VISIONING THE SOUTH CEDAR CORRIDOR:
A Form Based Code Study for
the Design Lansing Comprehensive Plan

Michigan State University
Urban and Regional Planning Practicum
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Kate Calabra - Jason Cox - Pat Falconer - Chuyao Fang - Lori Morgan - Gil Schultz
Section 1:
PROJECT GOALS
Project Goals

Explore the potential to transform the South Cedar Corridor to follow a form-based code.

- Determine current conditions
- Create a vision through the use of case studies and build out analysis
- Project economic impacts through a tax assessment across multiple development scenarios
- Provide recommendations to the City of Lansing to ease the transition from current zoning to form based code
Section 2: BACKGROUND
Design Lansing

- City of Lansing Comprehensive Plan
- Adopted April 9, 2012
- Focused on implementation of Form Based Code (FBC) and placemaking principles
- Corridors were chosen by citizens to be made more active pedestrian friendly
What is Form Based Code?

Emphasizes:

- Design standards rather than separation of uses
- Higher density, mixed-use development
- Pedestrian friendly environments

Conventional Zoning

Form Based Code Zoning

Source: Formbasedcode.org
Study Area Location within the Region

State of Michigan

City of Lansing

Ingham County

State of Michigan
Study Area Location within Lansing
Study Area
Section 3: STUDY AREA CHARACTERISTICS
Key Characteristics

- Business Corridor
- Dominated by auto service & sale businesses
- Medium to large parcels with deep setbacks
- Large areas dedicated to parking

Large setbacks and Parking Space

Auto Dealership

Quality Dairy and Rite-Aid

Music Manor
Existing Land Use

- Consistent with existing, mainly commercial zoning
- Limited residential usage

Legend
- commercial
- industrial
- office
- residential
- utility
- vacant
Vacancy Inventory

• 46 total parcels
• 67% occupied
• 13% vacant with structure
• 13% vacant no structure
• 7% partially vacant
Units of Analysis

- Established by the practicum team to have comparable frontage lengths along South Cedar
- To better manage and compare data across the study area
Parking Inventory

• Parking spaces counted by block
• 361 Total Spaces
• Auto sales lots were not included in the count
Parking Usage Study

- Performed to understand the potential to reduce parking coverage to match form based code standards

Average Parking Usage by Block

- Block 1E: 15.64%
- Block 2E: 5.16%
- Block 3E: 65.48%
- Block 4E: 25.65%
- Block 1W: 23.56%
- Block 2W: 7.86%
- Block 3W: 44.44%
- Block 4W: 4.57%
Transportation

- Auto-oriented state trunkline
- Controlled by Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)
- High traffic from 8 AM to 8 PM, characteristic of a Business Corridor

Intersection of South Cedar Street and Holmes Road
Public Transit

- Serviced by Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) Route 5
- Route 5 ridership has increased over the past five years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Riders</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>588,618</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>612,757</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>654,100</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>713,580</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>731,208</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alternative Transportation

• Only two crosswalks, one at Greenlawn Ave. and the other at Holmes Rd.

• Sidewalks present but lack barriers between pedestrians and automobiles
Section 4:
EXPLORING FORM BASED CODE-
CASE STUDIES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning</th>
<th>Business Corridor (Existing)</th>
<th>Urban Mixed-Use Corridor (Proposed Zoning)</th>
<th>Activity Corridor (Proposed Street Typology)</th>
<th>General Urban (Form Based Code Model)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block &amp; Lot Width</td>
<td>Medium Block sizes, Lot sizes vary from small to large</td>
<td>To be determined by City of Lansing</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Walkable blocks, predominately in a grid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Characteristics</td>
<td>Multiple driveway curb cuts, medium to large parking lots, little/no parking screening</td>
<td>Shared driveways and cross-access easements along the rear property line</td>
<td>3-5 lanes or 2-4 lane boulevard. Center turn lanes, center lane median, crosswalk bump-outs, on-street parking</td>
<td>All right-of-way have curb, sidewalk, and on-street parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Height</td>
<td>1 story</td>
<td>2-4 stories</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1-3 stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Siting</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Front setbacks 0-15ft</td>
<td>Buildings built close to the right of way edge and oriented toward the street.</td>
<td>Little to no setbacks for commercial. Some setback for residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Coverage</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>80% Maximum coverage</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>40-95% for commercial &amp; 30-75% for residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage of Front Property Line</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>To be determined by City of Lansing</td>
<td>May include parallel, angle or reverse-angle on-street parking spaces. Off-street parking should be provided in the rear.</td>
<td>50-100% for commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Commercial/Office</td>
<td>Retail, personal services, office, live-work, and selected light industrial with special approval</td>
<td>Provide access to entertainment, businesses, and employment for motorists, transit users, and pedestrians</td>
<td>Commercial &amp; Residential - single &amp; multiple-family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Case Studies

Cincinnati, Ohio

- Example of citywide form based code
- Development meets Lansing’s goals for retail and entertainment activity
- Consideration: Cincinnati had existing infrastructure to be preserved
Birmingham, Michigan

- Example of an overlay form based code
- Demonstrates pedestrian friendly corridors
- Consideration: Development targets a different demographic than goals of Design Lansing

Triangle District
Case Studies

Leesburg, Virginia
- Example of an overlay district
- Demonstrates potential of form based code beyond the corridor
- Consideration: Leesburg experienced population growth and is more affluent than Lansing

Crescent District
Case Studies

Grandville, Michigan
- Example of hybrid zoning
- Prioritizes areas of the city for form based code
- Plan includes detailed development requirements
- Conversation: Grandville has long standing programs that help finance development.
Section 5: BUILD OUT ANALYSIS & TAX ANALYSIS
Build Out Analysis

- Projected using form based code standards of 40% and 80% building coverage
Tax Analysis

- Block 1W and 1E generates the most tax revenue
- The two most common tax rates in the study areas are non-homestead (NH) and commercial personal (CPP)
Tax Analysis

Tax Status of All Listed Properties

- Taxes Paid 2013: 37%
- Delinquent as of Winter 2013: 63%

Delinquent Properties

- Delinquent - Less Than 2 Pay Periods: 23%
- Delinquent - Over 2 Pay Periods: 77%
Section 6:
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN
Illustrative Plan

- Block 4W was selected based on high exposure at the Holmes and S. Cedar intersection and potential for future development
Illustrative Plan

- Projections based on 40% and 80% build out, for 1, 2 and 3 story development scenarios
- Non-homestead (NH) and commercial personal (CPP) tax rates
Section 7: RECOMMENDATIONS
Short-Term

**Transportation**
- Walkability Study
- Ridership Study by Capital Area Transit Authority (CATA)
- Conversations with MDOT about potential for changes along the trunk line

**Financial Impact**
- Market Study
- Pursue Programs that Incentivize Investment
- Establish a Corridor Improvement Authority
Long Term

Build Out

• Increase Building Coverage
• Reduce Parking; Reorganize Parking
• Encourage Infill Development
• Partner with Ingham County Land Bank
Final Recommendations

• Postpone adoption of form based code within the study area. Meanwhile:
  • Explore other locations stated in Design Lansing for adoption
  • Allow time to establish programs and for programs to mature before development
  • Perform studies from previous recommendations to help identify characteristics that can be better prepared for form based code adoption
Thank You.

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