

## CHAPTER 3 - Area Evaluations

In preparation for this master plan update, the Village Council identified three areas of concentration: entrances into the village; the village's commercial areas; and the village's industrial areas. This chapter evaluates each of these areas and identifies goals for their future development and objectives for implementing those goals.

### A. Entrances

There are four principal entrances into the village. These entrances, or "gateways" into the village are important because they set the tone for visitors entering the community. The Village of Metamora Downtown Development Authority (DDA) determined that enhancing these gateways was important enough to pay for new signage for each one to provide a unified look and feel.

#### *Goal 1*

Build on the new gateway signage to promote the village image and improve access to sites in the village.

#### *Objectives*

1. Where appropriate, enhance the new signage with larger monument style signage and landscaping.
2. Create a sign post with wayfinding signs at the center of town using the same sign motif as the entrance sign that identifies key village uses.
3. Provide additional signage using the same sign motif that designates public parks.

### B. Commercial Areas

The village's downtown is its sole commercial center. The village has avoided the development of retail uses on the edge of their community. These fringe developments have tended to weaken the economic vitality of traditional downtowns and reduce their role as a community's center. The fact that Metamora has avoided this problem is a major asset for its downtown.

The downtown is located at the center of the village. The buildings are generally built at or near the property line and are adjacent to the public right-of-way. Most of the buildings date from the mid to late 1800s. Most of the buildings are occupied, but some vacancies exist. The range of uses includes retail, offices, and institutional uses.

The village established a DDA in 1983, which established a district that encompasses the entire village. The DDA recently updated its development plan to include items such as:

- Sidewalk enhancements;
- Expand sewer capacity;
- Study need for additional off-street parking;
- Provide financial assistance to the village and other organizations involved in historic preservation;
- Establish entrance features to enhance village gateway; and
- Develop design guidelines in conjunction with planning commission.

#### *Goal 1*

Preserve the village's downtown as the sole commercial area.

*Objectives*

1. Do not rezone property that is not contiguous to the existing downtown to commercial use.
2. Work with Metamora Township to prevent the development of fringe commercial areas on the edge of the village.

*Goal 2*

Provide opportunities for expansion of the downtown core.

*Objectives*

1. Establish transition zone to allow for conversion of single-family residential property adjacent to downtown to commercial or office uses.
2. Work with DDA in establishing design standards to be applied to any new construction within the DDA.
3. Promote the development of additional downtown parking as identified in DDA plan.

**C. Industrial Areas**

The Village of Metamora has a larger industrial base than most communities its size. This is due primarily to Metamora Products, a manufacturer of plastic products for various customers, including the petroleum and pharmaceutical industries.

The industrial uses are concentrated along the former railroad right-of-way, south of the downtown. The current location does not provide many alternatives for expansion. Incremental growth along the edge of the existing industrial area is blocked by the fact that it is surrounded on most sides by small lots already developed for commercial or residential use. Expansion in the southeast quadrant of the village is a problem due to the substantial grades on the vacant land in this area, potential conflict with residences along Blood Road, and the potential for conflict with planned residential development in the township that are contiguous to the site.

A third alternative would be to create a new industrial area in the northeast quadrant of the village adjacent to the village sewage lagoons. This property is owned by the village and is intended to serve as the site for future expansion of the lagoons. However, assuming not all of the property is required for the lagoons, land could be made available for industrial uses. This site has the advantage of limited conflicting surrounding uses in an area adjacent to an industrial area on the Township Future Land Use Map and adjacent to a major street.

*Goal 1*

Provide adequate space for potential expansion of the village's commercial space.

*Objectives*

1. Evaluate the amount of land currently owned by the village in the northeast quadrant that is needed for future sewage lagoons and determine if remaining land is usable for industrial purposes.
2. Evaluate cost of extending road access and water to northeast quadrant.
3. Discuss potential impact of industrial zoning in northeast quadrant with Metamora Township.