



CITY OF ALBION PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

7:00 P.M.

AGENDA

- I. Call To Order (Reminder: turn off cell phones)
- II. Roll Call of the Commission
- III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – August 16, 2016
- IV. Correspondence
- V. Presentation –Historic Districts, Amanda Reintjes
- VI. Update on Comprehensive Plan Input
 1. Monday, November 28, 2016 at 7 p.m.-Public Hearing and Adoption of Resolution by Planning Commission to recommend to City Council
- VII. Update on Redevelopment Ready Community
- VIII. Order of Business
 - A. Excuse Absent Commissioners
- IX. Citizen Comments (Persons addressing the Planning Commission shall limit their comments to no more than 5 minutes. Proper decorum is required.)
- X. Adjournment

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS

- 1) The Planning Commission Chair opens the hearing
- 2) Chair summarized the process
- 3) Staff presents report on applicant's request
- 4) Chair reads any correspondence into the record
- 5) Public speaking portion of hearing
 - Individuals in support
 - Opposition speakers
 - Questions & rebuttal (directed through the Chair)
 - Public speaking portion of hearing closed
- 6) Finding of facts
- 7) Board begins deliberations
- 8) Motion is made
- 9) Roll call vote taken

Planning Commission
August 16, 2016

I. Call To Order

The August 16, 2016 Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Strander and a quorum declared.

II. Roll Call of the Commission

T Pitt, G Brown, G Strander, G Strand, J Domingo, L Zuck, W. Dick

Staff Present: S Mitchell, City Manager, J Domingo, City Clerk and J Tracy,
Director Building, Planning & Code Enforcement

Absent: S Brown and S Kipp

III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

G Strander asked for the following changes to the June 28, 2016 minutes:

G Strander was absent at the June 28, 2016 Planning Commission meeting.

J Domingo moved, T Pitt supported, CARRIED, to approve the June 28, 2016 Planning Commission minutes with the above correction. (Voice Vote)

IV. Correspondence – None

V. Presentation of Preliminary Information/Findings for the 5 Year Comprehensive Master Plan-Phase 1

Rosalyn Jones presented the following highlights of the Comprehensive Master Plan-Phase I for the Planning Commission as follows:

- Public input is critical to the plan.
- The Albion Community Foundation administered a survey in which 242 resident's participated. The two major concerns were roads and housing.
- Ms. Jones acknowledged the AmeriCorps Vista grant written by Albion College and allows for eleven VISTA members to work with the College and City in 2016-2017 to boost economic development, education and health initiatives.
- The population growth has declined
- We have an aging population and have been unable to attract the younger generation
- Due to automation, decentralization and relocation of manufacturing operations and jobs, unskilled workers and youth have been the hardest hit by the economic

restructuring that has taken place in the American economy. As of 2015, 42% of Albion's residents over the age of 16 were not currently in the work force. People "not currently in the labor force" include stay-at home parents, who have not held and are not looking for jobs, the elderly, and the chronically sick and disabled. In addition, this count includes many "prime age workers" who are discouraged and disillusioned and have deinvested and given up trying to find a job.

- The Comprehensive Plan update is based on an understanding that the quality of housing impacts the attractiveness of the city, which impacts the level of artistic and cultural activity, which impacts the number of entertainment options, which impacts the attractiveness to talented and skilled workers, which impacts the level of economic activity.
- Redevelopment of housing in Albion is important not only to its existing residents, but also in the talent attraction efforts of businesses located within the local area and those throughout the region. The existing workforce is very mobile. People who are in the labor market are willing to commute to neighboring areas for employment. For example: in 2012, there were nearly 50,000 jobs in Calhoun county; however, of the 47,330 employed residents fewer than 27,000 of them worked within the county.
- Revitalizing the downtown is key to Albion's future. So the following questions are raised: where are the opportunities for downtown revitalization, what is the cultural and recreation niche for Albion and how do we reach our existing and target customers.
- There is an opportunity to enhance major gateways and corridors by developing strong and consistent visual themes along the major corridors and gateways and stabilizing them.
- Improve Albion's transportation network to accommodate and promote various modes, including walking, biking, automobiles, passenger rail and public transportation.
- Albion's River Trail is an important community asset and can draw people into the downtown.
- The Comprehensive Plan needs to be an actionable plan and to be able to measure the objectives.

Comments were received from Commissioners G Strander, G Strand, W Dick and G Brown.

VI. Public Comments-Five (5) year (2017-2021) Comprehensive Plan-Phase 1

Comments were received from Dr. Raymond Washington who asked if housing was the number one priority and also where the statistics on the comprehensive plan were from.

Ms. Jones stated the visions are not prioritized at this time but that the items are actionable and allows them to hit the ground running. She stated the statistics were largely from Census data and the Target Market Analysis. Ms. Jones also

stated she was willing to work with Dr. Washington on any changes he feels should be made to the Plan before going to Council.

Additional comments were received from Commissioners G Strander, G Brown and G Strand and City Manager Mitchell.

VII. Order of Business

A. Consideration/Approval of Recommendation of 5 year (2017-2021) Comprehensive Plan-Phase 1

Comments were received from Commissioner G Strander and City Manager Mitchell.

G Strand moved, T Pitt supported, CARRIED, to approve current comprehensive plan that may change due to additional input, comments and edits.

(Voice Vote)

B. Excuse Absent Commissioners

W Dick moved, T Pitt supported, CARRIED, to excuse Commissioners Brown and Kipp.

(Voice Vote)

VIII. Citizen Comments

Comments were received from Dr. Raymond Washington, Commissioners G Strander and T Pitt and Rosalyn Jones.

IX. Adjournment

G Brown moved, T Pitt supported, CARRIED, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Recorded By: Jill Domingo, City Clerk

Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries
Michigan Historical Center
State Historic Preservation Office

**Criteria for Evaluating Resources for
Inclusion in Local Historic Districts**

Legal Authority

Section 3(1) of Michigan's *Local Historic Districts Act*, 1970 PA 169 (MCL 399.203) states that counties, cities, villages and townships may, by ordinance, establish one or more local historic districts. The section further states that before a district is created, the legislative body of the local unit of government must appoint a historic district study committee. The section says that in evaluating the significance of historic resources to be included in districts, a committee shall:

"be guided by the selection criteria for evaluation issued by the United States secretary of the interior for inclusion of resources in the national register of historic places, as set forth in 36 C.F.R. part 60, and criteria established or approved by the department (of history, arts, and libraries), if any."

Applicable Definitions

The United States Secretary of the Interior promulgated a definition of the word "district" at 36 C.F.R. § 60.3, as follows:

"A district is a geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district may also comprise individual elements separated geographically but linked by association or history."

Section 1a(i) of the *Local Historic Districts Act* (MCL 399.201a) indicates that the term "historic district" means:

“an area, or group of areas not necessarily having contiguous boundaries, that contains 1 resource or a group of resources that are related by history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.”

Criteria for Historic District Boundary Determinations

The criteria that a historic district study committee must apply when determining the historic significance of historic resources and the boundaries of historic districts are the criteria and considerations developed by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior for the creation of historic districts, as set forth in *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria* (pp. 5-6), *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* (pp. 56-57), and *National Register Bulletin 21: Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties* (p. 2) [see Appendix].

Criteria for Establishing Single Resource Districts

The criteria that a historic district study committee must apply when establishing a single resource district are those set forth in the preceding paragraph, plus the criteria set forth below.

A single resource historic district in Michigan is one in which the single resource individually meets the criteria for eligibility established by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places on its own merit for:

Criterion A: Association with a significant person

Criterion B: Association with a significant event or pattern of history

Criterion C: Design and construction

Criterion D: Information potential

In other words, boundary selection is based on the nature of the resource's significance, integrity, and physical setting. However, a district is seldom defined by the limits of current parcels of ownership, management, or planning boundaries. The boundaries must be based upon a shared relationship among the properties constituting the district.

Examples of single resource historic districts would be: a county courthouse; a fire station; an armory; an isolated, intact farmstead; a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright; the summer cottage of Ernest Hemmingway; or the first automobile plant where Henry Ford utilized mass production techniques.

Accordingly, a single resource historic district must be distinguishable from the surrounding resources in the immediate vicinity by virtue of geography, historic significance, or integrity.

Therefore, a single resource historic district **cannot**:

- share its significance of historic development or association with surrounding resources. If the resource does share those characteristics with surrounding resources, then the single resource district cannot stand alone and must be included as part of a larger district. Examples of inappropriate and thus impermissible single resource districts include one bungalow in the middle of a neighborhood of bungalows, or one Queen Anne or Italianate house in a larger neighborhood of Victorian style homes.
- be a commercial building, separated from a larger commercial district by demolition or new infill, if the building does not meet the National Register criteria on its own merit.
- be one contributing resource in a National Register of Historic Places designated district, if the resource does not individually meet the criteria for inclusion in the National Register.
- be based solely on property ownership.
- be based solely on the consent of property owners.

Single resource historic districts that the Michigan Historical Center determines to be inappropriately designated will not qualify for the state historic preservation tax credit.

Boundary Description

Each historic district study committee must issue reports. The historic district study committee report must include a written boundary description that is a legal description. Examples include: a legal parcel number; block and lot number; metes

and bounds; or the dimensions of a parcel of land, reckoning from a landmark, such as a natural or cultural feature.

Boundary Justification

A historic district study committee report must also include a boundary justification statement. The boundary justification statement shall be a brief and concise explanation of the reasons for selecting the proposed historic district boundaries. Each directional boundary shall be individually addressed in the boundary justification statement. A boundary's justification must be based on physical geography, historic significance, or physical integrity.

Photographic Documentation for Single Resource Districts

Streetscape photographs showing the resources located on both sides of the block on which a single resource district is being designated must be included with the historic district study committee report.

Additional Information and Questions

Requests for additional information, as well as questions about the criteria listed here, may directed to:

Ms. Amy Arnold
Preservation Planner
State Historic Preservation Office
Michigan Historical Center
Department of History, Arts and Libraries
717 W. Allegan Street
P.O. Box 30740
Lansing, MI 48909-8240

Ms. Arnold may also be reached by e-mail: arnolda@michigan.gov and by telephone: (517) 335-2729.

Approvals and Issuance*

Approved: June 24, 2002
Brian D. Conway, State Historic Preservation Officer

Established and Issued: August 19, 2002
Sandra S. Clark
Director, Michigan Historical Center
Department of History, Arts and Libraries

*Signed copy on file: State Historic Preservation Office, Michigan Historical Center

Appendix

National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria states:

“A district possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.”

A district derives its importance from being a unified entity, even though it is often composed of a wide variety of resources. The identity of a district results from the interrelationship of its resources, which can convey a visual sense of the overall historic environment or be an arrangement of historically or functionally related properties. “ (p. 5)

“A district . . . is seldom defined, however, by the limits of current parcels of ownership, management, or planning boundaries. The boundaries must be based upon a shared relationship among the properties constituting the district.” (p. 6)

National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form discusses in detail how criteria are to be applied, and states:

“A district must be a definable geographic area that can be distinguished from surrounding properties by changes such as density, scale, type, age, style of sites, buildings, structures, and objects or by documented differences in patterns of historic development or associations. It is seldom defined, however, by the limits of current parcel ownership, management, or planning boundaries. The boundaries must be based upon a shared relationship among the properties constituting the district.” (p. 56-57)

Bulletin 21: Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties states that boundary selection is “based on the nature of the property’s significance, integrity and physical setting.” Therefore, an individual property located within a larger area that meets the criteria for a multi-resource district, should not be singled out for designation as a single resource district. (p. 2)

DRAFT 12/2002

“How to Write a Historic District Study Committee Report”

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the historic district study committee report is to establish the legal basis for the creation of a local historic district. Historical data about a proposed district is collected, analyzed, summarized and presented in the report in a clear and concise manner to illustrate the historic significance of a district. The report should justify why a local historic district is being created and establish the boundaries for the district. The report serves as a source of information for a variety of audiences including:

- the historic district commission as it fulfills its duties as the regulatory body for the district
- planners when decisions on development projects are made within the community;
- professional consultants hired to do historic reviews for federally funded projects; and
- teachers and others in the community interested in using the information to create educational programs about a community's heritage.

Components of the Report

Section 399.203 of Public Act 169 of 1970 (PA 169), as amended, *Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act*, requires that a historic district study committee report contain, at a minimum, six (6) items: 1) the charge of the committee; 2) the composition of the committee membership; 3) the name of the proposed historic district(s); 4) the written and visual boundaries of the district; 5) the history of the proposed district; 6) the significance of the district highlighted by information on a number of the individual resources within the district that relate to that significance. Over the years, the State Historic Preservation Office has found it appropriate to include additional information in the report and in August 2002, the Michigan Historical Center established criteria that requires the following information to be included in the historic district study committee report: a boundary justification, a list of historic and a list of non-historic resources in the district, photographs of the resources highlighted in the report, the total count of the number of resources in the proposed district and percentage of historic to non-historic resources. Below is an explanation of the type of information it would be helpful to include in each component of the report.

Charge of the Committee

The local unit of government, through a resolution, must appoint the members of the historic district study committee. In the study committee report, the charge should contain the following information:

- Name of the municipal body that appointed the historic district study committee
- Date the resolution to appoint the historic district study committee was adopted

- A short verbal description of the general geographic area the committee was asked to study

Composition of Committee Membership

The name of each study committee member should be listed in the report. Because PA 169 requires that the majority of study committee members have a “demonstrated interest” in historic preservation, it is a good idea to show how committee members fulfill this requirement by listing their historic preservation interests and affiliations. This need not be a lengthy description. For example, the study committee member list could look something like this:

John Doe, member, Elk County Historical Society
LeeAnn Pratt, architect, Smith and Wells, Inc.
Tom Baker, property owner, Lincoln Heights Historic District
Sue Richards, planner, Elk City
Eileen Jones, compiled a comprehensive history of Elk City for the city's Centennial celebration
Brian Harris, member, Elk County Historic District Commission
Todd Baron, archaeologist, Elk College

The Historic District(s) Studied

This is simply the name(s) given to the proposed district(s) that result from the study. For example, “Elk Park Historic District” or the “Adolph Stephenson Farmstead Historic District.” District names are typically based on the historic name associated with the property or area.

The Boundaries of the Proposed District(s)

PA 169 requires that the study committee report include both a written boundary description and a visual depiction of the boundary on a map. The purpose of the maps is to enable readers of the report to determine which individual properties in a given area are or are not included in the district. Thus, the maps should be of a level of detail and quality where this can clearly be seen. Sometimes, more than one map may need to be included in the report.

Verbal Boundary Description

The verbal boundary description should be a legal description of the district boundary. The description should be written so that federal, state, and city planning agencies or a property owner can clearly identify the district's limits and what properties are included in it. Depending on the size of the district the verbal description of the district could be:

- Legal parcel number
- Block and lot number
- Metes and bounds, or
- Dimensions of a parcel of land, reckoning from a landmark, such as a natural or cultural feature. The description should begin at a fixed reference point and then follow the perimeter of the district, including dimensions and directions.

While parcel numbers can be used, we do not recommend that they be the sole source of identification for the district. Parcels can be merged or eliminated which can cause confusion when trying to identify a district's boundaries in the future. If parcel numbers are used, we recommend also including a metes and bounds description of the district's boundaries.

Visual Boundary Description

The visual boundaries of the proposed district should be clearly and boldly drawn on a map so they are easily distinguishable in the original report and on any copies that are made of the map(s). The final map should be of a size and format that will allow it to be bound within the body of the report: 8 ½ by 11 inches for most districts or 11 x 17 inches with 2 vertical folds for larger districts. Each map should include all of the following:

- Name of the proposed district
- Name of the community and county
- Date the map was created
- Key identifying any symbols used on the map
- North arrow
- All streets in the proposed district with their names clearly labeled
- Street addresses for all properties in the proposed district
- Lot Lines
- Footprints or an outline representation (rectangles or squares) of the individual resources surveyed in the proposed district
- The boundary of the proposed district clearly drawn in a bold line on the map.

For larger districts, a series of maps may be required, one that shows the location of the proposed district within the community and others that show smaller areas of the district in more detail. For example, if you are designating a large district that includes 200 residential properties and a park, you would include an overview map of the whole district that shows its location within the larger community; a series of maps each showing a portion of the district and enabling the reader to see street addresses and number, until the entire district has been depicted; and a site map of the park indicating the location of existing historic features, such as paths, fountains, historic plantings, and monuments. For a farmstead, it may be necessary to draw a site plan to indicate where historically significant features such as orchards, farm fields, silos, barns and outbuildings are located in relation to the farmhouse.

Boundary Justification

The report should include a boundary justification that addresses each directional boundary of the proposed district. Boundaries should be justified by using three guidelines: geographical features, the historic significance of the district, and/or the integrity of the resources in the proposed district. An example:

“The northern district boundary is the Bendy River; the eastern boundary is I-59 which, when it was constructed in 1957, bisected the original plat for the neighborhood; Elm Street was chosen as the southern boundary because it marks a change in housing types from a concentration of early 20th century two-story frame houses to the north and a neighborhood of post-World War II brick ranch houses to the south; Green Street was chosen as the western

boundary as there is a significant loss of material integrity in the resources beyond this point.”

For a single resource property you may simply state something like, “The boundaries are those of the original lot platted in 1882.”

History of the Proposed District

The purpose of the history is to place the district and its resource(s) within its historic context at the local, state, and national level, as need be. The historic context is simply a compilation of the significant time periods, the significant people, and the important trends that shaped the development of the proposed district. The history should be based on facts that can be documented through primary and secondary sources. Beware of including oral traditions that have been passed down for generations but that cannot be substantiated. When writing the report, existing resources in the district should be linked directly to the district’s historic significance. Here is a shortened example of a history statement for a residential district.

“In the early 1900’s Middletown became a center for the development of the early automobile. Travis Jones, who’s Jonesmobile became the most popular car in America between 1910 and 1930, built a factory at 915 Washington Boulevard in 1910 (demolished 1977). The construction of the factory resulted in a boom in population for Middletown as workers left the surrounding farms to take advantage of the high wages offered in the Jones factory. To house these workers, the Oakdale neighborhood was constructed by Dorian Blue, a prominent real estate agent in the city. The Oakdale neighborhood is made up of single story, gable front frame houses that line Oak, Elm, Water and Front Streets between Washington Boulevard and the Green River at the southeastern corner of the district. The homes have little ornamentation but are distinguished by their pressed tin roofs. This was the first subdivision developed in Middletown in response to the needs of the rapidly expanding automobile industry.

In addition to the Jones factory, two other car manufacturers built plants in Middletown between 1904 and 1930. The Casey Steam-Powered automobile was only in production for two years (1904-1906) and did not have a big impact on the development of the automobile or the city of Middletown. However, its founder, James Casey, become Vice President of Jones Automobile in 1912 and was responsible for the design of the company’s most popular car, the Model B. Casey was also a founding member of the Good Roads Movement in Michigan and worked to develop a paved highway between Middletown and Detroit. While the Casey factory building no longer exists, James Casey’s commanding stone Colonial Revival home designed by Grand Rapids architect Samuel Osgood, is located at 12 Addison Street. Addison Street is the stately avenue of estate homes that fronts the Bendy River on the western edge of the district. Casey Park, located in the northeast section of the district was created on land donated to the city of Middletown by James Casey in 1923. Casey hired the nationally known landscape architect, Jens Jensen, to develop the plan for the park.”

If individual properties in the district are significant because of a specific architectural style, they should be discussed in terms of similar resources in the proposed district or in the community overall. You do not need to write lengthy descriptions of

architectural styles. Instead, provide the distinguishing characteristics of the specific property that shows how it is representative of the style. An example:

“The Ira George House at 15 Lincoln Avenue is an excellent example of the Italianate style. The 2-story structure has a square floor plan and is distinguished by its decorative full-length front porch, cupola, round arch windows and large, ornamental roof brackets. This high style structure is one of only 6 Italianates found in the district and the only one constructed of brick. ”

Do not fall into the trap, as many communities do, of only explaining the significance of the proposed district in terms of its architecture. It is important to include information on the significant people and events that shaped the district as well.

PA 169 states that the report must highlight individual resources within the proposed district. We recommend that you include a representative example of *all* the property types found in the district. For example, if a predominately residential district includes a school, church, park or commercial structure, these resources should be highlighted in the report along with a variety of the residential homes. Be sure that you include representative examples of the property type found in the majority in the district— don't just concentrate on the unique or special properties. For example, if the majority of the homes are bungalows or simple upright and wing homes, include one or more as representative examples in addition to highlighting the high style or more unusual resources--don't just focus on the district's high style architecture.

Statement of Significance

Each resource needs to be evaluated using the evaluation criteria for the National Register of Historic Places. There are four primary criteria:

- Criterion A: Association with Significant Events
- Criterion B: Association with Significant People
- Criterion C: Design/Construction Significance
- Criterion D: Information Potential

In the report, state the criteria that the district meets (it may be more than one) and how it meets the criteria. For example, “The Oakville District is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the developing automobile industry; Criterion B for its association with early automobile pioneer and former Michigan Governor John Doe who lived there from 1897 to 1922 and Criterion C as a representative example of late 19th century vernacular architecture.”

Photographs

Remember when taking photographs of resources in the district that you are documenting the way the district looks at the time it was established. This visual record will become a useful tool for the historic district commission when they are reviewing proposed work to a property. They will be able to tell what alterations already existed at the time the district was created. Be sure the resource is unobstructed by trees or cars and that architectural details are clearly visible in the photograph. Photographs should be oblique shots that encompass 2 sides of the building. For multiple resource districts, take at least one photograph of each individual resource. If there are other features on a property that contribute to its historic significance such as a carriage barn, entry gateposts, a historic fence or

garden, photographs should be taken of each feature, if possible. Representative streetscape shots should also be taken to show how the resources relate to each other in terms of set back, vegetation, etc. For single resource districts, we recommend documenting all exterior elevations of the building as well as any special or outstanding features.

Resource Count and Percentage

Historic resources are typically those that are 50 years of age or older, unless the resource is proven to have exceptional significance. Historic resources must retain their integrity—the physical features that represent the period in which the property was built and/or its period of historic significance. Integrity is determined by looking at seven qualities: location (is the property on its original location), design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association (with people and events).

Each resource in the proposed district should be evaluated to determine if it is a historic (contributing) or non-historic (non-contributing) resource. To make that determination look at the resource in terms of how it relates to the historic context that was developed, the National Register Criteria for Eligibility and the resource's integrity. PA 169 requires that a percentage of historic to non-historic properties be developed. It is a good idea to include this in the study committee report to show the study committee has met this obligation.

Lists of Historic and Non-Historic Properties

It is recommended that a list of the historic properties by street name and address and a list of the non-historic properties by street name and address in the district be included in the report. This will greatly facilitate the use of the report by the historic district commission, building officials, and local planners. It will also enable residents to know if a particular property qualifies for preservation tax credit incentives.

Bibliography

Each report should include a bibliography of the historic resources used to develop the history of the district. The bibliography can be presented in any standard, accepted format such as the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS ACT
Act 169 of 1970

AN ACT to provide for the establishment of historic districts; to provide for the acquisition of certain resources for historic preservation purposes; to provide for preservation of historic and nonhistoric resources within historic districts; to provide for the establishment of historic district commissions; to provide for the maintenance of publicly owned resources by local units; to provide for certain assessments under certain circumstances; to provide for procedures; and to provide for remedies and penalties.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1986, Act 230, Imd. Eff. Oct. 1, 1986;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

399.201 Short title.

Sec. 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the “local historic districts act”.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.201a Definitions.

Sec. 1a. As used in this act:

(a) “Alteration” means work that changes the detail of a resource but does not change its basic size or shape.

(b) “Certificate of appropriateness” means the written approval of a permit application for work that is appropriate and that does not adversely affect a resource.

(c) “Commission” means a historic district commission created by the legislative body of a local unit under section 4.

(d) “Committee” means a historic district study committee appointed by the legislative body of a local unit under section 3 or 14.

(e) “Demolition” means the razing or destruction, whether entirely or in part, of a resource and includes, but is not limited to, demolition by neglect.

(f) “Demolition by neglect” means neglect in maintaining, repairing, or securing a resource that results in deterioration of an exterior feature of the resource or the loss of structural integrity of the resource.

(g) “Denial” means the written rejection of a permit application for work that is inappropriate and that adversely affects a resource.

(h) “Department” means the department of history, arts, and libraries.

(i) “Fire alarm system” means a system designed to detect and annunciate the presence of fire or by-products of fire. Fire alarm system includes smoke alarms.

(j) “Historic district” means an area, or group of areas not necessarily having contiguous boundaries, that contains 1 resource or a group of resources that are related by history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.

(k) “Historic preservation” means the identification, evaluation, establishment, and protection of resources significant in history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.

(l) “Historic resource” means a publicly or privately owned building, structure, site, object, feature, or open space that is significant in the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of this state or a community within this state, or of the United States.

(m) “Local unit” means a county, city, village, or township.

(n) “Notice to proceed” means the written permission to issue a permit for work that is inappropriate and that adversely affects a resource, pursuant to a finding under section 5(6).

(o) “Open space” means undeveloped land, a naturally landscaped area, or a formal or man-made landscaped area that provides a connective link or a buffer between other resources.

(p) “Ordinary maintenance” means keeping a resource unimpaired and in good condition through ongoing minor intervention, undertaken from time to time, in its exterior condition. Ordinary maintenance does not change the external appearance of the resource except through the elimination of the usual and expected effects of weathering. Ordinary maintenance does not constitute work for purposes of this act.

(q) “Proposed historic district” means an area, or group of areas not necessarily having contiguous boundaries, that has delineated boundaries and that is under review by a committee or a standing committee

for the purpose of making a recommendation as to whether it should be established as a historic district or added to an established historic district.

(r) "Repair" means to restore a decayed or damaged resource to a good or sound condition by any process. A repair that changes the external appearance of a resource constitutes work for purposes of this act.

(s) "Resource" means 1 or more publicly or privately owned historic or nonhistoric buildings, structures, sites, objects, features, or open spaces located within a historic district.

(t) "Smoke alarm" means a single-station or multiple-station alarm responsive to smoke and not connected to a system. As used in this subdivision, "single-station alarm" means an assembly incorporating a detector, the control equipment, and the alarm sounding device into a single unit, operated from a power supply either in the unit or obtained at the point of installation. "Multiple-station alarm" means 2 or more single-station alarms that are capable of interconnection such that actuation of 1 alarm causes all integrated separate audible alarms to operate.

(u) "Standing committee" means a permanent body established by the legislative body of a local unit under section 14 to conduct the activities of a historic district study committee on a continuing basis.

(v) "Work" means construction, addition, alteration, repair, moving, excavation, or demolition.

History: Add. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992;—Am. 2001, Act 67, Imd. Eff. July 24, 2001;—Am. 2004, Act 67, Imd. Eff. Apr. 20, 2004.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.202 Historic preservation as public purpose; purpose of ordinance.

Sec. 2. Historic preservation is declared to be a public purpose and the legislative body of a local unit may by ordinance regulate the construction, addition, alteration, repair, moving, excavation, and demolition of resources in historic districts within the limits of the local unit. The purpose of the ordinance shall be to do 1 or more of the following:

(a) Safeguard the heritage of the local unit by preserving 1 or more historic districts in the local unit that reflect elements of the unit's history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture.

(b) Stabilize and improve property values in each district and the surrounding areas.

(c) Foster civic beauty.

(d) Strengthen the local economy.

(e) Promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of the local unit and of the state.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1986, Act 230, Imd. Eff. Oct. 1, 1986;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.203 Historic districts; establishment; study committee; duties; public hearing; notice; actions; availability of writings to public.

Sec. 3. (1) A local unit may, by ordinance, establish 1 or more historic districts. The historic districts shall be administered by a commission established pursuant to section 4. Before establishing a historic district, the legislative body of the local unit shall appoint a historic district study committee. The committee shall contain a majority of persons who have a clearly demonstrated interest in or knowledge of historic preservation, and shall contain representation from 1 or more duly organized local historic preservation organizations. The committee shall do all of the following:

(a) Conduct a photographic inventory of resources within each proposed historic district following procedures established or approved by the department.

(b) Conduct basic research of each proposed historic district and the historic resources located within that district.

(c) Determine the total number of historic and nonhistoric resources within a proposed historic district and the percentage of historic resources of that total. In evaluating the significance of historic resources, the committee shall be guided by the selection criteria for evaluation issued by the United States secretary of the interior for inclusion of resources in the national register of historic places, as set forth in 36 C.F.R. part 60, and criteria established or approved by the department, if any.

(d) Prepare a preliminary historic district study committee report that addresses at a minimum all of the following:

(i) The charge of the committee.

- (ii) The composition of the committee membership.
 - (iii) The historic district or districts studied.
 - (iv) The boundaries for each proposed historic district in writing and on maps.
 - (v) The history of each proposed historic district.
 - (vi) The significance of each district as a whole, as well as a sufficient number of its individual resources to fully represent the variety of resources found within the district, relative to the evaluation criteria.
- (e) Transmit copies of the preliminary report for review and recommendations to the local planning body, to the department, to the Michigan historical commission, and to the state historic preservation review board.
- (f) Make copies of the preliminary report available to the public pursuant to subsection (4).
- (2) Not less than 60 calendar days after the transmittal of the preliminary report, the committee shall hold a public hearing in compliance with the open meetings act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275. Public notice of the time, date, and place of the hearing shall be given in the manner required by the open meetings act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275. Written notice shall be mailed by first-class mail not less than 14 calendar days before the hearing to the owners of properties within the proposed historic district, as listed on the tax rolls of the local unit.
- (3) After the date of the public hearing, the committee and the legislative body of the local unit shall have not more than 1 year, unless otherwise authorized by the legislative body of the local unit, to take the following actions:
- (a) The committee shall prepare and submit a final report with its recommendations and the recommendations, if any, of the local planning body to the legislative body of the local unit. If the recommendation is to establish a historic district or districts, the final report shall include a draft of a proposed ordinance or ordinances.
 - (b) After receiving a final report that recommends the establishment of a historic district or districts, the legislative body of the local unit, at its discretion, may introduce and pass or reject an ordinance or ordinances. If the local unit passes an ordinance or ordinances establishing 1 or more historic districts, the local unit shall file a copy of that ordinance or those ordinances, including a legal description of the property or properties located within the historic district or districts, with the register of deeds. A local unit shall not pass an ordinance establishing a contiguous historic district less than 60 days after a majority of the property owners within the proposed historic district, as listed on the tax rolls of the local unit, have approved the establishment of the historic district pursuant to a written petition.
 - (4) A writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by a committee in the performance of an official function shall be made available to the public in compliance with the freedom of information act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231 to 15.246.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1980, Act 125, Imd. Eff. May 21, 1980;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992;—Am. 2001, Act 67, Imd. Eff. July 24, 2001.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.204 Historic district commission; establishment; appointment, qualifications, and terms of members; vacancy; commissions previously established by charter or ordinance.

Sec. 4. The legislative body of a local unit may establish by ordinance a commission to be called the historic district commission. The commission may be established at any time, but not later than the time the first historic district is established by the legislative body of the local unit. Each member of the commission shall reside within the local unit. The membership of the historic district commission in a local unit having a population of 5,000 or more individuals shall consist of not less than 7 or more than 9 members. The membership of the historic district commission in a local unit having a population of less than 5,000 individuals shall consist of not less than 5 or more than 7 members. A majority of the members shall have a clearly demonstrated interest in or knowledge of historic preservation. The members shall be appointed by the township supervisor, village president, mayor, or chairperson of the board of commissioners, unless another method of appointment is provided in the ordinance creating the commission. Initial members shall be appointed within 6 months after the ordinance establishing the commission is enacted. Members shall be appointed for 3-year terms except the initial appointments of some of the members shall be for less than 3 years so that the initial appointments are staggered and that subsequent appointments do not recur at the same time. Members shall be eligible for reappointment. A vacancy on the commission shall be filled within 60 calendar days by an appointment made by the appointing authority. The ordinance creating the commission may provide procedures for terminating an appointment due to the acts or omissions of the member. The appointing authority of a local unit having a population of 25,000 or more individuals shall appoint at least 2

members from a list of citizens submitted by 1 or more duly organized local historic preservation organizations. A local unit having a population of more than 5,000 individuals but less than 25,000 individuals shall appoint at least 1 member from a list of citizens submitted by 1 or more duly organized local historic preservation organizations. The commission of all local units shall include as a member, if available, a graduate of an accredited school of architecture who has 2 years of architectural experience or who is an architect registered in this state. This section does not apply to historic district commissions established by charter or to historic district commissions established by ordinance before August 3, 1970.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1971, Act 30, Imd. Eff. May 25, 1971;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.205 Permit required; completed application; certificate of appropriateness or notice to proceed; issuance; permit fee; appeal to review board and circuit court; plan review standards, guidelines, and considerations; scope of review; preservation plan; approval; conditions; public meeting; availability of writings to public; rules of procedure; approval of minor work; finding of demolition by neglect; restoration or modification of work done without permit.

Sec. 5. (1) A permit shall be obtained before any work affecting the exterior appearance of a resource is performed within a historic district or, if required under subsection (4), work affecting the interior arrangements of a resource is performed within a historic district. The person, individual, partnership, firm, corporation, organization, institution, or agency of government proposing to do that work shall file an application for a permit with the inspector of buildings, the commission, or other duly delegated authority. If the inspector of buildings or other authority receives the application, the application shall be immediately referred together with all required supporting materials that make the application complete to the commission. A permit shall not be issued and proposed work shall not proceed until the commission has acted on the application by issuing a certificate of appropriateness or a notice to proceed as prescribed in this act. A commission shall not issue a certificate of appropriateness unless the applicant certifies in the application that the property where work will be undertaken has, or will have before the proposed project completion date, a fire alarm system or a smoke alarm complying with the requirements of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale single state construction code act, 1972 PA 230, MCL 125.1501 to 125.1531. A local unit may charge a reasonable fee to process a permit application.

(2) An applicant aggrieved by a decision of a commission concerning a permit application may file an appeal with the state historic preservation review board within the department. The appeal shall be filed within 60 days after the decision is furnished to the applicant. The appellant may submit all or part of the appellant's evidence and arguments in written form. The review board shall consider an appeal at its first regularly scheduled meeting after receiving the appeal, but may not charge a fee for considering an appeal. The review board may affirm, modify, or set aside a commission's decision and may order a commission to issue a certificate of appropriateness or a notice to proceed. A permit applicant aggrieved by the decision of the state historic preservation review board may appeal the decision to the circuit court having jurisdiction over the historic district commission whose decision was appealed to the state historic preservation review board.

(3) In reviewing plans, the commission shall follow the United States secretary of the interior's standards for rehabilitation and guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings, as set forth in 36 C.F.R. part 67. Design review standards and guidelines that address special design characteristics of historic districts administered by the commission may be followed if they are equivalent in guidance to the secretary of interior's standards and guidelines and are established or approved by the department. The commission shall also consider all of the following:

(a) The historic or architectural value and significance of the resource and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area.

(b) The relationship of any architectural features of the resource to the rest of the resource and to the surrounding area.

(c) The general compatibility of the design, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.

(d) Other factors, such as aesthetic value, that the commission finds relevant.

(e) Whether the applicant has certified in the application that the property where work will be undertaken has, or will have before the proposed project completion date, a fire alarm system or a smoke alarm complying with the requirements of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale single state construction code act, 1972 PA

230, MCL 125.1501 to 125.1531.

(4) The commission shall review and act upon only exterior features of a resource and, except for noting compliance with the requirement to install a fire alarm system or a smoke alarm, shall not review and act upon interior arrangements unless specifically authorized to do so by the local legislative body or unless interior work will cause visible change to the exterior of the resource. The commission shall not disapprove an application due to considerations not prescribed in subsection (3).

(5) If an application is for work that will adversely affect the exterior of a resource the commission considers valuable to the local unit, state, or nation, and the commission determines that the alteration or loss of that resource will adversely affect the public purpose of the local unit, state, or nation, the commission shall attempt to establish with the owner of the resource an economically feasible plan for preservation of the resource.

(6) Work within a historic district shall be permitted through the issuance of a notice to proceed by the commission if any of the following conditions prevail and if the proposed work can be demonstrated by a finding of the commission to be necessary to substantially improve or correct any of the following conditions:

(a) The resource constitutes a hazard to the safety of the public or to the structure's occupants.

(b) The resource is a deterrent to a major improvement program that will be of substantial benefit to the community and the applicant proposing the work has obtained all necessary planning and zoning approvals, financing, and environmental clearances.

(c) Retaining the resource will cause undue financial hardship to the owner when a governmental action, an act of God, or other events beyond the owner's control created the hardship, and all feasible alternatives to eliminate the financial hardship, which may include offering the resource for sale at its fair market value or moving the resource to a vacant site within the historic district, have been attempted and exhausted by the owner.

(d) Retaining the resource is not in the interest of the majority of the community.

(7) The business that the commission may perform shall be conducted at a public meeting of the commission held in compliance with the open meetings act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275. Public notice of the time, date, and place of the meeting shall be given in the manner required by the open meetings act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275. A meeting agenda shall be part of the notice and shall include a listing of each permit application to be reviewed or considered by the commission.

(8) The commission shall keep a record of its resolutions, proceedings, and actions. A writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by the commission in the performance of an official function shall be made available to the public in compliance with the freedom of information act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231 to 15.246.

(9) The commission shall adopt its own rules of procedure and shall adopt design review standards and guidelines for resource treatment to carry out its duties under this act.

(10) The commission may delegate the issuance of certificates of appropriateness for specified minor classes of work to its staff, to the inspector of buildings, or to another delegated authority. The commission shall provide to the delegated authority specific written standards for issuing certificates of appropriateness under this subsection. On at least a quarterly basis, the commission shall review the certificates of appropriateness, if any, issued for work by its staff, the inspector, or another authority to determine whether or not the delegated responsibilities should be continued.

(11) Upon a finding by a commission that a historic resource within a historic district or a proposed historic district subject to its review and approval is threatened with demolition by neglect, the commission may do either of the following:

(a) Require the owner of the resource to repair all conditions contributing to demolition by neglect.

(b) If the owner does not make repairs within a reasonable time, the commission or its agents may enter the property and make such repairs as are necessary to prevent demolition by neglect. The costs of the work shall be charged to the owner, and may be levied by the local unit as a special assessment against the property. The commission or its agents may enter the property for purposes of this section upon obtaining an order from the circuit court.

(12) When work has been done upon a resource without a permit, and the commission finds that the work does not qualify for a certificate of appropriateness, the commission may require an owner to restore the resource to the condition the resource was in before the inappropriate work or to modify the work so that it qualifies for a certificate of appropriateness. If the owner does not comply with the restoration or modification requirement within a reasonable time, the commission may seek an order from the circuit court to require the owner to restore the resource to its former condition or to modify the work so that it qualifies for a certificate of appropriateness. If the owner does not comply or cannot comply with the order of the court, the commission or its agents may enter the property and conduct work necessary to restore the resource to its

former condition or modify the work so that it qualifies for a certificate of appropriateness in accordance with the court's order. The costs of the work shall be charged to the owner, and may be levied by the local unit as a special assessment against the property. When acting pursuant to an order of the circuit court, a commission or its agents may enter a property for purposes of this section.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1980, Act 125, Imd. Eff. May 21, 1980;—Am. 1986, Act 230, Imd. Eff. Oct. 1, 1986;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992;—Am. 2001, Act 67, Imd. Eff. July 24, 2001;—Am. 2004, Act 67, Imd. Eff. Apr. 20, 2004.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.206 Grants, gifts, and programs.

Sec. 6. The legislative body of a local unit may accept state or federal grants for historic preservation purposes, may participate in state and federal programs that benefit historic preservation, and may accept public or private gifts for historic preservation purposes. The legislative body may make the historic district commission, a standing committee, or other agency its duly appointed agent to accept and administer grants, gifts, and program responsibilities.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.207 Historic resource; acquisition by local legislative body.

Sec. 7. If all efforts by the historic district commission to preserve a resource fail, or if it is determined by the local legislative body that public ownership is most suitable, the local legislative body, if considered to be in the public interest, may acquire the resource using public funds, public or private gifts, grants, or proceeds from the issuance of revenue bonds. The acquisition shall be based upon the recommendation of the commission or standing committee. The commission or standing committee is responsible for maintaining publicly owned resources using its own funds, if not specifically designated for other purposes, or public funds committed for that use by the local legislative body. Upon recommendation of the commission or standing committee, the local unit may sell resources acquired under this section with protective easements included in the property transfer documents, if appropriate.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.208 County historic district commission; coordination with township and municipality.

Sec. 8. The jurisdiction of a county shall be the same as that provided in Act No. 183 of the Public Acts of 1943, as amended, being sections 125.201 to 125.232 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, or as otherwise provided by contract entered into between the county and a city, village or township. If a county historic district commission is in existence, coordination between the county historic district commission and township and municipality historic district commissions shall be maintained. The overall historic preservation plans of cities, villages and townships shall be submitted to the county historic district commission for review, and county plans submitted to cities, villages, and townships having historic district commissions. Day-to-day activities of a commission shall not be reviewed unless the activities affect resources of importance to another commission.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.209 Historic district commission; filings with delegated authority; duties of local public officials, employees, and department.

Sec. 9. (1) The commission shall file certificates of appropriateness, notices to proceed, and denials of applications for permits with the inspector of buildings or other delegated authority. A permit shall not be issued until the commission has acted as prescribed by this act. If a permit application is denied, the decision shall be binding on the inspector or other authority. A denial shall be accompanied with a written explanation by the commission of the reasons for denial and, if appropriate, a notice that an application may be

resubmitted for commission review when suggested changes have been made. The denial shall also include notification of the applicant's rights of appeal to the state historic preservation review board and to the circuit court. The failure of the commission to act within 60 calendar days after the date a complete application is filed with the commission, unless an extension is agreed upon in writing by the applicant and the commission, shall be considered to constitute approval.

(2) Local public officials and employees shall provide information and records to committees, commissions, and standing committees, and shall meet with those bodies upon request to assist with their activities.

(3) The department shall cooperate with and assist local units, committees, commissions, and standing committees in carrying out the purposes of this act and may establish or approve standards, guidelines, and procedures that encourage uniform administration of this act in this state but that are not legally binding on any individual or other legal entity.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992;—Am. 2001, Act 67, Imd. Eff. July 24, 2001.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.210 Construction of act.

Sec. 10. Nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or repair of a resource within a historic district, or to prevent work on any resource under a permit issued by the inspector of buildings or other duly delegated authority before the ordinance was enacted.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.211 Appeal of decisions.

Sec. 11. Any citizen or duly organized historic preservation organization in the local unit, as well as resource property owners, jointly or severally aggrieved by a decision of the historic district commission may appeal the decision to the circuit court, except that a permit applicant aggrieved by a decision rendered under section 5(1) may not appeal to the court without first exhausting the right to appeal to the state historic preservation review board under section 5(2).

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970;—Am. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.212 Effect of act as to existing legislation and historical commissions.

Sec. 12. This act does not affect any previously enacted legislation pertaining to historical preservation and does not affect historical commissions appointed by local governing bodies to foster historic preservation. An existing local historical commission organized under Act No. 213 of the Public Acts of 1957, as amended, being sections 399.171 and 399.172 of the Compiled Laws of 1948, may be designated as a historic district commission, if its membership and structure conform, or are revised to conform, to the provisions of section 4.

History: 1970, Act 169, Imd. Eff. Aug. 3, 1970.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.213 Powers and duties of historic district commission.

Sec. 13. The local legislative body may prescribe powers and duties of the historic district commission, in addition to those prescribed in this act, that foster historic preservation activities, projects, and programs in the local unit.

History: Add. 1986, Act 230, Imd. Eff. Oct. 1, 1986.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.214 Local units; establishing, modifying, or eliminating historic districts; study

committee; considerations; review of applications within proposed historic district; emergency moratorium.

Sec. 14. (1) A local unit may at any time establish by ordinance additional historic districts, including proposed districts previously considered and rejected, may modify boundaries of an existing historic district, or may eliminate an existing historic district. Before establishing, modifying, or eliminating a historic district, a historic district study committee appointed by the legislative body of the local unit shall, except as provided in subsection (2), comply with the procedures set forth in section 3 and shall consider any previously written committee reports pertinent to the proposed action. To conduct these activities, local units may retain the initial committee, establish a standing committee, or establish a committee to consider only specific proposed districts and then be dissolved.

(2) If considering elimination of a historic district, a committee shall follow the procedures set forth in section 3 for issuing a preliminary report, holding a public hearing, and issuing a final report but with the intent of showing 1 or more of the following:

- (i) The historic district has lost those physical characteristics that enabled establishment of the district.
- (ii) The historic district was not significant in the way previously defined.
- (iii) The historic district was established pursuant to defective procedures.

(3) Upon receipt of substantial evidence showing the presence of historic, architectural, archaeological, engineering, or cultural significance of a proposed historic district, the legislative body of a local unit may, at its discretion, adopt a resolution requiring that all applications for permits within the proposed historic district be referred to the commission as prescribed in sections 5 and 9. The commission shall review permit applications with the same powers that would apply if the proposed historic district was an established historic district. The review may continue in the proposed historic district for not more than 1 year, or until such time as the local unit approves or rejects the establishment of the historic district by ordinance, whichever occurs first.

(4) If the legislative body of a local unit determines that pending work will cause irreparable harm to resources located within an established historic district or a proposed historic district, the legislative body may by resolution declare an emergency moratorium of all such work for a period not to exceed 6 months. The legislative body may extend the emergency moratorium for an additional period not to exceed 6 months upon finding that the threat of irreparable harm to resources is still present. Any pending permit application concerning a resource subject to an emergency moratorium may be summarily denied.

History: Add. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

399.215 Violation; fine; payment of costs.

Sec. 15. (1) A person, individual, partnership, firm, corporation, organization, institution, or agency of government that violates this act is responsible for a civil violation and may be fined not more than \$5,000.00.

(2) A person, individual, partnership, firm, corporation, organization, institution, or agency of government that violates this act may be ordered by the court to pay the costs to restore or replicate a resource unlawfully constructed, added to, altered, repaired, moved, excavated, or demolished.

History: Add. 1992, Act 96, Imd. Eff. June 18, 1992.

Compiler's note: For transfer of powers and duties of department of history, arts, and libraries or the Michigan historical center relating to the identification, certification, and preservation of historical sites to the Michigan state housing development authority, see E.R.O. No. 2009-26, compiled at MCL 399.752.

Introduction

In 2002, the Michigan Legislature amended the Municipal Planning Act, PA 285 of 1931, to revise the legal processes necessary to adopt a new or amended Master Plan. Sometimes referred to as "The Coordinated Planning Act," the amendment greatly expanded the notification process and the degree of involvement of the governing body. Municipalities wishing to begin work on a new master plan, or amend an existing plan, must now follow this process.

Preplanning

Notice to Plan

Municipalities beginning the planning process to adopt a new or amend an existing master plan must first send a notice by first class mail to the planning commissions of **every** township, village or city located within or contiguous to the city or village **and** to the county planning commission. If an adjoining community has no planning commission, the notice goes to the legislative body. If there is no county planning commission, then notice must go to the regional planning commission for its comments. The same notice must also be sent to any railroad company or public utility that *registers* for such a notice with the city or village. Other governmental entities that can register to become a part of the planning process include airports, downtown development authorities (DDA), tax increment finance authorities (TIFA), school boards, road commissions and other local governmental units.

The *notice of intent to plan* should state that the municipality is beginning a planning process and request cooperation and comments from adjacent communities. This would also present an opportunity for the municipality to request the planning and zoning documents from those communities to assist in its planning process.

Although there is no specified time limit for the notice, presumably it should be sent before any substantive work is begun.

The Planning Process

No particular requirements are noted for the actual planning process. The law only states that certain elements be included in the master plan if they are relevant to the municipality.

These include:

- A land use plan and program.
- General location, character and extent of transportation systems and infrastructure, public utility systems, and other similar facilities.
- Recommendations for blighted areas and changes to streets, open space, buildings, utilities, etc.
- Recommendations for implementing any of the plan's proposals.

The Planning Commission is still given the authority to write the plan, but the adoption process has changed to involve the municipality's governing board. Accordingly, planning commissions should seriously consider actively involving the board in the planning process.

Plan Review

Distribution of the Plan

Once the plan has been drafted, it must be submitted to the governing body for its review and comment. If the council is generally satisfied with the plan, or at least comfortable with sending it out to the public, it may then approve the plan for distribution. This initial approval is intended to provide an opportunity for both the planning commission and the governing body to state its support for the proposed plan.

If the council does not approve the plan for distribution, it should note its objections to the planning commission. Should the commission disagree with the board's position on the plan, the two bodies must work to resolve those differences. Otherwise, the planning process is stopped in its tracks and the proposed plan can proceed no further.

If there are no disagreements, or those disagreements are worked out, the council can approve the plan for distribution. This permits the plan to be sent to the same list that received the notice of intent to plan. The proposed plan must include a statement from the secretary of the planning commission noting that all the requirements of the Municipal Planning Act have been met.

External Review and Comment

The entire review process takes a total of 95 days. With the exception of the county, those receiving the plan have up to 65 days to submit their comments to the city or village. Reviewing communities and agencies are also required to send their comments to the county as well as the municipality.

The county has between the 75th and 95th day after submission to submit its comments to the municipality. This permits the county to include the reviews from other communities and agencies in its comments. The purpose of the county review is to determine whether the proposed plan is consistent with the county's plan and the plan of any other adjacent community.

All reviews and comments, including those of the county, are advisory and need not be considered or included by the village or city. However, the municipality may benefit considerably from these reviews and therefore should take advantage of having "other sets of eyes" review the plan.

Public Hearing and Adoption

Public Hearing

Only after the review comment period has expired can the municipality conduct its required public hearing. Notice of the hearing must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality and in the official gazette, if any, of the municipality not less than 15 days before the hearing. The planning commission shall also submit notice to each entity receiving the notice of intent to plan. The notice can run during the 95 day review period so that the hearing could be held on the 96th day.

Adoption

After the public hearing on the proposed plan, one of two actions may follow. The options depend on whether or not the council has passed a resolution asserting its right to be the adopting authority for the plan.

If such a resolution has not been adopted, the planning commission may adopt the plan with a majority vote. For example, if the planning commission has seven members, at least four votes are needed to adopt the plan. Should only four commissioners be present to vote on the plan, all four must vote to adopt.

After adoption, the secretary of the planning commission submits the proposed plan to the governing board for the municipality and the adoption process is complete.

If, however, the governing board for the municipality has passed the resolution to become the adopting authority for the plan, the planning commission, rather than adopting the plan, will vote to "recommend"

adoption to the council. The council may then vote to adopt the plan by a majority vote (no specific vote requirement is noted in the Act, but each community needs to check its charter for what constitutes a majority).

If, however, the council does not approve of the substance of the plan, it is required to send to the planning commission a "statement of objections." The planning commission must consider these objections and either revise the plan to address them or otherwise work out the problems with the council.

For example, if the objections are significant, a joint meeting would be useful to help resolve the issues. If the issues are never resolved, and the council refuses to adopt the plan, the plan is effectively dead. Unlike the zoning ordinance adoption procedure, the council has no independent authority to make any change to the plan.

If the council's recommended changes are significant, the planning commission may wish to consider holding an additional public hearing to publicize the changes. This would not be required, but would certainly be of value to those property owners who may be affected by the changes and did not have an opportunity to comment on them.

After Adoption

Once adopted, the plan goes into effect immediately. Copies must be sent to the same list of communities and agencies that received the draft plan.

The Act includes a requirement that at least every five years the municipality reviews its current plan and determines whether any amendments are needed, or if the process for a new plan should be started. This review may be documented through the minutes of the meeting. It is suggested that the village or city council be invited to participate in this review.

After the review, if the municipality determines that no changes are necessary, the planning commission should document that decision in its minutes. No notices or other procedures are necessary if no changes are to be made.

The following checklist may be used to chart the progress of the planning process to ensure that all of the procedures are followed.

Based on material provided by Steve Langworthy, LSL Planning, Inc.



The City of
ALBION

2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

City of Albion
112 W Cass St. Albion, MI 49224
www.cityofalbionmi.gov

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What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Essentially, the Comprehensive Plan is a study of Albion's present conditions and a framework for future growth. The Comprehensive Plan provides a strategic focus and helps guide the community in future decision-making concerning land-use planning, social, economic, and environmental development. The plan identifies the community's strengths and assets as well as its opportunities for growth and improvement. It looks at Albion's past, where it wants to go in the future, and what needs to happen in order to achieve its vision of the future.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008; MPEA) requires an update of the plan at least every five years. Albion's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2000. Still very early in the process, the Planning Commission is seeking input from Albion's residents in updating the Comprehensive Plan.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

In creating this draft document, the Planning Commission looked back and reviewed the goals and objectives contained in the 2000 Comprehensive Plan Update to determine which goals had been accomplished, which were still relevant, and which were still high priority. Based on the Planning Commission's review and analysis, ten overarching goals along with corresponding objectives are proposed. Certain goals from the 2000 plan are strengthened and restated. A couple of new goals are offered.

This draft document:

- Provides current demographic data, describes changes that have taken place in Albion, and highlights certain emerging trends within the city and the region
- Provides an overview of the updated goals and objectives. They are summarized in Appendix 1.
- Identifies priority redevelopment sites

During a 95-day review and comment period, local residents, employers, business owners, and other key stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide feedback, discuss major challenges and opportunities, and participate in visioning. Input gained from interviews, Town Hall meetings, and other forums will be gathered and shared with both the Planning Commission and City Council. During this same 95-day period, the City and Planning Commission will continue with the technical evaluation and studies that are essential components of the Comprehensive Plan. At the end of the review and comment period, a public hearing will be held, regarding the Phase I Comprehensive Plan Update. The focus of Phase I is on adopting goals and objectives and a vision to guide Albion for the next 10 to 20 years. Your input is valuable. Citizen and stakeholder participation is key to this process.

Vision

Building a sustainable community requires diverse partnerships and collaboration, sound and thoughtful public policy, quality education institutions, business and economic opportunity, stable residential neighborhoods, diversity in arts, entertainment and recreational offerings, conservation and protection of the natural environment and access to services for all residents. The following Comprehensive Plan incorporates these fundamental community building blocks and provides a framework from which to address the most pressing needs and most promising solutions for re-imagining the City of Albion.

Albion is resilient. Its leadership is shaping the future instead of merely being shaped by it. In updating its Comprehensive Plan, the City's leadership is taking a serious look at the community's most pressing needs, identifying catalytic revitalization projects, and taking necessary steps to create the amenities that will attract people to the community and improve the quality of life for existing residents. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a living document that serves as a rallying point to help the City identify priorities, allocate resources, and chart the course for the future. The City of Albion is creating collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders, nonprofits, county, regional, state and federal leadership to make the plan a reality. The Comprehensive Plan encompasses a wide range of topics including housing, transportation, economic and business development, public and environmental health, entertainment and recreation, and public infrastructure.

Community Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement

Albion's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2000. Economic shifts and the housing crisis that took place in 2008 have changed many of the assumptions in the previous plan. Therefore, rather than rush through the planning process, the City of Albion is taking a phased approach in updating its Comprehensive Plan. The phased approach is intended to encourage greater public participation and input in the update process and bring together people throughout the community. This Phase I document is the overarching framework for additional work to be conducted. It synthesizes feedback received from members of the public, key stakeholders, and Planning Commission discussions. By releasing this document, the intent is to obtain additional public opinion through a public hearing. Many community residents are seeking more transparency regarding key revitalization projects and greater dissemination of information. This underscores the importance of taking a phased approach in updating Albion's Plan, in order for more voices to be heard and concerns addressed.

The process of updating the Comprehensive Plan began with a review of the goals and objectives that were outlined in the previous plan. The Planning Commission took a close look at those goals and objectives to determine which had been achieved and which were still relevant. Numerous discussions have been held among Planning Commission members and key stakeholders.

Ultimately, the Comprehensive Plan will be used to assist bodies such as the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), and City Council to make policy decisions, especially related to land use. This plan update helps set parameters for land use decision-making and provides the foundation on which the community's zoning ordinance is based.

Local and Regional Stakeholders

Input has been sought from various community partners to create a dynamic comprehensive plan. The City of Albion seeks to continuously involve these entities and others in its comprehensive planning process as well as Key stakeholders are comprised of many local, regional, state, and federal partners and include, but are not limited to:

*Albion Economic Development Corporation and
Downtown Development Authority*

Albion Community Foundation

Albion College

Albion Food Hub

Albion Healthcare Alliance

Albion Housing Commission

Albion/Marshall Public Schools

Albion: Senior Millage Allocation Committee

AmeriCorps VISTA

Forks Senior Center

Local businesses

Local churches

Neighborhood organizations

Major employers

Private investment partners

City of Homer: Senior Millage Allocation Committee

City of Marshall: Dial-a-Ride

Calhoun County Community Action

Calhoun County Land Bank Authority

Calhoun County Senior Services

Calhoun County Board of Commissioners

Southcentral Michigan Planning Council

Southwest Michigan First

Habitat for Humanity

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)

Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

*Michigan State Housing Development Authority
(MSHDA)*

Michigan Works!

USDA Rural Development

Community Input Survey

A Community Input Survey was conducted to engage community members and identify today's most pressing needs. In order to reach a broad audience, the survey was administered both on-line by the Albion Community Foundation and also with hard copies disseminated by the City. Two hundred forty-two community members participated in the survey. Like the community itself, survey respondents reflected a diverse array of perspectives, e.g. home owners and renters, business owners, and a small number of property developers. Interestingly, a number of non-residents participated in the survey, because of their personal ties and commitment to the community. Although nearly 63% of the participants were in the 35-64 age group, people in younger and older groups also participated. Citizen feedback from the survey is included in the Appendix.

Town Hall Meetings were held on topics like Walkability and Housing, in order to share and disseminate information and to gain input from citizens. Two working groups were formed – The Downtown Housing Workgroup and the Albion City Transportation Workgroup – to take a more in-depth look at those particular issues. A briefing with emphasis on downtown housing was held with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). In addition, one-on-one interviews were held with the director of the Albion Housing Commission and local pastors to gain their perspectives on a number of challenges facing the community. Major employers are being invited to share their perspectives, especially as it relates to the retention and attraction of talent.

Table 1

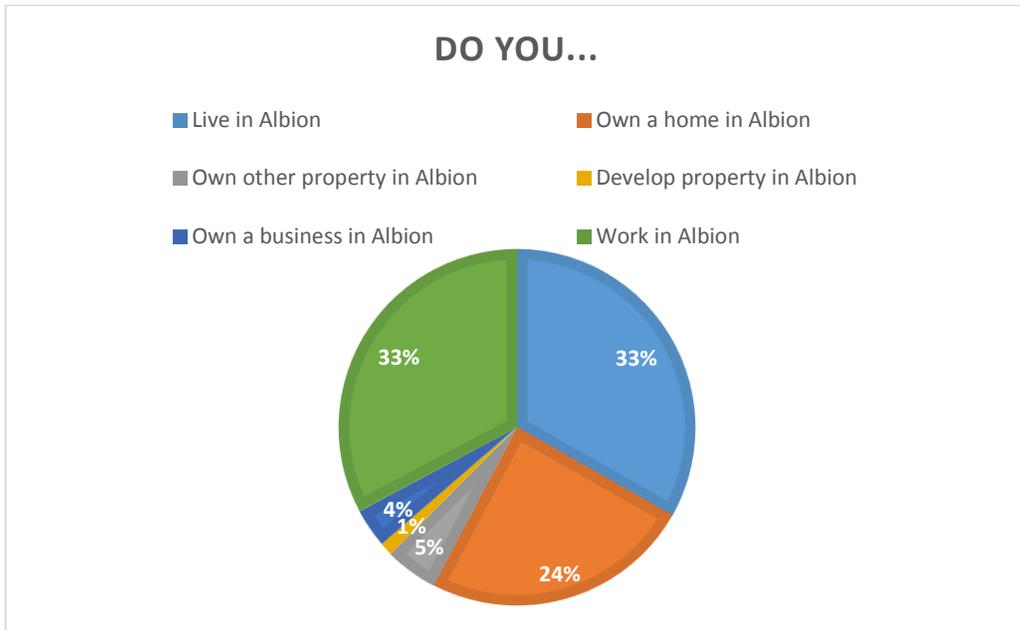
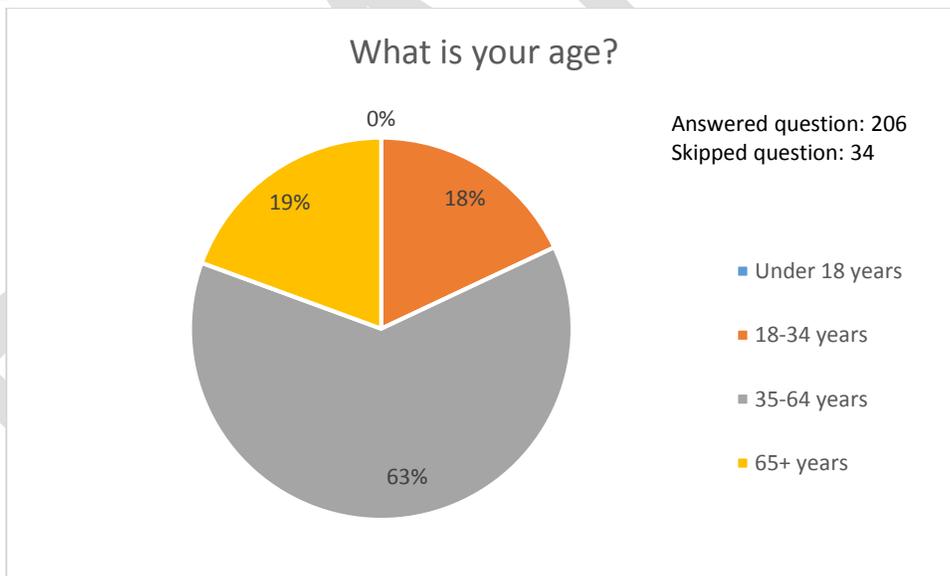


Table 2



A number of planning documents supplement the City of Albion’s Comprehensive Plan:

- An Analysis of Residential Market Potential: The City of Albion – February 2015
- City of Albion Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016 – 2020
- Southcentral Michigan Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: September 2014 – W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research
- Calhoun County Master Plan: A Comprehensive Land Plan: Amended February 2013
- Downtown Market Strategy: The City of Albion – February 2006 – Anderson Economic Group
- Downtown Design Plan 1991

Social and Economic History

Albion's first settlers arrived in 1833. These visionaries formed a land development company called the Albion Company from which the City draws its name. In 1835, Methodist settlers established Albion College, a private college that has its official charter as a city.

Location

Throughout the course of its history, Albion's location and its access to transportation networks have been strategic assets that propelled its growth. Albion was founded at the Forks of the Kalamazoo River, the confluence of the river's north and south branches. During its early period as an agrarian economy, the river provided power for various mills that located on or near "the Forks". Through the 19th and 20th centuries, the city's steel facilities and foundries transported goods and products along the Chicago Road and two railroads. In 1844, the arrival of the Michigan Central Road brought with it an influx of industry and population. A second railroad, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad was completed in 1872. In the mid-20th century, transportation was expedited by two major interstate highways -- I-94 and I-69.

The City of Albion is located along the I-94 corridor in the eastern portion of Calhoun County. The city is bordered largely by Sheridan Township to the north and Albion Township to the south. The City of Marshall, county seat of Calhoun County, lies approximately 12 miles west of Albion.



The Kalamazoo River

Albion is within a short driving distance of several major metropolitan centers in the Great Lakes region. Via the interstate highway system, Albion is only 40 miles from Lansing, 53 miles from Ann Arbor and 47 miles from Kalamazoo. On a larger scale, it is 86 miles from Grand Rapids, 91 miles from Detroit, 98 miles from Toledo, and 93 miles from Fort Wayne, 175 miles for Chicago, 190 miles from Cleveland. In addition, Interstate 94 provides convenient access to international markets in Canada.

The Kalamazoo-Battle Creek International Airport is located 45 miles west of Albion. More than 20,000 flights per month depart from the airport. Its regional carriers provide service mainly to Detroit, Chicago O'Hare, and Minneapolis-Saint Paul, with limited flights to Atlanta.

Economic History

Like many cities throughout the Midwest, Great Lakes and North-Eastern regions of the United States, Albion has suffered the effects of deindustrialization. The city's economy has fundamentally changed with shifts that have taken place in domestic manufacturing and specifically in the automotive industry. Since 2001, Albion lost nearly 1,000 jobs in manufacturing, healthcare, and retail. This economic shift has caused a reduction in real and personal property tax revenue and an increase in vacant or under-utilized industrial spaces.

While no single industry has replaced the jobs and taxes generated by the automotive suppliers, several sectors have emerged in Albion with the potential to bring new vitality to the local/regional economy and community. These include small to medium-sized manufacturing, craft production facilities, alternative energy, and a major expansion by a Tier 1 automotive supplier.



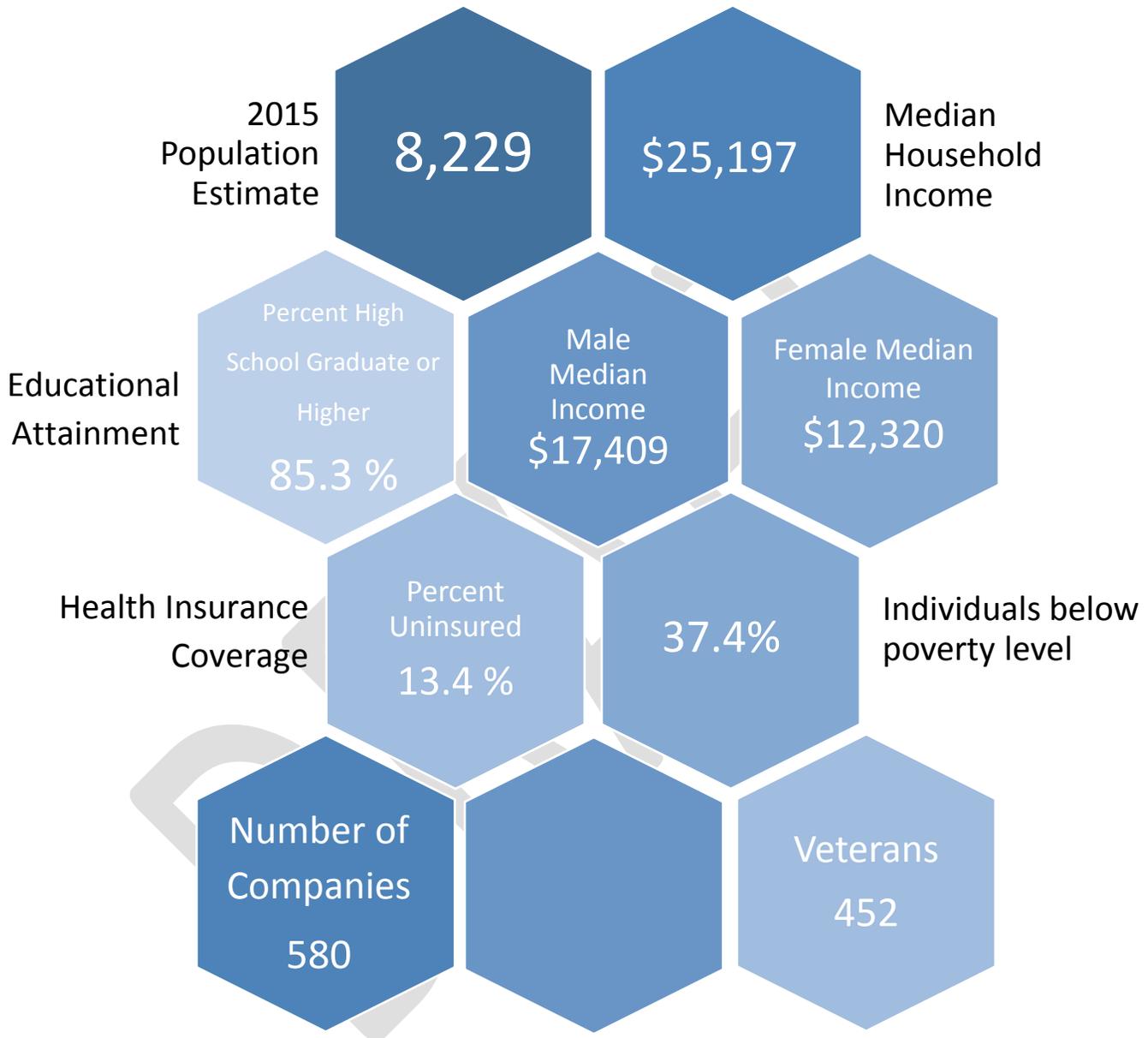
The Gardner House Museum

Albion College, the city's major anchor institution with over 452 employees, is working with the City to develop a strategic economic partnership to redevelop and revive the downtown. It is in the vested interest of the College, the City and its citizenry to forge new relationships and partnerships to help Albion recover its economic vitality. The College is leveraging the financial support of its alumni, intellectual capital of its faculty, strength of its student involvement, and reach of its network to begin the revitalization effort. Albion College has made it a top

priority to launch a long-term housing development strategy with financial incentives designed to attract new employees to live in the City and either rent or purchase residential dwellings. Another example of the College's commitment is its writing and receiving an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) grant, which allows 11 VISTA members to work with the College and City in 2016-2017 to boost economic development, education and health initiatives.

Demographics

Table 3



SOURCES:

2015 Population Estimate: Source: Vintage 2015 Population Estimates: Population Estimates; Median Household Income: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Individuals below poverty level: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Profiles; Educational Attainment: Percent high school graduate or higher: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Profiles; Health Insurance Coverage: Percent uninsured: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Profiles; Number of Companies: Source: 2012 Survey of Business Owners: Company Summary; Male Median Income: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Female Median Income: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Veterans: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Profiles

Declining Population Growth

During the 40-year period from 1970 to 2010, Albion and many surrounding communities lost population. The Nielsen Company estimates that in 2015, Albion’s population decreased to 8,240 persons, a decline of 4.4 percent from the 2010 Census. Without interventions, Nielsen projects that the city’s population would continue to fall to 7,961 persons by 2020, a decrease of another 3.4 percent.

Within the larger region, many counties registered a net population loss between 2000 and 2010. During this period, population was lost in most of the region covered by the Southcentral Regional Planning Council (SMPC). SMPC is a regional planning organization representing Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and St. Joseph Counties. During the 2000-2010 time frame, the rate of population growth in neighboring Jackson County slowed

Table 4: % Population Change, 1970-2010, City of Albion & Surrounding Communities

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	70-80	80-90	90-00	00-10
City of Albion	12,112	11,059	10,066	9,144	8,616	-8.7%	-9.0%	-9.2%	-5.8%
Albion Township	1,582	1,413	1,256	1,200	1,123	-10.7%	-11.1%	-4.5%	-6.4%
Homer Township	2,714	3,041	2,890	3,010	3,015	12.0%	-5.0%	4.2%	0.2%
Homer Village	1,617	1,791	1,758	1,851	1,668	10.8%	-1.8%	5.3%	-9.9%
Sheridan Township	2,469	2,257	2,139	2,116	1,936	-8.6%	-5.2%	-1.1%	-8.5%
Marshall City	7,253	7,201	6,891	7,459	7,088	-0.7%	-4.3%	8.2%	-5.0%
Marshall Township	2,232	2,564	2,655	2,922	3,115	14.9%	3.5%	10.1%	6.6%

Source: Calhoun County Master Plan, U.S. Bureau of Census

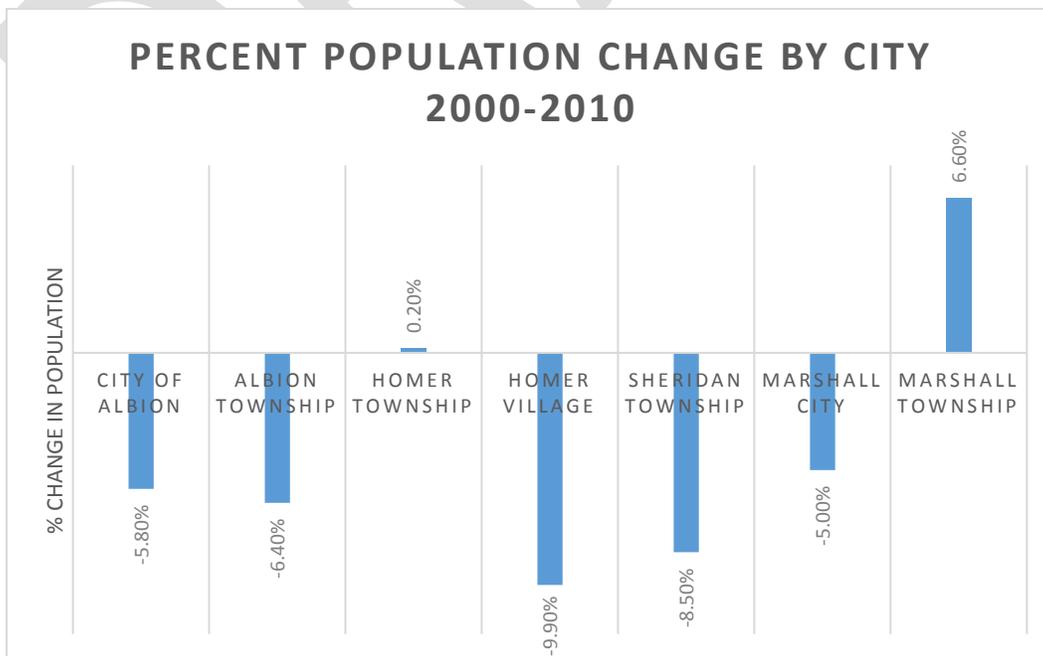
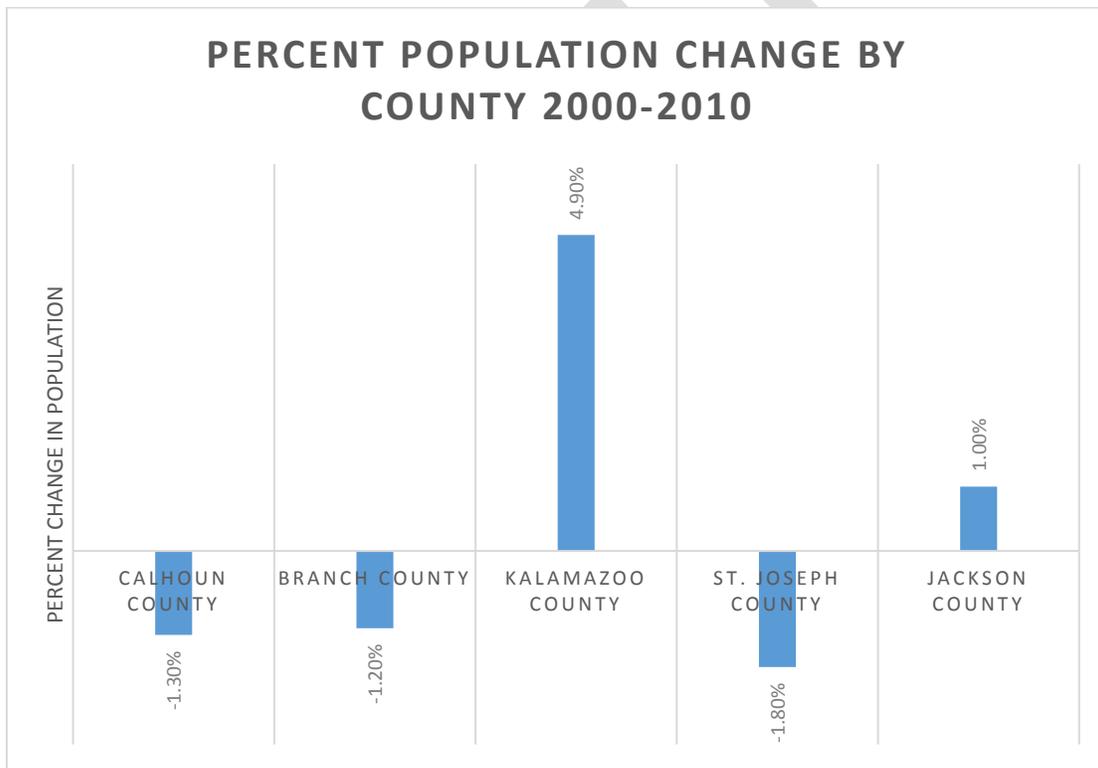


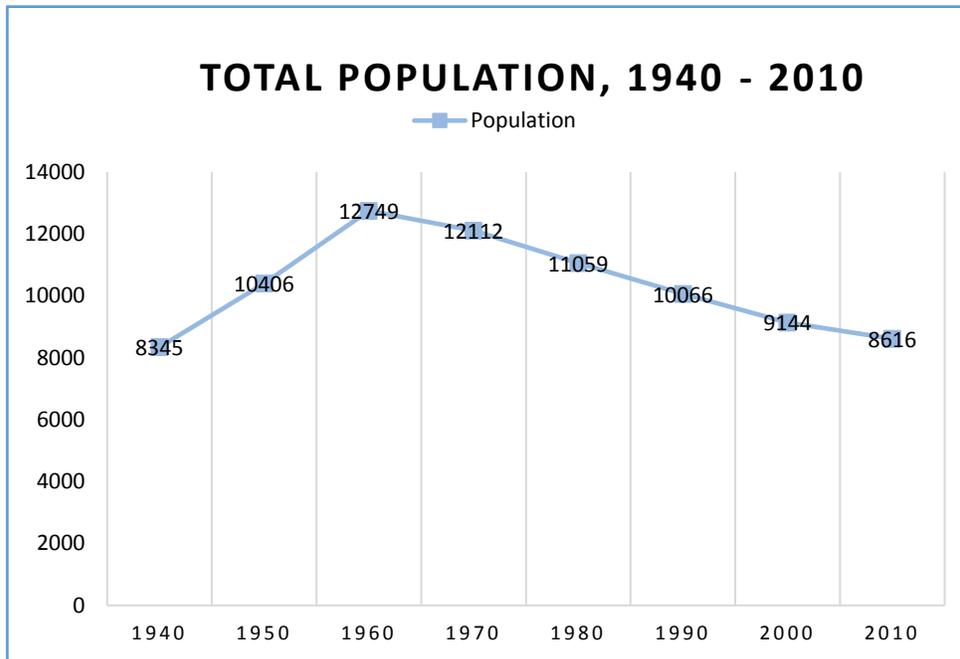
Table 5: % Population Change, 1960-2010, Calhoun County and Surrounding Counties

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	60-70	70-80	80-90	90-00	00-10
Calhoun County	138,858	141,963	141,557	135,982	137,985	136,146	2.2%	-0.3%	-3.9%	1.5%	-1.3%
Branch County	34,903	37,906	40,188	41,502	45,787	45,248	8.6%	6.0%	3.3%	10.3%	-1.2%
Kalamazoo County	169,712	201,550	212,378	223,411	238,603	250,331	18.8%	5.4%	5.2%	6.8%	4.9%
St. Joseph County	42,332	47,392	56,083	58,913	62,422	61,295	12.0%	18.3%	5.0%	6.0%	-1.8%
Jackson County	131,994	143,274	151,495	149,756	158,425	160,248	8.6%	5.7%	-1.1%	6.0%	1.0%



Sources: Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, U.S. Bureau of the Census
<https://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/mi190090.txt>

Table 6: Population Change
 Source: US Census 1940-2010



The Industrial Revolution brought with it steady growth in the City’s population and economic base. Between 1900 and 1950, the City’s population more than doubled. The chart above would suggest that in 1960 there was another upward spike in Albion’s population. However, it should be noted that the inclusion of the college student population in Census reporting is likely to account for this phenomenon. Conversely, the 5% decrease in population registered between 1960 and 1970 understates the dynamics in the “permanent” population, which actually decreased by a full 9.5% when controlling for the student population. In spite of these statistical anomalies, since 1960 Albion has experienced a steady decline in population. This downward population trend is consistent with the pattern of urban centers throughout the country, which lost population to their suburban neighbors.

Aging Population

Like the rest of the nation, Albion’s population is aging as the Baby Boom generation (people born between 1946 and 1964) make their way through the life cycle. Between 2000 and 2010, “Baby Boomers” began entering the retirement phase of their lives. In 2000, the Baby Boom generation entered the new millennium with ages ranging from 36 to 54. Ten years later in 2010, they were between the ages of 46 and 64. In 2010, the median age was 28.1. It had increased from 23.5 in 1980 and 26.5 in 1990.

Since 1980, Albion has experienced a downward trend in the percentage of people ages 25-44. One contributing factor to the 23% decrease in the 25-44 age group between 2010 and 2000 is the exodus of the Baby Boom generation from this segment of the population. A second factor is the

outmigration that occurred due to plant closings and economic dislocation. The lack of population growth coupled with the aging and retirements of Baby Boomers will undoubtedly impact the availability of labor in Albion and throughout the region, especially in construction trades and manufacturing skilled trades where an increasing number of Baby Boomers are retiring en masse. During the next 20 years, the aging of Baby Boomers will also have serious implications on healthcare and housing markets in Albion and throughout the region. In spite of these demographic changes and the increased need for health care services, Albion lost its hospital. One participant in the community survey expressed the desire for an urgent care option with walk-in and after hours services.

Table 7: Age Distribution

City of Albion – 2010

Source: U.S. Census 2000-2010

Age	2000	% of Pop	2010	% of Pop	% Change 2000-2010
Under 18 Years	2,356	25.8	1,872	21.7	-20.5
18 to 24 years	1,801	19.7	2,159	25.1	19.9
25 to 44 years	2,099	23	1,613	18.7	-23.2
45 to 64 years	1,660	18.2	1,848	21.4	11.3
65 years and older	1,228	13.4	1,124	13	-8.5
Total population	9,144		8,616		

Table 8: 25-44 Cohort

City of Albion – 2010

Source: U.S. Census 1980-2010

Age	1980	% of Pop	1990	% of pop	2000	% of Pop	2010	% of pop
25-44	2,314	20.9%	2,405	23.9%	2,099	23%	1,613	18.7%

Another significant trend within the city of Albion is the loss in population of children ages 14 and under. Between 2000 and 2010, there was a decrease of about one-third of the size of the 5 to 9 and 10 to 14 age groups. This trend has had adverse effects on K-12 school enrollment.

Table 9: Population: Ages 5 to 24 Years

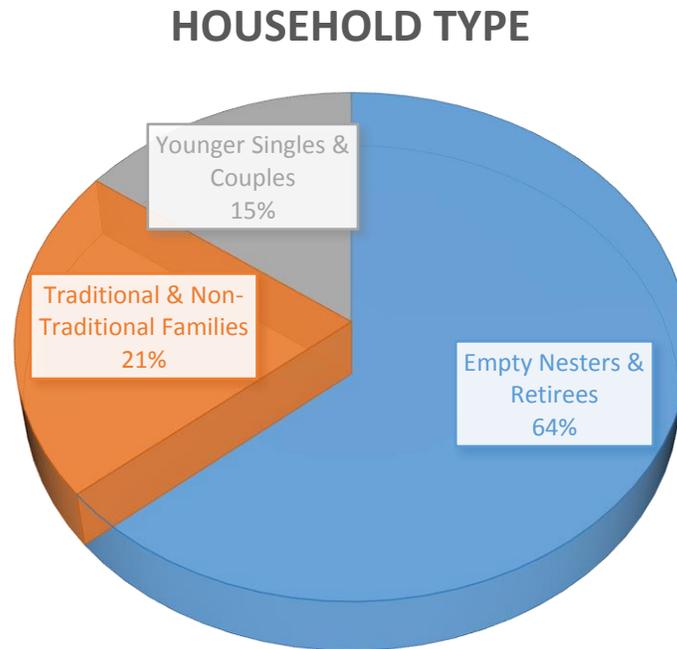
	Number 2000	% of Pop	Number 2010	% of Pop	% Change 2000-2010
Under 5 years	606	6.6	574	6.7	-5.3
5 to 9 years	752	8.2	525	6.1	-30.2
10 to 14 years	621	6.8	439	5.1	-29.3
15 to 19 years	1,019	11.1	1,129	13.1	10.8
20 to 24 years	1,159	12.7	1,364	15.8	17.7

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

Life Stage

Life stage denotes the stage of life of a given household – ranging from initial household formation, through family formation, empty-nesting, to retirement. Of the 2,785 households estimated in Albion in 2015, nearly 64% are comprised of “empty nesters and retirees”.

Table 10: 2015 Household Classification by Life Stage
City of Albion, Calhoun County, Michigan



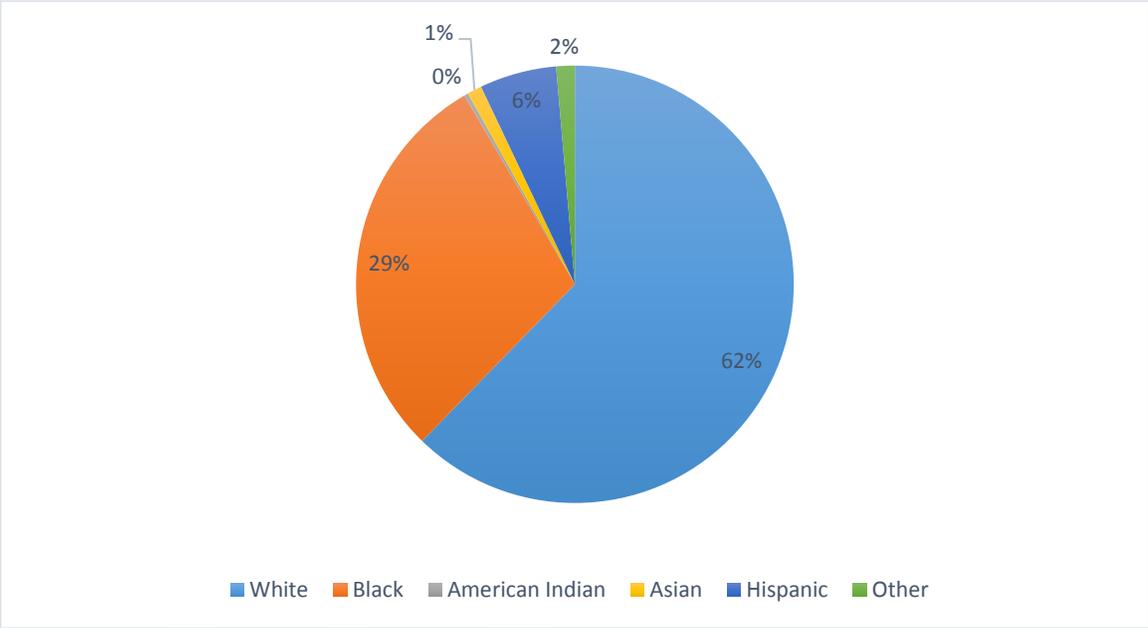
SOURCES: The Nielsen Company; Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

Racial Composition

Table 11 below depicts the racial composition of the City of Albion as of 2010. Over the last 20 years, the racial makeup of the city has remained fairly consistent, although there have been slight fluctuations in the actual percentages. As of the 2010 Census, nearly two-thirds of Albion’s current residents were White. Nearly one-third were Black. In previous years, between the years 1950 and 1980, the racial composition underwent a significant shift with an inverse trend between the City’s White and Black populations. The Black population

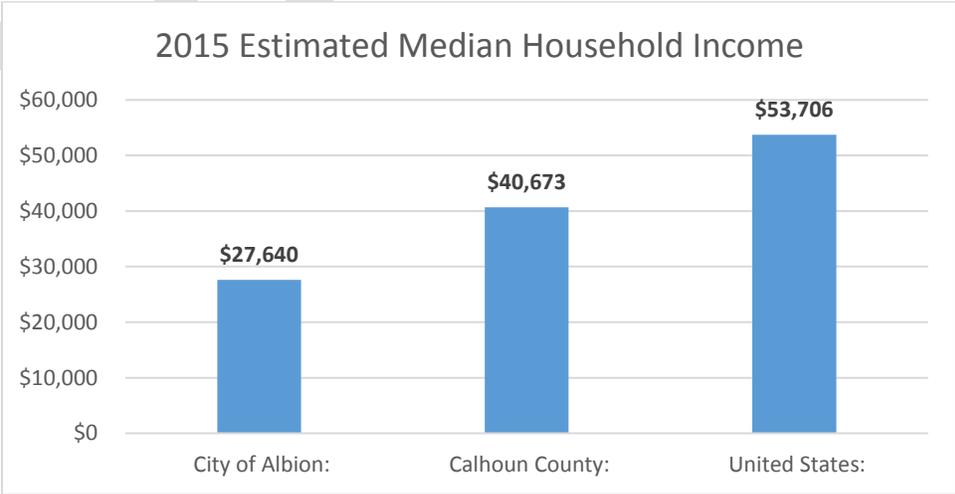
increased in both absolute and relative terms. Between 2000 and 2010, the City’s Hispanic population increased in absolute terms from 416 to 500. This is consistent with regional and national trends concerning the increasing number and percent of Hispanics in the population. In previous years, the “Hispanic or Latino” classification underwent several changes in definition. As a result, the decrease in absolute numbers between 1980 and 2000 may be a statistical aberration.

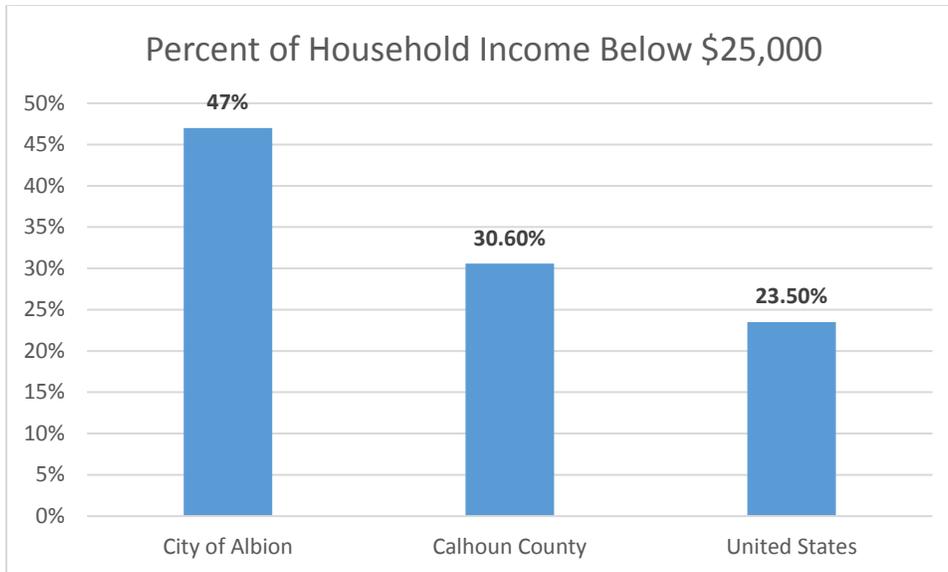
Table 11: Racial Composition
 Source: US Census 2010



Income

Table 12: Income





SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Census; The Nielsen Company; Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

In 2015, the Nielsen Company estimates Albion’s median household income in the city at \$27,640, which is about 51% of the national median of \$53,706 and about \$13,000 less than the county median. During this period, nearly 47% of Albion’s households had incomes below \$25,000.

Workforce

As a result of macroeconomic changes, automation, decentralization, and relocation of manufacturing operations and jobs, unskilled workers and youth have been the hardest hit by the economic restructuring that has taken place in the American economy. As of 2015, over 42% of Albion’s residents over age 16 were not currently in the

labor force. People “not currently in the labor force” include stay-at-home parents, who have not held and are not looking for jobs, the elderly, and the chronically sick and disabled. In addition, this count includes many “prime age workers” who are discouraged and disillusioned and have disinvested and given up on trying to find a job. These individuals have left the workforce.



“The Molder” Statue

Table 13: Employment Status
 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-
 Year Estimates

Subject	Albion city, Michigan			
	Total	In labor force	Employed	Unemployment rate
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Population 16 years and over	6,862	53.8%	43.5%	19.2%
AGE				
16 to 19 years	884	36.4%	30.0%	17.7%
20 to 24 years	1,173	72.2%	54.8%	24.1%
25 to 44 years	1,692	81.7%	65.6%	19.7%
45 to 54 years	809	67.9%	56.1%	17.3%
55 to 64 years	1,019	46.2%	38.4%	17.0%
65 to 74 years	652	13.8%	13.8%	0.0%
75 years and over	633	4.7%	4.7%	0.0%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN				
One race	6,724	53.0%	43.7%	17.5%
White	4,779	55.5%	48.8%	12.1%
Black or African American	1,804	45.3%	28.9%	36.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	59	78.0%	78.0%	0.0%
Asian	39	76.9%	76.9%	0.0%
Some other race	43	39.5%	23.3%	41.2%
Two or more races	138	92.0%	31.2%	66.1%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	284	63.4%	37.3%	41.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	4,585	55.4%	49.4%	10.7%
Population 20 to 64 years	4,693	69.2%	55.4%	20.0%
SEX				
Male	2,142	71.9%	53.4%	25.8%
Female	2,551	67.0%	57.0%	14.9%
POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS				
Below poverty level	1,467	50.9%	27.5%	46.0%
DISABILITY STATUS				
With any disability	754	28.8%	19.6%	31.8%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				
Population 25 to 64 years	3,520	68.2%	55.5%	18.6%
Less than high school graduate	384	31.5%	19.5%	38.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,224	66.4%	50.2%	24.4%
Some college or associate's degree	1,194	68.3%	57.6%	15.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	718	90.8%	80.4%	11.5%

In reading Table 13, it should be noted that American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing statistical survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Although the numbers are estimates, the data is useful in helping to understand certain characteristics within the community. Business users, including those who make site location decisions, have access to the same data.

The City of Albion and Albion Economic Development Corporation (EDC) serve as intermediaries between the city's workforce and employers and the region's workforce development network. The City and EDC respond to



Albion EDC Industrial Park

employers by making appropriate connections to resources and networks that deliver qualified candidates. The City and EDC work with local partners to help workers build their capacity, in order to compete for and perform in 21st century jobs. This underscores the importance of developing a local and regional education-to-employment system to prepare Albion's workforce for 21-st century careers. Centers like the Regional Manufacturing Technology Center (RMTC), operated by Kellogg Community College and located in the Fort Custer Industrial Park in Battle Creek, are key to the development of Albion's workforce. RMTC

provides a five-week introductory program for manufacturing skills that is customized for the manufacturers located in the industrial park and elsewhere in Calhoun County.

In addition, the City supports employers' talent attraction efforts by creating the atmosphere necessary to attract new talent. Through place making efforts, which are discussed later in the Comprehensive Plan, the City can help create the vibrant downtown and walkable communities sought by young professionals. One important assumption of the Comprehensive Plan update is an understanding that the quality of housing impacts the attractiveness of the city, which impacts the level of artistic and cultural activity, which impacts the number of entertainment options, which impacts the attractiveness to talented and skilled workers, which impacts the level of economic activity.

Table 14: Commuting Patterns

	Residential employment	Barry	Branch	Calhoun	Kalamazoo	St. Joseph
County employment		22,564	19,496	47,330	87,581	21,754
Barry	11,005	6,928	27	334	353	29
Branch	12,476	49	6,630	912	227	723
Calhoun	49,979	2,175	1,459	26,972	5,366	632
Kalamazoo	102,330	2,251	754	4,038	58,550	2,480
St. Joseph	19,030	115	1,050	386	1,555	10,238

SOURCE: Upjohn Institute for Employment Research

Redevelopment of housing in Albion is important not only to its existing residents, but also in the talent attraction efforts of businesses located within the local area and those throughout the region. The existing workforce is very mobile. People who are in the labor market are willing to commute to neighboring areas for employment. For example, Table 14 shows that in 2012 there were nearly 50,000 jobs in Calhoun County; however, of the 47,330 employed residents fewer than 27,000 of them worked within the county.

Table 15: Employment Change

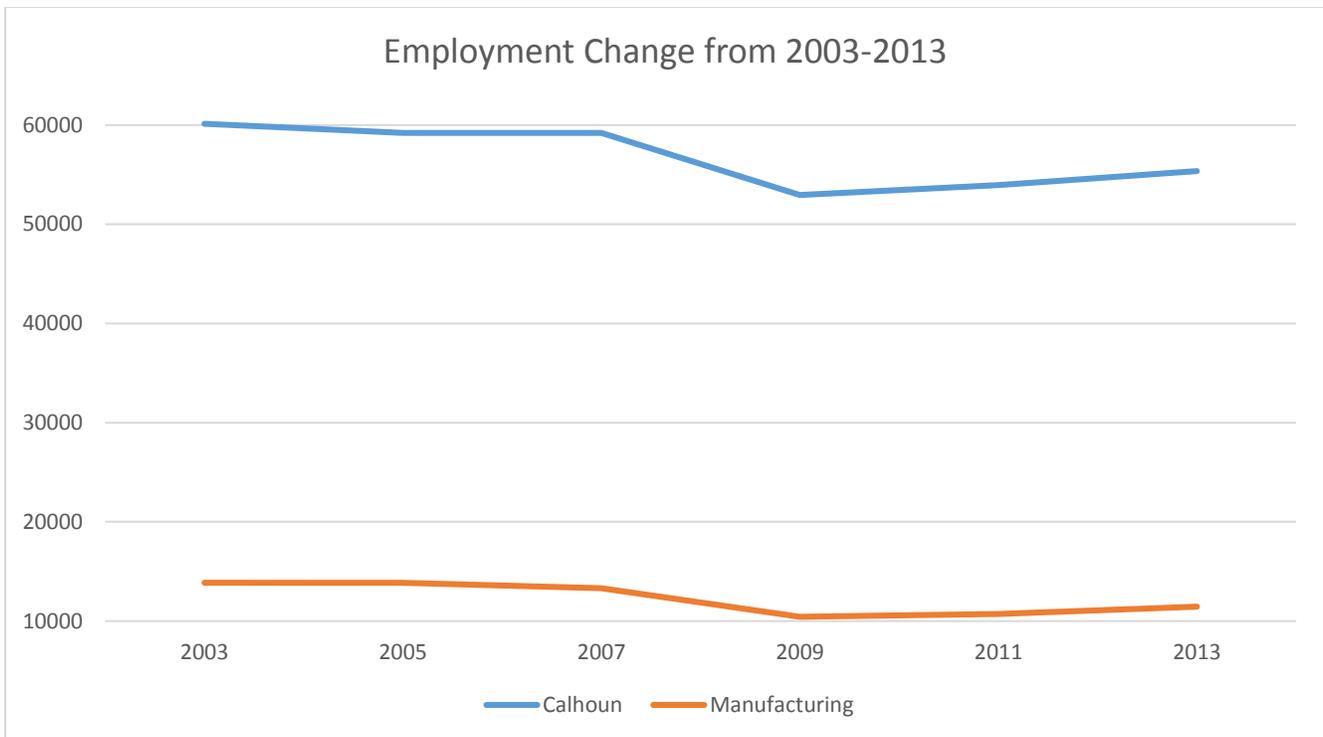
	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	Change 2003-2013	
							Number	% Change
Calhoun	60,131	59,209	59,209	52,953	53,962	55,362	-4,769	-7.9%

Source: The Upjohn Institute for Employment Research

Table 16: Employment Change in Manufacturing, 2003 to 2013

	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	Change 2007-2013		Change 2003-2013	
Calhoun	13,862	13,847	13,297	10,432	10,700	11,465	-1,832	-13.8%	-2,397	-17.3%

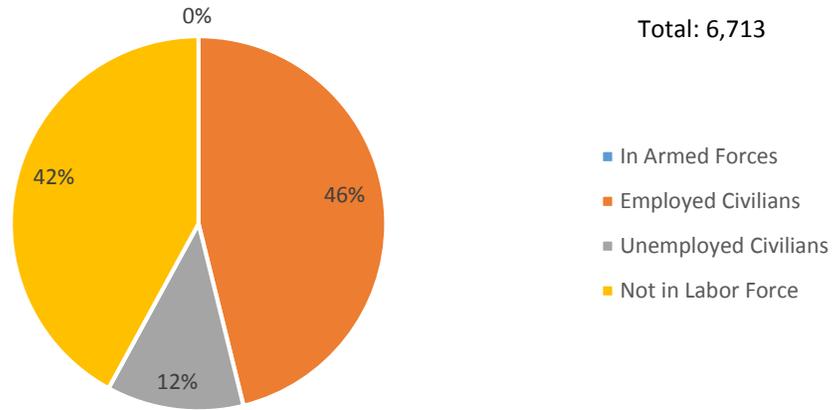
Source: The Upjohn Institute for Employment Research



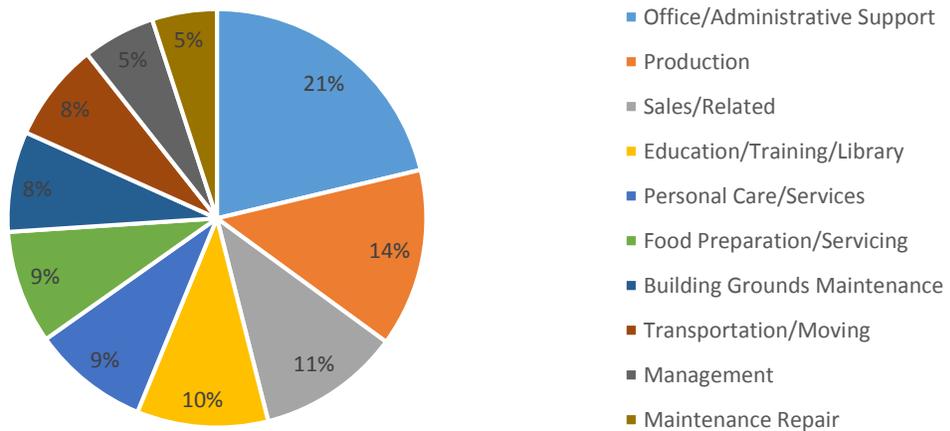
From 2003 to 2013, a shift took place in the economic base within the five-county area served by the Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC). Throughout the region, employment fell by 13,200 jobs, nearly 6.0%. Calhoun County lost over 4,700 jobs. However, as employment in the manufacturing sector decreased, employment in healthcare and other service sector activities increased. One question for Albion to consider is whether there are niche opportunities within the healthcare sector to meet the needs of its community, especially the senior and disabled populations. Nursing and residential care facilities are examples of industries that meet a need within the population and create jobs. Although jobs in other sectors are important, manufacturing continues to be a vital base industry. Most manufacturing products are sold to customers outside of the county and region, which draws money into the local economy.

Table 17: Employment Information
 City of Albion
 2015 Estimates

Employment Information for the City of Albion 2015
 Estimates: Population 16+

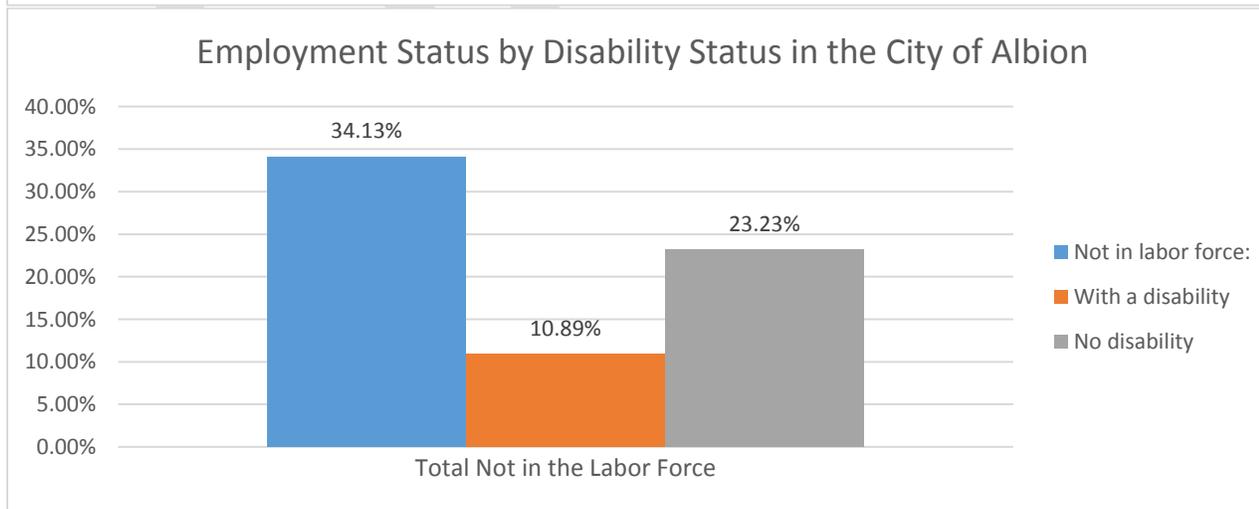
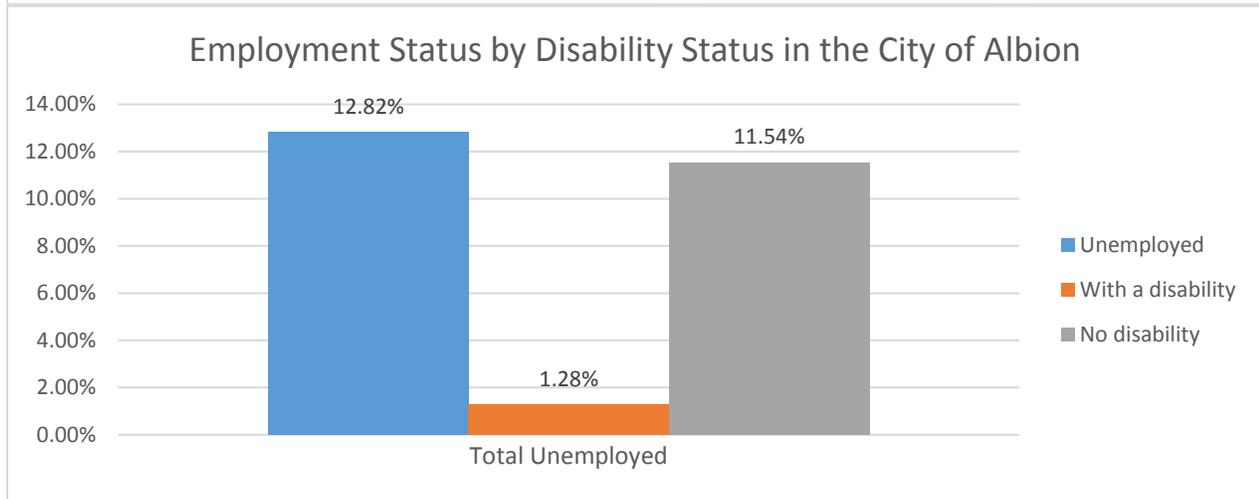
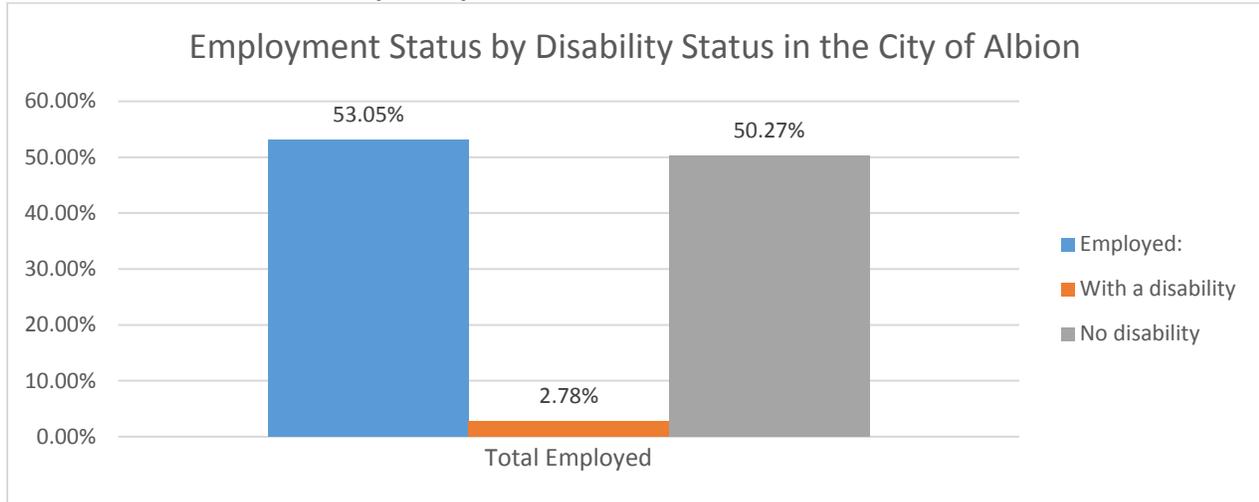


Top 10 Civilian Occupations for the City of Albion 2015
 Estimates



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census; The Nielson Company; Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

Table 18: Employment Status by Disability Status
City of Albion: Civilian population 18 to 64 years
2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_5YR_C18120&prodType=table

Poverty

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in Albion in 2014, including children, there were 2,702 people below poverty level. In many instances, children whose parents are not currently in the labor force lack educational qualifications and social and other skills and unable to rise out of poverty.

According to the 2000 Census figures, nearly 32% of the population received Social Security income. Eight percent or 264 households received public assistance. About 7.6% of the population received Supplemental Security Income.

Table 19: 1999 Government Transfer Payments

Households	3,291	100%
With Social Security Income	1,406	31.8%
Mean Social Security Income (dollars)	\$ 10,634	
With Supplemental Security Income	249	7.6%
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	\$ 4,931	
With public assistance income	264	8.0%
Mean public assistance income (dollars)	\$1,717	

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Plan Elements

NEIGHBORHOODS

Strengthen and beautify Albion's neighborhoods

Urban infill and Brownfield Redevelopment

The City is collaborating with a diverse array of stakeholders to redevelop and rebuild its neighborhoods and create a more vibrant community. Albion has an aging housing stock. Almost 54% of the city's housing stock was built prior to 1950. Less than seven percent of all units were built since 1980. In 2015, almost 20 percent of all city housing units were estimated to be vacant. Of the 2,785 occupied units, 43.6% were rented and 56.4% were owner-occupied. Community residents and leaders recognize the need to increase the availability of housing options.

Albion is a diverse community. Albion College, a premiere four-year residential college, attracts an influx of academic talent, both in terms of students as well as faculty and staff. At the other end of the spectrum, Albion's senior citizens are an integral part of the fabric of the community. Therefore, it is important that the City's housing strategy range from the development of loft apartments to considering the array of options available for seniors, including assisted living. A number of respondents to the Community Input Survey expressed concern regarding the lack of options for senior housing. Several respondents indicated that there is a demand for condominiums and cited examples of people who have left the community because these options are not available. As new housing products are developed, it will be important to consider issues of accessibility and accommodations of barrier-free design, in order to allow all persons, regardless of ability, weight, height, or age, equal access to facilities.

A target market analysis (TMA) produced by Zimmerman/Volk Associates reports that there is demand for new housing units in and around downtown Albion. Approximately 42% of the potential housing market is comprised of young singles and couples, about 35% represent families, and 23% are empty nesters and retirees. According to the TMA, about 38% currently live within the City, approximately 32% live elsewhere in Calhoun County, with the balance being drawn from neighboring counties and elsewhere. Their housing preferences include apartments, townhouses, and single-family houses. Although there is demand for smaller rental units and a diverse array of product types, there is a disconnect between available housing units and the preferences of many in the housing market. Most of Albion's available housing units are single-family houses. Over 69% of the city's 3,478 housing units are single-family detached houses. However, nearly 65 percent of all households in Albion contain just one or two persons. The TMA encourages development of rental units, especially on the upper floors of commercial buildings that are along or adjacent to Superior Street, the main corridor in Albion's central business district. Mixed-use developments blend residential and other uses and create economic activity.

The introduction of new and/or renovated market and affordable-rate units in and around the downtown area will create a healthier balance of housing types and incomes. Between now and 2022, an estimated 432 housing units could be absorbed in and around the downtown area. This

includes both market-rate and affordable apartments, townhouses, single family houses, lofts and condominiums.

Nationwide, there has been a significant shift in preferences from suburban subdivisions toward mixed-use, walkable urban neighborhoods. The two largest generations in American history – Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) and Millennials (born between approximately 1982-2000) are having a significant influence on housing markets. Many are singles or couples without children. Due to a combination of economic and lifestyle preferences, including their recollection of the housing market collapse in 2008, many prefer to rent rather than own and enjoy living in downtown areas. A critical mass of residential housing in the downtown increases the density and contributes to the vibrancy of the downtown. As more people live downtown, spending is increased in the downtown.

Albion has a significant number of retirees. In 2015, there were 545 households that would be considered “Struggling Retirees” with income largely from Social Security, supplemented by small pensions. Nearly all live in substandard housing. Some of Albion’s seniors would prefer to live in dwelling units that require minimal upkeep and low maintenance expense, and if given appropriate housing choices, would choose to remain in their current neighborhoods. There is an opportunity to stabilize neighborhoods by raising awareness of resources to assist seniors in staying in their homes, encouraging homeowners to improve their homes, and providing new homebuyers with information about available financing tools and incentives. Homeownership helps to instill a sense of pride and create a more stable local economy.

Working in partnership with the Calhoun County Land Bank, the City of Albion has and is taking steps necessary to eliminate blight, encourage infill housing development, and attract private investment. In preparation for infill development, the Land Bank has demolished a number of blighted residential structures in the neighborhood that is located west of South Superior Street, south of West Cass, and north of West Erie. The Urban Renewal Area (also known as the Renaissance Area) is another priority area for infill housing development.

Blight elimination was noted as a major concern by a number of participants in the Community Input Survey. Some people did acknowledge the work that the City is doing to address this problem. Others called for greater code enforcement.

Redevelopment of abandoned industrial facilities, which are located in close proximity to residential areas, can spark the revitalization of surrounding neighborhoods. Through adaptive reuse, historic buildings like the former Sheldon Hospital can be repurposed and used for something other than the purpose for which they were originally built. Today, the Sheldon Place Apartments, the most expensive apartments in Albion, are fully occupied with a waiting list. At most, only one or two units become vacant each year and are quickly filled. Unfortunately, the lack of this type of high quality housing has forced residents seeking it to leave and prevented others from relocating to Albion. Regardless of the price point, the City encourages through thoughtful planning the revitalization of underutilized and vacant properties.

According to the TMA, downtown artist housing could potentially be developed through the use of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). Artists who do not have high incomes could likely qualify for income-restricted units, as has been the case with many developments across the country. A

requirement would be that at least one member of the household have a portfolio review by a qualified committee established for that purpose. The LIHTC program can be augmented with federal historic tax credits to redevelop buildings within an historic district. Artspace Project, Inc., in Minneapolis, Minnesota, has used this strategy and provided consultation for similar redevelopment projects around the country.

Objectives

1. Develop and implement a neighborhood revitalization strategy to eliminate blight, improve public safety and environmental health, and strengthen residential areas as well as former industrial sites that are in close proximity to neighborhoods (1-10 years)
2. Expand, diversify and market housing options to meet the needs of residents of varying life stages, life styles and income levels (e.g. Senior/retirement living, College corridor neighborhood, downtown lofts, affordable and low income housing, etc.) (1-10 years)
3. Develop and implement a certification/registration program for rental and vacant properties (1 year)
4. Highlight progress and achievements as part of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

DRAFT

EDUCATION

Support and strengthen a Pre-K through 16 education system for the community

In May 2016, Albion merged and consolidated its school district with its neighbor, Marshall. Albion voters made the difficult decision to approve the annexation, in order to deal with the challenges of declining enrollment and revenue. Through a cooperative agreement, Albion's high school and middle school age children were already attending Marshall Schools. Many factors must be considered in handling this complex phenomenon of bringing together two historic sports rivals with racially, culturally, and socioeconomically different student populations.

Participants in the Community Input Survey expressed that education is a very important issue and a deciding factor for many parents with school age children.

Objectives

1. Continue joint meetings with Marshall Public Schools, Albion College, other area schools and community partners to assess, document and support a comprehensive, “post-annexation” K-16 education strategy. An important element would be a communications plan to share information and inform the parents and guardians of Albion’s school-age children. (1-2 years)
2. Strengthen and promote City programs (summer and after school tutoring, the arts, recreational programs, etc.) that support youth in and around Albion (1-5 years)
3. Partner with area school districts, the Albion Recreation Department, the Albion District Library, neighborhood organizations, the Build VISTA Team, Albion College, and other partners to develop educational opportunities outside of the classroom for all school-age children in the Albion (49224) area. (1-2 years)
4. Utilize Albion College and other institutions of higher education to support college preparation and access. Strengthen the Albion College Access Network. (1-2 years)
5. Highlight progress and successes in the educational arena as part of the City’s comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

BUSINESS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Retain and attract jobs to Albion by supporting business growth and development

Economic development looks at the flow of activity within the community due to the health, growth, and attraction of companies as well as the development and attraction of talent. The Albion Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is the City's lead economic development organization and works to assist and recruit business and industry in the greater Albion area. The City contributes to this partnership in a number of ways, which ranges from tapping into networks that build workforce capacity to leveraging public sector incentives to assist with business growth and development. In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, the City's contribution also includes making zoning ordinance decisions that spur commercial and industrial growth.

Another manner in which the City of Albion contributes to economic growth and development by creating the physical and cultural amenities that help employers attract new talent. For example, the downtown is in close proximity to Albion College. The College is taking proactive steps to redevelop housing in the blocks between Superior Street and Albion College. Not only will this benefit Albion College, but it will also benefit local companies in their efforts to attract professional and technical workers. The City contributes to this type of development in a number of ways, including facilitating the demolition of abandoned sites, taking steps necessary to ensure that zoning ordinances do not prohibit desired development, and attracting public sector funding to make redevelopment projects happen.

The City of Albion recognizes the importance of trained and skilled workforce. The City will work with workforce development partners and key stakeholders to train and prepare workers, who are able to compete for jobs throughout the region, enabling companies locally and throughout the region to better compete in the global market place.

In addition, the EDC and City will work to strengthen the local business support network and help existing businesses and entrepreneurs to access it. Through its business incubator, the EDC has hosted dozens of young companies and initial ventures that have developed into successful businesses. Business development activities include helping companies access new markets through procurement, exports, and business to business (B2B) opportunities.

The City desires to be both strategic and realistic in identifying ways to diminish the flow of dollars that leave the community through sales leakage. This occurs when consumers make purchases outside the local area either at a physical location or online. In being strategic, the City desires to identify niche businesses that will draw local residents to shop in Albion on a frequent basis and that will even appeal to visitors. In being realistic, the City recognizes that in certain consumer categories it will be difficult for local businesses to compete on price, given the economies of scale achieved by major retailers and big-box stores.

Farmers Market and Food Hub

Farmers markets benefit community members by increasing their access to fresh fruits and vegetables and keeping farming in Michigan a viable business. Farmers markets add to a community's quality of life. In colder months, Albion's farmer's market moves indoors to the site of the Albion Food Hub. The Food Hub includes a business incubator and commercial kitchen for those interested in growing businesses in the food industry.

Kitchen space, including stoves, burners, pots, pans, etc. can be rented to community members with the desire to develop their own products for potential sale at the Food Hub. The facility may also be rented for users who need the facilities to cook large amounts of food for private events like weddings or graduation parties. With the farmers market and Food Hubs, local families and community members have better access to fresh, healthy food, locally grown fruits and vegetables at reasonable prices. Community gardens have also been a means of helping local residents contend with food insecurity—not being certain that they would always get enough to eat -- educating them on the process of growing a variety of fruits and vegetables from seeds, allowing them to prepare meals together based on food items that have harvested, developing a work ethic and even developing entrepreneurial skills by allowing participants to sell products at the Albion Farmer’s Market, the French Market held annually in June, and to employees in the public schools and at the college. Community gardens in urban areas provide a positive use for vacant land and a local food source.

Objectives

1. Work closely with Albion EDC, the Chamber and other partner entities to support local businesses with a proactive business retention and development strategy (1-3 years)
2. Encourage broader participation with local stakeholders (public, private, non-profit, higher education, civic, and business) in the formulation of Albion’s economic diversification strategy (1-3 years)
3. Take proactive steps to connect Albion’s talent base with employment opportunities (e.g. partnering with Michigan Works, Albion College Career & Internship Center, etc.) (1-3 years)
4. Take all of the necessary steps to have Albion certified by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation as a Redevelopment Ready Community (1-2 years)
5. Continue support for programs and initiatives that foster entrepreneurship (e.g. promote Albion business incubators and encourage minority, youth, and other business development) (1-10 years)
6. Highlight the progress of Albion’s economic development strategy within the framework of the City’s comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10)

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Stabilize the downtown and enhance its historic character

According to leadership guru John Maxwell, “Momentum is the most powerful force for change.” Momentum is hard to gain, but once it begins to build, it becomes a source of energy that fuels change. Momentum is building in downtown Albion with significant investments in anchor projects like the renovation of the Bohm Theatre, restoration of the Mary Sheldon Ismon House, and construction of a new hotel.



The beautifully restored Bohm Theatre, which reopened in the fall of 2014, has been a significant catalyst in the revitalization of downtown Albion. The project involved the exterior and interior historic renovation of the 1929 landmark theatre. An important community gathering place was restored with the historic rehabilitation of the Mary Sheldon Ismon House, located at 300 S. Clinton. The Ismon House is listed as an eligible property in a National Register of Historic Places. A \$9.2 million project is underway to construct a four-story, 72-room boutique hotel at the corner of Superior and Porter streets. The hotel would house a restaurant, conference and ballroom space.

With the increased numbers of young adults/Millennials and Baby Boomers wanting to live in high-density, walkable neighborhoods, it is important for Albion to make the downtown area an attractive place to live, work, and play. A few participants in the Community Input Survey expressed concern regarding the condition of downtown storefronts. The Michigan Main Street program could be a tool to assist with the beautification and restoration of downtown storefronts.



In addition to the Bohm Theatre, the downtown is home to Kids ‘N’ Stuff Children’s Museum. Museums and other cultural attractions can be primary destinations/trip generators as well

as supplemental attractions and activities for tourists already in an area for other reasons. Museums serve local residents, visitors on day trips from outside the local area, as well as those who stay overnight in the local area. The economic impact of museums is measured as the direct sales of museum admission and purchases within the museum as well as the secondary sales and expenditures in the local area, which include shopping, restaurant meals, gas and lodging.

Recreation and Entertainment

Revitalizing the downtown is key to Albion’s future. Community Input Survey respondents understand the importance of creating a vibrant downtown. Respondents recognized the importance and impact associated with special events like Swinging at the Shell and community festivals like the Festival of the Forks. However, the lack of entertainment options and nightlife was cited as a concern by some respondents. There is also demand for more restaurants. The image and vibrancy of the downtown is important in keeping and attracting all groups – young people, families, retirees, and visitors.

Albion College enriches the city with cultural and recreational amenities unusual for a town its size. The College’s

\$3.5 million project to upgrade its athletic facility will liven the athletic arena portion of the campus, which could have a spillover effect on downtown commerce. The Nancy G. Held Equestrian Center, which opened in the fall of 2004, regularly hosts events for regional horse organizations. The Held Center is a 340-acre resource intended to draw community members and those from surrounding communities who are interested in equine sports and will be another economic engine for the community.



In addition, the City desires to be both strategic and realistic in identifying ways to diminish the flow of dollars that leave the community through sales leakage. This occurs when consumers make purchases outside the

local area either at a physical location or online. The City desires to be strategic in identifying niche businesses that will draw local residents to shop in Albion on a frequent basis and that will even appeal to visitors. The City desires to be realistic in recognizing that in certain consumer categories it will be difficult for local businesses to compete on price, given the economies of scale achieved by major retailers and big-box stores.

Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation

Historic preservation protects the historic building stock and transforms aging structures into buildings that contribute to the vibrancy and economic revitalization of communities. The Superior Street Commercial Historic District is listed on the National Register and two other districts -- the Eaton/Superior Residential District and the Albion Historic District -- are eligible to be listed on the National Historic Register. In addition to the Bohm Theatre and the Mary Sheldon Ismon House, other historic assets include the Gardner House Museum, a preserved historic

building, and a Carnegie library built in 1919, which houses the Albion Public Library. Albion College also has at least two Michigan registered historic buildings.

Objectives:

1. Strengthen and better utilize the Downtown Development Authority (3-5 years)
2. Attract commercial development to the downtown that will serve the needs of the community and complement the existing mix of businesses (e.g. restaurants, retail, entertainment, etc.) (3-5 years)
3. Analyze and evaluate the City's parking situation and create a plan for improving parking management and balancing parking space supply with demand. (1-3 years)
4. Monitor the balance of non-profit (i.e. tax exempt) and revenue generating (i.e. tax base) development in the downtown district (1-10 years)
5. Explore the establishment of a historic district commission (1 year)
6. Continue to create incentives and attractions for residents, college students and tourists to visit the downtown (e.g. Hotel, Bohm Theater, Kids N Stuff, the Ludington Center) (1-3 years)
7. Highlight progress of downtown development efforts within the context of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

DRAFT

MAJOR CORRIDORS

Focus planning and resources to enhance and transform the city's major corridors

The City of Albion has several important gateways and corridors leading into the community and connecting it to other communities, i.e. downtown commercial district, Albion College, the I-94 Business Corridor, Austin Avenue and the south entrance on M-99. There is an opportunity to enhance major gateways, develop strong and consistent visual themes along these corridors, and stabilize them. This would include improving the gateways into the City with attractive landscaping, streetscape, and signage; establishing strong visual themes and physical linkages to strengthen connections between the corridors, and improving access for walking and biking.

Objectives:

1. Develop a Corridor Improvement Plan that strengthens the visual and physical connections between the Downtown Commercial District, Albion College, the I-94 Business Corridor, Austin Avenue and the south entrance on M-99. (1-2 years)
2. Enhance the City's major gateways (as described above) with appropriate landscaping, street-scaping, and signage (1-10 years)
3. Explore the possibility of establishing a Corridor Improvement Authority (1 year)
4. Work with surrounding communities to extend/connect Albion's major corridors to the region (e.g. establishing an MLK corridor between Albion and Marshall, and complementing corridors with non-motorized, regional trail systems) (1-5 years)
5. Highlight progress and achievements in the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

PARKS AND RECREATION

Enhance and protect the environment

In the fall of 2015, the City of Albion Parks and Recreation released its 2016-2020 Master Plan. The Master Plan focuses on: (1) maintenance and improvement of the current parks and recreation system; (2) ensuring that there are sufficient recreational opportunities within walking distance of low-income neighborhoods; (3) enhancing recreational opportunities associated with the Kalamazoo River and the parks along the river and associated with the river trail; (4) addressing access to and safety within the park system; and (5) ensuring that, whenever possible, all applicable policies and environments promote physical activity.

The City of Albion owns and maintains approximately 100 acres of parks and trails. The 17 developed city parks range in size and scale from mini-pocket parks to the nearly 40-acre Victory Park. The facilities and amenities provided in these parks include a range of options, such as playground, canoeing, ball fields, basketball courts, shuffle board, and a disc golf course. The City also maintains five properties that have not been designated permanent parks or open spaces, but are being utilized in this fashion. These include a dog park, memorial garden, and landscaped greenspaces. Finally, the 1.6 mile Albion River Trail along the Kalamazoo River bisects the city from Victory Park to Harris Field.

Albion's riverfront and parks are important community assets that provide recreational opportunities and offer places for solace and reflection, and contribute to placemaking and the overall quality of life. The Community Input Survey confirmed that the people of Albion value its parks and natural areas. Respondents rated these amenities as "important" to the health of the community. One respondent suggested the creation of a splash park or skate park. The future of the Kalamazoo River dam, the millrace, and maintenance of the swimming area of the Rieger Park Pond were concerns raised by another respondent.



Victory Park Playground



Albion is located along the North Country National Scenic Trail.

TRANSPORTATION

Improve Albion’s transportation network to accommodate and promote various modes, including walking, biking, automobiles, passenger rail and public transportation

The I-94 business loop is a 4.4 mile Michigan highway that runs south from I-94 along Eaton Street, west along Austin Avenue, then south via Superior Street into downtown Albion. M-99, a state trunkline also runs through Albion which terminal point in Lansing to the north and Ohio to the south. The Michigan Department of Transportation has scheduled a \$4 million reconstruction of M-99 (Superior Street) within the downtown in 2017. The project includes the replacement of bricks, concrete base, subbase, curb and gutter, storm sewer system, water main, sidewalk, and trees.

Table 20: Transit

2015 Estimates

Transportation Access

	Albion	Calhoun County	United States
No Vehicle Ownership	13.7%	8.1%	9.1%
Own 1 vehicle	44.6	37.4	33.9
Walk to Work	17.2	3.8	2.8
Take public transportation to work	0.0	0.6	5.0

SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Census; The Nielsen Company; Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

Overall, Albion residents have lower rates of automobile ownership than the nation as a whole. In 2015, the Nielsen Company estimated that 13.7% of Albion’s population did not own vehicles. This is in comparison with 8.1% of Calhoun County and 9.1% of the United States population. A substantially large percent of the population – 17.2% -- walked to work. This is in comparison with 3.8% and 2.8% of the population of Calhoun County and nationwide, respectively. So few people in Albion use public transportation as a means to get to work that it registered at 0.0% in comparison with .6% county-wide and 5% on the national level.

In 2000, it was estimated that 3.0% of Albion’s population worked at home and the mean travel time to work was 15.8 minutes.

Working in partnership with AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers, the Albion City Transportation Workgroup looks to raise awareness of existing transportation services that are available to the people of Albion. In addition, the City is collaborating with Michigan Works! and others to help Albion residents overcome transportation barriers that might prohibit them from obtaining and maintaining jobs within the city and the region.

Community Action, the Albion-Marshall-Connector, and private taxi companies provide transit services for Albion and its surrounding areas. Community Action specializes in providing curb-to-curb services in Calhoun County for seniors age 60 and over and disabled persons age 18 and over. Community Action transports its clientele to medical appointments, handle grocery shopping and banking, places of employment, congregate meal centers, and other necessary trips. The Albion-Marshall Connector serves a broader audience and provides

intercity bus services between Albion and Marshall. The service has been in operation since 2014, when the City of Marshall expanded its offerings to bridge the 12-mile gap between both the two communities.

Community Action provides services to its targeted clientele on a donation basis. The Albion-Marshall Connector charges a nominal fee. Both services operate mainly on weekdays and Saturday mornings. Albion's most active taxi service offers more flexibility in scheduling. However, its moderately priced fares are still cost-prohibitive for certain segments of the population.

Albion is served by both Amtrak and Greyhound. Amtrak stops daily in Albion, which is located along the Wolverine passenger route between Chicago and Detroit. The Wolverine route continues north from Detroit reaching Pontiac. Albion's historic train station was built in 1882 and in the mid-1980's was restored to its original condition.

Non-Motorized Network

Albion's River Trail is an important community asset. The trail runs through Albion for 1.6 miles along the Kalamazoo River. Many towns around the country enjoy their trails as both a recreational and economic resource. A 2014 study released by the Michigan Department of Transportation reported that bicycling provides an estimated \$668 million per year in economic benefit to Michigan's economy, including employment, retail revenue, tourism expenditure, improved health, and increased productivity. The City is looking to strengthen its connections with regional and even a national network of trails.

Albion is strategically located along the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST), one of the nation's longest hiking and backpacking trails, extending 4,600 miles from New York to North Dakota. The trail is administered by the National Park Service. Albion also has the opportunity to pursue a "Trail Town" designation, by identifying and promoting the amenities and attractions that would be of interest to trail users. Trail towns have developed systems of trails and created a welcoming environment with amenities like bike and kayak racks and picnic tables at access points. Wayfinding signage and kiosks encourage trail users to visit and patronize downtown businesses and use amenities like ATM machines, air at gas stations, or Internet access at the public library.

Water trails also translate into regional economic growth. As one of the cities located along the Kalamazoo River, Albion would benefit from its participation in a regional recreation plan, which would culminate in the creation of a water trail for the Kalamazoo River. The City has expressed its support of the proposed project, which is being spearheaded by the Southcentral Michigan Planning Council, the Pottawatomie Resource and Development Council and the Kalamazoo River Watershed Council. The water trail will cover the entire navigable portion of the river, approximately 120 miles.

Albion is poised to take the next step in leveraging its trails as an element within its economic revitalization strategy. Trails are good for the health of local residents. They also link and connect people, which is good for the health of an economic region.

In addition to the recreational and economic benefits of developing a non-motorized network, the City recognizes the importance of building sidewalks, bicycle paths and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure to make walking and bicycling safer and more accessible for students who will continue to attend school within city limits.

Objectives:

1. Develop a motorized public transportation plan working in conjunction with the Calhoun County Transit system, Albion-Marshall Connector and other strategic partners (1-2)
2. Develop a non-motorized transportation plan (1-2)
3. Encourage walking, biking and other recreation by strengthening Albion's non-motorized trail network within the city as well as its connections with the region's non-motorized network (e.g. Iron-Belle Trail, North Country Trail, Kalamazoo River Water Trail, etc.)
4. Establish Albion as a "Trail Town" (1-2)
5. Continue to work cooperatively with MDOT, AMTRAK and other regional transportation partners and authorities to coordinate and improve major streets and other public transit systems.
6. Highlight progress and achievements in the comprehensive marketing campaign for the City. (1-10)

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MUNICIPAL SERVICES: Deliver high-quality municipal services that improve the quality of life in Albion

Maintaining quality infrastructure is important to every aspect of community growth and development, ranging from sidewalk maintenance to facilitating the use of high-speed telecommunications and other technologies. A resounding number of respondents to the Community Survey registered strong dissatisfaction with the condition of certain roads and neighborhood streets. This is certainly the top infrastructure concern expressed by many survey participants. One respondent also expressed concern regarding the possibility of losing federal funding for the stoplights on Eaton/Watson and Michigan Ave/Clark.

Green infrastructure

The citizens of Albion value its existing green infrastructure, e.g. parks, trails, etc. The City of Albion is partnering with others to develop a regional green infrastructure vision for the region. Green Infrastructure is both a network of green space and natural areas in our communities, along with built techniques such as rain gardens and bio swales that preserve the function of the natural ecosystem to benefit residents of the region. Rain gardens along roads help clean the rain water before it enters our rivers and lakes. Green infrastructure is a mechanism to provide recreational opportunities for citizens, increase tourism, and protect water quality.

The City of Albion planned and secured funding for trail development and construction of green infrastructure for control of storm water runoff. Storm water runoff is a major problem for municipal sewer systems and can lead to the contamination of drinking water.

Encourage Green Development

Albion's revitalization strategy embraces and encourages sustainable development. The City of Albion encourages green development practices in public, commercial, educational, and residential buildings, at the onset of projects and in the initial stages of planning. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present while being mindful of and not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Green development looks at improving the built environment while having a minimal impact on the natural environment. Green buildings make more efficient and effective use of the resources of energy, water, materials, and land. Beyond the environmental, social, and health benefits associated with green buildings, increasingly more studies make the case for the financial benefits in terms of the long run savings and payback from reduced energy and water consumption, reduced buildings' emissions, and improved and healthier work, learning, and living environments.

Green development ranges from reusing portions of existing structures, when possible, to minimizing impervious surfaces to reduce storm water handling/management, encouraging the creation of rain gardens and bio swales, green roofs, and the use of alternative energy.

Objectives:

1. Develop/formalize a Public Services Plan to determine needed enhancements in city administration, public safety, community health, and overall municipal services.
2. Develop/update a Capital Improvements Plan to enhance and maintain quality technological and physical infrastructure. Infrastructure includes: Roads and sidewalks; parking; water, sewer, and storm sewer utilities (1 year)
3. Evaluate fiber optic communications and other emerging technology infrastructure in order to address the current and future needs of the community's diverse array of stakeholders (ongoing)

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Appendix 1: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Goals and Objectives

Goal 1

Forge local, regional and global collaborations that support the City of Albion -- its people, its needs and its opportunities.

Objectives

- Work in collaboration with local and regional partners and AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers to assess community needs, increase organizational capacity and expand access to education, health care, quality food, economic opportunity and the overall quality of life for all residents (1-3 years)
- Develop a local food culture through increased access to healthy food and nutrition education that utilizes community resources including businesses, farms, community gardens, farmers market, food hub, and other organizations (1-5 years)
- Strengthen and increase the number of strategic collaborations with global partners (e.g. Noisy-le-Roi and Bailly, France, the Albion College/Global Liberal Arts Alliance, etc.) that bring international perspective and attention to Albion (1-3 years)
- Develop and utilize a *Partnership & Collaboration Agreement* with appropriate community partners (tbd) to further define goals, objectives and roles (1-2 years)
- Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy, working in collaboration with partner entities, to promote Albion as a desirable place in which to live, play, study, and invest (1-5 years)

Goal 2

Strengthen and beautify Albion's neighborhoods

Objectives:

- Develop and implement a neighborhood revitalization strategy to eliminate blight, improve public safety and environmental health, and strengthen residential areas as well as former industrial sites that are in close proximity to neighborhoods (1-10 years)
- Expand, diversify and market housing options to meet the needs of residents of varying life stages, life styles and income levels (e.g. Senior/retirement living, College corridor neighborhood, downtown lofts, affordable and low income housing, etc.) (1-10 years)
- Develop and implement a certification/registration program for rental and vacant properties (1 year)
- Identify neighborhood groups who can serve as ambassadors and champions for their respective areas (1-2 years)
- Highlight progress and achievements as part of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 3

Support and strengthen a Pre K-16 education system for the community

Objectives:

- Continue joint meetings with Marshall Public Schools, Albion College, other area schools and community partners to assess, document and support a comprehensive, “post-annexation” K-16 education strategy (1-2 years)
- Strengthen and promote City programs (summer and after school tutoring, the arts, recreational programs, etc.) that support youth in and around Albion (1-5 years)
- Utilize Albion College and other institutions of higher education to support college preparation and access. Strengthen the Albion College Access Network. (1-2 years)
- Highlight progress and successes in the educational arena as part of the City’s comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 4

Retain and attract jobs to Albion by supporting business growth, development, and attraction

Objectives:

- Work closely with Albion EDC, the Chamber and other partner entities to support local businesses with a proactive business retention and development strategy (1-3 years)
- Encourage broad participation with local stakeholders (public, private, non-profit, higher education, civic, and business) in the formulation of Albion’s economic diversification strategy (1-3 years)
- Take proactive steps to connect Albion’s talent base with employment opportunities (e.g. partnering with Michigan Works, Albion College Career & Internship Center, etc.) (1-3 years)
- Take all of the necessary steps to have Albion certified by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation as a Redevelopment Ready Community (1-2 years)
- Continue support for programs and initiatives that foster entrepreneurship (e.g. promote Albion business incubators and encourage minority, youth, and other business development) (1-10 years)
- Highlight the progress of Albion’s economic development strategy within the framework of the City’s comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10)

Goal 5

Stabilize the downtown and enhance its historic character

Objectives:

- Strengthen and better utilize the Downtown Development Authority (3-5 years)
- Attract commercial development to the downtown that will serve the needs of the community and complement the existing mix of businesses (e.g. restaurants, retail, entertainment, etc.) (3-5 years)
- Analyze and evaluate the City’s parking situation and create a plan for improving parking management and balancing parking space supply with demand. (1-3 years)
- Monitor the balance of non-profit (i.e. tax exempt) and revenue generating (i.e. tax base) development in the downtown district (1-10 years)
- Explore the establishment of a historic district commission (1 year)
- Continue to create incentives and attractions for residents, college students and tourists to visit the downtown (e.g. Hotel, Bohm Theater, Kids N Stuff, the Ludington Center) (1-3 years)
- Highlight progress of downtown development efforts within the context of the City’s comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 6

Focus planning and resources to enhance and transform the city's major corridors

Objectives:

- Develop a Corridor Improvement Plan that strengthens the visual and physical connections between the Downtown Commercial District, Albion College, the I-94 Business Corridor, and Austin Avenue, and the south entrance on M-99.. (1-2 years)
- Enhance the City's major gateways (as described above) with appropriate landscaping, streetscaping, and signage (1-10 years)
- Explore the possibility of establishing a Corridor Improvement Authority (1 year)
- Work with surrounding communities to extend/connect Albion's major corridors to the region (e.g. establishing an MLK corridor between Albion and Marshall, and complementing corridors with non-motorized, regional trail systems) (1-5 years)
- Highlight progress and achievements as part of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 7

Improve Albion's transportation network to accommodate and promote various modes, including walking, biking, automobiles, passenger rail and public transportation

Objectives:

- Develop a motorized public transportation plan working in conjunction with the Calhoun County Transit system, Albion-Marshall Connector and other strategic partners (1-2 years)
- Develop a non-motorized travel plan (1-2 years)
- Encourage walking, biking and other recreation by strengthening Albion's non-motorized trail network within the city as well as its connections with the region's non-motorized network (e.g. Iron-Belle Trail, North Country Trail, Kalamazoo River Water Trail, etc.) (Time frame?)
- Establish Albion as a "Trail Town" (1-2 years)
- Fortify relationships with MDOT, AMTRAK, Greyhound and regional transportation partners and authorities to coordinate improvements to major streets and public transit systems (1-5 years)
- Highlight progress, achievements, and testimonials as part of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 8

Deliver high-quality municipal services that improve the quality of life in Albion

Objectives:

- Develop/formalize a Public Services Plan to determine needed enhancements in city administration, public safety, community health, and overall municipal services. (1-3 years)
- Develop a Capital Improvements Plan to enhance and maintain quality technological and physical infrastructure. Infrastructure includes: Roads and sidewalks; parking; water, sewer, and storm sewer utilities, dam and millrace (1 year)
- Evaluate fiber optic communications and other emerging technology infrastructure in order to address the current and future needs of the community's diverse array of stakeholders (1-5 years)

Goal 9

Achieve consistency between the existing zoning code and the City's long-term goals for housing, commercial, and industrial development

Objectives:

- Evaluate and consider changes in zoning ordinances that are necessary to achieve desired land use patterns and align with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan (1-10)
- Explore the feasibility of establishing form-based code, starting in the downtown area (1-2 years)
- Adopt and update standards in the zoning ordinance to promote and encourage green infrastructure (1-2 years)

Goal 10

Build capacity and a network of organizations and services to address poverty and meet the needs of residents who cannot afford basic services

Objectives:

- Update comprehensive community needs assessments and asset maps to identify assets and determine needs (1-2 years)

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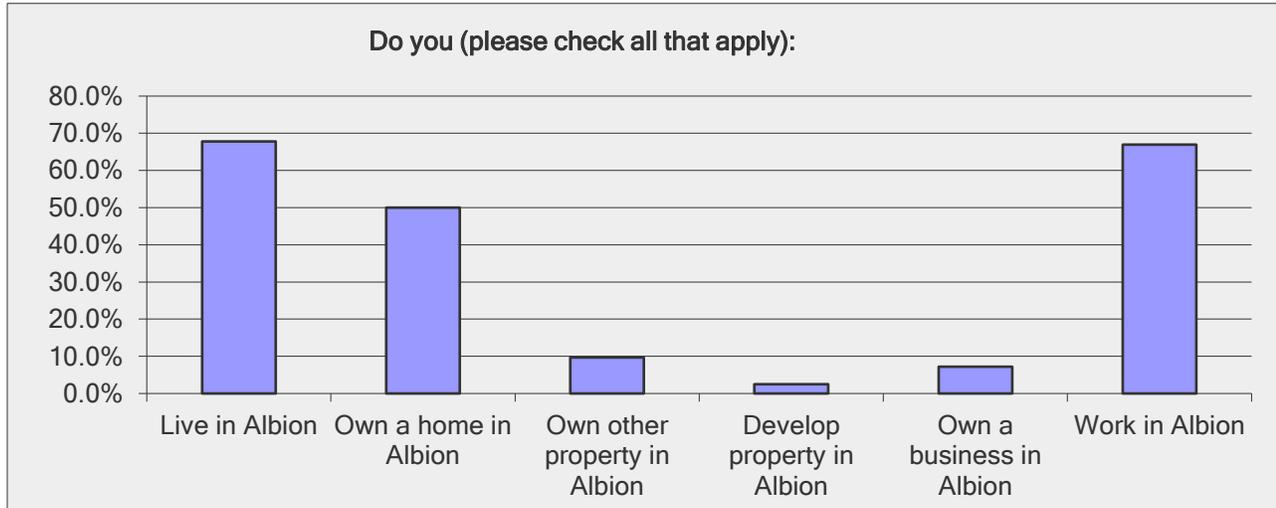
Appendix 2: Redevelopment Sites

Sites	Blight	Contamination	Length of vacancy	Utilities terminated by provider due to inactivity	Location: proximity to residential, river, downtown, or park	Rezoned from residential to B-1	Brownfield designation	Number of acres	Architectural Integrity	Historic value
1 Washington-Gardner					xx				x	x
2 Dalrymple	x	x	x		x			x		
3 Union Steel (plus 2 additional former Union Steel sites)	x	x	x		xx			x		
4 Austin School	x	x	x							x
5 "Gayle Mfg": 710 W. Cass St	x	x	x		x			x		
6 Harvard Site	x	x	x							
7 Parker Labs: 601 N. Albion	x	x	x							
8 Parker Labs: asphalt parking lot										
9 600 block of Austin Ave	x			x	x			x		
10 Schools: N. Berrien Street								x		
11 500 N. Berrien										
12 Browns Weld	x	x	x		xx					
Renaissance Area (Urban Renewal land)										
13					x					
14 Sheridan 425								xx		

Appendix 3: Community Input Survey Results

Provided by the Albion Community Foundation

Question 1



Question 2

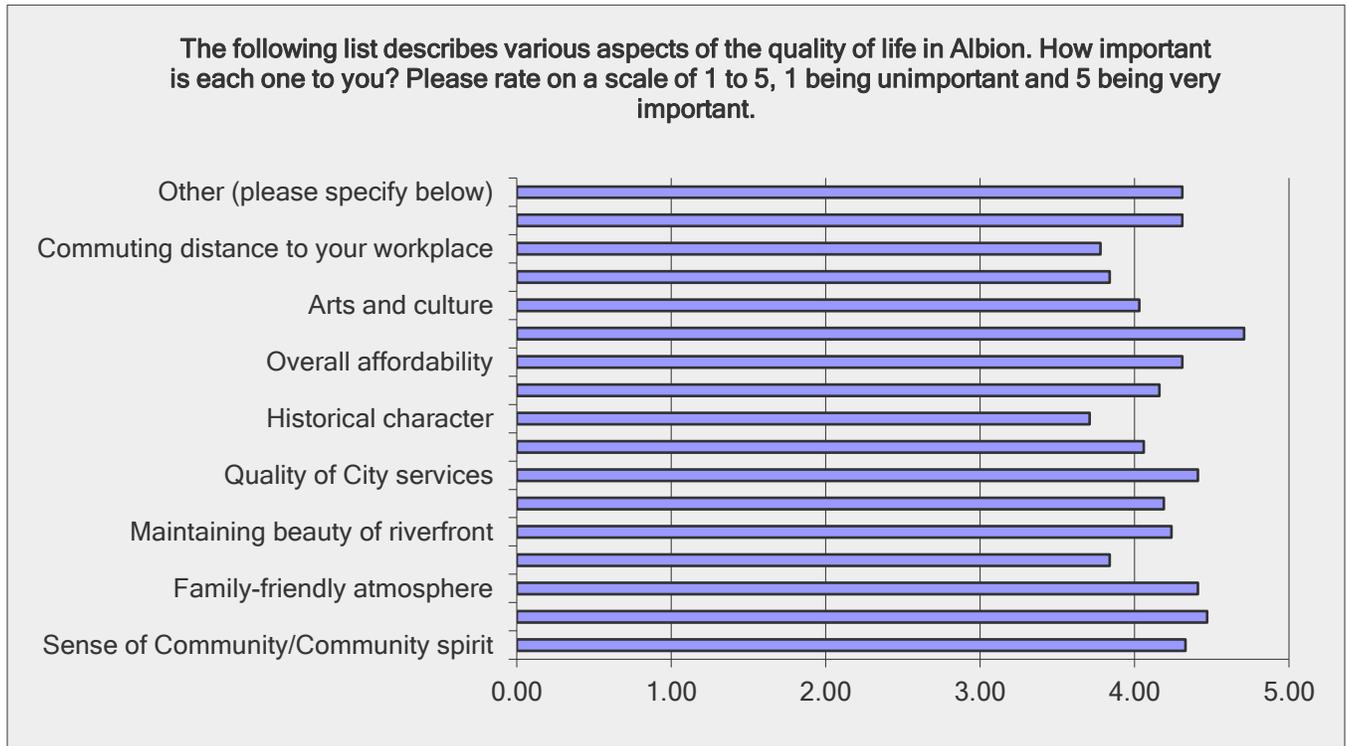
In general, how satisfied are you with the quality of life in Albion?

Answer Options	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Rating Average	Response Count
	5	42	92	86	10	3.23	235
	<i>answered question</i>						235
	<i>skipped question</i>						5

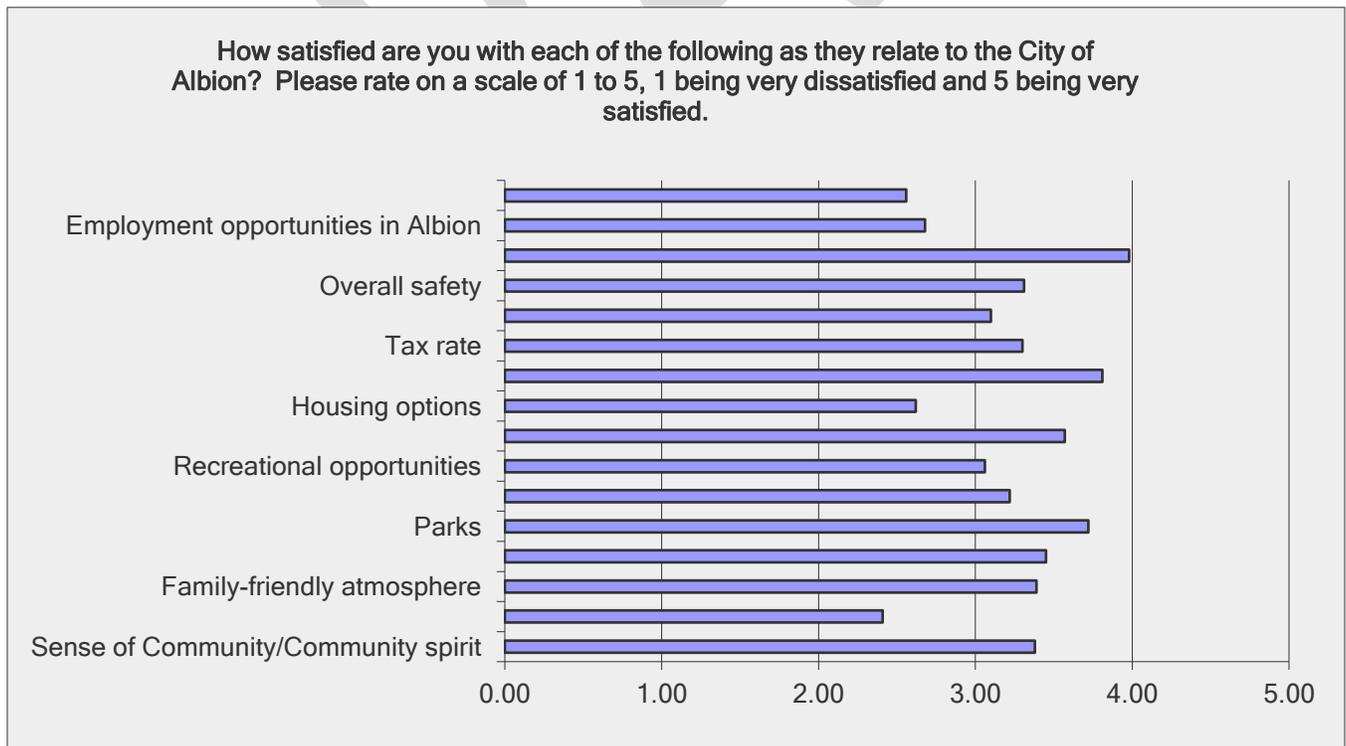
Question 3



Question 4



Question 5

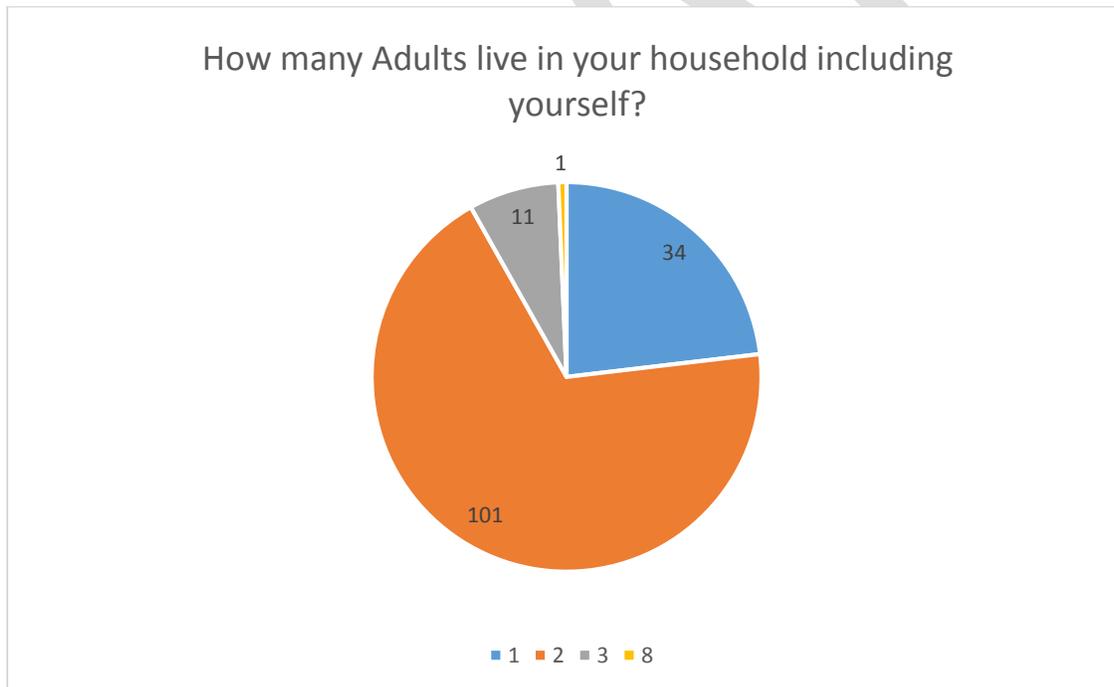


Question 6

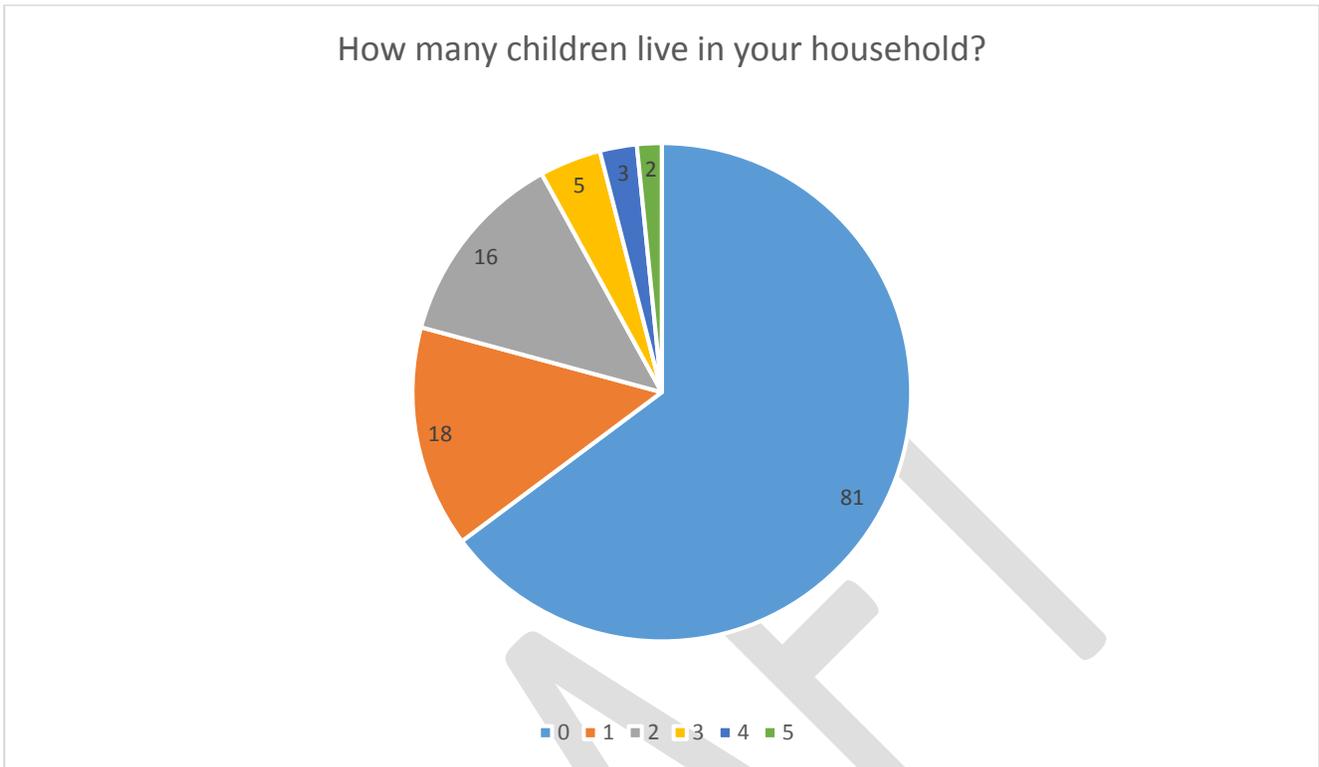
Please check all of the following that you would like to see in Albion:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Improved sidewalks	60.9%	126
Improved street lighting	45.9%	95
Bike lanes	44.0%	91
Bike racks/bike parking at more locations	37.2%	77
Benches downtown	52.2%	108
Historical markers/Historic tours	40.1%	83
Public art	50.7%	105
Art gallery/artist co-op space	43.5%	90
Transportation system between Albion & surrounding	52.7%	109
Retirement community	44.4%	92
Community center	52.7%	109
Other (please specify)	34.3%	71
answered question		207
skipped question		33

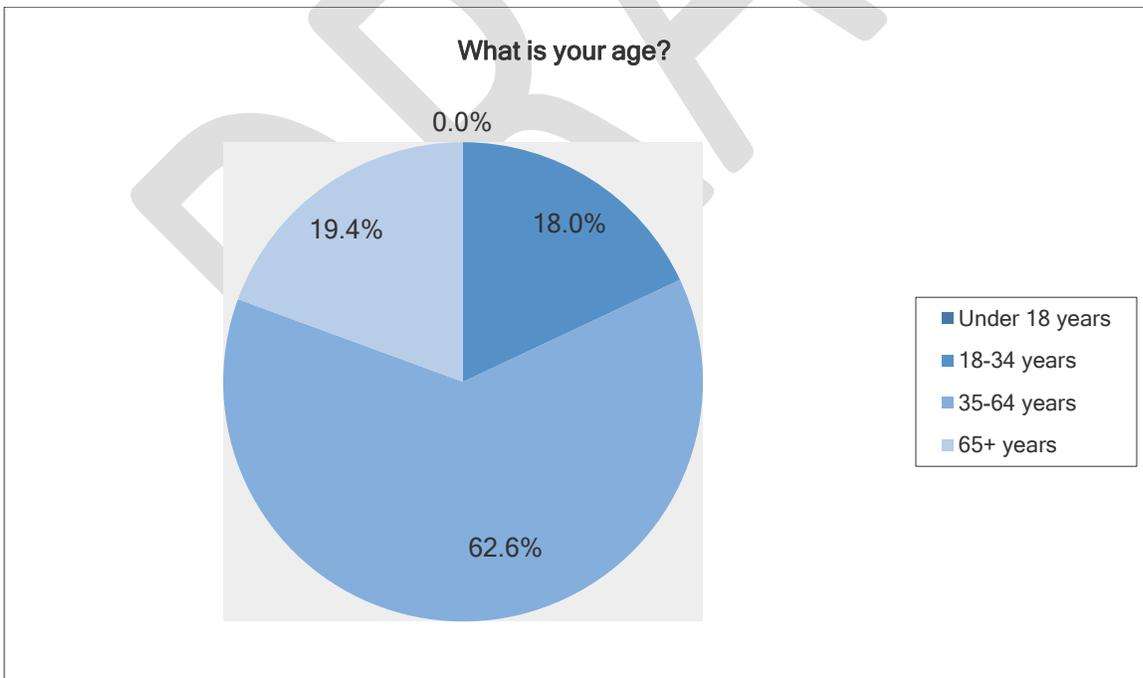
Question 7:



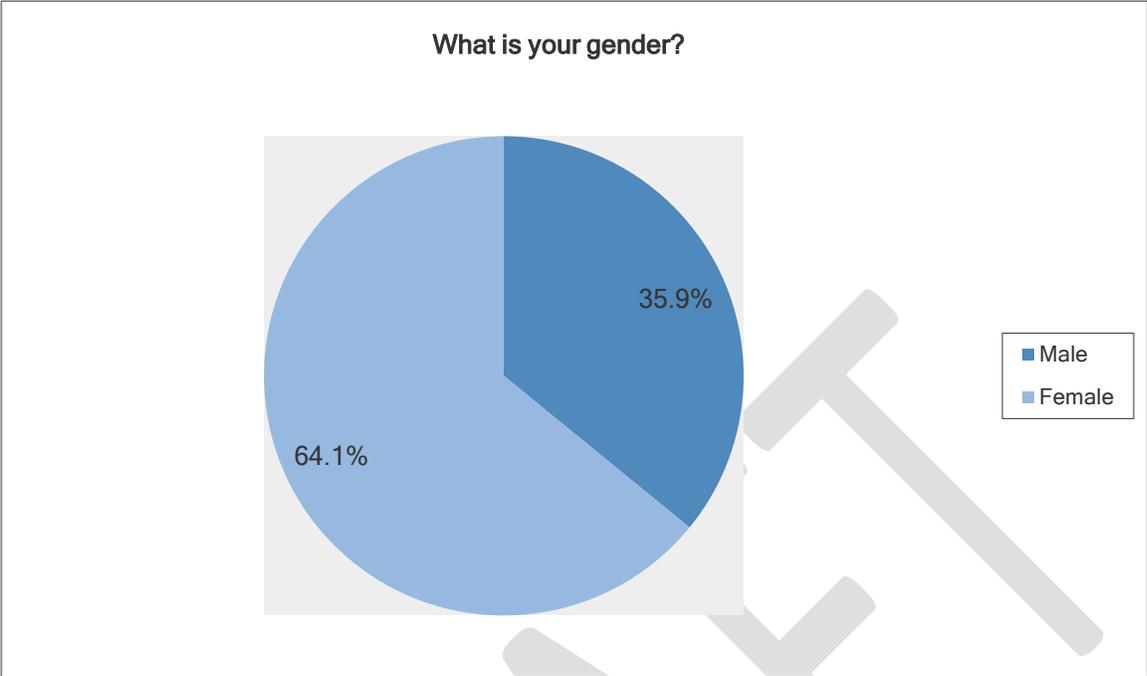
Question 8:



Question 9:



Question 10:





The City of
ALBION

2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

City of Albion
112 W Cass St. Albion, MI 49224
www.cityofalbionmi.gov

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What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Essentially, the Comprehensive Plan is a study of Albion's present conditions and a framework for future growth. The Comprehensive Plan provides a strategic focus and helps guide the community in future decision-making concerning land-use planning, social, economic, and environmental development. The plan identifies the community's strengths and assets as well as its opportunities for growth and improvement. It looks at Albion's past, where it wants to go in the future, and what needs to happen in order to achieve its vision of the future.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008; MPEA) requires an update of the plan at least every five years. Albion's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2000. Still very early in the process, the Planning Commission is seeking input from Albion's residents in updating the Comprehensive Plan.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

In creating this draft document, the Planning Commission looked back and reviewed the goals and objectives contained in the 2000 Comprehensive Plan Update to determine which goals had been accomplished, which were still relevant, and which were still high priority. Based on the Planning Commission's review and analysis, ten overarching goals along with corresponding objectives are proposed. Certain goals from the 2000 plan are strengthened and restated. A couple of new goals are offered.

This draft document:

- Provides current demographic data, describes changes that have taken place in Albion, and highlights certain emerging trends within the city and the region
- Provides an overview of the updated goals and objectives. They are summarized in Appendix 1.
- Identifies priority redevelopment sites

During a 95-day review and comment period, local residents, employers, business owners, and other key stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide feedback, discuss major challenges and opportunities, and participate in visioning. Input gained from interviews, Town Hall meetings, and other forums will be gathered and shared with both the Planning Commission and City Council. During this same 95-day period, the City and Planning Commission will continue with the technical evaluation and studies that are essential components of the Comprehensive Plan. At the end of the review and comment period, a public hearing will be held, regarding the Phase I Comprehensive Plan Update. The focus of Phase I is on adopting goals and objectives and a vision to guide Albion for the next 10 to 20 years. Your input is valuable. Citizen and stakeholder participation is key to this process.

Vision

Building a sustainable community requires diverse partnerships and collaboration, sound and thoughtful public policy, quality education institutions, business and economic opportunity, stable residential neighborhoods, diversity in arts, entertainment and recreational offerings, conservation and protection of the natural environment and access to services for all residents. The following Comprehensive Plan incorporates these fundamental community building blocks and provides a framework from which to address the most pressing needs and most promising solutions for re-imagining the City of Albion.

Albion is resilient. Its leadership is shaping the future instead of merely being shaped by it. In updating its Comprehensive Plan, the City's leadership is taking a serious look at the community's most pressing needs, identifying catalytic revitalization projects, and taking necessary steps to create the amenities that will attract people to the community and improve the quality of life for existing residents. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a living document that serves as a rallying point to help the City identify priorities, allocate resources, and chart the course for the future. The City of Albion is creating collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders, nonprofits, county, regional, state and federal leadership to make the plan a reality. The Comprehensive Plan encompasses a wide range of topics including housing, transportation, economic and business development, public and environmental health, entertainment and recreation, and public infrastructure.

Community Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement

Albion's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2000. Economic shifts and the housing crisis that took place in 2008 have changed many of the assumptions in the previous plan. Therefore, rather than rush through the planning process, the City of Albion is taking a phased approach in updating its Comprehensive Plan. The phased approach is intended to encourage greater public participation and input in the update process and bring together people throughout the community. This Phase I document is the overarching framework for additional work to be conducted. It synthesizes feedback received from members of the public, key stakeholders, and Planning Commission discussions. By releasing this document, the intent is to obtain additional public opinion through a public hearing. Many community residents are seeking more transparency regarding key revitalization projects and greater dissemination of information. This underscores the importance of taking a phased approach in updating Albion's Plan, in order for more voices to be heard and concerns addressed.

The process of updating the Comprehensive Plan began with a review of the goals and objectives that were outlined in the previous plan. The Planning Commission took a close look at those goals and objectives to determine which had been achieved and which were still relevant. Numerous discussions have been held among Planning Commission members and key stakeholders.

Ultimately, the Comprehensive Plan will be used to assist bodies such as the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), and City Council to make policy decisions, especially related to land use. This plan update helps set parameters for land use decision-making and provides the foundation on which the community's zoning ordinance is based.

Local and Regional Stakeholders

Input has been sought from various community partners to create a dynamic comprehensive plan. The City of Albion seeks to continuously involve these entities and others in its comprehensive planning process as well as Key stakeholders are comprised of many local, regional, state, and federal partners and include, but are not limited to:

*Albion Economic Development Corporation and
Downtown Development Authority*

Albion Community Foundation

Albion College

Albion Food Hub

Albion Healthcare Alliance

Albion Housing Commission

Albion/Marshall Public Schools

Albion: Senior Millage Allocation Committee

AmeriCorps VISTA

Forks Senior Center

Local businesses

Local churches

Neighborhood organizations

Major employers

Private investment partners

City of Homer: Senior Millage Allocation Committee

City of Marshall: Dial-a-Ride

Calhoun County Community Action

Calhoun County Land Bank Authority

Calhoun County Senior Services

Calhoun County Board of Commissioners

Southcentral Michigan Planning Council

Southwest Michigan First

Habitat for Humanity

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)

Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

*Michigan State Housing Development Authority
(MSHDA)*

Michigan Works!

USDA Rural Development

Community Input Survey

A Community Input Survey was conducted to engage community members and identify today's most pressing needs. In order to reach a broad audience, the survey was administered both on-line by the Albion Community Foundation and also with hard copies disseminated by the City. Two hundred forty-two community members participated in the survey. Like the community itself, survey respondents reflected a diverse array of perspectives, e.g. home owners and renters, business owners, and a small number of property developers. Interestingly, a number of non-residents participated in the survey, because of their personal ties and commitment to the community. Although nearly 63% of the participants were in the 35-64 age group, people in younger and older groups also participated. Citizen feedback from the survey is included in the Appendix.

Town Hall Meetings were held on topics like Walkability and Housing, in order to share and disseminate information and to gain input from citizens. Two working groups were formed – The Downtown Housing Workgroup and the Albion City Transportation Workgroup – to take a more in-depth look at those particular issues. A briefing with emphasis on downtown housing was held with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). In addition, one-on-one interviews were held with the director of the Albion Housing Commission and local pastors to gain their perspectives on a number of challenges facing the community. Major employers are being invited to share their perspectives, especially as it relates to the retention and attraction of talent.

Table 1

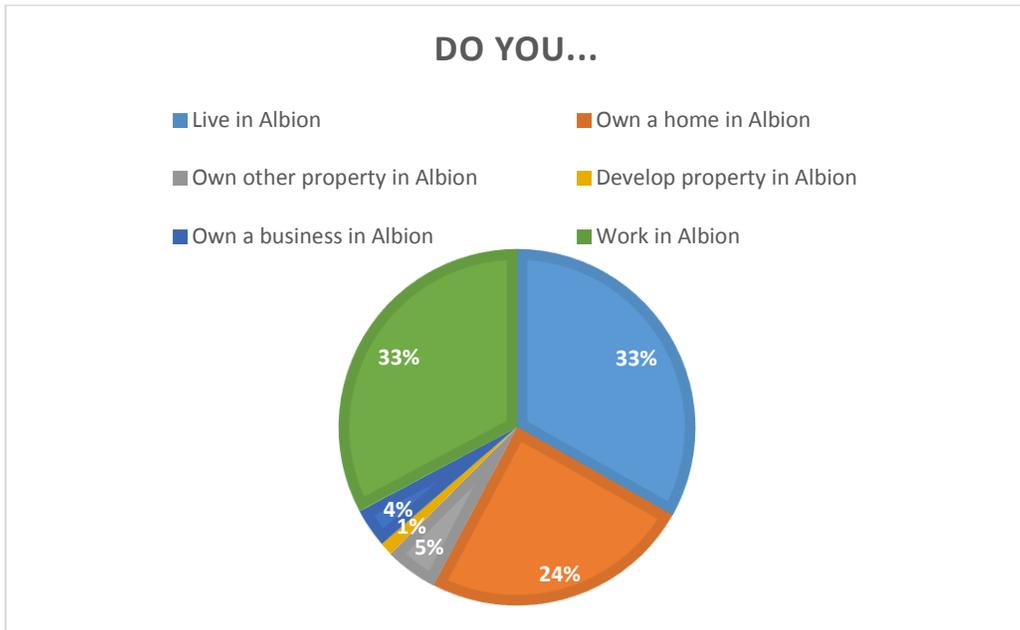
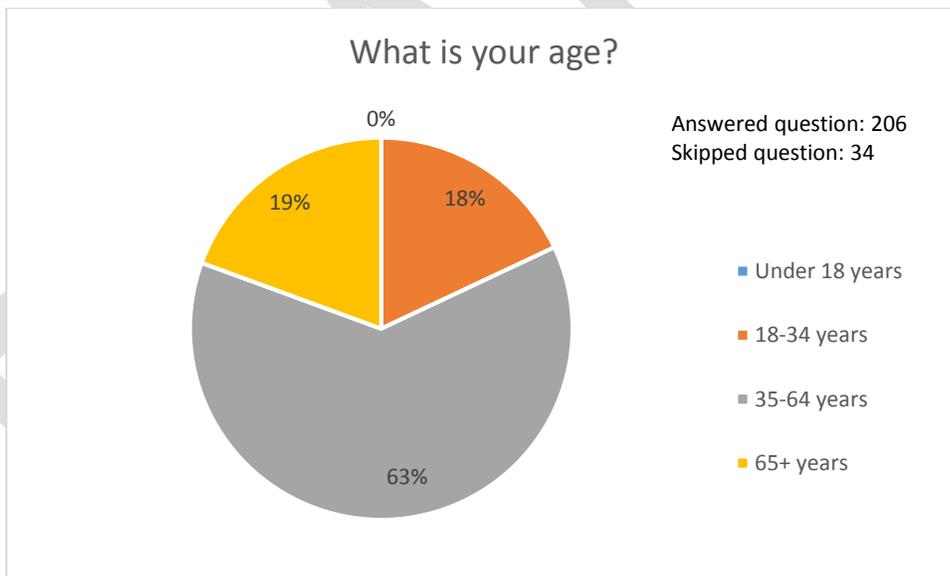


Table 2



A number of planning documents supplement the City of Albion’s Comprehensive Plan:

- An Analysis of Residential Market Potential: The City of Albion – February 2015
- City of Albion Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016 – 2020
- Southcentral Michigan Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: September 2014 – W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research
- Calhoun County Master Plan: A Comprehensive Land Plan: Amended February 2013
- Downtown Market Strategy: The City of Albion – February 2006 – Anderson Economic Group
- Downtown Design Plan 1991

Social and Economic History

Albion's first settlers arrived in 1833. These visionaries formed a land development company called the Albion Company from which the City draws its name. In 1835, Methodist settlers established Albion College, a private college that has its official charter as a city.

Location

Throughout the course of its history, Albion's location and its access to transportation networks have been strategic assets that propelled its growth. Albion was founded at the Forks of the Kalamazoo River, the confluence of the river's north and south branches. During its early period as an agrarian economy, the river provided power for various mills that located on or near "the Forks". Through the 19th and 20th centuries, the city's steel facilities and foundries transported goods and products along the Chicago Road and two railroads. In 1844, the arrival of the Michigan Central Road brought with it an influx of industry and population. A second railroad, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad was completed in 1872. In the mid-20th century, transportation was expedited by two major interstate highways -- I-94 and I-69.

The City of Albion is located along the I-94 corridor in the eastern portion of Calhoun County. The city is bordered largely by Sheridan Township to the north and Albion Township to the south. The City of Marshall, county seat of Calhoun County, lies approximately 12 miles west of Albion.



The Kalamazoo River

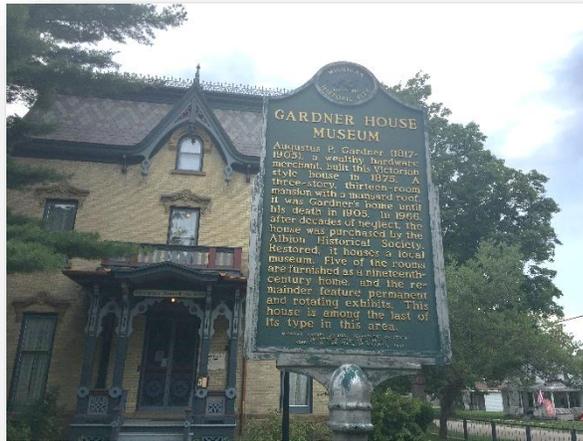
Albion is within a short driving distance of several major metropolitan centers in the Great Lakes region. Via the interstate highway system, Albion is only 40 miles from Lansing, 53 miles from Ann Arbor and 47 miles from Kalamazoo. On a larger scale, it is 86 miles from Grand Rapids, 91 miles from Detroit, 98 miles from Toledo, and 93 miles from Fort Wayne, 175 miles for Chicago, 190 miles from Cleveland. In addition, Interstate 94 provides convenient access to international markets in Canada.

The Kalamazoo-Battle Creek International Airport is located 45 miles west of Albion. More than 20,000 flights per month depart from the airport. Its regional carriers provide service mainly to Detroit, Chicago O'Hare, and Minneapolis-Saint Paul, with limited flights to Atlanta.

Economic History

Like many cities throughout the Midwest, Great Lakes and North-Eastern regions of the United States, Albion has suffered the effects of deindustrialization. The city's economy has fundamentally changed with shifts that have taken place in domestic manufacturing and specifically in the automotive industry. Since 2001, Albion lost nearly 1,000 jobs in manufacturing, healthcare, and retail. This economic shift has caused a reduction in real and personal property tax revenue and an increase in vacant or under-utilized industrial spaces.

While no single industry has replaced the jobs and taxes generated by the automotive suppliers, several sectors have emerged in Albion with the potential to bring new vitality to the local/regional economy and community. These include small to medium-sized manufacturing, craft production facilities, alternative energy, and a major expansion by a Tier 1 automotive supplier.



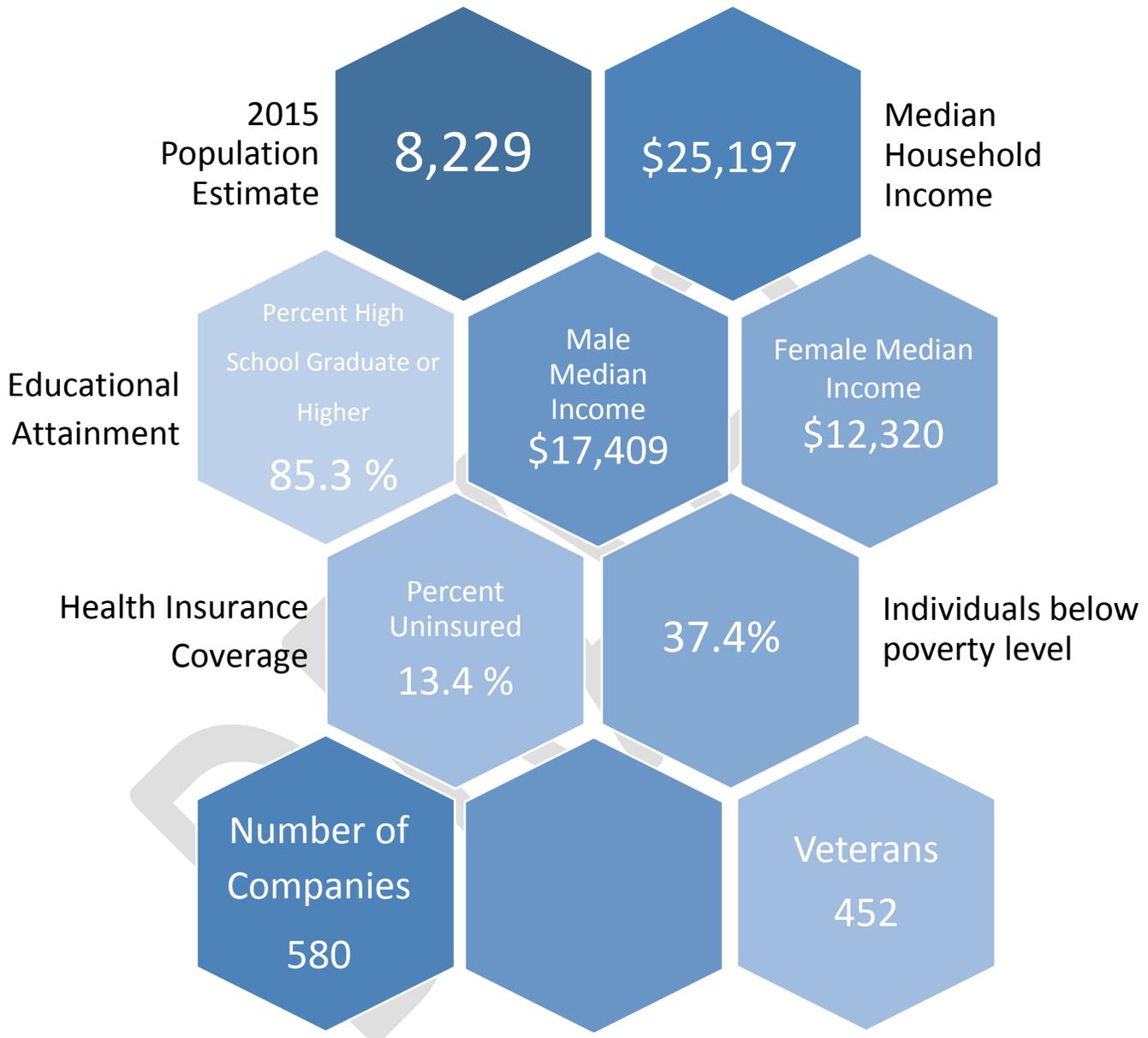
The Gardner House Museum

Albion College, the city's major anchor institution with over 452 employees, is working with the City to develop a strategic economic partnership to redevelop and revive the downtown. It is in the vested interest of the College, the City and its citizenry to forge new relationships and partnerships to help Albion recover its economic vitality. The College is leveraging the financial support of its alumni, intellectual capital of its faculty, strength of its student involvement, and reach of its network to begin the revitalization effort. Albion College has made it a top

priority to launch a long-term housing development strategy with financial incentives designed to attract new employees to live in the City and either rent or purchase residential dwellings. Another example of the College's commitment is its writing and receiving an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) grant, which allows 11 VISTA members to work with the College and City in 2016-2017 to boost economic development, education and health initiatives.

Demographics

Table 3



SOURCES:

2015 Population Estimate: Source: Vintage 2015 Population Estimates: Population Estimates; Median Household Income: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Individuals below poverty level: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Profiles; Educational Attainment: Percent high school graduate or higher: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Profiles; Health Insurance Coverage: Percent uninsured: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Profiles; Number of Companies: Source: 2012 Survey of Business Owners: Company Summary; Male Median Income: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Female Median Income: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Veterans: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Profiles

Declining Population Growth

During the 40-year period from 1970 to 2010, Albion and many surrounding communities lost population. The Nielsen Company estimates that in 2015, Albion’s population decreased to 8,240 persons, a decline of 4.4 percent from the 2010 Census. Without interventions, Nielsen projects that the city’s population would continue to fall to 7,961 persons by 2020, a decrease of another 3.4 percent.

Within the larger region, many counties registered a net population loss between 2000 and 2010. During this period, population was lost in most of the region covered by the Southcentral Regional Planning Council (SMPC). SMPC is a regional planning organization representing Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and St. Joseph Counties. During the 2000-2010 time frame, the rate of population growth in neighboring Jackson County slowed

Table 4: % Population Change, 1970-2010, City of Albion & Surrounding Communities

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	70-80	80-90	90-00	00-10
City of Albion	12,112	11,059	10,066	9,144	8,616	-8.7%	-9.0%	-9.2%	-5.8%
Albion Township	1,582	1,413	1,256	1,200	1,123	-10.7%	-11.1%	-4.5%	-6.4%
Homer Township	2,714	3,041	2,890	3,010	3,015	12.0%	-5.0%	4.2%	0.2%
Homer Village	1,617	1,791	1,758	1,851	1,668	10.8%	-1.8%	5.3%	-9.9%
Sheridan Township	2,469	2,257	2,139	2,116	1,936	-8.6%	-5.2%	-1.1%	-8.5%
Marshall City	7,253	7,201	6,891	7,459	7,088	-0.7%	-4.3%	8.2%	-5.0%
Marshall Township	2,232	2,564	2,655	2,922	3,115	14.9%	3.5%	10.1%	6.6%

Source: Calhoun County Master Plan, U.S. Bureau of Census

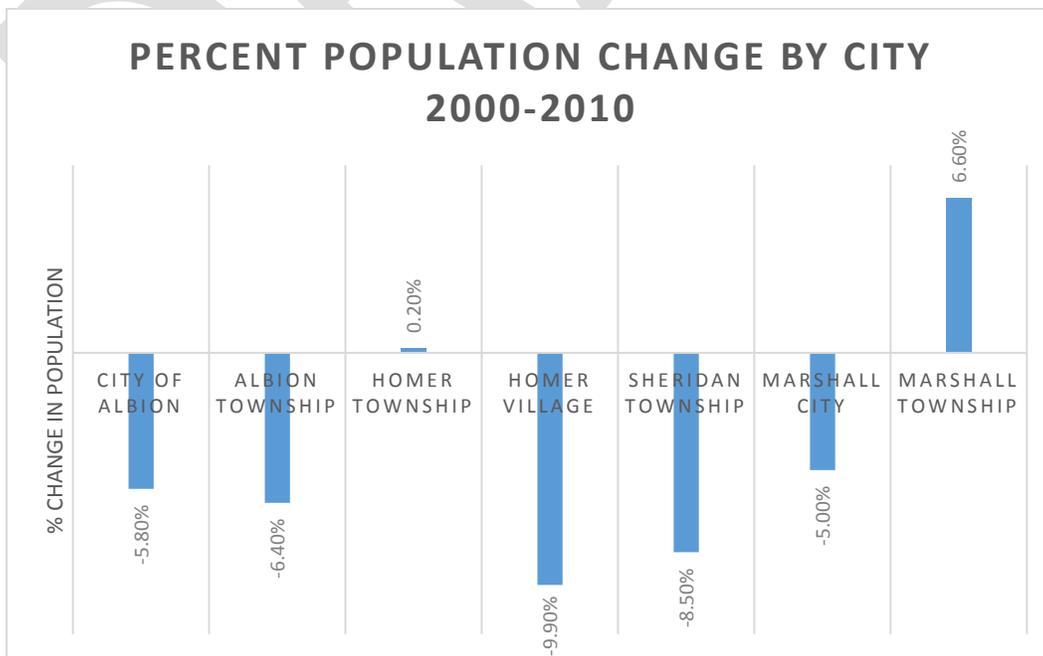
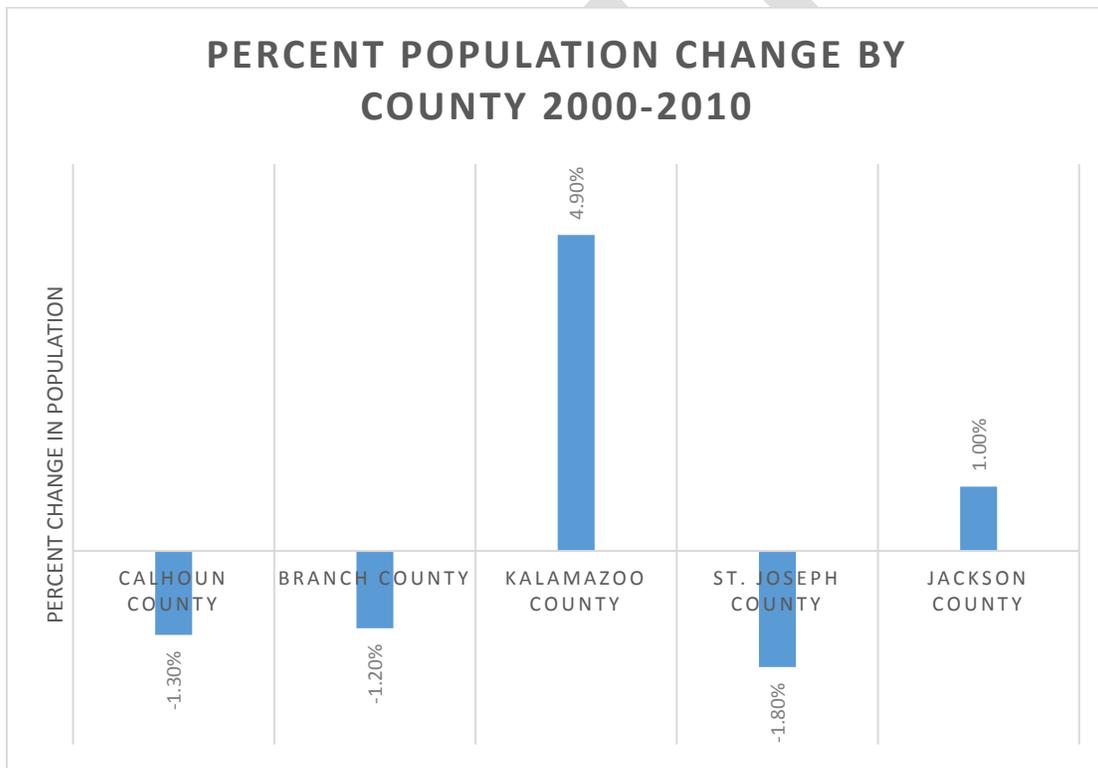


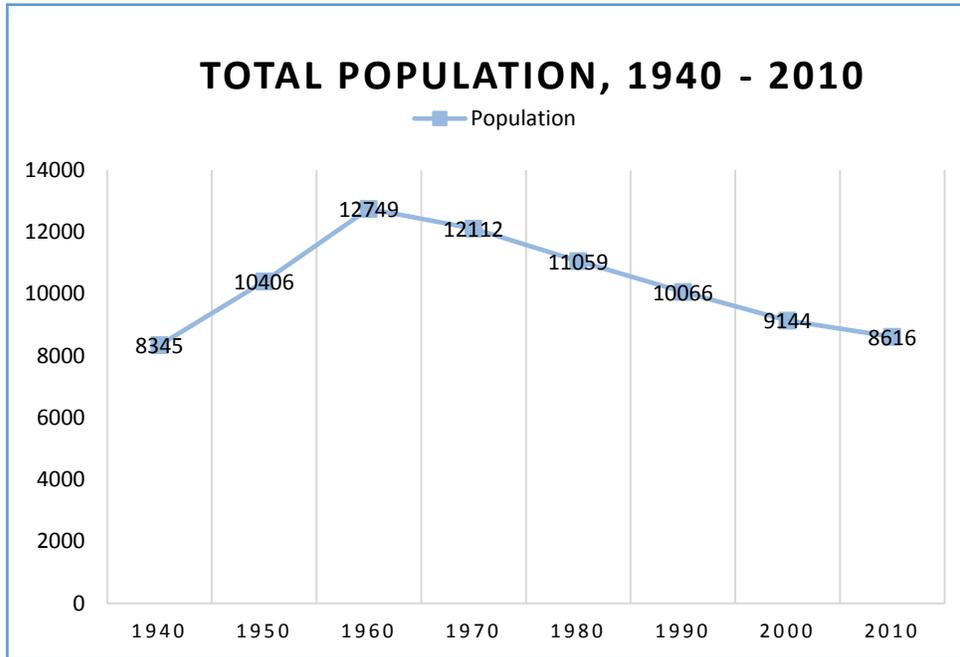
Table 5: % Population Change, 1960-2010, Calhoun County and Surrounding Counties

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	60-70	70-80	80-90	90-00	00-10
Calhoun County	138,858	141,963	141,557	135,982	137,985	136,146	2.2%	-0.3%	-3.9%	1.5%	-1.3%
Branch County	34,903	37,906	40,188	41,502	45,787	45,248	8.6%	6.0%	3.3%	10.3%	-1.2%
Kalamazoo County	169,712	201,550	212,378	223,411	238,603	250,331	18.8%	5.4%	5.2%	6.8%	4.9%
St. Joseph County	42,332	47,392	56,083	58,913	62,422	61,295	12.0%	18.3%	5.0%	6.0%	-1.8%
Jackson County	131,994	143,274	151,495	149,756	158,425	160,248	8.6%	5.7%	-1.1%	6.0%	1.0%



Sources: Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, U.S. Bureau of the Census
<https://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/mi190090.txt>

Table 6: Population Change
 Source: US Census 1940-2010



The Industrial Revolution brought with it steady growth in the City’s population and economic base. Between 1900 and 1950, the City’s population more than doubled. The chart above would suggest that in 1960 there was another upward spike in Albion’s population. However, it should be noted that the inclusion of the college student population in Census reporting is likely to account for this phenomenon. Conversely, the 5% decrease in population registered between 1960 and 1970 understates the dynamics in the “permanent” population, which actually decreased by a full 9.5% when controlling for the student population. In spite of these statistical anomalies, since 1960 Albion has experienced a steady decline in population. This downward population trend is consistent with the pattern of urban centers throughout the country, which lost population to their suburban neighbors.

Aging Population

Like the rest of the nation, Albion’s population is aging as the Baby Boom generation (people born between 1946 and 1964) make their way through the life cycle. Between 2000 and 2010, “Baby Boomers” began entering the retirement phase of their lives. In 2000, the Baby Boom generation entered the new millennium with ages ranging from 36 to 54. Ten years later in 2010, they were between the ages of 46 and 64. In 2010, the median age was 28.1. It had increased from 23.5 in 1980 and 26.5 in 1990.

Since 1980, Albion has experienced a downward trend in the percentage of people ages 25-44. One contributing factor to the 23% decrease in the 25-44 age group between 2010 and 2000 is the exodus of the Baby Boom generation from this segment of the population. A second factor is the

outmigration that occurred due to plant closings and economic dislocation. The lack of population growth coupled with the aging and retirements of Baby Boomers will undoubtedly impact the availability of labor in Albion and throughout the region, especially in construction trades and manufacturing skilled trades where an increasing number of Baby Boomers are retiring en masse. During the next 20 years, the aging of Baby Boomers will also have serious implications on healthcare and housing markets in Albion and throughout the region. In spite of these demographic changes and the increased need for health care services, Albion lost its hospital. One participant in the community survey expressed the desire for an urgent care option with walk-in and after hours services.

Table 7: Age Distribution

City of Albion – 2010

Source: U.S. Census 2000-2010

Age	2000	% of Pop	2010	% of Pop	% Change 2000-2010
Under 18 Years	2,356	25.8	1,872	21.7	-20.5
18 to 24 years	1,801	19.7	2,159	25.1	19.9
25 to 44 years	2,099	23	1,613	18.7	-23.2
45 to 64 years	1,660	18.2	1,848	21.4	11.3
65 years and older	1,228	13.4	1,124	13	-8.5
Total population	9,144		8,616		

Table 8: 25-44 Cohort

City of Albion – 2010

Source: U.S. Census 1980-2010

Age	1980	% of Pop	1990	% of pop	2000	% of Pop	2010	% of pop
25-44	2,314	20.9%	2,405	23.9%	2,099	23%	1,613	18.7%

Another significant trend within the city of Albion is the loss in population of children ages 14 and under. Between 2000 and 2010, there was a decrease of about one-third of the size of the 5 to 9 and 10 to 14 age groups. This trend has had adverse effects on K-12 school enrollment.

Table 9: Population: Ages 5 to 24 Years

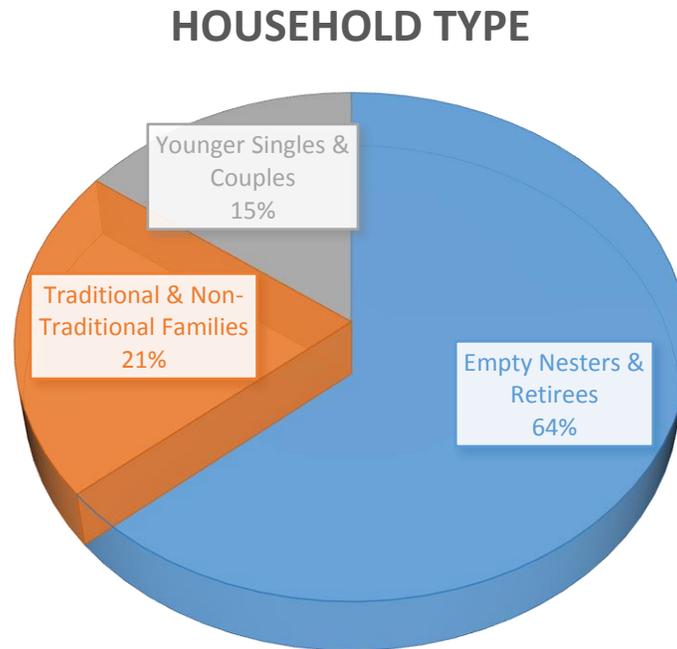
	Number 2000	% of Pop	Number 2010	% of Pop	% Change 2000-2010
Under 5 years	606	6.6	574	6.7	-5.3
5 to 9 years	752	8.2	525	6.1	-30.2
10 to 14 years	621	6.8	439	5.1	-29.3
15 to 19 years	1,019	11.1	1,129	13.1	10.8
20 to 24 years	1,159	12.7	1,364	15.8	17.7

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

Life Stage

Life stage denotes the stage of life of a given household – ranging from initial household formation, through family formation, empty-nesting, to retirement. Of the 2,785 households estimated in Albion in 2015, nearly 64% are comprised of “empty nesters and retirees”.

Table 10: 2015 Household Classification by Life Stage
City of Albion, Calhoun County, Michigan



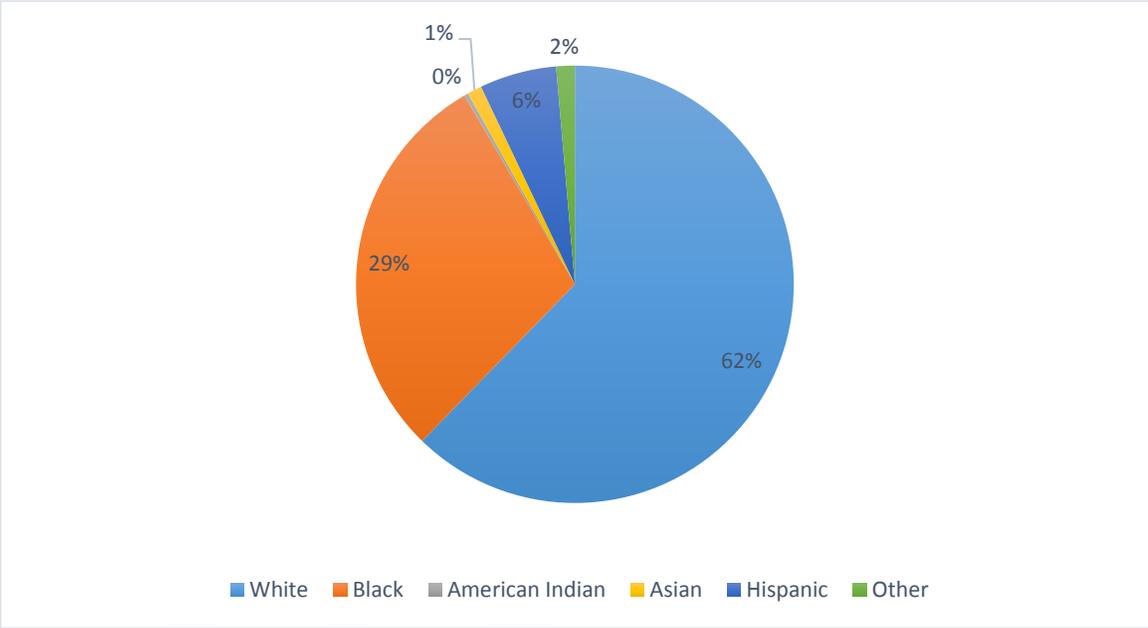
SOURCES: The Nielsen Company; Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

Racial Composition

Table 11 below depicts the racial composition of the City of Albion as of 2010. Over the last 20 years, the racial makeup of the city has remained fairly consistent, although there have been slight fluctuations in the actual percentages. As of the 2010 Census, nearly two-thirds of Albion’s current residents were White. Nearly one-third were Black. In previous years, between the years 1950 and 1980, the racial composition underwent a significant shift with an inverse trend between the City’s White and Black populations. The Black population

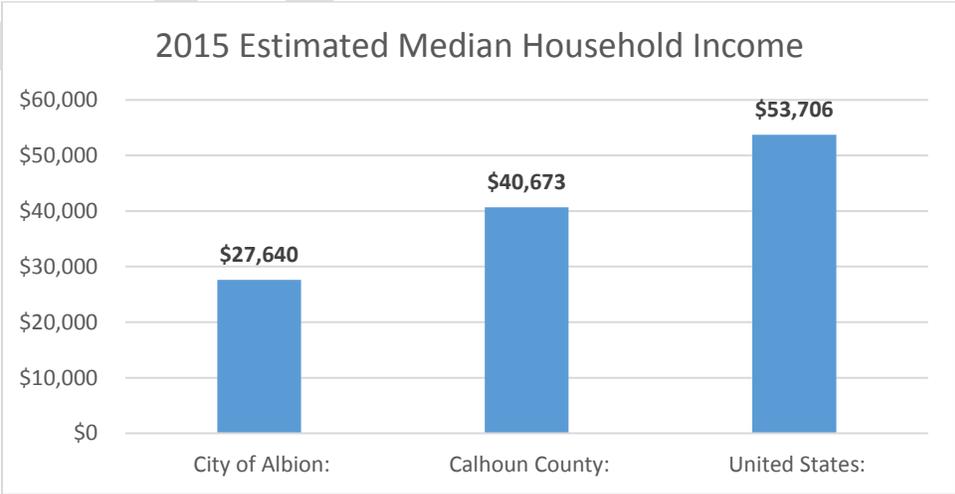
increased in both absolute and relative terms. Between 2000 and 2010, the City’s Hispanic population increased in absolute terms from 416 to 500. This is consistent with regional and national trends concerning the increasing number and percent of Hispanics in the population. In previous years, the “Hispanic or Latino” classification underwent several changes in definition. As a result, the decrease in absolute numbers between 1980 and 2000 may be a statistical aberration.

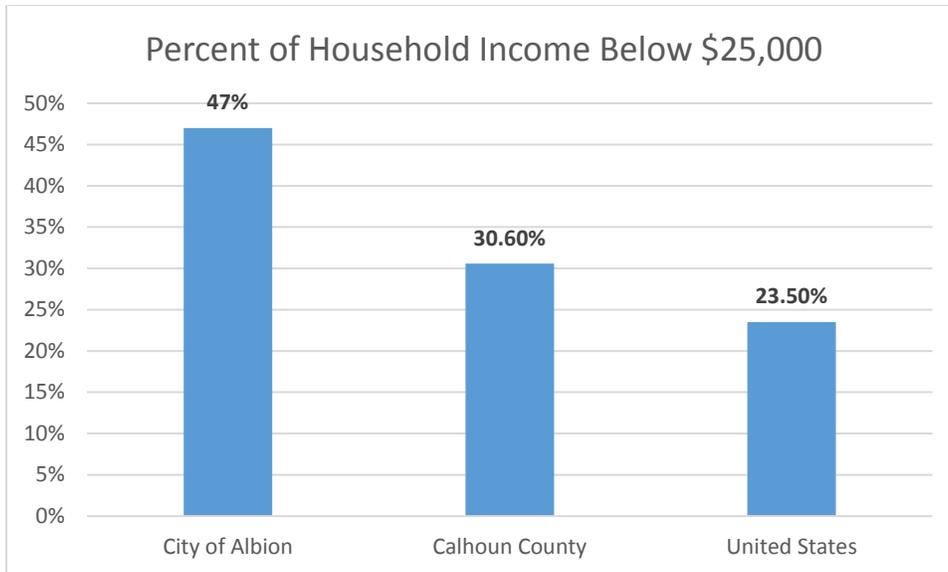
Table 11: Racial Composition
 Source: US Census 2010



Income

Table 12: Income





SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Census; The Nielsen Company; Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

In 2015, the Nielsen Company estimates Albion’s median household income in the city at \$27,640, which is about 51% of the national median of \$53,706 and about \$13,000 less than the county median. During this period, nearly 47% of Albion’s households had incomes below \$25,000.

Workforce

As a result of macroeconomic changes, automation, decentralization, and relocation of manufacturing operations and jobs, unskilled workers and youth have been the hardest hit by the economic restructuring that has taken place in the American economy. As of 2015, over 42% of Albion’s residents over age 16 were not currently in the

labor force. People “not currently in the labor force” include stay-at-home parents, who have not held and are not looking for jobs, the elderly, and the chronically sick and disabled. In addition, this count includes many “prime age workers” who are discouraged and disillusioned and have disinvested and given up on trying to find a job. These individuals have left the workforce.



“The Molder” Statue

Table 13: Employment Status
 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-
 Year Estimates

Subject	Albion city, Michigan			
	Total	In labor force	Employed	Unemployment rate
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Population 16 years and over	6,862	53.8%	43.5%	19.2%
AGE				
16 to 19 years	884	36.4%	30.0%	17.7%
20 to 24 years	1,173	72.2%	54.8%	24.1%
25 to 44 years	1,692	81.7%	65.6%	19.7%
45 to 54 years	809	67.9%	56.1%	17.3%
55 to 64 years	1,019	46.2%	38.4%	17.0%
65 to 74 years	652	13.8%	13.8%	0.0%
75 years and over	633	4.7%	4.7%	0.0%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN				
One race	6,724	53.0%	43.7%	17.5%
White	4,779	55.5%	48.8%	12.1%
Black or African American	1,804	45.3%	28.9%	36.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	59	78.0%	78.0%	0.0%
Asian	39	76.9%	76.9%	0.0%
Some other race	43	39.5%	23.3%	41.2%
Two or more races	138	92.0%	31.2%	66.1%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	284	63.4%	37.3%	41.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	4,585	55.4%	49.4%	10.7%
Population 20 to 64 years	4,693	69.2%	55.4%	20.0%
SEX				
Male	2,142	71.9%	53.4%	25.8%
Female	2,551	67.0%	57.0%	14.9%
POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS				
Below poverty level	1,467	50.9%	27.5%	46.0%
DISABILITY STATUS				
With any disability	754	28.8%	19.6%	31.8%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				
Population 25 to 64 years	3,520	68.2%	55.5%	18.6%
Less than high school graduate	384	31.5%	19.5%	38.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,224	66.4%	50.2%	24.4%
Some college or associate's degree	1,194	68.3%	57.6%	15.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	718	90.8%	80.4%	11.5%

In reading Table 13, it should be noted that American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing statistical survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Although the numbers are estimates, the data is useful in helping to understand certain characteristics within the community. Business users, including those who make site location decisions, have access to the same data.

The City of Albion and Albion Economic Development Corporation (EDC) serve as intermediaries between the city's workforce and employers and the region's workforce development network. The City and EDC respond to



Albion EDC Industrial Park

employers by making appropriate connections to resources and networks that deliver qualified candidates. The City and EDC work with local partners to help workers build their capacity, in order to compete for and perform in 21st century jobs. This underscores the importance of developing a local and regional education-to-employment system to prepare Albion's workforce for 21-st century careers. Centers like the Regional Manufacturing Technology Center (RMTC), operated by Kellogg Community College and located in the Fort Custer Industrial Park in Battle Creek, are key to the development of Albion's workforce. RMTC

provides a five-week introductory program for manufacturing skills that is customized for the manufacturers located in the industrial park and elsewhere in Calhoun County.

In addition, the City supports employers' talent attraction efforts by creating the atmosphere necessary to attract new talent. Through place making efforts, which are discussed later in the Comprehensive Plan, the City can help create the vibrant downtown and walkable communities sought by young professionals. One important assumption of the Comprehensive Plan update is an understanding that the quality of housing impacts the attractiveness of the city, which impacts the level of artistic and cultural activity, which impacts the number of entertainment options, which impacts the attractiveness to talented and skilled workers, which impacts the level of economic activity.

Table 14: Commuting Patterns

	Residential employment	Barry	Branch	Calhoun	Kalamazoo	St. Joseph
County employment		22,564	19,496	47,330	87,581	21,754
Barry	11,005	6,928	27	334	353	29
Branch	12,476	49	6,630	912	227	723
Calhoun	49,979	2,175	1,459	26,972	5,366	632
Kalamazoo	102,330	2,251	754	4,038	58,550	2,480
St. Joseph	19,030	115	1,050	386	1,555	10,238

SOURCE: Upjohn Institute for Employment Research

Redevelopment of housing in Albion is important not only to its existing residents, but also in the talent attraction efforts of businesses located within the local area and those throughout the region. The existing workforce is very mobile. People who are in the labor market are willing to commute to neighboring areas for employment. For example, Table 14 shows that in 2012 there were nearly 50,000 jobs in Calhoun County; however, of the 47,330 employed residents fewer than 27,000 of them worked within the county.

Table 15: Employment Change

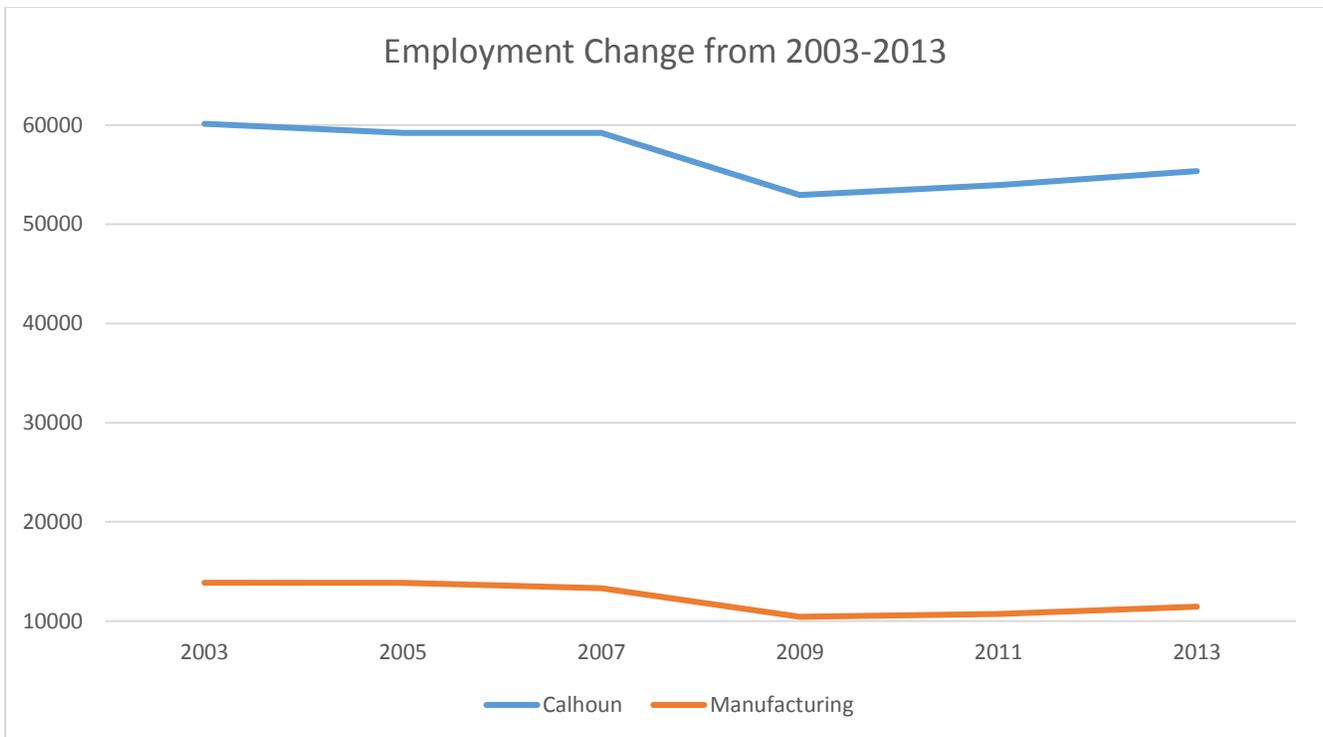
	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	Change 2003-2013	
							Number	% Change
Calhoun	60,131	59,209	59,209	52,953	53,962	55,362	-4,769	-7.9%

Source: The Upjohn Institute for Employment Research

Table 16: Employment Change in Manufacturing, 2003 to 2013

	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	Change 2007-2013		Change 2003-2013	
Calhoun	13,862	13,847	13,297	10,432	10,700	11,465	-1,832	-13.8%	-2,397	-17.3%

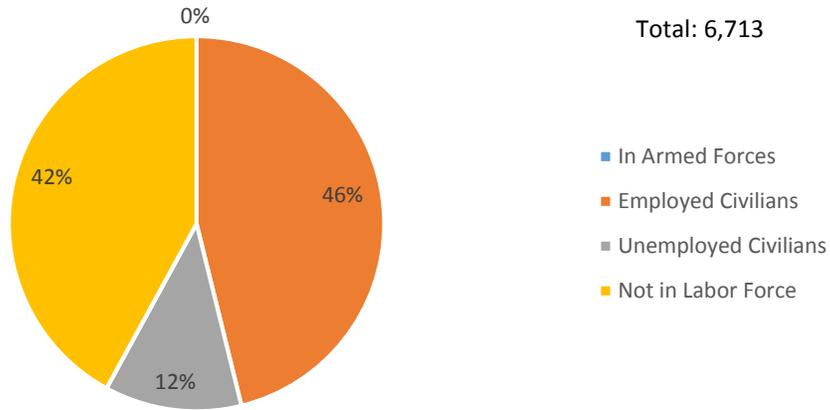
Source: The Upjohn Institute for Employment Research



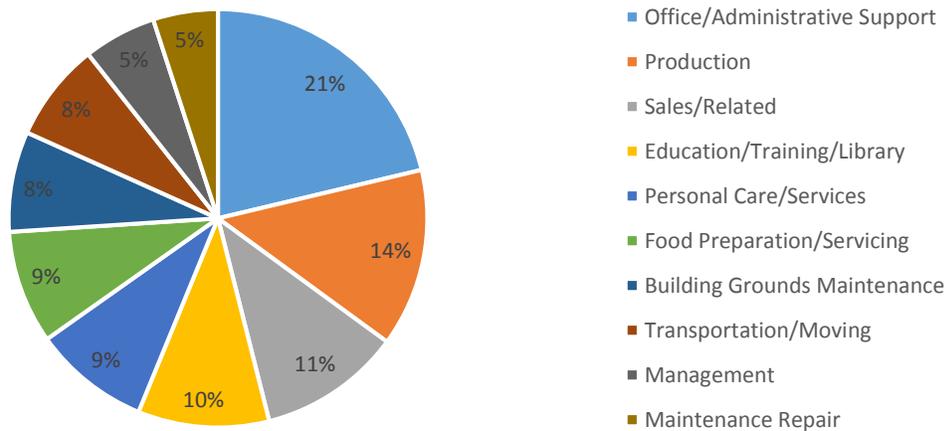
From 2003 to 2013, a shift took place in the economic base within the five-county area served by the Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC). Throughout the region, employment fell by 13,200 jobs, nearly 6.0%. Calhoun County lost over 4,700 jobs. However, as employment in the manufacturing sector decreased, employment in healthcare and other service sector activities increased. One question for Albion to consider is whether there are niche opportunities within the healthcare sector to meet the needs of its community, especially the senior and disabled populations. Nursing and residential care facilities are examples of industries that meet a need within the population and create jobs. Although jobs in other sectors are important, manufacturing continues to be a vital base industry. Most manufacturing products are sold to customers outside of the county and region, which draws money into the local economy.

Table 17: Employment Information
 City of Albion
 2015 Estimates

Employment Information for the City of Albion 2015
 Estimates: Population 16+

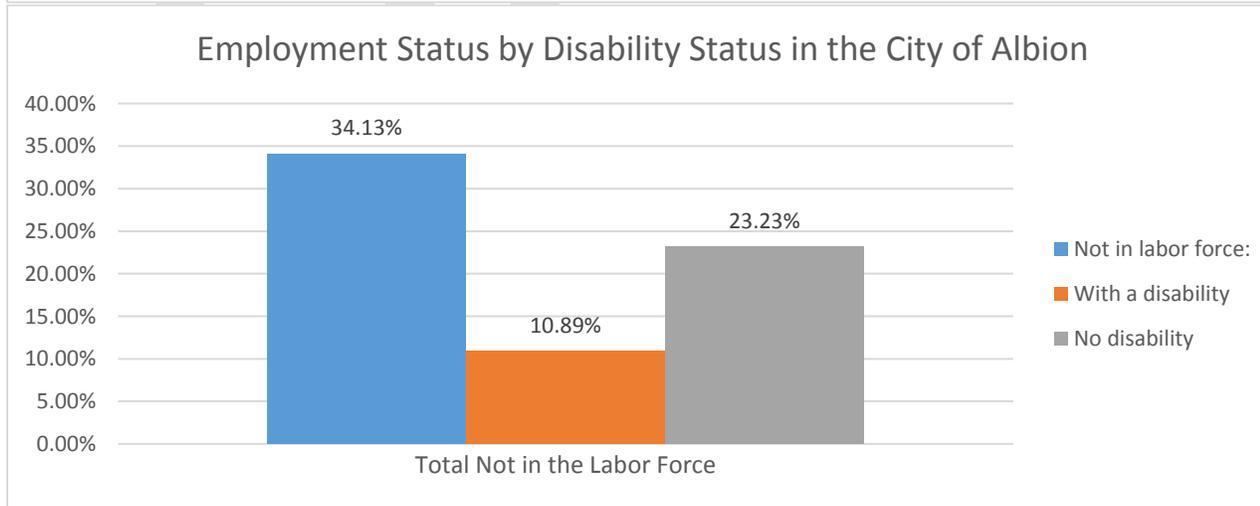
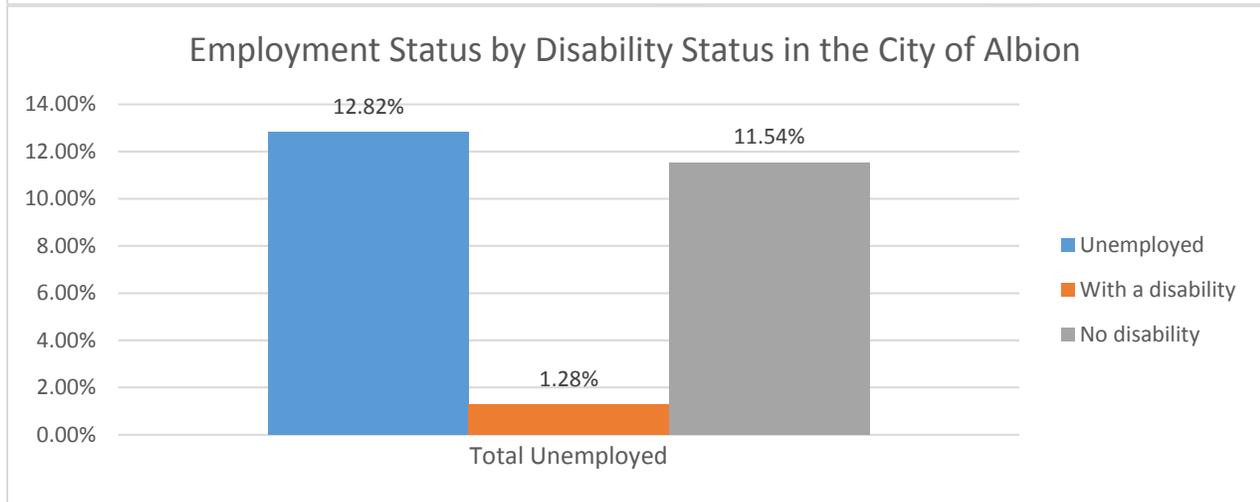
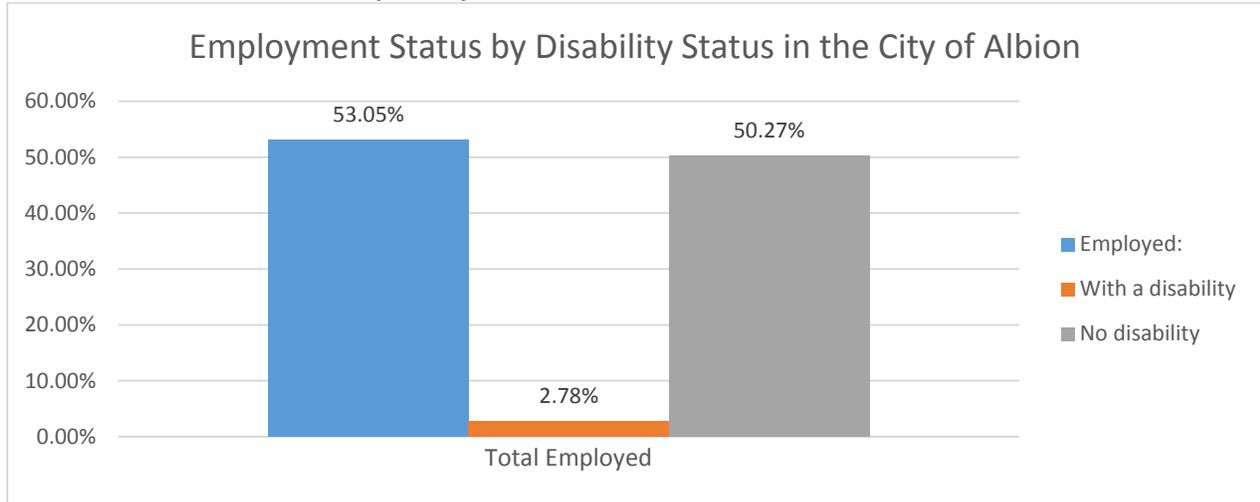


Top 10 Civilian Occupations for the City of Albion 2015
 Estimates



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census; The Nielson Company; Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

Table 18: Employment Status by Disability Status
City of Albion: Civilian population 18 to 64 years
2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_5YR_C18120&prodType=table

Poverty

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in Albion in 2014, including children, there were 2,702 people below poverty level. In many instances, children whose parents are not currently in the labor force lack educational qualifications and social and other skills and unable to rise out of poverty.

According to the 2000 Census figures, nearly 32% of the population received Social Security income. Eight percent or 264 households received public assistance. About 7.6% of the population received Supplemental Security Income.

Table 19: 1999 Government Transfer Payments

Households	3,291	100%
With Social Security Income	1,406	31.8%
Mean Social Security Income (dollars)	\$ 10,634	
With Supplemental Security Income	249	7.6%
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	\$ 4,931	
With public assistance income	264	8.0%
Mean public assistance income (dollars)	\$1,717	

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Plan Elements

NEIGHBORHOODS

Strengthen and beautify Albion's neighborhoods

Urban infill and Brownfield Redevelopment

The City is collaborating with a diverse array of stakeholders to redevelop and rebuild its neighborhoods and create a more vibrant community. Albion has an aging housing stock. Almost 54% of the city's housing stock was built prior to 1950. Less than seven percent of all units were built since 1980. In 2015, almost 20 percent of all city housing units were estimated to be vacant. Of the 2,785 occupied units, 43.6% were rented and 56.4% were owner-occupied. Community residents and leaders recognize the need to increase the availability of housing options.

Albion is a diverse community. Albion College, a premiere four-year residential college, attracts an influx of academic talent, both in terms of students as well as faculty and staff. At the other end of the spectrum, Albion's senior citizens are an integral part of the fabric of the community. Therefore, it is important that the City's housing strategy range from the development of loft apartments to considering the array of options available for seniors, including assisted living. A number of respondents to the Community Input Survey expressed concern regarding the lack of options for senior housing. Several respondents indicated that there is a demand for condominiums and cited examples of people who have left the community because these options are not available. As new housing products are developed, it will be important to consider issues of accessibility and accommodations of barrier-free design, in order to allow all persons, regardless of ability, weight, height, or age, equal access to facilities.

A target market analysis (TMA) produced by Zimmerman/Volk Associates reports that there is demand for new housing units in and around downtown Albion. Approximately 42% of the potential housing market is comprised of young singles and couples, about 35% represent families, and 23% are empty nesters and retirees. According to the TMA, about 38% currently live within the City, approximately 32% live elsewhere in Calhoun County, with the balance being drawn from neighboring counties and elsewhere. Their housing preferences include apartments, townhouses, and single-family houses. Although there is demand for smaller rental units and a diverse array of product types, there is a disconnect between available housing units and the preferences of many in the housing market. Most of Albion's available housing units are single-family houses. Over 69% of the city's 3,478 housing units are single-family detached houses. However, nearly 65 percent of all households in Albion contain just one or two persons. The TMA encourages development of rental units, especially on the upper floors of commercial buildings that are along or adjacent to Superior Street, the main corridor in Albion's central business district. Mixed-use developments blend residential and other uses and create economic activity.

The introduction of new and/or renovated market and affordable-rate units in and around the downtown area will create a healthier balance of housing types and incomes. Between now and 2022, an estimated 432 housing units could be absorbed in and around the downtown area. This

includes both market-rate and affordable apartments, townhouses, single family houses, lofts and condominiums.

Nationwide, there has been a significant shift in preferences from suburban subdivisions toward mixed-use, walkable urban neighborhoods. The two largest generations in American history – Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) and Millennials (born between approximately 1982-2000) are having a significant influence on housing markets. Many are singles or couples without children. Due to a combination of economic and lifestyle preferences, including their recollection of the housing market collapse in 2008, many prefer to rent rather than own and enjoy living in downtown areas. A critical mass of residential housing in the downtown increases the density and contributes to the vibrancy of the downtown. As more people live downtown, spending is increased in the downtown.

Albion has a significant number of retirees. In 2015, there were 545 households that would be considered “Struggling Retirees” with income largely from Social Security, supplemented by small pensions. Nearly all live in substandard housing. Some of Albion’s seniors would prefer to live in dwelling units that require minimal upkeep and low maintenance expense, and if given appropriate housing choices, would choose to remain in their current neighborhoods. There is an opportunity to stabilize neighborhoods by raising awareness of resources to assist seniors in staying in their homes, encouraging homeowners to improve their homes, and providing new homebuyers with information about available financing tools and incentives. Homeownership helps to instill a sense of pride and create a more stable local economy.

Working in partnership with the Calhoun County Land Bank, the City of Albion has and is taking steps necessary to eliminate blight, encourage infill housing development, and attract private investment. In preparation for infill development, the Land Bank has demolished a number of blighted residential structures in the neighborhood that is located west of South Superior Street, south of West Cass, and north of West Erie. The Urban Renewal Area (also known as the Renaissance Area) is another priority area for infill housing development.

Blight elimination was noted as a major concern by a number of participants in the Community Input Survey. Some people did acknowledge the work that the City is doing to address this problem. Others called for greater code enforcement.

Redevelopment of abandoned industrial facilities, which are located in close proximity to residential areas, can spark the revitalization of surrounding neighborhoods. Through adaptive reuse, historic buildings like the former Sheldon Hospital can be repurposed and used for something other than the purpose for which they were originally built. Today, the Sheldon Place Apartments, the most expensive apartments in Albion, are fully occupied with a waiting list. At most, only one or two units become vacant each year and are quickly filled. Unfortunately, the lack of this type of high quality housing has forced residents seeking it to leave and prevented others from relocating to Albion. Regardless of the price point, the City encourages through thoughtful planning the revitalization of underutilized and vacant properties.

According to the TMA, downtown artist housing could potentially be developed through the use of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). Artists who do not have high incomes could likely qualify for income-restricted units, as has been the case with many developments across the country. A

requirement would be that at least one member of the household have a portfolio review by a qualified committee established for that purpose. The LIHTC program can be augmented with federal historic tax credits to redevelop buildings within an historic district. Artspace Project, Inc., in Minneapolis, Minnesota, has used this strategy and provided consultation for similar redevelopment projects around the country.

Objectives

1. Develop and implement a neighborhood revitalization strategy to eliminate blight, improve public safety and environmental health, and strengthen residential areas as well as former industrial sites that are in close proximity to neighborhoods (1-10 years)
2. Expand, diversify and market housing options to meet the needs of residents of varying life stages, life styles and income levels (e.g. Senior/retirement living, College corridor neighborhood, downtown lofts, affordable and low income housing, etc.) (1-10 years)
3. Develop and implement a certification/registration program for rental and vacant properties (1 year)
4. Highlight progress and achievements as part of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

DRAFT

EDUCATION

Support and strengthen a Pre-K through 16 education system for the community

In May 2016, Albion merged and consolidated its school district with its neighbor, Marshall. Albion voters made the difficult decision to approve the annexation, in order to deal with the challenges of declining enrollment and revenue. Through a cooperative agreement, Albion's high school and middle school age children were already attending Marshall Schools. Many factors must be considered in handling this complex phenomenon of bringing together two historic sports rivals with racially, culturally, and socioeconomically different student populations.

Participants in the Community Input Survey expressed that education is a very important issue and a deciding factor for many parents with school age children.

Objectives

1. Continue joint meetings with Marshall Public Schools, Albion College, other area schools and community partners to assess, document and support a comprehensive, "post-annexation" K-16 education strategy. An important element would be a communications plan to share information and inform the parents and guardians of Albion's school-age children. (1-2 years)
2. Strengthen and promote City programs (summer and after school tutoring, the arts, recreational programs, etc.) that support youth in and around Albion (1-5 years)
3. Partner with area school districts, the Albion Recreation Department, the Albion District Library, neighborhood organizations, the Build VISTA Team, Albion College, and other partners to develop educational opportunities outside of the classroom for all school-age children in the Albion (49224) area. (1-2 years)
4. Utilize Albion College and other institutions of higher education to support college preparation and access. Strengthen the Albion College Access Network. (1-2 years)
5. Highlight progress and successes in the educational arena as part of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

BUSINESS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Retain and attract jobs to Albion by supporting business growth and development

Economic development looks at the flow of activity within the community due to the health, growth, and attraction of companies as well as the development and attraction of talent. The Albion Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is the City's lead economic development organization and works to assist and recruit business and industry in the greater Albion area. The City contributes to this partnership in a number of ways, which ranges from tapping into networks that build workforce capacity to leveraging public sector incentives to assist with business growth and development. In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, the City's contribution also includes making zoning ordinance decisions that spur commercial and industrial growth.

Another manner in which the City of Albion contributes to economic growth and development by creating the physical and cultural amenities that help employers attract new talent. For example, the downtown is in close proximity to Albion College. The College is taking proactive steps to redevelop housing in the blocks between Superior Street and Albion College. Not only will this benefit Albion College, but it will also benefit local companies in their efforts to attract professional and technical workers. The City contributes to this type of development in a number of ways, including facilitating the demolition of abandoned sites, taking steps necessary to ensure that zoning ordinances do not prohibit desired development, and attracting public sector funding to make redevelopment projects happen.

The City of Albion recognizes the importance of trained and skilled workforce. The City will work with workforce development partners and key stakeholders to train and prepare workers, who are able to compete for jobs throughout the region, enabling companies locally and throughout the region to better compete in the global market place.

In addition, the EDC and City will work to strengthen the local business support network and help existing businesses and entrepreneurs to access it. Through its business incubator, the EDC has hosted dozens of young companies and initial ventures that have developed into successful businesses. Business development activities include helping companies access new markets through procurement, exports, and business to business (B2B) opportunities.

The City desires to be both strategic and realistic in identifying ways to diminish the flow of dollars that leave the community through sales leakage. This occurs when consumers make purchases outside the local area either at a physical location or online. In being strategic, the City desires to identify niche businesses that will draw local residents to shop in Albion on a frequent basis and that will even appeal to visitors. In being realistic, the City recognizes that in certain consumer categories it will be difficult for local businesses to compete on price, given the economies of scale achieved by major retailers and big-box stores.

Farmers Market and Food Hub

Farmers markets benefit community members by increasing their access to fresh fruits and vegetables and keeping farming in Michigan a viable business. Farmers markets add to a community's quality of life. In colder months, Albion's farmer's market moves indoors to the site of the Albion Food Hub. The Food Hub includes a business incubator and commercial kitchen for those interested in growing businesses in the food industry.

Kitchen space, including stoves, burners, pots, pans, etc. can be rented to community members with the desire to develop their own products for potential sale at the Food Hub. The facility may also be rented for users who need the facilities to cook large amounts of food for private events like weddings or graduation parties. With the farmers market and Food Hubs, local families and community members have better access to fresh, healthy food, locally grown fruits and vegetables at reasonable prices. Community gardens have also been a means of helping local residents contend with food insecurity—not being certain that they would always get enough to eat -- educating them on the process of growing a variety of fruits and vegetables from seeds, allowing them to prepare meals together based on food items that have harvested, developing a work ethic and even developing entrepreneurial skills by allowing participants to sell products at the Albion Farmer’s Market, the French Market held annually in June, and to employees in the public schools and at the college. Community gardens in urban areas provide a positive use for vacant land and a local food source.

Objectives

1. Work closely with Albion EDC, the Chamber and other partner entities to support local businesses with a proactive business retention and development strategy (1-3 years)
2. Encourage broader participation with local stakeholders (public, private, non-profit, higher education, civic, and business) in the formulation of Albion’s economic diversification strategy (1-3 years)
3. Take proactive steps to connect Albion’s talent base with employment opportunities (e.g. partnering with Michigan Works, Albion College Career & Internship Center, etc.) (1-3 years)
4. Take all of the necessary steps to have Albion certified by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation as a Redevelopment Ready Community (1-2 years)
5. Continue support for programs and initiatives that foster entrepreneurship (e.g. promote Albion business incubators and encourage minority, youth, and other business development) (1-10 years)
6. Highlight the progress of Albion’s economic development strategy within the framework of the City’s comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10)

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Stabilize the downtown and enhance its historic character

According to leadership guru John Maxwell, “Momentum is the most powerful force for change.” Momentum is hard to gain, but once it begins to build, it becomes a source of energy that fuels change. Momentum is building in downtown Albion with significant investments in anchor projects like the renovation of the Bohm Theatre, restoration of the Mary Sheldon Ismon House, and construction of a new hotel.



The beautifully restored Bohm Theatre, which reopened in the fall of 2014, has been a significant catalyst in the revitalization of downtown Albion. The project involved the exterior and interior historic renovation of the 1929 landmark theatre. An important community gathering place was restored with the historic rehabilitation of the Mary Sheldon Ismon House, located at 300 S. Clinton. The Ismon House is listed as an eligible property in a National Register of Historic Places. A \$9.2 million project is underway to construct a four-story, 72-room boutique hotel at the corner of Superior and Porter streets. The hotel would house a restaurant, conference and ballroom space.

With the increased numbers of young adults/Millennials and Baby Boomers wanting to live in high-density, walkable neighborhoods, it is important for Albion to make the downtown area an attractive place to live, work, and play. A few participants in the Community Input Survey expressed concern regarding the condition of downtown storefronts. The Michigan Main Street program could be a tool to assist with the beautification and restoration of downtown storefronts.



In addition to the Bohm Theatre, the downtown is home to Kids ‘N’ Stuff Children’s Museum. Museums and other cultural attractions can be primary destinations/trip generators as well

as supplemental attractions and activities for tourists already in an area for other reasons. Museums serve local residents, visitors on day trips from outside the local area, as well as those who stay overnight in the local area. The economic impact of museums is measured as the direct sales of museum admission and purchases within the museum as well as the secondary sales and expenditures in the local area, which include shopping, restaurant meals, gas and lodging.

Recreation and Entertainment

Revitalizing the downtown is key to Albion’s future. Community Input Survey respondents understand the importance of creating a vibrant downtown. Respondents recognized the importance and impact associated with special events like Swinging at the Shell and community festivals like the Festival of the Forks. However, the lack of entertainment options and nightlife was cited as a concern by some respondents. There is also demand for more restaurants. The image and vibrancy of the downtown is important in keeping and attracting all groups – young people, families, retirees, and visitors.

Albion College enriches the city with cultural and recreational amenities unusual for a town its size. The College’s

\$3.5 million project to upgrade its athletic facility will liven the athletic arena portion of the campus, which could have a spillover effect on downtown commerce. The Nancy G. Held Equestrian Center, which opened in the fall of 2004, regularly hosts events for regional horse organizations. The Held Center is a 340-acre resource intended to draw community members and those from surrounding communities who are interested in equine sports and will be another economic engine for the community.



In addition, the City desires to be both strategic and realistic in identifying ways to diminish the flow of dollars that leave the community through sales leakage. This occurs when consumers make purchases outside the

local area either at a physical location or online. The City desires to be strategic in identifying niche businesses that will draw local residents to shop in Albion on a frequent basis and that will even appeal to visitors. The City desires to be realistic in recognizing that in certain consumer categories it will be difficult for local businesses to compete on price, given the economies of scale achieved by major retailers and big-box stores.

Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation

Historic preservation protects the historic building stock and transforms aging structures into buildings that contribute to the vibrancy and economic revitalization of communities. The Superior Street Commercial Historic District is listed on the National Register and two other districts -- the Eaton/Superior Residential District and the Albion Historic District -- are eligible to be listed on the National Historic Register. In addition to the Bohm Theatre and the Mary Sheldon Ismon House, other historic assets include the Gardner House Museum, a preserved historic

building, and a Carnegie library built in 1919, which houses the Albion Public Library. Albion College also has at least two Michigan registered historic buildings.

Objectives:

1. Strengthen and better utilize the Downtown Development Authority (3-5 years)
2. Attract commercial development to the downtown that will serve the needs of the community and complement the existing mix of businesses (e.g. restaurants, retail, entertainment, etc.) (3-5 years)
3. Analyze and evaluate the City's parking situation and create a plan for improving parking management and balancing parking space supply with demand. (1-3 years)
4. Monitor the balance of non-profit (i.e. tax exempt) and revenue generating (i.e. tax base) development in the downtown district (1-10 years)
5. Explore the establishment of a historic district commission (1 year)
6. Continue to create incentives and attractions for residents, college students and tourists to visit the downtown (e.g. Hotel, Bohm Theater, Kids N Stuff, the Ludington Center) (1-3 years)
7. Highlight progress of downtown development efforts within the context of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

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MAJOR CORRIDORS

Focus planning and resources to enhance and transform the city's major corridors

The City of Albion has several important gateways and corridors leading into the community and connecting it to other communities, i.e. downtown commercial district, Albion College, the I-94 Business Corridor, Austin Avenue and the south entrance on M-99. There is an opportunity to enhance major gateways, develop strong and consistent visual themes along these corridors, and stabilize them. This would include improving the gateways into the City with attractive landscaping, streetscape, and signage; establishing strong visual themes and physical linkages to strengthen connections between the corridors, and improving access for walking and biking.

Objectives:

1. Develop a Corridor Improvement Plan that strengthens the visual and physical connections between the Downtown Commercial District, Albion College, the I-94 Business Corridor, Austin Avenue and the south entrance on M-99. (1-2 years)
2. Enhance the City's major gateways (as described above) with appropriate landscaping, street-scaping, and signage (1-10 years)
3. Explore the possibility of establishing a Corridor Improvement Authority (1 year)
4. Work with surrounding communities to extend/connect Albion's major corridors to the region (e.g. establishing an MLK corridor between Albion and Marshall, and complementing corridors with non-motorized, regional trail systems) (1-5 years)
5. Highlight progress and achievements in the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

PARKS AND RECREATION

Enhance and protect the environment

In the fall of 2015, the City of Albion Parks and Recreation released its 2016-2020 Master Plan. The Master Plan focuses on: (1) maintenance and improvement of the current parks and recreation system; (2) ensuring that there are sufficient recreational opportunities within walking distance of low-income neighborhoods; (3) enhancing recreational opportunities associated with the Kalamazoo River and the parks along the river and associated with the river trail; (4) addressing access to and safety within the park system; and (5) ensuring that, whenever possible, all applicable policies and environments promote physical activity.

The City of Albion owns and maintains approximately 100 acres of parks and trails. The 17 developed city parks range in size and scale from mini-pocket parks to the nearly 40-acre Victory Park. The facilities and amenities provided in these parks include a range of options, such as playground, canoeing, ball fields, basketball courts, shuffle board, and a disc golf course. The City also maintains five properties that have not been designated permanent parks or open spaces, but are being utilized in this fashion. These include a dog park, memorial garden, and landscaped greenspaces. Finally, the 1.6 mile Albion River Trail along the Kalamazoo River bisects the city from Victory Park to Harris Field.

Albion's riverfront and parks are important community assets that provide recreational opportunities and offer places for solace and reflection, and contribute to placemaking and the overall quality of life. The Community Input Survey confirmed that the people of Albion value its parks and natural areas. Respondents rated these amenities as "important" to the health of the community. One respondent suggested the creation of a splash park or skate park. The future of the Kalamazoo River dam, the millrace, and maintenance of the swimming area of the Rieger Park Pond were concerns raised by another respondent.



Victory Park Playground



Albion is located along the North Country National Scenic Trail.

TRANSPORTATION

Improve Albion’s transportation network to accommodate and promote various modes, including walking, biking, automobiles, passenger rail and public transportation

The I-94 business loop is a 4.4 mile Michigan highway that runs south from I-94 along Eaton Street, west along Austin Avenue, then south via Superior Street into downtown Albion. M-99, a state trunkline also runs through Albion which terminal point in Lansing to the north and Ohio to the south. The Michigan Department of Transportation has scheduled a \$4 million reconstruction of M-99 (Superior Street) within the downtown in 2017. The project includes the replacement of bricks, concrete base, subbase, curb and gutter, storm sewer system, water main, sidewalk, and trees.

Table 20: Transit

2015 Estimates

Transportation Access

	Albion	Calhoun County	United States
No Vehicle Ownership	13.7%	8.1%	9.1%
Own 1 vehicle	44.6	37.4	33.9
Walk to Work	17.2	3.8	2.8
Take public transportation to work	0.0	0.6	5.0

SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of Census; The Nielsen Company; Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

Overall, Albion residents have lower rates of automobile ownership than the nation as a whole. In 2015, the Nielsen Company estimated that 13.7% of Albion’s population did not own vehicles. This is in comparison with 8.1% of Calhoun County and 9.1% of the United States population. A substantially large percent of the population – 17.2% -- walked to work. This is in comparison with 3.8% and 2.8% of the population of Calhoun County and nationwide, respectively. So few people in Albion use public transportation as a means to get to work that it registered at 0.0% in comparison with .6% county-wide and 5% on the national level.

In 2000, it was estimated that 3.0% of Albion’s population worked at home and the mean travel time to work was 15.8 minutes.

Working in partnership with AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers, the Albion City Transportation Workgroup looks to raise awareness of existing transportation services that are available to the people of Albion. In addition, the City is collaborating with Michigan Works! and others to help Albion residents overcome transportation barriers that might prohibit them from obtaining and maintaining jobs within the city and the region.

Community Action, the Albion-Marshall-Connector, and private taxi companies provide transit services for Albion and its surrounding areas. Community Action specializes in providing curb-to-curb services in Calhoun County for seniors age 60 and over and disabled persons age 18 and over. Community Action transports its clientele to medical appointments, handle grocery shopping and banking, places of employment, congregate meal centers, and other necessary trips. The Albion-Marshall Connector serves a broader audience and provides

intercity bus services between Albion and Marshall. The service has been in operation since 2014, when the City of Marshall expanded its offerings to bridge the 12-mile gap between both the two communities.

Community Action provides services to its targeted clientele on a donation basis. The Albion-Marshall Connector charges a nominal fee. Both services operate mainly on weekdays and Saturday mornings. Albion's most active taxi service offers more flexibility in scheduling. However, its moderately priced fares are still cost-prohibitive for certain segments of the population.

Albion is served by both Amtrak and Greyhound. Amtrak stops daily in Albion, which is located along the Wolverine passenger route between Chicago and Detroit. The Wolverine route continues north from Detroit reaching Pontiac. Albion's historic train station was built in 1882 and in the mid-1980's was restored to its original condition.

Non-Motorized Network

Albion's River Trail is an important community asset. The trail runs through Albion for 1.6 miles along the Kalamazoo River. Many towns around the country enjoy their trails as both a recreational and economic resource. A 2014 study released by the Michigan Department of Transportation reported that bicycling provides an estimated \$668 million per year in economic benefit to Michigan's economy, including employment, retail revenue, tourism expenditure, improved health, and increased productivity. The City is looking to strengthen its connections with regional and even a national network of trails.

Albion is strategically located along the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST), one of the nation's longest hiking and backpacking trails, extending 4,600 miles from New York to North Dakota. The trail is administered by the National Park Service. Albion also has the opportunity to pursue a "Trail Town" designation, by identifying and promoting the amenities and attractions that would be of interest to trail users. Trail towns have developed systems of trails and created a welcoming environment with amenities like bike and kayak racks and picnic tables at access points. Wayfinding signage and kiosks encourage trail users to visit and patronize downtown businesses and use amenities like ATM machines, air at gas stations, or Internet access at the public library.

Water trails also translate into regional economic growth. As one of the cities located along the Kalamazoo River, Albion would benefit from its participation in a regional recreation plan, which would culminate in the creation of a water trail for the Kalamazoo River. The City has expressed its support of the proposed project, which is being spearheaded by the Southcentral Michigan Planning Council, the Pottawatomie Resource and Development Council and the Kalamazoo River Watershed Council. The water trail will cover the entire navigable portion of the river, approximately 120 miles.

Albion is poised to take the next step in leveraging its trails as an element within its economic revitalization strategy. Trails are good for the health of local residents. They also link and connect people, which is good for the health of an economic region.

In addition to the recreational and economic benefits of developing a non-motorized network, the City recognizes the importance of building sidewalks, bicycle paths and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure to make walking and bicycling safer and more accessible for students who will continue to attend school within city limits.

Objectives:

1. Develop a motorized public transportation plan working in conjunction with the Calhoun County Transit system, Albion-Marshall Connector and other strategic partners (1-2)
2. Develop a non-motorized transportation plan (1-2)
3. Encourage walking, biking and other recreation by strengthening Albion's non-motorized trail network within the city as well as its connections with the region's non-motorized network (e.g. Iron-Belle Trail, North Country Trail, Kalamazoo River Water Trail, etc.)
4. Establish Albion as a "Trail Town" (1-2)
5. Continue to work cooperatively with MDOT, AMTRAK and other regional transportation partners and authorities to coordinate and improve major streets and other public transit systems.
6. Highlight progress and achievements in the comprehensive marketing campaign for the City. (1-10)

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MUNICIPAL SERVICES: Deliver high-quality municipal services that improve the quality of life in Albion

Maintaining quality infrastructure is important to every aspect of community growth and development, ranging from sidewalk maintenance to facilitating the use of high-speed telecommunications and other technologies. A resounding number of respondents to the Community Survey registered strong dissatisfaction with the condition of certain roads and neighborhood streets. This is certainly the top infrastructure concern expressed by many survey participants. One respondent also expressed concern regarding the possibility of losing federal funding for the stoplights on Eaton/Watson and Michigan Ave/Clark.

Green infrastructure

The citizens of Albion value its existing green infrastructure, e.g. parks, trails, etc. The City of Albion is partnering with others to develop a regional green infrastructure vision for the region. Green Infrastructure is both a network of green space and natural areas in our communities, along with built techniques such as rain gardens and bio swales that preserve the function of the natural ecosystem to benefit residents of the region. Rain gardens along roads help clean the rain water before it enters our rivers and lakes. Green infrastructure is a mechanism to provide recreational opportunities for citizens, increase tourism, and protect water quality.

The City of Albion planned and secured funding for trail development and construction of green infrastructure for control of storm water runoff. Storm water runoff is a major problem for municipal sewer systems and can lead to the contamination of drinking water.

Encourage Green Development

Albion's revitalization strategy embraces and encourages sustainable development. The City of Albion encourages green development practices in public, commercial, educational, and residential buildings, at the onset of projects and in the initial stages of planning. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present while being mindful of and not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Green development looks at improving the built environment while having a minimal impact on the natural environment. Green buildings make more efficient and effective use of the resources of energy, water, materials, and land. Beyond the environmental, social, and health benefits associated with green buildings, increasingly more studies make the case for the financial benefits in terms of the long run savings and payback from reduced energy and water consumption, reduced buildings' emissions, and improved and healthier work, learning, and living environments.

Green development ranges from reusing portions of existing structures, when possible, to minimizing impervious surfaces to reduce storm water handling/management, encouraging the creation of rain gardens and bio swales, green roofs, and the use of alternative energy.

Objectives:

1. Develop/formalize a Public Services Plan to determine needed enhancements in city administration, public safety, community health, and overall municipal services.
2. Develop/update a Capital Improvements Plan to enhance and maintain quality technological and physical infrastructure. Infrastructure includes: Roads and sidewalks; parking; water, sewer, and storm sewer utilities (1 year)
3. Evaluate fiber optic communications and other emerging technology infrastructure in order to address the current and future needs of the community's diverse array of stakeholders (ongoing)

DRAFT

Appendix 1: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Goals and Objectives

Goal 1

Forge local, regional and global collaborations that support the City of Albion -- its people, its needs and its opportunities.

Objectives

- Work in collaboration with local and regional partners and AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers to assess community needs, increase organizational capacity and expand access to education, health care, quality food, economic opportunity and the overall quality of life for all residents (1-3 years)
- Develop a local food culture through increased access to healthy food and nutrition education that utilizes community resources including businesses, farms, community gardens, farmers market, food hub, and other organizations (1-5 years)
- Strengthen and increase the number of strategic collaborations with global partners (e.g. Noisy-le-Roi and Bailly, France, the Albion College/Global Liberal Arts Alliance, etc.) that bring international perspective and attention to Albion (1-3 years)
- Develop and utilize a *Partnership & Collaboration Agreement* with appropriate community partners (tbd) to further define goals, objectives and roles (1-2 years)
- Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy, working in collaboration with partner entities, to promote Albion as a desirable place in which to live, play, study, and invest (1-5 years)

Goal 2

Strengthen and beautify Albion's neighborhoods

Objectives:

- Develop and implement a neighborhood revitalization strategy to eliminate blight, improve public safety and environmental health, and strengthen residential areas as well as former industrial sites that are in close proximity to neighborhoods (1-10 years)
- Expand, diversify and market housing options to meet the needs of residents of varying life stages, life styles and income levels (e.g. Senior/retirement living, College corridor neighborhood, downtown lofts, affordable and low income housing, etc.) (1-10 years)
- Develop and implement a certification/registration program for rental and vacant properties (1 year)
- Identify neighborhood groups who can serve as ambassadors and champions for their respective areas (1-2 years)
- Highlight progress and achievements as part of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 3

Support and strengthen a Pre K-16 education system for the community

Objectives:

- Continue joint meetings with Marshall Public Schools, Albion College, other area schools and community partners to assess, document and support a comprehensive, “post-annexation” K-16 education strategy (1-2 years)
- Strengthen and promote City programs (summer and after school tutoring, the arts, recreational programs, etc.) that support youth in and around Albion (1-5 years)
- Utilize Albion College and other institutions of higher education to support college preparation and access. Strengthen the Albion College Access Network. (1-2 years)
- Highlight progress and successes in the educational arena as part of the City’s comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 4

Retain and attract jobs to Albion by supporting business growth, development, and attraction

Objectives:

- Work closely with Albion EDC, the Chamber and other partner entities to support local businesses with a proactive business retention and development strategy (1-3 years)
- Encourage broad participation with local stakeholders (public, private, non-profit, higher education, civic, and business) in the formulation of Albion’s economic diversification strategy (1-3 years)
- Take proactive steps to connect Albion’s talent base with employment opportunities (e.g. partnering with Michigan Works, Albion College Career & Internship Center, etc.) (1-3 years)
- Take all of the necessary steps to have Albion certified by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation as a Redevelopment Ready Community (1-2 years)
- Continue support for programs and initiatives that foster entrepreneurship (e.g. promote Albion business incubators and encourage minority, youth, and other business development) (1-10 years)
- Highlight the progress of Albion’s economic development strategy within the framework of the City’s comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10)

Goal 5

Stabilize the downtown and enhance its historic character

Objectives:

- Strengthen and better utilize the Downtown Development Authority (3-5 years)
- Attract commercial development to the downtown that will serve the needs of the community and complement the existing mix of businesses (e.g. restaurants, retail, entertainment, etc.) (3-5 years)
- Analyze and evaluate the City’s parking situation and create a plan for improving parking management and balancing parking space supply with demand. (1-3 years)
- Monitor the balance of non-profit (i.e. tax exempt) and revenue generating (i.e. tax base) development in the downtown district (1-10 years)
- Explore the establishment of a historic district commission (1 year)
- Continue to create incentives and attractions for residents, college students and tourists to visit the downtown (e.g. Hotel, Bohm Theater, Kids N Stuff, the Ludington Center) (1-3 years)
- Highlight progress of downtown development efforts within the context of the City’s comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 6

Focus planning and resources to enhance and transform the city's major corridors

Objectives:

- Develop a Corridor Improvement Plan that strengthens the visual and physical connections between the Downtown Commercial District, Albion College, the I-94 Business Corridor, and Austin Avenue, and the south entrance on M-99.. (1-2 years)
- Enhance the City's major gateways (as described above) with appropriate landscaping, streetscaping, and signage (1-10 years)
- Explore the possibility of establishing a Corridor Improvement Authority (1 year)
- Work with surrounding communities to extend/connect Albion's major corridors to the region (e.g. establishing an MLK corridor between Albion and Marshall, and complementing corridors with non-motorized, regional trail systems) (1-5 years)
- Highlight progress and achievements as part of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 7

Improve Albion's transportation network to accommodate and promote various modes, including walking, biking, automobiles, passenger rail and public transportation

Objectives:

- Develop a motorized public transportation plan working in conjunction with the Calhoun County Transit system, Albion-Marshall Connector and other strategic partners (1-2 years)
- Develop a non-motorized travel plan (1-2 years)
- Encourage walking, biking and other recreation by strengthening Albion's non-motorized trail network within the city as well as its connections with the region's non-motorized network (e.g. Iron-Belle Trail, North Country Trail, Kalamazoo River Water Trail, etc.) (Time frame?)
- Establish Albion as a "Trail Town" (1-2 years)
- Fortify relationships with MDOT, AMTRAK, Greyhound and regional transportation partners and authorities to coordinate improvements to major streets and public transit systems (1-5 years)
- Highlight progress, achievements, and testimonials as part of the City's comprehensive marketing strategy (1-10 years)

Goal 8

Deliver high-quality municipal services that improve the quality of life in Albion

Objectives:

- Develop/formalize a Public Services Plan to determine needed enhancements in city administration, public safety, community health, and overall municipal services. (1-3 years)
- Develop a Capital Improvements Plan to enhance and maintain quality technological and physical infrastructure. Infrastructure includes: Roads and sidewalks; parking; water, sewer, and storm sewer utilities, dam and millrace (1 year)
- Evaluate fiber optic communications and other emerging technology infrastructure in order to address the current and future needs of the community's diverse array of stakeholders (1-5 years)

Goal 9

Achieve consistency between the existing zoning code and the City's long-term goals for housing, commercial, and industrial development

Objectives:

- Evaluate and consider changes in zoning ordinances that are necessary to achieve desired land use patterns and align with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan (1-10)
- Explore the feasibility of establishing form-based code, starting in the downtown area (1-2 years)
- Adopt and update standards in the zoning ordinance to promote and encourage green infrastructure (1-2 years)

Goal 10

Build capacity and a network of organizations and services to address poverty and meet the needs of residents who cannot afford basic services

Objectives:

- Update comprehensive community needs assessments and asset maps to identify assets and determine needs (1-2 years)

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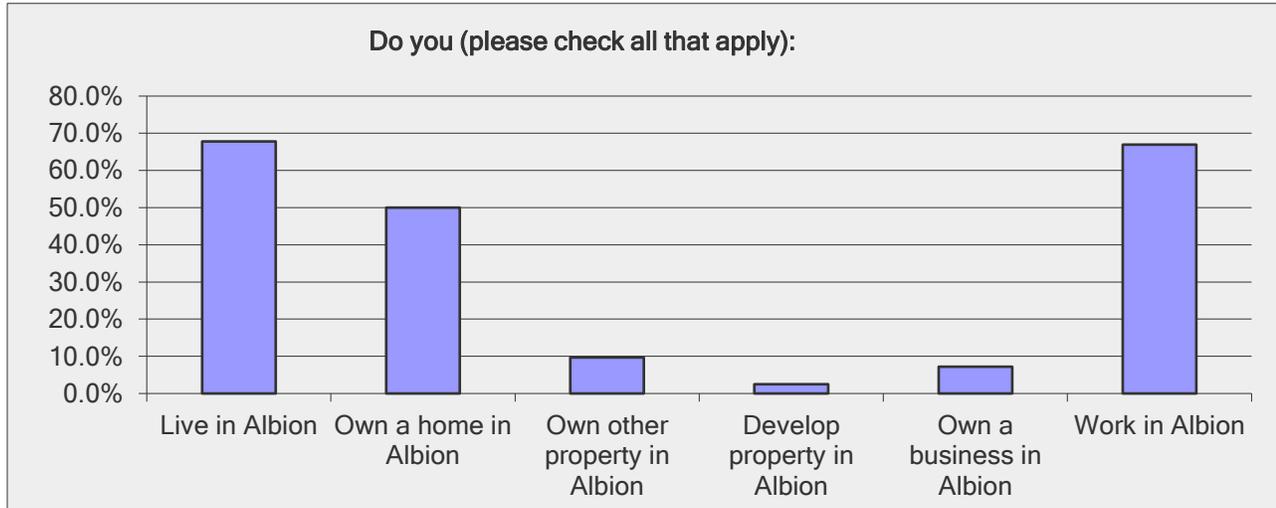
Appendix 2: Redevelopment Sites

Sites	Blight	Contamination	Length of vacancy	Utilities terminated by provider due to inactivity	Location: proximity to residential, river, downtown, or park	Rezoned from residential to B-1	Brownfield designation	Number of acres	Architectural Integrity	Historic value
1 Washington-Gardner					xx				x	x
2 Dalrymple	x	x	x		x			x		
3 Union Steel (plus 2 additional former Union Steel sites)	x	x	x		xx			x		
4 Austin School	x	x	x							x
5 "Gayle Mfg": 710 W. Cass St	x	x	x		x			x		
6 Harvard Site	x	x	x							
7 Parker Labs: 601 N. Albion	x	x	x							
8 Parker Labs: asphalt parking lot										
9 600 block of Austin Ave	x			x	x			x		
10 Schools: N. Berrien Street								x		
11 500 N. Berrien										
12 Browns Weld	x	x	x		xx					
Renaissance Area (Urban Renewal land)										
13					x					
14 Sheridan 425								xx		

Appendix 3: Community Input Survey Results

Provided by the Albion Community Foundation

Question 1



Question 2

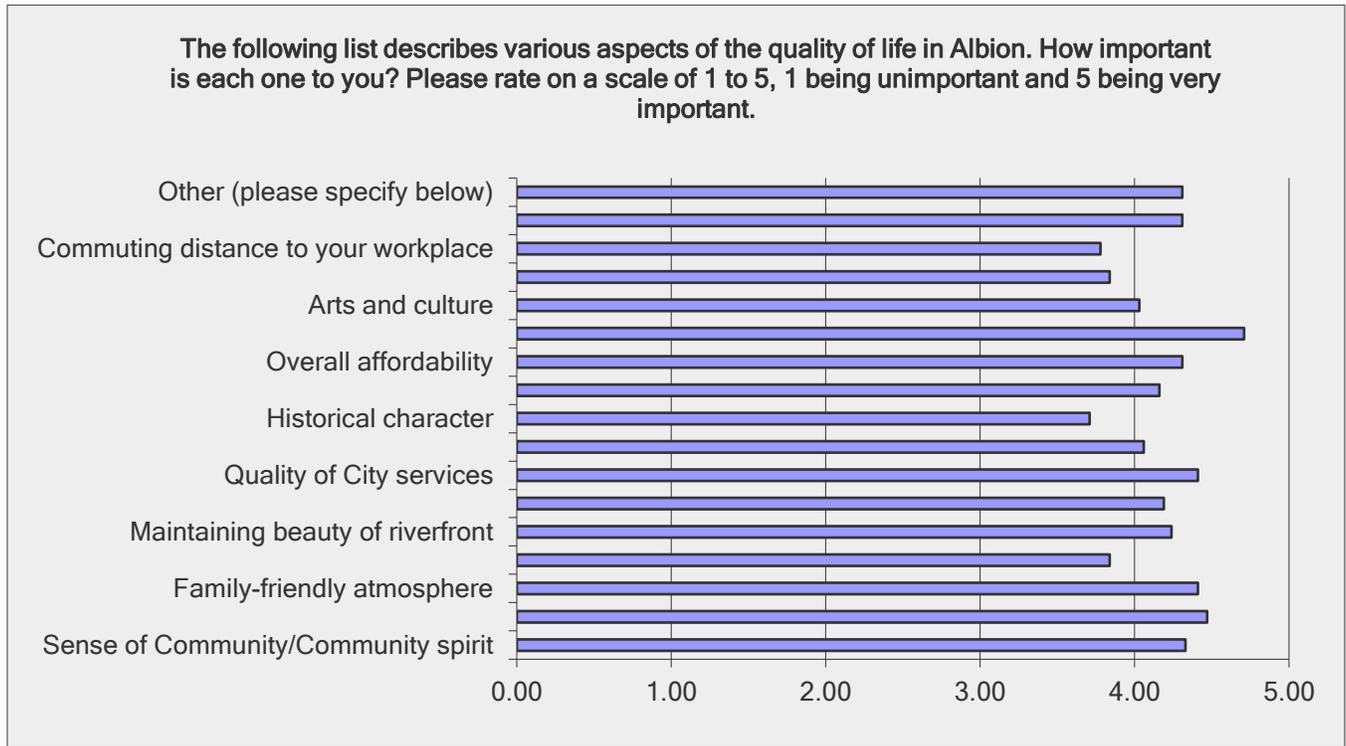
In general, how satisfied are you with the quality of life in Albion?

Answer Options	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Rating Average	Response Count
	5	42	92	86	10	3.23	235
	<i>answered question</i>						235
	<i>skipped question</i>						5

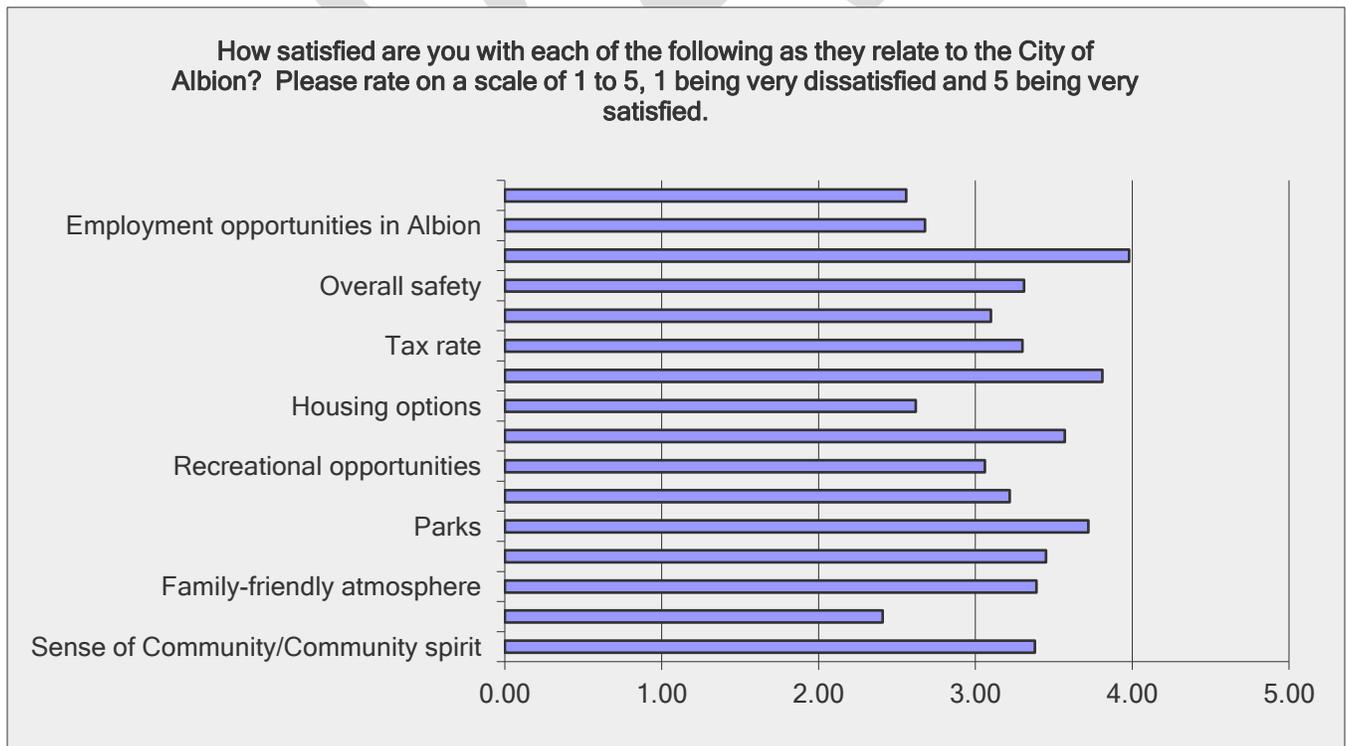
Question 3



Question 4



Question 5

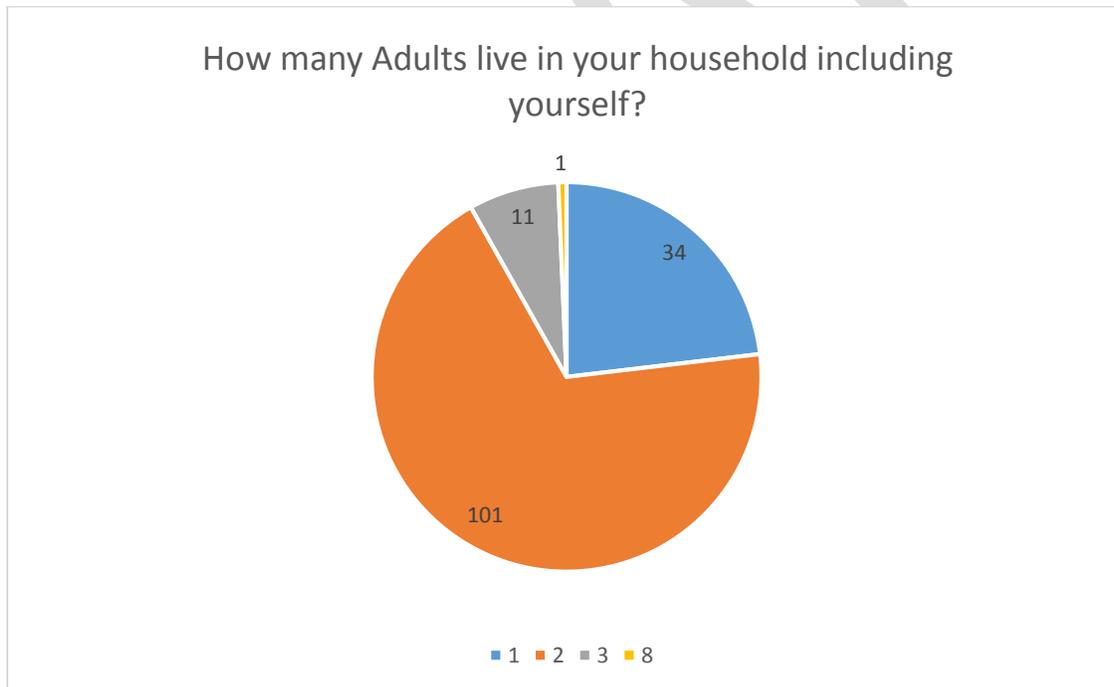


Question 6

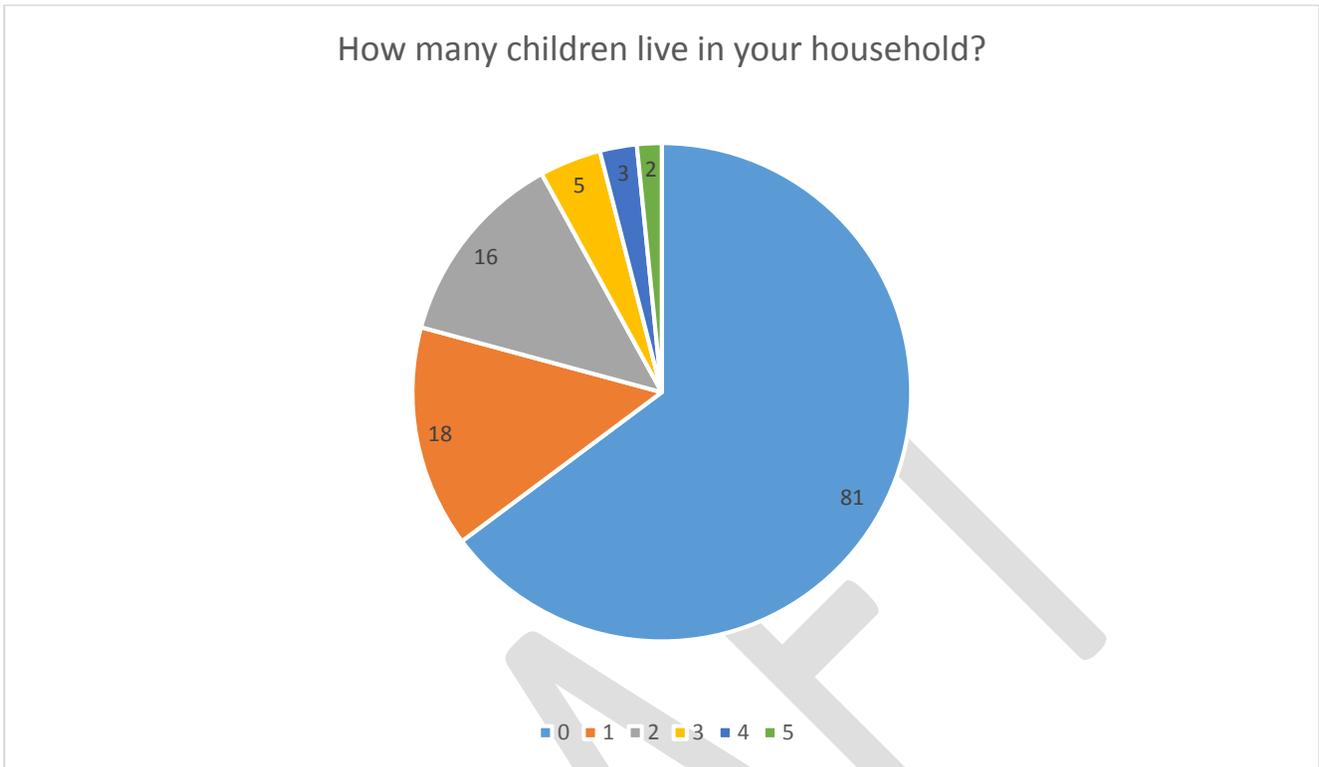
Please check all of the following that you would like to see in Albion:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Improved sidewalks	60.9%	126
Improved street lighting	45.9%	95
Bike lanes	44.0%	91
Bike racks/bike parking at more locations	37.2%	77
Benches downtown	52.2%	108
Historical markers/Historic tours	40.1%	83
Public art	50.7%	105
Art gallery/artist co-op space	43.5%	90
Transportation system between Albion & surrounding	52.7%	109
Retirement community	44.4%	92
Community center	52.7%	109
Other (please specify)	34.3%	71
<i>answered question</i>		207
<i>skipped question</i>		33

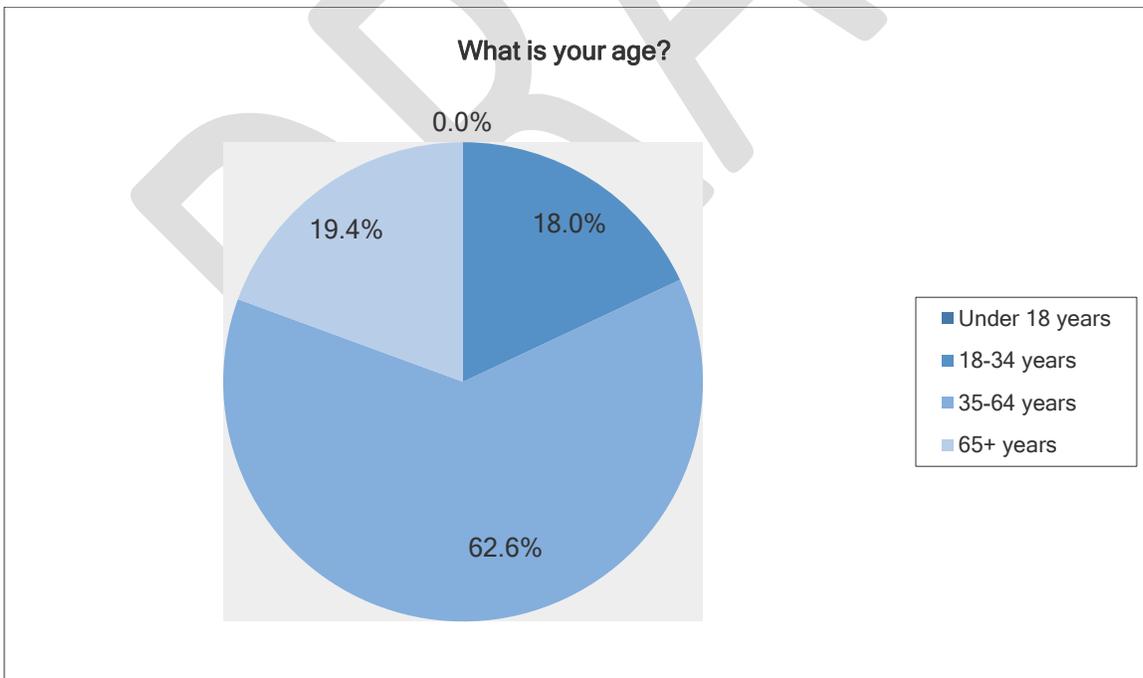
Question 7:



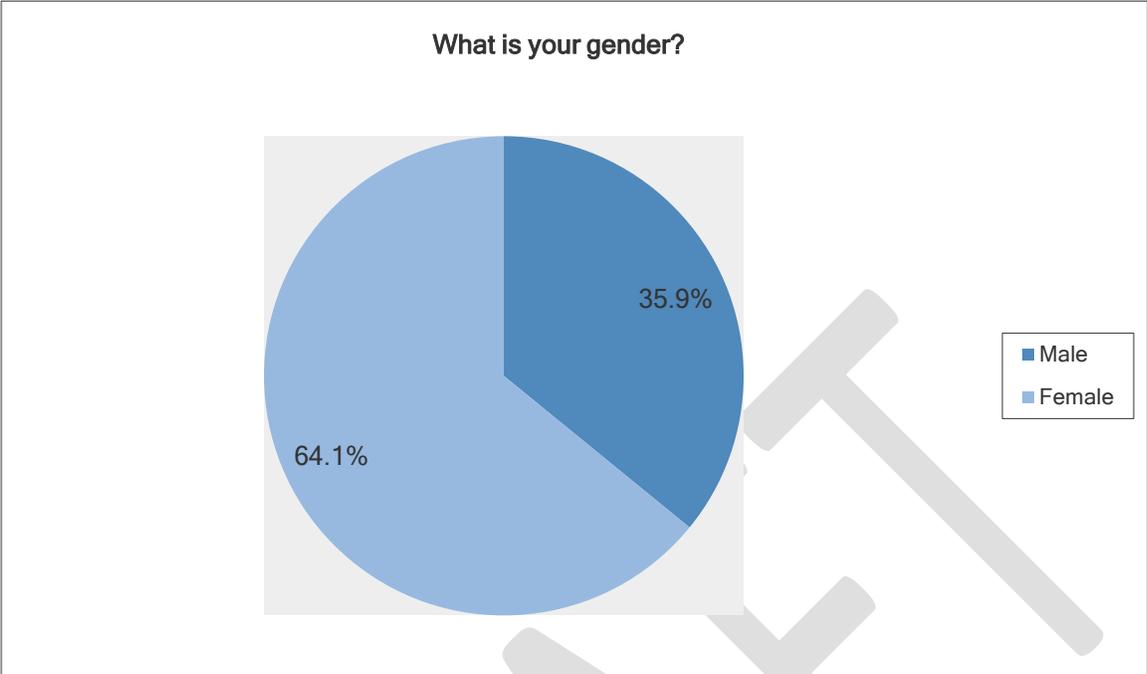
Question 8:



Question 9:



Question 10:



DRAFT