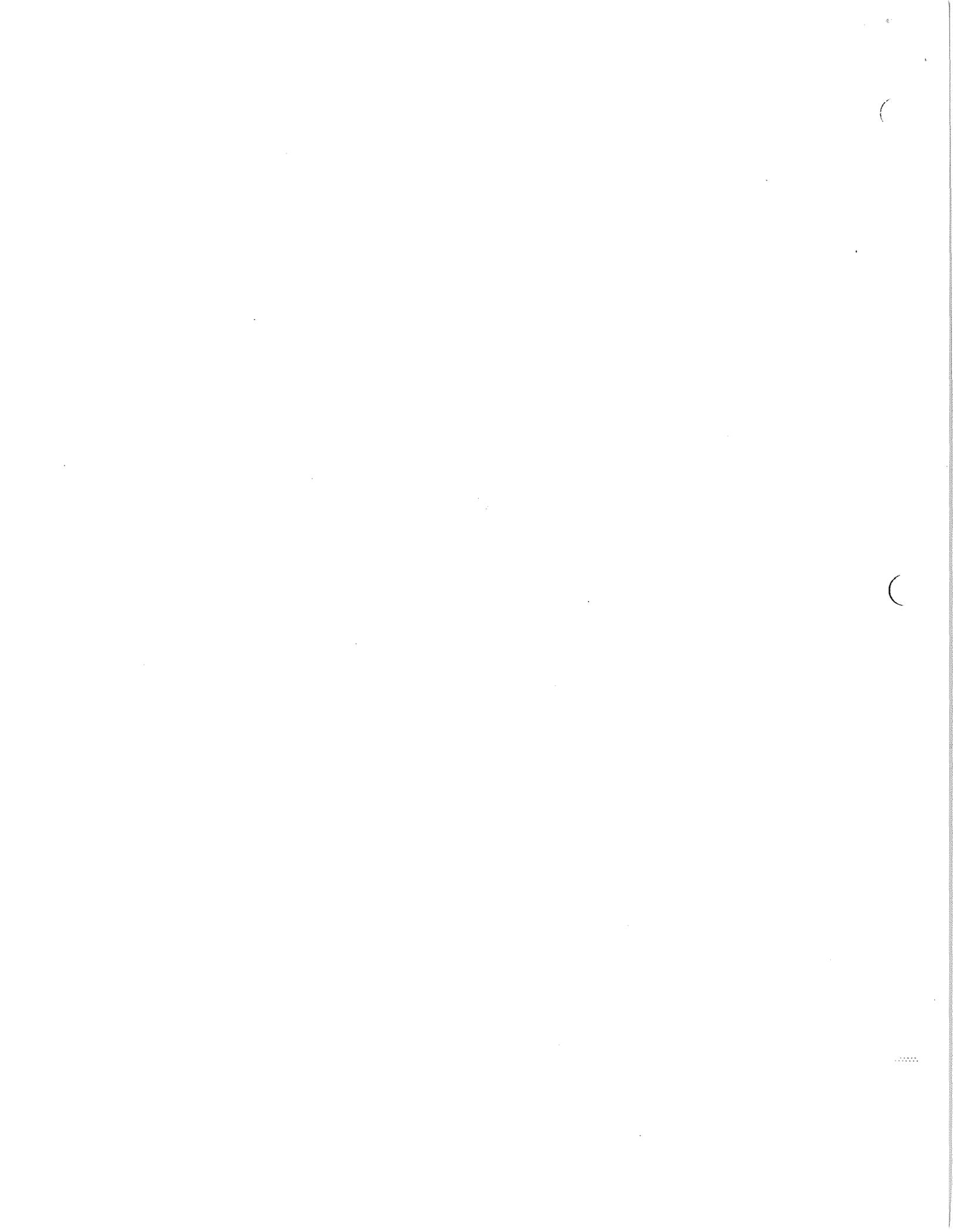


COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT

PLAN

THE CITY OF YPSILANTI  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
1 SOUTH HURON STREET  
YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN 48197

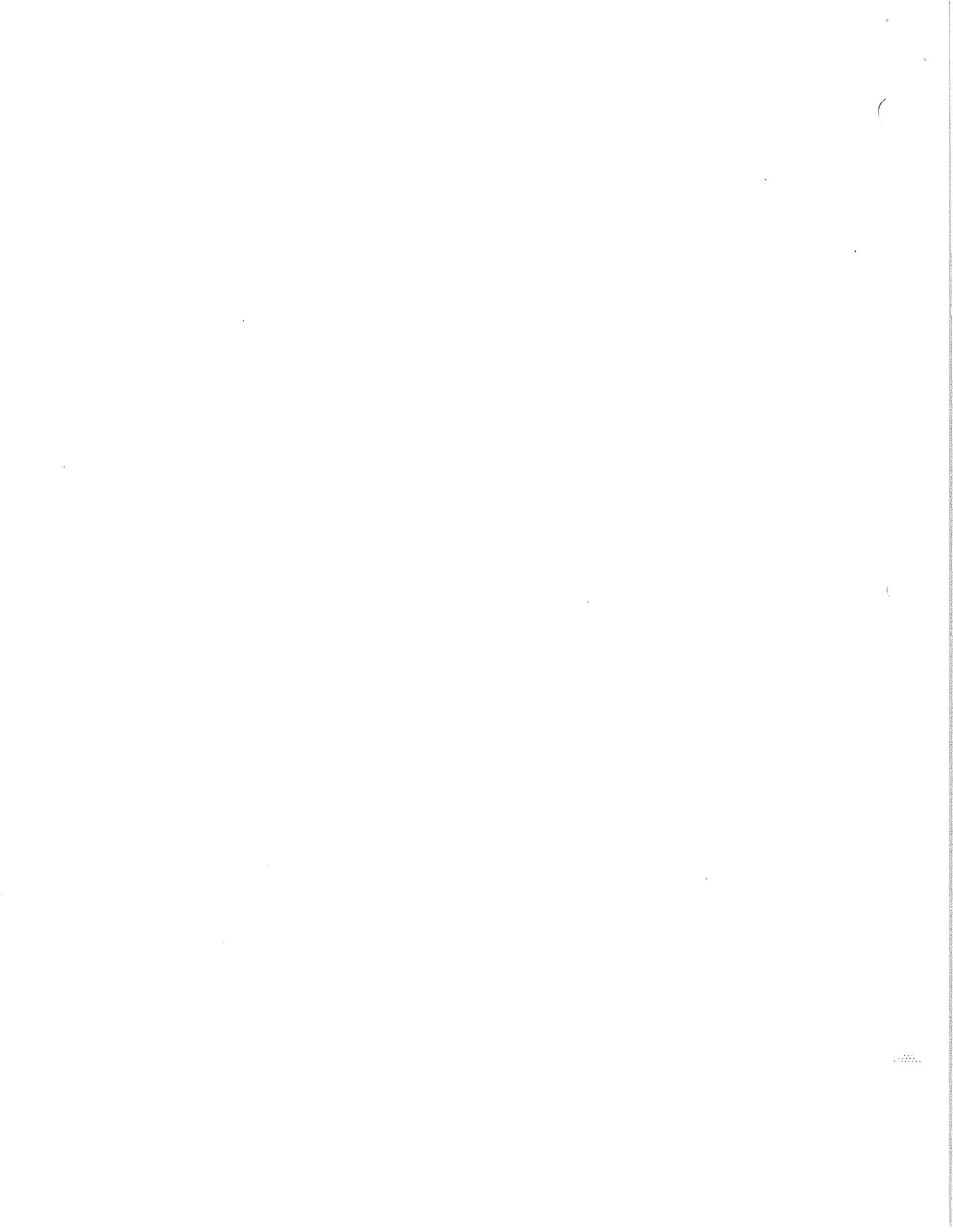


## Executive Summary

The City of Ypsilanti has prepared the Comprehensive Development Plan to address the priority of future development in Ypsilanti. The development Plan pertains to the Downtown and Depot Town Development Authority Districts which are both protected by Ypsilanti's Historic District. In addition, the Downtown Development Authority is designated as a tax increment financing district.

Ypsilanti's Economic Development Department has carefully analysed the following data including: historical background, demographics, neighborhoods, existing land use, public sector involvement, circulation, and market potential. Strategies have been planned to resolve identified problems over a three year period and includes an estimated cost for each of these projects. These projects have been prioritized on the basis of need and ability to implement.

Through the combined efforts of the Economic Development Department and Main Street Program, the Comprehensive Development Plan prioritizes recommendations in an order of most needing financial assistance from outside the City's own funding sources. The following data reviewing the past and present conditions of Ypsilanti conclude that these recommendations are essential to revitalization of Ypsilanti's economic base.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

The history of commercial development over the past 25 to 30 years in Ypsilanti is not unlike that experienced in thousands of towns and cities in the United States. The impact of the post World War II years (seller's market coupled with a growing industrialization and population) gave a false sense of security to the Ypsilanti downtown retail community. Meaningful planning and business cooperation was disregarded. During this time, convenience goods merchants developed locations on high traffic streets or in residential areas, away from downtown. Many of these retail locations were selected because the potential of the area demanded it. But, unfortunately, many others were located because the developers legitimately felt that the downtown area, in its present state, would offer little advantage to them. These latter developments were unfortunate -- not for the developers, because they selected the best alternative, but unfortunate for the consumers in the area and the downtown merchants.

The position of downtown as the "central hub" has been diluted but it can be recaptured through redevelopment. Consumers want and need a "hub" of commercial activity where various goods and services can be shopped for and purchased with convenience. Where large and small stores are located, where different price lines are offered, and where a full range of shopping goods and services (consumer and professional) can be found. Agglomerations of such stores and offices can be found in only two locations -- either in downtown or in suburban shopping centers. The modern shopping center has set the standard which downtowns must accept and acquire, i.e.,

- 1 ... convenient street access
- 2 ... ample parking, close to stores
- 3 ... inviting and attractive stores and center decor
- 4 ... a visual sense of unity, through architectural design
- 5 ... width and depth of merchandise selection
- 6 ... favorable price-quality relationship with regard to merchandise and services offered
- 7 ... powerful sales promotion (price, loss leader, etc.)
- 8 ... courteous, concerned and professional sales helpers
- 9 ... creation of a "fun-to-shop" atmosphere, through exciting promotion and activities, beauty and cleanliness of surroundings, convenience, etc.

All of these necessary customer inducing factors can be "built-into" the new Ypsilanti downtown center which extends from the Central Business District to Historic Depot Town.

The City of Ypsilanti over the past decade has begun to address many of these issues. The creation of both a Downtown Development Authority and Depot Town Development Authority, a tax increment financing district, a historic district encompassing forty blocks of residential and commercial structures, adoption of a downtown Facade Plan and Master Plan, establishment of a matching grant program for facade rehabilitation and the start-up of the Main Street program are all helping move both the Downtown and Depot Town forward.

A variety of strengths exist in the downtown which are currently being built upon -- the long established clientele of the area, the government services such as the library, museum, city hall, post office, financial and legal services, as well as a variety of class A

restaurants which draw from the greater Detroit Metropolitan area. Riverside Park and Frog Island park, which are continually being developed, will be another attraction in the downtown area.

In Depot Town, revitalization has been ongoing since 1975. Through the efforts of a small neighborhood group who formed an association and foundation and began to purchase and restore the dilapidated building stock, the area began to redevelop. The Depot Town Downtown Development Authority was created in 1984 to continue redevelopment efforts in that area. Many strengths currently exist which can be built upon - solid support for historic preservation, a history of reuse of second and third story spaces, development of a variety of restaurant and entertainment functions and development of specialty retailing and a Farmers' Market.

# DOWNTOWN DEVELOPEMENT AUTHORITIES



## II. HISTORY

Depot Town began its growth in the 1830's, northeast of today's Central Business District, because land prices in the 1820's along the Detroit-Chicago road (Michigan Avenue) were already high. The path of the railroad line did not approach the center of the original village, probably because of the shape of the land. With the decision to locate the depot east of the river also, the area rapidly grew.

By 1850, a saw mill, flour mill, a large farmer's store and an iron foundry were established. The neighborhood also had the first fire department, first clothing store and the City's first street with a paved gutter.

The original City Hall and jail were built in 1858 on W. Cross Street between Huron Street and the river. This strategic site selection established the necessary link between the business districts, separated only geographically by the river.

In 1859, the Follett House was built; a hotel considered to be one of the finest outside Detroit. In the 1860's, Benjamin Follett influenced the decision to build a new depot, "a fine brick station with a stately tower and was called the finest station on the road between Detroit and Chicago".

Just as Depot Town thrived with the height of the railroad, so did it decline as the twentieth century brought forth the automobile and other modern forms of transportation. While the impact of these new forms of transportation had a negative affect on Depot Town's economy, just two blocks away, Michigan Avenue began to boom with a tremendous increase in its business activities.

Prior to World War II, the City of Ypsilanti was oriented toward the surrounding agricultural community. The Ypsilanti CBD

had grown in relation to the activities of the regional Farm Bureau and served as the main shopping location for areas as far away as Milan, Dexter and Chelsea.

The character of the City changed dramatically during World War II when a bomber factory was located at Willow Run. The massive migration of labor, especially from the Appalachia region, transformed the agricultural character of the town. Both Ford Motor Company and General Motors Corporation sited facilities outside the City during the 1950's, contributing greatly to the rapid growth and economic health of the City during the next two decades.

During the 1960's, the Ypsilanti downtown was a flourishing retail center for its residents. Most of its merchandise catered to the needs of the blue-collar workers in the area, which comprised over 50 percent of the Ypsilanti population. By the late 1960's the CBD began to lose its supremacy with the loss of some of its business to development in other areas of the county and retail centers, such as Arborland, K-Mart and Topp's Department Stores.

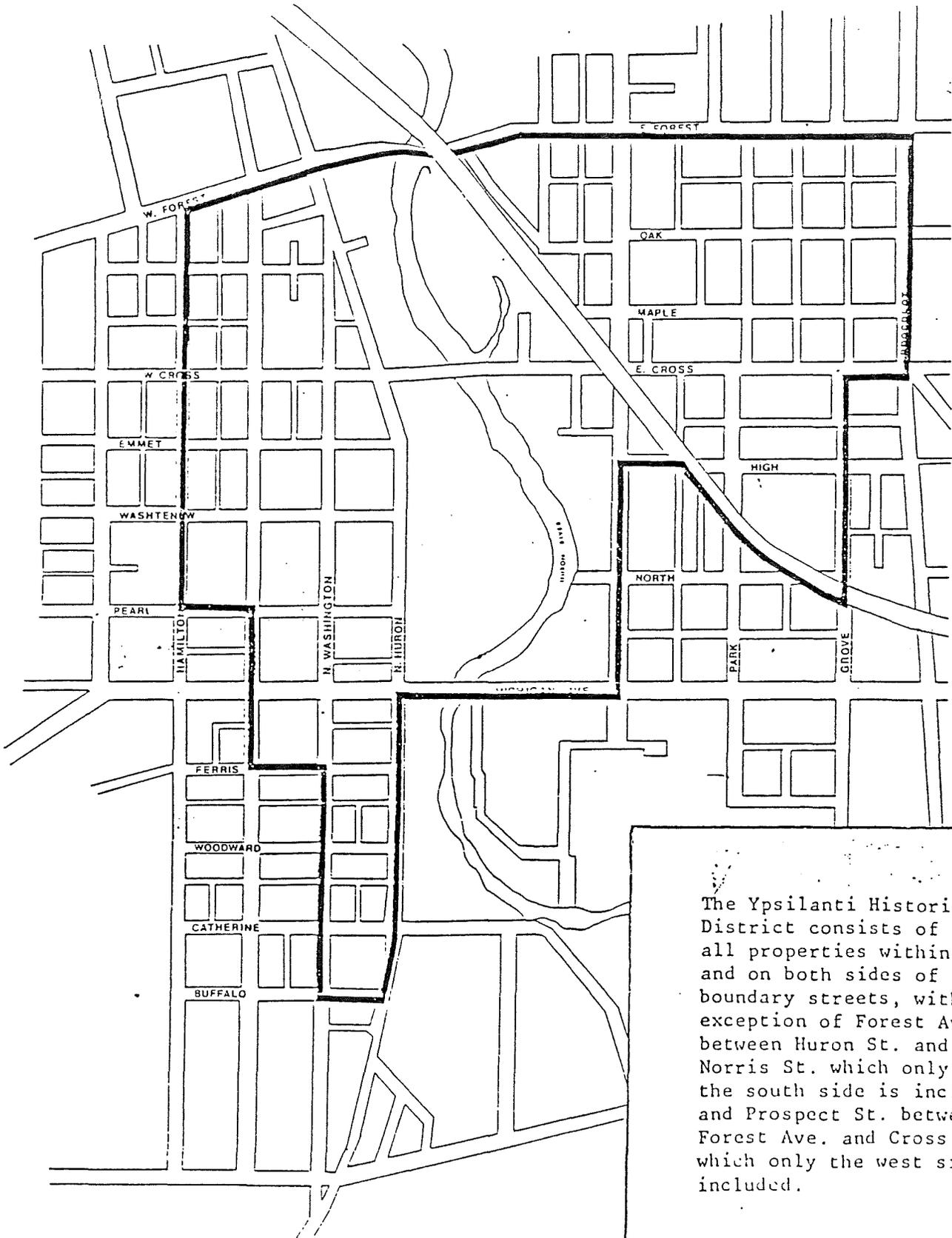
The CBD was once fortunate to have such major department catalog distribution centers as Sears & Roebuck, Speigel, Alden's and Montgomery Wards. A Kroger supermarket was located at Michigan Avenue from 1960 to 1972. Other major merchandise chains included the Singer Company and Phaff Sewer Centers, S.S. Kresge's, Sherman-Williams Paint Company and Arlan's Department Store. All of these establishments had left the area by 1975.

In 1970, the Michigan Public Act 169 was enacted, setting guidelines for historic district formation. The City of Ypsilanti took advantage of this enabling act, thus formulating the Ypsilanti Historic District. The Central Business District and Depot Town are included within these boundaries (see Map 1), with the vast proportion of the historically and architecturally significant buildings located in them, including the Public Library, the Hawkins House and the Follett House.

Through the establishment of the CBD and Depot Town as an integral part of the Ypsilanti Historic District in 1972 (passage of Ordinance in 1978), the City recognized its wealth of historic architecture and committed itself to protecting investments, stabilizing the area and improving the quality of community life. The District has been placed on both the State and National Register of Historic Places.

Depot Town continued to decline and the once elaborate and prestigious buildings of the mid 1800's were neglected. It wasn't until the 1970's that a new awareness of the special character of these buildings was recognized. In 1975, the Depot Town Association was established by the small group of citizens who began taking interest in restoring these buildings and reviewing the neighborhood. In 1976, the Association in cooperation with the City of Ypsilanti, contracted for a Preservation and Development Plan written for the improvement of Depot Town. The purpose of this plan was to identify ways in which to strengthen the neighborhood and encourage its revitalization. It was a successful attempt to guide public and private interests in making the best use of existing resources.

MAP I  
YPSILANTI HISTORIC DISTRICT



The Ypsilanti Historic District consists of all properties within, and on both sides of the boundary streets, with the exception of Forest Ave. between Huron St. and Norris St. which only the south side is included and Prospect St. between Forest Ave. and Cross St. which only the west side is included.

In the nine years following the acceptance of this plan, Depot Town stands today as a viable compliment to the Central Business District. The Association has taken the lead to encourage proper restoration to store fronts. It has volunteered assistance for many special events and has provided a network for disseminating enthusiasm and faith in the continued growth of Depot Town. The Association also provides historic information, through a variety of channels, regarding the area's evolution thus reinforcing the significance of existing building stock.

In the late 1970's, the Depot Town Foundation was established to address the philosophy and general future direction of the area. Then, in 1984, the Development Authority was created to encourage historic preservation, to create and implement development plans and to promote economic growth.

The Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority was established in 1976. The DDA adopted a tax increment financing and development plan in 1983. Monies accruing from the TIF district are earmarked for improved street lighting and entryway treatments in the downtown.

In 1984, the Ypsilanti Main Street Program began. This program is administered locally by the Downtown Development Authority which funds it through a 2-mil levy on downtown properties. With support from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the State Department of Commerce, the Main Street Program has accomplished a number of its objectives during its first year. Over \$300,000 worth of store front and interior renovation has been expended in the downtown since last June with assistance from the City's low interest loan and grant programs. A calender of promotional events has also

been developed in conjunction with the local business association (the Central Business Community. A business recruitment drive is also underway - a joint effort involving the DDA, the Central Business Community and the Chamber of Commerce. (See the enclosed downtown promotional packet.)

### III. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The Ypsilanti area has a diverse population. The demographic characteristics of an area, to a certain extent, describes a city in a marketing and a social context. Merchants in the downtown and other commercial areas need to know who their potential market is in order to be successful.

#### Data and Scope

Data for the Ypsilanti Area was gathered by census tracts from the 1980 census. The area studied consists of twenty-two census tracts (see Figure 1). These tracts were selected not by political boundaries, but by a reasonable marketing area approach. A ten to fifteen minute drive in all directions from the downtown commercial area was considered to be the possible shopper territory for the downtown merchants. This is formally known as a community shopping center - a center which seeks to serve an area greater than its immediate surroundings, but less area than that which is considered regional parameters. Thus, the Ypsilanti commercial district was believed to have the ingredients necessary to attract a larger market than a neighborhood center, but a smaller market than a regional shopping center. Census data was therefore gathered for a region greater than the City limits, formally referred to in this plan as the Ypsilanti Area.

# 1980 CENSUS TRACTS

Figure 1

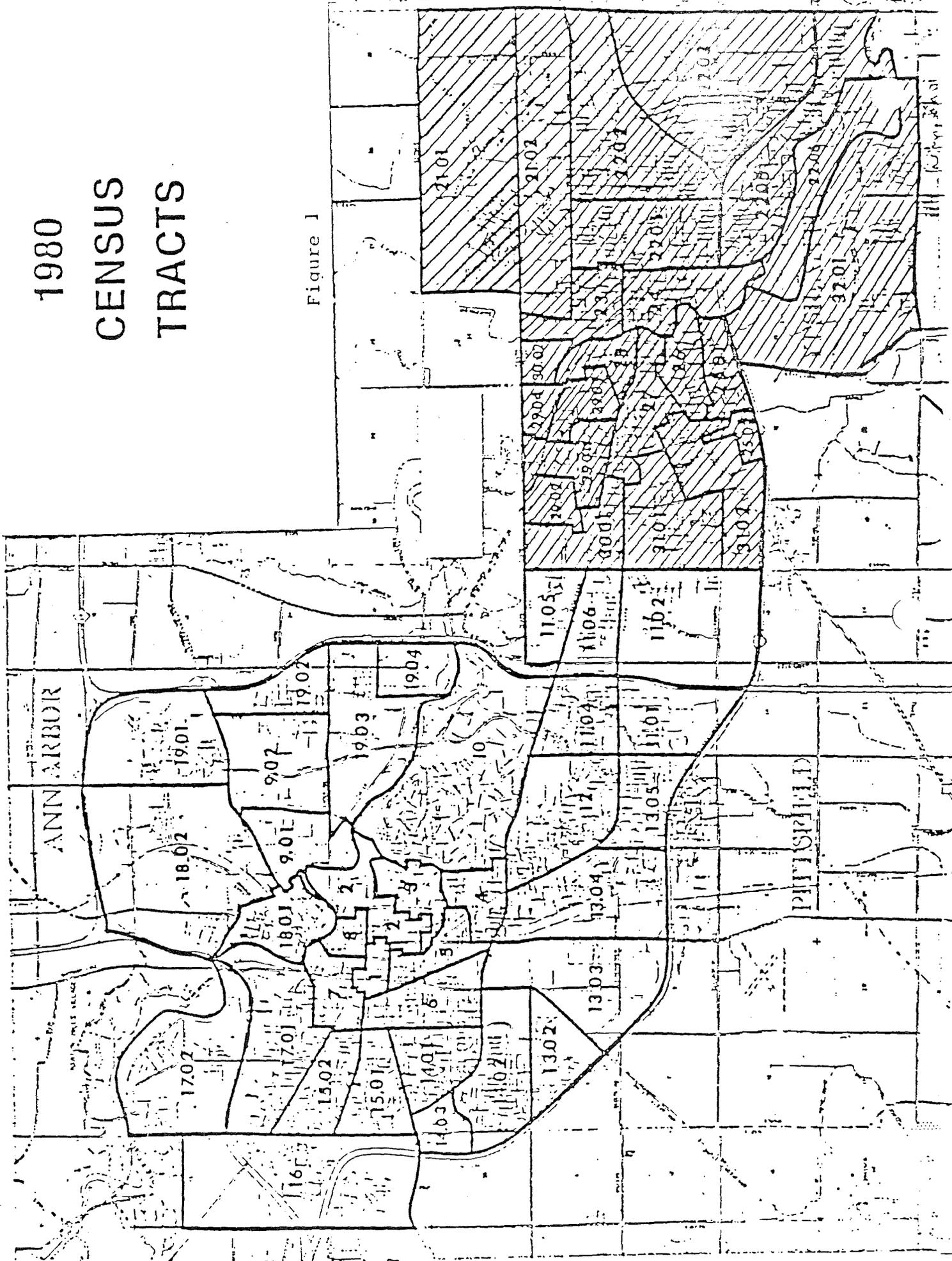


Table 1  
 RACIAL COMPOSITION OF RESIDENTS IN  
 DOWNTOWN YPSILANTI MARKET AREA

WHITE		BLACK		SPANISH		OTHER		TOTAL	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
54,046	76%	14,979	21%	334	.5%	1,183	2.5%	70,542	100%

#### Racial Composition

The Ypsilanti Area has a 1980 population of 70,542. Of this number 54,046 people or 76 percent are white; 14,979 or 21 percent are black and all other races make up the 3 percent remainder.

Table 2  
 EDUCATION LEVEL OF RESIDENTS IN  
 DOWNTOWN YPSILANTI MARKET AREA

ELEMENTARY 3 YRS H.S.		HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE		1-3 YRS COLLEGE		4 YRS COLLEGE		5+ YRS COLLEGE		TOTAL	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
13,081	26%	16,366	32%	13,194	26%	4,317	8%	4,329	8%	51,287	100%

Education

In the Ypsilanti Area 26 percent of the population has less than a high school degree. Thirty-two percent have at least a high school education and an additional 26 percent have had at least three years of college. In addition, sixteen percent of the Ypsilanti Area population has had four or more years of college level education.

Table 3  
INCOME IN 1980 BY HOUSEHOLD OF RESIDENTS OF  
YPSILANTI MARKET AREA

	0-4,999	5,000-9,999	10,000-14,999	15,000-19,999	20,000-24,999	25,000-29,999	30,000-39,999	40,000-49,999	50,000+	TOTAL
NUMBER OF RESIDENTS	3,036	3,378	3,206	3,487	3,498	2,855	3,562	1,441	912	25,375
PERCENT OF RESIDENTS	12%	13%	13%	14%	14%	11%	14%	6%	3%	100%

#### Income

The 1980 income data on the Ypsilanti Area reveals that 25 percent of the population earns less than \$10,000. An additional 27 percent earns between \$10,000 and \$20,000. Twenty five percent of the population has a yearly income between \$20,000 and \$30,000. And 23 percent of the Ypsilanti Area earns, \$30,000 and above. This represents an average Household income of \$21,042.

Table 4  
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF HOMEOWNERS AND RENTERS  
IN THE DOWNTOWN YPSILANT MARKET AREA

OWNER		RENTER		TOTAL	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
13,892	53%	12,473	47%	26,365	100%

Housing

Housing data reveals that 53 percent of the population in the Ypsilanti Area owns their home, while 47 percent rent.

Table 5

AGE BY SEX OF RESIDENTS IN  
DOWNTOWN YPSILANTI MARKET AREA

SEX OF RESIDENT	AGE OF RESIDENT							TOTAL
	0-15 YRS	16-24 YRS	25-34 YRS	35-44 YRS	45-54 YRS	55-64 YRS	65+ YRS	
Female	8,567 23%	9,592 26%	7,635 21%	3,282 9%	2,758 8%	2,362 7%	2,271 6%	36,467 100%
Male	8,624 25%	7,956 23%	8,037 24%	3,393 10%	2,564 8%	2,121 6%	1,380 4%	34,035 100%
TOTAL	17,191 24%	17,548 25%	15,672 22%	6,675 10%	5,322 8%	4,483 6%	3,651 5%	70,542 100%

Sex/Age

Almost three quarters of the people in the Ypsilanti area are below the age of thirty-four, with an almost equal split between male and female. Another ten percent of the Ypsilanti area's population is between 35 and 44 years old.

The demographic data presented here represents potential markets for the Ypsilanti merchants. Because this market area contains a very young population, Ypsilanti merchants have an opportunity to gear their stock and display for a younger population.

#### IV. NEIGHBORHOODS

The neighborhoods surrounding the two business districts play an important role in revitalization strategies. These residents will contribute to the base for new commercial activity. If surrounding homes are well-maintained, they will provide an attractive setting for improvements in the downtown.

The neighborhood surrounding the downtown is about one-half single family and one-half multi-family. Because of the number of multi-family dwellings, the majority of persons living in the area are renters and have created a rather transient area. At least 50% of the renters move within a five year period.

The median value of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhoods surrounding the two DDA's is between \$35,000 and \$40,000. The City of Ypsilanti as a whole has a higher value of \$45,000. In 1980, the U.S. Commerce Department's Census Bureau reported an unemployment rate in the areas ranging from 10% to 16%. At that time the household median income was approximately \$15,000.

A problem frequently mentioned by CBD merchants and nearby residents is the concentration of group quarters or half-way houses for the mentally ill in the surrounding neighborhoods. Approximately 50 people reside in five of these homes located near the downtown.

These neighborhoods have not been well maintained in recent years due to the lower income levels of most residents. In an effort to begin upgrading multiple dwellings in the area, the Ypsilanti Building Inspection Department is conducting inspections of all multiple dwellings in the City. Ordinance 624, passed in

1984, committed the City to begin this process. Since the ordinance was adopted, over 1,000 violations have been cited and over 600 units inspected. Thus, the City is doing its part to assist with better health and safety standards.

Ypsilanti residents have a tradition of activism. Many residents belong to political, church and other community groups. This activism has been carried through to create organizations who represent each neighborhood, such as the East Side and Depot Town. The Central City Neighborhood Task Force has organized workshops to share the experiences available in establishing neighborhood groups with residents of other areas in the City who may wish to organize their own organizations.

In addition to the housing surrounding the CBD, there are a number of units located within the commercial areas too. The former Graystone Hotel has been converted into a 24-unit apartment complex called Hawkins House. Some of the upper floors of commercial structures in the Central Business District have been renovated and are used as residences. In Depot Town, there is approximately 60% occupancy of upper floors in commercial structures. This high density level of residents within the commercial area has created a cohesive residential/business district.

## V. EXISTING LAND USE

In the Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority District, the predominant land uses are retail stores, personal service offices and restaurants and entertainment facilities. Map II indicates the location of retail, office, food, residential and publicly owned buildings in the development area.

The several restaurants in the downtown serve as the area's anchors today. The vast majority of retail/service establishments are small and locally owned. No primary shopper goods department stores remain in the downtown today. Downtown Ypsilanti functions primarily as a neighborhood/community oriented shopping area composed of smaller apparel or specialty stores such as jewelry, shoe, flowers, antiques as well as an adult book store and movie theater.

Selected services such as insurance agencies, hairdressers, physicians, dentists, optometrists, interior design and banking play a major role in the downtown's economy. The number of establishments providing these services increased greatly between 1970 and 1985. This increase confirmed the importance of service facilities in the CBD in relation to area shopping centers which provided the majority of merchandise facilities.

Public facilities are centered in the downtown. The police/fire/court complex is located in the 500 block of West Michigan; the City Hall on the corner of Huron and Michigan; and the Post Office at Ferris and S. Adams. Riverside Park located along the Huron River is a passive recreation area. No educational or school district sites are located within the downtown.

There are ten major public/private parking areas within the district. Five are private and five are public.

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Four privately owned buildings house almost all of our upper floor office space. The Centennial Center, the Ypsilanti Savings Bank, the Unity Building and the former Hopkins-Thomas-Blair Building. Each of these buildings, except the Savings Bank, has a 20-30% vacancy rate at the present time.

60% of our upper floor space is currently vacant or underutilized. A large amount of apartment space exists, however, many property owners stopped renting out this space years ago due to chronic problems with tenants. Over the past couple of years more and more property owners have begun to rehabilitate upper floor spaces for their own residences. This is a trend the Downtown Development Authority is trying to encourage by providing assistance to property owners on the investment tax credits available. In addition, we are working with local lenders in setting up a low interest loan pool for renovation.

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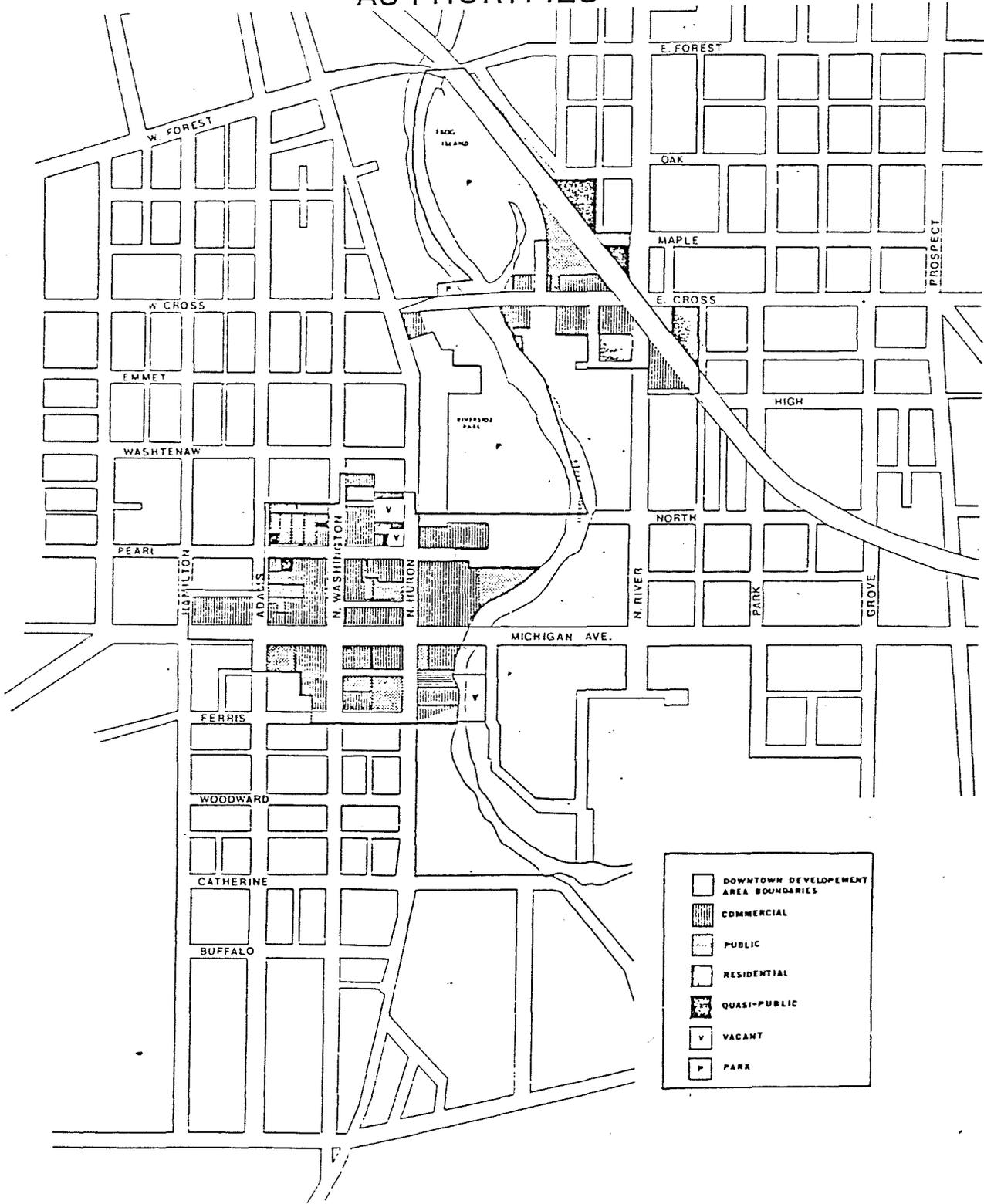
In the Depot Town Development Authority District, the main uses are restaurant and entertainment facilities, small antique and specialty stores, a Farmers' Market, an extensive park system and a vacant train depot.

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Public areas include both Riverside and Frog Island Park. Numerous improvements have been made to these park areas over the last few years. Walking trails, observation decks, a running track and amphitheater are a few of the improvements which have been made. The local Freighthouse houses a City owned and managed Farmers' Market. The market attracts over 1500 customers a week. A series of local Jazz Festivals are also held in the Freighthouse throughout

# LAND USE MAP II

## DOWNTOWN DEVELOPEMENT AUTHORITIES



## VI. PUBLIC SECTOR INVOLVEMENT

The City of Ypsilanti has spearheaded a number of efforts to reinforce and improve the physical and economic character of the Central Business District and Depot Town. The institution of a Historic District Ordinance and Commission in 1978 provided a direction for revitalization as well as financial incentives for renovation and restoration of properties within the district. The ordinance has benefited the CBD and Depot Town in the following ways:

- by encouraging compatible new construction in the district
- by preventing inappropriate alterations of structures in the district.
- by providing design guidelines and assistance for owners contemplating exterior alterations or new construction.
- by encouraging office and residential development in upper stories.

### Central Business District

A number of other efforts and projects have been undertaken by the City during the past decade in the Central Business District.

These include:

.. Establishment of a Downtown Development Authority, 2 mil levy \$21,000 per year, a Tax Increment Financing Plan and Main Street Program to plan and coordinate downtown revitalization efforts.

Construction of Town Center and Chidester Place Senior Citizens High Rise: Town Center, constructed in 1976, is located at the western edge of the DDA district and contains 170 units. Chidester Place, constructed in 1982, lies at the eastern edge and contains 150 units.

the year. A major public parking area is located behind the stores on the north side of Cross Street. This lot services the entire Depot Town area.

Most of the buildings in Depot Town are 2 or 3 stories. Currently about 60% of the upper floors are utilized as residential units. Approximately 40% of the upper floor space remains vacant or underutilized.

It is important as activity increases in both Depot Town and the CBD that pedestrian connections between the two areas be strengthened. A riverfront link through the park system as well as pedestrian link down N. Huron are both possibilities which need to be explored.

Construction of the Washington Street Promenade: In the early 1970's, as the CBD began to decline, the City decided to undertake a major beautification project on North Washington. Parking lanes were removed to create a pedestrian oriented promenade consisting of wide, brick paved sidewalks, concrete planters, pedestrian lighting. Although \$280,000.00 was invested in this project, it has never been regarded as a success. This is due primarily to the fact that this was the only effort undertaken to curb the decline and public improvements alone rarely result in a turnaround.

Construction of new sidewalks and curbs in the CBD, in conjunction with a tree planting program. Sidewalk areas were widened at all downtown intersections and brick paving and trees were installed.

Lighting - In 1984, the DDA allocated \$10,000 from their tax Increment Financing account to convert existing street lighting in the district, to the brighter sodium vapor lighting. Work will be complete by summer of 1985.

In 1981, the City developed a 5% loan program for commercial rehabilitation (interior/exterior). Of the initial \$150,000.00 allocation, approximately \$60,000.00 in loans was committed by fall of 1984. The remaining balance of \$90,000.00 was then allocated by the City as matching grants to owners to renovate storefronts. Approximately 80% of those remaining funds were allocated to downtown projects. This \$150,000.00 has generated over 700,000.00 in private reinvestment in downtown and Depot Town over the past two years.

Institution of a Downtown Maintenance Program; The DDA ( ) ran a \$5,000/year downtown maintenance program in 1984. They currently employ three part time maintenance workers who clean sidewalks and parking areas and maintain public improvements.

In 1985, the City allocated \$25,000.00 to fund a comprehensive downtown signage system. The system will consist of a set of graphically coordinated signs and will consist of the following: 1) Entryway signature signs announcing the downtown, 2) parking lot directional signage, 3) locator signs marking public buildings and 4) parking lot entry signage listing all the businesses serviced by that lot.

Repair of the Washington Street Promenade irrigation system. The City also allocated \$10,000.00 in this year's budget to repair the irrigation system on our downtown promenade and to completely replant it. This improvement will complement the \$120,000.00 private investment on the Promenade which is currently being generated in our rehabilitation program.

#### Depot Town

Since the Preservation & Development Master Plan was implemented in 1976, the City has made a tremendous effort to fulfill its Public Sector responsibility. The efforts of the City have been directed toward the reinforcement and improved physical and economic character of Depot Town, in accordance with those responsibilities outlined in the plan.

Sidewalks and Plantings - The first new public improvements made in the Depot Town District occurred in 1977. The City redug and surfaced sidewalks on both sides of Cross Street

between the bridge and N. River. New planters were also installed on these sidewalks and trees were planted in each by the City.

Freight House - In 1978, the City purchased the Freight House and began renovation. It opened in 1979 providing Ypsilanti with a permanent location for the Farmers' Market. The Freight House was also repaired to be used for special Events. This facility has evolved in the last six years with such public demand that the City employed a fulltime Manager to run the Freight House. It now houses a full market twice a week, is booked for a jazz concert series in the winters and offers a place for a variety of shows, exhibits, auctions and social events throughout the year. These functions have served a city wide need and given excellent exposure to the District by those who are drawn to the various events. In 1985, the City also funded additional interior facilities to assist Farmers' Market vendors and contracted the complete replacement of the roof of the building.

Parking Lot & Pedestrian Access - In 1979, the City made major parking improvements in back of the buildings on the north side of E. Cross Street. The parking served both the immediate needs of the Freight House and also provided free parking to the commercial area. Improvements were also made surrounding the parking lot and Freight House to enhance pedestrian access to both. This landscaping has also further defined the entryway and is of great aesthetic value to the District.

Depot - In 1981, the City commissioned a developer and began applying for funds to renovate the old railroad depot.

The City hopes to complete negotiations in the near future with Conrail/Amtrack to purchase the building and use the building for a restaurant.

Cross Street Bridge - A major improvement to the area began in 1982 when designs were approved to build a new bridge. The new bridge serves to better connect the two districts and also provides a clearer definition of entry into the Depot Town District. The bridge is a true landmark to the entire City and reinforces the link between the Central Business District and Depot Town.

Riverside Park - The Riverfront Park Master Plan was established in the early 1980's with the intent of upgrading the land connecting the two business districts. The land also helps to eliminate the barrier of the river. The park improvements were made in 1983 and 1984. They include a surfaced parking lot with driveway, new lighting at the entryway into the park from Cross Street, lights in the park itself, a deck at the bank of the river which leads up to the parking lot and walkways (paths) looping throughout the entire park. In addition to all of these improvements, the bank was landscaped and stabilized along much of the river.

Frog Island - With the park improvements made in 1983 on the southwest corner of the river where it is crossed by the bridge, the City began improvements to the park known as Frog Island, located northeast of the bridge. These improvements include resurfacing the existing running track, an amphitheater, a shed for City storage only with water access and some landscaping. A walkway was also pathed along the river bank leading up to new steps at a reinforced wall which connects the park to the north with Forest Avenue.

## VII. CIRCULATION

Map III shows the vehicular entry and exit points of the Ypsilanti CBD. These points are not clearly defined either through signage or physical delineation. Without a clear delineation of its boundaries, the downtown lacks cohesiveness and a sense of identity.

In 1984, the DDA hired a landscape architect to design an entryway and signage program for the downtown. The concept which was adopted by the DDA calls for erection of five "entry groves" in the downtown district. These groves will consist of clusters of trees, lighting and banners and will be constructed at the intersections of Michigan Avenue and the River, Michigan and Adams and N. Huron and Ferris. In conjunction with this treatment, a comprehensive signage system is also proposed. Large signature signs will be erected in preparatory zones before you enter the downtown. In addition, a compatible system of parking lot directional signage will be installed. Inadequate signage has long been identified as a problem in the downtown.

Downtown Ypsilanti suffers no insufficiency of parking at present. Parking lots, however, as they are currently landscaped and maintained, are too open to the streets onto which they front. There is no visual separation between the space of the streets and that of the parking lots. Existing tree plantings are inadequate in numbers and size.

The Huron River edge and the slope above the river on the downtown side is recognized as a valuable potential amenity and public resource. A proposal has been submitted to the Department of Natural Resources to fund the erection of a wooden step system next to the river bank



O - Entry points  
 S - Signage

CIRCULATION  
 MAP III

which would provide an important pedestrian linkage from the downtown shopping district into Riverside Park.

### Depot Town

The entryways into Depot Town make a very convenient access route to the commercial district. The Cross Street Bridge provides a very visible entrance from the Central Business District. In addition, the width of the bridge is also conducive to a liberal flow of traffic. The entryway from River Street has recently been improved by signage which welcomes you to Depot Town and from facade renovations stimulated by the City's Facade Incentive Program.

There is a great need to improve the entryway definition and circulation into Depot Town from Forest Street at the north side of Depot Town. At the present time Rice Street borders a gravel parking area which gives a very poor definition to the street. Curbs are also needed at the corner of Cross Street and Rice Street. Presently Rice Street appears to be more of a driveway than an actual street.

Parking lots on both sides of Cross Street need greater identification. The lot on the South is in especially poor condition because it is unpaved. Paving and signage would greatly assist circulation since the total area is rather limited in size.

Parallel parking is available on Cross Street. These spaces have a regular turnover and greatly assists businesses by providing accessible parking to customers. Customers who park in back of the buildings have pedestrian access to Cross Street from both the North and the South sides of the street. The circulation of pedestrians could be improved by more street furniture and plantings.

## VIII. MARKET ANALYSIS AND POTENTIAL

This Chapter will analyze the market potential for development of the Downtown and Depot Town. The analysis will cover residential and commercial uses. Residential will include only multi-family, while commercial will include retail, office and private recreation. This chapter will only present the basic information and should not be construed to be an indepth analysis.

### Residential Market Analysis

One of the more apparent trends occurring in most downtown areas, including Ypsilanti, is an increase in apartment living. An analysis of that trend leads to a combination of reasons why people are choosing downtown apartments. Some of these include:

1. People are wanting to live conveniently to place of employment. As downtown areas become centers of office buildings and more service oriented, the number of jobs are increased. This has led to many multi-use complexes such as office/apartment buildings being built under single ownership. Developers have found many office workers prefer living as close to employment as conveniently possible.
2. The delay in marriage, coupled with a postponement in having children, have also created a market for apartment living. Many people, particularly the young professionally degreed, are opting for a few years of single living before getting married. Then after marriage, couples are delaying having children. These conditions in turn have led to a delay in single family home purchasing, which leaves apartment living as the alternative lifestyle. In addition, many families are simply being priced out of the single family housing market.

3. There has also been an increase in apartment units which are geared primarily for retirees and the elderly in downtown areas. The convenience of being downtown with easy access to such things as libraries, shopping and personal services is attractive to the elderly.
4. Finally, the cost of living downtown is becoming more attractive. With rising fuel and new housing costs, a number of families are now abandoning plans to move out of the city. Many are remaining in their present dwelling units while other are switching to apartments as a living change.

There have been a number of apartment units built in Ypsilanti's immediate downtown area in recent years. Towne Center, a 170 unit senior citizens high rise, opened in 1976. Chidester Place, a 150 unit high rise, opened in 1980. The Graystone Hotel was converted into a 24 unit apartment complex now called Hawkins House. This latter project was completed in 1980. A number of upper floors of commercial structures have been converted into residential units and apartments. These events occurring in Ypsilanti reflect in a general way a national trend as discussed above.

The anticipated population growth in the Ypsilanti market area indicates that the demand for apartment units will increase. The regional Planning Commission estimates that multi-family units will increase by 29.4% by 1990. It can only be assumed that trends toward some downtown apartments as experienced in Ypsilanti and other communities will also continue.

A number of specific issues that affect the location of any new apartment complex in the downtown area will need to be addressed.

Such items as access to necessary amenities and employment center, adequacy of public facilities; and available land for the structure and associated parking.

Downtown Ypsilanti has a number of these items. The downtown area offers a range of opportunities including retail and professional services. The downtown still has a compact core of quality retail and service establishments. There also still is a food store and a pharmacy. In addition, the downtown area is a centralized point to new employment opportunities. The Industrial Park on West Michigan and the proposed Eastern Michigan Corporate Training Center and hotel are both located within a few miles of the downtown.

Downtown Ypsilanti has a number of public facilities which should be conducive to apartment living. The public library, post office, city hall and Farmers' Market are all located in the area. Rivers and Frog Ilnad Park have both undergone major improvements. In addition, the proximity of Eastern Michigan University which sponsors a number of entertainment and cultural events also set as an attraction to inner city living.

Finally, there are some sites in the downtown area that are potential apartment sites. Two of the better sites, in terms of land size, are located in the 100 block of North Huron and in the 200 block of Pearl Street. As stated earlier, many apartment projects in downtown areas are built in conjunction with a mixture of retail/office/apartment uses. It can be assumed that any new apartment complex of any consequence, built in Ypsilanti, will also have such mixed use characteristics. This gives the development a well rounded range of amenities to attract apartment dwellers while increasing the overall marketability of the project.

## Commercial Market Analysis

Expansion of commercial development in downtown Ypsilanti is analyzed in this section of the plan. Three commercial uses were studied - retail, office and recreation. The retail market has been analyzed for a regional center, a community center and for neighborhood convenience space. The market potential for office space has been assessed in general terms. A brief evaluation also has been made of the market for commercial recreation uses.

## Retail Market

Shopping areas can be classified into three types based on size and type of anchor; 1) Regional Center, 2) Community Center and 3) Neighborhood Center. The strongest potential for downtown Ypsilanti will be somewhere between a community center and neighborhood center to adequately service the residents of the area. The data that supports this conclusion are presented in the following sections.

## Major Shopping Center Potential

Downtown Ypsilanti has virtually no potential for development of a regional shopping center based on an analysis of potential department store anchors. Regional centers are anchored by two or more department stores and generally draw from a 20 minute driving radius. Briarwood Mall is a 1,000,000 square foot mall anchored by Sears, Hudson's, J.C. Penneys and Lord & Taylor's. It is located on South State at I-94 in Ann Arbor, six miles west and 10 minutes driving time from the study property. Arborland, a recently renovated discount mall, includes Marshall's and Service Merchandise on Washtenaw Avenue at U.S. 23. This eastern Ann Arbor location is also six miles and a 10 minute drive from downtown.

Development of a new regional center would require some combination of anchors from the following stores that serve the area -- Sears, J.C. Penney's, Hudson's, or a new unit moving into the market area. The addition of a new store within the primary trading areas of the Briarwood and Arborland malls would result in significant transfers of sales from existing stores. The magnitude of these transfers would make an additional store unlikely for any of the region's major anchors. The market is not growing fast enough to instill investor interest in two new stores moving into the region. Without department store commitments, no regional center could be developed.

#### Community Center

The next lower scale of retail center is the community center. A community center is anchored by one major retailer, typically a discount department store or store of similar size. It generally draws from a 10 minute driving distance or a three to five mile radius.

There are several community shopping centers located in the Ypsilanti area. K Mart has outlets in three centers within 5 miles proximity to the downtown Ypsilanti. The closest, Gault Village, is located just across I-94 on Grove Road. Though it has no direct access to the interstate, it is convenient to many Ypsilanti City residents. The center was recently renovated following acquisition from the Grant's chain. Included are K Mart, Farmer Jack's, A.C.O. Hardware, Perry Drug and several small specialty stores.

Lakewood Center is located at the first full I-94 intersection east of Whittaker Road, four miles from Ypsilanti. K Mart, Pack & Save Food and Perry Drug are the major tenants with 22 small stores and total space of 212,000 square feet. Also located at this intersection are several fast food restaurants, gas stations and branch banks.

Roundtree Center is located at the intersection of Hewitt Road and Ellsworth Road, adjacent to the I-94/Michigan Ave. interchange. A Savewell food store, Perry Drugs and two financial institutions are major tenants with several smaller stores.

A freestanding K Mart is located on Washtenaw Avenue at Golfside between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. It is a 103,000 square foot facility located on the area's major commercial strip. A fourth K Mart is on South State Road at I-94 south of Briarwood Mall.

Meijer's Thrifty Acres, the area's other major discounter, is located on Carpenter Road, four miles west of Ypsilanti. Its 200,000 square foot facility includes grocery and soft-line departments. Further north on Carpenter are a Best Products Catalog store and a small chopping center. More recently, University Plaza opened with a Kroger Super store as the major store.

Downtown Ypsilanti was definitely, at one time, a viable community shopping area. All of the chain general merchandise stores have left. During the last two years downtown Ypsilanti has lost three of its major retailers. Two of these stores - Mellencamps Mens Wear and Mack & Mack Furniture were old family owned businesses which had been in the downtown locations since the 1800's. Neither of these owners had family members who wanted to take over the businesses so they closed down. Both of these establishments had been losing money for over three years due primarily to poor management. The other retailer - Guttman's, a womens clothing store, closed to locate to a neighboring center. Currently downtown Ypsilanti has only a couple of small clothing stores.

The ground floor vacancy rate in downtown Ypsilanti currently stands at 20%. Several larger parcels have been purchased in the last year, however, few will be used for retailing. One of the greatest problems facing the downtown area is the continuing shift towards office and service uses (oftentimes fairly marginal uses) on our ground level space in our retailing core. In addition, the area has been experiencing an increase in resale and more marginal retail uses over the past five years.

Downtown Ypsilanti still remains central to the market area and has good highway access. However, attracting quality new retailers remains a problem.

#### Neighborhood Center

A neighborhood center is characterized by a group of small stores serving a relatively small trading area, generally about a one mile radius. It is generally anchored by a grocery store and is dependent on the growth in the immediate area of the site.

Depot Town and downtown both have a variety of stores that are neighborhood oriented. Small diners, drug stores and ice cream parlors are found in these districts. There are other stores in particular the furniture and antique stores, as well as the restaurant and entertainment facilities that receive a bulk of their sales from outside the immediate neighborhood.

Depot Town functions very much as neighborhood center as residential units are all occupied and citizen involvement is high. Downtown Ypsilanti functions somewhere between the neighborhood shopping area and a community shopping area. This means that both Downtown Development Authorities need not only to concern itself abc

wide efforts, but also the immediate neighborhood. Downtown Ypsilanti has the opportunity to plan now for a balanced growth of neighborhood type businesses and the community type businesses.

The Downtown Development Authority with assistance from the National Main Street Center has developed a merchandise plan for the downtown. The Main Street Economic Committee is currently recruiting for the following types of retailers: women's and men's ready to wear, jeans & casual apparel, records & video, sporting goods, family shoes, cards and gifts, crafts, hobbies, photo store, deli/wine/cheese, and an ice cream parlor. A plan to preserve a three block area - N. Huron - N. Washington and Michigan Ave between Huron and Washington, as a retailing/service district is being pursued by the DDA.

#### Primary Trading Area

The primary trading area for downtown Ypsilanti is defined as Ypsilanti City, Ypsilanti Township and Superior Township. A ten to fifteen minute driving distance is used as the general cutoff for the primary trade area.

An analysis of the trade area is necessary in order to determine the market potential. There are a number of competitive shopping areas in the primary trade area. Gault Village, Lakewood Center, Roundtree Center, University Plaza, Meijer's Thrifty Acres, and K Mart plaza on Washtenaw offer the most direct competition to downtown Ypsilanti.

The trade area has grown by 13.5% in the past ten years. Projections made by the Washtenaw County Regional Planning Commission show that the area will grow by 52,158 people or a 40.5% increase by the year 2000. The City's population, on the other hand, declined by 18.6% in the past decade. Projections made by the Regional

Planning commission indicate the decline should stop and the City ( will grow slightly by the year 2000 to 28,870 people. These figures indicate that if downtown Ypsilanti is to remain viable and receive it's share of the trade area, planning for the proper mix of services must begin now.

#### Market Potential

Currently the City of Ypsilanti is losing disposable personal income to competitive retail centers. Most of this is going to the large Briarwood Mall in Ann Arbor and the closer in community centers. It was also discussed that many of the large retail stores located in those shopping areas would not likely locate in the downtown area.

Downtown Ypsilanti functions primarily as a community oriented shopping area with a number of smaller specialty stores. There are still several jewelry, shoe and furniture stores. A few specialty ( shops have opened. The new Woodruff's Grove Restaurant adds to the downtown area. The Downtown area also has a few neighborhood oriented stores servicing the immediate residential area.

The future of retailing in downtown and Depot Town seems to be tied to both the ability to attract new small businesses serving the community and the upgrading of the surrounding residential area. One factor working in favor of Ypsilanti, is that its retail rental costs are much lower than the more recent developments. There is a need to diversify retailing activities in downtown Ypsilanti. This should include new clothing stores, specialty shops and other similar retail establishments.

#### Office Market

##### General Pattern

Major office space development has taken on two patterns in urban

areas. One is the high rise development in the central business districts and the other is the office park, which are located in suburban areas.

Downtown Ypsilanti has had one major new building opened in the past ten years - the 62,000 square foot Ypsilanti Savings Bank on West Michigan Avenue. Centennial Center on Pearl Street has been renovated adding 25,000 square feet of more office space.

Office center developments generally occur in a clustering concept. Very seldom does a major office project locate in an isolated area.

There are several major clusters of office buildings in Washtenaw County which will impact on any new development in Ypsilanti.

Downtown Ann Arbor and the Liberty-State Street campus area remain strongly competitive for office developments. Most of the county's banks have downtown headquarters. Office space is estimated to total 470,000 square feet.

South State Street has developed as the premier location for new office buildings since the opening of Briarwood Mall in late 1972. Wolverine Tower, developed in 1972, was the first suburban highrise office building developed in Ann Arbor. It has 237,000 gross square feet of space. Bechtel Corporation built a companion building of 320,000 gross square feet opposite Wolverine Tower. Construction of Eisenhower Boulevard from Packard to South State Street reinforced the competitive position of the Briarwood area by improving access and internal traffic movement. Waterworks Plaza, an attractive 70,000 square foot office building, was built on South State Street in 1979. Thomas B. McMullen is currently developing a 32,000 square foot speculative building behind Wolverine Inn. He has plans for an additional 70,000 square feet of speculative space, though

financing problems are delaying the development.

A third office cluster is developing in Northeast Ann Arbor along Plymouth Road. Several corporations have developed large single-tenant office and research facilities in the area. Warner-Lambert-Parke-Davis has a 310,000 gross square-foot facility. The Commission on Professional and Hospital Activities occupies an 82,000 gross square foot building on 35 acres on Green Road. The Bendix Corporation's building of 139,000 gross square feet on Plymouth Road is now owned by The Environmental Research Institute of Michigan. The occupancy rate is quite high in these recently built office nodes.

A fourth office cluster is being developed around the Catherine McAuley Health Center complex. The close proximity of this development to the downtown district as well as the scale of this office development may put this office cluster in direct competition with Ypsilanti's Downtown Office Market.

Downtown Ypsilanti does not have a high potential for major speculative office space development in the near future. This is due primarily from the regional economic slow down and to the stiff competition from other locations and demands in Ann Arbor. Ypsilanti also lacks, at this time, the prestige often sought by major office tenants.

However, mid-rise development on the order of the Savings Bank building may become feasible in five years if the regional economy becomes vigorous and population growth occurs as projected. Discussions with the bank officials indicate a critical office shortage in about five years in Ypsilanti. It also seems likely that new office building development in downtown Ypsilanti will occur as

part of an overall apartment-office-retail complex. Such a development would tend to occur on Michigan Avenue probably across from the existing mid-rise office building.

#### Small Office Market

For the immediate future, downtown Ypsilanti should continue to function as primarily a small office market. This would be generally the law offices and medical services although the latter tend to locate near hospital complexes. Service oriented agencies and corporations should also tend to locate in the downtown area.

There is a small amount of ground floor space that could be used for office. However, care should be given as to how ground floor space is used since ground floor area is also prime retail space. There should be some attention to segregating ground floor office area from the prime retail locations.

In addition, many structures have vacant upper floor space which could be converted to efficient small office space. This conversion has been a boon to many downtown revitalization programs. In fact, many small professional oriented groups such as architects, engineers and artists have tended to locate in older commercial areas. It is due generally to lower rental costs and overhead when compared to new developments.

#### Other Commercial Uses

Other commercial uses might be feasible for downtown Ypsilanti. A number of communities has encouraged development of art and theatrical complexes. This has included new motion picture houses.

The proximity of Eastern Michigan University and projected population growth in the City's market area may lead to development of entertainment/recreation enterprises. The proposed Eastern

Michigan Corporate Training Center/Hotel may also create a need for additional night life type of activities. However, with the volatility of demand for particular commercial recreational and the potential for new competitive facilities elsewhere in the area, market analysis based on current conditions cannot be definitive. It is the judgment of this report that commercial recreation would be an appropriate use in downtown Ypsilanti in locations not otherwise deemed suitable for office, retail or residential use.

## IX. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION

The basic purpose of this section is to outline the plan for future revitalization of the Downtown Development Authorities in Ypsilanti. Previous sections in this document have stated background information; existing land use and retail analysis; and the potential for certain new development. This section will attempt to bring the pieces together so that a coordinated effort in the area can be implemented. This plan will present a three (3) year projection on potential development.

### Future Development Pattern

As stated in previous sections, there are a number of events planned for the Ypsilanti area that will have an effect on the downtown area. Within the downtown area, over a dozen facade renovation projects are presently under construction. Riverside Park will also be undergoing extensive improvements. The Main Street Program is actively recruiting new businesses into the downtown and has taken the lead in coordinating proposals for signage and entryway improvements into the Central Business District. Frog Island and the Freight House in Depot Town continue to draw tourists looking for recreation and special events and more events are being planned.

The City's Economic Development Corporation owns 62.3 acres of land on the City's western corporate limits for purpose of developing a light industrial park. Three lots have been committed by tenants which should continue to attract other compatible tenants. Another 10.8 acres of industrial park land is also undergoing economic development negotiations for sale. Finally, plans are being drafted for redeveloping the South Water Street area into a commercial/light industrial park.

Outside the City, but in the downtown trade area, a number of large scale projects are being proposed. A \$15 million hotel and convention center has been planned by Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti Township and the City of Ypsilanti. Catherine McAuley Health Center has continued to expand in the last five years and additional plans exist to further expand.

The above projects are examples of just some of the plans that will have an impact on the downtown area. The affect can be positive if the downtown has a plan or the affect can be negative if there is no plan.

#### Project Prioritization

The following is a recommended list of projects/programs to revitalize the downtown areas of Ypsilanti. The proposed projects represent a strong partnership between public and private enterprise to improve these areas. It is only through this partnership that there can be any hope of attaining a viable business district.

The following table represents a timetable of proposed improvements. The timing has been designed to fulfill a coordinated redeveloped effort. The distribution of funding sources are also reflected.

Recommendations of Development Plan  
Timetable of Activities and Improvements

<u>Project/Program</u>	<u>1985-86</u>	<u>1986-87</u>	<u>1987-88</u>	<u>Proposed Source of \$</u>
1. Downtown Signage & Banner Program	X	X		TIF & State
2. Entryway Groves	X	X	X	TIF & State
3. Downtown Lighting	X			City & DDA
4. Facade Improvements	X	X	X	State
5. Street Furniture		X	X	State
6. Water Street Project		X		State
7. Business Recruitment	X	X	X	DDA
8. Entryway to Riverside Park		X		DNR
9. Parking Lot/Landscaping			X	State
10. Frog Island/Paving Lot		X	X	State
11. Rice Street Paving		X	X	State
12. Railroad Tower		X		State
13. Depot	X	X	X	City/State/ Private
14. Pearl Street Water Mains	X	X	X	City/State/ Township/ YCUA

## X. EXPLANATION OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1985-86

The Main Street Program has successfully coordinated efforts between the DDA and the City to convert existing street lighting in the district to the bright sodium vapor lighting. This \$20,000 project will be completed by the summer of 1985.

Due to the overwhelming popularity and success of the Facade Improvement Program, this plan has placed continued funding for the program as its highest priority. Thus far the \$150,000 received for commercial improvements has generated over \$700,000 in private investment in both commercial areas. These improvements will stimulate all other sectors of development and are believed to be essential to retain Ypsilanti's vitality.

The Main Street Program has also developed a low interest loan program for exterior and interior rehabilitation in conjunction with local lenders. We anticipate that \$200,000 will be made available September for downtown property owners and tenants.

The Entryway Signage, Grove and Banner Program, also initiated by the Main Street Program, will further add to the definition of the Central Business District. An investment of \$100,000 has been estimated as the total project cost and is the second highest priority of recommendations in this plan. The Business Recruitment Program will be greatly assisted by these improvements. Potential new businesses who are recruited to the downtown will see a well-defined and attractive commercial area.

The City continues to negotiate plans for purchasing the Railroad Depot and renovating the structure to be used for a higher quality restaurant. The restaurant would complement the other features in Depot Town and research has determined that it would be well patronized. This project including renovation and landscaping, will cost \$800,000.

The Pearl Street Water Main Improvements, a total project cost of \$600,000, is predicated upon two basic goals. The first is to insure adequate water is available within the existing service area through ample supply and storage facilities and a distribution system of sufficient capacity to complement the supply and storage in order to take full advantage of them. The second goal is the expansion of service within the jurisdiction of the utility. New 12" mains are recommended to be installed in Pearl Street, Summit Street and Adams Street. These would have the effect of supplying a major water supply to the downtown area from the Catherine Street water treatment plant, the Cross Street water tank and the Shadford Field water tank. With this availability, the commercial district could be assured of having sufficient fire protection under any circumstances.

Most of the downtown projects will carry on to a second year, with the addition of new street furniture to further enhance both the Downtown and Depot Town areas. \$60,000 has been recommended toward sidewalk benches, trash receptacles and several planters. These improvements will be a timely addition to enhance the commercial streetscapes.

The Water Street Development Project is also recommended to begin in 1986. This will allow a year to solidify final plans. Water Street is located immediately east of the Huron River and south of Michigan Ave. At one time this street and general area was a commercial and industrial center. Due to a general decline in prior decades, only three major businesses remain in the somewhat blighted area. The project proposes to renovate an abandoned

building and to expand another building. For the most part, the 60 people to be employed will be in the low to moderate pay range. From studies done on the history and present condition and use of the area, it has been recommended that this 20 acre site be renovated for commercial and light industrial use. The City is committed to assist the local businesses in developing and up-grading this land. By improving the building and land in the first 900 feet south of Michigan Ave., the area will be attractive for other light industrial development. The project, including the paving of the first two blocks of Water Street from Michgian Ave., will cost \$400,000. The continuation of the Business Recruitment Program may help to recruit light industrial and commercial businesses into the area.

Entryways and improvements for Phase II of Riverside Park will cost \$228,000. The project includes construction of a new observation deck and a new stair system leading into the park from Michian Ave. with an entry grove. Additional parking will also be provided along with pedestrian security lights, land control and various other site improvements. This project will further promote the use of Riverside Park, which serves the entire community and is one of Ypsilanti's finest assets.

The Frog Island Park project is recommended in conjunction with the Rice Street Project. Total improvements will include installing curbs, sidewalks and necessary drainage immediately north of Cross Street in Depot town on Rice Street. The recommendation includes paving both Rice Street and the parking lot located on the east rim of Frog Island Park. These improvements will better define the north entry into Depot Town and create a better definition of Rice Street.

Depot Town's Railroad tower will be rebuilt in 1986 at a cost of \$10,000 for design and reconstruction. The project is intended to restore the landmark that once stood during the hayday of the railroad. The tower will revive the old character of the neighborhood that the community and merchants have worked toward for the last ten years. In addition to being an added amenity to Depot Town, the tower will serve as a tourist attraction for the City as a whole.

1987-88

The Mainstreet Program will have demonstrated in full impact on the downtown commercial area by the third year of this plan. Remaining definition of entryways, as well as the completion of major downtown renovation will produce a new vitality attractive to many new businesses.

Finally, Depot Town will be further stimulated by the Depot Restaurant, which will continue to draw customers from both inside and outside the city. The Depot renovation will be an additional attraction to tourists visiting the neighborhood. Foot traffic in Depot Town will also increase, resulting in a spinn off effect of greater business to the other merchant in the area.

## Priority of Recommendations

### Project Description

1. Facade Incentive Program	\$150,000
2. Five Entryway Groves & Signage	\$100,000
3. Depot	\$140,000
4. Water Street Project	\$400,000
5. Frog Island Paving	\$100,000
6. Tower	\$ 10,000
7. Street Furniture	\$ 60,000
8. Rice Street Paving/Sidewalks	\$ 40,000
9. Pearl Street Water Lines	\$600,000

## XI. CONCLUSION

The intent of this plan is to demonstrate the need and ability to implement various projects to improve the business districts in the community. The background and history of the area have been presented first to better define the needs of Ypsilanti's Development Authorities. The Public Sector Involvement provides credibility for the City's past and present commitment to revitalization. The Recommendation Section presents a carefully planned strategy for making improvements over a three year period, combining projects that will complement and stimulate each other, all working toward better economic condition in the two discussed commercial areas.

The Priority of Recommendations is strictly based on the ranking of spinoff effects each project will have in the community. The recommendations are also prioritized in an order of most needing financial assistance from outside the City's own funding sources. Therefore, the City of Ypsilanti is submitting this Comprehensive Development Plan with the intent of completing each project during its delegated time allotment. The City is also hopeful that the need for funding assistance, and the scope and impact that each of these projects will have on other commercial improvements, will merit the funding assistance of the Department of Commerce.

