



Kalamazoo Township

2024 Master Plan



ADOPTED — May 2024

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF KALAMAZOO
COUNTY OF KALAMAZOO , MICHIGAN

May 13, 2024

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING PLANNING COMMISSION'S ADOPTION OF THE
KALAMAZOO TOWNSHIP 2024 MASTER PLAN

Resolution # 24-05-01

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended) provides for a Township Planning Commission to prepare and adopt a Master Plan for physical development of the community; and

WHEREAS, The Kalamazoo Township Planning Commission has prepared such a Master Plan for the Township's physical development in compliance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, which plan includes relevant charts, maps and text; and

WHEREAS, the Kalamazoo Township Planning Commission has provided multiple opportunities for public participation in the planning process; and

WHEREAS, the Kalamazoo Township Planning Commission prepared and approved a draft Master Plan for distribution, and subsequently the Master Plan was so distributed for review by surrounding communities and other public agencies as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act; and

WHEREAS, the Kalamazoo Township Board received and reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to the Notice Group entities identified in MCL 125.3839; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Master Plan 2023 on April 4, 2024 in order to provide final opportunity for public comment; and

WHEREAS, the Township Planning Commission resolved on April 4, 2024 to approve and adopt the Kalamazoo Charter Township 2024 Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board wishes to recognize the Planning Commission's adoption of the 2024 Master Plan; as well as its efforts in undertaking this monumental effort for the good of the community.

NOW THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Kalamazoo Charter Township Board recognizes the April 4, 2024 adoption of the 2024 Kalamazoo Charter Township Master Plan by the Township Planning Commission; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Kalamazoo Township Board appreciates the effort and dedication of the Planning Commission and its consultants in the production and adoption of this worthwhile and necessary project.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the Planning Commission's resolution adopting the 2024 Master Plan signed by Fred Nagler, Planning Commission chairperson, shall be attached to the front

cover of the adopted Master Plan, which shall be forwarded to the Township Clerk and to the Township's general counsel.

This Resolution offered by Trustee Leuty, supported by Trustee Glass.

Upon roll call vote, the following members voted "aye":

Leuty, Mackie, Glass, Martin, M. Miller, S. Miller

Upon roll call vote, the following members voted "nay":

The Supervisor declared the motion passed and the resolution adopted.

Date: 05/13/2024

Lisa Mackie, Clerk
Charter Township of Kalamazoo
1720 Riverview Drive
Kalamazoo, MI 49004
269-381-8080
www.ktwp.org

CERTIFICATE

The undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Township Board of Kalamazoo Township on May 13, 2024 the original of which resolution is on file in the office of the Township Clerk, at which meeting a quorum was present, that said meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act of the State of Michigan and that the members of said Board voted upon said Resolution as hereinbefore set forth and that the minutes of the meeting will be or have been made available as required by the Open Meetings Act.



Lisa Mackie, Clerk
Charter Township of Kalamazoo

Attest:


Donald D. Martin, Supervisor

Kalamazoo Township 2024 Master Plan

ADOPTED — May 2024

Prepared with the assistance of:



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Acknowledgments

Kalamazoo Township is a community of engaged, passionate residents—we thank them for their time, ideas, and important input provided throughout the planning process. This plan has been shaped by their opinions and vision, championed by the Planning Commission, and thoughtfully considered by the Township Board.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Fred Nagler, Chair
Denise Hartsough, Vice Chair
Christopher Mihelich, Secretary
Warren Cook
William Chapman
Steven Leuty, Trustee
Peter Morrison

TOWNSHIP BOARD

Don Martin, Supervisor
Mark E. Miller, Trustee
Lisa Mackie, Clerk
Sherine Miller, Treasurer
Ashley Glass
Steven Leuty
Clara Robinson

ADMINISTRATION

Don Martin, Supervisor
Roxanne Seeber, Township Attorney
Seth Koches, Township Attorney

Contents

- Executive Summary 1
- Planning Context 3**
- Regional Snapshot 4
- Kalamazoo Township Today 9**
- People 10
- Place 23
- Kalamazoo Township Tomorrow 47**
- Vision Statement 48
- Goals and Objectives 49
- Future Land Use Plan 53
- Land Use Themes and Frameworks 69
- Zoning Plan 77
- Implementing Viable Change 81**
- Action Plan 82
- Resources 87

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1.	Regional Location Map.....	5
Map 2.	Neighborhoods Map.....	26
Map 3.	Floodplains Map.....	31
Map 4.	Wetlands Map.....	32
Map 5.	Existing Land Use - Lakewood.....	37
Map 6.	Existing Land Use - Eastwood.....	38
Map 7.	Existing Land Use - Northwood.....	39
Map 8.	Existing Land Use - Westwood.....	40
Map 9.	Road Classifications Map.....	42
Map 10.	Future Land Use Map.....	67

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Population Change, 2010-2019.....	10
Table 2.	Population by Age, 2019.....	11
Table 3.	Racial Distribution, 2010, 2020.....	12
Table 4.	Housing Units, 2010-2019.....	12
Table 5.	Year Structure Built, 2019.....	13
Table 6.	Housing Tenure, 2019.....	14
Table 7.	Employed Population by Industry, 2019.....	15
Table 8.	Commuting Destinations, 2018.....	16

Executive Summary

The Kalamazoo Township Master Plan is intended to serve as a policy-guiding document in the Township over the next 10, 15, and 20 years. This Plan provides the base guide for the future growth and development of the Township, in terms of rezonings, zoning ordinance provisions, and the overall look and feel of the built environment. It is the intent of this Plan to:

- Target growth and development to appropriate areas
- Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized residential, commercial, and industrial sites
- Protect the Township's environmental features and natural assets
- Support the highest and best land uses for each property in the Township
- Plan for and promote high quality building and site design with durable materials
- Ensure that the Township is supporting its residents

The major themes represented in this Plan derive from public engagement activities such as an online survey advertised to the public, public working session meetings (aside from the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meetings) and spreading the word on social media outlets. As such, these major themes discussed throughout this Plan include:

- Incorporating aging in place principles
- Expanding the Township's sidewalk and nonmotorized network
- Supporting each of the Township's four neighborhoods and their specific needs
- Engaging in economic development initiatives
- Expanding affordable and attainable housing opportunities

Kalamazoo Township is committed to maintaining its regional position as a great place to live, work, and recreate in Southwest Michigan.

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Planning Context

Planning for the future change and continual development and redevelopment of a community and its resulting land uses is largely dependent on where the community is located. Understanding the regional location of a community and other existing conditions such as transportation systems, environmental features, demographics, and more helps to drive logical, pragmatic, and action-oriented implementation measures that can be used to steer the community into a sustainable future.

Not only is it imperative to understand regional location and existing conditions within a community, other elements such as regional development and planning trends - as well as broad development and planning trends - are significant foundations to the master planning process and subsequent implementation actions taken by a community. By analyzing both regional and broad planning trends, a community can proactively prepare for changing environments and seamlessly adapt to growth and development for years to come.

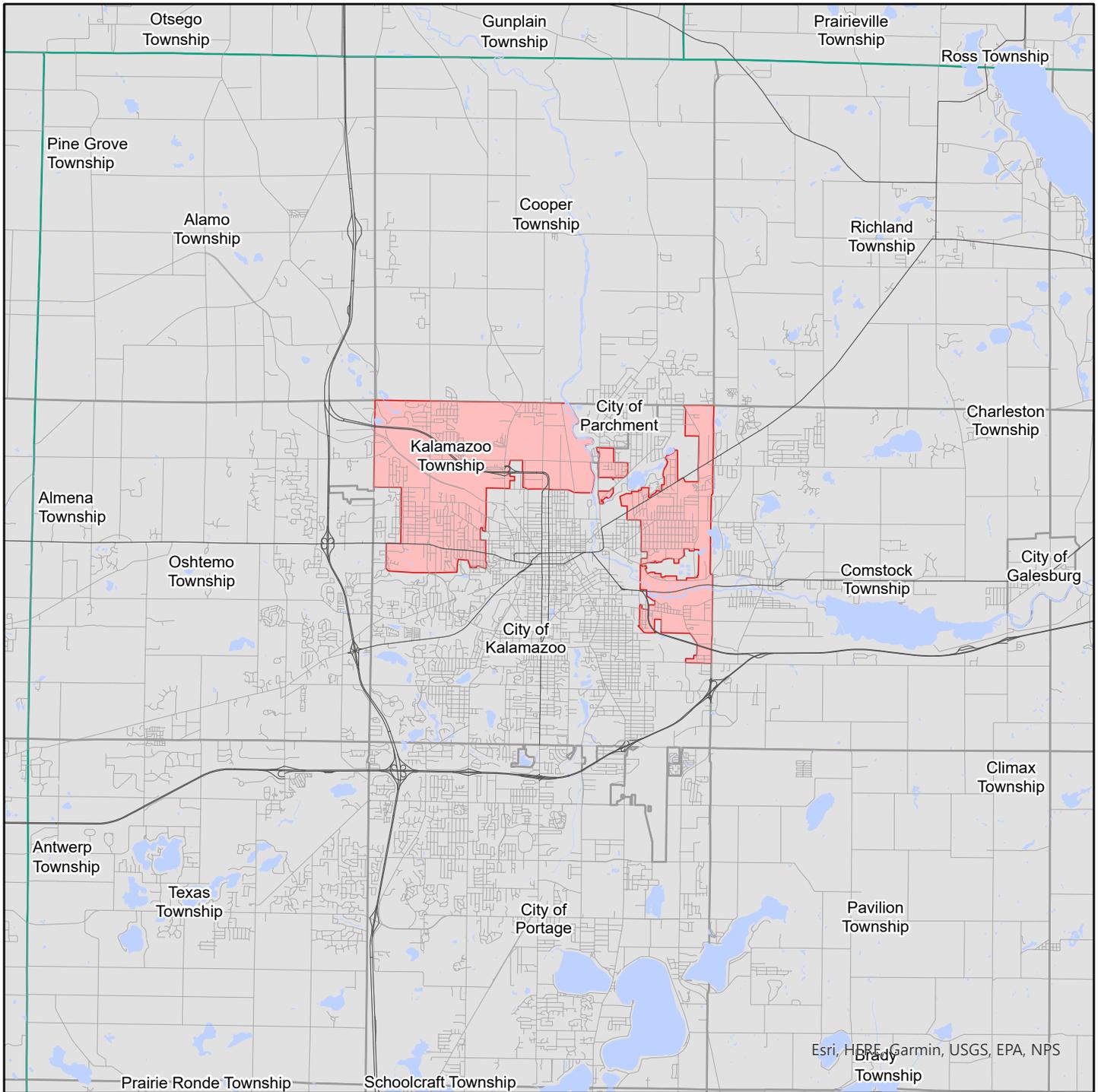
Regional Snapshot

Covering just under 12 square miles, Kalamazoo Township is located in Kalamazoo County, Michigan, which is situated on the southwest corner of the State. Kalamazoo Township encompasses the suburban homes and neighborhoods on the fringes of the City of Kalamazoo. The Township is separated into four distinct neighborhoods, Lakewood, Eastwood, Westwood, and Northwood.

From a regional perspective, Kalamazoo Township is located just 22 miles west of Battle Creek, approximately 50 miles south of the City of Grand Rapids, approximately 50 miles east of the shore of Lake Michigan, about 140 mile west of the City of Detroit, and about 150 miles northeast of the City of Chicago.

Kalamazoo Township is largely accessible by the State's highway system, including State Highway 343, known as Gull Road, and West Main Street. The Township is also located within close proximity to US-131 and I-94, between Detroit and Chicago.

In conjunction with the Township's prime location within close proximity to larger urban centers, Lake Michigan, and other scenic locations in the State, Kalamazoo Township is also located on the Kalamazoo River. The Kalamazoo River serves as the separating border between some of the Township's four major neighborhoods.



Regional Location

Kalamazoo Charter Township,
Kalamazoo County, MI

April 15, 2022

LEGEND

- Kalamazoo Township
- Surrounding Municipalities
- Counties
- Bodies of Water



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Kalamazoo County 2021. McKenna 2022.



Broader Development and Planning Trends

Kalamazoo Township should also consider broad planning and development trends that are occurring at the national, and even international, level. By analyzing these important trends, the Township can effectively and proactively plan for the future of the community, as well as get ahead of upcoming trends and important quality of life considerations to ensure Master Plan relevancy, longevity, and applicability. In turn, this will help the Township to attract and retain residents and businesses and continue into an ongoing sustainable future.

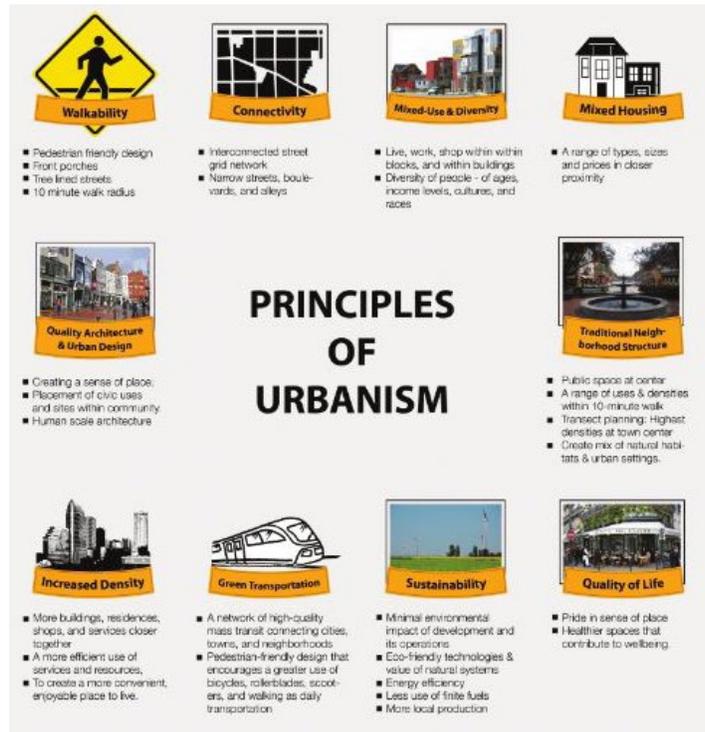
New Urbanism

An important best planning practice to consider throughout the implementation of this Plan and long after, is the concept of new urbanism. New urbanism refers to the planning and development approach that brings communities back to the basics—walkable blocks, accessible streets, mixed uses, accessible public spaces, and human-scaled design. By bringing communities back to the organic fundamentals of how towns originated, residents and businesses begin to thrive. The New Urbanism movement focuses on ensuring communities are providing a sense of place for everyone.

AARP Livability Guidelines

Additionally, according to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), communities should examine current policies and planning practices that shift toward livability. In this context, livability is an overarching term meaning the “high-level performance measure of neighborhood design factors that are critical to high quality of life for people of all ages.” Planning for all ages is a sound method of planning for people with all abilities. To achieve livability, a community must work toward the following four goals:

1. Compactness (walkable, less automobile dependent)
2. Integration of land uses (residential development within close proximity to places of employment, and neighborhood commercial nodes)
3. Housing diversity (varying types of housing for all ages and incomes)
4. Transportation options (easily available bike infrastructure, sidewalks, ridesharing, etc.)



COMPACTNESS

As briefly described above, compactness is an integral component of a livable community. On a broad spectrum, compactness simply means the close proximity of varying land uses. For example, in a compact community, residents would live within walking distance to work, school, and entertainment options such as parks, restaurants, and shopping. Compact communities tend to have successful businesses and higher property values. Given that the Township of Kalamazoo Township is a geographically small community, compactness can be achieved through mixed-use development, walkable neighborhoods, and road corridors fitted with pedestrian infrastructure and protected crossings, and a walkable Community Business District.

INTEGRATION OF LAND USES

As the title suggests, integration of land uses describes the planning practice to encourage a variety of uses within close proximity of one another. For example, residents in a livable community may live within biking distance to work or school, as well as shopping centers or grocery stores. Integrated land uses encourage live, work, play opportunities within the same area. Additionally, these areas should be close to public transit, outdoor recreation options, and more. As mentioned above, compactness and the integration of land uses are closely related with one another.

HOUSING DIVERSITY

A popular topic and crisis across the nation, housing diversity is one of the many methods used to create a livable community with high quality of life. Housing diversity encourages a varied choice of housing stock and price points. For the Township of Kalamazoo Township, this could be applicable by means of promoting mixed use development with upper floor residential units, as well as multi-family units, two-family units and duplexes, townhomes, and single-family homes and neighborhoods—types of residential units typically called “missing middle housing.” While the Township of Kalamazoo Township is largely built-out, housing diversity can be implemented during redevelopment processes of vacant or obsolete storefronts or homes, or retrofitting of underutilized areas such as large parking lots. According to the AARP livable communities report, land value is increased when higher-density development is permitted.

TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

A livable community includes the accessibility of a multitude of transit options for people with all different types of physical capabilities and ages. In this context, transportation options include automobiles, bikes, walking, buses, ridesharing, and more.

Although this is a small sample and brief overview of some of the broad overarching trends in planning and development, Kalamazoo Township can implement each of these core principles noted in this section in a variety of ways with each development, redevelopment, and zoning ordinance review and/or update. This plan is also meant to be utilized as a guide to assist Kalamazoo Township to move toward these core planning principles, in a pragmatic sense that is applicable to the Township goals.

Covid-19 Impacts

In addition to the New Urbanism and AARP best practices are outlined above, Kalamazoo Township should consider new trends in planning as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. While the nation has seen shifts in how people work, shop, and play over recent years, the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated these trends in many ways and a multitude of the emerging societal trends that arose as a result of the pandemic are likely here to stay. Some of these trends include:

- Social districts and social distancing in public spaces
- Outdoor seating and dining opportunities
- Increased usage of parks, trails, and other outdoor activities
- Increased need for curbside pickup, drive-through, and walk-up window infrastructure
- Increased working from home and telecommuting
- Online ordering, deliveries, and online shopping

Moving into the projected duration of this Master Plan, Kalamazoo Township should continue to implement and consider the Covid-19 implications as noted above.

RRC Best Practices

An important best practice in master planning is to comply with and exceed recommendations and expectations for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program. This program is a Statewide initiative designed to assist local communities with economic development growth and incentives, business attraction and retention, and overall best practices for community planning. The RRC program recommends that a community master plan should be the following:

- Reflects the community's desired direction for the future
- Identifies strategies for priority redevelopment areas
- Addresses land use and infrastructure, including complete streets
- Includes a zoning plan
- Establishes goals, implementation actions, timelines and responsible parties
- Is accessible online
- Assesses implementation recommendations annually

This Master Plan update is designed to align with RRC best practices to not only meet the MEDC's guidelines, but also to enhance the Township's eligibility to obtain RRC certification, if desired during the life of this Plan.

Kalamazoo Township Today

The Charter Township of Kalamazoo is an inner ring suburb, defined as a post-World War II community adjacent to a central city. It particularly developed between 1950 and 1969, a time in which the primary mode of transportation was the automobile. There are also outer ring suburbs. Oshtemo and Texas Townships and the southern half of the city of Portage are examples of outer ring suburbs.

Rings of growth around a city are a function of urban sprawl. The phenomenon of sprawl is brought about by economic growth of metropolitan areas creating movements of population and business toward the outer edges of metropolitan areas, along with the demands for newer and larger housing and cheaper land for business development. The addition of newer and larger housing causes deterioration of aged and obsolete housing in the central city and inner ring suburbs. Simply put, the supply of newer and larger housing absorbs more than the growth of households in the metropolitan area.

The Kalamazoo Township Master Plan provides a roadmap for the future development of the Township and is a rewrite of the current Master Plan, which was adopted in 2017. The changes in the Township's demographics, acknowledgment of advances in technology, community-building, and other important sectors, and comments received during public input have led to a revised vision for the future changes within Kalamazoo Township.

People

Community Profile

POPULATION TRENDS

Changes in the number of people in an area provides as an important indicator of community health; examining these trends is an integral tool in community planning. Table 1 shows the relative populations of the Township of Kalamazoo Township from years 2010 to 2019 in comparison with other surrounding communities.

As noted in Table 1, the total population in the Township of Kalamazoo has generally increased over the 9-year sample period. Likewise with the Kalamazoo County and neighboring communities as a whole, it appears that population trends show a general growth of the area. In particular, Texas Charter Township experienced the most growth between 2010 and 2019, while Kalamazoo Township experienced the least growth out of the sample communities.

The planning implications to encourage a steady population increase may include exploring and continuing options for economic development tools, working to diversify the housing stock where applicable, and exploring opportunities to redevelop priority sites to achieve the four livability goals discussed in the prior section.

Table 1. Population Change, 2010-2019

Community	2010	2019	Total Change 2010-2019	% Change 2010-2019
Kalamazoo Township	21,791	22,608	↑ 817	↑ 0.5%
Oshtemo Township	20,789	22,961	↑ 2,172	↑ 1.3%
Texas Township	13,983	16,871	↑ 2,888	↑ 2.4%
Comstock Township	14,633	15,531	↑ 898	↑ 0.8%
City of Kalamazoo	74,318	76,201	↑ 1,883	↑ 0.3%
Kalamazoo County	247,246	265,066	↑ 17,820	↑ 0.9%

Demographic analysis, or the study of the characteristics of the population, is a fundamental element of master planning. Future growth and development require consideration of how many people will need Township services, how much housing is affordable, how many new houses will be built, and other vital signs. By understanding these existing conditions and past trends, the Township can then appropriately anticipate and plan for the future needs of the community.

The comprehensive data source for the Township of Kalamazoo Township is the U.S. Census in 2010, Esri 2019 Forecasts (utilizing Census data), as well as the 2000 U.S. Census and the 2014-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, and the 2020 U.S. Census. This analysis compares Kalamazoo Township to several surrounding communities and Kalamazoo County, where appropriate. Differences in demographics may indicate issues or areas in which land use planning and public policies are warranted; may identify strengths or assets that can be further developed; or may identify weaknesses or issues that need to be addressed.

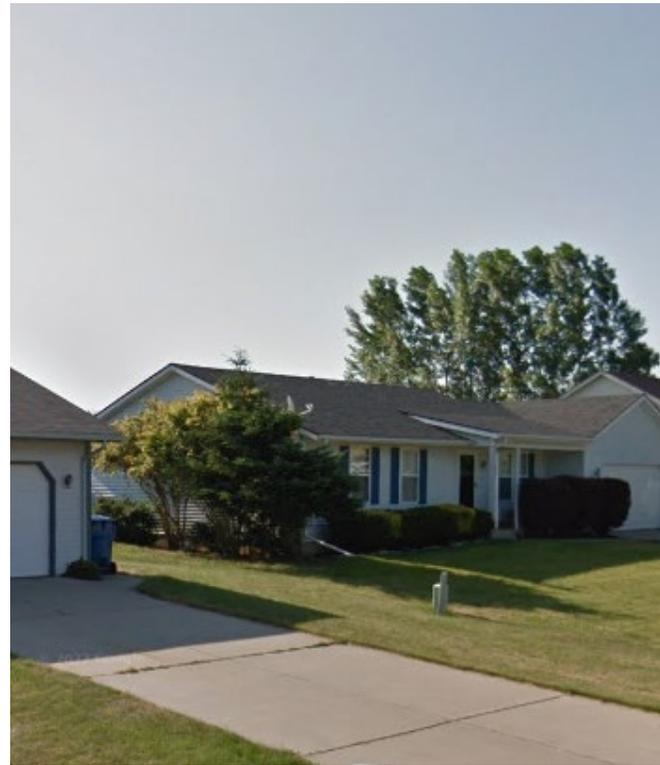
AGE DISTRIBUTION TRENDS

The age of a community’s population has implications for planning and development, whether it is a need for housing alternatives, an increased or decreased need for schools, or services for empty nesters and older residents. In the Township of Kalamazoo Township, the median age of residents is 34.3 years old. This younger median age can indicate that many Township residents are currently in the “family forming” years, likely with young or school-aged children. The planning implications for a median age of this group include increased public school and daycare enrollment, needs for entertainment opportunities such as bars, restaurants, breweries, and movie theaters, increased usage of Township parks and recreation facilities, increased usage of sidewalks and bike trails, and more.

Age structure (analyzing which proportions of a municipality’s populations are in which stages of life) gives a nuanced view of the makeup of a community. The table below describes the age distribution trends in the Township of Kalamazoo for the year 2019. As the table indicates, the age bracket with the highest population concentration in the Township is the 20-24 age group. This is likely due to the Township’s location within close proximity to Western Michigan University, which is located primarily within the City of Kalamazoo.

Table 2. Population by Age, 2019

Age Bracket	Percentage of Population
0-4	6.3%
5-9	5.5%
10-14	5.6%
15-19	5.5%
20-24	12.7%
25-29	7.6%
30-34	7.7%
35-39	6.3%
40-44	7.3%
45-49	5.7%
55-59	4.7%
60-64	4.8%
65-69	4.1%
70-74	3.7%
75-79	2.4%
80-84	1.6%
85+	1.9%



RACE AND ETHNICITY

The table below describes the racial and ethnic composition of Kalamazoo Township residents. By understanding the racial and ethnic fabric of a Township, decision-makers can adequately plan and address the needs of different population groups. As the table below indicates, the population of “White Alone” exceeds the percentages of all other races at 69% of the total population of the Township. However, it should be noted that the Township, in general, has grown in diversity over the sample period from 2010-2020.

Table 3. Racial Distribution, 2010, 2020

Race/Ethnicity	2010 Percentage of Population	2020 Percentage of Population	Percent Change 2010-2020
White Alone	76%	69%	↓ 7%
Black Alone	16%	17%	↑ 1%
American Indian Alone	0.4%	0.1%	↓ 0.3%
Asian Alone	1.4%	0.2%	↓ 1.2%
Pacific Islander Alone	0.01%	0.03%	↑ 0.02%
Some Other Race	2%	2.7%	↑ 0.7%
Two or More Races	4%	7.8%	↑ 3.8%
Hispanic Origin	4.6%	6.5%	↑ 1.9%

HOUSING PROFILE

The quality, affordability, location, and availability of a community’s housing stock has a significant impact on the vitality and livability of the community as a whole. The following analysis of trends relating to the number of housing units, the amount of owner-occupied, rental, and vacant units, and households by type helps evaluate the health of the Township of Kalamazoo Township’s housing stock.

Table 5 provides more information on the types of available housing in the Township, and how the housing types have changed over a seven-year time period. As a result, the Township’s housing stock has remained relatively consistent over the sample period from 2010 to 2019. The largest variation during the sample period is the loss of 2.6% of manufactured units and the increase of 3.2% in 2-4 unit homes. This can be due to the Township’s commitment to address the “missing middle” housing gap in recent years. The increase in two-family and multi-family units can attribute to the Township’s population growth.

Table 4. Housing Units, 2010-2019

Housing Type	2010 Percentage	2019 Percentage	Percent Change 2010-2019
Single Family Detached	66.4%	66%	↓ 0.4%
Single Family Attached	2.9%	2.6%	↓ 0.3%
2-4 Attached	2.6%	5.8%	↑ 3.2%
Multi-Family (5+ Units)	19.5%	21%	↑ 1.5%
Manufactured Units	7.1%	4.5%	↓ 2.6%

In addition to the number of housing units in the Township over a given period of time, it is also significant to understand the year residential structures were built. Construction year data helps provide insight on the age of the current housing stock in the Township. Table 5 provides more information on the year homes were constructed; and, as indicated, the time period with the greatest number of homes being built in the Township of Kalamazoo Township was 1940 to 1959, which reflects the postwar housing construction boom, as many communities experienced across the Country.

Throughout the duration of this Master Plan, the Township should continue to be mindful of the aging housing stock, which can have implications on planning such as code enforcement, redevelopment incentives and initiatives, housing assistance programs, and more.

Table 5. Year Structure Built, 2019

Year	Number of Structures Built
2014 or Later (less than 9 years old)	42
2010 to 2013 (10–13 years old)	119
2000 to 2009 (14–23 years old)	375
1980 to 1999 (24–43 years old)	2,092
1960 to 1979 (44–63 years old)	2,313
1940 to 1959 (64–83 years old)	3,240
1939 or earlier (84+ years old)	844



HOUSING TENURE

Housing tenure describes how housing is occupied—by the owner, by a renter, or whether it is vacant. According to Table 6, the housing tenure with the highest share of residents is owner-occupied housing (66.3%), with a small smattering of vacant homes. This data is consistent with the housing type data, in that 2–4 unit family home construction has risen, and multi-family developments have decreased (and those are often the housing types that are occupied by renters).

Additionally, Table 6 concludes that Kalamazoo Township has one of the higher rates of home ownership among the sample communities. Some of the planning implications to consider in analyzing housing tenure data is whether to address aging housing stock, ensure that housing stock diversity is appropriately balanced, that adequate rental housing is available to meet the local demand, and more.

Table 6. Housing Tenure, 2019

	Kalamazoo Township	Oshtemo Township	Comstock Township	Texas Township	City of Kalamazoo	Kalamazoo County
Owner Occupied	64.3%	52%	69%	93%	44%	64%
Renter Occupied (2019)	35.7%	48%	31%	7%	56%	36%

HOUSEHOLDS

In the Township of Kalamazoo Township, the 2019 average household size was 2.33 persons and the average family size was 2.95 persons. Of this information, combined with the age distribution, it is likely that the Township of Kalamazoo Township is comprised largely of older 2-person families that no longer have children living in their homes, or older residents living in their adult child’s home.

Economic Profile

This section describes the employment distribution, income, and other economic data for the Kalamazoo Township. It also includes a Tapestry Segmentation profile, which summarizes the segments, based on demographics and socioeconomic factors, that can be found in the Township.

The following table addresses the employment sector of the residents in the Township. This is not an analysis of what kinds of jobs are available or what businesses are located within the community, but rather in what occupations residents are employed, regardless of where they work. Major occupational sectors for residents of Kalamazoo Township include

Table 7. Employed Population by Industry, 2019

Industry	Number of 16+ Labor Force
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	112
Construction	508
Manufacturing	1,500
Wholesale trade	204
Retail trade	1,150
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	361
Information	179
Finance and insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	846
Professional, scientific, and management, administrative and waste management	1,342
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	3,419
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation, and food service	1,255
Other services	526
Public administration	287

INCOME AND UNEMPLOYMENT

In the Township of Kalamazoo Township, the median household income in the year 2019 was approximately \$58,681, according to the Esri 2019 Estimates; the median home value was \$163,047. Additionally, only 3.6% of Kalamazoo Township’s residents were unemployed in 2019.

Some of the planning implications due to the income and poverty data noted above include housing affordability, education and lifelong learning / training, availability of transportation options, availability of recreation options, relationships with local large employers, and more.



COMMUTING

An indication of this area’s economic position relative to the surrounding region can be illustrated in travel time to work for residents. Table 8 further outlines the time residents, age 16 and older, spend traveling to their place of employment, as well as which places of work can be reached in that radius.

Table 8. Commuting Destinations, 2018

Travel Time to Work	Places of Work within this Commute Radius	% of Population
Less than 10 minutes	Kalamazoo Township /City of Kalamazoo	14%
10-24 minutes	Oshtemo Township/Portage	17%
25-44 minutes	City of Battle Creek/ Three Rivers/Paw Paw	34%
45-59 minutes	Grand Rapids/ Benton Harbor/Holland	4%
60 + minutes	Lansing/South Bend	4%

Table 8 above indicates that the highest percentage of residents in the Township of Kalamazoo Township have commuting times around 25-44 minutes. This can indicate that many people who live in the Township travel to places such as Battle Creek, Three Rivers, and Paw Paw for work.

However, it is also important to note that over 30% of the Township’s population commutes between 0-24 minutes. This can also indicate that many of the Township’s commute needs are currently being met in that many residents likely have the opportunity to both live and work in the Township. Commute data is significant when planning for future transportation systems (both motorized and nonmotorized), business and economic development projects and programs, corridor enhancements, and more.

Tapestry Segmentation Profile

Tapestry segmentation profiles provide an accurate, detailed description of America's neighborhoods, classifying them into unique segments based not only on demographics, but also socioeconomic characteristics. For the Township of Kalamazoo Township, there are three major segments which can provide information about the neighborhoods and its residents.

“TRADITIONAL LIVING”

This profile is largely comprised of families living in single-family homes and neighborhoods. Many individuals in this group tend to live multiple generations in the same community. Further, this segment of individuals are most likely to be employed in the manufacturing, retail trade, and healthcare sectors. This group is also likely to be cost and budget conscious and are proficient with the internet and electronics. In terms of budget index, Traditional Living groups have a higher than average budget for transportation, healthcare, entertainment and recreation, and food. In this group, a near even amount of individuals own and rent their homes.

“COLLEGE TOWNS”

In this group, over half of residents are either enrolled in college or work for a college or the services that support it. This group is comprised of mostly younger people with a median age of 24.5 years old. Most of this group has limited income and tends to shop for discounts and thrifty purchases. Further, this group tends to live in non-family households with roommates and are not likely to own their own homes. This group is more likely to spend their income and earnings on entertainment, clothing, food, and other similar items. College Towns individuals are also more likely to spend time outdoors and enjoy hiking, biking, and exercise.

“RUSTBELT TRADITIONS “

This Tapestry Segmentation profile comprises the highest percentage of residents in the Township of Kalamazoo Township. Rustbelt Traditions have an average household size of approximately 2.47 people, a median age of 39 years old, and a median household income of \$51,800. A majority of Rustbelt Traditions homes are located in older industrial cities surrounding the Great Lakes. Additionally, this group is likely to have low unemployment rates, are family-oriented consumers, and live in modest single-family homes.



Community Conversations

Kalamazoo Township advertised a survey online to the public in spring and summer 2022. The survey received 166 responses. Key points from the survey include:

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

- 94% residents of the Township
- 85% live in Westwood
- 33% have lived in the Township for 21+ years
- 26% have lived in the Township for 0-5 years
- 24% of respondents are 35-44 years old
- 23% of respondents are 70+ years old

KEY TAKEAWAYS: STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

Many people live in the Township for a long period of time, which indicates the Township is a desirable place to live with amenities people enjoy. Further, the Township has an influx of newcomers of “family forming” ages.

TOWNSHIP IMPRESSIONS

What people like the most about Kalamazoo Township (in descending order)

1. Balance between urban and rural landscape
2. Close proximity to other urban centers
3. Close proximity to natural features
4. Short travel times to work or other destinations
5. Close access to major thoroughfares
6. Quality and/or affordable housing
7. Parks and trails system
8. Schools

What should change from its current condition in the Township (in descending order)

1. Not enough sidewalks
2. Too much speeding
3. Not enough affordable housing or newer housing
4. Not enough parks, bike trails, bike paths
5. Not enough quality of life options for seniors
6. Not enough code enforcement
7. Roads are in poor condition
8. Too much traffic congestion
9. Not enough environmental preservation
10. Not enough commercial businesses and/or entertainment opportunities
11. Too many vacant commercial and industrial sites

Neighborhood Conditions

- Speeding requires major change
- Sidewalks requires major change
- Accessibility and noise require no change
- Bike facilities require no change

Paying for Improvements

- 49% would pay more taxes for improved or more sidewalks
- A near even percentage of respondents said they would pay more taxes for improved parks (26%) as well as would not pay more taxes for improved parks (27%)

Township Identity

- 48.6% of respondents noted that Township events (such as parades and festivals) require no change
- 50% of respondents noted that neighborhood associations require no change
- 26% of respondents selected that government transparency and community outreach from Township staff requires major change
- 19% of respondents would like a central gathering place in their neighborhood for events, concerts, private parties, and other events



KEY TAKEAWAYS: TOWNSHIP IMPRESSIONS

- The Township should incorporate preservation of existing established neighborhoods in the Master Plan, keeping land uses balanced between suburban/rural.
- Targeting commercial, residential, and industrial development to strategic areas
- Focus on redevelopment rather than sprawl
- Continue efforts to expand the sidewalk system
- Focus on complete streets and identify unsafe road corridors or intersections to assess opportunities for improvements (e.g., traffic calming, light signal timing, crosswalks, etc.)
- Continue efforts for the Township to keep a transparent presence on upcoming projects, events, agendas, etc.

HOUSING

Housing Needs

- 61% said that current housing options meet their needs
- 17% said housing does not meet their needs due to high costs

Enforcement Efforts

- 51% would like more ordinance enforcement
- 46% would like the Township to maintain current level of enforcement

Housing Stock

- 47% would support the Township exploring options to expand housing stock
- 18% not be supportive
- 23% have no opinion

New Housing Types

	I love it	It is ok	Neutral/No Opinion	I do not like it	I really do not like it
Single family homes on large lots	31%	28%	26%	7%	8%
Single family neighborhoods on smaller lots	23%	36%	32%	9%	1%
Accessory dwelling units	21%	25%	24%	17%	13%
Townhomes	16%	37%	21%	16%	10%
Cottage courts/ bungalow courts	27%	25%	27%	12%	10%
Duplexes/triplexes	16%	28%	20%	24%	12%
Condos	11%	36%	30%	13%	11%
Apartments	8%	20%	22%	27%	23%

KEY TAKEAWAYS: HOUSING

- Generally, the public would be supportive of the Township adding more types of housing, including bungalow courts, accessory dwelling units, and others. This may also help to address high housing cost concerns.
- The Township should explore options for refined code enforcement procedures.
- Aging in place should be addressed in the master plan, and how the Township can help.

TRANSPORTATION

Getting around the Township

- 61% would like to walk more to access their destination (using sidewalks)
- 52% would like to use their bike more to access their destination

Safety along W. Main

- Generally, people feel safe biking along W. Main
- People feel less safe walking along W. Main

Safety Along Gull Road

- Generally, people feel fairly safe walking and biking along Gull Road

Kalamazoo Metro

- 0% said the Metro currently meets their needs
- 56% do not use the Metro
- 21% have no opinion
- 7% said bus stop times do not work with their personal schedule
- 5% said the bus system does not provide stops near where they need to go

New Stop Suggestions

- K-Pep
- Connections to the Route 14 bus (along Cherokee)
- Westwood Fire Station
- Near senior housing complexes



KEY TAKEAWAYS: TRANSPORTATION

- This data shows additional support for more sidewalks and a connected sidewalk system
- More bike infrastructure would also generally be supported
- Of those who do ride the Metro, their needs are generally not being met
- In general, some of the Township’s major corridors provide the perception of safety for both biking and pedestrian activities. Although, this is slightly contradictory to previous results in that residents noted that speeding is the biggest issue. This usually creates unsafe perceptions for bikers and pedestrians.

PARKS AND TRAILS

- In general, people are less satisfied with the Township’s current parks and trails system

New Park Amenities

	I would like more of these	Neutral/No opinion	I do not see a need for more of these
Playgrounds	34%	55%	11%
Ballfields/courts	31%	55%	14%
Outdoor nature programs	64%	31%	5%
Kalamazoo River recreation	57%	38%	5%
Natural woodlands/greenspaces	67%	30%	3%
Dog parks	26%	57%	18%
Splash pads	29%	52%	19%

New Park Location Suggestions

- Westwood
- Trails connections from Lakewood
- Links from West Main to Linden Grove
- Bike facilities along all major roads
- More trails to connect neighborhoods

KEY TAKEAWAYS: PARKS AND TRAILS

- Generally, people are less satisfied with the current parks and trails system
- Respondents would like to see more River recreation, natural woodlands/greenspace (passive recreation), and outdoor nature programs



Place

Planning Framework—Neighborhoods, Nodes, and Corridors

A major component of a community master plan is to identify existing land use patterns. To make informed decisions regarding the future of land uses in Kalamazoo Township, it is critical to have a clear understanding of existing land uses and the relationships between those land uses. Documenting the existing land use framework not only identifies the locations of particular land use activities, but also highlights the areas with future growth potential and areas where land use conflicts may exist.

A key element to consider when determining the future fabric of a community is the identification of where current activities (such as residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational) take place. This existing conditions and land use analysis will help to determine what areas and corridors should be preserved, redeveloped, or intensified.

This Master Planning process has also identified other existing conditions factors that helped determine not only the Future Land Use Plan, but also the overarching goals, objectives, and recommendations, as described in the next section—specifically neighborhoods, nodes, and corridors.



Neighborhoods

Kalamazoo Township is comprised of four distinct neighborhoods, each with unique qualities and characteristics.

LAKWOOD

Lakewood is the smallest and least populated neighborhood in the Township. It is bordered by the City of Kalamazoo on the west, and Sprinkle Road (Comstock Township) on the east. The north and south boundaries are less well defined but generally follow East Michigan Avenue on the north and Business Route 94 on the south—although the neighborhood extends south to the city limits as far as Miller Road.

Lakewood's northern and southern halves exhibit very different land use patterns. The northern half -- from the Kalamazoo River north—contains a great deal of undeveloped open space that is partially floodplain, while the southern half consists of a mix of low density residential development interspersed with commercial and industrial uses as well as the Kalamazoo County Fair Grounds. This area has poorly drained soils subject to seasonal flooding from both the Kalamazoo River and Davis Creek as well as large areas of regulated wetlands.

EASTWOOD

The Eastwood neighborhood is defined as those parcels within the Eastwood Fire District. The area is bounded by the City of Kalamazoo on the west, south and north and by Comstock Township on the east. The neighborhood includes most of the Ascension/Borgess Hospital campus. Commercial development has expanded in a discontinuous manner along Gull Road; and in half-mile segments at the extreme eastern and western ends of East Main Street. South of Main Street between Nazareth Road and East Michigan, and extending into Comstock Township to the east, is the largest gravel mine in the Township.

NORTHWOOD

The Northwood neighborhood is defined as those properties within the Northwood Fire District as well as the small, non-contiguous residential plat—Barclay Hills, east of the Kalamazoo River. The neighborhood's southern boundary is the City of Kalamazoo and the Westwood neighborhood boundary. Its north side is Cooper Township (G Avenue) and its eastern side the City of Parchment (Kalamazoo River), the City of Kalamazoo and the Barclay Hills area to Mt. Olivet Road. The western side of the neighborhood is sometimes described as Ravine Road or alternatively the north-south half-section line running through the middle of Section 5 and 8.

The majority of the developed land in Northwood lies in the level areas between Westnedge and Douglas avenues north of the line of Allen Street and along the primary county roads. There are several mobile home parks on Douglas Avenue north of the US-131 Business Loop. Douglas Avenue itself is a commercial corridor; North Burdick and North Pitcher streets are industrial corridors and Mosel Avenue has a mix of commercial and industrial areas. West of Douglas Avenue the land is characterized as having steep slopes and is moderately covered by wood lots. The area north of Mosel between Douglas and Westnedge possess severe developmental limitations due to extensive areas of muck soils. The areas between the north-south railroad line and the Kalamazoo River also have limited developmental possibilities due to wetlands and the potential for flooding. North Burdick Street between the City limits and Mosel Avenue has become a corridor for marijuana industries as long vacant industrial buildings have been adapted to this new use. North Pitcher Street south of Mosel and into the City has become an industrial redevelopment area for the Graphic Packaging Corporation.

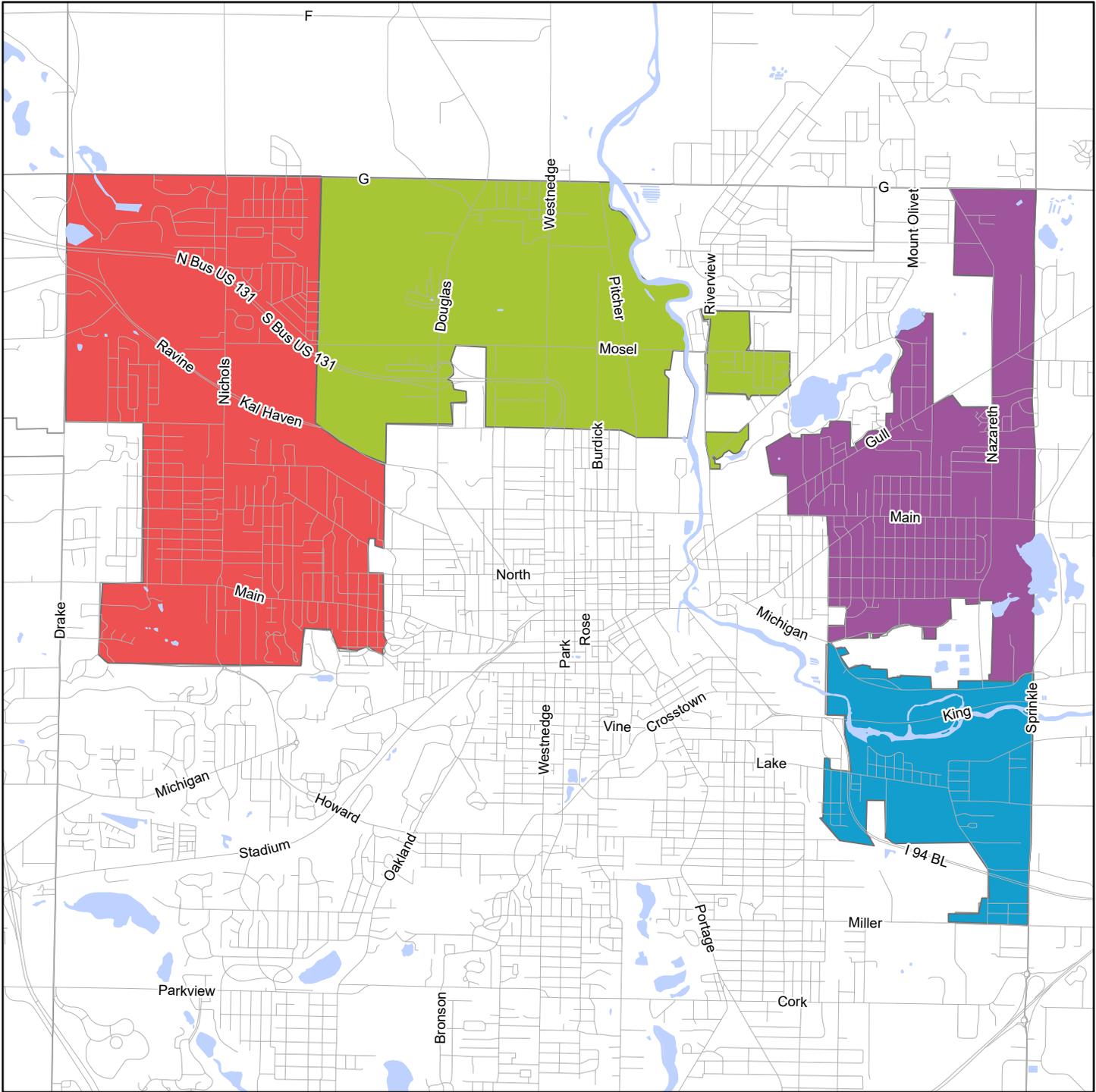
WESTWOOD

The Westwood neighborhood is defined as those properties within the Westwood Fire District. The southern, southeastern and southwestern edges are bordered by the City of Kalamazoo; the neighborhood's western boundary is Oshtemo Township; and its northern boundary is generally Ravine Road but the west halves of township sections 5 and 8 north of Ravine Road are sometimes considered to be part of Westwood.

Westwood south of Ravine Road is now almost completely fully developed. The neighborhood is primarily single family residential with commercial uses confined to the West Main Street (M-43) corridor and the Nichols/Ravine roads intersection. Industrial uses are confined to the Ravine Road corridor with the primary use being gravel mines between Ravine Road and the US-131 Business Loop. The Kalsec Planned Unit Development of mixed commercial/industrial/residential uses occupies the extreme southwest corner of the neighborhood south of West Main.

The only area having significant wetlands is the area around Twin Lakes in Section 6. Due to the small size of platted lots, storm water runoff is a concern for commercial development and redevelopment along West Main.





Nighborhood Boundaries

Kalamazoo Charter Township
Kalamazoo County, MI

July 6, 2023

LEGEND

- Westwood Neighborhood
- Northwood Neighborhood
- Lakewood Neighborhood
- Eastwood Neighborhood



0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Kalamazoo County 2022. McKenna 2022.



Corridors

WEST MAIN

Currently, West Main is largely commercial in nature. However, the Township’s current zoning notes that the corridor is zoned for multiple family residential and single and two family residential. West Main is a heavily traveled corridor that is comprised of four lanes, two travel lanes both eastbound and westbound. Speed limits are relatively steady at 35 miles per hour. According to the Michigan Traffic Crash Facts, West Main is one of the top corridors in the Township with the most traffic accidents reported. Closer to the City of Kalamazoo limits, West Main includes higher density commercial land uses.



EAST MAIN

Additionally, East Main is largely commercial in nature with residential uses mixed in. The Township zoning map notes multifamily and single and two family uses on the west end of East Main, toward the City of Kalamazoo limits. Traveling further east, there are more intense general commercial land uses toward Comstock Township. This corridor is also heavily traveled by many motorists and is generally comprised of three lanes.



GULL ROAD / M-343

Along with East and West Main, Gull Road is one of the Township’s most significant corridors. According to the Township zoning map, Gull Road is comprised of several zoning districts, ranging from multifamily, to single family, to local commercial. The corridor is generally high traffic volume and higher traffic speeds and is constructed as a five-lane thoroughfare. Gull Road can also be referred to as M-43, which indicates MDOT jurisdiction.





MOSEL AVENUE

Mosel Avenue is one of the Township's primary industrial corridors. It is a main thoroughfare in the Township that runs east-west and provides direct access to BL-131. In general, the western portion of Mosel Avenue is comprised of residential zoning and the eastern portion is comprised of general commercial and industrial land uses.



NICHOLS ROAD

Nichols Road is one of the Township's primary north-south corridors and is mainly comprised of residential land uses, with some commercial. The residential uses along Nichols Road can be described as higher density, small lot single family neighborhoods with older housing stock. Traveling north, Nichols Road is comprised of less dense large lot single family homes and neighborhoods.



NAZARETH ROAD

Another one of the Township's main north-south thoroughfares, Nazareth Road is located toward the easternmost portion of the Township. The land uses along Nazareth range from residential, to commercial. In general, the residential uses along this corridor are comprised of larger lot single family homes and neighborhoods.



LAKE STREET

The Lake Street corridor provides relatively greater transportation use to access County Services (i.e., County Jail, Sheriff Dept, Animal Control, Household Hazardous Waste Center, Expo Center and Fairgrounds), as well as many small businesses located between Olmstead Road and Sprinkle Road. Lake Street also provides feeder access to Sprinkle Road and BL-94, a Metro bus line, Kalamazoo Probation Enhancement Program (KPEP) facilities (located on Olmstead Road, south of Lake Street), and the neighboring governmental units of Comstock Twp and City of Kalamazoo.



Natural Features

Kalamazoo Township encompasses a wide variety of physical resources and landscape features. The quantity and quality of these natural attributes have been and will continue to be a determining factor in the types of recreational patterns and land uses that occur in the neighborhoods.

TOPOGRAPHY

While topography in the Township is generally level or rolling, several areas exist in the Township where the slopes of the terrain are in excess of five percent. Land with slopes less than five percent is generally considered desirable for development, requiring minimal, if any, grading. Land areas with slopes ranging from five to twelve percent can be developed with careful grading and conservation measures. Land areas with slopes in excess of twelve percent should not be developed except for recreational and open space activities.

In the Lakewood neighborhood, the dominant physical characteristic is the Kalamazoo River and the adjacent low-lying floodplain. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has classified the river as a second quality warm water mainstream. Davis Creek flows into the river from the south. Lakewood's terrain is generally flat to gently rolling with higher elevations occurring in the southern portions of the neighborhood.

The Eastwood neighborhood is generally flat to gently rolling with the exception of the southern portion. That portion of Eastwood has steep slopes down to the Kalamazoo River floodplain.

The western portion of the Northwood neighborhood is rolling with steep slopes. Ravines and sharp relief, the result of post-glacial activity, are found in this area. The portion of Northwood east of Douglas Avenue is a wide flat floodplain of the Kalamazoo River.

Most of the Westwood neighborhood is gently rolling, although some severe slopes occur on both sides of Ravine Road, again due to post-glacial moraines and run-off channels. A natural drainage area exists in the extreme southern portion of the neighborhood.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

With the extension of municipal sanitary sewer and municipal water through most of the Township, soils are of less significance for development purposes other than for possible storm water runoff impacts. Well-drained soils are found in the western half of the northeastern quarter of the Township. These soils are typically sands and gravels. The moraines of Westwood/Northwood along Ravine Road and Eastwood between Nazareth and Sprinkle roads are prime sources for sand and gravel mining.

Soils with marginal natural drainage are buildable but require close attention to storm water runoff. These soils are found primarily in the transition zones between the moraines and floodplains.

Poorly drained soils are primarily mucks and silts. These are found in the Kalamazoo River floodplains in both Northwood and Lakewood. Characteristics of muck-type soils are instability, high water table and poor percolation. According to the USDA Soil Conservation Service, muck soils have severe limitations for building site development. These limitations include: flooding, ponding, and cutbanks caving. They are also subject to frost action.

WATER RESOURCES AND WETLANDS

The largest body of water in Kalamazoo is the Kalamazoo River which traverses the Township in two places. The River flows from the east through the north side of the Lakewood neighborhood to the City. It then re-enters the Township from the south along Riverview Drive running along the east side of the Northwood neighborhood and exits on the north into Cooper Township.

The River provides recreational opportunities to the community. At one time, the Kalamazoo River was so heavily polluted it could not serve that purpose. There are still contaminants affecting the waters but water quality has improved enough for some limited recreational purposes such as boating and fishing, although health warnings remain in effect for eating fish from the River. The only other sizable bodies of water are the Consumers Sand and Gravel Company pit in the southeastern quadrant of Nazareth Road and East Main, and the Twin Lakes in the extreme northwest quarter of Section 6 along Ravine Road.

Land areas along the Kalamazoo River are designated floodplains. These areas are subject to a one-percent chance of major flooding every year as calculated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the National Flood Insurance Program. Because floodplains are also subject to seasonal flooding and serve as both wildlife refuges and recreational areas, development should be discouraged.

Regarding floodplain areas in the Township, the Lakewood Neighborhood is located within both wetland and floodplain areas, especially those properties located immediately north and south of the River along Lake Drive and Michigan Avenue. Any new development or redevelopment projects or opportunities within the Lakewood Neighborhood should be reviewed with environmental considerations to the River. Additionally, any new work within this area should involve the Michigan Department of Environmental, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). If any FEMA grant funding, project funding, and/or administration opportunities become available to assist property owners in this area, the Township is likely to facilitate.

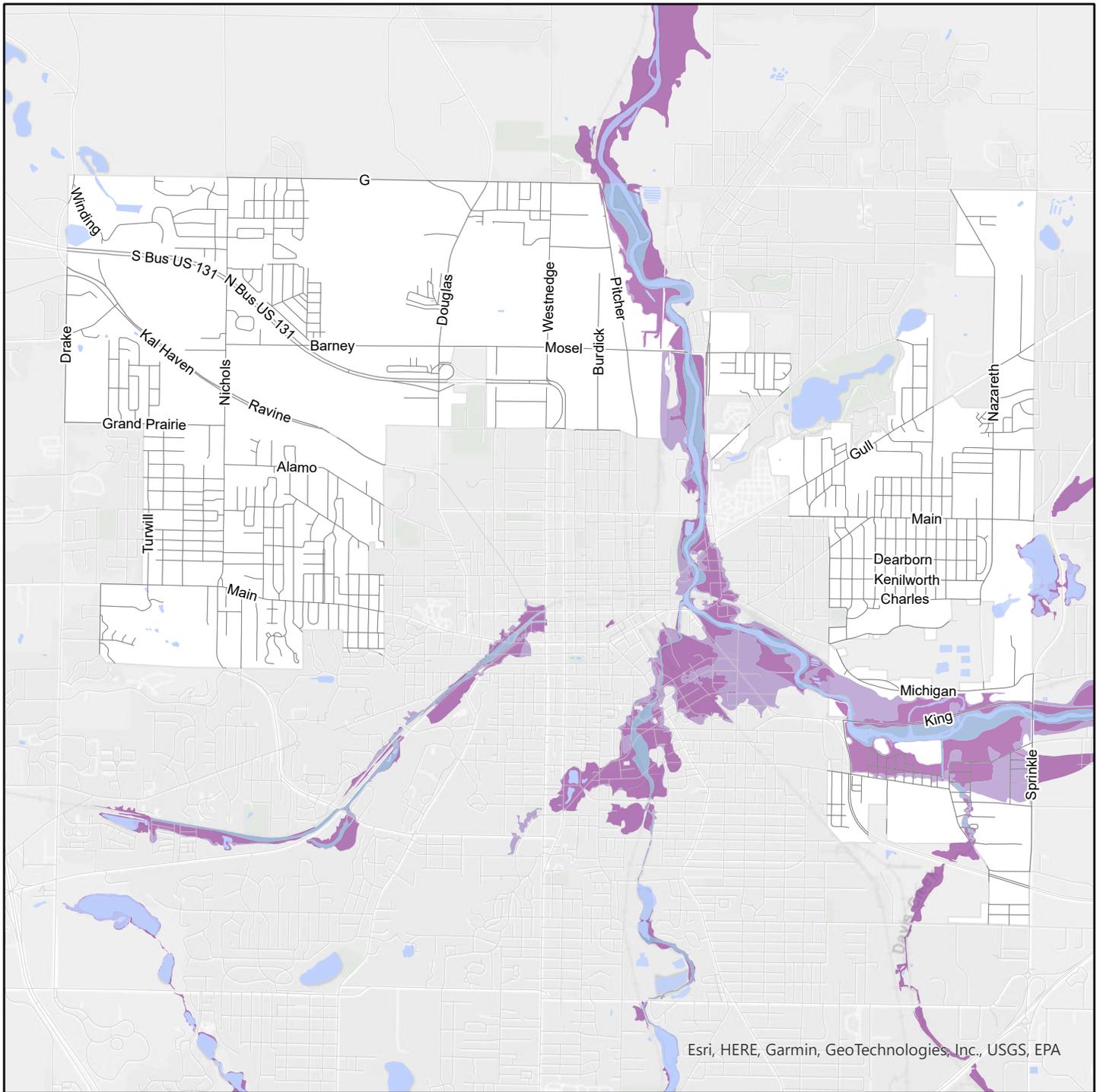
Some wetland areas occur within the Township. Wetlands are associated with poor soil conditions and seasonal standing water. Wetlands provide excellent retention areas for storm water and for ground water recharge.

The Kalamazoo County Drain Commissioner's office has identified wellhead protection areas within Kalamazoo Township. These are found:

- In Section 6 along US-131 Business Loop and east of Nichols Road,
- In Section 1 along Nazareth Road and to the east,
- In Sections 13 and 14 in the southern undeveloped portion of Eastwood, and
- In Section 24 east of Olmstead, and along the line of Davis Creek.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Most agricultural land in Kalamazoo Township is located north of Mosel/Barney between North Westnedge and Douglas Avenues. These lands are used mostly for truck farming and greenhouses.



Esri, HERE, Garmin, GeoTechnologies, Inc., USGS, EPA

Floodplain

Kalamazoo Charter Township
Kalamazoo County, MI

June 20, 2022

LEGEND

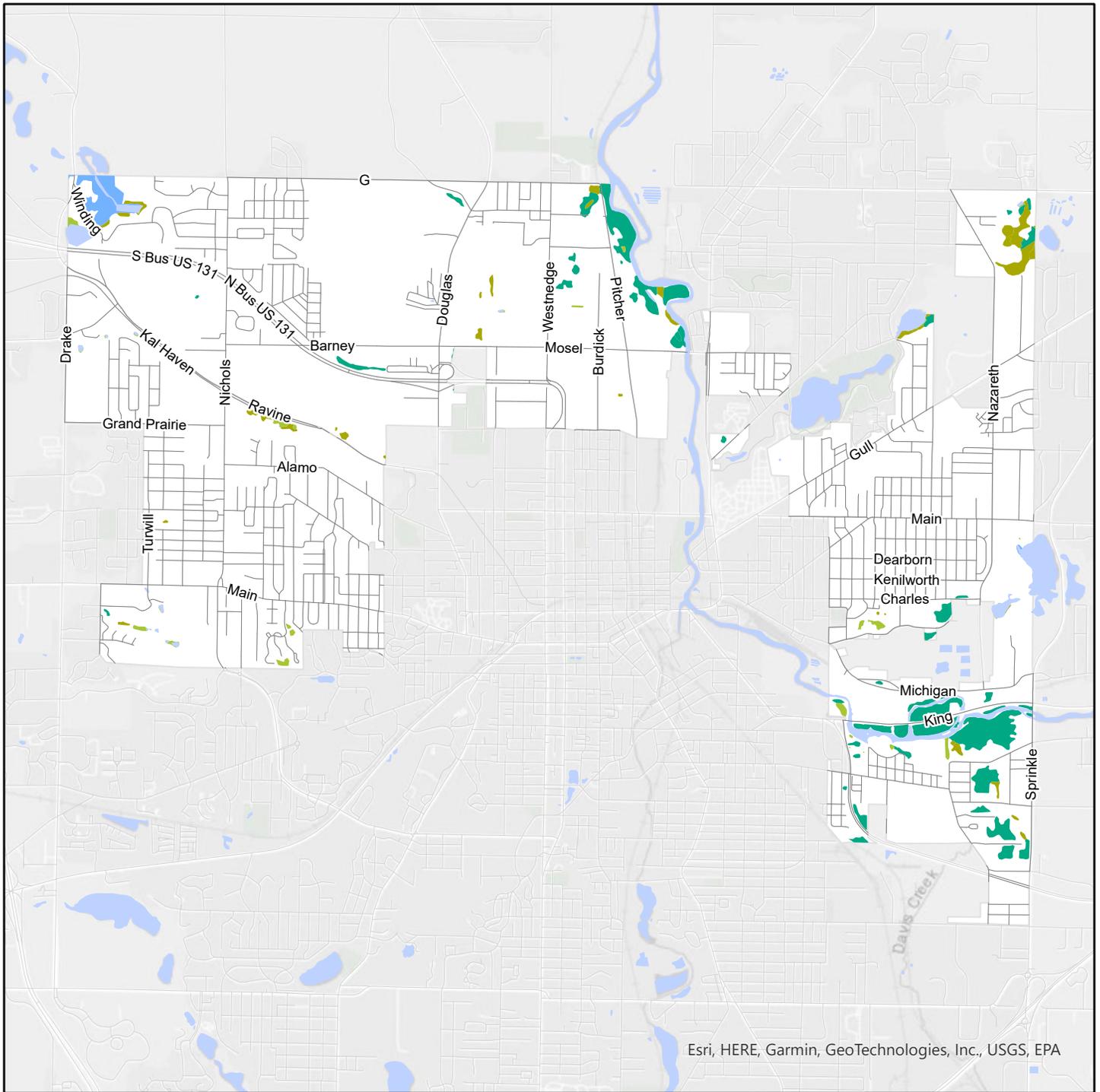
- 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
- 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
- Regulatory Floodway
- Bodies of Water



0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Kalamazoo County 2022. McKenna 2022.





Esri, HERE, Garmin, GeoTechnologies, Inc., USGS, EPA

Wetlands

Kalamazoo Charter Township
Kalamazoo County, MI

June 20, 2022

LEGEND

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Bodies of Water



0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Kalamazoo County 2022. McKenna 2022.





Environmental Conditions

PFAS CONSIDERATIONS

The most critical environmental issue for Kalamazoo Township is the PFAS groundwater contamination event, identified in 2018 from the discovery of drinking water contamination in the City of Parchment’s well-fields. There is also evidence of PFAS contamination in the Lakewood Neighborhood.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of man-made chemicals that includes PFOA, PFOS, GenX, and many other chemicals. PFAS have been manufactured and used in a variety of industries around the globe, including in the United States since the 1940s. PFOA and PFOS have been the most extensively produced and studied of these chemicals. Both chemicals are very persistent in the environment and in the human body—meaning they don’t break down and they can accumulate over time. There is evidence that exposure to PFAS—through such activities as gardening, or other contact with soils for persons living in PFAS-contaminated areas—can lead to adverse human health effects.

The source of the PFAS contamination in the City of Parchment and Kalamazoo Township (as well as neighboring Cooper Township) seems to have been an industrial landfill used by the former Parchment Paper Company. This area is located in Cooper Township and is adjacent to the Parchment well field.

In 2019 it was discovered that PFAS in groundwater has spread to private wells in the north central portion of Kalamazoo Township. The immediate response was to connect the Parchment water supply system to the City of Kalamazoo’s system. Residents on private wells have been issued bottled water until they can be connected to a municipal water system.

LUST SITES

Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites are a continuing concern. If left untreated, these sites have the potential to cause significant environmental problems through off-site migration of contaminants. Typically, these tanks contain residual amounts of petroleum based substances which can leach into the groundwater supply. These leaks frequently develop into underground plumes of contamination that have the potential to degrade the groundwater supply beyond the source point.

One option for dealing with LUSTs is to prepare a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes & Energy (former MDEQ) to mitigate existing contamination or future threats of such contamination.

KALAMAZOO RIVER

Other key environmental issues include:

- floodplain management (particularly in Lakewood),
- PCB contaminants remaining in the river and adjacent remediation sites
- accessibility/aesthetics improvements along the riverfront.

These issues will be discussed in the implementation section.

BROWNFIELD AUTHORITY

Kalamazoo Township has chosen to participate in the Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to assist in the remediation of contaminated sites and provide financial incentives for redevelopment of such properties.

Kalamazoo Township is faced with the problem of how to reutilize vacant or underused industrial properties. In many cases, these properties have been abandoned by previous owners, and have been forfeited to the State or the Township. The lack of reinvestment may be due, in part, to the fear of potential liability on the part of any new owner. In other cases, current owners avoid marketing such properties for fear of triggering “due diligence” research that may reveal unanticipated problems.

Michigan has been a national leader in building mechanisms to encourage redevelopment of brownfield sites and buildings. The state has gone to great lengths to provide incentives for the redevelopment of brownfields. These efforts include a general relaxation of liability laws to protect innocent investors, along with an assortment of financial incentives including: site assessment and remediation grants, and the Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI). Further assistance is possible through federal grants.

Existing Land Uses and Character

Kalamazoo Township generally consists of seven land uses. Differing from zoning districts, land uses describe the overarching character of an area and how the land is occupied, that which are then specified further into zoning districts with corresponding regulations. The existing land uses represented in Kalamazoo Township include:

SINGLE AND TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Single- and two-family homes occupy the majority of the Township's total land area. Single- and two-family residential areas typically include residential neighborhoods with detached one-family homes constructed on small-to-medium size lots. In each of the Township's four neighborhoods, single- and two-family residential land uses are the most prominent residential land uses.



MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

This classification includes land areas that are occupied by predominately residential structures containing dwelling units for three or more households. The Multiple Family classification includes apartments and attached condominiums. Multi-Family Residential land uses are generally found on the southern portion of the Westwood neighborhood and central areas of the Eastwood Neighborhood, along Gull Road. Multi-family residential land uses are typically situated near common community nodes or hubs, where public amenities are located.



LOCAL COMMERCIAL

Local Commercial land uses are located all throughout the Township. In general, Local Commercial land uses are comprised of smaller scale and less intense commercial uses such as corner stores, personal services such as salons and medical offices, and other similar type uses. Local Commercial land uses are intended to serve the immediate adjacent populations. These establishments typically are not planned to accommodate regional sales or distribution.





GENERAL COMMERCIAL

General Commercial land uses are those that are commercial in nature, but are intended to serve a larger more regional population. Examples of General Commercial land uses include big box stores, grocery stores, regional shopping facilities, and other similar uses. General Commercial land uses are located along the Township's major thoroughfares and typically experience higher traffic volumes.



LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

This category includes manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, fabrication facilities, and other non-manufacturing industrial and utility uses. Kalamazoo Township has a vast amount of light industrial land uses located throughout the Township, but mostly in the Lakewood Neighborhood area. The existing light industrial businesses include warehousing, processing, packaging, wholesale establishments, and more.



GENERAL INDUSTRIAL

General Industrial land uses typically includes all industrial land uses of higher intensity and potential nuisances. These include outdoor storage uses, heavy manufacturing, and other similar uses. General Industrial uses are generally concentrated in clusters within close access to highways and expressways.



PUBLIC/SEMI PUBLIC

Public/Semi Public uses are comprised of parks and planned greenspace (such as in the floodplain areas), schools, municipal buildings such as the Township Library or Township Hall, and other municipally-owned lots. These land uses are generally intended to provide a public service.

The map on the following page includes the existing land uses in the Township of Kalamazoo Township.

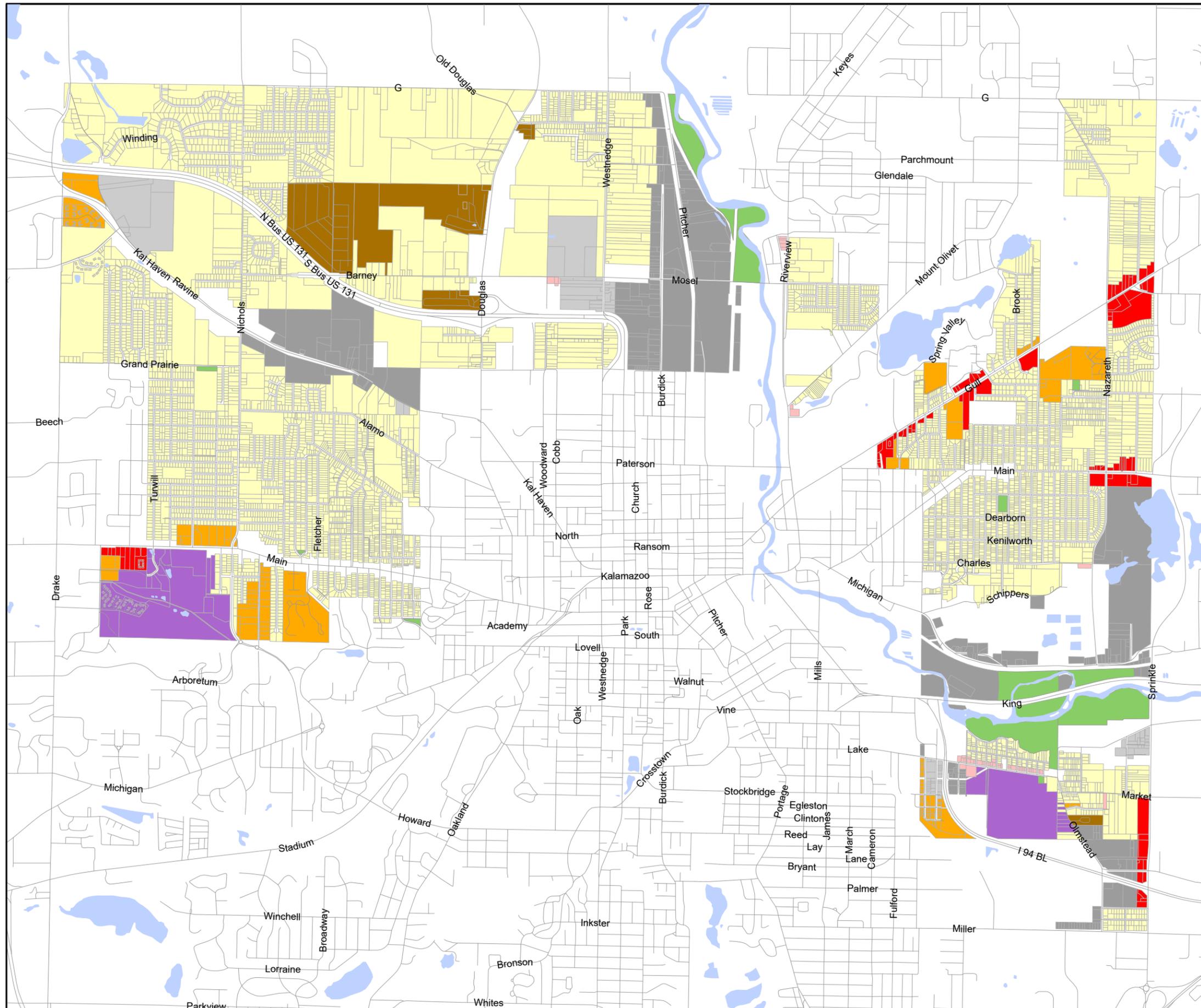
Existing Land Use

Kalamazoo Township, Michigan

July 6, 2023

LEGEND

- Single & Two-Family Residential
- Multiple Family Residential
- Mobile Home Park
- Local Commercial
- General Commercial
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial
- PUD Planned Unit Development

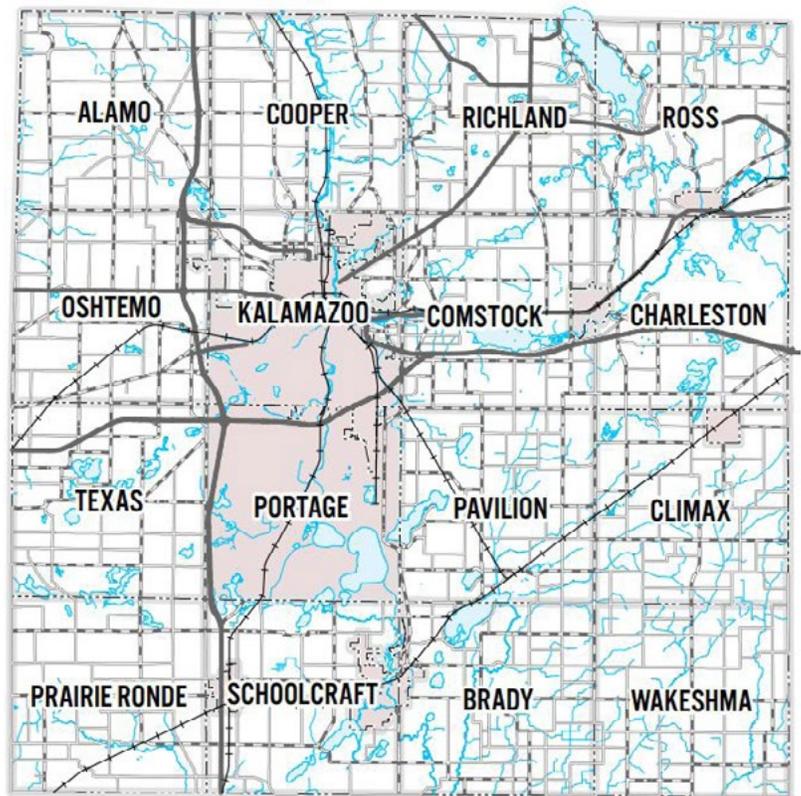


Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
Data Source: Kalamazoo Township Master Plan, McKenna 2022.

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Existing Transportation System

From a regional perspective, Kalamazoo Township is situated approximately one mile north of I-94, and one mile east of US-131 with business loops from both crossing the Township. The US-131 business route has no access to/from the south on US-131, is limited access and there is only one interchange in the Township. The I-94 business loop is restricted access (no driveways) has four at-grade intersections in the Township and has no direct access to/from the west on I-94—although access to/from the west can be obtained via US-131 and on surface streets. The Township is also crossed by State Routes M-343 (West Main and Gull Road) and M-96 (King Highway).

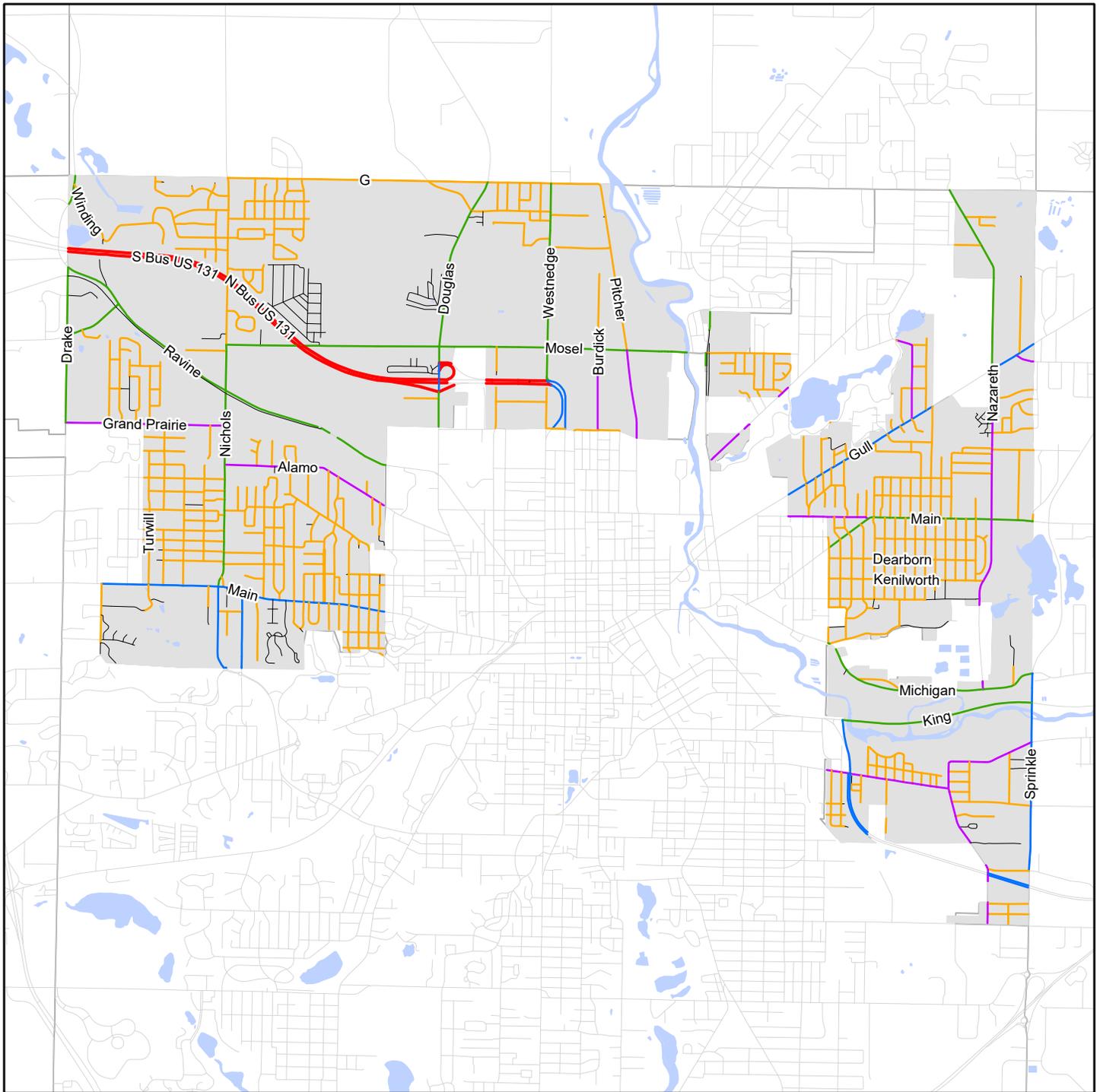


ROAD CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

There are several classifications of roads within Kalamazoo Township. The following classifications are designed by the Federal Highway Administration and are referred to as the National Functional Classification, or NFC. Higher functions emphasize mobility and lower functions represent more property access.

In Kalamazoo Township, the following functional road classifications are represented (in descending order of function):

- Freeways and expressways: access-controlled designed for the unimpeded movement of large volumes of traffic (e.g., BUS US-131)
- Principal arterial: a road in which carries the major portion of trips entering and leaving urban areas and outlying rural and recreation areas (e.g., East and West Main, Sprinkle, and Gull Road)
- Minor arterial: a street that accommodates traffic, usually having origin and destination within the community, carries vehicles to and from the expressway (e.g., Ravine Road, Douglas Avenue, Mosel Avenue)
- Major collector: a road in which serves major intercounty travel corridors and traffic generators (e.g., Grand Prairie, Alamo Avenue)
- Local: a low volume and low traffic speed road that is a way used primarily for access to adjacent properties (e.g., G Avenue, Dearborn Avenue, Kenilworth Avenue)
- Unclassified: a street with low impact traffic and low speed limits. These are typically private roads and residential streets (e.g., Old Farm Road, Red Maple Lane)
- Road classifications are important aspects to any community. In many circumstances, a particular road classification can dictate how and where state and federal road improvement project dollars are spent. Further, road classifications can indicate various traffic patterns such as traffic volumes and speed limits.



Transportation Network

Kalamazoo Charter Township
Kalamazoo County, MI

April 26, 2022

LEGEND

- Unclassified
- Freeways & Expressways
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Local



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Kalamazoo County 2022. McKenna 2022.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation service is provided to the Township through the Kalamazoo Metro System. The system provides seven scheduled bus service routes through Kalamazoo Township that include:

- Alamo/Grand Prairie/Drake
- West Main
- Solon/Kendall
- Riverview/Mt. Olivet/Mosel/G Avenue
- Gull Road
- East Main
- Lake Street

All of these connect to the iconic train station in downtown Kalamazoo which is an intermodal station for rail passenger services, inter-city bus service and limo service to the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport.

RAIL FREIGHT SERVICE

Rail freight service is available from the north-south rail line between Pitcher and Burdick streets. This line runs between Grand Rapids to the north and Indianapolis to the south. The current short-haul operator of record is Grand Elk Railroad. Passenger rail service is provided in the City of Kalamazoo at the intermodal station, with service on the east-west MDOT-owned line, via AMTRAK. That line connects Detroit and Chicago.

NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

Non-motorized transportation consists primarily of sidewalks and bicycle routes. The majority of the residential subdivisions have sidewalks on at least one side of the streets. Further, the Township has been committed to promoting and establishing sidewalks on both sides of the street along major thoroughfares and popular pedestrian routes to connect residents to commercial hubs and frequent destinations such as schools, parks, and municipal buildings.

Most of Kalamazoo Township's sidewalk infrastructure was constructed in the 1950s. After decades of limited development of new sidewalks, significant improvements have occurred during the last eight years.

In the mid-2010s, Kalamazoo Township installed sidewalks on the east side of Drake Road (between Grand Prairie Road to Kalamazoo Central High School), in partnership with neighboring jurisdictions. Kalamazoo Township also installed a new sidewalk on the north side of Grand Prairie Road and improved deficiencies for the existing sidewalk on the south side of the road in order to connect Indian Prairie Elementary and Kalamazoo Central High schools, Stroud Family Park, the Grand Prairie Golf Course, and the Kalamazoo River Valley Trailway.



In June 2015, the Kalamazoo Township Board of Trustees adopted a Complete Streets Ordinance, which reflects the community’s commitment to supporting a network of transportation elements for safely driving, walking, bicycling, and other means to move within the township.

In February 2015, a voter-approved Transportation Bond financed \$10 million worth of road and non-motorized transportation improvements. In partnership with the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County, the bond primarily funded road and road drainage improvements from 2015—2018. A portion of the bond funding also supported many non-motorized improvement projects, including:

- 44 “orphaned sidewalks” (existing sidewalks that do not reach streets) installed to connect existing sidewalks to roadways and to replace curb and gutter barriers with ADA-compliant ramps.
- Over 100, “spot” repairs, each consisting of typically 1-7 concrete slabs, of existing, high-use sidewalks.
- 4+ miles of signed, bicycle routes on E. Main Street and Drake Road, as well as bicycle boulevards through Eastwood and Westwood.
- 2.8 miles of new sidewalks installed adjacent to primary and other busy roads, including portions of Grand Prairie Road, Nazareth Road, Sunnyside Drive, Kendall Avenue, Olmstead Road, and West Main Street/M-43 (between Solon and Sabin Streets).

Kalamazoo Township aims to continue incremental progress toward addressing the needs identified in its Non-motorized Transportation Master Plan, which was adopted in 2021.

TOWNSHIP BICYCLE ROUTES

An alternative bike route has been signed parallel to West Main Street through the Westwood neighborhood and a few of the county primary roads have been striped for bike lanes, although there are no pavement markings or signs designating them as such.

The Kalamazoo River Valley Trail (KRVT) is a Kalamazoo County Park, free to all to use. It features a multi-purpose, 10-foot wide paved asphalt surface for non-motorized transportation and recreation. The Kalamazoo River Valley Trail is planned to encompass 35 miles of trail throughout Kalamazoo County. Kalamazoo will be a regional hub, connecting Battle Creek to Lake Michigan, D Avenue to Portage, Augusta to Gull Lake, and eventually Lake Michigan to Lake Huron. This existing trail and planned trails in other counties will connect more than 140 miles of trails, connecting the Battle Creek Linear Park, Kal-Haven Trail and Portage Bicentennial Park Trail.

Currently, 22 miles of the KRVT are complete. One stretch begins at 10th Street, heading east from the Kal-Haven Caboose and stretching 4.8 miles to Westnedge Ave. Another section connects 35th Street in Galesburg to D Avenue, traveling through River Oaks County Park, Mayors’ Riverfront Park, Verburg Park, along Riverview Drive, and then north along Markin Glen County Park and the Kalamazoo Nature Center. These two segments are connected by a signed route through downtown Kalamazoo between Westnedge Avenue and Harrison Street.



Overall Existing Land Use Themes / Summary

Through analyzing the Township's existing conditions such as demographic information, natural features, brownfield sites, transportation network, and more, the following overall land use themes have been identified:

- 1 A majority of the Township's existing land use fabric is comprised of residential land uses, ranging in density, but largely single-family in nature. Recognizing that each of the Township's four major neighborhoods have different needs, a key focus of this Plan will include the identification of prime areas to target preservation or redevelopment.
- 2 The Township has a sizable amount of wetlands and floodplains, especially in the Lakewood neighborhood. This Plan should also focus on preservation of the Kalamazoo River as well as addressing environmental concerns that may arise from development in floodplain areas.
- 3 Given the Township's demographic makeup and commitment to provide a welcoming environment for all residents, this Plan will explore themes and ideas pertaining to aging in place and encouraging amenities to residents and visitors of all ages.
- 4 The Township is highly committed to enhancing the Townshipwide sidewalk system. Over the course of this Master Plan and beyond, the Township will continue efforts to expand the sidewalk network and create a well-connected system.
- 5 Demographic information indicates that much of the Township's housing stock is comprised of older homes, ages ranging from approximately 30 to 70 years old. Efforts to revitalize these older home, as well as identifying new innovative housing options, should be explored throughout this Plan.

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Kalamazoo Township Tomorrow

This Section describes the planned future conditions of the Township of Kalamazoo, through the duration of this Master Plan. The goals, objectives, and recommendations listed in this Plan derive from the high-level existing conditions analysis, feedback from Township staff and officials, stakeholder and public input, analysis of current planning trends, and more.

The primary purpose of this Section is to determine the goals and objectives of this Plan and itemize and prioritize the implementation steps for how to achieve them. The Future Land Use Plan is also a significant component of this Section, that which describes the future fabric and planned land use of each parcel of land within the Township.

Vision Statement

Kalamazoo Township is a safe and stable community, which has proven to be a great place to live and work. Its location, surrounding the City of Kalamazoo and important regional natural features such as the Kalamazoo River and mature growth forests and trees, gives the Township an excellent balance between natural and suburban landscape.

This Plan intends to protect, preserve, and support the Township's long-standing neighborhoods, while also providing the tools for growth and development in logical, practical, and incremental ways. Kalamazoo Township will retain its identity as a community of four (4) unique neighborhoods, each with commercial destinations, and industrial centers.

This Plan will also proactively incorporate improvements in sustainability, enhancements as a destination place, increasing economic development, emphasizing livability elements, and strengthening other areas that can have a positive impact on the Township's fiscal environment.

Goals and Objectives

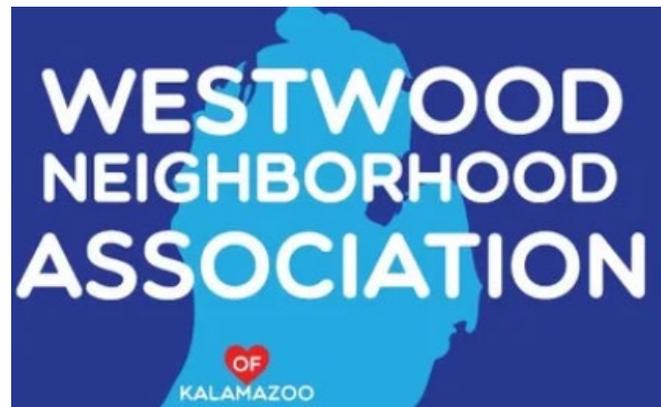
The following section describes the overarching goals and objectives of this Plan. The goals are used to describe the general guidelines and direction for Kalamazoo Township, and what the Master Plan hopes to achieve. The objectives define general strategies used to achieve the overarching goals, all of which is further detailed and described in Section IV, “Implementing Viable Change”.

Goal #1 Community Image

The Township will work with its residents to establish a sense of community and belonging through activities, events, and placemaking.

OBJECTIVES

- Continue to strengthen community and neighborhood pride through improvements aimed at enhancing the Township’s physical and social conditions.
- Establish a neighborhood identity unique to each of the Township’s four distinct neighborhoods.
- Formally establish neighborhood associations/organizations where they currently do not exist.
- Work alongside each neighborhood association/organization on enhancement efforts such as:
 - » Sidewalk, bike path, and park maintenance and connections
 - » Mitigating blight or vacancy issues
 - » Targeting specific sites for redevelopment opportunities
 - » Establishing continual communication to ensure each neighborhood’s needs are being met
 - » Establishing a schedule for community events and festivals
- Establish an area in the Township that may be best suited for a community gathering space, and subsequently, associated programming.





Goal #2 Housing and Families

The Township will work to enhance existing housing conditions, while preserving established neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage residential developments that which are needed by persons of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds.
- Retrofit underutilized or vacant lots, commercial areas, or parking lots for unique, modern, and creative housing options, while expanding the Township's housing stock, where appropriate.
- Create and increase efforts that provide opportunities to enhance and revitalize vacant, underutilized, or aging housing stock where needed.



Goal #3 Neighborhoods

The Township will continue to advance each of the four (4) major neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVES

- Maintain the Township's place in Kalamazoo County that provides safe, attractive, and vibrant neighborhoods that can accommodate residents at all stages of life.
- Maintain and enhance the sidewalk system within and between neighborhoods.
- Promote safer neighborhoods by assisting neighborhood organizations and encouraging more interaction between neighborhood residents.
- Enhance (as needed) existing infrastructure, such as roads, water, sewer, internet, etc. within each of the Township's four (4) neighborhoods.
- Promote new amenities in each neighborhood, such as new parks and trails, community centers, senior programs, and others.



Goal #4 Land Use and Economic Development

Land use and economic development decisions will be made to appropriately position the Township into a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable future.

OBJECTIVES

- Land Use decisions should be based on the Quality of Life indicators that underly this plan.
- Land use decisions must recognize the rights of private property owners, as well as those of neighboring owners and the interests of the Township’s residents and businesses.
- Ensure that all community commercial nodes in the Township are accessible to patrons of all ages, backgrounds, incomes, and physical abilities—for both motorized and nonmotorized travelers.
- Support a wide variety of shopping and retail diversity in the Township.
- Continue to support and foster relationships with local commercial business owners and industrial business owners to maintain their presence in the Township.
- Keep abreast of upcoming trends in planning and economic development to ensure the Township is updated on updated policies and best practices, especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - » Work with applicable local and State agencies to develop redevelopment strategies, where applicable.

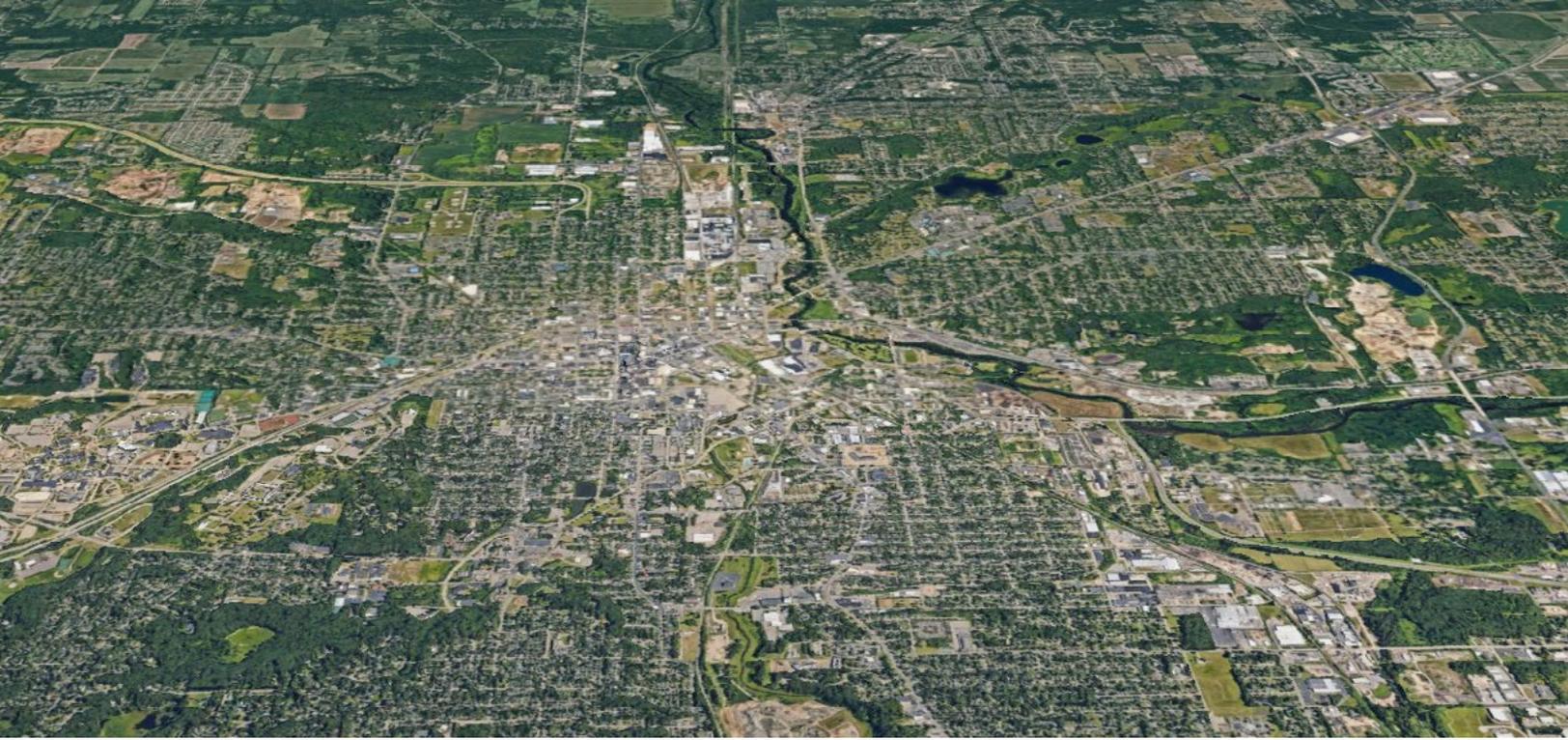


Goal #5 Sustainability and Beautification

The Township will continue to be mindful of local and nationwide trends pertaining to best practices in sustainability.

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that each new and existing development in the Township is well-landscaped with visually pleasing and welcoming elements.
- Encourage sustainability elements throughout the Township, such as:
 - » Encouraging native plantings that utilize less water and maintenance resources
 - » Limiting development within the Township's floodplain areas
 - » Addressing any pollution or clean-up activities in the Kalamazoo River
 - » Limiting the amount of unnecessary pavement within new developments
 - » Encouraging new developments within the Township to be constructed with LEED design
- Continue to implement the Township's Non-Motorized Plan and advocate for new sidewalk and bike network connections.
- Continue to keep abreast of new technologies and best practices relating to sustainability.
- Encourage renewable energy and resources whenever feasible to reduce carbon footprint per development.
- Target specific road corridors in the Township best suited for beautification and safety elements, which may include:
 - » Vegetation along roadways
 - » Street trees/complete streets
 - » Pedestrian crossings and crosswalks
 - » Bike infrastructure (e.g., separated pathways, bike lanes, paved shoulders, etc.)
 - » Traffic signal timing
 - » Correcting unsafe intersections (high accident volumes)
 - » Assessing walkability
- Work with local and State agencies to address vacant and blighted properties.
- Work on efforts to preserve the Kalamazoo River.
- Encourage opportunities for better and more efficient public transportation



Future Land Use Plan

Based on a comprehensive planning process, the Future Land Use plan serves as a guide for the community's vision of the next 10 to 15 years. It is based on an analysis of land use issues facing the Township, existing uses and conditions, demographic and housing statistics, physical constraints and resources, community infrastructure, circulation patterns, community engagement, and the goals and objectives of this plan.

Through land use planning and zoning controls, the Township intends to ensure that the character of neighborhoods is preserved, that economic development is encouraged, and that the designated mixed use areas become vibrant and exciting places to be.

This Future Land Use plan constitutes the development policy of the Township, and as the Township moves into the future, the plan should be updated to address how development and physical change have impacted the infrastructure and existing conditions.

EXISTING & PLANNED CHARACTER

Single Family Residential

The Single Family Residential future land use designation is planned to encompass the Township's existing established neighborhoods characterized by larger lot sizes and lower density. These areas are comprised of primarily single-family homes located setback from adjacent roadways. Single Family Residential areas are planned to be preserved with existing characteristics but can be enhanced with sidewalk infrastructure and bike paths.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

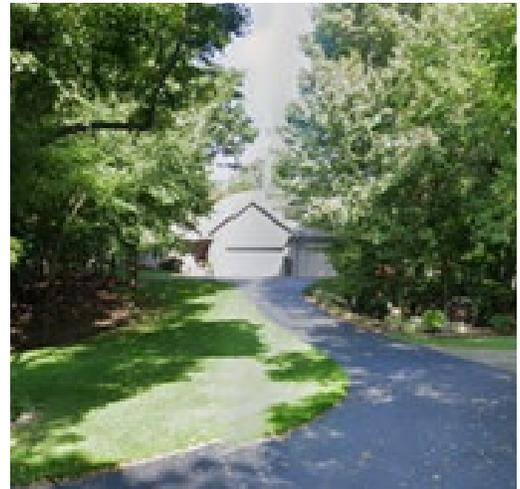
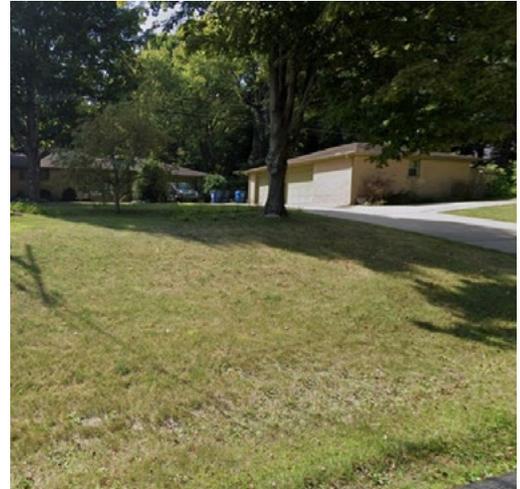
Appropriate uses include dwelling units matching the character and density of the surrounding uses, schools, parks, and other compatible municipal and civic uses. Planned unit developments are discouraged.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

Residential streets should be designed for slow traffic and easy pedestrian and bicycle usage. However, they should form a connected, logical pattern with as many connections to the existing street system as possible, including connections to neighborhoods in the surrounding areas. Cul-de-sac are discouraged, except where they already exist, or where there are no realistic alternatives.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

New homes should be designed with quality materials and should be consistent with surrounding homes in terms of scale, massing, and site design. Further, all new developments should preserve existing mature trees and natural vegetation as much as possible.



APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

R-1 Single Family Residential

Single and Two Family Residential

The Single & Two Family Residential future land use designation is designed to include the Township’s medium density residential uses. This includes existing single-family neighborhoods, residential corridors, and higher density housing, but not quite multi-family, such as “missing middle” housing types including duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes. Single & Two Family Residential land uses encompass a majority of the Township’s residential landscape and are generally consistent with higher density homes placed on smaller lots.

Gross acreage is used in order to incentivize the creation of compact developments that retain important natural features such as wetlands, woodlands, and topographical changes. Neighborhoods should be designed with connected street patterns, including connections to existing neighborhoods where possible, and should have amenities (such as parks and schools) within their boundaries. Businesses and retail should be within walking distance, along major corridors.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Typical uses include residential dwelling units, schools, parks, open space, and other compatible municipal or civic uses.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

Streets should follow a connected pattern that respects topography and natural features, and therefore may not constitute a true “grid.” Streets should feature elements such as sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, and a tree canopy.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Sites should be designed to give homes a front and back yard, while maintaining a human, walkable scale that promotes social interaction and reduces unnecessary and unused lawn space.

EXISTING & PLANNED CHARACTER



Note: Neighborhoods constructed with street trees, sidewalks, and street lights.

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

R-2 Single and Two Family Residential

Multi-Family Residential

This designation is characterized by high density residential neighborhoods and multi-family complexes, though slightly lower densities may be appropriate. Gross acreage is used in order to incentivize the creation of compact developments that retain important natural features such as wetlands, woodlands, and topographical changes. New neighborhoods are encouraged to contain a variety of housing types, to allow for a variety of price points and to create increased density without impacting the character of existing adjacent neighborhoods.

Neighborhoods should be designed with connected street patterns, including connections to existing neighborhoods where possible, and should have amenities (such as parks and schools) within close proximity their boundaries. Businesses and retail should be within walking distance, along major corridors, or within “Neighborhood Nodes” designed to serve surrounding neighborhoods.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Typical uses include residential dwelling units, schools, parks, open space, and other compatible municipal or civic uses. Retail and other amenities should be located within nearby “Neighborhood Nodes”, that may or may not be built as part of the same development.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

Streets should follow a connected pattern that respects topography and natural features, and therefore may not constitute a true “grid.” Streets should feature elements such as sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, and a tree canopy.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Sites should be designed to give homes a front and back yard (or, in the case of multifamily buildings, nearby usable green space), while maintaining a human, walkable scale that promotes social interaction and reduces unnecessary and unused lawn space.

Buildings should be designed with energy saving, quality materials and consistent with architectural styles common in the general area. Alternative architectural styles may be appropriate in some neighborhoods, provided that the unique design enhances the general character of the area. Buildings should include front (street) entrances to encourage connection to the street, and garages should be located in rear yards to the extent possible.

EXISTING CHARACTER



PLANNED CHARACTER



APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

- RM-1** Multiple Family Residential
- RM-3** Residential Restricted

Manufactured Housing Community

Manufactured Housing Community District is intended to provide for the location and regulation of mobile home parks and ancillary facilities. It is intended that manufacturing housing communities be provided with necessary community services in a setting that provides a high quality of life for residents. Manufactured Housing Community areas should be located in areas where they will be compatible (in terms of scale, density, and design) with adjacent uses.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Appropriate land uses include manufactured homes and associated facilities such as a club house, park amenities, office buildings, and other similar structures.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

Streets should follow a connected pattern with low speeds and low traffic volumes. Manufactured Housing Communities should be located within reasonable proximity to major Township roads and thoroughfares.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Sites should be designed to give homes a front and back yard and/or usable greenspace. Homes should be constructed from energy saving, high quality materials to promote and preserve quality of life.

EXISTING & PLANNED CHARACTER



APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

MHP Mobile Home Park

Neighborhood Commercial

The Neighborhood Commercial areas are a lower intensity commercial district intended to serve 1-3 neighborhoods and provide services, small-scale retail, and amenities. The Neighborhood Commercial district should provide amenities to the surrounding residential areas in a human scale and walkable format, while keeping a “small town”, rather than “urban” character.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Low-intensity businesses such as small retail stores, personal services, small offices (including medical offices).

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

All streets lined with Neighborhood Node uses should have sidewalks or bike paths on both sides. Streets should be Neighborhood Connectors (see Corridor Design Plan). On-street parking is encouraged where possible. Bike racks, street trees, benches, trash cans, and other streetscaping should also be included.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Buildings should be built with high-quality materials and should be architecturally compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. Buildings should be constructed with storefront-style first floors, although the use may not necessarily be retail. Individual buildings are encouraged, even if they do not have side yards, rather than large, wide buildings that take up entire lots.

Parking areas should be located in the side or rear yards for buildings. Large areas of parking should be broken up with landscaped islands and trees. Parking space requirements may vary based on the location of the development and availability of shared parking.

EXISTING CHARACTER



PLANNED CHARACTER



Note: high quality building materials, modern design, sidewalks to parking areas, and landscaping

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

C-1 Local Commercial

Mixed Use Node

This future land use district is designed for areas which, slowly over time, will transition into walkable mixed-use nodes. The new nodes should have a newly built street grid, lined with multi-family or office buildings and interspersed with retail and small pocket parks. Most notably, the West Main Corridor is planned for Mixed Use Node land uses. Mixed Use Node areas are planned to be constructed with a traditional urban format and mixed-use buildings, such as bottom floor commercial space and top floor apartments or offices.

Further, large redevelopment areas, such as the current gravel mine operations, can become prime locations for future mixed-use nodes. These areas could potentially be redeveloped into “Lifestyle Centers.” A lifestyle center is a mixed-use commercial development that combines traditional shopping activities with leisure and living amenities.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

In the short term, the existing uses should stay and prosper to the extent possible. Over time, they should be replaced with mixed use buildings and neighborhoods that make more efficient use of space and provide a high quality of life with energy saving infrastructure incorporated into the design.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

In the short term, the existing uses should stay and prosper to the extent possible. Over time, they should be replaced with mixed use buildings and neighborhoods that make more efficient use of space and provide a high quality of life.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Buildings should have little to no front setback, although small, landscaped areas in front of residential buildings are encouraged. Redeveloped sites should be built out as full neighborhoods, with residential units, employment opportunities, retail, amenities, and park space.

If any new parking lots are constructed, they should be at the backs of sites and should be open to the public, with attractive landscaping and screening. Wayfinding signage should promote parking areas to visitors.

EXISTING CHARACTER



PLANNED CHARACTER



Note: Upper floor residential units, walkable storefronts, decorative elements, and human-scale buildings.

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

RM-2 Multiple Family/Mixed Use

Corridor Mixed Use

This future land use district is designed for areas which, slowly over time, will transition into walkable mixed-use nodes, in appropriate areas. The new nodes should have a newly built street grid, lined with multi-family or office buildings and interspersed with retail and small pocket parks. Most notably, the West Main Corridor is planned for Corridor Mixed Use land uses. While traditional mixed-use developments are appropriate, a mix of single uses are also encouraged in this area. For example, missing middle housing, single family homes, and other housing types can be constructed adjacent to retail shops, corner stores, small office buildings, and other lower intensity commercial uses.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

In the short term, the existing uses should stay and prosper to the extent possible. Over time, they should be replaced with mixed use buildings and neighborhoods that make more efficient use of space and provide a high quality of life.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

Within the new developments, streets should be focused on pedestrian and non-motorized access.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Buildings should have little to no front setback, although small, landscaped areas in front of residential buildings are encouraged. Redeveloped sites should be built out as full neighborhoods, with residential units, employment opportunities, retail, amenities, and park space.

If any new parking lots are constructed, they should be at the backs of sites and should be open to the public, with attractive landscaping and screening. Wayfinding signage should promote parking areas to visitors.

EXISTING CHARACTER



PLANNED CHARACTER



Note: High quality building materials, street lights, sidewalks, street trees, minimal parking areas, and greenspace

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

RM-2 Multiple Family/Mixed Use

General Commercial

General Commercial areas are designated for higher intensity commercial uses. In Kalamazoo Township, the General Commercial land uses are concentrated along the Township’s major road corridors, such as East Main, Gull Road, and West Main. Further, some General Commercial land uses are concentrated along Sprinkle Road bordering with Comstock Township. In these areas, majority of the existing and planned General Commercial structures include big box stores, shopping malls, large grocery stores, restaurants, and retail centers.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Higher intensity commercial businesses such as retail stores, personal services, small offices (including medical offices), restaurants (both sit-down and fast food with drive through), schools, and more. The sales of those establishments within General Commercial areas should include the sale of goods and services that can benefit the community on a wider scale.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

General Commercial land uses in Kalamazoo Township are typically surrounded by major arterial and principal arterial roads, which are characterized with higher volumes of traffic, heavier vehicles, and faster speeds. General Commercial streets should allow for regional connectivity as well as pedestrian connectivity and protected pedestrian crossings on both sides of the road. Roadside landscaping and other beautification elements should be considered in these areas due to the high volumes of both motorists and pedestrians traveling to these areas.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Buildings should be constructed of high-quality materials which wrap around the entire building and feature attractive signage. Robust landscaping should be installed throughout the site. Commercial buildings should be supported by sufficient but not overly excessive parking areas. Parking areas may be located in the front, side, or rear yards for buildings. Large areas of parking should be broken up with landscaped islands and trees.

EXISTING CHARACTER



PLANNED CHARACTER



APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

C-2 Commercial Corridor

Business

Business is intended for office, manufacturing, and research and development business uses that are in close proximity to residential. They should be designed and operated to be respectful of their surroundings, with minimal truck traffic, noise, odor, dust, or outdoor storage/operations.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Appropriate uses include office, light manufacturing, artisan production, food and beverage production, and research and development uses. Further, flexible work and manufacturing spaces such as maker-spaces are encouraged in Light Industrial areas. Parking areas and loading zones are properly buffered and landscaped.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

Streets should be designed in a pattern that allows access from residential areas but does not encourage cut-through traffic by employees and trucks. Within the Light Industrial district, the streets should be designed to be sufficient for business-traffic. Non-motorized and transit connections are encouraged but are only necessary along major corridors.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Buildings should be constructed of high-quality materials which wrap around the entire building and feature attractive signage. Robust landscaping should be installed throughout the site, especially adjacent to residential areas.

Commercial buildings should be supported by sufficient but not overly excessive parking areas. Parking areas may be located in the front, side, or rear yards for buildings. Large areas of parking should be broken up with landscaped islands and trees.

EXISTING CHARACTER



PLANNED CHARACTER



APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

I-1 Light Industrial

General Industrial

This designation provides an exclusive area for medium to high intensity Industrial uses, as well as large corporate campuses, which are vital to the Township’s economy. Large plants that involve manufacturing products, stamping, and machine operations are well-supported here. Industrial areas have heavy buffers and deep setbacks to minimize impacts to adjoining properties.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Examples include large plants that involve manufacturing products, stamping, and machine operations. Large institutional operations and large corporate campuses are also encouraged to locate within General Industrial districts.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

Roads in the industrial areas should be designed to be sufficient for truck traffic, without making them unsafe for pedestrians or bicyclists. New road connections should be built as needed to connect the industrial districts with arterial roads without disturbing residential areas.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Buildings in this district should be designed to be long-lasting and to support efficient industrial and/or business practices. High-quality appearance is encouraged; however, sites should be designed to minimize off-site impacts and reduce pollution and site contamination to the extent possible.

Parking lots should be sufficient to support employee parking and truck maneuvering but should not be excessively large.

EXISTING CHARACTER



PLANNED CHARACTER



APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

I-2 General Industrial

Public/Semi-Public

These facilities are planned to remain in place. If renovated or expanded, they should strive to enhance the character of the surrounding area. If they are re-located or removed, redevelopment should proceed consistent with the immediately adjacent areas.



Park/Open Space

These areas encompass the Township's existing parks facilities and floodplain areas. The Township's existing parks facilities should be preserved in perpetuity, with periodic improvements and upgrades to park infrastructure and amenities. Further, the Township should advocate for additional parks facilities to be included with the development of new residential neighborhoods (of all densities) if/when applicable.

In terms of floodplain, the majority of the Township's floodplain areas are located in the Lakewood neighborhood, surrounding Lake Street just south of the Kalamazoo River. Floodplain areas are to be preserved and reuse of occupied private properties should be discouraged wherever practical.



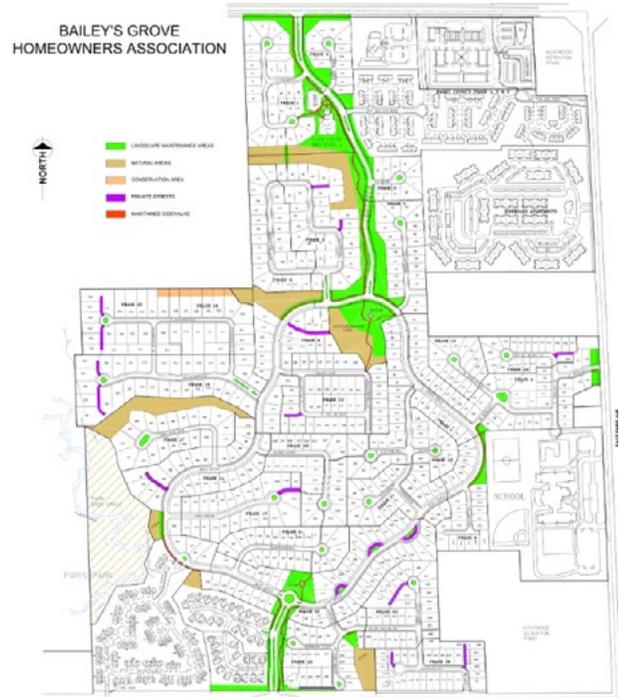
Mixed Use Node / Residential Hatching

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

In certain circumstances, either a mixed-use node or residential land use may be appropriate. These areas are represented in a purple and yellow hatching on the Future Land Use map. The primary intent of the hatching is to demonstrate that the future land use fabric of these areas could either become mixed use in nature, residential in nature, or residential of mixed densities (most commonly implemented as a planned unit development). The areas planned with mixed use and residential hatching are the current gravel mine operations. It is anticipated that one day, in the far future, these properties will be mined out of useful material and will need to be restored back to buildable land. As such, it is important to acknowledge a future land use plan for these properties. Depending on the surrounding land uses, economic impacts, housing needs, and other factors, a mixed-use node or residential designation would be most appropriate. Further, redeveloping these sites into planned unit developments may accommodate mixed density residential developments. This can include phases of several various residential typologies ranging in density.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

In any case, whether future development include commercial and/or residential uses, the streets should be connected to one another, and residential developments should have multiple points of ingress and egress. All streets should connect back to arterial roads and cul-de-sacs are discouraged.



Bailey's Grove, pictured above, located in Kentwood, MI includes several different housing typologies within a phased development. This includes single family homes, condos, and apartment units. The development is also supported by walking trails, clubhouse, and community pool.

APPROPRIATE ZONING DISTRICTS

- R-2** Single & Two Family Residential
- RM-1** Multiple Family Residential
- RM-2** Multiple Family/Mixed Use

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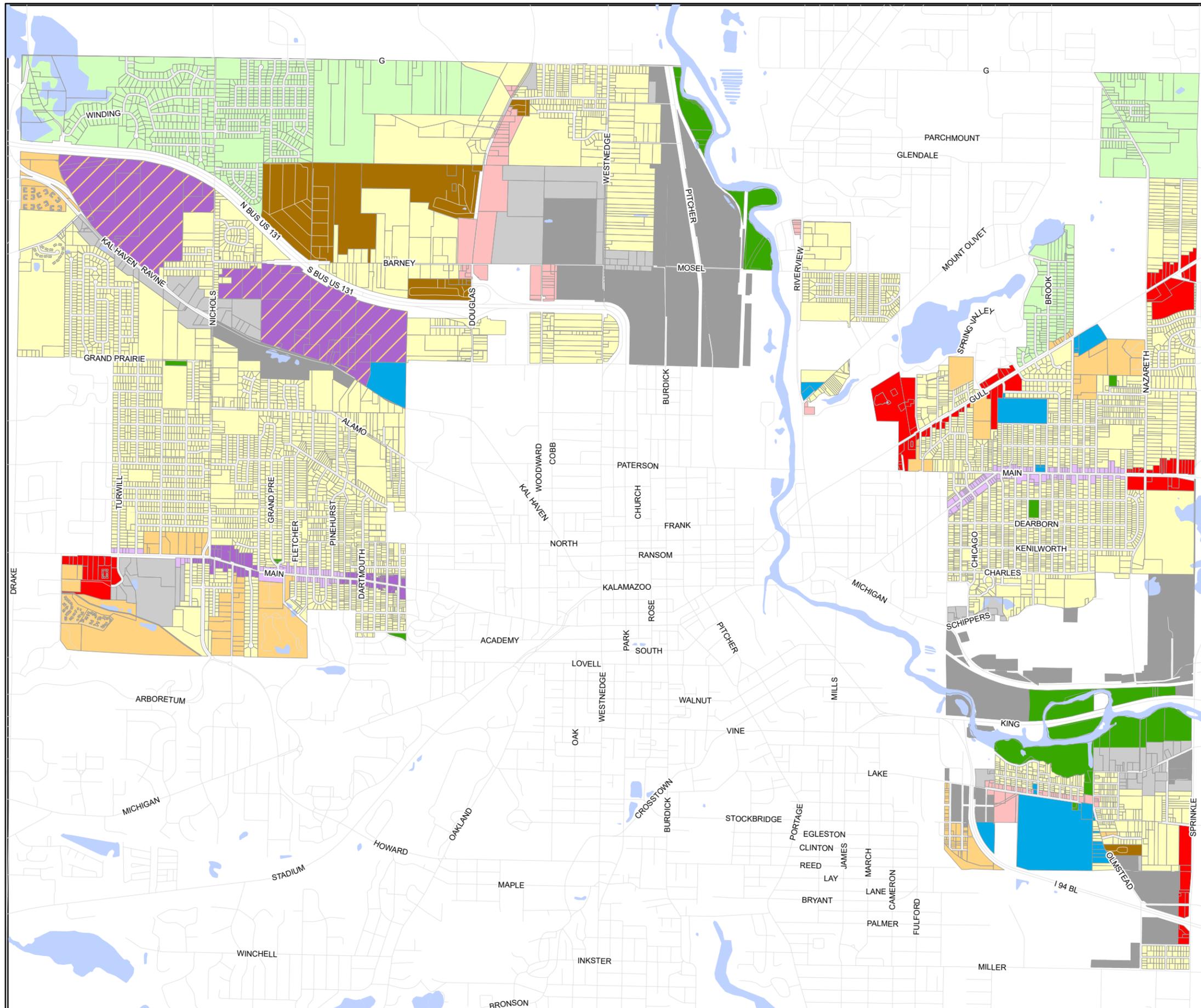
Future Land Use

Kalamazoo Charter Township
Kalamazoo County, MI

July 14, 2023

LEGEND

- Single Family Residential
- Single & Two Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Manufactured Housing Community
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial
- Business
- General Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public
- Mixed Use Node
- Corridor Mixed use
- Park/Open Space
- Mixed Use/Residential Hatching



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
Data Source: Kalamazoo County 2022. McKenna 2022.



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Land Use Themes and Frameworks

Redevelopment Sites & Mechanisms

One of the major themes represented in this Plan is the identification and revitalization of prime redevelopment sites. While the Township is generally supportive and in favor of new development, it is recognized that many existing sites are prime locations for redevelopment opportunities. Throughout the duration of this Plan, the Township can initiate conversations with local and State economic development agencies to identify and market vacant or underutilized sites to potential developers. Further, Kalamazoo Township should initiate discussions with the Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and the Kalamazoo County Land Bank to assess options for brownfield sites within the Township.

Over previous decades, strip mall and strip center development has dominated the streetscape in many communities in Michigan. These developments are characterized by deep front yard setbacks and large underutilized street-facing parking lots. This design not only discourages walking, biking, and accessibility, but also may serve as an environmental and physical challenge given the expansive areas of asphalt and lack of vegetation.

To address this, many communities have introduced the concept of Liner Buildings in their redevelopment efforts to revitalize suburban development. Liner Buildings are a great way to help convert strip malls into a pedestrian-scaled area by replacing a part of the large surface parking lot with buildings that “line” the edge of the former parking lot. These buildings should be typically close to the street and accessible to sidewalks and bike infrastructure. By exploring the Liner Building, underutilized strip malls and strip centers can be redeveloped into walkable small-scale commercial nodes. This type of redevelopment can be an excellent mechanism to implement the Mixed-Use Node Future Land Use designation.

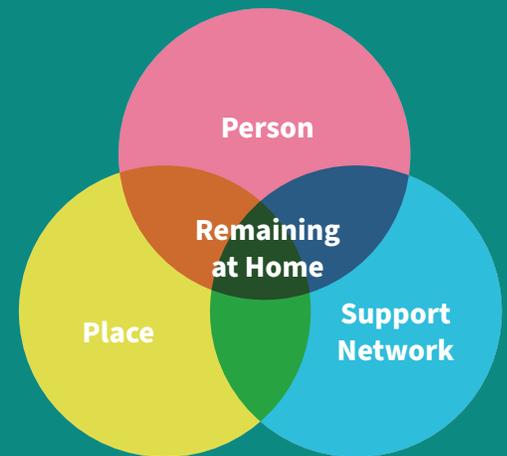
Further, the Township can pursue the certification process to become Redevelopment Ready. This is a program available and hosted by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) that assists communities with becoming ripe for redevelopment. Some of the tools the MEDC offers through this certification program include:

- Technical assistance
- Creating clear development policies and procedures
- Targeting specific sites prime for redevelopment
- Creating public/private partnerships
- Developing site packages and marketing
- Assistance with match funding

Aging in Place & Disability Advocates

As described earlier in this Plan, the AARP advertises several “Livability Guidelines” that assist communities in planning for an aging population. Nationwide trends are shifting toward a general aging population as the baby boomer generation continues to age. Some of the tools and resources that can be utilized by Kalamazoo Township to promote aging in place include:

- Developing programs or incentives to assist with renovating existing homes to accommodate ADA compliance
 - » Promote universal design principles and standards
- Establish a network “hub” for seniors to utilize that will connect them with appropriate local organizations that specialize senior programming
- Actively involving seniors and older adults in planning processes involving aspects such as physical design and social support
- Actively seeking and supporting affordable housing options available for older adults
 - » Initiate conversations with providers of federally assisted housing projects
 - » Seek out collaborative opportunities for rehabilitation of housing stock
 - » Encourage energy-efficient homes
 - » Allow other housing typologies such as accessory dwelling units, smaller homes, and minimal parking requirements
 - » Support age friendly housing, such as cohousing, senior housing, and others.
- Creating a robust public transportation system and identifying the inefficiencies that exist
 - » Ensure that public transit stops are located within or near senior living complexes
 - » Seek public funding for specialized transportation
- Supporting a mix of land uses that include residential within close proximity to small local commercial nodes and centers
 - » Create design standards
 - » Encouraging community hubs to serve as one-stop resource centers
 - » Support a robust parks and recreation network



SUCCESSFUL COMPONENTS FOR AGING IN PLACE

Person

- Finances
- Activities of Daily Living
- Preventative Healthcare
- Medical Care
- Spirituality
- Self Worth
- Recreation

Place

- Your Residence of Choice
- Home Modification
- Community Environment

Support Network

- Community Involvement
- Continuing Education
- Transportation
- Family, Friends, Community

CASE STUDY

While a vastly different economic, demographic, and geographic makeup than Kalamazoo Township, The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes the City of Portland, Oregon as an age-friendly community, the only city in the United States to participate in the Global Age Friendly Cities Project. Through this process, several important factors to aging in place were identified. These various projects and considerations can be implementable in other communities across the nation, such as Kalamazoo Township:

- Barrier-free access to all municipal buildings and parks
- Inclusive pedestrian paths, such as with tactile markings for the visually impaired
- Improved access to signage for public transportation
- Age friendly employers and business awards
- Zoning incentives for accessible housing

- Supporting the economic well-being of caregivers
 - » Support the federal, state, and local policies that overcome discrimination, especially in terms of the definition of family
- Seeking out policies and planning responses that address the needs of seniors
- Supporting age-friendly infrastructure in all public spaces, such as:
 - » Park pavilions for seating and shade
 - » Nonmotorized pathway material that is not prone to cracks and holes
 - » Wide barrier-free playground equipment

In addition to the Township's commitment to assisting aging in place efforts and initiatives, throughout the duration of this Plan, the Township will embark on an intentional effort to provide resources and advocate for folks with disabilities in the Township. Some of the ways the Township can advocate include:

- Encouraging ADA accessibility best practices in building and site design. This would be above and beyond what is required by the Michigan Building Code and other legal requirements.
- Continuing to ensure that all new development or redevelopment activities include external infrastructure that supports those with disabilities. This can include:
 - » A connected sidewalk network
 - » Ramps
 - » Safe crosswalks
 - » High quality pavement materials
 - » Appropriate exterior lighting, especially for night and early morning hours
 - » Handrails on both sides of all steps, decks, porches, and/or stoops
 - » Adequate snow/ice removal from walkways, parking lots, steps, and public spaces
 - » Enforcing the resurfacing and/or restriping of parking lots
- Continuing to implement other Township plans, such as the Nonmotorized Plan, that identifies sidewalk connection and maintenance priorities.
- Establishing open communication and partnerships with local transit authorities to ensure that folks with disabilities have access to public transportation opportunities.
- Supporting programming funding efforts for disability advocates.

Non-Motorized Transportation Framework

The Kalamazoo Township Planning Commission and Township Board recently adopted the Kalamazoo Township Non-Motorized Plan in Summer 2021. Some of the key highlights of the Plan include the following themes:

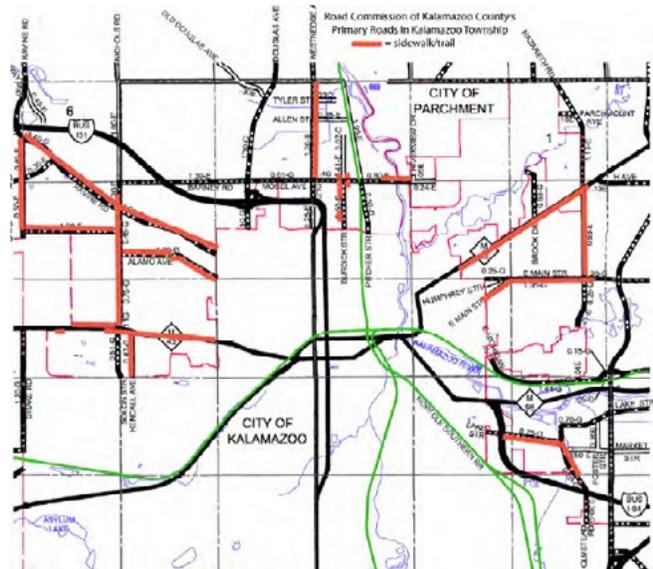
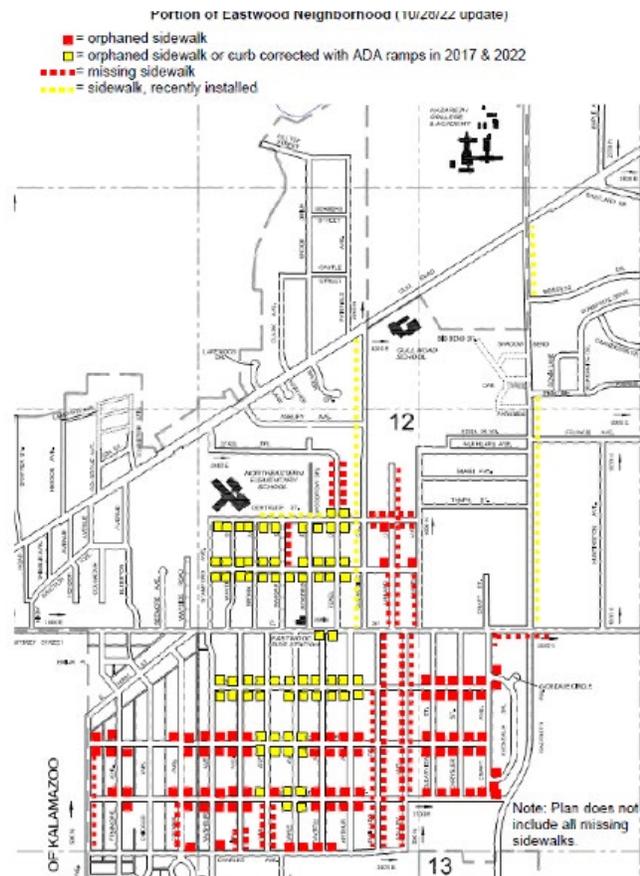
- Maintaining the Township’s current sidewalk infrastructure, such as repair of deficient slabs and ensuring ADA compliance
- Education and enforcement tools to reduce barriers to sidewalk use
- Expanding the Township’s sidewalk system and identifying gaps in the system
- Identifying priority connections for non-motorized trails
- Expanding the Township’s non-motorized network (including bike lanes and trails)

In the Kalamazoo Township Non-Motorized Plan, some of the important implementation priorities mentioned include:

- Advance and securing funding for Safe Routes to Schools
- Improving access to the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail
- Assessing opportunities and potentially working alongside road jurisdictions and entities to construct sidewalks (or other types of bike infrastructure such as bike lanes) along the Township’s major road corridors and County primary roads
- Seeking out local grant funding for sidewalk and nonmotorized expansion projects
- Establishing partnerships with neighboring communities, such as the City of Kalamazoo, for sidewalk projects along the Township’s border

Throughout the duration of this Plan, careful consideration should be given to identifying opportunities to implement the Township’s Nonmotorized Plan. In more immediate years, the Township should work to implement the high priority projects the Nonmotorized Plan lists. For example, from 2015 through 2022, the township installed a total of 195 ADA sidewalk ramps to improve orphaned corners.

Further, while implementing sidewalk infrastructure projects, the Township should consider high priority bike infrastructure projects, such as shared use paths, bike lanes, shared bike lanes, and others. These types of bike infrastructure projects can potentially be implemented in conjunction with the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County’s road improvements schedule, or as funding becomes available through grants or other resources. As the Non-Motorized Plan explains, the Township’s highest priorities for bike network



connections are located along the Township’s primary roads. Additional expansion areas to consider can include:

- Connections to major bike networks such as the KVRT
- Connections to existing Township bike facilities
- Connections between neighborhoods
- Connections to local commercial centers and community hubs such as schools, churches, parks, and other similar facilities

Sustainability and Resiliency

In recent years, there has been a renewed emphasis on the concept of sustainability— i.e., the ability of communities to maintain themselves economically, environmentally, and socially in the years to come. This section includes ways in which Kalamazoo Township and its citizens intend to work to protect the environmental and historical resources of the community. Further, with the changing climates, increased risk of flooding, extreme heat and cold weather events, and increased vulnerability of utility lines due to increasing tree diseases and high wind events, and other factors, addressing sustainability and resiliency in the Master Plan is now more important than ever. Kalamazoo Township is taking action to address these growing issues by establishing the Climate Committee. The Climate Committee was developed in response to the Township’s adopted Climate Emergency Action Plan.

CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES

The United States Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program certifies new construction and renovations as environmentally sustainable. The organization uses checklists of building techniques to grade construction projects and assign “Silver,” “Gold,” or “Platinum” designations to them.

Kalamazoo Township is well-positioned to attract developments looking to attain LEED status, by promoting sustainable design elements such as bike racks, sidewalks, reduced parking, and more.

The table below lists a variety of construction materials, designs, and techniques that can reduce a community’s environmental impact and improve its sustainability for the future. Some are expensive and technical, while others are simple, easy, and cost little-to-nothing. Picking just a few of the most feasible for a project can go a long way in reducing the project’s environmental impact. Further, some techniques can be implemented inexpensively by homeowners if they are given the tools to execute them.

Site Design

- Minimize disturbed area
- Maximize permeable surfaces
- Effective stormwater management
- Increase development density (where appropriate)

Landscaping

- Plant more trees/replace trees when removed
- Green roofs
- Maximize permeable surfaces
- Encourage native plants and plants that require less water

Water

- Rainwater harvesting
- Effective stormwater management
- High-efficiency fixtures

Building Materials

- Recycled materials
- Efficient construction management (reduce over-ordering)
- Environmentally-safe materials
- On-site waste reduction

Energy/HVAC

- Energy-efficient appliances
- Efficient hot water distribution
- Pipe insulation
- Combustion venting
- Moisture control
- Room-by-room controls
- Enhanced insulation
- South-facing windows
- Solar panels
- Geothermal energy

ENERGY CONSUMPTION

With energy costs rising, one of the most important contributors to community sustainability is conservation. There are many ways to do so, ranging from expensive and complex technology to simple, everyday solutions.

HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION

The simplest and easiest way to save energy at home is simply to use the heat and air conditioning less, with proper building insulation. This is easier said than done for many families, especially in Michigan winters. However, simple home remedies such as putting fans in the windows on hot days and dressing in layers on cold days can help reduce energy bills. Many families already practice these techniques as part of their everyday life.

Construction techniques can also help. Quality materials, such as insulation and windows, are important, but design elements can also be important, such as large windows, especially on southern building exposures, to allow sunlight to heat (and light) the home. Finished basements are also a useful feature because they tend to stay cool on hot summer days.

There are also more technical and complex solutions. These are not feasible for many families, but they should not be discouraged, and indeed can be encouraged through zoning and other measures. Green roofs not only manage storm water, they also serve to cool the home in the summer. Solar panels can dramatically reduce a family's electricity bill and can even, in some cases, be a source of income.

Geothermal heating and cooling systems can be especially effective in small towns and rural communities, because large lots mean piping can be laid horizontally through the ground, reducing the cost as compared to the vertical systems necessary in more dense areas. Furthermore, systems have been developed that allow river or stream water to be used as a natural cooling agent.

TRANSPORTATION

Most people use a large amount of energy in getting from place to place, and with fuel prices rising, this is increasingly becoming a budgetary strain on families, especially in communities where residents drive a long distance to reach jobs, shopping, or school. For that reason, it is important for communities to be walkable and bikeable. The creation of additional non-motorized transportation options, as described elsewhere in this Plan, will allow residents of the Township to save on gas.

Another way that transportation resources can be saved is through improved communications technology. With better internet and wireless communication services, Township residents can use technology to commute, shop, and communicate, and will not have to drive as often, or as far.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The patterns of growth and development in a community are also a key element of sustainability. Kalamazoo Township is perfectly situated in Kalamazoo County as a prime balance of urban and natural landscape. To support future development, Kalamazoo should reflect a partnership with neighboring communities to encourage sustainable growth patterns.

EDUCATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Many ways to improve community sustainability are simple, but not widely implemented because people are unaware or do not understand their benefits. Thus, education about sustainability is important. A marketing or educational campaign explaining the impact of various practices, not only on the environment, but also on the family budget, could be effective. Setting up a community garden, with or without composting, often results in other people starting their own backyard garden.

Federal grants are available for energy efficiency upgrades by homeowners and landlords. Other communities have found success with these programs. Many property owners would like to improve the efficiency of their properties but are unable to afford the upfront costs. This is especially true of seasonal residents, who worry about the cost of heating a home that they do not live in in the winter. Grant programs can offset those costs.

Other, more complex, sustainability initiatives such as solar or wind power installations built by the Township are possible, but not necessarily economically practical in the short term. However, the Township can make a big difference with simple transportation improvements such as sidewalks, street lighting, and bike lanes.

Zoning Plan

The table below shows the Kalamazoo Charter Township Zoning Districts that would appropriately implement the vision of the Future Land Use Categories. Rezoning requests should be reviewed against this table to determine whether the requested district is supported by this Plan. In some cases, a new zoning district may be the most effective way to implement the vision of the Future Land Use Plan.

Future Land Use Categories	Zoning Districts
Single Family Residential	R-1 Single Family Residential
Single & Two Family Residential	R-2 Single & Two Family Residential RM-3 Residential Restricted
Multi-Family Residential	RM-1 Multiple Family Residential RM-3 Residential Restricted
Manufactured Housing Community	MHP Mobile Home Park
Neighborhood Commercial	C-1 Local Commercial
General Commercial	C-2 Commercial Corridor
Business	I-1 Light Industrial C-2 Commercial Corridor
General Industrial	I-2 General Industrial
Public/Semi-Public	All Districts
Mixed Use Node	New District
Corridor Mixed Use	RM-2 Multiple Family/Mixed Use
Park/Open Space	All Districts

Housing and Residential Zoning Recommendations

This plan also envisions that the Township’s residential zoning districts be realigned in the following way, in order to more clearly implement the vision of the three residential Future Land Use categories.

- Constantly monitor market trends to determine if the minimum lot size is appropriate and responsive to the housing market and best development and planning practices, especially for the R-1 and R-2 Districts where many non-conforming lot sizes exist.
- Simplify and combine the RM-1 and RM-3 Districts.
- Permit senior housing and independent living communities in the RM-1 District.
- Research and analyze mechanisms to promote aging in place.
- Limit neighborhoods with cul-de-sac designs.
- Incorporate recreation space (active or passive) with new residential developments (such as single-family neighborhoods, multi-family complexes, etc.).

Industrial Zoning Recommendations

One of the primary goals for the Business Future Land Use category is to offer more flexibility for business and property owners in the Township. These areas, over time, can become a mix of higher intensity commercial uses and lower intensity industrial uses. Innovative land uses such as “maker spaces” are appropriate here. Some of the proposed revisions to I-1 District include:

- Allow all commercial uses permitted in the C-2 District to promote development flexibility.
- Permit maker spaces in the I-1 District and develop supplementary district standards.
- Permit trade schools in the I-1 District.
- Prohibit higher intensity industrial uses in the I-1 District, such as:
 - » Salvage yards
 - » Freight yards and truck terminals
 - » Mineral and soil extraction
 - » Marijuana growing, processing, and provisioning centers
- Include standards for high quality building and site design in the I-1 and I-2 Industrial Districts.
- Revise the buffer measuring methods for marijuana facilities to ensure that the boundary is clear and comprehensive.

Commercial Zoning Recommendations

The following recommendations pertain to commercial zoning districts in Kalamazoo Township:

- Target higher intensity commercial uses (e.g., big box stores) along major Township corridors, such as Gull Road.
- Provide further distinction between the types of commercial uses permitted in the C-1 and C-2 Districts.
- Prohibit “owner-occupied residential uses in combination with a principal permitted use” in the C-2 District.
- Continue to monitor market trends to encourage high quality building materials and site design for all commercial districts.
- Permit hospitals (subject to special land use approval) and other similar medical facilities in the C-2 District.

Mixed Use Zoning Recommendations

In order to promote mixed use development in the Mixed Use and Neighborhood Commercial Areas, the following changes to the Zoning Ordinance are recommended.

- Create a new Zoning District to implement the vision of the Mixed Use Node Future Land Use Category.
- Allow residential units on upper floors within the Mixed Use Node District by right.
- Development proposals within the Mixed Use Node category should generally contain a residential use, plus one or more of the following.
 - » Retail Space
 - » Office Space
 - » Institutional or Research Space
- Consider new street and road connections with each proposed mixed use development. The Township’s Corridor Improvement Authority can utilize funding to assist developers with financial burdens related to this requirement. Grid-like street patterns here are encouraged, to create a small, walkable space with a variety of uses.
- Encourage redevelopment opportunities to reenergize underutilized commercial spaces and vacant storefronts/strip mall centers.
- Prior to the creation of the new Mixed Use Zoning District, rezoning proposals within the Mixed Use Future Land Use Category should be evaluated against the following criteria:
 - » Whether or not the proposal advances the implementation of the Master Plan’s major themes, such as aging in place, promoting walkability, encouraging business and “missing middle” residential development, and more. Only rezoning requests that further the implementation of those plans should be approved.
 - » Single use developments may be appropriate in some areas designated as Mixed Use, such as those designated for Corridor Mixed Use in the Future Land Use map.
- Promote for high quality building and site design in all mixed use districts.
- Eliminate minimum unit size for residential units in all residential districts. These standards shall rely on the Michigan Building Code for livable spaces.

Promoting Connectivity

In order to create a connected and safe community, the following changes to the Zoning Ordinance are recommended:

- Enhance standards for new roads in the Township, and make sure the standards apply to both public and private roads. Examples of enhanced standards could include the following, but should be somewhat flexible based on the context of the road.
 - » Required sidewalks.
 - » Required curb and gutter.
 - » Required street trees.
 - » Required lighting.
- Require stub streets at the edges of development, to connect to new development. Do not make this requirement dependent on the approval of the neighboring property.
- Restrict cul-de-sacs to only situations where stub street requirements are met elsewhere in the development.
- Continue to advocate for new sidewalk connections and establishing sidewalks with all new development and redevelopment opportunities. Kalamazoo Township makes it a priority to close the gaps in the sidewalk network and continue to work toward a connected Townshipwide system. The goal is to provide safe transportation alternatives and additional opportunities for health and fitness activities in the Township.

Implementing Viable Change

A Master Plan is at its strongest and most actionable when specific implementation tasks and strategies are included, described in detail, programmed into a timeframe, and clearly marked by which organization will be responsible for leading or supporting each item. Below is an Action Plan that should be implemented by the Township. Further, the next section of this chapter includes potential resources for the Township and its partners to utilize in implementing the Action Plan.

Action Plan

The Action Plan table below describes the step-by-step actions that can be taken by Township officials, staff, and partners to achieve the goals and objectives, strategies, and future land use as described in this Plan.

GOAL #1 RESIDENTIAL AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Objectives	Implementation Measures	Time Frame
Maintain the Township's place in Kalamazoo County that provides safe, attractive, and vibrant neighborhoods that can accommodate residents at all stages of life.	Continue to plan for the Township's aging population and implement the AARP livability guidelines as described in this Plan.	Ongoing ●
	Prioritize livability principles and research potential funding sources that could be utilized to achieve these goals.	Ongoing ●
	Preserve and maintain the Township's successful residential neighborhoods. Including code enforcement procedures, sidewalk connectivity, mechanisms for redevelopment, and others.	Ongoing ●
	Seek out State and federal designations to promote aging in place, such as the Age Friendly Communities designation. These programs can be utilized to assist with funding opportunities to implement age friendly infrastructure and projects.	5-10 years ●
Encourage residential developments which are needed by persons of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds.	Ensure all proposed residential developments and redevelopments are inclusive for all individuals. Such as implementing universal design standards.	Ongoing ●
Update the Township's Zoning Ordinance to reflect the housing and residential goals in this Plan.	Assess the Township's multi-family districts to identify areas for clarification and consolidation.	1-3 years ●
Retrofit underutilized or vacant commercial areas, parking lots, or industrial areas for unique, modern, and creative housing options.	Identify underutilized parking commercial parking areas in the Township.	1-3 years ●
	Determine and identify diverse housing types that should be added to the Township's housing stock (ex. two-family developments, townhomes, duplex, quadplex, etc.).	1-3 years ●
	Prioritize the retrofitting of the underutilized parking areas to those areas that are within close proximity to neighborhoods, schools, parks, and other community hubs.	1-3 years ●
	Research and seek potential funding or economic development incentives to encourage the retrofitting of those underutilized areas.	5-6 years ●

Objectives	Implementation Measures	Time Frame
<p>Maintain and enhance the several small-scale neighborhood nodes as walkable service nodes that serve the immediate community.</p>	Identify the neighborhood nodes that which contain the most pedestrian traffic and crossings.	1-3 years ●
	Prioritize the neighborhood nodes that need sidewalk enhancements (ex. those adjacent to schools, neighborhoods, Township Hall, parks, etc.).	1-3 years ●
	Continue to collaborate with the County Road Commission and MDOT (as applicable) to implement sidewalk facilities throughout the Township. This can include crosswalks to enhance pedestrian safety.	5-10 years ●
	Research and seek funding opportunities for pedestrian and other nonmotorized enhancements to ensure safe and accessible travel to neighborhood nodes, as well as from one neighborhood to another.	5-10 years ●
	Ensure neighborhood nodes are welcoming and inclusive for individuals of all backgrounds.	1-3 years ●
<p>Create and increase Townshipwide efforts that provide opportunities to enhance and revitalize vacant, underutilized, or aging housing stock where needed.</p>	Revisit and update (as needed) the Township's code enforcement procedure to ensure it's a comprehensive and effective process.	1-3 years ●
	Create and provide programs or assistance for homeowners to update and maintain aging homes.	5-6 years ●
	Identify areas where vacant homes are located and prioritize revitalization efforts.	5-10 years ●

GOAL #2 COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Objectives	Implementation Measures	Time Frame
Ensure that all community commercial nodes in the Township are accessible to patrons of all ages, backgrounds, incomes, and physical capabilities—for both motorized and nonmotorized travelers.	Identify the gaps in the Township’s bike and pedestrian transportation system and update the Non-Motorized Plan as needed.	1-3 years ●
	Identify intersections and sidewalk stretches that may be cumbersome for individuals with disabilities to travel.	1-3 years ●
	Determine that each crosswalk and sidewalk is safe and accessible for individuals with varying mobility needs.	5-7 years ●
Support and create a wide variety of commercial and business diversity in the Township.	Continue to foster relationships with current business owners.	Ongoing ●
	Identify the gaps in the Township’s retail market.	5-7 years ●
	Identify potential locations for new businesses (ex. vacant buildings, underutilized parking areas, outlots, etc.)	1-3 years ●
	Provide programs or research economic development incentives for new retail businesses.	5-7 years ●
	Assist and encourage local businesses to grow with the shift in consumer trends (ex. online shopping availability, outdoor dining establishments/opportunities)—especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.	Ongoing ●
	Ensure that commercial land uses are not over-allocated in the Township.	Ongoing ●
	Offer flexible permitted uses in applicable commercial and industrial districts to spur new development and investment in the Township.	
Continue to support and foster relationships with local commercial business owners and industrial business owners to maintain their presence in the Township.	Continue to be available for business owners and assist them with growth and maintenance where applicable.	Ongoing ●

GOAL #3 TRANSPORTATION

Objectives	Implementation Measures	Time Frame
Maintain the current transportation system in the Township of Kalamazoo Township to ensure all roadways are safe, accessible, and high-quality.	Continue working relationships with local road agencies to maintain road network.	Ongoing ●
	Continue to work alongside the Road Commission to identify and prioritize roadways that are in need of repairs, as applicable. The Township should reference the Road Commission’s 5-year plans to establish priority segments and corridors.	Ongoing ●
	Seek funding opportunities to accomplish road repairs.	Ongoing ●
	Correct high accident intersections.	Ongoing ●
Continue to foster relationships with local road agencies to maintain and enhance State and County roadways, where applicable.	Schedule regular meetings to discuss current and future road enhancement or repair projects.	Ongoing ●
Assess current public transit routes and stops, and explore opportunities for future enhancements to the public transportation system in the Township—especially to popular employment centers and residential hubs.	Foster relationships with local public transit agencies.	Ongoing ●
	Assess current public transit routes in the Township.	1-3 years ●
	Identify areas where public transit stops may be needed (ex. near major residential developments, multi-family developments, grocery stores, municipal buildings, large area employment centers, etc.).	5-7 years ●
	Work with public transit agencies to determine feasibility of new stops or routes.	7-10 years ●
Plan for and assess opportunities for nonmotorized transportation alternatives , such as widened paved shoulders, bike lanes, bike routes, and others.	Identify the routes in the Township utilized by cyclists traveling at faster speeds and/or by commuters.	1-3 years ●
	Assess the applicability of fitting those identified routes with widened paved shoulders (at least 4 feet), separated bike lanes, or special pavement markings.	5-7 years ●
	Seek funding opportunities and create a fundraising plan that can be used to implement bike infrastructure on popular cycling routes.	5-7 years ●
Continue to support newly emerging transportation technology in the Township.	Ensure that the Township is well-connected to changing trends in transportation by means such as supporting ridesharing and carpooling application technology.	Ongoing ●

GOAL #4 RECREATION

Objectives	Implementation Measures	Time Frame
Maintain and preserve the Township's existing parkland and outdoor recreation resources.	Continue to upkeep and allocate staff and financial resources to preservation of existing Township parkland and outdoor recreation.	Ongoing ●
	Assess and prioritize which parks are in need of equipment and other upgrades or enhancements.	1-3 years ●
	Continually implement the goals and recommendations as listed in the current Kalamazoo Township Recreation 5 Year Plan.	Ongoing ●
	Review and update the Kalamazoo Township Parks and Recreation 5 Year Plan every 5 years as needed.	Ongoing ●
Assess and prioritize areas that which may be revitalized for outdoor recreation , such as parks, ball fields, playgrounds, dog parks, and more.	Assess which lots/properties in the Township can be utilized for future public recreational uses and expansion to the Township's park system.	5-7 years ●
Target and prioritize areas and corridors for nonmotorized trails .	Prioritize ideal routes for separated pathways/nonmotorized trails (typically at least 8 feet wide) from the Township's Non-Motorized Plan.	Ongoing ●
	Consider allocating CIP funds for trails and other outdoor recreation opportunities (including maintenance).	Ongoing ●
	Seek other State, Federal, and local funding opportunities for separated pathway/nonmotorized trail development and create a fundraising plan.	Ongoing ●

GOAL #5 SUSTAINABILITY & BEAUTIFICATION

Objectives	Implementation Measures	Time Frame
Ensure that each new and existing development in the Township is well-landscaped with visually pleasing and welcoming decorative elements.	Upkeep and maintain Township records on property landscaping or nuisance violations.	Ongoing ●
	Assist property owners with beautification programs and measures as applicable.	Ongoing ●
	Ensure that newly proposed developments, or renovations to existing developments are compliant with the Township's landscaping and screening ordinances and promote high-quality landscaping in the Township.	Ongoing ●
Encourage sustainability elements throughout the Township.	Ensure that all new developments in the Township include sustainable elements such as native plantings, permeable pavement and parking lots, LED lights, and more.	Ongoing ●
	Promote Townshipwide recycling opportunities.	Ongoing ●
Incorporate Townshipwide beautification elements whenever feasible.	Target certain corridors to enhance beautification measures, such as street trees, landscaping elements, decorative elements such as banners and lamp posts, planter baskets, and more.	1-3 years ●
	Consider funding opportunities for said beautification measures.	5-7 years ●
	Identify Township gateways and include decorative elements into Township gateways to create a unique sense of character and identity into various neighborhoods.	7-10 years ●



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