

4.3 Current and Future Non-residential Land Uses.

CURRENT NON-RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Despite its small town scale, Charlevoix has five distinct commercial development districts, segments or nodes, distinguished from one another by their predominant use and development character.

HIGHWAY/REGIONAL COMMERCIAL (MARION CENTER ROAD TO CARPENTER STREET)

The intersection of US-31 and M-66 near the Charlevoix Airport has a dominant regional/highway orientation. Large strip development, national restaurant chains and convenience stores, gas stations, banks, and other auto-oriented uses provide goods and services to tourists and residents, as well as the surrounding townships. Buildings are primarily single story and set back 75 feet or more from the roadway. Parking dominates the remainder of the lot and there are limited, if any, connections between adjacent developments.

MIXED LOCAL SERVICE COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL

The character of development along US-31 south of downtown reflects an area in transition, introducing local service commercial into the once primarily residential corridor. Historically, this roadway was lined with early 20th century homes, much like those found in abutting neighborhoods. While many of these homes still exist, some have been converted to nonresidential uses (offices or other businesses). Over time non-residential infill development has occurred where homes were removed or vacant land between residences became available.

Nonresidential uses in the corridor include a variety of offices, local retail, and a church and school. Most of this development has

mimicked the setbacks and pattern of residential development along the corridor reasonably well. However, some infill development is significantly out of character. Parking lots and landscaping between the roadway and buildings are minimal. Strip commercial architecture interrupts the rhythm of the corridor.

DOWNTOWN CHARLEVOIX (FROM HURLBUT AVENUE TO THE PINE RIVER CHANNEL)

Downtown Charlevoix is the retail, cultural, and historic heart of the region. Most of downtown consists of traditional one to three story attached structures built to the sidewalk's edge. The exception is Oleson's Plaza, which is a strip-style development. Bridge and East Park afford public access to Round Lake and the marina. Much of the business community (mainly restaurants and retailers) caters to the Charlevoix's explosive influx of summer tourists. However, a variety of offices and personal service establishments are oriented mainly to local residents.

HOSPITALITY COMMERCIAL (PINE RIVER CHANNEL TO DIXON AVENUE)

While downtown Charlevoix extends a short distance across the Pine River Channel, the character north of the channel is decidedly different from the downtown core. Hospitality related uses including hotels, bed and breakfasts, and restaurants, rather than retail and office uses, lend a residential character to the corridor and blend with homes in surrounding neighborhoods. This transitional area features buildings set close to the roadway and includes elements of residential character including landscaped front yards, street trees, and pitched roofs.

**MIXED LOCAL SERVICE COMMERCIAL/LIGHT INDUSTRIAL RESIDENTIAL
(FAIRWAY DRIVE TO MARTIN ROAD)**

The US 31 corridor between Mercer Road and Martin Road is a mix of rural residential with scattered commercial and light industrial development. The C&O Club, Charlevoix Industrial Park, and Charlevoix Golf Club flank the corridor. Most nonresidential buildings are set 100 feet or more from the roadway and exhibit varied and not entirely harmonious construction styles. While most of this corridor is located in Charlevoix Township, the development pattern influences the perceived character of the City.

FUTURE NON-RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

Given the existing development pattern, high traffic volumes, excellent visibility, and proximity to the airport, the area surrounding the intersection of US 31 and M 66 is well suited for intense Regional Commercial, including highway commercial or auto-oriented uses. The following elements should be considered for such development:

- This area is a major gateway into the community. Site design and building standards should be followed, and continually updated to ensure future development reflects an appropriate image for Charlevoix. Residents and visitors should be greeted with a first impression of a distinct, attractive, quality-conscious community, different from the monotonous repetition of every other place. This can be accomplished through zoning requirements and by introducing gateway elements, such as “welcome” and wayfinding signs, special landscape treatments, public art, etc.
- Since the continued development and promotion of downtown Charlevoix is

identified as a priority, uses allowed along US 31 near M 66 should be of a different type and scale than those found downtown. The two commercial areas should be distinct from one another to avoid duplication and undue competition. Both districts can thrive, if they retain their individual focus.

- The City should coordinate future land use plans with Charlevoix Township to prevent sprawl along US 31 and M 66 and to develop a unified character across community borders. Redevelopment of existing sites over new “greenfield development” should be encouraged.
- Access management requirements should be established through the zoning ordinance (possibly as an overlay district). Service or frontage roads, parking lot connections, shared driveways, and other techniques will ensure safe, convenient, and coordinated access to businesses, while protecting the traffic-carrying capacity of US 31 and M 66 and minimizing conflicts.

MIXED USE

This style of development promotes blending businesses and dwellings within the same site, or building. Low-intensity businesses and institutions that serve nearby neighborhoods are appropriate, such as offices, small convenience stores, and personal service establishments.

Three areas of the City that currently exhibit a variety of uses should retain that mixed use character. These locations are: 1) Along Bridge Street from Carpenter Avenue to Hurlbut Avenue; 2) north of downtown on US 31 from the Channel to Dixon Avenue, and 3) from the south shore of Round Lake to Belvedere Avenue. These mixed use corridors should retain their current character of relatively low intensity office, condominium, single family and service uses.

Future nonresidential development along the corridors should reflect a residential character to blend with Charlevoix's well-established neighborhoods, east and west of US 31. Site development and building design elements of a high-quality residential atmosphere – pitched roofs, parking to the rear or side of the structure, well-maintained front yards and streetscape, entrances and windows facing the public street, and pedestrian amenities – should be incorporated into future development.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Downtown should retain its position as the activity hub, not only for the City but the surrounding area. Rather than expanding its geography, attention should instead focus on continued infill development, redevelopment, and revitalization projects, streetscape and landscaping enhancements, and continued support for building façade improvements.

The ultimate mixed use district, downtown should contain a mix of retail, service, office, residential, public, and entertainment uses, as well as special uses that are found to create pedestrian traffic and promote a vibrant community environment. Retail, services and entertainment uses should be located at street level to enhance their visibility and pedestrian access. Other uses such as offices and residential, while important to the health of the business district, should be confined to upper floors of downtown buildings.

Upper level residential uses, in particular, are important to add energy and density to the downtown. While downtown Charlevoix is surrounded by residential neighborhoods, within easy walking distance of the business district, the addition of loft apart-

ments will inject a needed residential option to further support the vitality of the central core.



Example of a mixed use building downtown with condos over retail space.

Attention to pattern and form in the downtown is as important as compatibility of use. New development should complement the established character. A consistent edge should be maintained along the street frontage with buildings built to the sidewalk. Parking should be located to the rear of buildings, ideally in central locations to serve entire blocks or sectors. Where parking is visible to the street, an attractive edge of landscaping or a low wall should be provided.

Building façades should be divided into smaller bays to maintain a rhythm of storefront patterns along the street to retain the

pedestrian scale. A consistent height, preferably two to three stories, should be maintained and reflected in appropriate development regulations.

Where feasible, rear access to businesses should be considered from central parking lots, often located behind downtown buildings. However, such access is not always possible due to building layout, location of storage rooms or because of security concerns. In any case, primary access should remain at the front to promote interaction among businesses and promote the street level activity that is essential to the health of the downtown.

The 2007 Downtown Blueprint and 2015 Market Study provide guidance and strategies for the future of downtown Charlevoix. The City should continue to work with the Downtown Development Authority to facilitate the recommendations and actions of the Blueprint as well as the preferred streetscape improvement alternatives for downtown area roadways.

EMPLOYMENT AREAS

Two areas of Charlevoix are natural attractors for employment opportunities; 1) the area surrounding the Charlevoix Municipal Airport, and 2) the Norman Ance Industrial Park located on Ance Road and Taylor Road north of US-31. The City should work with the township toward a mutually beneficial plan for standardized zoning and expansion of the industrial park.

A growing trend in business park development is to better integrate employment areas with the rest of the community. Certain enhancements should be explored, such as pedestrian connectivity with nearby restaurants, businesses and neighborhoods; improved streetscapes and landscape stand-

ards. Design standards addressing building materials and facades should also be considered.

Greater flexibility should also be considered for the future expansion of the City's employment districts. A wider variety of potential uses such as office, research and development, laboratories, light industrial/manufacturing, and service commercial can act to stimulate development. Supporting green efforts such as on-site alternative energy generation, coordinated recycling, innovative stormwater management practices, and LEED building certification and construction practices could attract new users to the industrial park. High speed internet and fiber optic systems being installed throughout the industrial park could also spur economic development in the form of software companies, E-commerce (internet based sales), and even home based businesses.

CHARLEVOIX AREA SCHOOLS

Recently, the Charlevoix Public Schools system has had to undergo changes related to falling attendance numbers. Charlevoix Middle School was closed and students consolidated in the elementary and high schools. As of the adoption of the plan, the school system has set up a committee to investigate further facility actions, including the possibility of relocation, as now the elementary school is in need of extensive repairs. City officials or committee members should seek to be involved in this process as the future use of the large properties owned by the school system will almost certainly have an important impact on the development of Charlevoix.



The Norman Ance Industrial Park on the north side of Charlevoix.

SCENIC RESERVE

Scenic Reserve properties include both public and private lands that have high scenic, recreational and aesthetic value. These properties are typically along the water and help define the character of Charlevoix. Private property owners who actually own the land and those that live in the immediate vicinity are concerned about future development of these properties. The general public also has a keen interest in future development of these properties because of their scenic and environmental value.

Publicly owned examples of Scenic Reserve properties include Depot, Ferry and Michigan Beach Parks, East Park, and City owned land along the north side of the Pine River Channel and the DNR Fisheries Station. Privately owned examples of scenic reserve properties include Old Island owned by the

Chicago Club, and the beach area on the east side of Ferry owned by the Belvedere Club.

Future zoning considerations should allow for continued recreational facilities and associated development. Limited development should occur in these areas paying special attention to structure heights, setbacks, stormwater management, and other environmental considerations.

PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL FACILITIES

Uses in the Public and Institutional Facilities designation are limited to government and quasi-government facilities such as schools, libraries, and government centers. Examples include the County Building, City Hall, the Electric Department, Water Treatment Plant, the Commission on Aging Building, and the former Charlevoix Middle School building.