



CITY OF CHELSEA

CHELSEA PLANNING COMMISSION NOTICE OF WORK SESSION

Notice is hereby given that the Chelsea City Planning Commission will hold a Work Session on **Tuesday, May 17, 2016 at 7:00 pm**, at the Chelsea Municipal Building (Council Chamber) located at 311 S. Main Street, Chelsea, Michigan.

The purpose of the meeting will be for the Planning Commission to review draft documents submitted by Carlisle Wortman and Associates regarding the Master Plan Revision.

Agenda:

1. Review and Discuss Draft Transportation Chapter and Maps
2. Review and Discuss Draft Non-Motorized Map

Persons requiring reasonable accommodations due to disabilities in order that the meeting is accessible to them are requested to notify the Chelsea Planning Commission of such disability no later than five (5) business days prior to the date of the meeting.

Larry Ledebur, Chair

PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
May 17, 2016
CHELSEA MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
311 S. MAIN STREET, CHELSEA, MICHIGAN

NAMES OF THOSE PRESENT: Sarah Haselschwardt, George Olsen, Larry Ledebur, Steven Parker, Robert Dean, Cary Church

MEMBERS ABSENT: Erik Larson, Peter Shaw

MEMBERS VACANT: One

OTHERS PRESENT: Cheri Albertson, Peter Feeney

Meeting started at 7:00pm

Item #1: Agenda Revision made to include a discussion of the Culture and Heritage Draft Chapter

Item #2: Review and Discuss Draft Transportation Chapter

Commissioners agreed on the following feedback for our consultants with regard to the new Transportation Chapter:

- The 2008 Comprehensive Plan included some valid information that should be in the new chapter. Format can be as recommended by consultants. Item to be included are
 1. Acknowledge the lack of options in and around Chelsea for traveling in the North/South direction without going on M52, or routing to gravel roads. Commissioners agreed that the West Drive option as mentioned by Carlisle Wortman is likely not valid. There are however, ongoing discussions from MDOT/Amtrak regarding a revised Fletcher Rd rail crossing, which could provide some potential new possibilities in the City. There was much discussion at the public meeting about this issue. Commissioners would like to be led in a discussion that explores conceptual options.
 2. Include more information on Functional Road Classification Map such as MDOT, County and City designations, what impact these have on types of vehicles that can travel on them and impacts on road improvement funding.
 3. Include mention of original city street layout on a grid and how this could or should affect any future residential neighborhood layouts and developments. Commissioners would like to discuss this topic at a future meeting.
 4. Include "gateway" concept at all major entrances to the City, not just south as in current plan. This could also include recommendations for historic signage at appropriate prior city limits.
 5. Include impact of future high speed rail.
 6. Include recommendations for accommodating a potential commuter rail stop.
 7. Revise "boiler plate" language in "Transportation Planning Section" of new Chapter to focus on City of Chelsea.
 8. Clarify source of specific bicycle facility improvement recommendations in new Chapter. Some language and content were unclear or potentially incorrect.
 9. Have recent traffic studies been completed that could inform recommendations?

Item #2: Other Items

1. While there have been multiple meetings with the consultant, the focus at those meetings have been on process, meeting schedules and overall Plan Outline. Some commissioners

believe that there should be more sessions to review and focus on content and planning ideas for the new Plan. While much information was gathered at the Public Meeting in January, it should not be the sole source for the generation of ideas in the new Plan.

2. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan is text heavy. More graphics and less boiler plate explanations are appropriate in new plan. An overall format was discussed that would include a Statement of Philosophy followed by a Graphic indication of where it could or should apply.

Item #3: Heritage and Culture Draft Chapter

Commissioners did a very brief review of the draft language. There is a unanimous interest in protecting the historic charm and character of the uptown area. Cary Church passed out a plan of Chelsea's Historic District, which all feel should be included in the new Plan. More information needs to be obtained about the official classification of the District, the official boundaries, implications for future developers, whether tax credits are available.

Two additional ideas were discussed:

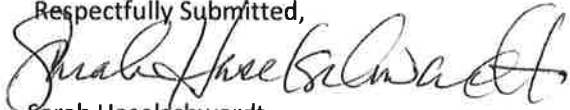
1. Should an Historic Overlay District be included
2. Should a recommendation be made for an Historic District Commission, and did one exist at one time?

Item #3: Next Meeting

Work Session will be held at 7pm on Tuesday, June 7, 2016.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sarah Haselschwardt

Planning Commission Secretary



Capitol/Wortman Associates, Inc.
605 S. Main Street, Ste. 1
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 667-2200
(734) 667-1935 Fax

MEMORANDUM

TO: City of Chelsea Planning Commission
FROM: John Enos and Paul Montagno
DATE: April 28, 2015
RE: Transportation Language

Attached please find the draft language for the Master Plan Transportation Chapter for your review and discussion. As you review please determine if we are capturing all of the key issues that have been identified by the community. Please let us know if there are additional areas where you'd like us to focus or provide clarification or more detail.

Additionally, attached is the developing non-motorized map. We will continue to refine this map by providing additional specific opportunities and by including detail in the form of graphic examples for specific treatments. Please indicate areas where additional pedestrian connections might be appropriate.

In the coming weeks we will be providing you additional chapter language to review. We look forward to your comments.



Transportation

Overview

The transportation pattern in Chelsea is well established and has been dictated in many ways by the development of the land use pattern in the city. At 3.68 square miles, the City is essentially built out with few areas that have not been developed. Any new development will take place in limited undeveloped areas as redevelopment or infill and will therefore need to connect to the existing transportation systems. Highway M-52 runs north and south through downtown providing a connection to Interstate 94 at the south end of town. This connection represents access to the city as well as the surrounding Townships. In addition, old US 12 runs through town with connections to the Interstate a mile and a half east of the City and two miles to the west. The intersection of M-52 and Old US 12, south of downtown, marks the border between the newer commercial developments oriented towards the highway and the older part of the City.

South of Old US 12 the transportation system is dominated by automobile access, while the system north of Old US 12 exhibits more traditional neighborhood design with a more human scale roadway network. In addition to having narrower roadways, more through streets, and walkable blocks, the development patterns of adjacent land uses in the older parts of town make the environment friendlier to pedestrians. Conversely, though the area along M-52 south of Old US 12 does have sidewalks; lack of street trees, the absence of lamp posts, and buildings setback from the street beyond landscaped berms and expansive parking lots make this area uninviting for walkers and bikers.

Dexter Chelsea Road in the north east corner of town also represents a major route in and out of town. The balance of the arterial roads and local roads are generally developed in a grid pattern and provide access to homes businesses and other destinations in the city. The transportation network is largely dominated by the automobile. The transportation network must be designed to provide for all modes of transportation including pedestrians, bikes, personal vehicles, freight, and transit.

Transportation Planning

Addressing livability issues in transportation planning, development and implementation ensures that transportation investments support both mobility and broader community goals. A well-crafted transportation project can be the catalyst for achieving these goals, including economic growth and job creation. There is growing demand to design facilities that meet the needs for all users, while balancing the different access and mobility needs of motorists, truckers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders at the same time. As communities age and become more diverse, how the transportation networks connect and function, how they support "Main Street" businesses and regional economies, and how they protect environmental and public health will become increasingly relevant to long term economic prosperity and quality of life.

Initiatives

There are a key number of initiatives identified by the community that would enhance the transportation network within the City. These generally include increasing safety and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists, providing enhanced amenities for pedestrians and bicycles, filling in gaps in facilities for all modes of transportation, and making transportation connections more sensitive to the surrounding land uses. In general, the community would like to see more multi-modal options and traffic calming measures while still providing safe and convenient access for passenger vehicles and the transportation of goods.

The City must attempt to strike a balance between increasing pedestrian and bike activity while still providing for the critical movement of motorized vehicles to and from, and within the city.

Complete streets

Complete streets are roadways that are planned, designed, and constructed to provide appropriate access to all legal users in a manner that promotes safe and efficient movement of people and goods whether by car, truck, transit, assistive devices, foot or bicycle. In recent years there has been a shift in focus from roadways that are designed primarily to convey vehicular traffic, to a focus on designing roadways that accommodate all users both motorized and non-motorized. In 2010, legislation was passed in Michigan that requires those who have jurisdiction over roads to consider complete streets principles in their planning and implementation of transportation projects. In order to provide connections to all areas of the City for people of all abilities and desired forms of transportation, our roadways must be designed to support multiple modes of transportation. However, it is important to note that not one specific treatment is appropriate for all roadways. Treatments should vary based on adjacent uses and the amount of traffic on a road.

Chelsea is a city with a strong community feel with many destinations that would lend themselves well to trips that were made on foot or bicycle. Destinations such as schools, parks, shops and restaurants downtown, and numerous community events and festivals would benefit from increased pedestrian and bike facilities. It is important to create connections that facilitate access to these destination from the residential neighborhoods in order to support not only mode choice, but facilitate access for those who cannot drive especial the city's youth, disabled residents, and aging population.

Bicycle Facilities

Chelsea is known as a bicycling destination, or stop over for biking enthusiasts who are drawn to the area for the beautiful country side and winding county roads that surround the city for recreation and exercise. In addition, there are regional trail initiatives and projects such as the Huron Valley Trail that will link Chelsea to Dexter and the Washtenaw County Border-to-border trail that will provide increased access to miles of non-motorized trails increasing the need for safe and accessible biking facilities within the city.

It has been identified by the community that there is a general lack of bicycle facilities within the city. These facilities are necessary to support local bicycling trips as an alternative to driving or a means of transportation for those who cannot drive. While the seasoned bicyclist, who adventures out on the country road for a long bike trek might be more comfortable on the roadway, it is necessary to provide additional bicycle facilities within the city to make biking a safer and more inviting option for a bicyclist of varying experience and comfort levels. In town where traffic is heavier, there are more vehicular turning actions, and more destinations, the city can encourage bicycling by investing in improvements such as shared roadways, bicycle lanes, shared use paths, even providing additional bike parking facilities in destinations, especially commercial areas.

The community has identified priority routes that should include bicycle facilities including, Main Street (M-52), Washington Street, Dexter/Chelsea Road, and Old US-12. The appropriate facility must depend on the speed of the roadway, the available space to build the facility and adjacent land uses. These are identified in the non-motorized Plan.

Completing Pedestrian facilities

The older neighborhoods and the downtown area have been developed with an interconnected street pattern with shorter blocks that are lined with sidewalks, street trees, and in some areas street lamps, which make the environment more inviting to walkers and bikers. Newer areas of town have longer block lengths with no side streets, and in some cases sidewalks on only one side of the street. Though not many, there are a number of areas where the sidewalk network has gaps in the sidewalk on the same side of the street. Additionally, there are areas where pathways that do not follow the roadway would provide appropriate and convenient access to destinations such as parks or schools. Additional connection opportunities are identified on the non-motorized plan.

BIKE LANE - A portion of roadway that has been designated for preferential or exclusive use by bicyclists by pavement markings and, if used, signs. It is intended for one-way travel, usually in the same direction as the adjacent traffic lane, unless designed as a contra-flow lane. Buffered bike lanes are bike lanes with additional pavement striping in between the bike lane and the travel lane.

MULTI-USE PATH - A bikeway physically separated from motor vehicle traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent right-of-way. MUPs may also be used by pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users, joggers, and other non-motorized users. MUPs are typically designed for two-way travel and are paved.

SHARROW - A pavement marking symbol that indicates an appropriate bicycle positioning in a roadway used by motor vehicles and bicycles. Sharrows may be placed at the edge of the travel lane or at the center of the travel lane, depending on factors like on-street parking, width of travel lane, or posted speed.

Pedestrian Oriented Design

Pedestrian Oriented Design is a design approach which links urban design qualities to such qualities as sense of comfort, sense of safety, and level of interest to create quality walking environments that consider the perceptions and sensitivities of pedestrian users. This design approach is focused on the pedestrian experience of space and place. The conceptual framework behind pedestrian oriented design argues that physical features influence the quality of the walking environment both directly and indirectly. Design features include appropriate sidewalk widths, a buffer or transition to the street that could include grass, street trees or other plantings, pedestrian scale lighting, and close proximity of buildings that create a “street wall”. Buildings near the street must be designed to provide accessible entrances oriented towards the street and visual interest in architecture and transparent windows that allow views into commercial establishments.

There are a number of areas of Chelsea that exhibit elements of quality pedestrian oriented design. These techniques should be incorporated into all areas of the community. This can be accomplished through development regulations for new developments and redevelopment opportunity’s as identified in the land use section of this plan.



Residential Neighborhood pedestrian design



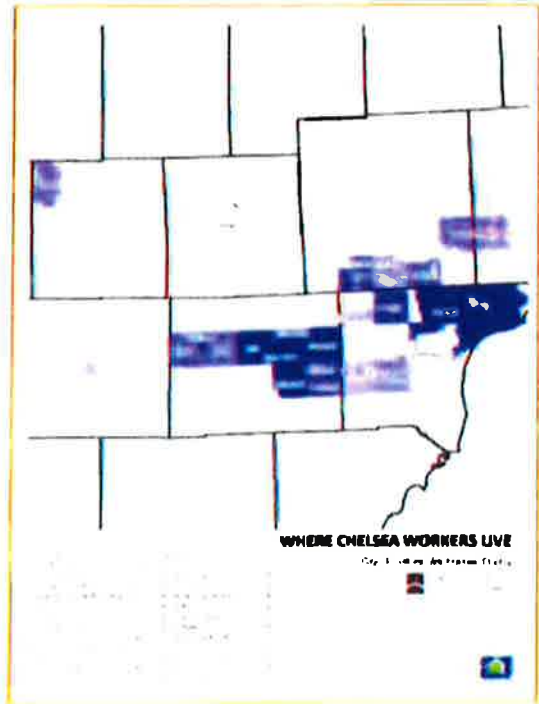
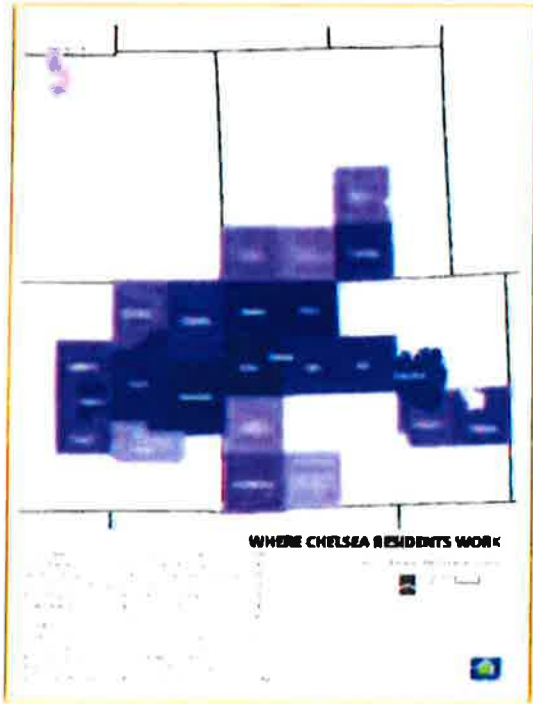
Downtown Pedestrian Design

Destination

Due to the City's size and availability of resources, Chelsea serves as a destination for the local region. In addition to being an employment center for the area, residents in neighboring communities travel to Chelsea for goods and services, as well as entertainment. Chelsea schools, located within the city provide education to students who live in the surrounding areas as well.

Commuting

There are potentially over 13,000 commuter trips in and out of Chelsea every work day. Only about 8% of the population of Chelsea works within the city. The rest commute out of town for employment in various surrounding communities. Many going as far as Ann Arbor, Jackson or even East Lansing. Likewise, of the roughly 2500 jobs in the city, only about 16% are filled by Chelsea residents.



Cut-through Traffic

As noted in the transportation overview there are limited routes in and out of town. Therefore traffic that is merely passing through Chelsea is primarily using one road. M-52 is the main north south route for commuters and truck traffic from I-94 to destinations within the city and the communities to the north. M-52, also known as Main St. goes right through downtown. Residents and business owners complain about traffic, especially truck traffic on Main Street.

Even worse than traffic downtown, drivers, including personal vehicles, as well as trucks, will find alternate routes to avoid Main Street. This means they are driving, often times, at inappropriate speeds through residential neighborhood streets. Routes such as Dewey Street to McKinley Street and Washington Street have been identified as especially problematic examples.

Installing traffic calming measures will be the most effective way to discourage cut through traffic, or at a minimum decrease speeds to appropriate levels in residential areas. Traffic calming measures are the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. Examples include: Bulb outs or curb extensions, raised crosswalks, pedestrian refuge islands, or traffic circles. In addition, narrower roadways, on street parking and even the presence of trees or structures closer to the road will help to slow traffic. The city has already begun the installation of some such traffic calming measures. Additional improvements should be strategically designed and located to not only provide for improved pedestrian safety but to discourage cut-through traffic.

In the past there, were initiatives to create a bypass around the city. Unfortunately bypasses around small towns often have a detrimental effect on a community's vitality. While the bypass effectively removes traffic from downtowns and neighborhoods, alleviate the annoyance of noise and congestion, they tend to just move the "unwanted traffic" to other areas of town. Improved infrastructure and increased vehicle trips then make these areas more attractive to developers, thereby encouraging sprawl. Those vehicle trips that are critical to maintaining viable commercial businesses no longer pass by those existing businesses. The bypass merely shifts the traffic and the development to a different area of the community and leaves the existing developed areas to struggle for business.

Railroad

There is a major railroad corridor that runs east and west through Chelsea, just north of Downtown. This presents both challenges and opportunities. On one hand there are limited crossings which exacerbate the vehicular congestion on Main Street as well as cut-through issues in the neighborhoods. There are four at-grade crossings, which present safety issues for both vehicles and pedestrians. On the other hand

Traffic Calming Measures -

The combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users.

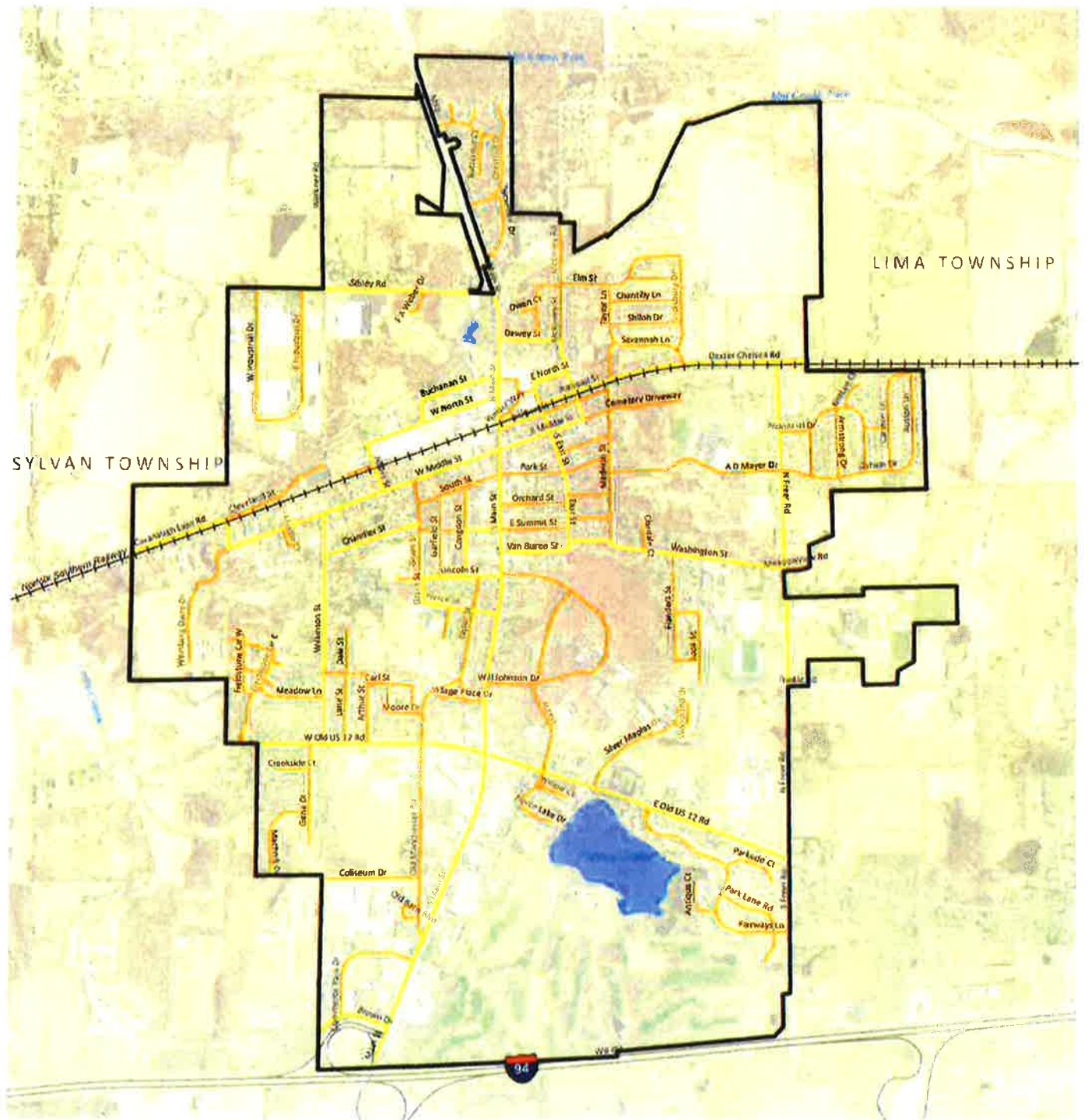
Examples include: Bulb outs or curb extensions, raised crosswalks, pedestrian refuge islands, or traffic circles



the presence of the rail line makes the industrial areas along the rail corridor an attractive place for industries with shipping needs that could utilize rail for those needs. In addition, the potential for a passengers rail stop for high speed rail between Detroit and Chicago could make Chelsea an attractive location for new residents, as well as various industries that could rely on a much larger employee pool. If a high-speed rail stop is located in Chelsea, the City must carefully plan how such a stop would be integrated into the fabric of the community. Fixed rail stops have been shown to attract millions of dollars of private investment.

Green Streets

Incorporating "green streets" improvements has the potential to increase the life of infrastructure, lower energy costs and lessen impacts on the environment. "Green streets" improvements may incorporate process changes during construction such as changing from hot mix to less polluting warm mix asphalt and, where applicable, changes in surface type that feature both environmental and safety benefits. Additionally "green streets" designs and facilities can promote runoff infiltration, reduce runoff quantities, and reduce impacts to receiving waters.



- Arterial Roads
- Local Roads and Service to Limited Access Roads
- Lakes
- Rivers and Creeks

FUNCTIONAL ROAD CLASSIFICATION

City of Chelsea, Washtenaw County

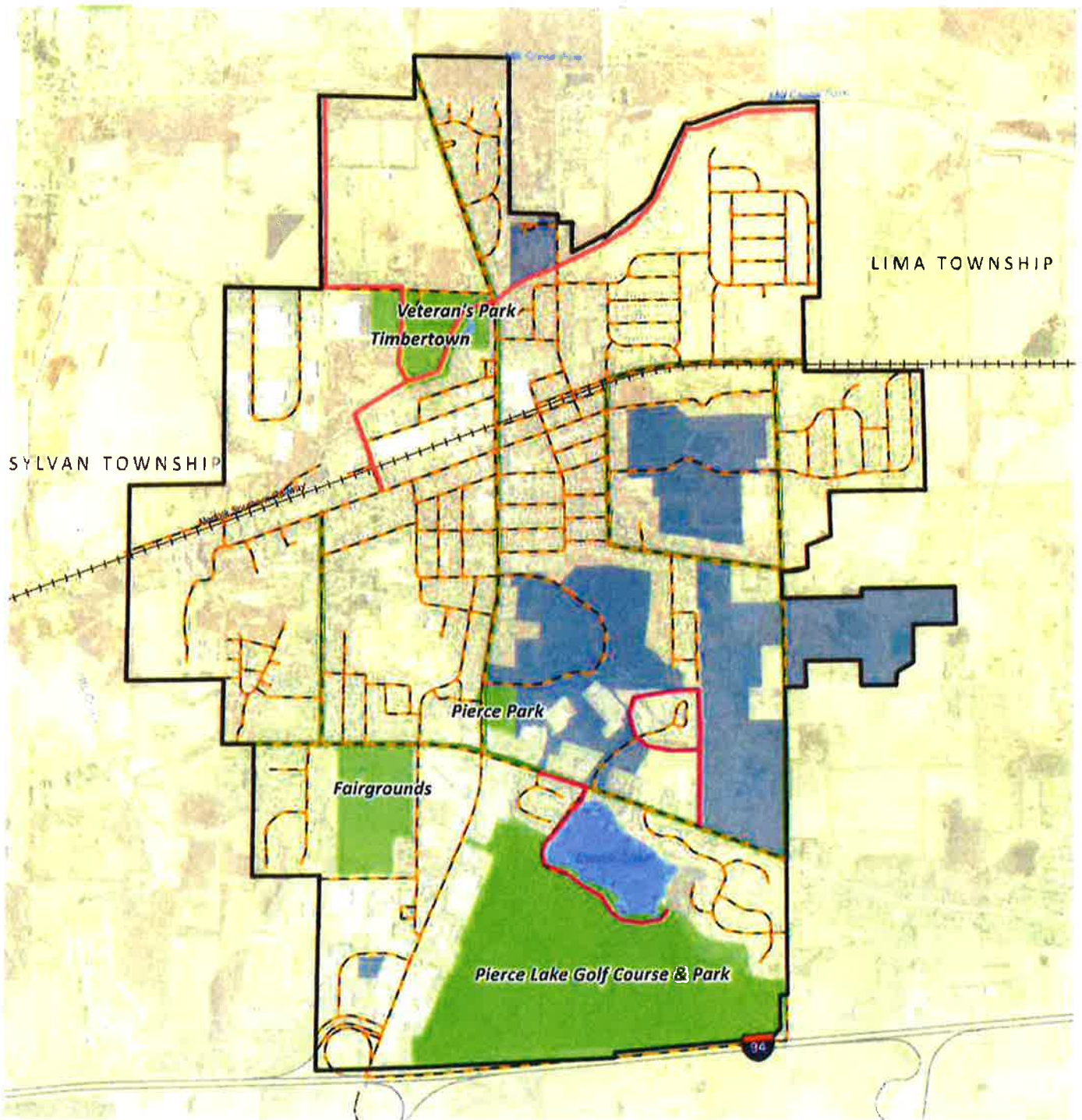








0 0.125 0.25 Miles

Source: Washtenaw County GIS, SEMCOG

Carlisle/Wortman Associates
9-2-15

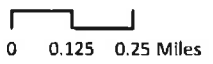




-  Sidewalks
-  Existing Non-Motorized Path
-  Proposed Non-Motorized Path
-  Bikelanes
-  Lakes
-  Rivers and Creeks

NONMOTORIZED PATHWAYS

City of Chelsea, Washtenaw County



Source: Washtenaw County GIS, SEMCOG

Carlisle/Wortman Associates
4-29-16

