

Downtown Howell

FUTURES

Howell, Michigan

Market Insights and Evolutions

A Michigan Main Street Program Service



Howell
Main Street

Market Insights

Howell, a Great American Main Street Award-winning community, has already achieved a level of success that communities aspire for. A long track record of results and positive changes occurring in the downtown area have positioned the community well. Still, recognizing that change is inevitable and with growth occurring in the community and surrounding region, Howell Main Street, Inc., along with community partners and stakeholders, is taking a pro-active planning approach and applying sound market principles, community engagement practices and creative thinking to guide future initiatives.

Market study findings and input offered by community and downtown stakeholders serve as a great starting point—not for physical change, but for the necessary dialog that should occur as the community plans downtown’s evolution.

Opportunities Ahead

Findings from the 2018 Top Prospects and Strategies Survey, based on responses from 774 participants, provide insights for eating & drinking places and retail establishments that could be candidates – and targeted – for expansion and recruitment in Downtown Howell, as well as specific features, products and services most likely to appeal to the Howell market.

Eating and Drinking Establishments | Top Selections

Deli/Sandwich Shop	Restaurant	Drinking Place
Top Features:	Top Features:	Top Features:
Sandwiches/salads	Casual, family-friendly	Outdoor seating
Homemade soups	Full-service	Dinner menu
Grilled sandwiches	Dinner menu	Beer garden
Grab-and-go items	Outdoor dining	Craft beers

Retail Establishments | Top Selections

Specialty Foods	Kitchen, Home & Gifts	Books, Toys & Games
Top Features:	Top Features:	Top Features:
Locally-sourced foods	Home furnishings/decor	New books
Artisan foods	Demo kitchen & classes	Used books
Organic foods	Made in Howell/MI	Educational toys/games
Ethnic foods	Tasting/sampling events	Book signing events

Potential Market Traction

Q: How likely would you be to patronize the following types of business in Downtown Howell?

Average Score Shown | 5.00 = Definitely Would

1. Restaurant	4.35	1. Specialty Foods Market	4.24
2. Deli/Sandwich Shop	4.19	2. Kitchen, Home & Gifts	3.76
3. Coffeehouse/Bakery	3.67	3. Books, Toys & Games	3.50
4. Ice Cream & Sweets	3.45	4. Arts, Crafts & Hobbies	3.44
5. Drinking Establishment	3.38	5. Clothing & Accessories	3.39

Potential Downtown Housing Appeal



55%

Of those surveyed would or might consider living in Downtown Howell



An Organizing Idea

- Grand River Avenue and Michigan Avenue are dividers, but it’s only four quadrants that make it whole.
- Grand River Avenue and Michigan Avenue are the core of the retail experience.
- Wandering should be encouraged as a public experience.
- Each quadrant should have: 1) a parking reservoir; 2) a place to play or gather; 3) intensive housing; and 4) space for non-retail businesses.
- Parking should be convenient and visible, but not obvious.
- Public spaces should be prominent and obvious, and oriented to all ages.

Possibilities—and Concepts

While concepts suggest certain types of uses and configurations, they have not been verified through a process typically used by a developer as a project is undertaken. However, trends and input have suggested that uses demonstrated in first-generation concepts would be supported by the community, with high interest for some of the proposed uses. As concepts, there are also broad considerations related to incrementalism, market support, pedestrian movements, and local guidance that may need attention in order to gain the most from any new investment.

Cross Quadrant Corridors

Two street corridors—Walnut Street and Court Street—are suggested as expanded links between quadrants on either side of Michigan Avenue, not so much as vehicle corridors but as signals to new development that might occur in the blocks behind Grand River Avenue facades.

Alleys

While not every alley experience will be like that of the northeast quadrant, other alleys might acquire some of the same charm and attraction—and could even allow for some “back room” spaces to become storefronts, now on alleys.



Guiding Change

Principles for Downtown Howell

- Forget style... it’s about authenticity
- Keep the neighborhood close
- Walk if you want to experience downtown
- Create a downtown to accommodate play
- Build structures for many lifetimes of use
- Seek evolution, not revolution

Principles aren’t rules; rules can be broken, and in some cases the broken rules create better results. Principles are more like truths or values—things that might resonate so clearly with the community that they’re the first filter when considering a change.

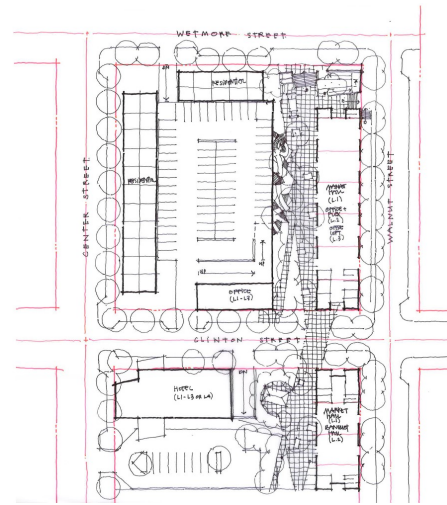
Northwest Quadrant Demonstration



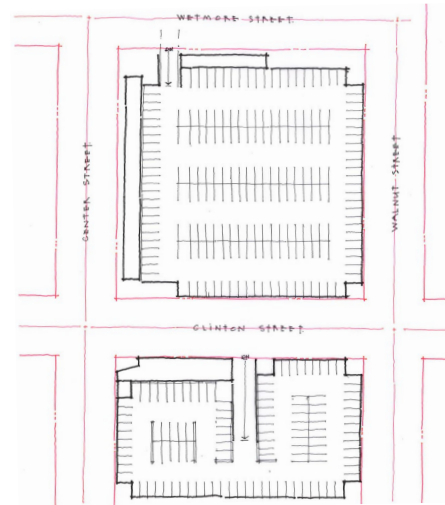
A market hall, in two parts, parallels Walnut Street and the cross-quadrant corridor, with spaces at street level matching the activity of a farmers' market and other uses occupying upper story spaces.

All or portions of three blocks comprise the core redevelopment opportunities in the **Northwest Quadrant**, with each containing new parking and public spaces. Those blocks include:

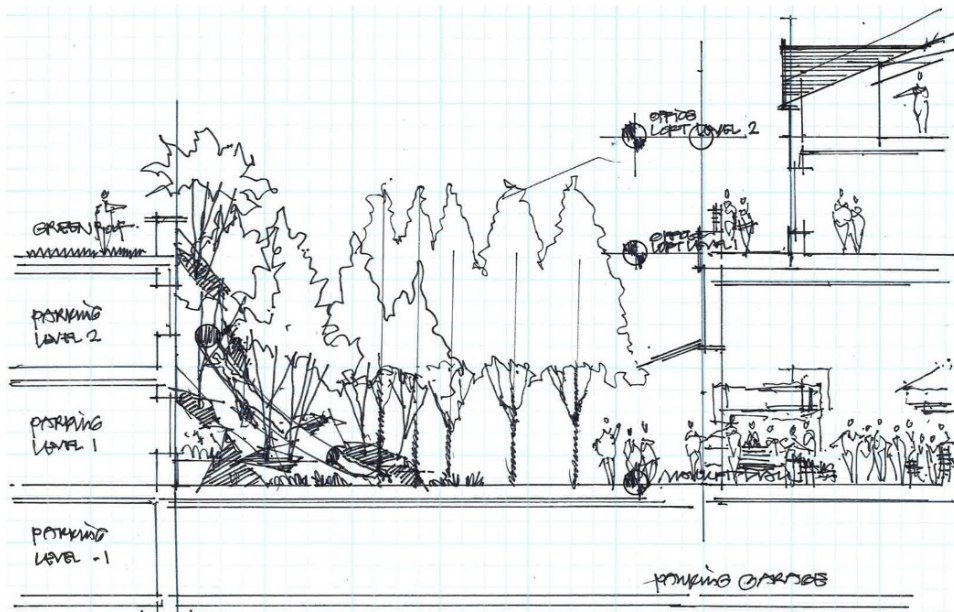
- ▶ **Block NW-1:** the northerly half of the 200 block between Grand River Avenue and Clinton Street, which is currently occupied by "the pit" parking lot;
- ▶ **Block NW-2:** the entire block bounded by Clinton Street, Walnut Street, Wetmore Street, and Center Street which is currently occupied by a small building at 214 North Walnut Street and an associated parking area, with large areas of the block being vacant;
- ▶ **Block NW-3:** the entire block bounded by Walnut Street, Clinton Street, Grand River Avenue, and the railroad, which is currently occupied by a public parking area, two small buildings (118 West Clinton Street and 122 West Clinton Street), and a convenience store/gas station, all of which may or may not be a part of the redevelopment.



Potential development at NW-1 and NW-2 blocks shows an integrated pattern of public and private uses, including a significant parking structure, a market hall, and an expansive linear park as public features.



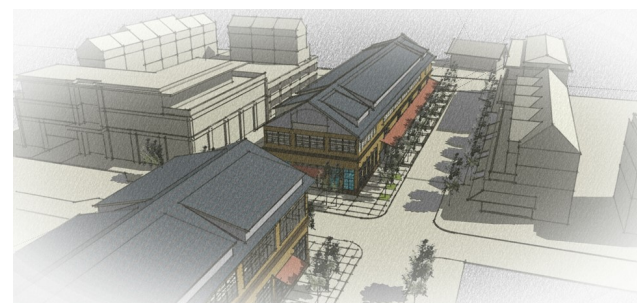
Parking below grade is important in the development of NW-1 and NW-2 blocks, particularly when the need for private parking serving new uses is recognized.



A place to play or gather. One side of a parking reservoir in the Northwest Quadrant is faced with a play structure, attracting people to downtown and encouraging them to stay longer.

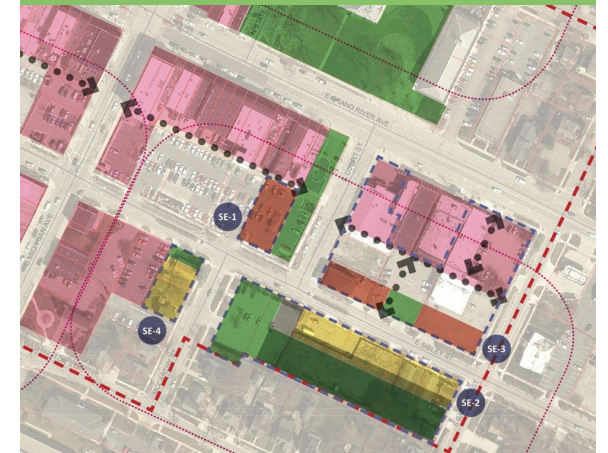


Wide walks achieved through the elimination of parking on one side of Walnut Street create the promenade along the market hall, which stretches across portions of two blocks, and reaching to the Depot.



A market hall, in two parts, parallels Walnut Street and the cross-quadrant corridor, with spaces at street level matching the activity of a farmers' market and other uses occupying upper story spaces.

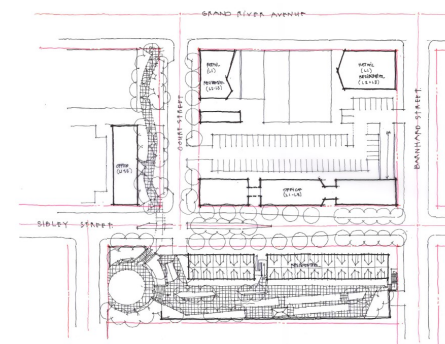
Southeast Quadrant Demonstration



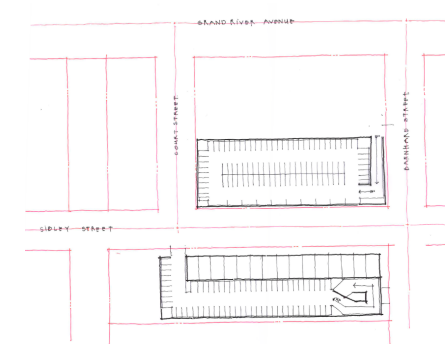
Portions of four blocks comprise the Southeast Quadrant, with a parking reservoir created on the most southerly block and public spaces on each block.

The Southeast Quadrant holds all or portions of four blocks that might, under the right conditions, be appropriate for redevelopment. Those blocks include:

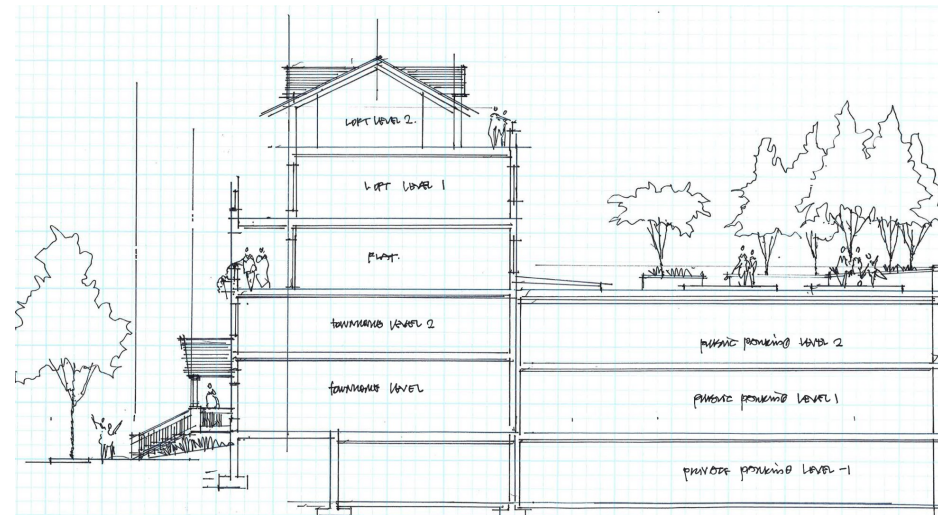
- ▶ **Block SE-1:** the easterly portion of the block bounded by Sibley Street, Court Street, Grand River Avenue, and Michigan Avenue, and containing a single-story commercial building (100 South Court Street) and a portion of a public parking area;
- ▶ **Block SE-2:** the northerly portion of the block bounded by Washington Street, Barnard Street, Sibley Street, and McCarthy Street, and containing a parking area at its westerly end, a vacant lot (215 East Sibley Street), and commercial and residential buildings at its easterly end (233 East Sibley Street, 239 East Sibley Street, and 206 South Barnard Street);
- ▶ **Block SE-3:** portions of the block bounded by Sibley Street, Barnard Street, Grand River Avenue, and Court Street, and including two structures facing Grand River Avenue and one along Court Street (303 East Grand River Avenue, 323 East Grand River Avenue and 121 South Court Street); and;
- ▶ **Block SE-4:** the northeasterly portion of the block bounded by Michigan Avenue, Sibley Street, McCarthy Street, and Washington Street and containing two residential structures (204 McCarthy Street and 210 McCarthy Street).



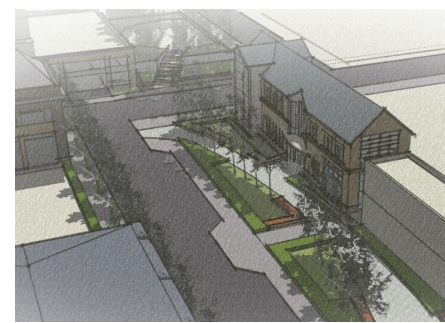
A mix of uses is possible in an evolution of the Southeast Quadrant, made possible largely through the creation of parking on a portion of one block. The parking would be lined by residential uses and capped with a public park.



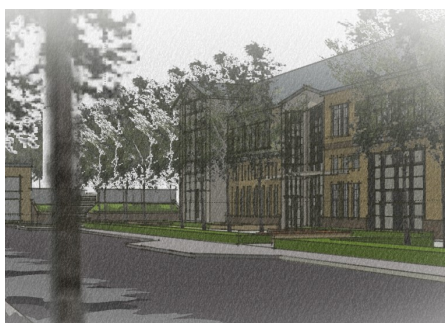
Most parking for the quadrant is located below a green roof extending along the length of a residential liner, made into a parklike space for this part of Downtown Howell.



Intensive Housing. A parking reservoir is lined by residential uses and capped with a public space.



A new building replaces a part of the public parking area along Court Street, creating a more active link between Grand River Avenue and Sibley Street.



The Court Street Promenade provides a public space connection to new development in the Southeast Quadrant other than retail and other activities along Grand River Avenue.

