

December 20, 2007

Commissioner David Potts, Chairperson  
Oakland County Coordinating Zoning Committee  
1200 North Telegraph Road  
Pontiac, Michigan 48341

SUBJECT: County Code No. MP 07-08, Planning and Economic Development Services' review of Amendment #1 to the Village of Lake Orion Master Plan 2002-2022

Dear Chairperson Potts and Committee Members:

The Village of Lake Orion Planning Commission is proposing to amend its 2002 Master Plan by adding a new Future Land Use classification for the southern part of the M-24 corridor and a revised Future Land Use map. The following is a review and analysis of the plan amendment.

Under the recent amendments to the Municipal Planning Act, which took effect December 20, 2006, Lake Orion is required to send a copy of the draft amendment to Oakland County and neighboring communities for comment prior to adoption. Oakland County has 40 days to submit comments on a draft amendment. The January 8, 2008 Oakland County Coordinating Zoning Committee (CZC) meeting falls within our 40-day comment period. Neighboring communities also have 40 days to submit comments directly to Lake Orion and are asked to send a copy of any comments to the County as well. Once the comment period has expired, the Planning Commission can hold a public hearing and take final action to amend the plan.

According to the Village Clerk, Orion Township, AT&T, and SEMCOG were sent a copy of the draft amendment. All three have received notice of the CZC meeting. No comments have been received.

### **Plan Contents**

Changes in land use have occurred along M-24 since the adoption of the Master Plan in 2003. Most notably, the Atwater Commons mixed use project, south of Atwater Street on the east side of M-24, has been developed. This is the largest new development in the Village and consists of two commercial buildings and 108 residential condominiums. Two of the residential buildings have yet to be constructed. In addition, on the west side of M-24, a Planned Unit Development has been approved for an office building and residential units on Pelton's Point, although construction has not started.

*"During the development review process the Planning Commission noted similarities between the east side and west side of M-24, including the importance of transitions to single family residential uses, need for flexibility in setbacks and other ordinance requirements, and incorporation and/or protection of environmental and recreational features, like the Lake and pedestrian walkways and trails...This Amendment #1 to the Master Plan recognizes those similarities along M-24 south of South Broadway, and combines the former Mixed Use A, Mixed Use B and Office future land use categories into the new Mixed Use District-M-24 Corridor."*  
(Pages 1 and 2)

The amendment replaces pages 99-112 of the current Master Plan, which describe the Future Land Use classifications. Most of the classification descriptions remain unaltered. The major change is the new text for the Mixed Use District-M-24 Corridor. “Neighborhood-serving” office and commercial uses are planned for the M-24 frontage; however the residential uses adjacent to these commercial and office uses are also included in this district. Much of this district is already developed, and the former railroad tracks are now the Paint Creek Trail. Key considerations for new development or redevelopment within this district are compatibility with existing uses in terms of scale and lot coverage, shared parking, pedestrian orientation, and connectivity to the downtown and to the adjacent residential uses.

### **Comparison of the Amended Future Land Use Map to the 2002 Future Land Use Map**

The proposed Future Land Use map is attached. The previous Future Land Use map had 13 categories; the amended map has 11. The reduction in categories is due to changes in the number of Mixed Use Districts and the elimination of the Office District. Only two Mixed Use classifications are now shown on the map, down from the previous three (classified as A, B, and C).

The major change to the map is the new Mixed Use: M-24 Corridor district that extends from south of Broadway south to the municipal limits along both sides of M-24. This district replaces previous categories of Mixed Use A along the west side of M-24, Mixed Use B on the east side of M-24, Corridor Commercial on both sides of M-24, and Office located at the southern end of the corridor. The Mixed Use A, Mixed Use B, and Office categories have been eliminated from the amended map. The Mixed Use: M-24 Corridor also extends to Pelton’s Point, which had been classified as Park/Open Space on the previous map, and to a small area along Heights Road that had previously been classified as Lake Single Family Residential.

In addition, the district covering the downtown has been renamed from Mixed Use C Downtown to Mixed Use: Downtown. The Mixed Use: Downtown district essentially corresponds to the area previously shown as Mixed Use C Downtown except for a few minor changes. Along Shadbolt west of Lapeer Road, at the northern edge of the district, two small Village Single Family Residential parcels are now part of Mixed Use: Downtown. Another parcel on the south side of Shadbolt between Lapeer and Broadway has been changed from Mixed Use C Downtown to Public because it is now owned by the Downtown Development Authority. The last change to this district involves the addition of a small Park/Open Space parcel at Broadway and M-24 to the Mixed Use: Downtown District.

No other changes have been made to the map.

### **Coordination with Adjacent Community Boundary:**

Under the new state law, the county’s review is required to include a statement indicating whether the proposed plan is “inconsistent with the plan of any city, village, or township” that received notice of the draft plan. The amendment area is adjacent to Orion Township.

**South Boundary – Orion Township:** The Charter Township of Orion Master Plan was adopted in May 2003 and amended in April 2006. At the M-24 border with the Village of Lake Orion, Orion Township has planned for General Office. This is compatible with the Mixed Use: M-24 Corridor classification that allows for a variety of uses including office.

### **Analysis**

Every five years, communities are required to review their master plans to see if they need to be updated or amended. The Village of Lake Orion conducted its review and determined that changes needed to be made to the classifications used on the Future Land Use map. The former Mixed Use A district allowed for a mixture of office and single family residential uses, while Mixed Use B district allowed for commercial and residential uses. The new Mixed Use: M-24 Corridor district combines commercial, office, and residential uses previously allowed in this location into one classification. The intent remains the same: to have small-scale commercial or office uses that are compatible with adjacent uses. The new classification allows for more flexibility and also stresses the need for new development or redevelopment to be sensitive to the historic downtown and to the adjacent residential uses.

### **Conclusion**

Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services staff commends the Village of Lake Orion for reviewing their plan and making appropriate revisions.

Based on the review of the adjacent community's boundaries, the Amendment #1 to the Lake Orion Master Plan 2002-2022 is **not** inconsistent with the plan of any city, village, or township that received notice of the draft plan.

Oakland County has not prepared a countywide development plan, so there is no countywide plan to which to compare the amendment.

Sincerely,

Charlotte P. Burckhardt, AICP, PCP  
Principal Planner

Enclosure