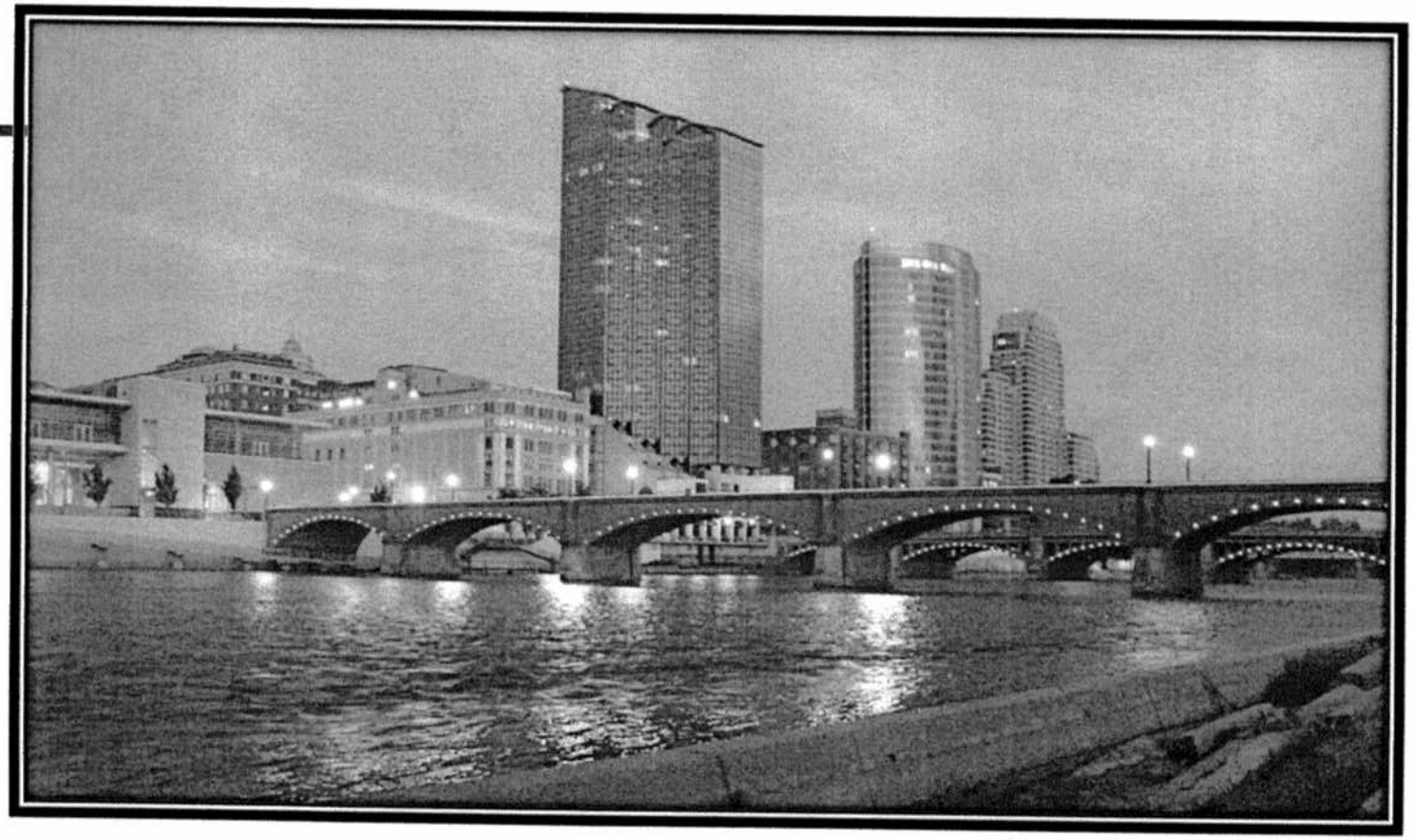
Public Transportation in Metro Grand Rapids:

Spurring Urban Redevelopment Through Collaborative Regional Partnerships and Planning



What Makes Public Transportation Work in Metro Grand Rapids?

- Strong, Vocal Support from Stakeholders and Partners in All Economic Sectors
- Visionary, Results-Oriented Management
- Regional Collaboration and Long-Term Planning = Effective, Efficient Use of Millage Dollars
- Strong Support from GVMC (MPO): Transportation and Land Use Planning to Support Public Transportation
- Coalition Building: Cooperative Spirit Builds Political Support for Public Transportation

History of The Rapid

- Begun in 2000
- Act 196 authority
- 6-city regional cooperative
- Contracts for service in outlying areas
- Successful millages in 2000, 2003, 2007
- Corresponding service increases

THE rapid

The Rapid currently operates 25 fixed routes:

Equipment Fleet:
- 119 Fixed Route Buses
- 6 DASH Buses
- 65 Paratransit Buses
- 24 Service Vehicles
- 20 Van Pool Vans

Employees:
- 251 Union (includes drivers, mechanics, & technicians)
- 59 Staff and administrative
- 279 Contract Employees

Passengers:
- FY 2008 – 9,081,282
- FY 2009 – 9,339,467

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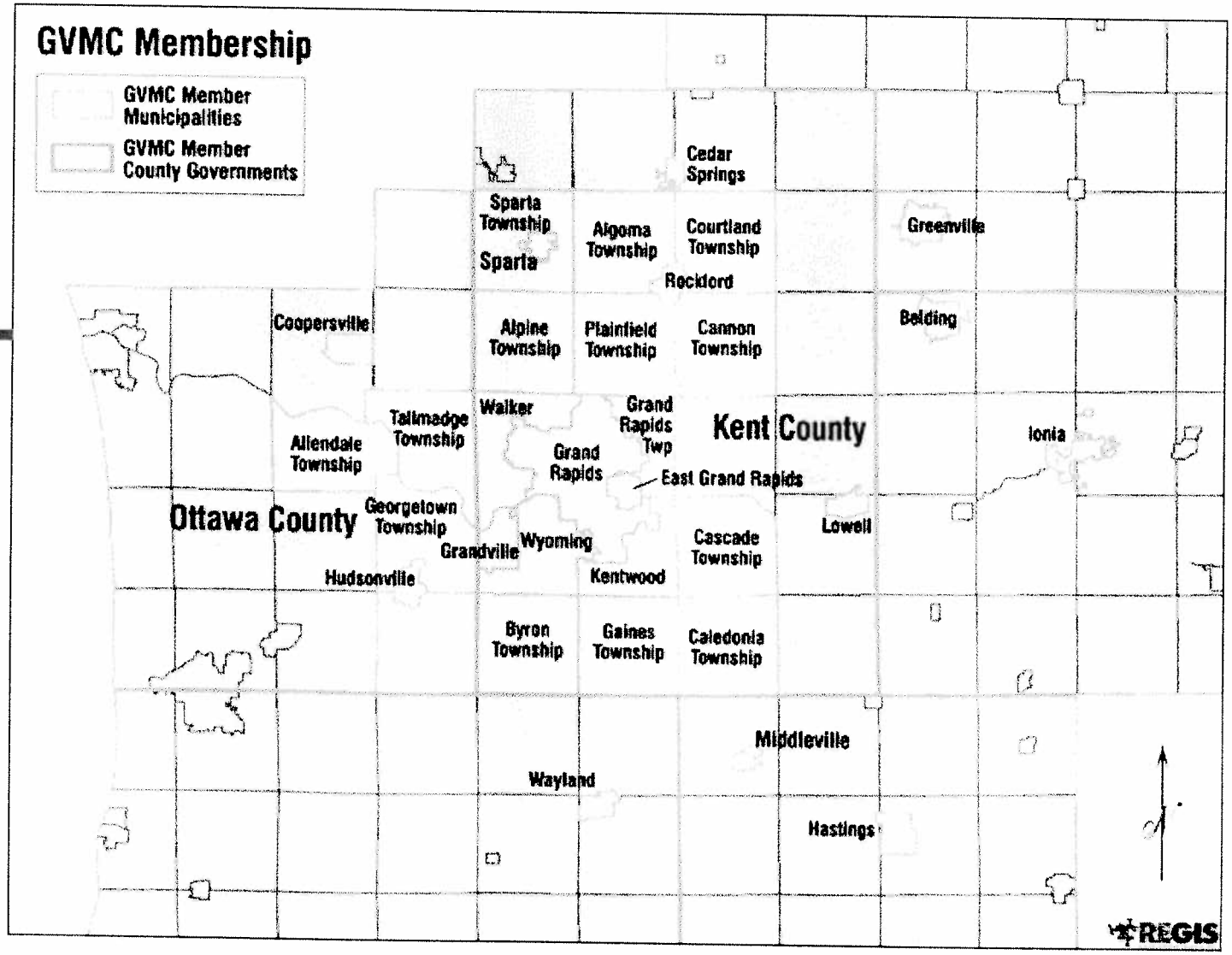
GVMC

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

Established in 1990



Collaborative Partnerships

Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce

Creating Opportunities for Business Success

WYOMING-KENTWOOD AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

GREATER Grand Rapids

THE RIGHT PLACE, INC.

A REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

WEST MICHIGAN STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Collaboration to secure our future

Grand Rapids

Muskegon

Holland

Collaborative Partnerships

Grand Valley State University

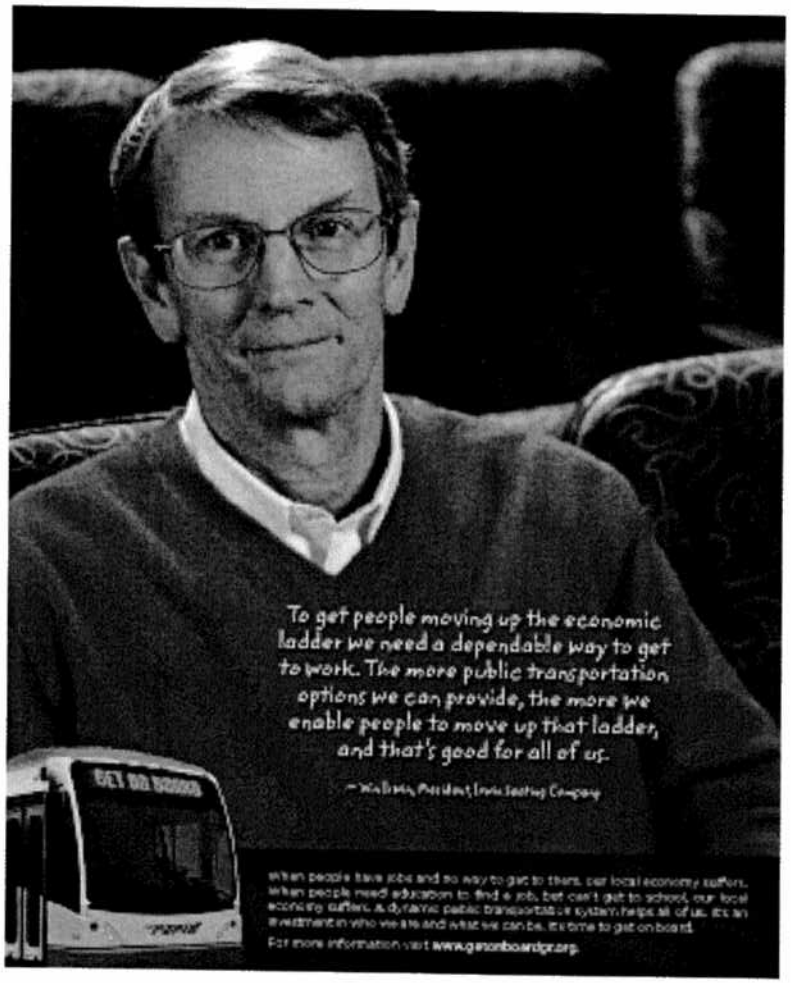
Michigan State University

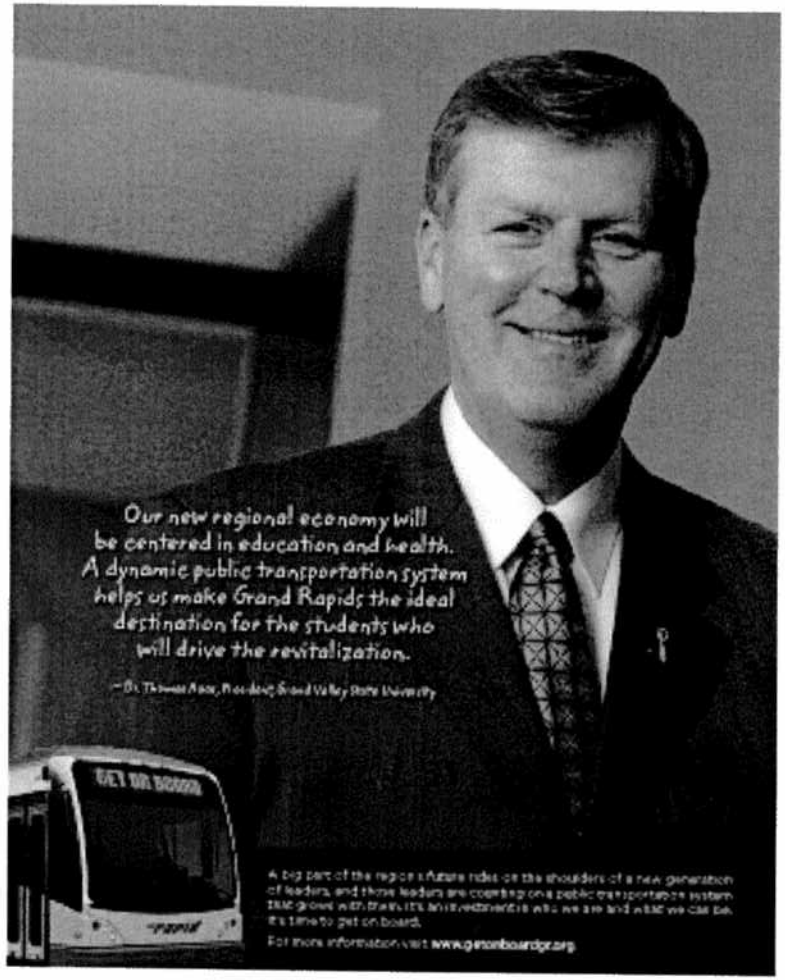
Aquinas College

Grand Rapids Community College

Calvin College

Print Ads





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Regional Collaboration: Transit Partnerships

- Staff from ITP-The Rapid actively participates in the GVMC MPO planning process
- GVMC Transportation and Land Use Planners Work Cooperatively to Ensure Transit-Friendly Planning
- MDOT Supports GVMC Transit Planning Efforts

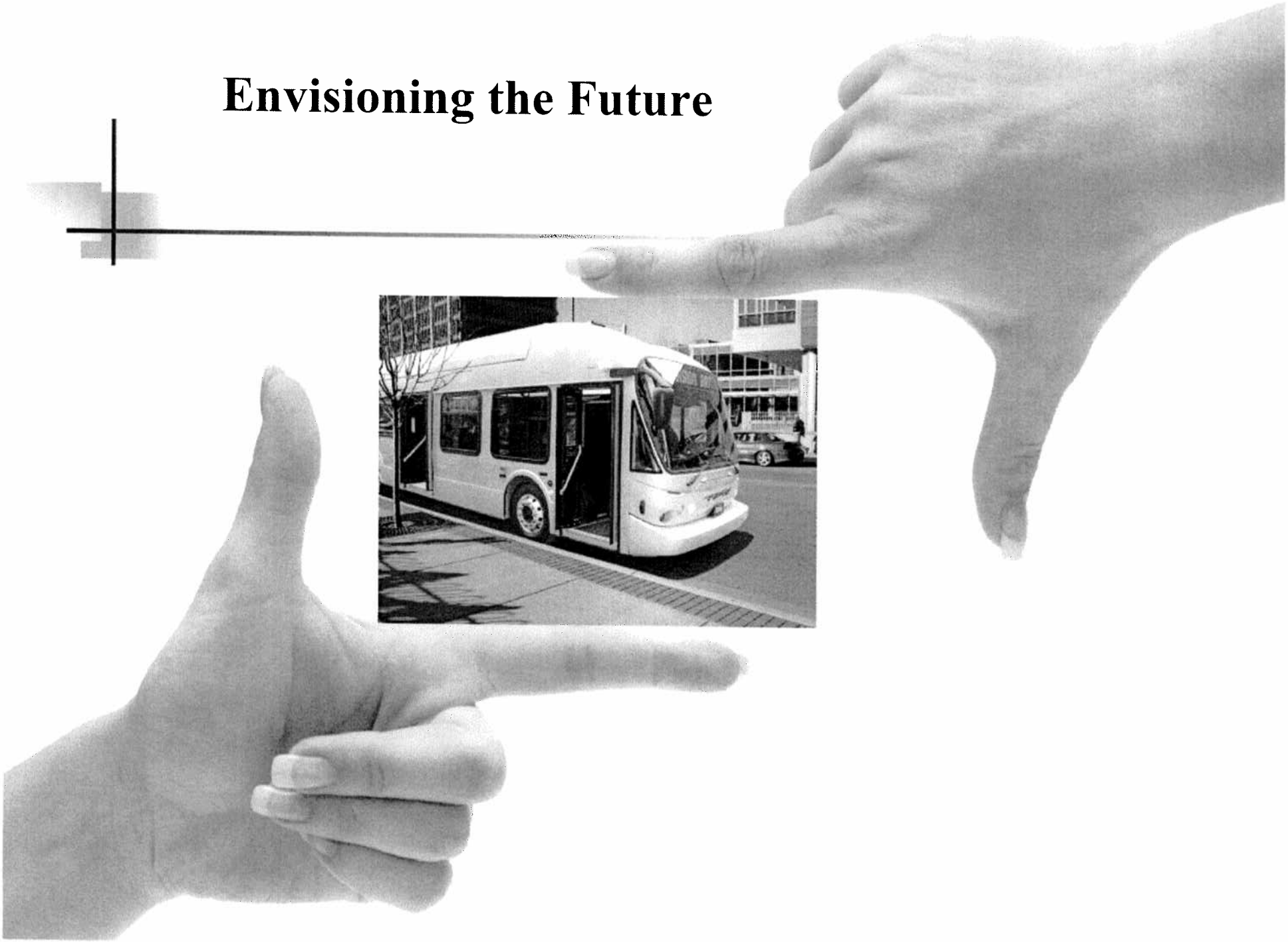
Regional Transit Collaboration: Gerald R. Ford Airport

- Airport Officials Work Collaboratively with The Rapid to Ensure Facilities are Transit-Friendly
- Airport Officials Participate in GVMC-sponsored Planning Activities That Connect Air and Transit Modes

Regional Collaboration: Stakeholders from All Sectors Plan <u>Together</u>

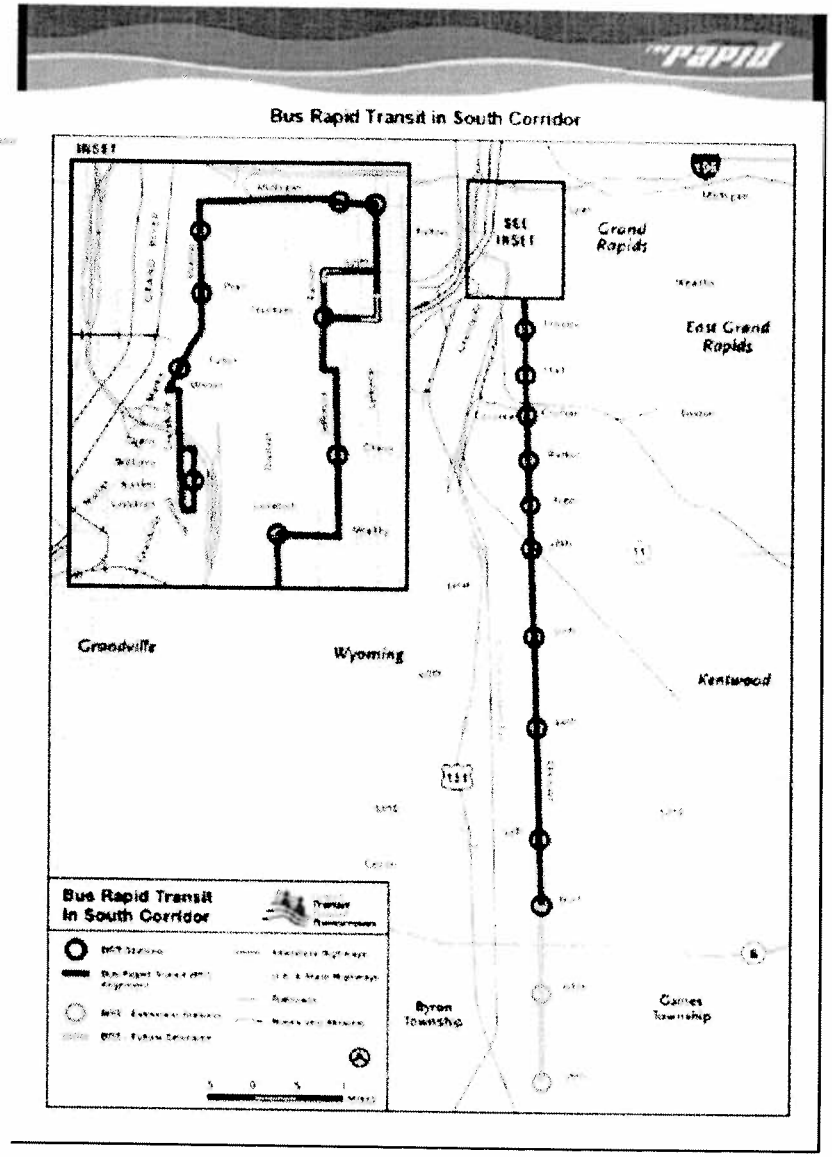
- GVMC Transportation staff worked with representatives of county and local agencies, MDOT and ITP-The Rapid to prepare project lists
- Public Transportation is an Integral Component of the Grand Valley metro area's total transportation planning regimen

Envisioning the Future



Regional Collaboration: Bus Rapid Transit

- Public/Private Transit Task Force selects route through downtown, south 9.5 miles to the junction of four communities
- Nineteen stations, connecting to existing Rapid bus routes
- Great potential to spur redevelopment



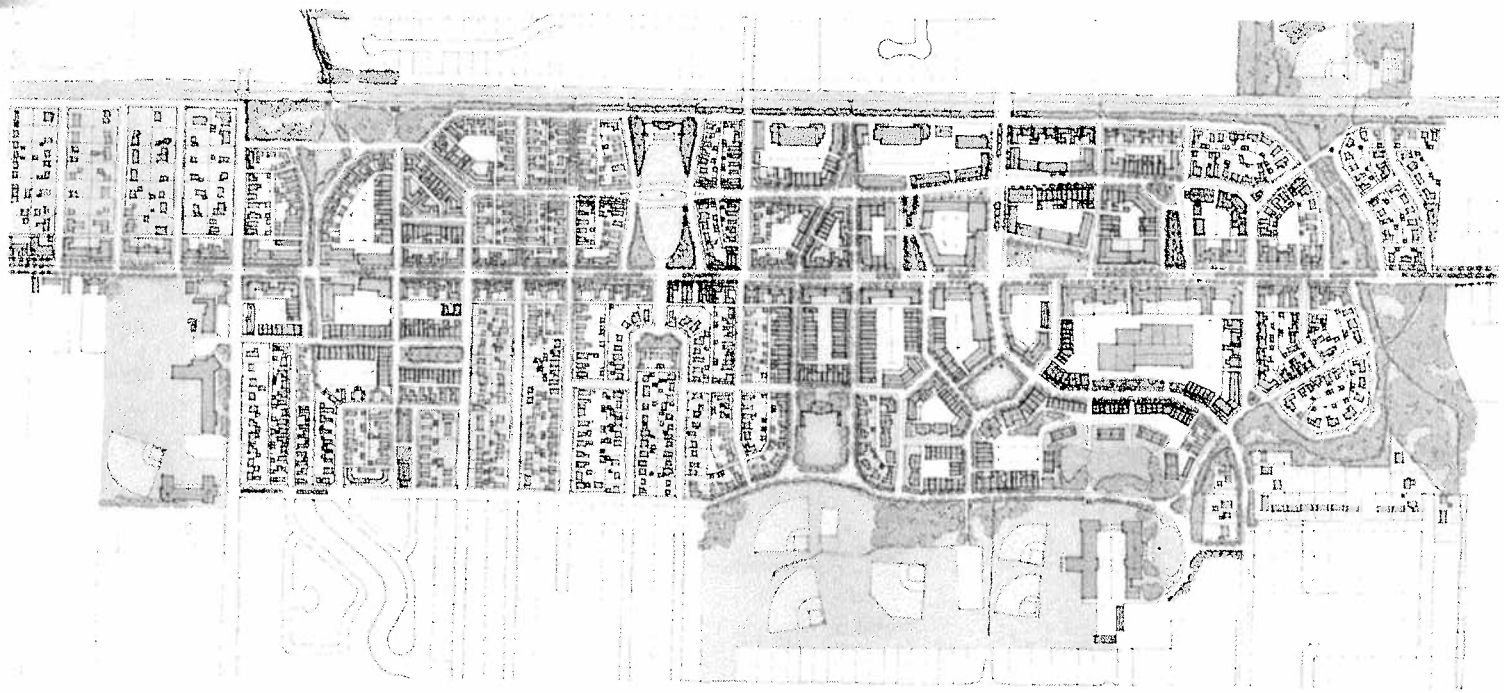
The SilverLine

- Bus Rapid Transit works like Light Rail – on Tires
- Dedicated Lanes in Peak
- High Frequency – 10 minutes at Peak
- Advanced Technology & Substantial Stations
- Hybrid Electric Buses
- Signal Priority
- Level Boarding
- Congestion relief potential in US 131 corridor

The SilverLine

- 60th Street to Medical Mile in 27 minutes
- Creates 400 direct new & permanent jobs
- Serving a concentration of jobs in downtown
- Serving major activity centers
- Serves choice riders and low income areas
- Demonstrates viability of BRT corridors in region
- Promotes transit supportive land use
- Projected development growth of 400%

Designing for Bus Rapid Transit on Division Avenue



- GVMC Coordinating Multi-Jurisdictional Land Use Plan for Division Avenue Corridor for Cities of Grand Rapids, Wyoming and Kentwood
- Multi-Jurisdictional Plan Required by Federal Transit Administration for Approval of Very Small Starts Construction Grant for 9.5 mile BRT Line

New Tools: Form-Based Code

FORM-BASED CODE STUDY

Grand Valley Area Of Michigan

Prepared For:

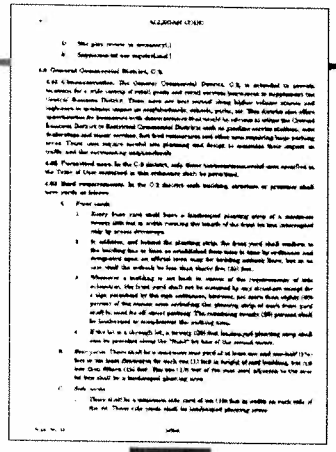
Grand Valley Metro Council

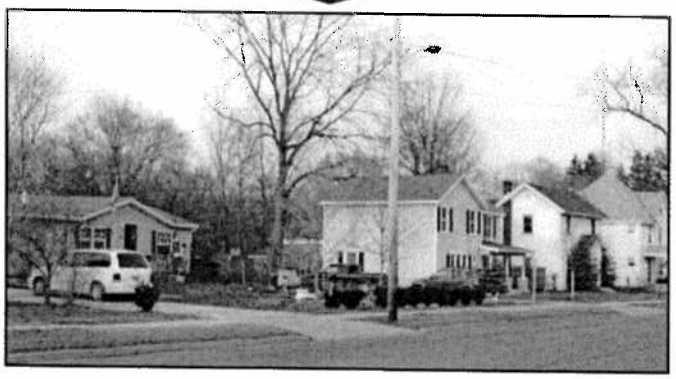
FARR ASSOCIATES

Architecture | Planning | Preservation

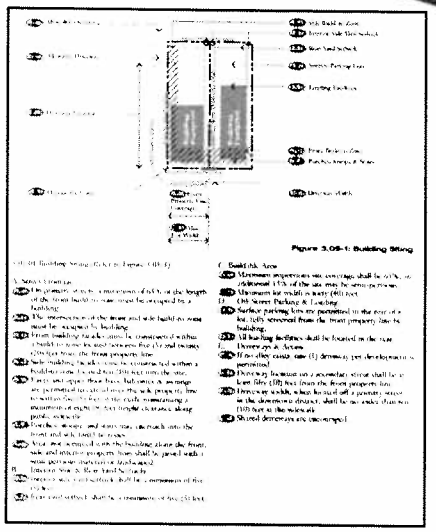
Meyer, Mohaddes Associates

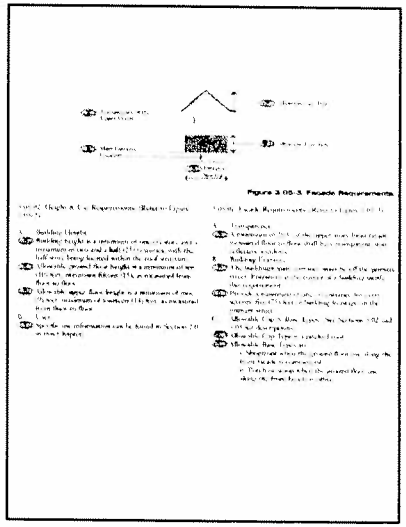
Conventional Zoning





Form-Based Zoning

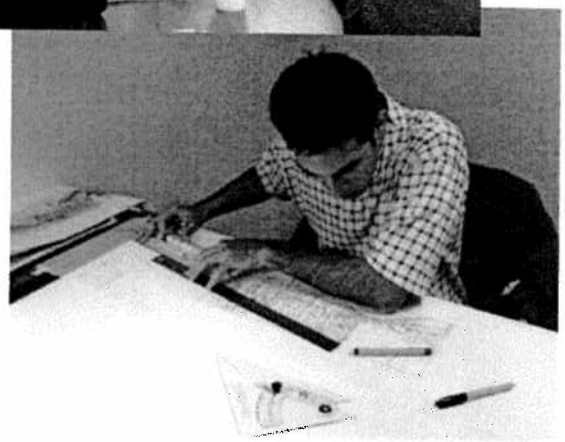


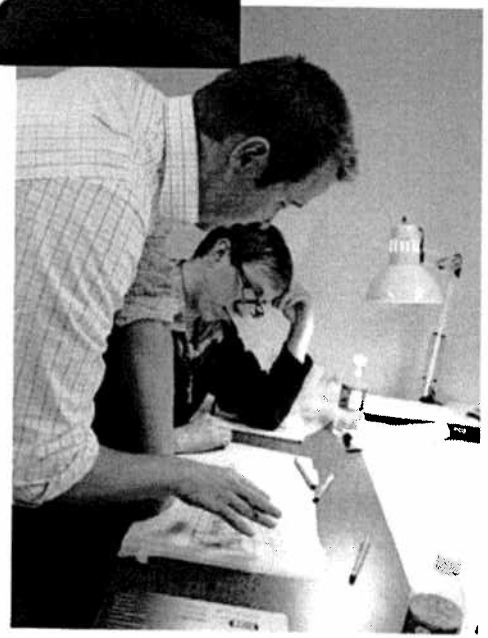


July 2007 – GVMC Unveils Regional Form-Based Code Study

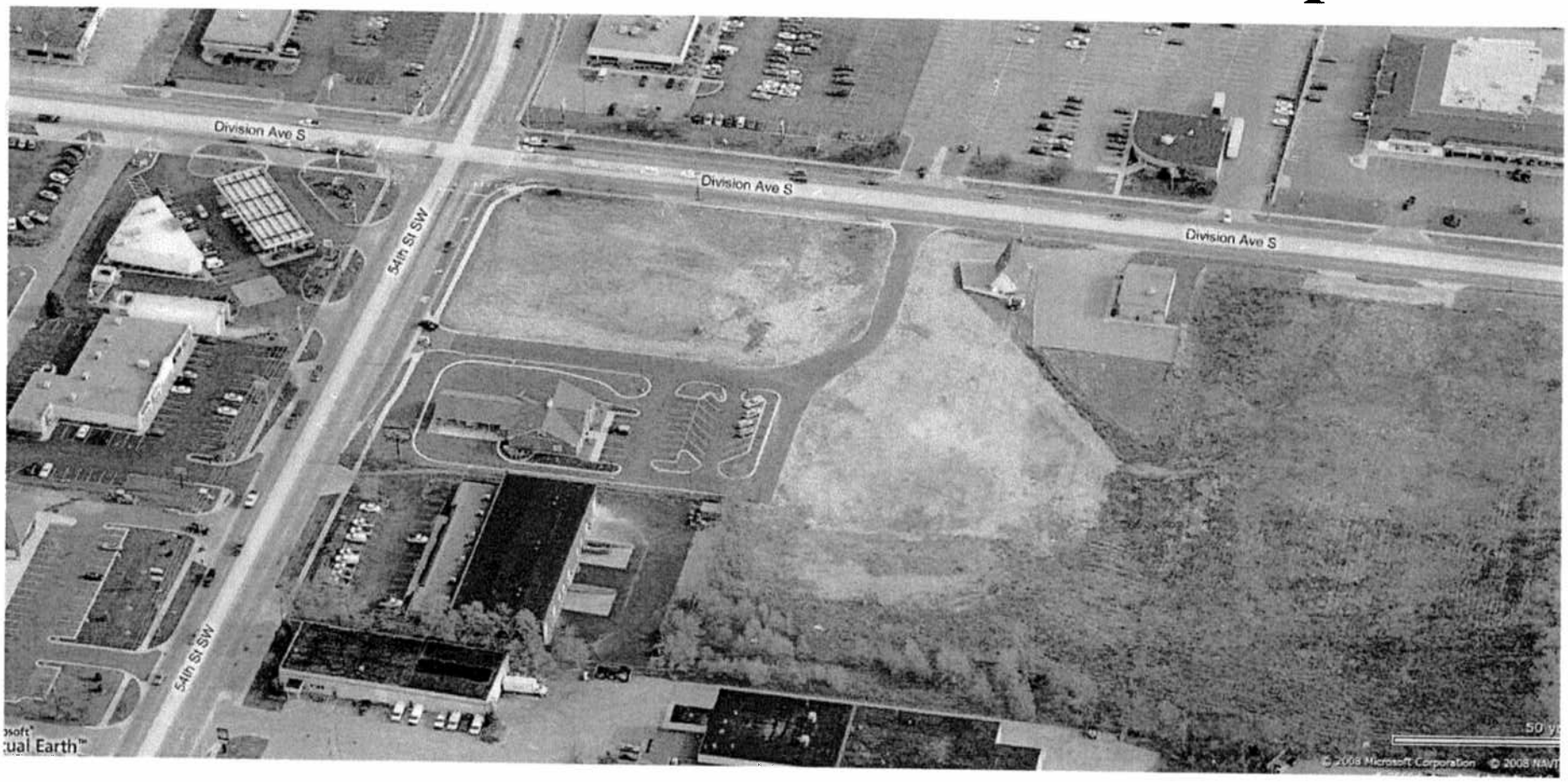
Focuses on Good Design and Development of Inviting, Friendly Places

Citizen-Driven Design Charrette





BRT Spurs Transit-Oriented Development



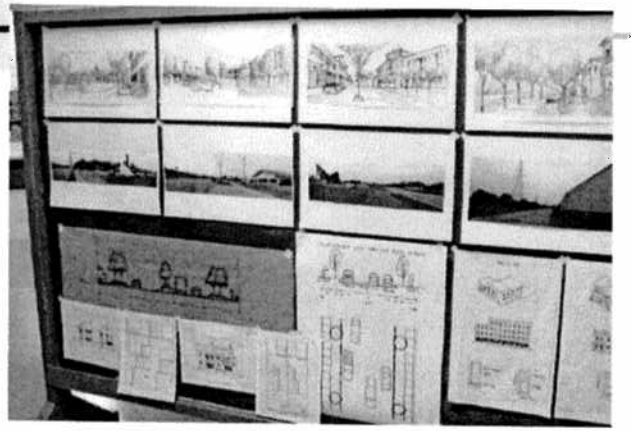
GVMC Planners conducted design "charrette" to bring together citizens from three cities and two townships to design new transit-oriented commercial center on BRT route

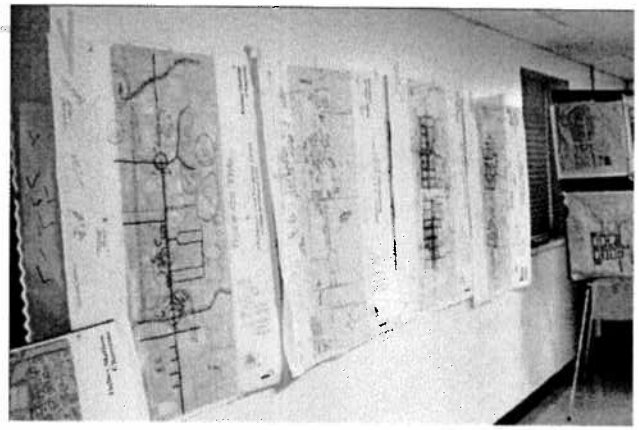
One warm, sunny Saturday morning . . . :

Public Process: Citizens at Work

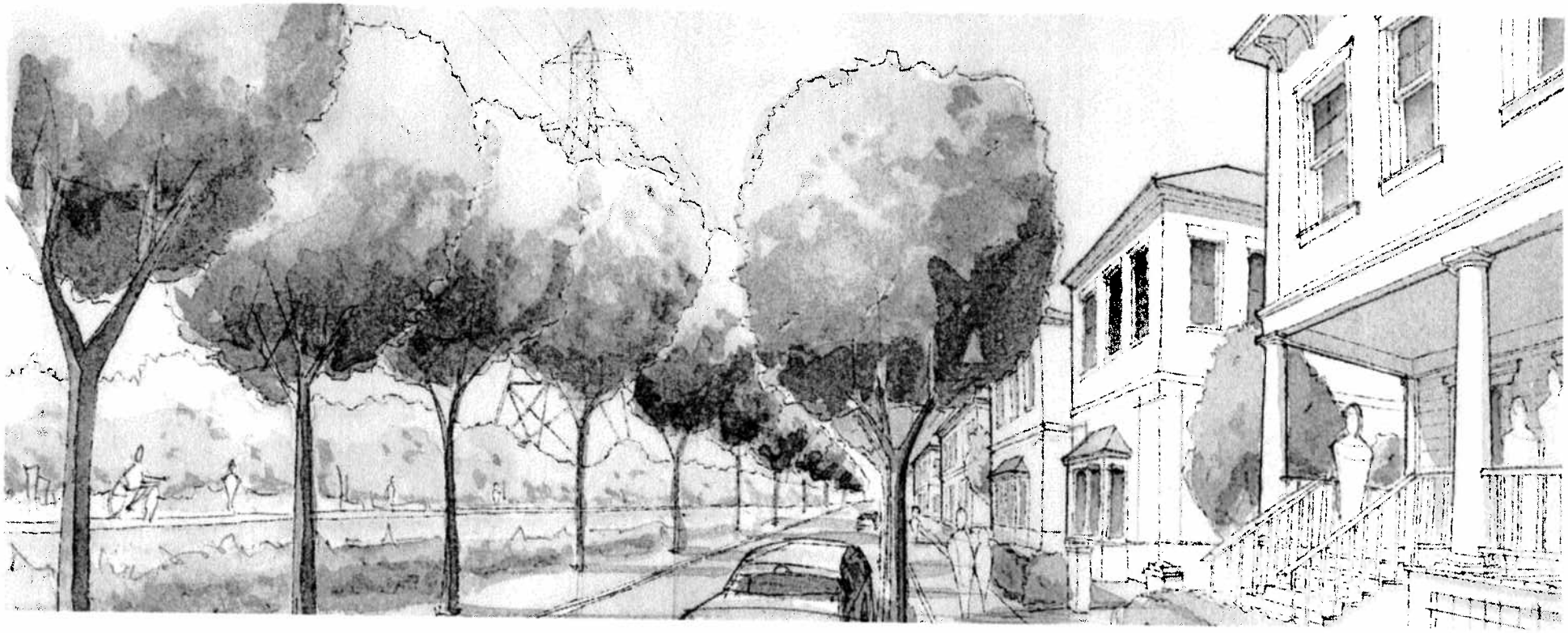
Saturday October 18, 2008

Citizen-Driven Community Planning
Diverse Input Yields Great Plan

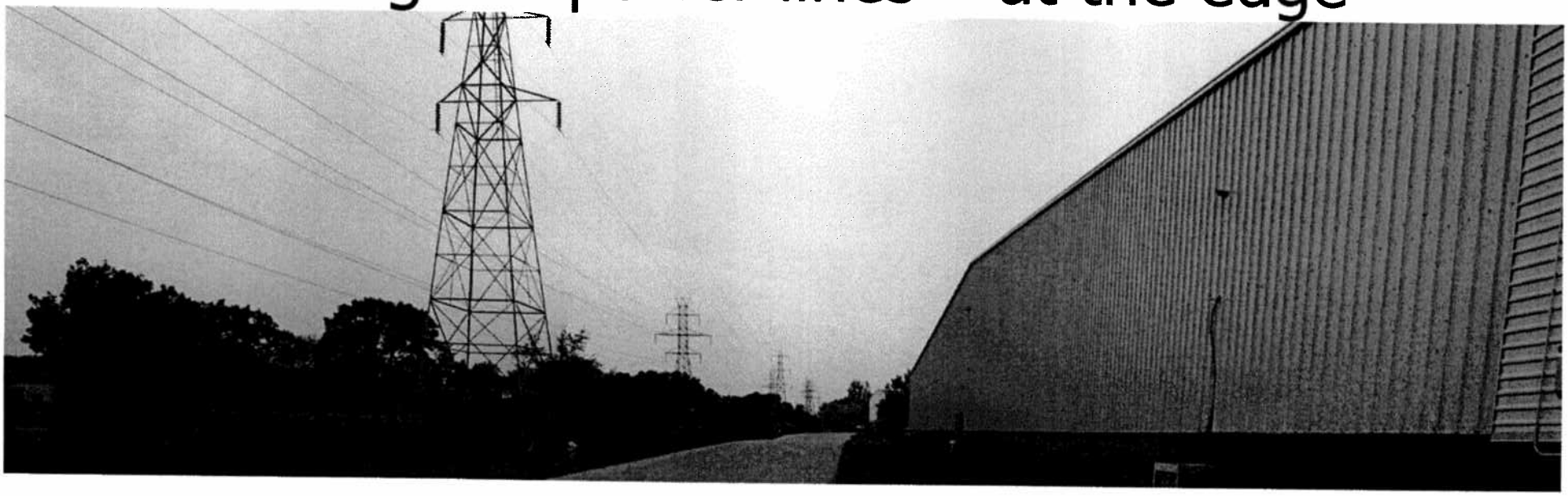


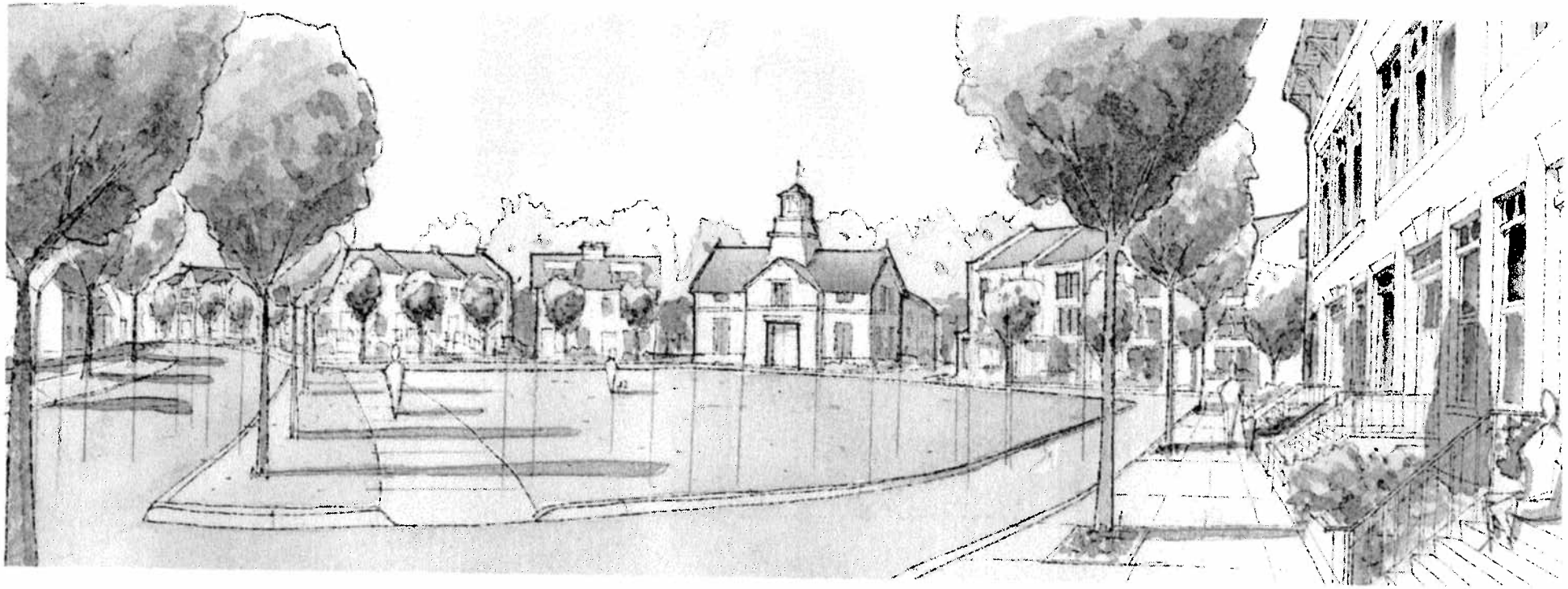


Citizens' and Developers' Vision for the Future

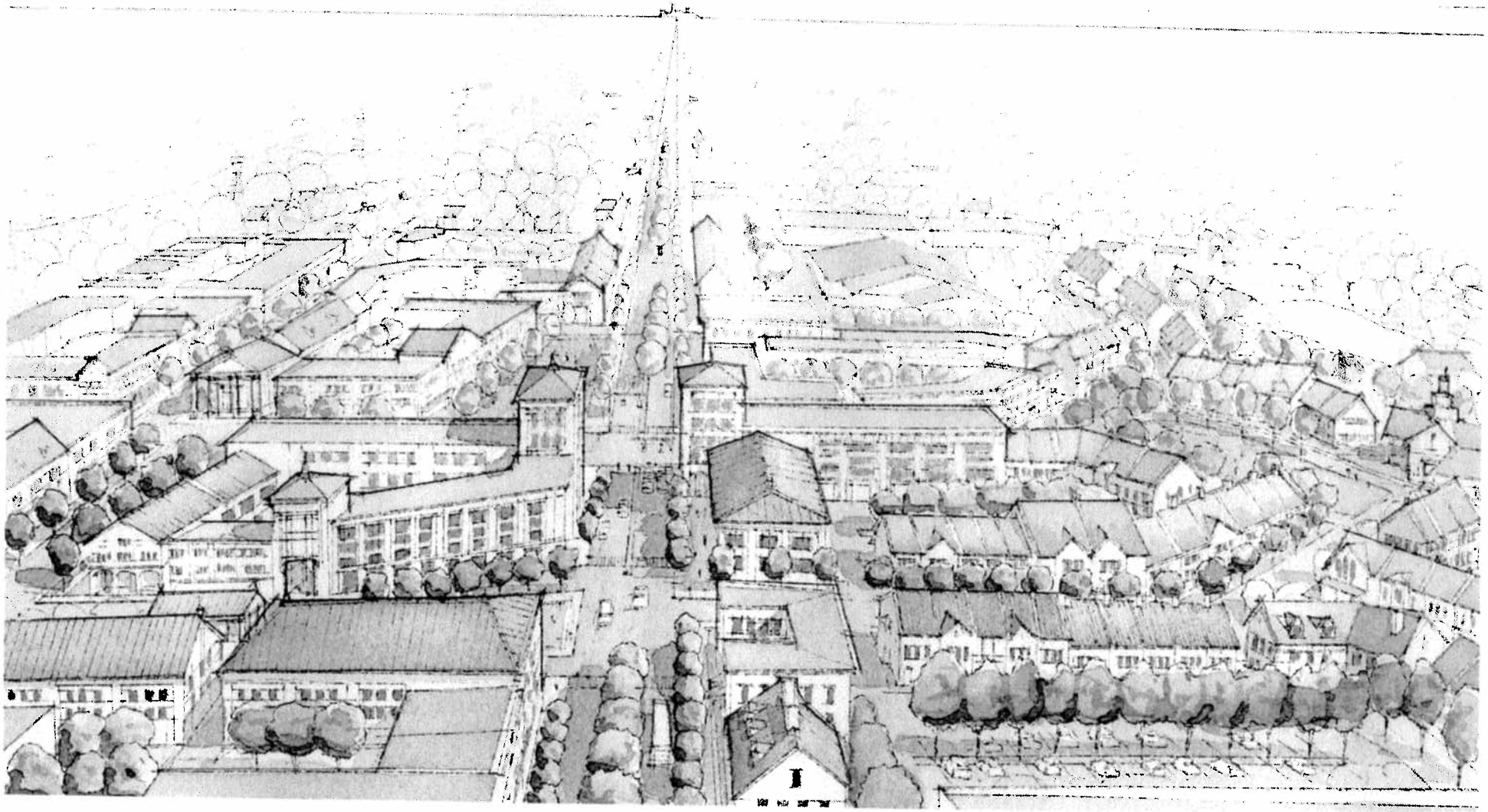


Along the power lines – at the edge





View east where 54th curves north



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Mixed Use Examples

Retail first floor – three stories of residential above

What's Next for the five community BRT project?

- **Multi-Jurisdictional Brownfields Assessment**
  - GVMC administering a $400,000 U.S. EPA grant project to identify, inventory and assess environmentally impacted properties along the 9.5 mile BRT corridor
- **Multi-Jurisdictional Land Use Planning**
  - GVMC working with regional partners on comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional land use plan for the BRT corridor