

Michigan

Known Condemnations Benefiting Private Parties ²⁰⁹

Threatened Condemnations ☁ ☁ ☁ ☁ 40

Legend ☁ = 10

East Lansing

In February 2006, East Lansing officials voted to approve the East Village Master Plan, which calls for redeveloping 35 acres that house thousands of Michigan State University students, into a mix of housing, retail and commercial developments. Or, actually, into a mix of housing, retail and commercial developments that is different from the mix that's there now. They had previously declared the area, which has at least 40 properties—including



If this is blighted—every fast food store in America is blighted. An official plan for this area of East Lansing shows new shops and housing where four fraternity houses, well-maintained apartments, a florist, an auto shop and this McDonald's now sit.

²⁰⁹ These numbers were compiled from news sources. Many cases go unreported, and news reports often do not specify the number of properties against which condemnations were filed or threatened.

well-maintained apartment buildings, fraternity houses, a florist, retail stores, an auto shop, a McDonald's and rental homes, to be "blighted."²¹⁰ Officials say the blight designation gives them the option of applying for State redevelopment money and that they never had any plans to seize property. Yet under Michigan law, municipalities have authority to seize land that is "blighted" and officials have drafted a master plan showing new and different development.²¹¹ The community—property owners and students—have come out solidly against the plan.²¹²

210 Chris Andrews, "Blighted? Property owners ask lawmakers for help," *Lansing State Journal*, October 14, 2005, at 1A; East Village Master Plan, <http://www.cityofeastlansing.com/COEL.asp?action=http://www.cityofeastlansing.com/CITYGOV/PCD/EastVillage.asp> (retrieved May 31, 2006).

211 Sikha Dalmia, "Blight loophole could allow cities to grab homes, land," *Detroit News*, November 3, 2005, at 19A.

212 Leach Hugh, "E.L. delays vote in redevelopment," *Lansing State Journal*, December 15, 2005, at 1B; "Try again: Lacking neighborhood support, East Lansing plan needs retooling," *Lansing State Journal*, November 11, 2005, at 8A.