

January 31, 2017

Hon. Marlene Chockley
Township Supervisor
Northfield Township
8350 Main Street – P.O. Box 576
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

Subject: Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework

Dear Marlene:

At your request, we have outlined a process to work with Township stakeholders to create a Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework for the future development of Whitmore Lake. We will work with the Township to refine this scope to best fit your needs after discussion and your input.

A. ORGANIZATION FOR PLANNING

While many groups, boards, commissions, landowners, the public and others will be involved and contribute to the process of creating the Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework, the Township's Downtown Planning Group (DPG) will provide the organizing structure.

B. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

We understand that Northfield Township wants consistent and substantive public engagement. We envision the Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework as the next phase of Township outreach - building on the success of the Northfield Community Park Master Plan effort and leading up to the Township Master Plan effort. A realistic goal of any participation process is consensus, but not necessarily total agreement. We will:

- Be *respectful* of residents' time and attitudes
- Provide residents with *multiple opportunities for input*, as described below
- Be straightforward and forthcoming in establishing the *role the public will play* in decision-making
- Conduct public engagement activities with a *friendly yet professional* demeanor
- *Follow through on all promises* made to the public

Key Public Engagement Tools

The mail survey, stakeholder interviews, trunk-or-treat event, and mini-charrette conducted for the Northfield Community Park Master Plan yielded valuable results that will inform the Downtown planning process. The next phase of engagement can follow-up on these activities and provide a framework for the future development of Downtown Whitmore Lake. We recommend the following activities:

- Downtown Planning Group: Facilitate meetings with the DPG throughout the planning process.
- Focus Groups: Conduct two (2) to four (4) focus groups with residents and stakeholders identified by the Township and the DPG. Possible focus areas include: housing needs, growth management, design preference, and transportation.
- Digital Information Kiosk: As an option, the Township could install a digital kiosk with information and feedback opportunities at Township Hall or the Library.
- Pop-up Workshops: Attend and present at one (1) to two (2) community events (like trunk or treat)

McKenna will design a project logo/brand that can be used in outreach efforts to improve participation, and give credibility and context to each message.

C. PROPOSED WORK PLAN

1. Alternatives and Development Scenarios:

McKenna will work with the DPG to develop alternative concepts for downtown development. Ideas and will be fueled by the flexibility of the public engagement approach. The result of this phase will be to develop alternatives for refining a Design Framework for downtown.

The evaluation of different development scenarios will be an opportunity for the Township and stakeholders to look closely at policy questions to determine how to guide regulations and public investment.

To evaluate land development scenarios, the McKenna team will examine the existing conditions and public input, to identify two to four key site opportunities in the Downtown. Some likely candidates have already been identified for study, like the Driftwood Marina, but others may emerge. McKenna will work with the DPG, and site stakeholders, to develop alternatives based on future competitiveness, physical or economic patterns; conditions or arrangement of land, buildings, lots, or blocks; land use adjacencies; or inappropriate intensity of use is a candidate for a “change in intensity” within the planning period of five, 10, or 20 years.

To evaluate transportation development scenarios, the McKenna team will document the existing roadway conditions on Main Street and Barker Road, including utilities, traffic speed, traffic volumes, right-of-way constraints, as well as public input, to assess mode prioritization schemes for each character area in the Downtown. The McKenna team will explore trade-offs between biking, walking, parking and driving within the downtown to test a variety of cross-sections for their ability to meet design objectives.

2. Development Framework:

McKenna will work with the DPG to develop a plan for the character of development in Downtown Whitmore Lake that considers building massing, uses, and public space. The Plan will address how buildings should look, including height and massing, where buildings should be located on the parcel, and appropriate uses for each kind of building. The Development Framework will include renderings showing the location, height, and design of buildings for development opportunities in Downtown. This will make it easier to coordinate development and redevelopment on different sites easier.

The Development Framework will address the following:

- a. Character transitions, gateway, and nodal plan
- b. Future land use designations for all areas
- c. Opportunities to attract new development and businesses
- d. Priority redevelopment sites and catalytic opportunities
- e. Development visualizations, elevations, and 3-D renderings for key areas in the Downtown
- f. Design concepts for pocket parks and public spaces
- g. Building design standards
- h. Siting standards
- i. Parking standards
- j. Recommended building types for the various sub-areas
- k. Recommended uses for the various sub-areas

3. Connectivity Framework:

McKenna will work with the DPG to create a Connectivity Framework and establish a preferred concept for the design of streetscape, roadway components, and crossings in the Downtown. The McKenna team will refine and finalize the preferred design elements that are selected from the preliminary recommendations and alternatives development phase.

The Connectivity Framework will address the following:

- a. Streets and circulation plan, including access management
- b. Opportunities for new streets and grid retrofitting
- c. Complete Streets approach, policy objectives, and principles
- d. Nonmotorized plans for bicycle, pedestrian, and marina connections
- e. Crossing plan for priority pedestrian and bicycle crossings
- f. Typology plan for right-of-way variations to establish district transitions
- g. Typical cross-sections for segments and intersection
- h. Streetscape concepts and design drawings
- i. Cost estimates for improvement projects and phasing plan
- j. Street design guidelines
- k. Parking plan showing areas for shared parking and potential areas for public parking facilities

4. Downtown Design Guidelines:

McKenna will work with the DPG to create responsive and appropriate Downtown Design Guidelines for Whitmore Lake. These guidelines will support the land use and transportation recommendations for Downtown and will foster welcoming, attractive, and active development that is reflective of the unique character of Northfield Township. The guidelines will include recommendations to improve and enhance the image and identity of Downtown, including a framework for all streetscape improvements and identity projects.

The Downtown Design Guidelines will address the following:

- a. Landscaping
- b. Pedestrian amenities
- c. Street Furnishings
- d. Medians
- e. Gateway elements
- f. Public art
- g. Crossing enhancements
- h. Wayfinding and interpretive signs
- i. Downtown identity and branding

5. Strategic Action Plan

McKenna will work with the DPG to create a strategic action plan to guide project implementation. This plan will include step-by-step guidance for plan objectives and an implementation matrix that identifies funding sources, priority levels, partners for each key project. McKenna will also create a detailed work plan for the first two years of plan implementation and marketing tools.

The plan will include strategic actions pertaining to targeting desired/supportable land uses, business attraction strategies, and administration duties. The purpose of the strategic action plan is to provide a concise list of implementation-ready projects that the Township should pursue.

This Strategic Action Plan will include the following:

- a. A concise action plan organized around project goals, objectives, strategies, and actions
- b. An implementation matrix, with each projects priority, timeframe, funding, and partners
- c. A two-year work plan for staff or the DPG
- d. A marketing strategy and marketing materials

D. END PRODUCTS

- 1. Graphic Boards and Illustrations:** Renderings from the Design Framework will be mounted on boards to serve as a permanent record, suitable for display.
- 2. Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework:** The completed document will include text, photos, plans, maps, reduction and sketches, and will also incorporate the Northfield Community Park Master Plan to clearly communicate our recommendations. The Plan will be developed to be formally adopted by the Township as a subarea plan or chapter of the current Northfield Township Master Plan. Additionally, the Plan will serve as the foundation for future amendments to the Whitmore Lake District of the Zoning Ordinance.

McKenna will deliver 10 copies of the bound document along with one electronic copy for your use.

E. SCHEDULE

We propose to complete the Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework within 4 - 5 months from date of authorization to proceed. This schedule may be adjusted, as mutually agreed with the Township.

F. FEES

McKenna's fee for the Work Plan, as outlined above is \$18,500. On a task by task basis, our fee is:

Step 1: Alternatives	\$2,000
Step 2: Development Framework:	\$4,500
Step 3: Connectivity Framework:	\$4,500
Step 4: Downtown Design Guidelines	\$4,000
Step 5: Strategic Action Plan	\$3,500
TOTAL:	\$18,500

We propose that the Public Engagement be conducted based on the following professional fees; which will allow the Township some flexibility in scheduling additional events or meetings during the process.

- Downtown Planning Group Meetings: \$400 per meeting
 - Monthly meetings recommended for four to five months = \$1,600 to \$2,000
- Focus Group Meetings: \$600 per meeting
 - Two to four meetings recommended = \$1,200 to \$2,400
- Digital Information Kiosk: \$2,500 per kiosk

- Optional - McKenna can explore permanent installation, as well
- Pop-up Workshops: \$1,000 per meeting
 - One to two events recommended = \$1,000 to \$2,000

Recommended Public Engagement commitment = \$3,800 to \$6,400

Services will be invoiced to the Township on a percent complete basis. Any tasks beyond those cited in the agreed-upon work plan, as requested by the Township, would be invoiced as additional services, in accordance with the Schedule of Hourly Rates in our current contract with Northfield Township.

If you are satisfied with the Work Plan described, then please return one signed copy of this letter for our files, authorizing McKenna to proceed. If the Township Board of Trustees would like us to present our proposal and answer any questions, we would be pleased to do so. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

McKENNA ASSOCIATES



Paul Lippens, AICP
Director of Transportation and Urban Design
Senior Principal Planner

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP, WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Signature

Title

Date

Name (printed)

**Northfield Township
Non-Residential District Use Matrix**

	WLD-D	WLD-NV	WLD-W	LC	GC	HC	ES	PSC	RO	LI	GI	RTM
Accessory uses, building, or structure	P	P	P	P	P	P	P ¹			P ²	P	
Essential services	P	P	P	P	P	P			C	P ²	P	
Personal services, including barber shop and beauty salon, medical and dental clinics, music studios, banks and saving and loan associations and other similar uses.				P	P		P ¹	P				P
Personal services including clothing and apparel services, including laundry pickup, automatic laundry, dressmaking, millinery, tailor shop, and shoe repair shop	P	C	P	P	P							P
Personal service offices, such as accountant, attorney, and real estate offices, provided such use shall not exceed 4,000 square feet of floor area in any building				P	P							
Food services including grocery, meat market, bakery, restaurant, delicatessen and fruit market, and similar self-serve units but not including any business of a drive-in type.				P	P							
Retail services, including drug store, hardware, and gift shop, and dry goods and notions store.				P	P							
Business and professional offices	P	P	P	C	P							P
Commercial communications apparatus (Cell Towers)			C	C	C	C			C		C	P
Permanently reserved areas for outdoor seating and/or service when associated with a restaurant	P	C	P	C	C	C						
One dwelling unit within the principal building or structure for security purposes only.				C	C	C						P
Mini-warehousing				C	C	C						
Animal hospitals or clinics	C	C	C	C	C							
Restaurants serving alcoholic beverages, provided that the gross receipts thereof derived from the sale of food and other goods and services exceed 50 percent of the total gross receipts.				C	C							
Temporary outdoor sales				C	C							
Primary and secondary schools.				C								
Printing, lithographic, blueprinting, and similar uses	C	C	C		P		P ¹			P ²	P	P
Commercial recreation facilities, including indoor theaters, bowling alleys, skating rinks, racket clubs	P	P	P		P		P ¹					
Equipment services, including repair, radio and television, electrical appliance shop, plumber, electrician, and other similar services and trades	P	C	P		P		P ¹					
Retail services, including department stores, furniture stores, appliance stores, and super markets.					P							
Showroom and sales of new automobiles, farm machinery, and other vehicle and equipment, and the display and sale of used cars, farm machinery, and other vehicles and equipment when in conjunction with a showroom and sales of new units thereof; and repair of same when in conjunction with a showroom and sales of new units thereof.					P							
Agricultural services, including machinery sales and repair establishments, and farm supply stores.					P							
Automotive service station, including minor repair services					C	P	C					P

**Northfield Township
Non-Residential District Use Matrix**

	WLD-D	WLD-NV	WLD-W	LC	GC	HC	ES	PSC	RO	LI	GI	RTM
Contractor wholesale supply when in conjunction with general retail sales of items, including electrical, plumbing, lumber, and/or garden supplies	C	C	C		C		P ¹					
Contractor wholesale supply when in conjunction with general retail sales of items, including electrical, plumbing, lumber, and/or garden supplies	C	C	C		C		P ¹					
Minor automotive repair facilities.					C		P ¹					
Open air display area for the sale of manufactured products	C	C	C		C					C		
Boat sales and marinas		C	C		C							
Child care facilities.					C							P
Bowling alleys, miniature golf courses, commercial swimming pools, skating rinks.					C							
Bars or establishments principally used for the sale of beer, wine or intoxicating liquor for consumption on the premises					C							
Lots for the sale of used cars, used farm machinery, and other used vehicles and equipment, when not sold in conjunction with sales of new cars, machinery, vehicles, or equipment.					C							
Hotel, tourist home and boarding and rooming house					C							
Controlled uses as defined in section 36-710.					C							
Drive-through facilities for a use permitted in the GC district					C							
Funeral establishments, mortuary.					C							
Sexually oriented businesses					C							
Motel, hotel, restaurants.						P						
Motel, hotel, restaurants.						P						
Drive-in theater.						C						
Places of amusement, entertainment or recreation such as a dancehall, bowling alley, miniature golf, commercial swimming pool.						C						
Drive-in theater.						C						
Drive-throughs, including restaurants, banks, laundries						C						
Retail, sporting goods sales, souvenir and gift shop, public information booth.						C						
Warehousing and material distribution centers; provided all products and materials are enclosed within a building.							C			P ²	P	
Hospitals, nursing homes, sanitariums	C	C	C				C					
Mini-storage							C					
Other retail stores, such as hardware, home improvements, automotive supplies, garden supplies, hobby supplies, records and tapes, musical instruments, books and stationery, pets and pet supplies, flowers, tobacco, drugs and cosmetics, greeting cards and gifts, photography equipment and services, and party supplies, including packaged beer, wine, and liquor.								P				P
Other services, such as automobile service stations, bowling alleys, theaters, and skating rinks								P				
Other services, such as automobile service stations, bowling alleys, theaters, and skating rinks								P				
Food service shops, such as restaurants, cafeterias, cocktail lounges, and ice cream shops.								P				

**Northfield Township
Non-Residential District Use Matrix**

	WLD-D	WLD-NV	WLD-W	LC	GC	HC	ES	PSC	RO	LI	GI	RTM
Financial services.								P				
Clothing and shoe stores.								P				
Dry goods stores.								P				
Food stores, such as supermarkets, meat and fish markets, delicatessens, bakeries, dairy products, and health food stores.								P				
Furniture and appliance stores, decorating shops, and china and glassware stores.								P				
General merchandise stores, such as department stores, variety stores, and catalog store								P				
Luggage and leather goods stores.								P				
Offices, such as legal, accounting, real estate, medical and dental.								P				
Offices, such as legal, accounting, real estate, medical and dental.								P				
Single-family dwellings and any use, building, or structure accessory thereto	UP	P	UP						P			
Two-family dwellings and any use, building, or structure accessory thereto	UP	C	UP						P			
Family child care homes, adult foster care family homes, foster family homes and foster family group homes	P	P	P						P			
Home occupations	UP	P	UP						C			
Church, synagogue, cathedral, mosque, temple, or other building used for public worship	C	C	C						C			C
Group child care homes	C	C	C						C			
Public and private nursery schools, primary and secondary schools.									C			
Executive, administrative, legal, accounting, insurance, real estate and similar offices at a scale that will not generate off-street parking resulting in excessive traffic generated from the use which would be incompatible with the purpose of this district.									C			
Offices of architects, engineers, surveyors and similar professionals; provided that no trucks, drillings, rigs, and similar vehicles shall be stored on the premises and provided that no materials or field equipment shall be stored outdoors on the premises.									C			
Public and private nursery schools, primary and secondary schools.									C			
Dwelling unit combined with an office; provided that the proprietor of the office resides in the dwelling unit.									C			
Assembly of merchandise such as electrical appliances, electronic or precision instruments and articles of similar nature.										P ²	P	
Landscape and lawn care businesses.										P ²	P	

**Northfield Township
Non-Residential District Use Matrix**

	WLD-D	WLD-NV	WLD-W	LC	GC	HC	ES	PSC	RO	LI	GI	RTM
Light manufacturing industrial uses which by the nature of the materials, equipment and processes utilized are to a considerable extent clean, quiet and free from any objectionable or dangerous nuisance or hazard, including any of the following goods or materials: drugs; jewelry; musical instruments; sporting goods; glass products; small household appliances; electronic products; printed matter; baked and dairy products; advertising displays; tents and awnings; brushes and brooms; cameras and photographic equipment and supplies; wearing apparel; leather products and luggage, but not including tanning; products from such finished materials as plastic, bone, cork, feathers, felt, fiber, paper, glass, hair, horn, rubber, shell, or yarn.										P ²	P	
Manufacturing, compounding, process, or treatment of such products as bakery goods, candy, cosmetics, dairy products, food products, perfumes, pharmaceutical toiletries, and frozen food lockers.										P ²	P	
Packaging of previously prepared materials, but not including the bailing of discards, old iron or other metal, wood, lumber, glass, paper, rags, cloth or other similar materials; recycling centers.										P ²	P	
Research and testing facilities.										P ²	P	
Bus, truck, taxi, and rail terminals	C	C	C							C		
Retail sales of items that are the same as the items sold at wholesale on the premises, or are related by use or design to such wholesale items;										C	C	
Outdoor storage of recreational vehicles										C	C	
Restaurants and cafeteria facilities for employees.										C		P
Minor or major repair of vehicles.										C		
Business/technical schools, when licensed by the state,										C		
Outdoor storage of materials and equipment to be used as part of the principal business, and products resulting from the principal business,										C		
Multiple-family dwelling and any use, building, or structure accessory thereto	UP	C	UP									
Financial services, not including a drive-through	P	P	P									
Bed and breakfast inns	P	P	P									
Medical and dental offices	P	P	P									
Restaurants, including those primarily devoted to serving alcoholic liquors for consumption on the premises and/or providing entertainment, but not including any business of a drive-in type or which have a drive-through	P	C	P									
Retail, including food services retail, general retail	P	C	P									
Temporary outdoor sales when conducted by a permanent business established on site	P	C	P									
Motels, hotels	P	C	P									
Outdoor commercial recreation, public or private	C	C	C									P
Public and private nursery schools, primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities	C	C	C									
Public Building	C	C	C									
Automobile or vehicle dealerships	C	C	C									

**Northfield Township
Non-Residential District Use Matrix**

	WLD-D	WLD-NV	WLD-W	LC	GC	HC	ES	PSC	RO	LI	GI	RTM
Medical and dental clinics when associated with a hospital or nursing home (ambulatory health care facility) in which outpatient treatment for patients is provided	C	C	C									
Public and private nursery schools, primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities	C	C	C									
Research oriented and light industrial park uses	C	C	C									
Funeral establishments	C	C	C									
Drive-through as an accessory to a restaurant, financial services, or other permitted use			C									
Trucking and cartage facilities, truck and industrial equipment storage yards, repairing and washing equipment and yards											P	
Wholesale auto auctions											P	
Wholesale businesses, including warehouse and storage, commercial laundries, dry cleaning establishments, ice and cold storage plants, lumber, fuel and feed yards, automobile repair garages, construction and farm equipment sales and contractor's equipment yards.											P	
Contractor's establishment not engaging in any retail activities on the site.											P	
Manufacturing product warehousing, exchange and storage centers and yards.											P	
Manufacturing.											P	
Open industrial uses,											P	
Wholesale businesses, including warehouse and storage, commercial laundries, dry cleaning establishments, ice and cold storage plants, lumber, fuel and feed yards, automobile repair garages, construction and farm equipment sales and contractor's equipment yards.											P	
Vehicle towing services											C	
Concrete and asphalt mixing or production plants.											C	
Heat treating processes.											C	
Junkyards and inoperative vehicle storage, subject to the provisions of this chapter and also to the provisions of the current junkyard resolution.											C	
Plating shops.											C	
Vehicle towing services											C	
Commercial, office, and service uses which are located, designed, and intended to support and complement permitted principal uses which are located in an RTM district, such as the following: theaters, auditoriums and meeting facilities												P
Uses such as fire, police, and ambulance stations; technical and business schools; recreation facilities, both indoor and outdoor post office												P
Commercial, office, and service uses which are located, designed, and intended to support and complement permitted principal uses which are located in an RTM district, such as the following: office supply sales; medical and dental offices; data processing and computing centers; computer and office machine service and repair establishments												P
Transient lodging facilities												P

Northfield Township
Non-Residential District Use Matrix

	WLD-D	WLD-NV	WLD-W	LC	GC	HC	ES	PSC	RO	LI	GI	RTM
Automated production equipment, such as robots												P
Warehousing, only for principal uses permitted and located in this district.												P
Business research, development, and testing laboratories.												P
Commercial, office, and service uses which are located, designed, and intended to support and complement permitted principal uses which are located in an RTM district, such as the following: office supply sales; medical and dental offices; data processing and computing centers; computer and office machine service and repair establishments												p
Electricity transmission and distribution lines, gas and oil pipelines, and related structures; electricity switching and step-down stations.												P
Industrial research, development, and testing laboratories.												P
Measuring, analyzing, and controlling instruments; photographic (except chemicals and sensitized materials); medical and optical goods; watches and clocks.												P
Office, computing, and accounting machinery.												P
Pharmaceutical drugs.												P
Production and processing of genetic materials.												P
Prototype or pilot processing, manufacturing, and/or assemble												P
Scientific research, development, and testing laboratories.												P
Space vehicles and parts.												P
Agricultural uses, as temporary uses prior to development of a parcel in the RTM district.												P
Power plants and water treatment plants.												P

NOTES:

¹ The materials and equipment to be used in the principal business and products resulting from the principal business shall be stored entirely within completely enclosed buildings.

² The materials and equipment to be used in the principal business and products resulting from the principal business shall be stored within a completely enclosed building. Such products, materials, and equipment may be stored outdoors if a conditional use permit therefor is obtained in accordance with this chapter (18).

February 9, 2017

Board of Trustees and Planning Commission
Northfield Township
8350 Main Street – P.O. Box 576
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

Subject: Proposed 2017 Community Development Work Plan for Northfield Township

Dear members of the Board of Trustees and Planning Commission:

In early 2016, Northfield Township selected McKenna through a competitive process to serve as its community planning consultant. Over the last year, we have served the Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Downtown Planning Group on the following projects:

- Defending the Master Plan by preparing an analysis and recommendation of the Biltmore proposal to amend the Plan.
- Assisting the Downtown Planning Group in the preparation of the Northfield Community Park Master Plan, including public participation, design, and market analysis.
- Working with the Planning Commission to draft Zoning Ordinance amendments to revise commercial land use regulations and improve screening regulations for outdoor storage.
- Writing waterfront regulations for the Zoning Ordinance, which have been adopted.
- Monthly advisory assistance to the Planning Commission (site plan review, rezonings, and conditional land uses).
- Zoning Administrator assistance, including permit reviews, phone calls with applicants, attendance at ZBA meetings, and preparing ZBA reviews.

As Northfield Township begins 2017, we would like to recommend the following projects based on feedback received from the DPG and Planning Commission, as well as our analysis of the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

- 1. McKenna Attendance at DPG Meetings and Other Ongoing Assistance.** As the DPG concludes the Northfield Community Park Master Plan, the DPG plans to keep momentum by encouraging activities and development in the downtown.
- 2. Master Plan Update.** The current Northfield Township Master Plan was originally adopted in 2012. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires a municipality to review its master plan at least once every 5 years to determine if revisions are needed. The current Master Plan is strong and provides a clear vision for many of the community's goals with respect to future growth and preservation. At the same time, there are areas of the Master Plan that would benefit from additional policies, including:
 - a. Northfield Community Park Master Plan.** With the upcoming completion of the Northfield Community Park Master Plan, we recommend incorporating it into the Master Plan as an additional step toward supporting downtown recreation and development.

- b. Details of Nonmotorized Transportation Plan.** With the adoption of Complete Streets legislation in Michigan, it is important for Northfield Township to plan for the appropriate interconnectivity of its current and future nonmotorized and motorized transportation systems. While the Master Plan supports a non-motorized (e.g., pedestrian and bicycle) transportation system in the township and includes a map from the 2006 Non-Motorized Plan for Washtenaw County developed by the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS), the Master Plan should include a nonmotorized inventory (including sidewalks) and include specific policies for how that nonmotorized network will be developed in the coming years. There are major considerations for a non-motorized system, which include the locations of high priority corridors and the opportunities to link to existing systems in adjacent communities. McKenna has assisted Hamburg Township and Lyon Township in the development of their nonmotorized systems, so we are familiar with the local nonmotorized transportation systems and plans.
- c. Agricultural Production and Preservation.** The Master Plan includes goals for preserving farmland, which include promoting agricultural tourism. While we recommend standards in the Zoning Ordinance to promote agritourism (see below), the Master Plan should acknowledge the recent creation of the Farmland and Natural Areas Preservation Committee and include supporting language for its upcoming tasks. We anticipate that many of the policies of the Farmland and Natural Areas Preservation Committee will eventually be adopted into the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance, so we recommend establishing that link as soon as possible in the Master Plan.
- d. Zoning Plan.** The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires that a zoning plan be included in a master plan that explains how the land use categories of the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map. The Master Plan currently has a Zoning Plan; however, with the anticipated repeal of the Enterprise Service (ES) District and Highway Commercial (HC) District, the Township should eliminate the references to these districts in the Zoning Plan. At the same time, the Future Land Use Map should be reviewed for consistency with the Zoning Plan.
- e. Public Participation.** The public participation feedback for the current Master Plan was obtained in 2010 (2 Planning Fairs and a community survey). The public input recently received for the Northfield Community Park Master Plan yielded excellent feedback and was a reflection of the community's excitement about planning the future of the community. If an update to the Master Plan is initiated in 2017, it would provide an excellent opportunity to invite the public to provide input on the community's future land use policies. This can include an online survey, public workshops and charrettes, and stakeholder interviews.

We understand that the Township currently has an agreement with Cobalt Community Research to conduct a survey. A comprehensive community survey can be an excellent way of obtaining the public's opinions about development, preservation, public services, and several other topics. These opinions, in turn, will be used to shape public policy. The Planning Commission has asked us to evaluate the draft survey (the latest version we have is titled "Draft 6") and provide comments. The following are our initial comments and suggestions regarding the survey:

- In Question 1, there is a question asking the respondent to rate the "cleanliness of downtown Whitmore Lake." We recommend asking about "appearance" and/or "attractiveness" of downtown Whitmore Lake.
- In Question 2, we recommend adding a question about "Availability of different types of housing (e.g., detached single-family homes, attached single-family homes, apartments, manufactured homes, etc.)"
- In Question 5, there is a general question asking the respondent to rate the "availability of bike paths and walking trails." We recommend that a question be added asking about the sidewalk network.
- In Question 12, the last 2 questions ask about opinions regarding additional housing development. The response choices for these questions are confusing because the respondent

won't know what it means to "allocate existing funds to accomplish" or "request a small millage to accomplish" more housing developments.

- In Question 13, it seems as though increasing the residential density in the Agricultural area is already under consideration by the Township. This statement may elicit defensive responses. We recommend changing the question to: "If the Township were to consider additional residential development in the Agricultural areas of Northfield Township, please review the following statements and rate your level of agreement with each." Also, the last question asks about supporting additional residential housing if sensitive areas are preserved, but it does not include a density.
- In Question 14, we recommend including a statement instructing the respondent to "select all that apply."
- In Question 22, we recommend changing "Child(ren) over age 13-17" to "Child(ren) between ages 13-17." Also, we recommend changing "Child(ren) over age 17" to "Other adults." In this case, "other adults" can include children ages 18-19 as well as senior citizens.

3. **Whitmore Lake Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework.** We recently prepared a proposal to Northfield Township for a Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework (enclosed). The intent of the Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework is to continue the DPG's work on the Northfield Community Park Master Plan by looking at downtown Whitmore Lake as a whole and creating a vision of future development. The proposed Strategic Action Plan will be based on heavy public engagement, consideration of real-life design scenarios of downtown Whitmore Lake, development of a design and connectivity framework, creation of downtown design guidelines, and adoption of a Strategic Action Plan and implementation schedule. When completed, we would propose incorporating the policies into the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance where appropriate.

4. Zoning Ordinance Updates

- a. **Amendments to encourage more development activity downtown.** The Whitmore Lake District (WLD) was adopted in 2013 to encourage development in downtown Whitmore Lake that was mixed use, human scale, and had good urban form. So far, the WLD does not appear to have had a major impact. One of the impediments that we've noticed in the Zoning Ordinance is that the WLD includes an inordinate number of Conditional Uses, which will discourage many types of business from starting because of the high barriers to entry. We recommend that the Township review the land uses of the WLD and try to include more uses as Permitted Uses. This will also encourage re-use of buildings – the re-use of a building is much easier if there are more Permitted Use options. Additionally, if the Township starts the Whitmore Lake Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework (described above), the design guidelines can be codified with accompanying graphics based on real-life scenarios in downtown Whitmore Lake.
- b. **Amendments to encourage more agricultural tourism uses.** The Zoning Ordinance allows for agricultural tourism uses as Conditional Uses in the AR district. The Michigan Right to Farm Act may require some of the uses listed to be permitted as part of a commercial agriculture operation, so we recommend reviewing these regulations to ensure they are consistent with the Right to Farm Act. The Township may want to obtain comment from the Farmland & Natural Areas Preservation Committee regarding any research it has done on agricultural tourism and how the Zoning Ordinance could be amended to encourage more agricultural tourism uses.
- c. **Land Use table to simplify uses and fix discrepancies between similar uses.** Several months ago, McKenna prepared a Non-Residential District Use Matrix (enclosed, dated June 29, 2016). We recommend adopting a similar table into the Zoning Ordinance that also includes the residential zoning districts. However, this table reveals areas where there are redundant uses that are difficult to interpret.

This has made the Zoning Ordinance more difficult to administer and understand over time. Therefore, we recommend resolving these conflicts as part of the adoption process of the land use table.

- d. **Medical Marihuana.** On September 22, 2016, Governor Snyder signed three new bills that expand the regulatory framework affecting medical marihuana in Michigan. Of these, PA 281, the Medical Marihuana Facilities Licensing Act, MCL 333.27101 et seq., is the one which is of particular interest to municipalities, both because it provides a range of land uses that the state will be licensing, which a municipality may choose to allow within its jurisdiction, and because there are license fees, and potential tax-sharing revenue, available to municipalities related to those facilities. PA 281 became effective on December 20, 2016, and it provides that licensing of marijuana facilities, by the State, will begin 360 days after its effective date, i.e. in December of 2017. Thus, municipalities also have about that long to consider what actions they would like to take in response to it, though proprietors will certainly want to be securing sites in anticipation. PA 281 authorizes the following 5 types of facilities: (1) Class A-C Growers (500-1,500 plants); (2) Processors; (3) Secure Transporters; (4) Provisioning Centers (commonly called dispensaries); and (5) Safety Compliance Facilities (testing labs). A municipality may adopt an ordinance to authorize one or more of the five types of marijuana facilities within its boundaries and to limit the number of each type of marijuana facility, but shall not impose regulations regarding the purity or pricing of marijuana or interfering or conflicting with statutory regulations for licensing marijuana facilities. If a municipality wants to prohibit all 5 types of facilities, it is unclear whether the municipality must adopt an ordinance to that effect or simply do nothing. We recommend that the Planning Commission discuss these types of facilities and consult with the Township Attorney regarding what actions, if any, the Township should take to achieve its desired regulations.

5. **Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update.** The Parks & Recreation Master Plan was adopted in 2015, so it will not expire until 2020. However, in order to remain eligible for many state and federal grants, the Plan must stay up-to-date as grant opportunities arise. With the upcoming completion of the Northfield Community Park Master Plan, we recommend incorporating it into the Parks & Recreation Master Plan to take advantage of any grant opportunities for Northfield Community Park.

6. **Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Assistance.** The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires any community with a water or sewer facility to annually approve a CIP. The CIP process allows for the Township and its departments to predictably budget for capital expenses in the coming years, such as water and sewer improvements, park improvements, road and nonmotorized infrastructure, and other large capital expenses.

A proactive work program can help build a quality community, and we look forward to working with the Township as it actively seeks to preserve its rural character and sense of place.

Respectfully submitted,

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