



Communities for real life.

What we did:

PLANNING

Master Plan

Parks and Recreation Plan

DDA/TIF Plan Placemaking

Master Plan

VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS, MICHIGAN

The Village of Three Oaks, Michigan, near the beaches of Berrien County, had a planning challenge – how to balance the needs of its permanent residents with those of its summer and weekend residents and visitors. The small town was popular with vacationers from larger cities, who rented homes in the Village to serve as a “home base” for beach vacations along Lake Michigan in the summer months. But in the cold winter months, permanent residents complained of empty homes dotting their neighborhoods and businesses that closed for months at a time.

The Village took an aggressive approach to meeting the needs of its residents while taking measures to remain a thriving tourist destination. Village leaders hired McKenna to put together a combined Land Use, Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan, and Recreation Plan, which combined were branded as Plan 203Oaks. Plan 203Oaks envisioned a vibrant community 365 days a year, with diverse housing options, an expanded business district, and improved parks amenities.

Because the plan met Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements for grant funding, and outlined a capital improvements strategy based on DDA TIF capture, the Village was able to hit the ground running with implementation. Today, Plan 203Oaks serves as the Village’s guiding vision as it remakes itself into a community that serves everyone who lives, works, and plays there, no matter how long they stay.

