

November 2024

City of Chelsea Opportunity Report



foundation



michigan municipal league



Table of Contents

2-3	Introduction
4	Strengthening the Small Business Ecosystem
4-5	Opportunity 1: Housing and Lodging
5-6	Opportunity 2: Chelsea as a Place to Play, Work, and Grow
7	Opportunity 3: Reimagining Chelsea's South Side
8-9	Opportunity 4: Transportation and Infrastructure
9-10	Conclusion and Next Steps



Introduction

Since 2022, the Michigan Municipal League (the League) and Michigan Municipal League Foundation (MML Foundation), with support from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, have been working on a local economies initiative to explore entrepreneurship and small business support systems in southeast Michigan. Specifically, the goal of this initiative is to consider gaps in resources, like space, capital, technical assistance, networks, and more, that could be filled by the local government and community stakeholders to support more equitable local small business environments.

The League and MML Foundation are collaborating with small and/or rural southeast Michigan communities to learn more about their small business environments and connect them with potential tools and resources to strengthen the local economy ecosystem. In each community, we will partner with local small business stakeholders to hold one-day workshops that will delve into the resources, barriers, and opportunities each community has for entrepreneurs. Following stakeholder workshops, we will provide tailored feedback in the form of opportunity reports. The culmination of these collaborations will be a Microbusiness Ready Communities guidebook that will draw from our learnings in each community and provide resources and inspiration to communities across the state.

Why Chelsea?

The League and the MML Foundation were excited to collaborate with the City of Chelsea through the local economies initiative. The community is experiencing growth and opportunity while also navigating capacity challenges which so many Michigan communities are facing right now. The City of Chelsea is a small, rural community in Washtenaw County that has seen substantial investment and growth in the past decade, with fewer people leaving as they age and more people moving from surrounding areas. This growth is clearly seen in its downtown, which now boasts rehabbed buildings, a 90 percent occupancy rate, and a handful of small businesses that enjoy a regional draw.

Chelsea has a supportive and collaborative community, including a strong informal business network. It is considered the “downtown” for many nearby communities and has exciting opportunities to increase its regional draw and subsequent revenue. Chelsea’s position within Washtenaw County generates both opportunities, like revenue growth, and challenges, like providing housing for its workforce. There is much that can be learned statewide from Chelsea’s hard work and still great potential for evolution within the local community.

What is an opportunity report and what is it meant to do?

This report is a summary of what League and MML Foundation staff observed and heard during the local economies stakeholder workshop in Chelsea on August 21, 2024, and follow-up discussions on September 6 with an additional group of small businesses. It outlines areas for improvement, details short- and long-term opportunities, shares resources to consider utilizing, and highlights inspiration from other Michigan communities doing similar work. The objective of this opportunity report is to serve as a resource for the City of Chelsea and its staff.

The League and MML Foundation would like to thank the City of Chelsea, its participating stakeholders and businesses, and others who helped contribute to this “deep dive.”



Strengthening the Small Business Ecosystem

Significant change has taken place in Chelsea's local economy in recent years. The small business ecosystem is robust and full of potential. But the success and growth of Chelsea's downtown and small businesses in other parts of the community are dependent on having more people living and working in and visiting the city. For the city to have a diverse and healthy entrepreneur ecosystem now and into the future, it must ensure a strong enough customer base to support its small businesses.

In this section, we will highlight four main areas of opportunity we feel would maximize the sense of place and identity of Chelsea while also creating a stable or growing base of residents, workers, and visitors who enjoy and support the city's small businesses. Broadly speaking, these areas of opportunity are housing and lodging, retention of young people and families, south side development, and transportation and infrastructure. Each area of opportunity includes a brief overview of how Chelsea is already succeeding in this sphere, a set of short- and long-term recommendations for ways to further growth, and peer community examples to serve as inspiration.

We acknowledge that there are no "one size fits all" solutions for communities, so we strongly encourage local stakeholders to continue working together to create resources and opportunities that celebrate the unique spirit of Chelsea and foster an inclusive local economy.



Opportunity 1: Housing and Lodging

Overview

As stated above, Chelsea has a robust small business community for a city its size. We heard from Chelsea's small businesses that for them to remain viable into the future—let alone increase the number of small businesses—the city needs to grow the number of residents and visitors. According to Chelsea's most recent master plan, 84 percent of people who work in the city do not live there—they commute from Jackson, Livingston County, and other parts of Washtenaw County. While the city has had only modest population growth in the last five years (2 percent), it has seen a substantial increase in the total number of households (19.5 percent growth since 2019). This has put a significant amount of pressure on the housing market. According to the Census Bureau, Chelsea has had basically a zero percent vacancy/availability rate for homes since 2017. As a result, costs for both owners and renters have become challenging (rent is up 44 percent since 2019) and are hindering people's ability to make Chelsea their home.

In addition to meeting the housing needs of current and future residents, the city is also in need of more temporary lodging options for visitors to the area. Chelsea's proximity to the Ann Arbor area and the availability of numerous in-demand amenities, like shopping, dining, the Purple Rose Theatre, Waterloo Recreation Area, a popular wedding venue, and more, make it a great location for visitors. The small business community would benefit from having more visitors to the city and having those visitors stay for longer periods. However, there is a lack of hotels or other short-term lodging to accommodate visitors and make Chelsea a draw for people from other parts of the state.

While private developers play the lead in developing new housing and lodging facilities, the City can encourage those investments through changes in its planning, zoning, and economic development policies that allow for greater housing density, commercial uses like hotels, and other infrastructure that supports these uses.

Recommendations

Short Term (<1 year)

1. Facilitate the development of new housing to address availability and costs by allowing for more density in downtown and downtown-adjacent neighborhoods. In the downtown mixed-use district, updating the zoning code to allow for some additional building height (at least 60 feet) would add available units and could be done in a way that is authentic and in line with Chelsea's identity as a smaller community. In the R-3 and neighborhoods adjacent to downtown and the Old Highway 12 corridor, allowing for more duplexes and triplexes could increase available housing and still retain the historic neighborhood feeling. The League's recent guidebooks, *Pattern Book Homes*

for Michigan's 21st Century and Missing Middle Mixtape, offer zoning reform tools and copyright-free construction plans for these types of "gentle density" housing, giving communities the tools to create new homes right where residents want to live.

2. Conduct a market analysis for an additional hotel or lodging in the city that would cater to the types of users Chelsea's small businesses are already attracting, such as wedding guests, shoppers and diners, people visiting the Ann Arbor area, or cyclists and other outdoor enthusiasts visiting the Waterloo Recreation Area.

Long Term (1-4 years)

1. Explore options for additional hotel lodging. If a market analysis shows opportunity for additional lodging facilities, work with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), developers, and realtors to explore options for developing/redeveloping property for a new hotel. This process should include identifying appropriate locations, setting development standards that ensure hotel development reinforces Chelsea's walkable small-town character (rather than permitting highway-oriented site plans), and targeting marketing to brands that operate this style of hotel. Look to MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Sites program for resources and examples of this community-led marketing approach.

Case Study

In the 1990s, the City of Birmingham, Michigan, faced a declining population, stagnant economic activity in its downtown, and some decay in its commercial corridor. This was a result of some earlier backlash against growth and limits on density in the city and downtown districts. Large and small businesses began to disappear, and the city faced some significant challenges with the viability and attractiveness of its downtown.

Various updates to the city's 1996 master plan attempted to address revitalization of urban spaces and new wayfinding as part of the solution for supporting its commercial district. But in 2016, Birmingham launched a specific downtown planning effort that included months of community educational and information-gathering sessions. Thousands of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders participated in the process, and through community visioning and discussions about the future, the city decided to grow Birmingham from a town into a small city. The Downtown 2016 Plan reflected this desire by recommending numerous policy revisions, streetscape improvements, park expansions, traffic-calming measures, and the first form-based code in Michigan history." Birmingham's 2016 Plan insisted upon allowing five-story mixed use buildings with retail and housing in the central business district.

Following the Downtown 2016 Plan process, the City updated its zoning code, including the establishment of a new downtown overlay district that divides their downtown into several zones. Each of the identified zones has regulating

policies that prescribe the requirements for building form, including height. In the city's D4 zone, four to five stories are allowed and in the D5 zone, five or more stories are allowed with design review requirements to ensure compatibility with the surrounding environment. Since the adoption of these changes, the city has been revitalized into a more modern and vibrant small Michigan city that maintains its unique identity and high quality of life.

Resources

- [NPS Technical Preservation Brief: Rooftop Additions on Mid-Sized Historic Buildings](#)
- [Michigan Municipal League Pattern Book Homes for the 21st Century](#)
- [Michigan Economic Development Corporation Missing Middle Housing Solutions](#)
- [MEDC Redevelopment Ready Sites](#)
- [City of Birmingham, MI and National Planning Trends](#)

Opportunity 2: Chelsea as a Place to Play, Work, and Grow

Overview

Michigan is facing serious economic and social challenges due to stagnant population growth. According to the Governor's recent Growing Michigan Together Council, Michigan is 49th out of 50 in terms of population growth, and our population is aging. Young people are not staying in Michigan and not locating here from other states at a level that supports growth and economic well-being. One of the Council's identified strategies is to "create thriving, resilient communities that are magnets for young talent."

Like the rest of the state, Chelsea has an aging population, with those under the age of 65 falling by 14 percent between 2012 and 2022. People under 35 years old make up only 33 percent of the city's population, compared to 43 percent statewide. For Chelsea's small business ecosystem to continue thriving in the coming years, the city must provide inclusive and inviting amenities for residents and visitors at all stages of life. Chelsea already has a good diversity of retail, dining, service, and other small businesses in both downtown and south side districts. But to stay relevant and meet the needs of younger generations in particular, the city will need to make sure there are enough attractions/activities in Chelsea both day and night. Currently, the city's noise ordinances limit the operating hours for bars and restaurants downtown. Small businesses we met during our site visit indicated that this is limiting the attractiveness of the city for younger residents and visitors, which has an impact on the viability of all small businesses in the community.

Recommendations

Short Term (<1 year)

1. Update the city's noise ordinance to allow for noise levels above 60 decibels until at least 11 p.m. on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Some of the downtown restaurants have patios or outdoor-adjacent spaces that lend themselves to music (live or recorded). Again, allowing for a more activated, engaging outdoor space could help increase foot traffic and business in these downtown establishments.

2. Extend downtown social district hours on Thursdays (and/or evenings where there are special events downtown) to match allowable hours on Fridays and Saturdays (12-10 p.m.) and consider expanding those weekend hours until 11 p.m. to support restaurants and bars and improve the experience of residents and visitors.

3. Evaluate downtown and other community events to ensure there is a good mix of activities for residents and visitors of all ages. A majority of City and Chamber of Commerce events are targeted toward families with kids and older residents which is an important part of creating a cohesive and fun community, but diversifying the mix of events and the location (for example, hosting more in or near the south side of town) to meet the interests of younger adults and older adults/retirees could expand engagement of these groups in the local economy. Not every event can be all things to all people, but across the calendar, event offerings should be diverse and welcoming for people of all backgrounds and life stages.

Case Study

Downtown Farmington has embraced placemaking and ordinance changes to create a green and lively town center where folks of all walks of life and ages can live, work, and play. These changes did not come overnight, and, in fact, have been steadily worked toward since 2002. One of the first significant changes made to the downtown was the reimagining of a parking area into what is now Riley Park. While almost unthinkable at the time, Riley Park has since become the “keystone that has blended old Farmington with new Farmington.”

Since the creation of this park, an investment in quality of life improvements—proven to be the number one attractor of younger demographics to cities—has driven Farmington's success with 66 new businesses opening since 2002 and a vacancy rate at just 5 percent. Improvements have focused on the creation of parks, pedestrian safety, arts, and events and the creation of a seven day a week social district branded as “the Syndicate.” Farmington has become an example of how “investing in our shared spaces—be it through art, parks, or otherwise—results in a downtown that has more people and fewer vacant storefronts.”

Resources

- [City of Farmington Social District — the Syndicate, open seven days a week until 10 p.m.](#)
- [City of Ludington events calendar](#)
- [City of Northville, MI, Social District — the Twist, open seven days a week until 10 p.m.](#)
- [Detroit Regional Chamber statewide survey on priorities for Michigan residents aged 18-29](#)
- [Michigan State University Extension: Zoning in on Millennials](#)



Opportunity 3: Reimagining Chelsea's South Side

Overview

Chelsea's south side business area, primarily running along Old US 12 and Main Street (between Chelsea Hospital and I-94), is a mix of larger big box stores and chains, and several local small businesses, including several longstanding family businesses in the community (e.g., Thompson's Pizza, Chelsea Lanes, and Aberdeen Bikes). There are low density residential areas surrounding this corridor, and it is anchored by Pierce Park. In addition, the south side is home to Chelsea Hospital, which is part of the University of Michigan Health System.

The City's 2019 Master Plan identifies this area as ripe for redevelopment efforts because there are significant vacancies along with undeveloped and underdeveloped parcels. It is a more affordable area for small businesses and entrepreneurs and presents some great opportunities for expanding and bolstering the local entrepreneurial economy. As the Master Plan states, "there has been desire expressed to this area re-imagined as a more community-oriented, pedestrian accessible area, that exhibits characteristics similar to the rest of the City. This area is a gateway to the community and should express the small town character that is Chelsea."

In our visit to Chelsea, businesses and stakeholders indicated that the small businesses in the south end of the city may not feel as connected to the local economy as they could be and that additional housing density and infrastructure improvements, especially south of Old US 12, could help support small businesses in this corridor.

Recommendations

Short Term (<1 year)

1. Use the Master Plan process to identify vacant/underutilized parcels along and adjacent to Old US 12 and opportunities for increased density in this corridor, where new development could reinforce Chelsea's sense of place and business community and provide additional (more affordable) housing and spaces for small businesses.

2. Ensure small businesses in the south end of town feel networked and connected to Chelsea's local economy by including this area of the city in community events that drive traffic to their businesses, providing wayfinding signage between downtown and Old US 12 that highlights business offerings in this area, and establishing (and funding) cross-business promotion programs such as discounts at stores with the receipt from another small business in the city.

3. Host events with the Chamber of Commerce and DDA to encourage connectivity between south and north side communities. Use placemaking in current strip mall parking lots to increase foot traffic social interaction in underutilized parking lots.

Long Term (1-4 years)

1. Invest in Pierce Park The park has significant potential to serve as an anchor for the south side, both geographically and as part of the area's identity. Reimagined, and marketed as the heart and soul of the south side, Pierce Park can host events and connect disparate parts of the area creating a more cohesive feel. Furthermore, Pierce park can be connected to both Screw Park and Pierce Lake as part of a south side greenway that can be used to draw in foot traffic and increase the desirability of the area.

2. Reimagine the corridor south of Old US 12 as a place for density and opportunity to meet community needs. The corridor south of Old US 12 is a car-centric commercial area that supports numerous businesses—both larger chain stores and small businesses—but in a way that feels detached from the rest of the community. With four lanes of traffic, limited pedestrian crossings, and large surface parking lots fronting the street, the environment is not very desirable or safe feeling, in jarring contrast to the historic downtown and neighborhoods to the north. The city should undertake an effort to reimagine and make necessary zoning/policy changes that support additional housing and commercial density in this area of town. Specifically, updating zoning and using economic development tools and incentives to support redevelopment of some of the large surface parking areas, in concert with the transportation changes mentioned in the next section could have multiple benefits: making this a significantly more supportive small business environment, adding much-needed housing, and expanding on the traditional character of Chelsea's core.

Case Study

Over the course of 30 years, an aging 1960s strip mall in Mashpee, Massachusetts, was transformed into a lively town center. Mashpee Commons, as its came to be known, is a partial demolition of an existing strip mall, which was reimagined as a walkable, open-air shopping environment with residential options. In an homage to the historic New England architecture of the area, the former shopping center was “re-skin” to encapsulate the charm and identity of the larger community. This “suburban retrofit” has allowed a once dying strip mall to enjoy new life as a town gathering place that is now growing into a complete village and spurring on a renaissance of local development and environmental, financial, and regional traffic benefits.

Resources

- [Mashpee Commons](#)
- [Strong Towns — “We Could Fit Lots of homes in the Middle of Old Strip Malls”](#)
- [Congress for New Urbanism — “The remarkable potential for retrofitting strip malls”](#)
- [Strong Towns — “Eden Center: Is This Strip Mall Paradise?”](#)
- [MEDC & Congress for New Urbanism — Enabling Better Places: Commercial Corridors and Shopping Centers](#)



Mashpee Commons, Massachusetts



Opportunity 4: Transportation and Infrastructure

Overview

Many of the placemaking pain points noted in Chelsea stem from having to accommodate state infrastructure: M-52 hosts high traffic volumes, including a large amount of through truck traffic that creates a noise nuisance, and the rail corridor limits opportunities for alternative routes—past discussions of creating a bypass have stalled due to cost and feasibility challenges. Other challenges grow out of the business district’s success: the need for nearly all employees and visitors to arrive by car stresses in-town traffic and parking, capping the ability of businesses to grow in downtown. The dependence on car access and channeling of so much of Chelsea’s traffic onto Main Street result in high traffic volumes that limit the ability for pedestrians to cross safely outside of the few signalized intersections.

Chelsea can control only parts of this access and traffic equation—but what it can control can support business success, housing opportunity, and quality of life in unison. Doubling down on the sidewalk-and-front-porch charm of Chelsea’s historic core by directing new development to follow that pattern, as discussed above, will support the “good congestion” of many people walking within town to access their destinations, rather than driving for convenience. Adding housing options and destinations in the walkable fabric of town can, in some cases, even decrease total car traffic.

Additionally, these steps will discourage the nuisance congestion of through-traffic. Truck traffic in particular is sensitive to travel time, and the same improvements that support in-town access (such as additional signalized crossings) will help push this cut-through trucking back to US-23 and US-127.

Recommendations

Short Term (<1 year)

1. Require connectivity in subdivision and zoning standards. The new Master Plan and following code updates are an opportunity to promote safe and pleasant walking connections within town. All new developments should promote easy pedestrian access internally and with existing and future neighboring plats, continuing the traditional street grid to the extent possible.

2. Identify opportunities to repair connectivity within existing land use. Many of Chelsea’s larger public or institutional land uses could be opportunities to secure easements and relatively cheaply create sidewalk connections that dramatically shorten walking distances within town. Coordinating winter maintenance will be an important consideration in such projects.

3. Adopt “duty to stop” ordinance for crosswalks.

Some intersections discourage pedestrian crossing because traffic is too continuous or fast to offer gaps for crossing: Van Buren at Main, Dewey at Main, and Silver Maples at Old US-12 were noted by local stakeholders as examples. Michigan’s uniform traffic code only requires that drivers yield to a pedestrian already crossing; a local ordinance can require instead that drivers stop for pedestrians waiting at the curb, creating gaps to cross. The increased crossings made possible by passing (and enforcing) such an ordinance may additionally lead crossings to meet MDOT standards for adding flashing beacons or signals.

Long Term (1-4 years)

4. Relentlessly pursue pedestrian improvements

on M-52. Fill sidewalk gaps, advocate for additional safe pedestrian crossings (with RRFDs or HAWK signals), implement access management standards promoting shared drives, and otherwise demand that MDOT prioritize residents’ access, not just vehicular throughput. This should apply through the entire length of Chelsea, rather than accepting the south side of town as a “sacrifice zone” that is inherently unsafe for pedestrians.

5. Evaluate the need for decked parking, and plan for financing.

The cost of decked parking construction makes it a last-choice option for serving visitor access but may be a necessary part of Chelsea’s strategy. The city should consider what combination of DDA TIF funding from new construction and user fees on parts of the parking system would be needed to support a new parking facility.

6. Engage regional partners in discussion of additional transit options.

Stakeholders noted that WAVE’s existing services are too limited to support employment or visitor travel needs, but future transit conversations between Western-Washtenaw Area Value Express (WAVE), Washtenaw County, Ann Arbor Area Transit Authority (AAATA), and the Regional Transit Authority could build on these. In particular, expansion of the existing in-town shuttle’s route and hours could allow it to alleviate internal car traffic demand, especially if it were able to serve park-and-ride employees coming from I-94 or move visitors between the South Town hotels and downtown.

Case Study

Places like Farmington, Kalamazoo, Traverse City, and Ann Arbor have all had “duty to stop” ordinances in place for several years and have reported significant success in improving crosswalk safety, as well as establishing familiarity for such expectations for drivers. Neighboring Stockbridge, also on M-52, has recently adopted this type of ordinance.

Farmington’s ordinance:

Sec. 31-55. - Pedestrians; right-of-way in crosswalk.

Rule 702 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) The driver of a vehicle shall stop for a pedestrian standing within the designated ADA ramp adjacent to any marked *crosswalk* facing the roadway, or within the designated ADA ramp adjacent to any unmarked *crosswalk* at an intersection facing the roadway or at any point within the crosswalk, except at intersections where the movement of traffic is being regulated by a police officer or a traffic control signal; and at such regulated intersections operators of vehicles shall stop for all pedestrians crossing or who have started to cross the roadway on the “go” or “walk” signal.
- (2) A person who violates this section is responsible for a civil infraction.

(Ord. No. C-790-2018, § I, 12-17-18)

Resources

- MDOT [Pedestrian Crosswalk Guide](#)
- FHWA Guide: [Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility and Reducing Conflicts](#)



Conclusion and Next Steps

Chelsea has an opportunity to use placemaking, policy, strategic development, and more to sustain its downtown economy and attract and retain a younger population through a combination of short- and long-term steps. We recognize that capacity is a longstanding challenge in the municipal sphere, and we encourage leveraging Chelsea's many healthy partnerships as the community comes together to strengthen the local economy and create equitable opportunities for entrepreneurs.

What follows is an overview of the recommendations presented in this report, starting with opportunities that can be implemented within a relatively short timeframe, are less labor intensive, and are relatively inexpensive. These small-scale interventions are shown alongside large-scale interventions that are more oriented toward creating new long-term infrastructure and resource development within Chelsea over the next few years.

Small-Scale Interventions

- Facilitate the development of new housing to address availability and costs by allowing for more density in downtown and downtown-adjacent neighborhoods.
- Conduct a market analysis for an additional hotel or lodging in the city that would cater to the types of users Chelsea's small businesses are already attracting, such as wedding guests, shoppers and diners, people visiting the Ann Arbor area, or cyclists and other outdoor enthusiasts visiting the Waterloo Recreation Area.
- Change local policies/ordinances to allow for later closing hours on weekends for restaurants and bars to encourage a more active and robust evening environment in the city's downtown, attract younger residents and visitors to downtown, and expand the earning opportunity for those businesses.
- Update the city's noise ordinance to allow for noise levels above 60 decibels until at least 11 p.m. on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday to accommodate music and events at the city's restaurants, bars, and other small businesses.
- Extend downtown social district hours on Thursdays (and/or evenings where there are special events downtown) to match allowable hours on Fridays and Saturdays (12-10 p.m.) and consider expanding those weekend hours until 11 p.m.
- Evaluate downtown and other community events to ensure there is a good mix of activities for residents and visitors of all ages.
- Use the Master Plan process to identify vacant and underutilized parcels along and adjacent to Old US 12 and opportunities for increased density in this corridor,

where new development could reinforce Chelsea's sense of place and business community and provide additional (more affordable) housing and spaces for small businesses.

- Ensure small businesses in the south end of town feel networked and connected to Chelsea's local economy by including this area of the city in community events, providing wayfinding signage between downtown and Old US 12, and establishing (and funding) cross-business promotion programs, such as discounts at stores with the receipt from another small business in the city.
- Require connectivity in subdivision and zoning standards to promote safe and pleasant walking connections within town. All new developments should promote easy pedestrian access internally and with existing and future neighboring plats, continuing the traditional street grid to the extent possible.
- Identify opportunities to repair connectivity within existing land use by securing easements and creating sidewalk connections that dramatically shorten walking distances within town.
- Adopt "duty to stop" ordinance for crosswalks, particularly at Van Buren at Main, Dewey at Main, and Silver Maples at Old US-12, which were noted by local stakeholders as examples.

Large-Scale Interventions

- Explore options for additional hotel lodging by conducting a market analysis and working with MEDC, developers, and realtors to explore options for developing/redeveloping property for a new hotel.
- Invest in Pierce Park to clearly identify it as an anchor and entry point of the south side and link it to Main Street Park in both formal and informal ways.
- Reimagine the south side Old US 12 corridor as a place for density and opportunity to meet community needs, including a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- Relentlessly pursue pedestrian improvements on M-52: filling sidewalk gaps, advocating for additional safe pedestrian crossings (with RRFDs or HAWK signals), implementing access management standards that promote shared drives, and otherwise demand that MDOT prioritize residents' access, not just vehicular throughput.
- Evaluate the need for decked parking in downtown, and plan for financing to support both residential and visitor needs.
- Engage regional partners in discussion of additional transit options with WAVE, Washtenaw County, AAATA, and the Regional Transit Authority. In particular, expansion of the existing in-town shuttle's route and hours could allow it to alleviate internal car traffic demand.



Thank you to the City of Chelsea, its small business community, and all its supportive partners for giving us your time and attention.

We look forward to seeing Chelsea thrive in the years to come.



The Michigan Municipal League and MML Foundation would like to acknowledge the partners and community stakeholders involved in this exploration:

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation

The City of Chelsea

Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce

Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation

Ann Arbor SPARK

Michigan Small Business Development Center

Michigan Economic Development Corporation

Washtenaw Community College Entrepreneurship Center

**And all of the dedicated Chelsea entrepreneurs and small business
owners who participated in the stakeholder workshop!**

We thank you for your support and partnership in this effort!

Contact

Shanna Draheim

Director, Policy Research Labs

Michigan Municipal League

sdraheim@mml.org

Richard Murphy

Program Manager, Policy Research Labs

Michigan Municipal League

rmurphy@mml.org