

## CHAPTER SEVEN: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This chapter contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, policies and recommended programs to promote the retention and stabilization of the City's economic base. As required by §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes, this chapter includes an assessment of new businesses and industries desired in the City, an assessment of the community's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, an inventory of environmentally contaminated sites and recommended strategies for their redevelopment.

### A. Existing Economic Development Framework

#### Labor Force

The City's labor force is the portion of the population that is employed or available for work.

The labor force includes people who are in the armed forces, employed, unemployed, or actively seeking employment. According to 2000 census data, 70.3 percent of City residents aged 16 and older were included in the labor force. The percentage of the City's labor force employed by sector in 2000 is shown in Table 15. Over one-quarter of the labor force is employed in the Manufacturing sector, and another fifth in the Educational, health, and social services sector.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

- Recruit new business and promote local entrepreneurship to expand and diversify the local economy.
- Promote businesses and industries that capitalize on the City's location and resource base in a sustainable manner.
- Establish standards for commercial and industrial development that will enhance the City's image, add to the quality of life, and achieve other goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Table 15: Occupational Groups, 2000

Occupational Group	Percentage of Labor Force
Manufacturing	27.5
Educational, health, and social services	20.2
Retail trade	14.3
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	8.1
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	5.2
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	4.3
Construction	3.9
Other services (except public administration)	3.6
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	3.3
Wholesale trade	3.1
Information	3.0
Public Administration	2.6
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	0.9

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000*

*Educational Attainment*

Educational attainment is one variable that is used to assess a community's labor force potential. According to 2000 Census data, 88.5 percent of the City's population ages 25 and older have attained a high school degree or higher. This is identical to the Town of Aztalan but higher than the City of Jefferson (78.3 percent), the City of Fort Atkinson (87.1 percent), and Jefferson County (84.7 percent). However, it is lower than the Town of Lake Mills (91.8 percent). The Town of Lake Mills was the only neighboring community that had a higher percentage of advanced degrees than the City of Lake Mills.

Table 16: Educational Attainment, 2000

	High School Graduates	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
City of Lake Mills	88.5	26.8
Town of Lake Mills	91.8	28.4
Town of Aztalan	85.5	16.9
Village of Johnson Creek	85.5	16.3
City of Jefferson	78.3	12.9
City of Fort Atkinson	87.1	19.9
City of Whitewater	81.3	31.8
City of Waterloo	83.0	16.0
City of Watertown	81.9	16.2
Jefferson County	84.7	17.4

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000*

Income Data

Table 17 presents income and labor characteristics for the City of Lake Mills and the surrounding communities. According to 2000 U.S. Census data, the City's median household income was \$44,132. This is higher than the median household income reported for the cities of Jefferson and Fort Atkinson, but lower than the Towns and Jefferson County. The City's per capita income was \$21,929 which is average compared to surrounding communities. The per capita income is defined as the total personal income, divided by the total population. This is used as a measure of the wealth of the population, and indicates that Lake Mills' residents fare better than neighboring cities but is still below the more affluent towns.

Table 17: Income Comparison

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income
City of Lake Mills	44,132	21,929
Town of Lake Mills	55,278	24,105
Town of Aztalan	55,048	23,193
Village of Johnson Creek	45,694	19,671
City of Jefferson	40,962	19,124
City of Fort Atkinson	43,807	21,008
City of Whitewater	31,793	13,965
City of Waterloo	49,221	22,099
City of Watertown	42,562	18,977
Jefferson County	46,901	21,236

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000*

Commuting Patterns

According to 2000 U.S. Census data, Lake Mills residents spent an average 25.5 minutes commuting to work, indicating that a significant number of workers traveled outside the City for employment. Roughly 8.0 percent of workers traveled over an hour to their jobs (up from 6.1 percent in 1990), while 14.4 percent traveled less than ten minutes (down from 16.4 percent in 1990). About 84.9 percent of workers traveled to work alone, while approximately 6.1 percent carpooled.

## B. Economic Base Analysis

The City of Lake Mills has a fairly diverse economic base that includes manufacturing, construction professional services, dining, recreation, and small scale retail. Table 18 lists the City's largest employers.

Table 18: Major Private Sector Employers, 2007

Number of Employees	Employer
250-499	Wisco Farm Coop
100-249	Key Electronics
	Conrad Sentry
50-99	Day Break Foods
	Fiberdome
	Geiger/Brickel
	Aztalan Engineering
	Willowbrook Nursing Home
	McDonalds
	Seljan Tool Company
	Vision Fitness
	Creekwood Farms
20-49	Chapter 2 Inc
	Joseph Megan's Restaurant and Pub
	Matrix Fitness Systems Corp
	Lake Mills Cleaners and Dryers
	Sand Bar
	Bank of Lake Mills
	Forest Landscaping and Construction
	Jensen Plumbing and Heating Inc.
	Kwik Trip
	Allen Howe and Son
	Lake Mills Golf Club

### *Environmentally Contaminated Sites*

The Wisconsin DNR's Environmental Remediation and Redevelopment Program maintains a list of contaminated sites, or brownfields, in the state. The DNR defines brownfields as "abandoned or under-utilized commercial or industrial properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination." Examples of brownfields might include a large abandoned industrial site or a small corner gas station. Properties listed in the DNR database are self-reported, and do not necessarily represent a comprehensive listing of possible brownfields in a community.

As of July 2006, there were 8 contaminated sites in the City of Lake Mills in need of clean up or where clean up is underway according to the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Trading System (BRRTS). Of the 8 incidents, 5 are classified as LUSTs, or leaking underground storage tanks. These tanks are, or were, known to be contaminating the soil and/or groundwater with petroleum. Three sites in the Lake Mills area are classified as environmental repair, or ERP. These sites are often times older,

and have been releasing contaminants to the soil, groundwater, or air over a long period of time. The ERP locations are typical brownfield sites. Many of the properties on the BRRTS list will need special attention for successful redevelopment to occur.

The locations of these environmentally contaminated sites were considered when making the land use recommendations in this Plan. The City encourages remediation and redevelopment of these sites for economic development where appropriate.

### *Economic Development Agencies, Programs, and Studies*

The City has a number of tools, programs, and agencies available to foster economic development. The City recognizes the importance of its abundant community facilities, such as public utilities, streets, and parks, as an economic development and “quality of life” asset and will continue to provide funding into the development and maintenance of these facilities.

The City of Lake Mills performed an **Industrial Business Retention and Expansion Study in 1986** and has updated the finding periodically since that time.

In **2006**, the City prepared a **Redevelopment Opportunity Analysis** that provided recommendations for the redevelopment of blighted, abandoned, and/under utilized commercial and industrial sites in the City. The report included recommendations on the types of redevelopment and includes design criteria to ensure that the quality and character of new buildings meets with City objectives. Primary areas of emphasis include the areas around STH 89 and CTH V intersection south of I-94, the Tyrana Park Road corridor paralleling I-94, including the area around the intersection of CTH V and CTH A, an old industrial (Crepaco) site on the north side of CTH B and nearby, and the historic downtown.

As a means of implementing the recommendations of the Redevelopment Opportunity Analysis and encourage high quality redevelopment and new development in areas with blighted property, **the City has established four Tax Increment Districts (TID)**. TID are a mechanism by which the City funds public infrastructure improvements serving property within the district through bonds, which are in return paid back through the increase in property taxes (or tax increment) realized from redevelopment of the site. Public funding of the public infrastructure up front provides an incentive for developers to redevelop blighted property rather than build on an undeveloped green field site elsewhere. The City has established Tax Increment Districts for the commercial area surrounding the STH 89 and CTV intersection, and the old Crepaco site and portions of the adjacent industrial site.

**The City of Lake Mills Main Street Program** is a non-profit organization whose mission is to foster downtown revitalization and promote economic redevelopment while maintaining the historic character of the City’s downtown area. Representatives from numerous local businesses form its membership and the program is served by a board of directors and staffed by an executive director. The program markets the downtown area to both prospective business owners and customers, helps business owners find information on various local, state and federal economic development programs, encourages development and building rehabilitation sensitive to the City’s historic context, and organizes community events that emphasize and raise awareness of the City’s assets and opportunities.

**The Lake Mills Area Chamber of Commerce** represents business interests in the City of Lake Mills and surrounding communities. Its mission is to maintain a strong business community through active leadership, networking, promotional activities that emphasize the area as a great place to live, work, and play and generally improve the quality of life for all member residents and communities through economic development and public/private partnerships, community development, tourism, and services to members.

**The Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium (JCEDC)** serves as the lead economic development organization in Jefferson County. The Consortium, **comprised of municipal officials, County board supervisors, and representatives from the Department of Commerce, the UW-Extension**, was formed in June 2003 to implement Jefferson’s Overall Economic Development

Program and to achieve the economic development goals of the County. Its overall goals are to foster and encourage responsible, sustainable economic development activities that result in job creation, job retention, increase the tax base and improve the quality of life for the citizens of Jefferson County. In this effort, JCEDC offers training programs and has assisted numerous businesses in obtaining financing information from banks, Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Wisconsin Business Development, Women Business Initiative Corporation, and other financing sources.

#### **Jefferson County – Economic Positioning Initiative**

The Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium launched its Economic Positioning Initiative in the summer 2007 to set an economic framework for the future of Jefferson County. The project will focus on gaining a comprehensive understanding of the County's place-based assets and locational advantages, identifying emerging economic opportunities that are based on existing assets and global trends, and identifying catalytic projects and initial implementation plan. Scheduled to be complete work by the end of 2008, Jefferson County intends to use the outcomes of this initiative to complete the economic development chapter of the County's comprehensive Plan.

The state's **Community Based Economic Development Program (CBED)** provides funding assistance to local governments and community-based organizations that undertake planning, development and technical assistance projects that support business development. Using CBED program funds, local governments can finance economic development plans, small business and technology-based incubator grants, revolving loan programs, and entrepreneur training programs for at-risk youth. Any Wisconsin city, village, town, county, tribe or community-based organization is eligible to apply for grant funding. Funds are available on an annual basis through a competitive application process. Some grants must be matched by local funds. Application materials are available from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce.

The **U.S. Small Business Administration's Certified Development Company (504) Loan Program** provides growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and buildings. 504 loans can be used to fund land purchases and improvements, grading, street improvements, utilities, parking lots and landscaping, construction of new facilities, or modernizing, renovating or converting existing facilities. A Certified Development Company (CDC) is a nonprofit corporation set up to contribute to the economic development of its community.

### C. Assessment of Desired Economic Development Focus

The Wisconsin comprehensive planning statute requires that this *Plan* “assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the local government unit.” In order to do this, the City must understand its assets, and how to capitalize on those assets by identifying strengths and weaknesses for economic development. Table 19 summarizes the City’s current and potential strengths and weaknesses with regards to economic development, and provides insights into a range of economic activities that are most suitable for Lake Mills.

Table 19: Strengths and Weaknesses for Economic Development

Strengths	Weaknesses
Excellent Regional Access via Interstate 94.	Competition from other communities with similar transportation advantages and closer proximity to larger regional metropolitan areas.
Proximity and access to large regional metropolitan areas in Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago	Insufficient efforts to actively recruit new industry and other employers.
Proximity to well-developed agricultural economy	Lack of upscale, temporary lodging for tourists
Regional tourism based on proximity to Rock Lake, and other preserved natural areas within the Glacial Heritage Area.	Resistance or unresponsiveness to tourism opportunities by local residents and businesses
Historic downtown is a popular shopping, entertainment, and tourist destination	Lack of coordination in business hours, property improvements, shared facilities (i.e. parking, waste collection) in downtown.
The City has an active Main Street Program to help market downtown	Some blighted or obsolescent commercial and industrial properties
Strong existing industries	Lack of employment diversification
Active efforts to foster economic development and redevelopment of older sites through such efforts redevelopment planning, creation of a business park, and establishment of TIF districts.	Lack of additional financial incentives to reinvest in downtown and other older areas of the community
High quality, efficient municipal services and electric utility	Perceived inefficiencies City’s development review process and standards
Range of affordable housing options for varied workforce	
Active Civic Groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, Lake Mills Rotary, etc.	
“Small Town” atmosphere appealing to potential employees and employers	

### D. Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

*Goals:*

***Strengthen and diversify the City’s economic base to provide local employment, serve the needs of residents, and provide tax revenues to the City.***

***Attract and retain businesses that enhance the City's character, appearance, and image as a desirable place to live, work, and visit.***

Objectives:

1. Continue to identify and plan for the needs of existing and future businesses and industries with regards to adequate land, transportation, utilities and municipal services
2. Address work force needs through the adequate opportunities for appropriate housing and education and the provision of City services and amenities
3. Promote improvements in the downtown area as to enhance its role as the City's primary multi-purpose shopping, service, entertainment and civic center
4. Provide appropriate sites for a range of additional commercial and industrial development at appropriate locations within the City that minimize the negative impacts on residential and natural resource areas of the community
5. Increase opportunities for regional tourism that are compatible with the City's natural resource, cultural resource, and community character goals and objectives
6. Promote the City's advantages to prospective employers, residents, and customers
7. Improve development standards for businesses and industry that enhance the image of the community, preserve and increase property values, and prevent conflicts between incompatible uses
8. Encourage redevelopment of blighted, abandoned, or under utilized commercial and industrial property within the City

Policies:

1. The City will provide appropriate sites for additional commercial and industrial development near Interstate 94 and other major transportation corridors that maximize the benefit of the City's location within the region and minimize the impact of traffic and other externalities on residential and natural resource areas of the community in accordance with recommendations of this Plan
2. The City will provide opportunities for neighborhood scale shopping and services that can serve the local needs of future residents and neighborhoods
3. The City will maintain and develop necessary utilities and other services to support increased economic development.
4. The City will continue to use TIF, State and Federal grant programs and other economic development tools to provide incentives and assistance with redevelopment of blighted, abandoned or under utilized commercial and industrial property
5. The City will work to ensure that development within TIF districts provide above-average returns to the City in the form of increased property tax revenues and employment.
6. The City will establish and enforce minimum design standards for all commercial and industrial development within the City in accordance with the recommendations in this Plan., the Northside Neighborhood Plan, the City of Lake Mills Redevelopment Opportunity Analysis, and other plans
7. The City will refine its zoning and land division ordinances to ensure they are not in conflict with and forward the recommendations of this Plan.
8. The City will refine specific design criteria for the downtown that preserves the historic context and character of the downtown with regards to building materials, bulk, setback, exterior design, and signage in accordance with the recommendation of this Plan
9. The City will work to improve administration, coordination, and communication of the City's development standards and other economic development programs
10. The City will work with local, county, regional, state, and federal entities to make Community Development Block Grant and other economic development programs more responsive to City needs

11. The City will continue to explore the advantages and disadvantages of consider other private/public economic development strategies to improve businesses and cooperative marketing of the downtown and the City as a whole.

## E. Economic Development Programs and Recommendations

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### *Geographic Locations for Economic Development and Redevelopment*

The Comprehensive Plan identifies three primary areas for economic development and Redevelopment. They are:

- The Central Business Core: In order to retain and enhance this downtown as the City's civic and commercial center, ongoing efforts to cooperate on parking, municipal services, enhancement of public and private areas, business management and marketing will be required.
- The I-94/STH 89 Interchange: This large area includes much of the land between Tyranena Road and Interstate 94, and some land south of Tyranena Road. The property includes existing commercial uses, redevelopment sites, undeveloped parcels, and residential areas that will transition to commercial use.
- The Lake Mills Business Park: The Comprehensive Plan anticipates that the current industrial park will be built out over the next 25 years, and therefore reserves additional undeveloped land to the south of the industrial park along the projected extension of CP Avenue south to State Highway 89.

In addition to these major centers of economic activity, the plan identifies several smaller but potentially significant opportunities for economic redevelopment and new development. These include:

- The old Crepaco Industrial Site: This large (16+ acre) site north of Lake Street and just east of Owen Street was once occupied by a factory. Currently, a number of smaller businesses occupy the old structure and the property continues to be marginally viable for those uses. Approximately 9 acres remain unsold. The City of Lake Mills could allow continued use and improvement of this site as a small business incubator or a more comprehensive redevelopment as a mixed commercial/residential development that would be more compatible with residential uses to the west and east. These measures include placing the property in a Tax Increment District to finance public infrastructure and site clean up, and preparing a detail redevelopment plan (See "Implement Recommendations of the 2006 Redevelopment Opportunity Analysis")
- A new mixed commercial/residential development serving the planned Northside Neighborhood north of Interstate 94. Though the mix of uses for this development are primarily residential, a small commercial center serving future neighborhood residents is planned in order to provide them with opportunities to serve some shopping, service, and social needs without auto-commuting to harder to reach centers south of Interstate 94. The scale of commercial uses intended for this area is meant to be smaller, with larger community and regional shopping, highway oriented, and large scale motor vehicle sales and services located elsewhere. For more information on the Northside Neighborhood Plan, see Chapter 6: Housing).
- A new neighborhood commercial/residential center south of the City. Like the mixed use node in the planned Northside Neighborhood, this relatively small commercial node would be geared toward providing local shopping, service, and socializing opportunities for residents of new neighborhoods who cannot or choose not to auto commute for every shopping trip.
- Other commercial and industrial sites are located at various points in and adjacent to the City. Most of these areas are located along Mulberry Street, Tyranena Road, and at the south end of the City along Main Street. This Plan recommends allowing compatible commercial uses in these areas to remain provided any alterations or changes are at least as compatible or more compatible with

current requirements and surrounding land uses. For those areas that are obsolescent or blighted, the City recommends developing specific recommendations for desirable redevelopment on a case by case basis (See Recommendation #2).

### Implement the Recommendations of the 2006 Redevelopment Opportunity Analysis

In 2006, the City of Lake Mills sponsored a study to identify areas for redevelopment and make recommendations for desirable new land uses and design standards for these areas. The two areas correspond to Tax Incremental Districts created by the City, and the intention is to maximize the return on the public funds invested in these areas as well as improve the City's long term tax base and quality of life.

The major sites include:

- The "Union 76 Project Area: This area includes lands on or near all four corners of the intersection of Main Street and Tyrana Road. It's named comes from an old gas station site that is now the site of Walgreen's. Recommendations for the large undeveloped parcels adjacent to the interstate include large regional and community scale uses appropriate to an Interstate Highway location and a growing community. The uses south of Tyrana Road and at the western end of the planning area transition to more community/neighborhood commercial and residential uses. A recent amendment to Tax Increment # 4 now includes nearly all of the blighted or undeveloped land in the area. The City has also updated its Zoning Ordinance to include Planned Business and Planned Office Districts with requirements that better reflect the design and site recommendations of this report. Given the high inherent value of the locations, enhanced by the City's efforts to overcome barriers to extending public infrastructure to these sites, this Plan recommends stringent adherence to the underlying principles, if not the specific site plan recommendations of the 2006 Redevelopment Opportunity Analysis.
- The Crepaco Site: The 2006 report acknowledges that the existing structure has been marginally successful as a small business and industry incubator of sorts, with several tenants leasing space. However, given the site's location near an established residential areas to the west, the natural amenity of the Rock Creek east of the property, and possible long term environmental issues stemming from past uses, the report recommends a high value, more compatible redevelopment plan that focuses primarily on a mix of housing types and neighborhood scale commercial.

The third area discussed in more general terms is the downtown, which is discussed in greater detail below.

### Continue to Focus Economic Development Efforts on the Downtown

The City of Lake Mills central business core area is one of the most recognizable and favorably viewed areas in the City of Lake Mills (see Chapter 1: Issues and Opportunities). The downtown area is notable for:

- Central Location;
- Historic mixed commercial/residential mixed use buildings near residential neighborhoods;
- Concentration of varied mix of service, office, entertainment, civic, and retail uses;
- Higher concentration of locally owned businesses;
- "Human scale" architecture: buildings with buildings that meet the sidewalk, generous display windows at street level that are meant to attract the interest of pedestrians instead of passing motorists, architectural detail visible to pedestrians, and many different stores and destinations within a convenient walk;

- Public gathering places such as Commons Park and sidewalks that allow limited seating or outdoor display of goods;
- Civic institutions in high quality structures such as the historic L.D. Fargo Public Library and the recently constructed Municipal Building;
- Main Street Program, which works with downtown business individually and collectively to link businesses with information and financial programs, organize downtown events, serve as liaison between downtown businesses and government entities, and promote the downtown to customers and businesses.
- Ongoing civic, promotional, and cultural events

However, as with many traditional downtowns, the Lake Mills central business core faces challenges to its continued vitality from both external and internal causes. Ironically, many of the most valued traits of the downtown area also pose some challenges to their ongoing economic viability, including:

- Competition from newer commercial areas that cater exclusively to auto commuters;
- Competition from major franchises (with more promotional resources and better branding) located elsewhere;
- Loss of historic charm and pedestrian-friendly character owing to rising amounts of traffic and subsequent road improvements.
- Historic Buildings that do not meet contemporary expectations with regard to space and environmental controls;
- Real or perceived financial risks and/or additional costs for developers and businesses to rehabilitate older buildings;
- Real or perceived financial risks for constructing new mixed-use buildings matching the context of the historic structures;
- Resistance from property owners to manage mixed commercial/residential properties;
- Insufficient public and private financial incentives and/or full awareness of such incentives to overcome the obstacles outlined above;
- Real or perceived lack of parking and failure to maximize existing parking through shared use of parking;
- Uneven levels of business management (such as better business hours, better marketing, more effective mix of niche or specialized goods and services);
- Insufficient effort to coordinate promotion and management the downtown as single entity (common business hours, shared solid waste storage and collection, shared parking, additional marketing).
- Reluctance to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) or similar mechanism that would pool and provide additional funds for physical improvements and marketing.
- Confusing and/or insufficient Municipal Development Standards for new downtown construction (particularly outside of the B-1C zoning district).

Of the issues and challenges noted above, some cannot be addressed directly by the City. For others issues, the City has attempted to address through such measures, as site, signage, and architectural standards specifically tailored to the downtown (as expressed in the City of Lake Mills Zoning Code), direct investment in the downtown in the form of new and rehabilitated community facilities; and

development of a Transportation Plan that favors providing an alternative north-south minor arterial through the City that will reduce the need to provide additional traffic lanes while still maintaining direct route to the downtown. Additionally, detailed economic recommendations for other commercial centers such as the I-94/State Highway 89 and neighborhood commercial areas elsewhere emphasize uses that will minimize (but not eliminate) direct competition between commercial nodes.

This *Plan* recommends that the City consider the following additional measures to enhance the downtown:

- a. Improve education and communication of City standards and procedures;
- b. Review and amend, and where insufficient, amend City standards and procedures. Work with the Main Street Program and individual businesses to identify where problems exist.
- c. Review public infrastructure and street design requirements for the downtown. Consider additional street and intersection design features to improve pedestrian safety and promote a pedestrian friendly environment.
- d. Consider performing or providing assistance for a downtown parking study. Consider programming funds to address any deficiencies in public parking (to include possible acquisition of additional lands in or near the downtown as opportunities arise) and help downtown organizations communicate any positive findings.
- e. As opportunities arise, consider public acquisition and/or redevelopment of blighted property in or near the downtown in order to assemble lands necessary to attract larger “anchor” commercial uses or for such uses as parking and new, “infill” commercial and residential uses.
- f. Continue to keep public employment and community facilities in the downtown where possible.
- g. Consider local financial incentives to improve the downtown such as creation of a downtown Tax Incremental District and other financial incentives to overcome obstacles to compatible forms (i.e. two and three story mixed structures) of development. Where problems are more perceptual than real, assist downtown organizations in educating would be developers and businesses.
- h. Consider creation of a Community Development Authority (CDA).
- i. Work with the Main Street Program, civic groups, and businesses to create community-themed way finding signage.
- j. Explore the advantages and disadvantages of establishing a Business Improvement District or Certified Local Government Status.

*Ensure the Use of Tax Increment Financing and other Financial Incentives are Part of Comprehensive Development Strategy*

In considering future financial assistance (e.g., TIF) to promote economic development and improve the tax base, emphasize sites and projects with the following characteristics:

- Sites with significant barriers to development such as obsolete or blighted buildings and environmental challenges, particularly if they are in otherwise highly desirable locations such as major traffic corridors or the downtown.
- Site planning and building design that works with the topography, includes innovative stormwater management practices, features enhanced landscaping and on-site open space, is designed to promote pedestrian access, and meets or exceeds community architectural and site planning standards included in the comprehensive plan.
- Projects with construction that exceeds a pre-set minimum value per square foot.

- Projects that desired expansion or retention of types of business, industry, and employment. Projects that complement other Lake Mills businesses and developments and make the area more attractive for future business investment.

Methods of ensuring these criteria are met are described elsewhere in this Chapter and Comprehensive Plan.

### *Economic Development Management and Partnerships*

The tools and resources available to the City government are limited. Successful economic development depends on the efforts of numerous private and public entities, and best results are achieved through cooperation. This Plan recommends consideration of the following management and collaborative approaches to enhance the City's economic development:

- a. Invest time and resources into a proactive and assertive economic development program Proactive economic development will involve developing business recruitment and retention programs; writing requests for proposals; answering inquiries; executing developer agreements; administering, staffing, and funding incentive programs; and, in some cases, helping to assemble properties. Approaches include:
  - Continuing to work with established organizations like the Main Street Program.
  - Creating a Community Development Authority or non-profit Development Corporation. These organizations can, at the discretion of the City Council, have the ability to actively market the community, recruit developers and businesses, and be involved with land transactions and incentive programs to facilitate economic development and redevelopment.
  - Either hiring an economic development coordinator or by enlisting the help of an outside consultant to serve as staff to City officials and be solely focused on economic development in Lake Mills.
- b. Establish a priority of partnering with Madison Area Technical College to create convenient educational and training opportunities in Lake Mills.
  - Establish a training culture in Lake Mills and advertise the training culture and emphasis on technical skills as a business recruitment tool.
  - Facilitate the design of custom training curriculum for existing or desired Lake Mills businesses.
  - Focus on growths fields such as Information Technology and Bio Industries Opportunities for bilingual education
- c. Support the growth and expansion of existing businesses in the City by reaching out to business owners and involving them in the development of future economic development strategies and the marketing of the City for new businesses, and encourage their growth at existing or larger sites.
- d. In collaboration with businesses and economic development organizations and agencies, research, identify and address the obstacles to local business development.
- e. In collaboration with businesses and economic development organizations and agencies, research, communicate desired changes and shortcomings of various public economic development and building rehabilitation programs to appropriate agencies and elected officials.
- f. Work with businesses to investigate options to pool the area's employee base (for businesses with 25 or more employees) for the purposes of providing more comprehensive and affordable benefit packages (e.g. health insurance), thereby making these businesses more financially successful.

### *Specific Areas of Economic Development Focus by Sector*

The following specific recommendations are some suggested specific areas of economic development appropriate to the Lake Mills context. There may be others. Agencies or entities such as those described

in Recommendation 6 (a) above are often most suited to take a leadership role in pursuing and implementing these strategies.

- Better utilize web-based marketing approaches, which are increasingly being used as an initial site/community screening tool by businesses seeking new locations.
- Retain existing businesses and industries that are compatible with other Comprehensive Planning Goals.
- Retain industries that benefit from the City's location near supporting industries and services and from locally produced agricultural products.
- Broaden business recruitment activities to include:
  - Professional Service sectors such as CPA, legal, engineer, and insurance offices.
  - A quality hotel or motel to compliment local tourist base lodging such a campgrounds and cabins.
  - Retail establishments that can serve and successfully compete for local dollars, thereby reducing "leakage" of Lake Mills resident expenditures to other communities.
  - Bio-based or "green" industries that utilize the City's natural resources and access to agricultural products and that build off of Wisconsin's recent initiatives to advance "Clean and Green" industries. Lake Mills' proximity to a major research and development center at the University of Wisconsin—Madison; the manufacturing centers of southeast Wisconsin, northern Illinois, and Chicago; and the City's access to raw agricultural products from local farms puts the City in a position to recruit these types of businesses.
  - Businesses and industries that employ environmentally progressive and responsible production and building practices (also see Natural Resources section).
- Examine the feasibility of offering a program for artists, artisans and craft persons in which they would be attracted to take up residence in Lake Mills.
- Explore the possibility of expanding markets for local agricultural produce by expanding and increasing the promotion of the Farmer's market, encourage the School District and other community based organizations to contract with local producers for bulk purchases of agricultural products such as dairy and vegetables for school lunches, and promoting the idea of cooperative, location based branding of a variety of locally produced specialty products (such as organics).
- Improve cross-promotional of activities such as encouraging local business to sell specialty items geared toward tourists bearing images and the name of Lake Mill's.
- Expand on the image of Lake Mills as a multi-faceted visitor and tourist destination by capitalizing on the area's existing and planned nature based recreation and cultural resources such as the Glacial Drumlin Trail and Aztalan State Park. Incorporating these destinations into an area-wide marketing strategy for Glacial Heritage and Jefferson County lands can work to the mutual benefit of all these assets by raising awareness and helping to fund planned enhancements such as the region wide recreational trail and Aztalan State Park Cultural and Visitor Center, thereby further benefiting the City's economic development goals.

Remain aware of and involved in economic such as the Jefferson County Economic Positioning project that is currently underway. Also continue to remain involved in and utilize the services of the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium.

### *Pursue Redevelopment and Infill of Underutilized Areas*

Beyond the downtown, there are other redevelopment opportunities in Lake Mills over the 25-year planning period. These sites are typically located adjacent older streets and in older industrial or commercial sites. Many are located primary and secondary areas of economic concern discussed earlier in this chapter, and the City has already established plans and incentives to redevelop them. One recent example of successful redevelopment is the Walgreen's located on a former gas station.

Sites like these typically do not attract redevelopment without assistance. Figure 9 illustrates the range of redevelopment activities and tools often required for successful redevelopment projects. Careful planning, site assessment, public-private partnerships, redevelopment incentives, and persistence over a number of years are often required. Typically, this type of detailed planning and implementation process includes:



*New Walgreens on redevelopment site*

- Evaluating the planning area's condition.
- Conducting a regional and local economic opportunities analysis.
- Identifying goals and objectives for the redevelopment area
- Prioritizing redevelopment sites.
- Conducting a market assessment for each redevelopment site.
- Preparing a redevelopment strategy and concept plan map, with attention to priority sites.
- Aggressively pursuing implementation through adoption of a statutory redevelopment plan; establishment of a redevelopment tax increment financing district; possible brownfield remediation; possible site acquisition, consolidation, and demolition; and developer recruitment.

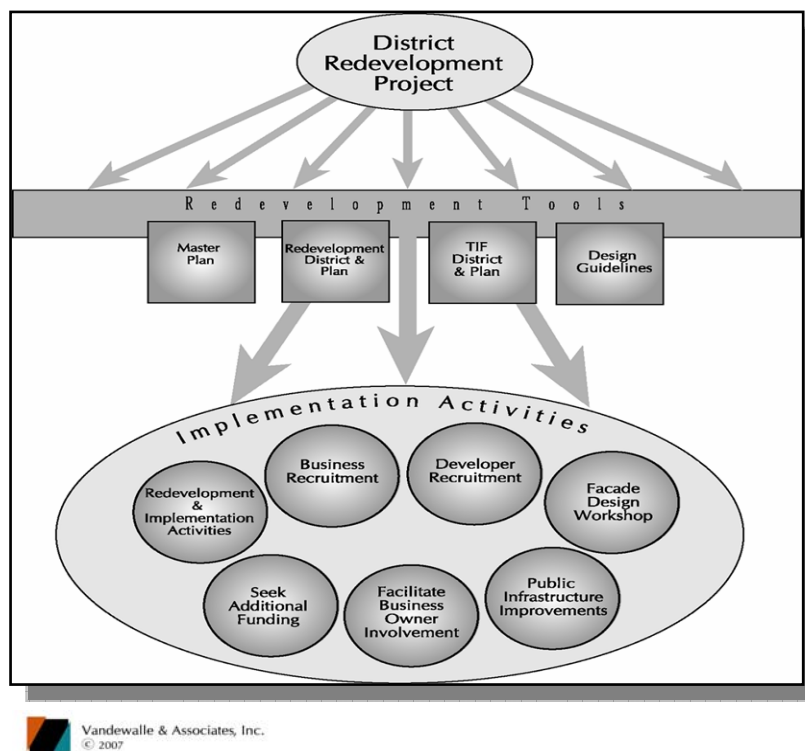


Figure 9: Redevelopment Planning and Implementation Process

Redevelopment strategies for brownfield (contaminated) sites are extremely site-specific, dependent upon factors such as previous ownership, past land use, and the type of potential environmental contamination. A detailed environmental site assessment and market analysis is recommended before proceeding in any brownfield redevelopment project. There are a range of funding sources and implementation tools available from both public and private agencies to assist communities, businesses, lenders, and private citizens in the clean-up and redevelopment of brownfields in Wisconsin.

*Collaborate with the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium's Regional Economic Positioning Initiative*

At the time this Plan was being prepared, the Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium was leading an initiative to advance economic development county-wide. The City will stay actively involved in this process and generally take advantage of the services offered by the JCEDC. See Chapter Eight: Intergovernmental Cooperation for details.

*Review and strengthen Zoning and Architectural Design Review Standards for all Commercial and Industrial Development.*

The City of Lake Mills Zoning Code includes various general provisions addressing site plan and design review standards for commercial and industrial development, and covers building materials, general layout, parking, landscaping, lighting, signage and various other aspects. Some Standards are somewhat general in nature to allow more flexibility in their application. While this may be appropriate in many cases, there are some instances where a more detailed set of design parameters tailored to the different recommended future land use categories or specific location may be desirable.

Lake Mills intends to strengthen and enforce design standards for commercial and industrial projects to ensure high-quality, lasting projects that are compatible with the desired character. These standards should apply to all new development and redevelopment projects in the City.

The City of Lake Mills has already adopted more specialized requirements for the downtown/central business core overlay district, and for its Planned Business and Planned Office Zoning Districts. This *Plan* recommends further refinement of City Zoning requirements to include the recommendations for the various future commercial and industrial land use categories found below and in Chapter 3. At minimum, the *Plan* recommends use of these or similar design guidelines by City Staff, Plan Commissioners, and elected officials, as a basis for reviewing discretionary aspects of site and architectural plans.

The illustrations on the following pages include general design guidance for various types of commercial development projects: Indoor Retail, Service and Institutional (Small to Moderate Scale); Indoor Retail, Service and Institutional (Large Scale); In-Vehicle Sales and Service; and Neighborhood Commercial, Downtown and Mixed-Use. Overall, the following principles should be incorporated into site and building designs for new and expanded commercial uses, regardless of type:

- Avoidance of linear, “strip commercial” development patterns within multi-occupant development projects. Buildings shall instead be arranged and grouped so that their orientation complements adjacent, existing development; frames adjacent street intersections and parking lots; features pedestrian and/or vehicle access ways and spaces; and properly considers the arrangement of parking lots, gathering spaces, and other site amenities.
- High quality building materials, such as brick, wood, stone, and tinted masonry.
- Variations in roof lines, including parapets, multi-planed, and pitched roofs and staggered building facades (variations in wall depth and/or direction).
- Canopies, awnings, trellises, bays, and windows to add visual interest to facades.
- All building façades containing architectural details and of similar quality as the front building façade.
- Central features that add to community character, such as patios and benches.
- Signage that is high quality and not excessive in height or total square footage.
- Illumination minimized to that necessary for safety and kept on site through use of cut-off fixtures.
- Orientation of at least one principal façade and customer entrance toward a public street with no intervening parking lots.
- Parking to the sides and rear of buildings, rather than having all parking in the front.
- Safe, convenient, and separated pedestrian and bicycle access to the site from the parking areas to the buildings, and to adjacent commercial developments including features that allow pedestrians to walk parallel to moving cars.
- New driveways with adequate throat depths to allow for proper vehicle stacking.
- No or limited number of access drives along arterial and collector streets.
- Common driveways and cross easements serving more than one commercial use, wherever possible.
- High quality landscaping treatment of buffer yards, street frontages, paved areas and building foundations.
- Parking lots heavily landscaped with perimeter landscaping and/or landscaped islands, along with screening to block views from streets and residential uses.
- Street trees along all public street frontages.
- Complete screening of loading docks, dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and outdoor storage areas through use of landscaping, walls, and architectural features.

- Intensive activity areas such as service and loading areas, parking lots, and trash receptacle storage areas oriented away and/or screened from public rights of way and residential land uses.
- Provision for adequate on-site snow storage or private snow removal. Except in the *Downtown* Future Land Use category where new buildings may require zero setbacks to match existing structures and make use of existing streets and sidewalks, new commercial uses with buildings placed near the street should ensure adequate on site storage or removal without recourse to municipal services through one of the following:
  - Front yard landscaping areas or extra wide paved pedestrian ways and/or terraces capable of doubling as snow storage in winter.
  - On new zero lot line development outside of the downtown in a commercial or mixed use Planned Development District, covenants ensuring private removal of snow from sidewalks and pedestrian ways that do not rely on municipal plows or street storage.

Figure 10: Indoor Retail Service and Institutional (Small to Medium Scale)

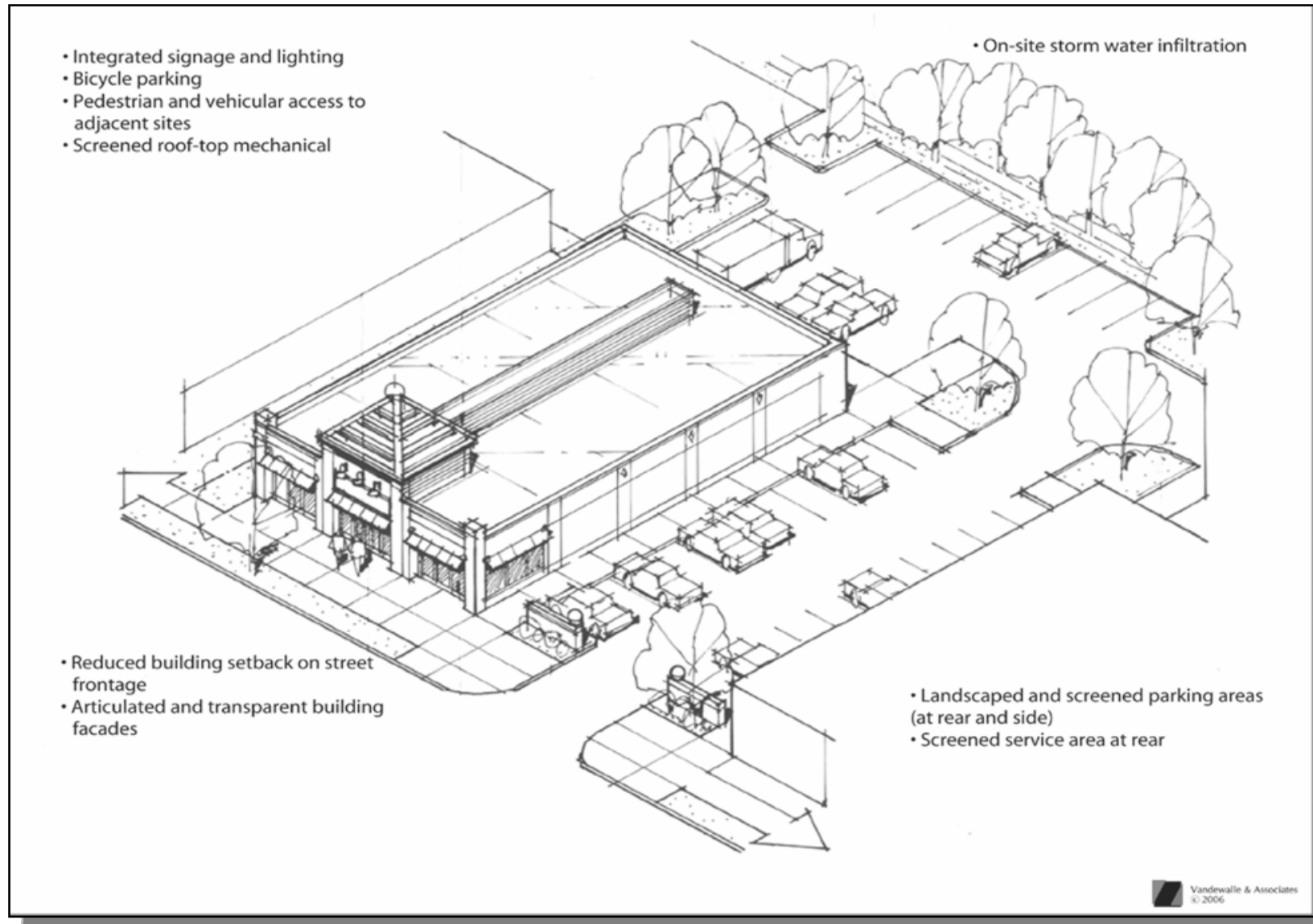


Figure 11: Indoor Retail, Service, and Institutional (Large Scale)

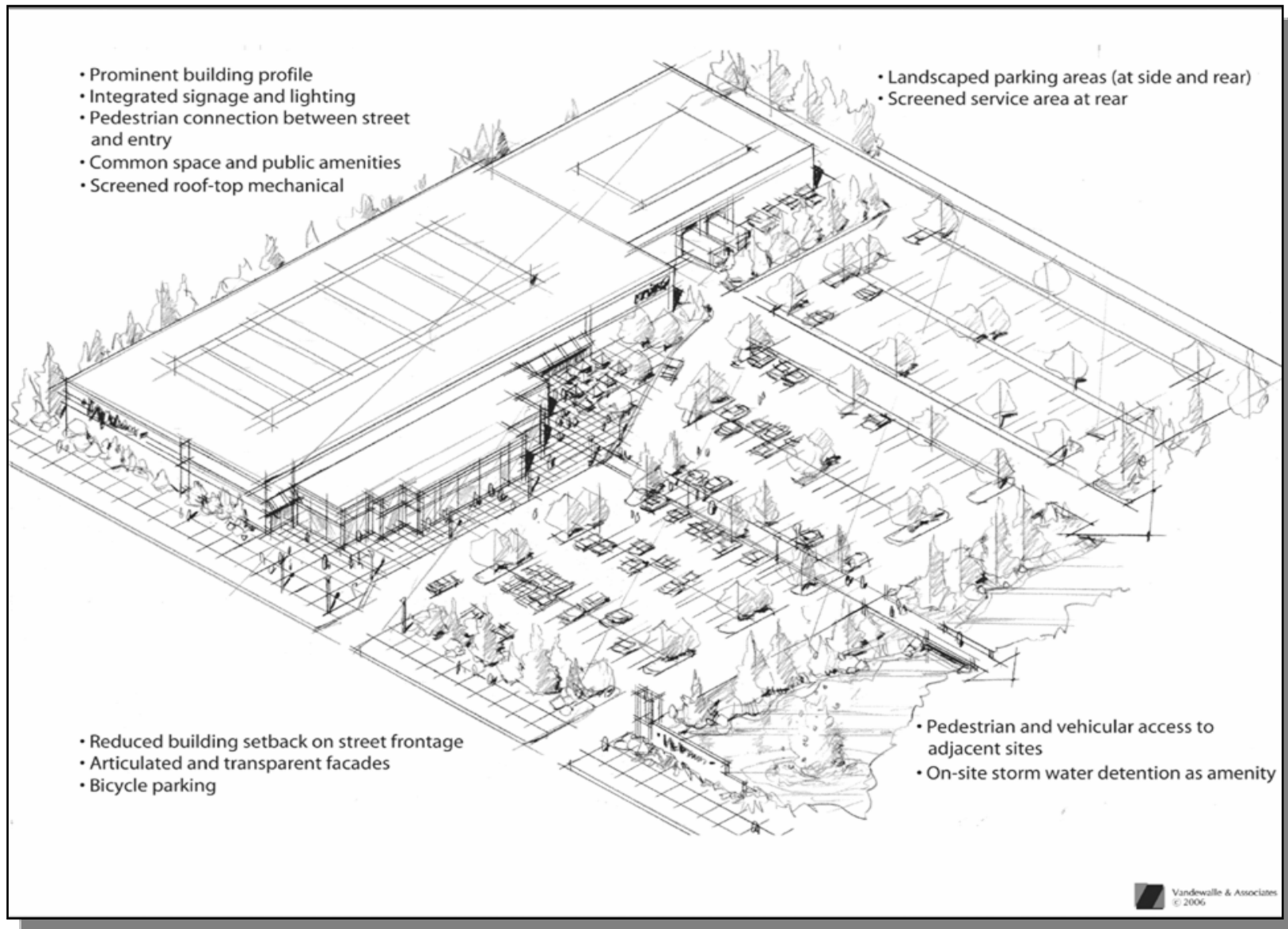


Figure 12: In-Vehicle Sales and Service (e.g. gas stations, fast food windows)

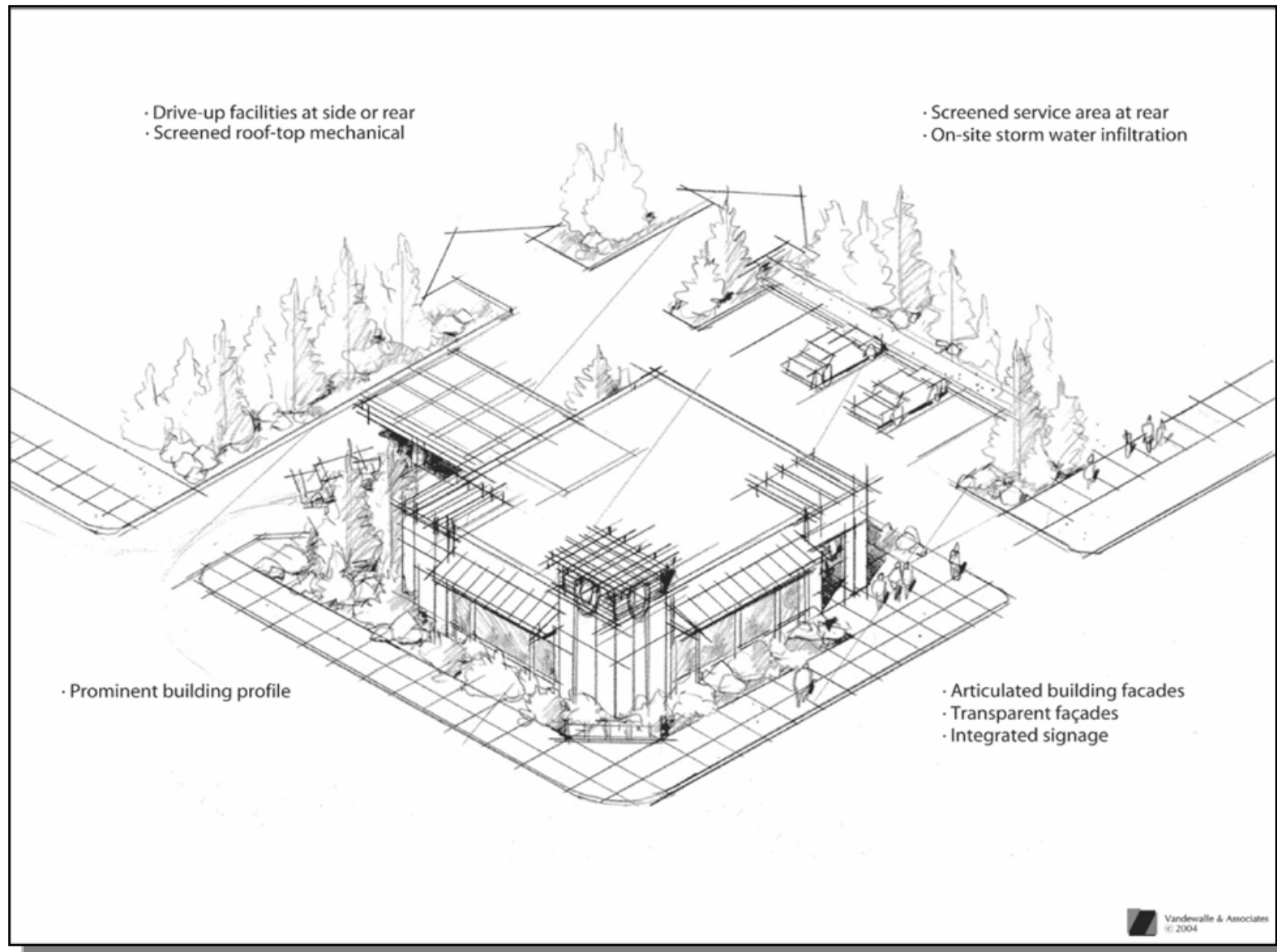
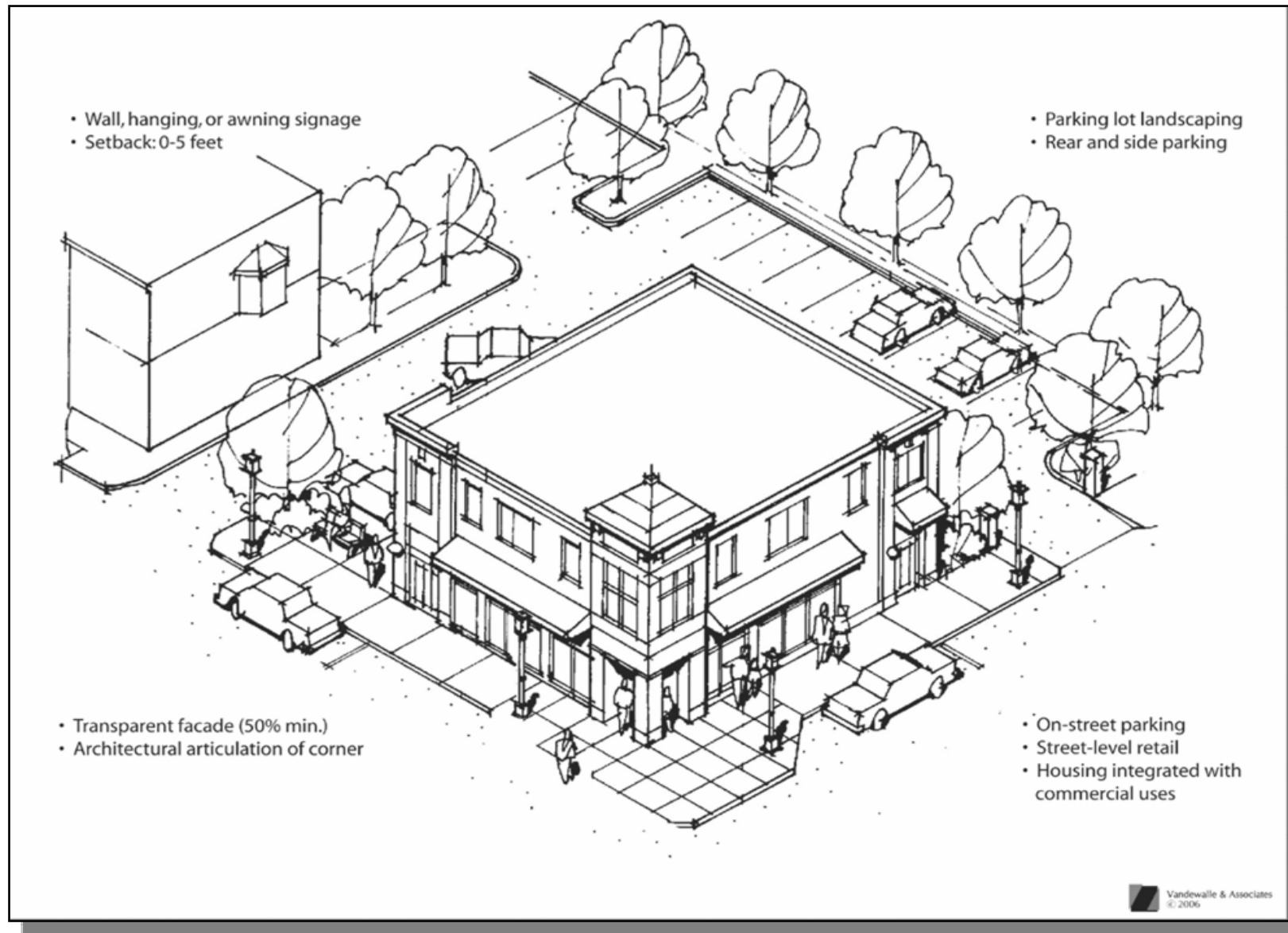


Figure 13: Neighborhood Commercial, Institutional, Mixed Use, and Downtown



For new and expanded Industrial uses, the standards listed below and illustrated in Figure 14 are advised:

- New driveways with adequate throat depths to allow for proper vehicle stacking.
- Limited number of access drives along arterial and collector streets.
- High quality landscaping treatment of bufferyards, street frontages, paved areas and building foundations.
- Screening where industrial uses abut non-industrial uses, in the form of hedges, evergreen trees, berms, decorative fences or a combination.
- Screening of parking lots from public rights-of-way and non-industrial uses.
- Complete screening of all loading areas, outdoor storage areas, mechanical equipment, and dumpsters using berms, hedges, or decorative walls or fences.
- Street trees along all public road frontages.
- High quality building materials, such as brick, wood, stone, tinted masonry, pre-cast concrete, and architectural metal, particularly in office and research development areas
- Location of loading areas at the rear of buildings, with very limited loading in office and research areas.
- Separation of pedestrian walkways from vehicular traffic and loading areas.
- Design of parking and circulation areas so that vehicles are able to move from one area of the site to another (and from one site to the adjacent site) without re-entering a street.
- Variable building setbacks and vegetation in strategic locations along foundations.
- Areas for future building and parking expansion, even if none is anticipated in the near future.

Figure 14: Industrial Building Standards

