

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AND TAX INCREMENT FINANCING PLANS

Village of Almont Downtown Development Authority



... that was then...



... this is now...

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Almont DDA was formally established by the Almont Village Council on November 7, 1984 with the adoption of Ordinance Number 139. This ordinance established the district boundaries. The DDA then adopted a tax increment financing and development plan. The Plans were amended in 1992 and 1998. This amendment extends the life of the plan to 2034 or until all debts are retired.

The DDA is governed by a ten member Board of Directors. The Board members represent people with a vested interest in the success and development of a vibrant downtown. Representing a cross section of our community, they include business and property owners as well as residents of the community. The Village Council President serves on the DDA Board of Directors. Board members are appointed by the Almont Village Council President with the approval of the Council and serve four year terms.

Legally, the Development Plan and the Tax Increment Financing Plan are two separate plans, but because they are interrelated, they are presented here as one document.

For their efforts in updating this plan, the Village would like to thank the current members of the DDA:

- Terry Roach - Chairperson
- Tammy Pepper - Vice Chairperson
- Steve Schneider - Secretary
- Tara Antonelli - Treasurer
- Mike Bohm
- Michele Breen
- Al Dettmer
- Christie Kinkade
- Lynn Zarate

This plan was prepared with assistance from LSL Planning, Inc., a SAFEbuilt Company



RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION BY DDA BOARD:

ADOPTED BY VILLAGE COUNCIL:

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INTRODUCTION AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

INTRODUCTION

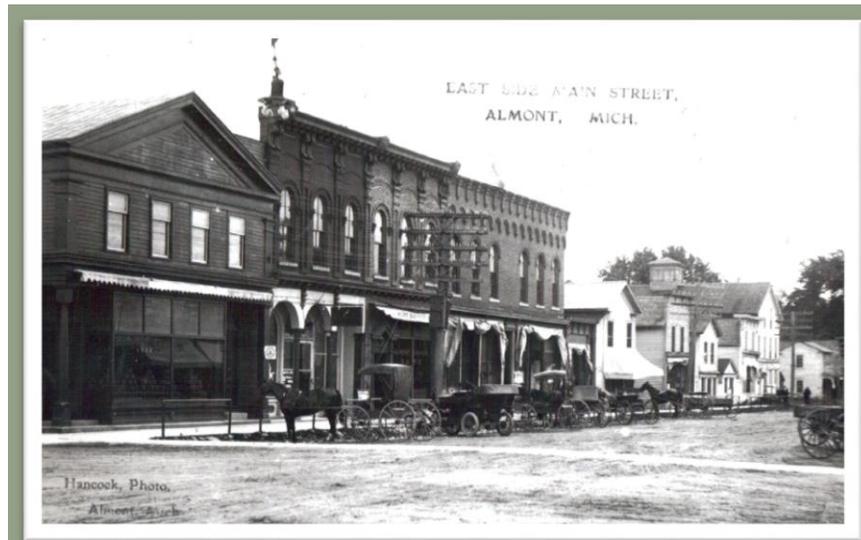
Almont is a community distinct from others, largely due to the presence and vibrancy of its downtown district. This key asset is part of what defines the local quality of life and economic climate. The Almont DDA District includes both a traditional downtown, but also a developing industrial park. Together, these two elements of the local economy provide places for new, unique and growing businesses; places where people want to visit; and jobs to keep them and their families within the community for years to come.

The Almont Village Council created the Almont Downtown Development Authority (DDA) by Ordinance 139 which became effective on November 21, 1984. The primary purpose of the Development Plan and the Tax Increment Financing Plan is to establish a legal basis for the capture and expenditure of tax increment revenues in accordance with P.A. 197 of 1975, as amended, for the purpose of stimulating and encouraging private investment in specific development areas through the provision of public improvements.

PURPOSE OF THE DDA

The purpose of the Almont Downtown Development Authority Plan is to facilitate the maintenance of a vibrant local commercial economy, preservation of important cultural elements, and attractive business district(s) that promote economic growth and strengthen the identity of the Village of Almont.

The DDA is designated to manage improvements and funds captured within the development area district. Generally speaking, the “district” includes most commercial, industrial and some residential land within the Village of Almont located along Main Street and Van Dyke Road from just south of Stone at the southern end, to the Village boundary to the north.



East Main Street, 1910

The purpose of the Development Plan is to present the DDA’s goals and planned projects that are expected to further the purpose of the DDA and the goals below. The Tax Increment Financing Plan projects the DDA’s expectations for revenue capture and compare them to the planned projects to ensure adequate funds will exist to accomplish the Development Plan.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In addition to public improvements to be financed with funds under the direction of the DDA, the overall development plan includes private development and reinvestment within the DDA district and the Village. To this end, the DDA will:

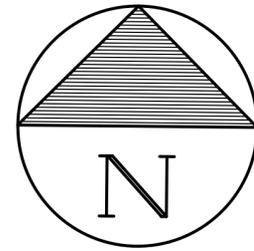
1. Encourage renovation of rear building facades and creation of back entrances which are attractive and convenient to shoppers using the parking area behind the stores.
2. Facilitate improvement, renovation, and redevelopment of interiors and exteriors of commercial buildings.

3. Promote second-story commercial and residential space to increase occupancy of properties and more appropriate usage of buildings.
4. Strive to maintain the historic character of existing structures and encourage new development to conform to the historic identity of the district.
5. Encourage the establishment and development of residential complexes within the authority district.
6. Offer assistance and encourage outside signage that fosters pedestrian oriented lighting and visibility.
7. Engender cooperation and unity among development area merchants via a business and retail organization.

DEVELOPMENT AREA/DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

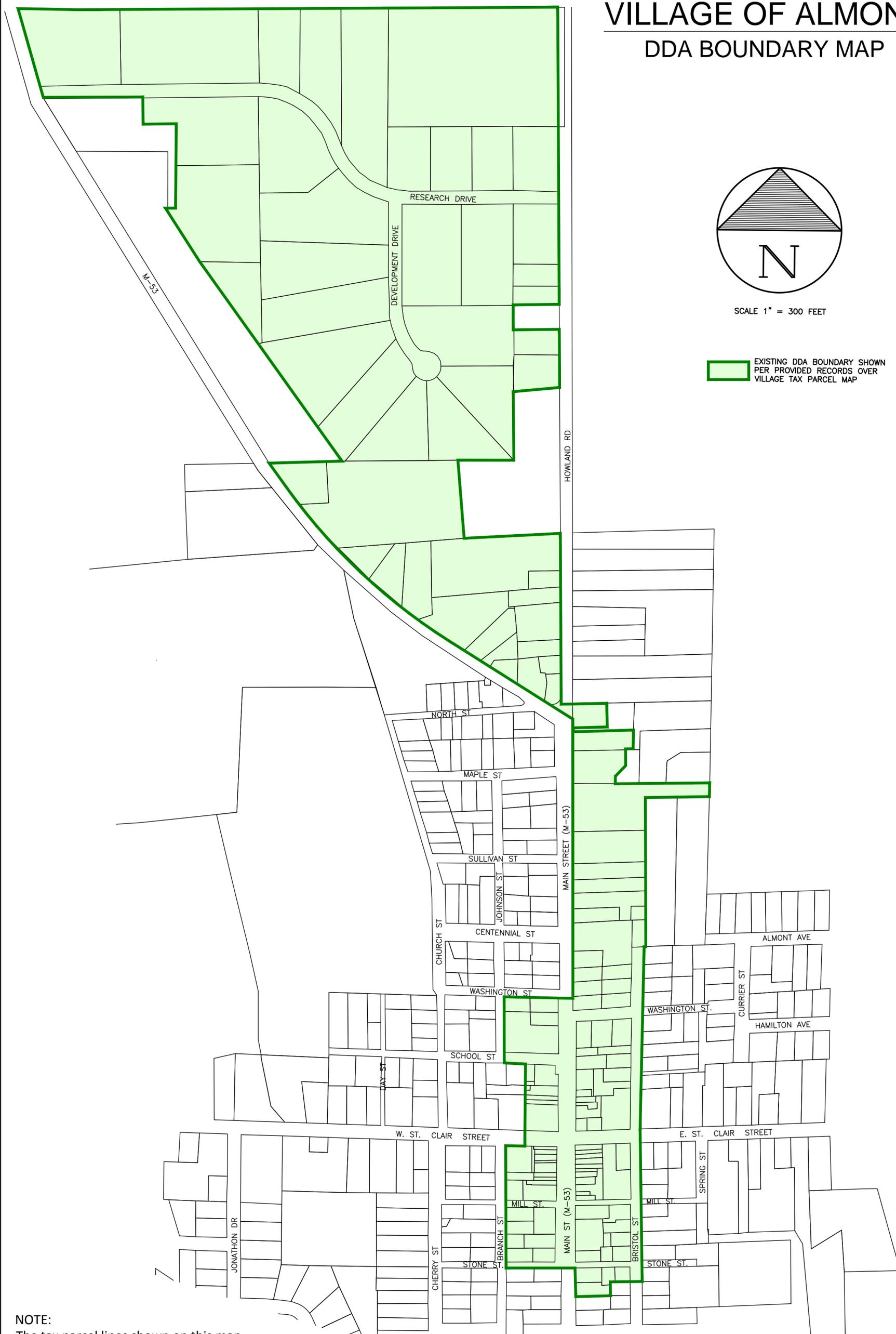
The Development Area Boundary Map illustrates the boundaries of the development area in relation to the individual properties, transportation facilities, and water bodies. The primary DDA District includes most commercial, industrial and some residential land within the Village of Almont located along Main Street and Van Dyke Road from just south of Stone at the southern end, to the Village boundary to the north. The development area boundaries are coterminous with the DDA district boundaries.

VILLAGE OF ALMONT DDA BOUNDARY MAP



SCALE 1" = 300 FEET

EXISTING DDA BOUNDARY SHOWN
PER PROVIDED RECORDS OVER
VILLAGE TAX PARCEL MAP



NOTE:
The tax parcel lines shown on this map
are for general reference only and
should not be viewed as legal proof of
a parcel or structures location in
relation to the flood plan boundaries.



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DESCRIPTION OF LAND USES WITHIN THE DISTRICT

Land uses in the development district include a mixture of commercial and retail, business and professional offices, industrial, and residential structures (both single and multiple family). The Existing Land Use Map shows the location of uses in the Village.

Public Land Uses

Public facilities in the development area include:

- a. The Almont Municipal Building (N. Main)
- b. United States Post Office (N. Main)
- c. Municipal Parking Lots located south of St. Clair on the east and west sides of Main Street behind the commercial buildings.
- d. Various water, sewer, electrical, and telephone facilities

Private Land Uses

Land uses in the development area include:

- a. **Residential.** The majority of residential structures are located along Main Street north of E. Washington. Based upon the information collected by the Almont Downtown Development Authority, the number of residents residing in the development district is 95. There will be no displacement of these residents. The development plan does not call for the displacement of any residents; however, if studies or projects necessitate the displacement of any residents, the plan will be amended with the approval of the Almont Village Council following a public hearing. No occupied residences are designated for acquisition and clearance by the Authority. The population within the district is not known, but is not expected to exceed 100 residents.
- b. **Commercial.** The majority of commercial and retail businesses are concentrated along both sides of Main Street from Stone Street north to E. Washington. Additional commercial businesses lie on M-53, north of North Street, and south of Water Street. Business and professional offices are scattered throughout the district.
- c. **Industrial.** Industrial uses are located in the Industrial Research Park at the northern end of the Village, between Van Dyke and Howland.

Existing Streets

All streets in the development area are shown on the Development Area map. With the proposed future development of light industrial zoned property in the Development Area, there will be new streets designed and constructed to accommodate that development.

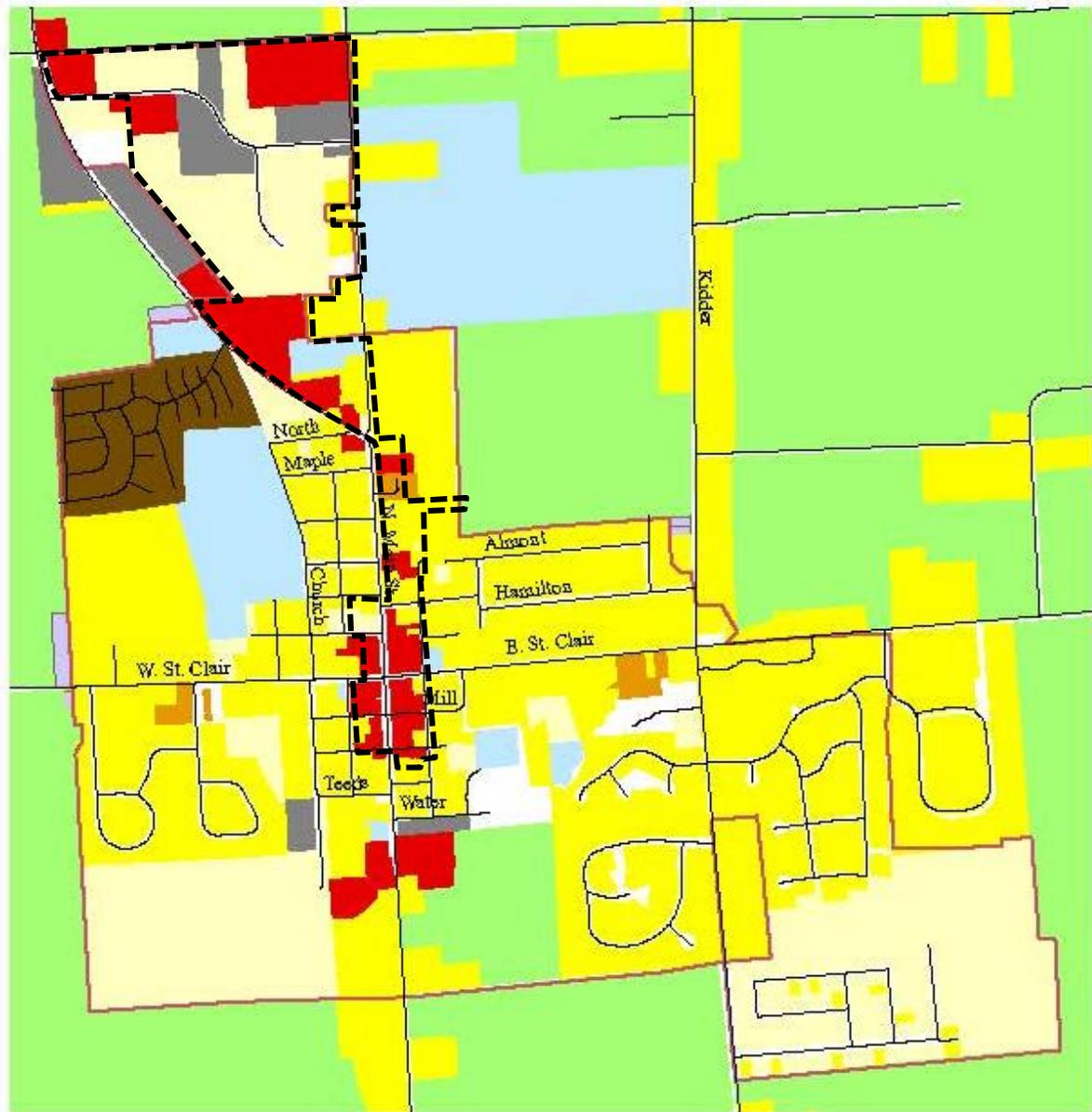
Future Land Use

The location and extent of proposed land uses for the development area are shown on the Future Land Use Map. The future land uses are as presented in the Almont Township and Village of Almont Master Plan, adopted in 2013.

EXISTING LAND USE MAP

The existing land use plan was prepared and adopted by the Village of Almont Planning Commission. It shows how land is actually used, not necessarily how it is zoned or proposed to be used. It is intended to provide an understanding of existing land use patterns.

Generalized Existing Land Use



Village of Almont

Lapeer County

Map Prepared By:
Village of Almont Planning Commission

With Assistance From:
Community Planning & Management, P.C.

Base Map: Lapeer County Equalization

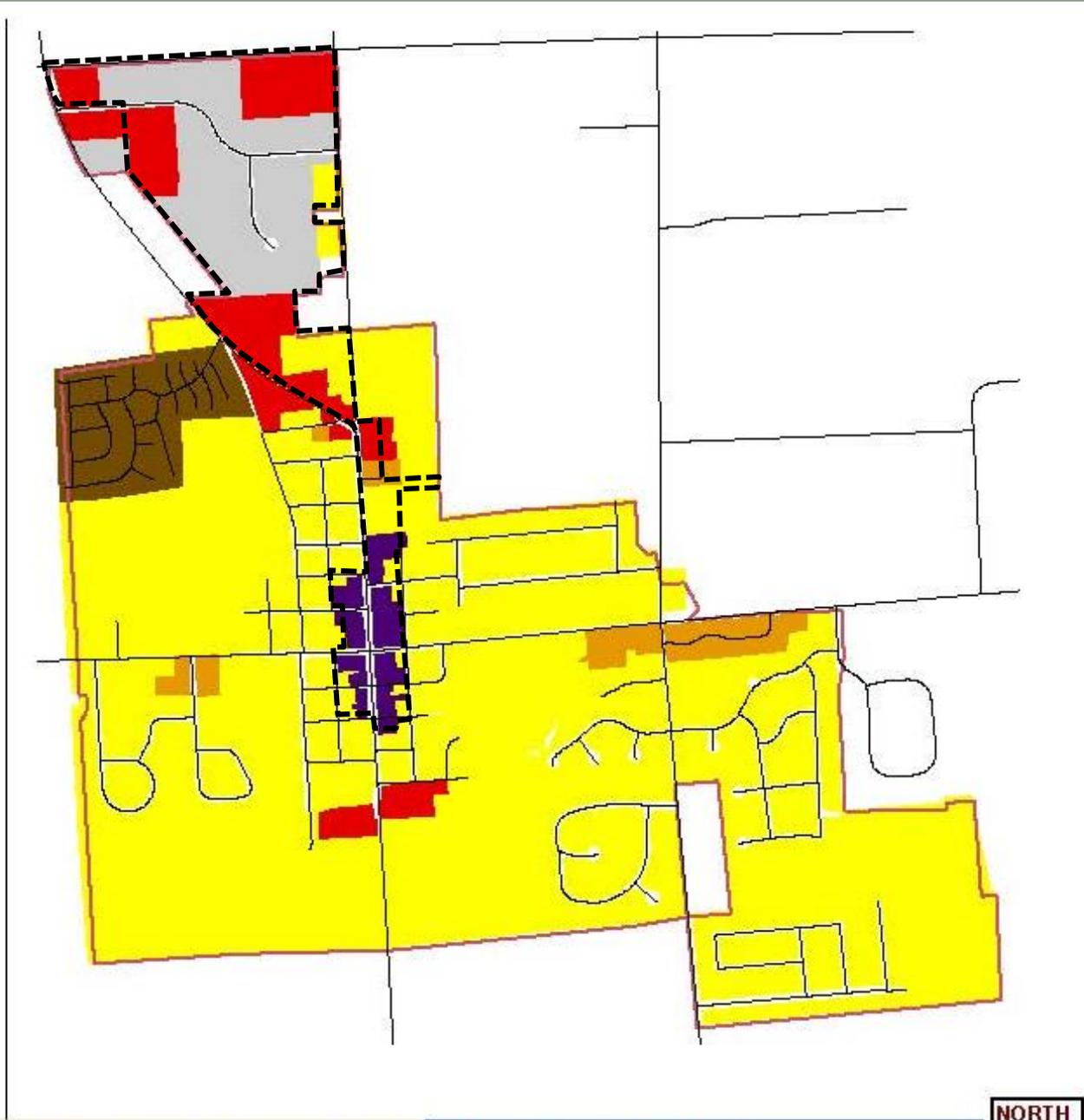
Legend

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Vacant |  Commercial |
|  Agricultural or Residential on Acreage |  Industrial |
|  Single Family |  Manufactured Housing Community |
|  Multiple Family |  Public/Semi-Public |



FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The future land use plan was prepared and adopted by the Village of Almont Planning Commission. It shows how land is proposed to be used in the future. By comparing the Existing and Future Land Use Maps, one can begin to see where land use changes are expected to occur.



Village of Almont LAND USE PLAN

Lapeer County

Map Prepared By:
Village of Almont Planning Commission

With Assistance From:
Community Planning & Management, P.C.

Base Map: Lapeer County Equalization

- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MANUFACTURED HOUSING COMMUNITY
- COMMERCIAL/OFFICE
- DOWNTOWN
- INDUSTRIAL



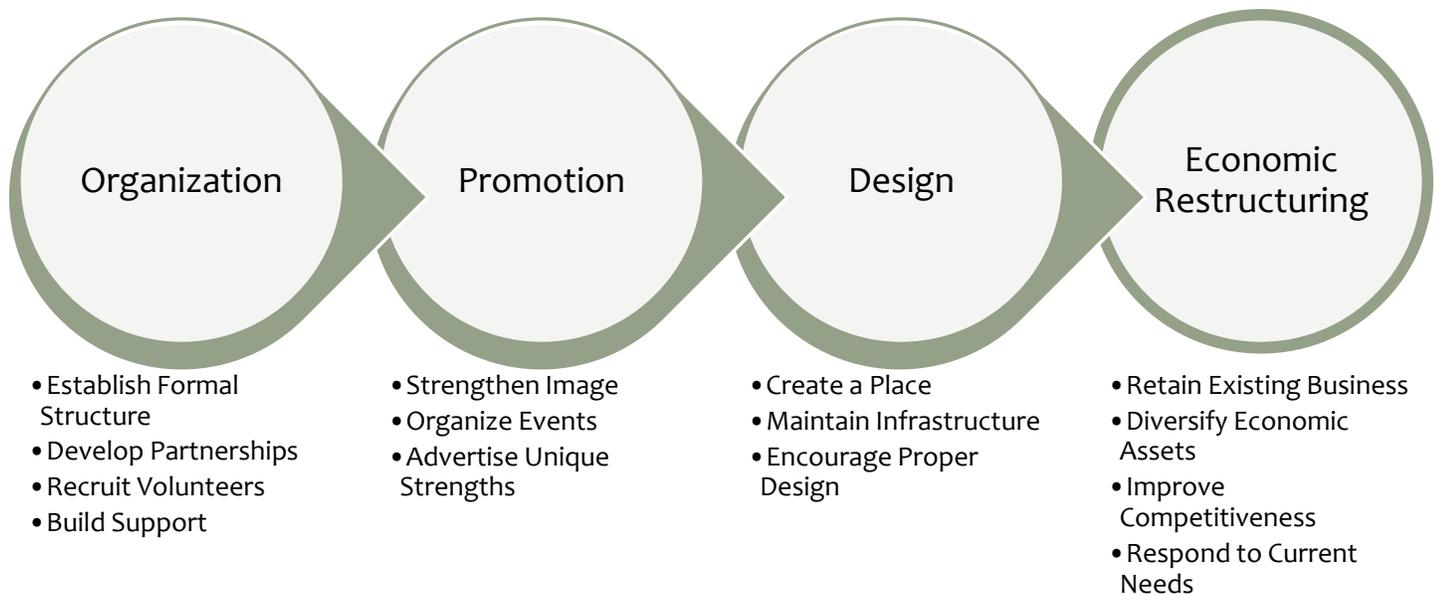
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

KEY PRINCIPLES

While the DDA maintains a list of goals and objectives, it is also dedicated to promoting good planning and organizational behavior. The DDA recognizes its role in improving the entire Almont community, and has embraced several emerging concepts that will benefit the downtown, its businesses, and the Almont area.

1. Implement the Main Street 4 Point Program

The Main Street Four-Point Approach® is a preservation-based economic development tool created by the National Trust for Historic Places. Their National Main Street Center offers guidance and technical support to select communities seeking to preserve and revitalize traditional downtowns and neighborhoods. The National Main Street Center promotes a comprehensive approach to addresses the variety of issues and problems that challenge traditional commercial districts, using its Four-Point Approach. The Village of Almont is a community that could qualify as a Main Street Community, since it meets many of the established principles of the program, which are summarized below.



The DDA already maintains a formal structure as recommended, and it has recruited volunteers and built support through its events and promotions and activities. Downtown Almont is already a quaint Village with a distinct character. The Village and DDA have gone through great lengths over the years to improve the downtown environment through streetscape improvements, coordination and proper zoning regulation. The downtown is a thriving component of the local economy, and it provides viable business locations that offer important goods and services to the community. In this way, the downtown promotes small business retention, as its location away from high volume freeways provides a visible and profitable location at a more reasonable cost.

2. Promote Sustainability within the Downtown

The DDA is committed to lowering its energy costs and improving efficiency in design, both on public and private land. Low-energy and low-impact design within the public street right-of-way and on publicly-owned land easily complements efforts on privately-owned land. The DDA supports sustainable efforts in the following ways:

- Adaptive Re-use. By its very existence, downtown Almont provides a significant preservation of investments by maintaining existing viable buildings rather than encouraging complete redevelopment. As opposed to complete demolition and redevelopment, preservation of the initial investment made when a historic building was constructed can provide economic benefits as well. Rather than spending money to completely reconstruct an existing viable building, re-use of existing structures maintains the original investment made in that site. The Michigan State Historic Preservation Office rewards businesses who preserve historic buildings and facades through tax incentives.
- LED Lighting. The DDA plans to replace its existing street light fixtures with LED lighting. This will help reduce energy consumption while reducing costs.
- Stormwater Management/LID. The DDA promotes use of rain gardens, pervious pavement and other low-impact design elements on private land in the downtown.

3. Provide Economic Support to Promote the Michigan Redevelopment Ready Initiative

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation developed the Redevelopment Ready Communities program, which encourages communities to evaluate their administrative, zoning, and development policies and regulations and streamline them in anticipation of redevelopment. A limited number of communities are accepted into the program by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, based on an evaluation of their adherence to a set of best practices developed by a panel of experts. The best practices challenge communities to be flexible while seeking quality development that supports sense of place.

To become “Redevelopment Ready,” communities are required to promote available assets and opportunities, implement policies that will foster a sense of place within the community, streamline development review procedures, and others. Each municipality will be evaluated by this set of criteria, and some are those that only be achieved in the downtown and by the DDA. Criteria that would likely become the responsibility of the Almont DDA include those listed below. The DDA currently meets these criteria:

- ✓ Publish plans and documents available online
- ✓ Establish DDA and downtown district boundaries
- ✓ Promote development projects
- ✓ Identify open space
- ✓ Consider pedestrian oriented development
- ✓ Allow mixed use in the Downtown

REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES

To qualify, MEDC reviews the following community components:

- Community Plans and Public Outreach
- Zoning Policy and Regulations
- Development Review Process
- Education and Training
- Redevelopment Ready Sites®
- Community Prosperity

4. Support Complete Streets Initiatives

Complete Streets are those that considers the user of streets (i.e. drivers, bikers, pedestrians, etc.), along with the street’s intended function (i.e. to move traffic, provide access to goods and services, etc.) to determine the best street design. Historically, transportation decisions were made primarily to improve traffic flow and reduce vehicle crashes. While such efforts have resulted in improved safety on Michigan roads, they often overlooked the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders.

Downtown Almont is an example where complete streets have been implemented. It provides streetscape and design elements that promote pedestrian activity, provide on-street parking, and maintain good traffic flow. These elements are critical to serving those who commonly visit downtown, and are an important design element of the downtown that shapes the visitor’s

experience. The DDA has also included a variety of new projects in this plan that will support complete streets, including development of a Complete Streets Plan. Other planned projects, such as development of design guidelines, improving and extending streetscaping, and other road improvement projects will also further this goal.

5. Placemaking

A community is defined by a variety of factors that must work in tandem to create livable places. The concept of “placemaking” considers this holistic approach where any one factor can influence the rest. Focusing on, or neglecting any one factor can result in an imbalance that generally manifests as declining property values, less private investment and increased blight. Desirable communities not only provide safe and attractive housing, but also meaningful jobs, convenient access to goods and services, and a healthy environment. In short, they are places where people want to live, work, shop and recreate.

The state of Michigan has taken an active role in promoting the concept of placemaking that will result in quality places, more jobs and greater economic competitiveness. The concept of placemaking revolves around the following key tenets:

- **Housing:** improving and revitalizing homes and neighborhoods; providing financial assistance
- **Transportation:** promoting safe travel along and across streets for all users of the right-of-way (motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders)
- **Historic Preservation:** maintaining historic and cultural resources that have shaped the character and identity of a community
- **Michigan Main Street:** building solid downtown commercial centers that are both competitive and which contribute to walkable, mixed use areas
- **Green Space:** preserving valuable natural resources while providing active and passive recreational opportunities
- **Talent:** providing vibrant and inviting places that will attract skilled workers, young professionals, and new businesses that seek to hire them
- **Entrepreneurialism:** cultivating local businesses through economic gardening rather than recruiting outside businesses
- **TIDE (Talent, Innovation, Diversity and Environment) Community Online Assessment Tool:** assessing local potential for economic growth of proposed investments and initiatives by comparing employment data with



a variety of factors that impact the New Economy

It is a goal of this plan to promote placemaking by supporting local businesses and creating a strong downtown. A healthy, viable downtown is crucial to the heritage, economic health and civic pride of the entire community for several reasons:

- ✓ A healthy downtown retains and creates jobs.
- ✓ A healthy downtown translates to a stronger tax base.
- ✓ Long-term revitalization of businesses in locations that use existing infrastructure is more efficient and fiscally sound than greenfield development.
- ✓ A diverse downtown provides additional options for goods and services, especially for less conventional businesses.
- ✓ A healthy downtown is a symbol of strong community caring and quality of life.

PLANNED PROJECTS



Built in the mid-1800s, it remains as one of the last original wood structures in downtown. In 2010, the structure was rehabilitated and remodeled and gained recognition from the Mich. Historic Preservation Network.

The Almont DDA has evaluated a list of potential projects that can meet the goals and objectives of this development plan. From time to time the DDA may modify the priority and timing of the project without changes to the Development Plan or Tax Increment Financing Plan. A budget will be submitted to the Village Council for approval for each year's proposed projects. The DDA may indicate modification to the plan for submission to the Village Council for public hearing, consideration and approval.

The table on the next page lists projects planned by the DDA, projection of general estimated costs and priorities. A detailed description of each project is provided below.

- **Cost Estimates:** The cost estimates provided are very general, and not based on actual project estimates. Cost estimates are not expected to be entirely accurate, rather are provided to help the DDA identify expectations so they can appropriately manage its funds and appropriate money at a reasonable pace. Therefore, cost estimates are expected to change as projects are refined and initiated.
- **Timeframe:** The estimated timing of implementation is as shown, but may be adjusted as resources allow and priorities shift. In reality, certain projects may be undertaken before the timeframe specified if opportunities present themselves, or after the timeframe if adequate resources or other elements of the project are not yet available.

	Cost Estimate	Timeframe
EXECUTIVE/PLANNING PROJECTS		
Youth on Main Program	\$1,000 per year	Annually
DESIGN/INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS		
Parking Lot Projects		
1) Finish Fire Hall Lot	\$8000	2020
2) New Parking Lot	TBD	2025
3) Maintenance and Improvements	Varies by project	Ongoing
Façade Improvement Program	\$20,000	Annually
Downtown Design Guidelines	\$4,000	2014-2015
Historic Preservation Program		
1) Building Improvements	TBD	2025-2035
2) Assistance with state/national register applications	\$3000 / property	2025-2035
3) Develop list of resources/"Best Practices"	\$4,000	2025-2035
Complete Streets/Walkability Study	\$15,000	2016-2017
Land Acquisition	TBD	2020-2030
Environmental/Green Initiatives	\$350 / LED adapter	
Amenities Improvements		
1) Benches	\$2000 / bench	2017-2020
2) Lighting	\$4,000 / post	2017-2020
3) Bike Racks	\$1,500 / rack	2014-2015
Infrastructure Study	TBD	216-2016
PROMOTION PROJECTS		
"Branding" Strategy	TBD	2018-2019
Marketing Plan	TBD	2016-2017
Heritage Festival	\$6,000	Annually
Other Events	\$6,000	Annually
"Shop Local" Campaign	TBD	2016-2017
New Signage		
1) Village Entryway Signs	\$5000	2015-2018
2) Parking Lot Signs	\$3000	2018-2020
3) Industrial Park Sign	\$2500	2018-2020
New Banners	TBD	As Needed
Attraction Brochure/Materials	\$1000	Annually
ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING PROJECTS		
Downtown WiFi		
1) Short Term – 3 pilot locations	\$1500 per location	2016-2017
2) Long Term – Complete System	TBD	2020-230
Rental/Rehab Program	\$500	Annually
Business Seminars	\$500	Annually
Regional/Statewide Partnerships	\$5000 to \$6000	Annually
Business Incubator Program	TBD	2015/2024
LONG TERM PROJECTS		
Farmer's Market Site	\$400,000	2025-2035
Sidewalk Extensions	\$10/square foot	2025-2035
Decorative Lamp Posts	\$5,000 per post	As Needed
Streetscaping	TBD	2025-2035
Community Center	TBD	2025-2035

DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

The following describes each project that the Village DDA plans to accomplish.

EXECUTIVE/PLANNING PROJECTS

These are projects that help maintain the downtown through partnerships and executive level planning and collaboration.

Youth on Main Program

To engage local youth, the DDA will partner with the local high school to create a volunteer group. The program encourages youth to get involved in downtown placemaking and civic engagement efforts like spring clean-up, Historical Scavenger Hunt and Polar Palooza.

DESIGN/INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

To maintain a safe and welcoming downtown, the DDA will invest in a variety of capital projects. The DDA plans to improve a number of parking lots as listed below. It will continue its façade improvement program, and develop materials to provide property owners with design guidance, especially as it relates to historic structures and sustainability. A complete streets study will be conducted to assess local transportation options and seek ways to provide better service to all travelers, including those by foot or bicycle, and to identify ways that the transportation system can facilitate placemaking efforts. Achieving a vibrant streetscape will also involve providing amenities that welcome visitors. Finally, land may be acquired to further various goals of the plan, and various efforts to become more sustainable will be explored.

Parking Lot Projects

- 1) Finish Fire Hall Lot. This lot has seen improvements over the last year. The DDA plans to complete the project with pedestrian walkways and lighting
- 2) New Parking Lot. The DDA already leases property for parking, but there is currently no municipal lot in the northwest corner of the district so new purchases may be sought for new parking.
- 3) Maintenance and Improvements. The DDA would like to improve the existing lot in the southeast corner by resurfacing, adding lighting and building dumpster enclosures. The lot in the northeast corner (Kracker Barrel lot) needs resurfacing and lighting.

Façade Improvement Program

The DDA will continue its facade improvement grant program which helps fund ADA projects and improvements to the physical appearance of buildings including awnings, signage, doors, windows, paint, design assistance and landscaping.

Downtown Design Guidelines

Building on a draft set of development guidelines, the DDA will refine and adopt formal design guidelines to direct infill and redevelopment projects.

Historic Preservation Program

As resources are available, the DDA will earmark funds to plan for preservation of downtown buildings. Funds may also be used to assist property owners of significant buildings with restoration of building in expansion area that could be on the National Register. The following specific projects may become part of this program:

- 1) Building Improvements
- 2) Assistance with state/national register applications
- 3) Develop list of resources/"Best Practices"

Complete Streets/Walkability Study

To help assess the comfort level for pedestrians and bicyclists, the DDA will commission a study of the downtown. The study will determine ways to improve the environment for those visiting local businesses by foot or bicycle.

Land Acquisition

To further the goals of this Plan, the DDA may acquire property for redevelopment, resale, lease, or parking lot. The following specific projects are being considered, but would be implemented as funds are available:

- 1) 117 Branch Street
- 2) Corner of Main Street and School Street - festival lot and vacant lot on the other side of Johnson Street
- 3) Corner of Main Street and Mill Street
- 4) 102 S. Main Street

Environmental/Green Initiatives

The Village would like to convert existing Main Street light fixtures to LED. An electric charging station may be explored if demand and resources make it feasible. The DDA may provide guidance or facilitate funding of green initiatives, LEED buildings, s, etc.

Amenities Improvements

- 1) Benches. Benches are highly sought by the public. They will be added along Main Street as funding becomes available.
- 2) Lighting. The DDA currently maintains 32 street posts. Some may need replacement. New lighting may be installed at DDA parking lots.
- 3) Bike Racks. The DDA would like to install at least 3 bicycle parking racks in the downtown.

Infrastructure Assessment

As part of its goal to retain and attract new business to the community, the DDA may determine that certain infrastructure improvements or upgrades are needed. The lack of water retention and fire suppression capabilities may deter some businesses from locating or expanding in the Village. The DDA will commission a study of the infrastructure system within the district, specifically in the industrial park, to assess current demand for additional services or capacity.

PROMOTION PROJECTS

These projects involve much of the “soft” projects needed to keep the district vibrant and attractive to visitors. Part of this involves branding the DDA through marketing and print materials. Marketing strategies will be explored through a detailed marketing plan. New signs, banners and other materials should maintain a consistency in design and message delivery. To bring in visitors, the DDA already maintains a thriving annual Heritage Festival, but wishes to expand this event and add others. In addition, the DDA wants to encourage regular patronage of local businesses, and plans to launch a “shop local” campaign to strengthen the local market for local businesses.

“Branding” Strategy

The DDA has established some branding through its website development. Additional branding efforts may include development of a special downtown Almont logo, and other marketing strategies to strengthen the Village’s image.

Marketing Plan

The DDA will commission marketing studies and develop marketing and sales materials for the development district in order to promote development and redevelopment by the private sector. A market study will help focus attraction/retention program efforts and help in identifying potential new businesses.

Heritage Festival

The DDA would like to elevate the event the Village’s primary event so it may one day be financially self-sustaining.

Other Events

The DDA organizes several events throughout the year, including festivals, fairs, retailer events and business open houses. Past events such as the “Taste of Almont,” which has a broad appeal and level of involvement, may also be re-established.

“Shop Local” Campaign

Tying in to the “Local Grown” and “Local Foods” market is seen as a timely and appropriate niche. Special events, Farmer’s Expo, or other retail promotions may be conducted. Print materials and website improvements will help educate the community about what is “Made in Almont,” showcase Industrial Park tenants and local manufacturers.

New Signage

To advertise the Village boundary and help visitors navigate throughout the district, the following signage is planned to be installed.

- 1) Village Entryway Signs at the 2 Village entry points
- 2) Parking Lot Signs at each of the 6 lots, which will be typical MDOT signs
- 3) Industrial Park Sign at the industrial park entrance

New Banners

Light posts along Main Street include brackets for one banner each. The DDA currently maintains 4 banners for each post for each of the four seasons. New banners are expected to be needed as new branding is established or current banners need replacement.

Attraction Brochure/Materials

The DDA conducts regular marketing campaigns that are continually adjusted to match current trends, interests and events related to the downtown. As such, new print materials, and updates to existing media and websites must be maintained.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING PROJECTS

Some capital improvements, such as completion of the fiber optic loop, are needed to provide the type of modern utility service that today's businesses demand. Other programming efforts will also be made to help make the district more attractive to new businesses, or to help elevate the business skills for existing businesses. The DDA will continue to leverage its own resources by utilizing funding provided at the regional and state levels. It will use its resources to provide business assistance and planning guidance, as well as a rental rehabilitation program where the DDA will work with property owners to improve dilapidated or obsolete sites so they will contribute to the local economy.

Downtown WiFi

The DDA would like to provide wireless internet at 3 hot spot locations within the district to establish initial service. Longer term plans include providing a connected internet system for the entire district that would include extending the fiber optic loop from the industrial park into downtown to complete the loop.

Rental/Rehab Program

The DDA will seek grants and provide assistance to property owners to help improve the availability, variety, condition and marketability of residential units within the district.

Business Seminars

The DDA will provide education and assistance to businesses on a variety of topics, including business planning and start-up, marketing strategies, financing, accounting, product development, employee recruitment, and specialized employment training.

Regional/Statewide Partnerships

Maintain and expand coordination with other groups such as Next Michigan Development Corporation, the I-69 International Trade Corridor, Lapeer Development Corporation, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, etc.

Rental Incubator Program

A rental incubator program will be created to help bring potential business owners and land owners together. The program would help match owners of vacant buildings with new and growing businesses that want to locate within the district but who may not have the resources to secure a long-term lease.

LONG TERM PROJECTS

These are projects that are not currently planned, but may be considered as opportunities arise or as resources become available. Many of these efforts will involve collaboration with the Village of Almont, other communities, MDOT and local citizen groups.

Farmer's Market Site

If resources are available, the DDA would like to develop a Farmers Market site. The site would include a pavilion, parking and other amenities.

Sidewalk Extensions

The DDA would like to install sidewalks along the east side of Van Dyke from the curve to shopping plaza to provide better connectivity and walkability to the commercial businesses, schools and residential neighborhoods.

Decorative Lamp Posts

The DDA currently maintains 32 light posts along Main Street. As needed, new decorative lamp posts will be purchased for new areas or to replace those in disrepair.

Streetscaping

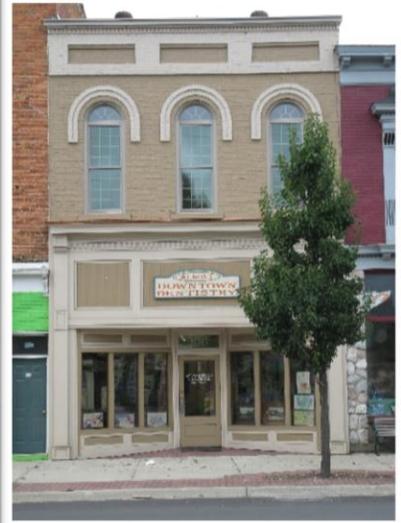
The DDA would like to extend the existing improved streetscape east and west past Fountain Park and the new Fire Hall lot
Decorative poles and lighting on Van Dyke, and landscaping.

Community Center

The DDA plans to partner with the Village, Township and the Almont Elementary School to discuss the possibility of a municipal and community center.

EXPECTED SALE, DONATION, EXCHANGE OR LEASE OF PROPERTY

While there are no specific acquisition projects underway or planned for the immediate future, the possibility exists that the DDA might purchase land in the future. The DDA may consider purchasing, selling or donating any property during the duration of this development plan. If such activities occur, the values of sale, rent, or donated value shall be established according to generally accepted practices. Such would likely include solicitation of multiple (at least three) estimates or professional appraisals to establish appropriate market rates.



Economic Restructuring and business assistance efforts include operating a successful “Façade Improvement Grant Program”. This program leverages private and public funds. 106 S. Main Street (before – left, after – right) represents an excellent example of a building through proper architectural design utilizing cost-efficient materials works in hand with public-private investment to rehabilitate a downtown property.

DESIRED ZONING, STREETS, INTERSECTIONS AND UTILITY CHANGES

The Downtown Development Authority is proposing no additional changes to the district’s zoning, street levels, intersections or utilities at this time. Necessary improvements will occur as is required at the discretion of the Almont Village Council.

Zoning

The zoning categories found within the DDA District are shown on the Zoning Map. No zoning changes are proposed as part of the development plan activities.

Streets

Aside from potential improvements or reconstruction, no major street changes are proposed as part of the development plan activities.

Intersections

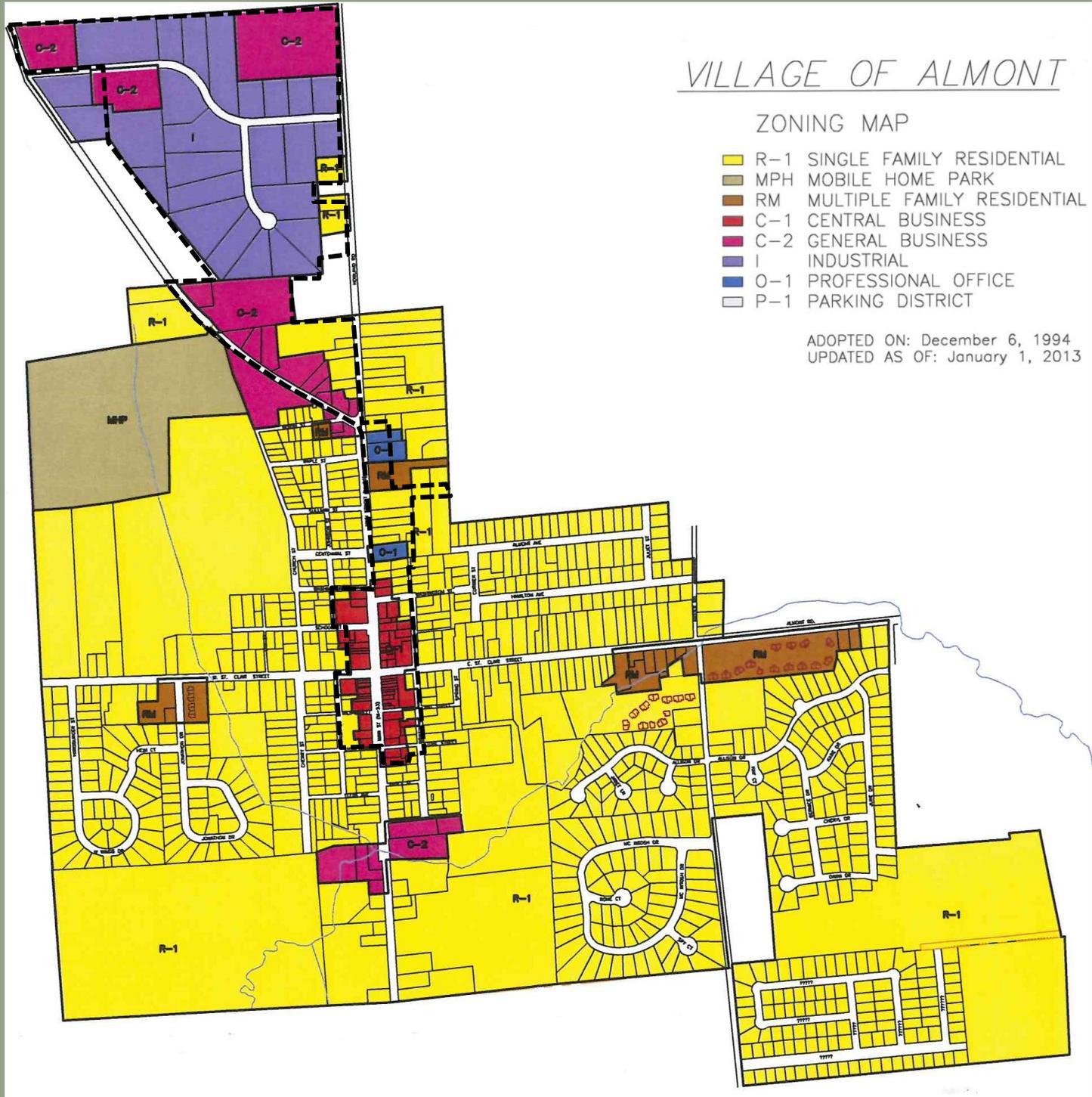
No major intersection changes are proposed as part of the development plan activities.

Utilities

No major utility work is expected as part of the development plan. Some may be necessary to facilitate other planned projects; but no specific utility projects are planned.

ZONING MAP

This is the zoning map prepared and adopted by the Village of Almont. It shows how property is zoned or regulated. Each district relates to a set of requirements in the Village Zoning Ordinance that regulates future development.



IMPLEMENTATION

Public-Private Partnerships

The Almont DDA intends to use its resources as effectively as possible, using its resources to leverage additional private investment in the district. The DDA participates with private businesses and investors by:

- Funding of certain public improvements that may be needed to serve a new or growing business
- Encouraging improvements to existing businesses through façade grants
- Providing business development resources for new and expanding businesses
- Promotion of the District and its businesses on the DDA website and print materials
- Encouraging redevelopment of environmentally impacted land through Brownfield Redevelopment Grants
- Assistance in finding property buyers, developers and tenants for existing lots and buildings in the district
- Support with obtaining tax abatements through the Lapeer Development Corporation

Tax Increment Financing

Tax Increment Financing (TIF financing) is a method of funding public investments in an area slated for (re)development by capturing, for a time, all or a portion of the increased tax revenue that may result from increases in property values, either as a result of (re)development or general market inflation. TIF Revenue represents the value of new taxes that may be received as a result of new property value increases. A more thorough description of this financing method is included in the Tax Increment Financing Plan.



Youth on Main Street is an organization that promotes civic engagement and leadership, sense of ownership within their community, and promote historic preservation and education. Above shows the organization working on the parking lot project in downtown Almont.

General Obligation Bonds

Tax increment revenues may be pledged as debt service on one or more general obligation bonds issued by the Village of Almont pursuant to Section 16 (1) of Public Act 197 of 1975.

Tax Increment Bonds

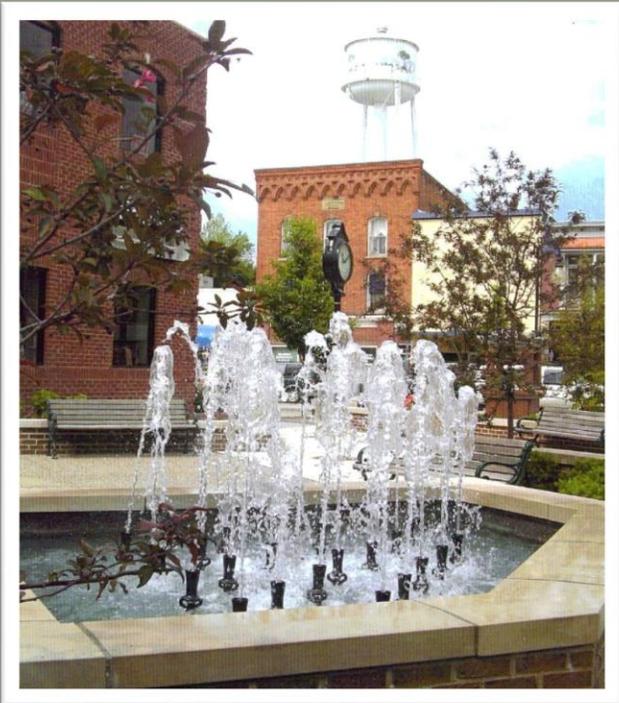
Tax increment revenues may be pledged as debt service on one of more series of tax increment bonds issued by the DDA pursuant to Section 16 (2) of Public Act 197 of 1975.

Land Contract Financing

A land contract is a contract between a buyer and seller of real property in which the seller retains ownership of the property, and provides financing to the buyer, who is allowed to take possession of the property. The contract specifies a sale price, but in these cases, a third party (a bank or mortgage lender) is not involved, and loan installments are paid directly to the seller. Much as with a third party loan, interest is charged, and sometimes a “balloon” or down payment is required. If the terms of the agreement are not met by the buyer, then the seller can re-claim the property and take full possession of all legal ownership rights.

Commercial Rehabilitation Districts

The Village is enabled by State legislation to approve a Commercial Rehabilitation District where the property value is frozen at the value on the date the district is created, and will not increase until a date specified by the Village.



After a devastating fire destroyed properties located on the southeast corner of Van Dyke and E. St. Clair Streets, the Almont DDA developed an urban pocket park as part of a work plan created through a community visioning process.

Redevelopment Liquor Licenses

The Michigan Liquor Control Commission is authorized to issue liquor licenses to businesses located in the DDA who have made considerable investments in their property. A variety of criteria are considered, and the license must be endorsed by the Village of Almont.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING PLAN

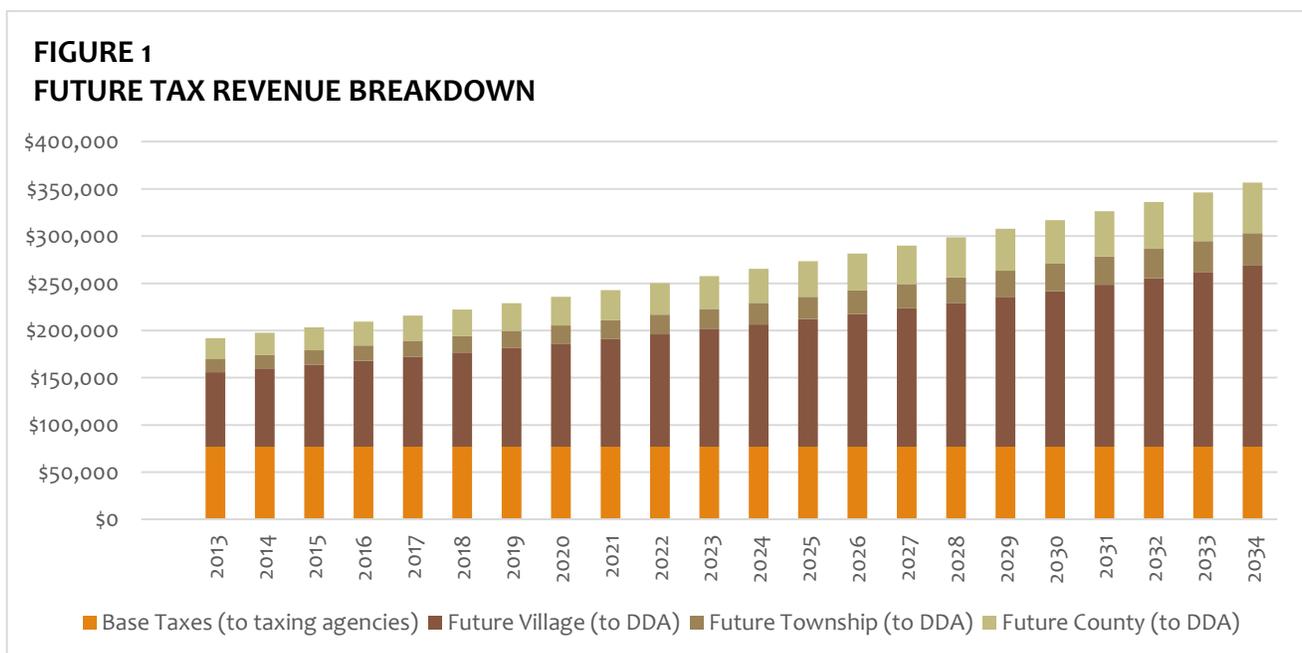
INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Development Authority Act authorizes several potential sources of funds for the Downtown Development Authority to use in financing its development activities, including the following:

- Donations
- A tax up to two (2) mills levied on the Downtown Development District upon approval of the Almont Village Council or for the general fund of the Authority for purposes of the Authority.
- Proceeds from a revenue bond issue or general obligation bond issue.
- Revenues from property owned by the Downtown Development Authority.
- Moneys received from other sources approved by the Almont Village Council.
- Proceeds from a tax increment financing plan.

Most often, the most consistent and reliable source of revenue is gained through Tax Increment Financing (TIF financing). TIF financing is a method of funding public investments in an area slated for (re)development by capturing, for a time, all or a portion of the increased tax revenue that may result from increases in property values within the DDA district, either as a result of (re)development or general market inflation. The Almont DDA expects to capture 100% of tax increment revenues generated within the district. That means that, the taxes generated from any increase in property value of parcels within the district will be routed to the DDA to spend on improvements within the same district. Instead of being distributed to the various taxing agencies, this money is instead kept in local control and uses to promote local improvements and initiatives that will strengthen the overall community. Figure 1 below shows how future taxes generated within the district will be distributed:

- Base Taxes include tax collected based on the value of property as of the date the DDA was first established (1984). Tax revenue generated from the base value will continue to go to the appropriate taxing agency as it has in the past.
- Future Village, Future Township and Future County taxes will all be distributed to the DDA for use according to this Plan.
- After the TIF expires, one hundred percent of taxes generated will be re-distributed to the taxing agencies in existence at the time, and the tax capture to the DDA will cease.



The theory behind TIF financing is that businesses in the downtown create less demand for the services that many taxing agencies provide, and that tax revenue, in some cases, is better spent to improve the local commercial district instead of on projects and services that may not benefit them. While this is not true in all cases, establishing a DDA, in and of itself, signifies a need to reinvest locally, as they are created in places where a decline in property values and development quality threatens to weaken the local economy.

The justification of tax increment financing is based on the expectation that property values within the district will rise as a result of the efforts detailed in this plan. While taxing agencies may see a short-term freeze in tax revenue generated from the district, they will benefit from the long-term growth in property values, which are not likely to occur without the stimulation of the public investment provided by this plan. At the time the DDA expires, the original taxing agencies will capture 100% of the taxes generated by land in the district. Until then, their tax revenue will remain the same as it was in the base year.

To utilize TIF financing, the DDA must prepare a Development Plan and a TIF Plan. Both plans are submitted to the Village Council, who must approve the plans. The TIF financing plan is effective for a certain time period specified by the Village of Almont. Unless it is renewed and the TIF expires, the DDA's revenue capture will cease and 100% of taxes collected from property values will be, from there forward, distributed to the appropriate taxing agencies in place at that time.

TIF REVENUE PROJECTIONS

Table 2 shows the projected revenues expected for the district. It represents the amount the DDA can anticipate in TIF Revenue, based on available property data. The increases in property values are based on a modest inflation rate of 3% annually. In reality, property values, and resulting TIF capture will exceed these figures as private investments and redevelopment generated by this Plan increases property values at a more rapid rate.



Utilizing upper story underutilized space increases property values, allows for owner income and contributes to a vibrant downtown. The DDA secured \$280,000 in CDBG funding through MSHDA to assist in the creation of 5 new living units downtown. Total private investment was \$177,257.38. \$140,481 of the original public funding was utilized.

While it is known that these calculations will not be the actual revenue that will be received, it provides a realistic estimate upon which the Development Plan can be based. Adjustments to these calculations may be made by amending this Plan in the future. The purpose of the Tax Increment Financing Plan is to evaluate potential revenues from tax increment capture and ensure it will be sufficient to cover anticipated costs. Therefore, some assumptions are involved in the calculations in order to project property values into the future and determine anticipated revenues. The figures in the TIF Plan are estimates of revenue that apply the best available data and most reasonable assumptions.

The “Base Value” for this plan is the taxable value of all real and personal property in the development area as determined in 1984. The value of all land within the district in the Base

Year of 1984 was \$3,895,403, and in 2013, the value of land in the district was \$10,006,302. This means that the DDA can capture the tax revenue generated from the difference in these values (or \$6,110,899). The base value is the “Capture Amount” that provides the basis for calculations provided in this Plan.

Table 2 shows a conservative estimate of the tax revenue that could be captured within the Almont DDA district. It is broken down by taxing agency and year. In total, the DDA can reasonably expect to generate \$4,048,849 in tax revenue within the term of this TIF Plan.

TABLE 2 ESTIMATED TAX REVENUE BY TAXING JURISDICTION						
<i>Millage Rates</i>		0.0136	0.0024	0.0038	0.0197368	
Fiscal Year	Capture Amount ¹	Village Tax	Township Tax	County Tax	Annual Capture	Revenue Compounded
2013	\$5,819,453	\$78,953	\$13,857	\$22,048	\$114,857	
2014	\$6,110,899	\$82,907	\$14,551	\$23,152	\$120,610	\$120,610
2015	\$6,411,088	\$86,979	\$15,266	\$24,289	\$126,534	\$247,144
2016	\$6,720,282	\$91,174	\$16,002	\$25,460	\$132,637	\$379,781
2017	\$7,038,753	\$95,495	\$16,761	\$26,667	\$138,922	\$518,703
2018	\$7,366,778	\$99,945	\$17,542	\$27,910	\$145,397	\$664,100
2019	\$7,704,643	\$104,529	\$18,346	\$29,190	\$152,065	\$816,165
2020	\$8,052,645	\$109,250	\$19,175	\$30,508	\$158,933	\$975,098
2021	\$8,411,086	\$114,113	\$20,028	\$31,866	\$166,008	\$1,141,106
2022	\$8,780,281	\$119,122	\$20,908	\$33,265	\$173,295	\$1,314,401
2023	\$9,160,551	\$124,281	\$21,813	\$34,706	\$180,800	\$1,495,201
2024	\$9,552,230	\$129,595	\$22,746	\$36,190	\$188,530	\$1,683,731
2025	\$9,955,659	\$135,068	\$23,706	\$37,718	\$196,493	\$1,880,224
2026	\$10,371,191	\$140,706	\$24,696	\$39,292	\$204,694	\$2,084,918
2027	\$10,799,188	\$146,513	\$25,715	\$40,914	\$213,141	\$2,298,060
2028	\$11,240,026	\$152,493	\$26,765	\$42,584	\$221,842	\$2,519,902
2029	\$11,694,089	\$158,654	\$27,846	\$44,304	\$230,804	\$2,750,706
2030	\$12,161,774	\$164,999	\$28,960	\$46,076	\$240,034	\$2,990,740
2031	\$12,643,489	\$171,534	\$30,107	\$47,901	\$249,542	\$3,240,282
2032	\$13,139,656	\$178,266	\$31,288	\$49,781	\$259,335	\$3,499,617
2033	\$13,650,708	\$185,199	\$32,505	\$51,717	\$269,421	\$3,769,038
2034	\$14,177,091	\$192,341	\$33,758	\$53,711	\$279,810	\$4,048,849
		\$2,783,163	\$488,484	\$777,201	\$4,048,849	

Notes: Calculations assume 3.0% growth/year
Capture amount includes both Real and Personal Property values

MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF BONDED INDEBTEDNESS TO BE INCURRED

The DDA does not currently hold any bonds for improvements within the district, but may explore the possibility of bonding against future revenues to supply the funds required to accomplish larger public improvement projects. The extent of the indebtedness and the timing of the debt retirement will be determined by the extent of the tax increment revenues. By law (PA 197 of 1975), the maximum indebtedness cannot exceed the ability to service the debt from tax increments.

The DDA anticipates completion of projects on a "pay-as-you-go" basis, committing funds only as dollars become available. The DDA is empowered, with permission of the Village Council, to issue bonds against proposed revenues. The state act allows for no more than 80% of the anticipated tax increment revenues to be used for debt service. In practice a Limited Tax General Obligation (LTGO) Bond Issue would be required. The Village would pledge anticipated tax increment revenues to repay the bonds. The General Fund of the Village must be pledged to pay any shortfall of funds required to meet the debt service of the bond issue. For this reason a conservative approach is taken in estimating available funds.

DURATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The duration of the tax increment financing plan is twenty (20) years, commencing upon approval by the Village Council in 2014 and will cease with tax collections due in December 2034, unless this plan is amended to extend or shorten its duration.

ESTIMATED IMPACT OF TAX INCREMENT FINANCING ON TAXING JURISDICTIONS

The most important impact of this plan on the effected taxing jurisdictions is that the base value within the Development Area will remain constant for the taxing jurisdictions over the life of this plan. No decrease in tax revenues will occur from what they currently received. Tax revenues for taxing agencies are capped at the 1984 value.

PROPOSED METHOD OF FINANCING

Proposed projects will be funded on a "pay as you go" basis. The DDA will prepare an Annual Budget to program the specific expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year, at which time they will choose the specific work elements for that year. It is expected that the majority of projects will be funded by TIF financing in accordance with a Tax Increment Financing Plan established pursuant to Public Act 197 of 1975, as amended. The DDA will continue to pursue grant funding as may be possible. Revenue bonds and tax increment bonds may be used as a financing tool in conjunction with large developments that occur within the development district. However, in as much as possible, the DDA will pursue other sources of revenue before TIF dollars are spent. For instance, where grant funding or partnerships are possible, the DDA will pursue those funding options before paying out of TIF revenue. The Authority may issue tax increment bonds in accordance with Section 16 of Act 197, and pledge future captured tax increments to pay the principal and interest due on such bonds. A comprehensive discussion of tax increment financing for the proposed public improvements is set forth in the Tax Increment Financing Plan.

The DDA shall not sell any bonds pursuant to this plan without the prior approval of the Almont Village Council. The DDA may also purchase property under land contract and undertake installment contract financing.

PLAN FOR EXPENDITURE OF CAPTURED REVENUE

Currently, the DDA has more projects planned than can be funded with the projected revenues alone, so a tax revenue surplus is not expected. However, should the actual tax revenue captured be significantly different than the revenue estimates provided, the funds will be used as follows.

Any additional tax increment revenues beyond those projected in this plan will:

1. be used to expedite any debt service,
2. further the implementation of the public improvement program, or
3. be returned, pro-rata, to the taxing units.

Should the tax increment revenues be less than projected, the DDA may choose to:

1. Collect and hold the captured revenues until a sufficient amount is available to implement specific public improvements,
2. Consider implementing public improvement projects based upon the ability to match existing funds with expenditures while seeking out additional funding sources,
3. Amend the development plan and/or tax increment financing plan to allow for alternative projects and funding.

PROPOSED LESSEES

Acquisition of property would be based on the value such as identified by an independent appraisal if licensed to perform such work in the State of Michigan.

PROCEDURES FOR CONVEYANCE

If leased, sold or conveyed, the value of property shall be determined by the Downtown Development Authority Board and the Village of Almont. The Downtown Development Authority will adhere to appropriate bidding procedures as is applicable in the Village of Almont.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICT

At a point beginning at the Southwest corner of said lot 1 of "Barnes Acres" Plat; thence S. 89 degrees 17' E. 300 feet to the Southeast corner of said lot 1; thence N. 34 degrees 17' W. 1181.60 feet along the Easterly line of said "Barnes Acres" Plat; thence on a curve to the right whose radius is 2814.78 feet and whose chord bearing and distance are N. 31 degrees 14'47" W. 298.20 feet to the Southeast corner of lot 6 of said "Barnes Acres" Plat; thence S. 89 degrees 17' E. 48.50 feet; thence N. 00 degrees 43' E. 466.87 feet thence N. 89 degrees 17' W. 553.81 feet to the Easterly right of way line of M-53 Highway; thence on a curve to the right along said M-53 right of way whose radius is 2814.78 feet and whose chord bearing and distance are N. 12 degrees 38'44" W. 507.07 feet to the North line of Section 21; thence S. 88 degrees 55' E. 2557.60 feet along the North line to the Northeast 1/4 corner of said Section 21 to the point which is located at the intersection of Tubspring Road and Howland Road Centerlines; thence S. 01 degrees 19' W. 1427.37 feet along the East line of said Section 21; thence N. 89 degrees 17' W. 249.02 feet along the South line of lot 16 of "Barnes Acres No. 2" Subdivision to the Southwest corner of said lot 16; thence S. 01 degrees 19' W. 216.95 feet along the West line of said Subdivision to the Southwest corner of lot 17; thence N. 86 degrees 15' E. 216.88 feet to the Southeast corner of said lot 17; thence S. 1 degree 19' W. 200.0 feet along the East line of said "Barnes Acres No. 2" Subdivision to the Southeast corner of lot 18; thence S. 86 degrees 15' W. 216.88 feet along the South line of lot 18 to the Southwest corner of said lot 18; thence S. 01 degrees 19' W. 320.55 feet to the Southwest corner of lot 20; thence N. 89 degrees 17' W. 230.98 feet; thence Southerly 374.78 feet to a point on the E-W 1/4 line of Section 21 that is Westerly 451.14 feet from the East 1/4 corner of Section 21; thence Easterly along the E-W 1/2 line 451.14 feet to the East 1/4 corner of Section 21 which is also the West 1/4 corner of Section 22 and which is located in the Centerline of Howland Road thence S. 824 feet in the center of Howland Road; thence E 185 feet; thence S. 382 feet; thence E. 513 feet; thence S. 66 feet; thence W. 315 feet; thence S 2382 feet; thence W. 97 feet; thence S. 22 feet; thence W. 163 feet; thence N. 88 feet; thence W. 364 feet; thence N. 614 feet along the eastern boundary of Branch Street, thence E. 119 feet; thence N. 381 feet; thence W. 125 feet; thence N. 314 feet along the eastern boundary of Johnson Street; thence E. 343 feet; thence N. 1272 feet along the eastern boundary of M-53 highway; thence NW. 1790 feet continued along the eastern boundary of M-53 Highway to the point of beginning.