

5.0 Conclusion and Physical Plan Recommendations

Physical recommendations are intended to promote a unified image, distinct from Waterford and Highland Townships, through the use of high-quality elements that reflect White Lake's *Four Seasons* image. Recommendations were formulated to further the Vision and Goals (Section 4.0), and are based on those presented in the *2006 Master Plan*, and the *2007 Highland Road Corridor Beautification Project*. Recommendations set the path for implementation strategies and proposed improvements described in Sections 6.0 and 7.0, respectively. Cost and time estimates for projects are provided in Section 8, Tax Increment Financing Plan.

5.1 Gateway Enhancements

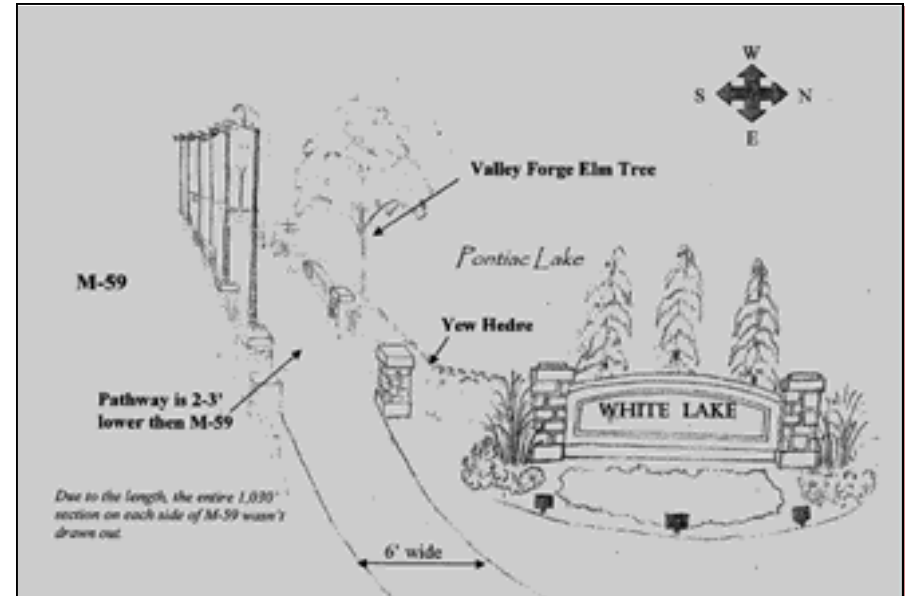
One method for accomplishing a unified identity is through consistent application of materials and environmentally-friendly landscaping. Gateways to the District and to each Planning Area and/or Focus Area¹ are visual indicators that set the tone for the visitor experience. The following recommendations are taken from the *Beautification Project*.

Recommendation 1. Gateway at Pontiac Lake

The east and west points of entry set the tone for expectations of White Lake Township. The figure to the right presents a gateway concept at Pontiac Lake. Features include:

- ❑ Stone monuments with limestone capping.
- ❑ Landscaping and plantings that are native to the area and produce a vacation-like atmosphere.

¹The *White Lake Township Master Plan* identifies Planning Areas, areas with similar neighborhood characteristics (Figure 5), and Focus Areas, smaller areas with more complex issues that call for major changes.



Design for the Pontiac Lake Gateway (2007 Beautification Report)

- ❑ Seasonal colors that 'lock-in-step' with changing seasons.
- ❑ Pedestrian-scale lighting that invites pedestrians and cyclists.

Note: Because the municipal boundary line crosses along the Highland Road bridge, the entry sign will need to be placed in Waterford Township. White Lake Township expects to coordinate this effort with Waterford Township.

Recommendation 2. Gateway at West Entrance

The approach from the west opens to boulevards that can be improved with landscaping and entry signage similar to that used at the eastern entrance. The designs outlined in the *Beautification Report* should be followed.



Left: Example of bridge with pedestrian walkway. Right Example of pedestrian walkway treatment as shown in the 2007 Beautification Report.

Recommendation 3. Continuous Multi-Use Pathway

A continuous pathway system connects key businesses and resources within White Lake, as well as connects White Lake to the Oakland County Trailway system. The Corridor Authority can contribute significantly to both objectives by 1) ensuring new development includes segments, 2) facilitating the filling in of system gaps, 3) developing sidewalk enhancements, like benches, lighting, trash receptacles and sidewalk patterns, and 4) assuming the responsibility of sidewalk maintenance within the District.

Pedestrian pathways north and south of Highland Road should be continuous, inviting, and well-maintained. These link people to restaurants, shopping, entertainment and recreational opportunities. Amenities, such as landscaping, human-scale lighting, benches and fountains, should be part of the pathway system. As well, the paths have the opportunity to provide scenic views of lakes and woodlands. The *Beautification Report* envisions pedestrian bridges to use the same materials as the Gateways (Bandera Brown Stonework), and illustrates the following:

- ❑ Pedestrian bridge just west of Lowe's Home Improvement. Stone archways on the south side, and pedestrian bridge on the north side.

Pedestrian pathway on south side with vista of Oxbow Lake (across from *Brew Bob's* restaurant).

- ❑ Pedestrian pathways leading west from the Fire Department, with stone pillars and arches and old-world style lamp posts (similar to Pontiac Lake Gateway).

Recommendation 4. Highland West Pedestrian Crossing

A crossing of Highland Road is a priority for the White Lake Township community. Currently the road is a major obstacle for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. A bridge, or other connector, would provide access to corridor businesses for residents as well as hikers, cyclists and equestrians traveling between Highland and Pontiac State Recreation Areas.



Equestrians enjoy a ride in White Lake Township.

Recommendation 5. Target Development Opportunities

A primary function of the Corridor Authority is to facilitate economic development within the District. To this end, the Authority may consider land purchases, land swaps, and leases. A potential project may involve relocating the historic Fisk Farm to a more significant, historical village as an element of a new Civic Center. Its present site could be offered for retail development and/or used for a new Fire Station site. The sale of the property is expected to more than cover the cost to relocate and reassemble the historic structures.

Recommendation 6. Bury or Relocate Utility Lines

Trees and power lines are not compatible. Trees must be trimmed regularly to prevent damage to power lines, resulting in an awkward canopy line. Power lines near trees can result in power outages; power lines and oddly-shaped trees can also detract from the peaceful, resort-like feel being created by White Lake. Solutions include burying power lines, or relocating them to the back of properties. Removal of power lines is a subtle, yet highly effective means for creating a comfortable, aesthetically pleasing environment.

Recommendation 7. 'Places To Walk To'

Hand-in-hand with a pathway system (Recommendation 6) are destinations, or places to walk to. The Corridor Authority should focus on developing destinations that offer unique retail, dining, office/professional service, entertainment, recreation, and indoor and outdoor public venue opportunities in a pedestrian-friendly environment. To create such places, the Master Plan identifies desirable uses, development and specific physical improvements by Planning Area (Page 12). Improvements that the Authority Board could promote and/or sponsor are noted below, by Planning Area.

❑ Overall Enhancement

- Transportation and Access Management Study to consider service roads, decreased speed limits, roundabouts and other techniques to increase pedestrian safety.

❑ Highland Road West

- Work with the Township to develop the Township-owned parcel on the south side of Highland Road, west of the Utility Corridor (Figure 5, Page 12). This area is planned for a recreation or civic use. The Board should work with the Township to develop this land in a manner that is desirable to the community. Visioning sessions and/or workshops will be necessary to identify the use and design for this piece of land.
- Enhance existing buffers between residential and non-residential developments where necessary.
- Update and implement the Access Management Plan to ensure traffic and pedestrian safety along M-59, and convenient cross-access between developments.
- Partner with the Township to provide sewers along the Bogie Lake Corridor and Highland Road west of Highland.
- Promote façade and sign enhancement programs.

❑ Lakes Village: the Central Gathering Place

- Boulevard Elizabeth Lake Road. Elizabeth Lake Neighborhood Core is intended to be a local gathering spot for area residents.
- Establish a passive-use area, adjacent to Brendel Lake, to provide an open space and recreation use to compliment the residential, retail and service offerings in Lakes Village.
- Promote façade and sign enhancement programs.
- Work with the Planning Commission to develop timeless unifying visual features, such as pavement, pedestrian amenities, lighting, landscaping, wayfinding sign system



*Top right and left: Examples of the physical environment envisioned for Lakes Village (2007 White Lake Township Master Plan).
Bottom right and left: Examples of businesses that exhibit local character and pedestrian orientation, ideal for Lakes Village.*

and highest-quality architecture unique to Lakes Village.

- Work with the Planning Commission to develop an attractive roadway system: landscaped boulevards, special crossing features, refuge islands, mast-arm signals, roundabouts and on-street parking.
- Update and implement the Access Management Plan to

ensure traffic and pedestrian safety along M-59, and convenient cross-access between developments.

❑ Highland Road East

- Promote façade and sign enhancement programs.
- Update and implement the Access Management Plan to ensure traffic and pedestrian safety along M-59, and convenient cross-access between developments.
- Work with the Planning Commission to enhance existing buffers between residential and non-residential developments where necessary.

❑ North Central

- Partner with the Parks and Recreation Committee to develop the utility corridor segment of the trailway system. This segment would open the District to residents as well as visitors taking advantage of White Lake’s recreational opportunities.



A trailway alongside the utility corridor would link the Recreation Areas to the Corridor Improvement District.