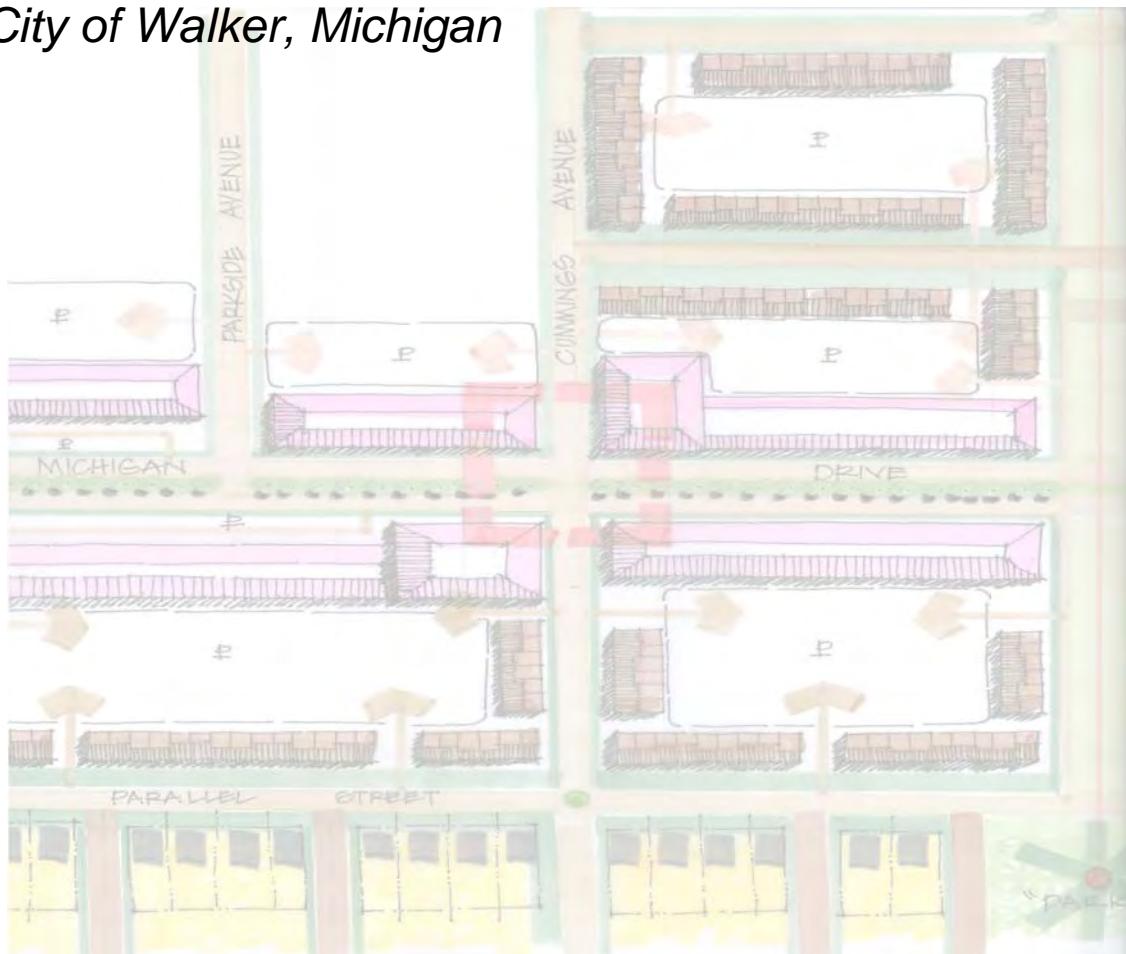


Approved September 24th 2007

**Sub-Areas 4-A and 4-B:
Standale / Downtown Walker
& West Standale**

**Future Land Use Plan
2007 Master Plan Update**

City of Walker, Michigan



LSL Planning, Inc.
Community Planning Consultants



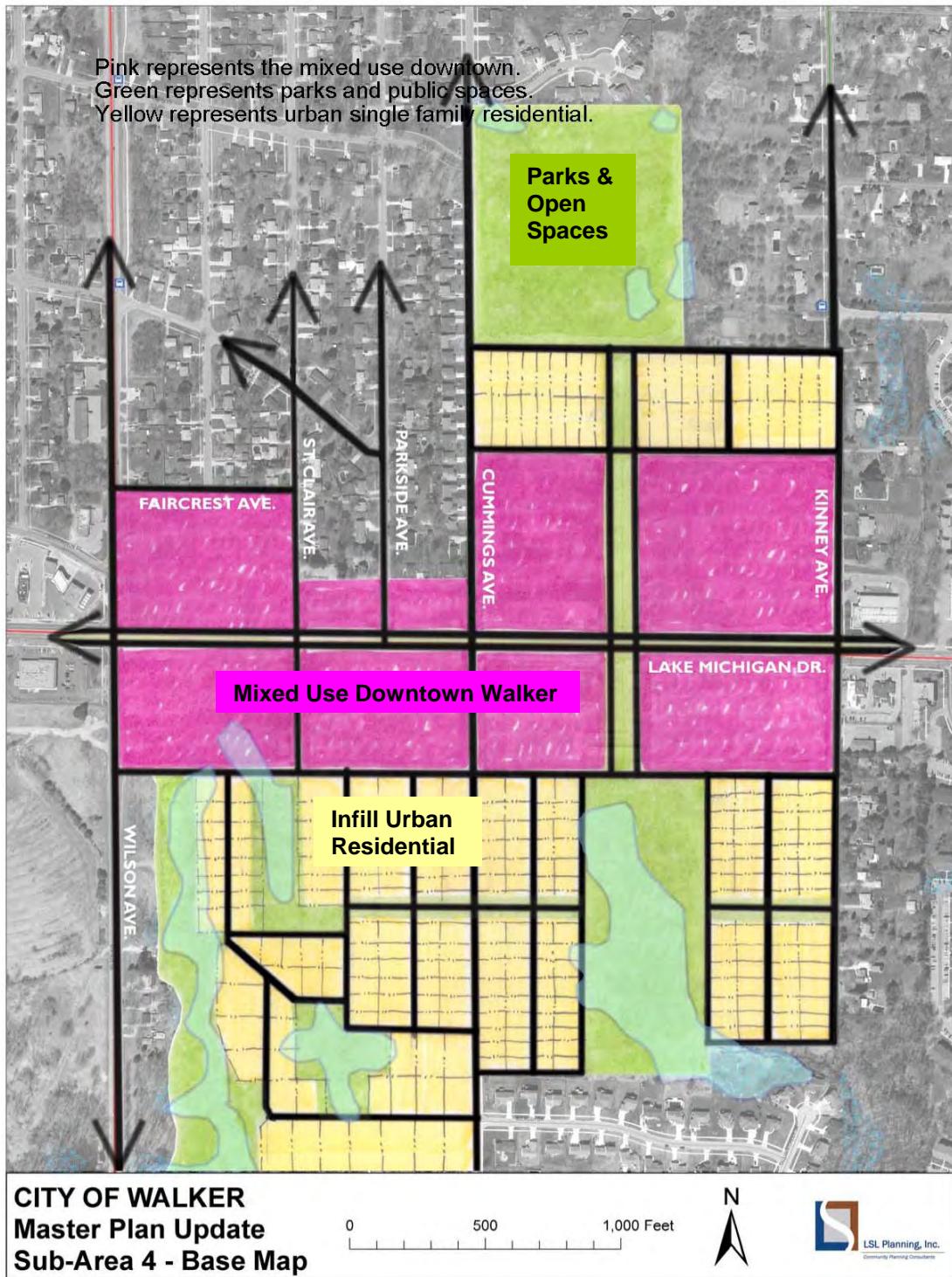


Figure 1: 2007 Sub Area 4A Future Land Use Map

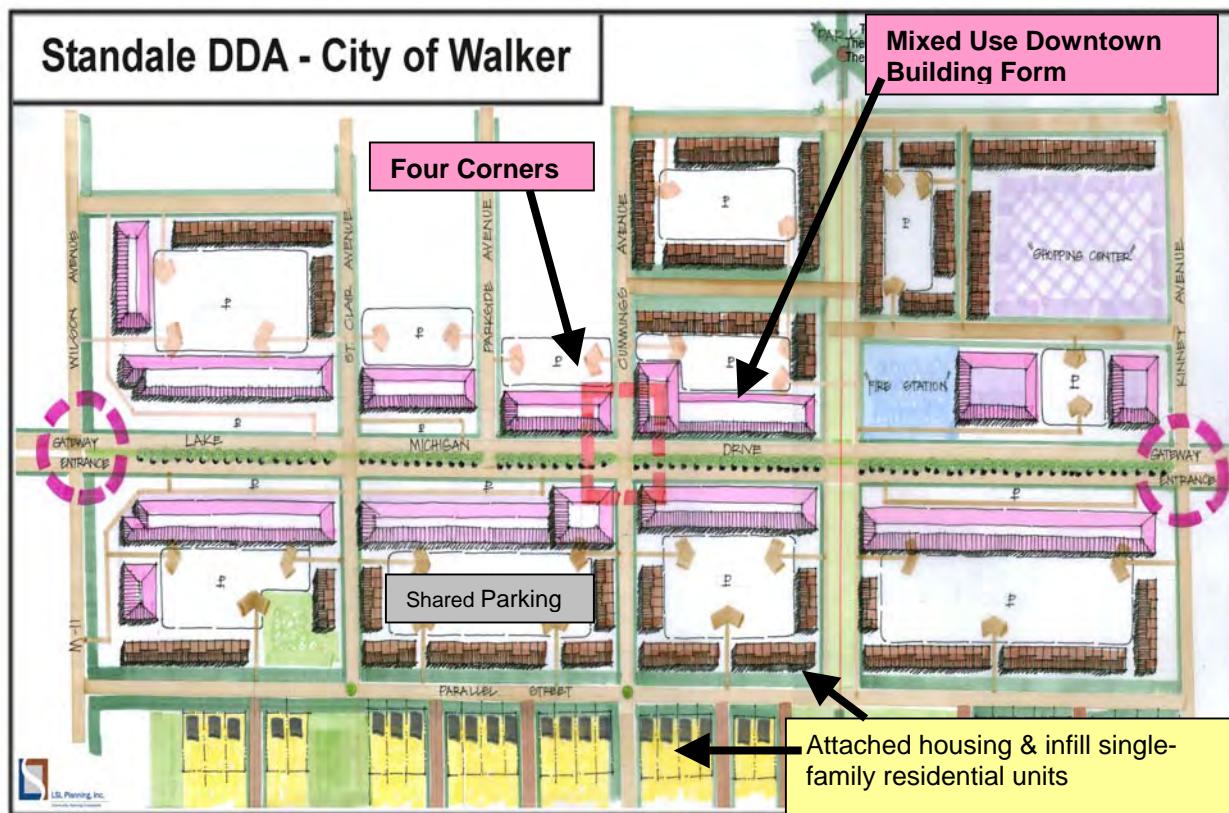


Figure 2: “Downtown Walker” Physical Design Master Plan

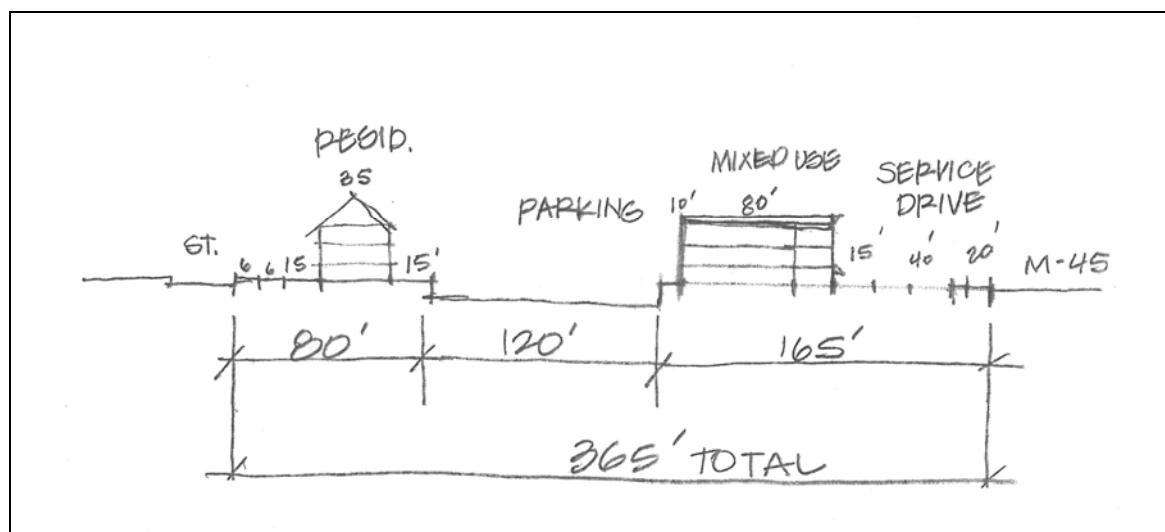


Figure 3: Proposed Cross Section For “Downtown Walker”

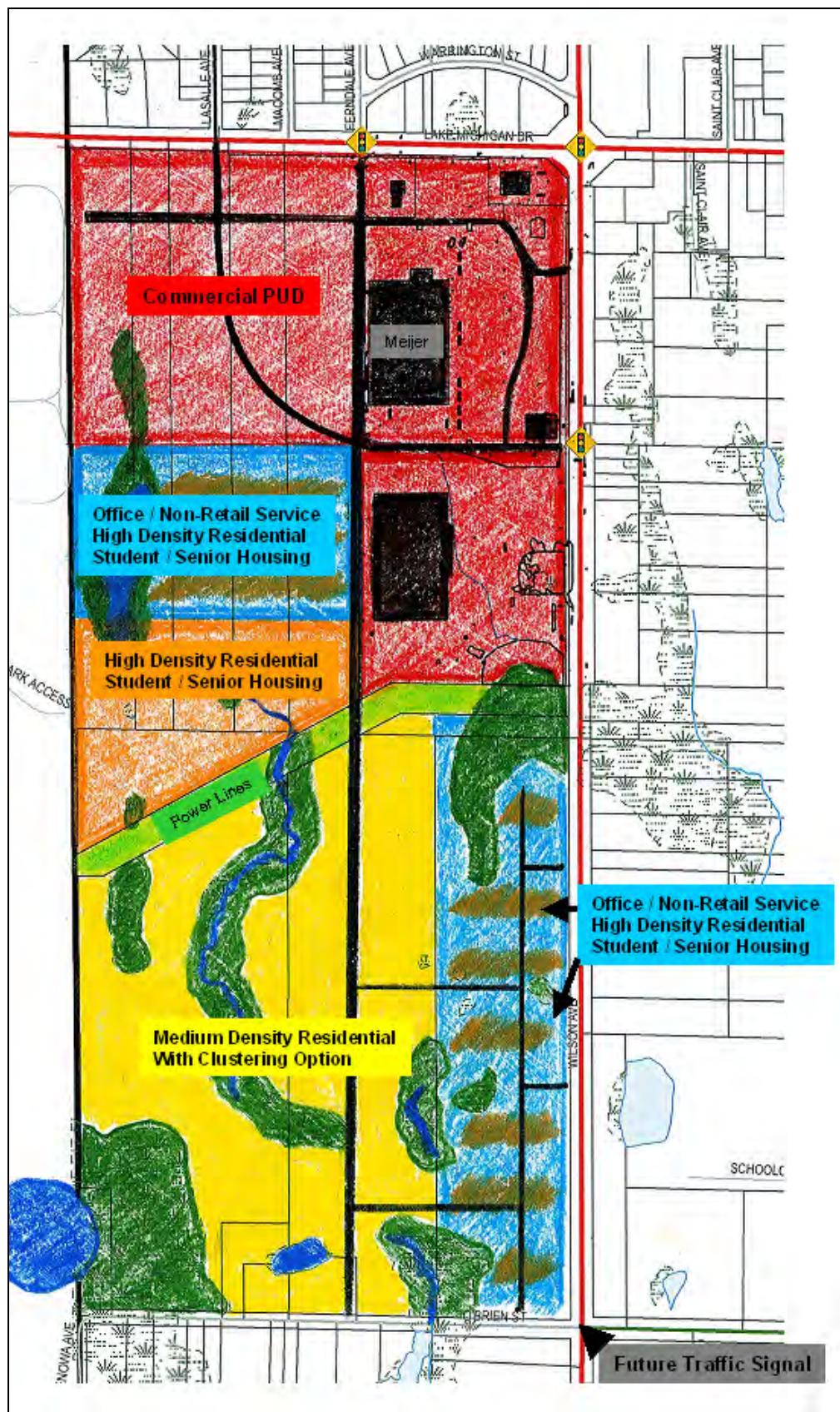


Figure 4: 2007 Sub Area 4B Future Land Use Map

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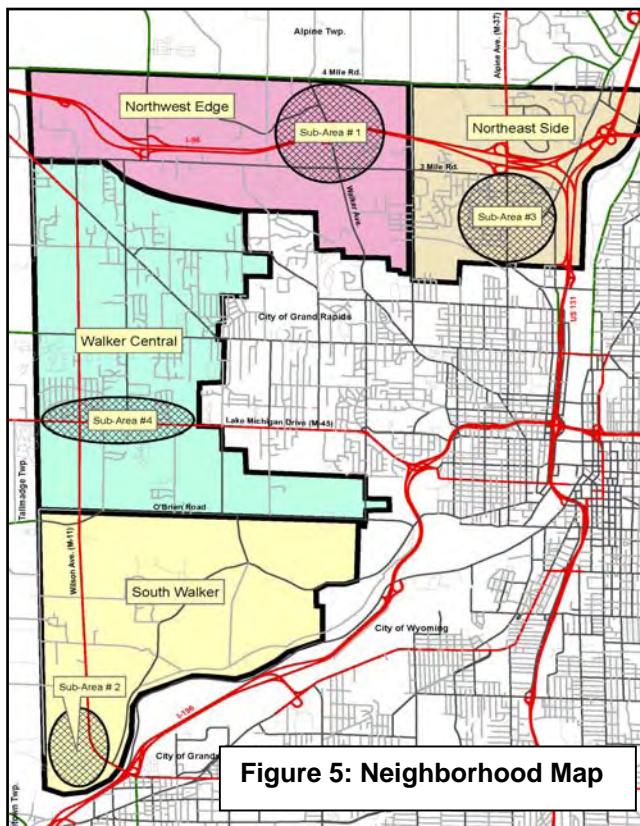
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Introduction

The City of Walker has undertaken an update of its 1998 Master Plan. The goal of this process is to create a guidebook for future land use decisions that will be understood and supported by the community at-large. Much of the 1998 Plan remains valid. However, various planning issues have arisen that require additional review. To that end, five Sub-Areas have been selected by the Walker City and Planning Commissions for detailed study, including (see Figure 5 - Neighborhood Map, below):

- 1 Sub-Area 1 -defined by Four Mile and Three Mile Roads and Bristol and Fruit Ridge Avenues.
- 2 Sub-Area 2 - located along Wilson Avenue adjacent to I-196.
- 3 Sub-Areas 3A - located near the Ann Street and Alpine Avenue corridors and 3B – located east of Bristol Avenue to Alpine Avenue.
- 4 **Sub-Areas 4A** - located along the Lake Michigan Drive corridor in Standale between Wilson Avenue and Kinney Avenue and **4B** - located on the south side of Lake Michigan Drive, west of Wilson Avenue and north of O'Brien Road.

These five general Sub-Areas reflected the disparate “neighborhoods” contained within the City of Walker. There are effectively several different communities within the borders of the City of Walker. The 2007 Master Plan Update process sought to work within this reality to better address local issues.



The planning process and resulting land use recommendations for these Sub-Areas provide a sound foundation on which to base future decisions, while at the same time providing effective implementation measures that accurately reflect community desires. Other actions that may be undertaken as a result of this effort are an update to the City's Zoning Ordinance, Parks and Recreation Plan and Capital Improvements Plan.

Although elected officials adopted the Sub-Area plans for the City of Walker, the public played an important advisory role in this process, providing input and acting as an effective sounding

board for both the Planning Commission and the City Commission. The City of Walker's ultimate goals for public participation were:

- 1 Provide the public with an opportunity to participate and be heard.
- 2 Make sure the process was fair.
- 3 Respect everyone's ideas and opinions.

The master plan update process was originally designed to encourage citizen participation at two junctures. The first would occur during an initial planning phase for each Sub-Area during a Community Forum, where the public would be given the opportunity to learn about the planning process, identify relevant issues and opportunities, learn about the context and physical parameters for each area, and participate in the development of land use and planning concepts.

Planners, designers and members of the Walker City and Planning Commissions would use results from these Forums to develop an initial land use concept for each Sub-Area that would be later tested and evaluated by the public.

The second opportunity would occur when, based on the outcomes of the previous public meeting, future land use concepts would be presented and discussed. During this second round of Community Forums, the public would have the opportunity to comment and provide opinions. These comments would prove helpful in completing the final future land use plan for each Sub-Area.

This elaborate and ambitious process was only used to its fullest extent for Sub-Areas 1, 2 and 3-B. Budget constraints required that the other Sub-Areas be managed using a modified version of the master plan update process.

The process for **Sub-Area 4-A** was modified to include public input after the redevelopment concept alternatives had already been generated. While this was an abbreviated process, it still provided citizens an opportunity to review proposed plans and provide comments and criticism.

Citizens provided comments and concerns at a public meeting on July 12th, 2006. A written survey / questionnaire was used to obtain comments from the public, which were ultimately used by the Planning and City Commissions in their deliberations and final decisions. The public comments were quite supportive of the proposed "Standale / Downtown Walker" plan.

The process for **Sub-Area 4-B** began with a meeting between staff and the site's large landowner – the Goodale Family. Next, the City of Walker Downtown Development Authority reviewed and acknowledged a draft future land use map that had been generated by staff.

A public meeting was held on April 18th, 2007 to roll out the draft future land use plan while allowing the public to comment and critique the proposal. Written

comment cards were distributed to the 50-60 people in attendance but only five cards were turned into the planning department. The comments were generally supportive of the future land use plan.

Sub Area 4-A Standale / Downtown Walker



Figure 6: Sub Area 4-A

Sub-Area 4-A is located between Wilson (M-11) and Kinney Avenues on Lake Michigan Drive (M-45). Sub-Area 4-A extends north and south to include existing residential neighborhoods and undeveloped land.

Better known as Standale, the area has evolved over time as a strip commercial corridor that serves surrounding neighborhoods and the central part of the city.

Standale was severely damaged by a tornado in 1956. Rebuilding was quickly completed, establishing a strip commercial character that reflected the suburban development patterns gaining momentum across the country.



—Grand Rapids Press Photographer.
THREE-MONTH TRANSFORMATION IN TORNADO PATHS—New homes, business structures and farm buildings have replaced the ruins of the April 3 tornadoes. Top picture shows a row of modern houses which have been built along hard-hit Port Sheldon rd. near Hudsonville. Center picture shows the same area the day after the tornado as homeowners scoured the ruins for their valuables. The twister leveled 16 houses in this area. Three months later 13 new homes, described as bigger and better than their predecessors, line the road. Lower picture shows a block of new commercial buildings on Lake Michigan dr., NW, in Standale, where 22 firms already are back in full operation.



Three months have transformed this branch. Lincoln Dairy has been remodeled and



—Grand Rapids Press Photographer.
SPIRIT OF STANDALE—The Delight grill was wiped off the map of Standale by Tuesday's tornado, but Kenneth Blakeslee, proprietor, was not daunted. An American flag, found in the debris, was rescued by Blakeslee and was attached to the only post left standing there Saturday, defiantly waving in the breeze as a symbol of courage.

**Figure 7: Post-Tornado
Redevelopment**

Figure 8: 1956 Tornado Damage

Sub Area 4A Existing Conditions

Land Use & Land Cover

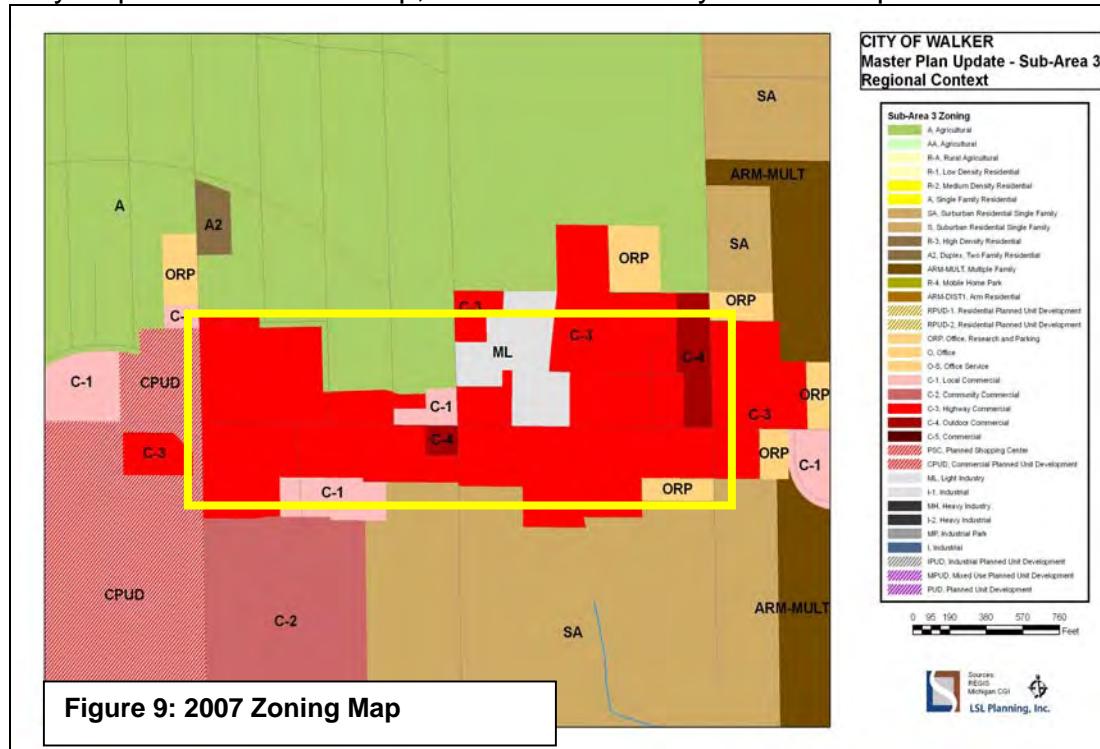
Sub-Area 4-A is characterized by strip commercial development along Lake Michigan Drive, surrounded by stable residential neighborhoods. Its southern edge has a semi-rural atmosphere and contains numerous large-lot, single-family homes. Many of these parcels contain woodlots, streams and wetlands.

New and/or redevelopment activity includes the Meijer store at the intersection of M-45 and M-11, the City's Fire Station #2 and community room, the GVSU/ITP/City of Walker Park-N-Ride lot, 5th 3rd Bank, Independent Bank, Applebee's, Uccello's and numerous facelifts to existing businesses.

There exists a large amount of commercially zoned property that is either vacant or underutilized. The existing zoning for these properties requires a traditional, suburban strip commercial character to development.

2007 Zoning

Properties along Lake Michigan Drive are zoned for commercial uses that, for the most part, are automobile-oriented. The commercial districts are flanked by single-family residential districts. Existing regulations use a conventional approach to zoning. The current zoning codes are geared to isolate development on stand-alone parcels; they do not permit mixed land uses and they require a suburban strip, "non-downtown" style of development.



Natural Features

Sub-Area 4-A was historically characterized by farms, woodlots and orchards supported by a small downtown business district. Much of the land base has since transitioned to urbanized uses but areas to the south remain largely undeveloped.

While overall topography is gently rolling, some areas, especially those to the south, are quite flat. As a result many parcels have not developed because they are constrained by wetlands and poor drainage. These lots have retained their rural residential characteristics.



Figure 10: Natural Features Map. Note that wetland boundaries are preliminary only and not approved by MDEQ.

City And DDA Owned Properties

Several Sub-Area 4-A properties are owned by either the City of Walker or the Standale Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The ability to purchase private property, market it for redevelopment via a Request For Proposals (RFP) process, then reinvest the profits by purchasing more property in Standale establishes a realistic mechanism to initiate and sustain the Sub-Area 4-A “downtown” redevelopment process.



Figure 11: City of Walker and DDA Owned Parcels in Sub-Area 4-A. Lots under public ownership are highlighted in yellow.

Transportation

Sub-Area 4-A is located at the crossroads of Lake Michigan Drive (M-45) and Wilson Avenue (M-11). Both are state highways of regional transportation importance. Wilson Avenue has historically been planned as the "West Beltline" for the Grand Rapids region. The intersection of M-45 and M-11 was improved in 2004 via a partnership between Meijer, the City of Walker, the Standale DDA and MDOT.

Regional development, including the expansion of Grand Valley State University's Allendale and downtown Grand Rapids campus sites, has highlighted the importance of M-45 and M-11. While accommodating regional traffic movement is an important consideration, it must be balanced with the community's desire for Standale to be restored as "Downtown Walker."

A recent partnership between the City of Walker, Grand Valley State University, The Rapid / ITP and the Grand Valley Metro Council has enabled the construction of a GVSU Park-N-Ride lot behind the new Fire Station #2 building. This new public parking lot currently accommodates 90 vehicles. The ITP Route 50 bus will now stop at Fire Station #2 to facilitate student use of the new lot.

Public Utilities and Topography

Sub-Area 4-A is currently served by public water and sewer systems. Major upgrades to the Tallman Creek trunk sewer will be completed in 2007.

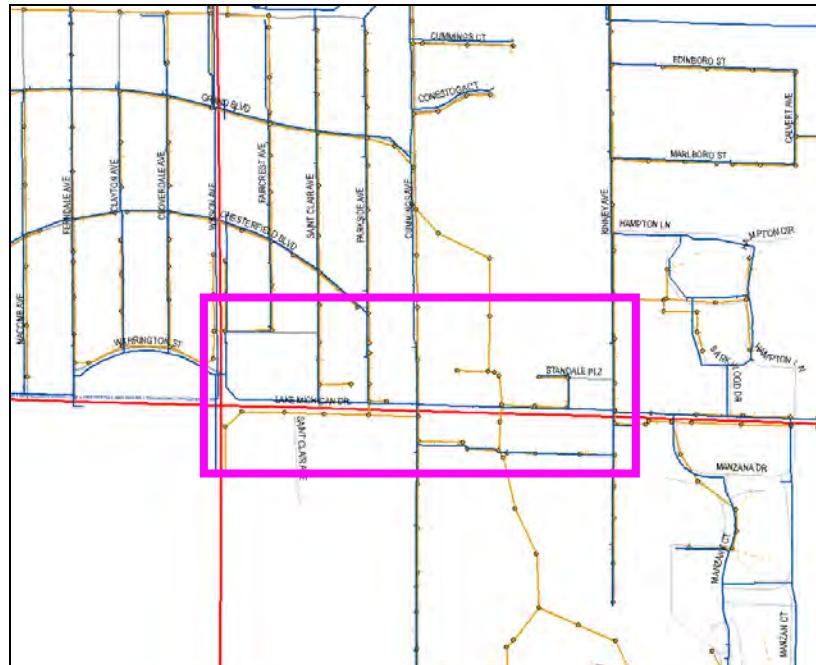


Figure 12: Public Water and Sewer Map

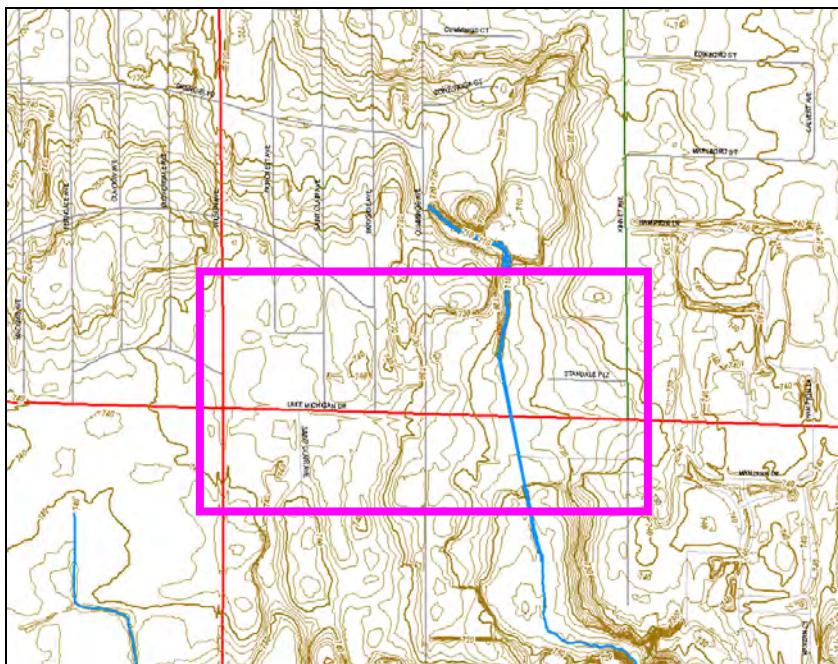


Figure 13: Sub-Area 4-A Topography (2' contour intervals)

1998 Master Plan

The 1998 Walker Master Plan and its Future Land Use Map (Figure 14) projected a suburban strip commercial corridor through Standale. Vacant land outside of the commercial corridor was planned for residential uses of various densities.

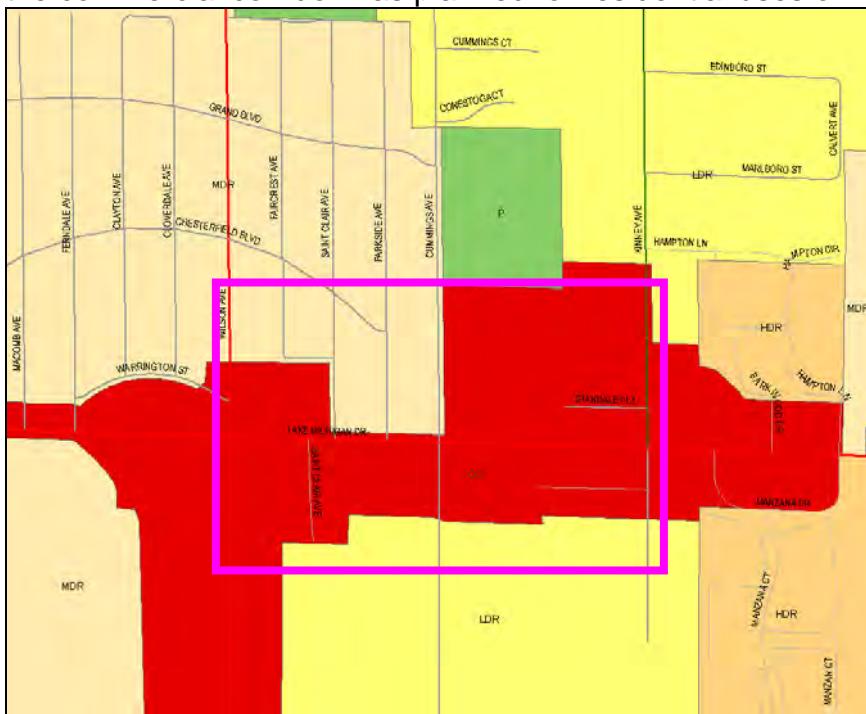


Figure 14: 1998 Master Plan – Future Land Use Map

2007 Sub Area 4-A Master Plan Update: Description

Concept Alternatives

The creation of an overall Concept Plan and a more detailed plan for the Lake Michigan Drive Corridor (see Figures 15 & 16) was guided by a report titled “*Market Analysis and Strategic Plan for Standale*” prepared by the Chesapeake Group. This plan was reviewed and endorsed by the City of Walker Downtown Development Authority on March 29th, 2006 and became the foundation for the Sub-Area 4-A Master Plan. The following is a synopsis of those findings:

Market Research Results

Sub-Area 4-A Multi-Unit Residential Demand

- ◆ 5,400 Residents (2006 to 2015 estimated city-wide population increase)
- ◆ 1,641 to 2,199 Residential Units (2006 to 2015 city-wide increase in total number of households)
- ◆ 328 to 440 Multi-Family Units (20% of total city-wide residential units = non-single family units)
- ◆ 164 to 220 Multi-Family Units (50% market capture for study area)

Sub-Area 4-A Single Family Residential Demand

- ◆ 1,313 to 1,759 Single Family Homes (80% of total city-wide residential unit demand)
- ◆ 328 to 440 Single Family Homes (25% capture for study area)

Total Study Area Forecasted Demands (2006 – 2015)

- ◆ 492 to 660 Residential Units



- ◆ 46,000 to 101,500 Square Feet Retail
- ◆ 52,000 to 69,000 Square Feet Office

2007 Sub Area 4-A Master Plan Update: Key Concepts

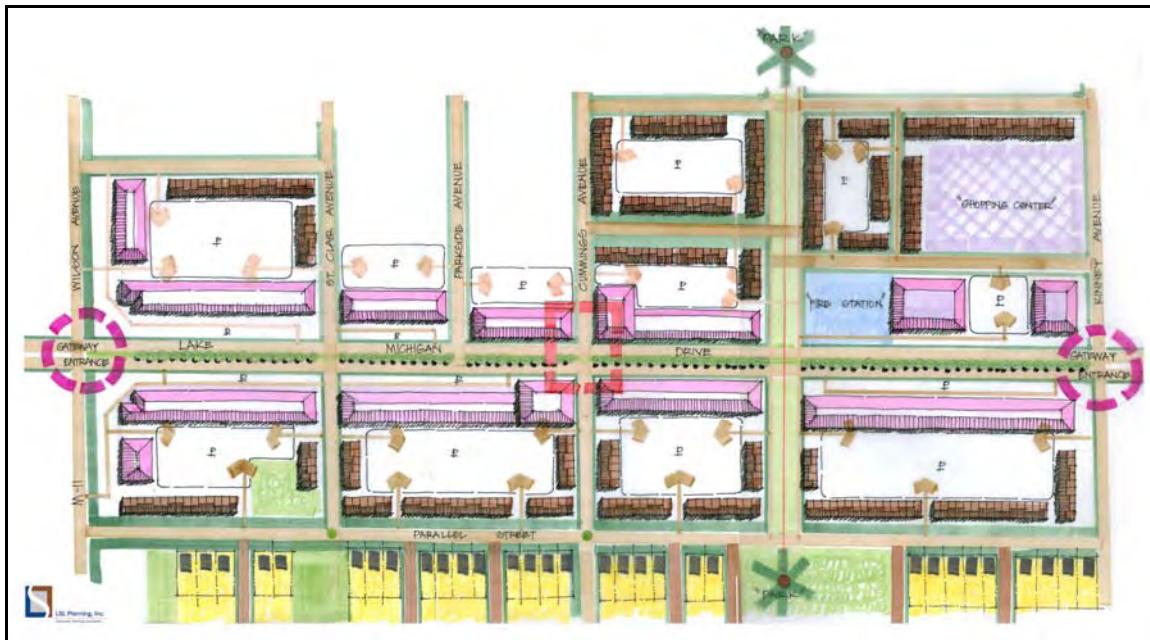


Figure 16: Lake Michigan Drive Corridor – Detailed Plan For “Downtown Walker”

Land Use

- ◆ Promote mixed-use development (shown in pink on Figures 15 & 16) including a blend of residential, commercial and office uses in a “downtown” setting.
- ◆ Encourage multi-story buildings in the mixed-use downtown that accommodate residential or office uses on upper floors and retail / office on the ground floor.
- ◆ Support development of higher density residential (shown in yellow on Figures 15 & 16) in neighborhoods surrounding the downtown.
- ◆ Create traditional development patterns that are typically found in older residential neighborhoods:
 - Two and three story buildings located at or near the sidewalk.
 - Small blocks and narrow interconnected streets with sidewalks to promote walking.
 - Garages that are located in the rear yard or are set back behind a line extending across the front façade of a building.

- ◆ Orient buildings toward public streets and place parking lots either to the side or behind buildings at the center of a block.
- ◆ Formalize a service drive with on-street parking that parallels Lake Michigan Drive but is separated from the M-45 travel lanes by a sidewalk and parkway planted with street trees.
- ◆ Design buildings near the intersection of Cummings Avenue and Lake Michigan Drive as the “4 Corners” focal point of Downtown Walker.
- ◆ Permit a blend of different types of homes in residential neighborhoods ranging from small-lot single family to town-homes, student housing and senior housing.

Public Spaces

- ◆ Promote the development of an interconnected system of parks, sidewalks and natural areas.
- ◆ Create public spaces in the downtown to accommodate multiple-uses, events and activities.
- ◆ Preserve existing wetlands and tree stands where possible and incorporate them into an inter-connected open space and park system.

Gateways and Entrances

- ◆ Celebrate and reinforce entrances into Standale / Downtown Walker via Lake Michigan Drive by encouraging signature buildings, special landscape design treatments and way-finding signs.
- ◆ Place existing overhead utilities underground to clean up the overall streetscape and to minimize conflicts with street trees.
- ◆ Transform Lake Michigan Drive into a tree-lined boulevard. The boulevard island would be narrow and urban in design.

Downtown Building Orientation and Design

- ◆ Buildings along Lake Michigan Drive should:
 - Front on the parallel service drive;
 - Provide at least a 12' public sidewalk;
 - Provide parking in the rear, on the sides and along the parallel service drive;
 - Provide plazas and other common spaces;
 - Be multi-story;
 - Be primarily brick and block with the ground floor exhibiting a high percentage of window space.



Figure 17: Downtown Building Orientation Conceptual Guide

*"They don't want it to become another Alpine,
and that's good. No one wants to lose the small town feel of Standale."*

— Rob Conkey, general manager of Uccello's



Down the road: Planners hope to reshape the strip mall appearance of Lake Michigan Drive into a more traditional downtown look.

PHOTO: REX D. LARSEN

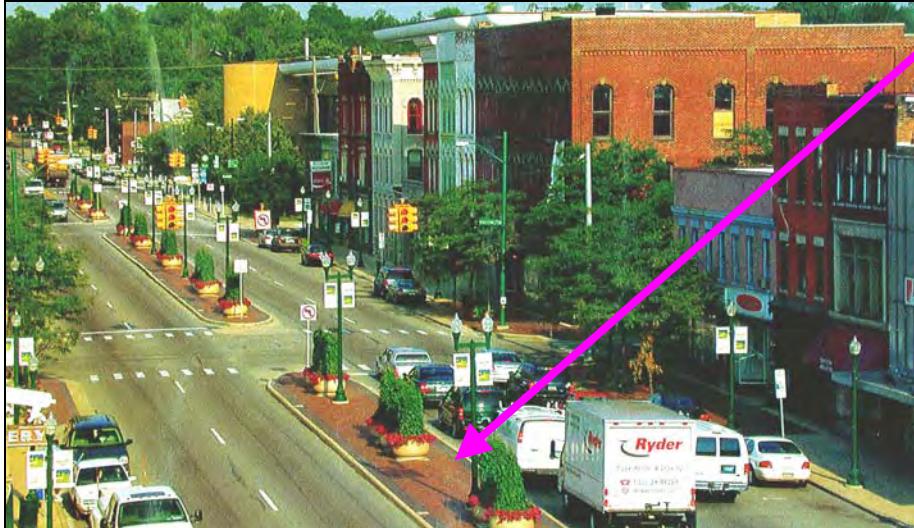
Destination Standale

Shopping hub again
a place to stop,
not just drive through

the arrival of the Meijer Inc. store in 2005, said Walker Mayor Rob VerHeulen.

Now, the city is working to shape that growth as a more attractive downtown-style district.

"A few years ago, everyone real-



Present and Potential Future of Lake Michigan Drive

Note: Future image is lacking parallel M-45 service drive. Parking directly on M-45 is not proposed or recommended.



Downtown buildings will be constructed of brick, block and glass and will present onto public streets.



The downtown mixed-use area will establish an interesting, walkable and interconnected public frontage.



The downtown mixed-use area and supporting infill residential will be creative, constructed with durable materials and will offer “niche market” housing products.

Standale / Downtown Walker Public Meeting

A public meeting to roll out the proposed Standale / Downtown Walker master plan was held at City Hall on July 12th, 2006. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting. Participants were given an opportunity to review and comment on the previously prepared “Downtown Walker” concepts for Sub Area 4-A. In addition, the public was afforded a more detailed assessment of the Lake Michigan Drive corridor and the Downtown Development Authority’s market analysis.

In order to help explain the proposed master plan, photos and sketches were presented indicating possible land uses, residential densities and downtown-character options. These helped explain the proposed Standale / Downtown Walker concepts and aided the public in responding to a questionnaire.

The following are citizen comments from the questionnaire for Sub-Area 4-A:

1. ***What do you like about the plan for Standale / Downtown Walker?***

- ◆ I like eliminating mid-block driveways.
- ◆ I like the connected buildings instead of stand alone buildings
- ◆ The high-density residential is good to have.
- ◆ I like all the access roads and the connection to/with the existing park and the planned one.
- ◆ I like the multi-story buildings.
- ◆ I like the new bus shelters at and across from Meijer. Possibly a sidewalk for de-boarding the back of the bus would be nice.
- ◆ I like having a Meijer.
- ◆ I like the 7 lanes at the cross roads of Wilson and Lake Michigan Dr. to slow the speed down to 35 m.p.h.
- ◆ Yes – Pedestrian common areas, green space, variety of housing.
- ◆ Focus on green and public areas, eating outdoors.
- ◆ Prospect of a farmer’s market!
- ◆ Yes.

- ◆ Business
- ◆ Yes!! All the plans are great, just what Standale needs.
- ◆ Standale is at present dying. This new idea is great – long over due.
- ◆ First impression is ok. Trying to get traffic to slow down.
- ◆ Yes, it is very unique. I've seen similar idea in Maryland where our daughter lives. Especially one area that was an undesirable area, but today it is a pleasant place to shop and visit.
- ◆ Yes! The idea of rejuvenating Standale. The green spaces and walks. The idea of counter-balancing the “village” and Standale seems like the City of Walker making all her streets “people friendly.”

2. Is there anything you don't like about the plan?

- ◆ I would like to see an access road from Kinney and Barkwood and Hampton Lakes drives, as well as from Kinney to Manzana Dr., so there is access to the traffic signal.
- ◆ I would like to see more on-street parking and less parking lots.
- ◆ I like how the cement sidewalks cross the asphalt driveways.
- ◆ I would like to see Ralph's become an Aldi's.
- ◆ I would like to see a Home Depot.
- ◆ Standale no more being a suburb but a city, but I guess that comes with the changing of times.
- ◆ The sidewalk/boulevard may not be wide enough for outdoor restaurant seating?
- ◆ Too many people move in.
- ◆ Absolutely not!!!
- ◆ Didn't discuss types of businesses would not be allowed. What types of current businesses would be expected to leave?
- ◆ Only that this vision takes time and I'd like to see that vision a reality.

3. ***Do you have any suggestions?***

- ◆ There should be a better or more prominent memorial to Standale.
- ◆ I would like to see some way-finding signs at M-45 and the Standale bike trail emphasizing what is in Standale.
- ◆ Sidewalks should be raised above the grade of the service drives.
- ◆ Bury the power lines.
- ◆ Moving the library to Standale would be great.
- ◆ Make Fennessey Road on the east side of Wilson a park area and rest area with picnic tables.
- ◆ A post office
- ◆ Maintain historical look
- ◆ When rezoning, be very restrictive about sign size and height to help reduce the “Alpine” look of chain advertisements.
- ◆ Put into the design a bike path, bike lanes, bike parking, and perhaps connection to other trails and/or Millennium Park.
- ◆ Try to find a specialty grocery store as an anchor to complement
- ◆ Meijer’s less “fancy” foods, e.g., Whole Foods or Trader Joe’s, G.B. Russo’s.
- ◆ Create a bus exchange – a stop where the GR to GVSU bus meets with another bus route – one that circles around Walker –Remembrance, Kinney, Wilson, Leonard, Oakleigh, etc.
- ◆ Try as hard as possible to avoid chains and the look of chains - “McDevelopment”.
- ◆ Keep China Chef
- ◆ Consider consignment shops, organic/farm foods e.g., Sobie meats, etc., other organic farm goods. Sammy Gyros! (Eastown) (We could ask him, that would be totally great!)
- ◆ Bike trail to Grand Rapids and also to Grand Valley!

- ◆ Be sure to bury wires.
- ◆ I would like to see a committee formed to work with the development of Standale. I would like to be a part of this committee or help develop it. I will be looking forward to hearing from you.
- ◆ Possibly expand area to bike trails. More inviting to stop. Welcome signs under power lines heading west. Some of the current buildings as a lead-in may make things less appealing.
- ◆ I would like to see a market. Suggest you check out Nashville, Tennessee Open Market with perhaps a meat, fish market – year around operation.
- ◆ Store suggestion – Tuesday Morning, Trader Joe's.
- ◆ Yes! Farmer's Market opposite days of the village and other activities would round out the city for all the citizens. I would consider volunteering on the committee to help!

Policy Recommendations For Implementation Of Sub Area 4-A Master Plan

1. The City of Walker should create a new “downtown” zoning district for Sub-Area 4-A. The suburban zoning currently in place will not allow redevelopment to occur as proposed in this master plan update.
2. The City of Walker Downtown Development Authority (DDA) should continue to invest in capital improvements. However, DDA activity should be expanded to include aggressive self-promotion and marketing.
3. The DDA should initiate a plan to eventually bury all utility lines.
4. The DDA should investigate potential façade improvements loans to local businesses.
5. The City of Walker should partner with MDOT to study the eventual reconstruction of Lake Michigan Drive / M-45 into a narrow boulevard cross-section. This boulevard should not be similar to the expansive design used on Lake Michigan Drive through Allendale. Rather, the Sub Area 4-A reconstruction plan should be an urban, compact boulevard design.
6. The City of Walker and the DDA should continue to partner with and support the Route 50 public bus between the two Grand Valley State University campus sites. Students provide an opportunity to help sustain the redevelopment of Standale / Downtown Walker.
7. The City of Walker and the DDA should aggressively pursue the purchase of property for permanent public parking areas. The Standale / Downtown Walker plan will not be successful without adequate public parking.

Sub-Area 4-B – West Standale

Sub-Area 4-B focused on the properties located south of Lake Michigan Drive, west of Wilson Avenue, north of O'Brien Road and east of the Ottawa County line. Nineteen properties totaling approximately 270 acres of land were included. The dominant landowners were Meijer, Inc. and Goodale Enterprises.

Sub Area 4-B was located immediately southwest of **Sub Area 4-A**.

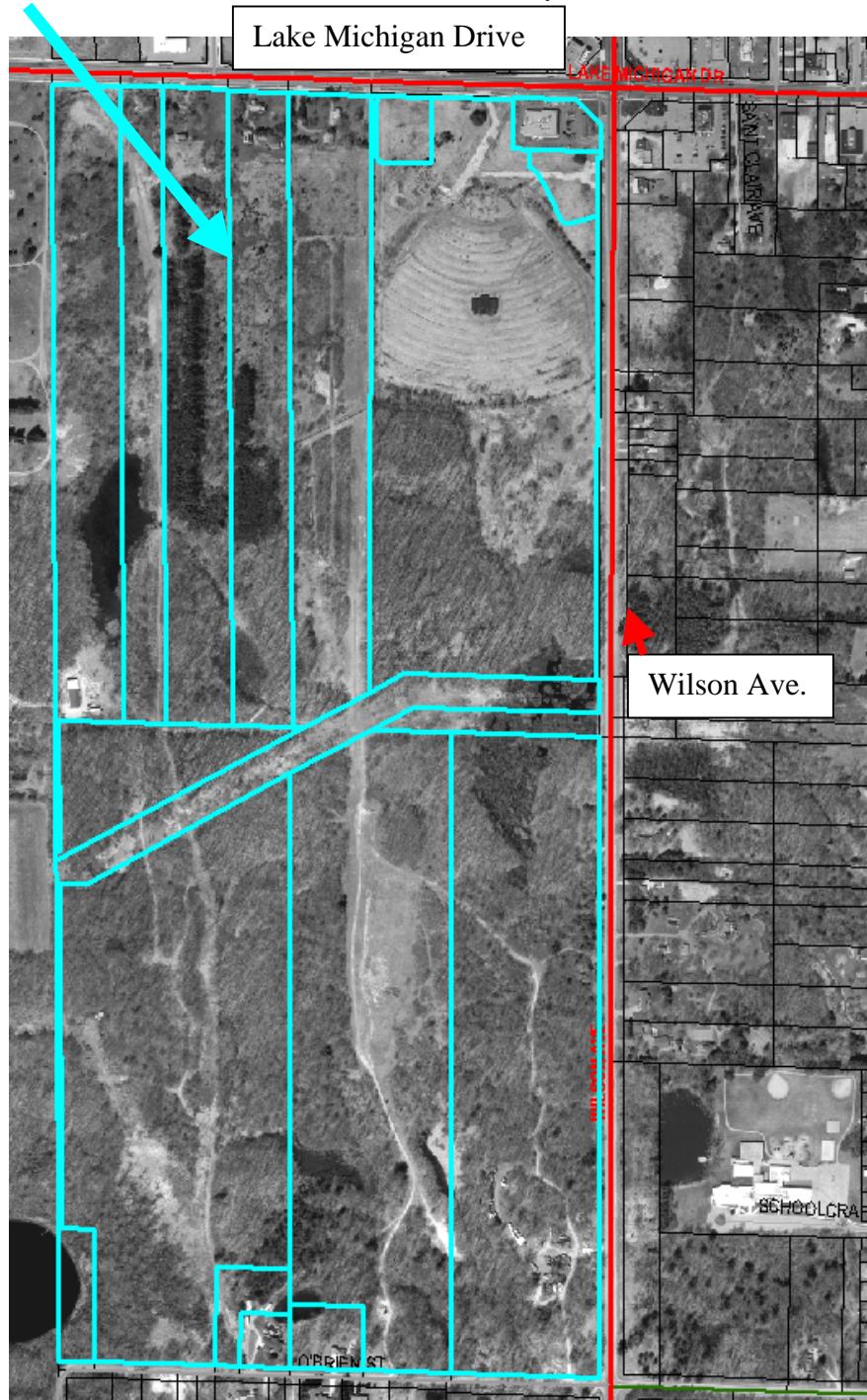


Figure 18: Sub Area 4-B

Sub-Area 4-B Existing Conditions

Land Use & Land Cover

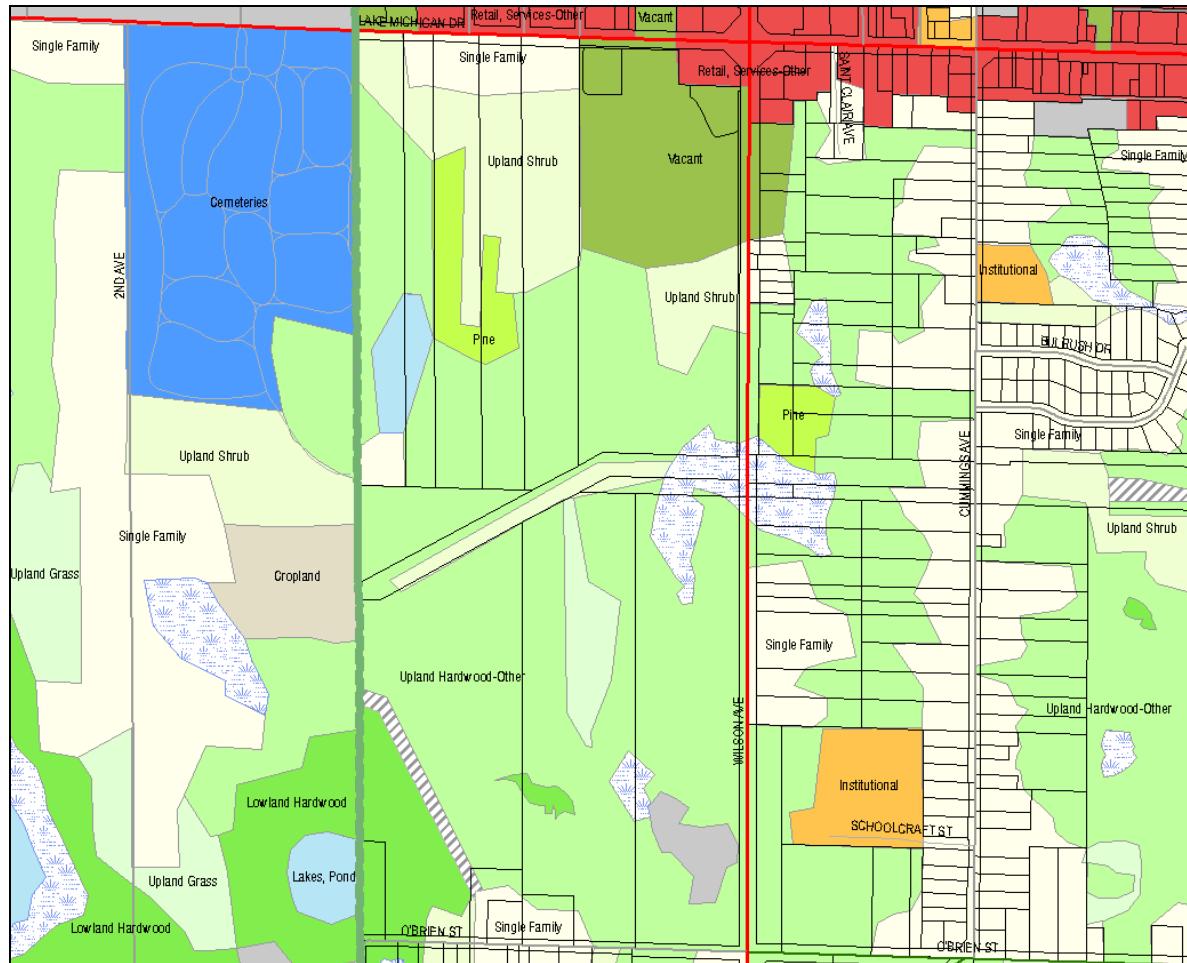


Figure 19: 2003 Land Use & Land Cover Map

The existing land use in Sub-Area 4-B reflects a suburban edge pattern. The majority of the land is vacant. Land cover consists of grasslands, wetlands, floodplains and mixed forest types.

The northeastern corner of Sub Area 4-B has been developed as suburban commercial via the new Meijer and associated retail outlots.

These recent land use changes are not reflected on the 2003 Land Use Map.

Existing Zoning

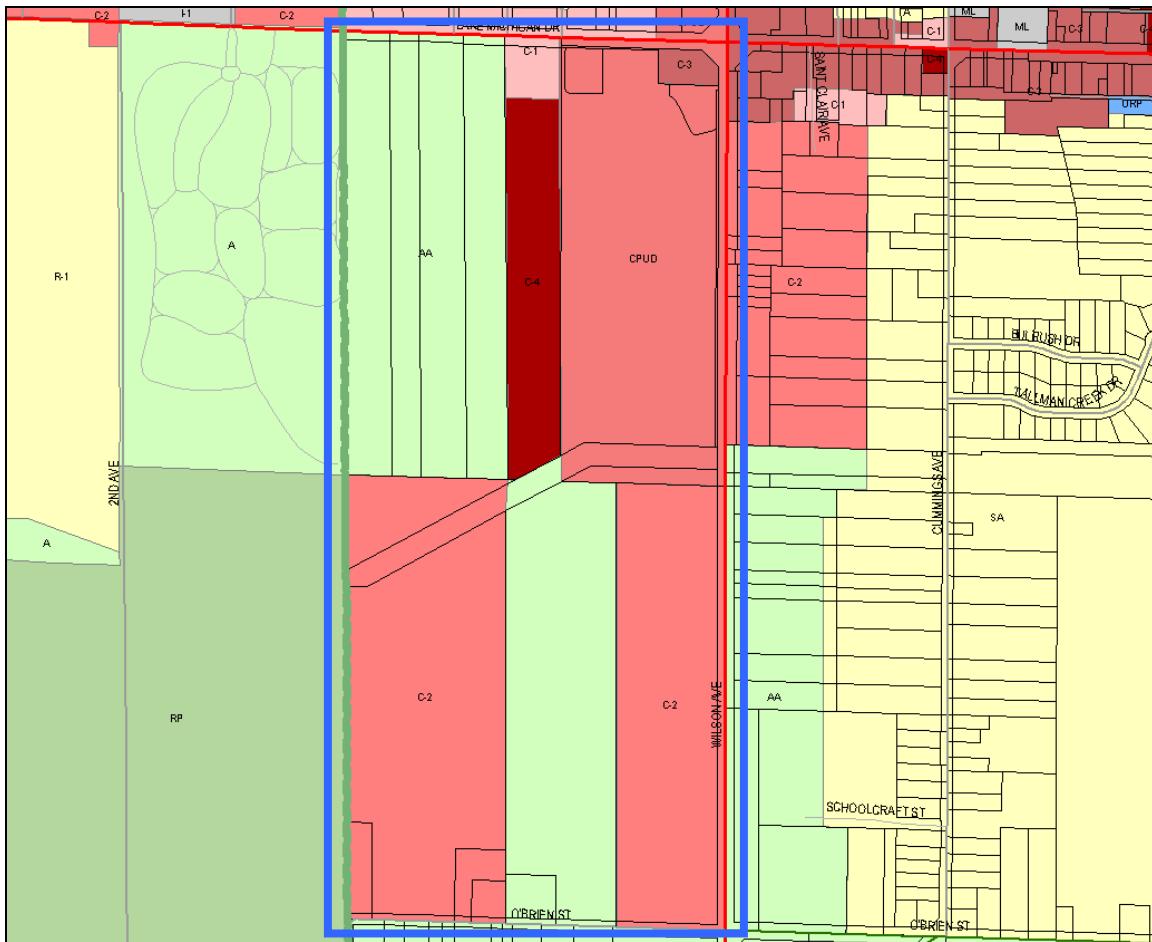


Figure 20: 2007 Zoning Map

More than half of Sub Area 4-B is currently zoned for commercial uses. The Meijer complex is a Commercial Planned Unit Development. A vacant, 36-acre parcel south of the power lines along Wilson Avenue is zoned C-2. A vacant, 47-acre parcel on O'Brien Road is also zoned C-2.

The other zoning present is AA – Agricultural.

1998 Master Plan – Future Land Use Map

The 1998 Walker Master Plan and its Future Land Use Map projected commercial uses on the current Meijer CPUD properties. The remainder of Sub Area 4-B was planned for Low Density Residential (LDR) and Medium Density Residential (MDR). The 1998 Plan identified MDR as “density up to 8 dwelling units per acre.”



Figure 21: 1998 Master Plan – Future Land Use Map

Existing Topography

Sub Area 4-B drainage is best understood by viewing the three-dimensional contour map below. The area generally drains from North to Southwest. However, most of the Meijer CPUD site drains to the Southeast.

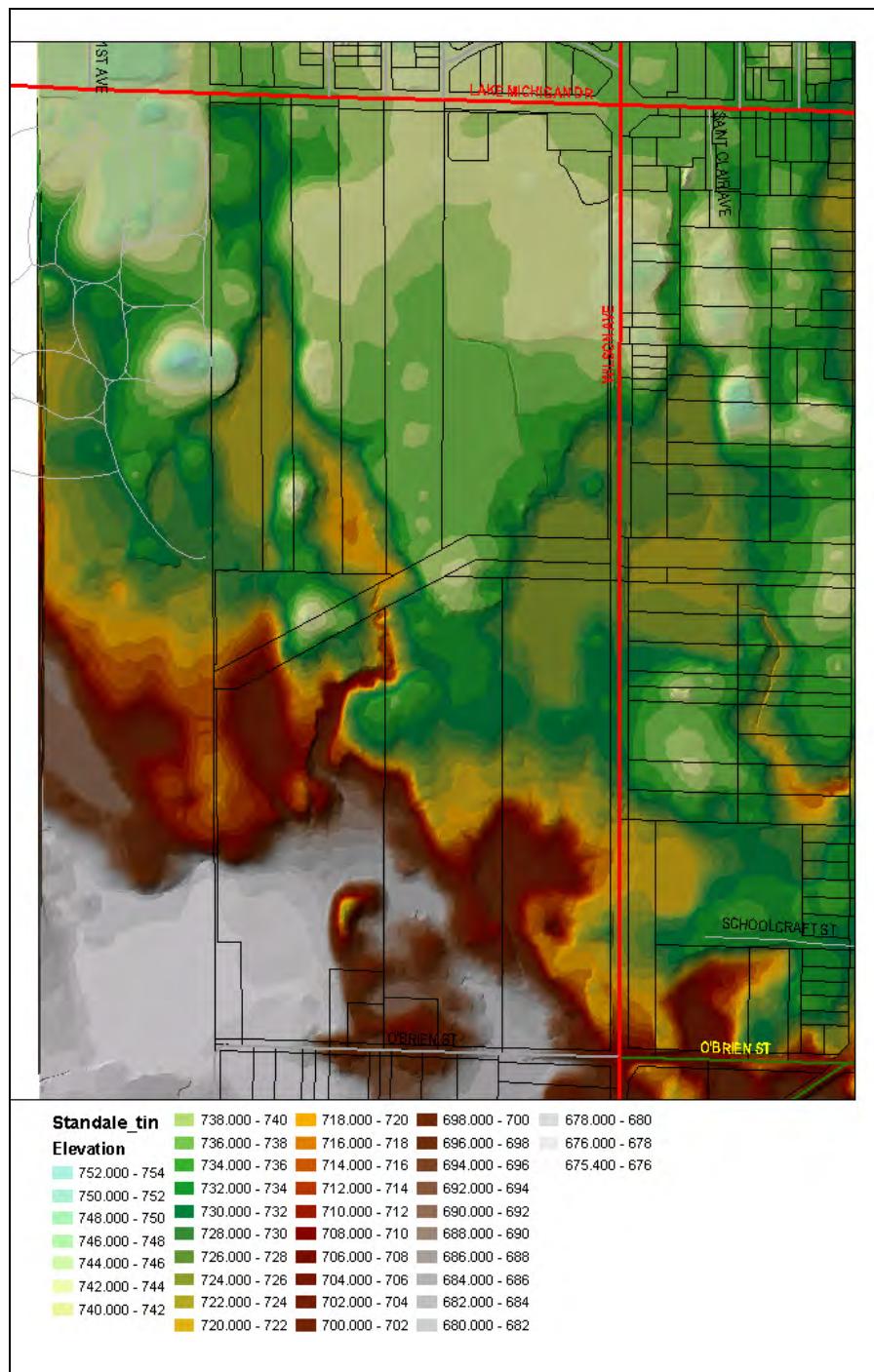


Figure 22: 3-D Topography Map

Existing Public Utility Infrastructure

The northeasterly portions of Sub-Area 4-B are currently served by public water lines and sanitary sewer. Extensive and expensive public utility expansions will be required in order to serve future land development projects.

Existing Roadway Network

Sub Area 4-B is bordered on the north by Lake Michigan Drive, which is M-45. The easterly border is Wilson Avenue, which is M-11. These two State of Michigan highways each move between 20,000 and 30,000 vehicles per day.

The City of Walker has recently partnered with MDOT and Meijer Incorporated to construct extensive improvements to the M-45 and M-11 intersection.

The southerly border is O'Brien Road. A traffic signal is planned at the intersection of O'Brien Road and Wilson Avenue.

The Future Roadway Challenge: Is there a way to intelligently design “context sensitive” connectivity between Sub Area 4-B and surrounding major and local roads? Can a local street network be constructed within Sub Area 4-B?

Oil Wells

The City of Walker contains numerous oil wells. Most of these are located from Lake Michigan Drive to the Grand River. Sub Area 4-B contains several oil wells, most of which appear to have been closed and capped. However, at least five oil wells appear to be in current operation. Environmental health and safety issues will be important items to consider during future site plan reviews in Sub Area 4-B, especially where residential uses are proposed.

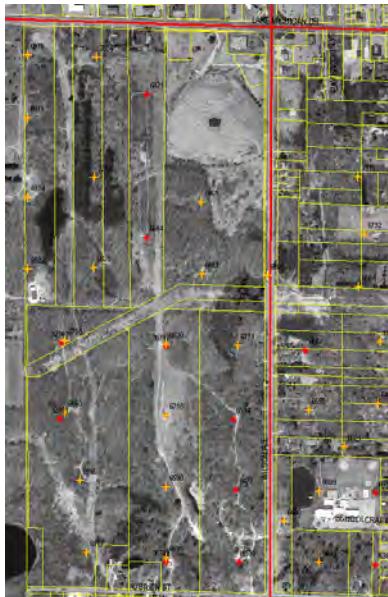


Figure 23: MDNR Oil Well Data. Note: Requires field verification by MDNR and MDEQ.

Wetlands and Floodplains

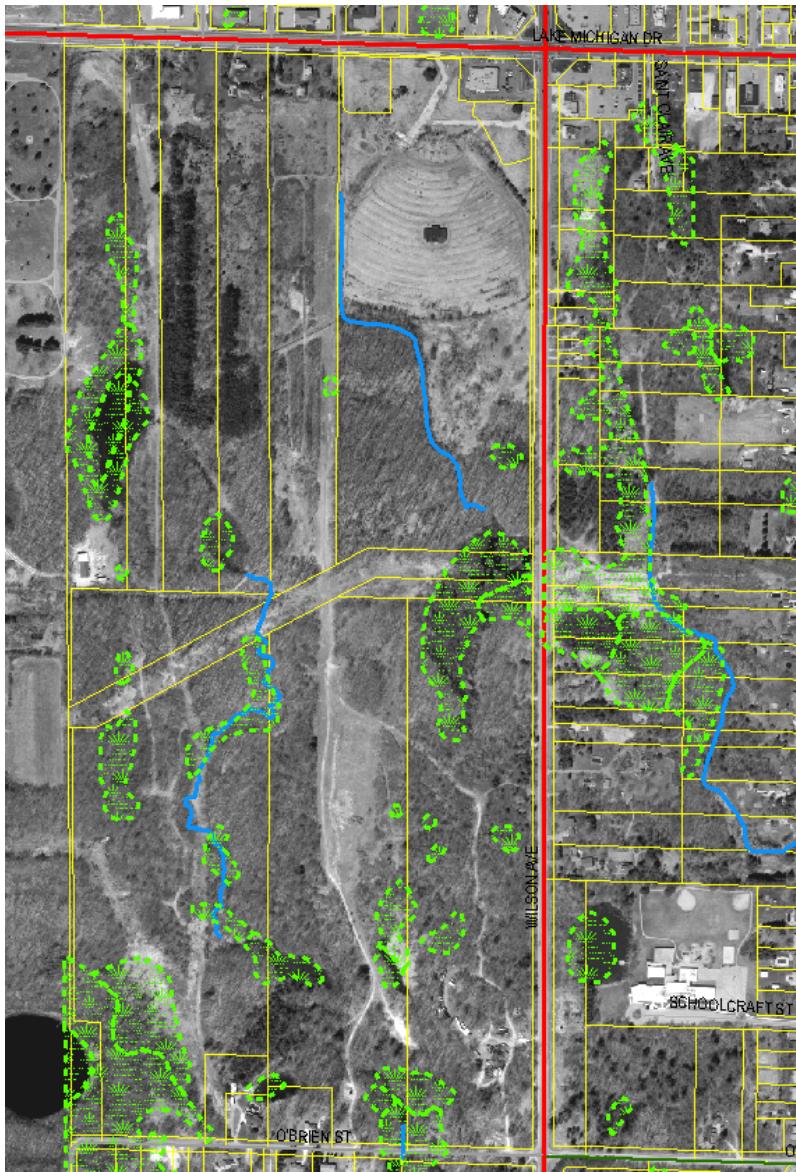


Figure 24: Wetland and Streams. Note: Approximate location only. Verification needed from MDEQ.

Several significant wetland and floodplain areas are present within Sub Area 4-B. The presence of these natural features will limit the extent of development on certain properties. However, preservation and enhancement of these natural areas will add value to future development projects, especially residential plans, via improved site features and aesthetics.

As noted in Figure 24, the location of wetlands and floodplains must be field verified and confirmed by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

Tallmadge Township Master Plan

Tallmadge Township, in their 2007 Master Plan, proposes public (cemetery) and low-density residential uses adjacent to Sub Area 4-B.

The Tallmadge Township Master Plan also proposes a commercial corridor along Lake Michigan Drive to the power lines west of 8th Avenue.

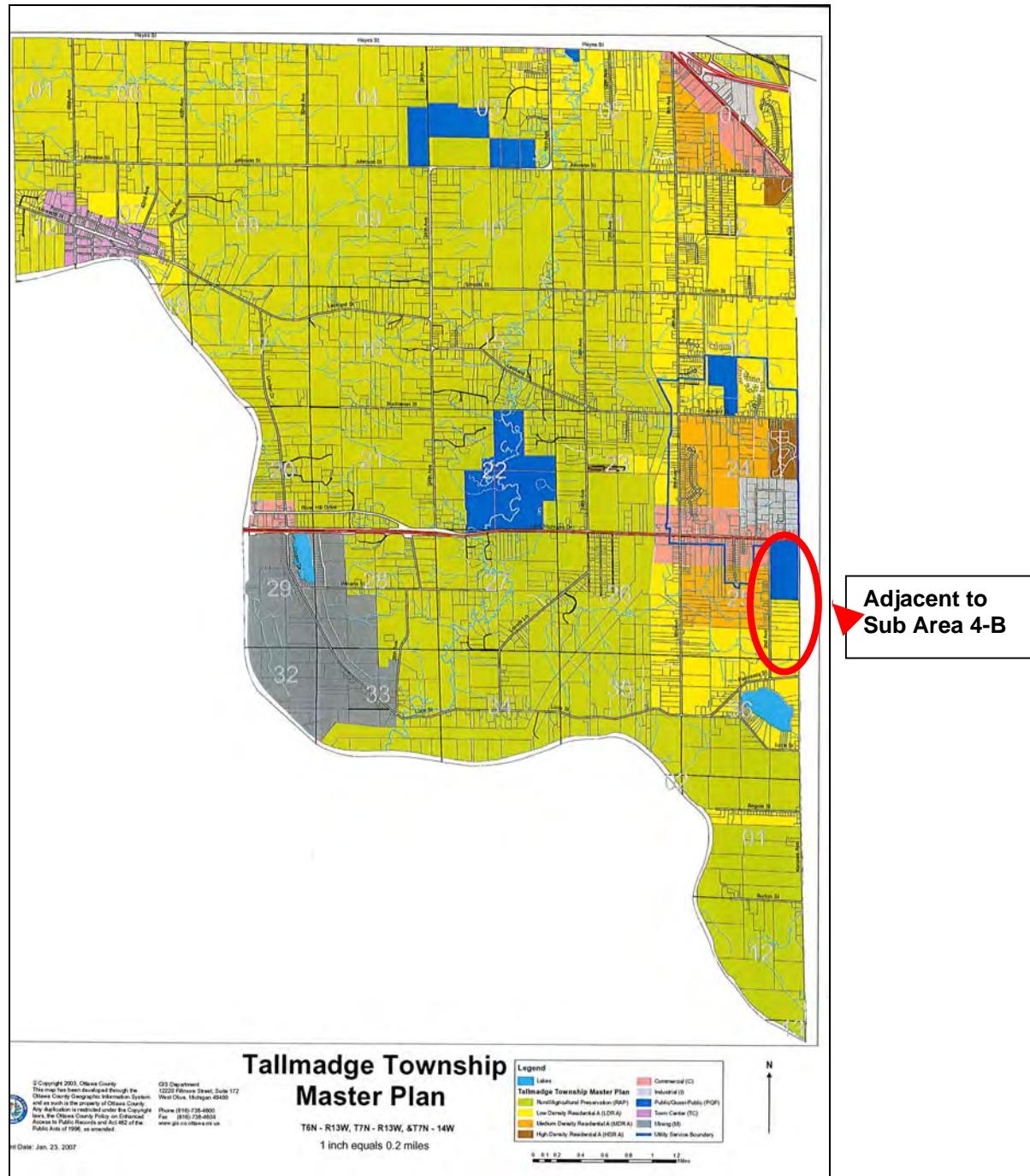


Figure 25: Tallmadge Township Master Plan - 2007

2007 Sub Area 4-B Master Plan Update: Process

Key concepts for Sub Area 4-B were developed in the following manner:

- ◆ October 25, 2006: Planning department staff first met with the primary owners of vacant land in Sub Area 4-B – Goodale Enterprises, Inc. Various planning and zoning issues were debated. A “bubble drawing” showing potential future land uses was developed.
- ◆ January 16, 2007: Planning department staff next engaged the City of Walker Downtown Development Authority (DDA) in a mini-design charrette for Sub Area 4-B. The DDA examined existing zoning, land use, topography, natural features, the 1998 master plan and the Tallmadge Township Master Plan. Staff then facilitated a “bubble drawing” exercise to draw and label potential future land uses.
- ◆ March 26, 2007: The Master Plan Committee met with planning department staff to review the “bubble drawings” to date. The Committee fine-tuned the bubble drawings and recommended changes to the proposed future land uses, including a limitation on the depth of future commercial along M-45 and the elimination of commercial uses south of the power lines on M-11. The former was proposed to reduce over-saturation of commercial development and potential negative impacts on Sub Area 4-A. The latter was proposed to reduce the potential of “strip commercial sprawl” seeping down Wilson Avenue to the south.
- ◆ April 17, 2007: Planning department staff provided the DDA with a preview of the proposed Sub Area 4-B Future Land Use Map. The DDA reviewed and acknowledged the master plan update proposal.
- ◆ April 18, 2007: A public meeting was held to roll out the Sub Area 4-B Master Plan Update and Future Land Use Map (see Figure 26). Staff facilitated a review of existing zoning, land use, topography, natural features, the 1998 City of Walker Master Plan and the 2007 Tallmadge Township Master Plan. Staff then walked the public through the proposed future land use plan for Sub Area 4-B. The relationship between Sub Areas 4-A and 4-B was explained.

Staff then encouraged the public to fill out and return the public survey. Although approximately 50 people were in attendance, only five chose to fill out and return their surveys.

Results from the surveys are shown below after the draft 2007 Sub Area 4-B Future Land Use Plan.

Sub Area 4B Open House April 18th, 2007

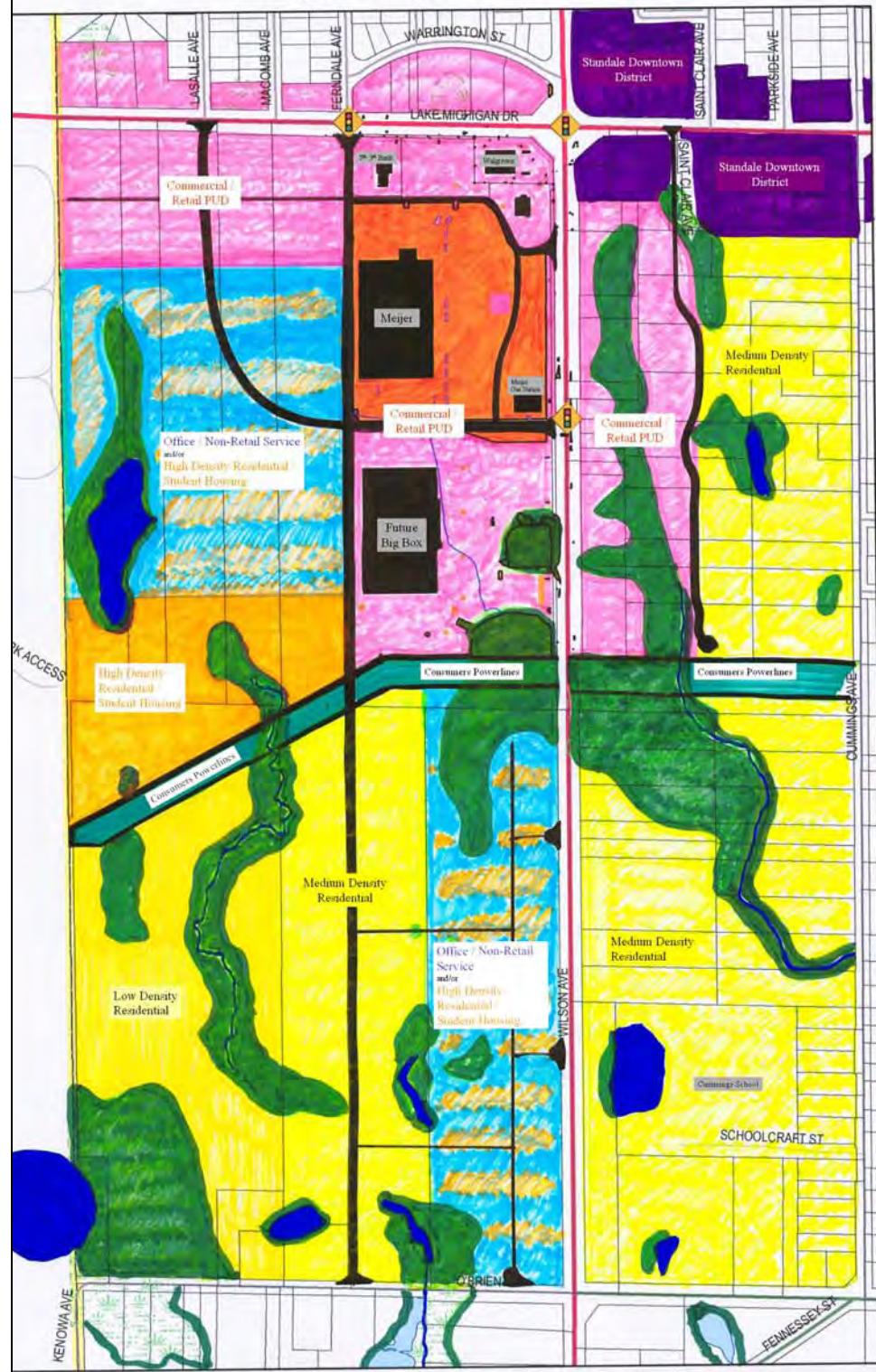


Figure 26: Draft 2007 Sub Area 4-B Future Land Use Plan

**Public Survey Comments Received From April 18, 2007
Open House Meeting:**

1) What do you like about the proposed Sub Area 4-B master plan map?

- We feel that the proposed changes are good, although we feel that some of the sizes of the areas should be modified. We think this will help the economic future of Standale.
- We definitely need housing for students. I like the idea of more small business sites, especially with the connecting service drives. I like the idea of apartments, condos and single dwelling homes. I like the fact that all wetlands, ponds, streams and lakes will be left as they are.
- Basically, very sound.

2) What don't you like about the proposed master plan map?

- We feel that the commercial area along Lake Michigan Drive needs to be larger.
- So far, I have no problems with this proposal.
- I don't want to see Standale turn into Alpine Avenue.

3) Do you have any further suggestions for the City and Planning Commissions to consider regarding the master plan for the West Standale area?

- Commercial zoning along Wilson Avenue south of the power lines should stay commercial.
- Some sort of shuttle service from student housing to the bus stops so that they don't park their vehicles in business parking lots.
- Take care in what types of "box" stores come so that they don't hurt our current businesses. I was told maybe a home improvement store might be sought. What about Standale Lumber, Ace Hardware and Standard Kitchen, along with Standale Interiors?
- Make ALL housing more affordable. Stay away from houses that cost \$200,000 or more. It will ensure that the houses get filled.
- I would like to see Pizza Hut, Quiznos and Burger King here; all with seating dining areas, not just carryout or drive up. I currently have to go to other communities to enjoy those. Maybe a buffet style place as well.
- I do not want to see Wal-Mart here. They undercut other businesses, are known for unfair labor practices, and despite revenues for the city, run a neighborhood down. The store on Alpine Avenue is disgusting.
- Traffic controls must be in place.
- Put traffic light at O'Brien Road and Wilson Avenue.
- Put traffic light at Cummings and Lake Michigan Drive.
- A traffic light needs to be put in at O'Brien Road and Wilson Avenue.

- ◆ June 6th, 2007: The planning commission held a public hearing to “make the plan” before forwarding the draft report to the City Commission for distribution. The planning commission examined the draft future land use plan (Figure 26) and build-out calculations provided by staff.

The planning commission also discussed the boundaries on the future land use plan with representatives from Goodale Enterprises, the primary owners of vacant land in Sub Area 4B.

The planning commission directed staff to make the following alterations to the April 18th, 2007 version of the Sub Area 4B Future Land Use Plan (Figure 26):

1. Increase the amount of “Commercial / Retail PUD” along M-45 to match the southerly line of the Meijer building.
2. Reduce the amount of the “Office / Non-Retail Service – High Density Residential / Student Housing” to accommodate the increase in “Commercial / Retail PUD” noted above.
3. Change the “Low Density Residential” along the County Line to “Medium Density Residential with a clustering option”.

Staff made these changes as directed by the planning commission. The revised Sub Area 4B 2007 Future Land Use Plan is shown below as Figure 27.

The planning commission also approved the design concepts and details found in the “**Key Concepts**” section that follows the draft future land use plan (Figure 27).

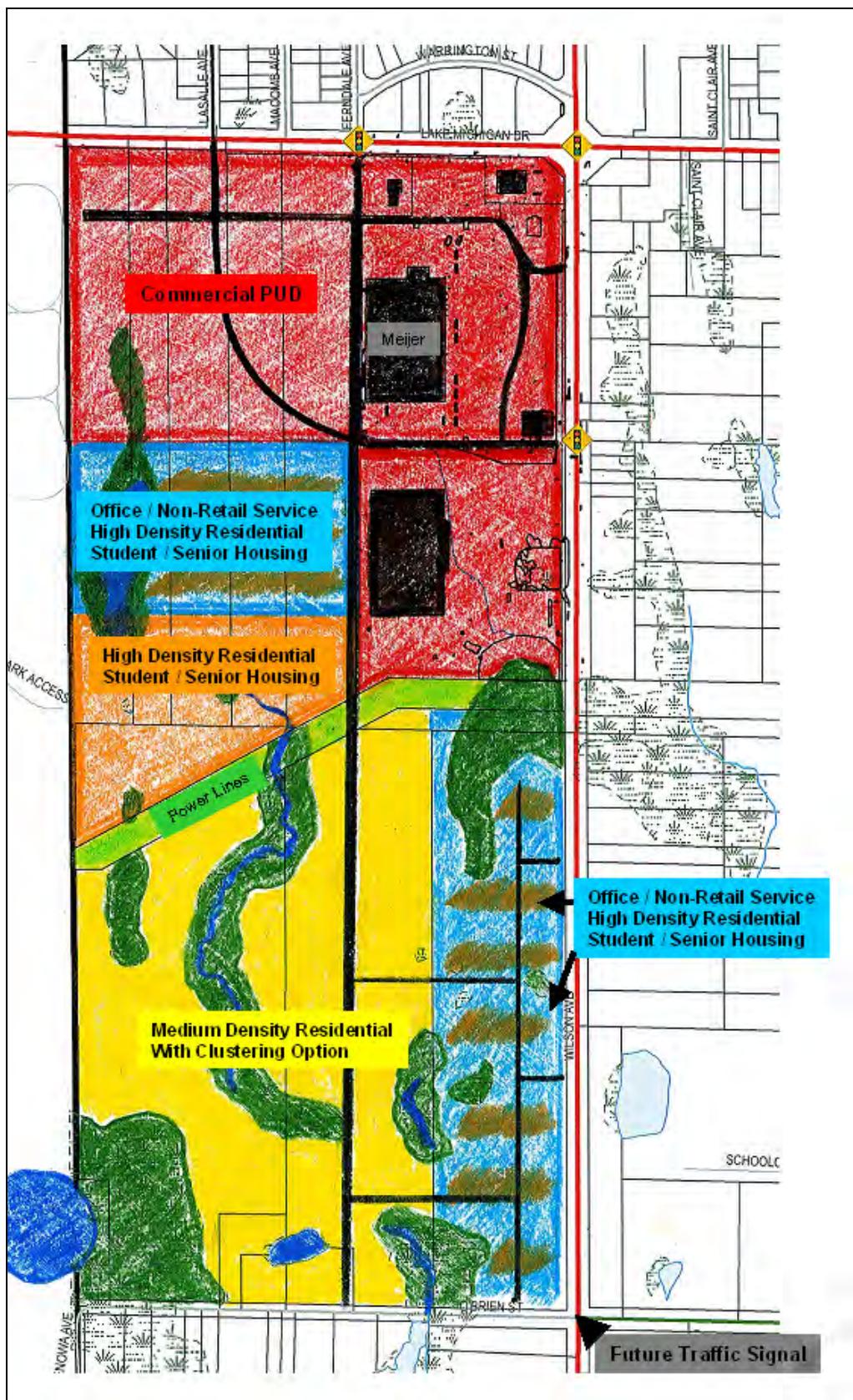


Figure 27: Sub Area 4B 2007 Future Land Use Plan

2007 Sub Area 4-B Master Plan Update: Key Concepts

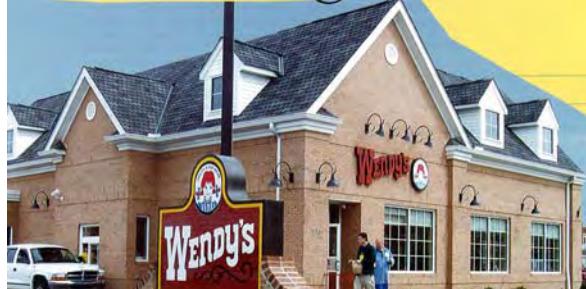
Commercial Planned Unit Development (Areas in red on Figure 27)

❖ The City of Walker should promote the development of high quality commercial sites on Alpine Avenue and Wilson Avenue. While suburban in character, future commercial developments should follow the best design practices of such an environment, including:

- Buildings with architectural character, that relate to the street; that are constructed of durable, high quality materials such as brick; that contain ample windows to avoid blank walls and increase street appeal; and that have clearly defined and articulated entrances.
- Professionally designed, landscaped parking lots and streetscapes that are not over-illuminated.
- A clear hierarchy of commercial signs that are appropriately scaled relative to the size of the buildings and do not overwhelm the streetscape. Ground signs are preferred.
- Streets and service drives that allow convenient and safe access from business to business without traveling back onto Lake Michigan Drive and Wilson Avenue.
- A complete system of interconnected sidewalks from neighborhoods to destination points.
- Stormwater management designs and appurtenances that address water quality and water quantity.



Examples of suburban commercial best design practices





Examples of suburban commercial best design practices.



Build-out analysis of the Commercial Planned Unit Development (Areas in red on Figure 27): 34 acres x 10% wetlands x 30% building coverage = 405,108 square feet of new commercial building space. Note: Does not include the vacant Meijer CPUD properties. Add 150,000 square feet of new commercial building space for the vacant Meijer CPUD properties.

Office / Non-Retail Service / High Density Residential – Student / Senior Housing (Areas in blue/orange on Figure 27)

- ❖ The City of Walker should promote the development of high quality office, non-retail service and high density residential / student housing projects within Sub Area 4-B. While suburban in character, future developments should follow the best design practices of such an environment, including:
 - Buildings with architectural character, that relate to the street, that are constructed of durable, high quality materials such as brick, that contain ample windows to avoid blank walls and increase street appeal and that have clearly defined and articulated entrances.
 - Professionally designed, landscaped parking lots and streetscapes that are not over-illuminated.
 - A clear hierarchy of signs that are appropriately scaled and do not overwhelm the streetscape. Ground signs are preferred.
 - Streets and service drives that allow convenient and safe access from site to site without traveling back onto Lake Michigan Drive and Wilson Avenue.
 - Public bus stops that are integrated into the pedestrian network via sidewalks and street calming methods. The City of Walker should continue to partner with Grand Valley State University and The Rapid to sustain and expand use of the ITP Route #50 public bus.
 - Access to Wilson Avenue should follow the guidelines set forth in the M-11 Access Management Plan.
 - Stormwater management designs and appurtenances that address water quality and water quantity.

Future land uses within the Office / Non-Retail Service / High Density Residential – Student / Senior Housing areas could include professional / medical offices; hotels; senior housing facilities of varying intensities; and attached housing units.

Build-out analysis of the Office / Non-Retail Service / High Density Residential – Student / Senior Housing (Areas in blue/orange on Figure 27):

North of power lines: Estimated 21 buildable acres (after subtracting wetlands) x 30% building coverage for office / non-retail service uses = 274,428 square feet of new building space. Estimated 21 buildable acres (after subtracting wetlands) x 8 units per acre maximum for high density residential / student housing = 168 new residential housing units. Mixing the uses will reduce both the new building

space and the number of housing units.

South of power lines along M-11: Estimated 29 buildable acres (after subtracting wetlands) x 30% building coverage for office / non-retail service uses = 378,972 square feet of new building space. Estimated 29 buildable acres (after subtracting wetlands) x 8 units per acre maximum for high density residential / student housing = 232 new residential housing units. Mixing the uses will reduce both the new building space and the number of housing units.

High Density Residential – Student / Senior Housing (Areas in orange on Figure 27)

- ❖ The City of Walker should promote the development of high quality and high density residential / student housing and senior housing projects within Sub Area 4-B. While suburban in character, future developments should follow the best design practices of such an environment, including:
 - Buildings with architectural character, that relate to the street, that are constructed of durable, high quality materials such as brick, that contain ample windows to avoid blank walls and increase street appeal and that have clearly defined and articulated entrances.
 - Professionally designed, landscaped parking lots and streetscapes that are not over-illuminated.
 - A clear hierarchy of signs that are appropriately scaled and do not overwhelm the streetscape. Ground signs are preferred.
 - Streets and service drives that allow convenient and safe access from site to site without traveling back onto Lake Michigan Drive and Wilson Avenue.
 - Public bus stops that are integrated into the pedestrian network via sidewalks and street calming methods. The City of Walker should continue to partner with Grand Valley State University and The Rapid to sustain and expand use of the ITP Route #50 public bus.
 - Access to Wilson Avenue should follow the guidelines set forth in the M-11 Access Management Plan.
 - Stormwater management designs and appurtenances that address water quality and water quantity.

Build-out analysis of the High Density Residential – Student /Senior Housing (Areas in orange on Figure 27):

Estimated 18 buildable acres (after subtracting wetlands) x 8 units per acre maximum for high density residential / student housing = 144 new residential housing units.

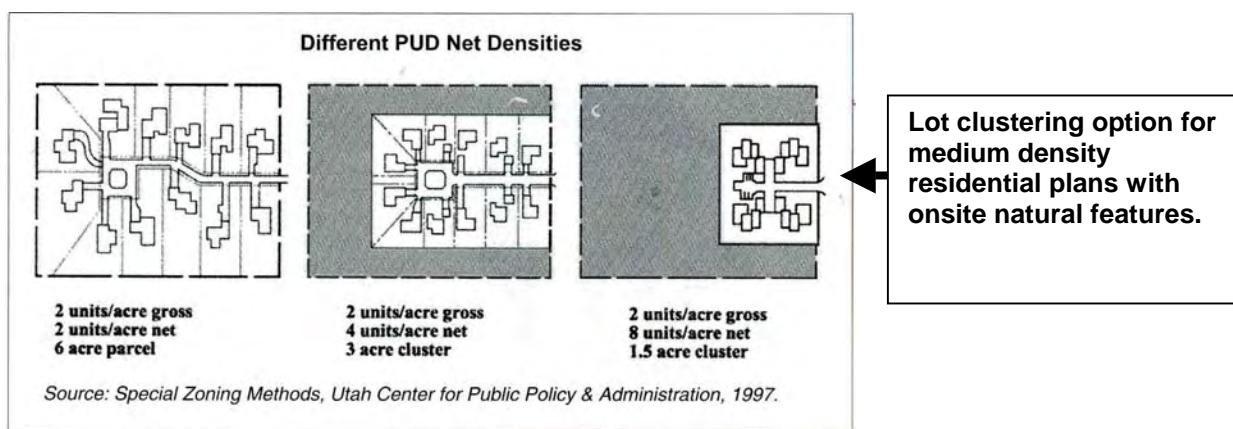


Examples of high density residential / student housing best design practices.



Medium Density Residential With Clustering Option (Areas in yellow, south of the power lines on Figure 27)

- ❖ The City of Walker should promote the development of high quality, medium density residential projects within Sub Area 4-B. While suburban in character, future developments should follow the best design practices of such an environment, including:
 - Attached or detached buildings with architectural character, that relate to the street, that are constructed of durable, high quality materials such as brick, that contain ample windows to avoid blank walls and increase street appeal and that have clearly defined and articulated entrances.
 - Professionally designed streetscapes that are not over-illuminated.
 - Streets and service drives that allow convenient and safe neighborhood access without traveling back onto Lake Michigan Drive and Wilson Avenue.
 - Access to Wilson Avenue should follow the guidelines set forth in the M-11 Access Management Plan.
 - Stormwater management designs and appurtenances that address water quality and water quantity.
 - Creative clustering of lots to preserve and enhance existing natural features and improve property values.



Build-out analysis of Medium Density Residential (Areas in yellow, south of power lines on Figure 27): Estimated 55.5 buildable acres (after subtracting wetlands) x 4 units per acre maximum for medium density residential = 222 new residential housing units.



Examples of medium density residential best design practices.

Traffic and M-45 / M-11 Access Management Planning (proposed streets/drives shown on Figure 27)

- ❖ The City of Walker should require the development of interconnected public streets, private streets and service drives within Sub Area 4-B. The goal should be the creation of an internal transportation network for Sub Area 4-B. Such a network would allow shoppers, employees and residents to move from site to site without venturing back onto M-45 and M-11.
- ❖ Public streets, private streets and service drives should link to existing and proposed traffic signals on M-11 and M-45.
- ❖ Access management and traffic calming tools should be applied when developing the interconnected transportation network and when accessing M-45 and M-11.
- ❖ The MDOT / City of Walker M-11 Access Management Plan should be applied during the site plan review process.

Policy Recommendations For Implementation Of Sub Area 4-B Master Plan

1. The City of Walker Downtown Development Authority (DDA) should continue to invest in **capital improvements**. However, DDA activity should be expanded to include **aggressive self-promotion and marketing**.
2. The DDA should initiate a plan to eventually **bury all utility lines**.
3. The City of Walker and the DDA should continue to partner with and **support the Route 50 public bus** between the two Grand Valley State University campus sites. Students provide an opportunity to help sustain the redevelopment of West Standale and Standale / Downtown Walker.
4. The City of Walker should continue to partner with MDOT, Grand Valley State University and The Rapid to plan for and improve a **multi-modal transportation system** in Sub Area 4-B.
5. The City of Walker should **resist the urge to extend commercial and retail strip** land uses south of the power lines along Wilson Avenue. The land that is presently zoned commercial south of the power lines in Sub Area 4B should be **rezoned** by the City of Walker to match the 2007 Sub Area 4B Future Land Use Plan (Figure 27).