VASSAR VISION
2016 PlacePOP Concept Plan
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Program Coordinator - Civic Innovation Labs
Michigan Municipal League
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Vassar Vision Steering Committee & Participating Business Leaders

Brian Chapman, Vassar City Manager
Adam Barden, Vassar True Value Hardware
Jim Cain, The Pit BBQ
Susan Campbell, Vassar Visionaries
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Elaine Williamson, Women’s Life
Carlos Wilson, The Pit BBQ

The Michigan Municipal League: PlacePOP

PlacePOP is a project of the Michigan Municipal League (“League”), a statewide municipal membership organization dedicated to strengthening communities by innovating programs, connecting ideas and people, serving members, and inspiring positive change. Placemaking is a dynamic, strategic approach to community and economic development based on a community’s strengths.

PlacePOP is a collaborative placemaking effort focused on civic engagement, creativity, tactical changes, and experimentation. The program promotes a “lighter, quicker, cheaper” approach to placemaking that emphasizes localized, incremental improvements to a space. With LQC placemaking, communities can test ideas, gain community support, and use the experience to plan longer-term placemaking initiatives.

Consultant Team

Campbell Planning & Architecture, PLC | Northville, MI: Urban Design Concepts; Concept Plan Renderings

Michael Campbell, RA is an architect and urbanist with over 30 years’ experience shaping urban design in Michigan and the midwestern United States. His expertise in town and site planning, form-based coding, and building design is rooted in the New Urbanist tradition, and his work has made contributions to the built environment in communities small and large. In addition to teaching urban and interior design at the university level, Michael is an active member of the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU).

Seamless Collaborative | Ann Arbor, MI: Urban Design; Stakeholder Outreach; Lead Researcher and Editor

Adam Cook, CNU-A is an urbanist specializing in land use planning and research, urban design, and economic analysis. His firm, Seamless Collaborative, specializes in coordinating experts in diverse disciplines to shape place-based projects that have a positive impact on the built environment. Adam serves on the board of the Michigan Chapter of CNU, and has been an advocate for placemaking in Michigan through his work with the Michigan Municipal League.
In 2016, downtown Vassar was experiencing a renaissance of local business, with five new merchants opening within one year. The city manager and elected officials were eager to build on the momentum of their downtown’s development by enhancing adjacent public space to better support these entrepreneurs and the community.

To begin this process, City Manager Brian Chapman invited the League to lead a placemaking workshop in February, 2016. With city council, city staff, and more than 15 residents present, the group identified the space surrounding Townsend North Pavilion (“T. North Pavilion”), roughly bordered by Cass, Spring, Huron, and Main streets, as an underutilized asset. With this as the groundwork, the League and City implemented the following scope of work:

- Establish a local steering committee to help guide and promote the initiative;

- Coordinate a community-wide engagement workshop to establish a broad vision and uses for the project site to guide design renderings;

- Host a community-wide event to provide feedback on design alternatives and test possible uses of the space;

- Deliver a final design rendering of the project site that reflects the community’s future vision of the project site.

This final report details the project’s background, process, final site concepts, and an overview of recommended implementation strategies.
LEFT: Aerial view of the project site. Huron Avenue, Vassar’s principal shopping street, forms the site’s northeastern boundary; South Cass Avenue parallels the Cass River, which forms the southeastern boundary. The large building on the southwestern portion of the site is T. North Pavilion. Moore Drain is the green channel paralleling the river. Credit: Google Earth

BELOW: Looking southeast on Spring Street toward the Cass River, 1912 (1). The Hart Brothers Mill complex can be seen at right, where T. North Pavilion stands today. Situated in the Cass River floodplain, the site is pictured during that year’s heavy rains. Credit: Vassar Historical Society & Museum

FACING PAGE: View southwest on Cass Avenue from Huron Street, 1948 (2). Now mostly open land, the site was once filled with industrial buildings. The brick building on the northwestern bank of the Cass River (white roof in aerial photo at left) is the only building from this era remaining today. It can be seen in the left of the photo. Credit: Vassar Historical Society & Museum
The City of Vassar is a community of roughly 2,700 people located in the western portion of Michigan’s Thumb region. The community is located on the Cass River, and was founded in 1849. Like many smaller Michigan communities of this era, Vassar saw intense industrial development that peaked in the early 20th Century, and many historic buildings were constructed to form the city’s downtown.

As seen in the photos at left, the land on the northwestern bank of the Cass River behind Huron Street was an intense hub of industry through the 1950s. Milling and logging operations took place here, and Vassar’s famous export of cork pine wood was transported to national markets via river or rail. The decline of these industries in the second half of the 20th Century emptied this area of activity and, eventually, all but one of its buildings.

By the 1960s, a portion of the area immediately south of Huron Street was converted to provide additional parking for downtown businesses. Townsend North Pavillion, named for Vassar’s founder, was constructed as a community events space in 1998-1999. A limited amount of land along the Cass River is parkland, complementing the pavilion. Only one building on this site remains from Vassar’s industrial era, and is currently owned by the City.

Another unique feature in this area is the Moore Drain, which bounds this site to the northwest. The drain is an integral feature of Vassar’s flood control program, as the Cass River is prone to flooding (evidenced by the fact that, historically, the area was photographed regularly during these events).

Vassar has a riverfront site with great potential to grow into a unique and special place with a targeted plan of design interventions. The community currently identifies positive memories and experiences with the site, as T. North Pavilion is frequently used throughout the year. Community members and stakeholders were eager to demonstrate their desires for the future of this area through the engagement and feedback process detailed in the next section of this report.
Placemaking is a process, and it is essential that all community stakeholders have the opportunity to participate. During 2016, the project team facilitated discussions with community stakeholders on several occasions, summarizing the ideas generated, and creating “feedback loops” to further refine those ideas. A summary of detailed responses and feedback at each of these events is included in the Appendix to this report.

February 1, 2016: Placemaking Workshop. A group of local residents and business owners, accompanied by Vassar city council, staff, and city manager, attended this meeting. Residents and business leaders were excited about recent downtown investments, were unified in identifying areas that they felt to be in need of improvement, and were eager to improve their community. T. North Pavilion was identified as underutilized space that would be a possible catalyst for economic development. The group generated a list of initial ideas of possible improvements to the space and potential leaders interested in being involved. The question, “What could we do to improve the sense of place surrounding T. North Pavilion?” elicited many responses that became the ingredients for the first, rough design concept for the area.

April-May 2016: Project Launch Meetings. The residents and business owners from the February meeting, along with the city manager, formed the steering committee for the project to guide engagement, marketing, and advise on progress.

The steering committee decided a community-wide visioning session should be held in a creative and fun way. The group devised the concept of Taste & Talk, to be held at T. North Pavilion in early summer. Merging a community ‘taste-fest’ with a planning workshop, Taste & Talk would be hosted by the local businesses themselves.

June 2, 2016: Taste & Talk Visioning Event. The Taste & Talk event was an astonishing success, with over 200 community attendees. Participants circulated through a series of tables at T. North Pavilion, each hosted by a local business—and each offering free food. Every table, staffed by members of the project team, contained an aerial photograph of the site and covered one sub-area. Residents were encouraged to discuss their vision for the area’s future with team members and each other, putting significant ideas on sticky notes. Hundreds of individual ideas were collected and grouped together by theme, and summarized below.

The design team was able to refine their initial rough concept based on the volume of feedback into an initial working concept. This initial concept had four variations.

FACING PAGE: Top Left, Intial rough concept sketch, February, 2016. Top Right, One of four initial concept variations stemming from feedback gathered at the June, 2016 Taste & Talk event. Bottom, Summary of feedback gathered at Taste & Talk, June, 2016.
### Drain
- Wild Flowers 18
- Tables / Patio 17
- Art & Sculpture Garden / Art Walk 16
- Bridge 10
- Cover Drain 10
- Landscaping / Boulders 9
- Bathrooms Open & Clean 9
- Buffer Parking w/ Trees & Change Name 6
- Covered Structure 6
- Butterfly Garden 5
- Food Vendors / Cooking Demonstrations 4


### Parking Lot
- Splash Pad 39
- Auction House / Second-Hand Store 20
- Paved Multi-Use Area 19
- Food Trucks 17
- Live Music 13
- Movie Night 12
- Batting Cages / Fielding 11
- Miniature Golf 10
- Swimming Pool 9
- Community Garden 9
- Halloween Festival / Haunted House 8
- Skating Rink 7


### Pavilion
- Splash Pad 40
- Movie Night / Film Festival 40
- Live Music / Marty’s 23
- Swimming Pool 20
- World Expo / Beer 15
- Antique Fair / Auction 14
- Keep Restrooms Open 12
- Roller Derby / Skating 11
- Flea Market / Local Art Fair 8
- Go-Cart Track 7
- Move Road Back to Allow Lawn & Landscaping 7
- Art Prize 9


### Riverfront
- Band Shell 24
- Calisthenics Park 21
- Basketball Court 15
- River Walk 13
- Canoe Launch 15
- Fishing Structures / Access 9
- Wine Walk 7
- Yoga By River 7
- Corn Hole Tournney 6
- Benches 6
- Youth Center 5
- Comm. Center 5
- Clean Bank 4
- Flea Market 4

Community Center 4 / Trees on M-15 4 / Flowers 4 / Winter Activities 2 / Football Field / Safety / Art Programs 2 / Sunset Canoe Rides 3 / Vassar History Day / More Recreation / Ice Cream Shop 3 / Sambusa Café / Mud Ball with Pick-Ups / Open from 7 AM to 8 PM / Fireworks 2 / Fix Storefronts 2 / Civil War Encampment 2 / Sidewalk Sales 2 / Fix Fountain in Veteran’s Park
July 12, 2016: Initial Concept Review Session. A meeting with the steering committee and local business owners served as a debriefing session for the Taste & Talk event. The project team presented four variations of the initial concept to the steering committee, with feedback and discussion solicited on each. The steering committee then launched an online survey to elicit feedback from a wider audience, and the design team updated concept plans in preparation for RiverFest engagement activities.

August 5-7, 2016: RiverFest Engagement Activities. Vassar’s annual RiverFest was an opportunity to display concept variations with the most positive feedback from stakeholders and from the online survey. Members of the project team spent Friday, August 5 on-site engaging and conversing with community members about the concept and recording their feedback. Steering committee members performed these duties throughout RiverFest weekend.

The project team and steering committee were also able to coordinate several small, tactical or ‘lighter, quicker, cheaper’ improvements to the riverfront space, consistent with the concept plan, to inspire attendees. These included lawn games on the riverfront, placement of patio tables to simulate the permanent seating suggested in the concepts, and the hosting of a calisthenics class on the riverfront where many stakeholders had suggested the location of a permanent calisthenics park.

September 6, 2016: Final Concepts Presentation & Workshop. The League and design consultants presented two final concepts to the Vassar city council and community members. The project team hosted discussion groups during the meeting and solicited broader feedback by launching a second online survey. Based on the results of this session and the survey, the project team and City Manager determined that the open street concept would become the preferred final concept for the Vassar Vision plan.

BELOW: Residents and stakeholders placed sticky notes with their ideas on aerial photos of the site at the Taste & Talk event on June 2, 2016.
**Summary of Vassar Vision Riverfest Engagement**  
August 5, 6 & 7

**Favorite images**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Splash pad (157)</th>
<th>Colorful outdoor seating near river &amp; drain (115)</th>
<th>Foot bridge across river (72)</th>
<th>Outdoor workout area (44)</th>
<th>Enclosed pavilion (28)</th>
<th>Incubator kitchen (10)</th>
<th>Open pavilion (9)</th>
<th>Road barriers near T. North (8)</th>
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Other priorities: sculpture garden (5), drain foot bridge (4), mews (4), gravel near T. North (2), visibility tower (2), welcome center (2), tiny houses (1)

**New programming ideas**

<table>
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<th>Skate park (25)</th>
<th>Better access to river with walkway, fishing, and nice landscaping (9)</th>
<th>Art and artist market (4)</th>
<th>Wedding and special event venue (2)</th>
<th>Vintage, craft, farmers market (2)</th>
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Other ideas: dog park, ice skating on the river, lights along the drain, music, horseshoe pits, warming station

**Brick building ideas**

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<th>Wedding and special events venue (6)</th>
<th>Art, flea, vintage, food market (6)</th>
<th>Artist co-op (5)</th>
<th>Brewery, beer/wine festival (5)</th>
<th>Tube and canoe rental (2)</th>
<th>Kitchen, pop-up food events (2)</th>
</tr>
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Other ideas: quick lunch spot, medical marijuana supply, haunted house, Vassar museum, roller rink, batting cages, zip-line

**Top design concerns**

- Not enough parking spaces (8)
- Challenge building in flood plain (2)

**ABOVE:** Summary chart of feedback from area residents given at RiverFest, August, 2016. The desire for a splash pad was overwhelming, as well as the desire for more outdoor seating in the area. Respondents were excited to envision new uses for the remaining historic brick building on the Cass River.

**LEFT:** A portion of the "Closed Street" interim concept presented to residents at RiverFest. One of two interim concepts, the closed street design was developed in response to concerns about vehicular traffic on Cass Avenue and Spring Street. After further discussion, this concept was dropped in favor of keeping the streets open. The possibility of adding "tiny houses" to the site was explored at this point as well. Due to concerns about feasibility on the site, they were eliminated from the final concept plan.
The Vassar Vision concept plan is based on the community feedback detailed in this report. It is a future vision of the riverfront area and it speaks to the passion and commitment Vassar residents have for their community.

This vision contains many individual elements, such as a Farmers’ Market pavilion, a Calisthenics Park, and new outdoor seating. They were not placed randomly on paper, timeless design principles were followed. These principles contribute to that quality that makes great public spaces, "great". That quality is sometimes called, 'sense of place.' You can find these design principles in cities all over the world, from famous places like Rome to small villages and towns. Vassar, too, is a great place—and the design of its public spaces in the future can reinforce and instill a sense of greatness for residents and visitors, present and future.

An outdoor ‘room.’ We feel secure and comfortable in our homes; our homes are divided into rooms that create different moods. Great public spaces can be thought of as rooms, too. Notice the location of the splash pad on the concept plan: it is a feature in the middle of a large, outdoor room. The walls of the room are formed by the farmers’ market pavilion to the north, the historic brick building to the east, T. North Pavilion to the south, and the Moore Drain to the west. This room will be a memorable place for citizens and visitors to spend time.

A series of experiences. We move around in our community on streets or sidewalks. These paths not only get us from point ‘A’ to point ‘B’, but they also provide us with a unique experience as we move along them. Cass Avenue and Spring Street are two streets that have existed in Vassar for a long time, and they remain open in the concept plan. The elements that are envisioned to line these streets—the skate park, small retail cottages, the calisthenics park—will make walking along them a memorable experience.

The Moore Drain can also act like a ‘street,’ similar to the famous canals in cities like Venice, Italy and Annecy, France. When it is lined with trees and places to eat outside, it will become another way to move between Huron Street and T. North Pavilion.

A third new ‘street’ can be formed from west to east: when the pedestrian bridge across the Cass River is built, it will line up with the splash pad at the center of our great outdoor room.

Re-thinking Cass and Spring Streets. The parkland along the Cass River now expands across Cass Avenue and Spring Street, into our outdoor room, and north along the Moore Drain. The corner of Cass and Spring has been redesigned to be easily closed to cars when many people will be in the area. When cars are blocked from entering this area by bollards, the park extends without interruption.

The corner has been smoothed from one right angle to two slight bends, and the streets will narrow here, to slow cars when they are open to auto traffic. The hatching shown on the Concept Plan is meant to show that a different type of pavement will be used here: perhaps bricks, or rough fixed stones. This surface will be tactile, and will create a slight vibration when it is driven over. Motorists will sense that this is a special area and will naturally be inclined to pass through it with extra caution.
PLAN COMPONENTS

**SPLASH PAD/FOUNTAIN**

The splash pad should be designed to double as a fountain, a visual landmark punctuating the center of the outdoor gathering space. It should be a fountain that adults can sit near and enjoy, while children can feel free to play. It will be a space for families, alongside those without children, to gather together. The fountain in Bicentennial Park in Southlake, TX is pictured above.

**Credit:** [http://rice-puppy.deviantart.com/art/Flat-foun-](http://rice-puppy.deviantart.com/art/Flat-foun-)

**FARMERS’ MARKET PAVILION**

The four-season Farmers’ Market Pavilion is an open structure, due to its location in the Cass River floodplain. Its roofline and profile can take dimensions from similar market buildings around the country, to make this a structure signifying civic importance.

**Credit:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Paducah_Market_House_from_south.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Paducah_Market_House_from_south.jpg)

**BOLLARDS**

The redesigned corner of Cass Avenue and Spring Street can be closed to traffic as necessary with lightweight, removable bollards. Bollards are visually attractive and functional. By design, they allow pedestrians and cyclists the ability to walk or ride ‘through’ them, making full use of the street when it is closed to cars. Contrast this with the gate system currently in use: when the gates are closed, non-motorists have to negotiate them to continue along the closed streets.

**Credit:** Reliance Foundry Co. More photos and examples may be found at: [http://www.reliance-foundry.com/bollard](http://www.reliance-foundry.com/bollard)

**TOWER FEATURE**

If placed at the intersection of Cass Ave. and Spring St., a unique tower with a carillon would become a landmark, drawing attention south along the river from the Huron Ave. bridge. If the tower on the Riverside Grill building is restored, a new tower feature should echo this in its design. The Kerrytown Market carillon in Ann Arbor is shown above.

**Credit:** Brandi November Lyons. [https://www.pinterest.com/umengineering/ann-arbor/](https://www.pinterest.com/umengineering/ann-arbor/)
PAVING

By paving the ‘flexible’ portion of Cass Avenue and Spring Street with a material other than asphalt or concrete, users will have both a visual and a tactile cue that they are in a unique space, and should proceed carefully.

The above photo, of the Piazza d’Armi in Milan, Italy, shows an example of creative paving. Here bricks are used, as well as an aggregate surface made up of stones. The stones are fixed into place to appear rustic without creating dust or loose debris.


OUTDOOR SEATING/PATIO

Retaining the historic brick building along the Cass River and developing the space behind it as a patio with tables and chairs was a popular idea during the feedback sessions. The Moore Drain area should also be a focus for outdoor seating. Downtown restaurants should be encouraged to allow their patrons to make use of these areas. The San Antonio Riverwalk is pictured above; Vassar can incorporate this spirit in the areas along the Cass River and Moore Drain.


NEW PUBLIC RESTROOMS

The existing public restrooms near T. North Pavilion should be retained and used as family restroom facilities during busy times. Locating new public restrooms near Huron Street makes them easily accessible to shoppers, while a more prominent location will increase the level of security for the facilities. A small visitors center should be located in this building, staffed with a concierge during busy times to give directions and answer questions.

The Allegan Welcome Center, pictured above, is a case study that will be discussed below.

Credit: Michigan Municipal League

SEASONAL RETAIL/FOOD TRUCKS

Food trucks can be staged in the parallel parking spaces provided along Cass Avenue. As shown in the concept plan, staging them near the historic building will allow customers to use the scenic patio area along the river as a nearby dining spot. The city should review best practices and work closely with local business owners to craft any ordinance regulating food trucks. Vendors currently operating during RiverFest and other city events should be able to operate from the parallel parking spaces under existing regulations.

Credit: Adam Cook
PARKING

Provision of adequate parking was identified on multiple occasions throughout the engagement and feedback process. The design team, during multiple visits, studied and photographed parking usage in the area, and recorded the observations of dozens of residents. The concept plan incorporates as much formal parking as feasible, and is designed to promote a “park once” strategy within the community. A downtown visitor should need only to park once and that space should be located within a 5-minute walk of all downtown amenities. The walk should always be interesting and exciting, and traverse vibrant, active spaces. If this is seen as a guarantee, the visitor will gladly make this tradeoff.

Look at the picture of the Vassar site with the gold diagram laid on top (above): the diagram is a scale outline of the Walmart Supercenter in Caro. It can easily be seen that the distance the shopper is typically willing to walk from car to store, through the store, and back to the car is roughly contained in the area encompassed by downtown Vassar. Put another way, a shopper parks roughly where the historic brick building is located, walks at least as far as the Vassar Theatre to
purchase groceries, and walks to T. North Pavilion to shop for plants and flowers before checking out and returning to his or her car.

We are willing to walk these distances when a store guarantees us a selection of necessary goods at low prices; if our downtown guaranteed us a lively, exciting sense of place and community, would we not walk at least as far?

There are roughly 50 formal (striped) diagonal and parallel parking spaces as the site is currently configured. It appears to us that these 50 spaces adequately serve neighboring downtown businesses. During times of peak demand, such as RiverFest, an additional 150-180 cars could informally park on site. The concept plan has 152 formal, full-time parking spaces designed into the site. If built as illustrated, these spaces should exceed the needs of the community on a daily basis, while accommodating demand generated by events at T. North Pavilion or RiverFest.

Demand for parking in downtown Vassar will change slowly, and adapt to current circumstances, as portions of the plan are implemented over time. If a formal parking study is undertaken by the city at some point in the future, it should incorporate the entire downtown area as well. Making simple improvements, like adding parking wayfinding signs, can help direct out-of-towners to appropriate parking spaces outside of the project site. Interested stakeholders should also consult the parking-related resources below.

**ADDITIONAL PARKING RESOURCES**


Rebuilding the space around T. North Pavilion as envisioned in Vassar Vision will require phasing over time and the use of multiple funding sources. Below are implementation recommendations, case studies from communities across the state, and a brief list of potential funding opportunities that can help the city implement the plan.

Ensure continuous stakeholder engagement and keep business owners connected. The steering committee and local business owners have been an integral part of Vassar Vision. By raising awareness, gathering feedback, and promoting placemaking throughout the process, steering committee members are now viewed as project experts and have a unique position to take on further leadership roles through implementation. For example, the steering committee could lead a future crowdfunding campaign or make an ask to local donors for a specific portion of the plan. The committee’s involvement, passion, and experience with the process make them expert decision-makers and this talent should not be lost with the end of the plan development.

Continue ‘Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper’ Placemaking. There were a number of ideas generated during the Taste & Talk and RiverFest events that can be implemented quickly and at a low cost. It’s clear residents are interested in increasing activities and heightening the aesthetics of the project site by enhancing landscaping, adding public art, lawn games, seating, and unique events. Purchasing and putting out games, sidewalk chalk, art, and moveable furniture on weekends and during events is an easy way improve the space and show progress. Similarly, the city can encourage and make it easy for local residents and organizations to host events in the space. Review Farmington’s Sundquist Pavilion case study below for an example of locally-led programming.

Start implementing one piece at a time. There are many phases to the Vassar Vision project and the best way to keep momentum going is to start implementation immediately and keep moving one piece at a time.

For example, clearing brush along the river can be done immediately, greatly enhance the space, and illustrate that the city is serious about implementing the vision (inquire with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality [DEQ] about the need for an erosion control permit before removing vegetation). In the spring, the city can start rebuilding the road as envisioned in the plan and submit grant applications for building the new pavilion spaces. At the same time, community stakeholders can launch a crowdfunding campaign for the splash pad, while others solicit a private funder for the calisthenics or skate park, and others engage donors for developing public art features.

Review the Cadillac Commons case study on the next page for an example on how that community is implementing a similar project in an estimated timespan of less than five years.

ABOVE: The Consultant Team discusses the interim design concept with a Vassar family and listens to their ideas and feedback at RiverFest.
IMPLEMENTATION CASE STUDIES

CADILLAC COMMONS
City of Cadillac
Population: 10,281

Cadillac Commons transformed a nondescript parking lot and park into a year-round and vibrant destination in the city’s downtown. The Cadillac Commons project updates an existing park, stage, and parking lot, while adding a new farmers’ market pavilion and a plaza containing a splash pad, ice rink, outdoor seating, attractive landscaping, and a large outdoor fireplace. In just two years since the community finalized their PlacePlan with the Michigan Municipal League, the city has installed the splash pad, skating rink, and fireplace, reconfigured and repaved the parking lot with decorative pavers, buried overhead utility lines, improved landscaping, and added outdoor seating. The new farmers’ market structure is expected to break ground in the spring of 2017.

Cadillac has received overwhelming support for the estimated $2 million project. The community has led two successful Patronicity crowdfunding campaigns and received matching grants on the money raised locally through the MEDC’s Public Spaces Community Places program, collecting nearly $230,000. The city was also awarded $200,000 from the MEDC’s Core Communities grant program, as well as grants from Consumers Energy Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Charities, and other local organizations. More grants are in the works, but the DDA is ensuring the project’s timely completion by taking on more than $1 million in debt. Above photo and more information available at cadillaccommons.com

IRONWOOD ART PARK
City of Ironwood
Population: 5,183

The City of Ironwood formed a leadership group composed of municipal officials, the DDA, and local artists to crowdfund enough money to build an art park in a vacant parcel in the community’s downtown. The total build-out cost was about $25,000 and included new concrete, landscaping, electricity, and benches. The leadership team raised more than $15,000 through the Public Spaces Community Places crowdfunding program and received a matching grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). Read the full case study and how-to guide in the Appendix and review additional information on crowdfunding in the Funding Options section below.
SUNDQUIST PAVILION
City of Farmington
Population: 10,557

During a community visioning process in the early 2000s, residents had trouble answering the question: where is the heart of your downtown? Today, a beautiful park and pavilion are built atop a former strip-mall parking lot to become the center of the community (pictured below). The $2.2 million park and pavilion, pictured below (credit: Farmington DDA), host more than 60 events a year, and the city looks to community partners to activate the space during events and downtime. Downtown businesses and community stakeholders were active initiators of the project, despite concerns over parking and traffic. Project start-up funding came from a private foundation, donations, bonds, and the city’s capital improvement fund. Maintenance is mainly funded by the DDA through its Principal Shopping District Special Assessment. Learn more about this project in the Appendix.

RIVERFRONT PLAZA
City of Allegan
Population: 5,046

Allegan’s riverfront development project converted an underutilized parking lot on the Kalamazoo River into a public plaza and performance stage. The plaza now has improved landscaping and lighting, new outdoor seating, and a new Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant canoe/kayak launch. The community has also installed artistic LED lights on the historic Second Street Bridge and opened a welcome center with public rest-rooms near the plaza. There are future plans to build a 450-foot zipline across the river, with groundbreaking expected to start in 2017. Besides the zipline, the community has now successfully implemented every piece of the project in just a few short years from the design concept was published in a League PlacePlan report.

Allegan residents showed their support for redeveloping their riverfront by approving a 2013 ballot initiative that transferred $500,000 from the city’s sinking fund toward implementing the estimated $1 million project. The community also accepted a $250,000 grant from the MEDC’s Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs program and a $100,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Land and Water Conservation fund, as well as other sources, to help fund the project.

HERITAGE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
City of Ypsilanti
Population: 19,809

The wood and metal, 10-foot wide Ypsilanti Heritage Bridge is part of the Border to Border Trail, completing a non-motorized path connecting city parks and downtown districts. The cost for the bridge was estimated at $800,000. The city of Ypsilanti contributed about $285,000 toward the project and received funding from the Michigan Department of National Resources Trust Fund, Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation, the Ypsilanti DDA, Saint Joseph’s Mercy Hospital, and Eastern Michigan University.
FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Vassar should expect to collect funding from multiple sources, including local dollars, to implement the vision. However, a number of funding opportunities can also be explored for this project.

The list below is by no means exhaustive, but rather a snapshot of some opportunities potentially available for Vassar Vision implementation.

CROWDFUNDING

As previously described in the Ironwood Art Park case study, the Public Spaces Community Places program provides a 50/50 match of up to $50,000 to successful crowdfunding campaigns for public space improvements. Proposals are reviewed on an ongoing basis, with no deadline, but a limited amount of match funding is available statewide each year. To qualify, communities must submit a proposed project for review by MEDC, the League, and crowdfunding partner Patronicity.

Several pieces of Vassar Vision could be implemented with crowdfunding dollars, including funding for public art, the splash pad, and beautifying the drain or riverwalk. Since the program’s inception, more than 84 projects have been implemented statewide, and the program has a 99% success rate.

COMMUNITY GRANTORS

Vassar should use the Vassar Vision project to build relationships with private and community grantors. Local organizations like the Chamber, Rotary, Tuscola County Community Foundation, and large local or regional businesses could donate funds for specific aspects of the project.

STATE OF MICHIGAN

There are a number of MEDC funding opportunities Vassar may be able to leverage while implementing Vassar Vision. The City should engage in the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program to ensure eligibility for future opportunities. Vassar should explore funding opportunities or incentives with the MEDC, including Core Communities, or the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs program to help fund certain aspects of the project. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources offers several annual grant programs for recreation facilities, new market structures, and related activities. The City should explore opportunities with the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Trust Fund, Recreation Passport, and others.
PROJECT IMPACT

As directed in the original scope of work, Vassar Vision created a footprint for a community-supported design for the space surrounding T. North Pavilion. However, the process of completing this task led to more than a mere workplan. Through conversations with involved stakeholders and insights from League staff, it’s clear Vassar Vision accomplished much more.

Vassar Vision is the community’s project. The steering committee exhibited true ownership of Vassar Vision. The League educated these volunteers in placemaking principles and the city gave them enough decision-making power that they had ownership in the project, and therefore did better outreach and solicited better feedback. Unlike in some communities, Vassar Vision doesn’t feel like the city’s project, it feels like community’s project.

Residents and stakeholders are excited about Vassar’s future. Many new businesses have opened in Vassar’s small downtown in the past year, and municipal leaders timed the Vassar Vision project perfectly to build off this momentum. Residents are optimistic about the community’s growth and excited to improve public spaces that will put Vassar on the map.

People generated transformative ideas. Because of this excitement and the process in which Vassar Vision collected ideas, residents came up with creative and ‘big’ concepts for the small town, which in other settings may have been deemed too bold and immediately discredited.

The final design is representative of the community’s needs and dreams. Hundreds of people participated in Vassar Vision, with more than 200 attending the initial visioning workshop alone. This kind of idea generation, feedback, and excitement is rare, and designers took ideas into serious consideration to develop a final rendering that best illustrates the community’s needs and vision.
“What part of Vassar Vision am I most proud of? The fact that we were able to get our community behind a transformative idea that will guide the future of our community.”

- Adam Barden, Vassar True Value Hardware Owner and Vassar Vision Steering Committee Member
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## Attendees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Role</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam Barden</td>
<td>DDA/True Value</td>
<td><a href="mailto:adam@vassartv.com">adam@vassartv.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Bushaw</td>
<td>EDC Turcola</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lbushaw@tds.com">lbushaw@tds.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Filkins</td>
<td>Business owner</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Starfilkins82@gmail.com">Starfilkins82@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Miller</td>
<td>Planning commission</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jmiller@bagpsy.org">jmiller@bagpsy.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connie Gamet</td>
<td>Citizen, volunteer, wife of councilman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tedfireol@hotmail.com">tedfireol@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corey Haubenstricker</td>
<td>Business owner</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Corey@irdhomes.com">Corey@irdhomes.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth Ann Fall</td>
<td>Parks &amp; rec</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bethannfall@yahoo.com">bethannfall@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Weisenberger</td>
<td>Parks &amp; rec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faye Hembling</td>
<td>DDA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Fayehembling@yahoo.com">Fayehembling@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandy Keyes</td>
<td>Woman’s Life</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sandy_keyes@yahoo.com">Sandy_keyes@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Millenou</td>
<td>UFD</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gmillenou@cityofvassar.org">gmillenou@cityofvassar.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol J Miller</td>
<td>Vassar</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cjmill@cityofvassar.org">cjmill@cityofvassar.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert McKay</td>
<td>Parks &amp; Rec</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tryon@hotmail.com">tryon@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toni Schribner</td>
<td>Parks &amp; Rec</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tscribner@vassar.k12.mi.us">tscribner@vassar.k12.mi.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony &amp; Sarah Barber</td>
<td>FBC Church</td>
<td><a href="mailto:anthonydbarber@gmail.com">anthonydbarber@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buryl &amp; Pam Bireler</td>
<td>Planning Commission</td>
<td><a href="mailto:P5b2017@yahoo.com">P5b2017@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## What we love most about Vassar

- Sense of community
- Small community
- Always something to do
- Downtown walkability
- Cooperative community
- Deep relationships and connections
- Rail trail
- Location
- Quiet, safe
- Friendliness
- People
- New businesses opening
- Welcoming people
- Downtown growing
- Energy
- Natural and historic scenery
- Willingness to change
- Schools
- Kids

Where could we focus a placemaking project? Townsend North Pavilion

What could we do to improve the sense of place in T North Pavilion?
- Joint concert and movie in the park nights
- Wine and cheese trail fundraiser, add beer, art
- Improve parking and lighting, clean up the space, better landscaping
- Arts and craft events
- Cook offs
- RC boat and car races
- Basketball tournament
- Farmers market and concert days combined
- Art, selfie spot
- Walkability to downtown
- Improve walkability and connectivity to downtown
- Clear plan for how it connects to key areas
- Campsite connectivity during events
- Outdoor vendors, food trucks, art fair
- Splash park
- Kiosk, retail, food
- Draw people in from M15 – lights, signs
- Dress up the drain
- Make it so people can see the river from the city
- City band events
- Parade that ends at the pavilion
- Monthly, regular events

Next steps discussion

- Take action
- Identify a calendar of events and see what we can improve, combine, add
- Determine a timeline, allow for plenty of outreach
- Promote the events to new and different audiences
- Find new partners to work with (chamber)
- Logistics – identify and attract vendors
- Create a community vision for the area, draw a rendering and identify a plan for accomplishing these goals
- Create a placemaking committee to lead do engagement
April 19 Steering Committee Meeting Notes

Attendees & what they bring:
Brian – 10 years experience, council connection
Pam – creative, coordination, idea generation
Adam – engineering, DDA connection
Sandy – knows everyone!

The project
Vassar City Council has identified the T. North Pavilion area (roughly bordered by the river, pavilion, and public property/parking behind Main and Huron) as a potential catalyst for economic development and an opportunity to enhance community gathering space for Vassar residents and visitors. This community-led project will develop a concept design and programming plan for the area. The city has hired the Michigan Municipal League to manage the project and deliver project outcomes. The estimated timeline for this project is as follows:

- Community visioning workshop – June
- Pop-up event and public engagement – July
- Final report delivery – September council meeting

Role of the steering committee
The steering committee for this project includes a variety of local stakeholders that will enhance the project by:

- Educating the broader community on placemaking and the specific project
- Planning and facilitating creative outreach and engagement activities
- Documenting and promoting events, activities, and the project’s progress
- Acting as advisors to guide the project through to implementation

Potential new members of the steering committee:
- School – Brian will reach out
- Library – Sandy will reach out
- Council member – Brian
- City staff (police chief and/or clerk/treasurer) – Brian
- Parks & Rec committee (Toni) – Pam?
- Others under-represented in the community??
- TASKS – Talk to them about the project & role of steering committee, if interested get name, email and phone to Sarah so she can follow up. We’ll invite folks to the next meeting

Visioning event
1. Thursday, June 2 6:00 – 8:00 PM at the T. North Pavilion
2. Event goals
   a. Educate the broader community on placemaking and the Vassar project
   b. Collect ideas for how to use the space and what it could look like
   c. Bring the community together and have some fun!
3. Name ideas:
a. Vassar Vision, Pavilion Party, Backyard Brainstorm, POP the Pavilion, Taste & Talk, Beer & Brainstorm  
b. Or some combination: For example, the project could be called Vassar Vision (consistent for both events) and this one could be called Taste & Talk  
c. TASK: COMPLETE Please share your ideas/cast your vote via email/phone by Friday 4/22 so I can make the flyer on Monday

4. Basic agenda/structure of the event:
   a. 6:00 arrive, check in, grab a drink, sample food, mingle, listen to music  
   b. 6:20 welcome and very brief overview of project/placemaking  
      i. Start with some of the ideas people came up with in the February workshop  
   c. 6:30 workshop activity  
      i. Each table will have a local food business owner with samples and a table facilitator (MML/city staff). Business owner talks about their food, people taste, and then get to work!  
      ii. Tables will have maps of a key area of the site (drain, parking area, Cass & river, Pavilion & playground) for people to draw or write their ideas of what could-be in that space. After about 15 minutes, people rotate to the next table to taste more food and share ideas on a different part of the site.  
   d. 7:15 mingle and vote!  
      i. Attendees get stickers to vote for their favorite ideas for each area  
   e. 7:30 table presentations  
      i. Facilitators announce the top three ideas that got the most votes at each table  
      ii. Very brief next step discussion – announce to come back in July to see ideas in action and share feedback  
   f. 8:00 clean-up  

5. Materials  
   a. Tables and chairs (number TBD, based on number of vendors) (city)  
   b. Site maps (city)  
   c. Sticky notes (MML)  
   d. Pens, markers (MML)  
   e. Voting stickers (MML)  
   f. Easels and posters with images of placemaking from other places for inspiration (MML)

6. Potential vendors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Committee member doing outreach</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Corner Deli</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>Brian contacted, Sarah followed up, no response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betty Lou’s</td>
<td>Ron,</td>
<td><a href="mailto:onjr.andersonsortool@gmail.com">onjr.andersonsortool@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>Tenants NOT able to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Contact Person</td>
<td>Email/Phone Info</td>
<td>Contacted</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambuca</td>
<td>Brian Derscha</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brian.derscha@yahoo.com">brian.derscha@yahoo.com</a>, (810) 834-8853</td>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>Contacted, Sarah followed up, no response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vassar Theatre</td>
<td>Andres &amp; Susan</td>
<td>(989) 823-9000 – <a href="mailto:vassartheatremichigan@gmail.com">vassartheatremichigan@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweetcakes</td>
<td>Andrea</td>
<td>(989) 871-4188</td>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragon Palace</td>
<td></td>
<td>(989) 823-3577</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Rib Stand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ribs sauce vendor,</td>
<td>Toni Schribner</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tscribner@vassar.k12.mi.us">tscribner@vassar.k12.mi.us</a></td>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork Pine</td>
<td>Laura – in the AM</td>
<td>(989) 823-3011</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Confirmed, Sarah will follow up with details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vassar Cheeks Bar</td>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>(989) 823-2721</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Confirmed - Bringing soup sample, roaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karrs Kafe</td>
<td>Charley owner</td>
<td>(989) 823-1702 – <a href="mailto:charlykarr@gmail.com">charlykarr@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Interested, will decide after Thurs meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish Line Pizza &amp;</td>
<td></td>
<td>989-882-9494</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Interested, need to confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolates Galore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragon Palace</td>
<td></td>
<td>989-822-9494</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Interested, need to confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivy Pizza</td>
<td></td>
<td>(989) 823-3991</td>
<td>Star</td>
<td>Star will follow up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ASK to vendors:**
- Promote your business by hosting a table and offering free samples during the event
- Participate in the event by sharing ideas of what you would like to see in the space
- Come to a prep meeting on May 12 at 6:00 PM in the pavilion to quickly run through the June 2 event
Baskets:
- Ann Zwerk, Big Farm – basket from farm products with flyer for July event
- High School basket
- Library
- Barb Cunningham - Girl’s basket
- Star’s shop
- Sholl

7. Potential volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Contact person</th>
<th>Contact info</th>
<th>Role request</th>
<th>Committee member doing outreach</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DJ</td>
<td>Tina Hawkins</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tmhawkins56@gmail.com">tmhawkins56@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Music and sound for event</td>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotary Club</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beer and wine</td>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>July event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Life</td>
<td>Susan Campell</td>
<td></td>
<td>Check in table</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy Scouts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kids activities during the event (including some visioning activities)</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scouts</td>
<td>Lenore Philo</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Landon3614@yahoo.com">Landon3614@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Kids activities during the event (including some visioning activities)</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Confirmed interest, Sarah will follow up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Society</td>
<td>Dorothy Watts</td>
<td>989-652-2379</td>
<td>Bring historic photos of the site</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Confirmed interest, Sarah will follow up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber</td>
<td>Cheryl Deike</td>
<td><a href="mailto:omaradeike@hotmail.com">omaradeike@hotmail.com</a>, 989-823-3346</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Confirmed interest, Sarah will follow up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion’s club</td>
<td>Adam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blow up for the kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Frankie</td>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>Wolverine</td>
<td>Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McDonald</td>
<td>Dianna</td>
<td>652-6964,</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:McNuggets.office@gmail.com">McNuggets.office@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Marketing materials
   a. Flyer – Sarah will make and share by **Monday 4/25**
   b. Facebook event – Pam will make by **Wednesday 4/27**, all will promote
   c. Article(s) in the paper – Pam and Sarah will coordinate – maybe a short one now, announcing the project, one right before the event, and one after the event to talk about what happened? (work with author of Feb workshop article)
   d. Present/in-person invites at events, meetings, etc.
   e. **Share resources & notes & pics with Library to put on display in a case**

9. **Next meeting: Thursday, May 12 6:00 – 7:30 at the Pavilion**
   a. 6:00 – 6:30 – walk through the June 2 event with representatives from all parties (they just should be there for the first 30 mins, free to leave after that if not part of the steering committee – all are welcome to stay, however!)
   b. 6:30 – 7:30 – steering committee meet to finalize visioning logistics & start discussions about the July pop-up event
May 12 Steering Committee Meeting Notes

1. Welcome & intros
   a. Attendees: Pam, Laura, Adam, Star, Brian, Katy, Andreas, Thomas, Cheryl, Dorothy, Toni, Elaine, Tina, Susan, Mary Ann, Andrea, Brian

2. Vassar Vision background info
   a. See “Talking Points” doc attached

3. Taste & Talk basics
   a. Goals of the event
      i. Bring people together to have fun!
      ii. Come up with ideas of use & aesthetics of T. North Pavilion area
      iii. Support & feature local businesses
      iv. Build momentum for long-term improvements and bringing new people into conversations with the city
   b. Basic agenda/logistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:00</td>
<td>Set up</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Tables &amp; chairs (City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>Check in, gather, mingle, food samples, look at historic &amp; new photos ideas. Word wall: now &amp; future</td>
<td>Check in table: Women’s Life Historical Society All welcome &amp; talk to people about pics</td>
<td>Tables &amp; chairs (City) Now &amp; future word board &amp; easel (MML) Sticky notes (MML) Pens &amp; markers (MML) Raffle tickets (Sandy) Sign in sheet (MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:10</td>
<td>Welcome, project overview, timeline, today’s goals Brief placemaking overview What people brainstormed at first visioning How workshop will work</td>
<td>Brian? Star &amp; Pam? Star &amp; Pam? Sarah</td>
<td>Pics around the pavilion of what could-be (Sarah &amp; Star Mic (Tina)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 table 1</td>
<td>Workshop activity &amp; tasting tables (drain,</td>
<td>Facilitators: Sarah, Luke, Murph,</td>
<td>Maps (City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Facilitators</td>
<td>Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:40</td>
<td>table 2</td>
<td>Adam (Mike float)</td>
<td>Pens (MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:50</td>
<td>table 3</td>
<td>Tasting host</td>
<td>Sticky notes (MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>parking, Cass &amp; River, pavilion &amp; playground)</td>
<td>DJ??</td>
<td>Tracing paper (MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00</td>
<td>table 4</td>
<td>Host gets 1 min to talk about food &amp; biz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:10</td>
<td>Vote for favorite ideas at each table – 2 votes?</td>
<td>All vote MML facilitators, assistance from tasting host Steering committee make sure people are voting</td>
<td>Emoji stickers (MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30</td>
<td>Table report outs – top three “big ideas” from each table</td>
<td>Facilitators tally, tasting hosts announce</td>
<td>Mic (Tina)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:45</td>
<td>Next steps – see you in July! Take a flyer Raffle</td>
<td>Brian, Toni, Adam, Sandy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Baskets (Sandy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Clean up</td>
<td>EVERYONE</td>
<td>Trash bags (City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trash cans (City)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. Tasting hosts:
   i. Vassar Theatre
   ii. Sweet Cakes
   iii. Sambuca
   iv. Cork Pine
   v. Forever Green
   vi. The Pit BBQ
   vii. Grace Lutheran Church
   viii. Corner Deli
   ix. Scribs BBQ

d. Your role as a vendor or volunteer – rotary offering $100 to assist
   i. Tasting for 150-200
   ii. Decorate your table (if you want! – table dimensions to come)
   iii. Contribute ideas
iv. Stay with the table, hear ideas & and announce the top pics from your table

4. Materials at the event
   a. Tables & chairs – City
   b. Trash cans & bags – City
   c. Name tags – MML
   d. Markers & pens - MML
   e. Sign in sheet (include - MML
   f. Maps of each area, master map - City
   g. Heart stickers - MML
   h. Plates & napkins - MML
   i. Drinks: water/pop - Rotary
   j. One word poster now and future - MML
   k. Historic pics – Historical Society
   l. What could-be pics at each table – MML
   m. Easels – MML & others
   n. Kids activity stuff: coloring what they want, record ideas, games – MML & Lion’s club
   o. Flyers for July event – MML & City
   p. 2 color raffle tickets – Sandy

5. Outreach and promotion
   a. Getting the word out
      i. Flyers (see attached)
      j. Facebook [https://www.facebook.com/events/1574104619586850/]
      k. Presentations & personal invites
      l. Media – Pam
      m. Banner – MML will order ASAP
   b. Documenting June 2 event
      i. Pictures & share on facebook page!

6. Next steps
   a. **June 2 Taste & Talk!**
   b. June 2 debrief & next event planning meeting TBA late June/Early July
   c. Next public event, possibly during Riverfest, August 5, 6, 7 – to confirm within 2 weeks
      i. View & give feedback on renderings, test out ideas people come up with at Visioning

7. Tasks
   a. Outreach and promotion! – All
5/25 Steering Committee Meeting

1. Vassar Vision background info
   a. See Talking Points doc attached

2. Taste & Talk basics
   a. Goals of the event – estimated 150 attendees!
      i. Bring people together to have fun!
      ii. Come up with ideas of use & aesthetics of T. North Pavilion area
      iii. Support & feature local businesses
      iv. Build momentum for long-term improvements and bringing new people into conversations with the city

b. Agenda & logistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:00</td>
<td>Set up</td>
<td>ALL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>Check in, gather, mingle, food samples, look at historic &amp; new photos ideas.</td>
<td>Check in table: Women’s Life Historical Society All welcome &amp; talk to people about pics</td>
<td>Tables &amp; chairs (City) Historic pics &amp; easels (Historical Society) Inspiration pics &amp; easels (MML) Sticky notes (MML) Pens &amp; markers (MML) Raffle tickets (Sandy) Sign in sheet (MML) Paper towel (MML) Water (MML) Each tasting table brings their own food utensils!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:20</td>
<td>Welcome, project overview, timeline, today’s goals Brief placemaking overview</td>
<td>Brian Star &amp; Pam</td>
<td>Pics around the pavilion of what could-be (MML &amp; all) Mic (Tina)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Facilitators/Hosts</td>
<td>Resources</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30</td>
<td>What people brainstormed at first visioning (write on each map to get the conversation started)</td>
<td>Star &amp; Pam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:40</td>
<td>How workshop will work</td>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:50</td>
<td>Workshop activity &amp; tasting tables (drain, parking, Cass &amp; River, pavilion &amp; playground)</td>
<td>MML facilitators, steering committee</td>
<td>Maps (City/MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00</td>
<td>Host gets 1 min to talk about food &amp; biz</td>
<td>Tasting host</td>
<td>Pens (MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Write/draw ideas on stickies and the maps</td>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>Sticky notes (MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:10</td>
<td>Vote for favorite ideas at each table – 2 votes?</td>
<td>All vote</td>
<td>Question “cheat sheet” to get the conversation started (MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30</td>
<td>Table report outs – top three “big ideas” from each table</td>
<td>Facilitators tally, tasting hosts announce</td>
<td>Emoji stickers (MML)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:45</td>
<td>Next steps – see you at Riverfest! Take a flyer</td>
<td>Adam, Brian, Toni</td>
<td>Baskets (Sandy)</td>
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<td>Raffle</td>
<td>Sandy</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Clean up</td>
<td>EVERYONE (Sarah will facilitate)</td>
<td>Trash bags (City)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trash cans (City)</td>
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</table>

c. Kids area – Kids are welcome to participate in the mapping exercise but they’ll also have an area near the playground with the following:
- Activities
  - Ronald McDonald
  - Lions Club games (kids get 4 game tickets when they come in) **TASK**: Sarah will talk to Sandy about getting another color ticket
o Coloring table – MML will bring coloring papers so kids can draw what they want to in the area **TASK**: Sarah will see if Library will help with the table
o Kids will be in view of parents but extra supervision provided by high school students
- Food
  o Vassar Theatre is providing popcorn
  o McDonalds is providing juice
d. Tasting hosts:
  1. Vassar Theatre - popcorn
  2. Sweet Cakes - sweets
  3. Sambuca – coffee & fruit salad
  4. Cork Pine
  5. Forever Green – dip & to-go spices
  6. The Pit BBQ – BBQ beans
  7. Grace Lutheran Church – cookies
  8. Corner Deli
  9. Scribs BBQ
ii. Your role as a vendor or volunteer
   1. Tasting for 150-200, bring all materials/utensils you need
   2. Contribute ideas
   3. Stay with the table, hear ideas & and announce the top pics from your table
3. Materials
   a. MML
      i. Name tags
      ii. Pens & markers
      iii. Sticky notes
      iv. Sign in sheet
      v. Maps
      vi. Emoji stickers
      vii. Paper towel
      viii. Water
      ix. Inspiration pics & boards
      x. Easels
      xi. Kids coloring pad
      xii. Kids crayons
      xiii. Flyers for Riverfest event
      xiv. “Cheat sheet” for steering committee to keep conversations moving, ground rules
   b. City
      i. Tables (15) & chairs (100?)
      ii. Trash cans & bags
   c. Other
i. Historic pics & easel – Historical Society
ii. Raffle tickets – Sandy
iii. Kids games – Lions club
iv. Tasting host materials – businesses

4. Set up
   a. **Set-up begins at 5:00 PM** – Please be ready for “doors open” at 6:00 PM!

5. Next steps
   a. **June 2 Taste & Talk! June 1**
   b. June 2 debrief & Riverfest planning meeting **TBD**
   c. Next public event during Riverfest, **August 5, 6, 7**
      i. View & give feedback on renderings, test out ideas people come up with at Visioning

6. **Additional tasks**
   a. **Outreach and promotion! – All**
   b. Send inspiration pictures to be printed and displayed around the pavilion – **ALL, due Tuesday 9AM**
   c. **Sarah** will work with speakers to identify talking points
   d. **Sarah** will make flyers for Riverfest engagement
   e. **Sarah** will make cheat sheets for all steering committee members
| Parking Lot | Splash Pad | Tents/Top Ten | Landscaping/Borders | Change Name | Park/Trail | Water Moving Things | Lounge Area | Senior Exercise | Community Garden | Park/Playground | Nature保育区
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Vassar PlacePOP
Initial Concepts
Stakeholder Review
July 12, 2016

Adam A. Cook, CNU-A NCI FBCI
Managing Principal Planner & Researcher
Seamless Collaborative
Ann Arbor, MI

Michael A. Campbell, M.Arch RA
Principal
Campbell Planning & Architecture PLC
Northville, MI
Taste & Talk
Thursday June 2
<table>
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<tr>
<td>Paved Lot</td>
<td>Live Music</td>
<td>Night Golf</td>
<td>Miniature Golf</td>
<td>Paddling Area</td>
<td>Pool</td>
<td>Second Base</td>
<td>Swimming Pool</td>
<td>Food Court</td>
<td>Community Garden</td>
<td>Halloween Festival / Haunted House</td>
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<td>Auction</td>
<td>Movie Night</td>
<td>Movie Ticket</td>
<td>Ten Pin Bowling</td>
<td>Fielding</td>
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<tr>
<td>More Road Back to Local Access</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Art Fair</td>
<td>Fantasea</td>
<td>Cart</td>
<td>Market</td>
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</table>

| Splash Pad | Movie Night / Live Music / Swimming Pool | World Fair Ceremony / Restrooms Open / Art Festival | Beer 14 | 15 | 16 |
| Top Ten | Top Ten | Top Ten | Top Ten | Top Ten | Top Ten |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Riverfront</th>
<th>Band Shell</th>
<th>Calisthenics Park</th>
<th>Basketball Court</th>
<th>Baseball Park</th>
<th>Launch</th>
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<td>Volleyball</td>
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<tr>
<th>Riverfront</th>
<th>Fishing</th>
<th>Canoe</th>
<th>Kayak</th>
<th>Paddle</th>
<th>Rowboat</th>
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<td>River</td>
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<th>Outdoor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Taste & Talk Public Input

## Drain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Ten</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wild Flowers 18</td>
<td>Tables / Patio 17</td>
<td>Art &amp; Sculpture Garden / Art Walk 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge 10</td>
<td>Cover Drain 10</td>
<td>Landscaping / Boulders 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


## Parking Lot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Ten</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Splash Pad 39</td>
<td>Auction House / Second-Hand Store 20</td>
<td>Paved Multi-Use Area 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Trucks 17</td>
<td>Live Music 13</td>
<td>Movie Night 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batting Cages / Fielding 11</td>
<td>Miniature Golf 10</td>
<td>Swimming Pool 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Garden 9</td>
<td>Halloween Festival / Haunted House 8</td>
<td>Skating Rink 7</td>
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## Pavilion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Ten</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Splash Pad 40</td>
<td>Movie Night / Film Festival 40</td>
<td>Live Music / Martini’s 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming Pool 20</td>
<td>World Expo of Beer 15</td>
<td>Antique Fair / Auction 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep Restrooms Open 12</td>
<td>Roller Derby / Skating 11</td>
<td>Flea Market / Local Art Fair 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go-Cart Track 7</td>
<td>Move Road Back to Allow Lawn &amp; Landscaping 7</td>
<td>Art Prize 9</td>
</tr>
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## Riverfront

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Ten</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band Shell 24</td>
<td>Calisthenics Park 21</td>
<td>Basketball Court 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Walk 13</td>
<td>Canon Launch 19</td>
<td>Fishing Structures / Access 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine Walk 7</td>
<td>Yoga By River 7</td>
<td>Corn Hole Tourney 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benches 6</td>
<td>Youth Center 5</td>
<td>Comm. Center 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clean Bank 4</td>
<td>Flea Market 4</td>
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</table>

Community Center 4 / Trees on M-15 4 / Flowers 4 / Winter Activities 2 / Football Field / Safety / Art Programs 2 / Sunset Canoe Rides 3 / Vassar History Day / More Recreation / Ice Cream Shop 3 / Sambuca Café / Mud Ball with Pick-Ups / Open from 7 AM to 8 PM / Fireworks 2 / Fix Storefronts 2 / Civil War Encampment 2 / Sidewalk Sales 2 / Fix Fountain in Veteran’s Park /
### Taste & Talk Public Input

#### Drain

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<td>Bathrooms Open &amp; Clean 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buffer Parking w / Trees &amp; Change Name 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Covered Structure 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Butterfly Garden 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Vendors / Cooking Demonstrations 4</td>
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- Community Center 4 / Trees on M-15 4 / Flowers 4 / Winter Activities 2 / Football Field / Safety / Art Programs 2 / Sunset Canoe Rides 3 / Vassar History Day / More Recreation / Ice Cream Shop 3 / Sambuca Cafe / Mud Ball with Pick-Ups / Open from 7 AM to 8 PM / Fireworks 2 / Fix Storefronts 2 / Civil War Encampment 2 / Sidewalk Sales 2 / Fix Fountain in Veteran’s Park
## Taste & Talk Public Input

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Initial Concept Development

- Area Studies
- Aspirational Ideas
- Incorporating Public Feedback

Concept 1
Initial Concept Development

- Area Studies
- Aspirational Ideas
- Incorporating Public Feedback

Concept 1
Initial Concept Development

- Area Studies
- Aspirational Ideas
- Incorporating Public Feedback
- Study how to incorporate Drain
Initial Concept

Development

- Aspirational…
- Short-Term
- Medium-Term
- Long-Term

Concept 3
Initial Concept Development

- Aspirational...
- Short-Term
- Medium-Term
- Long-Term

Concept 3A
Initial Concept Development

Aspirational...

Short-Term

Medium-Term

Long-Term

Concept 3A
Initial Concept Development

- Aspirational...
- Short-Term
- Medium-Term
- Long-Term

Concept 3A
Initial Concept Development

- Aspirational…
- Short-Term
- Medium-Term
- Long-Term

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Initial Concept Development

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- Long-Term

Concept 3A
Initial Concept Development

- Aspirational…
- Short-Term
- Medium-Term
- Long-Term

Concept 3A
Precedents: “Woonerf”/Shared Space
Precedents: Bollards
Precedents: Bollards
Precedents: Restrooms/Welcome Center
Precedents: Market Shed
Precedents: Fountain/Splash Pad
Precedents: Dress Up the Drain
Precedents: Dress Up the Drain
Precedents: Small Carillon
Thank You

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7/12 Meeting notes

Agenda

- Debrief & lessons from the Taste & Talk (15 min)
  - What were you proud of?
  - How could we improve for the next public event?

- Review and give feedback on initial site design draft from our design consultants (45 min)

- Confirm goals, logistics, activities, roles, and outreach for Riverfest engagement (30 min)
  - Goals – share our favorite, get feedback, programming ideas, volunteers, outreach & awareness
  - What it looks like
    - Big engagement wall – view design, pictures, vote for favorite programming ideas & who could do them
    - Talking to people!
    - Pop-up?
  - Outreach
    - How do we want to promote our presence at the event
      - Fbook page
      - Email to T&T attendees
      - Online engagement & comments?
  - Logistics – we need you to volunteer! – I can write up a cheat sheet with talking points, questions & directions but we need someone there most of the time to gather feedback
    - Friday, August 5, 1-8 PM – at least 2/3 MML, maybe have a few folks come help out?
      - Volunteers
    - Saturday, August 6, 10-8
      - Volunteers
    - Sunday, August 7, 12 – 6
      - Volunteers, include tear down. Could we store it in one of the warehouses

Our next big event will be in conjunction with Riverfest on August 5, 6 & 7. At minimum, we’ll have:

- Large display boards with drawings to show what could-be in that space (based on ideas generated at the Taste & Talk). People will be able to look at and give feedback on what they see
- A long list of programming activities/use (generated during the Taste & Talk) where people can vote for their favorites
- Pop-up activities to test ideas put forth in visioning
7/19 Pop-up notes
On the call: Cheryl, Andreas, Drew, Pam, Star

1. Brief comments on the designs
   a. Road change is necessary – Alt 3 doesn't do enough to slow traffic and keep kids safe
   b. Some people are getting concerned about parking – resident is even doing his own parking study!
   c. Overall, everyone is really excited

2. Logistics
   a. Sarah & MML team will arrive on Friday around 11AM to start setting up the space & engagement board. We are only staying through the end of Friday evening (though all of our materials will be there until Monday) so the rest of the weekend is up to you guys! If you haven't already, please sign up to say when/how you can help out: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1r1Og3ucrJ1RXFHJgQDvgp5EMBrZjdhZL1aNmc3aRyB8/edit?usp=sharing
   b. Most of the pop-up programming can stay out throughout the entirety of Riverfest but we'll need volunteers to at least commit to hanging out in the space and making sure everything is in order.
      i. Andreas has volunteered some of his employees to help take in any necessary items at the end of the night.
      ii. Please use the volunteer sheet to indicate if you can help bring things in/out in the AM & PM when you're going to be at the event
      iii. Brian & volunteers will coordinate proper overnight storage of items that need to come inside & use building, hockey building, and MML trailer.
   c. Sarah will return to Vassar Monday afternoon to pick up ALL ENGAGEMENT COMMENTS & MATERIALS and the MML trailer. It's important to keep all of the feedback and comments we get so we can create the final rendering of the space.

3. Pop-up placemaking activities during Riverfest
   a. Focus on the brick building and grassy area surrounding (Drew confirmed there were not other competing activities in that space). Our goals will be to draw attention to the project, this space in particular, offer people a space to relax & have fun in the shade, and collect feedback on designs and/programming ideas. We'll work towards the following:
      i. Seating – Sarah will bring the MML trailer with an assortment of outdoor seating (patio chairs, bistro tables, blankets & pillows).
      ii. Art –
         1. Pam is bringing a few of the 6ft barn quilts to decorate the space with local art. They need to be brought in every evening and in inclement weather
         2. Brick building doors are painted! Huge thanks to Adam for donating the paint and the Girl Scouts for painting!
      iii. Games –
         1. Sarah will bring MML trailer with an assortment of outdoor games (cornhole, badminton, bouncy balls, chess etc.), which will be set out by the brick building.
         2. Drew will look into making a homemade game like Kerplunk or Jenga
3. **Sandy** will confirm we can use any of the games already stored in the brick building (i.e. DuckDuckGO)

4. **Adam** will bring his two cornhole games and leave them down all weekend!

iv. Signage – **Pam** will work with local sign company to print about 5 campaign-sized yard signs that are generic enough that they can be used for future Vassar Vision events

v. Programming – **Larry** from 1 Life Fitness has confirmed they’ll host a Zumba class on Saturday morning from 10-12.

vi. Engagement –

1. **Sarah** will bring giant sandwich board with design renderings and images of what could-be (located in the pavilion). **Steering committee** members (all of you!) will manage the engagement wall on Saturday & Sunday.

2. **Sarah** will bring butcher paper to post on the brick building to ask attendees what they would like to see in this space. **Steering committee** members will manage the engagement wall and activities on Saturday and Sunday.

3. **Sarah** will bring small displays & engagement walls for business owners who want to post about Vassar Vision inside their stores.
Vassar Vision: What do you think?

In June, Vassar neighbors gathered for a fun event to brainstorm what could-be in the area surrounding T. North pavilion. Attendees contributed hundreds of ideas and professional designers put these ideas into some draft designs. These are all big, aspirational ideas for now so we need your ideas, comments, and feedback to help make them a reality!

We'll be displaying and discussing these designs in more detail at the Vassar Riverfest, but we wanted to give you a chance to take a look, share your ideas, and talk about what could-be with your neighbors. Try not to worry too much about things like cost at this stage. Our designers will work developing recommendations on how to phase implementation on whatever aspects people like most, but that won't happen until we get better feedback on what people are dreaming about!

If you have further questions, feel free to contact scraft@mml.org or come by Riverfest on August 5, 6, & 7!

Alternative 1: Aspiration ideas including new townhouses, changing the street layout, completely covering the drain, improving access to the river, a splash pad, and rehabbing the brick structure on Cass St. to become an incubator kitchen or pop-up retail space.
1. What do you like most about Alternative 1?

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2. What do you like least about Alternative 1?

3. What other comments do you have about Alternative 1?

Alternative 2: Aspirational ideas include adding townhouses along the drain, improving the aesthetics of the drain, changing the street layout, adding a splash pad & calisthenics park, improving access to the river, and rehabbing the brick structure on Cass St. to become an incubator kitchen or pop-up retail space.
4. What do you like most about Alternative 2?
5. What do you like least about Alternative 2?


6. What other comments do you have about Alternative 2?


Alternative 3: Aspirational ideas include slightly changing the street layout, adding a splash pad & calisthenics park, improving access to the river, improving the aesthetics to the drain, adding a covered structure for picnic benches and restrooms, and rehabbing the brick structure on Cass St. to become an incubator kitchen or pop-up retail space.
7. What do you like most about Alternative 3?
8. What do you like least about Alternative 3?

9. What other comments do you have about Alternative 3?

10. What other comments do you have about all three designs or ideas on how to better program the space?
30 responses

Summary

Alternative 1: Aspiration ideas including new townhouses, changing the street layout, completely covering the drain, improving access to the river, a splash pad, and rehabbing the brick structure on Cass St. to become an incubator kitchen or pop-up retail space.

What do you like most about Alternative 1?

Splash pad
I like the concept.
I like the riverwalk/fishing access, and the deck/outdoor dining area.
Love the outside kitchen idea and the covered area
Splash Pad
THE SPLASH PAD
I think the incubator kitchen is a great idea, particularly with the deck towards the river.
The food truck area would be a wonderful option! I like the idea of the row houses.
Essplash pad will bring lots of people back here also the use of brick building.
Developing the brick buildings.
the splash pad is a community gathering place, great idea.
Rehabbing brick structure
parking and covered buildings and shade, splash pad (who maintains it) designated fishing area
Parking convenient to all areas; nice open river access
Utilizing the riverfront area
I like the use of the Moore Drain next to M-15 and covering the rest with parking would
be great if feasible.
You left existing trees.
Good ideas
additional housing in Vassar, new build, covering the drain!!! cleaning the river bank areas
Nice parking in back and it leaves the events concentrated in an area.
improving access to the river, a splash pad, and rehabbing the brick structure on Cass St.
Looks like the best design, build the city back up to its standards. We need this.

What do you like least about Alternative 1?

Townhouses
I dont like how the road goes thru the back. I have had a business downtown for about 4 years now and I feel that road is not good for that area. It needs to be looked at as a destination and not a right away of travel.
Eliminating so much of the parking area.
Row House
Nothing
THE TOWNHOUSES
lack of public restrooms for all of the added traffic to the area.
Building in middle to be built. Love tiny houses in the covered drain area For seniors everything in walking distance. Flood area would state allow it?
Row of houses-loss of parking
I would not appreciate new construction for private housing, in what I prefer to be a community gathering place.
Need a swimming pool too
Row houses
canoe docking? sand volley ball court
I don't care for the big rowhouses location - makes it feel like less of a "community space."
Re-routing the street seems unnecessary to me.
Townhouses reduced area of park and not enough parking for Current uses of pavilion.
Too vague. Does vassarc need an incubator kitchen?
The red building is in rough shape...new build better idea
Don't understand use of splashpad nor its size. Seems large?
I don’t think townhouses are a needed as we already have empty houses in town.
Like it all
new townhouses, changing the street layout, completely covering the drain,
Nothing.

**What other comments do you have about Alternative 1?**
I see the drain over paved over. This could be an issue for flood season.
Need parking closer to park
Where’s the much needed restrooms?
I Think it’s a Very Attractive Design
I DO NOT THINK THE TOWNHOUSES WILL BE AFFORDABLE. I ALSO DO NOT KNOW HOW YOU CHANGE THE STREET LAYOUT.
I would hate to see the row houses become low income housing. I think Vassar needs to draw in more middle class young couples who would use the row houses as a great first home stepping stone. If we could give and maintain an upscale image, it would be helpful for attracting more successful people to make Vassar their home.
Would like to see bridge across Cass River back there by old bathrooms
I really rather the area be used for community activities, and I hope we can have a year round farmers’ market as well. I also regret that at this time, we are using the pavilion/basketball /hockey area for farmers’ mrkt. during Saturday mornings, when most residents are likely to use the pavilion.
Do not cover the drain
docking stations for phone charging, chalk wall for kids, Camera’s

I think this is my 3rd favorite design though it does have some nice features.
I think this is a great aspirational plan with a lot of great ideas.
Not drawn to scale.
None
can we build in a current flood zone?
Who will pay for this and pay to maintain it?
you have business that use that area.
Is there anything for the long winter months in this area? Splash pad will be amazing, but only for a few months a year.

**Alternative 2: Aspirational ideas include adding**
townhouses along the drain, improving the aesthetics of the drain, changing the street layout, adding a splash pad & calisthenics park, improving access to the river, and rehabbing the brick structure on Cass St. to become an incubator kitchen or pop-up retail space.

What do you like most about Alternative 2?

Splash pad
Using each side of the moore drain.
The deck on the river.
The kitchen area and the calisthenics park
Splash Pad and River Walk
Incubator Kitchen & Deck and Bathrooms
I LIKE ALL THE IDEAS
The art and sculpture garden would be visible from M15, which would be something unique to cause those just traveling through to stop and potentially utilize the businesses. Love the idea of the T North Auction house!
Use of brick building have a citywide clean out day get community invested by helping get these projects done! Kids and all .school also. Splash pad .fountains That dance rocking chair chained down to relax and watch fountain. new bathrooms somewhere.
Love idea of tiny houses or townhouses love to see some nice low income senior housing in this area! Great area to develop so many Parking spaces handicapped some people can't walk far.
Development of red brick building
more areas open to the public, love the splash pad,
Splash pad bridges
nicely laid out,
I like how the road goes around the splash pad.
Utilizing the riverfront area
Again, I like the changes to the drain area and I think these would be a big improvement. The splash pad is great.
Splash pad and deck around kitchen.
addition of new build, housing
Moves people into more of the downtown area, possible benefit for businesses.
adding a splash pad rehabbing the brick structure on Cass St., improving the aesthetics
of the drain, improving access to the river

**What do you like least about Alternative 2?**

**Townhouses**

If you put structures up against the drain it will be hard to machine mow. An alternate covering will have to be addressed in the moore drain.

The parking eliminated.

I do not like the idea of housing in that area. Who's going to buy them...the elderly and they are going to complaon about the children making noise. Plus parking is needed in that area.

Seems Very Bland Compared to Alternative 1

**WHERE WILL PARKING BE.**

The food trucks wouldn't be visible from m15, and i wonder if that would diminish the customer traffic

Need more walkways to the Main Street Huron area.umbrella area by food trucks wine truck. Barn dance area auction area to get people down in this area. Let's get community working on this right away and not drop the ball. Short time goals long term projects.like to have Bridge on Cass Rivers to fin and go to canoe launch on other side.

The buildings in parking lot. Loss of parking concern over where we will play hockey and basketball, and have our concerts

**Row houses food trucks.**

Not enough parking for "future planned events" remember average age of people needing to park, and mostly 1-2 people per car, emergency routes, jungle gym area (in the open)

It seems too crowded and like not enough parking, especially considering theater & old Betty Lou's coming back. And possible kitchen on Cass River.

**Townhouses**

I do not think we should eliminate cass avenue, this is an important traffic pattern for the downtown.

Aging population needs parking. Hi density housing not needed, we have plenty of property to build on in the city.

**Same**

not covering the drain, using the old red building

Seems to be a chaotic mix of vendors / cars all in an area with what will probably be limited parking. Don't like the idea of vendors, cars, and people, all fighting for the same space.
Townhouses.
Houses
incubator kitchen or pop-up retail space. calisthenics park

What other comments do you have about Alternative 2?

Not enough parking for the downtown and the new space!
Need more play area for kids
Where are the residents of the townhouse going to park? If parking is under the townhouses, that still raises the question of where guests and additional cars of residents will park. Especially since adding the food areas and splash pad will bring more people there.
Focus on the children and their needs! Not housing and somebody making money.
IF THIS NEAR THE TOWSEND NORTH PAVILION WHERE DO YOU PLAN TO PARK AND WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE PAVILION?
Will the deck outside the incubator kitchen have outdoor dining? Not listed on this one, but perhaps that is still part of the plan.
Keep this going and in public eye not just talk but get going on some of these ideas. Get a volunteer force behind this can you give 4 HR or 6 HR on a sat to clean out the brick building and get a dumpster down there and go to town empty out and than do a review of what needs to be done to bring it up to code. Get volunteer community members to do electric plumbing or whatever it needs. Let's make a plan and move now not just let it drop now that we have the ball in the air let's keep it going. like this best using all the ideas.
Like the calisthenics park
you could almost replace the plan for townhouses with stalls for farmers' market/ pop up retail. it would almost be a sort of thoroughfare with an attached art park- :-) , the several garden like bridges, crossing the drain, connecting the market. And what do you mean by 'T. North Auction House'? would this auction off livestock?
What's with the row houses.
I'm not feeling strongly about the townhouses but this layout is the best out of the two.
Will there be more parking around TN Pavillion?
camper hook ups, chalk wall or activity wall. Camera's , turn splash area into outdoor music stage in the round
I like how the road is taken out from in front of the Pavillion and goes up and around the splash pad.
If there are going to be houses, I like this layout for them better than the other.
Again, great ideas.
Reducing the size of usable space downtown is counterproductive.
Flood zone?
same as before, can we build in current flood zone?
Again how will you pay for this and how will you maintain it?

**Alternative 3: Aspirational ideas include slightly changing the street layout, adding a splash pad & calisthenics park, improving access to the river, improving the aesthetics to the drain, adding a covered structure for picnic benches and restrooms, and rehabbing the brick structure on Cass St. to become an incubator kitchen or pop-up retail space.**

**What do you like most about Alternative 3?**

Central
I like the deck on the river, and there seems to be enough parking available.
This is my favorite! Offers something for everyone
Just about everything!
Open Structure, New Restrooms, Incubator Kitchen & Deck
I LIKE ALL THE IDEAS
I like the added restrooms. The town square could be a great spot for a picnic, and community gathering.
Lots of great ideas need to get started on grants and raising money to get going.
art and sculpture garden
got rid of the private housing in the middle of everything. and I love the splash pad.
Bathrooms, splash pad
Everything!
The gated area seems like it would make it safer for kids playing and not having traffic going through.
No Townhouses
I love the pop up Retail Space idea as well as splash pad and such. We definitely need the restrooms so people have places to stop as they will be more actively walking town with the extra stuff to do.
I like the added market house/open air building. I also think this design is very doable. Improves the amount of green space while retaining parking. Love the splash Pad / fountain area and deck around brick building. This is my favorite.

It all seems the same
This would be my choice as there appears to be some thing for everyone.

Splash pad and river access
adding a splash pad, improving access to the river, improving the aesthetics to the drain, adding a covered structure for picnic benches and restrooms, and rehabbing the brick structure on Cass St.

What do you like least about Alternative 3?

Needs more play area for kids
Lack of riverwalk for fishing access.
Not sure about the kitchen beside the Veterans Monument!
The Design Seem Too Busy. Sometimes Less is More. See Alternative 1
STILL CONCERNED ABOUT CHANGING THE STREET LAYOUT
wildflowers would be pretty only a small portion of the year, then I feel like it would be underutilized space.
No bride across the River.i like all these ideas but getting them done will be a BIG Job
people like stuff to be better but don't want to work to improve things they would rather complain than dig in and get it done. I say let's Get it a Done NOW is the time when new businesses coming to downtown .
Loss of parking
you still need a playground and athletic area for cooler weather. wondering where we will hold our concerts.
Nothing!
parking, adult sitting area to watch kids in splash area, (maybe shaded)
I think the pavilion will get more use with these items around it so I'd rather not see it become an auction house.
Lack of utilizing the riverfront
I am not sure that changing the road to gravel is ideal, but perhaps we could have a brick road area in the grey section that would be similar to what downtown Flint has (except new).
I worry that the road in front of pavilion would become a racetrack or raise dust if gravel.
Why a pop up kitchen?
not covering the drain
While more parking is always good, it seems like a waste of space for activities and buildings.

How will you maintain all this and who pays for it?
calisthenics park, incubator kitchen or pop-up retail space

**What other comments do you have about Alternative 3?**

Move fishing access and three is the better idea

I think I like this one the best of the three, especially if you can incorporate the riverwalk from Alternative 1 into it. I also wonder if the deck showing is also a dining area, as in Alternative 1. If it is, great!

Improve existing bathrooms for quick access of children playing on the playground.

I'm not sure how much the carillon would be used. But it is an interesting idea.

Love that old brick building let Boy Scouts paint the doors before Riverfest put out some tables with umbrellas maybe golf course would let you borrow some of there's. Put out pots of flowers and A barn quilt Pam has. And show people we can do this .community action is a great motivator to keep stuff up if all community involved.community service hrs for school kids and bad kidsto

Like red brick building and overall improvements of the area

what is involved in an 'art and sculpture garden/bridge'? and what would a 'town square' involve?

This is the best one. I don't think food trucks and town or row houses are necessary.

Love this one!

camping area, kids activity wall, gym, can splash area be turned into outdoor stage for music in the round,

I like the inclusion of art and can't wait for that splash pad. This is my favorite one.

This is my favorite design because I can see it happening. We need to add a walking bridge across the river to the new canoe/kayak launch that is going in this fall.

Would prefer kitchen area to be performance space.

None

**What other comments do you have about all three designs or ideas on how to better program the space?**

More play area for kids.

These are interesting ideas.

I would hope the new area wouldn't be destroyed like our current area!
Definitely need more bathrooms, like improving the existing for children playing on the playground as well as the new ones proposed in #3. Also, I would assume the road would be closed except for parking lot access and vendors.

Design 1 is a Home Run All Day Long

MOSTLY PARKING, ESPECIALLY IF YOU ADD TOWNHOUSES.

If you don't Bloom where you are planted who will do it? Let's start one step at a time. Moving forward we can do this! Sandy Keyes

I prefer plans 2 and 3. Very proud of all of this, can't wait, call me if I can help in any way. and thank you to everyone involved, this can only make our community even more healthy and more beautiful.

As a Lutheran pastor who is a resident of Lapeer, it is difficult for me to fully comprehend what you are trying to do with these plans. And I am not sure what an "Incubator kitchen" is nor its function, not sure what is the function of an auction house in these plans, and what is the purpose of the food trucks. Townhouses seem like a good idea, how would they add to the idea of an area that is for the enjoyment of the community? Would there still be a pavilion style building for things like the Farmers Market, Riverfest, etc? Other than on Alternative 1, I see no space for parking? How would people access this?

Number 3 is the best design.

Will there be more parking around TN Pavillion?

Maintenance and yearly budget. organized parking, future purchase of buildings

Wonder if 3 could be tweaked to the same type of road set-up as 2

I think the addition of a walking bridge across the river would really help unify the downtown area to the other side of the river and make canoe and kayak accessibility much better. It would make our riverfront more welcoming to visitors as well.

As the area is used, parking is a necessary evil. We have much better locations for housing. I know you want to get as much into the space as possible but we still have 90 more acres of property to utilize. It is a great start to get the community thinking.

Good ideas.

I like the idea of parking a bit of out of eye-shot and from the activities of events to lessen accidents and congestion. If possible, more "lively" spaces towards main street to allow interaction with businesses and to be seen from commuters traveling through, allowing for maximum exposure. -- Incubator kitchen & flowers space in diagram #3.

The play area/calisthetics with a see-through fence instead?

I think having a vision is great but stop and look at reality. How will you maintain any of this? A splash pad? You havint even fixed the blue push button sprinkler at the pavilion on Spring street. Its been broke for yrs now. My child always runs up to it hoping it will
work again and yet another summer where it is not fixed which leaves my kid heartbroken everytime we go. Can we even use the bathrooms yet? Or are they still vandalized? More police around this area is needed. Yesterday a jeep was doing donuts by the drain behind the pavilion. The jeep almost lost control. Kids play here it is dangerous. I even went as far as contacting the state police in Caro to help the Vassar police patrol this area. They took my request very seriously and passed word to all the troopers. I think its time to hire another officer one is obviously not enough.

Number of daily responses
How could we better use the brick building?

Entrepreneurial activity
- Wedding and special events venue – 6
- Markets - 5
  - Arts & craft
  - Flea
  - Vintage
  - Food/Farmers market
- Artists co-op - 5
- Tube and canoe rentals - 2
- Incubator kitchen with rotating pop-up food nights - 2
- Brewery – 3
- Quick lunch spot
- Medical marijuana grower/supply
- Walmart
- Haunted house

Programing
- Beer/wine festival - 2
- Art
- Vassar Museum
- Bingo and veteran hall

Other
- Splash pad
- Trampoline park
- Zip-line
- Roller rink
- Batting cages

Feedback on design renderings and inspirational pictures

Design likes
- Splash pad - 6
- Walking bridge over river – 2
- Farmers market sheds – 1
  - Moving the market to make it more visible from the street
- Incubator kitchen- 4
- Calisthenics park - 1
- Love the fish art
- Slowing traffic near T. North - 2
- Outdoor seating, outdoor café near river and drain – 2
- Outdoor café

Design dislikes
- Pea gravel, loose stones by T. North - 2

New activity ideas
- Our own little river walk, nice landscaping - 5
- Skate park – 25
Riverfest Engagement Complete Comments

- Better river access for fishing, even on the pedestrian bridge – 4
- Ice skating on the river
- Dog park
- Dredge the river
- Disk golf
- Taco bell – 3
- Music
- Wedding and event venue – 2
- Art – 2
- Art co-op – 2
- Strung lights
- Vintage market, craft market- 2
- Horseshoe pits
- Lights on the Moore drain
- Warming station for ice skating
- Puppy track

Inspiration from other places
- Frankenmuth’s market pavilions
- Tiffany’s in Frankenmuth
- Kansas City’s marketplace

Concerns/questions
- Not enough parking - 7
- Could put more parking behind T. North
- Could the splash pad be combined with the tower?
- Flooding for tiny houses - 2
- We don’t need to copy Frankenmuth

Other comments
- Need more trees downtown with pretty lights
- Cork Pine should put out colorful outdoor seating
- Lower taxes and fees, keep businesses viable

Image votes
- Splash pad – 157
- Colorful umbrella tables & outdoor seating by river & drain - 119
- Foot bridge across river – 72
- Outdoor workout area - 43
- Enclosed pavilion - 28
- Kitchen incubator – 10
- Open pavilion – 9
- Road barriers near T. North – 8
- Sculpture garden – 5
- Footbridge on drain – 4
- Mews - 4
- Gravel near T. North – 2
- Tower – 2
Riverfest Engagement Complete Comments

- Welcome center – 2
- Tiny houses – 1
**Summary of Vassar Vision Riverfest Engagement**
August 5, 6 & 7

**Favorite images**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Splash pad (157)</th>
<th>Colorful outdoor seating near river &amp; drain (119)</th>
<th>Foot bridge across river (72)</th>
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<th>Incubator kitchen (10)</th>
<th>Open pavilion (9)</th>
<th>Road barriers near T. North (8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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Other priorities: sculpture garden (5), drain foot bridge (4), mews (4), gravel near T. North (2), visibility tower (2), welcome center (2), tiny houses (1)

**New programming ideas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skate park (25)</th>
<th>Better access to river with riverwalk, fishing, and nice landscaping (9)</th>
<th>Art and artist market (4)</th>
<th>Wedding and special event venue (2)</th>
<th>Vintage, craft, farmers market (2)</th>
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Other ideas: dog park, ice skating on the river, lights along the drain, music, horseshoe pits, warming station

**Brick building ideas**

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<tr>
<th>Wedding and special events venue (6)</th>
<th>Art, flea, vintage, food market (6)</th>
<th>Artist co-op (5)</th>
<th>Brewery, beer/wine festival (5)</th>
<th>Tube and canoe rental (2)</th>
<th>Kitch incubator, pop-up food events (2)</th>
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Other ideas: quick lunch spot, medical marijuana supply, haunted house, Vassar museum, roller rink, batting cages, zip-line

**Top design concerns**

- Not enough parking spaces (8)
- Challenge building in flood plain (2)
### Drain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Ten</th>
<th>Wild Flowers 18</th>
<th>Tables / Patio 17</th>
<th>Art &amp; Sculpture Garden / Art Walk 10</th>
<th>Bridge 10</th>
<th>Cover Drain 10</th>
<th>Landscaping / Boulders 9</th>
<th>Bathrooms Open &amp; Clean 9</th>
<th>Buffer Parking w/ Trees &amp; Change Name 6</th>
<th>Covered Structure 6</th>
<th>Butterfly Garden 5</th>
<th>Food Vendors / Cooking Demonstrations 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


### Parking Lot

|---------|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|


### Pavilion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Splash Pad 40</th>
<th>Movie Night / Film Festival 40</th>
<th>Live Music / Martini’s 23</th>
<th>Swimming Pool 20</th>
<th>World Expo of Beer 15</th>
<th>Antique Fair / Auction 14</th>
<th>Keep Restrooms Open 12</th>
<th>Roller Derby / Skating 11</th>
<th>Flea Market / Local Art Fair 8</th>
<th>Go-Cart Track 7</th>
<th>Move Road Back to Allow Lawn &amp; Landscaping 7</th>
<th>Art Prize 9</th>
</tr>
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August 5, 6, 7 Riverfest: Which components do you like the best?
### Favorite images

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### Brick building ideas

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Other ideas: quick lunch spot, medical marijuana supply, haunted house, Vassar museum, roller rink, batting cages, zip-line

### Top design concerns

- Not enough parking spaces (8)
- Challenge building in flood plain (2)
September Updated Designs

Alternative 1: Open Street
Alternative 2: Closed Street
Discussion Questions

Assign a recorder and discuss the following questions:

1. Design
   a. Which design alternative do you like the best? Why?
   b. Which components of the designs do you like the best? Why?
   c. What concerns do you have with the proposed design alternatives?

2. Programming
   a. What are your favorite programming, activity, and use ideas?
   b. Who/what community groups could lead these activities?
ALTERNATIVE 1: KEEP STREETS OPEN

PROPOSED PARKING
70
38
36
183 SPACES (BOTH ON AND OFF-STREET, NOT INCLUDING E. HURON AVE. & MAIN ST.)

CURRENT PARKING +/- 250 SPACES
Vassar Vision: Final design engagement

Please fill out the following survey to share your feedback on the final design renderings for the area surrounding T. North Pavilion. Feel free to share this survey with anyone interested in participating. We will close the poll on Monday, September 19 and share results with the city manager and council.
1. Open Street: Do you like this design alternative the best?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes
2. Which components do you like the best about the Open Street design?

3. What concerns do you have with the Open Street design?
4. Closed Street: Do you like this design alternative the best?

Option 1
5. Which components do you like the best about the Closed Street design?

6. What concerns do you have with the Closed Street design?

---

Programming, activities & use

7. What are your favorite programming, activities, and use ideas for this area?

---

8. Who/what community groups could lead these activities?
37 responses

Summary

Open Street: Do you like this design alternative the best?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>62.9%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which components do you like the best about the Open Street design?

- 4 season farmers market
- The same components that are available in the Closed Street design.
- There is still plenty of parking and it will draw more activity to the area
- View of park to entice people to engage with the park.
- The parking
- I like the splash pad location with the new gazebo / farmers market location.
- Feels more inviting
- More parking helps business customers to have place to park. Less parking.
- Flexible seating by the river, new restrooms, kitchen
- Accessibility more likely to use it.
- Spacious and looks nice to visitors
- It still offers adequate parking.
- Looks like parking accessible in many areas. Design looks great.
- I like the added parking next to the pavilion
- Love all the things for the kids to do
- Gives alternative traffic flow in case of obstructed traffic flow on Huron going through downtown.
- Shape of Farmers Market structure
More parking and access
flow of traffic
Splash place; skate park; foot bridge; kayak launch; outside dining
more parking
Spruced up look, lots of activities without losing parking. Calisthenics park
Foot bridge across river Paved area by TN pavilion
river walk; integration of brick building, with cross walk from central parking and steps to
riverwalk connection of foot bridge to central "plaza" space

**What concerns do you have with the Open Street design?**

Currently the road can be dangerous as people do not follow the speed limit.
It seems too congested with parking.
None
Would like the larger splash pad. We don’t need the housing. Need more parking.
Seems over crowded
With all the on street parking, we will have to carefully design the space to keep pedestrians safe.
Traffic needs to slow down but up something to slow traffic
Flood zone..no permanent fixtures
traffic speeding in the area where the road turns, near children playing.
Vehicle speed on the street.
not enough room for the Farmer’s Market, Cottages are not necessary in this community
Not sure about the traffic flow.
My concern is that children would dart back and forth across the street with it open.
traffic and drivers not paying attention to pedestrians and pedestrians not paying attention to drivers! Both need to be attentive
Safety of children and not enough green space! The calisthenics and skate park both need to be relocated. The calisthenics to beyond the existing playground and the skate park to where the proposed houses are located. A Spring Street exit from parking lot behind stores is necessary because of difficulty exiting Cass Ave. onto Huron!
Looks like lots of children's play area near streets.
not enough parking
Parking for existing businesses, such as Paul the Barber and Furbabies. Customers for these businesses park in the street and some elderly customers can not walk the distance of the proposed parking.
river walk; parking; what are the cabins and tents for, camping?

With both alternatives, there is just too much being crowded into too small an area. This leaves parking for the T. North pavilion as the primary victim. Some of the ideas may be fine, but at different locations in the city.

Maintenance

Little houses are dumb Not enough parking for businesses Parking drawn isn't realistic we need more parking; splash pad should be located on playground side so that children do not have to cross the street, water hook-up already in place from rest rooms and tot-lot mister; informal play area is located anywhere past the current tot lot; small houses are in flood area; space should remain for parking

Closed Street: Do you like this design alternative the best?

Option 1  13  100%

Which components do you like the best about the Closed Street design?

Removing the road gives more open area around the splash pad.
Safety for our youth and elders in transition to events
More green space around the splash pad. Seems like more of a community space
I don't like the closed street
Larger park and splash pad area. Farmer's market could become pop up stores Skate park a great idea.
More relaxing and not as over crowded
I like the overall aesthetic of this design best. I also like the fact that the farmers market pavilion is closer to the street.
Parking for events at the pavilion. for band concerts and bussiness, had all the parking lot full of 500 people who came for fly all from many states to spend money in new bussiness. i say get more events like this thT bring people down there to market this
area for other big events. Use the brick building, apply for Grants for splash pad and skate park but put in different area.

safer environment with no traffic. Larger gathering space around splash pad

Safer for pedestrians with closed streets. More park-like. I like the area designated for farmers market.

Like this one the best. Room for Farmer’s Market, splash pad has a nice area

I like the splash pad in the center of the whole area. I like the safety feature of the closed street.

I love that cars will not be right with all the activities

I liked the closed street and would have voted yes for it except that option was not available in this survey.

Looks like lots of open green space to wander around and play!! Safe for families to walk around with kiddos ans nor have street and parking lot everywhere. Love the farmers market area next to all that park and splash pad. This is seriously amazing. In Vassar, really?!!! Yessssss

a lot more green/open space

I prefer Alternative 1

The closed street. Safer for children and pedestrians.

safer play area for children with no traffic

What concerns do you have with the Closed Street design?

The loss of the 4 season farmers markets to being a open structure. Maybe half 4 season, half open could be a option.

Still need additional parking

I don’t. I think this could work well. Both designs are great but I like this one a bit better.

Not enough parking it’s overkill

Less reason for public to drive back there. Park becomes less visible. Access is limited and more difficult.

Lack of additional parking

It would cut off traffic downtown too much making it more difficult to navigate and possibly keeping people out of the downtown area.

more restrictive

To far to walk for old people to get down there. Handicapped parking.

Flood zone.. no permanent fixtures

Practicality of tiny houses in flood zone

Possibly not enough parking near the pavilion.
Cottages not necessary, appeal it to visitors
A definite decrease in parking. If people are frustrated in trying to find parking spaces, they won't choose to come downtown or stay downtown.
Looks like you might need to park a distance away.
Is there enough parking for large events? Such as Friday night Band Concerts?
I don't care for the location of the calisthenics park. It should be located in a less conspicuous location such as past the existing playground.
Will it be harder to get in and out of this area? We would need to think about traffic coming and going since there's no through area and just that one parking lot with one entrance with food trucks lined up at entry.
not enough parking
Again the parking or lack of is an issue.
No open exits
Losing parking with too much open grass area.
Who will live in the cottages or how will they be rented? Weekly? Monthly? Yearly?
little house on the left need to be parking for the apartments

Programming, activities & use

What are your favorite programming, activities, and use ideas for this area?

Splash park and community gathering area
Splash pad! Can't wait to bring my nieces. Also, it will be nice to have a place to hang out near the river.
Splash pad visually appealing and utilizes the space that is currently not being used
Splash pad, pop up shops. Skate park.
Family friendly park spaces and farmers market designated space
Splash pad, new farmers market pavilion.
Splash pad. Skate park not in place they have them but put them some other place down there. Brick building a wedding venue.i think zvassar has enough New Resturants need other shops .market pavillion for more events like fly ball th bring in people to spend money here in zvassar..
gathering space, outdoor dining,
Festivals, concerts. Farmers market.
Concerts, shaded picnic area.
use the pavilion for more community skating events, community gatherings, community picnics, more festivals
Not sure how to answer so I will defer to those who are actively involved with children's and adult groups because I am sure they have a lot of ideas to consider.

like the idea of outdoor movies, and activities for the kids

Holiday programming
The splash pad would be great fun for kids. Also, activities like art in the park would be great, along with areas to buy refreshment and just hang out to visit with everyone.
Having live music there seems great, as well as open air market and food trucks. Maybe have family day so parents can meet other parents with kids similar ages.
I like to photograph clients in our area so flowers and a curb appeal would be great. I have no idea what those cottages are but I have a feeling those are not needed as much as more parking and such.

close the moore drain

a place to have outdoor movies; festivals

Farmers market, kids activities.

Art fairs, concerts, open flea market, expanded farmers market,

Maintain the status quo with perhaps two adjustments. First, make the back sides of he Huron Avenue business appear attractive and inviting. While leaving a vehicular access path (drive, alley, or whatever it might be called) behind (meaning to the south of) them in place, along with the current parking for 32 or so vehicles, separate off that area from area further south with a "green wall" of bushes, shrubbery, and/or streetscape trees.
Leave everything south of that as a parking lot for T. North activity users.

Farmers Market - needs to grow with more vendors and crafters from the area.
space is being used creatively already; usage will increase with accessibility, parking and overall beautification; check on historic use of brick building

Love the walking bridge across the river, splash pad is great

Who/what community groups could lead these activities?

All

Local businesses, school, churches

Local business and all local clubs and groups

Parks and recreation, and DDA

DDA or Chamber of Commerce

DDA could lead the splash pad project.
Many volunteers needed to promote this project.
unsure, but I would be happy to be involved in whatever capacity I am needed.
All community groups could utilize this area.
Chamber, Riverfest, High School/NHS
Scouts, Parks and Rec committee
everyone
Just about any group or organization, if given the idea and chance!
city
anyone with a projector; everyone
Not sure
Chamber, Rotary, local business people, possibly a downtown promotion group could be
formed that would plan and coordinate events.
Crafters
chamber, roatery, lions, boy scouts...start a local Jaycee group

**Number of daily responses**
Michigan Municipal League

Sundquist Pavilion in Riley Park
PROJECT SCOPE:

Challenge:
During a community visioning process, residents tried to answer the question: Where is the heart of your downtown? Answer: There wasn’t one.

Overview:
A collaborative effort of residents, business owners, philanthropists, and city leaders created an active city center by transforming a surface parking lot in the middle of a strip mall into a ¾ acre park. The park has a large pavilion, attractive landscaping, and a large space to host community events year-round. The team was able to do all this without losing one parking spot.

Accomplishments:
- The Sundquist Pavilion in Riley Park hosts about 60 events throughout the year, offering a space for neighbors to gather, connect, and spend time downtown. For example, the Saturday Farmers Market hosts about 2,000 visitors each week and hundreds attend the Holly Days winter market. Resident-led programming, like weekly swing dancing performances, draws a smaller audience but keep the space activated.
- With more people in downtown Farmington on a regular basis, many local retail stores and restaurants have seen more foot traffic and higher sales. Improving the streetscape and walkability also encouraged...
business owners to enhance aesthetics in their property. For example:

- Dress Barn used the opportunity to remodel their store, enhance their product line, and feature the Farmington store in a national photo shoot.
- Many downtown restaurants, like Los Tres Amigos, added outdoor seating and improved landscaping.

Farmington planners were able to keep the same number of shopping center parking spaces, despite adding the park and pavilion to the middle of the surface lot.

Development of the Sundquist Pavilion in Riley Park built momentum for the downtown Master Plan, which also included redeveloping other aspects of the area:

- The Grand River Streetscape Project was completed in 2009 and improved pedestrian safety, aesthetics, business environment, and reduced road congestion. Planners used tactics of bump-out parking to narrow the road and creative landscaping to make the sidewalk more comfortable.
- The Grove Street Project was completed in 2013 and upgraded the shopping center and streetscape, adding parking, and improving aesthetics and pedestrian safety.

**Budget:**
Total cost: Approximately $2.2 million
Ongoing costs: $25,000–$30,000 annually, not including major items

**Funding:**
Project start-up funding came from a private foundation, donations, bonds, and city contributions from the capital improvement fund. Maintenance is mainly funded by the DDA through its Principal Shopping District Special Assessment.
Participation:
City leaders engaged a wide group of supporters and planners to help with the project, including:
• Residents
• Local business owners
• The Farmington Downtown Development Authority and planning committees
• Private architecture and design firms
• Local philanthropists
• Nonprofit organizations
• Other governmental agencies (library, schools, etc.)

How-to:

1) ENGAGE RESIDENTS FOR VISIONING
Create a foundation for the project by bringing residents and business owners together to talk about their community and identify what they want for their downtown. In Farmington, the engagement process smoothed implementation because planners could refer back to what neighbors discussed at early planning stages.

2) FIND INSPIRATION
To help residents imagine the final product, city leaders used Plymouth’s Kellogg Park as an example of what Farmington could look like. Planners drew up illustrative designs of the project to keep residents excited and supportive.

3) FUNDRAISE
Before redevelopment could begin, Farmington officials needed to secure funding. Using donations from local foundations, business leaders and residents, the community invested in the park and pavilion.

4) CHANGE ZONING AND DESIGN STANDARDS
Farmington used its Master Plan process to make changes to the downtown zoning laws. The space was previously zoned for a suburban shopping center, which was exactly what they got. Changing laws to more traditional downtown zoning and design standards (for example, building on the front of a lot instead of the back) allowed planners and landscape architects to improve aesthetics, safety, and comfort.

5) BUILD
Once everything was in place, the city started construction.

6) CELEBRATE
To kick off the new downtown space, city leaders worked with residents and business owners to organize an opening night celebration. On an October evening in 2005, neighbors gathered for the Harvest Moon Dance, which has become an annual event.

7) PROGRAM YEAR-ROUND
Programming in the new space didn’t stop with the Harvest Moon Dance; the Downtown Development Authority coordinates events in the park year-round. With a weekly farmers market, a summer concert series, art fairs, community events, and even an ice rink in the winter, the space is well used throughout the seasons.
8) **KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING**

As residents and visitors were spending more time downtown, it became clear that Farmington needed to continue their placemaking efforts and redesign wide streets that divide the downtown. In an effort to improve walkability, aesthetics, calm traffic, and improve the business environment, local leaders were able to redesign Grand River and Grove Street, major corridors of the downtown.

**Lessons Learned:**

- **Effective engagement makes for smooth implementation.**
  An in-depth community visioning process, seven years before the park’s grand opening, was the best way for residents to communicate to city leaders what they want in their downtown. The priorities and ideas that came out of this meeting helped ensure public support and smooth implementation for the park and pavilion, even over controversial topics like parking and street design.

- **Year-round programming keeps the space activated.**
  Once Sundquist Pavilion was built, residents need a reason to gather. Moving the city’s farmers market was an obvious decision, but only occupied the space once a week through the growing season. The DDA took an active role in hosting events and coordinating community groups’ events that invited residents and visitors to gather in Farmington’s redesigned downtown spaces. City leaders took the attitude of trying to “find a way to ‘yes’” when approached by residents and organizations interested in using the space. Be flexible and allow for resident innovation.

- **Get creative with parking spaces.**
  The pavilion and park were built on an existing strip mall parking lot. Instead of throwing out the idea because of the fear of losing parking, planners had time to be creative with the space and rearrange parking spots. After the development was complete, the lot around the pavilion had the same number of spaces as before.
Know your funders.
City leaders built strong relationships with local funders and residents interested in investing in the city. If residents and business owners are in full support, leaders will have an easier time finding funding.

Experts:
Annette Knowles, Executive Director of the Farmington Downtown Development Authority
aknowles@downtownfarmington.org

Vincent Pastue, Farmington City Manager
vpastue@ci.farmington.mi.us

Similar Projects:
• City of Plymouth’s Kellogg Park
• City of Detroit’s Campus Martius Park
• Village of Dexter’s Monument Park
The Center for 21st Century Communities

Building 21st century communities
Experts from around the world—in academic, business, and public sectors alike—agree that investing in communities is a critical element to long-term economic development in the 21st century. Michigan’s future depends on its ability to attract and retain knowledge-based workers. Central to attracting this priceless commodity is place. Research proves that successful 21st century communities effectively leverage the assets summarized in this brochure. Learn more and stay engaged at mml.org.

Who we are...
The Michigan Municipal League is the one clear voice for Michigan communities. We are a nonprofit, but we act with the fervor of entrepreneurs; our people are dynamic, energetic, and highly approachable, passionately and aggressively pushing change to achieve better communities and a better Michigan.

What we know...
Never before have so many diverse interests, from academic researchers to the business community to government leaders, shared a single conclusion: Michigan’s future depends on its ability to attract knowledge-based workers. And what is central to attracting this priceless commodity? Place, specifically vibrant 21st century communities.

What we offer...
Through its Center for 21st Century Communities (21c3), the League provides education, technical assistance, public outreach, and unprecedented access to experts and resources. The 21c3 is a “one-stop-shop” for communities interested in creating and sustaining livable, desirable, and unique places that attract the highly skilled, creative, and talented workforce of the next century.
Michigan Municipal League

Crowdfunded Art Park Builds Community

Ironwood, Michigan
A lot had been sitting vacant in downtown Ironwood for years and no one knew exactly what to do with it. In 2014, the city underwent a comprehensive planning process to guide future investment, development, and growth. Through a series of engagement activities including an open house, workshops, surveys, and small group discussions, residents repeatedly said they wanted a public place to display and enjoy local art. It didn’t take long for the city to connect the dots, and they got to work creating the Ironwood Art Park.

**OVERVIEW:**
The Art Park is a public-private partnership that gives residents and visitors a venue to gather, display art, hold performances, and offer classes. The city raised enough money through crowdfunding and a matching grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to open the park with new landscaping, electricity, benches, and a performance area.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**
The park opened in July 2015, and already the community is proud of its many accomplishments:
- The city raised $15,711 through an online crowdfunding campaign to fund the construction of the Art Park, which exceeded its goal of $10,000.
- 118 people contributed to the crowdfunding campaign. “This speaks volumes of the support the community has for this project,” said Community Development Director Michael Brown. “People are excited about place-making and this will really help give the community an edge.”
The community formed a leadership group composed of municipal officials, the Downtown Development Authority, and local artists to help guide the project. This is the first time the city has ever partnered with artists in this way.

**PARTICIPATION:**
The public-private partnership is a coordinated effort of:
- The city of Ironwood;
- The Downtown Art Place (DAP);
- The Downtown Ironwood Development Authority (DIDA); and
- The Historic Ironwood Theatre

Patronicity, a Michigan-focused crowdfunding site, took on an advisory role through the crowdfunding campaign offering personalized support—including creating a funding strategy and handling communication between MEDC—throughout the campaign. MEDC supported the project through a matching grant.

**BUDGET:**
Start-up and initial construction costs for the Art Park came in just under $25,000. This included concrete, landscaping, electricity, benches and more. The city will continue limited maintenance of the park but the DAP will seek grants to support the park long-term. This includes future improvements, art installations, and programming expenses.

**FUNDING:**
$15,711 came from individual donations through the online crowdfunding campaign and the city was awarded a $10,000 matching grant from MEDC’s Public Spaces Community Places program. Some materials were also donated, such as chairs and an arbor that were built by a local woodworker.

DAP will secure future funding for the park through additional art-focused grant-making opportunities.

**HOW-TO:**

1. **Listen to the community**
   In 2009, the city adopted a master plan which called for more public art. The community also prioritized art and public spaces in their July 2014 comprehensive plan. Residents were sending a pretty clear message and the city listened.

2. **Build a creative and collaborative team to lead the project**
   After the community brought the idea of an art park to Ironwood, the city formed a committee with representatives from DAP, DIDA, and the Historic Theatre. The committee created renditions of what the park “could be” to use in their crowdfunding drive.
3. Raise money
In November of 2014, the committee partnered with Patronicity to kick-off their campaign. Over the next 30 days, each partner worked hard to promote the park, solicit donations, and get support across the community.

Patronicity coordinated the application process to MEDC’s grant and the city got approval of their grant within just a few days of submitting the application. After the crowdfunding campaign was over—and the community had met, and exceeded their goal—Ironwood received grant funds from MEDC in early 2015.

4. Get to work
The city transferred park designs into formal schematics and construction started in June. The ribbon cutting event took place July 17, 2015 and the city hopes to build the mural within the next year. Art Park partners wanted to give residents even more ownership of space so they plan on having the public create a mural in the park themselves; children and adults will decorate tiles and each will be mounted on the wall to create a large community-driven art display.

5. See what happens next
DAP is taking over much of the programming and ongoing art exhibitions in the park. They plan to open the space for organizations to host events, offer classes, put on performances, and display art. As of right now, there aren’t any set guidelines for how the park can be used—and that’s on purpose! Partners hope the park will be an organic, public space so the city will watch what happens and only make changes or regulations when they really need to.
LESSONS LEARNED:

➤ Really listen to the community
“The park didn’t come out of thin air and it didn’t come from one person,” Brown said. “It started with public planning processes—people put an emphasis on public art and public spaces, so that’s what we prioritized. You’ll run into a lot of resistance for any project you do if you don’t have strong public support and input.”

➤ Crowdfund, crowdfund, crowdfund
“Since you know you have the support, go out with a constant, daily message to raise money,” Brown said. “Dedicate one person to manage social media and try to find someone who has experience in marketing. You’ll need to come up with a ton of new ways to say ‘please donate’ and ‘support’ that still catch people’s attention.”

➤ Don’t over-plan the future
“See how the public responds and learn from what takes place,” Brown said. “Evaluate before you move forward.”

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:
- Patronicity, www.patronicity.com
- MEDC Public Spaces Community Places Grant, www.patronicity.com/puremichigan
- Ironwood 2014 Comprehensive Plan, Chapters 5 & 6 discuss art, available at www.cityofironwood.org
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Who we are...
The Michigan Municipal League is dedicated to making Michigan’s communities better by thoughtfully innovating programs, energetically connecting ideas and people, actively serving members with resources and services, and passionately inspiring positive change for Michigan’s greatest centers of potential: its communities.

What we know...
Never before have so many diverse interests, from academic researchers to the business community to government leaders, shared a single conclusion: Michigan’s future depends on its ability to attract knowledge-based workers. And what is central to attracting this priceless commodity? Place, specifically vibrant 21st century communities.