

THRIVE COLLABORATIVE

Veridian At County Farm Green Neighborhood Plan

Ann Arbor, Michigan



Above: Veridian concept drawings by Union Studio Architecture and Community Design

Located next to a 130-acre park with trails that wind through re-naturalized agricultural fields, woodlands, and gardens, Veridian at County Farm is an inspiring, regenerative, planned community. Envisioned as one of the first mixed-income net zero energy communities in the U.S., the neighborhood will include space for growing food, a farm store and community spaces where residents can gather, play, access social services, and avoid the isolation felt by many in new developments.

It will also feature green space designed to improve social interaction between neighbors, and pathways that integrate green infrastructure to manage stormwater. Biophilic/walkable urban design elements include front porches facing greenways connected with miles of wooded trails.

The restorative landscape approach incorporates native trees, shrubs, and perennial grasses managed as a system to provide habitat, water balance, and beauty. The project is being led by

A water balance strategy that integrates living green infrastructure with net zero energy, affordable green homes, regenerative food systems, and walkable urbanism supports a new paradigm for community design.

THRIVE Collaborative, a development firm with a mission to create ecologically restorative housing, and Avalon Housing, a non-profit that creates healthy, safe, and inclusive housing as a long-term solution to homelessness. As ecological consultant on the integrated planning and design team, Biohabitats is ensuring that the project improves the local ecology and balancing the community's water demand with onsite harvesting and reuse.

Biohabitats began by co-creating a restorative site development concept with the project team, exploring the potential for rainwater harvest and re-use combined with infiltration-based living green infrastructure practices to optimize every surface for multiple values and benefits.

Biohabitats has incorporated a distributed network of permeable pavement, bioretention, below-grade storage, and overflow routing calibrated with varied soil conditions and compaction from prior site use and high groundwater conditions to effectively manage all rainwater on-site. This approach meets stringent local/county requirements for stormwater management/water quality, supports Living Community Challenge criteria for water balance and ecology/habitat, and reinforces the developer's core mission and values.

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