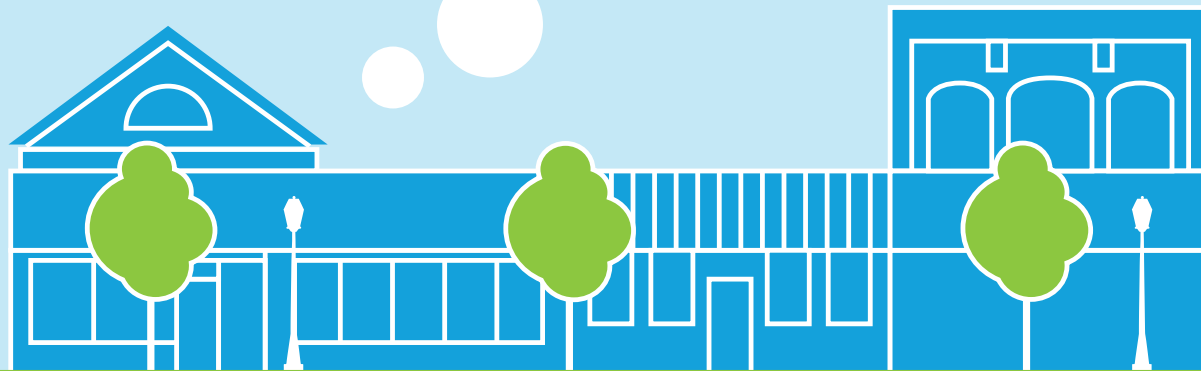


**IMAGINE
WHITE CLOUD**



CITY OF WHITE CLOUD
COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

DRAFT 2024

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY OF WHITE CLOUD CITY COUNCIL

Brian J. Miller, Mayor

Lori Shears, Mayor Pro Tem

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Amy Barnhard

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

The City of White Cloud has a proud history of being a regional destination set at the crossroads of M-20 and M-37, and nestled along the picturesque Lake White Cloud and White River. With an expanding Industrial Park, beloved community park and recreation spaces, and a focus on attracting investment to Downtown, the City has established a forward-looking vision. Residents love this community and support efforts for its growth and development in ways that align with this plan.

The City of White Cloud Master Plan 2024 is a significant update from previous Master Plans. With continuous guidance from the Planning Commission and feedback from community members gathered through a robust public engagement process, the development of the plan was created from a collective vision for the City. With new goals and objectives, a refocused future land use map, and revised future land use categories, the City has new tools to use to guide growth and spur investment in Downtown. Understanding that there is potential for future housing developments, improvements to the transportation network, and revitalization efforts across the community, the Master Plan positions White Cloud to achieve its growth and development aspirations for years to come.

MASTER PLANNING IN THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD

The City of White Cloud Master Plan is a significant update of the previous Master Plans which was adopted in 2010 and then amended in 2014 and 2018. This plan focuses on:

- Supporting the buildout of a variety of residential developments. (Chapters 3 & 9)
- Articulating a vision for White Cloud based on community-based goals and objectives. (Chapter 6)
- Providing direction for economic development investment through a regional economic development strategy & related key actions. (Chapter 8)
- Identifying the location of future residential, commercial, and other land uses, especially in Downtown. (Chapter 9)
- Curating a list of implementable actions to support the evolution of the downtown area based on community-based themes of placemaking, streetscape improvements, enhancing visual quality, and connectivity. (Chapter 10)

This information is further detailed in chapters of the document as the plan aims to enable the community to be proactive and resilient in shaping its future.



WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A Master Plan represents a physical and cultural vision for a community based on data from various local, state, and national sources. Feedback from local officials, residents, and City staff is also included to inform the community's goal. This Master Plan is comprised of several different sections, including a description of the existing data and trends related to the City's population, the natural features of the land, and city services. Goals and objectives provide a framework to help local officials, Planning Commission members, City staff, and the public realize that vision.

The Master Plan provides the City of White Cloud with a guide for new development and redevelopment within municipal boundaries. The Master Plan serves as the basis for land use decisions and regulation under zoning and other regulatory means. This Master Plan has been developed pursuant to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008, as amended), which enables municipalities in Michigan to undertake planning efforts.



HOW SHOULD YOU USE THIS PLAN?

Consider the following steps in understanding how to use this plan.

STEP 1. Consider how future Land Use is proposed for your property and/or the area surrounding your property.

This information is on the Future Land Use map in Chapter 9. The map is divided into separate land use classifications. Find the location you want on the map, and then use the legend to identify the land use category for the parcel(s) or land area.

STEP 2. Determine what the Future Land Use Map shows for your area. Consider how the Planning Commission may interpret the information on the map.

The Future Land Use map is meant to be a development guide for the Planning Commission. The Future Land Use map is used to identify the general idea of what development in the future may be within your area. It may be specific or it may be general, depending on the narrative provided for the future land use class in Chapter 9.

STEP 3. Determine the land use classification for your property.

Review the various land use classifications in Chapter 9. The narrative after each land use class provides information on the general future direction of development within the area. If there is a specific proposal that does not fit the Future Land Use Map, review the Plan in more detail, beginning with the goals and objective statements in Chapter 6.

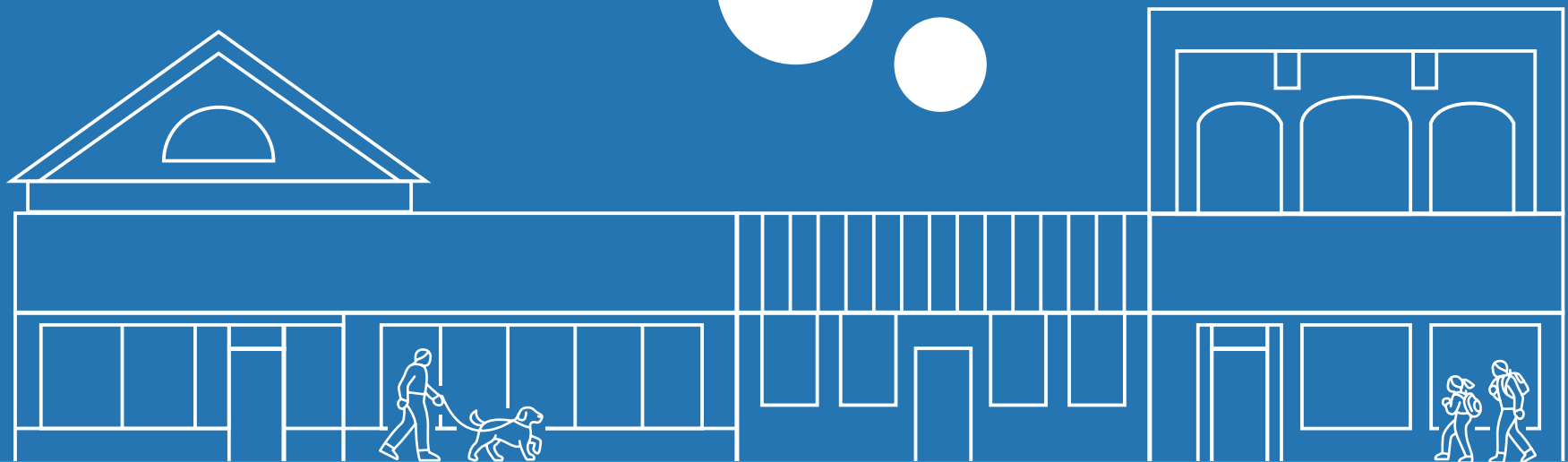
STEP 4. Determine how the Plan affects your property.

The Future Land Use designation on the map and the accompanying narrative will indicate to you how your property is planned for use in the future. The way the land is currently used is acceptable. Land use within City of White Cloud is also affected by the zoning for your property. See the City of White Cloud Zoning Ordinance or call City Hall for more information.



CHAPTER 2

DEMOGRAPHICS



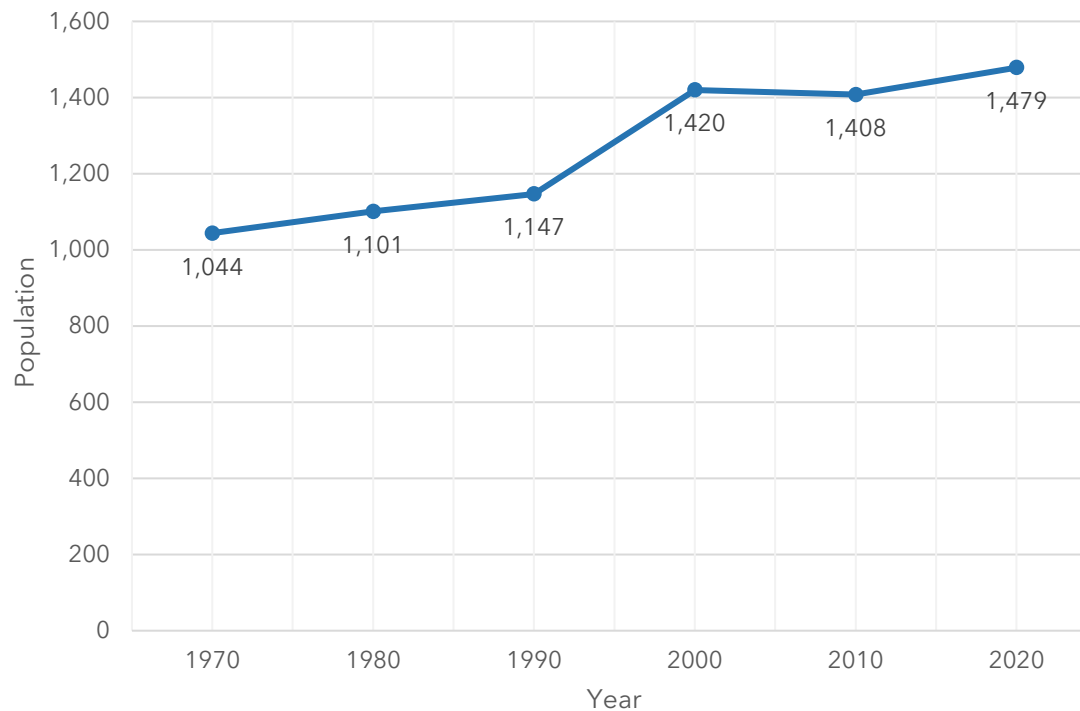
DEMOGRAPHICS

This Master Plan includes a socio-economic profile based on census data available from the 1970-2020 U.S. Censuses and the 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.

POPULATION GROWTH

Understanding population change is vital when creating a community Master Plan. Growth or decline can have an immense impact on a community's land use, economy, and culture. As shown in Figure 1.1, the population as of the 2020 Census was 1,479 people. There has been continued growth in the City's population over the last 50 years.

FIGURE 2.1 | CITY OF WHITE CLOUD POPULATION TREND (1970-2020)

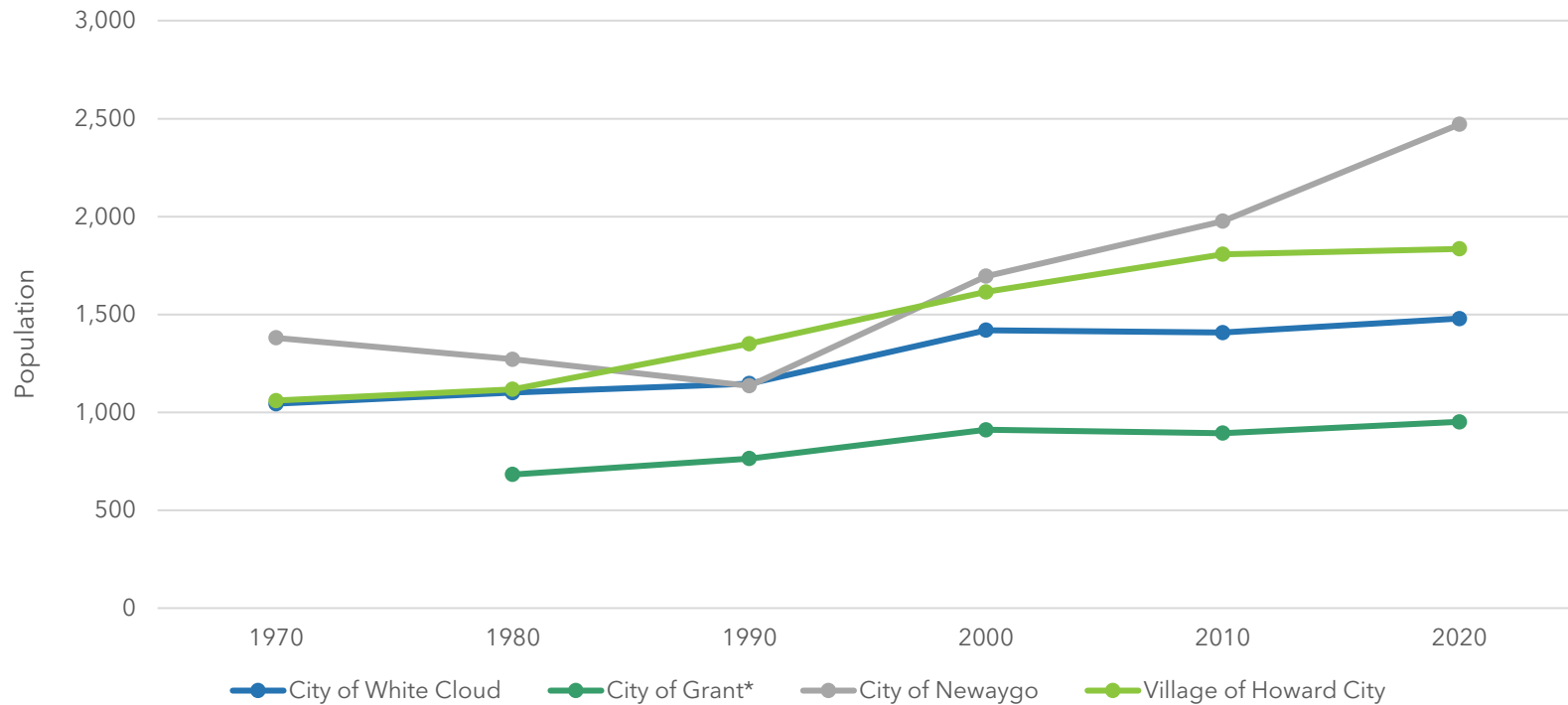


U.S. Census, 2000-2020



Figure 2.2 below shows the City of White Cloud's population compared to similar nearby communities. While all of the communities have seen growth overall between the years 1970 and 2020, White Cloud's growth has been the slowest.

FIGURE 2.2 | POPULATION TREND OF SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES (1970-2020)



U.S. Census, 1970-2020.

** The City of Grant was incorporated in 1971. Therefore, the City has no US Census information from the 1970 census. The City of Grant 1980 US Census population number was not listed in their Master Plan, and is difficult to find. The number provided is an estimate based on the best available data when this plan was developed.*

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Projecting populations is a valuable tool in visioning a community's future. Population growth means the need for more housing, community spaces, grocery stores, schools, and other community services. Two different population projects are used which allows the community to compare two different potential future outcomes. One rate is not better than the other.

GROWTH RATE METHOD

The growth rate method uses population change from the past to project into the future. In the case of the City of White Cloud, there was an average growth rate of .984% between 1970 and 2020, as shown in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1 | GROWTH RATE METHOD POPULATION PROJECTIONS

	Current	Population Projections			Rate of Change from 1970 to 2020: 0.984%
	2020	2030	2040	2050	
Projected Population:	1,479	1,631	1,798	1,984	

U.S. Census, 2000-2020

ARITHMETIC METHOD

The arithmetic method is much like the growth rate method; however, this method bases population growth on average increases in population per year. In the City of White Cloud, the population averaged an increase of 8.7 persons per year from 1970 to 2020. Table 2.2 shows the projections for the next 30 years using the assumed 8.7 persons per year increase.

TABLE 2.2 | ARITHMETIC METHOD POPULATION PROJECTIONS

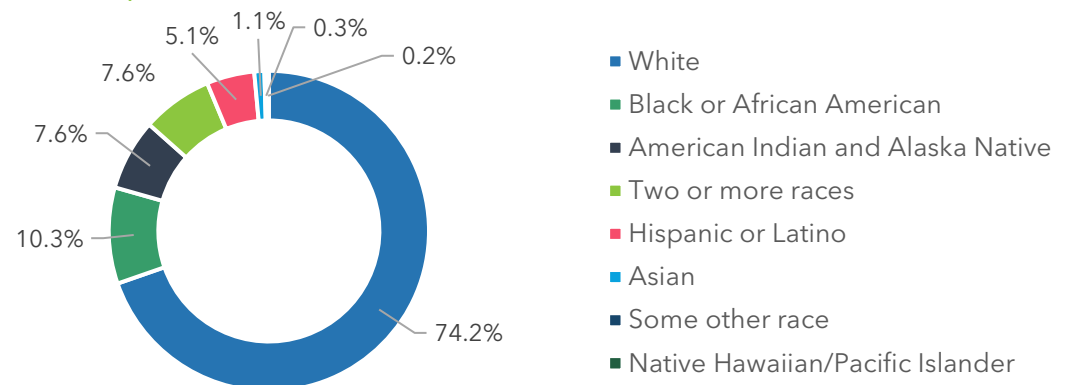
	Current	Population Projections			Average Annual Increase : 8.7 persons
	2020	2030	2040	2050	
Projected Population:	1,479	1,566	1,653	1,740	

U.S. Census, 2000-2020

RACIAL COMPOSITION

Figure 2.3 shows that the City's population in 2020 was primarily White, at 74.2% of the total population. The next largest demographic group was Black or African American with 10.3% of the population. The population of two or more races and American Indian and Alaska Native both share 7.6% of the population. The Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population in the City is the smallest demographic group, at 0.2% of the total population.

FIGURE 2.3 | CITY OF WHITE CLOUD RACIAL COMPOSITION, 2020



U.S. Census, 2020

Table 2.3 shows a more detailed composition of White Cloud's racial make-up. White and Hispanic/Latino populations have seen declines between 2010 and 2020. However, all other racial groups have seen increases in the same period, suggesting a slight diversification of the population within the City.

TABLE 2.3 | WHITE CLOUD RACIAL COMPOSITION, 2020

Racial Composition	2010	2020	% Change
White	1,145	1,097	-4.2%
Hispanic or Latino	91	76	-16.5%
Black or African American	98	153	56.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	5	17	240.0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	3	300.0%
Asian	7	16	128.6%
Some other race	1	4	300.0%
Population of two or more races	61	113	85.2%

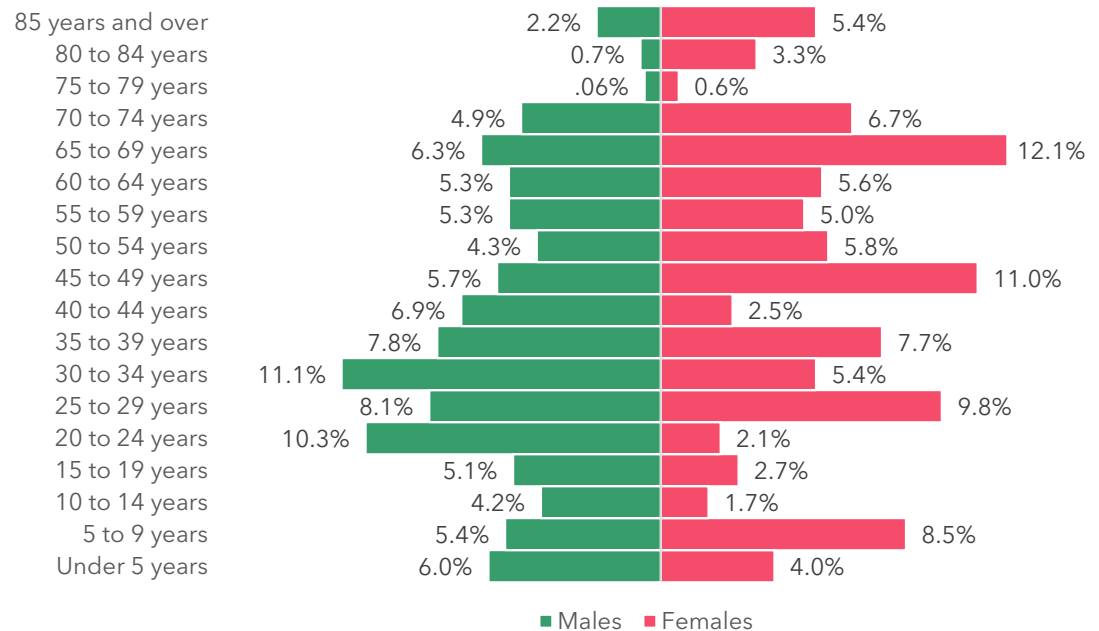
U.S. Census, 2010-2020

AGE

Figure 2.4 shows the population pyramid, or age distribution of residents, in 5-year cohorts for the City of White Cloud.

The purpose of a population pyramid is to show the different 5-year age cohorts in a community. A pyramid with a wider base implies a community that is seeing fast population growth, while the inverse shows decline in population. In the City of White Cloud's case, there is a large population of older and middle-aged residents, while the number of people under the age of 20 is comparatively low.

FIGURE 2.4 | POPULATION PYRAMID FOR 2021 IN THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD

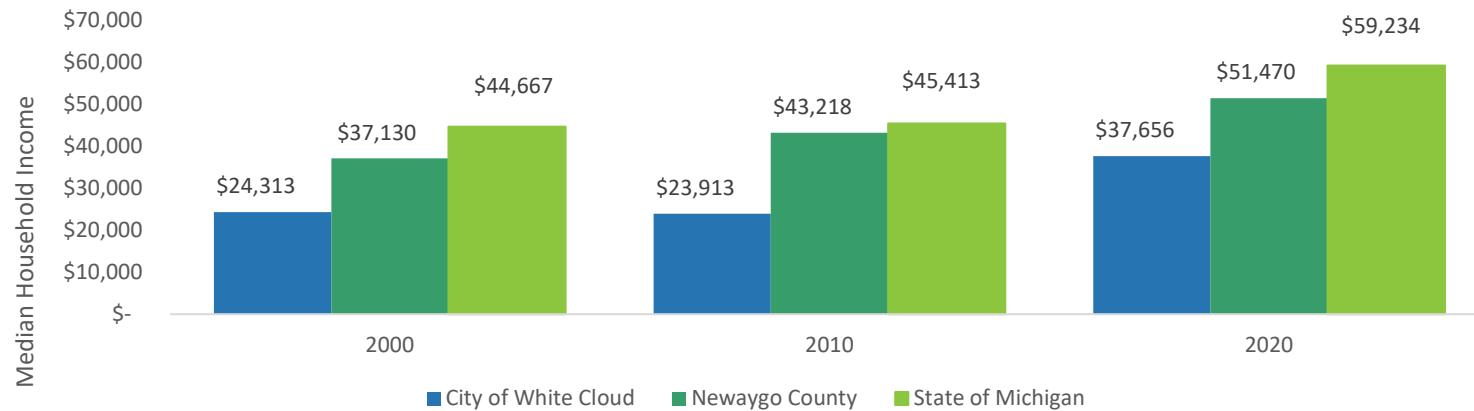


U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS 5-Year Estimates), 2021.

INCOME

Median household income is a good indicator of economic health in an area. The average earnings in the City of White Cloud have routinely trailed behind the average earnings in Newaygo County and the State of Michigan. Figure 2.5 below shows the trend between the three locations over the last three censuses.

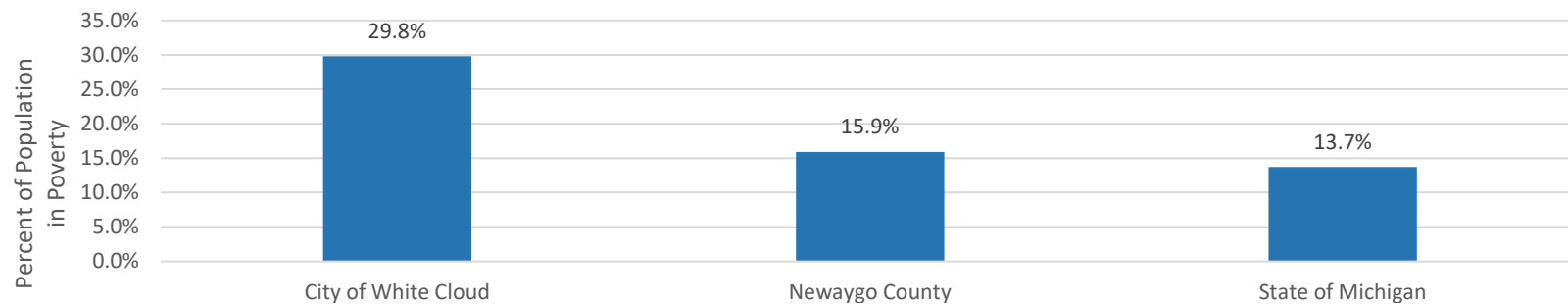
FIGURE 2.5 | INCOME IN THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD COMPARED TO NEWAYGO COUNTY AND THE STATE OF MICHIGAN (2000-2020)



U.S. Census; American Community Survey (ACS 5-Year Estimates), 2000-2020.

Another indicator of the economic health of a community is the poverty rate. The City of White Cloud's poverty rate, as seen in Figure 2.6, is higher than the rates in Newaygo County and the State of Michigan, at 29.8% in the 2020 Census.

FIGURE 2.6 | POVERTY RATE IN THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD, NEWAYGO COUNTY, AND THE STATE OF MICHIGAN IN 2020



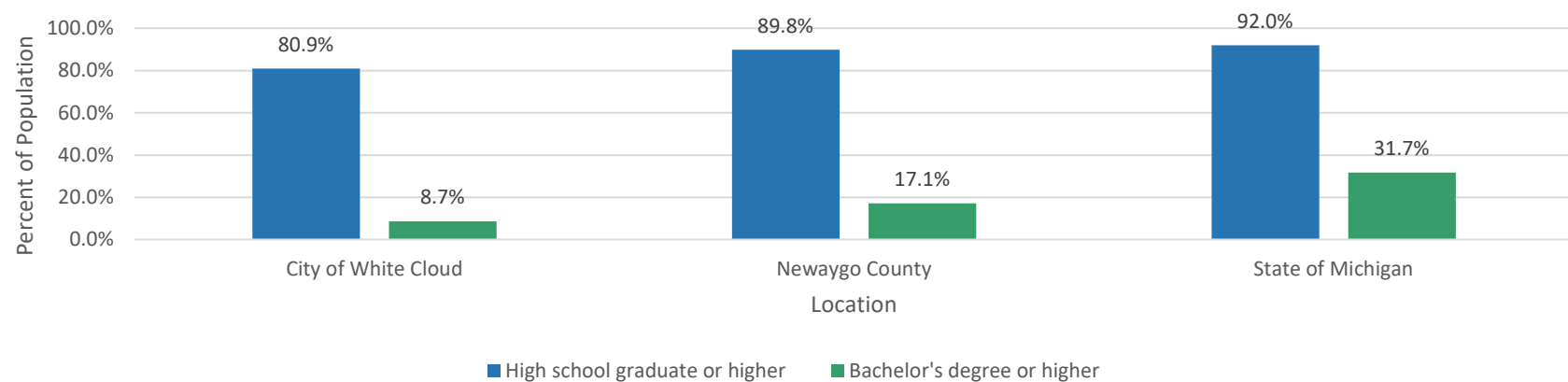
U.S. Census, 2020.



EDUCATION

Figure 2.7 below shows the educational attainment among City of White Cloud residents aged 25 and older in 2021. The City is shown compared to Newaygo County and the State of Michigan. White Cloud lags behind Newaygo County and the State of Michigan as a whole at 80.9% of City residents having at least graduated high school, and 8.7% having a bachelor's degree or more. The State average is higher, at 92% of Michiganders having at least graduated high school, and 31.7% having received a bachelor's degree or more.

FIGURE 2.7 | EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AMONG RESIDENTS 25 YEARS AND OLDER, 2021



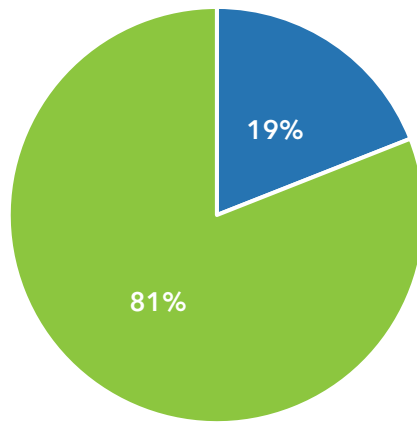
U.S Census, American Community Survey (ACS 5-Year Estimates), 2021.

EMPLOYMENT

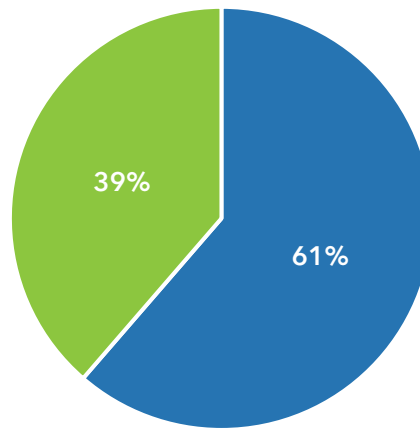
There are a variety of employment opportunities in the City of White Cloud, with the largest portion of the community working in the production, transportation, and material moving industry at around 37.8% employment. The second most prominent industry is service occupations, which employ around 23.8% of the local population. The remaining industry areas do not exceed 20% of the total population employed, but can be seen in Figure 2.9.

The Figures below show the number of people working within the City of White Cloud and those working outside of the City of Newaygo County. It is important to note that while a majority of White Cloud's 326 workers worked outside of the City in 2021 (81.0%), most still worked within Newaygo County (61.3%).

FIGURE 2.8 | EMPLOYMENT WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD, 2021



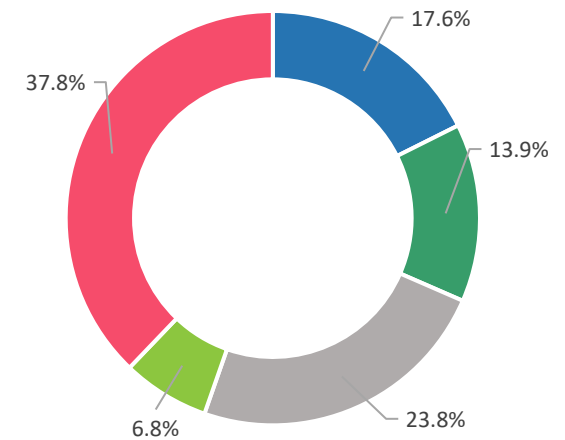
- Worked in White Cloud
- Worked outside of White Cloud



- Worked in Newaygo County
- Worked outside of Newaygo County

U.S. Census, 2021.

FIGURE 2.9 | EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY IN THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD, 2021

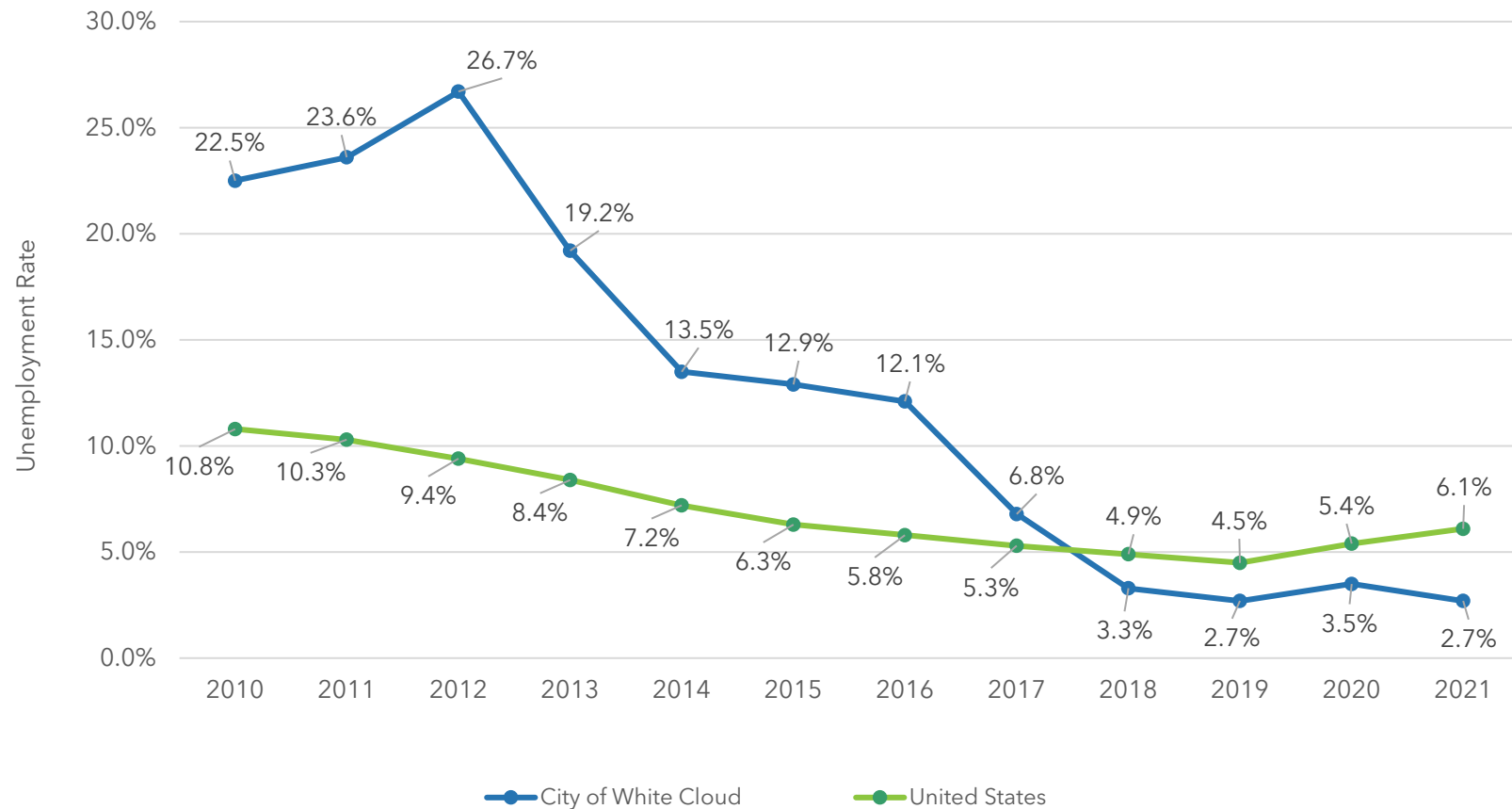


- Management, business, science, and arts
- Sales and office
- Service occupations
- Natural resources, construction, and maintenance
- Production, transportation, and material moving

U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS 5-Year Estimates), 2021.

The unemployment rate in the City of White Cloud has been decreasing every year since 2012. The community did not see substantial job losses during the first few years of the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020-2023). Given the Community's low unemployment rate, businesses in the City of White Cloud may be struggling to find employees or may be experiencing the effects of inflation worse than other communities.

FIGURE 2.10 | UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD AND THE UNITED STATES (2010-2021)



U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS 5-Year Estimates), 2010-2021.



DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS & IMPLICATIONS

POPULATION GROWTH. As the population continues to increase, there will be an increased demand for housing. Income and demographics will affect the types of housing needed to support the community in White Cloud.

RACE & ETHNICITY. The community should recognize the diversification and changing racial and/or ethnicity of the City's population, especially if the trend continues.

AGE. The City may see the age of residents increase if the birth rate continues to slow. In-migration as a result of economic or environmental changes may result in an increasing population in the future, including retirees who are locating from outside the community. Anecdotally, this is already happening.

INCOME. The median household income for the residents of the City of White Cloud continues to lag behind County and State averages. More could be done to attract employers and jobs that provide a higher wage. This would also help support improvement in the City's poverty rate.

EDUCATION. Educational attainment in City residents is also low compared to County and State rates. Support of local educational K-12 programs would help improve high school graduation rates.

EMPLOYMENT. The unemployment rate has continued to decrease, outpacing the national average since mid-2017. More should be done to match local employees' skill set, education, and wage needs with the local employers' desire for a professional and committed workforce. Along with that, the City should continue to keep its economic base and employment opportunities diverse. Efforts to retain and attract talented professionals and entrepreneurs will be beneficial to White Cloud.

CHAPTER 3

HOUSING



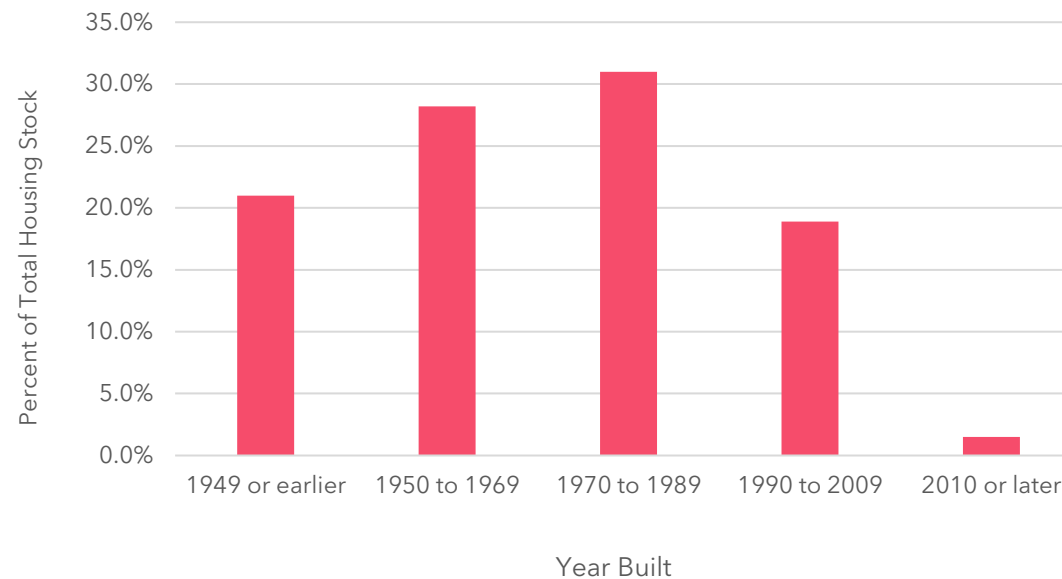
HOUSING PROFILE

Across the country, people are struggling to find homes in the communities they want to live in, and this is also true for the residents of White Cloud. With few residential developments built since 2000, there are not many housing options for people who want to live in the City. City officials are aware of this fundamental issue.

HOUSING AGE & TYPES

Figure 3.1 shows that the housing stock in the City of White Cloud tends to skew older, with very few homes built within the last decade. As seen in Figure 3.2, single-family homes tend to dominate the housing stock. Approximately 205 of the 372 housing units in the City are owner-occupied (55%), while 167 are renter occupied (45%). The average home price in the City in 2020 was \$76,900 and the average rent price was \$586 (U.S Census Bureau, 2020).

FIGURE 3.1 | AGE OF HOUSING STOCK



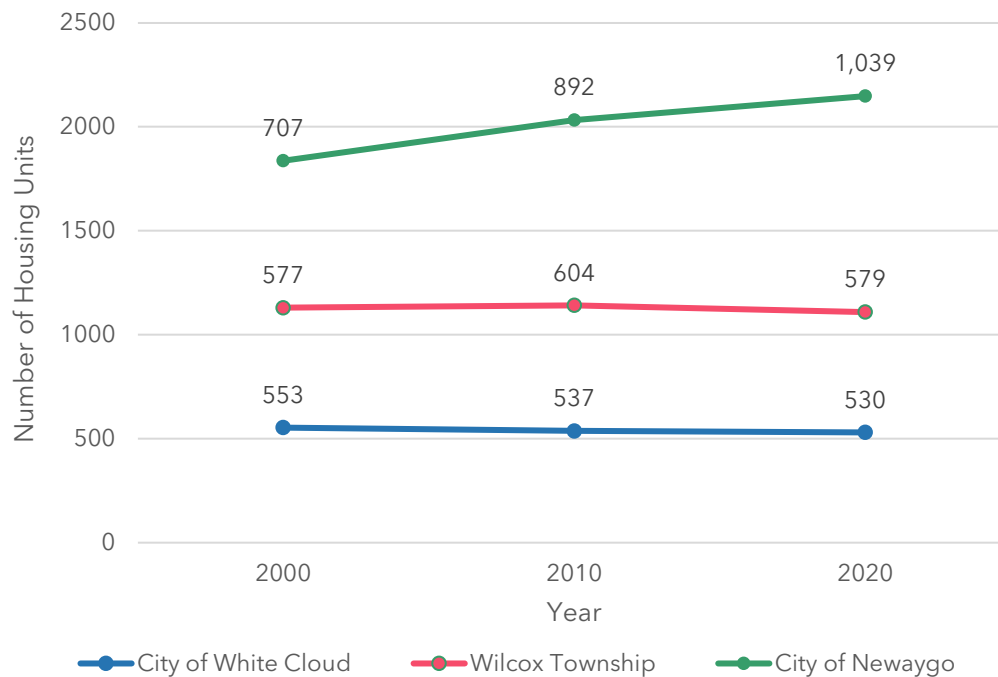
U.S. Census, 2020.



CHANGE IN HOUSING UNITS

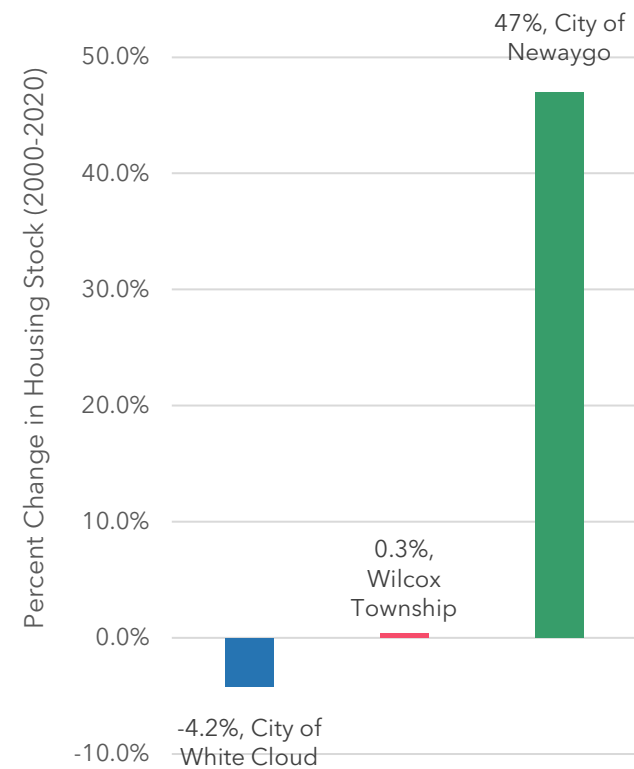
Between the years 2000 and 2020, the City of White Cloud saw a 4.2% decrease in the number of housing units available to residents. In comparison, neighboring Wilcox Township saw a 0.3% increase in available housing units, and the City of Newaygo saw a 47% increase in available in housing units. There were only 7 homes built within the City of White Cloud from 2008 to 2023. Figures 3.2 and 3.3 highlight the housing trends in these communities.

FIGURE 3.2 | CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS OVER TIME (2000-2020)



U.S. Census, 2020.

FIGURE 3.3 | PERCENT CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS OVER TIME (2000-2020)



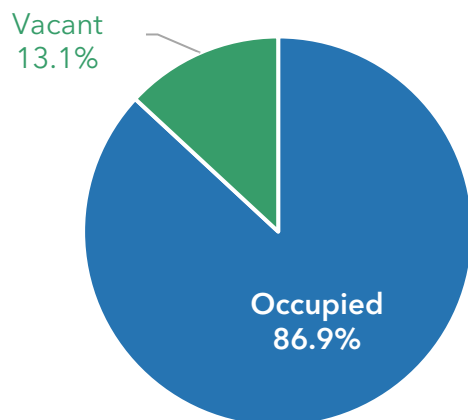
U.S. Census, 2020.



VACANCIES

There is also a significant number of vacant structures in the City of White Cloud, with 86.9% of homes being occupied, and 13.1% vacant, as seen in Figure 3.4.

FIGURE 3.4 | VACANCY RATE IN THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD, 2020



U.S. Census, 2020.

MEDIAN HOME VALUE

The value of homes in the City of White Cloud has seen an up-and-down trend over the last 20 years, including a fairly large increase (20.6%) in median home value between 2000 and 2010, followed by a decrease (12.4%) in median home value between 2010 and 2020, as shown in Table 3.1. However, there was an overall increase (9.3%) in median home value over the last 20 years.

TABLE 3.1 | MEDIAN HOME VALUE (2000-2020)

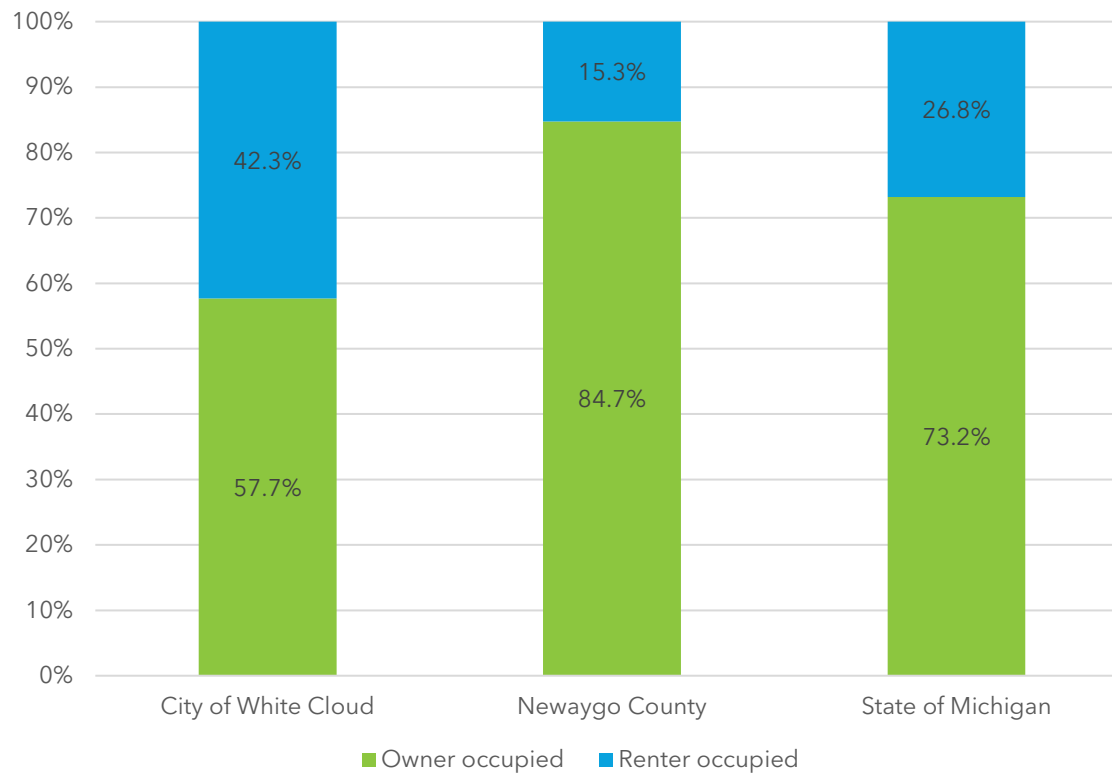
	2000	2010	2020
City of White Cloud	\$67,100	\$84,500	\$74,000
Newaygo County	\$88,700	\$115,800	\$128,900
State of Michigan	\$115,600	\$123,300	\$162,600

U.S. Census, 2000-2020

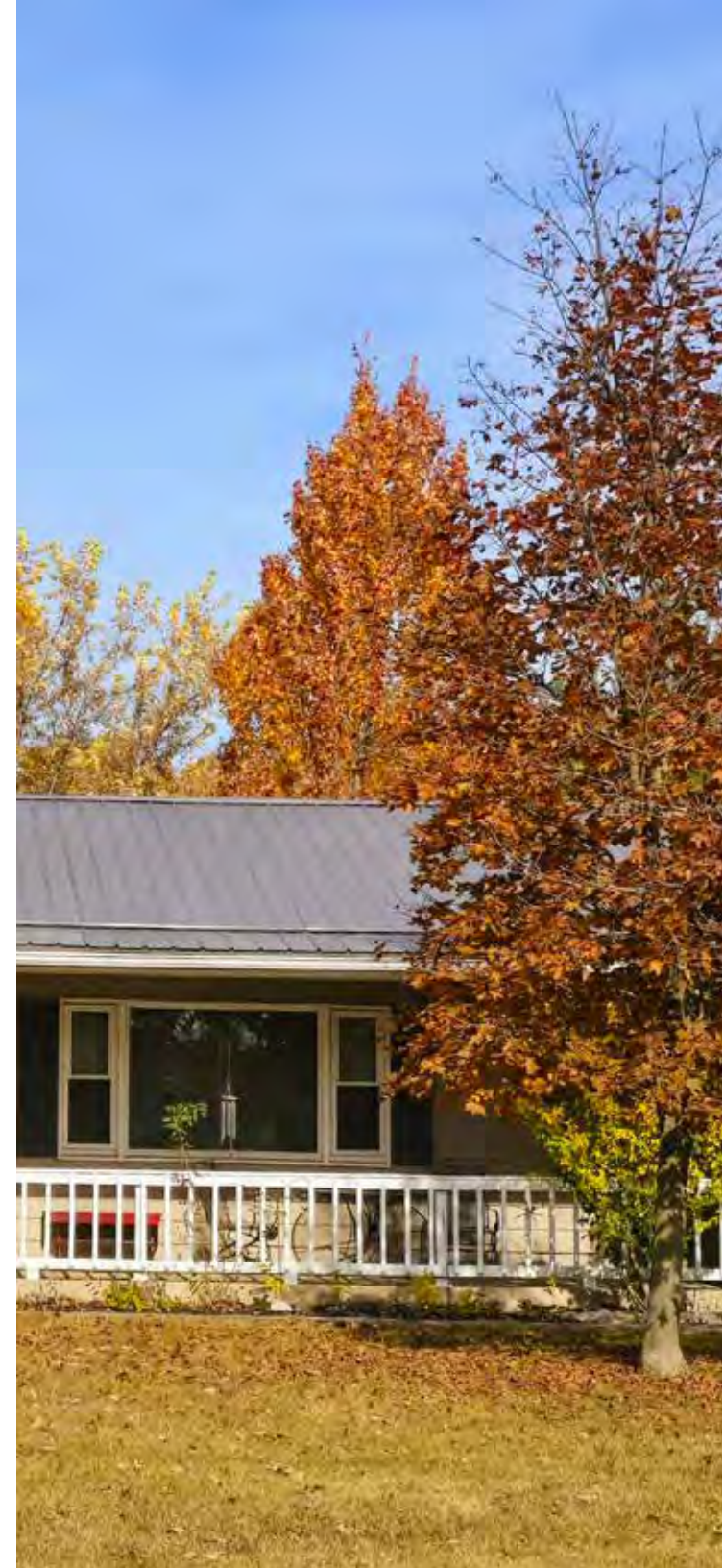
HOMES OWNED VS. HOMES RENTED

Figure 3.5 shows the share of owner-occupied housing versus renter-occupied housing in the City of White Cloud compared to the County and Statewide totals. It is evident that renters make up a larger quantity of the people living in the community compared to the County and State. This is likely a result of the low-income nature of the community, and the rise in housing costs seen across the State.

FIGURE 3.5 | SHARE OF OWNERS VS. RENTERS IN WHITE CLOUD



U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS 5-Year), 2021.



RENT BURDEN

The number of rental housing units in the City of White Cloud that are considered rent burdened, or paying more than 30% of their income on housing, is 56.7%. This means that over half of all renters in the community are paying more than is financially advisable for housing. Table 3.2 shows the number of rent burdened households in 2000, 2010, and 2020 in the City. This is also likely a result of the low-income nature of the community. In comparison, 47.6% of renters in Newaygo County are rent burdened, and 48.5% of Michigan renters are rent burdened.

TABLE 3.2 RENT BURDEN IN WHITE CLOUD (2000-2020)

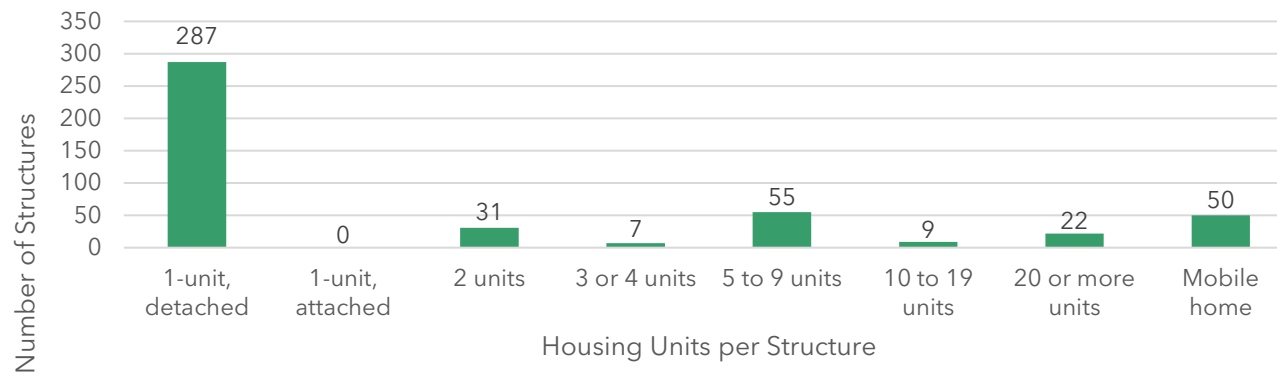
	Rent Burdened	Total Rented Units	Percent Rent Burdened
2000	85	208	40.9%
2010	121	194	62.4%
2020	89	157	56.7%

U.S. Census, 2000-2020.

HOUSING UNITS PER STRUCTURE

Not all residential structures are home to a single family or household. Multi-family dwellings – duplexes, triplexes, and multiplexes, apartments, and townhouses - are housing types that have two or more units attached and provide more options for residents. In the City of White Cloud, single-family detached homes reign as the predominant housing type. As shown in Figure 3.8, the next most common housing are structures that have between 5 and 9 housing units, though these structures are 5 times less common within the City compared to single-family homes.

FIGURE 3.6 SHARE OF OWNERS VS. RENTERS IN WHITE CLOUD



U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS 5-Year), 2021



REGIONAL HOUSING TRENDS

2021 PRELIMINARY HOUSING ANALYSIS - FREMONT, MICHIGAN

The Right Place, a Greater Grand Rapids economic development organization, completed a preliminary housing analysis for Newaygo County, referred to as the Fremont Primary Market Area (PMA). The report was a housing analysis for potential affordable workforce housing projects in the identified PMA. The report concluded that the area will experience positive demographic growth through 2026. A lack of currently available conventional rental units was also identified, along with an existing limited supply of modern affordable housing options. Occupancy rates for dwelling units were at 100%, and waiting lists at existing rental properties also existed within the PMA at the time when the study was conducted.

UNITED WAY OF THE LAKESHORE

The United Way helps to provide resources for households and individuals struggling with shelter, transportation or physical or mental health related issues. The local chapter - the United Way of the Lakeshore, has been studying local and statewide trends. They have found that the number of seniors in the State of Michigan has been increasing. As a result, Michigan is the fastest aging state in the nation, and by 2025, Michiganders age 65 and over will outnumber young people under age 18, ten years ahead of the national trend.

Historically, single-family households have been the common household type, however, this is changing. In 2019, households of single or cohabitating adults, including roommates, unmarried partners, and relatives, made up the largest portion of households in the State of Michigan at 47%. This was coupled with an 11% decrease in married-parent families from 2010 to 2019. These single or cohabitating households also made up the largest number of households below the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) threshold. Households who are in this category are not below the poverty line, however, they are still low-income and struggle with basic finances. In 2017, of the 417 households in the City of White Cloud, 67% were identified as ALICE and/or in poverty.

In addition to the changes happening around the State of Michigan, rising costs of living and stagnating wages have plagued Michiganders, and have put many people in a strained financial position. Figure 2.5 below shows a survival budget comparison for different types of households.

IMPLICATIONS

The lack of housing available in White Cloud impacts residents and people who desire to move into the community. With a strong demand for housing, there is a compelling need for more to be built. Different housing types will provide options for people who are looking to live in the City. Housing availability and affordability are vital in an aging community like the City of White Cloud.

Housing studies show that rental occupancy rates have been at 100% with waiting lists, which implies that there is a significant undersupply of rental housing in the local market. The national standard for healthy rental occupancy rates is between 92% - 95%, with markets that have slightly lower occupancy rates being favorable to renters. Since rental occupancy rates are high, finding a rental housing unit is extremely difficult. Potential White Cloud residents will have to consider other housing options, including being located farther away from their desired location.

Furthermore, with a higher number of households being rent burdened in the City and struggling financially, residents have fewer finances available for other costs like food, transportation, health care, and other monthly expenses. More should be done to ease their housing cost burden.

Areas in the City should be identified as preferred locations for various housing types. Utility, water, sewer, internet, and other infrastructure networks should be well-maintained and address capacity issues as the number of residential developments increases. Natural, environmental, and water preservation Master Plan goals should also remain paramount, as the Planning Commission, City Council, City Staff, and other local officials make residential land use decisions. Allowable housing types can be located and defined in the Zoning Ordinance, providing a stronger framework and better guidance on the range of housing options that could be built within the City of White Cloud.



CHAPTER 4

NATURAL FEATURES



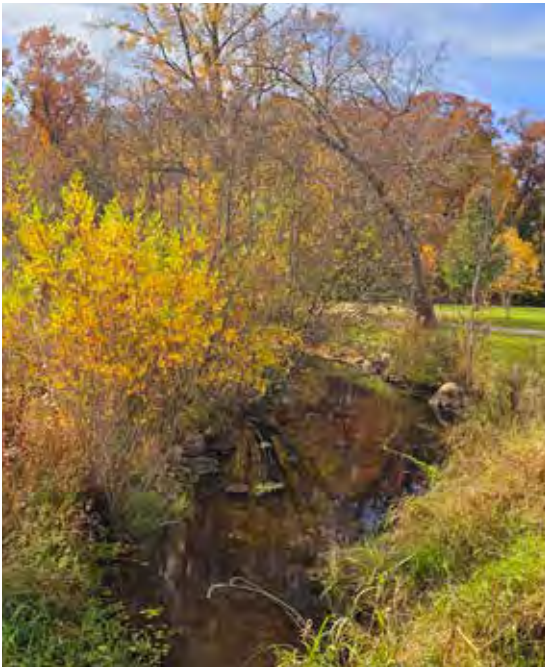
NATURAL FEATURES

The City of White Cloud has an array of captivating natural features that enchant residents and visitors. Nestled within the picturesque landscape of Newaygo County, towering forests, meandering rivers, and sparkling lakes are the hallmarks of the community's natural allure. The City is surrounded by the expansive Manistee National Forest, which blankets the area with lush greenery and offers a variety of trails for hiking, biking, and wildlife observation. From the gentle rustle of the leaves in the forest to the soothing sound of water flowing, White Cloud's natural features create a harmonious backdrop for relaxation and exploration.

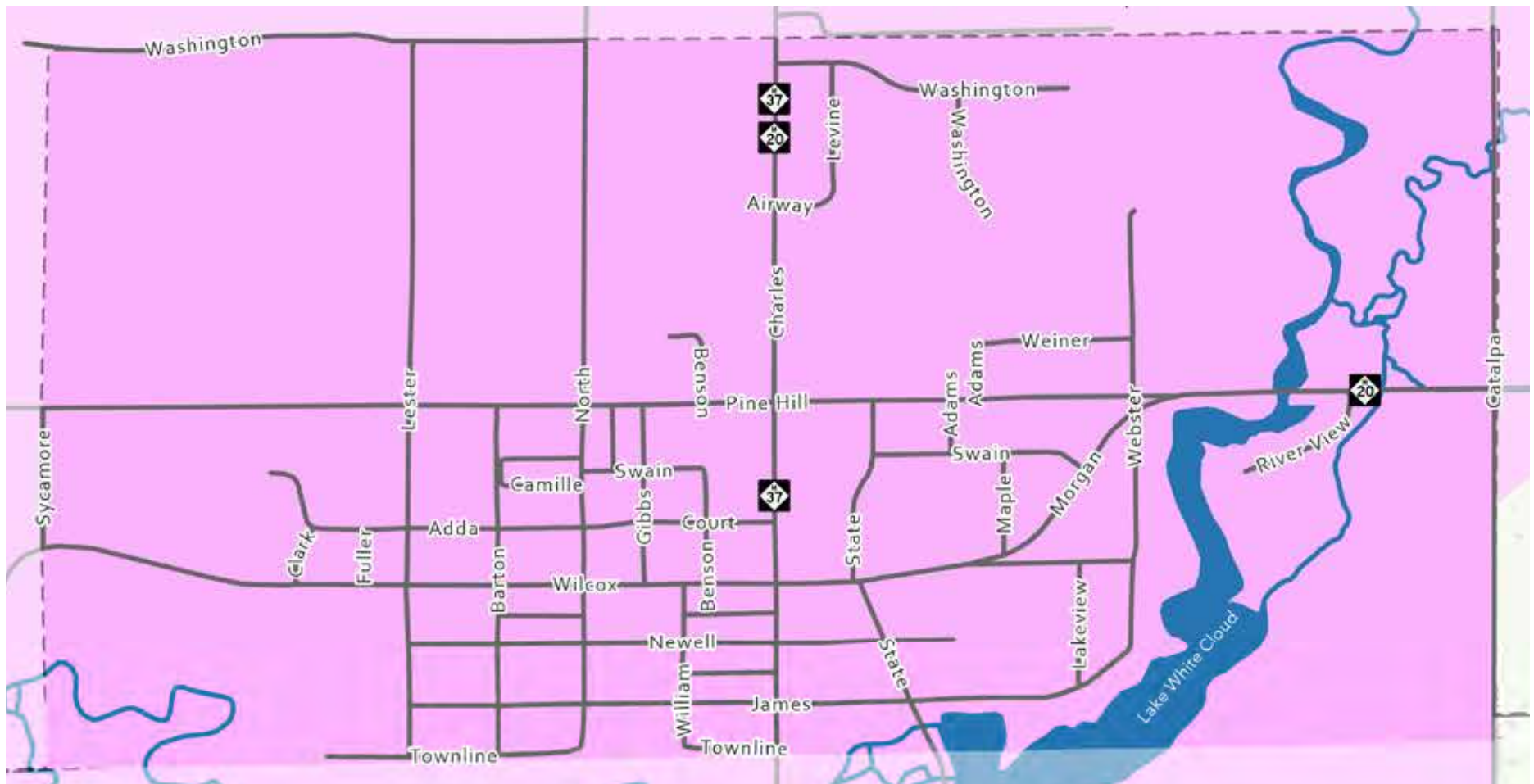


WATERSHED

The City of White Cloud is included in the White River Watershed, and borders the Muskegon River Watershed to the southeast, as shown on Map 4.1. The White River feeds into Lake White Cloud, and after passing through the White Cloud Dam, eventually flows out to Lake Michigan. The abundant water resources within and near the City are a community asset that contribute to the community's identity. Care should be taken to prevent contamination of water resources in these watersheds given their importance to the City and the region.



MAP 4.1 WATERSHED

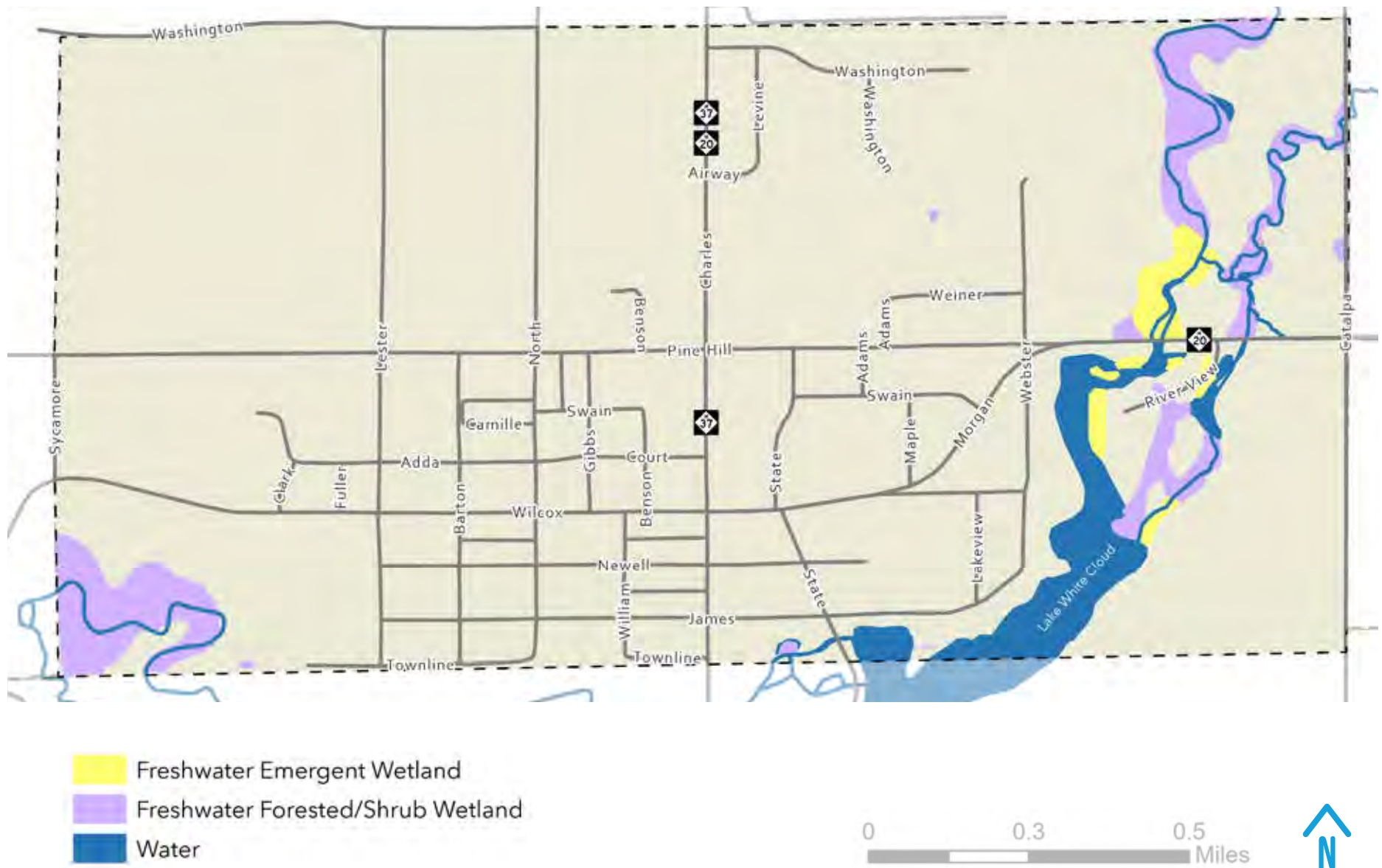


- White River Watershed
- Muskegon River Watershed

0 0.3 0.5 Miles



MAP 4.2 WETLANDS





WETLANDS

Given the City's position within the Manistee National Forest, there are several areas of Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands in White Cloud. In addition, much of Lake White Cloud can be found within the borders of the City. A majority of the City's wetland areas can be found along the shores of Lake White Cloud and the White River (Map 4.2).

Wetlands provide important ecosystem services to the places in which they are located. They have the ability to capture and store precipitation as surface water and slowly release it over time, either through associated water resources, groundwater, or the atmosphere. They help maintain the level of the water table and may serve as filters for sediments and organic matter. They may also serve as a sink to catch water, or transform nutrients, organic compounds, metals, and components of organic matter. Wetlands have the ability to impact levels of nitrogen, phosphorous, carbon, sulfur, and various metals in the environment. Without them, water quality decreases, areas can be prone to flash flooding, and habitat for specialized plants and animals is reduced.



MAP 4.3 FLOODPLAINS



Flooding Frequency

- | | |
|---|---|
| Frequent | Lakes |
| Occasional | Streams |
| Sand/Gravel Pits | Dam |



FLOODPLAIN

Flooding risk from the White River in the City of White Cloud is overall rather minimal. Map 4.3 shows the floodplain within the City's boundaries. There is a small area of the City around Riverview Drive and East Baseline Road that is at risk of flooding. Otherwise, most of the floodplain encompasses uninhabited areas.

Floodplains are important to note in the planning process as care should be taken to disrupt these areas as little as possible. Natural floodplains provide a place for water to flow during flooding events, limiting the exposure of the built environment to floodwaters, and therefore avoiding damage to homes, infrastructure, and more.

SOILS

The soils in the City of White Cloud are largely mixed soils that were deposited by glaciers thousands of years ago. Around the White River, the terrain is steeper, and more rocky soils are common where seasonal flooding has eroded the land. Many of the soils in the City are conducive to native growth, particularly for hardwood and evergreen tree species (Map 4.4). Understanding soil types is very important for determining suitability for different kinds of infrastructure and construction projects, as well as for stormwater management and agriculture. Soils can influence land use practices, natural resource conservation, and may even factor into local economic functions.

There are 4 different types of soils in the City of White Cloud. These are:

- Alfisols
- Entisols
- Inceptisols
- Spodosols

Much of the City consists of Entisols, which are geologically young soils with little layer development. Within the White Cloud area, these are largely sandy or rocky soils that were deposited by glaciers. While these soils are not conducive to farming in much of northern Michigan due to their dry, nutrient poor characteristics, they do provide conditions that are favorable for hardwood and pine forest growth.

The remainder of the City comprises mostly of Alfisols, which are developed soils with a high native fertility, supporting hardwood forest growth. Along the eastern border of the City are areas of clay and organic materials that comprise Inceptisols and Spodosols, respectively. These soils tend to be nutrient-poor and acidic.







TOPOGRAPHY

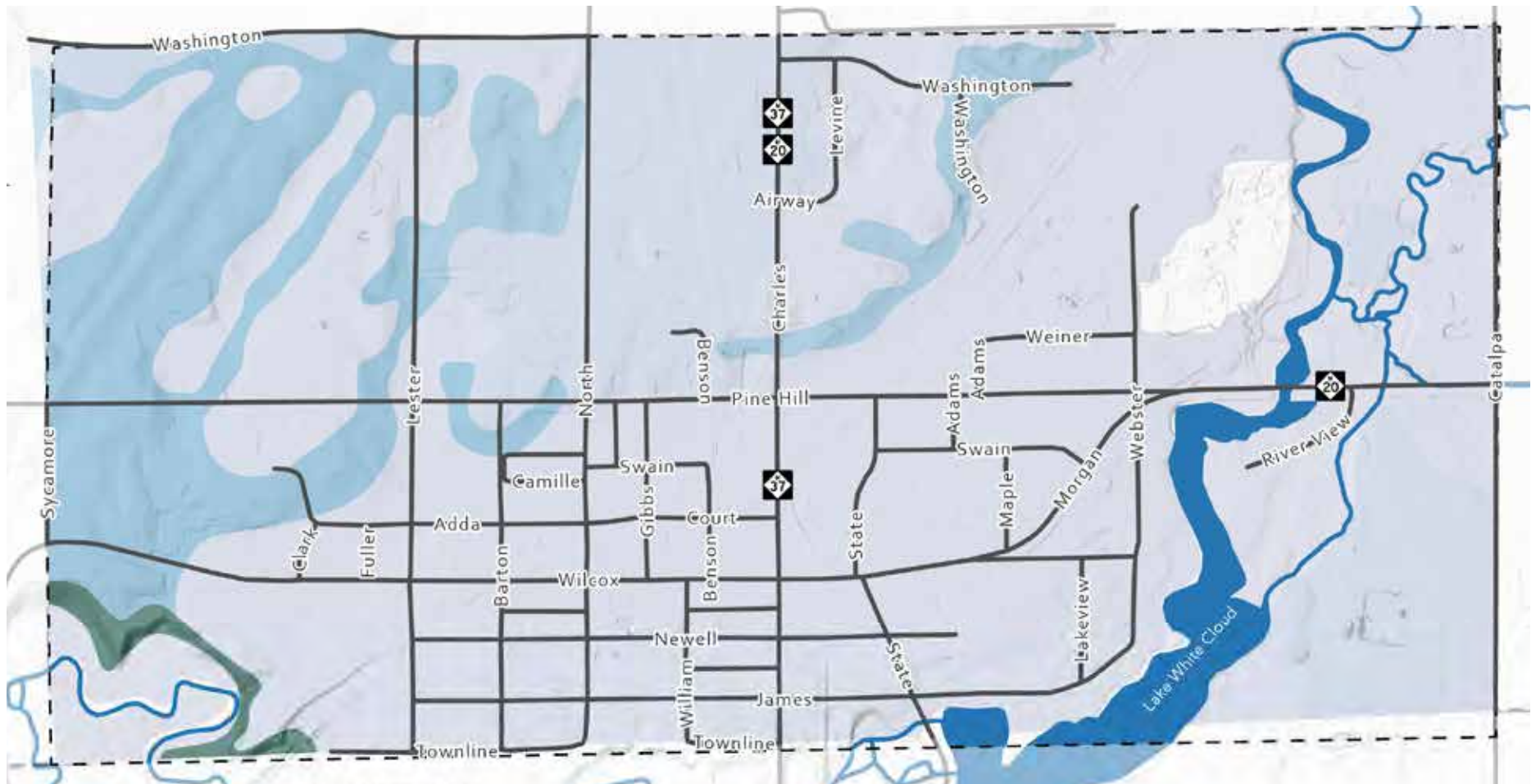
Consideration of land forms is very important during the Master Planning process. Topography plays a role in shaping the built environment of a city.

Slope gradient as large as 41% can be seen in some areas in the City as shown in Map 4.6. Slope gradient refers to the steepness or incline of the land surface and is typically measured as the ratio of vertical change (rise) to horizontal distance (run). It provides a quantitative measure of how quickly or gradually the elevation changes over a given distance and is an essential factor in understanding the topography, drainage patterns, and potential erosion risks of an area. Steep slopes next to a river can be common in certain geographic settings. Rivers often cut through the landscape, eroding the surrounding terrain over time. This erosion process can result in the formation of steep slopes or cliffs along the riverbanks.

While steep slopes can be found in certain areas, they are generally not typical throughout the City. The landscape features a relatively gentle gradient, which contributes to a more level and accessible environment.



MAP 4.5 TOPOGRAPHY



1% (Flat) 43% (Steep)

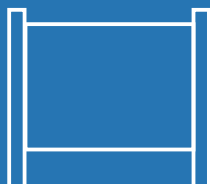


0 0.3 0.5 Miles



CHAPTER 5

COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES,
& INFRASTRUCTURE



COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

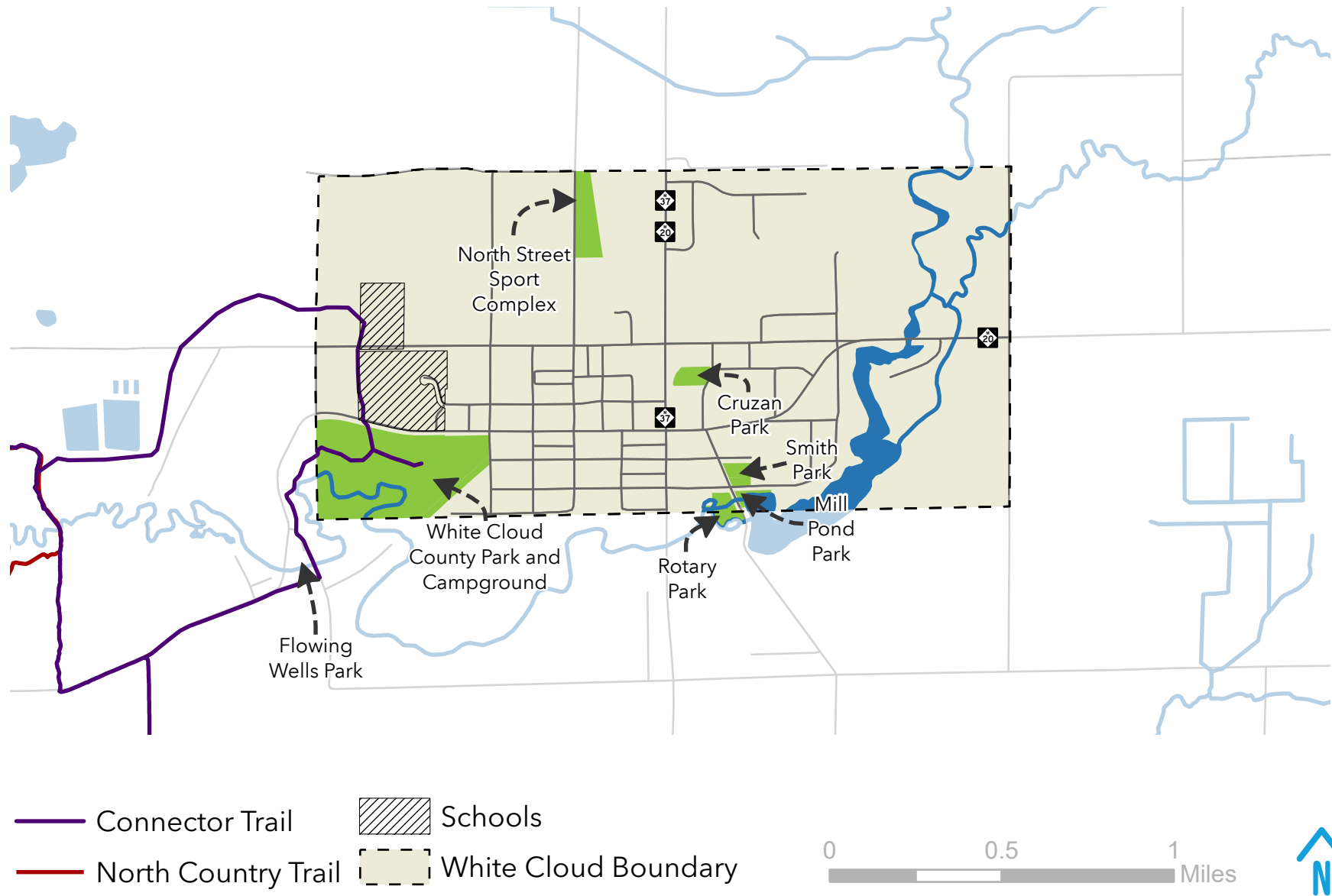
Having an inventory of a community's services and infrastructure captures the state of the man-made system at a given time. This information can help local officials identify gaps and needs that may be difficult to observe during the daily operations of a municipality. A collection of local parks, utilities, the local transportation system, public health and safety infrastructure, educational institutions, and other related information can be found in this chapter.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The City of White Cloud has an expansive parks and recreation system that provides a variety of options for residents and visitors alike. The following is an inventory of the City's parks and recreation facilities, and Map 5.1 shows the location of the parks.



MAP 5.1 PARKS AND RECREATION





SMITH PARK

Amenities include a basketball court, bathroom, large open field, and a parking lot. The City was awarded a DNR SPARK Grant in the amount of \$862,600 providing resources for the following enhancements: small/large fenced in dog parks, shaded pavilion, ADA accessible walking paths, parking additions, and playground improvements. These improvements will be completed by September of 2026.

ROTARY PARK

This 3.5-acre park is located at the southwest corner of James Street and State Street, directly adjacent to Lake White Cloud where it meets Mill Pond Park at the banks of Lake White Cloud. This community park, equipped with a picnic pavilion, picnic tables, playground and paved walking paths along the river, serves as a popular gathering place for family reunions, weddings and other get-togethers. The park includes a kayak launch and fishing areas. This park is partially located within Everett Township.



MILL POND PARK

Amenities include playground equipment, picnic tables, benches, and an ADA accessible dock and beach for swimming and swim lessons.

FLOWING WELLS PARK

This 2.48-acre park is located partially in Everett Township, along the northern banks of the White River in the southwest portion of the City. This park is conveniently placed along both the White River and the White Cloud Campground Connector Trail, which provides direct connection to the North Country Trail for hikers. Lower Peninsula Trail 3 (LP 3), and a snowmobiling trail (open seasonally) run along the north and west side of Echo Drive, traversing through Flowing Well Park. The park includes a picnic table and kayak launch.



WHITE CLOUD COUNTY PARK

Amenities include 100 campsites, a kayak launch, playground area, picnic pavilion and gathering lodge with a restroom, and the White Cloud Campground Connector Trailhead.

NORTH STREET SPORTS COMPLEX

Amenities include two lighted softball fields, a football practice field owned by the City, concession stand, restrooms, shelter buildings, and gravel parking lot.

CRUZAN PARK - LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD

Amenities include two fenced-in ballfields, a concession stand, and a storage building.

WHITE CLOUD SCHOOLS

Amenities include a football field and running track.



TRAILS

Just west of the City boundary is the 4,600-mile North Country Trail, the longest of the nation's National Scenic Trails. This provides a unique opportunity for residents and visitors to explore the local area. The trail passes through a variety of different types of ecosystems in Newaygo County alone, from stands of hardwood and pine forests to native prairies. Trail users can catch glimpses of rivers, lakes, ravines, and wildlife.

The White Cloud Campground Connector Trail provides access from White Cloud County Park and Flowing Wells Park to the North Country Trail. The North Country Trail Association has designated White Cloud as a "Trail Town."

The City also has a water trail for recreation on the White River. The White Cloud Blue Water Trail paddle begins in Rotary Park and ends at Flowing Wells Park, just outside of City limits. Paddlers can exit the river at various road crossing and take-out points, or continue along the river as far downstream as Hesperia.

TRANSPORTATION

Mobility options within the City of White Cloud are primarily private vehicles. State highway M-37 passes through the heart of the City, providing a connection to Grand Rapids to the south and Traverse City to the north. M-20 enters the City from the east and joins with M-37 downtown before briefly heading north. M-20 offers connections to Big Rapids to the east and New Era and the Lake Michigan coast to the west. Both routes provide connections to other small communities around the region.

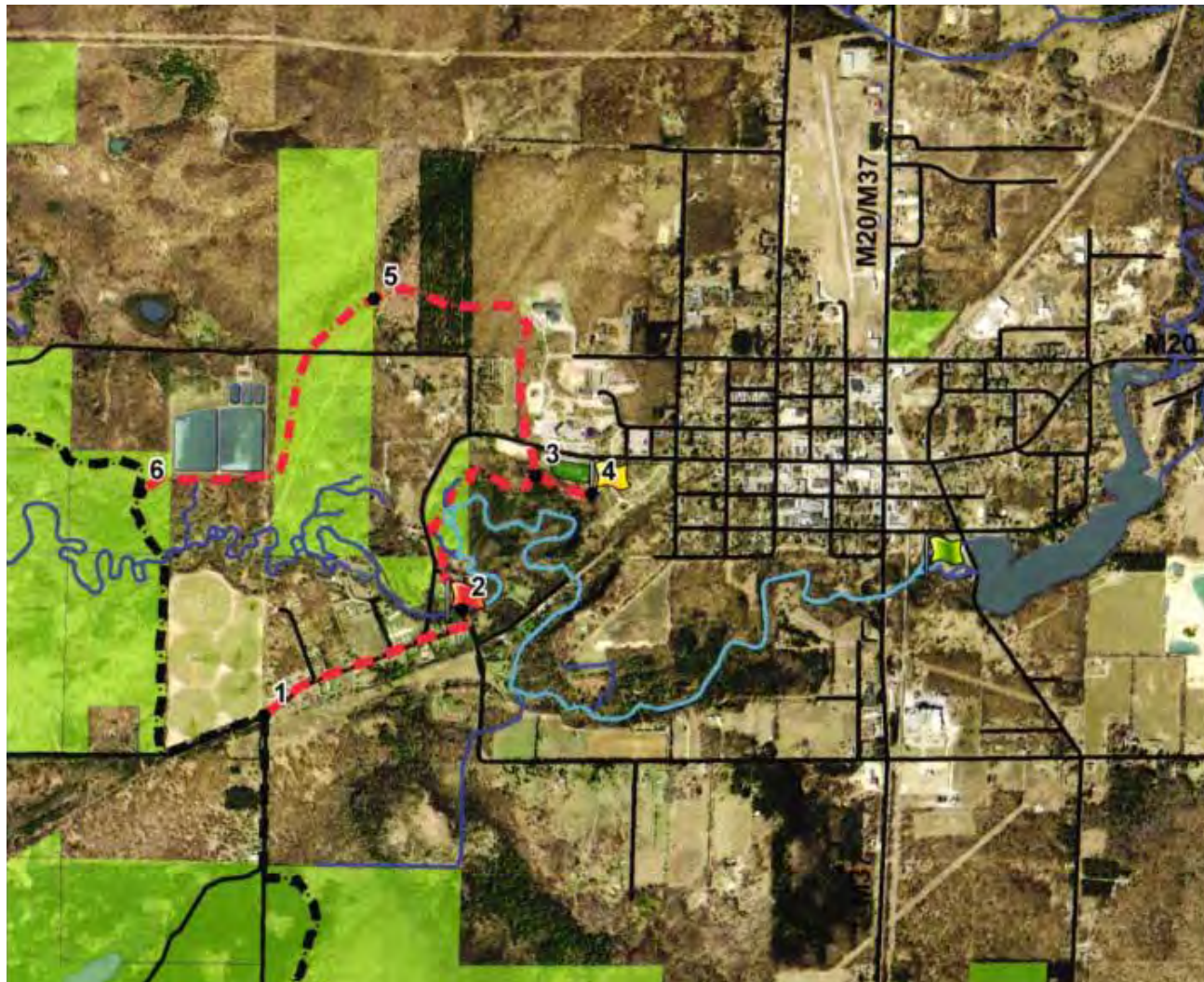
Public transportation options in the region are limited, given the rural nature of Newaygo County. The Newaygo County Commission on Aging (COA) provides bus service to those 60 years and older to run personal errands and receive transportation to meal sites. For the City of White Cloud, these buses run Tuesday to Thursday. Healthcare vans are also available through COA, but likewise only to those 60 and over.

The City of White Cloud owns the White Cloud Airport (42C). The airport covers 72 acres and contains one 2,416-foot runway. Air Traffic Control operations for the airport are based out of Chicago, and pilots are advised by the Lansing Flight Service Station. While no commercial flights service the City, the airport is open to the public.

One railroad passes through White Cloud, the Marquette Railroad, which connects Grand Rapids and Ludington and serves industrial customers in and between the two cities.



MAP 5.2 WHITE CLOUD RECREATION TRAILS



Trail Distances

North County Trail (1) to Flowing Wells Park (2) to Football Field (3) to FS Land (5): 0.8 miles
FS Land (5) to North County Trail (6): 0.88 miles

White River Water Trail from Raceway Park to Flowing Wells Park: 2.95 miles

-  Flowing Wells Park
-  Raceway Park
-  White Cloud Park
-  White River Water Trail
-  Rivers
-  White Cloud Connector Trail
-  North County Trail
-  Roads
-  Lakes
-  Forest Service Land

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Map created by
Newaygo County GIS



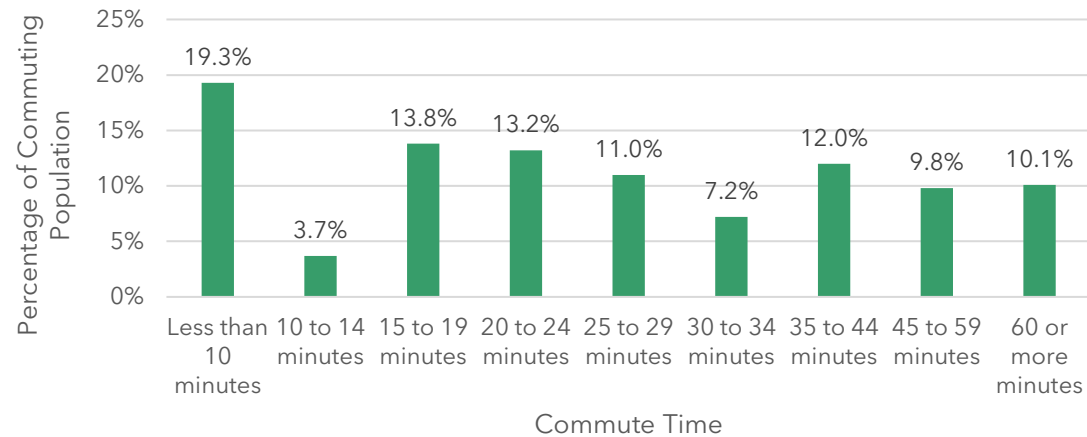
COMMUTING

Residents of the City of White Cloud have a wide variety of commuting times, ranging from less than 10 minutes to as much as 60 minutes or more. The average commute time for residents was 28.8 minutes in 2021, and the largest cohort of commuters reported a commute time of 10 minutes or less.

Some of the largest employers for City residents include the Newaygo County Government, White Cloud Public Schools, Harbison Walker, and Ceres Solutions Feed Mill (Keystone Cooperative), which are all within or near the City. This could be an explanation for the large number of short commute times.

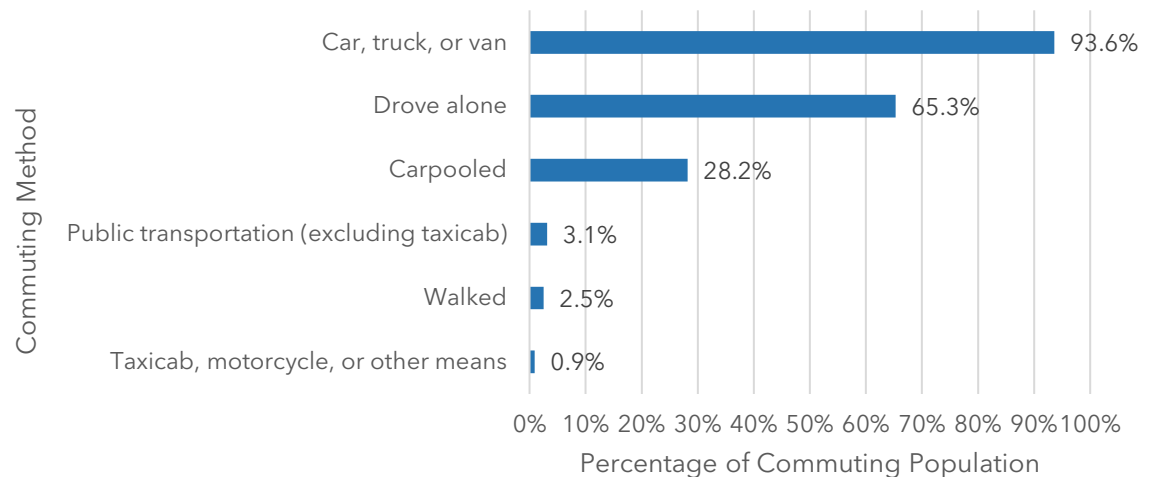
While a majority of White Cloud residents use personal vehicles such as cars, trucks, or vans to commute to work, there is a sizeable portion who carpool (28.2%). Driving was the preferred method overall, with 93.6% of commuters driving to work. Less than 7% of the commuting population reported either taking public transportation, walking, or any other means to get to work (Figure 3.2).

FIGURE 4.1 | COMMUTING TIMES IN THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD



American Community Survey (ACS 5-Year Estimates), 2021

FIGURE 4.2 | COMMUTING METHODS IN THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD



American Community Survey (ACS 5-Year Estimates), 2021

EDUCATION

The City of White Cloud is serviced by the White Cloud Public School District. The District is composed of three different schools, which together had a total of 935 students in the 2022-2023 school year:

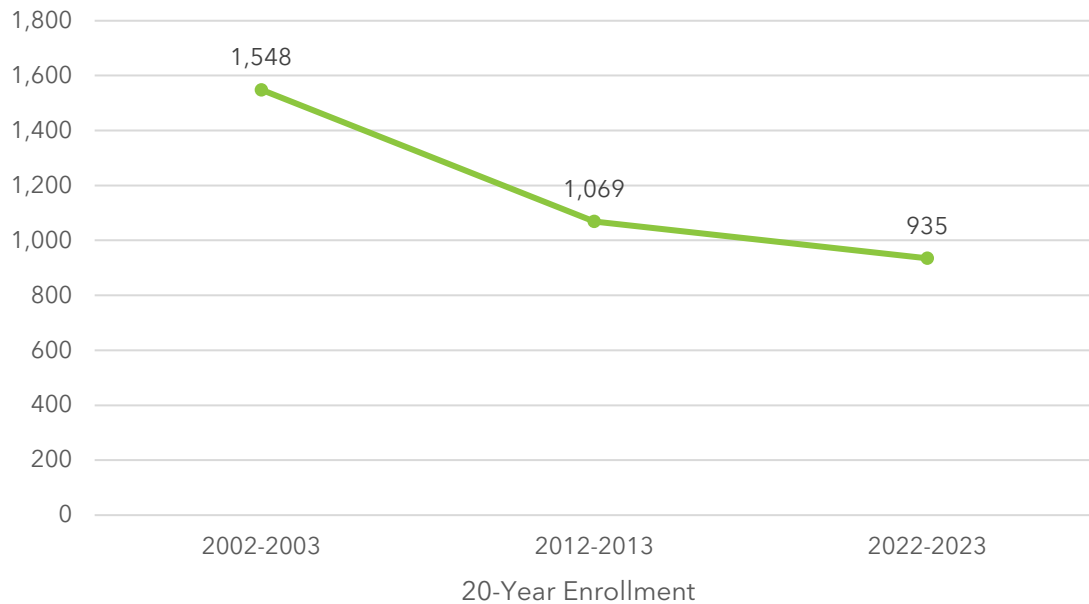
- White Cloud Elementary School
- White Cloud Junior High School
- White Cloud High School

Over the last 20 years, the student population of the public school system has been decreasing. The district saw a nearly 40% decrease in enrollment in the 20-year period. The graduation rate for the district was 72.3%, which is lower than the State average of 81%. However, 78.2% of the enrolled population of the school district is considered economically disadvantaged, perhaps explaining lower than average graduation rates.

The Newaygo County Promise Zone also covers the City of White Cloud. This program provides scholarships to students in Newaygo County who hit certain academic benchmarks to attend Muskegon Community College tuition-free.

Residents within the White Cloud Public School District also have access to the White Cloud Community Library, located at 1038 E. Wilcox Avenue.

FIGURE 4.3 | ENROLLMENT DECLINES IN WHITE CLOUD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



MI School Data, 2023

GOVERNMENT

The City of White Cloud's offices are located at 12 N. Charles Street. This office houses all of the City's departments.

The City also acts as the county seat for Newaygo County. The County offices are located in several buildings on two blocks between E. Wilcox Avenue, Williams Street, James Street, and S. North Street. These offices house the County Sheriff, Clerk, District Court, Building Inspector, Drain Commission, and Health and Human Services Departments, among others.



PUBLIC SAFETY

Police services are provided to the residents of the community through the City of White Cloud Police Department. Fire services are provided through the White Cloud Area Fire-Rescue Department.

The Newaygo County Sheriff's office is also located in the City of White Cloud, providing additional law enforcement to the City as well as the other municipalities in Newaygo County.

Emergency medical services are provided by Life EMS Ambulance. Corewell Health in Fremont serves as the nearest hospital for City residents.

DAM

The White Cloud Dam is an important and unique feature of the City's infrastructure. The approximately 19 feet tall by 950-foot-long earthen-concrete Dam maintains the water levels in Lake White Cloud and provides a north-south connection over the embankment to Everett Township via State Street. While the Dam used to provide hydroelectric power to the community, it no longer has the capacity to generate electricity. The Dam is currently owned and maintained by the City of White Cloud.

It is vital to note that the Dam was assessed in poor condition by Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) inspectors in 2022. An emergency action plan has been created in the event of a failure, due to the high risk to life

and property downstream from the Dam, including the M-37 and Marquette Railroad Bridges.

In 2022, several public meetings were held to gather input from the community regarding the future of the White Cloud Dam. These meetings provided a platform for residents to express their opinions and concerns, and the feedback was overwhelmingly in favor of preserving the dam. The community emphasized the historical significance of the dam, its importance for recreational activities at the Mill Pond, and its deep rooted value as a central feature of local identity. There was a strong consensus that maintaining the dam is vital to preserving the character and traditions of the area, making it a priority for future planning efforts.

In May 2023, the City of White Cloud was awarded \$222,712 through the EGLE Dam Risk Reduction Grant Program (DRRG) to repair the structure and create a dam disposition feasibility study to inform the City of the dam's potential future.

The City used the awarded grant funds from the EGLE dam risk reduction in Round One to complete necessary repairs in the summer of 2024 totaling \$222,712. In the Summer of 2024, the City was awarded an additional EGLE Dam Risk Reduction Grant in Round 2 for \$68,425 to complete further geological studies. These studies are expected to be completed in Spring of 2025.

UTILITIES

Electrical utilities in the City of White Cloud are provided through Consumer's Energy and Great Lakes Energy and gas utilities are provided by DTE Energy.

The City owns, operates, and maintains a public water supply that serves approximately 1,407 people. The system is comprised of 3 groundwater wells and pumps, two elevated storage tanks, and around 15 miles of distribution lines.

A sewer authority operated by the White Cloud/Sherman Utilities Authority (WCSUA), covers nearly the entire City, including all of downtown.

INTERNET ACCESS

Broadband access deemed adequate service for day-to-day functioning by the nonprofit Connected Nation is considered to be speeds of 25 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 3 Mbps upload. Except for a few small areas in the northeast corner of the City, most of White Cloud is covered with adequate internet service.

UTILITY AUDIT

A utility audit on the City's drinking water, waste water, and stormwater systems, and energy providers was completed as a part of the Master Plan. The results of the audit are found in this section.



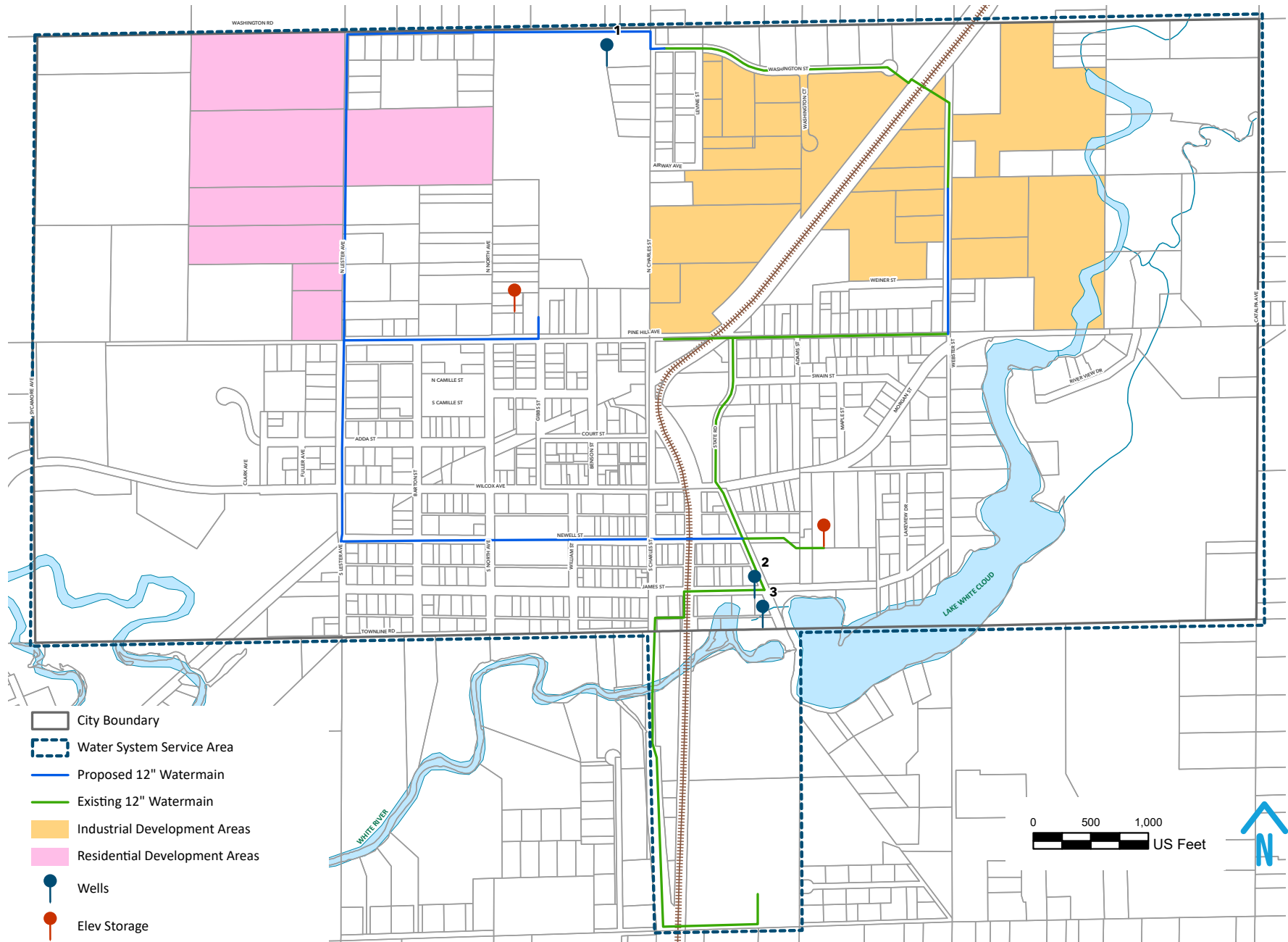
DRINKING WATER

The City of White Cloud owns and operates a water supply and distribution system to supply its residents, businesses, and industry with drinking water. As part of this audit, the 2017 Water Reliability Study and 2019 Asset Management plans were reviewed. The two documents outline the requirements for expected growth in the City and maintenance of existing infrastructure. The system is shown on Map 5.3

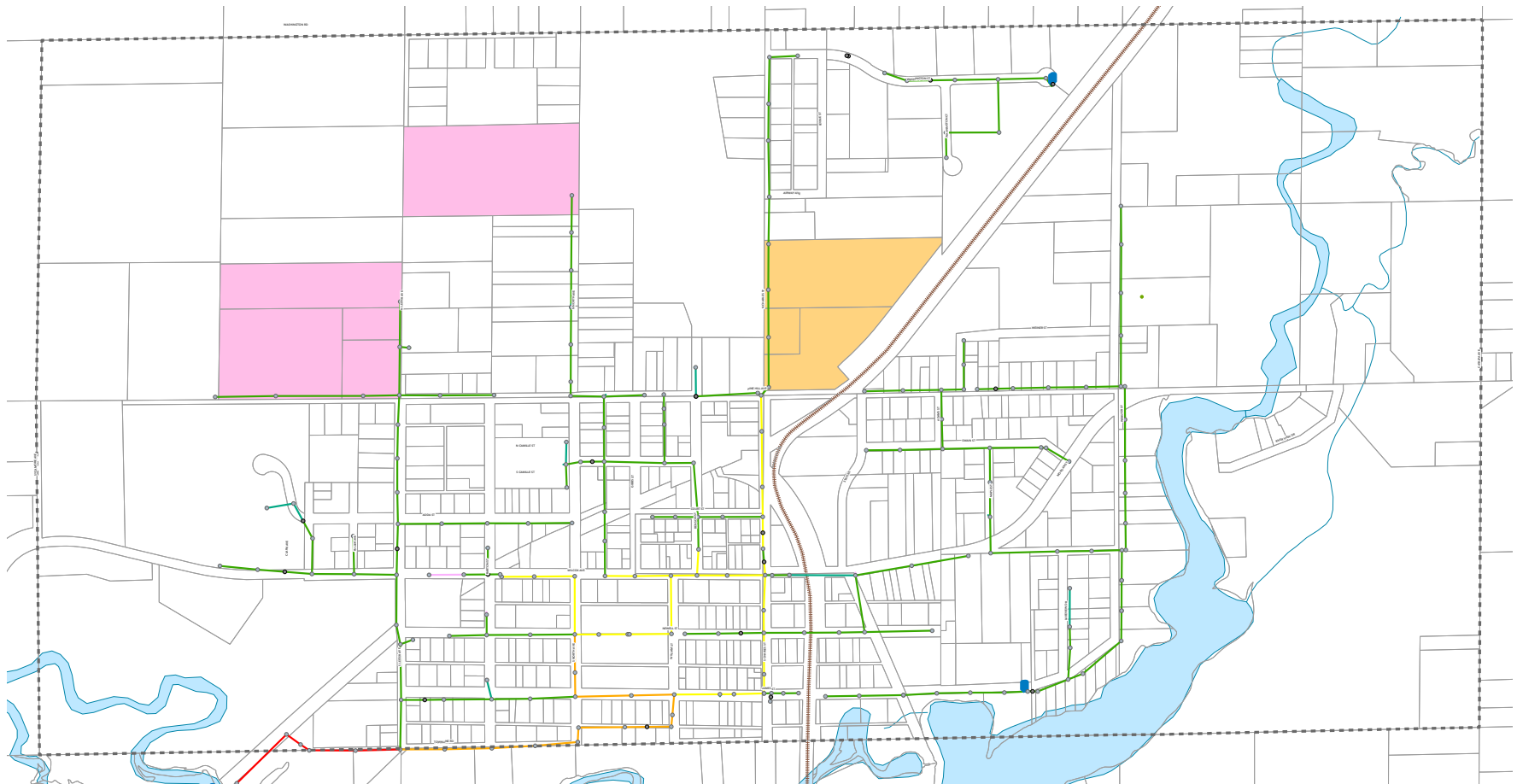
The audit focuses on requirements and recommendations for changes to the systems for significant future growth.

The water is supplied by three wells and stored in two elevated storage tanks. The system is quite robust for a city of this size, with redundancies in water supply and storage. The existing infrastructure is sized appropriately for expected growth in White Cloud, but may need to be expanded for dense residential or industrial development. This expansion would be the most effective and implemented when a significant user is planning to move into the City rather than trying to estimate future needs.

MAP 5.3 WATER SYSTEM



MAP 5.4 SEWER SYSTEM



- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| City Boundary | 12 |
| 4 | 15 |
| 5 | 24 |
| 6 | Industrial Development Areas |
| 8 | Residential Development Areas |
| 10 | |

0 500 1,000
US Feet



The water distribution network in the City is quite developed. There is a 12-inch water main loop around half the City which crosses the railroad tracks twice. This is very rare and provides a massive amount of flexibility with water conveyance to all areas. This 12-inch main also feeds an industry on the south end of White Cloud, although it does not appear that there is much availability for system expansion from this main. There is a significant area of undeveloped land within the City limits on the east side of the White River, however, it does not have access to the water distribution network.

Based on the location of water mains and water storage, the most economical areas of the system for large-scale development are in the northeast quadrant for industrial and the northwest quadrant for residential. Both areas are already zoned for this purpose and have appropriate water infrastructure to support these uses. Development on the west side of White Cloud could be bolstered by completing a 12-inch water main loop the rest of the way around the City, including a connection to the 200,000-gallon elevated storage tank. This would create massive flexibility for growth anywhere within the City as well as improving the available flows for the schools and downtown area.

There is little known data on the water quality in the water system. There is no treatment of the water supply. Two of the wells produce “good” quality water and one well produces water with “taste and odor concerns” according to the water reliability study completed in 2017. Some

further research and reporting would be recommended to attract housing developers and industrial facilities to the City. Since the water is fed from wells, there is a high probability of elevated iron and hardness levels. These would require a treatment system at each well site to treat.

Based on our understanding of the drinking water system, we have the following recommendations:

- Investigate and report water quality of the well supply.
- Carefully plan with the help of an engineer for large water use expansions such as schools, industry, splash pads, and campgrounds.
- Require site plans to be approved by an engineer familiar with the water infrastructure in the city to ensure that pressure-reducing valves, isolation valves, and water mains are located and sized appropriately to handle future expansion of the water infrastructure, among other considerations.

WASTE WATER

The waste water system for the City of White Cloud is serviced by the White Cloud Sherman Utilities Authority, of which White Cloud is the primary constituent. The authority operates a waste water treatment facility located west of the City of White Cloud on W. Baseline Rd. The facility uses a combination of lagoons for treatment. The outfall of the facility is on the White River downstream of the City. The facility likely has the capacity for modest growth within White Cloud, but may need to be expanded to service new industry or dense housing development. In addition, any industry that produces high-strength wastewater will likely need to install a pretreatment system before discharging it to the collection system.

The waste water collection system extends throughout White Cloud to service all developed areas of the City. There is a combination of gravity sewers and lift stations that convey waste water to the waste water treatment facility. The utility lines are sized appropriately to handle foreseeable residential expansion in all locations of the City. Map 5.4 show the City’s Sewer System and future preferred locations for residential and industrial development. If necessary and acceptable to the Authority, improvements for specific areas of the City could be funded through Special Assessment Districts (SADs) to remove the financial burden from the rest of the system users.

STORM WATER

The topography around the City is quite flat, but generally slopes south and east toward the White River and Lake White Cloud. These water bodies are the main outfall locations for all storm sewers in the area.

The design standards for stormwater are dictated by the Newaygo County Drain Commission. The Commission sets rules for site development which include required detention, treatment, and conveyance for storm water. It is recommended that the City require private developments to be reviewed for adherence to these standards as well as abiding by for government-owned developments.

The 100-year floodplain of the White River extends into the city limits on both sides of the River, but does not reach any developed areas within the City. The flood plain should be avoided for any planned development. Outside of the 100-year floodplain are areas of protected wetland that are inventoried by the EGLE water resources division. These wetlands should continue to be protected in place. If development is proposed that disturbs wetlands, a permit will be required through EGLE Part 303.

ENERGY

Energy is provided to White Cloud in the form of natural gas by DTE Energy and electricity by Consumers Energy. Great Lakes Energy provides natural gas for the industrial park. The utilities have service lines throughout the City to provide energy to homes, businesses, and industries. Consumers and DTE have a long history of working in Michigan. They are typically willing to expand their current networks to supply new customers or expand use.

City staff should become familiar with local Consumers and DTE Energy service representatives. This would be helpful in sharing information with developers and to notify the utility companies about future planned changes.



CHAPTER 6

GOALS & OBJECTIVES



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Master Plan goals provide the guiding framework for community development and land use decisions for the City of White Cloud. Goals should be thought of as the overarching policy, written as a desirable state that the City aims to reach during the Plan's 20-year planning lifespan. Objectives can be thought of as milestones that will help the City reach the goals.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

EVENTS

The goals and objectives were developed based on the results of the community engagement "Pop-Up Planning Events" that occurred in the summer of 2023. The first event was held on Saturday, July 8, 2023, from 1:00 – 4:00 pm during the City's multi-day Sesquicentennial (150 Years) Celebration. Dozens of people visited the booth, including current and former residents, frequent City visitors, and long-time tourists. Participants ranged in age from young children to older adults. The second event was held on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, from 5:00 – 6:30 pm during a community planning event and dinner at Rotary Park. Amidst a friendly atmosphere, residents were invited to gather, eat, and give their opinions on Master Plan related activities and participate in the Michigan State University's Sustainable Built Environment Initiative kickoff event. Approximately 50 community members were in attendance, including City Staff, City Council, and the Planning Commission. Participants ranged in age from children to older adults.



COMMUNITY PRIORITIES & DESIRES

From the input received, the most common reoccurring topics that participants loved about the City of White Cloud were the “Community” and “Small Town,” denoting that the sense of community is valued by residents. “Nature” and park-related comments were also common top comments from participants from both events, showing that recreational and natural places and spaces in White Cloud are valued assets.

When considering what could be improved in White Cloud, the desire for more commercial and retail opportunities was the top issue. People are looking for more restaurants and places to shop. There were a number of comments related to the improvement of various kinds of infrastructure within the City like roads and old buildings.

At the events, the public was asked to give their feedback on a list of community priorities. The top five topics were:

1. Protecting natural resources
2. Promoting commercial development; Investing in trails; and Enhancing internet access (three-way tie)
3. Supporting diverse housing options
4. Improving existing parks
5. Addressing infrastructure needs

The rankings reflect the collective sentiments of the participants and provide valuable insights for the City of White Cloud to consider in its Master Plan for future development.

Another important idea that emerged during the community engagement events was that more needs to be done to improve the corridors along Wilcox and along M-37 and to attract, accommodate, and retain businesses. The public understands that the Downtown streetscape needs improvement. Ideas to support more businesses like tax incentives and updating Zoning Ordinances were popular.

More information related to these events and results can be found in the Community Engagement Report found in the Appendix. Keeping these results in mind, the City of White Cloud Master Plan will help City officials and leaders to support the development of the community using the following goals and objectives.





GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1. Promote a strong, diverse economy that supports the character of White Cloud.

OBJECTIVES

1. Use and periodically update the City of White Cloud's Economic Development Strategy to intentionally attract investment, build the tax base, and create jobs. [Note: this will be developed as a task of the City's Master Plan]
2. Work with regional economic development agencies like Newaygo County Economic Development Partnership, powered by The Right Place, Newaygo County Tourism Council, and the River Country Chamber of Commerce to promote White Cloud-based businesses and spur intentional development within city limits.
3. Develop a business retention program that includes annual visits to local industries to discuss topics of mutual concern.
4. Designate a zone for entrepreneurial incubator spaces that provide affordable facilities and resources for startups and small businesses.

5. Support efforts to develop workforce training and mentorship programs at secondary schools and institutions of higher education.
6. To grow the local economy, build a stronger cultural connection to assets like the North Country Trail and the Dragon Trail along the Croton-Hardy Dam.
7. Develop White Cloud's reputation as a trail town by supporting local businesses that cater to the needs and interests of people who use trails for biking, walking, rolling, snowmobiles, ORVs, and other recreation purposes.

GOAL 2. Build a vibrant Downtown that serves as a hub of community activity, providing a unique and beautiful backdrop for area events, social interaction, and commerce.

OBJECTIVES

1. Update the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that mixed-use developments are permitted and encouraged, especially in the Downtown area.

2. Invest in urban design improvements, beautification projects, and the creation of welcoming public spaces in the Downtown, especially near the intersection of M-37 and M-20.
3. Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, integrating modern functionality while preserving the unique character of the structures.
4. Support community events that draw the community together and invite visitors to experience the warm, small-town character of White Cloud.

GOAL 3. Ensure access to safe and affordable housing for individuals and families across all income levels, especially for at-risk populations.

OBJECTIVES

1. Update the Zoning Ordinance to allow for a variety of housing types.
2. Allow different types of housing in neighborhoods across the City that cater to a diverse range of demographics and income levels.
3. Work with TrueNorth to provide financial, home repair, disaster relief, and other related resources and services for

first-time home buyers and vulnerable populations.

4. Support the development of workforce housing, especially for those looking to relocate to White Cloud.

GOAL 4. Encourage the creation of mixed-use residential developments.

OBJECTIVES

1. Identify aspects of the physical environment that will enable developments like this to flourish, and incorporate those into the Site Plan Review Zoning Ordinance.
2. Develop incentives for developers that incorporate commercial and residential spaces.
3. Use mixed-use developments to create a transition area between residential neighborhoods and commercial districts, especially near Downtown.

GOAL 5. Showcase a park and trail system that is laced through the community and recognized as a gem of the City.

OBJECTIVES

1. Update the infrastructure and amenities in the parks to meet the current and future needs of residents and visitors.
2. Develop a maintenance program to keep the parks and recreational amenities in good condition.
3. Establish Mill Pond Park as a recreation destination for residents and visitors who are seeking to host a special event or space to play and commune.
4. Develop a connected nonmotorized system to link important destinations like schools, parks, neighborhoods, the campground, and Downtown.
5. Improve signage for visitors who use regional amenities such as the snowmobile and ORV trails, nonmotorized trails, nearby campgrounds, Lake White Cloud, and the White River.



GOAL 6. Strategically invest in public utilities and infrastructure to maintain a high quality of life.

OBJECTIVES

1. Work with MDOT to create a functional, safe multi-modal corridor on M-37 (Evergreen Drive) and M-20 (Wilcox Avenue) that will support a variety of local businesses that strengthen the identity of White Cloud.
2. Identify gaps in the sidewalk network, and then maintain an inventory that will allow the City to use available resources to strategically address the needs over time.
3. Identify locations within the City that lack adequate internet service and then work with those populations to determine their needs.
4. Work with EGLE's efforts to address the needs of the White Cloud Dam.
5. Use the recommendations of the Utility Audit in the Master Plan to inform and drive improvements and future development in the City.

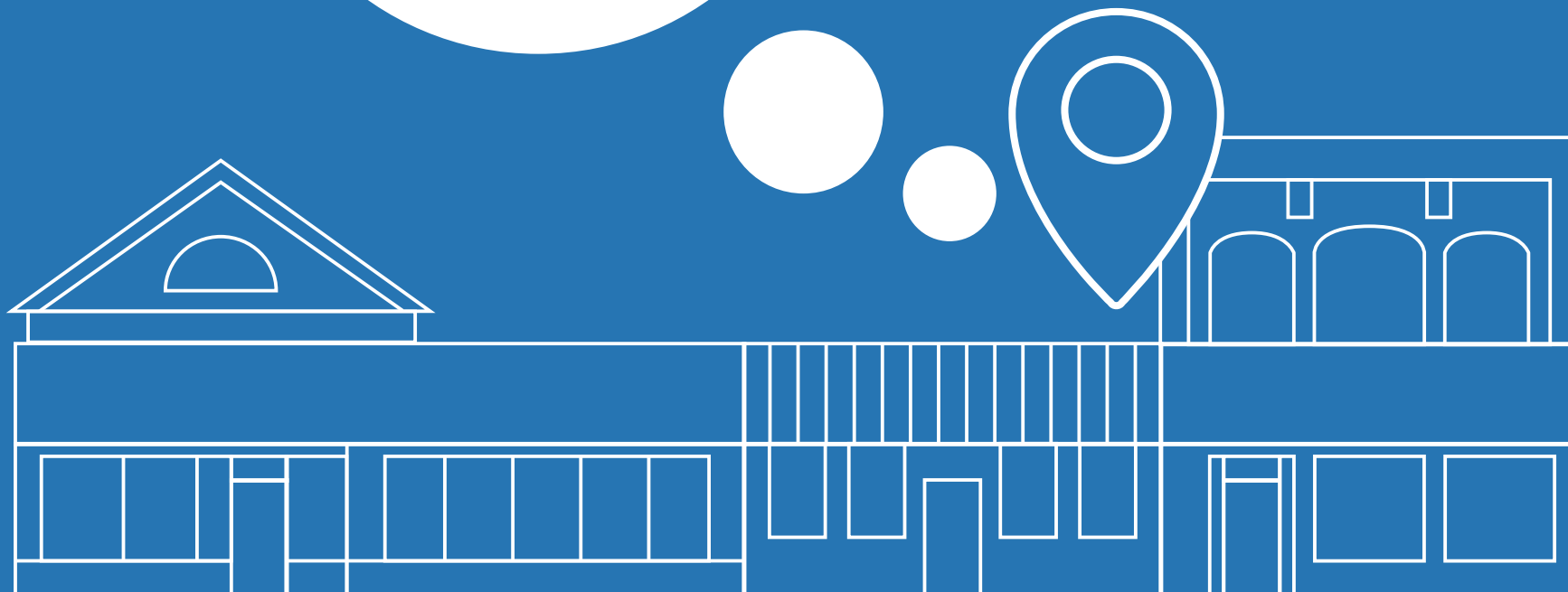
GOAL 7. Protect natural resources within the City to enhance the inherent natural landscape.

OBJECTIVES

1. Support resilience in the local ecosystem by using low-impact stormwater management strategies like rain gardens, bioswales, and the preservation of the urban tree canopy.
2. Continue to promote and use the Newaygo County recycling program.
3. Continue to actively participate in the White River Watershed Partnership to enhance and protect the White River area.
4. Encourage the use of native plantings to support the resilience of local ecosystems in parks, along the White River, and in other City-owned green spaces.
5. Support the development of a connected network of green spaces by supporting the parks and undeveloped parcels and areas of the City.

CHAPTER 7

DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR PLAN



THE DOWNTOWN PLAN FOCUSES ON TWO PUBLIC CORRIDORS:

- Wilcox Avenue from Fuller to State Streets
- Evergreen Drive (M-37) from Pine Hill to James Street



DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR PLAN

The City of White Cloud's downtown is full of opportunities that would meet the needs of the community residents and tourists. White Cloud's downtown is envisioned as a hub of community activity, which will serve as a backdrop for events and center of social interaction and commerce. This plan is intended to guide the implementation of the Master Plan's vision for Downtown through sound planning practice. To achieve the City's vision for Downtown White Cloud, this plan includes identification of important design elements and suggested projects.

The City of White Cloud has developed this plan, in part, to meet the requirements of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Redevelopment Ready Certification Program.

DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR DESIGN ELEMENTS



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY'S SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE (MSU SBEI)

The City of White Cloud worked with Michigan State University's Sustainable Built Environment Initiative to get community input on future improvements for the Downtown. The Michigan State University Extension program and the School of Planning, Design, and Construction developed the Sustainable Built Environment Initiative as a means of assisting communities to address physical planning, design, and land use issues. Improving the quality of life in communities across the state is another intended outcome. The program offers a graphic visioning process that provides community members with a set of images and recommendations to guide improvements.

OVERVIEW

During the summer and fall of 2023, the City engaged with SBEI to get community feedback on future improvements to the Downtown. The SBEI project's focus was to develop a future vision for the M-37/Wilcox Street Corridor to address sustainability challenges and improve the quality of life of the community. Project objectives included reimagining streetscape designs to encourage safe driving, enhance the walking and biking conditions in the corridor with added bike lanes and pedestrian crosswalks, and create an attractive downtown environment with the addition of street trees, planters, and banners.

PLANNING PROCESS

The SBEI process included three different public meetings. The public was invited, along with City officials, staff, and Planning Commission members. The first meeting was a community visioning process held at Rotary Park to build consensus and generate ideas. The second meeting provided an opportunity for community members to review and comment on initial design ideas developed by SBEI at City Hall. Project goals and placemaking themes were introduced and preliminarily reviewed. Example character images were used to obtain feedback on what was desired by attendees. The third meeting was an opportunity to provide feedback on project goals, placemaking themes, and give final feedback on design concepts for various areas and corridors in Downtown. A final report for the project was developed in early 2024 and provided to the City.



NOTABLE CONCEPTS: The SBEI project provided a community-driven engagement process that produced an excellent source of information to build from, including the downtown corridor plan development. A number of deliverables that were created through this process are and built upon for this plan, including planning recommendations, streetscape designs, intersection improvements, and placemaking ideas.



DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR PLAN & SBEI DESIGN THEMES



THEME #1: PLACEMAKING

TO UNIFY FEATURES OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INTERACTION, AND TO ENHANCE THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY

- Create spaces for the community to use and that take advantage of local resources
- Provide public spaces across generational scales
- Draw upon the local character and features to create a sense of place
- Consider future development while supporting existing businesses



THEME #2: STREETScape

TO PROVIDE SAFE AND EFFICIENT MOTORIZED TRANSIT THAT ACCOMMODATES A PLEASING PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

- Develop streets as livable spaces with strong visual elements and a variety of street amenities
- Implement complete street designs on M-37/Wilcox Avenue





THEME #3: VISUAL QUALITY

TO ENHANCE THE AESTHETIC VALUE OF THE COMMUNITY'S NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

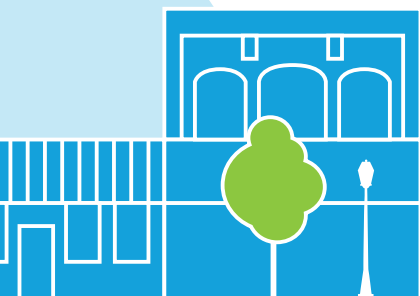
- Improve street character by adding landscaping, art, and amenities
- Use paving design, outdoor furnishings, and lighting to create a cohesive visual aesthetic
- Propose new uses of current space
- Add trees and native plants to improve visual quality



THEME #4: CONNECTIVITY

TO IMPROVE THE OVERALL CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN PEOPLE AND PLACES

- Enhance connectivity between people and places
- Improve and emphasize community assets by improving visual and physical accessibility
- Use wayfinding to enhance connectivity



The following design elements are recognized as important for White Cloud to achieve a vibrant downtown that is accessible, safe, connected, and attractive.

BUILDING FORM AND AESTHETICS

Buildings create the basis for a downtown's visual appeal. A downtown with a unified aesthetic will attract and invite people to explore local businesses and attractions. White Cloud can promote functional and unified building designs through the development of design standards. These can be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance, but can also be created in a separate document. The intent of design standards is to enhance building form, function, and aesthetics, contributing to the overall character of the downtown area. Downtown design standards are encouraged to address the following:

- **BUILDING FAÇADES.** Design standards should encourage building façades and architecture that are attractive and functional, enhancing the historic and unique character of the downtown.
- **SITE AMENITIES.** Developers may be required to include certain amenities to encourage pedestrian activity, such as benches, street trees, waste receptacles, and bike racks.
- **PEDESTRIAN-FOCUSED.** Pedestrian-scale building features should be encouraged in new developments and redevelopments. This may include features such as covered entries, multiple-paned windows, pedestrian-scale light fixtures, and artwork.
- **FLEXIBILITY.** Mixed-use developments are encouraged through design standards. By adhering to the same design standards, a greater variety of uses can be permitted on a given parcel. By enhancing flexibility for the developer, this allows for a variety of uses and supports a viable downtown.



STREETSCAPE

White Cloud's downtown streetscape is lined with sidewalks, decorative street light fixtures, banners, and a few street trees. In some areas, buildings front immediately adjacent to the sidewalk, while in other locations the buildings are setback with a parking lot or green spaces located next to the sidewalks. This disrupted pattern can influence the visual aesthetic and pedestrian experience along a corridor. Through the community engagement events conducted for the White Cloud Master Plan and MSU's SBEI, respondents indicated a desire for a revitalization of the Downtown district, an improved streetscape, attractive community gathering places, and updated public infrastructure.

This downtown corridor plan encourages the creation of a Complete Streets Strategy, as suggested in this Master Plan, that addresses detailed streetscape options in the City of White Cloud Downtown district.

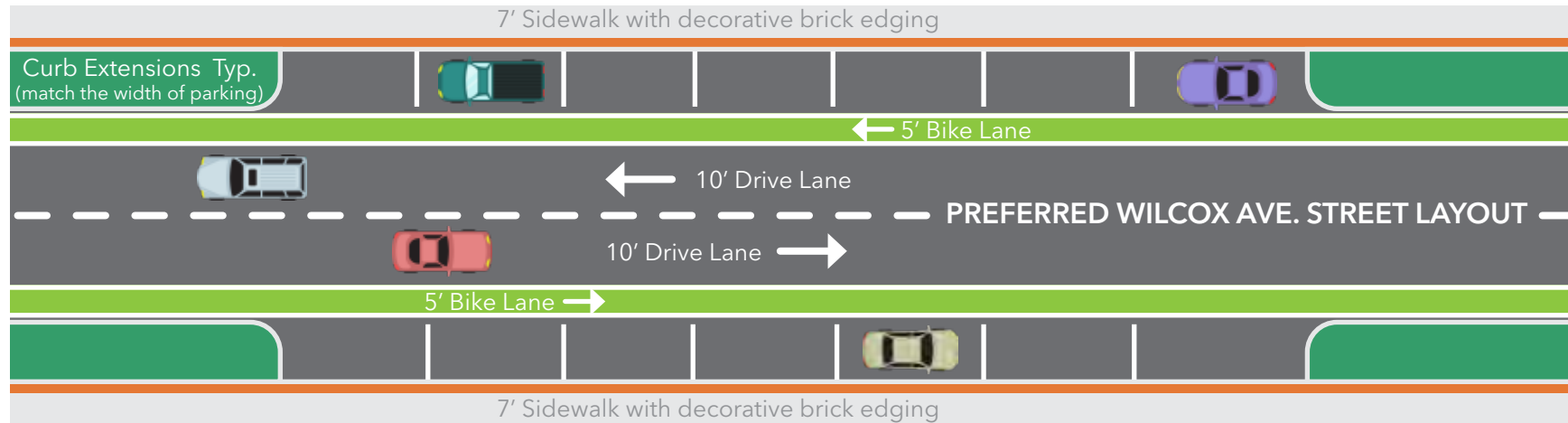
THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS CONTRIBUTE TO AN ACTIVE AND EQUITABLE STREETSCAPE:

- **SAFETY.** The Downtown district streetscape along Wilcox Avenue and M-37 should offer safe access for a variety of transportation modes, including people who are walking, biking, or using mobility assistance. Safe travel can be supported through crosswalk demarcation, sidewalk maintenance, road right-sizing, curbing, and design measures for traffic calming.
- **ACTIVATION.** By planning, designing, and implementing pedestrian-friendly street fixtures and installing specific infrastructure for bicycles like bike racks and bike lanes, people will be drawn to the Downtown. Residents and visitors will be enticed to the area, shaded by new street trees, rest on benches, and drawn to the beauty of the "Up North" aesthetic through landscaping. These investments can build the confidence of entrepreneurs and new business owners, encouraging them to locate their commercial, retail, and office endeavors here. Simple, yet effective improvements along the Downtown corridors will create a sense of place and turn the City of White Cloud into a destination for residents and tourists.
- **CONNECTIVITY.** Establishing a multi-modal network that provides people with safe, clear connections throughout the Downtown district and into the nearby neighborhoods is paramount. The existing roadway has been designed to move people and goods quickly through the corridors by vehicle, as evident by the wide roads, higher speeds, and lack of pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. More resources need to be allocated to the development of a nonmotorized network. Sidewalks need to be maintained and gaps need to be identified to provide a clear route into and out of the Downtown. The City should design accessible bicycle lanes based on the level of investment that the City can afford and with the support of the Michigan Department of Transportation since parts of the Downtown are along M-routes. Investing in infrastructure like this, along with way finding signage, will strengthen the City's identity as a connected community.

THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT has a unique opportunity to provide goods and services as a "Trail Town," as White Cloud is located near the North Country Trail, a National Park that spans several states. This downtown corridor plan, in coordination with the Master Plan, encourages a connection between the trail and the City through a trail spur. Connectivity can be improved over time.

PRIORITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Understanding that improvements along the streetscape are important drivers of improving the Downtown, the following examples are investments the City can make. These kinds of investments will demonstrate the City's interest and ability to support the growth of and within the Downtown district.



STREETSCAPE 1: WILCOX AVENUE & BENSON STREET

Wilcox Avenue has been the heart of the White Cloud Downtown district for decades. The community celebrated their Sesquicentennial (150 years) in the summer of 2023, acknowledging the history of this place. Few of the existing buildings are over 100 years old and not all of the significant architectural features have been retained or valued. Some structures have had notable characteristics hidden or diminished along the street. This, along with the lack of streetscape features, wide lanes on Wilcox Avenue, and a variety of building setbacks along the corridor leaves the area feeling disjointed and disconnected. Street trees, planters, and other features like sitting areas would be cost-effective, impactful enhancements along Wilcox Avenue that would create a strong sense of connection and invite people to shop, eat, do business, and linger.



At this intersection in the commercial district, and others like it, brick or brick-like pavement treatment at crosswalks could provide a clear space for pedestrians, cause vehicular traffic to slow down, and add aesthetic value to the neighborhood. Trees would provide shade to cool the street down significantly, encourage people to walk along the sidewalks, and enjoy businesses on hot days. Planters would add landscaping and stormwater retention, softening the urban fabric. The placement of additional seating would create moments to pause in the Downtown district. Retaining and delineating on-street parking (along with additional space for parklets) provides more space for retail and commercial business customers.



INSPIRATION FROM MSU's SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE (pictured above)

- Inclusion of bike lanes (preferred separated - see street layout).
- Prominent mid-block crosswalks and curb extensions shorten crosswalk distances, slow traffic, and allow for safer navigation of Wilcox Ave.
- Vegetative parkways delineate pedestrian and vehicular spaces.
- Street trees add shade and visual interest.
- Plantings allow for greater infiltration of stormwater and combat the impacts of urban heat/pollution.
- Pavement colors and textures add aesthetic value to the streetscape.

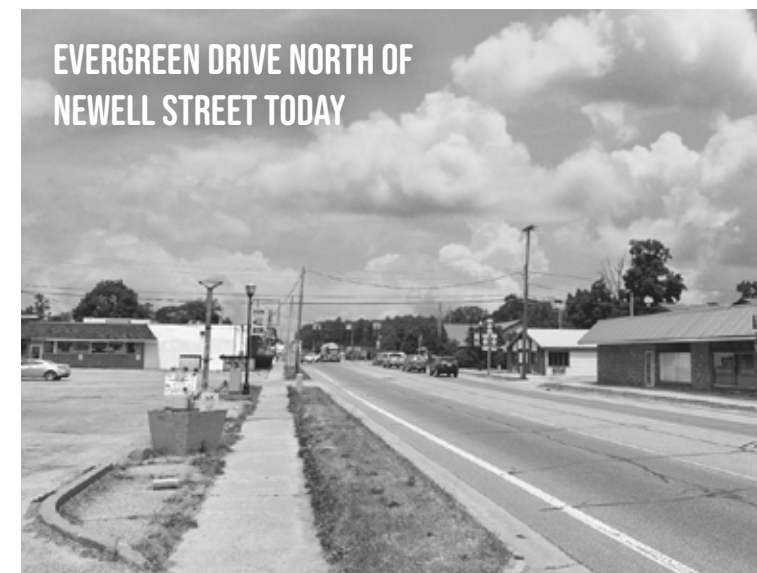
WILCOX AVENUE & BENSON STREET TOMORROW



EVERGREEN DRIVE NORTH OF NEWELL STREET TOMORROW

STREETSCAPE 2: EVERGREEN DRIVE NORTH OF NEWELL STREET

The sense of arrival into White Cloud on either the north or south side of the City while traveling along M-37 is minimal. Notable features, landmarks, or gateway transitions are lacking at either end of the city limits along the corridor. Streetscaping features like trees, decorative lighting, banners, and planters would provide simple, elegant elements to enhance the sense of place. These features slow vehicle traffic and create an inviting atmosphere for pedestrians. Street trees provide shade for pedestrians and visually encroach on the road, naturally reducing vehicle speeds. Decorative light fixtures increase the sense of safety. Banners can be used to showcase important events or a sense of identity for White Cloud. Planters and trees also help with stormwater management. All of these features would provide a notable upgrade along the sidewalks on the M-37 corridor, creating a much more inviting place for pedestrians. Through community engagement, residents have expressed their desire to have more, safer places to walk, bike, and roll, especially in the Downtown district. These features could also entice people traveling through the corridor to stop, find a place to eat or rest, and enjoy what White Cloud has to offer. The corridor street could become a safe, welcoming place for residents and tourists to enjoy all year round.



**EVERGREEN DRIVE NORTH OF
NEWELL STREET TODAY**

STREETSCAPE 3: WILCOX AVENUE & NORTH STREET

This intersection, and others like it, can be enhanced to be safer and help instill a sense of identity for White Cloud's neighborhoods. The streetscape is void of any features that might denote a transition from the commercial Downtown district to the residential neighborhoods along Wilcox Avenue. These could be developed to create a sense of arrival into the Downtown district, supporting the growth and sense of place in the commercial heart of the City. As the intersection currently exists, the road is wide, inviting vehicles to drive at higher speeds and making pedestrians cross wider streets than necessary. There is ample space for improving the nonmotorized facilities. Sidewalks should be maintained, and bike lanes could be installed. Installing the broader-striped continental crosswalks, as shown in the image below, increases the visibility of the pedestrian crossing area and also slows vehicle speeds. Exploring the opportunity to build separated bike lanes that are adjacent to the sidewalk and higher than the road would create a network that would be usable by people of all ages and abilities. Considerations for a boulevard with street trees and street-level light fixtures would also further enhance the corridor, and could be considered a gateway element for the area.

WILCOX AVENUE & NORTH STREET TOMORROW



PRIORITY SITES

The following properties are the priority sites for redevelopment in the Downtown district. Though these are privately owned, they have been identified as important areas to help activate the heart of the City. Capital improvements could be focused around these sites to encourage future redevelopment and reinvestment.

The map on the following page highlights these priority sites, as well as the Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (OPRA) sites within the City. The OPRA District provides property tax exemptions for commercial and commercial housing properties that are rehabilitated. The identification of both of these types of properties provides a clear overview of the many opportunities, both physical and financial, for redevelopment in Downtown White Cloud.



1198 E WILCOX AVE (PPN 177-024)



**1175 & 1165 E WILCOX AVE
(PPN 136-027 & 136-026)**

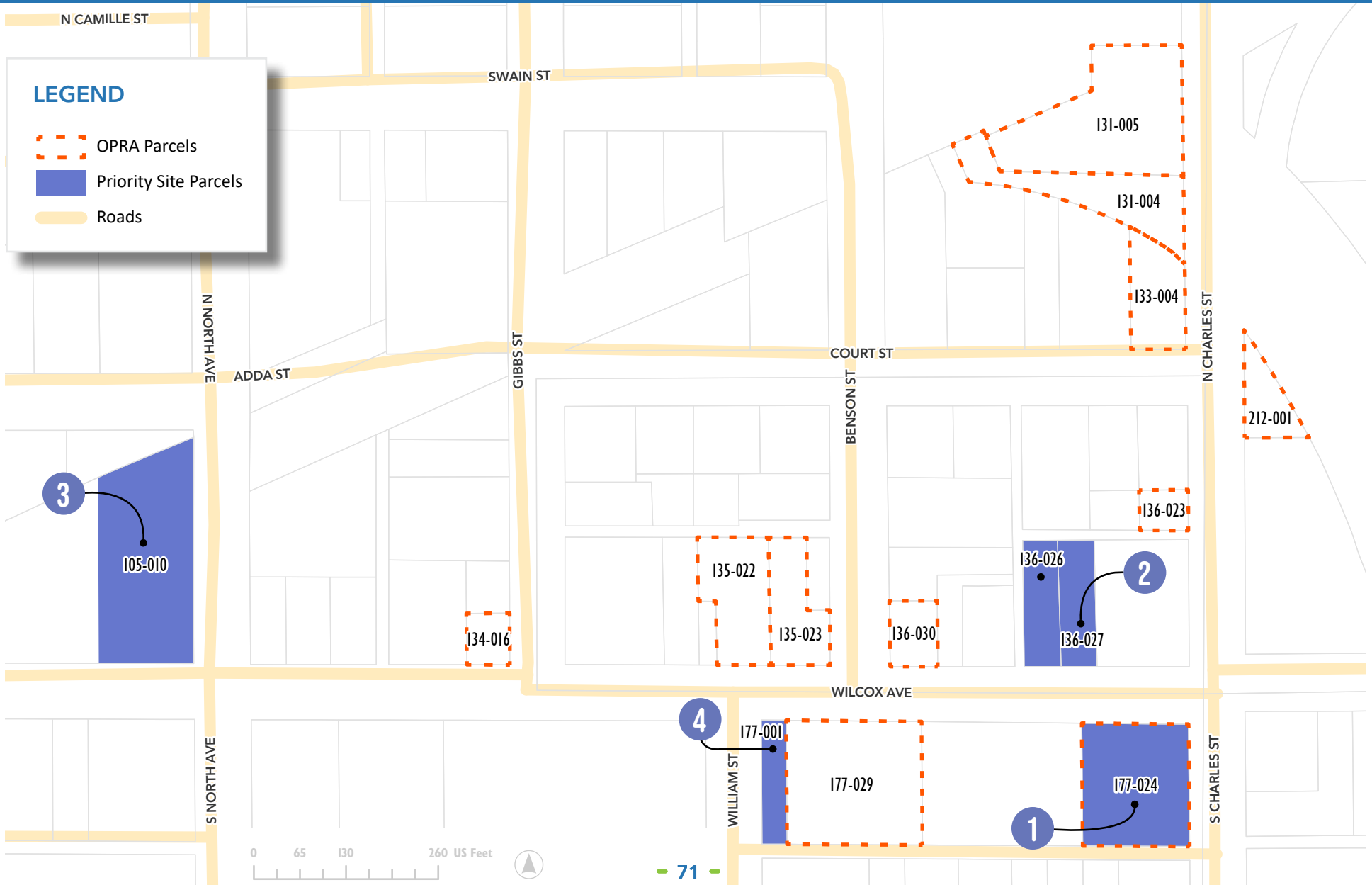


953 E WILCOX AVE (PPN 105-010)



1110 E WILCOX AVE (PPN 177-001)

Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (OPRA) Properties & Priority Sites



PRIORITY SITE 1: 1198 EAST WILCOX AVENUE

(PPN 177-024)

The property is at the southwest corner of White Cloud's major intersection of Wilcox Avenue and M-37, a major crossroads for residents and regional travelers heading "Up North." The prime location is ideal for commercial development and could be designed to draw people to the Downtown district. The parcel is a part of the City's Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (OPRA) District which provides property tax exemptions for commercial and commercial housing properties that are rehabilitated. Depending on the integrity of the existing structure, the building could be rehabilitated for use or demolished and reconstructed. The building façade could be upgraded to be more distinctive, including windows and different exterior treatment to invite patrons, especially since it's at a key location along the City's two main streets. Ample parking exists on the site, which could also allow for more of the parcel to be developed.



PUBLIC ALLEY

PUBLIC ALLEY

WILCOX AVENUE

PRIORITY SITE 2: 1175 & 1165 EAST WILCOX AVENUE

(PPN 136-027 & 136-026)

These two adjacent undeveloped parcels are in the heart of the White Cloud Downtown district, and would be an ideal site for a mixed-use, two- or three-story commercial and residential development. Being located along the commercial corridor of Wilcox Avenue, just west of the significant intersection of M-37, the site has a lot of potential. To the north, the site is bordered by a short alley that is a part of a residential neighborhood full of single-family homes. Commercial buildings are on the parcel to the east and west of this two-parcel priority site, that provide a variety of styles and characteristics to emulate. Site improvements could also include landscaping and building frontages set close to the road. The two-parcel site is ready to be built to propel the future of Downtown White Cloud.

LEGEND

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| A Existing business | E Off-street parking |
| B Mixed use buildings | F Activation elements, such as outdoor sales areas, dining space, or art |
| C Sidewalk connection | |
| D Vegetative buffer | |

PRIORITY SITE 3: 956 EAST WILCOX AVENUE

(PPN 177-024)

Located on the west edge of the Downtown district, this parcel is uniquely positioned to provide a distinct sense of transition between the existing residential and commercial neighborhoods along the Wilcox Avenue corridor. The parcel is on the northwest side of the intersection of Wilcox Avenue and North Street. Though the site contains a single-family house that is occupied and in good condition, the site may be eligible for a split to allow for the development of the vacant area. With residential neighborhoods to the north and west, churches to the south, and the Downtown district to the east, this area can emphasize a sense of arrival to the Downtown and could include a gateway feature or streetscaping. A variety of housing types could be considered, as it is close enough to the Downtown to architecturally and economically support a higher density than single-family attached-style houses.

LEGEND

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| A Lot split | E Stoops and front yard gardens typ. |
| B Townhomes | F New public sidewalk, street parking, and street trees |
| C Access drive | |
| D Vegetative buffer | |



PRIORITY SITE 4: 1110 EAST WILCOX AVENUE


(PPN PPN 177-001)

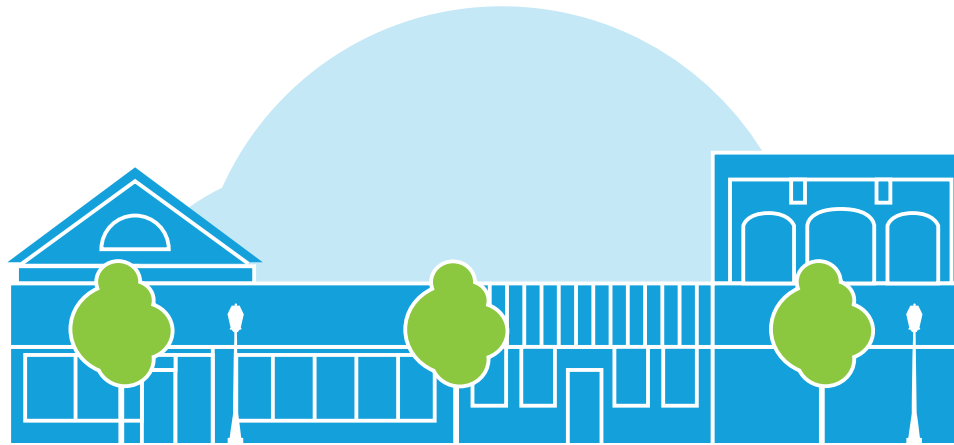
Small spaces next to or in between buildings can be a great opportunity for a placemaking feature. These areas have the potential to be inviting, intimate sitting areas that are set back from Wilcox Avenue. Moments like this along a downtown corridor can be beautiful, peaceful focal points and attract business investment. Residents and visitors could gather in this space, creating a respite to convene and linger. This would encourage foot traffic within the Downtown, enrich the potential for commercial businesses, and be a wonderful community asset. 1110 East Wilcox Avenue is a perfect site for these placemaking features. The property is partially vacant and fronts the downtown. In the example rendering below, gardens frame this vacant greenspace, offering central seating that looks out toward the Downtown, and a singular focal point like a fountain or sculpture to draw people into the site.



DOWNTOWN PLAN PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

The City of White Cloud desires to maintain its small-town character while allowing for business investment and accommodating small-scale tourism by revitalizing the Downtown. The goals, objectives, and policies of this plan should be reviewed often and should also be considered in decision-making by City officials and staff. Successful implementation of this plan will be the result of actions taken by elected and appointed officials, City staff and consultants, the Planning and Zoning Commission, City residents, public agencies, private organizations, and outside government agencies including Newaygo County and the State of Michigan. The following tables present a detailed summary for all the recommended implementation activities.

 THEME 1: PLACEMAKING	DESIGN CONSIDERATION	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY		
					CITY	OTHER GOV'T	PVT.
	Create spaces for the community to use and that take advantage of local resources	Encourage residents to use the Downtown district by providing shade, seating, art, and gathering spaces	Explore becoming a Michigan Main Street Community to promote vibrancy in the Downtown area	Short Term	X		
		Promote public art installations that reflect the community character	Apply for the MEDC Community Partners Grant	Mid Term	X		
	Provide public spaces across generational scales	Create gathering spaces for people of all ages and abilities	Identify appropriate areas within the Downtown district to locate potential gathering spaces	Short Term	X		X
			Promote social interaction throughout the year with events and programming	Short Term	X		X
			Seek funding partners to help support these activities	Long Term	X	X	X
	Draw upon the local character and features to create a sense of place	Work with professionals to develop an interpretive sign and wayfinding system that represents the City	Inform and direct people to community assets such as the Downtown district, parks, local waterways, and trails	Short Term	X		
	Consider future development while supporting existing businesses	Support local businesses investing in the community	Investigate forming a Downtown Development Authority (DDA)	Mid Term			X



THEME 2: STREETSCAPE

DESIGN CONSIDERATION	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY		
				CITY	OTHER GOV'T	PVT.
Develop streets as livable spaces with strong visual elements and a variety of street amenities	Create an eyecatching streetscape with a variety of vertical and horizontal amenities to attract people to Wilcox Avenue from M-37	Maintain existing street elements, like the brickwork, street lights, and banners	Short Term	X		
		Install streetscape amenities such as benches, outdoor dining, signage, trees, planters, gardens, art, and pavers	Mid Term	X		
Implement complete street designs on M-37/Wilcox Avenue	Include nonmotorized infrastructure to develop the Downtown district as a multi-modal corridor	Add well-designed crosswalks to improve visibility	Mid Term	X		
		Apply for the TEDF Category B Grant and TAP Grant through the Michigan Department of Transportation for additional funding	Mid Term	X	X	
		Install medians, pedestrian islands, and/or other natural buffers to create a distinct Downtown district identity	Long Term	X	X	
		Design and install bike lanes to promote multi-modal transportation	Long Term	X	X	



THEME 3: VISUAL QUALITY

DESIGN CONSIDERATION	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY		
				CITY	OTHER GOV'T	PVT.
Improve street character through art	Use murals, sculptures, and temporary installations to add art Downtown	Engage local artists and residents to identify desirable locations for art	Short Term	X		
		Apply for funding through the Public Spaces Community Places Program	Mid Term	X		X
Use paving design, outdoor furnishings, and lighting to create a cohesive visual aesthetic	Create a consistent theme within the Downtown to apply to design elements	Update benches and planter boxes to develop a cohesive Downtown district identity	Mid Term	X		X
		Establish a local façade improvement program to help businesses update buildings	Long Term	X		
	Use the practice of tactical urbanism to try out various concepts and designs temporarily that may lead to development opportunities	Add seating and planter boxes to create colorful, inviting spaces	Mid Term	X		
		Establish policies to allow pop-up shops (temporary retail spaces) to attract new small businesses	Mid Term	X		
		Explore the feasibility of a farmers market on the northeast corner of the Wilcox Avenue/M-37 intersection	Long Term	X	X	
Propose new uses of current space	Use underutilized spaces to create opportunities for placemaking and economic development	Apply for the MEDC Revitalization and Placemaking 2.0 Program	Short Term	X		
Add trees and native plants to improve physical and visual and quality	Create native plant buffers between the roadways and pedestrian spaces	Develop a list of native vegetation to incorporate in the Downtown district	Short Term	X		
	Add trees along Wilcox Avenue and M-37 to provide shade	Apply for the ReLeaf Michigan program to help fund tree planting	Long Term	X		



THEME 4: CONNECTIVITY

DESIGN CONSIDERATION	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY		
				CITY	OTHER GOV'T	PVT.
Enhance connectivity between people and places	Develop nonmotorized routes to increase mobility for people and places	Complete a sidewalk gap analysis and maintenance inventory to inform Capital Improvement Plan decisions	Mid Term	X		
		Collaborate infrastructure improvements with planned Safe Routes to School routes and needs	Long Term	X		X
Improve and emphasize community assets by improving visual and physical accessibility	Enhance the streetscape design which distinguishes the Downtown area	Install bike lanes, curb expansions with native plantings, and colored crosswalks	Mid Term	X		
Use wayfinding to enhance connectivity	Include wayfinding throughout the Downtown district to guide pedestrians to important destinations	Apply for mini-grants or Community Development Block Grants	Mid Term	X		

Following the recommendations for implementing the design considerations in the Downtown Plan Projects and Programs table, the City will have a road map for developing a vibrant, active downtown. This Downtown Corridor Plan for the City of White Cloud adds a sense of predictability for future development and can support local efforts to support business and create a community gathering space.

CHAPTER 8

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

As part of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's best practices for Redevelopment Ready Sites, tying into regional economic development efforts is key to creating a successful economic development strategy. The City of White Cloud is supported by The Right Place, Inc. and the Newaygo County Economic Development Partnership. The Right Place, Inc. is a regional economic development organization funded through investments from the private and public sectors. The Right Place drives regional economic development initiatives to stimulate economic growth, wealth creation, and operational excellence by focusing on productivity, innovation, and the retention, expansion, and creation of quality employment and companies in the Greater Grand Rapids region. This region includes Kent, Ionia, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties. The Newaygo County Economic Development Partnership focuses on growth in Newaygo County and also works seamlessly with The Right Place, Inc. The County is the primary agency that White Cloud can continue to work with to find mutually beneficial opportunities in support of growth in the City, County, and the Greater Grand Rapids area.

This analysis aims to provide the City of White Cloud with a basic economic development analysis and the framework for a complete future economic development strategy. The chapter will provide the City with some fundamental community development ideas to support the growth of the local economy and provide goals to inform the economic development strategy. This component includes information regarding employment, industry, retail markets, income, population, and other related information. Information sources include the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the US Census Bureau, the West Michigan Shoreline Economic Development District, and the National Association of Development Organizations.

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT

According to the US Census Bureau, roughly 63% of Americans live in incorporated places (cities, towns, or villages) of 5,000 people or fewer in population. Small towns are where the prototype for the typical “Main Street America” comes from, and are attractive places for economic prosperity.

According to the US Census, the City of White Cloud is estimated to have lost 23.6% of its resident population between 2020 and 2022, likely as a result of the SARS-COVID-19 pandemic, as compared to the 0.3% population reduction of Newaygo County during the same period. The three largest industry sectors that employ City of White Cloud residents are:

1. *Educational, Healthcare, and Social Services sector* (35.8%)
2. *Manufacturing* (20.6%)
3. *Retail Trade* (19.4%)

Less than one in four residents (24.2%) work in different industries. The county and region have a long-standing history and large market share in metal fabrication and agricultural processing. However, other industries require a growing employment share as employer demand shifts. The 2023 Newaygo County Economic Output Report notes that the fastest-growing employment sectors in the County, calculated by the number of job postings, were 1) *Healthcare and Social Assistance*, 2) *Transportation and Warehousing*, 3) *Administrative Support, and Retail. Healthcare and Logistical and Supply Chain* are almost half of the total number of job postings in 2023, which is significant. Also of note is that the Scientific and Technological sector, which comprises only 7.7% of the total employed population in the County, grew by 84% within the last ten years.¹

Large employers found in the City of White Cloud are:

1. County of Newaygo
2. White Cloud Public Schools
3. Family Healthcare
4. Frosted Farms
5. Acme Marine Group (Bentek)

Large Employers found in Newaygo County include:

1. Harbison Walker International
2. Gerber Products/Nestle Nutrition
3. Magna Mirrors
4. Valspar Corp.
5. Corewell Gerber Memorial Health Systems
6. Dura Automotive
7. Gerber Life Insurance
8. Bucher Hydraulics
9. G-M Wood Products
10. MPH Trucking and Logistics

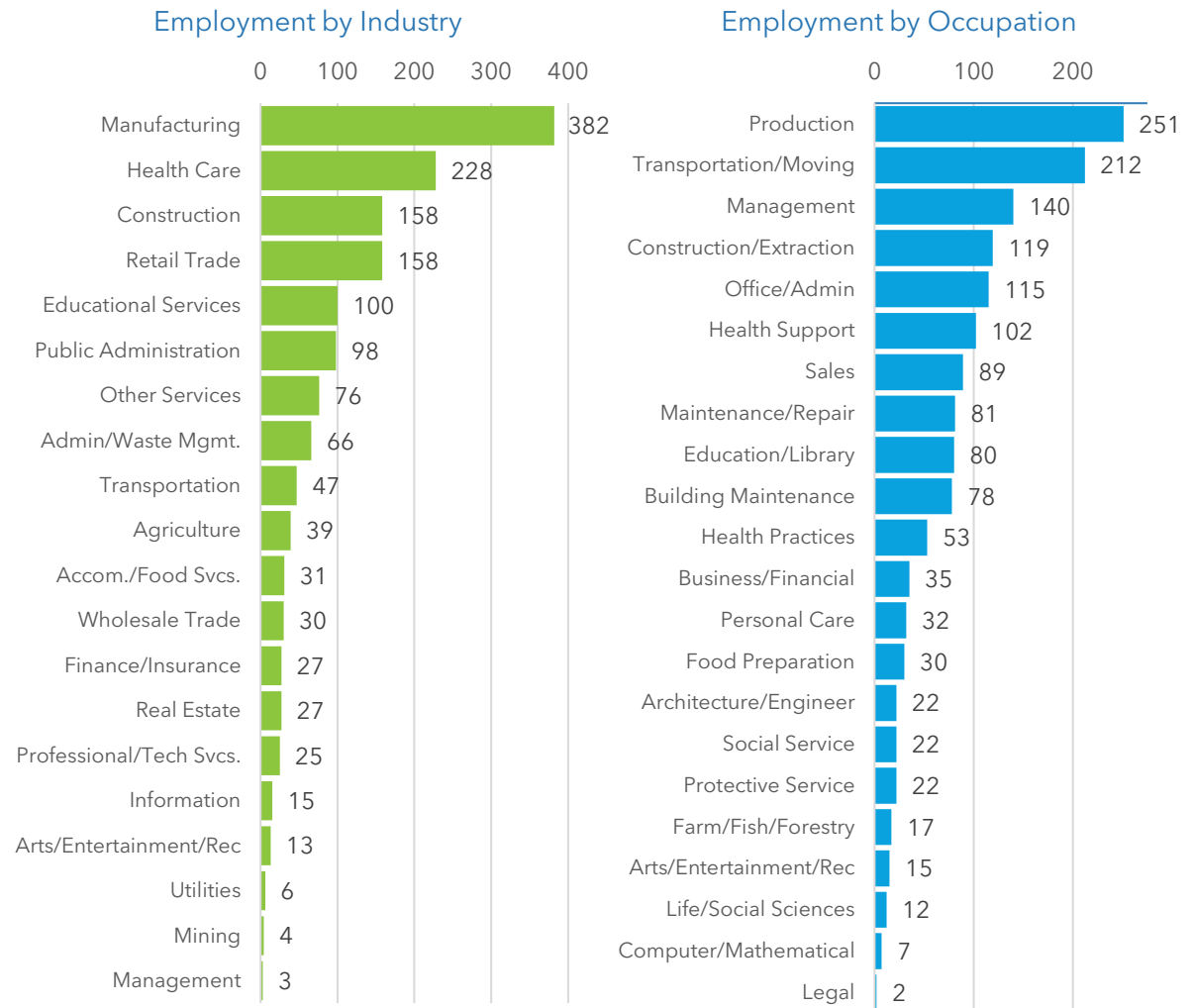
These statistics highlight the non-traditional demand that has been created for growing industries in the White Cloud and Newaygo County region. Education, Healthcare, Technology, and Supply Chain Management occupations are increasingly needed to fill vacant positions. Local skill training and education are important to fill this gap. One of the biggest factors in successful economic development is creating or growing competitive advantage over surrounding regions by fostering a skilled workforce that meets the needs of current employers and provides the human resources desired by future employers.

¹ (Newaygo County Economic Development Partnership; The Right Place, 2023)

One of the best ways that data can be used to track competitive advantage is through a technique of calculating a Location Quotient (LQ). Location quotients compare the industry and occupational share of the local area's employment relative to that same share on a national scale. A value that is lower than one indicates that the area is less specialized in that particular industry/occupation, while a value that is greater than one indicates that the area is more specialized in that particular industry and/or occupation than the nation on average. Greater or higher location quotients provide evidence of a strategic advantage for the local economy. The location quotients for the City of White Cloud are showcased in Figure 8.1 and Figure 8.2. Manufacturing and Agriculture are of the highest advantage for the City of White Cloud when considering using data from industry location quotients. Other notable industries are Management and Construction which each have a location quotient of 1.5

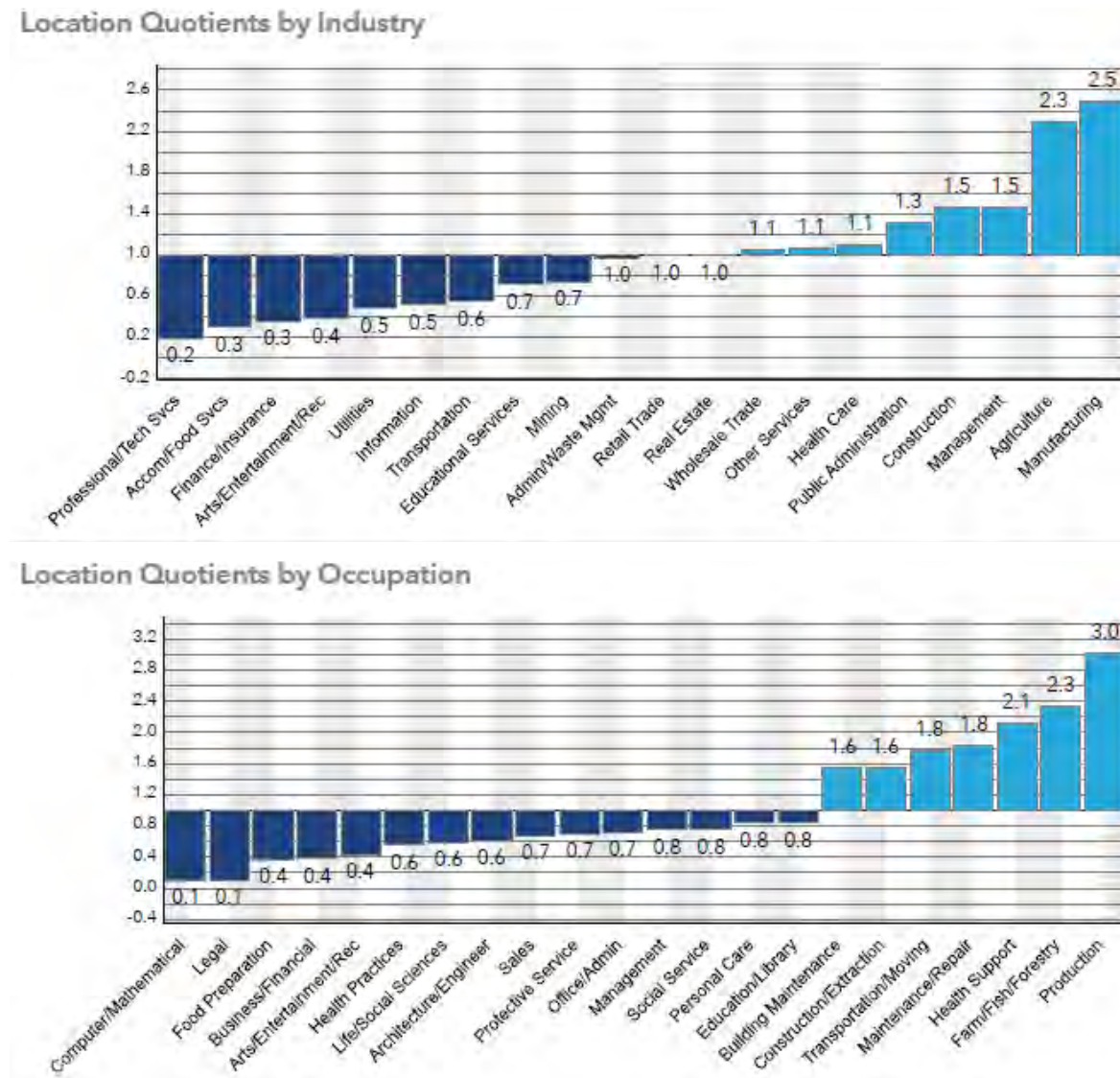
When considering location quotient by occupation, Production is the highest sector at 3.0. Farm/Fish/Forestry is the second highest category at 2.3, with the second highest location quotient as ranked by occupation. Health Support also has a location quotient above 2 (2.1) and is the third highest ranked sector by occupation.

FIGURE 8.1 | FIGURE 1: BREAKDOWN OF OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT FOR THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD



Source: ESRI Data Axle 2023

FIGURE 8.2 | LOCATION QUOTIENT OF OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT FOR THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD



Source: ESRI Data Axle 2023

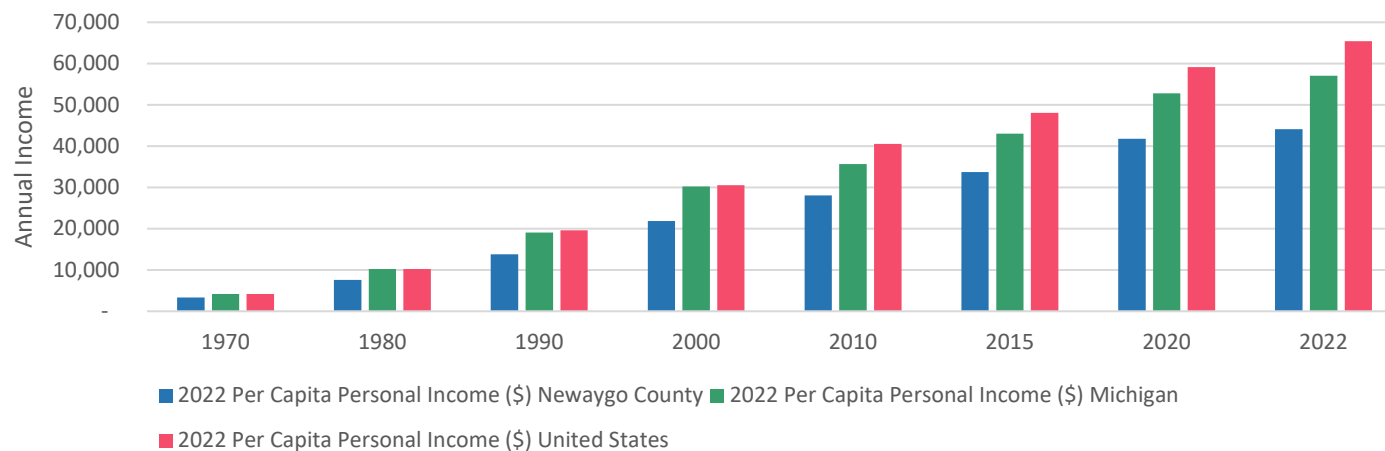
INCOME

According to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2023, the total number of jobs in Newaygo County has increased by 55.7% since 1970. This increase in jobs slightly outpaced the population growth (45%) during the same period. The per capita personal income in Newaygo County was \$3,304 in 1970 and has risen to \$44,140 in 2022.

The per capita personal income annual growth rate as of 2022 is shown in Figure 3 and shows the County (3.8%) is slightly lower than the State average of 4.0%. In Figure 3, as personal incomes increase over time, the gap between the personal income earned at the County, State, and United States levels continues to widen. What this means is that in 1970, even though personal income per capita was less in Newaygo County than it was at the average State or the United States level, the difference was relatively small. This gap continued to grow over time, through 2022.

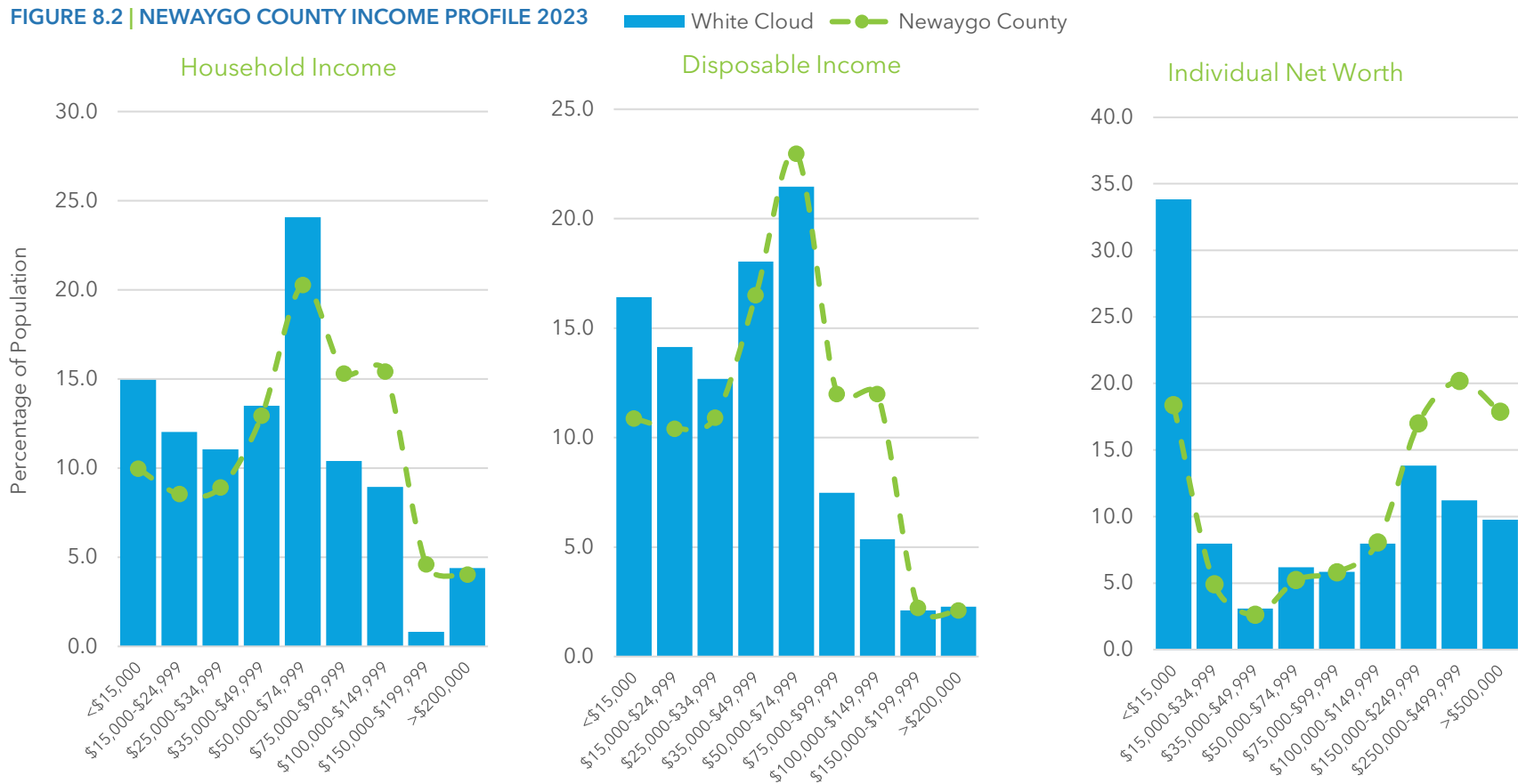
Gross domestic product (GDP) or the total production exports of goods is a strong indicator of how well a community or region is doing economically. Impressively, the City of White Cloud and Newaygo County increased their overall GDP between 2020 and 2022 at a rate of 8.3%. This outpaces the State of Michigan's GDP increase of 8.0% during the same period. This shows that the local economy was able to rebound fairly quickly from the downturn in the economy due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

FIGURE 8.3 | PERSONAL PER CAPITA INCOME FROM 1970 TO 2022



Source: ESRI Data Axle 2023

FIGURE 8.2 | NEWAYGO COUNTY INCOME PROFILE 2023



Source: ESRI Data Axle 2023

Newaygo County has experienced economic fluctuations in unemployment similar to other communities in the region and State. In 2010, Newaygo County had an unemployment rate of approximately 11.1% (recession of 2008-09), but that rate dropped significantly by 2015 to 5.5%. In 2020 the rate increased again to approximately 9.0% (recession) and has decreased to 4.3% in 2022 according to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis.

The City of White Cloud has a daytime population of 1,835 people, which is an increase of 718 people who commute into the City for employment during the average weekday.² This predictable influx of people creates an opportunity for commercial business growth in Downtown.

¹ (ESRI Data Axle, 2023)

CITY OF WHITE CLOUD SWOT ANALYSIS

Planning regionally and implementing locally is a great way to think of local and regional strengths. Organizations like the West Michigan Shoreline Economic Development District, which serves Newaygo County, and the Michigan Economic Development Organization are designed to work on a regional scale incorporating several counties and thousands of employers and employees from an identified area. The regional level provides the geography and framework to articulate the strategies for attracting national or international employers. The local level provides opportunities for communities to differentiate themselves within the region, demonstrating the unique features that make them a great place to locate a business. Examples of desirable features and strengths within a local community include a large amount of development-ready land, high-tech infrastructure, major education and research institutions, a well-educated and skilled workforce, and desirable quality-of-life components like an abundance of parks and natural features like lakes and rivers. When small communities work collaboratively to identify local strengths within a given region, there is less hype-local competition and a greater chance of employment being drawn to a given area.



STRENGTHS

Strengths define a city or region's competitive advantage. These are items that make a strong economic generator and destination for future growth and development. Strengths are what a community or area needs to highlight, nurture, and expand to attract and retain employers and a talented workforce. Strengths identified to help the City of White Cloud are listed below.

IDENTIFIED STRENGTHS:

1. Established manufacturing industries – several large industries in and around the City
2. A large amount of available industrial land or buildings for sale – many developable locations
3. Agricultural Industry – a vast amount of agricultural land surrounding the community containing large agricultural product processing facilities
4. Low cost of living
5. Regionally located on two state highways, M-37 and M-20, and industrial land with rail access
6. Municipal utility services available
7. Newaygo County Career Tech Center
8. Natural Beauty
9. Newaygo County Offices in the downtown
10. Newaygo County Commission on Aging/Senior Center collocated and located in the City



WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses are assets that a community lacks or can place them at a disadvantage. Examples of weaknesses can be a lack of local leadership, a lack of stakeholder buy-in, and overly complicated local permitting and review procedures that require developers to spend extra money and time to get an application approved. Weaknesses identified to potentially impact the City of White Cloud are listed below.

IDENTIFIED WEAKNESSES:

1. Not a large tax base to work with
2. A lack of interactive development applications
3. Many different applications for each reviewing commission or board
4. Need stronger IT infrastructure
5. County government offices are on a large portion of land in the downtown

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities are things or situations that can be changed to improve or encourage progress. These can be identified in the strengths that the community already contains. Opportunities for the City of White Cloud are listed below.

1. Several manufacturing facilities that operate locally have the opportunity to expand their facilities and employment base
2. Newaygo County Economic Development advertises available local development sites for the City of White Cloud
3. Programs at the Newaygo County Career Tech Center are available to develop skills for existing and future employers
4. Further expansion of outdoor recreation opportunities and tourism
5. Buildable downtown core with the opportunity to expand commercial and retail businesses catering to the City's large daytime population

THREATS

Threats can severely impact the economic health of a region. Many industries in Michigan have experienced threats in recent decades, especially in the automotive and manufacturing industries and related sectors. When a region or community relies heavily on several large employers that are a part of the same sector, they can be fairly susceptible to threats because the economy is too reliant upon a single sector. Threats that may impact the City of White Cloud are listed below.

1. Downtown vacancy
2. Needed façade upkeep in the downtown
3. High turnover of retail/service businesses downtown
4. Disorderly appearance of many residential properties around town
5. Outcompeted by neighboring communities such as the City of Newaygo or the City of Fremont
6. Poverty

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Right Place is the regional economic development organization for the region that includes the City of White Cloud. The 2023 - 2025 Strategic Plan outlines a framework and goals to guide growth. The vision of the plan is to position the Greater Grand Rapids area as the growth leader of the Midwest for the next 10 years. Progress toward this goal will be achieved by the continued commitment to the areas of People, Place, and Prosperity and in our strategic growth industries of Advanced Manufacturing, Health Sciences, and Technology. White Cloud is well-positioned to align with these goals. Below are the goals of the plan:

1. **Foster economic growth.** Drive growth and sustainability with existing regional businesses while attracting strategic businesses to bolster the region's economic prosperity.
2. **Champion inclusive opportunities.** Expand economic opportunities to create a more vibrant economy.
3. **Elevate Greater Grand Rapids.** Amplify our story to position the region as a destination of choice.
4. **Boost regional impact.** Deepen the bonds among our communities to create a more globally competitive region.

The City is further supported by the Newaygo County Economic Development Partnership. They have a five member advisory board, with members representing multiple sectors of the local economy. Their vision is for Newaygo County and the surrounding areas to have a diverse and resilient economy, providing economic accessibility and opportunities for upward mobility for all. The Newaygo County Economic Development Partnership is supported by The Right Place, and the two entities work collaboratively to support growth in this region. The City of White Cloud will continue to seek support from both of these entities.



DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT ACTION STRATEGIES

The Economic Development Strategy is a direct reflection of the input of residents, business owners, and other stakeholders through the Master Planning process. Local officials, residents, and business owners in the community have been calling for a plan to support business growth in the City. This document supports their call to action.

Promoting development and redevelopment in the City is supported by the goals and objectives in the Master Plan and aligns with the goals of the Downtown Corridor Plan (Chapter 7). To further support and implement the economic development strategy for White Cloud, there are three components to the strategy: placemaking, streamlining, and marketing. Table 8.1 outlines the key actions that should be implemented in support of this Economic Development Strategy.

TABLE 8.1 | KEY ACTIONS

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Status
1. Routinely review and update economic development strategy. Report progress to the City Council.	City Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Annually, minimum 5 years	Ongoing
2. Find suitable developments for the City's existing OPRA properties & priority sites	City Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, The Right Place	1-5 years	In progress
3. Support local businesses in completing the City's Façade Grant Application Program	City Staff, Planning Commission, Private Businesses	Now	In progress
4. Continue to enforce building and maintenance codes.	City Staff	Now	Ongoing
5. Update C-1 and C-2 zoning districts to ensure that buildings cover the lot to maintain a walkable area, especially in the downtown.	City Staff, Planning Commission	1-2 years	TBD
6. Remove the 5% greenspace C-1 zoning district requirement. Create greenspaces in areas like bulb-outs, curbsides, street corners, pocket parks, and other small public-facing areas that will enhance commercial areas.	City Staff, Planning Commission	1-2 years	
7. Update RPUD ¹ language to permit smaller lot sizes closer to the downtown to promote higher-density.	City Staff, Planning Commission	1-2 years	TBD
8. Update MPUD ² language to permit the inclusion of public art, street trees, benches, and other amenities instead of requiring 15% of the lot to be open space in certain areas like the downtown district to promote higher-density.	City Staff, Planning Commission	1-2 years	
9. Facilitate discussion to consolidate small, narrow industrial lots that are adjacent if businesses are interested in expanding their business.	City Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, Private Property Owner, Businesses Owner	2-5 years	TBD

¹RPUD = Residential Planned Unit Development

²MPUD = Mixed-Use Planned Unit Development

ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES

PLACEMAKING

By creating quality places where people want to live, work, and play, communities are positioned to attract and retain residents and employers. When people are invested in their communities, they are more willing to actively participate in its development and maintenance. The City will continue to work with the property owners, businesses, and community partners in the improvement of the City following the recommendations of the Master Plan, Downtown Corridor Plan (Chapter 7), and the Economic Development Strategy (Chapter 8).

STREAMLINING AND PROCESSES

Having the site plan review process be simple and easy to understand helps encourage investment in a community. The City of White Cloud could streamline this process, demonstrating that they are a “business-friendly” city. Allowing online applications and reducing the number of required printed or hard copy forms would save time and costs for businesses and property owners.

The City could also adopt an administrative review process for minor projects, allowing the Zoning Administrator to approve them under set standards. This would expedite approvals and reduce costs for small projects, leaving the Planning Commission to handle larger developments and special uses.

MARKETING & REGIONAL ALIGNMENT

The City will continue to work with the Newaygo County Economic Development Partnership and The Right Place in marketing the City to new businesses and residents. The City understands that leveraging and advertising its assets locally and regionally will help to elevate prosperity and encourage investment.

RESPONSIBILITY: The Planning Commission, City Council, and City staff will primarily be responsible for accomplishing and implementing this strategy.

TIMEFRAME: The Implementation Table on page 123 (Chapter 10 Implementation) outlines broad timeframes and responsible parties for implementing the goals of this Master Plan. More detailed projects and programs specific to the economic development strategy are broken down into two sections: The Development and Redevelopment Strategies Key Action in Table 8.1 on page 90 and the Downtown Corridor Plan Implementation Table on pages 76-79. Some of the recommendations of this plan dovetail with the actions needed to achieve RRC Certification and should be implemented immediately. However, this plan intends for the economic strategy to be implemented in 3-5 years.

CHAPTER 9

LAND USE





LAND USE

This chapter provides an overview of the existing and future land uses for the City of White Cloud. The development of future land use classifications and map aid City staff, officials, and residents toward a common vision that guides future community growth and development.

The City of White Cloud is seeking to develop, evolve, and grow into a new phase of its identity as a small town that is a gateway to Michigan's "Up North." The community has several well-defined residential neighborhoods that have a strong connection to the centralized downtown. Buildable land that provides future opportunities for residential developments, neighborhood parks, and a few small commercial nodes sprinkled along the edges of the City boundary allows for additions that will add to White Cloud's identity as a quaint, attractive, livable community. State highways M-20 and M-37 bring people to White Cloud daily, and City leaders are looking to capitalize on this opportunity.

A well-defined urban grid street system throughout much of the south-central part of the City provides a strong transportation network – people can use the sidewalks and streets to bike, walk, roll, and drive. A small airport and railroad also contribute to the diverse local transportation system. The local economy is comprised of industrial employers located in the northeast, commercial enterprises along M-37 and M-20, and City and County government agencies sprinkled in locations near Downtown. There are many parcels ripe for redevelopment and infill providing potential developers, employers, and future business owners with areas that are connected to existing infrastructure in prime locations.

The City also has several beloved parks that provide access to recreation green spaces, places to play, relax, and provides access to the White River and Lake White Cloud. Connecting the City of White Cloud to the nearby North Country and Dragon Trails could have a significant impact on the local economy and the quality of life for residents.



EXISTING LAND USE

Identifying the existing uses of the parcels in the City is helpful to understand the state of the existing land uses within the community, and to influence future land use decisions by the Planning Commission and City Council. The following information provides an overview of the existing land use categories, with the corresponding information on Map 9.1.

RESIDENTIAL

This land use classification identifies where residential development is the primary use. Much of the land in the City is identified as a residential land use. There are a few different housing types, but a majority of homes are single-family detached dwellings.

COMMERCIAL

The commercial land use classification includes professional services, retail goods, offices, restaurants, services, and other similar businesses in the City of White Cloud. Commercial land use are concentrated along or near M-37, Wilcox Avenue in Downtown, and some parcels northwest of Downtown, including along Lester Avenue.

INDUSTRIAL

Land identified as industrial is clustered in the northeastern part of the City, east of M-37 and south of the City's northern boundary.

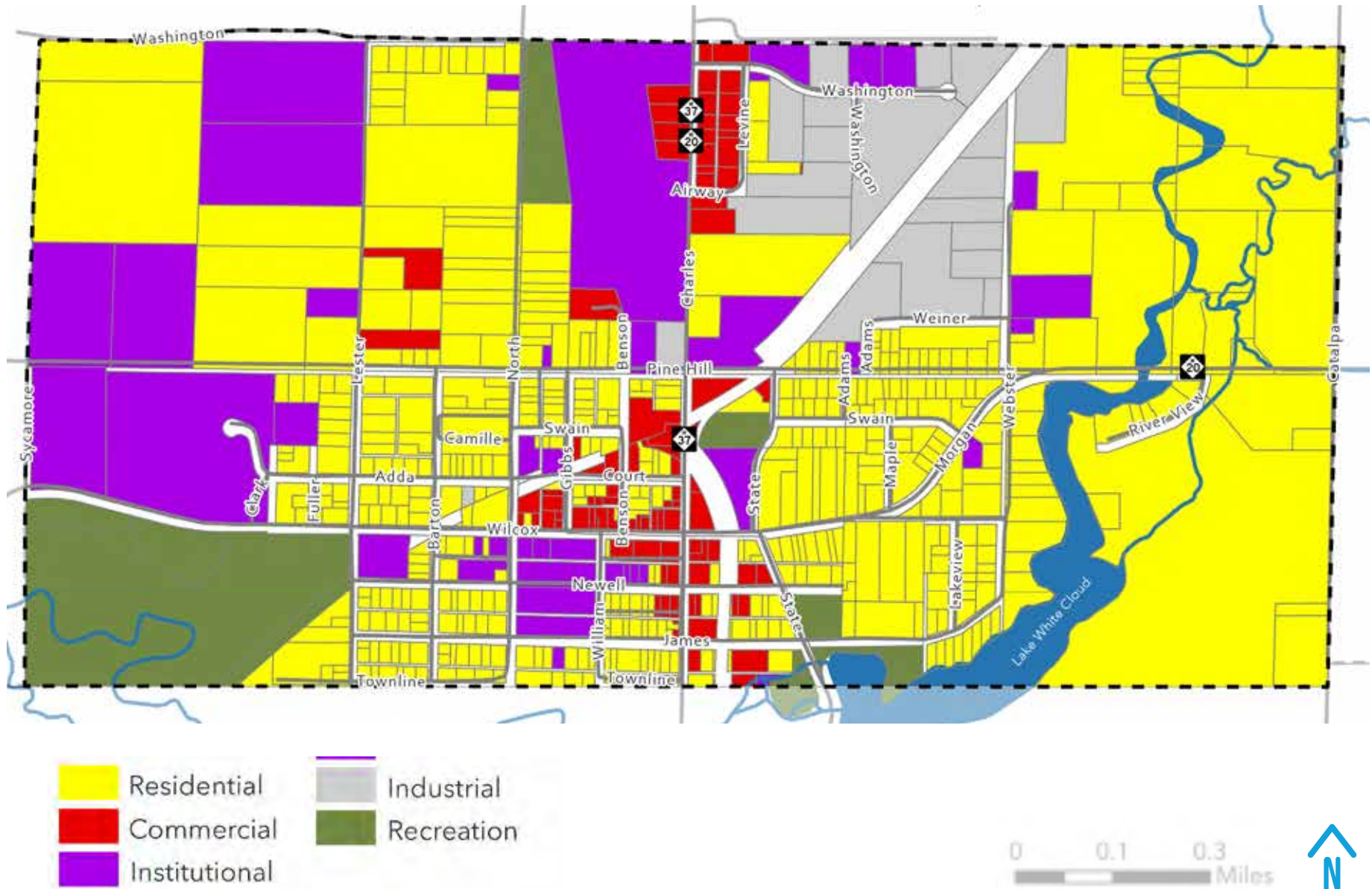
RECREATIONAL

The land use classification identifies parcels where public recreational activities occur. It includes the campground, parks, and the outdoor athletic facilities.

INSTITUTIONAL

This land use classification includes uses that are religious in nature, educational-related facilities, and government uses. In the City of White Cloud, this classification identifies parcels where area churches, municipal government office buildings, the Newaygo County Jail, the library, and K-12 school buildings are located.

MAP 9.1 EXISTING LAND USE



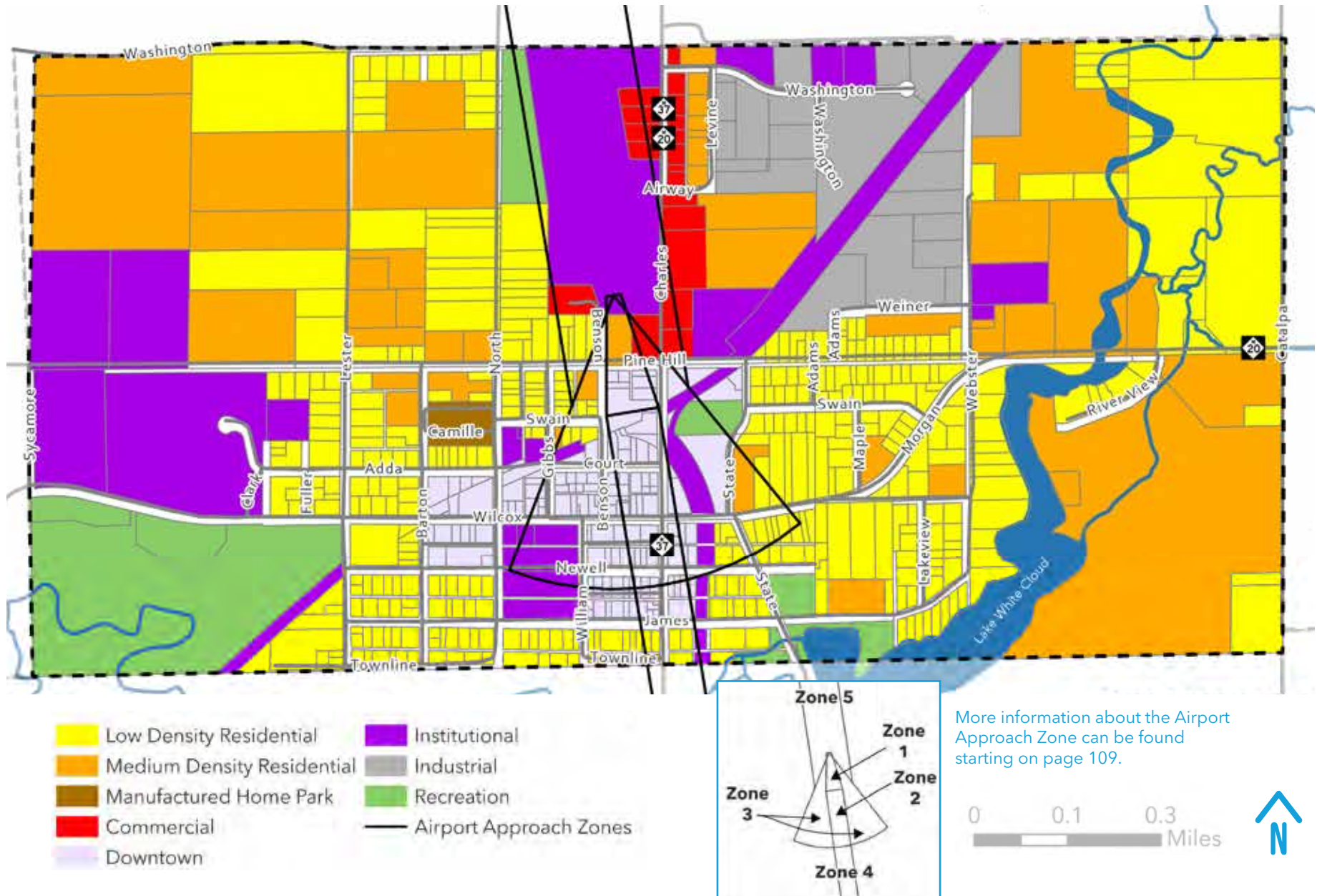


FUTURE LAND USE

The following section describes the future land use designations as illustrated on Map 9.2 for the City of White Cloud. As development and rezoning requests are brought forward to the City, this section is used by the Planning Commission and City staff to review the intended future land use for parcels. Each Future Land Use category is intended to foster a character distinctive of that area. Future land use designations are to be viewed as general with indistinct edges. Where two or more designations adjoin, either land use class may be appropriate depending on several factors such as the land use proposed, available infrastructure, parcel access, and the uses on adjoining properties. The Future Land Use Map provides a general vision for growth and development for the next 10-20 years.

The Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Map relate to each other, however, they are different maps. The Zoning Ordinance and Map is the law regulating the development and use of land in the City. The Future Land Use Map is a policy used to guide the vision of the physical development of the City and to shape the desired forms and uses involved in that development. The Future Land Use Map is not used to enforce the law, but it is used to inform zoning decisions so the City can determine if certain land use decisions are consistent with the overall community vision.

MAP 9.2 FUTURE LAND USE





LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Historically this is the most common residential land use found throughout the City of White Cloud. Some neighborhoods have accessible, tree-lined streets and sidewalks that connect in a predictable grid-like pattern. Properties are characterized by inviting front yards and porches or stoops and consistent building setbacks to promote a symmetrical neighborhood. Tiny houses, townhomes, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and other housing types may be compatible, especially on parcels near Downtown.



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- High-quality building materials and architecture should be used in all residential developments. The existing, nearby neighborhoods should be used as guidance for infill and redevelopment projects so that new dwellings complement and enhance the character of the community.
- Lot size should be determined by considering adjacent and nearby residential parcels. Smaller lot sizes exist in some City neighborhoods while others have larger lots. Providing flexible options will provide developers choices in building dwellings and neighborhoods that will meet the needs of a variety of individuals and households seeking to live in White Cloud. The City may consider reviewing the dimensional requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
- On-site elements like walkways, porches, or stoops will be included, providing a physical connection to the neighborhood.
- Accessory structures like garages and accessory dwelling units should always be set back from primary structures to form a consistent streetscape.
- Promote connections throughout the neighborhoods and to Downtown by developing and maintaining safe nonmotorized facilities and improved street crossings.
- Streets should be lined with streetlights and trees to provide a safe, inviting environment.
- Encourage the use of green infrastructure elements, such as bio-swales, rain gardens, and native and drought-resistant plantings to support stormwater management and reduce the pollutants that may enter into Lake White Cloud and the White River.
- Land for new recreation features like a pocket park or neighborhood park should be set aside for future residential developments or neighborhoods that will be located in the far eastern and western portions of the City where few to no public recreation features exist.

DESIRED LAND USES:

- Single Family Detached Homes (including “Tiny Homes”)
- Single Family Attached Homes (Duplexes, Town Houses)
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Two-Family Homes
- Parks
- Schools
- Places of Worship

PRIMARY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

R-1 Single Family District

POTENTIALLY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

R-2 Multi-Family District





MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

This designation serves to support the construction of different housing types in the City of White Cloud. Dwellings are intended to accommodate options for people of varying ages, abilities, life phases, households, and income levels. Residential developments can be on a smaller lot size, however, the development should meet the scale of the site.

These sites should also address stormwater on-site. Playgrounds and sitting areas that provide recreational opportunities should be incorporated into new developments, especially if they are located far from local parks or recreational green spaces. Nonmotorized infrastructure like sidewalks and trails along with the street layouts should be designed to connect future developments to existing and planned infrastructure.



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Attractive, durable building materials and architecture should enhance the neighborhood's character to form high-quality, lasting developments.
- Building forms should include elements such as walkways, porches, or stoops that provide physical connections to the neighborhood.
- Projects can be one or two stories based on the existing or intended future neighborhood character.
- Pedestrian-oriented movements should be promoted by installing and maintaining accessibility to sidewalks, streets, bike lanes, and trails. Opportunities to maximize connections to public spaces and natural features should be explored.
- Larger residential developments or new neighborhoods should include designated greenspaces and/or access to parks and recreational amenities including play structures.
- Developments should be well landscaped and screened using native, drought-resistant plantings.
- Consider that every individual dwelling in higher-density developments may not need access to a parking spot, and incentivize parking reductions with options like accelerated approval processes and/or timelines. A small number of secure, safe, conveniently located, and covered long-term bike parking areas may also be considered in lieu of parking spots.
- Encourage the use of green infrastructure elements, such as bio-swales, rain gardens, and native and drought-resistant plantings to support stormwater management and reduce the pollutants that may enter into Lake White Cloud and the White River.
- Infill projects that will enhance the existing neighborhood without providing an undue burden on existing utilities are encouraged.
- Places of worship that are located or would be in areas with this kind of land use are permitted here, as long as the development matches the existing character of the neighborhood.

DESIRED LAND USES:

- Single Family Attached
- Single Family Detached
- Duplexes
- Multiplexes
- Townhouses
- Assisted Living Facilities
- Apartments

PRIMARY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

R-2 Multi-Family District

POTENTIALLY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

C-1 Central Business District





MOBILE HOME

Manufactured homes provide an affordable place to live for community members and can also serve as a short-term housing option. Natural vegetative buffers around the manufactured home park can provide shade and buffer for residents from other land uses.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Durable building materials should enhance the existing neighborhood character to form high-quality developments.
- When possible, building forms should include architectural elements like porches or stoops to provide connections to the neighborhood.
- Individual properties, buildings, and neighborhood grounds should be kept neat, clean, and well-maintained to provide a high standard of living for residents.
- Developments should include designated greenspace and/or access to parks, recreational amenities, and play structures when appropriate.

DESIRED LAND USES:

- Mobile Home Parks
- Manufactured Homes
- Related amenities

PRIMARY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

MHC Manufactured Home Community

POTENTIALLY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

N/A



INSTITUTIONAL



Governmental buildings, railroad right-of-ways (in use and abandoned), schools, and the airport comprise the land uses in the institutional classifications that are located throughout the City.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Connections between these uses should be maintained and encouraged since they are important destinations.
- The City and County should work together to address any changes that might occur in ownership, as there are a large number of government-owned parcels in the City, reducing the land that's available for tax revenue.

DESIRED LAND USES:

- Government Buildings
- Transportation Rights-of-Way
- Religiously Affiliated Facilities/Places of Worship
- Schools

PRIMARY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

PD - Public District

POTENTIALLY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

Institutional uses such as government facilities, places of worship, and other facilities may be located in various land use classifications. If the City is contemplating a zoning change due to the redevelopment of an institutional use, the City should evaluate surrounding zoning districts and land uses to ensure that the character of future development is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.



Following the pattern of a more suburban-style commercial development, this designation is defined by a more auto-centric built environment. Parking lots are adjacent to the road, access to the parcel is granted through driveway egresses, and buildings are setback from the curb. Much of this development already exists north of the Downtown future land use category on M-37 where there is immediate access along an important, heavily traveled corridor within the city limits. A consistent style of architectural features will promote a cohesive feel and identity within this part of White Cloud. Allowing for a variety of commercial land uses is key to creating an economically diverse, welcoming business environment within the community.



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Street-facing building façades should add to the aesthetic quality of the street and be designed to break up large building expanses. This can be done by requiring building transparency (>50%), high-quality materials, and regular façade articulations to create a three-dimensional form.
- While it is recognized that this designation is largely automobile-oriented development, steps should be taken to improve these areas. Driveways and parking lots should be well-landscaped and sized appropriately for the uses they serve. Using parking maximums (instead of minimums) can provide space for nonmotorized facilities like sidewalks, bike lanes, and bike racks in developments as well as minimize impervious surfaces which contribute to stormwater management issues.
- Development patterns that encourage multi-modal access, including enhancing the safety of people biking, walking, or rolling (using wheelchairs or other mobility devices) and transit stops should also be encouraged, rooted in complete streets concepts.
- Nonmotorized connections to nearby neighborhoods should be encouraged, allowing convenient access without needing to drive a vehicle to residents who live nearby.
- Landscaping should contribute to softening and shading the corridor. Plants should be native and drought-tolerant when possible.
- The use of green infrastructure elements is encouraged, such as bioswales, rain gardens, and native plantings for all development and street projects.

DESIRED LAND USES:

- Retail/Commercial
- Service
- Office
- Mixed Use

PRIMARY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

C-2 General Business Commercial
District

POTENTIALLY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

N/A





DOWNTOWN

The City is seeking to redevelop Downtown to infuse energy and make it a year-round destination for residents and visitors. Centrally located within the community, some of the existing buildings provide a strong framework for future buildings to emulate: peaked roofs, covered sidewalks, buildings set adjacent to the sidewalk, 3 story buildings, and historical charm. Existing streetscape elements like street trees, streetlights, banners, and street furniture provide examples to be replicated throughout the Downtown.



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- A healthy mix of active ground floor uses that fosters a welcoming, people-oriented environment (restaurants, cafes, demonstration studios, retail and service businesses, etc.) is highly encouraged. Sidewalk sales, outdoor seating, and public art should contribute to the streetscape, creating a sense of place, especially along M-37. Dwellings and office spaces or similar uses that do not contribute to an active street should be located on the upper floors of buildings whenever possible.

- Consider if the (re)development would contribute to or detract from the character and ambiance intended for Downtown White Cloud. This includes the number of floors and the total building height. Density is desired in this district, especially along Wilcox Avenue and M-37 – the heart of the Downtown.
- Density should be encouraged. Buildings should be adjacent to the sidewalk and the first floors of buildings facing the street should have a high degree of transparency. Multi-story buildings that complement the historic character of the existing building stock should be encouraged.
- Reprioritize mobility in Downtown by enhancing infrastructure that allows people to move safely and conveniently by biking, walking, and rolling (using wheeled mobility devices like wheelchairs). Maintain a connected, complete streets network that enhances pedestrian safety by slowing traffic and improving key intersections and multi-modal crossings.
- When thinking about parking for tenants, customers, and/or staff, remember not everyone has or wants to use a vehicle. The historically traditional number of parking spaces desired or the use of parking maximum thresholds may not be necessary when accommodating vehicle storage.
- Bike racks should be installed in visible, convenient locations to promote mobility options other than the personal vehicle. Placing racks near the curb, where street furniture is located, and near building entrances provides a message of priority, safety, and security for people choosing to use bicycles.
- Include and maintain streetscape enhancements, such as street trees, sidewalks, decorative paving patterns, lights, plantings, waste receptacles, bike racks, and benches.
- Encourage the use of green infrastructure elements, such as bio-swales, rain gardens, and native and drought-resistant plantings.
- Maximize connections to public spaces.
- Places of worship that are located or would be in areas with this kind of land use are permitted here, as long as the development matches the existing character of the neighborhood.

DESIRED LAND USES:

- Retail
- Office
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Multi-Family Residential
- Recreation

PRIMARY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

C-1 Central Business District

POTENTIALLY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

R-2 Multi-Family District





INDUSTRIAL

The industrial uses are clustered in the northcentral/northeast part of the City, east of M-37 across from the White Cloud airport, and many uses are for manufacturing facilities. The expectation is that most parcels identified as an "industrial" land use will remain in that use, and significant expansion to additional lands is not anticipated. Having housing located in nearby neighborhoods also helps provide people an option to live near where they work, providing an additional benefit to the land uses and their colocations in the City.



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Building façades on the street should add to the aesthetic quality of the street and be designed to break up large building expanses. This can be done by requiring building transparency (>50%), high-quality materials, and regular façade articulations to create a three-dimensional form.
- Provide a buffer between the industrial areas from existing and planned residential development to protect residents from obtrusive noise, sound, smell, and light pollution.
- While development will be more automobile-oriented, driveways and parking lots should be well-landscaped and sized appropriately for the uses they serve. Considerations for nonmotorized facilities like transit stops and/or bike parking (bike racks) could be made, as not everyone owns a vehicle and drives to work.
- The use of green infrastructure elements is encouraged, such as bio-swales, rain gardens, native, and drought-resistant plantings.
- Loading areas should be either on the side or at the rear of the building, hidden from public view.

DESIRED LAND USES:

- Manufacturing
- Processing
- Assembly
- Research
- Office

PRIMARY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

I-1 Industrial District

POTENTIALLY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

N/A





RECREATIONAL

This designation is used to identify parks in the City of White Cloud, including the County-owned campground. The City is looking to maintain and improve these features over time following the recommendations of the City's 5-year Parks and Recreation Plan.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Incorporate universal design elements and recreation amenities that serve people of all ages and abilities.
- Maintain an appropriate buffer comprised of natural features along the waterways like Lake White Cloud and the White River which will help clean pollutants from stormwater runoff after

significant/seasonal precipitation or snowmelt events. Provide appropriate buffers to sensitive natural features, such as steep slopes and high-quality natural features, when considering improvements.

- The development of new parks and recreation spaces should be consistent with adopted plans.
- Connections between these uses should be maintained and encouraged since they are important destinations within the City, including local and regional trails.

DESIRED LAND USES:

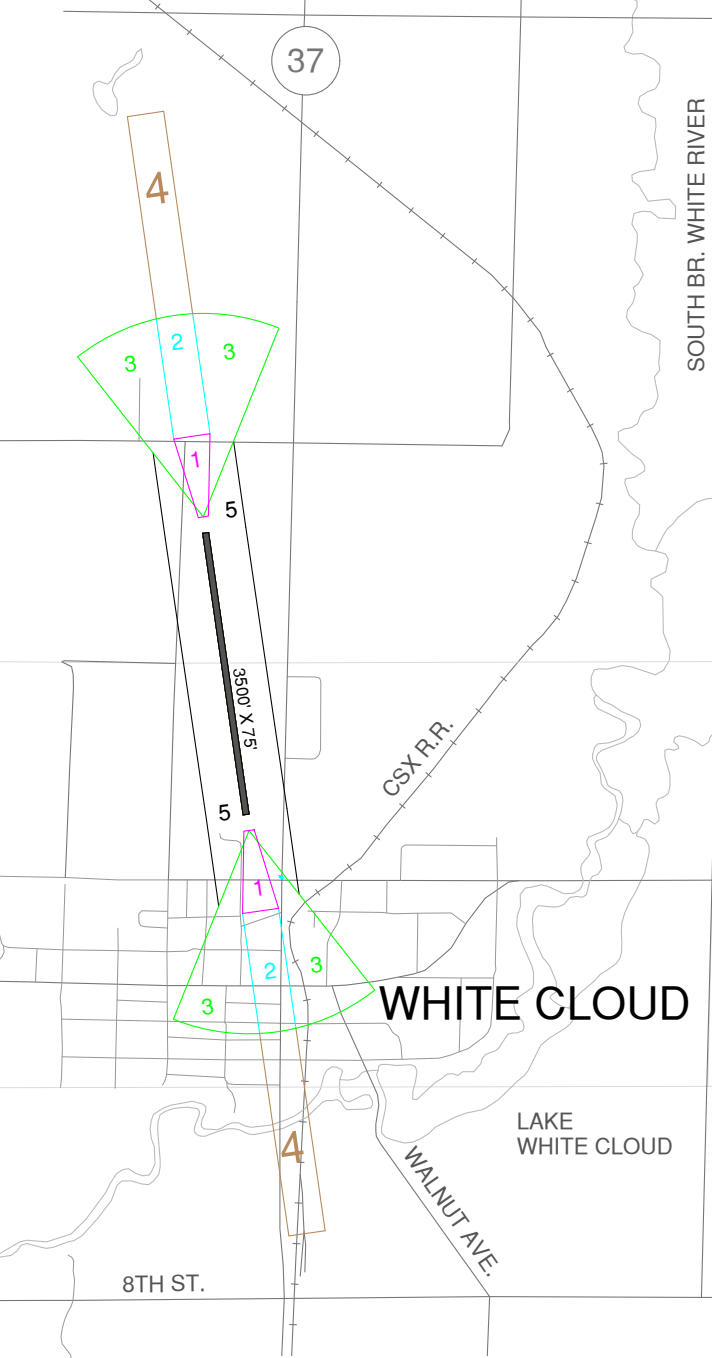
- Parks

PRIMARY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

Any residential or commercial district

POTENTIALLY COMPATIBLE ZONING:

PD - Public District



THE CITY OF WHITE CLOUD AIRPORT AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE MDOT AIRPORT APPROACH PLAN

CITY OF WHITE CLOUD AIRPORT

The City of White Cloud owns and operates the public airport. The airport is uncontrolled and is used for general aviation purposes. The Federal Aviation Administration National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems for 2017-2021 includes the facility as a basic general aviation facility. The airport covers an area of 72 acres.

The facility has an airport approach plan that was developed by MDOT in 2004. The airport approach plan considers how land is used in the vicinity of the airport to support safe aircraft operations and mitigate any potential negative effects on the surrounding community. The intent of the plan is manage the land surrounding an airport to ensure safety, efficiency, and minimal environmental impact.

MDOT WHITE CLOUD AIRPORT APPROACH PLAN AND CITY OF WHITE CLOUD ZONING

In the case of the City of White Cloud, the south approach for the White Cloud Airport's runway coincides with much of the Downtown area and land to the north of Wilcox Avenue. When the Michigan Department of Transportation approved the Airport Approach Plan in 2004, the zoning classification of City parcels within the runway approach was essentially "frozen," limiting land uses within the approach to what they were in 2004, or to less intense uses within the accident safe zones.

Considering the zoning districts that were used in the City of White Cloud in 2004, land that was zoned commercial within the airport approach Zone 2 could be repurposed or changed in the future as a similar zoning district - something like a light industrial use. This flexibility allows for some evolution in economic activity and development while maintaining a low level of risk and impact on airport operations. However, the parcels within Zone 2 could not be rezoned into something significantly different that would include a more intense use, like single-family residential zoning. The increase in land use intensity may increase the safety risk for the community within the zone in the event of an aircraft-related incident. This decision was made by MDOT as a means to ensure safety and minimize potential conflicts between airport operations and local land use.

Additional information, including images, can be found in the Appendix.

The implications of this zoning freeze are notable for the growth and development of Downtown White Cloud. While the safety and operational efficiency of the airport is a priority, this may impact the potential for revitalizing some parcels within the Downtown. The City will need to balance revitalizing areas within the Downtown and City along with the need to provide safety considerations for airport operations. The zoning restriction impacts urban planning and economic development strategies for the City of White Cloud. City staff and developers should navigate these constraints when considering projects and investments in these areas. Intentional coordination between the City and the airport authorities is needed to ensure that development plans align with airport and approach plan safety regulations while striving to meet the community's economic and social needs.

HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

Referring to the maps in Appendix B, building heights are restricted in the approach to the runway at intervals of 10 feet that progressively get more restrictive as one gets closer to the runway. This information is also listed in zones 1-5 in the list below. At a distance of approximately 200 feet from the end of the runway, land is supposed to remain clear of any obstructions, including buildings, trees, cell phone towers, and other obstacles to ensure safe airplane passage. The height restrictions above certain areas in the City were calculated using the heights provided in the Map titled "Approach Protection with Aerial" in Appendix B, and subtracting the approximate known land elevations. As a result of some data limitations, there is a margin of error in these calculations of approximately 5 feet. These restricted building heights approaching the White Cloud Airport are summarized below.

Building height limitations at the boundaries of each approach zone:

Zone 1:

North boundary: 0 feet

South boundary: 85 feet

Zone 2:

North boundary: 85 feet

South boundary: 175 feet

Zone 3:

North boundary: 0 feet

South boundary: 175 feet

Zone 4:

North boundary: 175 feet

South boundary: 200 feet or greater

Zone 5:

Within approximately 200 feet of the center of the runway: 0 feet

The eastern and western boundaries of Zone 5: 60 feet

AIRPORT APPROACH PLAN LAND USE GUIDELINES

The MDOT airport approach plan includes five accident safety zones that are identified in relationship to the airport runway and have a number of land use planning strategies that are meant to influence development and encourage safety. The following section identifies the characteristics of each zone that are identified on the Future Land Use map. The materials related to the MDOT airport approach plan and the City of White Cloud 2004 Zoning Map materials are found in Appendix B.

ZONE 1:

Land Use Guidelines:

- » Population Density: Avoid land uses that concentrate people indoors or outdoors.
- » Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use: Prohibit all residential land uses.
- » Special Function Land Use: Prohibit all special function land uses.

Land Use Planning Strategies:

1. Population Density:
 - Limit density to 0-5 people/acre.
 - Encourage airport sponsors to purchase property if possible.
 - Zone for uses that will be relatively unoccupied by people (e.g., mini-storage, small parking lots).
2. Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use:
 - Create a height hazard overlay ordinance around the airport.
 - Obtain aviation and obstruction easements.
3. Special Function Land Use:
 - Prohibit overhead utilities and all noise-sensitive land uses.
 - Zone land for uses other than schools, playfields, hospitals, nursing homes, daycare facilities, and churches.
 - Limit storage of large quantities of hazardous or flammable material.
 - Ensure permitted uses will not create large areas of standing water or generate smoke/steam.

- Shift structures away from the runway centerlines during site development.
- Prohibit high overhead outdoor lighting.
- Require downward shading of lighting to reduce glare.
- Evaluate all possible permitted conditional uses to ensure compatibility.

ZONE 2:

Land Use Guidelines:

- » Population Density: Avoid land uses that concentrate people indoors or outdoors.
- » Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use: Prohibit all residential land uses.
- » Special Function Land Use: Prohibit all special function land uses.

Land Use Planning Strategies:

1. Population Density:
 - Limit density to 0-5 people/acre.
 - Zone land uses that will be relatively unoccupied by people (e.g., mini-storage, small parking lots).
2. Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use:
 - Create a height hazard overlay ordinance around the airport.
 - Obtain aviation and obstruction easements.
 - Shift structures away from the

runway centerlines during site development.

- Prohibit mobile home parks.
- Landscaping should establish only low-growing vegetation.
- Prohibit high overhead outdoor lighting.
- Require downward shading of lighting to reduce glare.
- Evaluate all possible permitted conditional uses to ensure compatibility.

3. Special Function Land Use:

- Prohibit overhead utilities and all noise-sensitive land uses.
- Zone land for uses other than schools, playfields, hospitals, nursing homes, daycare facilities, and churches.
- Limit storage of large quantities of hazardous or flammable material.
- Ensure permitted uses will not create large areas of standing water or generate smoke/steam.

ZONE 3:

Land Use Guidelines:

- » Population Density: Avoid land uses which concentrate people indoors or outdoors.

- » Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use: Limit residential development to low-density housing standards. All non-residential land uses permitted outright, subject to Population Density and Special Function Land Use guidelines.
- » Special Function Land Use: Prohibit all special function land uses.

Land Use Planning Strategies:

1. Population Density:

- Limit population density to <25 people/acre.
- Zone land uses that, by their nature, will be relatively unoccupied by people (e.g., mini-storage, small parking lots).

2. Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use:

- Create a height hazard overlay ordinance around the airport.
- Obtain avigation and obstruction easements.
- During site development, shift all structures away from the runway centerlines if possible.
- Prohibit mobile home parks.
- Landscaping requirements shall establish only low-growing vegetation.

- Prohibit high overhead outdoor lighting.
- Require downward shading of lighting to reduce glare.
- Evaluate all possible permitted conditional uses to ensure compatible land use.

3. Special Function Land Use:

- Prohibit overhead utilities and all noise-sensitive land uses.
- Zone land for uses other than schools, playfields, hospitals, nursing homes, daycare facilities, and churches.
- Limit storage of large quantities of hazardous or flammable materials.
- Ensure permitted uses will not create large areas of standing water or generate smoke/steam, etc.

ZONE 4:

Land Use Guidelines:

- » Population Density: Limit population concentrations.
- » Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use: Limit residential development to low-density housing.
- » Special Function Land Use: Prohibit all special function land uses.

Land Use Planning Strategies:

1. Population Density:
 - Limit density to <40 people/acre in buildings and <75 persons/acre outside buildings.
2. Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use:
 - Create a height hazard overlay ordinance around the airport.
 - Obtain avigation easements.
 - Cluster development to maintain density as long as open space remains unbuilt.
 - Place clustered development away from the extended runway centerline.
 - Prohibit mobile home parks.
 - Require downward shading of lighting to reduce glare.
 - Evaluate all possible permitted conditional uses to ensure compatibility.
3. Special Function Land Use:
 - Evaluate noise-sensitive land uses in light of aircraft noise contour lines when establishing new zoning.
 - Prohibit high overhead utilities and all noise-sensitive land uses.

- Zone land for uses other than schools, playfields, hospitals, nursing homes, daycare facilities, and churches.
- Limit storage of large quantities of hazardous or flammable material.
- Ensure permitted uses will not create large areas of standing water or generate smoke/steam.

ZONE 5:

Land Use Guidelines:

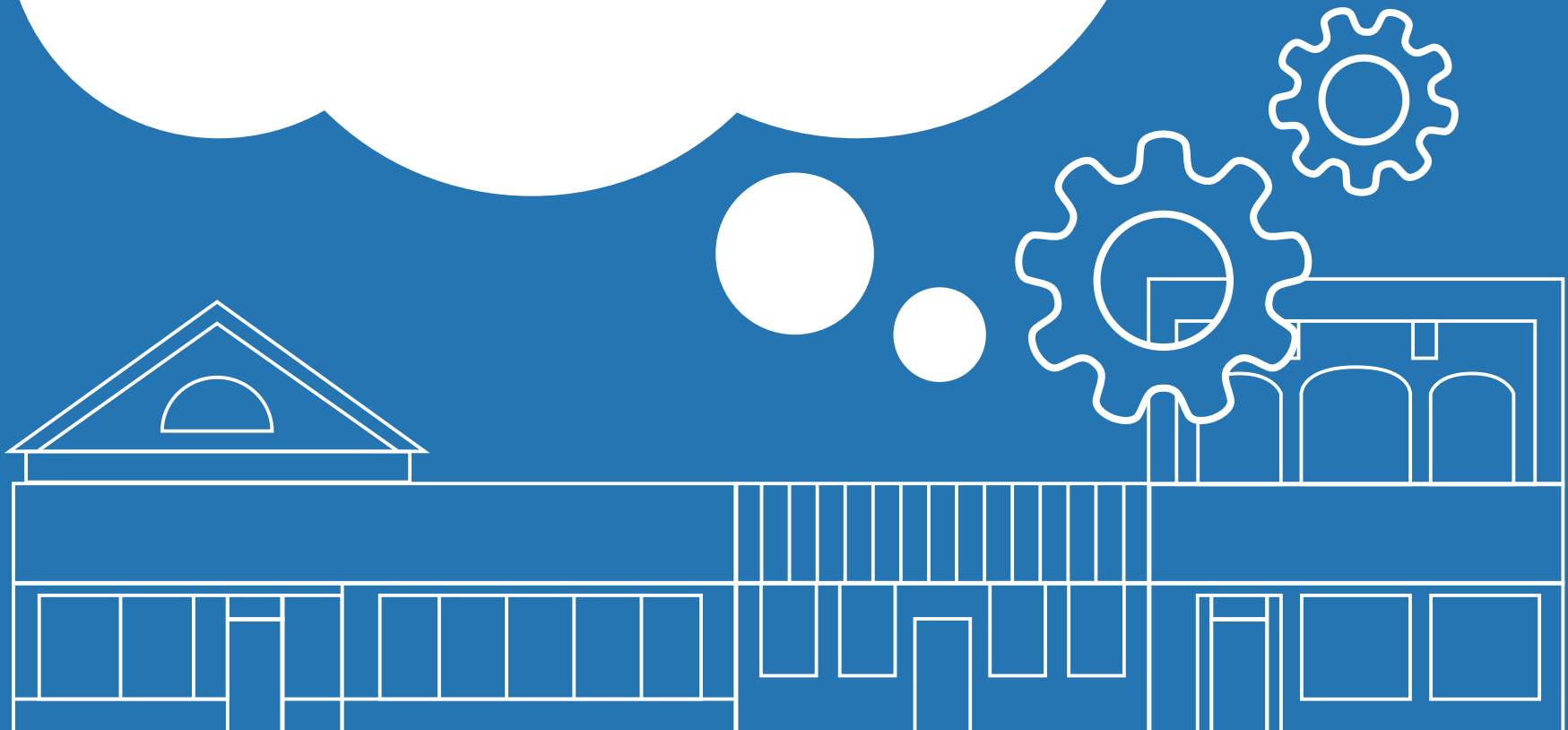
- » Population Density: Avoid land uses that concentrate people indoors or outdoors.
- » Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use: Prohibit all residential land uses.
- » Special Function Land Use: Prohibit all special function land uses.

Land Use Planning Strategies:

1. Population Density:
 - Limit density to 0-5 people/acre.
 - Zone land uses that will be relatively unoccupied by people (e.g., mini-storage, small parking lots).
2. Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use:
 - Create a height hazard overlay ordinance around the airport.
3. Special Function Land Use:
 - Obtain avigation and obstruction easements.
 - Shift structures away from the runway centerlines during site development.
 - Landscaping should establish only low-growing vegetation.
 - Prohibit high overhead outdoor lighting.
 - Require downward shading of lighting to reduce glare.
 - Evaluate all possible permitted conditional uses to ensure compatibility.

CHAPTER 10

IMPLEMENTATION



IMPLEMENTATION

Achieving the goals of the City of White Cloud Master Plan requires continuous, intentional implementation. The Plan provides a road map for redevelopment and investment in the City based on community input and feedback from the Planning Commission. Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9 should be used as a guide to inform land use and community development decisions that the Planning Commission, City Council, and City staff will need to make. City staff and leadership must proactively collaborate in pursuing the Plan's goals.

The strategies identified in this chapter provide a framework for the plan's implementation and can be thought of as the Plan's "To Do" list. Their descriptions are general to provide the City with flexibility in deciding what work assignments and tasks to take on. Each strategy is important to achieving the vision for the improvement and direction of the City of White Cloud.

The City Council, Planning Commission, and City staff have the primary responsibility for implementing the strategies and developing and completing the work assignments. Strategies may include special studies or assignments, ordinance revision or development, program review, planning activities, and/or administrative procedures. Additionally, some implementation strategies will require public and private investment and/or outside professional assistance while others may be integrated into the City's operations. The City will have to balance financial, political, and other factors in determining how and when to implement the strategies listed in the following pages.

ZONING ORDINANCE REVISIONS

The City of White Cloud Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation mechanism for the Plan. The Zoning Ordinance is a law adopted by the City Council that regulates land use and development in the City. Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance will be needed to turn the goals and policies outlined in the Master Plan into enforceable regulations, ensuring that new development follows the Plan's intent.

Zoning Ordinance revisions occur in two ways: (1) the City may opt to engage in a comprehensive revision of the entire Zoning Ordinance, or (2) the City can work to update different parts of the Zoning Ordinance targeted to specific issues, concerns, or points of conflict in the existing ordinance. A comprehensive review of the Zoning Ordinance is recommended from time to time to incorporate new statutory requirements, case law, good planning practice, and to ensure that all parts of the document are working together appropriately.

Suggested revisions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Overall, the Zoning Ordinance may be easier to work with if it were reformatted to give it a more modern look and feel. Graphics throughout the document could be updated and modernized, and in some cases, additional graphics could be used to illustrate complex concepts. There are also a few instances where provisions are duplicated, while others create conflicts with the ordinance. These could be cleaned up when the City embarks on a thorough overhaul of the document. During this process, special attention should be given to processes to ensure they are clear, fair, predictable, and lead to desired outcomes.

2. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance should be considered to remove regulatory barriers to creating additional forms of residential development. Suggestions include:
 - a. Certain housing types are only permitted in a PUD or only with special land use approval, and the City should consider amendments to permit more housing types by right.
 - b. Allow for the retrofitting of a single-family home with up to three units, allow duplex homes by right, and/or allow conversions to tri- and quad-plex buildings.
 - c. The Zoning Ordinance contains some provisions related to accessory dwelling units that may be difficult to enforce and may need to be revised to ensure that they are meeting the intent of this plan.
 - d. The City should consider less restrictive provisions related to residential nonconformities. The intent with this type of change is to allow nonconforming residential buildings to be rebuilt or restored after being destroyed by wind, fire, or other natural disasters in an effort to reduce barriers to financing for potential buyers.
 - e. Review the minimum dwelling unit area requirements for single-family, two-family, and multi-family units. In addition, review minimum lot area provisions for various types of residential development, and make these regulations less restrictive where possible.
 - f. Clarification related to the condominium and platting requirements
3. Standards should be adopted that require or incentivize nonmotorized trail connections within new development and to the broader network.
4. Industrial provisions should be reviewed to ensure that the regulations align with the district's intent.
5. Parking regulations should be revised. The City should consider removing minimum parking requirements or introducing flexibility in the requirements. For example, many communities allow developments to count public parking (either on- or off-street) within a certain radius to satisfy parking requirements. This can help reduce regulatory roadblocks and allow flexibility to encourage new development and redevelopment in commercial areas.
6. The City should explore ways to accommodate alternative means of transportation to reduce the amount of surface parking that is required.

The Planning Commission is primarily responsible for the tasks involved in implementing this strategy with significant support from staff, and possibly outside support. Several of the changes proposed in a revised ordinance will likely generate public interest and discussion, so public input should be solicited at several points throughout the process. While the Planning Commission will be the primary proponent of this effort, the City Council will have final approving authority over any changes made to the Zoning Ordinance.



REIMAGINE WHITE CLOUD: FOLLOWING THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR PLAN (CHAPTER 7) AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CHAPTER 8)

The City invested resources into developing plans to guide future development in the community by creating the Downtown Corridor Plan and Economic Development Strategy found in the Master Plan. Following these recommendations creates a comprehensive approach to guide development and redevelopment, especially in the downtown area. Local officials and City staff should use these elements often as developers and property owners come before the Planning Commission, in reviewing site plans, working with economic development agencies, when considering grant or other kinds of funding opportunities, and in working with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). See each of these chapters for the list of recommendations.

HOUSING

White Cloud needs more housing, and especially affordable housing. Housing is in high demand by people who want to live within the City limits. Following recommendations from Chapter 9 Land Use, the Planning Commission should use the chapter to direct future residential developments to the identified preferred locations for various housing types. In addition to making changes to the Zoning Ordinance, the City should work with property owners and developers to build various types of housing for the community. Different housing styles should include attached single family housing like duplexes or triplexes (which can also be called townhouses), accessory dwelling units, or “ADUs,” multi-family homes, and assisted living dwellings. Single family home types that are also popular and more likely to be affordable include “tiny homes” or “cottage courts.” Infrastructure networks should be well-maintained and address capacity issues before residential developments increase.

The City should work closely with the property owners to understand their preferences and desires, identify timeframes for possible development, evaluate market conditions, and address the opinions of residents. Additional work beyond the Master Plan will be needed to balance these things to create housing that is suitable and aligns with the character of White Cloud. Care should be taken to ensure that marketing efforts for these properties coincide with the ability and interest of the property owner to develop them.

COMPLETE STREETS

This Master Plan supports a complete streets policy for the City of White Cloud. A complete streets policy encourages a design approach that enables safe travel for multiple modes of transportation including vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, and public transit. Through this approach, thoroughfares are planned, designed, and constructed to allow safe access for all types of users and modes of transportation.

The City's primary objective will be to work with MDOT to promote healthy lifestyles for people of all ages, abilities, and life circumstances. Sidewalks on both sides of a street, bike infrastructure, and other features will be promoted when appropriate. Complete streets can result in increased safety for all road users, improved public health, a cleaner environment, mobility equity, and enhanced quality of life through more inviting streets.

Another key motivation to enact complete streets policies is that Michigan law encourages MDOT to give additional consideration to grant applicants with these policies. This also helps clarify the City's intent of developing a connected, safe, inclusive transportation system that supports vulnerable road users, especially people who bike, walk, and roll, when working with MDOT to make changes to state-owned roads. Knowing that the public supports improvements that slow down vehicular traffic in areas in residential and certain commercial areas and mixed-use areas like in the downtown and along portions of State Street and Maple Street will help the City craft a transportation network that will support the evolution of the identity of White Cloud. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act has also been amended to stipulate that transportation improvements be respectful of the surrounding context, further ensuring that more equitable and attractive streets become a reality.

NONMOTORIZED INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The community is interested in building more sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails based on input that was shared during the creation of the Master Plan. The City should consider having a nonmotorized plan to direct the development of nonmotorized infrastructure. By connecting to the existing trails and sidewalks, the plan would help the City build a network of connected facilities that would allow people to move about the community and reach local destinations by walking, biking, and using wheeled mobility devices like wheelchairs.

Once the plan is developed, the City should work to implement these upgrades as financial resources and staff capability are available, and follow a capital improvement plan. The City should examine these recommendations and be poised to take advantage of any local resurfacing or reconstructing projects, MDOT construction projects, or other opportunities that may become available.

FUNDING NONMOTORIZED IMPROVEMENTS

The Safe Routes to School program can be used to design and construct any nonmotorized infrastructure that provides a connection from a school to a neighborhood. The Michigan Fitness Council runs the statewide program that can provide planning and construction grants for routes that provide a new or improved nonmotorized infrastructure connection to a school. The Safe Routes to School program helps students bike, walk, and roll to school safely, unifies neighborhoods, and increases students' ability to learn. Through infrastructure improvements, safety education, and incentives, kids are encouraged to get to school by means other than riding in a car.

The City may be eligible to pursue the United States Department of Transportation Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grants. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary program with \$5 billion in appropriated funds over 5 years, 2022-2026. The SS4A program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious

injuries. These grants are for developing safer transportation infrastructure like sidewalks, intersection improvements, and other construction projects, especially for people who bike, walk and roll. The City needs to have their own or be a part of a multi-jurisdictional SS4A Action Plan to be eligible.

The City can also seek Michigan Department of Transportation Transportation Alternative Program grant funds, also known as TAP funds. TAP is a competitive grant program that uses federal transportation funds designated by Congress for specific activities that enhance the intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. A guidebook is available online to help communities apply for the grant. Before pursuing a grant, a community liaison is recommended to talk to a MDOT TAP grant coordinator.

If developing a recreational off-road paved or unpaved trail, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant is a viable alternative program. Local units of government are eligible to peruse the program for outdoor recreation projects provided that they have an approved and up-to-date 5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan on file with the DNR. Contact a DNR State grant coordinator for more information. Trust fund grants can be used for land acquisition or construction if the land has already been acquired.

UTILITY AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

A utility audit was completed in Chapter 5 of the Master Plan. In support of keeping the utilities maintained and ready for future residential, commercial, and/or industrial development, the City should review and consider following the recommendations of the audit. Identifying tasks that should be considered part of the City's capital improvement plan (CIP). The City should also work with the White Cloud Sherman Utilities Authority to ensure that the waste water system is also capable and well-maintained ahead of any significant development.

MASTER PLAN UPDATES

The Plan should be reviewed periodically by the Planning Commission. At a minimum, the land use portion should be reviewed annually and, following the state law, updated at least every five years. An annual review allows the City to stay on track to implement the Plan's recommendations and identify changes that may need to be made when the time comes for a significant update. A periodic review of the Plan also ensures that the information is current and relevant.





IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

The timeline provides a roadmap for implementing recommendations found in the plan. The table includes a variety of categories, which are defined below.

Task: The specific assignment to be implemented and accomplished. A narrative for the task is specified in the previous section of this chapter.

Timeframe: The period of time in which a task should be started. Time frames can vary in length and may be influenced by the priority level and perceived complexity. Defined as "near-term," "mid-term," or "long-term."

Party: Group(s) that would be involved in leading this task.

Priority: How important the accomplishment of a task is to implementing the Plan's vision. Defined as "Low," "Medium," or "High."

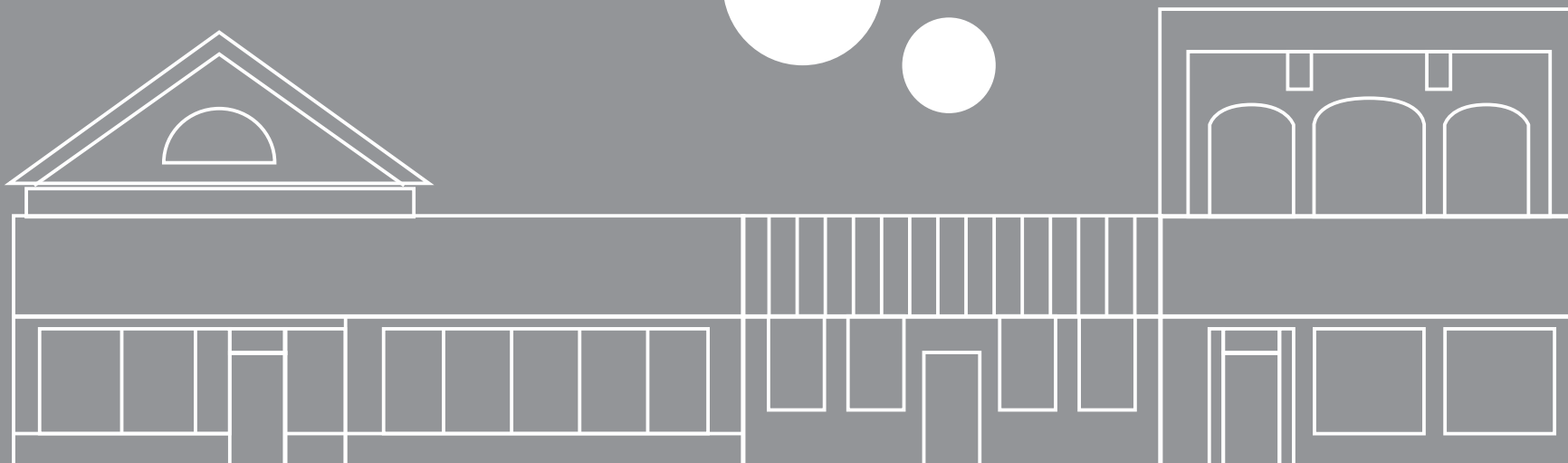
Perceived Complexity: The perception of how easy or difficult the completion of a given task may be based on factors such as financial resources, political support, the number of different agencies involved, construction, staffing, and others. Defined as "Simple," "Moderate," or "Complex."

IMPLEMENTATION TABLE

Task	Timeframe	Party(s)	Priority	Perceived Complexity
Master Plan Update	Every 5 years	Planning Commission	High	Moderate
Update Zoning Ordinance	Near-Term	Planning Commission	High	Moderate
Update City's Parks and Recreation Plan	Every 5 years	City Staff	Medium	Simple
Support a variety of residential developments being built in the City.	Near-Term	City Staff, Planning Commission, Property Owners, Developers	High	Complex
Support future development in the City by maintaining and addressing capacity issues in the utility, water, sewer, internet, and other infrastructure networks ahead of development projects.	Near-Term	City Staff	Medium	Moderate
Utility Audit Recommendation: Investigate and report water quality of the well supply for the City's drinking water.	Mid-Term	City Staff	High	Moderate
Utility Audit Recommendation: Plan for large water use expansions such as schools, industry, splash pads, and campgrounds.	Long-term	City Staff	Medium	Complex
Utility Audit Recommendation: Require site plans to be approved by an engineer familiar with the water infrastructure to ensure that pressure-reducing valves, isolation valves, and water mains are located and sized appropriately to handle future expansion of the water infrastructure.	Near-Term	City Staff, Planning Commission	High	Simple
Develop and adopt a nonmotorized plan.	Mid-Term	City Staff, City Council	Medium	Complex

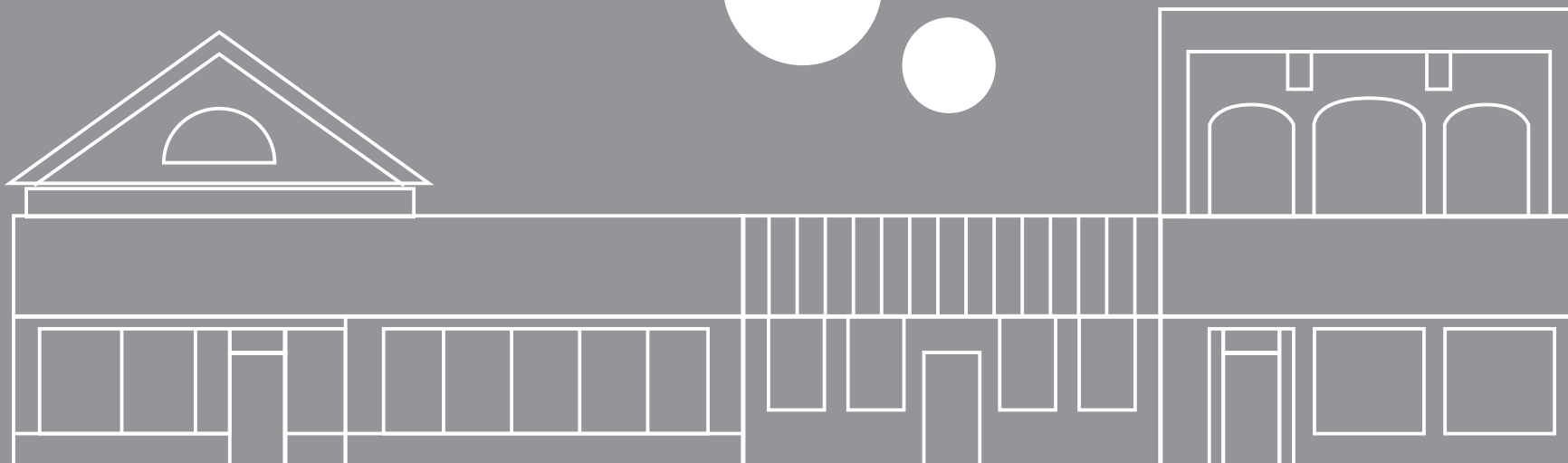
APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

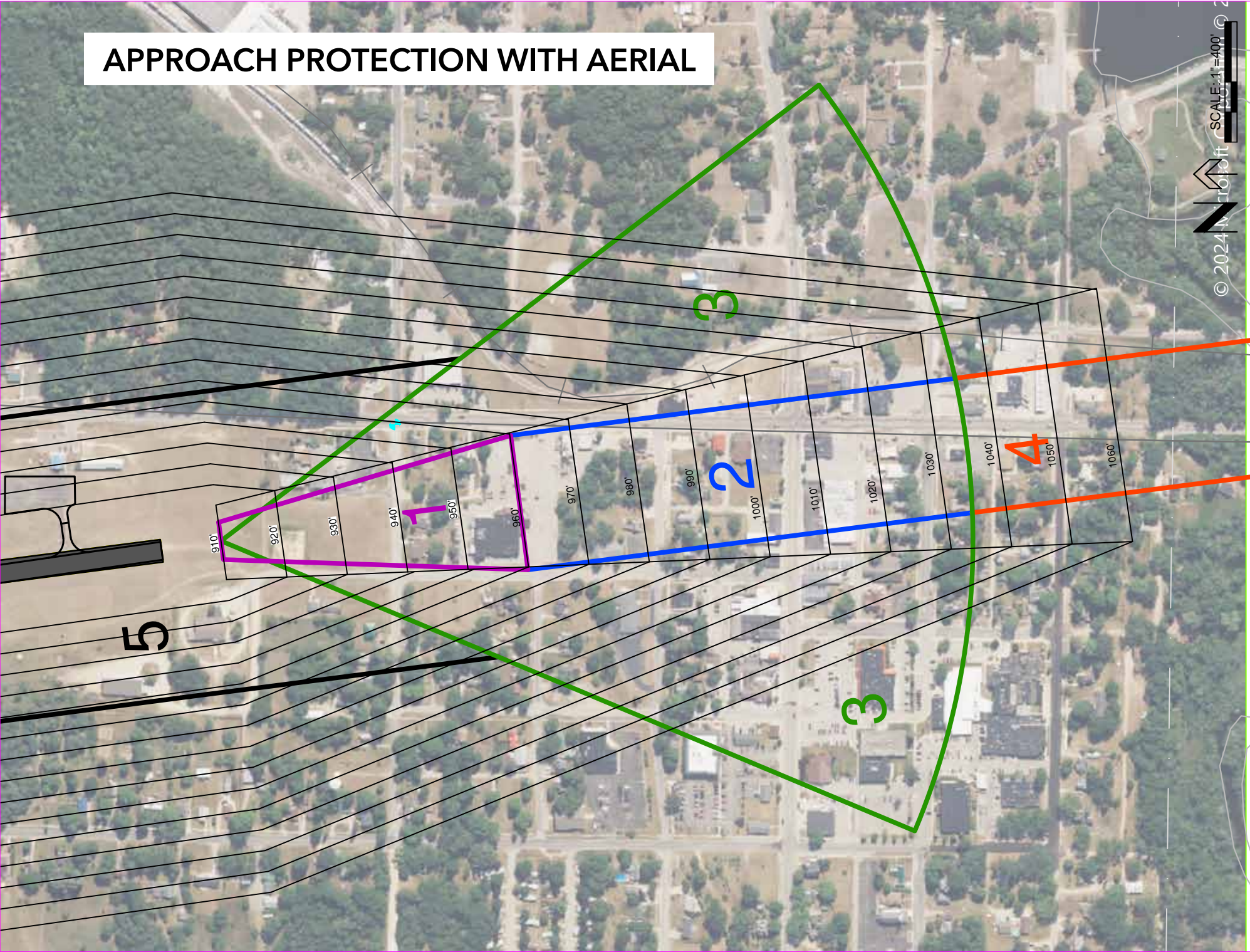


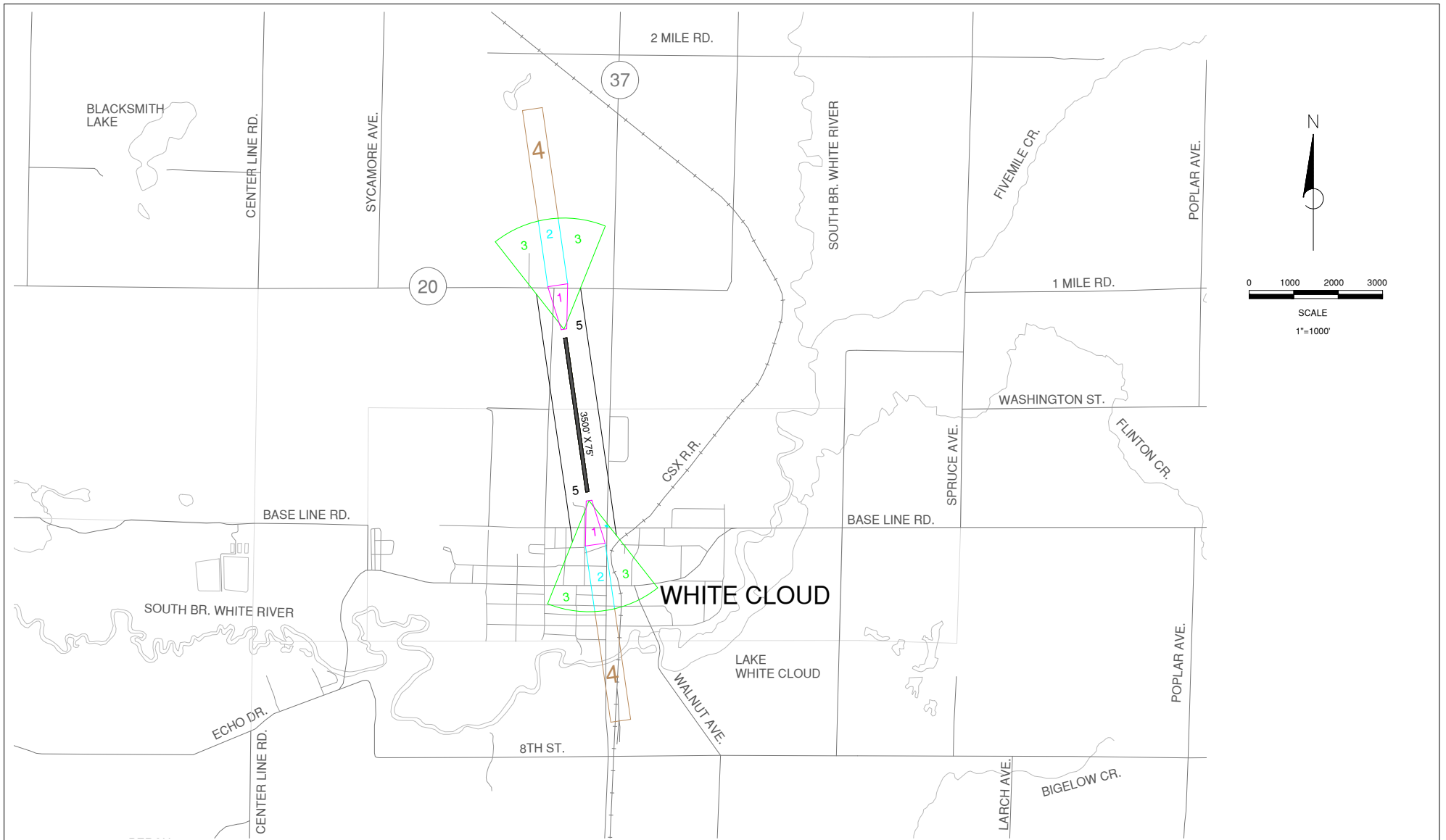
APPENDIX B

CITY OF WHITE CLOUD AIRPORT: MDOT AIRPORT
APPROACH PLAN & CITY OF WHITE CLOUD 2004
ZONING MAP MATERIALS



APPROACH PROTECTION WITH AERIAL





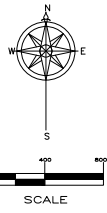
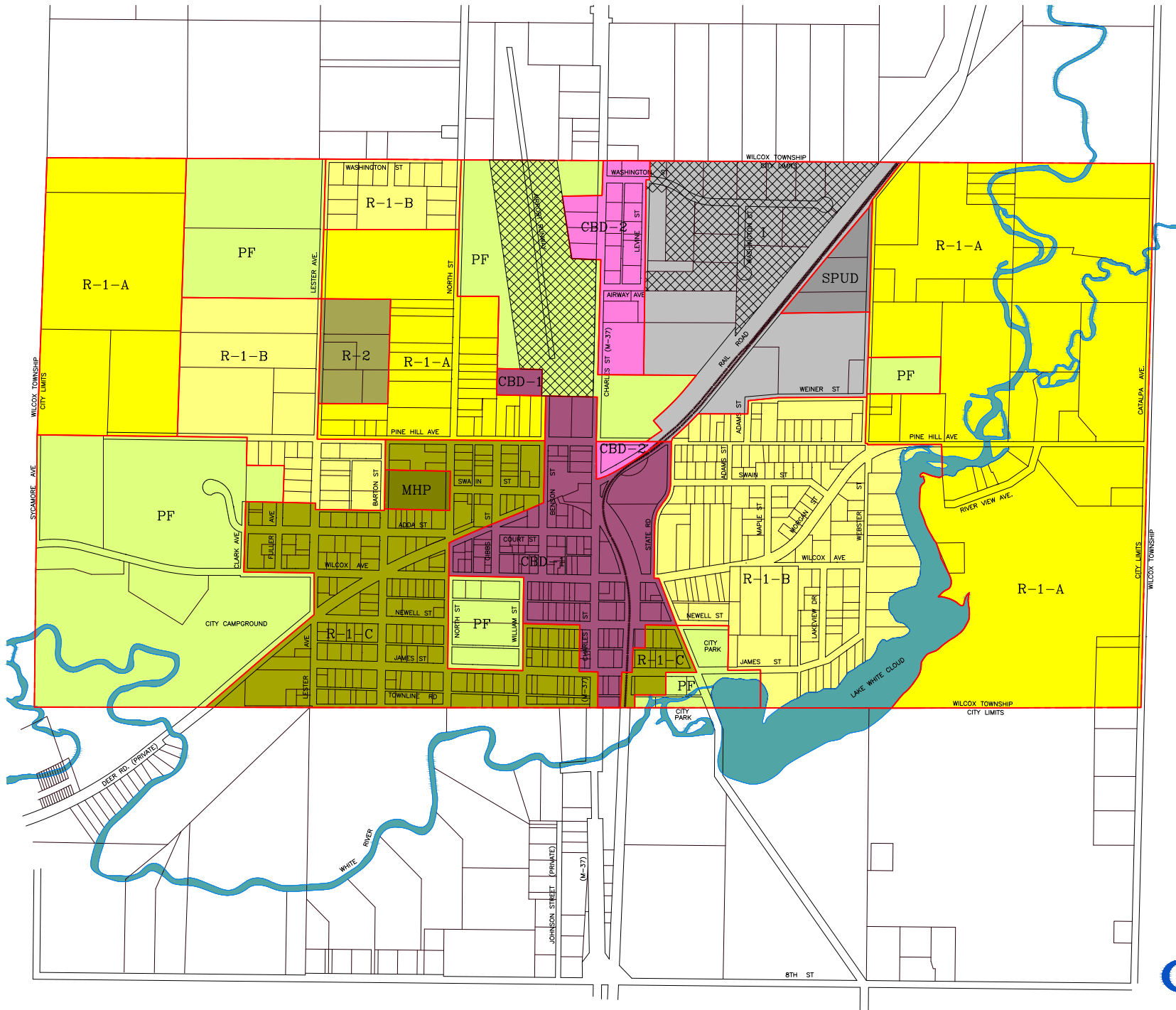
AT THE NOVEMBER 15, 1994 MICHIGAN AERONAUTICS COMMISSION MEETING LAND USE GUIDELINES WERE APPROVED TO BE USED IN AIRPORT APPROACH PLANS FOR ALL LICENSED PUBLIC USE AIRPORTS. THIS DOCUMENT SUPERSEDES ALL PREVIOUSLY APPROVED AIRPORT APPROACH PLANS LAND USE GUIDELINES APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION. FOR A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING PLEASE CONTACT THE COMMISSION ADVISOR AT 517-335-1843.

DATE: 11/15/2005
 DATE: 11/15/2005
 DATE: 11/15/2005

LAND USE ZONING FOR White Cloud			
PREPARED BY THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AIRPORTS DIVISION LANSING, MICHIGAN			
1	0107	Design Background Map, Author Control Map, Scale	10
2	0107	Revisions	11
REVISIONS			
DRAWN: NAB: 01/07			
CHECKED: NAB: 10/05/02			
ZONING			
PAGE: 62-01			

ZONING MAP

January 01, 2004



LEGEND

- RIGHT-OF-WAY
- PARCELS
- CITY LIMITS
- WATERWAYS
- R-1-A SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R-1-B SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R-1-C SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R-2 MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MHP MOBILE HOME PARK
- CBD-1 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT - ONE
- CBD-2 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT - TWO
- PF PUBLIC FACILITIES
- I INDUSTRIAL
- SPUD SPECIAL PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

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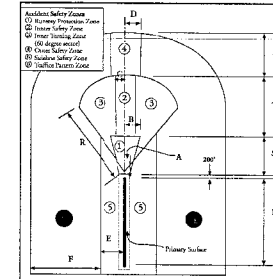
COMPATIBLE LAND USE MATRIX

[illegible]

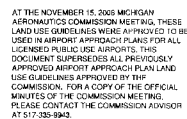
Artist/Seal Zone	Land Use Characteristics	Land Use Guidelines	Land Use Planning Strategies *All actions are an integral part of the design
Zone 3	Population Density	Avoid land use which concentrates people within our watersheds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 25 people/acre. 2. Prioritize areas, which by their nature, are naturally unsuitable for people (e.g., main drainage, main parking lots).
Residential vs. Non-Residential Land Use	I must understand development of land use density standards. I must understand land use patterns and the impact of the Special Function Land Use designation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Create a bright line between residential and non-residential development. 4. Define agriculture and development patterns. 5. Determine site development process, infrastructure away from the resource conservation areas. 6. Prohibit multi-family housing. 7. Establish a minimum lot size that is suitable only low-density development. 8. Prohibit high intensity commercial uses. 9. Require down-sloping or light-sloping subdivisions. 10. Evaluate all possible potential conditions to meet compatible land use. 	
Special Function Land Use	Prohibit all Special Function Land Uses.	Prohibit all Special Function Land Uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prohibit development outside all seven watershed areas. 2. Limit land for use other than for school and child, hospital, religious, historic, office, facilities and libraries. 3. Limit zoning of large expansion of temporary or temporary structures. 4. Ensure identified uses will not create a loss of standing water, or generate hydroelectricity.

[illegible][illegible]

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT SAFETY ZONE DIAGRAM



Date	Runway Length Category (1.)		
	Minimum line class 4,000	Maximum 4,775 to 5,999	Inactive 6,000 and up
Delta Source: NTSS air clear investigations 1984-1991. Data from Source: Haggen and Shaw, <i>Journal of Transportation Studies</i> , University of California, Berkeley, 1993.	A 273 273	B 246 246	C 478 478
	11 225 225	12 246 246	13 478 478
	12 225 225	13 246 246	14 478 478
	13 225 225	14 246 246	15 478 478
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**IMAGINE
WHITE CLOUD**



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