

PROJECT: OX CREEK WATERSHED STUDY: MALL AREA PLANNING
CLIENT: SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN PLANNING COMMISSION

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #1 - KICK-OFF MEETING

What role does this district play in SWM?

- Commercial/retail – regional
- Good investment in area (hotels, etc.)
- Potential for Growth: 94 Corridor

What role should this district play in SWM tomorrow?

- Mixed use
- Walkable/livable
- Multimodal
- Grocery store important
- Improved Regional shopping center
- Ox Creek Park + Trail

Who Should be the Target Market (Shop/Play)?

- Keep shoppers here (not to South Bend/Kalamazoo)
- Become a destination shopping place
- Place for “entertainment experiences” / food trucks / farmer’s market / music venue
- A place to relax/read -> fireplace

Who Should be the Target Market (Live/Work)?

- Townhomes
- Young professionals
- Walk to lunch

To attract the Target Markets, what improvements should be considered?

- Clean
- Landscape
- Light
- Aesthetic
- Experience – community fireplace
- Focal point to draw them in
- Blight/Demo needed
- Free the creek/paddle trail – flowing water with multi-use: path continue to downtown

What is the Identity of Exit 29 Today?

- “Benton Harbor” – no lines between Township & City
- “bad reputation/stigma” for attracting businesses
- Old/tired/antiquated
- Ugly
- Failing landscape
- Threatened/crime (Perception)
- No sense of place of where you are
- Get in/get out
- Industrial/antiquated
- **East**-industrial - **West**-commercial
- Congested-avoid it

What should the Identity of Exit 29 be Tomorrow?

- More inviting wayfinding signs
- Something lovely/experience
- Orchard – Fruit Trees
- Ox Creek – aesthetic with still managing water as focus
- Gateway to Twin Cities
- Welcoming (signage, etc.)
- Plantings/sidewalks maintenance *Adoption
- Architectural Bridge

