



AGENDA
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
Downtown Development Authority – West
Hamilton and Okemos Subcommittee
September 8, 2025 7:30AM
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI
Meridian Township – Township Hall



1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. MISSION: Enacted to discuss the potential beautification and development of the 4.5 acre site on the northwest and southwest blocks of Hamilton and Okemos Road.
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. COMMUNICATIONS: Village of Okemos Site Prospectus
6. PUBLIC REMARKS
7. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Consumers Energy and the HVD Powerlines Discussion
 - B. What Next?
8. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS
9. PUBLIC REMARKS
10. NEXT MEETING DATE
 - A. October 6, 2025 7:30am – Town Hall Room, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos
11. ADJOURNMENT

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Board by contacting: Township Manager Timothy Dempsey 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4258 - Ten Day Notice is Required.
Meeting Location: 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 Township Hall

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable, prime community.





Village of Okemos Site Prospectus

Prospectus Contents

1. Site History
2. Stakeholders
 - A. Property Owner
 - B. Financial Partners
3. Approving Authorities
 - A. Ingham County Road Department
 - B. Ingham County Drain Office
 - C. Meridian Township Board
 - D. Meridian Township Planning Commission
 - E. Township Community Planning and Development Department
4. Infrastructure
 - A. AT&T
 - B. Consumers Energy
 - C. Meridian Township Water & Sewer
 - D. Local Roads (Meridian Township- Hamilton, Ardmere, Clinton & Methodist)
 - E. County Road (Ingham County – Okemos Road)
 - F. Site Stormwater Management (Ingham County Drain office)
5. Defined Project Goals
 - A. Mixed-Use Residential and Commercial Project
 - B. Current Zoning and Zoning Capabilities
 - C. Community Focused Amenities
 - D. Walkability
 - E. Investment in Downtown Meridian Township
6. Identification of Assets
 - A. Zoning Overlay and Density Increase Parameters
 - B. Prioritization of the Project - PICA
7. Site Specifics
 - A. Site description, Address, Size, Intersection, surrounding commercial
 - B. For Sale Price
 - C. Terminated BRA Plan, SUP approval, MUPUD approval as examples only!
8. Strategic Goal Alignment Options



- A. Propose a Project
 - B. Finance Project
 - C. Construct Project
 - D. Development Timeline based on potential project type and zoning
9. Identified Financial Support Incentives
- A. Meridian Township DDA TIF
 - B. Meridian Township BRA TIF
 - C. Commerical Rehabilitation Act PA 225
 - D. MSF Community Revitalization and Placemaking Grant/Loan
 - E. MSF Brownfield TIF
 - F. LITC Low Income Tax Credits
10. Community Demographic and Market Information
- A. Housing Needs
 - B. Commerical Market Study/Report
11. Meridian Township Masterplan & Economic Development Strategy
12. Summary from Economic Development Director Amber Clark



2012: Douglas J purchases the sites on the northwest corner of Hamilton and Okemos and proposes a three-story, 30,000-square-foot building at the corner of Hamilton and Okemos Road.

2014: The Township demolishes the existing "Central Fire Station" and starts plans to build a new one due to site contamination, health concerns, safety concerns, and the general cost to rebuild on site. (2150 Clinton Street, Okemos, MI 1957-2014).

2015: The Township sells the MARC building, which is the location of the small business incubator and meeting space for the Meridian Area Business Association members' monthly meetings. The MARC building provides affordable lease space to small businesses, organizations, and non-profits conducting business in the Township.

2015: Kris Elliot purchases 2150 Clinton Street and 4675 Okemos Road (MARC building) from Meridian Township. He conceptually proposes to the planning staff the construction of a new restaurant, "Tavern & Tap," for the southwest portion of the "Four Corners."

2016: [Douglas J's approvals for conceptual redevelopment expire](#). Douglas J lists property for sale.

2017: Kris Elliot's proposed plan has not received approval or stakeholder support. The ["Developer scraps \\$15M Plan for downtown Okemos"](#) and prepares site for sale.

2018: Properties are sold to a new developer with plans to redevelop the site with a mixed-use development concept. The developer presents to Meridian Township and the general community a 5-story mixed-used development. The proposal includes updates to 4.5 acres on the northwest and southwest blocks of Okemos and Hamilton roads. The proposal offers public amenities, underground parking, and a Hamilton Road boulevard to create a "park-like setting" within the development. Estimates for the proposal total \$100 Million for redevelopment.

Support for the proposal must include financial contributions and development incentives. Aging infrastructure (water & sewer controlled by Meridian Township), site contamination from leaking gas storage tanks, leaking solvents from a previous laundromat, and a need to update stormwater management (Ingham County Drain) must be calculated in the total cost of improvement. To address these financial implications, Meridian Township authorized Eric Helzer, President of Advanced Redevelopment Solutions to update the Township's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan. The updated TIF requires approval from the impacted tax jurisdictions (Ingham County, Lansing Community College, Capital Area Regional Airport Authority, Meridian Township, Capital Area Transportation Authority). Capital Area District Library did not authorize participation. A 20-year TIF Plan is approved through 2038.



A new TIF application was created to allow developers to gain access to the incentive with the new parameters.

December 19, 2018: Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) approves the request from the development team and the Township to enter into an agreement with the Michigan Department of Environmental Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE). The agreement will provide a \$1M grant and \$1M loan between the BRA and developer with EGLE to support site clean-up of the property.

2019: Village of Okemos proposal submits for Mixed-Use Planned Unit development (MUPUD) approval. This process includes an application to the Community Planning & Development department with an internal review of application completeness. The community is engaged through a public hearing held June 18, 2019, at the Meridian Township Hall. The proposal is discussed at the June 18, 2019, Township Board meeting.

The project receives an approved MUPUD July 10, 2019: Plans 205 residential units 241,995 bldg. sq. ft. & 52,650 sq. ft. of commercial

2020: Limited Planning or Economic Development Activities – COVID-19 Work from Home & Social Distancing Mandates.

Amendment request for the approved MUPUD for the Village of Okemos proposal is received in the Community Planning Development Department, December 2020. The process to amend an approved MUPUD varies based on the requested changes.

2021:

January 6, 2021: Site demolition in southwest block of Hamilton and northwest block of Hamilton commences. Demolition includes abatement of existing buildings (excluding one at the northwest corner of Hamilton and Okemos). Demolition is completed by January 15th.

January 17, 2021: The buildings on the southwest corner of Okemos Road complete demolition, with sheeting and shoring placed at the corner of Hamilton and Ardmore. The sheeting and shoring were paid for by the EGLE grant acquired by the developer with the assistance of Meridian Township. EGLE removed the building at the corner of Ardmore and Hamilton, excavating the building's foundation to leave room for a basement in the proposed development.

A request to amend the approved MUPUD for the Village of Okemos proposal is under review in the Community Planning & Development Department. The proposal qualified as a “Minor Amendment” and allows for an administrative public hearing held by the Community Planning Director.



[January 15, 2021: Community Planning & Development Approve the amendment to the MUPUD](#) for the site. The approval amended the project to include 286 residential units 295,935 bldg. sq. ft. & 32,680 sq. ft. of commercial.

The Economic Development Department/Department of Public Works submits a request to the Ingham County Road Department to include Okemos Road improvements in the Ingham County Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for the 2024-2027 allocation. The request is denied.

An amendment request for the approved MUPUD for the Village of Okemos proposal is received in the Community Planning Development Department in May 2021. The process to amend an approved MUPUD varies based on the requested changes. The proposal qualified as a “Minor Amendment” and allows for an administrative public hearing held by the Community Planning Director.

[July 21, 2021: The Community Planning Director grants the approval to amend the MUPUD for the “Village of Okemos” site to include plans for 200 residential units](#) 201,080 bldg. sq. ft. & 17,610 sq. ft. of commercial space.

2022:

[Village of Okemos Redevelopment Project Fact Sheet](#) is presented to the Downtown Development Authority by the Economic Development Director. The FAQ is placed on the website to provide an overview to the public of the most requested questions related to the site.

[February 17, 2022: Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority \(BRA\)](#) holds a public meeting to review the proposed plan to use Brownfield Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to address eligible site improvements associated with the project.

[March 15, 2022: The Township Board holds for discussion](#) and [moves for action](#) the allocation of \$1.25 Million to support the improvement of the public infrastructure associated with the redevelopment of the Village of Okemos project site. This includes street milling, resurfacing, and updating the underground public water and sewer system on the 4 local streets (Clinton, Ardmore, Methodist, and Hamilton).

[March 17, 2022: BRA approves the TIF Plan as proposed by the developer](#) and Advanced Redevelopment Solutions for the Village of Okemos site. The Plan includes a request to Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) for the use of School Education Taxes (SET) to assist with full reimbursement of eligible activities. The proposal is approved by the Meridian Township Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Submission to MEDC is pending the final development of the proforma.



April 22, 2022: Meridian Township Department of Public Works submits an application to Community Projects Fund (CPF) for Federal fund allocation in support of the redevelopment of Okemos Road. Application is submitted to Representative Elissa Slotkin's office for preselection for potential allocation.

June 3, 2022: The Economic Development Department submits an application for the [Revitalization and Placemaking \(RAP\)](#) Grant application to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). The request submitted supports the redevelopment of the Village of Okemos mixed-use project.

[August 22, 2022: An amendment request for the approved MUPUD for the Village of Okemos proposal](#) is received in the Community Planning Development Department in August 2022. The process to amend an approved MUPUD varies based on the requested changes. The proposal qualifies as a "Minor Amendment" and allows for an administrative public hearing held by the Community Planning Director.

[September 12, 2022: Economic Development Director and developer are notified MEDC](#) did not select the "Village of Okemos" project as a recipient of the Revitalization and Placemaking grant.

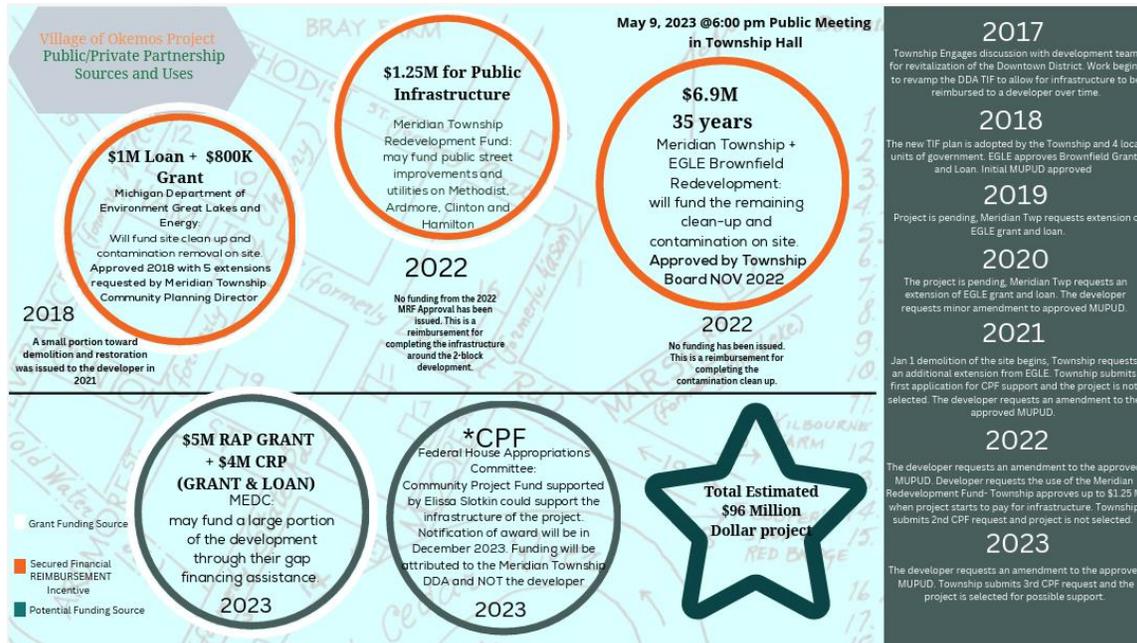
[October 6, 2022: Community Planning & Development approves an amended MUPUD](#) for the Village of Okemos site to include 200 residential units 246,939 bldg. sq. ft. & 26,399 sq. ft. of commercial- MUPUD Amendment Submittal.

2023

March 21, 2023: The Economic Development Department submitted a second request to the Federal Community Projects Fund, seeking support for the redevelopment of a mixed-use housing development that includes a 10-year workforce housing component. The proposal was submitted to Representative Elissa Slotkin's office for consideration in the fiscal year 2024 funding cycle.

April 17, 2023: Representative Elissa Slotkin's office notified the Township that the Village of Okemos Affordable Housing Mixed-Use Redevelopment Project was selected for potential funding through the Community Project Funding (CPF) program for fiscal year 2024.

May 9, 2023: The Township held a special meeting to engage with the community about the project's status and next steps. A recording of the meeting can be found [here](#), and the [presentation can be found here](#). Below is a snapshot of the project's funding sources and uses. The infographic outlines the approved, secured, and potential sources of funding to address several elements of the proposed plan. Elements in orange are secured. Elements in blue are potential sources.



June 30, 2023: The Economic Development Department submitted the second [Revitalization and Placemaking \(RAP\)](#) Grant application to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). The request submitted supports the redevelopment of the Village of Okemos mixed-use project.

November 12, 2023: [The approved grant and loan agreement from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy \(EGLE\)](#) for the site revitalization and clean-up expired. Township staff meets with EGLE representatives to discuss termination of the Agreement.

2024

[April 22, 2024: Planning Commission reviewed an updated proposed concept plan](#) for the Village of Okemos site. The proposal included three potential development options that could feasibly begin construction in 2024. The proposal was not officially submitted, but a concept to first determine the public’s general acceptance of the changes. The Planning Commission provided the developer with comments.

[May 6, 2024: Meridian Downtown Development Authority \(DDA\) members review the three conceptual options for redevelopment of the “Village of Okemos site”](#). DDA members share their concerns and general comments. They provide a general desire to see something of quality completed onsite.

[May 9, 2024: Meridian Township Board hears the conceptual plan for redevelopment of 4.5 acres commonly referred to as the “Village of Okemos site”](#). The Board expressed a general lack of



support for concepts that place buildings along Ardmore Ave and parking areas facing Okemos Road. The discussion also addressed emergency access via Hamilton Road. The Fire Department noted that it would not operate under power lines due to safety risks. Therefore, any boulevard constructed on Hamilton Road must ensure unobstructed access for emergency vehicles. [The comments of the Township Board and community can be here.](#)

June 12, 2024: Township Community and Economic Development staff receive a letter from the developer indicating the project is indefinitely on hold. The letter states that the previously approved MUPUD of 2022 is no longer feasible in the current economy. The letter also det

STAKEHOLDERS OF THE HAMILTON/OKEMOS ROAD PROJECT SITE

A. Property Owners: the property commonly referred to as “Village of Okemos” changed hands several times over a decade. Originally the 4.5 acres were divided into 11 separate parcels with different entities as owners. Meridian Charter Township held ownership of two parcels on the south block of Hamilton and Okemos until 2017.

B. Financial Partners:

- I. Meridian Township Board (Township Board)
- II. Meridian Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
- III. Meridian Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA)
- IV. Meridian Economic Development Corporation (EDC)
- V. Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)
- VI. Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE)
- VII. Developer
- VIII. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

APPROVING AUTHORITIES

A. Ingham County Road Department: approves all public road improvement plans in Meridian Township. It is responsible for the authorization of all improvements to Okemos Road. The Township maintains authorization for construction and financial improvements associated with Ardmore Ave, Clinton St., Methodist St., and Hamilton Ave.

B. Ingham County Drain Office: approves all stormwater management plans for development in Meridian Township. Stormwater management, drain relocation, easements of drain property, and access to public drains. This office does not have jurisdiction over all drains within Meridian Township.



- C. Meridian Township Board: is the final approving authority for Mixed-Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD) or “specialized use” proposals. Approves any final Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan through DDA or BRA. The Township Board is the final authorizing agency to approve any special permitting use for the C-2 zoned property. Any use by right within C-2 does not receive scrutiny or approval by the Township Board.
- D. Meridian Planning Commission: approves the first iterations of a MUPUD or “specialized use” proposal. A Special Use Permit SUP falls within the power of the Planning Commission, and many do not require Township Board approval. Any use by right within C-2 does not receive scrutiny or approval by the Planning Commission.
- E. Meridian Township Community Planning & Development (CPD): The Township’s Planning & Development Department reviews and approves internally the proposed Site Plan and Construction building Plans that a developer will submit. CPD will defer to the County Road Department and County Drain office before an official approval to commence construction is granted.
- F. Meridian DDA: approves any request for the use of DDA TIF and the required reimbursement agreement.
- G. Meridian EDC: this body has very limited authority related to support redevelopment in this district. The EDC previously managed the request for the use of the Meridian Redevelopment Fund (MRF). The MRF was eliminated in the 2022 budget.
- H. Meridian BRA: approves any request for the use of BRA TIF and the required reimbursement agreement.

INFRASTRUCTURE

KNOWN INFRASTRUCTURE AND COSTS

- A. AT&T currently has underground conduit and above-ground internet and cellular infrastructure along Okemos Road, mounted on utility poles. AT&T is responsible for the removal or relocation of this infrastructure if required. While this is not expected to impose financial costs on the development, it may affect the project timeline due to coordination and scheduling requirements.
- B. Consumers Energy: has 5 high voltage distribution transformers, one on each utility pole along Okemos Road. This is the Okemos-Holt High Voltage Distribution line that provides connectivity power to from Okemos to Holt in Michigan. Discussions with Consumers Energy have been held related to the utility line relocation and possible burial. Relocation of utilities may be a cost borne by Consumers Energy. Burial of the utility line is a cost that will be borne by the requestor. Cost estimates as of 2022 to bury the line estimates \$4.5M-\$7M.



- C. Meridian Township Water and Sewer: updates will be required, and costs will be attributed to the developer.

UNKNOWN INFRASTRUCTURE AND COSTS

- A. Local Roads: Improvements to all roads, access points, and traffic signalization will be required for a commercial project at this site. Okemos Road, Hamilton Avenue, Ardmore Avenue, Clinton Street, and Methodist Street are the roads that will need improvement. A developer will be required to pay at least ½ of the road improvement costs of Okemos Road.
- B. Stormwater Management: The southwest block of Okemos and Hamilton parcel is heavily contaminated. There are no feasible sources to eliminate the entire contamination. Site cleanup has been conducted and completed in 2021. Stormwater cannot be collected in underground storage on the southwest block. The northwest block may have opportunities for storage, but access to a drainage pipe runs through the south block. Stormwater management will need the highest form of engineering to ensure the collection and movement of water meets the standard of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) and meets the standards of the Ingham County Drain office.

DEFINED PROJECT GOALS

- A. Mixed Use Planned Unit Development (MUPUD): Mixed Used Planned Unit Developments offer an increasingly competitive option to a developer and end user. Financing for the overall project allows for varied financing. Residential long term lease options help to stabilize a project's pro forma for commercial unit improvements on the same site. Essentially increasing the density of use. The "Village of Okemos" site is 4.5 acres, and a dense development will make the cost per square foot more amenable to a buyer/developer, if shared with other uses.
- B. [The current zoning of the site is Commercial\(C-2\) as permitted by the Meridian Township Code of Ordinances.](#) Please see use by right and special use permits for all potential uses. Note an approved MUPUD will allow the site to include non-commercial uses like residential in the proposal. Ex: Commercial office, residential, and commercial retail.
- C. Community focused amenities will be required in order for the site to achieve approval for an MUPUD. Note that the road department is not especially fond of amenities in the public right of way (benches, steps, rain gardens). Amenities may need to be included throughout the development.
- D. Walkability is a term used to rate an area's ability to allow a pedestrian access from one point to another without cumbersome or dangerous impediments. The goal of this project is to also enhance the walkability of the site.
- E. The Downtown Development Authority of Meridian Township was created in 2006 to reverse the deterioration of the district. With a Strategic Integrated Plan established, the DDA would start at the heart of the district and redevelop the corners of Hamilton and Okemos Road. From there additional upgrades to the Red Cedar River and parks to added enhanced river access for our residents.



IDENTIFICATION OF ASSETS

- A. The Downtown Development Authority of Meridian Township is a Tax Increment Finance District. A TIF district is a defined area where the increase in taxable value is used as a revenue stream for eligible development activities. Those activities once complete, provide an enhanced district with a higher contributing taxable value. A development in this district is eligible for reimbursement through the DDA after an approved TIF Plan is authorized by the Township.
- B. Potential Intensity Change Area or PICA are the defined commercial areas within Meridian Township, that the Township Board and staff will prioritize to seek development. Requests for a new liquor license for instance are preferred in a PICA district than other commercial areas within the community. PICA's also have access to density bonuses subject to approval by the Community Planning Director. Other incentives like tax abatements, PILOTS, or other sources of funding are preferred in the PICA districts. Please see 2023 Masterplan for the PICA districts.

SITE SPECIFICS

- A. The property is currently listed for sale with no list price.
Addresses: 2137 Hamilton Road, 2138 Hamilton, 2143 Hamilton Road, 2148 Hamilton, 2149 Hamilton Road, 2153 Hamilton Road, 4611 Okemos Road, 4675 Okemos Road, 4695 Okemos, 4700 Ardmore Ave, 2150 Clinton Street.
Intersection: Hamilton Road and Okemos Road. Next Major Intersection Okemos Road and Grand River Avenue.
Commercial Nearby: Marathon Gas Station, Meijer Grocery, Meijer Gas, Chipotle, Chik-Fil-A, Aspen Dental, Walgreens, Jimmy Johns, Meridian Mall, Biggby Coffee, McDonald's, Buddy's Pizza.
- C. The proposed concept plan for the Village of Okemos received the following approvals:

Approved MUPUD	Meridian Township	Expired Status
Approved Environmental Clean UP Grant and Loan	Michigan Dept of Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE)	Terminated Status
Site Plan Approval	Meridian Township	Never received SPR Approval
Local only Brownfield Tax Increment Financing Plan (20 yrs)	Meridian Township	Needs approval from MEDC to use SET

STRATEGIC GOAL ALIGNMENT OPTIONS



- A. Meet with all local units of government that are responsible for infrastructure in the Downtown Development district. Provide them with a copy of the site prospectus, copy of the integrated DDA Plan and Masterplan for the community. Provide details of how Meridian will be the catalyst partner in the redevelopment of the downtown district, particularly the referenced site.
- B. Propose a conceptual project for the site.
- C. Plan and set agreements for the financial incentives, options, and programs that will meet our goal to redevelop the site.
- D. Develop a construction implementation plan and timeline.
- E. Construct the project.

IDENTIFIED FINANCIAL SUPPORT INCENTIVES

- A. Meridian Township DDA TIF
- B. Meridian Township BRA TIF
- C. Michigan State Housing Development Authority BRA Housing TIF
- C. Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) Community Revitalization and Placemaking Grant/Loan
- D. MSF Brownfield TIF
- F. Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHIC & MARKET INFORMATION

- A. TriCounty Regional Planning Commission created the tri-county regional housing assessment for the Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Communities. Meridian Township is included in the assessment with the report suggesting Meridian is short 1667 housing units. This is supported by the community market assessment conducted in 2018 that reflected the need at the time to have 1500 housing units. The Township has not met that metric as the cost of construction goes up, the number of units being proposed are decreasing. A housing development on the “Village of Okemos” site addresses a housing need that is affecting communities nationwide.



To: Meridian Township West Hamilton & Okemos Subcommittee

From: Amber Clark, Neighborhoods & Economic Development Director

Date: September 2, 2025

Re: Consumers Energy Power Line HVD Conversation

History

The Village of Okemos 200-unit redevelopment project originally included a boulevard along Hamilton Road, intended as a park-like amenity. During the review process, concerns arose regarding the existing High Voltage Distribution (HVD) power lines. The initial conceptual plan assumed these lines would be buried underground; however, this assumption was not approved. The issue became critical when the Meridian Township Fire Inspector reviewed the plan and identified fire safety concerns related to the overhead HVD lines. Specifically, the inspector noted the hazard of fighting fires beneath high-voltage lines. (See attached letter.) The conclusion was clear: if the boulevard remains in the plan, the HVD lines must be buried. Relocating the lines eastward is not an option.

Site Details

There are five HVD vaults, one per pole, along the west side of Okemos Road. These vaults serve the Holt-Okemos HVD line and are owned by Consumers Energy. The proposed boulevard would narrow the roadway, limiting access for emergency vehicles. Fire trucks require stable, concrete surfaces and proximity to buildings for effective operation. As noted in the letter from the Fire Marshall, no fires will be fought in parking lots, the side streets of Clinton and Ardmore are also inadequate streets for the fire truck to utilize to fight a fire for the proposed buildings.

Discussion

Consumers Energy owns and controls both HVD and LVD infrastructure. Any request to relocate or bury these lines must be initiated by the requestor and is subject to Consumers Energy's design, approval, and contracting processes. The requestor must:

- Submit a formal request to Consumers Energy.
- Pay at least 50% of the estimated cost (including engineering) before design work begins.
- Pay the full cost before project completion.

The most recent estimate provided by Consumers Energy to bury the HVD vaults was approximately \$7.5 million. The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) does not currently have the funding to support this cost.



Township staff recently met with Consumers Energy to explore power line options at the site. At this time, burial of the HVD lines is not under consideration. Alternative solutions are being explored to allow redevelopment to proceed without requiring line burial.



MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

To: Tim Dempsey, Meridian Township Manager

From: 
Tavis Millerov, Fire Marshal
Meridian Township Fire Department

Date: March 3, 2025

Re: Village of Okemos Site Plan Issues

The Village of Okemos project has been one of ongoing debate and confusion for some years now. Between the multitude of developers, staff, and Township officials who have come and gone during the planning process, a number of issues from a Fire Prevention perspective have been identified, discussed, and yet “lost in translation” over time. This memo is an attempt to clarify the two principal issues, from a Fire Marshal’s perspective, preventing any proposed development from moving forward on the site.

The heart of the matter revolves around **Appendix D, Section 105, Aerial Apparatus Access Roads** of the International Fire Code. There are four sub-parts to this section, of which I will list and provide comments for each one as they pertain to the project:

D105.1 Where required. *Where the vertical distance between the grade plane and the highest roof surface exceeds 30 feet (9144 mm), approved aerial fire apparatus access roads shall be provided. For purposes of this section, the highest roof surface shall be determined by measurement to the eave of a pitched roof, the intersection of the roof to the exterior wall, or the top of parapet walls, whichever is greater.*

Each iteration of this project has included two multi-story buildings on each side of Hamilton Rd, running adjacent to the west side of Okemos Rd. Each of these buildings are proposed to be 3-5 stories high. Therefore, with a grade to roofline (eave) height greater than 30ft, the requirements of D105 would apply.

D105.2 Width. *Aerial fire apparatus access roads shall have a minimum unobstructed width of 26 feet (7925 mm), exclusive of shoulders, in the immediate vicinity of the building or portion thereof.*



MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

The above specifies the requirement of what width the road must be to comply. This minimum width cannot include the shoulders of the road. The proposed “boulevard” style road to be created along Hamilton Rd creates unidirectional lanes 12 feet wide. The 12-foot lanes do not include the on-street parking spaces, which cannot be included in the width calculations for the obvious reason. Therefore, Hamilton Rd, as proposed with the center island boulevard, cannot be used as an Aerial Apparatus Access Road to satisfy D105.

D105.3 Proximity to building. *At least one of the required access routes meeting this condition shall be located within a minimum of 15 feet (4572 mm) and a maximum of 30 feet (9144 mm) from the building and shall be positioned parallel to one entire side of the building. The side of the building on which the aerial fire apparatus access road is positioned shall be approved by the fire code official.*

For this section, the 15 to 30 foot spacing is not the problem. The problem lies with the access road parallel to one entire side of the building. While it is not stated in this section, fireground operation protocols often place an aerial apparatus on the front side of the building so that the entire front, which could include emergency escape and rescue openings, can be reached by the ladder. The road that will meet the requirements of this section will often be the public street upon which the building fronts. Therefore, access to the building from the parking lot side, and not the public street, does not meet the requirements of D105.

D105.4 Obstructions. *Overhead utility and power lines shall not be located over the aerial fire apparatus access road or between the aerial fire apparatus road and the building. Other obstructions shall be permitted to be placed with the approval of the fire code official.*

This section is obvious to show why Okemos Rd. cannot be used as our Aerial Apparatus Access Road. It doesn't matter how tall the poles are, overhead utilities cannot be placed where aerial operations are expected.

My mantra throughout the years with this project has been, “Bury the power lines, or get rid of the boulevard...” For this project to move forward, one of these two things MUST HAPPEN! I welcome the chance to speak about these issues to yourself or anyone else in an effort to provide insight and guidance on this project.

ENTERPRISE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Cost Estimating Department Okemos HVD Line Installation

Basis of Estimate

Conceptual Estimate

BOE Date: 9/29/2022

C. General Qualifications of Costs

The following are qualifications and clarification of the costs contained in this project estimate:

1. The estimate does not take into consideration the potential impact of COVID-19 on labor, material, or equipment. In addition, there may be an adverse impact to the project schedule due to the possible limited availability of resources.
2. Estimating team recommends that the project manager; design manager and other responsible team members read this basis of estimate for alignment with the project scope and all applicable cost elements.
3. This estimate of probable costs is based upon our collective experience and historical data of similar project. We cannot guarantee that the proposal, bids, quantities, and actual costs will not vary from our probable estimate cost as design engineering has not been engaged at the time of the estimate.
4. The estimate does not include impact due to contracting methods other than open competitive procurement process. The pricing is not valid for negotiated contracts.
5. This estimate is based upon a competitive bid for construction costs, with five to seven responsible bidders. Any single source specification will have an increased impact on the overall cost.

D. Scope of Work

The following is the scope of the project provided for the estimate:

1. Underground Duct Bank
 - a. Demo and removal of road, sidewalk, and curbing by others.
 - b. Demo of six (6) existing HVD poles along Okemos Rd.
 - c. Excavation (Hydrovac Daylighting and Mechanical) for installation of duct bank.
 - d. Install 1800 feet of 4x3 duct bank with separate ground wire. Duct bank to include to 2 manholes.
 - e. Backfill and compaction of excavated soils (Class II for approx. 1 ft around duct).

E. Estimate Methodology

1. The cost was prepared for this conceptual estimate, using the following estimating methodologies and practices: Parametric estimating utilizing costs historical cost from SAP for materials and labor.
2. This estimate is considered a Conceptual estimate.
3. This estimate is considered a bottom rolled up estimate with cost items and breakdown of labor, materials, construction equipment and subcontracted cost.
4. This estimate may include factors costs for items such as conductor cost on a per LF basis or using industry standards for various work elements.

F. Estimate Classification

This estimate is considered Conceptual, based upon little to no project design. Design assumptions are based on similar work conducted for Consumers Energy. This estimate is considered accurate from - 30% to + 50% based on AACE and construction estimating standards.

The current level of design is 0 to 2%. Please refer to the EPMO Cost Estimating Manual for further clarification.

G. Contingency

The contingency that has been included in the cost estimate is based upon the Estimating Judgement process and abides by EPMO direction and guidance. The contingencies percentages that were included in the cost estimates are at 5% for the construction costs. In addition to the standardized contingency based on EPMO direction, A design allowance of 10% was applied to the estimate (Based on the current Design Engineering Completed) to accommodate the infancy of the design.

H. Escalation

Escalation was not included in the cost estimate as estimating assumed that this project is assumed to be executed in 2023.

I. Schedule Basis

The construction duration is expected to be less than 6 months for full completion of the work.

J. Labor Cost Basis

The estimate is based upon contracted crews utilized for the identified scope of work.

K. Taxes

The estimate did not include 6% state sales tax on materials because all material under this project will be considered process material which is not taxable.

L. Freight and Shipping Costs

The estimate assumes that all freight and shipping cost will be incurred by the contractor.

M. Major Assumptions

1. Underground Duct Bank Assumptions

- A. All construction will be completed in 2023.
- B. 5% project contingency was used in the estimates along with 10% design allowance.
- C. AFUDC dollar value is not included in the cost estimate. This cost item is not required unless the project schedule extends beyond six (6) months period.
- D. All internal project support services were based on a 5-month project schedule.
- E. Minimal soil removal included, and environmental fees have been considered.
- F. Demo of Okemos Rd asphalt and sidewalk will be removed by others.
- G. No contaminated Soils
- H. No Temporary Line Required
- I. Duck bank to be install below utilities.
- J. Modification of other utilities by others.

N. Allowances

The following allowances have been included in the cost estimate for specific scope items:

1. Contractor installation
2. Dewatering
3. Hardware installation
4. Timber mat and Crane allowance
5. Design allowance of 10%

O. Exclusions

The following items **have not** been included in the cost estimate:

- A. AFUDC
- B. LVD
- C. No TWA/easement cost

P. Risk

The following items have been identified as being a risk or opportunity to the project, but **have not** been included in the cost estimate:

1. Market Material Pricing Volatility
2. Lead time on materials
3. Possible increase in costs if started in 2022.
4. Site conditions may vary.
5. Site obstructions (See Figure 1-2, 1-3)
6. Fill requirements (assumed reuse of existing materials)
7. Dewatering



R. Acronyms

□	EPM	Enterprise Project Management
□	EPMO	Enterprise Project Management Office
□	ER	Energy Resources
□	GRB	Gate Review Board
□	PGR	Project Gate Review
□	PLP	Project Lifecycle Process
□	PM	Project Manager



To: Meridian Township West Hamilton & Okemos Subcommittee

From: Amber Clark, Neighborhoods & Economic Development Director

Date: September 2, 2025

Re: Funding Resources for Okemos Road Improvements Conversation

History

The proposed redevelopment of the Village of Okemos site includes 200 residential units and approximately 15,000 square feet of commercial space. This scale of development will significantly increase traffic volume, likely exceeding 100 vehicle trips per hour. Such an increase typically triggers the requirement for a left-turn lane at the intersection of Hamilton and Okemos Roads.

Currently, left turns from Okemos Road onto Hamilton Road are prohibited. The Ingham County Road Department is expected to require the developer to fund these improvements. However, public road improvements do not yield a direct return on investment for the developer, making this requirement financially burdensome. Additionally, the developer would be responsible for dedicating public right-of-way to accommodate sidewalks, which further increases costs. These road-related obligations remain a major unresolved barrier to advancing the redevelopment.

Site Details

The estimated cost to mill and repave Okemos Road from Methodist Street to Clinton Street is approximately **\$4 million**. This estimate includes:

- Adding a fifth lane to Okemos Road
- Expanding the right-turn radius for semi-trucks turning onto Hamilton Road
- Dedicating frontage for sidewalks and streetscape enhancements
- Permitting and design costs

These improvements would require the property owner to relinquish frontage along Okemos Road for public use.

Discussion:

Assigning the full cost of road improvements to the developer places significant financial strain on the project from the onset. Banks are unlikely to approve loans for public infrastructure improvements, as these costs do not generate revenue or offer a return on



investment. Lenders typically require a debt coverage ratio of at least 1.25, which is difficult to achieve when the project must absorb non-revenue-generating expenses.

Township staff in coordination with the Ingham County Road Dept. have previously submitted grant applications to secure funding for these improvements. However, federal funding has become more competitive, and some programs are no longer available. Following a recent meeting with the Director of the Ingham County Road Department, it is clear that identifying a viable funding solution is critical.

Township staff recommend exhausting all potential funding sources (local, state, and federal) to bridge the gap between a stalled project and active construction. Staff propose partnering with local engineering firms to explore financing options. HRC, the engineering firm responsible for designing the Okemos Road improvements, has already initiated discussions with the Township to identify possible solutions.

Recommended motion:

MOVE TO RECOMMEND TO THE DDA TO COORDINATE WITH THIRD PARTY ENGINEERING CONSULTANT(S) TO FIND FUNDING SOURCES FOR OKEMOS ROAD IMPROVEMENTS TO SPUR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT. PERMIT PAYMENT FOR CONSULTATION TO NO MORE THAN \$5000 FOR SERVICES RENDERED.