



# CITY OF ROCHESTER ♦ MASTER PLAN

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

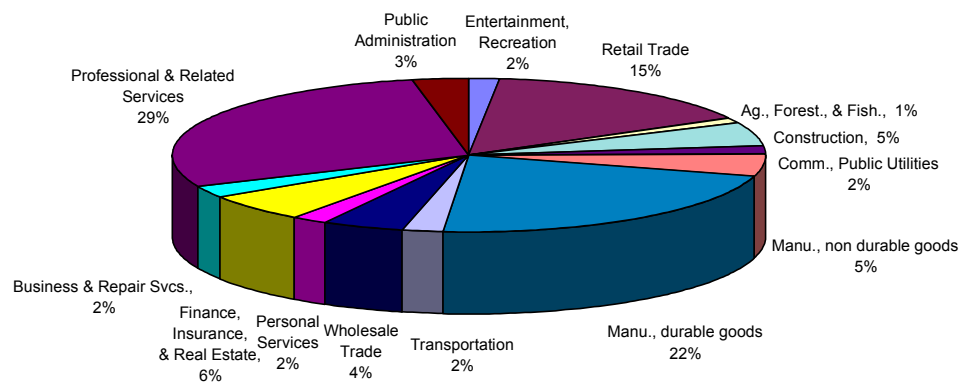
### EVALUATING POPULATION TRENDS

Rochester's past historical trends, present composition, and future population levels based on current trends can be analyzed to anticipate the needs of the community. Numerous forces work to determine the total population at any given time. The location of jobs, regional road network, housing supply, local amenities, and available land are just a few of the forces that can affect a community's population growth, both positively and negatively. The consequences of change in population make its study an important part of planning for Rochester's future.

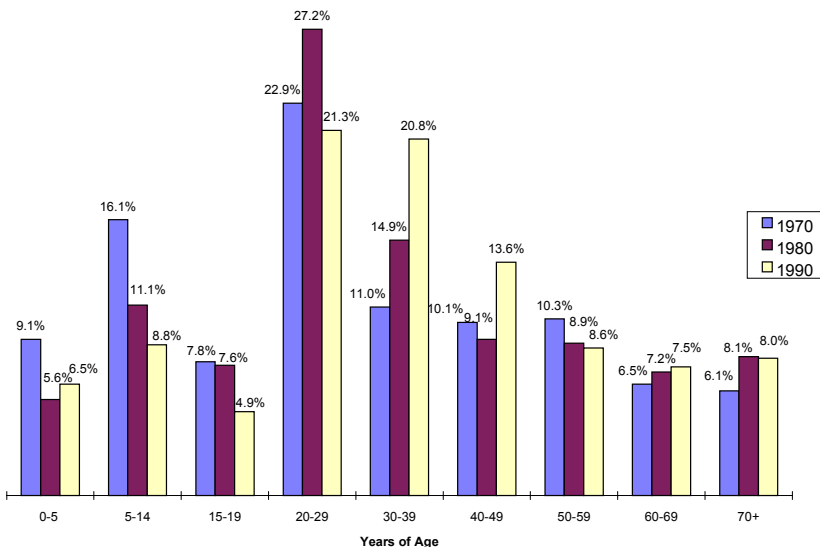
#### Estimated Population Levels City of Rochester

Year	Population
2000	9,500
2005	11,500
2010	12,100
2015	12,400
2020	12,700

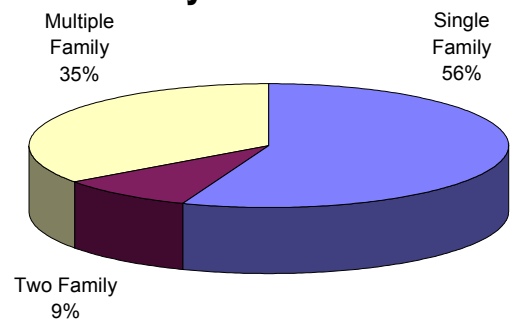
#### Employment by Industry, 1989 City of Rochester



#### Age Groupings; 1970, 1980, and 1990 City of Rochester



#### Dwelling Units by Type, 1998 City of Rochester



Source: U.S. Census of Population and SEMCOG



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### DEFINING THE COMMUNITY CHARACTER OF ROCHESTER

Community character is an important component of quality of life. If a community's character is perceived as a positive trait and is preserved and maintained, it can foster a strong sense of community. The aggregate characteristics of the City of Rochester are derived from a diverse mix of land uses that date from the community's early settlement era up to and including recent contemporary developments. The following broad categories detail some of the defining character of development in the City of Rochester.

#### Residential

The City of Rochester offers a wide variety of residential housing options. The character of residential neighborhoods varies based on the location within the City. In general, the area west of Letica Drive can be considered the mature, developed area of the City, while the area east of Letica Drive, especially within the northeast portion of the City, is considered to be more contemporary, with a somewhat suburban character.



Early 1900's single-family craftsman bungalow



Contemporary single-family home, featuring side-entry garage

#### Industrial / Research and Development

Most of the City's industrial development can be found in three general areas, along South Street, along Second Street east of the CBD, and along Woodward on the northwest side of the City. Most of the City's Research and Development uses are found in the Parkdale corridor from Letica Drive to Dequindre.



Outdoor storage in the front portion of the parcel, without screening, has a negative visual appeal.



Letica Headquarters on Dequindre



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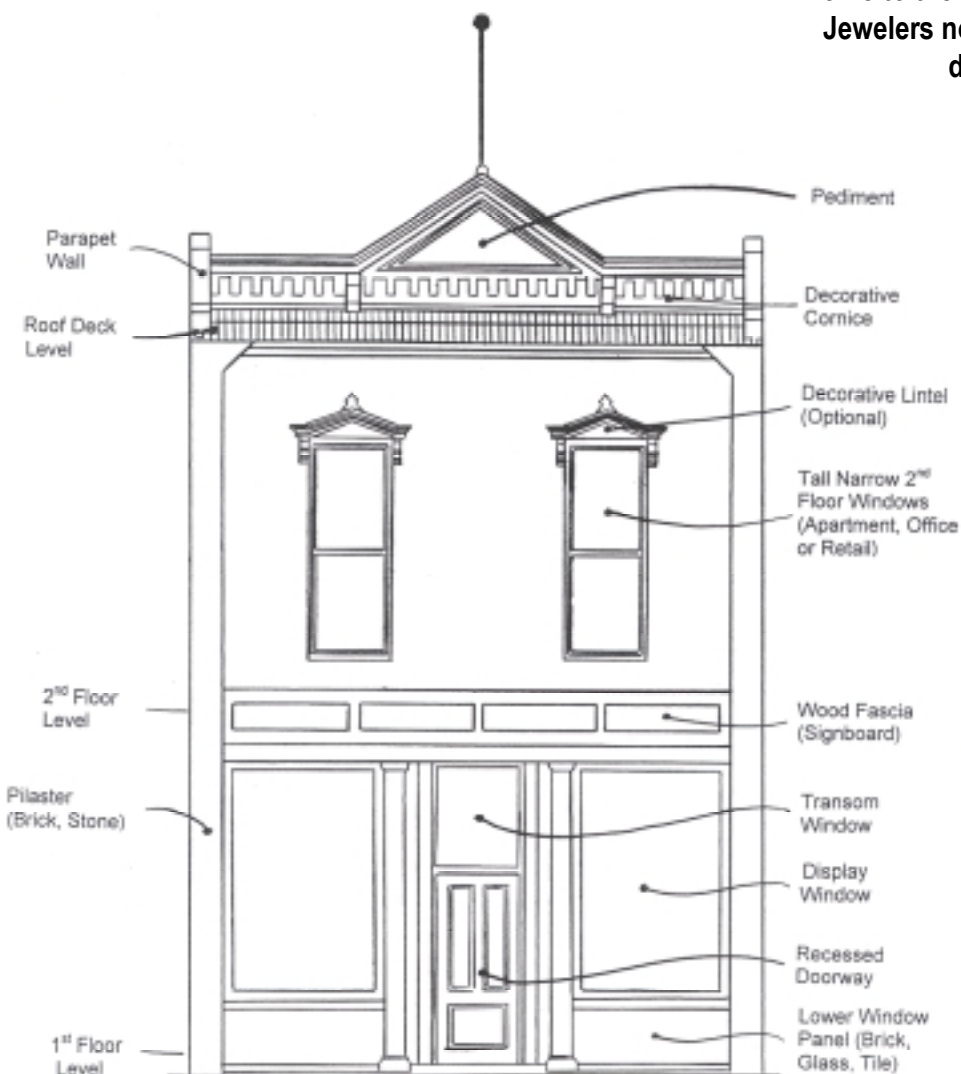
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### Central Business District

The character of the Central Business District (CBD) was in large part established over 100 years ago when the area now known as Rochester was first settled. In the early to mid-1800's, Main Street, between Third and University, developed as the community's major commercial thoroughfare with hotels, banks, grocery and drug stores, while Walnut Street to the west developed with several church structures. These areas of the downtown can be considered as the historic core of the CBD.



The historic Rochester Bank is now home to the Lytle Pharmacy and Rose Jewelers now occupies an historic drug store site.



Many of the retail structures within the historic core of downtown include at least two stories with a store-front lower facade with large display windows, and upper facades with symmetrical windows, a flat roof, and a decorative roof parapet. The graphic above shows some of the common features found in traditional commercial buildings. We note that the Downtown Development Authority has developed Design Guidelines for Downtown Commercial Rehabilitation which seek to preserve the historic character of these structures.



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### Transitional Development Potential

There are several sites within Rochester that occupy prominent, potential transitional use locations. Some of these have active uses, others house vacant buildings awaiting reuse or redevelopment, while still others have been cleared and will soon be available for development. A quartet of such sites includes the Transit Mix site, the old A&P grocery store site, the vacant automobile dealership, and the former ITT Higbie Manufacturing site.



The Transit Mix plant occupies a prime site near the CBD. Redevelopment of this area into office and/or retail establishments might be appropriate. The building styles could complement the surrounding development in order to maintain the desired community character. Extensive landscaping could be incorporated in order to increase the visual appeal of the area.

The former ITT Manufacturing site is located adjacent to the Rochester Mills Brewery, within the CBD. This location is well-suited for either multiple-family residential, office, or retail development. The location of this site within the CBD and adjacent to the Paint Creek makes it a very desirable location for pedestrian-oriented uses. The style of new development should complement the renovated Brewery and the downtown character.







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### FOCUSING IN ON DEVELOPMENT ISSUES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

#### Focus Area 1 - Former A&P Site

- ❖ The limited frontage along Main Street could cause possible driveway congestion with surrounding commercial establishments.
- ❖ The Paint Creek and the Paint Creek Trail / Walkway abut the entire southerly lot line.
- ❖ Poorly planned development of the A & P site has the potential to adversely impact the trail and the Albertson neighborhood.



- ❖ The site is a potential gateway to Municipal Park, site of several festivals and events which can be a positive attribute for the A & P site.
- ❖ This site is located near several restaurant and food/entertainment uses, however there is a weak connection to the downtown area due to a break in the pedestrian streetscape north of University.
- ❖ The site may be appropriate for a Special Project zoning designation.

#### Focus Area 2 - Griggs / Albertson Neighborhood

- ❖ The Helro Company has been a good neighbor to nearby residences, however, it is a non-conforming use in a residential zone. Both the company and the neighborhood could potentially benefit from relocating Helro to an industrial site with growth options.
- ❖ The connection between Griggs and Albertson Streets should be paved.
- ❖ Maintain adequate access to Paint Creek Trail for neighborhood residents.



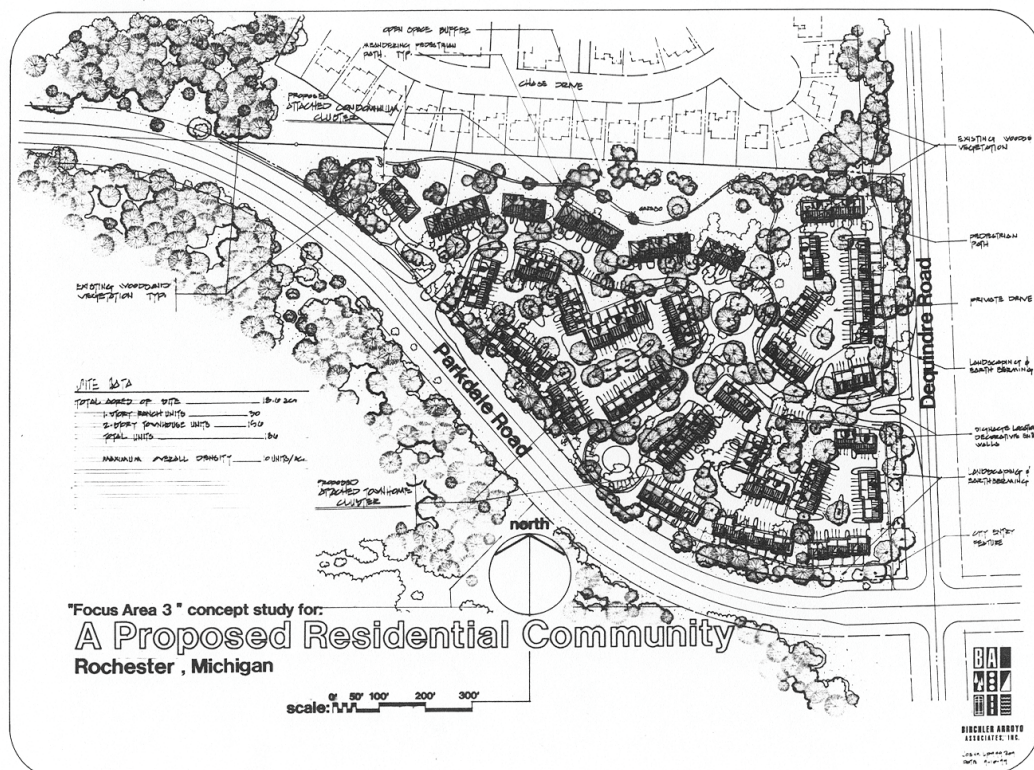


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### Focus Area 3 - Parkdale Project Area

- ❖ The single family residential neighborhood to the north requires protection from potential adverse impacts of future development.
- ❖ The Parkdale and Dequindre Greenbelts should be extended and the walkway connection completed.
- ❖ This area is a major city entryptoint from the east. Some type of “gateway” feature or development may be appropriate.
- ❖ The topography and wooded area of this site may afford some protection from visual and traffic impacts.
- ❖ A pedestrian connection to a future recreational trail just south of the new skating center is desirable.
- ❖ Continuation of Special Project designation may be appropriate. This would permit certain residential use in lieu of research park development as an alternative development opportunity.







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### Focus Area 4 - Walnut / Grand Trunk Project Area

- ❖ The many different land uses that converge at this point challenge the City's planners to develop a unifying theme and compatibility between adjoining uses.
- ❖ There is heavy truck traffic through the area.



- ❖ The Grand Trunk Western Railroad has the potential to become a future recreation trail.
- ❖ There are unique opportunities for use of the right-of-way underneath the Main Street Bridge.
- ❖ Future use of the southwest corner of First and Diversion and the concrete plant site may have interesting residential possibilities, due in large part to the Clinton River Corridor, potential recreational use of the rail line, and proximity to the downtown.

### Focus Area 5 - Letica East Project Area

- ❖ To the south of the property the Paint Creek Trail and the Railway converge.
- ❖ The proposed rail abandonment holds opportunities for recreational trail development on the Clinton River that would connect with the Paint Creek Trailway.
- ❖ The City's former sewage treatment plant site has potential for recreational use, particularly as a trail head access point and parking area.
- ❖ Views throughout this corridor are generally very dramatic, due to the area's unique topography.





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### Focus Area 6 - North Main Street Corridor

- ❖ Home to office conversions at the south end of the corridor can preserve architecturally interesting structures and add to community character. Inefficient site use is a constraint to conversions, however.
- ❖ Prior studies have addressed parking issues for home to office conversions and the ability to use the alley behind buildings (west side) for access.
- ❖ The east side from Lysander to Highland includes many parking lots that are highly visible from the road. Building placement fronting on Main with rear parking would enclose the street and continue the small-town atmosphere.
- ❖ Heavy truck traffic is mixed with commuters on Main. Because Main Street is a State Highway, there is no possibility of rerouting trucks.
- ❖ There is limited landscaping on the west side near the Napa Auto Parts, vacant auto dealer, and BP Station. Landscaping could be used to visually enhance the sidewalk and parking.
- ❖ This is the north entrypoint into the city. An entry feature would be appropriate.
- ❖ The extension of retail and service uses too far north on Main Street would weaken the downtown and introduce non-residential impacts to the stable neighborhoods in the north half of the corridor.



### Focus Area 7 - Clinton River Corridor

- ❖ The Paint Creek Trail and the Railroad (future recreational trail) converge at the former sewage treatment plant along the Clinton River. There is potential for long - range recreational space and access to the Clinton River.



- ❖ Trailways provide transportation alternatives for access to the central business district.
- ❖ Soil contamination issues need to be researched at the former sewage treatment plant.
- ❖ The Planning Commission should analyze the level of continuity of easements obtained during site plan approval for businesses along the river.
- ❖ MDNR grant programs often give preferential consideration to river front public access and trails.





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### Focus Area 8 - Paint Creek Trail / Walkway

- ❖ The segment of the walkway from Sunrise Assisted Living to Second St. needs to be completed.
- ❖ The trail should extend down to Elizabeth St. and to the Clinton River (future railroad recreational trail).
- ❖ A connection to Elizabeth Park located to the east of the trail, is desirable.
- ❖ The Fourth Street Walkway provides a potential connection into the heart of the downtown.



### Focus Area 9 - Downtown Linkage Project Area

- ❖ Improved retail streetscape on Water and East Streets is needed to attract shoppers to the area.
- ❖ A walkway connecting Fourth Street to Paint Creek is started along the Mills development. This needs more attention, visibility, and needs to be completed and connected with the Paint Creek Walkway.
- ❖ On-Street parking should be encouraged on the west side of Water Street.
- ❖ The need for more public parking in the area may be partially addressed by agreements for after-hours use of private lots.
- ❖ Industrial use of the Elevator, located at Water and E. University, no longer fits with the character of the community due to significant outdoor storage. The site has greater potential as an extension of the Central Business District. Consideration should be given to save the original barn building, if feasible.
- ❖ Focus Area 9 would benefit from continuing the Special Project Master Plan designation.



### Focus Area 10 - West University Corridor Project Area

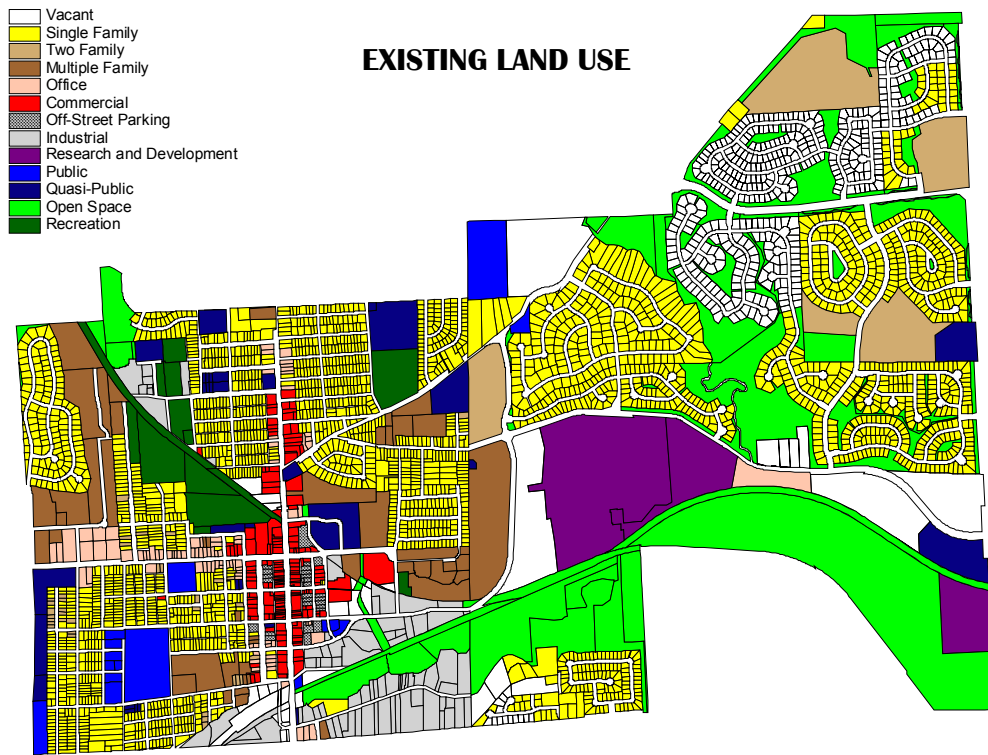
- ❖ Renovating older historic structures assists in maintaining the city's identity over time. Continuation of the Special Project designation on this site is appropriate.
- ❖ West University is a busy corridor that provides access to and from the downtown area.
- ❖ Existing residential buildings impart a special character to the corridor. New construction or adaptive reuse of structures along the corridor should maintain the desired community character.
- ❖ Large scale office buildings are appropriate at sites further removed from neighborhoods.
- ❖ Parking needs for office conversions should be addressed, including alleys and shared driveway access.





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 Major Arterial  
Collector Street  
Industrial Service Collector

### EXISTING THOROUGHFARES

