

## **Village of Augusta Land Use Plan: 2025-2045**

### **Strategic Framework for Growth & Preservation Kalamazoo County, Michigan**

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#### **LAND USE PLAN OFFICIALS**

##### **Village Board**

- Andy Ackley
- Kim Carlton
- Ann Daly
- Chris Thomas
- Val Silkworth
- John Thomas- Village President
- Jeff Heppler- Village Manager
- Julie Glenn- Village Clerk
- Marcea Schwartz- Treasurer

##### **Zoning Committee**

- David Sutton
  - Chelsea Sutton
  - Andy Ackley
  - Kim Carlton
  - Chief Jeff Heppler- Village Manager
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#### **I. FORWARD**

This plan has been prepared so that future development in Augusta can occur in a manner acceptable to local residents. In conjunction with the Village's zoning ordinance, the Plan minimizes land use conflicts by providing a foundation for decision-making. It is a general guide for future improvements and development.

A successful plan is:

- **Generalized:** It outlines goals without specifying parcel-level actions.
  - **Community-Based:** Draws from public input and surveys.
  - **Long-Term:** Projects 20 years into the future (2025-2045).
  - **Regionally Aware:** Considers surrounding growth from Kalamazoo, Battle Creek, and Fort Custer.
  - **Flexible:** Allows periodic updates based on unforeseen changes.
  - **Comprehensive:** Integrates infrastructure, housing, environmental features, and public services.
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## II. STRATEGIC PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

The Village of Augusta formed a Zoning Committee made up of members from council, business, and public safety. The committee developed a shared Vision Statement to guide long-term planning and address current limitations related to infrastructure, housing, flood zones, and economic development.

### VISION STATEMENT

"Expand the current village boundary geographically and economically to better serve present and future residents with public services, jobs, and homes."

This reflects community desire to:

- Accommodate future growth
- Improve public service delivery
- Offer diverse housing options
- Create job and business opportunities

### STRENGTHS

- Modern local streets
- Sewer and water systems
- Fire protection coverage

- Access to Galesburg-Augusta schools
- Library and park system
- State parks nearby (Fort Custer)
- VA hospital and cemetery nearby
- Proximity to employment centers (Kalamazoo/Battle Creek)
- North Country Trail passes through village
- 48 multifamily housing units
- Family-friendly environment

## **WEAKNESSES**

- Large portion of land within FEMA floodplain
  - No full-service grocery store or gas station
  - Minimal commercial activity or retail
  - Lack of 24/7 emergency services
  - High number of vacant or underutilized commercial buildings
  - Limited local job opportunities
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## **STRATEGIC ACTIONS**

### **Item 1: Downtown Improvement Plan**

- Contact property owners of underused storefronts
- Assess DDA formation and tax increment funding
- Seek grants (e.g., DOC RIF program)
- Coordinate with state/federal infrastructure funds

### **Item 2: Police Protection Expansion**

- Form a subcommittee to explore expanded service
- Coordinate with Kalamazoo County and MSP
- Evaluate costs and funding for a part-time force

- Pursue public safety grants

### **Item 3: Business Park Development**

- Identify suitable parcels near M-96 and rail line
- Zone for light industrial/start-up business
- Ensure water/sewer access and road improvements
- Promote phased lot development

## **III. DATA COLLECTION**

### **A. REGIONAL CONTEXT**

The Village of Augusta is located in northeastern Kalamazoo County within Charleston and Ross Townships. It functions as a small residential center, with many residents commuting to Kalamazoo or Battle Creek. The village is served by M-96, which connects to 1-94, providing access to regional transportation networks.

Nearby regional influences include:

- Fort Custer Training Center and Industrial Park
- City of Galesburg to the west
- Battle Creek to the east
- Kalamazoo to the west/southwest

### **B. NATURAL FEATURES**

Key natural features within and surrounding Augusta include:

- **Augusta Creek:** A major natural waterway passing through the village
- **Floodplains:** Southeast areas near the creek are in FEMA-designated zones
- **Mill Pond and Mill Race Canal:** Provide aesthetic, recreational, and environmental value
- **Woodlands:** Found in the northern and eastern areas of the village
- **Wetlands:** Significant environmental constraints for development
- **Topography:** Generally level with minor elevation changes toward the creek

### **C. COMMUNITY ATTITUDES**

A 2024 community survey was conducted to assess public preferences. Key takeaways:

- Strong desire to retain "small-town feel"
- High interest in revitalizing downtown and encouraging new businesses
- Moderate support for residential development
- Preference for limited industrial expansion
- High value placed on walkability, parks, and preservation of natural spaces

#### **D. POPULATION AND HOUSING**

**Table I -Population Trends**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>
1980	896
1990	879
2000	899
2010	885
2020	899
2023 est.	920

**Table II -Age Distribution (2023 ACS)**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>% of Pop.</b>
Under 18	21.3%
18-24	9.8%
25-44	26.4%
45-64	31.8%
65 and older	10.7%

#### **Housing Overview**

- **Total Units:** ~395

- **Occupied Units:** ~375
- **Vacancy Rate:** ~5%
- **Homeownership:** 60.8%
- **Rental Units:** ~148 (including 48-unit multifamily)
- **Median Home Value:** \$157,300

## E. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

### Water System

- Elevated 150,000-gallon storage tank
- Active well field
- Serves ~380+ connections
- Capable of expansion

### Sanitary Sewer

- Wastewater is pumped west to Kalamazoo for treatment
- System is capable of expansion
- Stormwater infiltration remains a concern

### Storm Sewer

- Mostly open-ditch system
- Limited underground stormwater infrastructure

### Fire Protection

- Augusta Fire Station: 105 W. Clinton Street
- Mutual aid agreement with Ross Township
- 2 pumper trucks and 1 grass rig

### Police

- Full-time Chief + full-time & part-time officers
- Assistance from Kalamazoo County Sheriff, Ross Township Police & Michigan State Police

### Streets

- **Major Streets:** 2.88 miles

- **Local Streets:** 4.83 miles
- Maintained by Village Department of Public Works

#### **IV. EXISTING LAND USE**

A physical land use survey categorized the Village into six primary land use types.

**Table III - Existing Land Use (2024 Survey)**

<b>Land Use Type</b>	<b>o/o of Land Area</b>
Single-Family Residential	48%
Multifamily Residential	5%
Commercial	7%
Industrial	3%
Public/Institutional	6%
Vacant/Open Space	31%

- Residential land use dominates with low-density lots.
- Commercial uses are clustered along Michigan Avenue and Webster Road.
- Vacant lands include floodplains, woodlots, and underutilized parcels.

#### **V. DATA EVALUATION AND PROJECTIONS**

##### **A. REGIONAL TRENDS**

- Augusta is not projected to become part of the Kalamazoo Urbanized Area.
- Surrounding rural townships are also expected to retain their character.
- Fort Custer Industrial Park continues to provide job opportunities but limited residential demand spillover is expected.
- Growth pressures from Battle Creek and Galesburg remain modest.

##### **B. NATURAL LIMITATIONS TO GROWTH**

- Approximately 30% of the Village is located in the floodplain, severely limiting potential for development in the southeast quadrant.

- Environmental constraints like wetlands and poor soil percolation hinder traditional septic systems.
- These limitations underscore the importance of strategic infill and redevelopment over outward sprawl.

### C. COMMUNITY ATTITUDE ANALYSIS

The community overwhelmingly supports:

- Maintaining a peaceful, walkable environment
- Attracting basic commercial services (grocery, gas, convenience)
- Protecting green spaces and public parks
- Revitalizing existing commercial areas rather than building new strip development

The survey reveals resistance to heavy industry or high-density development, but openness to cottage industries and mixed-use formats.

### D. POPULATION PROJECTIONS

**Table IV - Population Forecast: 2025-2045**

#### **Year Population % Growth Over Previous Period**

2025	920	—
2030	950	+3.3%
2035	980	+3.2%
2040	1,010	+3.1%
2045	1,040	+3.0%

These projections assume continuation of current trends, no annexation, and conservative economic growth.

### E. UTILITY SERVICE PROJECTIONS

- **Water:** Current capacity is adequate for up to 200 additional connections.
- **Sewer:** The main lift station is nearing capacity under stormwater loads-upgrades and I&I reductions are needed.

- **Storm Sewer:** No village-wide underground system; areas near the creek require engineered drainage if developed.

## VI. COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

In 2024, the Village conducted a comprehensive survey mailed to all households and made available online. Results helped prioritize future land uses.

### A. DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCES

#### Table V - Ranked Land Use Priorities

##### Land Use Type Average Ranking (1 = Highest Priority)

Commercial	1.68
Residential	2.00
Recreational	2.12
Agricultural	2.56
Industrial	4.90

Respondents most strongly supported:

- Adding a general store, gas station, or pharmacy
- Encouraging local small businesses and food establishments
- Avoiding large-scale industrial or warehouse operations

### B. GROWTH EXPECTATIONS

#### Table VI - Preferred Growth Rate by Respondents

##### Growth Range % of Responses

No Growth	9%
10-25% Growth	48%
26-50% Growth	16%
51-100% Growth	3%

**Growth Range**    o/o of Responses

>100% Growth    0%

No Opinion        24%

A modest growth expectation is consistent with Augusta's identity as a quiet village rather than a rapidly growing suburb.

**C. COMMENTS AND PUBLIC INPUT THEMES**

- "We need a gas station or general store-driving 10 miles for milk is ridiculous."
- "The parks and trails are great-let's not lose our green space."
- "Keep the charm. We don't want to look like a strip mall in 10 years."
- "Fix the vacant buildings before building new ones."

**VII. GOALS AND POLICIES**

This section presents actionable goals based on community input, data analysis, and planning principles. Each goal is followed by supporting policies that guide implementation.

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**1. Preserve Community Character**

**Goal:** Protect Augusta's small-town charm, rural views, and historic features.

**Policies:**

- Maintain a clear village boundary to prevent sprawl
- Encourage preservation of older structures and landmarks
- Ensure new development fits existing scale and character
- Require landscaping, signage, and building materials that reflect village style

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**2. Promote Balanced Residential Growth**

**Goal:** Provide diverse housing options while maintaining neighborhood quality.

**Policies:**

- Allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by right
  - Zone for small-scale multifamily (e.g., duplexes, townhomes)
  - Encourage senior and workforce housing near the village core
  - Incentivize infill over greenfield development
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### **3. Revitalize Downtown and Commercial Corridors**

**Goal:** Strengthen Augusta's core business district and local economy.

**Policies:**

- Prioritize reuse of vacant commercial structures
  - Allow mixed-use development in downtown zone
  - Support pop-up retail and mobile vendors in Village Park
  - Improve sidewalk connectivity and add bike racks downtown
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### **4. Expand Parks and Preserve Natural Features**

**Goal:** Protect water, floodplain, and woodland resources while expanding public open space.

**Policies:**

- Use conservation zoning or easements in sensitive areas
  - Expand existing parks and add pocket parks
  - Enhance access to Mill Pond and Augusta Creek
  - Require green infrastructure in new developments
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### **5. Upgrade Infrastructure Systems**

**Goal:** Ensure utilities, roads, and stormwater systems support future growth.

**Policies:**

- Coordinate capital improvements with land use goals

- Upgrade stormwater management, especially in southeast flood zones
  - Prioritize sidewalk and lighting expansions along key routes
  - Seek MDOT and Rural Development funding
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## **6. Foster Economic Development**

**Goal:** Attract and retain businesses that serve local needs and create jobs.

**Policies:**

- Develop a small business incubator or makerspace
  - Zone for a light industrial/business park north of M-96
  - Promote clean manufacturing, trades, and artisan shops
  - Partner with regional economic development agencies
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## **VIII. DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

This chapter presents the future land use map and supporting strategy to guide growth through 2045.

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### **A. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Projected Need**

- ~70 new housing units by 2045
- Mix of ownership and rental
- ~10 units of senior-friendly housing

**Preferred Areas**

- Infill along Davis and Clark Streets
- South side of town near Mill Pond (outside floodplain)
- North end near M-96 for townhomes or duplexes

**Guidance**

- Avoid development in FEMA flood zones
  - Allow duplexes and ADUs in R2
  - Cluster designs to protect natural features
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## **B. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Goals**

- Strengthen historic downtown on Michigan Ave
- Introduce neighborhood-scale commercial on north edge
- Enable mixed-use buildings near Village Park

### **Key Locations**

- Michigan Ave & Webster Road: existing core
  - Davis Street: small-scale corner retail or services
  - Vacant parcels near Mill Pond (infill opportunity)
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## **C. INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS PARK**

### **Concept**

- Establish a small business park/light industrial zone on the northeast edge of the Village near M-96
- Rail-adjacent parcels prioritized
- Target clean tech, machining, fabrication, logistics, and small-batch manufacturing

### **Required Improvements**

- Utility access and capacity expansion
  - Paved road connection and turning radii
  - Stormwater detention for full build-out
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## **D. PUBLIC, INSTITUTIONAL & CONSERVATION AREAS**

- Maintain and enhance McKay Library and municipal spaces
- Add interpretive signage at Mill Pond
- Work with DNR and Fort Custer for park connections
- Protect Augusta Creek corridor with buffers and limited footpath access

## **IX. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

This section provides tools to turn the vision, goals, and policies into reality.

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### **A. ZONING ORDINANCE REVIEW AND UPDATE**

A comprehensive review of the current ordinance is necessary to:

- Reflect new land use categories (e.g., mixed-use, conservation, business park)
  - Support accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and small-scale multifamily
  - Introduce form-based code elements in the downtown district
  - Improve floodplain development regulations
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### **B. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN {CIP}**

A 6-year CIP should guide budgeting and investment, including:

- Street resurfacing and sidewalk gap closures
  - Sewer lift station upgrades
  - Drainage improvements in SE floodplain area
  - Park facility upgrades and trail connections
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### **C. GRANT FUNDING AND RESOURCES**

Pursue opportunities through:

- **Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund {MNRTF}**
- **Community Development Block Grants {CDBG}**
- **MOOT Economic Development Program**

- **Rural Development (USDA) Utility Funding**
  - **EPA Brownfields Grants for vacant commercial parcels**
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#### **D. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION**

- Collaborate with Charleston and Ross Townships on shared goals
  - Coordinate with Kalamazoo County for mapping and planning support
  - Engage with local service providers (schools, police, fire) to align long-term infrastructure planning
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#### **E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

- Form a Downtown Business Council or Merchant Association
  - Establish a facade improvement program for storefront upgrades
  - Promote local entrepreneurs through an "Augusta Makers" campaign
  - Market vacant buildings through regional commercial listings
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#### **X. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

This plan should remain a living document.

##### **A. ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Planning Commission should:

- Review land use changes, rezoning requests, and development trends annually
- Document accomplishments and challenges
- Adjust priorities if necessary

##### **B. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- Host an annual town hall or "State of the Village" session
- Maintain a planning webpage with maps, zoning, and CIP updates
- Encourage resident input through digital surveys

## C. FORMAL UPDATES

- A minor update should occur every **5 years**
  - A comprehensive rewrite is recommended every **10-15 years** or if major regional shifts occur
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## XI. APPENDICES

### Appendix A- Glossary

- **ADU:** Accessory Dwelling Unit- small secondary home on a lot
  - **Brownfield:** Property complicated by potential environmental contamination
  - **Form-Based Code:** Land development regulation emphasizing physical form
  - **Floodplain:** Area subject to periodic flooding, often regulated
  - **Infill Development:** Development on vacant or underused parcels within existing built areas
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### Appendix B - Future Land Use Map Description

The Village of Augusta Future Land Use Map (FLUM) includes the following designations:

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
Low-Density Residential	Detached single-family homes, 1-2 units per acre
Medium-Density Residential	Duplexes, townhomes, small apartment buildings
Mixed-Use	Ground-floor commercial with residential above
Commercial Core	Retail, office, services in walkable downtown area
Business Park	Clean tech, artisan manufacturing, small industry
Conservation/ Open Space	Floodplains, wetlands, wooded areas, passive parks
Public/ Institutional	Schools, library, municipal offices

*Note: Map to be finalized and published by the Zoning Committee with Kalamazoo County GIS support.*

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### **Appendix C- Community Survey Instrument (2024)**

A copy of the mailed and online survey questions used to inform this plan is on file with the Village Clerk and available on the municipal website.

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### **Appendix D- Tables & Data Sources**

All data in this plan was sourced from:

- 2020 Decennial U.S. Census
  - 2023 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates)
  - FEMA Floodplain Maps
  - Kalamazoo County GIS
  - MDOT Traffic Counts
  - Village Infrastructure Inventory (2024)
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### **Prepared by the Augusta Zoning Committee- 2025**

#### **Committee Members:**

- David Sutton
- Chelsea Sutton
- Andy Ackley
- Kim Carlton
- Chief Jeff Heppler