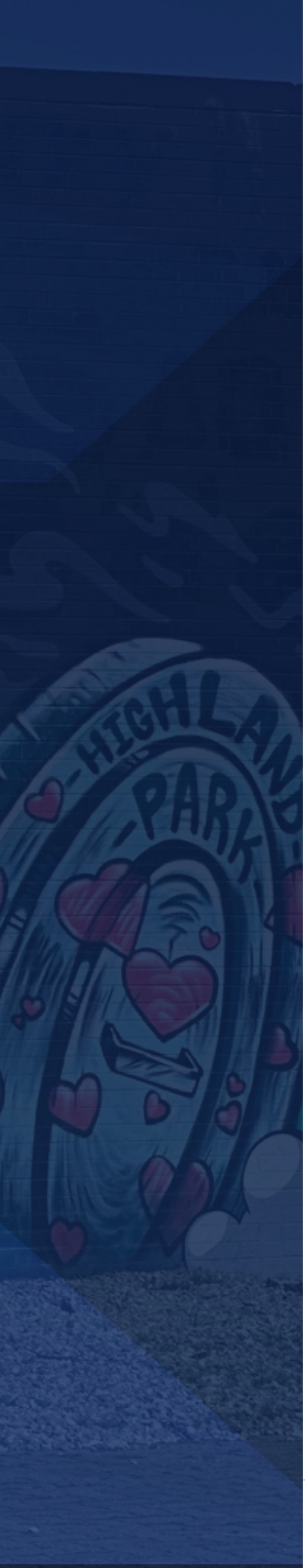
City of Highland Park

MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

NOVEMBER 6, 2026





Summary of Opportunity

Highland Park has always been a community built on resilience, opportunity, and pride. While the city has experienced significant change over the past several decades, its greatest strength continues to be its land and its residents, the people who have remained committed to their neighborhoods, invested in their community, and continue to believe in Highland Park's future. This Master Plan Amendment builds upon that optimism and provides a renewed vision for creating a stronger, healthier, and more vibrant city for current and future generations.

Throughout this planning process, residents, business owners, community organizations, City leaders, and regional partners shared their ideas about what they value most and where they want Highland Park to grow. They spoke about the need for quality housing, safer streets, thriving neighborhoods, better parks, new businesses, and more opportunities for families and young people. Most importantly, they shared a common belief that Highland Park is a community worth investing in. Those voices shaped every recommendation in this plan.

At its core, this amendment is about creating neighborhoods where people want to live and stay. It focuses on preserving existing homes, building new housing for families of all sizes and incomes, transforming vacant land into productive community assets, and creating places where residents can safely walk, gather, and enjoy their neighborhood. As such, housing is only one piece of the picture, the plan also connects investments in transportation, parks, infrastructure, economic development, and public spaces so that every improvement strengthens the community as a whole.

This plan is designed to be practical as well as ambitious. It outlines clear actions to modernize the City's zoning regulations, attract investment, support local businesses, improve public infrastructure, and expand partnerships with organizations that can help bring new resources to Highland Park. It also establishes measurable goals so the City can track its progress, celebrate successes, and continue adapting as community needs change.

Most importantly, this is not simply a document about land use or housing. It is a roadmap for rebuilding confidence, creating opportunity, and improving everyday life for the people who call Highland Park home. By working together residents, businesses, community organizations, and local government, Highland Park can build on its history, embrace new opportunities, and create neighborhoods that are safe, welcoming, and full of possibility for generations to come.

Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge the Michigan Department of Treasury for its support and partnership in advancing the update of the City of Highland Park Master Plan. Their collaboration and commitment have been instrumental in helping guide a comprehensive planning process that supports the city's long term growth and revitalization.

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1 DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Highland Park history is an important guide to updating today's policies and is reproduced with edits from Highland Park: A New Beginning Master Plan, 2001 & the Highland Park 2030 Master Plan. The history and growth patterns of the City of Highland Park are tied to Detroit and the automobile industry. Highland Park plays a special role in the evolution of the automobile and the American labor movement and is a unique enclave with an independent government, proud of its heritage and place in history.

Early Highland Park

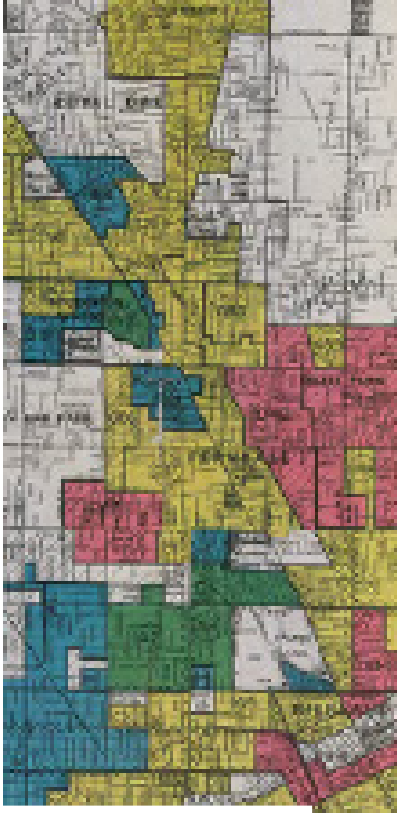
Judge Woodward began to plat the Highland Park area in 1818, naming it Woodwardville. This area was geographically suitable as high ground between Detroit and what is now Royal Oak. The village later changed its name to Whitewood due to the local supply of lumber.

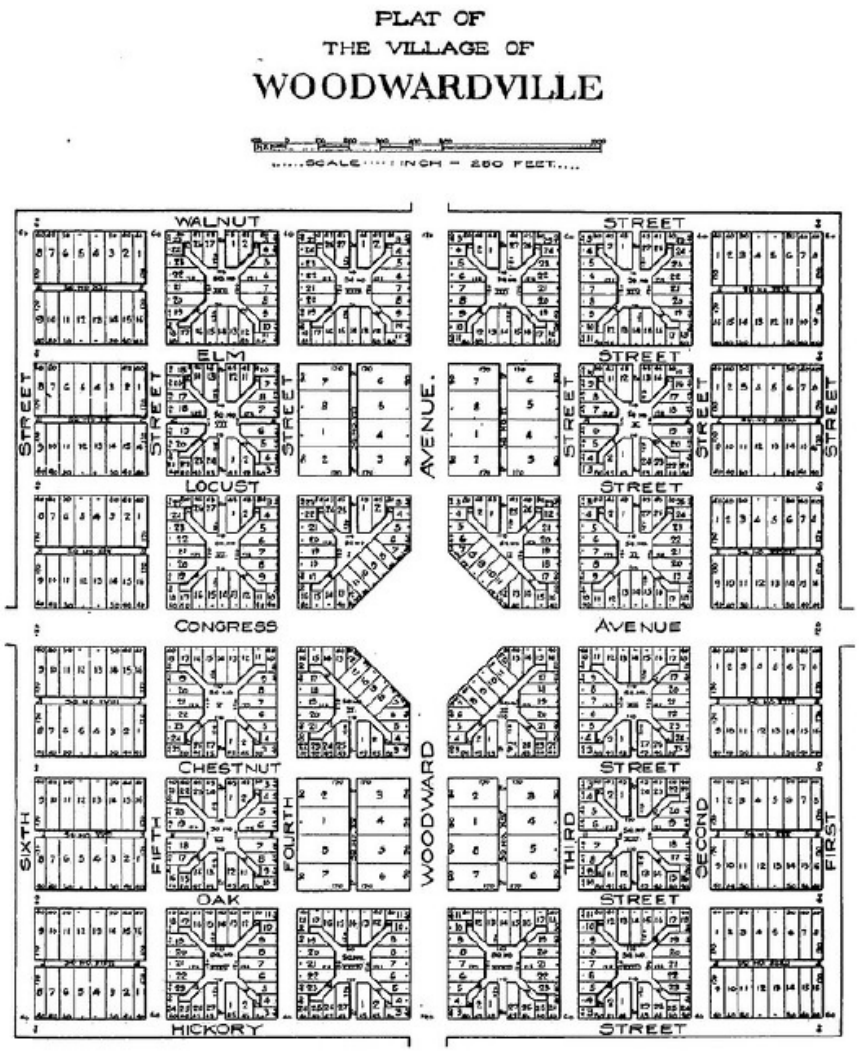
The Wayne County Atlas of 1876 shows the development of the Detroit, Milwaukee Railroad (now the Grand Trunk line), along with Pontiac Plank Road (Woodward), English Settlement Road (Glendale), and Hamilton Road (Alexander). The plats indicate 20- to 40-acre tracts fronting Woodward and larger tracts along Hamilton of up to 160 acres.

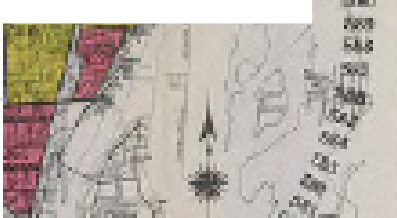
This platting formed the foundation of Highland Park's subdivision and street development. During the community's early years, the region evolved into an industrial center with rail cars, carriages, and stove manufacturing. The area's geography encouraged expansion to the west and north, following established roads, rail lines, and survey lines that naturally converged on Highland Park.

In 1887, Captain William H. Stevens purchased most of the land in the Highland Park area. He began developing the village by constructing a brick waterworks on Woodward between Colorado and McLean. He also built a large stone residence on Woodward between Rhode Island and Massachusetts, on the site of the present day McGregor Library. In 1888, the platting and sale of the first subdivision began.

The community of Whitewood was transitioning from a decentralized farming settlement centered on a major roadway into a more formally organized village. Captain Stevens and other community leaders took a significant step when the Village of Highland Park was officially platted in 1889, incorporating the original 1818 Woodwardville plat. The name Highland Park originated from the high ridge of land at Woodward and Highland, which has since been graded away. The platting further organized the existing block and elongated street grid, giving the village a distinct identity separate from the surrounding farmland.







City of Highland Park
Michigan



Highland Park's Industrial Rise

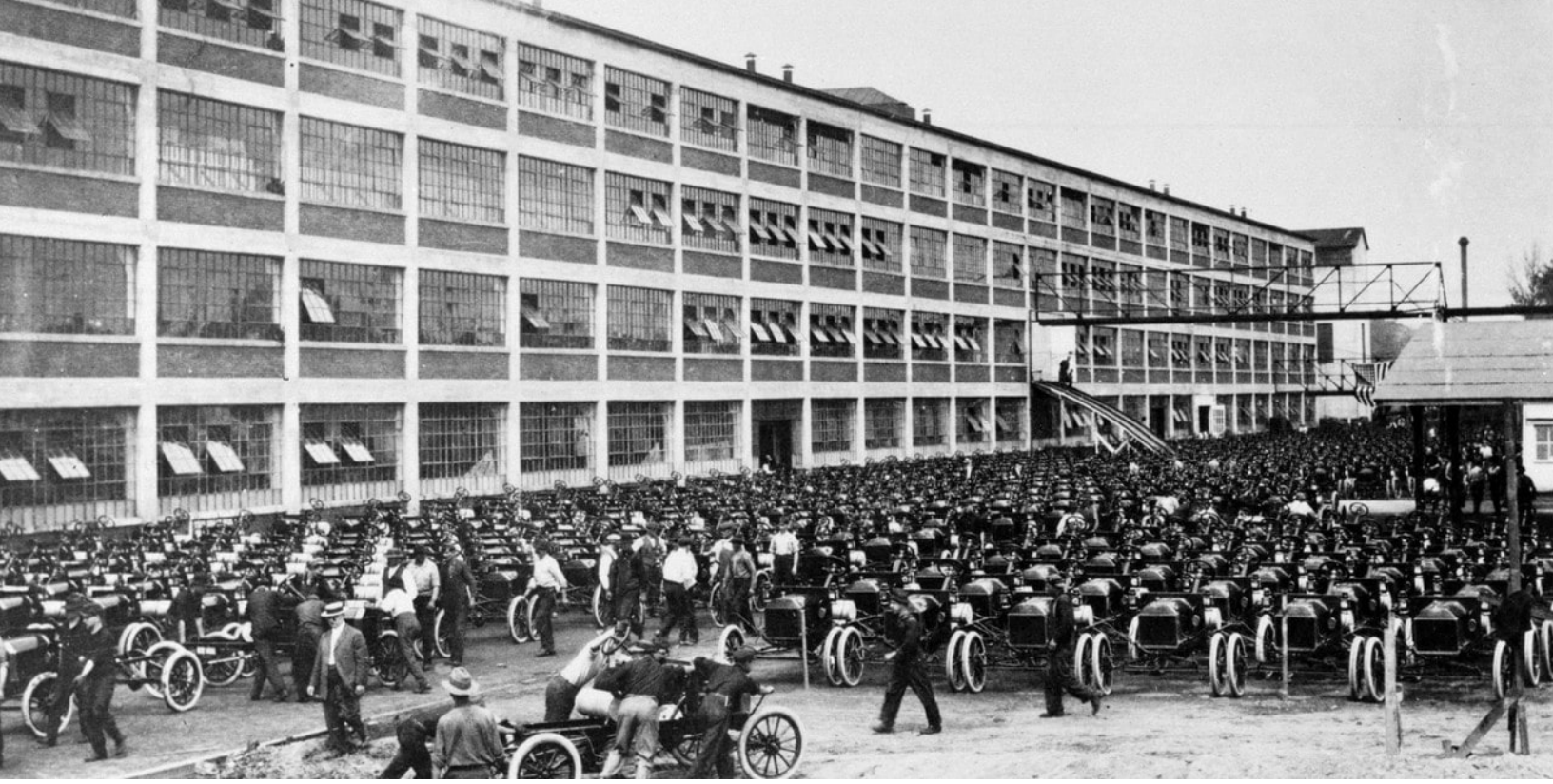
By 1900, Highland Park had grown into a small but rapidly developing community, with a population of 427 residents. The City's transformation accelerated in 1907–1908, when Henry Ford purchased approximately 160 acres north of Manchester Avenue between Woodward and Oakland Avenues to construct a new automobile manufacturing facility. Designed by renowned industrial architect Albert Kahn, the factory opened in 1910 to produce the Ford Model T and became the birthplace of modern assembly line manufacturing.

The Ford Plant revolutionized industrial production through the introduction of the moving assembly line, dramatically increasing manufacturing efficiency and forever changing the global automobile industry. Widely recognized as one of the most significant examples of industrial architecture in the world, the complex has been described as a masterpiece of functional design and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The success of Ford Motor Company transformed Highland Park almost overnight. Employment at the plant expanded from approximately 450 workers in 1908 to more than 36,000 employees by 1916, attracting thousands of workers and their families from across the nation and around the world. Reflecting this extraordinary growth, Highland Park's population increased from 427 residents in 1900 to 4,210 in 1910, and reached 46,499 by 1920, making it one of Michigan's fastest growing communities during the early twentieth century.

To accommodate this rapid expansion, neighborhoods developed throughout the city with a diverse mix of housing, including modest cottages and bungalows, Arts and Crafts homes, and larger Colonial style residences. Schools, churches, parks, and civic institutions were established to serve the growing population, while Woodward Avenue emerged as the City's primary commercial corridor, lined with businesses and services. Public transportation also expanded with the Detroit Street Railway's electric streetcar line, which operated along Woodward Avenue and maintained a terminal adjacent to the Ford Model T Plant.

As Highland Park continued to grow, it formally established itself as a city in 1918, building upon its earlier 1912 city charter, which provided the framework for orderly development and municipal governance. The City's emergence as a regional center for industry, education, and healthcare was further reinforced with the establishment of institutions such as Highland Park Community College, Highland Park General Hospital, and the Lawrence Institute of Technology, solidifying Highland Park's reputation as one of the nation's premier industrial communities during the first half of the twentieth century.



CHRYSLER CORPORATION AND CONTINUED GROWTH

Highland Park's role as a center of automotive manufacturing expanded even further in 1925, when the Chrysler Corporation acquired the former Brush-Maxwell Plant and began transforming it into one of the company's principal manufacturing complexes. Over the following decades, Chrysler expanded the facility to encompass more than 150 acres, ultimately exceeding the size of Ford's original Model T Plant. Strategically located along the Grand Trunk Railroad between Massachusetts Avenue and Farrand Park, the complex became an integral part of Chrysler's regional manufacturing network, with direct rail connections to Dodge Main, the Lynch Road Assembly Plant, the Huber Foundry, and numerous other facilities throughout metropolitan Detroit. Together, Ford and Chrysler established Highland Park as one of the nation's premier centers of automotive innovation and manufacturing.

THE ROARING TWENTIES AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

During the 1920s and 1930s, Highland Park experienced unprecedented growth as residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, schools, churches, and civic institutions developed throughout the City's entire 2.9 square-mile boundary. In 1926, two of the City's most significant civic landmarks the McGregor Public Library and the new City Hall were dedicated, reflecting Highland Park's growing prominence and civic pride. Other iconic buildings, including the Medical Arts Building and Highland Towers, further established the City's distinctive architectural character.

Woodward Avenue matured into one of southeastern Michigan's premier commercial corridors, lined with department stores, neighborhood retailers, offices, and restaurants. This period culminated with the opening of the Sears, Roebuck & Company Department Store in 1938, which became one of the region's major retail destinations. Residential neighborhoods flourished with an impressive range of architectural styles, including Craftsman, Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and bungalow homes, providing housing opportunities for families across a wide range of incomes.

Unlike neighboring Detroit, which continued expanding through annexation, Highland Park maintained its original municipal boundaries despite multiple annexation attempts. This decision preserved the City's independent identity and local governance. Population growth reached its historic peak in 1930, when 52,959 residents called Highland Park home. During this era, the City's nationally recognized public school system attracted students from neighboring communities, reinforcing Highland Park's reputation as an exceptional place to live, work, and raise a family.

WORLD WAR II AND THE POSTWAR ERA

The 1940s marked another significant chapter in Highland Park's industrial history as local manufacturers shifted production to support the national war effort. The Ford Model T Plant, Chrysler facilities, and numerous other industries produced military equipment, including anti-aircraft gun directors and other wartime materials essential to Allied victory. Highland Park's industrial workforce played a critical role in transforming the region into the "Arsenal of Democracy."

Continued industrial growth highlighted the need for improved transportation infrastructure. In 1942, construction began on the Davison Freeway, the first modern depressed urban freeway in the United States. Designed to improve east-west travel and provide direct access to Chrysler's manufacturing complex, the Davison established a new model for urban highway design that would later be replicated throughout the country.

Highland Park remained a prosperous and vibrant community into the 1950s, benefiting from strong industrial employment, stable neighborhoods, and thriving commercial districts. However, broader national trends including suburbanization, new federal housing and transportation policies, and the construction of regional freeway systems such as the John C. Lodge Freeway (M-10) began reshaping metropolitan Detroit. These changes encouraged residential and commercial development beyond Highland Park's borders and marked the beginning of demographic and economic shifts that would influence the City's future for decades to come.



McGregor Library (1920)



Chrysler Center, Plant No. 4

FREEWAYS, URBAN RENEWAL, AND SUBURBANIZATION

While the John C. Lodge Freeway (M-10) was ultimately constructed along the western edge of Highland Park rather than through the community itself, it fundamentally altered regional travel patterns. Following the Hamilton Avenue corridor before diverting around the City, the freeway provided residents with rapid access to Detroit and the growing suburban communities of Oakland and Wayne Counties. Combined with favorable financing offered through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and unprecedented post-war suburban housing construction, the new highway network accelerated population migration from older urban neighborhoods. At the same time, discriminatory lending practices known as redlining systematically limited investment in Highland Park and many neighboring communities, contributing to disinvestment, declining property values, and widening racial and economic disparities that would shape development patterns for decades.

By the late 1950s, Highland Park began implementing urban renewal initiatives in response to aging housing stock, deteriorating infrastructure, and changing federal redevelopment policies. At the time, many homes constructed during the City's rapid industrial expansion were more than fifty years old and considered functionally obsolete. Consistent with national planning practices of the era, urban renewal often emphasized large scale clearance of existing neighborhoods in favor of new development rather than rehabilitation of existing housing. While some projects achieved positive results, others permanently altered established neighborhoods and displaced residents.

One notable example occurred in 1962, when the neighborhood surrounding Hamilton and Glendale was cleared through urban renewal but was never redeveloped as the planned residential community. In contrast, the Gerald Avenue neighborhood was successfully redeveloped in 1965 as a modern suburban style subdivision, illustrating both the opportunities and shortcomings associated with mid century urban renewal practices.

LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY TRANSFORMATION

The 1967 civil unrest that affected much of metropolitan Detroit marked a significant turning point for Highland Park. Like many urban communities, the City experienced accelerating population loss, declining private investment, and substantial demographic change as many middle-class households relocated to surrounding suburbs. Manufacturing employment also began to decline as the automotive industry modernized and decentralized its operations. In 1973, Ford ended tractor production at the historic Model T Plant, and Highland Park General Hospital closed in 1976 amid broader regional consolidation of healthcare facilities.

Despite these economic challenges, Highland Park continued to demonstrate civic leadership and resilience. In 1968, Robert Blackwell was elected the City's first African American mayor, ushering in a new era of community leadership. Working with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the federal Model Cities Program, Mayor Blackwell initiated redevelopment efforts focused on the emerging Town Center and the Woodward Avenue and Manchester Street corridors. These projects represented the first coordinated efforts to establish a modern downtown district and laid the foundation for subsequent redevelopment initiatives along Woodward Avenue that continue today.

During the same period, the Chrysler Corporation continued investing in Highland Park. Among its most notable additions were the Walter P. Chrysler Styling Center buildings, designed by internationally acclaimed architect Minoru Yamasaki, whose work also includes the original World Trade Center in New York City and numerous landmark buildings throughout Michigan. These facilities reflected Highland Park's continuing importance as a center of automotive design and engineering during the latter half of the twentieth century.

Beginning in the 1980s, however, Chrysler gradually shifted its research, engineering, and corporate operations to a new technology campus in Auburn Hills, Michigan. Approximately 5,000 jobs relocated in 1991, followed by another 4,500 positions when Auburn Hills became Chrysler's corporate headquarters in 1992. The departure of these high-quality employment opportunities significantly affected Highland Park's economy and accelerated broader patterns of industrial restructuring and population decline.

EMERGENCY FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND RENEWAL

Facing increasing fiscal challenges at the turn of the twenty-first century, Highland Park entered Emergency Financial Management under Michigan Public Act 72 in 2001. The City remained under state appointed financial management until July 2009, when local governance was restored under the leadership of Mayor Hubert Yopp.

Following the return to local control, Highland Park began developing a renewed vision for its future one focused on stabilizing neighborhoods, revitalizing commercial corridors, preserving its remarkable industrial and architectural heritage, and coordinating redevelopment efforts throughout the community. This renewed commitment to comprehensive planning established the foundation for many of the initiatives reflected in this Master Plan Amendment, positioning Highland Park to leverage its historic assets, strategic location, and resilient community as it works toward a more sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future.

A New Era of Revitalization

Highland Park is entering a new era of revitalization driven by strategic investments in neighborhoods, parks, infrastructure, and economic development. The Joe Louis Greenway is strengthening regional connections while creating new opportunities for neighborhood reinvestment, recreation, and mixed-use development. At the same time, the City's historic neighborhoods continue to provide a stable foundation for growth through their distinctive architecture, walkable street patterns, mature tree canopy, and strong community identity. Ongoing investments in housing rehabilitation, historic preservation, infill development, and an expanding network of parks and public spaces are enhancing quality of life while making Highland Park an increasingly attractive place to live, work, and invest.

Equally important, Highland Park is making significant investments in its water, sewer, stormwater, and transportation infrastructure to support future residential, commercial, and industrial development. Modernizing these essential public systems improves service reliability while ensuring the capacity needed to accommodate new growth and redevelopment. Together, these initiatives position Highland Park to capitalize on its central location, rich history, and regional connectivity, creating the conditions for sustainable economic growth, vibrant commercial corridors, resilient neighborhoods, and long term community prosperity.



Joe Louis Greenway Pedestrian Bridge at Woodward

2 | HIGHLAND PARK 2030 MASTER PLAN & AMENDMENTS

The Highland Park 2030 Master Plan Amendment builds on the community's shared vision by providing an updated framework for understanding and addressing the city's housing needs as Highland Park continues to grow and evolve. Following the passage of HB 5557, signed into law on November 13, 2024, which amended the Michigan Planning Enabling Act to recognize housing as a required element of a master plan, the City has an opportunity to strengthen its long term planning efforts. Through support from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) Housing Readiness Incentive Grant, Highland Park is developing this amendment to establish practical strategies that advance the community's housing goals while supporting a healthy, sustainable housing ecosystem.

Originally adopted in 2020, the Highland Park 2030 Master Plan established a community driven vision for the city's future. This amendment reaffirms that vision while updating key elements of the plan, including the Future Land Use Map and implementation strategies, to guide decision making over the next five to ten years. Together, these updates reinforce Highland Park's commitment to creating a stronger, more resilient community where housing, economic development, and neighborhood investment work hand in hand to improve quality of life for current and future residents.

At its core, this amendment is about ensuring that Highland Park's housing policies reflect the realities and opportunities of today. By incorporating updated housing data, market trends, and community input, the plan refreshes its goals, objectives, and implementation strategies to better respond to the city's changing housing landscape and prepare for future growth.

Community Goals

- Be a distinct place with activity and investment along and just off of Woodward Avenue.
- Maximize the value created by the intersection of the Greenway and Woodward Avenue.
- Capitalize on proximity to downtown Detroit, Midtown, Wayne State, New Center, Ferndale, Royal Oak, Livernois, and all of the region's expressways.
- Expand tax base to minimize fee increases and grow the City's municipal services.
- Be a community of choice for living, working, learning, and playing.
- Be a safe and enjoyable place to walk.



Community Priorities

The community goals were expanded and are influenced by the following identified community priorities:

Housing. Support the preservation, rehabilitation, and development of safe, affordable, and diverse housing options that strengthen neighborhood stability and improve quality of life.

Transportation. Improve mobility, connectivity, and safety through enhanced pedestrian infrastructure, public transit access, roadway improvements, and walkable neighborhood design.

Infrastructure. Modernize and maintain essential public infrastructure systems to support reliable services, redevelopment opportunities, and long-term community resilience.

Park. Expand and improve parks, recreation facilities, and green spaces to promote public health, environmental sustainability, and neighborhood livability.

Community. Foster inclusive community engagement, neighborhood collaboration, and civic investment that strengthens Highland Park's identity and social connections.

Health & Safety. Promote public health, environmental quality, and neighborhood safety through improved services, emergency response, blight reduction, and healthy community initiatives.

Economic Development. Encourage business growth, workforce development, commercial reinvestment, and strategic partnerships that support long-term economic vitality and job creation.

Summary of Engagement

Public engagement was a key component of the Master Plan Amendment process. The engagement program included multiple opportunities for residents, stakeholders, and community leaders to provide input throughout the planning process. These efforts included participation during the Community Economic Development Strategy Open House, two community open house sessions focused specifically on the goals, objectives, and policies of the Highland Park 2030 Master Plan, and ongoing discussions with the Highland Park Strategic Partnership Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council.

The goals, objectives, and priorities identified in this amended Master Plan were developed through a collaborative planning process that incorporated community feedback alongside regional and statewide housing, economic development, and land use initiatives. This approach ensured that the amended plan reflects both local priorities and broader planning strategies while establishing a clear framework for future implementation.

Community Open House

The first Community Open House was held on March 24, 2026, at the Highland Park Justice Center. This event served as the initial opportunity for residents to evaluate the progress and effectiveness of the 2020 Master Plan, identify community priorities, and discuss areas where updates were needed. Participants provided feedback on the existing goals and objectives, discussed emerging community issues, and identified opportunities for future investment.

Input collected during the open house was reviewed by the Planning Commission and incorporated into the development of the amended community goals and objectives. This collaborative review process helped validate community priorities and ensured that the updated Master Plan reflects current resident needs and aspirations.

Community SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Small Community Size and Walkability
- Historic Community Qualities
- Updated Infrastructure that is attractive to new developers
- Highland Park resident pride
- Positive outlook on future growth
- Lots of vacant land

Weaknesses

- Lack of Community Communication
- Abandoned Homes
- Blight and Dangerous Buildings
- Lack of Police Presence
- Vacant Land
- Cost of home maintenance
- Incompatible commercial uses near residential areas

Opportunities

- Potential for a strong community
- Locally owned businesses
- Community willingness to development and build
- Blight Elimination
- Vacant land suitable for housing development

Threats

- Lack of Policing and Code Enforcement
- Noncompliant property and business owners
- Need for Senior assistance and home repair programs
- Lack of grant funding for community services

Strategic Partnership Committee and Planning Commission

Throughout the Master Plan Amendment process, the Highland Park Strategic Partnership Committee and the Planning Commission provided guidance on the development and refinement of the plan's goals, objectives, and policy recommendations. The Strategic Partnership Committee included representatives from regional organizations, City staff, elected officials, and community stakeholders, providing a broad range of perspectives on Highland Park's future.

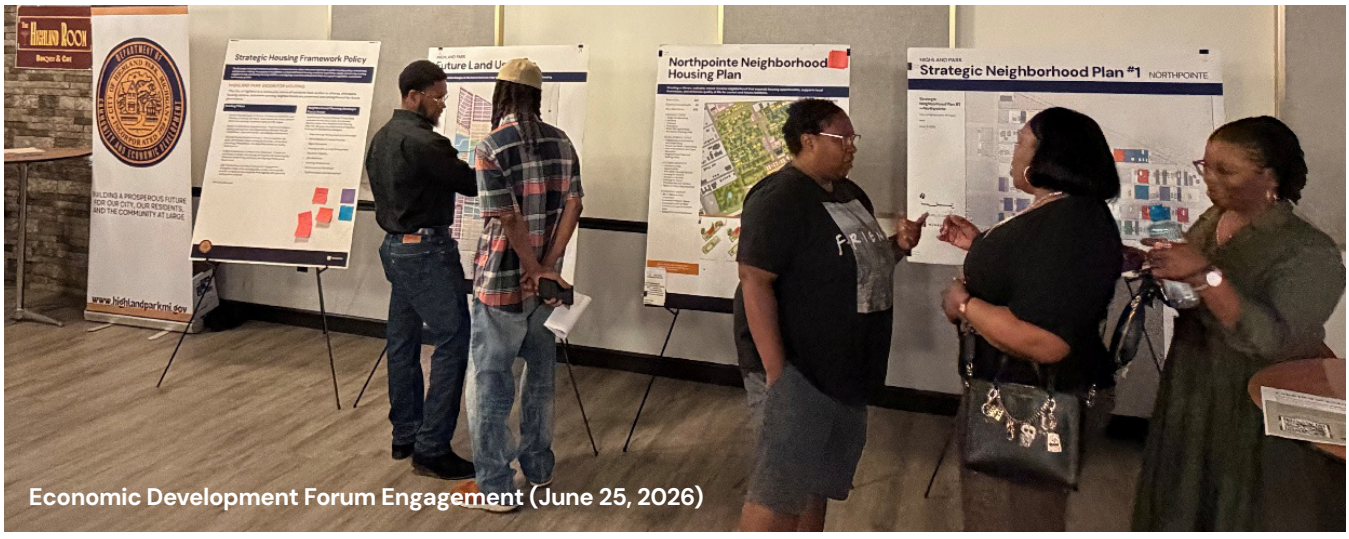
Committee discussions built upon the work completed during the Community Economic Development Strategy, allowing previously identified economic development priorities to inform the Master Plan update. This coordinated planning approach helped ensure consistency between the City's long term land use vision, housing initiatives, and economic development strategies.

Economic Development Workshop

On June 25, 2026, the City hosted an Economic Development Workshop and Community Showcase to present the draft Neighborhood Housing Framework, Future Land Use Plan, and proposed housing strategies. The workshop featured presentations on future land use, neighborhood revitalization, redevelopment opportunities, and housing initiatives designed to support long term community growth.

Residents were encouraged to provide direct feedback through comment cards, interactive mapping exercises, and open discussion. Participants identified preferred locations for future housing development, redevelopment priorities, and neighborhood investments. Overall, attendees expressed strong support for the Neighborhood Strategic Plan and agreed that it addressed many of the community's most pressing concerns, particularly those related to the revitalization of the Northpointe Park Neighborhood.





Economic Development Forum Engagement (June 25, 2026)

3 | HIGHLAND PARK PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

The Highland Park Community Health Dashboard was originally developed as part of the 2020 Master Plan to establish a baseline understanding of the City's health using data from 2017–2018. As part of the 2026 Master Plan Amendment, the dashboard has been updated to measure changes in key community indicators between 2019 and 2024. More than a collection of statistics, the dashboard serves as a tool for understanding how Highland Park is changing over time and whether community investments and public policies are helping improve residents' quality of life.

Organized around three focus areas Fiscal Health, Economic Strength, and the Housing Ecosystem, the dashboard provides a consistent, data-driven framework for tracking progress, identifying emerging challenges, and informing future decisions. By regularly monitoring these indicators, the City can better evaluate the effectiveness of its policies, prioritize investments, and adapt strategies to meet evolving community needs. The information presented is drawn from reliable, publicly available sources, including the Michigan Community Financial Dashboard, Michigan Housing Data Portal, the U.S. Census Bureau, DATA USA, and the Housing + Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index

Fiscal Health

Highland Park has made meaningful progress in strengthening its financial position between 2019 and 2024. After years of operating with deficits and negative fund balances, the City achieved sustained positive fund balances beginning in 2022. Revenues and expenditures have both grown, reflecting increased municipal activity and investment. Unrestricted reserves declined to just 4 percent by 2024, and debt per capita continued to rise, limiting the City's financial flexibility. Compared with peer communities, Highland Park performs well in measures of pension funding and general fund health but continues to face challenges related to cash reserves, liquidity, and taxable value per capita.

Economic Strength

Highland Park's economy has shown encouraging signs of growth. Median household incomes have increased, and more residents are earning post-secondary degrees and professional credentials, strengthening the City's workforce. At the same time, declining broadband access has emerged as a significant concern, limiting access to employment, education, healthcare, and other essential services that increasingly depend on reliable internet connectivity. Housing development has also not kept pace with employment trends, underscoring the need to better coordinate workforce growth with the availability of housing opportunities.

Housing Ecosystem

Highland Park's housing market has become increasingly competitive. Rising home values and increasing household incomes reflect renewed investment and market confidence, while homeownership has grown and renter cost burdens have modestly declined. Even with these positive trends, affordability remains one of the City's greatest challenges. Nearly 60 percent of renters continue to spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing, and housing costs are increasing faster than household incomes. Without continued action, these trends may place additional pressure on long time residents and increase the risk of displacement.

Expanding affordable housing choices, preserving the City's existing housing stock, and supporting neighborhood stability remain essential priorities. By tracking these indicators over time, Highland Park can better understand how housing conditions are changing and ensure that future growth benefits both current and future residents.

Table 1: Highland Park Performance Dashboard (2019-2024)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Fiscal Health								
Population	10,995	10,915	10,867	10,818	9,304	9,032	8,798	8,628
Total General Fund Expenditures	$13,872,198	$10,621,890	$12,169,910	$11,730,671	$11,864,075	$12,267,736	$13,817,647	$32,318,737
Annual General Fund Expenditures per capita	$1,262	$973	$1,120	$1,084	$1,275	$1,358	$1,571	$3,746
Total General Fund Revenue	$14,245,182	$12,543,287	$11,241,243	$10,040,481	$11,237,101	$13,114,086	$14,061,766	$34,191,785
Fund Balance	$372,984	$1,921,397	–$928,667	–$1,690,190	–$626,974	$846,350	$244,119	$1,873,048
General Fund Unrestricted Balance	49%	62%	62%	58%	39%	27%	6%	4%
Debt Per Capita	$1,801	$1,631	$1,681	$1,916	$2,043	$2,423	$2,726	$2,622
Unfunded Pension Liability	$41,189,497	$40,018,934	$36,186,687	$34,981,460	$36,287,897	$30,966,993	$22,156,151	$886,163
Unfunded Pension Liability as a % of GF Revenue	35%	31%	31%	29%	31%	42%	63%	–
Economic Strength								
% of Community with access to High Speed Broadband	69.20%	70.20%	69.80%	61.00%	61.20%	55%	47.60%	49%
Pop. w/Bachelor's degree or higher	794	878	765	1,269	1,115	1,056	1,056	1,066
Change in Jobs	6,908	7,063	6,978	7,118	5,889	5,800	5,693	–
Community Housing Metrics								
Renter Cost Burden	67.78%	69.48%	67.33%	63.12%	61.96%	60.79%	61.94%	59.96%
Homeownership	32.20%	38.50%	36.90%	41.2%	42.60%	45.20%	45.40%	44.50%
Home Value	$33,500	$33,700	$45,700	$50,200	$51,000	$59,400	$75,800	$79,200
Median Rent	$617	$580	$596	$585	$567	$620	$690	$688
Renter Income	$11,016	$11,449	$12,083	$12,511	$14,688	$16,081	$16,438	$16,672
Homeowner Income	$34,258	$38,776	$38,911	$43,078	$45,986	$50,872	$47,232	$53,863
Median Income	$15,699	$17,550	$18,474	$20,666	$25,189	$30,341	$27,852	$29,309

State of Michigan Treasury Report (Retrieved May 2026)

Housing + Transportation (H+T) Affordability Update

Since the adoption of Highland Park's 2020 Master Plan, updated Housing and Transportation (H+T) Index data has provided a more complete picture of what it actually costs to live in the city. While housing affordability is often measured by the cost of rent or a mortgage alone, the H+T Index recognizes that transportation is one of a household's largest monthly expenses. By considering both housing and transportation costs together, the Index offers a more realistic understanding of the financial pressures residents face every day.

Overall, Highland Park continues to compare favorably on this measure of affordability. On average, households spend approximately 34 percent of their income on combined housing and transportation costs well below the 45 percent affordability benchmark established by the Center for Neighborhood Technology. While this is encouraging, the average does not tell the whole story. Some households spend as little as 27 percent of their income on these combined expenses, while others spend as much as 47 percent, highlighting that affordability is experienced differently across the community depending on where people live, how they travel, and their household income.

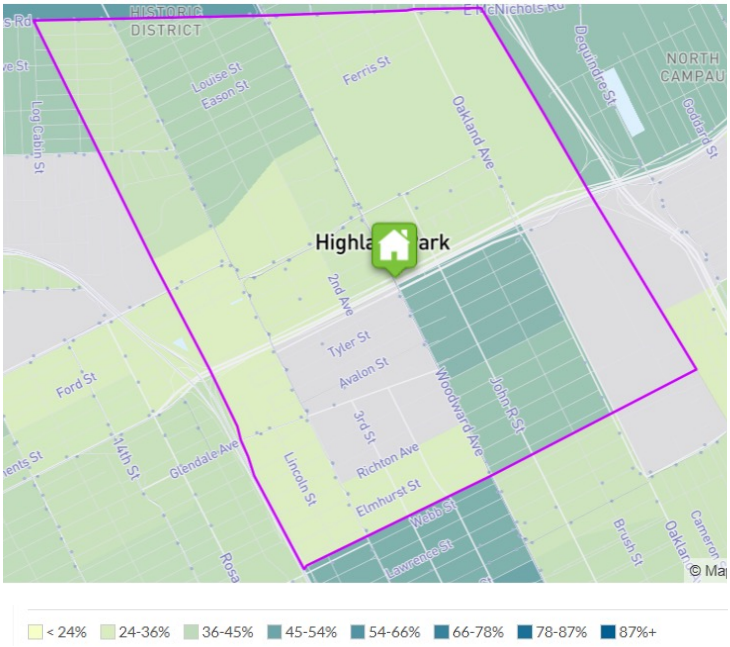
The updated H+T Fact Sheet also provides valuable insight into how residents move through the city and the costs associated with those travel choices. Transportation remains a major household expense, averaging nearly $13,000 annually. The typical household owns 1.7 vehicles and drives more than 13,000 miles each year, illustrating the continued dependence on personal automobiles. For many residents, the cost of owning, maintaining, and operating a vehicle represents a significant portion of the family budget, particularly when other transportation options are limited.

At the same time, Highland Park benefits from its location within the region. The city earns a strong job access score of 8.3, meaning residents have excellent proximity to employment opportunities compared with national benchmarks. Public transit also provides an important mobility option, earning a moderate performance score of 7. However, only 5 percent of workers currently commute by transit, suggesting there are opportunities to improve service frequency, connectivity, and reliability while making transit a more attractive choice for daily travel.

The city's compact development pattern also contributes to its long-term potential. With a neighborhood compactness score of 6.1, Highland Park's neighborhoods are moderately walkable and support more efficient land use than many suburban communities. Even so, the H+T Index found that none of the city's neighborhoods currently meet the definition of "location efficient," where housing, jobs, services, and transportation are closely connected in ways that substantially reduce transportation costs. This finding points to an important opportunity for future planning. As Highland Park continues to invest in housing, neighborhood revitalization, and transportation infrastructure, creating more connected, walkable neighborhoods can help reduce household expenses, expand mobility choices, and improve quality of life for residents.

Looking ahead, the updated H+T data reinforces several key policy directions for the City's 2026 Master Plan Update. These include expanding access to reliable and frequent transit, enhancing walkability and multimodal connectivity, and promoting development patterns that bring housing closer to jobs and essential services. By continuing to align land use, transportation investments, and housing strategies, Highland Park can further reduce cost burdens for residents and improve overall quality of life.

Figure 1: Housing + Transportation Cost as a Percentage of Household Income (2026)



Performance Policy Recommendations

The Highland Park Performance Dashboard identifies the City's strengths, challenges, and emerging trends through a series of measurable indicators that reflect community conditions and progress toward the City's long term vision. The findings highlight areas where targeted policy changes, strategic investments, and coordinated implementation efforts can have the greatest impact. The following policy strategies build upon these performance measures and should be incorporated into the goals, objectives, and implementation actions of this Master Plan Amendment to guide future decision making and track Highland Park's continued progress.

1. **Rebuild Financial Reserves.** Establish a formal fund balance policy targeting a minimum reserve of 15–20% of annual expenditures.
2. **Strengthen Revenue Stability.** Increase and diversify revenue sources through property tax growth, income generating development, and alternative funding streams.
3. **Expand Broadband Access.** Partner with providers and leverage funding to improve high speed internet access citywide.
4. **Support Workforce Development.** Create partnerships and training programs focused on high demand industries and local employment pathways.
5. **Strengthen Local Business Ecosystem.** Support small businesses through incentives, technical assistance, and streamlined permitting.
6. **Improve Job Housing Alignmen.t** Encourage mixed-use development and land use patterns that connect housing with employment centers.
7. **Preserve and Expand Affordable Housing.** Increase affordable housing supply through financial incentives and development partnerships.
8. **Reduce Cost Burden for Renters.** Promote moderate-income (“missing middle”) housing and expand renter support programs.
9. **Promote Homeownership.** Implement land sale, new construction, and first-time homebuyer assistance programs.
10. **Stabilize Neighborhoods.** Address blight and vacant properties through acquisition, rehabilitation, and infill redevelopment.

4 COMMUNITY POLICY PRIORITIES

The following policies were development in conjunction with Public, City Council, and Planning Commission input, and includes updates to identified policies and data-driven performance measurement for proposed policy improvements.

Housing

H.1 Ensure residents have equitable access to safe and affordable housing options and resources suitable for citizens of all ages, incomes and physical abilities.

H.2 Prioritize housing initiatives which preserve housing affordability for existing residents, and support attracting new residents.

H.3 Coordinate the transition of publicly owned property into new housing development opportunities for all income levels.

H.4 Allow residents the opportunity to directly participate in localized neighborhood planning

H.5 Align housing strategies with future land use, zoning ordinance, and zoning map

H.6 Develop policies which offer conditions, criteria, and processes to guide development incentive decision making

Transportation

T.1 Enable the full range of mobility choices, including private automobiles, transit, biking and walking.

T.2 Maintain and restore street connections when possible.

Infrastructure

I.1 Increase water, sewer, and energy efficiency and affordability at the parcel, neighborhood, and community levels.

I.2 Align infrastructure goals with future residential and commercial development.

I.3 Advocate with regulatory and legislative bodies for access to affordable clean energy and water, programs, and resources for residents.

I.4 Implement Improvements to road infrastructure throughout the city.

Parks

P.1 Prioritize park infrastructure as a solution to many Highland Park issues, including improving community health and regional perception.

P.2 Adopt Long Range Park & Recreation Department strategies for park improvement, maintenance, and operations

P.3 Participate in funding initiatives, and programs which support improved Municipal Facilities and recreational opportunities

P.4 Prioritize public beautification of residential and commercial areas with art, murals, and visual improvements

P.5 Consolidate Park and Recreational Inventory

P.6 Support activation of Joe Louis Greenway and public spaces



Community

- C.1 Align Community and Housing vision
- C.2 Support Downtown Revitalization Efforts
- C.3 Develop a Comprehensive Community Wide Risk Assessment
- C.4 Encourage increased youth programming and engagement opportunities.
- E.5 Ensure financial and economic development incentives are aligned with the long-term objectives and priorities of the city at large

Health & Safety

- HS.1 Protect and preserve human health and well being by reducing health risks and increasing access to sources of healthy food, water, and active transportation.
- HS.2 Mitigate hazards for roads and multimodal transportation system collisions.
- HS.3 Ensure the City of Highland Park has plans and processes for Emergency Preparedness and Operations situations.
- HS.4 Monitor and Employ policy and programs which support community mental health among residents.



Economic Development

- E.1 Nurture an economy that's diverse, adaptive and capable of providing opportunities for all.
- E.2 Respect traditions that give Highland Park its sense of place and inspire its citizens' devotion
- E.3 Position community to attract & reward future public & private sector investment.
- E.4 Encourage suitable development in priority areas and corridors
- E.5 Ensure financial and economic development incentives are aligned with the long-term objectives and priorities of the city at large
- E.6 Align the TIF and Development Plan with the long range housing and economic development objectives of adopted plans and strategic documents

5 POLICY AND ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES

The policies outlined in this Master Plan Amendment are derived from the priorities and implementation progress established in the Highland Park 2030 Master Plan and have been updated to incorporate new and relevant policy directions identified through the 2026 planning process. These updated policies reflect current community needs, market conditions, and regional planning initiatives while building upon the foundation established in the original Master Plan.

Policies are organized by priority area, with each priority containing corresponding action items designed to support implementation. Action items are categorized into three implementation areas: Projects & Programs, Permitting, and Partnerships. This structure is intended to clarify the types of activities and collaborations necessary to achieve each policy objective.

Each action item is accompanied by implementation strategies that provide additional context, guidance, and framing for how the policy can be advanced. These strategies are intended to support coordinated decision-making, identify potential implementation approaches, and establish alignment between City priorities and future initiatives. The strategies presented in this section serve as the foundation for the more detailed recommendations and timelines contained within the Strategic Action Plan.

Housing

H.1 Ensure residents have equitable access to safe and affordable housing options and resources suitable for citizens of all ages, incomes and physical abilities.

H.2 Prioritize housing initiatives which preserve housing affordability for existing residents, and support attracting new residents.

H.3 Coordinate the transition of publicly owned property into new housing development opportunities for all income levels.

H.4 Allow residents the opportunity to directly participate in localized neighborhood planning

H.5 Align housing strategies with future land use, zoning ordinance, and zoning map

H.6 Develop policies that establish conditions, criteria, and procedures to guide development incentive decisions.

Projects & Programs

- Develop resident resource hub for housing and support services.
- Legalize accessory dwelling units.
- Demolish dangerous city owned housing that cannot be restored.
- Adopt a Strategic Housing Framework
- Develop a policy establishing incentives for workforce housing.

Permitting

- Update the zoning code to allow for a variety of middle housing types.
- Adopt the 2021 International Existing Building Code.
- Adopt amendments to the zoning ordinance to support housing goals.

Partnership

- Streamline transfer of land bank real estate to residents.
- Provide partnership resources to renters.
- Leverage existing financial partnerships for developers.



Neighborhood Strategic Plan

Creating strong neighborhoods begins with providing housing choices that meet the needs of current and future residents. To advance Highland Park's housing goals, the Strategic Housing Framework establishes a comprehensive, data-informed roadmap that guides housing policy, public investment, and development decisions across the city's residential neighborhoods. The framework is designed to support a healthy housing ecosystem by expanding housing opportunities, preserving existing homes and neighborhoods, promoting long-term housing stability, and strengthening partnerships that encourage equitable and sustainable community growth.

Recognizing that each neighborhood has its own strengths, challenges, and opportunities, the Highland Park Economic Development Strategy identified seven strategic neighborhood planning areas where targeted investment and coordinated planning can have the greatest impact. These areas serve as the focus for future housing development, neighborhood revitalization efforts, and incentive programs that build on existing community assets while supporting the City's long term vision for vibrant, connected, and resilient neighborhoods.

Housing Vision

"The City of Highland Park is a community where all residents have access to diverse, affordable housing options, and where existing neighborhoods are preserved and strengthened for future generations."

Strategic Approach

"The Strategic Housing Framework defines targeted housing and development strategies for each Neighborhood Planning Area and provides actionable steps to achieve neighborhood based goals."



Guiding Pillars

- **Expand Housing Supply & Choice**: Increase the availability and diversity of housing options to meet current and future demand across income levels, household types, and life stages
- **Preserve & Strengthen Neighborhoods**: Protect and enhance existing housing stock and neighborhood character through rehabilitation, code enforcement, and targeted reinvestment.
- **Promote Housing Stability & Access**: Ensure residents can attain and maintain stable housing by reducing cost burdens, preventing displacement, and expanding access to housing opportunities.
- **Enable Development & Infrastructure Readiness**: Create the conditions necessary for housing development by improving site readiness, streamlining processes, and aligning infrastructure investments.
- **Align Partnerships, Economy & Community Engagement**: Strengthen collaboration among public, private, and nonprofit partners to advance housing goals while aligning with economic development priorities.

Neighborhood Planning Strategic Focus Areas

Neighborhood Planning Strategic Focus Areas represent the key issue areas and priorities identified within each Neighborhood Planning Area that will guide the development of targeted housing and development strategies. These focus areas are informed by local data, market conditions, and community input, and are intended to address the unique needs, challenges, and opportunities of each neighborhood.

Each focus area serves as a foundation for defining specific, actionable strategies and initiatives that support broader housing goals, while ensuring that planning efforts are responsive to neighborhood level conditions and aligned with the overall Strategic Housing Framework.

Neighborhood Planning Focus Areas

- Rehabilitation of Existing Housing
- Blight Elimination
- Housing Quality & Code Enforcement
- Residents' Stability
- Site Readiness
- Housing Infrastructure
- Economics and Workforce
- Communication and Partnerships

Framework Objectives

- Prioritize the development of Public Owned Land
- Deliver 400+ New Housing units by 2030
- Increase the overall supply and diversity of housing units.
- Support development across a range of income levels and housing types
- Improve existing housing conditions and reduce blight.
- Maintain safe, high quality neighborhoods.
- Reduce cost burdens and prevent displacement.
- Expand access to housing opportunities
- Remove barriers to housing development.
- Align infrastructure and land use to support growth.
- Strengthen collaboration and align housing with economic goals.
- Improve transparency and community involvement
- Deliver targeted, place based housing strategies.
- Ensure responsiveness to neighborhood level needs



Highland Park Neighborhoods

The Northpointe Park Neighborhood Strategic Plan serves as a prototype for neighborhood revitalization and residential reinvestment throughout Highland Park. The plan demonstrates how publicly owned land, vacant properties, and strategic infill development can be leveraged to stabilize neighborhoods, increase homeownership opportunities, and expand the City's housing inventory. By introducing a range of housing options including single family homes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, multiplexes, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) the plan promotes housing diversity while preserving the character of established residential neighborhoods.

The Northpointe Park framework also recognizes that strengthening neighborhoods is directly tied to the success of Highland Park's commercial and mixed-use corridors. Strategic residential growth is intended to increase the population needed to support neighborhood businesses, transit, parks, and community services while creating walkable connections to redevelopment opportunities along Brush Street, Second Avenue, Third Avenue, Glendale Avenue, Hamilton Avenue, Lincoln Street, Buena Vista Street, and other identified neighborhood corridors. As additional Neighborhood Strategic Plans are prepared, each plan should evaluate existing housing conditions, redevelopment opportunities, neighborhood assets, commercial potential, housing affordability, and infrastructure capacity to establish a customized vision for future growth and investment.

Table 2: Neighborhood Strategic Plan Residential Housing Types

	Single Family Homes	Duplex	3-4 Units Triplex/ Quadplex	5-8 Units Multiplex	Multiple Family Development	Accessory Dwelling Units
Northpointe Park Neighborhood	X	X	X	X	X	X
Geneva Park Neighborhood	X	X				X
Rose Parks Neighborhood	X	X				X
Pasadena Park Neighborhood	X	X	X		X	X
Buena Vista – Avalon Village Neighborhood	X	X	X	X	X	X
Buena Vista – Parker Village Neighborhood	X	X	X			X
Lincoln Park Neighborhood	X	X				X

The recommended middle housing types for each neighborhood are based on existing lot dimensions, block patterns, alley access, available infrastructure, neighborhood character, proximity to parks and schools, access to transit, and redevelopment opportunities. Future Neighborhood Strategic Plans should build upon these recommendations by identifying appropriate housing types, public improvements, neighborhood amenities, and redevelopment priorities that reflect the unique character and needs of each neighborhood. Collectively, these plans will provide a neighborhood-scale implementation strategy for the Master Plan, guiding residential reinvestment, supporting commercial corridor revitalization, and ensuring that future growth strengthens Highland Park's existing neighborhoods while creating new housing opportunities for residents.





Highland Park by Neighborhood

City of Highland Park, Michigan

July 24, 2026

LEGEND

- Highland Park City Boundary
- Highland Park Neighborhoods

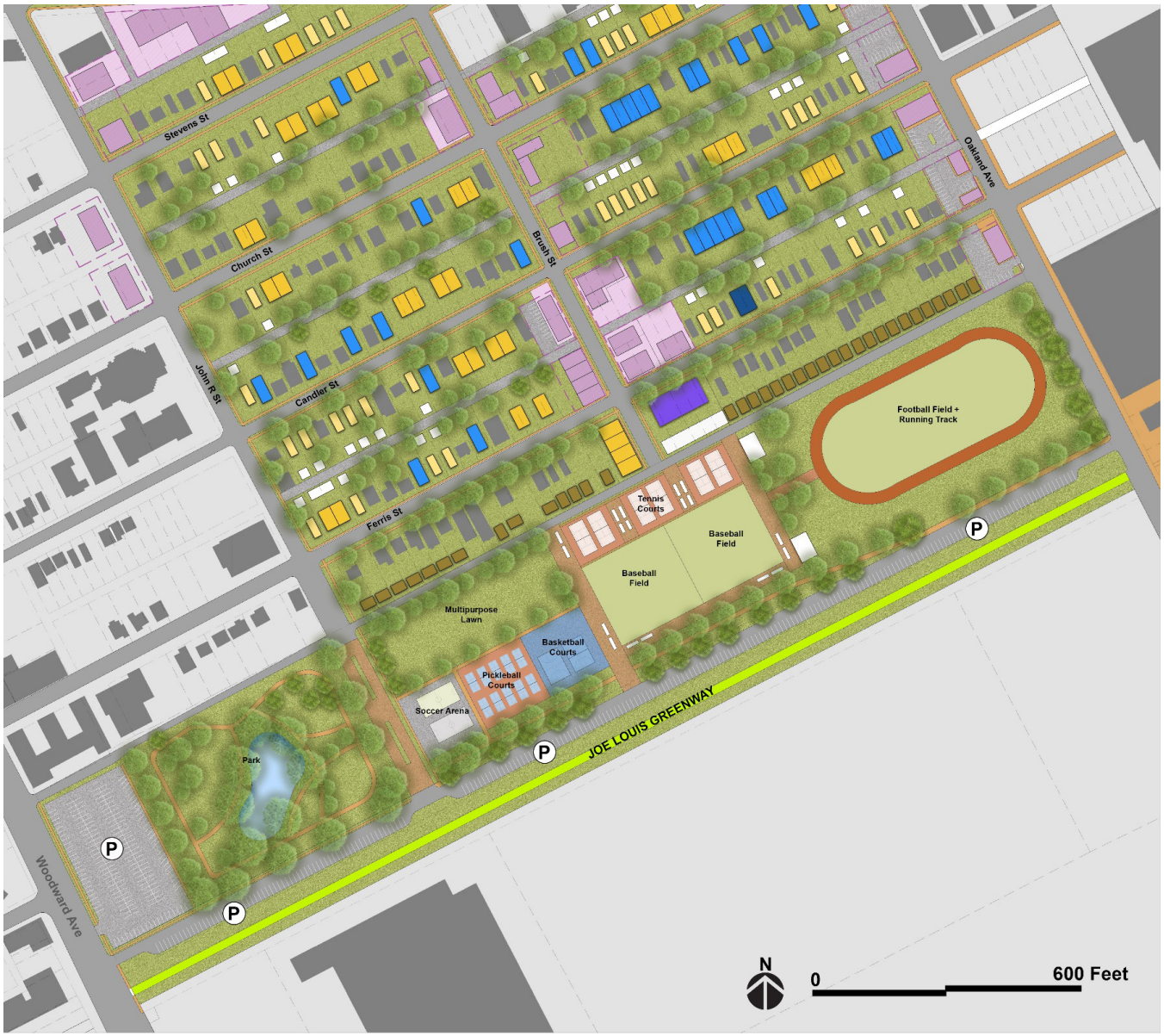
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Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: City of Highland Park 2023. McKenna 2026.

MCKENNA

City of Highland Park Michigan

Northpointe Park Neighborhood Concept Plan



- Parking
- Fourplex Units
- Duplex Units
- Triplex Units
- Eight Unit Building
- Single Family Units
- ADU- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Planned Redevelopment Area

Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are small, self-contained residential units located on the same lot as a primary dwelling, often created as basement apartments, garage conversions, or detached backyard cottages. As a zoning improvement, allowing ADUs by right (rather than requiring special approvals) can significantly expand housing options within existing neighborhoods without altering their overall character. ADUs provide a gentle form of density sometimes called "missing middle housing" that fits seamlessly into single family areas while increasing supply. They are typically more affordable to build and rent than new standalone homes, making them an effective tool for addressing housing shortages and rising costs.

Incorporating ADUs into zoning codes can also support broader community goals such as aging in place, multigenerational living, and workforce housing. Homeowners can house family members, caregivers, or generate supplemental income, improving financial stability and neighborhood vitality. To maximize their impact, municipalities can reduce barriers such as minimum lot sizes, parking requirements, and owner occupancy mandates, while providing clear design standards to maintain neighborhood compatibility. Overall, ADUs represent a flexible, low impact strategy for diversifying housing stock and promoting more inclusive, resilient communities.

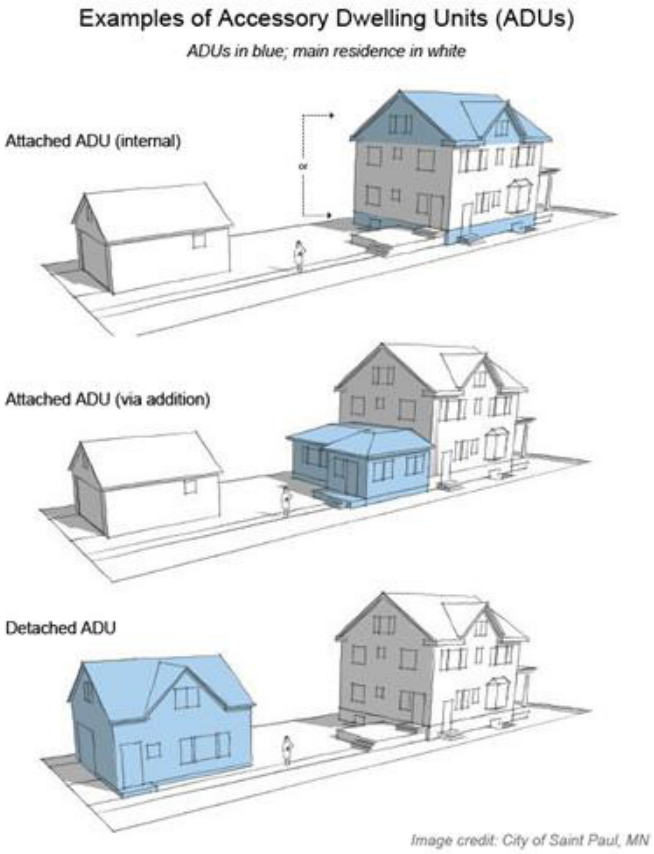


Image credit: City of Saint Paul, MN



Housing Strategic Partnerships

Strategic partnerships are essential to advancing the housing goals and action items identified in this Master Plan Amendment. Due to the scale and complexity of housing challenges facing the City of Highland Park, successful implementation will require coordinated collaboration between public agencies, nonprofit organizations, private devel opers, community development entities, financial institutions, and regional partners. These partnerships can provide critical technical expertise, funding opportunities, development capacity, and programmatic support necessary to implement housing initiatives effectively and equitably.

Partnerships may support a wide range of housing related activities, including affordable housing development, rehabilitation and preservation programs, homeownership assistance, mixed-use and mixed-income development, housing stabilization efforts, neighborhood revitalization, and supportive housing services. Strategic collaboration can also improve access to state and federal grant programs, tax incentives, land assembly resources, and infrastructure investments that may otherwise be difficult for the City to pursue independently.

The following list identifies potential partnership organizations and agencies accessible to the City of Highland Park that may assist in advancing housing policies, implementing action items, and supporting long term community development objectives. These partnerships should be viewed as implementation tools that can strengthen local capacity, leverage external resources, and align Highland Park's housing initiatives with broader regional and statewide housing strategies.

Public & Quasi-Governmental Partners

- Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA)
- Wayne County
- Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA
- Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)
- U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

Nonprofit Housing Developers & Community Organizations

- Southwest Housing Solutions
- Community Housing Network
- Habitat for Humanity Detroit
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC Detroit
- Enterprise Community Partners
- Invest Detroit
- Detroit Development Fund (DDF

Philanthropic & Anchor Institutions

- Kresge Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Skillman Foundation
- Henry Ford Health System/Detroit Medical Center
- Wayne State University



City Owned Land Strategy

A strategic approach to developing new housing units over the next 10 years in Highland Park can be anchored in a structured City Owned Land Disposition and Development Program approach that converts publicly owned parcels into productive housing and development uses. This strategy focuses on systematically reducing the City's inventory of vacant land while converting underutilized assets into tax generating properties. By creating a predictable annual pipeline of shovel ready lots through bundling parcels, clearing title issues, and pre-approving zoning and infrastructure conditions the City can attract small and mid-scale builders, as well as nonprofit developers. Establishing standardized development agreements, design guidelines, and affordability targets will ensure consistency in outcomes while allowing flexibility for market rate and workforce housing. This phased approach also enables the City to align land disposition with infrastructure capacity and neighborhood revitalization priorities.

To maximize impact, the City should pair land transfers with targeted incentives and streamlined processes that reduce development risk and cost. This may include discounted land pricing tied to performance benchmarks (e.g., construction timelines), expedited permitting, and access to gap financing tools such as MSHDA programs or brownfield housing TIF where applicable. Prioritizing development in clusters or targeted neighborhoods can create visible momentum, stabilize property values, and encourage additional private investment. Over time, this strategy not only delivers new housing supply but also strengthens the City's tax base, reduces maintenance burdens associated with vacant land, and supports long term neighborhood revitalization. By institutionalizing an annual disposition cycle with clear goals and accountability measures, Highland Park can transform surplus land into a sustainable engine for housing production and economic growth.

Community Land Trust

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) as a development tool are nonprofit, community-based organizations that acquire and hold land in trust for the long term benefit of residents, while allowing individuals to own or lease the housing situated on that land. As a zoning and policy innovation, CLTs help preserve affordable housing by separating land ownership from housing ownership, thereby stabilizing costs and preventing speculative price increases. Homes within a CLT are typically sold or rented at below market rates, with resale restrictions that ensure affordability is maintained for future occupants. Integrating CLTs into local housing strategies through supportive zoning, land donations, or public-private partnerships can create permanently affordable housing options without drastically altering neighborhood form.

In addition to promoting affordability, CLTs support community control and long term neighborhood stability. Residents often have a voice in governance, fostering local stewardship and equitable development outcomes. Municipalities can strengthen CLTs by prioritizing surplus public land for trust acquisition, offering density bonuses or streamlined approvals, and aligning zoning codes to accommodate CLT developments across residential districts. As part of a broader housing diversity strategy, CLTs provide a durable mechanism for expanding access to homeownership and rental opportunities, particularly for low- and moderate-income households.

Brownfield/Housing TIF

Michigan's Brownfield Housing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a relatively new financing tool that allows communities to support residential development by capturing and reinvesting future property tax growth generated by a project. Traditionally, brownfield TIF was used to offset costs associated with redeveloping contaminated or blighted sites, but amendments to the state's Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act particularly in 2023 expanded its use to include housing development and rehabilitation. Under this model, a local Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) can approve a plan where the increase in property tax revenue (the "tax increment") resulting from new development is captured over time and used to reimburse developers for eligible costs such as site preparation, infrastructure, demolition, and construction related expenses.

As a housing policy tool, Michigan's brownfield housing TIF is designed to close financing gaps and incentivize the production of workforce and affordable housing, typically for households earning up to 120% of Area Median Income (AMI). By expanding eligibility beyond traditional contaminated sites to include virtually any property developed for housing, the program enables communities to stimulate new construction, adaptive reuse, and mixed-use projects in areas that might otherwise be financially infeasible.

Planned Redevelopment Project (PRP)

Planned Redevelopment Project (PRP) provisions in the Highland Park zoning ordinance function as a flexible housing strategy that allows the City to tailor zoning standards to meet specific development goals, particularly for underutilized or vacant sites. Rather than relying solely on rigid base zoning districts, the PRP approach enables developers to propose customized site plans that may include a mix of housing types, increased density, or innovative design solutions. In exchange, the City can require conditions that align with broader community priorities such as affordability, design quality, or neighborhood compatibility. This negotiated zoning framework creates an opportunity to unlock sites that might otherwise remain undeveloped due to conventional zoning constraints.

As a housing strategy, PRPs are especially effective for encouraging infill development, adaptive reuse, and mixed-income housing in areas experiencing disinvestment or transition. By allowing flexibility in standards such as lot size, setbacks, parking, and use mix, municipalities can reduce barriers to development while still maintaining oversight through a structured approval process. To maximize their impact, PRP provisions should be paired with clear evaluation criteria, community engagement requirements, and incentives tied to public benefits like affordable housing or workforce units. Overall, PRPs provide a powerful tool for cities to promote housing diversity and redevelopment while ensuring that new projects contribute positively to neighborhood revitalization.

Michigan Neighborhood (HCDF Program)

Michigan's Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Fund (HCDF) program can be positioned as a targeted housing strategy to catalyze reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods and support equitable housing outcomes. The program provides flexible gap financing for a range of activities, including new construction, rehabilitation, preservation, and mixed-use development, with a focus on serving low- and moderate-income households. As a strategy, HCDF enables communities to direct resources into areas where market conditions alone are insufficient to support development, helping to stabilize neighborhoods, reduce vacancy, and improve overall housing quality. By layering HCDF funds with other tools such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), brownfield TIF, or local incentives, Highland Park can support financing gaps and make projects feasible that would otherwise not move forward.

Workforce Housing Pilot

Workforce Housing Pilot programs are a strategic tool that allow municipalities to test and refine targeted interventions aimed at increasing housing options for middle-income households, typically those earning between 80% and 120% of Area Median Income (AMI). These pilots are often structured as limited duration or site specific initiatives that provide incentives such as density bonuses, expedited permitting, reduced fees, or gap financing to developers who include workforce priced units in their projects. Through the use of Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS), communities can evaluate what combinations of incentives and regulatory adjustments are most effective at overcoming market barriers, particularly in areas where rising costs have made housing unattainable for essential workers such as teachers, healthcare staff, and public safety employees.

As a housing strategy, Workforce Housing Pilots offer flexibility and innovation while minimizing long term risk. They can be deployed in targeted areas such as downtowns, transit corridors, or redevelopment sites to support mixed-income communities and economic competitiveness. Municipalities can design pilots with clear performance metrics such as unit production, affordability duration, and geographic distribution to inform future policy decisions or permanent ordinance changes. When paired with tools like zoning flexibility, public land contributions, or financing mechanisms, these pilots can help bridge the "missing middle" gap and ensure that local workforces have access to attainable, well located housing options.

Transportation

T.1 Enable the full range of mobility choices, including private automobiles, transit, biking and walking.

T.2 Maintain and restore street connections when possible.

Projects & Programs

» Construct infrastructure on Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Network.

» Continue complete streets interventions in Woodward Non-Motorized Plan.

» Improve pedestrian safety along Woodward Avenue.

» Add temporary bike lanes along Victor Street.

» Apply for Woodward Avenue Bicycling and Walking Safety Audit grant.

Permitting

» Modify zoning code and subdivision regulations to create new multi-modal, context-sensitive street sections.

Partnership

» Adopt Woodward Avenue Action Association Complete Streets Plan.

» Implement Downtown Strategic Plan's Open Street policy along Manchester Parkway.

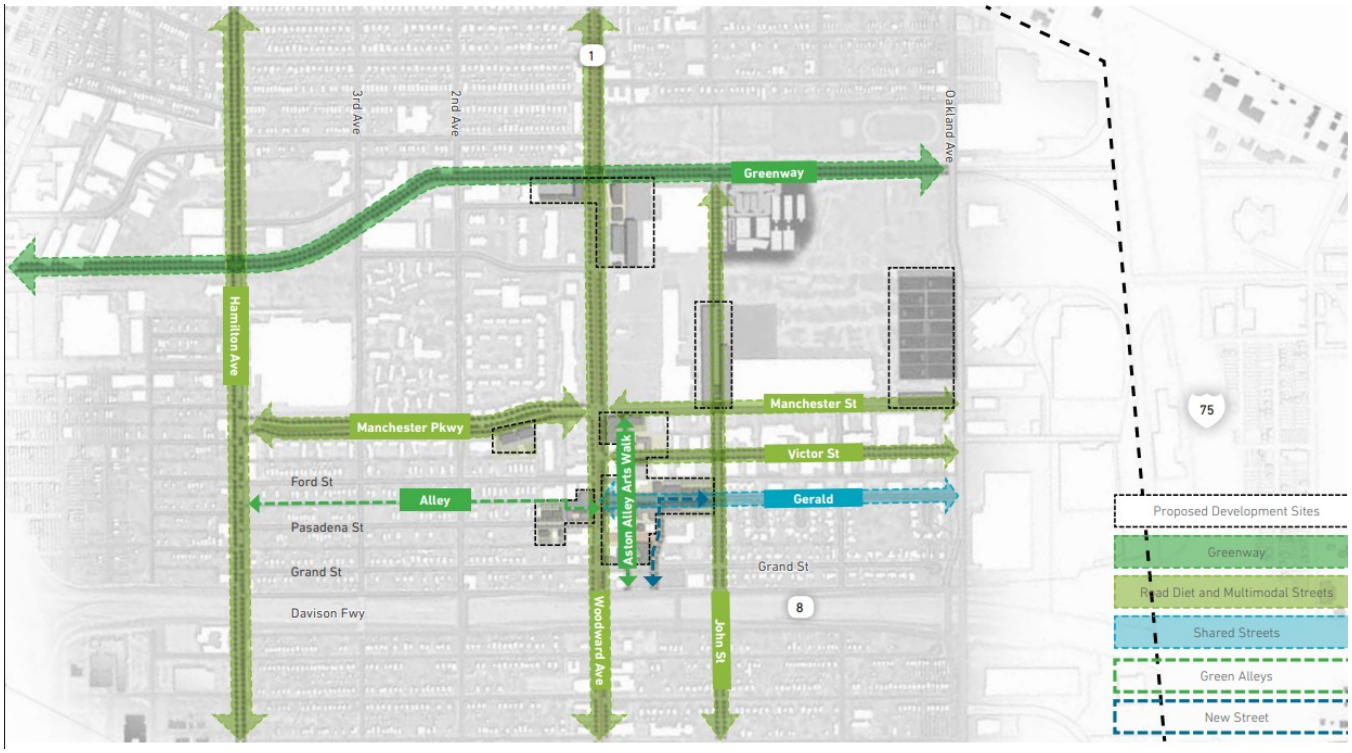
» Identify funding to maintain and improve streets and sidewalks.

» Collaborate with transit agencies to optimize connections.

Downtown Streets Plan

Ongoing implementation of the 2017 Downtown Streets Plan includes a range of infrastructure and transportation improvements designed to enhance mobility, connectivity, safety, and streetscape conditions along key corridors within the City of Highland Park. The priority corridors identified in the Downtown Streets Plan include:

» Manchester Parkway
» Victor Street
» Aston Street
» Hamilton Avenue
» Gerald Street
» John R. Street
» Woodward Avenue



Priority Corridor Improvements

Priority Corridor Improvements focus on enhancing the safety, accessibility, functionality, and visual character of Highland Park's major transportation and redevelopment corridors. These improvements are intended to support multimodal transportation, strengthen neighborhood and commercial connectivity, encourage economic reinvestment, and create more walkable and vibrant public spaces throughout the city.

The following corridor strategies identified in the Downtown Strategic Plan targeted transportation, streetscape, infrastructure, and placemaking improvements designed to support long term redevelopment goals while improving mobility and quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Manchester Parkway

- Implement temporary "Open Streets" activations to utilize underused right of way space for recreation, community events, food trucks, and public gathering activities.
- Evaluate long term conversion of portions of the corridor into a permanent linear park with a multi-use path and reduced travel lanes to support multimodal transportation and placemaking.



Victor Street

- Transform Victor Street into a walkable "Main Street" corridor that supports local businesses, pedestrian activity, outdoor gathering, and neighborhood connectivity.
- Introduce bike lanes, on-street parking, and traffic calming measures to create a safer and more active streetscape environment.

Aston Alley Arts Walk

- Activate downtown alleyways as pedestrian oriented arts and social spaces featuring public art, landscaping, bicycle parking, and improved pedestrian connections.
- Utilize alleys as flexible shared spaces that support parking access, ride share activity, and community gathering opportunities.

Hamilton Avenue

- Implement a roadway "road diet" to improve bicycle connectivity, calm traffic, and support future commercial and residential redevelopment along the corridor.
- Reinforce Hamilton Avenue's role as a neighborhood scale commercial corridor and regional bike connection.

Gerald Street

- Extend Gerald Street through the former Holiday Inn redevelopment site to improve circulation, emergency access, and redevelopment opportunities.
- Create new east-west and north-south local street connections that support slow moving traffic, neighborhood access, and future mixed-use development.

John R Street

- Enhance John R Street as a multimodal corridor through the addition of bike lanes, pedestrian improvements, and stronger connections to downtown destinations.
- Support long term redevelopment opportunities north of Manchester through street extensions, adaptive reuse, and connections to proposed greenway networks.

Woodward Avenue

- Reconfigure the Woodward Avenue right of way to support a more multimodal transportation environment with widened sidewalks, dedicated transit accommodations, and protected bicycle infrastructure.
- Improve regional connectivity while creating a safer and more accessible corridor for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and motorists.

Infrastructure

I.1 Increase water, sewer, and energy efficiency and affordability at the parcel, neighborhood, and community levels.

I.2 Align infrastructure goals with future residential and commercial development.

I.3 Advocate with regulatory and legislative bodies for access to affordable clean energy and water, programs, and resources for residents.

I.4 Implement Improvements to road infrastructure throughout the city.

I.5 Ensure all resident have access to quality internet and broadband services

Projects & Programs

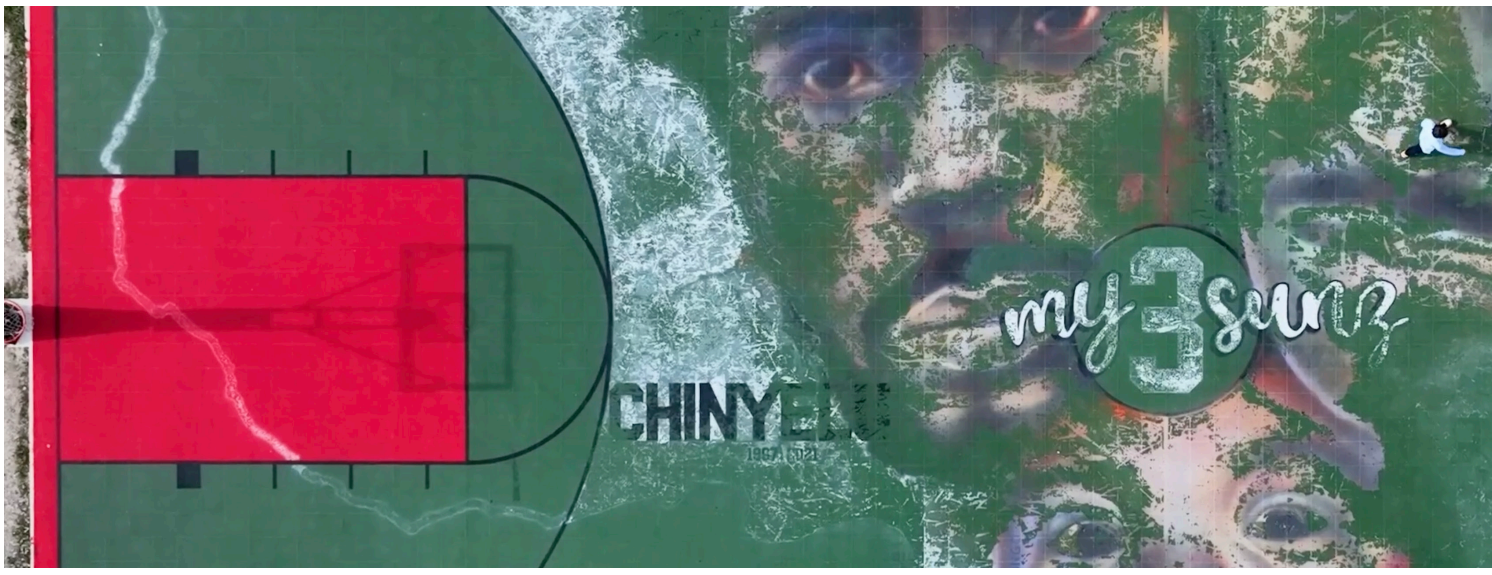
- Advocate for access to affordable clean energy and water.
- Implement Stormwater Credit Program.
- Implement FloodWise Community Program.
- Adopt Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Program Plan.
- Ongoing maintenance and replacement of water and sewer lines.
- Identify funding for ongoing road and infrastructure improvements.
- Launch a public education campaign.
- Develop sustainable water infrastructure plan.

Permitting

- Align infrastructure goals with future residential and commercial development.
- Develop sustainable street light energy sources.

Partnership

- Work with GLWA to ensure fair and equitable water rates.
- Improve water and sewer meters and rates.



Safe Routes to School—Priority Areas

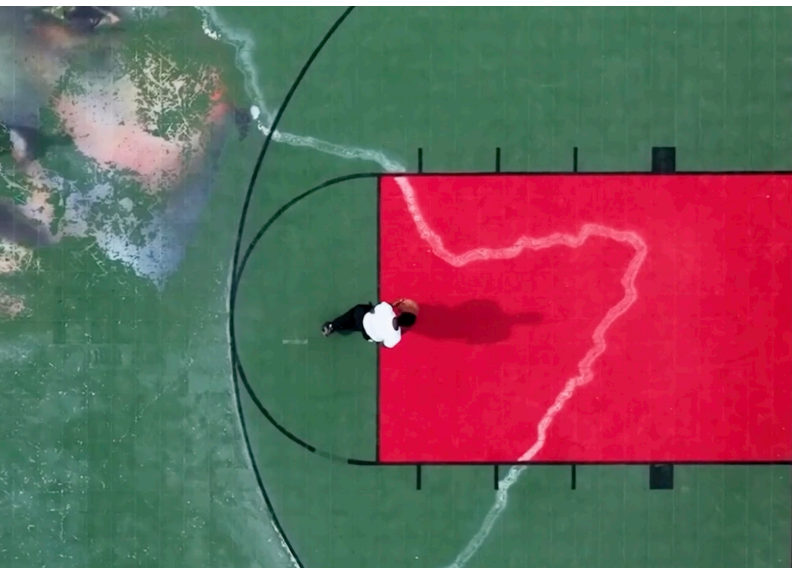
A Safe Routes to School (SRTS) strategy can serve as both a transportation and housing supportive initiative by improving neighborhood safety, walkability, and overall quality of life for families. Through focuses on creating safe, accessible pathways for children to walk or bike to school through targeted infrastructure investments such as sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic calming measures, lighting, and signage. Highland Park, should prioritize surrounding schools and along key corridors, with that routes are well maintained and connected to residential areas. By improving pedestrian safety and reducing reliance on vehicle transportation, SRTS enhances neighborhood desirability and supports family oriented housing stability.

Future Safe Routes to Schools:

» Buena Vista—Barber School

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

An Annual Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) can function as a foundational housing strategy by aligning public infrastructure investments with the City of Highland Park's housing development and neighborhood revitalization goals. The CIP prioritizes and schedules investments in critical systems such as roads, water and sewer infrastructure, sidewalks, lighting, and parks over a multi-year horizon, ensuring that public resources are directed to areas with the greatest need and opportunity for growth. By coordinating the CIP with housing strategies, the City can proactively prepare targeted neighborhoods for new development, including the planned disposition of city owned lots and infill housing construction. This approach reduces development barriers, lowers costs for builders, and signals to the market that the City is committed to long term reinvestment.



Regional Infrastructure Partnerships and Initiatives

» **Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)**: Regional planning, infrastructure coordination, data, and grant alignment (transportation, water, housing integration)

» **Wayne County Department of Public Services**: Roads, drainage, and infrastructure improvements; potential partner for corridor upgrades

» **Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD)/ Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA)**: Water and sewer infrastructure, system capacity, and capital planning coordination

» **Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)**: State road improvements, Complete Streets, and Safe Routes to School funding

» **Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART)**: Regional transit connectivity and access to jobs

» **Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA)**: Long term transit planning and regional mobility initiatives

» **DTE Energy**: Electric and gas infrastructure upgrades, energy efficiency programs, and potential support for housing development (e.g., service connections, grid improvements)

» **Consumers Energy (limited overlap regionally)**: Supplemental energy programs where applicable

» **Wayne County Land Bank Authority (WCLBA)**: Land assembly, demolition, and site readiness

» **Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA)**: Regional coordination and best practices in land reuse

» **Huron River Watershed Council/Local Watershed Groups**: Stormwater management and green infrastructure

» **Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)**: Environmental remediation, brownfield support, and infrastructure grants

» **Wayne County Parks**: Regional park access and greenway connections

» **Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)**: Grants for parks, trails, and recreation infrastructure

» **Joe Louis Greenway/Regional Trail Initiatives**: Connectivity and placemaking opportunities

» **Michigan High Speed Internet Office (MIHI)**: Broadband funding and planning support

Parks

P.1 Prioritize park infrastructure as a solution to many Highland Park issues, including improving community health and regional perception.

P.2 Adopt Long Range Park & Recreation Department strategies for park improvement, maintenance, and operations

P.3 Participate in funding initiatives, and programs which support improved Municipal Facilities and recreational opportunities

P.4 Prioritize public beautification of residential and commercial areas with art, murals, and visual improvements

P.5 Consolidate Park and Recreational Inventory

P.6 Support activation of Joe Louis Greenway and public spaces

Project & Programs

» Encourage park safety with adequate lighting.

» Provide structured play areas.

» Pursue DNR grant funding for park improvements.

» Develop Adopt-A-Park program.

» Convert and assemble empty parcels into additional community space.

Permitting

» Adopt 5-Year Parks & Recreation Plan.

» Include Parks & Recreation assessment in Annual CIP Plan.

» Develop civic space standards.

Partnership

» Collaborate with regional agencies.



Parks & Recreation Plan

A Parks and Recreation Plan can serve as a critical housing and neighborhood revitalization strategy by enhancing quality of life, increasing property values, and making Highland Park more attractive to current and future residents. By strategically investing in parks, open spaces, and recreational amenities, the City can create vibrant, family friendly environments that support residential stability and new housing development. Prioritizing improvements to existing parks such as upgraded playgrounds, walking paths, lighting, and programming can anchor neighborhood reinvestment efforts, particularly in areas targeted for new housing construction or rehabilitation. Well maintained and accessible parks also contribute to public health, safety, and community cohesion, all of which are key factors in housing demand.

As a coordinated strategy, the Parks and Recreation Plan should align with housing initiatives, infrastructure investments, and Safe Routes to School corridors to create a connected network of livable neighborhoods. A key implementation partner is the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), which provides essential funding through programs such as the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Recreation Passport grants. These resources can support park acquisition, renovation, trail development, and recreational amenities, allowing the City to leverage external funding to maximize local impact. By prioritizing equitable access ensuring all residents are within walking distance of quality green space and integrating green infrastructure elements like stormwater management and tree canopy expansion, Highland Park can enhance environmental resilience while supporting housing growth. Through strong alignment with MDNR programs and broader redevelopment goals, the parks system becomes a powerful catalyst for neighborhood stabilization, increased property values, and long term community vitality.

Major MDNR Grant Programs

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)

- Supports acquisition and development of public recreation land
- Eligible uses: park land acquisition, trail development, playgrounds, sports facilities

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

- Federal pass through program administered by MDNR
- Supports development and renovation of public outdoor recreation facilities
- Requires long term public access and use

Recreation Passport Grant Program

- Funds smaller scale park improvements and renovations
- Eligible uses: playgrounds, benches, picnic areas, accessibility upgrades

Civic Space Standards

Proposed Civic Space Standards establish a clear framework for the design, distribution, and quality of public spaces to support livable, connected, and equitable neighborhoods. These standards guide the development of parks, plazas, greenways, and community gathering spaces to ensure they are accessible, safe, and integrated with surrounding land uses. By setting minimum expectations for elements such as walkability, lighting, landscaping, seating, and recreational amenities, the standards help create consistent, high quality environments that enhance both public life and neighborhood identity. They also emphasize connectivity, linking civic spaces to housing, schools, transit, and commercial corridors to support daily use and long-term community value.

As a housing-supportive strategy, Civic Space Standards play a critical role in shaping neighborhood desirability and stabilizing property values. By requiring that new development and redevelopment projects incorporate or contribute to public space improvements, the City can ensure that growth is paired with investments in quality of life. These standards can be aligned with initiatives such as Safe Routes to School, parks planning, and infrastructure improvements to create a cohesive public realm network. Additionally, prioritizing equitable distribution of civic spaces ensures that all residents particularly in historically underserved areas have access to safe and functional gathering places. Overall, Civic Space Standards provide a foundational tool for guiding development, enhancing community well being, and reinforcing long term housing and economic development goals.

Community

C.1 Align Community and Housing vision
C.2 Support Downtown Revitalization Efforts
C.3 Develop a Comprehensive Community Wide Risk Assessment
C.4 Encourage increased youth programming and engagement opportunities.

Project & Programs

» Youth engagement, community events, city parking plan & meters.

» Comprehensive risk assessment, emergency snow and flooding response, monitoring master plan process, and cyber protection measures & policy.

»

Permitting

» Adopt changes in the Future Land Use Map.

» Update the zoning code to reflect character areas in the Future Land Use Map.

» Simplify the zoning code to reflect best practices in administration and application.

» Expand by-right uses to expedite adaptive reuse and enable residential projects without permitting.

» Update the zoning code to permit gentle densification to increase affordability.

Partnership

» Partner with MEDC's Michigan Main Street to support downtown revitalization.



Community Assets

Joe Louis Greenway

The Joe Louis Greenway is a 27.5-mile recreational pathway including both a pedestrian path and bike path with clear zones that aim to connect 4 cities: Detroit, Highland Park, Dearborn and Hamtramck. The greenway when completed will allow residents to travel safely from McNichols to the RiverWalk without a car. The planning process provides potential for the redevelopment of the historic Highland Park Ford Plant and investment in the Highland Park community. The Forks & Greens Connection, a community suggested public space led by the Wayne County Land Bank, is a planned scattered pocket park and linear neighborhood greenway in the Northpointe Park Neighborhood.

Solar Infrastructure

Highland Park was one of only 24 cities across the United States to be selected to participate in the US Department of Energy technical assistance program called Community Local Energy Action Program (C-LEAP). C-LEAP is a grant that aims to "assist community led transitions to a clean energy economy, and to build a healthier, more equitable, and sustainable future." Community partners included Soulardarity, Avalon Village, Parker Village, the City of Highland Park Water and Engineering Department, and the Highland Park Community Crisis Coalition. The grant has continued the work Soulardarity, a grassroots group, began through the installation of solar powered streetlights to brighten city streets.



Health & Safety

HS.1 Protect and preserve human health and well being by reducing health risks and increasing access to sources of healthy food, water, and active transportation.

HS.2 Mitigate hazards for roads and multimodal transportation system collisions.

HS.3 Ensure the City of Highland has plans and processes for Emergency Preparedness and Operations situations.

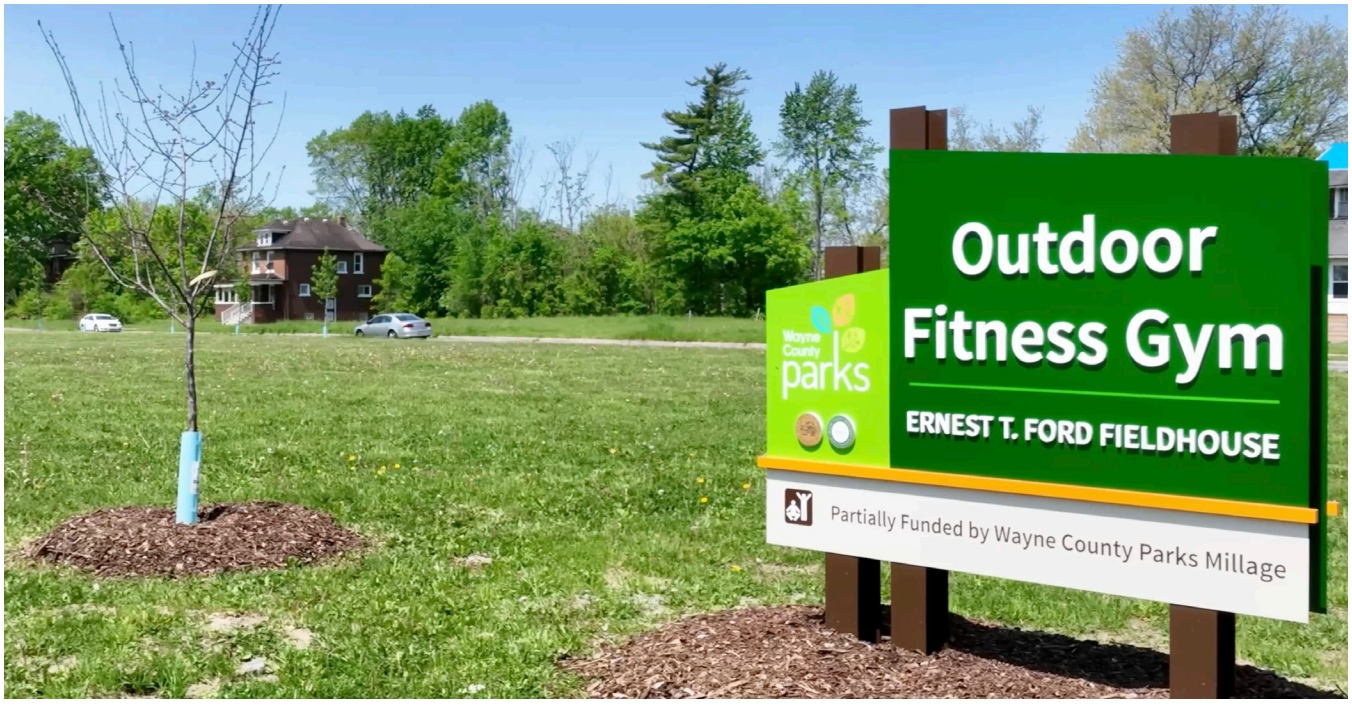
HS.4 Monitor and Employ policy and programs which support community mental health among residents.

Project & Programs

- Provide additional fire and hazmat training.
- Target select empty lots for cleanup and maintenance.
- Mental health, infrastructure, emergency preparedness and operations, expansion of fire and police services aligned with city growth, training, pedestrian and road safety.
- Air quality controls and ordinance, food and safety policy, pest and animal control policy, schools.

Partnership

- Provide resources to clear streets during and after winter storms.
- Review Wayne County Hazard Mitigation Plan for adoption.
- Enable citizen clean up crews.
- Contract with community based organizations for early warnings.



Heath Metrics

A Community Health Metrics and Dashboard strategy provides Highland Park with a data-driven framework to monitor, evaluate, and improve the well being of its residents while directly informing housing and neighborhood development decisions. This strategy involves identifying key indicators such as housing quality, vacancy rates, affordability, air and water quality, access to parks, walkability, crime, and health outcomes and compiling them into a centralized, publicly accessible dashboard. By integrating data from local, regional, and state partners (e.g., health departments, SEMCOG, MSHDA), the City can track trends over time, identify disparities across neighborhoods, and prioritize targeted interventions. The dashboard also increases transparency and accountability, allowing stakeholders and residents to better understand progress toward community goals.

As a housing supportive tool, the Community Health Dashboard enables Highland Park to align investments with areas of greatest need and opportunity. For example, data can inform where to focus infill housing development, infrastructure upgrades, Safe Routes to School improvements, or park investments to maximize impact on health and quality of life. Establishing clear metrics such as reductions in vacancy, increases in homeownership, improved walkability scores, or decreased environmental risks helps guide policy decisions and funding allocation. Over time, the dashboard becomes a critical management tool that connects housing, public health, and infrastructure strategies, ensuring that redevelopment efforts lead to measurable improvements in resident well being and more equitable, resilient neighborhoods.

Hazard Mitigation Plan

A Hazard Mitigation Plan serves as a proactive strategy to reduce risks from natural and environmental hazards while supporting long term housing stability and resilient community development. This plan identifies potential threats such as flooding, extreme weather, infrastructure failure, and environmental contamination and outlines actions to minimize their impact on residents, property, and critical systems. In Highland Park, the plan can prioritize improvements to stormwater management systems, aging infrastructure, and vulnerable housing stock, particularly in areas with high vacancy or disinvestment. By integrating hazard mitigation with land use and housing strategies, the City can guide new development away from high risk areas and ensure that rehabilitation efforts incorporate resilience measures such as drainage improvements, energy efficiency, and structural upgrades.

As a coordinated strategy, the Hazard Mitigation Plan should align with the City's Capital Improvements Plan, housing development initiatives, and infrastructure partnerships to maximize impact and funding eligibility. Leveraging federal and state resources such as FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grants and EGLE environmental programs can help finance critical projects that improve safety and reduce long term costs. The plan can also support the adaptive reuse of vacant land for green infrastructure, such as rain gardens or detention areas, which mitigate flooding while enhancing neighborhood aesthetics. By embedding resilience into housing and infrastructure decisions, Highland Park can protect residents, preserve property values, and create safer, more sustainable neighborhoods over time.

Economic Development

E.1 Nurture an economy that's diverse, adaptive and capable of providing opportunities for all.

E.2 Respect traditions that give Highland Park its sense of place and inspire its citizens' devotion

E.3 Position community to attract and reward future public and private sector investment.

E.4 Encourage suitable development in priority areas and corridors

E.5 Ensure financial and economic development incentives are aligned with the long term objectives and priorities of the city at large

E.6 Align the TIF and Development Plan with the long range housing and economic development objectives of adopted plans and strategic documents

Project & Programs

- Market and promote redevelopment areas.
- Develop reuse strategies for industrial spaces.
- Pursue Michigan Main Street Program for priority redevelopment corridors.
- Adopt the new Development and TIF district plan.

Permitting

- Expand allowable outdoor dining and retail sales.
- Allocate makerspaces in zoning districts.
- Permit accessory dwelling units.
- Implement planning for placemaking and community destinations.
- Evaluate qualifying brownfields to secure tax increment financing.
- Pursue Michigan Business Development Program grants.

Partnership

- Support local magnet schools for technical education.
- Study establishing a Highland Park Community Development Corporation (CDC).
- Package the conversion of publicly owned land into residential and commercial developments.



Workforce Housing

Workforce housing addresses the needs of households that earn too much to qualify for many traditional affordable housing programs but may still struggle to find quality housing they can reasonably afford. Often described as part of the "missing middle" of the housing market, workforce housing generally serves individuals and families earning approximately 60% to 120% of Area Median Income (AMI).

This segment of the housing market is particularly important for teachers, municipal employees, healthcare workers, public safety personnel, service sector employees, skilled tradespeople, young professionals, and other workers whose incomes may not keep pace with increasing home prices, rents, construction costs, or interest rates.

A successful workforce housing strategy should focus on both housing production and household access. This can include developing new rental and ownership units, rehabilitating existing housing, expanding attainable homeownership opportunities, encouraging missing middle housing types, and creating partnerships with employers, developers, financial institutions, and nonprofit organizations.

Missing Middle Housing Program (MMHP)

Missing middle housing programs can support the development or preservation of housing types that fall between detached single family homes and large multifamily developments. Examples include duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, cottage courts, accessory dwelling units, small apartment buildings, and other neighborhood scale housing.

These housing types can expand the number of attainable rental and ownership opportunities while fitting within the character and physical scale of established neighborhoods. Communities can support missing middle development through targeted financing, redevelopment incentives, publicly owned land, infrastructure assistance, zoning reforms, streamlined approvals, and partnerships with small and emerging developers.

Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) Program / MEDC Place Based Initiatives

Michigan Economic Development Corporation place based programs can provide another avenue for supporting housing as part of broader downtown, corridor, neighborhood, and mixed-use redevelopment initiatives. The Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) Program and related MEDC initiatives can help communities address redevelopment challenges, activate underutilized properties, support mixed-use development, and strengthen places where housing and economic development objectives intersect



Resilience Hubs

Highland Park has three resilience hubs that are going to be a part of The Wayne County Resilience Hub Network, a new partnership initiative by the Wayne County Sustainability & Innovation Division of the Economic Development Department and community institutions across Wayne County. The project aims to develop a network of resilience hubs or community serving facilities to support residents and coordinate resource distribution in cases of natural hazard emergencies.

Brownfield Incentives

Brownfields are properties where redevelopment, reuse, or investment may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of environmental contamination, blight, functional obsolescence, or historic disinvestment. In Michigan, brownfield redevelopment programs are designed to encourage reinvestment in underutilized or distressed properties by providing financial incentives and reimbursement mechanisms that help offset redevelopment costs.

Traditional Brownfields

Traditional brownfields typically include former industrial, commercial, or contaminated properties where environmental conditions or site challenges hinder redevelopment. Common examples include vacant factories, gas stations, obsolete commercial buildings, and former manufacturing sites. Under Michigan's Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act (Act 381 of 1996), municipalities may establish Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities (BRAs) to facilitate redevelopment activities and capture tax increment revenues generated by new investment.

Traditional brownfield incentives may support activities such as environmental assessment and remediation, demolition, asbestos abatement, site preparation, infrastructure improvements, and redevelopment of functionally obsolete properties. These tools are commonly used to attract private investment, return vacant properties to productive use, increase property values, and stimulate economic development within targeted redevelopment areas.

Residential Brownfields

Residential brownfields are a more recent expansion of Michigan's brownfield redevelopment framework and are specifically intended to encourage housing development, particularly in communities facing housing shortages or disinvestment. Residential brownfield incentives allow eligible projects to utilize tax increment financing and other redevelopment tools to support the construction, rehabilitation, or adaptive reuse of residential and mixed-use housing developments.

These programs can assist with costs associated with site preparation, demolition, environmental remediation, public infrastructure, and other redevelopment activities that may otherwise make housing projects financially infeasible. Residential brownfields are especially valuable for supporting affordable housing, workforce housing, mixed-income developments, and adaptive reuse projects in urban communities and redevelopment corridors.

Brownfield redevelopment tools in Highland Park can serve as a critical implementation strategy for transforming vacant, underutilized, or environmentally challenged properties into productive residential and mixed-use developments. By leveraging both traditional and residential brownfield programs, the City can support neighborhood revitalization, expand housing opportunities, improve property conditions, and encourage long term economic growth.

Development and TIFA Plan

A strategy to update the Development Plan should focus on aligning this tool with Highland Park's current housing, economic development, and infrastructure priorities. Development planning mechanisms can help guide and support reinvestment efforts by directing resources and public improvements toward targeted districts and redevelopment areas. The update process should begin with redefining district boundaries, goals, and priority investment areas to reflect current market conditions and emerging opportunities particularly corridors and nodes capable of supporting mixed-use development, workforce housing, neighborhood-serving retail, and commercial revitalization. By incorporating updated land use strategies, housing production targets, and infrastructure needs, the revised plan can better position the City to attract investment and improve overall district competitiveness.

As an implementation strategy, the updated Development Plan should prioritize investments that directly support housing development and placemaking, including streetscape improvements, site preparation, façade enhancement programs, public infrastructure upgrades, and financial support mechanisms for mixed-income and catalytic redevelopment projects. Establishing clear criteria for project prioritization such as alignment with housing goals, job creation, corridor revitalization, and community benefit will improve transparency and strengthen implementation outcomes. The City can also coordinate the Development Plan with complementary initiatives such as brownfield redevelopment tools, housing and community development funding programs, and the Capital Improvements Plan to leverage multiple funding sources and accelerate project feasibility. Regular performance tracking, stakeholder engagement, and periodic plan updates will help ensure the plan remains responsive to changing community needs and market conditions. Overall, modernizing the Development Plan positions Highland Park to guide strategic reinvestment, support housing growth, strengthen economic vitality, and expand the City's long-term tax base.



Innovation District

Highland Park's Innovation District represents an opportunity to transform underutilized industrial and commercial areas into a modern employment center that builds upon the City's manufacturing heritage while embracing emerging industries and entrepreneurial investment. Located within a region rich in automotive, mobility, engineering, and advanced manufacturing assets, the district can position Highland Park as a destination for innovation, research, small business development, clean technology, creative industries, and next generation manufacturing.

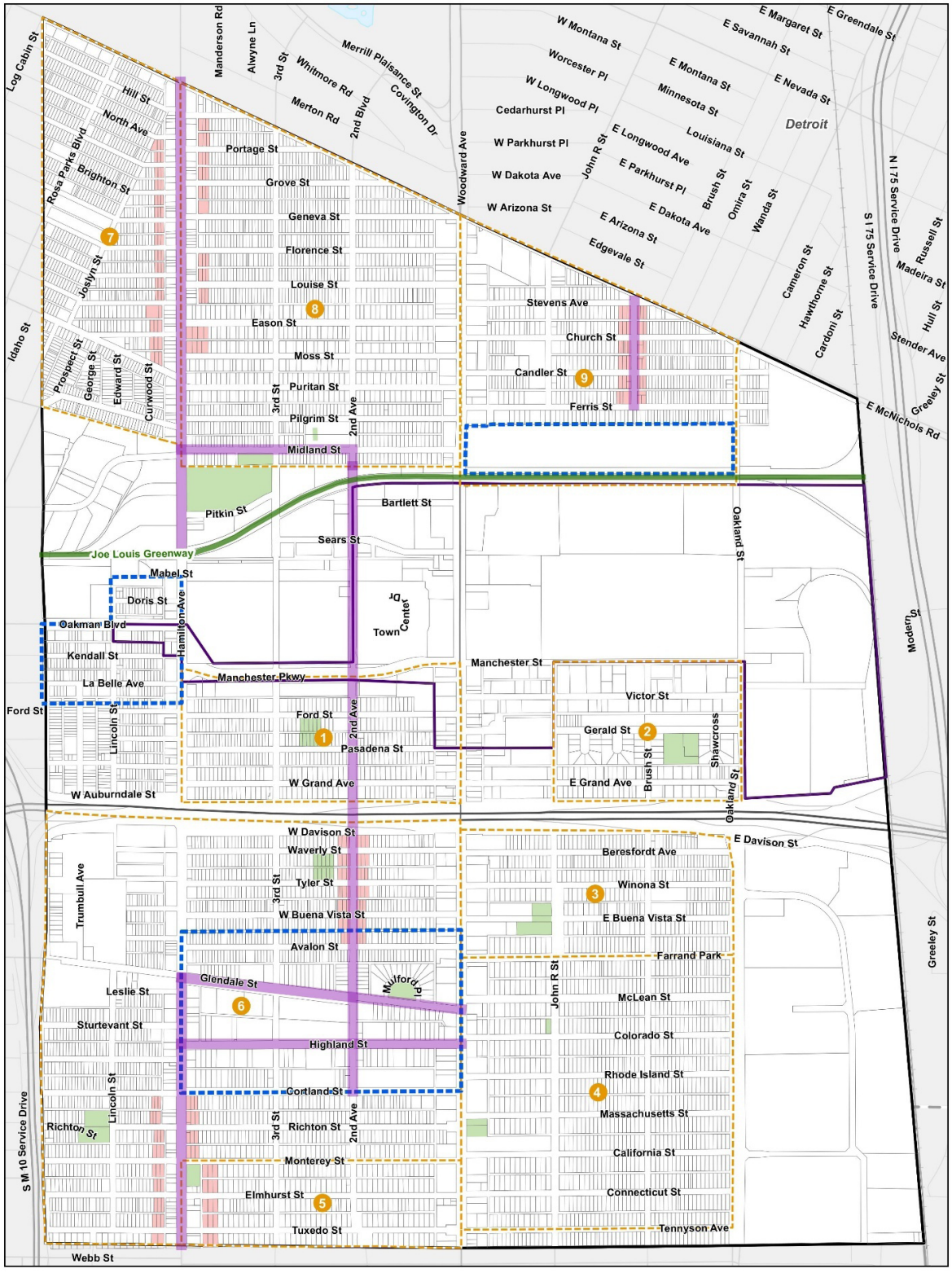
The Innovation District should focus on attracting employers that provide quality jobs for residents while supporting business incubation, workforce training, and partnerships with local schools, colleges, universities, workforce development agencies, and private industry. Strategic investments in infrastructure, high speed broadband, sustainable utilities, and flexible zoning should encourage the adaptive reuse of existing industrial buildings while accommodating new employment centers, makerspaces, technology campuses, and mixed employment developments. Redevelopment efforts should prioritize equitable economic opportunity by creating career pathways for Highland Park residents, supporting minority owned businesses, and leveraging state and federal redevelopment incentives to attract long term private investment.

Entertainment and Mixed-Use Corridors

Highland Park's commercial corridors including Woodward Avenue, Hamilton Avenue, Oakland Avenue, and Davison Street serve as the community's primary gateways, neighborhood business districts, and centers of daily activity. These corridors present significant opportunities to reestablish Highland Park as a vibrant destination for shopping, dining, entertainment, neighborhood services, housing, and cultural experiences while reinforcing the City's historic identity and walkable urban character.

Future redevelopment should encourage compact mixed-use development that combines residential, commercial, office, and civic uses within attractive, pedestrian oriented environments. Streetscape enhancements, improved lighting, public art, outdoor gathering spaces, façade improvements, wayfinding, and multimodal transportation investments should work together to create safe, inviting corridors that support both residents and visitors. Targeted redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties should prioritize locally owned businesses, restaurants, entertainment venues, neighborhood retail, and upper story housing to increase activity throughout the day and evening.

To support long term corridor revitalization, Highland Park should pursue participation in programs such as the Michigan Main Street Program and other Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) initiatives. These programs can provide technical assistance, organizational support, grant funding, façade improvement resources, and marketing strategies that strengthen commercial districts and attract private investment. By coordinating public improvements with business development and placemaking initiatives, Highland Park can create thriving mixed-use corridors that generate economic opportunity, strengthen neighborhood identity, and serve as catalysts for citywide reinvestment.



Economic Development Strategic Planning Map

April 24, 2025

LEGEND

- Entertainment Corridors
- Joe Louis Greenway
- Parks
- Parking
- Neighborhoods
- Special Districts
- TIF District
- City of Highland Park

0 500 1,000 Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: City of Highland Park, 2023. MCA, 2023. McKenna, 2023.

MCKENNA

Main Street Corridors

Highland Park's commercial corridors including Woodward Avenue, Hamilton Avenue, Oakland Avenue, and Davison Street represent some of the City's greatest opportunities for economic revitalization, neighborhood investment, and community identity. Establishing a Main Street Program would provide a proven framework for coordinating public and private investments while building upon the unique history, culture, and character of these important commercial districts.

The Michigan Main Street Program, administered through Main Street America and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), focuses on strengthening traditional commercial districts through four integrated strategies: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization. These strategies help communities attract new businesses, support existing entrepreneurs, rehabilitate historic buildings, improve streetscapes and public spaces, activate vacant storefronts, and create vibrant destinations that serve residents and visitors alike.

For Highland Park, a corridor focused Main Street approach could build on ongoing public and private redevelopment initiatives by encouraging reinvestment in underutilized commercial properties, enhancing the pedestrian environment, expanding opportunities for small and minority owned businesses, and fostering mixed-use development that brings new housing, employment, and neighborhood services to key corridors. The program would also provide access to technical assistance, leadership training, grant opportunities, facade improvement resources, and statewide partnerships that can accelerate revitalization efforts.

As Highland Park continues implementing the goals of the Highland 2030 Master Plan, the Strategic Neighborhood Plan, and future economic development initiatives, a Main Street Program could serve as a long term organizational framework to coordinate corridor improvements, strengthen business districts, celebrate the City's rich cultural heritage, and position its commercial corridors as vibrant centers of commerce, community life, and neighborhood reinvestment.

Potential Main Street Corridors

- 2nd Ave
- 3rd Ave
- Brush St.
- Hamilton
- Glendale

Funding Opportunities

Implementation of the policies, projects, and redevelopment strategies identified in this Master Plan Amendment will require a coordinated approach to securing and leveraging funding resources. The following funding sources represent potential financial tools and programs that may support housing development, infrastructure improvements, economic development initiatives, environmental remediation, public space enhancements, and neighborhood revitalization efforts throughout Highland Park.

Many of these funding opportunities can be layered together to support complex redevelopment projects and maximize local investment capacity. Strategic use of local, regional, state, federal, philanthropic, and private sector funding sources can help the City advance priority action items, improve project feasibility, and strengthen long term implementation outcomes. The identified funding programs should be viewed as flexible implementation tools that can support both short term projects and long range redevelopment goals.

Grants, Loans & Direct Financial Assistance

- Michigan Business Development Program (MBDP)
- Michigan Community Revitalization Program (MCRP)
- Critical Industry Program (CIP)
- Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) Program
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Tax Incentives & Abatements

- Brownfield Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Commercial Rehabilitation Act (PA 210)
- Commercial Redevelopment Act (PA 255)
- Industrial Facilities Exemption (PA 198)
- State Essential Services Assessment (SESA) Exemptions
- Renaissance Zones

Site Development & Infrastructure Programs

- Strategic Site Readiness Program (SSRP)
- Build MI Community / Infrastructure Grants
- Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA)

Workforce & Talent Development Incentives

- New Jobs Training Program (NJTP)
- Jobs Ready Michigan Program
- Work Share / Employment Programs (LEO)

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Programs

- Capital Access Programs (MEDC/MSF)
- Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
- Pure Michigan Business Connect (PMBC)

Community & Place Based Development Programs

- Michigan Main Street Program
- Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC)

6 COMMUNITY DATA & PROFILE

This chapter explores demographic trends in Highland Park using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), and the Michigan Data Portal. The analysis provides regional context by comparing Highland Park's trends with those of neighboring communities. By examining current patterns in population, household dynamics, the chapter aims to inform future planning efforts. This analysis also closely examines key trends, including population change, educational attainability, income rates, and poverty levels.



Population Change. As of 2024, Highland Park's population is 8,199 residents. Highland Park has experienced a gradual decline within the last two decades, with slight increases forecasted in 2030, 2040, and 2050. Compared to its surrounding communities, Highland Park has also experienced the largest percent decrease between 2020 and 2024 at –8.7%, with Hamtramck in close second at –7.7%. No city or township evaluated experienced a positive percent increase in population between 2020 and 2024. However, Highland Park, Hamtramck, Redford, Warren, and Livonia have projected forecast increases in population in 2030.

Table 3: Regional Population Change from 2000–2050

	2000	2010	2020	2024	Change (2020–2024)		2030 Forecast	2040 Forecast	2050 Forecast
					Number	Percent			
City of Highland Park	16,746	11,776	8,977	8,199	–778	–8.7%	8,263	8,230	8,333
City of Detroit	951,270	713,862	639,111	636,113	–2,998	–0.5%	624,141	624,316	632,328
City of Hamtramck	22,976	22,417	28,433	26,237	–2,196	–7.7%	28,097	28,325	28,193
Redford Township	51,622	48,362	49,504	46,620	–2,884	–5.8%	48,984	49,593	49,616
City of Warren	138,247	134,056	139,387	135,273	–4,114	–3.0%	138,672	142,670	144,204
City of Livonia	100,545	96,942	95,535	94,942	–593	–0.6%	95,532	96,601	97,098
Wayne County (excluding Detroit)	1,109,892	1,106,788	1,154,450	1,117,948	–36,502	–3.2%	1,152,696	1,168,286	1,172,580

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS)

Population and Households. Highland Park, as of 2020, has 3,917 Households (Occupied Units) and in 2050 Highland Park is projected to increase to 3,514 Households (Occupied Units). Compared to surrounding communities, Highland Park has the largest percentage of Residential Vacancy Rate (23.7%) which has held steady between 2010 and 2020. All of the surrounding communities' average household sizes are projected to slightly decrease except for Warren which is projected to remain the same.Regional Populations and Households.

Table 4: Regional Populations and Households

	Total Population		Housing Units		Households (Occupied Units)		Residential Vacancy Rate		Average Household Size	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
City of Highland Park	11,776	8,977	6,090	5,137	4,645	3,917	23.7%	23.7%	2.36	2.18
City of Detroit	713,862	639,111	349,213	309,913	269,478	254,275	22.8%	18.0%	2.59	2.47
City of Hamtramck	22,417	28,433	8,690	8,911	7,061	8,139	18.7%	8.7%	3.09	3.48
Redford Township	48,362	49,504	20,739	20,848	19,148	19,853	7.7%	4.8%	2.51	2.48
City of Warren	134,056	139,387	57,938	58,411	53,442	54,933	7.8%	6.0%	2.49	2.52
City of Livonia	96,942	95,535	40,401	40,380	38,714	39,282	4.2%	2.7%	2.47	2.40
Wayne County (excluding Detroit)	1,106,788	1,154,450	472,516	480,278	433,298	455,125	8.3%	5.2%	2.53	2.52

	2050 Forecast		
	Total Population	Households (Occupied Units)	Average Household Size
City of Highland Park	8,333	3,514	2.22
City of Detroit	632,328	251,519	2.45
City of Hamtramck	28,193	8,049	3.40
Redford Township	49,616	19,966	2.47
City of Warren	144,204	56,609	2.52
City of Livonia	97,098	40,006	2.38
Wayne County (excluding Detroit)	1,172,580	466,123	2.49

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates
SEMCOG 2050 Regional Development Forecast

Forecasted Jobs. The table below compares forecasted jobs by industry sector in 2025 and 2050 for Highland Park and surrounding communities. Highland Park's largest sector in 2050 is projected to be Healthcare Services, which is also true for the City of Detroit. Hamtramck's largest sector is projected to be Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities and Redford Township's Manufacturing. Livonia, Warren and Wayne County (excluding Detroit) will have Professional and Technical Services & Corporate HQ as their largest sector in 2050. The region overall is trending towards professional and technical services which provide potential for investing in mixed-use collaborative and co-networking spaces.

Table 5: Regional Forecasted Jobs by Industry Sector

	City of Highland Park		City of Detroit		City of Hamtramck		Redford Township		City of Warren		City of Livonia		Wayne County (excluding Detroit)	
Forecasted Jobs by Industry Sector	2025	2050	2025	2050	2025	2050	2025	2050	2025	2050	2025	2050	2025	2050
Natural Resources, Mining & Construction	182	225	7,872	8,832	191	190	1,693	1,755	5,027	5,619	7,088	7,135	31,924	32,830
Manufacturing	486	564	28,220	25,486	459	434	3,285	3,046	16,660	14,787	10,948	8,635	69,178	61,109
Wholesale Trade	330	321	7,974	8,671	222	224	841	904	2,958	3,216	4,702	5,478	22,293	24,123
Retail Trade	561	489	12,856	10,094	474	350	2,106	1,708	7,683	6,052	7,906	5,924	62,374	49,045
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	861	823	18,759	19,683	638	671	1,235	1,376	7,048	7,746	6,137	6,727	77,579	81,531
Information & Financial Activities	406	430	31,429	31,496	571	531	1,701	1,671	5,771	6,341	8,206	9,391	57,371	61,936
Professional and Technical Services & Corporate HQ	885	839	38,223	42,533	360	357	1,300	1,305	22,594	24,589	12,166	14,233	72,863	82,566
Administrative, Support, & Waste Services	511	590	20,711	27,439	265	293	1,537	1,895	5,032	6,074	5,848	6,758	42,990	50,459
Education Services	304	322	31,080	31,907	300	318	1,027	1,034	4,178	4,212	3,372	3,439	25,224	26,417
Healthcare Services	746	905	71,311	82,698	417	487	1,668	1,868	10,651	13,287	9,579	12,209	68,907	80,733
Leisure & Hospitality	249	201	34,591	37,007	427	453	1,803	1,647	6,543	7,086	7,177	6,875	55,619	56,324
Other Services	599	589	22,925	24,345	352	355	1,870	1,945	4,804	5,152	5,356	5,524	40,313	42,701
Public Administration	476	307	31,669	31,902	243	247	399	415	8,434	8,707	816	698	10,521	10,368
Total Employment Numbers	6,596	6,605	357,056	382,093	4,919	4,910	20,465	20,569	107,383	112,868	89,301	93,026	637,156	660,142

Source: SEMCOG 2050 Regional Development Forecast

Household Types. The following table compares household types between 2010 and 2023. The total household percentage change and 2050 forecast is also provided. The largest number of households fall into the without seniors category across the entire region evaluated. In 2010, Highland Park, Detroit, and Hamtramck had household types that were primarily 2+ persons with children. Alternatively, in 2010, Redford Township, Warren, Livonia and Wayne County (excluding Detroit) had household types that were primarily 2+ persons without children. In 2023, Highland Park, Detroit, Redford Township, Warren, Livonia and Wayne County (excluding Detroit) were all primarily 2+ persons without children. Only Hamtramck remained primarily with 2+ persons with children. In terms of total households, Highland Park, Detroit, Redford Township, and Livonia faced percent decreases while Hamtramck, Warren and Wayne County (excluding Detroit) faced percent increases.

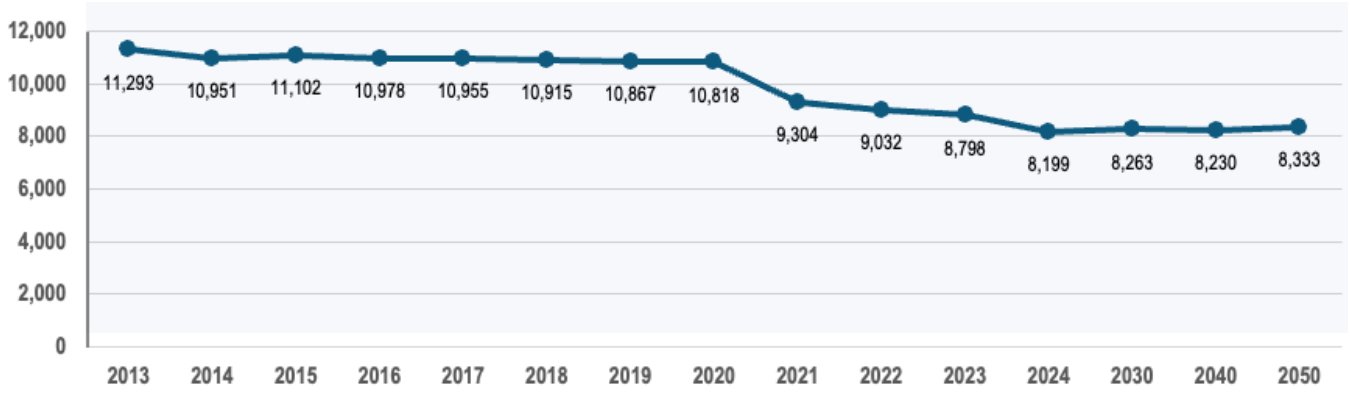
Table 6: Regional Household Types

	2010						
	w/ Seniors 65+	w/o Seniors	Live Alone, 65+	Live Alone, <65	2+ Persons, w/ children	2+ Persons, w/o children	Total Households
City of Highland Park	1,428	3,217	49	1,266	1,338	1,292	4,645
City of Detroit	66,799	202,646	27,723	6,401	92,574	85,131	269,445
City of Hamtramck	136	5,687	649	1,395	3,051	1,968	7,063
Redford Township	4,502	14,646	1,944	3,665	6,273	7,266	19,148
City of Warren	15,933	37,509	6,737	9,525	16,347	20,833	53,442
City of Livonia	12,052	26,662	5,059	5,287	11,261	17,107	37,716
Wayne County (excluding Detroit)	111,395	321,909	47,483	76,487	143,143	166,191	433,304

	2023							Total Households	
	w/ Seniors 65+	w/o Seniors	Live Alone, 65+	Live Alone, <65	2+ Persons, w/ children	2+ Persons, w/o children	Total Households	Percent Change 2010–2023	2050 Forecast
City of Highland Park	1,488	2,330	762	1,157	684	1,215	3,818	–17.8%	3,514
City of Detroit	74,740	178,467	36,349	71,309	71,435	74,114	253,207	–6.0%	251,519
City of Hamtramck	1,760	5,650	741	1,059	3,423	2,187	7,410	4.9%	8,049
Redford Township	4,997	13,831	2,343	3,912	5,518	7,055	18,828	–1.7%	19,966
City of Warren	16,282	37,794	6,878	10,004	15,676	21,518	54,076	1.2%	56,609
City of Livonia	13,812	23,904	5,328	5,354	9,416	17,618	37,716	–2.6%	40,006
Wayne County (excluding Detroit)	139,453	300,786	56,912	77,256	127,252	178,819	440,239	1.6%	466,123

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2019–2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates
SEMCOG 2050 Regional Development Forecast

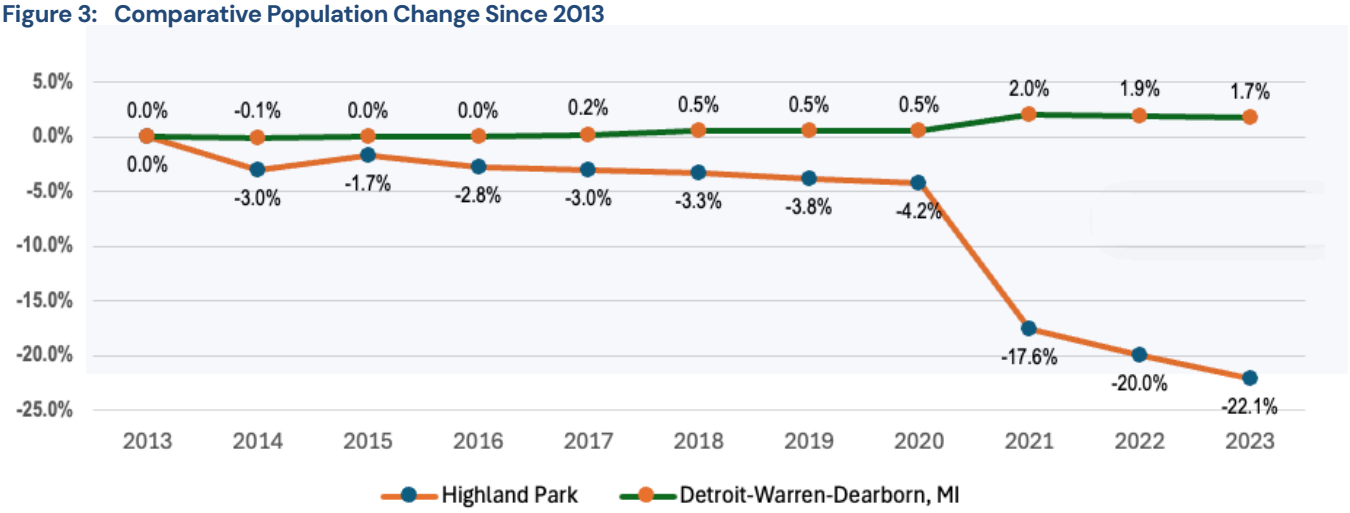
Figure 2: Highland Park Population Change Since 2013



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS)

To further emphasize Highland Park's population change over the past decade, the figure above displays the populations for each year starting in 2013. As shown above, Livonia has experienced a gradual decline in population, with a slight increase projected in 2050.

Figure 3: Comparative Population Change Since 2013



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS)

Additionally, Figure 3 compares Highland Park's population change to the Detroit-Warren-Dearborn region. As seen in the figure, Highland Park gradually declines starting in 2015, whereas the regional population change gradually increases. Notably, Highland Park follows the inverse of the regional trend, decreasing as the region increases. Then, Highland Park decreases steeply from –4.2% in 2020 to –17.6% in 2021, while the regional trend begins to gradually decline starting in 2021.

Age Distribution. In 2023, Highland Park's age distribution skews towards a slightly older population. Residents between the ages of 55 to 59 make up around 9.5% of the population, with the 60 to 64 age group (7.4%) and the 65 to 69 age groups (7.4%) following close behind. The 20 to 24 age group (7.5%) is the second highest population grwoup.

Median age. Over the past decade, the median age in Highland Park has steadily increased. In 1990 the median age was 32 and in 2010 the median age was 40.5. By 2023, the median age increased to 45 years old, displaying a 4.6% change in the last 13 years.

By assessing the age distribution of Highland Park, the City can consider the types of services and amenities that would improve the quality of life for an aging population.

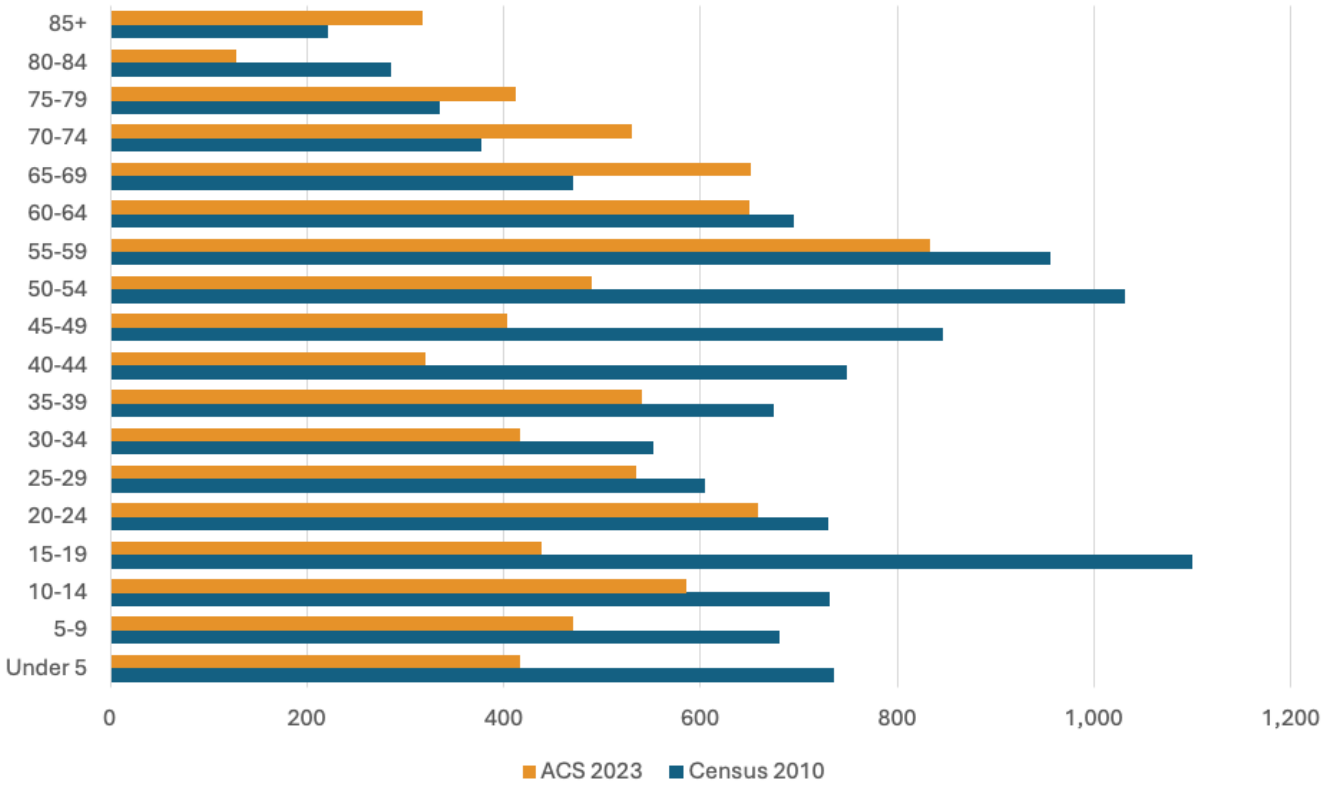


Table 7: Population Change by Age 1990–2023

Age Group	Census 1990	Census 2000	Census 2010	ACS 2023	Change 1990–2000	Change 2000–2010	Change 2010–2023
Under 5	1,753	1,277	735	417	–457	–547	–318
59	1,401	1,668	680	471	267	–922	–209
10–14	1,543	1,270	731	586	–273	–590	–145
15–19	1,711	1,052	1,100	439	–659	–1	–661
20–24	1,539	1,061	730	659	–478	–277	–71
25–29	1,469	2,182	604	535	–928	–495	–69
30–34	1,641		552	417		–524	–135
35–39	1,554	2,415	675	540	–375	–508	–135
40–44	1,236		749	320		–502	–429
45–49	865	2,115	847	403	449	–282	–444
50–54	801		1,031	489		80	–542
55–59	856	699	956	834	–157	234	–122
60–64	914	578	695	650	–336	108	–45
65–69	919	1,360	471	651	–274	–177	180
70–74	715		378	530		–291	152
75–79	584	845	335	412	–60	–149	77
80–84	321		286	128		–49	–158
85+	302	224	221	317	–78	–78	96
Total	20,121	16,746	11,776	8,798	–3,375	–4,970	–2,978
Median Age	32.0	34.5	40.5	45.1	2.5	6.0	4.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, and 2019–2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Forecasted Population. In 2050 there are two age groups that are projected to increase: 65 to 84 (25.6%) and 85+ (43.9%). This trend follows the current age distribution trend which displays an increase in older population groups. The remaining age groups are all projected to decrease in 2050 when compared to 2020. The under 5 age group is expected to experience the greatest decrease in population (–47.8%).

Table 8: Forecasted Population Change by Age, 2020–2050

Age Group	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	Change 2020–2050	Percent Change 2020–2050
Under 5	531	417	370	361	341	319	277	–254	–47.8%
5–17	1,373	1,262	1,186	1,117	1,057	973	976	–397	–28.9%
18–24	821	551	519	559	596	587	637	–184	–22.4%
25–64	4,554	4,433	4,211	4,093	4,137	4,259	4,278	–276	–6.1%
65–84	1,518	113	1,815	1,862	1,877	1,868	1,906	388	25.6%
85+	180	158	162	198	222	268	259	79	43.9%
Total	8,977	8,534	8,263	8,190	8,230	8,274	8,333	–644	–7.2%

Source: SEMCOG 2050 Regional Development Forecast

Race and Hispanic Origin. Highland Park's racial makeup is primarily Black with 93% of the population in 2010 and 85.8% of the population in 2023 identifying as Black. The second highest population group is White with 2.9% of the population in 2010 and 9.2% of the population in 2023 identifying as White. Between 2010 and 2023 the White and Multi-Racial groups have increased by 6.2% and 1.6% respectively.

Table 9: Race and Hispanic Origin

Race and Hispanic Origin	Census 2010	Percent of Population 2010	ACS 2023	Percent of Population 2023	Percentage Point Change 2010–2023
Non-Hispanic	11,620	98.7%	8,701	98.9%	0.2%
White	347	2.9%	807	9.2%	6.2%
Black	10,955	93.0%	7,545	85.8%	–7.3%
Asian	46	0.4%	9	0.1%	–0.3%
Multi-Racial	229	1.9%	313	3.6%	1.6%
Other	43	0.4%	10	0.1%	–0.3%
Hispanic	156	1.3%	97	1.1%	–0.2%
Total	**11,776**	**100.0%**	**8,798**	**100.0%**	**0.0%**

Source: U.S Census Bureau Decennial Census and 2019–2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Educational Attainment. When compared to 2010, educations levels in 2023 have risen with the greatest increase in population age 25 and over with Graduate / Professional Degree (4.3%). Following closely is a bachelor's degree (4.2%), some College, no Degree (3.6%), and associate degree (2.9%). Significantly, there has been a reduction in population age 25 and over that did not graduate high school (–9.4%). Through analyzing the education levels, the City can assess the level and type of employment opportunities Highland Park has to offer its residents, as well as potential new residents.

Table 10: Distribution of Educational Attainment

Highest Level of Education*	ACS 2010	ACS 2023	Percentage Point Change 2010–2023
Did Not Graduate High School	25.4%	16.0%	–9.4%
High School Graduate	36.4%	30.9%	–5.6%
Some College, No Degree	23.2%	26.8%	3.6%
Associate Degree	6.4%	9.3%	2.9%
Bachelor's Degree	5.4%	9.5%	4.2%
Graduate / Professional Degree	3.2%	7.5%	4.3%
* Population age 25 and over			

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2010 and 2019–2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Employment Distribution. In terms of employment distribution, Highland Park's employed population that is 16 years or older is projected to be 6,605 in 2050 which is a 4.8% increase from 2019 (6,302). Of this working population, the most prevalent industries are forecasted to be Healthcare Services (905), Professional and Technical Services & Corporate HQ (839), and Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities (823). This differs from the top three sectors in 2019 as Retail Trade was one of the top three industry sectors.

Table 11: Forecasted Jobs by Industry Sector

Forecasted Jobs by Industry Sector	2019	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	Change 2019–2050	
									Number	Percent
Natural Resources, Mining & Construction	162	152	182	178	192	200	209	225	63	38.9%
Manufacturing	287	255	486	476	499	502	542	564	277	96.5%
Wholesale Trade	362	318	330	320	332	339	338	321	–41	–11.3%
Retail Trade	668	597	561	545	515	506	487	489	–179	–26.8%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	628	637	861	886	905	858	841	823	195	31.1%
Information & Financial Activities	393	377	406	416	418	423	423	430	37	9.4%
Professional and Technical Services & Corporate HQ	921	870	885	863	876	863	860	839	–82	–8.9%
Administrative, Support, & Waste Services	512	489	511	522	542	560	576	590	78	15.2%
Education Services	319	298	304	319	329	338	323	322	3	0.9%
Healthcare Services	641	640	746	800	838	885	887	905	264	41.2%
Leisure & Hospitality	275	202	249	242	230	219	212	201	–74	–26.9%
Other Services	630	580	599	581	599	583	587	589	–41	–6.5%
Public Administration	504	473	476	517	337	307	306	307	–197	–39.1%
Total Employment Numbers	6,302	5,888	6,596	6,665	6,612	6,583	6,591	6,605	303	4.8%

Source: SEMCOG 2050 Regional Development Forecast

Note: The base year for the employment is 2019, as 2020 employment was artificially low due to the COVID recession.

Household Income. Median household income from 2010 to 2023 in Highland Park has slightly decreased from $28,234 to $27,582 which is a 2.3% change. Per capita income has increased by 45.8% from 2010 to 2023 with a $7,867 change. The greatest number of households fall into the $10,000 to $14,999 annual household income range (648). There are a small number of households in both the $150,000 to $199,999 range (12) and $45,000 to $49,999 range (27). Household income is important in determining the type of housing to provide for future residents.

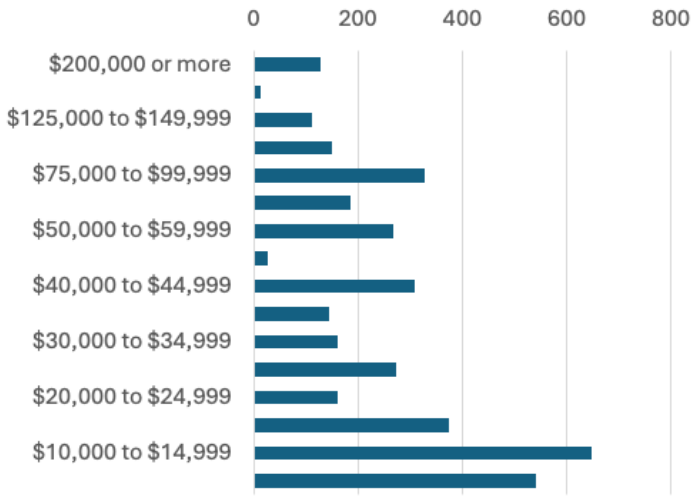
Table 12: Household Income

Income (in 2023 dollars)	ACS 2010	ACS 2023	Change 2010–2023	Percent Change 2010–2023
Median Household Income	$28,234	$27,582	–$652	–2.3%
Per Capita Income	$17,193	$25,060	$7,867	45.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006–2010 and 2019–2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Table 13: Annual Household Income Distribution

Annual Household Income	# of Household (ACS 2023)
$200,000 or more	128
$150,000 to $199,999	12
$125,000 to $149,999	111
$100,000 to $124,999	150
$75,000 to $99,999	328
$60,000 to $74,999	184
$50,000 to $59,999	266
$45,000 to $49,999	27
$40,000 to $44,999	309
$35,000 to $39,999	145
$30,000 to $34,999	160
$25,000 to $29,999	273
$20,000 to $24,999	161
$15,000 to $19,999	375
$10,000 to $14,999	648
Less than $10,000	541
Total	3818



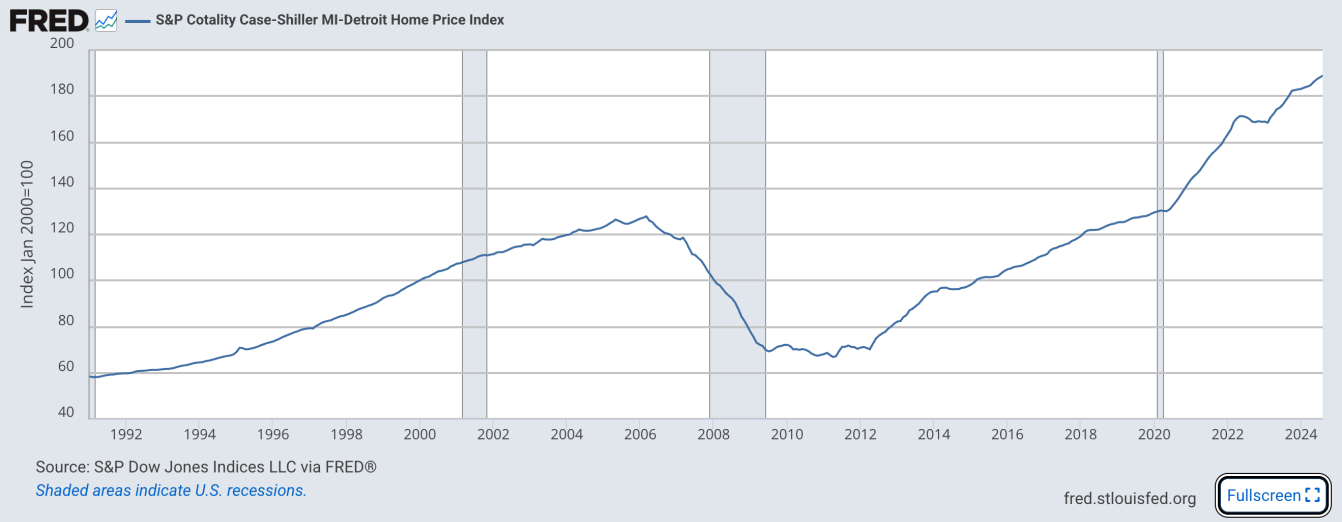
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019–2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Housing Affordability

The figure below shows the housing price to income ratio for the Detroit-Warren-Dearborn Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) from 1992 to 2024. The housing price in this ratio is the Case-Shiller housing price index, and income is median household income as reported by the U.S. Census. The figure shows that the price/income ratio remained steady over the 1987–2000 period, until the well-documented housing bubble of 2000–2006, and subsequent crash resulted in a nearly 60% decrease in the price/income ratio. Since then, prices have recovered, but incomes have increased much more slowly, and by 2020, the Case/Shiller index was equal to 2006 levels.

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the housing market has gone through considerable shifts in short periods of time. Immediately upon the start of the pandemic and associated business closures and quarantine mandates impacted employment and salaries. The pandemic's impact on the housing market, however, is still unraveling today. Home prices drastically increased starting in the late summer of 2020, and this growth continued into the summer of 2022. There was a leveling off and drop in the home price index between then and February 2023, before beginning to rise again.

Figure 4: Price/Income Ratio, Detroit-Warren-Dearborn Metropolitan Statistical Area, 1992–2024

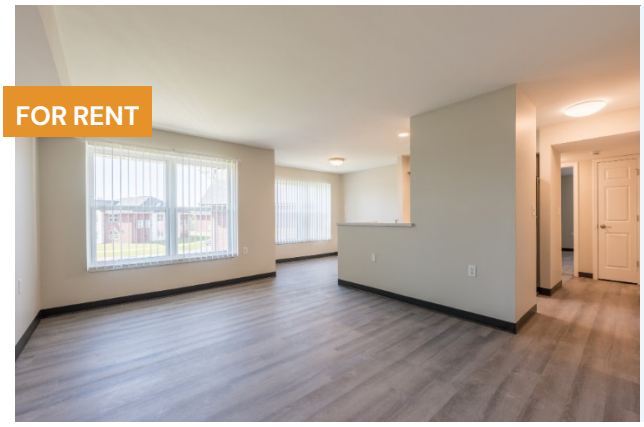


Source: Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED)

Although the regional trend shows housing prices increasing relative to household income, the trend in Highland Park may be different, or have different nuances. Therefore, this chapter determines the affordable rent or monthly mortgage payments for different levels of household income and compares them to the monthly cost of housing units in the Geographic Trade Area. The City of Highland Park is also specifically analyzed to pull out any City-specific trends.

Characteristics of Homes at Various Price Points

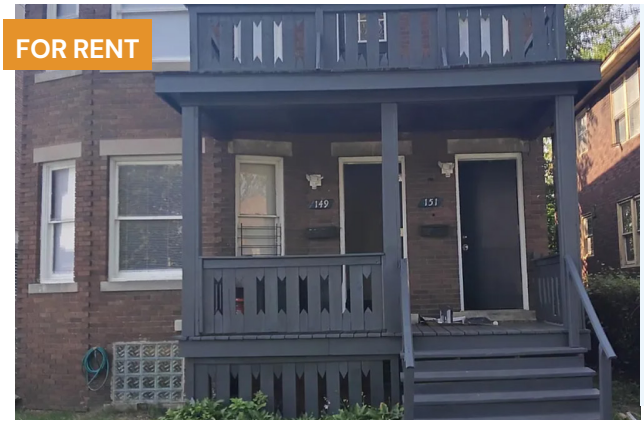
In order to demonstrate the real-world impact of various levels of affordability on households, the following are eight housing units in Highland Park to serve as examples of characteristics of housing at different price points (as of February 9th, 2026).



$410–$975/month*

- 1 bedroom
- 1 bathroom
- 651 square feet
- Built: 2024
- Water, trash removal, sewer, and air conditioning included

**Income limits apply*



$850/month

- 2 bedrooms
- 1 bathroom
- 2,132 square feet
- Party responsible for utilities: undetermined



$1,175/month

- 3 bedrooms
- 1.5 bathrooms
- 1,152 square feet
- Party responsible for utilities: undetermined



$1,495/month

- 4 bedrooms
- 1 bathroom
- 1,573 square feet
- Appliances not included
- Tenant responsible for all utilities



$52,000

- 4 bedrooms
- 2 bathrooms
- 1,547 square feet
- Forced air
- Built: 1909



$115,000

- 4 bedrooms
- 2 bathrooms
- 1,832 square feet
- Central air, natural gas
- Built: 1920



$179,500

- 4 bedrooms
- 2 bathrooms
- 2,462 square feet
- Forced air, natural gas
- Built: 1918



$205,000

- 5 bedrooms
- 3 bathrooms
- 2,200 square feet
- Heating: Oil, radiant
- Built: 1913, remodeled in 2025

Affordable Price Points

The following tables calculate the maximum affordable housing price points at different household income levels, for both monthly mortgage payments and rent. A household paying above these rates would be considered burdened by their housing costs.

The maximum affordable rent is calculated as 30% of gross income, which is a national rule of thumb used by, among others, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The maximum affordable mortgage payment is calculated as 25% of gross income, because of the other costs associated with homeownership, such as taxes, insurance, and maintenance.

The maximum affordable home price calculation uses interest rates approximating what a mortgage applicant would be offered in 2020, including an assumption that lower income households are likely to face higher interest rates. It also assumes a 30-year fixed rate mortgage and incorporates down payments that are realistic for households in given income ranges.

Table 14: Maximum Affordable Monthly Housing Payment

Annual Household Income	Maximum Affordable Monthly Housing Payment	
	Rent	Mortgage Payment
$25,000	$625	$521
$50,000	$1,250	$1,042
$75,000	$1,875	$1,563
$100,000	$2,500	$2,083

Source: McKenna Calculations

Table 15: Maximum Affordable Home Price

Annual Household Income	Maximum Affordable Mortgage Payment	Anticipated Down Payment	Anticipated Interest Rate	Maximum Affordable Home Price	Down Payment at Affordable Price
$25,000	$521	5%	7.5%	$51,000	$2,550
$50,000	$1,042	10%	7.0%	$125,000	$12,500
$75,000	$1,563	10%	7.0%	$200,000	$20,000
$100,000	$2,083	15%	6.5%	$300,000	$45,000

Source: McKenna Calculations

ZORI Average Rent 2026: $1,495

The Zillow Observed Rent Index (ZORI), which calculates the average rent of the housing units between the 35th and 65th percentiles in a community, stated in its February 6, 2026 report that the average rent in Highland Park was $1,495 per month.

Affordability + Gap Analysis

Geographic Trade Area

The Geographic Trade Area is a conventional method of defining a housing market. The boundary of the Geographic Trade Area is determined by what is reachable within approximately 24 minutes of the City, which is the average commute time of Highland Park residents. This area represents the realistic market area where households search for housing. Within this area, approximately 65% of households encompassed by the Trade Area boundaries own their homes, while 35% of households rent their homes.

Table 16: Number of Households by Affordability Category – Geographic Trade Area

Annual Household Income	Number of Households	Maximum Affordable Rent	Maximum Affordable Home Price
$0–$25,000	173,747	$625	$51,000
$25,000–$50,000	155,948	$1,250	$125,000
$50,000–$75,000	144,083	$1,875	$200,000
$75,000–$100,000	98,315	$2,500	$300,000
>$100,000	274,605	$2,500+	$300,000+

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

Table 17: Tenure Choice – Geographic Trade Area

Annual Household Income	Homeowner Households	Renter Households
$0–$25,000	112,752	60,995
$25,000–$50,000	101,202	54,747
$50,000–$75,000	93,502	50,581
$75,000–$100,000	63,801	34,514
>$100,000	178,203	96,402

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 202–2024, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

Within the Geographic Trade Area, housing supply is concentrated in moderate price ranges, with shortages occurring at both the lowest and highest ends of the income spectrum. Rental units affordable to households earning $25,000 to $75,000 are generally available in excess of demand, but there is a substantial shortage of units affordable to households earning under $25,000. Rental shortages also reappear at higher income levels, where supply of units priced above $1,500 per month is limited.

Table 18: Affordability Gap Rentals – Geographic Trade Area

Annual Household Income	Affordable Monthly Rent (Approx.)	Number of Housing Units	Number of Households	Affordability Gap	
$0–$25,000	$0–$499	33,679	60,995	**–27,316**	**undersupply**
$25,001–$50,000	$500–$999	131,831	54,747	**77,084**	**oversupply**
$50,001–$75,000	$1,000–$1,499	84,869	50,581	**34,288**	**oversupply**
$75,001–$100,000	$1,500–$1,999	21,195	34,514	**–13,319**	**undersupply**
$100,001–$150,000	$2,000–$2,499	6,768	46,118	**–39,350**	**undersupply**
$150,001–$200,000	$2,500–$2,999	1,756	23,803	**–22,047**	**undersupply**
$200,000 +	$3,000 +	2,323	26,481	**–24,158**	**undersupply**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

The ownership market shows a similar pattern. Homes affordable to households earning under $25,000 are in significantly short supply, while households earning $25,000 to $50,000 are comparatively well served by the available inventory. Modest shortages exist for middle-income households, and supply again becomes constrained for households earning above $100,000.

Table 19: Affordability Gap Homes for Sale – Geographic Trade Area

Annual Household Income	Affordable Home Price (Approx.)	Number of Housing Units	Number of Households	Affordability Gap	
$0–$25,000	$0–$50,000	56,135	112,752	**–56,617**	**undersupply**
$25,001–$50,000	$50,001–$150,000	152,170	101,202	**50,968**	**oversupply**
$50,001–$75,000	$150,001–$200,000	87,411	93,502	**–6,091**	**undersupply**
$75,001–$100,000	$200,001–$300,000	124,965	63,801	**61,164**	**oversupply**
>$100,000	$300,000+	129,325	205,704	**(76,379)**	**undersupply**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

The Geographic Trade Area demonstrates a housing market that most closely serves moderate-income households, while very low-income households face the greatest affordability challenges. These conditions increase the likelihood that lower income households experience housing cost burden and face heightened competition for limited affordable units.



Affordability Analysis

Within the City of Highland Park, the trends differ slightly when it comes to income and available units. There is a significant undersupply of rental and for purchase units affordable to households making under $25,000, which is just below the 2024 annual median income of $29,309. With the greatest proportion of households within Highland Park earning less than $25,000, there is demonstrated need for additional housing units considered affordable to low-income households.

For renters earning less than $25,000, there are substantially fewer units affordable at or below approximately $499 per month than there are households in need, resulting in a deficit of more than 400 units. A similar pattern is evident in the for-sale market, where homes priced below $50,000 fall well short of demand, with a deficit exceeding 300 units. These findings suggest that many extremely low-income households are likely cost burdened or competing for a limited supply of truly affordable housing.

At moderate income levels, the market conditions shift. Households earning between $25,000 and $50,000 experience an oversupply of both rental units and homes for purchase within their affordability ranges. Rental units affordable between $500 and $999 per month exceed the number of households in this income band, and homes priced between $50,000 and $150,000 are also more plentiful than the number of moderate-income households able to afford them comfortably. Rental affordability remains relatively favorable for households earning between $50,000 and $100,000, where supply continues to exceed demand, although the ownership market becomes more constrained at incomes above $50,000.

At higher income levels, the supply of both rental and ownership opportunities again becomes limited. There are no identified rental units affordable to households earning above $100,000, and the number of homes priced above $300,000 is insufficient relative to the number of higher-income households. This indicates that while moderate-income households are comparatively well served by the existing housing stock, both lower-income and higher-income households face constraints, though for different reasons.

These patterns suggest that many households earning less than $25,000 annually are paying more than what is considered affordable due to limited supply at the lowest price points. Some moderate and higher-income households may occupy units priced below their maximum affordability thresholds, particularly within the moderate-income ranges where supply exceeds demand. While this may provide flexibility for those households, it can intensify competition for lower-cost units and increase displacement pressures for residents with the fewest housing options, especially when considering barriers such as credit requirements, down payment constraints, and rental screening practices.

Table 20: Number of Households by Affordability Category – City of Highland Park

Annual Household Income	Number of Households	Maximum Affordable Rent	Maximum Affordable Home Price
$0–$25,000	1,818	$625	$51,000
$25,000–$50,000	872	$1,250	$125,000
$50,000–$75,000	457	$1,875	$200,000
$75,000–$100,000	313	$2,500	$300,000
>$100,000	446	$2,500+	$300,000+

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

The homeownership rate for the City of Highland Park is 44.5%, based on 2024 U.S. Census Estimates (compared to 67.6% homeownership across Wayne County). The table below conveys the difference in homeownership and rental rates by income level.

Table 21: Tenure Choice – City of Highland Park

Annual Household Income	Homeowner Households	Renter Households
$0–$25,000	809	1,009
$25,000–$50,000	388	484
$50,000–$75,000	204	254
$75,000–$100,000	139	174
>$100,000	198	248

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

The tables below show the current affordability gap in the City of Highland Park. As in the Geographic Trade Area, rental housing units cluster in the $500–$1,500 price range, which results in an undersupply of more than 400 units for households making under $25,000 per year.

Table 22: Affordability Gap Rentals – City of Highland Park

Annual Household Income	Affordable Monthly Rent (Approx.)	Number of Housing Units	Number of Households	Affordability Gap	
$0–$25,000	$0–$499	586	1,009	**–423**	**undersupply**
$25,001–$50,000	$500–$999	859	484	**375**	**oversupply**
$50,001–$75,000	$1,000–$1,499	404	254	**150**	**oversupply**
$75,001–$100,000	$1,500–$1,999	231	174	**57**	**oversupply**
$100,001–$150,000	$2,000–$2,499	0	148	**–148**	**undersupply**
$150,001–$200,000	$2,500–$2,999	0	24	**–24**	**undersupply**
$200,000 +	$3,000 +	0	76	**–76**	**undersupply**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

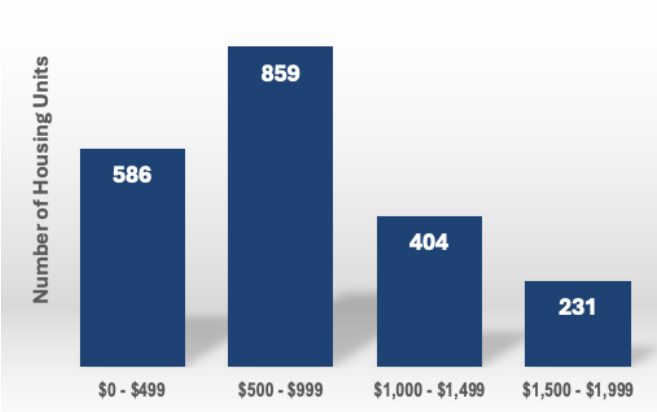
The vast majority of For Sale housing units in the City of Highland Park are valued between $50,000 and $150,000. While there are some units affordable to households making under $25,000, half of these households are likely paying more. This combined with the impediments to homeownership, and the added costs even if a household is able to achieve homeownership, means the opportunity is much more limited than the data indicates. Further, the problem of competition from higher income households is even more acute for homeownership, because mortgage companies are more likely to approve loans to households with higher incomes.

Table 23: Affordability Gap Homes for Sale – City of Highland Park

Annual Household Income	Affordable Home Price (Approx.)	Number of Housing Units	Number of Households	Affordability Gap	
$0–$25,000	$0–$50,000	492	809	**–317**	**undersupply**
$25,001–$50,000	$50,001–$150,000	879	388	**491**	**oversupply**
$50,001–$75,000	$150,001–$200,000	153	204	**–51**	**undersupply**
$75,001–$100,000	$200,001–$300,000	116	139	**–23**	**undersupply**
>$100,000	$300,000+	43	198	**–155**	**undersupply**

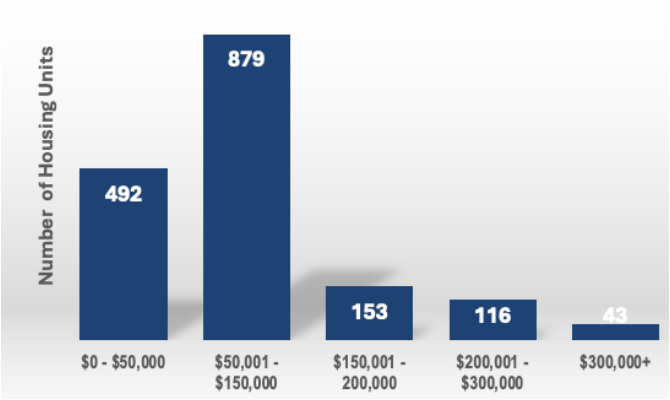
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

Figure 5: Existing Rental Units by Contract Rent, 2024 City of Highland Park



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024

Figure 6: Existing For Sale Units by Home Value, 2024: City of Highland Park



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024

Percentage of Homes in Various Price Points

To display the data in a more concise fashion, the tables below show the percentages for both For Rent and For Sale housing units that fall within each price range. The most notable disparities between the City and Geographic Trade Area occur in the lowest-cost and highest-cost ranges, reflecting Highland Park's concentration of lower-priced housing relative to the broader market.

The Trade Area contains a much greater proportion of mid-priced rental units between $1,000 and $1,500 (30% compared to 19% in the city). The share of higher-cost rental units above $1,500 is similar in both areas.

When compared to the broader Geographic Trade Area, the disparity is also pronounced in the ownership market. Nearly three-quarters of homes in Highland Park are priced below $150,000, including 29% priced under $50,000, while only 38% of homes in the Trade Area fall below that threshold. In contrast, higher-priced homes above $200,000 comprise 46% of the Trade Area inventory but only 9% of homes within the city. This distribution highlights Highland Park's role as a lower-cost housing market within the region.

Table 24: Percentage of Rental Housing Units within Rent Levels

	$0–$500	$500–$1,000	$1,000–$1,500	$1,500+
City of Highland Park	28%	41%	19%	11%
Geographic Trade Area	12%	47%	30%	11%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024, ESRI, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

Table 25: Percentage of For Sale Housing Units within Price Levels

	$0–$50,000	$50,000–$150,000	$150,000–$200,000	$200,000+
City of Highland Park	29%	52%	9%	9%
Geographic Trade Area	10%	28%	16%	46%

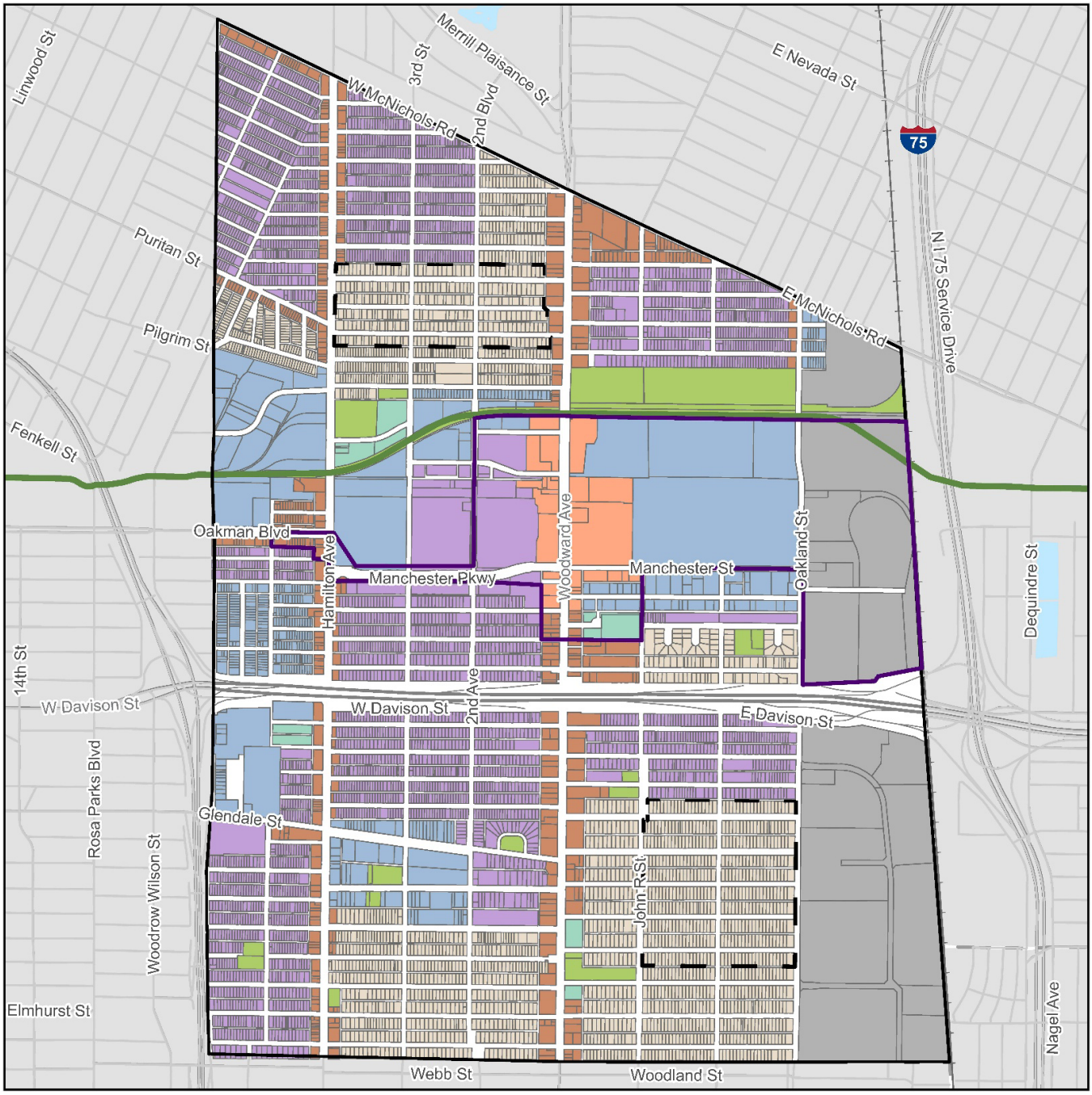
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020–2024, ESRI, Zillow Mortgage Calculator

7 FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Map establishes a long range framework for guiding growth, development, redevelopment, preservation, and public investment throughout the City of Highland Park. The identified land use districts represent the community's vision for how land should be utilized over time to support housing stability, economic development, neighborhood revitalization, environmental sustainability, and improved quality of life.

Table 26: Comparison of Zoning Districts and Future Land Use Designations

Future Land Use District	Description	Existing Zoning Designations	Proposed Zoning Designations
Civic	Public and institutional uses such as government facilities, schools, libraries, public safety, community centers, and religious institutions that provide essential services and strengthen community identity.	C – Institutional & Civic	C – Institutional & Civic
Downtown	The City's primary mixed-use center supporting retail, office, residential, entertainment, cultural, and civic uses in a walkable environment that promotes reinvestment and economic vitality.	CBD – Central Business District	CBD – Central Business District SP - Special Purpose District PRP – Planned Redevelopment Project District
Employment Center	Employment focused areas for office, commercial, light industrial, institutional, research, and flex-space uses that support business growth, innovation, and workforce development.	CBD – Central Business District SP Special Purpose District	CBD – Central Business District SP - Special Purpose District PRP – Planned Redevelopment Project District Transit Oriented Development
Traditional Neighborhood	Residential neighborhoods supporting a variety of housing types, parks, schools, and neighborhood services while promoting housing stability, reinvestment, and walkability.	R1 – Single Family R-UV – Residential Urban Village	R1-A - Low-Density
Industrial and Research	Areas for manufacturing, logistics, research, technology, and industrial uses that encourage modernization, innovation, and long-term employment growth.	IRD – Industrial & Research	IRD – Industrial & Research District PRP – Planned Redevelopment Project District
Neighborhood Center	Small-scale mixed-use centers providing neighborhood serving retail, services, offices, community facilities, and housing within walkable community gathering places.	MUV – Urban Village Mixed Use	MUV – Urban Village Mixed Use R4 – Mixed High Density PRP – Planned Redevelopment Project District Transit Oriented Development
Parks	Public parks, open space, greenways, and recreational areas that support recreation, environmental stewardship, stormwater management, connectivity, and public health.	N/A	P – Parks
Mixed Residential	Flexible neighborhoods accommodating a mix of residential, commercial, civic, institutional, and employment uses that promote housing diversity, reinvestment, and walkable development.	R1 – Single Family R-UV Residential Urban Village TOD – Transit Oriented Development	R1 - Low-Density R2 - Low-Medium Density R3 – Medium Density R4 – Mixed High Density PRP – Planned Redevelopment Project District Transit Oriented Development
Historic Neighborhoods	Established residential areas where preservation, rehabilitation, and context-sensitive redevelopment protect historic character while supporting long-term neighborhood stability.	R1-H Historic Residential	R1 - Low-Density



Future Land Use

City of Highland Park, Michigan

July 21, 2026

LEGEND

Future Land Use

- Civic
- Downtown
- Employment Center
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Historic Neighborhood
- Industrial and Research
- Neighborhood Center
- Parks
- Mixed Residential Neighborhood

- TIF District
- Highland Park City Boundary
- Joe Louis Greenway

0 500 1,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source. City of Highland Park 2023. McKenna 2026.

MCKENNA

8 ZONING PLAN & RECOMMENDATIONS

The following zoning recommendations are intended to implement the vision and policies of the amended Highland Park 2030 Master Plan. Together, these actions provide a framework for modernizing the City's zoning regulations, aligning zoning districts with the Future Land Use Plan, expanding housing opportunities, supporting strategic redevelopment, and creating a more predictable and effective regulatory framework for future growth and investment.

Establish a New R-4 Mixed High-Density Residential District

Create a new R-4 Mixed High-Density Residential District to accommodate higher-density residential development in appropriate locations. The district should support apartments, condominiums, senior housing, mixed-income developments, and other multifamily housing types while incorporating design standards that ensure compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods and encourage high-quality residential environments.

Expand and Refine the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) District

Reevaluate the location and boundaries of the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) District to better support walkable, mixed-use development along Highland Park's priority corridors. Consider expanding the district beyond Woodward Avenue to include strategic portions of Second Avenue, Third Avenue, Glendale Avenue, and other corridors within the Mixed Residential areas that have access to transit, neighborhood commercial uses, and redevelopment opportunities.

Update Zoning Districts to Reflect the Proposed Zoning Plan

Revise the City's zoning map and district framework to align with the proposed zoning district recommendations. This update will ensure that zoning classifications are consistent with the Future Land Use Plan, support the City's long term development vision, and provide greater clarity for property owners, developers, and residents.

Update the Planned Redevelopment Project (PRP) District

Modernize the Planned Redevelopment Project (PRP) District to better facilitate the redevelopment of large, vacant, or underutilized properties. The revised district should incorporate flexible development standards, encourage mixed-use and mixed-income projects, streamline the review process, and promote high-quality site design while maintaining compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

Revise the Permitted Use Table to Support Housing Diversity

Update the permitted use table to reflect the full range of housing types envisioned within the Mixed Residential designation. This should include provisions for missing middle housing, such as duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, townhomes, and small multifamily developments, while establishing clear development standards that ensure compatibility with adjacent residential areas.

Align Corridor Zoning with the Future Land Use Plan

Reevaluate and rezone major transportation corridors to better reflect their intended development pattern and function. This includes applying the Mixed Urban Village (MUV) District along appropriate portions of Woodward Avenue, including the area north of Midland Street to Geneva Street, and other corridors identified for mixed-use redevelopment. These updates will support walkable, mixed-use development, strengthen commercial activity, and encourage appropriate residential investment along key corridors.

Complete a Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update

Undertake a comprehensive update of the City's Zoning Ordinance to implement the recommendations of the amended Master Plan. The update should include revised zoning districts, development standards, permitted uses, administrative procedures, parking requirements, design standards, and other regulatory provisions necessary to support the City's long-term land use, housing, and economic development objectives while improving the overall usability and organization of the ordinance.

Recommended Zoning Districts and Development Matrix

Category	Zoning District	District Name	1 Unit	2 Units	3-4 Units	5-8 Units	Multifamily	Commercial	Industrial	Mixed-Use
Residential	R1-H	Historical Low-Density Residential	X							
	R1	Low-Density Residential	X							
	R2	Low-Medium Density Residential	X	X						
	R3	Medium-Density Residential		X	X	X				X
	R4	Mixed High-Density Residential			X	X	X	X		
Commercial / Mixed Use	CBD	Central Business District					X	X		
	TOD	Transit Oriented Development					X	X		
	MUV	Urban Village Mixed Use					X	X		X
Industrial	IRD	Industrial & Research District						X	X	
Civic / Public	C	Institutional & Civic								
	P	Parks								
Special Purpose	SP	Special Purpose District								X
	PRP	Planned Redevelopment Project District								X

9 STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The Strategic Action Plan for the City of Highland Park 2030 Master Plan establishes a coordinated framework for advancing the community's long-term vision through targeted policies, implementation actions, and strategic initiatives. The plan reflects priorities identified through public engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and ongoing planning efforts, providing a practical structure for guiding future investment, redevelopment, and decision making across the city.

The objectives outlined in this section are intended to address key focus areas including housing stabilization, economic growth, neighborhood revitalization, infrastructure improvements, sustainability, mobility, and community development. Together, these goals create a comprehensive implementation strategy that supports equitable growth, strengthens community assets, and enhances quality of life for residents. This section serves as the guiding framework for transforming planning priorities into actionable projects and measurable outcomes that support Highland Park's continued reinvestment and long term resilience.

RESOURCE ABBREVIATIONS	
CA	City Administration
MDOT	Michigan Department of Transportation
PC	Planning Commission
CC	City Council
SM	State of Michigan
WC	Wayne County
NP	Non-Profit Organization
MEDC	Michigan Economic Development Corporation
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
PD	Planning Department

Timeline	
L	5+ Years
M	3–5 Years
S	1–3 Years
PRIORITY	
1	Most Important
2	Very Important
3	Important

Summary of Priorities

Community Priority	Priority Statement
Housing	Support the preservation, rehabilitation, and development of safe, affordable, and diverse housing options that strengthen neighborhood stability, expand homeownership opportunities, and improve quality of life for Highland Park residents.
Transportation	Develop a safe, connected, and multimodal transportation network that improves walkability, public transit access, bicycle connectivity, and mobility throughout Highland Park.
Infrastructure	Modernize and maintain critical public infrastructure systems, utilities, and public facilities to support reliable services, redevelopment opportunities, and long term community resilience.
Parks	Enhance parks, recreation facilities, and public open spaces that promote public health, environmental sustainability, community gathering, and equitable access to recreational opportunities.
Community	Foster inclusive community engagement, neighborhood collaboration, cultural preservation, and civic participation that strengthen community identity and social connectivity.
Health & Safety	Promote safe, healthy, and resilient neighborhoods through improved public services, environmental quality, blight reduction, emergency preparedness, and public safety initiatives.
Economic Development	Encourage commercial reinvestment, entrepreneurship, workforce development, industrial innovation, and strategic partnerships that support long term economic growth and employment opportunities in Highland Park.



Housing

Action / Action Item	Resource	Priority	Timeline	Project & Programs	Permitting	Partnership
H.1 **Ensure residents have equitable access to safe and affordable housing options and resources suitable for citizens of all ages, incomes and physical abilities.**						
» Develop resident resource hub for support services.	CA, PD, PC, NP	1	L	•		
» Update the zoning code to allow for a variety of housing types.	CA, NP, WC	2	S		•	
» Legalize accessory dwelling units.	PD, PC, CA	1	S	•		
H.2 **Prioritize housing initiatives which preserve housing affordability for existing residents, and support attracting new residents.**						
» Demolish dangerous city-owned housing that cannot be restored.	CA, PD, NP, SM	1	L	•		
» Adopt the 2021 (International Existing Building Code)	CA, WC, SM, CC	2	M		•	
H.3 **Coordinate the transition of publicly owned property into new housing development opportunities for all income levels.**						
» Streamline transfer of land bank real estate to residents.	CA, PD, WC, SM, CC	1	L			•
H.4 **Allow residents the opportunity to directly participate in localized neighborhood planning**						
» Provide partnership resources to renters.	CA, PD, NP	2	M			•
» Leverage existing financial partnerships for developers.	NP, CA, WC	2	S			•
H.5 **Align housing strategies with future land use, zoning ordinance, and zoning map**						
» Adopt amendments to zoning ordinance to support housing goals	PD, PC, CA, CC	1	M		•	
H.6 **Develop policies which offer conditions, criteria, and processes to guide development incentive decision making**						
» Develop a Policy for LIHTC and Brownfield/TIF incentives.	CA, PD, PC, MEDC	2	M		•	

Transportation

Action / Action Item	Resource	Priority	Timeline	Project & Programs	Permitting	Partnership
T.1 Enable the full range of mobility choices, including private automobiles, transit, biking and walking.						
» Construct infrastructure on Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Network.	MDOT, WC, CA, PD	1	L	•		
» Adopt Woodward Avenue Action Association Complete Streets Plan.	MDOT, WC, CA, PD	1	M			•
» Continue complete streets interventions in Woodward Non-Motorized Plan.	MDOT, WC, CA	1	S	•		
» Improve pedestrian safety along Woodward Avenue.	MDOT, WC, PD	2	M	•		
» Implement Downtown Strategic Plan's Open Street policy along Manchester Parkway.	MDOT, WC, CA	2	S			•
» Modify zoning code and subdivision regulations to create new multi-modal, context sensitive street sections.	MDOT, WC, SM	2	M		•	
T.2 Maintain and restore street connections when possible.						
» Identify funding to maintain and improve streets and sidewalks.	MDOT, WC, CA, PD	1	L			•
» Add temporary bike lanes along Victor Street.	MDOT, PD, PC	1	S	•		
» Collaborate with transit agencies to optimize connections.	PD, CA, MDOT, PC	1	M			•
» Apply for Woodward Avenue Bicycling and Walking Safety Audit grant.	WC, MDOT, PD	2	M	•		

Infrastructure

Action / Action Item	Resource	Priority	Timeline	Project & Programs	Permitting	Partnership
I.1 **Increase water, sewer, energy efficiency and affordability at the parcel, neighborhood, and community levels.**						
» Advocate for access to affordable clean energy and water.	CA, WC, SM, GLWA	1	L	•		
» Work with GLWA to ensure fair and equitable water rates.	CA, SM, WC	1	M			•
» Improve Water and Sewer Meters and Rates	CA, GLWA, WC	1	M			•
» Implement Stormwater Credit Program	CA, WC, GLWA	2	M	•		
» Implement FloodWise Community Program	CA, WC, SM	2	S	•		
» Adopt Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Program Plan	CA, WC, SM	2	S	•		
I.2 **Align infrastructure goals with future residential and commercial development.**						
» Develop sustainable street light energy sources.	CA, PD, WC, MDOT	1	L		•	
» Ongoing Maintenance and replacement of water and sewer lines	CA, SM, WC	2	M	•		
I.3 **Advocate with regulatory and legislative bodies for access to affordable clean energy and water, programs, and resources for residents**						
» Identify funding for ongoing road and infrastructure project improvements	CA, SM, WC	2	L	•		
» Lauch a public education campaign.	MDOT, WC, SM, MEDC, CA	1	S	•		
» Develop sustainable water infrastructure plan.	CA, NP, WC	2	S	•		
I.4 **Implement Improvements to road infrastructure throughout the city.**						
» Improve primary roads such as Purtian & Hamilton to support reduced collisions and traffic	CA, GLWA, WC, SM	1	M	•	•	
I.5 **Ensure all resident have access to quality internet and broadband services**						
» Engage in grant opportunities and partnerships which deliver internet services to residential households	CA, PD, WC, SM, CC	1	M	•		•

Parks

Action / Action Item	Resource	Priority	Timeline	Project & Programs	Permitting	Partnership
P.1	**Prioritize park infrastructure as a solution to many Highland Park issues, including improving community health and regional perception.**					
» Encourage park safety with adequate lighting.	CA, DNR, WC, NP	1	L	•		
» Provide structured play areas.	CA, WC, DNR	1	S	•		
P.2	**Adopt Long Range Park & recreation Department strategies for park improvement, maintenance, and operations**					
» Adopt 5-Year Parks & Recreation Plan	CA, DNR, WC	1	L		•	
» Include Parks & Recreational Assets in Annual CIP Plan	CA, DNR, PD	1	S		•	
P.3	**Participate in funding initiatives, and programs which support improved Municipal Facilities and recreational opportunities**					
» Pursue DNR Grant funding for park improvements	DNR, MEDC, WC, CA	1	L	•		
» Develop Adopt-A-Park program	DNR, CA, WC	1	S	•		
» Collaborate with Regional Agencies	CA, NP, WC	2	S			•
P.4	**Prioritize public beautification of residential and commercial areas with art, murals, and visual improvements**					
» Develop civic space standards.	MEDC, CA, NP	2	M		•	
P.5	**Consolidate Park and Recreational Inventory**					
» Convert and Assemble empty parcels into additional community space.	CA, PD, DNR	2	L	•		
P.6	**Support the activation of the Joe Louis Greenway and public spaces**					

Economic Development

Action / Action Items	Resource	Priority	Timeline	Project & Programs	Permitting	Partnership
E.1	**Nurture an economy that's diverse, adaptive and capable of providing opportunities for all.**					
» Expand allowable outdoor dining and retail sales.	CA, MEDC, PD, NP	1	L		•	
» Allocate makerspaces in zoning districts.	PD, PC, CA	2	S		•	
» Legalize accessory dwelling units	PD, PC, MEDC	2	M		•	
E.2	**Respect traditions that give Highland Park its sense of place and inspire its citizens' devotion**					
» Support local magnet schools for technical education.	CA, NP, PD	2	L			•
» Implement planning for placemaking and community destinations	CA, NP, SM	1	M		•	
E.3	**Position community to attract & reward future public & private sector investment.**					
» Study establishing a Highland Park Community Development Corporation (CDC).	CA, MEDC, SM	1	L			•
» Market and Promote Redevelopment Areas	CA, NP, MEDC	2	M	•		
E.4	**Encourage suitable development in priority areas and corridors**					
» Develop reuse strategies for industrial spaces.	PD, CA, MEDC	1	L	•		
» Package the conversion of public owned land into residential and commercial developments	PD, MEDC, CA, CC	1	M			•
E.5	**Ensure financial and economic development incentives are aligned with the long term objectives and priorities of the city at large**					
» Evaluate qualifying brownfields to secure tax increment financing.	CA, MEDC, PD, PC, CC	1	L		•	
» Pursue Michigan Business Development Program grants.	MEDC, CA, SM	1	M		•	
» Pursue Michigan Main Street Program for priority redevelopment areas	MEDC, SM, CA	1	S	•		
E.6	**Align the TIF and Development Plan with the long range housing and economic development objectives of adopted plans and strategic documents.**					
» Adopt New the TIF and Development Plan district plan.	CA, PD, MEDC, TIFA	1	L	•		

Community

Action / Action Items	Resource	Priority	Timeline	Project & Programs	Permitting	Partnership
C.1 Align Community and Housing vision						
» Adopt changes in the Future Land Use Map	PD, PC, CA, CC	1	L		•	
» Update the zoning code to reflect the character areas in the Future Land Use Map.	PD, PC, CA, CC	1	S		•	
» Simplify the zoning code to reflect best practices in administration and application, including the use of clear and objective standards.	PD, PC, CA, CC	1	M		•	
» Expand by-right uses in the zoning code to expedite adaptive reuse projects and enable residential projects without permitting.	PD, PC, CA, CC	2	M		•	
» Update the zoning code to permit gentle densification in all neighborhood districts to increase affordability.	PD, PC, CA, CC	1	M		•	
C.2 Support Downtown Revitalization Efforts						
» Partner with MEDC's Michigan Main Street to access programs valuable to Downtown revitalization.	MEDC, CA, PD	1	L			•
C.3 Encourage the increase of youth programming and engagement opportunities						
» Youth Engagement, Community Events, City Parking Plan & Meters	MEDC, CA, PD	1	S	•		
C.4 Develop a Comprehensive Community Wide Risk Assessment Plan						
» Comprehensive Risk Assessment, Emergency Snow and Flooding, Monitor Master Plan Process, Cyber Protection Measures & Policy	CA, NP, MEDC	2	M	•		

Health & Safety

Action / Action Items	Resource	Priority	Timeline	Project & Programs	Permitting	Partnership
HS.1 Protect and preserve human health and well-being by reducing health risks and increasing access to sources of healthy food, water, and active transportation.						
» Provide additional fire and hazmat training.	CA, WC, SM, NP	1	L	•		
» Target select empty lots for cleanup and maintenance.	CA, WC, SM	1	S	•		
» Provide resources to clear streets during and after winter storms.	CA, WC, NP	2	S			•
HS.2 Mitigate hazards for roads and multimodal transportation collisions						
» Review Wayne County Hazard Mitigation Plan for adoption.	CA, WC, SM	1	S			•
» Enable citizen clean-up crews.	CA, WC, SM	1	M			•
HS.3 Ensure city has plans and processes for Emergency Preparedness and Operations situations						
» Contract with community based organizations for early warnings.	CA, NP, WC	2	S			•
» Air Quality Controls & Ordinance, Food & Safety Policy, Pest & Animal Control Policy, Schools	CA, WC, SM, NP	1	L	•		
HS.4 Monitor and Employ policy and programs which support community mental health among residents						
» Mental Health, Infrastructure, Emergency Preparedness and Operations, Grow Fire & Police with City Growth and infrastructure and planning/ deployment, training, pedestrian and road safety	CA, NP, WC	2	M	•		

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