CITY OF
Sterling Heights

InnovatingLiving
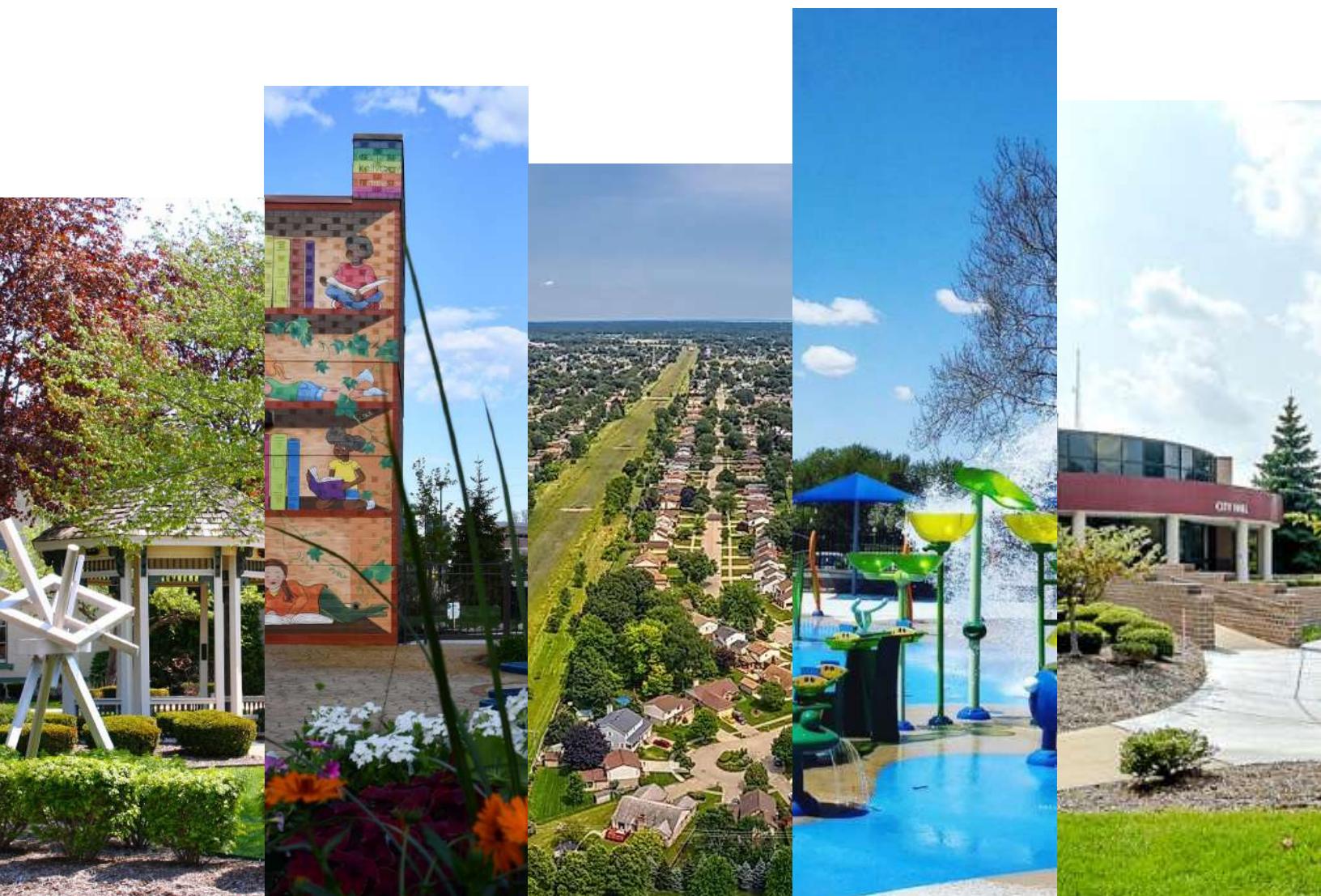
giffels
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2025 MASTER PLAN

giffels
webster

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION STERLING HEIGHTS MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the Sterling Heights Planning Commission has the responsibility and is empowered by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008, as amended, to make and adopt a Master Plan for the physical development of the City and to amend the Plan as needed from time-to-time; and

WHEREAS, the Sterling Heights City Council created the Planning Commission for the purposes stated in the in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sterling Heights has retained a professional planning consultant to assist the Planning Commission with the technical studies necessary to update the adopted Master Plan for the City of Sterling Heights; and

WHEREAS, the Sterling Heights Planning Commission has held a public hearing on its proposed amended Master Plan for the City on May 14, 2025 at the Sterling Heights City Hall; and

WHEREAS, the Sterling Heights Planning Commission finds that the amended Master Plan is necessary for the continued development and the appropriate redevelopment of the physical areas of the City;

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission adopted the 2025 Master Plan Update on May 14, 2025.

WHEREAS, the City Council stated its intent to adopt the 2025 Master Plan Update in conjunction with the Planning Commission adoption on May 20, 2025.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Sterling Heights City Council hereby adopts this Master Plan for the City, along with the text, maps, charts, graphs, and other descriptive materials contained in the Plan.

Motion by Sierawski, supported by Ziarko to adopt Resolution No. 2025-17.

AYES: Michael C. Taylor, Liz Sierawski, Deanna Koski, Michael V. Radtke Jr., Maria G. Schmidt, Henry Yanez, Barbara A. Ziarko
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 20th day of May, 2025

Michael C. Taylor, Mayor
Sterling Heights City Council

STERLING HEIGHTS PLANNING COMMISSION
MACOMB COUNTY, MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION
STERLING HEIGHTS MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the Sterling Heights Planning Commission has the responsibility and is empowered by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008, as amended, to make and adopt a Master Plan for the physical development of the City and to amend the Plan as needed from time-to-time; and

WHEREAS, the Sterling Heights City Council created the Planning Commission for the purposes stated in the in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sterling Heights has retained a professional planning consultant to assist the Planning Commission with the technical studies necessary to update the adopted Master Plan for the City of Sterling Heights; and

WHEREAS, the Sterling Heights Planning Commission has held a public hearing on its proposed amended Master Plan for the City on May 14, 2025 at the Sterling Heights City Hall; and

WHEREAS, the Sterling Heights Planning Commission finds that the amended Master Plan is necessary for the continued development and the appropriate redevelopment of the physical areas of the City;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Sterling Heights Planning Commission hereby adopts this amended Master Plan for the City of Sterling Heights, dated May 14, 2025, along with the text, maps, charts, graphs, and other descriptive materials contained in the Plan, including the Future Land Use Map.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that an attested copy of the adopted Master Plan shall be certified to the Sterling Heights City Council, the Macomb County Planning Commission, local utilities, and all other entities as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008, as amended.

Motion by Inks, supported by Kopp to adopt the Master Land Use Plan for the City of Sterling Heights.
AYES: Gariepy, Inks, Jaboro, Kopp, McGill, Sarau, Wright
NAYS:
ABSENT: Rowe, Ujkic
RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED THIS MAY 14, 2025 DATE.

Brandy Wright
Secretary
Sterling Heights Planning Commission

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX

INTRODUCTION/ SUMMARY

1

INTRODUCTION/SUMMARY

WHY PLAN?

This Master Plan serves as a roadmap for the future of the City of Sterling Heights, guiding its evolution. Recognizing that significant development has occurred over many years, this plan focuses on strategies for enhancing existing neighborhoods, strengthening the local economy, and creating a more vibrant and sustainable environment.

The Master Plan outlines a shared vision for the future, prioritizing the enhancement of existing built areas through strategies like infill development, redevelopment of underutilized properties, and revitalization of key corridors. It guides the implementation of the Zoning Ordinance by ensuring that new development complements the existing character of the City while addressing contemporary challenges such as the need for affordable housing, aging commercial development, and environmental concerns. The plan also aims to meet the needs of diverse populations and foster a sense of belonging for all residents.

By adhering to the principles outlined in the Master Plan, the City can strategically direct future development, ensuring that it enhances the quality of life for all residents. This includes improving walkability and bikeability, expanding access to green spaces and parks, and enhancing the City's overall aesthetic appeal. The Master Plan also serves as a valuable tool for attracting investment, fostering economic growth, and ensuring the long-term resilience and sustainability of the community.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLANNING & ZONING

The Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance are interconnected tools that collectively guide the City's growth and development. The Master Plan serves as a high-level policy document, setting forth a vision and goals for the community's future. It identifies strategies and priorities for land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental sustainability. The Zoning Ordinance, in turn, is the legal mechanism that translates the Master Plan's vision into actionable standards and regulations, shaping how land is used and developed.

While the Master Plan outlines the desired direction for the City's evolution, the Zoning Ordinance ensures that development aligns with this vision by specifying allowable land uses, building heights, setbacks, densities, and other design standards. For example, if the Master Plan calls for revitalizing a commercial corridor with mixed-use development, the Zoning Ordinance provides the detailed zoning classifications and requirements needed to make that vision a reality. The two documents work in tandem, with the Master Plan guiding updates to the Zoning Ordinance to ensure they remain consistent and responsive to the community's needs and goals.

IMPLEMENTATION

The successful implementation of the Master Plan requires collaboration among a variety of stakeholders, each playing a distinct yet complementary role. Municipal staff and elected officials are responsible for adopting and updating policies, ordinances, and budgets that align with the plan's goals. The Planning Commission serves as a key body for reviewing development proposals and ensuring they adhere to the plan's vision, while City Council provides leadership in prioritizing initiatives and allocating resources.

Beyond local government, the plan's success also depends on the active participation of community members, businesses, and nonprofit organizations. Residents play a vital role by engaging in public processes, advocating for improvements, and supporting community initiatives. Businesses and developers contribute by undertaking projects that align with the City's goals, such as sustainable construction or mixed-use developments. Partnerships with regional agencies, state entities, and neighboring communities further enhance the plan's implementation, addressing issues that extend beyond City boundaries, such as transportation, environmental conservation, and economic development.

By fostering a shared commitment to the Master Plan's vision, these collective efforts ensure that the City can achieve its long-term goals and create a thriving, resilient, and inclusive community for all.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Sterling Heights Master Plan process began in early 2024 with a mission to create a long-range plan that addresses future land use, placemaking, and sustainability. This Master Plan is built upon the foundation set in the 2017 Master Plan and further refines goals and strategies related to housing, transportation, local economy, environmental stewardship, placemaking and community building. As the City is mostly built-out, redevelopment of underutilized or recently vacated sites are at the forefront of the City's future planning and land use themes. The goals and policy recommendations included in this Master Plan for the mixed-use nodes and corridors reflect realistic opportunities for future incremental public and private investment.

Recently adopted plans – the Sustainability Plan, North Van Dyke Avenue Master Plan, Electric Vehicle Charging Master Plan, the Parks, Recreation, and Non-Motorized Plan – have great value and provide direction to the City in these specific areas. The Master Plan update incorporates these plans and reflects their goals in the Master Plan's policies and action strategies. Regional planning efforts are also included to show a larger context.

The Master Plan is organized into eleven chapters, including this introductory chapter, each focusing on a specific aspect of the City's development and providing a clear framework for achieving the community's vision. Following this Executive Summary, these chapters create a comprehensive guide for the City's future, connecting broad goals and objectives with actionable strategies.

CHAPTER 2: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This chapter articulates the overarching goals and guiding principles that shape the plan. It establishes a foundation for decision-making and serves as a benchmark for evaluating progress toward the community's vision, which was articulated in the City's 2040 Visioning strategic plan. Goals include the following:

- **Housing:** Promote a diverse and sustainable housing market that supports existing single-family neighborhoods, affordable housing options, and age-in-place opportunities.
- **Local Economy:** Foster a vibrant and sustainable local economy by attracting and retaining businesses, promoting entrepreneurship, and enhancing quality of life for all residents.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Actively promote a sustainable and resilient community by protecting and enhancing natural assets and the local environment.
- **Transportation:** Promote a sustainable and accessible transportation system that prioritizes walkability, public transit, and active transportation.
- **Placemaking:** Create a City comprised of vibrant, inclusive, and walkable neighborhoods that foster a strong sense of community and place.

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The City offered numerous opportunities for residents and stakeholders to share their ideas and insights throughout the Master Plan process. In addition to Planning Commission meetings, these included in-person and online workshops, as well as multiple surveys. This chapter outlines the engagement approach through surveys, workshops, and other engagement efforts, ensuring the plan remains rooted in local perspectives. Community engagement by topic is shared within the chapters outlined below.

CHAPTERS 4–9: KEY TOPICS

- **Housing (Chapter 4):** This chapter focuses on strategies to meet current and future housing needs, including affordability, diversity of housing types, and neighborhood revitalization. Recognizing the need for a variety of housing types, the plan adds accessory dwellings and duplexes throughout the City to support households seeking the stability of existing residential areas, while apartments and other multi-household dwellings are envisioned to be added into commercial areas, creating vibrant mixed-use areas (see also Nodes, below).

- **Economy (Chapter 5):** Supporting a vibrant local economy, this chapter summarizes ongoing economic development strategies, assesses opportunities for growth, and outlines new strategies supported by market data.

- **Environmental Stewardship (Chapter 6):** This section emphasizes sustainable practices and land use policies to protect natural resources, enhance resilience, and address climate change. It reinforces the City's award-winning Sustainability Plan and ties a variety of community elements together, including housing and transportation.

- **Transportation (Chapter 7):** While the City is fairly auto-oriented, there is growing demand for walkability; alternative modes of transportation provide more mobility options to community residents and helps businesses attract and retain employees. Improving connectivity and mobility is the focus in this chapter, with strategies to complete the City's transportation network.

- **Placemaking (Chapter 8):** This chapter outlines strategies for creating vibrant public spaces, fostering a sense of identity, and enhancing the City's aesthetic and cultural appeal.

- **Mixed-Use Development Nodes (Chapter 9):** Concentrating on strategic areas for growth identified in the 2017 Master Plan, this chapter discusses opportunities for integrating housing, commercial, and public uses to create dynamic, livable districts at two scales throughout the City: the district scale (community-oriented) and neighborhood scale (neighborhood-oriented). These nodes support and complement future development at Lakeside Mall, which is more regionally-oriented. With redevelopment plans underway for the mall, it is not a focus of this Master Plan.

CHAPTER 10: FUTURE LAND USE PLAN AND MAP

This chapter presents the vision for the City's spatial organization, outlining land use categories and the intended character of each area. It serves as a critical tool for guiding zoning decisions and shaping future development. Land use descriptions are refined from the previous plan, and boundaries modified to be more consistent with existing development and vision for appropriate development/redevelopment.

CHAPTER 11: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The final chapter translates the vision into actionable steps, identifying priorities, timelines, and responsibilities for achieving the Master Plan's goals. It ensures the plan remains a living document, adaptable to the City's evolving needs.

Each section builds upon the input of the community, analysis of current conditions, and best practices in community planning. Together, they form a cohesive guide to ensure the City grows and evolves in a way that enhances quality of life, strengthens the economy, and protects valuable resources.

Jack Shock, Age 6

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In 2024, the City of Sterling Heights adopted its 2040 Visioning strategic plan in an effort to plan for a prosperous and sustainable future. That plan now serves as a guide to City staff in all short and long-range planning initiatives. The City's vision, guiding principles, and core values were considered as a foundation, and ultimately the following goals and objectives of this Master Plan were synthesized using meeting module feedback from Planning Commission and City Council, public input, and updating of values articulated in the 2017 Master Plan.

WHAT ARE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?

Goals are general guidelines that explain what the community wants to achieve. Goals are usually long-term and represent broad visions such as to "Foster a vibrant and sustainable local economy by attracting and retaining businesses, promoting entrepreneurship, and enhancing quality of life for all residents." Goals define the "what," "why," and "where," but not the "how."

Objectives identify the milestones that mark progress in achieving goals and provide more of the "how" goals will be implemented. Further supporting the objectives are the action items, which are found in the Implementation Plan.

Public Safety

Sustainability

Enriched Living

Neighborhoods

Connected

Business Innovation

Distinctive Areas

Mobility

Measures of success, or metrics, are crucial additions to goals and objectives within a long-range plan. They provide a clear and quantifiable way to track progress, assess performance, and determine whether the plan is on track to achieve its desired outcomes. Within each of the goals that follow, a table of possible measures of success are listed. While the data for many of these metrics will be fairly easy to obtain from sources like the U.S. Census and SEMCOG, some new sources will be needed. For example, a metric measuring "neighborhood satisfaction" might require the development of a survey, which could be conducted annually or every few years. For purposes of plan adoption, the source and frequency of benchmarks are left blank, giving the City the opportunity to discuss which measures are most appropriate, as well as setting timelines for checking in on the data (frequency). This will be an important early step in the implementation process.

HOUSING

GOAL: Promote a diverse and sustainable housing market that supports existing single-family neighborhoods, affordable housing options, and age-in-place opportunities.

HOUSING OBJECTIVES	
Preserve existing neighborhoods: Support and improve existing single-family neighborhoods by addressing infrastructure needs, promoting property maintenance, connecting residents to civic and commercial destinations, and expanding community amenities.	
Promote mixed-use development: Encourage the development of mixed-use projects that combine residential, commercial, and cultural uses to create vibrant and walkable communities.	
Expand flexible and affordable housing options: Support the construction of a variety of flexible and affordable housing types to address the gaps in missing middle housing, including rental units, cooperatives, and homeownership opportunities.	
Strengthen a sense of welcoming: Foster inclusive housing practices that celebrate diversity and promote a sense of belonging through a variety of housing types, supporting walkability, improving transportation options, and improving community facilities.	
Support age-in-place and age-in-community options: Promote the development of senior-friendly housing, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and other housing options that allow older adults to remain in the community.	

HOUSING: MEASURES OF SUCCESS	SOURCE OF MEASURE	FREQUENCY OF BENCHMARK
Overall Housing Market Health		
Median home price: Track changes in median home price to assess affordability.		
Homeownership rate: Monitor the percentage of households that own their homes.		
Rental vacancy rate: Assess the availability of rental housing.		
Housing affordability index: Evaluate the affordability of housing relative to income levels.		
Housing types: Track the types of housing being developed.		
Preservation of Existing Neighborhoods		
Property values: Monitor changes in property values in established neighborhoods.		
Neighborhood satisfaction surveys: Conduct surveys to measure resident satisfaction with their neighborhoods.		
Maintenance of infrastructure: Track the condition of roads, sidewalks, and other infrastructure.		
Community amenities: Assess the availability and quality of parks, schools, and other amenities.		
Mixed-Use Development		
Number of mixed-use projects: Track the number of new mixed-use developments completed.		
Walkability scores: Measure the walkability of neighborhoods.		
Retail vacancy rates: Assess the availability of retail space in mixed-use developments.		
Affordable/Attainable Housing		
Number of affordable/attainable housing units: Track the number of affordable/attainable housing units available.		
Affordability gap: Measure the difference between average incomes and the cost of housing.		
Inclusive Communities		
Fair housing complaints: Track the number of fair housing complaints filed.		
Community engagement: Assess the level of community engagement and participation.		
Accessibility: Evaluate the accessibility of housing and community amenities for people with disabilities.		
Age-in-Place and Age-in-Community		
Senior housing occupancy: Track the occupancy rates of senior housing facilities.		
Age-friendly community assessments: Conduct assessments to evaluate the community's suitability for older adults.		

LOCAL ECONOMY

GOAL: Foster a vibrant and sustainable local economy by attracting and retaining businesses, promoting entrepreneurship, and enhancing quality of life for all residents.

| LOCAL ECONOMY OBJECTIVES	
Enhance walkability and mixed-use development: Create vibrant, walkable neighborhoods with a mix of residential, commercial, and cultural uses. Focus on targeted economic development in sectors that support walkability and mixed-use development, such as retail, restaurants, and entertainment.	
Promote entrepreneurship and innovation: Support local businesses, startups, and research and development initiatives. Continue to provide business incubation and acceleration programs, access to funding, and mentorship opportunities for entrepreneurs. Encourage work from home environments to create more space for businesses and to attract talent.	
Diversify the economy: Attract new businesses and industries to expand the tax base and create job opportunities, with a focus on promoting green industry participation. Continue targeted marketing campaigns to attract businesses in priority sectors, offer incentives for relocation or expansion, and deepen partnerships with economic development organizations.	
Improve infrastructure and connectivity: Invest in transportation, utilities, and other infrastructure to support economic growth and quality of life. Prioritize infrastructure improvements that enhance accessibility and attract businesses.	
Ensure housing affordability and availability: Support the development of affordable housing options to meet the needs of local residents and workers. Explore and assess policies and programs that encourage the development of affordable housing, such as inclusionary zoning and tax incentives.	

LOCAL ECONOMY: MEASURES OF SUCCESS	SOURCE OF MEASURE	FREQUENCY OF BENCHMARK
Business Growth and Attraction		
New businesses: Track the number of new businesses established.		
Businesses types: Track the types of businesses established		
Net job creation: Calculate the net jobs created.		
Retention rate of existing businesses: Track the existing businesses retained in the community.		
Location quotient for targeted industries: Calculate the location quotient for targeted industries. The location quotient compares the concentration of specific industries with the national average – this can illustrate the comparative local advantage as well as the potential competitive disadvantage.		
Business revenue: Track the increase in business revenue.		
Entrepreneurship and Innovation		
New entrepreneurs: Track the number of new entrepreneurs.		
Survival rate of startups: Calculate the survival rate of startups.		
Research and development Investment: Monitor the investment in research and development		
Local incubator or accelerator growth: Assess the growth from local incubators or accelerators in the community.		
Mixed-Use Development		
Median household income: Track median household incomes.		
Unemployment rate: Track unemployment rates.		
Poverty rate: Track poverty rates.		
Housing availability and affordability: Track housing affordability and attainability measures.		
Educational attainment : Track the rates of the highest level of education attained.		
Healthcare access: Assess the community's access to healthcare.		
Public safety statistics: Monitor public safety statistics.		
Community satisfaction surveys: Conduct surveys to measure public satisfaction with mixed-use development in the community.		
Economic Diversity		
Industries represented: Track the number of industries represented in the community.		
Concentration ratio of largest businesses: Calculate the concentration ratio of largest businesses.		
Student retention rate: Monitor the retention rate of graduated high school and college students.		

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

GOAL: Actively promote a sustainable and resilient community by protecting and enhancing natural assets and the local environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP OBJECTIVES	
Preserve and enhance natural resources: Protect and expand the City's tree canopy and amount of land preserved. Improve watersheds, wetlands, and other open spaces by controlling invasive species and enhancing biodiversity.	
Promote sustainable land use practices: Encourage brownfield redevelopment, alternative energy, green infrastructure, and mixed-use development.	
Reduce waste and promote sustainability: Implement waste reduction programs, increase recycling rates, and encourage repurposing and reuse.	
Foster environmental stewardship: Educate residents about environmental issues and encourage community involvement.	
Promote alternative energy and support energy efficiency: Encourage the development and use of renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, and geothermal power. Promote energy-efficient buildings and practices to reduce energy consumption.	
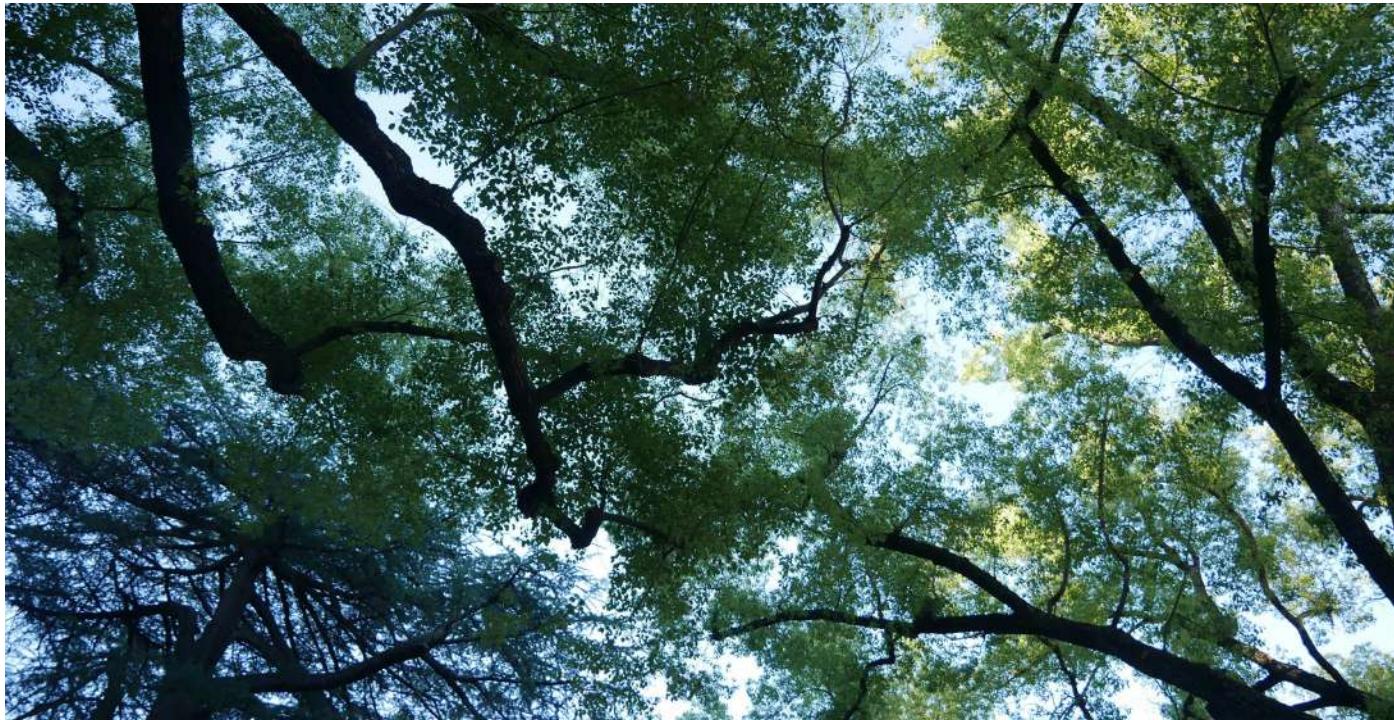
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP: MEASURES OF SUCCESS	SOURCE OF MEASURE	FREQUENCY OF BENCHMARK
Natural Asset Protection and Enchancement		
Tree canopy coverage: Track the percentage of the City covered by trees.		
Land preservation: Track the acreage of City-owned properties preserved and identify new parcels to acquire for preservation.		
Watershed health indicators: Monitor water quality, biodiversity, and ecosystem health in local watersheds.		
Wetland acreage: Measure the total area of wetlands in the community.		
Invasive species control: Track the prevalence and spread of invasive species.		
Biodiversity indicators: Monitor the abundance and diversity of native species.		
Sustainable Land Use Practices		
Brownfield redevelopment projects: Track the number of brownfield sites successfully redeveloped.		
Renewable energy capacity: Measure the total capacity of renewable energy sources in the community.		
Green infrastructure coverage: Calculate the percentage of the City covered by green infrastructure elements (e.g., rain gardens, bioswales).		
Mixed-use development: Track the number and size of mixed-use developments.		
Waste Reduction and Sustainability		
Waste generation per capita: Measure the amount of waste generated per person.		
Recycling rate: Calculate the percentage of waste recycled.		
Composting rate: Measure the percentage of organic waste composted.		
Repurposing and reuse initiatives: Track the number and success of repurposing and reuse programs.		
Environmental Stewardship		
Environmental education participation: Measure the number of residents participating in environmental education programs.		
Community involvement in environmental initiatives: Track the number of residents involved in environmental projects and organizations.		
Public opinion surveys: Conduct surveys to gauge public awareness and support for environmental initiatives.		
Alternative Energy and Energy Consumption		
Renewable energy generation: Measure the total amount of renewable energy generated.		
Energy consumption per capita: Track the amount of energy consumed per person.		

TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: Promote a sustainable and accessible transportation system that prioritizes walkability, public transit, and active transportation.

TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES	
Enhance walkability: Promote walkable neighborhoods by creating safe pedestrian paths, improving sidewalks, and supporting mixed-use development.	
Expand and improve public transit: Increase the frequency and reach of public transportation services, including buses, trains, and ride-sharing programs.	
Encourage active transportation: Promote cycling and walking by creating safe bike lanes, pedestrian paths, and bike-sharing programs.	
Reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles: Implement policies and programs to reduce the use of cars for short trips and encourage carpooling.	
Improve traffic flow and reduce congestion: Implement traffic management strategies to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.	
Support sustainable transportation infrastructure: Invest in sustainable transportation infrastructure, such as electric vehicle charging stations and bike-friendly facilities.	

TRANSPORTATION: MEASURES OF SUCCESS	SOURCE OF MEASURE	FREQUENCY OF BENCHMARK
Walkability and Active Transportation		
Pedestrian counts: Track the number of pedestrians using sidewalks and trails.		
Bicycle counts: Monitor the number of bicycle riders on bike paths and lanes.		
Walkability scores: Assess the walkability of neighborhoods using established metrics.		
Public Transit		
Ridership: Track the number of public transit riders.		
Accessibility: Assess the accessibility of public transit for people with disabilities.		
Traffic Management		
Congestion levels: Measure traffic congestion using various metrics, such as average travel time and speed.		
Traffic crashes: Track the number and severity of traffic crashes, including the number of pedestrian and bicycle crashes.		
Air quality: Monitor air quality levels to assess the impact of transportation on pollution.		
Sustainable Transportation Infrastructure		
Alternative fuel vehicle adoption: Track the number of alternative fuel vehicles in use.		
Electric vehicle charging station availability: Measure the number and accessibility of charging stations.		
Bike-friendly infrastructure: Assess the availability and quality of bike lanes, paths, and parking.		
Community Satisfaction		
Transportation satisfaction surveys: Conduct surveys to measure public satisfaction with transportation options.		
Focus groups: Conduct focus groups to gather feedback on transportation needs and preferences.		
Street network connectivity: Evaluate the connectivity of the street network.		

PLACEMAKING

GOAL: Create a City comprised of vibrant, inclusive, and walkable neighborhoods that foster a strong sense of community and place.

PLACEMAKING AND COMMUNITY BUILDING OBJECTIVES	
Mixed-Use Development: Encourage development that combines residential, commercial, and cultural uses within walking distance. This promotes a lively atmosphere and offers more transportation options, decreasing the reliance on car travel.	
Public Spaces and Amenities: Prioritize the development of high-quality public spaces, such as parks, plazas, and community centers, that are accessible to all residents and encourage social interaction.	
Public Art: Continue to integrate public art as a transformative element in the suburban landscape to enhance community identity, stimulate economic development, and create vibrant, inclusive public spaces.	
Walkable Streets: Design streetscapes that prioritize pedestrians and cyclists, with safe sidewalks, pedestrian amenities, bike lanes, and ample street trees.	
Community Engagement: Foster a collaborative process that involves residents, businesses, and other stakeholders in shaping the future of the community.	

PLACEMAKING AND COMMUNITY BUILDING: MEASURES OF SUCCESS	SOURCE OF MEASURE	FREQUENCY OF BENCHMARK
Community Character Metrics		
Sense of place: Measure residents' attachment to the community and their perception of its unique character.		
Cultural vitality: Assess the presence and diversity of cultural institutions, events, and activities.		
Community identity: Evaluate residents' shared values, beliefs, and traditions.		
Placemaking Metrics		
Public space utilization: Track the use of public spaces, such as parks, plazas, and benches.		
Street life: Observe the activity and vitality of streets and public spaces.		
Visual appeal: Assess the aesthetic quality of the built environment.		
Diversity of land uses: Measure the mix of residential, commercial, and cultural uses within neighborhoods.		
Green infrastructure: Evaluate the presence and quality of green infrastructure, such as trees, parks, and green roofs. Track all street trees on collector roads, major roads, and corridors.		
Economic Character Metrics		
Local business ownership: Measure the percentage of businesses that are locally owned and operated.		
Economic diversity: Assess the diversity of industries and businesses in the community.		
Affordability: Track housing affordability and other costs of living.		

Elyse Hartwig, Age 11

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The City offered numerous opportunities for residents and stakeholders to share their ideas and insights throughout the Master Plan process. In addition to Planning Commission meetings, these included in-person and online workshops, as well as multiple surveys. An overview of these activities is provided as follows, with summarized results contained in each chapter and detailed results provided in the following Appendix chapters: **"Community Survey Results" on page 243** and **"Market Survey Results" on page 309**.

FEB

APR

Community Survey (March to May 2024)

Market Survey (May to June 2024)

MAR

MAY

Master Plan Kickoff Meeting

Module 1: Housing

Future Land Use Workshop

Sustainability Workshop

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

Module 2: Economy & Workforce

Module 3: Nodes

Module 4: Transportation & Natural Systems
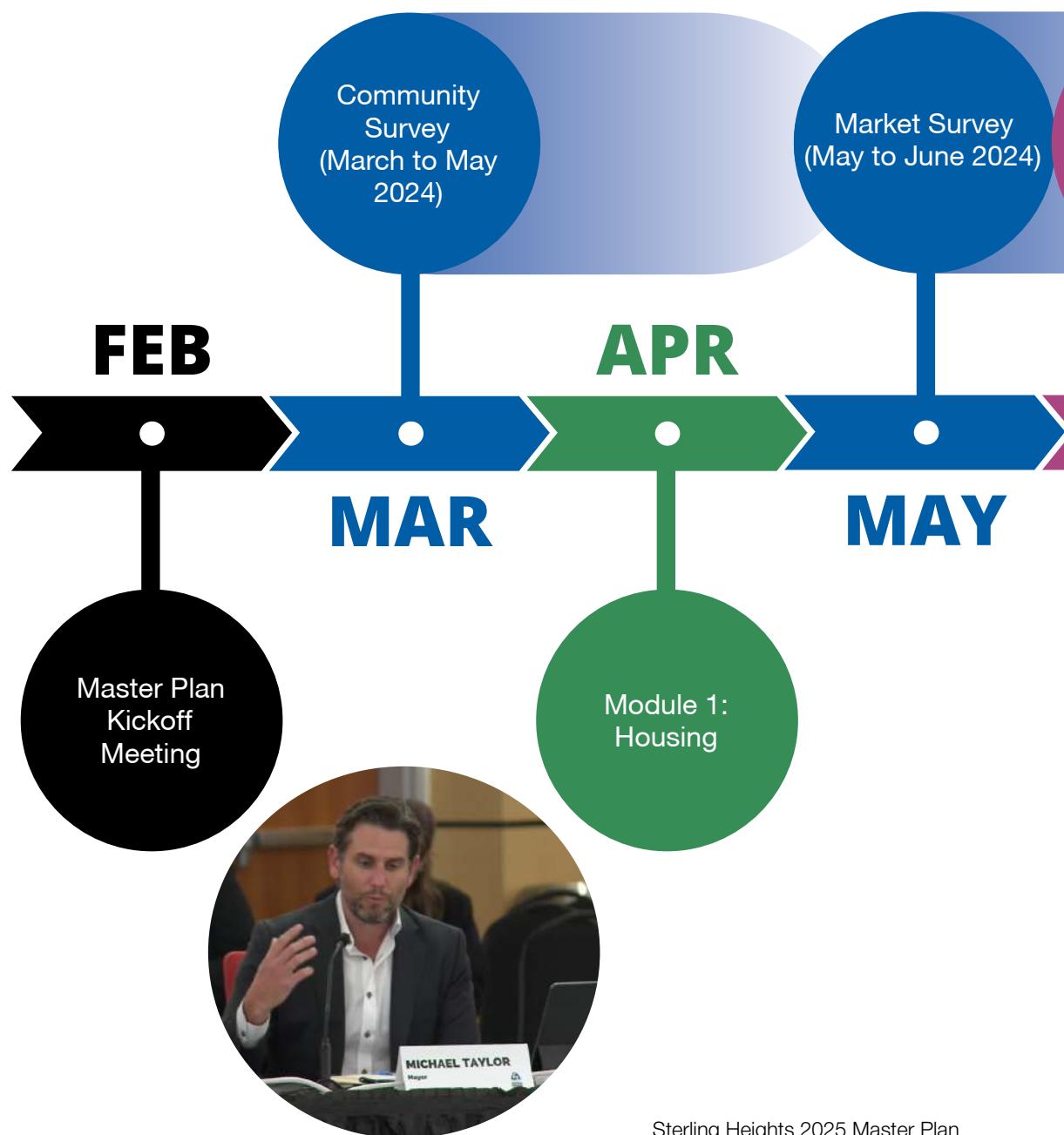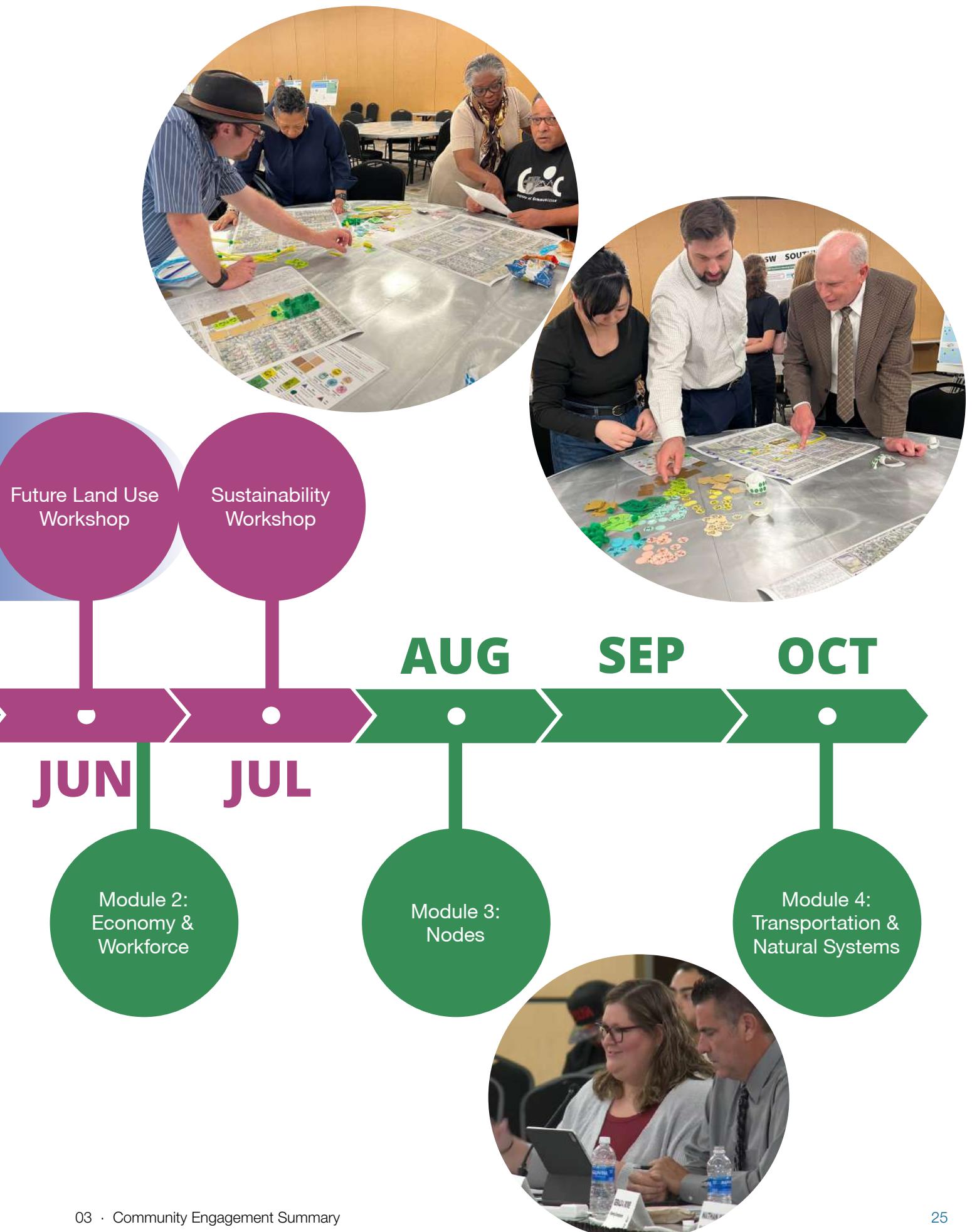
MODULES

Throughout 2024, four modules were presented to the Planning Commission to educate members, facilitate discussions, and shape a clear vision for the City's future on key topics. These modules focused on housing, the economy and workforce, nodes, and transportation and natural systems. This targeted approach ensured these critical areas were seamlessly integrated into the development of the Master Plan. The nodes module was held as a joint meeting of City Council and Planning Commission; the City opted to hold the meeting this way due to the significance of this topic.

Each module reviewed previous planning efforts, existing and evolving policies, changes in current conditions, best practices, and summaries of public input where applicable. Public participation was strongly encouraged, with some meetings using an interactive platform to actively engage both the public and commission members. Aside from the public bodies hosting the applicable module, a combined total of 27 members of the public attended the four modules.

YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Nine members of the City's Youth Advisory Board met to provide feedback for the Master Plan, sharing their perspectives on Sterling Heights' current state and future vision. The session included an interactive presentation that encouraged participants to reflect on the City's conditions and highlight areas for improvement. After the presentation, the Board engaged in a hands-on activity where they used paper and various objects to design their ideal neighborhoods. The results of this creative exercise can be found below. Additionally, the Board was prompted to imagine what they would prioritize or change to improve Sterling Heights if they were the mayor for a day.

Left: Youth Advisory Board assembling their ideal neighborhoods.

Top right: Youth Advisory Board-created neighborhoods.

Bottom right: Youth Advisory Board responding to the "Mayor for a Day" activity.

SCHOOL ART CONTEST

As part of the Master Plan update, the City sought to further engage the youth in the process by partnering with schools both within and beyond its boundaries. Students were invited to create artwork reflecting the essence of Sterling Heights. Their creative contributions are, adding a unique perspective to the City's vision for the future.

WORKSHOPS

The City of Sterling Heights held two well-attended workshops as part of the Master Plan update process. Each workshop featured food and a planning-related children's activity to create a welcoming and engaging environment. To ensure accessibility, all workshop activities were also made available online for residents who could not participate in person.

FUTURE LAND USE WORKSHOP

The first workshop was held on June 10th, 2024, from 6 to 9:30 pm at the Community Center, with 67 names recorded on the sign-in sheet and many more in attendance. The workshop focused on gathering resident input on the City's future land uses and educating the community about related topics. Informational boards, along with City staff and representatives from Giffels Webster, the lead consulting firm for the Master Plan, facilitated the session. Throughout the workshop, residents were free to roam the room and engage in the provided interactive activities.

Housing Type Activity

Residents identified appropriate locations for different housing types within the City. These areas included locations within a 15-minute walk of priority nodes and along major corridors. Participants selected their preferred housing options for corresponding areas on the map, with the activity divided into four quadrants of the City for greater focus and clarity.

Building Blocks Activity

This activity encouraged residents to envision new developments in Traditional Mixed Use Nodes. Participants considered details such as the number of building stories, intended uses of the buildings, parks and recreation spaces, and transportation infrastructure. This activity was then hosted on the project website, with 27 participants contributing online. The combined input received at the in-person workshop and the online activity is summarized in the **Mixed-Use Development Nodes** chapter's **"Land Use Workshop Feedback" on page 141**.

SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP

The second workshop was held on July 29th, 2024, from 5 to 8 pm at Velocity, with approximately 30 attendees. The workshop featured a presentation and interactive activities to involve residents in shaping the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Master Plan. Fresh Coast Climate Solutions, the consultants developing the CAP, opened the session with a presentation outlining the plan's key components. They discussed regional and local climate change trends, community-wide emissions, and the City's current initiatives to reduce emissions. Following the presentation, residents participated in a series of interactive activity stations designed to gather their feedback and foster discussion.
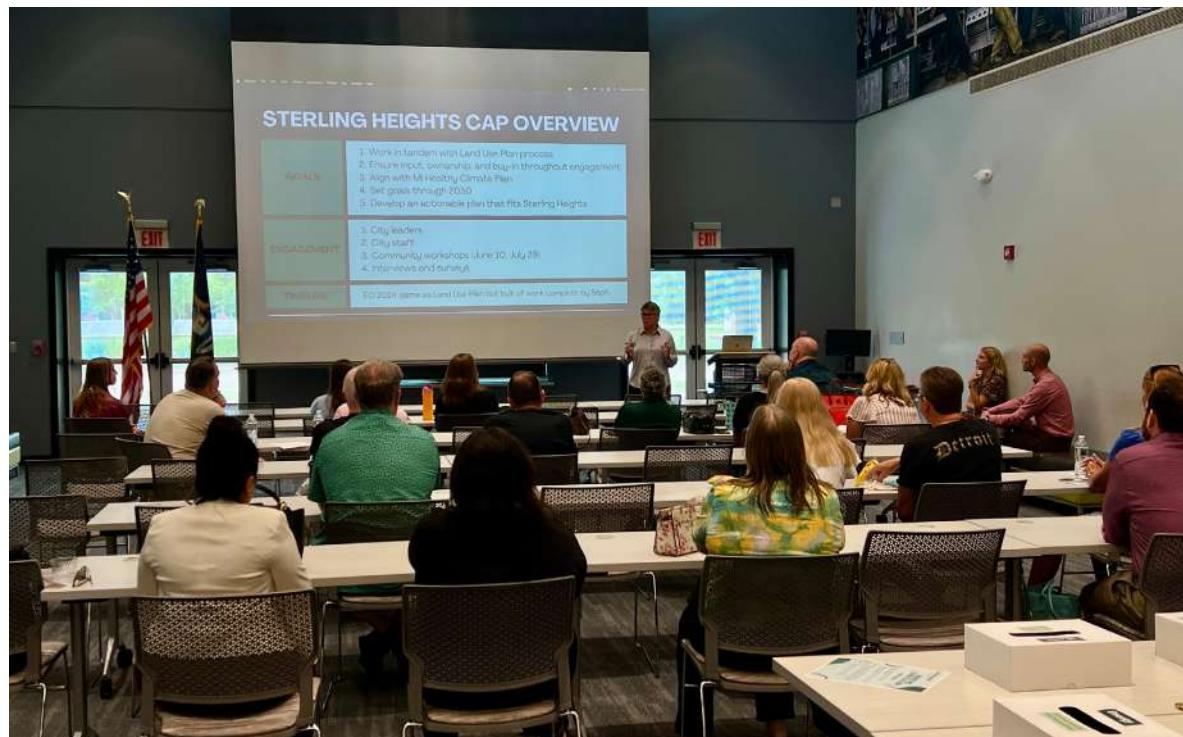
Budgeting Climate Action

Residents were given three gold coins to "vote" by placing them in boxes corresponding to the Climate Action Plan strategies they felt were most important to them.

Make Sterling Heights Cool

The aim of this activity was for residents to test their knowledge and identify technologies, structures, and activities that reduce the urban heat island effect.

What We Have and What We Need

Participants sorted 30 cards representing various sustainable City elements into three categories: things the City currently has, things it needs, and things it needs more of.

One Commitment, One Request

Residents shared one request they would like to have the City pursue when it comes to sustainability, and they also shared one sustainable practice they would like to commit to.

SURVEYS

During the community engagement phase of the Master Plan update process, two surveys were distributed to gather input from those who live, work, and play in Sterling Heights. Together, these surveys collected 4,434 responses and were extensively promoted through social media, the City's website, email outreach, 65 hand-delivered flyers to local businesses and multi-family developments, inserts with water bills, and a dedicated table at the Farmers Market. To enhance accessibility, both surveys were also available in Arabic.

The Community Survey, conducted from March to May 2024, sought feedback on various components of the Master Plan. Topics included housing, transportation, commercial development, quality of life, and public services. This survey, which was broadly shared with residents and stakeholders, received 3,157 responses.

The Market Survey, held from May to June 2024, focused on providing insights for the City's economic development efforts. It addressed topics such as shopping habits, entertainment activities, lifestyle, transportation and commuting, and current and future housing. A total of 1,277 responses were collected.

MEETING TOOLKITS

Meeting toolkits were available upon request to help generate interesting and informative opportunities for the community to talk about long-range plans for the City. The meeting toolkits were a way for smaller groups and organizations to get together and hold their own meeting to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the City as well as what the City would look like at its best and worst in the future.

The City received a completed toolkit from the Sterling Heights African American Coalition, which included valuable feedback from attendees. Their input emphasized Sterling Heights' opportunities for modernization, transit development, and collaboration to attract businesses and a diverse workforce. They commended the City's strengths in planning, economic stability, safety, and recreation but identified challenges such as resistance to change, aging infrastructure, and systemic inequality. To sustain growth and address risks like population decline and missed revenue opportunities, they stressed the importance of transitioning from a bedroom community to a cohesive, business-friendly City.

CITY STAFF'S OUTREACH

The City's Office of Planning staff heavily emphasized outreach to the business community, community groups, and most importantly City residents. Staff worked to make sure that all aspects of the community were included. From the youth groups and schools to the senior community, and from residents or business owners, Staff placed an extra emphasis to ensure inclusion of all residents regardless of barriers related to language, technological proficiency, or scheduling/transportation to get to the Master Plan events.

The City specifically made the following notable outreach efforts:

- Connected with the Chaldean Community Foundation and Connect Macomb, the local chamber of commerce, for allowing the City to share the Master Plan surveys and important items to their members and member organizations.

- Held a table presence at the Farmers Market throughout the summer.

- Hosted a "cooling center" station at Sterlingfest, which involved Master Plan information, a comment box, informational boards, and a fun mapping activity.

- Shared Master Plan flyers with 60 local businesses, met with businesses in person, and were able to share flyers in businesses' windows.

- Shared the survey and Master Plan information in the Senior Center Newsletter mailing.

- Shared a link to the Master Plan Community Survey in the water bill mailings to all residents who receive a water bill.

- Sent over 30,000 total emails to businesses, residents, community organizations, and housing groups seeking participation in the various surveys and events.

- Made the Master Plan workshops accessible for families by having a children's activity created by the Office of Planning's interns.

Aniela Galka, Age 11

4

HOUSING

HOUSING

WHY IS HOUSING SO IMPORTANT?

The State of Michigan adopted its first comprehensive housing plan – Michigan's Statewide Housing Plan – in 2022 because of the housing challenges throughout the state. These challenges, including the aging of the state's housing stock, the shortage of new housing and rising costs, make housing and homeownership less attainable. These issues are represented in the Metro Detroit region where the number of people and households continue to increase.

The need for more housing throughout the entire state is clear; the Statewide Housing Plan states that there should be at least 75,000 new or rehabilitated housing units added in the next five years, with at least 39,000 of those affordable rental units and at least 21,500 of those market-rate units (homeowner and rental).

In terms of underbuilding, the four "Ls" – labor, lumber, land, and laws play a role in affecting housing availability, according to the Zoning Reform Toolkit, published by the American Planning Association – Michigan Chapter. A shortage of available labor and lumber (or many other construction materials) hikes the costs of each, and encourages developers to opt to build the most lucrative, large houses first. A sprawling development that needs extensive infrastructure connections will almost certainly encourage this practice, therefore it is important for the City to encourage infill development as much as possible. Laws should also be updated to reflect contemporary housing needs.

LOCAL IMPORTANCE TO STERLING HEIGHTS

The lack of affordable and attainable housing can be detrimental to the economic growth of a community, including Sterling Heights. As the average household size shrinks in Sterling Heights and one-person households grow, it means more people may be looking for smaller housing units. This is very relevant for an aging community, where seniors may wish to downsize while remaining in the community. Empty-nesters may be looking to transition to smaller units when children become adults and move to their own homes. Sterling Heights has a very large proportion of single-family homes, especially of a larger size structurally and older in age, increasing the likelihood of critical home repairs; ensuring sufficient housing types in light of community changes is crucial to maintaining a healthy, vibrant, and diverse community.

Economically, the lack of housing choices can hurt the City as well. Being able to provide housing that suits the workforce is key for communities to sustain small businesses. Service and essential workers, including teachers and public safety officers, continue to be priced out of many communities in our state. This means workers face long commutes or they find work elsewhere. The blue-collar workforce driving the City's industry should have housing options that are affordable and proximal to where they work. Large companies looking for a regional headquarters often want to locate where their workforce can live and can travel to and from work easily, reliably, and affordably.

In addition, as the housing stock ages, the infrastructure (e.g., streets, water and sewer lines) created fifty or more years ago is also aging. This may be a burden on municipal finances. The more compact the development, the easier and more efficient it is to maintain the infrastructure. Overall, the more housing built within the City, especially with a variety of housing choices, the more of the population the City is able to serve. From aging residents who want to "age-in-place," to younger residents who want to live near their places of employment to the local and regional businesses, institutions and agencies that rely on the local workforce, a variety of housing options at a variety of price points is essential. Further, increasing the availability of housing for purchase can help create a more equitable community, as homeownership is one of the key contributors to upward mobility.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines cost-burdened households as households that pay over 30 percent of their income on housing. Paying more than 30 percent of income on housing results in challenges affording other necessities. This measure of cost-burdened households is widely accepted by housing organizations, governmental agencies, and academia. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey estimates (2022), percent about a third of all households in Sterling Heights were estimated to be cost-burdened, using that general rule.

The Center for Neighborhood Technology, an organization providing analysis and resources for communities across the US, goes further, including transportation into the calculation of affordability. Because transportation costs are typically the second highest expense for a household behind housing, they suggest a combined maximum standard of 45 percent for housing and transportation together.

Sterling Heights is just over that standard, at 49 percent, with 26 percent going towards housing and 23 percent going towards transportation. For the Southeast Michigan region (SEMCOG), 25 percent of income is spent on housing and 22 percent is spent on transportation on average. Similarly, in Macomb County, 25 percent of income is spent on housing and 23 percent is spent on transportation on average.

It should be noted that the term "housing affordability" does not always represent the provision of housing for the lowest of income levels. As displayed in the diagram below, the renter households with the lowest income levels are actually slightly less cost-burdened than the next higher income level. This may represent a rental housing landscape in the City that has negligible naturally occurring affordable housing options for low income and lower-to- moderate income households. This group could represent households whose modest finances may struggle to pay for daily needs, but do not rise to the thresholds for affordable housing options via HUD.
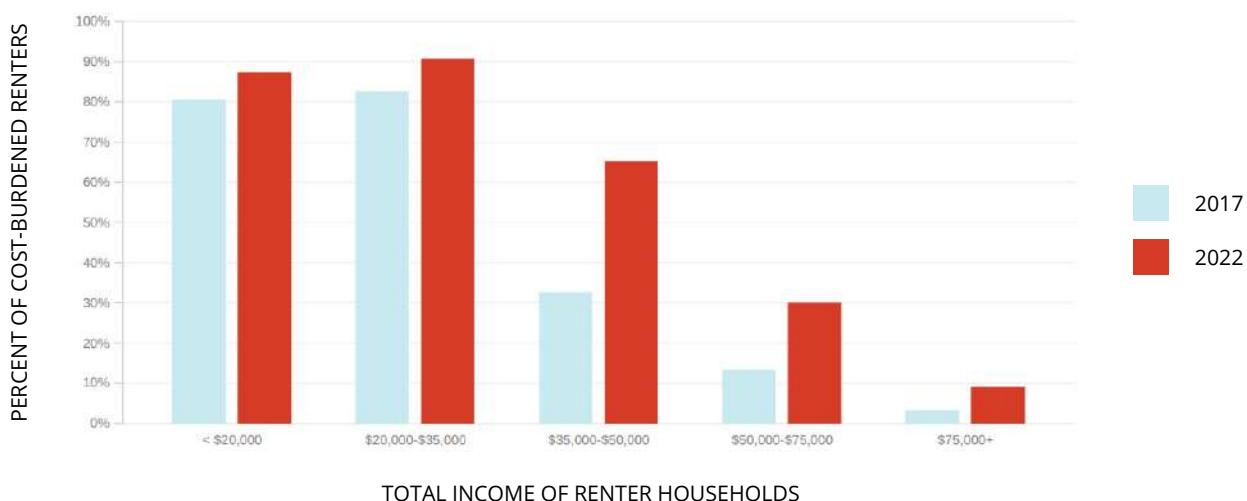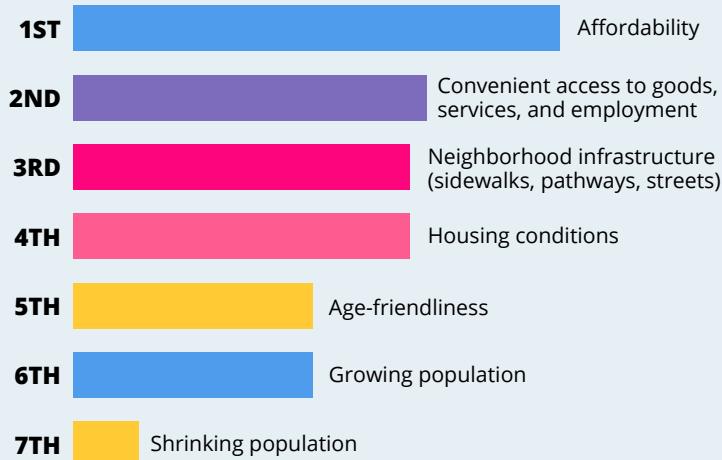

Source: U.S. Census Bureau via PolicyMap's Local Housing Solutions

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SNAPSHOT

The community survey found:

- Housing costs are a challenge. 46 percent of respondents stated rising housing costs are considered a "major challenge facing Sterling Heights. 84 percent of respondents indicated that cost of housing is "very important" or "important" to them.

- The quality of neighborhoods and their homes are important for residents. 95 percent of respondents stated quality of homes and neighborhoods are "very important" or "important" to them.

- Residents are interested in staying in their homes. 59 percent of respondents stated they are "very unlikely" to sell their home within the next year, with an additional 12 percent of respondents being "somewhat unlikely." The Planning Commission's Housing Module conducted in April 2024 allowed Commissioners and members of the public to rank the City's housing priorities. Affordability was deemed the number one priority, with convenient access to goods, services, and employment being the number two priority.

| Rank	Priority
1ST	Affordability
2ND	Convenient access to goods, services, and employment
3RD	Neighborhood infrastructure (sidewalks, pathways, streets)
4TH	Housing conditions
5TH	Age-friendliness
6TH	Growing population
7TH	Shrinking population

This Module also went over hypothetical scenarios in which new housing opportunities may open up throughout the City. The Commission and public were prompted with the question of how this scenario aligns with the above housing priorities, and found the following:
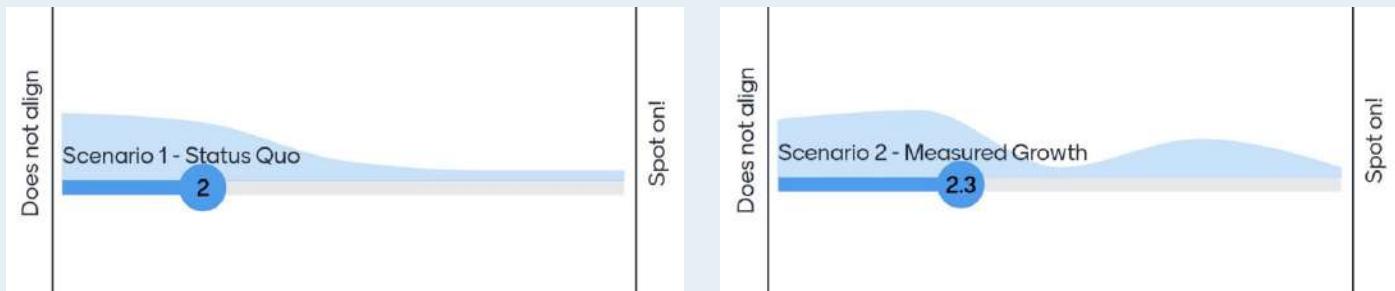

Scenario 1 - Status Quo: The City maintains its current zoning restrictions, primarily single-family homes. Limited development occurs, with mostly large single-family homes or multi-family apartment complexes being the occasional development.

Scenario 2 - Measured Growth: The City allows for a limited number of duplexes on existing lots, with a focus on maintaining the overall single-family character. Regulations may require design that blends seamlessly with existing homes.
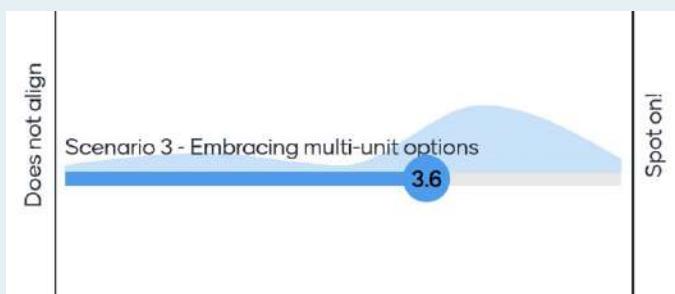
Scenario 3 - Embracing Multi-Unit Options: The City allows duplexes, triplexes, and possibly quadplexes in designated areas, and allows ADUs on existing properties. Zoning is revised to encourage development of these multi-unit dwellings alongside single-family homes.
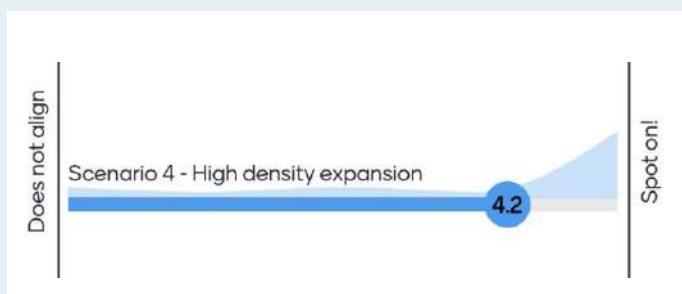
Scenario 4 - High-Density Expansion: The City allows for a significant increase in multi-unit dwellings, including duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes on existing properties. Zoning is revised to encourage higher-density development in designated areas.

From this scenario exercise, it was clear the commission and public understood the more flexible housing opportunities were enabled, the established housing priorities were more likely to be met. The Commission also suggested the following direction:

• High-density expansion everywhere in the City is likely too intense for Sterling Heights now, but may be preferred in particular geographic areas, such as the development nodes.

• The City needs to apply the appropriate scenario to various areas in order to build up density and allow for different kinds of housing like duplexes and triplexes to be built if they meet the desirable aesthetics.

• The zoning code needs to be more flexible to allow for greater density housing to be developed. There has been a lot of push back on developments, but there are examples of cottage courts and smaller scale single-family housing developments that can be emulated here, too.

Figure 1. Housing Affordability Measures

Cannot be Computed **10%**

Cost-Burdened **30%**

Not Cost-Burdened **60%**

Housing Costs **26%**

Transportation Costs **23%**

Remaining Income **51%**
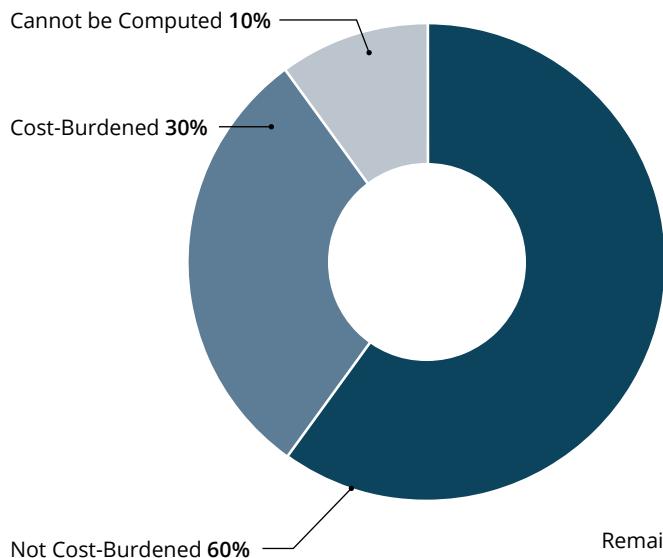
Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year
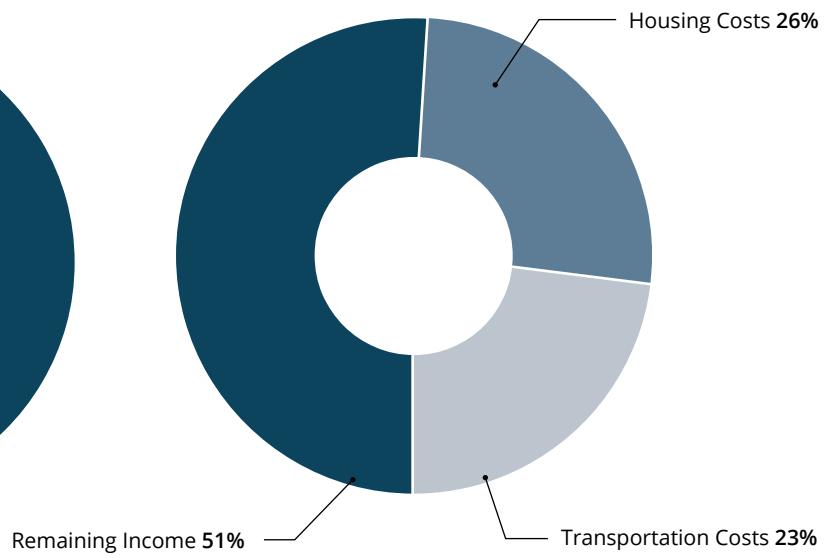
Source: H+T Affordability Index

QUICK AFFORDABLE AND ATTAINABLE HOUSING STATISTICS

Key Statistics:

(Note: Housing values and rents are lagging indicators. See the **Housing Market Summary** section for additional data.)

Median Housing Value (2022 ACS):	$243,400
Change in Median Housing Value (2010 to 2022 *in 2022 dollars*)**:**	0.7%
Macomb County as a whole:	1.0%

Median Gross Rent (2022 ACS):	$1,215
Change in Median Gross Rent (2010 to 2022 *in 2022 dollars*)**:**	10.0%
Macomb County as a whole:	7.5%

Data from U.S. Census Bureau's 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) unless otherwise noted.

Additionally, the share of cost-burdened renter households in the moderate- and higher-income levels have doubled from 2017 to 2022.

Considering the United Way's ALICE (acronym for "Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed") data in light of affordability and level of cost-burdened data is important as well. ALICE is intended to analyze people/ households who "earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but not enough to afford the basics where they live." In 2022, 28% of households in Sterling Heights meet the ALICE definition, plus 10% of households are below the federal poverty level, meaning 38% of total households struggle to afford basics where they live, which would conceivably include struggling to afford housing. In providing this data, the United Way notes that, in Macomb County, a "substantial portion of both full and part-time workers are paid by the hour; these workers are more likely to have fluctuations in income and less likely to receive benefits."

Attainable Housing. Attainable housing has been defined as non-subsidized, for-sale housing that is affordable to households with an income between 80 and 120 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). Housing below 80 percent AMI is affordable or subsidized housing, and housing above 120 percent AMI is market rate. As all residents have housing needs regardless of income level, the provision of attainable housing should not be disregarded.

Who needs affordable housing?

The median household income of Sterling Heights is $75,381 (ACS 2022). Housing for people making 80% - 120% range targets people earning between $60,304 - $90,457 per year. In Sterling Heights, in 2024, the following professions fall into that category with the estimated average annual income:

Profession	Income
Firefighters	$55,503
Teacher	$61,348
Police Officer	$64,833
Human Resources Manager	$64,809
Restaurant Manager	$66,429
Accountant	$67,616
Construction Foreman	$67,277
Social Worker	$72,159
Nurse	$75,414

Source: Indeed.com and ZipRecruiter.com

ATTAINABLE HOUSING
REAL ESTATE EXAMPLES

Attainable Housing in Sterling Heights. In a local context, the median household income of Sterling Heights is $75,381 (ACS 2022). With the rule of thumb that no more than three times annual household income should be spent on housing, a household spending $1,884.52 per month on all housing costs (including taxes and utilities) is attainable at this level, without becoming cost-burdened.
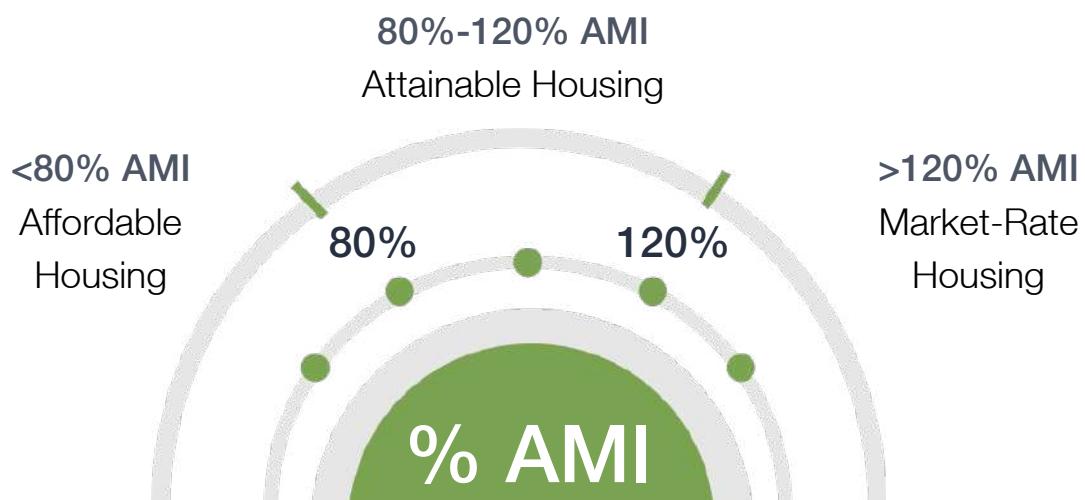
80 percent of the City's median household income is $60,305. With three times annual household income spent on housing, a household spending $1,507.63 per month on all housing costs is attainable at this level, without becoming cost-burdened.

120 percent of the City's median household income is $90,457. With three times annual household income spent on housing, a household spending $2,261.43 on all housing costs is attainable at this level, without becoming cost-burdened.

What's on the Market? The below graphic displays homes (of any housing unit type) available on Zillow as of April 15, 2024. Availability is broken down based on the affordable, attainable, and market-rate thresholds.

For study purposes, we are applying the rule of thumb that three times income equals the housing value for buyers, with the starting point being the median household income of $75,381 as listed above. The graphic shows that there is a disproportionate amount of expensive market-rate housing compared to housing that is considered attainable. Further, the number of homes priced at a value of $579,900 or greater (15 total homes) was the same as the number of homes that fell into the definition of attainable. Keep in mind that these income levels do not take into account additional housing costs of utilities and taxes, therefore the ideal housing price levels may be slightly lower.

80%-120% AMI
Attainable Housing

<80% AMI
Affordable Housing

>120% AMI
Market-Rate Housing

80%   120%

% AMI

	Affordable housing at less than 80% median household income = Housing priced at less than $180,914	Attainable housing at between 80% to 120% median household income = Housing priced at $180,914 to $272,372	Market rate housing (greater than 120 percent median household income) = Housing priced at greater than $272,372
Number of Homes Available	13	15	48
Percentage of Homes Available	17%	20%	63%

HOUSING TRENDS

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Currently, most new housing in the City consists of either single-family detached housing or large-scale multi-unit housing, with some single-family attached condominium developments sprinkled in. Below shows the allocation of building permits (in total number of housing units) for various housing types from 2010 to present. As Sterling Heights's population is projected to grow at a moderate pace, it is important for the community to consider an appropriate housing mix to address the growing demand.

The increase in housing values is consistent with a market with growing demand and increasing supply constraints. Residential vacancy in Sterling Heights has decreased over time, as well as the percentage of overall units which are renter occupied. The majority of building permits issued since 2010 have been for single-family units (51 percent). [Note: Keep in mind that the number of permits is tracked by housing unit, so if there are 50 housing units in a multi-family apartment building, that counts as 50 permits.]

Looking at the age of housing, 57.8 percent of the City's housing units were built before 1980. Some of these houses may be nearing time of critical repairs and may not suit the needs of aging homeowners or fit the lifestyle of younger homeowners. Remodeling and repair costs can make it challenging to stay in a home, putting aging residents at risk.

QUICK AFFORDABLE AND ATTAINABLE HOUSING STATISTICS

Key Statistics:

Housing Units (2022 ACS):	52,791
Occupied Housing Units (2022 ACS):	50,989
Projected Occupied Units (2050 SEMCOG):	56,191
Owner-Occupied Units (2022 ACS):	38,733 (76%)
Renter-Occupied Units (2022 ACS):	12,256 (24%)

Single-Family Building Permits: 332 building permits have been issued from 2021 to 2024, per SEMCOG.

Vacancy: Residential vacancy rates have shrunk 5.2% to 3.3% from 2010 to 2023, per ESRI data.

Data from U.S. Census Bureau's 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) unless otherwise noted.

BUILDING PERMITS, 2010 - 2024

Legend: Single-Family, Two Family, Attached Condo, Multi-Family, Total Demos
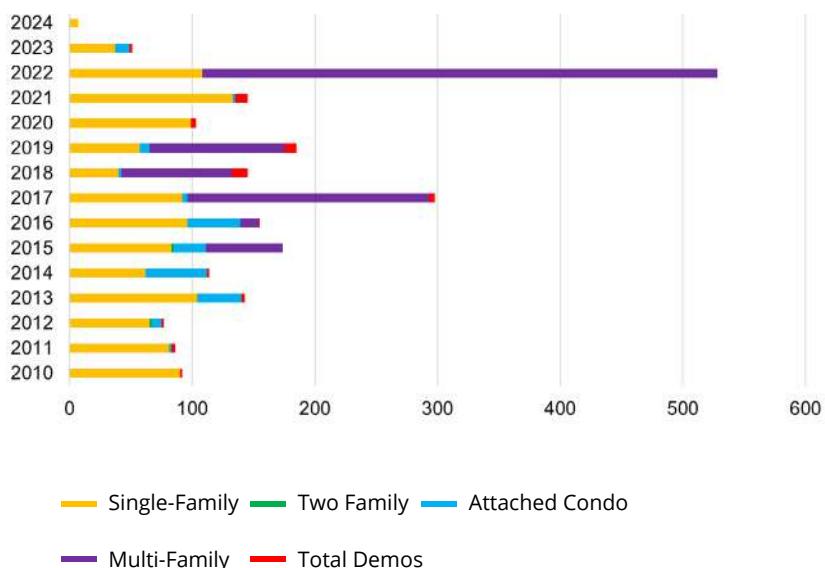
Source: SEMCOG

HOUSING MARKET SUMMARY

The housing market study conducted by The Chesapeake Group as part of this Master Plan update is summarized in this section.

A forward-looking approach to housing not only addresses population needs but also lays a foundational influence on the scope and sustainability of non-residential development, ensuring that the City's commercial landscape evolves in harmony with its growing population.

The population of Sterling Heights is projected to grow by 8 percent by 2050, from 133,103 to 143,767 people. However, the number of households in Sterling Heights is expected to grow by about 9 percent during this same time frame. This trend in projected household growth rates exceeding population growth rates is primarily due to internal factors (like residents moving to new homes or forming new households as existing residents age) rather than external factors (such as in-migration from other areas).

The housing demand forecast of 1,400 to 2,100 units over the next 8–10 years in Sterling Heights reflects the City's dynamic growth, driven by both new households forming and changing preferences. Meeting this demand requires a balanced approach that includes both affordable and market-rate housing to support diverse populations, including young professionals, families, and seniors.

Aging residents contribute significantly to household growth, especially as older adults often seek different housing arrangements that suit their changing needs. This trend increases the number of households even if the population size stays relatively stable, as larger households (often families) make way for smaller, one- or two-person households.

According to SEMCOG's population forecast, by 2050, nearly half (47 percent) of all households in Sterling Heights will have at least one person over age 65, compared to 37 percent of such households in 2022. In terms of aging residents, many choose downsizing to smaller homes, homes with less maintenance, or homes better suited to accommodate aging in place. This shift can create demand for varied housing options like smaller single-family homes, condos, and apartments. Additionally, an aging population can increase the need for specific types of housing—such as senior living communities or assisted living options—and support services tailored to older adults. This shift has a dual impact on the housing market, adding to household numbers and shaping demand for new developments that integrate walkability, accessibility, and proximity to healthcare, shopping, and social activities.

Workforce housing includes housing for teachers, healthcare workers, retail employees, and other middle-income workers who are essential to the local economy but may face challenges finding housing they can afford. Having housing close to key employment hubs (such as the commercial districts, manufacturing centers, healthcare facilities, and corridors such as the Mound Road industrial corridor) aligns housing growth with job opportunities. This can minimize commuting challenges for residents and improve the City's overall **economic health**.

Residential growth is a primary driver of economic activity, shaping demand for goods, services, and employment opportunities across the City. As the number of households expands, so does the need for a diverse array of retail, dining, entertainment, healthcare, and educational services to meet residents' day-to-day needs. This growth creates a ripple effect, where new residential developments stimulate investment in commercial spaces, offices, and public infrastructure, positioning the City as a dynamic, multifaceted community.
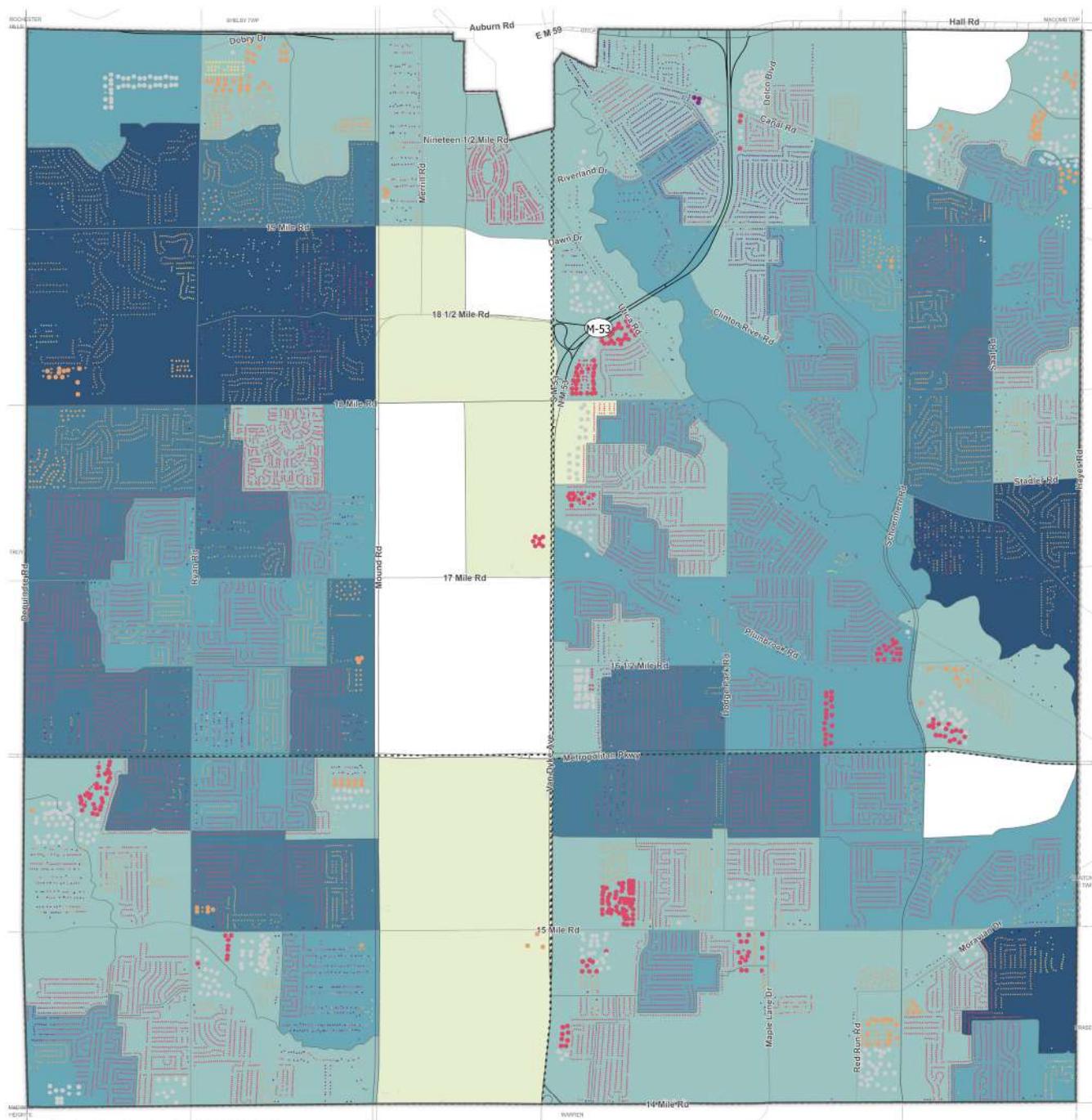
Sources: Roads, Building Footprint and Age; SEMCOG, © 2024, Giffels Webster

Housing & Transportation Cost, % of Income
- < 30.00
- 30.01 - 45.00
- 45.01 - 50.00
- 50.01 - 60.00
- 60.01 - 70.00

Housing Units
- · 1
- ∘ 2 - 4
- ○ 5+

Year Built
- Unknown
- Before 1940
- 1940 - 1959
- 1960 - 1979
- 1980 - 1999
- After 2000

giffels webster

0   0.5   1 Mile

HOUSING AGE AND COSTS
STERLING HEIGHTS

HOUSING TRENDS IN MACOMB COUNTY AND THE CITY OF STERLING HEIGHTS

Housing Trends	
Historic Trends	Housing patterns have evolved through major events: the pre-2008 housing boom, the Great Recession, and the recent era of low interest rates. Macomb County and Sterling Heights experienced dramatic shifts in housing permits, with significant declines in new units during the recession and partial recovery afterwards. More recent years have shown a growing demand for rental units and attached housing (e.g., multi-family units), with single-family detached homes still dominant.
Current Trends	Increased demand for smaller, more affordable housing, particularly among seniors.
Future Trends	Continued demand for diverse housing options, including single-family, multi-family, and senior living.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Surveys and data indicate high mobility among residents, with half of households likely to move within five years. About one-third of these households prefer smaller homes, particularly older adults (55+). Meanwhile, younger adults generally seek larger homes. Demand for affordable and diverse housing options, including studio flats and two-bedroom units, is strong, especially for lower-income and senior households. Additionally, new household formation from within existing households and migration into Sterling Heights both contribute to housing demand.

The analysis forecasts demand for 1,400 to 2,100 new units over the next 8 to 10 years in Sterling Heights, with about half of these units being attached (e.g., condos, apartments), primarily in two- or three-bedroom formats.

Sterling Heights should consider the housing strategies at the end of this chapter on , many of which are market-related.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

The City of Sterling Heights Planning Commission has reviewed nine Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), plus three conditional rezonings, for multi-unit housing developments since the beginning of 2022, proposing more than 1,100 housing units. A majority of these are multi-unit housing developments that have required relief from minimum parking requirements and maximum density requirements, indicating that there is a market push for less parking and higher density, sometimes in the form of smaller units or micro-units. This number of PUDs indicate that there is a disconnect between this market push and the City's zoning regulations. In terms of approvals, the Planning Commission has approved nearly 1,100 housing units in the form of special approval land uses or PUDs.

This market push is at least partially spurred by the fact that one-person households take up a large share of renter-occupied households, accounting for 44.6 percent of such households in 2022 (2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates). Further lessening the need for parking is that fact that 49.6 percent of renter-occupied households have one vehicle and 17.1 percent have no vehicle (2022 ACS). Right-sizing both unit size and parking, is a more beneficial use of land, has a less impactful opportunity cost for other development or land usage, and has less environmental impacts.

Since 2021, the City has approved two mixed-use Chaldean Community Foundation developments intended for low-income residents earning 30% to 80% area median income. The City has approved micro-units of approximately 415 square feet as part of the Icon Park development to fill the need of workforce housing. These proposals show that there is movement in developing mixed-use and workforce housing in the City and movement in diversifying the City's housing stock based on housing needs.

HOUSING SOLUTIONS

MISSING MIDDLE

Missing middle housing is a term used to describe housing types that were largely present in the early part of the 20th century, such as duplexes, fourplexes, small townhouse clusters, and cottage court detached units. In Sterling Heights, these housing types are truly presently missing in the City. Of all housing units, 76.3 percent are single-family detached or single-family attached (including townhomes and duplexes that share a ground-to-roof wall), and 17 percent are buildings with five or greater housing units (2022 ACS). Only 3.7 percent of the City's housing units are three- or four-unit buildings, buildings typically most associated with "missing middle" in semi-urban and suburban settings (2022 ACS).

Many communities are moving towards accepting missing middle housing as a means to diversify the housing stock in a low-impact manner. House-scale missing middle housing types can increase housing choices while being built at a scale that is consistent with the range of sizes of detached single-family homes. Missing middle can

Housing Types: Sterling Heights					
Housing Type	ACS 2010	ACS 2022	Change 2010 - 2022	% Share of Total, 2010	% Share of Total, 2022
Single-family, detached	34,386	35,094	708	66.6%	66.5%
Multi-unit	15,720	16,123	403	30.4%	30.5%
Mobile homes or other	1,520	1,574	54	2.9%	3.0%
Total	51,626	52,791	1,165		

entail the retro-fitting of large existing single-family homes into more units; it does not only mean new construction.

Pattern Book Homes for 21st Century Michigan, published in 2022 by the Michigan Municipal League, communicates how missing middle may occur in a Michigan City—that is, by designing neighborhood-friendly, low-impact density that is similar in scale and style to the character and form of the existing neighborhood. The schematic designs in this publication are specifically intended as an infill strategy to fit as small as 40' by 100' lots. Therefore, using these design schematics on Sterling Heights' 60' by 120'-and-greater lots provide a good opportunity to align with neighborhood character and form. Another major benefit of this publication is for homeowners or developers - maybe a smaller individual or business with less experience - in helping them create an easy and affordable infill home or missing middle housing development.

At the very least, missing middle housing types should be considered for transitional areas between the traditional suburban-style development patterns and the commercial and mixed-use areas intended in the City.

Missing Middle Housing

THIS USED TO BE NORMAL

PATTERN BOOK HOMES FOR 21ST CENTURY MICHIGAN

NEW HOUSING VARIETY

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are a staple of the lower-impact housing strategies. This may be a simple first step for the City to take to encourage such housing stock diversity. Some ADUs serve as "in-law flats" for older relatives or serve young adults who want more privacy from their parents. ADUs can be built in many forms, often converted from a detached garage, but can also be in the form of a converted attached garage, or converted attic or basement space.

Detached ADU   Attached ADU   Above the Garage ADU
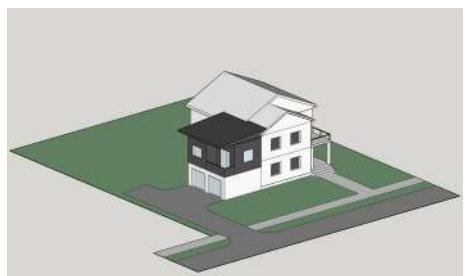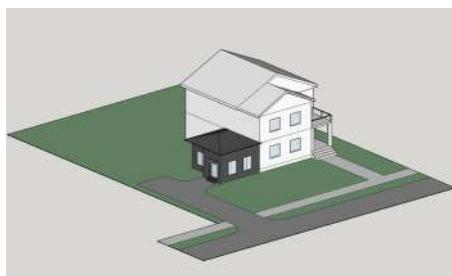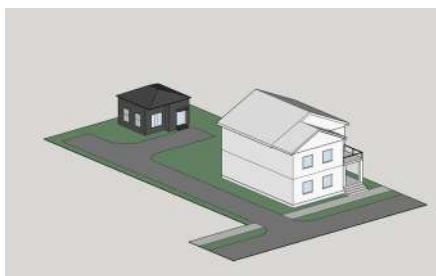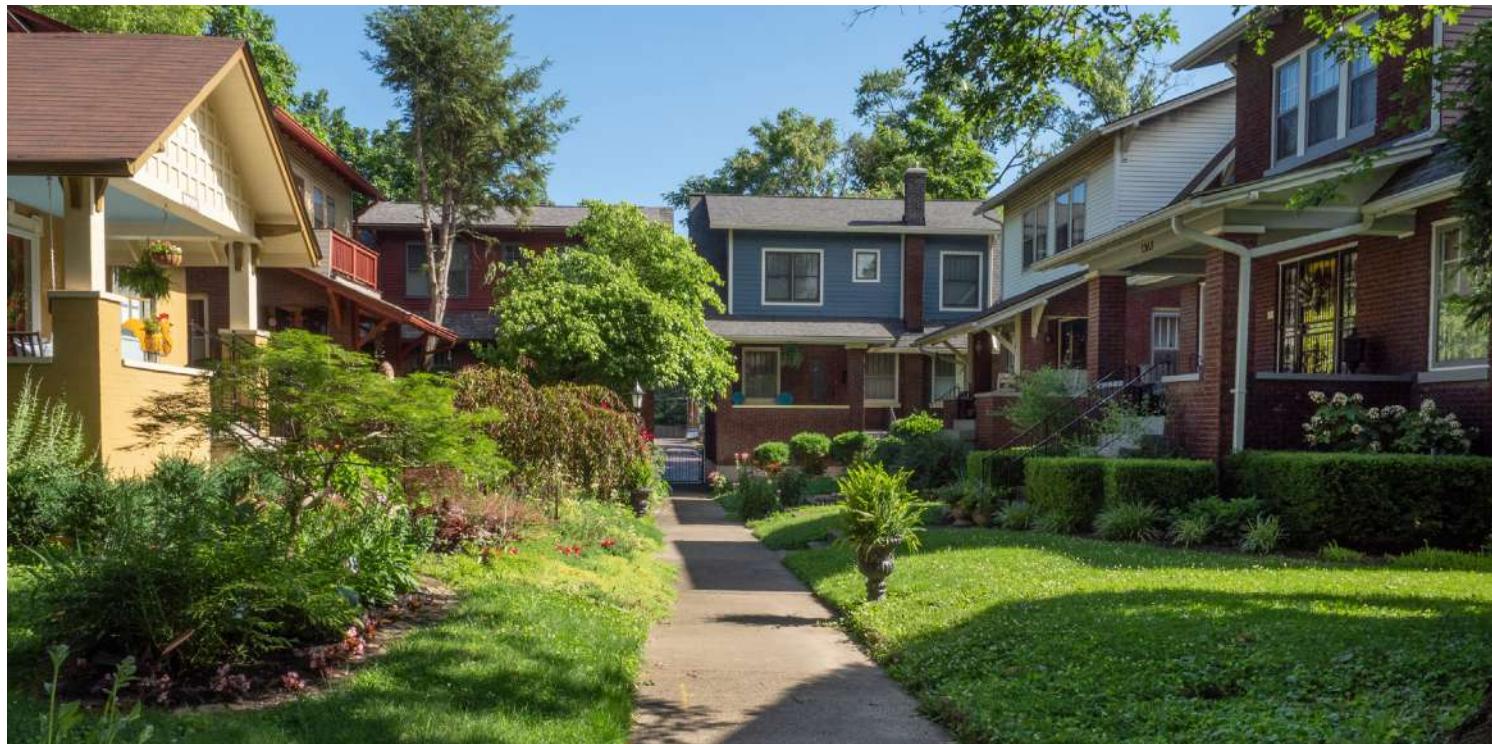
Cottage courts are also a lower-impact housing strategy oriented around the provision of common courtyard space. Often times, these are compact, one- to two-story small houses facing inwards towards a common space, like a community garden, courtyard, or playground, with access from an alley or service drive with a small and also common parking area.

Shrinking minimum zoning requirements can be an easy fix to allow for more housing to be built, more affordable housing options, and overall more flexibility in the design and development of housing.

In terms of <u>minimum lot size and lot dimensions,</u> the City regulates these fairly strictly. The City currently has five different single-family zoning districts, with the R60 district allowing for the smallest lot sizes. See the table to the right. If *Pattern Book Homes for 21st Century Michigan* can portray compatible design for duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes to fit into existing neighborhoods, then it's conceivable a single-family home can fit with other single-family homes while protecting neighborhood character.

In terms of <u>minimum housing unit size</u>, the City also regulates these strictly in terms of requiring a minimum floor area. The smallest size house a homebuilder could build in the City is a 1,000 square foot house, a far larger house than many ranch houses and workers cottages that thrived in cities and suburbs up until the 1960s. Reducing the minimum floor area does not mean that no larger homes would be built if the market demands it; however it removes a barrier for smaller home development.

When the City upholds large minimum zoning requirements, they are essentially requiring developers to only build large homes that are proportionally more expensive to accommodate a financial return on the larger land value.

Current Sterling Heights Zoning Ordinance			
Zoning District	Minimum Lot Size (sq. ft)	Minimum Lot Depth Width/Depth (ft.)	Minimum Floor Area (sq. ft.)
R60	7,200	60/120	1,000
R70	8,400	70/120	1,400
R80	10,000	80/125	1,800
R90	11,700	90/130	2,000
R100	14,000	100/140	2,000

ORIGINAL PLATTED SUBDIVISIONS EXAMPLE

Conveniently, the City is already set up in some of its neighborhoods to implement smaller lots in a relatively easy manner. Some neighborhoods still have the skeleton of their original plat in place, including the Wanda Park subdivision (see graphics below). This subdivision was platted in 1925 to have 40 feet wide by 102 feet deep lots, however more recent development consolidated these originally-platted lots together into their present-day parcels. The benefit of the underlying plat still existing in this manner though, is that property owners could easily split their lots back into what they were originally platted for, without complicated plat amendments, but in this case the Zoning Ordinance has prohibited those platted lots from being reused in that manner. See the below platted lot in yellow – a simple tweak to the Zoning Ordinance in allowing for smaller lot sizes could allow property owners to efficiently reuse land in the manner it was originally designed for.
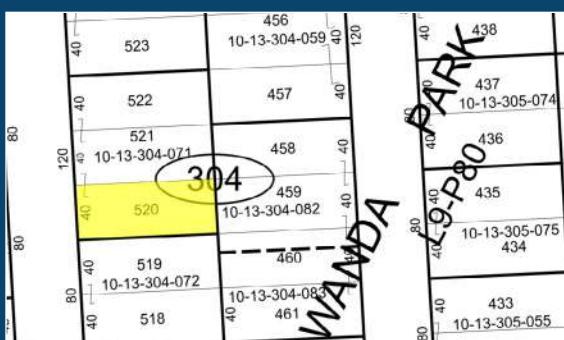
AGE-FRIENDLY HOUSING

Communities that are age-friendly have residents that are well-connected to a range of transportation options, recreational opportunities, community facilities, medical care and social assistance, and commercial goods and services. Being age-friendly not only ensures that seniors have access to these fundamental resources but also recognizes that by creating environments that are inclusive and accessible, a high quality of life can be achieved for all generations. A broad spectrum of housing options is an essential component of this goal; age-friendly housing is not only well-connected to key community amenities, but it also considers the safety, mobility, and comfort of all residents. This inclusive community approach not only enhances opportunities for multi-generational living, but also cultivates intergenerational interactions and strengthens social cohesion.

AGING-IN-COMMUNITY VS. AGING-IN-PLACE

As people age, many share a desire to age in their communities, or live in a place where they will not need to move to meet their needs over time. While this is a common aspiration, many homes are not well-suited to help seniors maintain independence as they are isolated from goods, services, and social opportunities. Aging-in-Community is the idea that, while it may be difficult to remain in the same home while aging, communities should have many different housing options for seniors, whether that is assisted or independent living facilities, smaller housing units, or single-story/visitable homes. Residential facilities that serve many seniors in a central location make it easier to deliver key resources and services.

The benefits of aging-in-community are multi-generational; strategies to increase opportunities for seniors to downsize or join a communal living environment can have a positive effect on the supply of highly sought-after single-family housing. This type of shift may make it easier for others to participate in a highly competitive market, including young families seeking features such as yard space or multiple bedrooms.

Visitability and Universal Design

To accommodate aging populations, homes may need to be altered or residents may need to move to places that match their physical abilities. As housing costs have risen and the share of multi-generational households has begun to increase after many decades of decline, demand for housing that is adaptable to all needs has grown. Two popular movements in design have surfaced to promote more accessible residential development: visitability and universal design. The City may consider ways to incentivize or require components of these accessible design strategies through zoning regulations or other strategies.

Visitability is a term used to describe the idea that housing should be designed in a manner that is welcoming and comfortable for not only homeowners but all visitors, regardless of physical limitations or needs. To qualify as visitable, a home should contain a zero-step entry, first-floor bathroom, and wheelchair accessible doorway (32 inches wide). Other characteristics, such as accessible outdoor pathways, first floor bedrooms,

and accessible light switches, have also been adopted as markers of visitability. These strategies are not only good for those with limited mobility, but also make spaces safe for moving large objects or strollers.

Similar to visitability, universal design promotes residential design that accommodates all individuals. However, while visitability primarily focuses on first-floor enhancements, universal design considers accessibility of the entire structure. The fundamental "Seven Principles of Universal Design" were established in 1997 by a working group of architects, product designers, engineers, and environmental design experts and serve as a blueprint that defines and guides Universal Design.

The City may consider ways to incorporate accessible design features into the Zoning Ordinance as a desired community benefit when zoning flexibility is provided. In addition, design considerations that pertain to the site or exterior of a structure can be included as ordinance requirements, such as an accessible front pathway or additional garage width.

VISITABILITY EXAMPLES:

At least one zero-step entry (does not need to be front entrance)

Doors and hallways of accessible width

At least one first floor bathroom

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

AS PEOPLE AGE, MANY SHARE A DESIRE TO AGE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, OR THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN:

1. **Equitable Use.**
   The design should be useful and marketable to those with diverse abilities.

2. **Flexibility in Use.**
   The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

3. **Simple and Intuitive.**
   Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of experience, knowledge, language skills or current concentration level.

4. **Legibility.**
   The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

5. **Tolerance for Error.**
   The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

6. **Low Physical Effort.**
   The design can be used efficiently and comfortably with minimum fatigue.

7. **Size and Space for Approach and Use.**
   The design provides appropriate size and space for approach, reach, manipulation, and use, regardless of body size, posture, or mobility.

Live-Works

Sterling Heights is a City with a significant economic presence and should take advantage of the fact that people want to do business here. Live-works can offer an opportunity for small business owners in allowing a residence connected to the business while having Building Code flexibility in not needing to design the live-work unit to stringent commercial code requirements. Businesses more likely to take place in live-works are small businesses such as artisan manufacturing, art studios, personal service, or small-scale retail/office, that contain limited customer/employee space and only a few- if any- additional employees.

Mixed-Use

Mixed-use is a development style communities desire to represent a traditional downtown or compact, walkable urban neighborhood, in which commercial and residential uses are mixed throughout, often with the residential being stacked on top in a vertical manner.

Development characterized by a mix of uses, built for walkability, and that includes good public transportation, tends to attract residents and businesses seeking a vibrant and connected environment. This generally compact development pattern offers goods and services all within easy reach. Additionally, reduced reliance on cars lowers transportation costs for residents and businesses, further boosting disposable income. Furthermore, compact development helps optimize infrastructure investment, maximizing the return on public resources spent on utilities, roads, and schools. This combination of factors – a strong local economy, lower transportation costs, and efficient infrastructure – is why the North Van Dyke Avenue Plan and other local strategies have worked to create opportunities for this type of development over the past several years.

Traditional mixed-use in the 21st century often looks the way it does with the frequently-occurring "five over one" building, a building style that maximizes the use of wood construction and utilizes (at least) two staircases serving a hotel-style hallway corridor. However, mixed-use can mean much more than the standard "five over one" building – it can mean stacked flats above a commercial space, live-works as mentioned above, or even horizontal mixed-use, which can be other forms of multi-unit or missing middle housing directly adjacent and accessible to amenities and convenience goods/services.

LAND USE LINKAGE

Mixed-use multi-unit housing has been a desire of the City's planning efforts dating back to 2017. Lakeside and North Van Dyke Avenue envision this development type in a traditional, vertical mixed-use sense, and the City has anxiously awaited potential mixed-use developments in the 2017-planned Traditional Mixed Use Development Node areas. Since there really hasn't been meaningful development of this type, however, it may be worth exploring whether land use policies need to be updated and/or refined. Additionally, it is worth noting any public improvements that might be needed to further encourage the types of development desired in this area.

Crafting zoning regulations to allow various housing types in the most flexible, hurdle-free manner is a critical action to encourage the mix of uses and ensure a stable local population to sustain the local economy. Starting here, along with an analysis of complementary land uses that are conducive to residents' needs in terms of convenience and quality of life, should be a baseline first step in analyzing how the City's **Mixed-Use Development Nodes** can thrive.
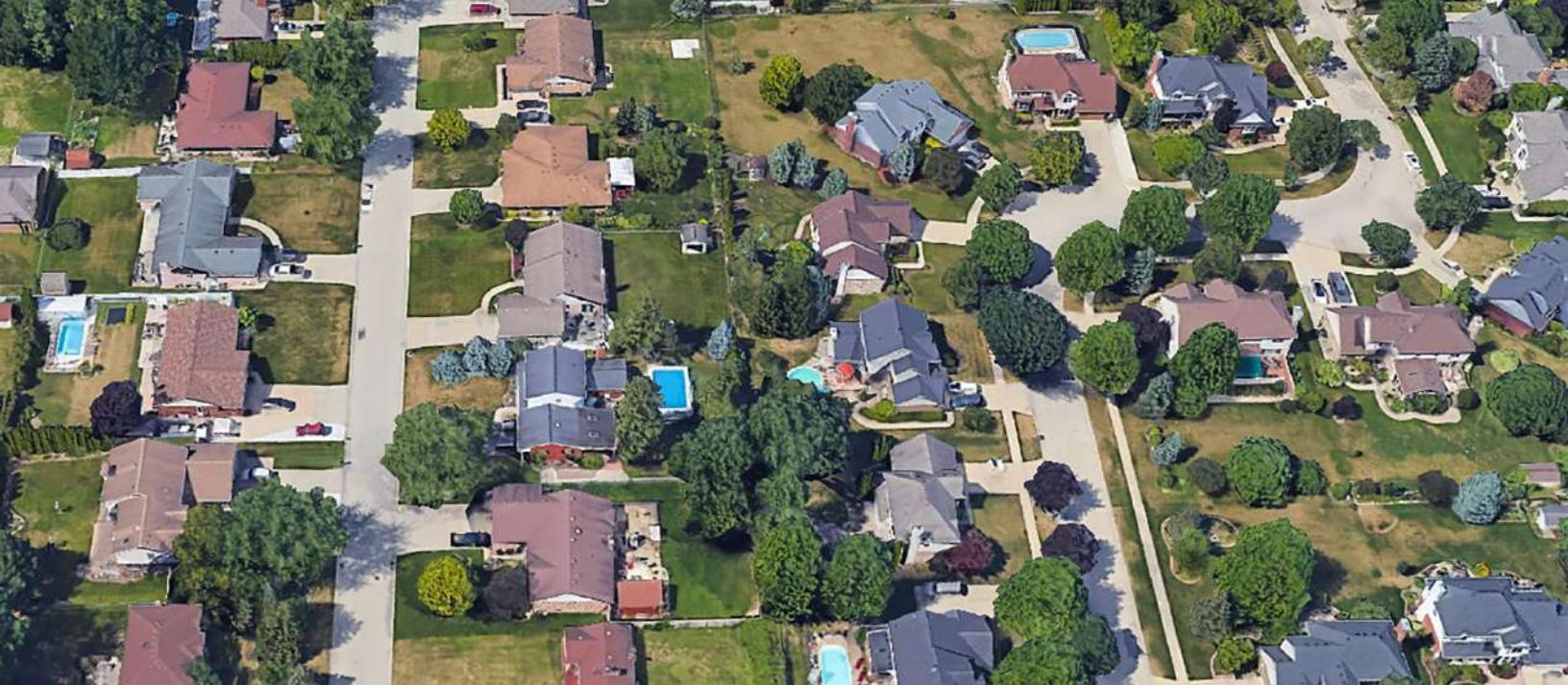
HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STERLING HEIGHTS

Encouraging Diverse Housing Options:

- Zoning for a mix of housing types, including single-family homes, accessory dwellings, "missing middle" housing (such as duplex, triplex, and quadplex housing), townhouses, apartments, and senior living facilities.

- Creating incentives for developers to build smaller, more affordable housing units.

- Supporting the development of age-restricted communities, especially when close to civic facilities and other community goods and services.

- Zoning for mixed-use, including smaller scale stacked-flats and live-works, in not only nodes but other office or commercial land use areas.

- Support existing residential neighborhoods by addressing any blight as it arises and by ensuring that infrastructure, including sidewalks, streets, and stormwater systems are well-maintained. Add street trees either within the rights-of-way or on private property, with the consent of homeowners.

Streamline Processes and Reduce Procedural Barriers to Housing Development:

- Utilize a "pattern book" or pre-approved design model for potential accessory dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes that meets a design preferred by the City and can be replicated by a property owner/developer in their permitting process.

- Assess the Zoning Ordinance to identify opportunities for the administrative approval of missing middle housing and reduce the instances in which discretionary (i.e., special land use) decisions are required for multi-family development in non-single-family zoning districts.

- Update the Zoning Ordinance's use and site regulations to permit multi-family development types that are more reflective of the recent market push with recent PUDs.

Affordable Housing

Housing is a key component to support a growing, diverse, and resilient community and it should be affordable for the City's aging residents, young householders, and workforce.

- **Zoning Flexibility for Affordable Housing Development**: Allow for a mix of housing types, like duplexes, townhomes, and multi-family units. By enabling these housing options on lots traditionally zoned only for single-family homes, the plan can create more attainable housing options and increase the availability of diverse, affordable units in an established neighborhood setting.

- **Support for Senior and Small-Unit Housing**: Given the aging population in Sterling Heights, housing stock should include support to age-in-place by encouraging the retro-fitting of existing homes, as well as promoting the development of accessible single-level homes or assisted living units. Additionally, smaller units such as studio apartments could be prioritized to accommodate single-person households and young professionals, adding variety to the housing market at lower price points.

- **Incentives for Affordable and Mixed-Income Developments**: Incentives, such as density bonuses or reduced permitting fees could help developers include affordable or mixed-income units in new residential projects. This approach would make it more financially viable for developers to build affordable housing while allowing the City to better meet housing demand without compromising on design or quality. Including housing options for young professionals (such as small, efficient apartments or co-living spaces) could appeal to a growing demographic who seek proximity to work, dining, and entertainment in the City, but at a lower cost.

- **Preserve Existing Affordable Housing**: Property tax relief for low- to moderate-income households or grants for home repairs could help maintain the affordability of current housing stock. These measures help long-term residents stay in their homes, reduce displacement risks, and stabilize neighborhoods.

- **Encourage Transit-Oriented and Walkable Developments**: Encouraging housing development near public transit and walkable areas can reduce reliance on cars, thereby lowering the overall cost of living. Mixed-use development areas, such as the nodes, should be highlighted as ideal sites for affordable housing to give residents access to essential services, retail, and employment.

- **Explore Housing Partnerships**: Affordable housing remains a cornerstone of a resilient and inclusive community. In addition to zoning flexibility, density bonuses, and incentives for developers, the City should explore innovative partnerships and funding mechanisms to promote local, individual home ownership, ensure long-term affordability, and maintain high-quality design and infrastructure.

Preserving Natural Resources in Housing Developments:

- Protecting green spaces and natural resources to improve the quality of life of City residents, but also as a strategy to manage stormwater, reduce flooding and improve air quality.

- Promoting sustainable development practices, including energy-efficient building materials, encouraging compact development, and promoting walkability.

- Ensure that the community's infrastructure, including roads, water, and sewer, can support future growth.

- Allowing height, setback, or density flexibility in instances that preserve green spaces and woodlands.
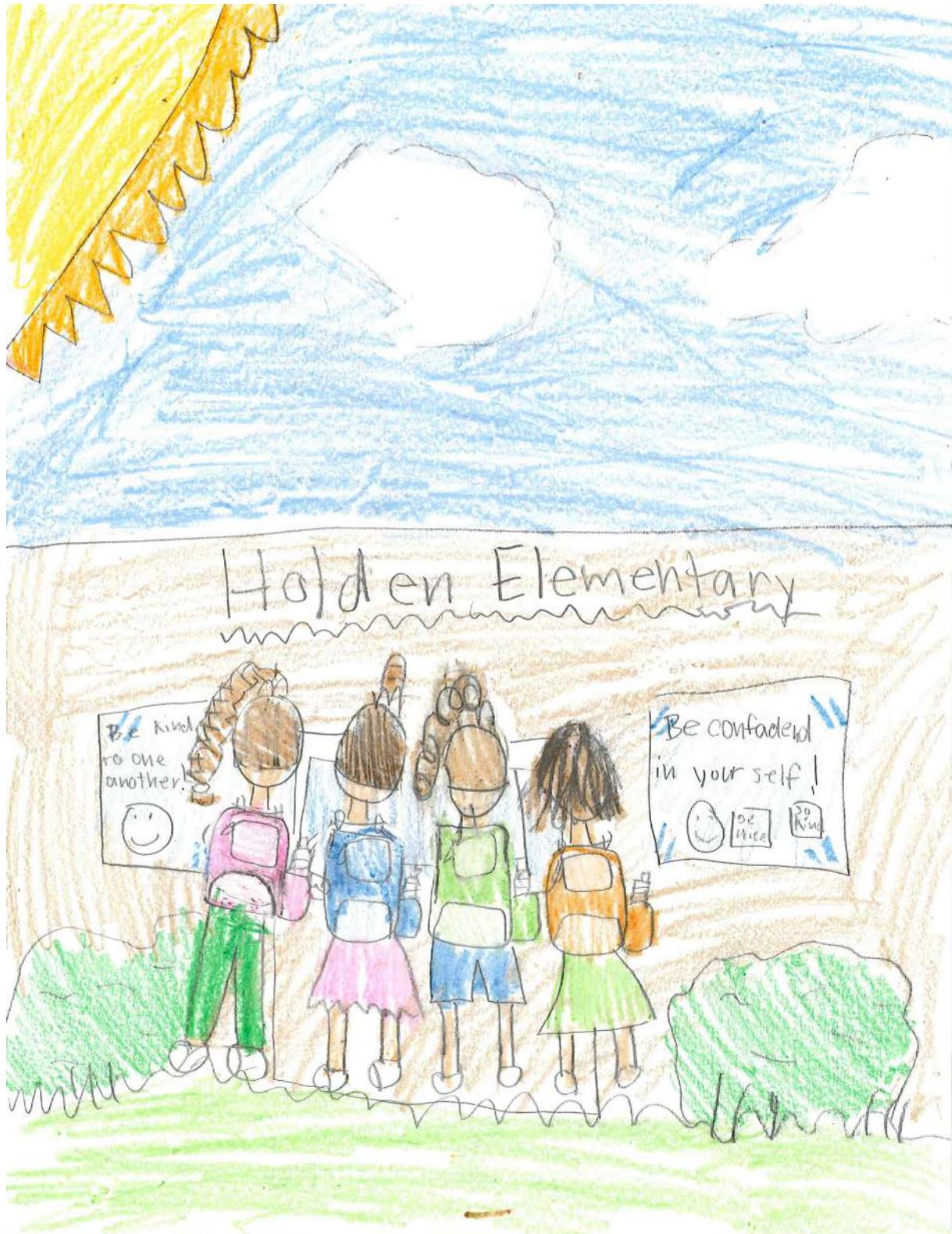
Fruit Rowland, Age 8

ECONOMY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WHY IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPORTANT?

On its own, economic development is a cornerstone of long-range community planning, driving prosperity, job growth, and improved quality of life. A thriving economy attracts businesses, generates tax revenue for essential services, and creates opportunities for residents. Conversely, a stagnant economy can lead to outmigration, reduced services, and a decline in community vitality.

As noted in the Housing Chapter, having housing close to key employment hubs (such as the commercial districts, manufacturing centers, and healthcare facilities) aligns housing growth with job opportunities. Workforce housing includes housing for teachers, healthcare workers, retail employees, and other middle-income workers who are essential to the local economy.

Residential growth is a primary driver of economic activity, shaping demand for goods, services, and employment opportunities across the City. As the number of households expands, so does the need for a diverse array of retail, dining, entertainment, healthcare, and educational services to meet residents' day-to-day needs. This growth creates a ripple effect, where new residential developments stimulate investment in commercial spaces, offices, and public infrastructure, positioning the City as a dynamic, multifaceted community.

In addition to housing, the success of economic development is closely intertwined with placemaking, sustainability, and transportation. Placemaking—the process of creating vibrant, attractive public spaces— can enhance a community's appeal, supporting tourism and attracting businesses that rely on a strong, cohesive identity. Sustainability practices, such as energy efficiency and green infrastructure, not only contribute to environmental well-being but

also attract eco-conscious businesses and residents. Similarly, efficient transportation systems enable the movement of goods and people, connecting workers to employers and supporting the overall economy. On the flip side, economic development can also impact these areas. This idea goes both ways, as economic growth can lead to increased demand for housing, better funding for sustainable projects, and the development of more comprehensive transportation networks, creating a cycle of mutual reinforcement that benefits the entire community.

LOCAL IMPORTANCE TO STERLING HEIGHTS

For many years, the City of Sterling Heights has been proactively engaged in planning for economic development and implementing strategies that support local businesses and the workforce. Some of the recent work focuses on several main industries tied to not only Michigan, but specifically to Sterling Heights and Macomb County. The City boasts a strong manufacturing sector, including automotive, aerospace, and defense industries. It also has a growing presence in high-tech and advanced manufacturing.

- **Aerospace**: More than one hundred companies in Sterling Heights and Macomb County specialize in aerospace, including Advanced Integrated Tooling Solutions, MB Aerospace, Chardam Gear, DM Tool & Fabrication, and KUKA Aerospace.

- **Defense**: Approximately 65% of all the defense work produced by the State of Michigan is done in Sterling Heights and the surrounding Macomb area. Major defense employers located in the area include: General Dynamics Land Systems, BAE Systems Land & Armaments Inc, Chardam Gear Co Inc., D-M Fabrication Inc., KUKA Robotics Corporation, Macomb Group Inc/MI, MAG las

LLC, Miba HydroMechanica Corp., MB Aerospace Holdings Ltd., Rave Computer Association Inc., Shuert Industries Inc., and Ultimate Hydroforming Inc. In addition, Sterling Heights is in close proximity to the U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command (TACOM) and the U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC), which are both located in the adjacent City of Warren. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation notes that the defense industry contributes $30 billion in economic activity in Michigan, which has significant impact in Sterling Heights and nearby communities.

- **Retail & Restaurant**: The City of Sterling Heights has many opportunities for retail locations to come to the area. The reimagined Lakeside Mall development, Lakeside City Center, promises to bring a dynamic environment bustling with shops, offices, coffee houses, and restaurants, creating a lively atmosphere for residents and visitors alike. A spacious central park, featuring restaurants and outdoor seating, will serve as a focal point for community gatherings, music, art, and events. Anchoring this park, a two-story community center will provide recreational amenities such as pools, fitness facilities, and lending libraries.

- **Automotive & Advanced Manufacturing**: Sterling Heights is home to four OEM vehicle productions plants: the Fiat-Chrysler Sterling Heights Assembly Plant, the Fiat-Chrysler Stamping Plant, the Ford Van Dyke Transmission Plant, and the Ford Axle Plant. In addition, over 76,000 automotive, engineering and design, technicians and skilled trades professionals work in the Sterling Heights and Macomb County area. The automotive and manufacturing industries continue to be a cornerstone of the City's local, regional, and statewide economy.

ECONOMIC STRATEGIES IN STERLING HEIGHTS

To advance economic development goals, the City of Sterling Heights has created five specific strategies tied to land use. Those areas encompass five business districts:

• **Golden Corridor**. The City of Sterling Heights is home to the Golden Corridor, a stretch of M-59 between M-53 and I-94 designated as "golden" because of its immense economic impact in Macomb County and Metro Detroit. The Golden Corridor stretches through Utica, Shelby Township, Sterling Heights, Clinton Township, Macomb Township and Mt. Clemens — and is home to world-class shopping, dining and retail as well as colleges, hospitals, a minor league baseball park, a major performing arts center and bustling industry. The Golden Corridor is recognized by the Detroit Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau as an area of note, as its commercial assets exceed $1 billion. Consumer spending data for the Golden Corridor reveals more than $2.6 billion is spent annually, with $720 million in restaurants, $400 million in home improvements and $215 million in entertainment alone. Approximately 100,000 vehicles travel the Golden Corridor every single day. M-59 is inarguably one of the largest economic hubs of Macomb County.

• The City has branded the corridor through aesthetic enhancements, such as decorative traffic signal mast arms, enhanced landscaping, monument signage, elimination of chain link fencing, decorative cross-walks and the like. Mid-block sidewalk crossings connect both sides of M-59 through the median. There are two, located between Schoenherr and Hayes. These crossings are a way to connect Lakeside Mall area

to a shopping district in Shelby for pedestrian use. Ultimately, the improvements are intended to be implemented eastward to I-94. The primary purpose of enhancing the Golden Corridor brand is to ensure the corridor remains a destination and to the extent possible, increase the number of visitors, shoppers and overall business development of the corridor.

- **North Van Dyke Avenue Corridor**. Beginning in August 2020, the City of Sterling Heights and the Van Dyke Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority created a Master Plan for the future of the Van Dyke Avenue corridor between 18-1/2 Mile Road to the south and the Utica City limits near M-59 to the north.

The North Van Dyke Plan aims to revitalize the street by creating a more vibrant and walkable environment. This includes enhancing pedestrian infrastructure, establishing new parks and green spaces, and encouraging mixed-use development. The plan identifies four key areas for development: the District Core, Utica Triangle, Parkside, and North VDA Industrial.

To achieve this vision, the plan recommends significant zoning changes. Current zoning regulations primarily support single-use development, hindering the plan's goals. The proposed zoning will encourage mixed-use development, higher density, and pedestrian-friendly design. This will be achieved through the creation of new zoning districts that allow for a wider range of uses and development options by right, reducing the need for special permits and approvals. By focusing on overall development form and the relationship between projects, the new zoning code will create a more flexible and attractive environment for investment and development.

NORTH VAN DYKE AVENUE CORRIDOR CONCEPT PLAN
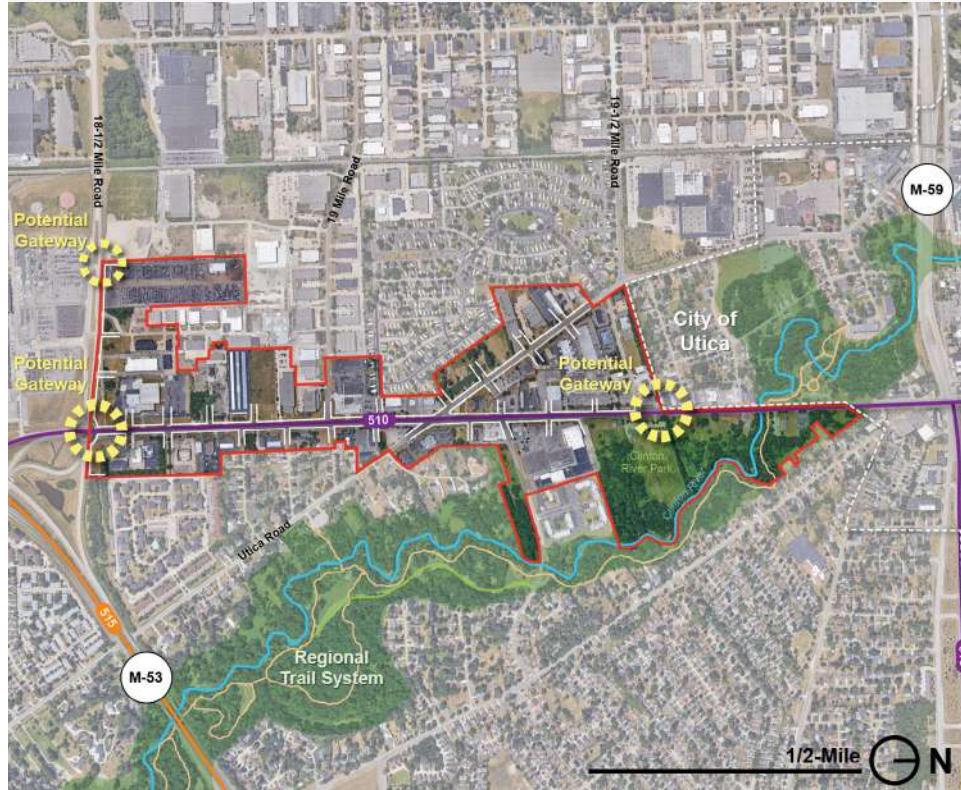
- **Sterling Innovation District/Velocity**. The Sterling Heights Innovation District is a growing hub focused on high-tech and advanced manufacturing sectors, particularly defense-related industries. This area is part of an initiative to foster entrepreneurship, with facilities such as Velocity, an incubator and accelerator that supports startups and established businesses in these sectors. Velocity offers coworking spaces, technical assistance, and a variety of business development programs aimed at promoting growth and innovation. It's a key part of the City's strategy to attract new businesses and create jobs, especially in fields like technology and advanced manufacturing.

  Velocity is a collaboration between the City of Sterling Heights, Macomb County, and Oakland University launched the center and created a hub for economic development across Macomb County as one of 21 SmartZones in the state of Michigan. Velocity is located in the "Sterling Innovation District," which spans six square miles and is home to 28 million square feet of industrial and high-tech space.

- Billions of dollars in new high-tech manufacturing investments have been made throughout the Sterling Innovation District over the past five years, including the reinvention of Velocity, a hub for resources related to business development, including coaching services, business planning, training, and networking. The facility includes coworking spaces, private office suites, and event space rentals.
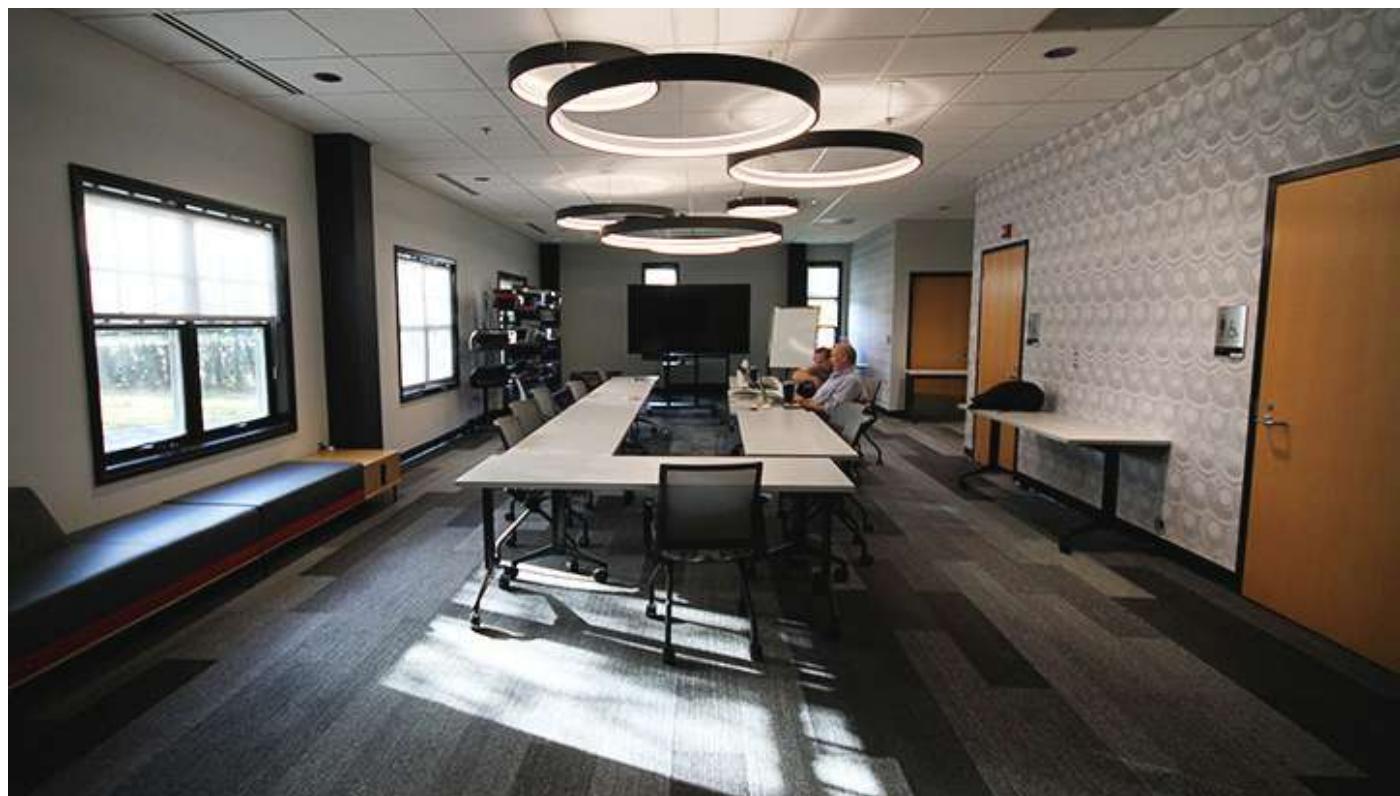
Photos: Media Resources | Photos and Videos | Velocity
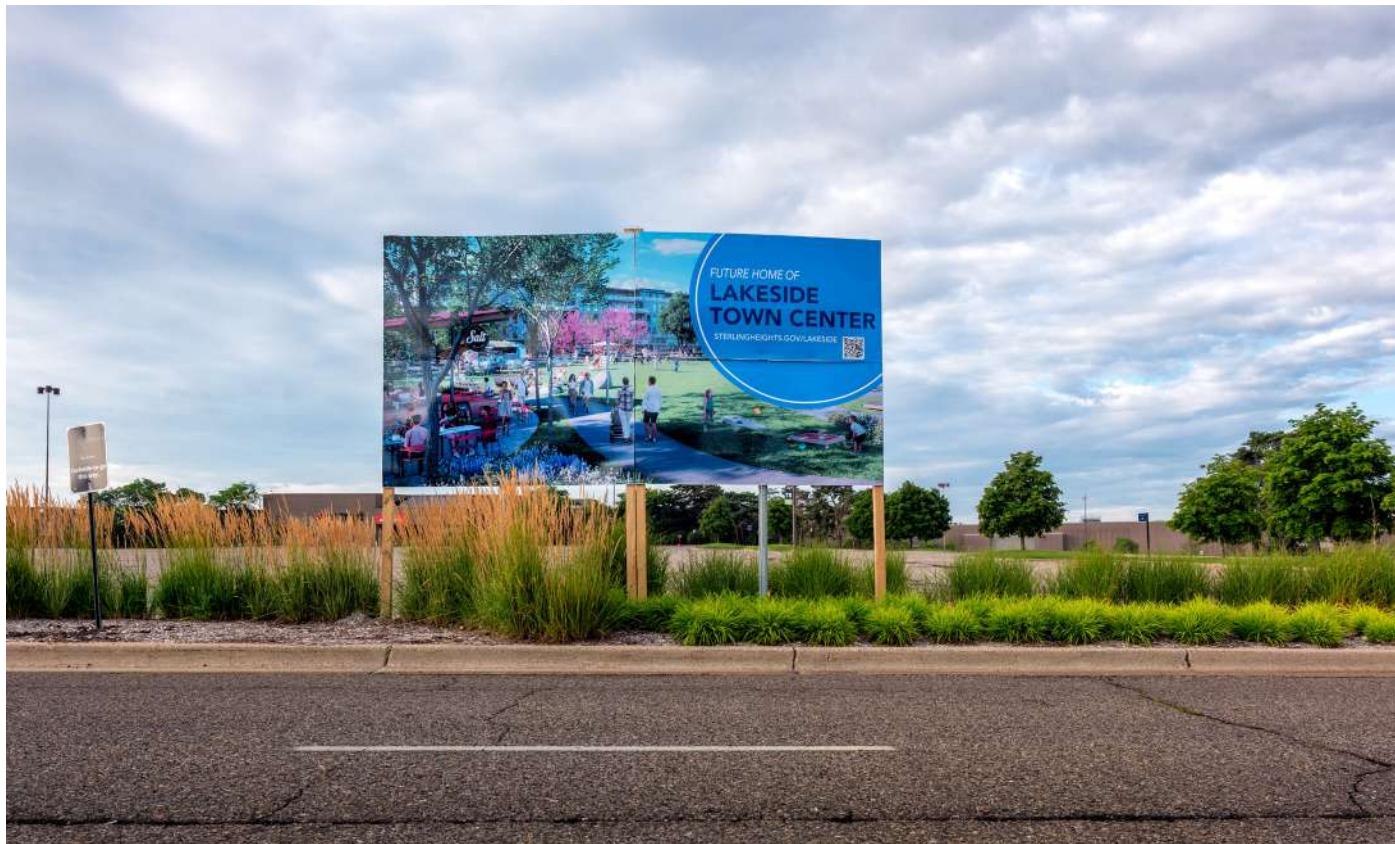
- **Lakeside City Center**. Lionheart Capital, a Miami-based real estate development and capital investment firm's retail subsidiary Out of the Box Ventures, is starting the redevelopment process for the former Lakeside Mall, with the demolition of the mall, paving the way for the construction of a dynamic mixed-use City center. This reimagined space will feature residences, parks, a hotel, office spaces, retail outlets, dining establishments and more, catering to diverse community needs. Complementing these amenities, approximately 30 acres will be dedicated to public spaces, including parks and infrastructure, enriching the community's quality of life. Groundbreaking for Lakeside City Center is scheduled for late 2025.

  The development project, which is projected to positively impact the region by $1 billion, marks a significant step towards revitalizing the area.

- **Innovate Mound**. Mound Road is an economic powerhouse supporting more than 200,000 jobs in Macomb County and across the state. The Innovate Mound project, located in the cities of Warren and Sterling Heights, will reconstruct approximately nine miles of Mound Road between I-696 and M-59 and add a fourth lane in each direction from 17 Mile Road to M-59. The project is an investment to create modern, efficient, reliable infrastructure to retain jobs today and sustain future economic growth. It includes new pavement, drainage, curbs and driveways, signal optimization, roadway widening, connected vehicle and fiber optic communications technology, enhanced non-motorized facilities, and energy-efficient lighting. Mound Road is internationally recognized as a hub for technological innovation. The Innovate Mound project will strengthen the region and enhance connectivity by incorporating state-of-the-art design and smart technology to create a 21st century multimodal corridor.

ECONOMIC TRENDS

Jobs: In 2021, there were a total of 48,289 individuals who worked inside the City but lived outside the City (inflow) and 49,131 residents of Sterling Heights worked outside the City (outflow). Only about 13 percent of the City's residents (6,732 people) lived and worked in Sterling Heights. With an even split between inflow and outflow, the transportation network is affected by both residents and commuters throughout the region. More local jobs for City residents and housing opportunities for the City's workforce could make a big impact on the local transportation systems.

Employment for Residents: The most common employment sectors for those who live in Sterling Heights, MI, are Manufacturing (14,454 people), Health Care & Social Assistance (9,620 people), and Retail Trade (8,368 people). The chart below shows the share breakdown of the primary industries for residents of Sterling Heights. The average wages by industry for Sterling Heights residents appear in the chart that follows.
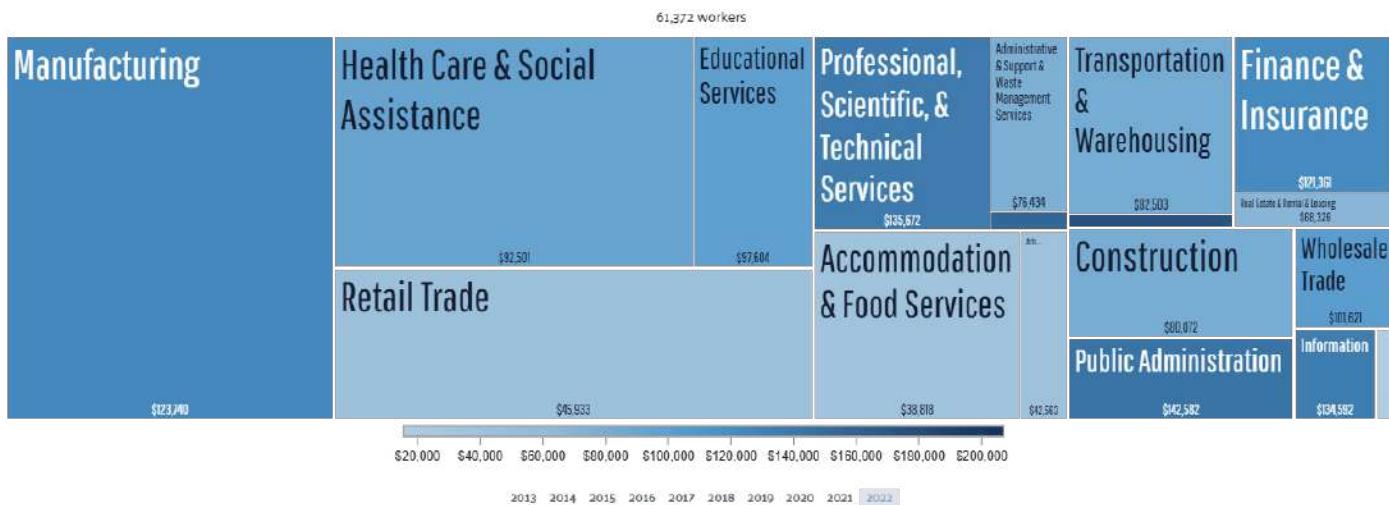
Market Assessment

As part of this Master Plan process, a market assessment was conducted. The complete set of statistics is found in the appendix. The assessment describes both residential and non-residential sentiment and conditions. While the residential market findings are reported in the housing chapter, this section focuses on non-residential economic development, which plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of Sterling Heights by fostering a dynamic, diversified economy that meets the needs of residents and attracts investment. As the City evolves, expanding retail, office, industrial, and mixed-use spaces becomes essential to support not only the increasing number of households but also the evolving demands of the workforce and local businesses. Strategic redevelopment of key commercial areas, such as the transformation of the Lakeside Mall site, demonstrates the potential to rejuvenate underutilized properties and enhance the City's appeal to both residents and businesses. By focusing on expanding non-residential sectors like retail, office, and industrial spaces—while incorporating sustainable and walkable development—the City can foster a robust, future-focused economy that enhances Sterling Heights' quality of life and strengthens its competitiveness in the region. Understanding the market demand and opportunities can lead to development of strategies to guide growth and development in a way that aligns with the local market wants and needs.

Market Demand: Understanding market demand is essential to identifying growth opportunities for Sterling Heights' non-residential sectors. Consumer behavior, particularly strong spending in food services and retail, highlights areas of opportunity, especially for local businesses that cater to residents' preferences. In particular:

- There is a strong preference for locally sourced, non-chain food establishments, with significant demand for dining out and grocery shopping. This trend supports the potential for diverse retail, dining, and service businesses that cater to the local population's desires for authentic, quality experiences.

- There is significant local spending on groceries and dining out.

- By focusing on mixed-use development and supporting both local businesses and well-established chains, the City can foster a diverse, resilient economy. However, competition, economic fluctuations, and the need for robust infrastructure will need to be carefully considered to maximize the potential of these opportunities.

Market Opportunities:

- Local, independent businesses, particularly in the food service sector.

- Retail and service businesses catering to the needs of the local population.

- Solid consumer base with significant spending power, particularly in the food and beverage sector.

- Demand for both local, independent businesses and national chains.

ECONOMIC STRATEGIES FOR STERLING HEIGHTS

Several key takeaways from the non-residential/commercial data have strategic implications for long-term planning in Sterling Heights:

1. **Growth-Driven Retail Demand**: Household growth (as discussed in the **Housing** chapter), paired with increased consumer spending, is expected to generate demand for an estimated 396,000 square feet of new retail space by 2034. By focusing on redeveloping underutilized commercial properties and fostering mixed-use districts, the City can meet this demand while creating vibrant, pedestrian-friendly retail hubs.

2. **Office Space Transformation**: As the workforce adapts to hybrid models, office spaces will need to be more flexible, smaller, and possibly integrated into mixed-use buildings. The City should prioritize the creation of adaptable office spaces, such as shared coworking spaces, which will meet the needs of remote workers and local businesses alike. Additionally, the City should work with owners of office buildings to identify structures that could be transformed into housing (nationally, approximately one in six office buildings are realistic candidates for this type of redevelopment). Other office buildings may be well-suited to being updated to more desirable Class A space, while remaining buildings may be repurposed into accommodating other uses. Flexibility with regards to office buildings should be reinforced in the Zoning Ordinance.

3. **Industrial Sector Focus**: With strong industrial activity supporting diverse industries that include automotive, defense, advanced manufacturing, health care, and aerospace, Sterling Heights can benefit from focusing on infrastructure and land use that supports these industries. Enhanced access to warehousing, distribution, and flex spaces could further boost local industry.

Strategies for workforce development and training – along with housing options affordable to this workforce – to support these industries will help ensure a skilled local workforce, which is crucial for attracting and retaining businesses in these sectors.

4. **Preference for Mixed-Use and Walkable Areas**: Resident interest in walkability and mixed-use development aligns with the broader trend toward creating "live-work-play" environments. Strategic zoning and development should aim to blend residential, retail, and office uses, encouraging compact, pedestrian-friendly communities. The redevelopment of land within the nodes identified can be the first step in creating these walkable areas.

5. **Adapting to Retail and Restaurant Trends**: There's a clear preference for local, non-chain dining and shopping, with many dining expenditures occurring outside City limits. Sterling Heights can support its local businesses by creating vibrant, accessible commercial hubs to retain more local spending. Zoning and development review should be easy to understand, allow for incremental improvements, and not be overly burdensome, while encouraging high-quality development.

6. **Aging and Redeveloping Malls and Large Commercial Properties**: The transition of Lakeside Mall into a mixed-use development offers a model for repurposing aging retail spaces. Similar approaches at the nodes could be adopted for other outdated commercial properties, integrating housing, retail, and community spaces to revitalize these areas.

7. **Supporting Local Businesses**: Sterling Heights can further support local businesses by creating a network of co-working spaces, local business incubators, and support programs that provide training, grants, and tax incentives.

These strategies will help local entrepreneurs thrive while contributing to the City's economic vibrancy. Creating/amending zoning districts to encourage local businesses and allow mixed-use districts that blend residential, retail, and office spaces.

- o Nurturing businesses at Velocity, the City's incubator, as well as exploring other types of business incubation, can promote entrepreneurship.
- o Providing incentives, ranging from tax breaks, to grants and reduced permitting fees, can help encourage and support small businesses in the community. Additional support can come through identifying shared spaces, event venues, and communication channels for community-wide promotion of local businesses.

8. **Ongoing Market Research**: Sterling Heights can conduct ongoing market research through surveys, focus groups, and analysis of local and regional consumer trends. This data can help identify gaps in the retail and service sectors, such as the growing demand for local dining options or professional services. Collaborating with local businesses and real estate developers to gather insights can ensure that new developments reflect the preferences and spending habits of residents and nearby communities.

9. **Innovative Design & Sustainability**: Incorporate innovative design elements to attract tenants and customers. Using design guidelines that emphasize pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, adaptable retail spaces, and modern architectural features could create a more attractive and sustainable environment. Additionally, incorporating green technologies like solar panels or rainwater harvesting in developments could help attract environmentally-conscious

businesses and residents. Offer incentives for eco-friendly building practices, such as LEED-certified buildings or energy-efficient infrastructure. The City can also integrate sustainable transportation options like bike lanes, electric vehicle charging stations, and improved public transit to reduce the environmental impact of car-dependent development. Local businesses and developments can be encouraged to use renewable energy sources and adopt sustainable waste management practices, contributing to the City's long-term sustainability goals.

10. **Attract and Retain Young Workers**: All of the above strategies support the attraction and retention of younger workers. These strategies can be communicated through clear channels focused on younger people. The City of Sterling Heights can support education and skills development through engaging with the local schools, training/vocational programs, and Macomb Community College. Additionally, there should be local opportunities for social engagement, networking, and volunteering to encourage young people to be involved and foster a sense of belonging.

11. **Foster Partnerships Around the Redevelopment of Tired Properties**: Communicate Master Plan strategies for redevelopment with property owners and host regular roundtable discussions to answer questions and explore potential funding sources and incentives to encourage private investment. Explore the development of one or more pilot programs to ignite ideas for redevelopment and demonstrate successful projects. Help property owners understand how to modify any restrictions, deeds, and covenants they may have that preclude successful redevelopment.

AUTHENTICITY

The trend toward authenticity has gained significant traction in consumer behavior, particularly in retail, food service, and lifestyle sectors. Consumers, especially younger generations (Millennial and Gen Z), increasingly seek experiences and products that feel genuine, unique, and aligned with their personal values. Here are a few key aspects of these trends and examples of ways the City of Sterling Heights could tap into them:

1. **Local and Independent Businesses:**
   - Why it matters: Consumers are moving away from mass-produced, impersonal brands and showing preference for local, independent businesses that offer products or experiences with a sense of place. Local businesses are seen as more authentic because they are often tied to the community, reflect regional culture, and offer personalized customer service.
   - Local application: Encourage local independent businesses to provide a unique atmosphere, use locally sourced ingredients, or embody/reflect interesting characteristics of the neighborhood in which the business is located (this might include local schools, parks, and/or other businesses).

2. **Transparency and Storytelling:**
   - Why it matters: Consumers want to know the story behind the products they buy. Transparency in sourcing, production methods, and business practices helps establish trust and a sense of authenticity. Brands that share their backstory or values—such as a commitment to sustainability or supporting local artisans—appeal to consumers who value authenticity.
   - Local application: Help local businesses identify and source locally made, ethically sourced materials, and fair trade practices to resonate with consumers who care about environmental and social responsibility.

3. **Experiential and Personalized Offerings:**

   o Why it matters: Authenticity extends beyond just products—it's about creating real, personal experiences. For example, in the food and beverage industry, consumers are seeking dining experiences that reflect local culture and traditions, rather than cookie-cutter chains that offer standardized menus and decor.

   o Local application: Help restaurants source and learn how to use local/regional products to increase the number of farm-to-table options in the City; encourage craft beverage production such as coffee roasting, breweries, distilleries, and others to tap into the desire for authentic, memorable experiences that can't be replicated at chain establishments.

4. **Connection to Place:**

   o Why it matters: The desire for authenticity is closely tied to a connection to the local community or environment. People want to engage with businesses that contribute to the local culture and economy. This has led to an increase in demand for places and businesses that reflect the unique identity of their surroundings, rather than ones that could exist anywhere.

   o Local application: Expand the Dodge Park Farmers Market to include an artisanal market featuring local crafts, foods, and goods creates a sense of authenticity by showcasing the area's creative talents and cultural heritage.

5. **Social Media and Influencers:**

   o Why it matters: Social media plays a huge role in amplifying the demand for authenticity. Influencers who promote brands or experiences that feel real, relatable, and unscripted tend to garner more trust and engagement. Consumers are quick to spot inauthentic or overly commercialized content and often reject it in favor of more genuine endorsements.

   o Local application: Help brands learn how to embrace "behind-the-scenes" looks at their production processes or feature real customer testimonials to resonate better with consumers. Expand this idea beyond individual businesses to the City's business districts and City-wide image-building.

6. **Promoting Localism:**

   o Why it matters: In response to the globalized nature of many markets and the rise of giant corporations, many consumers are rejecting impersonal, mass-market products in favor of more distinctive, bespoke items that feel handmade or one-of-a-kind. On the other hand, many of the City's largest employers are global companies. Reinforcing local connections to the larger economy can boost civic pride, raise awareness of the importance of a diverse economy, and encourage more engagement by employers in their support for the City's development goals.

   o Local application: Support makers of locally made, locally sourced and upcycled products that represent sustainable and unique options rather than mass-produced items that lack character. Encourage the participation of major employers in refining and implementing the City's development goals – including housing, transportation, and community-building.

Callie Grater, Age 12

6

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Environmental stewardship is the responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices to enhance ecosystem resilience and human well-being. (Chapin, F. S., Stephen R. Carpenter, Gary P. Kofinas, et al. 2010. Ecosystem stewardship: Sustainability strategies for a rapidly changing planet.")

WHY IS ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP SO IMPORTANT?

As we face increasingly frequent and severe impacts from climate change, such as extreme weather events, power outages, heat waves, and flooding, momentum is growing for a more sustainable and resilient Michigan. Sustainability and resilience are now essential priorities, not only to protect against future risks but also to improve the daily quality of life for residents. For communities like Sterling Heights, this means focusing on efforts to improve air and water quality, expand green spaces, minimize flooding risks, and enhance connectivity, creating safer, healthier neighborhoods for everyone.

In 2022, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) launched the MI Healthy Climate Plan, a strategic initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve statewide carbon neutrality by 2050. This ambitious goal addresses the urgent need to mitigate climate impacts, from more frequent heat waves and flooding to declining air and water quality. The plan highlights the importance of action at every level – from state agencies to individual households – and demonstrates how collective efforts can lead to transformative change.

By fostering sustainability and resilience, Sterling Heights has an opportunity to lead by example, implementing practices that enhance both local well-being and long-term community security. Building resilience means not only understanding local risk factors but also creating an actionable resiliency plan to address them. Currently, Sterling Heights utilizes Macomb County's emergency preparedness plan, which lays a foundation for more localized strategies to safeguard residents. With thoughtful planning and collaboration, Sterling Heights can contribute to a healthier future, inspiring other communities throughout Michigan to follow suit.

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY

Resiliency and sustainability both focus on helping communities thrive over time, even in the face of challenges.

Sustainability is about minimizing the negative impacts of our actions today to ensure future generations can meet their needs. It involves practices that reduce resource depletion, pollution, and other environmental harm.

Resiliency, on the other hand, is about a community's capacity to adapt and recover from stresses – whether environmental, economic, or social. A resilient community is built to withstand and bounce back from various disruptions, ensuring that all members, especially the most vulnerable, are supported and protected.

Importantly, this approach goes beyond simply preventing future issues; it also strengthens our ability to respond to whatever comes our way. While no community has full control over every factor that affects its resilience, local efforts can have a major impact. By working together, communities can fortify their systems and become better equipped to meet future challenges.

LOCAL IMPORTANCE TO STERLING HEIGHTS

Natural assets are essential to the health, resilience, and quality of life in Sterling Heights. Parks, waterways, and the tree canopy provide crucial ecosystem services like clean air, water filtration, and climate regulation, directly benefiting residents and supporting the City's long-term sustainability. Neglecting these assets can hurt a City's economy, environment, public health, and quality of life, leading to long-term negative consequences. Protecting and enhancing these resources isn't just about preserving natural beauty; it's about building a resilient, adaptable community that values well-being and environmental health.

Sterling Heights is fortunate to have numerous parks and natural features that offer both tangible and intangible benefits. To maintain a high quality of life, future land use decisions must thoughtfully balance development with conservation. Preserving and restoring natural areas strengthens community resilience and safeguards essential services that benefit the environment, economy, and public health. Educating residents, developers, and business owners on the value of these assets is necessary to encourage pride and involvement in caring for Sterling Heights' natural spaces.

QUICK STATISTICS: 2020 LAND COVER IN STERLING HEIGHTS

Impervious (buildings, roads, driveways, parking lots):	42%
Trees (woody vegetation, trees):	17%
Open Space (agricultural fields, grasslands, turfgrass):	39%
Bare (soil, aggregate piles, unplanted fields):	1%
Water (rivers, lakes, drains, ponds):	1%

Data from SEMCOG

The City has a history of long-range planning for sustainability. In 2008, the City published its first "Strategy for a Sustainable Sterling Heights." This document established the City's commitment to "creating a healthy environment, vigorous economy, and vibrant community." In 2021, the City updated and broadened this commitment with the 2021 Sustainability Plan. The plan notes that sustainability "has been globally recognized as a proven way to build a better community across a broad spectrum of topics, including economic prosperity, equity, social/cultural vitality, and environmental integrity." The Sustainability Commission, the body responsible for the plan's development, focused on four key areas: natural assets, mobility, land use, and environmental stewardship. It is important to weave these concepts into the Master Plan, to ensure consistencies in land use policies while minimizing fragmented efforts. Support in the Master Plan demonstrates the City's commitment to a more sustainable future, which can attract investment and enhance the overall quality of life for residents.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SNAPSHOT

In the **Community Survey**, residents of Sterling Heights shared valuable insights on the City's priorities, challenges, and opportunities for future growth, with a strong emphasis on sustainability and environmental initiatives.

KEY FINDINGS

- **High Value on Parks and Open Spaces**: 55% of respondents said one of the top things they valued about the City was its parks. Similarly, 62% ranked parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities as very important to them and 31% ranked them as important – a total of 2,105 people. These residents view parks as one of the defining features of Sterling Heights, contributing significantly to the City's appeal and quality of life.

- **Desire for Sustainable Services and Development**: When asked about what services are missing from the City, nearly 20% of respondents thought that more sustainability practices should be adopted. Their responses envisioned a pedestrian-oriented City with more public transportation, improved recycling and composting services, community gardens, and waste facilities for yard and hazardous waste collection.
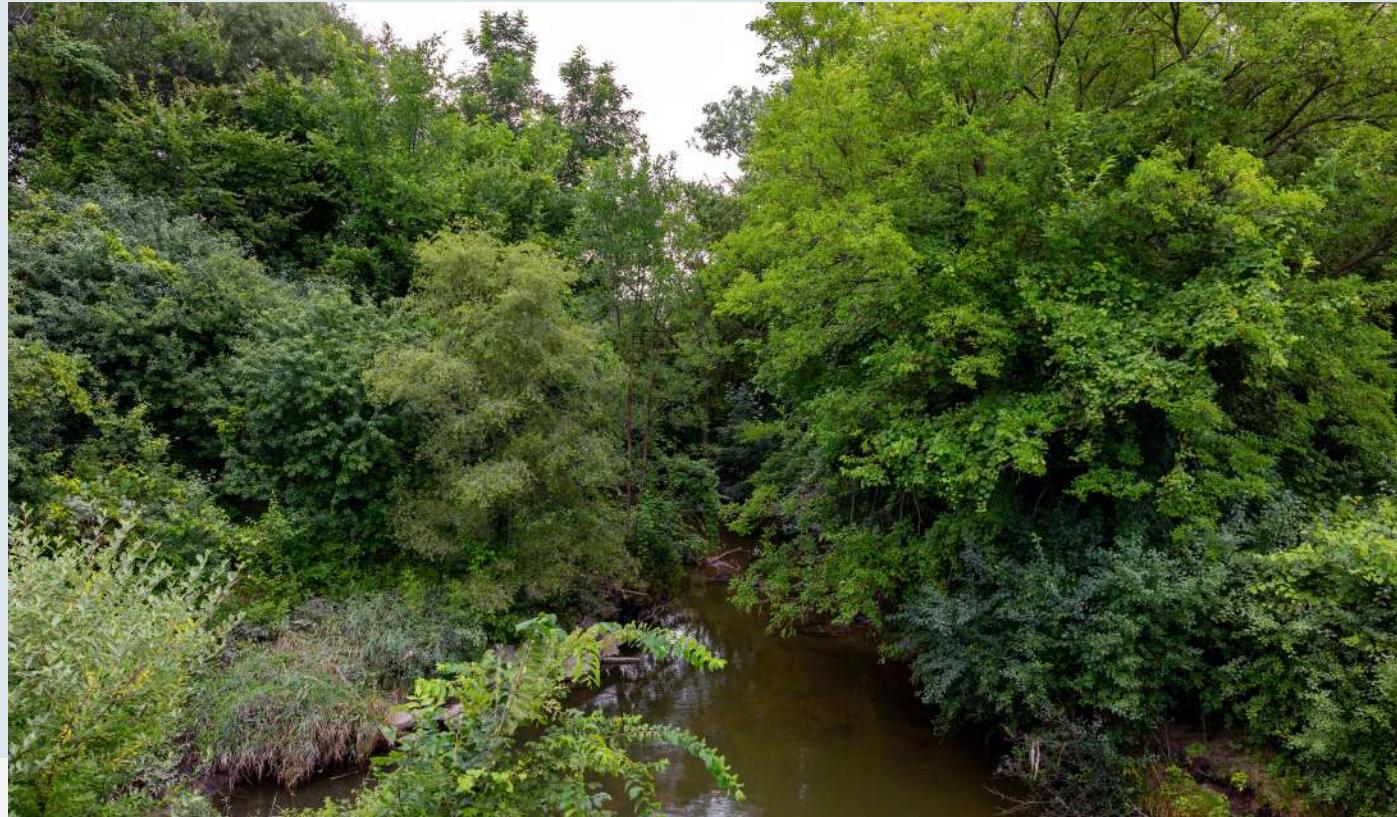
"My dream vision for Sterling Heights is for us to become a leader in sustainability, inspiring neighboring communities to follow [our] example."

- Sterling Heights resident

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

- **Loss of green space**: Residents are concerned about the continual loss of green space, particularly in relation to new developments. Many expressed the need to preserve existing green spaces and strategically integrate green spaces into future land use plans.

- **Land use and development patterns**: Higher-density developments were noted as a concern, with residents emphasizing the importance of balancing development with green space preservation.

- **Alternative transportation and connectivity**: Walkability and bikeability were highlighted as areas for improvement, with a focus on enhancing pedestrian safety and providing better options for alternative transportation.

- **Flood preparedness**: Residents expressed concerns about the increasing frequency of flooding due to more frequent precipitation, emphasizing the need for improved flood management strategies and infrastructure to mitigate risks.

Residents displayed their high valuation of parks and sustainability by voting yes for the "Pathway to Play and Preservation" millage aimed at enhancing parks, reforesting the community, preserving open space, and creating and maintaining pathways and walkways in Sterling Heights.

PARKS

Sterling Heights is home to 31 parks spanning over 870 acres of open space, as outlined in the Parks, Recreation, and Non-Motorized Master Plan. These parks play a vital role in enhancing air quality, supporting ecosystems, and providing recreational and social opportunities. They also help conserve natural resources while offering accessible, safe, and affordable ways for the community to connect with nature. Beyond these benefits, parks contribute to local economies by increasing property values and attracting visitors and new homebuyers. Studies by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) have shown that investing in public open spaces can yield remarkable returns – up to $100 in value for every $1 spent. Open green spaces provide additional benefits, including improved water filtration, enhanced climate protection, and other environmental and societal gains.

To build on these advantages, the City is launching several initiatives to enhance its parks and preserve more open space. Upcoming projects across multiple park locations include a new community garden, pickleball courts, expanded biking and walking trails, and a 24-hour satellite public library. In November 2024, residents approved a millage for "Pathway to Play and Preservation" to dedicate funds that preserve green spaces, increase tree canopy, complete and maintain sidewalks, develop shared use trails, and support residents' social and recreation needs.
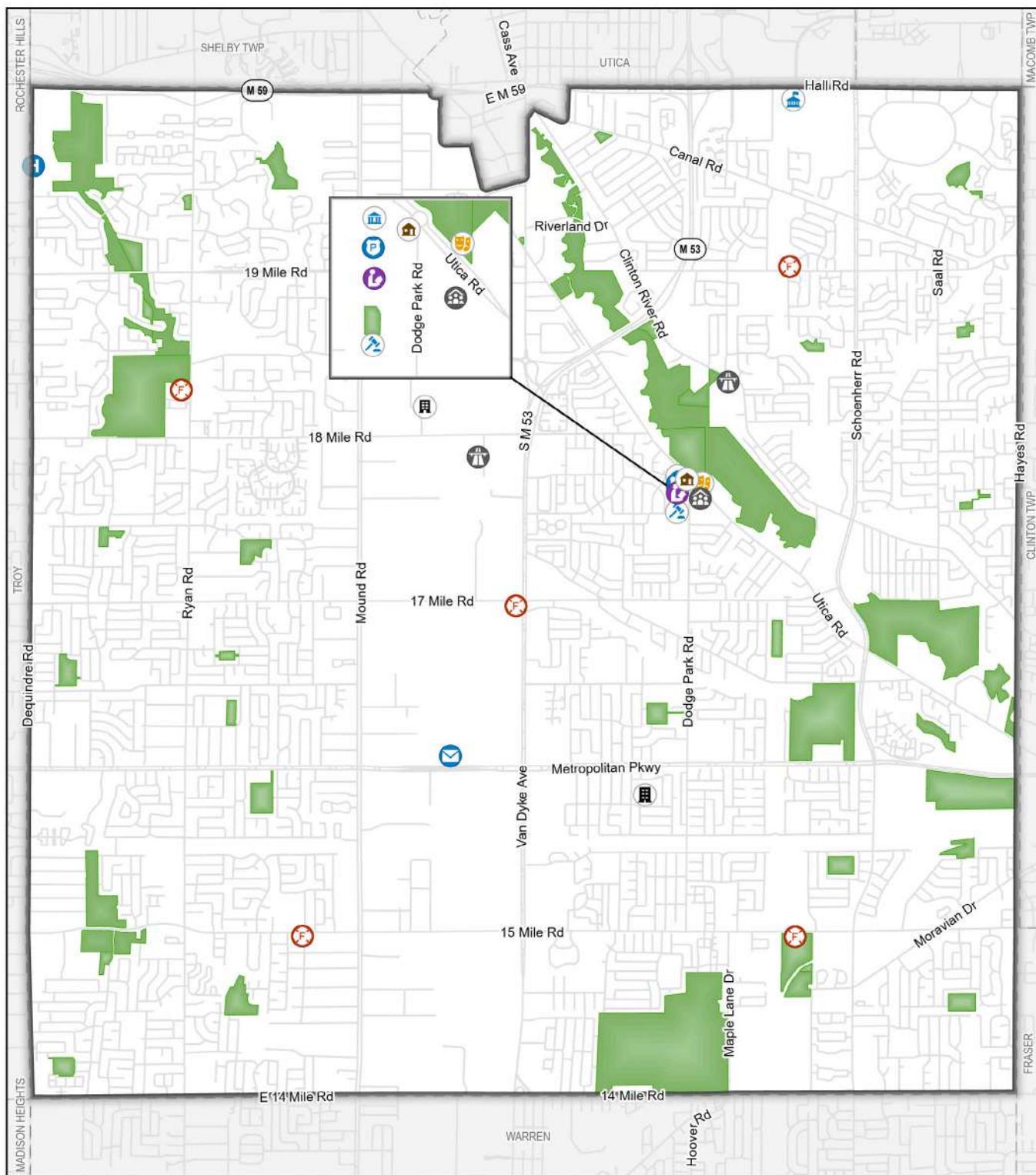
Community Facilities

Legend:

- Ampitheater
- Chamber of Commerce
- City Hall
- Community Center
- DPW
- Fire Station
- Admin Building
- Police Station
- Library
- Upton House
- Velocity Center
- Post Office
- Hospital
- Court House
- Park

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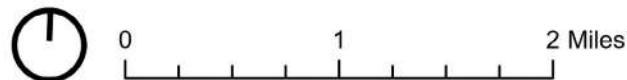
TREE CANOPY

The City's tree canopy provides numerous benefits, from supporting biodiversity to enhancing property values. Trees reduce air conditioning costs by shading homes and streets, cut residential heating costs when they act as windbreaks, and contribute to improved air quality by absorbing pollutants. They also help manage stormwater by capturing rain and replenishing groundwater, which would allow Sterling Heights to become more resilient against both flooding and heat considering its high percentage of impervious surfaces.

Current Coverage

With updated tree coverage data from 2024, Sterling Heights' tree canopy now covers 19% of the City, which is significantly below Michigan's 40% goal for municipalities.[1] This deficiency is especially evident in neighborhoods where 36% of homes lack street trees, partly due to the loss of ash trees from the Emerald Ash Borer infestation in the early 2000s.

Commitment to Growth

For 39 years, Sterling Heights has held the "Tree City USA" designation, highlighting the City's long-standing dedication to tree conservation. The City has also received two Growth Awards in recognition of its urban forestry efforts. Through programs to expand canopy coverage and preserve landmark trees, Sterling Heights is actively enhancing both the environmental and aesthetic value of the community.

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1   **Forest Resources Division. (2020) Forest Action Plan, Michigan Department of Natural Resources**.

< 1%

1 - 25%

25 - 50%

50 - 75%

> 75%

Tree Canopy

giffels
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Sources: Land Cover: USGS NLCD, Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: August 28, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster
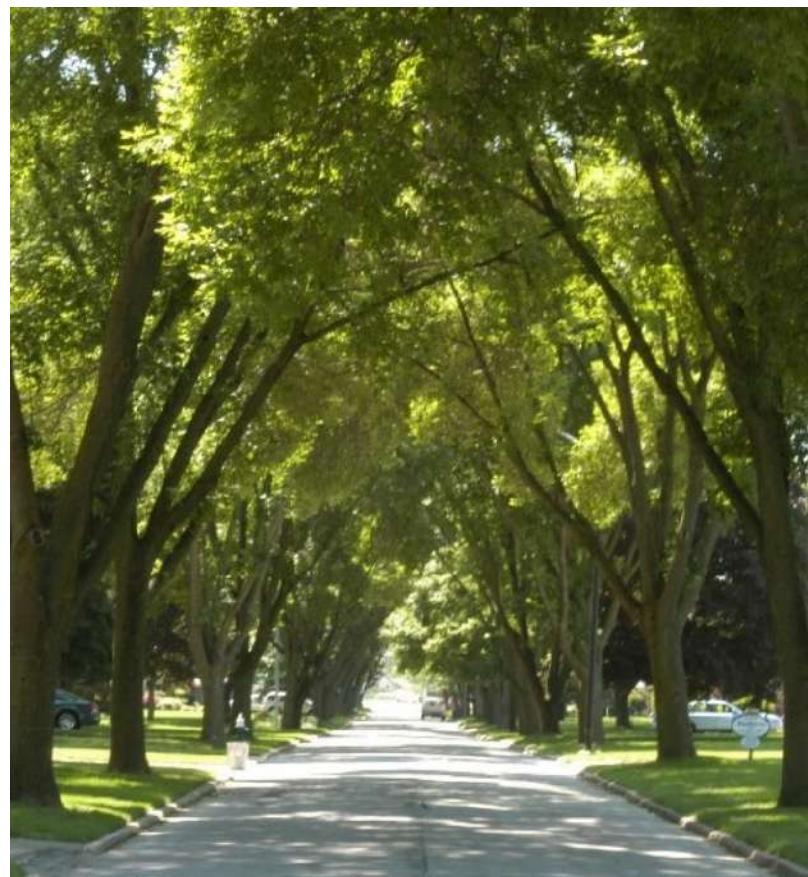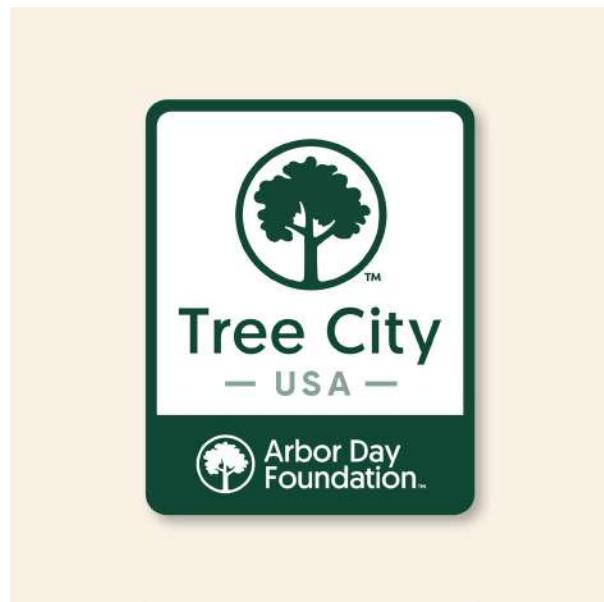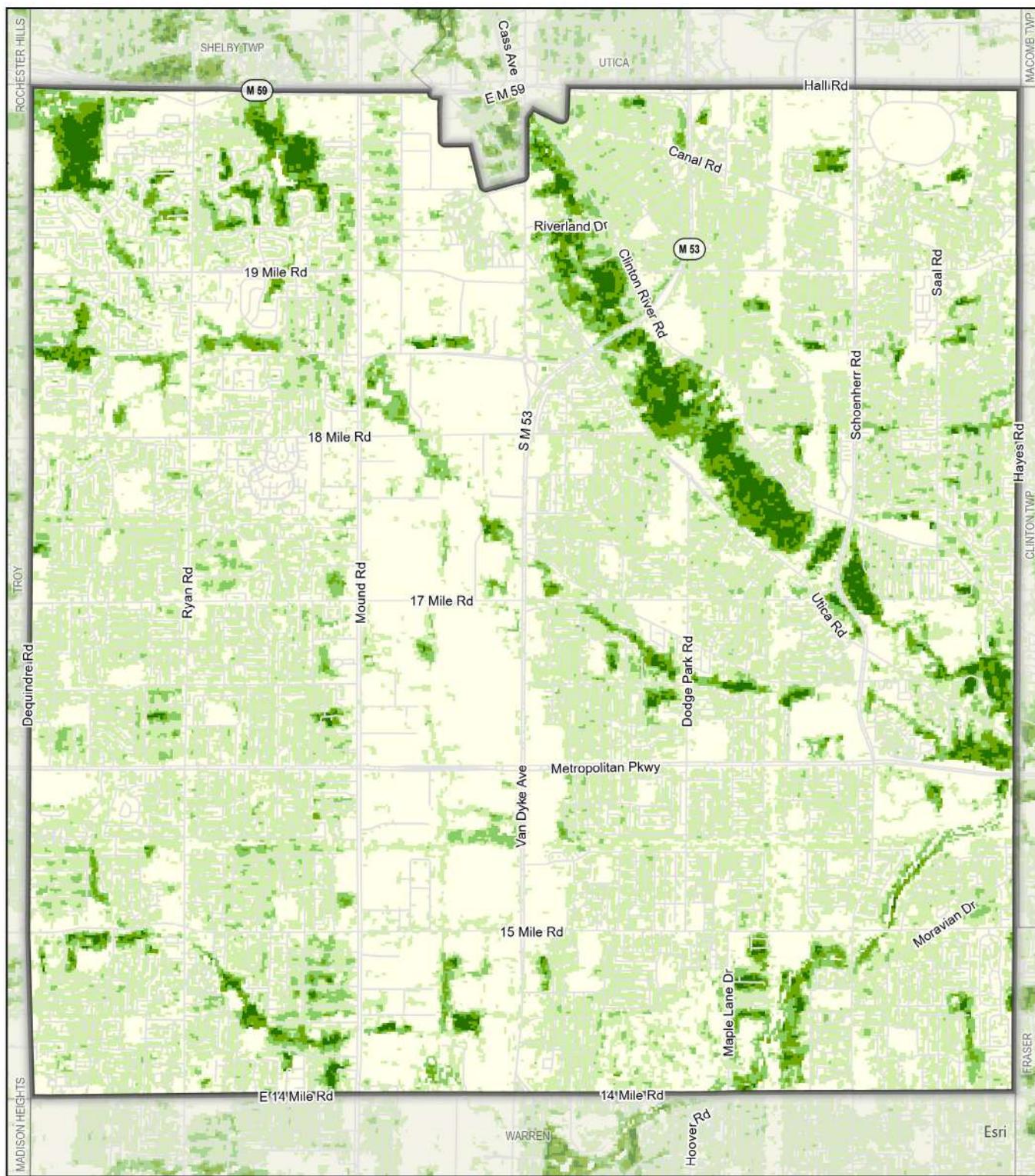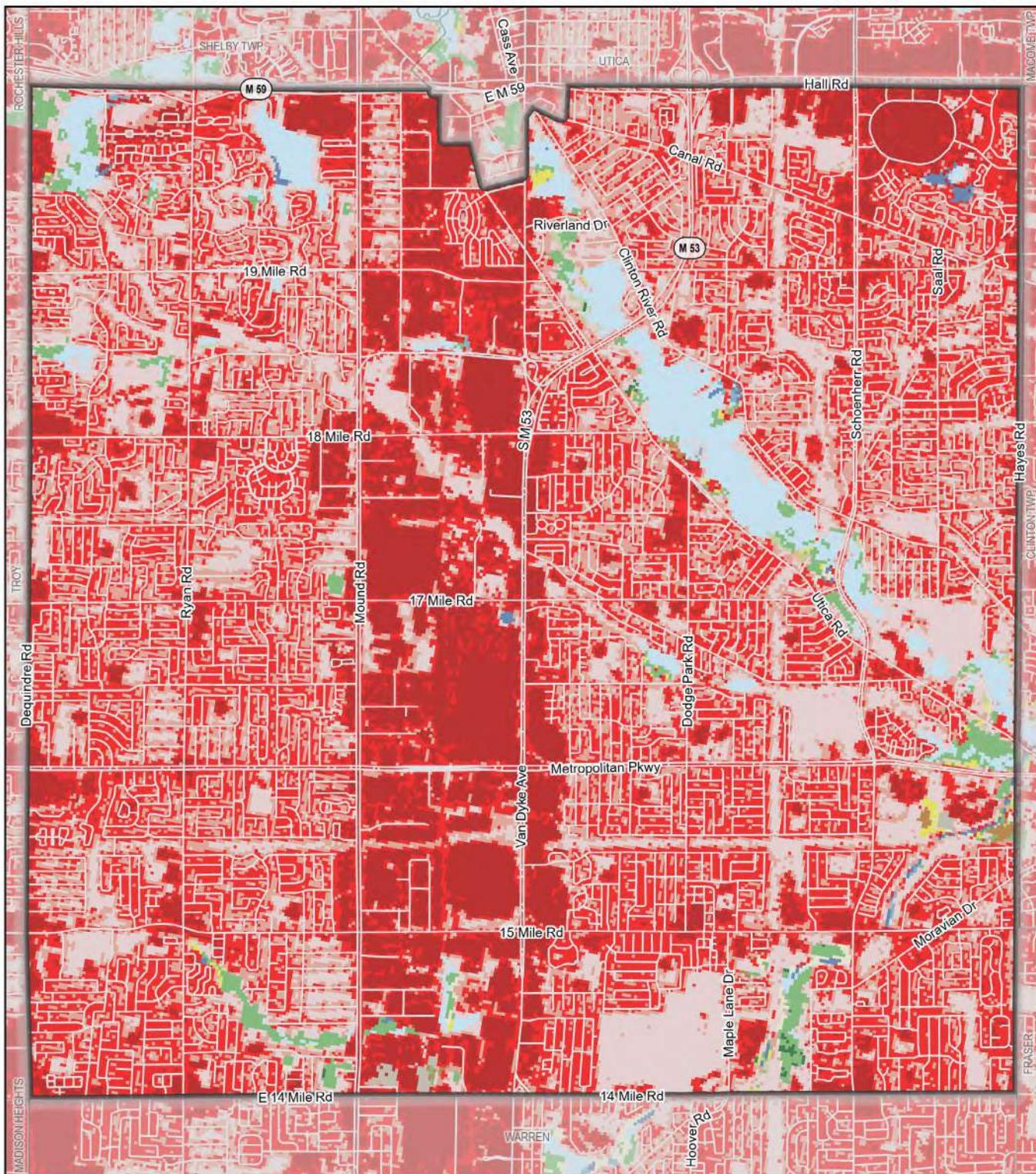
Legend:
- Open Water
- Developed, Open Space
- Developed, Low Intensity
- Developed, Medium Intensity
- Developed, High Intensity
- Barren Land
- Deciduous Forest
- Evergreen Forest
- Mixed Forest
- Shrub/Scrub
- Herbaceous
- Hay/Pasture
- Cultivated Crops
- Woody Wetlands
- Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands

Impervious Surfaces

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WATER FEATURES

Sterling Heights is home to a seven-mile stretch of the Clinton River, which is part of a larger watershed that includes lakes, ponds, wetlands, marshes, and bogs. Proper maintenance of these water features is essential for controlling pollution and managing stormwater in the City and surrounding areas. These bodies of water help buffer the effects of heavy rainfall, which reduces the likelihood of flooding, and filter pollutants, which is essential for the region's environmental and public health.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

While the impacts of climate change can affect entire communities, certain segments of the population are more vulnerable to these changes, facing greater challenges in preparing for and recovering from them. In Sterling Heights, groups that may be disproportionately affected include elderly residents, individuals with disabilities, low-income households, and young children. Understanding the specific needs of these vulnerable populations is essential to creating a resilient, equitable community prepared to support all residents in times of crisis.

Sterling Heights has a growing population of adults aged 65 and older, a group expected to see the most significant growth in the coming decades. As this population ages, many elderly residents may face challenges related to limited mobility, financial constraints, and social isolation, making it harder for them to adapt to or recover from extreme weather events, such as heat waves. Young children are also at increased risk during extreme weather events, particularly heat waves, as both groups are more susceptible to heat-related illnesses that can lead to hospitalization.

Efforts to increase access to natural assets and develop resilience-focused programs in these areas will ensure that all residents benefit from Sterling Heights' sustainability efforts.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Sterling Heights is actively enhancing recreational opportunities and public access along the Clinton River. As a member of the Clinton River Watershed Council, the City has implemented measures to reduce impermeable surfaces in driveways and is halfway through comprehensive improvements to green stormwater infrastructure. Strong stormwater management requirements are already in place, and two verified vernal pools are part of the Michigan Vernal Pools Partnership Project.

- **Elderly and disabled populations**: In Sterling Heights, around 8.6% of residents under age 65 live with a disability – approximately 9,500 people – which may limit their ability to prepare for and respond to climate events according to the 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2022 ACS). The elderly population (ages 65 and above) includes 24,026 residents and is expected to grow significantly over the coming decades. Both elderly and disabled populations are particularly vulnerable to extreme weather conditions and may need additional support to ensure their safety and well-being.

- **Low-income populations**: Financial constraints can limit the ability of low-income households to invest in adaptive measures, such as home cooling systems or emergency supplies. In Sterling Heights, 10.3% of residents, or approximately 13,702 individuals, are living below the poverty line according to the 2022 ACS; this figure has risen in recent years, highlighting a growing need to support financially vulnerable populations.
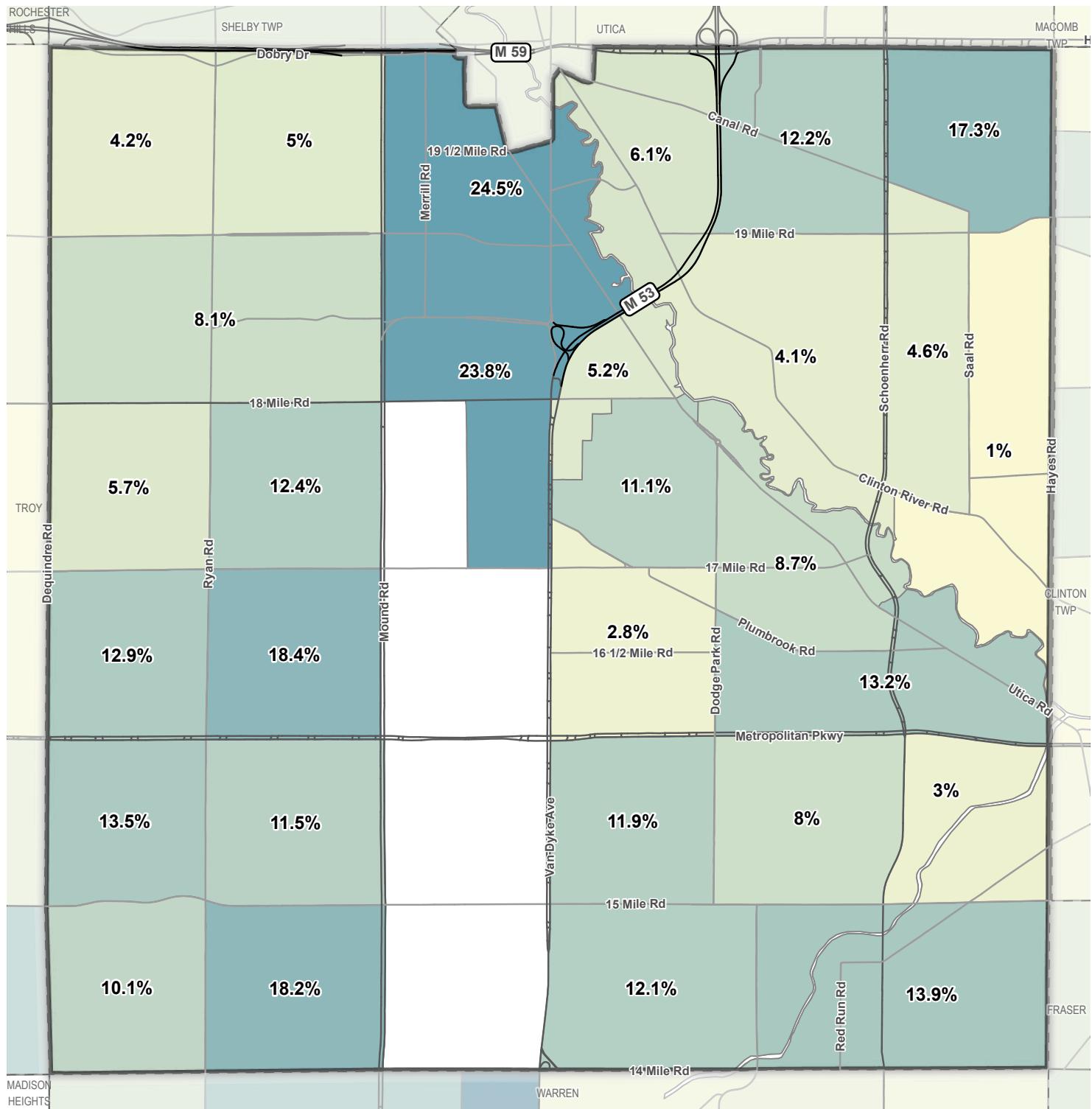
Sources: Population Income: Census Bureau's ACS, 2023. Roads: SEMCOG. Map exported: February 09, 2024 ©2024 Giffels Webster.

Percent of Population whose income in the past 12 months is below poverty level.

50%   0%

giffels webster

LOW INCOME
STERLING HEIGHTS

Sterling Heights 2025 Master Plan
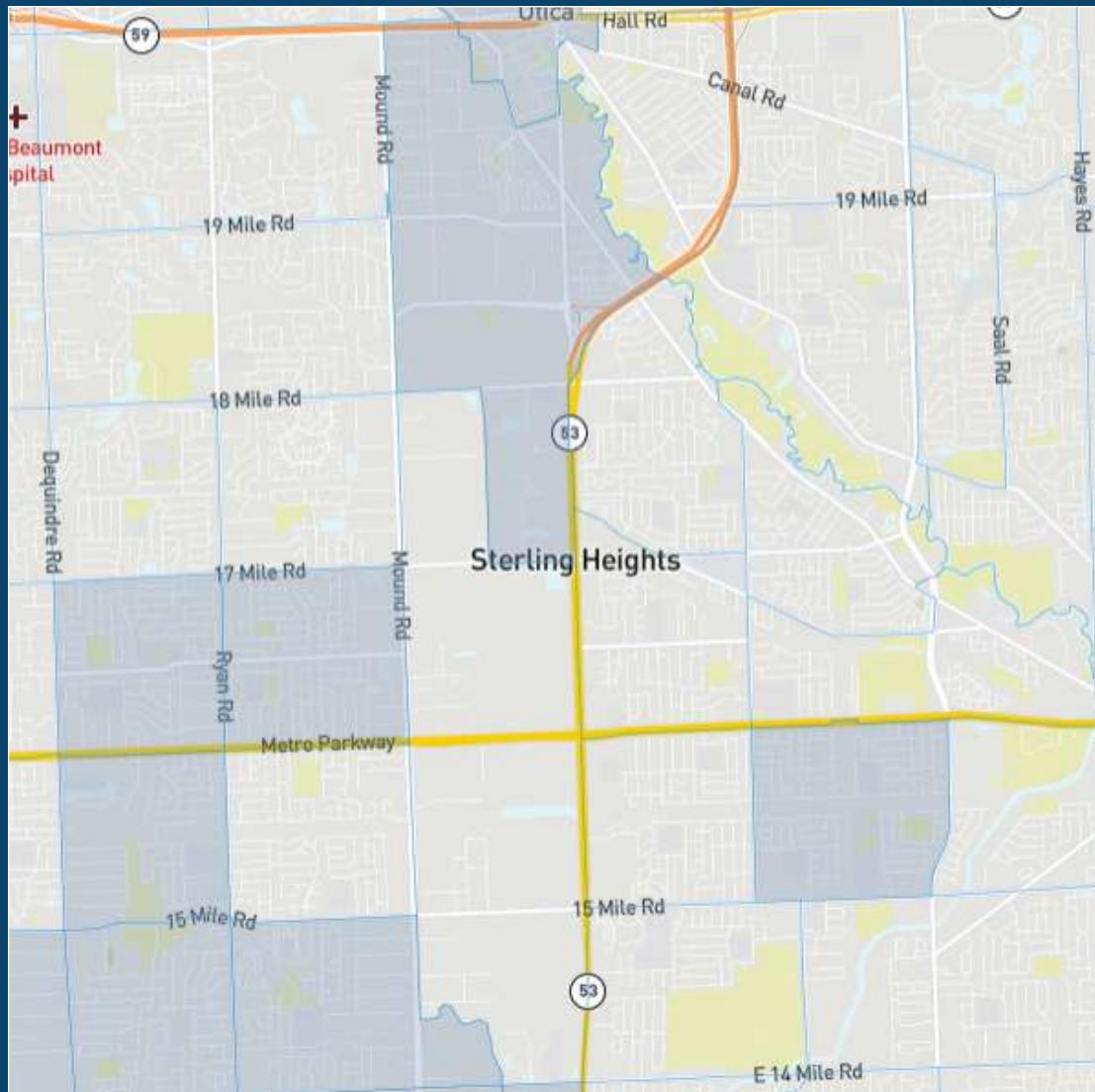
CLIMATE AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE SCREENING TOOL

Sterling Heights is committed to prioritizing equity through initiatives like the federal Justice40 Initiative, which identifies disadvantaged areas and aims to direct 40% of federal climate and clean energy investments toward these communities. To identify these disadvantaged areas that are overburdened and underserved, the Council on Environmental Quality created the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. According to this Tool, seven census tracts within Sterling Heights are identified as disadvantaged, making them priority areas for equitable and resilient infrastructure improvements and applicable for future grants. Prioritizing the needs of vulnerable populations is essential to ensuring an inclusive approach to resilience and sustainability. By considering the specific challenges faced by elderly residents, individuals with disabilities, low-income households, and children, the City of Sterling Heights can better design and implement strategies that protect these groups, especially in areas identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool.

Council on Environmental Quality (2022). Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, https://screeningtool.geoplatform. gov/en/#4.1/43.94/-101.41

STEWARDSHIP TRENDS

PLANNING EFFORTS

Sterling Heights has made significant strides in advancing sustainability and resilience through a series of strategic plans and initiatives. The City established a foundation of action-oriented plans, each designed to enhance community resilience, promote sustainability, and guide long-term growth.

As noted earlier, in 2021, Sterling Heights launched its sustainability journey with the *Visioning 2030 plan*, setting forth a bold vision that integrates sustainability into the City's core goals. Shortly after, the *Sustainability Plan*, developed by the Sustainability Commission (established in 2020), aligned with this vision and furthered the City's efforts. This plan won the Michigan Association of Planning (MAP)'s

Outstanding Resiliency and Sustainability Award and has become the framework for tracking progress in four key sustainability areas:

- **Natural Assets**: Preserving and enhancing the City's parks, waterways, and green spaces

- **Sustainable Mobility:** Expanding accessible, non-motorized transportation and public transit options

- **Sustainable Development and Land Use**: Promoting environmentally responsible growth and land use

- **Environmental Stewardship**: Fostering a culture of environmental responsibility through community engagement

Each area outlines specific actions that enhance resilience and advance sustainability, establishing benchmarks that help identify both achievements and gaps as the City moves forward. A key focus now is assessing where additional measures will address needs not fully covered by the Sustainability Plan.

Adopted in 2022, the *2022-2026 Parks, Recreation, and Non-Motorized Master Plan* serves as a vital tool for guiding the City's investments in parks, recreational facilities, and non-motorized pathways. This five-year plan, which extends through 2026, provides a framework for decision-making, with specific goals, objectives, and a five-year action plan to enhance outdoor spaces, increase accessibility, and promote active, sustainable lifestyles. This ties in well with the other plans, especially considering the prominence of parks and non-motorized pathways that will help to make Sterling Heights a more resilient, and sustainable City.

In 2024, Sterling Heights adopted the *Visioning 2040 plan*, which further underscores sustainability as a key element of community development. This plan provides guidance to City staff for future planning initiatives and reaffirms the City's commitment to creating a vibrant, adaptable community. To reinforce these efforts, Sterling Heights is actively developing a *Climate Action Plan (CAP)*, which will address emerging climate challenges, complement the Sustainability Plan, and guide the City's response to climate impacts.

Together, these plans build a comprehensive roadmap for a resilient, sustainable Sterling Heights. Each plan reinforces the other, helping the City to adapt to changing needs and setting a strong foundation for continuous improvement. With periodic updates every five years, Sterling Heights ensures that its approach to sustainability remains dynamic, responsive, and forward-thinking.

SUSTAINABILITY PLANS & CLIMATE ACTION PLANS

To effectively address environmental and climate challenges, cities often adopt two key types of plans: Sustainability Plans and Climate Action Plans (CAPs). While each has a distinct focus, together they create a comprehensive approach to resilience and sustainability.

A **Climate Action Plan** (CAP) is specifically designed to increase a City's resilience to climate change impacts. It provides a framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate-related challenges, such as extreme weather events and shifts in local ecosystems. CAPs lay out targeted actions to reduce a City's carbon footprint and prepare for future climate impacts.

A **Sustainability Plan** addresses a broader scope of sustainable development across multiple areas – such as resource use, natural assets, transportation, and environmental stewardship. It defines goals, measures progress and identifies actionable steps to create a sustainable City that supports economic vitality, social well-being, and environmental health.

By working together, these plans ensure that a City not only prepares for climate impacts but also adopts sustainable practices that improve overall quality of life for current and future generations.

POLICIES & ORDINANCES

Sterling Heights has adopted several forward-thinking policies to protect natural resources, promote sustainable practices, and enhance community resilience. These policies help guide development, resource use, and community engagement in alignment with the City's sustainability objective and work together to foster an environmentally responsible community.

A cornerstone of the City's approach is the ***Tree Preservation Ordinance***, which seeks to safeguard the urban tree canopy by preserving existing trees and setting requirements for new developments. By maintaining green spaces and minimizing tree loss, the ordinance supports cleaner air, provides natural cooling, and helps absorb stormwater runoff.

Complementing this, the ***Native Species Planting Requirement*** encourages biodiversity, supports local wildlife and pollinators, and reduces resource demands by mandating that at least 50% of all new plantings consist of native species. Native plants, adapted to local conditions, require less water and maintenance, making them integral to a resilient urban landscape.

The City is also exploring ***alternative energy ordinances***, such as ordinances that would permit **solar power infrastructure** which encourages the use of renewable energy by providing guidelines for installing solar panels on residential and commercial properties. This ordinance aligns with Sterling Heights' vision of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting clean energy, making sustainable choices more accessible to residents and businesses alike.

Additionally, an ***Impervious Surface Ordinance*** for single-family residential lots was adopted to minimize impervious surfaces to 45% in front yards helps mitigate the environmental impact of urban development by managing surfaces like concrete and asphalt that prevent water absorption. By limiting impervious surfaces, the City reduces the risk of flooding and promotes healthier water quality.

These policies reflect Sterling Heights' proactive stance on sustainability, yet there remains room to expand and refine them.

Regional municipalities with all parking minimums removed (Parking Reform Network).

PARKING REFORM

Parking reform is gaining momentum worldwide, reflecting a growing recognition of the need for flexible and sustainable urban planning. In the United States alone, over 3,000 communities have implemented reforms, with 175 updating their policies since 2015. While 20% of these reforms abolished or reduced parking mandates City-wide, the majority focused on specific areas such as central business districts, main streets, or historic zones. These reforms are concentrated in limited areas, sometimes as small as two to four blocks, restricting the broader benefits of these policies. Expanding reform boundaries to match population growth and urban density remains a key opportunity for many cities.

Most of the parking reforms emphasize commercial land use, with mandates for retail and downtown areas often being the first to go. This trend facilitates walkable and vibrant urban spaces but leaves residential areas lagging. Addressing residential parking requirements, which often result in underutilized spaces, could further maximize the positive impacts of reform. This gap presents a critical area for future progress within the movement. 49 communities that have populations like Sterling Heights have enacted parking reforms since 2015. Of these, 48 partially removed parking minimums, 24 added parking maximums, and 35 completely eliminated minimum requirements. These changes highlight the potential of parking reform to create healthier, more efficient urban spaces while limiting over-parking, reducing urban sprawl, and encouraging sustainable development.

Parking Reform Network. Parking Mandates Map based on Strong Towns' "A Map of Cities That Got Rid of Parking Minimums, https://parkingreform.org/resources/mandates-map/

LAND USE LINKAGE

The introduction of mixed-use development nodes in Sterling Heights aligns with the core topics of the Master Plan: housing, economy, sustainability, placemaking, and transportation. These planned nodes will advance sustainability across all these areas through compact, walkable designs that conserve natural resources, minimize land consumption, and reduce urban sprawl.

The nodes will enhance transportation accessibility by decreasing car dependency, encouraging active transportation such as walking and cycling, and improving connections to existing transit systems, reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

By diversifying the housing market, these nodes will provide options that meet the needs of various demographics while prioritizing affordability and resilience, ensuring that sustainable living is accessible to all. It is important to note that housing options mixing into existing residential areas are envisioned to be of similar character to other nearby homes.

Economically, they will attract new businesses, support entrepreneurship, and enhance the City's appeal, driving long-term growth that aligns with sustainable development principles.

Additionally, these nodes will prioritize placemaking and community building by integrating public spaces, recreational amenities, and local businesses. This approach not only fosters social interaction and a sense of belonging but also supports a local, sustainable economy.

To further amplify their sustainability impact, the nodes can incorporate the land-use strategies outlined in the opportunities section of this chapter, such as incentivizing more green additions and adopting more intense parking reforms. Once implemented, these mixed-use development nodes will create inclusive neighborhoods that balance economic, social, and environmental goals, enhancing residents' quality of life while securing a resilient, sustainable future for Sterling Heights.

Many of these strategies address private property, but the City of Sterling Heights also owns parcels throughout the City. Where possible, the City can take advantage of these parcels to plant trees and other native vegetation in ways that do not necessarily prevent future development.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR STERLING HEIGHTS

As the impacts of climate change grow increasingly evident, communities are striving to become more sustainable. This rising interest in sustainability has led to the development of numerous guidelines and resources from various organizations. Organizations like Michigan Green Communities, SEMCOG, the EPA, and ICLEI (an organization that helps member communities with sustainability initiatives) offer valuable support for cities pursuing sustainability goals. These resources help communities find the best route for becoming environmental stewards within their community, often embedding these principles into their Zoning Ordinances. This integration is crucial, as local land-use decisions, such as housing types and their locations, transportation options, and stormwater management, directly affect the health and environment of communities. Utilizing data from the EPA's Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities and their 2022 Greenhouse Gas Report, there are varying land-use strategies intended to be implemented to create a more sustainable City overall. The City has an opportunity to continue building on the innovation around sustainability evident in the last several years, which can support residents and businesses, attract new businesses, and resonate with younger people looking for a unique place to live and work in the southeast Michigan region.

BUILDINGS, HOUSING, AND ENERGY

Energy consumption in industrial, commercial, and residential buildings is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Addressing this issue requires a focus on improving building efficiency through upgrades and thoughtful design, reducing emissions at the source by adopting green energy solutions, and ensuring equitable access to these advancements.

Green Buildings

Energy-efficient building practices and retrofits can allow new and existing buildings to use less energy to accomplish the same functions, leading to fewer greenhouse gas emissions. This can be done through insulation improvements, energy-efficient heating, cooling, ventilation, and refrigeration systems, as well as efficient lighting and appliances. Other building designs to increase sustainability include incorporating water-efficient features, sustainable materials, low-maintenance landscaping, and reflective or "cool" roofs. These green practices can be promoted through guides for renters and landowners and be considered for integration into the City's Zoning Ordinance.

- Update zoning codes to include incentives for green buildings (e.g., expedited permits or density bonuses for developments meeting energy efficiency standards).

- Mandate energy-efficient designs in new developments, such as requiring reflective roofing, green roofs, or sustainable materials in certain zoning districts.

- Develop online resources, such as guides for energy-efficient upgrades, solar panel installation, and sustainable landscaping, tailored to homeowners, renters, and landlords.

Example of a cool roof (Source: Custom-Bilt Metals)

Housing

The **Housing** chapter identifies several strategies to address housing needs of current and future residents. Many of these strategies also reflect sustainability goals. Things like encouraging compact design and development near existing developments to conserve green space and encouraging alternative transportation like walking and biking could be achieved in the planned **nodes** (see the **Mixed-Use Development Nodes** chapter) and surrounding residential areas. Opportunities to support sustainable housing strategies include:

- Encourage mixed-use zoning in commercial nodes to integrate residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, promoting walkability and reducing energy use.

- Allow for more flexible zoning to include accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and missing middle housing (e.g., duplexes, triplexes).

- Rezone for compact, high-density, mixed-use developments near public transit and existing infrastructure.

A side-facing accessory backyard cottage (Source: Claremont Heritage)

Green Energy

Transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy is one of the most impactful steps in reducing emissions. Encouraging and facilitating the adoption of renewable energy technologies, such as residential and commercial solar installations, EV readiness, passive solar building design, and renewable energy purchasing options like wind and geothermal, can significantly accelerate this transition.

- Include solar access ordinances to protect property owners' ability to install solar panels.

- Zone for renewable energy infrastructure, such as community solar farm installations.

- Update building codes to include requirements for EV charging readiness and renewable energy integration in new developments.

- Establish public-private partnerships to fund and expand renewable energy projects within the City.

- Partner with local energy providers to create community education campaigns on transitioning to renewable energy sources and the benefits associated.

TRANSPORTATION AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Transportation is the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels by cars, trucks, ships, trains, and planes. This challenge can be addressed through thoughtful land-use development, which not only reduces car-related emissions but also promotes a community's overall health and well-being. Additionally, green infrastructure plays a vital role in enhancing environmental benefits and improving the quality of life for residents.

Transportation and Accessibility

While mixing uses in the built environment can help reduce emissions by improving walkability and decreasing reliance on personal vehicles, improvements in public transportation, combined with Complete Streets designs that prioritize pedestrians and support bike-friendly infrastructure, encourage alternative transportation options. These changes not only reduce car usage but foster better connectivity and accessibility throughout the community. Sustainable strategies specific to transportation include:

- Implement Complete Streets policies that prioritize walking, biking, and public transit.

- Invest in expanding and improving public transportation networks, and work with regional transportation providers to improve service, focusing on underserved areas as a priority.

- Update zoning standards for higher-density, mixed-use neighborhoods and encourage development/redevelopment initially near public transit to reduce car reliance.

- Organize events like "Car-Free Days" and "Bike to School/Work Days" to promote alternative transportation methods.

Parking Reform

As noted on **page 93**, many communities are embracing parking reform, which can take many forms. Some strategies could include:

- Eliminate minimum parking requirements to encourage denser, mixed-use development. Where supported by transit and where alternative transportation options are promoted, this could reduce the need for car ownership (helping residents with affordability as well).

- Encourage property owners to participate in shared parking arrangements by promoting the benefits and providing model agreement language that could be adapted as needed.

- Invest in public transportation and infrastructure and support regional transit efforts. Improving access to buses, shuttle services, and bike lanes can shift reliance away from cars and reduce the need for parking spaces.

- Support shared mobility services and encourage car-sharing and bike-sharing programs to further reduce the demand for individual car ownership and parking.

Stormwater Management

Reducing impervious surfaces and incorporating green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and permeable sidewalks/surfaces, can significantly improve stormwater management. Parking policies that align with transportation options and land use, such as reducing or eliminating parking minimums can also reduce impervious surface areas.

• Investigate the opportunities for strategic funding, such as a millage or stormwater utility fee (like a water or sewer fee), that would allow the City to better manage infrastructure needed to collect, transport, and treat stormwater runoff. Research best practices from communities who have created similar funding programs and engage in dialog with residents, businesses, and property owners throughout the research and assessment process.

• Explore creative approaches to stormwater management in the North Van Dyke corridor, an area historically prone to flooding. Develop strategies with local businesses and property owners to create pilot projects that can offer educational opportunities for others as well as promote the identity of the City and corridor as a hub for innovation.

• Promote community workshops and education materials on sustainable landscaping and green infrastructure maintenance.

• Further support Clinton River Watershed cleanup days and increase volunteer efforts for the watershed's health.
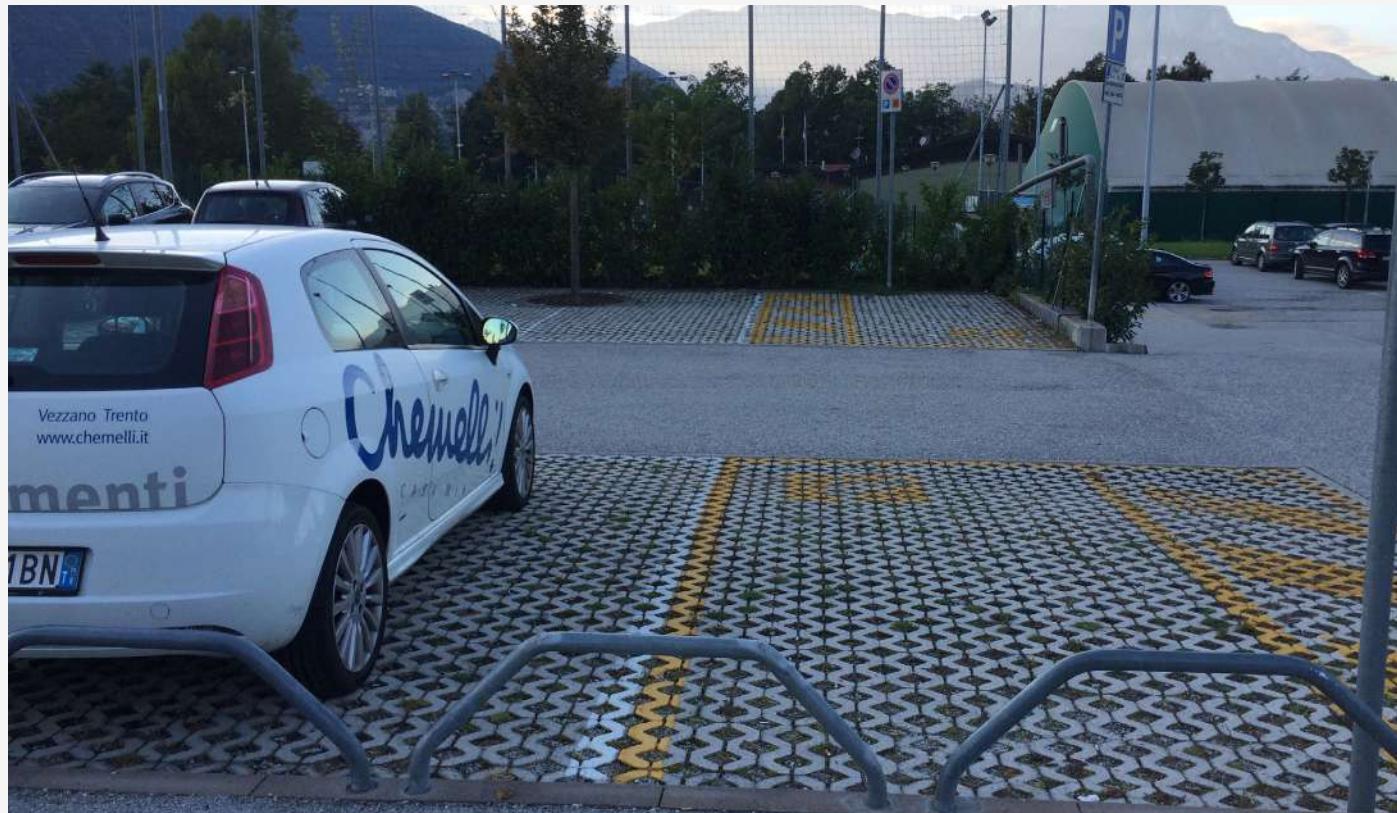
Tree Canopy

Expanding the tree canopy and incorporating tree shading along streets and parking lots can help mitigate heat absorption and re-emission from paved surfaces. Combined with the use of high solar-reflecting paving materials, these strategies effectively reduce air pollutants, greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, and human discomfort, while enhancing overall environmental quality.

- Update tree preservation ordinance to require improved tree replacement ratios for new developments.

- Incentivize the planting of more trees through density bonuses.

- Promote the use of citizen science apps to engage residents in monitoring and tracking tree health.

Preserving Natural Resources

Communities can prioritize the protection and enhancement of natural resources by expanding their tree canopy and preserving green space. Efforts to improve watersheds, wetlands, and other natural spaces, such as controlling invasive species and promoting biodiversity, help sustain ecosystems and contribute to environmental resilience.

- Develop a long-term plan to preserve local wetlands. Study the feasibility of adopting a local wetland ordinance.

- Identify parcels for green space preservation.

- Increase native species planting requirements for new development.

CONSUMER WASTE

Waste in landfills contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and poses risks to human health through the leaching of chemicals and hazardous substances. Addressing waste management practices is essential to minimizing these environmental and health impacts, supporting more sustainable and resilient communities.

Waste Management

Beyond minimizing waste generation through repurposing and reuse, several methods can significantly reduce emissions from consumer waste. Communities can consider implementing composting programs/facilities, advocating for zero-waste initiatives, and establishing waste drop-off facilities for hazardous materials and recyclables. By having these services readily accessible, there would likely be an increase seen in recycling rates and waste reduction. Additional strategies include landfill methane capture programs and the proper redevelopment of brownfield sites to mitigate environmental impacts.

- The City has new ordinance requirements that will be effective in 2026 to bring recycling to multi-family developments. Communicate these new requirements with property owners and managers. Assess the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that composting and recycling facilities are accessible to residents, including those in multi-family residential areas.

- Allow for flexible zoning that supports waste drop-off centers in convenient locations.

- Host more frequent community events like recycling drives, scrap metal collections, e-waste and hazardous waste drop-offs, and composting workshops to encourage proper waste disposal practices.

Local Food Systems

Communities can enhance green spaces and reduce paved areas by promoting urban agriculture, community gardens, and zoning for residential food production. These initiatives not only help lower emissions but also offer significant social and nutritional benefits, fostering a stronger sense of community and improving overall well-being.

- Include zoning for community gardens, urban farms, and residential food production.

- Allow for rooftop gardens and vertical farming in commercial and residential zones.

- Engage schools through hands-on programs like starting school gardens or teaching children about sustainable food systems and nutrition.

Source: Lance Cheung

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND EDUCATION

Engaging the community is vital to the success of Sterling Heights' sustainability initiatives by allowing residents to have a deeper connection to their local environment and building momentum for lasting change. While specific engagement strategies are listed under each previous respective section, more general ideas that can apply across multiple areas follow.

- Create a sustainable workshop series promoting sustainable topics for every session.

- Create online hubs with resources, maps, and toolkits for sustainability projects. Use social media to showcase ongoing initiatives and opportunities for involvement.

- Collaborate with schools, libraries, nonprofits, and businesses to host events, create educational materials, and run sustainability programs.

COMMUNITY GARDEN AT NELSON PARK

The City of Sterling Heights is making improvements to James C. Nelson Park in Spring 2025. The park improvements will ensure accessibility for all while providing numerous benefits to residents and offering businesses and individuals the opportunity to grow their own fruits and vegetables. The City hopes to increase access to healthy foods, promote better nutrition, and improve overall health outcomes. This initiative aligns with Sterling Heights' Sustainability Plan, promising improved air and soil quality, enhanced water infiltration, increased physical activity, and better overall health.
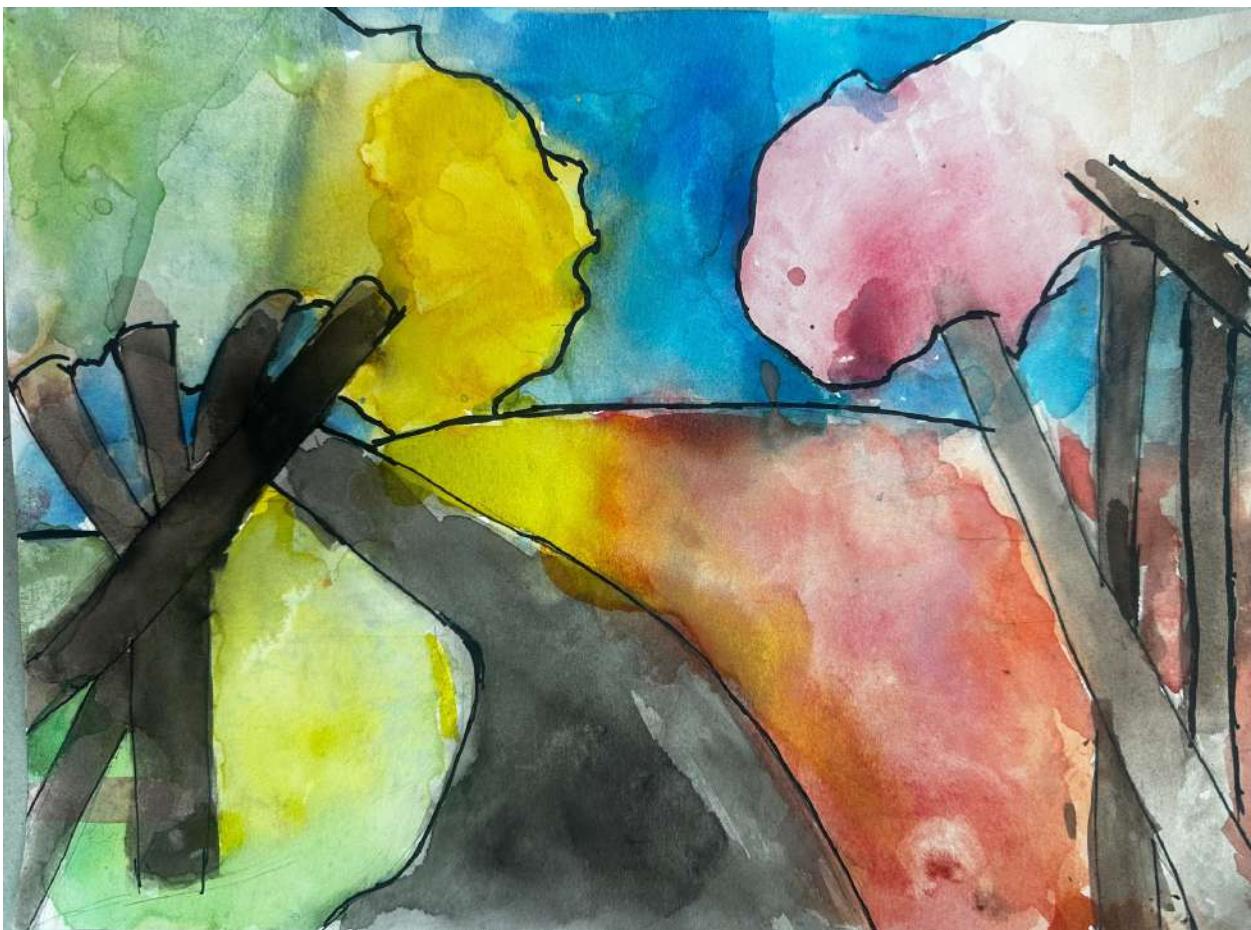
Hailey Delvecchio, Age 12

TRANSPORTATION

7

TRANSPORTATION

WHY IS TRANSPORTATION SO IMPORTANT?

A well-connected transportation network is essential for a thriving community. It not only facilitates efficient movement of people and goods but also can play a role in enhancing the quality of life for residents and supports the local workforce. A community's transportation network should be made up of more than just streets for personal vehicles. It should also support pedestrians, cyclists, and riders of shared/public transportation. The US Department of Transportation stresses the importance of this broad view by stating that "a well-connected transportation network reduces the distances traveled to reach destinations, increases the options for routes of travel, and can facilitate walking and bicycling. Well-connected, multimodal networks are characterized by seamless bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, direct routing, accessibility, few dead-ends, and few physical barriers."[1]

CONSIDERATIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION

Safety

Safety plays a major role in non-motorized travel. Perceptions of the safety of non-motorized travel strongly influence decisions about alternative modes of travel for many. Data from previous studies has shown that high vehicle speeds contribute to unsafe roadways for pedestrians, and thus the likelihood of accidents that lead to fatalities.[2]

Comfort

Comfort plays a crucial role in the attractiveness of transportation options. A comfortable journey significantly influences travel decisions; factors such as temperature, noise levels, air quality, and the availability of amenities like seating, shade, and protection from the elements all contribute to overall travel comfort. Studies have shown that discomfort, whether due to extreme temperatures, excessive noise, or poor air quality, can deter individuals from choosing active transportation modes like walking

1   https://www.transportation.gov/mission/health/promoting-connectivity

2   https://highways.dot.gov/safety/pedestrian-bicyclist/safety-tools/tools-diagnose-and-solve-problem

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Recognizing the importance of planning for a complete transportation network, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires Master Plans to include a plan for "[A]ll components of a transportation system and their interconnectivity including streets," which essentially mean 'Complete Streets.' What are complete streets? 'Complete Streets' describes a transportation network that includes facilities for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and other legal users of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets provide transportation choices, allowing people to move about their communities safely and easily. This does not mean that every street accommodates every user, but that the entire network provides opportunities for all users to reach their destinations.

Creating a transportation network is more than just providing the streets and sidewalks. Users of the network want to feel comfortable and safe. This means designing streets and sidewalks for safe travel, regardless of the travel mode. Further, road rights-of-way can have an impact on the appearance and design of streetscapes while also influencing private development on the other side of the right-of-way (ROW) line. This dividing line between where rights-of-way end, and private property begins is often blurred. Planning for both sides of the ROW can positively impact economic conditions, environmental quality, energy consumption, land development, and overall quality of life in a community.

and cycling, even if they are otherwise convenient and safe. Creating a comfortable travel experience is essential for encouraging a shift towards more equitable, sustainable, and healthy transportation choices.

Promote Healthy Lifestyles

Beyond the obvious reason of safety, there are other reasons communities should consider how complete their streets really are. As many people struggle with their weight, communities battle rising public health costs for chronic conditions associated with obesity. Over the past 25 years, obesity rates have skyrocketed across the country. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that between 1989-2018, obesity rates in Michigan rose from less than 14% to nearly 33% of the population. Additionally, childhood obesity rates have risen dramatically, while the percentage of children walking or biking to school has dropped.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that between 1989-2018, obesity rates in Michigan rose from less than 14% to nearly 33% of the population. Additionally, childhood obesity rates have risen dramatically, while the percentage of children walking or biking to school has dropped. Studies have shown an inversely proportional relation between children walking to school to child obesity rates. Data has shown that these three elements of a complete street, sidewalks on most streets, transit stops nearby, and presence of bicycle facilities, significantly impact the levels of physical activities of the residents. The more factors that were present, the higher the activity level by residents.

Obesity Rates and Percent of Students Walking to School		
Year	Percent of K-8 Walking/Biking to School	Obesity Rates of Children 6-11 Years
1969	48%	4.2%
2009	13%	18.1%
2017	10.9%	20.7%
Source: US Center for Disease Control and Prevention; National Household Travel survey		

Provide Access for People with Limited Mobility

People with limited mobility, such as children, older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income populations, are most affected due to lack of access to safe and Complete Streets. Complete Streets that provide access to grocery stores and personal services make a community livable, especially for this subset of people.

As the City's residents age, issues of health, mobility, and socialization are critical. According to a poll conducted by AARP in 2009, 21% of Americans over 65 do not drive. Studies have shown that forfeiting the driving privilege "results in an emotional trauma much like experiencing a death for the senior. The loss of independence is a source of loss, grieving and even depression" (AARP). It is very likely that this trauma results from the fact that there are limited mobility options for seniors once driving is no longer possible.

In a national survey conducted by AARP Public Policy Institute in 2024, the data indicated the following community features are "extremely/very important":

- 74% Streets well-lit, well-marked crosswalks, accessible, safe
- 72%: Sidewalks in good condition, safe for pedestrians
- 71%: Sidewalks that are located where people need and want to walk
- 69%: Pedestrian crossings, clearly marked, audio/visual signals, allow enough time to cross
- 65%: Safe speed limits that are properly enforced
- 65%: Safe public transportation

Environment

Complete Streets will provide alternate transportation options that could reduce short auto trips within neighborhoods to local retail and services. Our reliance on the automobile as a primary source of transportation leads to a sprawling infrastructure system carrying a low-density of population per lane mile. Between 1980 and 2015, the percent change in vehicle miles traveled has increased significantly (over 2.5 times) compared to the percent change in population growth for America. This demonstrates the significant reliance of people on automobiles for their transportation needs.

Shifting to alternative modes of transportation such as public transit, bicycles, and walking can help lead to corresponding public health improvements and less reliance on personal automobiles. Studies have shown that 5 to 10 percent of urban automobile trips can reasonably be shifted to non-motorized transport.

Our dependence on automobiles increases air and water pollution resulting from motor vehicles and the impervious surfaces of roads. With a minimal number of desirable transportation options, many people drive alone and create traffic congestion for several hours each day. This wastes time and productivity, and emissions from idling vehicles contribute to increased air pollution and greenhouse gases. Oil, gas, fluids and other materials from motorized vehicles collect on roads and are washed into lakes and streams by rainfall.

Reducing automobile dependence can positively impact carbon-dioxide emissions by removing 20 pounds per day or more than 4,800 pounds in a year per each commuter by using transit instead of driving.

Figure 2. Change in Vehicle Miles Traveled and Population in the U.S. (1980 to 2023)

Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled in the United States

Last updated: October 2024
Printed on: January 10

Figure 3. CO2 Emissions by Mode of Transport

Source: International Energy Agency

LOCAL IMPORTANCE TO STERLING HEIGHTS

In Sterling Heights, the majority of people drive to their destinations. Why is this? There are a number of reasons, but one key reason is that the non-motorized network does not support or encourage walking or biking. While the City has a fairly established sidewalk network, the built environment may feel unsafe and not especially comfortable or aesthetically pleasing. The scale of the built environment – buildings set far away from the road edge with a sea of parking in the front yards – all prioritize the automobile over the pedestrian. Transit connections to employment centers and other locations are limited. SMART, the regional transportation provider, currently runs limited bus routes in the City; however, there are efforts underway to expand this service and include a smaller, on-demand service throughout the City.

CITY-WIDE CONDITIONS AND PLANNING

Existing Transportation Infrastructure

This Complete Streets section of the Master Plan update provides a brief overview of the benefits of Complete Streets, policy and design elements, functional street classification, existing non-motorized inventory and identify priority projects. To understand the existing transportation network, it is helpful to consider road classification, road ownership, and safety. (See maps on the following pages.)

City-Wide Traffic Safety Action Plan (in progress)

It should be noted that the City is in the process of developing a City-wide traffic safety action plan. This plan will have three components: 1) Neighborhood Traffic Calming, 2) Ryan Road corridor re-imagining, and 3) Comprehensive traffic plan. It is anticipated to be completed in early spring 2025. Addressing the quantity and quality of pedestrian crossings should be included in this plan.

Economic Development

Whether providing access to customers or employees, or moving goods, an efficient transportation network is critical. Poor maintenance, insufficient transportation options, and congestion can present problems for economic development if supply chains are disrupted, employees are late, and customers find more convenient alternatives. A complete streets network supports local economic development by encouraging new businesses that serve the local population of residents and workers. When streets in and around the residential and local business districts are redesigned with traffic calming measures and provide safe bicycle and pedestrian access, it results in increased consumer activity. Implementing Complete Streets is also a good placemaking strategy for economic development and community revitalization.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SNAPSHOT

The **Community Survey** and **Market Survey** provided several opportunities for people to express their thoughts and comments on transportation. Responses included the following:

- Housing costs are a challenge. 46 percent of respondents stated rising housing costs are considered a "major challenge facing Sterling Heights. 84 percent of respondents indicated that cost of housing is "very important" or "important" to them.

- The quality of neighborhoods and their homes are important for residents. 95 percent of respondents stated quality of homes and neighborhoods are "very important" or "important" to them.

- Residents are interested in staying in their homes. 59 percent of respondents stated they are "very unlikely" to sell their home within the next year, with an additional 12 percent of respondents being "somewhat unlikely." The Planning Commission's Housing Module conducted in April 2024 allowed Commissioners and members of the public to rank the City's housing priorities. Affordability was deemed the number one priority, with convenient access to goods, services, and employment being the number two priority.

- Despite most neighborhood stores/businesses being within walking distance of many residents, a plurality (45%) said they "never" travel to those types of destinations by foot or bicycle. However, almost 14% say they ride to work or school at least once per week.

- Nearly a third (29%) say they are "not interested" in bicycling, but a plurality (35%) say they are "interested but concerned" riders, only feeling comfortable riding on side paths or local neighborhood streets. Over 22% say they're a little more open to cycling if there were buffered bike lanes or bike lanes wide enough to promote safety and comfort.

- When asked an open-ended question about where people would like to walk or ride to, about a quarter of the respondents said some kind of store (e.g., grocery store, hardware store, etc.). Many people said they'd ride or walk "downtown," as in downtown Utica or Rochester. Several noted the Lakeside Mall area.

- When asked about specific strategies the City could use to improve transportation:

  - A quarter (25%) of the responses strongly agreed that walkability should be encouraged through the Zoning Ordinance. Just over a third (35%) of the responses agreed with the statement. A majority of the respondents believed that walkability should be a point of emphasis in the Zoning Ordinance with regard to development.

  - Electric vehicle (EV) charging systems and how they fit into the built environment has become a more common aspect of City planning in recent years. Participants were asked if EV chargers should be installed in the City. About 39% of responses agreed that EV chargers should be installed in the City. However, roughly 62% of respondents either said that they were neutral to the idea or disagreed that charging systems should be installed within the City limits.

o   Sidewalks connecting residential areas throughout the City were viewed favorably by participants. Nearly 80% of the recorded responses either strongly agreed or agreed. This shows that participants view connectivity and walkability as a priority for the City. This sentiment is shared in other survey responses.

o   Providing safe access and routes for cyclists and pedestrians is important, and a majority of participants (77%) strongly agreed or agreed that safe routes should be a key aspect found throughout the City. This follows the same trend of participants asking for more walkable areas and improved connection to neighborhood stores or a future downtown area.

o   Just over half (51%) of the responses saw proximity to a place of work as an important factor. This indicates a slight majority of participants believed that living near their workplace was a key reason for their decision to live in Sterling Heights. However, almost a third (31%) had a neutral opinion about the importance of being close to work. A smaller percentage of responses (18%) saw proximity to work as either unimportant or very unimportant with regard to being located near their workplace.

o   When asked what is missing from the City's transportation offerings, public transportation was mentioned as an opportunity to serve aging members of the community as well as the workforce. Respondents noted the need to improve expansion of transportation services (geography and frequency), accessibility, and safety.

Main public input takeaways related to transportation:

•   While many residents in the community walk or ride for recreation, improvements to safety, convenience, and comfort would make it easier and more attractive for people to walk and ride as a form of transportation to community destinations including shops, restaurants, and civic facilities.

•   A variety of transportation options is important for not only community livability, but also to support a diverse workforce.

Road Classification
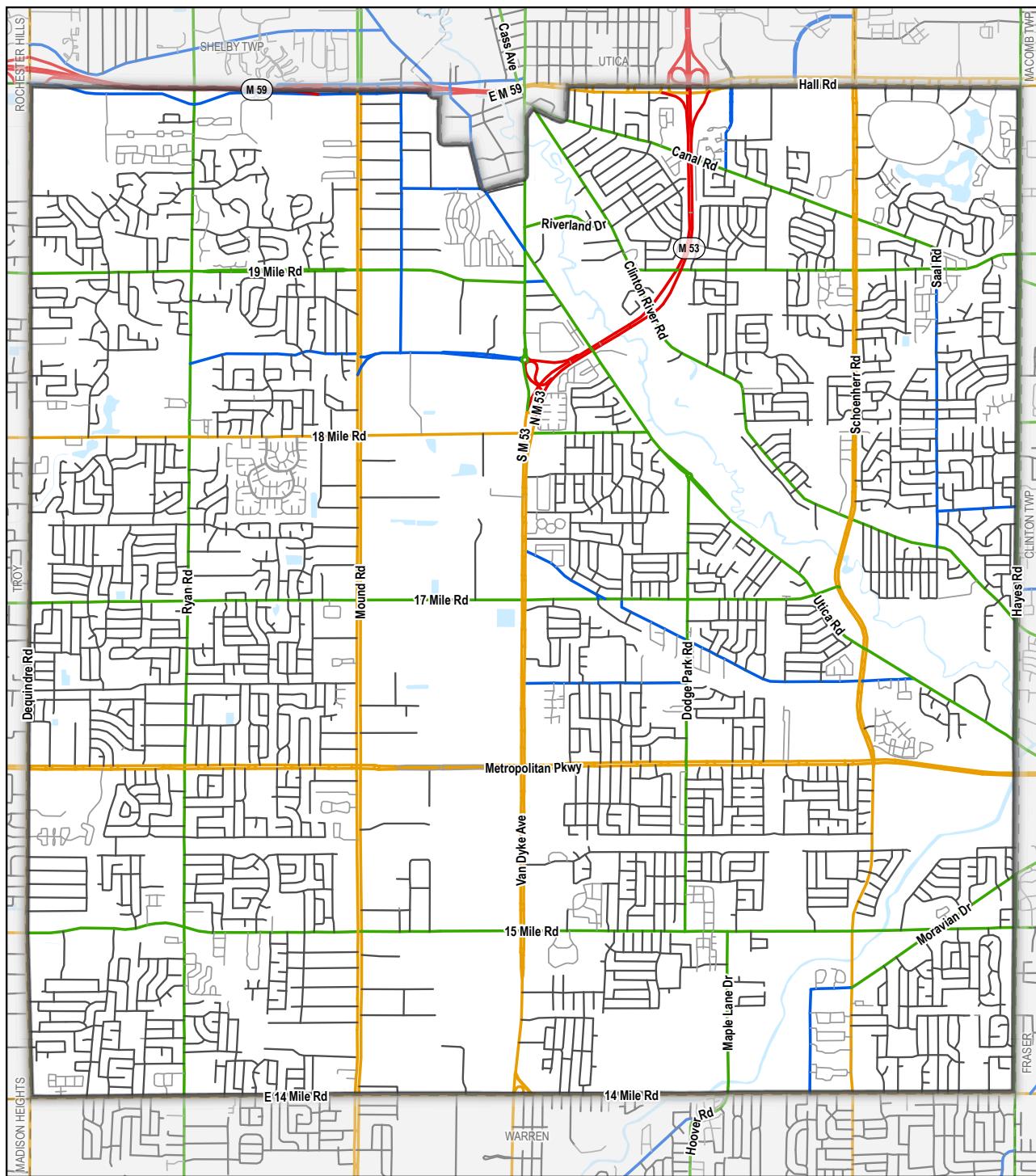
Freeway (35,000 – 129,000 vehicles per day)
Collector (1,100 – 6,300 vehicles per day)
Principal Arterial (7,000 – 27,000 vehicles per day)
Local (80 – 700 vehicles per day)
Minor Arterial (3,000 – 14,000 vehicles per day)
Private

giffels webster

0   1   2 Miles

ROCHESTER HILLS
SHELBY TWP.
UTICA
MACOMB TWP.
Cass Ave
M 59
E M 59
Hall Rd
Canal Rd
Riverland Dr
M 53
Clinton River Rd
Saal Rd
Schoenherr Rd
19 Mile Rd
N M 53
S M 53
18 Mile Rd
Ryan Rd
Mound Rd
17 Mile Rd
Dodge Park Rd
Utica Rd
Hayes Rd
CLINTON TWP.
Dequindre Rd
TROY
Metropolitan Pkwy
Van Dyke Ave
15 Mile Rd
Moravian Dr
Maple Lane Dr
FRASER
MADISON HEIGHTS
E 14 Mile Rd
14 Mile Rd
Hoover Rd
WARREN

Sterling Heights 2025 Master Plan

Sources: Roads: SEMCOG. Water Areas: SEMCOG. Exported: December 09, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster

State ——— County ——— City ——— Private

Road Ownership

giffels webster

0   1   2 Miles

2020 - 2023 Crash Density

Sources: Roads: SEMCOG. Water Areas: SEMCOG. Exported: December 10, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster

High   Low

0   1   2 Miles
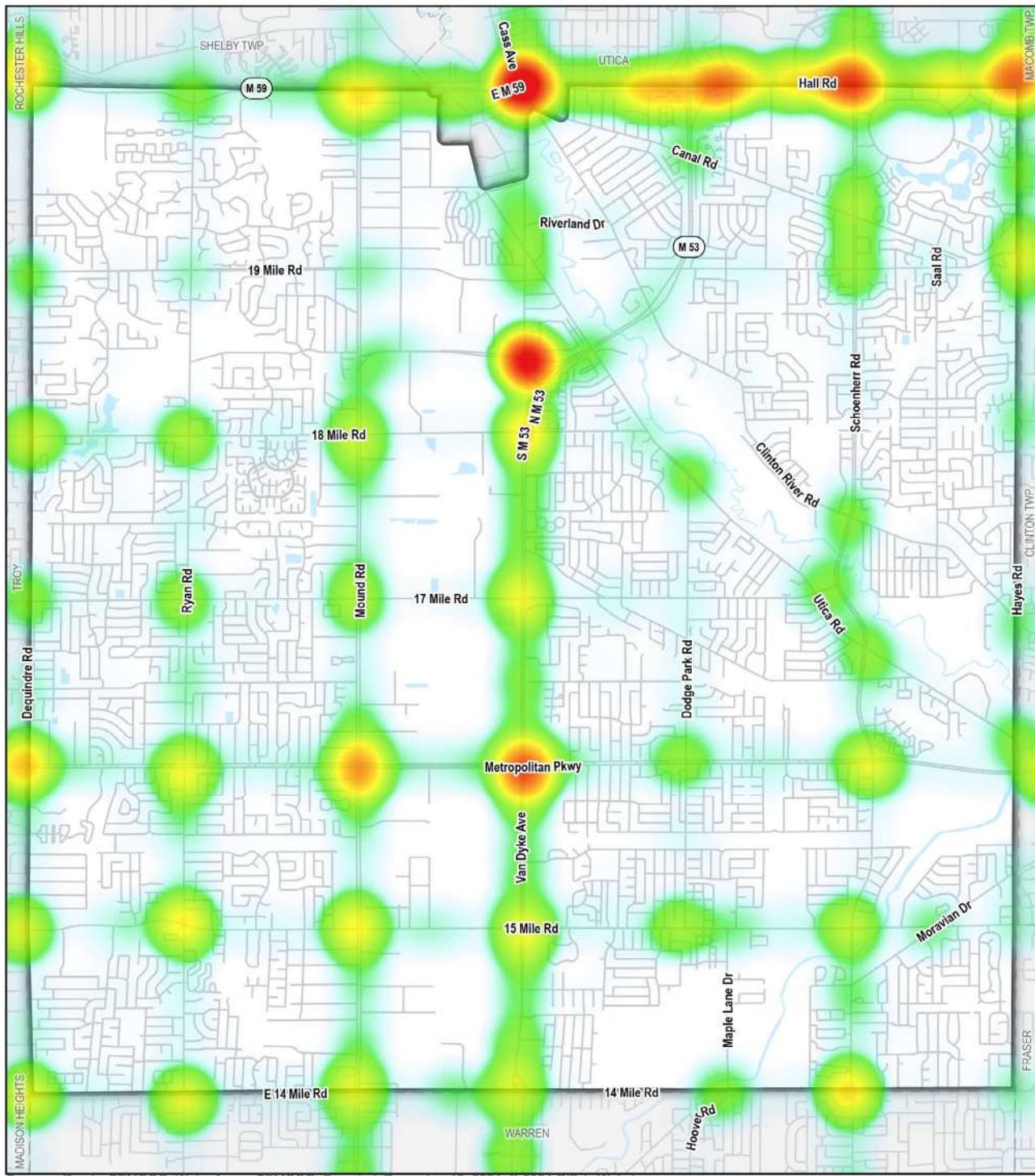
giffels webster

Parks, Recreation, and Non-Motorized Master Plan (2021)

The City's Parks, Recreation, and Non-Motorized Master Plan summarizes key non-motorized planning efforts that were included in the 2017 Mobilize Macomb plan, including the Sterling Relief Trail and the Iron Belle Trail Connector. The plan contains a proposed Parks & Non-Motorized Facility Improvement Map (see **Map 1**).

Complete Streets Policy (2011)

In 2011, the City adopted a Complete Streets Policy (see appendix) that expresses support for complete streets strategies that lead to an "efficient and safe multi-modal transportation network."

IRON BELLE TRAIL

The Iron Belle Trail extends more than 2,000 miles from the far western tip of the Upper Peninsula to Belle Isle in Detroit. Using existing trails and new connections, this trail is 71% built. In Sterling Heights, the trail segment is "Clinton River Park Trail Bridge to Riverbends Park," and is 4.7 miles in length. This trail ends at Metro Parkway, where a 10.25 mile segment is proposed along Schoenherr Road through to Masonic Boulevard in Warren.

Map 1. 2022-2026 Parks, Recreation, and Non-Motorized Master Plan Action Program Map: Parks & Non-Motorized Facility Improvements
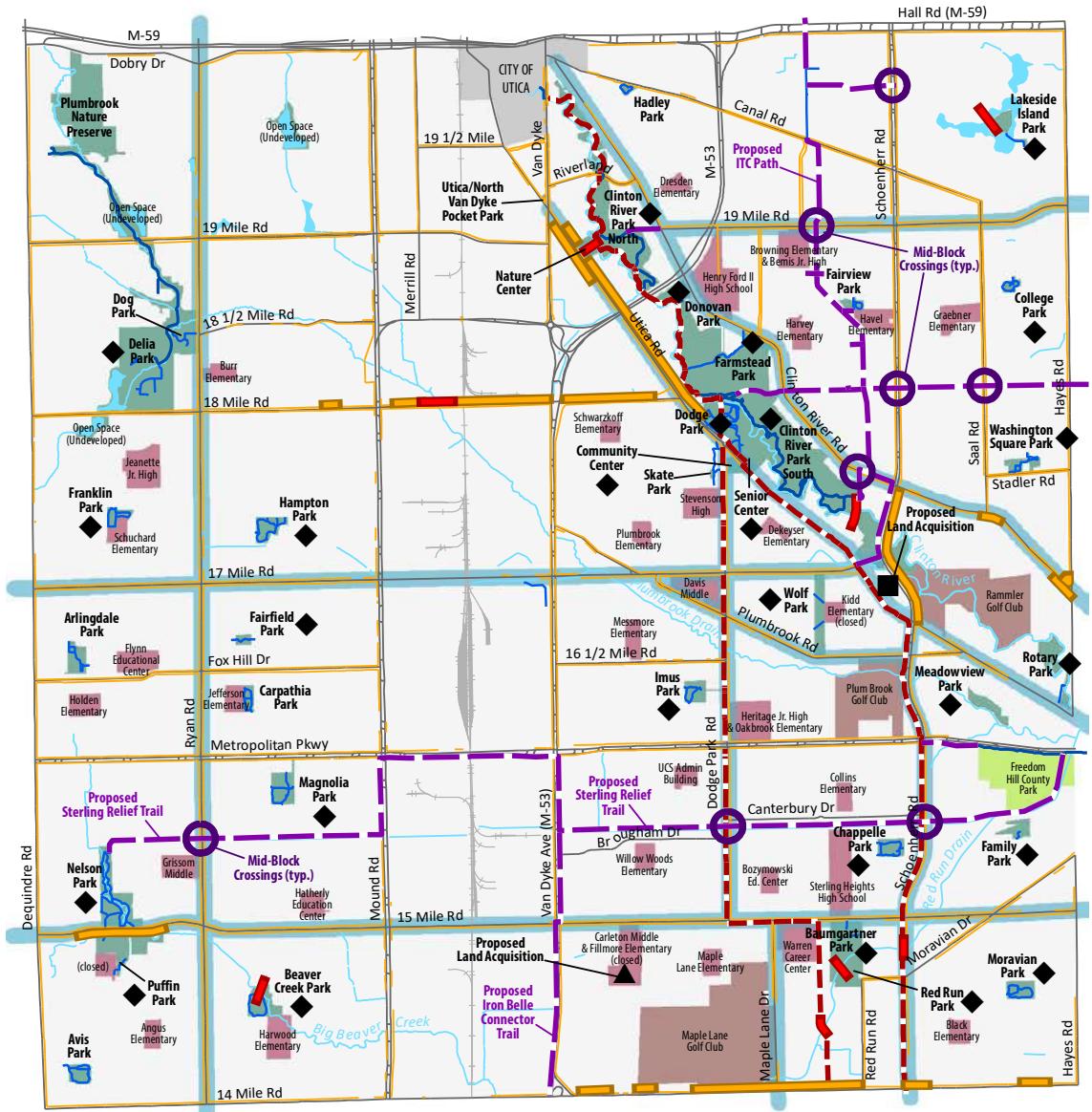
Proposed Park Improvements:
- ◆ Parks Proposed for Improvements
- ▲ Acquisition & Development of New Park
- ■ Land Acquisition for Open Space Preservation

Proposed Non-Motorized Improvements:
- ⭕ Mid-Block Crossing
- ━ Designated Pedestrian/Bike-Oriented Street
- ┅ Shared Use Trails
- ━ Pedestrian Bridge
- ━ Sidewalk Gap Priorities

Existing Facilities:
- City Parks
- Public Schools
- County Parks
- Private Golf Courses
- ┅ Iron Belle Trail Route
- ━ Local/Regional Trails
- ━ Other Shared Use Trails
- ━ Sidewalks/Safety Paths (Along primary roads)

November 2021

QUICK TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS

While 17.8% of households have at least one car (43% have at least two and 36% have more than three), about **6% of households have no car**.

Average commute to work time: 26 minutes – and **77.3% of commuters drive alone**.

About **24% of the City's population may not drive or limit their driving**.

- 16% of the population is under age 15 and cannot drive.

- About 8% of the population is over age 75 and may limit their driving, or choose not to drive.

- About **26% of the City's population will be over age 65 by 2050** (the percentage of the population between ages 65-84 is expected to rise by 26% and the percentage over age 85 is expected to rise by 156%).

About **13% of the population has a disability** of some kind that may impact their ability to drive (this includes difficulties with hearing and vision, cognitive or ambulatory difficulties, and those with limited ability for self-car or to live independently).

Although a low proportion of the overall transportation to work, the number of **people bicycling to work has more than tripled since 2010**.

Data from U.S. Census Bureau's 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) unless otherwise noted.

SAFETY IN THE CITY'S TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

In the past five years, there have been 19,446 total crashes in the City of Sterling Heights. Of those, 29 were fatal. Twenty percent of all crashes involved older drivers (65 and older), and about 18.5 percent involved young drivers (15-20 years old). Alcohol and drugs were factors in about five percent of all crashes. Distracted drivers were involved in about six percent of crashes. Pedestrians and cyclists were involved in about 178 crashes, eight of which were fatal. The most concerning intersections in the City include:

- **Van Dyke Avenue and Metropolitan Parkway** has an average of 1.2 fatalities per year over the past five years. For crashes alone, there are about 49 per year over the past five years.

- **18½ Mile and S. M-53/Van Dyke Ramp**, which is a roundabout, leads the county (and is second in the region) for traffic crashes, with an average of 108 per year over the past five years.

- **Mound Road and Metropolitan Parkway** rounds out the top three intersections locally for crashes, with an average of 45.4 crashes per year over the past five years. This intersection ranks seventh in the county and 26th in the region. There have been about one fatality per years in the past five years for this intersection.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING TRENDS

VISION ZERO

In addition to Complete Streets, a land use and transportation initiative to make a community's transportation network more inclusive, connected, and accessible, in recent years, the concept of "Vision Zero" has emerged. Conceived in Sweden in the 1990s, Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate traffic-related deaths and serious injuries. It's based on the idea that crashes are preventable, and by improving road design, traffic laws, and driver behavior, a safer environment is possible for everyone. It's a shift from blaming individuals for crashes to focusing on system-wide improvements to prevent them from happening in the first place. Transportation planners make strides towards this concept by making incremental improvements.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

In 1991, the first major federal transportation project to explicitly include non-motorized transportation planning and funding was passed. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (or ISTEA) has been modified and expanded since that time. In the early 2000s, an updated act (the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century – or TEA 21) incorporated the concept of providing "safe routes to school" as a program that focuses on improving the health of children, reducing traffic congestion, and promoting sustainability.

MICROMOBILITY

Micromobility strategies address personal transportation over short distances. This includes bikes, e-bikes, electric scooters, and other similar devices. It's often used as a way to get around cities, especially for first- and last-mile trips (when other public transportation is used), and can help reduce traffic congestion and air pollution. Bike-sharing, scooter-sharing, and other "shared mobility" options are becoming increasingly popular in urban and dense suburban areas.
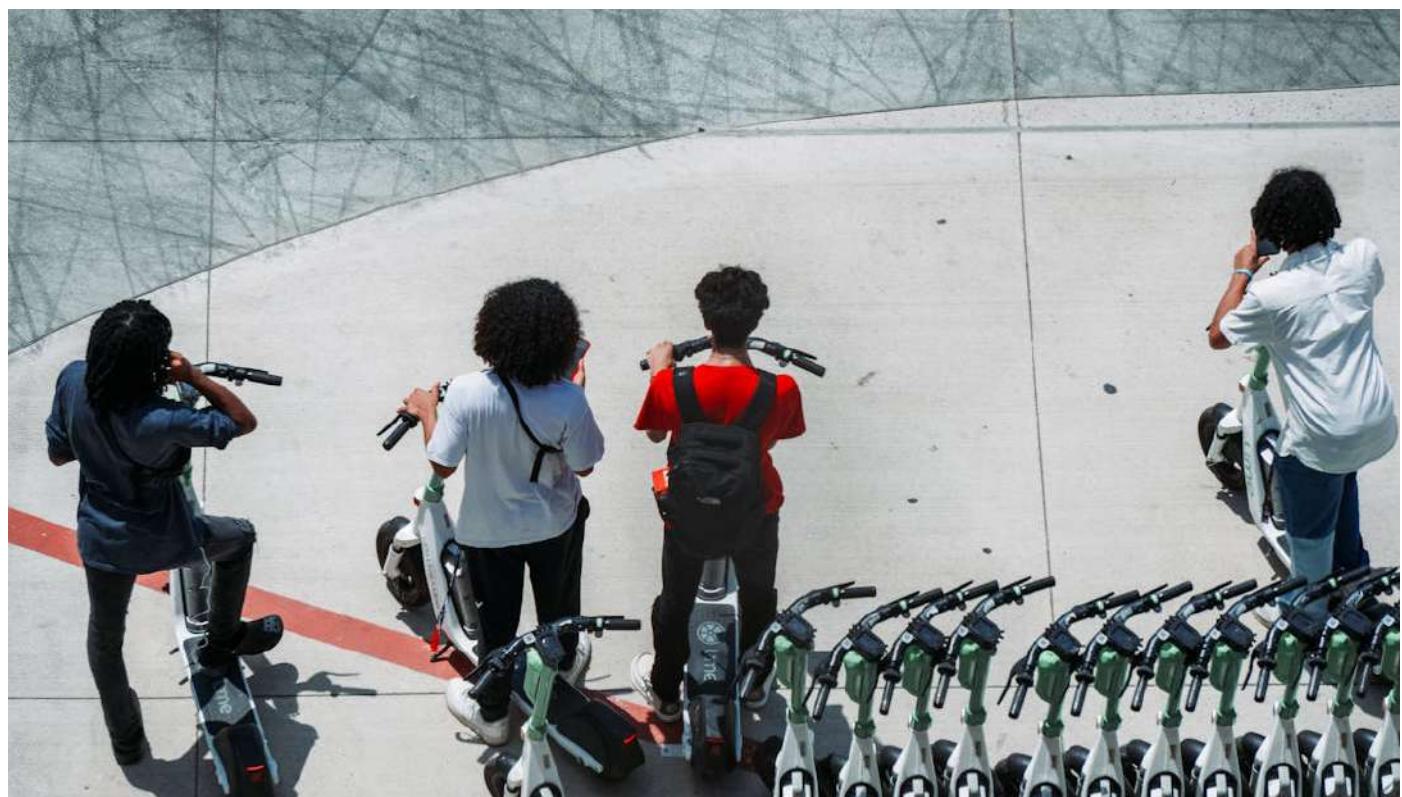
AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES

Autonomous vehicles (AVs) are cars that can drive themselves with little or no human input. They use a variety of sensors and artificial intelligence to navigate roads and traffic. Autonomous vehicles have the potential to revolutionize transportation, improving safety, efficiency, and accessibility. Autonomous delivery vehicles, such as drones and robots, are being used for last-mile delivery, particularly in urban areas.

There are five levels of vehicle automation, ranging from no automation (Level 0) to full automation (Level 5). There are many personal vehicles on the road today that are at Level 2:

- Level 0: No Automation: The driver is in complete control of the vehicle.
- Level 1: Driver Assistance: The vehicle can assist the driver with one function, such as adaptive cruise control or lane-keeping assist.

- Level 2: Partial Automation: The vehicle can control two or more functions simultaneously, like steering and braking.
- Level 3: Conditional Automation: The vehicle can handle most driving tasks, but the driver must be ready to take over at any time.
- Level 4: High Automation: The vehicle can handle all driving tasks in specific conditions, but human intervention may still be required.
- Level 5: Full Automation: The vehicle can handle all driving tasks in all conditions, without any human intervention.

SMART CITIES AND INTERNET OF THINGS (IOT)

Using sensors and data analytics to optimize traffic flow and reduce congestion, road agencies are able to manage traffic in real time. As noted above with AVs, vehicles that can communicate with each other and infrastructure to improve safety and efficiency.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Planning for the transportation can incorporate sustainability with strategies including "active transportation," encouraging walking and biking through infrastructure improvements and policies. In addition, public transportation investments such as expanding and improving public transportation systems to reduce reliance on private cars while supporting the adoption of electric cars, trucks, and buses can both reduce emissions and improve air quality.

MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION

Integrating transportation systems by combining different modes of transportation (e.g., buses, bikes, walking) creates seamless travel experiences. Exploring "Mobility-as-a-Service" (MaaS) platforms that offer a range of transportation options, including public transit, ride-sharing, and bike-sharing, through a single app or service can easily connect transportation users with options.

ROAD DIETS

A road diet is a traffic engineering strategy that reduces the number of vehicle lanes on a street, often from four lanes to three. The extra space is typically used to create a center turn lane, bike lanes, and wider sidewalks. Road diets are often implemented for the following reasons:

- Safety: Road diets have been shown to significantly reduce the number and severity of crashes.

- Traffic Flow: Surprisingly, road diets often improve traffic flow by reducing congestion and speeding.

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety: By providing dedicated space for pedestrians and cyclists, road diets make streets safer for non-motorized users. Reducing vehicle travel lanes also provides additional room for "refuge" islands in larger road crossing, allowing pedestrians to safely wait for a signal or traffic to clear.

- Community Enhancement: Road diets can contribute to a more walkable and bikeable community, increasing property values and quality of life. Also, some road diets may even create excess space that can be used for green space, tree plantings, pedestrian benches, and even outdoor dining in certain areas.

Road diets have additional benefits as well, particularly for congestion management and municipal expenses. While it might seem counterintuitive, road diets typically do not increase congestion. In fact, they often improve traffic flow by reducing the number of lane changes and conflicts. As speeds slow, additional capacity is gained for traveling vehicles. And cost-wise, road diets are generally less expensive than other traffic calming measures. Many road diets simply require restriping the road, making them a cost-effective option.[3]

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3   https://highways.dot.gov/safety/other/road-diets/road-diet-informational-guide/2-why-consider-road-diet

Existing road

Road Diet. A road diet removes lanes for through-travel and gives them to parking and traffic calming elements to slow traffic and make pedestrian crossings safer.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Due to the nature of our region, the City's transportation network should be considered regionally and recognize that there are multiple jurisdictions responsible – not only the City itself but Macomb County Department of Roads (MCDR), Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART), Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) – we summarize some of the key points of their planning efforts below.

Most of these plans are visionary, while some point out specific improvements that should be made within the City. MDOT's various plans – The Michigan Mobility 2045 Plan (MM2045), Active Transportation Plan, Statewide Transit Strategy and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan, collectively create a comprehensive framework for improving transportation networks in Michigan. All plans align under the overarching vision of the MM2045 plan, emphasizing multimodal integration, safety, accessibility, and sustainability. Similarly, SEMCOG's Vision 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) envisions Southeast Michigan as a connected, thriving region of small towns, dynamic urban centers, active waterfronts, diverse neighborhoods, premiere educational institutions, and abundant agricultural, recreational, and natural areas.

MACOMB COUNTY

"Safe Streets for Macomb County". The Macomb County Department of Roads (MCDR) is currently developing a Comprehensive Transportation Safety Action Plan (CTSAP – and A.K.A. Safe Streets for Macomb County). In response to increased traffic incidents and adverse driver behaviors such as speeding and distracted driving, MCDR applied for and secured a U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant, which will help fund MCDR's safety action plan. The goal of Safe Streets for Macomb County is to develop a holistic strategy to help reduce the number of incidents and prevent fatalities and serious injuries on Macomb County roadways.

Key components of the safety action plan include comprehensive safety analysis, community engagement and collaboration, and identifying and prioritizing safety strategies and projects. Safe Streets for Macomb County will also consider equity throughout the process, including the disproportionate impacts of traffic crashes in disadvantaged communities. They will do a complete review of all roads under Macomb County jurisdiction.

This Complete Streets Plan section will be incorporated into the Macomb County plan.

ROUNDABOUTS

Roundabouts are increasingly used in modern transportation upgrades due to their ability to improve safety, traffic flow, and environmental sustainability. Roundabouts eliminate the need for traffic signals or stop signs by requiring vehicles to yield upon entry and travel in a continuous counterclockwise direction around a central island. This design reduces the likelihood of high-speed collisions and virtually eliminates dangerous T-bone or head-on crashes. Studies show that roundabouts can reduce severe crashes, such as those causing injury or fatalities, by as much as 75% compared to conventional intersections. In addition to safety benefits, roundabouts improve traffic efficiency by keeping vehicles moving, minimizing delays during peak hours, and reducing idling time. They also support environmental goals by lowering fuel consumption and emissions through smoother traffic flow. Roundabouts can be designed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, offering safe crossing points and clearly defined pathways. [1]

1 https://highways.dot.gov/safety/intersection-safety/intersection-types/roundabouts

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

Vision 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) – 2024. The RTP's vision is stated as "[a]ll the people of Southeast Michigan benefit from a connected, thriving region of small towns, dynamic urban centers, active waterfronts, diverse neighborhoods, premiere educational institutions, and abundant agricultural, recreational, and natural areas."

Listed guiding principles of the plan are:

- Educate and engage local leaders and residents
- Planning solutions that support our unique and diverse region
- Drive a dynamic, talent-rich economy
- Steward environmental and cultural resources
- Connect people safely to jobs and essential services
- Promote coordinated and effective public services

The plan notes the following concerns/strategies:

- Safety - Improving the safety of people traveling in Southeast Michigan requires an ongoing commitment to reducing risks throughout the transportation system.
- Emerging Technology - Advanced technology, including connected and automated vehicles (CAVs), provides many opportunities, but also presents challenges.
- Funding - Michigan has not invested enough to preserve and rebuild roads, enhance public transit, manage storm water runoff, and provide for a multimodal system.
- Aging Population - Southeast Michigan's share of older people is expected to grow significantly over the next 25 years.

Projects in the RTP are implemented through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is the list of projects proposed to be constructed in the first four years of the RTP. Opportunities to amend the TIP occur three times a year to ensure it remains consistent with changing priorities. The plan is completely updated every four years.

Sterling Heights has 10 projects selected for the current TIP. A majority of these projects consist of road rehabilitation and base repairs and overlays. The only one focused on non-motorized improvements is the construction of the Dobry Trail from Dequindre Road to Utica Road to be completed spring 2025.

Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART)

SMART is a regional public transit provider operating in Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne County. SMART provides fixed route service, including local, limited-stop, and express routes. Flex services (on-demand trips using smaller van-sized vehicles) are also available in limited areas.

As part of its efforts to create and expand mobility options, the transit system is aiming to streamline services and diversify its fleet with smaller vehicles to accommodate the needs of more riders. SMART is developing mobility hubs across their service area that will include "activities that improve access to transit, increase the number and type of transit services available and add transit amenities that are not currently available." They reiterate the importance of mobility and economic development by stating that they are "leveraging an additional $1.34 for every $1.00 of local funding" into the transit system.

In Sterling Heights, SMART runs six fixed route services (see **Map 2**). However, not all routes run consistently throughout the day or week. For example, the 530 Schoenherr route only runs twice per weekday (southbound ending at DTE Energy Plaza in Detroit in the morning, returning northbound in the late afternoon) and not on the weekend. The relatively new Flex service runs in the Hall Road area (in the purple area on the map) for a fee of between $2-8 from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m., seven days a week.

Michigan Department of Transportation

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) developed the Michigan Mobility 2045 Plan (A.K.A. State Long Range Transportation Plan, or MM2045), which serves as a 25-year plan that will be maintained and updated in five-year time frames. The strategies and principles developed in MM2045 will be incorporated into program and project decision-making processes, including parallel statewide and regional efforts. This overarching MM2045 Plan contains a sub-plan called the Active Transportation Plan which works to support the MM2045's vision of the transportation future in Michigan across all modes, recognizing active transportation as a vital form of transportation. This plan details objectives and strategies to reach its goals of:

- Mobility
- Safety and Security
- Economy and Stewardship
- Network Conditions
- Partnerships

This sub-plan details Michigan's current active transportation network and its current gaps. The Active Transportation Plan focuses on the four primary policy areas that strive to expand and enhance walking and biking opportunities in Michigan:

- Zero-Focused Traffic Safety Programs include Road to Zero, Toward Zero Deaths, and Vision Zero.
- Complete Streets are streets designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe use and support mobility for all users.
- Safe Routes to School is a program that reduces the barriers that limit or hinder children who commute to school via active transportation.
- First- and Last-Mile Connections are multi-modal types of transportation that get commuters from their starting (first-mile) or ending (last-mile) locations to and from a transportation transfer point.

Map 2. 2024 SMART System Map: Services in Sterling Heights Inset
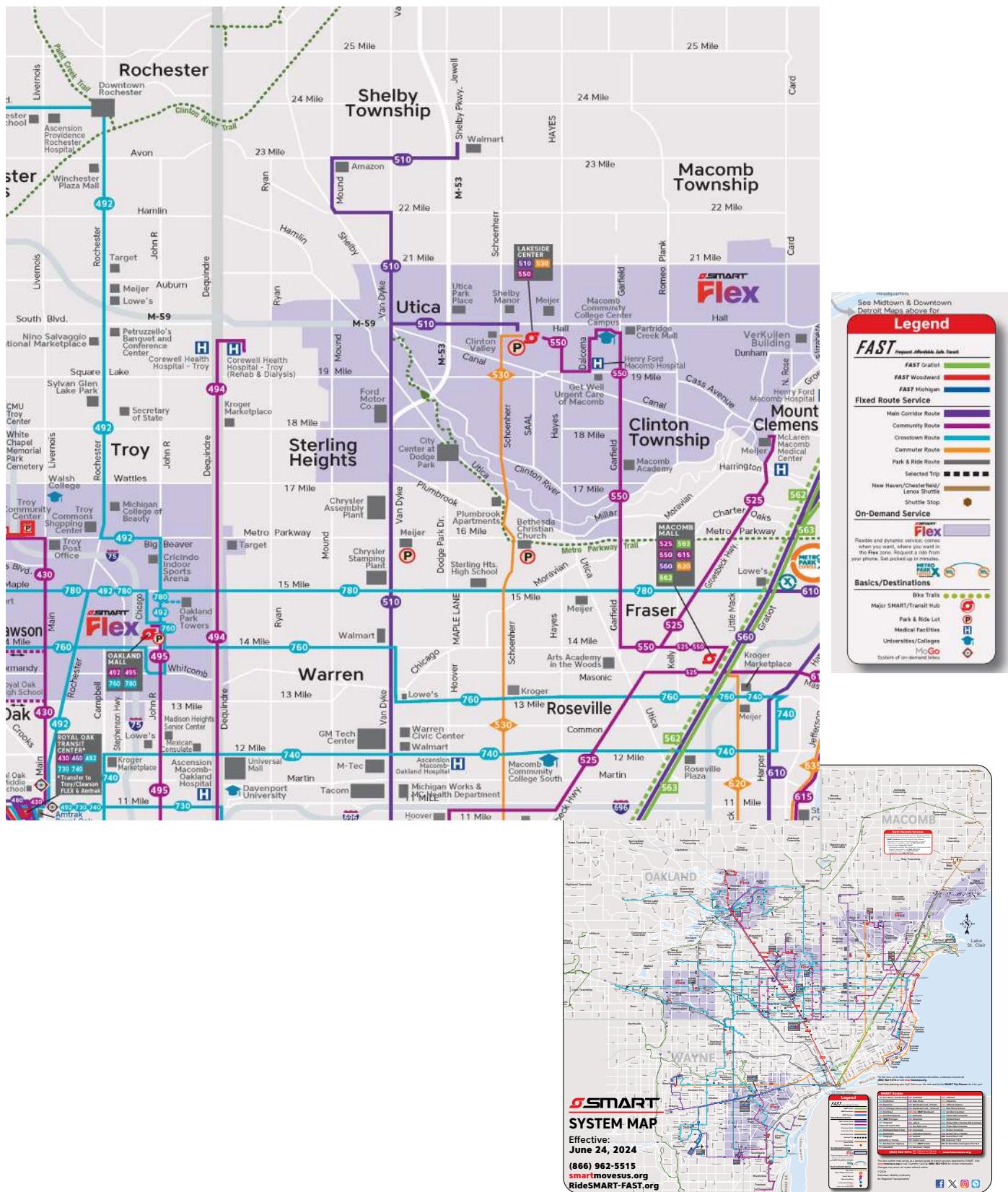
TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES FOR STERLING HEIGHTS

STREETSCAPE
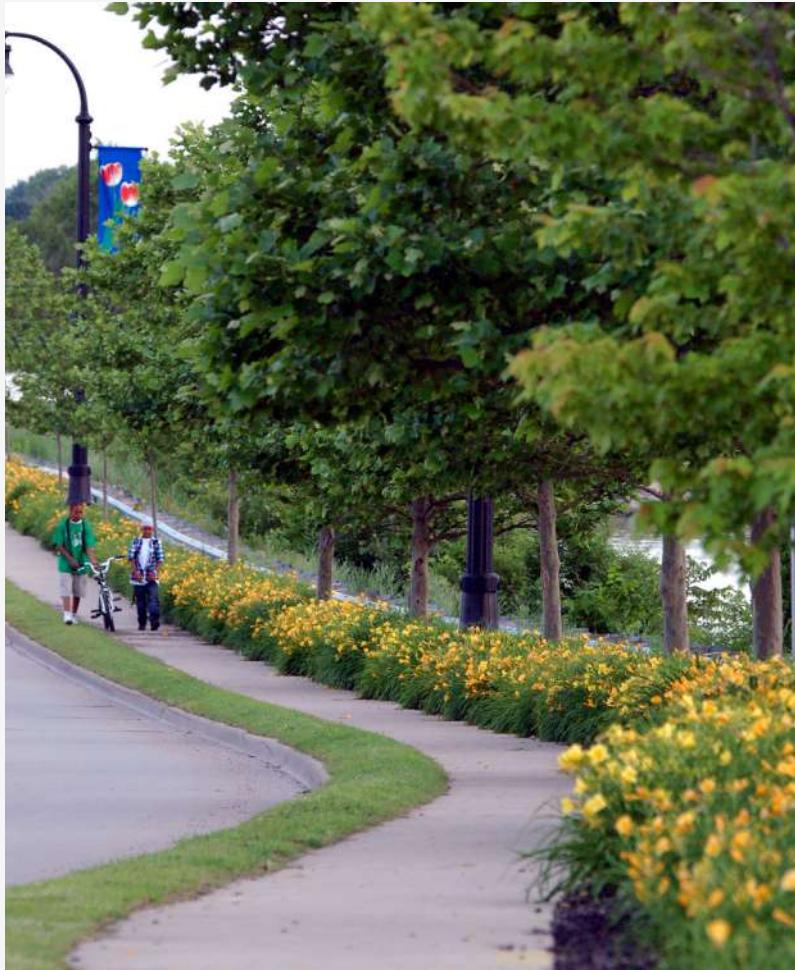
DESIGNING A HEALTHIER AND MORE COMPLETE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Complete Streets Improvements. The City should prioritize safe and efficient choices for people in their mode of travel, which means ensuring that pedestrians and cyclists have the same access to community destinations, goods, services, and neighborhoods as those using personal vehicles.

1. **Sidewalks**. Ensure the sidewalk network in the City is complete and in good repair to connect neighborhoods to schools, civic uses, and other destinations.

2. **Bicycle lanes**. These special dedicated travel lanes that are on-street with traffic may not be appropriate throughout the City, but there could be locations to explore. Bike lanes may be separated from vehicular lanes by a painted buffer (buffered bike lane), which tends to be better for experienced riders, or separated from vehicular lanes by a distance and a vertical element (protected bike lanes). Buffered and protected bike lanes are attractive to wide variety of users.

3. **Off-street shared use paths**. Expand the shared use path network within the City and connect the City's network to the regional network. These facilities are good for pedestrians, cyclists and others, for those who may be less comfortable with riding in the street with vehicular traffic or where bike lanes are impractical.

4. **Streetscape**. Create an enhanced protective streetscape program to provide shade from sun as well as minor protection from rain. Streetlights contribute to a sense of safety and security.

5. **Traffic signals with pedestrian signal heads**. Signals, as well as audible crossing signals for visually impaired pedestrians, help people safely cross major roadways. Pedestrian-only signals may be used as an alternative to traditional signals to stop vehicular traffic in locations where pedestrians are likely to be traveling.

6. **Curb extensions or bump-outs and other traffic calming devices**. These physical improvements may be used to reduce pedestrian crossing distances, slow vehicular traffic, and alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians.

7. **Crosswalks, pedestrian pavement markings, and crosswalk signals**. Similar to the above, these directional and visual cues make it safer for children to walk to school, along with other strategies to help slow motorized traffic.

8. **Wayfinding signage**. The City has installed wayfinding signage in the Civic Center area that makes it easier for people on foot or on bicycles to understand where they are and where they are going. Wayfinding signs help identify the route to important destinations and civic spaces.

9. **Micro-transit**. Establish opportunities for local transit, which may include "micro-transit," such as car (or bike)-sharing and dial-a-ride services, as well as local trolley or shuttles, which can help people "go the last mile" to reach a regional transit system. In southeast Michigan, this is a challenge that requires ongoing policy discussion regarding investment and implementation.

10. **Advocacy**. As noted above, establishing complete streets policies at the local level can help reframe road improvements to include non-motorized infrastructure. Advocating for those improvements with the Macomb Department of Roads and MDOT should be a priority for the City. These agencies have "context-sensitive" design guidelines that include pedestrian and bicycle facilities that fit the City's needs and conditions.

11. **Funding**. Local financing mechanisms, such as tax increment financing and business improvement districts, can help fund pedestrian-oriented improvements.

Land use policies.

12. Focus on the development of the mixed-use zoning districts and nodes to allow residential and commercial uses to be located together – this could mean side-by-side or in on top of one another. When people can work, live, and shop within walking or biking distance, they have more opportunities to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives, reduce transportation costs, and have more connectivity with others in their community.

13. Utilize form-based code standards, zoning strategies that focus primarily on how buildings and site design contribute to shaping the public realm, making streets and sidewalks more attractive, comfortable, and conducive to walkable areas.

14. Lowering minimum parking requirements and establishing parking maximums are approaches aimed at reducing the amount of land dedicated for parking automobiles. Allowing "infill" development provides opportunities to allow land to be used more productively as well, making a more positive contribution on the tax rolls.

My fav place in S.H. is my neighborhood

Hellen Paola Franco, Age 13

PLACEMAKING

PLACEMAKING

WHY IS PLACEMAKING IMPORTANT?

Placemaking means intentionally creating quality places that people seek out to live, work and play. It is a process of creating and nurturing quality places that have a strong sense of place. As it becomes increasingly easier to live and work anywhere, people will choose quality places that are:

- Safe

- Connected

- Welcoming

- Conducive to authentic experiences

- Accessible; people can easily circulate within and to and from these locations

- Comfortable; they address cleanliness, character, and charm

- Sociable; they have a physical fabric that encourages people to connect with one another

- Able to promote and facilitate civic engagement.[1]

Placemaking is important to connect people to communities; residents, business owners, employees and visitors are drawn to places with a strong sense of place and identity. Typically, communities focus placemaking activities in public spaces – streets, sidewalks, plazas, parks and civic buildings. Placemaking initiatives that encourage people to gather and celebrate together can help to create a sense of belonging and identity. Public spaces provide opportunities for people to meet and interact with each other, which can help to build stronger communities.

Art plays an important role in authentic placemaking. The earliest human experiences include expressions of art and the creation of cultures that define a group of people. There is no one definition of art; expressions of art include the visual, such as painting, drawing, photography or sculpture, as well as the performed, such as music, theater, dance and film. Art includes the spectrum from the written word and storytelling to animation and textiles. It includes industrial design, architecture and graphic design industries. The definition of "culture" is "all that is fabricated, endowed, designed, articulated, conceived or directed by human beings, as opposed to what is given in nature. Culture includes both material elements (buildings, artifacts, etc.) and immaterial ones (ideology, value systems, languages)."[2]

According to the American Planning Association (APA), planners in the past have used art and culture as a "community revitalization tool," but today, there is recognition that arts and cultural opportunities have tremendous potential to contribute to broader social, economic, and environmental aspects of community life.[3] The APA states that arts and culture provide a medium to:

- Preserve, celebrate, challenge, and invent community identity;

- Engage participation in civic life;

- Inform, educate, and learn from diverse audiences; and

- Communicate across demographic and socioeconomic lines.

1   Steuteville, R. (2014) "Four Types of Placemaking," Congress for the New Urbanism https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/four-types-placemaking

2   United States Department of Art and Culture (2018). Art & Well-Being: Toward a Culture of Health: Arlene Goldbard.

3   American Planning Association (2011).The Role of Arts and Culture in Planning Practice (Briefing Papers), p. 4.

ARTS & CULTURE

The arts and cultural activities – vast and innumerable – support individual health and wellbeing, promote community identity through placemaking and catalyze economic development.

What are the benefits of public art?

The benefits of public art are wide-ranging. Some broad benefits are noted below; additional information on health and wellbeing, placemaking and economic impacts follow.

- **Aesthetic improvement**: Public art can enhance the visual appeal of public spaces, making them more attractive and inviting. It can transform otherwise mundane areas into vibrant and engaging spaces.

- **Economic development**: Public art can attract visitors and tourists, boosting local businesses and the overall economy. It can also increase property values in the area, benefiting property owners and the local tax base. Public art can be a draw for tourists and locals alike, encouraging exploration and outdoor activities. Public art trails and installations can make a City or neighborhood more appealing to walkers and cyclists.

- **Sense of place**: Public art can define and enhance the character of a place. It helps create unique and memorable spaces that encourage people to gather, socialize, and build a sense of community.

- **Social engagement**: Public art often serves as a focal point for community events and gatherings. It can bring people together, stimulate conversations, and facilitate cultural exchange. Inclusive public art programs can promote diversity and address social issues. They may involve underrepresented groups, encouraging broader participation and representation in the arts. Public art contributes to the City's cultural identity and can celebrate its history, values, and diversity. It can help foster a sense of pride and connection among residents.

- **Education and inspiration**: Public art can educate and inspire the community. It may convey important messages, provoke thought, and introduce people to new ideas, artists, and cultural traditions.

- **Civic pride**: A well-executed public art program can instill a sense of civic pride and ownership among community members. People often take pride in art that reflects their values and tells their stories. Public art projects can be designed to reflect the unique character and history of a community, reinforcing a sense of identity and belonging.

- **Creative expression**: Public art provides a platform for local artists to display their work and can serve as a source of support and recognition for artistic talent within the community.

- **Crime reduction**: Studies suggest that well-placed public art can deter vandalism and graffiti by making spaces feel cared for and watched over.

Health and Wellbeing

There are specific connections between arts and health. Over the past several years, studies throughout the world have shown the value of arts and culture on individual and community health. The positive impacts of art can be seen at all ages, from arts education in schools to the participation in arts activities by older adults, the arts can lead to improved social, emotional and physical health.

In a 2018 report, the United States Department of Art and Culture (USDAC), a non-governmental grassroots action organization, cites several of these studies that include wide-ranging data to support the power of art on health and wellness.[4] The report concludes, "we understand human connection, meaning-making, creativity, and purpose as key contributions to individual and collective well-being and therefore as powerful modes of prevention." The report concludes with the following findings:

- The arts can help keep us well, aid our recovery and support longer lives better lived.

- The arts can help meet major challenges facing health and social care: aging, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health.

- The arts can help save money in the health service and social care.

Another public health study showed that public art has "clear public health impacts" due to its ability to "decrease stress, elicit awe, develop shared identity, reinforce self-efficacy, and promote positive health behaviors."[5]

Safety

Improved safety is another healthy outcome from public art. In 2019, Bloomberg Philanthropies created an "Asphalt Art Initiative," that promotes the installation of artwork in streetscapes, sidewalks and crosswalks. A 2022 study of 17 diverse sites over a two-year period found "significantly improved safety performance across a variety of measures during periods when asphalt art was installed."[6] Measures included a 50% decrease in the rate of crashes involving pedestrians or other "vulnerable road users," a 37% decrease in the rate of crashes leading to injuries and a 17% decrease in the total crash rate.

Because authenticity is a critical component of placemaking, arts and culture unique to a community are key ingredients in creating quality places. The Kresge Foundation is a strong advocate for placemaking in communities and focuses on the role that art and culture play. They establish the following guiding premises:

- Creativity, aesthetic expression and the impulse to create meaning are evidence of our humanity and serve as community assets from which to build.

- Participation in arts and culture takes many forms and occurs in a wide range of venues—parks, community centers, churches and public spaces. People attend art events and buy art. But they also make, teach, learn and support arts and culture in myriad ways, from the amateur to professional realms.

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4   United States Department of Art and Culture (2018).
5   Cameron M, Crane N, Ings R, Taylor K. Promoting well-being through creativity: how arts and public health can learn from each other. Perspectives in Public Health. 2013;133(1):52-59. doi:10.1177/1757913912466951

6   https://assets.bbhub.io/dotorg/sites/43/2022/04/Asphalt-Art-Safety-Study.pdf

- Our societal tendency is to focus on art products, but it is also imperative to recognize and appreciate the creative process. Process can be as important as, or in some cases, more important than art product.

- Artists have many kinds of relationships with communities, often helping people find their voice and expression or lending a different perspective when framing or devising solutions to community issues.

- Arts-and-culture activity is intrinsically important and contributes to a wide range of community dynamics, conditions and issues.

- Arts-and-culture activity in communities relies on supports inside and outside of the cultural sector.[7]

Economic Impact of Arts and Culture

The nonprofit organization Americans for the Art provides research data on the impact of arts and culture in communities. Their 2023 report on the economic impact of the arts (supported by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis) found that nonprofit arts and culture industries generated $151.7 billion in total economic activity and supported 2.6 million jobs in 2022.[8] The report notes that findings show that the arts are an "industry that supports jobs, generates government revenue and is a cornerstone of tourism."

The economic impacts are substantial in Michigan. In 2023, the arts and culture industries added 2.7% or $15.5 billion to the state's economy and employed 109,943 workers (about 2.6% of Michigan's employment). These workers earned wages and benefits totaling over $8.5 billion.[9]

7   The Kresge Foundation (2018). Creative Placemaking and Expansion of Opportunities: Observations and Reflections: Jackson, Maria Rosario, Ph.D.

8   Americans for the Arts (October 2023). Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 https://aep6.americansforthearts.org/resources/media/user/1696872054-AEP6_National_Findings_Full_Report-Proof_final-web.pdf

9   https://www.artsactionfund.org/sites/artsactionfund.org/files/2023-04/Michigan%202023_1.pdf

OTHER PLACEMAKING STRATEGIES

Placemaking is a holistic approach that goes beyond just physical design. It includes aspects of culture, community involvement, art, accessibility, and much more. Public art is a powerful tool within this framework, but it works in conjunction with these other elements to create a meaningful, vibrant, and functional public space. Through a combination of thoughtful design and community engagement, placemaking can transform ordinary places into places where people want to gather, interact, and feel a sense of connection. Beyond public art, there are other strategies that can help communities create place:

- **Urban design and architecture**: This involves the layout and design of buildings, streets, squares, parks, and other infrastructure elements. Good urban design creates a well-organized, aesthetically pleasing, and functional environment.

- **Green spaces and landscaping**: Parks, gardens, and other designed landscapes can be incorporated into urban areas to enhance a space. Ensuring adequate shade through the provision of canopy trees is an effective strategy to combat excessive heat and improve the user experience.

- **Public seating and gathering areas**: Spaces with benches, chairs, or other seating arrangements designed for people to rest, socialize, and engage with the environment. Well-designed gathering areas can host events and activate a space.

- **Lighting and ambiance**: Proper lighting enhances the atmosphere of public spaces, ensuring safety, visibility, and an inviting environment at night.

- **Wayfinding and signage**: Wayfinding refers to the use of signs, maps, and other visual cues to help people navigate a space. Signage also includes information about local attractions, history, or cultural aspects.

- **Activating spaces through events**: Events such as festivals, performances, markets, and public gatherings bring people together in public spaces.

- **Transportation and accessibility**: Giving people options for accessing places via different forms of transportation, including walking, biking, public transit, and cars promotes connectivity and ensures that public spaces are easy to reach. This can encourage more people to use and enjoy spaces and promotes equity by making spaces accessible to all.

LOCAL PLACEMAKING IN STERLING HEIGHTS

In today's increasingly mobile world, individuals and businesses have the freedom to choose where they live and work. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity for any community. To thrive today and into the future, the City of Sterling Heights needs more than just infrastructure and development; to grow and thrive, the City needs to intentionally focus on creating a community where people choose to be. This is where the transformative power of arts and placemaking comes into play.

Integrating arts, culture, and placemaking within this Master Plan is not just about beautification; it's about strategically crafting an environment that resonates with the desires and aspirations of the community. These desires and aspirations are evident with the City's ongoing efforts of connecting residents with visual and performing arts.

- The City of Sterling Heights supports arts and culture through its 2030 and 2040 Visioning Plan, guiding documents for City Council. In 2017, the City re-launched its Public Art Program, building on decades of support and investment for public art around the City.

- City Council is advised by the Sterling Heights Arts Commission, a 12-member board that considers, studies and recommends City-wide cultural programs to City Council. Programs and projects sponsored by the Arts Commission are developed in accordance with the goals and objectives set by the City Council and administration. The Community Relations Director serves as the liaison between the Arts Commission and City Council.

PUBLIC ART IN THE CITY

"The Seed" was installed in the traffic circle at Dodge Park and Utica Roads, a very prominent and visible location for maximum public viewing opportunities. The installation of the art came as a result of months of planning by the City's Arts Commission and Community Relations Department. Sterling Heights' first piece of public art under its newly revamped Public Art Plan, dubbed "The Seed," was installed in November 2017. "The Seed" was commissioned by highly acclaimed local artists Erik and Israel Nordin of the Detroit Design Center.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STERLING HEIGHTS

To support community health and wellness, placemaking efforts and the local economy, communities should look for ways to support local arts and cultural activities. Some strategies may be adapted to Sterling Heights as follows:

Incorporate placemaking into nodes via mixed-use development – on both public and private properties:

- Urban design: Thoughtful urban design improves accessibility, safety, and the overall ambiance of a place. It encourages walking, socializing, and active use of spaces. This could include pedestrian-friendly streets, mixed-use developments, accessible public plazas, and green spaces integrated with urban environments.

- Plazas/open spaces: Incorporate green spaces within development, or utilize publicly owned properties to offer areas for recreation, relaxation, and social interaction. Ensure these spaces are adequately shaded.

- Public seating and gathering areas: Add benches in public spaces, movable chairs in plazas, or seating around fountains or sculptures.

- Lighting and ambiance: Add lighting to emphasize design features, create a welcoming environment, and improve security. This could include the addition of street lamps, ambient lighting in public squares, and creative lighting in public art installations.

- Wayfinding signage: The City of Sterling Heights has implemented wayfinding in key civic areas. Adding wayfinding within nodes improves accessibility, makes public spaces easier to navigate, and helps visitors understand the cultural and historical context of a place.

- Activities and events: Events breathe life into public spaces by attracting people, creating social interactions, and contributing to the vibrancy of the place. Encourage businesses and property owners to incorporate outdoor concerts, food markets, theater performances, and art installations or exhibitions into the nodes/mixed-use areas.

- Transportation support: Add bike parking facilities, bus stops, pedestrian pathways, and car-free zones to encourage and support access by a variety of modes.

Support arts-related businesses. Tap into the skill sets and synergies of local arts-related businesses; facilitate discussions with businesses to identify opportunities for support:

- Promoting the City as welcoming to the arts and arts businesses as well as fostering connections between businesses already in the City can enhance the City's profile and tax base.

- Explore opportunities for incubator space, similar to or in conjunction with Velocity, for the arts through education, programming and the makerspace. Explore other ways to incubate and support organizations and for-profit businesses as well as cultural organizations.

Promote interaction in public space: design, manage and program public space with people in mind. Include citizen participation in these elements to ensure buy-in and ongoing support.

- Tap into the expertise of planning, engineering and recreation professionals to incorporate art into public spaces.

- Add standards for public art in private development.

Understand the community's arts and cultural assets: identify arts-related organizations and for-profit businesses as well as cultural organizations.

- In Sterling Heights, the Arts Commission may already know and support arts and culture-related organizations and businesses, but establishing links on the City's website may help promote who, what and where they're located, strengthening the cultural network of the City.

- Public art: Continue to support temporary and permanent public art projects; explore creating a public art fund tied to new development.

Continue to promote community arts and cultural assets: Leverage assets to attract and retain residents and businesses.

- Reaching out to realtors, Connect Macomb, and the Utica Community Schools and Warren Consolidated Schools districts can spread the word of the existing and future arts offerings in the City.

- Continue to encourage and support civic celebrations, including as festivals and farmers markets; tap into the social, ethnic, and economic diversity found in the community.

Encourage youth in the community: Provide opportunities for young people to create and participate in arts and cultural events and activities. Keep in mind that engaging the youth of the community also often engages adults.

Mai Nguyen, Age 11

9

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT NODES

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT NODES

WHY ARE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT NODES IMPORTANT?

Mixed-use development, which combines residential, office, commercial, and even recreational or civic spaces within a single area, offers numerous advantages for communities. While other chapters of this Master Plan focus on housing, transportation, placemaking, and the economy, this chapter presents an opportunity to plan places for people to live, work, and do business.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT BASICS

Benefits of Mixed-Use Development

By creating concentrated opportunities for people to live and do business within a compact environment, mixed-use areas can foster a sense of community and reduce reliance on cars. These developments can inject new life and vibrancy into the area, boosting local businesses, creating jobs, and increasing property values, especially those within walking/bicycling distance. Creating walkable areas, designed with comfort and safety in mind, can provide rich environments for the youngest and oldest members of a community. Additionally, mixed-use projects can help address housing shortages by providing a variety of housing options, from affordable rentals to high-end condos.

- **Improved quality of life**: Creates a walkable, vibrant community.

- **Increased accessibility**: Supports people of all ages and abilities.

- **Enhanced sustainability**: Reduces reliance on cars and promotes eco-friendly practices.

- **Economic growth**: Boosts local businesses, creates jobs, and increases property values.

- **Increased housing supply**: Provides a variety of housing options to meet diverse needs.

DEFINING "NODES"

For planning purposes, "nodes" refer to key points or intersections within a development or network where different elements converge and interact. A node is made up of both private and public property. In the context of mixed-use development and suburban commercial corridor redevelopment, nodes can be strategic locations that:

- **Concentrate activity**: They bring together various land uses like residential, commercial, and civic spaces within a compact area.

- **Enhance connectivity**: They improve pedestrian and bike access, often situated near transit stops or major intersections.

- **Stimulate economic growth**: By creating vibrant, walkable environments, nodes attract businesses and residents, boosting local economies.

Creating Healthy Nodes and Corridors

The Urban Land Institute (ULI), with the assistance of Smart Growth America (SGA), prepared a 2019 report called "*Blind Spots - How Unhealthy Corridors Harm Communities and How to Fix Them*." This report focuses primarily on community health impacts of the built environment – particularly with respect to the ways in which the automobile is prioritized over people. The regional demand on our thoroughfares to provide efficient vehicular access through communities negatively impacts housing choices, connectivity and mobility, as well as social cohesion. The report's title refers to the "blind spots" that communities often have regarding these roadways and their opportunities to improve community health.

The report is based on findings from ULI and SGA based on "an audit of 6,925 urban and suburban commercial arterials from 100 of the most populous U.S. metropolitan areas" that results in a "statistically accurate portrait of corridors nationwide."

The report includes key findings of corridors that negatively impact community health and economic contribution:

- Primary arterials are dangerous. These high-capacity, high-speed roads represent 157,033 miles of the nation's 4.2 million miles of roadways—just 4 percent of the total—but have accounted for almost 30 percent of traffic fatalities in recent years.

- People walking make up a disproportionate share of traffic deaths on arterial commercial corridors. Nationwide, 15 percent of people killed in traffic crashes were walking, but on the commercial corridors analyzed in this report, people on foot account for 32 percent of traffic deaths.

- Unhealthy corridors are ubiquitous. Sixty-seven percent of commercial corridors are at least moderately unhealthy, and 4 percent are severely unhealthy. Only 3 percent can be considered healthy.

- Unhealthy corridors constitute a loss to communities in terms of human life and safety, economic productivity, and transportation efficiency.

- Overlapping land use and transportation policies and practices lead to the proliferation and persistence of unhealthy corridors. These policies and practices can and should be addressed so that corridors are better able to serve their communities.

Four corridor conditions categories are presented. It is worth noting the overlap between categories when considering the elements included within them:

- **Transportation**: This includes street design, transit options, and car use.

- **Economics**: This includes businesses, job density, and land use.

- **Health and safety**: This includes healthy foods, air quality, and traffic safety.

- **Equity**: This includes local opportunities, affordability, and income segregation.

A common theme between this report and the previously discussed report is the importance of transit. This report noted that of all the corridors assessed, "83 percent of corridors offer no access to transit within a half mile, and only 3 percent offer complete or near-complete access (...at least 90 percent of jobs along these corridors are located within half a mile of a transit stop)."

The report includes key policies and practices that "create, perpetuate, and exacerbate unhealthy corridors," while also including alternative approaches that can improve community health and economic prosperity.

Blind Spots
How Unhealthy Corridors Harm Communities and How to Fix Them
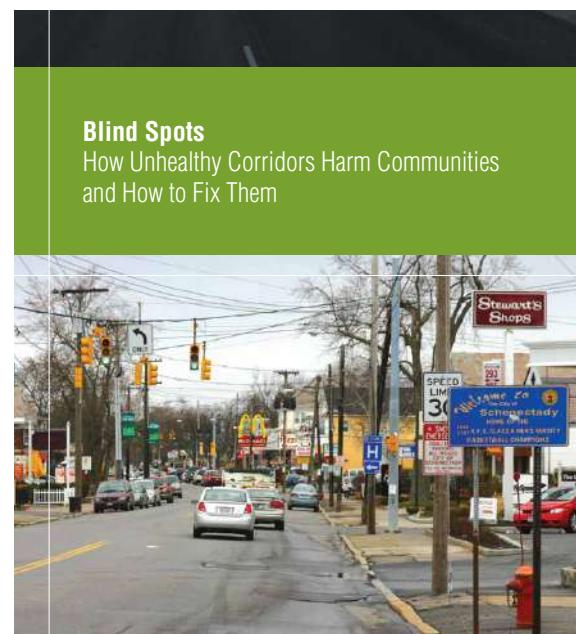
POLICY RECOMMENDATION THEMES

Common recommendations by the EPA's *Restructuring the Commercial Strip*, ULI's *Blind Spots - How Unhealthy Corridors Harm Communities and How to Fix Them*, and *Enabling Better Places – Commercial Corridors and Shopping Centers* by RRC, MEDC, and CNU, include the following:

- **Redeveloping strip commercial corridors embodies sustainability**. Redevelopment means enhancing the local economy by providing new opportunities for entrepreneurship and jobs, supporting community health through a variety of housing types and transportation options, and improving the environment by addressing air and water quality impacts associated with automobile-oriented development and infrastructure.

- **Phased implementation and patience is key**. Change doesn't happen overnight and does not happen from just one large project.

- **Investments in both the public and private realm are needed**. Roadway and right-of-way improvements to build the streetscape and pedestrian infrastructure for this character is a critical early step to not only match the efforts of private development but also attract it.

- **Importance of transit cannot be overstated**. Reliable and frequent transit must be provided to the node or corridor undergoing these land use reforms.

- **Consider the land uses**. Prohibiting the detrimental uses, such as auto-oriented uses, from the district is a critical early step.

LOCAL IMPORTANCE TO STERLING HEIGHTS

The Traditional Mixed Use Development future land use designation was formulated in the 2017 Master Plan as a way to concentrate a mixture of land uses and housing types in a way that creates compactness, walkability, and connectivity. The Traditional Mixed Use Development future land use designation was given to 11 different geographic areas, based on key intersections, as shown on the map below. These came to be known as "Traditional Mixed Use Development Nodes."

Additionally, the Master Plan provided suggestions for how the mixed-use development nodes should be developed, even including a diagram on how they should be phased. A similar phasing technique was also introduced in 2020 by MML and MEDC in their "*Enabling Better Places – Commercial Corridors and Shopping Centers*" guide. Therefore, the node phasing strategies may still be carried forward into guiding how future development occurs in these nodes.

In 2021, the City completed a Sustainability Plan as part of years-long efforts to support a "healthy environment, vigorous economy, and vibrant community." The plan discusses sustainable development and land use in a way that is consistent with the 2017 Master Plan; it promotes mixed-use residential development, more walkability, and a reduction in impervious surfaces.
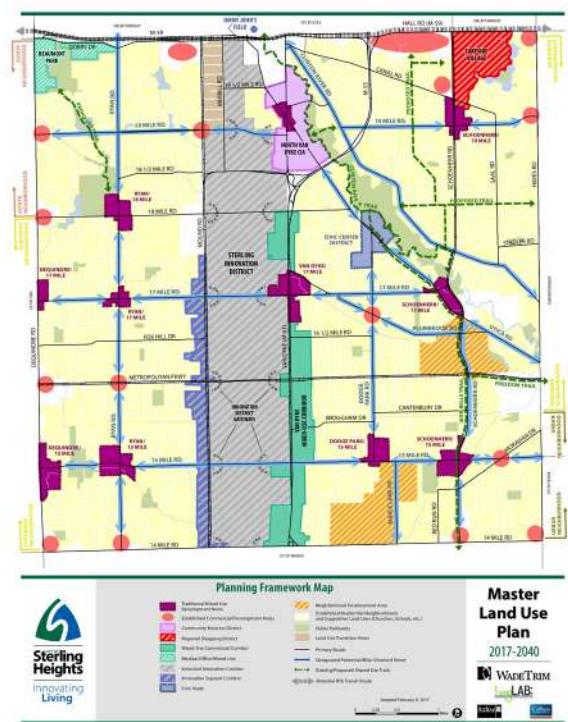
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SNAPSHOT

LAND USE WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

At the land use workshop on June 10, the public participated in workshop activities oriented towards land use.

At the heart of the workshop was an activity where participants were tasked with placing markers on maps of the 2017 Master Plan's designated Traditional Mixed Use Nodes to symbolize how the participant would like the node to transform. These markers symbolized building heights; land uses; parks, recreation and open space options; tree buffers/screening; and non-motorized transportation options. A corresponding activity was also hosted online at the Master Plan's project webpage.

City staff created a welcoming environment to encourage parents to attend this workshop while engaging children with a fun "Create Your Own City" activity. Using paper cutouts of essential City elements – schools, grocery stores, housing – and recreational features like sports fields and playgrounds, kids could design their cities creatively with added natural features and markers.
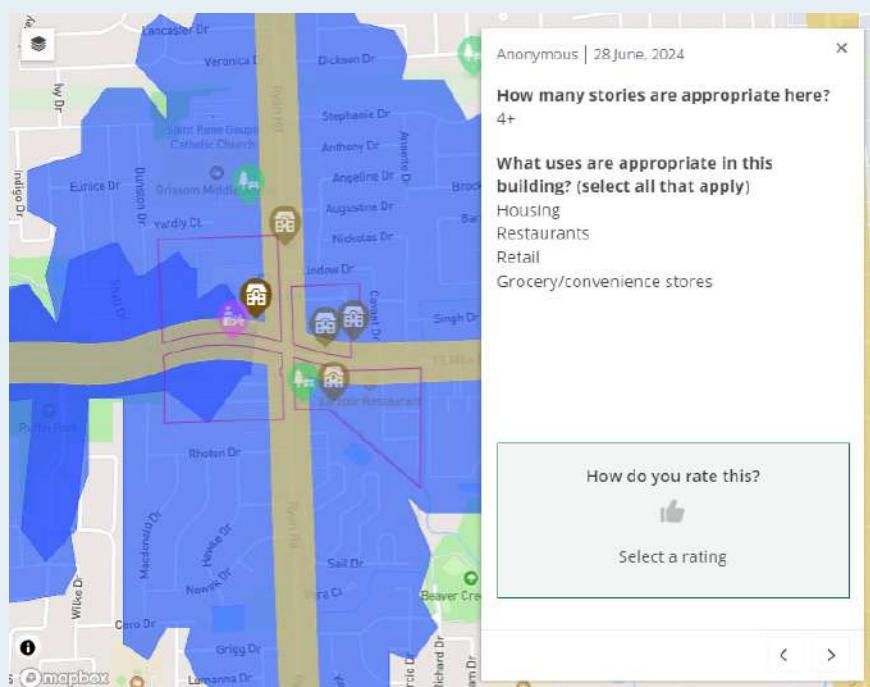
PROJECT WEBSITE ACTIVITY

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY

The workshop revealed children's intuitive understanding of functional cities. Unable to drive, their designs prioritized enjoyable, accessible, and visually appealing amenities that reflected their focus on convenience and fun. While this insight was notable, the activity's primary goal was to include children and engage participants across all age groups, fostering a sense of involvement.

EXAMPLE NODE PLANS

Building Height

1	2
3	4+

number of stories

Uses

Housing

Office

Convenience/ Grocery

Retail/ Personal Service

Restaurant/ Cafe

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Pocket parks or mini-park

Plaza or urban park with amenities

Large-scale, passive recreation

Playground or athletic facility

Pathway/crosswalk additions or upgrades

Bike infrastructure

Trees buffers/screening

Bus stop

The following maps display the combined input results from both the in-person workshop and the online activity.

MAPS OF ACTIVITY RESULTS

Building Height

The workshop asked participants to note building height they believe is appropriate for given nodes. The numerical values display the number of respondents noting the particular building height as appropriate.
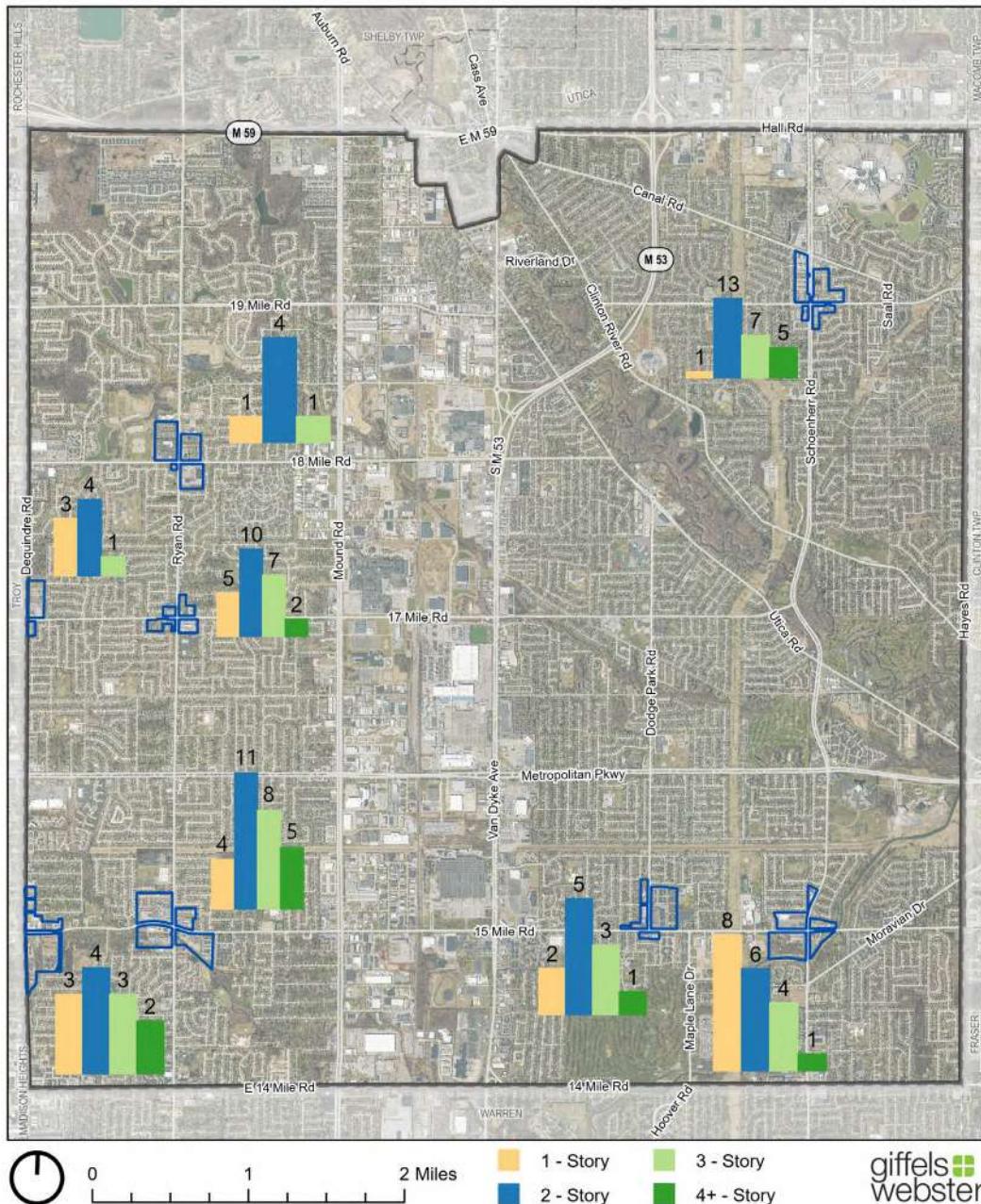
Use Types

The workshop asked participants to note use types they believe are appropriate for given nodes. The numerical values display the number of respondents noting the particular use type as appropriate.

Legend:
- Housing
- Office
- Grocery
- Retail
- Restaurant

giffels webster
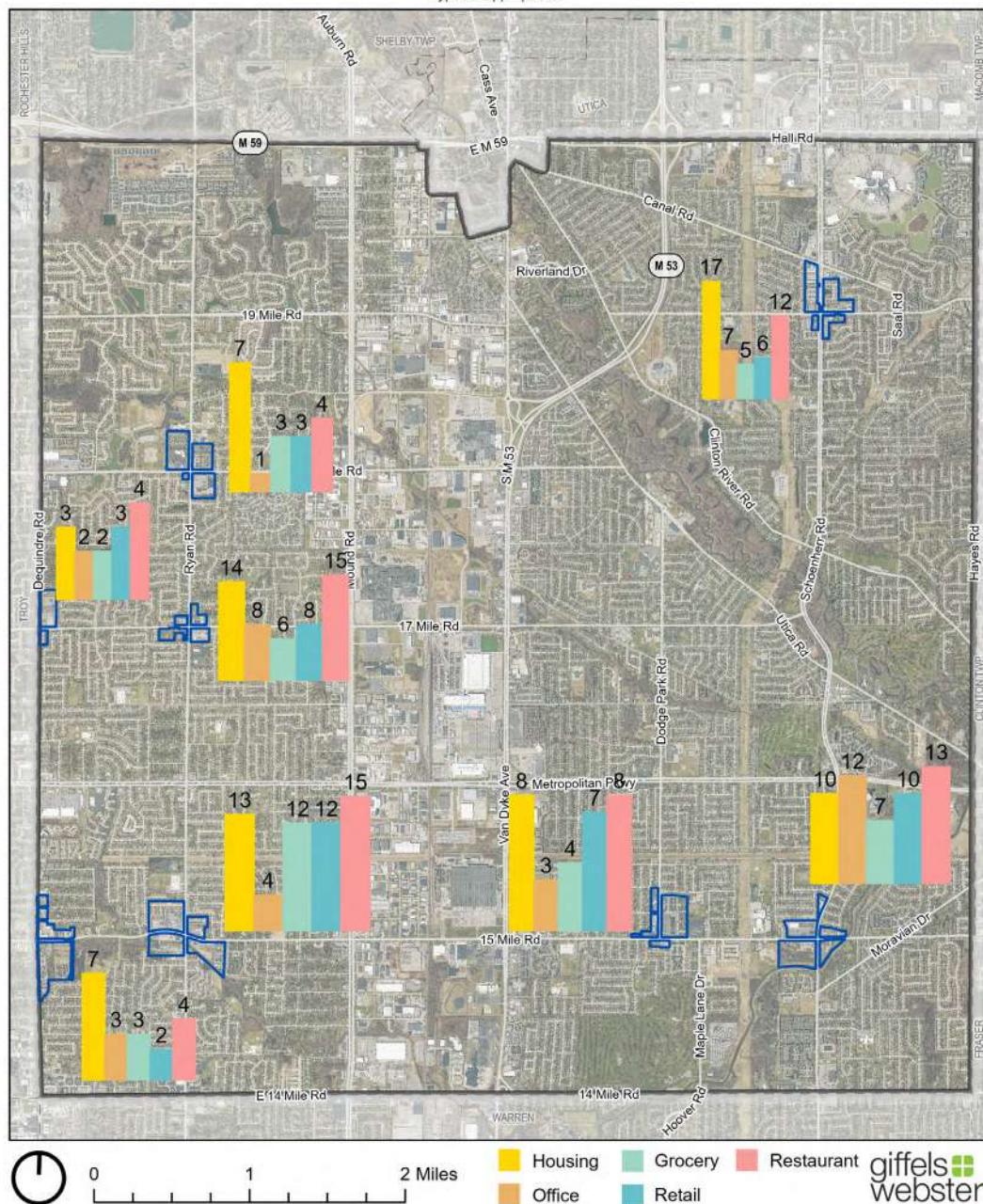
**MAPS OF
ACTIVITY
RESULTS**

Green Space

The workshop asked participants to note green spaces they believe are appropriate for given nodes. The numerical values display the number of respondents noting the particular green spaces as appropriate.
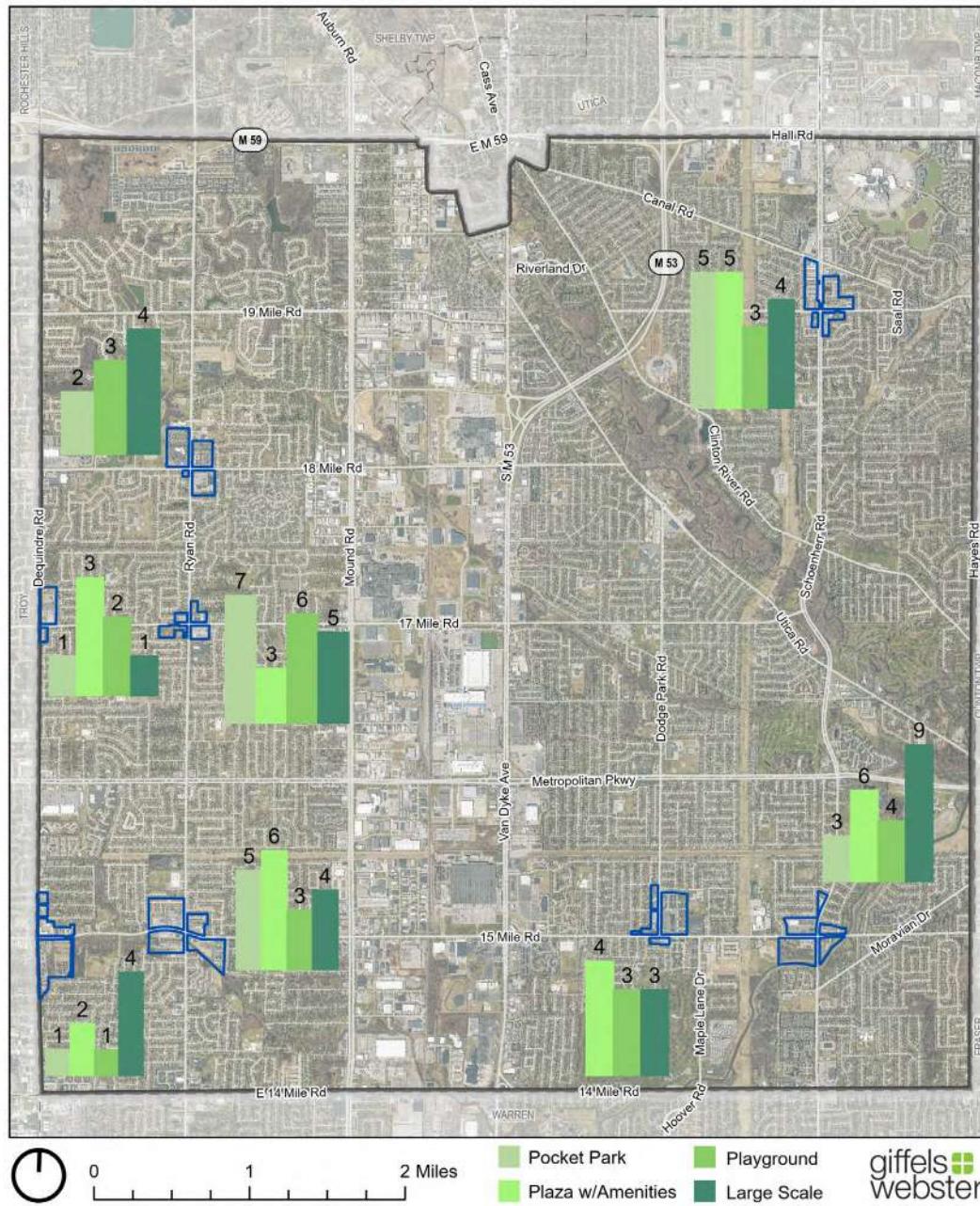
Infrastructure

The workshop asked participants to note infrastructure they believe is appropriate for given nodes. The numerical values display the number of respondents noting the particular infrastructure as appropriate.

Legend: ■ Bike Rack — Suggested Pathways ■ Bus Stop
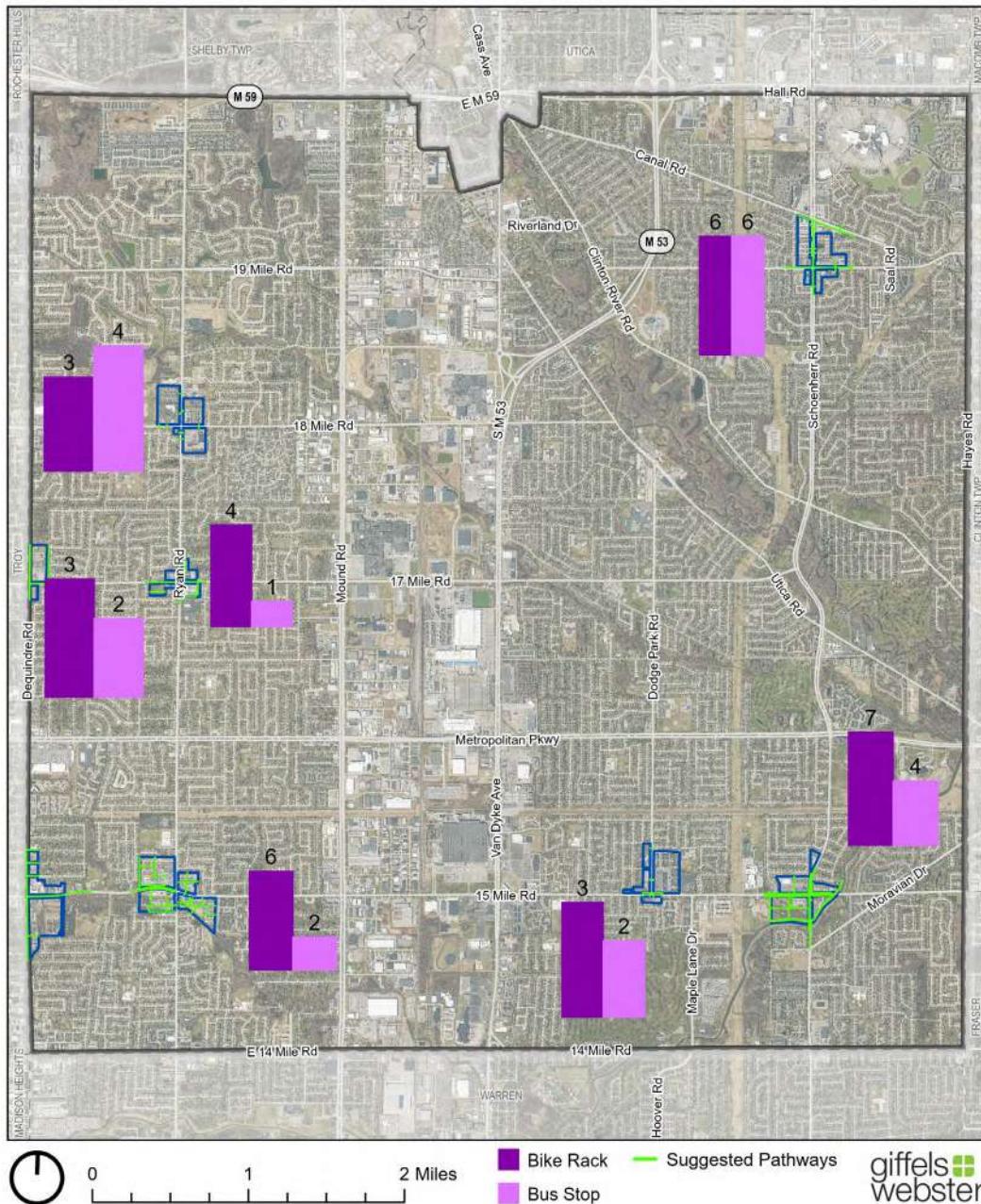
NODES MODULE JOINT MEETING FEEDBACK

The City Council and Planning Commission held a joint meeting on August 28, 2024, to particularly focus on the nodes topic. Like the other modules, this session was oriented around a presentation with interactive questions and activities built in.

The City Council, Planning Commission, and public commented on what makes a "successful" place make vibrant, attractive, and comfortable. The word cloud below summarizes the key themes from this question. Out of all responses, 14 respondents commented about walkability, and 14 commented about trees, shade, or landscaping.

After coming to an understanding that it is logical to separate the Traditional Mixed Use Development Nodes into two sub-categories – district versus neighborhood – each of the nine key geographic nodes were reviewed. City Council, Planning Commission, and members of the public then "voted" on the sub-category to designate the node.

NODE TRENDS

CURRENT CONDITIONS

These nodes are intersections that contain heavy automobile traffic and commercial land use activity. They are often characterized by many commercial strip center, big box retail, auto-oriented, and medical office uses of varying levels of occupancy/use. Some of these nodes contain multi-family housing options towards their edges, which provide a reasonable transition to the single-family neighborhoods, but often lack connectivity to the remainder of the node and/or the neighborhoods. Some nodes do not contain housing options.

From a private property standpoint, the physical elements of these nodes often include seas of parking lots (see below observations for more detail on parking), lack of pedestrian connections, buildings with large setbacks and separation distances from one another, and buildings needing façade or structural updates. From a public property (right-of-way) perspective, the streets forming node intersections are heavily traveled auto-centric streets with many lanes – often at least two lanes in each direction. The remaining space is largely un-activated margin strips with a simple five-foot wide sidewalk, which is the bare minimum for two people to pass each other or walk side-by-side. Some of the remaining space is treed, and it's important to note the City is aggressively making tree canopy improvement efforts on City rights-of-way.

USES

SEAS OF PARKING

SITE DESIGN

CURBCUTS

PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Parking trends were observed over time at both a chain pharmacy/retail store (CVS) and a commercial strip center with a variety of uses. Data publicly available and Google Earth historical imagery were used to guide these observations. See examples in the boxes below. Because the City has a 42 percent impervious surface coverage (SEMCOG, 2020) – a higher percentage than many comparable suburban communities in this region – due care should be taken in strategizing a reduction, and these observations evidence parking lots as a sensible reduction target.

PARKING IN A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT NODE: 17 MILE ROAD AND DEQUINDRE ROAD

| APRIL 2017 | APRIL 2019 | JUNE 2022 |

Aerials of Study Area

This is a commercial strip center at the corner of 17 Mile Road and Dequindre Road, a designated Traditional Mixed Use area which contains 14 commercial suites, including three restaurants/lounges, five retail, three barber shops/beauty shops, two professional offices of doctors or similar professions, and one dry cleaner. We utilized only weekday examples to conduct an average due to our hypothesis that some of the uses were likely closed on the weekend, but provided a Saturday example nonetheless for reference.

The chart shows the parking area is only 31% utilized, on average. At 200 square feet per parking space, this suggests nearly 26,000 square feet could be available for other uses.

Current Number of Parking Spaces Provided	Standard Zoning Requirement for Parking Spaces	Average Weekday of Three Examples*	Saturday Example	Highest Day Observed **
186	162	57	19	67

* Based on an average of three weekday examples in April 2017, April 2019, and June 2022.

**Out of 24 observations ranging from 1999 to 2024, the highest day observed was April 23, 2019, a weekday.

PARKING IN A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT NODE: 15 MILE ROAD AND RYAN ROAD

MAY 2010

APRIL 2015

JULY 2018

MARCH 2020

JUNE 2022
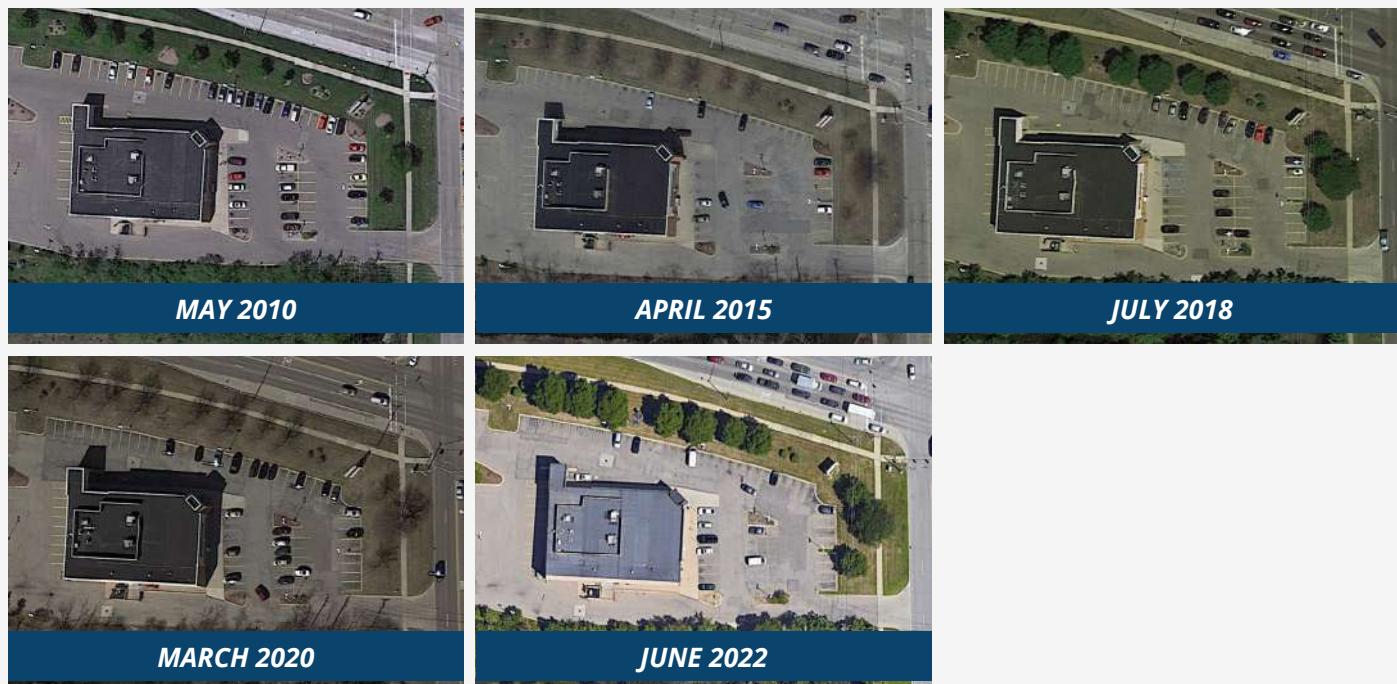
Aerials of Study Area

This example focuses on a chain pharmacy retail store (CVS) at the corner of 15 Mile Road and Ryan Road, a designated Traditional Mixed Use area. We utilized a combination of weekdays and weekend days in calculating an average, due to the business being open on both weekdays and weekends.

In this example, the average utilization of parking is even lower, at 20%. Here, nearly 15,000 square feet of land could have been available for other uses, if the parking requirement was lower.

Current Number of Parking Spaces Provided	Standard Zoning Requirement for Parking Spaces	Average of Five Examples*	Highest Day Observed **
93	49	19	67

* Based on an average of three weekday examples in July 2018, March 2020, and June 2022, and weekend examples of April 2015 and May 2010. Note that March 2020 was at the height of COVID-19, but was the second most-parked day of all observations, therefore it was included.

**Out of 23 observations ranging from 2002 to 2024, the highest day observed was May 9, 2010, a Sunday.

COMMUNITY SURVEY AND MARKET SURVEY FEEDBACK

Several questions, including open-ended responses, in the Community Survey and Market Survey made references to themes associated with mixed-use development nodes.

Question #17 of the Community Survey asked arguably the most direct question pertaining to mixed-use development: To what extent would you encourage or discourage more of the following land uses in Sterling Heights in the future? This question asked respondents to share their preferences for future land uses in Sterling Heights. The land uses range from single-family homes to general manufacturing. Participants were asked if they would encourage or discourage future land uses anywhere in the City or at key interactions throughout the

City. Mixed-use developments and land uses were generally viewed favorably in the City. About a quarter (26%) of participants believed that development with a mix of uses could be located anywhere in the City. Additionally, nearly a third (31%) of respondents believed that these types of development should only be at key intersections, but still believed these uses should be encouraged. However, 7% believed that these developments should not be located at key intersections and 13% believed they shouldn't be allowed anywhere in the City. Overall, developments that incorporate a mix of uses were viewed positively, although a quarter of participants viewed them neutrally.

To what extent would you encourage or discourage more of the following land uses in Sterling Heights in the future?

Legend:
- Encourage anywhere in the city
- Encourage at Key Intersections
- Neutral
- Discourage at Key Intersections
- Discourage anywhere in the city

Development with a mix of uses, such as office, food, or shops, and residential
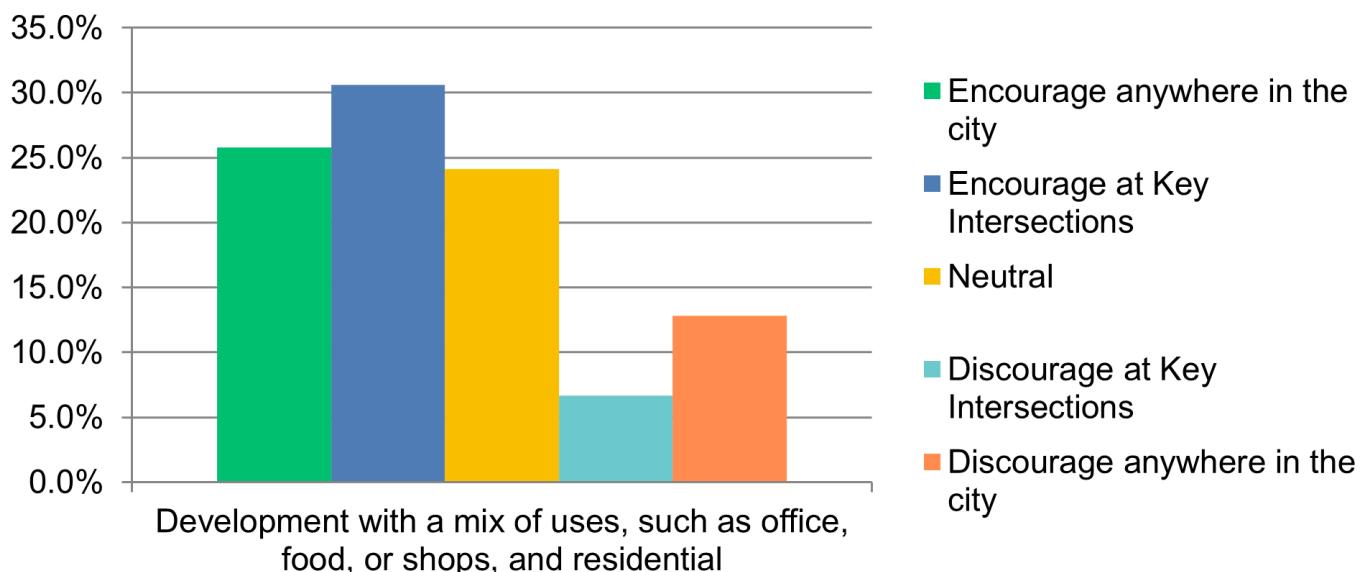
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements for Sterling Heights as a whole?
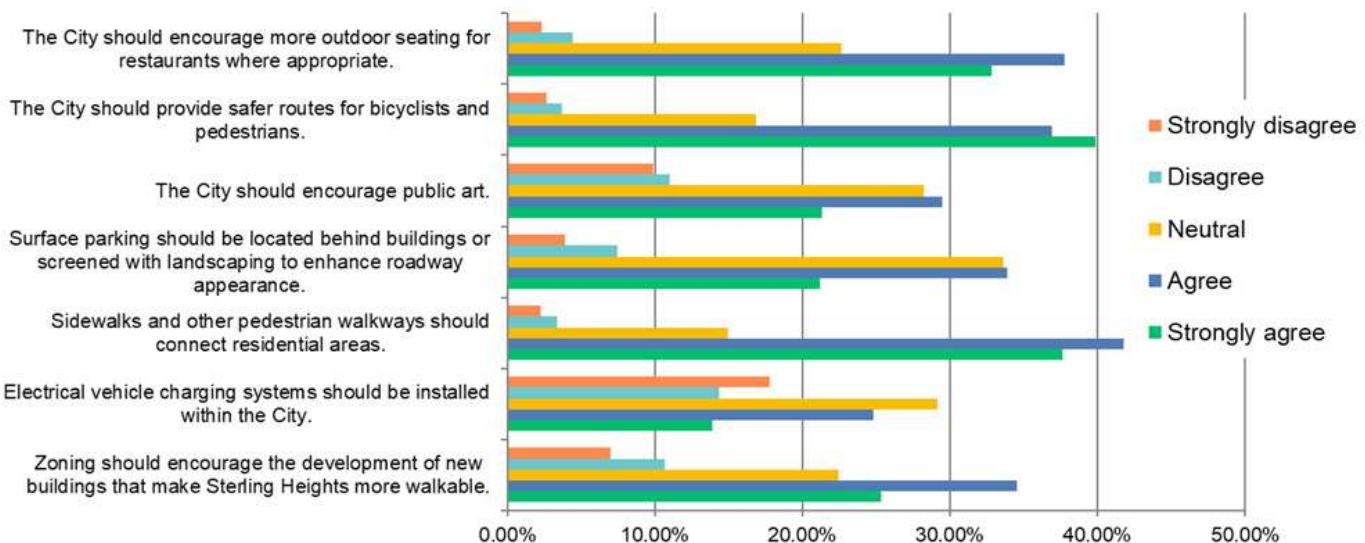
Question #21 of the Community Survey pertained to general site design characteristics that should be encouraged or prioritized within the City. The survey asked "Do you agree or disagree with the following statements for Sterling Heights as a whole?"

These results show that 60% of respondents agree or strongly agree that zoning should encourage the development of new buildings that make Sterling Heights more walkable, with 22% being neutral.

Additionally, the following statements had overwhelming agreement:

- Sidewalks and other pedestrian walkways should connect residential areas (79% agree or strongly agree).
- The City should provide safer routes for cyclists and pedestrians (77% agree or strongly agree).
- The City should encourage more outdoor seating for restaurants where appropriate (71% agree or strongly agree).

Additionally, the following responses provide additional insight on the public's preference for nodes:

- **There is a general desire to access to shopping or grocery destinations by foot or bike.** When asked the open-ended question of "Which three destinations would you like to be able to reach by walking or biking, rather than driving?" (Question #16 of the Community Survey), 455 of 1,468 (30.3%) respondents mentioned the words "store," "shop," "shopping," "retail," or contained a large retailer like Kroger or Meijer.

- **Living near work, medical services, and amenities is important to people**. Question #27 found that:

  o Just over half (51%) of the responses found proximity to a place of work as a very important or important factor.

  o Nearly 82% of the responses found proximity to medical services as a very important or important factor.

  o Just over three-quarters (76%) of the responses found proximity to retail, restaurant or other consumer amenities as a very important or important factor.

CASE STUDY: IMPLEMENTATION OF MIXED-USE AND CORRIDOR UPGRADES

In the early 2000s, the Seattle suburb of Shoreline, Washington started planning for improved infrastructure for all modes of transportation on their major state trunkline, North Aurora Avenue. This Aurora Corridor Project planned for and constructed right-of-way improvements, including pedestrian bridges, wider shared-use pathways, transit lanes, and roadway improvements. All levels of government committed to this – the City, County, State Department of Transportation, and Federal Highway Administration. These improvements were made, and instantly made the corridor more desirable for private development.

The City then followed-up with a Community Renewal Area Plan for a key area of this corridor in 2013, emphasizing appropriate land use planning and even further improvements to walkability in the distinct area which was now prime for redevelopment.

From 2013 on, the City has worked on implementation of this Plan. A new 330-unit 6-story residential building was built in 2019 on a site of three former buildings including a Denny's restaurant and bank drive-thru.

It's important to note that this portion of North Aurora Avenue had between 40,000 and 45,000 vehicles in average daily traffic, approximately the traffic of the portion of Metro Parkway east of Van Dyke on. This Aurora Corridor Project added pedestrian infrastructure first, prior to the massive redevelopment efforts. The area roads started reducing dangerous slip lanes and reducing the distances of crosswalks during that project, opening the door for pedestrian-oriented commercial spaces across the street. Next will be another large residential building. There is now a critical mass of residents and businesses here, ensuring this will be stable neighborhood for years to come.

AERIAL

BEFORE (2015)

APRIL 2024

Photos from Google Earth and Google Street View

SIDE STREET (WESTMINSTER WAY)

BEFORE (2018)

AUGUST 2023

INTERSECTION

BEFORE (2015)

APRIL 2024

SOLUTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR STERLING HEIGHTS

ZONING CONSIDERATIONS

Mixed-use nodes offer opportunities to satisfy needs and demands for additional housing without sacrificing the integrity of existing single-family neighborhoods, while also providing goods and services near existing neighborhoods that people can walk to.

Understanding that incremental change can be helpful, and that change can occur very slowly, zoning fixes can be an important first step.

Land uses belonging to a mixed-use node should be those that serve the neighborhood, particularly those that can provide goods and services to the proximal residents. Enabling residents to access these places by foot or bicycle is important in reducing dangerous traffic patterns, mitigating noise, odors, and emissions, and overall creating a more pleasant and equitable environment. Considering what to do with automobile-oriented uses is crucial for mixed-use nodes; not only does the use itself contribute to the negative effects of traffic, noise, odors, and emissions, but the site design is often from the start inefficient and detrimental to mixed-use goals. In the "Restructuring the Commercial Strip" report cited previously on **page 140**, land uses including "retail, food service, and entertainment venues," are desirable to add vibrancy and synergy between residential uses.

Site design should provide an integration of both standalone land uses and potential mixing of uses to provide an attractive continuum of building and site development throughout the node. This can include shared parking, shared access drives, internal sidewalk/crosswalk connections, and the elimination of curb cuts. It also could include undeveloped areas, such as pocket parks, plazas, and natural spaces. Amenities should be provided that encourage multi-modal transportation, such linkages to public

sidewalks and bus stops, and the provision of bicycle racks. Beautification strategies should also be incorporated, to both attract development and also to make walking/bicycling more pleasant. This could include public art and providing attractive landscape treatment areas for sitting and relaxing. See the **Placemaking** chapter for additional information on this topic.

A major effect of updating zoning law is the creation of nonconformities – both by uses and structures. As noted above, residential, retail, food service and entertainment should be the primary uses in areas intended for redevelopment. This may mean removing certain auto-oriented uses from mixed-use districts. It's important to note that the point of providing for nonconforming uses and structures in Zoning Ordinances is to recognize that there are uses and structures in existence that the community no longer wants; they are permitted to continue, but eventually should be replaced with desired uses and structures. There are more aggressive strategies, such as amortizing land uses/structures and incentivizing relocation as well as other strategies zoning law can take to ease the impact of nonconforming restrictions. This could include the creation of nonconforming "protected classes" (sometimes used for preserving historic structures, for example) or the implementation of phased nonconformity clean up (for example if a nonconforming use or building proposes improvements they need only to come into compliance with a specific portion or numerical value of the Zoning Ordinance's standards, not the entire Zoning Ordinance completely).

Considering appropriate land uses, thoughtful site design, and crafting the right touch for nonconformities are the most significant zoning considerations to be made for development nodes.

Land Uses

Key zoning-related strategies pertaining to land uses in the nodes include:

1. **Add residential density**. Mixed-use developments in nodes should focus on developing at least 80% of a project with residential uses to generate customers for the non-residential uses. Additionally, blanket residential density maximums in the Zoning Ordinance should be eliminated as residential density maximums can be arbitrary without considering local context, including local jobs, amenities, and local transportation options.

2. **Prioritize desirable uses that contribute to a place**. Uses that add vibrancy and synergy between residential uses should be encouraged, creating attractive places to live, work, and spend free time in. In addition to residential, the City should encourage the following in a node:

    o   Restaurants and cafes, including outdoor seating

    o   Retail shops

    o   Entertainment venues in the higher-intensity District Nodes

    o   Pop-up shops and temporary uses

3. **Prohibit auto-oriented uses**. Automobile-oriented uses, including uses such as drive-throughs which cater to automobile-oriented site design, should be prohibited in order to prioritize the pedestrian and walk-in activity over activity that takes place from a car.

4. **Zero-in on nonconformities**. When updating the Zoning Ordinance, the City should analyze land uses permitted or prohibited in the nodes. If the City opts to be flexible with nonconformities, certain nonconforming "classes" may be implemented to ensure certain uses are given flexibility while others are held to more rigid prohibitions.

NONCONFORMITIES

When a community decides to redevelop an area, changes to zoning regulations often accompany the new vision for the district. These updates are intended to guide future development toward the desired land use patterns, densities, and design standards. However, existing land uses within the area may not align with the updated zoning, resulting in some properties being designated as nonconforming.

A nonconforming use occurs when a property's current use, such as a manufacturing facility in an area rezoned for residential or mixed-use development, no longer complies with the new zoning regulations. In most cases, these uses are allowed to continue operating as "grandfathered" uses under the legal principle that they were established in compliance with previous zoning rules. However, restrictions are often placed on nonconforming uses to gradually phase them out and encourage redevelopment that aligns with the new zoning. For instance, expansions of nonconforming uses may be prohibited, or significant reconstruction after damage may require compliance with the updated zoning standards. In addition to uses, buildings or structures that no longer conform to the Zoning Ordinance's dimensional requirements (setbacks, height, etc.) are recognized as nonconforming structures.

This approach balances the rights of property owners with the community's redevelopment goals. It ensures that existing businesses or residences are not immediately displaced while signaling the community's long-term vision for the area. By including clear regulations and incentives within the Zoning Ordinance, municipalities can encourage property owners to transition to conforming uses and structures over time, fostering redevelopment that aligns with the goals of the Master Plan.

Site Design

Key zoning-related strategies pertaining to site design in the nodes include:

1. **Incentivize shared facilities**. Shared parking, shared access drives, and internal sidewalk/crosswalk connections should not just be encouraged, but should be incentivized through zoning reductions (e.g., require less parking if shared, encourage sharing through shared amenities such as alternative fueling stations, such as EV charging, etc.).

2. **Require "taming" techniques for minor redevelopment projects**. The "tame" step of the Enabling Better Places – Commercial Corridors and Shopping Centers guide should be acted on for any minor redevelopment projects in the nodes. This may include the following:

    o   Replacing surface parking or unnecessary vehicular drives with pocket parks, plazas, or intentional enhanced landscape treatment areas.

    o   Improving access to and from the main entrance of the building to the public sidewalk.

    o   Restricting blank walls along a public road and public or quasi-public sidewalk. Such facades should be interesting with architectural elements and/or windows.

    o   Vacant buildings proximal-to or part of a minor redevelopment project should be either demolished or repaired, when under like ownership as the minor redevelopment project.

3. **Require "evolving" or "transforming" techniques for new construction or large redevelopment projects**. The "evolve" or "transform" techniques of the Enabling Better Places – Commercial Corridors and Shopping Centers guide should be acted on for any new construction of buildings or large development projects in the nodes. This may include the following:

    o   The rebuilding of a building, or structurally altering a building in a manner that orients the building towards the public street, primary driveway, or communal space. The front of the building should look like the front, with a front door and windows that allow for walkability. However, if parking lots are behind buildings there may be two entrances; one at the front and one at the rear. This ensures accessibility but also creates a sense of vibrancy by creating places for people to see people.

    o   Orienting a parking lot to the rear or side of the building, obscuring the parking lot from public view and pedestrian access.

LAND USE LINKAGE

The mixed-use development nodes are the locations in which a variety of this Master Plan's chapters intersect – housing, economy, sustainability, placemaking, and transportation, to name a few.

DISTRICT VERSUS NEIGHBORHOOD NODES

The 2017 Master Plan promoted the concept of "Traditional Mixed Use Development Nodes," as a redevelopment strategy to revitalize existing commercial areas. Since that plan was adopted, development of these areas has been limited and do not represent what the plan envisioned. Because there can be differences between the geographic conditions surrounding nodes, there is an opportunity to distinguish nodes between two categories – district versus neighborhood. District nodes often are bounded by roads with higher traffic volumes. They may be or have been developed with big box retailers and oversized parking lots. These district nodes should be thought of as regional hubs that can attract larger, integrated developments supporting higher densities and a more robust mix of uses. Neighborhood nodes are more typically developed with strip-style commercial development and stand-alone buildings. These areas should be considered as local hubs, supporting existing neighborhoods, that are designed attractively and featuring a mixture of uses, including horizontal mixed-use. Horizontal mixed-use is an appropriate strategy in both the district and neighborhood nodes, only in instances where the

residential land use is prevalent to ensure an active daytime and nighttime population within the node. In addition to being prevalent, the residential land use should contain multi-unit housing, stacked flats, and/or townhouse development types. The design of horizontal mixed-use should consider buildings that are proximal to one another, as well as containing clear and obvious pedestrian connections between front entrances of all buildings in the area. Horizontal mixed-use should only be appropriate when the entire node area, or portion of the node area bounded by intersecting of streets, is integrated in this manner.

Neighborhood Node | Typical Existing Conditions

Neighborhood Nodes today are typically developed with strip commercial buildings and parking lots. There is generally minimal landscaping, There are few, if any, considerations for pedestrians or cyclists, such as crosswalk areas, benches, or bike parking.

Opportunities to transform many of these nodes into **Neighborhood Nodes** involve incremental public and private investment that will benefit nearby residents, visitors, and local businesses. These nodes are envisioned to support a variety of new housing types.

Neighborhood Node | Incremental Improvements

Creating vibrant nodes requires public and private investment. The color bar indicates short- to long-term timelines

Private Property Investments

Shorter-term | Longer-term

1 Building facades are freshened up with modern colors, materials, lighting, and awnings.

2 Enhance landscaping along the sidewalk.

Public Property Investments

1 Improve street crossings for pedestrians for safety.

2 Add street trees to provide shade to pedestrians and improve the appearance of the node area.

3 Add pedestrian-scaled street lighting to create a sense of place and enhance walkability in evening hours.

Neighborhood Node | Evolution: Framing the Corners

Additional improvements to private property bring new value to previously developed areas. These types of improvements not only enliven spaces for visitors and residents, but also improve sustainability in these areas. Development provides for the automobile, but is transformed by pedestrian design and components.

1   Add buildings, particularly at the corners, to create more of a destination and provide opportunities for a mix of uses, including residential. Existing buildings may remain until a later phase of redevelopment.

2   Expand sidewalk beyond the right-of-way to increase room for outdoor dining and pedestrian amenities like benches.

3   Replace outdated/obsolete/underutilized buildings with new development, particularly residential.

Neighborhood Node | Evolution: Complete Redevelopment

District Node | Typical Existing Conditions

The primary development pattern in areas designated as **District Nodes** includes big box and strip-style commercial buildings set back from the road and surrounded by a sea of asphalt for parking. There is generally minimal landscaping, There are few, if any, considerations for pedestrians or cyclists, such as crosswalk areas, benches, or bike parking.

Opportunities to transform many of these nodes into **District Nodes** involve incremental public and private investment that will benefit community residents and businesses as well as visitors.

District Node | Incremental Improvements

Creating vibrant places can start with temporary activation of underutilized spaces and requires minimal development. Here, a food truck plaza could attract new visitors and local residents as well as begin to create a new identity for this district.

Creating vibrant nodes requires public and private investment. The color bars indicate short- to long-term timelines

Private Property Investments

Shorter-term

1   Activate corners with pedestrian spaces and seasonal activities like food trucks and pop-up shops.

2   Add buildings to make better use of oversized parking lots.

Longer-term

3   Rehab existing buildings and/or retrofit to new uses, including housing.

Public Property Investments

1   Improve street crossings for pedestrians for safety.

2   Add street trees to provide shade to pedestrians and improve the appearance of the node area.

3   Improve bus stop areas.

4   Add a landscaped median to improve the appearance of the roadway and make crossings safer and more comfortable.

5   Add on-street parking to slow traffic and supplement any loss of off-street spaces.

6   Add bike lanes for bicyclist safety.

Additional improvements to private property bring new value to previously developed areas. These types of improvements not only enliven spaces for visitors and residents, but also improve sustainability in these areas. Development provides for the automobile, but is transformed by pedestrian design and components.

1	Renovate parking lots with natural stormwater management techniques like additional trees, rain gardens and/or bioswales.
2	Add more buildings to create more of a destination and provide opportunities for a mix of uses, including residential.
3	Add green spaces for gathering areas, events, and activities - these may be programmed privately to support local businesses and/or publicly for district-wide events.
4	Improve pedestrian safety and accessibility with wide crosswalks, guided paths, bollards, and additional lighting.

Adding new landscaping not only enhances the pedestrian experience, but also mitigates stormwater and the heat island effect from large expanses of paved land. Intentionally providing places for people to safely cross parking areas (below left) and enjoy the district experience (below right) will breathe new life into these previously developed areas.

CITY COMMITMENTS TO NODE IMPROVEMENTS

ROAD AND RIGHT-OF-WAY DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS

The City can play a proactive role in node improvements. The City has right-of-way jurisdiction over Ryan Road, 19 Mile Road, 17 Mile Road, 15 Mile Road, Dodge Park Road, and the portion of Utica Road west of Van Dyke Avenue, therefore the City has more local control in transforming the nodes associated with these roads into something representative of the City's land use goals. Key right-of-way improvement strategies include the following:

1. **Road diets**. The City should study the feasibility for road diets to support nodes, working with the Macomb Department of Roads and MDOT on those roads that are not City-controlled. Road diets that reduce the number of driving lanes and replace that area with features such as on-street parking or increased width for pedestrian or non-motorized infrastructure can be an effective trade-off that not only works towards safety goals but also makes a place more attractive to live, work, and visit. While it might seem counterintuitive, road diets typically do not increase congestion. In fact, they often improve traffic flow by reducing the number of lane changes and conflicts. And cost-wise, road diets are generally less expensive than other traffic calming measures. Many road diets simply require restriping the road, making them a cost-effective option.

2. **Improve pedestrian and non-motorized infrastructure**. Sidewalks and non-motorized infrastructure should be improved in a manner that provides user comfort, ensures safety, and increases transportation efficiency. This may involve the widening of sidewalks into shared-use paths, the providing of benches or seating areas, and the providing of shade in the form of canopy trees as well as canopies and awnings on new

buildings at the property lines. Pedestrian-scaled lighting helps with nighttime visibility but also is a design feature that signals a change of building form/site development is occurring. Increased comfort will be directly associated with the above strategy of implementing road diets, because without road diets high vehicle speeds and noise will continue to cause discomfort.

ACTIVATION OF VACANT PARCELS

The City only owns one buildable or activatable property within the mixed-use development nodes. With this property, or if more properties become available, the City should consider the following:

1. **Temporary pop-up activity**. The City should entertain the implementation of pop-up shops or temporary uses that can stimulate activity and vibrancy. This could be done in conjunction with private property owners also.

2. **Property disposition program and requests for proposals for developable land**. If the City obtains ownership of any developable or re-developable land within a mixed-use development node, the City should set up a property disposition program that solicits developments meeting Master Plan goals. This may be done via requests for proposals (RFPs) where an interested developer proposes a development plan that meets the Master Plan's goals, i.e., providing mixed-use development.

3. **Establish City policy for tax incentives**. A City policy which requires a private project seeking tax incentives (i.e., brownfield tax incentives, commercial rehabilitation tax exemptions, etc.) to explicitly meet City Master Plan goals may be worth considering for future projects.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP COORDINATION

As evidenced above, the City does not own much property within mixed-use development nodes. With the remaining property being privately owned, entire blocks of a node are often piecemealed together by half a dozen to a dozen different owners. This makes coordinated development and the utilization of shared parking, shared access, shared pedestrian pathways, etc. difficult, and often contributes to the individual property owner to desire developing standalone, single-use buildings. Property ownership coordination should be encouraged as much as possible, and **the City should implement an "Interested Node Developer Task Force"** which can be a program of regular meetings or open houses hosted by the City to facilitate discussions between development ideas owners may have, or even be means to simply link property owners to one another for future business.
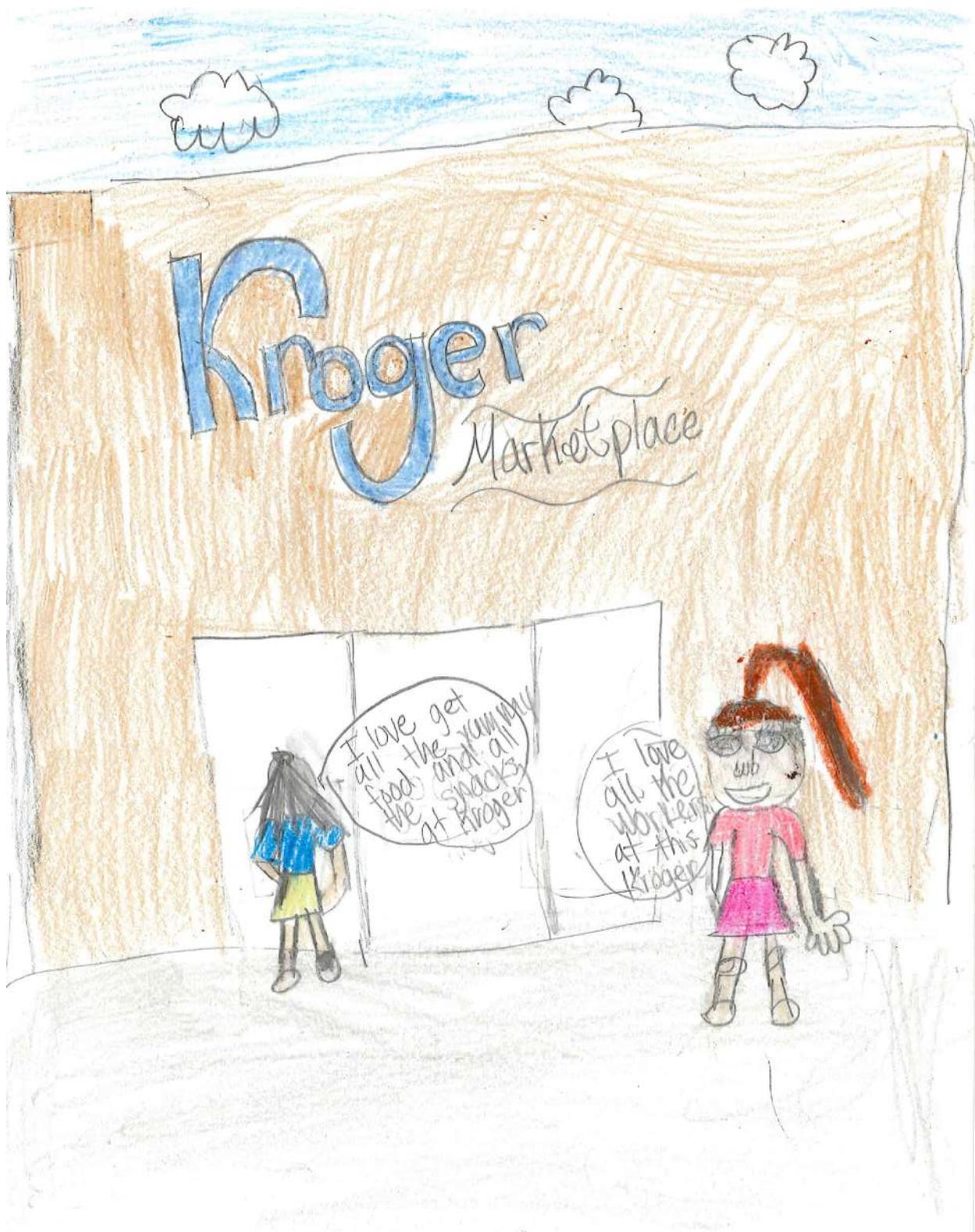
Savannah Rowland, Age 9

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN AND MAP

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

This Master Plan is an update from the 2017 Master Plan that established a foundation set of future land use designations. Particularly aspirational, innovative, and meaningful were the Traditional Mixed Use Development, Lakeside Village, Van Dyke Mixed Use, and Innovation Support designations. These were focal points of that 2017 Plan and process, and the City engaged in implementation work that supports these designations. This future land use plan attempts to keep the spirit of these designations alive, with some revisions as necessary.

UPDATE TO DESIGNATIONS

The chart to the right represents how the 2017 Master Plan's future land use designations relate to this Master Plan Update's designations. This chart pertains more to the details of the designation itself, and pertains less to the geography of the future land use map, which did undergo numerous changes.

2017 Master Plan	Master Plan Update
Estate Residential	**Large Lot Residential**
Suburban Residential	Consolidating the description for larger lot single-family residential neighborhood areas.
Urban Residential	**Suburban Residential** Renaming this category to be more accurate; this is a suburban area, predominantly single-family residential.
N/A	**Compact Residential** New category for mixed residential areas.
Planned Residential	Planned Residential
Multiple-Family Residential	Multi-Household Residential
Manufactured Home Residential	Manufactured Home Residential
Local Commercial	Local Commercial
Regional Commercial	Regional Commercial
Office	**Office**
Medical/Office	
Traditional Mixed Use Development	**Neighborhood Node**
	District Node
	North Van Dyke Node
Lakeside Village	Lakeside Village
Van Dyke Mixed Use	Van Dyke Mixed Use
Innovation Support	Innovation Support
Industrial	Industrial
Civic Center	Civic Center
Parks/Open Space	Parks/Open Space
Transitional Land Use	**Deleted – Becomes various designations**

Sources: Roads: SEMCOG. Future Land Use: Sterling Heights. © 2025, Giffels Webster

Legend:

- Large Lot Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Compact Residential
- Multi-Household Residential
- Planned Residential
- Manufactured Home Residential
- Local Commericial
- Regional Commercial
- Lakeside Village
- Office
- Neighborhood Node
- District Node
- North Van Dyke Node
- Van Dyke Mixed-Use
- Civic Center
- Industrial
- Innovation Support
- Civic Center
- Parks/Open Space

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0   0.5   1   2 Miles

FUTURE LAND USE
STERLING HEIGHTS

Map labels: ROCHESTER HILLS, MACOMB TWP, SHELBY TWP, W Utica Rd, Auburn Rd, Cass Ave, UTICA, E M-59, Hall Rd, Dobry Dr, Merrill Rd, Delco Blvd, Canal Rd, Riverland Dr, Dawn Dr, M 53, 19 Mile Rd, 18 1/2 Mile Rd, Utica Rd, Schoenherr Rd, Saal Rd, Hayes Rd, 18 Mile Rd, Ryan Rd, Dequindre Rd, TROY, Stadler Rd, CLINTON TWP, Clinton River Rd, 17 Mile Rd, Mound Rd, Plumbrook Rd, Dodge Park Rd, 16 1/2 Mile Rd, Metropolitan Pkwy, Van Dyke Ave, Maple Lane Dr, Red Run Rd, Moravian Dr, 15 Mile Rd, FRASER, 14 Mile Rd, MADISON HEIGHTS, WARREN, Chicago Rd, Masonic Blvd

SHELBY TWP

Dobry Dr

Waldo Ave

Poplar Ave

UTICA

Stacy Ave

19 1/2 Mile Rd

Phoenix Dr

Apple Blossom Dr

Berkshire Dr

Galaxy Blvd

Corkwood Dr

La Domain Dr

Trillium Dr

Vineyards Blvd

Vintner's Place Dr

Merrill Rd

Frontenac Ave

Burningbush Dr

Hoptree Dr

Emily Dr

Flis Dr

Plum Ln

Silverwood Dr

Creek Dr

Tessmer Dr

Jo Ed Dr

Malbeck Dr

Hanks Ln

Bobjean St

R.Mancini Dr

Forest Mead Dr

Beyer Ln

Pond View Dr

Farmdale Dr

Tarragon Dr

Bayleaf Dr

Spicemill Dr

Vancouver Dr

Borg Warner

TROY

18 Mile Rd

Kirkton Dr

Rudgate Blvd

Brentwood Dr

Carillon Rd

Rudgate Ctr

Harmon Dr

Steel Dr

Sims Dr

Gulliver Dr

Kraft Dr

Riverbend Dr

Alderdale Dr

Crystal Dr

Durand Dr

Forbes Dr

Gardner St

Branch St

Gardner E

Franklin Park Dr

Byers Dr

University Dr

Nathan E

Kipling Dr

Faith Dr

Nathan W

Mitchell Dr

Ryan Rd

Sturbridge Dr

Pinebrook Dr

Belinda Dr

Fairfield Dr

Dequindre Rd

Sumpter Dr

Gloucester Dr

Bloomfield Dr

Lin Dr

Mount Kisco Dr

Westchester Rd

Fox Hill Dr

Mound Rd

Wall St

Michael Dr

Barton Dr

Reese Dr

Hanson Dr

Connie Dr

Carpatha Blvd

Hacker Dr

Almont Dr W

Tamarack Dr

Progress Dr

Dundee St

Curwood St

Calka Dr

Agar Dr

Groves Dr

Denson Dr

Leason Rd

Susan St

Highlite Dr

Noll St

Sources: Roads: SEMCOG, Future Land Use: Sterling Heights. © 2025, Giffels Webster

Legend

- Large Lot Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Compact Residential
- Multi-Household Residential
- Manufactured Home Residential
- Local Commericial
- Regional Commercial
- Office
- Neighborhood Node
- District Node
- North Van Dyke Node
- Van Dyke Mixed-Use
- Industrial
- Innovation Support
- Civic Center
- Parks/Open Space

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0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

NORTHWEST FLU

STERLING HEIGHTS

Map labels (roads and streets):

Auburn Rd · UTICA · Hall Rd · SHELBY TWP · MACOMB TWP

Delco Blvd · Oleander Dr · Pine Dr · Shoreline Dr
N York Dr · Lakeside Cir · Island Dr
Leslie Dr · Essen Dr · Cologne Dr · Kidley Dr · Sterritt St
Birkhill Dr · Shannon Dr · Donley Dr · Headley Dr · Erdmann Rd · Diamond Dr
Canal Rd · Wheaton Dr · Lakeshore Dr · Kerner Dr · Four Lakes Dr · Hillcrest Dr
Riverland Dr · Saar Dr · Delvin Dr · Vivian Dr · Averill Dr · Burtley Dr · Goldberg Dr · Hartwick Dr
Dawn Dr · 19 Mile Rd · Freeport Dr
Main · Waiteley Dr · Buckingham Dr · Mair Dr · Rice Dr · Utah Dr
Diehl Dr · Grove Park Dr · Alma Dr · Annapolis Dr · Harvard Dr
M 53 · Betley Dr · Gainsley Dr · Mac Rae Dr · Arcadia Dr · Olivet Dr · Hillsdale Dr · Alpena Dr
Parkside Cir · Clinton River Rd · De Cook Dr · Takoma Dr · Wessel Dr
M Ct · Embassy Dr · Royce Dr · Bender Dr · Denoter Dr
18 Mile Rd · Schoenherr Rd · CLINTON TWP
Flagstaff Dr · Regency Dr · Rinaldi Dr · Spitz Dr · William Dr · Beresford Dr · Firesteel Dr · Lagrange Dr · Bangor Dr
Constitution Blvd · Long Horn Dr · Pernell Dr
Independence Dr · Alwardt Dr · Lozen Dr · Lancer Dr · Dart Dr · Stadler Rd · Elrond Dr · Capitol Dr
San Marco Blvd · Plumridge Blvd · Wanda Ave · Merci Ave · Lorenzo Dr · Lembke Dr · Hayes Rd
Balboa Dr · Poinciana Dr · Chantilly Dr · Martha St · Early Dr · 17 Mile Rd
Dodge Park Rd · Lesure Dr · Sorrento Blvd · Pomona Dr · River Park Dr
Arcola Dr · Dill Dr · Beecher Dr · Plainview Dr · Picadilly Dr · Cloverlawn Dr · Utica Rd
16 1/2 Mile Rd · Andrew Dr · Irene Dr · Maas Dr · Gregory Dr · Jerome Dr · Lola Dr · Danforth Dr · Greenway Dr · Alper Dr · Golfview Dr · Plumbrook Rd · Jolori Cane
Anna Lisa Dr · Metropolitan Pkwy

Van Dyke Ave

Sources: Roads: SEMCOG. Future Land Use: Sterling Heights. © 2025, Giffels Webster

Legend:

- Large Lot Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Compact Residential
- Multi-Household Residential
- Planned Residential
- Local Commericial
- Regional Commercial
- Lakeside Village
- Office
- District Node
- North Van Dyke Node
- Van Dyke Mixed-Use
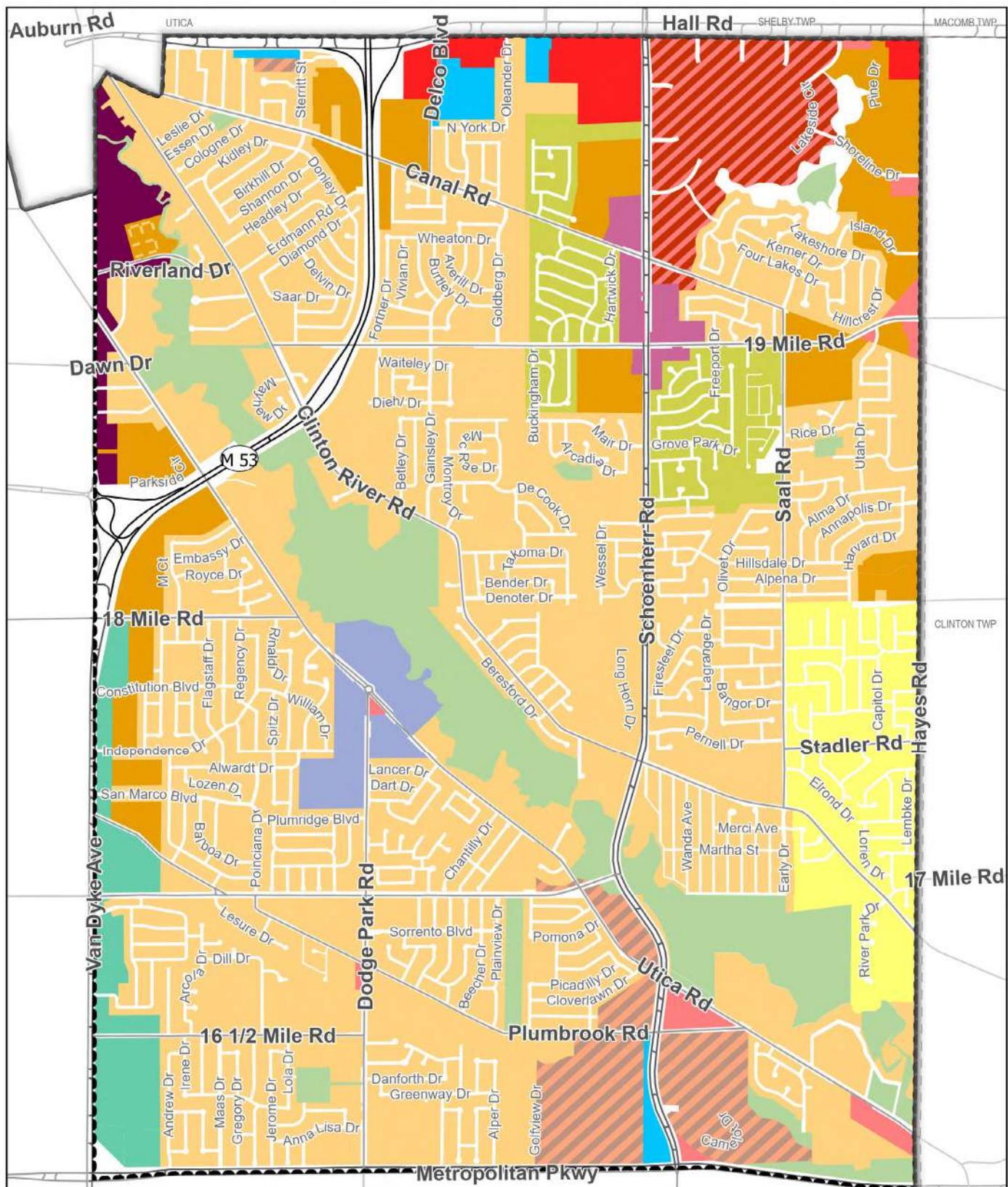- Civic Center
- Parks/Open Space

giffels webster

0 · 0.25 · 0.5 · 1 Miles

NORTHEAST FLU
STERLING HEIGHTS
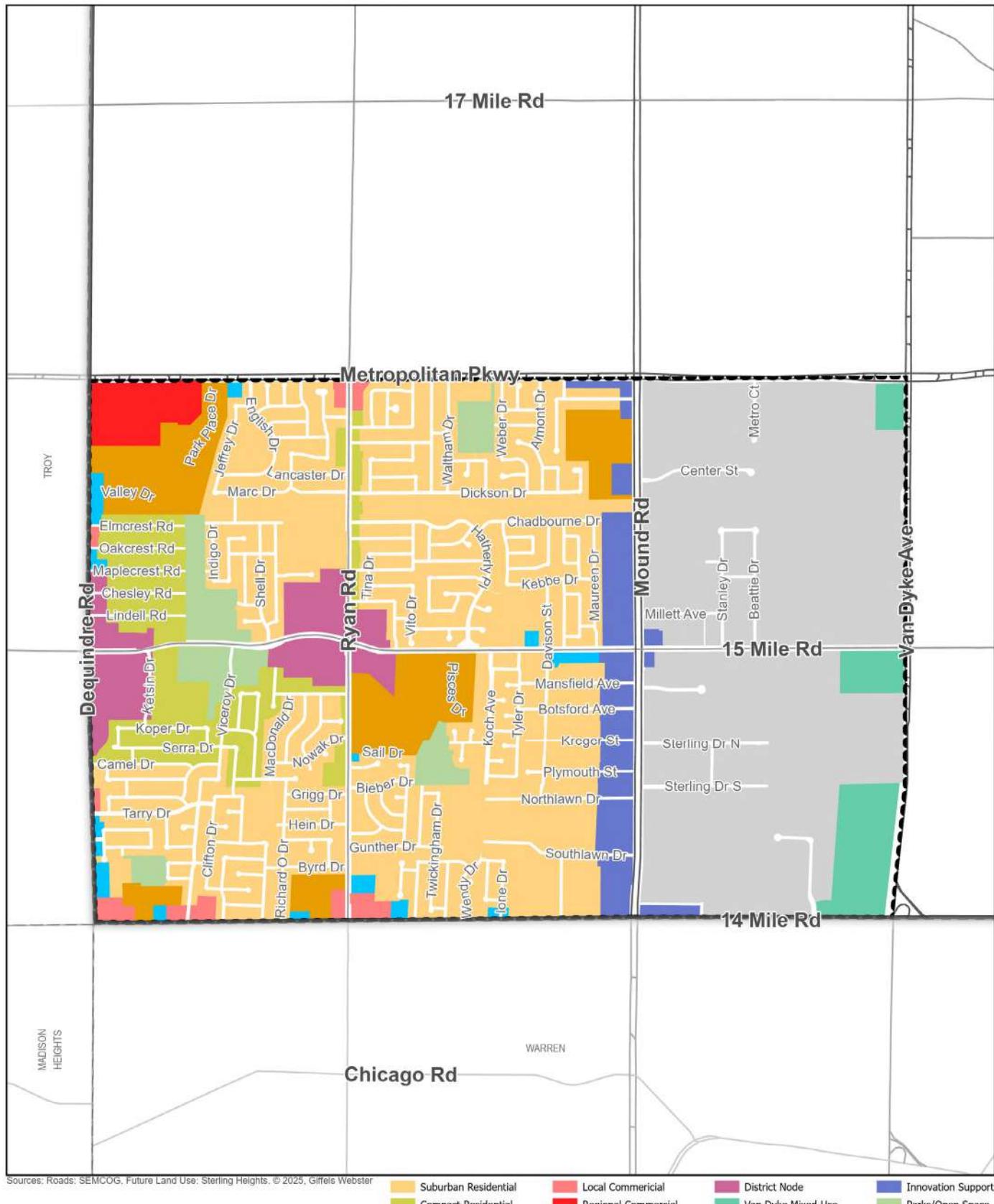
Sources: Roads: SEMCOG, Future Land Use: Sterling Heights. © 2025, Giffels Webster

Suburban Residential	Local Commericial	District Node	Innovation Support
Compact Residential	Regional Commercial	Van Dyke Mixed-Use	Parks/Open Space
Multi-Household Residential	Office	Industrial	

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0   0.25   0.5   1 Miles

SOUTHWEST FLU
STERLING HEIGHTS

Sources: Roads: SEMCOG, Future Land Use: Sterling Heights. © 2025, Giffels Webster

Legend:

Suburban Residential	Local Commericial	Van Dyke Mixed-Use
Compact Residential	Office	Parks/Open Space
Multi-Household Residential	Neighborhood Node	
Planned Residential	District Node	

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0   0.25   0.5   1 Miles

SOUTHEAST FLU
STERLING HEIGHTS

FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

RESIDENTIAL OVERVIEW

The residential future land use designations of Large Lot Residential, Suburban Residential, and Compact Residential will allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and duplexes by right. It is not envisioned that entire neighborhoods will be converted to duplex homes, or that many existing homes will be converted, but rather that if a home is removed (through disaster or other means), the lot could be redeveloped with a duplex home. Additionally, triplexes and quadplexes may be considered for these three future land use designations when fronting a major thoroughfare.

Large Lot Residential is the lowest-density single-family residential oriented future land use designation. The former estate residential and suburban residential categories combine to form this designation's intent. This reflects a character often prevalent in the northwestern quadrant of the City. This is a designation that protects and promotes the single-family nature of these built neighborhoods, with lot sizes typically 8,400 square feet or larger. Few new areas will be designated as such. Essentially, this will match the R70 to R100 zoning districts, with the addition of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and duplexes by right, given site and design standards.

Suburban Residential is the moderate-density single-family residential oriented future land use designation. The character of this designation will be similar to that of the older residential neighborhoods frequently occurring on the southern half of the City. It will allow for reduced minimum lot sizes and dimensions to meet a size more like the current R-60 district, but it should add increased housing options. Few new areas will be designated as such. Essentially, this will match with the R60 zoning district, with the addition of ADUs and duplexes by right.

Compact Residential is the most dense single-family residential oriented future land use designation, and aims to provide density greater than what

the 2017 Master Plan's Urban Residential future land use designation envisioned. The character of this designation will be similar to that of the older residential neighborhoods frequently occurring on the southern half of the City, with additional options to promote a "gentle density" within the neighborhood. Gentle density in this case might mean more reduced minimum lot sizes and dimensions to offer flexibility in the construction of single-family homes. It may also include ADUs and duplexes by right, and triplexes and quadplexes as special land uses with site and design standards to fit with the character of the neighborhood. Compact Residential neighborhoods are strategically located within walking distance of mixed-use nodes, preferably within a quarter or half mile (5- to 10- minute walk time), which makes these neighborhoods more conducive to supporting additional housing units. These neighborhoods are often characterized by residential property with detached garages, one- to two-story homes, on-street parking, and an overall older age of housing stock. This category will require the creation of a new zoning district to provide standards for new housing types.

Multi-Household Residential is carried over from the 2017 Master Plan, which states the classification is intended to provide opportunities for more affordable housing and alternatives to traditional single-family detached subdivision development. The Multi-Household Residential future land use classification seeks to accommodate a diverse stock of housing in the City to ensure housing choice for individuals of all ages and lifestyles. Land designated this future land use may serve as a transitional land use; one which buffers single-family units from more intensive land uses or the impacts associated with transportation corridors. This land use category is most commonly defined by the existence of multi-unit apartment structures, but may also include group living quarters such as independent and assisted living, and convalescent care facilities. In addition, traditional attached single-family development types like townhouses, condominiums, duplexes, bungalow

courts, fourplexes, live/work units and courtyard apartments should also be incorporated within this future land use category.

Manufactured Home Residential is carried over from the 2017 Master Plan and is intended to comprise a group of manufactured housing or mobile homes located on the same property in a park setting. Uses incidental to the manufactured home park such as a sales office and recreational facilities may also be present. Reflective of existing manufactured housing developments, two areas within the City (Rudgate Manor and Sterling Estates) are identified for manufactured home residential usage.

Planned Residential is a unique designation intended to give flexibility for diverse housing options, ranging from detached single-family to mult-unit housing. The overall intent is reflective of what the 2017 Master Plan described, including the enabling of these areas' significant properties to be redeveloped into diverse housing options that encourage active living, passive recreational opportunities, and third places or community facilities. Additionally, significant natural features should be considered and preserved in any future development of these areas; physical development may be concentrated/clustered in a flexible manner that may involve increased heights, reduced setbacks, or other dimensional relief in order to preserve the natural features. Development here should be integrated into larger planned projects, rather than piecemeal standalone sites. There may be areas of Planned Residential adjacent to the City's park system that could be explored for acquisition. Note that the land bounded by 17 Mile, Utica, and Schoenherr Roads was designated as Planned Residential.

Local Commercial is largely carried over from the 2017 Master Plan, and land so designated is intended to meet the daily retail and service needs of the residents of surrounding neighborhoods. Small to mid-scale neighborhood and community commercial uses are appropriate in these designated areas. Local Commercial uses may be located on individual sites, or in neighborhood or community commercial centers. Existing Local Commercial uses tend to be located at and oriented toward major intersections and along major streets (mile roads). Local Commercial uses should be designed to relate to the surrounding neighborhood(s) they serve, not just the roads upon which they front.

Regional Commercial is largely carried over from the 2017 Master Plan, and these areas are intended to serve a regional population. Regional Commercial uses have higher gross floor-area requirements and are often found in large retail centers or in stand-alone buildings. Developers of such Regional Commercial uses typically cite high levels of visibility and accessibility as a requirement. Because these uses are often destination uses that draw people from a greater distance, more parking is required. Due to the above-mentioned factors, Regional Commercial uses require sites with larger areas than other commercial uses, and are located along major thoroughfares such as Van Dyke Road or M-59.

Lakeside Village is intended to continue consistent with the momentous vision established in the 2017 Master Plan, and the City's recent work engaging in preliminary planning stages with the Lakeside Mall site's developer. The City envisions this property to transform into a "mixed-use town center or urban district.

Office is a consolidated designation that includes the 2017 Master Plan's Office and Medical/Office categories. This new designation will continue to provide for office uses located along major roads, but generally not at road intersections. Office development may occur in stand-alone buildings on smaller parcels, or in planned office parks on larger parcels. Secondary uses compatible with office uses may be permitted on the upper stories of office buildings; such uses may include residential dwelling units. The Office designation does not

include higher intensity commercial uses, but will accommodate accessory uses that may serve a large office use. Office uses are also envisioned in the Local Commercial and Regional Commercial areas as well.

Nodes. Nodes are concentrated areas of development within a larger suburban area. The development of nodes may be incremental or part of one comprehensive project. This Mater Plan includes two general nodes that appear at designated locations across the City. The **District Node** is the higher-intensity node that derived from the 2017 Master Plan's Traditional Mixed Use Development future land use designation. This District Node is focused on more vertical mixed-use of taller heights and larger planned projects. Similarly derived from the Traditional Mixed Use Development designation is the **Neighborhood Node**, which is the lower-intensity node, allowing mixed-use but focusing on incremental design improvements that can be a stepping stone for higher-intensity potentially at a future time. Mixed-use is allowed in both District and Neighborhood Nodes. Please refer to the Node Chapter's Land Use Linkage for a full summary on the characteristics, design, and phasing strategies that should make up future development in these nodes.

North Van Dyke Node intends to be a focal point for the City, and the 2022 North Van Dyke Avenue Master Plan will govern the future land uses of this area, which is envisioned to transform over time into a dense, walkable, mixed-use urban center.

Van Dyke Mixed Use is largely carried over from the 2017 Master Plan, which intends to permit the continuation of predominantly regional commercial and related land uses within this corridor." Further, the 2017 Plan's summary lists "numerous recommendations to enhance the corridor's functionality, long-term marketability, access/mobility, and its overall aesthetic appeal:

- Diversify the types of allowable land uses to establish a true mixed-use corridor. In addition to regional commercial uses, this corridor can be enhanced through the integration of office buildings, institutional uses, and residential uses. Residential uses can be incorporated through the allowance of vertical mixed-use (upper story residential units) or through infill development of a higher-density residential nature. Such high-density residential development would serve as a transition between non-residential uses along Van Dyke and adjacent single-family residential uses.

- Develop new retail, office, and other development "pads" along the road frontage. These pads should feature limited setbacks and should be oriented to the street. In some cases, these development pads could be accommodated within existing large and underutilized parking areas. Other opportunities exist to accommodate development on the interspersed vacant and underutilized lands within the corridor. Intersection reconfigurations as part of the ongoing Van Dyke Avenue reconstruction may also free up the corners of Van Dyke/15 Mile and Van Dyke/Metropolitan Parkway for unique and highly visible mixed-use developments.

- Provide plaza and park areas to break up existing large sites and in conjunction with future mixed-use development.

- Minimize the amount of parking to only that which is necessary to support the proposed uses throughout the year.

- Promote the creation of a pedestrian friendly site plan that separates vehicles from pedestrians.

- Reconfigure circulation aisles on existing commercial sites to function as streets and to define blocks throughout the sites. Additionally, seek to connect the internal street system to the existing streets found in adjacent developments.

- Establish a uniform aesthetic for private development which builds upon the design amenities constructed as part of the recent Van Dyke Avenue road project.

Industrial is largely carried over from the 2017 Master Plan, intending to permit traditional industrial uses including large manufacturing operations (such as

the Fiat Chrysler, Ford, General Dynamics, and BAE Systems), research and development plants, hi-tech industries, smaller light industrial operations inside and outside of planned industrial parks, warehousing, light manufacturing, and other common industrial uses. The industrial sector of the economy is continually evolving. It is important that the industrial land use category permits not only traditional manufacturing uses, but also permits and encourages industries of the future to ensure that Sterling Heights retains and enhances its local employment base. Emerging industries such as information technology, bio-technology, and life sciences are more environmentally benign, highly productive, energy-efficient, technologically savvy, and globally competitive. Sterling Heights offers an ideal location for industries such as these.

Innovation Support is largely carried over from the 2017 Master Plan, which focuses on the Mound Road corridor between 14 Mile Road and 18 Mile Road. This future land use designation should accommodate uses that support the industrial corridor to the east. It should be flexible enough to allow Sterling Heights' major industrial base to expand its supporting business uses, research and development uses, and other associated uses that do not quite rise to the intensity of industrial use, to this area primarily on the west side of Mound Road. The land uses envisioned in the 2017 Plan should continue to be represented here, including light industrial (no outdoor storage), high-technology/innovation uses, commercial and office uses. Multi-unit residential uses may also be appropriate in a limited manner. The commercial land uses should be concentrated at the key intersections (14 Mile, 15 Mile, Metropolitan Parkway and 17 Mile). Between these commercial intersections, an effective mix of land use should be encouraged. To facilitate appropriate future development and redevelopment, the consolidation of smaller lots should be encouraged so as to allow for larger sites and to accommodate buffer zones.

Civic Center continues to focus the municipal- and civic-related facilities in one integrated campus-style

center, at Dodge Park Road and Utica Road. Other than these uses, institutional uses, places of worship, and assembly uses may be appropriate here. In alignment with the vision established in the 2017 Plan, if an existing public or semi-public facility within this current designation closes or becomes available for private development, this Plan recommends that the site be developed for a residential use consistent with the neighborhood character, or consistent with what the Planned Residential future land use has in mind regarding clustering/concentrating development in exchange for providing larger setbacks or larger buffering from the existing residential neighborhoods nearby.

Parks/Open Space is largely carried over from the 2017 Master Plan. This category includes a variety of public or private land, recreation facilities, and natural resources such as floodplains, woodlands or wetlands which should be preserved. The maintenance and development of these properties and facilities is expected to satisfy the local recreation needs of the residents of the City. Continued park development and natural features preservation will help ensure that Sterling Heights retains its natural beauty and desirability.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In all future land use designations, **institutional uses** such as schools and places of worship should be given flexibility for redevelopment. These institutions play an important role in the City for community gathering, fellowship, learning, and provision of community services. In the future, these may add and/or be redeveloped with multi-unit residential housing, potentially including the ongoing function of the property and/or buildings to be used for these valuable places.

Lastly, there may be future areas with a concentration of institutional uses, or with an opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment. In the next Master Plan update, the City may wish to identify these areas and create an additional future land use category that describes a vision for this redevelopment.
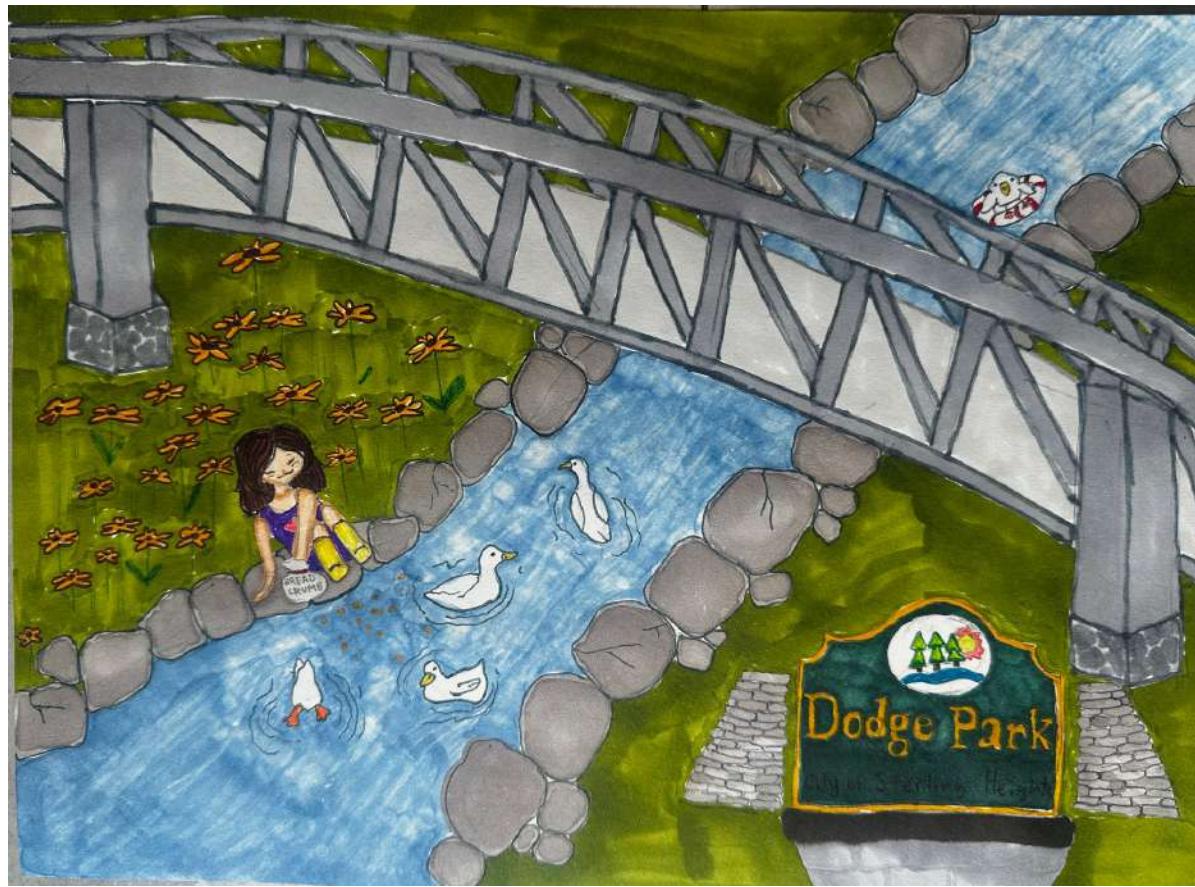
Iris Shim, Age 13

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

ZONING PLAN

The Zoning Plan is intended to guide short-term implementation of the long-term recommendations illustrated on the Future Land Use Map. The intent of the Zoning Plan is to highlight specific key or priority areas where existing zoning is lacking appropriate standards or would inhibit development in accordance with the Master Plan.

Zoning is one of the City's most effective tools for implementing the recommendations of the Master Plan; however, there is not always a direct correlation between the Plan's future land use designations and the City's current zoning districts. The reason for this is that the Future Land Use Map represents the City's preferred long-range land use arrangement, while the Zoning Ordinance regulates specific use and development of property today. Some of the Plan's recommendations may spur a need to create new zoning districts and/or amend existing districts. As an implementation tool, the Zoning Plan illustrates how the future land use designations described earlier in the Master Plan generally correspond to the existing zoning districts. Additional guidance for zoning changes may be found in the land use chapters.

ZONING PLAN	
FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION	**EQUIVALENT ZONING DISTRICT**
Large Lot Residential	R-70, R-80, R-90, and R-100; all to be collapsed into one district.
Suburban Residential	R-60
Compact Residential	R-2, with amendments to uses and standards to match Compact Residential.
Planned Residential	No equivalent; involves special development options.
Multi-Household Residential	RM-1, RM-2, and RM-3
Manufactured Home Residential	MHP
Local Commercial	C-1
Regional Commercial	C-2 and C-3; both to be collapsed into one district.
Office	O-1, O-2, and O-3; all three should be collapsed into one district.
Neighborhood Node	No equivalent; may be TMUDN with amendments or a new district may be created.
District Node	No equivalent; may be TMUDN with amendments or a new district may be created.
North Van Dyke Node	No equivalent; new district to be created.
Lakeside Village	Lakeside Overlay District
Van Dyke Mixed Use	VDMUD
Innovation Support	O-R, TRO, MRISD; O-R and TRO to be collapsed into one district.
Industrial	M-1 and M-2
Civic Center	No equivalent; can be made up from a variety of zoning districts.
Parks/Open Space	No equivalent; will generally be the Floodplain Area zoning district.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION ITEMS

Bringing plans to fruition is best done through consistent, incremental, and logical implementation of steps towards the final goals. The implementation matrix that follows is designed to show how the goals of the Master Plan are fulfilled by action strategies. All boards and commissions are encouraged to read through all of the strategies to understand how they all work together to create a better community to live, work, and play.

It is the responsibility of the Planning Commission and City Council to implement the long-range policies and recommendations of the Master Plan, as appropriate, to achieve the future vision and goals of the City. The City Council, Planning Commission, and Planning Staff should review the Action Strategies Summary Table on a regular basis, assess priorities, and develop annual work plans. In addition, ensure that decisions and policies are consistent with the vision of the Plan. The City's implementation priorities and schedule will likely change over time as conditions change, such as the state of the economy, development trends, demographic shifts, financial ability, etc.

There are a variety of approaches the City may take to prioritization, which should really be an ongoing process. This gives the City flexibility to adjust based on changing circumstances, new information, and emerging priorities. Regular review and evaluation will be essential to ensure that the City's efforts remain aligned with the community's needs and goals. Therefore, the "priority" column in the table below is intended to be completed following adoption. At that time, there is another opportunity to engage the community through a prioritization exercise of the action strategies and assigned short– and long-term priorities. With this input, the Planning Commission and City Council then will be able to set priorities and set an actionable work plan each year. Prioritization will consider factors such as urgency, feasibility, potential impact, resource availability, and alignment with the City's overall goals. Data analysis and community input will be crucial in determining the most effective and impactful strategies.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX CATEGORIES	
MATRIX CATEGORIES	DEFINITIONS
Action Strategy	The actions necessary to carry out goals and objectives.
Priority	To be completed following adoption of the Master Plan
Lead Party	Identifies the primary party responsible for accomplishing the action strategy.
Supporting Partners	Identifies other parties involved in the accomplishment of the action strategy.

Table 1. Action Items: Housing

Promote a diverse and sustainable housing market that supports existing single-family neighborhoods, affordable housing options, and age-in-place opportunities.

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: ZONING			
Zone for a mix of housing types, including single-family homes, accessory dwellings, "missing middle" housing (such as duplex, triplex, and quadplex housing), townhouses, apartments, and senior living facilities.		PC	CC
Create incentives for developers to build smaller, more affordable housing units.		PC	CC
Support the development of age-restricted communities, especially when close to civic facilities and other community goods and services.		PC	CC, ECC
Zone for mixed-use, including smaller scale stacked-flats and live-works, in not only nodes but other office or commercial land use areas.		PC	CC
Promote sustainable development practices, including energy-efficient building materials, encouraging compact development, and promoting walkability.		PC	SC, CC
Allow height, setback, or density flexibility in instances that preserve green spaces and woodlands.		PC	SC, CC
Support aging-in-place by encouraging the retro-fitting of existing homes, as well as promoting the development of accessible single-level homes or assisted living units.		PC	CA, CC
Incentivize the inclusion of smaller units, such as studio apartments, to accommodate single-person households and young professionals, adding variety to the housing market at lower price points.		PC	CC
Incentivize housing development near public transit and walkable areas can reduce reliance on cars, thereby lowering the overall cost of living.		PC	CC
Utilize density bonuses for affordable or mixed-income units in new residential projects.		PC	CC
Assess the Zoning Ordinance to identify opportunities for the administrative approval of missing middle housing and reduce the instances in which discretionary (i.e., special land use) decisions are required for multi-family development in non-single-family zoning districts.		PC	CC
Update the Zoning Ordinance's use and site regulations to permit multi-family development types that are more reflective of the recent market push with recent PUDs.		PC	CC
Lead Party Legend:			
PC = Planning Commission; CC = City Council; AC = Arts Commission; BC = Beautification Commission; CAC = Citizens Advisory Committee; EDC = Economic Development Corporation/Brownfield Authority; ECC = Ethnic Community Committee; LDFA = Local Development Finance Authority; SC = Sustainability Commission; YAB = Youth Advisory Council			
Note: Staff is assumed to be involved as appropriate and as directed by CC/Administration.			

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS			
Support existing residential neighborhoods by addressing any blight as it arises and by ensuring that infrastructure, including sidewalks, streets, and stormwater systems are well-maintained.		CC	CAC
Add street trees either within the rights-of-way or on private property, with the consent of homeowners.		CC	BC, SC
Protect green spaces and natural resources to improve the quality of life of City residents, but also as a strategy to manage stormwater, reduce flooding and improve air quality.		CC	BC, SC
Ensure that the community's infrastructure, including roads, water, and sewer, can support future growth.		CC	SC
ACTION TYPE: ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS			
Explore innovative partnerships and funding mechanisms to promote local, individual home ownership, ensure long-term affordability, and maintain high-quality design and infrastructure.		CC	CAC, CA
ACTION TYPE: OTHER			
Investigate programs for property tax relief for low- to moderate-income households or grants for home repairs that could help maintain the affordability of current housing stock.		CC	
Investigate reducing permitting fees for developments that include affordable or mixed-income units in new residential projects.		CC	
Implement a "pattern book" or pre-approved design model for accessory dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes that meets a design preferred by the City and can be replicated by a property owner/ developer in their permitting process.		CC	PC
Update the Zoning Ordinance's use and site regulations to permit multi-family development types that are more reflective of the recent market push with recent PUDs.		PC	CC

Table 2. Action Items: Local Economy

Foster a vibrant and sustainable local economy by attracting and retaining businesses, promoting entrepreneurship, and enhancing quality of life for all residents.

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: ZONING			
Encourage redevelopment of underutilized commercial properties and fostering mixed-use districts, to meet an increased demand of new retail space while creating vibrant, pedestrian-friendly retail hubs.		PC	CC, LDFA, ECC, CAC, BC, AC, SC, YAB
Encourage the creation of adaptable office spaces, such as shared coworking spaces, which will meet the needs of remote workers and local businesses alike.		PC	CC, LDFA, ECC, CAC, BC, YAB
The Zoning Ordinance should enable flexibility in regards to office building renovation/redevelopment.		PC	
Strategize zoning and development to blend residential, retail, and office uses, encouraging compact, pedestrian-friendly communities. The redevelopment of land within the nodes identified can be the first step in creating these walkable areas.		PC	CC, LDFA, ECC, CAC, BC
Create vibrant, accessible commercial hubs to retain more local spending.		PC	CC, LDFA, ECC, CAC, BC, AC, YAB
Ensure zoning and development review is easy to understand, and allow for incremental improvements to not be overly burdensome, while encouraging high-quality development.		PC	CC
Incentivize the addition of innovative design elements to attract tenants and customers. Use design guidelines that emphasize pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, adaptable retail spaces, and modern architectural features.		PC	CC, LDFA, ECC, CAC, BC, SC, AC
Incentivize green technologies like solar panels or rainwater harvesting in developments.		PC	CC, LDFA, ECC, CAC, BC, SC
Incentivize eco-friendly building practices, such as LEED-certified buildings or energy-efficient infrastructure.		PC	CC, LDFA, ECC, CAC, BC, SC
Integrate sustainable transportation options like bike lanes, electric vehicle charging stations, and improved public transit to reduce the environmental impact of car-dependent development.		PC	CC, LDFA, ECC, CAC, BC, SC
Incentivize renewable energy sources and adopt sustainable waste management practices.		PC	CC, LDFA, SC
ACTION TYPE: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS			
Enhance access to warehousing, distribution, and flex spaces could further boost local industry.		CC	LDFA
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Sterling Heights 2025 Master Plan

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS			
Work with owners of office buildings to identify structures that could be transformed into housing (nationally, approximately one in six office buildings are realistic candidates for this type of redevelopment).		LDFA, LCIA	ECC, YAB
Assist with identifying strategies for workforce development and training for diverse industries such as automotive, defense, advanced manufacturing, health care, and aerospace – along with housing options affordable to this workforce.		LDFA, LCIA	CC
Identify shared spaces, event venues, and communication channels for community-wide promotion of local businesses.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, AC
Collaborate with local businesses and real estate developers to gather insights can ensure that new developments reflect the preferences and spending habits of residents and nearby communities.		LDFA, LCIA	CC
Support education and skills development through engaging with the local schools, training/vocational programs, and Macomb Community College.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, YAB, ECC, CAC
Encourage local opportunities for social engagement, networking, and volunteering to encourage young people to be involved and foster a sense of belonging.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, YAB, ECC, CAC, AC
Host regular roundtable discussions with interested private property owners to answer questions and explore potential funding sources and incentives to encourage private investment and potential for redevelopment projects.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, YAB, ECC, CAC, AC
Help property owners understand how to modify any restrictions, deeds, and covenants they may have that preclude successful redevelopment.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, ECC
ACTION TYPE: OTHER			
Consider the Lakeside Mall redevelopment as a model for repuprosing aging retail spaces, albeit on a smaller physical level. Relative approaches at the nodes could be adopted for other outdated commercial properties, integrating housing, retail, and community spaces to revitalize these areas.		LCIA	CC, LDFA
Create a network of co-working spaces, local business incubators, and support programs that provide training, grants, and tax incentives.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, YAB, ECC, CAC, AC
Nurture businesses at Velocity, the City's incubator, as well as explore other types of business incubation, to promote entrepreneurship.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, YAB, ECC, CAC, AC
Provide incentives, ranging from tax breaks, to grants and reduced permitting fees, can help encourage and support small businesses in the community.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, YAB, ECC, CAC, AC
Conduct ongoing market research through surveys, focus groups, and analysis of local and regional consumer trends, to help identify gaps in the retail and service sectors, such as the growing demand for local dining options or professional services.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, ECC
Explore the development of one or more pilot programs to ignite ideas for redevelopment and demonstrate successful projects.		LDFA, LCIA	CC, YAB, ECC, CAC, AC

Table 3. Action Items: Environmental Stewardship

Actively promote a sustainable and resilient community by protecting and enhancing natural assets and the local environment.

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: ZONING			
Incentivize green buildings by way of expedited permits or density bonuses for developments meeting energy efficiency standards.		PC	CC, SC
Require energy-efficient designs in new developments in certain zoning districts, such as requiring reflective roofing, green roofs, or sustainable materials.		PC	CC, SC
Encourage mixed-use zoning in commercial nodes to integrate residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, promoting walkability and reducing energy use.		PC	CC, SC
Allow for more flexible zoning to include accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and missing middle housing (e.g., duplexes, triplexes).		PC	CC, SC
Rezone for compact, high-density, mixed-use developments near public transit and existing infrastructure.		PC	CC, SC
Ensure renewable energy infrastructure, such as community solar farm installations, are permitted in the Zoning Ordinance.		PC	CC, SC
Incentivize the planting of more trees through density bonuses.		PC	CC, SC
Increase native species planting requirements for new development.		PC	CC, SC
Assess the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that composting and recycling facilities are accessible to residents, including those in multi-family residential areas.		PC	CC, SC
Allow for flexible zoning for waste drop-off centers in convenient locations.		PC	CC, SC
Allow for flexible zoning for community gardens, urban farms, and residential food production.		PC	CC, SC
Allow for flexible zoning for rooftop gardens and vertical farming in commercial and residential zones.		PC	CC, SC
Develop solar access ordinances to protect property owners' ability to install solar panels.		PC, SC	CC
ACTION TYPE: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS			
Investigate the opportunities for strategic funding, such as a millage or stormwater utility fee (like a water or sewer fee), that would allow the City to better manage the infrastructure needed to collect, transport, and treat stormwater runoff. Research best practices from communities who have created similar funding programs and engage in dialog with residents, businesses, and property owners throughout the research and assessment process.		CC	SC
Implement Complete Streets ordinance and policies that prioritize walking, biking, and public transit through coordination of infrastructure improvements.		CC	SC

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS			
Establish public-private partnerships to fund and expand renewable energy projects within the City.		CC	SC
Partner with local energy providers to create community education campaigns on transitioning to renewable energy sources and the benefits associated.		CC	SC
Promote community workshops and education materials on sustainable landscaping and green infrastructure maintenance.		SC	CC, BC, YAB, ECC
Further support Clinton River Watershed cleanup days and increase volunteer efforts for the watershed's health.		SC	CC, BC, YAB, ECC
Promote the use of citizen science apps to engage residents in monitoring and tracking tree health.		SC	CC, BC, YAB, ECC
Engage schools through hands-on programs like starting school gardens or teaching children about sustainable food systems and nutrition.		SC	CC, BC, YAB, ECC
Create a sustainable workshop series promoting sustainable topics for every session.		SC	CC, BC, YAB, ECC
Create online hubs with resources, maps, and toolkits for sustainability projects. Use social media to showcase ongoing initiatives and opportunities for involvement.		CC	SC
Collaborate with schools, libraries, nonprofits, and businesses to host events, create educational materials, and run sustainability programs.		SC	CC, BC, YAB, ECC
ACTION TYPE: OTHER			
Develop online resources, such as guides for energy-efficient upgrades, solar panel installation, and sustainable landscaping, tailored to homeowners, renters, and landlords		SC	CC
Update City codes to include requirements for EV charging readiness and renewable energy integration in new developments.		PC, SC	CC
Explore creative approaches to stormwater management in the NVD Corridor, an area historically prone to flooding. Develop strategies with local businesses and property owners to create pilot projects that can offer educational opportunities for others as well as promote the identity of the City and corridor as a hub for innovation.		LDFA	SC, CC, BC
Update tree preservation ordinance to require improved tree replacement ratios for new developments.		CC	SC
Develop a long-term plan to preserve local wetlands. Study the feasibility of adopting a local wetland ordinance.		CC	SC
Identify parcels for green space preservation.		CC	SC
Communicate the new ordinance requirements, which will be effective in 2026, that bring recycling to multi-family developments with property owners and managers.		SC	CC, YAB, ECC
Host more frequent community events like recycling drives, scrap metal collections, e-waste and hazardous waste drop-offs, and composting workshops to encourage proper waste disposal practices.		CC	SC
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Note: Staff is assumed to be involved as appropriate and as directed by CC/Administration.			

Table 4. Action Items: Transportation

Promote a sustainable and accessible transportation system that prioritizes walkability, public transit, and active transportation.

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: ZONING			
Eliminate minimum parking requirements where supported by transit and where alternative transportation options are promoted.		PC	CC
Incentivize property owners to participate in shared parking arrangements by promoting the benefits and providing model agreement language that could be adapted as needed.		PC	CC
Utilize form-based code standards, zoning strategies that focus primarily on how buildings and site design contribute to shaping the public realm, making streets and sidewalks more attractive, comfortable, and conducive to walkable areas.		PC	CC
Lower minimum parking requirements and establish parking maximums to reduce the amount of land dedicated for parking automobiles.		PC	CC
ACTION TYPE: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS			
Implement Complete Streets ordinance and policies that prioritize walking, biking, and public transit through coordination of infrastructure improvements.		CC	SC
Improve access to buses, shuttle services, and bike lanes.		CC	PC
Ensure sidewalk network in the City is complete and in good repair to connect neighborhoods to schools, civic uses, and other destinations.		CC	PC
Explore opportunities for new dedicated bicycle lanes.		CC	PC
Expand the shared use path network within the City and connect the City's network to the regional network.		CC	PC
Create an enhanced protective streetscape program to provide shade from sun as well as minor protection from rain.		CC	PC
Explore a street lighting enhancement program to create an improved sense of place and safety.		CC	PC
Utilize pedestrian-only signals with audible messaging on key pedestrian intersections, including the mixed-use nodes.		CC	PC, CAC
Utilize curb extensions or bump-outs and similar traffic calming devices in key pedestrian intersections, including the mixed-use nodes.		CC	PC
Utilize crosswalks, pedestrian pavement markings, and crosswalk signals in key pedestrian intersections, including the mixed-use nodes.		CC	PC, CAC
Install wayfinding signage to improve directional understanding of pedestrian and non-motorized transportation users.		CC	PC, CAC

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Note: Staff is assumed to be involved as appropriate and as directed by CC/Administration.

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS			
Work with regional transportation providers to improve public transportation networks and services, while focusing on underserved areas as a priority.		CC	ECC, CAC
Organize events like "Car-Free Days" and "Bike to School/Work Days" to promote alternative transportation methods.		CC	ECC, YAB
Invest in public transportation and infrastructure and support regional transit efforts.		CC	PC
Support shared mobility services and encourage car-sharing and bike-sharing programs.		CC	SC, PC
Work with regional transportation providers to establish opportunities for micro-transit, such as car (or bike)-sharing and dial-a-ride services, as well as local trolley or shuttles, to help people "go the last mile" to reach a regional transit system.		CC	PC
Advocate for complete streets and improved context-sensitive design on streets that the City does not have jurisdiction over (Macomb Department of Roads and Michigan Department of Transportation roads).		CC	PC
ACTION TYPE: OTHER			
Explore local financing mechanisms, such as tax increment financing and business improvement districts, to fund pedestrian-oriented improvements.		CC	EDC

Table 5. Action Items: Placemaking and Community Building

Create a City comprised of vibrant, inclusive, and walkable neighborhoods that foster a strong sense of community and place.

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: ZONING			
Incorporate thoughtful urban design to improve accessibility, safety, and the overall ambiance of a place.		PC	CC
Integrate pedestrian-friendly streets and driveways, accessible public or semi-public plazas, and green spaces in or near mixed-use development.		PC	CC
Require appropriate lighting for usable areas accessed at night in mixed-use development.		PC	CC
Add standards for public art in private development.		PC	CC, AC
ACTION TYPE: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS			
In public parks accessible to nodes, add more seating opportunities - including benches, movable chairs, or seating around foundations or public art.		CC	PC
Add appropriate lighting to sidewalks, pathways, and public parks near or accessible to nodes.		CC	PC
Add wayfinding signage in key civic areas, as well as the mixed-use nodes while they develop.		CC	PC
Add bike parking facilities, bus stops, pedestrian pathways, and car-free zones to encourage and support access by a variety of modes.		CC	PC
ACTION TYPE: ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS			
Encourage businesses and property owners to incorporate outdoor concerts, food markets, theater performances, and art installations or exhibitions into the mixed-use nodes.		CC	BC
Support arts-related businesses, non-profit organizations, and cultural organizations through the promotion of the City as an arts-welcoming community.		CC	AC, ECC
Support arts-related businesses, non-profit organizations, or cultural organizations by exploring opportunities for incubator space, similar to or in conjunction with Velocity, for the arts through education, programming, and a makerspace.		CC	AC, LDFA
Reach out to realtors, Connect Macomb, and the Utica Community Schools and Warren Consolidated Schools districts can spread the word of the existing and future arts offerings in the City.		CC	YAB
Continue to encourage and support civic celebrations, including festivals and farmers markets; tap into the social, ethnic, and economic diversity found in the community.		AC	BC, ECC
Encourage youth in the art community by providing opportunities for young people to create and participate in arts and cultural events and activities.		AC	YAB, BC, ECC

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: OTHER			
Host activities and events to breathe life into public spaces, attracting people, creating social interactions, and contributing to the overall vibrancy of the place.		AC	CC, BC, ECC
Tap into the expertise of planning, engineering, and recreation professionals to incorporate art into public spaces.		CC	PC
Utilize the City's website to promote the community's arts and cultural assets, including an explanation of what they do and where they are located.		CC	AC,ECC
Continue to support temporary and permanent public art projects; explore creating a public art fund tied to new development.		CC	AC
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Table 6. Action Items: Mixed-Use Nodes

Many of the goals related to housing, economy, environmental stewardship, transportation, and placemaking will be realized by the actions and strategies utilized in these mixed-use node.

ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: ZONING			
Encourage residential density in mixed-use nodes.		PC	CC
Eliminate blanket residential density maximums in the mixed-use nodes, instead consider residential density in terms of local context, including access to jobs, amenities, and local transportation options.		PC	CC
Prioritize desirable uses that contribute to place; in additional to residential, restaurants and cafes (including outdoor seating), retail shops, entertainment venues (in District Nodes), and pop-up shops and temporary uses should all be permitted by right.		PC	CC
Prohibit automobile-oriented uses in the mixed-use nodes, including uses such as drive-throughs and uses which cater to automobile-oriented design.		PC	CC
Analyze land uses in the nodes to ensure sensible regulations for nonconformities. If a flexible approach with nonconformities is preferred, creation of nonconforming "classes" may be implemented to ensure certain uses are given flexibility while others are held to more rigid prohibitions.		PC	CC
Incentivize shared facilities, including shared parking, shared access drives, and internal sidewalk/crosswalk connections. These may be incentivized through Zoning Ordinance reductions, such as reduction of required parking if shared facilities are provided.		PC	CC
Require "taming" techniques for minor redevelopment projects. This may include the following: replacing surface parking, unnecessary pavement, or excess vehicle drives with pocket parks, plazas, or intentional enhanced landscape treatment areas; improving access to and from the main entrance of the building to the public sidewalk; and restricting blank walls along a public road and public or quasi-public sidewalk.		PC	CC
Require "evolving" or "transforming" techniques for new construction or large redevelopment projects. This may include the rebuilding of a building, or structurally altering a building in a manner that orients the building towards a primary driveway or communal space; it may also include orienting a parking lot to the rear or side of the building, obscuring the parking lot from public view and pedestrian access.		PC	CC
Allow for temporary pop-up activity on vacant land or underutilized land (i.e., parking lots).		PC	CC, AC

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ACTION	PRIORITY	LEAD PARTY	POTENTIAL SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ACTION TYPE: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS			
Study the feasibility for road diets on the City-controlled roads which make up the mixed-use nodes.		CC	PC
Widen sidewalks into shared-use paths, provide benches or seating areas, and provide shade in the form of canopy trees within the mixed-use nodes' rights-of-way.		CC	PC
Add pedestrian-scale lighting in conjunction with changes to uses, building form, and site development.		CC	BC
ACTION TYPE: ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS			
Establish an "Interested Node Developer Task Force," which can be a program of regular meetings or open houses hosted by the City to facilitate discussions about development ideas owners may have, or even be a means to simply link property owners to one another for future business.		CC	EDC, LDFA
ACTION TYPE: OTHER			
Create property disposition program in the event that the City were to obtain ownership of any developable or re-developable land within a mixed-use development node. This may be done via requests for proposals (RFPs), where an interested property owner proposes a development plan that meets this Master Plan's goals.		CC	PC, LDFA
Establish a City policy which requires a private project seeking tax incentives (i.e., brownfield tax incentives, commercial rehabilitation tax exemptions, or similar incentives) to explicitly meet City Master Plan goals.		CC	PC, EDC, LDFA

My favorite place in Sterling Heights is Dodge Park. There is lots of nature, and it is very comfortable.

Brooke Wilson, Age 14

APPENDIX A

EXISTING CONDITIONS

EXISTING CONDITIONS: REGIONAL SETTINGS

LOCATION

The City of Sterling Heights resides in southern Macomb County, Michigan. The City is 36.7 square miles and is the fourth most populated City in the state of Michigan. Located 30 minutes north of Detroit, the City serves as a major suburban hub in southeastern Michigan. It acts as a regional base and hosts a wide range of commercial and industrial activity.

Several transportation corridors serve as the boundaries for the City. M-59 runs through the northern border, Hayes Road acts as the eastern border, East 14 Mile Road forms the southern boundary, and Dequindre Road defines the western border between Macomb and Oakland County. Between Mound Road and Van Dyke Avenue is the City's major industrial corridor. The Sterling Heights Assembly and Stamping plants, which are operated by Stellantis, and Ford Motor Company's Sterling Axle Plant are located in the City.

Sterling Heights' location enables the community to provide its residents with easy access to other major commercial and recreational locations throughout southeastern Michigan. With easy access to downtown areas in Detroit, Utica, Mount Clements, and several communities in Oakland County, the City and its residents have a wide array of opportunities to travel and access popular commercial corridors. Located within the City is the Lakeside Mall site, which was a major retail and shopping center currently undergoing a process to be reimagined and reactivated. Residents of Sterling Heights also have access to several regional parks, which include Lake St. Clair Metropark, Wolcott Mill Metropark, and Stony Creek Metropark. Dodge Park, Michigan Lottery Amphitheatre, and Freedom Hill County Park are a few examples of key recreational areas located within the City.

Figure 4. Location Map

SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

The City is bordered by Shelby Township and the City of Utica to the north, Clinton Township and the City of Fraser to the east, the City of Warren to the south, and the City of Troy to the west.

A majority of the City is suburban with greater intensity of uses and density located between Mound Road and Van Dyke Avenue. There are several commercial nodes located throughout the City,

Figure 5. Surrounding Communities
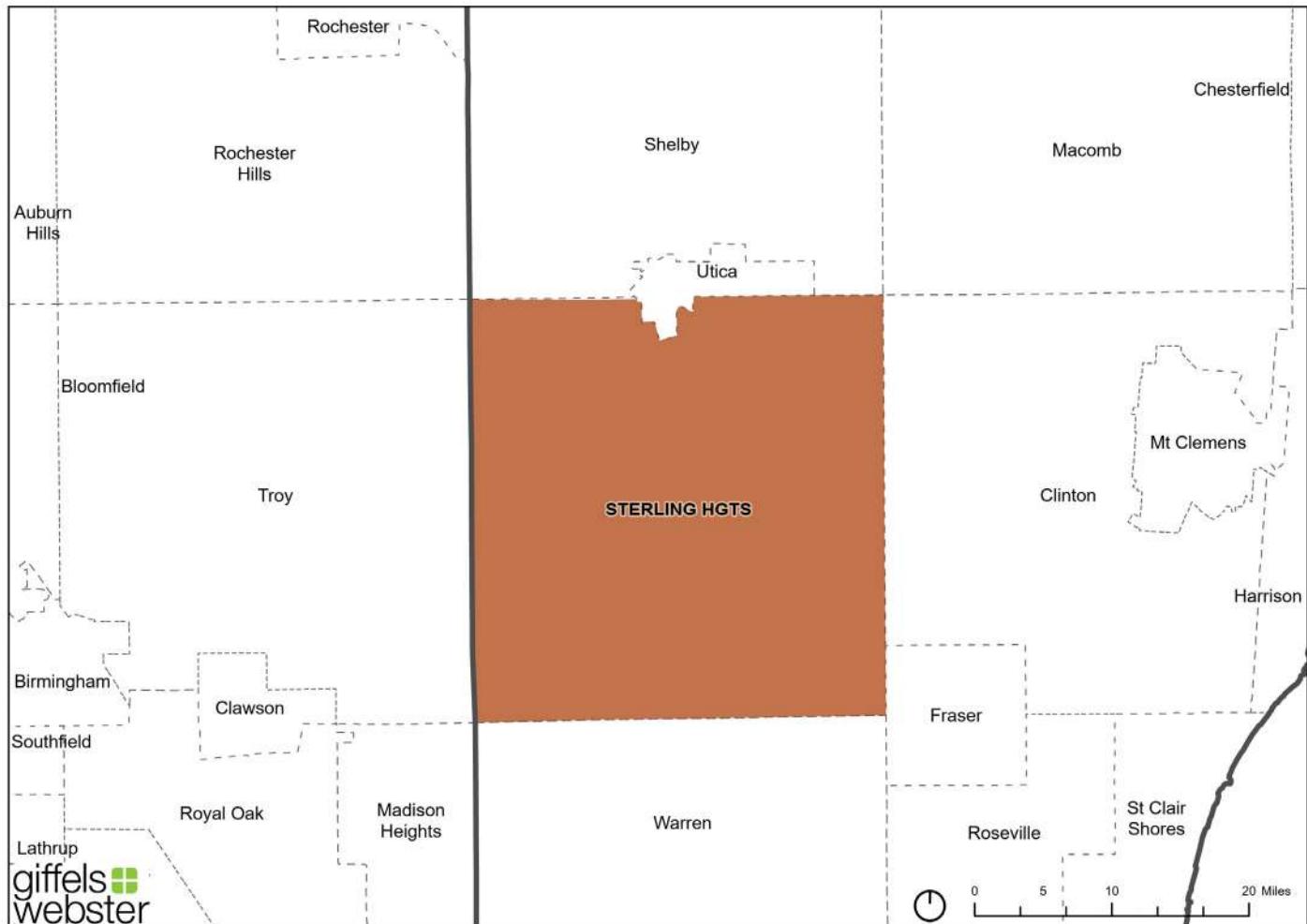
which serve as neighborhood shopping and retail destinations for residents.

LONG-RANGE PLANNING IN ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

Shelby Township (north)

Shelby Township borders the entire northern border with the City of Utica located between Shelby Township and Sterling Heights. The border is defined by M-59, which runs east to west. West of Van Dyke Avenue consists of a mix of commercial and residential uses in Shelby Township. Between Ryan and Mound Road is a higher density residential area. Along the eastern section of the border consists of a similar mix of commercial and residential areas, with a higher density shopping area located between Hayes Road and Schoenherr Road. Shelby Township

and Sterling Heights are generally similar in their future land use designations.

City of Utica (north)

The City of Utica splits the border between Shelby Township and Sterling Heights. The future land use for Utica is a mix between single-family residential areas and mixed-use commercial areas, which generally aligns with the future land uses in Sterling Heights. Downtown Utica is easily accessible for Sterling Heights residents and provides them with a walkable and urban downtown area.

Clinton Township (east)

Clinton Township entirely borders Sterling Heights to the east, with a small section covered by the City of Fraser. Hayes Road defines the border. The future land uses designations along Hayes Road for Clinton Townships consists of a mix between commercial, multi-family residential, single-family residential, and

office uses. Sterling Heights' future land uses generally align with Clinton Township's.

City of Fraser (east)

The City of Fraser shares a small section of the eastern border of Sterling Heights. The future land uses for the City of Fraser are primarily low-density single residential areas with a few denser residential areas. However, the Sterling Heights future land use maps shows the southeastern section to consist of urban residential, which is somewhat compatible with the residential areas in Fraser, but with a much more consistent higher density.

City of Warren (south)

The City of Warren completely borders the southern section of Sterling Heights. Warren is the third largest City in the State of Michigan, with Sterling Heights right behind Warren. Between Mound Road and Van Dyke Avenue is a continuation of the industrial and commercial corridor future land use designations found within Sterling Heights. East of Van Dyke Avenue comprises of mainly single-family residential and higher density residential, which slightly differs from the more urban residential future designation found in Sterling Heights. The future land use designations west of Mound Road are similar between the two communities, with both proposing a more low-density residential and some commercial areas.

City of Troy (west)

The City of Troy is the only community that borders Sterling Heights on the west side of the City. The future land use designations of Troy and Sterling Heights along their shared border are similar. Both designate a majority of the area low-density residential with commercial areas located along Dequindre Road and the east to west roads.
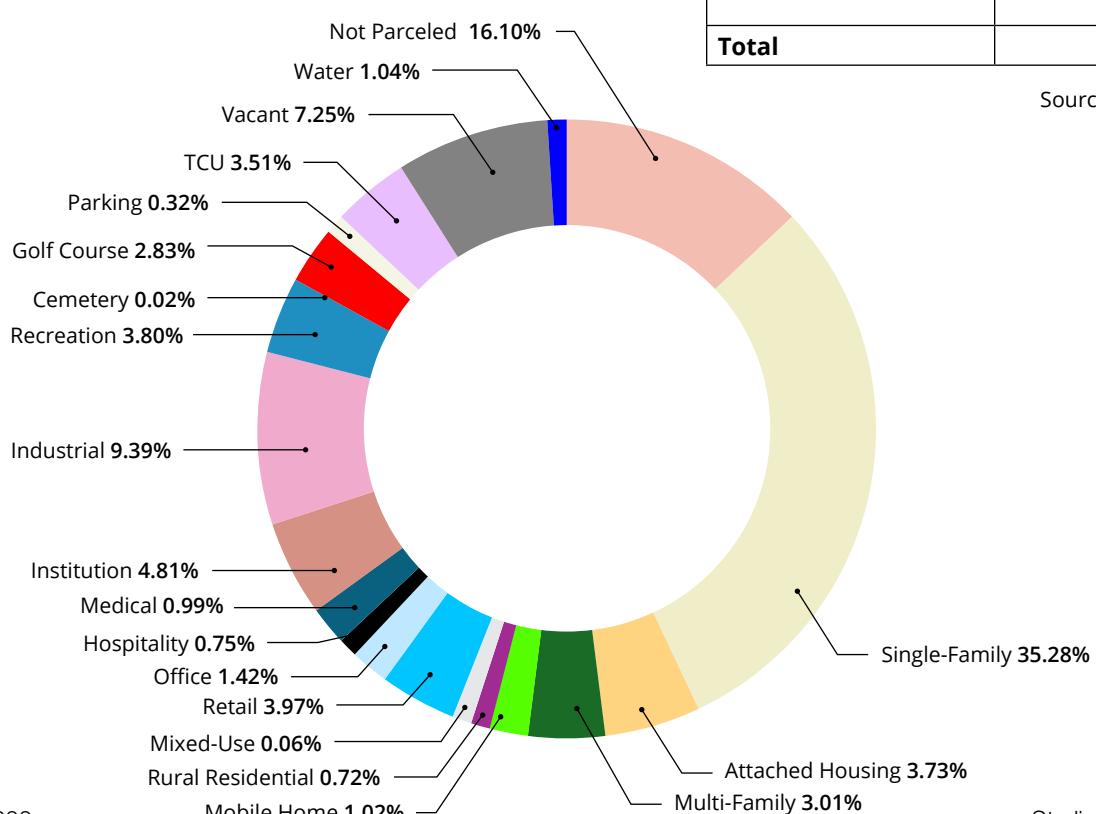
To lay the groundwork for planning the future land uses for the City, an understanding of the existing uses is required. The following map and graphic provide a breakdown of the existing land uses found within Sterling Heights. (TCU describes land uses that fall under Transportation, Communications, and Utilities.)
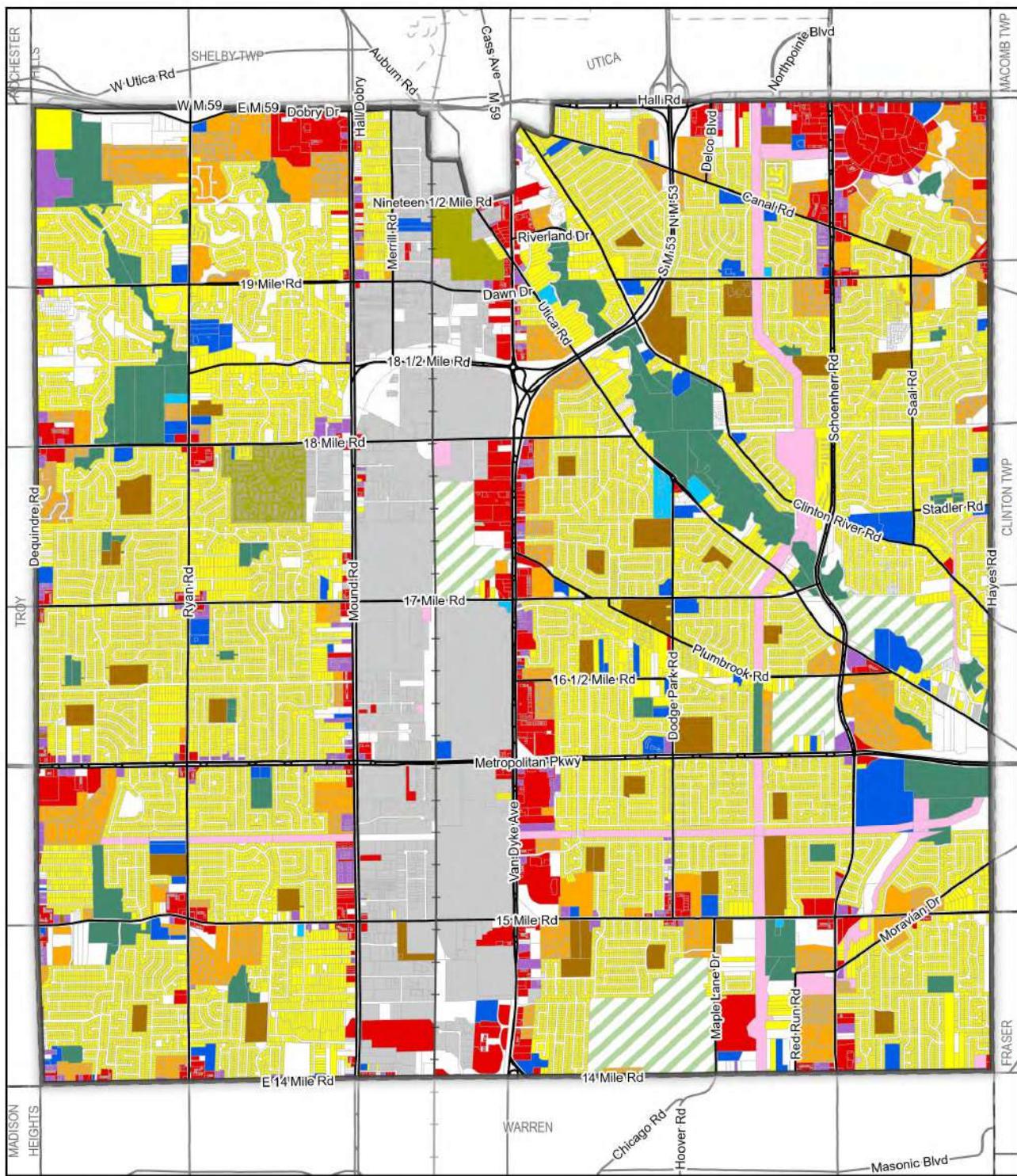
Sources: Land Use: Sterling Heights. Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: August 13, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster

Single Family Residential	Industrial	School
Multiple Family Residential	Parks/Public Open Space	Utilities
Mobile Home Park	Public/Semi Public	Vacant
Office	Municipal	
Commercial	Golf Course	

0   0.5   1 Miles

giffels webster

EXISTING LAND USE

To lay the groundwork for planning the future land uses for the City, an understanding of the existing uses is required. The following map and graphic provide a breakdown of the existing land uses found within Sterling Heights. (TCU describes land uses that fall under Transportation, Communications, and Utilities. Other includes all areas within a community that are not covered by a parcel legal description such as roadways.)

SEMCOG's Community Profile provides a breakdown of the existing land use categories in Sterling Heights. Single-family homes make up 35.3% of the available land in the City. Overall, 43.8% of land is residential, 7.2% is dedicated to commercial uses, and 9.4% is designated for industrial use.

LAND USE	ACRES	PERCENT
Single-Family	8,292	35.28%
Attached Housing	876	3.73%
Multi-Family	707	3.01%
Mobile Home	239	1.02%
Rural Residential	168	0.72%
Mixed-Use	14	0.06%
Retail	932	3.97%
Office	334	1.42%
Hospitality	176	0.75%
Medical	232	0.99%
Institutional	1,130	4.81%
Industrial	2,206	9.39%
Recreation	894	3.80%
Cemetery	5	0.02%
Golf Course	666	2.83%
Parking	75	0.32%
TCU	824	3.51%
Vacant	1,704	7.25%
Water	244	1.04%
	3,783	16.1%
Total	**12,501**	**100.0%**

Source: SEMCOG 2020 Land Cover

Not Parceled **16.10%**
Water **1.04%**
Vacant **7.25%**
TCU **3.51%**
Parking **0.32%**
Golf Course **2.83%**
Cemetery **0.02%**
Recreation **3.80%**
Industrial **9.39%**
Institution **4.81%**
Medical **0.99%**
Hospitality **0.75%**
Office **1.42%**
Retail **3.97%**
Mixed-Use **0.06%**
Rural Residential **0.72%**
Mobile Home **1.02%**
Multi-Family **3.01%**
Attached Housing **3.73%**
Single-Family **35.28%**

Sterling Heights 2025 Master Plan

DEMOGRAPHICS

The foundation of any Master Plan relies on understanding the current makeup of the residents that call that community home. Capturing and analyzing data of who lives where and who may live in Sterling Heights provides greater insight into any future land use decisions. Each community is demographically different, which is then reflected in the Master Plan process and recommendations found within the plan. This uniqueness and difference between communities, results in different requirements for resources and improvements within the built and natural environment.

Demographic trends at the national and regional level can directly impact local communities. Changes in the population makeup, birth rates, aging population, income, etc. at the national and regional level can provide insight into trends that may be found at the local level. Key national and regional trends include:

- Birth rates in the United States have been falling almost continuously for more than a decade. The 2020 Census showed the lowest birthrate in U.S. history of 11.0 births per 1,000 people. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, for every 1,000 women of childbearing age (15-44), 55.8 of them gave birth in 2020. When compared to 2007 (69.5 births for every 1,000 women of childbearing age), this is a 20% decline in birth rates. Additionally, data from the World Bank show fertility rates (an estimate of the total number of children a women will ever have) also at a historically low level, at 1.7 births per woman in 2019.

- The marriage rate in the US continues to decline. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the rate was 5.1 per 1,000 people in 2020. A rate this low was likely impacted by the pandemic, however, it is a 1% drop from the 2019 rate, and follows a several decades-long trend of fewer marriages.

- The US population is aging. By 2030, every "Baby Boomer" will be 65 years old or older, making 20% of the US population of retirement age.

- As the population ages and fewer babies are born, the 65+ age group will outnumber the 18 and under age group for several years.

POPULATION

The data included in this Master Plan consists of mostly of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 Decennial Census and 2017-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates. The ACS and SEMCOG's Community Profile data supplement Decennial Census data that may not be available.

Population

The population in Sterling Heights for the past 20 years has largely remained the same, with small increases over that time. According to the 2020 Census, the population in Sterling Heights is 134,346 individuals, which is a 3.6% increase from 2010. The average household size in 2020 was 2.59 per household, which is a slight decrease from the average household size of 2.61 in 2010. The largest population cohort consists of individuals aged from 25-64, which is an estimated 70,325 individuals.
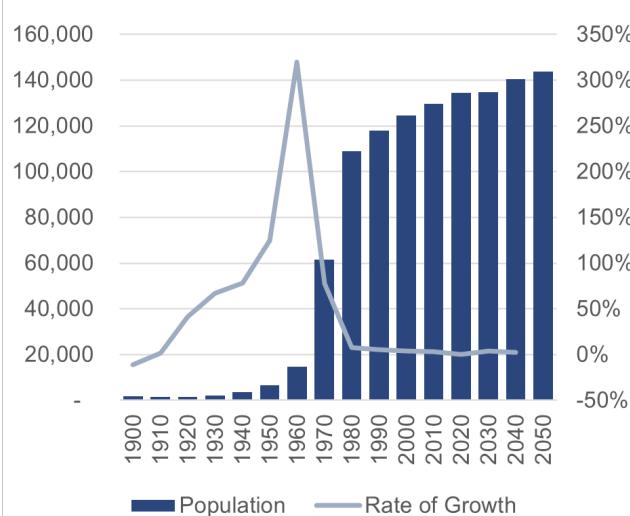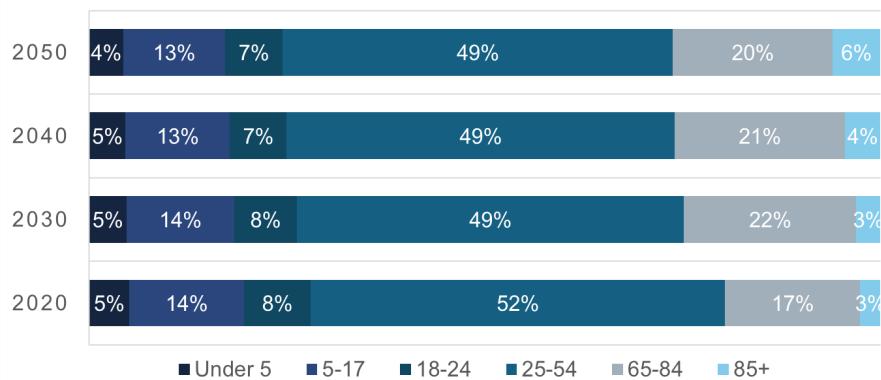

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile

Population Forecast

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) 2050 Regional Development Forecast provides population predictions based on current trends and current development projections. In this forecast, which goes to 2050, the population in Sterling Heights is predicted to slightly increase each decade. According to the forecast, the population will increase by 7% or increase to 143,767 individuals by 2050. People over 65 will have the greatest amount of growth within the coming decades. This suggests that the City of Sterling Heights should plan for a population that is aging in place as well as consider strategies to attract younger residents.

Projected Population by Age Group

Source: SEMCOG 2050 Regional Forecast and Community Profile

STERLING HEIGHTS POPULATION FORECAST 2020 - 2050									
AGE GROUP	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	CHANGE 2020-2050	% CHANGE 2020-2050
Under 5	6,865	6,447	6,407	6,379	6,520	6,407	6,247	-618	-9.0%
5-17	19,433	18,845	18,327	18,188	18,465	18,597	18,464	-969	-5.0%
18-24	11,346	10,980	10,690	10,632	10,101	10,059	10,483	-863	-7.6%
25-64	70,325	66,791	65,927	67,357	68,844	70,794	70,920	595	0.8%
65-84	22,979	26,632	29,369	30,743	30,170	29,544	28,936	5,957	25.9%
85+	3,398	3,426	4,089	5,279	6,304	7,677	8,717	5,319	156.5%
Total	**134,346**	**133,121**	**134,809**	**138,578**	**140,404**	**143,078**	**143,767**	**9,421**	**7.0%**

Source: SEMCOG 2050 Regional Forecast and Community Profile

SURROUNDING AND COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

To better understand where Sterling Heights will exist in the future context of the region an understanding of the future demographic trends in surrounding communities is required.

Person per Acre

Sterling Heights has a higher population density when compared to surrounding communities. Only Warren has a higher density per acre, which correlates with Warren having a larger population. Refer to the figure below for more information.

PERSON PER ACRE

Community	Person Per Acre
Southeast Michigan	1.7
Oakland County	2.3
Macomb County	2.87
Shelby Twp	3.61
Troy	4.08
Utica	4.66
Fraser	5.56
Clinton Twp	5.6
Sterling Heights	5.76
Warren	6.34
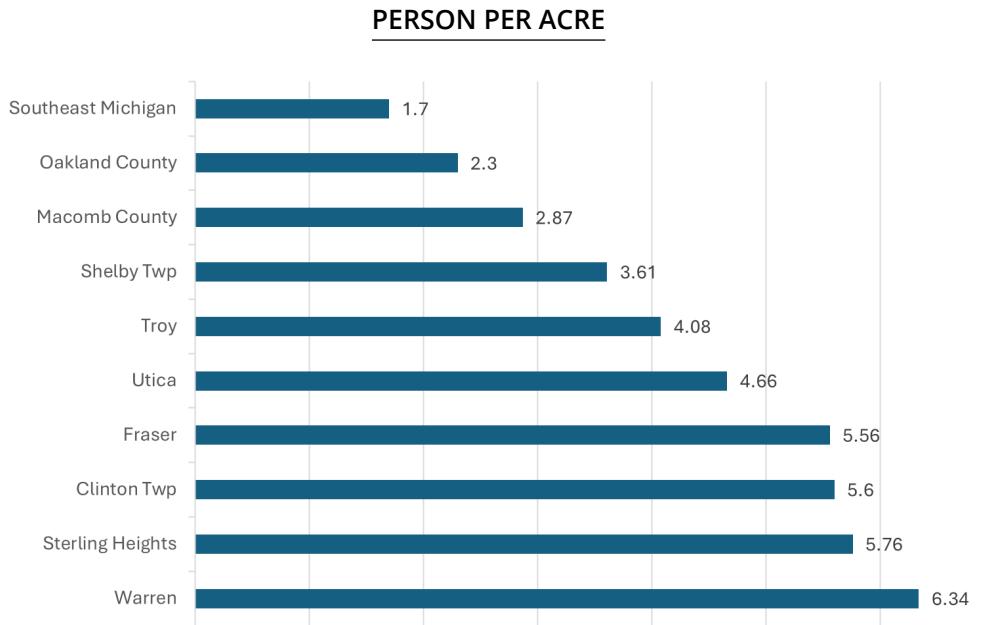
Source: SEMCOG 2020 Census Map

POPULATION: SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES (2010-2020)			
	2010 TOTAL POPULATION	2020 TOTAL POPULATION	% POPULATION CHANGE (2010-2020)
United States	308,745,538	331,449,281	7.4%
Michigan	9,883,640	10,077,331	2.0%
SE Michigan	4,704,809	4,830,489	2.7%
Oakland County	1,202,362	1,274,395	6.0%
Macomb County	840,978	881,217	4.8%
Shelby Twp	73,804	79,408	7.6%
Utica	4,757	5,245	10.3%
Sterling Heights	129,699	134,346	3.6%
Clinton Twp	96,796	100,513	3.8%
Fraser	14,480	14,726	1.7%
Warren	134,056	139,387	4.0%
Troy	80,980	87,294	7.8%
Ann Arbor	113,934	123,857	8.7%
Grand Rapids	187,975	198,173	5.8%

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile

Persons Per Acre

Legend:
- Less Than 3.5
- 3.5 - 5.5
- 5.5 - 8.5
- Over 8.5

Sources: Census Data: ACS 2023. Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: August 27, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster
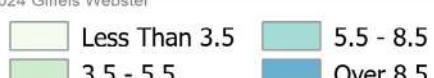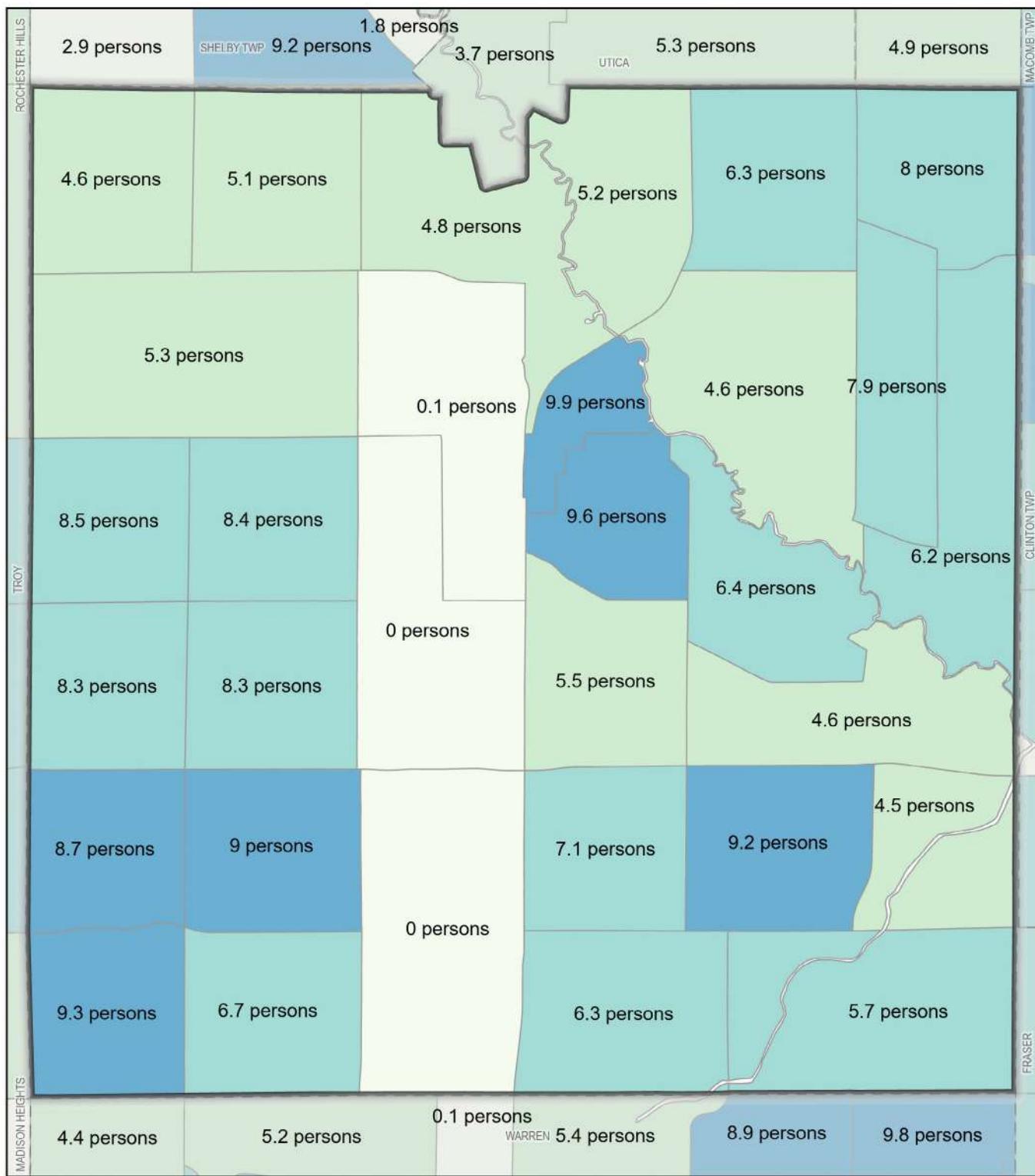
0   1   2 Miles

giffels webster

Population Growth

According to U.S. Census Bureau, the 2020 Census shows Sterling Heights experienced similar amounts of growth when compared to surrounding communities. With a growth rate of 3.6%, the City had a greater increase in population than the region and State of Michigan. No nearby community experienced any decline in population. The City with the largest increase in population was Utica, which had an increase of 10.3%. Sterling Heights has had a consistent increase in population over the past two decades even with a limited amount of undeveloped land available.

Older and Younger Adult Population

The City of Sterling Heights population has a higher percentage of adults aged 65 and over. When compared to the region, the City has 2.8% greater percentage of seniors than the region (16.79%). Considering the percentage of people between the ages of 5 to 17 years, Sterling Heights has a lower percentage when compared to surrounding communities. Sterling Heights has a smaller percentage of youth when compared to the region (15.93%). The City is fairly split between the youth population and senior population.

PERCENT OLDER THAN AGE 65

Warren	16.0%
Southeast Michigan	16.79%
Oakland County	17.71%
Macomb County	17.7%
Troy	18.3%
Sterling Heights	19.6%
Fraser	19.8%
Shelby Twp	19.8%
Clinton Twp	19.8%
Utica	20.7%

PERCENT AGES 5-17

Utica	12.0%
Clinton Twp	13.7%
Fraser	14.4%
Sterling Heights	14.5%
Shelby Twp	15.0%
Macomb County	15.2%
Oakland County	15.31%
Warren	15.4%
Southeast Michigan	15.93%
Troy	17.2%
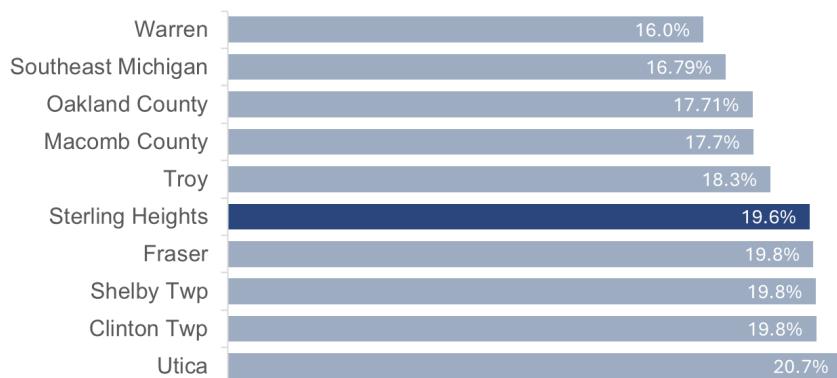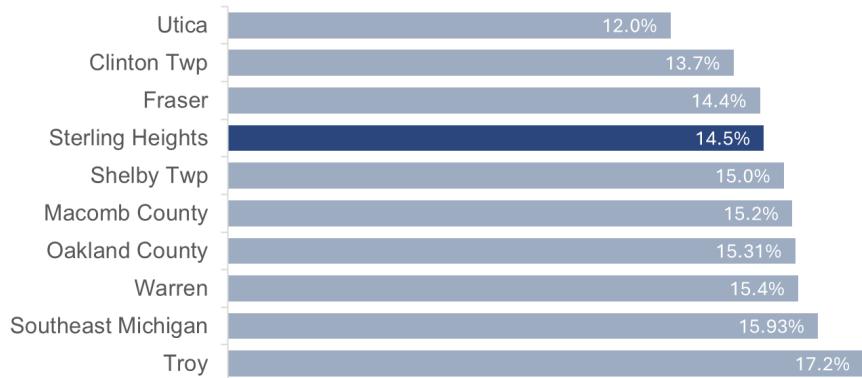
Source: SEMCOG Community Profile (2020 Census)

Population Cohort Analysis

The figure to the right provides a breakdown of the population based on age and sex. The distribution of males and females is almost equal. According to the 2018-2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 51.2% of the population is female and 48.8% is male. The largest section of the population falls between the ages of 25-29 (7.5%). The figure to the right demonstrates that women in Sterling Heights tend to live longer than men with women representing a larger share of the population that is older than 60 years. Overall, the smallest section of the population are people between the age of 80-84. Understanding the distribution of age and sex in Sterling Heights can provide greater insight into the socio-economic trends and conditions within the City.
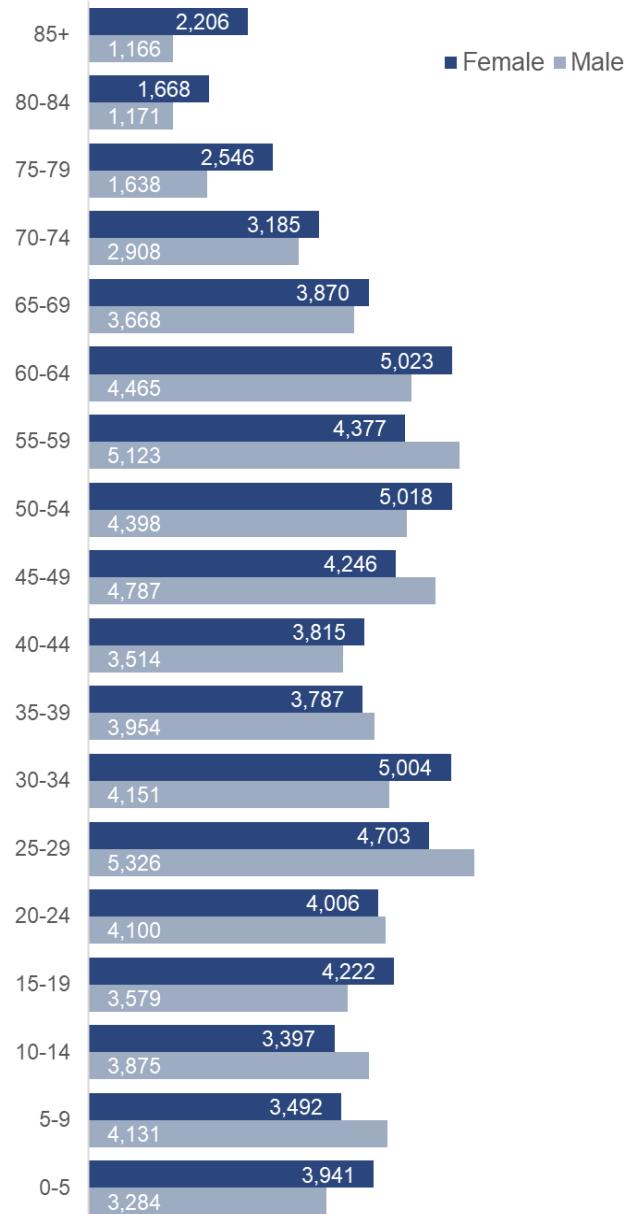
Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2018 - 2022 American Community Surveys 5-year Estimates

RACE

The majority of the population in Sterling Heights is white at 79.9%. The Black population in the City is 5.8% and the Asian population is 8.8%. Individuals who identify as multi-racial make up 3% of the population. 2% of the population is Hispanic. From 2010 to 2022 the share of the population that identified as white declined by 3.9%. The Asian population increased by 2.1% within the same time frame. Overall, the racial composition of Sterling Heights has remained the same over the past decade.

When compared to surrounding communities and the region, Sterling Heights has a percentage of individuals who identify as white. With a white population of 79.9% only Fraser and Shelby Township have a greater white population. Sterling Heights' Black population falls well below the Black population of the region (5.8% < 20.6%). The City has a fairly large Asian population when compared to surrounding areas. The Asian population had the largest increase between 2010 and 2022, which correlates to a larger percentage of the population identifying as Asian.

RACE DISTRIBUTION					
RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN	CENSUS 2010	% OF POPULATION 2010	ACS 2022	% OF POPULATION 2022	% POINT CHANGE 2010-2022
Non-Hispanic	127,176	98.1%	131,045	98.0%	-0.1%
White	108,750	83.8%	106,873	79.9%	-3.9%
Black	6,638	5.1%	7814	5.8%	0.7%
Asian	8,713	6.7%	11833	8.8%	2.1%
Multi-Racial	2,655	2.0%	4060	3.0%	1.0%
Other	420	0.4%	435	0.3%	-0.1%
Hispanic	2,523	1.9%	2699	2.0%	0.1%
Total	**129,699**	**100.0%**	**133,744**	**100.0%**	**0.0%**

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile
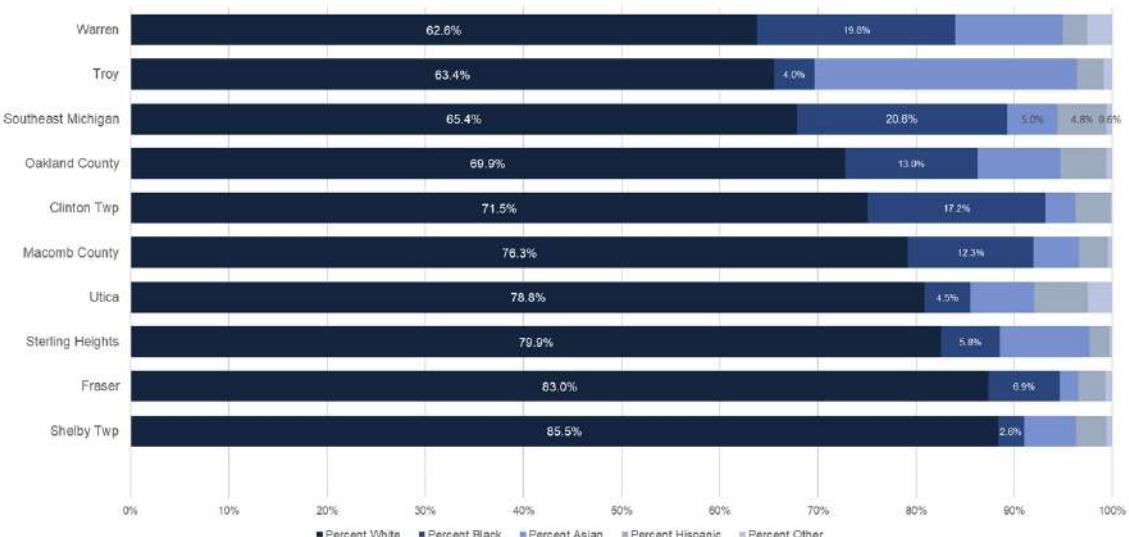
Source: SEMCOG Community Profile

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Nearly 60% of the population aged 25 and over in Sterling Heights has some education beyond high school. The figure below provides an overview of the educational attainment of residents. 28.2% of the population has received their high school diploma but did not pursue further education, and 19.2% of the population has received some form of college education, but no degree was awarded. 40% of the population has some level of college degree, with most of those individuals having received a bachelor's degree. 12.3% of the population have not received their high school diploma. The educational attainment levels in Sterling Heights have remained roughly the same since 2010.

Just under a third (30.9%) of residents in Sterling Heights have a bachelor's degree or higher. When compared to the region, the City has a lower percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher.

High School Graduate
19.2%

Associate's Degree
9.3%

Bachelor's Degree
19.9%

Graduate / Professional Degree
11.0%

Some College, No Degree
28.2%

Did Not Graduate High School
12.3%

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile
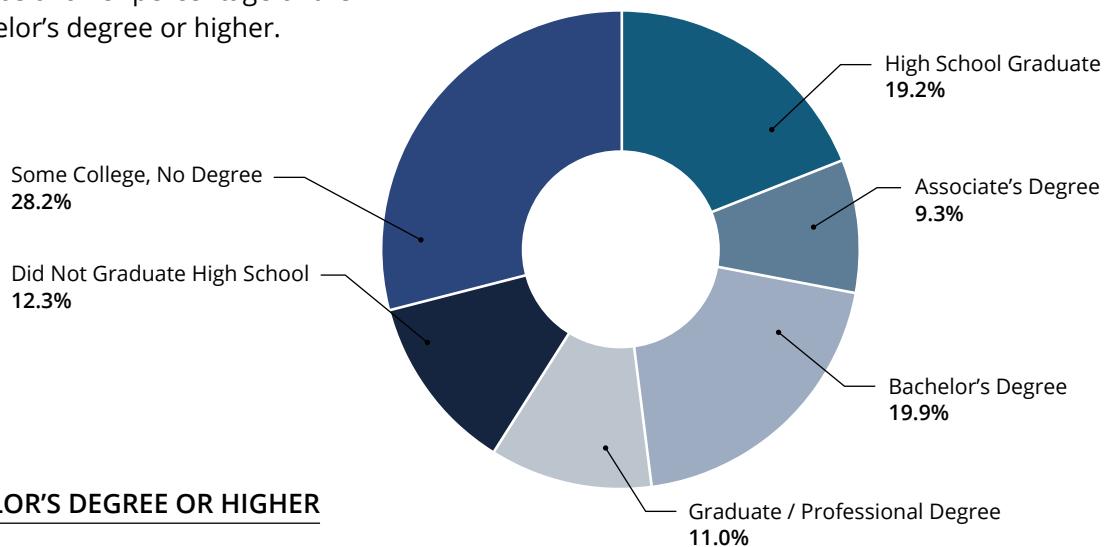
PERCENT BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER

Warren	19.9%
Fraser	21.0%
Clinton Twp	23.7%
Macomb County	26.8%
Utica	27.6%
Sterling Heights	30.9%
Southeast Michigan	35.2%
Shelby Twp	37.5%
Oakland County	49.5%
Troy	62.9%
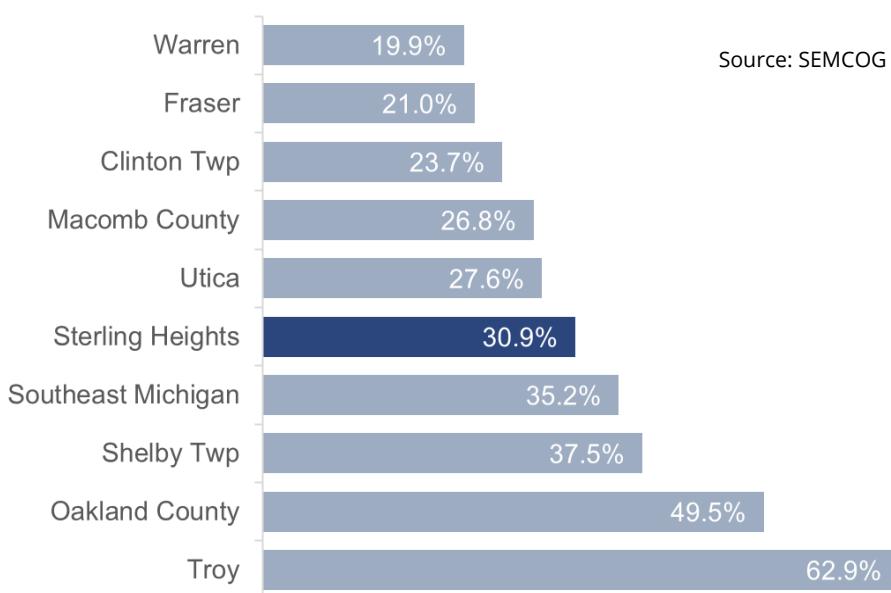
Source: SEMCOG Community Profile
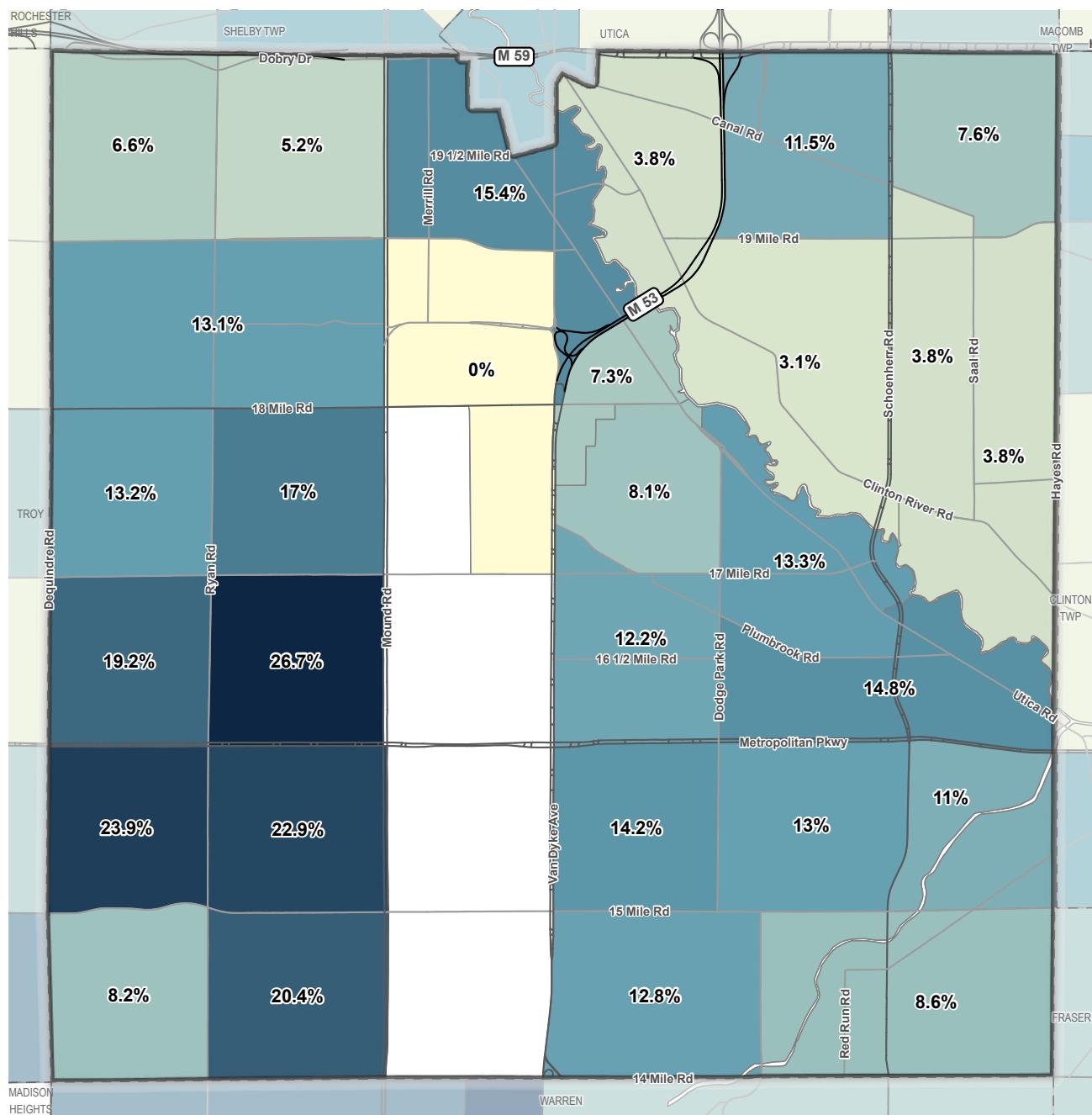
Sources: Education Status: Census Bureau's ACS, 2023. Roads: SEMCOG. Map exported: February 09, 2024 ©2024 Giffels Webster.

Percent of Population 25 Years and Over whose Highest Education Completed is Less Than High School.

30%   0%

EDUCATION LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL
STERLING HEIGHTS

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FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION

The 2022 ACS 5-year estimates state that Sterling Heights has a population of 133,744 residents. Of the total population, 96,572 (72.2%) residents are native-born citizens. A native-born citizen is considered an individual that is born in the United States. Those who are not a U.S. citizen at birth are a part of the foregin-born population, this includes those who become U.S. citizens through naturalization. The immigrant population may not be fully captured in this dataset due to underreporting/undercounting, but it is intended to illustrate that they make up a
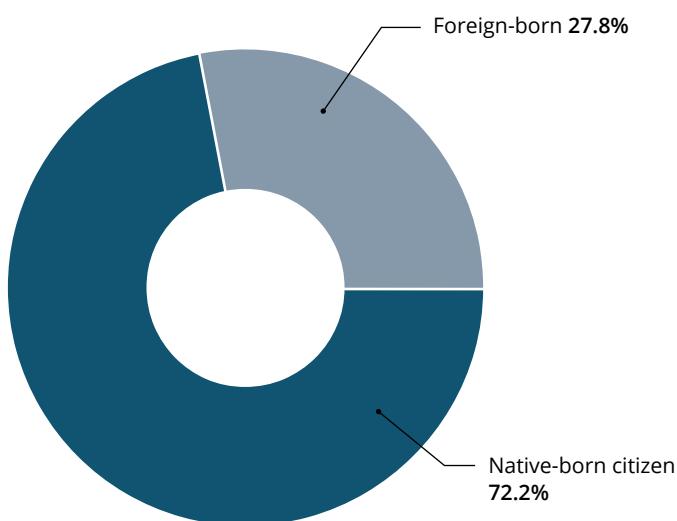
significant part of the City. The Census gathered that the foreign-born population of the City is 37,172 (27.8%) individuals. Just over a quarter of Sterling Heights residents were born outside of the U.S. and immigrated into the United States.

The population born outside of the U.S. (which includes native-born citizens born abroad) is 38,842 individuals. 1,670 residents are native-born citizens but were born outside of the country and had parents who were American citizens. As shown above, 37,172 individuals are considered foreign-born. 67.5% of those born outside the United States entered the country before 2010 and 32.5% entered the country after 2010. Just over two thirds of the population born outside the U.S. have lived in the country for nearly 15 years or more, whereas a third of the population born outside the country moved here within the past 15 years. The immigrant population within Sterling Heights is well-established and has become an integral part of the community. Compared to the region and nearby communities, Sterling Heights has a very high percentage of foreign born residents - only Troy has a higher percentage.

Foreign-born **27.8%**

Native-born citizen **72.2%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

PERCENT NATIVE OR FOREIGN BORN

	Southeast Michigan	Oakland County	Macomb County	Shelby Twp	Utica	Sterling Heights	Clinton Twp	Fraser	Warren	Troy
Percent foreign born	10.2%	13.1%	11.3%	14.9%	12.2%	27.8%	7.9%	7.4%	12.8%	29.3%
Percent native born	89.8%	86.9%	88.7%	85.1%	87.8%	72.2%	92.1%	92.6%	87.2%	70.7%

■ Percent native born ■ Precent foreign born
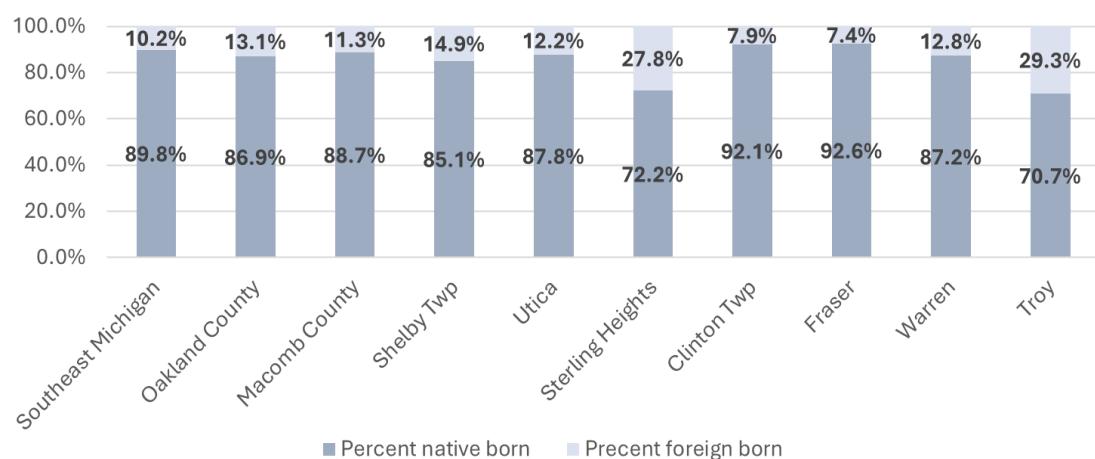
POPULATION BORN OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES					
	POPULATION	ENTERED BEFORE 2010	ENTERED AFTER 2010	PERCENT ENTERED BEFORE 2010	PERCENT ENTERED AFTER 2010
Native-born citizen born outside U.S.	1,670	921	749	2.4%	1.9%
Foreign-born	37,172	25,285	11,887	65.1%	30.6%
Total population	38,842	36,206	12,636	67.5%	32.5%
Asian	8,713	6.7%	11833	8.8%	2.1%
Multi-Racial	2,655	2.0%	4060	3.0%	1.0%
Other	420	0.4%	435	0.3%	-0.1%
Hispanic	2,523	1.9%	2699	2.0%	0.1%
Total	**129,699**	**100.0%**	**133,744**	**100.0%**	**0.0%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

FOREIGN-BORN PLACE OF BIRTH		
	POPULATION	PERCENT OF FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION
Europe	7,622	20.5%
Asia	27,142	73.0%
Africa	666	1.8%
Oceania	7	0.0%
Latin America	808	2.2%
Northern America	927	2.5%
Total Population	**37,172**	**100.0%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The 2022 ACS provides a breakdown of the country of origin for the foreign-born population in Sterling Heights. Almost three quarters (73.0%) of the foreign-born population are from Asia. Just over one fifth (20.5%) immigrated from Europe. Individuals from Northern America, Latin America, Africa, and Oceania are where the rest of the foreign-born population were born.

ANCESTRY		
	POPULATION	PERCENT OF POPULATION
German	17,020	12.70%
Polish	15,672	11.70%
Assyrian/Chaldean/ Syriac	15,378	11.50%
Italian	10,888	8.10%
Irish	9,076	6.80%
English	6,619	4.90%
Iraqi	6,168	4.60%
American	4,021	3.00%
Albanian	3,405	2.50%
French (except Basque)	3,028	2.30%
French Canadian	2,159	1.60%
Scottish	1,824	1.40%
Arab	1,754	1.30%
Lebanese	1,588	1.20%
Other Arab	1,456	1.10%
Romanian	1,332	1.00%
Greek	1,165	0.90%
Dutch	1,062	0.80%
Macedonian	1,119	0.80%
Belgian	905	0.70%
Canadian	954	0.70%
Ukrainian	940	0.70%
Yugoslavian	872	0.70%
Russian	842	0.60%
Swedish	852	0.60%
Norwegian	696	0.50%
Scotch-Irish	674	0.50%
Slovak	652	0.50%
Other groups	**25,354**	**19.0%**
Unclassified or not reported	**23,380**	**17.5%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Note that the above chart shows ancestry groups containing greater than or equal to 0.50% of the population. The Arab row indicates persons identifying themselves simply as "Arab." The Other Arab row indicates ancestry subgroups not including the above Arab subgroup nor the Egyptian, Iraqi, Jordanian, Lebanese, Moroccan, Palestinian, or Syrian subgroups.

The 2022 ACS also provides an analysis of the ancestry or ethnic origin of individuals. The table to the left provides a breakdown of the ethnicities reported by individuals during the 2022 ACS. Specifically, it includes the number of people who identified an ethnicity, whether as their sole response or as part of a multiple-ancestry response. It is important to note that not all ethnicities may be represented in the table. Since ACS data is self-reported and only allows for up to two ancestries per person, some survey takers may have elected to not answer the question or may not have put all of their ethnicity.

According to the 2022 ACS, a majority of individuals over the age of five (65.6%) in Sterling Heights only speak English at home. However, just over a third (34.4%) of residents over the age of 5 also speak another language other than English. Of those that speak a language other than English, 0.9% of residents speak Spanish. 10.7% of the population over the age of 5 speak an Indo-European language. Some examples of Indo-European languages include French, Italian, Russian, Hindi, Bengali, etc. 4.2% of the population speaks an Asian and Pacific Islander language at home. Examples of languages that fall under this category include Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, etc. The largest portion of the population over the age of five that speaks another language is 18.6% of the population, which fall under the other languages category. Other languages include Arabic, Hebrew, Swahili, etc.

The **Linguistics Isolation Map** provides an overview of which households in Sterling Heights are considered a limited English household. A limited English household describes a household that may have individuals whose first language is not English. The map demonstrates which areas of the City have households that are linguistically isolated. The area south of 19 Mile Road, west of Van Dyke Ave, east of Mound Road, and north of 17 Mile Road has the highest percentage of households (64.6%) with an adult population that are in a limited English household. Another area of the City that has a higher concentration of limited English households is located in the southwest corner. The area south of 17 Mile Road, west of Mound Road, north of 14 Mile Road, and east of Dequindre Road ranges from 24.1% to 34.6% of adults in a limited English household.
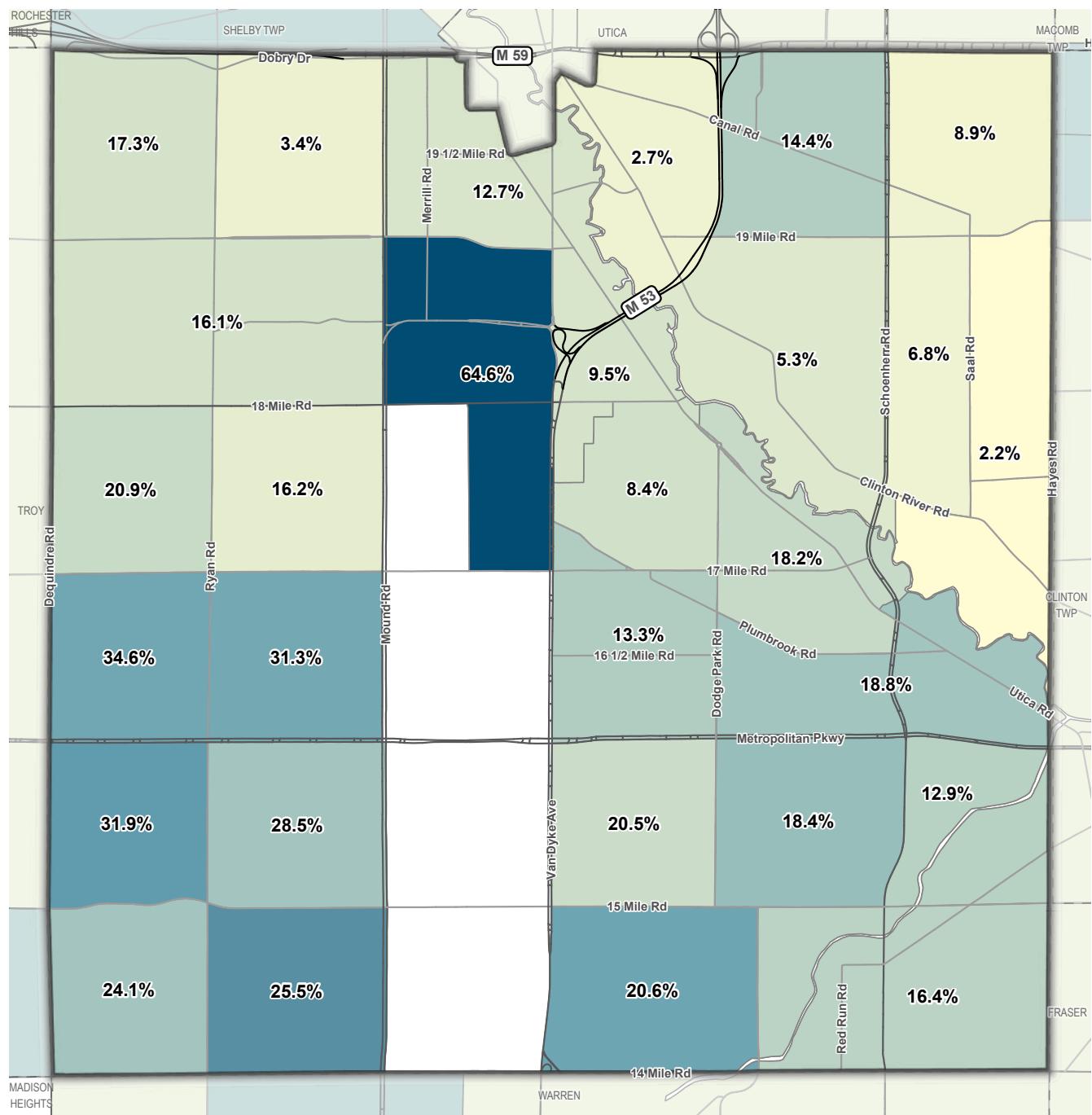
Sources: Linguistics: Census Bureau's ACS, 2023. Roads: SEMCOG. Map exported: February 09, 2024 ©2024 Giffels Webster.
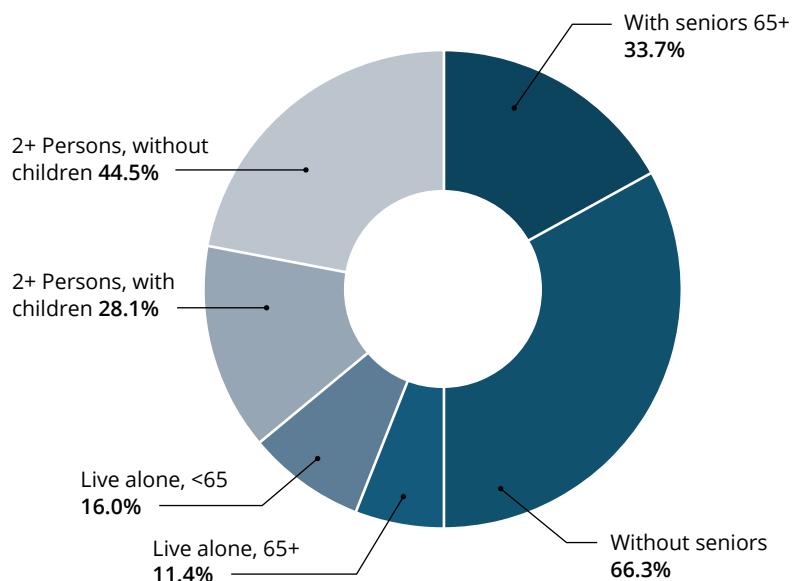
Percentage of adult population in a limited English household.

70%   0%
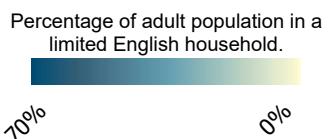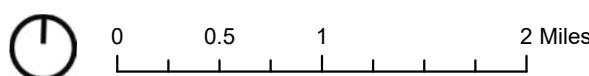
LINGUISTICS ISOLATION
STERLING HEIGHTS

giffels
webster

HOUSEHOLDS

According to the 2022 ACS, Sterling Heights has 50,989 households. Just over a third (33.7%) of households lived with an individual over the age of 65. Households comprised of a senior who lives alone make up 11.4% of all households. People who live alone and are under the age of 65 make up 16% of households in the City. According to the 2010 and 2020 Census, the average household size in Sterling Heights has only decreased by 2% or decreased from 2.61 to 2.59 people per household. Sterling Heights' population has remained relatively stable over the past decade.

With seniors 65+ **33.7%**

2+ Persons, without children **44.5%**

2+ Persons, with children **28.1%**

Live alone, <65 **16.0%**

Live alone, 65+ **11.4%**

Without seniors **66.3%**

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION: SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES		
	POPULATION HOUSEHOLDS WITH SENIORS (65+)	PERCENT HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN (<18)
United States	30.8%	30.2%
State of Michigan	31.8%	27.7%
Southeast Michigan	30.7%	27.8%
Oakland County	27.4%	30.5%
Macomb County	31.9%	27.7%
Shelby Twp	35.1%	27.7%
Utica	43.5%	17.4%
Sterling Heights	33.7%	28.1%
Clinton Twp	33.8%	24.3%
Fraser	35.0%	28.1%
Warren	30.3%	27.7%
Troy	32.7%	32.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 - 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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LOCAL ECONOMY

ESTABLISHMENTS

Similar to the Decennial Census, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts an Economic Census every five years. The 2022 data for Sterling Heights will be released around the time of this Plan's publishing. Data from 2012 and 2017 are used instead and may not fully reflect the current economic trends in Sterling Heights since 2017.

In 2012 there were 2,283 establishments that employed 40,586 people. The sales and revenue from the businesses in Sterling Heights nearly reached $8 billion in 2012. In 2017 the number of establishments increased to 2,536 which led to the number of employees increasing to 41,633. However, there was a slight decline in the total amount of sales and revenue, which decreased to just under $7 billion. The sector that experienced the greatest loss in sales and revenue between 2012 and 2017 was the professional, scientific, and technical services sector. The loss of revenue in this sector was $1.6 billion with a loss of 11 businesses, which may explain the decrease in revenue and sales. Overall, other sectors remained relatively stable between 2012 and 2017.

NAICS CODE	MEANING OF NAICS CODE	2012			2017		
		NO. OF ESTABLISHMENTS	SALES, VALUE OF SHIPMENTS, OR REVENUE ($1,000, IN 2022 DOLLARS)	NO. OF EMPLOYEES	NO. OF ESTABLISHMENTS	SALES, VALUE OF SHIPMENTS, OR REVENUE ($1,000, IN 2022 DOLLARS)	NO. OF EMPLOYEES
42	Wholesale trade	151	$1,048,316	1,914	153	$1,022,948	1,877
44-45	Retail trade	449	$2,451,890	7,490	458	$2,574,324	6,921
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	114	$125,725	742	198	$126,105	889
51	Information	41	N/A	1,381	54	N/A	1,787
52	Finance and insurance	178	N/A	1,401	153	N/A	1,767
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	93	$150,773	549	105	$248,052	693
54	Professional, scientific, and technical services	266	$2,813,694	8,887	255	$1,212,008	7,854
56	Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	150	$459,151	7,518	182	$595,264	7,053
61	Educational services	20	$10,969	149	20	$17,146	198
62	Health care and social assistance	374	$541,507	4,669	453	$672,713	6,039
71	Arts, entertainment, and recreation	28	$20,373	311	28	$24,598	295
72	Accommodation and food services	226	$238,084	4,510	262	$304,892	5,168
81	Other services (except public administration)	193	$116,958	1,065	215	$118,428	1,092
	Total	**2,283**	**$7,877,439**	**40,586**	**2,536**	**$6,916,480**	**41,633**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table EC1200A1 & EC1700BASIC All Area Series: Economy-Wide Key Statistics: 2012 & 2017

JOBS

In 2020 there were 66,838 jobs in Sterling Heights, however these numbers were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and may not reflect an accurate description of the number of jobs. SEMCOG's 2050 Regional Forecast uses 2019 data as the base for the forecast. In 2019, there were 74,423 jobs in Sterling Heights. The 2050 Regional Forecast predicts an additional 1,101 additional jobs in Sterling Heights by 2050. Retail trade will roughly decrease 30% by 2050. Transportation, warehousing, and utilities are predicted to see an increase of 1,079 jobs or 35% by 2050. A noteworthy industry that is expected to decrease by 2050 is manufacturing, which is shown to decline by 13.5%. With key manufacturing plants for Stellantis and Ford within Sterling Heights, this decline in jobs may have a large impact on the local economy.

FORECASTED JOBS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR										
	2019	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	CHANGE 2019-2050	PCT CHANGE 2019-2050
Natural Resources, Mining, & Construction	4,038	3,720	4,271	4,449	4,574	4,588	4,628	4,709	671	16.6%
Manufacturing	23,039	19,843	22,854	22,781	21,747	20,765	19,855	19,923	-3,116	-13.5%
Wholesale Trade	2,313	2,081	2,185	2,283	2,399	2,416	2,406	2,403	90	3.9%
Retail Trade	6,988	6,433	6,147	5,816	5,436	5,218	5,034	4,879	-2,109	-30.2%
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	3,086	3,228	3,849	3,930	3,950	3,993	4,095	4,165	1,079	35.0%
Information & Financial Activities	7,115	6,678	6,821	6,908	6,976	6,968	6,925	6,949	-166	-2.3%
Professional and Technical Services & Corporate HQ	5,039	4,840	5,223	5,577	5,861	6,060	6,296	6,617	1,578	31.3%
Administrative, Support, & Waste Services	3,693	3,213	3,512	3,708	3,925	4,059	4,223	4,400	707	19.1%
Education Services	2,881	2,717	2,861	2,962	3,043	3,098	3,119	3,126	245	8.5%
Healthcare Services	6,978	6,552	6,965	7,472	7,889	8,232	8,520	8,926	1,948	27.9%
Leisure & Hospitality	5,107	3,831	4,889	5,213	5,313	5,349	5,383	5,384	277	5.4%
Other Services	3,112	2,691	2,785	2,917	2,989	2,948	2,945	2,930	-182	-5.8%
Public Administration	1,034	1,011	1,062	1,087	1,091	1,100	1,107	1,113	79	7.60%
Total Employment Numbers	**74,423**	**66,838**	**73,424**	**75,103**	**75,193**	**74,794**	**74,536**	**75,524**	**1,101**	**12.10%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2055 Regional Forecast

JOBS FORECAST BY INDUSTRY SECTOR: 2019-2050

Industry Sector	2019	2050
Public Administration	1,034	1,113
Other Services	3,112	2,930
Leisure & Hospitality	5,107	5,384
Healthcare Services	6,978	8,926
Education Services	2,881	3,126
Administrative, Support, & Waste Services	3,693	4,400
Professional and Technical Services & Corporate HQ	5,039	6,617
Information & Financial Activities	7,115	6,949
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	3,086	4,165
Retail Trade	6,988	4,879
Wholesale Trade	2,313	2,403
Manufacturing	23,039	19,923
Natural Resources, Mining, & Construction	4,038	4,709

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2055 Regional Forecast

WORKFORCE

Employment by Industry

According to the 2018-2022 American Community Survey, the three largest industries in 2022 were:

1. Manufacturing (14,454 residents)

2. Educational services, health care, and social assistance (12,818 residents)

3. Retail trade (8,368 residents)

Manufacturing and construction saw a decline in the number of residents employed in those industries due to the Great Recession, but those numbers increased in the aftermath and in 2022. Residents employed in the wholesale trade, professional & scientific management, and information industries have experienced a steady decline in the number of jobs available to them since 2000. The educational and healthcare services industry has seen the greatest increase in the number of residents employed in that sector since 2000.

RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, 2000 - 2022

	2022	2010	2000
Public administration	2,114	2,123	
Other services, except public administration	3,158	2,924	2,372
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and...	5,529	5,591	4,777
Educational services, and health care and social...	12,818	11,899	9,651
Professional, scientific, and management, and...	5,713	6,313	6,774
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental...	3,591	3,203	4,091
Information	870	1,180	1,475
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3,642	2,181	1,583
Retail trade	8,368	8,114	9,105
Wholesale trade	1,201	1,635	2,471
Manufacturing	14,454	12,292	16,639
Construction	2,859	2,421	3,226
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	231	67	53

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial census, 2006 - 2010 & 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Employment by Occupation

Since the 2000 Decennial Census, farming, fishing, and forestry occupations have been combined with construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations to form a new category: Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations, which is a relatively small portion of the City's workforce. Most workers are occupied in management and professional jobs or sales and office jobs. Sales and office roles are the only occupation type to have seen a decline since 2000.

Unemployment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)'s Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program publishes monthly employment, unemployment, and labor force data for larger cities, as well as states, counties, and metropolitan areas.

Historically, the unemployment rate for Sterling Heights has been lower than the unemployment rate for Macomb County. The graph below shows that the City's unemployment number spiked during the Great Recession and the start of the COVID-19 pandemic but decreased to lower levels afterwards.

OCCUPATION TYPE	2000	2010	2020
Management, professional, and related occupations	22,844	21,768	24,962
Service occupations	7,889	9,485	10,581
Sales and office occupations	19,213	18,261	15,043
Natural Resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	4,978	3,945	3,984
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	9,416	7,482	10,761

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial census, 2006 - 2010 & 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, STERLING HEIGHTS AND MACOMB COUNTY, 2000 - 2023
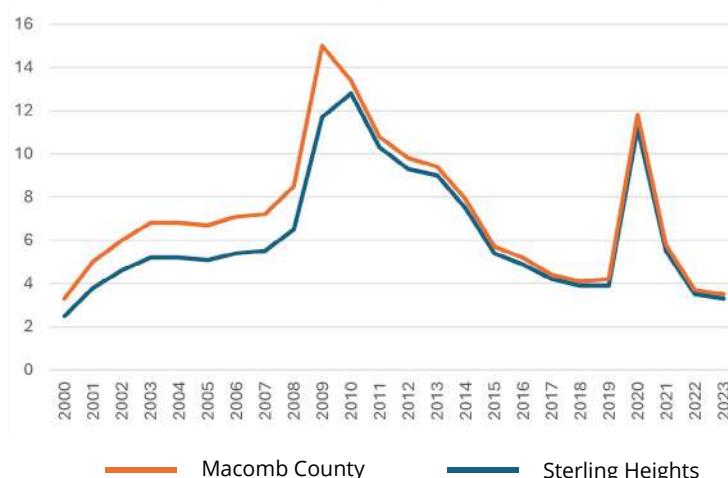
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES	
Community	Median Household Income
United States	$75,149
Michigan	$66,986
SE Michigan	$73,354
Oakland County	$92,620
Macomb County	$73,876
Shelby Twp	$87,526
Utica	$52,247
Sterling Heights	**$75,381**
Clinton Twp	$68,987
Fraser	$61,039
Warren	$61,633
Troy	$115,639

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates; SEMCOG Community Profile

ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2022 ACS)	
Income Range	Percent
$200,000 or more	6.9%
$150,000 to $199,999	9.6%
$125,000 to $149,999	7.7%
$100,000 to $124,999	12.2%
$75,000 to $99,999	13.9%
$60,000 to $74,999	10.2%
$50,000 to $59,999	6.7%
$45,000 to $49,999	3.6%
$40,000 to $44,999	3.6%
$35,000 to $39,999	4.4%
$30,000 to $34,999	3.9%
$25,000 to $29,999	3.9%
$20,000 to $24,999	3.1%
$15,000 to $19,999	3.4%
$10,000 to $14,999	3.1%
Less than $10,000	3.7%
Total	**50,989**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

INCOME AND WAGES

Earning by Residents

Since 2010, the median household income (which is a common tool to measure the standard of living) has declined by 3.3%. The median household income (2022 dollars) in 2010 was $77,940 and in 2022 it was $75,381. The per capita income (2022 dollars), which measures the average income per person, had a slight increase between 2010 and 2022. In 2010 the per capita income was $35,532 and in 2022 it was $35,615, which is an increase of $83 or 0.20%. These figures show a slight decline in the overall standard of living for Sterling Heights residents. However, the median household income was higher than median household income within the United States, the State of Michigan, and Southeast Michigan.

The largest group of households have an annual household income of $75,000 to $99,000. Just over two-thirds (67.2%) of all households are above the $50,000 threshold

Poverty

Just over 10% of the population falls below the poverty line in Sterling Heights. This number is still below the national, state, and regional average, but is above the county average. Only Shelby Township, Utica, and Troy have a smaller percentage of the population in poverty.

POVERTY RATE	
United States	12.5%
Michigan	13.1%
SE Michigan	13.3%
Oakland County	7.7%
Macomb County	9.8%
Shelby Twp	6.8%
Utica	7.8%
Sterling Heights	**10.3%**
Clinton Twp	10.6%
Fraser	10.7%
Warren	13.5%
Troy	5.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates; SEMCOG Community Profile

TRANSPORTATION

Mode of Transportation to Work

The main mode of transportation in 2022 for Sterling Heights residents was driving alone in a personal vehicle. 77% of the population drove alone in 2022, which is a decrease from 2010 where 89% of the population drove alone. This decrease in those who drove alone could be attributed to the increase in individuals who work from home, which has become more popular in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commute Times

The average commute time in 2022 was 23 minutes, which was a slight decrease from 25.5 minutes in 2010. This decrease in commute time could also be attributed to the increase in the number of people working from home.

Inflow/Outflow

In 2021, there were a total of 48,289 individuals who worked inside the City but lived outside the City (inflow) and 49,131 residents worked outside the City (outflow). 6,732 people lived and worked in Sterling Heights. With an even split between inflow and outflow, the transportation network is affected by both residents and commuters throughout the region.

MODE OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK: STERLING HEIGHTS					
Transportation to Work	ACS 2010	% of Total (ACS 2010)	ACS 2022	% of Total (ACS 2022)	% Point Change (2010-2022
Drove alone	52,579	89%	48,271	77%	-11.80%
Carpooled or vanpooled	4,252	7%	5,574	9%	1.70%
Public transportation	240	0%	372	1%	0.20%
Walked	377	1%	466	1%	0.10%
Biked	69	0%	240	0%	0.30%
Other means	219	0%	372	1%	0.20%
Worked at home	1,262	2%	7,175	12%	9.40%
Resident workers age 16 and over	58,998	100%	62,470	100%	0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

HOUSING

HOUSING VALUE AND RENT COSTS

In 2022 there were a total of 52,791 housing units. Of those units, only 3.4% were vacant, 73.4% were owner-occupied, and 23.2% were renter-occupied. Sterling Heights has a higher homeownership rate when compared homeownership rates at the national, state, regional, and county level. The median value of owner-occupied units was $243,400 and the median gross rent was $1,215 in 2022. These numbers are comparable to other communities within the vicinity. Please refer to the table below for more information.

HOUSING AGE AND OCCUPANCY

52.3% of people have moved into their home since 2010 whereas 47.7% had moved prior to 2010. Just over one third (34.1%) of current homeowners moved to their current homes between 2010 and 2017. There has been a steady level of movement for homeowners in Sterling Heights. Most of the housing in Sterling Heights was built prior to 1980 (57.8%), with the

decade with the most homes built being between 1970 and 1979 (28.7%). Only a small percentage of homes have been built since 2000. This suggests that a majority of homes that people have moved into are older homes. Older homes require more upkeep and additional maintenance which may act as a barrier for new homeowners looking to afford a home. Additionally, aging housing stock can become a cost burden for existing homeowners and aging adults.

HOUSING TYPES

Single-family detached housing makes up most of the housing stock in Sterling Heights (66.6%). Just under a third (30.5%) of housing is multi-units housing, which includes large multi-unit apartments, but also includes non-single-family detached housing and non-mobile home housing. In addition, this includes single-family attached housing and side-by-side two-unit housing (duplexes) which account for 10% of all housing. The share between housing types has remained relatively the same since 2010.

HOUSING DATA IN SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES			
	Owner Occupied Housing Rate (ACS 2022)	Median value of owner-occupied housing units (2022 ACS)	Median gross rent (ACS 2022)
United States	64.8%	$281,900	$1,268
State of Michigan	72.5%	$201,100	$1,037
Southeast Michigan	64.1%	$229,300	$1,129
Oakland County	68.0%	$302,800	$1,243
Macomb County	71.6%	$216,200	$1,124
Shelby Twp	72.8%	$316,400	$1,186
Utica	51.2%	$199,600	$944
Sterling Heights	**73.4%**	**$243,400**	**$1,215**
Clinton Twp	61.7%	$198,800	$1,110
Fraser	70.5%	$178,900	$782
Warren	66.6%	$169,300	$1,139
Troy	71.4%	$375,600	$1,461

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates; SEMCOG Community Profile

YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED TO STERLING HEIGHTS, 2022

Category	Percent
Moved in 2021 or later	3.6%
Moved in 2018 to 2020	14.6%
Moved in 2010 to 2017	34.1%
Moved in 2000 to 2009	19.2%
Moved in 1990 to 1999	12.8%
Moved in 1989 or earlier	15.7%
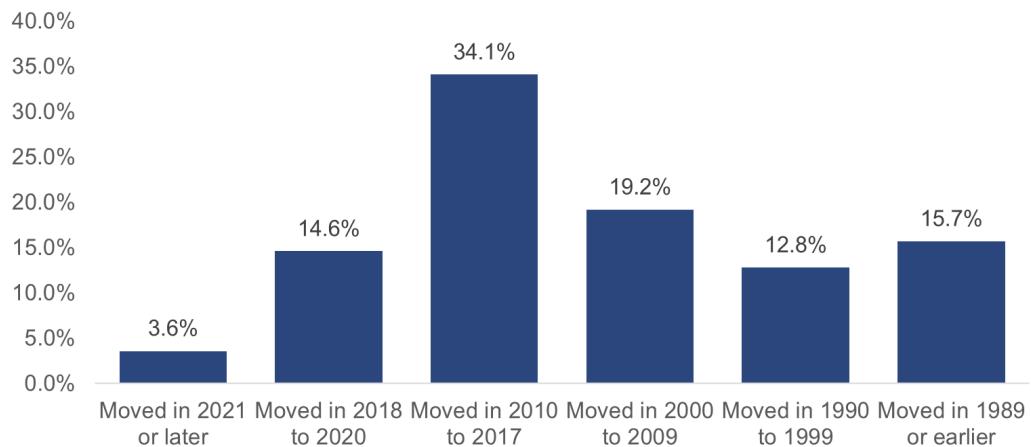
YEAR HOUSING BUILT IN STERLING HEIGHTS, 2022
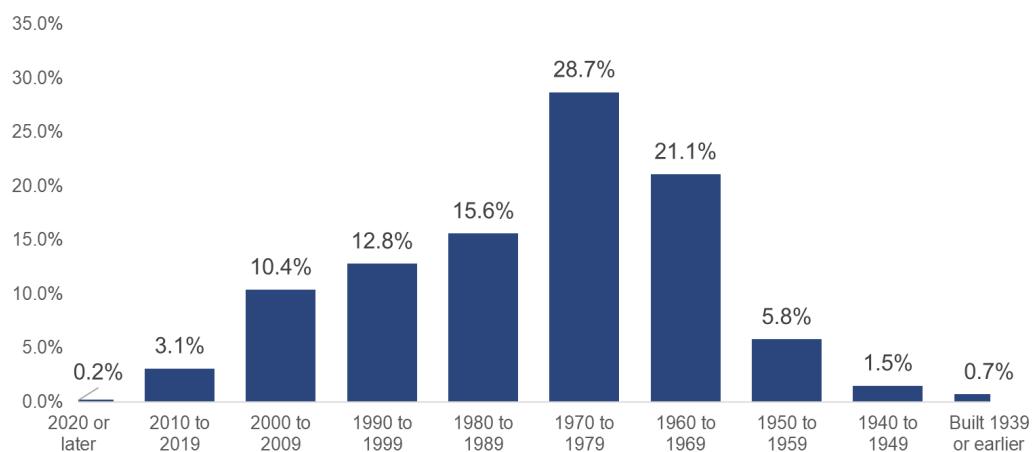
Category	Percent
2020 or later	0.2%
2010 to 2019	3.1%
2000 to 2009	10.4%
1990 to 1999	12.8%
1980 to 1989	15.6%
1970 to 1979	28.7%
1960 to 1969	21.1%
1950 to 1959	5.8%
1940 to 1949	1.5%
Built 1939 or earlier	0.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates; SEMCOG Community Profile

HOUSING TYPES: STERLING HEIGHTS					
Housing Type	ACS 2010	ACS 2022	Change 2010 - 2022	Percent share of total, 2011	Percent share of total, 2022
Single-family, detached	34,386	35,094	708	66.6%	66.5%
Multi-Unit	15,720	16,123	403	30.4%	30.5%
Mobile Homes or Other	1,520	1,574	54	2.9%	3.0%
Total	**51,626**	**52,791**	**1,165**		

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile

Community Facilities

Legend:
- Ampitheater
- Chamber of Commerce
- City Hall
- Community Center
- DPW
- Fire Station
- Admin Building
- Police Station
- Library
- Upton House
- Velocity Center
- Post Office
- Hospital
- Court House
- Park

Sources: Points: Sterling Heights. Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: January 16, 2025. © 2024 Giffels Webster
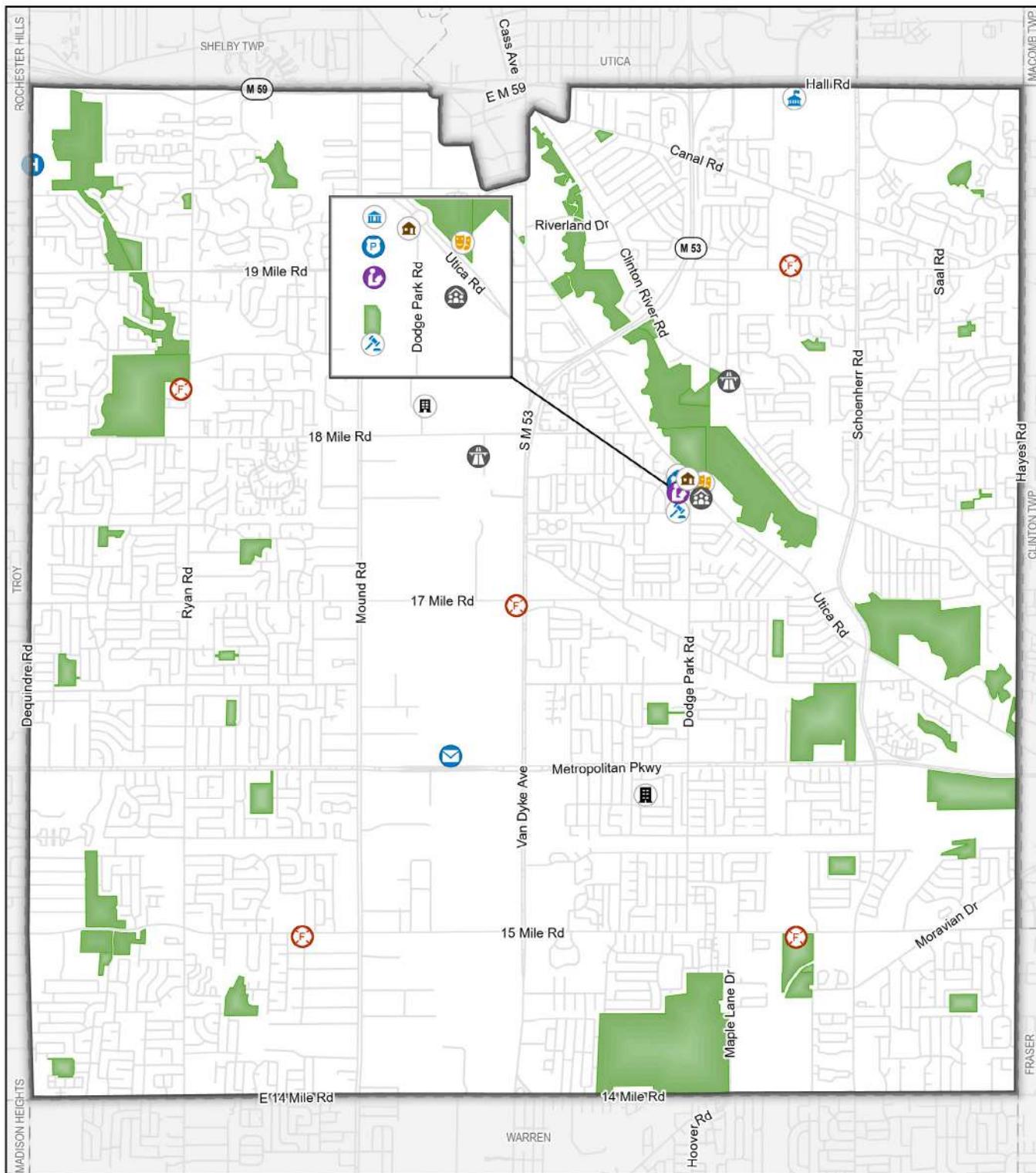
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0   1   2 Miles

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

CIVIC FACILITIES

CITY HALL

Sterling Heights City Hall is located on Utica Road and is located within a short walking distance to the City's Library and Community Center.

LIBRARY

The Sterling Heights Library is located on Dodge Park Road and near City Hall and the Community Center. The Library prioritizes engaging the community and providing residents with opportunities to discover, learn, and grow together. The Library focuses on creating a welcoming and forward-thinking environment for residents to come together and learn from one another.

COMMUNITY CENTER

The Sterling Heights Community Center is a 98,000 square foot facility that provides a variety of programs for residents. The Center houses an indoor gymnasium with different sport courts, an indoor track, dance/fitness studios, and USA Softball of Metro Detroit Hall of Fame. The Parks and Recreation Department is based in the Community Center.

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Arlingdale Park

An 8.7-acre park with a variety of amenities like a basketball court, a multi-purpose field, picnic areas, a tennis court, and a playground and is ADA accessible.

Avis Park

A 9.5-acre park that has a pickleball court, tennis court, a non-motorized trail, picnic areas, and a playground and is ADA accessible.

Beaver Creek Park

A 14.5-acre park with a sledding hill, a baseball/softball diamond, a non-motorized trail, picnic areas, a tennis court, a swing set, a multi-purpose field, and a toddler aged playground, and is ADA accessible.

Ben Hadley Park

A 3-acre park with a multi-purpose field, a non-motorized trail, picnic areas, a playground, and a swing set and is ADA accessible.

Carpathia Park

A 5.5-acre park with a basketball court, a non-motorized trail, picnic areas, a playground, and a swing set and is ADA accessible.

Clinton River Trail System

The Clinton River Trail System is 461.1 acres long and traverses through Dodge Park, Donovan Park, Farmstead Park, North Clinton River Park, and South Clinton River Park. It has such amenities like a hiking trail, a mountain bike trail, a nature area, a nature trail, and a non-motorized trail.

College Park

A 4.1-acre park with a basketball court, a non-motorized trail, a pickleball court, picnic areas, and a playground and is ADA accessible.

Dodge Park

A 51.2-acre park that is highly trafficked due to the high number of amenities it has. This includes a basketball court, a grilling facilities, horseshoe pit, a multi-purpose field, a nature area, a non-motorized trail, an outdoor concert stage, community pavilions, picnic areas, a refrigerated ice rink, a sand volleyball court, a soccer field, a splash pad, and a toddler aged playground and is ADA accessible.

Fairfield Park

A 3.7-acre park with benches, a multi-purpose field, picnic areas, playgrounds, and a non-motorized trail. This park is ADA accessible.

Fairview Park

A 4.6-acre park that is a largely undeveloped natural area.

Farmstead Park

A 55-acre park that is ADA accessible with a variety of recreation facilities, which include basketball courts, a multi-purpose field, a soccer field, and a sand volleyball court. Farmstead park also provides direct access to the Clinton River Trail System.

Franklin Park

A 6.4-acre park with an in-line hockey rink, a non-motorized trail, picnic areas, and a variety of other recreation facilities. The park is ADA accessible.

Gerald N. Donovan Park

This park is 5 acres and has lit baseball and softball diamonds, a playground area, and access to the Clinton River Trail System.

Hampton Park

A 12.6-acre ADA accessible park with a pickleball, basketball, and tennis court. There are areas to picnic with grills.

James C. Nelson Park

A 36.6-acre park a nature area (Puffin Park), anon-motorized trail, and sports courts and fields. The park is ADA accessible.

Joseph J. Delia Jr. Park

A 119-acre park with a lit baseball and softball diamonds, cricket field, nature trail, a non-motorized trail, and a sledding hill are few facilities available. The park is ADA accessible. The park also includes a Dog Park with 1.25 acres for large dogs and 0.75 acres for small dogs. An annual pass is required for access to this area, that includes pet waste dispensers,benches, and is ADA accessible.

Kenneth Wolf Park

A 8.9-acre park with a baseball and softball field as well as a non-motorized trail.

L.W. Baumgartner Park

A 42.5-acre ADA accessible park with baseball diamonds, picnic areas, and a playground area. It includes a trail along the Red Run drain.

Lakeside Island Park

A 10.9-acre park with a nature area and benches available to look at wildlife and the surrounding lake.

Leroy Imus Park

A 10-acre park with a basketball court. An in-line hockey rink, picnic areas, a playground, a sand volleyball court, and a tennis court. The park is ADA accessible.

Magnolia Park

A 16.9-acre park with a basketball court, a multi-purpose field, a non-motorized trail, a pickleball court, and a sledding hill in the winter. The park is ADA accessible.

Mark Sawyers Family Park

A 10.1-acre park that is ADA accessible. The park has a baseball/softball diamond, a basketball court, picnic areas, and a tennis court.

Meadowview Park

A 10.7-acre park with a nature area and a sledding hill.

Moravian Park

A 9.7-acre park with a multi-purpose field, a non-motorized trail, and a picnic area with shelters. The park is ADA accessible.

Nature Trail

The trail is 2 miles long and runs from Delia Park to the Troy Beaumont Hospital. The trail has a hiking, mountain bike, and nature trail. The trail also features a nature area and non-motorized path.

North Clinton River Park

A 82-acre park with a nature center and area, a non-motorized trail, a paddle dock, and a picnic area. The park is ADA accessible.

Rotary Park

A 0.9-acre park with a paddle dock, picnic areas with shelters, a playground, and a swing set. The park is ADA accessible.

South Clinton River Park

A 251-acre park that is a continuation of the North Clinton River Park. The park features a water trail on the Clinton River and information kiosks.

Thomas Chappelle Park

A 10-acre park with a multi-purpose field, a non-motorized trail, a playground and swing set, and a sledding hill. There are picnic areas and shelters that have grills. The park is ADA accessible.

Washington Square Park

A 3.6-acre park with a basketball court, a multi-purpose field, a non-motorized trail, and tennis courts. There are picnic areas and shelters available. The park is ADA accessible.

PUBLIC UTILITIES/SERVICES

Fire

There are five fire stations that are operated by the Sterling Heights Fire Department. The department is tasked with ensuring the safety and welfare of residents by providing fire and medical services. According to the Fire Department, Sterling Heights is in the top 2% of all fire departments in the country and in the top 1% in the State of Michigan. This is based off of the City achieving a Class 2 rating by the Insurance Services Office (ISO).

Police

The Sterling Heights Police Department, which is fully accredited by the Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission, operates out of five different divisions, each tasked with ensuring the public safety and welfare of all residents.

Water & Sewer

The Great Lakes Water Authority provides drinking water access to Sterling Heights and its residents. The source water comes from the lower Lake Huron Watershed. The Water and Sewage Division of the Department of Public Works oversees the daily management of the water and sewage systems in Sterling Heights.

School Districts

There are two school districts within Sterling Heights, Warren Consolidated Schools and Utica Community Schools. Warren Consolidated School serves residents in the southwest and south portions of the City. Utica Community Schools serves residents in the north and northeast portions of the City.

ENVIRONMENT

NATURAL FEATURES

Natural features include wetlands, woodlands, rivers, lakes, floodplains, etc. These features have a direct impact on the health and resilience of Sterling Heights. Each aspect of the built environment is impacted by the natural environment. During the Master Plan process, it is important to have a baseline understanding of the natural features and natural environment within the community. Future land use decisions must take into account the natural environment and find ways to preserve as much the existing natural environment and seek out ways to restore the natural environment in Sterling Heights.

SOIL AND GEOLOGY

A majority of the land in the City somewhat poorly drains. There are only a few areas with soil that is able to drain water and runoff efficiently. Refer to the Soil Drainage Map for more information. The bedrock geology throughout the City consists of some forms of shale or sandstone, which do not drain water well. Please refer to the Bedrock Geology Map for more information.

WATERSHED, DRAINS, AND STREAMS

Much of the central part of the City is a part of the Plum Brook Watershed. The southwest section of the City is within the Big Beaver Creek Watershed. The northwest section of the City is a part of the Gibson Drain. The eastern part Sterling Heights is associated with the Cranberry Marsh Drain, which is a part of the Clinton River Watershed. This section of the City is where the Clinton river runs through the City's boundaries. The northeast corner of the City is tied to the Gloede Ditch. The southeast section of the is a part of the McCoy Drain which is a part of the red Run watershed. There are several small lakes and ponds found through Sterling Heights. Refer to the Watershed Map for more information.

Bedrock Geology

giffels **▪▪**
▪▪ webster
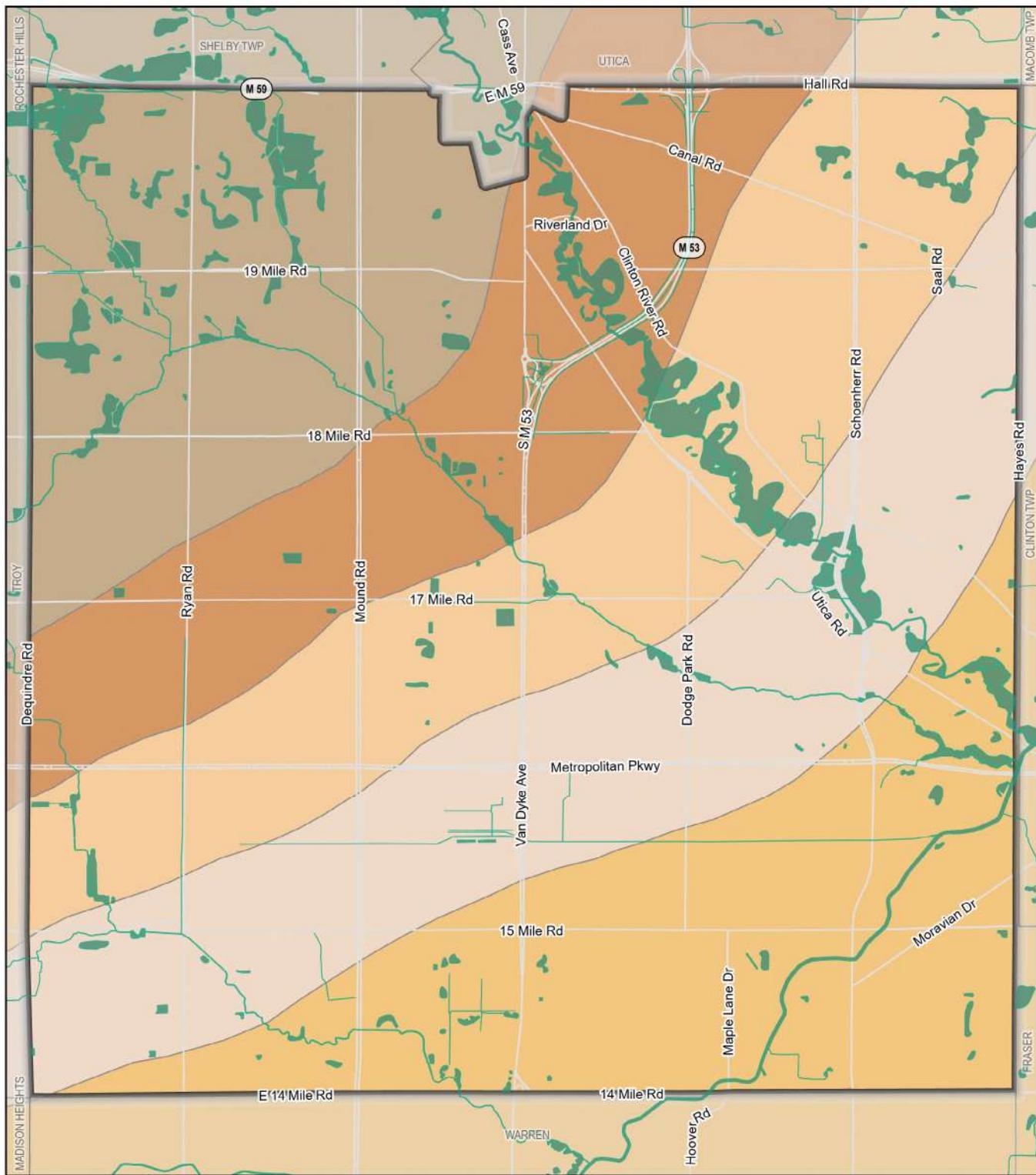
Legend:
- ANTRIM SHALE
- BEDFORD SHALE
- BEREA SANDSTONE & BEDFORD
- COLDWATER SHALE
- SUNBURY SHALE
- WETLANDS

Sources: Geology: MI EGLE. Wetlands, Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: August 28, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster

0   1   2 Miles

Soil Drainage

Legend:
- Well Drained
- Moderately Well Drained
- Somewhat Poorly Drained
- Poorly Drained
- Very Poorly Drained
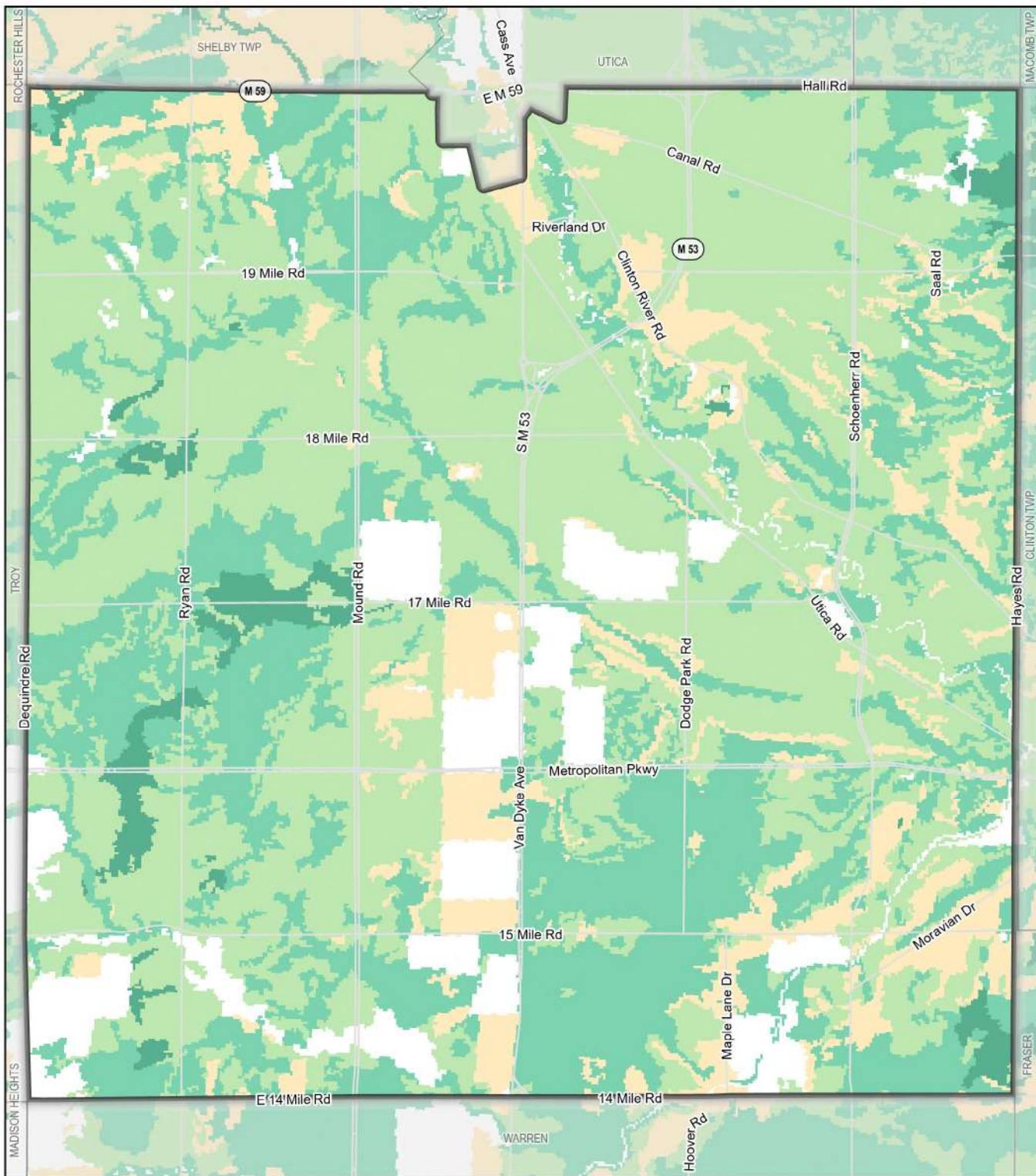
Sources: Soils: SSURGO Drainage Class. Wetlands, Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: August 29, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster
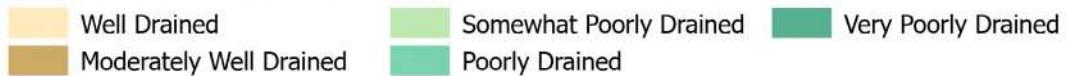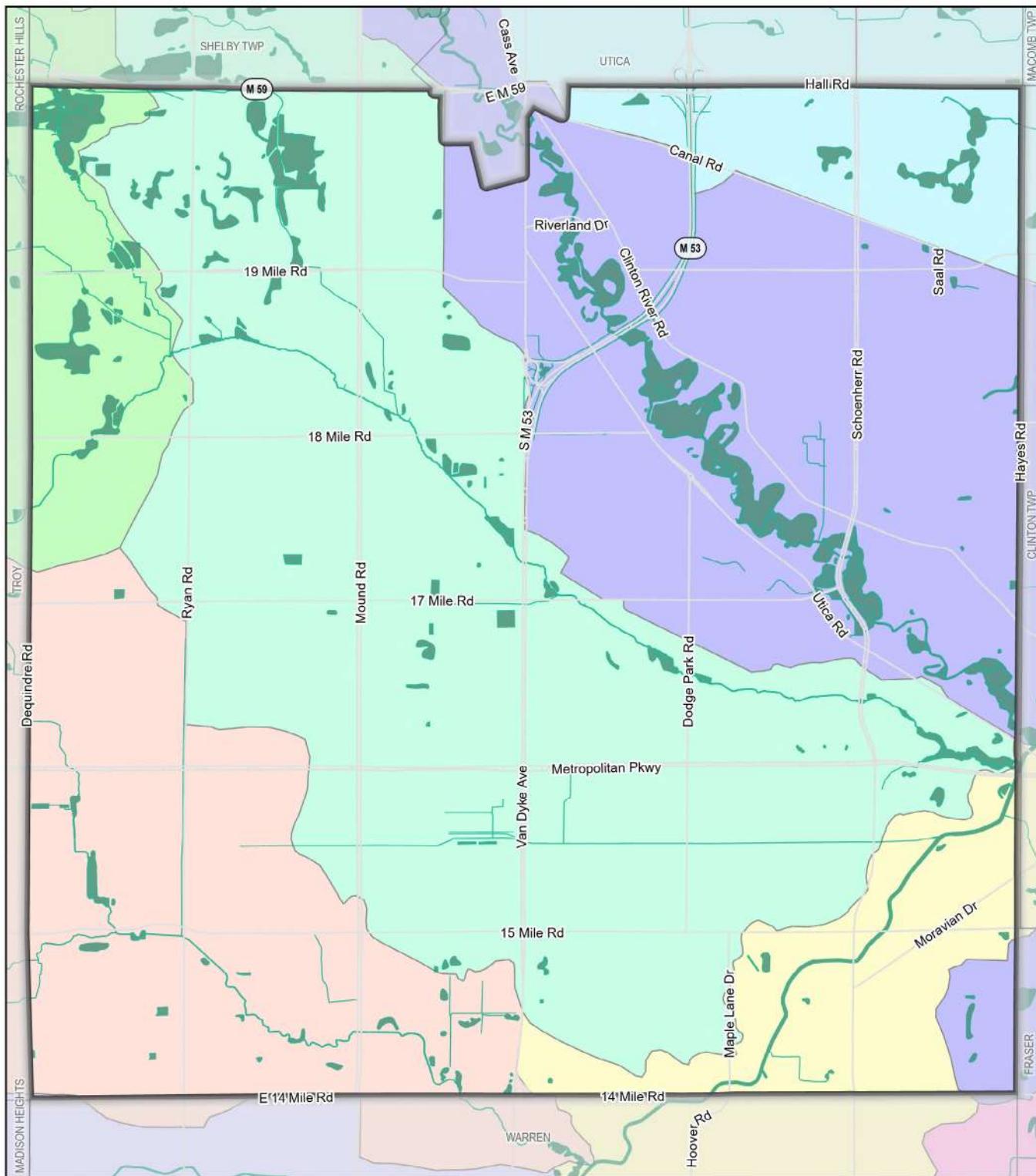
giffels webster

0   1   2 Miles

Watersheds

giffels webster

FLOOD RISK

Much of the City does not have frequent flood risk. Areas near the Clinton River and other lakes and streams have a much higher risk for frequent floods. Please refer to the Flood Risk Map for additional information.

WETLANDS

Sterling Heights has scattered wetlands throughout the City. A majority of wetlands are found in the northwest and northeast sections of the City. A concentrated area of wetlands can be found along the Clinton River on the east side of the City. Refer to the Wetlands and Woodlands Map for more information.

Wetlands provide a vast array of benefits, which include:

- Protecting downstream water supplies by providing clean ground water through nutrient retention and sediment removal. Wetland vegetation traps these sediments and pollutants, thereby preventing them from being deposited in surface water bodies.

- Functioning as a natural storage basin for floodwater. Wetlands act as large sponges that absorb substantial quantities of precipitation and gradually release it when the receiving channels are able to accept it.

- Providing habitat for many types of plants and animals that thrive in the type of physical environment created by wetlands. These plants and animals provide an economic and recreational benefit as a result of hunting, fishing, and other leisure activities.

WOODLANDS AND TREE CANOPY

There are a handful of undisturbed pockets of woodlands within the City. Areas with woodlands are found near areas with undisturbed wetlands. These areas are concentrated in the northwest and northwest sections of the City (as seen in the Wetlands and Woodlands Map). Woodlands provide clear benefits for cities. These include:

- **Mitigating climate change**: Asphalt and concrete streets and parking lots increase urban temperatures by three to seven degrees. Trees provide shade and mitigate the heat island effect found in cities and areas with lots of impervious surface. In addition, trees near homes can help lower cooling costs in warmer months. Additionally, trees provide some mitigation against flooding, which is becoming more frequent regionally.[1]

- **Filtering pollution**: Trees improve air quality by producing oxygen and soaking up particle pollution.

- **Increasing property value**: The U.S. Forest Service estimates that trees can increase property values from 5-20%. When combined with a walkable business area, nearby home values increase by about $3,500 in a treeless neighborhood, but more than $22,000 in a tree-lined one.[2]

- **Providing habitat**: Trees are often home to a variety of birds and animals.

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[1] https://www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/soak-rain-trees-help-reduce-runoff

[2] Donovan, G.H.; Butry, D.T. (2010). Trees in the City: Valuing street trees in Portland, Oregon. Landscape and Urban Planning 94:77-88.

Sources: Flood zones: FEMA. Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: January 16, 2025. © 2025 Giffels Webster

■ 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard (100-year)
■ 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard (500-year)
■ Regulatory Floodway

Flood Risk

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Sources: Woodlands: USGS, Wetlands, Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: August 28, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster
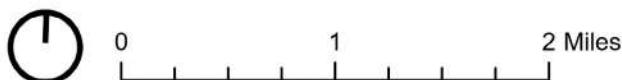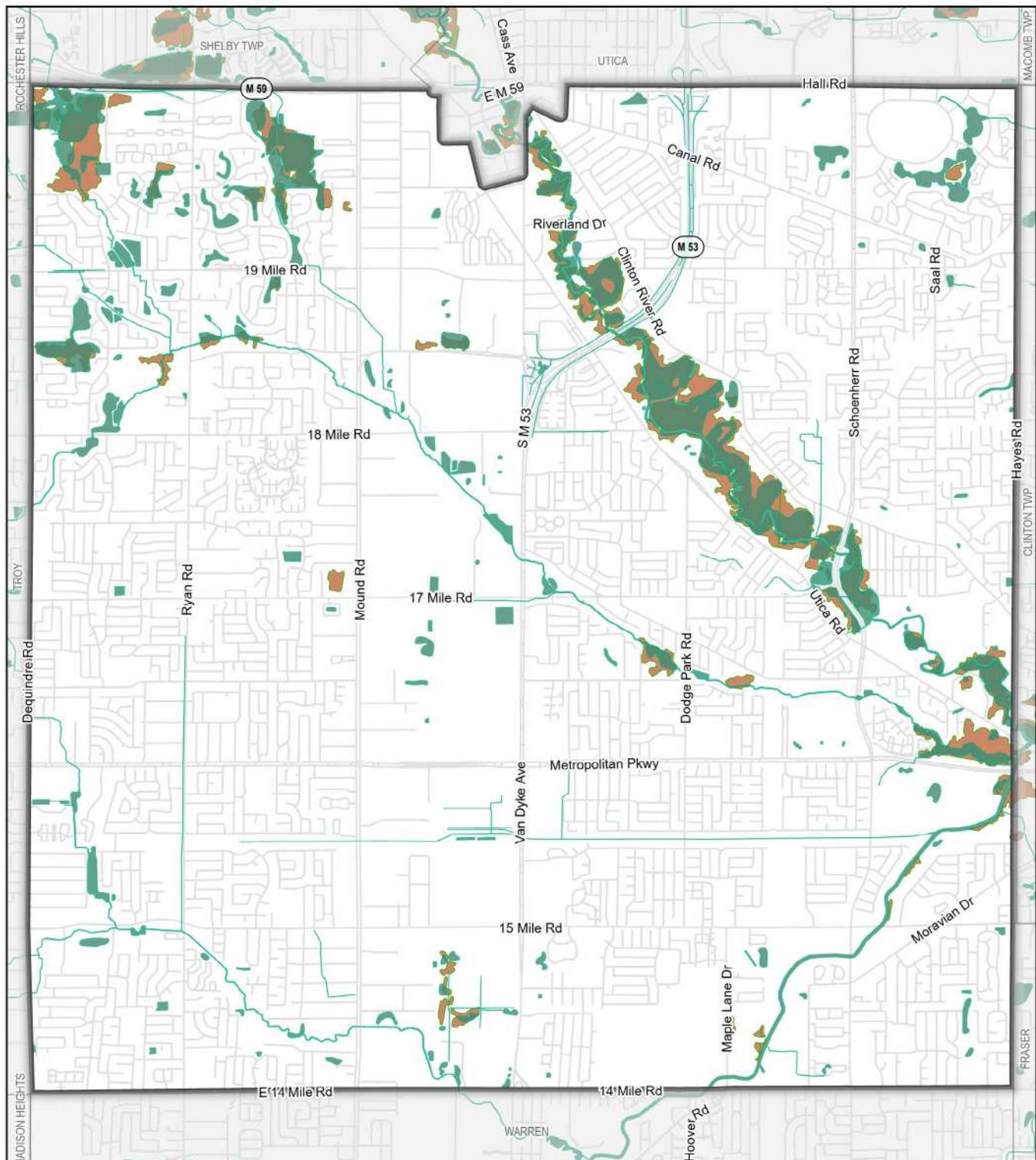
Woodlands   Wetlands

Wetlands and Woodlands

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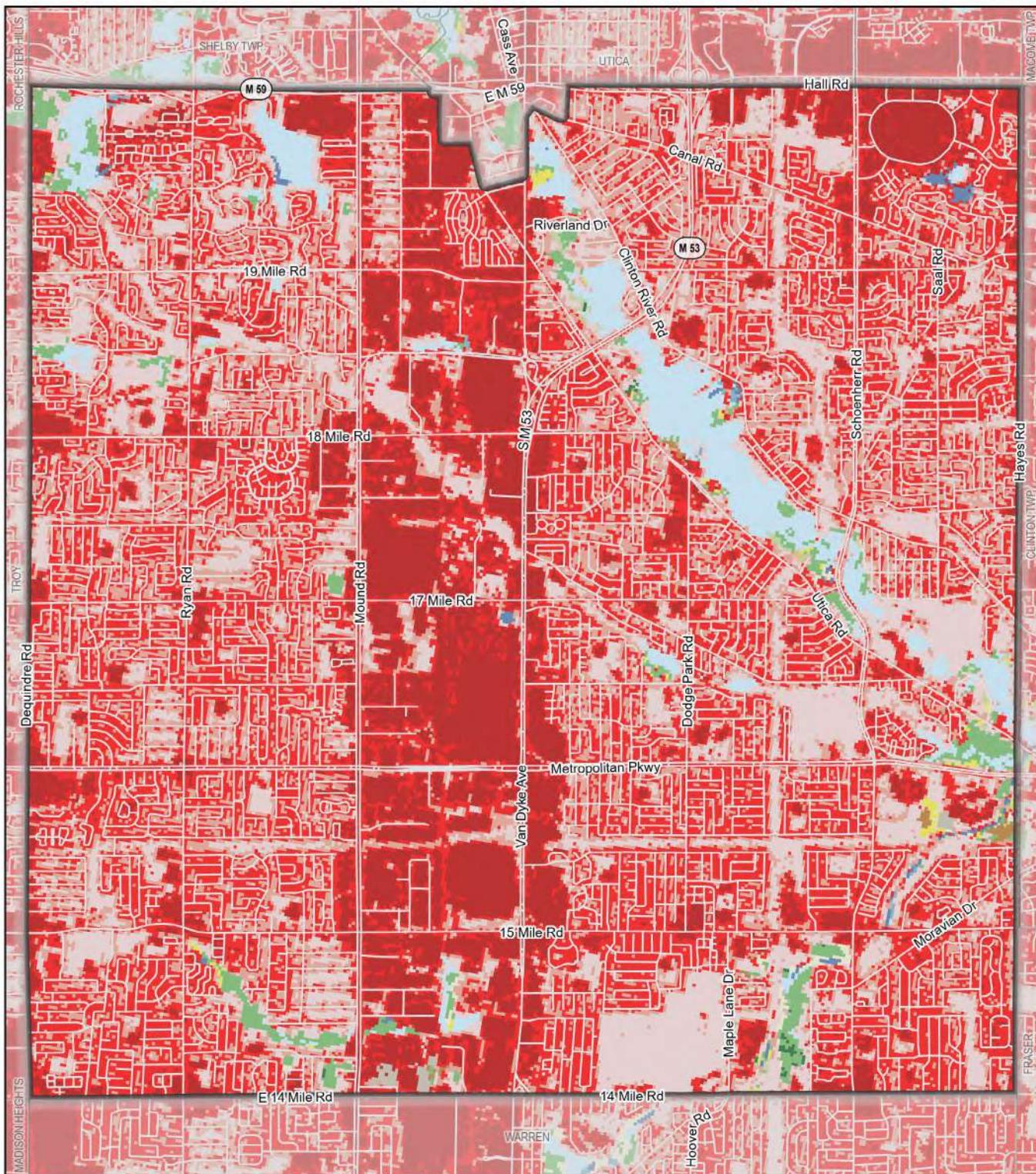
0   1   2 Miles

Sources: Tree Canopy: USA NLCD. Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: August 29, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster

< 1%	25 - 50%	> 75%
1 - 25%	50 - 75%	

Tree Canopy

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webster

Sources: Land Cover: USGS NLCD. Roads: SEMCOG. Exported: August 28, 2024. © 2024 Giffels Webster

Open Water	Developed, High Intensity	Mixed Forest	Cultivated Crops
Developed, Open Space	Barren Land	Shrub/Scrub	Woody Wetlands
Developed, Low Intensity	Deciduous Forest	Herbaceous	Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands
Developed, Medium Intensity	Evergreen Forest	Hay/Pasture	

Impervious Surfaces

giffels
webster

LAND COVER/IMPERVIOUS SURFACE

Impervious surfaces like sidewalks, rooftops, parking lots, streets, and driveways all have a direct impact on a community's stormwater management. These surfaces are unable to absorb water and lead to runoff that is directed to the City's stormwater systems. During intense periods of rain, the stormwater management systems may become overloaded and oversaturated, which increases the risk of flooding. There are a few pockets of land that consist of pervious surfaces. Most of the land coverage in Sterling Heights is comprised of impervious surfaces. Please refer to the Impervious Surfaces Map for more information.

RESILIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The City of Sterling Heights adopted the Sustainability Commission's Sustainability Plan in 2021. This plan acts as guiding documents and a supplement to the City's Visioning 2030 Strategic Plan. The goal of the plan is to establish a baseline understanding of where the City currently sits at with regards to sustainable development and protecting the natural resources found within the City. The Plan focuses on natural assets, mobility, sustainable development, and environmental stewardship. The City of Sterling Heights has a clear commitment to achieving their sustainability goals and creating a resilient and vibrant City for current and future residents.

Boards and Commissions

Sterling Heights has several different boards and commission dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural and built environment. These Boards and Commissions provide an opportunity for residents to participate in improving and investing in their community.

- **Beautification Commission:** The goal of this commission is to recommend the planting and preservation of trees, flowers and plants within the City. Initiatives in this Commission focus on beautifying both private and public properties.

- **Corridor Improvement Authority:** The Board seeks out ways to improve the viability and appearance of the North Van Dyke commercial corridors throughout the City. The Board utilizes tax increment financing to support their projects and initiatives.

- **Economic Development Corporation/Brownfield Authority:** This Board oversees the brownfield redevelopment of the entire City. Sterling Heights designated the entire City as a brownfield, which has enabled developers and investors to have access to additional tax incentives.

- **Lakeside Corridor Improvement Authority Board:** This Board oversees and provides recommendations on how to improve the Lakeside Mall site and its surrounding areas. The goal is to offer guidance and make decisions on the redevelopment of Lakeside Mall.

- **Local Development Finance Authority:** This Board assists with the redevelopment of industrial sites found throughout the City. Board members provide recommendations and insight into how industrial properties could best improved.

- **Solid Waste Management Commission:** This Commission provides guidance on the City's solid waste disposal process.

- **Sustainability Commission:** The Sustainability Commission was established in 2020 and makes recommendations to City Council and Administration on how the City can achieve its sustainability goals. The Commission oversees the implementation of the Sustainability Plan and other sustainability initiatives.

- **Water Systems Advisory Council:** The Council aids in ensuring that Sterling Heights residents have access to clean drinking water. The Council also assists with developing educational materials surrounding water quality issues.

AREA OF FUTURE STUDY

AREA OF FUTURE STUDY

The following approximate area identified in the map below received additional input from the public and Planning Commission; Planning Commission recommended this be called out as an area for future study due to its prevalence of large institutional buildings with ample open space and parking. This approximate area could be subject to a future land use plan amendment, or further area planning at a later date. Actual boundaries may be subject to change.
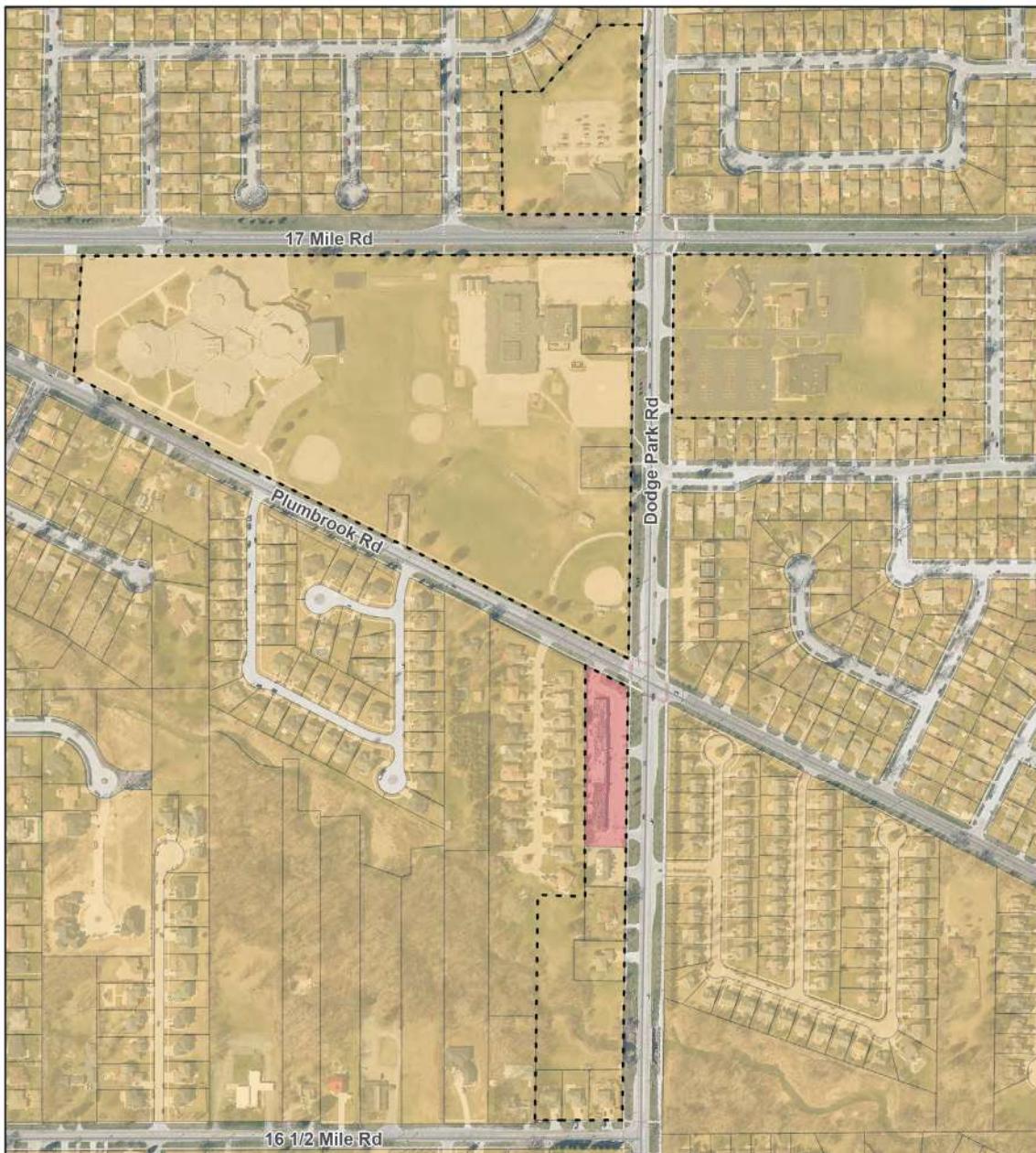
Sources: Aerial: Macomb County. Roads: SEMCOG. Zoning: Sterling Heights. © 2025. Giffels Webster

Future Study Area   Future Land Use

    Suburban Residential

    Local Commericial

giffels webster   0   250   500   1,000 Feet

ZONING DISTRICTS
FUTURE STUDY AREA
STERLING HEIGHTS

APPENDIX C

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Q1 What is your connection to Sterling Heights?

Answered: 3,135   Skipped: 23
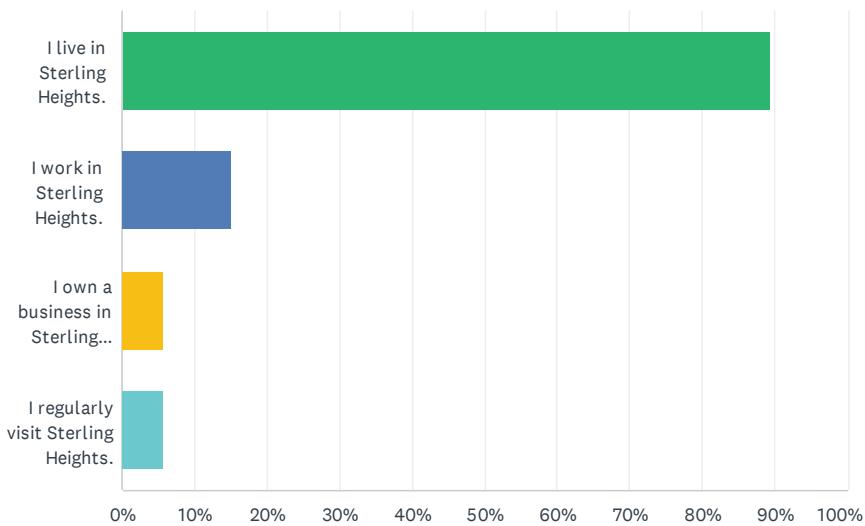
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live in Sterling Heights.	89.44%	2,804
I work in Sterling Heights.	15.12%	474
I own a business in Sterling Heights.	5.81%	182
I regularly visit Sterling Heights.	5.71%	179
Total Respondents: 3,135		

1

Q2 How many members of your household (including yourself) belong in each age group?

Answered: 3,106   Skipped: 52

Number of persons

Legend: ■ None ■ 1 person ■ 2 persons ■ 3 persons ■ 4 persons
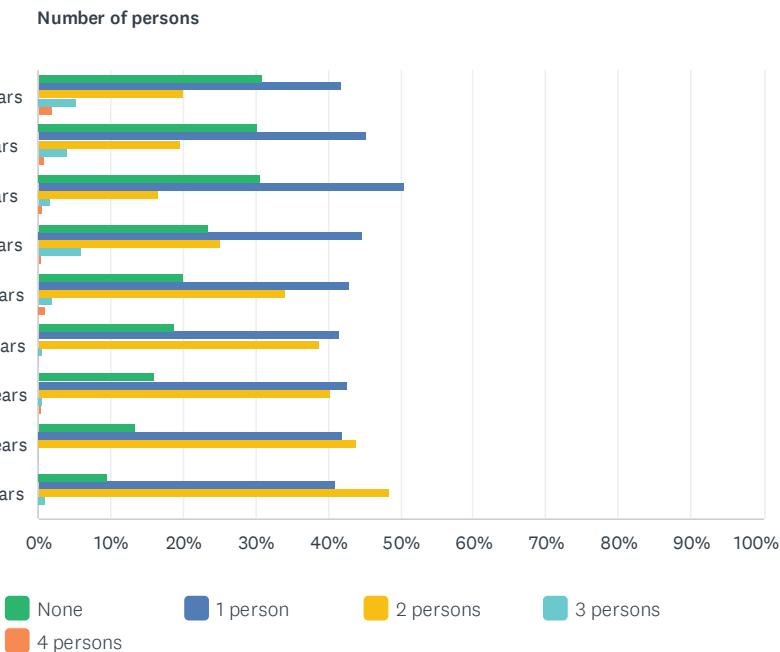
Number of persons						
	NONE	**1 PERSON**	**2 PERSONS**	**3 PERSONS**	**4 PERSONS**	**TOTAL**
<6 years	30.93% 189	41.73% 255	19.97% 122	5.40% 33	1.96% 12	611
7-12 years	30.38% 175	45.14% 260	19.62% 113	3.99% 23	0.87% 5	576
13-17 years	30.71% 172	50.54% 283	16.61% 93	1.61% 9	0.54% 3	560
18-25 years	23.55% 179	44.87% 341	25.13% 191	5.92% 45	0.53% 4	760
26-35 years	20.00% 165	42.91% 354	34.18% 282	1.82% 15	1.09% 9	825
36-45 years	18.78% 160	41.67% 355	38.73% 330	0.59% 5	0.23% 2	852
46-55 years	16.09% 149	42.66% 395	40.39% 374	0.54% 5	0.32% 3	926
56-65 years	13.41% 138	42.08% 433	44.02% 453	0.29% 3	0.19% 2	1,029
>66 years	9.59% 107	40.86% 456	48.30% 539	1.16% 13	0.09% 1	1,116

2

Q3 How long have you lived in Sterling Heights? (In years. Answer "0" if you are not a resident of Sterling Heights.)

Answered: 3,055   Skipped: 103
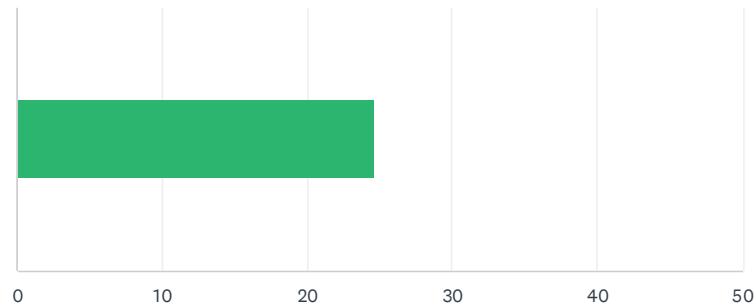
ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	25	75,200	3,055
Total Respondents: 3,055			

3

Q4 Where do all the adult (18 and over) members in your household (including yourself) work?

Answered: 2,779   Skipped: 379

Number of persons

| None | 1 person | 2 persons | 3 persons |
| 4 persons |
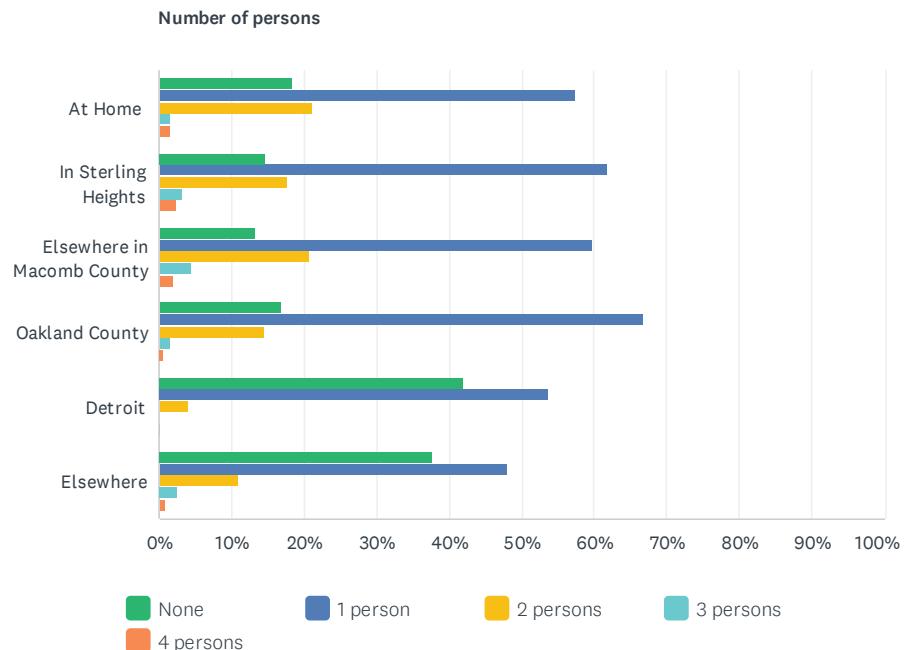
Number of persons					
	NONE	**1 PERSON**	**2 PERSONS**	**3 PERSONS**	**4 PERSONS**	**TOTAL**
At Home	18.40% 209	57.39% 652	21.21% 241	1.58% 18	1.41% 16	1,136
In Sterling Heights	14.77% 156	61.84% 653	17.80% 188	3.22% 34	2.37% 25	1,056
Elsewhere in Macomb County	13.25% 157	59.66% 707	20.76% 246	4.47% 53	1.86% 22	1,185
Oakland County	16.84% 160	66.63% 633	14.42% 137	1.47% 14	0.63% 6	950
Detroit	41.98% 170	53.83% 218	3.95% 16	0.00% 0	0.25% 1	405
Elsewhere	37.75% 228	48.01% 290	10.93% 66	2.48% 15	0.83% 5	604

4

Q5 What is the employment status of all adult (18 and over) members in your household (including yourself)?

Answered: 3,078   Skipped: 80
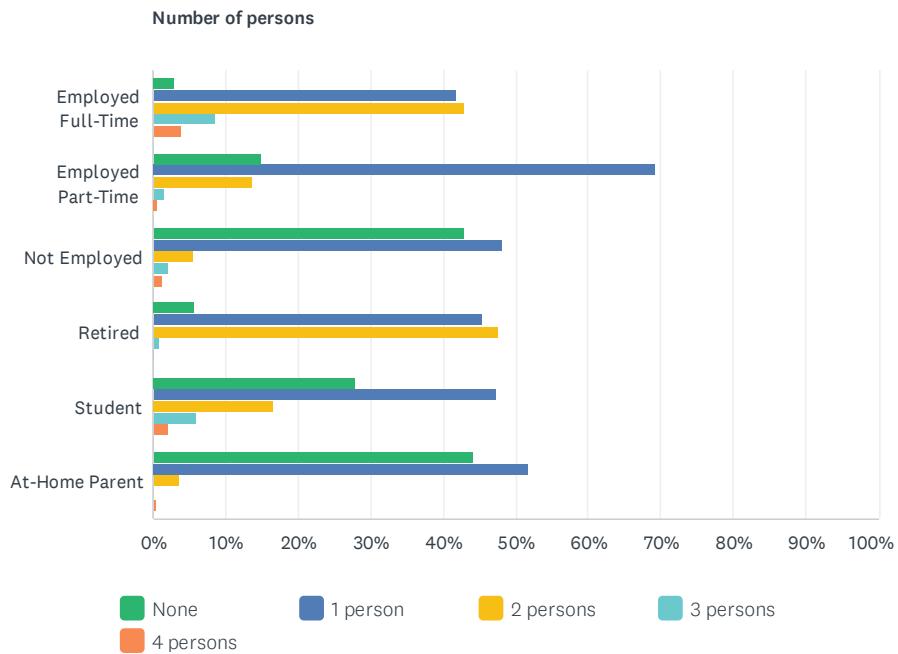
Number of persons

Number of persons						
	NONE	**1 PERSON**	**2 PERSONS**	**3 PERSONS**	**4 PERSONS**	**TOTAL**
Employed Full-Time	2.92% 66	41.87% 948	42.76% 968	8.52% 193	3.93% 89	2,264
Employed Part-Time	14.94% 114	69.33% 529	13.63% 104	1.44% 11	0.66% 5	763
Not Employed	42.94% 140	48.16% 157	5.52% 18	2.15% 7	1.23% 4	326
Retired	5.83% 67	45.52% 523	47.61% 547	0.87% 10	0.17% 2	1,149
Student	27.87% 114	47.43% 194	16.63% 68	5.87% 24	2.20% 9	409
At-Home Parent	44.20% 122	51.81% 143	3.62% 10	0.00% 0	0.36% 1	276

5

Q6 Which of the following are likely reasons why people would choose to move or stay in Sterling Heights? Check all that apply.

Answered: 2,579   Skipped: 579

6
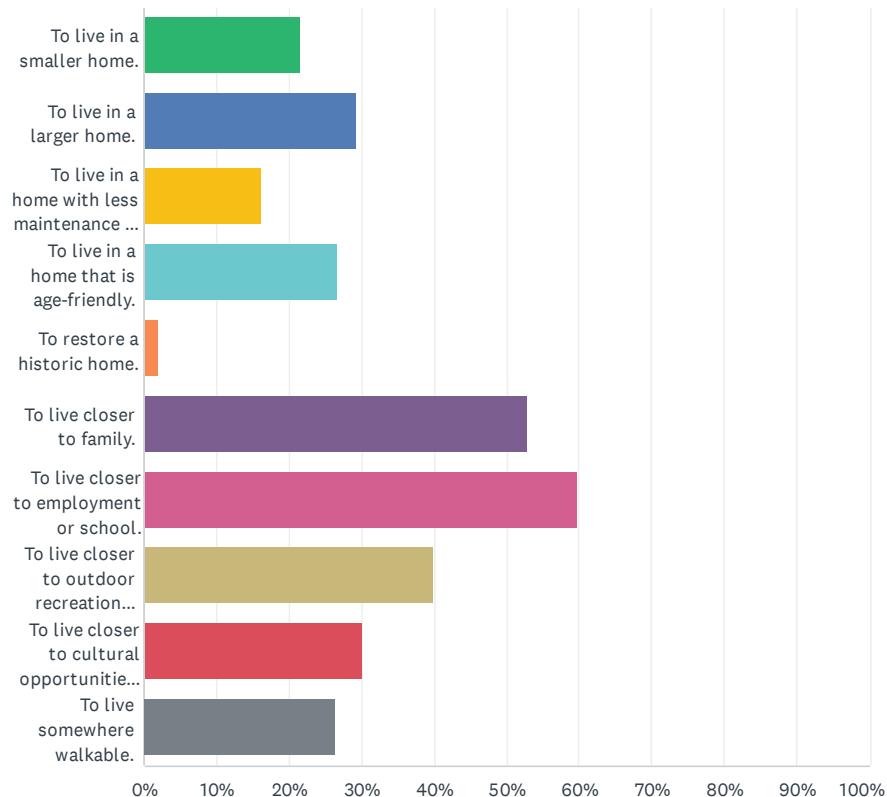
Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
To live in a smaller home.	21.48%	554
To live in a larger home.	29.27%	755
To live in a home with less maintenance on home/ yard.	16.29%	420
To live in a home that is age-friendly.	26.64%	687
To restore a historic home.	1.86%	48
To live closer to family.	52.97%	1,366
To live closer to employment or school.	59.60%	1,537
To live closer to outdoor recreation opportunities.	39.94%	1,030
To live closer to cultural opportunities, festivals, and events.	29.97%	773
To live somewhere walkable.	26.52%	684
Total Respondents: 2,579		

7

Q7 Do you think you could find housing that meets your preferences in your price range in Sterling Heights?

Answered: 2,553   Skipped: 605
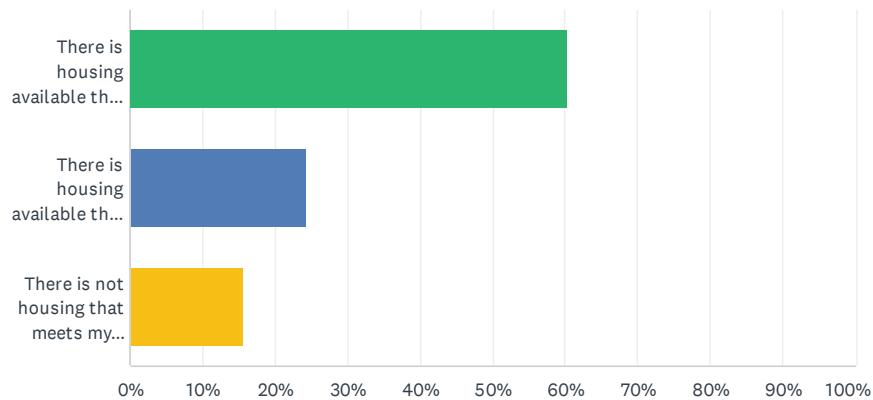
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
There is housing available that meets my preferences in my price range.	60.24%	1,538
There is housing available that meets my preferences, but it is outside of my price range.	24.25%	619
There is not housing that meets my preferences available.	15.51%	396
TOTAL		2,553

8

Q8 Would you encourage or discourage the following types of residential development in Sterling Heights in the future?

Answered: 2,660   Skipped: 498
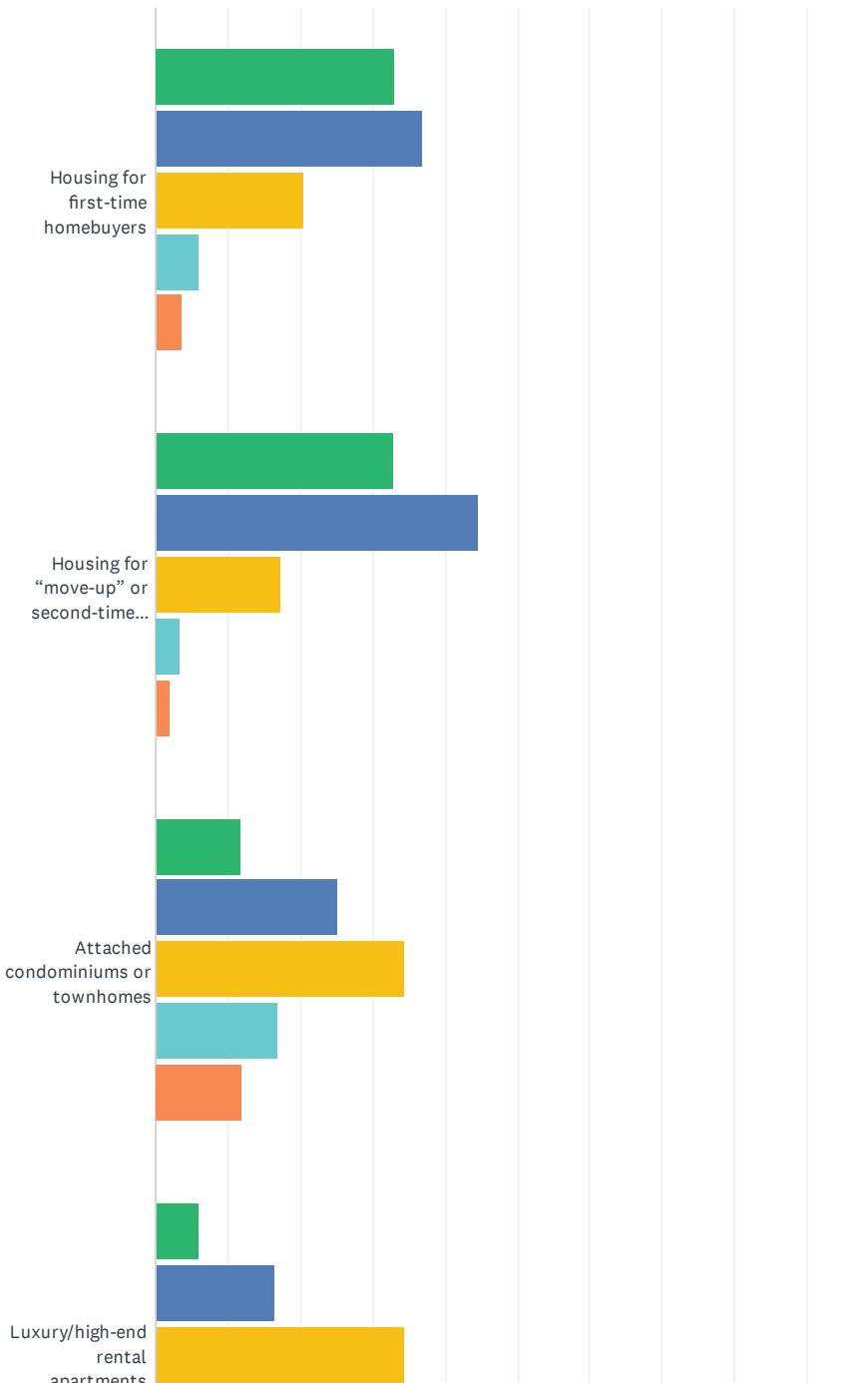
Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey
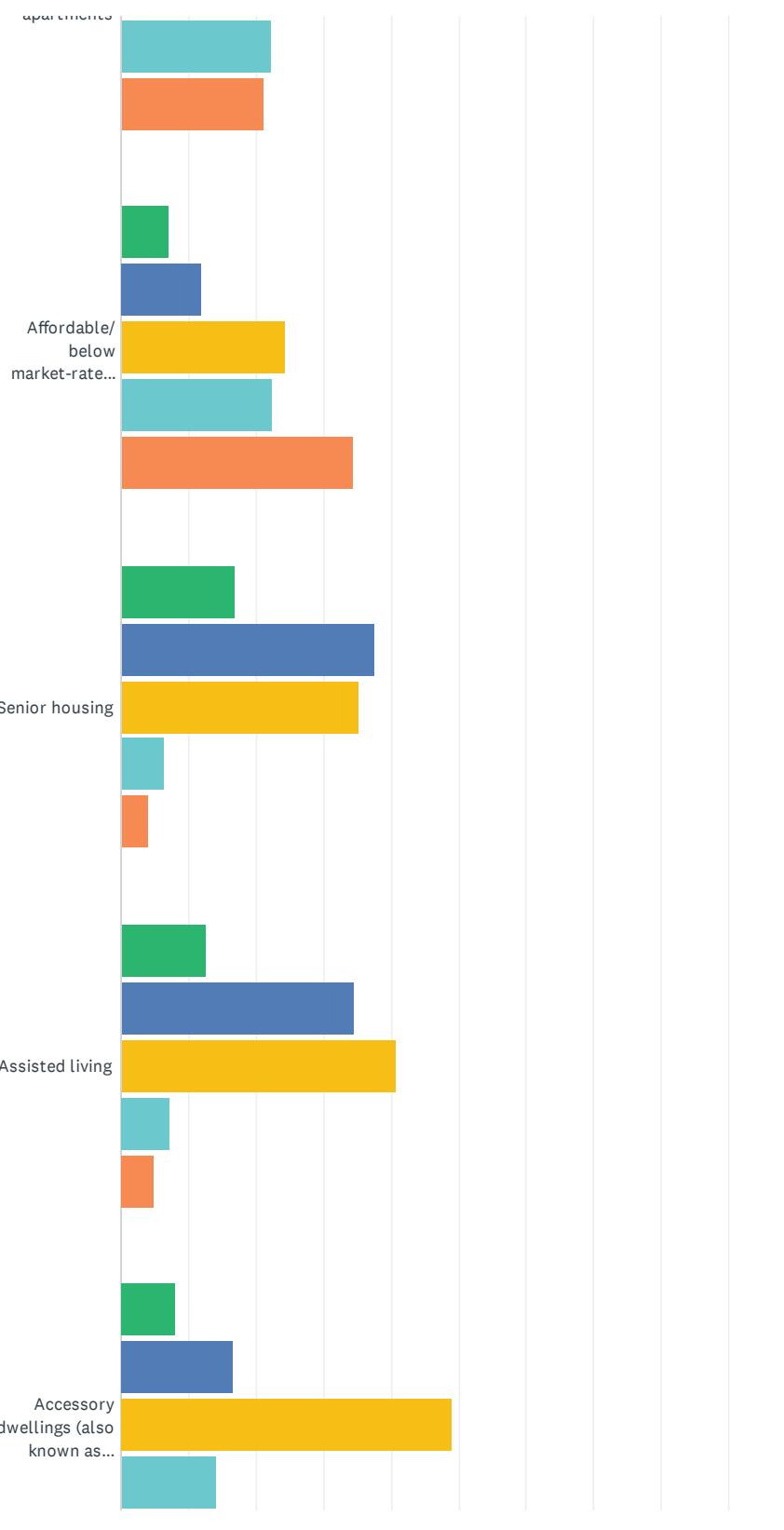
10

Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey
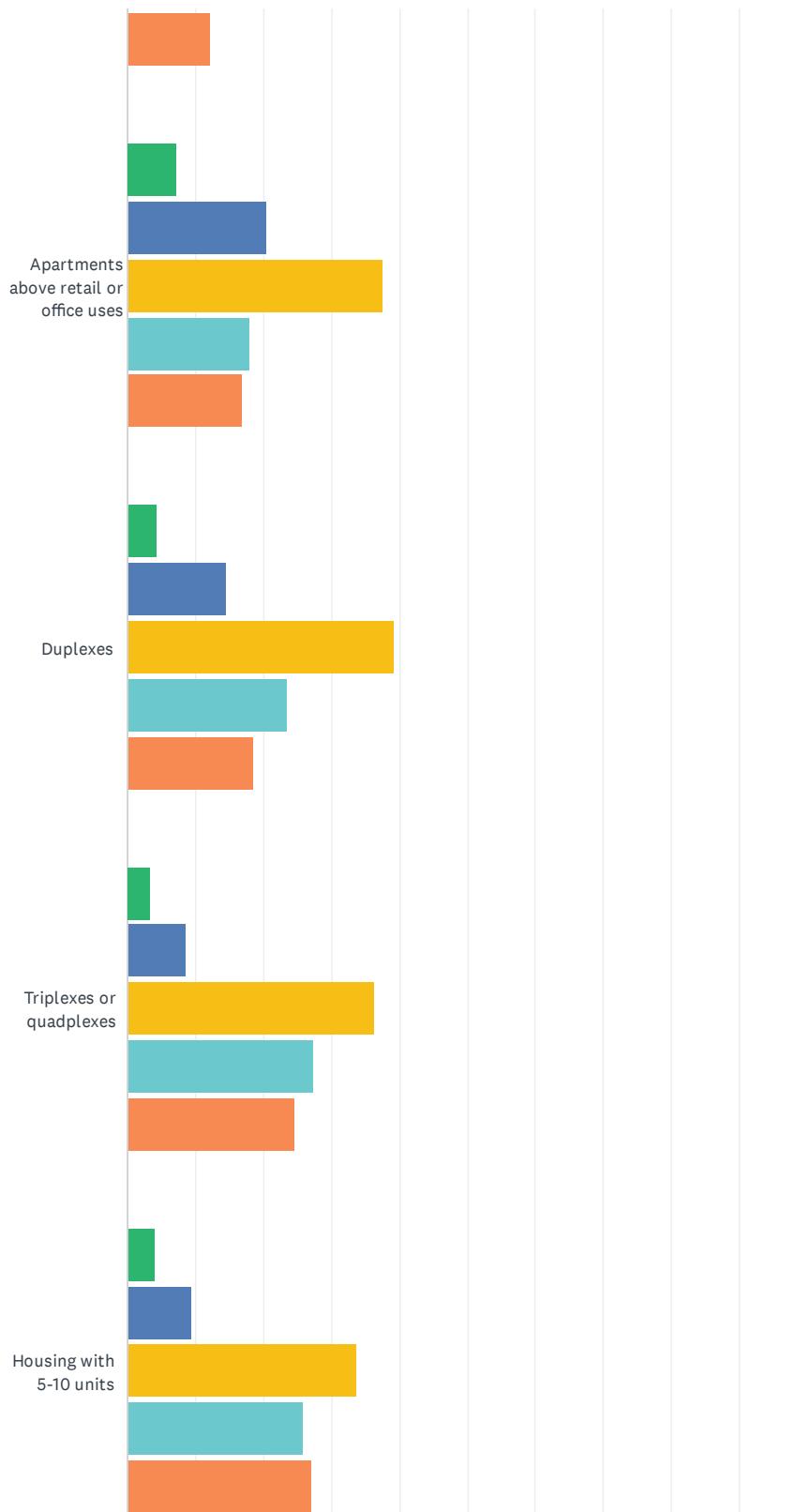
Apartments above retail or office uses

Duplexes

Triplexes or quadplexes

Housing with 5-10 units

11

Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey
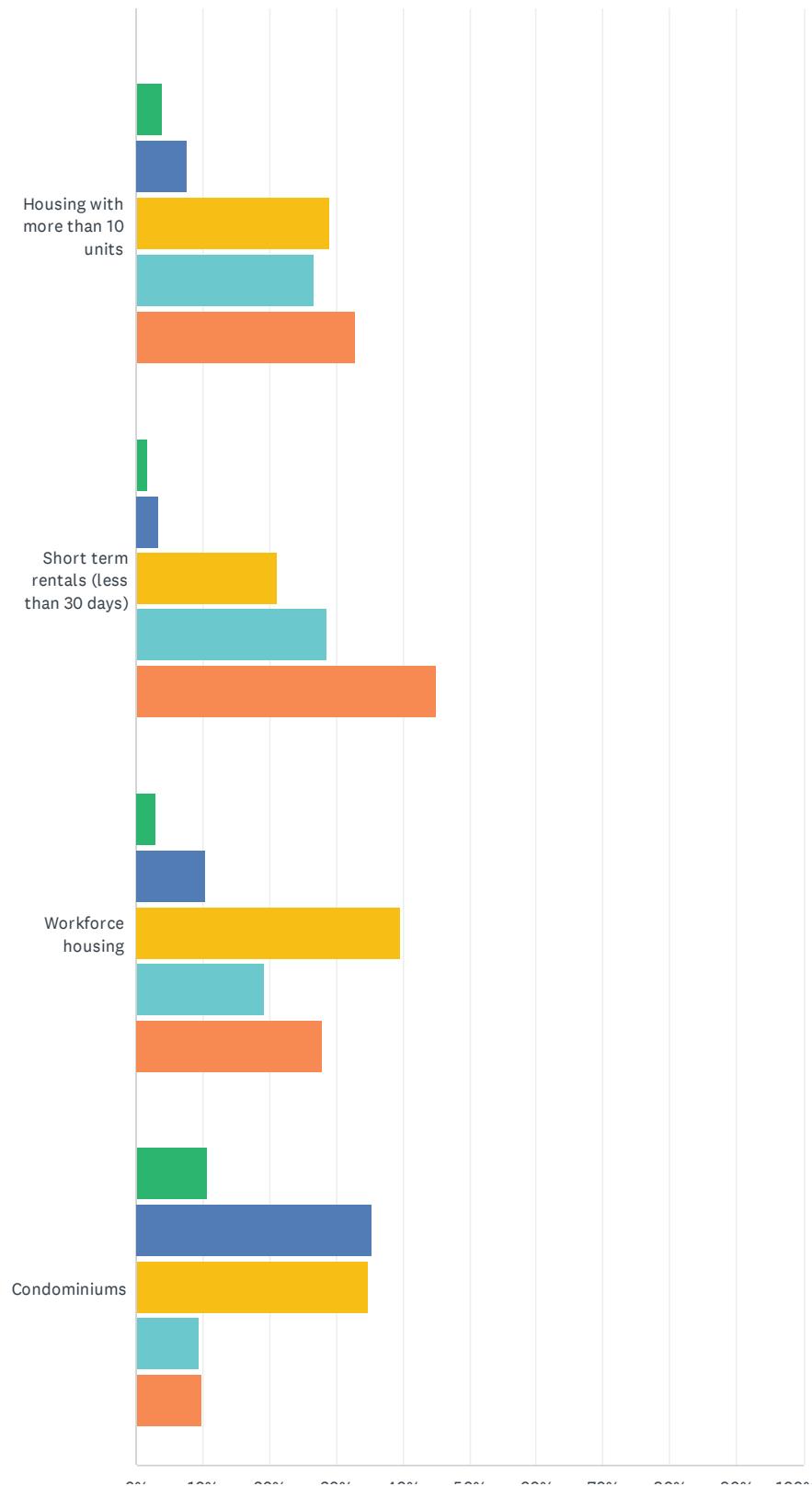
Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%   60%   70%   80%   90%   100%

🟩 Highly enco...   🟦 Encourage   🟨 Neutral   🟦 Discourage
🟧 Highly disc...

	HIGHLY ENCOURAGE	ENCOURAGE	NEUTRAL	DISCOURAGE	HIGHLY DISCOURAGE	TOTAL
Housing for first-time homebuyers	33.05% 870	36.97% 973	20.48% 539	5.97% 157	3.53% 93	2,632
Housing for "move-up" or second-time homebuyers	32.90% 865	44.47% 1,169	17.23% 453	3.39% 89	2.02% 53	2,629
Attached condominiums or townhomes	11.64% 304	25.23% 659	34.34% 897	16.88% 441	11.91% 311	2,612
Luxury/high-end rental apartments	6.06% 158	16.38% 427	34.37% 896	22.09% 576	21.10% 550	2,607
Affordable/ below market-rate rental apartments	7.00% 183	12.02% 314	24.23% 633	22.46% 587	34.29% 896	2,613
Senior housing	16.83% 441	37.44% 981	35.23% 923	6.45% 169	4.05% 106	2,620
Assisted living	12.62% 328	34.59% 899	40.63% 1,056	7.20% 187	4.96% 129	2,599
Accessory dwellings (also known as "granny flats")	8.10% 210	16.74% 434	48.94% 1,269	14.08% 365	12.15% 315	2,593
Apartments above retail or office uses	7.19% 187	20.45% 532	37.51% 976	17.99% 468	16.87% 439	2,602
Duplexes	4.18% 108	14.60% 377	39.27% 1,014	23.39% 604	18.55% 479	2,582
Triplexes or quadplexes	3.52% 91	8.50% 220	36.24% 938	27.24% 705	24.50% 634	2,588
Housing with 5-10 units	4.12% 107	9.44% 245	33.64% 873	25.70% 667	27.09% 703	2,595
Housing with more than 10 units	3.74% 97	7.63% 198	29.07% 754	26.64% 691	32.92% 854	2,594
Short term rentals (less than 30 days)	1.69% 44	3.50% 91	21.09% 548	28.64% 744	45.07% 1,171	2,598
Workforce housing	2.92% 75	10.38% 267	39.66% 1,020	19.09% 491	27.95% 719	2,572
Condominiums	10.63% 277	35.36% 921	34.82% 907	9.44% 246	9.75% 254	2,605

13

Q9 Which housing type do you think will meet your housing needs in 10-15 years? Check all that apply

Answered: 2,656   Skipped: 502
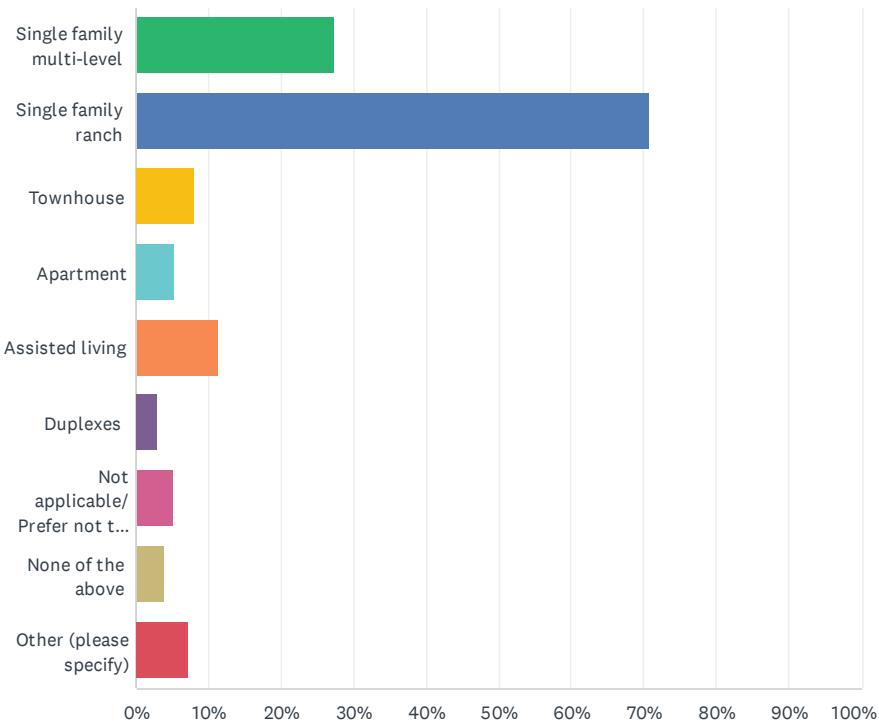
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single family multi-level	27.30%	725
Single family ranch	70.82%	1,881
Townhouse	8.06%	214
Apartment	5.42%	144
Assisted living	11.30%	300
Duplexes	3.05%	81
Not applicable/ Prefer not to answer	5.05%	134
None of the above	3.92%	104
Other (please specify)	7.23%	192
Total Respondents: 2,656		

14

Q9 Other (192 responses)

Most Common Preferences:

1. **Condo/Condominium**: The most frequently mentioned preference, with many respondents indicating a desire for condos or condominiums.

2. **Detached Condo**: A significant number of comments specifically mentioned detached condos.

3. **Ranch Style**: Several comments highlighted a preference for ranch-style homes or condos.

4. **Senior Housing**: There is a notable interest in senior housing options, including independent living and senior communities.

5. **Acreage and Larger Properties**: Some respondents expressed a desire for properties with more land or acreage.

6. **Staying in Current Home**: A few comments indicated no plans to move or a preference to stay in their current home.

Key Themes:

- **Accessibility**: Comments mentioned the need for fully wheelchair-accessible homes.

- **Development Concerns**: Some respondents expressed concerns about overdevelopment and its impact on the community.

- **Affordability and Taxes**: Lowering taxes and affordability were mentioned as important factors.

- **Community and Safety**: There were concerns about maintaining the community's character and safety, with some comments opposing apartments due to perceived crime risks.

- **Senior-Friendly Features**: Preferences for senior-friendly features, such as single-story homes and communities that accept pets, were highlighted.

- **Diverse Housing Needs**: There is a desire for a variety of housing options, including smaller homes, multi-generational housing, and homes with more land.

Summary:

The majority of respondents prefer condos or condominiums, with a significant interest in detached and ranch-style options. Senior housing and accessibility are important considerations, along with concerns about overdevelopment and maintaining community character. There is also a desire for more diverse housing options to meet different needs, including larger properties and affordable housing.

15

Q10 How likely are you to sell your home within the next year?

Answered: 2,647   Skipped: 511
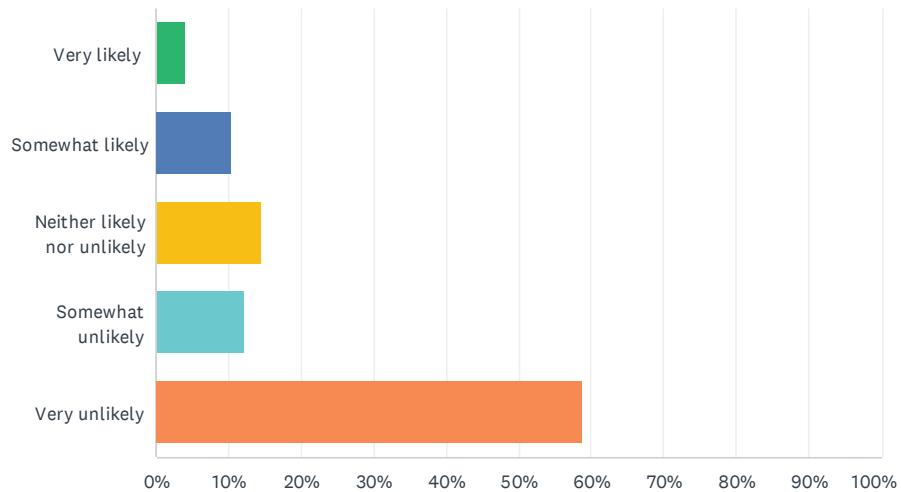
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very likely	4.12%	109
Somewhat likely	10.43%	276
Neither likely nor unlikely	14.58%	386
Somewhat unlikely	12.13%	321
Very unlikely	58.75%	1,555
TOTAL		2,647

16

Q11 If you answered that you would be very or somewhat likely to sell your home within the next year, why do you anticipate a potential move?

Answered: 500   Skipped: 2,658

Most Common Preferences:

1. **Downsizing**: Many respondents mentioned a desire to downsize their housing.
2. **More Property/Land**: There is a significant interest in moving to areas with more land or larger properties.
3. **Rural/Suburban Areas**: Several comments indicated a preference for moving to more rural or suburban areas with less congestion and more space.
4. **Lower Taxes**: Lowering taxes is a recurring theme among the comments.
5. **Larger Homes**: Some respondents are looking for larger homes with more space and storage.
6. **Senior-Friendly Housing**: There is a need for affordable, senior-friendly housing options, such as ranch-style homes and condos with first-floor laundry.

Key Themes:

- **Overdevelopment and Urbanization**: Concerns about overdevelopment, increased traffic, and urbanization are prevalent. Many respondents feel that Sterling Heights is becoming overcrowded and losing its charm.
- **Neighborhood Upkeep**: Comments frequently mention issues with neighborhood upkeep, such as unmaintained properties, weeds, and general neglect.
- **Community and Safety**: There are concerns about the changing community dynamics, including the influx of renters and perceived decline in neighborhood safety and cleanliness.
- **Taxes and Affordability**: High taxes and the need for more affordable housing options are significant concerns.
- **Desire for Change**: Many respondents are looking for a change, whether it's a new location, a different type of housing, or a better-maintained neighborhood.
- **Traffic and Congestion**: Increased traffic and congestion are common complaints, with some respondents wanting to move to areas with less traffic.
- **Cultural and Demographic Changes**: Some comments reflect concerns about cultural and demographic changes in the community.
- **Environmental and Health Concerns**: Issues such as the use of chemicals like Glyphosate and the impact on health were mentioned.
- **City Management and Services**: There are concerns about city management, including dissatisfaction with city services, maintenance, and decisions made by city officials.
- **Crime and Safety**: Increased crime rates and safety concerns are frequently mentioned, with some respondents feeling unsafe in their neighborhoods.
- **School Quality**: Concerns about the quality of schools and the impact of school choice policies on the community.
- **Rental Properties**: An increase in rental properties and the impact on community feel and property upkeep is a common concern.

Summary:

The majority of respondents are looking to downsize or move to areas with more land and lower taxes. There is a strong desire for larger homes, senior-friendly housing, and better neighborhood upkeep. Concerns about overdevelopment, urbanization, high taxes, and increased traffic are common, with many respondents feeling that Sterling Heights is becoming overcrowded and losing its appeal. Additionally, there are concerns about cultural changes, environmental health, city management, crime, school quality, and the overall direction of the city's development. The increase in rental properties and its impact on the community is also a significant concern.

17

Q12 Does Sterling Heights offer enough housing choices to allow seniors to age in community and stay in the city as long as they want to?

Answered: 2,543   Skipped: 615
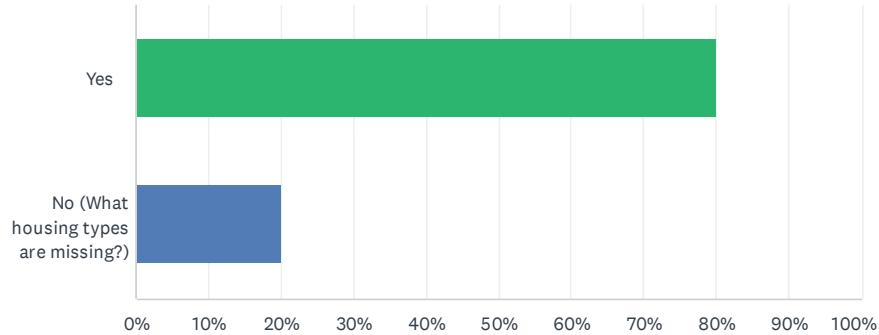
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	79.87%	2,031
No (What housing types are missing?)	20.13%	512
TOTAL		2,543

Summary: The Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey revealed that a significant majority of respondents (79.87%) believe the city offers enough housing choices for seniors to age in the community. However, 20.13% of respondents feel that there are gaps in the housing options available for seniors. The feedback highlights a strong demand for more affordable and senior-specific housing solutions.

Key Themes and Common Preferences:

1. **Affordable Housing:**
   - Many respondents emphasized the need for more affordable housing options, including smaller homes, condos, and apartments that are within the financial reach of seniors.

2. **Senior-Specific Housing:**
   - There is a clear preference for housing types that cater specifically to seniors, such as ranch-style homes, detached condos, and communities with amenities designed for older adults.

3. **Assisted Living:**
   - Several respondents pointed out the lack of affordable assisted living facilities and senior communities that offer a continuum of care, from independent living to assisted living and memory care.

4. **Accessibility:**
   - The need for housing that is ADA compliant and accessible for seniors with mobility issues was a recurring theme. Respondents mentioned features like single-story layouts, wider hallways, and bathroom safety features.

5. **Walkability and Proximity:**
   - A number of respondents stressed the importance of housing located in walkable areas with easy access to amenities such as parks, stores, and medical facilities. This would help seniors maintain their independence and quality of life.

18

Q13 How often do you access the following destinations by walking or by bicycle, rather than in your car? Please choose one for each destination

Answered: 2,582   Skipped: 576
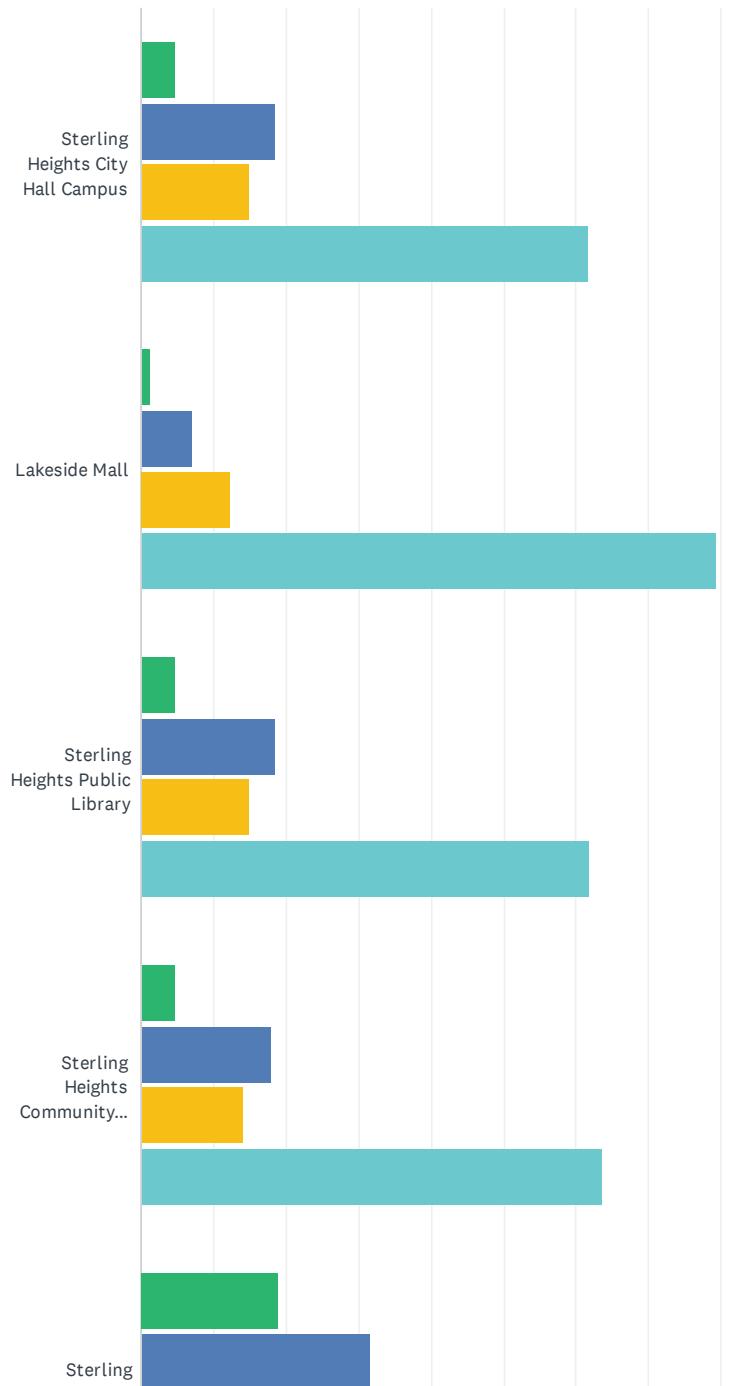
19
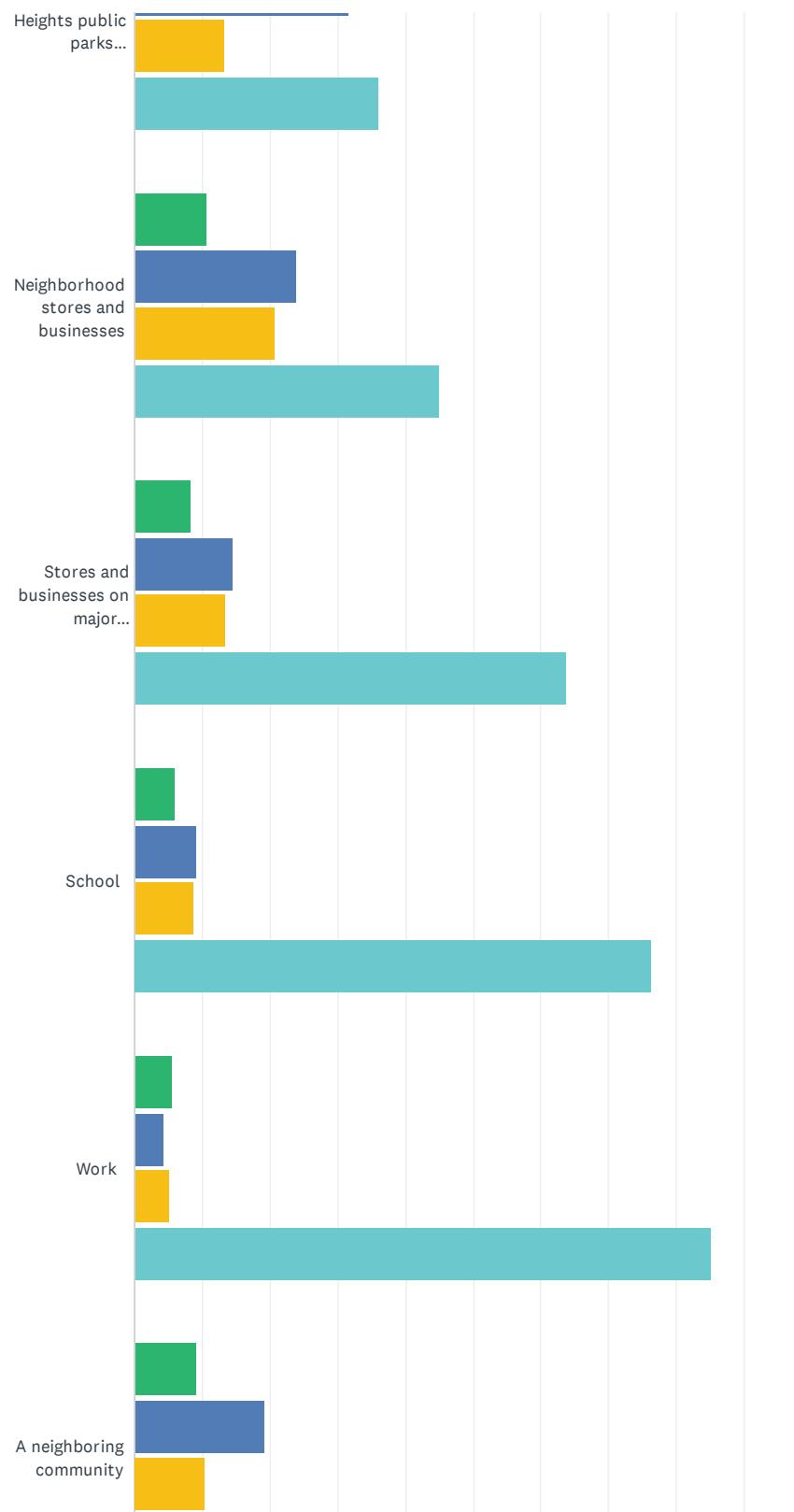
Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey
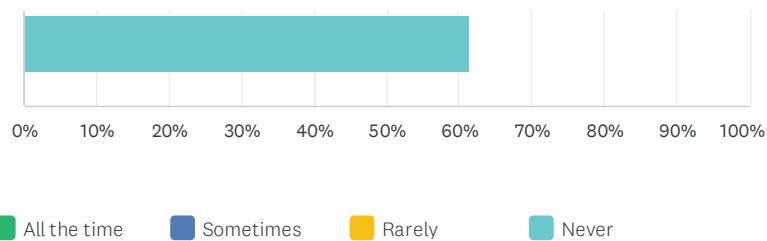
	ALL THE TIME	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Sterling Heights City Hall Campus	4.73% 121	18.58% 475	14.98% 383	61.71% 1,578	2,557	4.29
Lakeside Mall	1.29% 33	7.05% 180	12.34% 315	79.31% 2,024	2,552	4.68
Sterling Heights Public Library	4.66% 119	18.64% 476	14.92% 381	61.77% 1,577	2,553	4.29
Sterling Heights Community Center	4.74% 121	17.81% 455	14.01% 358	63.44% 1,621	2,555	4.31
Sterling Heights public parks (Including Dodge Park)	19.08% 489	31.56% 809	13.27% 340	36.09% 925	2,563	3.47
Neighborhood stores and businesses	10.64% 273	23.78% 610	20.66% 530	44.91% 1,152	2,565	3.89
Stores and businesses on major thoroughfares	8.21% 210	14.58% 373	13.49% 345	63.72% 1,630	2,558	4.25
School	5.87% 147	9.15% 229	8.67% 217	76.32% 1,911	2,504	4.50
Work	5.58% 140	4.34% 109	5.06% 127	85.03% 2,135	2,511	4.64
A neighboring community	9.07% 230	19.16% 486	10.41% 264	61.36% 1,556	2,536	4.15

21

Q14 How often do you access the following destinations by car?

Answered: 2,585   Skipped: 573
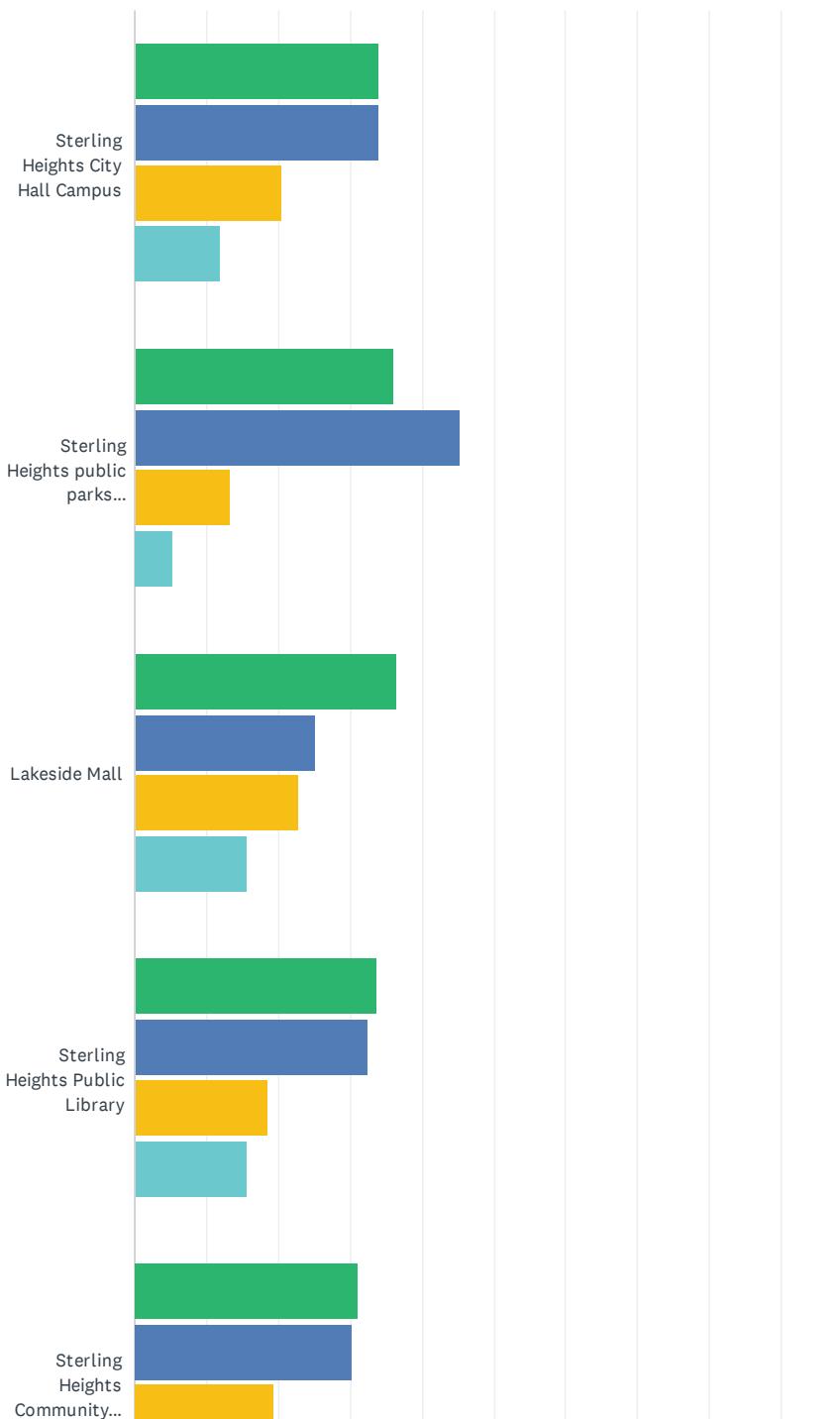
22
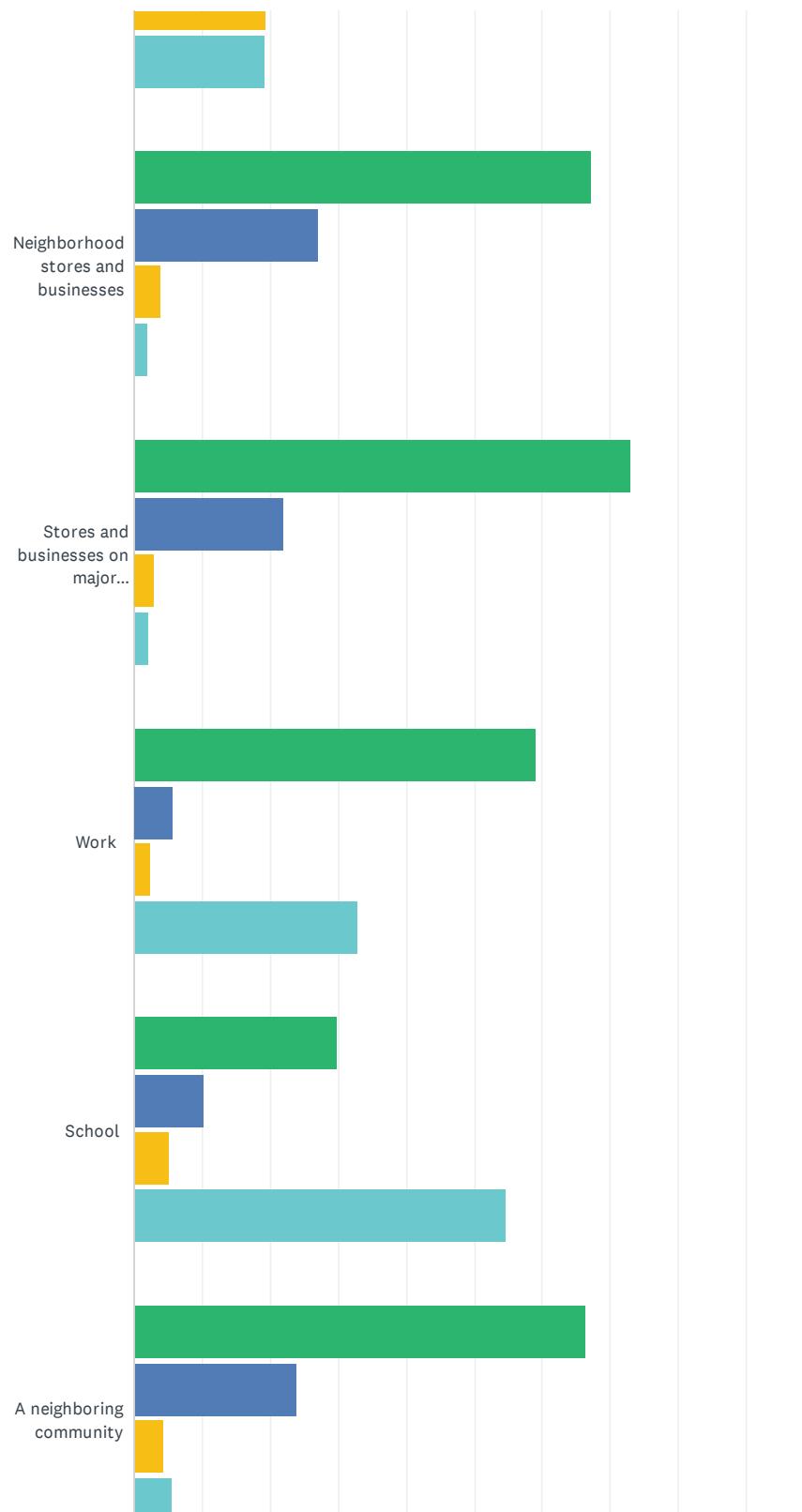
Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey
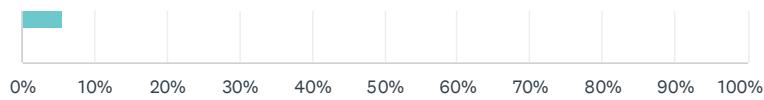
Legend: ■ All the time ■ Sometimes ■ Rarely ■ Never

	ALL THE TIME	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Sterling Heights City Hall Campus	33.88% 867	33.88% 867	20.40% 522	11.84% 303	2,559	2.10
Sterling Heights public parks (including Dodge Park)	36.14% 928	45.29% 1,163	13.24% 340	5.33% 137	2,568	1.88
Lakeside Mall	36.43% 934	25.23% 647	22.78% 584	15.56% 399	2,564	2.17
Sterling Heights Public Library	33.61% 858	32.39% 827	18.49% 472	15.51% 396	2,553	2.16
Sterling Heights Community Center	31.12% 796	30.22% 773	19.43% 497	19.23% 492	2,558	2.27
Neighborhood stores and businesses	67.10% 1,719	27.09% 694	3.83% 98	1.99% 51	2,562	1.41
Stores and businesses on major thoroughfares	72.82% 1,873	21.89% 563	3.07% 79	2.22% 57	2,572	1.35
Work	58.97% 1,450	5.73% 141	2.40% 59	32.90% 809	2,459	2.09
School	29.90% 723	10.34% 250	5.09% 123	54.67% 1,322	2,418	2.85
A neighboring community	66.42% 1,687	23.82% 605	4.17% 106	5.59% 142	2,540	1.49

24

Q15 How would you describe yourself as a cyclist? Check one option below

Answered: 2,552   Skipped: 606
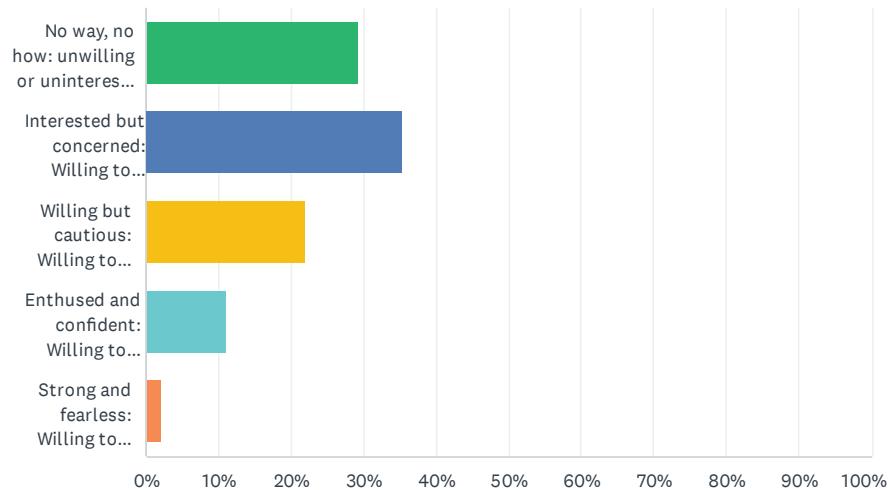
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No way, no how: unwilling or uninterested in bicycling.	29.23%	746
Interested but concerned: Willing to bicycle, but only on off-road trail or where high-quality bicycle accommodations are provided (e.g. separated bike lanes or side paths outside the roadway).	35.42%	904
Willing but cautious: Willing to bicycle within a roadway but only if comfortable bike accommodations are present (eg buffered bike lanes or wide bike lanes).	22.06%	563
Enthused and confident: Willing to bicycle within a roadway, but only on lower traffic streets or if modest bike accommodations are present (e.g. conventional bike lanes or share road markings).	11.05%	282
Strong and fearless: Willing to bicycle in a roadway with limited or no bike accommodation.	2.23%	57
TOTAL		2,552

25

Q16 Which three destinations would you like to be able to reach by walking or biking, rather than driving?

Answered: 1,468   Skipped: 1,690

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Destination 1:	99.86%	1,466
Destination 2:	81.54%	1,197
Destination 3:	64.85%	952

Summary: The survey responses indicate a strong desire for more walkable and bikeable access to various destinations within Sterling Heights. The most mentioned destinations include parks, community centers, and local businesses. Respondents expressed a need for improved infrastructure to support walking and biking, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and safer crossings.

Key Themes and Common Preferences:

1. **Parks:**
   - **Dodge Park** was the most frequently mentioned destination, with many respondents wanting easier access to this popular park.
   - Other parks mentioned include **Freedom Hill**, **River Bends Park**, and **Stony Creek**.

2. **Community Centers and Public Facilities:**
   - Respondents expressed a desire to reach community centers, libraries, and city hall by walking or biking. The **Sterling Heights Community Center** and **Sterling Heights Public Library** were frequently mentioned.

3. **Local Businesses:**
   - Many respondents want to access local businesses, including grocery stores, restaurants, and coffee shops. Specific mentions include **Meijer**, **Kroger**, and various neighborhood stores.

4. **Schools:**
   - Schools were also a common destination, with respondents wanting safer routes for children to walk or bike to school.

5. **Shopping Areas:**
   - **Lakeside Mall** and other shopping centers were popular destinations that respondents would like to reach without driving.

6. **Recreational Trails:**
   - There was a strong interest in accessing recreational trails, such as the **Clinton River Trail** and the **Macomb Orchard Trail**, for both leisure and commuting purposes.

7. **Safety and Infrastructure Improvements:**
   - Many respondents highlighted the need for better infrastructure to support walking and biking, including more sidewalks, bike lanes, and safer crossings at busy intersections.

26

Q17 To what extent would encourage or discourage more of the following land uses in Sterling Heights in the future?

Answered: 2,373   Skipped: 785
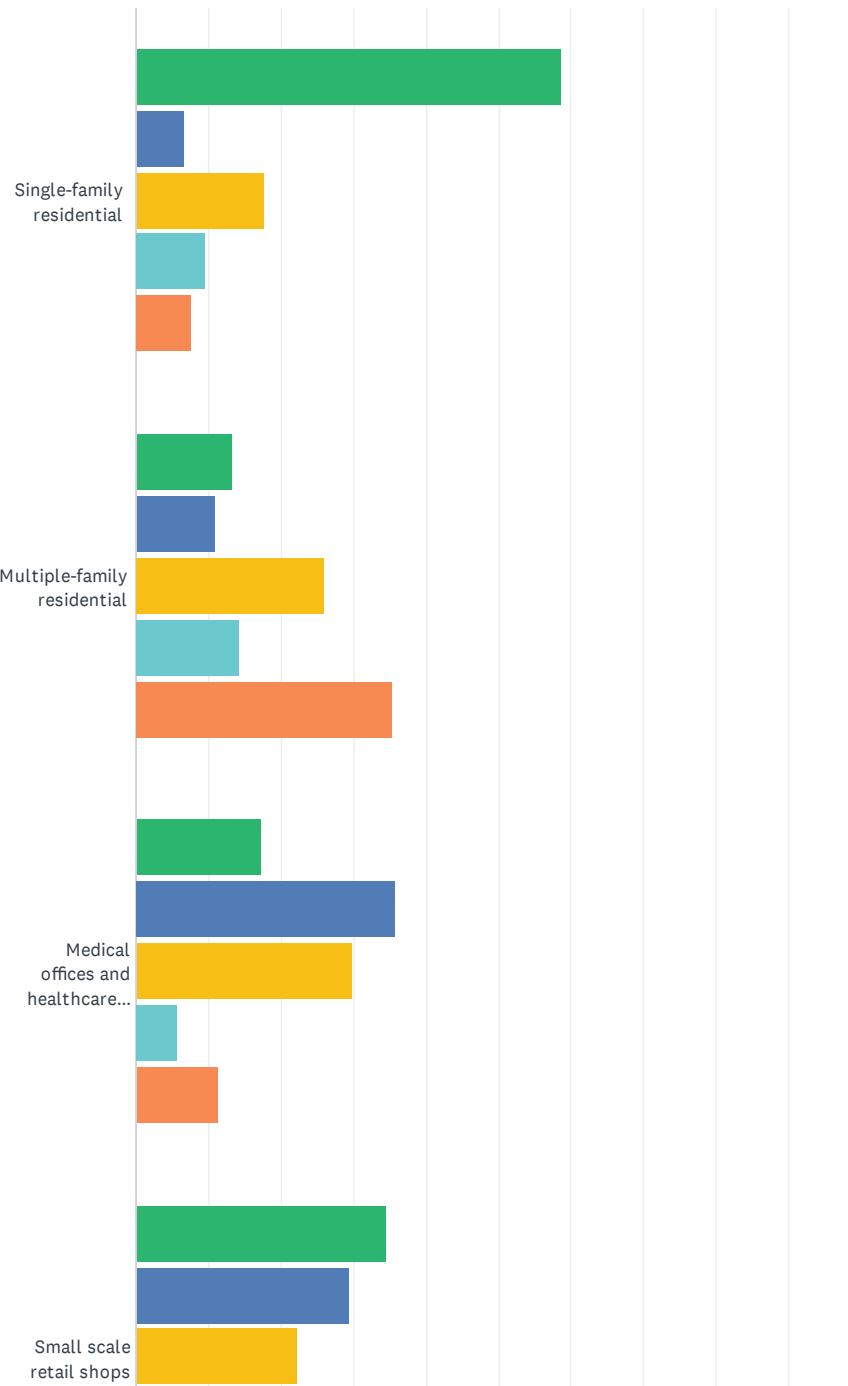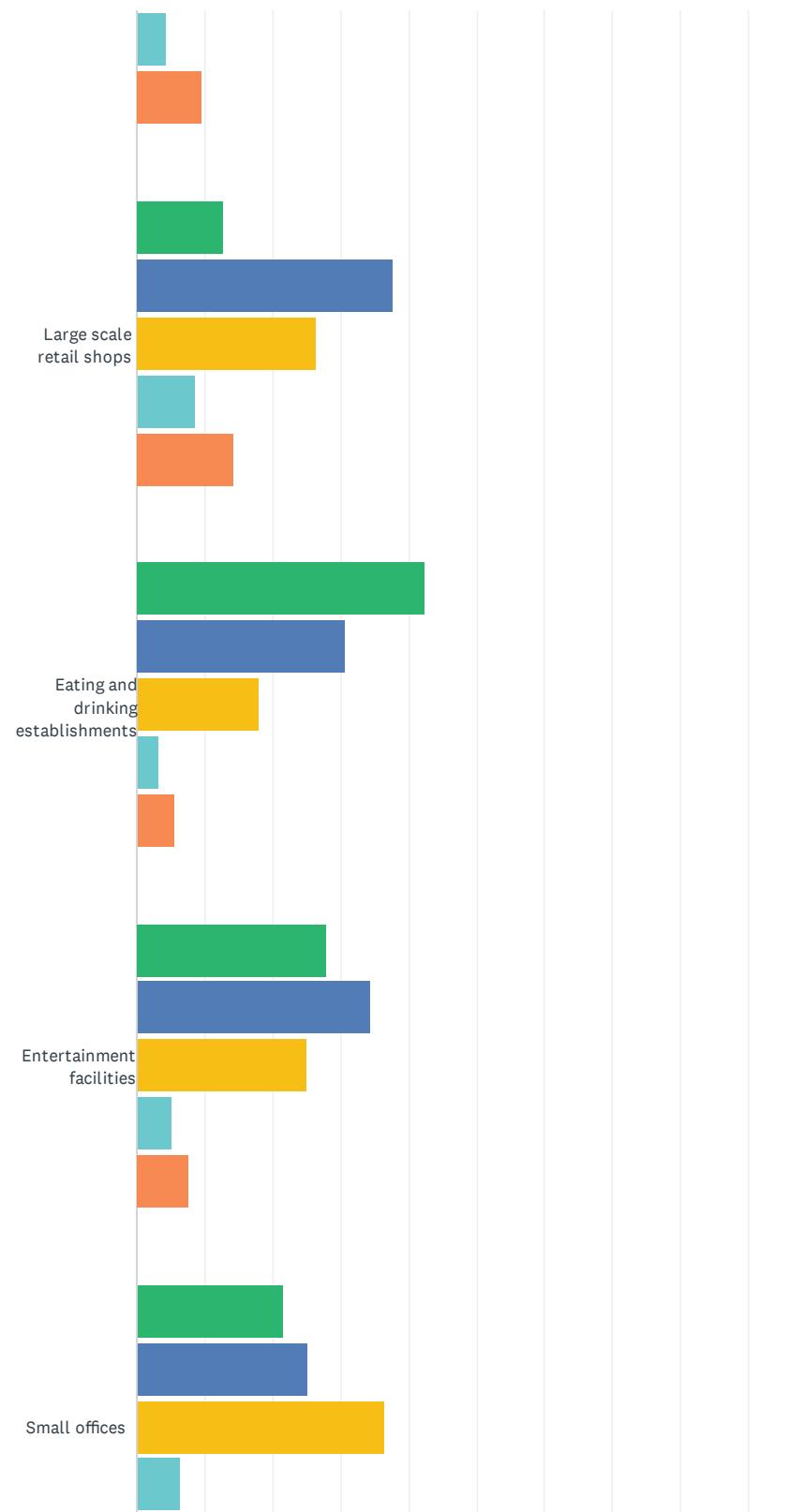
27

Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey

Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey

Parks and open space

Grocery stores

Development with a mix of uses, such a...

Community uses such as schools,...

Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey

Legend:
- Encourage ...
- Encourage ...
- Neutral
- Discourage...
- Discourage...

Categories: Research and development or light..., General manufacturing

X-axis: 0% to 100%

30
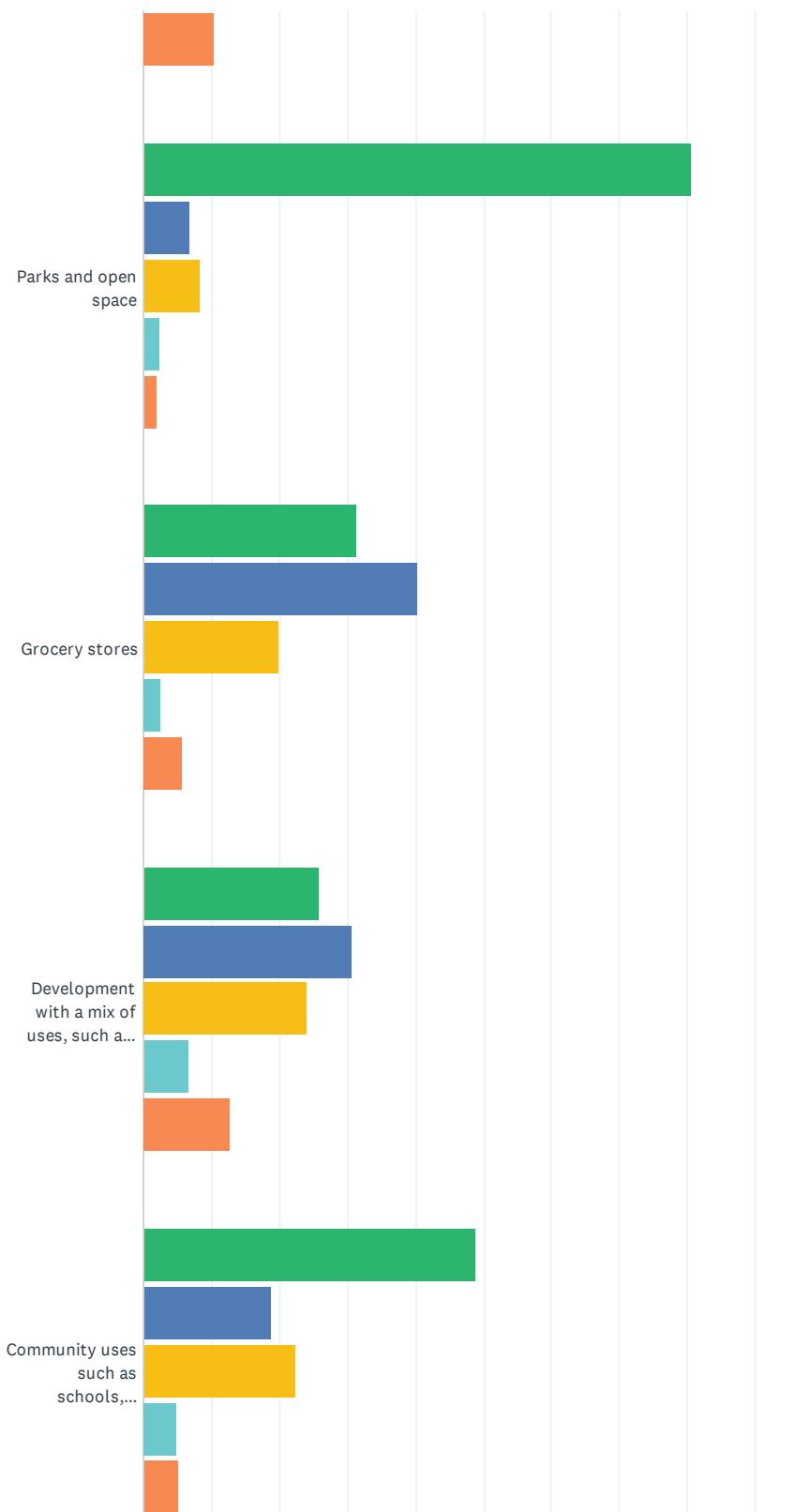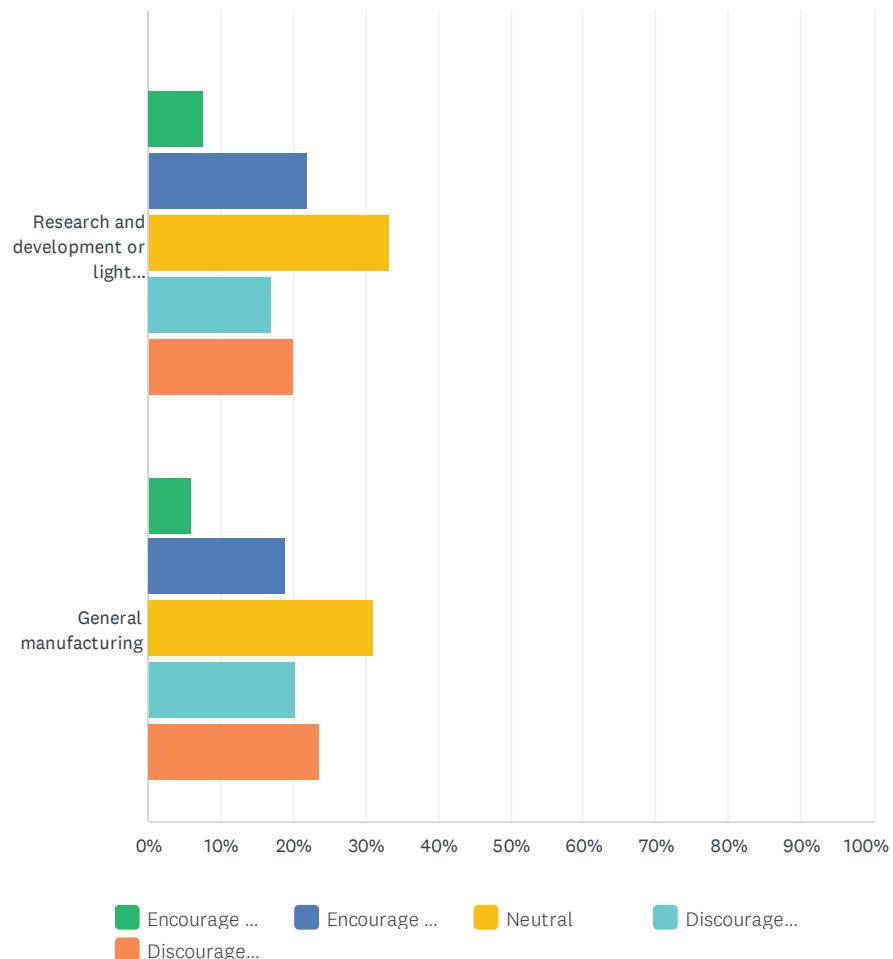
Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey

	ENCOURAGE ANYWHERE IN THE CITY	ENCOURAGE AT KEY INTERSECTIONS	NEUTRAL	DISCOURAGE AT KEY INTERSECTIONS	DISCOURAGE ANYWHERE IN THE CITY	TOTAL
Single-family residential	58.55% 1,366	6.56% 153	17.79% 415	9.52% 222	7.59% 177	2,333
Multiple-family residential	13.29% 308	10.96% 254	26.06% 604	14.24% 330	35.46% 822	2,318
Medical offices and healthcare services	17.27% 403	35.82% 836	29.95% 699	5.66% 132	11.31% 264	2,334
Small scale retail shops	34.46% 808	29.47% 691	22.22% 521	4.35% 102	9.51% 223	2,345
Large scale retail shops	12.86% 301	37.80% 885	26.40% 618	8.59% 201	14.35% 336	2,341
Eating and drinking establishments	42.53% 999	30.65% 720	17.97% 422	3.28% 77	5.58% 131	2,349
Entertainment facilities	28.01% 657	34.36% 806	24.89% 584	5.12% 120	7.63% 179	2,346
Small offices	21.63% 502	25.12% 583	36.45% 846	6.33% 147	10.47% 243	2,321
Parks and open space	80.65% 1,901	6.75% 159	8.23% 194	2.42% 57	1.95% 46	2,357
Grocery stores	31.43% 734	40.21% 939	19.91% 465	2.66% 62	5.78% 135	2,335
Development with a mix of uses, such as office, food, or shops, and residential	25.81% 605	30.63% 718	24.10% 565	6.66% 156	12.80% 300	2,344
Community uses such as schools, libraries, and museums	48.91% 1,148	18.75% 440	22.37% 525	4.86% 114	5.11% 120	2,347
Research and development or light industrial	7.73% 181	21.91% 513	33.23% 778	17.04% 399	20.08% 470	2,341
General manufacturing	5.94% 139	19.02% 445	31.07% 727	20.21% 473	23.76% 556	2,340

31

Q18 Are there any types of commercial establishments with goods and services that are not available in Sterling Heights that you would like to see offered?

Answered: 2,233   Skipped: 925
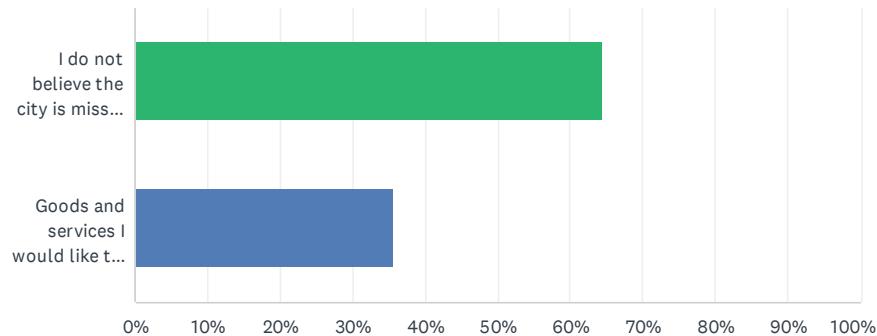
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I do not believe the city is missing any goods or services.	64.35%	1,437
Goods and services I would like to see include:	35.65%	796
TOTAL		2,233

Common Themes and Key Preferences

1. **High-Quality Dining and Retail:**
   - **Popular Chains**: Many respondents requested well-known chains such as Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, Cracker Barrel, Cheesecake Factory, and Nino Salvaggio.
   - **Upscale Dining**: There is a strong desire for more high-quality, sit-down restaurants and upscale dining options.

2. **Entertainment and Recreational Facilities:**
   - **Entertainment Venues**: Requests for entertainment options like bowling alleys, arcades, go-kart tracks, axe throwing venues, and pickleball courts.
   - **Recreational Facilities**: Many respondents expressed a need for public pools, indoor playgrounds, and community centers with gyms, spas, and saunas.

3. **Cultural and Specialty Shops:**
   - **Cultural Spaces**: Suggestions included performing arts venues, museums, and art schools.
   - **Specialty Shops**: Respondents mentioned a desire for bookshops, bike shops, and outdoor cafes.

4. **Walkable and Community-Centric Areas:**
   - **Walkable Downtown Areas**: There is a strong interest in developing walkable, community-focused areas similar to downtown spaces in cities like Rochester or Royal Oak.
   - **Mixed-Use Developments**: Suggestions for mixed-use developments that combine residential, retail, and dining options in a pedestrian-friendly environment.

32

5. **Grocery and Food Markets**:

   - **Grocery Stores**: Specific requests for grocery stores like Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, and Nino Salvaggio.

   - **Local Markets**: Desire for more local and neighborhood grocery stores, as well as specialty food markets.

6. **Family and Kid-Friendly Establishments**:

   - **Family Entertainment**: Requests for family-oriented entertainment options such as indoor water parks and play areas, roller rinks, and kid-friendly activity zones.

   - **Dining with Play Areas**: Suggestions for restaurants with play areas for children.

7. **Health and Wellness Facilities**:

   - **Fitness Centers**: Interest in more fitness centers, including gyms with pools, saunas, and wellness programs.

   - **Health Food Stores**: Requests for natural food stores and organic markets.

8. **Unique and Independent Businesses**:

   - **Independent Shops**: Desire for more independent, non-chain businesses such as boutique stores, artisanal shops, and local cafes.

   - **Unique Dining Options**: Interest in unique dining experiences, including non-chain restaurants and specialty eateries.

9. **Sustainability and Green Spaces**:

   - **Sustainable Businesses**: Suggestions for businesses focused on sustainability, such as recycling centers and eco-friendly stores.

   - **Green Spaces**: Desire for more parks, community gardens, and green spaces integrated with commercial areas.

10. **Social and Community Services**:

    - **Community Centers**: Requests for more community centers offering a variety of services, including senior programs and volunteer opportunities.

    - **Public Amenities**: Interest in public amenities such as libraries, community pools, and public transportation options.

Summary

The survey responses highlight a community interest in a diverse range of commercial establishments that enhance the quality of life in Sterling Heights. Key preferences include:

- **High-Quality Dining and Retail**: Popular chains and upscale dining options.

- **Entertainment and Recreational Facilities**: Venues for entertainment and recreation.

- **Cultural and Specialty Shops**: Cultural spaces and specialty retail shops.

- **Walkable and Community-Centric Areas**: Development of pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use areas.

- **Grocery and Food Markets**: More grocery stores and local markets.

- **Family and Kid-Friendly Establishments**: Family-oriented entertainment and dining options.

- **Health and Wellness Facilities**: Fitness centers and health food stores.

- **Unique and Independent Businesses**: Independent shops and unique dining experiences.

- **Sustainability and Green Spaces**: Sustainable businesses and green spaces.

- **Social and Community Services**: Community centers and public amenities.

These preferences reflect a desire for a balanced mix of commercial establishments that cater to diverse needs and contribute to a vibrant, sustainable, and community-focused environment.

33

Q19 How satisfied are you with the appearance of the following in Sterling Heights?

Answered: 2,373   Skipped: 785

34
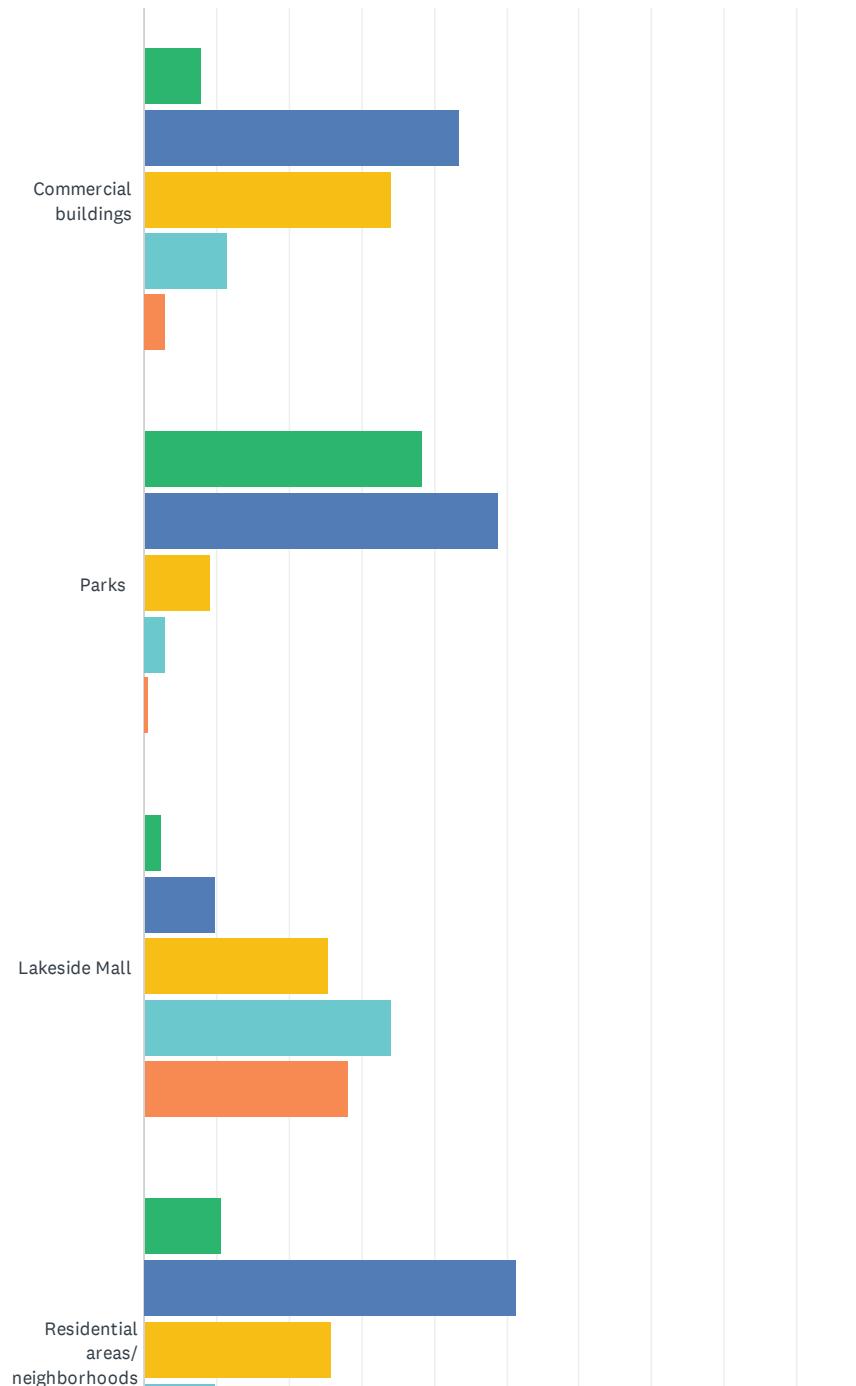
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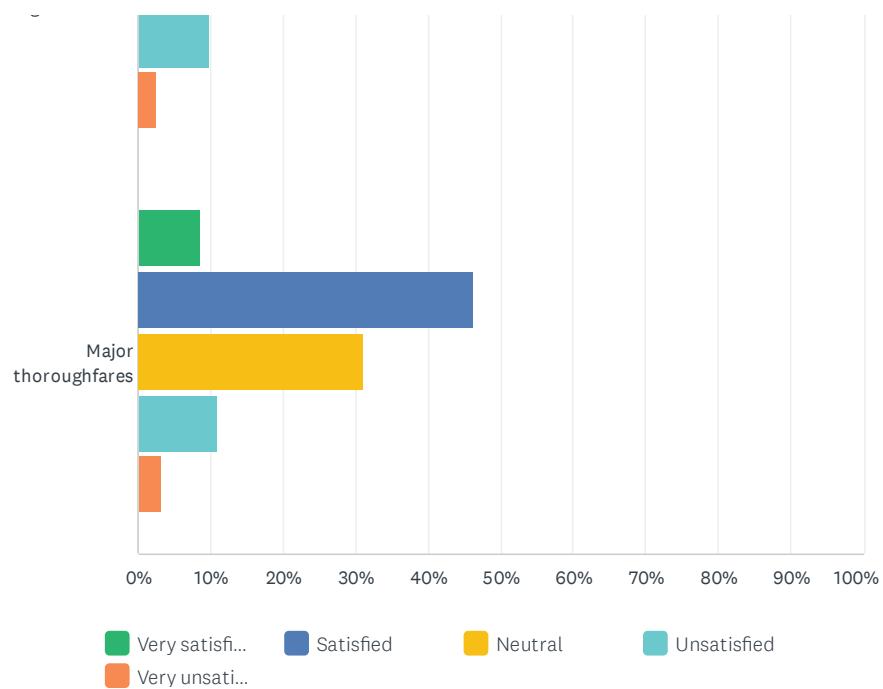
	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	NEUTRAL	UNSATISFIED	VERY UNSATISFIED	TOTAL
Commercial buildings	7.96% 188	43.58% 1,029	34.01% 803	11.56% 273	2.88% 68	2,361
Parks	38.39% 909	48.86% 1,157	9.25% 219	2.91% 69	0.59% 14	2,368
Lakeside Mall	2.38% 56	9.91% 233	25.47% 599	34.06% 801	28.19% 663	2,352
Residential areas/ neighborhoods	10.64% 251	51.31% 1,211	25.72% 607	9.83% 232	2.50% 59	2,360
Major thoroughfares	8.59% 202	46.22% 1,087	31.12% 732	10.93% 257	3.15% 74	2,352

35

Q20 How would you prioritize the following elements related to the streetscape of the City's commercial corridors?

Answered: 2,368   Skipped: 790
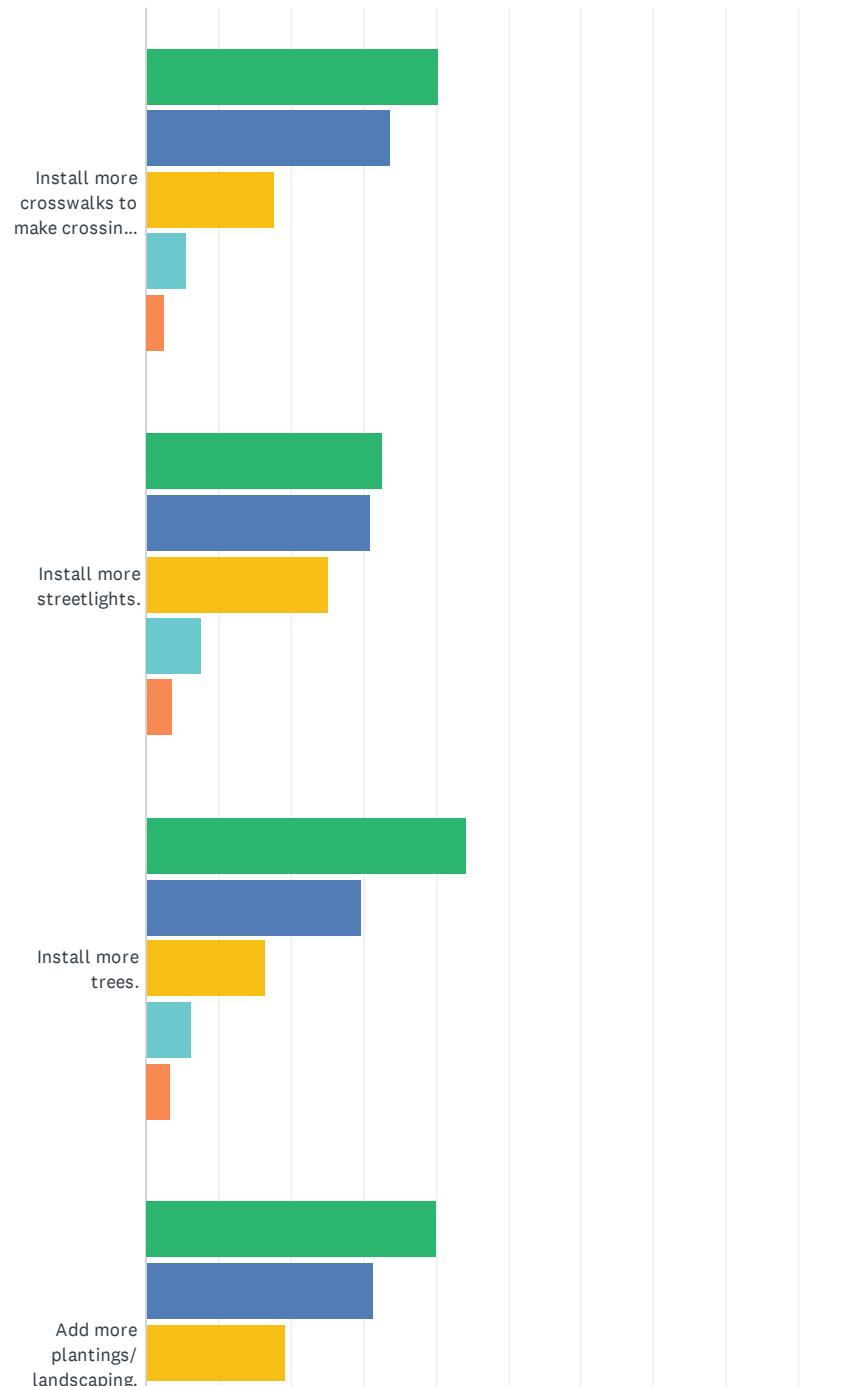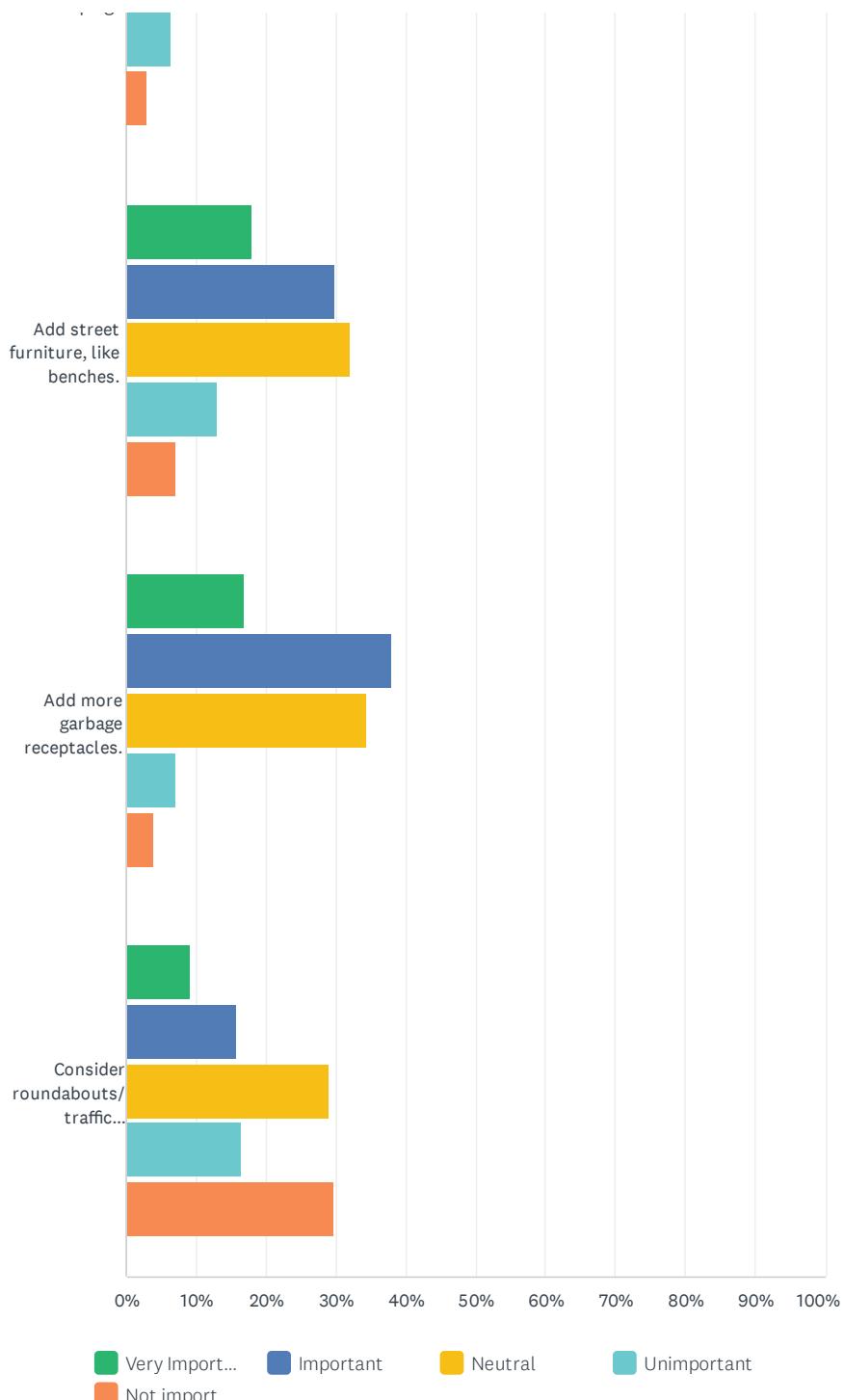
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Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey

Add street furniture, like benches.

Add more garbage receptacles.

Consider roundabouts/traffic...

Legend: Very Import... | Important | Neutral | Unimportant | Not import...

37

	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	UNIMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL	TOTAL
Install more crosswalks to make crossing the street safer and easier.	40.38% 951	33.72% 794	17.79% 419	5.52% 130	2.59% 61	2,355
Install more streetlights.	32.60% 767	30.94% 728	25.07% 590	7.73% 182	3.65% 86	2,353
Install more trees.	44.22% 1,041	29.61% 697	16.48% 388	6.29% 148	3.40% 80	2,354
Add more plantings/ landscaping.	40.00% 940	31.32% 736	19.23% 452	6.38% 150	3.06% 72	2,350
Add street furniture, like benches.	18.01% 424	29.86% 703	32.03% 754	13.04% 307	7.05% 166	2,354
Add more garbage receptacles.	16.79% 394	38.02% 892	34.27% 804	7.12% 167	3.79% 89	2,346
Consider roundabouts/ traffic circles.	9.06% 214	15.84% 374	29.10% 687	16.43% 388	29.56% 698	2,361

38

Q21 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements for Sterling Heights as a whole?

Answered: 2,372   Skipped: 786
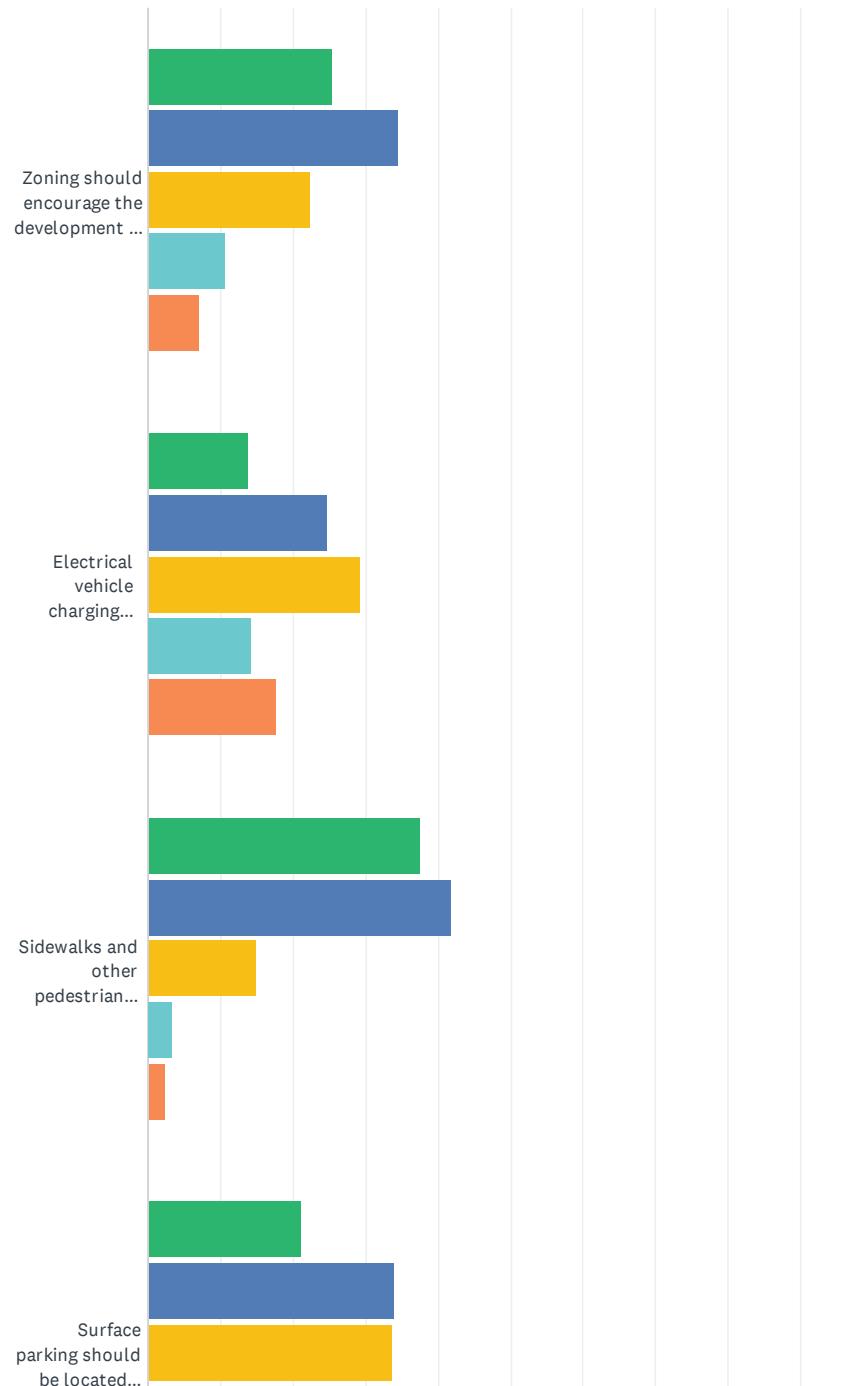
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Legend:
- Strongly ag... (green)
- Agree (blue)
- Neutral (yellow)
- Disagree (teal)
- Strongly dis... (orange)

40
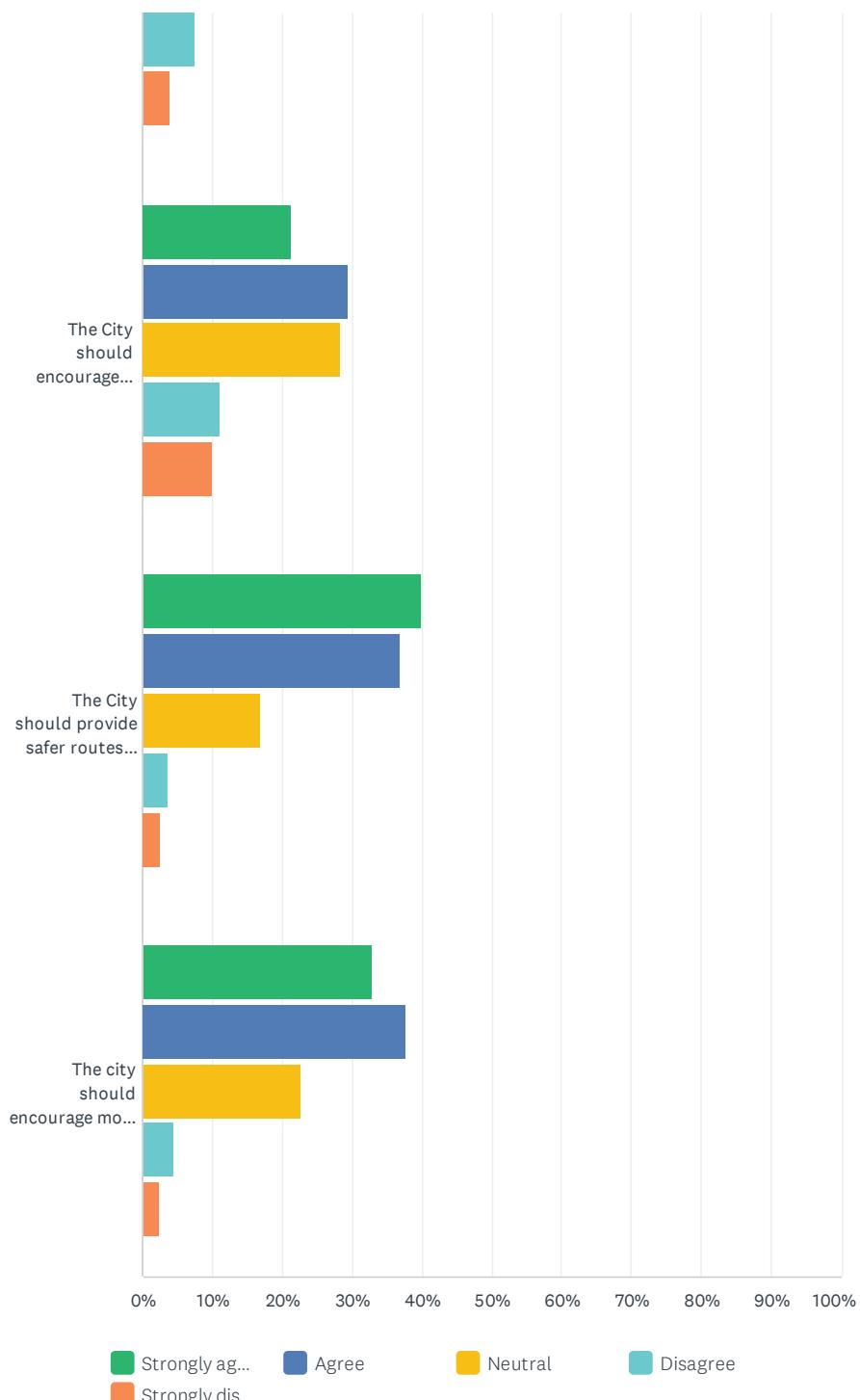
Sterling Heights Master Plan Community Survey

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
Zoning should encourage the development of new buildings that make Sterling Heights more walkable.	25.33% 597	34.58% 815	22.44% 529	10.65% 251	7.00% 165	2,357
Electrical vehicle charging systems should be installed within the City.	13.93% 329	24.81% 586	29.13% 688	14.35% 339	17.78% 420	2,362
Sidewalks and other pedestrian walkways should connect residential areas.	37.63% 888	41.82% 987	14.96% 353	3.35% 79	2.25% 53	2,360
Surface parking should be located behind buildings or screened with landscaping to enhance roadway appearance.	21.17% 498	33.89% 797	33.63% 791	7.44% 175	3.87% 91	2,352
The City should encourage public art.	21.33% 501	29.50% 693	28.27% 664	10.98% 258	9.92% 233	2,349
The City should provide safer routes for bicyclists and pedestrians.	39.87% 941	36.91% 871	16.86% 398	3.73% 88	2.63% 62	2,360
The city should encourage more outdoor seating for restaurants where appropriate.	32.84% 776	37.75% 892	22.68% 536	4.40% 104	2.33% 55	2,363

41

Q22 What would you rate the overall quality of life in Sterling Heights as?

Answered: 2,275   Skipped: 883
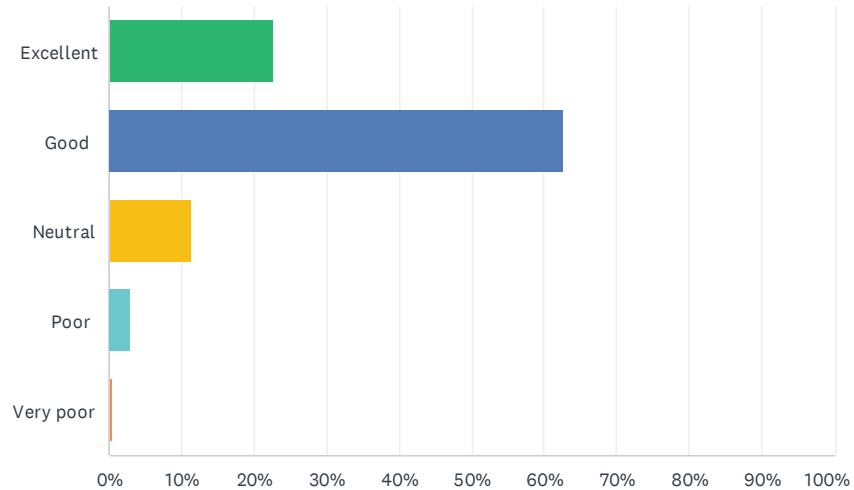
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent	22.51%	512
Good	62.64%	1,425
Neutral	11.34%	258
Poor	3.08%	70
Very poor	0.44%	10
TOTAL		2,275

42

Q23 What are three things you like most about Sterling Heights?

Answered: 1,874   Skipped: 1,284

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Answer 1:	100.00%	1,874
Answer 2:	92.53%	1,734
Answer 3:	80.31%	1,505

Common Themes and Key Preferences

1. **Parks and Recreation:**
   - **Parks:** Many respondents appreciate the numerous parks, including Dodge Park, and the recreational activities they offer.
   - **Community Center:** The community center and its programs are highly valued.
   - **Events:** Events like Sterlingfest, Music in the Park, and the Farmers Market are popular.

2. **Safety and Public Services:**
   - **Safety:** A significant number of respondents mentioned feeling safe in Sterling Heights, highlighting the effective police and fire departments.
   - **Public Services:** Services such as trash collection, snow removal, and city maintenance are frequently praised.

3. **Community and Neighborhoods:**
   - **Community Feel:** Respondents enjoy the sense of community and the friendly, welcoming atmosphere.
   - **Neighborhoods:** Clean, quiet, and well-maintained neighborhoods are a common theme.

4. **Location and Accessibility:**
   - **Proximity:** The city's location, with easy access to highways, shopping centers, and other amenities, is a major plus for residents.
   - **Convenience:** The convenience of having essential services and stores nearby is frequently mentioned.

5. **Schools and Education:**
   - **Schools:** The quality of schools, particularly Utica Community Schools, is a key factor for many residents.
   - **Educational Programs:** Programs and activities offered by the schools and community center are appreciated.

6. **Cleanliness and Aesthetics:**
   - **Cleanliness:** The overall cleanliness of the city, including well-maintained streets and public areas, is a common positive point.
   - **Aesthetics:** The city's efforts in landscaping, tree planting, and maintaining green spaces are valued.

7. **Diversity and Inclusivity:**
   - **Diversity:** The diverse population and cultural inclusivity are seen as strengths of the community.
   - **Cultural Events:** Cultural events and the variety of dining options reflecting different cultures are appreciated.

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8. **Shopping and Dining:**

- **Shopping**: The availability of a wide range of shopping options is a significant advantage.

- **Dining**: Residents enjoy the variety of restaurants and dining experiences available in the city.

Summary

The survey responses highlight that residents of Sterling Heights value the city's parks and recreational facilities, safety and public services, sense of community, convenient location, quality schools, cleanliness, diversity, and shopping and dining options. These elements contribute to a high quality of life and a strong sense of satisfaction among the residents.

44

Q24 What are three things you would like to see improved in Sterling Heights?

Answered: 1,850   Skipped: 1,308

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Answer 1:	100.00%	1,850
Answer 2:	87.08%	1,611
Answer 3:	69.62%	1,288

Common Themes and Key Preferences

1. **Infrastructure and Roads**
   - **Road Maintenance**: Many respondents mentioned the need for better road maintenance and repairs, especially in residential areas.
   - **Traffic Management**: Improved traffic flow and better timing of traffic lights were frequently requested.
   - **Sidewalks and Bike Paths**: There is a strong desire for more sidewalks, bike lanes, and safer pedestrian crossings.

2. **Green Spaces and Environment**
   - **More Trees and Green Spaces**: Respondents want more trees planted and better maintenance of existing green spaces.
   - **Preservation of Natural Areas**: There is a call to preserve existing natural areas and limit new construction that removes green spaces.

3. **Public Services and Amenities**
   - **Parks and Recreation**: Many respondents would like to see more parks, better maintenance of existing parks, and additional recreational facilities such as public pools and pickleball courts.
   - **Community Events and Activities**: There is a desire for more community events and activities, especially those that cater to families and seniors.

4. **Housing and Development**
   - **Limit New Apartments**: A significant number of respondents expressed concerns about the construction of new apartment buildings and prefer the focus to be on single-family homes.
   - **Use of Vacant Buildings**: Respondents want to see vacant buildings repurposed before new construction is approved.

5. **Safety and Code Enforcement**
   - **Increased Police Presence**: Many respondents want more police patrols to address speeding and other traffic violations.
   - **Code Enforcement**: There is a call for stricter enforcement of property maintenance codes to ensure neighborhoods are well-kept.

6. **Public Transportation and Accessibility**
   - **Improved Public Transportation**: Respondents would like to see better public transportation options within the city.
   - **Accessibility**: There is a need for more accessible facilities and services for seniors and people with disabilities.

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7. **Economic Development**

- **Support for Local Businesses**: Respondents want more support for local businesses and a greater variety of shopping and dining options.

- **Revitalization of Commercial Areas**: There is a desire to revitalize older commercial areas and attract new businesses to fill vacant storefronts.

46

Q25 Of the following, are there any that you consider to be a "major challenge" facing Sterling Heights (Check all that apply).

Answered: 2,241   Skipped: 917

47
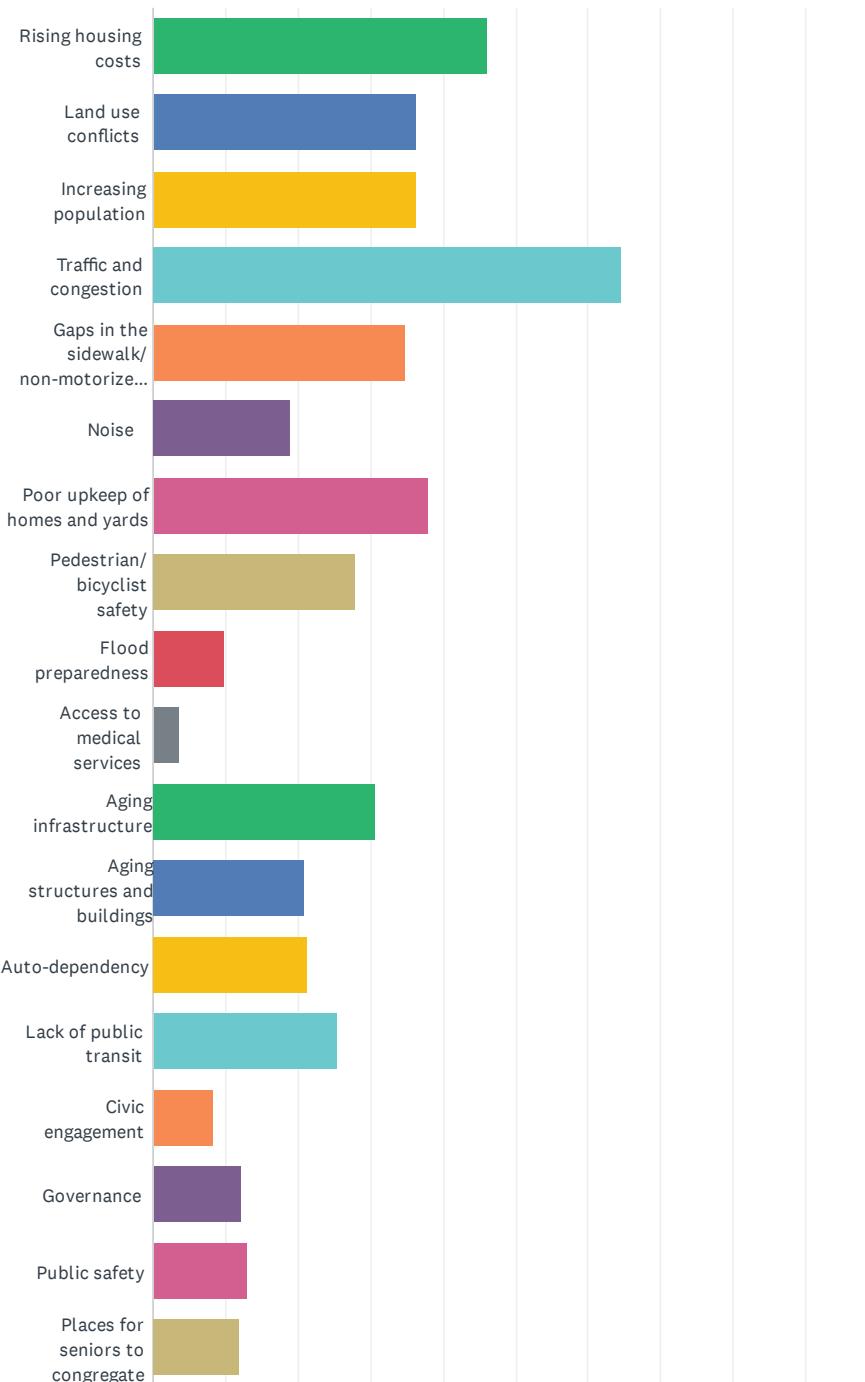
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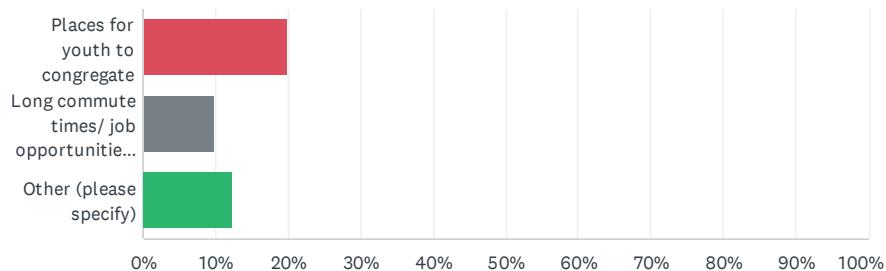
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Rising housing costs	46.10%	1,033
Land use conflicts	36.19%	811
Increasing population	36.28%	813
Traffic and congestion	64.57%	1,447
Gaps in the sidewalk/ non-motorized network and the condition of sidewalks	34.85%	781
Noise	19.05%	427
Poor upkeep of homes and yards	37.88%	849
Pedestrian/ bicyclist safety	28.02%	628
Flood preparedness	9.91%	222
Access to medical services	3.53%	79
Aging infrastructure	30.75%	689
Aging structures and buildings	20.93%	469
Auto-dependency	21.37%	479
Lack of public transit	25.44%	570
Civic engagement	8.30%	186
Governance	12.23%	274
Public safety	13.07%	293
Places for seniors to congregate	11.96%	268
Places for youth to congregate	19.90%	446
Long commute times/ job opportunities available locally	9.82%	220
Other (please specify)	12.27%	275
Total Respondents: 2,241		

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Q26 Of the following, which would you consider to be a pressing environmental issue in Sterling Heights? Check all that apply.

Answered: 2,114   Skipped: 1,044
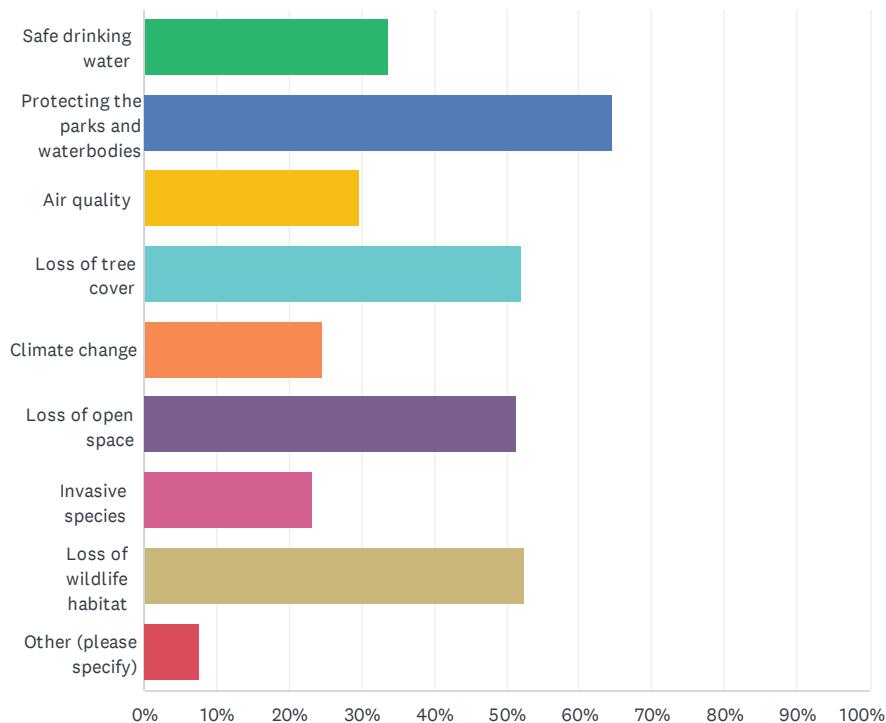
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Safe drinking water	33.63%	711
Protecting the parks and waterbodies	64.57%	1,365
Air quality	29.71%	628
Loss of tree cover	52.03%	1,100
Climate change	24.50%	518
Loss of open space	51.37%	1,086
Invasive species	23.32%	493
Loss of wildlife habitat	52.51%	1,110
Other (please specify)	7.66%	162
Total Respondents: 2,114		

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Q27 Indicate how important each of the following is to you

Answered: 2,272   Skipped: 886
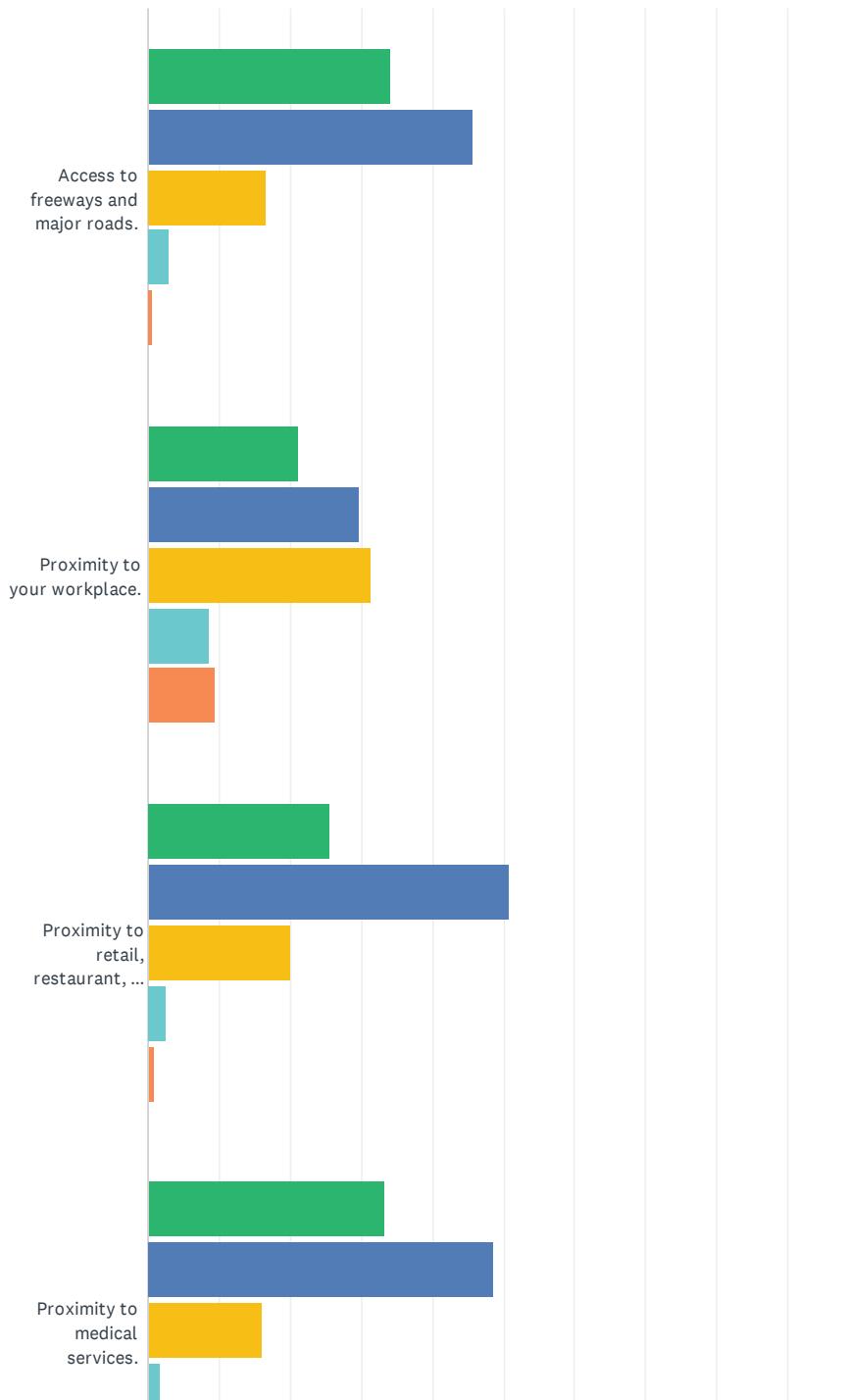
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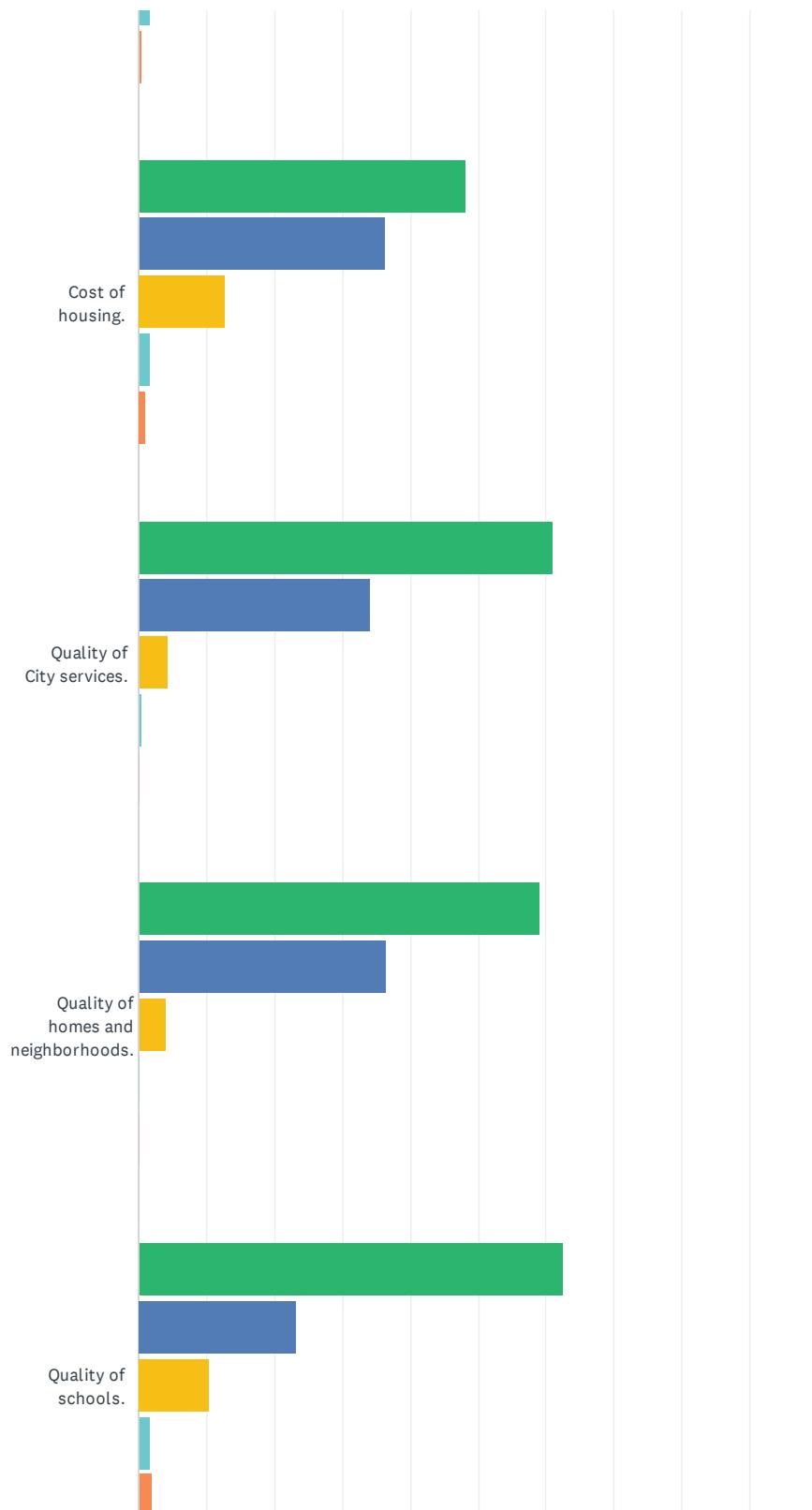
Cost of housing.

Quality of City services.

Quality of homes and neighborhoods.

Quality of schools.

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Parks, open
spaces, and
recreational...

Ability to
travel without
a vehicle/...

Access to
waterways for
recreation...

Access to
waterways for
recreation w...

52
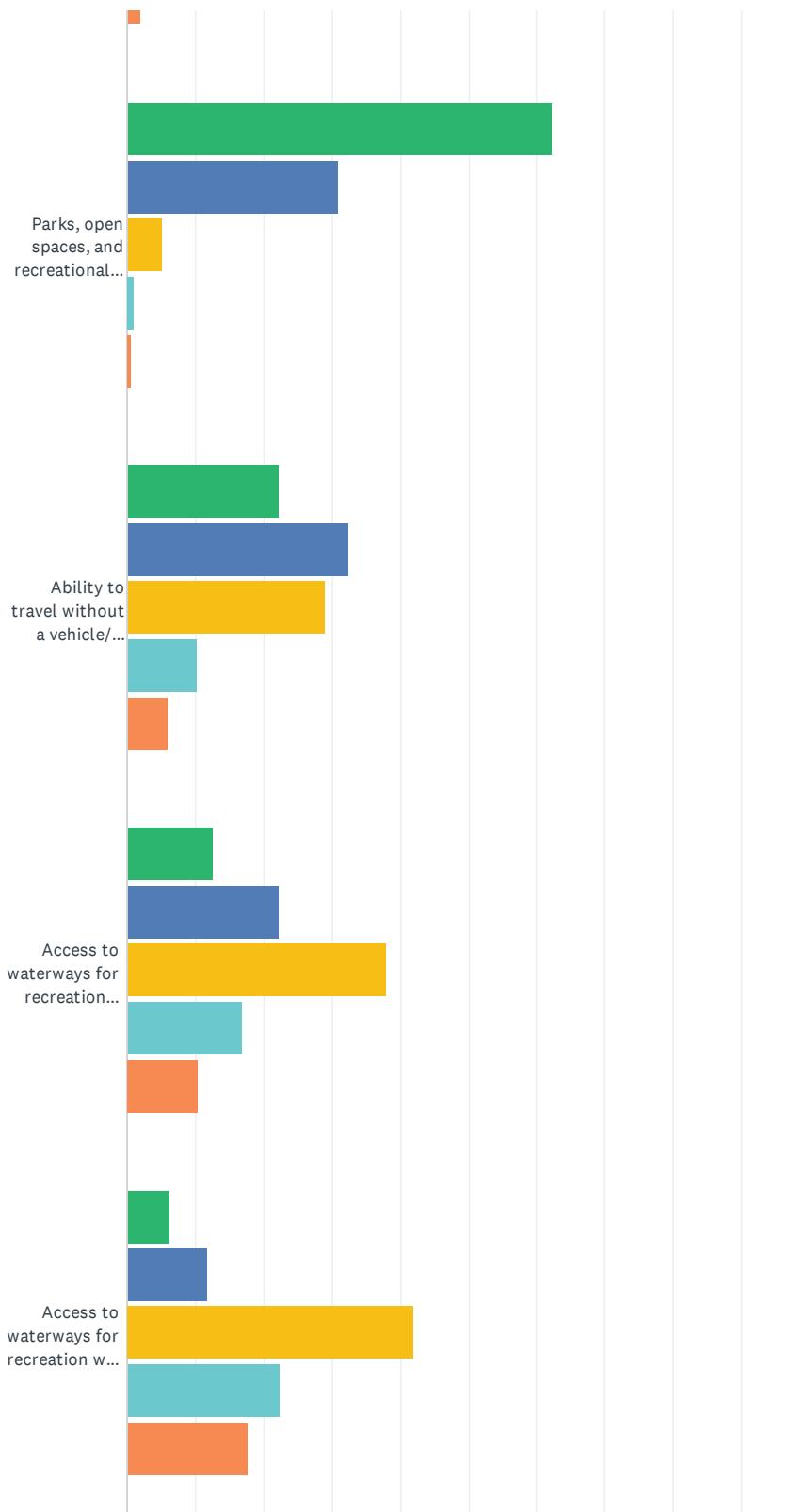
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0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

🟩 Very import...   🟦 Important   🟨 Neutral   🟦 Unimportant
🟧 Very unimp...

	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	UNIMPORTANT	VERY UNIMPORTANT	TOTAL
Access to freeways and major roads.	34.10% 772	45.63% 1,033	16.61% 376	2.96% 67	0.71% 16	2,264
Proximity to your workplace.	21.19% 462	29.68% 647	31.28% 682	8.53% 186	9.31% 203	2,180
Proximity to retail, restaurant, or other consumer amenities.	25.55% 576	50.75% 1,144	20.14% 454	2.66% 60	0.89% 20	2,254
Proximity to medical services.	33.17% 750	48.61% 1,099	16.05% 363	1.64% 37	0.53% 12	2,261
Cost of housing.	48.13% 1,084	36.19% 815	12.83% 289	1.78% 40	1.07% 24	2,252
Quality of City services.	60.88% 1,376	34.16% 772	4.20% 95	0.49% 11	0.27% 6	2,260
Quality of homes and neighborhoods.	59.02% 1,332	36.46% 823	3.99% 90	0.31% 7	0.22% 5	2,257
Quality of schools.	62.43% 1,399	23.34% 523	10.53% 236	1.74% 39	1.96% 44	2,241
Parks, open spaces, and recreational activities.	62.34% 1,407	30.93% 698	5.14% 116	1.02% 23	0.58% 13	2,257
Ability to travel without a vehicle/ walkability.	22.13% 499	32.51% 733	29.09% 656	10.29% 232	5.99% 135	2,255
Access to waterways for recreation without a boat.	12.53% 281	22.20% 498	37.94% 851	16.90% 379	10.43% 234	2,243
Access to waterways for recreation with a boat.	6.21% 139	11.83% 265	41.92% 939	22.41% 502	17.63% 395	2,240

53

Q28 How would you rate Sterling Heights' performance in providing these services from excellent to very poor

Answered: 2,273   Skipped: 885
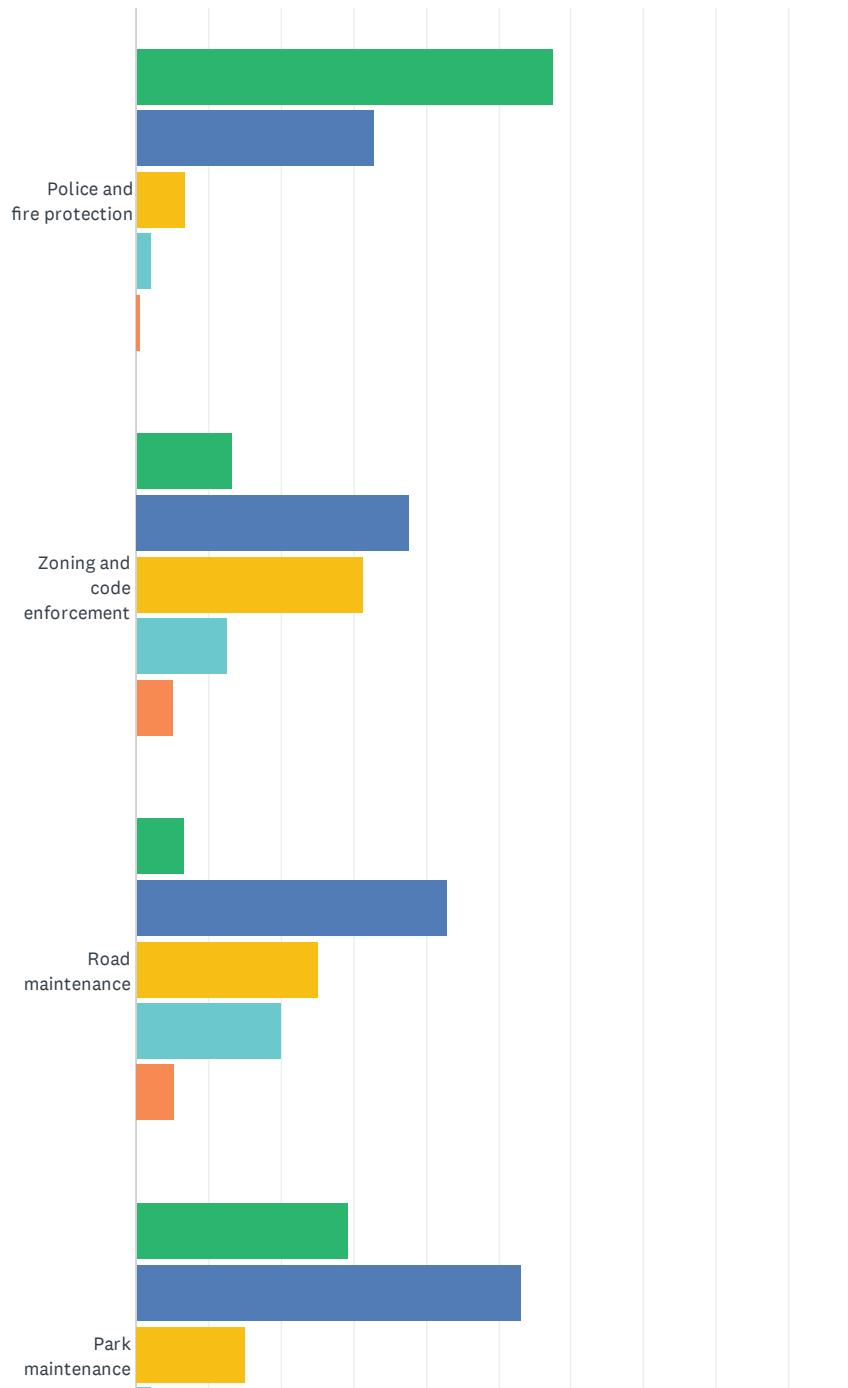
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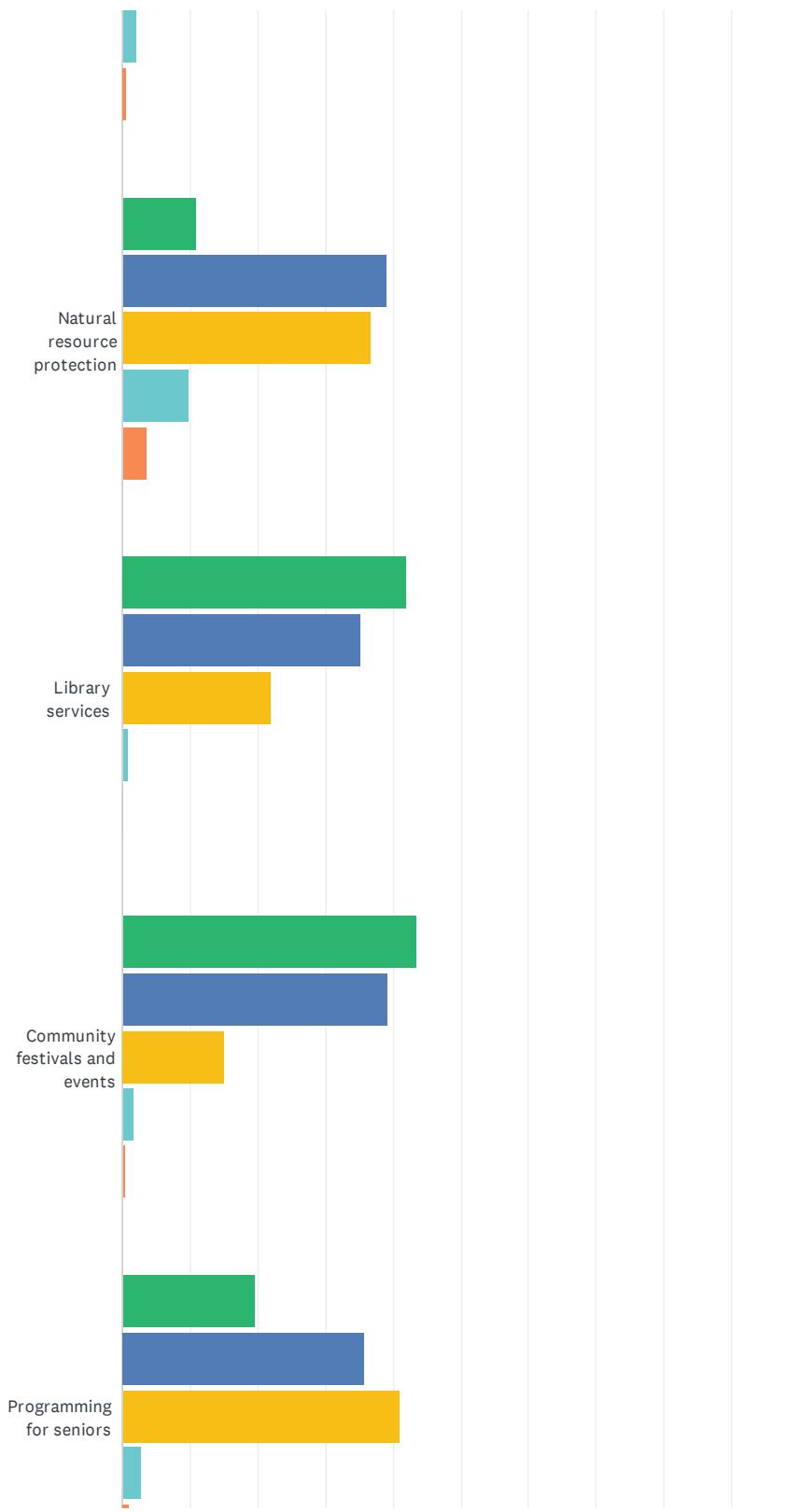
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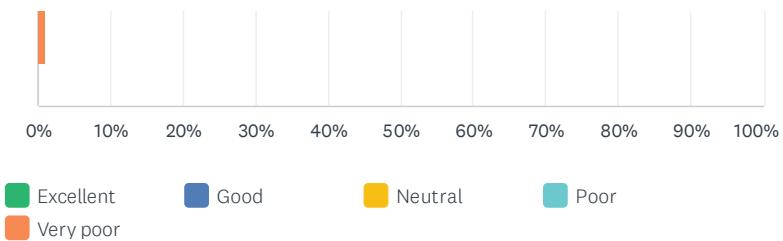
	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEUTRAL	POOR	VERY POOR	TOTAL
Police and fire protection	57.49% 1,301	32.92% 745	6.89% 156	2.08% 47	0.62% 14	2,263
Zoning and code enforcement	13.19% 297	37.74% 850	31.39% 707	12.57% 283	5.11% 115	2,252
Road maintenance	6.64% 150	42.79% 967	25.27% 571	20.00% 452	5.31% 120	2,260
Park maintenance	29.15% 657	53.02% 1,195	15.04% 339	2.17% 49	0.62% 14	2,254
Natural resource protection	10.97% 245	39.05% 872	36.63% 818	9.72% 217	3.63% 81	2,233
Library services	41.93% 943	35.08% 789	22.01% 495	0.80% 18	0.18% 4	2,249
Community festivals and events	43.56% 985	39.19% 886	15.04% 340	1.68% 38	0.53% 12	2,261
Programming for seniors	19.54% 438	35.74% 801	40.87% 916	2.81% 63	1.03% 23	2,241

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Q29 Are there any services you would like to see offered in Sterling Heights that are not currently available?

Answered: 1,980   Skipped: 1,178
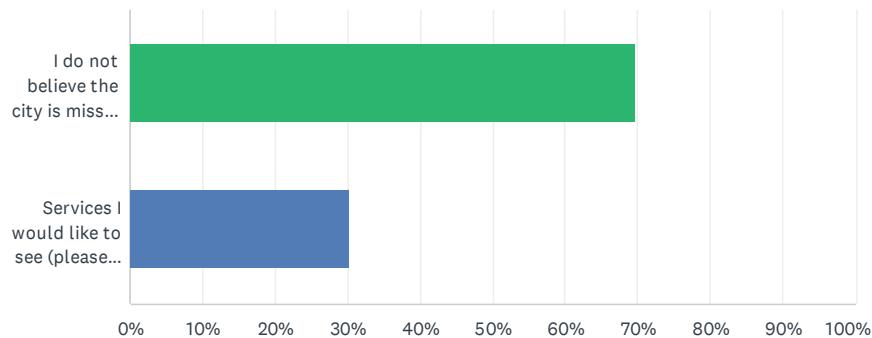
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I do not believe the city is missing any services.	69.70%	1,380
Services I would like to see (please specify)	30.30%	600
TOTAL		1,980

Services I would like to see (600 responses)

Summary of Key Themes and Most Common Preferences

1. **Active Lifestyle and Recreation**
   o **Public Pools**: Strong demand for both indoor and outdoor public pools for residents of all ages.
   o **Fitness Opportunities**: Interest in community gym equipment, rock climbing walls, and expanded pickleball courts.
   o **Family and Youth Activities**: Requests for more activities such as swimming lessons, soccer fields, and special needs programs.
   o **Senior Activities**: Desire for fitness programs, evening programs, and affordable recreation options for seniors.
   o **Community Events**: Support for diverse events like marathons, conventions, and arts & craft fairs.
2. **Transportation and Accessibility**
   o **Public Transportation**: Calls for city-wide shuttles, improved bus routes, and services for seniors and those with disabilities.
   o **Bike Lanes and Sidewalks**: Emphasis on safer pedestrian travel, particularly on bridges, and better street and sidewalk maintenance.

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3. **Community and Environment**
   - **Beautification Efforts**: Interest in city landscaping, community gardens, and pollinator-friendly habitats.
   - **Cultural Events**: Expansion of multicultural fairs, food fairs, and winter festivals.
   - **Neighborhood Upkeep**: Need for better code enforcement and street cleaning to maintain property values and improve the city's aesthetic appeal.
4. **Sustainability Initiatives**
   - **Recycling Programs**: Requests for recycling centers, leaf and compost collection, and battery recycling programs.
   - **Sustainability Education**: Support for education on climate-friendly choices, natural landscaping, and environmental health initiatives.
5. **City Services and Infrastructure**
   - **Enhanced Communications**: Desire for better updates on local events, public notices, and emergency alerts through accessible, real-time platforms.
   - **Improved Libraries**: Calls for libraries to serve as community hubs with extended hours, better facilities, and more staff.
   - **Expanded Senior Services**: Requests for transportation, home maintenance assistance, and healthcare-related support for seniors.
6. **Economic and Fiscal Concerns**
   - **Property Taxes**: Concerns over rising property taxes and requests to limit additional services or amenities that increase the tax burden, especially for seniors on fixed incomes.
   - **Business Development**: Proposals for business development programs, particularly for small businesses and youth trades.
   - **Affordable Services**: Criticism of high costs for basic services like compost bins and a need for more affordable housing options, especially for seniors.
7. **Safety and Enforcement**
   - **Traffic Enforcement**: Calls for better enforcement of traffic laws, particularly regarding texting while driving and speed limits.
   - **Public Safety**: Concerns about safety during festivals and large gatherings, with requests for more police presence and resources.
   - **Mental Health Initiatives**: Interest in mental health programs and non-violent communication training to foster a safer and more supportive community.

These themes reflect a community that values recreational opportunities, environmental sustainability, safety, and fiscal responsibility, while also seeking enhancements to infrastructure, public services, and cultural offerings to foster an inclusive and vibrant city.

58

Q30 Would you recommend Sterling Heights as a desirable place to live?

Answered: 1,822   Skipped: 1,336

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, because....	84.96%	1,548
No, because..	27.50%	501

Responses for "Yes" to Recommending Sterling Heights

Key Themes

1. **Safety and Security**
   - **Low Crime Rate**: Many respondents highlighted the low crime rate as a significant factor in recommending Sterling Heights as a desirable place to live.
   - **Effective Public Safety**: The presence of a reliable police force and good public safety measures were frequently mentioned.

2. **Community and Neighborhoods**
   - **Friendly and Welcoming**: The city's friendly and welcoming neighborhoods were a recurring theme. Residents appreciate the clean, quiet, and safe nature of these areas.
   - **Community Spirit**: There is a strong sense of community and neighborliness, with many respondents valuing the supportive environment.

3. **Affordability and Housing**
   - **Affordable Housing**: The availability of affordable housing options is noted as a significant advantage. Many residents feel that the housing market in Sterling Heights is reasonably priced compared to nearby areas.
   - **Reasonable Property Taxes**: The city's relatively low property taxes are frequently mentioned as a benefit, enhancing the overall affordability of living in Sterling Heights.

4. **Amenities and Services**
   - **Parks and Recreation**: Sterling Heights is praised for its numerous parks, recreational facilities, and community centers. These amenities provide residents with ample opportunities for outdoor activities and community engagement.
   - **High-Quality Public Services**: High-quality public services, including well-maintained parks, efficient city administration, and accessible community resources like libraries and senior centers, are frequently highlighted.

5. **Education and Family-Friendly Environment**
   - **Good Schools**: The presence of high-quality schools is a common positive point. Many respondents value the strong educational system, which contributes to the city's appeal for families with children.
   - **Family-Friendly Atmosphere**: The city is recognized for being family-friendly, offering a variety of programs and services that cater to families and children.

6. **Location and Convenience**
   - **Central Location**: Sterling Heights is appreciated for its central location within the metro Detroit area. The city's proximity to major roadways and other communities provides residents with convenient access to a wide range of services, shopping, and dining options.
   - **Accessibility**: The ease of access to essential services, including medical care and recreational activities, is frequently noted as a significant advantage.

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7. **Diversity and Inclusivity**

- **Cultural Diversity**: The city's diverse population is seen as a positive aspect, enriching the community with a variety of cultural perspectives and experiences.
- **Inclusive Community**: The sense of community and the efforts made by the city to engage residents through events and programming are appreciated by many.

Responses for "No" to Recommending Sterling Heights

Key Themes

1. **Overdevelopment and Congestion**

- **Traffic and Congestion**: Many respondents expressed concerns about increasing traffic and congestion due to overdevelopment.
- **Overbuilding**: There are worries about the construction of too many apartments and commercial buildings, leading to a loss of green spaces and increased population density.

2. **Affordability and Taxes**

- **Rising Property Taxes**: Some residents are concerned about rising property taxes, which they feel are making the city less affordable.
- **High Cost of Living**: The increasing cost of housing and living expenses is a significant concern for some respondents.

3. **Community and Neighborhoods**

- **Declining Neighborhoods**: Some respondents feel that certain neighborhoods are not being maintained well, leading to a decline in property values and overall appeal.
- **Lack of Community Feel**: There are concerns that the city is losing its sense of community due to the influx of transient populations and overdevelopment.

4. **Safety and Cleanliness**

- **Crime Concerns**: A few respondents mentioned an increase in crime rates, which makes them hesitant to recommend the city.
- **Maintenance Issues**: There are complaints about the cleanliness and maintenance of certain areas, including poorly maintained roads and public spaces.

5. **City Management and Services**

- **City Planning**: Some respondents are critical of the city's planning and development strategies, feeling that they do not adequately consider the needs of long-term residents.
- **Public Services**: There are mixed feelings about the quality of public services, with some residents feeling that the city could do more to improve services like public transportation and senior assistance.

6. **Cultural and Social Issues**

- **Diversity and Integration**: While some appreciate the city's diversity, others feel that there are challenges related to the integration of different cultural groups.
- **Community Engagement**: There are concerns about the level of community engagement and whether the city is effectively addressing the needs and concerns of all residents.

60

Q31 If you have one dream vision for Sterling Heights, what would it be?

Answered: 1,519   Skipped: 1,639

Summary of Key Themes and Common Preferences

1. Downtown Development

- **Desire for a Downtown Area**: Many respondents expressed a desire for a walkable downtown area similar to those in Royal Oak or Rochester. They envision a space with small shops, restaurants, cafes, and entertainment options.

- **Lakeside Mall Redevelopment**: There is significant interest in transforming the Lakeside Mall area into a mixed-use development that includes residential, retail, and recreational spaces.

2. Parks and Green Spaces

- **More Parks and Green Spaces**: Respondents frequently mentioned the need for more parks, green spaces, and nature areas. They value spaces for outdoor activities, relaxation, and community events.

- **Preservation of Existing Green Spaces**: There is a strong preference for preserving existing green spaces and preventing overdevelopment that could lead to the loss of natural areas.

3. Walkability and Bikeability

- **Improved Walkability**: Many respondents want the city to be more walkable, with better sidewalks, pedestrian paths, and safe crossings.

- **Bike-Friendly Infrastructure**: There is a call for more bike lanes, bike paths, and overall bike-friendly infrastructure to encourage cycling as a mode of transportation.

4. Community and Neighborhoods

- **Community Feel**: Respondents value a strong sense of community and neighborliness. They want Sterling Heights to maintain its friendly and welcoming atmosphere.

- **Neighborhood Improvements**: There are suggestions for improving neighborhood aesthetics, such as better maintenance of homes and public spaces, and ensuring that neighborhoods remain clean and safe.

5. Public Services and Amenities

- **Public Pools and Recreation Centers**: Many respondents expressed a desire for public swimming pools and enhanced recreational facilities.

- **Public Transportation**: There is interest in improving public transportation options to make it easier for residents to get around without relying on cars.

6. Safety and Security

- **Low Crime Rate**: Maintaining a low crime rate is a priority for many respondents. They appreciate the safety of Sterling Heights and want it to continue.

- **Traffic and Speed Control**: Concerns about traffic and speeding were mentioned, with suggestions for better traffic enforcement and speed control measures.

7. Economic Development

- **Support for Local Businesses**: Respondents want to see more support for local businesses and small shops. They believe this will enhance the community feel and provide more unique shopping and dining options.

- **Affordable Housing**: There is a call for more affordable housing options to ensure that Sterling Heights remains accessible to a diverse range of residents.

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8. Environmental Sustainability

- **Sustainable Practices**: Respondents are interested in seeing more environmentally sustainable practices, such as the use of native plants, better waste management, and conservation efforts.

- **Green Energy**: There is support for initiatives that promote green energy and reduce the city's carbon footprint.

62

Q32 Is there anything important you feel that we missed in this survey?

Answered: 953   Skipped: 2,205

Key Themes:

1. **Traffic and Transportation Issues:**
   - Concerns about traffic congestion, reckless driving, and road construction.
   - Suggestions for improving traffic signage, creating better public transit options, and addressing traffic control issues.

2. **Development and Land Use:**
   - Dissatisfaction with current development practices, especially high-density housing and loss of green spaces.
   - Calls for preserving natural areas, managing land development carefully, and limiting new apartment constructions.

3. **Property Taxes and City Spending:**
   - Frustration with rising property taxes and perceived wasteful city spending.
   - Suggestions for reviewing city projects and financial management to ensure effective use of taxpayer money.

4. **Public Services and Infrastructure:**
   - Criticism of the new garbage collection system and calls for improvements in recycling services.
   - Requests for better maintenance of parks, roads, and public spaces.

5. **Community and Inclusivity:**
   - Concerns about diversity and inclusion policies and changes in community dynamics.
   - Calls for better enforcement of codes to ensure property upkeep and community standards.

6. **Local Amenities and Recreation:**
   - Suggestions for adding more recreational facilities such as disc golf courses and soccer fields.
   - Interest in promoting local art and cultural activities and improving holiday decorations and public events.

7. **Safety and Crime:**
   - Emphasis on the need for better policing and enforcement of minor infractions to improve safety.

8. **Environmental and Aesthetic Concerns:**
   - Concerns about the environmental impact of new developments and a desire for more green spaces.
   - Calls for better maintenance of natural areas like lakes and improved street aesthetics.

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9. **Citizen Engagement and Feedback**:

- Suggestions for improving the survey to include options like "don't know" and better capturing resident opinions.

- Calls for better communication with residents about city plans and decisions.

Most Common Preferences:

- **Improved Traffic Management**: Better traffic control, signage, and public transit options.

- **Preservation of Green Spaces**: Limiting high-density housing and preserving natural areas.

- **Effective Use of Taxpayer Money**: Reviewing city spending and projects for efficiency.

- **Enhanced Public Services**: Better garbage collection, recycling services, and maintenance of public spaces.

- **Community Standards**: Enforcing property upkeep and maintaining community standards.

- **Recreational Facilities**: Adding more recreational options like disc golf courses and soccer fields.

- **Safety Measures**: Increased policing and enforcement of minor infractions.

- **Environmental Maintenance**: Maintaining natural areas and improving street aesthetics.

- **Resident Engagement**: Better communication and feedback mechanisms for residents.

These themes and preferences reflect a mix of dissatisfaction with current practices, concerns about future developments, and a desire for improved community engagement and services.

64

APPENDIX D

MARKET SURVEY RESULTS

Q1 What is the name of the store at which you most often shop for groceries?

Answered: 1,068   Skipped: 14

Common Themes:

1. **Preference for Major Grocery Chains**:
   - **Kroger** and **Meijer** are the most frequently mentioned stores, indicating a strong preference for these major grocery chains.
   - **Aldi** and **Costco** are also popular choices, reflecting a preference for stores that offer competitive pricing and bulk purchasing options.

2. **Interest in Specialty and Local Stores**:
   - Stores like **Trader Joe's**, **Nino Salvaggio**, **Ventimiglia's**, and **Vince & Joe's** are mentioned, showing an interest in specialty and local grocery stores that offer unique products and high-quality fresh items.

3. **Convenience and Proximity**:
   - Many respondents prefer stores that are conveniently located either within or near Sterling Heights, highlighting the importance of proximity and ease of access.

4. **Variety and Quality**:
   - The choice of stores reflects a desire for a variety of products, including fresh produce, meats, and baked goods. Quality is a significant factor in store preference.

Summary of Results:

The survey responses indicate that residents of Sterling Heights have diverse grocery shopping preferences, with a strong inclination towards major grocery chains like Kroger and Meijer. These stores are favored for their wide range of products and convenient locations. Additionally, there is a notable interest in specialty and local stores such as Trader Joe's, Nino Salvaggio, Ventimiglia's, and Vince & Joe's, which are appreciated for their unique offerings and high-quality fresh items.

Overall, the key preferences can be summarized as follows:

- **Major Grocery Chains**: Kroger and Meijer are the top choices for their comprehensive product range and convenience.
- **Specialty and Local Stores**: Trader Joe's, Nino Salvaggio, Ventimiglia's, and Vince & Joe's are popular for their specialty products and quality.
- **Convenience**: Proximity and ease of access are crucial factors in store selection.
- **Variety and Quality**: A diverse range of high-quality products, especially fresh produce, meats, and baked goods, is highly valued by residents.

1

Q2 Is that operation in Sterling Heights or elsewhere?

Answered: 1,071   Skipped: 11
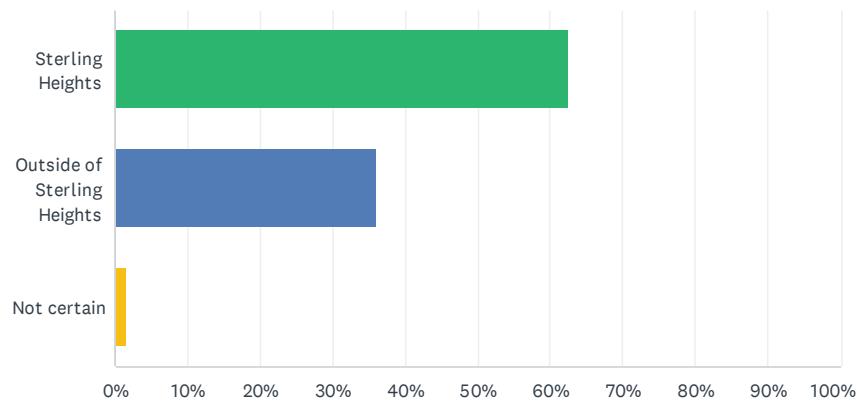
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sterling Heights	62.46%	669
Outside of Sterling Heights	36.13%	387
Not certain	1.40%	15
TOTAL		1,071

2

Q3 Which of the following best describes the usual amount spent on groceries each week?

Answered: 1,067   Skipped: 15

3
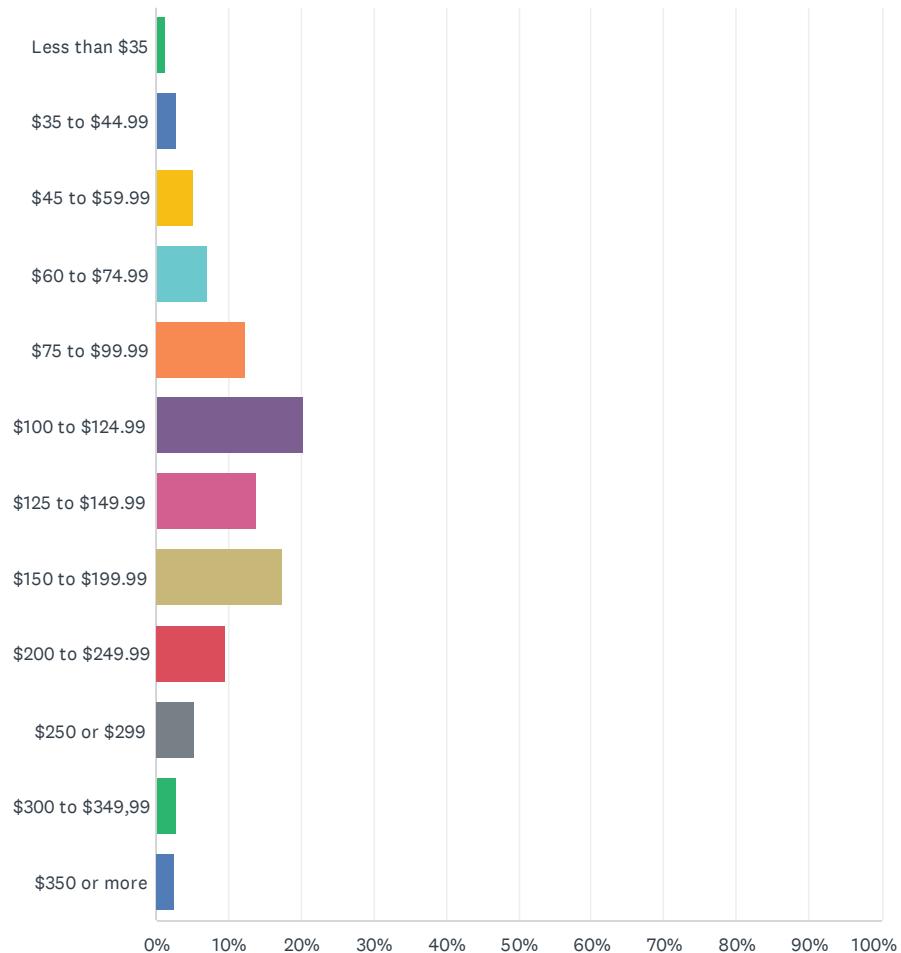
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than $35	1.22%	13
$35 to $44.99	2.72%	29
$45 to $59.99	5.15%	55
$60 to $74.99	7.12%	76
$75 to $99.99	12.28%	131
$100 to $124.99	20.15%	215
$125 to $149.99	13.87%	148
$150 to $199.99	17.43%	186
$200 to $249.99	9.56%	102
$250 or $299	5.25%	56
$300 to $349,99	2.72%	29
$350 or more	2.53%	27
TOTAL		1,067

4

Q4 Which of the following best describes the frequency you have groceries delivered to your home?

Answered: 1,073   Skipped: 9
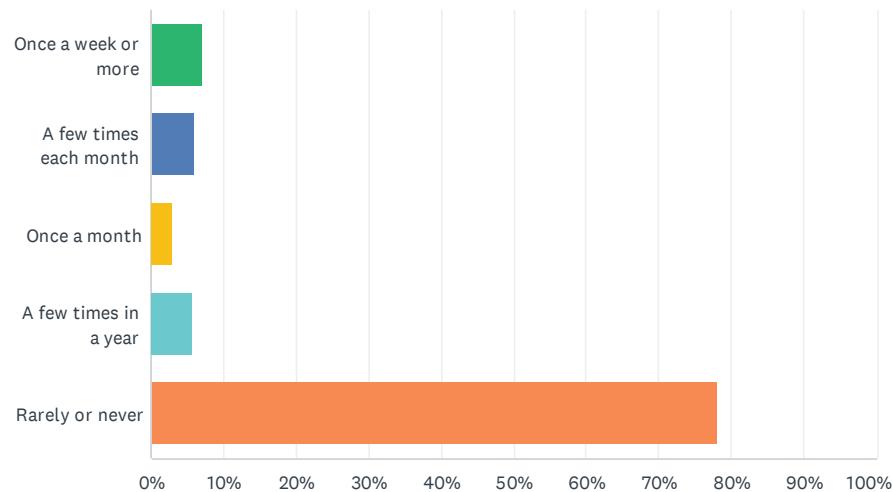
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Once a week or more	7.08%	76
A few times each month	6.06%	65
Once a month	3.08%	33
A few times in a year	5.68%	61
Rarely or never	78.10%	838
TOTAL		1,073

5

Q5 What is the name of the store at which you purchase most of your clothes?

Answered: 1,010   Skipped: 72

Common Themes:

1. **Preference for Major Retailers:**
   - **Kohl's** and **Macy's** are frequently mentioned, indicating a strong preference for these major department stores.
   - **Amazon** is also a popular choice, reflecting the convenience of online shopping.

2. **Interest in Specialty and Discount Stores:**
   - Stores like **TJ Maxx**, **Old Navy**, and **Target** are mentioned, showing an interest in specialty and discount stores that offer a variety of clothing options at affordable prices.
   - **Lands' End** and **Von Maur** are noted for their quality and specialty clothing.

3. **Convenience and Proximity:**
   - Many respondents prefer stores that are conveniently located either within or near Sterling Heights, highlighting the importance of proximity and ease of access.

4. **Variety and Affordability:**
   - The choice of stores reflects a desire for a variety of clothing options, including casual, formal, and specialty wear. Affordability is a significant factor in store preference.

Summary of Results:

The survey responses indicate that residents of Sterling Heights have diverse clothing shopping preferences, with a strong inclination towards major retailers like Kohl's and Macy's. These stores are favored for their wide range of clothing options and convenient locations. Additionally, there is a notable interest in specialty and discount stores such as TJ Maxx, Old Navy, and Target, which are appreciated for their variety and affordability. Online shopping through Amazon is also popular due to its convenience.

Overall, the key preferences can be summarized as follows:

- **Major Retailers**: Kohl's and Macy's are the top choices for their comprehensive clothing range and convenience.
- **Specialty and Discount Stores**: TJ Maxx, Old Navy, and Target are popular for their variety and affordability.
- **Convenience**: Proximity and ease of access are crucial factors in store selection.
- **Variety and Affordability**: A diverse range of clothing options, including casual, formal, and specialty wear, is highly valued by residents.

6

Q6 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you eat lunch outside the home or place of employment at any type of food establishment?

Answered: 1,069   Skipped: 13
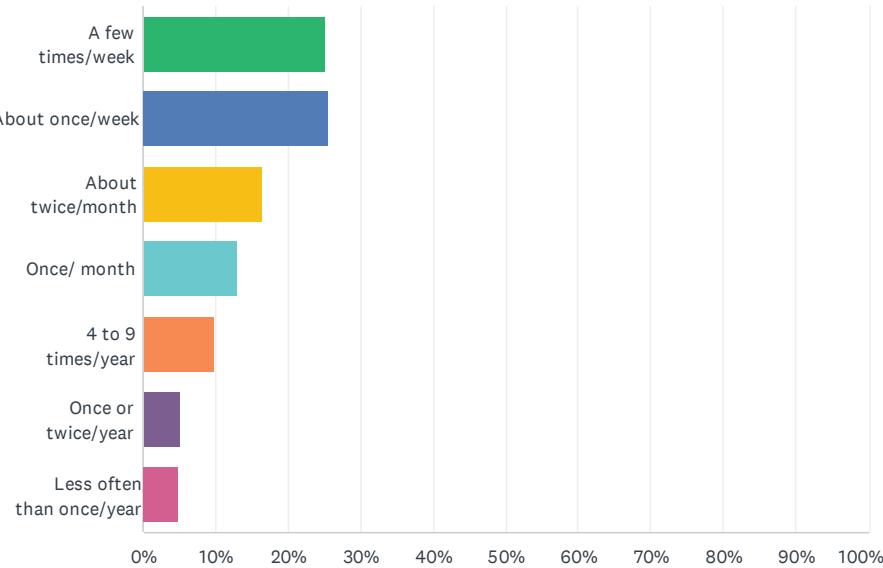
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	25.16%	269
About once/week	25.54%	273
About twice/month	16.46%	176
Once/ month	12.91%	138
4 to 9 times/year	9.82%	105
Once or twice/year	5.14%	55
Less often than once/year	4.96%	53
TOTAL		1,069

7

Q7 When eating lunch out, which of the following best describes the type of establishment most often frequented?

Answered: 1,058   Skipped: 24
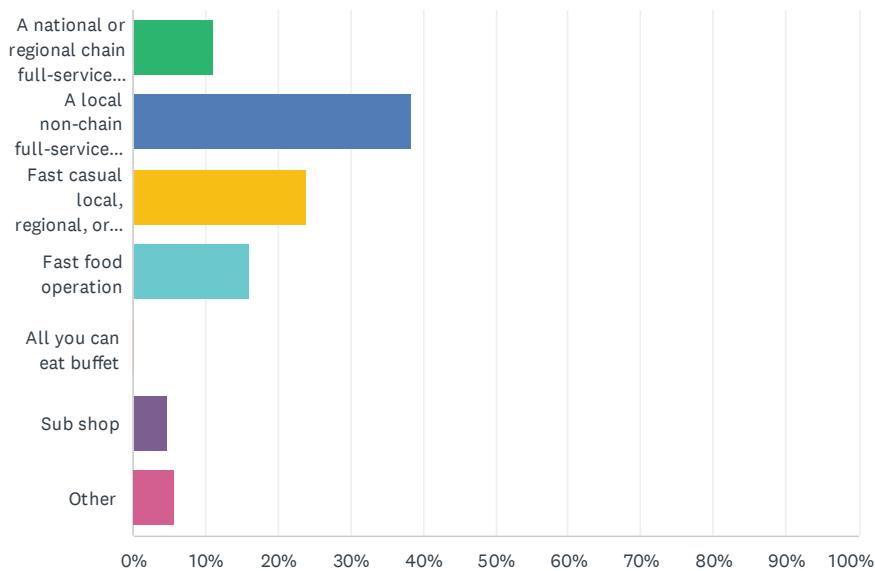
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A national or regional chain full-service restaurant	11.15%	118
A local non-chain full-service restaurant	38.28%	405
Fast casual local, regional, or national affiliated operation	23.82%	252
Fast food operation	16.07%	170
All you can eat buffet	0.28%	3
Sub shop	4.63%	49
Other	5.77%	61
TOTAL		1,058

8

Q8 What is the name of the establishment most often frequented for lunch?

Answered: 943   Skipped: 139

Common Themes:

1. **Preference for Local Non-Chain Restaurants**:

   - Many respondents mentioned local non-chain restaurants, indicating a strong preference for unique, locally owned dining establishments. Examples include **Greek Grill**, **Manga Bevi**, **Wildflower**, and **Johnny's Coney Island**.

2. **Fast Casual and Fast-Food Restaurants**:

   - Fast casual restaurants like **Panera Bread**, **Qdoba**, and **Tropical Smoothie Cafe** are popular choices for lunch due to their quick service and higher quality food compared to traditional fast-food.

   - Fast food establishments such as **McDonald's**, **Taco Bell**, and **Subway** are also frequently mentioned for their convenience and speed.

3. **National or Regional Chain Full-Service Restaurants**:

   - Some respondents prefer full-service restaurants that are part of national or regional chains, such as **Applebee's**, **Olive Garden**, and **Texas Roadhouse**, for their consistent quality and service.

4. **Variety and Rotation**:

   - Several respondents mentioned that they do not have a single favorite lunch spot and prefer to rotate between different establishments. This indicates a desire for variety in their dining choices.

Summary of Results:

The survey responses indicate that residents of Sterling Heights have diverse preferences when it comes to dining out for lunch. The key preferences can be summarized as follows:

- **Local Non-Chain Restaurants**: There is a strong interest in supporting local businesses and enjoying unique, non-chain dining experiences. These establishments are valued for their individuality and community support.

- **Fast Casual and Fast-Food Restaurants**: Convenience and speed are important factors, making fast casual and fast-food restaurants popular choices for many respondents. These establishments offer quick service and a range of options.

- **National or Regional Chain Full-Service Restaurants**: These restaurants are favored for their consistent quality and service, providing a reliable dining experience.

- **Variety and Rotation**: Many residents prefer to rotate between different lunch spots, indicating a desire for variety in their dining options.

Overall, the responses reflect a community that values a mix of convenience, quality, and support for local businesses when choosing where to eat lunch.

9

Q9 When eating lunch out, are the operations most often within Sterling Heights or outside of Sterling Heights?

Answered: 1,059   Skipped: 23
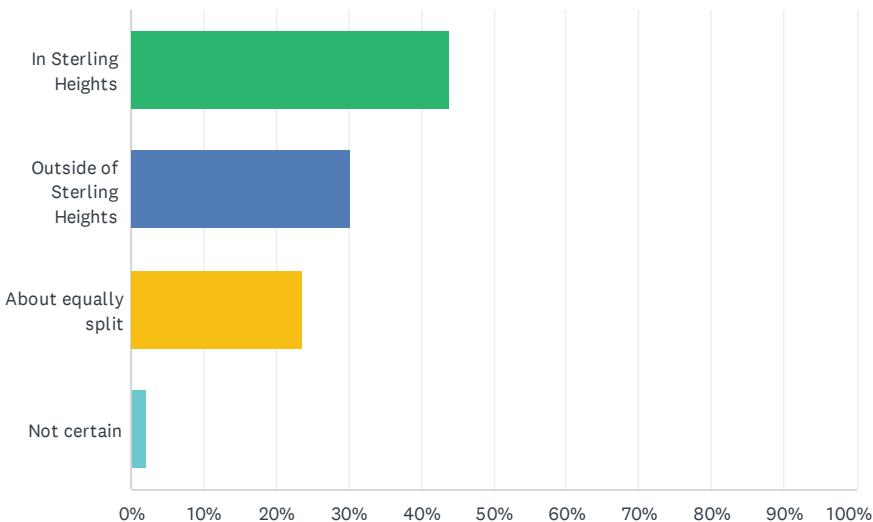
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
In Sterling Heights	44.00%	466
Outside of Sterling Heights	30.31%	321
About equally split	23.61%	250
Not certain	2.08%	22
TOTAL		1,059

10

Q10 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you eat dinner outside the home at any type of food service establishment?

Answered: 977   Skipped: 105
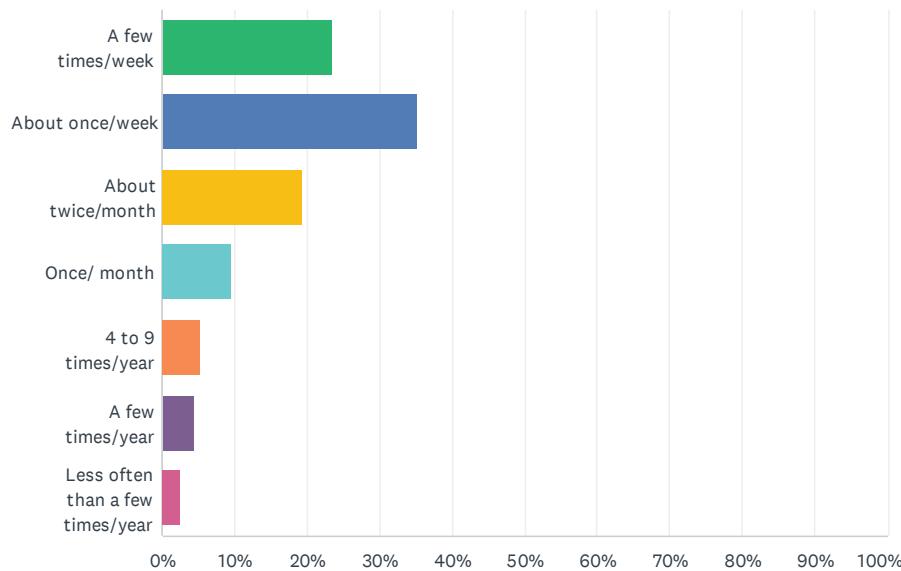
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	23.54%	230
About once/week	35.21%	344
About twice/month	19.45%	190
Once/ month	9.52%	93
4 to 9 times/year	5.42%	53
A few times/year	4.40%	43
Less often than a few times/year	2.46%	24
TOTAL		977

11

Q11 When eating dinner out, which of the following best describes the type of establishment most often frequented?

Answered: 972   Skipped: 110
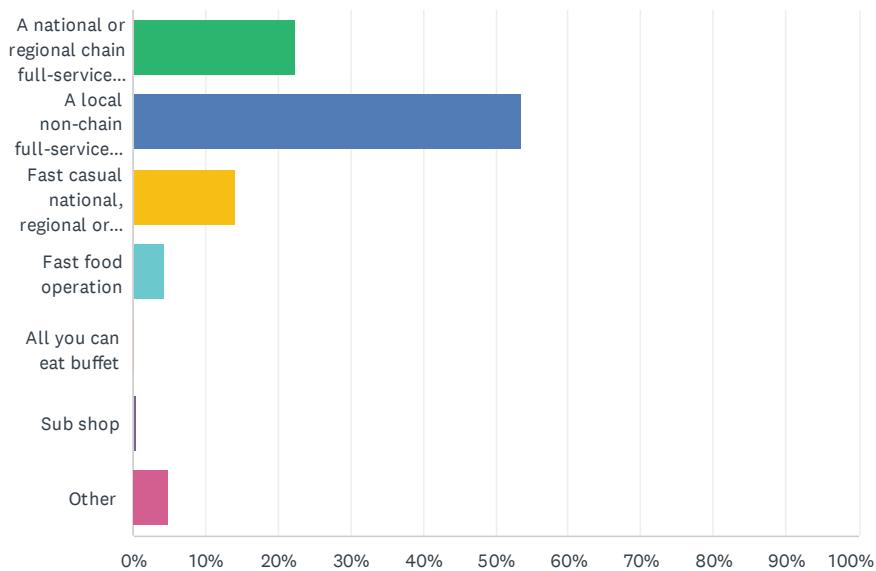
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A national or regional chain full-service restaurant	22.43%	218
A local non-chain full-service restaurant	53.60%	521
Fast casual national, regional or local chain	13.99%	136
Fast food operation	4.22%	41
All you can eat buffet	0.31%	3
Sub shop	0.51%	5
Other	4.94%	48
TOTAL		972

12

Q12 What is the name of the establishment most often frequented for dinner?

Answered: 837   Skipped: 245

Common Themes:

1. **Preference for Local Non-Chain Restaurants**:

   - Many respondents mentioned local non-chain restaurants, indicating a strong preference for unique, locally owned dining establishments. Examples include **Manga Bevi**, **Wildflower**, **Johnny's Coney Island**, and **Greek Grill**.

2. **Fast Casual and Fast-Food Restaurants**:

   - Fast casual restaurants like **Panera Bread**, **Qdoba**, and **Tropical Smoothie Cafe** are popular choices for dinner due to their quick service and higher quality food compared to traditional fast-food.

   - Fast food establishments such as **McDonald's**, **Taco Bell**, and **Subway** are also frequently mentioned for their convenience and speed.

3. **National or Regional Chain Full-Service Restaurants**:

   - Some respondents prefer full-service restaurants that are part of national or regional chains, such as **Applebee's**, **Olive Garden**, and **Texas Roadhouse**, for their consistent quality and service.

4. **Variety and Rotation**:

   - Several respondents mentioned that they do not have a single favorite dinner spot and prefer to rotate between different establishments. This indicates a desire for variety in their dining choices.

Summary of Results:

The survey responses indicate that residents of Sterling Heights have diverse preferences when it comes to dining out for dinner. The key preferences can be summarized as follows:

- **Local Non-Chain Restaurants**: There is a strong interest in supporting local businesses and enjoying unique, non-chain dining experiences. These establishments are valued for their individuality and community support.

- **Fast Casual and Fast-Food Restaurants**: Convenience and speed are important factors, making fast casual and fast-food restaurants popular choices for many respondents. These establishments offer quick service and a range of options.

- **National or Regional Chain Full-Service Restaurants**: These restaurants are favored for their consistent quality and service, providing a reliable dining experience.
- **Variety and Rotation**: Many residents prefer to rotate between different dinner spots, indicating a desire for variety in their dining options.

Overall, the responses reflect a community that values a mix of convenience, quality, and support for local businesses when choosing where to eat dinner.

13

Q13 Which of the following best describes the general location of the establishment most often frequented for dinner?

Answered: 972   Skipped: 110
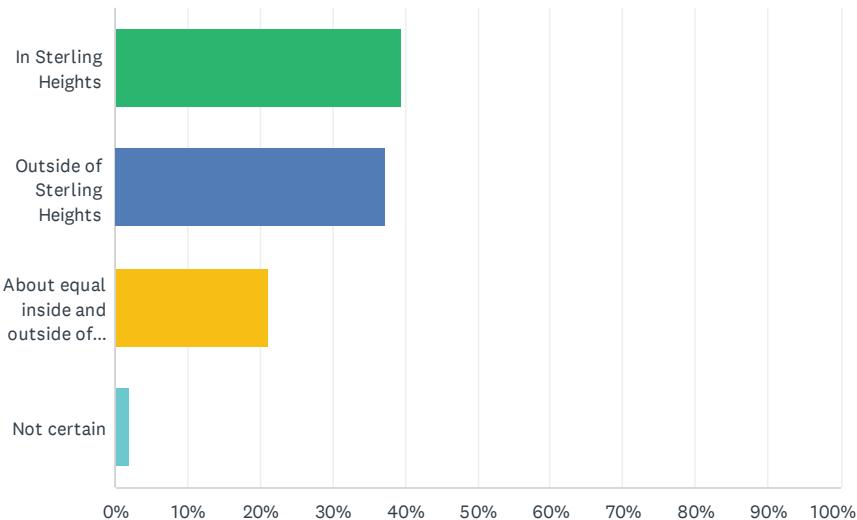
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
In Sterling Heights	39.51%	384
Outside of Sterling Heights	37.35%	363
About equal inside and outside of Sterling Heights	21.19%	206
Not certain	1.95%	19
TOTAL		972

14

Q14 Which of the following best describes the frequency you have lunch or dinner delivered to you home from Door Dash, Uber Eats, the establishment's own system, or others?

Answered: 977   Skipped: 105
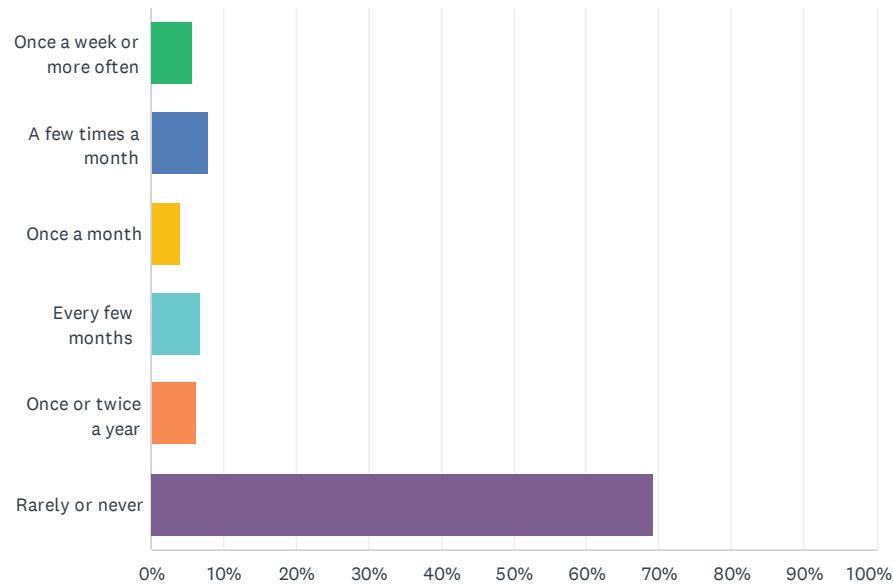
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Once a week or more often	5.73%	56
A few times a month	7.98%	78
Once a month	4.09%	40
Every few months	6.76%	66
Once or twice a year	6.14%	60
Rarely or never	69.29%	677
TOTAL		977

15

Q15 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you make purchases online or through catalogs?

Answered: 972   Skipped: 110
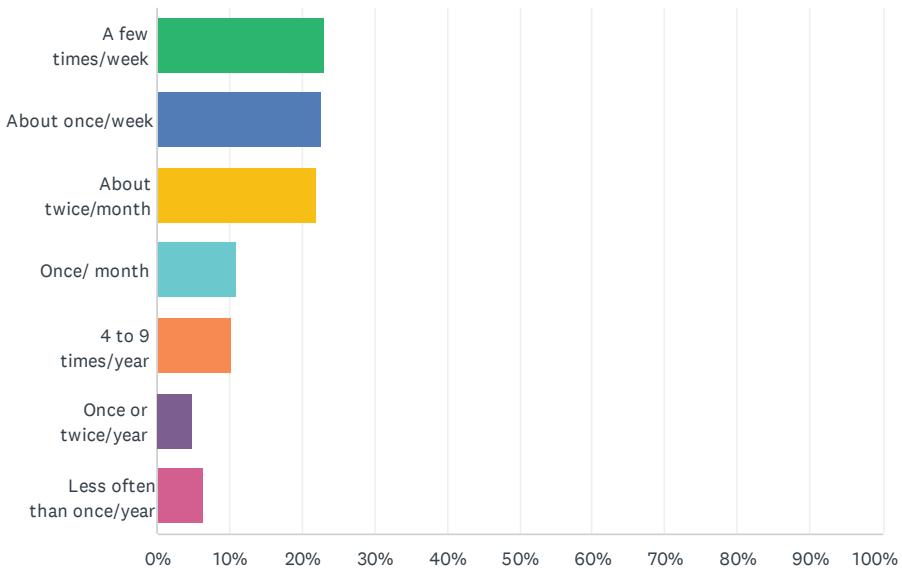
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	23.05%	224
About once/week	22.53%	219
About twice/month	21.91%	213
Once/ month	10.80%	105
4 to 9 times/year	10.29%	100
Once or twice/year	4.94%	48
Less often than once/year	6.48%	63
TOTAL		972

16

Q16 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you purchase fresh vegetables, breads, baked items, fresh fish or other fresh items from farmers' markets, roadside stands, butchers or bakeries?

Answered: 972   Skipped: 110
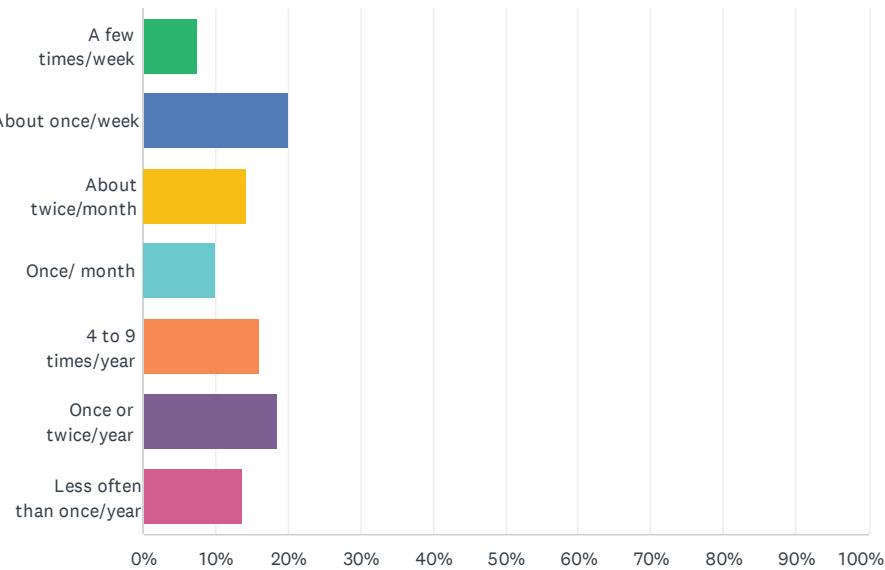
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	7.51%	73
About once/week	20.06%	195
About twice/month	14.20%	138
Once/ month	9.98%	97
4 to 9 times/year	15.95%	155
Once or twice/year	18.62%	181
Less often than once/year	13.68%	133
TOTAL		972

17

Q17 Which of the following do you buy at such non-supermarket or non-box store operations? (check all that apply)

Answered: 904   Skipped: 178
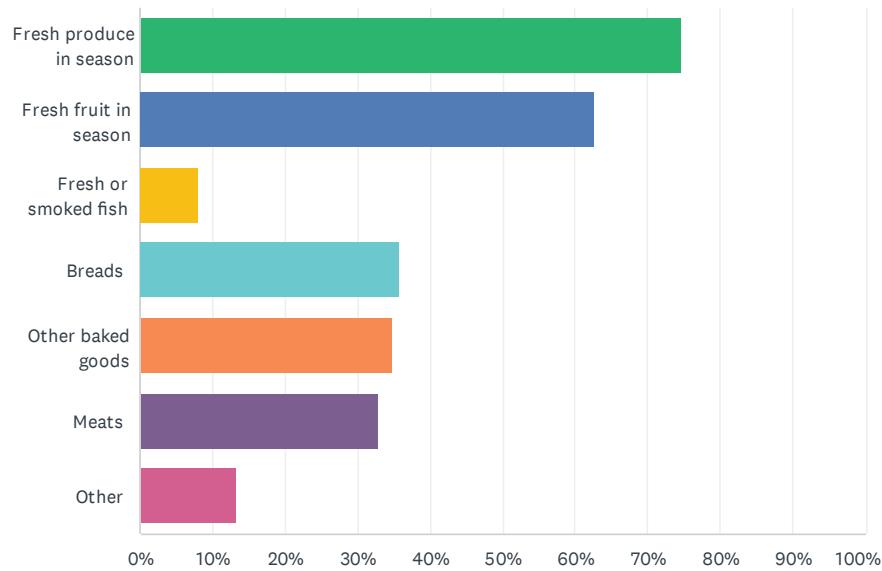
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Fresh produce in season	74.67%	675
Fresh fruit in season	62.72%	567
Fresh or smoked fish	8.08%	73
Breads	35.84%	324
Other baked goods	34.73%	314
Meats	32.74%	296
Other	13.16%	119
Total Respondents: 904		

18

Q18 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you purchase lunch or dinner from a food truck?

Answered: 974   Skipped: 108
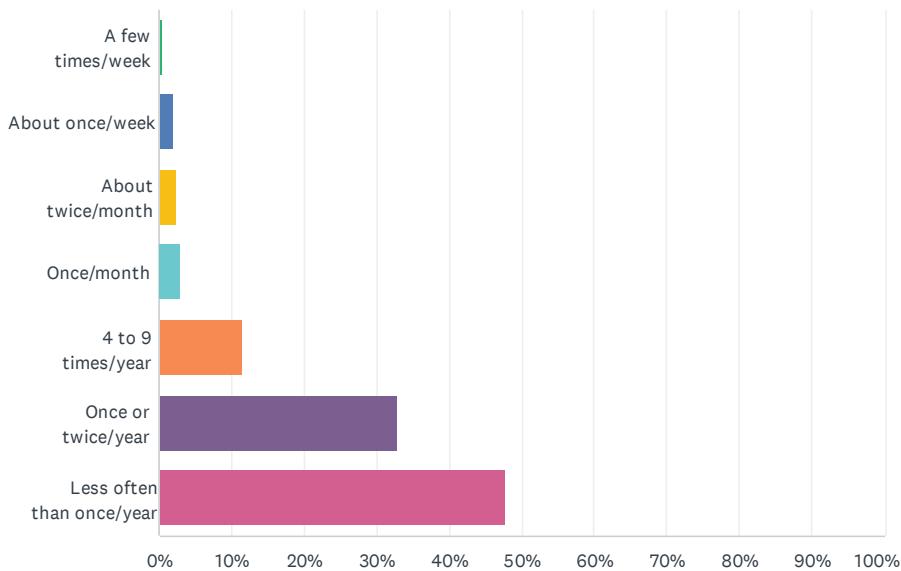
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	0.51%	5
About once/week	1.85%	18
About twice/month	2.36%	23
Once/month	3.08%	30
4 to 9 times/year	11.60%	113
Once or twice/year	32.85%	320
Less often than once/year	47.74%	465
TOTAL		974

19

Q19 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you go to see movies at a theater?

Answered: 974   Skipped: 108
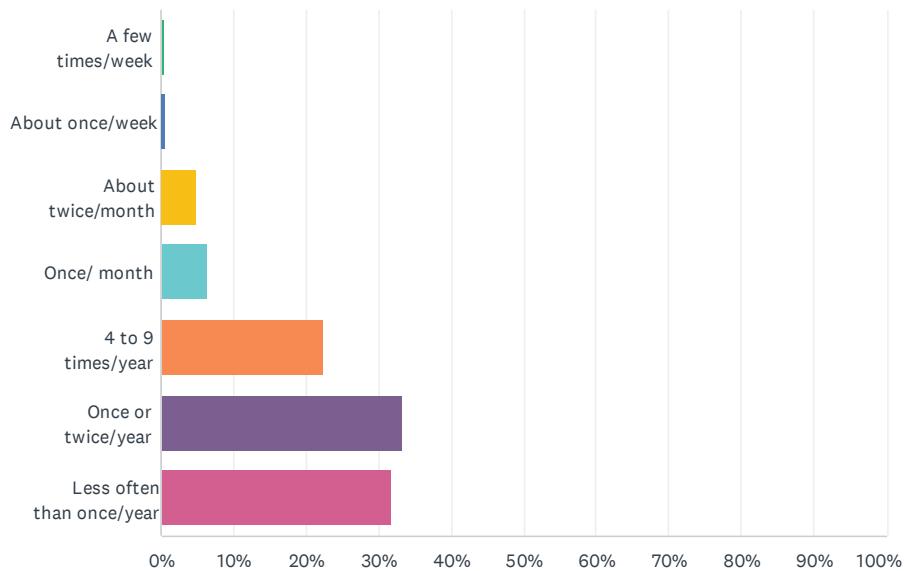
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	0.51%	5
About once/week	0.72%	7
About twice/month	4.93%	48
Once/ month	6.37%	62
4 to 9 times/year	22.38%	218
Once or twice/year	33.26%	324
Less often than once/year	31.83%	310
TOTAL		974

20

Q20 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you attend crafts or art shows?

Answered: 974   Skipped: 108
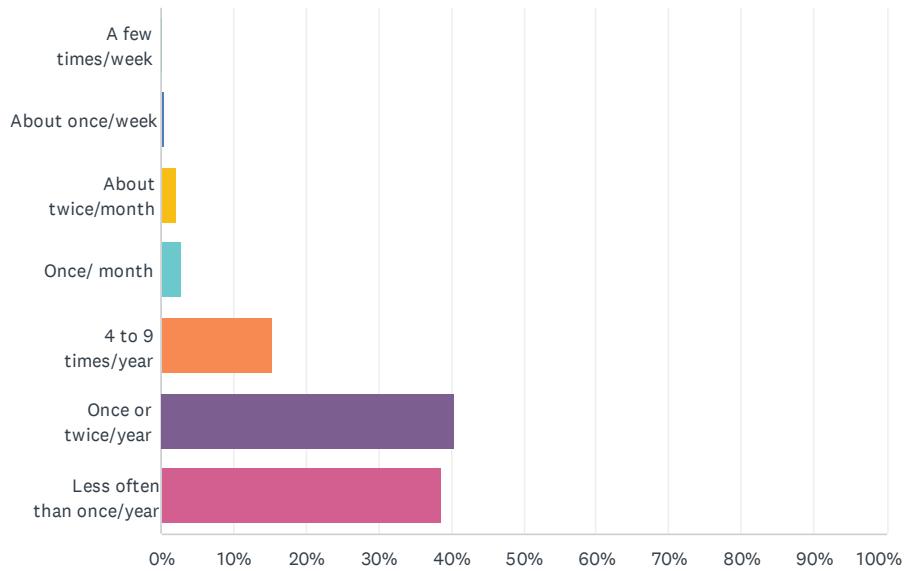
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	0.21%	2
About once/week	0.51%	5
About twice/month	2.05%	20
Once/ month	2.87%	28
4 to 9 times/year	15.30%	149
Once or twice/year	40.45%	394
Less often than once/year	38.60%	376
TOTAL		974

21

Q21 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you attend any and all types of collectibles shows?

Answered: 974   Skipped: 108
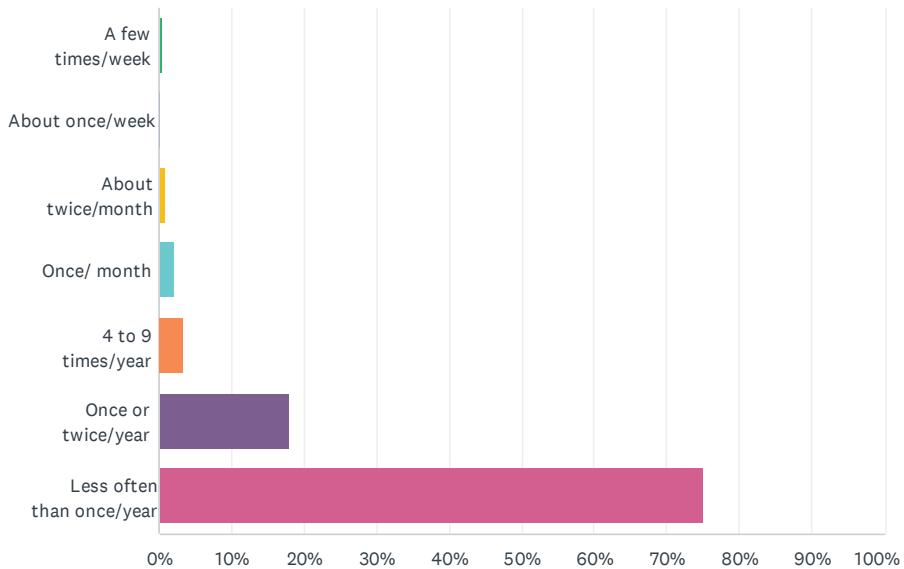
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	0.41%	4
About once/week	0.21%	2
About twice/month	0.82%	8
Once/ month	2.16%	21
4 to 9 times/year	3.49%	34
Once or twice/year	17.97%	175
Less often than once/year	74.95%	730
TOTAL		974

22

Q22 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you attend professional sporting events?

Answered: 956   Skipped: 126
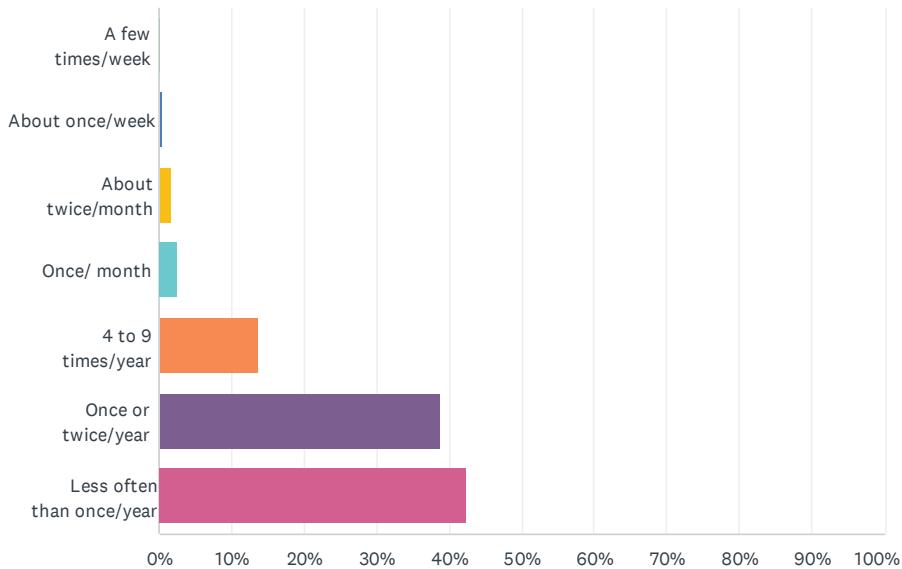
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	0.21%	2
About once/week	0.52%	5
About twice/month	1.67%	16
Once/ month	2.62%	25
4 to 9 times/year	13.60%	130
Once or twice/year	38.91%	372
Less often than once/year	42.47%	406
TOTAL		956

23

Q23 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you attend college sporting events?

Answered: 957   Skipped: 125
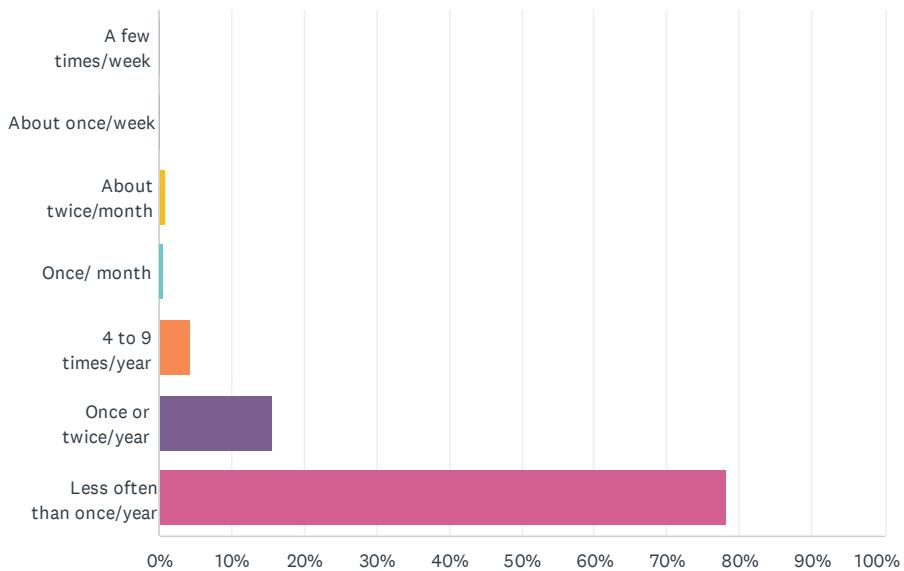
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	0.31%	3
About once/week	0.31%	3
About twice/month	0.84%	8
Once/ month	0.63%	6
4 to 9 times/year	4.18%	40
Once or twice/year	15.57%	149
Less often than once/year	78.16%	748
TOTAL		957

24

Q24 Which of the following best describes the frequency that you seek any form of entertainment, including shows, activities for children, or others in all areas other than Sterling Heights?

Answered: 957   Skipped: 125
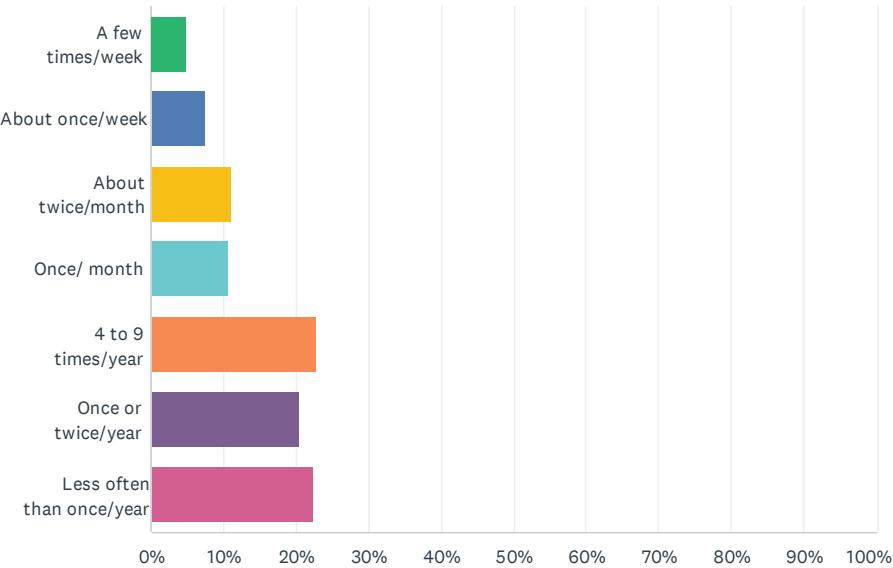
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A few times/week	4.91%	47
About once/week	7.52%	72
About twice/month	11.18%	107
Once/ month	10.76%	103
4 to 9 times/year	22.88%	219
Once or twice/year	20.38%	195
Less often than once/year	22.36%	214
TOTAL		957

25

Q25 Which community or communities do you normally go to for entertainment activity outside of Sterling Heights? (Note all applicable)

Answered: 921   Skipped: 161

26
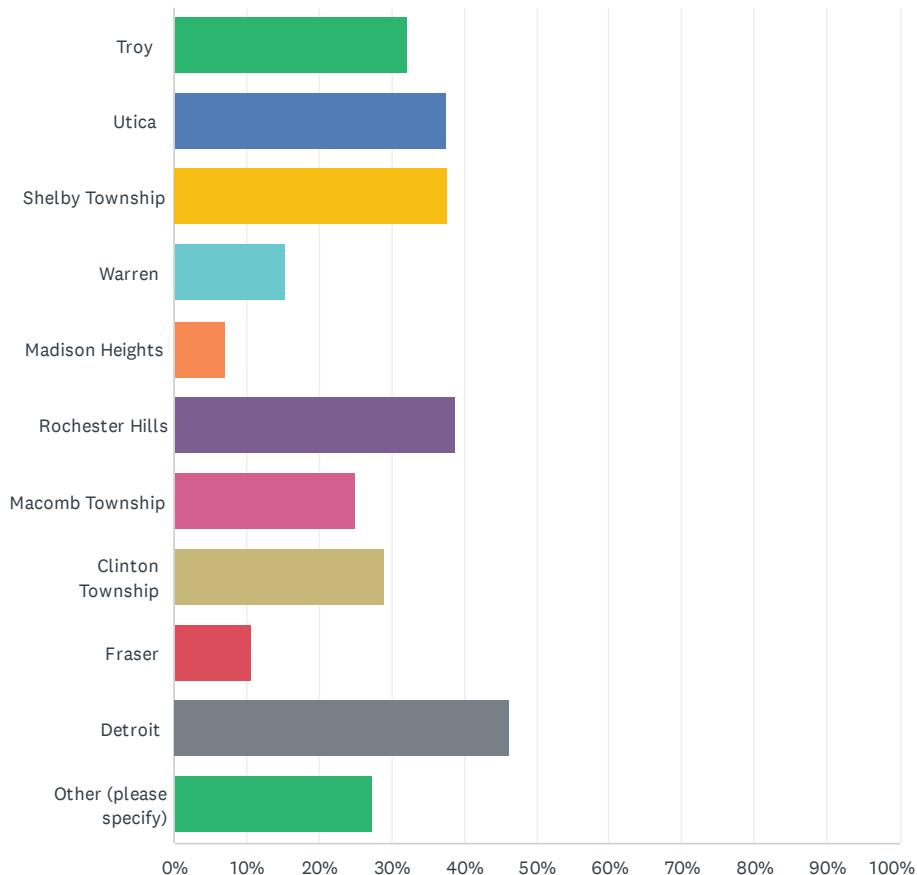
Sterling Heights Master Plan Market Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Troy	32.14%	296
Utica	37.57%	346
Shelby Township	37.68%	347
Warren	15.31%	141
Madison Heights	7.06%	65
Rochester Hills	38.87%	358
Macomb Township	24.97%	230
Clinton Township	28.99%	267
Fraser	10.64%	98
Detroit	46.25%	426
Other (please specify)	27.36%	252
Total Respondents: 921		

27

Q26 Is there anyone in your household that is likely to have the primary responsibility for planning or paying for a family event or other event in the next three years?

Answered: 955   Skipped: 127
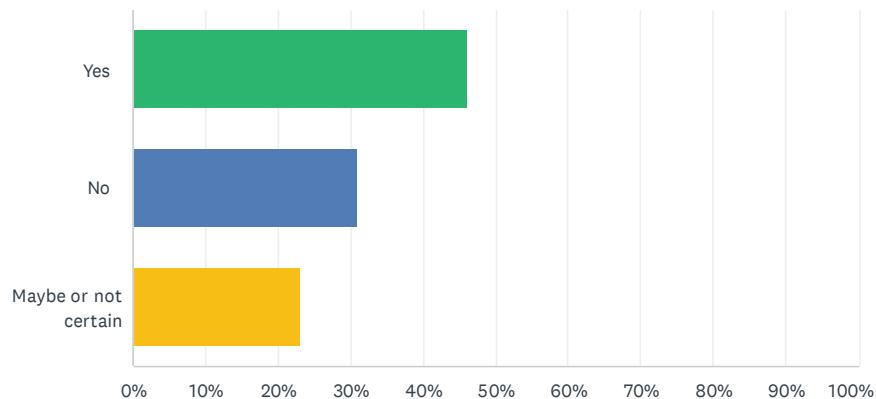
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	45.97%	439
No	30.99%	296
Maybe or not certain	23.04%	220
TOTAL		955

28

Q27 How many people live in your household?

Answered: 942   Skipped: 140
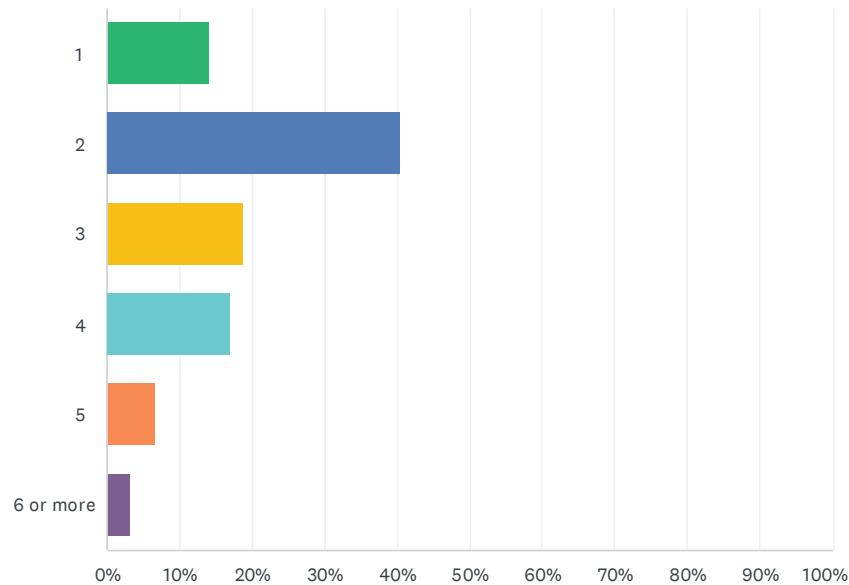
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	14.01%	132
2	40.45%	381
3	18.68%	176
4	16.99%	160
5	6.69%	63
6 or more	3.18%	30
TOTAL		942

29

Q28 How many people in your household are YOUNGER than six years of age?

Answered: 941   Skipped: 141

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0	88.95%	837
1	6.70%	63
2	3.61%	34
3	0.53%	5
4 or more	0.21%	2
TOTAL		941

30
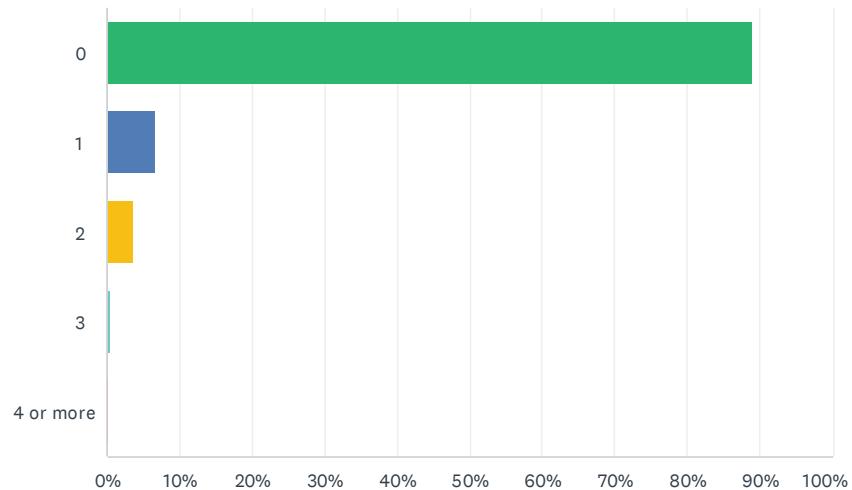
Q29 How many people in your household are employed full-time?

Answered: 941   Skipped: 141
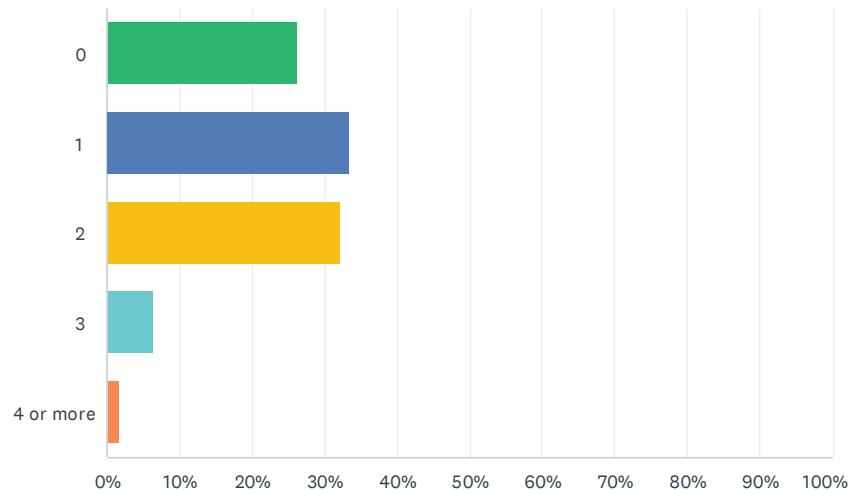
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0	26.25%	247
1	33.58%	316
2	32.09%	302
3	6.38%	60
4 or more	1.70%	16
TOTAL		941

31

Q30 How many people in your household are employed part-time?

Answered: 936   Skipped: 146
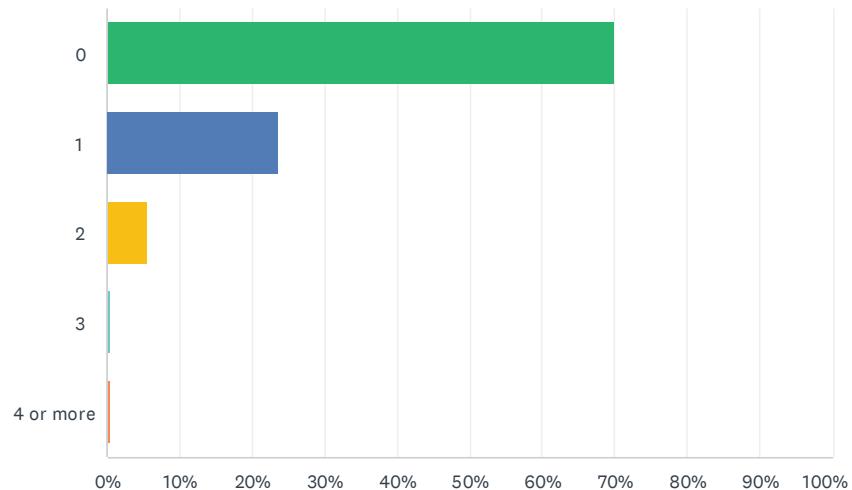
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0	69.98%	655
1	23.72%	222
2	5.56%	52
3	0.43%	4
4 or more	0.32%	3
TOTAL		936

32

Q31 Is there anyone in your household that is employed at two different jobs?

Answered: 936   Skipped: 146
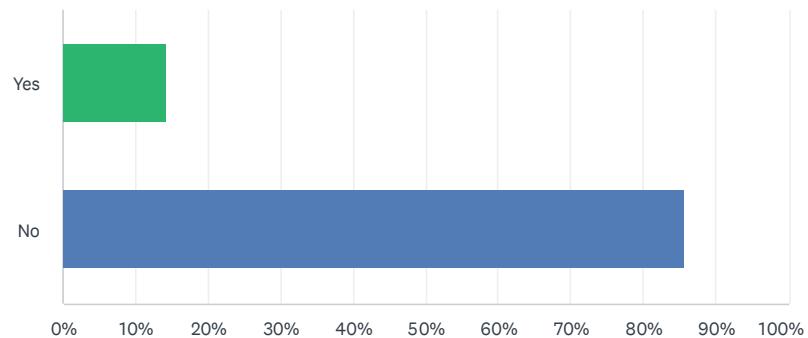
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	14.21%	133
No	85.79%	803
TOTAL		936

33

Q32 For anyone employed outside of the home, in which COUNTY is the employment located??

Answered: 883   Skipped: 199
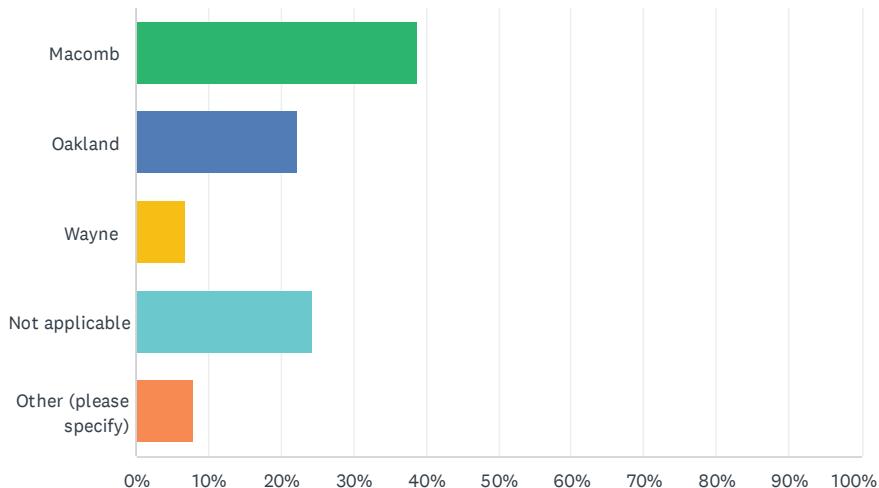
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Macomb	38.73%	342
Oakland	22.20%	196
Wayne	6.91%	61
Not applicable	24.24%	214
Other (please specify)	7.93%	70
TOTAL		883

34

Q33 Is there anyone in your household that is not employed or employed part-time that would like to be employed full-time?

Answered: 927   Skipped: 155
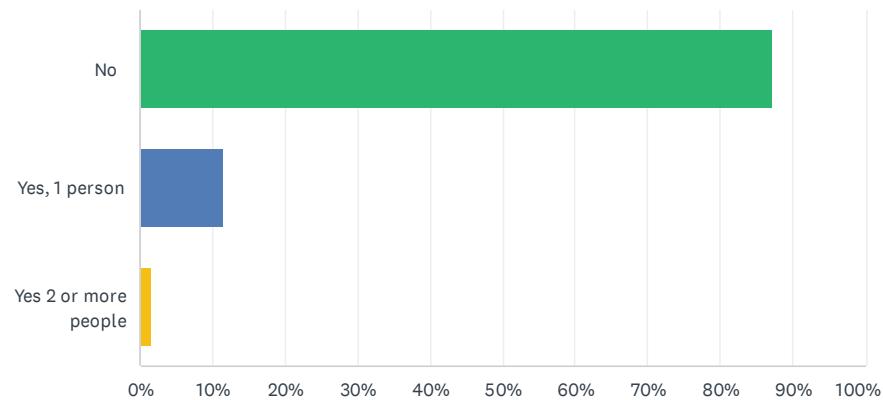
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No	87.16%	808
Yes, 1 person	11.43%	106
Yes 2 or more people	1.40%	13
TOTAL		927

35

Q34 Which of the following best describes the person's or people's education levels?

Answered: 846   Skipped: 236
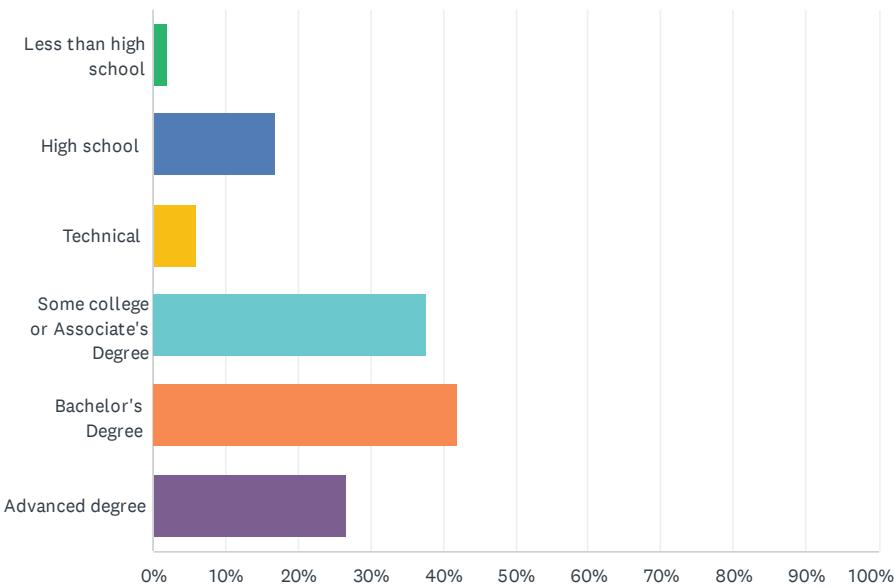
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than high school	1.89%	16
High school	16.78%	142
Technical	6.03%	51
Some college or Associate's Degree	37.83%	320
Bachelor's Degree	41.96%	355
Advanced degree	26.60%	225
Total Respondents: 846		

36

Q35 Which of the following would you say are the primary factors for not having the type of work wanted? (Check all that apply.)

Answered: 587   Skipped: 495
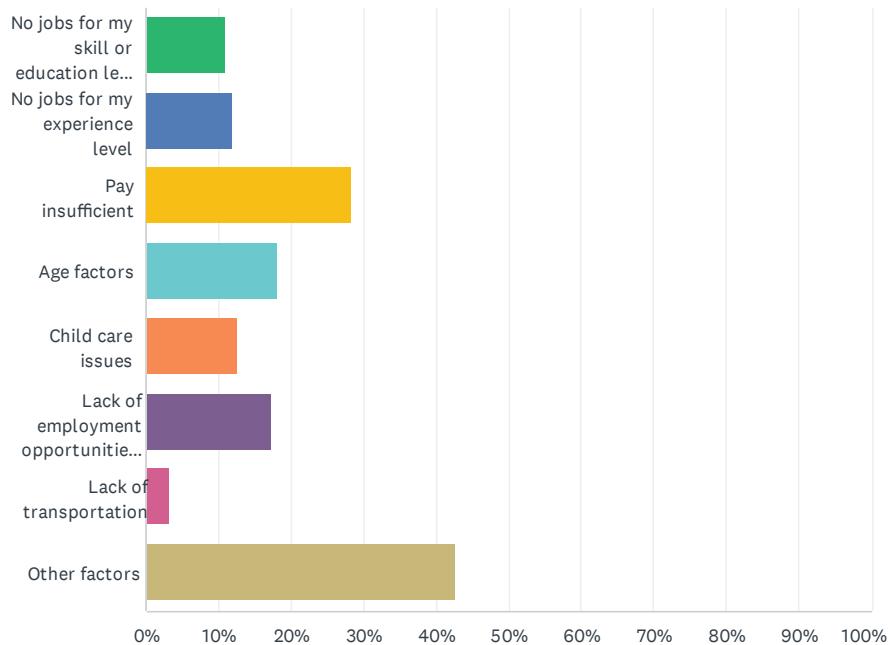
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No jobs for my skill or education level available	10.90%	64
No jobs for my experience level	11.93%	70
Pay insufficient	28.45%	167
Age factors	18.06%	106
Child care issues	12.61%	74
Lack of employment opportunities near home	17.38%	102
Lack of transportation	3.24%	19
Other factors	42.59%	250
Total Respondents: 587		

37

Q36 In which of the following age category does your household's primary income earner fall?

Answered: 927   Skipped: 155
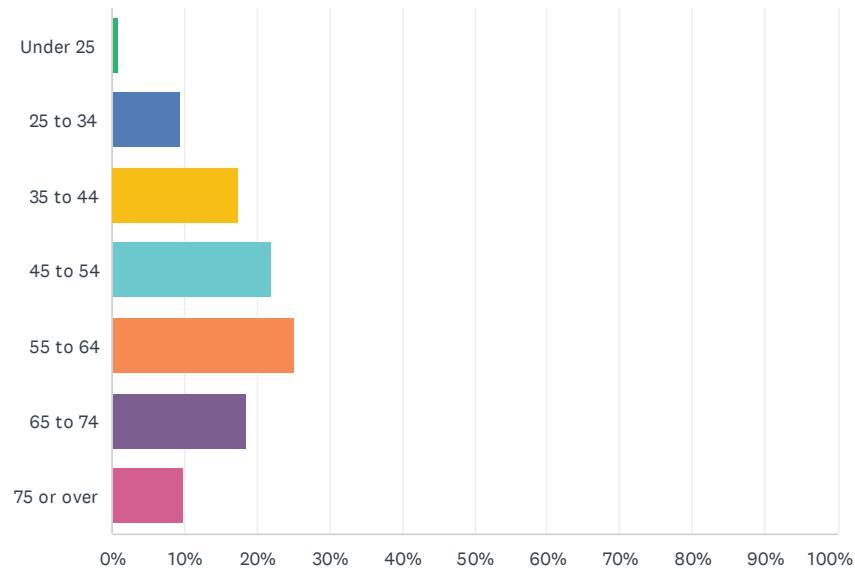
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 25	0.76%	7
25 to 34	9.39%	87
35 to 44	17.48%	162
45 to 54	22.01%	204
55 to 64	25.13%	233
65 to 74	18.55%	172
75 or over	9.71%	90
Total Respondents: 927		

38

Q37 How many personal vehicles does your household own or lease?

Answered: 903   Skipped: 179
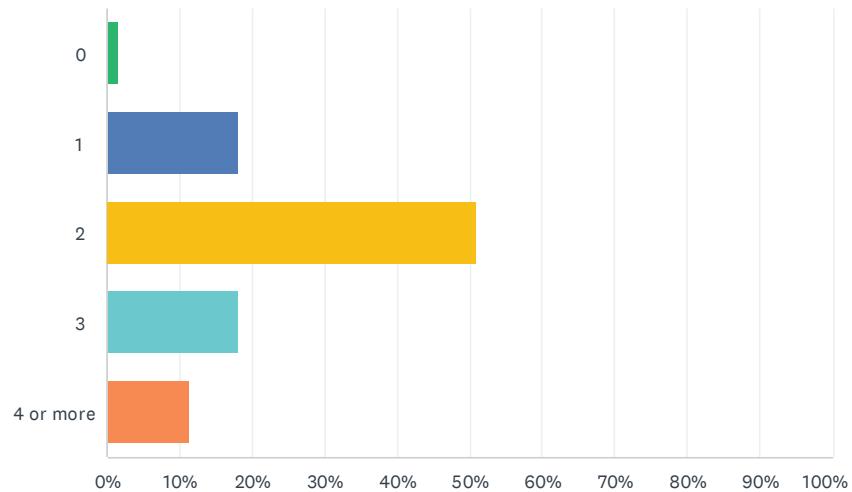
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0	1.44%	13
1	18.16%	164
2	51.05%	461
3	18.05%	163
4 or more	11.30%	102
TOTAL		903

39

Q38 How many personal vehicles owned or leased are more than five years old?

Answered: 903   Skipped: 179
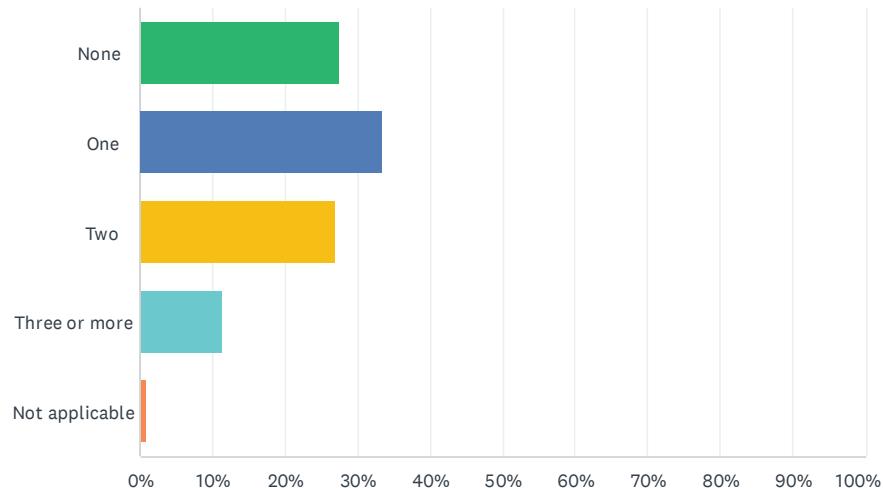
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	27.57%	249
One	33.44%	302
Two	26.80%	242
Three or more	11.30%	102
Not applicable	0.89%	8
TOTAL		903

40

Q39 How many members of your household either ride bikes or walk for fitness or recreation purposes?

Answered: 906   Skipped: 176
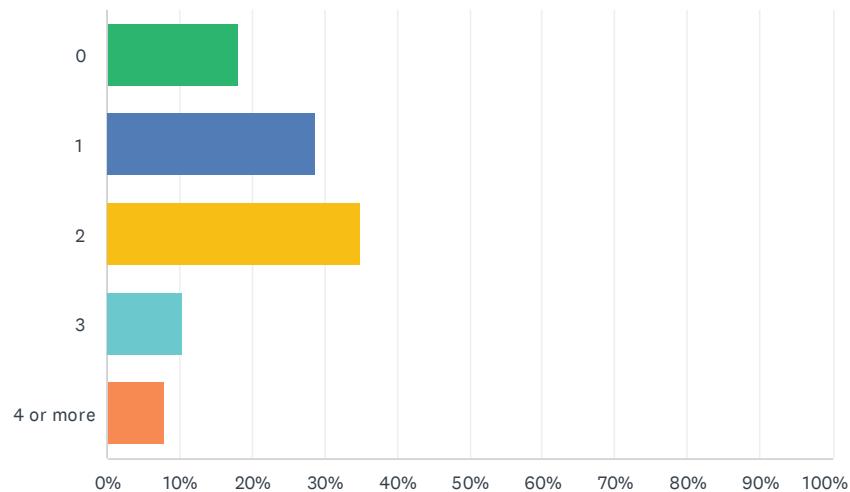
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0	18.10%	164
1	28.70%	260
2	34.99%	317
3	10.38%	94
4 or more	7.84%	71
TOTAL		906

41

Q40 Which of the following best describes the frequency you or another household members rides a bicycle or walks for commuting purposes?

Answered: 900   Skipped: 182

Legend: Once per w... | a few times... | Once per m... | A few times... | Less often | Rarely or n...
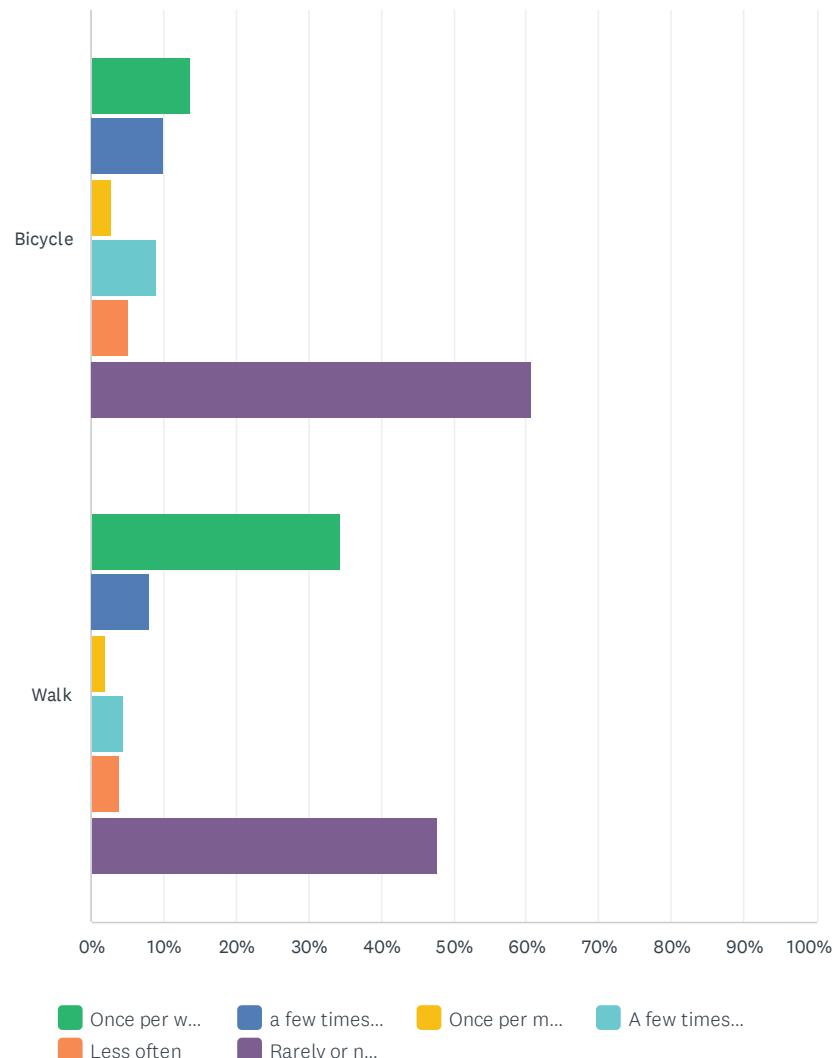
	ONCE PER WEEK OR MORE OFTEN	A FEW TIMES PER MONTH	ONCE PER MONTH	A FEW TIMES PER YEAR	LESS OFTEN	RARELY OR NEVER	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Bicycle	13.73% 120	10.07% 88	2.86% 25	9.04% 79	5.03% 44	60.76% 531	874
Walk	34.28% 303	8.14% 72	1.92% 17	4.52% 40	3.73% 33	47.85% 423	884

42

Q41 Do you own or rent the home in which you live?

Answered: 903   Skipped: 179
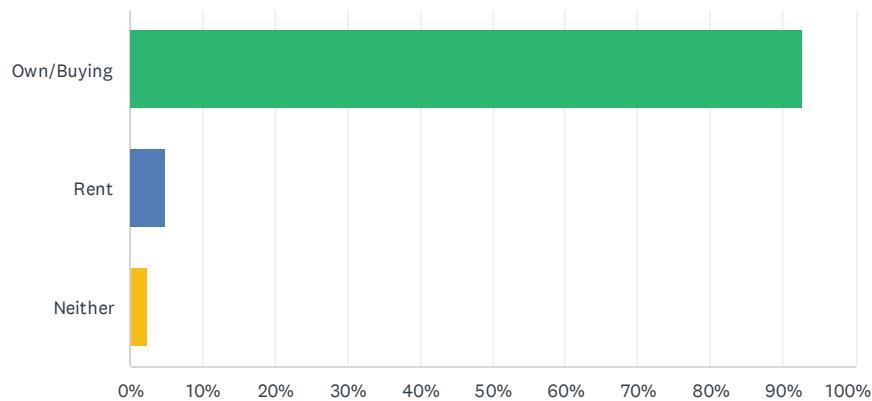
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Own/Buying	92.80%	838
Rent	4.87%	44
Neither	2.33%	21
TOTAL		903

43

Q42 Which of the following best describes the amount of time you have lived at your current address?

Answered: 903   Skipped: 179
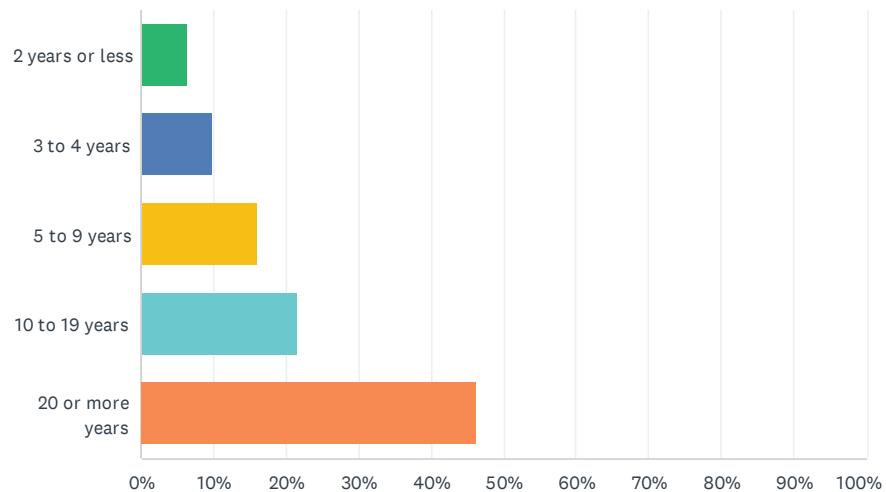
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
2 years or less	6.31%	57
3 to 4 years	9.75%	88
5 to 9 years	16.06%	145
10 to 19 years	21.59%	195
20 or more years	46.29%	418
TOTAL		903

44

# Q43 Which of the following best describes the number of bedrooms in the home in which you live?

Answered: 906   Skipped: 176
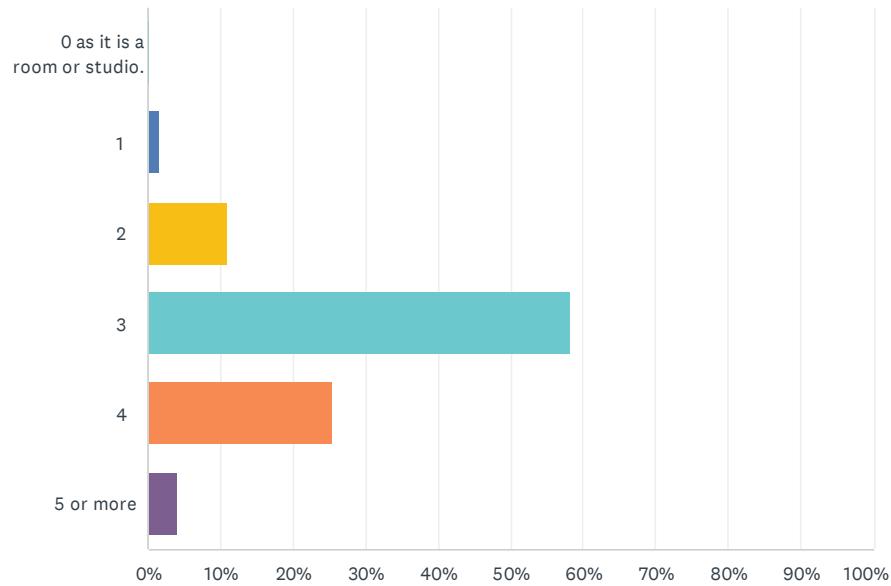
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0 as it is a room or studio.	0.11%	1
1	1.43%	13
2	10.93%	99
3	58.17%	527
4	25.39%	230
5 or more	3.97%	36
TOTAL		906

45

Q44 Which of the following best describes the amount of your TOTAL monthly rent or mortgage payment? (Include escrowed taxes and insurance if part of your payment)

Answered: 862   Skipped: 220

46
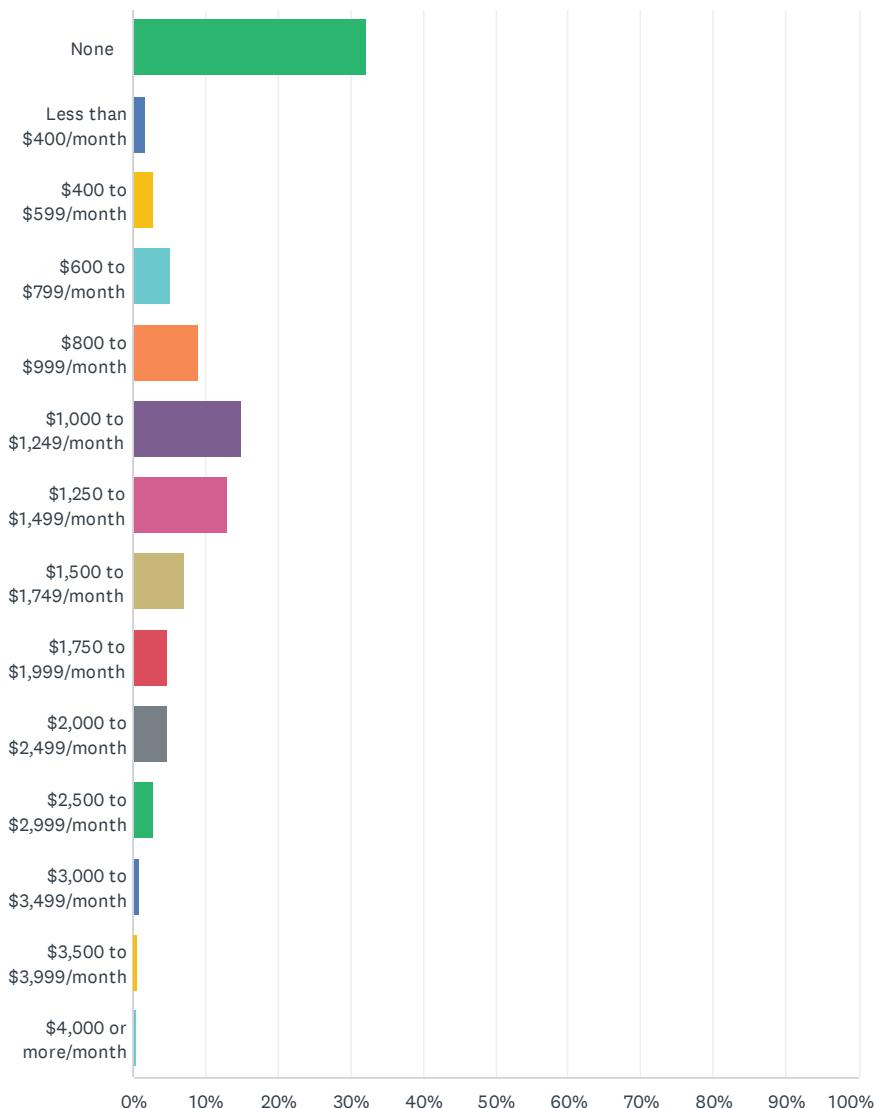
Sterling Heights Master Plan Market Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	32.25%	278
Less than $400/month	1.74%	15
$400 to $599/month	2.78%	24
$600 to $799/month	5.10%	44
$800 to $999/month	9.05%	78
$1,000 to $1,249/month	14.85%	128
$1,250 to $1,499/month	13.11%	113
$1,500 to $1,749/month	6.96%	60
$1,750 to $1,999/month	4.64%	40
$2,000 to $2,499/month	4.76%	41
$2,500 to $2,999/month	2.67%	23
$3,000 to $3,499/month	0.93%	8
$3,500 to $3,999/month	0.70%	6
$4,000 or more/month	0.46%	4
TOTAL		862

47

Q45 Which of the following best describes the current size of your home?

Answered: 894   Skipped: 188

48
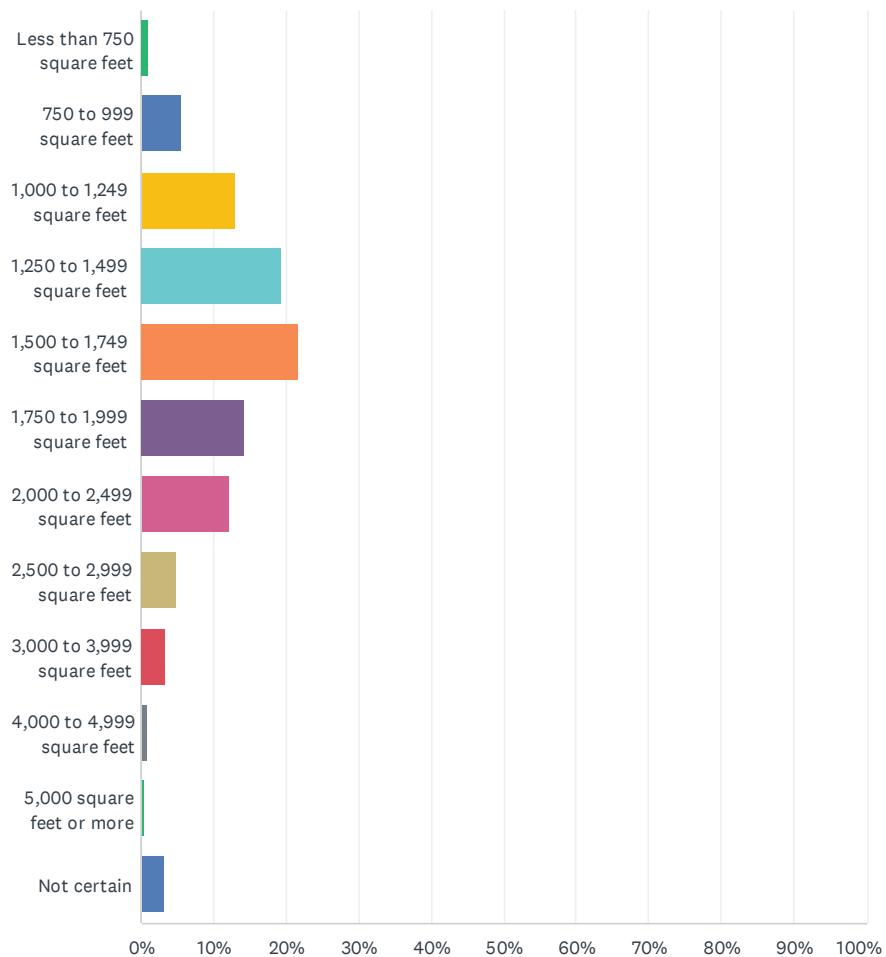
Sterling Heights Master Plan Market Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 750 square feet	1.01%	9
750 to 999 square feet	5.48%	49
1,000 to 1,249 square feet	13.09%	117
1,250 to 1,499 square feet	19.46%	174
1,500 to 1,749 square feet	21.70%	194
1,750 to 1,999 square feet	14.21%	127
2,000 to 2,499 square feet	12.19%	109
2,500 to 2,999 square feet	4.81%	43
3,000 to 3,999 square feet	3.47%	31
4,000 to 4,999 square feet	0.89%	8
5,000 square feet or more	0.45%	4
Not certain	3.24%	29
TOTAL		894

49

# Q46 Which of the following best describes the number of months you spend in a year in your home in Michigan?

Answered: 900 Skipped: 182
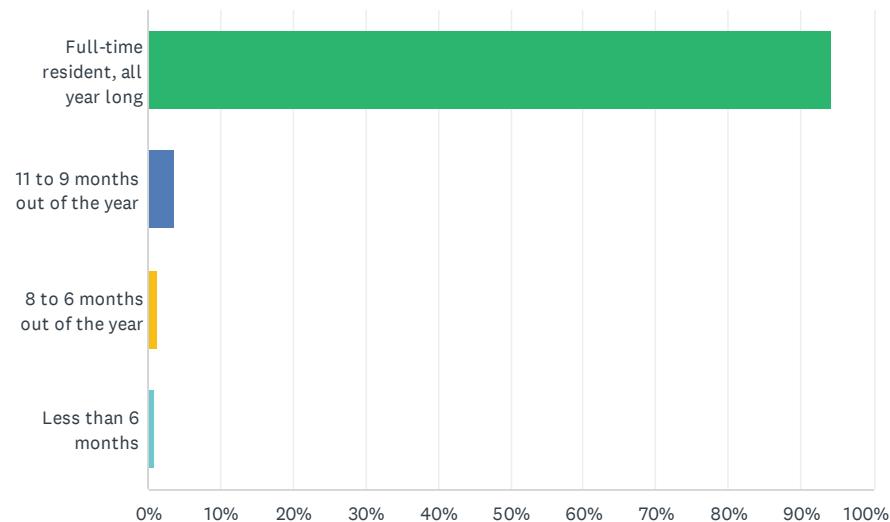
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Full-time resident, all year long	94.22%	848
11 to 9 months out of the year	3.67%	33
8 to 6 months out of the year	1.33%	12
Less than 6 months	0.78%	7
TOTAL		900

50

Q47 Because of life-style changes, rental conditions, housing market conditions, employment changes, increase or decrease in family size, changes in physical or fiscal conditions, or for medical or other reasons do you see yourself potentially moving from your current home in the next 5 years?
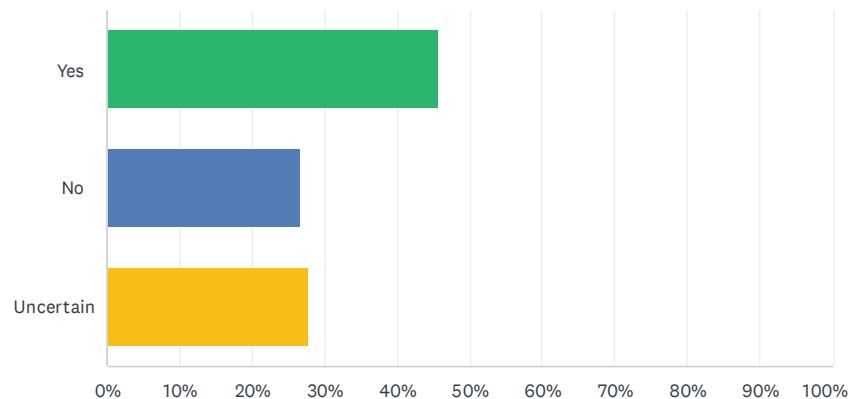
Answered: 906   Skipped: 176
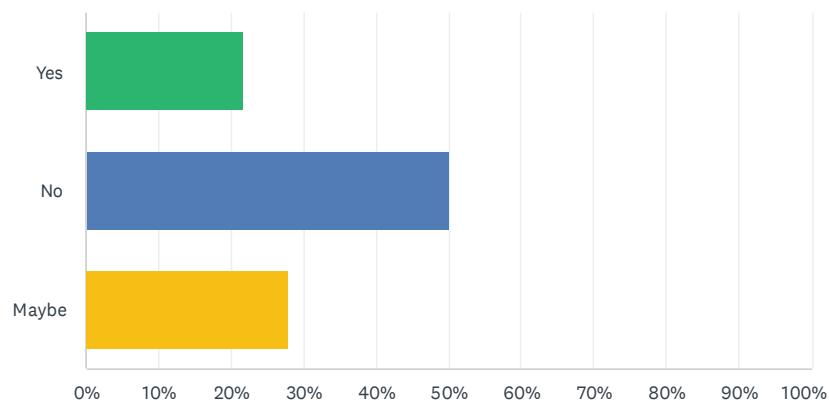
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	21.85%	198
No	50.11%	454
Maybe	28.04%	254
TOTAL		906

51

Q48 Hypothetically, if such a move occurred, is there a reason to believe that the move would likely be to an area outside of Sterling Heights, Macomb County, or this area of Michigan?
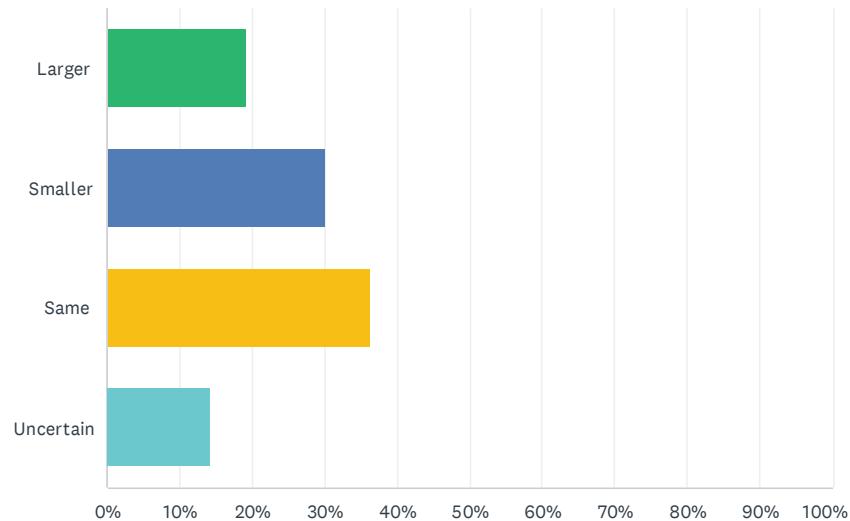
Answered: 889   Skipped: 193

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	45.67%	406
No	26.66%	237
Uncertain	27.67%	246
TOTAL		889

52

Q49 If you were to move in the next 5 years, would you be likely to move to a housing unit that was larger, smaller, or about the same size as your current home?
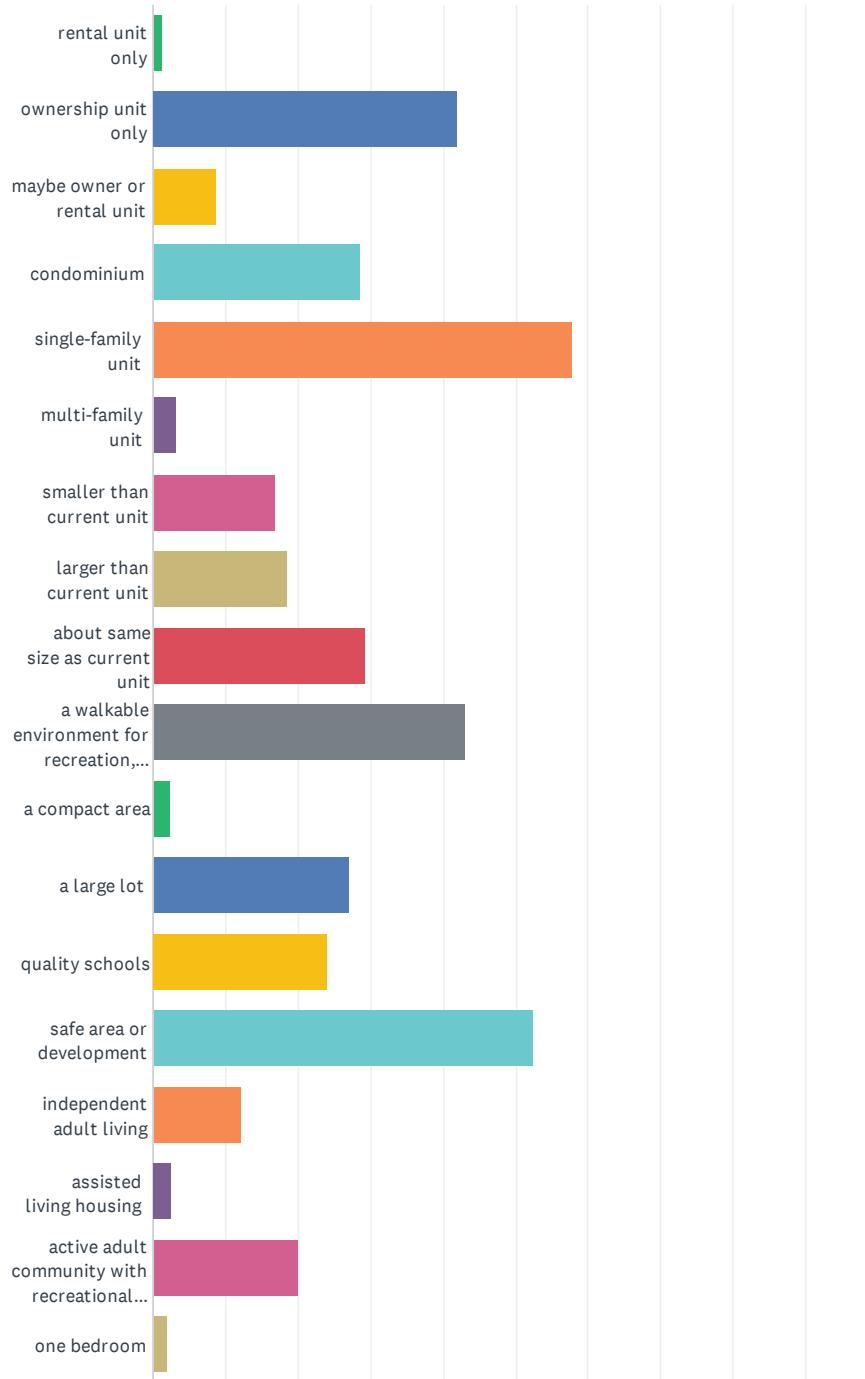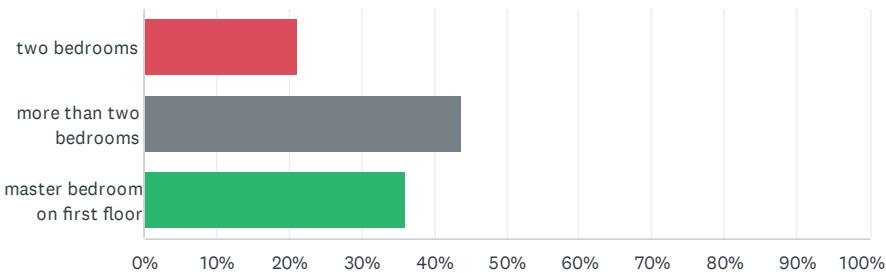
Answered: 894   Skipped: 188

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Larger	19.24%	172
Smaller	30.09%	269
Same	36.35%	325
Uncertain	14.32%	128
TOTAL		894

53

Q50 If you were to move, for what characteristics would you be looking in the new housing unit? (please identify all those that apply)

Answered: 870   Skipped: 212


54

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
rental unit only	1.38%	12
ownership unit only	41.95%	365
maybe owner or rental unit	8.74%	76
condominium	28.62%	249
single-family unit	57.82%	503
multi-family unit	3.10%	27
smaller than current unit	16.78%	146
larger than current unit	18.51%	161
about same size as current unit	29.31%	255
a walkable environment for recreation, shopping and other activity	43.10%	375
a compact area	2.30%	20
a large lot	27.01%	235
quality schools	24.02%	209
safe area or development	52.53%	457
independent adult living	12.07%	105
assisted living housing	2.64%	23
active adult community with recreational amenities such as golf, clubhouse, pool, etc.	20.11%	175
one bedroom	1.84%	16
two bedrooms	21.03%	183
more than two bedrooms	43.79%	381
master bedroom on first floor	36.09%	314
Total Respondents: 870		

55

Q51 On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor, please rank each of the following in Sterling Heights.

Answered: 874   Skipped: 208

56
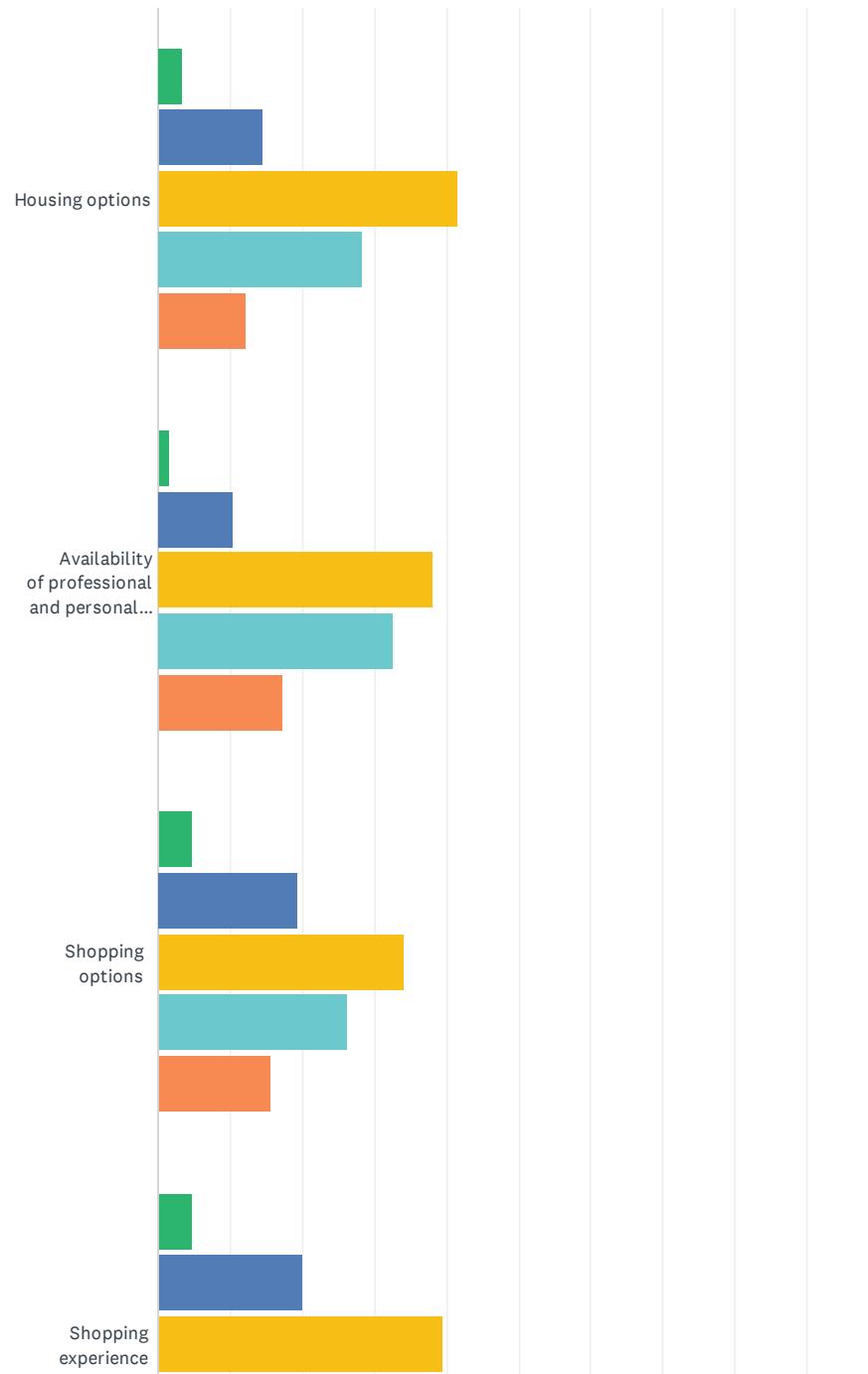
Sterling Heights Master Plan Market Survey
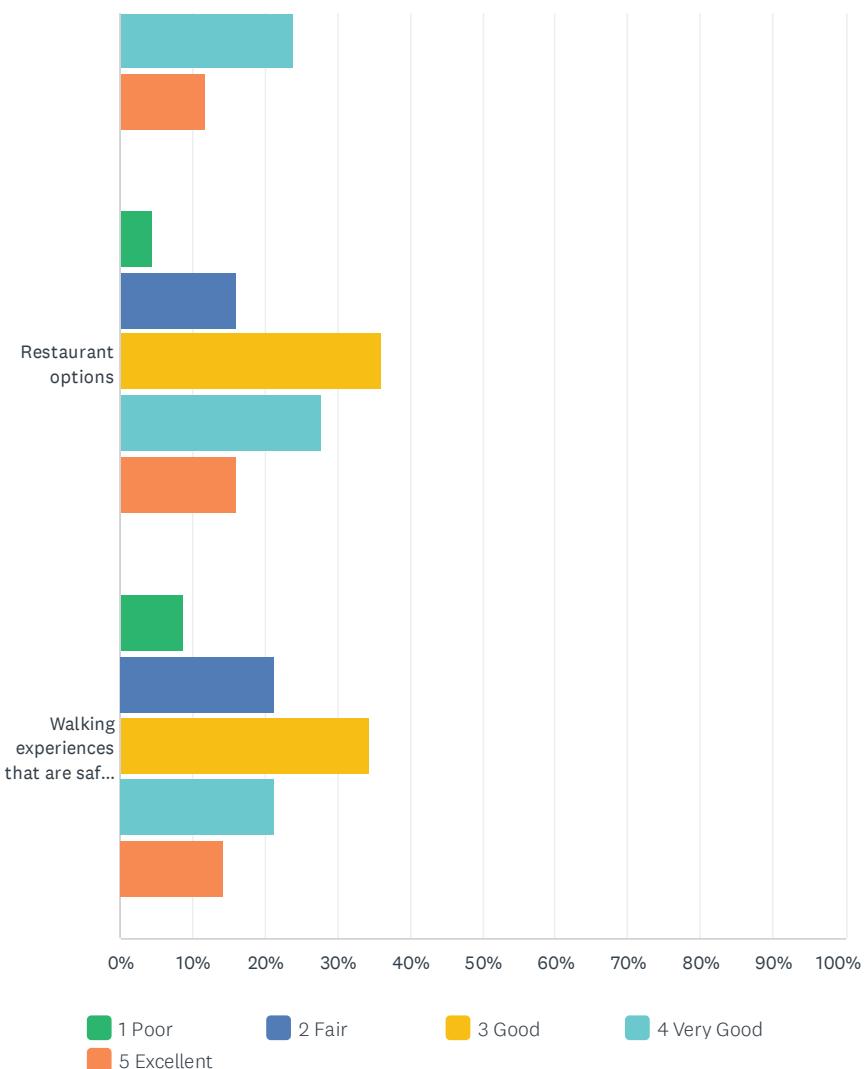
	1 POOR	2 FAIR	3 GOOD	4 VERY GOOD	5 EXCELLENT	TOTAL
Housing options	3.48% 30	14.50% 125	41.65% 359	28.31% 244	12.06% 104	862
Availability of professional and personal services	1.50% 13	10.42% 90	38.08% 329	32.64% 282	17.36% 150	864
Shopping options	4.72% 41	19.35% 168	34.10% 296	26.27% 228	15.55% 135	868
Shopping experience	4.74% 41	20.00% 173	39.54% 342	23.93% 207	11.79% 102	865
Restaurant options	4.39% 38	15.95% 138	35.95% 311	27.63% 239	16.07% 139	865
Walking experiences that are safe, comfortable and interesting	8.81% 76	21.32% 184	34.30% 296	21.32% 184	14.25% 123	863

57

Q52 What types of activities would you like to see developed in Sterling Heights for our residents and their extended families that you would be likely to patronize? Please provide all that you believe you would patronize.

Answered: 537   Skipped: 545

Common Themes:

1. **Outdoor and Recreational Activities:**
   - Many respondents expressed a desire for more parks, green spaces, and walking/biking trails.
   - There is a strong interest in developing community pools, splash pads, and water parks.
   - Sports facilities such as tennis courts, pickleball courts, and golf courses are also popular requests.

2. **Cultural and Social Events:**
   - Residents would like to see more community events such as festivals, concerts, and art shows.
   - There is a demand for more family-friendly activities and events that cater to all age groups.
   - Suggestions include movie nights, food truck events, and farmers' markets.

3. **Fitness and Wellness:**
   - There is a significant interest in fitness and wellness activities, including fitness centers, yoga classes, and dance classes.
   - Residents also mentioned the need for more recreational amenities such as gyms and sports leagues.

4. **Entertainment and Leisure:**
   - Respondents would like to see more entertainment options such as theaters, bowling alleys, and arcades.
   - There is a desire for more dining options, including diverse and international cuisine.

5. **Community and Family-Oriented Spaces:**
   - Many residents emphasized the need for more community centers and spaces where families can gather and engage in activities together.
   - Suggestions include playgrounds, picnic areas, and community gardens.

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Summary of Results:

The survey responses indicate that residents of Sterling Heights have a strong interest in a variety of activities and amenities that enhance their quality of life. The key preferences can be summarized as follows:

- **Outdoor and Recreational Activities**: There is a significant demand for more parks, green spaces, walking/biking trails, community pools, splash pads, and sports facilities.

- **Cultural and Social Events**: Residents want more community events such as festivals, concerts, art shows, movie nights, food truck events, and farmers' markets.

- **Fitness and Wellness**: There is a strong interest in fitness and wellness activities, including fitness centers, yoga classes, dance classes, gyms, and sports leagues.

- **Entertainment and Leisure**: Respondents would like to see more entertainment options such as theaters, bowling alleys, arcades, and diverse dining options.

- **Community and Family-Oriented Spaces**: There is a need for more community centers, playgrounds, picnic areas, and community gardens where families can gather and engage in activities together.

Overall, the responses reflect a community that values a mix of outdoor, cultural, fitness, entertainment, and family-oriented activities.

Q54 In which of the following categories does YOUR TOTAL annual household income fall? (Include pension or Social Security if applicable)

Answered: 778   Skipped: 304

60
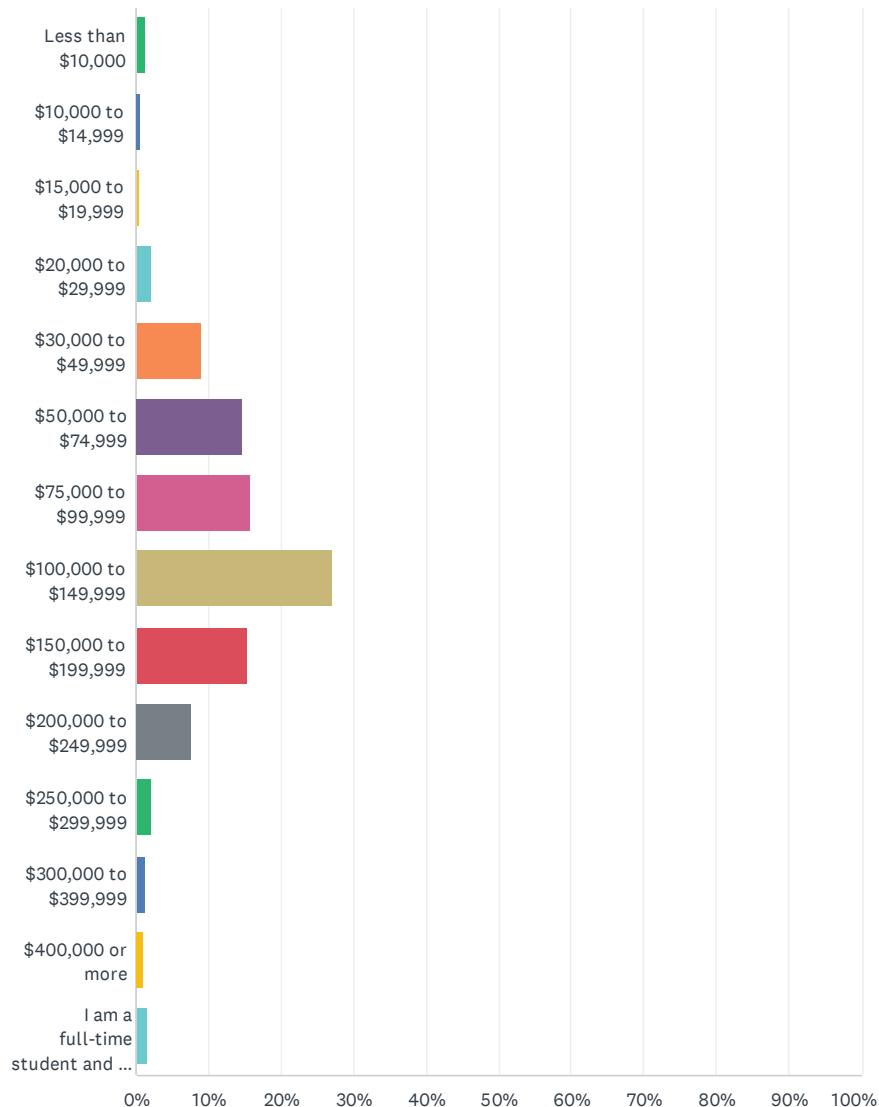
Sterling Heights Master Plan Market Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than $10,000	1.29%	10
$10,000 to $14,999	0.64%	5
$15,000 to $19,999	0.39%	3
$20,000 to $29,999	2.06%	16
$30,000 to $49,999	8.87%	69
$50,000 to $74,999	14.78%	115
$75,000 to $99,999	15.68%	122
$100,000 to $149,999	27.12%	211
$150,000 to $199,999	15.42%	120
$200,000 to $249,999	7.71%	60
$250,000 to $299,999	2.19%	17
$300,000 to $399,999	1.29%	10
$400,000 or more	1.03%	8
I am a full-time student and am supported by grants, loans, my family or others	1.54%	12
TOTAL		778

61