

## AGENDA REPORT

TO: Mayor Pat Humphrey & Clare City Commission  
FROM: Ken Hibl, City Manager  
DATE: April 12, 2018  
RE: City Manager's Report

For the Agenda of April 16, 2018

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Planning Commission. The City Planning Commission met on April 11<sup>th</sup> to review and consider a site plan application for a 2,750sf addition to the Gateway Lanes Bowling Alley and the addition of a roof-top dining area and a patio; the site plan was approved with a stipulation related to vehicular parking. The Commission also recommended approval of the City's 2018/2019 Capital Improvement Plan and considered the proposed Ordinance 2018-004. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of both. The Commission will meet in special session at 7:30 pm on April 16<sup>th</sup> following the scheduled City Commission meeting to review a proposal of a façade change to the commercial building at 601 N. McEwan Street; the DDA unanimously recommended approval of the façade improvement project at its regularly scheduled meeting of April 6<sup>th</sup>.

Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) Certification Status. We've received our initial/preliminary MEDC evaluation/baseline report (*copy att'd*) of our current status for RRC certification. We have significant administrative and bureaucratic work we have to accomplish to attain formal certification and will slowly work on these items as we have time. The red, yellow, & green chart within the report is a good snapshot on where our young evaluator believes we are today...we have to change all the colors on the chart to green before we are awarded the pretty little certificate and declared a "certified" community by MEDC's standards. I'll discuss the process and the bureaucracy involved with the Commission in greater detail Monday evening.

Skate Park Project. For nearly four years the dedicated trio of Jan Winter, her grandson, Alan Winter, and his skate-boarding friend, Dylan Morrish, has relentlessly pursued funding to construct a new skateboard park at the City's new south recreation complex. Their fund-raising efforts have been significantly boosted by a recent personal donation of \$10K from Mr. John Kulhavi, a White Lake, MI resident and long-time acquaintance and friend of Jack & Jan Winter, asking that the new skateboard park be named in honor of Jack Winter. A second \$10K donation from a prominent Mt. Pleasant businessman has also been promised. These donations will bring the fund-raising efforts of Jan and the two young men to a total of just over \$35K – enough to fund the construction of the concrete pad for the park; allow the City to move the currently-owned skateboard equipment to its new permanent home at the City's south recreation complex this year; purchase other skateboard equipment; and assist in funding the adjoining planned playground at the new recreation complex. Mr. Kulhavi has recently purchased the PohlCat Golf Course in Mt. Pleasant. He has also benevolently offered that the golf course will sponsor a golf tournament this year with the majority of the proceeds raised at the tournament to benefit the skateboard park and the recreation complex; the golf tournament will be held on July 19<sup>th</sup> with a noon registration time and a 1pm shotgun start T-time. Hole sponsorship and major sponsorship is being sought. Thirty 4-person teams are invited to participate on a first-come/first to enter basis. Cost per team is \$500 (\$125 per entrant).

DDA & TIFA Boundary Expansion. The DDA has formally commenced the process to amend and expand its geographical and TIF boundaries to include incorporation of lots that had been previously excluded (the former Consumers Energy site, the current Clare Castle site, and the former CMF site – presently the PMDL) and expansion eastward to include Block 23, the southern half of Block 14, and Lots 1 & 2 of Block 11 (*see copy of att'd plat extract*). The anticipated time to complete the process is approximately three months due to required public hearings and approval steps in the process – to include approval/no objection by the various taxing jurisdictions.

Absence. I will be out of the state during the period April 25-29; Steve will be the Acting CM during my absence.

Attachments.

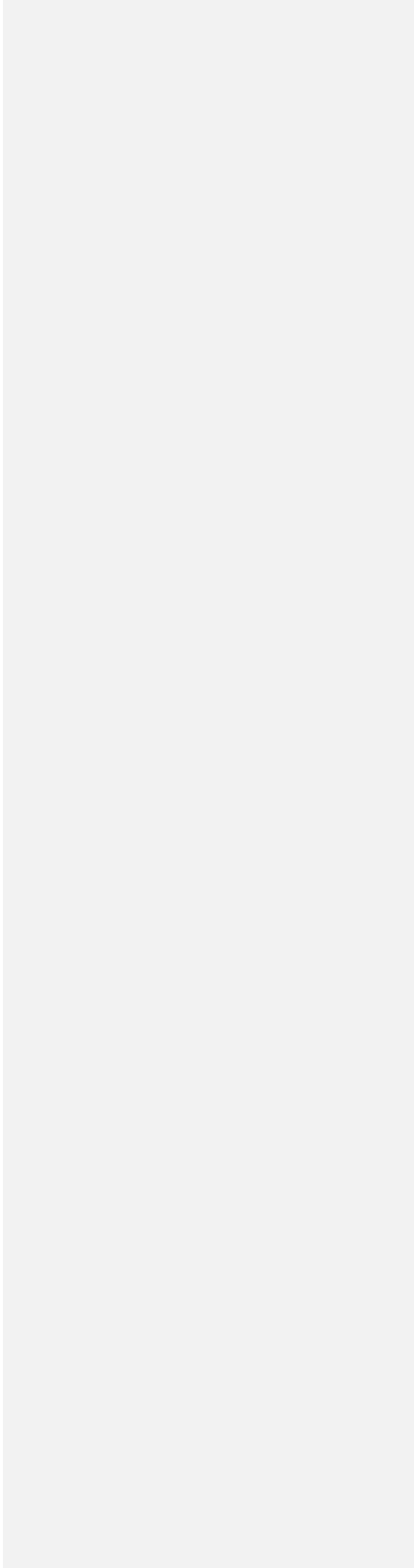
1. RRC Baseline Report.
2. Plat Extract.

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# **Redevelopment Ready Communities® Baseline Report**

## **City of Clare**

April 2018



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# Executive Summary

Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) is a certification program supporting community revitalization and the attraction and retention of businesses, entrepreneurs and talent throughout Michigan. RRC promotes communities to be development ready and competitive in today's economy by actively engaging stakeholders and proactively planning for the future – making them more attractive for projects that create places where people want to live, work and invest.

To become formally engaged in the RRC Program, communities must complete the RRC Self-Evaluation, send at least one representative to the best practice trainings, and pass a resolution of intent, outlining the value the community sees in participating in the program. Representatives from Clare's city staff submitted the city's self-evaluations in September 2017 and attended trainings in February 2017. Later in October, City Council passed a resolution of intent to participate in the program.




Developed by experts in the public and private sector, the RRC best practices are the standard to achieve certification, designed to create a predictable experience for investors, businesses and residents working within a community; communities must demonstrate that all best practice criteria have been met to receive RRC certification. Clare's strengths lie in its 2016 master plan which contains fundamentals of the RRC best practices; from a commitment to improve streetscapes, to increased multimodal transportation to the dedication to increase density and a encourage variety of housing options. An additional strength of Clare is its downtown design standards and flexible parking tools. Pre-application meetings are available, and the city's departments work together to coordinate efficient joint site plan review. Challenges in Clare include a downtown plan that needs to be compiled and updated, the creation and development of a development-focused public participation strategy, the need for an ordinance update to align zoning with the with the master plan and developing-drafting overarching marketing and economic development strategies. With this report, resources provided through the RRC program, strong leadership and an involved citizenry, Clare will be able to complete all of the unmet RRC best practices and achieve certification.

# Methodology

The basic assessment tool for evaluation is the RRC Best Practices. These six standards were developed in conjunction with public and private sector experts and address key elements of community and economic development. A community must demonstrate all of the RRC Best Practice components have been met to become RRC certified. Once received, certification is valid for three years.

Measurement of a community to the best practices is completed through the RRC team’s research, observation and interviews, as well as the consulting advice and technical expertise of the RRC Advisory Council. The team analyzes a community’s development materials, including, but not limited to: the master plan; redevelopment strategy; capital improvements plan; budget; public participation plan; zoning regulations; development procedures; applications; economic development strategy; marketing strategies; and website. Researchers observe the meetings of the community’s governing body, planning commission, zoning board of appeals and other committees as applicable. In confidential interviews, the team also records the input of local business owners and developers who have worked with the community.

A community's degree of attainment for each best practice criteria is visually represented in this report by the following:

	Green indicates the best practice component is currently being met by the community.
	Yellow indicates some of the best practice component may be in place, but additional action is required.
	Red indicates the best practice component is not present or significantly outdated.

This report represents the [City of Clare community](#)’s current status in meeting all the redevelopment ready processes and practices. This baseline establishes a foundation for the community’s progress as it moves forward in the program. All questions should be directed to the RRC Team at [RRC@michigan.org](mailto:RRC@michigan.org).

## EVALUATION SNAPSHOT

Clare has completed 35% of the Redevelopment Ready Communities<sup>®</sup> criteria and is in the process of completing another 40%.

1.1.1	1.1.2	1.1.3 N/A	1.1.4	1.2.1	1.2.2	1.2.3
2.1.1	2.1.2	2.1.3	2.1.4	2.1.5	2.1.6	2.1.7
2.1.8	3.1.1	3.1.2	3.1.3	3.1.4	3.1.5	3.1.6
3.1.7	3.1.8	3.2.1	3.2.2	4.1.1	4.1.2	4.2.1
4.2.2	4.2.3	4.2.4	5.1.1	5.1.2	5.1.3	5.1.4
5.1.5	5.1.6	6.1.1	6.1.2	6.2.1	6.2.2	

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### **Best Practice 1.1- The Plans**

Best Practice 1.1 evaluates community planning and how the redevelopment vision is embedded in the master plan, downtown plan and capital improvements plan. The master plan sets expectations for those involved in new development and redevelopment, giving the public some degree of certainty about their vision for the future, while assisting the city in achieving its stated goals. Local plans can provide key stakeholders with a roadmap for navigating the redevelopment process in the context of market realities and community goals.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Public Act 33 of 2008, requires that the planning commission create and approve a master plan as a guide for development and review the master plan at least once every five years after adoption. The City of Clare's comprehensive master plan was adopted in November of 2016 to incorporate multiple planning efforts that had taken place since the 2007 master plan. Public input is a vital component of the master plan process and outlines the goals for the future development of the city. Five stakeholder sessions, representing various interest groups were held in the city council chambers and the results were then presented to the Planning Commission. To reach a broader selection of residents a survey was created, available online, and distributed to the community through various methods. Many residents responded to the survey and the results were later presented at a Planning Commission meeting.

Through the master plan ~~process~~, the vision for the future includes maintaining a small-town atmosphere while offering a variety of business options, coordinating growth with the adjoining townships to maximize land resources, and ensuring that new development is sustainable and adds to the community and quality of life. Two redevelopment opportunities addressed in the master plan are the Historic Downtown and the commercial strips of East and West Fifth and McEwan Streets. The redevelopment of historic downtown places an emphasis on creating loft

style housing above downtown businesses, establishing third places where people can recreate and interact and working with the DDA to unify and improve the street appearance with specific design guidelines. The commercial strips along East and West Fifth and McEwan Streets are highlighted for redevelopment because they currently feature automobile centric design at the expense of pedestrians and aesthetics. The redevelopment of this area will focus on proper design and access management ~~in order to~~ improve appearance and function.

Goals, objectives, and policies are outlined throughout the master plan and the implementation table prioritizes them and sets recommendations to be completed before or by 2021. A strength of the implementation table is that it identifies the parties responsible for each recommendation. However, the city may want to consider going one step further by turning the implementation table into a working document with action items, specific deadlines, and projected costs. Utilizing a living accountability system would allow all responsible parties to track their progress, communicate, and coordinate work. Due to Clare's limited staff size, a free or cheap option, such as Asana, could be ~~utilized~~used. If the city was interested in making a larger investment in a strategic planning system, Envisio is another option.

Downtown is often viewed as the focal point of a community; it is an indicator of economic health and serves as a gathering place. Clare's historic downtown is located in the heart of the city and provides a variety of places for residents and visitors to eat, drink, and shop. [The city and the Downtown Development Authority \(DDA\) have worked together to make streetscape improvements, develop underutilized parcels, and create public parking in the downtown.](#) The Art Alley program has ~~also~~ been successful in attracting residents and visitors alike. The city has an implementation plan that focuses on respecting the historic character while maintaining the existing commercial base and strengthen the tax and employment base of downtown Clare. A major recommendation in ~~this the master~~ plan is that the city reinstitute the Main Street Program and take a Main Street

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~~Approach approach~~ toward the restoration of downtown. While goals, objectives, policies, recommendations, timelines, and responsible parties related to downtown are laid out in the master plan, they are scattered about and not compiled in a centralized and cohesive location, they also do not include estimated costs. In order to meet RRC Best Practice 1.1.2, the city should compile the all of the downtown projects, including estimated costs, timelines, and responsible parties so they are easy to find and execute. This could be accomplished by using a working document, such as the ones mentioned above, or in Clare's future marketing plan. This could also be accomplished in Clare's DDA TIF plan. The DDA TIF plan is from 1989 and is due to be amended in 2018.

Dwindling resources and increasing costs put pressure on local governments to make limited budgets work more efficiently. A comprehensive capital improvements plan (CIP) is an essential tool for the planning and development of the social, physical, and economic wellbeing of a community. The CIP can be used as a tool to implement the master plan and provides a link between planning and budgeting for capital projects. A portion of Clare's CIP ~~is located in~~ their budget but only lays out capital improvements for the current fiscal year. The City of Clare also has a standalone CIP that is adopted by the planning commission. The current CIP

covers fiscal years 2016 through 2021. The implementation table in the master plan lays out a goal to prepare, annually update and adopt a comprehensive capital improvements plan for City facilities and major equipment expenditures. To meet RRC best practices and the goals set in the master plan, the CIP must be reviewed annually and detail six years of public structures and improvements, from 2018 to 2023, for all projects. It should be noted that the fiscal year 2018-2019 CIP will be presented to the planning commission in early April 2018. Clare's CIP coordinates water, sewer, and park improvements mentioned in the master plan and budget. However, the road projects located in the CIP do not address enhancements to traffic calming features, complete streets, wayfinding, and landscaping improvements mentioned in the master plan. Once a new CIP is adopted it should be made available on the city's website.

Status	Evaluation Criteria	Recommended Actions for Certification	Estimated Timeline
1.1.1	The governing body has adopted a master plan in the past five years.	✓	
1.1.2	The governing body has adopted a downtown plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Compile a Downton plan that meets Best Practice 1.1.2.	
1.1.3	The governing body has adopted a corridor plan.	NA	
1.1.4	The governing body has adopted a capital improvements plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a CIP that meets Best Practice 1.1.4	

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## Best Practice 2.1 – Zoning Regulations

Best Practice 2.1 evaluates the city's zoning ordinance and assesses how well it implements the goals of the master plan. Zoning is a significant mechanism for achieving desired land use patterns and quality development. Foundationally, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA), Public Act 110 of 2006, requires that a zoning ordinance be based on a plan to help guide zoning decisions. Clare's most recent master plan was adopted in 2016 and recommends a comprehensive review of the city's ordinances, particularly the Zoning Ordinance, General Ordinances related to property maintenance, and the subdivision ordinance, in order to determine the scope of amendments needed to achieve the goals of the master plan. Clare's ordinances are accessible from their website and are easily accessible for residents and developers alike.

Zoning is an essential tool for shaping inviting, walkable communities and flexible zoning regulations can encourage desired development. Mixed use developments can increase a sense of place and spur revitalization efforts. Although mixed use developments are allowed by special use permits in the C-1 district, the city should update the ordinance to allow mixed use by right in areas of concentrated development. By updating the ordinance in this way, the City would also accomplish the goals and vision described in the master plan. While updating the ordinance to coordinate with the city may want to consider establishing form-based zoning in the commercial and multi-family residential districts, as mentioned on page 126 of the master plan in order to better regulate design. Clare's is ahead of the curve in many positive aspects related to historic preservation, minimum ground floor transparency, outdoor dining, and streetscape elements, as it has ordinances related to all. Another positive aspect related to development in Clare is the availability of flexible tools. The special land use procedures are clearly laid out in section 52-343 and information on condition zoning is accessible in section 52-530. Once aspect that could be improved on is the lack of mention in the ordinance of

permitted new economy uses and businesses. New economy industries include mixtures of commerce, sales, trade, medical research, film industry, indoor recreation. it or office, heavy arts, breweries, indoor recreation, alternative energy, catering services, arts & crafts studios, and business incubators. Clare's master plan acknowledges the importance of planning for the new economy with its encouragement of business incubators. To meet RRC best practices, Clare should review the ordinance to consider how and where new economy type uses could be permitted in the commercial and industrial districts.

As detailed in Clare's master plan, a majority of the city's housing stock (54.8%) is single family, detached homes. While this is still a popular housing style, a need and desire for compact and alternative housing types has arisen. The master plan calls for the inclusion of attached single family as a new zoning district called high density single family residential, downtown residential over non-residential uses, and live-work house housing located in the multi-family residential districts. ~~In order to~~To meet best practice 2.1.4 Clare should allow for a greater variety of housing options, possibly those recommended in their master plan. The master plan also calls for non-motorized transportation and public realm updates such as the greater inclusion of bike racks and traffic calming implements. Complete streets and the protection of vulnerable users is a major part of the master plan. The corridor design standards provide visual examples of complete streets implementation. To ensure that the protective measures and pedestrian friendly ideas expressed in the master plan, and to comply with RRC best practice 2.1.5, the City of Clare should enshrine them into their ordinance.

The City of Clare is currently excelling in the areas of flexible parking standards and green infrastructure. Section 52-306 of the city's ordinance allows for the reduction or elimination of parking when public parking is available, a reduction in parking when uses are complimentary, and parking waivers. Standards for parking lot connections are located in section 52-525. Clare encourages green practices by having ordinances detailing the

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replacement of removed trees, encouraging the use of native species, and providing standards for parking lot landscaping.

Status	Evaluation Criteria	Recommended Actions for Certification	Estimated Timeline
2.1.1	The governing body has adopted a zoning ordinance that aligns with the goals of the master plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Review zoning ordinance to determine if regulations reflect master plan vision.	Q3 2019
2.1.2	The zoning ordinance provides for areas of concentrated development in appropriate locations and encourages the type and form of development desired.	<input type="checkbox"/> Update zoning ordinance to allow for mixed-use by right in designated areas of concentration.	Q3 2019
2.1.3	The zoning ordinance includes flexible tools to encourage development and redevelopment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Review district regulations to determine where modern light industrial type uses could be located.	Q3 2019
2.1.4	The zoning ordinance allows for a variety of housing options.	<input type="checkbox"/> Allow for a greater variety of housing options as recommended in Best Practice 2.1.4.	Q3 2019
2.1.5	The zoning ordinance includes standards to improve non-motorized transportation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt zoning ordinance standards to accommodate walking and biking, where appropriate, as described in Best Practice criteria 2.1.5.	Q3 2019
2.1.6	The zoning ordinance includes flexible parking standards.	✓	
2.1.7	The zoning ordinance includes standards for green infrastructure.	✓	
2.1.8	The zoning ordinance is user-friendly.	✓	

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### **Best Practice 3.1 – Development Review Policy and Procedures**

Best Practice 3.1 evaluates the city's development review policies and procedures, project tracking and internal/external communications. An efficient site plan review process is integral to being redevelopment ready and can assist a community in attracting investment dollars while ensuring its zoning ordinance and other laws are followed. The framework for Clare's site plan review process is documented in the zoning ordinance and the roles and responsibilities of the planning commission and zoning board of appeals are laid out in sections 51 and 52-71 respectively. Clare's city manager is tasked with administering and enforcing all provisions of the zoning ordinance, as stated in section 52-31. The city offers a preliminary review, located in section 52-414 and recommends it for sites over five acres, environmental challenges, and special land use. Clare holds preliminary site plan ~~reviews~~ with requestors and ~~all of~~ the department heads prior to the plan being submitted to the planning commission for consideration. If there are issues with the site plan the city staff works with the applicant to find solutions. If the plans must go before the planning commission, city staff will hold multiple reviews if needed. The City Clerk retains both the formal and informal notes on those proceedings. Since beginning this process over twelve years ago the City of Clare has had a 100% site plan approval rate from the planning commission. Unfortunately, the optional preliminary site plan review is only mentioned in the ordinance and not advertised on the website. The city should make it clear that staff is available for pre-application meetings. These meetings should be looked at as a service provided to customers – and advertised as such. Additionally, there are no clearly defined expectations, checklists, or materials offered for the meetings. To meet the RRC best practices, Clare should develop a set of expectations and a checklist to be reviewed at preliminary meetings and advertise this service in the guide to development and on the City's website. This will provide greater transparency to the

process and will allow applicants who may not be familiar with the area to navigate the process more easily.

Section 52-421 lays out which uses require full site plans and which require sketch plans. Site plan submittal requirements can be found in section 52-415 and site plan applications can be found on the city's website under the "Services" section. Once the application has been completed, the site plan is submitted to at City Hall and is transmitted to the appropriate departments for review and comment. One area Clare could improve on related to the internal review process is its documentation. The internal review process should be clearly documented with clear roles, responsibilities and timelines. After the internal review, the plans can be either approved administratively or elevated to the planning commissions will where it will be determined if the plan is in conformance with the standards of the zoning ordinance.

There is an application procedure for special use regulations, laid out in section 52-343, stating what materials are required and that they need to be submitted to the city at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which the planning commission first considers the special land use application. Section 52-433 discusses that the planning commission has final review authority for all special land uses and the timeline for sending out notices to various stakeholders. The only timeline given related to regular site plans can be found in section 52-420 and is related to the zoning board of appeals process. The only timeline related to administrative sketch plan approval is the 14 days applicant has to submit a full site plan if the the building official/city manager has determined a full site plan is needed. Clare should develop a timeline and flow chart for both their internal and external site plan review process. It should be clear when an applicant's submission deadline is for each month's planning commission meeting.

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▲ Clare County Community Development handles all building, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical permits and inspections for the City of Clare. Applications are available the City of Clare’s website and on the Clare County Community Development website. Applicants have the options make payments and submit their forms directly to Clare County Community Development or submit signed forms to Clare City Hall, where they will be forwarded on to the county. The City of Clare has an excellent working relationship with the Clare County Building Department and Mr. Dave Lipovsky, the building official. The county will not issue trade permits (building, electrical, plumbing, or mechanical) for a new commercial or industrial without first checking with the city to ensure the project has been approved. Currently, projects are tracked, recorded, and coordinated with the county through email. The City of Clare should create a tracking mechanism that follows projects from submission to completion, including the permitting and inspection process, in order to keep development projects from falling through the cracks and ensure continuity in the case of staff turnover. ▲

▲ The City of Clare does not currently obtain formal feedback from customers about the development review process. However, they do keep an open dialogue with requestors through the whole staff review process. Staff obtain feedback verbally a during the site plan approval process by asking applicants what they feel an be improved and then making those adjustments. While this method is simple and efficient the City may want to develop a more formal method of gathering and tracking customer feedback. ▲

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Status	Evaluation Criteria	Recommended Actions for Certification	Estimated Timeline
3.1.1	The zoning ordinance articulates a thorough site plan review process.	✓	
3.1.2	The community has a qualified intake professional.	✓	
3.1.3	The community defines and offers conceptual site plan review meetings for applicants.	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop expectations and a checklist of items to be reviewed at conceptual meetings.	Q1-2019
3.1.4	The appropriate departments engage in joint site plan reviews.	✓	
3.1.5	The community has a clearly documented internal staff review policy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop formal internal review process with clear roles, responsibilities, and timelines.	Q1-2019
3.1.6	The community promptly acts on development requests.	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a flowchart with timelines for the development process.	Q1-2019
3.1.7	The community has a method to track development projects.	<input type="checkbox"/> Create a tracking mechanism that tracks projects from submission to completion.	Q1-2019
3.1.8	The community annually reviews the successes and challenges with the site plan review and approval procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/> Create a formal mechanism to obtain customer feedback about the City's development review process.	Q1-2019

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**Best Practice 3.2 – Guide to Development**

Best Practice 3.2 evaluates the availability of the community's development information. Having all the necessary information easily accessible online for developers and residents alike creates a transparent development process that can operate at any time. This information creates a smoother process overall and reduces the amount of time staff spend answering basic questions.

The City of Clare does not currently have a centralized website location for information related to development. Ordinances are located in one section, contact information is in another. Planning documents are found on the city's landing page. A complete fee schedule for all

development related costs, including county permits is currently unavailable. Applicants can find the cost to submit the site plan application, conditional use permits, rezoning applications, and those individual webpages. As the city makes updates as part of the RRC process, an online guide to development should be created and centralized on the city's website. This will create a one stop shop and allow potential applicants ease of access to information to all development related policies and procedures in the City of Clare. As part of the guide to development the city should create a comprehensive fee schedule, centralizing all building and development related costs.

Status	Evaluation Criteria	Recommended Actions for Certification	Estimated Timeline
3.2.1	The community maintains an online guide to development that explains policies, procedures and steps to obtain approvals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Create an online guide to development that meets the standards laid out in best practice 3.2.1.	Q4 2019
3.2.2	The community annually reviews the fee schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/> Create comprehensive fee schedule and make it available online as part of guide to development.	Q4 2018

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#### **Best Practice 4.2 – Education and Training**

Best Practice 4.2 assesses how a community encourages training and tracks educational activities for appointed and elected officials and staff. Trainings provide officials and staff with an opportunity to expand their knowledge and ultimately make more informed decisions about land use and redevelopment issues. An effective training program includes four components: financial resources to support training, a plan to identify priority topics and track attendance, consistent encouragement to attend trainings and sharing of information between boards and commissions to maximize the return on investment for the community.

The city is well-positioned to take advantage of training opportunities as it currently allocates money for this purpose in the city budget. Clare ensures that training opportunities are offered to newly appointed board and committee members. If new issues arise that the boards and commissions need to be aware of the city staff will provide the information to members at regularly scheduled meetings or the city attorney will present to them. Board and commission members are encouraged to attend trainings through various forms of communication, such as email, meetings, and one on one communications. Although the city provides training materials to elected and appointed officials, the city could do more to encourage the consistent attendance of trainings. For instance, the city could add *upcoming training opportunities* as a standing agenda item. This would prompt staff to research training opportunities on a regular basis. Further, the city could identify training goals for its staff and

officials. The city could consider surveying staff and officials to learn about the areas in which they feel their skills are lacking or identify areas of interest. The Michigan Municipal League (MML), Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) and MSU Extension may prove to be good resources for the city. Due to the time and location constraints faced by board and commission members the city may want to look into webinars as a training option. The city should also develop a simple tracking mechanism that centralizes training attendance.

The level of communication between city officials and staff is currently a strength of Clare. Clare city officials and staff communicate effectively through email, reports and presentations. Clare’s planning commission creates an annual report to detail their accomplishments and activities. The City held a collaborative meeting with stakeholders and the planning commission as part of the master planning process. As the city seeks to increase its communication and collaboration, as well as get greater value out of trainings, a forum or method of conveying information should be provided so attendees can share lessons learned with those who were not able to attend.

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### **Best Practice 5.1 – Redevelopment Ready Sites®**

Best Practice 5.1 assesses how a community identifies, visions for and markets their priority redevelopment sites. Communities must think strategically about the redevelopment of properties and investments and should be targeted in areas that can catalyze further development around it. Instead of waiting for developers to propose projects, Redevelopment Ready Communities identify priority sites and prepare information to assist developers in finding opportunities that match the community’s vision.

The City of Clare maintains a list of priority redevelopment sites to be developed or redeveloped. The sites are located in the “Available Properties” section on the Middle Michigan Development Corporation website. Each property includes a photo, property size, a method to contact the listing agent, and brief information about municipal services. Some of the most detailed listings include zoning and the sale price. Clare’s Master Plan identifies the former Consumers Energy Regional Service Center as a large downtown redevelopment opportunity and the commercial strips of East and West Fifth and McEwan Street. To align with the RRC best practices, Clare should prioritize at least three redevelopment sites that the city would like to market and see redeveloped. Privately-owned priority redevelopment sites should have property owners who are willing to have their properties marketed for redevelopment. Once the sites have been selected, the city should gather basic information on the sites, including: zoning, lot area, site assets, property surveys, etc. The city should also engage residents and community stakeholders to establish an agreed-upon community vision for the use of the sites. The community champions for the priority redevelopment sites include Clare’s Industrial Development

Corporation, Downtown Development Authority, and Local Development Finance Authority. The city should work with these champions and other stakeholders to identify any and all site specific, negotiable development tools, financial incentives, or any other in-kind support that would help the property reach the community’s vision and development outcomes.

Further, best practice 5.1.5 asks communities to assemble in-depth information to help market at least one Property Information Package (PIP). This PIP should include technical information the city has available on the site(s), including: housing, market or traffic studies, environmental records, demographic data and/or planned infrastructure improvements, as available. Once the city has identified three priority redevelopment sites (including the PIP), these sites should be marketed online, including the City’s website, and through local partners to help generate interest in the sites.

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Status	Evaluation Criteria	Recommended Actions for Certification	Estimated Timeline
5.1.1	The community identifies and prioritizes redevelopment sites.	✓	
5.1.2	The community gathers basic information for at least three priority sites.	<input type="checkbox"/> Gather basic information on at least three redevelopment sites	Q1 2019
5.1.3	The community has development a vision for at least three priority sites.	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish visions for each of the redevelopment sites	Q1 2019
5.1.4	The community identifies potential resources and incentives for at least three priority sites.	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify potential resources and/or incentives for the identified redevelopment sites	Q1 2019
5.1.5	The community assembles a property information package for at least one priority site.	<input type="checkbox"/> Create a Property Information Package (PIP) for at least one of the redevelopment sites	Q1 2019
5.1.6	Prioritized redevelopment sites are actively marketed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Market the redevelopment sites online	Q1 2019

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**Best Practice 6.1 – Economic Development Strategy**

Best Practice 6.1 evaluates goals and actions identified by the community to assist in strengthening its overall economic health. Today, economic development means more than business retention, expansion and attraction. While business development is a core value, a community needs to include place making and talent in the overall equation for economic success. A successful economic development strategy will highlight a community’s assets and describe a range of innovative incentives that will attract both people and businesses. Strategic economic development planning is critical to attract jobs and new investment in communities.

Clare has been proactive in planning for its economy as evidenced by the including of an economic development strategy as a part of the master plan, the existence of the DDA and economic development corporation. An important strength of Clare’s economic development strategy is that it

delegates responsibilities to the DDA, City Commission, Administration, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Business Group, and Planning Commission. Clare’s economic development strategy will be the strongest and most implementable if the city coordinates its strategy with its regional stakeholders. It may be helpful for Clare to look at Clare and Isabella County’s economic development plans, as well as the plans of East Michigan Council of Governments (EMCOG) and the Middle Michigan Development Corporation (MMDC) to see if there are opportunities for collaboration or additional resources. MMDC is strong partner and is an important stakeholder for regional growth and collaboration. To further strengthen the city’s existing economic development, the city should add goals and implementation actions to the economic development recommendations described in the master plan. Timelines and responsible parties should be included in the expanded economic development strategy.

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Status	Evaluation Criteria	Recommended Actions for Certification	Estimated Timeline
6.1.1	The community has approved an economic development strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Expand existing economic development strategy by adding goals and implementation actions.	Q4 2018
6.1.2	The community annually reviews the economic development strategy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

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**Best Practice 6.2 – Marketing and Promotion**

Best Practice 6.2 evaluates how the community promotes and markets itself. Marketing and branding is an essential tool in promotion of a community’s assets and unique attributes. Consumers and investors are attracted to places that evoke positive feelings and to communities that take pride in their town and their history.

The City of Clare coordinates with the Clare Area Chamber of Commerce to promote the city’s businesses, events, history, education, and arts. The chamber utilizes Facebook to promote local businesses and events and connect with residents and visitors to the city. The “Clearly Clare” logo appears on both the city’s and chamber’s website and both websites use various shades of green. Despite these existing initiatives, the city is lacking an overarching marketing and promotion strategy. To become certified, Clare should develop an all-encompassing marketing strategy that highlights the city’s many assets, leverages available resources and establishes agreed-upon city goals within the existing regional framework of marketing and economic development strategies. The city’s priority redevelopment sites described in best practice 5 should be integrated into the marketing strategy. To get the most out of the “Clearly Clare” brand, the city and chamber could work to develop attractive, standardized brand standards to be integrated whenever possible- including the city’s website and formal documents.

The second element of best practice 6.2 is the promotion of a community through a website. A municipal website serves multiple functions. On a fundamental level, it is a means to share information—including information about public meetings, city plans, policies, events and related organizations. Beyond this, a municipal website is an important expression of a community’s character and image. People who are unfamiliar with a community will often first look to a website for information. They will be forming their first impressions and reaching conclusions from the website; therefore, it is imperative that the website is visually appealing and key information is easily accessible.

The homepage of the city’s website features a top menu bar that allows for easy navigation, links to the city’s important meeting and planning documents and public service announcements. Each of the city’s departments also has their own webpage with related information. The city’s website is visually appealing, organized and undoubtedly helpful for residents. As the development-related items discussed in this report are completed, they should grouped be together and added to the website.

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Status	Evaluation Criteria	Recommended Actions for Certification	Estimated Timeline
6.2.1	The community has developed a marketing strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt an overarching marketing strategy for the city	Q1 2019
6.2.2	The community has an updated, user-friendly municipal website.	<input type="checkbox"/> Create a centralized location for planning and development information and add documents to the website as they are developed	Q1 2019

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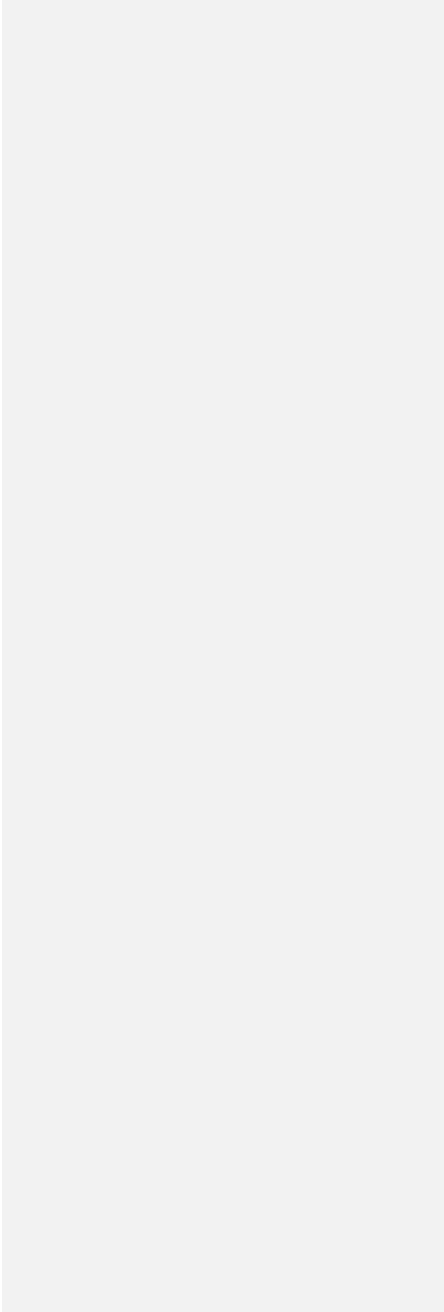
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**Conclusion**

The RRC Program assists communities in maximizing their economic potential by embracing effective redevelopment tools and best practices. As this report makes clear, Clare has a strong foundation in place for meeting the best practices.

Upon receipt of this report, city staff and leadership should review the recommendations and determine if they align with the city's priorities and vision. If, after review, the city believes that RRC is still a good fit, council should pass a resolution of intent to continue with the process. Upon receipt of that resolution, the city will enter final phase of the process: officially working toward certification. During that phase, the city will be able to make progress on RRC items at its own pace and receive regular support from its RRC Planner. It will also have continued access to the RRC Online Library of resources and extensive network of other RRC-engaged communities while also becoming eligible for matching technical assistance dollars from RRC (once the city has shown at least one quarter of progress). In order to guide this next phase, RRC recommends the creation of an RRC workgroup consisting of city staff, officials and community representatives. We look forward to working with the city on reaching certification and a long, positive partnership for many years to come.

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Tax Increment District After Changes

Changes 2018

