

# Sprawl Bike Tour

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## Purpose:

- Look at issues of sprawl and urban issues
- Encourage students to think about the impact of their lifestyle decisions
- Tie in the issues of lifelong fitness and open space to urban living – How do these issues relate to good urban design?

## Possible Student reports - Student are expected to write 1 to 2 paragraphs on one of the following:

- Neighborhoods. Examine the history of one of the following neighborhoods: Alger Heights, Burton Heights, John Ball Park, West side, Belknap Springs, Heritage Hill, Fulton Heights, Oakdale Park, Ottawa Hills, Baxter Community, Eastown, East Grand Rapids, Wyoming, Kentwood.
- Parks. Examine the history of one of the following parks: Millennium Park, John Ball Zoo, Lamar Park, Ramona Park, Veteran's Park, Garfield Park, Martin Luther King Park, Kent Trails,
- Concepts: New Urbanism, traditional neighborhood design, community based agriculture, co-housing,
- Organizations. Grand Rapids YMCA, ICCF, One of the Grand Rapids Neighborhood Associations, YWCA, The Other Way Ministries, Mel Trotter, DeGage, God's Kitchen

## Reflections on the Experience - Student are expected to reflect on the following:

- What was your favorite neighborhood that we traveled through today? What did you like about it? What was attractive? What was not?
- Use either the walkability or the bikeability checklist form (use which ever one is attached), rate the four communities we traveled through today? Explain the rating you gave.
- What would you like to remember from today's ride? How would you like to apply this information in your life in the future?

# Start Calvin P.E. Fieldhouse

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## Directions to next stop: PARKING LOT ON 28<sup>TH</sup> & RADCLIFFE

- Exit along Burton, heading west to Woodcliff, turn left (south)
- Take Woodcliff to Mulford, turn right (road will simply turn, going west)
- Take Mulford to Ridgemoor, turn left (south)
- Take Ridgemoor to 28<sup>th</sup> street
- STOP IN THE PARKING LOT ON 28<sup>th</sup> & RADCLIFFE

## Possible discussion issues

- Purpose of the trip:
  - Look at issues of sprawl and urban issues
  - Encourage students to think about the impact of their lifestyle decisions
  - Tie in the issues of lifelong fitness and open space to urban living – How do these issues relate to good urban design?
- Bike Safety; Tips for the ride today:
  - Everyone must have a helmet – wear bright or reflective cloths if possible
  - Everyone should have a water bottle
  - Ride single file Stay behind the person in front of you except when on bike paths – where you can ride side by side with one other rider
  - Obey all traffic laws, signals and signs.
  - Signal all turns
  - Ride with (not against) traffic
  - You are responsible for the person behind you.
- SIGN AND TALK ABOUT WAIVER
- Grand Rapids, a city of neighborhoods – It is difficult to define a neighborhood, it can mean many different things to different people. In a real sense, a neighborhood is a living thing, not just a random collection of streets and houses. Neighborhoods are a lot like people. They have specific histories, distinctive appearances, attractive features and problems that challenge those who know them best (Heart and Soul, 2003, p. xv). As we pedal today, try to catch the feel of the various neighborhoods we will visit, how does the neighborhood feel? What is attractive? What is not? But most of all I hope this kindles in you a desire to get to know your neighborhood and to work to make it special for you and your neighbors.
- Difficulty of coordination. Trip will take us through four distinct municipalities which highlights the difficulties of developing a unified planning document for the region.
  - Grand Rapids: Established by two main settlers – Louis Campau and Luius Lyon. Campau enjoyed his status as the sole founder of Grand Rapids village until he

sold the northern half of his plot to Lucius Lyon. The two began to compete for control of the area. While Campau called his village Grand Rapids and cut his streets parallel to his area of the river, Lyon called his village Kent and planted his streets on cardinal directions (north, south, east, west). The two tycoons battled for control of the area, each wanting to name the entire village after his own choosing. Kent however, lost its bid for the village name when the Kent Company went out of business in the mid 1830s and the entire village became incorporated in 1938 as Grand Rapids. Even today we can see the result of this struggle in the many mismatched streets that remain.

The city of Grand Rapids was officially created on May 1, 1850, when the village of Grand Rapids voted to accept the proposed city charter. The population at the time was 2,686.

During the second half of the 19th century the city became a major lumbering center and the premier furniture manufacturing city of the United States. For this reason it was nicknamed "Furniture City". The city also became a center of Dutch immigration in the 19th century.

In 1881, the country's first hydro-electric plant was put to use on the city's west side. Grand Rapids was home to the first regularly scheduled passenger airline in the United States when Stout Air Services began Grand Rapids to Detroit service on July 31, 1926. In 1945, Grand Rapids became the first city in the United States to add fluoride to its drinking water.

- Kentwood is a city in Kent County in the U.S. state of Michigan. As of the 2000 census, the city had a total population of 45,255. The city was originally formed as Paris Township in 1839. It incorporated as a city in 1967 to prevent further annexation of land from the cities of Grand Rapids and Wyoming.
- Wyoming: Incorporated as a city in 1958, realizing that a municipal government wielded more defensive power than a township and the residents of Wyoming did not want to be gobbled up by the city of Grand Rapids.
- East Grand Rapids was established as a village in 1891, it became the city of East Grand Rapids in 1926.

# Stop 1

## Parking lot, 28<sup>th</sup> and Radcliffe

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### Directions to next stop: PLASTER CREEK BIKE TRAIL AT EASTERN

- Cross at the light at Radcliffe and 28<sup>th</sup> Street, heading south
- Take Radcliffe to 29<sup>th</sup> Street, turn left (east)
- Take 29<sup>th</sup> Street to Shaffer, turn right (south)
- Take Schaffer to 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave, turn right (west)
- Take 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to Kalamazoo Ave, cross Kalamazoo and turn left (south)
- Turn into Ken-o-sha school and pick up the Plaster creek bike trail in the parking lot.
- Take the bike trail to Eastern Ave STOP

### Possible discussion issues

- Dependency on the automobile. In the parking lot discuss how pedestrian friendly this area is, note how a car is almost a necessity. Huge parking lots everywhere -- WHY?
- Eastbrook Mall. Opened for business in 1969. Began the pattern of urban sprawl characterized by thriving retail centers away from the downtown area. It forced central cities across the country to find new ways to remain healthy.
- Loss of agricultural land. As you travel west on 32<sup>nd</sup> notice the remnant of agricultural land and how new housing developments continue to take farm land away.
- Sidewalks: Examine the use of sidewalks as we move to our next stops. Are sidewalks easily accessible?

### Side Trips

- Instead of turning off Kalamazoo into Ken-o-sha school continue on Kalamazoo to 44<sup>th</sup> and take the Paul Henry Trail at the SE corner of 44<sup>th</sup> and Kalamazoo. This trail goes all the way to 60<sup>th</sup> – lots of sprawl (farms interspersed with new developments)

## Stop 2 Plaster Creek and Eastern

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### Directions to next stop: Alger Height's Business District

- Turn right onto Eastern avenue (north), cross 28<sup>th</sup> street and continue to Alger Heights business district
- STOP IN THE GREEN SPACE JUST SOUTH OF THE FIFTH THIRD BANK

### Possible discussion issues

- Environmental health of Plaster Creek
- Environmental concerns in Grand Rapids
  - Lead poisoning
  - Others?

## Stop 3 Alger Heights Business District

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### Directions to next stop: PLASTER CREEK PARK

- Burton to Linden, turn right (south)
- Linden to Mulford, turn right (west)
- Mulford to College, turn left (south)
- College to Godwin, turn left
- Godwin to Brookside, turn right
- Brookside to Madison, turn right (south)
- Madison to Ken-o-sha Dr, turn left (west, along Plaster Creek)
- Ken-o-sha to Division and jog north to Plaster Creek Dr, turn left (west)
- Plaster Creek Dr. to Buchanan (down the embankment and back on bike trail along Plaster Creek to Plaster Creek Park)
- STOP AT PLASTER CREEK PARK

### Possible discussion issues

- Alger Heights Neighborhood. Sprung up almost overnight during the early years of World War II. The business district was established in 1947. It was known as a beautiful neighborhood, heavily wooded along Plaster Creek.
- Neighborhood grocery stores: Many neighborhood grocery stores were lost during the 1930s and 1940s robbing neighborhoods of the ethnic flavor and specialization of small, neighborhood food stores. Instead people turned to larger supermarkets, such as A & P or Kroger's. George Harper describes how this trend affected the Dutch in the Eastern Avenue neighborhood:

*In the 1930s there were still many small shops in the Eastern-Wealthy area. The A & P had begun to destroy the market for these shops, but many hung on, serving a dwindling clientele. Most of the shops were family enterprises, and in some cases the family lived behind or above the shop. The shops had large front windows, which were used to display some of the goods. And often the family cat would lie in the window absorbing sunlight, under the glass curtains that hung from brass rods at the top of the window...The shop often had a warning bell attached to the door frame which jangled whenever a customer opened the door. The shopkeeper would then emerge from the back room and do business.*

*But not only business: Often the customer entered in expectation of news as well as merchandise. The most sought after news was church news; then came gossip about families in that area, or of political matters in the city or neighborhood, or excited descriptions of recent catastrophes such as streetcar/automobile collisions. The shops functioned as message centers also – when few had telephones, one way to communicate with others in the community was to leave a message with the shopkeeper or his*

assistants. *The shops were more than mere commercial enterprises; they had important social and political functions.*

In 1926, no more than 10 large grocery stores existed in Grand Rapids. By 1940, the A & P supermarket chain alone had 12 stores. (*Heart and Soul*, p. 121).

- What small grocery stores still exist in Grand Rapids? Was it the competition of larger grocery stores or the fact that second generation immigrants moved out of neighborhoods that is responsible for the loss of small ethnic grocers?
- **Big Box Retail:** Refers to places like Walmart and Sam's. What are the tradeoffs of using places like Walmart versus the small neighborhood grocery store or even a place like D & W? What principles do you use in buying for your wants and needs?
  - What is Big box retail:
    - Large, industrial style structures
    - Uniform in architecture and appearance
    - Usually 1-story of floor space but 3-stories tall
    - 20,000 to 200,000 square feet of footprint
    - Parking lots can be 4 to 7 times the size of store footprint
  - Categories of Big Boxes
    - Discount Department stores – Walmart, K-mart
    - Category killers – Home Depot, Toys R Us, Ikea
    - Outlet stores – Burlington Coat Factory
    - Warehouse clubs – Sam's Club, Costco
  - Positive Impacts of Big Box Retail
    - Convenience and low prices
    - Tax revenue & Jobs
    - May benefit other retailers by attracting shoppers
  - Negative impacts of big box retail
    - Increased cost of public services (police, utilities, fire)
    - Short lifespan (5 to 10 years)
    - Increased stormwater runoff/pollution
    - Job creation or job transfer
    - Traffic – 10,000 trips/day
    - May drive local retailers out of business
    - Profits sent outside the community – local merchants generate substantially greater economic impact than chain retailers – Recent study, for every \$100 in consumer spending at Borders, the local economic impact is only \$13. The same amount spent with a local merchant yields \$45 in local spending.
  - Pole of Vermont resident in 2004 – Where would you prefer to shop for goods and services?
    - Big box store, mall, or store along highway 26%
    - Store in neighborhood or nearby downtown/village center 74%

## Stop 4 Plaster Creek Park

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### Directions to next stop: LAMAR PARK

- Take the bike trail from Plaster Creek Park to Stafford
- Take Stafford to Burton St, turn right (west)
- Take Burton (cross 131), continue to Beverly (Burton dead ends at Beverly)
- Take Beverly to Farrogot, turn right
- Take Farrogot to the bike route to Lee to Porter, turn right (west)
- Porter to Winfield
- STOP AT LAMAR PARK

### Possible discussion issues

- Burton Heights Neighborhood. Area around Burton and Division, includes Garfield Park (swimming pool, frisbee golf course). Originally Burton Heights was a farming community, just outside of Grand Rapids. Several geographical features put Burton Heights on the map as a farming community. First, Division Avenue was the major road between Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo. Second, Plaster Creek offer the area ample water. Finally, the elevation of the land made the area more valuable.

The streetcar arrived at the intersection of Burton and Division in 1893. Though Garfield park was extremely popular within the developing neighborhood, it was not advertised as a major resort by the streetcar company (as opposed to Ramona park or John Ball Zoo). Those who came to settle in Burton Heights came for the attraction of the unsettled land and its beautiful location.

The land north of Burton Street developed first and was annexed by the city in 1891. South of Burton St. quickly followed, although it wasn't until 1916 that the area to Alger Street was annexed as people wanted to stay outside the city and its taxes. This area of Grand Rapids was quite diverse, by the 1930s, 11 churches of different denominations thrived in Burton Heights. Many of these churches survive today and the neighborhood continues to be diverse with a large population of Hispanics calling the area home.

- Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department: With over 2,000 acres of parklands located throughout the City, the Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department welcomes you to enjoy the natural beauty and recreational opportunities in our community. Includes 78 parks, one golf course and six cemeteries. In addition, the department offers a wide variety of recreation programs for people of all ages.

### Side Trips

- Take Burton up to the Burton Height business district at the corner of Burton & Division.
- Visit Garfield Park at the corner of Madison and Burton.



## Stop 5 Lamar Park

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### Directions to next stop: BRIDGE OVER GRAND RIVER ON KENT TRAILS

- Off of Porter turn left onto Winfield bike path to Lee (turns into 27<sup>th</sup> Street)
- Take 27<sup>th</sup> Street to Ivanrest, turn right (west)
- Take Ivanrest west, cross Chicago Drive and get on the the Kent County Trail.
- Take the trail north to the Grand River bridge STOP

### Possible discussion issues

- City of Wyoming.
  - Today, Wyoming is Michigan's 16<sup>th</sup> largest community with Michigan's largest industrial tax base.
- Wyoming Park and Recreation Department. (Ask Kenny Westrate)
- Bike friendly communities. Talk about how bike friendly the Grand Rapids metropolitan area is using the attached checklist.
  - Have the group evaluate the route so far for bike usability, continue to evaluate the ride on how easy or difficult it is to ride a bike in Grand Rapids.

### Side Trips

- When the group arrives on Ivanrest, go south on Kent Trails to Bryon Center rather than north towards John Ball Zoo.

### Other notes

- Old ball parks in Grand Rapids.
  - Ramona Field – Hosted the Detroit Tigers vs Washington on May 24, 1903 because there were no rules against playing on Sunday. “The game on Sunday is largely in nature of a test of Grand Rapids as a baseball town. If the game draws satisfactorily it is expected that the remainder of the Sunday games scheduled for Detroit will be played here.” Evening Press, May 22, 1903
  - Baseball in Grand Rapids during the depression
    - Grand Rapids struggled to maintain teams in the Michigan-Ontario League as well as the Central/Michigan State League , attendance was poor , schedules curtailed and play suspended
    - MLB in a effort to build a larger fan base, barnstormed across the country
    - Because Grand Rapids was short distance off of the Detroit to Chicago train route it became a popular place for exhibition baseball
    - Allowing the fans to see a number of professional teams and their stars.

- Bigelow Field on the corner of 39<sup>th</sup> and South Division.
  - Home of the Grand Rapids Jets, Grand Rapids Athletics (Black league) and the Grand Rapids Chicks.
- Grand Rapids Chicks Baseball Team. Played at Bigelow Field.
  - <http://www.michiganhistorymagazine.com/extra/women/chicks.html>  
 Until the West Michigan Whitecaps began their inaugural season in 1994, Grand Rapids had been without a professional baseball team for 40 years, since the Grand Rapids Chicks disbanded in 1954. But Grand Rapids has a strong history of baseball as more than 30 professional teams, both men's and women's, and dozens of amateur leagues have called this area home since 1883.

Playing in a variety of leagues, the teams went by such nicknames as Furnituremakers, Rustlers, Gold Bugs, Ganzeloids, Braves, Black Sox, Bissell Sweepers, Bill-Eds, Billberts, Billbobs, Dodger Colts, Chicks, Orphans, Jets and Joshers.

The original professional team in Grand Rapids was organized in late 1882 and played as a charter franchise in the Northwestern League in 1883. The team had no nickname and played home games at Recreation Park on weekdays and at Alger Park on Reeds Lake on weekends.

Many teams came and went in the early 1900's, but with the onset of the Great Depression in the late '20's, professional baseball all but ended in Grand Rapids.

Fans were still able to enjoy semi-pro baseball in the area during the Depression. When the Brooklyn Dodgers barnstormed through Grand Rapids in 1939, they discovered more than 50 teams playing in six city leagues. Because enthusiasm for the game was so high, the Dodgers decided to place a farm team in Grand Rapids for the 1940 season. The Dodger Colts, as the team was called, played at Bigelow Field on South Division until the outbreak of World War II ended their stay.

Toward the end of the war, the Chicks of the All American Girls Professional Baseball League (immortalized in the movie "A League of Their Own") came to Grand Rapids from Milwaukee. The Chicks were popular and played excellent baseball, winning the AAGPBL playoff pennant in 1947 and again in 1953, but were forced to disband when the league folded in 1954.

For a time, the Chicks had competition from a men's team, the Grand Rapids Jets, who played minor league baseball in the Central League from 1948 through 1951.

Locally-sponsored professional baseball all but disappeared in this country during the 1950's as television brought major league baseball into the home. But local baseball legend Bob Sullivan successfully bucked this trend. His team, the Sullivans, were noted for their success in amateur baseball play and in sending players to the majors for almost four decades.

Another local hero, Ted Rasberry, owned the Grand Rapids Black Sox and later the Detroit Stars and the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro Leagues. Rasberry fought to keep black baseball alive until 1960, when the league, which at one point consisted of 16 teams, shrunk to only four (two of them being Rasberry's Stars and Monarchs) due to the falling of the racial barrier.

The West Michigan Whitecaps are keeping the century-old baseball tradition alive. The Whitecaps recognized the rich history of baseball in Grand Rapids with six "Turn Back The Clock" tribute games in 1996. Players dressed in old-time uniforms and played one game each as the 1899 Furnituremakers, the 1903 Orphans, the 1921 Joshers, the 1922 Billbobs, the 1948 Black Sox and the 1950 Jets. The Whitecaps have also represented the Holland Flying Dutchmen and the Ludington Mariners in special "Turn Back The Clock" games.

Despite the number of teams that have called Grand Rapids home, the Whitecaps became Grand Rapids' first professional sports team to win a championship. They won the Midwest League championship again in 1998.

# Stop 6

## Kent County Trails – Bridge over the Grand River

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### Directions to next stop: JOHN BALL ZOO

- Cross the bridge and turn right and head north on the Kent County Trail
- STOP AT THE ENTRANCE TO JOHN BALL ZOO

### Possible discussion issues

- Kent County Trail System, Kent Trails follows 15 miles of converted railroad track, surface streets and easement to form a pathway through the Grand Rapids metropolitan area. The trails are a result of coordinated planning by Kent County Parks, Grand Rapids, Grandville, Walker, Wyoming and Byron Townships. The trail starts at John Ball Zoo and runs to Byron Center on 84<sup>th</sup> street.
- Millennium Park. Urban greenspace includes 1,500 acres and nearly ten miles of frontage on both sides of the Grand River. The initial piece of the park includes a beach, beach house, fishing pier, adventure playground, picnic shelters, etc. All features include universal access. When completed the park will be one of the largest urban parks in the country, much larger than Central Park in New York.
- Greenways:

#### 1. What is a Greenway?

Greenways are corridors of land recognized for their ability to connect people and places together. These ribbons of open space are located within linear corridors that are either natural, such as rivers and streams, or manmade, such as abandoned railroad beds and utility corridors. Greenways as vegetated buffers protect natural habitats, improve water quality and reduce the impacts of flooding in floodplain areas. Most greenways contain trails, which enhance existing recreational opportunities, provide routes for alternative transportation, and improve the overall quality of life in an area.

#### 2. Who uses a greenway?

Greenway trails can be paved or unpaved, and can be designed to accommodate a variety of trail users, including bicyclists, walkers, hikers, joggers, skaters, horseback riders, and those confined to wheelchairs.

#### 3. What are the benefits of greenways?

**Recreation.** The growing popularity of outdoor recreation activities, such as rollerblading and mountain biking, combined with the rapid loss of community open spaces has increased the need for quality recreational facilities such as greenways. Greenways can not only serve as stand-alone facilities, complete with parking areas and amenities such as benches and informational signage, they can also enhance the existing recreational resources in an area by linking parks, schools and recreational centers.

**Transportation.** Two-thirds of all the trips we make are for a distance of five miles or less. Greenway trails, as part of a local or regional system, offer transportation alternatives by connecting

homes, workplaces, schools, parks, shopping centers and cultural attractions. Using trails to bicycle or walk for short-distance trips reduces air pollution and increases the mobility of those who cannot drive.

**Health.** According to the Surgeon General, moderate exercise, such as walking and bicycling, performed on a regular basis can yield substantial health benefits for individuals. Greenway trails provide safe and convenient places for these activities, which have been proven to reduce stress, burn excess fat, and reduce a person's risk of developing cardiovascular problems, diabetes, cancer, and arthritis.

**Economic.** Greenways have been proven to attract and retain tourists and expand tourism revenues in many communities. Trail users spend money in places such as hotels, restaurants, retail stores, campgrounds, bicycle shops, bed and breakfasts, gas stations, and ice cream stands. A case in point is the Tallahassee-St. Marks Trail in Florida where approximately 170,000 people visit every year, and the average user spends more than \$11 a day (1992 National Park Service Study). Another example is the Northern Central Rail Trail in rural Maryland which supports 264 jobs statewide and produces in excess of \$3.38 million in annual revenues.

Greenways are also economic assets that increase the real estate value of adjacent properties. A recent study from the real estate industry revealed that "walking and biking paths" ranked 3rd among 39 features identified by homebuyers as crucial factors in their home-purchasing decisions (1994 American Lives Study). Additionally, according to a study of an urban trail in the Denver metro area, 57% of residents surveyed felt that the trail would make their home easier to sell (*The Effect of Greenways on Property Values and Public Safety*).

**Education.** The interpretation of natural, historic and cultural resources along a greenway serves to educate young and old alike. Examples of communities that have incorporated educational themes in the development of greenways include: the Swift Creek Recycled Greenway in Cary, NC, where the use of recycled waste by-products is the featured element of the trail; the Stones River Greenway in Murfreesboro, TN, which emphasizes Civil War history; and the Boulder Greenway System in Boulder, CO, where "outdoor classrooms" help children learn about surrounding natural systems.

**Environmental.** Greenways are important ecological tools for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. They improve water quality by establishing buffers along creeks and streams and providing habitat for a diversity of plant and animal species. These buffers serve as natural filters, trapping pollutants from urban runoff, eroding areas and agricultural lands. Additionally, greenways improve air quality by encouraging non-polluting forms of transportation.

**Floodplain Management.** In the 1990s, flooding has caused more damage to communities across the nation than all other types of natural disasters combined. Flooding costs Americans billions of dollars in property losses every year. One reason for these losses is the fact that many floodprone areas have been heavily developed. Today, communities are beginning to realize the benefit in protecting floodprone areas through greenway development strategies, which reduces the impacts of flooding.

**Quality of Life.** Communities are always looking for ways to improve quality of life, which not only includes a strong economy and low taxes, but also a clean environment, good education system, access to outdoor resources and neighborhoods that are friendly and free of crime. Greenways are an inexpensive way for cities and towns to improve their quality of life by providing all of these benefits. An improved quality of life attracts individuals and corporations wishing to relocate and invest in the community, thereby improving the local economy as well.

#### 4. How are greenways funded?

There are many different sources of funds for the acquisition, development and management of greenway facilities. To maximize the amount of financial support for any greenway project, local

public sector funds should be combined with funds from state, federal and private sector sources. Many communities involved with greenway implementation are choosing to leverage local money as a match for outside funding sources, in essence multiplying their resources.

The Transportation Efficiency Act of the 21st Century (TEA21), and its predecessor, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), is the single largest source of federal funding for greenway and other bicycle and pedestrian projects in the United States. It is administered through the United States Department of Transportation and provides up to 80% of the cost of developing and constructing facilities such as greenways, rail-trails, sidewalks and bike lanes. Contact the organizations listed below for more information on TEA21 and other funding sources. (source: [www.greenways.com](http://www.greenways.com))

- Rails to Trails Network's mission is to *Create a nationwide network of trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors to build healthier places for healthier people.*

### Side Trips

- Millennium Park
- Johnson Park. At the west end of the bridge turn south toward Johnson Park rather north toward John Ball Zoo.

# Stop 7

## John Ball Park

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### Directions to next stop: GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIV., PEW CAMPUS

- From John Ball Zoo, head east on Fulton
- STOP IN THE COURTYARD OF THE GVSU PEW CAMPUS

### Possible discussion issues

- Trolley Routes in early Grand Rapids.
  - The *Trolley Topics* was created in 1900, devoted to the interest of the patrons that passengers read for information and amusement. .
  - As trolley routes grew, management realized they could transport commuters to work all week long, but on Sundays, no one rode streetcars. To collect profits on Sundays and holidays, the railway companies focused on the development of streetcar service for recreational use to such places as John Ball Zoo, Reeds Lake and the fairground at Comstock Park. Later, the owners began to create and promote their own resorts, such as North Park and Ramona Park.
  - Street cars offered mobility, allowing families to live in one place, attend church somewhere else, work downtown, visit friends in other areas and visit parks or resorts each week end.
  - Most street car suburbs developed their own business districts within walking distance of residents, each new development becoming a virtually autonomous entity.
  - Heyday of the trolleys was in the 1910s when GR residents purchased over 30 million rides at a cost of a nickel each.
  - Trolleys lose out to automobiles and buses in the 1920s and 1930s, helped by a 1924 fire of the trolley barn on Hall street. The last trolley rolled from Campau Square to Ramona park on August 25, 1935.

- John Ball Zoo:

The John Ball Zoo is contained within John Ball Park. Situated on the ravines and bluffs along the west edge of the park, the zoo houses a variety of animals from around the world and is a significant regional attraction.

The original land for the park was donated to the city by noted pioneer and explorer [John Ball](#) upon his death in 1884. The city later purchased more land and began adding amenities, including ponds, a theater, a band shell, playgrounds, ballfields, trails and the zoo. Parts of the unimproved areas of the park were used for routing [I-196](#) when it was constructed in the early 1960s.

The John Ball Park and Zoo were operated by the City of Grand Rapids until 1989, when the park, known as a regional asset because of the zoo, was sold to

[Kent County, Michigan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Ball_Park). Kent County continues to operate and maintain the park and zoo. Retrieved from "[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Ball\\_Park](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Ball_Park)"

- Nutrition (Community Supported Agriculture - CSA): CSA is a partnership of mutual commitment between a farm and a community of supporters which provides a direct link between the production and consumption of food. Supporters cover a farm's yearly operating budget by purchasing a share of the season's harvest. CSA members make a commitment to support the farm throughout the season, and assume the costs, risks and bounty of growing food along with the farmer or grower. Members help pay for seeds, fertilizer, water, equipment maintenance, labor, etc. In return, the farm provides, to the best of its ability, a healthy supply of seasonal fresh produce throughout the growing season. Becoming a member creates a responsible relationship between people and the food they eat, the land on which it is grown and those who grow it.

This mutually supportive relationship between local farmers, growers and community members helps create an economically stable farm operation in which members are assured the highest quality produce, often at below retail prices. In return, farmers and growers are guaranteed a reliable market for a diverse selection of crops.

CSA reflects an innovative and resourceful strategy to connect local farmers with local consumers; develop a regional food supply and strong local economy; maintain a sense of community; encourage land stewardship; and honor the knowledge and experience of growers and producers working with small to medium farms. CSA is a unique model of local agriculture that has developed from many different influences. More than 30 years ago in Japan, a group of women concerned about the increase in food imports and the corresponding decrease in the farming population initiated a direct growing and purchasing relationship between their group and local farms. This arrangement, called "teikei" in Japanese, translates to "putting the farmers' face on food." A similar community farming approach has been successful in Europe. A variation of this concept traveled from Europe to the U.S. via the biodynamic community. This method was adapted locally and given the name "Community Supported Agriculture" at Indian Line Farm, Massachusetts, in 1985. There are now over 1000 CSA farms across the US and Canada.

- West side neighborhoods: West side neighborhoods have had amazing ethnic diversity over the years – Remains of significant Native American, Polish, Lithuanian, Irish, Dutch, and German population can still be found throughout the West side. Traces of Armenian, Jewish, Latvian, Hungarian, Italian, Greek, Swedish, Danish, and various other immigrant populations are also present and important to the unique flavor of the west side.

### Side Trips

- Lunch in a small local restaurant like the Adobe or have students bring their lunch.
- Invite Trillium Farms to meet with us over lunch to discuss community based agriculture



## Other notes

- Can you find the golden egg? The streetcar companies stretched their creative craniums to fill every seat on every streetcar with riders. During the summer of 1906, in an attempt to encourage riders to visit the amusement parks and entertainment sites, the newsletter *Trolley Topics* of the Grand Rapids Railway company announced the hunt for the golden eggs.

As passengers traveled during the summer, *Trolley Times* updated them on the hunt for several golden eggs that the railway company had placed in the various parks or attraction sites. The pamphlet urged readers to tour all of the attraction sites to search for the golden eggs. Those who located the eggs could redeem them for five dollars worth of street car tickets. The fortune would go a long way with a fare of only five cents.

Some riders criticized the egg hunt, which dragged on throughout July with no eggs in sight. *Trolley Topics* claimed that the eggs were located in plain view. The pamphlet answered any critics by stating that the hunt was not about the nickel. In fact they claimed the eggs could be found in any downtown park that people could access on foot.

When someone did find two golden eggs, one in John Ball Zoo and another in North Park, it turned out the eggs hadn't been initialed properly; a safeguard that the railway company had taken before planting the eggs. Someone, *Trolley Topic* claimed had placed these false eggs as a hoax. Therefore, the contest would be closed the following week if the real eggs were not found. The contest ended July 28, 1906 without a winner. *Trolley Topics* disclosed the location of the five initialed eggs at Lincoln Park, North Park, Reeds Lake, and the bleachers of the baseball park on Market Avenue (*Heart and Soul*, p. 118)

## Stop 8

### Grand Valley State University, Downtown campus

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#### Directions to next stop: VAN ANDEL ARENA

- Exit the east side of the courtyard at Front Street,
- Go under US 131, cross the walking bridge over the Grand River to Monroe, turn right
- Take Monroe to Fulton and turn left (east)
- STOP IN FRONT OF THE VAN ANDEL ARENA

#### Possible discussion issues

- Pew Campus of GVSU: Built to create an academic village in a urban setting. Connected building around a public square, attracting over 7,000 students a year.
- The coming of the expressway. Expressways, an idea of President Eisenhower, came to Grand Rapids in 1961 with the opening of US 131. While expressways made it easier for automobiles to get to and from downtown this opportunity had a price. Many established neighborhoods as well as historic buildings (like Union Station) were destroyed in the building of the expressways. Another example of the problem created by the coming of expressways was when I-196 cut off the Belknap Lookout neighborhood from Michigan avenue. Many stores were isolated from the community and the freeway became a psychological barrier from the city to the south.
- Smart growth principles:
  - Mixed land use
  - Create range of housing types and choices
  - Provide transportation options
  - Protect farmland and open space
  - Invest in existing communities
  - Make development process predictable
  - Steer growth away from natural hazards
  - Invest public resource wisely
  - Encourage community collaboration
- Principles of new urbanism: See attached.

#### Side Trips

- Visit the new David D. Hunting YMCA

## Stop 9 Van Andel Arena

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### Directions to next stop: CIVIC AUDITORIUM

- Take Fulton east to Division, turn left (north) and take an immediate left onto Monroe mall (on the sidewalk)
- Follow the mall down to Monroe, turn right and go just past the Grand hotel
- Cross Monroe and continue to the river (by the civic auditorium),
- STOP AT THE CIVIC AUDITORIUM

### Possible discussion issues

- The role of sports and cultural arenas in urban renewal. The growing literature on the economic impact of professional sports facilities and franchises on urban economies should prove to be a fertile area for future research. New stadium and arena construction is in the midst of a boom period. Cities are increasingly interested in these facilities as the centerpiece of urban renewal projects, and may be willing to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in public subsidies on these projects. Despite a growing body of academic research that contains no evidence supporting the idea that sports facilities are important engines of economic growth, the sizable gulf between the predictions of prospective “economic impact studies” and the academic literature still exists; proposed stadium and arena construction projects still go forward based on the promise of large positive tangible economic benefits flowing from these projects. The flawed “multiplier” approach remains firmly entrenched as the empirical tool of choice among proponents of stadium subsidies. Only additional careful empirical research, and better dissemination of the existing results in the literature, can close the gulf between “impact studies” and academic research and help tax payers to make informed decisions about subsidies for sports facility construction.
  - Do you think that professional sports teams and arenas contributes or takes away from a community? Do you think that professional sports teams and arenas contributes or takes away from urban development?
  - See attached article.
- Cool cities. Richard Florida in his book *The Rise of the Creative Class* advocates that city planners must look for ways to create cool cities where creative people can integrate their work and leisure. According to Florida the characteristics of creative communities are:
  - Creative centers encourage the development of “third places” – venues like coffee shops, bookstores, and cafés in which we find less formal acquaintances. These third places comprise the heart of a community’s social vitality where people hang out simply for the pleasures of good company and lively conversation.
  - Creative centers provide recreation on a just in time basis by offering lifestyle amenities close at hand; such amenities include urban parks, bike lanes, and off road trails for running, cycling, rollerblading or just walking the dog. In addition,

creative centers encourage people to seek out leisure experiences that involve them, support their search for an active and fitness conscious lifestyle, as well as foster their desire for an energetic, organic and indigenous street level culture.

- Creative centers celebrate diversity. A diverse community is a sign of a place open to outsiders. Diversity also means excitement and energy. An attractive place doesn't have to be a big city, but it has to be cosmopolitan – a place where anyone can find a peer group to be comfortable with and also find other groups to be stimulated by; a place seething with the interplay of cultures and ideas, a place where outsiders can quickly become insiders.
- Creative centers are authentic. Authenticity comes from several aspects of a community: historic building, established neighborhoods, a unique music scene or specific cultural attributes.
- Creative centers offer a vibrancy of street life, café culture, arts, music and people engaging in outdoor activities – altogether a lot of active , exciting, creative endeavors.

The bottom line according to Florida *“is that cities need a people climate even more than they need a business climate. This means supporting creativity across the board and building a community that is attractive to creative people, not just to high tech companies...instead of subsidizing companies, stadiums and retail centers, communities need to be open to diversity and invest in the kinds of lifestyle options and amenities people really want”* (p. 283).

- As we tour downtown Grand Rapids, how is the city doing in terms of creating a cool city? What elements are present in Grand Rapids and what elements are missing?
  - How does Van Andel arena contribute to urban renewal? How might it detract from urban renewal?
- New Grand Rapids Art Museum. The new Grand Rapids Art Museum will be located at 101 Monroe Center in downtown Grand Rapids. The 125,000 square foot facility is located adjacent to an urban park designed by Maya Lin. Construction will be completed in Fall 2006. A \$75 million Capital Campaign, now at 85% completion, includes the \$55 million museum facility, site acquisition and operating endowment.

### Side Trips

- Heartside neighborhood was initially settled by Dutch immigrants in the late 1840s. Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century this neighborhood was quite affluent due to its proximity to Union Station but when the railroads fell victim to the automobile the neighborhood began to decay. Today the area is part of a major re-vitalization process. Today the neighborhood strives to reflect its proud past while still finding room for those who are poor and/or being displaced from other places of the city. A variety of social services such as God's Kitchen, Mel Trotter Mission, Degage, and Dwelling Place are an integral part of the Heartside neighborhood.

# Stop 10

## Civic Auditorium

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### Directions to next stop: CANAL STREET PARK

- Turn right on the riverside bike path (behind the convention center, cross Michigan Street and continue on to the park
- STOP AT CANAL STREET PARK

### Possible discussion issues

- Cornerstone of initial renewal in Grand Rapids. Amway Grand Hotel and Ford Presidential Museum the start of Grand Rapids urban renewal in the early 1980s.
- The role of cultural amenities in urban renewal. See attached article
- Measuring a cities walkability. See attached checklist and discuss how to make communities more walkable.

### Side Trips

- Ford Museum
- Grand Rapids Museum

# Stop 11

## Canal Street Park

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### Directions to next stop: BELKNAP BLUFFS

- Ride the bike path to the end of Canal Street Park to \_\_\_\_\_
- Take \_\_\_\_\_ to Belknap park (turn right)
- Through the park and up the path on the side of the hill

### Possible discussion issues - Check the signs in the park.

- Role of the river in the development of the Grand Rapids. The river has always been an important part of Grand Rapids History.
- From factory to condos, the story of the Boardwalk.  
Living in grand style near the heart of the city has never been more reasonably priced. The Boardwalk Uptown Community offers studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartment living in a relaxed and charming atmosphere. We restored the historic Berkey and Gay Furniture building – preserving its turn-of-the-century exterior and unmatched craftsmanship – and converted its spacious five-story interior into 252 beautiful, contemporary apartments.
- Furniture City.

### Side Trips

- Continue on the bike trail to Riverfront Park, you can catch the White Pines Trail all the way to Rockford.
- Visit the fish ladder on the west side of the river.

### Other notes

- Belknap Springs Art Project and Park (Historical marker at the top of the bluff)

# Stop 12 Bluffs

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## Directions to next stop: Veteran's Park

- Coit to Michigan, turn right (west)
- Take Michigan to the first traffic light (Bostwick), turn left (south)
- Continue through GRCC – STOP AT VETERAN’S PARK

## Possible discussion issues - Stop at both overlooks

- Loss of farm land along Alpine (looking north from Bluff stop 1).
- Re-using factories (American Seating Company) from Bluff stop 2.
- Grand Rapids First Co-housing Complex  
Co-housing is the name of a type of collaborative housing that attempts to overcome the alienation of modern subdivisions in which no-one knows their neighbors, and there is no sense of community. It is characterized by private dwellings with their own kitchen, living-dining room etc, but also extensive common facilities. The common house may include a large dining room, kitchen, lounges, meeting rooms, recreation facilities, library, workshops, and children's space.

Usually, co-housing communities are designed and managed by the residents, and are intentional neighborhoods: the people are consciously committed to living as a community; the physical design itself encourages that and facilitates social contact. The typical co-housing community has 20 to 30 single family homes along a pedestrian street or clustered around a courtyard. Residents of cohousing communities often have several optional group meals in the common building each week.

This type of housing began in Denmark in the late 1960s, and spread to North America in the late 1980s. There are now more than a hundred cohousing communities completed or in development across the United States and Canada.

## **The Main Characteristics of Co-housing**

1. **PARTICIPATORY PROCESS.** Future residents participate in the design of the community so that it meets their needs. Some co-housing communities are initiated or driven by a developer, which may actually make it easier for more future residents to participate. However, a well-designed, pedestrian-oriented community without resident participation in the planning may be "co-housing-inspired," but it is not a co-housing community.
2. **NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN.** The physical layout and orientation of the buildings (the site plan) encourages a sense of community. For example, the private residences

are clustered on the site leaving more shared open space, the dwellings typically face each other across a pedestrian street or courtyard, and/or cars are parked on the periphery. The common house is often visible from the front door of every dwelling. But more important than any of these specifics is that the intent is to create a strong sense of community with design as one of the facilitators.

3. **COMMON FACILITIES.** Common facilities are designed for daily use, are an integral part of the community, and are always supplemental to the private residences. The common house typically includes a common kitchen, dining area, sitting area, children's playroom and laundry and may also have a workshop, library, exercise room, crafts room and/or one or two guest rooms. Except on very tight urban sites, co-housing communities often have playground equipment, lawns, and gardens as well. Since the buildings are clustered, larger sites may retain several or many acres of undeveloped shared open space.
4. **RESIDENT MANAGEMENT.** Co-housing communities are managed by their residents. Residents also do most of the work required to maintain the property, participate in the preparation of common meals and meet regularly to develop policies and do problem-solving for the community.
5. **NON-HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE AND DECISION-MAKING.** In co-housing communities there are leadership roles, but no one person or persons who has authority over others. Most groups start with one or two "burning souls" but as people join the group, each person takes on one or more roles consistent with his or her skills, abilities or interests. Most co-housing groups make all of their decisions by consensus, and although many groups have a policy for voting if consensus cannot be reached after a number of attempts, it is very rarely or never necessary to resort to voting.
6. **NO SHARED COMMUNITY ECONOMY.** The community is not a source of income for its members. Occasionally, a co-housing community will pay one of its own members to do a specific (usually time limited) task, but more typically the task will simply be considered to be that member's contribution to the shared responsibilities.

### Side Trips

- Site of Grand Rapids first co-housing site
- Van Andel Institute (Butterworth Hospital)



## Stop 13 Veteran's Park

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### Directions to next stop: ICCF

- Cross Fulton and continue South on Sheldon
- Sheldon to Maple, turn left (east)
- Maple to Jefferson, turn right (south)
- STOP AT THE ICCF OFFICE

### Possible discussion issues

- Old YMCA – The downtown branch of the YMCA was established in 1866 by a small group of men meeting in the chapel of the First Park Congregational Church. The first building is constructed in 1885 with a few meeting rooms and study areas. In 1892 the a new \$100,000 building is constructed. It included a gymnasium, swimming pool, track and library room (now the site of the Federal Square Building). In 1915, a new building was constructed just North of Veteran's Park (at a cost of \$250,000), In 2005, the downtown Y moved to its new site on the West Side by the GVSU's Pew Campus. The Mission of the YMCA is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. The vision of the GR Metropolitan Y is to be the premier community organization in the development of character, leadership skills, and healthy lifestyles. Values include: Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility.
- YWCA. The YWCA of Grand Rapids has been a place of renewal and healing for over 100 years. Today, we offer services that respond to the issues of domestic violence, sexual assault and child sexual abuse, as well as health fitness programs that help families grow strong in body and mind, and empowerment programs that allow girls to realize their full potential.

The YWCA of Grand Rapids will empower women, promote diversity, and advocate for justice and equality

- Library system in Grand Rapids.

# Stop 14

## ICCF

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### Directions to next stop: FIRST CRC PARKING LOT

- Jefferson to Logan, head east
- Logan to Madison, turn right (south)
- Madison to Franklin, turn left (east)
- Franklin to Union, turn left (north)
- Union to Bates, turn right (east)
- STOP AT FRONT OF FIRST CRC

### Possible discussion issues

- Taxes and the desertion of the inner city. The never ending cycle of loss of tax revenue as people move out of the city because of lack of service or poor schools but as more tax dollars are lost, more services are cut. Look at the demographic charts for the Wealthy/Jefferson area.
- Inner City Christian Federation - ICCF.  
In response to God's call to justice, the Inner City Christian Federation provides housing opportunities and services that encourage family responsibility and independence, thereby helping to build stable communities.

The Inner City Christian Federation is one of the oldest Community Development Corporations in the State of Michigan. It had its start as a volunteer organization called Project Conserve in 1974. Between 1974 and 1977, volunteers totally rehabilitated two vacant and deteriorated houses. In 1977, Project Conserve formally incorporated assuming the corporate structure of the Inner City Christian Foundation. Shortly thereafter, the name was changed to the Inner City Christian Federation. Between late 1977 and mid 1982, ICCF rehabilitated 12 additional houses with a combination of volunteer assistance, paid building trades employees and a youth employment training program. Because of funding difficulties, no houses were rehabilitated between October of 1982 and July of 1985. During this period, ICCF continued its community development services by painting and roofing houses owned by very low income Grand Rapids residents.

In 1993, ICCF completed its first newly constructed single family house for ownership. Since 1997, over 90% of the organization's annual single family house production has been through new construction. From the inception of the organization in 1974, over 258 single-family houses have been either reconstructed or newly constructed for home ownership purposes, bringing the total number of affordable housing units produced by ICCF to 431 units. Today ICCF builds or reconstructs 16-18 houses per year and serves over 1000 families annually.

## Side Trips

- Heritage Hill. Originally this neighborhood was established for the elite of the city. Furniture barons, politicians, lumber barons, prominent business owners, and banker all called Heritage Hill home. The neighborhood suffered greatly during the 1960s and 70s and became the door for the downtrodden. White flight left the area with dwindling property values and a less economically stable population. Banks even denied a mortgage for the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Amberg home. At this point the neighborhood association stepped in, working to rebuild the neighborhood. In March, 1971 the area was registered as a National Historic District, making it the largest urban historic district in the country at that time. After 30 years of hard work (starting in the late 1960s) the neighborhood has rebounded but new problem (such as gentrification) have emerged. Heritage Hill represents the continued struggle to create stable, diverse neighborhoods today.

## Other notes

- As we move to our next stop, we will pass old Christian High at Franklin and Madison, notice the crest above the main entrance.

# Stop 15

## First CRC Parking Lot

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### Directions to next stop: BAXTER COMMUNITY CENTER

- Take Henry north (turning left off of Bates) to Sherman, turn right (east)
- Take Sherman to Eastern Ave, turn left (north)
- Take Eastern to Baxter, turn right (east)
- STOP AT BAXTER COMMUNITY CENTER

### Possible discussion issues

- Project Neighborhood (began 1998). An off-campus housing option that challenges students to live out their faith in the context of their houses and communities. Students live in an intentional Christian community with housemates and mentors and strive to better understand what it means to be a neighbor. Mission is Project Neighborhood is an opportunity for students to live in an intentional residential community within an urban neighborhood. Together, students commit to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ by learning to relate to others as image bearers of God, bridging social and economic barriers, and developing vision and capacity for service. This is a caring, accountable environment, shaped by prayer and Biblical principles. Students covenant to live their Christian faith together in their home and neighborhood in specific and tangible ways.
- Inner-city churches/white flight.
- Gentrification.
- First CRC. Church was established in 1857 on Ionia and Weston Street, ten years later the church had grown to 1,300 members and moved to Commerce Street and moved to its present location on \_\_\_\_\_.

### Side Trips

- Fulton Street Cemetery. One of six cemeteries owned, operated and maintained by the Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department. The cemetery was acquired in 1838 for a sum of \$300, In 1868 the Fulton St. Cemetery Association was formed to operate the cemetery. The city took over the operation of the cemetery again in 1948. Many of the earliest settlers to the area are buried here. See attached info.
- Oakdale Cemetery. One of six cemeteries owned, operated and maintained by the Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department. The cemetery was acquired in 1859, at the time the cemetery stood just outside the city limits by a budding Dutch settlement known

as Dutchtown. The cemetery was modeled after a recreational park, with benches, walkways, plants, trees, and ornate monuments. This trend attracted many wealthy families which resulted in the most influential and powerful people in Grand Rapids being buried here. The rich built ornate mausolea by which they could be remembered, even competing at times for the most memorable monuments. The cemetery includes a 35 foot pyramid and other interesting sculptures.

## Stop 16

### Baxter Community Center

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#### Directions to next stop: OTTAWA HILLS/CALVIN'S OLD CAMPUS

- Continue East on Baxter to Fuller, turn right (south)
- Take Fuller to Franklin, turn left (east)
- STOP IN FRONT OF THE OLD CALVIN CAMPUS AT FRANKLIN & GIDDINGS

#### Possible discussion issues

- Baxter Community Center. . Baxter Community Center was established in the late 1960s in an old Christian School to reveal God's love by responding to human needs in its community through effective programs and partnerships. Baxter's response primarily includes addressing immediate needs, assisting individuals to become responsible, productive and self-sufficient, and affirming the positive qualities in individuals and the community

#### Some stats about the Baxter Community:

- According to the 2000 census, 5031 of the 11,992 households living within a one mile radius of the Baxter neighborhood had an annual income of less than \$25,000.
- 3,056 of the community's households had an annual income of less than \$15,000
- Some 2,732 of 11,992 total households fall well below the poverty line

#### Services at Baxter include:

- Food pantry
- Tax Preparation
- Day Care
- Health clinic
- Recreation programs
- Mentoring programs
- Baxter also provides office space to such organizations as Camp Tall Turf.

# Stop 17

## Ottawa Hills/Calvin's Old Campus

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### Directions to next stop: COLLINS PARK

- Continue east on Franklin (Franklin turns into \_\_\_\_\_), cross Lake Drive, continue to Wealthy, turn right (east)
- Wealthy to \_\_\_\_\_, turn left
- STOP AT COLLINS PARK

### Possible discussion issues

- Traditional Neighborhood development (alley, etc)
  - Alleys in the back where garages, and services took place
  - Front porches
- Hollyhock Parade.
  - Neighborhood parade started in 1934, named after the hollyhock bush.

### Side Trips

- Eastown. Reeds lake was the place for everyone to go on the weekend, a vacation spot located three miles east of the city. Eastown sprang from a crossroads between the city and the lake, connecting the 9 to 5 work world with the land of summer vacation. People slept in Eastown but worked and worshipped in other areas. It was a bedroom community, a place where street car changed lines and were stored.
  - Established in 1904 the neighborhood's most expansive growth took place in the 1920s.
  - The building where Mulligan's pub and Wolfgang's began as a street car barn. As a result most of the early development was connected to the street car lines.

### Other notes

- History of Ottawa Hills.
  - Early on in the development of Grand Rapids, the Ottawa Hills area escaped development due to a nine hole golf course that opened in 1905 (South of Franklin and East of Giddings). The course closed in 1922.
  - Ottawa Hills was not on the streetcar lines so it was marketed to middle and upper classes with automobiles.
- Old Calvin Campus.
  - Lack of money in 1876 kept Calvin from being located in Holland as was the original plan. Imagine the Calvin-Hope rivalry had there been enough money to locate Calvin in Holland as desired!

- The first class was seven men. The oldest, at 51, was seven years older than the professor,. Students with families sold their livelihoods and lived on the proceeds. They were expected not to work so as to fully be engaged with their studies.
- Tuition that first year was \$52 for the year.
- Calvin's first women students were admitted in 1901.
- Chimes, the student paper, was first published in 1907.
- Around 1910 Kalamazoo and Muskegon both battled to get Calvin to move to their cities. Muskegon offered land plus \$10,000, a fair sum of money in those days, but GR countered with \$10,000 of its own and Calvin decided to stay put.
- In 1937 the Board of Trustees chastised the faculty for not being more vigilant about disciplining students. Movie attendance was a big bone of contention in those days and would remain controversial until the 1950s. Calvin now has a film studies program that sees students spend a semester in Hollywood.
- Calvin's enrollment was 520 in 1941, dropped to 420 in 1944 b/c of WWII and then rocketed to 1,245 in 1946, a gain of over 800 students in just two years.
- The Knollcrest campus was purchased from J.C. Miller in 1956 for \$400,000. It was, for all intents and purposes, in the country.
- The first classes were held at Knollcrest in 1962. But Calvin maintained two campuses, Knollcrest and Franklin, for another decade.
- In 1970 the faculty voted to broaden the appeal of Calvin to Christian students beyond denominational lines, including students from minority and disadvantaged groups.
- Mandatory Chapel attendance was dropped in 1972.
- In 1972 about 94% of the student body was CRC. Just 30 years later that number is 50%. It was in the early 70s that Calvin first started recruiting and advertising. One rejected ad targeted parents worried about drugs and the tagline was "Calvin College: One College That Is Not Going to Pot."
- In 1988 enrollment hit 4,505, still a record and one not likely to be topped now that Calvin has an enrollment ceiling.
- In 1991 Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary split into two schools with separate Boards.



## Stop 18 Collins Park

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### Directions to next stop: Calvin Fieldhouse

- Return to Lake Drive and head west back to Calvin.

### Possible discussion issues

- History of Ramona Park. Ramona Park 1904-1955 Once located on the north side of Wealthy, and just west of Lakeside Drive and including parts on Reeds Lake, the Ramona Park included roller coasters, a theater, a dance pavilion, a ballpark and many other amusement rides. This was a summer resort for out-of-towners and entertainment for the locals. For instance, during an 8 week operation in 1942, there were 64,000 paid admissions. In its prime time, the theater attracted show people such as the Marx Brothers, Edgar Bergen, Fred Allen and Joan Davis. Also the dance pavilion attracted famous big band leaders like Tommy Dorsey, Shep Fields, Glen Gray and Glenn Miller. After WWII, Americans wanted to travel more and by the early 1950's the park struggled to keep it's doors open. In 1954, a special election gave approval for a new shopping center and apartment complex where the park once stood. All was gone by 1955.
- Baseball stadium. Sat on the site of the track for EGR high school. In 1932, at the Ramona Athletic Club (now the sight of the East High athletic fields and community pool) hosted the New York Yankees - among them were Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig.
- Resorts on Reeds Lake. **Point Paulo: Turn of the century Bohemian resort:**

**George Burns, Will Rogers,** Morton Downey, and Walter Winchell stayed there, along with Buster Keaton, Fanny Brice, and many others. Several of the stars of the Vaudeville tour called Reeds Lake and the Ramona Theatre their favorite stop on the Orpheum Theatre circuit, primarily because of the beautiful resort on Reeds lake known as Point Paulo.

Frederick Paulo and Maurice Bellclaire created Point Paulo as a colony for touring and vacationing actors. At the time, Ramona Park was flourishing as one of the most successful tourist destinations in the country. Frederick Paulo had toured with the Orpheum Circuit for years as a song and dance man, and Maurice Bellclaire had amazed audiences with his strong man act. One day as they pondered the beauty of Reeds Lake from across the street at Ramona Park, the idea of Point Paulo was born. The farm house that stood at the center of the plot was remodeled into a country eating house. Paulo was the chef, and Bellclaire had charge of the serving. Their French and Italian dinner menu was irresistible.

The business quickly outgrew the farm house and a new, much larger building was constructed. This building, set on the slope of a hill overlooking Reeds Lake, became known as Chateau Paulo. As the popularity of Point Paulo soared, 30 guest cottages

were added, 6 at a time. And another 24 room guest house known as the "Chalet" was soon needed to handle the overflow of actors and vacationers.

Today, the Chateau Paulo still stands, along with the barn that housed the lions. It is now a private residence. The names of the resort founders can be seen on the street signs of the residential neighborhood developed by Paulo and Bellclaire after they closed their resort in 1920: Frederick Drive and Bellclaire Avenue.

- Clubs on Reeds Lake. The O-Wash-ta-Nong Boat Club was organized July 12th, 1885, for the purpose of promoting social intercourse and stimulating athletic sports among the young men of our city, and to establish a much needed breathing spot for the families of its member during the heated term. To this end we have erected at Reed's Lake, three miles from the center of the city, a spacious, handsome Boat and Club House, which is amply equipped with racing and pleasure boats, bowling alleys, billiard and pool tables, wide verandas, ball room, ladies' dressing room, etc., with every facility for bathing, fishing, and boating and picnic parties. In the city we have one of the finest suits of Club Rooms in the West, containing parlors, reading room and library, private card rooms, bowling alleys, billiard and pool rooms, a thoroughly equipped gymnasium, and a café where meals are served at all hours between 7 a.m. and 12 p.m. Hops are given twice a month, at the Boat House in summer, and at the Club House in winter, besides musicales at intervals.

### Side Trips

- Jersey Junction – You scream, I scream, we all scream for ice cream!