

September 2, 2008

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

SUBJECT: County Code No. MP 08-09, Planning & Economic Development Services' review of the City of Troy 2008 Master Plan (Draft dated June 25, 2008)

Dear Chairperson Potts and Committee Members:

The Troy Planning Commission has prepared a new master plan to replace its 2002 Master Plan (amended in 2006). The following is a review and analysis of the proposed plan.

Under the amendments to the Municipal Planning Act, which took effect December 20, 2006, the City of Troy is required to send a copy of the draft plan to Oakland County and neighboring communities for comment prior to adoption. Oakland County has 63 days to submit comments on a draft plan. The September 9, 2008 Oakland County Coordinating Zoning Committee (CZC) meeting falls within our 63-day comment period. Neighboring communities also have 63 days to submit comments directly to Troy 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 adopt the plan.

According to the Troy Planning Department, the Cities of Rochester Hills, Auburn Hills, Birmingham, Royal Oak, Clawson, Madison Heights, Sterling Heights, and Warren; Bloomfield and Shelby Townships; Macomb County Planning; Consumers Energy, Detroit Edison, SBC, Comcast, WOW Internet and Cable, Grand Trunk Western Railroad; and SEMCOG were sent a copy of the draft plan. All of these communities, agencies, and utilities have received notice of the CZC meeting. Since the Oakland/Troy Airport is located within the City of Troy, Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services staff also sent a copy of the Future Land Use map and relevant pages to the Oakland County Central Services Department. Comments were received from Shelby Township and the Cities of Madison Heights and Royal Oak, and are attached.

Public Participation Process

“On June 21, 2007, the City conducted a Master Plan workshop which involved a selected participant list of over 150 invitees. Those invited to participate on the workshop process represented a wide cross section of Troy’s population, and included residents, business owners, City officials, volunteers, and other participants.” (Page 8) Results from the smart growth assessment survey given at the workshop are included in the various chapters of the plan.

In addition, *“The Plan was further inspired by the efforts of the Troy Futures Group; an organization of motivated “civic entrepreneurs” who collectively developed a document entitled “Vision 2020.” Troy Futures consisted of over 150 volunteers who served on seven separate task forces eager to work on important issues such as infrastructure, community image, lifestyles, learning, mobility, the role of Troy in the region, and economics.”* (Page 3)

Plan Contents

The Plan consists of the following sections: Introduction; Troy's Context: From Local to Global; A Place to Learn and Play: The Quality of Life in Troy; A Place of Prosperity: The Economy of Troy; The City in Motion: Local and Regional Mobility; Infrastructure: The Assets and Care of the City; Green City: Responsibility to Natural & Energy Resources; People: The Changing Face of Housing Demand; Land Patterns: City Design and Image; and Implementation. The appendices contain supplemental demographic, land use, and inventory information. As the chapter titles suggest, this is more of a topic-based master plan that is designed to strategically address issues within the City.

Troy is a large city and a major employment center in southeast Oakland County. Its 2000 population was 80,959, although the City's Planning Department estimates this has grown to 87,594 by 2007. In addition, the workforce within the City is over 120,000; the City estimates a daytime population of over 136,000. Surprisingly, only about 8,000 of these workers actually live within the City. These employment numbers elevate Troy to an important position within the region.

The first chapter of this master plan highlights the City's desire to be a leader in the region with several avenues explored. The first avenue is in the area of the international market place. Nearly 20% of Troy residents are foreign-born, of which over 60% are Asian. The City may be able to capitalize on this tie to Asia by partnering with local Asian business leaders. Offering assistance to international investors could connect the City to a global market.

Beyond being an economic leader, the plan identifies the role the City of Troy could play in leading the region in transportation and sustainable development. In terms of transportation, the City has a unique opportunity to create a multi-modal transit center on its border with the City of Birmingham. A three acre parcel at Coolidge Highway and Maple Road is envisioned as a transit center offering commuter rail, taxi, rental car, and bus service. *"The development of the planned Troy and Birmingham Transit Center will bring Troy and Birmingham to the forefront of Southeast Michigan in providing an example of coordinated planning for new transportation options in Michigan."* (Page 13)

The plan explores several ways the City could be a leader in sustainable development as well. Low impact development, which is a new way to manage stormwater, is promoted in the plan. Under this approach, a site is designed to be more permeable so the stormwater infiltrates into the site rather than running off it. Using permeable pavers, green roofs, and rain gardens help accomplish this goal. Other sustainable practices are described in the plan including green building through LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification, natural resource preservation, and community energy planning. The City of Troy recently has contracted for a natural features inventory as a first step in developing a Natural Areas Plan. This plan will look at the remaining natural features present in the City in an effort to preserve high quality areas and identify opportunities for open space connections.

A major goal of this plan is to make Troy a "World Class City" to attract the knowledge workers of the New Economy. The most desirable of these workers will be young professionals of the Creative Class. *"The Creative Class is a demographic of worker with more education and a greater focus on high-tech or intellectual fields, rather than the previous generations, which were*

primarily based on agriculture and industry.” (Page 23) Some of the aspects addressed in this plan, especially to attract these workers, include:

- Establishing a culture of lifetime learning
- Improving the library by making it bigger, adding parking and program space
- Providing a diversity of affordable housing choices
- Creating informal gathering spaces for social interaction
- Providing trails and pathways for mobility and recreation
- Developing vibrant mixed use areas
- Placing public art in prominent locations
- Upgrading office and industrial buildings to provide spaces with the needed technology for emerging sector businesses

One key location in the City for many of these elements is the Big Beaver Corridor. The plan references the recently completed Big Beaver Corridor Study. This study envisions a lively corridor containing public art and defined landscaping. Mixed use buildings in the heart of the district will have retail uses on the first floor, with office and residential uses on upper floors. New restaurants, cafes, and small gathering spaces should invite pedestrian activity. The intent is to create an environment where people can live, work, and play all in the same area, fostering a 24-hour vitality.

Housing new and current residents is addressed in the plan. The Housing chapter looks at housing demand for the two ends of the demographic spectrum—young workers and those 65+. In order to attract younger workers, the plan identifies the need for affordable housing for first time home buyers. In addition, providing creative housing types like live/work units or loft style development is recognized as vital to attracting young, urban professionals. *“While not all knowledge-economy workers and their families are seeking urban lifestyles, this is an area where Troy has room to grow.”* (Page 83) Re-using some industrial buildings for open floor plan units may be possible in certain parts of the City.

Ensuring that older residents also can remain in the community is given consideration in this plan. The plan introduces the concept of “visitability.” *“The term refers to single-family housing designed to be lived in or visited by people with disabilities.”* (Page 81) Developing new homes with features like wide hallways and no-step entrances broadens the market for these homes to include disabled and elderly residents, and allows even younger, non-disabled residents to “age in place.” The plan also discusses the idea of “continuous care” facilities where someone can start with independent living and move, if necessary over time, to varying degrees of assisted living within the same development. However, no specific locations are identified for this type of facility.

The plan concludes with a chapter on implementation. Implementation strategies are divided into five categories: Regulation; Spending; Further Planning and Study; Updates and Maintenance; and Promotion of the Plan. The plan identifies the possibility of using an overlay district to address the needs in certain parts of the City while the planned unit development (PUD) approach is most appropriate for mixed use projects. An extensive revision of the zoning ordinance also will be needed to allow certain elements of this master plan to be implemented. A Capital Improvement Plan is recommended to help the City of Troy prioritize and coordinate its spending for major

capital improvements. The development of a “pattern book” would be useful to communicate to developers architectural and site design elements that are desired for distinct parts of the City. A Green Building Manual is another document that the plan recommends be developed. *“The Manual would introduce a wide variety of green techniques, explain where they would be most appropriate, describe the potential pros and cons, costs and impacts, and provide alternatives. Incorporation of elements introduced in the Manual would be used as additional incentives during the approval process for PUDs, site plans, or other projects within the City.”* (Page 127)

Future Land Use Map

The visual representation of the City’s policies is shown on the Future Land Use map (attached). The majority of the northern half of the City (north of Big Beaver) is planned for Single Family Residential. While only one classification of single family residential is listed, there is a subtle gradation of the single family color shown on the map that may be an attempt to depict density, although this gradation is not explained in the text. No density range is given in the plan for single family residential. Most of this residential is composed of existing, established single family neighborhoods. These “Social Neighborhoods” are essentially square mile areas bounded by major roads with a school or park as a central focus. Ensuring walkability within each neighborhood is a strong goal expressed in the plan.

A second residential classification, High Density Residential, is shown south of the Big Beaver Corridor from Coolidge to Rochester Roads. The dominant use in this classification is intended to be multi-family residential; however, other limited service uses that cater to the daily needs of residents may be allowed. Open space, pathways, and high quality landscaping should be part of these multi-family developments. Multi-family residential uses are not restricted to just this area shown on the map as High Density Residential; they are allowed and encouraged as part of mixed use developments in other parts of the City as well.

Recreation and Open Space, and Public and Quasi-Public sites are shown separately on the map. Both public and private recreation sites are shown and are intended for either active recreation or more passive conservation uses. Interestingly, the few lakes that do exist in Troy are displayed as Recreation and Open Space on the map. Institutional uses like churches, schools, and municipal facilities are also shown on the map. Key public uses are the Troy Civic Center at Big Beaver and I-75, White Chapel Cemetery at I-75 and Long Lake Road, and Beaumont Health Care Campus on Dequindre and South Boulevard in the northeast corner of the City.

For the remaining non-residential areas, the City of Troy does not use traditional land use classifications, such as commercial, office, and industrial. Instead, the following more geographic or topic based names are applied to the map. A description of each of these classifications is given below.

1. Neighborhood Nodes
2. South John R. Road
3. Big Beaver Road
4. Rochester Road
5. Maple Road
6. Northfield
7. The Smart Zone

8. Automall
9. The Transit Center
10. 21st Century Industrial

Neighborhood Nodes are shown graphically as circles centered on key intersections throughout the City. These mixed use areas of commercial, office, or multi-family residential are designed to serve the day-to-day needs of nearby residents. Neighborhood Nodes are intended to complement the concept of “Social Neighborhoods” by providing a gathering space for nearby residents to facilitate social interaction. *“Development will be denser and taller than the surrounding area, encouraging visual prominence to signal a gathering space. Nodes should be generally confined to a 1,000 foot radius from a major intersection. The nodes provide uses and spaces that attract and welcome neighborhood residents.”* (Page 94) In the plan, each node is individually noted with a description of specific uses, considerations, and character appropriate for that node.

South John R. Road is the southern gateway into the City of Troy and extends from Fourteen Mile Road to Maple Road along John R. The Oakland Mall is a major destination in this area. If redevelopment should occur in this area, the plan identifies site and building guidelines to encourage a walkable, mixed use development where natural resource restoration may be possible. Redevelopment could entail retail, office, and higher density residential of three to six stories in height with a mass transit stop.

Big Beaver Road is envisioned as a “World Class Boulevard.” The key findings of the recently completed Big Beaver Corridor Study are included in this master plan. The City should capitalize on Big Beaver’s existing high quality collection of signature office and retail uses to make it a more distinctive gateway into the City, consisting of unique mixed use developments with strong components of residential use. The boulevard should have significant landscaping, walkability, and public art. As redevelopment occurs, buildings should be located closer to the road, and height is encouraged in certain locations. The plan references a Big Beaver Development Code that will be used to regulate the specifics of building design and location.

Rochester Road classification extends along the frontage of Rochester Road for a little over four miles from South Boulevard to just south of Big Beaver Road. Significant changes are planned for this busy roadway. An emphasis on mixed use will replace the current orientation of highway commercial uses. Main features of the road will be coordinated stormwater management, access management, and native landscaping. *“The creation of this green corridor would occur primarily in the right-of-way along road frontages and in the median of a future boulevard...New construction along the corridor may include detention and retention basins that work together from site-to-site with other features to create a continuous, linear landscape feature.”* (Page 103)

Maple Road classification extends along the frontage of Maple Road from Crooks to just east of Rochester Road. This area is primarily industrial but could transition to a more eclectic mix including loft style residential units and mass transit stops. Three to four story buildings with open floor plans could be appropriate, although heights should be limited to two stories adjacent to the single family residential north of Maple Road.

Northfield is between Long Lake and Square Lake Roads at I-75 in the northwest part of the City. This district along with the *Smart Zone* below is designed to provide locations for the employment

of the desired knowledge workers. Medical and professional offices, related service uses, and research uses are the prime land uses planned for this area. Along the edge of this district, the City is encouraging higher density residential of 20 units per acre

The Smart Zone is a prime location for high-technology uses, including light industrial, office, and research and development. This district has high visibility along I-75 and extends from Big Beaver to Fourteen Mile Road. Because there are some vacant and underutilized parcels in this area, opportunities exist for new buildings set within a campus like setting. Amenities like pedestrian walkways, landscaped drainage areas, and mass transit stops are part of the concepts for this district.

Automall is a small area on Maple Road between Coolidge and Crooks Roads where a great variety of auto dealerships are located. The City intends to maintain this unique niche land use in this location.

The Transit Center is located in the far southwestern corner of Troy adjacent to the City of Birmingham. The planned Troy/Birmingham Transit Center described earlier will be the central focus of this area around which a mixed use district can develop. The Oakland/Troy Airport is also within this district and contributes to the multi-modal orientation desired by the City. *“The combination of air, rail, bus and non-motorized transportation in one compact area, supported by a high-density residential development and regional commercial uses, will work to create a vibrant gateway to the southwest corner of Troy.”* (Page 115)

21st Century Industrial refers to three distinct locations in the southern part of the City where industrial is the existing land use. These manufacturing and warehouse uses will remain though new business-to-business uses may locate within this area as well to support new Knowledge Economy uses. Upgrading the appearance of these industrial sites will enhance the image of this part of the City. The re-use of some of the industrial buildings for loft-style residential units may be considered on a limited basis as part of a mixed use project in this district.

Comparison of the Draft 2008 Future Land Use Map to the 2002 Map as amended

The two maps use different Future Land Use classifications so a direct comparison between the maps is not possible. Essentially, both maps show the northern part of the City of Troy in a single family residential use. More intensive uses are mainly located from Big Beaver to the southern city limits, with the exception of the Northfield District along I-75 between Square Lake and Long Lake Roads. The concept of Neighborhood Nodes at major intersections is reflected on the 2002 map although the nomenclature is different. Areas planned for Light Industrial/Research on the 2002 map have been renamed The Transit Center, Automall, The Smart Zone, and 21st Century Industrial. These new classifications provide more opportunities for mixed use.

Big Beaver Road is now shown as one classification as opposed to defined areas of Low Rise Office, Mid Rise Office, High Rise Office, Office Service, Regional Center Commercial, Non-Center Commercial, and High Density Mid Rise Residential. The City of Troy still wants Big Beaver to be a vibrant, mixed use district; however, the draft plan places more emphasis on the design and building elements that will turn Big Beaver into a World Class Boulevard.

Coordination with Surrounding Community Boundaries and County Property

Under 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 following provides detail on how the draft plan coordinates with each of Troy's seven neighboring communities and with County property.

North Boundary – City of Rochester Hills: The City of Rochester Hills Master Land Use Plan 2007 was adopted in February 2007. Troy shares its entire northern border with the City of Rochester Hills. Single Family Residential is the dominant land use planned by the City of Troy along this border, with Neighborhood Nodes (mixtures of commercial, office, and/or multi-family uses) shown at major intersections. From the western edge to Crooks Road, Rochester Hills has planned for a large area of Business/Flexible Use 1 at Adams Road, and then alternating areas of Park/Public Open Space, Residential 4 (4 dwelling units/acre), and Private Recreation/Open Space, terminating at a small node of Business/Flexible Use 1 and 2 at Crooks Road. In this area, Troy has planned for Single Family Residential except for two areas of Recreation and Open Space directly opposite land planned for either public or private open space in Rochester Hills and a Neighborhood Node at Crooks Road. The Business/Flexible Use 1 at Adams Road in Rochester Hills is intended to be a mixed use area of low intensity. Flexible 1 uses of residential, public, institutional, and office should be compatible with the Single Family Residential in Troy. Currently, the residential land in Troy is occupied by a church and a subdivision, while the land in Rochester Hills consists of single family homes, an apartment complex, a church, vacant land, and a historic property. If the land is developed as a mixed use, care should be taken with site design elements to ensure compatibility with the residential land in Troy.

East of Crooks, the Rochester Hills plan shows Residential 4 extending to a node of Business/Flexible Use 1 at Livernois Road and then Residential 3 (3 dwelling units/acre) east to an area of Office at Rochester Road. In this area, Troy has planned for Single Family Residential except for Neighborhood Nodes at Livernois and Rochester Roads. East of Rochester Road, Rochester Hills has planned for a limited area of Residential 3 and then a narrow band of Office extending south along the M-59 Expressway to Dequindre Road. Troy again has planned for Single Family Residential in this area except for a Neighborhood Node at John R Road. Between John R and Dequindre, Troy has a large area of Recreation and Open Space (City Park) and Public and Quasi-Public (Detroit Water Station). This portion of the border is compatible.

East Boundary – City of Sterling Heights: The Master Land Use Plan 2005 City of Sterling Heights was adopted in July 2005. Troy shares its entire eastern border along Dequindre Road from South Boulevard to Fourteen Mile Road with the City of Sterling Heights. Dequindre is also the dividing line between Oakland County and Macomb County. Troy has planned for mostly Single Family Residential along this border except for Neighborhood Nodes (mixed commercial, office, or multi-family uses) at the Mile Roads and more intense uses both at the northern and southern corners. At Dequindre and South Boulevard, the City of Troy has Public and Quasi-Public planned (the Detroit Water utility site and the Beaumont Health Care Campus). At the southern border near Fourteen Mile Road, the City of Troy has 21st Century Industrial planned; industrial uses currently exist in this area.

Similarly, the City of Sterling Heights has Neighborhood Residential planned for most of this border except for more intense uses at the Mile Roads. Most of these Mile Road intersections

contain a mixture of Office, Local Commercial, and/or NR-Moderate Density Residential. These classifications appear to be compatible with most of the Neighborhood Nodes planned in the City of Troy. Two Mile Road intersection locations in the City of Sterling Heights have larger, more intensive uses planned. At Dequindre and South Boulevard, Sterling Heights has planned for Transition and Office uses. The plan indicates future uses in the Transition classification will depend on the characteristics of that site. In this particular location, County staff feels the Office and Transition uses can be compatible with the hospital campus and water utility site in Troy. At Dequindre and Big Beaver (Metropolitan Parkway in Sterling Heights), Sterling Heights has planned for a large area of Regional Commercial and NR-Moderate Density Residential. This represents an existing shopping center and multi-family development. Overall, the boundary appears to be compatible.

South Boundary – City of Madison Heights: The Madison Heights Master Plan: 1990, 2000, 2010 was adopted in October 1990 and amended in May 2007. Troy shares its southeastern border with the City of Madison Heights from Campbell Road to Dequindre along Fourteen Mile Road. Both communities have more intensive uses planned in this location. Madison Heights has Commercial planned from Campbell to John R and then Industrial planned to Dequindre. Adjacent to the Commercial, Troy has planned the following classifications: a small area of Single Family Residential (existing), 21st Century Industrial, The Smart Zone, and South John R Road. Adjacent to the Industrial, Troy has planned for 21st Century Industrial and Neighborhood Node. Existing and planned commercial and industrial uses are compatible in this area.

One possibility identified in the Troy Master Plan is the redevelopment of the Oakland Mall or the area surrounding it. If redevelopment is proposed in the future, it is recommended that the City of Troy coordinate with Madison Heights to ensure that the proposed mixed uses are compatible and mutual issues regarding traffic, access, landscaping, and signage are discussed.

South Boundary – City of Clawson: The Master Plan City of Clawson was adopted in January 1990 and amended in October 2004. Troy shares its southern border with the City of Clawson from Crooks to North Campbell Road. Along Crooks, Troy has planned The Transit Center district while Clawson has Industrial along the frontage. Along Maple, Troy has the Maple Road classification while Clawson has a mixture of General Commercial, Industrial, and Office. The border then goes south along Livernois Road (North Main Street in Clawson) where Troy has both Maple Road and 21st Century Industrial classifications. This is adjacent to General Commercial and Multiple Family Residential in Clawson. The border continues to the east along Elmwood Avenue. Here, the City of Troy has planned for 21st Century Industrial while Clawson has planned for Public/Semi-Public, and Single Family and Multiple Family Residential, with a small area of Industrial at Rochester Road. Finally, Single Family Residential is planned in both communities for the last portion of the border between Elmwood and Fourteen Mile Road. While there are a variety of uses planned along this shared border, the classifications represent existing land uses. Also, changes proposed by Troy for the Maple Road frontage should be compatible with the non residential uses present in Clawson. It should be noted that Oakland County just received the draft City of Clawson Master Plan (MP 08-12) for review. It appears that future land use classifications remain the same for this border area, although the draft plan indicates design improvements related to landscaping, access, and parking may be warranted.

South Boundary – City of Royal Oak: The Master Plan City of Royal Oak was adopted in August 1999. Troy shares approximately a mile border with the City of Royal Oak, south of the Oakland/Troy Airport between Coolidge and Crooks Road. Troy has this border area planned for The Transit Center. Royal Oak has this border planned for a variety of uses. Starting from Coolidge and going east, the future land use classifications are General Commercial, Industrial, Parks and Open Space, Single Family Residential-Medium Density (minimum 5,000 square foot lot), and finally Multiple Family Residential. This mixture of classifications represents existing uses. Currently, in Troy, light industrial uses are located south of the airport. These industrial uses are mainly adjacent to a Meijer's and a large park, and therefore, have limited impact on neighboring properties. Nearer Crooks Road, there is a small area of single family residential and a large condominium development. If any changes are proposed for this part of The Transit Center district, care should be taken to minimize any negative impacts on the adjacent residential in Royal Oak.

Southwest Boundary – City of Birmingham: The Birmingham Future Land-Use Plan was prepared in 1979 and has been amended several times since, most recently in July 2007 for the Triangle District area. Troy shares its southwestern border with the City of Birmingham. The southern irregular border from the Canadian National Railroad to Coolidge is planned for Single Family Residential in both communities. Then along Coolidge to just north of Maple, Troy has planned for High Density Residential while Birmingham has more Single Family Residential. These classifications reflect existing conditions. The Maple Road frontage is planned for Low-Density Multifamily Residential in Birmingham while Troy has planned for The Transit Center. South of Maple Road to Troy's municipal limit, Birmingham has planned for Industrial along the railroad, and Troy has planned for The Transit Center. In 1999, Birmingham prepared an update to its master plan called the Eton Road Corridor Plan for this area along the railroad adjacent to the City of Troy. The City of Birmingham envisioned this area transitioning to a mixed use district. This is compatible with the vision the City of Troy has for The Transit Center. Part of this vision includes replacing the Amtrack station in Birmingham with a multi-modal station planned at Coolidge and Maple Roads that would include rail, bus, taxis, and rental cars. Land uses around this Troy and Birmingham Transit Center would be higher-intensity mixed uses in a walkable environment. This border area has great potential for coordination; County staff encourages continued dialogue between Troy and Birmingham to ensure issues of mutual concern are addressed.

West Boundary – Bloomfield Township: The Charter Township of Bloomfield Master Plan Update was adopted in March 2007. Troy shares its western border along Adams Road with Bloomfield Township. This border, which extends from South Boulevard to just south of Big Beaver, is almost entirely planned for Single Family Residential in Troy. The only exceptions to this are a small area of Public and Quasi-Public between I-75 and Square Lake Road, and a small area of Recreation and Open Space about one-half mile south of South Boulevard. Single Family Residential is also the dominant land use planned by Bloomfield Township with a few exceptions. One exception is an area planned for Office between I-75 and Square Lake Road, adjacent to the Public and Quasi-Public in Troy. Another exception is an area of Multiple Family Residential on Big Beaver just west of Adams. Bloomfield Township also has planned for an area of Attached Single Family Residential (no density given) north of the expressway and four areas of Institutional/Civic at various locations along the border. This is a very compatible border with a shared residential focus.

County Property – Oakland/Troy Airport: The Oakland/Troy Airport is located in the southwest corner of the City in the area planned for The Transit Center. The plan identifies the airport as a “*critical part of the Transit Center*” because it provides for another mode of transportation in this district. While new two to four story buildings are envisioned in this district in the future, it is acknowledged that building height has to meet Federal Aviation Administration requirements. The airport’s Approach Plan is included in the appendix. Uses and concepts put forth in The Transit Center classification description are compatible with the continued operation of the Oakland/Troy Airport.

Analysis

The City of Troy Planning Commission, Planning Staff, and Planning Consultant should be commended for creating a very interesting master plan. It is not the traditional land use based plan that most communities prepare. Rather, the plan poses big questions, such as:

- How can the City of Troy attract knowledge workers of the New Economy?
- What does Troy need to do to become a World Class City?
- How can Troy demonstrate its leadership in the region?
- How can the City of Troy ensure it is creating development that will be sustainable for the 21st Century?

The plan provides a framework for the answers to these challenging questions. Readers of the plan receive a primer on the major planning issues of the day. The plan contains a lot of background material on a variety of topics, and photographs help convey the type of new uses and character desired. This is important because educating residents will be a critical part of implementing this plan. Some major changes are proposed that will have a significant impact on the look and feel of the City. There is relatively little vacant land left in the City so much of what is envisioned in the plan will be through redevelopment. New uses and new buildings with different footprints are planned to make Big Beaver into a World Class Boulevard. To a lesser degree, changes planned around the Transit Center, and along Rochester and Maple Roads will affect the existing character of Troy.

The goal is to re-invent strategic parts of the City. While these areas are in the southern part of Troy away from the majority of the single family neighborhoods, most of these areas do abut single family residential on their periphery. In addition, the new uses and new types of residential units proposed are intended to attract more residents and workers into Troy, possibly adding to traffic congestion and other impacts. Based on the public input cited in the plan, there is support for these changes. The changes are designed to make Troy a more vibrant city with definite urban characteristics. Engaging residents in discussions on the future of Troy will help make this plan successful.

An annual review of the plan is recommended as one of the implementation strategies. This is an excellent approach that Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services Division (PEDS) staff recommends highly since it allows the community to identify those elements of the plan that are working well while providing oversight to modify aspects of the plan that need attention. In a plan as innovative as the City of Troy’s, it will be important to monitor progress on a regular basis to ensure coordination as different parts of the plan are implemented. In addition, a regular review of the plan will help in educating appointed and elected officials on the various

aspects of the plan. These reviews will provide opportunities to continue to engage residents as well.

Given the plan's emphasis on attracting knowledge workers and New Economy businesses, it should be noted that PEDS is working on a Technology Planning Toolkit document that should be available shortly. This document is designed to help communities review their master plans, zoning ordinances, and permitting processes to see what changes should be made to prepare for the technology and knowledge-based industries of the New Economy. Coincidentally, this document is being prepared with the assistance of the City of Troy Planning Consultant, and City Staff served on an advisory committee. It is hoped that this toolkit will be useful to the City of Troy as they review their zoning ordinance with an eye toward implementing their plan.

Lastly, since the completion of the Troy draft master plan, SEMCOG has released a new version of its Regional Development Forecast. This forecast looks at population projections to the year 2035. The new forecast differs from the 2030 numbers in that there is now an increase forecasted for Troy. The new forecast shows a 2030 population for Troy to be 84,726, compared to the 77,046 previously forecasted for 2030 and cited in the draft master plan. The 2035 forecast is for a population of 86,528. It is recommended that before the master plan is adopted, these new numbers be included in the plan. In addition, City Staff may wish to review these numbers for possible revisions given the increased opportunities for new residential units (mixed development projects, live/work units, and lofts) identified in this plan.

Conclusion

Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services Staff commends the City of Troy for preparing this new Master Plan. The plan addresses a variety of very relevant topics that go beyond just future land use.

Based on the review of the surrounding communities' master plans, the City of Troy 2008 Master Plan 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 plan.

Sincerely,

Charlotte P. Burckhardt, AICP, PCP
Principal Planner

Enclosures