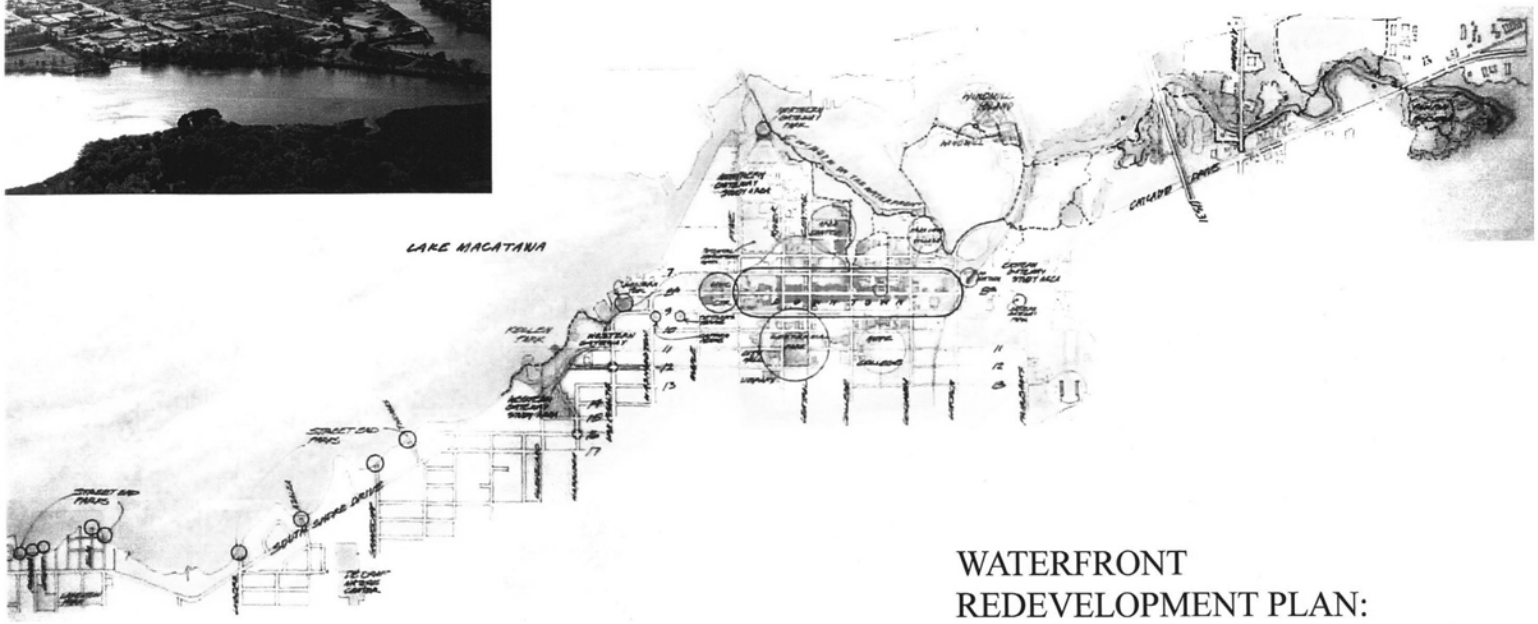

WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT PLAN:

A Compilation and Synthesis of Community Planning For the City of Holland's Waterfront

Adopted by the
Holland City Council
April 1999

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For the City of Holland's Waterfront

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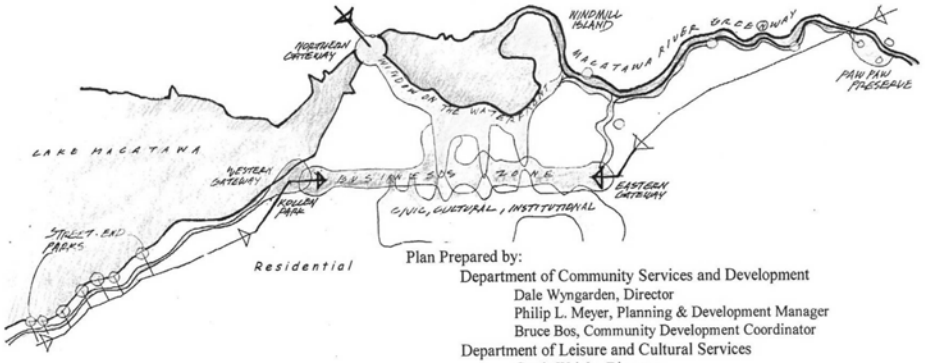

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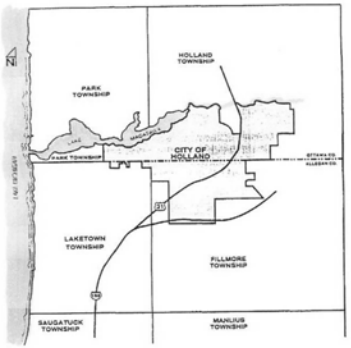
- E. Waterfront Area Center: A Design Charrette, March 1997.
- F. Kollen Park Waterfront Design Charrette, November 1998.
- G. Macatawa River Greenway: Segment A, December 1998.



I. PURPOSE: COMMUNITY PLANNING FOR HOLLAND'S WATERFRONT

The purpose of this Waterfront Redevelopment Plan is to assemble, synthesize, and promote support for the important opportunities that exist for connecting the City's downtown and neighborhoods to the Macatawa waterfront.

There is an emerging- or perhaps more accurately- a clarifying vision for the waterfront, and for Holland's place as a waterfront community that recognizes the opportunity for public access to and enjoyment of the waterfront in all aspects of one's daily life. This broadened vision goes beyond opportunities for private waterfront homes and waterfront parks by recognizing expanded opportunities for waterfront commerce, waterfront living, and waterfront celebration with an overriding public presence and purpose. Traditional recreational opportunities within our waterfront areas are expanded as opportunities for gatherings and celebrations are enhanced through more meaningful connections to the rest of the community. This vision builds on the ideas and sensitivities accumulated over the past 25 years and gives additional impetus to the consistent desire to enhance this community for residents and visitors alike.

This is also a Redevelopment Plan calling for continued action in pursuing waterfront opportunities, building on the successes, spirit, and leadership already demonstrated in so many sectors of our community. In order to accomplish enhanced connections to our waterfront and realize improvements in the envisioned quality of life, it is important that this Redevelopment Plan elevate the community's awareness that the City of Holland is indeed a waterfront community. By assembling the series of planning studies and improvement projects that individually are bringing development opportunity and recreational amenity to our waterfront, our ability to redefine the entire Holland waterfront through a comprehensive waterfront plan becomes clear.

II. HOLLAND'S WATERFRONT

A. Natural Features

The City of Holland's most significant natural features are Lake Macatawa and the Macatawa River and Marsh. Lake Macatawa, located along the City's northern border, is an inland lake some six miles in length, connecting to Lake Michigan through a man-made shipping channel some 150 feet wide and maintained at a navigable depth of 22 feet. Due to frequent low-volume flow in the Macatawa River, and the open-ended connection between Lakes Michigan and Macatawa, water conditions and levels in Lake Macatawa are subject to considerable influence by atmospheric, wind, wave, temperature, and other conditions affecting Lake Michigan.

While historical depths of 100 feet have been recorded, the deepest charted areas today are just over 30 feet, the result of many years of sedimentation due to changes from forest to farmland, and increasing urban drainage. Only seven percent of the lake area exceeds a natural depth of 21 feet, thus necessitating regular maintenance dredging to keep the shipping channel open. Without dredging, commercial vessels would increasingly become less able to reach the waterfront industrial and utility facilities at the east end of Lake Macatawa. More than half the lake is less than 12 feet, posing problems along many residential shoreline locations for the mooring of some sailboats and deep-draft pleasure boats.

For decades, dredging spoils were simply dumped into deeper waters of Lake Michigan. When that ceased in 1975, near-shore land disposal sites in what are now Window on the Waterfront Park and Windmill Island were utilized. As the capacity and desirability of such sites disappeared, the Holland area joined forces in securing an upriver site (Zuidema Dredge Disposal Placement Facility) along the Macatawa River in 1996. Rather than viewed as a permanent burial site for periodic lake dredgings, however, this site is seen as a transfer station where dredgings suitable for upland uses can be pumped and dried, and then reused in landscaping, agricultural, or horticultural applications. The site also serves as a significant publicly controlled link along the emerging Macatawa River Greenway.

The lakefront and the Macatawa estuary, with extensive marshlands of some 75 acres in surface area, afford a variety of wildlife not customarily found in urbanized areas. In addition to serving as a seasonal floodplain, the estuary has been identified as a nesting or feeding ground for a wide variety of birds and waterfowl. In addition, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources has identified a variety of game fish in the Macatawa lake and river system.

B. Evolution of Waterfront Uses

One can only speculate at the sense of "arrival" Dominie Albertus Van Raalte and his band of parishioners must have felt in 1847 as they finished the trek from Allegan to put down roots at the place now called Holland. Coming from the Netherlands, much of which was literally carved from the sea bottom, they must surely have relished the bogs and wetlands, the rivers and marsh, the waters of Lake Macatawa, and the proximity to that great inland sea called Lake Michigan.

Early Dutch immigrant settlers coexisted peacefully with the local bands of native Americans. Scant early narratives tell of bartering between the settlers and natives, and old maps identify a Native American settlement along the shores of Lake Macatawa in the area west of Ottawa Avenue. As immigration swelled the rolls of the young community, however, and as cultural clashes related to lifestyles and land ownership became more and more prevalent, the native Americans sought refuge in less populated lands further north.

The very heart of Holland was planted at the estuary where the lazy waters of the Macatawa River, fed by a relatively small watershed of some 175 square miles, feed Lake Macatawa, which is essentially a drowned river. At its westerly end, Lake Macatawa connected to Lake Michigan by a shallow stream. Early commerce on Lake Michigan happened only by off-loading goods from ships anchored in Lake Michigan, and transporting them across the narrow band of land to be reloaded onto barges in Lake Macatawa. By 1864, the community had developed enough local funding and political clout to pursue dredging a connecting channel to Lake Michigan. Soon thereafter, Holland became a harbor community. To this day, the City still benefits from being both a recreational harbor and a minor commercial harbor. The latter designation qualifies the community for periodic dredging by the Army Corps of Engineers to maintain a navigable shipping channel for two importers of minerals and aggregates, one exporter of scrap iron and stel, and the coal boats that supply a municipal power plant.

In days past, one can picture a much more active and vibrant waterfront than today's remnant. Like much of West Michigan, the most abundant natural resource around Holland in the middle of the 19th century was lumber. The rolls of early industries stand testimony to the impact of lumber on commerce and industry. Holland's tax rolls have included over time sawmills, shingle factories, lumber yards, a leather tannery, a piano factory, wooden boat manufacturing, a basket factory, and numerous furniture manufacturing industries. Before the era of trains and trucks, industry gravitated toward the water's edge, lining the shoreline of Lake Macatawa north and northwesterly of the central city. Water was, of course, the commerce connection between Holland and the great Midwest marketplaces like Chicago. Water is also an essential ingredient for some industrial processes, and the location of a sugar beet factory and a pickle factory along the Macatawa shoreline was certainly attributable to the abundant supply of water to wash and process beets and pickles.

As the city grew southerly from the epicenter near 8th and River, so too did the fashionable neighborhoods. While residents certainly understood the economic advantages of a community on the waterfront, they showed little inclination to claim it as prized residential real estate for the first century or so. The short-lived interurban railroad that connected the south shore of Lake Macatawa to the downtown area, and ultimately to Grand Rapids, spurred the growth of several clusters of modest frame cottages between downtown Holland and the channel to Lake Michigan. At one time, names like Montello Park, Central Park, Virginia Park, and Macatawa Park identified not only stops along the interurban route, but discernable neighborhoods of modest summer homes and limited neighborhood shopping amenities. Over the past four or five decades, demand surpassed supply, and few remnants of the cottage era can be found directly along the waterfront. Even second, third and fourth tier lots back from the water have experienced an era of middle class gentrification, rediscoverin the waterfront with conversion of cottages to year round homes, nestled in year round neighborhoods.

The original plat of Holland set aside several town squares and parks. It did not preserve for the public, however, any waterfront lands on Lake Macatawa. Consequently, the only public access to the water in the homogeneous single family residential districts lying west of Ottawa Avenue are public street ends. Many ends are narrower than normal rights of way, reflecting the cottage character of the plats that produced them, and public usage of street ends is limited by size, proximity to private property, and in some cases, litigation. Current plans to enhance most such street ends seek to capitalize on the visual and aesthetic wellbeing that comes with being on the waterfront.

Once the site of a basket factory, the crown jewel of public access to Lake Macatawa came as a gift to the community from the Kollen family. Kollen Park today offers a picnic pavilion, playground, public boat launch, band shell, shoreline fishing, parking, and rest rooms. It also serves as a major community festival and event site.

Along the northern edge of downtown, the Macatawa Marsh offers an entirely different waterfront experience. Visual access comes from the 3500 feet of boardwalk and pedestrian trail that is the focal point of Window on the Waterfront. Access also comes from the publicly owned Windmill Island which operates as an enterprise fund and is open seasonally, and from key viewing locations at the River Avenue bridge and the street end of Columbia Avenue. Parts of the marsh were reputedly farmed with muck crops during low water periods in the 1920's through 1940's. With the development of Windmill Island in the 1960's, private holdings in the marshlands were acquired by the city to assure unobstructed air rights to the windmill, and prevent any potential visual obstruction between it and downtown Holland. The marsh environment certainly affords a more dramatic diversity of character than do the lakes or river. In periods of higher water levels, the marsh is fully inundated and looks much like a great shallow lake. In periods of low water, large tracts of it dry up and appear as sun baked mud flats. As water levels fluctuate, so too do the flora and fauna, making the marsh a different experience each time visited.

Whether motivated by Dutch pride in having come from a country where much of the land was recovered from the sea bottom, or the basic human desire to make value where none is perceived, Holland's forefathers were not always appreciative of lowlands and marshlands. A century ago, it was undoubtedly seen as a mark of good stewardship to fill low lands and create buildable sites and marketable value. Early maps reveal that the industrial lands either side of Pine Avenue north of 8th Street were shallow lake lands at one time. The park area called Window on the Waterfront was originally marshland, used first as a municipally run landfill and more recently as a dredging disposal site by the Army Corps of Engineers. At the turn of the last century, the Kollen Park boat launch ramp and parking lot sat under three feet of Lake Macatawa.

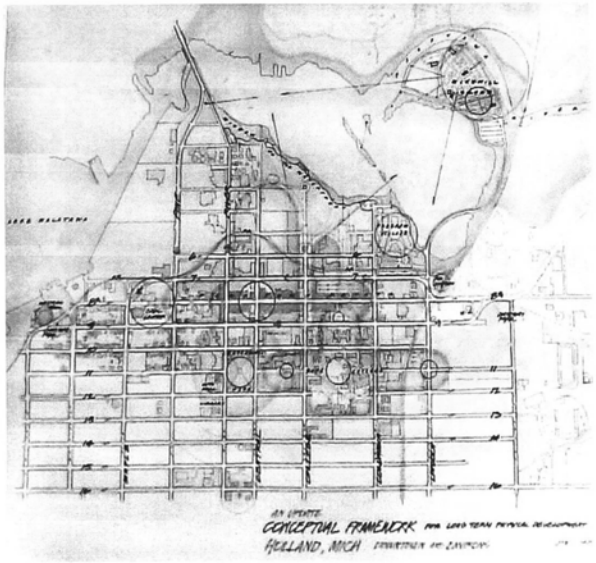
First the railroads and more recently the interstate highways have dampened any appeal for industrial siting on the waterfront. Heinz is a carryover from days gone by, where processing and shipping demanded water frontage. Only the shippers or users of bulk minerals and aggregates like sand, slag, stone, salt, iron and coal cling to the waterfront locations where access to Great Lakes and international shipping is critical. These users for the most part appear situated for the long term. By the same token, lakefront residential lands are selling in the neighborhood of $5000 per front foot, making the prospect of any significant public reclamation of residential lands challenging.

III. WATERFRONT: A PLANNING CONTEXT

The public course for waterfront planning, therefore, is to refresh, enhance, and look for linkages among those sites under its jurisdiction, while planning, budgeting, and being prepared in the event additional lands become available. Certain tensions will continue over the relationship between industrial users and nearby residential areas, with impacts relating to noise, dust, and truck traffic, and the increasing diversity of new uses and access opportunities drawing people to the water's edge.

We are in a period of rediscovering our waterfront, both in terms of historical connections as well as contemporary needs. We acknowledge the need for some balance between those remaining water dependent industrial uses and the benefit they bring both commercially and in terms of channel maintenance, and the more public commercial and recreational improvement and redevelopment opportunities.

The following community documents provide background and context for the planning of specific projects that are called for as a part of this overall Waterfront Redevelopment Plan. This planning context reveals the extent and intensity of commitment with which we are undertaking improvements along the waterfront. This commitment will encourage the timely development of these promising opportunities.



A. Downtown Holland Strategic Plan

In 1995, the Downtown Development Authority and City Council adopted "Broadening the Vision: A Strategic Plan for Downtown Holland" in order to continue and expand a program of investment, commitment and vision. A rich and diverse mix of commercial, industrial, residential and cultural uses has characterized Downtown historically, is present today, and will remain a priority in future growth and development. An award winning member of the National Main Street Network, Downtown has benefited by very strong public and private cooperation and commitment, resulting in over $100 million in local investment over the past decade. Several themes provide a framework around which continued commitments are being realized and coordinated. The Downtown has been reestablished as a Place to Be, a Place for Family and Youth, a Place to Live, a Place of Culture and History, a Place to Shop, a Place to Work, and a Place to Invest.

Holland is a waterfront city. Downtown Holland, situated strategically with its historical access to the water's edge, provides considerable opportunity for reconnecting to the waterfront and redeveloping and enhancing waterfront and nearby properties.

- The **Western Gateway** provides a direct link from Downtown to Lake Macatawa and is presently a mix of civic, industrial, residential, and vacant properties. The City's waterfront Western Machine Tool Works property is of central importance offering a key point of access to the Lake and exciting alternative mixed-use opportunities.
- The **Northern Gateway**, serving as the primary connection between Downtown and northern communities, provides potential for additional public access and redevelopment where the Macatawa River connects to the Macatawa Marsh and Lake Macatawa. More than a streetscape improvement project, potential improvements bring opportunities to reinforce existing industrial activities, open possibilities for more extensive commercial redevelopment of underutilized properties, and present opportunities for enhanced public connections to the waterfront.
- **Window on the Waterfront Park**, lying along the northern edge of downtown and the southern edge of the Macatawa River and Marsh, offers considerable commercial and community redevelopment opportunity along with continued enhancements to waterfront recreational opportunities. Improvements and plans for this area are true to the character of existing diversity of uses and high quality design and construction of public and private improvements throughout the Downtown. The Windmill Island project and potential Area Center arena facility, along with other private commercial and residential developments, offer great promise for this area.
- The **Eastern Gateway**, also identified in the Strategic Plan as the Fairbanks Initiative, provides opportunity for substantial enhancement to the eastern approach to Downtown. In addition to establishing high quality gateway park and streetscape improvements, this area can provide important points of connection to Windmill Island and the Macatawa River Greenway on its northern edge, to Hope College on the south and southwest, and to the community's transportation depot on the west. A careful consideration of the existing mix of uses and creative review of the extensive redevelopment opportunity combine to demonstrate exciting potential for this area of our Downtown and waterfront. A Plan for this area is not yet developed.

B. Macatawa Greenway Network

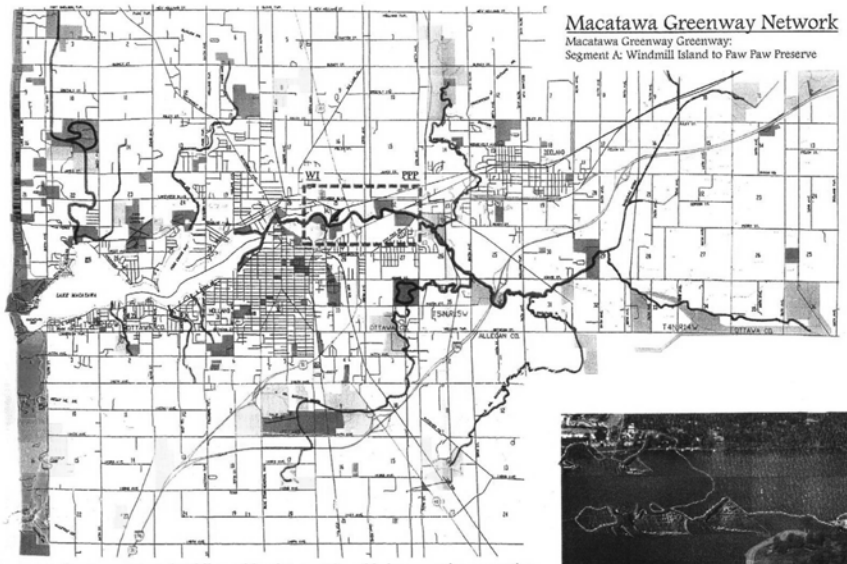
The Macatawa Greenway Network is planned to be an interconnected system of public and private parks, forests, streams, and other dedicated open undeveloped lands in the greater Holland/Zeeland area. Planning work for this Network began in 1994. The Network will be connected throughout the area along Lake Macatawa tributaries by greenways that will provide corridors for use by our growing population as well as serving as additional protected habitat for the area's wildlife. These corridors and connected open spaces will provide expanded recreational opportunities for such activities as walking and hiking, birding, fishing, canoeing and kayaking, and biking. With certain key properties such as Window on the Waterfront Park, Windmill Island, the Zuidema Dredge facility, and Paw Paw Park already in public and other friendly hands, the concept of this Greenway is quickly becoming reality.

C. Community Parks and Recreation Plan

The City's Community Parks and Recreation Plan identifies community parks as those open spaces focusing on meeting the recreation needs of several neighborhoods and larger sections of the community. The Plan also identifies Special Use parks, oriented toward "single-purpose use", that provide unique recreational amenities offering historical, educational and cultural opportunities, and as specialized recreational facilities.

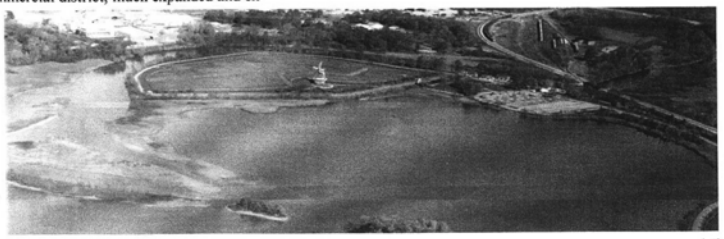
The City of Holland has targeted several of the community parks for renovation and for potential development of Special Use facilities within the next five years. The following fall within the context and parameters of this Waterfront Redevelopment Plan:

- **Kollen Park:** Situated between the western end of 10th Street and Lake Macatawa, this 14.5 acre park is a heavily used, family-oriented, all-purpose waterfront community park. A complete renovation of Kollen Park is proposed starting with development of an overall park master plan and renovation of several of the park's existing features including an enlarged destination children's play area, new picnic pavilions, upgraded boat launch areas, and improved walkways and water access. (The Kollen Park charrette has identified further opportunities, as well.)
- **Window on the Waterfront Park:** Located northeast of 6th Street and Central Avenue, this 30 acre property along the south edge of the Macatawa Marsh contains walking/biking paths that overlook the marsh, viewing decks, boardwalks, open fields and wooded water's edge, and the Riverview Athletic Field. The City has identified the continued development of this waterfront park adjacent to both Downtown and Windmill Island as a high priority. Improvements will include additional walkways, boardwalks, fountains, lighting, site furniture, and extensive landscaping.
- **Area Center:** Although not formally a part of the Community Parks and Recreation Plan, the City and nearby Townships have been engaged over the last several years in the planning for an area-wide multi-purpose arena facility. The City has preliminarily endorsed the location of this facility on land immediately adjacent to the Window on the Waterfront Park. This site is readily accessible from the adjacent Downtown area (and Downtown's constituent retail, restaurant, and public parking lot assets) and brings a major recreation and trade show/exhibition/performance facility to the waterfront.



- **Windmill Island:** Located in the Macatawa Marsh, Windmill Island contains the historic De Zwaan windmill, imported from the Netherlands in the early 1960's, parking, landscaped gardens, and additional Dutch-style buildings and attractions. The facility is an attraction to both local citizens and tourists. For the first 25 years from 1964 through 1988, there averaged 105,000 visitors to the Island per year. Over the last five years, visitors have dropped to an average of 75,000 per year.

Planning is underway to develop Windmill Island on the model of the villages of the northern provinces of the Netherlands, with authentic Dutch buildings and character supporting a new commercial district, much expanded and enhanced tourist attractions, and a new residential neighborhood. Windmill Island could become a $53 million investment in this area promising state-of-the-art infrastructure technologies and environmental management techniques and realizing a major economic and community development project in the heart of the region's waterfront and downtown area.



D. City of Holland Housing Goals and Policies

Holland City Council has adopted an extensive statement of goals and policies for housing throughout the city based on a study of housing conditions, needs, and aspirations for improved housing conditions. This policy statement encourages implementation of plans and programs designed to improve what the document defines as "Good Neighborhood" attributes that are conducive to personal satisfaction and community development.

In creating good new neighborhoods, program strategies advocate creation of housing units of a variety of sizes as a primary component of new mixed-use development throughout the Downtown, waterfront, and new neighborhood commercial areas. Housing integrated with commercial office and retail uses, recreational open space, and other community uses will assure a vital and diverse core of our community. Within any such new housing development, affordable housing is encouraged as a proportion of between 10 and 15 percent of new units constructed, in a manner where such units would be integrated with and virtually indistinguishable from market rate units.

E. City of Holland Master Plan

Over the years, master planning for and within the City of Holland has demonstrated an evolving appreciation and attention to the waterfront.
The City Master Plans of 1953 and the early 1960's, prepared by West Michigan planner Scott Bagby, acknowledged the existence of residential, industrial, and park open space (specifically Kollen and Windmill - now Van Bragt - Parks) along the waterfront. The Plan cited the unlikely change in uses from the west end of the City through the Verplank property at 8th Street and Kollen Park Drive. Those parks were simply noted as "attractive assets". Greater initiative was seen in a Renewal Prospectus written after 1964, where property now occupied by Freedom Village was proposed by Mr. Bagby as a site for a tourist-oriented restaurant and motel development with ice skating ponds and a focused view toward Windmill Island. Westerly of this site, industrial uses were proposed on existing and potentially additional filled land.

In 1973, at the request of Holland Mayor L. W. Lamb, Jr., an area-wide Area Goals Committee offered the following recommendations. The community should make investments and improvements to keep precious river and lake shorelines orderly and attractive, suggesting high-rises along the river and lakeshore not crowded together but separated by parks and boat basins. While suggesting some debate over whether portions of land on the northern side of the river ought to be acquired near Windmill Island (a greenbelt along the Black river), there was clear favor in maintaining the marsh area and its Dutch-lowlands effect and varied wildlife. Windmill Island was viewed as part of "an ecological garden" running through the City. From the River Avenue Bridge to South Shore Drive, it was urged to create a landscaped parkway, with roadway and rest areas, for a depth of 200 feet along the water's edge. At some point along this parkway, a marina and restaurant would be appropriate. Inland, multiple dwelling units would bring the greatest numbers of residents close to the waterfront. It was also felt that Holland should not become a general seaport, but rather promote the area for "sporting use".

Holland's 1978 Community Plan: Land Use and Development, acknowledged changing and competing community goals by describing the waterfront as "an ideal location for public recreation and residential uses. Industrial uses are viewed as an impediment to the fullest possible enjoyment of our waterway resources. And yet any reading of our history will reveal the great sacrifice by our early community to excavate a shipping channel so that waterfront commerce and industry could develop. Planning for waterfront parks and recreation reflecting changes in our culture, traditions, and leisure time, is a valid exercise in defining community goals today. No less valid, however, was the planning for waterfront commerce and industry of the last century."

The 1978 Plan, incorporating the 1974-75 document An Area Plan for Maintaining Prosperity and Vitality in the Inner City, went on to state the long-term vision of phasing out industrial uses along the waterfront and maximizing public enjoyment through expansion of waterfront parks and public facilities. Included in this vision, Kollen Park would be extended to Van Raalte Avenue, and the area between Van Raalte Avenue and 7th Street would be rezoned to highway commercial uses. There, public access to the waterfront within private development would be encouraged such as at the Western Machine Tool Works property which might hold a fine import store, a mini-mall or public arcade, and a waterfront community museum. Other sites might accommodate a motel/restaurant complex or high rise residential or office use. Short term, impacts of such property uses as found at Padnos, Verplank's, Brewers, and the BPW should be mitigated. Finally, the Macatawa Riverfront was viewed as a major piece of unfinished business, with commercial development and public recreational and park improvements proposed along the southern waterfront together.

In 1988, Holland 2010 was developed as a statement of goals and strategic objectives for Holland. Relative to the City's waterfront, the document stated the long-term objective of encouraging public access and recreational development along the waterfront from Kollen Park north to Van Bragt Park. To accomplish this, the City needed to establish financial capacity for such land acquisition and development, aggressively seek public ownership of this property, and establish a plan for the use and development of this waterfront area. One result of this planning process was the establishment of a property acquisition fund for which a ¼ mill is annually set aside to assist in purchasing strategic properties.

The City's current Master Plan for the Physical Development of the City of Holland, adopted in 1992, recognizes the waterfront objective of encouraging waterfront redevelopment between Kollen and Van Bragt Parks described in the Holland 2010 plan. The Plan recommends improving public access to Lake Macatawa by acquiring additional lakefront property and maintaining existing access locations. The Plan also supports endeavors to expand facilities and market the rich recreational resource available at Windmill Island. The Plan recommends actions to assure the public benefits of the waterfront by preserving views to the water through height limitations and imposition of limits on maximum water frontage development, and encourages waterfront landowners to provide suitable access easements to allow the public direct contact with the water edge. This 1992 Master Plan is presently undergoing revision and updating.

F. Macatawa Watershed Project

Finally, the Macatawa Watershed Project, initiated in 1996 by the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, has the improvement of water quality throughout the Macatawa River watershed as its mission. The project is focused particularly on controlling erosion, reducing fertilizers (especially phosphorous), reducing non-point source pollution, and encouraging groundwater recharge and slowing the flow of surface waters through infiltration. All future development work and waterfront improvements will be held to a high environmental standard, at least in part as a result of this project.

IV. REDEVELOPMENT THEMES AND GOALS

This Waterfront Redevelopment Plan sets forth a series of projects that collectively redefine and embrace the Holland waterfront as the center of our public realm. The Plan proposes a thorough revitalization, building on previous accomplishments and vision, with the following themes and overriding goals.

A. Enhancing Quality Of Life

Every policy and program advanced by the City of Holland has as an intentional objective the enhancement of the quality of life in this community. The City's Mission Statement speaks to this:

"Our Mission is to provide...
- *Quality municipal services defined with citizens through their participation and representation;*
- *The best conditions under which citizens live, work and play;*
- *Compassionate leadership in meeting the needs and vision of our community; and*
- *A government that serves with honesty and integrity."*

Opening the waterfront more completely to public enjoyment, creating diverse and exciting land uses and facilities, and thoughtfully connecting these with nearby neighborhoods and commercial districts clearly enhances the quality of life for Holland area residents and visitors.

B. Public Access to Waterfront

Holland was founded and grew along a waterfront. Holland is a waterfront community. Being a waterfront community is more than simply a matter of location. It is a matter of the heart and psyche of this community. Being near the water is important for a host of reasons including everyone's need to be close to and experience nature, to enjoy recreational opportunity, to experience open space and tranquility in an ever more complex and aggressive world.

Providing public access to the waterfront is a primary objective of every improvement and development concept in this Waterfront Redevelopment Plan. This has been an objective of this community for at least the past 25 years. As land available for public access has diminished greatly over this period, the importance of securing and improving access to such remaining available waterfront property has become more acute. Completion of the projects identified in this Plan will provide a diversity of public and private uses and improvements along the water's edge, daily bringing thousands of residents and visitors to work, live, and play along our waterfront.

C. Economic Development

Improving the Holland waterfront clearly goes beyond aesthetic or recreational objectives. A strong, vibrant, multi-use waterfront represents a strong economic development component of the greater community. Holland has been a community fortunate enough to nurture a home-grown industrial base, complemented by a growing and thriving West Michigan economy. The waterfront provides significant opportunities, to construct nearly $100 million in private and public redevelopment, all in concert with Downtown and community objectives of public access and multi-use development, make overall economic development a primary and achievable objective of this Plan. New business development in both newly constructed facilities and rehabilitated buildings, job creation in the form of direct construction and full-time positions within these facilities, and enhancement of the community-wide economy through indirect benefits to existing and new service businesses are all benefits of this commitment to invest.

Industrial and utility operations continue to exist along Holland's waterfront that are, at this time, dependent on water transportation and waterfront access to operate their businesses. These industries, along with the Board of Public Works electric and sewage treatment operations, play important roles in both supporting our existing infrastructure and in facilitating the continued growth of our greater community. As the needs of these industries and utilities change over time, the community- both the public and private sectors- needs to be prepared to capitalize on opportunities for redevelopment or co-development of those waterfront properties. It is imperative that the community be prepared to act in a manner that keeps the waterfront vital to the community and increasingly connected to and a part of the City's downtown and waterfront economies and objectives.

Also, the attraction and amenity of the Lake and Marsh, with expanding recreational opportunities, tend to reinforce the fact that tourism is a major component of the Holland economy.

D. Environmental Quality

A principle of the community's character and a trademark objective of the community's success have been a striving for the very highest quality achievable in community programs, building initiatives, and improvement projects. Along the waterfront, this objective is equally important and an integral part of how the community interacts with the natural environment, as well as how the built environment is shaped.

- Natural Environment: Described as an "ecological garden" in the Waterfront Redevelopment Plan, this Macatawa waterfront is extremely important as a natural environment. All redevelopment work carried out in this area must recognize the sensitivity of this environment. Proposed work must recognize the importance of assuring that the quality of water is maintained and enhanced where possible, the abundance and character of flora and fauna is maintained, and that the watershed and its natural functions such as the carrying capacity of the floodplain is maintained or enhanced.

- Built Environment: Public and private development and improvement projects traditionally have been of very high quality in Holland. With our downtown as only one of many examples, an expectation of high quality in design, selection of materials, and in construction of buildings and landscapes is carried from past work into the present and future construction of our evolving community.

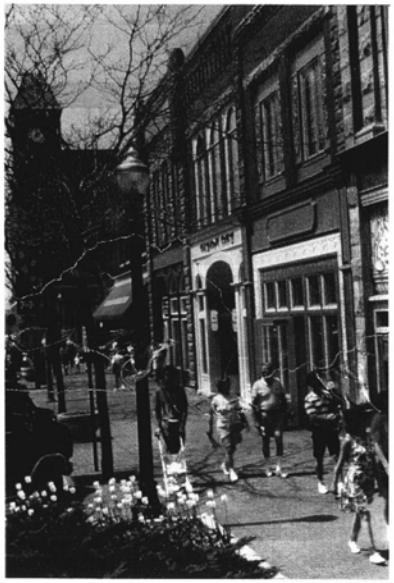
E. Continuing the Commitment

A generation ago, who would have imagined the extraordinary investment which would occur in Holland ? Over the last decade, investment and commitment in Downtown Holland alone has exceeded $100 million. Consider the investment in our industrial, educational, institutional, and residential sectors and the commitment is staggering. The community is on the verge of a second wave of this kind of community commitment, with many of the most significant and enduring opportunities present along the waterfront. The commitment is certainly a financial one, with an additional nearly $100 million in projects identified in this Plan. Yet the commitment which must continue is also one of community leadership and stewardship as we clarify this vision and establish creative partnerships that help to realize the potential of securing an active, vibrant and economically strong waterfront accessible to all for coming generations.

F. Setting An Example

In many areas of this community, great successes have been realized thanks to extraordinarily generous and hard working individuals and companies. Holland has been described as a "Place of Values" with "a distinctive personality built on a unique heritage and bolstered by an inherent sense of stewardship and integrity." This commitment has led to accomplishments in the City's Downtown, in neighborhood revitalization, community policing, and in the industrial sector which have been recognized regionally and nationally as models of success in defining and nurturing livable communities.

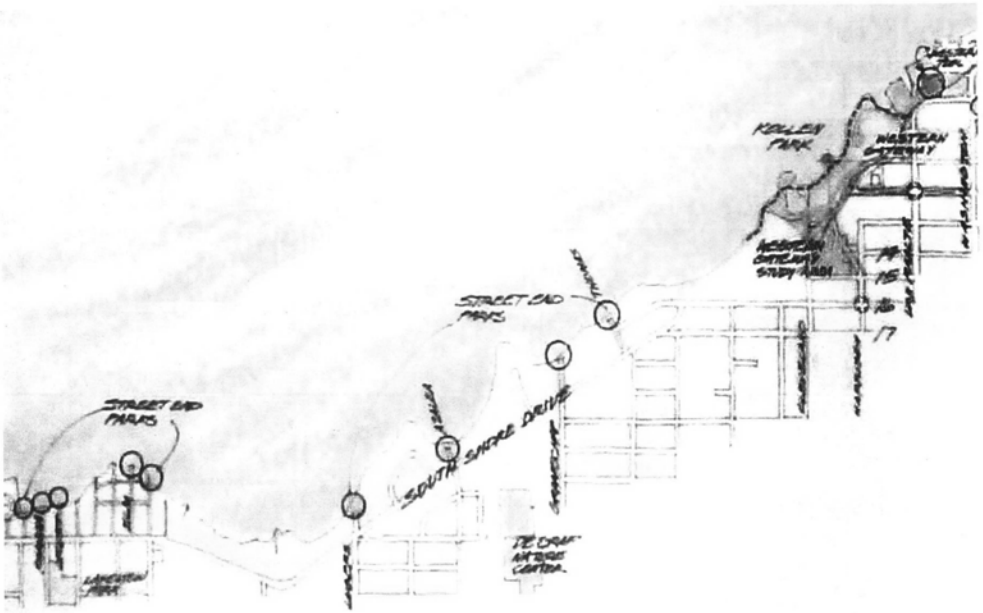
The community has an opportunity, and a remarkable head start, for redefining the use, enhancement, and appreciation of the waterfront in a manner steeped in the diversifying heritage and deep commitment of the community. This opportunity includes an ability to strengthen our Downtown, neighborhoods, and the greater Macatawa community. The example we set here in Holland and the manner in which we address local needs will increasingly provide a model of success for waterfront communities throughout our region.



V. STRATEGIC ACTION PROJECTS

Over the past five years, the City of Holland has devoted considerable time and resources to more clearly defining the vision for improvements throughout the City's waterfront area. Building on the planning history and policy framework described earlier, the following specific public and public/private cooperative projects have been identified.

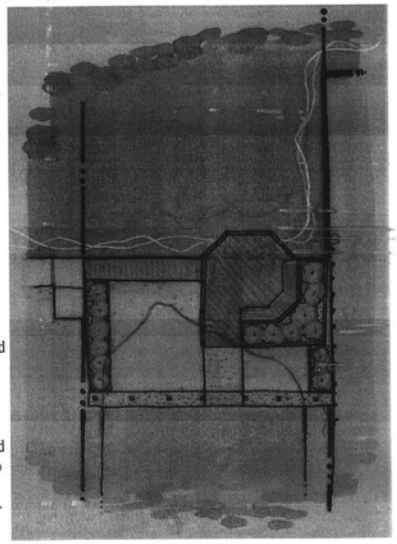
Each project should be considered within the framework of the primary themes identified for waterfront development. No project would be advanced if there were a determination that the quality of life for Holland residents would not be improved as a result of that project. Wherever public access to the waterfront is an opportunity, such *public access* is of paramount importance. Either directly, such as in the case of Windmill Island or the Western Tool Building, or indirectly such as the Area Center or through public infrastructure improvements, *economic development* is a desired and anticipated result of these projects. *Environmental quality*, both in our care and nurturing of the natural environment as well as in our expectation of the physical improvements and facilities we create, must be a fundamental product of these projects.



A. Street Ends Program

The Lake Macatawa shoreline in the western end of the City is developed with private single family residences. Developed initially as seasonal summer cottages, the area is experiencing a pattern of tearing down cottages to enable construction of larger waterfront estates. The lone exception to the private control of the water's edge in this part of the city is the occasional "street end" which extends from South Shore Drive to the water. Assuring readily identifiable public visual and physical access from nearby neighborhoods to the Lake not only provides an emotional and aesthetic tie to this fundamental community-wide resource, but also serves as an improvement which strengthens property values and the desirability of the surrounding neighborhood. Public access goes beyond an aesthetic consideration as these locations also provide for recreational access for small boaters, kayakers, and canoeists.

In an effort to enhance the public's use and enjoyment of these limited points of waterfront access, the City developed plans in 1996 for physical improvements to eleven street ends. These include (west to east): West End Drive, Ramona Drive, Locust Avenue, Bay Avenue, Grove Avenue, Elm Drive, Myrtle Avenue, Lugers Road, Azalea Avenue, Graafschap Road, and Thomas Avenue. Typically, planned improvements include concrete pedestrian walkways, wooden viewing decks, modest and carefully considered landscaping, bollards to control vehicles, and "Shore Path" public access signage.



Implementation Timeframe: Budgeted at a cost of approximately $320,000 for phase I (7 street ends) and II (4 additional street ends), it is expected that construction of street end improvements for phase I will begin in the summer of 2001.

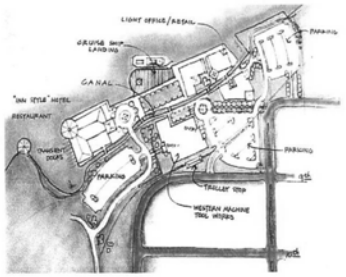
For more information, contact: Curtis Wright, Director
Leisure and Cultural Services
616-355-1130

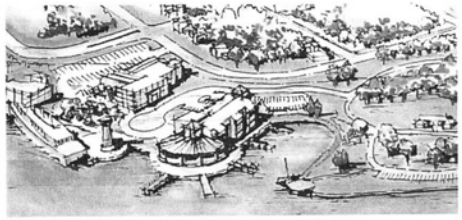
B. Kollen Park and Vicinity Master Plan

In November of 1998, the City conducted a design charrette involving a dozen design professionals and City staff considering the potential for future improvements, redevelopment, neighborhood stabilization, and change involving properties and lakefront in the vicinity of Kollen Park, from 16th Street north into the Western Gateway area of Downtown. The charrette began with participants getting familiar with the properties in question and listening to property owners, neighbors, and other community citizens provide comments, concerns, needs, and dreams regarding the future of this area of the City in an evening public forum. The charrette team spent the next two days generating conceptual plans suggesting a variety of public and private opportunities for enhancing this area.

For ease of discussion, the study area was divided into three sub-areas:

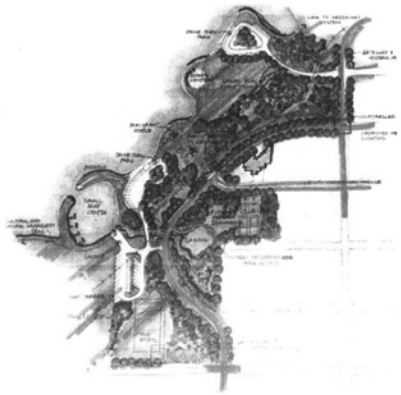
- **North center:** Building on the conclusions reached during the Downtown strategic planning process and the Western Gateway charrette, and recognizing the City's effort to re-use the Western Tool building, short and long term changes and improvements were offered for the area between Kollen Park and the Padnos facilities. In the short-term, recognizing continued private ownership of two adjacent properties, the charrette plan calls for the re-use of the Western Tool building. An exchange of properties with adjacent owners would facilitate access and parking for the Western Tool property, and a realignment of roadway in front of the building would provide for additional parking and public landscape amenities. Longer term, consistent with long-standing City objectives to continue to provide public access to the water's edge throughout this study area, the planning work envisions re-use of adjoining properties for hotel, restaurant, retail, and office uses, a cruise ship docking and support facilities, and extensive public water edge amenities.
- **Central green:** More passive in nature, the area between the more heavily commercially developed north center and the southern activity center, the central green is envisioned as the family picnic area, a place for playground facilities, and park-like landscaping. The proposed plan eliminates the continuous waterside roadway in favor of pedestrian continuity and improvements. Opportunities for vehicular parking near the water are offered in several locations. Two schemes for this area offer alternative ideas for facilitating special events with shelters and/or contoured land providing a focus for entertainment.
- **South center:** One area of great opportunity is the possible reconfiguration of boat launch facilities and the creation of a small boat basin to provide for protected short-term docking. The potential inclusion of the former Sugar Beet site and creative land exchanges and cooperation between the City and the Heinz Company could realize both a waterfront pathway (Greenway linkage) connecting the park to neighborhoods to the west, and additional recreational opportunities to the south of the present park. Alternative realignments of Kollen Park Drive provide interesting opportunities to enhance movement along the park as well as provide opportunities (short- and long-term) for connections to the neighborhood to the east.





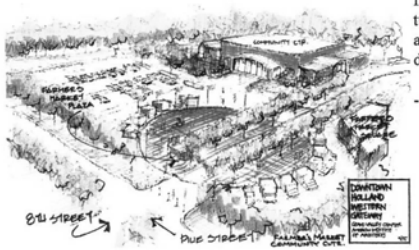
Implementation Timeframe: The City's Parks and Recreation Plan has identified an estimated $1,000,000 of phase I improvements for the year 2000. These improvements will be more clearly defined in the master planning effort currently underway. The City has contracted with M.C. Smith Associates to carry ideas and concepts derived in an intensive design charrette during November, 1998 through to completion of a Master Plan for Kollen Park and nearby properties. Park master planning should be complete by the Fall of 1999. Proposals for nearby street realignments to assist in facilitating parking at the Western Machine Tool Works are also presently under study.

For more information, contact: Curtis Wright, Director
Leisure and Cultural Services
616-355-1130

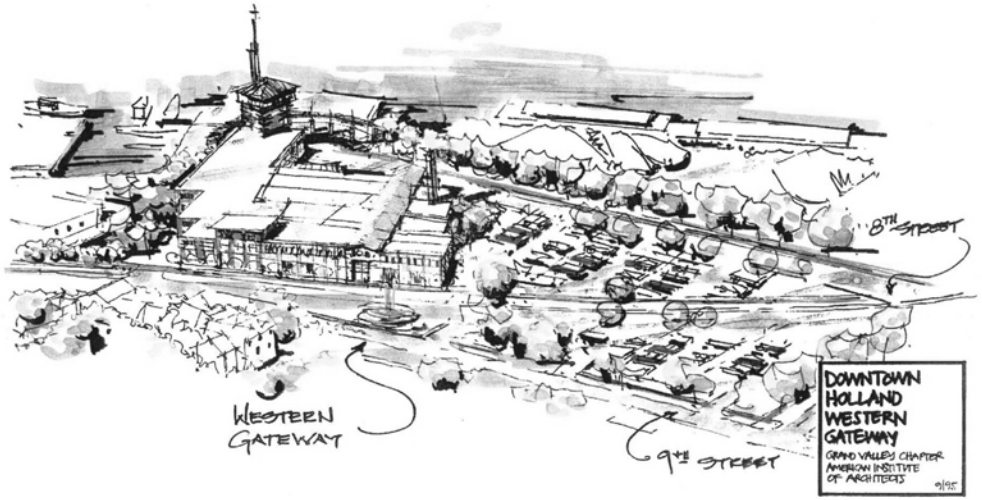


C. Western Gateway

With assistance from City staff and building on the direction and opportunities presented in the Downtown Strategic Plan, a group of ten architects from the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects conducted a design charrette in Fall of 1995 focusing on the Western Gateway area of Downtown. This process included becoming familiar with the Western Gateway area, digesting extensive input from property owners, businesses, and neighborhood residents, and proposing a future vision through designing, critiquing, and redesigning conceptual infrastructure and building improvements. The study area was divided into three sub-areas in order to facilitate both discussion and charrette team design efforts.



- **Civic Center/Farmer's Market.** The east end of the study area includes the City's Civic Center (a multi-use recreation, trade show, and performance facility) and the adjacent parking lot serving as the site of the community's seasonal farmer's market. The area also includes properties along 8th Street being acquired by the City to facilitate redevelopment and allow street alignment improvements. With the possible development of an Area Center, the charrette demonstrated an opportunity for these properties to collectively function as a reinvigorated civic center, with a more focused community recreation facility, a much enhanced and potentially multi-use farmer's market and civic plaza, and potential for additional development.
- **Central retail corridor.** Connecting the east end's Civic Center/Farmer's Market and the west end's Western Machine Tool Works redevelopment opportunity, the block extending along 8th Street serves as the principle connector between the heart of downtown activities and the waterfront. In addition to being an important view corridor and potentially important pedestrian and bike route, lighting improvements and smaller scale neighborhood service and retail uses are envisioned both to enhance and encourage movement to and from the waterfront, and to provide amenities and services for the nearby neighborhood and industry.
- **Waterfront/Western Machine Tool Works:** The vision for redevelopment of these properties at the west end of the study area consists of both short-term and long-term opportunities. Short term improvements include the re-use of the Western Tool building, development of associated parking, and construction of open space improvements which involve a gateway fountain and pedestrian improvements connecting the facility to the adjacent neighborhood. Also included are waterfront public access and view corridor improvements connecting to and running along the water's edge. The longer term proposal looks to possible Western Tool building expansion and gaining control of adjoining property for additional public and/or commercial improvements such as a boat dock area, recreational improvements, and lakeside observatory.



The focus of this sub-area is the Western Machine Tool Works Building. Purchased in 1994 for $450,000 with resources from the City's Property Acquisition Fund, this 40,000 square foot landmark waterfront industrial building and accompanying site are being examined for potential reuse and redevelopment. Supported by a $75,000 State grant to assist in environmental cleanup, this property is targeted for mixed-use development including restaurant, retail and office tenants, and an industrial history museum.

Implementation Timeframe: The City has entered into a contract with a development entity to develop a plan for the Western Machine Tool Works Building's reuse by July of 1999. The City will make a decision regarding the future use of the Western Tool building and property following review of that plan. With a positive decision to move forward with this $3-5 million dollar public/private building re-use and site improvement, it is anticipated that construction could begin by early Fall, 1999.

Properties are being assembled in the vicinity of the Civic Center in anticipation of street improvements and realignment. A decision regarding the future of an Area Center is anticipated within the next six to twelve months. An affirmative decision will trigger more detailed planning for improvements to the Civic Center and redevelopment of surrounding properties. One example is that there is approximately $200,000 available and intended to make improvements in support of the Farmer's Market.

For more information, contact:

Philip L. Meyer
Planning and Development Manager
616-355-1363

D. Northern Gateway

Identified as the "Northern Gateway" in the Downtown Strategic Plan, this area stands as one of two unfinished pieces in the tier of planning activity beyond the Strategic Plan. Defined loosely as including properties north of 7th Street from Lake Macatawa on the west to Central Avenue on the east, the area includes extensive waterfront property used either in an industrial or recreational capacity. The River Avenue Bridge serves as the primary connection between downtown and communities to the north and is nearing obsolescence. Planning is beginning to focus on major improvements to River Avenue north of the bridge, possible significant widening in the replacement of the bridge itself, and potential changes in both Pine and River Avenues south of the bridge.

There are significant land use, access, and character issues throughout this corridor as well. For starters, street, sidewalk, lighting, and landscaping improvements are needed here. There is an opportunity to build on the sculptural enhancements provided by the Padnos Corporation and create an industrially-influenced sculptural and arts corridor as a major entry into the City. There are also significant non-motorized circulation issues in this corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists. When considering improvements to address all such character and movement issues, all property owners should be evaluating their facility and land requirements for the foreseeable future in light of changing economies, changing utility and transportation conditions, and in recognition of the evolution of downtown, waterfront, and neighborhood development opportunities. There also remain some significant opportunities within this corridor for economic development of underutilized privately owned properties.

Implementation Timeframe: Upon completion of the Eastern Gateway charrette in 1999, it is anticipated that this Northern Gateway will become the next priority for focused design attention, with improvements coordinated with the bridge replacement and other corridor transportation improvements.

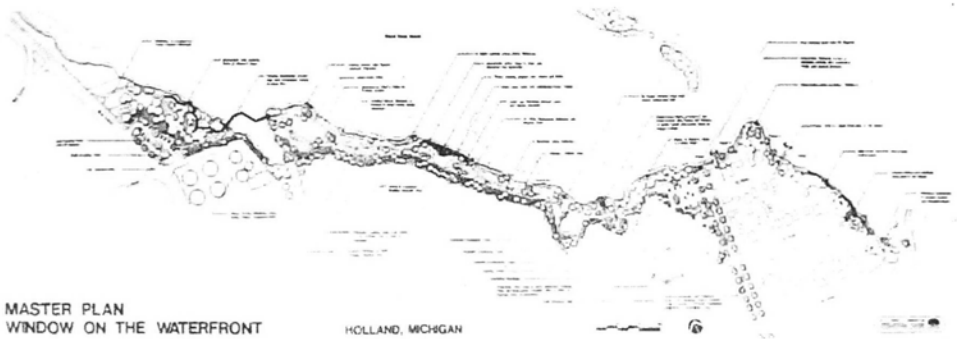
For more information, contact: Philip L. Meyer
Planning and Development Manager
616-355-1363

E. Window on the Waterfront Park

Over the past ten years, the City has worked with the Army Corp of Engineers to revitalize the Macatawa Marsh water frontage north of 6th Street. Once the town's dump and subsequently an important site for dredge disposal, an effort to stabilize the property and convert the area into a major Downtown waterfront park is nearing completion. Multi-million dollar improvements at the Board of Public Works' sewage treatment facility on the waterfront have resulted in significant odor reduction and aesthetic improvements. Pedestrian walkways, extensive landscaping, and revitalization of active recreational facilities have been completed. With the construction of the $30 million retirement community at Freedom Village, and the extension of walkways from Van Bragt Park through this area to Windmill Island, important elements of the broader Macatawa Greenway plan are now in place. Future projects including additional landscaping, lighting, a pedestrian/bicycle bridge connection to Windmill Island, and other park amenities have been identified. Should a component of the Area Center be located along the edges of this park, substantial opportunity for additional plaza, fountain, and potential public and/or private building development is anticipated. Potential spin-off economic development opportunities in the form of new residential and office uses, as well as adaptive reuse of existing buildings for retail, office,and residential uses, are significant in this area.

Implementation Timeframe: Several phases of Park improvements have been completed. Investment in the Park over the last five years totals approximately $877,000. Remaining work programmed for 1999 includes $147,000 for Phase V improvements including walkways, lighting, fountains, boardwalk, and site furniture. Phases VI and VII, scheduled over the next two years, are expected to total nearly $1million in a floating boardwalk to Windmill Island and development of a conservatory attraction. A final decision on the Area Center will significantly impact completion of work in this area.

For more information, contact: Curtis Wright, Director
Leisure and Cultural Services
616-355-1130



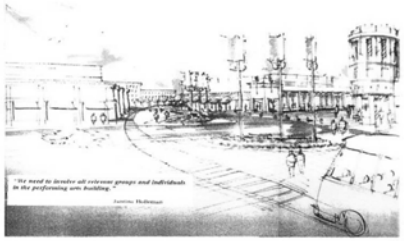
F. Area Center

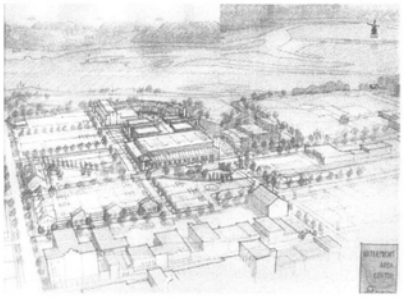
During the past dozen years, the greater Holland community has evaluated and debated the need and potential for a new facility to house an ice arena, performing arts venue, and a multi-purpose arena. In an effort to clearly evaluate potential sites for such a facility and how that facility might fit within the context of development adjoining those potential sites, the City conducted a design charrette in March of 1997. The charrette involved a number of professional architects, planners, and urban designers charged with creating a vision of the opportunity for such a community facility. Following an evening of intensive information gathering and public input, the charrette team conducted a rigorous process of brainstorming, designing, and critiquing site and design alternatives.

The charrette team determined the waterfront site was the best location for the Area Center, conclusively demonstrating the extraordinary opportunity for redevelopment of properties along the northern edge of Downtown, adjacent to the Macatawa Marsh waterfront. This site was selected for redevelopment due to its size, accessibility to Downtown's street network and parking system, and "fit" with the vision for future downtown and community development goals. This use promises to bring substantial crowds to the central waterfront for both special events and regular programming. This development opportunity not only benefits from its adjacency to existing downtown businesses, parking, and amenities, but also serves as a significant catalyst for continuing economic development in this area of Downtown.

Implementation Timeframe: To date, the Holland Area Center Authority has spent approximately $126,000 in pursuit of this project, while additional private funding and numerous volunteer hours have provided additional support. Discussions and planning continue in an effort to refine the specific objectives and building program. Private sector initiative is helping to refine this program and determine community-wide political and financial support for this facility. It is estimated that Phase I development of this facility will cost approximately $27 million, with an estimated one third of that cost covered through private fund raising. It is expected that this project will go to the voters in November 1999. A decision is anticipated within the next six to twelve months.

For more information, contact: Soren Wolff, City Manager
616-355-1310





G. Windmill Island

Windmill Island, currently a City of Holland park facility with an annual operating buget of $500,900; contains a 200-year old authentic Dutch windmill and several other buildings replicated from areas throughout the Netherlands. Principally a tourist attraction since its inception in 1964, Windmill Island has recently suffered from declining visitation, few new activities, and limited appeal to local citizens.

The past three years have brought renewed interest in this facility, with the City working with a variety of interested local and Dutch professionals and potential investors to define an extraordinary redevelopment opportunity. A development plan has been proposed in which Windmill Island will be redeveloped as a new City of Holland commercial district, neighborhood, and tourist attraction set in the historic geography of the northern Netherlands landscape and rural "terp" or mounded village. The Island will combine authentic, restored buildings from the northern provinces of the Netherlands with new commercial and residential buildings architecturally sensitive to the historic context of the Dutch village. Building on the success of Downtown Holland, where over $100 million has been invested over the past decade, the project will be an exciting extension of Downtown. The project is estimated as a $53 million cooperative public/private effort incorporating state-of-art technologies and environmental practices in reshaping this waterfront area of Downtown Holland.

Windmill Island will offer special opportunities for significant cultural exchange, private investment, and other business-to-business relationships between Holland/southwest Michigan entrepreneurs and potential business partners in the northern Netherlands.

Implementation Timeframe: A decision will be made during the summer of 1999 on whether to proceed with this project. Should a positive response be forthcoming, build-out of the majority of this development will probably occur over a six-year period.

H. Eastern Gateway

Identified as the "Fairbanks Initiative" in the Downtown Strategic Plan, the Eastern Gateway to downtown stands as the second of two unfinished pieces in the second tier of planning activity beyond the Strategic Plan. This area of Downtown is loosely identified as properties bounded by Lincoln Avenue on the west, Chicago Drive on the east, the Macatawa River to the north, and 12th Street on the south. The City anticipates utilizing a charrette design process to begin to receive input from property owners, affected tenants and residents, and the general public, and to generate some preliminary concepts which give a sense of vision to the future of this area of the City. As a portion of this study area falls within Holland Township, there is a need and desire to expand the involved parties beyond the City limits.

Implementation Timeframe: With property changing hands in this area, and significant interest in alternative uses of several properties, it is not too soon to define a vision for this area. The Downtown Development Authority anticipates conducting this charrette in early summer, 1999.

For more information, contact:

Philip L. Meyer
Planning and Development
Manager
616-355-1363

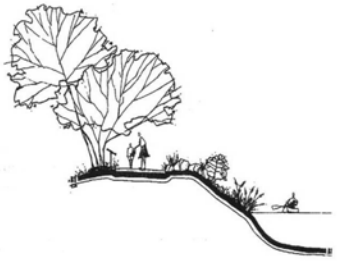
I. Macatawa River Greenway

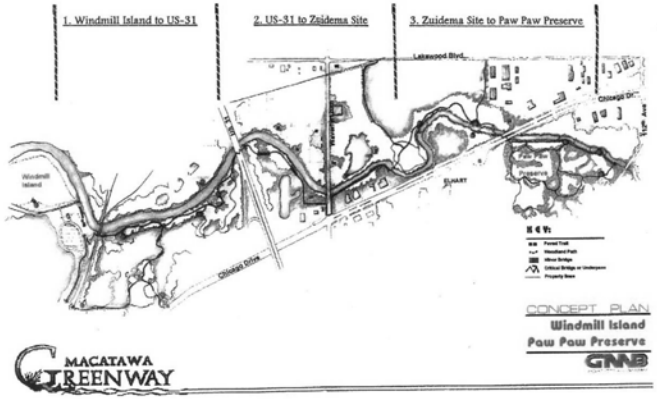
The Macatawa River Greenway is the first of several greenways identified in the Macatawa Greenway Network, a planned regional system of protected lands and connecting trails throughout the Holland/Zeeland area. The initial segment, located in the geographic center of the community, builds on significant land ownership and improvements of the City of Holland, Holland Township, and the City of Holland Board of Public Works. This two and one half mile segment connects four major publicly-owned parcels: Window on the Waterfront Park, Windmill Island, Paw Paw Preserve, and the Zuidema dredge containment site located in Holland Township.

This first segment of the Macatawa River Greenway is in large part being implemented by the City of Holland. The City has begun work in the Paw Paw Preserve providing passive recreational opportunities and river access. Cooperative efforts with Holland Township and the Macatawa Greenway Partnership will continue in an effort to construct further public access and parking at the Zuidema dredge containment site along Lakewood Boulevard, and parking and extensive public access to the water's edge at Windmill Island. Interconnection of these locations along the Greenway will require at least two bridge crossings of the Macatawa River, two bridge undercrossings (of Chicago Drive and US-31), and two potential tunnels under the CSX Railroad tracks near Windmill Island.

Implementation Timeframe: Efforts are ongoing to implement pieces of this Greenway Plan on a parcel by parcel basis. City cooperation with private property owners, Michigan Departments of Transportation and Environmental Quality, Ottawa County, and the Macatawa Greenway Partnership will be critical in achieving this ambitious plan.

For more information, contact: Macatawa Greenway Partnership
75 East 8th Street
Holland, Michigan 49423
616-392-7893





J. Paw Paw Park and Preserve

This 50-acre natural area is located West of Paw Paw Drive along the south bank of the Macatawa/Black River. The site is low land along the river floodplain with approximately eighty percent covered by wetlands. A Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant in 1997 assisted in developing a small parking area along with picnic shelters, fishing and canoe access, and a network of pathways through the park. The project provides the start of a Riverwalk that is envisioned to connect with Window on the Waterfront Park and Windmill Island as a part of the Macatawa River Greenway.

Implementation Timeframe: Implementation is underway. The First Phase of improvements totaling $310,000 will be completed in the Spring of 1999.

For more information, contact: Curtis Wright, Director
Leisure and Cultural Services
616-355-1130

K. Summary: Public and Private Commitments

Substantial planning, site acquisition and construction commitments have been made or are anticipated (*) in order to facilitate implementation of various elements of the Waterfront Redevelopment Plan, as follows:

Street Ends:	
Public- Phase I scheduled for 2000:	$215,000
Phase II to be determined:	$105,000*
Kollen Park and Vicinity:	
Public- Charrette completed (1999):	$ 18,000
Master Plan contract (1999):	$ 15,000
Construction Phase I (2000):	
City funds:	$250,000
State grant:	$750,000*
Western Gateway:	
Western Tool Works Building	
Public- Property Acquisition (1995):	$450,000
Building Maintenance, etc:	$140,000*
Charrette completed (1995):	$ 6,000
Waterfrom Improvements:	$300,000*
Environmental Cleanup:	
City funds:	$100,000
State grant:	$ 75,000
Private Building Rehabilitation:	$4,000,000*
Civic Center/Farmer's Market	
Public- Market Improvements	$200,000
Building Improvements	$Unknown
Northern Gateway:	
To Be Determined.	$Unknown
Window on the Waterfront Park:	
Public- Improvements to-date	
City funds:	$691,990
State grant:	$ 25,000
Army Corp funds:	$135,890
Proj. Improvements (1999):	$147,000
Proj. Improvements (Phase VI and VII):	$1,000,000*
Area Center:	
Public- Planning to Date:	$126,020
Construction Phase I:	$18,000,000*
Private- Contributions to date:	$200,000 (est.)
Construction Phase I:	$9,000,000*
Windmill Island:	
Public- Planning to date:	$211,000
Infrastructure Construction	
City funds:	$9,545,163*
State grant:	$4,000,000*
Private- Planning to date:	$230,000 (est.)
Construction of residences and commercial buildings:	$33,832,300*
Heritage buildings:	$4,200,000*
Eastern Gateway:	
Charette (1999)	$30,000*
To Be Determined	$Unknown
Paw Paw Park and Preserve:	
Public- Land Acquisition, Administration, and Land Improvements:	
City funds:	$ 89,854
State grant:	$270,000
Total Projected Commitments for Specified projects:	$90,608,217+*

Further, there have been numerous additional public and private investments in the immediate Downtown waterfront area over the past decade that have enabled the identified projects to move forward. Projected Downtown redevelopment work, in addition to that described above, exceeds $90 million over the next three to five years. This redevelopment includes such projects as the Hope College Science Center, Superblock development, a performing arts facility, two new office buildings (Spoelhof and GMB), and a renovation of the J. B. Labs building.

II. COMMUNITY PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

The Waterfront Redevelopment Plan is a statement of intention and vision for the entire City of Holland waterfront. As previously described, the Plan integrates the conclusions and steps for implementation of a number of specific waterfront projects. Each of these projects went through it's own public review process as described below. Each project has generated significant press coverage and has undergone multiple reviews and funding discussions that are a part of the City's normal project approval process. In addition, the entire Waterfront Redevelopment Plan as a whole has gone through a review by both the City Planning Commission and Holland City Council.

A. Street Ends

In response to increasing concerns from neighborhood residents over the walling off of views to the water and increasing assertion of private control over waterfront access, the city undertook this project with the intention of more clearly identifying and improving City-owned access along street ends to Lake Macatawa. Conceptual improvement plans developed by M. C. Smith Associates will be further refined over the coming year with meetings and involvement of neighborhood residents and property owners.

B. Kollen Park and Vicinity

Focus of a public design charrette, the Kollen Park and Vicinity project has received public review and comment in several forums. The charrette, which was widely advertised through newspaper, radio, and school-distributed flyers, included a public session at the beginning of the process where some 70 people attended and offered comments, concerns, and ideas for the future of the Park and nearby properties. During the charrette, a number of citizens visited the charrette team working sessions. At the conclusion of the process, a second public session was held where many of the initial audience returned to hear and respond to a presentation of findings by the team. Subsequently, charrette documents have been presented in public meetings before the Planning Commission, Leisure and Cultural Services Commission, and City Council, as well as at various business and service organizational meetings such as the Chamber of Commerce and Rotary.

C. Western Gateway

Initial identification of and attention to the Western Gateway began during the City's Downtown Strategic Planning process. Involving a broad cross-section of representation from the downtown and community, that process began with a heavily attended discussion of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relative to the Downtown. A Committee of 13 Downtown representatives then met weekly over an 18-month period defining, debating, and shaping the collective vision for Downtown Holland. The "Broadening the Vision" document, including a section with specific concepts and images for the Western Gateway, was then presented to and thoroughly discussed with the full Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors, City Planning Commission, City Council, in the press, and at various civic, social, and business association meetings.

Shortly thereafter, the city conducted its first design charrette focused on the Western Gateway. With a charrette team comprised of a dozen architects from the Grand Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, affected property owners, neighbors, and the general public were invited to offer comments, concerns, and ideas about changes in this area. Following three hours of public comment, the charrette team spent the next 36 hours developing concepts for the study area and then presented their findings and conclusions in a public session. The product of this planning effort was subsequently presented to the City Planning Commission and City Council in public sessions, and discussed frequently at downtown, neighborhood, and business organization meetings.

D. Northern Gateway

This project has been identified for planning study in the near future. It is anticipated that City representatives and the various affected property owners will be directly involved in the study. Opportunity for broader public input will be offered. A charrette style session, with opportunities for public comment, may be utilized to explore long term development opportunities.

E. Window on the Waterfront Park

Planning for this Park has been ongoing for the last dozen years. Initially, following development of a waterfront walkway, a citizens committee was formed to define appropriate uses and an overall vision for the Park in recognition of the closing of the dredge disposal site and the opportunity for civic improvements. More recently, through the Downtown strategic planning process, the Area Center charrette process, and focused park master planning work by the firm of Johnson and Hill, additional attention has been directed at the Park. With this additional attention, there have been numerous opportunities to share planning concepts with the community and to receive comments and suggestions. Continuing discussion regarding this Park, particularly as it relates to the future of the Area Center, will likely involve additional community-wide review.

F. Area Center

In 1988, an initial meeting was convened by the Chamber of Commerce and hospitality interests to consider the need and feasibility of a multi-functional Area Center for the greater Holland area. As funding requirements determined a public millage would be necessary, public officials became more involved in exploring this opportunity. In what will be a public facility of area-wide importance, decisions ranging from building program to site selection to financing approach continue to be scrutinized publicly. The City's commitment to fully evaluate alternative sites for the facility utilizing a design charrette process and involving a design team comprised of a combination of local, regional, and internationally respected design professionals brought extensive press coverage and generated tremendous public response. The planning for the facility continues. Any decision to move forward with the construction of an Area Center will involve considerably more public involvement and decision making.

G. Windmill Island

The story of Windmill Island is a story of public activism and participation. A citizens group worked diligently to bring the Windmill to Holland in 1964 and strove to realize an evasive dream of a Dutch rural village on the Island. In the Fall of 1994, a citizen's task force was created to provide guidance to the ongoing program and future of the Island as an admission-based attraction. As the nature of tourism began to change and attendance diminished, as a vision was broadening for the future of Downtown Holland, and as there was growing awareness of the resource presented by the Macatawa Greenway, an idea and opportunity was presented to imagine a village on the Island.

The dream of a village, a downtown commercial and residential neighborhood, is nearing reality as a final point of decision by City Council approaches. This follows a three-year planning and design process involving innumerable public meetings with City Council, the City Planning Commission, the Windmill Island Advisory Committee, a wide variety of community-based technical advisory groups, and presentations to diverse business, social, and civic organizations. In dramatic contrast to private commercial and residential development proposals, the City's insistence that this project move forward as a "community project" has resulted in continuous scrutiny and public exposure from the outset. A decision to proceed will involve further public meetings as plans are finalized, financing and organizational implementation mechanisms are set in place, and leasing commitments are confirmed.

H. Eastern Gateway

Planning for this project has been scheduled for early summer, 1999. The intention is to invite participation from property owners and others in the City and Holland Township with an interest in the future of this area of Downtown in meetings that will initiate a design charrette process. Utilizing architects, landscape architects, and urban design professionals, this process will examine opportunities and constraints within this area and develop alternative visions for future redevelopment of this emrging gateway. As has been the intent and experience with these charrettes, it is expected that this will generate substantial public interest and involvement during the planning and subsequent public review process.

I. Macatawa River Greenway

Attention to the Macatawa Greenway is an outgrowth of a Future Visioning process conducted by the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, the area's metropolitan planning organization involving representatives from seven area communities. Future Vision brought together a diverse and expansive list of interested citizens from the area to focus on critical issues affecting the future of the greater Holland/ Zeeland community. A series of workshops and presentations brought this Visioning process to the community. The greenway concept captured the imagination and enthusiasm of the area, and- over the past three years- has received significant financial and political support from communities, businesses, and private property owners.

J. Paw Paw Park and Preserve

Beginning with the City's purchase of 20 acres of land along the Macatawa River, and continuing through approvals of acquisition of an additional 30 acres in 1995 and subsequent approvals implementing recreational and environmental improvements to the Park, all activity relating to the Paw Paw Park has been in a public forum. The City's Leisure and Cultural Services Commission and City Council have been the primary avenues for public participation and communication.