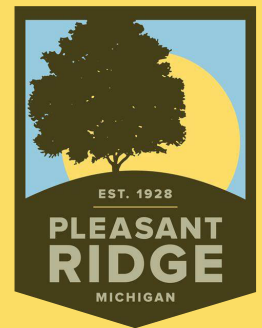




Draft December 7th, 2024



Master Plan

City of Pleasant Ridge, Michigan

Acknowledgments

The participation and cooperation of community leaders, residents, and members of civic organizations in the preparation of the 2024-2028 Master Plan is greatly appreciated and we thank everyone who participated in its development. The content in this Plan reflects the ongoing collaboration between City residents, stakeholders, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the City Council.

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1

Introduction

Executive Summary

The Pleasant Ridge Master Plan is a guide to maintaining the City's high quality of life and sense of community, enabling attractive growth and development, and positioning Pleasant Ridge to confront the key challenges of today and the next 20 years. City staff and officials are committed to ensuring that Pleasant Ridge maintain its place in the greater Metro Detroit area as a great place to live, work, and recreate.

Some of the key ideas and themes that are represented throughout this Master Plan can be summarized as:

- » One of the most referred to strengths of the Pleasant Ridge community is the architectural character of its housing stock, which is valued by the community and encourages continual investment. The Plan is aware of development pressure that may result in the future. **Maintaining and enhancing the community character** is core to all components of this Plan.
- » The Plan envisions **increased housing diversity** in the city to ensure that the City is supportive of residents at all stages of life and remains a highly livable community. This can be accomplished by incorporating mixed land uses, encouraging and facilitating density on Woodward that could accommodate residential development, and incorporating new housing types that are compatible with the scale of a single-family neighborhood, such as accessory dwelling units.
- » The Plan, anticipating future development pressures, identifies the **accepted potential future character of areas along Woodward Avenue** that may be primed for redevelopment, and further presents how that redevelopment may incorporate mixed use and accommodate residential development.
- » The Plan envisions Pleasant Ridge as a well-connected pedestrian-friendly environment that promotes **safe, efficient travel for all users of public ways.**
- » The Plan suggests strategies to **adapt to the impacts of a changing climate.** As a community affected by more severe and frequent flooding abating additional run-off is an important initiative. The incorporation of innovative stormwater infrastructure can help alleviate the pressures on the existing system.

Concurrently, as part of this planning process, the City undertook updating its Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Analysis and recommendations for the City's recreation facilities can be found as part of that plan.



Purpose of the Master Plan

A community's Master Plan is a policy document that directs decisions about housing, economic development. The Master Plan looks toward the future and is intended to be flexible to changing conditions. Unlike the Zoning Ordinance, which is law, the Master Plan is intended to be aspirational, usable and a source of reference for the entire Pleasant Ridge Community. The below table describes how the City uses the Master Plan to formulate policy and make decisions regarding development.

Table 1. How to Use the Master Plan

WHEN TO USE THE MASTER PLAN	POPULATION				
	WHEN TO REFERENCE DATA	SETTING BUDGET PRIORITIES	EVALUATING LAND USES	DESIGN GUIDELINES	DEFENSE OF ZONING DECISIONS
Rezoning	Supportable Plan: Capital Improvements Plan, SWOT Analysis, Public Participation Plan, Mack Avenue Improvement Plan, Urban Forestry Master Plan, Tax Increment Financing Plan		What implication does amendment have on future land use and goals, objectives and actions?		Does data, future land use map and goals, objectives and actions support zoning text change? (e.g. required site improvements or standards.)
Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments	Supportable Plan: Capital Improvements Plan, SWOT Analysis, Public Participation Plan, Mack Avenue Improvement Plan, Urban Forestry Master Plan, Tax Increment Financing Plan		What implication does amendment have on future land use and goals, objectives and actions?		Does data, future land use map and goals, objectives and actions support zoning text change? (e.g. required site improvements or standards.)
Special Land Use and Site Plan Review	Do data in plan support the need for the use? Is proposed use compatible with surrounding existing uses?		Is the use appropriate for the area based on goals, objectives and actions in the plan?	Check standards for the proposed use or surrounding area, e.g. paths, landscaping, corridor improvements that should be conditions of approval.	Does data, future land use map and goals, objectives and actions support conditions of special approval or site plan approval?
Capital Improvement Program	Check inventory of public facilities and demographic data for support of proposed projects.	Are projects, expenditures and priorities supported by goals, objectives and actions, or discussed elsewhere in plan?			
Special Programs: Economic Development, Parks, Gateway Improvement, Streetscape, etc.	Check inventory of public facilities. Use demographic data. Use economic data. Check description of funding sources.		Are proposed improvements consistent with priorities in goals, objectives?	Does project design/location conform to corridor and gateway plans?	
Preparing Grant Applications	Use data and other descriptive information in preparing support documentation for grant request.	Are projects, expenditures and priorities supported by goals and objectives or discussed elsewhere in plan?			

Background of Pleasant Ridge

Pleasant Ridge's roots date back to the early 1800s. It was originally part of three land grants made by the federal government shortly after the first U.S. land survey of Oakland County conducted by John Wampler in 1816 and filed with the land Surveyor General in Washington in 1818. In 1910, a residential core began to take form. These families met in various homes to discuss the problems of the community. In 1912, the group began discussing what to name this area. A resident, Mrs. Leila Kennedy, had fond memories of her childhood in Kentucky where she had lived in Pleasant Valley. From Mrs. Kennedy the first word "Pleasant" came, and given the fact that the so many of the residents lived on Ridge Road, which followed the top of the sandy ridge of land that had been used to traverse the otherwise semi-swampy area, it was decided to combine the names and hence "Pleasant Ridge" was born.

In the spring of 1919, the residents voted to incorporate and became the village of Pleasant Ridge. By making itself a village, the community established itself as a separate governmental unit, capable of indefinitely perpetuating its separate identity and no longer subject to uninvited annexation by an adjoining municipality. Through its village charter, Pleasant Ridge gained powers to establish, control, and enforce local policies, to maintain the type of local government it preferred and to initiate and finance various types of public improvements its property owners desired and needed.

Incorporation as a village brought with it these advantages, but it could not sever certain political ties to Royal Oak Township. Only incorporation as a city would accomplish that. It would take ten years for Pleasant Ridge to press forward to the next step and incorporate as a city. In 1928, with the threat of annexation into either Ferndale or Royal Oak pending, Pleasant Ridge voted to incorporate as a city.

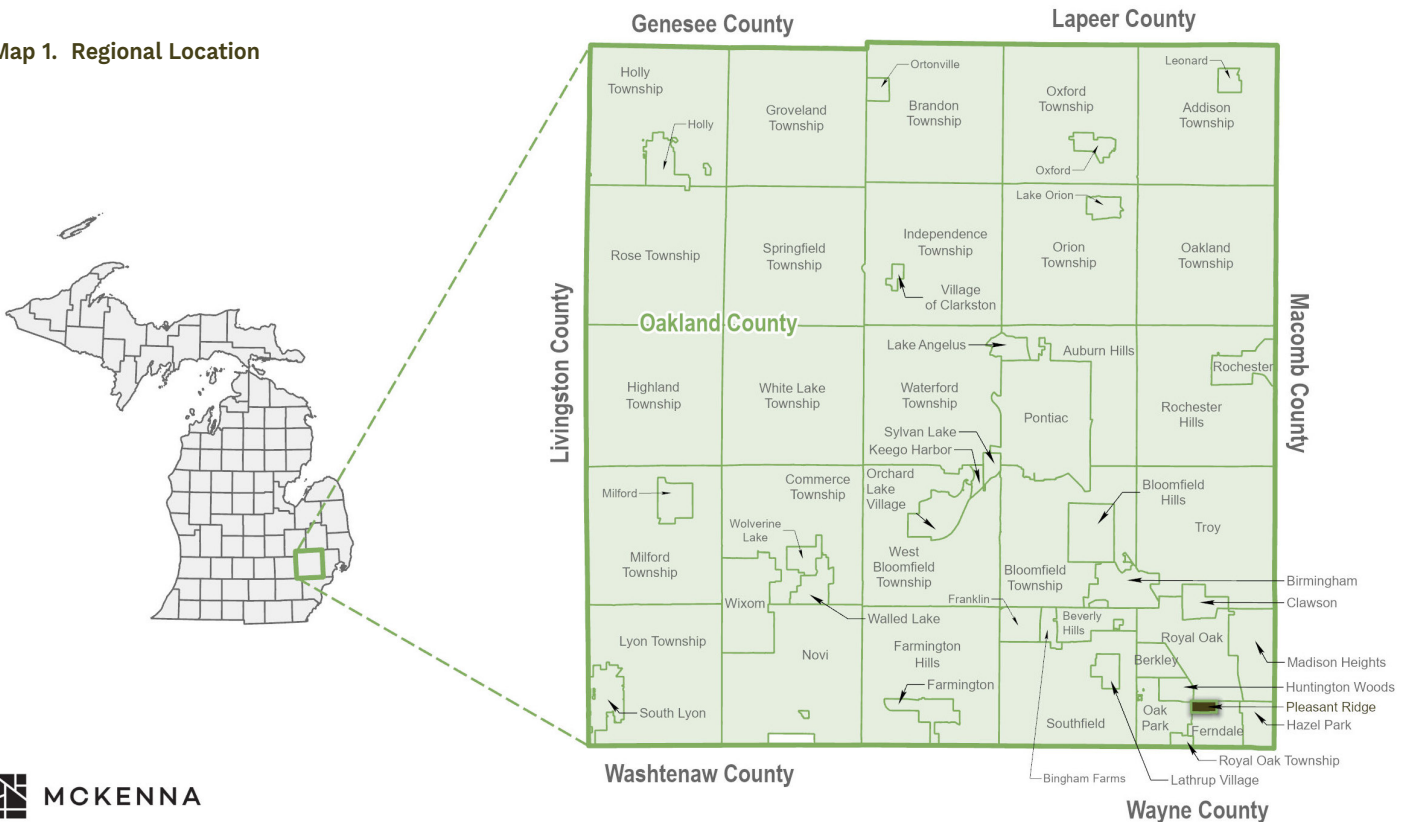


Regional Context

Today, Pleasant Ridge occupies a portion of southeast Michigan that is heavily defined by its proximity to the City of Detroit. It is bisected by the Woodward Corridor, bounded to the north by Interstate 696 and to the east by a Canadian National rail line, and adjacent to the Detroit Zoo. Its neighboring communities are Ferndale to the south and east, Royal Oak to the north, Oak Park to the west, and a northwest corner shared with Huntington Woods.



Map 1. Regional Location





The Woodward Corridor: A Historic Route of Connectivity and Growth

When the French trader Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac arrived at the Detroit River in 1701, he found an established hub where Native communities across the region gathered and traded. Over the ensuing decades, Detroit shifted hands from French to British control before becoming part of the newly formed United States in 1796. After a devastating fire in 1805, Judge Augustus Brevoort Woodward drew up a visionary city plan for Detroit inspired by Washington D.C.'s layout. His plan included a major artery stretching 40 miles northward, tracing what had long been known as the Saginaw Trail, a key Native American route. By 1807, this path was formally established as Woodward Avenue.

Under the leadership of Governor Lewis Cass, Woodward Avenue expanded to connect Detroit to Pontiac by 1824. This extension spurred settlement and economic growth, particularly as the Erie Canal's opening in 1825 and Michigan's statehood in 1837 brought waves of settlers to the area.

The full 27-mile length of Woodward Avenue was paved by 1916, marking it as one of the earliest fully paved roads in the nation. Shortly after, in 1919, it hosted the world's first electric traffic light. Over the next decades, the avenue continued to grow, transforming into an

eight-lane boulevard between Six Mile Road and Pontiac by 1926. Today, Woodward Avenue is recognized as Michigan's M-1 highway and has been designated both a "Recreational Heritage Route" and an "All-American Road," celebrated for its rich 200-year urban history and iconic status as the heart of Detroit's automotive legacy.

Woodward and the Birth of the Automobile

Woodward Avenue has long been a symbol of the automotive industry, with the "Big Three" automakers—Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler—anchoring Detroit's identity as the Motor City. The area supported a wide range of companies and businesses tied to car manufacturing, creating a bustling economic corridor. While Woodward became synonymous with car culture, its transportation history is far more diverse.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Woodward Avenue was a bustling multimodal route. The Detroit City Railway began horse-drawn rail service along Woodward in 1863, and by 1900, Detroit had the most extensive interurban trolley mileage in the country. In 1920, Woodward and Michigan Avenue held the title of America's busiest intersection, with over 18,000 cars passing through in a single 10-hour period. Though a subway system was proposed in 1919, and a "balanced system" of highways and transit was called for as early as 1953, these plans stalled, and streetcars were eventually phased out in 1956. Despite repeated proposals for rapid rail systems, regional transportation investments continued to favor automobiles.

Woodward's Revival as a Complete Street

In recent years, there has been renewed interest in transforming Woodward Avenue into a true multimodal corridor. A "Complete Streets" study is currently underway, exploring improvements that will make Woodward safer and more accessible for all—pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders. As the 21st century progresses, Woodward is poised to re-embrace its roots as a vibrant, diverse corridor offering a range of transportation options beyond car travel alone.



Royal Oak Inter-Urban in the 1940's

Key Infrastructure: Rail and Freeways Along Woodward

The Detroit & Pontiac Railroad, chartered in 1830, was among the earliest rail projects in the Northwest Territory. It initially connected Detroit with Pontiac, providing access to Oakland County's rich agricultural resources. This line later evolved into the Grand Trunk Western Railroad, now a Class 1 railroad under Canadian National.

Interstate 696, meanwhile, marks another crucial infrastructural element in Pleasant Ridge's history. This east-west route, initially proposed in the 1950s, faced significant resistance from communities along its path, including the Detroit Zoo and the Orthodox Jewish community in Oak Park. Pleasant Ridge itself was deeply affected, as the freeway construction consumed 10% of the city's tax base and involved lengthy legal battles. After decades of planning and construction, the final segment of the freeway opened in December 1989, creating a vital link between Michigan's other major highways.

The Detroit Zoo: Pleasant Ridge's Neighbor and Cultural Asset

Pleasant Ridge shares its northern boundary with the Detroit Zoo, Michigan's largest paid family attraction. Established in 1928, the zoo initially grew out of the Detroit Zoological Society's need to house animals rescued from a bankrupt circus. Today, the Detroit Zoo is a major attraction, drawing over a million visitors annually. Its close proximity to Pleasant Ridge brings a steady flow of visitors to the area, reinforcing the Woodward Corridor's role as a cultural and economic asset.



Demographic Characteristics

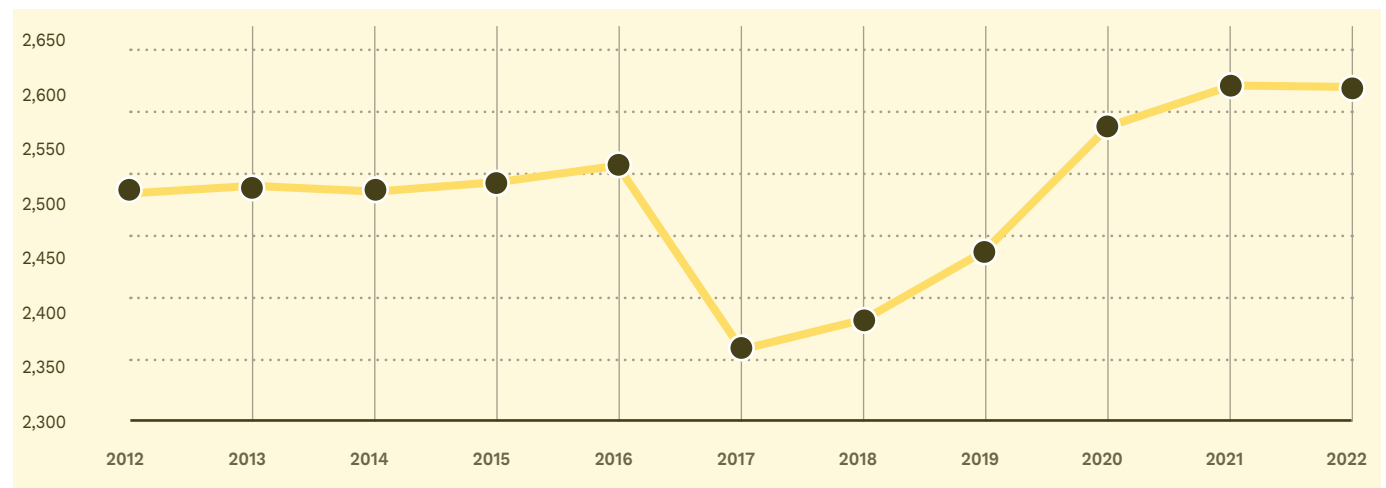
Pleasant Ridge’s current demographics provide a foundation for understanding the existing and future needs of the community. Understanding demographic factors such as age, income levels, household size, education, and diversity allows the City to tailor development strategies effectively. By analyzing demographics, Pleasant Ridge can anticipate future demands, identify areas for growth, and ensure that the goals and strategies of this Plan reflect the diverse needs of the community.

Population

Current population patterns serve as a crucial indicator to gauge whether the community is experiencing growth or decline, laying the foundation for anticipating future trends. This allows the City to predict the necessary policy adjustments in the upcoming years to adequately cater to services, amenities, housing, and economic development needs.

- » From 2012 to 2022, the total population of Pleasant Ridge has increased 2.7% to 2,609 (Figure 1).
- » In comparison to its neighbors, Pleasant Ridge has a very small population.
- » SEMCOG estimates that the population will increase to 2,642 by 2030, 2,762 by 2040, and back down to 2,716 by 2050. This increase is consistent with the current population pattern and is indicative of a steady population that is slowly growing.

Figure 1. Population Change, 2012 -2022



Source: ACS 2022, Table DP05



Credit: Pleasant Ridge Troublemakers Gallery

Households

The number of households and household size provide insight to the housing needs of the City. Understanding the composition of households within a population informs the City about the required size and type of residential units, ranging from single-family homes to multi-unit dwellings. Larger households may necessitate housing options with more bedrooms and communal spaces, while smaller households might prefer compact and efficient living arrangements. The composition of households also provides insight into population trends, which can allow the City to better plan for the specific needs of the community.

- » The number of households with children is declining by 3.4%, while the number of households with seniors is increasing by 10.7% (Table 3).
- » In comparison to the County, Pleasant Ridge's average household size is lower. However, it is consistent with surrounding communities' averages.

Table 3. Household Characteristics, 2012 & 2022

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTIC	2012	2022	2050 (SEMCOG)
Total households	1,114	1,149	1,150
Householder living alone under 65 years old	301	270	-
Householder living alone 65 years and over	74	92	-
Two plus person households with children	295	285	255
Two plus person households without children	291	502	588
Average household size	2.28	2.27	2.36

Source: ACS 2022, Table DP02

Age

Understanding the age distribution within a population provides crucial insights into the demand for different services, infrastructure, and amenities. Areas with a significant elderly population may require more accessible housing options, healthcare facilities, and transportation services tailored to their needs. Conversely, neighborhoods with a higher proportion of young families might benefit from additional educational resources, recreational spaces, and childcare facilities.

- » Pleasant Ridge has an older median age than surrounding communities, and the County (Table 4).
- » The senior population (over the age of 65) has fluctuated between 16% and 19% of the total population over the past decade.
- » SEMCOG projects a 203.1% growth in individuals over the age of 85 by 2050. Additionally, SEMCOG projects a 22.3% increase in the 65- to 85-year-old population by 2050.
- » SEMCOG projects a 33% decline in children aged 5 through 17, which is indicative of an older population base that is not replacing its aging population.

Table 4. Median Age, 2022

COMMUNITY	MEDIAN AGE
Pleasant Ridge	44
Ferndale	37.5
Huntington Woods	43.5
Oak Park	37.9
Royal Oak	35.9
Oakland County	41.7

Source: ACS 2022, Table DP02

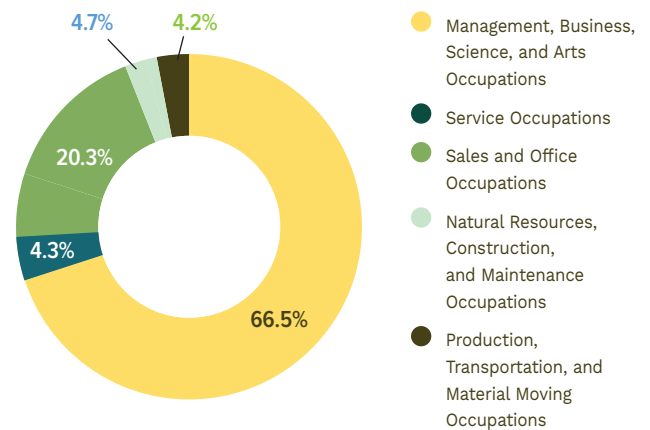


Employment

Employment directly impacts the economic vitality and social well-being of a community. A robust employment sector not only provides individuals with the means to support themselves and their families but also stimulates local business activity, fosters innovation, and drives overall economic growth. By incorporating considerations of employment into the Plan, Pleasant Ridge can strategically allocate resources to support job creation, attract businesses, and promote workforce development initiatives.

- » Approximately ¼ of Pleasant Ridge’s working population is not in the labor force, pointing to a high population percentage of senior residents (Table 5).
- » The unemployment rate is low in comparison to neighboring communities and the County (Table 5).
- » A majority of residents work in management, business, science, and art occupations (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Industry Sectors, 2022



Source: Labor Characteristics, 2022

Table 5. Labor Characteristics, 2022

	PLEASANT RIDGE	FERNDALE	HUNTINGTON WOODS	OAK PARK	ROYAL OAK	OAKLAND COUNTY
Population 16 years and over	2,132	17,479	4,902	23,802	50,301	988,161
In labor force	1,624	14,118	3,449	15,036	37,638	656,316
Not in labor force	594	3,361	1,356	8,073	12,354	351,212
Unemployment Rate	4.0%	9.3%	3.5%	12.3%	5.1%	7.5%

Source: ACS 2022, Table DP03

Education

Similar to occupation, educational attainment can influence aspects of community development and economic well-being. Higher levels of education within a population tend to correlate with improved economic outcomes, increased workforce productivity, and greater innovation and creativity. By prioritizing education in the Plan, Pleasant Ridge can foster a skilled and adaptable workforce, promote lifelong learning opportunities, and cultivate a culture of innovation and resilience,

ultimately contributing to the long-term prosperity and sustainability of the City.

- » Pleasant Ridge has a high population, 93.2% of residents with at least some college education (Table 6).
- » Generally, Pleasant Ridge has a higher educational attainment that surrounding communities.

Table 6. Educational Attainment, 2022

	PLEASANT RIDGE	FERNDALE	HUNTINGTON WOODS	OAK PARK	ROYAL OAK	OAKLAND COUNTY
Population 25 years and over	1,995	16,078	4,397	21,294	44,145	906,930
Less than 9th grade	1.2%	0.8%	0.6%	3.0%	1.1%	1.9%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	0.2%	3.0%	0.3%	4.4%	2.5%	3.4%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	5.4%	15.1%	4.4%	17.9%	12.7%	18.0%
Some college, no degree	12.3%	21.1%	7.5%	27.0%	15.6%	18.9%
Associate's degree	4.1%	7.0%	6.1%	9.6%	6.7%	8.3%
Bachelor's degree	40.3%	33.3%	33.5%	24.1%	37.3%	27.9%
Graduate or professional degree	36.5%	19.8%	47.6%	14.1%	24.1%	21.6%

Source: ACS 2022, Table DP02

Income

Income is an important trend to consider as it can provide insight to the economic vitality of the City. Understanding income considerations enables the development of equitable infrastructure and amenities that serve the needs of all income groups, fostering a more resilient and cohesive community.

- » The median household income of Pleasant Ridge is significantly higher than the median household income of the County and most of the surrounding communities (Table 7).
- » The median household income is increasing steadily over the past ten years.

Table 7. Median Household Income, 2012 & 2022

COMMUNITY	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME		PERCENT CHANGE
	2012	2022	
Pleasant Ridge	\$100,714	\$105,438	4.7%
Ferndale	\$48,967	\$51,312	4.8%
Huntington Woods	\$112,593	\$115,025	2.2%
Oak Park	\$45,467	\$47,463	4.4%
Royal Oak	\$62,453	\$65,786	5.3%
Oakland County	\$65,637	\$67,465	2.8%

Source: ACS 2022, Table DP02



Housing

Understanding housing preferences, affordability levels, and dwelling types within a population provides essential insights for the City to create diverse and inclusive neighborhoods. Factors such as housing density, size, accessibility, and affordability directly influence residents' quality of life, social interactions, and access to essential services.

Vacancy

- » While the vacancy rate has increased slightly, it is still very low in comparison to surrounding communities and the County (Table 8).
- » The rental vacancy rate is 0% in 2022, which may be indicative of a competitive rental market.
- » The number of renter-occupied housing has decreased by 32.6% from 2012 to 2022, indicating that Pleasant Ridge is mostly composed of owner-occupied housing. More diverse housing options should be explored to allow residents access to attainable housing options.

Table 8. Occupancy Characteristics, 2012 & 2022

OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS	2012	2022	PERCENT CHANGE
Total housing units	1,150	1,190	3.5%
Occupied housing units	1,114	1,149	3.1%
Owner-Occupied	1,028	1,091	6.1%
Renter-Occupied	86	58	-32.6%
Vacant housing units	36	41	13.9%
Homeowner vacancy rate	0.0%	1.1%	n/a
Rental vacancy rate	0.0%	0.0%	n/a

Source: ACS 2022, Table DP04

Table 9. Average Housing Value, 2022

COMMUNITY	AVERAGE HOUSING VALUE
Pleasant Ridge	\$393,900
Ferndale	\$218,000
Huntington Woods	\$457,600
Oak Park	\$176,900
Royal Oak	\$289,800
Oakland County	\$302,800

Source: ACS 2022, Table DP04

Housing Affordability

- » The average housing value in Pleasant Ridge is generally higher than neighboring communities (Table 10).
- » While Pleasant Ridge has a high average housing value, the population percentage of Pleasant Ridge with unaffordable housing costs is very low in comparison with the County and most of the surrounding communities (Table 10 & 11).
- » Pleasant Ridge is also reducing the population percentage with unaffordable housing costs at a higher rate than the County and surrounding communities, indicating that the average household income is increasing at a higher rate than the average housing costs.

Housing Stock

- » A majority of housing was built in 1939 or earlier, which may mean that housing repair or maintenance programs are needed (Table 11).
- » According to Census data and SEMCOG data, very little new housing is being built, with a total of 3 new units from 2010 to 2024.

Table 10. Housing Affordability, 2012 & 2022

COMMUNITY	POPULATION WITH UNAFFORDABLE HOUSING COSTS (30% OR MORE OF INCOME SPENT ON HOUSING COSTS)		PERCENT CHANGE
	2012	2022	
Pleasant Ridge	28.3%	13.0%	-15.3%
Ferndale	34.0%	22.3%	-11.7%
Huntington Woods	23.8%	9.0%	-14.8%
Oak Park	46.2%	32.9%	-13.3%
Royal Oak	28.0%	22.5%	-5.5%
Oakland County	34.7%	25.3%	-9.4%

Source: ACS 2022, Table DP04



Historical 100-Year-Old Property in Pleasant Ridge

Table 11. Age of Housing, 2022

YEAR BUILT	1939 OR EARLIER	1940 TO 1949	1950 TO 1959	1960 TO 1969	1970 TO 1979	1980 TO 1989	1990 TO 1999	2000 TO 2009	2010 TO 2019	2020 OR LATER
Percent of Housing Units	70.1%	8.8%	15.3%	1.2%	0.3%	0.3%	1.4%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: ACS 2022, Table DP04





2 Community Vision

Visioning Process

Introduction

In the Master Plan development process, various types of engagement opportunities were offered to gather feedback from the community, forming the basis for the plan’s recommendations. This included a Strategic Visioning Workshop in May 2024, an Ice Cream Social Field Day in July 2024, an online survey and interactive map, a roundtable meeting in August 2024, and a public workshop in October 2024. This chapter provides a summary of the feedback received. For more detailed information on the results of the community survey, please refer to the Appendix of this document.

Online Engagement – May 21 – June 30, 2024

In addition to the public workshops and field events, a survey and online mapping activity were made available for all residents. Several outreach strategies were used to advertise the online engagement opportunities including:

- » Direct postcard mailers to every home in Pleasant Ridge
- » Posts on the City’s Facebook page and website
- » Flyers posted at the Community Center and City Hall

The online engagement activities received comments on a wide range of topics, with key issues summarized below. Selected excerpts and more detailed analysis of both the survey and the online mapping activity are available in the Appendix of this plan.

Provide your input for the Master Plan & Parks and Recreation Plan

EST. 1938
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MICHIGAN

Timeline:

- April 22, 2024: Project Kick-Off
- May 21, 2024: Strategic Visioning Workshop
- July 17, 2024: Ice Cream Social
- October 16, 2024: Policy Workshop
- October - November 2024: Draft review with the Commissions
- January 2025: Draft Distribution for Public Comment
- April 2025: Adoption

Strategic Visioning Workshop
Tuesday, May 21, 2024
4:00-7:00 PM
Community Center

Online Engagement & Survey
Survey Open through June 30, 2024

Drop by the Community Center on Tuesday, May 21 anytime between 4:00 and 7:00 pm to provide your vision for the community through multiple engagement activities. All ages are encouraged to attend. A brief presentation will be made at 6:00 pm.

Check out the Master Plan website and provide your feedback on the comment map and through the survey. Paper copies of the survey are available at the Community Center and City Hall. The survey is open through June 30.

Local Postal Customer

PLEASANTRIDGEPLANS.COM

Take the survey!

Overall Results & Feedback from Community Participants

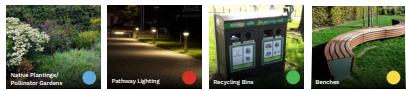
- » **Community, History, and Character:**
Above all, Pleasant Ridge residents value the sense of a tight knit and accepting community in their neighborhoods. Residents take great pride in the architectural features of the community's housing stock as well as the charm of tree-lined streets. When considering expanding the housing stock and reimagining public space, community members felt strongly about limiting overdevelopment and ensuring that any changes aligned with the historical design of current homes and maintained the current tree canopy.
- » **Parks and Recreation:**
The survey responses made clear that parks and recreation offerings are well-used and highly valued in Pleasant Ridge as a place to strengthen community relationships. In general, the community was quite pleased with current offerings but want to continue improving inclusivity and accessibility for all age groups and abilities at City parks. To continue activating these spaces, residents suggested pickleball courts, permanent yard games, as well as other regularly scheduled community events. Residents also signaled an interest in small improvements to the natural landscape to promote shade and invite pollinators.
- » **Housing Choice and Aging in Place:**
Some residents commented on a need to provide housing choices and other services for elderly and aging community members while also improving the diversity of the community's housing stock to accommodate younger families. Accessory dwelling

units are a favored option by the community to work towards this goal. However, a common concern included the impact of short-term rentals on the housing stock and community fabric, and residents are interested in regulating such units.

- » **Neighboring Roadways:**
Given that Pleasant Ridge is nestled between both the Woodward Corridor and I-696, residents communicated a need to continue promoting health and safety for pedestrians and nearby neighborhoods. A common point of concern for residents included noise from traffic, suggesting an opportunity to promote buffer landscaping along heavily traveled roadways to promote well-being in the community. Further, community members desire safer walking and biking routes across these corridors as well as increased traffic safety measures at popular intersections.

Where should the listed features be located?

Place a corresponding color sticker where you would like to see more of the listed examples. Have other ideas for other features? List them on a sticky note and place in the box to the right.



Online Engagement: Survey Results - May 21 - June 30, 2024

Overview

The public survey was distributed through several channels and generated 231 unique responses. The survey was available online through the Master Plan Project website as well as paper copies at City Hall. Survey respondents were largely representative of the community’s demographics, although residents aged 25 to 34 were slightly underrepresented and residents aged 18 to 24 were not represented at all.

Selected Results

BIGGEST CONCERNS FOR PLEASANT RIDGE

1. Sense of community
2. Public safety provision
3. Ability to age in place
4. Recreation offerings
5. Maintenance of city heritage and aesthetics
6. Mobility safety and access
7. Housing cost
8. Ability to retain and attract families with children
9. Environmental sustainability and resiliency
10. Housing availability and choice
11. Ability to retain and attract young adults
12. Stormwater management

In order to gain a high-level understanding of the residents’ main concerns, selected results are shared below. The full report on the survey responses can be viewed in the Appendix. As can be seen in the responses to questions regarding the community’s biggest concerns [see graphic], many place maintaining a sense of community among their top issues. These are followed by concerns around public safety, being able to age in place, and providing recreation offerings. With regards to aging in place, the majority of respondents describe the availability and accessibility of amenities for older adults as “good” (37 percent) or “excellent” (14 percent), but 19 percent of respondents rate the current offering as “fair” and 4 percent rated them as “poor.” The challenges fielded by respondents include lack of diversely accommodating housing stock and associated property tax increases for aging-in-place renovations. Other concerns mentioned by residents include transportation to amenities and home and yard maintenance support.

Figure 5. What Configurations of ADUs are appropriate in Pleasant Ridge?

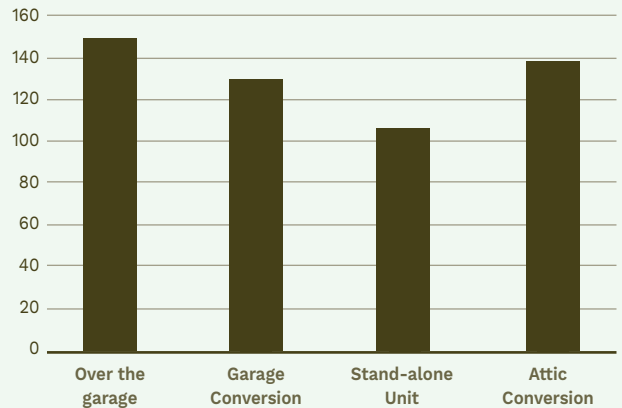


Figure 3. Do you support the creation of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in Pleasant Ridge?

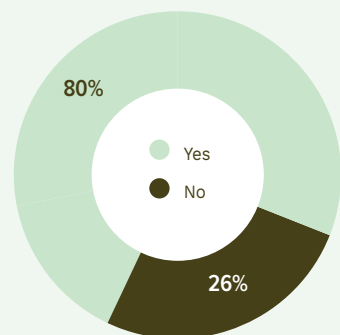
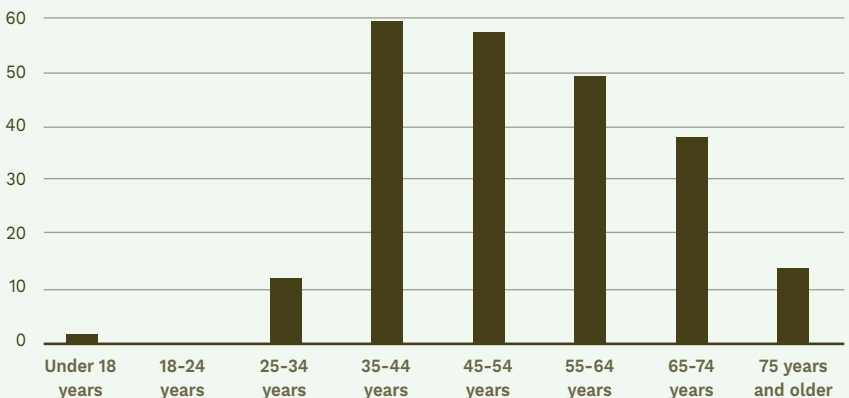


Figure 4. Age Distribution of Survey Respondents



When discussing ADUs, residents responded largely in support, with 80% of responses supporting the creation of ADUs within Pleasant Ridge. When considering the types of ADU configurations they found appropriate within the city, the largest proportion of responses were favorable to them being placed over the garage of homes, followed by attic conversions, garage conversions, and the smallest proportion supported standalone units.

Within the context of housing, residents were also asked about short-term rentals. Short-term rentals include properties or rooms of buildings that are part of sites like Airbnb and VRBO. In particular, they were asked if the City should regulate the supply and location of them throughout Pleasant Ridge. 52 percent of residents agreed that the City should regulated both the number and location of short-term rentals, while 22 percent did not believe the city needed to regulate them. The remaining 26 percent of responses believed either in regulating only the number or only the location of short-term rentals.

Finally, when discussing Woodward Avenue, residents were asked about what they believed would most benefit the Pleasant Ridge portion of the Woodward Corridor. Just over half (50.5 percent) of responses believed Beautification was the highest priority, followed by Diversity in Businesses (45.3 percent), Streetscaping (40.1 percent), and Appearance of Buildings (39.6 percent). However, over 78% of survey respondents did not wish to make Pleasant Ridge more identifiable from the Woodward Corridor; indicating that residents enjoy the private, ‘under the radar’ nature of the community.

Online Engagement: Pleasant Ridge Comment Map Results

Pleasant Ridge residents were invited to interact with a virtual map of the community by marking places of interest. The Pleasant Ridge Comment Map was available online through Social Pinpoint and collected 23 responses.

These responses identified everyday concerns from residents, including a need for pedestrian and cyclist safety across major thoroughfares, noise control along Woodward, I-696 and the dog park, and parks and recreation updates such as time-sensitive lighting and the provision of additional shade.

Popular comment locations included Gainsboro Park, Pleasant Ridge Dog Park, the intersection of S Main Street and 10 Mile Road, I-696, and the Woodward Corridor. A full list of comments is available in the Appendix.

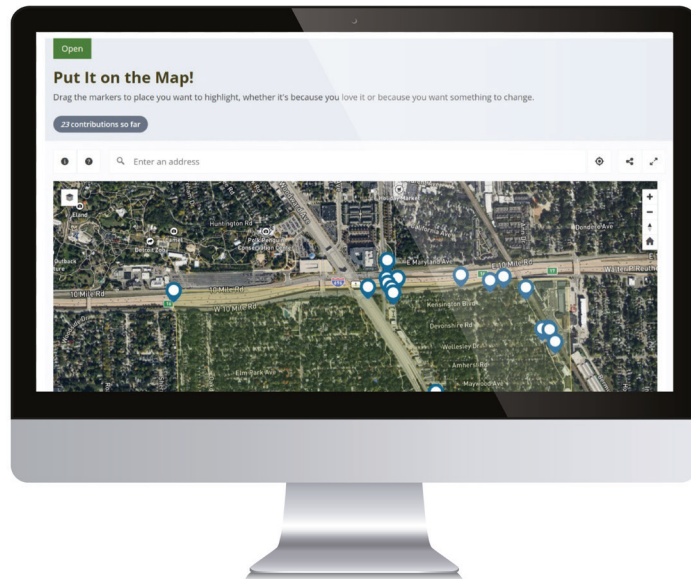
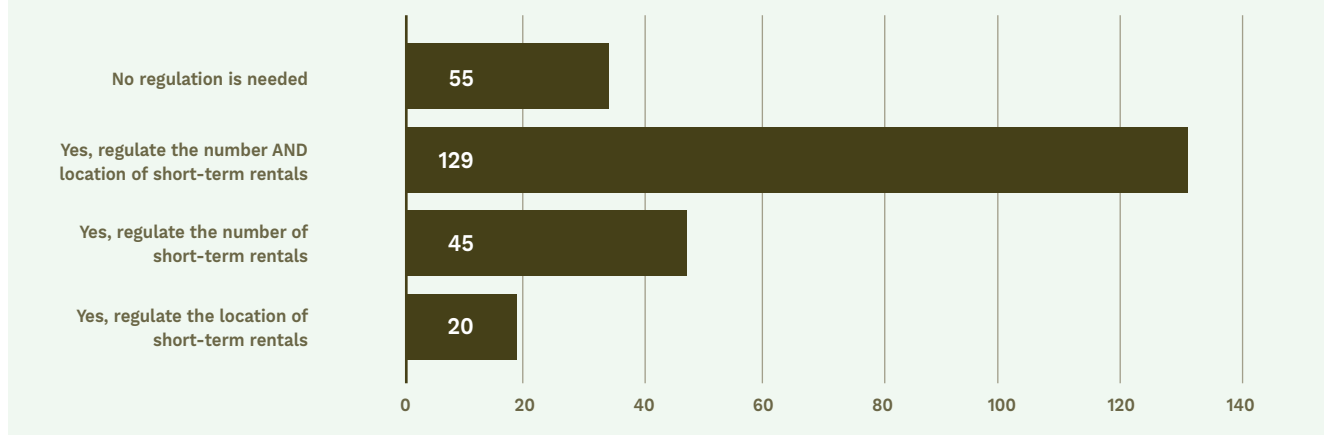


Figure 6. Should the city regulate the number and location of short-term rentals?





Strategic Visioning Workshop – May 21, 2024

A public workshop for all Pleasant Ridge residents was held on May 21, 2024 at the Pleasant Ridge Community Center to solicit feedback on residents' vision for the future of the community and identify specific concerns and goals. The event included self-guided comment boards and a facilitated table map activity to give participants the opportunity to comment on multiple aspects of daily life in Pleasant Ridge. McKenna staff also held a presentation explain the master planning process and issues identified by City staff, as well as to provide residents the opportunity to ask questions and comment on the master planning process. Several outreach strategies were used to advertise the event, including:

- » An update to the City website;
- » A post on the City Facebook page; and,
- » Individual post card mailings to each resident in the City.

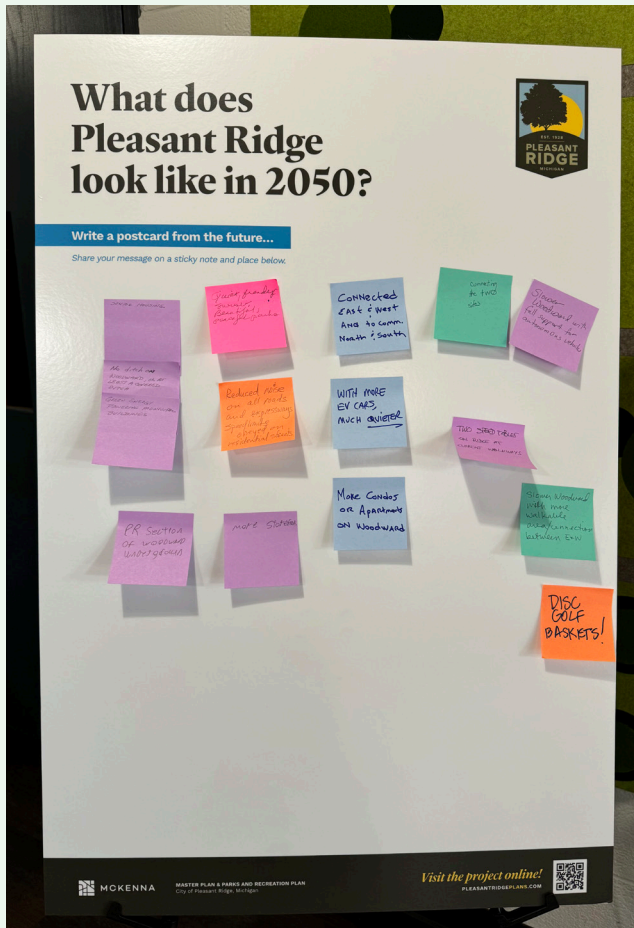
Approximately 29 people attended the event and numerous comments were received across a wide range of topics. Below is a summary of the key topics discussed as well as the main points derived from the comments for each board at the workshop.

The word cloud to the right shows the key topics that were brought up most often during the Strategic Visioning workshop – the larger the word, the more frequently it was mentioned. Woodward Avenue, traffic throughout the City, and preserving the parks as is were top comments, with housing, non-motorized access and connections, and safe speeds being other frequently mentioned topics.

Overall Results & Feedback

The following major themes from the workshop were drawn from the comments on the boards and the map. These comments will be provided in full later in this report.

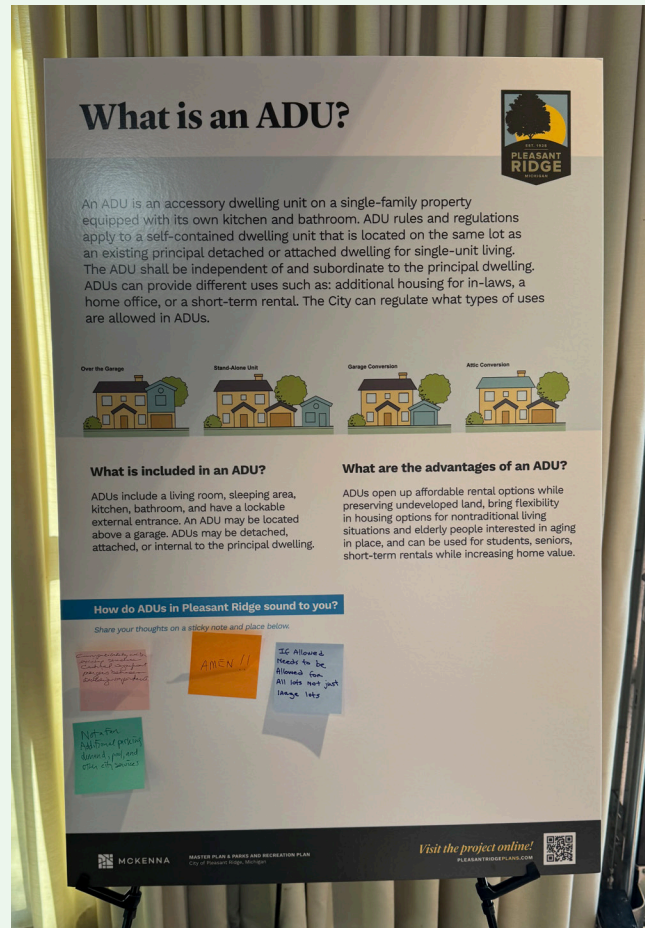
- » **Pedestrian and Non-Motorized Access:** Residents broadly supported initiatives to improve pedestrian and non-motorized connections. Safety was a common concern, especially along major corridors like Woodward Avenue and 10 Mile Road. Multiple comments supported improving the connection between the east and west sides of Pleasant Ridge – currently separated by Woodward Avenue. Specific strategies given by residents for improving pedestrian and non-motorized access included pedestrian crossings over I-696 and 10 Mile Road, “speed tables” or raised crosswalks, and “smart” traffic signals.
- » **Parks & Recreation:** Residents named the local parks as an asset to Pleasant Ridge and wanted to see them largely remain the same. Residents suggested some enhancements to the parks, including increasing native plantings, improving recycling and compost availability in parks, and adding amenities like a toddler play structure, a baseball league, and more park benches and shaded areas.
- » **Housing:** Many participants appeared to feel that the current housing stock in Pleasant Ridge met the needs of current residents. Residents had mixed views on accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in the City and emphasized ensuring that they match the style and character of the principal dwelling, are allowed on all lot sizes, and their impact on City services is kept in mind. In the mapping activity, participants mentioned opportunities for multi-family or condominium housing along Ridge Road and 10 Mile Road.



What does Pleasant Ridge look like in 2050?

Residents had mixed opinions on what they see across Pleasant Ridge 25 years from now. These comments covered topics including:

- » **Housing:** Some attendees suggested senior housing as being part of the landscape in 2050, while others expressed not wanting to see any. Attendees also expressed seeing more condominiums or apartments along Woodward Avenue.
- » **Safe, Quiet, Smart Streets:** Attendees provided several comments about the state of transportation connectivity within Pleasant Ridge. Residents noted changes such as I-696 Woodward Avenue being moved underground, reduced roadway noise and better respected speed limits. Woodward in particular was seen as slower and more walkable. Ridge saw suggestions for adding speed tables and bike lanes. Multiple comments expressed a future where the eastern and western sides of Pleasant Ridge are connected. One comment expressed seeing the community without any passthrough traffic. Other comments saw better facilitation for electric and autonomous vehicles. Finally, an attendee commented on wanting to see more and better street lighting.



- » **Other Comments:** An attendee commented on visualizing more storefronts in 2050, and another expressed stronger transit connections to Detroit and other communities once connected through the Grand Trunk Railroad. Attendees also mentioned green energy powering municipal buildings and the installation of disc golf baskets.

What is an ADU?

To gain an understanding an understanding of resident's views on the concept of ADUs, McKenna staff provided a board both explaining what they are and asking residents for their thoughts on them. The comments from residents included mixed opinions both in favor and against, with comments stressing the importance of compatibility with local structures, needing to be available on all lots, and permitting a variety of ADU layouts. Another while others expressed concerns over the additional parking needed and impact on city services.



Table Map and Brainstorm Banks

Alongside the boards, McKenna staff provided a table-sized map of Pleasant Ridge and asked residents to place stickers on areas they would like to change or see remain the same. The areas of discussion around these maps were categorized into five distinct areas:

Potential Change Areas

Keep: Attendees expressed preserving parks and not developing a western greenbelt. Attendees also recommended keeping and using the baseball field with leagues, and another enjoyed the use of garden plots along Kensington Boulevard.

Enhance: Attendees expressed wanting to add condos along Ridge Road, connecting parks with paths, paint, and signs, improving train safety and reducing waits near Ferndale, and placing public buildings on roundabouts.

Change: Residents expressed desire for changing cut through traffic along numerous streets in the city, particularly for residential streets between Ridge Road and Woodward Avenue, and on Oxford and Woodward Heights Boulevards. They also expressed needing safer crossings at the intersection of Woodward Avenue and East 10 Mile Road.

When asked about areas in Pleasant Ridge that could be used differently, attendees indicated a need for better utilizing the space in the Community Center Park, and adding more tennis courts.

Staying in the Community

When asked about what would make it easier for them to continue living in Pleasant Ridge, attendees commented on factors affecting both younger and older residents. These include establishing volunteer corps under both a potential Teen Council and Senior Council; updating zoning regulations to provide more ground-floor living spaces; and finding means for helping older people with activities like lawn care and snow shoveling.

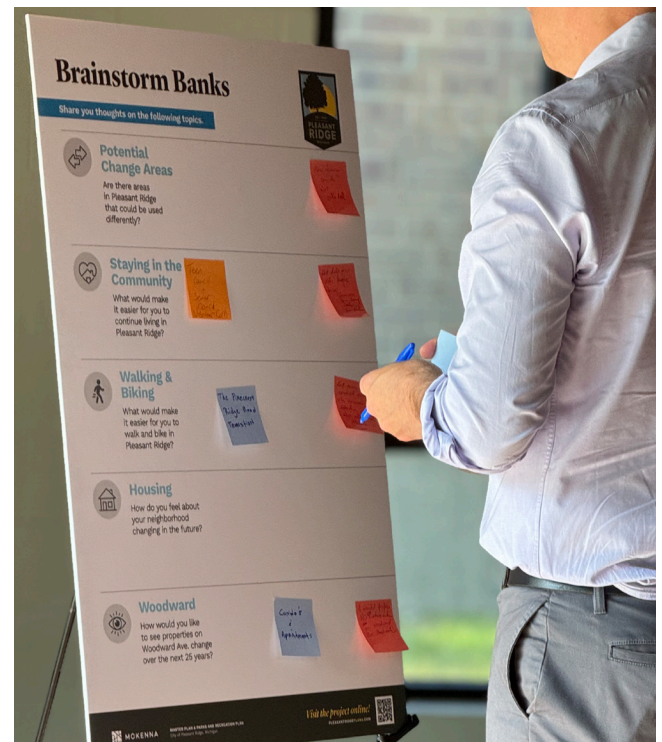
Walking and Biking

Keep: One attendee commented on needing a water fountain along the west side of Ridge Road.

Enhance: Attendees suggested different traffic calming, walk/bike access, and pedestrian safety measures, including walled-in crossings and pedestrian connections to the Zoo, rental bikes along medians, speed tables, covering I-696, installing smart traffic signals, and lowering speed limits along Woodward Avenue.

Change: Attendees recommended changing different potential chokepoints, blind spots on crossings, and reducing cut through traffic, and reinstating commuter rail service.

When asked what would make it easier to walk and bike in Pleasant Ridge, residents responded about the Pinecrest - Ridge Road transition at Oakridge Street, reducing cut through traffic, adding speedbumps and speed tables, and controlling excessive speeding on residential streets.



What do you love about your part of Pleasant Ridge?

Add a sticky note describing your favorite feature.

City of Huntington Woods



Housing

- » **Keep:** Housing variety the same, no need to develop new housing on park space.
- » **Enhance:** One attendee suggested a potential multi-tenant site at the intersection of 10 Mile Road and South Main Street.
- » **Change:** Allowing ADUs for personal use only.

When asked how they feel about their neighborhood changing in the future, attendees responded with recommendations for elevator licensure to assist with aging-in-place, preserving parks and greenspace, limiting ADUs for personal use, and a desire for no retirement housing in parks. Another attendee expressed concerns over home modifications uncapping taxes and making it too expensive to stay.

Woodward

- » **Keep:** Restaurant options for everyday use.
- » **Enhance:** Attendees recommended providing a bus to Detroit and a trolley system that leads into Ferndale.
- » **Change:** Attendees commented on concerns around the sunken portion of Woodward below I-696.

When asked how they would like to see properties on Woodward Avenue change over the next 25 years, attendees responded with comments about preserving the Woodward Avenue Greenbelt, adding condos and apartments, preserving greenspace, and not having new restaurant development on the east side of Woodward Avenue.



Ice Cream Social Field Day – July 17, 2024

A field day was held on July 17, 2024, in conjunction with the Pleasant Ridge Ice Cream Social. This event was open to all residents of Pleasant Ridge. Self-guided boards were provided to refine the feedback gathered from the Community Survey and Strategic Visioning Workshop. Areas identified in previous engagement efforts include sustainability in parks, accessibility in parks, ADUs, and amenity locations. McKenna staff were available to provide information about the planning process and explain the exercises.

Over 300 people attended the event and had the opportunity to provide feedback. Numerous comments were received throughout the event. Below is a summary of the key topics discussed as well as the main points derived from the comments for each board at the event.

How do ADUs in Pleasant Ridge sound to you?

Similar to the Strategic Visioning Workshop in May, McKenna staff provided a board and opportunities to explain and answer questions about ADUs. To further understand residents' views on the strategy to increase housing stock and support aging in place for seniors, McKenna staff included a posterboard explaining about ADUs. Participants were asked, "How do ADUs in Pleasant Ridge sound to you?"

Event attendees shared many different opinions, both in favor and against their presence in the community. Those in support said it would keep Pleasant Ridge accessible for young and old residents, supports aging-in-



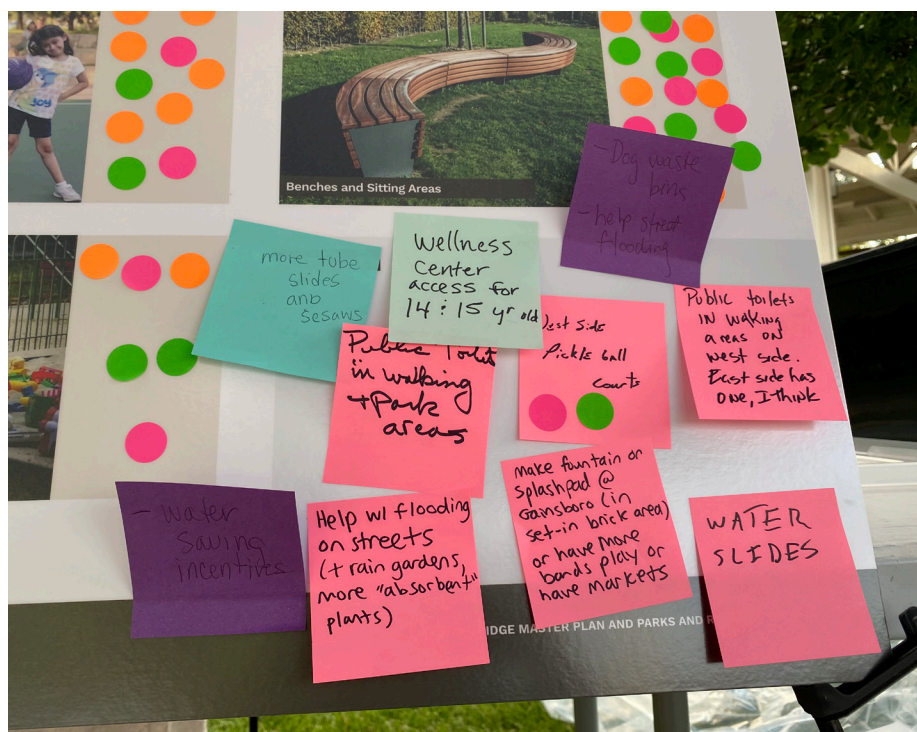
place and home offices, provides space for families, as well as extended family and older adults, and allows residents to utilize large lots. Those against ADUs expressed concerns about it affecting Pleasant Ridge’s single-family character and that their implementation is unnecessary. Others fell more in the middle, being supportive of the concept but recommending regulations and limits around short-term rentals, off-street parking, and bounding around the size of lots for ADUs to be permissible.

Where should listed features be located?

McKenna staff provided a map board that allowed residents to identify where certain features should be located throughout Pleasant Ridge. These four features included: Native Plantings / Pollinator Gardens, Pathway Lighting, Recycling Bins, and Benches. Certain patterns emerged for feature placement, including:

- » Native Plantings / Pollinator Gardens: Along Oakdale Boulevard and Poplar Park Boulevard, and within Gainsboro Park.
- » Pathway Lighting: Along the parks west of Woodward Avenue, within the dog park, and within Hessel Park.
- » Recycling Bins: Within Hessel Park and Gainsboro Park, and along Woodward Avenue.
- » Benches: Within Hessel Park, Gainsboro Park, and the dog park, as well as along Woodward Avenue.

Attendees also recommended other enhancements and changes, such as sound reduction, sound system and physical enhancements to the pool, maintaining dog park water fountains, installation of a music stage, installing roof-mounted solar panels and solar-powered lighting, adding seating in Gainsboro Park and utilizing the greenspace for markets, and not using native plantings along boulevards.





Roundtable Conversations – June 21 and July 17, 2024

One of the key in-person opportunities was Roundtable discussions which were advertised through a direct postcard mailer to every home in Pleasant Ridge. The primary aims of the roundtables were to:

- » Provide a collaborative, interactive gathering that focuses on a specific topic or issue.
- » Encourage equal participation amongst participants.
- » Test ideas based on feedback received thus far in the process and explore new ones brought up by participants.

A total of 31 participants were involved across the conversations. A summary of the discussions is provided in the following section. All community data will be thoroughly analyzed and incorporated into the drafting of the Master Plan and the 5-year Parks and Recreation Plan.

The roundtables focused on five different topic areas: Aging in Place, Community Groups, Youth, Parks & Recreation, and Housing & Neighborhoods. The discussions in each group examined many topics across the city, including:

Aging in Place: This group (4 participants) discussed concerns over the existing housing stock and accessibility, building new accessible housing, improving existing housing to be safer and more accommodating to aging residents, providing options for ADUs, improving recreational offerings for all ages, and increasing walkability around the city and particularly across the Woodward corridor and I-696.

Community Groups: This group (6 participants), with representation from the Garden Club, Pleasant Ridge Foundation, Historic Commission, and Women’s Club, discussed matters such as deepening their relationships

with City administration, increasing sustainability through measures like pollinator plants and stormwater management, and adding more programming in the city such as walking paths, and developing demonstration gardens.

Youth: This group (15 participants) discussed different aspects of both the youth and adult experience within Pleasant Ridge. This discussion included a strong sense of community and strong relationships between neighbors, opportunities for residents to live and prosper in Pleasant Ridge throughout high school and beyond, and recommendations for improving parks and public facilities increasing safety measures across Woodward Avenue, and bringing in different year-round programs to engage residents of all ages.

Parks & Recreation: This group (4 participants) discussed the state of the parks and their administration. Participants found that parks are important for sustainability goals, but could benefit off of additional programming, accessibility for all ages, and upgrading existing park facilities. The participants also spoke on needing stronger communication and interface with the Recreation Commission, and similar concerns around safety on Woodward Avenue, walkability, and utilizing lots for either new parks or undeveloped greenspace

Housing & Neighborhoods: This group (2 participants) discussed numerous aspects of housing and neighborhood structure within Pleasant Ridge. They highlighted assets like strong senses of community and city leadership, engagement from people of all ages, and bikeability around the community. They expressed support around measures such as ADUs, more business activity and restaurants, and better transit and alternative transportation options. On the other hand, the participants shared concerns about safety along Woodward Avenue, home maintenance challenges, and communications about long-term bicycle infrastructure improvements.

Policy Prioritization Workshop – October 16, 2024

Taking in the input from residents and City officials, staff from McKenna held this workshop to share the goals, objectives, and other components of both plans with residents to collect their input and refine the language of this plan. McKenna staff briefly presented on the components of the plan, and then turned the discussion to the audience to review the goals, objectives, and policy recommendations that would be incorporated into the plan. Utilizing an online polling software, Mentimeter, the proposed goals and objectives were validated. Alongside the goals and objectives, attendees also used Mentimeter to share their opinions on proposed redevelopments along Woodward Avenue, ideas for different housing mixes, and improvements to the parks.

Goals and Objective Polling

Participants were asked to join the Mentimeter activity using their smart devices, with paper copies available for residents who preferred to provide their feedback that way. The group was then presented goals from different categories, including Housing, Aging in Place, Transportation, Woodward Corridor, Sustainability, and Parks and Recreation. Details on the parks goals are in greater detail in the Parks and Recreation Plan. The attendees were asked to rate each goal statement on a scale of one to five, with five being the highest level of support. The activity ended with an open-ended question that allowed attendees to offer freeform feedback.

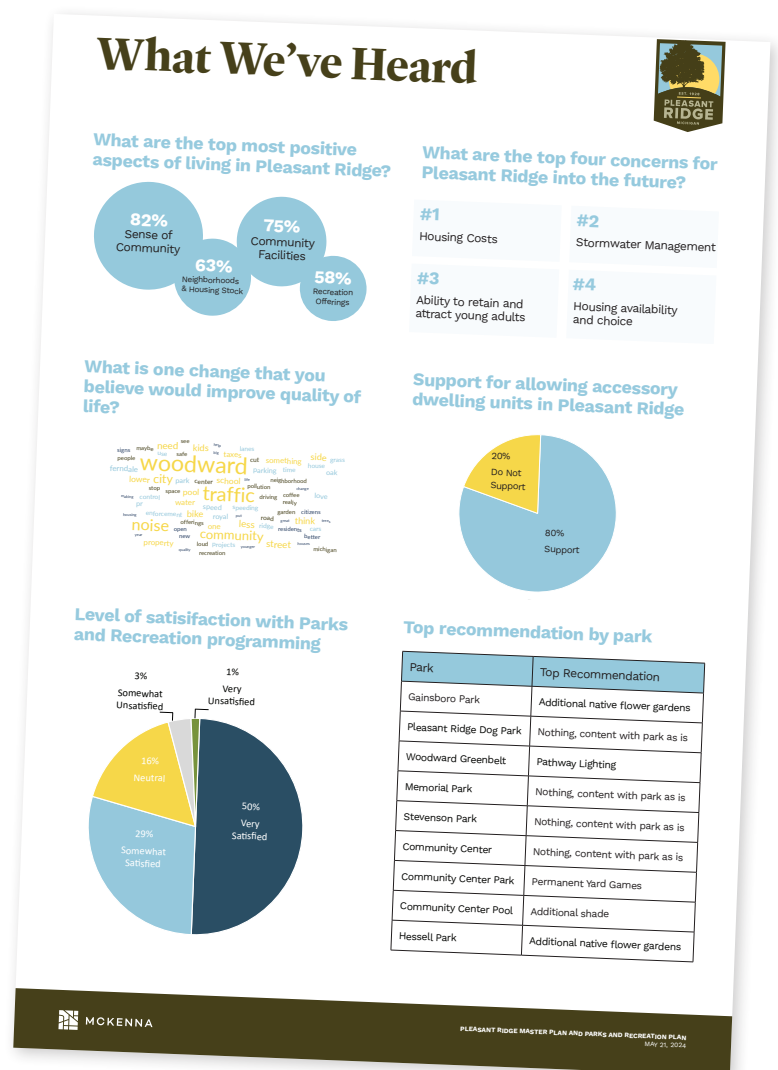
Mentimeter computed an average scoring for each goal and objective discussed, similarly ranging from 1-5. The scores for the goals were presented, with the highest scores being for the goals related to sustainability (4.4), followed closely by aging in place and transportation (both 4.3). These were followed by housing (4.2), and lastly the Woodward Corridor (4.1). However, all five goals ranked above four, which indicated stronger agreement among respondents.

When asked about any goals that were missing, attendees suggested different potential goals, objectives, and policy ideas. These included school district partnerships, park improvements and maintenance, reducing signage, regulations around short-term rentals, improving K-12 and community college education, street lighting, improving bike lane usage and connectivity, removing unused bike lanes, crossings along Woodward Avenue, and considering the future of the Roosevelt School.

Woodward Avenue Mixed-Use Development

Attendees were asked similar questions through Mentimeter focusing on their view of different housing and mixed-use options along Woodward Avenue. Responses were most receptive to a two-story mixed-use building on Woodward (4.4), while they were less in support of a three-story mixed-use building (3.5), and agreed the least with a four-story mixed use building (2.5).

When looking at purely residential apartment buildings along Woodward, respondents fell more in the middle with a three-story apartment building (3.0), while they were less receptive to a four-story apartment building (2.4)







3 Goals & Objectives

Goals & Objectives

Goal: Housing

Maintain the unique, traditional look of Pleasant Ridge while meeting the changing needs and preferences of residents through all stages of life.

OBJECTIVES:

- a) Review zoning regulations regularly to ensure they allow for flexibility of modern residential preferences while preserving the city's aesthetics.
- b) Regulate short term rentals throughout residential areas to maintain a balance to the community fabric.
- c) Support development of diverse housing types, including townhomes and ADUs, in appropriate locations that align with the traditional look of the city.

Goal: Aging in Place

Develop policies that enable seniors to age comfortably within the community, ensuring access to appropriate housing, services, and support.

OBJECTIVES:

- a) Increase partnerships with senior-focused organizations to provide health, wellness, and care services locally.
- b) Facilitate intergenerational housing options, allowing seniors to cohabit or live near family members or caregivers.
- c) Implement senior-friendly public amenities such as benches, shaded walkways, and social gathering spots.
- d) Connect seniors to programs to support home improvements for accessibility modifications.



Memorial Fountain in Pleasant Ridge

Goal: Transportation

Continue to ensure a safe and efficient transportation system for pedestrians, bikers, and drivers.

OBJECTIVES:

- a) Implement traffic calming measures on residential streets when opportunities arise to enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety.
- b) Expand and maintain a well-connected network of bike lanes and pedestrian pathways (i.e., crosswalk improvements and regular snow plowing).
- c) Promote the development of more regular bus services along the Woodward Corridor to increase transit access.
- d) Continue to encourage speed reductions on Woodward Avenue.
- e) Implement the recommendations from the Safe Streets for All Study and ensure that improvements for crossing 10 mile and I-696 continue.



Goal: Woodward Corridor

Continue targeted updates along Woodward Ave. that encourages mixed-use development with high quality housing options and commercial first floors.

OBJECTIVES:

- a) Encourage the development of affordable, high-quality residential units above commercial spaces.
- b) Promote streetscape improvements, including landscaping, lighting, and public seating, to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the commercial corridor.

Goal: Sustainability

Work toward a sustainable future by embracing green infrastructure and native plantings where appropriate.

OBJECTIVES:

- a) Increase the use of rain gardens, permeable pavements, and other green infrastructure to manage stormwater effectively.
- b) Implement planting initiatives with a focus on native species to enhance urban biodiversity and provide education pilot gardens.
- c) Develop partnerships to encourage homeowners and businesses to incorporate native plants and sustainable landscaping practices.
- d) Investigate opportunities for the City to upgrade equipment and facilities to utilize clean energy.





Woodward Avenue Corridor

Existing Conditions



Woodward Avenue (M-1) is a historic and prominent corridor in Southeast Michigan, stretching from Detroit to Pontiac, through several suburban communities, including Pleasant Ridge. Known as one of America's first highways, Woodward Avenue has long been a key route for both local and regional traffic, contributing to the growth and development of the surrounding communities. In Pleasant Ridge, Woodward Avenue serves as the main commercial and transportation artery, connecting residents to businesses, parks, and nearby cities. Despite its historical importance, the avenue faces challenges with traffic flow, pedestrian safety, and accessibility.

Traffic and Safety

Woodward Avenue is a state trunkline that is maintained and owned by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). As the major commercial corridor in Pleasant Ridge, Woodward Avenue experiences the highest volume of traffic, excluding I-696. The peak Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) along Woodward Avenue was 46,951 vehicles in 2023 according to MDOT.

From 2018 to 2022, there have been 202 vehicular crashes along Woodward Avenue in Pleasant Ridge. Of these only 1 was a serious injury and only 6 were minor injury crashes. The other 195 crashes were possible minor injury or property damage crashes. Another notable pattern is that none of the crashes involved a bicycle and only one involved a pedestrian. However, the pedestrian involved crash was the serious injury crash.

Road Configuration

Woodward Avenue, north of Elm Park Boulevard is particularly hard for pedestrians to cross with a 200-foot right-of-way, 8 lanes of vehicle traffic, wide medians, grade changes, and walls. Woodward Avenue splits into a below-grade underpass to cross I-696, while the at-grade lanes offer access to enter and exit I-696 and 10 Mile Road. The cross section detailing the general road configuration with the underpass lanes is shown in Figure 7.

While pedestrian crossings are difficult with the underpass lanes, Pleasant Ridge has made improvements to bicycle safety adding buffered two-way lanes on southbound Woodward Avenue and an elevated bicycle track on the northbound side of the road.

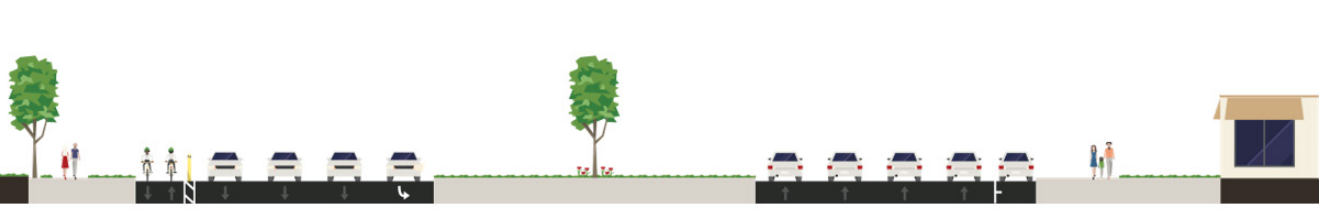
Figure 7. Woodward Avenue Cross Section between Poplar Park Boulevard and Elm Park Boulevard



Woodward Avenue south of Elm Park Boulevard remains challenging for pedestrians. Although walls and grade changes are not an issue, the wide median and 200-foot crossing distance still make it difficult to navigate. There is a single crosswalk across Woodward at Oakland Park Boulevard and Sylvan Avenue, with Figure 8 illustrating the general road layout, including the planted medians.

The northbound bicycle track shifts to the alley behind the buildings along Woodward at Sylvan Avenue, and the on-street two-way bike lane moves to the alley at Oxford Boulevard, both connecting to Ferndale’s on-street bike lanes along Woodward.

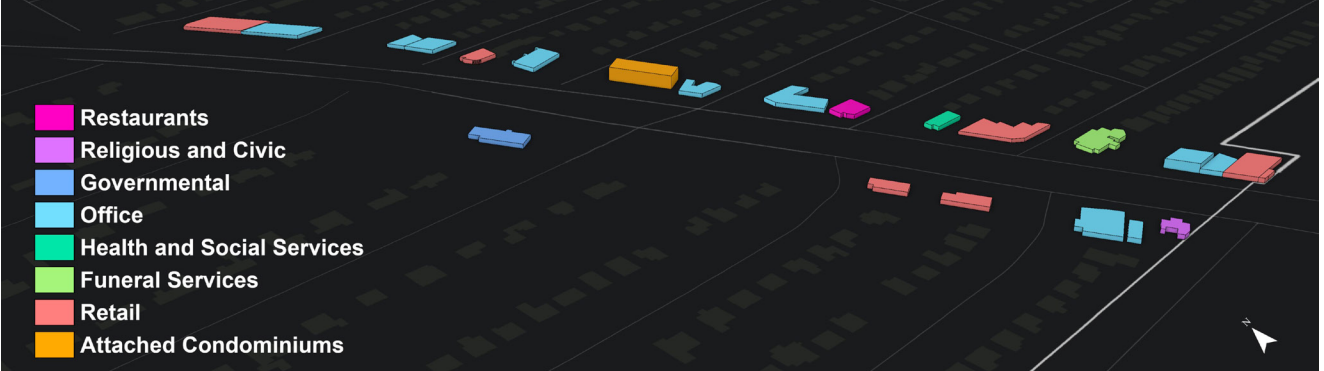
Figure 8. Woodward Avenue Cross Section between Oakland Park Boulevard and Oxford Boulevard



Building Configuration

The classification and height of the buildings along Woodward Avenue are shown in Figure 9. The southbound side of Woodward features an extensive stretch of parks with City Hall located in the middle of the parks. The majority of buildings along Woodward Avenue are one-story and commercial in nature. One notable exception are the three-story condominiums south of Maywood Avenue.

Figure 9. Woodward Avenue Existing Building Typologies





Woodward Avenue Complete Streets Study

The City of Pleasant Ridge has partnered to complete extensive study of Woodward Avenue. This section summarizes the previous planning work around Woodward Avenue.

Woodward Complete Streets Master Plan, 2014

This study is intended to provide recommendations for implementation of Complete Streets principles along Woodward Avenue from Detroit to Pontiac. The goal is to ensure Woodward Avenue as a complete street that provides safe and efficient means of travel for all users. In Pleasant Ridge, the recommendations call for reducing the eight vehicle lanes to six between Oakridge Avenue and north of I-696 to create a multiway boulevard with dedicated transit lanes, an enhanced pedestrian zone, two-way cycle tracks, on-street parking separated by a landscaped median, improved sidewalks, consistent tree canopy, stormwater-filtering vegetation, and coordinated furnishings for a unified corridor design.

Woodward-696 Conceptual Complete Streets Study, 2015

This study is organized into short-term road diet strategies and long-term concepts for the area surrounding the Woodward Avenue and I-696. The short-term plans show possible lane closures, lane realignments, reclaimed road space, and pedestrian improvements that can be tested. The long-term concept highlights best practices for pedestrian and non-motorized facilities, urban design, and development that could fit within the current right-of-way if the Woodward Avenue underpass is removed and bus rapid transit (BRT) is added.

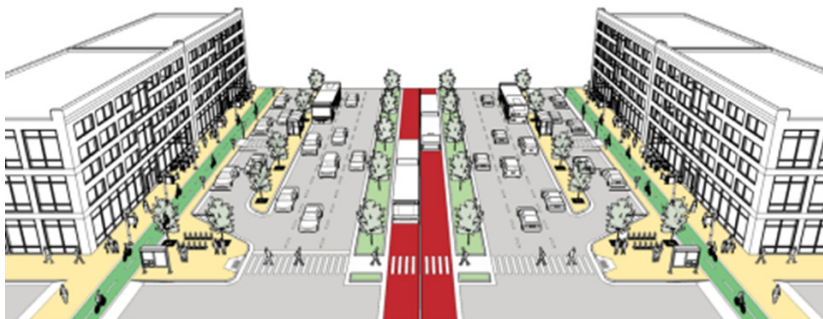


Figure 10. Typical Cross Section: Oakridge to I-696 Right-of-Way = 200'

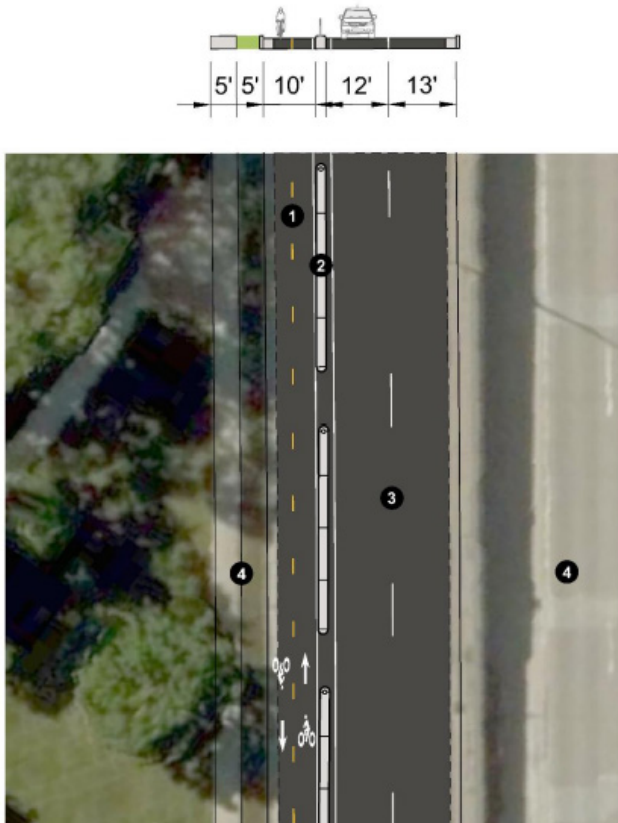


Cycle Track Construction in 2021

Woodward Avenue Bicycling and Walking Safety Audit, 2019.

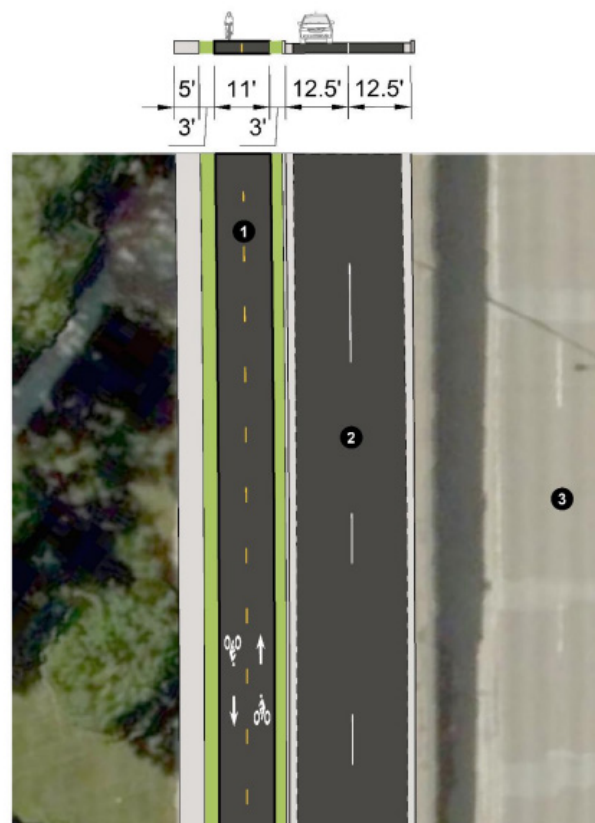
The purpose of this study is to promote safety as a foundation for creating and supporting a convenient, multimodal street that encourages increased cycling and pedestrian activity in Ferndale and Pleasant Ridge. The audit recommends interim and final designs for on-street separated bikeways in both cities. Additionally, intersection improvements were also recommended along Woodward Avenue.

Figure 11. Proposed Corridor Layout, Southbound Woodward Ave in Pleasant Ridge: Interim Design



- (1) Two-way separated bikeway is created from outer lane of frontage road. Bikeway has 8' width from gutter seam to median curb, 10' width between curb faces.
- (2) Sections of concrete curb separate the bikeway from vehicle traffic.
- (3) Frontage road is narrowed to two lanes.
- (4) Interim concept has no changes outside the frontage road to the grade-separated bypass.
- (5) Recreational riders may choose to navigate through the park on a future connected/modified park path system.

Figure 12. Proposed Corridor Layout, Southbound Woodward Ave in Pleasant Ridge: Final Design



- (1) Sidewalk level two-way separated bikeway provided between the sidewalk and the curb. Bikeway is bordered on either side by narrow landscaped areas to provide separation from both the roadway and the sidewalk.
- (2) Frontage road is narrowed to two lanes.
- (3) No changes to grade-separated bypass.
- (4) Recreational riders may choose to navigate through the park on a future connected/modified park path system.

Woodward Avenue Road Diet Feasibility Study, 2020

This study analyzed the feasibility of reducing Woodward Avenue by one lane in each direction along Woodward Avenue through Ferndale and Pleasant Ridge. The intent is to use the additional lane for bicycle facilities and the reduction of lanes would simplify lane change maneuvers and potentially slow traffic. Based on the analysis conducted, with the removal of a vehicular travel lane in each direction, all study intersection on Woodward Avenue between 10 Mile Road and 8 Mile Road will operate with reasonable overall level of service (LOS) during both the AM and PM peak hours, as defined by MDOT in the Road Diet Checklist.

Woodward Streetscape – Cycle Track, 2021

This project built on several previous studies along Woodward Avenue in Pleasant Ridge. The project includes streetscaping along northbound Woodward Avenue, an elevated cycle track from I-696 to Sylvan Avenue along northbound Woodward Avenue, and plans for southbound Woodward Avenue bicycle infrastructure projects.

What We Heard

Though several outreach efforts and a final prioritization workshop, residents have shared their vision for the Woodward Avenue Corridor. A complete summary of the community engagement conducted can be found in the Community Engagement Section.

- » Residents value the park space on the west side of Woodward and want to maintain the parks.
- » Residents are open to additional housing in the form of apartments and condominiums along Woodward Avenue.
- » Residents prefer a maximum of two-stories for mixed-use developments, but are open to three-stories.
- » Pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity can be improved across Woodward Avenue.



Kitchen Table Map Activity at the Strategic Visioning Workshop

Recommendations

It is evident that Woodward Avenue is a focal corridor through Pleasant Ridge. Woodward Avenue serves as a key connector for both local and regional traffic. In addition, the Woodward Avenue Corridor serves as the commercial hub for Pleasant Ridge. Because the corridor is poised as the commercial center in the City, the primary recommendation focuses on future development of the corridor.

The preferred configuration for the desired mixed-use development is two-story buildings with retail on the first floor and residential or office space on the second floor. This development achieves the mix of uses that the City desires along the corridor, without it feeling too misaligned with the neighboring residential properties which are generally two-stories or less.

In order to achieve these preferences if and when redevelopment occurs the City can consider the following:

- » Adopt a form-based code for the Woodward Avenue commercial corridor.
- » Ensure the greenbelt parks on the west side of Woodward Avenue are preserved and maintained as recreation space.
- » Explore opportunities to improve pedestrian and cyclist crossings along Woodward Avenue.
- » Ensure bus stops are furnished adequately to promote usage and act as an anchor for future land use development and future BRT development.

Figure 13. Woodward Visual Preference - Cross Section

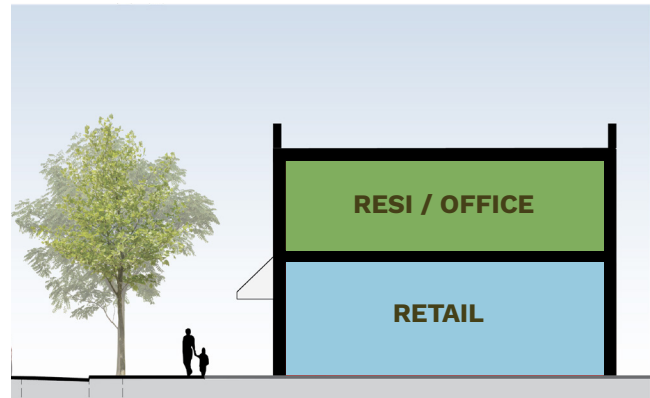


Figure 14. Woodward Visual Preference - Cross Section







Transportation & Mobility

Transportation & Mobility

This section outlines the current conditions of the City’s transportation system, highlighting areas that may need enhancements to safely and efficiently serve all types of travelers, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and drivers.

Crash Locations

The crash locations in Pleasant Ridge from 2018 to 2022, compiled by SEMCOG, are shown in the Crash Location Map. During the 5 year period, 873 crashes were recorded. Of these, 2 were fatal and 3 were serious injury crashes. Table 10 also details the crashes by major roadways.

Another notable trend is that of these 873 crashes, only 5 involved bicyclists and only 4 involved pedestrians. None of the bicyclist crashes resulted in serious injury, but 1 pedestrian crash was fatal, and another resulted in a serious injury. The fatality was on I-696, which is not intended for pedestrians. Overall, the low number of bicyclist and pedestrian crashes could indicate that the internal street system is largely safe, and the higher speed roadways may

not encourage pedestrian traffic, potentially reducing the risk of incidents.

Table 12. Crashes by Roadways

ROAD SEGMENT	TOTAL CRASHES	TOTAL FATAL CRASHES	TOTAL SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES
I-696	146	2	0
Woodward Avenue	202	0	1
Main Street	62	0	0
Woodward Heights Boulevard	11	0	1

Map 2. Crash Locations (2018 - 2022)



Traffic Volumes

Traffic volumes show the average amount of traffic that each roadway experiences on a daily basis. This is measured by annual average daily traffic (AADT) and is collected by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). AADT numbers can help determine if a roadway is at its maximum capacity or if improvements can help enhance its functionality. The City of Pleasant Ridge also collects traffic data, but this is not shown in the Motorized Transportation Map, as 2023 data collection mirrors MDOT's collection. Pleasant Ridge's traffic data is used for other transportation analyses in this plan, and the City uses the data in on-going efforts to improve the transportation system.

The highest traffic volumes occur on I-696 and Woodward Avenue. Woodward Avenue's AADT in 2023 was 46,951 vehicles. This is a stark comparison to the rest of the City roads, which experience under 5,000 vehicles daily, with many roads experiencing around 1,500 daily vehicles daily. Many of Pleasant Ridge's roads do not connect to adjacent communities, and so users of these roads would be limited to primarily residents.

Public Transportation

Pleasant Ridge is served by the SMART Bus, which provides public transportation across the greater southeast Michigan area and connects residents to key destinations and employment opportunities. The fixed route services that are located within the City are shown in Table 11 and in the Motorized Transportation Map.

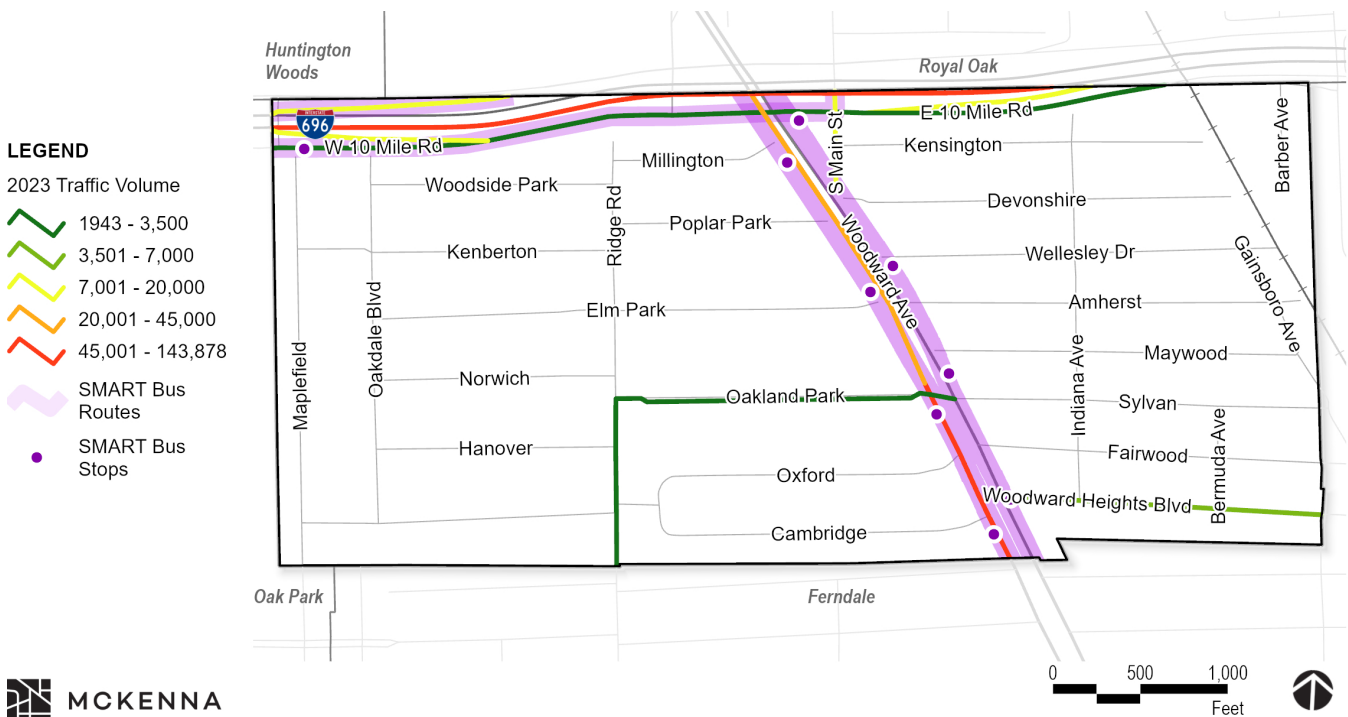
In addition to fixed routes, SMART also offers ADA paratransit services, senior services, and curb-to-curb connectors, which require advanced reservations. The city could consider improving the bus stops by adding seating, shelter, and trash receptacles as needed. Ensuring these stops are desirable and enjoyable for users also incentivizes usage of transit.

Pleasant Ridge is also focused on developing two-story residential and commercial mixed-use along Woodward Avenue. The bus stops along Woodward have the potential to be the focal point of these developments. This is a design practice called Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) that focuses on creating walkable, mixed-use communities centered around high-quality public transit, enabling people to live, work, and shop in close proximity to transit services.

Table 13. Local Transportation Routes

ROUTE NAME	ROUTE NUMBER	GENERAL CONNECTIONS
Woodward Local	450	Cities from Ferndale to Pontiac along Woodward Avenue
Woodward Local	460	Cities from Ferndale to Birmingham along Woodward Avenue
Ten Mile Crosstown	730	Cities from Telegraph Road to Eastpointe along 10 Mile Road

Map 3. Motorized Transportation System



Non-Motorized Facilities

Pleasant Ridge has a comprehensive system of non-motorized transportation facilities as show in the Non-Motorizes Transportation System Map. Non-motorized transportation facilities include sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle facilities.

Pedestrian Facilities

Most of the roads in Pleasant Ridge, except for 10 Mile Road, which is split around I-696, and Kenberton between Oakdale and Maplefield, have sidewalks on both sides of the street. Additionally, most of the local roads have crosswalks at intersections. There are some notable gaps that the City could prioritize, such as Oakdale Boulevard and Woodward Avenue. There are two Woodward Avenue crossings the first being at Oakland Park and Sylvan Avenue and the second at 10 Mile Road. Woodward Avenue north of Elm Park Avenue poses several obstacles to crossing including a grade change, walls, a wide right-of-way, and several lanes of traffic.

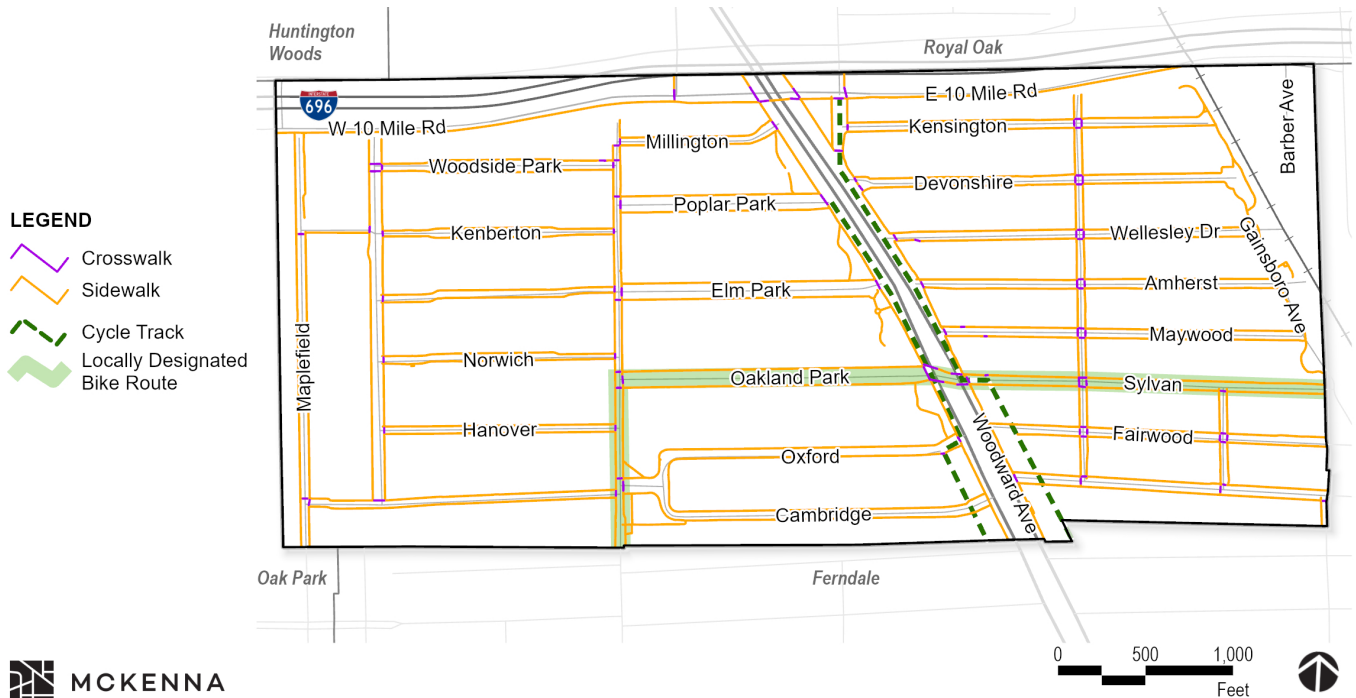
Ensuring that the crossings are safe and convenient for pedestrians, as well as exploring intersections that may be suitable for additional crossings or improvements to the existing crossings, will be important for improving pedestrian connections throughout the City. Additionally, ensuring that maintenance of the existing facilities is adequately provided year-round, will also help create a connected and usable pedestrian network.

Bicycle Facilities

Most of the local roads in Pleasant Ridge are suitable for shared bicycle usage without any additional treatments. Additionally, a locally designated bike route that connects to Ferndale and other nearby municipalities is identified from Ridge Road to Oakland Park to Sylvan Avenue. These neighborhood roads restrict vehicle speeds and feel comfortable to most bicyclists. Woodward Avenue is an exception where traffic moves fast over several lanes of traffic. Because of this, Pleasant Ridge has invested in bicycle infrastructure along Woodward Avenue. On the northbound side of Woodward Avenue, a raised cycle track extends from 10 Mile Road to Sylvan Avenue. At Sylvan Avenue, the bicycle path shifts to the alley behind Woodward Avenue and connects for Ferndale's on-street bicycle lanes. On the southbound side of Woodward Avenue, a two-lane buffered bicycle lane extends from Poplar Park Boulevard to Oxford Boulevard before also shifting to the alley behind Woodward and connecting to Ferndale's bicycle infrastructure.

Pleasant Ridge's bicycle network provides connectivity throughout the City and to adjacent communities. It will be important to assess the effectiveness and safety of the new bicycle infrastructure along Woodward Avenue. Additionally, it will be important for the City to evaluate if any on-street treatments may be necessary on busier neighborhood roads. Finally, the City should ensure the bicycle facilities are maintained year-round to ensure the bicycle network is usable.

Map 4. Non-Motorized Transportation System



Traffic Calming

In 2019, Pleasant Ridge adopted a Traffic Calming Manual. This manual offers background on street design and traffic calming practices, outlines specific elements suitable for use in Pleasant Ridge, and provides a detailed guide for residents on how to petition the City to initiate traffic calming measures on their street or block. These measures may include elements such as street plantings, speed cushions, corner bump-outs, chicanes, chokes, center medians, and mid-block crossings.

The manual identifies the conditions that must be met to be eligible for traffic calming treatments. The City will initiate and fund projects where conditions warrant an active intervention. The City's policy is to evaluate streets which have an average weekday traffic volume higher than 2,500 vehicles, OR where the 85th percentile speed is 32 mph or higher (7 mph over the 25-mph speed limit).

The manual also identifies a process for resident petition for speed control measures if the street does not meet the criteria for a city-initiated project.

The following roadways have completed traffic calming projects having met the city-initiated project threshold.

- » Ridge Road
- » Sylvan Avenue (from Woodward Avenue to Indiana Avenue)
- » Woodward s Boulevard

Based on latest traffic data in 2024, the following roads are eligible for city-initiated traffic calming projects.

- » Oakland Park Boulevard
- » Oxford Boulevard

The City should continue to use this manual to initiate traffic calming projects as needed. Additionally, the City should continue to assess and update this manual as new traffic data and traffic guidance is released.

While this plan acknowledges the need to address noise, safety, and traffic concerns, especially on Woodward Avenue, it also recognizes the City is limited in being able to take action as it does not maintain jurisdiction over the high volume roadways. The Planning Commission, City Staff, and residents should continue to advocate for improvements on Woodward, 10 Mile, and I-696.

Transportation Projects

Understanding the recently completed and ongoing transportation projects helps orient recommendations grounded in the direction the City is currently headed. This section summarizes the recent and ongoing projects that inform transportation recommendations. It is important to ensure that recommendations are aligned with recent and ongoing projects.

Safe Streets for All (SS4A)

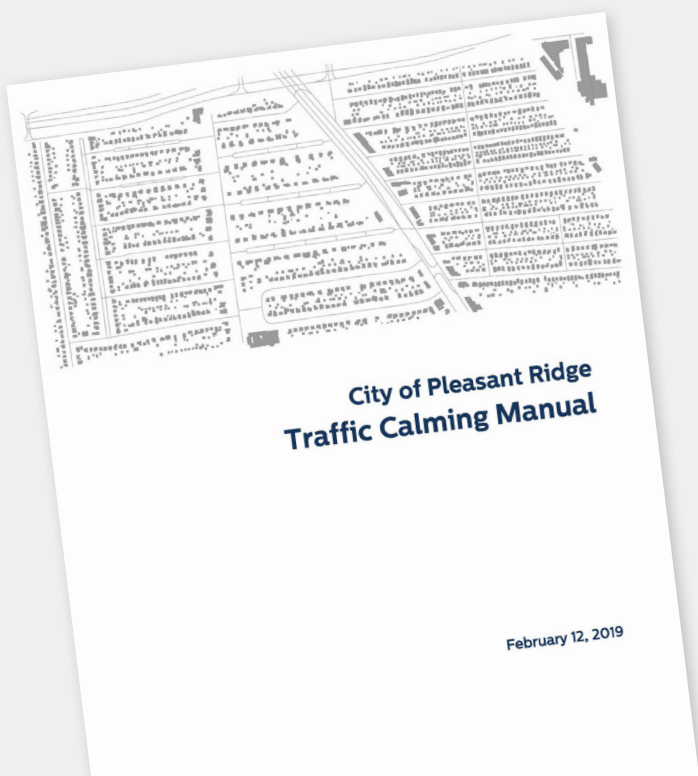
Ongoing. Throughout 2024, six southeast Oakland County communities, including Pleasant Ridge, have undertaken a Safe Streets for All Plan. This plan aims to provide recommendations aimed at reducing and eliminating serious-injury and fatal crashes affecting all roadway users. This plan uses data analysis to characterize roadway safety problems and strengthen a community's approach through projects and strategies that address the most significant safety risk.

Woodward Streetscape and Cycle Track, 2023

The streetscape along northbound Woodward in Pleasant Ridge was updated, and a two-way cycle track was built from Sylvan to I-696 along Woodward and Main St. This project was funded by over \$1.3 million in Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grants administered by SEMCOG for MDOT, with the local match provided by the Pleasant Ridge DDA through captured property tax revenue. No general fund, local property tax, or local street funds were used for this project.

Woodward Avenue Lane Reduction, 2023

Pleasant Ridge and Ferndale were awarded over \$2 million in TAP grant funding from the State for non-motorized improvements along Woodward. The project planned to reduce Woodward from four to three lanes in each direction in Ferndale and add two-way cycle tracks on both sides of Woodward in most of Ferndale and on part of southbound Woodward in Pleasant Ridge, creating continuous separated bicycle infrastructure from 8 Mile to I-696. Pleasant Ridge's portion of this project required a local match of approximately \$140,000, funded by the major streets fund, with no general fund or local property tax money used.





Complete Streets

Complete Streets is a design approach that ensures streets are safe, accessible, and convenient for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers of all ages and abilities, by incorporating features like sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, and transit amenities into road planning. Many of these elements have been discussed in previous sections, so this section aims to provide an overview of complete street considerations and recommendations.

Sidewalks throughout the community vary in width, identifying narrow walkways and widening these areas where possible could improve pedestrian accessibility. Additionally, opportunities within the right of way to widen streets to provide sufficiently safe bikeable routes will ensure cyclists feel comfortable traversing the City.

It is evident from the previous transportation projects that Pleasant Ridge is committed to ensuring a safe and efficient transportation system for all users. The City should continue this commitment by ensuring the following considerations are prevalent in future transportation plans and projects.

- » **Sidewalks:** Wide, continuous walkways with appropriate curb ramps, crosswalks, and tactile indicators.
- » **Bicycle Infrastructure:** Dedicated bike lanes, cycle tracks, or shared paths to ensure cyclist safety and convenience.
- » **Transit Facilities:** Bus stops, shelters, or transit lanes to prioritize and accommodate public transportation.
- » **Traffic Calming Measures:** Features like curb extensions, speed humps, and medians to slow down traffic and enhance safety.
- » **Crosswalks and Pedestrian Signals:** Clearly marked and signalized crossings for safe pedestrian movement.
- » **Street Lighting:** Adequate lighting for visibility and safety, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
- » **Landscaping and Green Spaces:** Street trees, planters, and green areas for aesthetic appeal and environmental benefits.
- » **Street Furnishings:** Benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and wayfinding signage to enhance usability and comfort.
- » **Accessible Design:** Compliance with ADA standards to ensure access for individuals with disabilities.







Housing & Neighborhoods

Housing & Neighborhoods

Pleasant Ridge is first and foremost a community of homes and neighborhoods. The input received during the public engagement process continuously highlighted that what makes Pleasant Ridge special is the tight-knit community. While Pleasant Ridge has limited land for development there will continue to be additions and renovation to existing homes. It is important to think strategically about what policies will help maintain the character of the existing neighborhoods while encouraging positive contributions through future changes.

Future Development Pressures and Retaining Housing Character

Thus far the value of properties in Pleasant Ridge has not attracted demolition and redevelopment of lots. Many neighboring communities have already experienced significant changes in their residential areas as a result of these shifts. As property values continue to rise the possibility of areas of the city attracting significant renovation of existing homes or demolitions and new building is a possibility over the next 20 years. Residential redevelopment and renovation can create a scale of new homes that feel overwhelming and out of character with their neighborhoods. This occurs when there is a lack of coordination and forethought between the existing housing character and zoning standards. It is important to plan for this possibility to properly retain housing character in Pleasant Ridge neighborhoods.

The community clearly values the historic nature of the buildings in the neighborhoods, having established a Federal Historic District in 1992, adding area in 2007 and 2012, where now almost all homes in the city have this designation. In addition, the City adopted Exterior Design Standards in 2015 to supplement the building code and help provide for harmonious and aesthetically pleasing new construction for both new and substantially renovated buildings.

These standards will help ensure that any future development pressures are aesthetically pleasing in the community. The City's Zoning Ordinance also helps promote a proper scale of residential development through the residential districts. The standards in the Zoning Ordinance should continue to be reviewed to ensure there are no gaps that would allow disproportionate scale of development on residential lots. The City can consider a Historic District Commission if there becomes a need to preserve existing housing stock.

Housing Diversity

Beyond the pressures for development of new or renovated homes there exists the need to balance these pressures with the needs to provide housing for people at a variety of stages of life as well as of income and ability. In the feedback received from the community it became clear that there was a desire to be able to have housing units that accommodate families, adults in middle age, and people as they age. In addition, responses in the community survey highlighted concerns about the rising cost of housing. While the following chapter provides a more in-depth analysis of opportunities and strategies for aging in place there are opportunities to expand the housing diversity in the city to benefit all segments of the population.





Missing Middle Housing

“Missing middle housing” is a term that refers to housing types for which there may be a demand but that do not currently exist in a community, usually because they are not provided for in the Zoning Ordinance and/or Master Plan. Common missing middle housing types in older Michigan communities include triplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and second-floor apartments above commercial businesses. These housing typologies can help attract younger residents looking to establish themselves in the community or allow older residents to transition to housing that may better fit their needs. Often

these housing types are smaller, which can also help drive down the cost of housing. This can help diversify the type of resident living in the community – given the location on Woodward Avenue there may be potential to attract young working professionals who commute into Downtown Detroit. As acknowledged throughout the Plan the potential for development in Pleasant Ridge is incredibly limited. However, there is potential for the inclusion of apartments, townhomes, and condominiums on Woodward Avenue. Further discussion of the development potential along Woodward Avenue is addressed in the corresponding chapter.

Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units present another opportunity to increase the diversity of housing options in the community. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are housing units that are constructed on the same parcel as an existing primary residence, such as a single-family home. For this reason, ADUs present potentially the most viable option for providing additional housing options in Pleasant Ridge. ADUs are a relatively inexpensive, easy way to increase the number of housing options while also meeting the needs of seniors, empty nesters, and young working professionals, many of whom may be priced out of traditional homeownership.

What is an ADU?

- » Self-contained unit on single-family property
- » Can be detached, attached, or internal to principal dwelling
- » Regulated as accessory to principal dwelling

What are the advantages of ADUs?

- » Housing flexibility – additional workspace, etc.
- » Supports aging in place
- » Suitable for young adults, in-laws, etc.

During the public engagement process the community broadly supported the inclusion of accessory dwelling units on residential properties. Some residents shared stories that they had hoped to convert their garage to a home office or a mother-in-law suite, which would include running water, electricity, and heat but were unable to under the current provisions. While the community supported allowing accessory dwelling units there was an emphasis placed on proper regulation. The need to manage parking, scale, and size all came up in the feedback received. Additionally, there was a strong desire to prevent the use of ADUs as short-term rentals.

Accessory dwellings units are provided in a variety of styles that are separate from the primary structure include garage conversions, stand-alone units, above garage units; units can also be a component of the primary structure including attic or basement conversions. The nature of single-family homes in Pleasant Ridge neighborhoods suggests that garage conversions or over the garage units may be the most appropriate and cohesive with the existing single-family character.

In addition to the type of accessory dwelling units allowed the community can decide how to regulate these units to address concerns of parking, use, occupancy, and placement. The City Planning Commission and City Commission should consider what appropriate development of accessory dwelling units will look like in the city.



Carriage House



Over Garage ADU

Short Term Rentals

Short-Term Rental (STR). An STR typically refers to a house, apartment, or other type of housing unit that is rented for 30 consecutive days or less by someone other than the permanent resident or owner. Across the United States, online STR services have grown significantly in the last decade, and municipal regulations of STRs are changing rapidly. Many municipalities are working on creative ways to manage STRs outside of zoning, such as creating a short-term rental registry and broadening local nuisance ordinances.

Multiple Short-Term Rentals exist in the City, and there are currently no regulations for these properties. Throughout the planning process the community was

asked about regulating short-term rentals and responded overwhelmingly that regulation was needed. Regulation of short-term rentals can take many forms based on the preferences of the community. The City could decide to require registration of short-term rentals, as part of the registration process the overall amount and density of short-term rentals could be regulated. Other cities, including Ferndale and Ann Arbor, have instituted requirements that allow only a certain percentage of any block to be registered as short-term rentals. Additionally, the City could consider requiring that short-term rentals be owner occupied, eliminating the opportunity for investment properties to function as full-time short-term rentals.



Historical 100-Year-Old Property in Pleasant Ridge





Aging in Place

Aging in Place

For many older adults, the desire to “stay in my own home” is a key part of what defines successful aging. The goal to age in place or in a community that enables older adults to thrive is common as individuals have healthier and longer lives. Achieving successful aging involves thoughtful planning, setting meaningful goals, making informed decisions, accessing necessary services and support, and smoothly transitioning into the next stage of life.

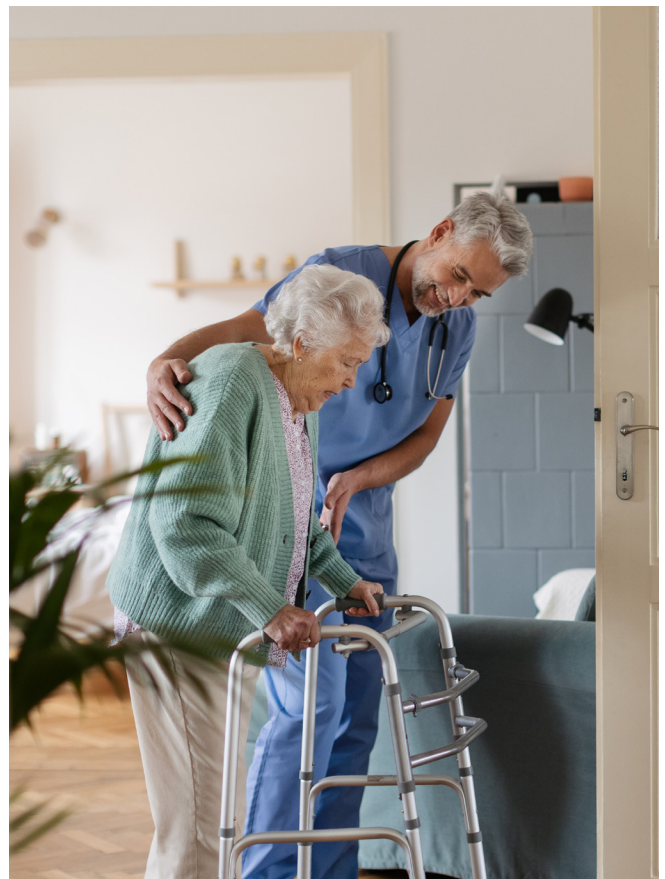
The population is growing older nationally as the baby boomer generation ages. Communities across the State and the Country are developing strategies to help create environments supportive of these individuals as they grow older, and Pleasant Ridge is no exception. As identified in the Demographics Section, 17% of residents are over 65 and the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments has projected that to increase to 23% by 2050. During the public engagement process residents identified the ability to age in place as third highest concern for the community into the future. 51% of respondents ranked accessibility and availability of services and amenities for older adults as good or excellent. Some shared concerns over the increase in property taxes for accessibility renovations and the need for transportation to amenities as potential improvements in addressing these needs.

In 2022 the Michigan Commission on Services to the Aging issued the report *Aging in Place, Aging in the Community*, which identified five domains of focus for successful aging in place. Most pertinent to local governments are the strategies for Aging in Community. This identifies housing options to create age friendly and caregiver friendly communities. Additionally, the State of Michigan and many Michigan communities have committed to the AARP Livable Communities network. These guidelines and resources help shape the recommendations of this Plan.

Pleasant Ridge has a variety of supportive services for seniors, especially through the Parks and Recreation Department. The city is also well connected with adequate curb cuts and a fully connected sidewalk network. There are limitations to increasing housing and addressing housing costs given that the community is fully developed.

Caregiver Friendly Communities

Another component of supporting residents who want to stay in their home or community is to support caregivers. Communities can provide help to unpaid family members, friends, and neighbors who provide care for older persons with disabling conditions. Many of the supportive services for seniors also help alleviate the burden of caregiving. Specifically allowing housing conditions that allow older individuals to live near caregivers but still stay somewhat independent can create a significant benefit for caregivers.



Livable Communities

The AARP Livable Communities Program defines a livable community “as one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and has supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence; allow residents to age in place; and foster residents’ engagement in the community’s civic, economic, and social life.” The Livable Communities Assessment for Pleasant Ridge highlights the following opportunities broken into the following categories:

- » **Housing** – Affordability and access are the main items for evaluation and as mentioned previously Pleasant Ridge has structural challenges to providing access to more affordable housing options given that the city built out. If there are opportunities in the future to consider redevelopment of the Ferndale School’s site at Ridge Road and Cambridge. Additionally, there is limited opportunity to add additional types of housing such as condominiums or apartments along Woodward Avenue. As part of this plan the City is also considering allowing accessory dwelling units, which would increase access and be especially supportive of potential caregivers in the community
- » **Neighborhoods** – Pleasant Ridge neighborhoods are well served by the access to amenities like parks, the Community Center, and the close vicinity to grocery stores in neighboring communities. Close-knit neighborhoods also provide a social safety net for seniors who may be living independently.
- » **Transportation** – The community has increased access to a variety of transportation types including more dedicated bike lanes, which helps promote an active lifestyle for seniors. The community is walkable but access to everyday services mostly requires a car. The community does provide limited transportation for seniors to get to necessities.
- » **Health** – Seniors, as well as the rest of the community, have universal access to exercise opportunities both through outdoor recreation and the facilities in the Community Center.
- » **Engagement** – Civic and social involvement is important in maintaining connection and mental fitness. Senior residents have access to a variety of programming and intentional communication from the city.

Figure 15. AARP Livable Communities Assessment of Pleasant Ridge



The overall livability index score for **Pleasant Ridge, Michigan** is **49**.

Principles of Universal Design

Universal Design is a framework for creating spaces, products, and environments that are accessible and functional for everyone, regardless of age or ability. By integrating features like no-step entrances, wider doorways, and accessible controls, universal design supports aging in place, allowing older adults to stay in their homes safely and comfortably as they age. This approach aligns with the goals of aging in place by fostering independence, reducing the need for costly renovations, and enhancing accessibility within the home and community.



Recommendations

As highlighted above, Pleasant Ridge has several existing supports for seniors who choose to age in place. The city could also consider becoming an age-friendly community through AARP. Joining this program would begin with joining the network, indicating that the community is committed to allowing individuals age in place. It would be followed by conducting a community assessment and developing an action plan based on the assessment results. Given the size of Pleasant Ridge some of the recommended actions may not be feasible, but inclusion in the network can help communities understand best practices. A first step could be providing links to universal

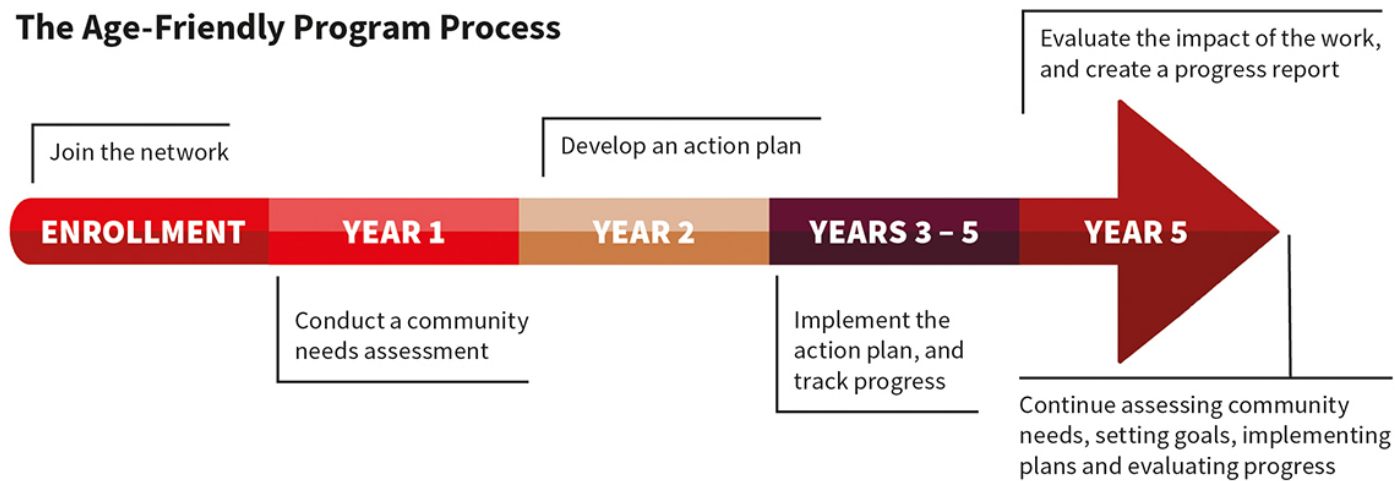
design resources on the City's website for individuals modifying their homes.

Additionally, sometimes outdoor ramps, lifts, and other accessible modifications are not allowed due to setback requirements and lot coverage regulations. These and other Universal Design alterations may not meet strict variance standards when being considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals. The City could consider amendments to the ordinance to allow provisions that create latitude for setbacks and other requirements to more easily allow for accessibility improvements.



Figure 16. AARP Age-Friendly Program Process

The Age-Friendly Program Process







Sustainability & Community Infrastructure

Sustainability & Community Infrastructure

Urbanized communities that were historically developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries experience specific challenges to community infrastructure and natural features. Thinking about natural features such as street trees and green space as part of the community's infrastructure can help create a holistic approach to maintaining the community in the face of changing environmental conditions.

Flood Risk

The City has a combined sanitary and storm sewer system. This means that sewage and stormwater flow into the same pipe underground. When Pleasant Ridge was developed in the 1910s and 20s, this system flowed out to waterways during rain events. This meant that raw sewage was being discharged to natural waterways. As the sewage disposal system has evolved in Oakland County the City has been required to install and maintain covers on inlets to restrict flow to the sewer system. These restricted inlets slow the rate at which stormwater can enter the sewer system. This causes streets to be used as short-term detention during storm events. Additionally, sometimes the restricted inlet covers become clogged, preventing the water from entering the drains. This turns streets into overflows for the local and regional sewer system, which helps prevent the system from being overwhelmed and causing sewage overflows into local water bodies.

As flooding events occur more frequently and are more severe than in the past these overflows can affect basements of residential homes. Identifying hazard mitigation strategies will become more important as

flood risk increases. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) may provide support for eligible hazard mitigation projects if they are included in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Separating the sanitary sewer and stormwater system can help alleviate the pressures on the system, but that process is costly and will take time to complete. Paying attention to impervious surface coverage, or areas that do not allow rainfall to naturally seep into the groundwater can help lessen pressures on the stormwater system.

Encouraging less impervious surfaces, or surfaces that do not allow rainwater to saturate into the ground, can help reduce the amount of rainwater that a stormwater system must accommodate. By creating zoning ordinance requirements that address total lot coverage for all surfaces, including homes, driveways, patios, and other built materials Cities can help ensure that there is ratio of ground surface that allows rainwaters to be naturally reabsorbed. Additionally, the use of new technologies such as permeable pavers or built materials that allow for rainwater to filter through can be utilized to decrease impervious surface conditions.

Another way to help alleviate pressure on the system is to incorporate green infrastructure techniques where possible. The City has demonstrated an understanding of the value of green infrastructure. Rain gardens and bioswales have been implemented in Gainsboro Park and along the Woodward Avenue streetscape. The Parks and Recreation Plan highlights additional opportunities for green infrastructure through the recreation system.



Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is a form of storm water infrastructure that uses pervious surfaces, such as rain gardens, bioswales, pervious pavers, and other techniques to help capture rainfall before it ever gets to the traditional storm water system. Green infrastructure is growing in popularity, and many communities are now using it as a compliment to their traditional storm water system because it provides numerous co-benefits— environmental, financial, aesthetic, and more. Rather than just getting water off the streets as quickly as possible, green infrastructure's goals is to reduce flooding while also cleaning and filtering that water. Some examples of green infrastructure are:

- » **Stormwater Curb Extensions:** Narrow roadways to calm traffic, shorten pedestrian crossings, and provide space for street trees, plantings, and bioretention.
- » **Pervious Pavers:** Concrete pavers with gaps that allow water infiltration, filtering back into the soil.
- » **Stormwater Presettling Zones:** Cobble areas capture debris and sediment to simplify targeted maintenance.

- » **Rain Gardens:** Depressed landscape areas that collect rain runoff and support plant growth.
- » **Parking Lot Bioswales:** Vegetated channels that filter and infiltrate stormwater.
- » **Rain Barrels:** Collect rainwater from rooftops for later use, reducing runoff and conserving water.
- » **Stormwater Trees:** Absorb rainfall, control runoff, improve aesthetics, and reduce urban heat and pollution.

Residential Garden Incentives

Some Michigan communities are creating rain garden credit programs that provide residents with either a tax break or a microgrant for installing rain gardens on their property. This is because rain gardens help relieve the stress on the traditional storm water system during heavy storms and help save the city money on wear and tear of pipes and curbs. Rain gardens prominently feature flowers and serve to aesthetically enhance neighborhoods and improve property values.

Urban Tree Canopy

Pleasant Ridge is defined by foliage of the mature deciduous street trees, with over 2,500 street and park trees on public property that the City maintains. The community indicated through the public engagement process that the City's trees are a deeply valued, distinguishing feature. The has demonstrated an understanding of the value of the trees and In the past 7 years, the City has planted over 400 new street and park trees to maintain the tree canopy over time. In addition, the City has a Street Tree Manual that guides the tree plantings in the public rights of way.

The City has demonstrated a commitment to aesthetics, environmental health, and maintenance through the Street Tree Manual. The Plan also provides for a Resident Cooperative Street Tree Planting Program, which allows residents who desire a street tree to cooperatively purchase a tree for their lawn.

Aesthetics

The City has thought carefully about how to create truly memorable streets lined with a great canopy. The City has carried out a policy of planting trees of the same species

within each block to allow for properly canopied streets that are visually harmonious. This policy is also mindful of the need for tree diversity and recommends planting a differing species from block to block.

Environmental Health

The Street Tree Manual dives in depth into the City's species diversity. The guidelines recommend adherence to the 10-20-30 Rule, that no more than 10% of the urban canopy should be the same species, no more than 20% should be of the same genera, and no more than 30% should be of the same family. This can help mitigate against diseases that have decimated urban tree canopies, such as Dutch elm disease and Emerald Ash Borer. The City has instituted this policy by reducing the amount of Maple trees planted, since they exceed 20% of all trees in the city.

The City has also taken into account the location of the street trees, the soil conditions, and the amount of vegetated right of way space available for tree planting in its recommendations. Informed by this analysis there is an approved list of canopy street trees. This list can be extend to recommending this list for private plantings as well.

Map 5. Tree Coverage





Maintenance

The Manual ensures that existing and new trees stay in good health by providing maintenance recommendations. This establishes young tree care that includes a watering cycle, mulching requirements, and pruning schedule. For mature trees the City has also included pruning best practices.

Recommendations

Given the robust nature of the City's current sustainability measures, the recommendations focus on incremental improvements. To help alleviate pressures on the stormwater management system the City could consider amending the zoning ordinance to establish maximum allowable impervious surface coverage for residential and commercial properties, considering surfaces like driveways, patios, and parking lots. This could also encourage the use of permeable materials, such as permeable pavers and green roofs, to reduce the volume of runoff entering the combined sewer system. Additionally, the promotion of residential rain gardens and rain barrels could be performed by partnering with the Pleasant Ridge Garden Club. Rain garden pilots could also incorporate native species and plants that promote pollinators. To further support the tree canopy the City could consider extending the City's approved canopy tree list to private properties, offering resources or minor incentives for homeowners who select from the recommended species, further supporting uniform, resilient urban canopy across throughout all properties.

Benefits of the Urban Treen Canopy

According to the Arbor Day Foundation's Alliance for Community Trees, a healthy tree canopy in cities provides numerous benefits including:

- » **Increased Property Values:** Homes that are landscaped with trees are worth 4-15% more and sell faster than homes without trees. Trees can also increase the property values of an entire neighborhood or business district.
- » **Increased Consumer Spending:** Studies have shown that people walking or driving down a street lined with trees are willing to pay up to 12% more for goods and services.
- » **Cleaner Communities:** There is less graffiti, vandalism, and littering in outdoor spaces with trees as a part of the natural landscape than in comparable tree-less spaces.
- » **Cleaner Air:** Trees clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxides, and other pollutants. Trees also shade cars and parking lots, reducing ozone emissions from vehicles. They filter airborne pollutants and reduce the conditions that cause asthma and other respiratory problems.
- » **Noise Reduction:** Trees reduce noise pollution by absorbing sounds. Planting big enough trees and earth berms can cut traffic noise by up to half.
- » **Slower Driving Speeds:** Trees in a suburban landscape significantly reduced the cruising speed of drivers by an average of 3 miles per hour. Faster drivers and slower drivers both slowed down in the presence of trees.
- » **Cooler Temperatures:** A mature tree canopy reduces air temperatures by 5-10 degrees Fahrenheit.





Land Use & Zoning

Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use section of the Pleasant Ridge Master Plan provides an overview of current land use patterns and how they shape the character and functionality of the community. This analysis examines the distribution and types of land uses across the city, including residential, commercial, recreational, and public spaces. This section sets the foundation for informed land use planning that will support a vibrant and resilient Pleasant Ridge.

Single Family Residential

The Single-Family Residential district dominates land use within Pleasant Ridge, covering approximately 61% of the total land area and 91% of the parcels. Nearly all of the city's 1,144 housing units fall within this category, with multifamily residential representing only 0.13% of land area. Most single-family parcels on the east side of the city are smaller than 8,000 square feet, comprising 26% of total land area and 57% of parcels. The west side primarily consists of lots between 8,000 and 13,999 square feet, concentrated between Ridge Road and Oakdale Boulevard, with a few larger parcels scattered near Poplar Park, Elm Park, and Oakland Park Avenues.

Multiple Family Residential

The Multiple Family Residential category in Pleasant Ridge is limited to just two parcels totaling 0.5 acres, which accounts for 0.13% of the land area. These units are the only multifamily residential parcels within the city, making single-family housing the primary residential type.

Transportation/Utility/Communication

Right-of-way is a significant land use in Pleasant Ridge, representing 30% of total land acreage. Woodward Avenue alone covers 3.9% of the city's land area and includes vehicle lanes, medians, sidewalks, and landscaping. Additionally, 18% of the land is dedicated to residential rights-of-way, with buffer zones along I-696 and the Grand Trunk Railway accounting for 7.2% and 1% of land area, respectively.

Industrial

Since the 2015 Plan the City has seen the parcel in the northeast corner of the city redeveloped into a mixed-use light industrial campus. The adaptive reuse of the existing industrial buildings has accommodated what has come to be known as the Iron Ridge District. The 13-acre site abutting the railroad and I-696 incorporates entertainment venues, offices, research, and wholesale retail.

Commercial/Office

Pleasant Ridge's commercial land use is concentrated on the east side of Woodward Avenue, extending slightly onto the west side near the southern city limits. The commercial district encompasses 29 parcels spread over 6 acres, accounting for 2.3% of parcels and 1.6% of land area. These buildings are primarily single-story structures with some height variation and a mixture of setbacks and sidewalk-abutting storefronts. Off-street parking is integrated into the area to accommodate visitors.

Vacant

There are limited vacant parcels within Pleasant Ridge, which are generally scattered throughout the city. These areas are underutilized and have the potential for future development or repurpose for community or public use.

Public/Institutional

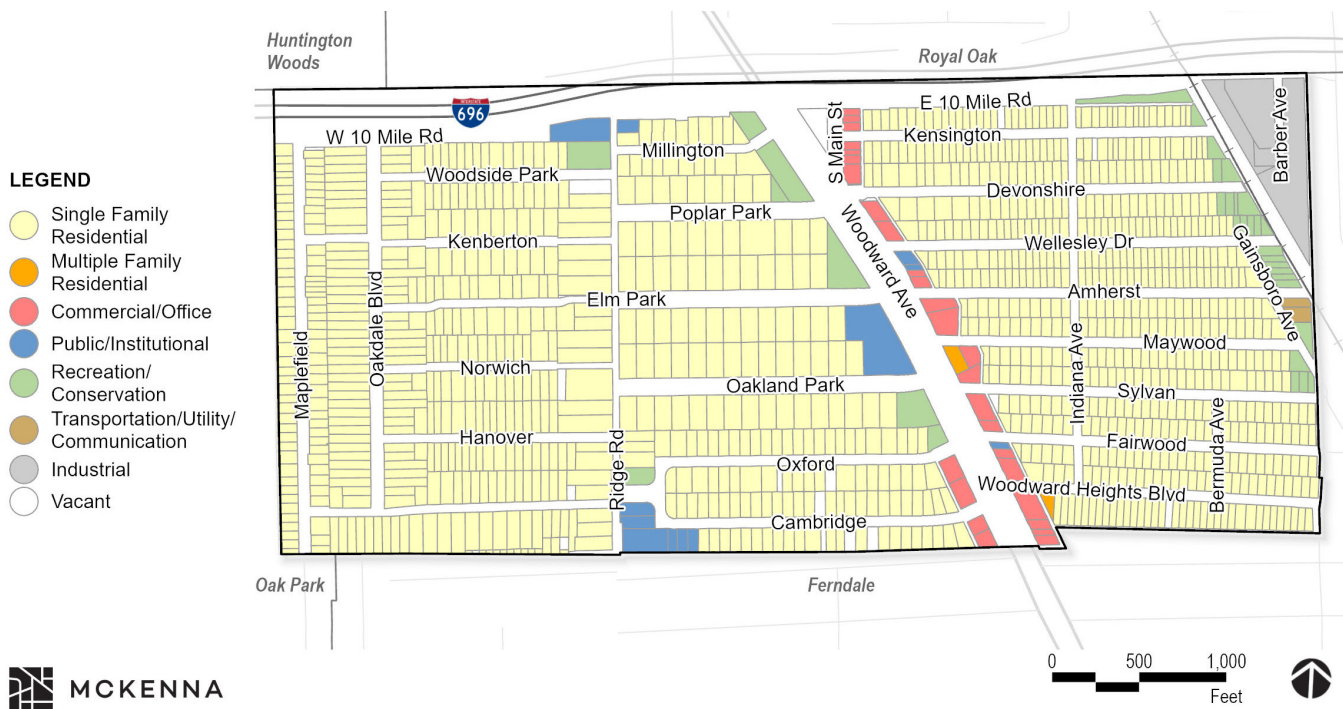
Public facilities in Pleasant Ridge include various community assets, occupying 2.6% of the land for recreation and 1.7% for other public land uses. Key public facilities include City Hall, the Community Center, Gainsboro Park, Roosevelt School, and the greenbelt along Woodward Avenue.

Recreation/Conservation

Recreation uses include uses that are private but provide recreation opportunities to the community. Recreational facilities occupy 9.6 acres (2.6% of total land area) and are equipped with playgrounds, sports courts, trails, and picnic areas that serve residents and visitors. Recreation land use includes areas like Gainsboro Park, which lies along the Grand Trunk Railway corridor, and other small community spaces.



Map 6. Existing Land Use 2022



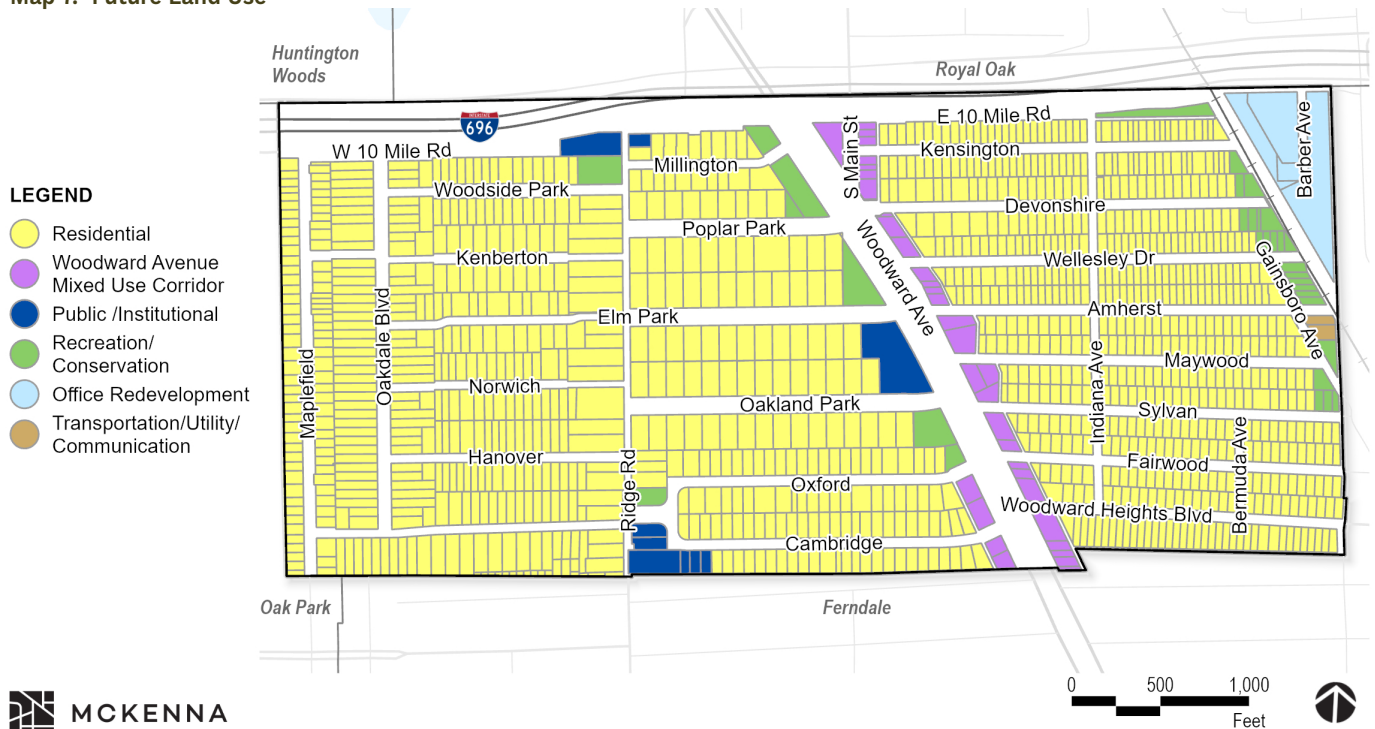
Future Land Use Plan

Since nearly all of Pleasant Ridge is already developed, the Future Land Use map primarily reinforces existing land uses without proposing significant changes. Single-family residential lots will continue to dominate the city's land area, and public and institutional uses, including City Hall and the Community Center, will remain unchanged. Recreational areas like the Community Center Park, Gainsboro Park, and the Woodward greenbelt will be preserved and enhanced without making significant alterations.

It should be noted that the Roosevelt School building on Ridge Road is transitioning from an active elementary school to an administrative building for the Ferndale Public School District. While this use is unlikely to shift in the recent future the City can think strategically about potential future acquisition of the site or the potential redevelopment if acquired by a private developer. At that juncture input from the community should be sought to better understand what appropriate uses for the site may be.

Along Woodward Avenue, the commercial and multifamily parcels on the east side, as well as the southernmost two blocks on the west, will maintain their current land uses. However, the configuration of these areas can be reassessed to explore mixed-use opportunities, especially with the recent improvements made along Woodward to incorporate a bike path, there may be interest in redeveloping one or more of these sites. Ultimately, the commercial portion of Woodward continues to be envisioned as a Mixed-Use Corridor District, emphasizing three- to three-and-a-half-story buildings with a similar scale to the townhomes on Maywood Avenue. As these parcels are redeveloped, they can potentially create housing options beyond single-family homes, such as townhomes and lofts, and allow for ground-floor retail and office spaces that complement the neighborhood's unique character.

Map 7. Future Land Use



Zoning Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA33 of 2008) mandates that the master plan include a zoning plan. This zoning plan highlights necessary updates to the current zoning ordinance to ensure it aligns with the goals and vision of the new Master Plan.

Woodward Corridor Zoning

the Commercial (C), Restricted Office (RO), Multiple Family (RM), and Parking (P) districts, located within the Pleasant Ridge Mixed-Use Corridor District on the Future Land Use Map, do not fully support the district's objectives. The current zoning ordinance relies on a traditional "Euclidean" model, which separates land uses to minimize conflicts. While this model effectively segregates uses, it often restricts integration, such as locating offices, shops, and homes in proximity. This separation creates dependency on motorized transport and limits Pleasant Ridge's ability to develop interconnected, multi-use spaces.

Additionally, this use-based zoning framework lacks tools for shaping public spaces; its regulations mainly address lot size, setbacks, stories, and floor area on a per-parcel basis, insufficient for creating cohesive streetscapes that reflect the city's character, support multi-modal transit, and foster a distinct sense of place. To address these limitations, the master plan advocates for adopting a form-based code within the Pleasant Ridge Mixed-Use Corridor District. Unlike traditional zoning, form-based codes emphasize the form and relationship of buildings with public spaces, ensuring that future development contributes to a vibrant, character-driven, and pedestrian-friendly community in line with Pleasant Ridge's goals.

Residential Districts

- » Permit accessory dwelling units in residential districts creating standards that ensure appropriate scale and density and accommodate sufficient off-street parking.
- » Codify short-term rental standards in all residential districts that allow a certain proportion of properties to be registered as short-term rentals. Consider adding provisions that require occupancy of the property owner as a qualification for registration.
- » Create provisions that allow latitude for setbacks and other requirements to more easily allow for accessibility improvements.

Sustainable Standards

- » Adopt zoning language that sets maximum impervious surface coverages by district.
- » Residential properties that add over a certain threshold of square footage of impervious surface could be required to show retention of first flush storm events for the net increase of added impervious surface. First flush is the initial surface runoff of a rainstorm where water pollution entering storm drains is typically more concentrated than compared to the remainder of the storm.
- » Downspouts on residential properties could be required to redirect to vegetated or other pervious areas, avoiding impervious surfaces or adjacent properties.

What is Form-Based Code?

Form-based code is a modern approach to zoning that emphasizes the physical form and character of buildings and their relationship with the public realm, rather than strictly focusing on separating land uses. Traditional, use-based zoning (also called Euclidean zoning) classifies areas by specific uses—such as residential, commercial, or industrial—and is designed to separate these uses for compatibility. However, form-based code shifts the focus from what can happen inside a building to how the building and its surrounding environment look, feel, and interact with each other.

In practice, form-based code establishes guidelines for building design elements, such as stories, setback, façade style, and relationship to the street, that collectively shape a cohesive streetscape and foster a pedestrian-friendly environment. It also addresses the layout of streets, blocks, sidewalks, and other public spaces, supporting a community's vision of a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood. Unlike use-based codes, form-based codes encourage a mix of compatible uses within a given area, allowing for a more integrated and diverse environment where people can live, work, shop, and relax within the same district.





Implementation Plan

Implementation Plan

The purpose of the Implementation Plan is to serve as a policy guide for preserving and advancing Pleasant Ridge, providing guidance for future physical and policy initiatives. Achieving the Plan's objectives will require a long-term commitment and consensus building. It is designed to be a comprehensive roadmap, including strategies, specific projects, and programs that will facilitate the desired outcomes.

The successful implementation of the plan will be closely linked to the level of dedication displayed by the City's leadership. Although elected and appointed officials play a significant leadership role, other individuals such as City staff, community leaders, and stakeholders will also be essential in supporting the Master Plan.

The Master Plan is intended for regular use and should be consistently applied during any decision-making process

that impacts the community's future. Private investors, including developers, corporations, and landowners, should take the Plan's direction into account, as it serves as a guide for the community and promotes its goals and objectives.

The purpose of an Implementation Plan is to provide guidance for implementing the Master Plan. It includes goals, strategies, and action steps, along with time frames, priorities, and key partners. The Master Plan has some flexibility to adapt to changing conditions, challenges, and opportunities. To ensure its continued usefulness, regular reviews and amendments should be conducted by the City Commission. This will ensure that the goals, objectives, and recommendations remain relevant to the community's evolving needs, expectations, and financial situation.

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Land Use	Permit accessory dwelling units in residential districts creating standards that ensure appropriate scale and density and accommodate sufficient off-street parking.	High	City Staff, Planning Commission
Land Use	Codify short-term rental standards in all residential districts that allow a certain proportion of properties to be registered as short-term rentals. Consider adding provisions that require occupancy of the property owner as a qualification for registration.	High	City Staff, Planning Commission
Land Use	Adopt a form-based code for the Woodward Avenue Corridor.	Medium	City Staff, Planning Commission
Sustainability	Consider adopting requirements for residential properties that add over a certain threshold of square footage of impervious surface to be required to implement off-set measures.	Low	City Staff, City Commission
Sustainability	Create a policy guide that encourages sustainable practices including the use of permeable pavers, the placement of downspouts into vegetated areas, and the use of other green infrastructure techniques.	Medium	City Staff, City Commission
Sustainability	Create residential rain garden pilots by increasing awareness of and facilitating applications to the Oakland County RainSmart Rebates program, and seeking additional partnership opportunities.	Medium	City Staff, Community Organizations
Aging in Place	Continue to connect residents with regional organizations that provide support to create home modifications.	Medium	City Staff
Aging in Place	Create provisions that facilitate aging-ready housing, such as explicitly exempting access improvements (e.g., ramps) from setback requirements.	High	City Staff, Planning Commission
Transportation & Mobility	Ensure bus stops are furnished adequately to promote usage and act as an anchor for future land use development and future BRT development.	Low	City Staff, MDOT, RTA

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