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## Chapter 3: Using the Plan

### How to Use the Access Management Plan Chapters

The following chapters and accompanying figures outline how the recommended access management, non-motorized and transit recommendations are applied within the overall plan area. As discussed in the previous chapters, the average speed of traffic along a given corridor is one of several design parameters used to develop driveway spacing standards; other factors that came into play include the roadway design types, intersection traffic control types, sight distance concerns, physical constraints and the type and size of potential traffic generators.

The Access Management Plan is illustrated on a series of 30 map tiles, which show the final recommendations that resulted from numerous discussions with the Steering Committee members and input obtained from other interested/affected persons at the two public open house meetings. The discussion and graphics start at the west end of the plan corridor (Jackson Road and I-94 overpass), and proceed easterly through the plan area. The evaluation of the corridor is organized into 4 chapters, with each chapter representing the plan area of one of the four communities in the project.

The Washtenaw County Access Management Plan is based on both state and nationally recognized standards. Developing and implementing standards to be used for future access considerations are only part of the picture. The other key element for any access management plan is the identification of specific recommendations for improvements to existing access systems that will reduce crash potential and provide better efficiency throughout the corridor. These recommendations are typically referred to as retrofit access improvements.

While the highly developed nature of much of the plan corridor makes it difficult to implement the optimal access spacing standards, the goal still is to minimize the number of driveways as much as possible with additional consideration of the interaction between access points and non-motorized and transit users. Retrofit recommendations in the following chapters of the plan will only be possible when an owner or developer volunteers or triggers an access review with MDOT, the WCRC, and/or local communities during another approval process. Others may be implemented

through other programs and incentives, outlined in the implementation opportunities section, from the townships, cities, County, WATS, and MDOT to assist business with the costs of closing and reconstructing driveways.

Chapters 4-7 focuses on the existing conditions and recommended changes to access, non-motorized, and transit along the corridor that lie within or adjacent to each of the four communities in the plan area. Each chapter begins with an inventory of existing conditions, problems, and opportunities, and concludes with parcel-specific illustrative recommendations for improving access and adjacent non-motorized and transit facilities along the corridor. The illustrative recommendations should be used in concert with *Chapter 2: Standards for Access, Non-Motorized, and Transit*, which provides standards and guidelines for new development or redevelopment not specifically addressed in the illustrative plan. Plan recommendations for standards and specific improvements resulted from numerous discussions with the Steering Committee members, input from the public, and input from local and agency officials and staff.

This plan is a flexible document that is subject to adjustments and improvements as the plan corridor develops or redevelops. Although the basic design parameters should remain in place, exact locations and configurations of driveways and service/frontage roads may shift as development plans come into focus.

The recommendations of the access plan are largely based on parcel configurations and future land use plans in existence at the time this plan was prepared. Property combinations and unified or coordinated development of smaller parcels is strongly encouraged. In addition, existing parcels should only be divided if a coordinated, limited access system is retained through signed agreements and illustrated on a plan.

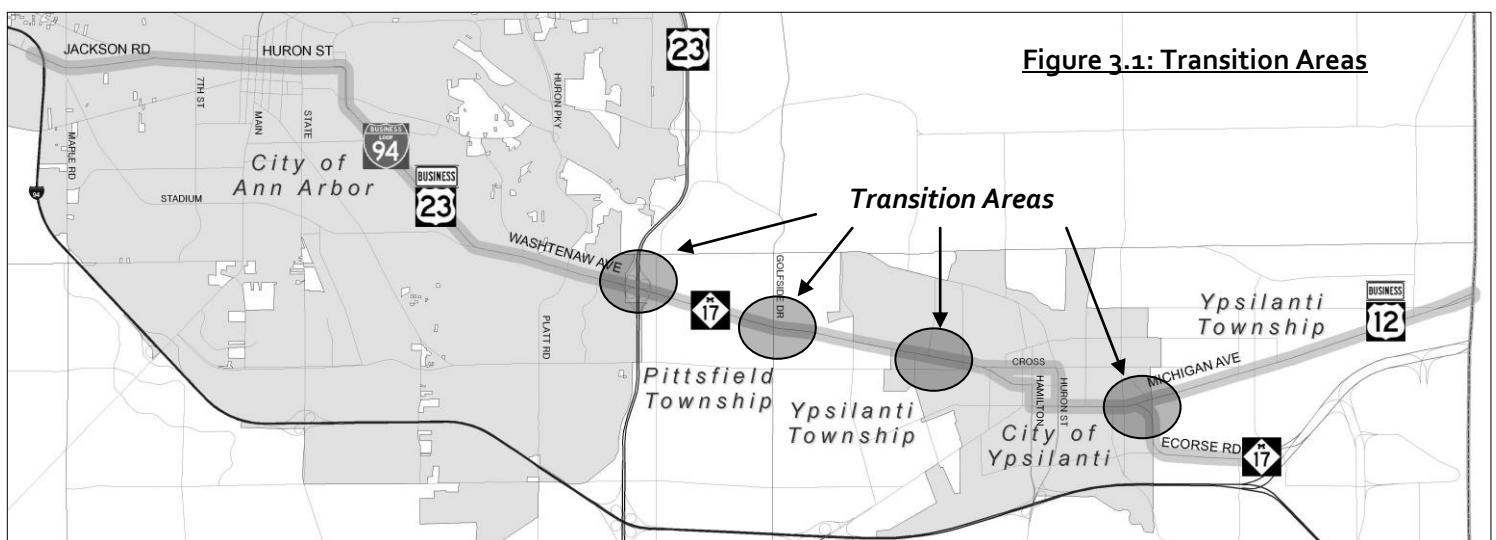
### **Community and Agency Role in the Plan**

Successful implementation of the recommendations in the Washtenaw County Access Management Plan requires a partnership between the City of Ann Arbor, Charter Township of Pittsfield, Charter Township of Ypsilanti, City of Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, Washtenaw County Road Commission, Washtenaw County Planning and Environment, Washtenaw Area Transportation Study, and MDOT to accommodate planned development along the corridor while

reducing the negative impacts of unorganized and poorly design access. In addition, all of the agencies and local communities should work closely with AATA to coordinate opportunities that may arise to relocate, upgrade, or reconfigure transit stop locations along the corridor, to improve safety.

This Plan includes specific recommendations for individual properties as well as general recommendations that apply to a number of areas along the corridor. While some of the recommendations can be directly implemented, many are long-term initiatives that will require an on-going partnership and commitment between the Steering Committee members. This requires the local communities' planning commissions, elected bodies, and zoning board of appeals to be aware of the benefits of access management and their role in the Plan's implementation. To this end, one of the products of the Washtenaw County Access Management Plan project is an informational 'road show' that can be presented by Steering Committee members, including an informational project/access management brochure and a PowerPoint presentation of the project and access management in general.

Recognizing that several areas of transition between local communities exist along the corridor, a pro-active approach to collaboration on projects and plans is essential within these transition areas. Successful coordination will help create smoother transition across the boundaries (highlighted in Figure 3.1), while providing for both a high quality image for the corridor and unique identity for each community.



Larger development projects that cross or are within ¼ mile of a community boundary should include a review by both communities early in the project process. This important step is reflected in the Access Review/Approval Procedure Flow Chart later in this Chapter. In addition, special attention should be paid to the interaction of access points, non-motorized facilities, and transit facilities at and around these transition areas when making decisions.

### **Implementation of the Plan Standards and Recommendations**

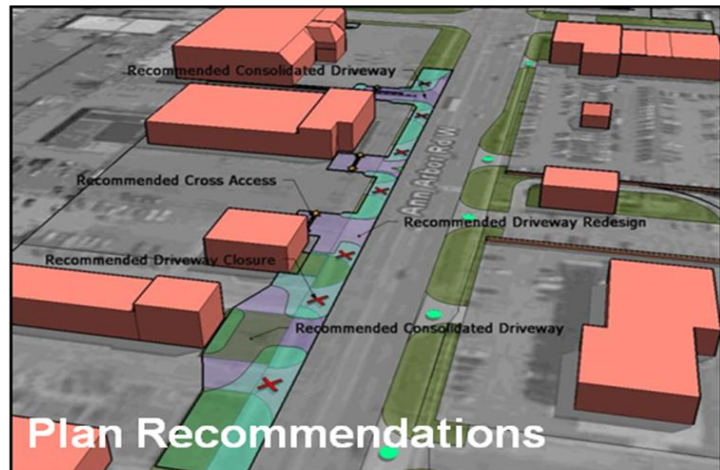
A model community-wide access management zoning article was prepared and customized to meet the needs of each of the four communities based on input from staff and planning commission. The final draft of the community-wide zoning ordinance template is included as Figure 3.3 at the end of this Chapter. Each community will adopt zoning and other ordinance amendments to incorporate the plan recommendations and standards by reference and to organize and consolidate all access-related standards and review procedures in the local codes. As many of the existing sites along the corridor will not be able to meet the access management standards, the ordinances provide the authority to modify the standards on a case-by-case basis, with the guidance of the plan recommendations where applicable. The ordinance provides planning commissions with the authority to modify the standards and plan recommendations during site plan review, provided the intent of the standards and/or recommendations is being met to the maximum extent practical on the site.

In addition to standards, specific recommendations, and ordinance language for implementation, this project has gone beyond the typical exercises of an access management project both in its incorporation of non-motorized and transit considerations and in conceptualization and consideration of the potential positive impacts of coordinated public and private investment along the corridor. Specifically, a 3-D model was prepared to simulate a concept which includes a potential reconfiguration of M-17 into a 4-lane boulevard, access and intersection reconfigurations, and intensification of land use densities in infill and redevelopment on adjacent parcels in the subarea. This illustrates the potential of this area to support a more robust transportation system that supports increased use of transit, park and ride, and pedestrian connections, to complement a redesigned roadway and access system.

A coordinated and comprehensive access management approach is essential if future development and redevelopment in the plan area is to be accommodated and traffic safety and flow in the area is to be improved. Development decisions along the plan corridor are under the purview of several agencies.

The cities and townships have jurisdiction over land use planning, zoning, site plan and subdivision review outside the corridor rights-of-way. The cities have full jurisdiction on side streets, the Washtenaw County Road Commission has jurisdiction over the township roads, and MDOT has control over improvements within the plan corridor rights-of-way. The Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS) also provides input and nominates projects for programming for improvement and enhancement for all roads, including the plan corridor. This complex network of agencies makes a formal, mutually agreed upon access approval procedure a critical element for the future implementation and success of this plan. The following section establishes a formal access review procedure.

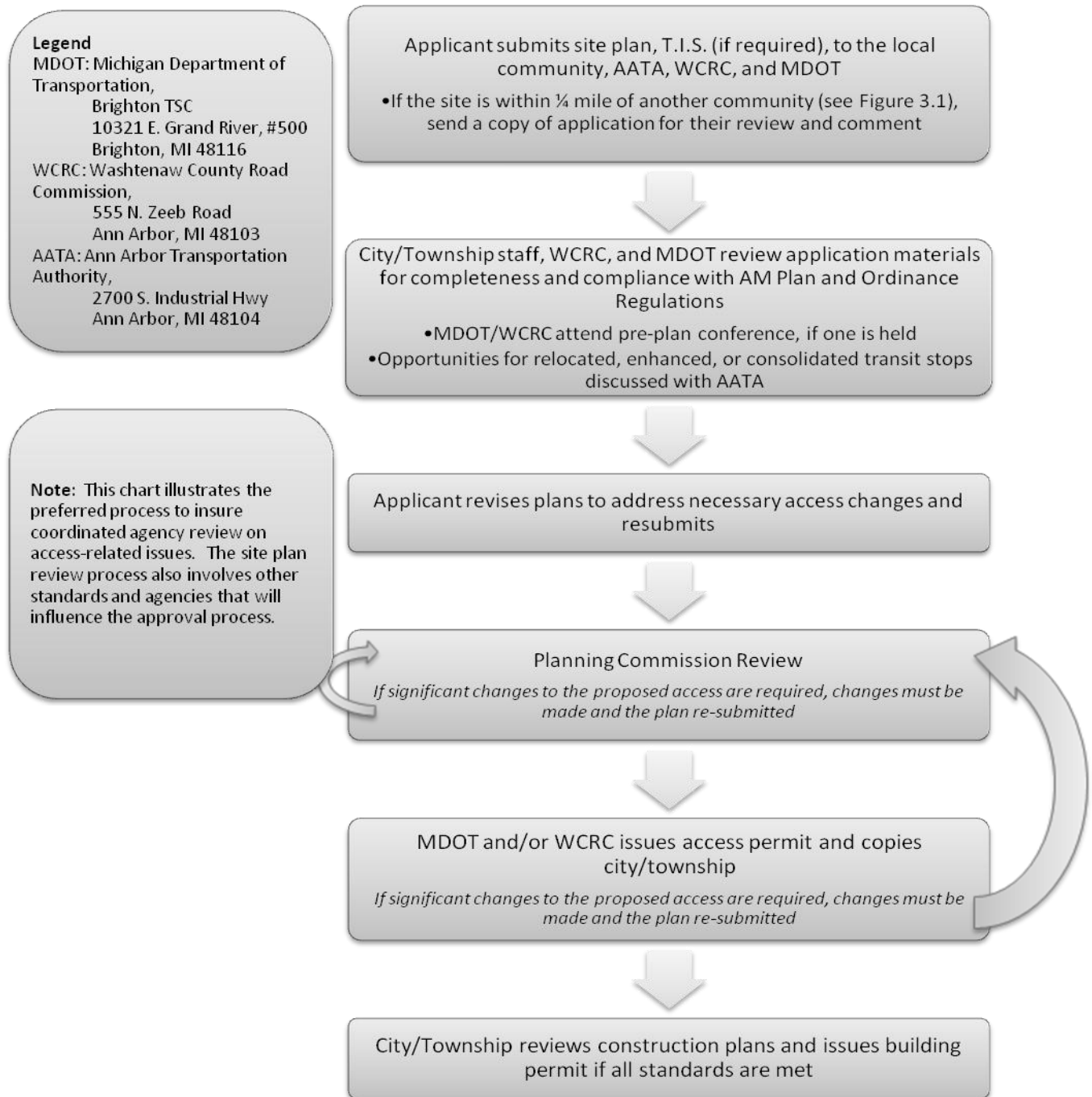
### *Incremental Implementation Process*



### Access Review and Approval Procedure

The flow chart illustrated in this Chapter outlines the recommended process to be followed in reviewing any development proposal or any project or situation that triggers access review along the plan corridor. It provides for a coordinated review by the cities, townships, WCRC, and MDOT. The intent of the process is to ensure that the local unit's of government review of the access design and the WCRC and/or MDOT's access permit processes are coordinated to implement the recommendations of this plan and realize the maximum benefits of access management. The process provides feedback loops between the planning commissions and WCRC/MDOT as modifications are made to access and circulation.

*Figure 3.2: Access Review/Approval Procedure Flow Chart*



### Implementation Opportunities

To continue the implementation of the Washtenaw County Access Management Plan, the Steering Committee should continue to meet on a regular basis; this plan recommends a quarterly or bi-annual meeting. These meetings will provide a forum to discuss and coordinate major development proposals, traffic impact studies, right-of-way preservation and roadway cross-section designs, rezoning proposals, ordinance text amendments, local master plan updates, roadway improvements or reconstruction, non-motorized transportation, streetscape enhancement, and other issues along the corridors.

There are several types of opportunities that may arise that each offers a chance to speed up implementation of the recommendations of this plan, including:

- Road reconstruction (including resurfacing in some cases).
- Road expansion or reconfiguration.
- New development or redevelopment of a site.
- Streetscape enhancement projects.
- Establishment of a local or county funding source to cover some or all of the expense associated with closing or consolidating driveways.
- Any project that requires a site plan review.

It should be noted that the recommendations outlined in this plan can be used on other area corridors with existing or expected future access management issues. The underlying benefits obtained by maintaining good control of the number and location of commercial access points can be realized on all major roads. The community-wide access management standards in each community's ordinance amendments will allow application of the standards established in this plan throughout all four communities.

