

2024

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

VILLAGE OF MONTPELIER

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the steering committee members, stakeholders, community members, staff, and officials who invested their time and expertise in the creation of this Comprehensive Plan Update for the future of Montpelier.

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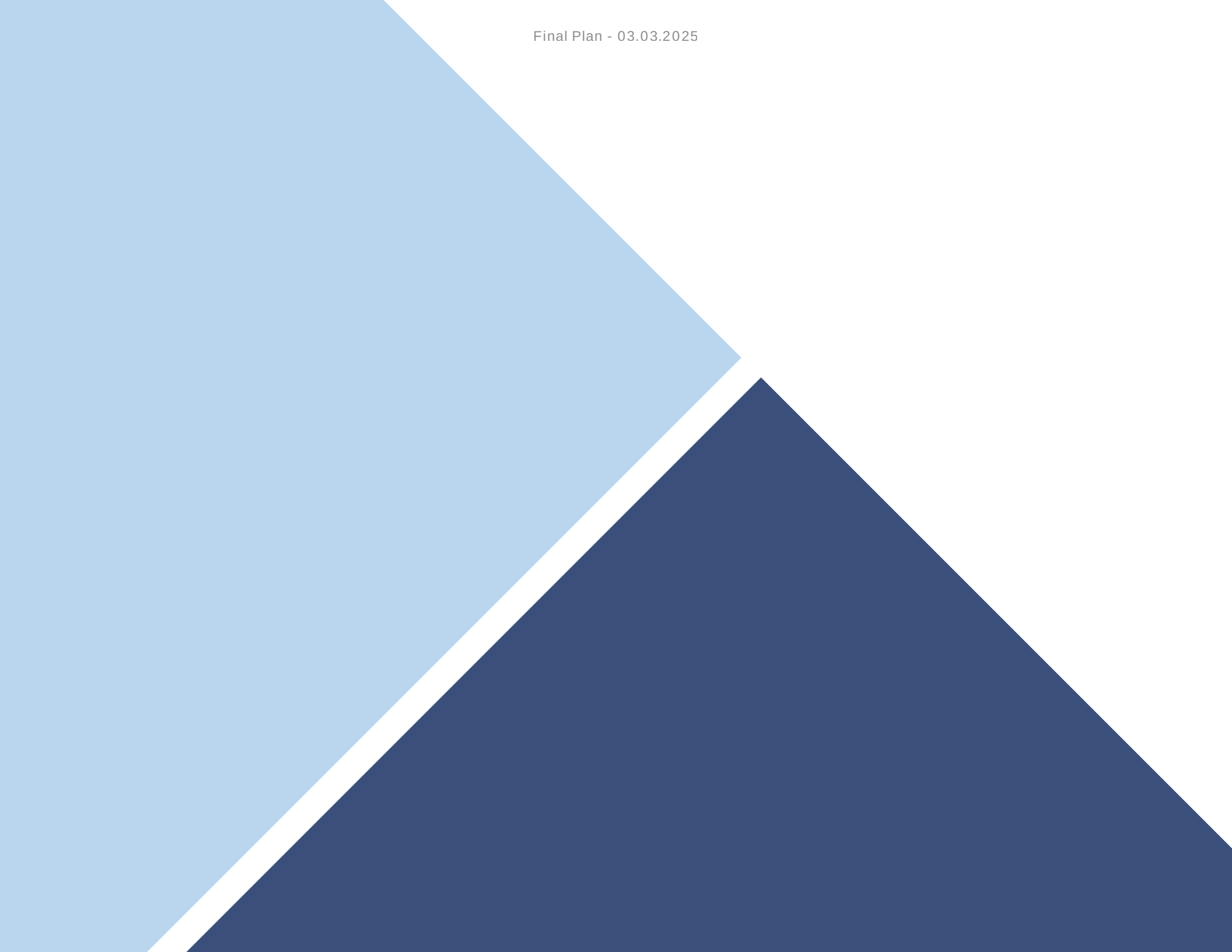
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01

Project Overview

01

Project Overview

ABOUT THE PLAN

In 2024, the Village of Montpelier initiated a process to update its comprehensive plan. This project identified key areas of focus for the village that would enable the community to continue to build on its residential growth, diverse industry base, safe and accessible parks, and small town image. With the insight of a steering committee made up of residents and elected officials, a technical analysis of existing conditions in the area and a robust stakeholder engagement process were conducted to aid the completion of the comprehensive plan update document.

PROJECT APPROACH

After completing the village's first Comprehensive Plan over 20 years ago, the community has worked towards achieving public and private sector goals in the economic, parks and recreation, and housing sectors. With numerous accomplishments since 2001, the village is now ready to update and utilize previously identified projects for funding and implementation. The outdated comprehensive county plan laid the groundwork for community transformation two decades ago, and the comprehensive plan update aims to build on that work by outlining a series of new initiatives and strategies to propel Montpelier into the future. The following are some specific objectives the plan helps achieve:

- » Establish a uniform vision for Montpelier through future land use designations
- » Identify opportunities for new catalyst projects that will generate new village revenue while enhancing the character and brand of the community
- » Support future development through creative redevelopment strategies and incentives
- » Support future funding initiatives (e.g. state and federal grant programs)

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

GUIDE

... the community in evaluating proposed public, private or joint projects.

INFORM ...

... current and prospective property owners, business owners, and developers on desirable growth patterns.

MEASURE ...

... progress and effectiveness of projects in the village to ensure they strengthen the community as a whole.

PLANNING PROCESS

A customized three phase planning process was designed to complete the comprehensive plan update. The process was iterative: each stage built on and informed the next step. Each phase is listed and described below:



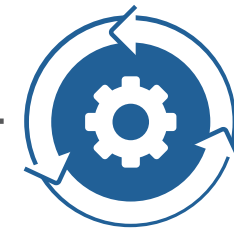
PHASE ONE: INFORM

In this phase, the project began, and thorough research and analyses were conducted to gather the essential data needed for the planning process. This phase involved evaluating existing conditions and trends, as well as engaging the community through stakeholder interviews.



PHASE TWO: INVENT

In this phase, the planning team along with help from the steering committee began to draft and refine the plan framework. This framework would later inform overarching themes, specific plan pillars, and plan objectives.



PHASE THREE: IGNITE

In the final phase, the planning team and the steering committee continued to refine the key recommendations of the plan. A priority objective was selected for each pillar of the plan and designated for further exploration. Finally, the plan was finalized and submitted to the village for adoption.

PLAN INPUTS

The Montpelier Comprehensive Plan Update is a detailed blueprint for future growth and development, focusing on housing, the village downtown, parks and recreation, and community image and brand. It incorporates input from both quantitative and qualitative analyses, as well as key stakeholder sessions to create a vision that is technically sound and informed by the community. This document describes the inputs and how they shaped the content of the plan update.

Existing Conditions

Existing conditions within the community were considered and included current land use, zoning, demographics, parks and open space, mobility, previous planning efforts, community vision, and infrastructure, among others. With an understanding of the existing conditions, the planning team and the Steering Committee worked to address issues and opportunities within the county to create the plan.

Steering Committee & Stakeholder Guidance

The planning team also facilitated discussions through steering committee and stakeholder meetings. Issues and opportunities made apparent during these discussions were used to validate findings from analyses and previous planning efforts and built focus and direction for the plan recommendations. These dedicated community members helped create the project framework and championed the plan on behalf of their community.

PLAN FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW

The plan integrates the inputs of an existing conditions analysis, steering committee guidance, and stakeholder feedback with guiding land use principles that represent the values and goals of the Montpelier community. This integration informed the development of the Plan Framework, along with related Implementation recommendations. The complete plan will serve to reinforce future development character and shape the village for years to come.

The Plan Framework chapter is broken into four Plan Elements including Future Land Use + Housing; Downtown Revitalization + Local Economy; Parks, Recreation + Community Connections; and Image + Brand. The Future Land Use + Housing section illustrates how land should be developed or zoned in the future, and gives direction on how to update the village's zoning code to align with the community's land use vision. The Downtown Revitalization + Local Economy section outlines strategies to continue to foster a diverse industry base and reinforce the need to continue to lift downtown and restore it as a thriving commercial and social center. The Parks, Recreation + Community Connections section defines additional open space and multi-use path connections to add to the robust local network, while the Image + Brand section outlines initiatives to continue to build social capital in the community through the arts, events, and other tactical efforts.

The final component of the plan comprises specific recommendations that should be implemented to advance the plan because a plan without an implementation strategy is limited in its effectiveness. Each plan section contains the desired vision, key objectives, and detailed next steps for priority objectives.

FUTURE LAND USE + HOUSING



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION + LOCAL ECONOMY



PARKS, RECREATION + COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



IMAGE + BRAND



HOW TO USE THE PLAN

The 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update is a living document which should be reviewed annually and updated periodically. The village will oversee the plan implementation and coordinate the efforts of the parties identified as being responsible for its implementation. As conditions change and various sections of the plan are implemented, the village might find additional projects and/or strategies with which to achieve its desired goals and objectives. Specifically the plan achieves the following:

- » Documents and illustrates what the community looks like today and what direction it wants to go in the future; it includes assessments of existing resources and issues, projections of future conditions and needs, and consideration of collective goals and desires.
- » Translates the community's values into specific actions. It is a policy guide which not only addresses land use and connections, but also includes important social, natural resource, and economic values of the community.
- » Covers an approximate time frame of 10 years; it is assumed that shorter-term reviews will keep it current with the changing needs of the community.
- » Integrates with other municipal documents and initiatives.

ADDITIONAL PLAN INTEGRATION METHODS

The following are some additional methods where potential projects from this plan can be implemented:

Annual Work Programs & Budgets

Individual village departments and administrators should be cognizant of the contents of the plan when preparing annual work programs and budgets. Plan recommendations should be considered when reviewing budgets to layer village improvements with the recommendations outlined herein. In this way, the village can use public funds to help attract and elevate private investment, in turn creating opportunities for more revenue generating developments.

Development Approvals

Administrative and legislative approvals of development proposals, including rezoning, major site plans, and conditional use permits, should be a central means of implementing the plan. Decisions by elected and appointed officials should reference relevant plan recommendations and guidelines. Village plans and codes should also reflect and support the plan vision and recommendations.

Capital Improvements & The General Fund

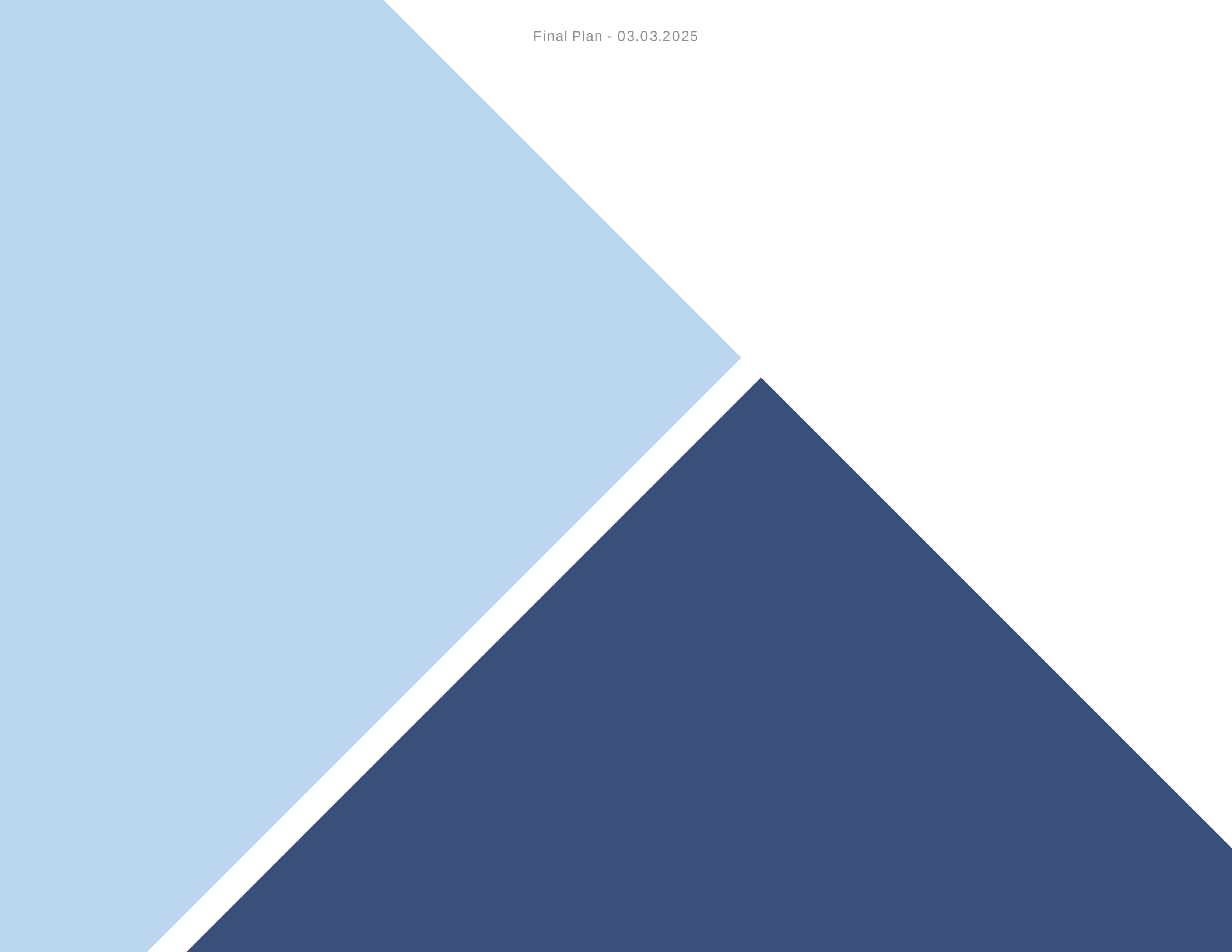
The village's plan for capital improvements and use of the General Fund should be prepared consistent with the plan's policies and infrastructure recommendations. New improvements that are relevant to recipients of the General Fund as well as other tax funds such as street improvements should be considered as a means to implement the recommendations of this plan.

Economic Development Incentives

Economic development incentives should be reviewed periodically to ensure consistency with the plan and current legislation. New state ordinances may develop that change the economic landscape for funding projects in Ohio. This plan should be leveraged to apply for funding which requires a set of guidelines or area plan.

Private Development Decisions

Property owners and developers should consider the plan's goals and strategies in their land planning and investment decisions. Public decision makers will be using the plan as a guide in their development deliberations such as zoning matters and infrastructure requests. The village should use this plan as a tool to clearly communicate to property owners and developers the overall vision for growth in Montpelier.



02

Understanding the Context

02

Understanding the Context

OVERVIEW

The following section outlines the key data, metrics, and perspectives that are foundational to the plan. This includes the data and analysis on existing conditions and community engagement. The combined analysis of existing conditions and community engagement served as one of the primary inputs from which the plan's vision and recommendations were developed. This approach ensures that the plan is informed by both technical data and intuitive insights.

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

Study Area

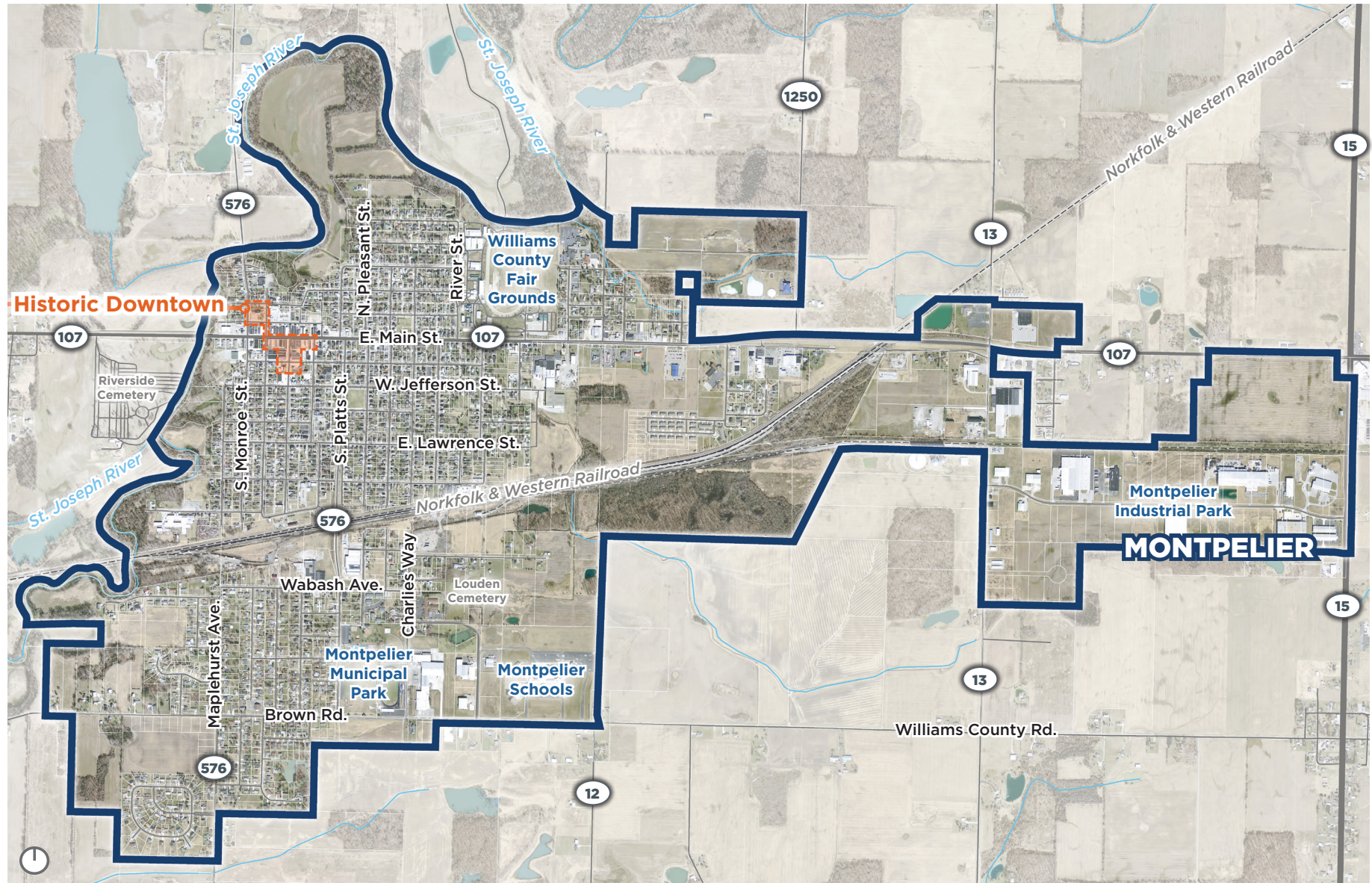
The primary study area encompasses all land and water within the existing boundaries of the Village of Montpelier, located in Williams County, Ohio. The village was originally platted in 1845 and officially incorporated as a village in 1875. The village spans a total area of 2.88 square miles, including both land and water. It provides essential public services to its residents and businesses, including water, electricity, and sewer. Public safety is maintained by a full-time police department and a volunteer fire staff.

Positioned in the northwestern corner of Ohio, Montpelier is approximately 5 miles south of the Ohio Turnpike, with Toledo, Ohio, and Fort Wayne, Indiana, being the nearest cities. Major routes serving the village include Ohio State Routes 107 (east-west) and 576 (north-south) and U.S. Highway 20A on the village's eastern boundary. Locally, Main Street runs (east-west) through the historic district and South Platts Street (north-south) crosses over the Northfork and Western Railroad. The Saint Joseph River borders the village from the northwest to the southwest, contributing to the area's natural landscape.



View of East Main Street and Empire Street intersection within the historic district of Montpelier.

FIGURE 2-1: Study Area Map



02 | Understanding the Context

Community Snapshot

The Village of Montpelier, originally named after Montpelier, Vermont, has a rich history, a vibrant present, and a commitment to a promising future. Montpelier is a progressive Charter Village with a strong Manager form of government.

Population & Growth

Over the past two decades, the Village of Montpelier experienced a decline in population, mirroring broader rural trends. However, since 2020, the village has seen a reversal of this trend with a gradual population increase. Montpelier remains optimistic about sustaining this growth and is committed to building a vibrant and thriving community for the future.

Median Age

The median age in the Village of Montpelier is 38.6 years, which is lower than the median age for both Williams County and the state of Ohio. This relatively younger demographic suggests a potential for a more dynamic and active community, with opportunities for growth in areas such as workforce development, local businesses, and community engagement.

Source: 2024 Esri Business Analyst; ACS Community Snapshot Data.

Note: The data shown above should be frequently reevaluated and reanalyzed to reflect the growth and change within the community.

2024 Population

2020: 3,915

2010: 4,099

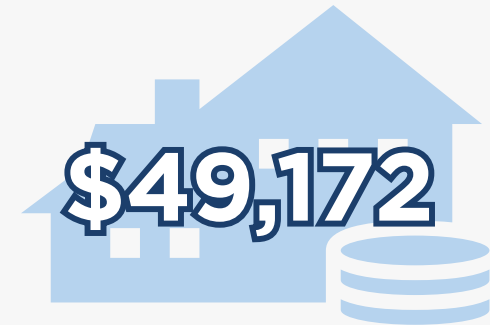
2000: 4,320



Median Household Income

\$55,947 in Williams County

\$65,720 in Ohio



Median Age

42.9 in Williams County

39.9 in Ohio



Growth Rate

2020-2023

0.09%

2010- 2020

-0.46%

Households & Housing Stock

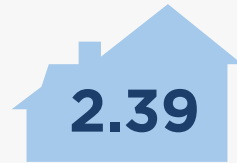
The Village of Montpelier has 1,626 households, the majority of which are single-family homes, and 74.8% of these housing units are owner-occupied. The average household size is 2.39, and the median home value is \$110,714, which is notably below both the county and state median home values. Additionally, the village's median household income is \$49,172, which is also lower than the median income levels for the state and county, indicating some economic challenges for residents.

Despite having a relatively low percentage of vacant housing units, Montpelier faces ongoing issues related to the upkeep and maintenance of its existing housing stock. The prevalence of single-family homes and a lack of a variety of housing types highlight the need for increased development to cater to different household needs, attract a broader range of residents, and accommodate potential growth. The village has recently taken steps to address these maintenance concerns, improving property conditions and overall quality of life. By investing in the renewal and expansion of its housing stock, Montpelier can accommodate all demographics and an appealing environment that supports current and future residents.



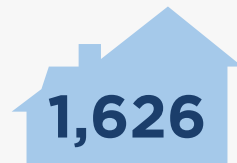
\$110,714
Median Home Value

\$152,968 in Williams County
\$204,100 in Ohio



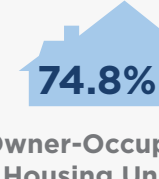
2.39
Avg. Household Size

2.35 in Williams County
2.38 in Ohio



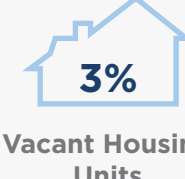
1,626
Total Households

15,200 in Williams County
4.8 million in Ohio



74.8%
Owner-Occupied Housing Units

66.8% Ohio average



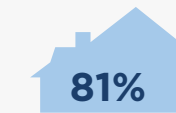
3%
Vacant Housing Units



\$523

Median Gross Rent

\$945 in Ohio



81%
Single Unit Structures

172

Housing Affordability Index*

*This index measures whether or not **a typical family earns enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan on a typical home** at the national and regional levels based on the most recent price and income data.*

An index above 100 signifies that family earning the median income has more than enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan on a median-priced home, assuming a 20 percent down payment.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following section provides a detailed overview of the current state of zoning, land use, parks and trail connectivity, and environmental conditions within the Village of Montpelier. It outlines the various zoning classifications and their implications for development, examines existing land use patterns, and assesses the connectivity of parks and trails throughout the village. Additionally, it evaluates local environmental conditions to highlight potential opportunities and constraints. This thorough analysis of existing conditions plays a crucial role in shaping the plan framework, offering a clear baseline that guides decision-making and helps to align future growth and planning initiatives with the village's long-term vision and goals.

Zoning

The Village of Montpelier has ten zoning classifications, including four residential districts (single-family, one-to-two family, and two multifamily types) that cover the largest portion of the village. There are two commercial districts—Limited and Full Commercial—as well as the C-3 Central Business District, which spans East Main Street and encompasses much of the historic downtown.

The smallest zoning area is the Limited Commercial district, which includes the Montpelier Emergency Room and Emergency Services. Two industrial districts are also designated: Light Industrial, covering the Montpelier Industrial Park on the village's eastern boundary, and General Industrial, located next to the Norfolk & Western Railroad. Notably, the current zoning code lacks mixed-use designations for commercial or residential purposes, and multifamily zoning is quite limited.

Understanding these zoning classifications is essential to establish a baseline for current land use and to provide a reference point when comparing the village's present conditions with future development plans and growth objectives.

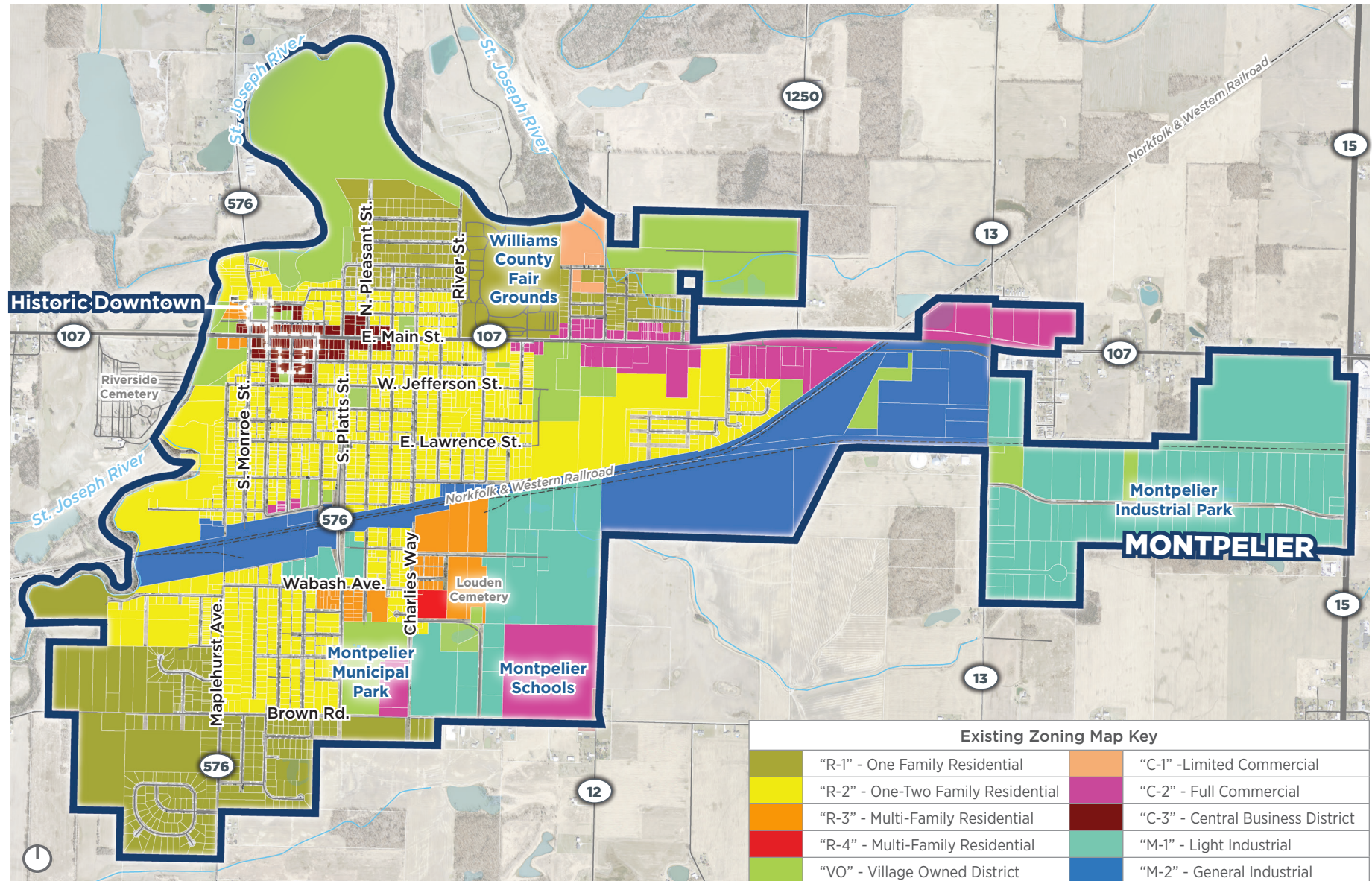


Imagery of the current conditions on a section of East Main Street, zoned as C-3 Central Business District.



Imagery of Main Street Park, zoned as Village Owned District, located on East Main Street.

FIGURE 2-2: Existing Zoning Map



02 | Understanding the Context

Land Use

The study area has a variety of land designations, with the main ones being residential, industrial, institutional, and open space. East Main Street has commercial, residential, industrial, institutional, and open-space uses. The historic downtown area is primarily commercial and institutional. There are opportunities to repurpose historic buildings into mixed-use spaces that combine commercial and residential elements. In the northern part of the village, there are various land uses, with significant open space along the Saint Joseph River designated for preservation and future recreational purposes. The southern area is mainly residential, with critical institutional sites like the Montpelier School. The eastern portion is dominated by industrial use due to the Montpelier Industrial Park, crucial for local employment and services. This overview of existing land use provides a foundation for understanding current conditions and guiding future development plans.



Montpelier Municipal Park is an example of an existing open space land use typology within the village.



Montpelier Schools an example of an existing Institutional land use typology within the village.

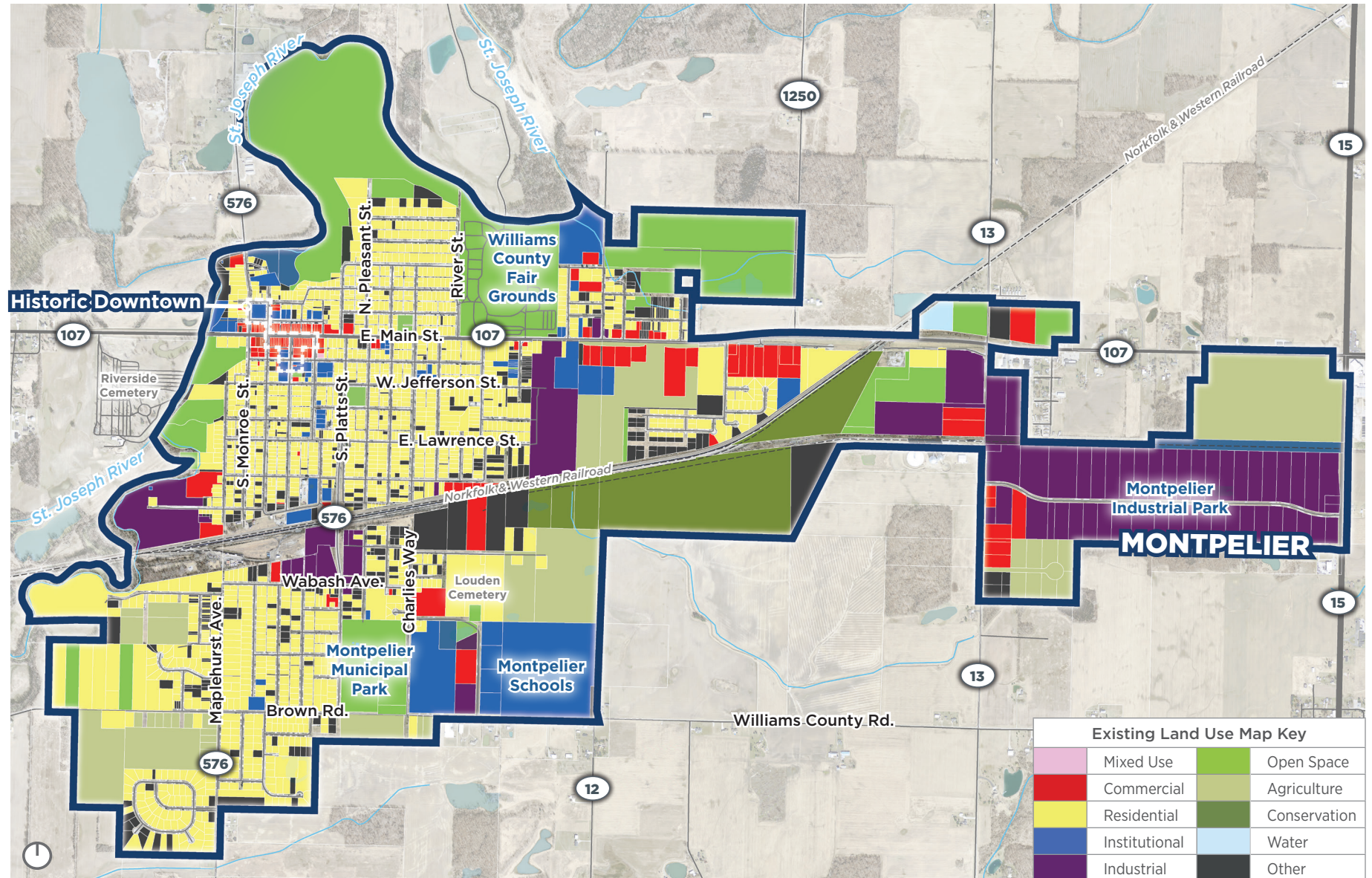


Imagery of existing residential land use typology within the Village of Montpelier.



An example of an existing Industrial land use typology within Montpelier.

FIGURE 2-3: Existing Land Use Map



02 | Understanding the Context

Trails & Park Connectivity

The Village of Montpelier has a network of trails and parks that support residents' and visitors' well-being and quality of life. Within the village is the Wabash Cannonball Trail, a 66-mile multi-use trail in Northwest Ohio that supports hikers, bikers, equestrians, and cross-country skiers, connecting the village to broader regional networks. The Iron Horse River Trail spans 1.5 miles and runs adjacent to the Saint Joseph River. Phase two of the trail will include expanding and improving access and amenities. The ODOT Bicycle Route 90 runs east to west through the village on Williams County Road 13, and Brown Road and the Wabash Cannonball Trail serve as a regional cycling routes. Sidewalks throughout the village, particularly downtown, around parks, and near Montpelier School, enhance pedestrian connectivity. The village's parks—Montpelier Municipal Park and Recreation Services, Robert A. Storrer Municipal Park, Main Street Park, and Founders Park East Main St.—offer various recreational amenities. Most notably, the Montpelier Municipal Park provides recreational baseball fields and is adjacent to the Municipal Pool, Montpelier Gardens, and Hobe Krouse Field.

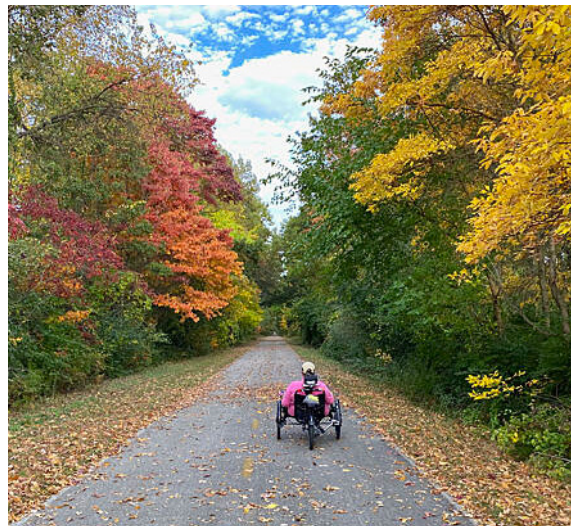
The village is committed to enhancing connectivity and amenities. The village's trail and park master plan includes proposed trails and trailhead connections to improve connectivity and quality of life further. These developments will continue to enhance the non-motorized network and benefit its residents and visitors.



Iron Horse River Trail



Robert A. Storrer Municipal Park

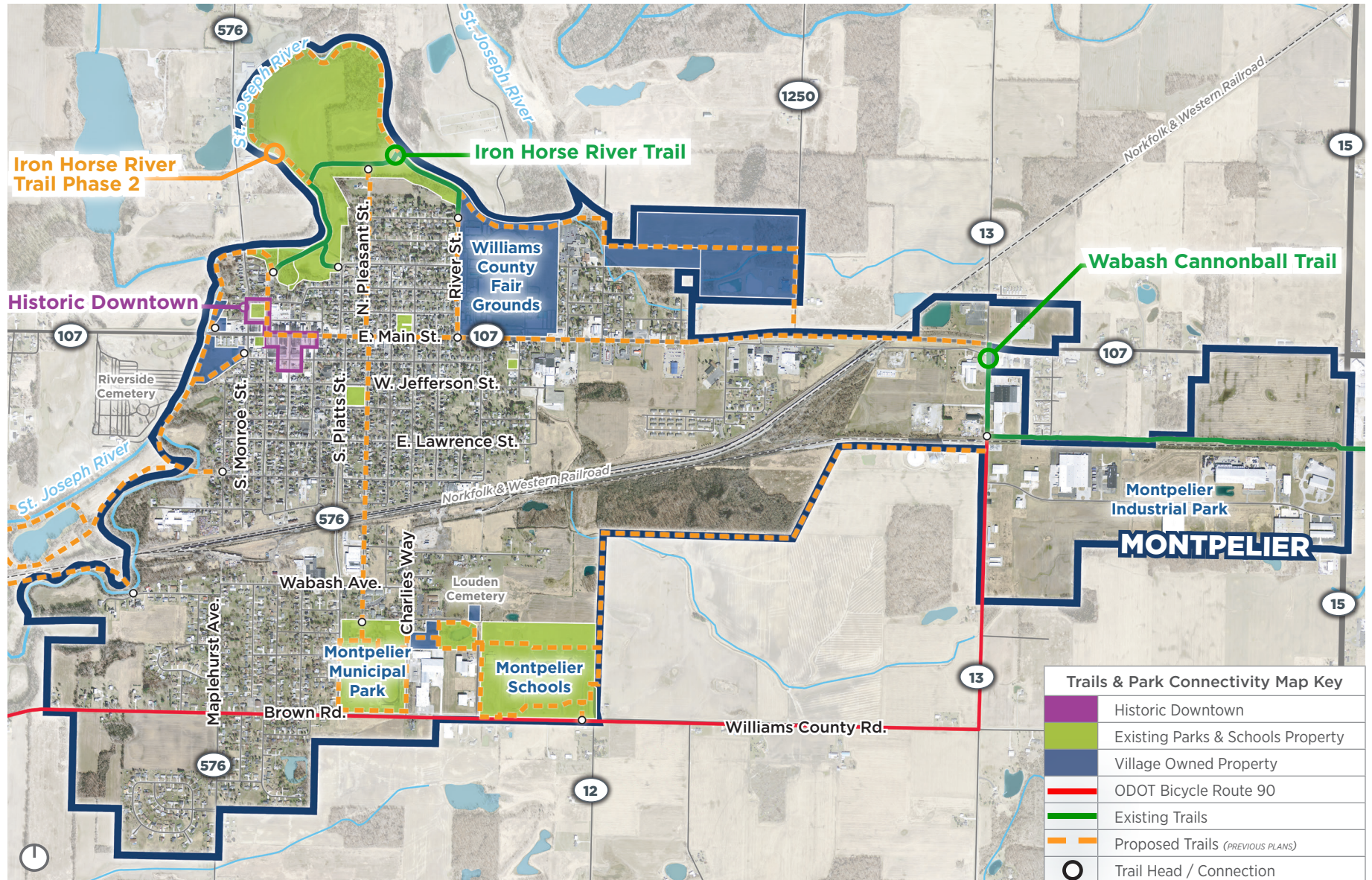


Wabash Cannonball Trail



Montpelier Municipal Pool

FIGURE 2-4: Trails & Park Connectivity Map



Environmental Conditions

The Village of Montpelier is within an area rich in blue and green assets. The St. Joseph River, a tributary of the Maumee River, flows through the village, contributing to the diverse environmental conditions. The St. Joseph River contributes to the diverse ecological conditions and offers recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Recognizing and marketing the river and trails as a destination can significantly improve residents' and visitors' quality of life and well-being and potentially aid village revenue. Due to the topography and the presence of the St. Joseph River, the village's western boundary falls within a floodplain. This area will require careful monitoring and consideration as the village undergoes future planning, development, and potential expansion of its current boundary. Additionally, the presence of various ponds, lakes, and wetlands in the vicinity further enhances the ecological landscape.

An ongoing project to note is the Montpelier Wetland Restoration project that's west of the St. Joseph River along SR 107. This initiative leverages existing partnerships between the City of Montpelier and researchers/project engineers at The Ohio State University. The project aims to establish two Edge of Field treatment wetlands designated to receive runoff from elevated phosphorus agricultural fields. The overall project spans a total parcel size of 98 acres, and the restoration activities will focus on up to 10 acres, with a minimum of 8 acres designated for wetlands.

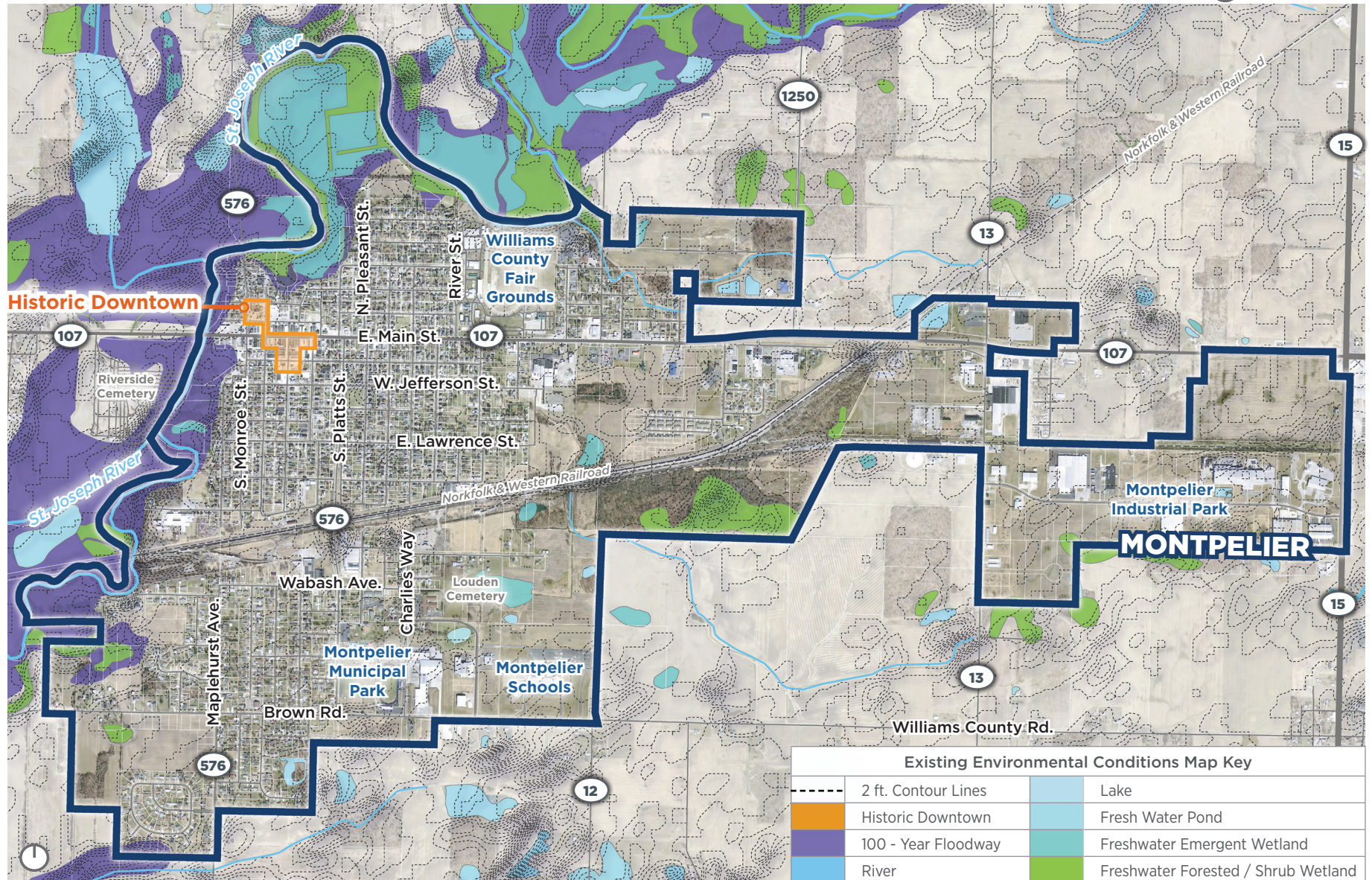


Saint Joesph River within Montpelier.



The Montpelier Wetland Restoration project is located in Montpelier and is adjacent to the St. Joseph River

FIGURE 2-5: Environmental Conditions Map



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The public engagement process for the 2024 Village of Montpelier Comprehensive Plan included working with a Steering Committee and Stakeholder groups. The engagement process began with the first Steering Committee meeting in March 2024 and continued throughout the summer and fall of 2024. The consultant team met virtually with local stakeholders also during the summer of 2024 to gain further insight and input from community members and residents on issues, opportunities, and big ideas that would aid in developing the plan framework. Altogether, residents, property owners, and business owners played a crucial role in shaping the plan framework by sharing their insights regarding the future of Montpelier. The following is a summary of the engagement efforts and the input received from the Steering Committee meetings and Stakeholder Interviews.

Steering Committee Participation

Throughout the planning process, the consultant team and village staff worked closely with the local steering committee to gain specific insights into the village's future aspirations. The committee consisted of local leadership, appointed staff, property and business owners, as well as key individuals from the business, education, real estate, and employment sectors. This committee met regularly and provided guidance to the consultant team from the community's perspective.



Steering Committee meetings took place in person and virtually via Zoom throughout the process to help guide the consultant team.

Stakeholder Interviews

During the first half of the planning process, the consultant team interacted with and listened to local stakeholders to gain targeted insight into their desires for the village's future. A stakeholder is an individual or group interested in or investing in a project. They can be directly affected by its outcomes or can influence its direction. Stakeholders can include employees, customers, community members, investors, government agencies, and other entities relevant to the planning project. Engaging stakeholders is crucial for understanding various perspectives, addressing their needs and concerns, and fostering successful outcomes.

There were two Stakeholder Interviews and over fifteen people attended in total. Throughout the first and second interviews, stakeholders were presented with an overview of the project and the goals associated with the project. Stakeholders were then asked to provide input on the most significant issues and opportunities related to Montpelier and any big ideas they had for the village's future. The diagram on the right outlines the key stakeholder discussion topics presented by the stakeholders during the first and second interviews. Following the interviews, an analysis of the input and feedback from the stakeholders occurred and aided in the creation of the plan framework.



Stakeholder Meetings



Stakeholder Attendees

Stakeholder Interview Discussion Topics

Housing & Workforce

Rehabilitation & Programing

Village Perspective

Municipal & County Partnerships

Downtown Appearance

Signage & Wayfinding

Accessibility & Transportation

Services & Amenities

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS & EXISTING CONDITIONS KEY FINDINGS

This page summarizes the key takeaways from the community analysis and existing conditions. These key findings, along with the community engagement and research trends, informed the development of the plan framework.

Key Community Analysis Findings

- » Within the village are a variety of resident ages; currently, the median age is 38.6.
- » The village's population has fluctuated over time, but recently there has been an increase, and there is still potential for further growth within the village.
- » The village is a wonderful place to live and work, thanks to its people and community.
- » The quantity and quality of housing stock in Montpelier pose challenges for those wanting to move and live there.
- » There is a strong Parks and Recreation facility in the village, and the department has recently been a leader in providing community resources and amenities.

Key Existing Conditions Findings

- » The Village of Montpelier is centrally located between US Route 20 and various state routes, making the village easily accessible to neighboring areas.
- » The village is actively collaborating with local and state authorities to maintain and advance its existing and future trail system.
- » The active railroad running directly through the village should be closely monitored for future planning and safety measures.
- » There is a lack of accessible transportation for non-drivers, and a need for expanded non-motorized connectivity
- » The existing floodplain on the western edge of the village boundary requires long-term monitoring for sustainability and durability, especially in the event of village expansion.
- » There is already an existing land use fabric within the village, and it should be considered when making future land use decisions.
- » Within the village, there is a lack of varying housing types for people of all demographics, and there is little mixed-use development beyond the historic buildings along Main St.

Themes

There's a strong community fabric with optimism for the future.

There are opportunities for the village to grow inward and outward.

A growing demand for better housing and a variety of housing options to cater to all demographics.

The parks and recreation facilities, trail systems, and environmental elements are vital assets.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY FINDINGS

This page summarizes the key takeaways and themes generated from the community engagement. These themes and takeaways, together with the existing conditions and research trends, informed the development of the plan framework.

Key Issues

- » There is a lack of housing stock, and the quality of available housing needs improvement.
- » Property maintenance and upkeep are a community concern and are becoming more rigorously enforced
- » There is fluctuation in the population of school-aged children and families.
- » There are vacant properties along Main St.
- » Economic development has been stagnant in recent years.
- » The village has a negative perception due to issues like drugs, blight, and school quality.
- » There are limited resources for visitors and investors.

Key Opportunities

- » Redevelop Main Street to accommodate a variety of uses and improve existing infrastructure.
- » Partner with local entities like the Port Authority and businesses to facilitate workforce and housing growth.
- » Identify the market demand for senior housing, multifamily units, and other housing types.
- » Identify and develop areas for increased non-motorized trails and improved connectivity.
- » Expand signage and wayfinding to enhance accessibility.
- » Leverage local events such as farmers markets, seasonal activities, and parades to boost community pride.

Key Input

- » Expand housing options for medium to higher incomes, rentals, and seniors.
- » Improve and maintain Downtown through enhancements to facades and streetscape.
- » Attract new businesses such as restaurants, breweries, and gyms.
- » Support and create programs for addiction treatment, community culture and pride, and workforce advancement

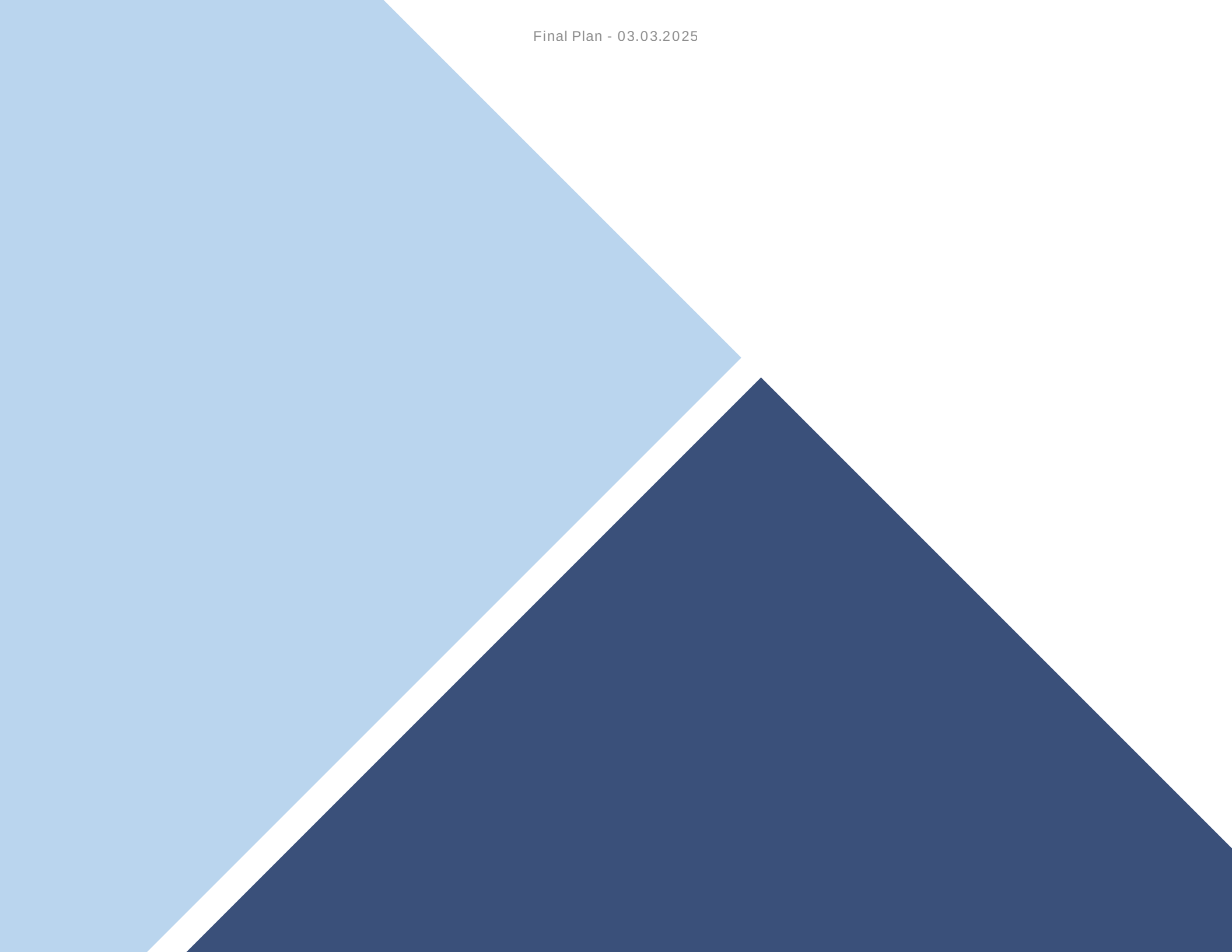
Themes

Maintain the existing fabric of the community.
(improvements, maintenance, etc.)

Meet housing demand with a variety of housing types.
(infill and new development etc.)

Improve quality of life through amenities and services.
(new pool house/pool pump, expanded trails and trail connections, connectivity to the downtown etc.)

Boost community identity and village brand.
(locomotives/ railroad transportation.)



03

Plan Framework

03

Plan Framework

ABOUT THE PLAN

This section includes the Plan vision, future land use map, and recommendations for each plan element. These elements cover Future Land Use + Housing; Downtown Revitalization + Local Economy; Parks, Recreation + Community Connections; and Image & Brand.

The Plan Elements were developed based on existing conditions, market trends analysis, and community feedback, with guidance from the Steering Committee. Each section contains an overall Vision, which is a statement of intent describing the desired outcome and future condition. The vision serves as the foundation for the recommendations found in each section:

- » Overview
- » Insights & Analysis
- » Key Findings
- » Plan Recommendations

HOW TO USE THIS CHAPTER

This chapter is a guide for community stakeholders to take actionable steps to create local change. The plan recommendations should be implemented under the guidance of village staff, and elected and appointed officials at the county and village level.

A committee of local leaders and community members committed to improving the quality of life in Montpelier should be formed to oversee the plan's implementation. This action plan committee can include members from the project steering committee and additional community members as necessary. Such committees are intended to act as plan representatives and stewards, fostering connections with interested parties and potential government funding, and achieving success through their daily efforts.



Each plan element will have an overall vision, key objectives, and specific action items to chart a course for project identification and implementation.

FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS

A framework for the plan was developed based on insights gathered from the analysis of existing conditions and input from the community. These elements represent key themes and areas of focus identified as part of the process and serve as the main sections of the plan. Each section will include important recommendations, strategies for implementation, and future actions. The following pages provide detailed descriptions of these elements.



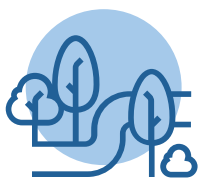
Future Land Use + Housing

The land use section contains the future land use map and recommendations that help shape how growth should take place in the future. The map and recommendations provide a framework for determining the location and nature of the village's future expansion. These recommendations are essential for attracting new businesses, creating new areas for residential uses, and identifying and planning for areas to protect and preserve.



Downtown Revitalization + Local Economy

The downtown is the geographic and social heart of the community. Planning for the stabilization and revitalization of this important community district will help to re-establish a center of commerce and activity in the community, build around the historic core, and create social and economic connections to the region.



Parks, Recreation + Community Connections

Improving access to parks, open spaces, and recreational areas, as well as investing in the connections between them, can enhance the mental and physical health of the community. It also creates gathering places for the community and contributes to making Montpelier a desirable place to live and visit. These elements will also elevate the overall quality of life and attract new economic investment.



Image + Brand

A community identity expresses the overall impression, culture, and feel of a place. Identifiable image branding on gateways and signage, as well as clear communication and marketing strategies, can improve a community's overall sense of pride and bring awareness to visitors and residents alike.

Future Land Use + Housing

OVERVIEW

The Future Land Use plan is a key component of this Plan, designed to provide direction for development in and around the community. The planning process involved assessing the current housing options for people of all ages and backgrounds and preparing for the future to meet the needs of current and future residents.

This chapter aims to steer the pattern and nature of future growth in Montpelier, ensuring that growth is balanced, financially and environmentally sustainable, and in line with the community's aspirations. The plan was developed based on community input, technical analysis by the project team, and market trends. These inputs led to the creation of a set of land use principles that shape the development of the Future Land Use Map.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

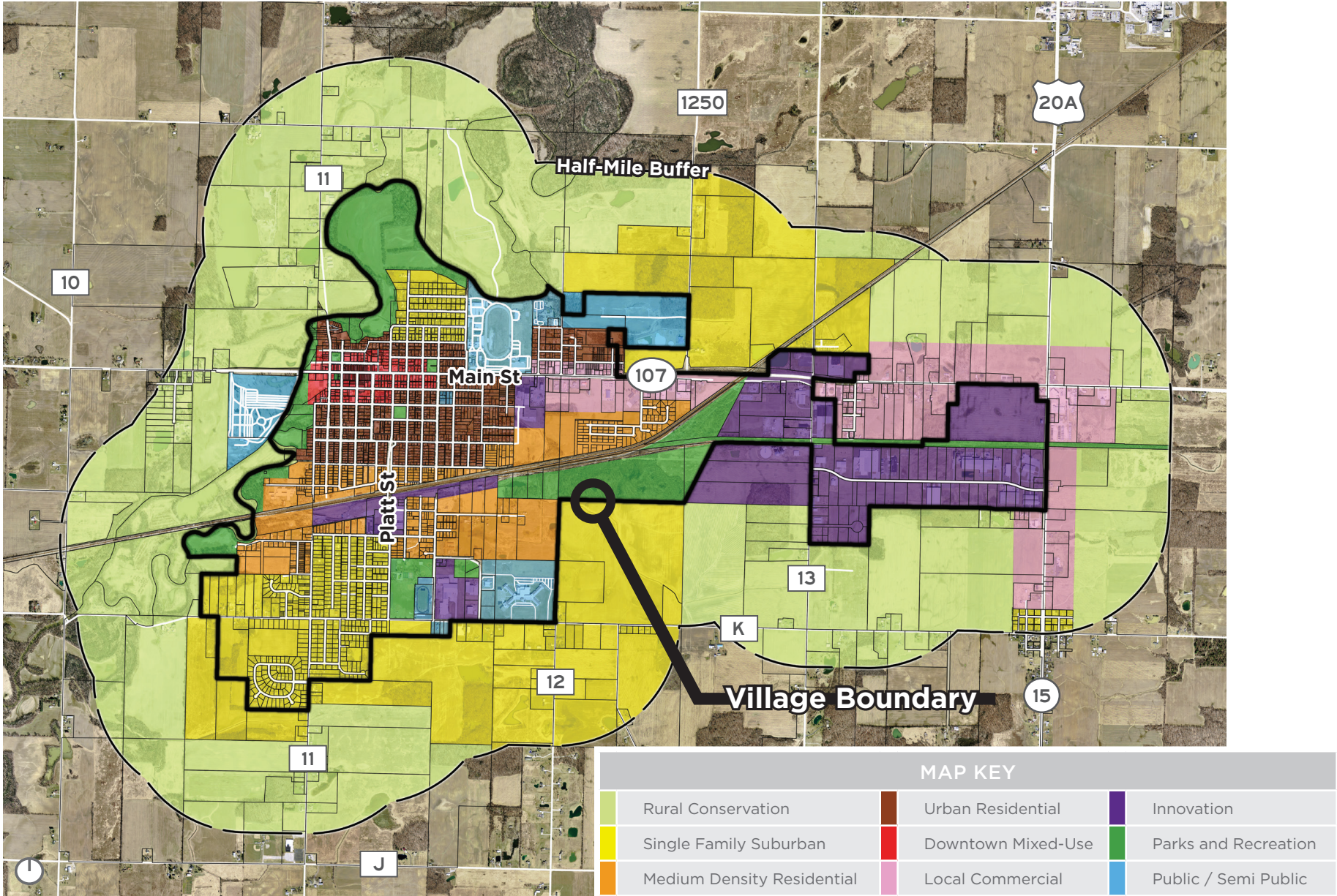
The Future Land Use map on the following pages illustrates how the village should grow in the future. As development occurs, future zoning, developments, capital projects, and policy decisions should align with the map and designated districts. Each district has a unique land use typology and a prescribed set of characteristics.

PLEASE NOTE:

The Future Land Use map, districts, and typologies are intended to be used as a general guide for how development could occur in the future and how land could be rezoned in the future, or how zoning text may be updated or changed to align with the Future Land Use map.

It is understood that current village zoning designations may not align with the Future Land Use map presented here, and zoning changes may be necessary in the future. It is important to note that to rezone any property, potential applicants would follow the village's legal process to amend the zoning code, which includes, but is not limited to, an application, multiple hearings, and formal approval procedures.

Future Land Use Map - Draft v1



RURAL CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT

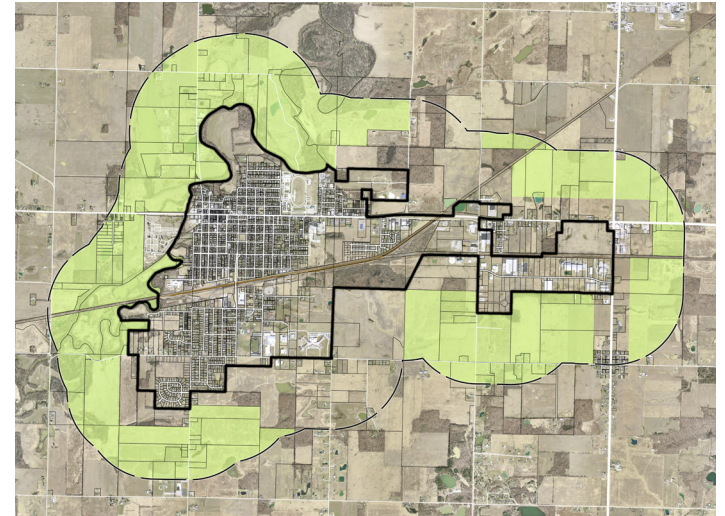
DESCRIPTION

Rural Conservation Development allows for single-family homes that are clustered within a larger site to reduce land consumption and preserve rural and natural features to be left undisturbed or developed for public use.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY in this area should be approximately one dwelling unit per acre. Higher net densities may be achieved in some areas. Density bonuses may be considered for development that exceeds 50% open space dedication.

OPEN SPACE should make up 50% of the site and primarily include preservation areas where land has been restored to its natural state and sensitive features are protected. Recreational paths can be included within open space. Landscaping consisting of native plants that require little care and support a variety of habitats are encouraged.

CONNECTIVITY should be of a rural character with narrow street widths and streetscapes that include trees and green stormwater infrastructure. Trails and non-motorized connections are encouraged.



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

HEIGHT	1-2 stories
FRONT SETBACK	30-100 feet
PARKING	Side or front facing garages
RECOMMENDED INTENSITY	Conservation of 50% of site or overall development, and up to du/ac
RECOMMENDED USES	• Detached Single Family Homes • Attached Single Family Homes • Condos

Left: Rural Conservation Development types include a variety of single-family attached and detached housing types that focus on the preservation and conservation of open space.

SINGLE FAMILY SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT

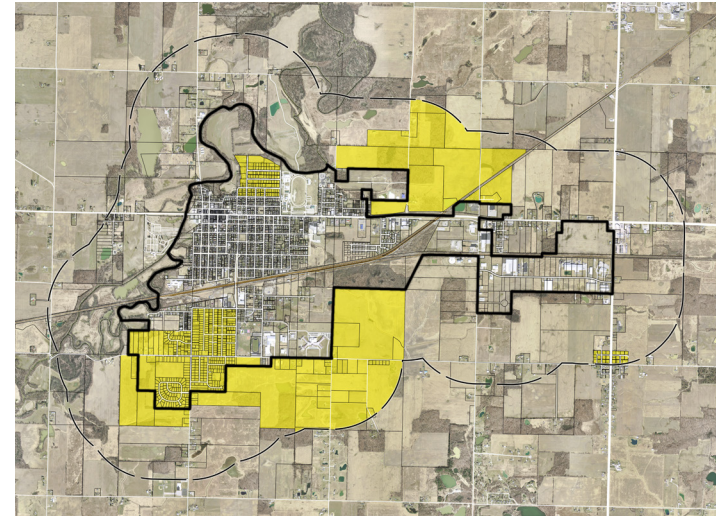
DESCRIPTION

Single Family Suburban allows for single-family housing in and around established districts and neighborhoods. The character should reflect existing suburban housing patterns, but allow for flexibility in housing type that maintains and mimics the look and feel of established neighborhoods.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY in this area should be up to 6 dwelling units per acre. Higher net densities may be achieved through open space dedication, as long as the overall density does not exceed 8 units per acre, unless density bonuses allow.

OPEN SPACE should be integrated into site and primarily include areas for gathering for residents within the development. Recreational paths should be included within open space and make connections to existing paths whenever possible.

CONNECTIVITY should be that of a neighborhood character, with narrow street widths and streetscapes that include trees, lighting, green stormwater infrastructure, etc.



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

HEIGHT	1-2 stories
FRONT SETBACK	5-25 feet
PARKING	Rear or side facing garages. Alley access where appropriate.
RECOMMENDED INTENSITY	Building coverage 30%-50% up to 6-8 units/acre.
RECOMMENDED USES	• Detached Single Family Homes • Attached Single Family Homes



Left: Suburban Single Family neighborhoods already exhibit characteristics of established development patterns and through stabilization and context appropriate development, can continue to improve and expand to accommodate future growth.

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

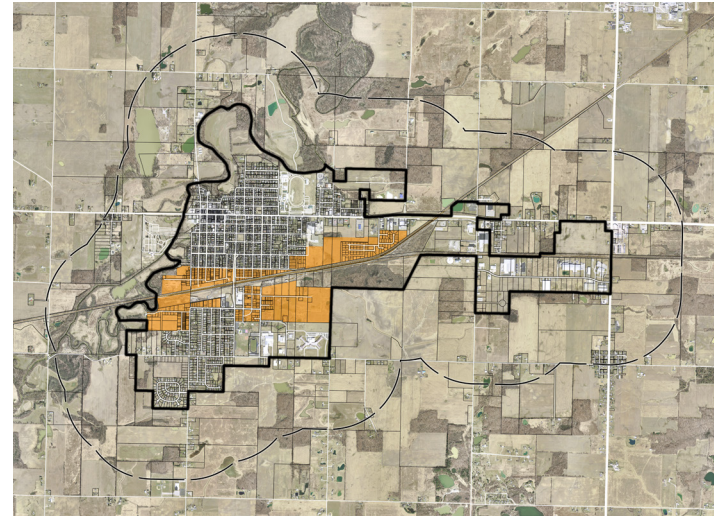
DESCRIPTION

Medium Density Residential Development allows for communities with a range of dense single and multifamily housing options with on-site, shared amenities such as new parks and open spaces and greenway connections.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY in this area should be up to 10 dwelling units per acre. Higher net densities may be achieved through open space dedication, as long as the overall density does not exceed 15 units per acre, unless density bonuses allow.

OPEN SPACE should be integrated into the site and primarily include areas for gathering for residents within the development. Recreational paths should be included within open space and make connections to existing paths whenever possible.

CONNECTIVITY should be that of a neighborhood character, with narrow street widths and streetscapes that include trees, lighting, green stormwater infrastructure, etc.



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

HEIGHT	1-3 stories
FRONT SETBACK	5-25 feet
PARKING	Rear or side facing garages. Alley access where appropriate.
RECOMMENDED INTENSITY	Building coverage 30%-50% up to 10-15 units/acre.
RECOMMENDED USES	• Detached Single Family Homes • Attached Single Family Homes • Multifamily



Left: Medium Density Residential Development can offer a variety of housing options and various price points for potential renters and owners. This can attract new and existing residents to housing options previously not offered within village limits.

URBAN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

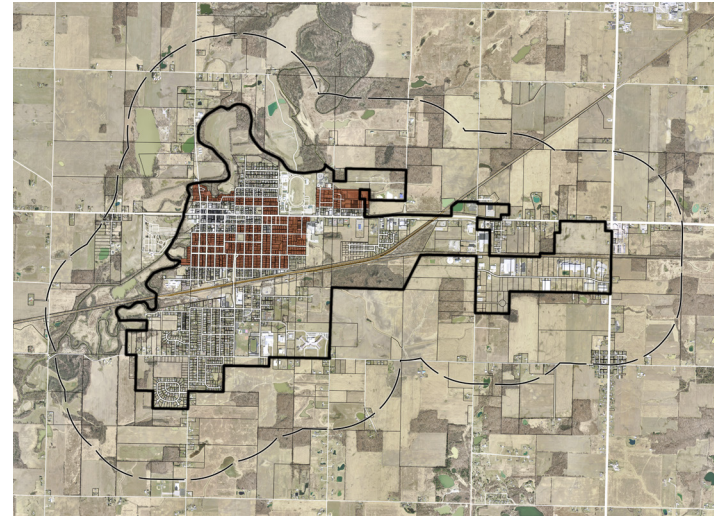
DESCRIPTION

Urban Residential allows for single and multifamily housing options in established urban districts and neighborhoods that support the proximity to commercial uses nearby.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY in this area should be up to 6 dwelling units per acre. Higher net densities may be achieved through open space dedication, as long as the overall density does not exceed 12 units per acre, unless density bonuses allow.

OPEN SPACE should be integrated into the site and primarily include areas for gathering for residents within the development. Recreational paths should be included within open space and make connections to existing paths whenever possible.

CONNECTIVITY should be that of a neighborhood character, with narrow street widths and streetscapes that include trees, lighting, green stormwater infrastructure, etc.



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

HEIGHT	1-3 stories
FRONT SETBACK	5-25 feet
PARKING	Rear or side facing garages. Alley access where appropriate.
RECOMMENDED INTENSITY	Building coverage 30%-50% up to 6-12 units/acre.
RECOMMENDED USES	• Detached Single Family Homes • Attached Single Family Homes • Multifamily



Left: Urban Residential Development can contain a variety of new and infill development types that support a neighboring commercial core. From new single-family homes, to townhomes, to duplex, triplex, or quadplexes, the development pattern should be context sensitive to its surroundings.

DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

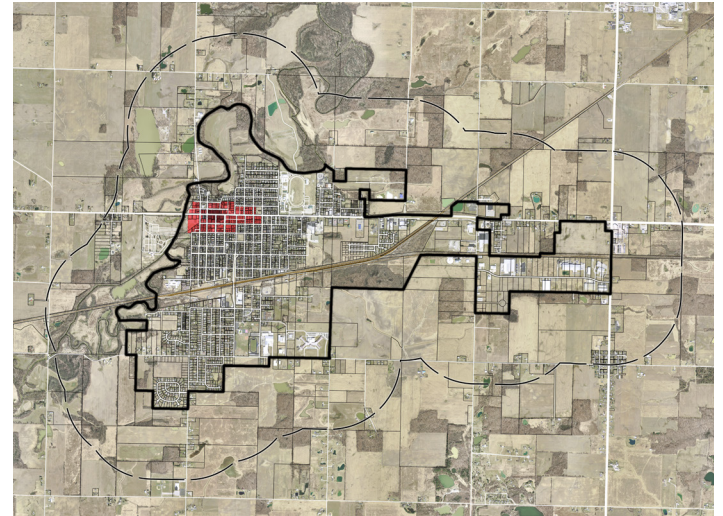
DESCRIPTION

Downtown Mixed-Use Development allows for a variety of uses including retail and office, as well as residential uses in an urban mixed-use development styles. These uses can be integrated vertically in the same building, or horizontally in the same development and contain public and private realm features that promote walkability, social interaction, and a connection to environmental assets. This area is the primary urban center of the village and supports the surrounding neighborhoods and community as a whole.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY in this area may range from 10 to 30 units per acre for residential and 10,000 to 30,000 square feet per acre for non-residential uses.

OPEN SPACE should be highly connected and create both small and large places for people to gather including plazas, green lawns, and natural areas.

CONNECTIVITY should incorporate “Complete Streets” principles so it is safe and efficient for all modes of travel. Streetscape elements should be cohesive and enhance the public realm. Cross-access drives are encouraged between developments to reduce curb-cuts on major roadways.



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

HEIGHT	1-5 stories
FRONT SETBACK	0-25 feet
PARKING	Rear or side facing of building, screen from street and neighboring uses (multifamily/commercial only)
RECOMMENDED INTENSITY	• 10-30 du/acre • 10,000-30,000 sf/acre
RECOMMENDED USES	• Attached Single Family Homes • Multifamily • Mixed Use w/ Retail • Mixed Use w/ Office



Left: Downtown Mixed-Use Development within historic downtowns promote a mix of commercial, residential, and public spaces that create dynamic centers for people to live, work, and play.

LOCAL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

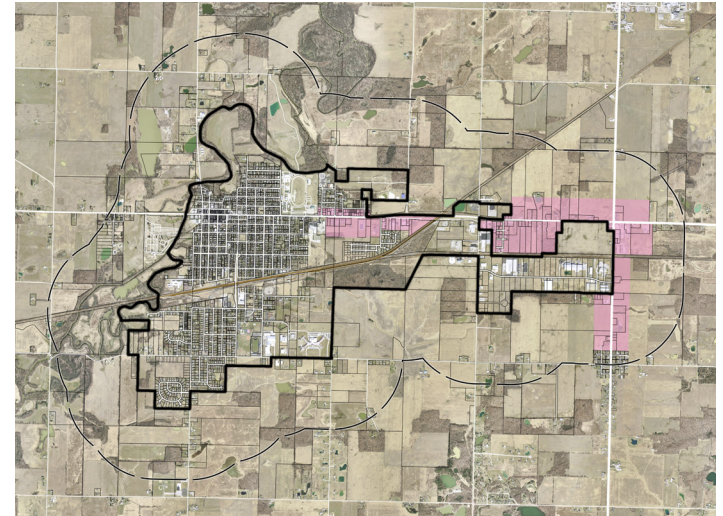
DESCRIPTION

Local Commercial Development allows for small to medium-scale retail, office, and commercial services that complement and support the village and the greater region.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY in this area should be medium scale, with individual buildings being no greater than 10,000-15,000 square feet, and look to create cohesive development blocks.

OPEN SPACE should be used to define and add character to a development. Ornamental landscaping within the setback, within parking lots, and along buildings is encouraged.

CONNECTIVITY should incorporate “Complete Streets” principles so it is safe and efficient for all modes of travel. Streetscape elements should be cohesive and enhance the public realm. Cross-access drives are encouraged between developments to reduce curb-cuts on major roadways.



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

HEIGHT	1-2 stories
FRONT SETBACK	0-50 feet
PARKING	Rear or side facing, screen from street/neighborhood uses
RECOMMENDED INTENSITY	Individual buildings less than 10,000-15,000 sf/acre
RECOMMENDED USES	• Retail • Office • Commercial Services



Left: Local Commercial Development creates an environment for small to medium-scale retail, neighborhood services, and office uses that complement and support nearby residential uses.

INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT

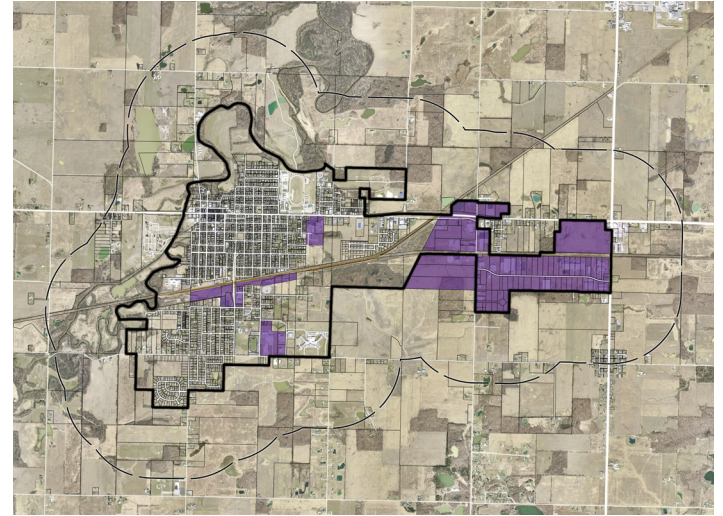
DESCRIPTION

Innovation Development allows for small to large-scale industrial, research, and office uses that demand proximity to local, regional, and national transportation networks and create and require synergy between adjoining uses and businesses.

DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY in this area may range from 15,000 to 25,000 square feet per acre and allow for large format users.

OPEN SPACE should be incorporated into site design as appropriate.

CONNECTIVITY should allow safe travel for cars, trucks, and freight with consideration for roundabouts where appropriate. Branding signage may also be considered in this area.



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

HEIGHT	1-2 stories
FRONT SETBACK	25-200 feet
PARKING	Screen from street/neighboring uses
RECOMMENDED INTENSITY	15,000 -25,000 sf/acre
RECOMMENDED USES	• Logistics • Light Industrial • Research & Development • Commercial Office



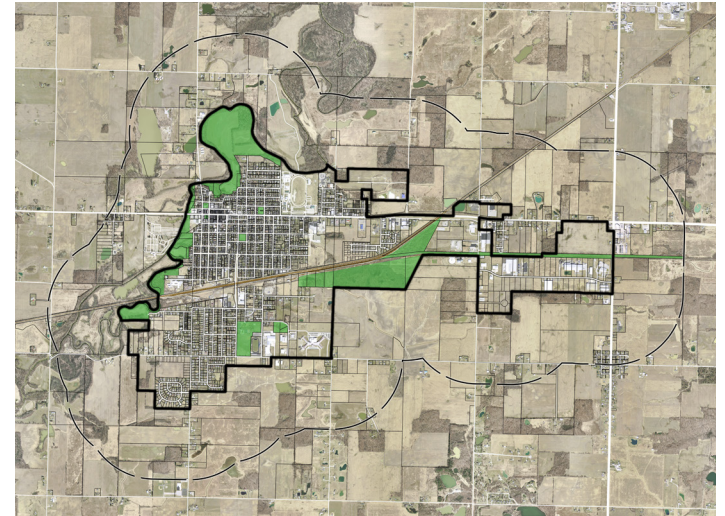
Left: Innovation Development districts can contain a variety of uses that require large development parcels, such as the Ohio Mega Site, to support logistics, light industrials, research and development, and other large employment centers.

PARKS AND RECREATION

DESCRIPTION

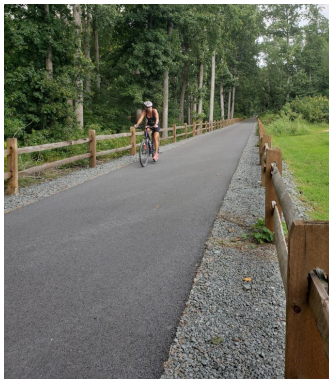
Public parks and open spaces are areas intended to accommodate public and semi-public uses. Such facilities should be well designed and integrated into their surroundings. Pedestrian access is within these areas and must be ADA accessible. Structures should be connected to pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the area, and enhanced crossings should be provided to ensure pedestrian safety at key roadway crossings.

When considering the development of large expanses of greenfield land, it is important to recognize the value of open space and recreational areas and land remaining in its natural state. Residential neighborhoods and mixed-use developments often gain greater value when located in proximity to parks and open space. Park facilities should include a range of active and passive uses or activities, and be designed to reduce maintenance expenses. The existing park network should be expanded into new areas of development.



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

HEIGHT	--
FRONT SETBACK	--
PARKING	--
RECOMMENDED INTENSITY	--
RECOMMENDED USES	• Public Services • Parks & Recreation • Natural Areas



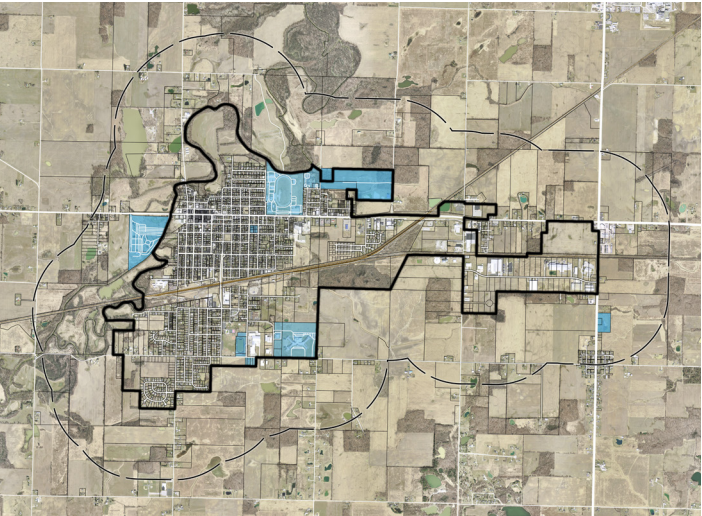
Left: Existing and future areas for parks and recreation should be connected across the community and integrated into individual neighborhoods to form a cohesive and robust network for residents and visitors alike.

PUBLIC + SEMI-PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT

DESCRIPTION

Public + Semi-public areas are intended to accommodate public and semi-public uses. Buildings and land owned by the government, libraries, village emergency and service departments, religious uses, and schools share this development character. Such facilities should be well designed and integrated into their surroundings.

Pedestrian access is key on these sites and must be ADA accessible. Structures should be connected to pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the area, and enhanced crossings should be provided at roadways to ensure pedestrian safety. Attractive landscaping, streetscape elements, and signage should be used to integrate larger sites into the existing street network.



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

HEIGHT	--
FRONT SETBACK	--
PARKING	--
RECOMMENDED INTENSITY	--
RECOMMENDED USES	• Parks and Recreation • Public • Semi Public



Left: Existing and future institutional buildings, sites, and campuses within a community offer key services for residents and improve quality of life.

HOUSING

One of the main focuses of the planning process was understanding the current housing availability for people of all ages and backgrounds and planning for a future that meets the needs of current and future residents. Additionally, the process involved identifying the need for housing incentives and initiatives to develop the workforce, which will contribute to the growth of the local economy. Although residential land uses make up a good portion of the zoned land in Montpelier, there have not been major new developments or changes in the population in recent history. This lack of development results in limited housing options, primarily consisting of suburban single-family homes, and represents a missed opportunity for the village to generate tax revenue.

As Montpelier looks to the future, the village must adjust to the community's changing needs to expand its housing options to accommodate a range of economic demographics. It is essential to develop age-friendly homes with smaller footprints for transitional housing and workforce housing to meet the growing demands of Williams County. As new housing is developed, it is crucial to ensure that the character of the housing complements the small-town community and promotes its quality of life assets such as parks, recreation, and other natural spaces.

Anticipated Regional Growth

In 2023, the Williams County Economic Development Corporation (WEDCO) carried out a housing study focusing on a three-year outlook for Williams County. The plan encompasses various data points and factors, such as household demographics, employment trends, rental and for-sale housing, and low-income housing options.

Key findings from the study regarding future housing growth in the county, which could impact Montpelier, include the projected three-year outlook. The study indicates a market demand for 408 to 486 new housing units in Williams County over the outlined three-year period. Within this range, approximately 200 to 440 units are projected to be market-rate rentals, 80 to 100 units for low-income rentals, and 128 to 146 units for market-rate homes for sale.

Although this growth projection is county-wide, there is a specific need in Montpelier for newer rental products across various unit types, particularly senior housing, as well as existing multi-family developments, due to their extremely low vacancy rates. Additionally, prospective residents are encountering challenges in finding housing options above market rate as existing housing ages and remains in the general market rate.

Housing Update Analysis

Williams County, Ohio



Market-Supported New Housing Development 2024 through 2027 Williams County, Ohio

	For-Sale	Rental Housing		Total
	Housing	Market-Rate	Low-Income	Housing Demand
Total Units	128 – 146	200 – 240	80 – 100	408 – 486

Prepared For:

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December 28, 2023

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Above and Right: The WEDCO Housing Update Analysis provided key metrics on how much potential housing Williams County can absorb through 2027. It is intended to be used as a guide if and when growth pressures occur in Montpelier and neighboring communities.

Housing Stock and Condition

The condition of housing in a community has significant implications for its livability, quality of life, and financial well-being. The following section provides an analysis of the current housing stock within the community in relation to future market demands and resident needs. Understanding the current state of housing in Montpelier ensures that the Plan can address present community housing needs while preparing for appropriate land use and planning decisions in the future.

The housing stock in the Village of Montpelier is mainly older, with many homes dating back several decades. These older homes, surrounding the historic downtown, often have charming architectural details and come in a variety of lot sizes and scales, reflecting the historical character of the village. While older homes can offer unique character and craftsmanship, they may also require more maintenance and updates compared to newer construction. The newer housing stock is located in the southern portion of the village and is generally on larger lots in a ranch style.

The Village of Montpelier is mainly made up of single-family homes, which can pose challenges for both existing homeowners and individuals seeking a different lifestyle. The limited availability of alternative housing options, such as townhouses or condominiums, may restrict the choices for those looking for a more low-maintenance or community-oriented living arrangement. Additionally, existing homeowners may face difficulties in finding suitable housing if they wish to downsize or transition to a different type of residence within the village. This emphasis on single-family homes underscores the need for diversification in housing options to accommodate the evolving preferences and needs of residents and potential residents of Montpelier.



Above: Example of older and newer single family housing types within the village.

Regional & National Market Trends

As Montpelier's population continues to grow and the village develops, there are national and regional trends that will inevitably affect the demographics of the population and the types of communities where people prefer to live. By incorporating these expected trends into planning efforts, the village can sustain or increase its competitiveness in the housing and commercial market and prepare for the correct amount of village services, including schools, senior services, utilities, and parks, among others.

Place First

Current national trends indicate a swing in how individuals choose where to live. A growing number of Millennials and Gen Z'ers choose where they want to live first and then resolve the logistics of finding employment and housing in their desired location. Younger generations seek destinations that offer a superior quality of life and ample amenities.

This quality of life, or satisfaction with one's health, community, employment, and environment, should be considered. These generations prefer in-town areas that feature diversity and walkability near jobs and entertainment.

The result of this change is more competition for jobs and housing in areas that have a high quality of life with a diverse array of amenities. A subsequent decrease in the desire to live in suburban areas with limited amenities has resulted for some within the Baby Boomer, Millennial, and Gen Z cohorts.

Buying vs. Renting

While owning a home may be desired by some, current trends indicate that many individuals are more inclined to rent instead. Buying can offer a greater return on investment over time but carries a significant amount of financial risk as well as long-term maintenance. Renting often does not carry the financial risk or maintenance of owning property. Longevity is also an important factor in determining whether to buy or rent. While owning typically involves a long-term commitment from the buyer, renting can offer short- or long-term living solutions and allows tenants the flexibility to move when desired or needed.

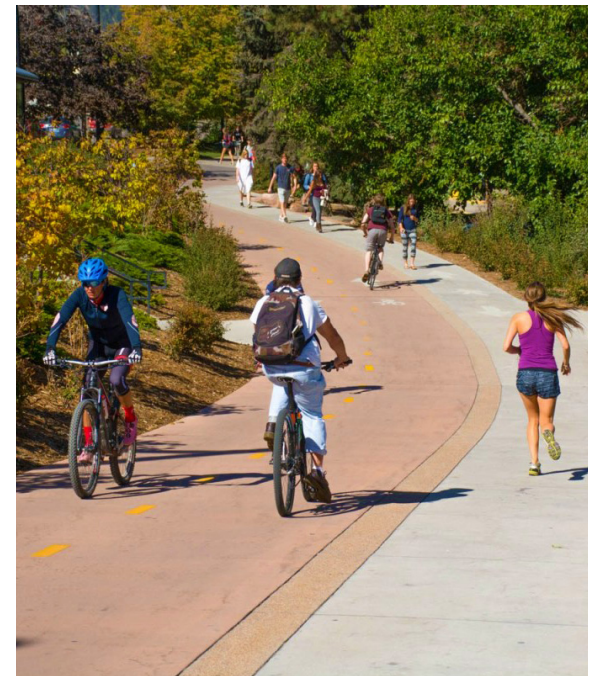
Health & Sustainability

Healthy and sustainable initiatives can enhance the overall quality of life in a community, attract talented employees, and encourage high-quality development. Investments in park space, trails, and other community amenities promote a healthy lifestyle for residents and draw regional visitors. Downtowns can increase sustainability by incorporating these initiatives as well as supporting the long-term financial health of their businesses and increasing residential density. Compact, walkable environments have the greatest potential for sustainability.

Right: Multi-use path systems promote various avenues of pedestrian connectivity and encourage non-motorized transportation.

Walkability & Connectivity

An emphasis on a complete transportation system allows people to easily travel by foot, bicycle, or car. Factors that influence walkability include pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, crosswalks, wayfinding, and signage. Communities easily navigated on foot are desired as more Millennials want to live near employment and entertainment options, and the ease and convenience of walkable and well-connected communities is preferred. Focusing on the pedestrian experience and finding creative ways to utilize funding and partnerships is what has been helping downtowns across the country revitalize.



Residential Development Options

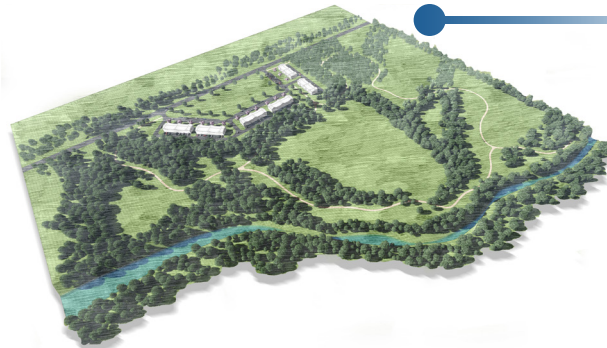
As development and planning have evolved, so have the options for how residential developments are designed within an area. When developing a neighborhood, it's essential to consider the available land and how it can be utilized to preserve natural spaces. The layout can be tailored to the land's characteristics to create a balance between residential areas and natural surroundings. Natural greenways and parks can be incorporated to provide recreational areas and support biodiversity. Additionally, the layout can take advantage of the natural topography and features of the land to maximize scenic views.

If and when the Village of Montpelier continues to expand, it will be increasingly important to accommodate a variety of residential housing styles, such as condos, single family homes, and multifamily units, while simultaneously considering the overall layout. By carefully considering the available land and its natural attributes, a neighborhood can be harmonious with the environment, offering a balance of residential options while preserving natural spaces.



Suburban Cluster Development - Single Family

This development type entails clustering units on smaller lots to preserve open space and promote community-wide amenities. Trails and open space can be integrated into the community's system. Single family lots are smaller and more clustered than conventional development types, while still maintaining existing development rights.



Suburban Cluster Development - Multifamily

This development type can also entail clustering multifamily units on smaller parcels to preserve even more open space and promote community-wide amenities. Trails and open space can be integrated into community's system. Various unit types, such as multifamily, can be more clustered than conventional development types, while still maintaining existing development rights.



Suburban Cluster Development - Mixed Unit

This development type can also entail clustering various unit types on smaller parcels to preserve even more open space and promote community-wide amenities. Trails and open space can be integrated into community's system. This development type would increase the density and intensity of development, but would still preserve more open space than conventional suburban development.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Creating a balanced land use plan that addresses both current and future needs, while fostering a sustainable and vibrant community, can help guide Montpelier through the next 20 years of growth and development. By promoting a diverse mix of residential housing types, Montpelier can meet the growing regional demand for various options, ensuring that residents of all ages, incomes, and family sizes have access to quality homes. This approach would include developing single-family homes, townhouses, options for seniors, and multifamily units, as well as affordable housing. Such variety would support younger residents, growing families, and older adults looking to downsize, making Montpelier an attractive and inclusive place to live. Integrating housing options near the downtown area could also encourage walkability and reduce car dependency, fostering a close-knit and accessible community.

In addition to residential development, this vision emphasizes the thoughtful promotion of commercial and industrial areas to support a growing economy. Designating land for new commercial use—particularly in or near downtown and along the existing commercial corridor on East Main Street—would strengthen Montpelier’s local businesses and attract new entrepreneurs looking for a welcoming, community-oriented environment. Industrial zones would be located where they maximize efficiency and minimize impact on residential

areas, providing well-paying jobs to support the local workforce. By focusing on sustainable development practices and strategically attracting industries that align with Montpelier’s values and steady growth, the village can establish itself as a community where economic prosperity and quality of life go hand in hand.

This land use vision also prioritizes the conservation of environmentally sensitive areas. Protecting natural features such as wetlands, woodlands, and waterways is essential for maintaining Montpelier’s ecological health and quality of life. By designating these areas for conservation and creating green buffers around them, Montpelier can preserve its natural heritage and offer residents beautiful outdoor spaces to enjoy. The village could also explore zoning incentives for developers who incorporate sustainable practices, such as preserving green spaces, enhancing stormwater management, or using eco-friendly building materials.

Looking ahead, updating Montpelier’s zoning code will be a crucial part of realizing this vision. An updated zoning code can guide future growth by balancing development and conservation, streamlining approvals, and encouraging mixed-use developments that combine residential, commercial, and recreational spaces. Modernizing zoning practices would help Montpelier adapt to future needs, ensuring that the village remains an attractive, vibrant, and sustainable community for generations to come.



Above: Diverse and complementary land uses help communities big and small attract new residents while meeting the needs of existing residents.



FUTURE LAND USE + HOUSING

VISION

A land use framework that balances the small-town character with future growth and development.

Existing Conditions & Community Engagement Feedback

- » There is a desire for strategic growth over the long term, **balancing inward and outward growth** through new development and preservation.
- » There is a **deficit of diverse and affordable housing choices**, making it difficult for existing residents to age in place and for new residents to move to the village.
- » Existing **zoning patterns allow for some future growth**, but need updated to adapt to best practices in planning and conservation.
- » Additional housing options like **smaller starter homes, multifamily infill and new build, as well as above market-rate housing** should be included in future housing developments.

Plan Objectives

- » Accommodate **context sensitive growth outside of the village limits** while protecting and maintaining an authentic rural character
- » Encourage residential infill with a **wide range of housing options** to meet the needs of current and future residents
- » **Protect and promote natural assets in the community** such as the St. Joseph River and surrounding environmentally sensitive areas
- » Create opportunities for **new housing developments with diverse options**
- » Work to **stabilize and enhance existing neighborhoods** through property maintenance and high-quality character and quality of new residential construction

Top Right: Clustering development and introducing a variety of housing types creates opportunities to conserve and connect vital natural open spaces.

Bottom Right: Constructing smaller, more economically attainable homes, allows for new choices for prospective and existing residents.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The action items below are intended to guide the next steps. It includes a recommended time frame for completion and key project partners for implementation.

ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	PROJECT PARTNERS
Offer residential tax abatements in targeted areas that align with the future land use map to attract workforce and entry level housing	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Offer density bonuses in the Urban Residential and Medium Density Residential districts to attract workforce and entry level housing	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Promote new residential development in undeveloped areas that helps to address the shortage of residential units in the community and is clustered to protect open spaces and the rural character	Mid Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Review and update zoning standards to encourage housing development while preserving the character of the community (e.g. allow for a variety of lot sizes and units while respecting the community character)	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning
Promote new residential housing on vacant and underutilized sites within developed areas	Mid Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO) • Williams County Land Bank • Habitat for Humanity of Williams County
Continue to use a variety of tools to attract and support new residential development with a focus on workforce and attainable housing (Habitat, CRA programs, landbanks, etc.)	Mid Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO) • Williams County Land Bank • Habitat for Humanity of Williams County
Ensure new annexations can be served by village utilities, infrastructure, and essential village services.	Long Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning • Village Electric Department • Village Water & Sewer Distribution Department

Downtown Revitalization + Local Economy

OVERVIEW

This section of the plan framework for the village is a crucial component that harmoniously integrates with other sections such as future land use, mobility and connectivity, and image and branding. The aim is to restore and rejuvenate this core district to align with the current and future needs of the community, while also embracing its rich historical significance and natural elements. This strategic approach not only seeks to elevate the functionality and appeal of the downtown area but also ensures a seamless connection with the village's heritage and environment. In addition, the plan emphasizes the promotion and support of local businesses, fostering a vibrant economic environment within the downtown area.

Right: Facade improvements to downtown buildings can help spur continued economic investment.



REVITALIZATION TRENDS

Downtown revitalization has become a significant focus across the United States as cities seek to attract residents, businesses, and visitors back to urban cores. One of the key trends driving this revitalization is the rise of mixed-use developments, which combine residential, commercial, and entertainment spaces within walkable environments. These developments cater to a growing demand for vibrant, live-work-play neighborhoods that offer convenience and community. Cities are also investing in infrastructure improvements, such as better public transportation, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, and green spaces, to enhance the appeal of downtown areas. This approach not only fosters economic growth but also helps to create more sustainable and resilient urban environments.

Another national trend in downtown revitalization is the adaptive reuse of historic buildings. Rather than demolishing old structures, cities are preserving their architectural heritage by converting these buildings into modern spaces that can house offices, apartments, restaurants, and cultural venues. This trend reflects a broader cultural shift towards sustainability and appreciation for history, as well as the economic benefits of maintaining unique local character.

Additionally, downtowns are increasingly embracing technology and smart city initiatives, such as free public Wi-Fi and smart parking systems, to enhance the urban experience and attract tech-savvy populations. These efforts are often supported by public-private partnerships and community engagement, ensuring that revitalization projects are inclusive and reflective of local needs.

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE

The success of a downtown core depends on the vibrancy of its streets. Streets that are safe and pleasant for pedestrians will continue to make downtown Montpelier a more attractive place to live, work, and visit. Even residents who drive downtown still walk from their car to local shops and businesses. Streets that encourage patrons to linger and enjoy themselves are important to the success of any downtown area.

Streetscape design and improvements can be achieved through a range of strategies. A prevalence of street trees in urban environments is important as they provide shade and a buffer between pedestrians and automobile traffic. Some communities in recent years have resisted the addition of trees to their downtowns due to the cost and time involved in their maintenance and the ever-present possibility of disease and storm damage. However, there are few other additions

a community can make to its urban environment that provide the same positive effects trees in the natural environment, including increased walkability, stormwater mitigation, improved street character, or reduced flooding events.

The wider sidewalks proposed in many streetscape designs inherently lead to narrower traffic lanes. This is a popular trend among cities as narrower travel lanes reduce traffic speeds, increasing the safety for all road users. Other physical improvements—such as sidewalk bump-outs that reduce the distance pedestrians have to cross the street or raised crosswalks that make pedestrians more visible to vehicles—can make downtown streets safer, and thus, more attractive to pedestrians.

Finally, streetscape design that incorporates green infrastructure can help advance downtown environmental strategies. In addition to being visually appealing, green infrastructure such as rain gardens or bioswales can redirect stormwater away from a sewer system and reduce the strain on existing infrastructure. Continuing to invest in Montpelier's streetscape designs can have myriad positive effects on the downtown area.

CONSUMER PREFERENCES

During the planning process, there was a strong community desire for more retail and entertainment options. It was important to balance development with the conservation and preservation of Montpelier's rural and historic character. In line with this, community members wanted a mix of neighborhood-focused retail in the heart of the community and regionally-serving commercial and innovation uses in designated districts towards the outskirts of the village.

This sentiment is consistent with national retail trends. Data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis reveals that spending on travel, recreation, and dining out has steadily increased over the last decade, while spending on household goods, clothing, and other items has declined. Retail stores have managed to stay competitive by locating in experiential or destination locations. Some retailers now offer services beyond traditional shopping, including cooking or fitness classes, community gathering spaces, restaurants, and service amenities.

Right: Creating a pedestrian-friendly streetscape to enhance accessibility and community engagement is part of downtown revitalization.

EXPERIENCE BASED PLACES

Montpelier can further develop immersive environments by creating new distinctive spaces that promote the same activity and social interaction like the recently constructed Founders Park. These spaces can act as focal points for community members to gather, work, shop, and enjoy entertainment. They are designed to move beyond traditional big-box retail settings and instead establish a vibrant hub where residents can access the shopping and entertainment options they seek. Special events like markets and festivals also contribute to the village's commercial activity and economy by attracting residents and visitors to shop and support local businesses.



VISION FOR THE FUTURE

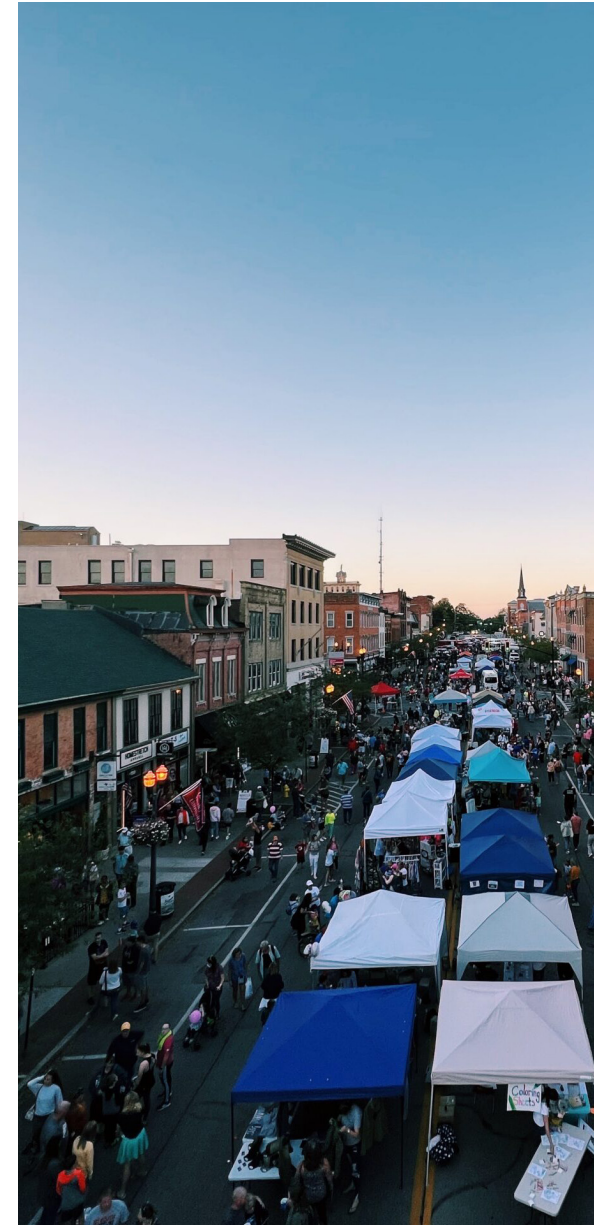
The Village of Montpelier has significant potential for continued downtown revitalization and economic development. By focusing on creating a vibrant and inviting village core, the revitalized downtown can reestablish Montpelier as a thriving business and cultural hub that attracts new businesses and the workforce needed to sustain them. The vision is for Montpelier to evolve into a bustling small town that combines charm with modern amenities, drawing visitors, new residents, and entrepreneurs who view the town as an ideal place to settle down and invest.

To attract new businesses, Montpelier could introduce incentive programs such as tax breaks, small business grants, or low-interest loans specifically targeted at startups and entrepreneurs. These initiatives could be supported by marketing efforts that highlight Montpelier's unique advantages, including its affordability, community-driven values, and prime location along the I-90 corridor. Developing coworking spaces or small business incubators would facilitate local entrepreneurship. A particular emphasis could be placed on attracting businesses that generate jobs and local spending, such as specialty retail shops, cafes, restaurants, and arts and entertainment venues, enhancing foot traffic and creating a more vibrant and interconnected downtown community.

Revitalizing the downtown area itself is crucial for fostering a business-friendly environment. Streetscape projects, improved lighting, updated building facades, and additional public gathering spaces, such as Founders Park, can make downtown Montpelier more attractive and accessible. Community-focused events like seasonal festivals, farmers' markets, and art fairs could be held in a dedicated town square to engage both locals and tourists. These efforts would not only increase the visibility of existing businesses but also create a welcoming atmosphere that aligns with the values of prospective new residents and workers seeking a high quality of life.

Attracting a sufficient workforce will be essential to support the vision of a revitalized Montpelier. To achieve this, partnerships with local schools and community colleges could be established to provide training programs tailored to the needs of current and incoming businesses. Additionally, improving local housing options, such as affordable rentals or live-work spaces in the downtown area, would enhance Montpelier's appeal for workers and families. With this three-pronged approach—business attraction, downtown revitalization, and workforce development—Montpelier can position itself as a vibrant modern small town with abundant opportunities and a thriving local economy.

Right: Downtowns can come alive when locals and visitors gather for vibrant local festivals, celebrating community spirit and local businesses.





DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION + LOCAL ECONOMY

VISION

A local economy defined and driven by a thriving downtown, and a diverse industry base creating local jobs and sustainable revenue streams.

Existing Conditions & Community Engagement Feedback

- » There is a lack of commercial and personal business, making **residents travel outside the village limits for basic goods** and services.
- » There is currently significant **vacancy and deferred maintenance** across a handful of buildings in the downtown.
- » There is a desire to continue to monitor the **need for improved sidewalk and streetscape conditions** in and around the downtown.
- » There is a desire to remain **sensitive to the available workforce in the region** as local businesses have expressed difficulty in staffing and available workers.

Plan Objectives

- » Promote **new businesses and infill development** in the downtown and industrial park
- » Support **facade improvements** through programs and policies
- » Identify **economic incentive mechanisms** to promote investment
- » Encourage **elevated building and design standards** for new builds and improvements
- » Improve **key gateways** into the downtown and village outskirts
- » Improve the **streetscape condition** for motorists and non-motorists



Top Right: Facade improvement programs help breathe new life into buildings and help promote continued investment into historic downtowns.

Bottom Right: Improving the streetscape condition helps promote economic development and makes a safer, more enjoyable condition for pedestrians.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The action items below are intended to guide the next steps. It includes a recommended time frame for completion and key project partners for implementation.

ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	PROJECT PARTNERS
Invest in downtown revitalization projects to improve the public realm such as streetscape improvements, public art, and beautification and branding as a means to promote private sector investment and elevate the quality of the downtown	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Offer incentives such as abatements, façade improvement grants, special districts such as a tax increment financing district to support new investment in the downtown and other areas of the community	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Partner with other governments, institutions, and economic-development-oriented nonprofits to study opportunities to support and grow ecosystem for entrepreneurs.	Long Term	• Village Leadership • Local Colleges, Universities, and Trade Schools
Create a community improvement corporation to help facilitate new investment in the community	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Consider becoming a Main Street Affiliate with Heritage Ohio to help bolster the revitalization of downtown	Mid Term	• Village Leadership • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Apply for CDBG funds to help support the implementation of capital projects in the Downtown Mixed Use and Innovation district	Mid Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning
Apply for Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (SC-CDBG) which specifically focuses on improving housing conditions and expanding economic opportunities in smaller communities with populations under 50,000	Mid Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning
Utilize Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credits to provide tax incentives to property owners who rehabilitate historic buildings	Long Term	• Village Leadership • Village Planning & Zoning
Work with local businesses to utilize the Job Creation Tax Credit and Ohio Enterprise Bond Fund which are designed to provide tax credits and low-interest financing to assist eligible businesses in making investments that will lead to job creation and retention in Ohio's small cities and rural areas.	Mid Term	• Village Leadership • Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)

Parks, Recreation + Community Connections

OVERVIEW

Access to parks, open spaces and recreational areas can improve people's mental and physical health, create spaces for community gathering, and help make a community a desirable place to live, work and visit. The Village of Montpelier boasts an array of parks and outdoor recreational spaces, each offering unique opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Montpelier Municipal Park serves as a central hub for community events, while the scenic pathways of the Wabash Cannonball Trail and Iron Horse River Trail offer great opportunities for outdoor activities. Additionally, Founders Park, which is also centrally located, hosts various community events. These spaces are essential for promoting physical activity, relaxation, and social interaction.

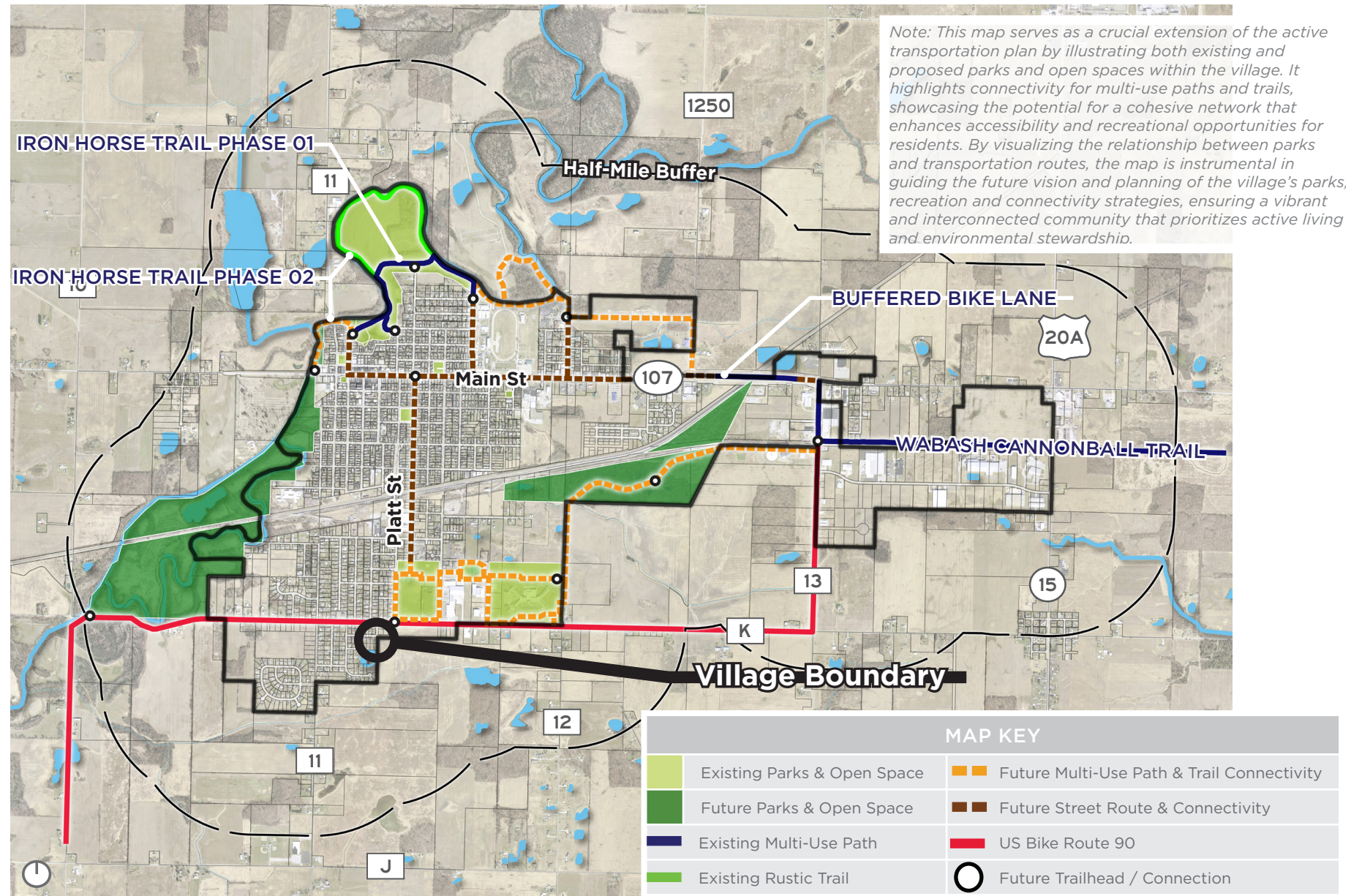
PARKS & RECREATION

The Village of Montpelier is home to a variety of parks and recreational spaces that serve as vital community assets, offering residents opportunities for leisure, fitness, and social engagement. To ensure these spaces remain inviting and functional, both short- and long-term maintenance and improvement strategies must be implemented. Short-term efforts could focus on routine upkeep, such as landscaping, equipment repairs, and accessibility enhancements, while long-term planning should prioritize infrastructure upgrades, the addition of new facilities, and the development of interconnected trails. By adopting a balanced approach, Montpelier can create a sustainable and vibrant network of parks that enhances community well-being and fosters a strong sense of place for current and future generations.



Right: Main Street Park located in the downtown district of Montpelier is an example of a semi-public space within the village that promotes community gathering and has various connectivity points.

Parks, Recreation, and Connections Map - Draft v1



ROADWAYS

Roadway connectivity is crucial for the Village of Montpelier, as it enhances access to essential services, promotes local businesses, and facilitates community interaction. Incorporating planning concepts such as Complete Streets can significantly enhance roadway connectivity in Montpelier.

Complete Streets

Complete Streets are defined as roadways planned, designed, and constructed to provide appropriate access to all legal users in a safe and efficient manner. The application of Complete Streets is dependent on the context of the community including the needs and function of its roadways. Therefore, appropriate design standards and engineering requirements must be balanced to meet users' needs within the context of the street.

Features of Complete Streets may include:

- Sidewalks and Bike Lanes
- Safe & Frequent Crossing Opportunities with Pedestrian Signals
- Curb Extensions and Median Islands
- Marked Lane Configurations & Signage
- Tree Lawns (landscaping barriers)

Right: An example of a historic downtown village streetscape with complete street elements.

NON-MOTORIZED CONNECTIVITY

A well-connected and accessible transportation network should incorporate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. Another aspect to consider for non-motorized connectivity is ensuring that pedestrians have safe access to commercial, institutional, and recreational facilities. The installation of sidewalks or multi-use paths in strategic locations will improve access and connectivity. As the village grows, it will be essential to ensure safe and accessible non-motorized connectivity for both residents and visitors.

Recently, the village has created and approved an Active Transportation plan that outlines non-motorized connectivity. To reflect the plan and further develop the network, it may be necessary to reassess the planned phases and organize them according to the Plan's future vision. Additionally, there are some connections that still need to be included in the plan but may be worth evaluating for future planning, such as trails. Creating an updated non-motorized transportation plan for the future and prioritizing the phases is a significant project that the community can work on over the next 3-5 years.



TRAILS

Trails are invaluable assets to communities, fostering physical activity, enhancing quality of life, and promoting social interaction among residents and visitors alike. The Wabash Cannonball Trail and the Iron Horse Trail exemplify this potential, serving as vital corridors that connect people within Montpelier and beyond. These trails not only provide recreational opportunities but also facilitate local and regional connectivity.

The Iron Horse Trail, with phase 1 construction recently completed, is a key focus for collaboration among local, county, and state authorities to ensure its successful completion. Continued investment in this trail will enhance access to surrounding areas and improve overall community connectivity. Meanwhile, the Wabash Cannonball Trail presents exciting opportunities for future expansion, particularly through its regional connectivity extending east and connecting to Toledo Metroparks.

The village should continue its collaborative efforts with the county, state, and Northern Ohio Rails to Trails Association (NORTA) to continue improving the Wabash Cannonball Trail connection in the village. The Wabash Cannonball Trail connection to the national North Country Trail strengthens the need for an improved Wabash Cannonball Trail. By prioritizing the expansion and maintenance of these trails, Montpelier can enhance its role as a hub for active transportation and outdoor recreation.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE & CONNECTIVITY

Within Montpelier are a variety of environmental assets, including the St. Joseph River, wetlands, and valuable open spaces. These natural features provide essential habitats for local wildlife, support biodiversity, and enhance the aesthetic and recreational appeal of the area. By prioritizing environmental resiliency, the village can ensure the long-term preservation of these resources while also promoting sustainability through thoughtful planning and conservation efforts.

Environmental resiliency and connectivity benefit both the environment and the community. By protecting these spaces and allowing for pedestrian experiences through trails and educational enrichment, residents can enjoy outdoor recreation and fostering a deeper connection with nature. In future planning efforts, the village should prioritize working within and around these natural assets by finding strategic connectivity points to allow pedestrian access. Collaborating with entities like the Ohio Department of Natural Resources can help identify opportunities for trails and educational pathways that enhance access while preserving these spaces. This approach not only protects natural resources but also enriches recreational and educational opportunities for residents and visitors.



Above: Completed sections of the Iron Horse Trail from the dedication ceremony in late October 2024.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

As Montpelier continues to evolve, maintaining a high level of services as it relates to community connections is highly desired by residents, stakeholders, and local leadership. This includes creating new greenways, trail connections, and parks that prioritize safety, accessibility, and connectivity to the surrounding region. By expanding and enhancing outdoor spaces, Montpelier can foster a sense of community, improve residents' quality of life, and attract visitors who seek scenic, accessible recreational opportunities. The goal is to design a cohesive network of green spaces that integrate with Montpelier's existing and proposed infrastructure, making it easy for people of all ages and abilities to access nature and safely travel within the area.

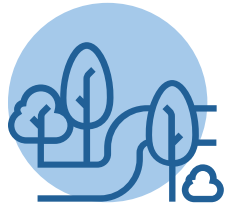
The development of new greenways and trails would prioritize safe, walkable, and bikeable routes that link residential neighborhoods to Montpelier's downtown, schools, and major parks. This approach would make active transportation a viable, enjoyable option for residents, helping to reduce car dependency and create a more pedestrian-friendly community. Safety features such as lighting, clear signage, and accessible trail surfaces would be integrated to ensure everyone, including families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities, feels comfortable and secure using the trails. Enhancing safety at crossings and intersections where trails meet roads will be crucial in promoting a seamless experience for all users.

In addition to connecting key locations within Montpelier, the trail network would link with larger regional trails, like the Wabash Cannonball Trail, giving residents access to broader outdoor recreation options and helping to attract eco-tourists to the area. Parks and greenspaces located along these greenways could feature a variety of passive and active amenities, creating inviting destinations for gatherings and events. Natural features would further enhance the aesthetic appeal, encouraging residents to spend more time outdoors and fostering a deep connection to the local environment.

This vision not only aims to improve Montpelier's livability but also to strengthen the local economy. Increased foot traffic to downtown and other areas could benefit local businesses, while Montpelier's green initiatives may attract environmentally conscious visitors and new residents. By prioritizing sustainability, accessibility, and regional connections, Montpelier can continue to transform itself into a model for small-town green infrastructure that supports a vibrant, healthy, and connected community.







PARKS, RECREATION + COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

VISION

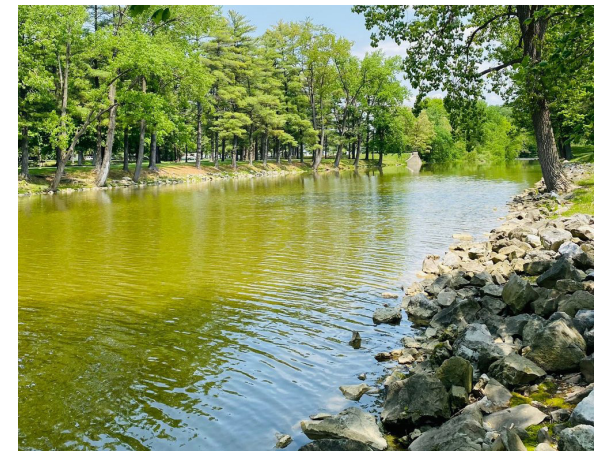
Safe and accessible parks and recreation services that are connected within the village and region.

Existing Conditions & Community Engagement Feedback

- » The Village of **Montpelier is centrally located** just off of the I-80/90 Ohio Turnpike, making the **village easily accessible to neighboring areas.**
- » The **St. Joseph River and surrounding natural environment** are assets to the village.
- » There is **a strong Parks and Recreation facility in the village**, and the department has recently been a leader in providing community resources and amenities.
- » The village is actively collaborating with local and state authorities to **maintain and advance its existing and future trail system.**
- » There are **opportunities to develop areas for increased non-motorized trails and improved connectivity.**

Plan Objectives

- » Continue developing the parks and recreation network in the village by **building on previous plans and studies**
- » **Identify potential areas for new green spaces and connections** in both future and existing residential neighborhoods
- » Enhance community connectivity by **linking to regional trail systems**
- » Ensure that **key infrastructure and other multi-modal improvements align with greenway initiatives**



Top Right: Ohio's Rails to trails program has proven to be a successful model in creating local and regional connectivity.

Bottom Right: The St. Joseph River is an asset for the village and can be connected to through various non-motorized connections.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The action items below are intended to guide the next steps. It includes a recommended time frame for completion and key project partners for implementation.

ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	PROJECT PARTNERS
Review and update parks and recreation master plans to outline improvements to existing parks and areas for new parks	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Identify a variety of partnerships, grants, and federal programs to help design and build additional multi-use connections and trails such as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant program, Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF), Recreational Trails Program (RTP), etc.	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Collaborate with regional trails and greenway associations to continue to build pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within and outside the village such as direct connections to the Wabash-Cannonball Trail and the North Country Trail	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Regional Trail Partners
Continue to review, assess, design, and build recommendations from the Active Transportation Plan such as the Iron Horse Trail Future Phases, and a North-South Connector	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Regional Trail Partners
Utilize the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to construct additional connections surrounding the Montpelier Schools campus	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Create and adopt a Complete Streets Policy to continue to promote a transportation system that is safe and efficient for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation in the community.	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Work with and utilize the Williams County Health Department and their annual goals to promote and improve health and wellness levels throughout the community. These include promoting Complete Streets and continuing to create and update green space and parks/ bike and pedestrian master plans.	Long Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Health Department

Community Image + Brand

OVERVIEW

A community's identity reflects its values and expresses its culture and feel to residents and visitors. The Village of Montpelier's identity represents a commitment to its long-term vision, as outlined in this Plan.

Community identity is more than a logo or banner: it leverages the best qualities of a place to tell a compelling story to targeted audiences and consistently delivers on its brand promises. This identity can be cultivated through deliberate branding, marketing, and physical realm considerations, including signage, streetscape design, or public spaces. Such targeted actions can help unite Montpelier in a shared vision for its future while securing a self-defined perception and sense of place. The following section outlines community image and branding elements and recommendations for supporting that image through branding and physical improvements.

IDENTITY TRENDS

Across the nation, communities are increasingly adopting branding initiatives as a strategic approach to cultivating a unique identity and deepen the sense of pride among their residents. By crafting distinctive logos, slogans, and visual themes that encapsulate the essence of their local culture, history, and values, these communities are creating a strong and memorable image.

Moreover, a well-executed branding campaign can be a powerful tool for economic development, attracting tourists, new residents, and businesses drawn to the village's distinct character and charm. As these efforts take root, they often lead to enhanced community pride and a stronger collective identity, reinforcing the emotional and cultural bonds that can help small communities thrive.



Right: The Montpelier Schools logo uses the village's color palette while creating its own unique identity that can still be tied back to the village's identity.

IMAGE & BRAND TOOLKIT

The following image and brand toolkit should be seen as a resource for village officials and community residents who wish to contribute to shaping the future image and brand of the village. Each element around the circle should be curated and considered in conjunction with the surrounding elements. Once an element is created, it should be recorded and consistently used when the village creates any marketing, signage, or general informational posts about the village.

MONTPELIER IMAGE & BRAND TOOLKIT

Values

Tagline

Imagery

Color Palette

Logo

Typography

PHYSICAL REALM

While some recommendations of this Plan are targeted to specific signature places in Montpelier, such as the downtown, the following physical realm elements should also be applied village-wide.

Streetscape

Montpelier's streets make up a significant portion of its public realm. Therefore, their quality, upkeep, and appearance impact the perception of the village as a whole and the viability of the businesses and residences that inhabit a particular street. There are many elements that can be incorporated into an attractive and functional streetscape. This includes physical aspects like materials, landscaping, signage, street "furniture" (benches, trash receptacles, etc.), sidewalks, and stormwater infrastructure, as well as intangible elements such as safety, comfort, and sustainability.

Gateways

Primary gateways are the entryways into a community which act as a first impression, signifying to visitors that they have arrived at a destination. Currently, Montpelier does not have a signature gateway, but creating such a gateway in the future would provide a sense of location awareness for visitors and pride for community members. Montpelier should consider not only adding a primary village gateway sign, but creating recognizable and cohesive branding which can help establish a sense of place and reinforce the community's vision for the future.



Above: Continuing to invest in unique branding elements, such as light pole banners, can spread the village identity through the community.



Above: Village gateway signs that reflect the village's image and brand can be implemented in the future.

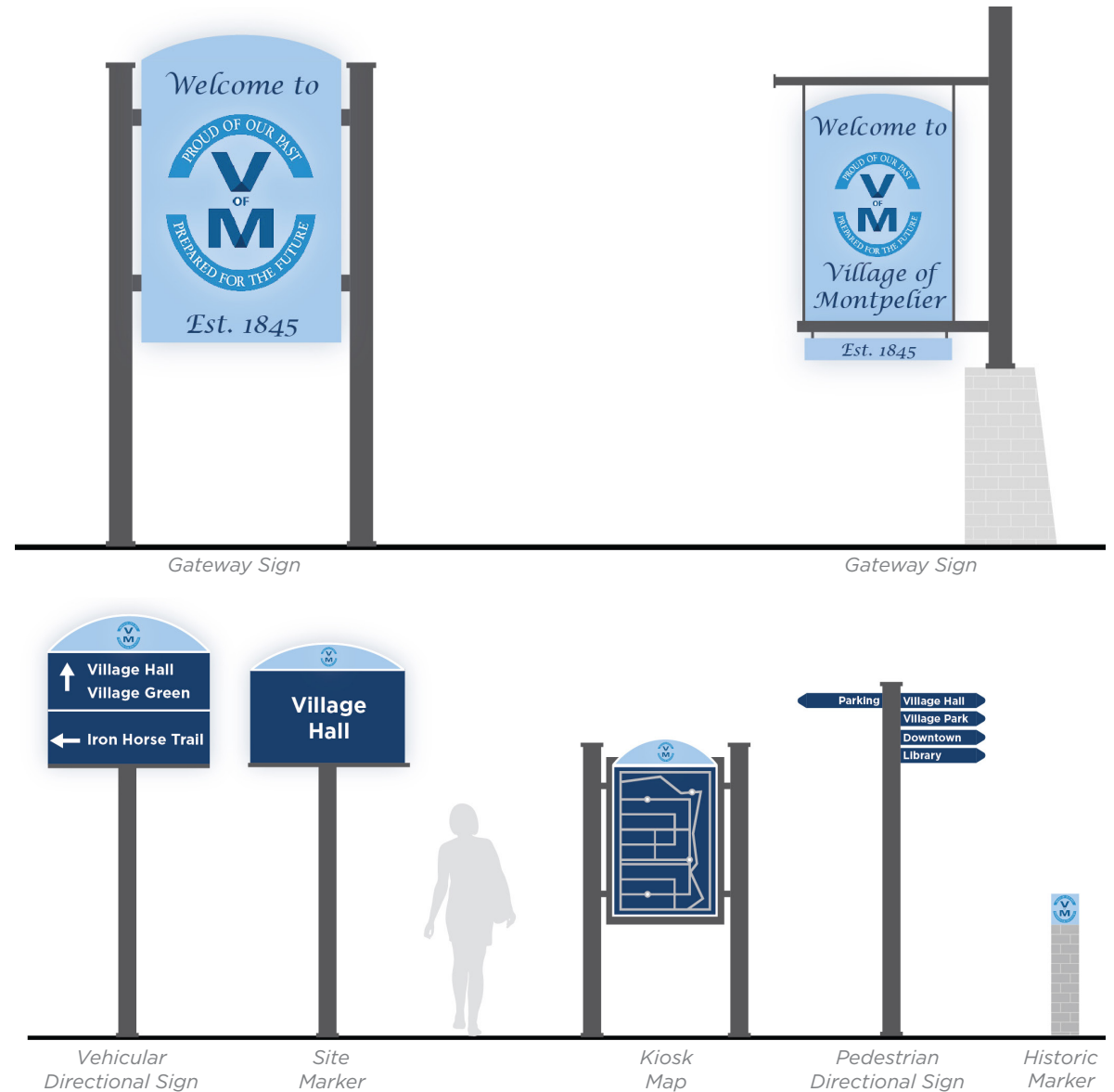
Signage & Wayfinding

Signage plays a crucial role in shaping a community's visual aesthetics and can significantly impact wayfinding and the success of local businesses. Oversized signs or those with unattractive colors or materials that don't fit the surrounding context can detract from the public space. Regulating and strategically placing signs to enhance aesthetics and wayfinding—especially for attractions and along major commercial corridors and in the downtown district—will be particularly important for creating a cohesive and welcoming environment.

Common elements that greatly impact signage aesthetics include location, scale, materials, color, lighting, and signage type, such as whether a sign is mounded or sits on pole. The Wayfinding Signage Toolkit on the right features signage that utilizes Montpelier's existing colors. This toolkit reflects various types and sizes of wayfinding signage that could be implemented throughout the village, which can also include signage for local attractions like the Iron Horse Trail and Wabash Cannonball Trail is essential for guiding visitors and residents. While it shouldn't be seen as a direct template, it serves as a valuable reference for future wayfinding signage.

The Village has expressed identifying and selecting an image and brand consultant to begin the efforts outlined in this section of the plan, and are slated to begin this process in early 2025.

Wayfinding Signage Toolkit

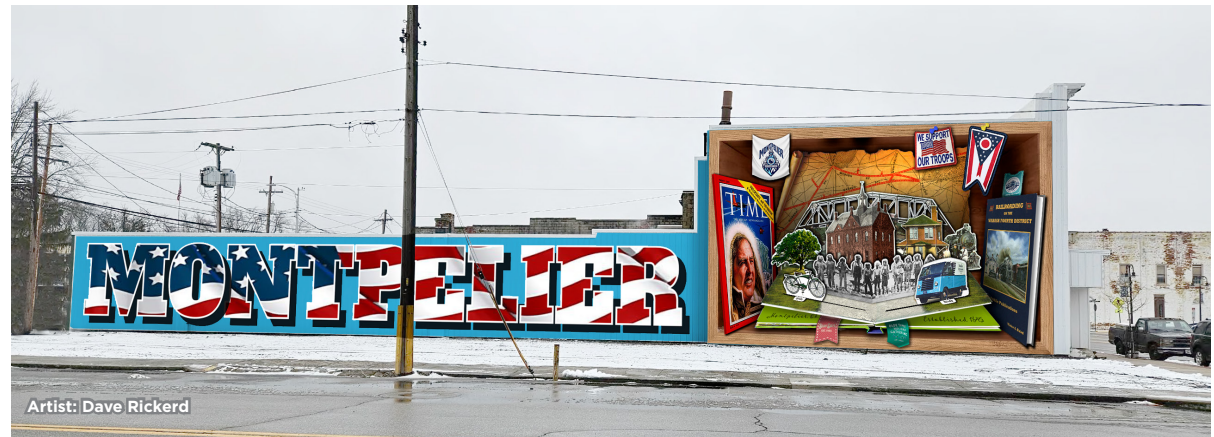


Arts & Culture

Incorporating artistic and cultural elements, such as murals, can significantly boost community pride and reflect the village's image and values. Murals can celebrate local heritage by depicting historical events, notable figures, and cultural traditions, fostering a deeper connection to the community. Vibrant murals can also beautify public spaces, transforming ordinary walls into eye-catching focal points. This visual enhancement creates inviting areas for residents and visitors, encouraging exploration and engagement with the village.

Engaging local artists and residents in the mural creation process can encourage collaboration. Workshops can gather input and ideas, ensuring that the final artwork represents a variety of voices and perspectives. By promoting local talent through mural projects, the village can position itself as a hub for creativity and cultural expression. Highlighting local artists supports the creative economy and attracts attention to the village as a destination for art and culture, potentially boosting tourism.

Ultimately, well-executed murals serve as symbols of shared identity, cultivating pride and reinforcing the community's unique character. Through the thoughtful integration of murals and other cultural elements, the village can foster a vibrant identity that reflects its spirit and vision for the future.



Above: The Village of Montpelier is currently investing in placemaking and tactical urbanism projects, such as adding murals in and around downtown to enhance beautification efforts, build pride in the arts and culture, and foster social capital. The concepts above were commissioned by the Montpelier Rotary Club.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The village has a unique opportunity to create a brand identity that reflects its heritage, community values, and future aspirations. The vision is to develop a cohesive and memorable brand that embodies Montpelier's welcoming spirit, historic charm, and progressive approach to small-town living. This brand can combine elements from Montpelier's history, such as its historic architecture and connections to the railroad, with symbols that signify progress and connectivity, appealing to both locals and visitors.

By incorporating this identity into future signage, wayfinding, and gateway initiatives, Montpelier can establish a unified look and feel throughout the village, enhancing its sense of place. Gateway signage at key entry points would reinforce Montpelier's identity as an inviting and thriving community, while wayfinding elements would guide people smoothly through the village, improving their overall experience.

This branding initiative would also extend to signage in downtown areas, parks, and public spaces, utilizing consistent colors, logos, and design elements to make Montpelier instantly recognizable. Alongside directional signs, interpretive panels sharing Montpelier's history and local pride stories could be placed in high-traffic areas, creating an engaging and educational experience. Branding on banners and decorative elements in popular event spaces would further emphasize Montpelier's community values and

charm, whether visitors come for a brief stop or a local celebration. Through a comprehensive branding approach, Montpelier can cultivate a stronger identity and enhance visibility, establishing itself as a must-visit destination in the region.

Promoting local events and gatherings is vital for fostering resident pride and building a close-knit community. Seasonal events such as street fairs, farmers' markets, and art festivals provide residents with frequent opportunities to come together, celebrate local culture, and showcase the talents of area artists, farmers, and entrepreneurs. These events not only strengthen social ties between residents but also serve as effective marketing tools, drawing people from neighboring communities eager to experience Montpelier's unique charm and energy. By featuring Montpelier's brand on event signage, programs, and promotional materials, the village can reinforce its identity while attracting new visitors and building a reputation as a lively, culturally rich community.

This vision combines strong, recognizable branding with a commitment to community engagement, positioning Montpelier as a place where people can experience a blend of tradition and progress. A well-crafted identity will not only boost community pride but also help Montpelier market itself as a distinctive regional destination, attracting visitors, new residents, and businesses that value its unique mix of history, culture, and community spirit.







COMMUNITY IMAGE + BRAND

VISION

A village that embraces and connects people to small town culture, history, and values as it strives to pursue smart, sustainable development for the future.

Existing Conditions & Community Engagement Feedback

- » The village is a **wonderful place to live and work, thanks to its people and community.**
- » There is an **existing village logo and color palette that represents the community** and can be leveraged for future marketing and signage.
- » There are **limited resources for visitors.**
- » The community desires to **expand signage and wayfinding to enhance accessibility.**
- » **Leverage local events** such as farmers markets, seasonal activities, parades, and Bean Days to **boost community pride**

Plan Objectives

- » Create a **unique image and brand standard for the village**
- » **Develop a marketing and communication strategy** for events and gatherings
- » **Promote the arts and culture** through tactical urbanism initiatives
- » Utilize the village brand to create **signage, wayfinding, and gateways**



Top Right: Events in the village, like a Historic Car Show, can honor and boost the village's identity and invite local and regional visitors.

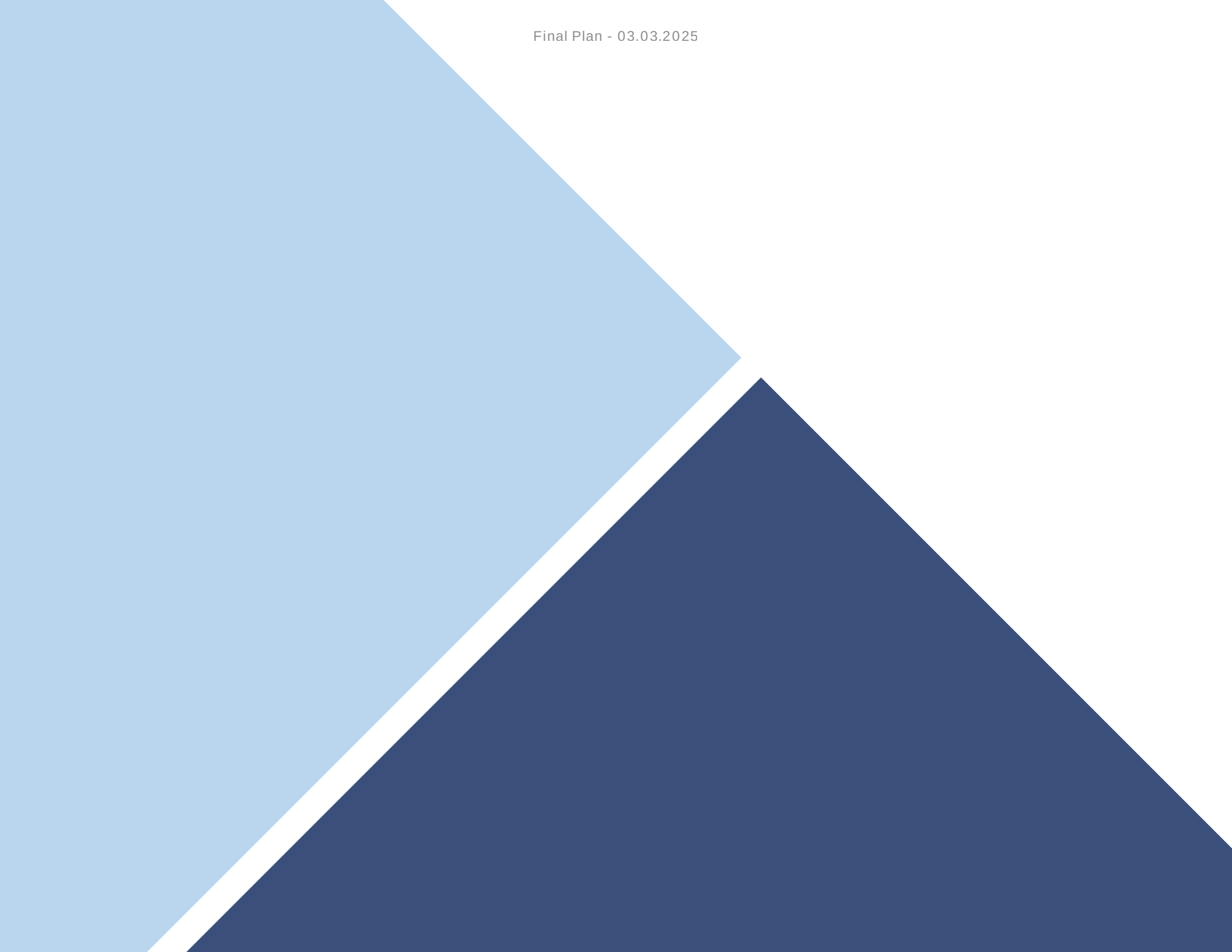
Bottom Right: Annual events like the Olde Tyme Holiday Gathering unite the community and strengthen community pride across generations.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The action items below are intended to guide the next steps. It includes a recommended time frame for completion and key project partners for implementation.

ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	PROJECT PARTNERS
Identify and select an Image and Brand consultant to establish a community-wide brand that will help promote the village through a variety of different mediums and events.	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Consultant
Develop a marketing strategy to showcase the benefits of doing business in the village	Short Term	• Village Leadership
Create a plan for tactical and cost-effective arts and branding initiatives to boost community pride	Mid Term	• Village Leadership • Local Arts and Culture Groups
Continue to promote and plan community gatherings centered around arts, culture, and entertainment	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Local Arts and Culture Groups
Create a branding, signage, and wayfinding guide for local government and community events	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Consultant



04

Recommendations Matrix

04

Recommendations Matrix

OVERVIEW

Successfully implementing the Plan will require a coordinated effort from Village and County staff, local organizations, stakeholders, engaged citizens, and others over the next ten years. To facilitate this process, an implementation matrix has been created, although specific time frames and project partners may change over time. This matrix should be reviewed regularly, and updates should be made as funding, roles, and community interests evolve to support the implementation of the objectives and actions.

The purpose of the Implementation Plan is to outline the steps and timelines associated with the specific objectives for each section of the framework to advance the overall vision. This plan serves as a roadmap to aid in making informed decisions related to each plan section. The plan sections, along with individual goals and objectives, are organized by action item, potential time frame, and project partners.

TIMEFRAMES

The projects were assigned a time frame based on a number of factors including level of priority, complexity of the project, funding, and local passion for specific projects that was noted during the planning process.

Short Term - 1 to 3 years **Long Term** - 7+ years
Mid Term - 4 to 7 years **Ongoing Projects**

FUTURE LAND USE + HOUSING

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The action items below are intended to guide the next steps. It includes a recommended time frame for completion and key project partners for implementation.

ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	PROJECT PARTNERS
Offer residential tax abatements in targeted areas that align with the future land use map to attract workforce and entry level housing	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Offer density bonuses in the Urban Residential and Medium Density Residential districts to attract workforce and entry level housing	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Promote new residential development in undeveloped areas that helps to address the shortage of residential units in the community and is clustered to protect open spaces and the rural character	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Review and update zoning standards to encourage housing development while preserving the character of the community (e.g. allow for a variety of lot sizes and units while respecting the community character)	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Promote new residential housing on vacant and underutilized sites within developed areas	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO) - Williams County Land Bank - Habitat for Humanity of Williams County
Continue to use a variety of tools to attract and support new residential development with a focus on workforce and attainable housing (Habitat, CRA programs, landbanks, etc.)	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO) - Williams County Land Bank - Habitat for Humanity of Williams County
Ensure new annexations can be served by village utilities, infrastructure, and essential village services.	Long Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Village Electric Department - Village Water & Sewer Distribution Department

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION + LOCAL ECONOMY

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The action items below are intended to guide the next steps. It includes a recommended time frame for completion and key project partners for implementation.

ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	PROJECT PARTNERS
Invest in downtown revitalization projects to improve the public realm such as streetscape improvements, public art, and beautification and branding as a means to promote private sector investment and elevate the quality of the downtown	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Offer incentives such as abatements, façade improvement grants, special districts such as a tax increment financing district to support new investment in the downtown and other areas of the community	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Partner with other governments, institutions, and economic-development-oriented nonprofits to study opportunities to support and grow ecosystem for entrepreneurs.	Long Term	- Village Leadership - Local Colleges, Universities, and Trade Schools
Create a community improvement corporation to help facilitate new investment in the community	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Consider becoming a Main Street Affiliate with Heritage Ohio to help bolster the revitalization of downtown	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Apply for CDBG funds to help support the implementation of capital projects in the Downtown Mixed Use and Innovation district	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Apply for Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (SC-CDBG) which specifically focuses on improving housing conditions and expanding economic opportunities in smaller communities with populations under 50,000	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Utilize Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credits to provide tax incentives to property owners who rehabilitate historic buildings	Long Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Work with local businesses to utilize the Job Creation Tax Credit and Ohio Enterprise Bond Fund which are designed to provide tax credits and low-interest financing to assist eligible businesses in making investments that will lead to job creation and retention in Ohio's small cities and rural areas.	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)

PARKS, RECREATION + COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The action items below are intended to guide the next steps. It includes a recommended time frame for completion and key project partners for implementation.

ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	PROJECT PARTNERS
Review and update parks and recreation master plans to outline improvements to existing parks and areas for new parks	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Identify a variety of partnerships, grants, and federal programs to help design and build additional multi-use connections and trails such as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant program, Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF), Recreational Trails Program (RTP), etc.	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Economic Development Corp. (WEDCO)
Collaborate with regional trails and greenway associations to continue to build pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within and outside the village such as direct connections to the Wabash-Cannonball Trail and the North Country Trail	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Regional Trail Partners
Continue to review, assess, design, and build recommendations from the Active Transportation Plan such as the Iron Horse Trail Future Phases, and a North-South Connector	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Regional Trail Partners
Utilize the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to construct additional connections surrounding the Montpelier Schools campus	Short Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Create and adopt a Complete Streets Policy to continue to promote a transportation system that is safe and efficient for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation in the community.	Mid Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning
Work with and utilize the Williams County Health Department and their annual goals to promote and improve health and wellness levels throughout the community. These include promoting Complete Streets and continuing to create and update green space and parks/ bike and pedestrian master plans.	Long Term	- Village Leadership - Village Planning & Zoning - Williams County Health Department

COMMUNITY IMAGE + BRAND

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The action items below are intended to guide the next steps. It includes a recommended time frame for completion and key project partners for implementation.

ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	PROJECT PARTNERS
Identify and select an Image and Brand consultant to establish a community-wide brand that will help promote the village through a variety of different mediums and events.	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Consultant
Develop a marketing strategy to showcase the benefits of doing business in the village	Short Term	• Village Leadership
Create a plan for tactical and cost-effective arts and branding initiatives to boost community pride	Mid Term	• Village Leadership • Local Arts and Culture Groups
Continue to promote and plan community gatherings centered around arts, culture, and entertainment	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Local Arts and Culture Groups
Create a branding, signage, and wayfinding guide for local government and community events	Short Term	• Village Leadership • Consultant

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