

Executive Summary

This project is a collaboration between the Michigan State University (MSU) Urban and Regional Planning Program and the City of Dearborn, Michigan during the spring semester of 2017. The purpose of this project is to create a vision and guidelines for the future development of the Fairlane Planning Area. The focus of our guidelines include identifying areas of potential growth or development, and improving the connection of uses within the Fairlane Planning Area and with the surrounding downtowns.

The Fairlane Planning Area, just north of Michigan Avenue and east of the Rouge River includes the Fairlane Town Center mall, the focal point of the site, as well as various educational institutions, businesses, hotels, and medical facilities. To gain a better understanding of the community and the built environment, several studies were conducted. The data collected for this report came from existing reports and statistics from the City of Dearborn, the United States Census, ESRI Business Analyst, and observations and data generated by the Practicum team.

Our research included a detailed socioeconomic profile that found that the population of the Fairlane Planning Area has increased since 1990, and is now younger and more educated in comparison to Wayne County and the state of Michigan. The zoning and land use analysis found a shift towards mixed-use development and transit oriented development, with a need for flexibility in zoning. A study conducted for transportation and connectivity revealed poor pedestrian access between points of interest within the Fairlane Planning Area, and between transit and destinations. Existing trails and bike paths were geared towards recreational purposes, and were insufficient for the purposes of commuting. Sidewalks and crosswalks were sporadic and unpredictable. The retail gap analysis found significant leakage from the Fairlane Planning Area, and concluded that businesses such as *Lawn and Garden Equipment Supply Stores, Grocery Stores, and General Merchandise Stores* might be beneficial to the site. The Housing profile of the area found that there were significantly more renter-occupied units and a greater variety of types of housing units in the Fairlane Planning Area than in the City of Dearborn or Wayne County. Additionally, the report includes several case studies and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (S.W.O.T.) analysis.

FAIRLANE PLANNING AREA STUDY

The results of the studies conducted, in addition to selected case studies, observations made during visits to the area, and information received from the City of Dearborn and other stakeholders, informed the recommendations made for the Fairlane Planning Area.

Recommendations focused on a range of short-term to long-term strategies and are divided into four main goals. These goals are subdivided into a series of objectives, each of which contains several actions the City of Dearborn can take in conjunction with relevant stakeholders. The overall focus of the recommendations is on the connectivity of the area, as well as fostering development and a community that will contribute to the Fairlane Planning Area's economic viability and sense of identity. The recommendations also heavily emphasize having strong community and stakeholder engagement.

Goal 1: Create a unified identity for the Fairlane Planning Area.

Objective 1.1: Improve and create public spaces that enhance the sense of community and place

Objective 1.2: Create a brand for the Fairlane Planning Area that identifies it as a unique neighborhood within the City of Dearborn.

Objective 1.3: Create a Fairlane Planning Area community built around the needs and interests of the local population.

Goal 2: Increase non-motorized transportation connections.

Objective 2.1: Implement bicycle path and sidewalk improvements.

Objective 2.2: Provide amenities that complement walking and bicycle use.

Goal 3: Enhance opportunities for multi-modal transit.

Objective 3.1: Create an environment that is conducive to multi-modal transit and development.

Objective 3.2: Attract more transit options to the area.

Objective 3.3: Improve existing transit facilities.

Goal 4: Foster cohesive future land uses and development.

Objective 4.1. Update the zoning code to coincide with the future land use goals from the Master Plan.

Objective 4.2: Continuing retail development and potential expansion within the Fairlane Area to attract people into the area.

Objective 4.3: Encourage the future development of a wide range of housing options within the Fairlane Planning Area.

Objective 4.4: Development of a form-based code.