



Village of Grass Lake Economic Development Strategy

May 2025

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Acknowledgements

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David Keener	Council President
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Sabrina Edgar	Village Manager, Council Liaison

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Grass Lake Village Administration

Sabrina Edgar	Village Manager
Paul Lammers	DPW Supervisor
Julie Muszynski	Village Treasurer
Jennifer Keener	Village Clerk

Region 2 Planning Commission

Jacob Hurt	Executive Director
Katie Miller	Planner

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Chapter 1: Overview



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Introduction

The Village of Grass Lake possesses a number of assets that position the community well for growth in both population and economic well-being if a handful of challenges can be overcome. The purpose of this economic development strategy is to provide a guide to allow the Village to capitalize on its assets for the benefit of the community and its residents.

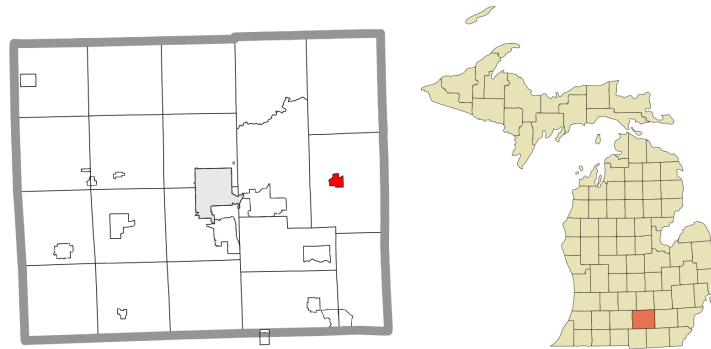
With a strong sense of place and downtown fabric the community is poised to capitalize on its location to capture new residents looking for a nice community with a lower cost of living. In fact, this appears to be underway as the Village has experienced population growth of 11.8 percent from 2020 to 2023, far outpacing Jackson County's growth of less than one-tenth of one percent for the same period. The Village also enjoys strong income levels as evidenced by the *Grass Lake Downtown Development Authority Community Survey* in which 56.1 percent of the survey's 300 respondents reported household income levels greater than \$100,000. These income levels will make the Village, and specifically downtown, appealing to prospective business owners and should be used by the Village to actively recruit new downtown businesses. The downtown's close proximity to Grass Lake and the Village's proximity to Waterloo State Recreation Area and the Sharonville and Grass Lake State Game Areas and other outdoor recreation areas should also be leveraged to attract visitors, residents, and businesses to the community resulting in positive economic impact and an even greater quality of life for residents.

Despite the Village's assets there are some challenges that must be addressed for the community to reach its full potential. Infrastructure issues, specifically the lack of sanitary sewer capacity, need to be resolved for the community to grow further. These issues are constraining the housing inventory, creating upward price pressures on the existing limited inventory, and limiting population growth. Coupled with these issues constraining both housing and population growth is a change-averse mindset that permeates a portion of the community. This was evident in a fair number of survey responses. The Village's population growth since 2020 indicates that it has been "discovered." As a result change is coming and this economic development strategy should be viewed as one tool to help manage that change in a way that most benefits the Village. Additionally, there is a lack of a defined downtown economic driver presenting an opportunity for the DDA and the Village to create one, either through leveraging the areas outdoor recreation assets or building off a few new downtown businesses to create dining destination, or both, to help drive economic growth for downtown.

Overall the Village's assets far outweigh its challenges and present an exciting opportunity for the community to usher in a new era of economic and community growth.

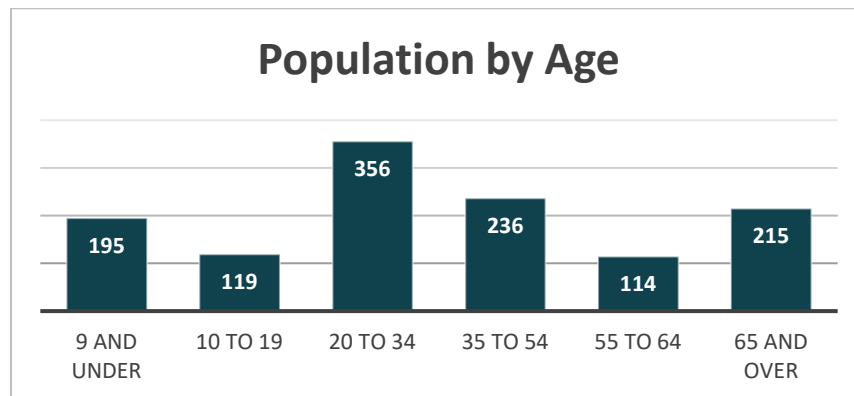
Location

The Village of Grass Lake is located in eastern Jackson County surrounded entirely by Grass Lake Township. Grass Lake Village lies 2.6 miles south of I-94, which leads to points east and west and provides access to routes which provide north and south access. The Village's main street, Michigan Avenue, is an important county road that provides access to nearby Jackson and environs. While to some degree the Village is self-sufficient, many residents are dependent upon neighboring urban areas for employment, shopping, and cultural activities.



Population

The Village of Grass Lake had a 2020 population of 1,105, a decrease of 5.8 percent from the 2010 population of 1,173. The Village population in 2023 was 1,235, an increase from the 2020 population of 11.8 percent. The Village comprised 20.2 percent of Grass Lake Township's 6,128 residents in 2023.



Age & Gender of the Population

The largest population cohort in the Village in 2023 was the Young Adult (ages 25 to 44) representing 32.0 percent of all Village residents. The next largest cohort was the Adult (ages 45 to 64) at 18.9 percent of residents. The Older Adult (age 65 plus) cohort at 18.9 percent and the School Age (ages 5 to 17) cohort at 13.4 percent of residents were next. Interestingly, the Preschool (ages 0 to 4) and College Age (18 to 24) cohorts were identical at 9.1 percent of residents. The median age of a Grass Lake Villager was 32.5 years in 2023, nearly twelve years younger than the 44.1 median age of all area residents. The Village's population was almost evenly split between male and female residents.

Household Income

The Village's median household income of \$74,306 in 2023 was similar to that of the U.S. (\$77,719), but the Village outpaced the median incomes for Michigan (\$69,183), and Jackson County (\$63,338). However, Grass Lake Township's household income of \$92,267 significantly exceeded all of them.

Educational Attainment

The educational attainment of Village residents in 2023 with at least a Bachelor's Degree older than 25 was 30.9 percent, which was greater than Jackson County's 23.0 percent of such residents but less than the Township's 33.7 percent, Michigan's 32.7 percent and the United States', 36.1 percent attainment levels.



Labor Force

The total labor force (older than 16 years old) of residents within the Village in 2023 was estimated at 989 people with 99 percent (between ages 25-64) having a high school diploma or higher.

Housing

The total number of housing units occupied in the Village of Grass Lake in 2023 was 529 with 409 (77.3%) of those being owner-occupied and 120 (22.7%) being rental units. The median home value for the Village is \$199,400 and the median residential rent is \$954/month.





Chapter 2:

Public Input Process

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PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

During February and March 2025, the Village of Grass Lake DDA distributed the "Grass Lake Downtown Development Authority Community Survey" to gather insights into the community's perception of downtown. Three hundred survey responses were received and categorized according to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Below are the identified areas for each category, along with the number of responses in parentheses.

Strengths

The community was asked, "What is the primary reason you visit Downtown Grass Lake?"

Restaurants and bars (169)

Events and festivals (123)

Shopping (115)

Outdoor recreation (55)

Business (46)

Work (21)

I live downtown (19)

Visit family (15)

Other (64) – library, pharmacy, post office, etc. (*see survey for complete list)



Weaknesses

The community was asked, "What is one specific way to improve the appearance of Downtown Grass Lake?"

Get rid of the antique store (39)
Bring in more businesses (52)
Improve the appearance – facades, flowers, keep historic appearance (98)
Lack of parking (13)
Incorporate the lake (3)
Maintaining the sidewalks (shoveling in the winter) (11)
Other issues: stores are not ADA friendly, store hours are limited

Opportunities

The community was asked, "What events or activities would you like to see added to the downtown area?"

Food and beverage festivals (208)
Live music and concerts (195)
Artisan markets (166)
Youth-focused activities (140)
Parades and holiday celebrations (111)
Arts and cultural performances (100)
Recreation events (82)
Community garden (3)

The community was asked, "What type(s) of housing should be available downtown?"

Upper story apartments (149)
Townhouses (106)
Apartment building – 20 units or less (91)

Threats

The community was asked, "What do you see as the greatest challenge facing Downtown Grass Lake?"

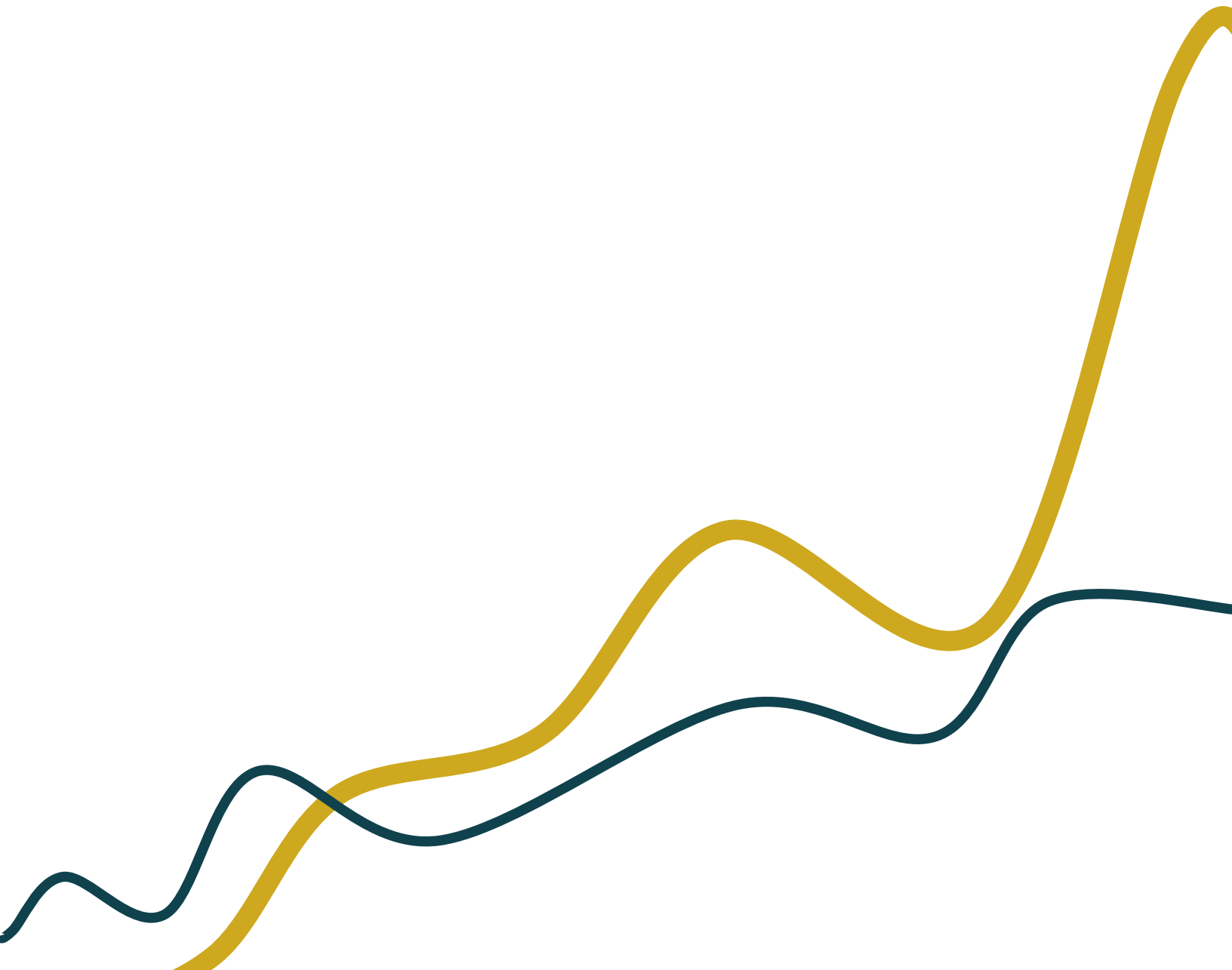
Run down building
Lack of business
Resistance to change
Water/sewer capacity limited





Chapter 3:

Local & Regional Economic Development Goals



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LOCAL & REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Local Economic Development Goals – Village of Grass Lake

The local economic development goals were identified in the Village of Grass Lake Mater Plan completed in December 2020.

GOAL #1: Revitalize Downtown Preserving Historic Character

The downtown is the heart of the village. The community supports a mixed-use downtown core that provide unique shopping and dining experiences and attracts new-economy industries while also enhancing the charming historic character of the village. In addition to programming, investment in the built environment is key to the success of downtown. This includes both public and private investments.

- ❖ Objective 1.1: Encourage Adaptive Reuse of Historic Structures
 - Continue to implement RRC Best Practices and leverage technical assistance to improve regulations and procedures.
 - Support private investment with layered incentives, coordinated infrastructure upgrades, and
 - Continue to fund the DDA facade improvement program.
 - Review outdoor dining ordinances to encourage active ground floor uses.
- ❖ Objective 1.2: Support Quality Design and Appropriate Historic Rehabilitation
 - Collaborate with Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) and the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to provide historic preservation training for local residents and property owners.
- ❖ Objective 1.3: Plan for Public Investment to Encourage Private Investment
 - Develop additional wayfinding signage within the downtown.
 - Update site furnishings such as benches and trash receptacles.
 - Work with railroad and MDOT to improve the pedestrian crossing at Lake Street.
 - Expand public open space opportunities in the downtown.

GOAL #2: Accommodate Future Growth While Maintaining the Traditional and Compact Character

The community feels strongly about providing opportunities for economic growth without losing the village's traditional scale and small town character. This means promoting continued

reinvestment through quality mixed-use infill development that complements the preservation and character of older buildings.

- ❖ Objective 2.1: Identify, Vision, and Market Redevelopment Ready Sites
 - Pursue further study of the current municipal property and adjacent parcels for a new mixed-use project with higher density residential.
 - Continue developer conversations regarding the potential for a new mixed-use building to house village offices within the downtown.

- ❖ Objective 2.2: Provide for a Range of Housing Options
 - Identify gap funding for new residential development.
 - Actively market potential sites for new housing, particularly missing middle housing types such as townhomes, apartments, cottage homes, or attached single family.
 - Coordinate with regional and state agencies to increase affordable housing programs.

- ❖ Objective 2.3: Support Home Businesses and Professional Offices
 - Allow home businesses and professional offices in certain residential districts.

GOAL #3: Stimulate Local Economy

Grass Lake is committed to supporting small business and attracting new development that is consistent with the community's vision. A critical step will be establishing priority redevelopment sites and marketing them to a mixture of businesses while also maintaining and expanding relationships with current employers, partner agencies, and other local organizations.

- ❖ Objective 3.1: Create and Build a Downtown Destination
 - Expand marketing and promotions for the village. Create a "passport" checklist highlighting local destinations to attract visitors.
 - Pursue feasibility of a bed and breakfast in the village or other unique lodging opportunities such as vacation home rentals.
 - Develop a retail/commercial strategy for the downtown.
 - Formalize the village's heritage tourism strategy highlighting local museums.
 - Formalize the village's recreation tourism strategy with connection to Grass Lake, Waterloo, Sharonville, Faholo, Greenwood Acres campground, and Holiday campground.

- ❖ Objective 3.2: Invest in Local Leadership and Downtown Management
 - Plan for network, resources, and continuing education for staff and volunteers (Michigan Downtown Association, Michigan Main Street)
 - Plan for benchmarking / peer-to-peer learning opportunities including visits to other communities.

- Prioritize succession planning for boards and commission. Continue to get young people involved in leadership roles

❖ Objective 3.3: Team with Local Partners

- Coordinate with major employers in the area including Henry Ford Allegiance, Grass Lake Schools , Jiffy Mix, Tenneco, and American Tooling Center

GOAL #4: Provide a Safe, Convenient, and Reliable Transportation System

The Village is committed to providing a safe, convenient, and reliable transportation system that is accessible for all and connects Grass Lake to the larger regional area. This means continuing to support street connectivity, particularly on Michigan Ave, Lake St, and Union St and encouraging a walkable village with an emphasis on multi-modal safety.

❖ Objective 4.1: Complete Streets

- Address sidewalk gaps, repair/new sidewalk pavement.
- Provide for bicycle parking within the downtown and other community gathering areas
- Pursue safe routes to school grant. Improve and install new 5' sidewalks.

❖ Objective 4.2: Develop a Holistic Approach to Downtown Parking

- Construct on-street parking along Brown St
- Prepare a downtown parking study
- Explore local transit options
- Expand on-call senior transit service
- Explore shuttle service for events with parking at high school lot

❖ Objective 4.3: Create, Expand, and Maintain an Integrated System of Sidewalks and Pathways

- Design sidewalks and pathways that connect with existing sidewalks, pathway systems and key destinations, activity centers throughout the village, including the lakefront, schools and parks.
- Discourage sidewalks that dead end or lead to nowhere.
- Incorporate pedestrian and landscaping elements along sidewalks and pathways.
- Pursue "Bicycle Friendly City" designation from the League of American Bicyclists.

❖ Objective 4.4: Improve Safety of Streets for All Users

- Incorporate distinctive and clearly marked crosswalks at road crossings that align with existing sidewalks and pathways.
- Incorporate curb bulb outs and other traffic calming devices to reduce the distances of pedestrian crossings.
- Improve the appearance of key entryways into the community by incorporating unique and distinctive road treatments, structural amenities, landscaping, signage and lighting that compliments the character of the community.

GOAL #5: Strengthen Public and Private Partnerships

Community prosperity is the overall economic health of the community. Today, economic development means more than business attraction and retention. Economic development and workforce development go hand in hand. Regional collaboration works to eliminate overlapping responsibilities and competing visions of economic priorities, and address redundancies and gaps in services.

❖ Government Partners

- MEDC
- Region 2 Planning Commission
- Jackson County
- Grass Lake Township

❖ Institutional Partners

- Grass Lake Community Schools
- State colleges and universities

❖ Workforce and Economic Development

- The Enterprise Group of Jackson (now Accelerate Jackson County)
- South Central Michigan Works!

Regional Economic Development Goals – Region 2 Planning Commission

The Region 2 Planning Commission serves as the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) designated Economic Development District for the region. A requirement of that designation is to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region every four to five years. The most recent CEDS for Region 2 was adopted in December 2021 and includes the regional economic development goals that follow.

GOAL #1: Create Fiscally Sustainable Quality Connected Places

Encourage responsible growth in interconnected areas within the region that have a critical mass of population, supportive infrastructure, and basic quality of life amenities, while also being fiscally sustainable, where revenues and expenses are balanced and sustainable for households, communities, and the region.

❖ Objective 1.1: Facilitate opportunities for centered growth and in-fill development

- Provide local governments with land use planning resources focused on population centers, growth areas, and areas with the capacity for in-fill development.

- ❖ Objective 1.2: Work with local governments to foster efficient growth
 - Assist local governments and economic development partners in understanding the local benefits and costs of development and infrastructure decisions.
- ❖ Objective 1.3: Maximize the use of existing transportation infrastructure to lessen fiscal pressures
 - R2PC supports and encourages choice of alternate modes of transportation and policies when developing transportation planning and programming.
- ❖ Objective 1.4: Increase financial literacy about innovative financing strategies and incentive policies
 - R2PC/R2EDD/economic development partners work with local governments to understand the full range of development financing strategies and incentive policies available. Efforts should be focused on regional places providing greatest return on investment.
 - R2EDD to explore the feasibility of developing a revolving loan fund to spur regional development.
- ❖ Objective 1.5: Maintain a full spectrum inventory of regional housing and affordability
 - R2PC/R2EDD/economic development partners/local governments work together to ensure an appropriate inventory of all housing types are available within each county and the region.

GOAL #2: Link Development with Transportation & Other Infrastructure

Coordinated transportation, infrastructure, and land-use decisions to enhance regional resident's access to jobs and educational opportunities and employer's access to workforce and customers.

- ❖ Objective 2.1: Improve employers' access to workforce and customers; residents access to jobs and education
 - R2PC/R2EDD will provide transportation and site accessibility information to appropriate transportation, workforce, and residential development entities when requested.
- ❖ Objective 2.2: Ensure households within vulnerable communities, as measured by Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and income metrics, have access to opportunities that meet their needs
 - R2PC/R2EDD will prioritize site locations for households and firms with good access to jobs and households for vulnerable communities when making land use planning recommendations and decisions.
- ❖ Objective 2.3: Fund infrastructure that strategically improves economic outcomes.

- R2PC works with other transportation agencies to incorporate economic development considerations into transportation planning, specifically the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
 - R2PC/R2EDD/economic development partners consider refinements to transportation planning and programming policies to improve economic outcomes.
 - R2PC/local governments/transportation partners develop policies around “mobility as a service” and integration of alternative transportation modes into community plans and policies.
- ❖ Objective 2.4: Invest and improve development of site infrastructure: water, sewer, fiber optic, and broadband in strategic locations
- R2PC/R2EDD/economic development partners/local governments assess needed infrastructure for identified regional priority development locations.
 - Focus economic development efforts on areas with workforce access, transportation, existing infrastructure and services.
 - Expand broadband deployment to maximize investment and connectivity

GOAL #3: Provide Placemaking Amenities to Attract Talent

Maintain quality of life elements that attract skilled labor by encouraging and highlighting walkable cities, towns, and villages, downtown development and revitalization, arts and culture, outdoor recreation, and open space preservation.

- ❖ Objective 3.1: Pursue the development of an outdoor recreation economy through preservation-minded leveraging of the region’s natural and man-made recreation resources
- R2PC/R2EDD/local governments/economic development partners support and encourage development and funding of regional outdoor recreational assets; development of events to attract visitors and economic impact; and improving access to outdoor recreation for local residents.
- ❖ Objective 3.2: Encourage downtown development and revitalization in the region’s cities, towns, and villages to support the attraction of skilled labor and to benefit existing residents
- R2PC/R2EDD will support local downtown development efforts such as Michigan Main Street affiliated programs, downtown development authorities, revitalization programs, and others within the region through land use planning and technical expertise.
 - Support development and building standards that balance affordability and encourage infill development where appropriate.
- ❖ Objective 3.3: Identify potential multi-jurisdictional placemaking projects that contribute to talent attraction and provide a positive regional impact
- R2PC/R2EDD/local governments/economic development partners identify, support, and encourage development of impactful multijurisdictional regional placemaking projects, such as trail connections.

- ❖ Objective 3.4: Promote regional tourism opportunities and maximize local government's revenue through increased visitor activity
 - R2PC/R2EDD/local governments/ economic development partners identify enhancements to existing and potential tourism areas, and promote efforts around increasing diversity, and broadening of arts and cultural opportunities within the region.
- ❖ Objective 3.5: Promote innovative and successful companies headquartered in the region
 - Identify ten companies to be featured in a coordinated marketing campaign and to also serve as local ambassadors in business and talent recruitment efforts.
- ❖ Objective 3.6: Provide attractive, amenity-rich, and walkable communities to attract skilled labor.
 - R2PC/R2EDD provide land-use resources to local governments to amend plans and policies in order to facilitate the development of more livable places that provide additional amenities to people near their homes and workplaces.
- ❖ Objective 3.7: Develop a regional branding and marketing campaign to improve awareness and recognition of the region.
 - R2EDD/economic development partners work with relevant entities to develop a regional branding and marketing campaign to attract talented new residents while also highlighting regional amenities for existing residents.

GOAL #4: Attract & Retain Businesses, & Encourage Innovation

Support and encourage economic diversity in business retention, job creation, workforce development, and innovation through partnering and information sharing.

- ❖ Objective 4.1: Business expansion and retention
 - Recruitment of businesses from targeted clusters, such as renewable energy, as well as other high-wage producing industries.
 - R2PC/R2EDD/local governments/economic development partners collaborate to gather and distribute data regarding buildings, sites and local permit processes and fees. Aim to streamline permitting process, if necessary, at local government level.
 - R2PC/R2EDD review Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding criteria and consider scoring criteria for projects that invest and modernize infrastructure at key business sites.
- ❖ Objective 4.2: Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation
 - Work with economic development partners and other relevant entities to retain and expand diverse businesses: women-owned, locally-owned, and other small business types.

- R2PC/R2EDD/local economic development partners identify and act upon new cluster based opportunities to maintain economic resiliency through a diverse economy.
- R2EDD/local economic development partners connect with Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), Small Business Administration (SBA), Lean Rocket Lab, and Chambers of Commerce to assist with entrepreneurial start-ups.
- R2EDD/local economic development partners work with local colleges and universities to integrate students into regional entrepreneurial ecosystem.

- ❖ Objective 4.3: Support growth of key industry clusters
 - Support local economic development partners' identification of desired workforce and site characteristics of key industry clusters, and share available data.
 - Explore use of industry cluster information in R2PC regional transportation and local land use planning process.

- ❖ Objective 4.4: Increase local government economic development capacity
 - R2EDD support Hillsdale Economic Development Partnership, Enterprise Group of Jackson, and Lenawee Now's local economic development efforts.
 - R2PC/R2EDD provide training opportunities in economic development tools, financing strategies, and policies.

- ❖ Objective 4.5: Develop a workforce that meets the needs of the region
 - R2EDD works with local economic development partners, colleges and universities, and other local workforce development entities to identify local gaps in workforce and meet with education institutions and industries to align resources.

- ❖ Objective 4.6: Monitor, partner, and assist with catalyst projects
 - R2EDD will encourage and monitor the development of large or significant economic sites and projects, strategic and emerging clusters, and housing policies and development.

Chapter 4:

Economic Development Strategy

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Throughout the planning process, a series of deliberate actions were undertaken to establish a comprehensive framework for the identification of strategic economic goals and objectives.

Goal #1: Revitalize Downtown Grass Lake

The Village's mixed-use downtown core should be leveraged to provide unique shopping and dining experiences while also adding needed residential uses, specifically apartments, in select locations and buildings.

- ❖ Objective 1.1: Adaptive reuse of downtown buildings
 - Support private investment with incentives when necessary and appropriate
 - Continue to fund the DDA's façade improvement program and explore the creation of new incentives
 - Encourage active ground floor uses and upper floor residential uses in vacant or underutilized spaces
- ❖ Objective 1.2: Identify downtown redevelopment sites
 - Explore the feasibility of redeveloping the Village office property and adjacent parcels into a new mixed-use project with higher density residential
 - Explore the feasibility of a new mixed-use building to house Village offices within the downtown
- ❖ Objective 1.3: Develop a downtown destination
 - Explore the feasibility of unique lodging options downtown, such as the cottage homes identified in the Village's 2020 Master Plan, to serve the downtown and outdoor recreation hub market segments
- ❖ Objective 1.4: Proactively address downtown parking
 - Identify potential sites to accommodate an increase in available parking inventory
 - Add wayfinding signage for parking
 - Improve Village Hall parking
 - Explore the feasibility of adding on-street parking west along Michigan Avenue to Frank's
- ❖ Objective 1.5: Encourage additional downtown placemaking
 - Explore the feasibility of public art including murals and sculptures
 - Encourage preservation and sustainability by establishing a downtown historic district

Goal #2: Establish Grass Lake as an Outdoor Recreation Hub

Utilize the community's outdoor recreation assets to attract visitors, residents, and new investment.

- ❖ Objective 2.1: Develop outdoor recreation related events to attract visitors and spending to the community
- ❖ Objective 2.2: Identify additional outdoor recreation infrastructure needed to continue building community as an outdoor recreation hub
 - Gear rentals such as kayaks, SUPs, bikes, etc.
 - Identify a partner, such as the Jackson Public Library Grass Lake Branch, to host an outdoor recreation gear lending library to provide a lower cost entry to outdoor recreation for local residents
 - Adopt the Rural Recreational Roads model to establish a gravel cycling presence in the community by identifying gravel cycling routes and the location for a hub to access the routes and provide a base level of amenities to riders, such as parking, water, and restroom access
 - Identify sites for the development of mountain bike trails and / or a pump track
 - Identify potential locations for a skate park or skate garden and determine the feasibility of incorporating skate park components such as benches, small banks, jumps, and ramps along a paved non-motorized
- ❖ Objective 2.3: Identify complementary infrastructure to serve outdoor recreation visitors to the community and nearby assets such as Waterloo SRA
 - Maps and guides of outdoor recreation offerings such as gravel cycling potentially in partnership with Experience Jackson and / or Region 2's Southern Michigan Outdoors initiative
 - Provide bike repair stations at appropriate locations
 - Food and beverage offerings including the potential to develop a food truck court
 - Short term lodging options catering to outdoor recreation visitors
- ❖ Objective 2.4: Identify partners to move outdoor recreation hub forward
 - Village, Township, DDA, Region 2 Planning Commission, Experience Jackson

Goal #3: Retain Existing Businesses and Attract New Businesses and Investment with an Emphasis on Entrepreneurial Support

The Village is committed to supporting existing businesses and attracting new businesses with a particular emphasis on growing the entrepreneurial environment.

- ❖ Objective 3.1: Leverage presence of fiber in the Village to attract new and entrepreneurial businesses
- ❖ Objective 3.2: Identify opportunities to stimulate the entrepreneurial environment
 - Partner with the Lean Rocket Lab's LOCAL program to host a fellow in an upcoming cohort in a downtown storefront space provided by the Village and DDA

Goal #4: Identification of Development Opportunities

Identify development opportunities within the Village limits while also promoting reinvestment through quality mixed-use infill development. Focus will be to identify commercial and residential opportunities to stimulate new investment in the community. Unique or “out of the box” development ideas, such as the outdoor recreation hub, that emphasize the Village’s assets should also be considered. New investment is critical to increase the Village’s tax base.

- ❖ Objective 4.1: Encourage (re)development of existing underutilized buildings or vacant commercial parcels
 - Redevelopment of the Brinkman’s site
- ❖ Objective 4.2: Provide for a range of housing options by encouraging new residential development in the Village that aligns with the Housing Action Plan
 - Identify gap funding for new residential development
 - Identify sites for new housing
 - Develop appropriate “price point” housing, particularly missing middle housing, such as townhomes, apartments, cottage homes, or attached single family
 - Look to expand rental market, currently 20% rentals, in Village
- ❖ Objective 4.3: Address infrastructure challenges that are impeding growth
 - Resolve sanitary sewer capacity issue to allow for new residential development
 - Partner with neighboring communities to explore the feasibility of creating a regional sewer district
 - Identify partners and funding sources, such as EDA or State of Michigan, to resolve sewer issue

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Chapter 5: Action Plan



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The development of the goals and objectives at the heart of the economic development strategy was informed by the results of the Grass Lake Downtown Development Community Survey and multiple meetings with the Village administration and the DDA staff.

Each goal's objectives have been assigned an implementation window and lead entity responsible for guiding the objective to completion.

Implementation timing suggestions are based on factors such as cost, ease of achieving the objective, and expressed interest in the objective garnered during the public input process. Implementation of objectives can be adjusted as opportunities present themselves to fund particular objectives. Multiple Village of Grass Lake departments are listed as the lead entity for each objective given the cohesiveness of the municipal leadership and need for cooperation to achieve successful implementation. It is also recommended that the Village seek out potential community partners for implementation of objectives, where appropriate.

The proposed timing of implementation is as follows:

IMMEDIATE: Low cost, easy implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1 – 12 months.

SHORT: Low cost, easy implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1 – 2 years.

MEDIUM: Important actions that have some level of significant cost and can be implemented within the next 2 – 4 years.

LONG: Actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation and are likely to take 4+ years.

ON-GOING: Actions which are continuously on-going in the Village and span multiple implementation timeframes.

The lead entities for the implementation of objectives include:

M – Village Manager

VC – Village Council

DDA – Downtown Development Authority

P – Partners Organizations

Implementation: Lead Entity:

Goal 1: Revitalize Downtown Grass Lake

Objective 1.1: Adaptive reuse of downtown buildings	Ongoing	DDA / M / VC
Objective 1.2: Identify downtown redevelopment sites	Immediate	DDA / M
Objective 1.3: Develop a downtown destination	Short Term	DDA
Objective 1.4: Proactively address downtown parking	Short Term	DDA / M / VC
Objective 1.5: Encourage additional downtown placemaking	Immediate	DDA

Goal 2: Establish Grass Lake as an Outdoor Recreation Hub

Objective 2.1: Develop outdoor recreation related events to attract visitors and spending to the community	Short Term	DDA / P
Objective 2.2: Identify additional outdoor recreation infrastructure needed to continue building community as an outdoor recreation hub	Medium Term	DDA / M / P
Objective 2.3: Identify complimentary infrastructure to serve outdoor recreation visitors to the community and nearby assets such as Waterloo SRA	Medium Term	DDA / P
Objective 2.4: Identify partners to move outdoor recreation hub forward	Immediate	DDA / M / VC / P

Goal 3: Retain Existing Businesses and Attract New Businesses and Investment with an Emphasis on Entrepreneurial Support

Objective 3.1: Leverage presence of fiber in the Village to attract new and entrepreneurial businesses	Long Term	M / VC / P
Object 3.2: Identify opportunities to stimulate the entrepreneurial environment	Medium Term	DDA / V / P

Goal 4: Identification of Development Opportunities

Objective 4.1: Encourage (re)development of existing underutilized buildings or vacant commercial parcels	Long Term	DDA / M / VC
Objective 4.2: Provide for a range of housing options by encouraging new residential development in the Village that aligns with the Housing Action Plan	Medium Term	M / VC
Objective 4.3: Address infrastructure challenges that are impeding growth	Long Term	M / VC

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