

In addition to the five goals, the Lyon Center Vision Plan sets forth seven guiding principles, which are summarized below:<sup>1</sup>

1. The Hamlet Concept. The hamlet model will allow Lyon Township to build upon the existing freestanding architecture of historic New Hudson, create infill and expansion opportunity, and revive a historic development model that characterized early development.
2. Balanced Development. Provide a place for all types of businesses: big box, mid box, convenience commercial, outlots, small office and downtown businesses.
3. Image and Identity. The Township needs to brand itself within Oakland County, Southeast Michigan, and globally. Equally important, the physical image of the Township needs to be clarified. The appearance of New Hudson is important to both the livability and the community's physical and economic development.
4. Quality Architecture. New Hudson stakeholders place emphasis on quality architecture and good design. Good design is sustainable, accessible, functional, well made, emotionally resonant, enduring, socially beneficial, and beautiful.
5. Public Spaces and Places. Stakeholders agree that one aspect of developing a lively downtown is development of public spaces and places, such as multipurpose streets; parks, plazas and squares; and, libraries, civic centers and other public buildings.
6. Walkability. One of the top objectives of the Lyon Center Vision Plan is to create a compact, walkable community. People love walkable neighborhoods because of their human energy – they create the opportunity for fun, lively, memorable activity.
7. Sustainability. Spurring the sustainability ethic are demographic shifts, a strong environmental ethic, increased fiscal concerns, and more nuanced views of growth. The result is a new demand and a new opportunity for smart growth.

### Retail Analysis

A plan should be visionary, but it should be realistic in terms of what is feasible. Retail feasibility can be determined by identifying the trade area, identifying the competing facilities within the trade area, and computing the retail market potential. A retail trade analysis was completed in the Lyon Center Vision Plan, finding that there will likely be little demand for additional large-scale retail floor space within a 15-minute drive time area. The well-established Brighton and Novi clusters enjoy regional prominence and will be difficult to compete against, and the existing WalMart store in Lyon Towne Center will meet the area's demand for big box goods and services now and in the foreseeable future.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See page 21 of the Lyon Vision Plan for further explanation of these principles.

<sup>2</sup> See page 7 of the Lyon Center Vision Plan for additional detail.

The retail analysis draws four conclusions:

1. The best chance of success will be where there is an undersupply in both the local and regional trade areas.
2. It will be difficult for new businesses to compete against WalMart on convenience and price.
3. There may be a need for a gas station, although it would have to be located at the outer edges of the ring road to be compatible with the vision for Lyon Center.
4. Most important, there are opportunities for niche businesses. To be successful, such businesses must differentiate themselves from big box stores in the market area. The differentiation can be on the basis of quality, service, uniqueness, or another characteristic that the big box stores cannot match. A local business will not be able to compete with a big box store on the basis of convenience or price alone.

### Design Charrette

The principles outlined above were some of the considerations that planners and urban designers took into account at the charrette that was held on February 6 and 7, 2009, at the Lyon Township Municipal Center in the preparation of the Lyon Center Vision Plan. A charrette is an intense period of design activity, when planners, designers, and community stakeholders come together to relatively quickly generate a solution to a design problem. The two-day charrette in 2009 included visioning exercises, preference surveys, and live-time drawings by graphic artists and architects to capture the vision of participants of New Hudson's future. At the culmination of the charrette, a conceptual plan for New Hudson had been prepared, showing locations and amounts of various land uses, the desired transportation pattern, streetscape plans that include road cross-sections, and perspective sketches showing how New Hudson might look in the future.

### The Design Plan

As briefly described in the introduction to this chapter, the Lyon Center Vision Plan calls for creation of a compact, walkable downtown, with a hamlet at its center, and high density residential adjacent to the hamlet on the south (see Lyon Center Development Vision). The hamlet, consisting of individual buildings on individual lots, mimics the way New Hudson historically developed. The hamlet is intended to be a mixed use district, with commercial, entertainment, and restaurants on the first floor, and residential and office on the upper floors.

Some redevelopment will be required to implement the hamlet plan. For example, in the southwest segment bounded by Pontiac Trail and Milford Road, the plan anticipates that in the long-term the New Hudson Corporation will relocate, providing the opportunity for more mixed use development at the intersection. Redevelopment of this site would provide the opportunity to develop a highly visible, landmark use.