

One of the goals of the Lyon Center Vision Plan is to integrate the regional marketplace with the local New Hudson marketplace in a manner that they both thrive.

### Land Use Planning Considerations

**Village (Hamlet) Character.** The policies related to planning innovation, commercial revitalization, and preservation of historic resources focus attention on the opportunity for a more traditional development pattern in New Hudson. This concept is best described by Peter Calthorpe in *The Next American Metropolis* (1993):

“The alternative to sprawl is simple and timely: neighborhoods of housing, parks, and schools placed within walking distance of shops, civic services, jobs, and transit – a model version of the traditional town. The convenience of the car and the opportunity to walk or use transit can be blended in an environment with local access for all the daily needs of a diverse community.”

Perhaps the most important aspect of a traditional village development is that it is a walkable environment. Research has shown that a comfortable walking distance – the ideal radius for a village environment – is a quarter of a mile to 2,000 feet, or a 5 to 10-minute walking distance. Coincidentally, most development within the ring road in New Hudson will be no farther than approximately 2,000 feet from the crossroads of Grand River Avenue and Milford Road.

**Traditional Design Principles.** Implementation of the traditional village concept requires adherence to certain design principles to achieve diverse concentrated development without sacrificing land use compatibility. Key design principles include:

- Commercial areas should be configured to allow standard parking quantities, access, and visibility for the car, but must include convenient sidewalks for pedestrians.
- Ideally, off-street parking should be located in the rear of the building. On-street parking should be encouraged on all streets. On-street parking helps to “civilize” the street for pedestrians by creating a buffer between moving cars and the sidewalk
- Building setbacks from the street should be minimized. Minimal setbacks bring buildings closer to the street, and enlivens commercial areas by encouraging window shopping and street activity.
- Building facades should be varied to provide visual interest to pedestrians. Building designs should provide as much visual stimulus as possible, without creating chaos.
- The ground floor entrance to commercial buildings should be oriented to the street. The pedestrian life of a building is at its entrance. If the primary entrance is oriented to the parking lot, it steals the activity and life away from the street and distracts from the pedestrian environment.

- Public parks and plazas are fundamental features of livable, higher-density, traditional communities.
- Parks and plaza should reinforce retail areas by providing places suitable for informal gatherings and public events. These areas should not simply be created out of residual land as an afterthought.
- The width, design speed, and number of travel lanes on Grand River Avenue should be minimized without compromising safety, on-street parking, or bicycle access. Streets should be designed to slow traffic, reduce accidents, and provide a more intimate scale.
- The size of any single surface parking lot should be limited to three acres. All parking lots should be planted with sufficient trees so that within ten years 70 percent of the surface area is shaded.

### Goals and Policies

Several general Master Plan goals and policies affect the nature of development in New Hudson. With respect to commercial design, the Planning Commission agreed that commercial uses should reflect thorough and careful analysis of the site and a sincere effort to improve aesthetics. The policies call for pedestrian access, and placement of loading, parking and storage areas behind buildings. The Planning Commission noted the need for close monitoring and stringent enforcement of building and maintenance codes in commercial areas, and called for transition uses or screening to buffer commercial uses from adjoining residential uses.

The Planning Commission also agreed that revitalization of aging residential areas should be a Master Plan goal. In this respect, the Township should work toward improving roads, streetlights, and other residential amenities as an incentive to undertake revitalization.

Focusing more directly on New Hudson, there are five key goals:

1. Promote a pedestrian-friendly town center area.
2. Reorganize the traffic hierarchy to promote safety, accommodate the completion of the ring road, and incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
3. Enrich commercial and office uses to support local needs.
4. Incorporate the history of New Hudson into the design to enhance its unique character.
5. Incorporate natural resources to support the uses and character of the hamlet.