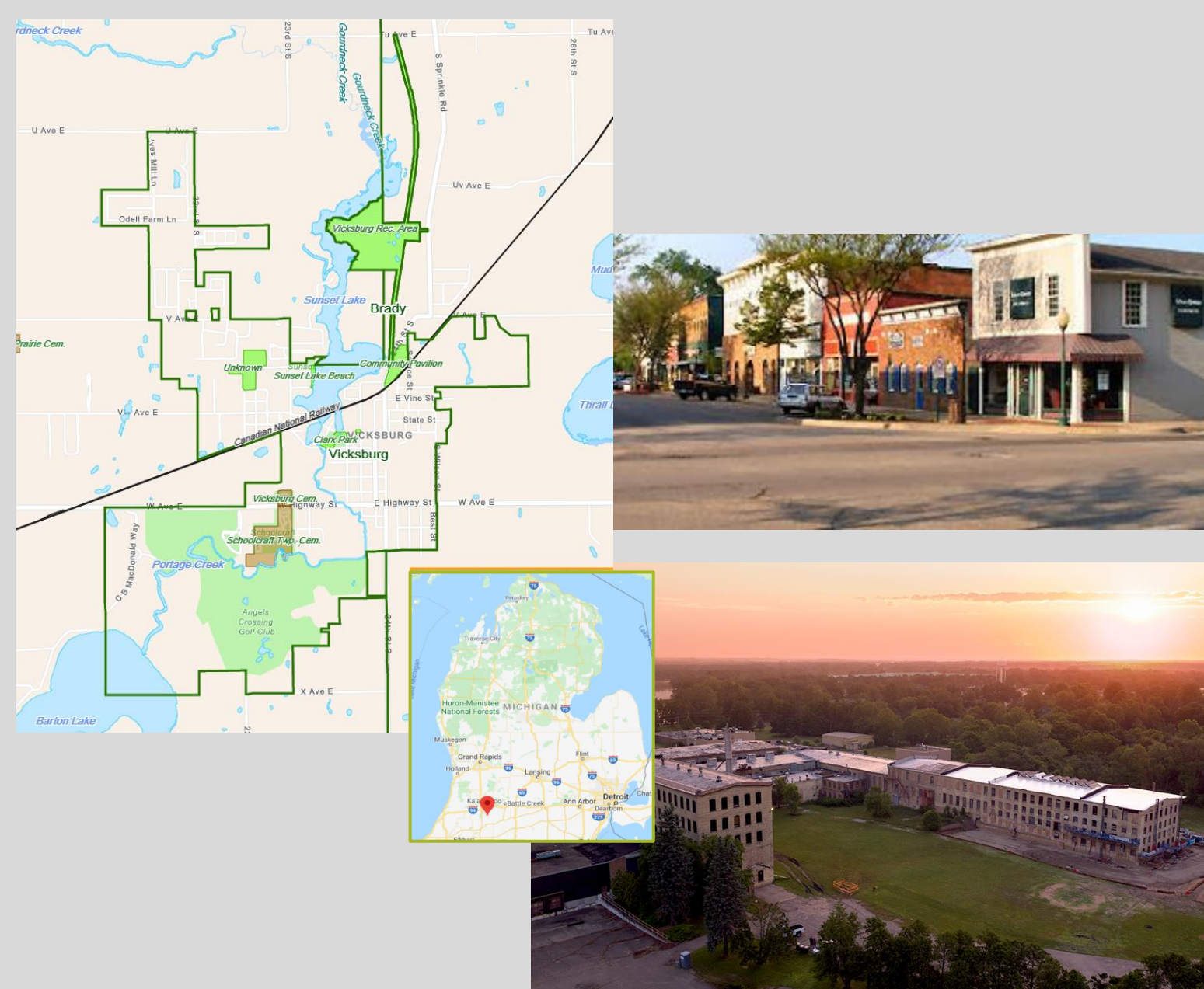


## Introduction

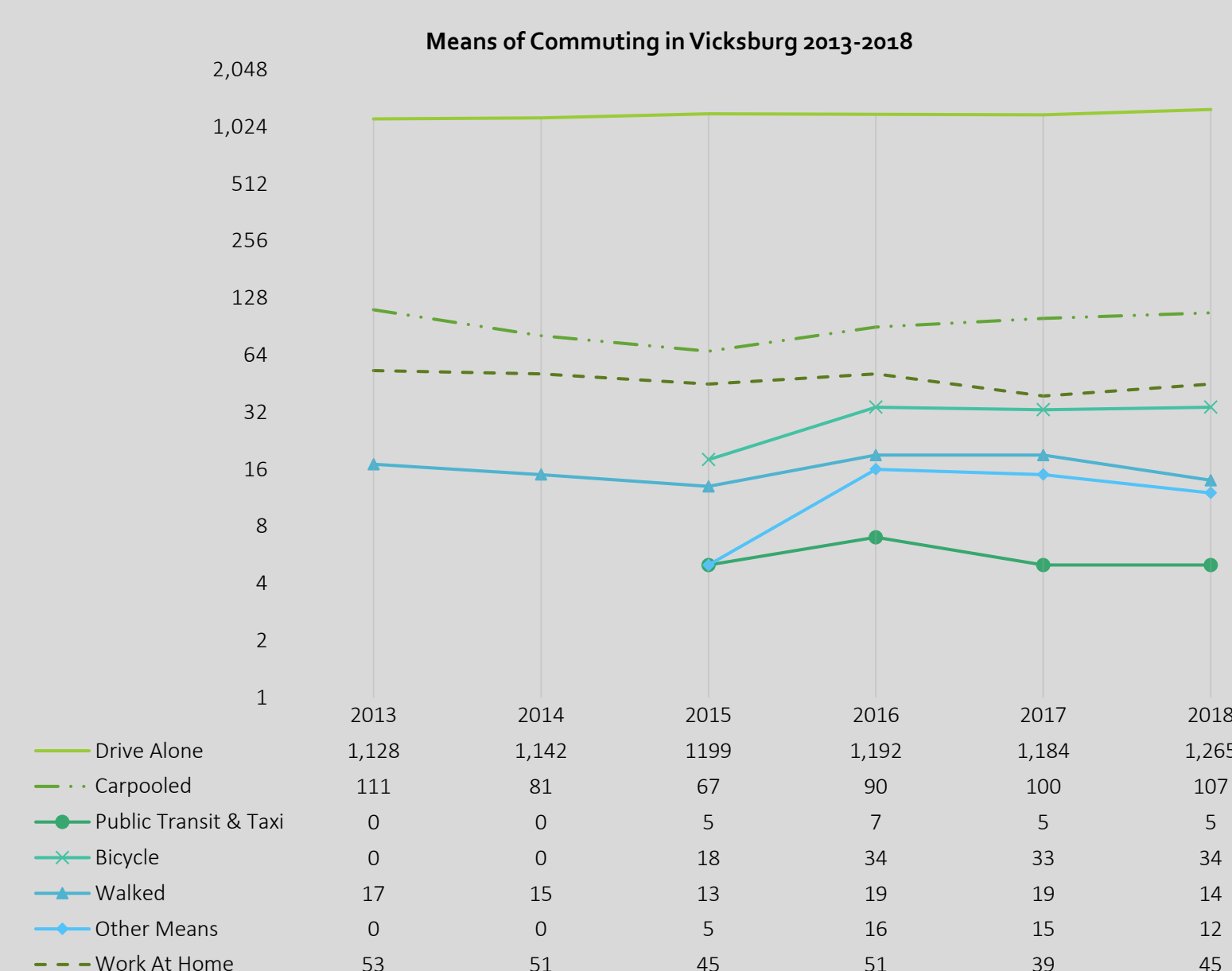
The purpose of this project is to identify assets within the Village of Vicksburg and to make recommendations that will enhance non-motorized connectivity by applying placemaking concepts for a new non-motorized path that strategically connects the village assets. The Village of Vicksburg is located 15 miles south of the City of Kalamazoo. The village was home to a thriving paper mill factory that used to be a major source of income for the village in the past that is now being redeveloped and managed by Paper City Development LLC. The revitalization project for The Mill is projected to create numerous jobs and attract more 15,000 visitors after one year of project completion and more than 50,000 visitors the following year.



Above: Downtown Vicksburg, MI  
Below: The Mill at Vicksburg (Old Paper Mill Redevelopment Project)

## Methodology and Community Input

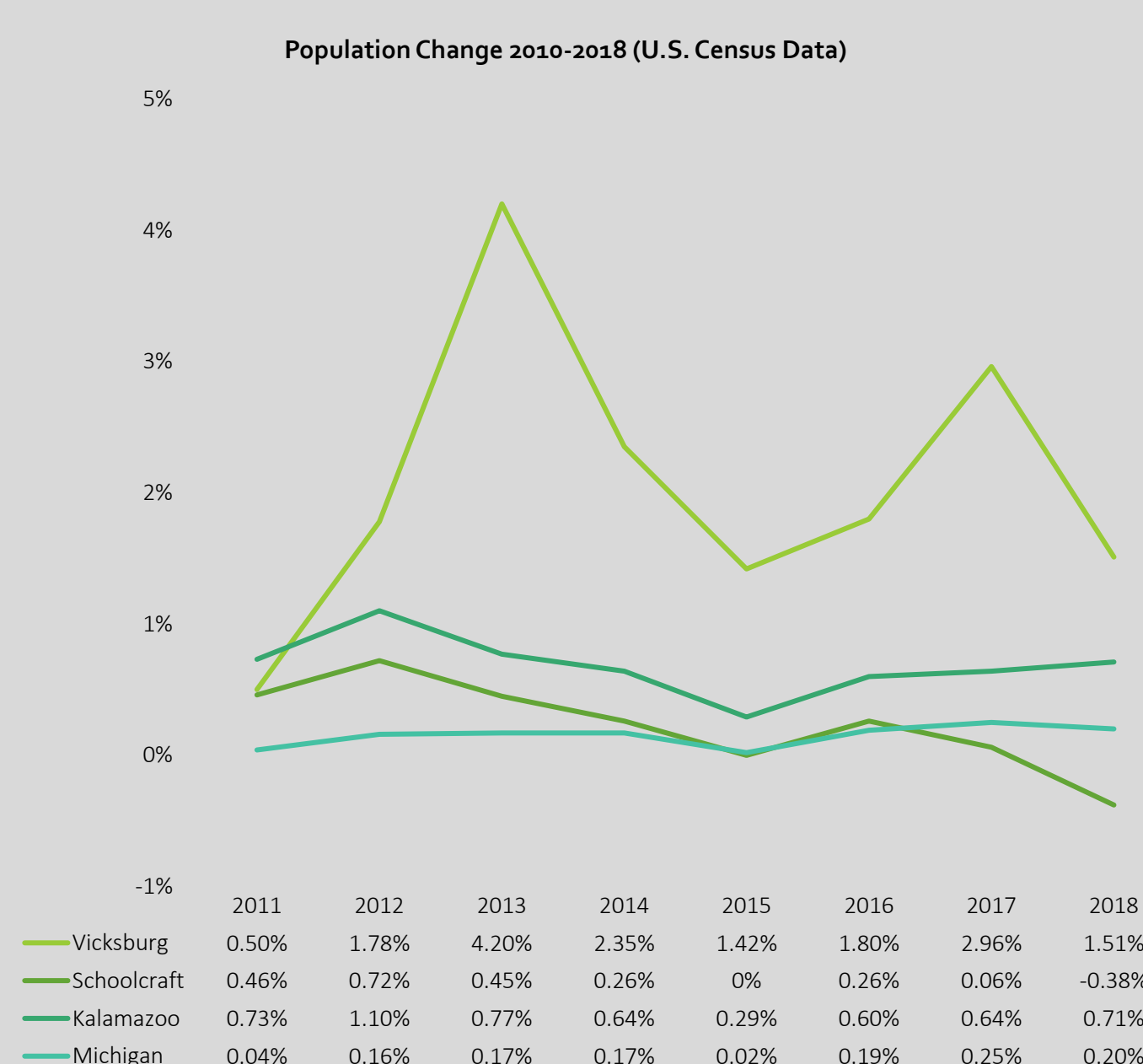
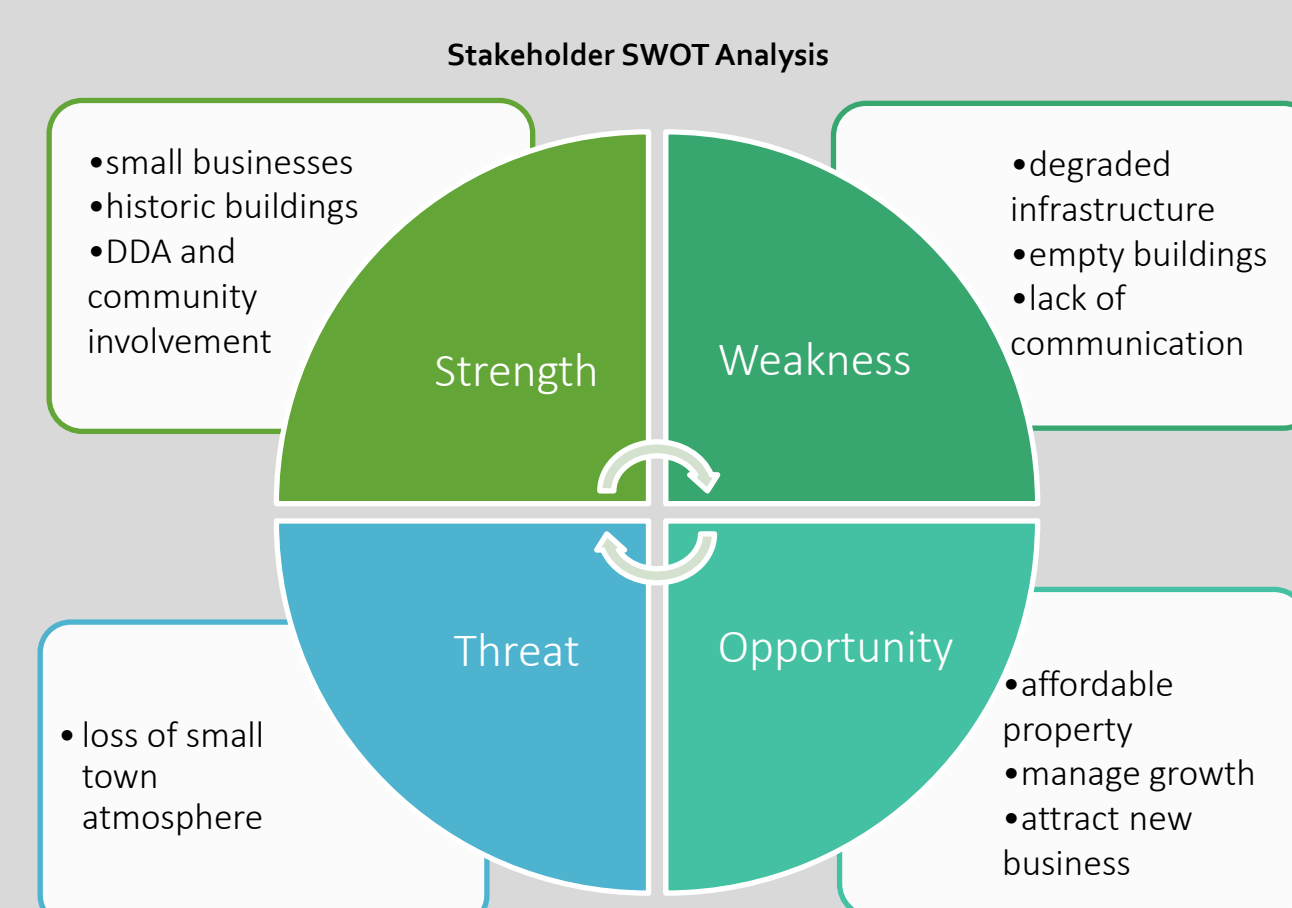
Planning recommendations found in the project are based on a methodology that evaluates the existing conditions of Vicksburg, stakeholder and community input, and a series of case studies from similar communities like Vicksburg. Primary data was collected through a tour of the village guided by John Kern, Project Manager at The Mill. Information on the existing conditions and the future needs showcased by the residents was compiled through an extensive socioeconomic profile, summarizing changes in current and future land use, a detailed retail assessment, and analyzing a focused community and stakeholder survey. Data from the village of Vicksburg Master Plan from 2015 was also utilized to formulate recommendations that accentuate goals and objectives of the village listed in the master plan.



## Trends & Demographics

The Village of Vicksburg comprises an area of 3.15 square miles and is home to 3,419 residents as of 2018.

- Median household income for Vicksburg was \$55,949 in 2015 and has increased the most since 2000 compared to its regional cohorts and the state average.
- Trends show that housing in Vicksburg is more affordable than Kalamazoo County and Michigan. Compared to its regional cohorts and the state average, the vacancy rates for rental units generally follow the same pattern but are below the state average.
- Data on means of commuting in Vicksburg shows that a majority of people drive alone for their commute followed by carpooling and public transport/taxi but non-motorized form of transportation is not very common among the residents of the village.
- According to the retail analysis, Vicksburg should encourage new businesses especially to the downtown node to boost the economic activity by creating more spending opportunities for residents and visitors that is currently taking place and to fill up buildings that are currently vacant.



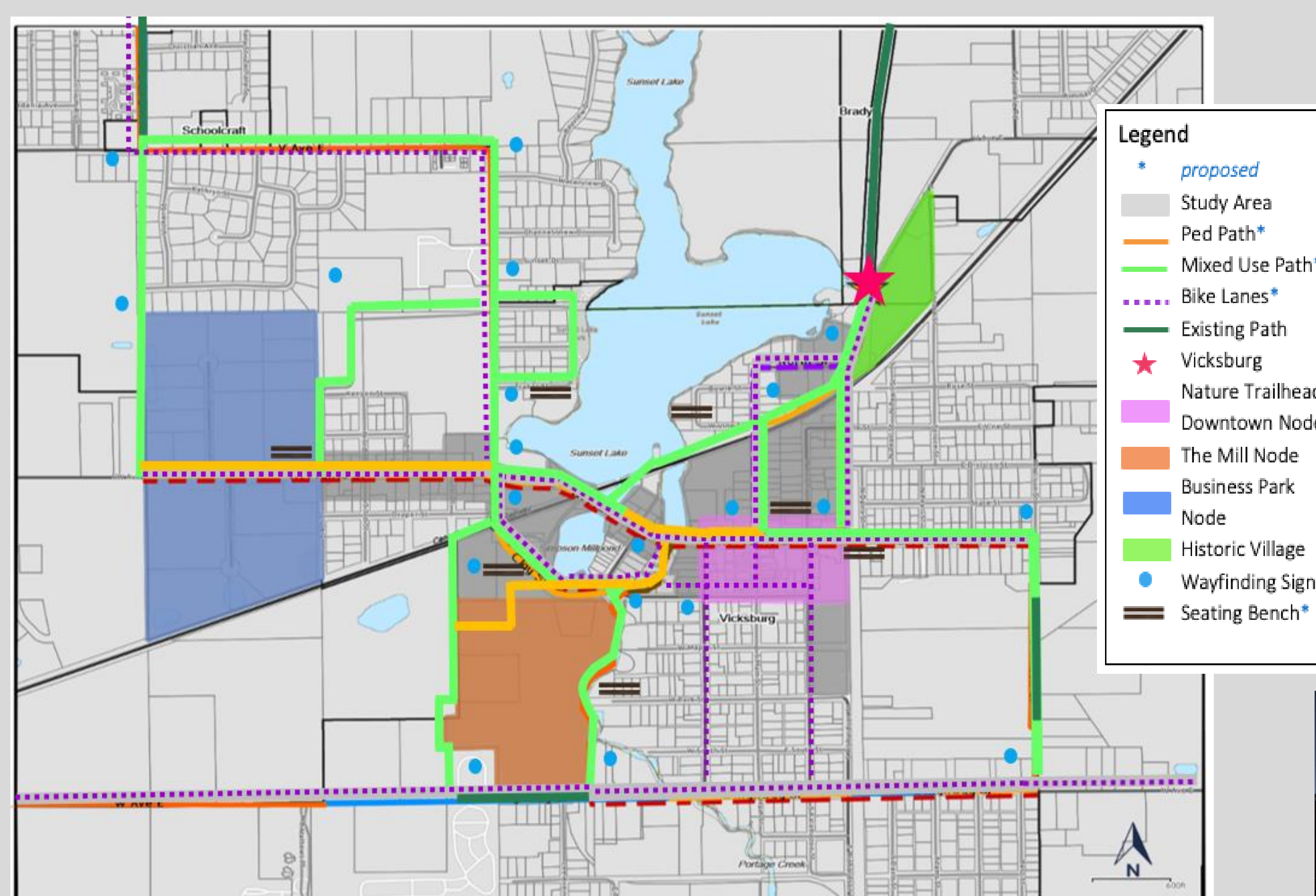
## Proposed Non-motorized Path & Recommendations

### Identified Nodes and Assets

The MSU Practicum Team identified numerous assets in the Village of Vicksburg and are incorporated into a set of four nodes that are used to expand the Vicksburg trail to ensure asset connectivity throughout the village.



### Proposed Non-motorized Path



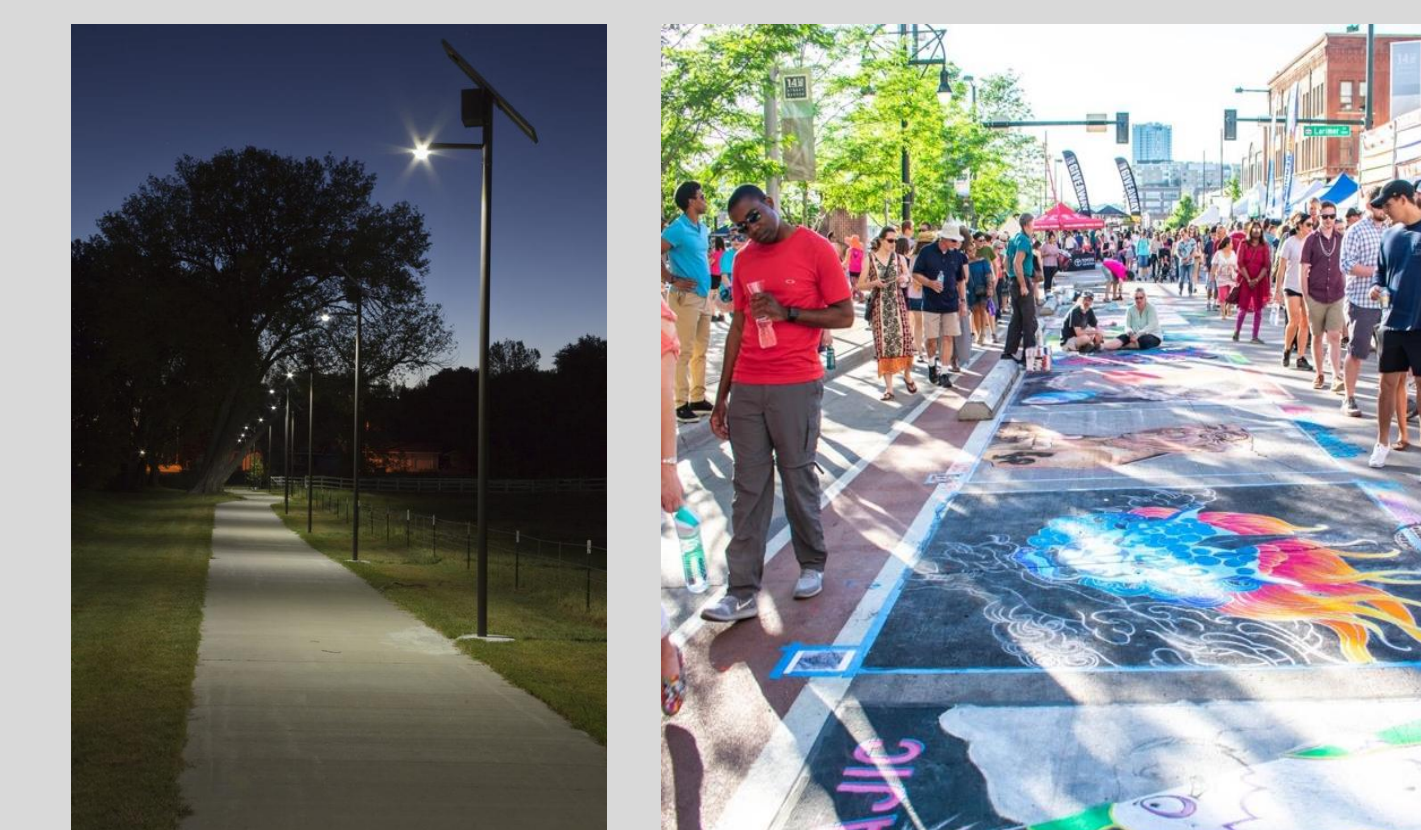
### Non-motorized Path Amenities



Example of a bike rack. Example of bench with logo.



Example wayfinding signs with logo.



Example of lighting along the path on the left and chalk art festival on the right.

### Recommendations

Methodology in the Placemaking Guide as An Economic Tool from the Land Policy Institute at Michigan State University was utilized to identify placemaking concepts that should be incorporated to the Vicksburg Trail.

Placemaking Strategy	Recommendation
Increase Walkability	Increasing walkability of the village assets through the Vicksburg Trail, sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks would allow the residents and visitors to use non-motorized transportation options.
Increase Connectivity	Increasing connectivity of the village through connecting all the nodes and assets through a non-motorized path would allow more residents to identify and utilize these assets more easily.
Increase Accessibility	Increasing accessibility of the village for people who lack the ability to drive like people with older age, disabilities and young children. It creates an equitable environment and provides another opportunity to reach the amenities in the village.
Increase Economic Vitality	The non-motorized path will connect the downtown corridor that consists of local businesses that allows users of the path to purchase goods and services while they are on the path.
Highlight Community Identity	The path also highlights the community identity by connecting it to the historical elements of the village including the historic village, the paper mill, and the downtown that encompasses the old Italianate architecture.