

Downtown Allegan Riverfront Development Project PlacePlan Concept Report – July 2013



Preface

What is Placemaking?

The following proposed design, prescribed land use regulatory tools, and asset optimization recommendations for the Downtown Allegan Riverfront Development site fall under the planning approach termed “placemaking”. As an approach, placemaking recognizes that places (central gathering spots, downtowns, neighborhoods, regions) must be designed in a way that their **form** (physical scale, land use diversity and density) leads to and supports desired social activity, resulting in a positive psychological and emotional response from those who spend time, reside in, or work within the place at hand. In order to plan for the development and/or maintenance of places that offer the amenities that support a wide array of real estate market demands, placemaking combines a variety of land use planning principles that move communities away from conventional zoning and development that focuses on where a single use, such as restaurants / entertainment / retail / office, should be located and instead considers how these uses should be combined in an environment that draws residents and visitors alike to enjoy spending extended time in a space. Many of these guiding principles lean toward designing spaces mirroring bustling traditional neighborhoods developed prior to widespread use of the automobile.



(Source: <http://0.tqn.com/d/gonw/1/0/G/E/-/-/RPclocktower.jpg>)

Acknowledgments

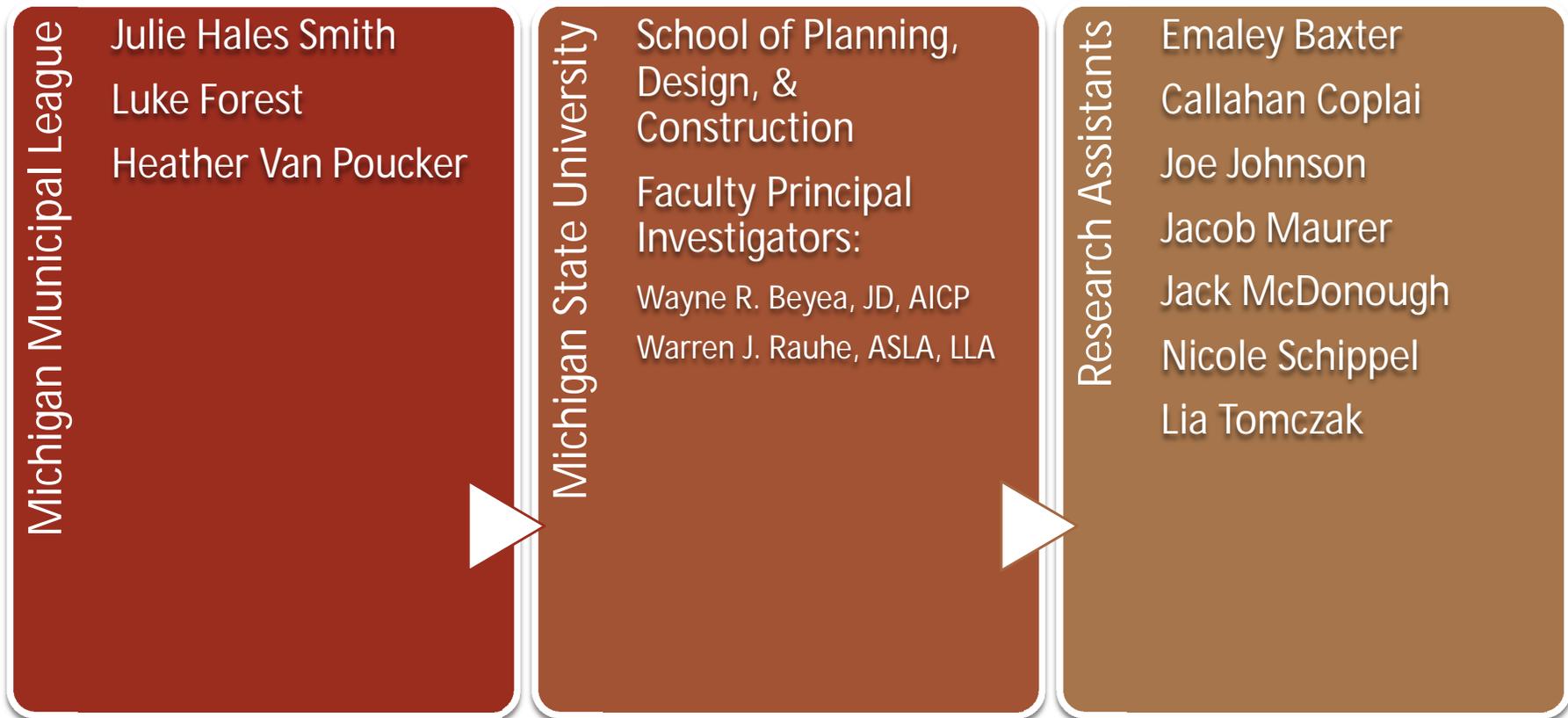
Governor Snyder's MiPlace Initiative

The MiPlace Partnership¹ is a statewide initiative with the purpose of keeping Michigan at the forefront of a national movement known as placemaking. It is based on the concept that people choose to live in places that offer the amenities, resources, social and professional networks and opportunities to support thriving lifestyles. The Partnership helps communities create and bolster those places. It is led at the state agency level by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and coordinated through a public/private leadership collaborative known as the Sense of Place Council. Michigan State University and the Michigan Municipal League, the partners on this project, are collaborators with the Sense of Place Council.



¹ Source: <http://miplace.org/placemaking>

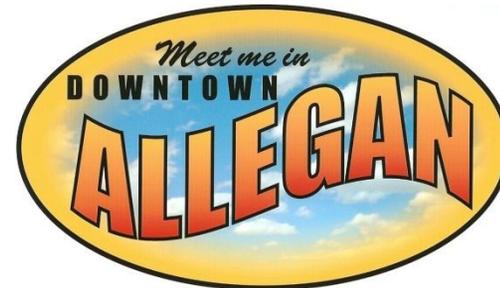
PlacePlan Technical Assistance Team Members



Local Partners

The PlacePlan Technical Assistance Team would like to acknowledge the Allegan city staff and elected and appointed officials for their constant support and assistance. The Local Partners ensured that the Team had data, documents, and community input necessary for completing the analysis and resulting asset, planning, and design recommendations for the Allegan Riverfront Development site (a full list of participating entities is listed in the appendix).

The PlacePlan Technical Assistance Team would like to express their sincere gratitude to the hundreds of residents, business owners, land owners, and other stakeholders that attended the Community Visioning Meeting, Multiple-Day Design Charrette, Post-Charrette Design Preview, and/or provided feedback during this process. Placemaking begins with a community-supported vision for what makes a place a true destination in the community. Without you, this process would not be possible.



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Introduction

Project Overview

In response to the MiPlace Partnership request for applications, the City of Allegan submitted a request for assistance with preparation of a design concept and accompanying urban planning strategies for a riverfront redevelopment project. The proposed site includes the Kalamazoo Riverfront that borders Downtown Allegan along Hubbard Street. The City of Allegan, the Allegan Downtown Development Authority, and local stakeholders envision transforming the identified riverfront site into a quality destination space recognized throughout the region.

The City of Allegan has leveraged investments and partnerships that will complement and assist with the success of this site. During Summer 2013 improvements will be made to the Veteran's Riverfront Park using matching grant funding provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Furthermore, Allegan has

completed a Safe Routes to School Plan, bringing about assistance from the Michigan Department of Transportation with improving walkable access to downtown, and completed a plan for the M-89 Corridor in an effort to address access to its downtown.

Objectives of the riverfront development design within Downtown Allegan include further enhancement of the city's natural beauty, capitalizing upon its historic districts, jumpstarting economic development, and supporting and maximizing the potential for the regional festivals and events Allegan is known for, including July Three Jubilee, Oktoberfest, and a series of summer weekend concerts. As the location of the world headquarters of the Perrigo Company, one of the largest employers in Southwest Michigan, Allegan endeavors to further solidify its place as a choice destination to live, work and play within west Michigan through the development of its riverfront property. The redesign will encompass a variety of upgrades to locations around the downtown riverfront such as facades of historical buildings, fishing facilities, the

1886 steel truss bridge, and the Veteran's Riverfront Park.

Overview of Methodology

In order to provide carefully considered asset, planning, and design recommendations for implementation within the riverfront development site in Downtown Allegan, the following process was carried out for gathering the necessary information and input:

- Reviewed local/regional land use plans and relevant data
- Inventoried assets that fulfill MML's 21st Century Community criteria
- Conducted interviews with stakeholders
- Held three community input meetings
 - Phase One: Community Visioning
 - Phase Two: Multiple-Day Design Charrette
 - Phase Three: Post Charrette / Input Session Feedback

- Final Report and Presentation

National Charrette Institute's Charrette System

These phases were carried out in line with the National Charrette Institute's (NCI) Charrette System. With objectives that include creating a safe environment in which all members can participate in planning their community; planning for scenarios at the neighborhood scale; bringing an on-the-ground reality to community planning by creating demonstration projects that often turn into real catalytic development; and anchoring public involvement with realistic constraints, the Allegan community was engaged in NCI's three planning phases, including a stakeholder interview process.

MML Stakeholder Interview Process

A critical element of the charrette process is engagement, including the preparatory work of interviewing stakeholders in advance of the design charrette meetings. The purpose is to identify key stakeholders and allow ample opportunity for input in a non-public setting for groups with considerable vested interest in the project. Key stakeholders are

decision makers, those with valuable information, those who will be affected by the outcome, and those who have the power to promote the project or block the project. Note that public meetings provided access to a wide range of individuals and interests that could not be accommodated in the interview process due to time and travel constraints.

With regard to targeted stakeholder outreach, MML prepared an initial stakeholder analysis, identifying individuals and groups that may be appropriate to speak with directly. MML provided that to the client for review and input, then representatives from MML and from MSU embarked on unstructured interviews aimed at promoting a shared understanding of the project, identifying priorities, concerns, and potential barriers to success.

Phase One: Community Kick-Off Workshop

At the onset of the Downtown Allegan Riverfront Development project, the City of Allegan hosted a kickoff community visioning meeting. During the meeting, attendees were challenged to consider, discuss with others, and document what about Allegan makes them proud, what they are sorry about, and what they would like to see in Allegan, in particular within the development site, in the future. To encourage creativity and vision over the long-term, questions were posed such as “you’re in a hot air balloon over the Riverfront site 15 years from now - what would you like to look down on?” and provided sheets of drawing paper and markers to encourage not only written comments, but an opportunity to share visuals. Figure 1 summarizes the findings from the Community Visioning Meeting.

Proud	Sorry	Vision
Historic District: style of architecture, landscapes, mix of housing, preserves community	The Downtown: empty store fronts, vacant after business hours, difficult to walk, no night life	Environment: clean air and water, green and welcoming space, lots of trees, renewable energy
The Community: walkable streets, small town atmosphere, sense of connectedness, diversity of people	Public Services: lack of public transportation, little to no bike riding access, no restrooms at riverfront	Infrastructure: riverfront signage, expansion of Veteran's Memorial Park, improved lighting around the downtown
Outdoor Activities: farmer's market, fireworks, county fair, state game area	Riverfront: too much parking, walking loop incomplete, poor landscaping, lack of apartments	Diverse Restaurants: sidewalk café, coffee shop, bakery, brewery, family-oriented restaurants

Figure 1: Allegan Community Visioning Meeting Summary

Phase Two: Multiple-Day Design Charrette

After considering findings from the community kick-off workshop, review of applicable land use plans, and inventory of local/regional assets, a multiple-day design charrette was conducted. Shown were images of the existing built environment and riverfront site. Day one consisted of gathering input and illustrating suggestions on draft sheets of paper over the existing location. Designs were prepared based on this input and displayed during day two. The displayed graphics included photos exemplifying what other communities have done to achieve desired attributes named during day one and preliminary design sketches. Attendees were provided with post-it notes on which they could write reactions / comments / suggestions with regards to the design layouts and photographs. The designs were further refined and presented to the community on day three of the charrette. Multiple days provided ample time for interested participants to attend. It also provided the design team time to work through ideas with key stakeholders and to respond to public comment with two preliminary designs

(Concept A and Concept B) presented during the final day of the charrette. Of the two preliminary designs, Concept B received the most praise and support for its simplicity, urban feel, and inviting interaction year-round. Both preliminary designs received praise and constructive criticism. Individuals expressed how the walkways, spaces in front of downtown buildings, and an anchor restaurant were all elements they would like to see along their downtown riverfront. The public also indicated that elements were missing from the design, including vehicle access, shade trees, and drinking fountains.



Figure 2: Allegan Multiple-Day Design Charrette

Final Design Input

After considering the findings from the Design Charrette, the recommendations and design renderings were updated. On April 11, 2013, the third community meeting was held at the Griswold Auditorium in downtown Allegan. Stakeholders representing the City, local businesses, and non-profit organizations were given the opportunity to see the updated designs and recommendations for the Riverfront project. The attendees were asked three questions about the updated concept:

1. What elements do you like?
2. What's missing?
3. How could we enhance connectivity?

The attendees were asked to write down their comments on notecards and their input has been considered in completing the final design and recommendations for the Riverfront project. Figure 3 depicts common themes from the community comments.

What Do You Like?	What's Missing?	How Could We Enhance Connectivity?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boardwalk • Clock Tower • Mix of Uses • Zip Line / Ropes Course • Phased Development • Entertainment Area • Kayak Launch • Wetland Gardens • Skating / Stage Area • Gateway Entrances • Green Spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent Roof Over Stage • Funding • Outdoor Activities at Library • Fountains in Water • Sufficienct Parking • Solar Energy • Year Round Farmer's Market • Recycling / Composting Near Community Garden • Downtown Business Incubator • Year Round Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better Signage • Outdoor Dining • Pedestrian Paths • More Bicycle Lanes • Collaborative Events / Festivals • Community College Buildings Near River • Shuttles to Fairground Events

Figure 3: Allegan Final Design Comments

Existing Conditions

Community Overview

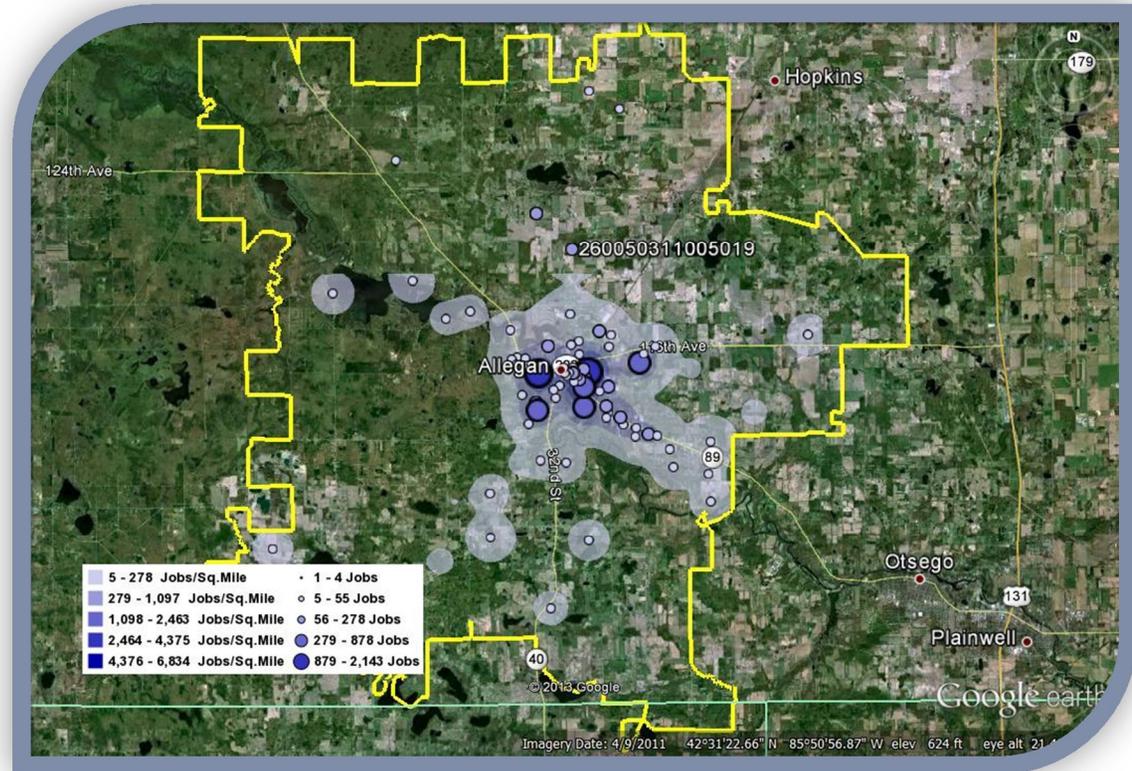
Located in lower southwest Michigan in Allegan County, Allegan is a city of 4.1 square miles positioned along the Kalamazoo River. Boasting a population of 4,990 people, Allegan fulfills the role of county seat for Allegan County².

Local Economy

According to the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey, the "Manufacturing" sector supplies 36.7% of employment for Allegan residents (2007-2011). This is most likely attributed to Perrigo Company, an international producer of over-the-counter pharmaceutical products. Perrigo has been headquartered in Allegan since its beginnings as a packaging and distribution company in 1887, employing approximately 2,700 workers³. Following the

² US Census Bureau, 2010

³ City of Allegan Master Plan, 2010, p. 38



"Manufacturing" sector, sectors that employ the greatest number of Allegan residents include "Educational services, and health care and social assistance" (13.6%) followed by "Retail Trade" (12.9%). Much of this is attributable to the Allegan Public Schools

Figure 4: Job location around the Allegan area

system, which employs approximately 475 people and Allegan General Hospital, employing approximately 330 people⁴. Figure 4 depicts job location in Allegan County.

⁴ Ibid.

Demographics

The median age within Allegan is 34.6 years, compared with Michigan (38.9 years) and the United States (37.3 years). Children younger than 19 years of age make up the greatest percentage of Allegan residents, comprising 28.3% of the population. Directly following is the age group of 20-34 years of age, which comprises 22.2% of the total population. The percentage of each age range represented by the 2010 Census generally follows a pattern of slight decline as age increases. The age group with the lowest number of residents is those aged 75-79 years, at 1.9%⁵. Results from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate indicate a mean household income of \$47,893 (2007-2011), compared with Michigan (\$48,432) and the United States (\$51,914). With regards to racial demographics, Allegan is primarily white (91.4%), followed by black (4.3%), Hispanic or Latino (3.8%) and two or more races (2.4%).

⁵ US Census Bureau, 2010

Land Use

During the 2004 master planning process and the 2010 update, ten land use categories were identified. An "Existing Land Use and Zoning" map of the City was created by Allegan County in 2002 (Figure 5). The land use that comprises the greatest percentage of Allegan is the category "Residential". At 25.7%, Residential is further distinguished into Single Family Residential Low Density, Single Family Residential High Density, Multi-Family Dwelling Units and Mobile Home Residential Districts. The most prevalent land uses after Residential included "Open and Woodland" (24.7%), followed by "Water/Wetlands" (15.9%)⁶. The "Water/Wetlands" area accounts for most of the Kalamazoo River and Riverfront.

⁶ City of Allegan Master Plan, 2010, p. 42-43

Placemaking
Element



Diversity of housing and transportation options. Keeping open spaces and linking attractions.



A mix of land uses allows for a greater level of activity.

Source: http://www.smartgrowth.org/principles/img/mix_land.jpg

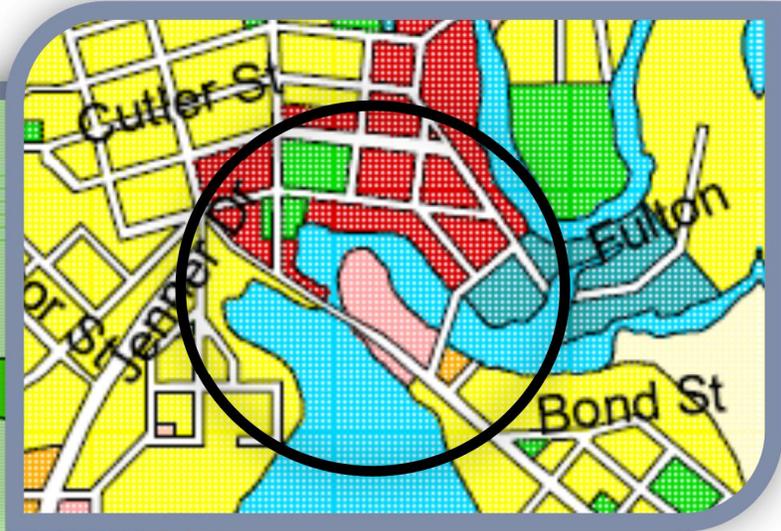
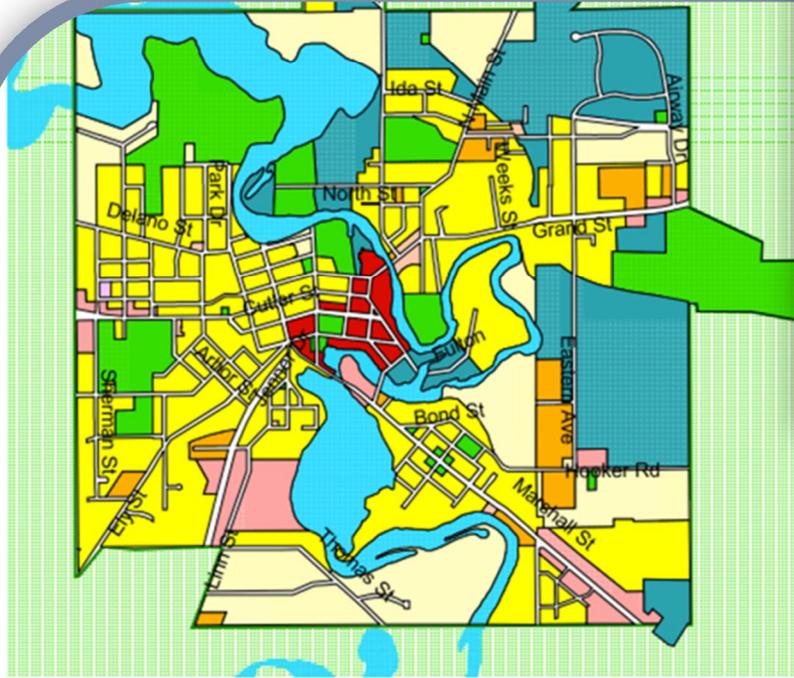


Figure 5: Downtown Allegan Existing Land Use

Source: City of Allegan Planning Commission, 2010

MAP 6
Existing Land Use and Zoning

- Allegan City Zoning
- CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
 - GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
 - MANUFACTURING DISTRICT
 - MOBILE HOME RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
 - MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING UNITS
 - PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL LANDS DISTRICT
 - RESTRICTED COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
 - SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - LOW DENSITY
 - SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL - MED DENSITY
 - WATER
 - City Boundary

Source: City of Allegan Zoning Ordinance and mapped by Allegan County, 2002.



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Downtown Riverfront Site

The Downtown Allegan riverfront site is located within the Central Business District of Downtown Allegan. Downtown Allegan is bordered by Marshall Street to the south, North Cedar Street to the west, Monroe Street to the north and Water Street to the east. Figure 5 depicts the land use and layout of Downtown Allegan. There are multiple buildings of historic significance in the area and Allegan boasts multiple historic districts in downtown. First, Trowbridge, Locust, Hubbard, Brady and Water Streets border the "Downtown Allegan Historic District". City Hall and the Post Office are among the buildings of significance in this District. Buildings in this area, designated as "The Core," have zero lot lines, rear parking and are generally 2-3 stories in height⁷. The Core fits within a walkable ¼ mile radius, with Locust and Hubbard as the center. Next, the "Griswold Civic Center Historic District" contains the 1929 Griswold Auditorium, the

⁷ Allegan Downtown Strategic Plan, 2004, p.21

1914 Allegan District Library, 1906 Old Jail Historical Museum and multiple historic churches. The district is bordered by Hubbard to the south, Walnut to the east, Trowbridge to the north and Marshall to the west. These buildings are labeled on Figure 7. Finally, the "Marshall Street Historic District" follows Marshall Street in southern Downtown Allegan. Historically, this site supported both domestic uses and a hospital. Other significant uses include Perrigo Company, which is bordered on the northwest by State Street, on the northeast by Water Street, and the Kalamazoo River to the south. The Old Regent Theatre is located on Trowbridge between Locust and Chestnut.

The project site itself is bordered by Hubbard Street to the north, Marshall Street to the south and west, and Brady Street and Second Street to the east (see Figure 6). Hubbard runs as a west to east one-way avenue, ending at Water Street. The

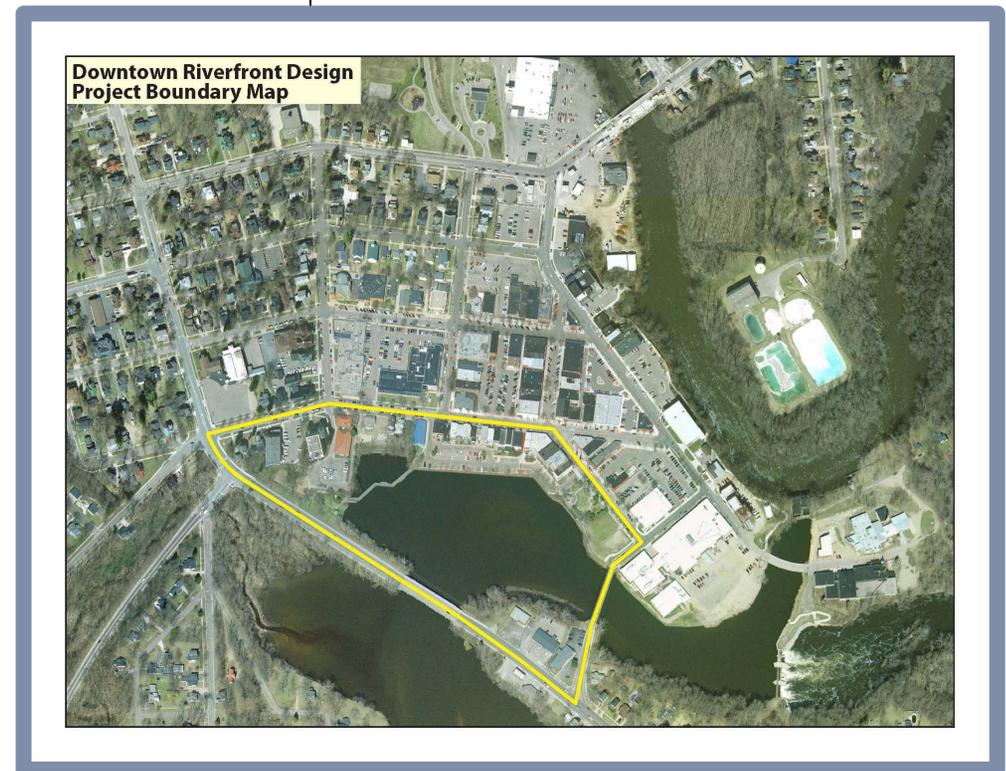


Figure 6: Downtown Riverfront Project Boundary Map

Source: Allegan County Land Information Services, 2011-12

Kalamazoo River flows through the site underneath bridges at Marshall Street and Second Street. The Second Street Bridge is a steel truss bridge built in 1886. Historic buildings mentioned above that are located within the project site include the craftsman-style 1914 Carnegie Library at Hubbard and Walnut Street. Next door to the west is the 1929 Griswold Memorial Auditorium. Three parks fall within the project boundaries including Hanson Park, Veteran's Riverfront Park, and Mahan Park. Within the site itself, there are two public parking lots. One is south of the 1914 library and the Griswold Memorial Auditorium. The parking lot borders Hanson Park to the south. The other parking lot is located south of the retail businesses on Hubbard Street and is bordered by Veteran's Riverfront Park to the west and Mahan Park to the east. The Riverfront Boardwalk runs west from Hanson Park eastward through Veteran's Park along the banks of the Kalamazoo River, ending at the Second Street Bridge.

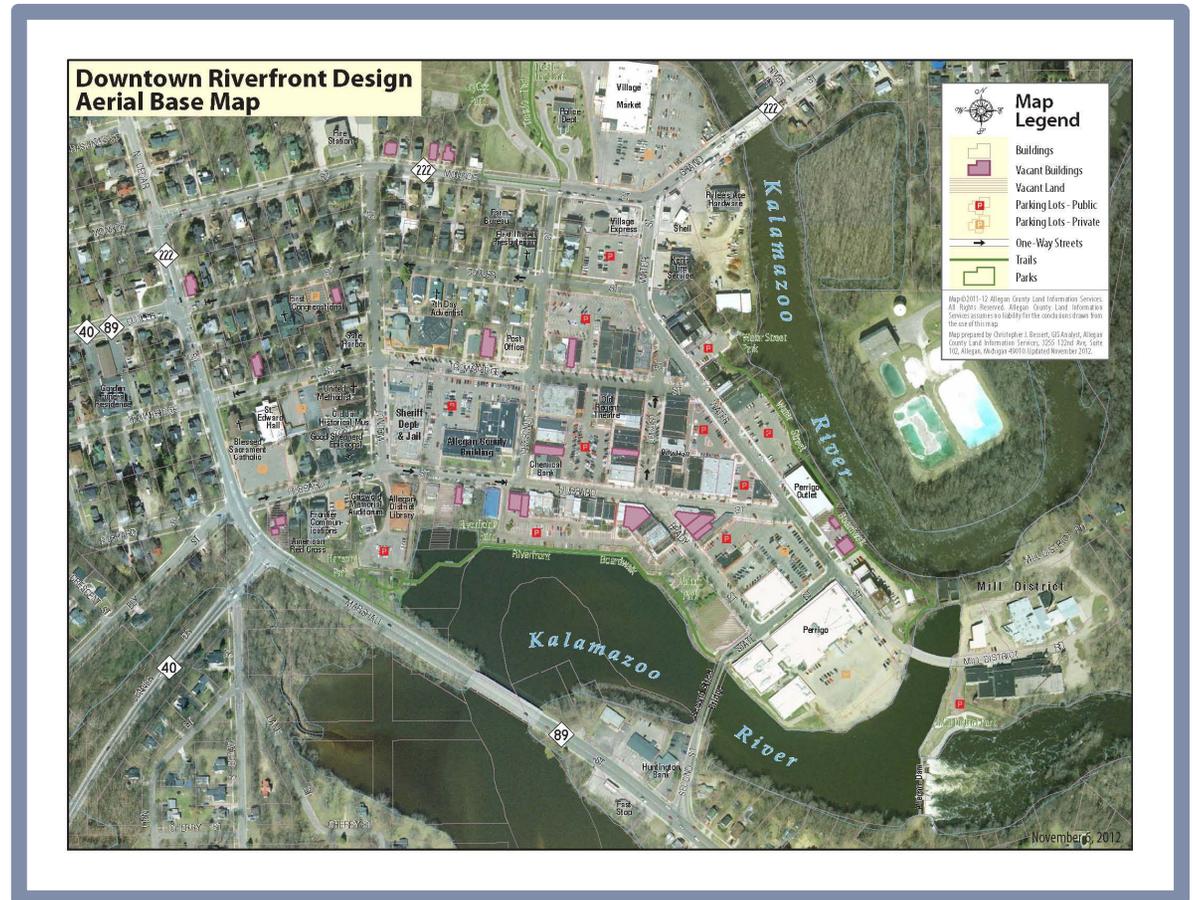


Figure 7: Downtown Allegan Riverfront Aerial Base Map

Source: Allegan County Land Information Services, 2011-12

Asset, Planning, and Design Evaluation

Local and Regional Asset Analysis

A local and regional analysis was carried out by the Michigan Municipal League in an effort to identify assets and opportunities within eight categories. Identified as essential by MML for communities that endeavor to be vibrant places in the 21st Century, these eight categories are:

- Physical Design, Walkability & Connectivity
- Sustainability and Environment
- Cultural Economic Development
- Entrepreneurship
- Education
- Branding and Communications
- Welcoming to All
- Transportation

Research continues to show that “placemaking” matters more than ever, as an increasingly mobile workforce seeks out neighborhoods before finding jobs and opening up businesses. The purpose of this analysis is to help Allegan’s local officials identify, develop, and implement strategies that will grow and strengthen their community and in turn Michigan in the coming decades.

Physical Design, Walkability & Connectivity

The physical design and “walkability” of a community helps create interest, connectivity and overall “sense of place.” Walkability and connectivity can afford people safe and convenient access to the places they live, work, shop, and play. Examples include a traditional downtown with easy access from historic and/or architecturally pleasing residential areas, and mixed-use development that encourages appropriate density, traffic and other infrastructure design features that value the human scale by considering the pedestrian, bicyclist and other non-motorized uses of the space.

The challenge is that oftentimes our streets are designed to prioritize cars, aiming to move them through a community as quickly as possible, without appropriate consideration for pedestrians, bicyclists and other users. Market analysis continues to show that preferences are changing, and more and more people want to live in neighborhoods with walkable downtowns, access to cultural, social, and entertainment opportunities, with a variety of transportation options. Walkability not only helps to create a strong sense of place, it promotes a strong local economy and healthy lifestyle.

Economic Impacts

A one point increase in “walk score” can translate into a \$3,000 increase in property

value!⁸ Higher employment density is linked to higher productivity and more innovation.⁹

ALLEGAN'S ASSETS

Sidewalks, trails, and connectivity all make Allegan a “very walkable” community according to Walk Score.com. Block length and frequency of intersections are key indicators of a neighborhood or district that is convenient for residents, employees, and visitors who want to travel by foot or bicycle and utilize local amenities. Block lengths should be short and frequency of intersections should be high. According to walkscore.com, Allegan’s downtown area has a Walk Score of 82 out of 100. The M-89 Corridor Plan and the report prepared by

⁸ “How Walkability Raises Home Values in U.S. Cities.” August, 2009, by Joe Cortright, Impresa, Inc. for CEOs for Cities.

⁹ “The Benefits of High Density Development.” 2005 presentation by Amy Liu, The Brookings Institution; also NY Times, September 3, 2011, “One Path to Better Jobs: More Density in Cities.”

Dan Burden are great inventories of the area and provide actionable goals for making short-term and long-range improvements to the pedestrian experience and overall walkability/non-motorized transportation along that corridor.

The city’s complete streets resolution, passed in 2010, is an important method for ensuring infrastructure is safe, accessible and supportive of all users, not just motorists. Inherent in complete streets is the use of applications to provide enclosure, slow traffic, improve safety and mitigate environmental impact. Often these techniques take the form of “enhancements” which have the added benefit of being aesthetically pleasing, for example using trees and shrubs to buffer the street from the sidewalk. Having a complete streets ordinance in place has the added benefit of requiring state and county transportation agencies to work collaboratively with a local community in making design decisions about streets covered by a complete streets policy.

Downtown and neighborhood amenities, especially the architecture, history and

aesthetics of nearby neighborhoods and the downtown districts, many protected within historic districts, are an advantage to the city and the riverfront project in particular. The “Meet Me In Downtown Allegan” downtown development plan (amended 2008) is an excellent resource that can serve as an ongoing working guide.

Allegan’s infrastructure goes beyond roads and sidewalks to include numerous parks, trails, and waterways in proximity to the riverfront area that support active living, healthy lifestyles, and non-motorized transportation, with considerable potential to positively impact the downtown district and riverfront site.

Cultural Economic Development

Cultural economic development makes a place unique and feeds our appetite for fun. This may include social and entertainment opportunities, art galleries, museums, cultural attractions, celebrations of heritage and tradition, athletics, special events, and a myriad of others. An active and diverse complement of arts and culture activities are

essential to a thriving local economy and high quality of life.

Economic Impacts

From 2006 to 2011, the number of arts-related jobs increased by 15 percent to 85,656 jobs in Michigan, while arts-related businesses increased by 65 percent to 28,072. Nationally, arts and cultural organizations generated \$135.2 billion in economic activity and supported 4.1 million jobs. Michigan's arts and cultural destinations generated more than \$2 billion in state tourism revenues in fiscal year 2011, representing 16 percent of the state's total tourism revenues in that year-more than golf, boating and sailing, hunting and fishing, and hiking and biking combined.¹⁰

ALLEGAN'S ASSETS

Allegan's assets in the area are numerous and include: the historic bridge, Arts Council,

¹⁰ "Creative State Michigan." 2013 by ArtServe Michigan.

Griswold Auditorium, Regent Theatre, community center, Old Jail Museum, district library, Veteran's park and memorial, the County Seat, Farmer's Market, downtown gazebo, fairgrounds, numerous parks including the Wellness and Sports Complex/skate park and many more regional assets. Additionally, the Forever Curious Children's Museum is scheduled to locate in Downtown Allegan in 2014.

Entrepreneurship

Growing jobs by ones and twos is key to creating strong local economies in the 21st century. Local communities are fueled by small start-ups and growth on main street; these economic gardening strategies are aimed at developing the talent and potential that already exists right at home.

Also central to success are social entrepreneurs, who act as change agents within a community, seizing opportunities others miss to create social value rather than profits. This type of entrepreneurial activity resonates especially with students and young adults looking to apply their optimism,

energy, passion and skills for a positive, tangible impact.

Economic Impacts

Small business is responsible for 75 percent of all net new jobs. There are 27.5 million small businesses in the U.S. (of these, about 6 million have employees and 21.4 million are "Solopreneurs" or businesses with no employees). In contrast, there are 18,311 business with over 500 employees.¹¹

ALLEGAN'S ASSETS

Strong, committed, and active Downtown Development Authority, local business owners, Chamber of Commerce, and others are all focused on supporting local business and regional economic success.

Branding and Communications

People communicate, connect, and engage differently today than they did ten years ago, or five years ago, or last year, or even last

¹¹ US Small Business Administration.

month! Next generation internet and communication technologies are allowing people to share information in the virtual world in unprecedented ways. Communities that use cutting-edge strategies in their approach to branding, engagement, and communication with new demographics, businesses, cultural institutions, and philanthropic communities are ahead of the game.

Economic Impacts

As of March 19, 2013, “Michigan’s Upper Peninsula” Facebook page has 176,454 “likes” and 13,679 people are talking about it. Just one year prior, it had about half that!

ALLEGAN’S ASSETS

The local network is strong, as evidenced by excellent engagement and turnout in this process. As well, the riverfront has ready-made brand recognition created by its featured spot on the televised weather update. The “Only One Allegan” initiative is a great first step in creating an unified regional brand and providing a one-stop-shop for the community. The Allegan County Economic

Development Corporation recently released the “Positively Allegan” campaign as a result of recent branding efforts.

Education

Education is key in competing in a global, 21st century economy, and educational institutions are vital anchor institutions within communities. From K-12 schools to community colleges and technical schools, to state universities, educational institutions bring innumerable benefits to a community. They are the hub for not only learning, but sports, entertainment, arts and culture, healthcare, and recreation, and serve as engines of economic development. Vibrant communities successfully collaborate with a full range of educational institutions to develop intellectual, human, and physical capital. Collaboration can be as simple as sharing physical facilities such as ballparks and swimming pools, or as complex as formal town-gown strategic plans.

Economic Impacts

In 2002, a Bachelor’s degree-holder could expect to earn 75 percent more over a lifetime than someone with a high school

diploma. In 2011 that premium was 84 percent.¹²

ALLEGAN’S ASSETS

An active, engaged local school district, the Allegan Area Educational Service Agency (including the technical education center,) strong faith-based organizations, the district library system and proximity to Holland’s Hope College and Kalamazoo with Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, the Kalamazoo Valley Community College, and other opportunities for higher education in the Grand Rapids area, combine to create a solid educational network within the community and region. Lake Michigan College promotes classes at the Allegan Technical & Education Center as well.

Allegan County has a notable youth population, with 25.8% under age 18 compared to the state average of 23.2%.

¹² “The College Payoff.” August, 2011 by Carnevale, Rose & Cheah, Georgetown University.

The region fares well with regard to high school diploma attainment, but lags the state average when it comes to bachelor's degrees (20.1% in Allegan County compared to the state average of 25.3%.)

Welcoming to all

Successful 21st century communities are inclusive and welcoming to all, embracing diversity and multiculturalism as a competitive advantage. These types of communities are most attractive to new businesses, and today's fluid, mobile, and global workforce seeks out places that embrace people of all ages, religions, ethnicities, national origins, and races.

Economic Impacts

It is estimated that immigrant-founded companies were responsible for generating sales of more than \$52 billion in 2005 and creating just under 450,000 jobs as of 2005. Immigrants have become a significant driving

force in the creation of new businesses and intellectual property in the U.S.¹³

ALLEGAN'S ASSETS

The community engagement in Allegan was unparalleled and revealed time and again that the Allegan community is close-knit, supportive, and friendly, with very well-developed social capital.

Sustainability and Environment

Sustainability and green initiatives encompass a broad range of environmental issues, including developing "green jobs," valuing our natural resources, and leveraging them within our new economy. Recognizing that good environmental stewardship is not just a "feel good" effort, it is a core value that has become a driver for economic success in the 21st century.

¹³ "America's New Immigrant Entrepreneurs." January 4, 2007 by Wadhwa, Saxenian, Rissing & Gereffi, Duke University.

Economic Impacts

Active outdoor recreation contributes \$730 billion annually to the U.S. economy, supports 6.5 million jobs, and generates \$88 billion in annual state and national tax revenue. Active recreation is defined as bicycling, trail activities, paddling, snow sports, camping, fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing.¹⁴

ALLEGAN'S ASSETS

The Allegan community's riverfront, parks, greenways, greenspace, nearby forests, state parks, state recreation areas, state game area, wetlands and ravines, are all primary assets. As a member of the Michigan Green Communities network, Allegan is well connected to other communities in Michigan that prioritize sustainability and value the environment.

¹⁴ "Economic Impact of Trails." summer 2011 by American Trails.

Transportation

Thriving regions offer a range of transit options, from walking and biking to buses and other modes of transit. Transportation has become an integrated part of all conversations concerning economic development, particularly in Michigan, where we share a border with Canada, and are surrounded by some of the most important waterways in the country. Developing effective transportation options is a necessary tool for all communities interested in attracting and retaining residents, workers, and businesses. Research shows that people across the nation are choosing communities that offer various modes of transportation, with easy access to the places they live, work, and play. Multimodal transit can be as complex as rail systems and as simple as trails and bike paths.

Economic Impacts

It is estimated that 14.6 million households over the next 20 years will want housing within ¼ mile of a transit stop. Residential property value increased from 10% to 20%

when near a transit stop, and commercial property increased by 23%.¹⁵ In Phoenix only 2 percent of the region's households live within a half-mile walk of a Metro station. However, even a relatively weak transit system has substantial benefits for nearby homeowners: Their home values outperformed the area by 36.8 percent, with apartments faring the best.¹⁶

ALLEGAN'S ASSETS

The convergence of three state highways in downtown Allegan is a natural way to feed interest and activity within the district. As well, non-motorized transportation, including water and bike systems, is a strong

¹⁵ "Transit-oriented Development: The Return on Investment." By David Taylor, CNU Senior Vice President for NCPPP Partnerships in Transportation

¹⁶ "The New Real Estate Mantra: Location Near Public Transportation." By the Center for Neighborhood Technology for the National Association of Realtors and the American Public Transportation Association, 2013.

asset in the Allegan community that can be channeled into the downtown district. The high walkability score in the downtown area is also a strength, as is the Allegan County Reserve-a-Ride service, which provides on-demand transportation service within the region.

Another important infrastructure related asset Allegan County has is the Allegan County Transportation (ACT) system. Its headquarters are in the Highland Business Park. The ACT had 40,803 rides totaling 614,145 miles in 2011. ACT transports people all over the county, from their homes, to their jobs, to restaurants, stores, medical appointments, and back home. These services make ACT essential for many people, businesses that employ them, and those to whom they are customers, as well as seniors and people living with disabilities¹⁷.

¹⁷ Allegan Area Asset Summary, City of Allegan

Planning and Design Considerations

Planning Analysis

In order to plan for the development and maintenance of places that offer the amenities that support a wide array of real estate market demands, placemaking combines a variety of land use planning principles that move communities away from conventional zoning and development. Instead, placemaking focuses on where a single use, such as restaurants / entertainment / retail / office, should be located and instead considers how these uses should be combined in an environment that draws residents and visitors alike to enjoy spending extended time in a space. Many of these guiding principles lean toward designing spaces mirroring bustling traditional neighborhoods developed prior to widespread use of the automobile.

After receiving feedback from local stakeholders at the community visioning meeting and design charrette, the following planning issues and considerations related to successful placemaking have been identified. Specific suggestions for the riverfront

development site and surrounding area are found in the Recommendations section of this report.

Transect-Based Planning

Transect-based planning is an approach that divides the built environment into six categories that differ in land use diversity and density, ranging from “natural landscape” to the “urban core”. Its major driving principle is that certain forms and elements belong in certain environments. What may work well in a suburban neighborhood may ruin the street aesthetics and connectivity within an urban core. Transect-based planning expresses that successful growth requires the sequential influence of many participants. It employs form-based code through a tool called SMART code that provides zoning guidelines that pertain to the Transect Zone being planned for. This allows the built environment to be designed and constructed by many individuals over years and/or

Placemaking Elements of Quality Places

- Mixed Use Development (Land and Buildings)
- Quality Public Spaces
- Broadband Enabled
- Multiple Transportation Options
- Multiple Housing Options
- Preservation of Historic Structures
- Recreation
- Arts & Culture
- Green Places
- Linked Regionally

Placemaking Form Characteristics

- Accessibility, Comfort
- Quiet- unless designated otherwise
- Sociability
- Civic Engagement
- Resilient and Sustainable
- Mass, Density, and Scale
- Human Scale
- Walkable/Pedestrian-Oriented
- Safe, Connected, Welcoming
- Encourages Activity -Stumbling into Fun
- Allows Authentic Experiences

Source: MiPlace Initiative Curriculum, 2012

generations, lending ingenuity to the landscape¹⁸.

Within the Recommendations section of this report, the tenets of transect-based planning have been utilized to address zoning regulations that should be applied to the site and greater downtown to ensure that future development takes place in a form that supports the functions envisioned for the site. Additionally, by describing where along the transect Allegan should be, this criteria can be used to address how to create/regulate appropriate design of linkages between the riverfront development site and greater downtown as well as between locations of interest within the site.

Form-Based Code

Using form-based code can assist a municipality with ensuring that future development within a community elicits the physical results intended, along with the

¹⁸ SmartCode Version 9.2, p. vii

desired impact on community and economic development. Form-based code offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning because they address the following with regards to the specific community at hand:

- Relationship between building facades and the public realm
- Form and mass of buildings in relation to one another
- Scale and types of streets and blocks

In order to ensure understanding, the regulations and standards in form-based codes are both written and illustrated with clearly drawn diagrams and other visuals. Essentially, they apply physical standards to a district/area in an effort to influence the district's overall character without addressing specific uses individually¹⁹. Form-based code is referenced heavily within the Recommendations section as an alternative to Allegan's conventional zoning

¹⁹ Form-Based Codes Institute, 2011

code focused upon regulating single uses.

Connectivity and Complete Streets

In order for the Downtown Allegan Riverfront Development to find success, the City of Allegan will have to ensure that multimodal connectivity is addressed both within the site and leading out to the greater downtown. Placemaking at its core is about creating the appropriate emotional response from visitors about a specific place. Perceptions about accessibility, parking, and linkages to surrounding amenities play a key role in visitor satisfaction.

Connectivity
Element



The "5-10 minute" walk is often used as the outer limit of an acceptable time to reach a destination and has been used as the standard in New Urbanism design and walkability studies extensively over the past decade.

Walking distance and the time it takes to park and reach a downtown business is an important factor for framing customer perception. Therefore, understanding the

walking behavior of residents and visitors to downtown Allegan is critical.

Acceptable walking distances are also impacted by weather, site distances to desired location, pedestrian barriers, perception of crime and type of business to name a few. A satisfactory walking distance is often between 400ft. (professional services/grocery establishments) and 1200ft (restaurants/general retail) for uncovered downtown parking areas²⁰.

Another important tool is attention to Complete Streets, a planning and design concept that endeavor to create streets that can be used by all. Implementation requires planning and design to enable safe access to users for a variety of transportation options including walking, bicycling, travel by automobile and transit of all ages and abilities. The City of Allegan has begun to

²⁰ Litman, Todd. *Parking management best practices*. Chicago, Ill.: American Planning Association, 2006. Print.

address walking access to downtown by passing a Complete Streets Resolution and implementation of a Safe Routes to School Plan. In addition, it has also addressed linkages to the downtown with its M-89 Corridor Plan.

Complete Streets should ensure ease when crossing the street, walking to retail, and bicycling to make it safe for people to walk to and from transit stations. Complete Streets asks transportation agencies to change their approach to community roads. Through the adoption of a Complete Streets policy, a community directs their transportation planners and engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. As a result, all transportation projects assist in making the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists²¹. With regards to

²¹ Smart Growth America, 2013

Allegan, methods for measuring connectivity have been addressed not only for streets, but for non-traditional pathway/trails used primarily by pedestrians and cyclists for use within the site.

Design Analysis

The placemaking process begins with asking questions of the people who reside, work, and play in a particular space in an effort to determine their needs and desires for a space. This information is then used to create a common vision for that place. The feedback of local stakeholders that attended the community visioning meeting and design charrette was necessary in order to develop the following design elements. These design elements inform the final PlacePlan concept design so that it succeeds in providing the form necessary to realize the social activities and emotional response envisioned for the space by the Allegan community. The diagram on the right depicts key design elements. Specific suggestions for the riverfront development site and surrounding area are found in the Recommendations section of this report.

Design Elements

- Major Public Plaza: Think Skate, Splash and Events. Multi-purpose with temporary overhead cover.
- Through Road, One Way, 50% + - Of Current Parking Spaces
- More Public Access to the Water
- Docks in a central area, but not too many
- Veteran's Memorial needs to stay in the same general area as it is now, but improved and planned for future expansion
- Include Art Throughout the Project
- Wetland Garden/Boardwalk is Great
- Consider a restaurant or other commercial/residential use on the east end
- Gateway Features
- "Wash" Light the Bridge
- Walkway/Boardwalk Around the Entire Project Area
- Upgrade the parking behind the Griswold/library
- Consolidate the playground on the west end
- Walkway, Outdoor Eating, Shops Along the Buildings at the River Level
- Move City Hall to the Old Bank Building with public restrooms at the river level
- Upgrade current buildings but keep the individual look
- Include a Clock Tower
- No Fountains in the River, Look into a Laser Light Show
- Add a "Wow" Element to the Riverfront
- Add a Canoe/Kayak In/Out Facility
- Link to Adjacent Sidewalks and Trails
- Accessibility for All, Universal Design
- Social Spaces and also Spaces for Individuals
- Flexibility for Multiple Uses and Events
- Human Scale, but also a sense of place that is the Allegan Riverfront
- Welcoming

Recommendations

Overview

The City of Allegan and its Downtown Development Authority recognize that Downtown Allegan's riverfront property abutting the Kalamazoo River provides a magnificent opportunity for use as a focal point to design a downtown revitalization strategy around. With an overarching goal to create a sense of place in Downtown Allegan that will draw both residents and visitors alike, the Kalamazoo Riverfront property is an asset in its own right but in addition, is within close proximity of assets that when considered together may create a perfect storm. These assets include the surrounding intact, contiguous historic buildings within the Old Town and Griswold Civic Historic Districts along Hubbard Street; the boardwalk system; three local parks; and destination assets (e.g. 1886 steel truss bridge). In response, a design concept and prescribed supporting land use regulatory tools and community economic development programming recommendations have been created in a

comprehensive process employing the "Placemaking" approach.

Placemaking recognizes that people tend to choose the neighborhood they live in based upon that neighborhood's amenities, social and professional networks, resources and opportunities to support thriving lifestyles – as defined by the individual. As an approach, placemaking recognizes that places (central gathering spots, downtowns, neighborhoods, regions) must be designed in a way that their **form** (physical scale, land use diversity and density) leads to and supports the aforementioned results.

In order to plan for the development and/or maintenance of places that offer the amenities that support a wide array of real estate market demands, placemaking combines a variety of land use planning principles that move communities away from conventional zoning and development that focuses on where a single use, such as restaurants/entertainment/retail/office, should be located and instead considers how these uses should be combined in an

environment that draws residents and visitors alike to enjoy spending extended time in a space. Many of these guiding principles lean toward designing spaces mirroring bustling traditional neighborhoods developed prior to widespread use of the automobile.

With these design guidelines, characteristics of placemaking form, and elements of quality places, the following recommendations address:

- Mixed Use Development, Scale, and Density for Transect 5: Urban Center Zone
 - Mixed Use Development of Housing and Commercial Space Options
 - Recreation, Arts and Culture within the Riverfront District
- Ensuring Connectivity to Local Assets and Districts
 - Measuring for Connectivity
 - Design at the Streetscape Level

- Historic Preservation
 - Capitalizing on Historic Districts as an Asset

Quality Places

The emotional response from spending time in a quality place is unique and hard to recreate. Consider these elements as examples when evaluating what is contained in the essence of a place.



Mixed Uses / Density
(Royal Oak, MI)



Linkage to Assets
(Birmingham, MI)



Historic Preservation
(Marquette, MI)

Sources: Royal Oak: http://www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/portal/webfm_send/412
 Birmingham: <http://pics3.city-data.com/businesses/p/3/7/6/9/8653769.JPG>
 Marquette: http://i2.cdn.turner.com/money/galleries/2011/real_estate/1109/gallery.best_places_retire.moneymag/images/marquette-mi.jpg

Final Design Concept

The final concept plan for the Allegan Downtown Riverfront provides a tremendous opportunity for economic development, creates a major identity for the community, and is a year round attraction. The design is composed of six areas that all work together, creating a multi-purpose riverfront for living, shopping, entertainment and eating.

The major areas are:

Central Plaza – An urban style open area for events, splash pad in the summer and ice skating in the winter. Temporary canopies can be erected to provide shade and shelter. Better access to the water, wider walkways, and shopping/indoor-outdoor experience along the existing buildings have been designed into the area. The backsides of the existing buildings would also be improved, but still retain their individual character. It is also proposed that City Hall be relocated to the vacant bank building and that public restrooms be made available at the river level in the new City Hall. A one-way roadway and diagonal parking is also included. Future detailed design of this area should include appropriate sound, lighting, and wireless Internet.

West End – Redesign of the parking lot behind the Griswold and library, new boat docks, a “beach” area for kayaks, and a consolidated playground complete this area. In addition, a new entrance at the river level has been proposed for the library. A clock tower would also be located in this area as

an iconic feature of the community.

Wetland Garden – The area between the existing boardwalk and shoreline has been re-developed into a wetland garden with walkways, sitting areas and an educational opportunity. This project would involve a public/private partnership with existing land owners.

Veterans Memorial Park – The park has been expanded for future memorial opportunities, areas for reflection, and an expanded event area. Public/Private partnerships would be part of this project.

East End – The park area has been re-landscaped to provide additional shade and color to the park. Two alternatives have been developed for the extremer east end, one as a mixed use opportunity for housing/restaurant and the second for a zip line across the river.

Gateways – Throughout the site, both vehicular and pedestrian entrances have been designed as signature gateways to

convey a sense of arrival and do so within the iron bridge era.

Other Elements – The iron bridge would be “wash lighted” to showcase its structure. Fountains in the river have been retained and lighted. A walkway/boardwalk goes all the way around the site, including a new pedestrian bridge along the existing M-89 bridge. The M-89/Hubbard intersection has been realigned. Throughout the site, murals and art have been introduced to showcase the history of Allegan. The entire area would be re-landscaped and made more “green”. Sustainable materials and practices would be incorporated into the design.

Design Recommendations

Using Scale, Density, and Mixing Uses to Create a “Sense of Place”

Specifically, placemaking elements and form characteristics consistent with the T5 land use development pattern have been addressed in the following ways:

- Spaces created at the pedestrian scale that are universally designed, interconnected, walkable, and welcoming that provide opportunities for protection from weather and climatic changes, bustle and solitude, people to gather or enjoy solitude, discovery, and surprise.
- A mix of residential, commercial, and recreation has been integrated within the Riverfront site.

Connectivity/Linkage to Local Assets and Districts

Site analysis as well as stakeholder input during the community visioning meeting yielded negative feedback regarding the current status of connectivity between assets within the riverfront development site

and between the site and greater Downtown Allegan. In particular, stakeholders cited broken connections, limited bicycle access, too much pavement, and the river itself being inaccessible as concerns. In response, the proposed riverfront site conceptual design applies placemaking elements in the following ways to create connectivity between assets/districts along the riverfront and appropriate linkages to greater Downtown Allegan:

- Wayfinding and signage are crucial to ensure that visitors and residents can enjoy all that Allegan has to offer.
- The downtown riverfront should connect visually and physically to other assets such as the library, Griswold Auditorium, existing parks, riverfront, veteran’s park, downtown shops and restaurants, housing, etc.
- Linked greenspace emphasizes public spaces and their connections

Creation of a Quality Public Space

- Riverfront should accommodate both active (e.g. outdoor games, children’s play space, fitness

activities) and passive (e.g. outdoor eating, reading, art viewing) uses

- Allow for both planned and spontaneous activity by creating and promoting flexible space
- The downtown riverfront’s “big wow” is the bridge and boardwalk; these should be featured and maximized; potentially incorporate clock tower too

Planning Recommendations

Ensure Zoning Supports Mixed Use Development, Scale, and Density for Transect 5: Urban Center Zone

Adopt Transect 5: General Urban Zone within Riverfront Development Site

The Allegan community expressed during the series of three stakeholder meetings the desire for a concept design plan that included some of following features, which are supported by the characteristics of a T5 zone:

- Mix uses within the site (residential, commercial, retail, entertainment, recreation).
- Greening of parks/public space within the riverfront site.
- Leverage existing assets within the site (historic buildings, fishing facilities, the 1886 steel truss bridge, boardwalk and the Veteran's Riverfront Park).

Based upon review of the site and the goals the community hopes to achieve, it is recommended that the City of Allegan use form-based code within the Riverfront Development site and into adjacent Downtown Allegan that mandates land use development guidelines in line with the Urban Center Transect Zone (T5).

Transect Zone 5, or the “Urban Center Zone” employs a land use development pattern calling for higher density mixed-use buildings that accommodate retail, offices, rowhouses and apartments. It plans for a tight network of streets with wide sidewalks. At the street level T5 calls for consistent street tree planting and building lot lines at the sidewalk²².

Buildings within in a T5 zone generally have a “main street” feel to them. This sector has been described as the type of district that “Is as diverse as any. You could see lights on in

²² SmartCode Version 9.2, 2012

the windows over the square every evening.”²³ Housing in such a district is comprised of apartments above retail, apartment buildings, and townhomes with a density requirement between 15-40 units/acre.

Allegan’s downtown riverfront presents an invaluable opportunity for transformation of their downtown area into a thriving hub of activity. In addition, the density of its historic districts satisfies a T5 development pattern. However, to ensure the vision for the Allegan Riverfront becomes a reality, it is strongly recommended the City of Allegan adopt a form-based code to replace its existing conventional code for the riverfront site (and the greater downtown).

The City of Allegan Zoning Code currently practices conventional zoning, segregating land uses and controlling development intensity through abstract and

²³ BetterCities.net – The Transect, 2009

uncoordinated parameters (e.g., FAR, dwellings per acre, setbacks, parking ratios, traffic LOS). This could be changed or an overlay could be created that considers the overall design and development criteria for, in this case, the C-1 Central Business District. Allegan has considered form-based code in the past, most recently in 2005, and found that the location where it would be most applicable is the downtown area.

It is recommended that the City of Allegan review SmartCode Version 9.2, which is a form-based code template that supports transect planning by including land use development requirements for all development patterns along the transect, including T5. It is offered as a soft copy electronic template on the Center for Applied Transect Studies website free of charge. Allegan has considered form-based code in the past and has determined tools such as overlays and incentive-based coding may be beneficial. Allegan’s form-based code for the district could provide detailed instructions for the following:

- Regulating Plan: A plan or map of the regulated area designating the

locations where different building form standards apply, based on clear community intentions regarding the physical character of the area being coded. In addition, form-based code allows for multiple uses within a district and within the same building. Allegan's current zoning code to date only allows for single uses, which will impede the development of a downtown space that satisfies their vision.

- Public Space Standards: Specifications for the elements within the public realm (e.g., sidewalks, travel lanes, on-street parking, street trees, street furniture, etc.).
- Building Form Standards: Regulations controlling the configuration, features, and functions of buildings that define and shape the public realm.
- Administration: A clearly defined application and project review process.

- Definitions: A glossary to ensure the precise use of technical terms²⁴.

In order to ensure understanding, the regulations and standards in form-based codes are both written and illustrated with clearly drawn diagrams and other visuals. Essentially, they apply physical standards to a district/area in an effort to influence the district's overall character without addressing specific uses individually²⁵. Beckett & Raeder completed a Downtown Strategic Plan in June 2004 for Allegan and is cited within this recommendation section because they included a recommendation within their report to change the C-1 overlay in line with recommendations above. Allegan has considered the recommendations within the Downtown Strategic Plan and has begun to implement those that are most applicable with the desired goals of the community.

²⁴ Form-Based Codes Institute, 2011

²⁵ Ibid.

With regards to the Central Business District (C-1), Beckett & Raeder proposed the following details be included:

- For permitted businesses, there is no need to list business types by SIC code; rather, any retail, service or office use should be permitted, with exceptions listed, such as auto-related uses that require vehicular access, which should be prohibited, e.g., gas stations, auto dealers, auto repair shops, auto washes, drive-through restaurants
- Upper floor dwellings and live-work units should be permitted uses; add ground floor attached dwellings as a special use.
- Add all public/government buildings to the CBD zone, particularly before county offices vacate their downtown site. Government uses are already considered general office uses. However, present zoning requirements for government land are inadequate for the type of new private development that would support downtown shopping,

- pedestrian links, and upper floor development.
- Consider establishing retail frontage lines in CBD on main shopping blocks, where maximum front yard setback is zero feet; minimum building height is two stories; parking lots cannot front the ROW; curb cuts are prohibited on the frontage line; retail/restaurant uses are preferred uses; storefronts require minimum area of transparent glass (such as 70% of façade). Encourage vertical mixed-use developments by creating zoning allowances for new proposals with retail or eatery on the ground floor, and offices and/or dwellings on upper levels.
 - Establish minimum lot coverage of 70% in CBD.
 - Establish maximum front yard setbacks in CBD of zero feet on major streets and ten feet elsewhere.
 - Establish maximum rear yard setbacks in CBD: twenty feet.

- Consider elimination of off-street parking requirement in the CBD, or establish standard for maximum off-street parking in CBD: 3.0 for retail, 3.0 for general office, 8.0 for sit-down restaurant²⁶.

Apply Planning and Zoning Techniques

Table 2 on the following page showcases practices that will help with the implementation of form-based code within the Downtown Allegan Riverfront Development Site. “Incentive-based zoning” has been included as an option to consider as it may assist the City of Allegan and/or its Downtown Development Authority with attracting businesses that can fill vacant storefronts while meeting the retail / entertainment / employment needs of residents and visitors.

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- ²⁶ Allegan Downtown Strategic Plan, 2004, p. 70)

Table 2: Land Use Planning Tools/Techniques for Implementing Desired Land Use Development Pattern

Land Use Planning Tool/Technique	Description	Benefits
Zoning Overlay Districts	Rather than investing time revising the zoning code, individual zoning overlays can be defined and approved for identified districts with potentially greater expediency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A form-based zoning code supports development patterns in identified neighborhood/districts that support desired activities/uses. • Saves time in reading/revising entire municipal zoning code. • Overlays can differ by district.
Incentive-Based Zoning	Incentive-based zoning may be used in the form of density and/or floor area bonuses to a developer for satisfying a policy (Shoemaker, 2006, p. 6). In Allegan's case, the bonus may be to encourage variety in business occupants, residential within the building, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be used to assist in satisfying a policy or goal. • Effective in an environment where policy makers are apprehensive and/or opposed to creating a specific provision within legislation.
Revise/Rewrite Zoning Code to Employ Form-Based Code	Update the City of Allegan Zoning Code as a form-based code focused on allowable development within neighborhoods/districts rather than where single uses should exist and their parking requirement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A form-based zoning code supports development patterns in identified neighborhood/districts that support desired activities/uses.

Ensuring Connectivity between Local Assets and Districts

Measuring Connectivity Between Assets in the Riverfront Development Site and How the Site Links to the Greater Downtown

Placemaking as a land use planning approach employs well thought-out linkages between neighborhoods and districts, considered the smallest units within a sustainable city-wide or regional development. Nodes, centers, and corridors become the centers and edges of neighborhoods and districts which is why when planning land use across a city or region, careful attention should be paid to how the context of one neighborhood/district is blended into another²⁷.

The 2004 City of Allegan Downtown Strategic Plan has also acknowledged connectivity, or “linkage”, within the downtown to be insufficient. The plan concluded that one of

²⁷ MiPlace Partnership Initiative Curriculum, 2012

the reasons for this insufficiency is that the downtown does not strictly adhere to a grid system due to the river, resulting in awkward intersections between East/West and North/South intersecting streets. The plan also supplied ideas for creating a connectivity plan including:

- Adding mid-block intersections along Hubbard between Chestnut and Locust and between Locust and Water in an effort to provide easier pedestrian access between commercial buildings and parking²⁸.
- Linking existing boardwalks along the river to create one linked path system that follows the river along the edge of the downtown²⁹.

The City of Allegan could address connectivity and ensure future development within the riverfront development site and

²⁸ Beckett & Raeder, p. 45

²⁹ Ibid.

greater downtown by ensuring a revised zoning code or zoning district overlay addresses the connection measurement criteria described in Table 3.

Table 3: Connectivity Criteria to be addressed by Land Use Regulatory Tools/Techniques

Connectivity Criteria	Description
Block Length	Block length may be used as a measurement of connectivity with the assumption that smaller block lengths correlate with more intersections, shorter travel distances, and a greater number of routes between locations (Dill, 2004).
Block Size	Block size is used as a measurement of connectivity in an effort to consider all four sides of a block, not just one length. Size is measured in maximum acres allowed (Dill, 2004).
Intersection Density	Intersection density is measured as the number of intersections per unit of area (e.g. a square mile) that makes the assumption that a greater number of intersections indicate higher connectivity (Dill, 2004). The number of intersections per specified unit of area is used in LEED Neighborhood Design evaluation criteria.
Pedestrian Route Directness	<p>Pedestrian Route Directness (PDR) is defined as the ratio of route distance to straight-line distance for two selected points. A score of "1.00" indicates a route is the most direct path between two nodes, described as the "crow flies" distance. This method of measurement assumes that having the most direct routes between nodes correlates with having a more connected network.</p> <p>This method is cited as better measure for promoting walking/bicycling because trip distance plays a major role in determining whether a person walks/bicycles to a destination.</p> <p>PDR may be useful in assessing connectivity between assets within the riverfront development site, but is likely too subjective for use within the downtown district/within a zoning tool.</p>

Density and Scale Requirements at the Streetscape Level

In order to ensure that connectivity within the riverfront development site and throughout Downtown Allegan is planned for, the City of Allegan could address density and scale requirements at the street level. Streetscape refers to the design character of a particular street and its surrounding environment. A streetscape includes the street, the buildings that line it, facades at the street level, sidewalks, incorporated vegetation, signage / wayfinding, and furniture / fixtures. The streetscape design is important as it determines the aesthetic quality of the site and the manner that vehicular traffic travels through the area³⁰.

Addressing streetscape design elements are not in themselves placemaking, but when planned for as a whole can be used in conjunction with planning for compact

³⁰ Southeast Michigan Council of Governments [SEMCOG], 2003, p. 58

spaces in the effort to create contiguous uniformity within an identified district.

In the midst of the inevitable organic development process that takes place over time, the City of Allegan could consider adopting certain public infrastructure design elements with regard to color, style, and material to create a unique brand for the district. Additionally, reviewing the standards already in place to ensure compatibility with future goals would be a good step. During the community input meetings, there was interest in conforming to a historic look. In the effort to support a vibrant riverfront district, the streetscape design elements should also be sized to human scale, focused upon pedestrian uses. Table 4 provides land use planning tools/techniques that may be used to accomplish the implementation of streetscape design that supports social activity and successfully creates a sense of place.

Table 4: Land use Planning Tools/Techniques for Successful Streetscape Implementation

Land Use Planning Tool/Technique	Description	Benefits
Design Element Specification Manual	Create/maintain a specification booklet describing specific products, styles, and installation requirements for identified streetscape design elements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides specific directions to contractors/developers. • Allows for revision to one document when design criteria changes. • Can be used for more than one overlay district.
Develop/Maintain a Streetscape Plan	A streetscape plan provides a layout indicating placement of design elements and where specific improvements larger in scope should be made (awkward intersection, sidewalk is discontinued, etc.) (SEMCOG, 2003, p. 59).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a visual map of existing problem areas that need attention, in relationship to development in the city as a whole. • Provides a blueprint for desired location of improvements in the long-term future. • Provides specific directions to contractors/developers. • Allows for revision to one document when design criteria changes.
Incorporate Streetscape Design into Zoning Code Requirements	Identify zoning districts that must include uniform light fixtures, sidewalk benches, trash receptacles, wayfinding, sidewalk design, etc as part of all development projects large in scope. The zoning code revisions may refer back to an approved streetscape plan for guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates design cohesion at the street level despite difference in property owner.
Zoning Overlay Districts	Rather than investing time revising the zoning code, individual zoning overlays can be defined and approved for identified districts. A zoning overlay should mandate uniformity in light fixtures, sidewalk benches, trash receptacles, wayfinding, sidewalk design, etc, as part of all development projects large in scope.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates design cohesion at the street level despite difference in property owner. • Saves time in reading/revising entire municipal zoning code. • Overlays can differ by district.

Asset Recommendations

As a result of the Local and Regional Analysis conducted by the Michigan Municipal League, the following opportunities were identified to capitalize upon the assets described under the analysis section of this report. The City of Allegan should act upon these opportunities to ensure they apply a comprehensive approach to placemaking within the riverfront development site and adjacent areas in conjunction with the design and planning recommendations.

Physical Design, Walkability & Connectivity

The Dan Burden report, the “Meet Me In Downtown Allegan” downtown development plan, and the M-89 Corridor Plan all provide detailed recommendations for improved pedestrian experiences through gateways/entry points, reducing one-way streets, realignment of key intersections, incorporation of roundabouts, improved street crossings, a comprehensive parking plan that included on-street parking, and directional/wayfinding. These are all key features that will be supportive of the riverfront redevelopment project going forward. After all, creating an amazing

riverfront area that people can see from across the water, but can’t find, is self-defeating. Similarly, supporting a street grid and traffic patterns that move cars and people away from the downtown district as quickly as possible is a mistake. The numerous existing studies and plans provide an excellent framework for moving forward to address these issues. Practical solutions like adding bike racks throughout downtown will promote non-motorized access to the area in the short-term.

The amenities of Allegan’s downtown district are excellent and very supportive of downtown living. Continued development of housing within the downtown area will ensure the riverfront becomes a “third place” within the community. The “third places” in a community is where people hang-out, connect and spend their leisure time. Improvements to downtown buildings, especially the rear of buildings facing the riverfront area will create an excellent first impression from across the water, and define the downtown district as a special place to be. Improving the curb appeal of the backs of the buildings will support new

uses on the riverfront, as would the addition of public bathroom facilities. Other opportunities to improve the aesthetics of the physical design along the riverfront relate to the seawall and embankments. Both were identified as eyesores that detract from the area. Repeatedly in the public sessions people brought up the idea of adding mile markers along the walking loop. Allegan has purchased the lot on the corner of Hubbard and Cedar to create better traffic flow, with Hubbard becoming a two-way street and pedestrian access to the riverfront. Similar changes should be considered for greater overall impact.

Preserve America is a national initiative that may be of interest to the Allegan community. Preserve America recognizes and designates communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. Designation affords several benefits, including access to grant; more than 800

communities have been designated since 2003. Other programs that may be of interest are the MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities program, Promoting Active Communities and Smart Growth Readiness.

Cultural Economic Development

More than once during the community engagement process people mentioned the untapped potential for the area's local art and music scene. The riverfront could serve as a great catalyst for small scale music performances, public art, informal art center, and space for impromptu creative work. The attached appendix of potential uses for the riverfront feature artistic expression and culturally relevant activities, including extensive integration of the arts.

The clock tower salvaged from the county courthouse is an architectural gem and may become a featured component of the riverfront area, a potential centerpiece for a grand entryway, maybe even in a main roundabout entering the downtown. Like the bridge, the clock is a piece of Allegan's history and heritage that is authentically

"Allegan." Both have the potential to serve as cultural centerpieces.

Entrepreneurship

The attached list of potential uses for the riverfront is ripe with small business opportunities-either new ventures or expansion of what is already within the downtown or nearby. For example, the successful ice cream store and coffee shops that already have a strong "brick and mortar" business might opt to have seasonal carts on the riverfront. A local music store might use the riverfront for lessons, a local fitness business could have yoga classes on the riverfront, artists could show selected works on consignment, the riverfront could cross-promote with the farmer's market to give local growers and artisans expanded exposure. The opportunities are limitless, and may be especially ripe for creating lower level retail on the riverfront with outdoor seating and "after 5:00" activities.

Given the role of local food, commercial kitchen incubation might be a consideration, as well as supporting local artists. Attached is a list of case studies including "Detroit

Soup," a monthly public dinner event and presentation series, where attendees vote to fund small to medium-sized arts and community projects. This is a very low-cost, high-impact way to seed ideas and activities at the local level, and may be especially helpful in connecting youth/students to business mentors.

Branding and Communications

In implementing riverfront plans, the community will be well-served to invest in Wi-Fi access and cutting edge technology, sound systems, lighting, etc.

Consider updating and utilizing the "Meet Me in Downtown Allegan" and "Positively Allegan" brand campaigns as the community moves forward.

Education

School age children are one important potential user of the riverfront, as are people of all ages who crave a "third place" and a sense of activity and excitement in the downtown area. Ensuring programmed events and, more importantly, unplanned and spontaneous uses within the riverfront district for all ages will activate the space.

On the structured side, working with the library, local schools and community groups to encourage them to use the riverfront as a place for their activities, clubs, educational programs, etc. will engage those groups on a formal basis.

Welcoming to All

In implementing the riverfront design and its activities/use, the community will be well-served to ensure these are supportive of all ages, abilities, and interests. The reality is that the Allegan community is not very diverse³¹; however, it is a very warm, friendly, and down-to-earth place so visitors and residents alike should feel comfortable in Allegan and the riverfront district. The Allegan area is younger than average, so features, uses, and activities catering to kids may be of particular interest.

³¹ US census data: Allegan County is 95.6% white, compared to 80.2% statewide; 3.3% of Allegan County residents are foreign born compared to 6% statewide.

Sustainability and Environment

Create more greenspace on the riverfront, continue expansion and connections of paved recreation trail system, continue to implement and update the recreation plan with an eye toward regional connectivity and all points leading to downtown Allegan.

In developing the riverfront project, physical access to the river was a clear consensus priority. People crave the connection to the river as a primary natural resource and opportunities abound to use it as a living laboratory to promote environmental awareness. Final plans for the riverfront should prioritize sustainability and environmental sensitivity, including featuring local and recycled materials wherever possible, rain gardens or related green storm water infrastructure, and incorporating low-maintenance plantings and landscape materials. Perhaps in developing the riverfront the community would be supportive of seeking certification under The Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES™), which has voluntary national guidelines, performance benchmarks and a comprehensive rating system for sustainable

land design, construction and maintenance practices for built landscapes.

Transportation

As already covered in excellent detail within existing studies, there are boundless opportunities to improve traffic flow, key intersections, gateways and wayfinding/direction signs. These improvements to the broader downtown district will positively and directly impact the riverfront area.

Implementation

Opportunities and Barriers to Implementation

The public excitement about the riverfront, the strength of the community, and the support of its local leaders are critical to getting the project launched and completed. However, there are several potential challenges that are especially important to recognize and address.

1. **Competing values of historic preservation and need for aesthetic improvements**

The charm and character of Allegan's historic buildings, including the bridge, were universally sited as critical elements of the riverfront area. However, the facades of some buildings, especially the rear of the buildings that frame the riverfront, were identified as a critical area to improve. The city will face a challenge in achieving the façade improvements needed for the

riverfront while honoring the restrictions of the historic districts. The strong relationships among various groups will serve everyone well in reconciling these competing values.

2. **Funding**

Dreaming of the riverfront and its potential is easier done than finding the means to fund its development, construction, and programming. This report provides a table of potential resources to address parts and pieces, but the team that assembles to push the riverfront project forward will need to be creative and diligent in finding public/private mechanisms for bringing the plans to life.

Short-term temporary "pop-up" uses and demonstrations that show how the riverfront will feel can help keep excitement going and build momentum during the development and fundraising phase. Phasing

construction and development may be necessary as well.

With regard to programming, most successful place-based initiatives are community driven and require little by way of formal programming and paid staff. Over time, as demand evolves, perhaps the community will find the need for centralized programming and controls as envisioned in the branding report.

3. **Need for constant activation of space**

The success of the riverfront will be largely judged by whether it is used or sits vacant, and whether it has a positive impact on the business and housing in the area. A well-designed public space will inspire use organically, it will invite people to spend time there and discover new ways to enjoy the space at each visit. This riverfront site will support that model given its central location, proximity to existing businesses and

cultural anchors like the library, the Griswold, etc.

International expert Fred Kent has coined “The Power of 10” concept in placemaking, which means where there are 10 good things to do, things to look at, things to engage you—you can create a truly great public place. This riverfront location together with the existing surrounding assets gives a running start on the power of 10 for this downtown district in Allegan.

Attached as an appendix is a list of over 100 ideas for things to do, or things to “let happen” in the riverfront space. Most were mentioned in the course of the public visioning session and/or the charrette process, and some are ideas that came out of other communities’ projects. Some are things that have worked elsewhere and may be modified to fit Allegan. Some may be completely off-the-wall and not a good fit at all. The

objective is to identify as many easy/organic uses and activities as possible to ensure active use of the riverfront ongoing, and anchor those with larger planned/managed events.

4. Is the community ready to “let things happen?”

Through our process we heard some competing values and differences in the comfort level people had with idea of “letting things happen” in the public riverfront area. For example, is a group of teenagers hanging out in the riverfront a good thing or is it loitering? Is it nice to hear someone strumming their guitar or is it noise pollution? What if that person sets out their case and takes tips? We heard numerous times that Allegan is close-knit and safe; so would an “honor system” fruit and vegetable stand work in the riverfront? How about a take-one/leave-one book and magazine cart? These activities happen in great public spaces in communities large and small, but

can they in Allegan? Most probably YES.

The biggest challenge here is going to be seeing whether folks are brave enough to try new things, and will persevere when an experiment fails. A great public space, with non-stop activity and year-round use will demand tolerance, experimentation, and “letting things happen” even when they make people uncomfortable. Take, for example, a public fountain in a small alley park in Traverse City in the downtown area; kids started putting bubbles in the fountain periodically. The small park filled with bubbles, it was a spectacle! There was outrage! The authorities were called! It happened a couple more times and the businesses realized moms let their little ones play in the bubbles and they bought coffee and ice cream and found a cute sweater they didn’t know they needed. The plants didn’t die, the hardscape was unharmed (it was cleaner!), the fountain worked

fine, the bubbles blew away quickly, and any residue washed away in the next rain. Some people love it, some people think it's terrible. But they don't call the police on bubbles anymore. It's cute to some, it's an attraction to many, and it's an occasional nuisance to others. Point is, a public space WILL be used in ways that some people won't like some of the time, but it is being used. Can Allegan get comfortable with that?

We would encourage the community to begin with as little structure as possible in the early stages of creating its central riverfront. Perhaps a "bureaucracy free zone" could be used for a specified period of time. During that test period the community could get a better sense of how people want to use the riverfront, and see first-hand what problems may arise. Regulations can then form to address actual issues, rather than trying to anticipate and solve problems before they exist. A

flexible public space, where success equals activity, shouldn't begin with a list of what CAN'T happen there. Rules may indeed become necessary, but maximum activity is encouraged when you start with the assumption that most people will honor and respect the space.

5. Improving traffic patterns/ wayfinding

An advantage of the riverfront location is its buffer from major thoroughfares which provides a feeling of safety and protection; it will encourage a wider range of uses. The down side of this is it is not easy to find from the main roads so those visiting Allegan may have a harder time finding the riverfront. Effective wayfinding and signage throughout the downtown district and at main gateways to the downtown to connect people to the riverfront will be a must-have. Changes to one-way traffic may also improve accessibility. The most significant challenge in resolving this will be

working with transportation agencies on improvements to the state highway intersections. A key to overcoming the challenge will be the city's complete streets resolution, which requires transportation agencies to work with the community in a different way. The success of the downtown, provided in part through this great public riverfront, must be set above the need to move cars quickly. People crossing the street safely must matter more than the people driving cars *through* the city.

6. Improving physical access to the river

Clear desire was expressed to give better physical access to the river. At present, the riverfront affords people a lovely view of the water, but does not promote physical interaction with it. So many potential uses and activities are foreclosed due to such limited access. A major challenge will be working with DEQ and other

agencies in opening up the opportunities for physical use and access to this waterway. But the community has already proven through its bridge preservation efforts that where there is a will, there is a way.

7. **Lighting the bridge**

Everyone agreed the bridge *is* Allegan; it is its defining feature, it is its history and heritage and an unparalleled source of community pride. And everyone agreed it is understated at night. However, no one agreed on whether to light the bridge, and if so, with what design features. This issue has the potential

to distract from the riverfront redevelopment project and may be better left for later. Once the riverfront is redesigned, and its uses at all times of day and night become apparent, consensus on the question of whether to light the bridge may emerge. In the meantime, perhaps a compromise position where lighting in some form is used temporarily for special events could give people a visual example of what might be.

8. **Veteran's Memorial and Park**

A central feature of the riverfront redevelopment will be the Veteran's park and memorial area. Key to success will be ensuring that the

location, design and other elements meet Veterans' expectations, balanced with other uses along the Riverfront.

9. **Parking**

Parking could become an issue in the implementation of the riverfront redevelopment if it is not proactively addressed. The consensus seemed clear that the riverfront as a community asset comes first, with parking considerations second. However, peoples' expectations were that parking impacts would be mitigated and addressed.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: Potential Community Economic Development Tools & Funding Opportunities

The following table summarizes community economic development tools and specific funding and technical assistance programs that may be relevant to the Allegan riverfront project. In addition to these resources, reference the list of stakeholders identified in appendix B for additional partners in pursuing funding opportunities.

Agency/Program	Summary Overview	Contact/Learn More
Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs grant programs	The Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs coordinates grants to arts and culture organizations, cities and municipalities, and other nonprofit organizations to encourage, develop and facilitate an enriched environment of artistic, creative and cultural activity in Michigan. Grant areas include operational support, project support and capital improvements.	http://www.michiganadvantage.org/Arts/Grant-Programs/
DNR Land and Water Conservation Fund	The objective is to provide grants to local units of government and to the state to develop land for outdoor recreation.	James Wood 517-335-4050 woodj@michigan.gov
DNR Recreation Grants	One of the department's biggest priorities is getting people outside more often, and improving access to the many natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities available in Michigan.	Christie Bayus 517-335-2253 bayusc@michigan.gov

MEDC Community Revitalization Program	The Michigan Business Development and Michigan Community Revitalization Programs replace the state's previous MEGA, Brownfield and Historic tax credit programs, which were features of the Michigan Business Tax that will be eliminated under business tax restructuring legislation.	Sarah Rainero MEDC Community Assistance Team 517-242-5480 raineros@michigan.org
MSHDA Rental Rehabilitation	MSHDA's Community Development Division's (CD) Rental Rehabilitation program is designed to improve investor-owned properties and spur economic development in Michigan's downtowns. Funding for rental rehab is generally provided through the unit of local government with jurisdiction for code enforcement and/or rental licensing.	MSHDA Community Development Division (517) 373-1974
DNR Waterways Fund	Grants provide funding assistance for design and construction of public recreational harbor/marina and boating access site/launch facilities throughout the state. Only local units of government (city, village, township, or county) and public universities are eligible. Applicants may cooperate with community/sports organizations in the implementation of projects.	Paul Petersen, Waterways Grant Program Manager DNR, Parks and Recreation Division P.O. Box 30257 Lansing, MI 48909 517-335-3033 petersenp@michigan.gov
Michigan Complete Streets Coalition	The Michigan Complete Streets Coalition works with the Michigan Department of Community Health to assist communities with technical assistance related to complete streets.	http://michigancompletestreets.wordpress.com/

Preserve America Grant program	Designated “Preserve America” communities have access to grant programs for wayfinding among other things. Allegan is not a designated community at this point, but may wish to pursue designation to gain access to these resources.	http://www.nps.gov/hps/hpg/preserveamerica/index.htm
MSHDA Modified Pass-Through Program	The Pass Through program offers tax-exempt loans to for-profit or nonprofit developers for new construction or rehabilitation of rental developments up to 150 units. Loans must be credit enhanced by a third party.	MSHDA Director of Legal Affairs (517) 373-8295
Transportation Alternatives Program	The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a competitive grant program that funds projects such as bike paths, streetscapes, and historic preservation of transportation facilities that enhance Michigan’s intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. These investments support place-based economic development by offering transportation choices, promoting walkability, and improving the quality of life.	Matt Wiitala, MDOT Office of Economic Development wiitalam@michigan.org 517-241-2152
MEDC Brownfield Redevelopment Program	Michigan's brownfields redevelopment efforts are considered the premier model for the country. Properties that in the not-so-distant past were considered lost forever are now being actively pursued for revitalization. In Michigan, brownfields are considered properties that are contaminated, blighted, or functionally obsolete.	Dan Wells, Brownfield Program Specialist 517.241.4801 wellsd1@michigan.org Mary Kramer, Brownfield Program Specialist 517.373.6206 kramerm1@michigan.org

MEDC Downtown Façade Improvement	For communities that seek to target traditional downtowns for façade improvements, which have a significant impact on the downtown community.	Jennifer Tucker MEDC Community Assistance Team 906-241-0589 Tuckerj4@michigan.org
MEDC Blight Elimination	The Blight Elimination program is structured to assist communities in removing blighted conditions that often hinder adjacent private investment in their community.	Jennifer Tucker MEDC Community Assistance Team 906-241-0589 Tuckerj4@michigan.org
MEDC Signature Building Acquisition Grant	The Signature Building Acquisition Grant enables a community to secure a building that is a focal point within the downtown for commercial rehabilitation purposes that will result in job creation, and, once redeveloped, will become an asset and make a significant contribution to the overall downtown area.	Jennifer Tucker MEDC Community Assistance Team 906-241-0589 Tuckerj4@michigan.org
Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act	The Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (OPRA) provides for a tax incentive to encourage the redevelopment of obsolete buildings.	Jennifer Tucker MEDC Community Assistance Team 906-241-0589 Tuckerj4@michigan.org
MEDC Farm to Food	Grants are available for communities seeking to construct, rehabilitate, acquire, expand or improve a facility for the support of a three- to four-season farmer’s market. The market must follow the program’s national objectives and must be located in a low- to moderate-income community or will lead to job creation in these communities.	Jennifer Tucker MEDC Community Assistance Team 906-241-0589 Tuckerj4@michigan.org

USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program	The Farmer's Market Promotion Program (FMPP) offers grants to help improve and expand domestic farmer's markets. Agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, local governments, nonprofit corporations, public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers' market authorities and Tribal governments are among those eligible to apply.	USDA FMPP 202-720-0933
MSHDA Pre-Development loans	Pre-development loans available to help nonprofit developers pay for pre-development expenses for affordable housing developments from project conception through submission for financing (including the Office of Community Development, the Office of Rental Development and Homeless Initiatives, & the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program).	MSHDA Community Development Division (517) 373-1974
MSHDA Community Development Technical Assistance	MSHDA has consultants available to provide technical assistance to nonprofit organizations and local units of government. These consultants provide guidance and training geared to increasing grantees' capacity to produce affordable housing.	MSHDA Community Development Division (517) 373-1974
MEDC	Grant program for business incubators	http://www.michiganadvantage.org/Press-Releases/MEDC-seeks-business-incubator-proposals-for-start-up-support/

DEQ	Guide to grant funding options for recycling	http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-rmd-recycling-funding_355618_7.pdf
Various	Funding opportunities included within M-89 Corridor Plan	See existing study

APPENDIX B: Stakeholder analysis

Groups/individuals targeted for personal meetings and/or specific time to provide input during charrette process:

Allegan City Council
 Allegan Downtown Development Authority
 Allegan Parks Commission
 Allegan Historic District Commission
 Allegan Planning Commission
 Allegan Area Economic Development Corporation
 Allegan Township Planning Commission
 Allegan Township Trustees
 Allegan County Fair Board
 Perrigo Company
 Allegan Senior Residence
 Allegan District Library
 Arc of Allegan
 Allegan County Parks, Recreation and tourism
 Allegan Area Chamber of Commerce

American Legion – Oscar Briggs Post 89
 Allegan Area Arts Council
 Allegan County Department of Veteran Services
 Allegan Eagles
 Allegan Jaycees
 Friends of the Parks – Garden Tour Committee
 Allegan Board of Commissioners
 Rotary Club
 Knight of Columbus
 Old Jail Museum
 Michigan Department of Transportation
 Lakeshore Disability Network
 Allegan County Transportation
 Allegan County Courts
 Allegan County Sheriff’s Department
 Allegan County Clerk’s Office
 Allegan Treasurer’s Office
 Allegan Department of Public Works
 Allegan Police Department

APPENDIX C: Riverfront Participants

The following businesses and organizations were represented at one point or another in the development of this document. Also, dozens of citizens throughout the Allegan Area who love the riverfront participated as well.

Allegan City Council

Allegan Planning Commission

Allegan Parks Commission

Allegan Downtown Development Authority

Allegan Economic Development Corporation

Allegan Historic District Commission

City of Allegan City Manager's Office

City of Allegan DPW

City of Allegan Water Treatment Plant

City of Allegan Waste Water Treatment Plant

City of Allegan Finance

Allegan County Children's Museum

Allegan County Historical Society

Allegan County Board of Commissioners

Allegan County Treasurer's Office

Allegan County Clerk's Office

Allegan County Township Board

Allegan County Transportation

Allegan County Land Information Services

Allegan County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism

Allegan County of Veteran's Services

Allegan Township Planning Commission

Allegan District Library

Allegan General Hospital

Valley Township Board

Allegan Area Chamber of Commerce

Allegan Area Arts Council

Allegan Historic Farm and Learning Center

Renewed Hope Free Clinic

Arc of Allegan County

Love Incorporated

Allegan County Legal Assistance

Lakeshore Disability Network

Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance

Allegan Jaycees

Allegan Lions

Allegan Rotary

Allegan Masons

Allegan News

Baker Allegan Studios

Positively Allegan Committee

Safe Harbor Children Advocacy Center

American Legion

Knights of Columbus

Riverfront Committee

Perrigo Company

Bridge Church in Allegan

FACE of Allegan

Montage

NAPA Auto

Made in Allegan

Reflexions Plus	WWMT	Village Market
Rumspeed	Kalamazoo Gazette	B&C Emporium
Beach Paradise/Tiki Hut	Still Point Massage	Allegan High School Students
Downtown Deli and Bakery	Hathaway Cottage	Allegan County Area Technical and Education Center Students
Regent Theatre	Schulz Realty	Michigan State Housing Development Authority
Pizza Hut	Michigan Township Services	Michigan State University
Creative Events	Prein and Newhof	Michigan Municipal League
Something Sweet	Abonmarche Consultants	
Q3 Technologies	Huntington Bank	
Cobblestone Hotels	Grill House	
Allegan Ropes Courses	Cornelisse Design	
Burnett and Kastran Attorneys at Law	OCBA Landscape Architects	
Tibbett's Financial Consulting	Bazzani Associates	
Brandon Jay Salon	Enright Law Firm	
Griswold Auditorium	Clark Hill Law	
Chemical Bank	Verde Law Offices	
Beneath the Trees	Allegan Senior Residence	
Mug Shots	State Representative Bob Genetski Office	
Allegan Country Inn	Bartz Rumery Agency	

APPENDIX D: Potential Uses and Activities in or Near Riverfront

1. "Allegan After 5" activities, happy hours, etc. to keep the work crowd downtown after work
2. River Regatta
3. Hands-on science/environment classes at the river; a "living laboratory"
4. Zip lines, other unique sports experience
5. Ice skating
6. Interactive fountain/splash/water feature that can be played in
7. Outdoor firepit
8. Marshmallow roasting
9. Hot chocolate stand
10. Cross country ski rental
11. Hands-on programs, demonstrations, exhibits for kids in partnership with museum
12. Kayak/canoe rentals
13. Chili cook-off
14. Barbeque battles
15. Food truck rally
16. Top Chef Allegan contest
17. Harvestfest/Taste of Allegan
18. Outdoor cooking classes
19. Cake decorating demonstrations
20. Buy-and-decorate cupcakes, cookies
21. Library book club meetings
22. Kids story time, maybe even with dress-up props
23. Author book signing event
24. Poetry slams
25. Book cart with magazines, books, puzzles, board games for loan or for sale
26. Outdoor eating, whether formal cafés or informal picnic tables
27. Small music performances
28. Small theatrical performances
29. Improv/comedy
30. Artists working
31. Art classes/demonstrations
32. Strolling history installation featuring the bridge and clock tower
33. Sculpture/public art/murals
34. Pursue Detroit Institute of Art "Inside Out" program (maybe be first community in West Michigan to host it, or get the Grand Rapids Art Museum to replicate the program) and have art viewing/discussion groups
35. Hands-on art for kids, sidewalk chalk out for kids
36. Yoga classes
37. Family fitness classes
38. Walking club start/finish
39. Turkey trot, 5k start/finish
40. Mom's club, mom-to-mom sales
41. Fencing
42. Karate
43. Parade start/end
44. Food carts, fruit/veggie stand
45. Dog area, watering station for pets
46. Street performers, clowns
47. Music classes, guitar lessons
48. Impromptu jams
49. Barbershop Quartet
50. Battle of the Bands
51. Recycling roundup spot
52. Outdoor games (chess, ping pong, etc.)
53. Oktoberfest/Biergarten (pop-up temporary)
54. Dancing
55. Dance lessons (swing to hip-hop)
56. Flashmobs
57. Outdoor movies
58. Wi-fi access, people surfing the web
59. Meeting space for community groups
60. "Adopt the Riverfront" program; veteran's groups/service clubs/schools, etc. assigned to raise/lower flag (if there is one) and clean up the riverfront for a week at a time
61. Major defining feature that could be the Allegan "photo-op"
62. Meditation spot
63. Complimentary activities to Farmer's market
64. Knitting/quilting club

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| <p>65. Student photography exhibition with all Allegan inspired works</p> <p>66. Designated graffiti space (see The Alley Project case study)</p> <p>67. School/church choir practice</p> <p>68. School band practice</p> <p>69. Cheer practice</p> <p>70. Holiday carolers</p> <p>71. Santa visits</p> <p>72. Live reindeer pen</p> <p>73. Pep rallies</p> <p>74. Formal posting site for hunting counts</p> <p>75. Christmas tree lighting (have an ornament decorating station at local stores for a few weeks before so people can put their own art on the tree)</p> <p>76. New Year's Eve ball drop</p> <p>77. Egg hunt</p> <p>78. Memorial Day service</p> <p>79. Veteran's Day service</p> <p>80. St. Patrick's Day parade</p> <p>81. Valentine's Day sweets stroll</p> <p>82. Labor Day barbeque/community potluck</p> <p>83. Martin Luther King Day service</p> | <p>84. Halloween parade</p> <p>85. Puppy parade/pet adoption drive</p> <p>86. Garden club perennial exchange</p> <p>87. Community garden space</p> <p>88. Start point for garden tour</p> <p>89. Annual "clean sweep" program, volunteers meet there then do seasonal clean-up/beautification projects in the riverfront area</p> <p>90. Fishing derby</p> <p>91. Fly fishing lessons, demonstrations</p> <p>92. Build-and-race model boats</p> <p>93. Model train, car or airplane demonstrations</p> <p>94. Ladies night downtown, babysitting available, shops stay open late, performance/entertainment in the riverfront</p> <p>95. Water balloon fight on last day of school</p> <p>96. Blessing the backpacks before school starts</p> <p>97. Multi-denominational services, rotate a daily message</p> | <p>98. Central place for community drives/drop-off (i.e. canned goods collection at the holidays, Toys for Tots)</p> <p>99. Community garage sale</p> <p>100. Community block party/potluck</p> <p>101. Face painting</p> <p>102. Build a Lego replica of the bridge contest</p> <p>103. Robot club, build them and drive them around the riverfront</p> <p>104. Downtown living tour start point</p> <p>105. Snow fort contest</p> <p>106. Snow ball fight</p> <p>107. Outdoor toy chest for kids with all-season toys</p> <p>108. "Soup" style micro-funding program (monthly pot-luck where people pitch ideas and winner takes home the \$\$\$)</p> <p>109. Chair massages</p> <p>110. Rowing club on the river with warm-up at the riverfront</p> <p>111. Walking history tours that start at the riverfront</p> |
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APPENDIX E: Case studies of potential interest

Visit <http://placemaking.mml.org/how-to/> to view case studies of successful placemaking projects and access how-to kits and best practices. Those of particular interest to the Allegan riverfront project may include:

- ✓ Detroit Soup (Micro financing for art/community projects, business start-ups)
- ✓ Recycle Here (Community recycling program that incorporates art, education)
- ✓ DIA Inside Out (Brings eighty reproductions of masterpieces from the Detroit Institute of Art Museum's collection to the streets and parks of various communities.)
- ✓ The Alley Project (Alley gallery that showcases legal street art produced by local youth and community members. Professional artists, teens, and neighbors have worked together to build an infrastructure for creative expression and community responsibility.)