

Proposed Improvements

This section elaborates more fully on the policy recommendations addressed in the "Functional Goals and Policies" section (Figure H).

1) Streetscape

Public improvements such as new street lighting, banners, and landscaping are highly visible elements that have a considerable impact on a community. These amenities help improve the overall community image and also create an attractive business district. Additional considerations include pedestrian scale lighting, signage, benches, waste receptacles, and planters. The proposed streetscape development will include Michigan Avenue from Wolf Lake to the ODA boundaries at Maple Street. Another section might be along Lake Street north of Michigan Avenue to connect with a linear park along the Grass Lake ODA boundary.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000
Estimated Completion: 1995

2) Sidewalks/Curbs and Gutters

Ease of walking from business to business is an important element of any downtown development plan. In many areas of the district, sidewalks are in need of repair. New sidewalk extensions especially along Michigan Avenue and Lake, north of the railroad track, add to the overall aesthetics of the area. As funding becomes available, all of the development area will have pedestrian walkways.

Well-defined walkways are also needed with curbs and gutters throughout the central business district. This not only adds to the aesthetics but enables more efficient drainage.

Estimated Cost: \$250,000
Estimated Completion: 2000

3) Property Acquisition

It may be desirable and/or necessary to acquire properties located throughout the DDA in an effort to accomplish various improvement projects. Some of those projects include, but are not limited to, properties for expansion of commercial facilities to be leased out to private business. Additional property may be acquired by the DDA as it becomes available and offered for private development in the future. The DDA may look at purchasing property along Grass Lake for recreational use such as a linear park and greater public access.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000
Estimated Completion: Ongoing

4) Business District Parking Area

This project will include the design and construction of new parking areas behind businesses on the south side of Michigan Avenue. Plans will maximize parking potential, minimize circulation conflicts, and clearly define service areas and pedestrian walkways. Site lighting, landscaping, signage, and site furniture may also be included in the overall parking improvement project.

Estimated Cost: \$225,000 (Excluding land acquisition)
Estimated Completion: 2010

5) Promotional Activities

- a) Business Promotion and Assistance: One of the major goals of the DDA will be to attract new businesses and maintain existing occupancy in the business district. The development of promotional literature and providing assistance to potential interests will enable the DDA to actively seek additional businesses such as retail, service, and professional office.

Estimated Cost: \$2,500 Annually (25-year total: \$62,500)
Estimated Completion: Ongoing

- b) Market Study: The market study should identify the trading area of the downtown district and provide detailed information concerning consumer spending patterns within the market area. Data will be collected by a questionnaire distributed throughout the assumed market area. Information will be cross-tabulated and compared to other known information on consumer spending. The result will be a document containing this information as well as recommendations on strategies for improving market share and business in downtown Grass Lake.

Estimated Cost: \$12,500
Estimated Completion: 1992

- c) Civic Image: Civic image and community pride are other key elements that will help contribute to the positive growth and development in Grass Lake. Well-organized activities, events, and promotional literature sponsored by the DDA are methods by which the community can begin to strengthen its image.

Estimated Cost: \$5,000 Annually (25-year total: \$125,000)
Estimated Completion: Ongoing

6) Public Utility Improvements

A complete study and evaluation of the existing public utility systems should be complete prior to any improvements and additions.

- a) Sanitary Sewer System: A sanitary sewer feasibility study has been completed which indicates present on-site waste disposal systems are becoming increasingly ineffective. Sanitary sewer service is proposed for the Grass Lake area to remedy the waste discharge problem and accommodate future development. Several alternatives are provided and need to be addressed as funding becomes available.

Estimated Cost: \$1,750,000
Estimated Completion: 2005

- b) Water System: Improvements to the water system in the DDA may consist of, but not be limited to, testing, treatment, and upgrading undersized water mains.

Estimated Cost: \$300,000
Estimated Completion: 2005

- c) Storm Drainage System; Initial observations indicate that the existing storm drainage throughout the ODA is inadequate. Consideration should be given to improving most of the district. Drainage improvements may include, but not limited to, land and easement acquisition, the installation of culverts, underground piping, open ditches, retention/detention basins, etc.

Estimated Cost: \$500,000 Estimated Completion: 2005

- d) Bury Overhead Utility Lines: In an overall plan to improve the appearance of the DDA, it is proposed to bury overhead utility lines (electrical, cable television, and telephone) mainly along Michigan Avenue, within the ODA boundaries.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000
Estimated Completion: 2015

Signage Program

This project will include a complete signage program for the entire DDA. Attractive, well coordinated, new street signs, directional signs, and informational signs will not only add aesthetic value to the DDA but also assist pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

Estimated Cost: \$25,000
Estimated Completion: Ongoing

7) Physical Development

- a) Improve Lake Access: Taking advantage of natural features can greatly influence the aesthetics of the area while attracting visitors for recreational use. It may be desirable to purchase property along the east side of Grass Lake for a linear park with pedestrian walkway, landscaping, signage, benches, waste receptacles, and planters. The selection and placement of all items should express basic design principles and close harmony with the environment

Estimated Cost: \$80,000
Estimated Completion: 2010

- b) Open Area/Greenspace:

There are very few areas within the DDA boundaries set aside as open space. There are a number of small areas which would be well used as such. These areas should be landscaped and provided street furniture to create a pleasant, restful area where pedestrians might stop and pause while they stroll through the downtown area.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000
Estimated Completion: 2010

- d) Road/Street Improvements

It is the objective of the DDA to upgrade less than adequate streets and roads within the district. Various problems including improper drainage, surface deteriorations, and other irregularities will be improved.

Estimated Cost: \$300,000 Estimated Completion: 2006

Planning Projects

- a) Recreation Plan: A comprehensive document examining existing recreation facilities and identifying any deficiencies in the village of Grass Lake should be developed. This is not only an important element for future growth and development but is also a prerequisite for any of the recreation grants available from the state for land acquisition and/or recreation facility development.

Estimated Cost: \$10,000
Estimated Completion: 1991

b) Design Study

A design study addressing specific DDA projects should be prepared. The study should include evaluations and design recommendations for buildings and site development. The purpose of the study would be to evaluate existing conditions, examine alternatives, and establish standard design guidelines for future development. Recommendations should include proposed styles, colors, types, etc., for lighting, landscaping, signage, and site furniture such as benches, waste receptacles and planters. The selection and placement of all items should express basic design principles such as rhythm and harmony. Each element should complement the others.

Estimated Cost: \$12,000
Estimated Completion: 2010

11) Maintenance/Repairs/Equipment

The maintenance of proposed improvements such as lighting, landscaping, and recreation areas will be an additional expense, not currently provided by either the DDA or the village at large. The actual maintenance could be provided by a subcontractor to the DDA or on a shared time and expense basis with village personnel. The allocation of revenue for this purpose would include the salary and benefits of a maintenance individual(s) and the costs associated with repairs and replacement of fixtures, structures, etc.

Estimated Cost: \$2,500 Annually (25-year total: \$62,500)
Estimated Completion: Term of plan