

## City of Northville Master Plan Open House Sessions

### Meeting Results Summary

In September 2020, the City of Northville Planning Commission held three virtual Open House sessions to gather ideas on re-development of the Cady St., Racetrack, and S. Center St. Master Plan subareas. The sessions began with a welcome, and an introductory presentation about Northville’s current demographics, the subareas being considered, and design concepts that are common in traditional towns and neighborhoods.

Participants were then divided into small groups, each with a facilitator, to participate in a “design activity.” The activity presented each small group with an aerial photograph (or “gameboard”) of the subareas, and asked them to locate various icons onto the gameboard to design the layout of new development. Their design must include roads and pathways/sidewalks, parks, and open spaces, at least three different land uses, and any other feature they thought important or desirable. Space to add notes or comments was also provided on the gameboard. Once the small groups were finished with their design, the large group re-convened and each small group presented their design concept to the large group. After each small group’s presentation, participants were asked to take a poll, responding to questions about that design’s characteristics.

The information presented here is divided into two sections. The first section is a summary of common themes and unique ideas illustrated in the various small group gameboard designs. The next section of this summary includes ideas and thoughts provided in the “comments” section of the gameboards, or comments placed on the gameboard design.

### SUMMARY OF GAMEBOARD DESIGNS

The following summarizes the common themes and unique design ideas illustrated in the 15 gameboards created by the Open House small groups. Note that some groups did not illustrate anything in some areas of the gameboard. Lastly, not every idea is included in this summary, but the completed gameboards are available on the Master Plan Update page on the City’s website.

<b>Roads, Trails &amp; Pathways</b>	<b>Number of times concept appears on gameboard</b>
<b>Common Themes</b>	
<b>Beal Street:</b>	
Extend Beal into site to S. Center St. (E/W through street)	14
<b>Hutton Street:</b>	
Extend Hutton into site	14
Extend Hutton to 7-Mile and meet up with Edward Hines Drive. (N/S through street)	7
<b>Fairbrook Street:</b>	
Extend Fairbrook into site	14
Extend Fairbrook (either directly or indirectly) to Johnson St. (E/W through street)	7

<b>Roads, Trails &amp; Pathways (Continued)</b>	<b>Number of times concept appears on gameboard</b>
<b>Common Themes</b>	
<b>Church Street:</b>	
• Extend Church into site	10
• Terminate Church into a more prominent street within the site	7
• Extend Church to 7-Mile	3
<b>Edward Hines Drive:</b>	
• Extend Edward Hines Drive into site	9
• Extend Edward Hines Drive to Downtown	7
• Terminate Edward Hines Drive into a more prominent street within the site	2
<b>Johnson Street:</b>	
• Extend Johnson into site	8
• Extend Johnson to Fairbrook	7
<b>Griswold:</b>	
• Extend Griswold into site (never a through street)	6
• Curve Griswold around river	5
<b>Pathways:</b>	
• Pathway along daylighted river	12
• Pathway along north side of 7-Mile	10
• Pathway between site and Town Square	5
• Notes on many plans state that pathways/sidewalks should be located along either one or both sides of all streets	
<b>Unique Ideas</b>	
1. Stagger or curve streets as traffic control device	
2. Include alleys in single-family Residential areas	
3. Locate street along the daylighted river, and locate buildings on other side of street to face the street/park (i.e. single-loaded street)	
4. Roadway follows existing horse racing track surface	
5. Add traffic calming boulevard sections (similar to clock in downtown) on main roadways (i.e. Cady St. and Beal St.)	

<b>Parks, Open Space and Public Amenities</b>	<b>Number of times concept appears on gameboard</b>
<b>Common Themes</b>	
1. Daylight the river and locate within a park surrounding the river and Johnson Creek	15
2. Add one or more “centrally-located” parks fronted by streets (i.e. single-loaded street with buildings on one side and park on the other side) within the site	7
3. Locate open space/linear park along one or both sides of S. Center St.	4
4. No one dominant location for Farmers Market. Several designs had various options:	
• Near or at existing location	7
• Near downtown	6
• In new park surrounding the daylighted river	4
5. Gateway features at 7-Mile and S. Center, including welcoming signage, enhanced pedestrian crossing and a round-about	6
6. Gateway at 7-Mile to include or be incorporated into park area	6
<b>Unique Ideas</b>	
1. Locate large central park in green space on the interior of the racetrack surface (racetrack surface is proposed as a road)	
2. Second gateway where Johnson St. crosses river/park into site with open commons beyond, accentuated with unique architecture/landscape treatment	

<b>Land uses in Cady St. sub-area (Between Cady St. &amp; the new extension of Beal St.)</b>	<b>Number of times concept appears on gameboard</b>
<b>Common Themes</b>	
<b>Directly adjacent to Cady St.:</b>	
• Commercial	8
• Both 2- and 3-story mixed use	6
• Mixed use 3-story	5
<b>S. of use along Cady (north of Beal St. extension):</b>	
• Dedicated green space. Could also serve as traffic calming device, stormwater management, or as a “setting” for farmer’s market or mixed use buildings	6
• Townhomes	3
• All other built uses (MU 3, MU 2, MU 2+3, Apartments, SF Res.)	2
<b>At southeast corner of Cady &amp; Center St:</b>	
• Commercial	5
• All other uses (MU 3, MU 2)	3
<b>At southwest corner of Cady &amp; Griswold</b>	
• Commercial	6
• Mixed use 2-story	3
• Mixed use 3-story	3

<b>Land uses in Cady St. sub-area (Continued) (Between Cady St. &amp; the new extension of Beal St.)</b>
<b>Unique Ideas</b>
1. Directly adjacent to Cady St.: Dedicated green space or single-family residential
2. S. of use along Cady (north of Beal St. extension): Single-family residential
3. At southeast corner of Cady & Center St.: Hotel
4. Parking lot adjacent to Griswold (across from sub-station)

<b>Land uses in Racetrack sub-area</b>	<b>Number of times concept appears on gameboard</b>
<b>Common Themes</b>	
1. Single-family residential as one land use among several	13
2. Townhomes	10
3. Designs that placed single-family residential directly next to the daylighted river park	7
4. Pocket parks or other parkland in addition to daylighted river	5
5. Designs that located townhomes (mixed with single-family residential) directly next to the daylighted river park	4
<b>Unique Ideas</b>	
1. Mixed-use 2-story directly next to the daylighted river park (so first floor commercial can take advantage of the park view and location for outdoor dining, etc.)	
2. Senior housing land use	

<b>Land uses in S. Center St. sub-area</b>	<b>Number of times concept appears on gameboard</b>
<b>Common Themes</b>	
<b>East Side North (Between Cady &amp; extended Beal St.).</b>	
• Mixed use 3-story	5
• Commercial	5
• Mixed use 2-story	3
<b>East Side South (Between extended Beal St. &amp; 7-Mile).</b>	
• Single-family residential	5
• Mixed use 3-story	4
• Townhomes	4
• Park/open space directly adjacent to street	4
<b>West Side North (North of Fairbrook)</b>	
• Single-family residential	4
• Townhomes	4

<b>Land uses in S. Center St. sub-area (Continued)</b>	<b>Number of times concept appears on gameboard</b>
<b>Common Themes</b>	
<b>West Side South (Between Fairbrook &amp; 7-Mile)</b>	
• Townhomes	4
• Single-family residential	3
• Mixed use 2-story	3
• Park/open space directly adjacent to the street	3
<b>Unique Ideas</b>	
1. East side South (Between extended Beal St. & 7-Mile): Arrange townhomes around semi-circular park that fronts S. Center St.	
2. West Side North (North of Fairbrook): Office use or apartments	

## **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS**

Participants could also provide comments regarding their design in the “Comments” section of the gameboard, or as a text box located anywhere on their design. The following ideas were expressed through comments provided. (Note that common ideas were combined in this summary.)

### Land Use Relationships:

- Work/live walkable community with dense housing near commercial.
- Both sides of Cady Street need to become more “commercial” in character to welcome people on both sides. Redevelop existing parking structure with façade along Cady St.
- Office space is suggested on west side of Center Street with similar architecture on both sides of the street. Would offices on the site of the current farmer’s market work?
- Diverse multi-family with green or decoratively paved courtyards/pocket parks featured in the southern area of the district.
- Explore planning features and geometries to capture an essence of the Northville Downs racetrack and/or affiliated structures after the complex is removed. A concern was raised that too much developable space may be needed for such a solution – causing it to be infeasible.

### Building Architecture:

#### *Cady St.:*

- Avoid long walls of same height on any one street—break up different uses/different heights.
- Take advantage of the slope of Cady for “walkout.”
- Views of backs of buildings along E. Cady St. should look as nice as the fronts. Aesthetics are more important than height.

*Townhomes:*

- Townhomes should be of varying styles (i.e., Cherry Hill Village) vs. one uniform look (5 Mile and Sheldon).
- Townhome should be high-end design.

*Single-Family Residential:*

- Single family, townhouses & ranches with siding and Victorian design (not brick). Different types of floorplans. Need for ranch condos.
- Consistent lots? Blended house size with surrounding area. Make entry homes.
- River St. homes on stilts?

*Style*

- Not one builder dominating residential development.
- Look at Country Place / St Lawrence Estates.
- Looks like Northville.
- Want to keep the quaint character. Architecture should not be too modern. Blend in with historical feel of Northville.

*Cost:*

- Do not do typical construction >\$750k.
- Northville is not affordable. Apartments are still going to be expensive.
- Concern that condos become rentals. Transient residents.

Building Height:

- Do not block views of downtown with development along south side of Cady St.
- Vary architecture/height on Cady to avoid “wall” effect.
- Mixed use could be a mix of 2/3 stories - vary height.

Building Orientation:

- Mixed use along park areas to include outdoor dining facing the parks.
- Condos on Center St. should face the street with large inviting sidewalk, street trees, and decorative streetlights, etc.

Rouge River:

- Daylight the river – will serve as a focal point (mentioned 6 times).
- Preserve trees in the vicinity of the daylighted river/along River St.
- Prevent commercial development along the park and river.
- Will a daylighted river park be flooded most of the time?

Other Parks/Open Space/Public Amenities:

- A dedicated green space is provided at the north portion of the site as a gateway, pedestrian calming device, and stormwater management. Pedestrian pathways would switchback to accommodate grade change. Spectacular architecture will be required at the southern terminus of this open space.
- Public squares with townhomes around. Include green space, benches, statues, etc. Can be used for events or informal gatherings. Could bring in vendors etc.
- Potential event “street” on the extension to S. Griswold along the river?
- In favor of more natural/parkland than development. Link with other green spaces in town.
- Water feature (for kids?) in park south of Beal.
- Need places for teenagers.
- Parks should not be owned/maintained by Association—should be under City.
- Land swap with Schools to accommodate athletic fields.
- Create gateway to the City at Center/Sheldon & 7 Mile .

Farmer’s Market:

- Creating a space for a farmer’s market is a must. – must have parking. Location of Farmer’s Market should be a multi-use space (not just for Farmer’s Market). Farmer’s Market with Pavilion which could be rented for other uses.
- Keep space for Farmers Mkt. (in park space?). Current farmers market is good for traffic in and out of Sheldon and 7-Mile [2 agree]. The area west of Center near 7 -Mile could be a nice area for a market/gathering space.
- Farmers market at Cady and Griswold—covered, multi-use. Parking to west of Market. Market parking under retail on Cady?

Streets

*General concepts:*

- Ensure connection of all existing roads, no cul-de-sacs. New roads not to be used as quick, unsafe cut-through options.
- Development should provide more opportunities for diverting traffic off of existing main roads.
- All roads would be multi-use roads with wide sidewalks and bike paths.
- All streets should be tree lined with significant parkways adjacent to ROW.
- Streets would support neighborhood blocks.
- Make sure streets are present to accommodate all **traffic** that will result from new development. Where will traffic go? What **traffic impacts** may occur?

*Ideas for specific streets:*

- The extension of Griswold to 7-Mile should be a curved boulevard that follows the river to highlight the park.
- The Church Street extension is purposefully curvilinear (other streets could do the same) to avoid the monotony of a gridded street network. Hutton connects to Hines.
- Gardner Street is connected via a vehicular bridge while Johnson Street is connected by a pedestrian-only bridge.

- A one-lane roundabout is suggested for the Sheldon-Seven Mile roads inter-section to create a gateway. Adjacent buildings should align/conform to the curvilinear roundabout. Dedicated bicycle lanes along Seven Mile and connecting into downtown is important.
- No dedicated left-hand (LH) turn northbound (NB) at Sheldon.
- River St. looks like it will be a bigger road.
- New street one block south of and parallel to Cady.

#### Pathways:

- Need trails and sidewalks. All streets have ample inviting sidewalks.
- Trail connections and focus on the highlighting the river. Connections to urban and nature trails.
- Pathways could be determined by pedestrian movement (and especially between parking and destinations).
- Sidewalks on both sides of River St?
- Easy way from Hines drive to downtown for bike connections.
- Bike lanes along the river?

#### Parking

- Parking for all uses should be behind residential buildings.
- Any use fronting on S. Center St. would have to have rear loaded parking.
- Surface lots should be landscaped and made of permeable surfaces.
- Moderate existing parking requirements so that they are not so high.

#### Overall Vision:

- Victorian village with places to live at all stages of life. Center of beautiful little town.
- Keep the track? Is it financially feasible? But maybe not as a “gaming” place...just horse racing. Alternatively, this planning project may be an opportunity to change what Northville is known for...not gambling.

#### Observations:

- We can do whatever we want as long as our eyes are open to the up sides and down sides.
- Concern about density.
- Farmers Market in in flood plain.
- Can look down into this area (from Cady St. looking south).
- Private car use decreasing over time? Or electric? Charging ports needed.