



MASTER PLAN | CITY OF WALKER, MI

**Book 1:**

# **Citywide 2040 Vision**

# Acknowledgments

The participation and cooperation of the numerous community leaders and residents in the preparation of the City of Walker Master Plan is greatly appreciated. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the efforts of the following individuals:

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- Book 3: Past Walker Master Plans**
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# 1.

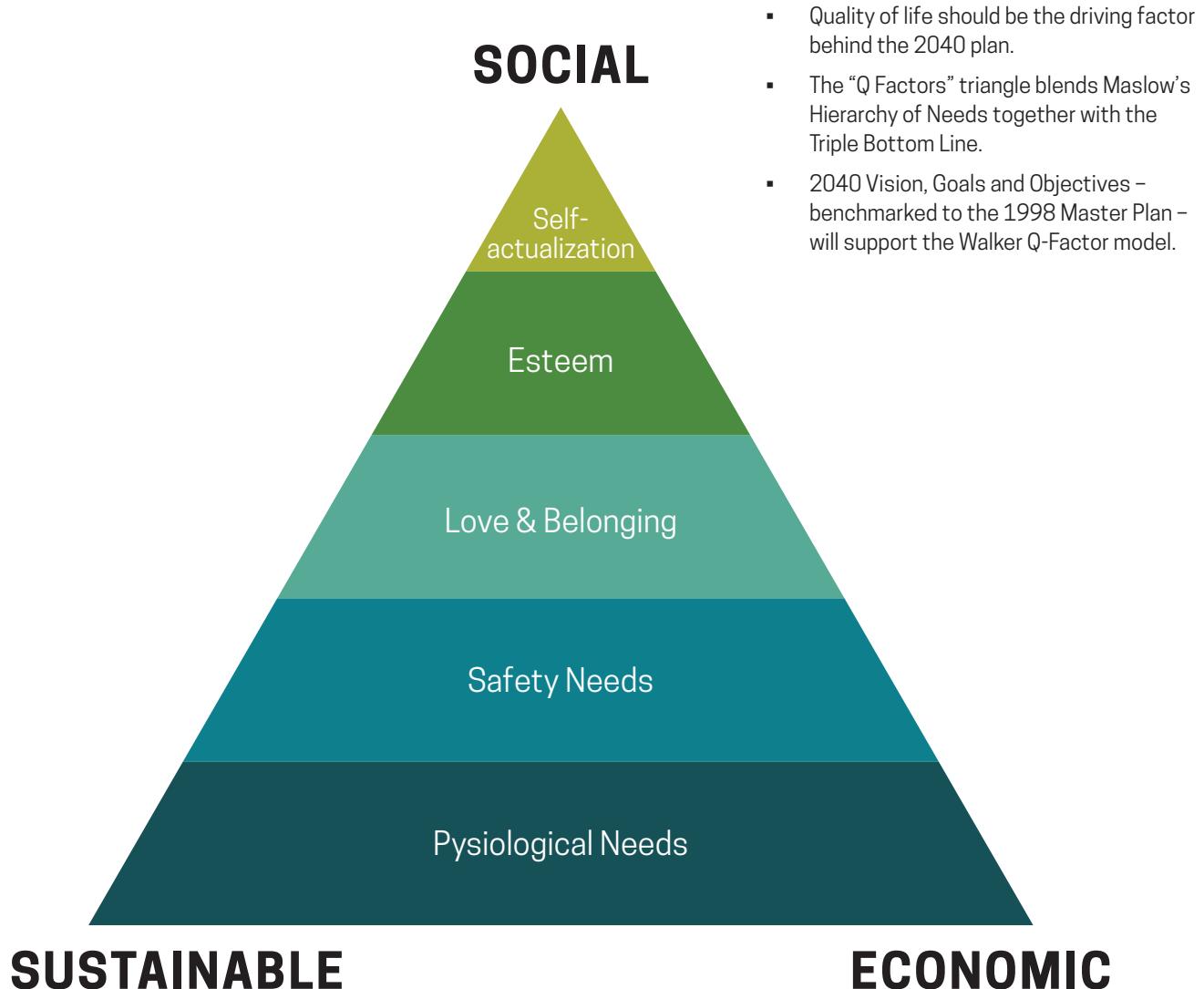
## Introduction

*Walker is a fast-growing and dynamic community that plays key roles in the West Michigan region as a business hub, beloved residential community, and transportation linkage. This 2020 Master Plan is envisioned to enhance, preserve, and improve the City over the next 20 years, out to a target date for full implementation in 2040.*

The recommendations of this plan are designed to reflect the “Q Factors” – the Triple Bottom Line Approach to improving quality of life in the City.

In creating the plan, the City sought to achieve a “triple bottom line” of social, environmental, and economic vitality and sustainability. This overarching philosophy is at the heart of the plan’s recommendations, and should be considered when making decisions based on the vision of the plan.

### Walker Q-Factors



# Neighborhood Clusters

Walker is a multi-centric community. While previous Master Plans (including 1998) have endeavored to locate and develop a single “downtown” (or “heart” as the 1998 plan called it), this plan recognizes that the City’s multi-centric nature is not a negative, and in fact should be celebrated and enhanced. The City can and should have multiple “hearts.”

In recognition of the multi-centricity, this plan was developed using the concept of “Neighborhood Clusters”—groups of neighborhoods that have a common central place and/or common identity and culture. By developing the plan based on these sub-areas, detailed recommendations were possible that could not have happened City wide.

## **There are four Neighborhood Clusters:**

Alpine/Bristol

Northwest

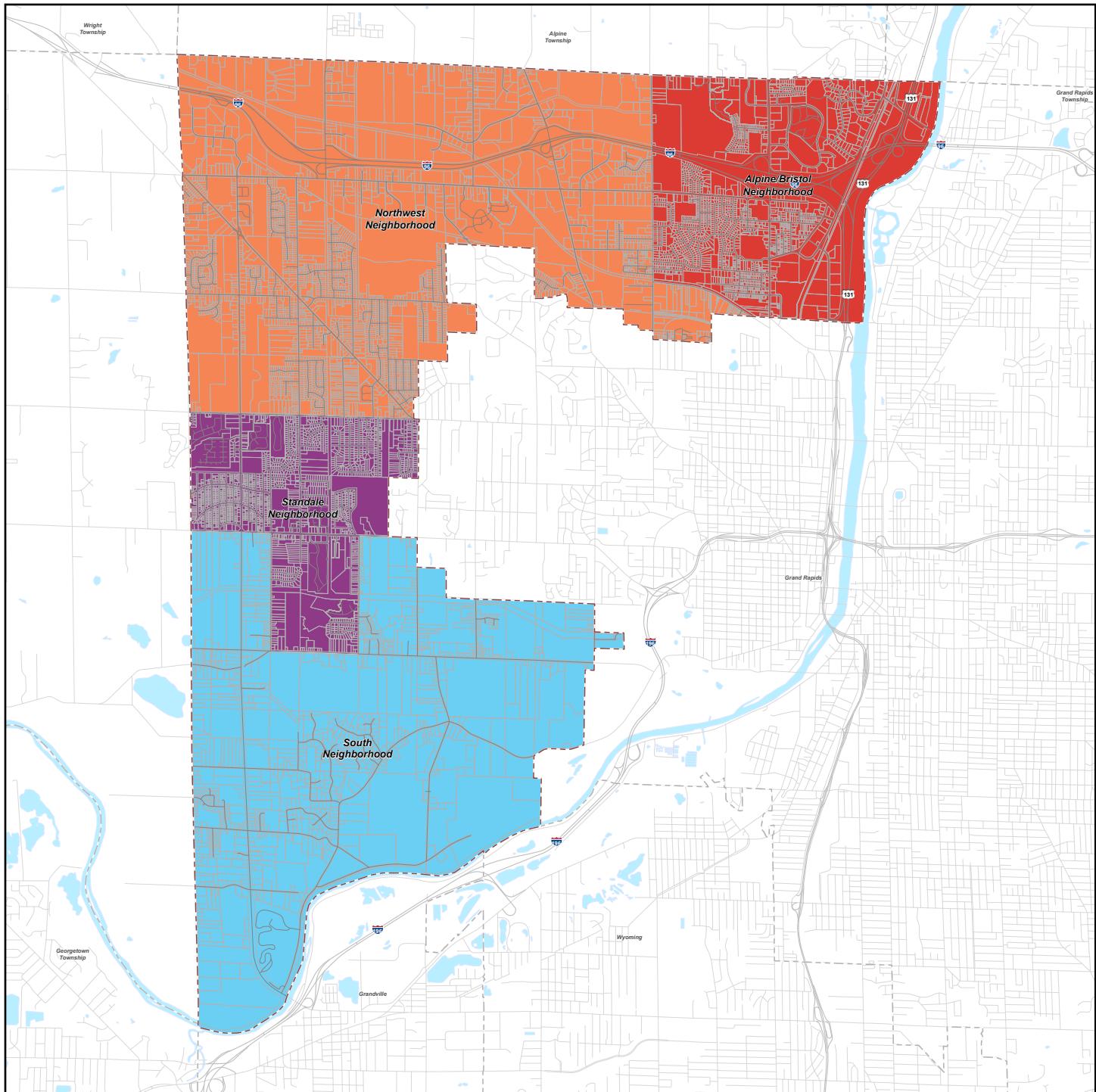
Standale

South Walker

The boundaries of the Neighborhood Clusters were determined using Census Block Groups, to aid in the analysis of data about each Cluster. Generally, the Block Group boundaries were consistent with both anecdotal and data-driven understandings of the Cluster boundaries.

However, there was an exception. The Block Group for South Walker extends all the way north to Lake Michigan Drive in two places, but the areas immediately south of Lake Michigan Drive are tied more to Standale than to South Walker. Therefore, those areas were planned with the Standale cluster.

Plans for the four Neighborhood Clusters can be found in Books 2a-d. This plan also includes a history of planning in Walker (Book 3) and sub-area plans adopted prior to this plan (Book 4). However, in the event of conflict between a pre-2020 sub-area plan and Books 1 or 2, the plans adopted in 2020 shall be the prevailing City policy.



# Neighborhood Clusters

City of Walker, Michigan

November 1, 2019



**SOURCES**  
Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.  
Data Source: City of Walker 2019. McKenna 2019.

# Planning Process



The development of the 2020 Master Plan was a public process that took place from May of 2019 to Fall of 2020.

The process began by identifying the Neighborhood Clusters and their boundaries. Then, the City hosted four Open Houses, one focused on each Neighborhood Cluster:

- **Alpine/Bristol:** June 19, 2019 at English Hills Country Club
- **South Walker:** July 17, 2019 at Fire Station #2
- **Standale:** August 21, 2019 at Fire Station #2
- **Northwest:** September 18, 2019 at the City Commission Chambers

After each Open House, the Planning Commission met in a public meeting to discuss draft ideas for the Neighborhood Clusters that were the subject of previous Open Houses.

The Citywide Plan aggregated the Neighborhood Cluster Plans, and was developed in October and November of 2019. On November 20, 2019, the City held a Rough Draft Open House to present the plan to the public and receive feedback.

The plan was then presented to the Planning Commission on June 10, 2020, and then to the City Commission on June 22, 2020. The City Commission approved the draft plan for distribution that night.

After the 63 day comment and distribution period, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on September 02, 2020 and recommended the plan to the City Commission. The City Commission adopted the plan on September 14, 2020.

# 2.

## Goals and Objectives

# Goals and Objectives



Below are the goals of the 1998 City of Walker Master Plan, along with the current status of the goal, and the goals of the 2020 City of Walker Master Plan. In some cases, the 2020 goals are the same as the 1998 goals, but in other cases the 2020 goals have been substantially changed.

**Table 1.1: Citywide Goals and Objectives**

1998 Goal	Status	2020 Goal
<b>Community Image</b>		
The City will work with its residents to establish a sense of community and belonging through activities, such as an annual Walker Fair with community and family events, and distinctive theme, logo, or slogan.	The City hosts events throughout the year, including an Easter egg hunt, the Memorial Day Parade, a summer kick-off, a summer concert series, a pumpkin bash, and a winter fest and tree lighting.	The City will improve and expand its festivals and activities, in order to continue to build a sense of community and belonging, including hosting events in a wider variety of locations throughout the City.
The City will identify and develop a central "place" as the focal point of the City. The "Heart of Walker" will be a place for recreation, community events, festivals, and other activities to promote interaction among the people of the City.	Walker is a multi-centric community, and this plan does not envision that changing. The City should have several "hearts", which each work together to create a sense of place and community pride.	The City will enhance its existing and planned "hearts" in order to ensure community pride, a sense of place, and ongoing economic vitality. Each of the four Neighborhood Clusters should have a heart. In South Walker, the "heart" is Millennium Park. In Standale, Community Park is the "heart", and should be part of an enhanced Standale core centered on the corner of Lake Michigan Drive and Cummings Avenue. In the Northwest, the Civic Center is the "heart" and should continue to be enhanced and improved. In Alpine, a new "heart" should be created in the redeveloped Green Ridge Square.
Efforts will be made to strengthen community and neighborhood pride through improvements aimed at improving the physical and social conditions of the City's residents.	The City has ongoing efforts in many areas dedicated to this goal. But both programs and their results can always be improved upon.	Efforts will continue to be made to strengthen community and neighborhood pride through improvements aimed at improving the physical and social conditions of the City's residents.

<b>1998 Goal</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>2020 Goal</b>
<b>Neighborhoods and Families</b>		
The City and residents of Walker will work together to develop strategies to maintain the positive features and character of the neighborhoods. These may include activities such as road maintenance, upkeep of homes, preserving trees and other natural features, and other similar efforts.	Programs are ongoing to maintain and improve infrastructure, tree canopy, parks, and other neighborhood features.	The City and residents of Walker will work together to develop strategies to maintain the positive features and character of the neighborhoods. These may include activities such as road maintenance, upkeep of homes, preserving trees and other natural features, upgrades and maintenance of parks, and other similar efforts. They will also include the construction and upgrading of sidewalks in areas envisioned as Sidewalk Improvement Zones.
The City will promote safer neighborhoods by assisting neighborhood organizations and encouraging more interaction between neighborhood residents.	The City participates on ongoing efforts to strengthen and maintain community relationships and engages in programs such as implementing a Communications Department, enhanced Police Department involvement, and many WIFC programs.	The City will continue to promote safer neighborhoods by assisting neighborhood organizations and encouraging more interaction between neighborhood residents.
The City will work with neighborhoods and other community organizations to promote structured programs for all age groups to encourage recreation and interaction between residents.	The City has ongoing efforts to work with neighborhoods for structured programs such as National Night Out events, neighborhood meetings, Drivers ed programs, Toys for Tots, Try Hockey for Free Days, community events, Walker Trails Committee meetings, and enhanced Recreation Department efforts.	The City will continue to work with neighborhoods and other community organizations to promote structured programs for all age groups to encourage recreation and interaction between residents.
The City will work to develop a partnership with the community school systems to utilize existing facilities and programs and to develop new facilities to meet the need of Walker residents.	The City maintains active partnerships and ongoing communication with all schools within the Walker municipal boundary.	Maintaining and, where possible, improving City and school relationships and lines of communication regarding operations, community involvement and facility location.
<b>Land Use</b>		
Future land use decisions in the City will seek to balance the physical, social, and economic effects of development with the needs and desires of existing residents, the environment, and necessary community services.	The 1998 Master Plan, and the City's Zoning Ordinance, have guided development throughout Walker.	Land Use decisions should be based on the Quality of Life indicators that underly this plan - Social Responsibility, Environmental Stewardship, and Economic Prosperity. Specific aspects of development that are envisioned by this plan should be integrated into the City's Zoning Ordinance, and then built out into reality through public investment and private development.
Land use decisions must recognize the rights of private property owners, as well as those of neighboring owners and the interests of the City's residents and businesses.	The City strives to address all of those factors in land use decision making processes.	Land use decisions must recognize the rights of private property owners, as well as those of neighboring owners and the interests of the City's residents and businesses.

<b>1998 Goal</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>2020 Goal</b>
The City of Walker will identify and develop a central "place" as a focal point of the City. The "Heart of Walker" will be a place for recreation, community events, festivals, and other activities to promote interaction among the people of the City.	Walker is a multi-centric community, and this plan does not envision that changing. The City should have several "hearts", which each work together to create a sense of place and community pride.	The City will enhance its existing and planned "hearts" in order to ensure community pride, a sense of place, and ongoing economic vitality. Each of the four Neighborhood Clusters should have a heart. In South Walker, the "heart" is Millennium Park. In Standale, Community Park is the "heart", and should be part of an enhance Standale core centered on the corner of Lake Michigan Drive and Cummings Avenue. In the Northwest, the Civic Center is the "heart" and should continue to be enhanced and improved. In Alpine, a new "heart" should be created in the redeveloped Green Ridge Square.
<b>Resident Communications</b>		
The Master Plan for the City of Walker will be citizen-based with emphasis on neighborhoods. The Plan will be a document upon which the City may rely.	The 2020 Master Plan, which looks out to 2040, was developed in a public process, including five public open houses. It is organized by "Neighborhood Cluster", dividing the City into four areas, which were then planned in detail, creating a Master Plan that is action-focused and specific down to individual parcels.	The Master Plan for the City of Walker will be citizen-based with emphasis on neighborhoods. The Plan will be a document upon which the City may rely.
The Master Plan will be kept current and consistently followed by the Planning and City Commissions.	The 1998 plan has been consistently updated through the use of sub-area plans. The sub-area plans are located in Chapter 4.	The Master Plan will be kept current and consistently followed by the Planning and City Commissions.
The City of Walker will promote community involvement by assisting in the organization of neighborhood and business associations and encouraging more interaction between neighborhood residents.	The City Police Department hosts neighborhood watch meetings and facilitates communications, the DPW manages an "Adopt a Road Program," the Assessing Department manages a PA198 IFT Program, as well as other efforts from the Recreation Department, Communications Department, Community Development Department, WIFC, and others.	The City of Walker will promote community involvement by assisting in the organization of neighborhood and business associations and encouraging more interaction between neighborhood residents.
The City of Walker will provide regular communication at the ward level between City Commissioners and neighborhood and business associations.	Individual Walker elected officials each engage with residents and businesses via in-person contacts and active social media platforms.	The City of Walker will provide regular communication at the ward level between City Commissioners and neighborhood and business associations.
The City of Walker will promote the widest possible awareness of projects and issues that will affect the entire community.	The City is committed to robust public involvement in all major policy questions and physical development decisions.	The City of Walker will promote the widest possible awareness of projects and issues that will affect the entire community.

# 3.

# Citywide Plan

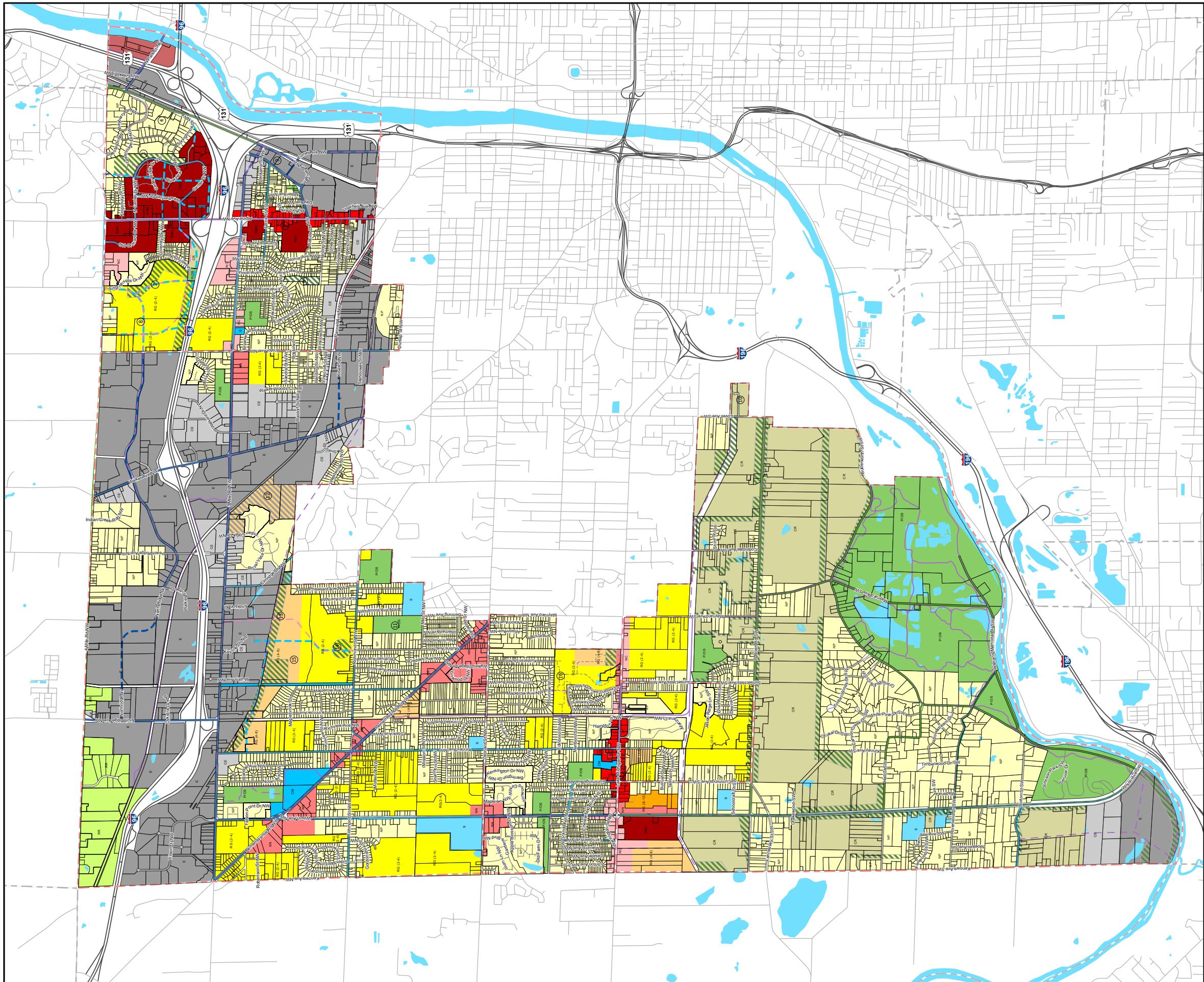
# Overall Vision

The map on the following page shows the vision of the 2020 City of Walker Master Plan at a glance. It includes the recommendations of the Community Character, Corridor Design, and Non-Motorized Transportation plans, which are all components of the overall vision. Detailed information regarding the categories and corridors included on the plan can be found throughout this document.

On the following page, the Community Character, Corridor Design, and Non-Motorized Transportation recommendations are all combined into the Overall Vision Map, an at-a-glance visual representation of the vision of the plan.



CopperRock Real Estate



## Overall Vision

City of Walker, Michigan

1

## LEGEND

**Legend:**

- Neighborhood Boundaries**: Red line with a square icon.
- Neighborhood Preservation - NP**: Yellow line with a square icon.
- Rural Residential (0-1 Units/Acre) - RR**: Green line.
- Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre) - CR**: Olive green line.
- Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre) - RG (2-4)**: Yellow line.
- Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre) - RG (4-8)**: Orange line.
- Residential Growth (8-12 Units/Acre) - RG (8-12)**: Orange line.
- Community Enterprise - CE**: Grey line.
- Enterprise - E**: Grey line.
- Business/Residential (8-12 Units/Acre) - BR (8-12)**: Yellow line with diagonal stripes.
- Neighborhood Corridor - NC**: Pink line.
- Neighborhood Node - NN**: Red line.
- Urban Corridor - UC**: Red line.
- Retrofit/Mixed Use - RMU**: Dark red line.
- River Enhancement - RE**: Dark red line.
- Public/Semi Public, City Municipal, Utility - CM**: Blue line.
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains**: Blue line.
- Schools - S**: Blue square.
- Park/Open Space - P/OS**: Green square.
- Preserved Open Space Overlay**: Green diagonal stripes.
- Existing Bike Path**: Purple line.
- Proposed Bike Path**: Purple line.
- Existing Bike Lane**: Pink line.
- Proposed Bike Lane**: Pink line.
- Regional Throughway**: Purple line.
- Urban Throughway**: Pink line.
- Business Connector**: Blue line.
- Neighborhood Connector**: Blue line.
- Natural Beauty Corridor**: Green line.
- Natural Beauty Throughway**: Green line.
- Neighborhood Street**: Grey line.
- Proposed Business Connector**: Blue line.
- Proposed Neighborhood Connector**: Blue line.
- Proposed Neighborhood Street**: Grey line.

base map source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. City of Walker 2020. McKenna 2020.

MCKENNA



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# Existing Conditions: Population

## Demographic Profile

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 City services, how much housing is affordable, how many new houses will be built, and other vital signs. One must understand these existing conditions and past trends in order to appropriately anticipate and plan for the future needs of the community.

The comprehensive data source for the City of Walker is the U.S. Census in 2010, ESRI 2019 Forecasts (Utilizing Census data), as well as the 2000 U.S. Census and the 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. This analysis compares the City of Walker to Kent County and the State of Michigan 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.

### Population Trends

Changes in the number of people in an area serves as an important indicator of community health; examining these trends is an integral tool in community planning. Table 1.2 shows the relative populations in the City of Walker in comparison to Kent County and the State of Michigan.

**Table 1.2: Population Change, 2000-2019**

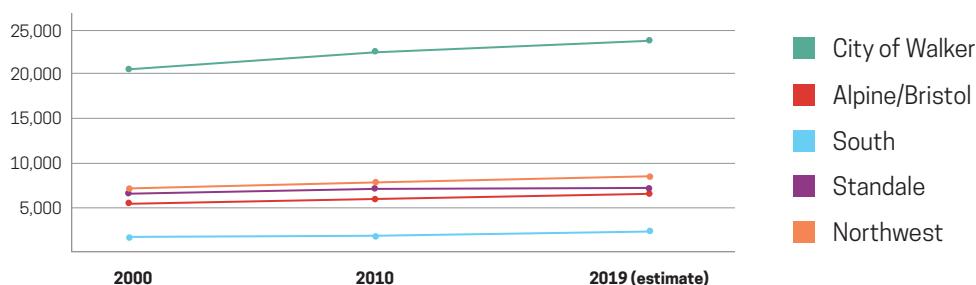
	2000	2010	2019 (estimate)	% Change 2000-2019	Average % Growth/Year
City of Walker	21,842	23,537	24,618	12.71%	0.748%
Kent County	574,335	602,622	636,876	10.80%	0.635%
State of Michigan	9,938,444	9,883,640	9,925,568	-0.00129%	-0.00007%

Source: U.S. Census (2000, 2010); 2019 ESRI Forecasts

As shown in the table above, the City of Walker has experienced the highest change in population between the sample years, resulting in the highest growth rate among the sample communities. As populations increase, the City of Walker must plan to be a place that can retain growth while maintaining and improving the quality of life for existing residents.

Walker's annual growth rate is healthy, but demonstrates a need for additional housing and other types of development on the City's remaining undeveloped parcels. This plan seeks to strike a balance between the need for new development - especially housing - and the desire to preserve the rural character of portions of the City.

**Figure 1.1:**  
**Population Change,**  
**2000-2010**



## 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.

**Figure 1.2: Median Age, 2010**

The figure below compares the median age (the mid-point where half the population is younger and half is older) in the City of Walker, Kent County, and the State of Michigan. The median population for these communities are:

<b>34.6</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>38.9</b>
<b>City of Walker</b>	<b>Kent County</b>	<b>State of Michigan</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

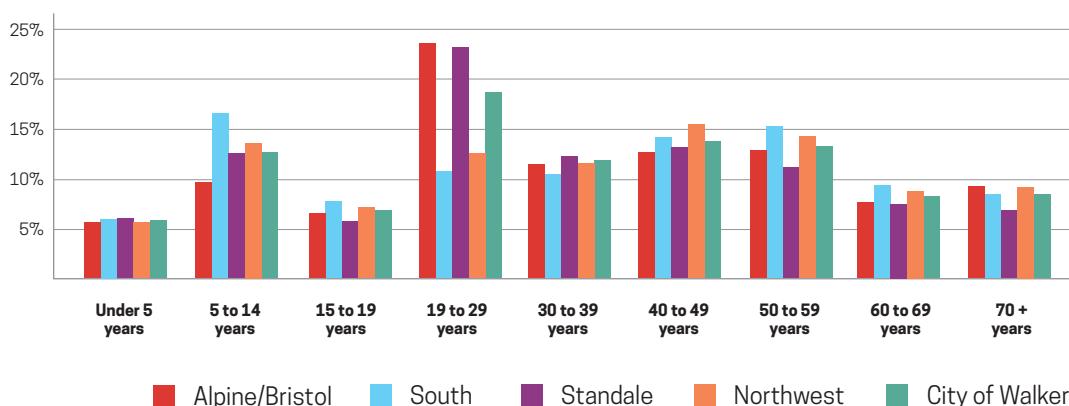
Age structure (analyzing which proportions of a municipality's populations are in which stages of life) gives a nuanced view of the makeup of a community. The age bracket encompassing the largest percentage of the City's population is 20 to 29 years old. While the largest age bracket is comprised of young residents, the second highest age bracket is comprised of individuals aged between 40 and 59 years old; while another significant percentage of the City's population is aged between 4 and 14 years old. Therefore, the age distribution in the City can be described as relatively evenly distributed.

**Table 1.3: Age Structure, 2010**

	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Under 5 years	1,396	5.93%
5 to 14 years	2,994	12.72%
15 to 19 years	1,625	6.90%
19 to 29 years	4,379	18.60%
30 to 39 years	2,794	11.87%
40 to 49 years	3,255	13.83%
50 to 59 years	3,139	13.34%
60 to 69 years	1,936	8.23%
70 years and Over	2,019	8.58%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>23,537</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 1.3: Age Structure, 2010**



## Racial Distribution

Table 1.4 illustrates these racial distributions for the area in comparison with the City of Walker, as well as Kent County and the State of Michigan. As the table outlines, whites make up the highest percentage in all of the sample comparison communities.

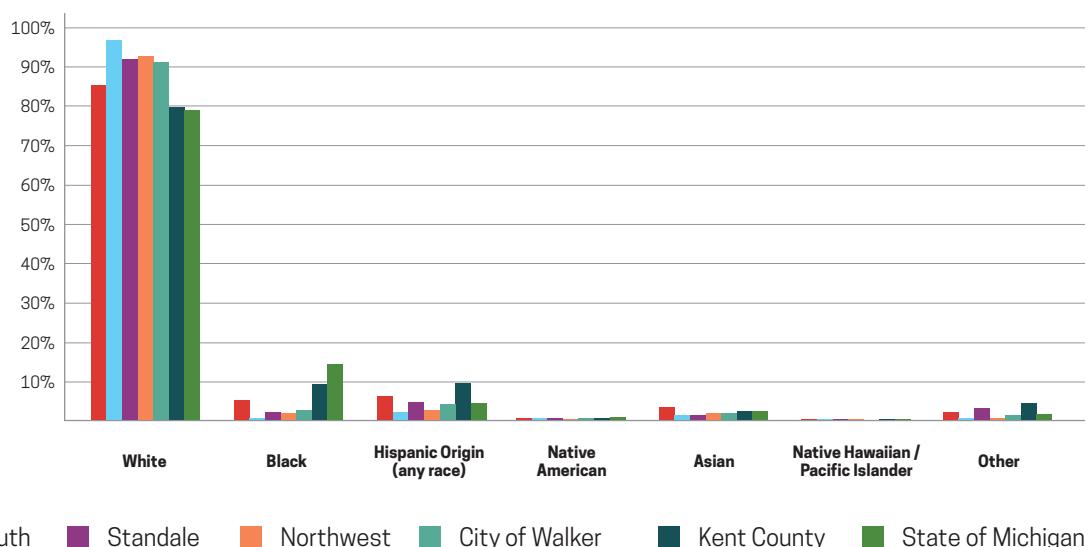
**Table 1.4: Racial Distribution, 2010**

	White	Black	Hispanic Origin (any race)	Native American	Asian	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	Other
City of Walker	91.3%	2.8%	4.1%	0.5%	1.9%	0.0%	1.4%
Kent County	79.9%	9.7%	9.7%	0.5%	2.3%	0.04%	4.5%
State of Michigan	78.9%	14.2%	4.4%	0.6%	2.4%	0.026%	1.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ESRI Converted Census 2010 Data.

Portions of the population may be left out of these counts due to identifying as two or more races. This information is provided for reference purposes and will not influence land use decisions.

**Figure 1.4: Racial Distribution**



## Housing Profile

The quality, affordability, and availability of a community's housing stock has a significant impact on the vitality and quality 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 City of Walker's housing stock.

### Housing Units

As of the 2010 Census, the Northwest Neighborhood had 10,432 total housing units. Each housing unit represents one dwelling unit- a house, apartment, condominium, etc.

In comparing with the other sample communities, the City of Walker has experienced the highest percentage of housing unit growth at 11.74% between years 2000 and 2019. This simply indicates that the number of overall housing units in the City has been increasing over the 19 year sample period.

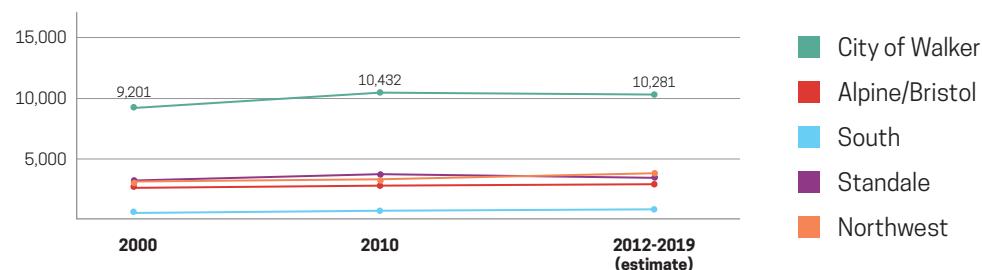
See Map 1.1 on page 5 for the geographic boundaries of the Neighborhood Clusters.

Table 1.5: Change in Number of Housing Units, 2000 - 2019

	2000	2010	2012-2019 Estimates	Change in Number of Housing Units (2000 - 2019)	Change in Percent of Housing Units (2000 - 2019)
City of Walker	9,201	10,432	10,281	1,080	11.74%
Kent County	224,000	246,901	249,029	25,029	11.17%
State of Michigan	4,234,279	4,532,233	4,544,920	310,641	7.34%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2012-2016 American Community Survey Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau 2000 and 2010 Census, \*2019 ESRI Estimates

Figure 1.5:  
Change in Number  
of Housing Units,  
2000-2016



## Housing Tenure

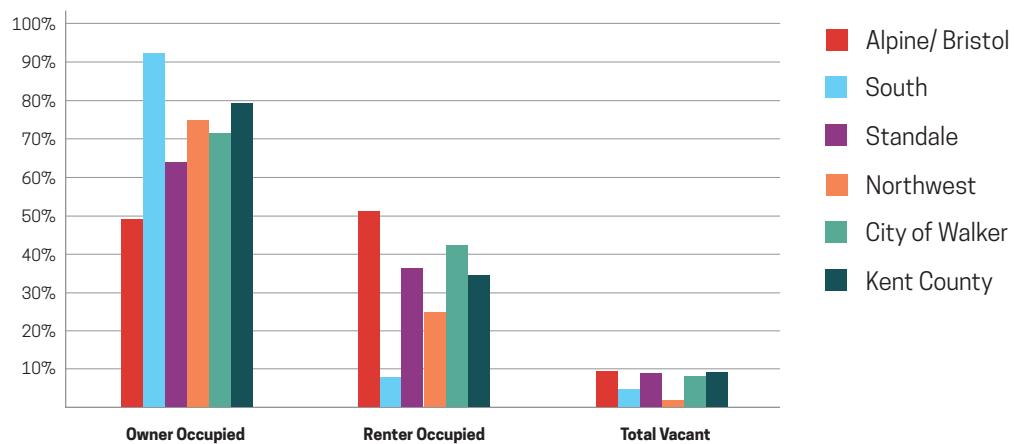
Housing tenure describes how housing is occupied – by the owner, by a renter, or whether it is vacant. The table below shows that owner occupied housing in the City of Walker is significantly more common than renter occupied housing, by over 25%. Additionally, there is a very small percentage of vacant housing in the City at 7.17%.

Table 1.6: Housing Tenure, 2010

Total Occupied Dwellings	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied		Total Vacant		Total Units
	Units	Percentage*	Units	Percentage*	Units	Percentage	
City of Walker	9,684	62.79%	3,603	37.21%	748	7.17%	10,432
Kent County	227,239	69.7%	69,938	30.3%	19,662	8.0%	246,901

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, \*Numbers appear as a percentage of the Occupied Dwellings

Figure 1.6:  
Housing Tenure, 2010



## Households

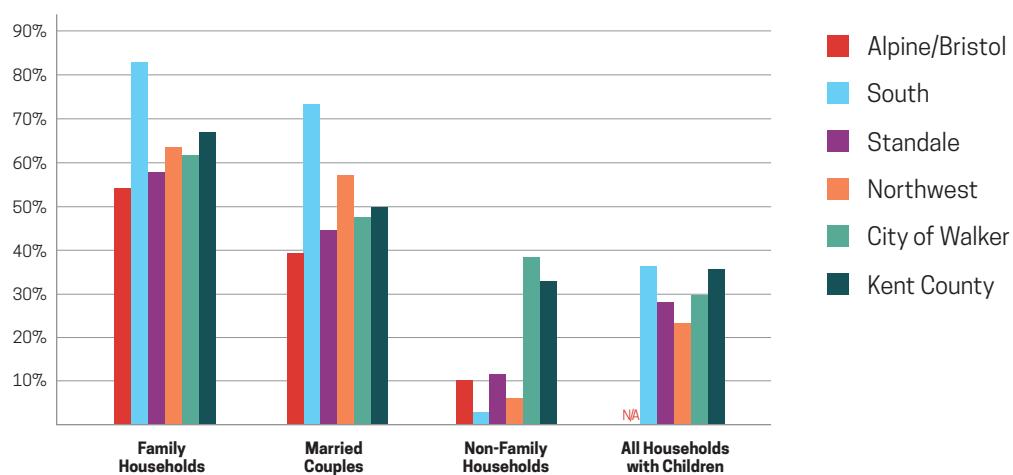
Table 1.7 below breaks down the types of households in the City of Walker and Kent County. The City of Walker has a slightly lower average household size than Kent County as a whole. Additionally, the highest percentage of households in the City that are comprised of two or more people is family households.

**Table 1.7: Households by Type, 2010**

	Total	Family Households	Married Couples	Non-Family Households	All Households with Children	Average Household Size
City of Walker	9,684	61.2%	47.8%	38.3%	29.9%	2.40
Kent County	227,239	67.0%	50.0%	33.0%	35.5%	2.60

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 1.7:**  
**Households by Type, 2010**



# Existing Conditions: Economy

## Economic Profile

This section describes the employment distribution, income, educational attainment, and other economic information of the population of the City of Walker. It compares the City to Kent County, and the State of Michigan to allow comparisons to be made by readers. It also includes a Tapestry Segmentation profile, which summarizes the segments, based on demographics and socioeconomic factors, that can be found in the City.

### Occupation Summary

This section addresses the employment of residents of the City of Walker. 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 the City include educational services, health care, and social assistance (23%), retail trade (13.5%), and manufacturing (15%).

**Table 1.8: Occupational Sectors, 2017**

Industry	City of Walker
<b>Total Employed Persons Over 16 Years of Age</b>	<b>13,211</b>
Agriculture/Mining	0.5%
Construction	4.0%
Manufacturing	15.3%
Wholesale Trade	2.7%
Retail Trade	12.9%
Transportation/Utilities	3.8%
Information	2.1%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	7.2%
Services	49.2%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	11.1%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	22.5%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	11.1%
Other services, except public administration	4.5%
Public Administration	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

\*ESRI forecasts for 2019 utilizing converted U.S. Census 2000 data into 2010 geography

### Top 5 Occupational Sectors

#### City of Walker

1. Educational services, health care, and social assistance
2. Manufacturing
3. Retail Trade
4. Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services
5. Arts, entertainment, recreation and accommodation, and food services

## Income and Poverty

The median household income in the City of Walker is \$55,781, according to the 2019 ESRI Forecasts. This means that half of all workers earned more than this amount and half earned less. The median income for Kent County, according to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, is \$57,302. As such, the City's median income can be described as compatible with the surrounding Kent County, at only about a \$1,500 difference.

According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey, about 9.8% (or 2,404) of the households in the City earned an income in the last 12 months that places them below the poverty level.

## Educational Attainment

This section analyzes the educational attainment in the City of Walker and the comparison communities for persons age 25 and older. Generally, the City has similar levels of educational attainment compared to the Kent County and the State of Michigan. As shown in the table below, the City of Walker has a higher percentage of residents with Bachelor's Degrees and Associate's Degrees than the other sample communities. Overall, the City has higher levels of educational attainment.

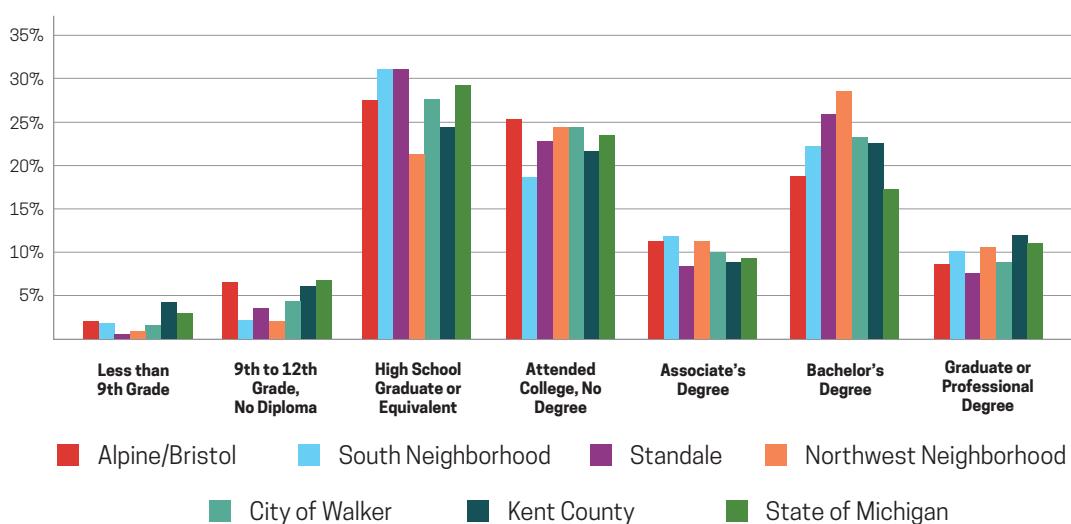
**Table 1.9: Educational Attainment, 2017**

Education Level	City of Walker	Kent County	State of Michigan
Less than 9th grade	1.6%	4.2%	3.0%
9th to 12th grade, No Diploma	4.4%	6.0%	6.7%
High School Graduate or Equivalent	27.7%	24.5%	29.3%
Attended College, No Degree	24.4%	21.7%	23.6%
Associate's Degree	10.0%	8.9%	9.3%
Bachelor's Degree	23.3%	22.7%	17.1%
Graduate or Professional Degree	8.7%	12.0%	11.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010), ESRI Forecasts for 2019

**Figure 1.8:**  
**Educational Attainment,**  
**2010**



An indication of this area's economic position relative to the surrounding region can be illustrated in travel time to work for residents. The following table 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 1.10 shows that the majority of the residents in the City work within the Grand Rapids, Wyoming, and Grandville area, with slightly less than 60% of people commuting only 10 to 24 minutes to their place of employment.

**Table 1.10: Commuting Destinations, 2017**

Travel Time to Work	Places of Work Within this Commute Radius	% of Population
Under 10 minutes	Walker/Grand Rapids	12.8%
10 to 24 minutes	Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Grandville	58.9%
25 to 44 minutes	Grand Rapids/Holland/Dorr/Rockford	23.6%
45 to 59 minutes	Muskegon/South Haven/Big Rapids/Portland	1.8%
Over 60 minutes	Lansing/Chase/Ludington/Benton Harbor	2.8%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-20170 American Community Survey

## 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 City of Walker, there are three major segments which can provide information about the neighborhoods and its residents. This tapestry profile for the City of Walker is an accumulation of the resident data from all four of the neighborhood cluster subareas.

### **Bright Young Professionals, 20.8%**

The Bright Young Professionals segment exists primarily in urban outskirts, consisting of young, educated, working professionals, with a median age of 33. Residents are relatively well educated, with about 35% having completed some college or an Associate's Degree or higher. The average household size is 2.41, with more than two-fifths of the segment living in single-family homes, while over a third live in multi-unit buildings. Households are primarily couples and contains a higher level of renters compared to home owners.

### **Young and Restless, 19.8%**

The Young and Restless segment consists of well-educated young workers, with a median age of 29.8 years and a median household income of \$40,500. This is one of the youngest markets, made up of primarily single-person households. This group has high levels of renters as opposed to home ownership. Young and Restless residents are diverse, favoring densely populated neighborhoods in large metropolitan area and are fairly mobile; almost 1 in 5 residents move each year. The majority live alone or in shared non-family dwellings.

### **Green Acres, 12.2%**

The Green Acres segment features country living and self-reliance set in rural enclaves in metropolitan areas. Homes are typically older, single family homes with a high percentage of homeowners. The Green Acres segment is an older market, mainly consisting of married couples, most with no children. Green Acres residents have a median age of 43.9 and a median income of \$76,800.

Source: ESRI Tapestry Segmentation Profiles, ESRI and Infogroup.

# Existing Land Use

## Overview

Knowledge of current land uses allows the City to consider the compatibility of new land uses and is a valuable tool when considering the day-to-day problems associated with land management and the delivery of key public services. The existing land use survey provides an inventory of land use within the community and is a key source of background information used in developing the Master Plan.



### Single Family Residential

The City contains a high concentration of single-family residential developments, which consists of single-family detached homes at typical suburban densities. Single family residential neighborhoods in the City limits are typically contained in neighborhoods and residential streets located in the Alpine-Bristol Neighborhood cluster, just south of 3 Mile Road and south of the I-96 Freeway. In the Northwest Neighborhood cluster, single family housing is generally concentrated along Remembrance Road, and in the Standale Neighborhood cluster south of Leonard Street and north of Lake Michigan Drive and along Kinney Avenue. In the South Neighborhood cluster, single family home developments are generally more concentrated on the east side of the Neighborhood, bordering Millennium Park.



### Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family residential sites are those that contain attached housing units, with two or more units per structure, such as duplexes, townhouses, and apartment buildings. Multi-family housing in the City is less common than single-family housing with far fewer developments. The multi-family residential developments in the City are located primarily along Lake Michigan Drive, which is on south side of the Standale Neighborhood cluster and the north side of the South Walker Neighborhood Cluster. These multi-family residential complexes include the Apple Ridge Apartments, Hampton Lake Apartments. Additionally, several other multi-family residential units are located along Remembrance Road and Leonard Street and south of 3 Mile Road in the Northwest Neighborhood cluster. A small number of duplex developments and other multi-unit developments such as the Royal Vista Townhomes, The Orchards at Four Mile, and Green Ridge Apartments are located in the Alpine-Bristol Neighborhood cluster on either side of Alpine Avenue.



### Rural Residential

Rural Residential districts are those that contain single family housing at lower densities than typical suburban development, with a couple acres of property for each single-family home. Majority of the City of Walker's rural residential land uses are concentrated in the South Walker neighborhood, which is largely rural in character. Additionally, a smaller rural residential cluster can be identified in the Northwest Neighborhood south of 4 Mile Road along the City limit boundary.



## Mobile Home

Mobile Home sites includes areas that contain 10 or more mobile homes for primarily residential use. Two major manufactured or mobile housing sites can be found in Standale in the northwest corner of the cluster, bordering Leonard Street. A third, smaller mobile home parking is located at Vinecraft and Montclair and is named "Oakwood."



## Commercial

Commercial sites are those that contain real estate intended for use by for-profit businesses, such as grocery stores, restaurants, and malls. Commercial land uses in the City of Walker are largely concentrated in the Alpine-Bristol Neighborhood cluster located on Alpine Avenue within close proximity to I-96. Many of the commercial opportunities located in this area include chain restaurants, big box stores, banks, fast food restaurants, and more. There is a small number of commercial establishments, such as local restaurants, in the Northwest Neighborhood Cluster located on Remembrance Road. Additionally, a larger pocket of commercial land uses is located in the Standale Neighborhood cluster at the corner of Lake Michigan Drive and Wilson Avenue, which contains a Meijer grocery store and a number of chain and fast food restaurants.



## Industrial

The Northwest Neighborhood cluster includes the vast majority of the City's industrial uses, which are primarily located within close proximity to highway I-96 and the Coopersville-Marne Railway. The Industrial zones in the Northwest Neighborhood range from light industrial to heavy industrial, and also include industrial parks. Industrial land uses may include manufacturing facilities, warehouses, wholesale businesses, truck terminals, and mineral processing developments. Significant industrial development is occurring along the rapidly-expanding Northridge Drive corridor from Bristol Avenue west to Fruit Ridge Avenue. The 3 Mile Road corridor, including the northerly projection along Fruit Ridge Avenue, continues to be a primary industrial employment center for Walker.



## Agricultural

The Northwest Neighborhood and South Walker Neighborhood clusters include majority of the City's agricultural land. Agricultural land uses typically include farming, dairying, forestry operations, and other rural activities. Specifically, in the Northwest Neighborhood, the agricultural uses include small local farms with on-site residential dwellings. The Agricultural land uses in the Northwest Neighborhood are located on the northern border of the City along 4 Mile Road. Additionally, the South Walker Neighborhood cluster includes agricultural establishments such as Versluis Orchards and Grand River Angus Farm.



## Major Impact Sites

Major impact sites are those that serve community and regional need but have significant impacts on the surrounding area that require special compatibility considerations. For the purposes of analyzing existing land uses in the City, this category comprises the Deltaplex, an arena/stadium.



## Office

Office areas are those that include spaces for business, professional, and financial offices, as well as offices for individuals and non-profit organizations. Office space is concentrated mainly in the southeast corner of the Alpine-Bristol Neighborhood along I-96, in proximity to industrial, commercial, and single family uses. Additionally, small concentrations of Office are located in the Northwest Neighborhood and in Standale. The Meijer and Bissell corporate headquarters are located along the Walker Avenue corridor south of I-96.



## Public/Quasi-Public

Public/Quasi-Public sites include any site for facilities such as governmental offices, hospitals, and churches, and utility sites that serve the public. Public/Quasi-Public uses in the City of Walker are mostly concentrated in the Northwest Neighborhood cluster. These include City Hall, the Walker District Branch of the Kent District Library, and Walker District Court. Schools are also included in this category.



## Open Space

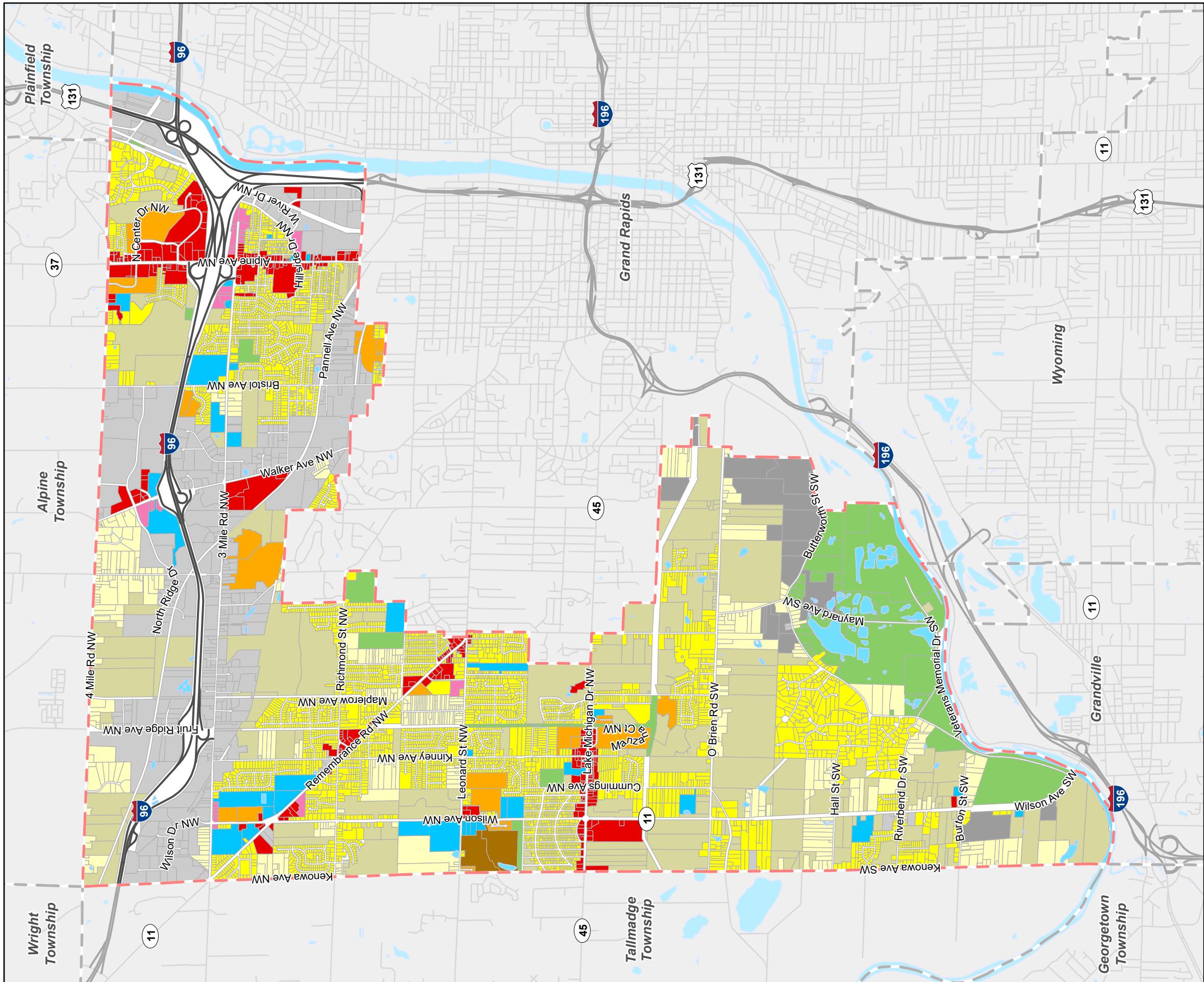
Open Spaces are areas that are left open as woodland, prairie, grass etc. Open spaces are those that are currently undeveloped, and often exist between single-family housing in this area. Most of the undeveloped open space in the Northwest Neighborhood exists just east of Remembrance Road, along Milo Street and along Richmond Street, just north of the Blandford Nature Center. Additionally, open space areas are located in the Alpine-Bristol Neighborhood cluster such as the English Hills Country Club (not currently operating), and areas south of Lake Michigan Drive in the South Neighborhood cluster.



## Parks and Recreation

Walker benefits from several public parks spread throughout the City. Kent County owns and maintains Millennium Park and Johnson Park in South Walker. Major Walker-owned parks include Alpine Estates Park, City Central Park, Community Park, and Harmon Park.

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## Citywide Existing Land Use

City of Walker, Michigan

October 30, 2019

### Legend

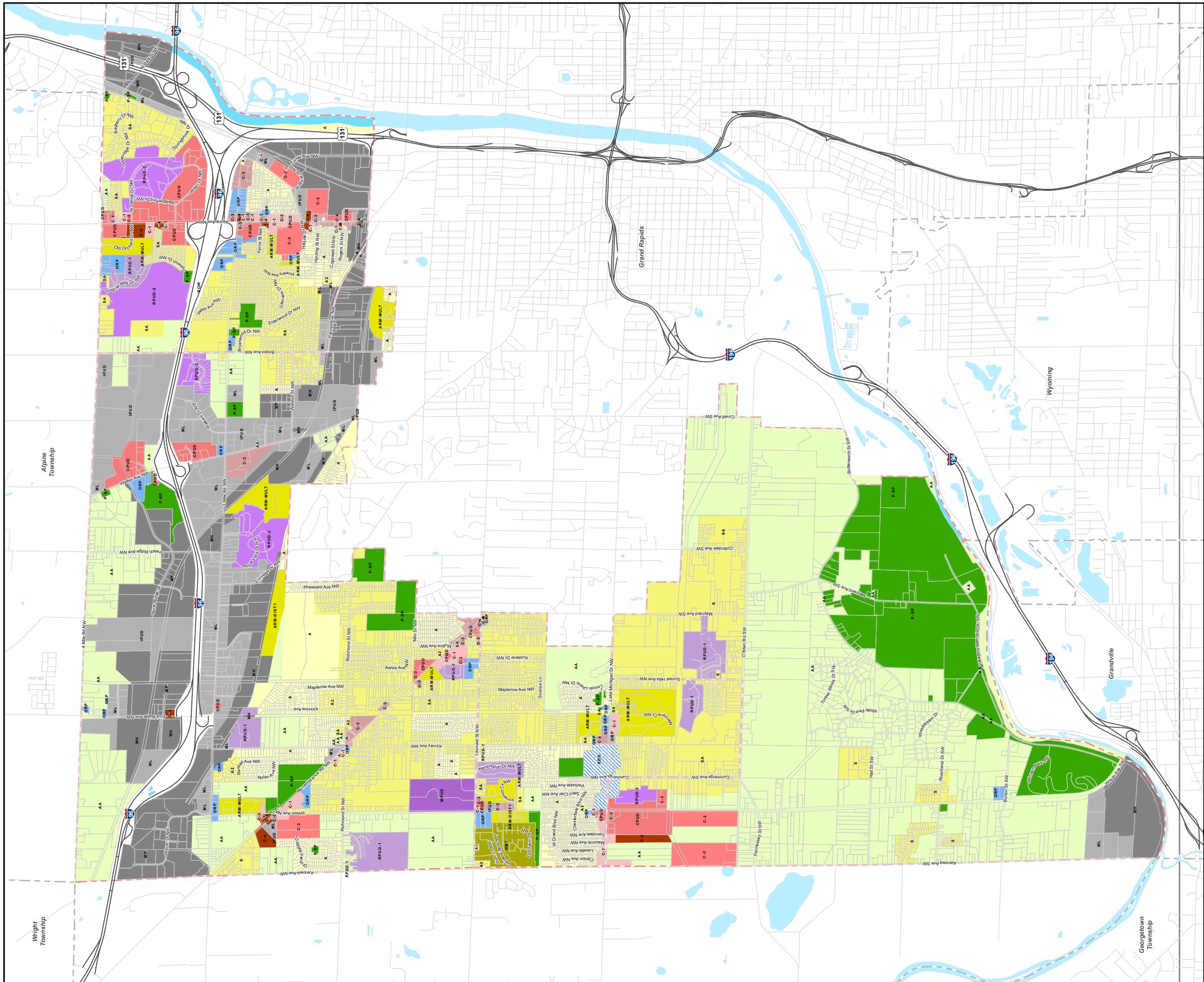
- Walker Boundary
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Freeways
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains
- Agriculture and Open Space
- Rural Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Mobile Home Park
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial/Major Impact
- Extractive Mining
- Parks and Recreation
- Public/Semi-Public

SOURCES - Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Date Source: City of Walker 2019. McKenna 2019.



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# Zoning Map

City of Walker, Michigan

June 16, 2020



0 500 1,000  
Feet

## LEGEND

	Neighborhood Boundaries
	Zoning Districts
	A: Single Family Residential
	A2: Duplex - Two Family Residential
	AA: Agricultural
	ARM-MULT1: Residential Multi-Family
	ARM-MULT2: Residential Multi-Family
	C-1: Local Commercial
	C-2: Community Commercial
	C-3: Highway Commercial
	C-4: Outdoor Commercial
	CPUD: Commercial Planned Unit Development
	IPUD: Industrial Planned Unit Development
	MH: Heavy Industrial
	ML: Light Industrial
	MP: Industrial Park
	MPUD: Mixed Use Planned Unit Development
	ORP: Office, Research & Parking
	P-SP: Public / Semi-Public
	RMT: Mobile Home Park
	RPUD-1: Low Density
	RPUD-2: High Density
	SA: Suburban Residential
	SA: Single Family
	SDD: Standale Downtown District

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: GVMC 2020. McKenna 2020.

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# Existing Conditions: Mobility

## Road Network

The road system is of vital importance to the overall well-being of the City of Walker and its residents. At its most basic level, the road system provides the means of transportation, of moving people and goods.

Due to the many functions of the road network, transportation has a significant impact on the environmental quality, economy, energy consumption, land development, and the general character of the City. Accordingly, it is important to identify and understand deficiencies in the road system and to prepare alternatives to address those deficiencies.

The road network in the City of Walker contains several major thoroughfares into neighboring communities such as Interstate 96 (I-96), Remembrance Road (a portion of which is MDOT-maintained and signposted M-11), Wilson Avenue (also partially M-11), Leonard Street, Lake Michigan Drive (M-45), Walker Avenue, and Alpine Avenue (M-37). Each of these routes provides significant connections to a variety of uses such as industrial parks, residential areas, and retail development as well as significant connections to Downtown Grand Rapids to the east and Ottawa County to the west.

A large portion of the north side of the City is comprised of industrial uses. As such, 3 Mile Road, Walker Avenue, and Fruit Ridge Avenue provide easy Freeway access, as well as access to nearby industrial parks. Additionally, the City's accessibility to I-96 is significant to the operation of industrial businesses for the movement of goods and services as well as for the workforce to access their place of employment from adjacent municipalities.

Additionally, a significant portion of the City's commercial development is located in the Alpine-Bristol Neighborhood. Alpine Avenue serves as the main access route into the commercial corridor from the Freeway and into adjacent communities. Wilson Avenue also provides north-south access through the City and connects with other major thoroughfares such as Lake Michigan Drive and Remembrance Road. Wilson Avenue also provides access to the City of Grandville to the south, which connects with Freeway 196, as well as additional access to the southern portion of the City, which is mainly comprised of agricultural, rural residential, and parkland.

Major primary roads such as Remembrance Road in the Northwest Neighborhood cluster provides access to residential developments and institutional buildings such as schools, City Hall, and the Walker location of the Kent District Library. Another example of a primary Road in the City includes Butterworth Drive, O'Brien Street, Richmond Street, 3 Mile Road, Bristol Avenue, Leonard Street, and 4 Mile Road.

# Road Classifications

The intended purpose of each specific road or highway can be best communicated through classification. Road classifications also identify the type and volume of traffic that are appropriate for each segment of the road network.

For the purposes of transportation planning and this master plan, the following classifications have been assigned to the roads in the City of Walker;

## Expressway

Expressways are major state and federal routes designed to hold large volumes of traffic moving at high speeds over long distances, connecting cities throughout Michigan and the United States. I-96 and US 131 are both expressways, each having major impacts on the level of traffic and vehicular movement in the City. Within close proximity to the south of the City is Expressway I-196.

## Regional Street

Regional streets are those that carry traffic between the Northwest Neighborhood and other communities in the region. Regional streets serve the major centers of activity in an area and are often the highest traffic volume corridor. There are several regional streets within the City of Walker. These include Alpine Avenue, or M-37 Lake Michigan Drive, or M-45, and Wilson Avenue, or M-11. Alpine Avenue provides access to the City's main commercial corridor and into the City of Grand Rapids. Lake Michigan Drive provides east-west access into the Grand Rapid's west side and into Ottawa County. A major node located on Lake Michigan Drive is Grand Valley State University, which located in Allendale. Wilson Avenue provides north-south access across the City.

## Major City Street

Major City Streets are those that carry traffic throughout the Northwest Neighborhood and the City of Walker a whole, as well as to adjacent parts of the region. The City's Major City Streets include Leonard Street, providing east-west access into both neighboring Ottawa County and the City of Grand Rapids, 3 Mile Road, and 4 Mile Road which provide east-west access across the City as well as into adjacent communities such as Wright Township, Marne, Comstock Park, and the City of Grand Rapids.

Other Major City Streets in Walker include O'Brien Street and Kenowa Avenue in the South Walker Neighborhood, and West River Drive in the Alpine-Bristol Neighborhood.

## City Collector

City Collector streets provide shorter distance movements, collecting traffic from local streets and higher volume Regional and Major City Streets. Examples of City Collector streets in the City of Walker include those such as Kinney Avenue, Richmond Street, Fruitrige Avenue, Center Drive, Old Orchard Drive, Cummings Avenue, Butterworth Drive, and Maynard Avenue.

## Residential/Local Street

Local/residential streets are those that are lightly traveled and meant to provide residents access to residential areas. Movement of through traffic is generally discouraged on local streets. Examples of Local/Residential Streets in the City are generally found in single family residential neighborhoods, such as Maplerow Avenue, Mullins Avenue, Timber Winds Drive, Hall Street, Chesterfield Boulevard, Coventry Drive, and Greenridge Drive.

# Access Management

The capacity of a highway or road can be quickly depleted and traffic safety compromised if development is allowed to occur without proper attention to access control. Access management can benefit properties on all types of roads within the community. With the growth the City of Walker and the greater Grand Rapids region has experienced thus far, and is projected to experience in the future, the presence of traffic on Remembrance Road, 3 Mile Road, Wilson Avenue, Lake Michigan Drive, and Leonard Street will increase.

Additionally, the need for good access management will be most obvious within the commercial area of the Alpine-Bristol Subarea, however, there is also a need within the residential areas that surround the commercial district on Alpine Avenue. The existing road network currently forces too much traffic onto Alpine Avenue (which is not a local street), thus aggravating congestion along that commercial corridor. Good access management design will reduce potential congestion on streets, vehicle-pedestrian conflict points, and on-site congestion, while creating a network of public and private streets that allow for alternative routes of travel.

# Transit Service

The Rapid, a public transit system operated by the Interurban Transit Partnership, provides service to the Grand Rapids metropolitan area and beyond. The Rapid provides public transportation services throughout the City in each of the Neighborhood subareas.

For example, access to The Rapid is available at several transit stops located on Remembrance Road. Some of these stops include Walker Village, located at Leonard Street and Remembrance Road, Walker City Hall located on Remembrance Road, other residential clusters located on Remembrance Road, and Kinney Avenue and Remembrance Road and Wilson Avenue. These transit stops are all located on The Rapid Bus Route 7, which connects to Rapid Bus Routes 12 and 50. These Bus Routes intersect at the Standale Meijer located on Lake Michigan Drive. From there, bus service can be available to access Downtown Grand Rapids.

Alpine Avenue is also served by Rapid Route 9, which loops through the apartment complexes and shopping centers to provide local access.

At the time of adoption of this plan, the Laker Line Bus Rapid Transit line was under construction along Lake Michigan Drive. The BRT line will provide express service from Grand Valley State University to Downtown Grand Rapids, with stops in Walker at Ferndale Avenue, Cummings Avenue, the Meijer Standale Trail, and Maynard Avenue.

In the northern portion of the City, transit is available at various stops located near multi-family residential developments such as the Orchard Apartments and Greenridge Apartments as well as other points along the City's main commercial corridor such as Home Depot and Meijer.

# Non-Motorized Transportation

Non-motorized transportation is an important component of a City's transportation infrastructure. Unlike motorized transportation, modes that focus on efficient and safe movement of individuals and bicycle and pedestrian circulation play an important role in improving the community's connectivity, physical & mental health, and perception of safety.

## Pedestrian Networks

As it stands, the City of Walker as a whole is very car dependent, with almost all errands requiring a car. Some major regional streets such as Lake Michigan Drive, located in the center of the City, offer areas with sidewalk facilities and attractive frontages. With majority of the southern portion of the City being rural, pedestrian facilities are scarce, lacking protected crosswalks and sidewalks.

Additionally, the industrial parks located along the northern portion of the City not include a fluid connected pedestrian network to nearby residential areas. For example, the residential developments located along the north side of Remembrance Road do not have safe pedestrian facilities connecting to the nearby industrial park for residents to have opportunities to walk or bike to work or school.

As for the City's main commercial corridor in the Alpine-Bristol subarea, the pedestrian network is largely characterized by long pedestrian street crossings and lack of sidewalk infrastructure.

## Bicycling

Bicycling is an environmentally friendly and healthy travel mode, as well as a key component of a multi-modal transportation system. There are two popular regional bike trails located within City limits. These include the Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail, which runs east-west from Grand Rapids and the Fred Meijer Standale Trail, which runs north-south from Kent Trails in Grandville. Additionally, the City currently is fitted with infrastructure used for bicycle transportation such as bike lanes, along certain corridors such as Remembrance Road, and sections of Leonard Road.

The Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail is planned to connect to the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail and the Riverside Park Trail, both located in the City of Grand Rapids. Additionally, the Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail provides connection to the Musketawa Trail, which then offers non-motorized accessibility to neighboring Ottawa County and Muskegon County.

The Fred Meijer Standale Trail connects to many other trails in the region, such as the Millennium Trail network and Kent Trails that runs through Millennium and Johnson Park, as well as beyond in the greater Grand Rapids region. These systems are connected to one another and provide residents with safe recreational and transportation opportunities.

However, among these regional trail opportunities in the City of Walker, there is not a connection between the Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail and the Fred Meijer Standale Trail. A potential north-south connector route along Fruitridge and Kinney Avenue is being explored by the City to join the two regional trails within City limits.



# Future Land Use

The Future Land Use map shows the generalized, at-a-glance development pattern that is planned for the City of Walker. It provides the framework upon which the Community Character Plan is built.

Each Future Land Use Category contains one or more Character Areas, which more specifically articulate the vision, and tie into zoning recommendations, including appropriate zoning categories to implement the vision of the Character Area.

## Future Land Use Categories



### Residential: Existing Density

This future land use category indicates residential areas that are not intended to increase in density, or change in character, over the life of the plan. While significant change is not planned, these neighborhoods can still be upgraded with sidewalks, lighting, crosswalks, and other improvements.

#### Character Areas:

- Neighborhood Preservation



### Residential: Growth 8-12 Units Per Acre

This future land use category indicates areas that are planned for residential growth, with the resulting built-out neighborhood featuring more than 8 units per gross acre of land. The size and style of multi-family buildings may vary.

#### Character Areas:

- Residential Growth 8-12 Units Per Acre



### Residential: Growth 4-8 Units Per Acre

This future land use category indicates areas that are planned for residential growth, with the resulting built-out neighborhood featuring between four and eight units per gross acre of land. The type of residential unit may vary (duplex, townhouse, small apartment buildings, large apartment buildings, etc), but the density should remain between five and ten units per acre.

#### Character Areas:

- Residential Growth 4-8 Units Per Acre



## Residential: Growth 2-4 Units Per Acre

This future land use category indicates areas that are planned for residential growth, with the resulting built-out neighborhood featuring between two and four units per gross acre of land. The type of residential unit may vary (single family, duplex, townhouse, small apartment buildings, etc), but the density should remain between two and four units per acre.

### Character Areas:

- Residential Growth 2-4 Units Per Acre



## Residential: Cluster 0-1 Units Per Acre

This future land use category indicates areas that are planned for residential growth, with the resulting built-out neighborhood featuring cluster/open space preservation developments, with a gross density of 0-1 units per acre, and a practical density of 2-6 units per acre. The type of residential unit should generally be single family homes on small to medium sized lots, surrounded by preserved natural features.

### Character Areas:

- Cluster Residential 0-1 Units Per Acre



## Rural Residential: 0-1 Units Per Acre

This future land use category indicates areas that are planned to retain their rural character, with housing built at a density no higher than one unit per acre, which less density preferred.

### Character Areas:

- Rural Residential 0-1 Units Per Acre



## Mixed-Use

This future land use category indicates areas that are planned for a mix of uses. The specific mix, and anticipated character and design, are articulated by the various future land use categories.

### Character Areas:

- Neighborhood Corridor
- Neighborhood Node
- Retrofit Mixed Use
- Urban Corridor
- River Enhancement



## Business

This future land use category indicates areas that are planned primarily for industrial and commercial businesses, and not for residential uses. Within these areas, efficient business operations should be prioritized, except where nearby residential areas need to be protected from negative impacts.

### Character Areas:

- Community Enterprise
- Enterprise



## Public / Semi Public

This future land use category indicates areas that contain public amenities and facilities, which are planned to stay in place.

### Character Areas:

- Parks
- Schools
- Civic/Municipal Facilities

## Parcels Split Between Future Land Use Categories

In general, if a parcel is split between two Future Land Use (or Community Character) categories, the intent of this plan is for the boundary between the land uses to roughly reflect the line drawn in this plan. However, for parcels split between two Residential Growth categories, the planned residential density shall be calculated as follows:

### Step 1

The number of acres within each Residential Growth category shall be determined  
(Ex: 80 acres in RG 2-4 and 20 acres in RG 4-8)

### Step 2

The maximum number of dwelling units within each category shall be calculated individually  
(Ex:  $80 \times 4 = 320$  units, and  $20 \times 8 = 160$  units)

### Step 3

The two maximum shall be added together to get a total maximum dwelling unit allowance for the site  
(Ex:  $320 + 160 = 480$  units)

### Step 4

When the site is designed, the total number of dwelling units shall not exceed the overall maximum calculated in Step 3. However, within the individual Future Land Use categories, the density may exceed the planned maximum by up to 1 unit per acre. (Ex: The 80 acre RG 2-4 section could contain 5 dwelling units per acre, or 400 units, provided that the RG 4-8 section is reduced to 80 units, so that the total maximum is not exceeded).



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The table below compares the 1998 Future Land Use categories to the 2020 Future Land Use and Community Character Categories.

**Table 1.11: Future Land Use, 1998 vs 2020**

1998 Future Land Use	2020 Future Land Use	Description of Changes
<b>Rural Residential</b>	<b>Rural Residential 0-1 Units Per Acre</b>	The Rural Residential category is largely unchanged from 1998, calling for very low density and rural character preservation.
	<b>Residential: Cluster 0-1 Units Per Acre</b>	The Residential Cluster category was added for the 2020 plan. It also strives to preserve rural character, but does so by envisioning clusters of smaller residential lots surrounded by preserved natural space, not homes on large lots.
<b>Low Density Residential</b>	<b>Residential Existing Density</b>	The Existing Density category was added for the 2020 plan. This designation is used for existing residential neighborhoods at all density levels.
	<b>Residential Growth 2-4 Units Per Acre</b>	The Residential Growth 2-4 category envisions the same density as the 1998 Low Density category, but it includes more neighborhood design prescriptions within the Community Character category of the same name.
<b>Medium Density Residential</b>	<b>Residential Existing Density</b>	The Existing Density category was added for the 2020 plan. This designation is used for existing residential neighborhoods at all density levels.
	<b>Residential Growth 4-8 Units Per Acre</b>	The Residential Growth 4-8 category envisions increases the envisioned maximum density from the 1998 Medium Density category from 8 to 10 units per acre. It also includes neighborhood design prescriptions within the Community Character category of the same name.
<b>High Density Residential</b>	<b>Residential Existing Density</b>	The Existing Density category was added for the 2020 plan. This designation is used for existing residential neighborhoods at all density levels.
	<b>Residential Growth 8-12 Units Per Acre</b>	The Residential Growth 8-12 category envisions increases the envisioned maximum density from the 1998 Medium Density category from 12 to 15 units per acre, acknowledging the ongoing growth in the Grand Rapids region and the need for new housing. It also includes neighborhood design prescriptions within the Community Character category of the same name.
<b>Neighborhood Commercial</b>	<b>Mixed Use</b> (Neighborhood Node Community Character Category)	The Neighborhood Node Community Character Category encompasses Neighborhood Commercial, but also calls for upper floor residential uses. It also envisions a more walkable character, at least where appropriate, than the 1998 Neighborhood Commercial category.
<b>Community Commercial</b>	<b>Mixed Use</b> (Urban Corridor Community Character Category)	The Urban Corridor Community Character Category calls for increasing density and intensity, along with a wider mix of uses, along Walker's large-scale commercial corridors.
	<b>Mixed Use</b> (Retrofit Mixed Use Community Character Category)	The Retrofit Mixed Use Community Character Category calls for big box configurations and large shopping centers with oversized parking lots to be phased out in favor of development styles that make more efficient use of land.
<b>Office</b>	<b>Mixed Use</b> (Neighborhood Corridor Community Character Category)	The Neighborhood Corridor Community Character Category Calls for a mix of uses that complement nearby residential, such as office, institutions, multi-family residential, and low intensity retail.
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>Business</b> (Enterprise Community Character Category)	The Enterprise Community Character Category is designed to allow the operations of businesses, including offices, research, manufacturing, processing, warehousing, and outdoor storage.
	<b>Business</b> (Community Enterprise Community Character Category)	The Community Enterprise Community Character Category is designed to allow the operations of businesses, similar to the Enterprise category, but with the recognition that nearby residential uses make certain processes inadvisable and require additional screening and buffering.
<b>Public</b>	<b>Public/Semi-Public</b>	The Public/Semi-Public is similar to the 1998 category and designates municipal, educational, recreational, and institutional uses that are planned to remain in place.
<b>No 1998 Equivalent</b>	<b>Mixed Use</b> (River Enhancement Community Character Category)	The River Enhancement category acknowledges the unique challenges and opportunities of developing riverfront land, and allows for a mix of uses and designs to open up the river to the public and protect important ecologies and habitats.

# Significant Undeveloped Lots (SUL)

The City of Walker is a prime place for future development of all types. Because of this, a key component of the Future Land Use Plan is to identify the parcels that, when developed, will have a significant impact upon the community. Significant impacts can include density considerations, transportation and traffic considerations, open space considerations, recreation considerations, and more. Parcels that are projected to have substantial community impact when developed are referred to as a “Significant Undeveloped Lot,” or SUL. The following map indicates which parcels in the City of Walker are classified as SULs.

The following parameters have been used to determine the SUL’s as listed in this Section:

- Size of the lot (if the lot is large enough to accommodate significant development).
- Location of the lot (if the lot has access to public water/sewer infrastructure, if it is within close proximity to popular community nodes, and more).
- Significance of the lot (how much development of the lot will impact the surrounding area).

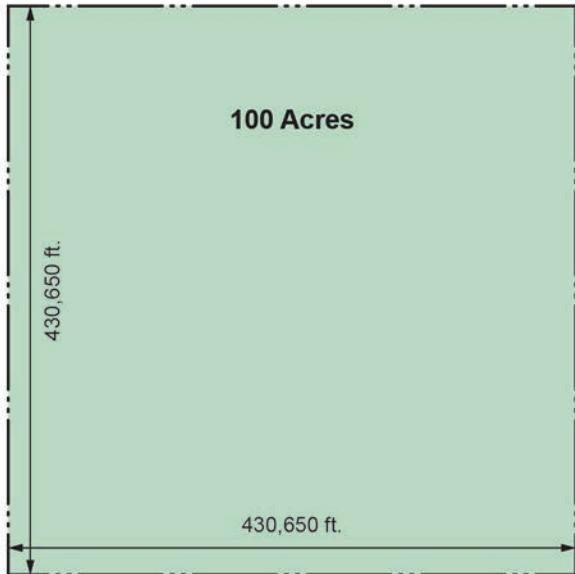
## **Recommendations for Applying Density and Unit Yield Based on the Future Land Use Map, Table 1.12, and Table 1.13**

The Future Land Use Map, plans, and projections in this 2020 Master Plan are intended to assist city officials, property owners and residents when making decisions related to zoning changes, site plan reviews, capital improvements, park locations and other “quality of life” variables.

Walker Planning Commissioners will be challenged to determine what is a “reasonable and appropriate” number of dwelling units for a particular property. The Future Land Use Map, Table 1.12, and Table 1.13 should be the foundations for decisions involving future densities and residential dwelling unit type(s).

**Two Density Types and Design Methods:** Density and the total number of residential dwelling units allowed on a site should be determined by applying the following two types of calculations, based on factors including:

- The proposed site design of a specific project
- The Future Land Use Map
- Table 1.12: Residential SUL Properties
- Table 1.13: SUL: Manufacturing, Warehousing, Research & Development, and other Businesses



## Type 1: Gross Density

**Type 1 - Gross Density:** Gross Density is calculated by dividing the maximum allowable housing units per acre, based on the Future Land Use Map, Table 1.12, and Table 1.13, by the total acreage of the project site.

Based on the example at left:

- 2 – 4 units / acre on Future Land Use Map.
- 4 units x 100 acres = 400 max. units.
- 400 units / 100 acres = 4 units / acre.

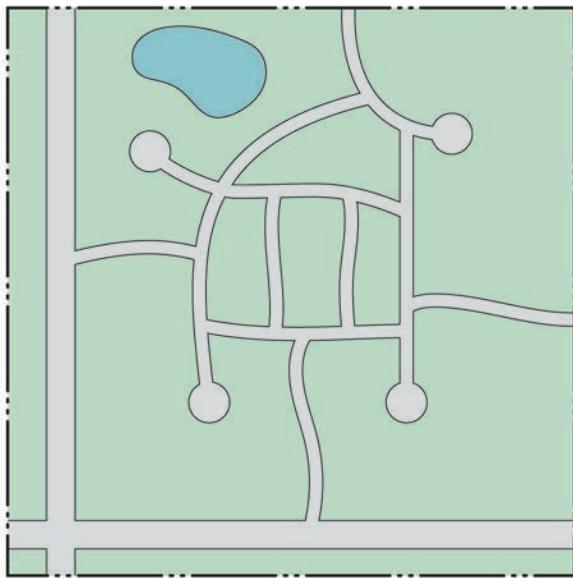
Gross Density **can only be achieved** using Cluster Development site design via a Planned Unit Development zoning district.

Cluster Development site design preserves a significant amount of land on a lot in exchange for flexibility relating to lot area, building setbacks, residential use types, etc. Land to be preserved should be quantified based on pre-development natural features, regulated areas, planned functional open spaces and future park areas.



Use with Type 1: Gross Density

**Cluster Development**



## Type 2: Practical Density



Use with Type 2: Practical Density  
**Conventional Development**

**Type 2 - Practical Density:** Practical Density is calculated by dividing the maximum allowable housing units per acre, based on the Future Land Use Map, Table 1.12, and Table 1.13, by 80% of the total acreage of the project site.

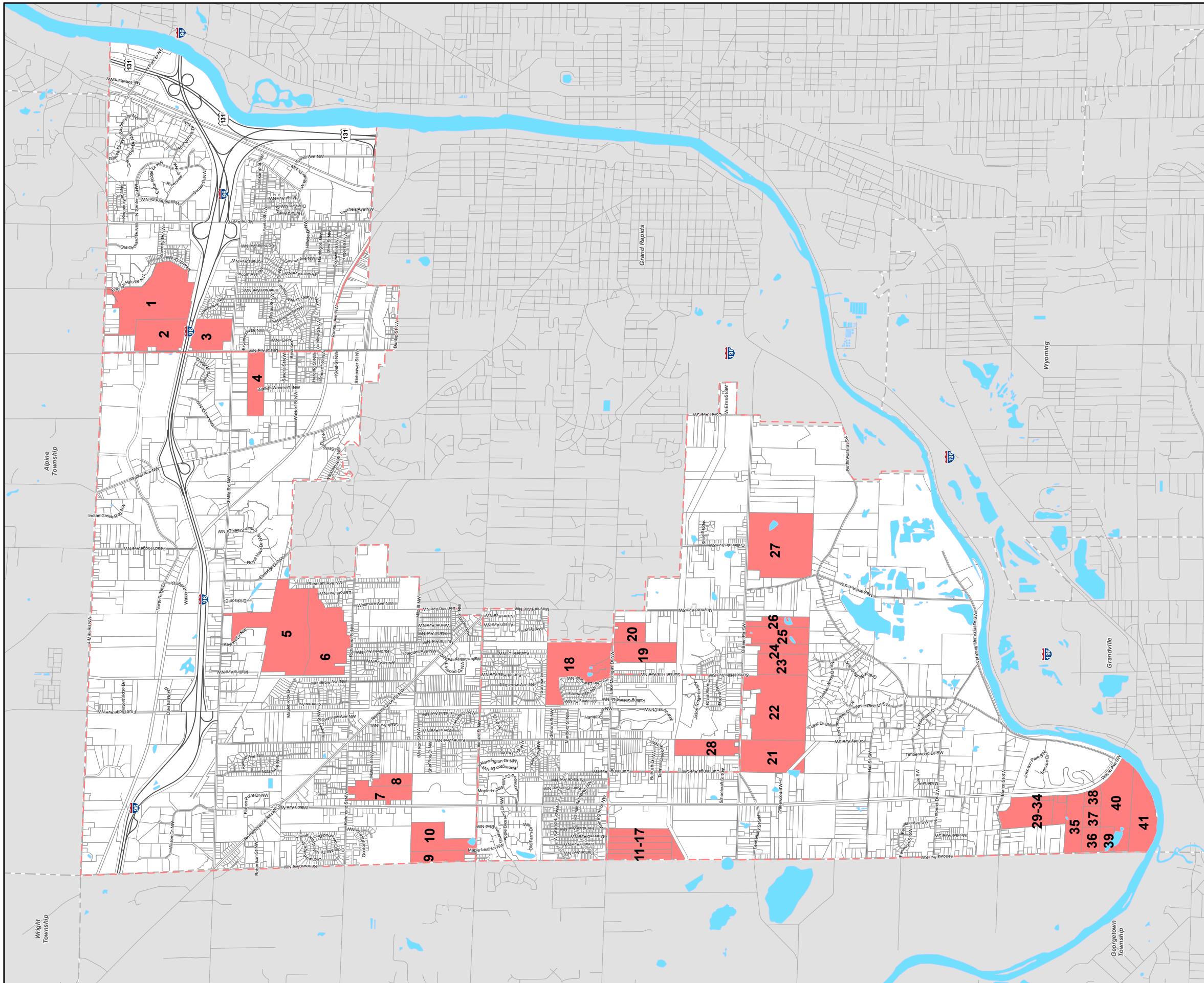
20% of the total acreage of site will be reserved for infrastructure, such as roads, easements and stormwater management.

Practical Density will apply to projects that are not proposed as Cluster Developments. Such projects will be called Conventional Developments.

Conventional Developments utilize the full developable area of the property for dwelling units and associated private yards. These types of residential developments should generally not be allowed in the Residential Cluster 0-1 Units Per Acre Future Land Use category.

Using the Practical Density graphic at left, the calculation is as follows:

- 2 – 4 units / acre on Future Land Use Map.
- 100 acres x 80% = 80 acres.
- 4 units / acre x 80 acres = 320 max. units.
- 320 units / 80 acres = 4 units / acre.



## Significant Undeveloped Lots

City of Walker, Michigan

September 28, 2020

SOURCES - Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Data Source: City of Walker 2019. McKenna 2020.

**MCKENNA**

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Table 1.12 below provides tabular detail to match the residential areas of the “Significant Undeveloped Lots Map” on page 45. Table 1.13 below provides tabular detail to match the non-residential areas of the “Significant Undeveloped Lots Map” on page 45.

Table 1.12 lists approximate maximum dwelling unit numbers for each residential SUL based on previously-described Type 1: Gross Density and Type 2: Practical Density definitions.

Walker Planning Commissioners should note the following:

- Gross Density must be combined with Cluster Development design via a Planned Unit Development in order to achieve these approximate dwelling unit yields.
- Practical Density will be the default maximum dwelling unit yield for non-Cluster Development projects.
- The Future Land Use Map is the primary reference for future land use categories and associated residential density ranges.
- Table 1.12 will assist in the process of assigning a reasonable number of dwelling units to a specific lot.
- Once a reasonable number of dwelling units has been assigned to a lot, the Community Character Plan / Map should be used to determine appropriate types of residential dwelling units, based largely on the type of proposed development design and layout. In other words, will the project be a Cluster Development or a Conventional Development?
- Table 1.12 provides usable data for future SUL residential dwelling unit totals and associated population increases.

**Table 1.12: Residential SUL Properties**

	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>Future Land Use Designation</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Parcel Number</b>	<b>Approx. Acres</b>	<b>Approx. Gross Density (Units)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Approx. Practical Density (Units)<sup>2</sup></b>
1	1200 -4 Mile Road NW <sup>1</sup>	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-02-100-059	139	556	444.8
2	3254 Bristol Ave. NW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-02-100-064	57	228	182.4
3	1465 -3 Mile Road NW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-02-351-002	43	172	137.6
4	2605 Bristol Ave. NW <sup>2</sup>	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-10-201-003	40.6	162.4	129.92
5	3200 -3 Mile Road NW	Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-08-400-034	135.5	1084	867.2
6	3487 Richmond Street NW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-08-400-035	105.5	422	337.6
7	4226 Mohler Street NW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-18-201-055	17	68	54.4
8	4310 Richmond Street NW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-18-201-061	37	148	118.4
9	4737 Leonard Street NW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-18-300-010	25	100	80
10	4699 Leonard Street NW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-18-300-017	52	208	166.4
11	4684 Lake Michigan Drive NW	Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-30-100-008	10	80	64
12	4664 Lake Michigan Drive NW	Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-30-100-009	16	128	102.4
13	4620 Lake Michigan Drive NW	Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-30-100-013	14.6	116.8	93.44

	Street Address	Future Land Use Designation	City	State	Parcel Number	Approx. Acres	Approx. Gross Density (Units) <sup>1</sup>	Approx. Practical Density (Units) <sup>2</sup>
14	4658 Lake Michigan Drive NW	Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-30-100-015	18.7	149.6	119.68
15	4780 Lake Michigan Drive NW	Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-30-100-023	10.7	85.6	68.48
16	4696 Lake Michigan Drive NW	Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-30-100-028	6.4	51.2	40.96
17	31 Wilson Avenue NW	Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-30-300-001	6.6	52.8	42.24
18	3483 Lake Michigan Drive NW <sup>1</sup>	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre) Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-20-401-004	99.6	398.4	318.72
19	3500 Lake Michigan Drive NW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-29-201-027	47.6	190.4	152.32
20	3284 Lake Michigan Drive NW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-29-226-020	23	92	73.6
21	4290 Obrien Street SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-31-226-001	75	75	60
22	3908 Obrien Street SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-32-100-026	136	136	108.8
23	3470 Obrien Street SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-32-200-001	40	40	32
24	3420 Obrien Street SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-32-200-002	20	20	16
25	3300 Obrien Street SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-32-200-004	39.4	39.4	31.52
26	3264 Obrien Street SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-32-200-010	22	22	17.6
27	2610 Obrien Street SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-33-200-014	154	154	123.2
28	4057 Obrien Street SW	Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-13-30-476-022	39	39	31.2
29	2227 Wilson Avenue SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-17-07-100-015	1.2	1.2	1
30	2287 Wilson Avenue SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-17-07-100-016	1.2	1.2	1
31	2301 Wilson Avenue SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-17-07-100-017	0.76	0.76	1
32	2327 Wilson Avenue SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-17-07-100-026	2.4	2.4	1.92
33	2313 Wilson Avenue SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-17-07-100-041	12.5	12.5	10
34	4480 Burton Street SW	Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre)	Walker	MI	41-17-07-100-053	52.6	52.6	42.08
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>1,501</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>4,072</b>

1. Gross Density must be combined with Cluster Development design via a Planned Unit Development in order to achieve these approximate dwelling unit yields.
2. Practical Density will be the default maximum dwelling unit yield for non-Cluster Development projects.

Similar to the preceding table, the table below lists the SULs planned for Business future land uses. The table ultimately indicates that the SULs contain approximately 190.8 acres planned for manufacturing, warehousing, research and development, and other business uses.

**Table 1.13: SUL: Manufacturing, Warehousing, Research & Development, and other Businesses**

	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>Future Land Use Designation</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Parcel Number</b>	<b>Approx. Acres</b>	<b>Approx. Developable Acres</b>
35	2496 Kenowa Avenue SW	Business	Walker	MI	41-17-07-300-001	37.9	30.32
36	2635 Wilson Avenue SW	Business	Walker	MI	41-17-07-300-006	11	8.8
37	2550 Kenowa Avenue SW	Business	Walker	MI	41-17-07-300-007	16.7	13.36
38	2552 Kenowa Avenue SW	Business	Walker	MI	41-17-07-300-008	14	11.2
39	2646 Kenowa Avenue SW	Business	Walker	MI	41-17-07-300-009	13.5	10.8
40	2648 Kenowa Avenue SW	Business	Walker	MI	41-17-07-300-010	80.4	64.32
41	2650 Kenowa Avenue SW	Business	Walker	MI	41-17-18-100-001	65	52
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>238.5</b>	<b>190.8</b>

# Community Character Plan



## Neighborhood Cluster Key

- AI – Alpine/Bristol Neighborhood
- S – South Neighborhood
- St – Standale Neighborhood
- NW – Northwest Neighborhood

Walker's Future Land Use plan is conveyed using a "Community Character Plan" which identifies how different areas of Walker should look and function, in addition to what the land uses should be. A Community Character Plan establishes land uses and dimensional requirements like a traditional future land use plan, but it also discusses the look and feel of streets, how buildings should look and function, how uses relate to each other, and overall intensity of development within the context of a specific area.

The purpose of a Community Character Plan is to recognize distinct land use areas like residential, industrial, and commercial, and identify all of the parts that add up to create character, such as use, design, and density. The Plan establishes several Community Character categories, each with the following components:

1. **Land Use:** Uses which are appropriate within the character area.
2. **Buildings:** How the building looks and functions and where it is located on the lot.
3. **Design:** How lots, streets, and frontages are designed, and how lots relate to each other in the public realm.

The Community Character Plan serves as a guide for how the community envisions itself in the next 10 to 15 years. It is based on an analysis of land uses issues in the city, existing land use, demographics, housing conditions, retail market potential, housing market potential, community infrastructure, transportation and circulation, public input from workshops and online engagement, and the goals and objectives set forth by the community.

The Community Character Plan constitutes the development policy of the City. The Plan should be updated on a regular basis to address the impact of new developments or other changing conditions. The elected and appointed officials of Walker are responsible for the interpretation of the intent of the Community Character Plan.

Each Community Character category is explained in greater detail on the following pages with the guidelines specifying the preferred land uses, buildings, and designs for each area, as well as pictures showing the existing and planned character of each area.

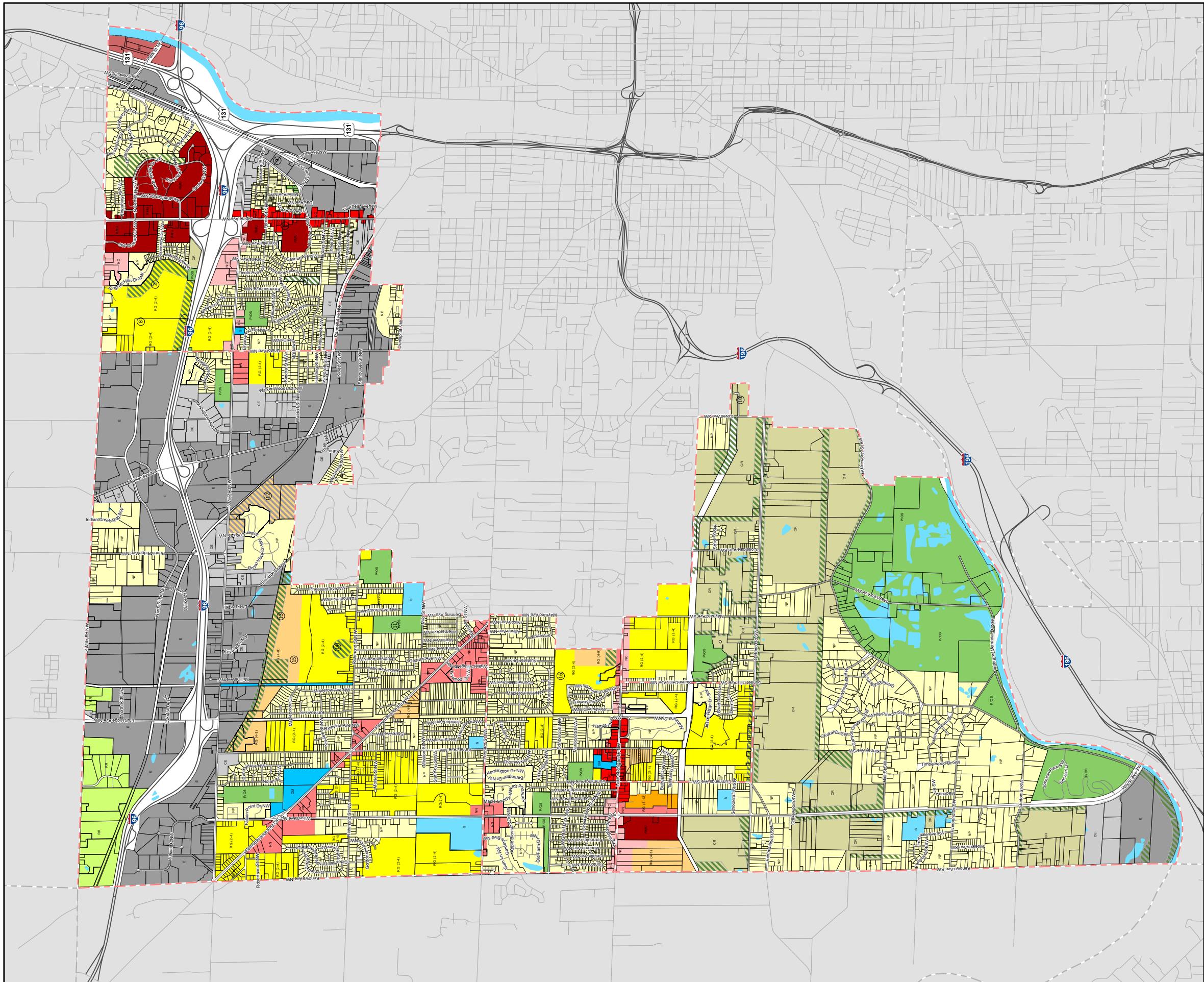
## Types of Multi-Family Buildings

The descriptions of the Community Character Categories on the following page frequently reference "Small", "Medium", or "Large" Apartment/Multi-Family Buildings. Those terms should be understood to have the following meaning:

**"Small" Apartment Buildings** include between 3 and 6 units, and should be no more than two stories in height.

**"Medium" Apartment Buildings** include 6 to 12 units, and should be up to three stories in height.

**"Large" Apartment Buildings** include more than 12 units, and can be up to the maximum height permissible in the Community Character District.



# Community Character

City of Walker, Michigan

October 16, 2020

## LEGEND

- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Neighborhood Preservation - NP
- Rural Residential (0-1 Units/Acre) - RRR
- Cluster Residential (0-1 Units/Acre) - CR
- Residential Growth (2-4 Units/Acre) - RG (2-4)
- Residential Growth (4-8 Units/Acre) - RG (4-8)
- Residential Growth (8-12 Units/Acre) - RG (8-12)
- Community Enterprise - CE
- Enterprise - E

- Business/Residential (8-12 Units/Acre) - BR (8-12)
- Neighborhood Node - NN
- Urban Corridor - UC
- Retrofit Mixed Use - RMU
- River Enhancement - RE
- Public/Semi Public, City Municipal, Utility - CM
- Schools - S
- Park/Open Space - P/OS
- Preserved Open Space Overlay
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains



0 500 1,000  
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. City of Walker 2020.  
McKenna 2020.

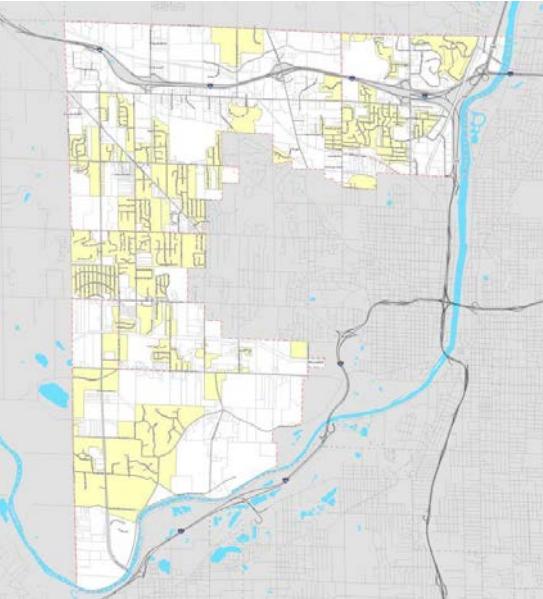


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## Community Character Map Footnotes:

1. **I-96 Buffer.** New developments adjacent to I-96 west of the Alpine interchange should include a buffer of 100 feet of wooded area (leaving existing trees in place to the extent possible) along the freeway, with an additional 100-200 feet of recreational space, additional wooded area, or other natural open space. The purpose of the buffer is to reduce traffic noise from residents and maintain the wooded appearance of the area to travelers on the expressway. New roads may be constructed through the buffer to achieve desired connections, but should be designed as "Natural Beauty Corridors" (see the Mobility Plan).
2. **English Hills.** Residents in the English Hills condominiums and the Ipswich neighborhood have become accustomed to a "wooded back yard" in the former golf course. In the likely event the golf course is developed, a buffer of trees and natural space must be maintained, in order to preserve this valued aspect of life in the neighborhood. Bike paths should be built through the buffer to allow non-motorized connectivity between the new and existing neighborhoods (see the Mobility Plan).
3. **North Center Drive Open Space.** The topography east of North Center Drive lends itself to the preservation of open space between the Retrofit Mixed Use area to the west and the Neighborhood Preservation area to the east.
4. **West River Drive Hillside.** The hill above West River Drive is difficult to develop and surrounded by Neighborhood Preservation areas. It is therefore prime land for preservation of open space.
5. **Meijer/Home Depot Access Management.** While the big box stores along Alpine south of I-96 are planned for Retrofit Mixed Use in the long term, in the short term access to the two stores should be improved to prevent traffic congestion and ensure business viability.
6. **Powers Avenue Park/Open Space.** Within the neighborhood west of Alpine and south of 3 Mile, there are undeveloped areas that could become neighborhood parks.
7. **Lankamp Street Park/Open Space.** At the west end of Lankamp Street, there is an undeveloped area that could become a neighborhood park.
8. **English Hills Park/Open Space.** New development on the English Hills site should include a central gathering space park.
9. **Deltaplex.** The parcel on which the Deltaplex is located could be developed as Retrofit Mixed-Use.
10. **Mines Golf Course.** A portion of the Mines Golf course is in the City of Walker. The rest is in the City of Grand Rapids. In the even the Golf Course closes and is redeveloped, this plan intends for Walker to be allow flexibility so that the development can be consistent across the two jurisdictions.
11. **Blandford Elementary School and Nature Center.** Although the Blandford Nature Center is mostly within the City of Grand Rapids, the "Back 40," as well as the Elementary School grounds, are within the Walker City Limits. Blandford is a private facility, but is designated as Public/Quasi-Public in this plan because it is planned to remain in place through the life of the plan.
12. **Residential/Community Enterprise Flex Area.** This area is surrounded by both multi-family residential uses and industrial/business uses. Therefore, future development could be either residential growth (appropriate density 4-8 units per acre) or business growth following the Community Enterprise character area.
13. **Richmond Farms Buffer.** If the Richmond Farms property is developed, along the northern edge, a wooded buffer should be preserved to protect the residential development from the industrial businesses to the north. The planned bike trail in this area could run through the wooded buffer.
14. **Richmond Farms Park.** If the Richmond Farms property is developed, a public park should be reserved within the neighborhood, preferably closer to Richmond Street, to preserve the wooded character of the street.
15. **Richmond Farms Density Restriction:** The portion of the Richmond Farms area that is designated for Residential Growth at 4-8 Units Per Acre should be restricted to no more than 4 units per acre, unless a new road is constructed connecting Richmond Farms to either 3 Mile Road or Kinney Avenue (preferably both). This restriction shall not obligate the City to construct the road, and the Planning Commission may determine that, in the event that the road connections are deemed too impractical to connect, the site should be developed with a density limit of 4 units per acre.
16. **Lincoln Lawns Road Network:** Roads within a development on the Lincoln Lawns site should reflect the principles of "complete streets", with pedestrians and cyclists prioritized. The road network should be designed to connect to surrounding neighborhoods, and to make two connections to Lake Michigan Drive, but within the neighborhood, streets should be designed to discourage cut-through traffic and minimize traffic increases on existing neighborhood streets.

# Neighborhood Preservation



## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- Keep current zoning,
- Or rezone as necessary to keep consistency with surroundings, using the following districts:
  - A Residential
  - SA Suburban Residential,
  - S Suburban Residential

## General Characteristics

This designation is characterized by existing residential areas that are fully or nearly built-out, and have an existing character that is highly valued by the residents. These neighborhoods are planned to remain as-is in terms of character and density, although enhancements such as park spaces and new sidewalks/bike paths are recommended where envisioned by this plan. Undeveloped land within Neighborhood Preservation areas should be developed with a similar character and density to the surrounding homes, or acquired by the City as new park space.

## 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.

## 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 townships. Culs-de-sac are highly 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. Garages should be located so that they do not dominate the front façade of the home.

### Existing Character



### Planned Character



## Design Guidelines

### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:**  
Consistent with surrounding character

**Recommended Lot Width:**  
Consistent with surrounding character

### Building Setbacks

**Minimum / Maximum / Side / Rear:**  
Consistent with surrounding character

### Building Height

**Minimum:**  
Consistent with surrounding character

**Maximum:**  
Consistent with surrounding character

### Street Frontages

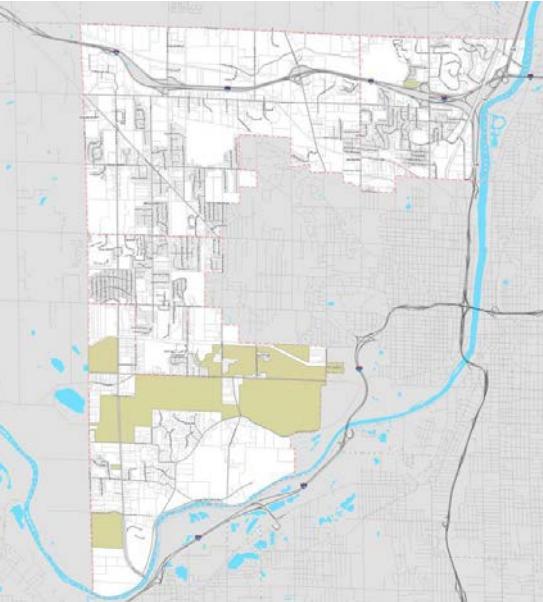
Front porch  
Lawn / greenscape  
Trees and landscaping

*(unless other street frontages are consistent with surrounding character)*

## Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Address frequently requested variances and barriers to investment in existing properties by amending zoning to reflect the built character of neighborhoods.
- Consider allowing existing setbacks and building heights to always be considered conforming.
- Require new construction to meet the massing and design of existing homes in the neighborhood.

# Residential Cluster 0-1 Units Per Acre



AI S

## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- RPUD-1 Low Density Residential PUD
- Open Space Preservation Option, based on the standards of:
  - A Residential
  - A-2 Residential
  - SA Suburban Single Family
  - S Suburban Residential

## General Characteristics

This designation intends for the development of open space preservation, or “cluster” single family residential developments, with homes on lots ranging from 7,000 to 25,000 square feet, surrounded by preserved natural features and open space, so that the gross density is one unit per acre, or less, and the practical density is 2-6 units per acre. The general areas intended for preservation are described in the Preserved Natural Features Overlay, and included in the overlay on the Community Character Map.

Within the cluster of housing, homes should be constructed of quality materials, and designed to sit comfortably on smaller lots. Rear yard (or alley facing) garages will preserve a quality street frontage, as will large front porches.

## Appropriate Land Uses

Single family homes and low density non-single family homes and preserved open spaces will be the primary uses. Small areas within the preserved open space for active and passive recreation are appropriate.

In larger clusters, a “neighborhood center” with active recreational uses (such as a playground or swimming pool), a “clubhouse” or other gathering place, and very small convenience retail should be built. These “neighborhood centers”, including the small retail, may be operated by a condominium or homeowners association for the benefit of the residents.

Schools and religious institutions may be appropriate along major thoroughfares.

## Streets and Transportation

Streets should follow a connected pattern that respects topography and natural features, and therefore may not constitute a true “grid.” Connections should be made to existing thoroughfares approximately once every 600 feet of frontage along the thoroughfare. Stub streets to adjacent neighborhoods or clusters should be built where appropriate, but need not be built through large areas of preservation. Streets should have street trees, but sidewalks and lighting may not be necessary in all cases.

Bike paths should connect the clusters to each other and to the larger non-motorized pathway system. These should be built through large preservation areas, where streets for automobile traffic would be inappropriate.

## 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 (by reducing the size of the lots to create larger areas of preservation).

Buildings should be designed with quality materials and consistent with architectural styles common in Walker and the greater Grand Rapids area. Alternative architectural styles may be appropriate in some neighborhoods, provided that the unique design enhances the general character of the area. Homes 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



### Design Guidelines

#### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:** 7,000 to 25,000 square feet, in order to accommodate 2-6 units per net acre while retaining natural open space and a gross density of one unit per acre, or less.

**Recommended Lot Width:** 50-100 feet

#### Building Setbacks

**Recommended Front Setbacks:** 15-35 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:** 5-10 feet, with space for a driveway on one side.

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:** 30-50 feet

#### Building Height

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 2 stories

#### Street Frontages

Front porch

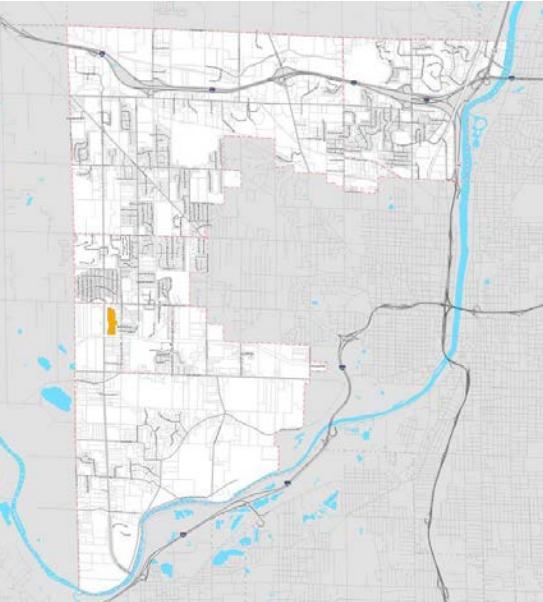
Lawn / greenscape

Trees and landscaping

### Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Allow for creativity in lot size and design to allow for retained open space where envisioned by this plan.
- Provide for clustered single family homes, with a gross density is one unit per acre, or less, and a practical density of 2-6 units per acre.
- Require connecting bike trails between clusters.
- Require road connections to thoroughfares every 600 feet.
- Allow recreation, community, and very small-scale commercial uses to create neighborhoods centers within the clusters.

# Residential Growth 8-12 Units Per Acre



S

## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- ARM Multiple Family
- ARM Multiple Family-1
- RPUD-2 High Density Residential PUD

## General Characteristics

This designation is characterized by high density residential neighborhoods with densities of 8-12 units per gross acre of land, 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.

Single family houses, “missing middle” housing types such as townhouses, duplexes, quadplexes, and multi-family buildings are all appropriate. 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 their boundaries. Businesses and retail should be within walking distance, along major corridors, or within “Neighborhood Nodes” designed to serve 1-3 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. Some streets may be “Neighborhood Connectors” (see Mobility Plan) and may be appropriate for bike lanes.

## Building and Site Design

Sites should be designed to give homes a front and back yard (or, in the case of multi-family 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 quality materials and consistent with architectural styles common in Walker and the greater Grand Rapids 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



### Design Guidelines

#### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:**  
As needed to design a mixed-density neighborhood that respects natural features and includes approximately 8 to 12 housing units per acre.

**Recommended Lot Width:**  
50-100 feet

#### Building Setbacks

**Recommended Front Setbacks:**  
15-35 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:**  
5-10 feet, with space for a driveway on one side.

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:**  
30-50 feet

#### Building Height

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 6+ stories, though taller buildings should be built away from each other, and views from nearby neighborhoods should be respected, especially in areas with nearby rural character.

#### Street Frontages

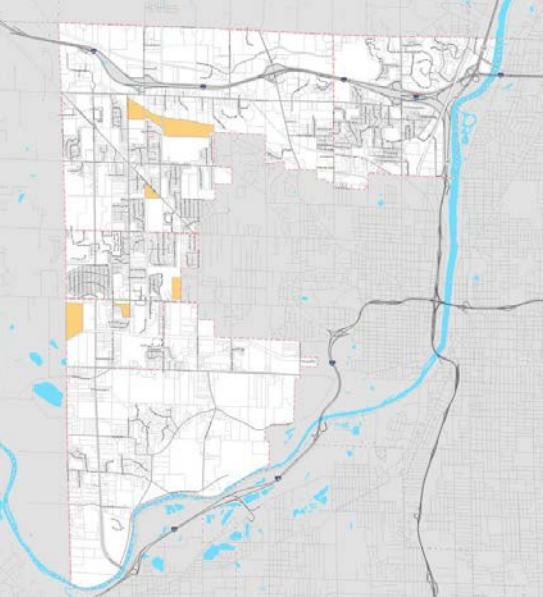
Front porch  
Lawn / greenscape  
Trees and landscaping  
Residential Lobby

### Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Work closely with developers to ensure that the neighborhood will provide high quality of life, and be appropriately supported by infrastructure.

# Residential Growth

## 4-8 Units Per Acre



### Appropriate Zoning Districts

- ARM Multiple Family
- ARM Multiple Family-1
- RPUD-2 High Density Residential PUD
- A-2 Duplex District, Two-Family Residential

### General Characteristics

This designation is characterized by residential housing units in neighborhoods with densities of 4-8 units per gross acre of land. 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.

Single family houses, as well as housing types such as townhouses, duplexes, quadplexes, and small multi-family buildings are encouraged. Large apartment buildings are also appropriate, which differentiates this Character Area from less dense character areas. 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. Some streets may be "Neighborhood Connectors" (see Mobility Plan) and may be appropriate for bike lanes.

### 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.

Buildings should be designed with quality materials and consistent with architectural styles common in Walker and the greater Grand Rapids 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



### Design Guidelines

#### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:**  
5,000-10,000 square feet, in order to accommodate 4-8 units per gross acre.

**Recommended Lot Width:**  
50-70 feet

#### Building Setbacks

**Recommended Front Setbacks:**  
15-25 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:**  
5-10 feet, with space for a driveway on one side.

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:**  
30-40 feet

#### Building Height

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 5 stories

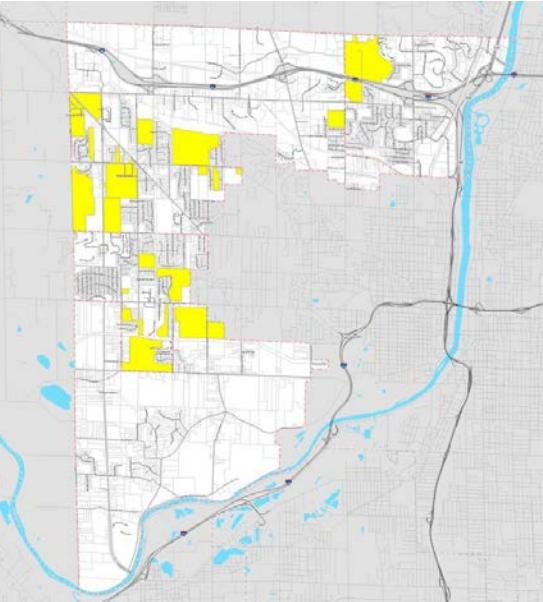
#### Street Frontages

Front porch  
Lawn / greenscape  
Trees and landscaping

### Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Work closely with developers to ensure that the neighborhood will provide high quality of life, and be appropriately supported by infrastructure.
- Allow for creativity in lot size and design to allow for retained open space where envisioned by this plan.
- Allow a variety of housing types, provided that the overall density is between 4 and 8 units per gross acre.
- Require a connected grid of internal streets, multiple connections to thoroughfares, and stub streets along interior lot lines.
- Require connections to existing stub streets, and other connections to existing neighborhoods where possible.
- Require a central gathering place or park in new neighborhoods.
- Require sidewalks in new neighborhoods.
- Require streets to be designed in accordance with the Corridor Design Plan in this document.

# Residential Growth 2-4 Units Per Acre



## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- A Residential
- A-2 Residential
- SA Suburban Single Family
- S Suburban Residential
- RPUD-1 Low Density Residential PUD
- Choose district in order to achieve a density of 2-4 units per gross acre

## General Characteristics

This designation is characterized by residential housing units in neighborhoods with densities of 2-4 units per gross acre of land. 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.

Single family houses, as well as “missing middle” housing types such as townhouses, duplexes, quadplexes, and small multi-family buildings are encouraged. 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.

Larger multi-family buildings are also appropriate, when included within cluster developments that consolidate units within larger buildings in order to preserve natural and recreational space elsewhere on the site.

## 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. Some streets may be “Neighborhood Connectors” (see Mobility Plan) and may be appropriate for bike lanes.

## 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.

Buildings should be designed with quality materials and consistent with architectural styles common in Walker and the greater Grand Rapids 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****Design Guidelines****Lot Dimensions**

**Recommended Lot Areas:** 5,000-15,000 square feet, in order to accommodate 2-4 units per gross acre while preserving natural open space

**Recommended Lot Width:** 50-100 feet

**Building Setbacks**

**Recommended Front Setbacks:** 15-35 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:** 5-10 feet, with space for a driveway on one side.

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:** 30-50 feet

**Building Height**

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 3 stories

**Street Frontages**

Front porch

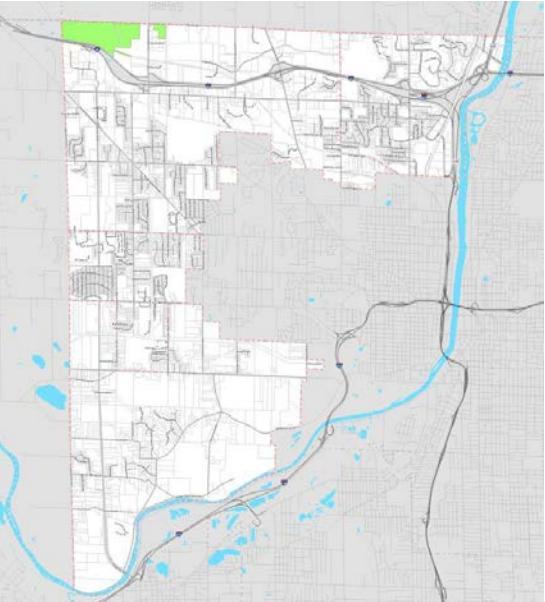
Lawn / greenscape

Trees and landscaping

**Recommended Zoning Amendments**

- Allow for creativity in lot size and design to allow for retained open space where envisioned by this plan.
- Allow a variety of housing types, provided that the overall density is between 2 and 4 units per gross acre.
- Require a connected grid of internal streets, multiple connections to thoroughfares, and stub streets along interior lot lines.
- Require connections to existing stub streets, and other connections to existing neighborhoods where possible.
- Require a central gathering place or park in new neighborhoods.
- Require sidewalks in new neighborhoods.
- Require streets to be designed in accordance with the Corridor Design Plan in this document.

# Rural Residential 0-1 Units Per Acre



NW

## General Characteristics

This designation intends to preserve rural character by prohibiting commercial and industrial development, and restricting housing development to less than one unit per acre.

## Appropriate Land Uses

Single family homes and farmland, as well as preserved open space, will be the primary uses.

## Streets and Transportation

New streets should not be necessary, nor should public transportation. Existing thoroughfares should generally be Natural Beauty Corridors. Bike paths may be appropriate in some circumstances.

## Building and Site Design

Sites should be designed to preserve natural features by locating homes relatively close to the road (though setbacks appropriate to a rural character are permissible and appropriate).

## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- AA Agricultural
- No PUDs should be approved within this Character District

### Existing Character



### Planned Character



### Design Guidelines

#### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:**  
1 acre or more.

**Recommended Lot Width:**  
100 feet or more

#### Building Setbacks

**Recommended Front Setbacks:**  
35-50 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:**  
20 feet or more

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:**  
As large as necessary to preserve natural features.

#### Building Height

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 2 stories

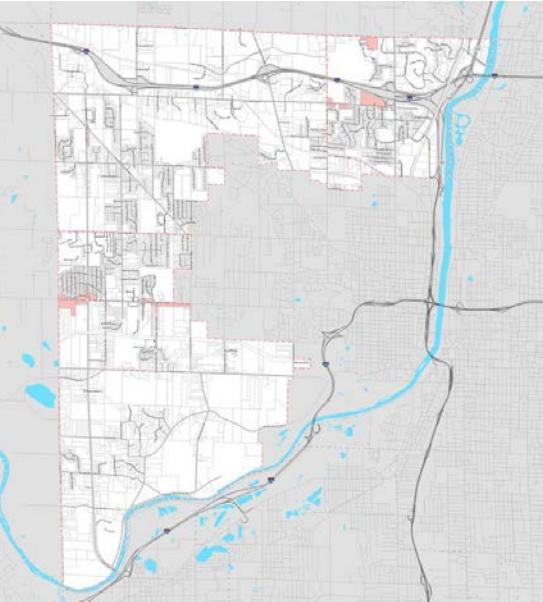
#### Street Frontages

Front porch  
Lawn / greenscape  
Trees and landscaping

### Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Consider increasing the minimum lot size to 1 or more acres, or restricting the number of splits for lots under 10 acres, in order to preserve farmland and rural character.

# Neighborhood Corridor



## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- ORP Office Research and Parking
- ARM Multiple Family
- ARM Multiple Family-1
- MPUD Mixed Use PUD
- P-SP Public/Semi-Public
- RPUD-2 High Density Residential PUD
- Consider creating new "Suburban Mixed Use" Zoning District

## General Characteristics

The Neighborhood Corridor area is a low intensity mixed use character districts intended for Walker's thoroughfares that run through predominantly residential areas. The Neighborhood Corridor districts should provide amenities to the surrounding residential areas in a human scale and walkable, though not necessarily urban, format.

## Appropriate Land Uses

Low-intensity businesses such as personal services, small offices (including medical offices), and convenience stores, as well as religious institutions, schools, and similar uses. Residential uses, including small multi-family and "missing middle" style housing units, are also appropriate.

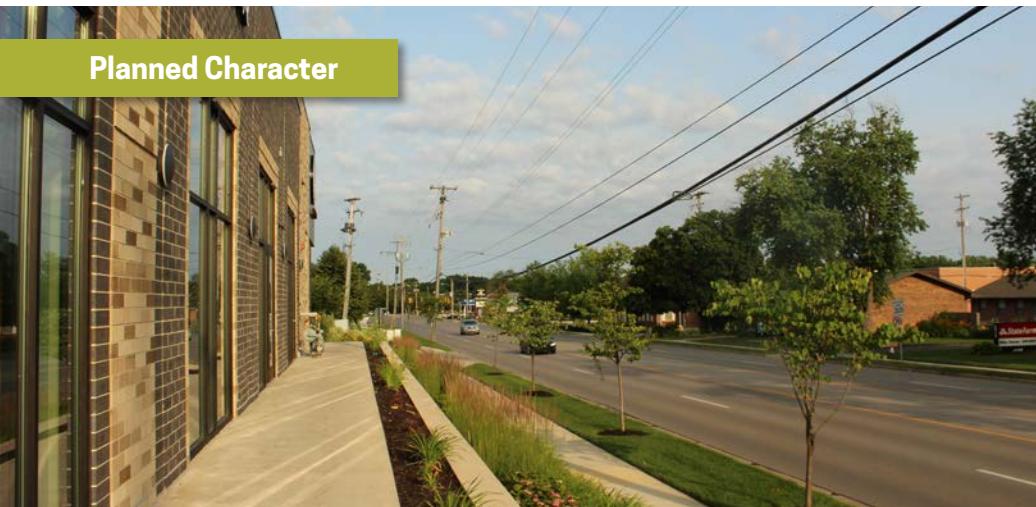
## Streets and Transportation

All streets lined with Neighborhood Corridor uses should have sidewalks or bike paths on both sides. Streets should be Neighborhood Connectors (see Mobility Plan).

## Building and Site Design

Buildings should be built with high-quality materials and should be architecturally compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. Buildings with a connection to the street, including designs with attractive front facades, entrances, and porches are all highly encouraged. Open spaces should be functional and allow for recreational enjoyment and the preservation of natural features. Architectural variation is highly encouraged to create a character on long and connected facades.

Parking areas may be located in the front, side, or rear yards for buildings, but, where practical, buildings should front the street and provide parking to the rear. 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****Design Guidelines****Lot Dimensions**

**Recommended Lot Areas:** 20,000 to 60,000 square feet, though larger or smaller lots may be appropriate in some areas

**Recommended Lot Width:** 100-200 feet

**Building Setbacks**

**Recommended Front Setbacks:** 15-35 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:** 10-20 feet, though larger setbacks to allow driveways to rear parking could also be appropriate

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:** As needed for parking and loading

**Building Height**

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 4 stories, though lower heights may be necessary near residential, and taller buildings may be appropriate when supported by appropriate infrastructure and not out of scale with the surrounding character

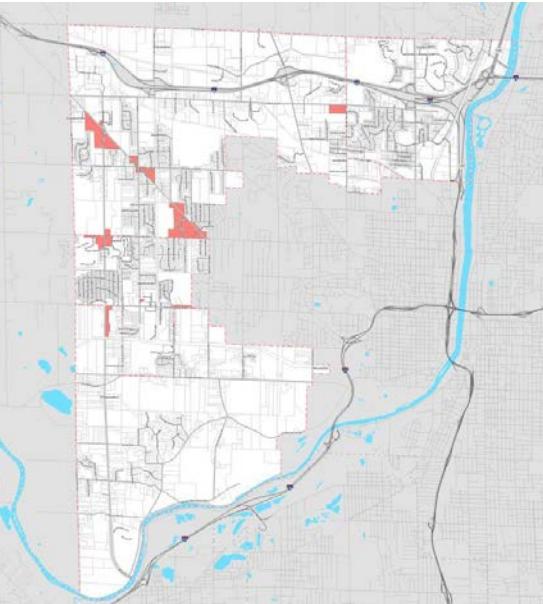
**Street Frontages**

Welcoming office/institutional entrances  
Retail storefronts  
Outdoor patio / seating areas  
Lawn / greenscape

**Recommended Zoning Amendments**

- Reduce minimum front setback requirements.
- Consider a maximum front setback requirement.
- Increase maximum building height.
- Reduce minimum parking requirements.
- Consider a new Suburban Mixed Use zoning district, permitting community, religious, educational, institutional, office, and research uses, as well as multi-family housing.

# Neighborhood Node



St NW

## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- ORP Office Research and Parking
- C-1 Local Commercial
- P-SP Public/Semi-Public
- MPUD Mixed Use PUD

## General Characteristics

The Neighborhood Node area is a low intensity mixed use or commercial district intended to serve 1-3 neighborhoods and provide services, small-scale retail, and amenities. Neighborhood Node districts 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, small cafes or delis, personal services, small offices (including medical offices) should populate ground floors of buildings. Residential uses or office uses should be on upper floors.

## Streets and Transportation

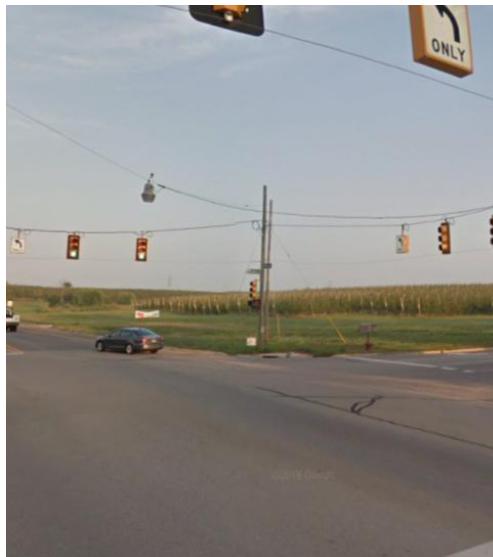
All streets lined with Neighborhood Node uses should have sidewalks and bike paths on both sides. Streets should be Neighborhood Connectors (see Corridor Design Plan). On-street parking is encouraged where possible. Bike racks, street trees, benches, trash cans, and other streetscaping should also be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

### Existing Character



### Planned Character



### Design Guidelines

#### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:** 5,000 to 20,000 square feet, though larger lots featuring multiple buildings with shared parking would also be acceptable.

**Recommended Lot Width:** 40-60 feet, except as described above.

#### Building Setbacks

**Recommended Front Setbacks:** 0-10 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:** 0-15 feet, though larger setbacks to allow driveways to rear parking could also be appropriate.

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:** As needed for parking and loading

#### Building Height

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 4 stories, though lower heights may be necessary near residential.

#### Street Frontages

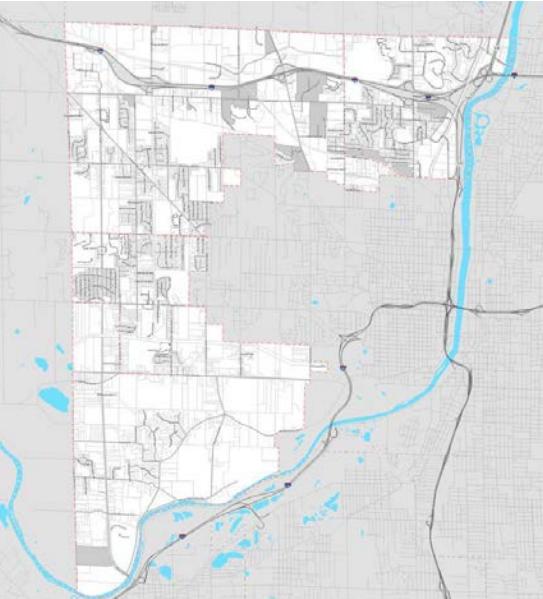
Welcoming office / institutional entrances  
Retail storefronts

Outdoor patio / seating areas

### Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Reduce minimum front setback requirements.
- Consider a maximum front setback requirement.
- Eliminate required side setbacks, or only require side setbacks if a building has windows.
- Increase maximum building height to 3 or 4 stories.
- Reduce minimum parking requirements – consider automatically waiving parking requirements if shared, public, or on-street parking can be made available.
- Allow upper-floor residential uses in the C-1 and ORP districts.

# Community Enterprise



AI S NW

## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- ML Light Industry
- MP Industrial Park
- ORP Office, Research, and Parking
- C-2 Community Commercial
- IPUD Industrial PUD

### General Characteristics

Community Enterprise 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. Parking areas and loading zones are properly buffered and landscaped.

### Streets and Transportation

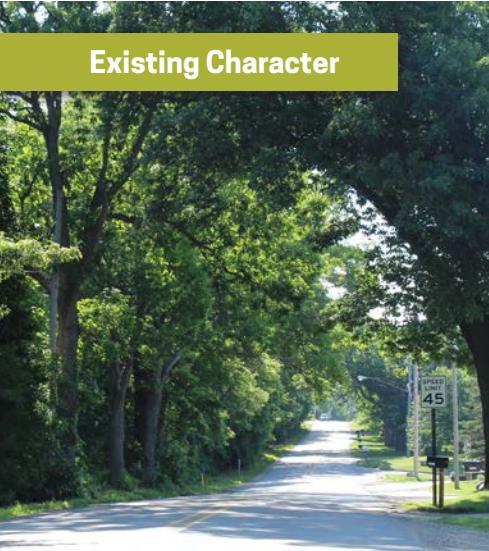
Streets should be designed in a pattern that allows access from residential areas, but does not encourage cut-through traffic by employees and trucks. Within the Community Enterprise district, the streets should be designed to be sufficient for business-traffic. Non-motorized and transit connections 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



## Design Guidelines

### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:**  
50,000 to 100,000 square feet, though larger or smaller lots may be appropriate in some areas

**Recommended Lot Width:**  
100-300 feet, though larger may be necessary for business operations

### Building Setbacks

**Recommended Front Setbacks:**  
As needed for business operations

**Recommended Side Setbacks:**  
As needed for business operations

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:**  
As needed for business operations, without negatively impacting residential

### Building Height

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 4 stories, though lower heights may be necessary near residential, and taller buildings (or structures) may be appropriate when not out of scale with the surrounding character

### Street Frontages

Welcoming business entrances

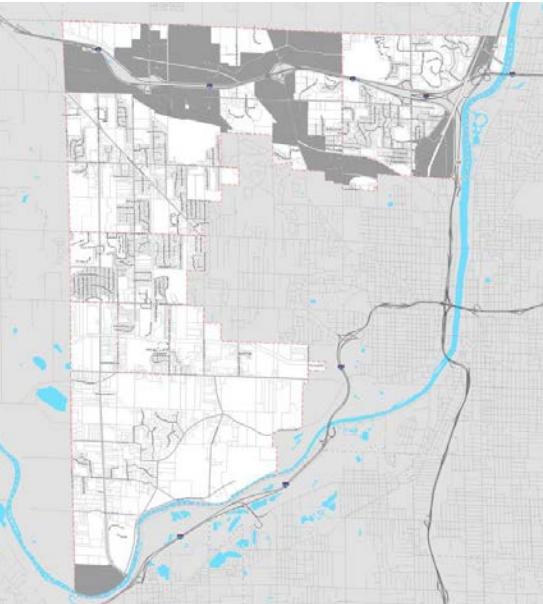
Operational space

Parking

## Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Reduce setback requirements from roads and other industrial properties, to allow for increased operational flexibility.
- Increase setbacks from residential districts, to protect residential.
- Increase buffer requirements between businesses and residential uses, as well as when residential uses are located across the street or across a railroad right-of-way from industrial or commercial uses.

# Enterprise



AI S NW

## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- ML Light Industry
- MP Industrial Park
- MH Heavy Industry
- ORP Office, Research, and Parking
- IPUD Industrial PUD

## General Characteristics

This designation provides an exclusive area for medium to high intensity Industrial uses, as well as large corporate campuses, which are vital to the City'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 Enterprise districts. The Enterprise District also includes the Deltaplex, and is appropriate for regional entertainment venues and similar attractions.

## 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. Connecting 3 Mile Road to West River Drive is an example of such an improvement (see Mobility Plan).

## Building and Site Design

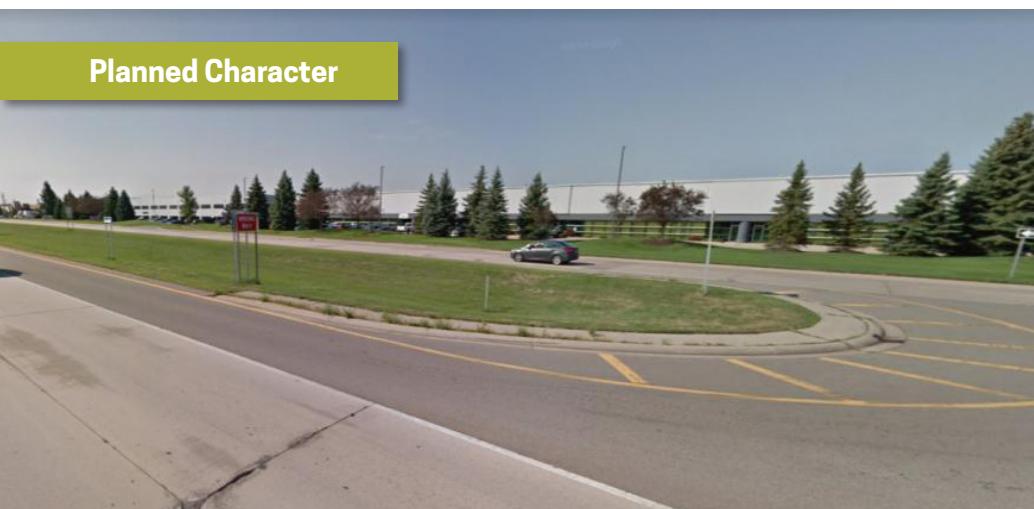
Buildings in this district should be designed to be long-lasting and to support efficient industrial and/or business practices. High-quality appearance is encouraged, however, sites should be designed to minimize off-site impacts and reduce pollution and site contamination to the extent possible.

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

### Existing Character



### Planned Character



## Design Guidelines

### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:**  
As needed for business operations

**Recommended Lot Width:**  
As needed for business operations

### Building Setbacks

**Recommended Front Setbacks:**  
As needed for business operations

**Recommended Side Setbacks:**  
As needed for business operations

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:**  
As needed for business operations,  
without negatively impacting residential

### Building Height

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 4 stories, though taller  
buildings (or structures) may be  
appropriate when not out of scale with  
the surrounding character

### Street Frontages

Welcoming business entrances

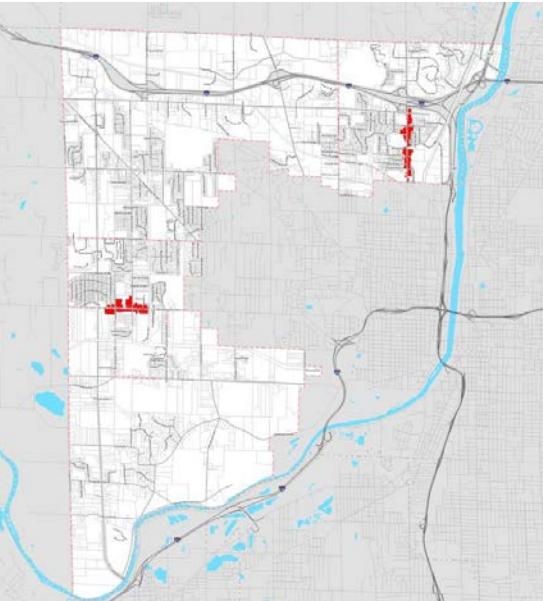
Operational space

Parking

## Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Reduce setback requirements  
from roads and other industrial  
properties, to allow for increased  
operational flexibility.
- Increase building heights, to allow  
for increased operational flexibility.
- Ensure that research and  
development operations, as well as  
offices, are permitted within the ML,  
MP, and MH districts, to allow for  
maximum business flexibility.

# Urban Corridor



AI St

## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- MPUD Mixed Use PUD
- New Urban Mixed Use Zoning District

### General Characteristics

Urban Corridors should be mixed-use, walkable boulevards designed for active and vibrant business and social interactions. They should be lined with buildings at least two stories tall, and have wide, inviting sidewalks. All parking should be located in the rear. Upper floors of buildings could contain offices, residential space, hotel space, or other, creative uses.

### Appropriate Land Uses

Mixed uses are envisioned. Commercial businesses intended for this category include service, professional, small-scale cafes and delis, and retail businesses that encourage foot traffic and do not require large parking lots, although grocery stores and other larger retail uses could be appropriate with proper accommodations for their parking needs. Other land use types such as institutional or recreational uses, as well as small business “maker spaces” are also encouraged. Some residential uses, such as upper floor apartments, should also be located along the corridor.

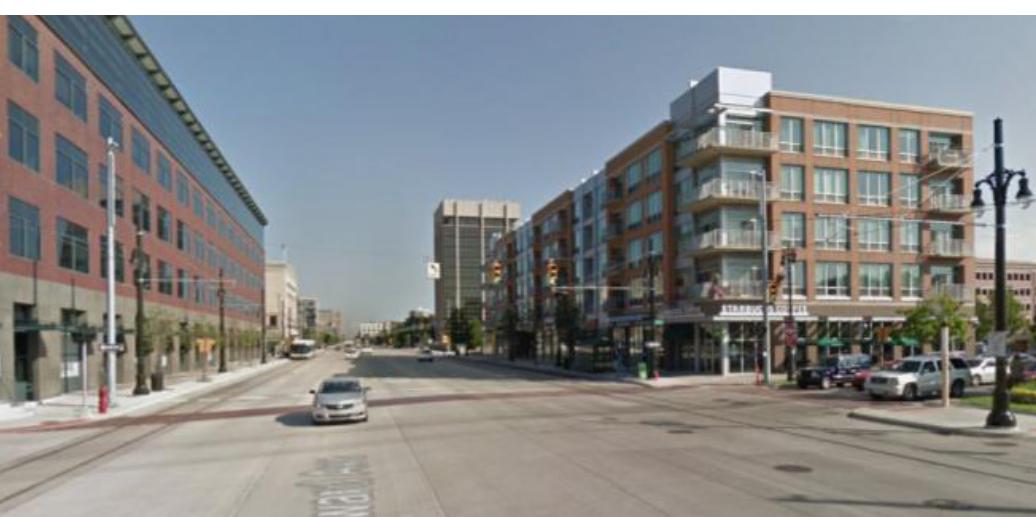
### Streets and Transportation

Urban Boulevard street types are the most appropriate for this character district (see Mobility Plan).

### Building and Site Design

Buildings should contain two or more stories, be located right on the sidewalk, or with a small landscaped setback (never parking) and have off-street parking located to the rear. No front and side yard setbacks are encouraged. First floor storefronts should be transparent and welcoming with minimal window signage. Signage should be attractive, with projecting signs encouraged.

On street parking should be encouraged where street right-of-way and through traffic needs permit, and off street parking should be located at the rear of buildings. Shared parking should be encouraged, including potentially publicly owned or managed parking. Wayfinding signage should clearly identify parking.

**Existing Character****Planned Character****Design Guidelines****Lot Dimensions**

**Recommended Lot Areas:**  
Utilize existing lots, except where they are too deep or too shallow to accommodate the design recommendations of the Urban Corridor character area.

**Recommended Lot Width:**  
Utilize existing lots, except where they are too deep or too shallow to accommodate the design recommendations of the Urban Corridor character area.

**Building Setbacks**

**Recommended Front Setbacks:**  
5-10 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:**  
0 feet, except for space reserved for landscaped areas

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:**  
As needed for parking

**Building Height**

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 6+ stories, except where excessive height would negatively impact nearby residential.

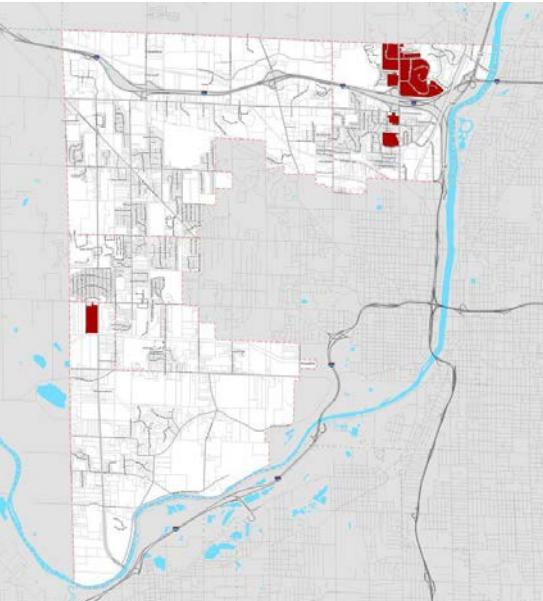
**Street Frontages**

Storefronts

**Recommended Zoning Amendments**

- Create a zoning system where property owners have the option to redevelop in the fashion recommended by the Urban Corridor character area, without creating non-conformities. Options include:
  - Rezoning some or all of the Urban Corridor character area to MPUD.
  - Creating a new Urban Mixed Use Zoning District and rezoning some or all of the Urban Corridor to the new district.
- Decrease setbacks and parking requirements, and increase maximum building heights.
- Allow residential uses on upper floors.
- Require transparent first floors, with retail-style storefronts, but do not necessarily require ground floor uses to be retail – office or service uses can be appropriate as well.

# Retrofit Mixed Use



AI S

## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- MPUD Mixed Use PUD
- New Retrofit Mixed Use Overlay
- CPUD Commercial Planned Unit Development

### General Characteristics

This character district is designed for areas which, slowly over time, will transition from large suburban shopping centers and apartment complexes 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.

### 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. There should be a hierarchy of streets, with some streets taking on the Neighborhood Connector street type, while others take on the Residential Street street type (see Mobility Plan). Regional Boulevards (such as Alpine Avenue) can run through Retrofit Mixed Use areas, but should be treated as edges, not centers, with buildings facing away from them, and pedestrian connections built intentionally to avoid conflicts with through traffic.

### Building and Site Design

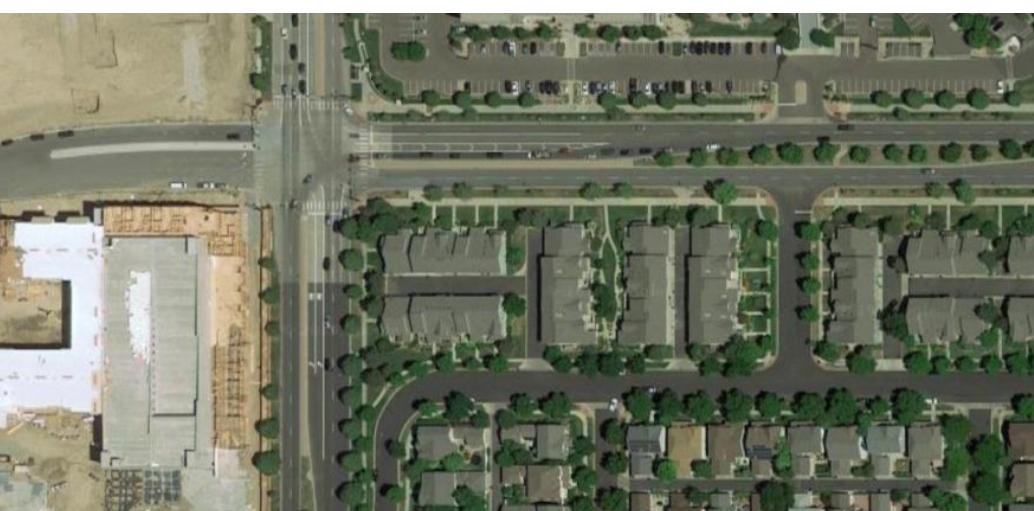
Buildings should have little to no front setback, although small landscaped areas in front of residential buildings are encouraged. Redeveloped sites should be built out as full neighborhoods, with residential units, employment opportunities, retail, amenities, and park space.

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



## Design Guidelines

### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:**  
Create lots of appropriate sizes to fit the new street grid.

**Recommended Lot Width:**  
Create lots of appropriate sizes to fit the new street grid.

### Building Setbacks

**Recommended Front Setbacks:**  
0-15 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:**  
0 feet, except for driveways to parking

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:**  
As needed for parking

### Building Height

**Minimum:** 1 story  
**Maximum:** 6+ stories

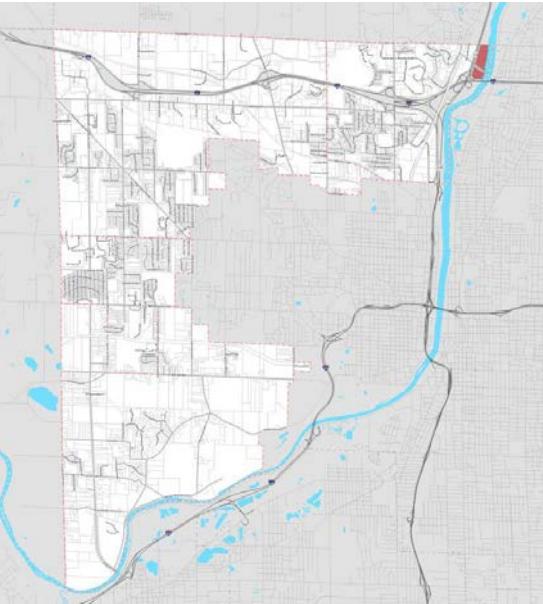
### Street Frontages

Storefronts  
Residential entranceways  
Residential or hotel lobbies

## Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Create a zoning system where property owners have the option to redevelop in the fashion recommended by the Urban Retrofit character area and the Alpine Redevelopment Plan, without creating non-conformities. Options include:
  - Rezoning some or all of the Urban Corridor character to area to MPUD.
  - Creating a new Retrofit Mixed Use Overlay and including some or all of the Retrofit Mixed Use character area in the new Overlay.
- Decrease setbacks and parking requirements, and increase maximum building heights.
- Allow residential uses on upper floors.
- Require transparent first floors, with retail-style storefronts, but do not necessarily require ground floor uses to be retail – office or service uses can be appropriate as well.

# River Enhancement



AI

## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- C-1 Commercial
- ARM Multi-Family
- ARM-1 Multi-Family
- MPUD Mixed Use PUD
- RPUD Residential PUD
- CPUD Commercial PUD
- New Riverfront Mixed Use Zoning District
- New Riverfront Greenway Overlay

## General Characteristics

The River Enhancement area is intended to provide opportunities for high quality recreation and sustainable riverfront mixed-use development in the area between US-131 and the Grand River, north of I-96, near Comstock Park. Development should be designed to take advantage of the existing White Pine Trail, as well as the river itself, creating a connective tissue of entertainment, retail, and residential uses leading up to the Grand Rapids Rowing Association Boathouse and Fifth Third Ballpark (both of which are in Plainfield Township).

## Appropriate Land Uses

The riverfront and floodplain/wetland areas should remain undeveloped, except for pathways, trails, kayak launches, and other low-impact recreational amenities allowing for public experience of the water. Uplands should be developed with mixed-use buildings including retail, entertainment, residential, and potentially office uses or hotels.

Existing businesses should be encouraged to remain and operate until redevelopment occurs.

## Streets and Transportation

All streets within the River Enhancement area should have sidewalks on both sides, unless they are lined with bike paths. In the short term, streets should be Business Connectors, but as redevelopment occurs, they should switch to Neighborhood Connectors. North Park Street may eventually become an Urban Boulevard. On-street parking is encouraged where possible. Bike racks, street trees, benches, trash cans, and other streetscaping should also be included.

The access drive leading to the Boathouse should be converted into a public street and eventually connected to Fifth Third Ballpark (if possible without impacting the wetlands north of the Boathouse). At least one additional connection should be built over US-131 within the Walker City Limits – a full service street if possible, or a bike/pedestrian connection if not. Another connection in Plainfield Township is also encouraged.

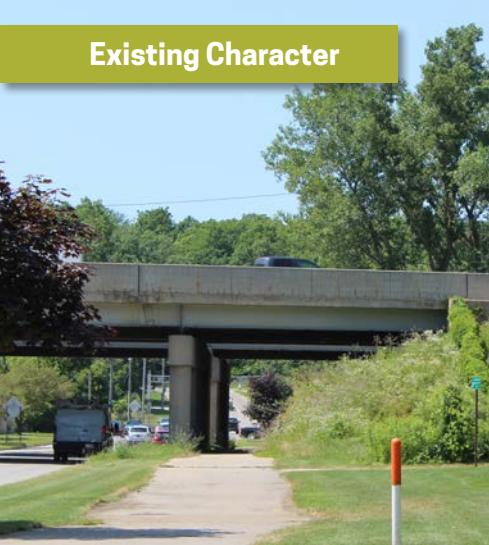
## Building and Site Design

Buildings should be built with high-quality materials and should be carefully designed to be outside of the floodplain. Storefront-style first floors should line the north-south roadway, although the use may not necessarily be retail. Buildings may be relatively tall (4-6 stories), if supported by the market.

Buildings should be designed to have a welcome face towards the White Pine Trail, including storefronts where appropriate, and all sites abutting the trail should have access to and from the trail.

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 (or be waived completely) based on the location of the development and availability of shared parking.

## Existing Character



## Planned Character



## Design Guidelines

### Lot Dimensions

**Recommended Lot Areas:** 10,000 to 40,000 square feet, though larger lots featuring multiple buildings with shared parking would also be acceptable.

**Recommended Lot Width:** 50-200 feet, depending on the specifics of the development. Larger lots with multiple buildings and shared parking would also be acceptable.

### Building Setbacks

**Recommended Front Setbacks:** 0-10 feet

**Recommended Side Setbacks:** 0-15 feet, though larger setbacks to allow driveways to rear parking could also be appropriate.

**Recommended Rear Setbacks:** As needed for parking and loading, and to avoid development in floodplains and wetlands.

### Building Height

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** 4+ stories

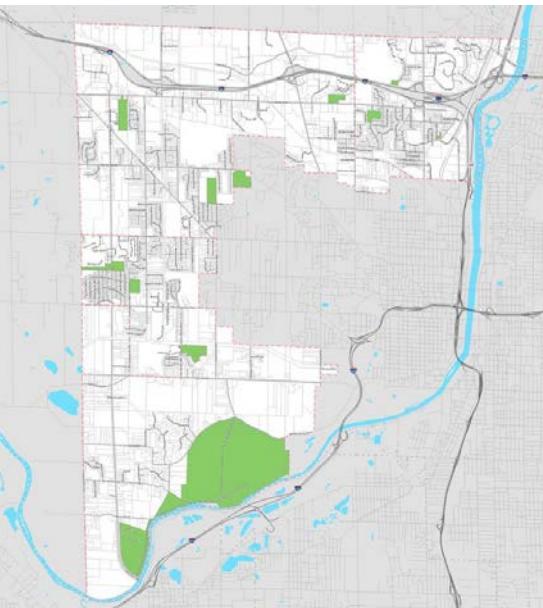
### Street Frontages

Welcoming office / institutional entrances  
Retail storefronts  
Outdoor patio / seating areas

## Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Be flexible with rezonings, to allow a mix of uses that make uses of the river and White Pine Trail.
- Create a Riverfront Greenway Overlay, or other mechanism to require a publicly-accessible riverfront, and protect wetlands and floodplains from development.
- Require properties abutting the White Pine trail to provide access to and from the trail, and use the site plan review process to ensure that sites are designed to address the trail appropriately and attractively.
- Consider a new zoning district to encompass all aspects of the River Enhancement character area.
- Allow existing businesses to continue operation while the district turns over into a mixed use area.

# Parks



## Appropriate Zoning Districts

- AA Agricultural
- Matching Zoning of Surrounding Properties
- New Conservation or Open Space Zoning District or Overlay

## General Characteristics

This designation identifies park land and open space as well as land not owned by the City that could be acquired in the future, or could be used for private outdoor recreation. Areas within this designation can be used for both passive and active recreation. Natural features and developed parklands should be compatible with the surrounding landscape and neighborhood.

Parks and Open Space Target Areas are less specific than land designated solely for parks and open space. They indicate general areas where new parks or preserved open space could be located.

## Appropriate Land Uses

All areas should maintain uses which promote the inclusion of the public and provide recreational and gathering opportunities.

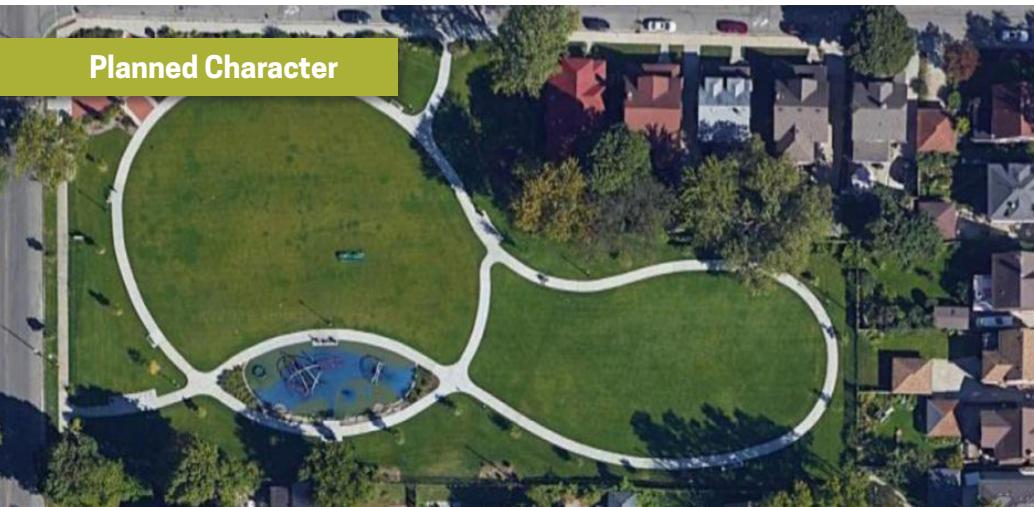
## Streets and Transportation

Existing pedestrian and cyclist trails should be maintained. Additional pathways and associated amenities (e.g. bicycle racks, water fountains, wayfinding signage, lighting, etc.) should be constructed as needed. The connection of such pathways to connect the parks is strongly encouraged.

## Building and Site Design

There are no specific Building and Site Design recommendations in this Plan for the Parks district, although high quality architecture is encouraged. Buildings should be well lit, highly visible, and provide public amenities. Parks should be maintained and upgraded as needed.

Sufficient parking should be provided for public facilities. Parking areas should be designed to minimize stormwater runoff and implement low-impact development techniques (pervious pavement, bioswales, etc.)

**Existing Character****Planned Character****Design Guidelines****Lot Dimensions**

**Recommended Lot Areas:** N/A

**Recommended Lot Width:** N/A

**Building Setbacks****Minimum / Maximum / Side / Rear:**

As necessary for park amenities

**Building Height**

**Minimum:** 1 story

**Maximum:** As necessary to accommodate use

**Street Frontages**

Recreational amenities

Lawn / greenscape

Preserved trees

**Recommended Zoning Amendments**

- Ensure that parks are permitted uses (or special uses if deemed appropriate) in most or all zoning districts.
- Consider a new zoning district or overlay for areas where conservation or open space are the planned land use.
- Consider a Transfer of Development Rights program for private property where the planned land use is conservation or open space.

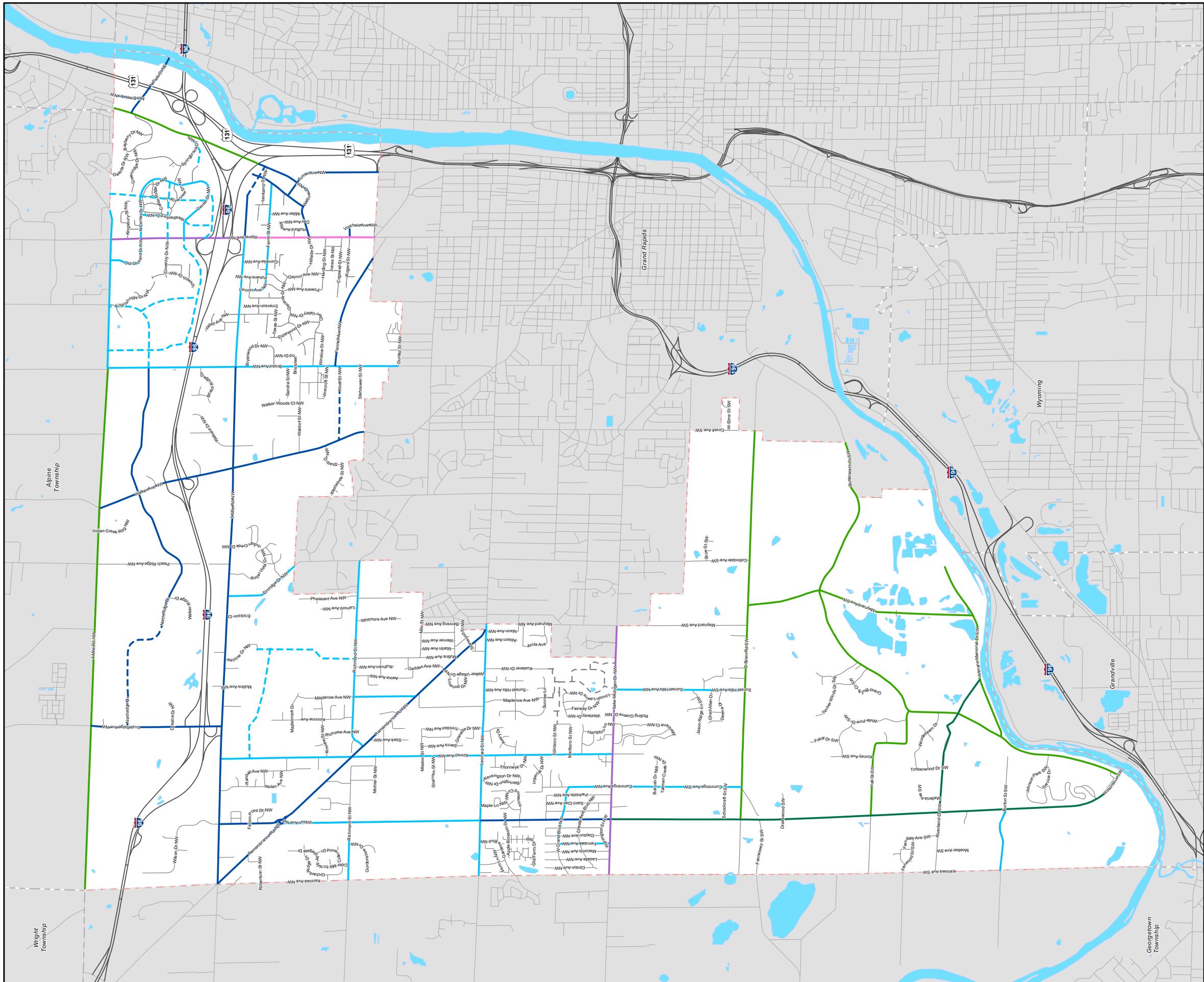
# Corridor Design Plan



## Introduction

The Corridor Design Plan is intended to give guidance and state goals for the corridors throughout Walker. Because specific contexts may vary from street to street and neighborhood to neighborhood, the images and text on the following pages should be taken as guidelines and best practices, rather than specific designs.

However, it is City's goal to achieve the concept of **Complete Streets** throughout Walker, designing corridors to be safe and attractive for all users, and ensuring that streets contribute positively to the vibrancy and economic vitality of the community. Therefore, the guidelines expressed in this plan contain recommendations to re-orient streets away from the needs of through traffic, and towards the needs of local traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists.



# Corridor Design Plan

City of Walker, Michigan

September 28, 2020

## LEGEND

The legend consists of a vertical list of ten items, each with a colored line segment followed by a text label. The items are: Proposed Business Connector (dark blue), Proposed Neighborhood Connector (light blue), Proposed Neighborhood Street (grey), Regional Throughway (dark grey), Urban Throughway (light grey), Business Connector (purple), Neighborhood Connector (pink), Natural Beauty Corridor (green), Natural Beauty Throughway (dark green), Neighborhood Street (light green), Other Municipal Boundaries (light grey), and Freeways (blue).

1,000  
800  
600  
400  
200  
0

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information,  
Version 17a. Data Source: City of Walker 2019. McKenna 2019.

MCKENNA

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## Corridor Design Plan Map Footnotes

1. **Alpine/Center Drive.** The intersection of Alpine Avenue and Center Drive should be redesigned to allow for all traffic flow, both along Alpine Center Drive for access to businesses and amenities..
2. **Wilson/Butterworth Improvements.** The intersection of Wilson and Butterworth, as well as the bridge over the Grand River, will need upgrades to handle additional traffic generated by development on the Fenske site, as well as the ongoing development of Grandville and Standale.
3. **Butterworth Relocation – Potential:** Butterworth Drive could potentially be relocated through Johnson Park, in order to improve safety at the Wilson/Butterworth intersection, support development on the Fenske site, and create a large public recreational area along the Grand River.
4. **Butterworth Truck Route Elimination:** Butterworth is currently a truck route, due to the sand mines along the corridor. When the sand mines close and their reclamation plans are implemented, Butterworth will no longer need to be a truck route.
5. **Kinney/Remembrance/Richmond.** This plan does not envision reconnecting Richmond Street for automobile traffic across the Remembrance/Kinney intersection. However, the unused public right-of-way where the road has been removed should be used for a public purpose, such as a bike path, parking, park space, a plaza, or pedestrian access.
6. **Richmond/Wilson.** Residents in this area noted that this intersection is frustrating and dangerous. The City should work with MDOT to evaluate the current configuration (stop signs on Richmond and no traffic control device on Richmond) to determine if improvements can or should be made.
7. **Ironwood/3 Mile/Kenowa.** Improvements to this intersection were planned at the time of this plan. This intersection should continue to be monitored for safety and efficiency.
8. The Corridor Design Plan maps have not been approved by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

# Regional Boulevard



## General Characteristics

- 100-120 feet of ROW
- 25,000 – 50,000 cars per day
- 45-55 MPH

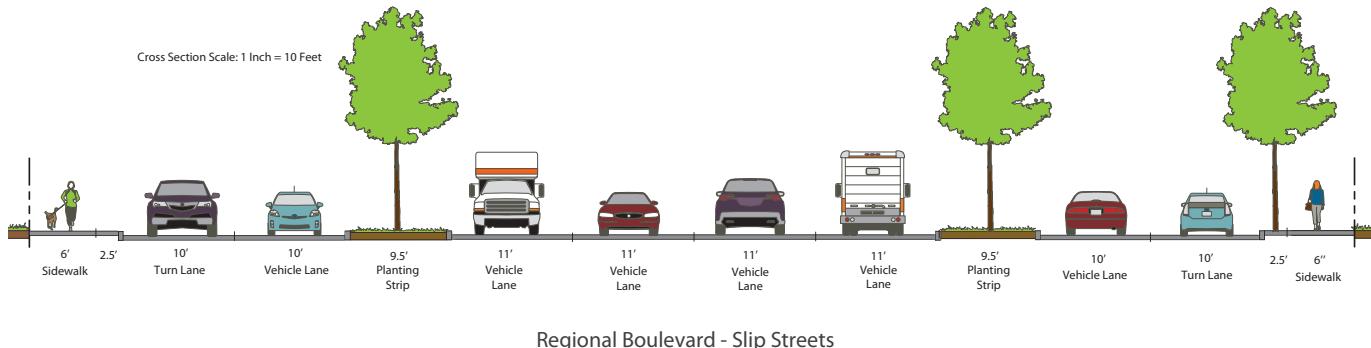
AI

Regional Boulevards carry high volumes of through traffic. As major commuter routes for the Grand Rapids region, they are frequently designated as State Highways and maintained by MDOT. Therefore, the needs of through traffic must be kept in mind in their design.

However, these corridors are also lined with businesses, and many residents live in close proximity to them. Therefore, the needs of local traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists must be taken into account as well.

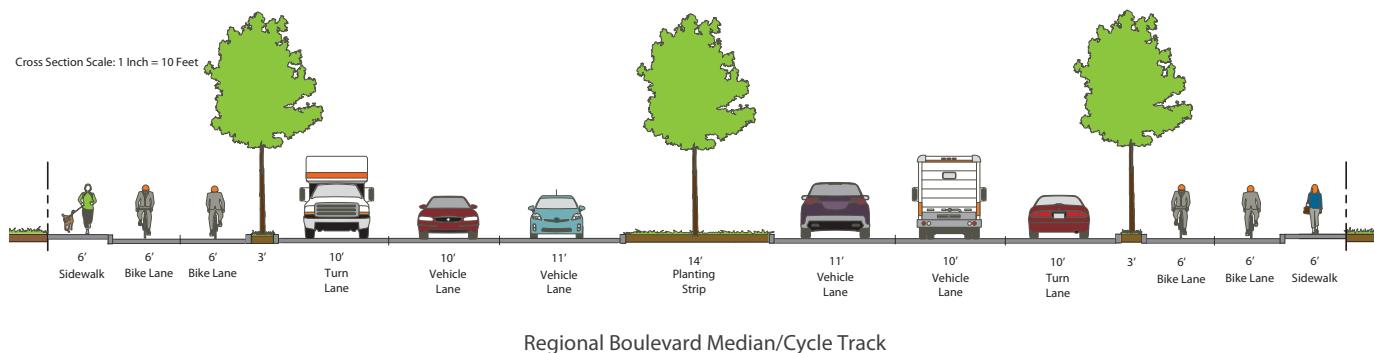
## Guidelines for Regional Boulevards

1. Creative solutions should be investigated for allowing through traffic to continue to its destination at an efficient rate, while also allowing for turning movements and local access. **Slip streets**, as illustrated below, separate through traffic from local traffic.

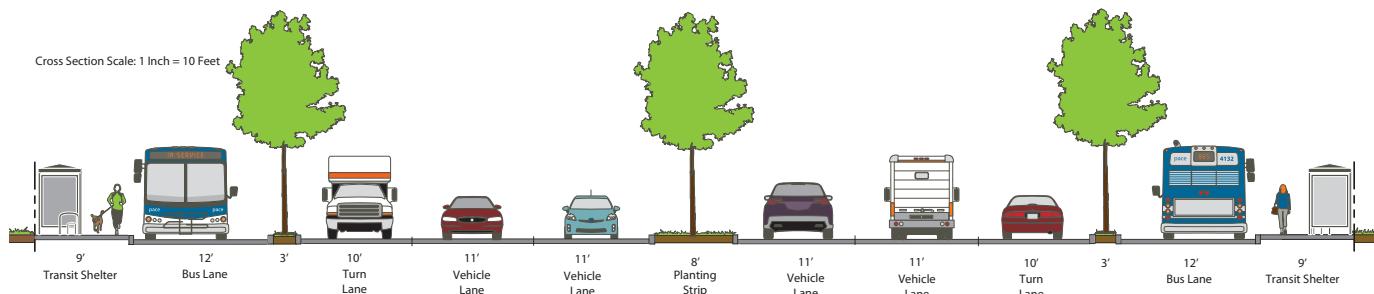


2. Although they will always feature heavy automobile traffic, Regional Boulevards should also be designed to be safe for pedestrians and bicyclists. One way to achieve that safety is to create **cycle tracks**, which separate cyclists into their own two-way path. The cycle-track can also be used to separate pedestrians from automobile traffic.

3. **Medians** allow for greenery in the center of roadways, as well as controlling left turns and assisting in the efficient flow of through traffic – especially through the use of “Michigan Lefts.” Medians also reduce the heat island effect and improve the pedestrian environment.



4. Regional Boulevards are also excellent candidates for **Rapid Transit**. In addition to being high-traffic corridors with destinations that drive ridership, their wide rights-of-way allow for dedicated transit lanes, including for Bus Rapid Transit or Light Rail.



## Regional Boulevards in the City of Walker

- **M-37/Alpine Avenue (I-96 to 4 Mile)**, one of the City and region’s most congested corridors, carrying nearly 50,000 cars per day at its busiest point. While some of the ideas discussed above will need to be reconciled with the needs of the I-96 interchange, the width of the roadway gives plenty of space for creativity.

# Urban Boulevard



## General Characteristics

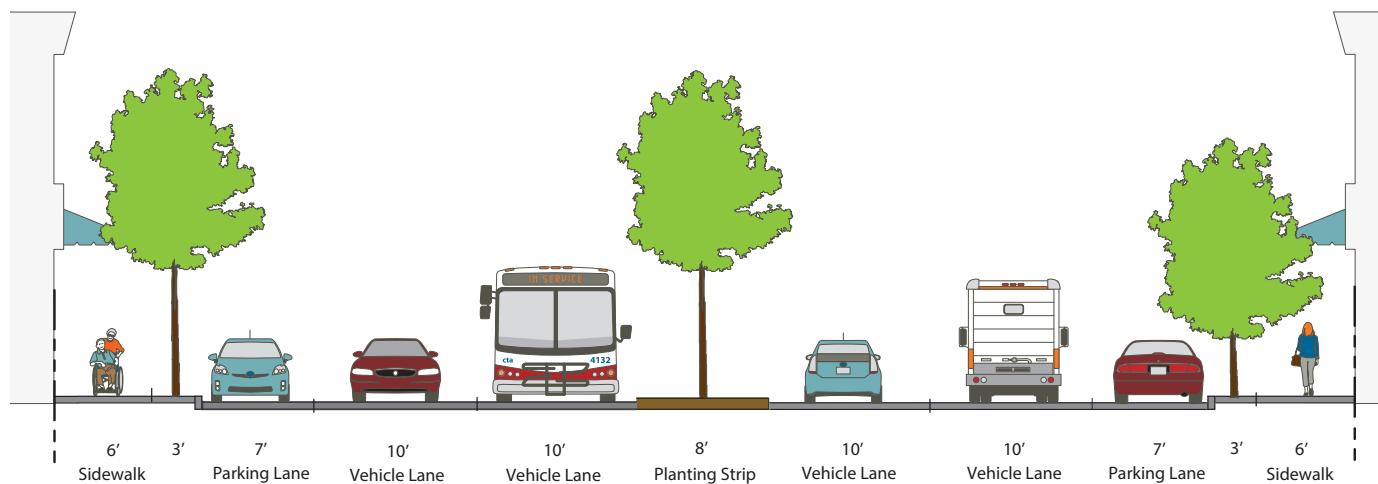
- 80-100 feet of ROW
- 15,000 to 35,000 cars per day
- 30-40 MPH

AI

Urban Boulevards are heavily trafficked roadways, but run through areas that are either currently or planned to be urban districts. Therefore, they need to balance the needs of through traffic with anticipated high pedestrian traffic, on-street parking needs, non-motorized connectivity, and transit access.

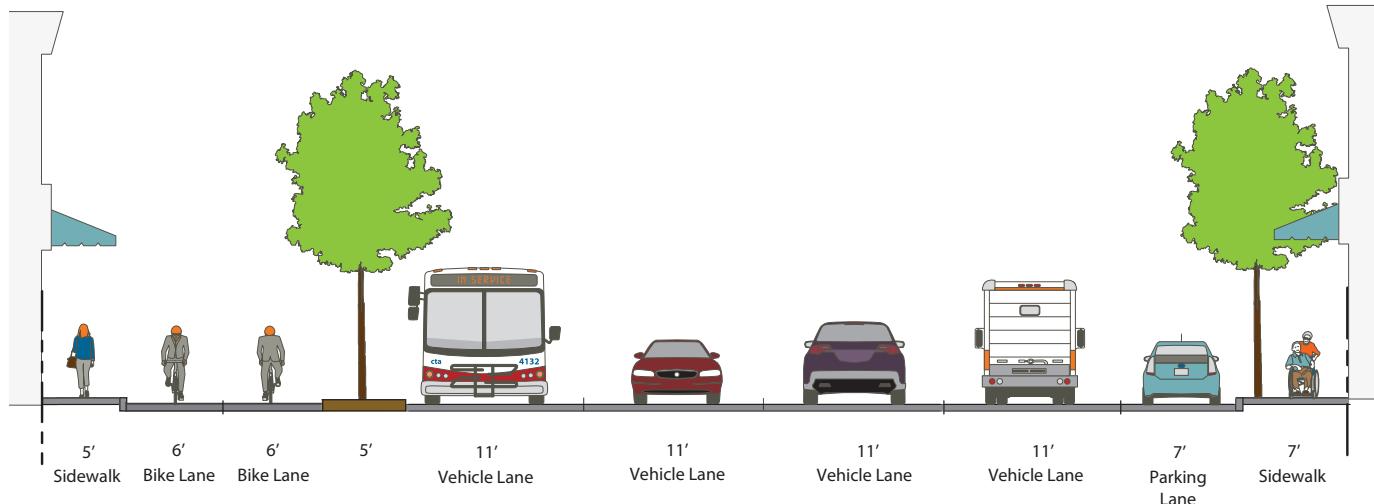
## Guidelines for Urban Boulevards

1. Urban Boulevards should have plenty of trees and green space, to slow traffic, improve the pedestrian experience, and add beauty and charm. **Sidewalks** should be wide, including small required setbacks on private property that contain pedestrian amenities.



Urban Boulevard - Median

2. **On Street Parking** is a crucial feature of Urban Boulevards. On Street Parking buffers pedestrians from moving traffic and supports businesses that need easily accessible parking spaces near their front door. On Street Parking in an Urban Boulevard context should be parallel spaces, due to the anticipated speed of through traffic.
3. Non-motorized connectivity on Urban Boulevards can be achieved through bike lanes, although bike lanes and on-street parking are not always compatible. Another option is a protected **cycle track**, particularly on roadways with wider rights-of-way.



Urban Boulevard - Cycle Track

4. While dedicated lanes for transit are desirable, realistically there may not be space on most Urban Boulevards. However, transit should still be prioritized, with attractive **stations/shelters**, **bus-bulbs** (if there is sufficient space), or **dedicated bus stop space** where there would otherwise be on-street parking.

## Regional Boulevards in the City of Walker

- **Alpine Avenue (Southern City Limits to I-96).** While not as busy as stretch of Alpine north of I-96, the stretch to the south is a major business corridor for the City. Land uses are planned to become more urban, with mixed use buildings and smaller front setbacks. Therefore, the road will need to change to accommodate this new context, and increase in pedestrian activity and parking demand that will come with it.

# Regional Thruway



## General Characteristics

- 100-120 feet of ROW
- 25,000 – 50,000 cars per day
- 45-55 MPH

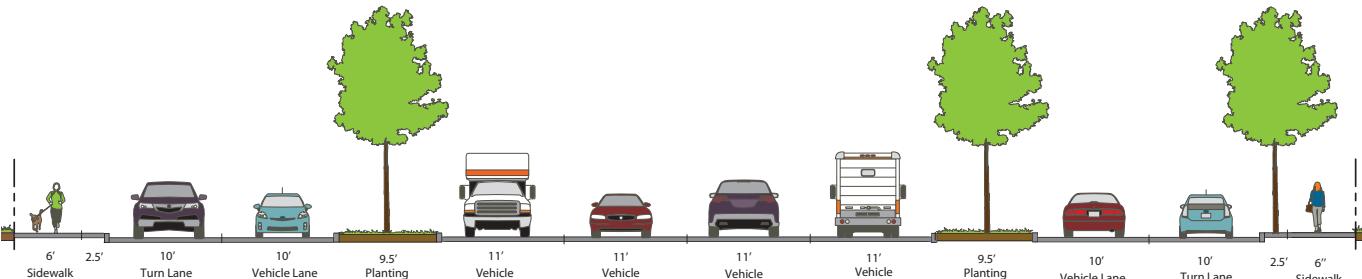
St

Regional Thruways carry high volumes of through traffic. As major commuter routes for the Grand Rapids region, they are frequently designated as State Highways and maintained by MDOT. Therefore, the needs of through traffic must be kept in mind in their design.

However, these corridors are also lined with businesses, and many residents live in close proximity to them. Therefore, the needs of local traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists must be taken into account as well.

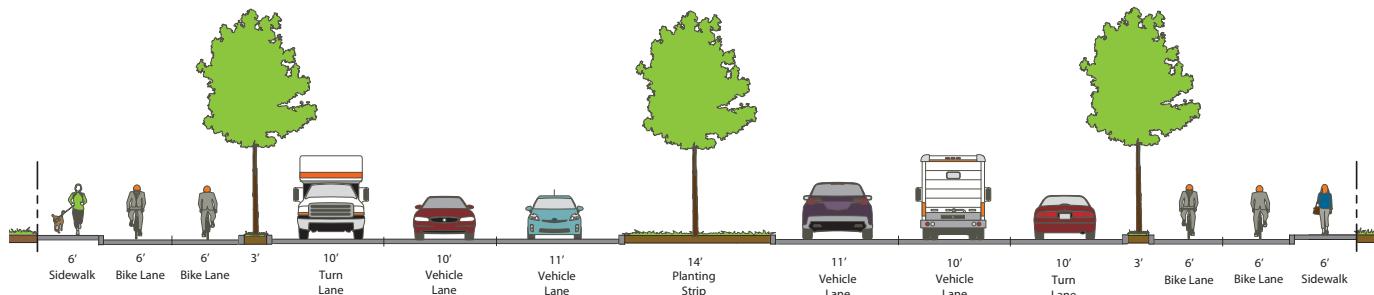
## Guidelines for Regional Thruways

1. Creative solutions should be investigated for allowing through traffic to continue to its destination at an efficient rate, while also allowing for turning movements and local access. **Slip streets**, as illustrated below, separate through traffic from local traffic.



Regional Boulevard - Slip Streets

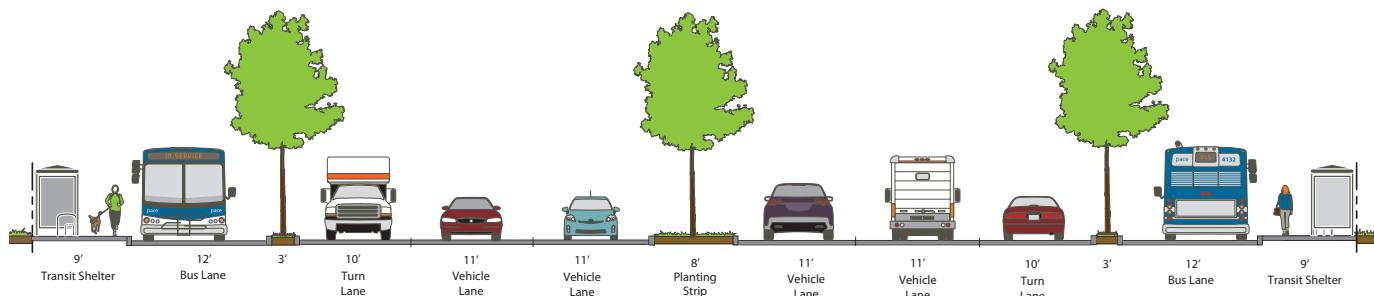
2. Although they will always feature heavy automobile traffic, Regional Thruways should also be designed to be safe for pedestrians and bicyclists. One way to achieve that safety is to create **cycle tracks**, which separate cyclists into their own two-way path. The cycle-track can also be used to separate pedestrians from automobile traffic.



Regional Boulevard Median/Cycle Track

3. **Medians** allow for greenery in the center of roadways, as well as controlling left turns and assisting in the efficient flow of through traffic – especially through the use of “Michigan Lefts.” Medians also reduce the heat island effect and improve the pedestrian environment.

4. Regional Thruways are also excellent candidates for **Rapid Transit**. In addition to being high-traffic corridors with destinations that drive ridership, their wide rights-of-way allow for dedicated transit lanes, including for Bus Rapid Transit or Light Rail.



Regional Boulevard - Rapid Transit

## Business Connectors in the City of Walker

- **Lake Michigan Drive/M-45** one the City and region's busiest corridors. The existing slip street configuration in the center of Standale should be enhanced and expanded, due to its positive impact on businesses and safe mobility.

# Business Connector



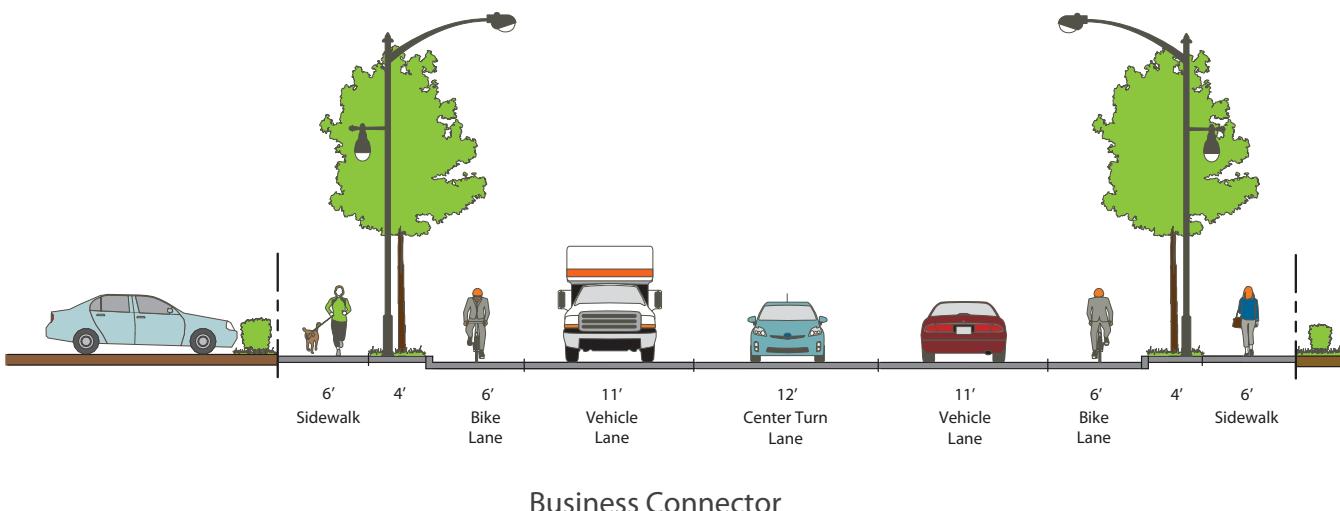
## General Characteristics

- 66-100 feet of ROW
- 10,000 to 25,000 cars per day (and heavy truck traffic)
- 30-45 MPH



Business Connectors are roadways that travel through non-residential areas – particularly Enterprise and Community Enterprise Character Areas. They are designed for high levels of truck traffic. While pedestrians and bicyclists should be able to traverse them safely, and transit access should be efficient, they are predominantly corridors for commercial traffic and commuters.

## Guidelines for Business Connectors



1. Business Connectors should have **wide lanes**, particularly turning lanes, to accommodate trucks safely.
2. Although other designs may be appropriate, business connectors should generally have a **3 or 5 lane cross section** with a **continuous center turn lane**. This prevents rear-end accidents, and allows for efficient through traffic and turning movements.
3. **Sidewalks** should be constructed where possible. **Bike lanes** (or other appropriate bicycle infrastructure) should be constructed where designated in this plan. **Bus bulbs** are desirable in these areas at transit stops to keep through traffic moving.

## Business Connectors in the City of Walker

- **3 Mile Road (Alpine to dead end)**, with an extension to West River Drive Planned (see “New Road Connections” below)
- **Hillside Drive (Alpine to dead end)**, with a connection to the extended 3 Mile Road plan.
- **West River Drive (Hillside Drive to US-131 underpass)**, with a connection to the extended 3 Mile Road.
- **Turner Avenue (West River Drive to southern City Limits)**
- **Voorheis Avenue (Alpine Avenue to southern City Limits)**
- **Pannell Avenue (Bristol Avenue to southern City Limits)**
- **Mill Creek Lane (North Park Street to northern City limits)**
- **North Park Street (West River Drive to the Grand River)**
- **M-11/Wilson Avenue – O’Brien Road to M-45/Lake Michigan Drive**
- **Wilson Avenue (Remembrance Road to 3 Mile Road)**
- **Remembrance Road**
- **3 Mile Road**
- **Fruit Ridge Avenue**
- **Northridge Drive (including the planned portion that is not yet constructed)**
- **Walker Avenue**
- **Waldorf Street**
- **Pannell Avenue**

# Neighborhood Connector



## General Characteristics

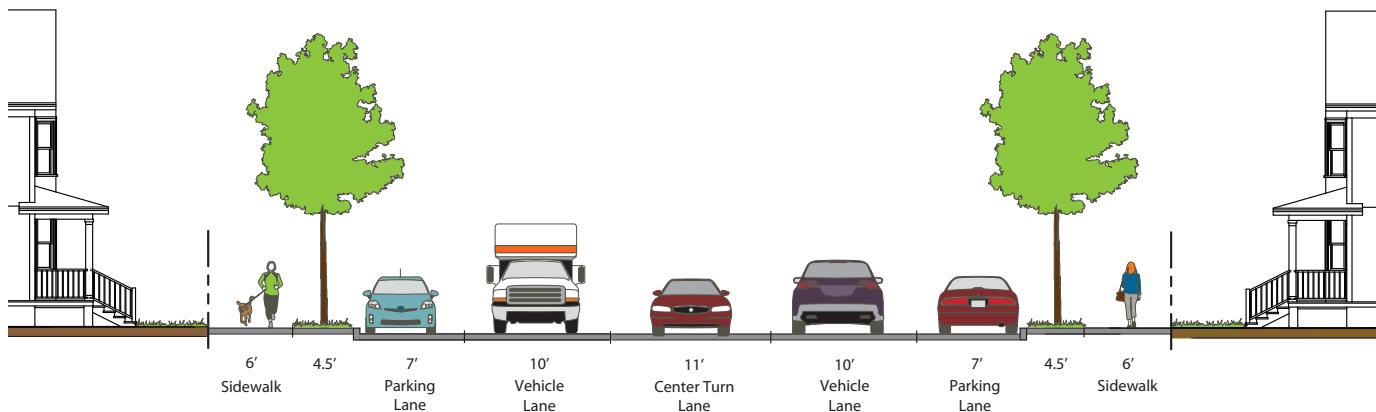
- 66-100 feet of ROW
- 5,000 to 25,000 cars per day
- 25-35 MPH (faster in undeveloped areas)



Neighborhood Connectors are roadways that travel through and between neighborhoods, connecting those neighborhoods together. Their land use context is generally residential, but could also include low-intensity retail/service businesses, religious or educational institutions, recreational areas, or preserved open space.

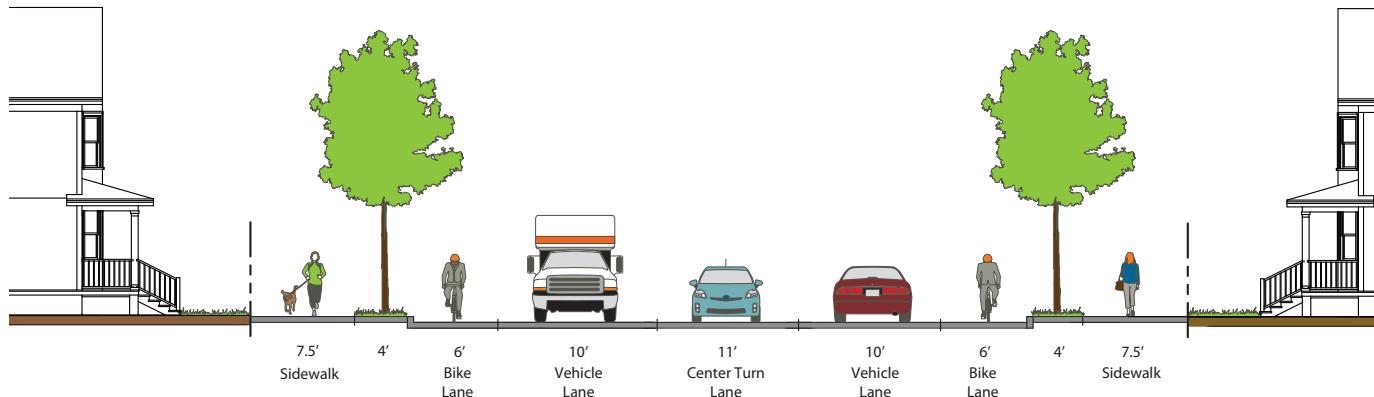
## Guidelines for Neighborhood Connectors

1. Neighborhood Connectors with frequent intersections and driveways should have a **three lane cross section** to allow for left turns and efficient movement of through traffic.
2. Where there are businesses nearby that need the support of **on-street parking**, it should be provided. On street parking is also appropriate in residential areas.



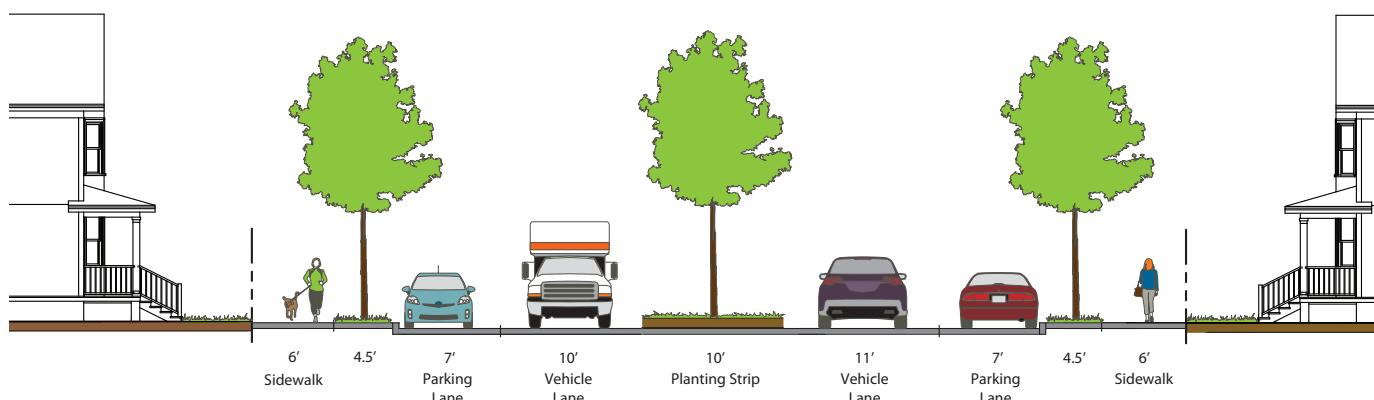
Neighborhood Connector - On Street Parking

3. Neighborhood Connectors should always have sidewalks, with wide, tree-lined buffer areas separating them from the automobile lanes.
4. Bike lanes (or other appropriate bicycle infrastructure) should be constructed where designated in this plan.



Neighborhood Connector - Bike Lanes

5. Bus bulbs are desirable at transit stops to keep through traffic moving.
6. In some areas, medians may be desirable, for aesthetic and tree canopy reasons, and to calm traffic. Medians are recommended for roadways with through traffic within residential areas.



Neighborhood Connector - Median

## Neighborhood Connectors in the City of Walker

- **4 Mile Road (Bristol Avenue to northern City Limits)**
- **Old Orchard Drive**, particularly if the Old Orchard Apartments are redeveloped.
- **North Center Drive/Center Drive/Weatherford Drive**, in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Greenridge Square shopping center and adjacent apartments.
- **Bristol Avenue (4 Mile Road to southern City Limits)**
- **3 Mile Road (Bristol Avenue to Alpine Avenue)**
- **Lincoln Avenue (3 Mile Road to Ferris Street)**
- **Ferris Street (Lincoln Avenue to Hillside Drive)**
- **Voorheis Avenue (Alpine Avenue to southern City Limits)**
- **Burton Street (Wilson to Kenowa)**
- **Riverbend Drive (Wilson to Kenowa)**

# Natural Beauty Thruway



## General Characteristics

- 100-120 feet of ROW
- 15,000 to 35,000 cars per day
- 45-55 MPH

S

Natural Beauty Thruways are roadways that run through undeveloped and natural areas that are planned to remain in that character, but which carry very high levels of traffic. The roadway should be designed to complement the natural surroundings, while also providing safe and efficient through traffic between denser nodes.

### Guidelines for Natural Beauty Thruways



1. Natural Beauty Corridors should be designed with a **five lane cross section** more lanes may even be appropriate if traffic levels warrant.
2. **“Michigan Lefts”** may be appropriate near intersections, if there is sufficient right of way.
3. **Cycle tracks/bike paths** should be prioritized alongside natural beauty thruways, to allow for non-motorized transportation between developed areas, as well as recreational cycling. Sidewalks, however, will generally not be necessary, except to connect neighborhoods to schools or transit stops.
4. Where there is additional right-of-way in a Natural Beauty Thruway once the street elements listed above have been designed, the additional right-of-way should be **planted with trees, shrubs, and flowers** to add to the natural beauty of the private realm.

### **Natural Beauty Thruways in the City of Walker**

- **M-11/Wilson Avenue (O’Brien Road to the Grand River)**

# Natural Beauty Corridor



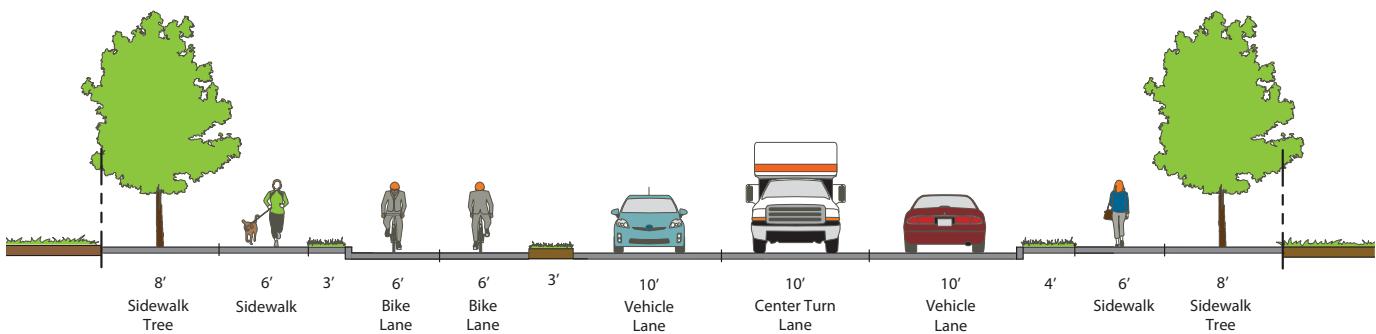
## General Characteristics

- 66-100 feet of ROW
- 5,000 to 35,000 cars per day
- 35-55 MPH

AI S

Natural Beauty Corridors are roadways that run through undeveloped and natural areas that are planned to remain in that character. The roadway should be designed to complement the natural surroundings.

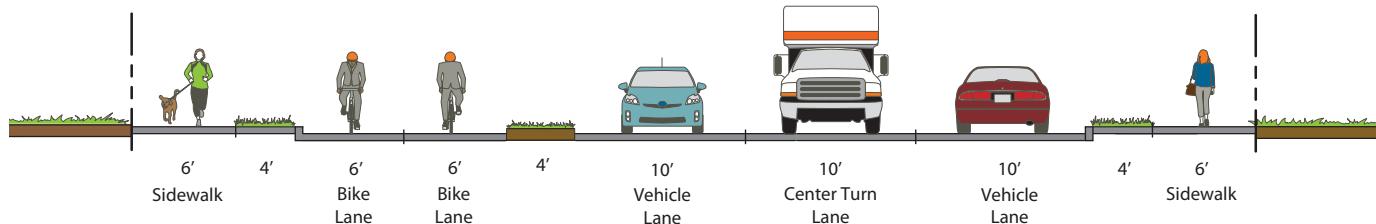
## Guidelines for Natural Beauty Corridors



Natural Beauty Corridor-80' R.O.W.

1. Natural Beauty Corridors should be designed with a **two or three lane cross section**. Four lane cross sections are inefficient, and five lanes should be unnecessary through areas that are not planned for heavy development.

2. **Cycle tracks/bike paths** should be prioritized alongside natural beauty corridors, to allow for non-motorized transportation between developed areas, as well as recreational cycling. Sidewalks may also be provided where they are determined to be necessary.



Natural Beauty Corridor-66' R.O.W.

3. Where there is additional right-of-way in a Natural Beauty Corridor once the street elements listed above have been designed, the additional right-of-way should be **planted with trees, shrubs, and flowers** to add to the natural beauty of the private realm.

### Natural Beauty Corridors in the City of Walker

- **West River Drive (US-131 Underpass to northern City Limits)**
- **Butterworth Drive (Wilson to City Limits)**
- **Riverbend Drive (Wilson to City Limits)**
- **Hall Street (Wilson to Butterworth)**
- **O'Brien Road (Wilson to City Limits)**
- **Maynard Avenue (O'Brien to Veterans Memorial)**
- **Veterans Memorial Drive (Butterworth to Dead End)**
- **O'Brien Road (Cummings Avenue to Sunset Hills Avenue)**
- **4 Mile Road**

# Neighborhood Streets



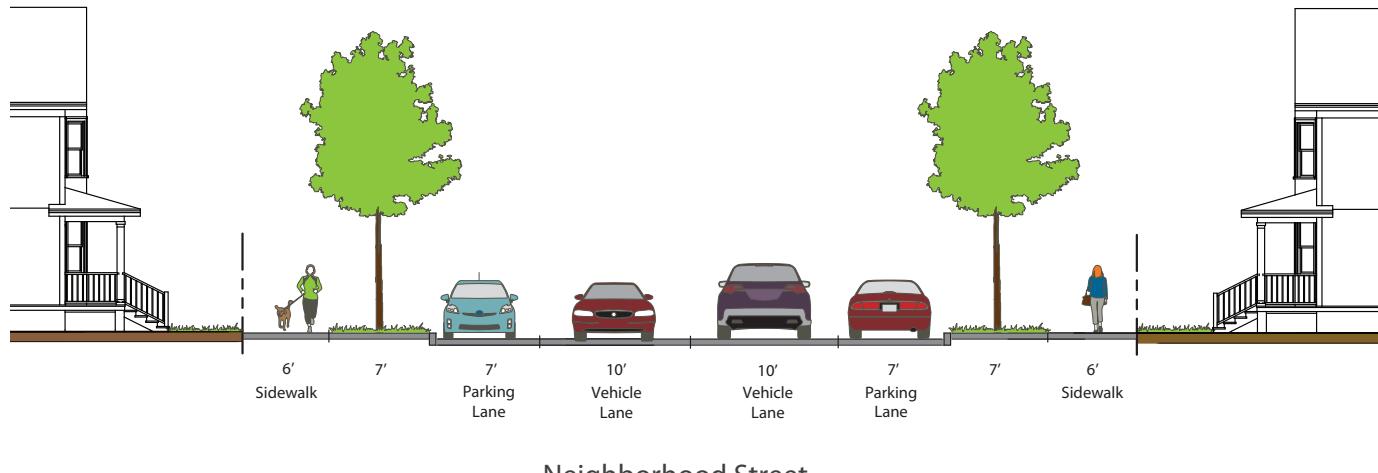
## General Characteristics

- 60-66 feet of ROW
- Local Traffic
- 25 MPH

AI   S   St   NW

Neighborhood Streets are low traffic corridors designed for local access, mainly to residential uses.

## Guidelines for Neighborhood Streets



1. Neighborhood Streets should be designed with narrow traffic lanes and space for on-street parking along the curbs.
2. All Neighborhood Streets should have sidewalks, buffered from the roadway by wide, tree-lined landscape areas.
3. Cycling on Neighborhood Streets should be encouraged, but bike lanes need not be specifically designated.
4. Transit lines and truck traffic should not be permitted on Neighborhood Streets.
5. Newly constructed Neighborhood Streets should be public roadways, dedicated to the City, and designed based on the guidelines of this plan and the City's engineering standards.

Neighborhood Streets within the City of Walker include all roadways not listed in one of the other categories.

# New Road Connections

**3 Mile Road Extension:** 3 Mile Road should be extended from where it currently dead ends to West River Drive. This extension will require the removal of 2-3 single family homes and engineering design to accommodate the steep downhill grade. Connections should be made to Hillside Drive and Lankamp Street (Lankamp may need to be truncated to accommodate the extension). The new 3 Mile Road should be built as a Business Connector.

**Northridge Drive Extension:** Northridge Drive has already been precisely platted between Bristol Avenue and 4 Mile Road. Within the precise plat, the roadway design should respect natural features and topography. The intersection with English Hills Drive should be designed to minimize the impact on the existing residential uses nearby. Northridge Drive should be designed as a Neighborhood Connector, and anticipated to have residential uses lining it once the English Hills Golf Course is redeveloped.

**English Hills Connecting Road:** A new road should be constructed from where Northridge Drive is proposed to bend, south towards English Hills Park, and then connecting through to Alpine Avenue across from Center Street. This roadway would require the re-design of English Hills Park and the redevelopment of the Summit Alpine shopping center. The roadway should connect with Ipswich Street, but in such a way as to discourage cut-through traffic on Ipswich. Allowing traffic to exit Ipswich but not enter Ipswich is one option. West of English Hills Park and within the redeveloped Summit Alpine, the new road should be constructed as a Neighborhood Connector. However, through the park and through the land east of the park designated to be retained as open space, it should be designed as a Natural Beauty Connector.

**English Hills Neighborhood Streets:** A connected network of Neighborhood Streets should be constructed within any new development on the English Hills property.

**Greenridge Square/Summit Alpine New Street Networks:** Within the redeveloped Greenridge Square and Summit Alpine shopping centers, a new network of streets should be developed. Some of these streets may be Neighborhood Connectors, while others will be Neighborhood Streets.

**North Center-4 Mile Connection:** A new connection should be made between North Center Street and 4 Mile Road. The exact location should be determined based on the specifics of the redevelopment of Greenridge Square, and in consultation with residents on Kingsbury Street. The new connection need not connect to Kingsbury Street, unless that is considered desirable by the residents, or if there are no design options that can avoid a connection to Kingsbury. The new road should be designed as a Neighborhood Connector.

**River Ridge Extension:** River Ridge Drive should be extended to connect to Springbrook Drive. Exact routing is not clear at this time.

**Fenske Site Roads:** In order to support the development of the Fenske site, Butterworth Drive should be extended west of Wilson Avenue, and Kenowa Avenue should be extended south from where it currently dead ends. Both should be Neighborhood Connectors, and should tie in to an efficient and connected road pattern within the development. The development should also be connected to Burton Street with a new north-south Neighborhood Connector road.

**West of Meijer Roads:** New Neighborhood Connectors are envisioned west of Meijer to support new development in that area. There should be a clear and efficient route from Lake Michigan Drive to O'Brien Road, to provide access to the development and ease the pressure on Wilson Avenue.

**Westown Loop:** A new public road running south of Meijer, and then looping north to Lake Michigan Drive through the Westown development, will provide improved circulation and efficiency in the Lake Michigan/Wilson area, especially as new development occurs.

**Lincoln Lawns Roads:** If the Lincoln Lawns Golf Course is developed for residential uses, a new grid of streets should be constructed. The road network should connect to Lincoln Lawns Drive in several places, and should also connect to the Maplerow Avenue and Kusterer Drive stub streets, as well as Edinboro Street.

**Kinney Infill Connectors:** Between Edinboro Street and Macey Drive, there is land available for new housing. Roads built to support this new housing should connect to Calvert Avenue and Sydney Drive, as well as other nearby roads as possible.

**Sunset Hills-Maynard Roads:** If new residential development occurs south of Lake Michigan Drive between Sunset Hills and Maynard, it should be supported by a connected network of streets, including multiple connections to Sunset Hills, Maynard, and Lake Michigan Drive.

**Sunset Hills-Cummings Roads:** If new residential development occurs south of Lake Michigan Drive between Sunset Hills and Cummings, it should also be supported by a connected network of streets, although existing roadways and development will make the pattern less predictable than in potential new neighborhoods to the east.

**Richmond Farms Road:** A new Neighborhood Connector is envisioned running from the intersection of Richmond Street and Mullins Avenue, north to 3 Mile Road. This road will not be called Mullins Avenue, because there is already a segment of Mullins Avenue connecting to 3 Mile Road, and the new road will not connect to that segment.

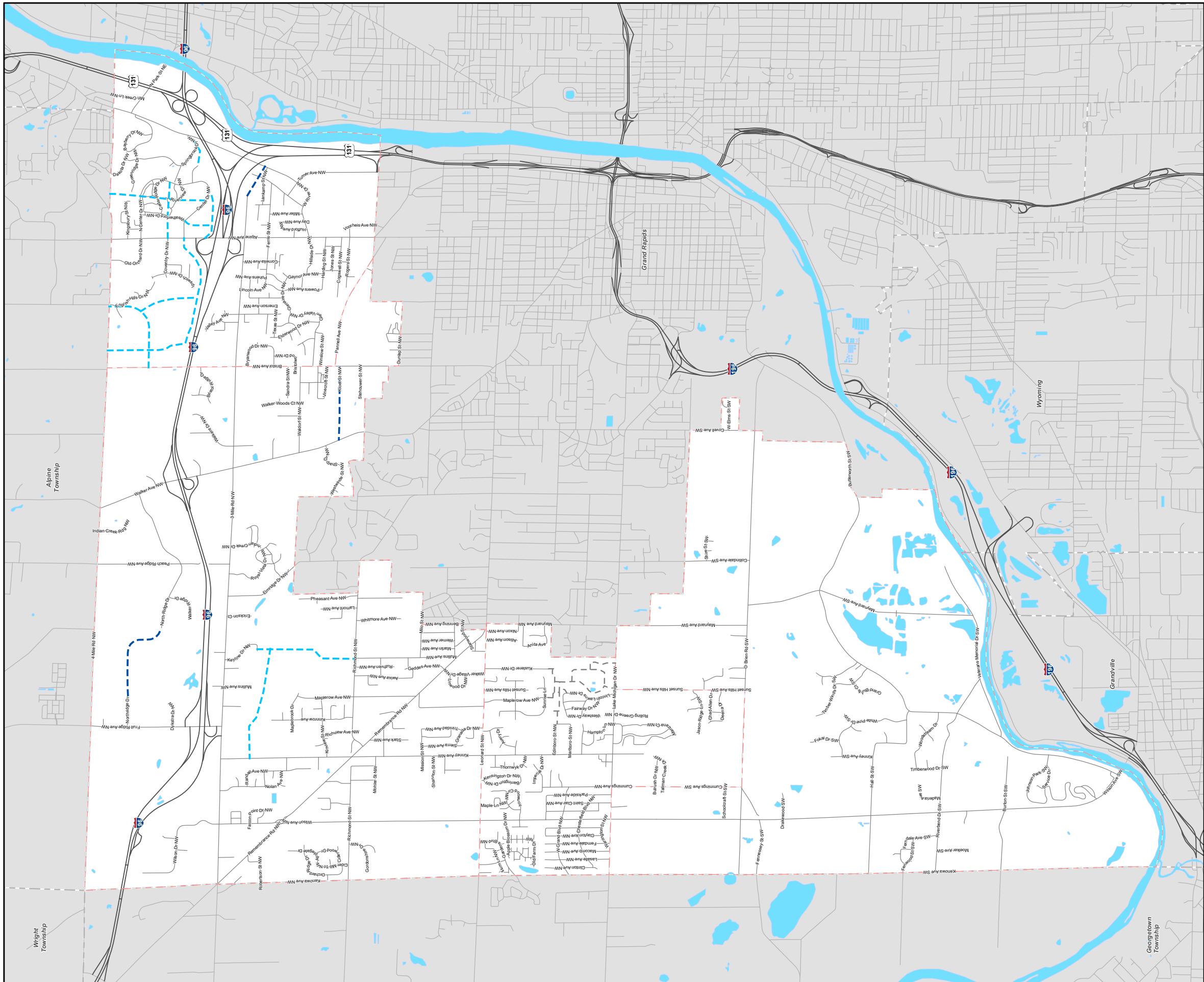
**Kinney Connection:** A new Neighborhood Connector connecting Kinney Avenue to the new Richmond Farms Road.

The proposed road connections are conceptual and based on best practices. Specific road locations and design may vary, and will be based on the needs of individual developments, recommendations by the City Engineer, and decisions by the Planning Commission and City Commission.

## Expressways

The I-96 and US-131 expressways in Walker are a valued part of the regional and state-wide transportation system. However, the City desires that the following guidelines are followed with regard to the design of the highways:

- Surrounding development should be buffered from the highways by dense tree plantings, both within the MDOT right-of-way and on adjacent private property.
- The footprints of interchanges should be reduced when possible, including the uses of SPUIs, diverted diamonds, and other creative interchange designs.
- The provision of additional right-of-way for freeway construction and expansion is highly discouraged.



## New Road Connections

City of Walker, Michigan

September 28, 2020

### LEGEND

- Proposed Business Connector
- Proposed Neighborhood Connector
- Proposed Neighborhood Street
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Freeways
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains



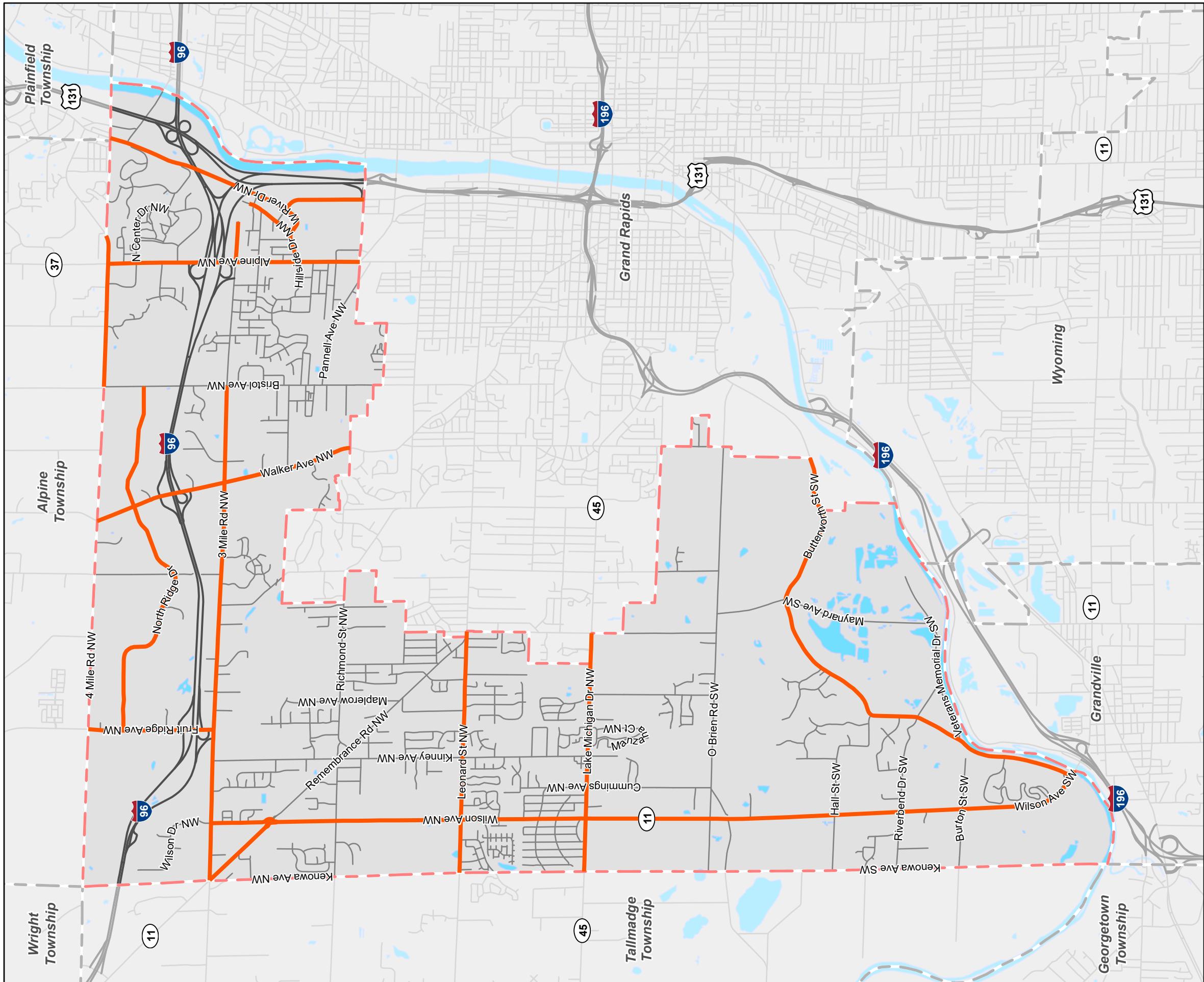
0 500 1,000  
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Data Source: City of Walker 2019. McKenna 2019.

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## Citywide Truck Routes

City of Walker, Michigan

November 1, 2019

**Legend**

- Walker Boundary
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Freeways
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains
- Truck Route

0 0.5 1 Miles

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## Truck Routes

Truck traffic is necessary for the function and efficiency of businesses throughout Walker, but it can also cause negative impacts on residential areas, educational and religious institutions, and small retail businesses. Within the City of Walker, the following roads are designated as truck routes. On all other roads, truck traffic should be discouraged.

- I-96
- US-131
- M-37/Alpine Avenue
- 3 Mile Road (Alpine Avenue to dead end -West River Drive once extended - ONLY)
- Hillside Drive (Alpine Avenue to dead end – 3 Mile Road once extended – ONLY)
- West River Drive
- Turner Avenue
- Wilson Avenue
- Butterworth Drive (until the sand mines cease operation, at which time truck traffic should be discouraged)
- Wilson Avenue/M-11
- Lake Michigan Drive/M-45
- 3 Mile Road
- Wilson Avenue
- Remembrance Road
- Leonard Street
- Fruit Ridge Avenue
- Northridge Drive
- Walker Avenue
- Pannell Avenue

## Transit Routes

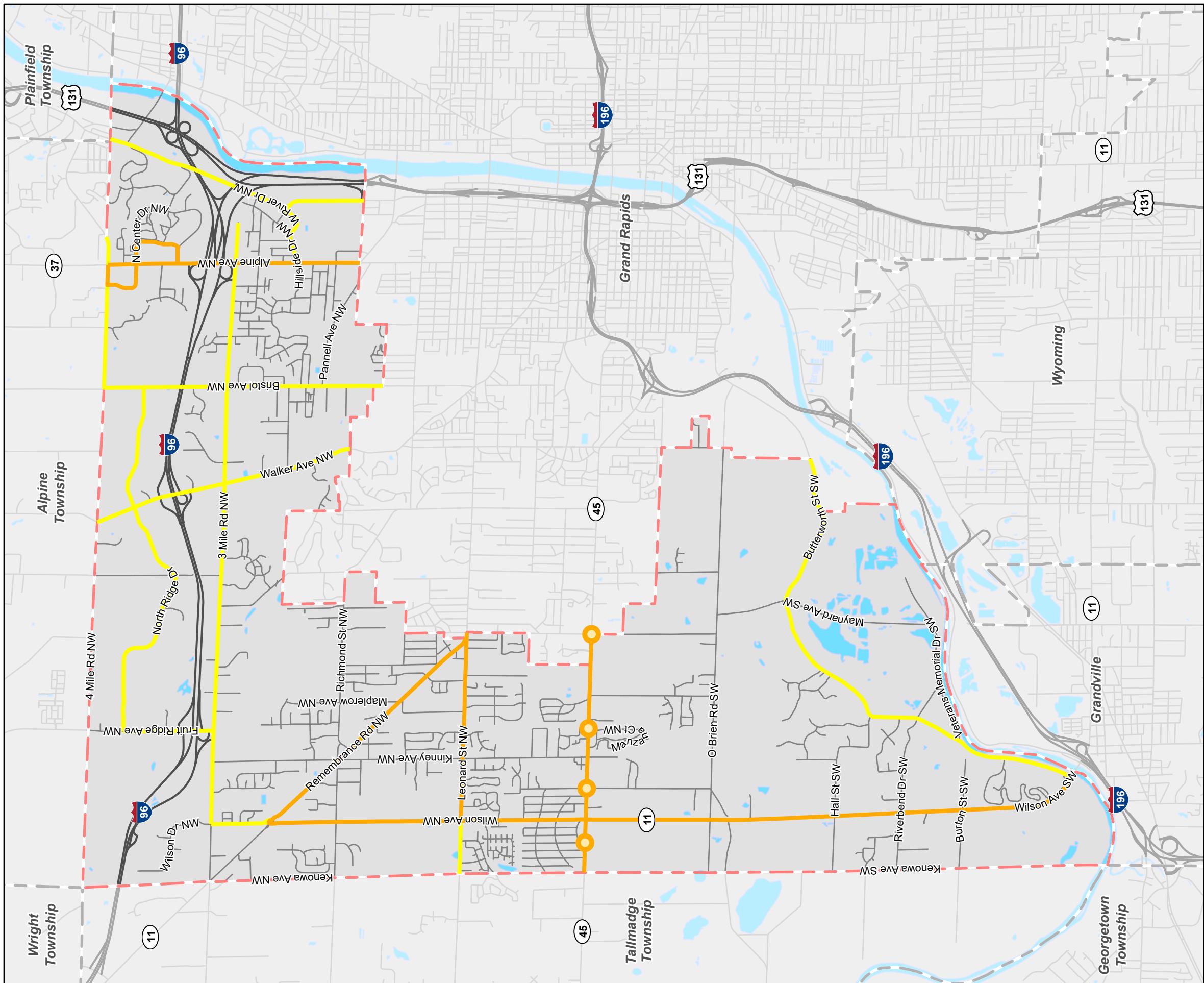
Public transportation is a crucial part of the transportation system. In some areas, the only way to reduce congestion is to take cars off the street by providing other options. Within the City of Walker, the following routes are designated for transit:

### High Priority

- **Alpine Avenue:** Alpine is currently the route of The Rapid's No. 9 bus. That important service should be maintained and upgraded. It could eventually become a Bus Rapid Transit line or even Light Rail. Currently, the No. 9 loops through the Greenridge Square shopping center and the Old Orchard apartments. If the Alpine route becomes a higher-capacity/higher-speed design, then that service could be replaced by circulators or a local bus.
- **West River Drive/Turner Avenue:** There is not currently a bus route on this corridor. However, with growth in Comstock Park/Alpine Township (as well as Fifth Third Ballpark) on one end, and Grand Rapids' West Leonard and Stockbridge neighborhoods on the other, this corridor should be considered for a future route.
- **Wilson Avenue.** A new Wilson Crosstown route should be created and operated by The Rapid. The new route will make a key north-south connection between Rivertown Crossings Mall, Downtown Grandville, Standale (including the Laker Line Bus Rapid Transit, and other Rapid routes), the Walker Civic Center, and, eventually, the industrial park at Wilson and 3 Mile Road.
- **Remembrance Road/Leonard Street.** The Rapid's existing Route 7 serves Remembrance Road, Wilson Avenue, and Leonard Street in a one-way loop. The City should work with The Rapid to improve service on these corridors so to make the routing more efficient. Creating Routes "7a" and "7b", with one providing service to the Walker Civic Center or the Wilson/3 Mile industrial park, and the other providing service to the Standale Meijer via Leonard and Wilson, would be one option. The Wilson Crosstown route described below would also improve service in the area.

### Future Vision

- **3 Mile Road, 4 Mile Road, and Bristol Avenue:** In a built-out environment with high-quality transit service, transit lines should be available approximately every half mile. The Alpine/Bristol Neighborhood Cluster does not have the road network to support that level of service, but it does have Neighborhood Connector roads approximately every mile. Crosstown service should be provided on 4 Mile and 3 Mile, with connections across the North Park Bridge to destinations on east side of the region such as Knapp's Corner. A Bristol Avenue line could terminate within the redeveloped Greenridge Square, and then head west to Bristol and south to Grand Rapids' West Side and Downtown, via Walker Avenue, Stocking Avenue, and Bridge Street.
- **Butterworth Drive.** Once Millennium Park reaches its full build-out, and if and when development is constructed on the Fenske site, a new bus route running from downtown Grand Rapids to John Ball Park, Millennium Park, Johnson Park.
- **Lake Michigan Drive.** Lake Michigan Drive is already one of the region's busiest transit corridors, and the under-construction Laker Line will give it the highest capacity service in the Rapid system. The corridor should continue to be monitored for additional transit needs, including potentially light rail service (on a 15-20 year time horizon).
- **Walker Avenue/Northridge Drive.** Walker Avenue also serves a large employment base. A route along Walker could serve Downtown Grand Rapids, Bridge Street, and Stocking Avenue, and could also serve Northridge Drive.



## Citywide Transit Routes

City of Walker, Michigan

October 30, 2019



0 0.5 1 Miles

SOURCES - Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Date Source: City of Walker 2019. McKenna 2019.

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# Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

Non-Motorized Connectivity is crucial for sustainability, vibrancy, and transportation efficiency. This plan envisions the following non-motorized transportation improvements.



## Bike Paths

Off-street bike paths provide the highest level of safety and efficiency for cyclists, but they require right-of-way that is not always available. Therefore, they are best prioritized on high-traffic corridors and roads that run through lightly developed areas.

### Within the City of Walker, the following bike paths already exist:

- The Fred Meijer White Pine Trail, running along North Park Street from the Grand River to Mill Creek Lane, and then up Mill Creek Lane to the northern City Limits, with a spur leading to the Grand Rapids Rowing Association Boathouse.
- The Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail, running along 3 Mile Road, and then the old rail right-of-way north of I-96 into Ottawa County.
- The Fred Meijer Standale Trail, running along the power line right of way between Kinney and Cummings Avenues, then along Remembrance Road, then through the Walker Civic Center to Central Elementary School.
- The Kent Trail along the Grand River.
- Millennium Park's network of trails.

### The following additional bike paths are proposed:

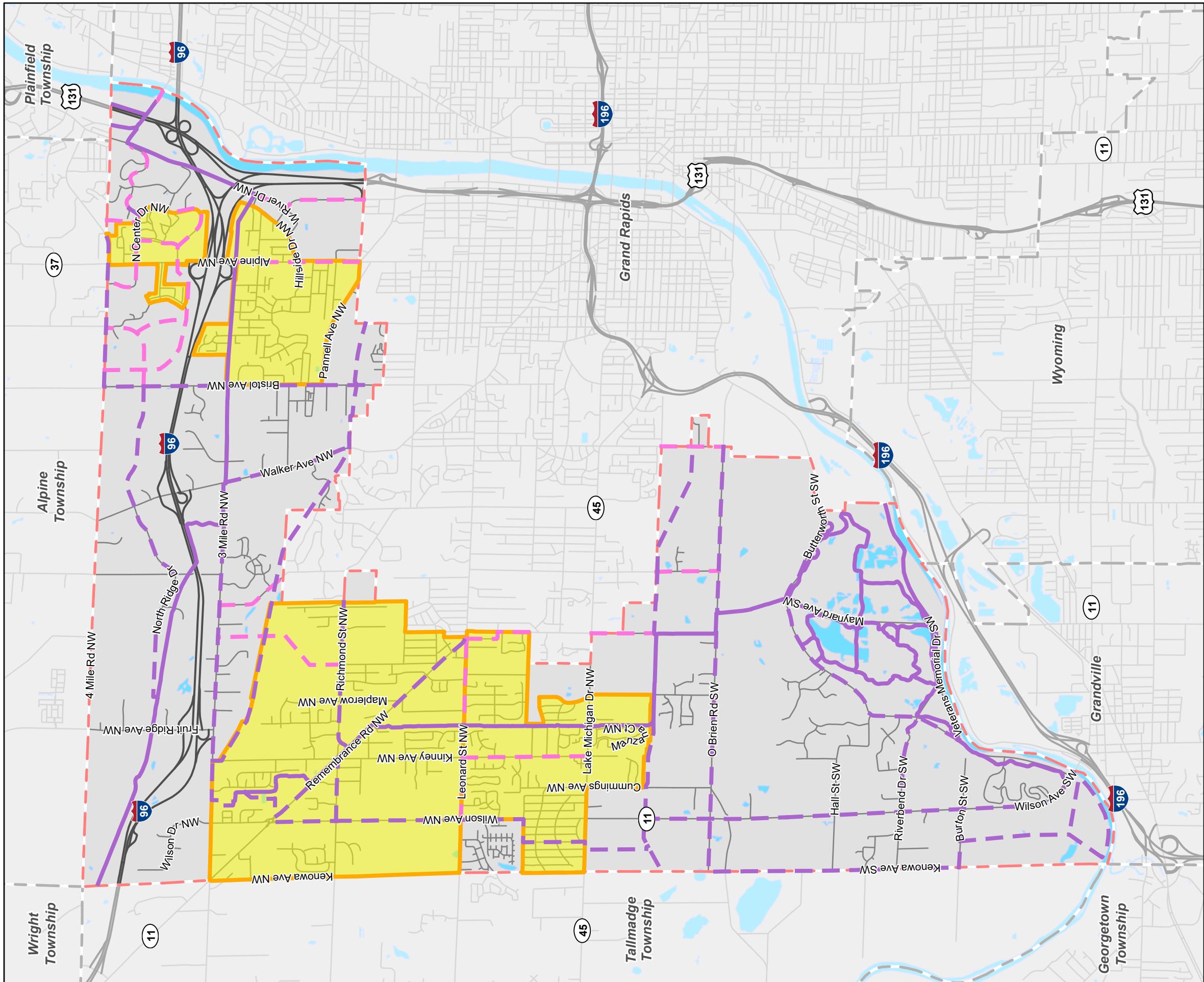
- West River Drive, from Alpine Avenue to the northern City Limits
- North Park Street, from Mill Creek Lane to West River Drive
- Turner Avenue, from West River Drive to the southern City Limits
- Bristol Avenue, from the southern City Limits to 4 Mile Road
- 4 Mile Road, from Bristol Avenue to the northern City Limits
- A New Bike Path connecting North Center Drive to Greenridge Drive
- New Bike Paths connecting the existing Ipswich neighborhood and future English Hills development to redeveloped Old Orchard Apartments and Summit Alpine
- An extension of the Kent Trails riverfront trail west of Wilson.
- Wilson Avenue, from the Grand River to Lake Michigan Drive, and from Remembrance Road to Leonard Street
- Burton Street, Kenowa Avenue, and O'Brien Road, creating a loop serving the neighborhoods west of Wilson.
- Riverbend Drive, Wilson to Butterworth.

- Butterworth Drive, Wilson to City Limits.
- Along the new road connecting the Fenske Site to Burton Street.
- Connecting cluster developments throughout South Walker, where street connections are not practical or desirable.
- A bike path running in the east-west power line right-of-way, from the where the Standale Trail turns north to the Ottawa County line (and beyond).
- Along the new road west of Meijer, then north on Ferndale Avenue, and then back on the city-owned land north of West Grand Blvd to Wilson, allowing the Wilson bike path to continue north while bypassing the busy Wilson/Lake Michigan Drive intersection.
- 3 Mile Road, from Central Elementary School (and a connection to the Standale Trail) to the Pioneer Trail.
- The old rail right of way south of 3 Mile Road, from where it intersects with 3 Mile to Bristol Avenue. Easements will need to be obtained where the rail right of way has been vacated. A portion of the route runs through the City of Grand Rapids, and Grand Rapids has planned for an eastward extension of the trail, so partnership will be necessary.
- Richmond Street, from Wilson Avenue to the Grand Rapids City Limits. The portions of the right-of-way that no longer contain a road, due to the re-routing of Richmond near the Remembrance/Kinney intersection, could be used for the pathway. The Grand Rapids Bike Action Plan designates Richmond for bike lanes east of Elmridge, but not west of Elmridge. Walker should partner with Grand Rapids to add bike lanes to Richmond, and to plan the transition from the proposed path in Walker to the proposed bike lanes in Grand Rapids.
- Remembrance Road, from the Standale Trail to Leonard Street, and from the Standale Trail to Wilson Avenue.
- Walker Avenue, from 3 Mile Road to the Grand Rapids City Limits. Walker Avenue is planned for bike lanes within the City of Grand Rapids, so partnership will be necessary on the transition from a separated path to bike lanes.
- Bristol Avenue, from 4 Mile Road to the Grand Rapids City Limits. Bristol has existing bike lanes within Grand Rapids, so partnership will be necessary on the transition from a separated path to bike lanes.

## Bike Lanes

On-street bike lanes are an effective design when space is limited, and through areas where urban-style development is existing or planned. There are no existing bike lanes in the City of Walker. Bike lanes are planned on the following corridors:

- Alpine Avenue (I-96 to south City Limits).
- North Center Drive
- Center Drive
- Weatherford Drive
- Northridge Drive (when constructed)
- The new road connecting Northridge Drive to Alpine Avenue (when constructed)
- Maynard Avenue. The City of Grand Rapids Bicycle Action Plan designates Maynard Avenue as a “Bicycle Community” roadway. The two Cities should work together to ensure a consistent environment for cyclists on the corridor.
- Leonard Street, from Wilson Avenue to the Grand Rapids City Limits. There are already bike lanes on Leonard in the City of Grand Rapids. Walker should extend them.
- Elmridge Drive, from 3 Mile Road to the Grand Rapids City Limits. There are already bike lanes on Leonard in the City of Grand Rapids. Walker should extend them.
- The new “Richmond Farms” road.



# Citywide Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

City of Walker, Michigan

October 30, 2019

## Legend

- Walker Boundary
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Freeways
- Existing Bike Path
- Proposed Bike Path
- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Sidewalk Improvement Zone



0 0.5 1 Miles

SOURCES - Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a. Date Source: City of Walker 2019. McKenna 2019.

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## Sidewalk Improvement Zones

Within Sidewalk Improvement Zones, sidewalks should be repaired and widened where they exist and built where they do not exist. Crosswalks should be constructed at busy intersections, including signage and signalization where appropriate.

### Sidewalk improvement zones are planned in the following locations:

- Alpine Avenue (I-96 to north City Limits)
- Coventry Drive and Ipswich Drive
- Old Orchard Drive
- North Center Drive, Center Drive, and Weatherford Drive
- Greenridge Drive (but not the other streets in that neighborhood)
- Valley Avenue north of 3 Mile Road, and the surrounding streets
- The area bounded by Bristol Avenue, 3 Mile Road, Pannell Avenue, and Alpine Avenue, including Alpine itself
- The area bounded by Hillside Drive, 3 Mile Road, and Alpine Avenue, including Alpine itself
- North of Lake Michigan Drive in Standale
- West of Elmridge Drive and south of 3 Mile Road.

# Zoning Plan

The table below shows the appropriate zoning districts for each Community Character Category. The City should consult this table, as well as the other recommendations of this plan, when determining whether to allow a rezoning.

Table 1.14: Zoning Plan

	AA	A	A2	S	SA	ARM-Dist 1	ARM-MULT	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-4	MH	ML	MP	ORP	P-SP	RMT	RPUD-1	RPUD-2	CPUD	IPUD	MPUD	SDD	
<b>Residential Existing Density (Neighborhood Preservation)</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*										*	*	*					
<b>Rural Residential 0-1</b>	X																							
<b>Cluster Residential 0-1</b>	X																	X	X					
<b>Residential Growth 2-4</b>		X	X	X	X														X					
<b>Residential Growth 4-8</b>			X				X	X												X				
<b>Residential Growth 8-12</b>							X	X												X				
<b>Mixed Use</b>																								
Neighborhood Corridor						X	X										X					X		
Neighborhood Node								X									X	X			X	X		
Urban Corridor								X	X	X	X					X	X			X	X	X	X	
Retrofit Mixed Use								X	X	X	X					X	X			X	X	X	X	
River Enhancement						X	X	X	X	X	X					X	X			X	X	X	X	
<b>Business</b>																								
Enterprise								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X			
Community Enterprise								X	X	X		X	X	X							X			
<b>Public/Semi-Public</b>																	X							

\*Parcels planned for Existing Density/Neighborhood Preservation should only be rezoned to make them consistent with surrounding parcels. Parcels already consistent with their surroundings should not be rezoned.

# Recommended Zoning Revisions

The following revisions to the Zoning Ordinance would support the implementation of this plan. The City should consider a major rewrite of the zoning ordinance to accommodate modern trends and encode the recommendations of this plan.

**Table 1.15: Zoning Recommendations**

Category	Zoning Ordinance Recommendation
General	Address frequently requested variances and barriers to (re)investment by amending zoning ordinance to reflect the built character of neighborhoods.
General	Consider allowing existing setbacks and building heights to be considered conforming.
General	Decrease off-street parking requirements and increase permeable surface requirements.
General	Promote green energy through specialized regulations.
General	Increase the use of low-impact design such as green roofs and green stormwater solutions.
General	Protect existing trees and require the planting of new trees.
General	Study a Transfer of Development Rights Program for private property where the future land use is a clustered, conservation or open space design.
General	Limit development in regulated areas, such as floodplains and wetlands.
General	Bring the residential zoning districts more in line with the Community Character categories in the 2020 Master Plan.
Residential	Study the consolidation of existing residential zoning districts and bring their density requirements in line with the 2020 Master Plan.
Residential	Allow infill residential construction to meet the massing and design of existing homes in the surrounding neighborhood.
Residential	Plan and implement a connected grid of internal streets, multiple connections to thoroughfares, and stub streets along interior lot lines.
Residential	Require connections to existing stub streets and make other connections to existing neighborhoods.
Residential	Prioritize a central gathering place or public / private park in new neighborhoods.
Residential	Require sidewalks in all neighborhoods, both new and existing, according to the Walker Sidewalk Plan.
Residential	Allow for flexibility in lot size, layout and design to allow for retained open space where envisioned by the 2020 Master Plan.
Residential	Allow a variety of housing types in Planned Unit Developments, provided that the density and mix of uses meet the requirements of the 2020 Master Plan.
Residential	Amend the zoning ordinance to define gross density, practical density, and net density with references to the 2020 Master Plan.
Residential	Allow Cluster Development where shown in the 2020 Master Plan.
Residential	Plan and implement the connecting of non-motorized trails between neighborhoods.
Residential	Require road connections, to create redundancy, every 800 feet.
Residential	Allow recreation, community, and specialized commercial uses within residential neighborhoods.
Residential	Allow new construction to meet the massing and design of existing homes in a neighborhood.
Residential	Provide for clustered residential units where allowed by the 2020 Master Plan.
Residential	Work closely with developers to ensure neighborhoods will provide high quality of life and be supported by infrastructure.
Mixed Use	Consider replacing the existing C-1, C-2, C-3, and C-4 districts with the following Mixed Use Districts:
Mixed Use	1 - Urban Mixed Use: Reflecting the recommendations of the Urban Corridor Community Character District.
	2 - Neighborhood Mixed Use: Reflecting the recommendations of the Neighborhood Node Community Character District.
	3 - Corridor Mixed Use: Reflecting the recommendations of the Neighborhood Corridor Community Character District.
Mixed Use	Allow Mixed Use Planned Unit Developments (MPUDs) for the areas designated as Retrofit Mixed Use in the 2020 Master Plan. The PUDs should allow the continued operation and growth of the property as presently developed, but should also implement the vision for the future redevelopment of the property.
Mixed Use	Allow Mixed Use Planned Unit Developments (MPUDs) for the major development sites envisioned by the 2020 Master Plan (English Hills, West Standale, etc.) to ensure projects are approved in a manner consistent with the 2020 Master Plan.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Zoning Ordinance Recommendation</b>
Mixed Use	Work with property owners in the northern River Enhancement area (near the North Park Bridge) and determine the best course of action for zoning in that area.
Business	Where identified in the 2020 Master Plan, reduce setback requirements from roads and other industrial properties, to allow for increased operational flexibility.
Business	Increase setbacks from residential districts to protect residential units.
Business	Increase buffer requirements between businesses and residential, and apply when residential is across the street or across a railroad right-of-way from industrial or commercial.
Business	Increase permitted building heights to allow for operational flexibility in the Enterprise Community Character Category.
Business	Ensure that research and development operations, as well as offices and retail, are permitted within the ML, MP, and MH districts, to allow for business flexibility.
Mixed Use	Require streets to be designed in accordance with the Corridor Design Plan.
Mixed Use	Reduce minimum front setback requirements.
Mixed Use	Consider a maximum front setback requirement.
Mixed Use	Reduce minimum parking requirements.
Mixed Use	Consider a new Suburban Mixed Use zoning district, permitting community, religious, educational, institutional, office and research uses, and multi-family housing.
Mixed Use	Create a zoning system where property owners have the option to redevelop in the fashion recommended by the Urban Corridor character area, without creating non-conformities. Options include rezoning some or all of the Urban Corridor areas to MPUD or creating a new Urban Mixed Use zoning district and rezoning some or all of the Urban Corridor to the new district.
Mixed Use	Allow residential uses on upper floors.
Mixed Use	Prescribe transparent first floor windows with retail or office storefronts.
Mixed Use	Be flexible with rezonings to allow a mix of uses that enhance access to the Grand River and White Pine Trail.
Mixed Use	Create a Riverfront Greenway Overlay.
Mixed Use	Protect riverside wetlands and floodplains from development and design a publicly-accessible riverfront.
Mixed Use	Require properties abutting the White Pine Trail to provide access to the Trail; use the site plan review process to ensure that sites are designed to enhance the Trail.
Mixed Use	Consider a new zoning district to encompass all aspects for the River Enhancement Corridor without making existing businesses into non-conforming uses.
Mixed Use	Allow existing businesses to continue operation while the district turns over into a mixed use area.
Public	Ensure the P-SP district meets the needs of a variety of public and semi-public uses.
Public	Consider allowing public and semi-public uses in districts other than P-SP, in case a different zoning district is desired or more appropriate.

# Action Plan

The Action Plan table below details activities and actions needed to implement this plan over the 20 year planning horizon. Actions are listed in time based on when they are likely to be realistic and practical.

**Table 1.16: Citywide Action Plan**

Land Use	Mobility	Infrastructure	Open Space and Parks
<b>Key Partners:</b> Developers, Business Owners	<b>Key Partners:</b> MDOT, Kent County Road Commission, The Rapid	<b>Key Partners:</b> City of Grand Rapids, North Kent Sewer Authority	<b>Key Partners:</b> Kent County Parks
<b>2020 - 2025</b>			
Redevelop English Hills golf course with the character and uses envisioned by this plan	Construct Northridge Drive along the previously platted route	Maintain existing infrastructure to support high quality of life	Acquire the wooded land east of English Hills Park
Ensure that development along Alpine south of I-96 takes place according to this plan	Redesign Alpine Avenue south of I-96 as an Urban Boulevard	Upgrade infrastructure as necessary to support development.	Required the preservation of an I-96 buffer and a "wooded back yard" English Hills Drive and Ipswich Drive during the redevelopment of English Hills Golf Course
Ensure that any redevelopment of Summit Alpine, Greenridge Square, Old Orchard Apartments, or other properties along Alpine north of I-96 take place in accordance with this plan	Redesign West River Drive north of US-131 as a Natural Beauty Corridor as described in this plan	Ensure that water and sewer infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of ongoing development.	When Richmond Farms is developed, set aside a location for a new neighborhood park.
Create a multi-jurisdictional Alpine Corridor Improvement Authority	Redesign roads designated as Business Connectors in this plan	Construct a water main loop to serve South Walker, as described in this plan	Set aside a buffer of preserved woodlands on the south side of the industrial uses along 3 Mile Road, from Kinney Avenue to Elmridge Drive.
Develop Richmond Farms according to the design goals of this plan.	Construct a bike path from North Center Drive to Greenridge Drive		Maintain and improve existing parks.
Ensure that development along Remembrance Road takes place according to this plan, including zoning revisions to support that development.	Construct a bike path along North Park Street from Mill Creek Lane to West River Drive		Partner with Kent County Parks on the continued build out of Johnson Park and Millennium Park.
Ensure that infill development throughout the Neighborhood Cluster is consistent with this plan.	Extend 3 Mile Road to West River Drive		Preserve the wooded and rural character of South Walker through cluster development, natural beauty roads, and other means.
Ensure that development west of Meijer meets the designs in this plan	Upgrade sidewalks in the Sidewalk Improvement Zones		

Land Use	Mobility	Infrastructure	Open Space and Parks
<b>Key Partners:</b> Developers, Business Owners	<b>Key Partners:</b> MDOT, Kent County Road Commission, The Rapid	<b>Key Partners:</b> City of Grand Rapids, North Kent Sewer Authority	<b>Key Partners:</b> Kent County Parks
<b>2020 - 2025, continued</b>			
Ensure that any redevelopment of Lincoln Lawns Golf Course meets the design recommendations of this plan.	Construct Northridge Drive along the previously platted route		
Develop zoning regulations for cluster housing developments	Construct the precisely platted road through Richmond Farms.		
Develop the Fenske site according to this plan	Redesign Leonard Street, Kinney Avenue, Wilson Avenue, Richmond Street, Bristol Avenue and Elmridge Drive as Neighborhood Connectors as described in this plan.		
	Add bike lanes to Leonard Street and Elmridge Drive.		
	Redesign 3 Mile Road, Walker Avenue, Waldorf Street, Pannell Avenue, and Fruit Ridge Avenue as Business Connectors as described in this plan.		
	Utilize the vacant Richmond Street right-of-way near the Kinney-Remembrance intersection for a public purpose - but not for automobile traffic.		
	Upgrade intersection safety at Remembrance/3 Mile and Wilson/Richmond.		
	Improve transit service on Remembrance, Wilson, and Leonard.		
	Construct a bike path on 3 Mile Road from the Pioneer Trail to the Standale Trail.		
	Work with the DDA to enhance the "slip street" system along Lake Michigan Drive.		
	Ensure the Laker Line is implemented in a fashion that supports and promotes Standale.		
	Redesign Kinney, Cummings, and Sunset Hills Avenues as Neighborhood Connectors.		
	Construct the "Westown Loop", including a light at Wilson Avenue.		
	Partner with the City of Grand Rapids to create a consistent experience for cyclists along Maynard Avenue, including bike lanes.		
	Precisely plat Neighborhood Connectors west of Meijer for new development.		
	Protect O'Brien Road as a Natural Beauty Corridor		

Land Use	Mobility	Infrastructure	Open Space and Parks
<b>Key Partners:</b> Developers, Business Owners	<b>Key Partners:</b> MDOT, Kent County Road Commission, The Rapid	<b>Key Partners:</b> City of Grand Rapids, North Kent Sewer Authority	<b>Key Partners:</b> Kent County Parks
<b>2020 - 2025, continued</b>			
	Ensure any development west of Meijer has a north-south bike path		
	Construct non-motorized pathways along Wilson Avenue, Butterworth Street, and O'Brien Road		
	Partner with The Rapid to create a bus route along Wilson Avenue		
	Construct new road connections and non-motorized pathways as part of a Fenske site development		
	Ensure that road infrastructure near the Fenske site is sufficient to support proposed development there		
<b>2026 - 2030</b>			
Ensure that development along Alpine south of I-96 takes place according to this plan	Construct bike paths connecting Ipswich Drive and a new English Hills development to Alpine Avenue at multiple points	Maintain existing infrastructure to support high quality of life	Explore opportunities to maintain the wooded hillside east of North Center Drive as undeveloped space
Ensure that development along Remembrance Road takes place according to this plan.	Upgrade sidewalks in the Sidewalk Improvement Zones	Ensure that water and sewer infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of ongoing development.	Maintain and upgrade parks as needed.
Ensure that infill development throughout the Northwest Neighborhood Cluster is consistent with this plan.	Construct bike paths along Bristol Avenue and 4 Mile Road	Evaluate infrastructure needs to determine if additional water or sewer is needed. Do not provide sewer unless the planned residential density requires it.	If Lincoln Lawns is redeveloped, ensure there is public park space retained within the new neighborhood.
Ensure that any new development south of Lake Michigan Drive meets the design goals of this plan.	Construct a road connection between North Center Drive and 4 Mile Road		Preserve the wooded and rural character of South Walker through cluster development, natural beauty roads, and other means.
Ensure that cluster housing developments, as they are developed preserve generally the areas envisioned by this plan	Construct a road connection between River Ridge Drive and Springbrook Drive		
	Construct a bike path on Northridge Drive from Bristol Avenue to the Pioneer Trail.		
	Construct a bike path on Walker Avenue from 3 Mile Road to the Grand Rapids City Limits.		
	Construct a bike path on Richmond Street from Wilson Avenue to the Grand Rapids City Limits, making use of the currently vacant right-of-way near Kinney Avenue.		

Land Use	Mobility	Infrastructure	Open Space and Parks
<b>Key Partners:</b> Developers, Business Owners	<b>Key Partners:</b> MDOT, Kent County Road Commission, The Rapid	<b>Key Partners:</b> City of Grand Rapids, North Kent Sewer Authority	<b>Key Partners:</b> Kent County Parks
<b>2026 - 2030, continued</b>			
	Construct a bike path in the unused rail corridor south of 3 Mile Road, from 3 Mile to the Grand Rapids City Limits. Partner with Grand Rapids to make the trail consistent across city lines.		
	Construct a bike path along Wilson Avenue from Remembrance Road to Leonard Street.		
	Construct a bike path along Remembrance Road from Wilson Avenue to Leonard Street, where one does not already exist.		
	Add transit service to 3 Mile and Walker Avenues. Determine whether transit service should be added to Northridge Drive as well.		
	Redesign West Grand Blvd and Ferndale Avenue as Neighborhood Connectors.		
	Construct a bike path running west through the power line right-of-way from where the Standale Trail turns north.		
	Advocate for transit improvements on Wilson Avenue		
	Construct non-motorized pathways through the neighborhoods west of Wilson, including within the Fenske site		
<b>2031 - 2035</b>			
Ensure that any redevelopment of Summit Alpine, Greenridge Square, Old Orchard Apartments, or other properties along Alpine north of I-96 take place in accordance with this plan	Construct a new road connecting Northridge Drive to Alpine Avenue	Maintain existing infrastructure to support high quality of life	Redesign English Hills Park to accommodate a road connection from Northridge Drive to Alpine Avenue
Ensure that development along Alpine south of I-96 takes place according to this plan	Upgrade sidewalks in the Sidewalk Improvement Zones	Ensure that water and sewer infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of ongoing development.	Identify opportunities for a new park in the center of the neighborhood bounded by Alpine, 3 Mile, Bristol, and Pannell.
Ensure that infill development throughout the Neighborhood Cluster is consistent with this plan.	Redesign Neighborhood Connectors as described by this plan	Evaluate infrastructure needs to determine if additional water or sewer is needed. Do not provide sewer unless the planned residential density requires it.	Identify opportunities for a new park in the area bounded by Alpine, Hillside, and 3 Mile.
Ensure that any new development meets the goals of this plan.	Evaluate the City's transportation network for upgrades.		Maintain and upgrade parks as needed.

Land Use	Mobility	Infrastructure	Open Space and Parks
<b>Key Partners:</b> Developers, Business Owners	<b>Key Partners:</b> MDOT, Kent County Road Commission, The Rapid	<b>Key Partners:</b> City of Grand Rapids, North Kent Sewer Authority	<b>Key Partners:</b> Kent County Parks
<b>2031 - 2035, continued</b>			
Continue cluster housing developments as envisioned by this plan	Ensure that the mobility network is continually improved to meet the needs of the community.		If development occurs south of Lake Michigan Drive and east of Sunset Hills Avenue, ensure that a public park is retained within the new neighborhood.
	Evaluate the non-motorized pathway system and determine if additional pathways are needed in South Walker		Preserve the wooded and rural character of South Walker through cluster development, natural beauty roads, and other means.
<b>2036 - 2040</b>			
Ensure that any redevelopment of Summit Alpine, Greenridge Square, Old Orchard Apartments, or other properties along Alpine north of I-96 take place in accordance with this plan	Redesign Alpine Avenue north of I-96 as a Regional Boulevard	Maintain existing infrastructure to support high quality of life	Maintain and upgrade parks as needed.
Ensure that development along Alpine south of I-96 takes place according to this plan	Upgrade sidewalks in the Sidewalk Improvement Zones	Ensure that water and sewer infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of ongoing development.	Ensure the parks system meets the needs of the community.
Ensure that infill development throughout the Neighborhood Cluster is consistent with this plan.	Evaluate the City's transportation network for upgrades.	Evaluate infrastructure needs to determine if additional water or sewer is needed. Do not provide sewer unless the planned residential density requires it.	
Ensure that any new development meets the goals of this plan.	Ensure that the mobility network is continually improved to meet the needs of the community.		
Continue cluster housing developments as envisioned by this plan	Evaluate the overall transportation system and update this plan.		

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4.

## **Redevelopment Ready Checklist**

# Redevelopment Ready Best Practices

## Master Plan Update Guide

The Redevelopment Ready Communities program provides a list of questions to ask during a Master Plan Update process. Below, each of those questions is answered in the context of the Walker 2040 Master Plan.

**Have development patterns changed significantly since the 1998 Plan?**

The City has grown and changed under the guidance of the 1998 Plan, but the biggest changes have been external trends – rapid changes in the retail market, demands for new types of housing and transportation, and increased concern about environmental sustainability. This plan seeks to position Walker effectively in light of those trends.

**Does the adopted Zoning Ordinance align with the goals of the plan?**

The Zoning Ordinance has been amended to fit the 1998 Plan, but will need further amendments in order to effectively implement this plan.

**Have there been instances where the planning commission or elected body has departed from the 1998 plan?**

The 1998 plan has been amended with sub-area plans over the years, which have reduced the need for departures. But this plan takes a more comprehensive look at recent trends in Walker.

**Have there been any major changes in Walker since the 1998 Plan?**

Continued growth and development have changed the built environment of Walker, but infrastructure investments (the Standale and Pioneer Trails, and the Laker Line Bus Rapid Transit project) have also had a big impact on the community. This plan addresses those investments.

**Are the goals and priorities of the 1998 plan in sync with the goals and priorities of City officials?**

During the planning process, elected and appointed officials, as well as the general public, expressed ways in which this plan could address Walker's needs in the 21st Century better than the 1998 plan does.

**Does the plan address the location and types of land uses frequently requested?**

This plan responds to the need for additional housing, the desire for walkability and mixed use, and the importance of preserving natural ecosystems, farmland, and open space as the City grows.

**Have other plans been completed that change the relevancy of the 1998 plan?**

The sub-area plans, which are included in Chapter 4, amend the 1998 plan. Some of those plans are reflected in this plan, while others are superseded by it.

**Have community goals and vision changed since the 1998 plan was written?**

Many of the goals of the City have changed. See Chapter 2.

**Are recent best practices integrated into the 1998 plan?**

Several best practices are missing from the 1998 plan. The best practices of Complete Streets, Placemaking, Sustainability, and Missing Middle Housing have been incorporated into this plan.

**Is the 1998 background data still relevant and accurate?**

No. Walker has grown and changed significantly since 1998. The background data has been updated accordingly.

**Is the 1998 plan user-friendly, with clear organization and graphics?**

The 1998 Plan was graphically interesting for its time, but new technology allows for increased usability.

**Are there clear goals and objectives for a downtown area?**

The 1998 Plan envisions a “Heart of Walker”, but does not clearly state where that “heart” should be. This plan acknowledges Walker’s multi-centricity, and envisions several new or existing “hearts”, including the Civic Center, Community Park in Standale (and in the future the surrounding area), Alpine Avenue (to be enhanced and improved as a community heart), and, potentially in the future after development, the Fenske site.

**Is there an implementation plan, including a CIP?**

The 1998 Plan’s implementation actions have either already been accomplished or are no longer relevant. This plan includes Action Plans for each Neighborhood Cluster in Book 2, as well as a Citywide Action Plan in Book 1.

**Are a zoning plan and zoning objectives included?**

The 1998 Plan’s zoning recommendations have largely been implemented. This plan includes zoning recommendations throughout, including a consolidated Citywide Zoning Plan in Book 1.

**Is a redevelopment strategy provided? Are priority sites for redevelopment included?**

The 1998 Plan envisioned greenfield development and did not discuss redevelopment as thoroughly as this plan does. In addition to general redevelopment recommendations, this plan includes specific redevelopment plans for English Hills Golf Course, the Fenske site, the land west of the Standale Meijer, Alpine Avenue, and Remembrance Road.

**Have there been any changes along community borders?**

Continued growth along Alpine Avenue, as well as in Grandville, Wyoming, and Grand Rapids, have impacted Walker. A lack of growth in Alpine Township west of Bristol Road, as well as in Tallmadge Township, also have an impact on Walker.

**Is there an upcoming major development or investment?**

The Laker Line Bus Rapid Transit project has already had a substantial impact in Standale, despite not yet being open at the time of adoption of this plan. Development and redevelopment on the sites noted in this plan will also impact the community.

**Do policy and recommendations support a safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation system?**

This plan is much more detailed on transportation than the 1998 Plan, including Corridor Design recommendations for all streets in the City, identification of future non-motorized infrastructure corridors, planning for future public transit needs, and envisioning a truck transportation system that impacts neighborhoods as little as possible.

**Do permitted uses support the job market and reflect the local talent pool?**

This plan envisions the I-96 industrial corridor remaining strong, and supported by the “Enterprise” and “Community Enterprise” categories in this plan. This plan also envisions mixed use development along major corridors in the City, a vision flexible enough to adapt to changing economic conditions.

## Ongoing Best Practices

The City should undertake the following best practices, as recommended by the Redevelopment Ready program, in the implementation of the Master Plan.

- Create corridor plans for Lake Michigan Drive and Alpine Avenue, in order to more fully develop the recommendations of this plan. Create a Corridor Improvement Authority along Alpine Avenue (partnering with the City of Grand Rapids and Alpine Township) to implement the plan, and instruct the Standale DDA to implement the Lake Michigan Drive plan.
- Create and implement an annual Capital Improvements Plan, using the Action Plan in this plan as a guide.
- Develop a public participation strategy and use it consistently.
- Update the zoning ordinance to implement this plan.
- Ensure that the development review process is streamlined, and take proactive steps (like adopting PUDs in advance of redevelopment) to ensure development takes place consistent with this plan.
- Review the City's Development Guide and update as needed.
- Follow RRC Best Practices for recruiting and training elected and appointed officials.
- Follow RRC Best Practices for internal and external communications.
- Identify redevelopment sites, including, but not necessarily limited to, those in this plan, and maintain a list of those sites and a clear plan for redevelopment.
- Create an Economic Development Strategy for MEDC approval.
- Review the City's Marketing Strategy and update as needed.
- Review the City's Website and update as needed.
- Continue annual updates of the City's 5 year Capital Improvement Plan during the budget approval process.
- Update the Standale Downtown Development Authority's 2004 Master Plan and Capital Improvements Plan.





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