



Master Plan

— NOVEMBER 2019 —

Executive Summary

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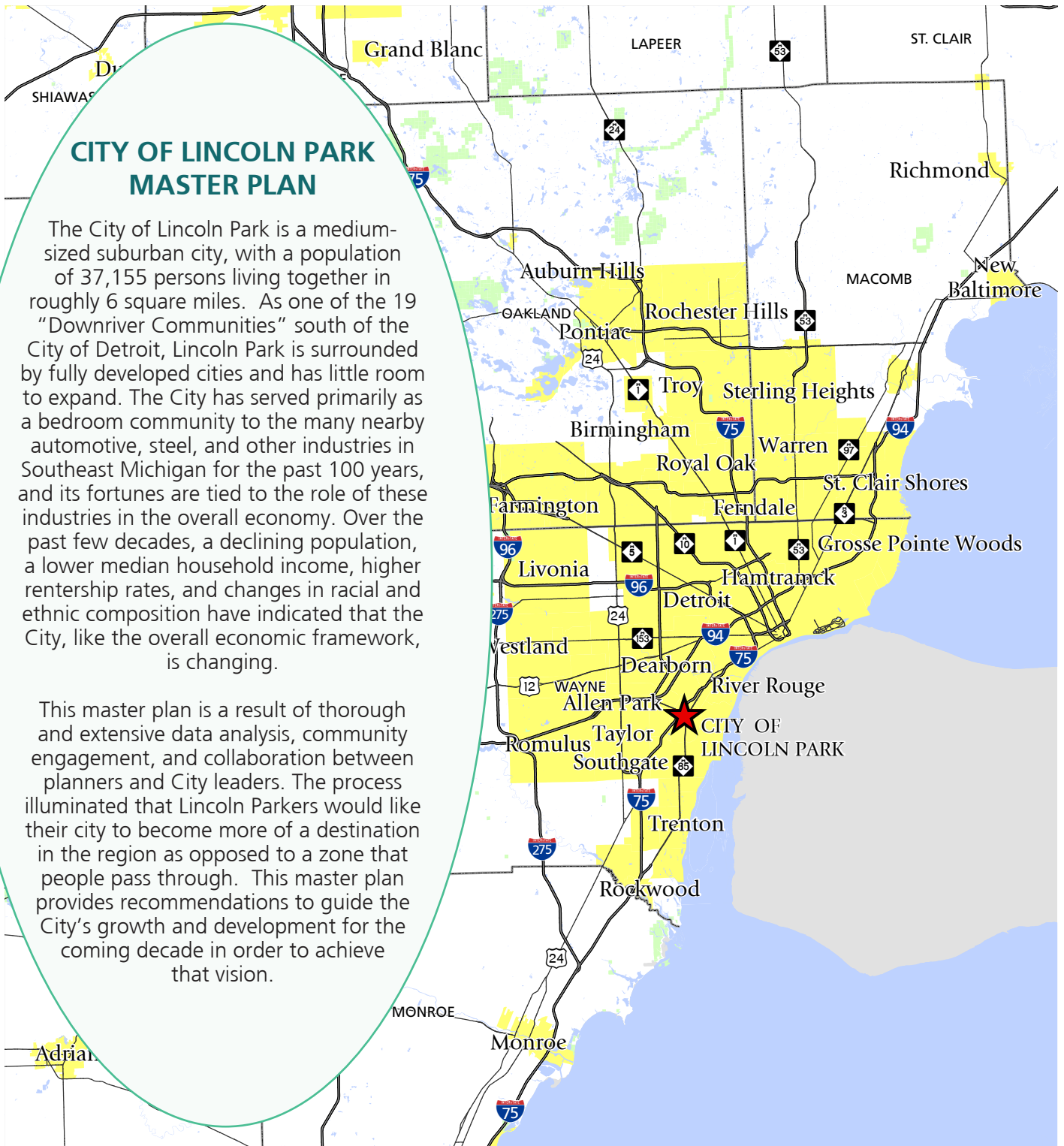
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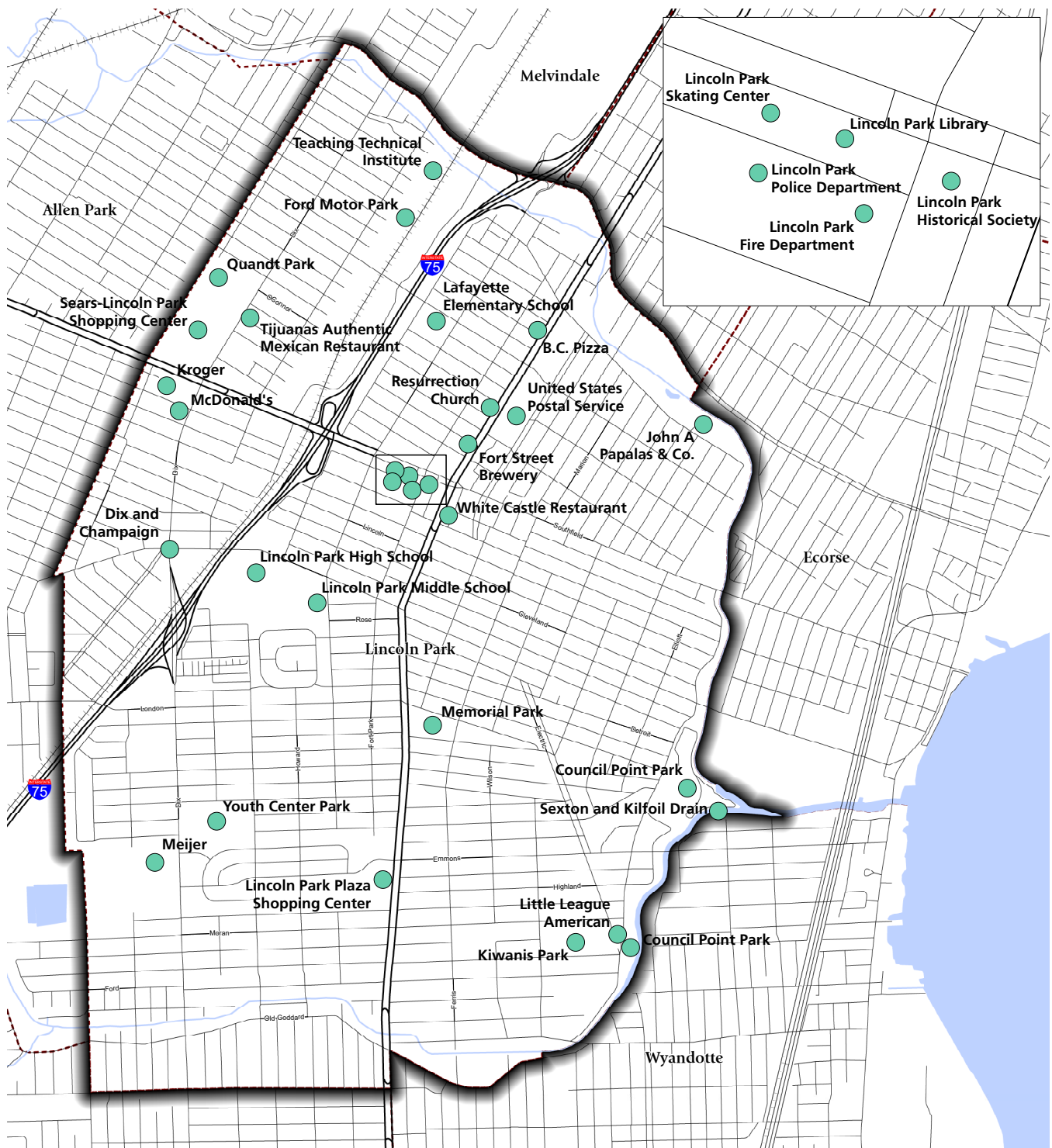
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CITY OF LINCOLN PARK MASTER PLAN

The City of Lincoln Park is a medium-sized suburban city, with a population of 37,155 persons living together in roughly 6 square miles. As one of the 19 “Downriver Communities” south of the City of Detroit, Lincoln Park is surrounded by fully developed cities and has little room to expand. The City has served primarily as a bedroom community to the many nearby automotive, steel, and other industries in Southeast Michigan for the past 100 years, and its fortunes are tied to the role of these industries in the overall economy. Over the past few decades, a declining population, a lower median household income, higher rentership rates, and changes in racial and ethnic composition have indicated that the City, like the overall economic framework, is changing.

This master plan is a result of thorough and extensive data analysis, community engagement, and collaboration between planners and City leaders. The process illuminated that Lincoln Parkers would like their city to become more of a destination in the region as opposed to a zone that people pass through. This master plan provides recommendations to guide the City’s growth and development for the coming decade in order to achieve that vision.





CITY OF LINCOLN PARK

Community Assets

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, City of Lincoln Park, Wayne County GIS

Lincoln Park Boundary

State Roads

All Roads

Railroads

Municipalities

Community Assets, Identified by Visioning Session Participants

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This master plan process employed three community engagement techniques: a community visioning session that 20 residents attended, a visioning session with students from two classrooms at Lincoln Park High School, and a community-wide online survey that garnered 201 responses. All three engagement techniques brought up the following topics:

- » Poor quality of the roads
- » A city in transition
- » Empty buildings downtown

The lack of attendance at the community visioning session points to the lack of communication between City leadership and citizens; however, the general vision that community members determined for the future Lincoln Park was a blight-free city with an array of good housing and business stock, strong public institutions, and improved connectivity to the region.

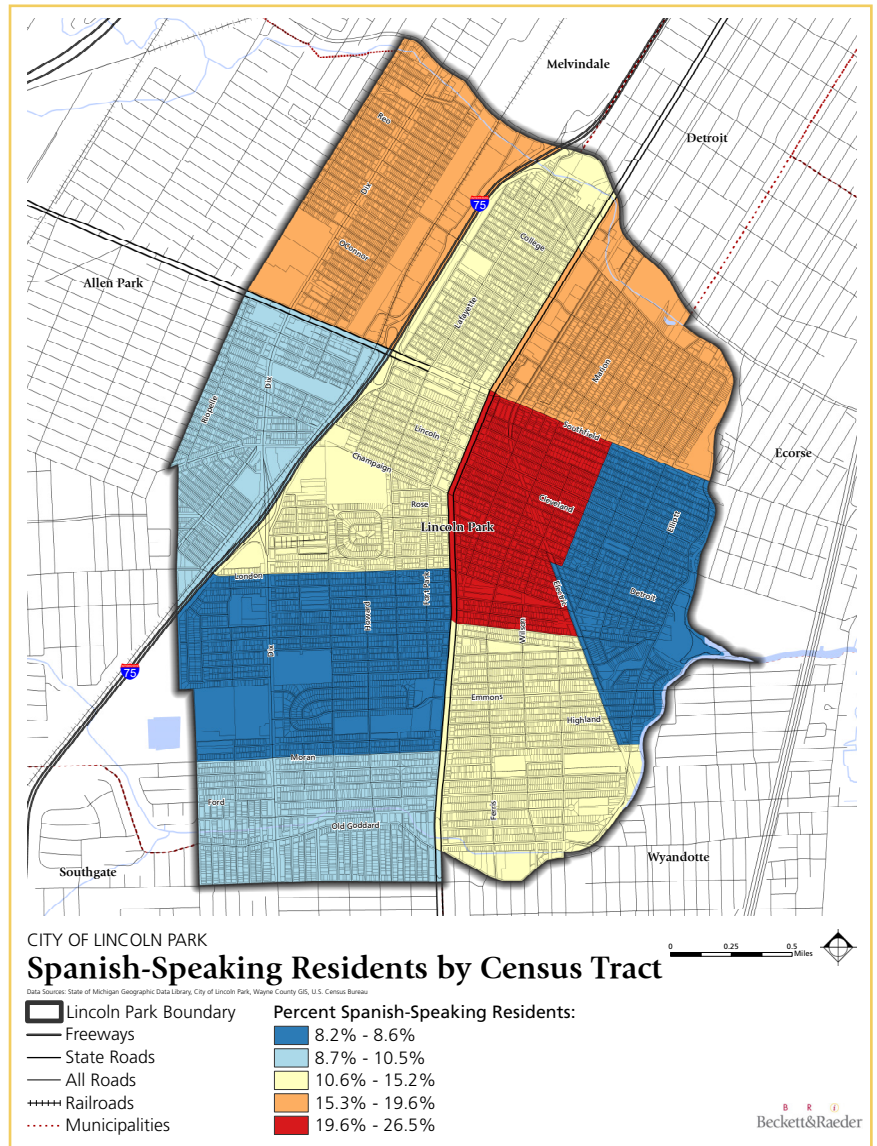
The Communication recommendations call for there to be an inclusive and honest exchange between the City and its residents. In order to do this, the City and its partners must:

- » Consistently and widely publish city news, processes, and results of major findings to the community.
- » Build stronger relationship with the citizens.

Example action items for Communication include providing weekly updates on City matters on social media platforms and developing a strong liaison with the Hispanic community and/or hiring bilingual staff.

DEMOGRAPHICS

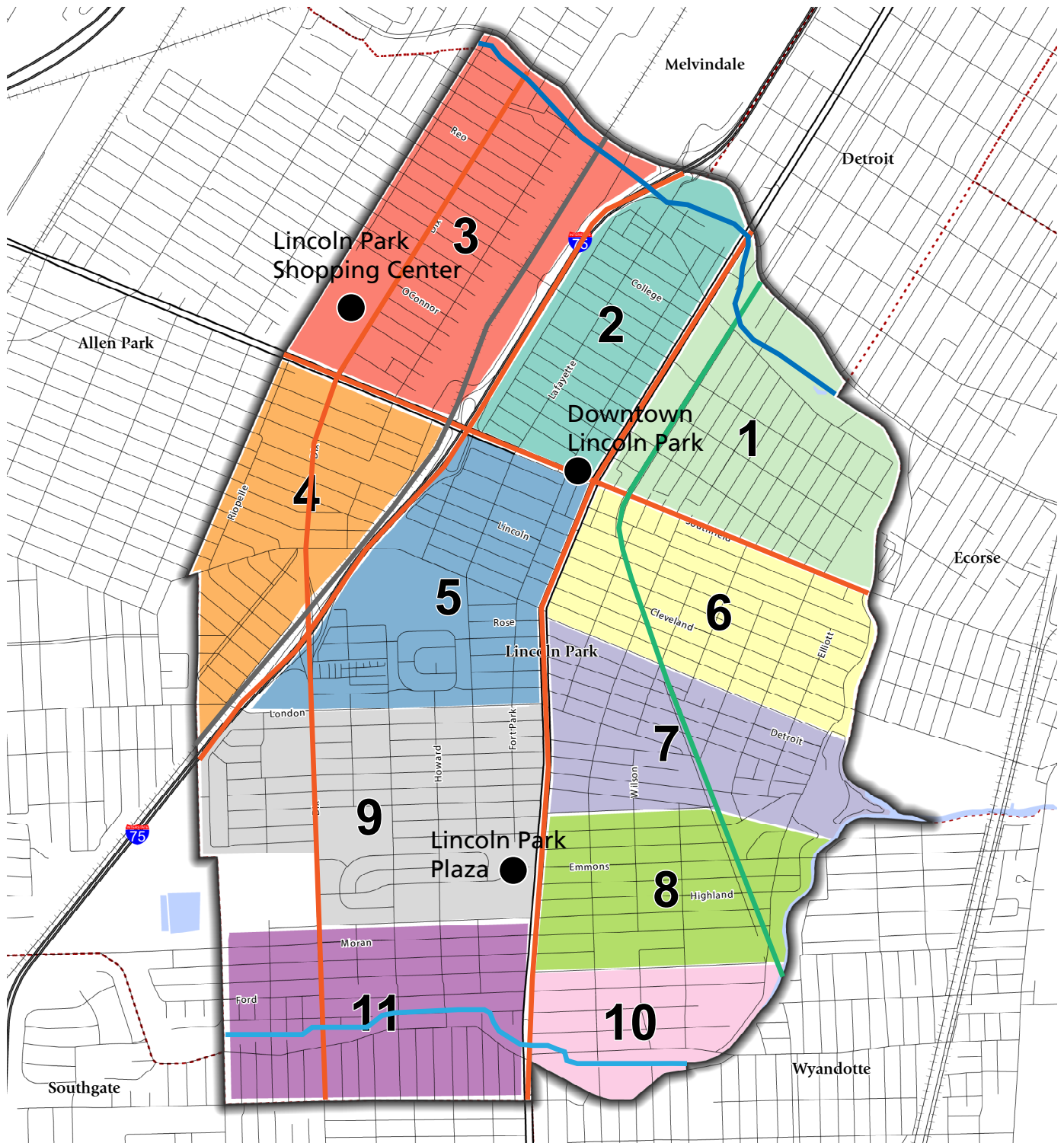
Lincoln Park's population peaked in 1970, corresponding to the rising demand of a thriving manufacturing economy in the mid-20th century. There has been a steady decline in Lincoln Park's population from the 1970s until today, and ESRI Business Analyst predicts further population loss by



2022. The City sees the largest drop in young adult age cohorts, signifying that young adults and families are leaving at faster rates than the rest of the population.

There have been significant changes in the racial and ethnic composition of the City. Between the 2000 Census and the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, the African American population has doubled to 8%, and persons of Hispanic ethnicity have more than tripled to 20%. These trends are expected to continue, and the City should expect an expanding racial and ethnic make-up. Additionally, Lincoln Park has a very low proportion of college-educated residents (only 9%). With the





CITY OF LINCOLN PARK

Neighborhoods, Centers, and Corridors

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, City of Lincoln Park, Wayne County GIS

Lincoln Park Boundary

Freeways

State Roads

All Roads

Railroads

Municipalities

Centers

Corridors:

Greenway

Railway

Waterway

Roadway



decline of manufacturing jobs that paid a livable wage to non-college-graduates, there has been a significant increase in the number of residents living in poverty (21% live in poverty now compared to only 7% in 2000).

HOUSING

In terms of residential population, Lincoln Park is a “shrinking city.” The housing and foreclosure crisis had a significant impact on the City, and the median home value has dropped by almost \$40,000. Between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses, there was also an increase in vacancies, which brings on the multiplier effects of blight.

The predominant housing format in Lincoln Park is single-family detached homes at 82% - this is a noticeably higher percentage than the City’s neighbors, the county, the state, and the country. Because of this, there is a mismatch between the current housing stock and emerging housing preferences. There is a high demand for more low and midrise apartments, small and large multiplexes, townhouses, lofts downtown, and triplexes and fourplexes. The challenge in the Lincoln Park housing market will be to integrate the new array of housing units in demand into the existing neighborhood fabric or to creatively re-purpose vacant land to build new neighborhoods.

The Housing recommendations call for the City to treat housing as a priority building block for neighborhood stabilization and a link to economic development. In order to do this, the City and its partners must:

- » Improve the quality of existing housing stock.
- » Increase the variety of housing stock that is permitted.

Example action items for Housing include using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to demolish blighted homes and permitting duplexes in the single-family zone.

CORRIDORS, CENTERS, & NEIGHBORHOODS

Lincoln Park is fully developed, so growth will have to be resourcefully focused inward as it does not have the luxury to expand. As a bedroom community, 92% of Lincoln Park hosts a residential land use. Commercial land uses are clustered along the City’s wide corridors – Southfield Road, Fort Road, and Dix Highway. There are some industrial properties within the City, though almost one-third of industrial properties are vacant.

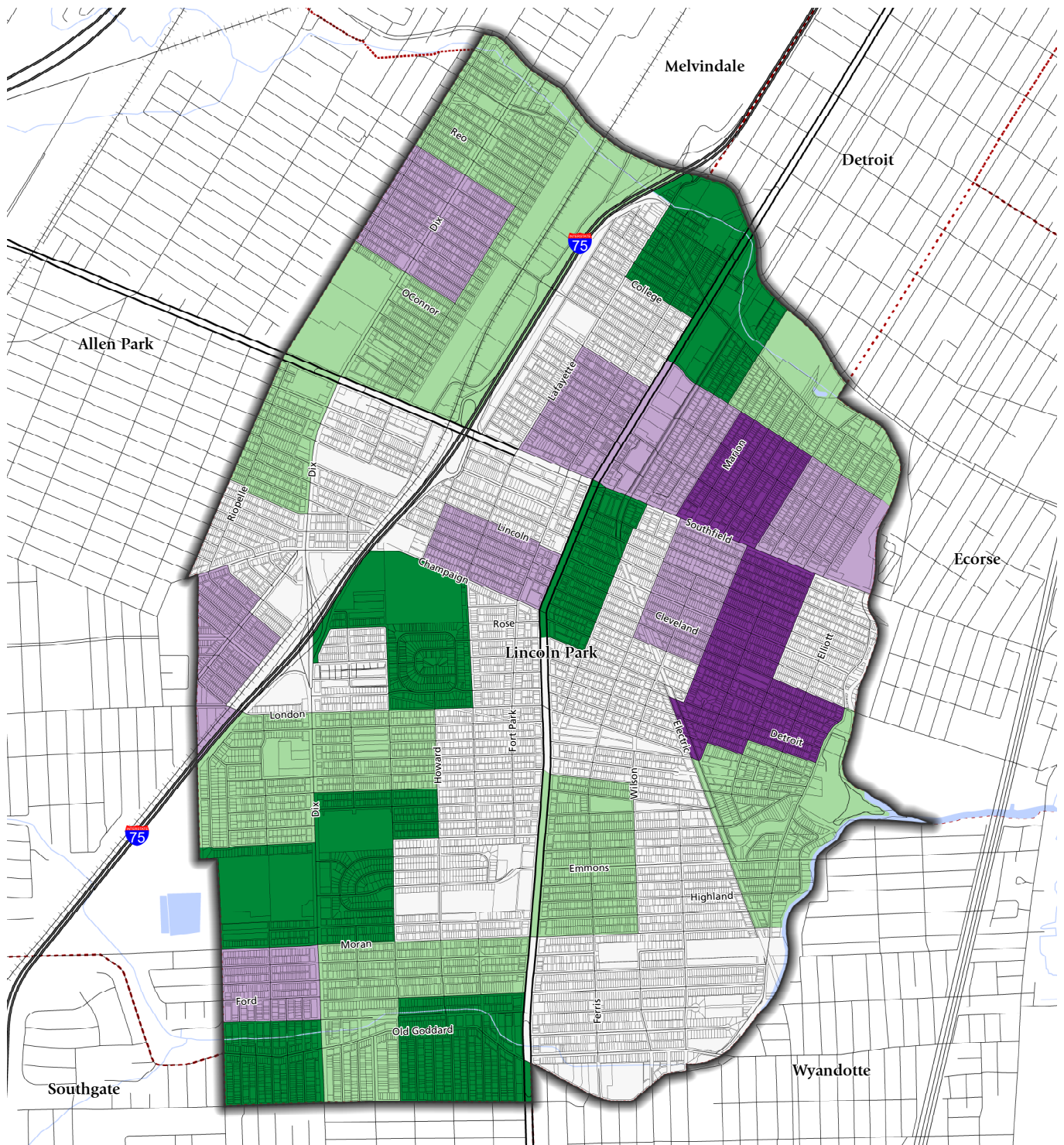
Lincoln Park is a city built to facilitate vehicular mobility. All main roads are wide corridors that are difficult to use on foot or by bicycle. Additionally, many of the main roads in Lincoln Park are under a different governing body’s jurisdiction. Thus, the deteriorating quality of the roads is not entirely within the City’s control. For instance, MDOT manages both Southfield Road and Fort Street – where the two roads intersect is Downtown Lincoln Park.

Downtown Lincoln Park is not thriving due to the width of these corridors, the high traffic volume, and the high number of surface parking lots. All these elements make the Downtown an easy place to pass through. There are numerous opportunities for improvement, however, including focusing on incorporating more elements of Complete Streets and creating more pedestrian-friendly public spaces.

The Downtown recommendations call for the City to make Lincoln Park’s downtown a place where residents want to spend more time. In order to do this, the City and its partners must:

- » Convert the Downtown from a convenience shopping location to an experiential shopping destination.
- » Improve the Downtown’s real and perceived safety concerns.
- » Experiment with low-cost event and design ideas to bring people Downtown.





CITY OF LINCOLN PARK

Tree Planting Priority Index

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, City of Lincoln Park, Wayne County GIS, i-Tree Landscape

Lincoln Park Boundary

Freeways

State Roads

All Roads

Railroads

Municipalities

Priority Ranking

0 - 20 (Adequate Tree Coverage)

21 - 40

41 - 60

61 - 80

81 - 100 (Insufficient Tree Coverage)

0 0.25 0.5 Miles



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Example action items for Downtown include removing parking minimums downtown, continuing to work with MDOT to bring the speed limit on Fort Street back down, maintaining sidewalks so they are safe and clean for all users, and hosting regular food truck events downtown.

NATURAL FEATURES

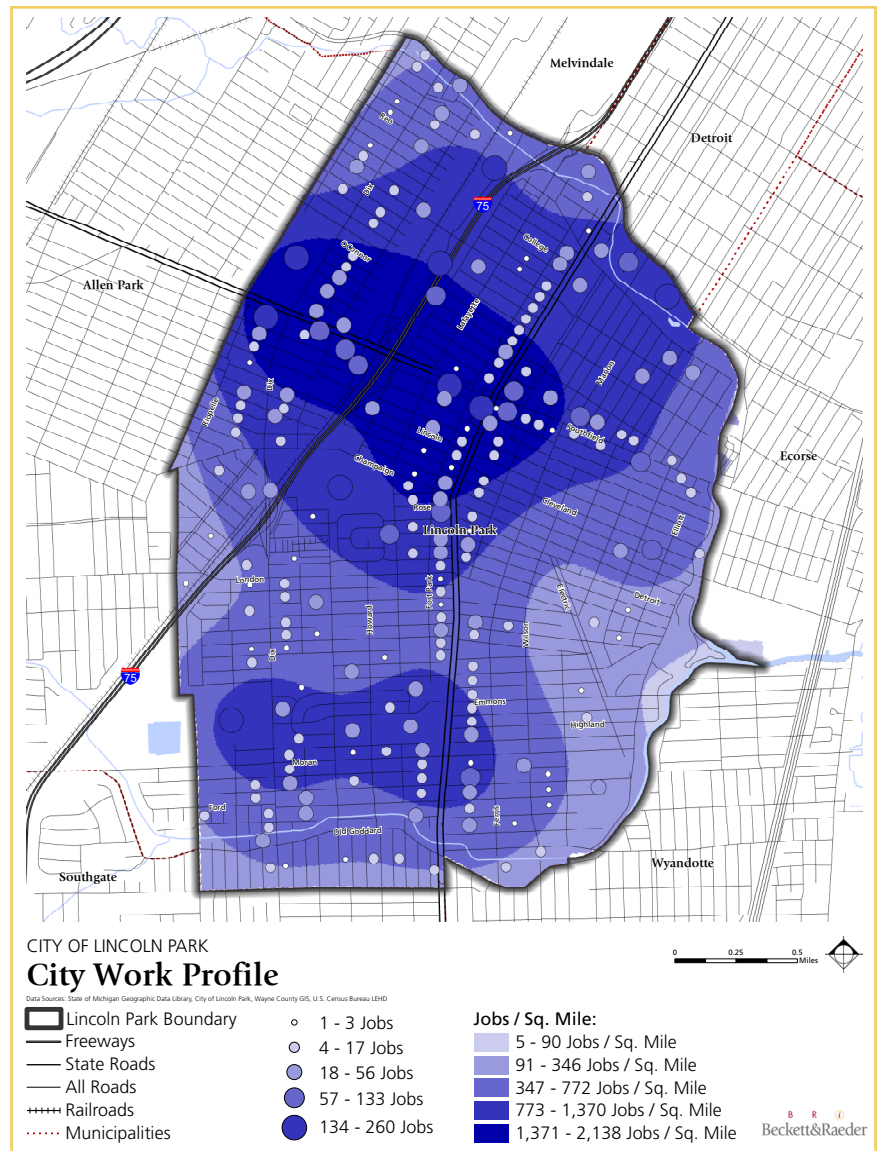
The majority of Lincoln Park is covered in impervious surfaces, though there are areas of permeability along the Ecorse River and in Lincoln Park's municipal parks. Impervious surfaces increase stormwater runoff and contribute to the urban heat island effect. Increasing the tree canopy coverage is an effective strategy in mitigating these negative effects. Increasing the City's understanding of the role that natural features can and do play in a successful urban ecosystem will be crucial to the successful future of Lincoln Park.

With the impending unpredictability of Climate Change, the City should adopt standards that exceed FEMA-established minimums in flood zones. However, most of the parcels that flooded during the May of 2019 flooding event were outside of the FEMA-designated flood zones – the greatest recent risk came not from open watercourses but from inadequate infrastructure. When the combined sewer system overflows, the City must discharge untreated sewage into the Ecorse River, and there have been many instances of raw sewage backups in basements. These issues present a great opportunity for green infrastructure improvements.

The Environment recommendations call for the City to reduce the instances of flooding and to mitigate the damage to people and property. In order to do this, the City and its partners must:

- » Reduce the amount of water that hits impervious surfaces.
- » Protect the people and properties at greatest risk of flooding.

Example action items for Environment include minimizing impervious surfaces in

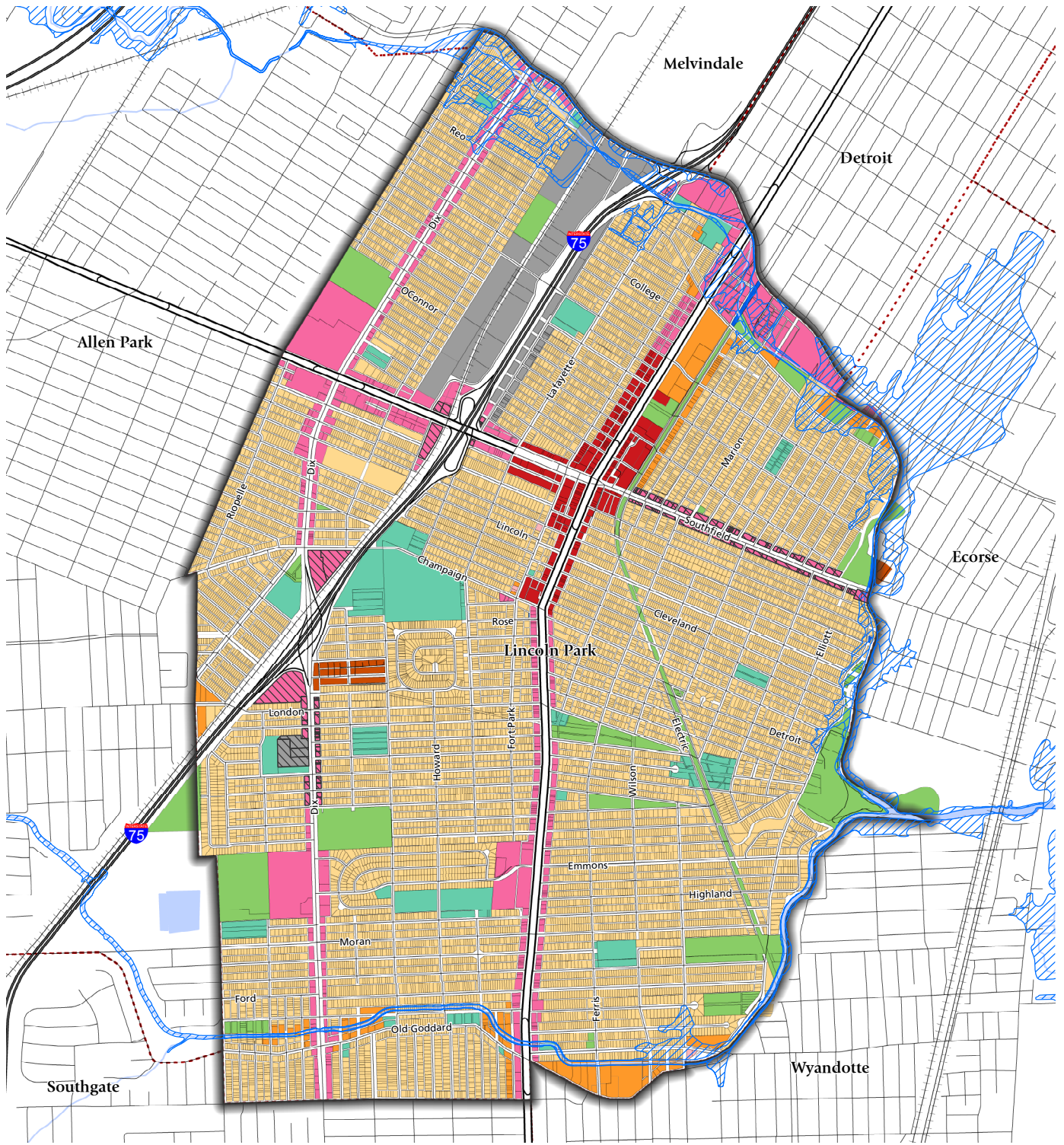


site design approvals, eliminating impervious surfaces that are directly adjacent to water bodies, and updating floodplain overlay zone standards to exceed National Flood Insurance Program minimum guidelines.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Historically, Southeast Michigan has been a manufacturing hub. The manufacturing sector has shrunk by 30% in the region, but compared to the entire U.S. economy, Southeast Michigan still has a higher concentration of manufacturing jobs. The top three sectors that Lincoln Parkers work in are: "manufacturing," "healthcare and social assistance," and "retail trade." The City has especially felt the recent collapse of





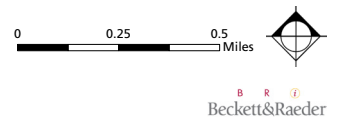
CITY OF LINCOLN PARK Future Land Use

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, City of Lincoln Park, Wayne County GIS

- Lincoln Park Boundary
- Freeways
- State Roads
- All Roads
- Flood Hazard Overlay
- Automotive Service Overlay

- Lower Density Residential
- Higher Density Residential
- Manufactured Home Park
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial

- Downtown Commercial
- Industrial
- Public
- Quasi-Public / Institutional



department stores and other in-person shopping experiences, dubbed the “Retail Apocalypse,” due to the closure of the “Lincoln Park Sears.”

As a bedroom community, it is no surprise that 96% of workers commute to other parts of the region for employment. A reduction of jobs available in Lincoln Park, as well as a shift to non-union service jobs, means that not only is it tougher to find a job within the City, it is more likely to be a low-paying, part-time service job. The three largest employers, by number of employees, in Lincoln Park are from the public sector: Lincoln Park High School, Police Department, and Middle School.

More than its neighbors, Lincoln Parkers’ basic retail needs are met within the City, which has kept the City’s net import and export ratio favorable in some key areas for economic development: food services and retail. This is another strong indicator that residents are willing to support local businesses. The stagnating wages in Lincoln Park, however, mean that residents are earning less in real dollars than they were in 1999, and the shortfall is magnified by all other rising costs – there is little disposable income to spend on entertainment or investing in the local economy. With these limitations in mind, the Downtown is a good place to start and focus placemaking efforts. Additionally, Lincoln Park has a federally designated Opportunity Zone, which permits an area along north Fort Street to receive investment from certain national funding tools.

The Business Development recommendations call for Lincoln Park to facilitate business growth in the City in a way that reconciles resident and business owner needs. In order to do this, the City and its partners must:

- » Collect and share data that is valuable to the business community.
- » Proactively identify and market sites that are ready for redevelopment.
- » Invest in both people and infrastructure that help businesses thrive.
- » Plan responsibly for Opportunity Zones.

Example action items for Business Development include conducting an annual survey of business owners to stay up to date on their changing needs, creating a matrix with important criteria for redevelopment ready sites to prioritize the top three, providing incubator space for self-employed or entrepreneurs to run small service-based businesses, and creating an economic prospectus for priority parcels in the Opportunity Zones that includes relevant data and the community’s vision for needed development.

ZONING PLAN

As the primary tool that a city may use to implement land use policies, it is essential that the City’s zoning ordinance is consistent with its master plan. As such, there are six suggested changes to the City’s Zoning Ordinance so that it may effectively implement the recommendations outlined in this master plan:

- » Adjust the “Municipal Business District” regulations so that they serve the majority of the parcels along the City’s three major corridors.
- » Make the “Neighborhood Business District” more closely match its name.
- » Include by-right regulations to permit maker spaces in the Municipal and Regional Business Districts.
- » Create an “Automotive Service Overlay” to define the areas where this use is most appropriate.
- » Prune the list of permitted uses in the “Central Business District” to only those which actively contribute to a vibrant, pedestrian-accessible downtown.
- » Develop a second category of nonconforming use within the Zoning Code which supports the continued existence of some nonconforming uses, including expansion and the right to rebuild, while prohibiting the establishment of new instances of that use in a district.





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