Walker 2020

MASTER PLAN I CITY OF WALKER, MI

Book 2b:

South Walker Neighborhood Cluster

Adopted August 12, 2024

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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Thom Burke

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Elaina Huizenga - Chase

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1.

Introduction

Introduction

South Walker is a unique part of Greater Grand Rapids. Despite being located near the urban core, it retains a rural, wooded character that is cherished by residents and valued by visitors. But maintaining that character in the face of development pressure, while also addressing Walker's needs for housing and tax base, presents a challenge.

In summary, the recommendations include:

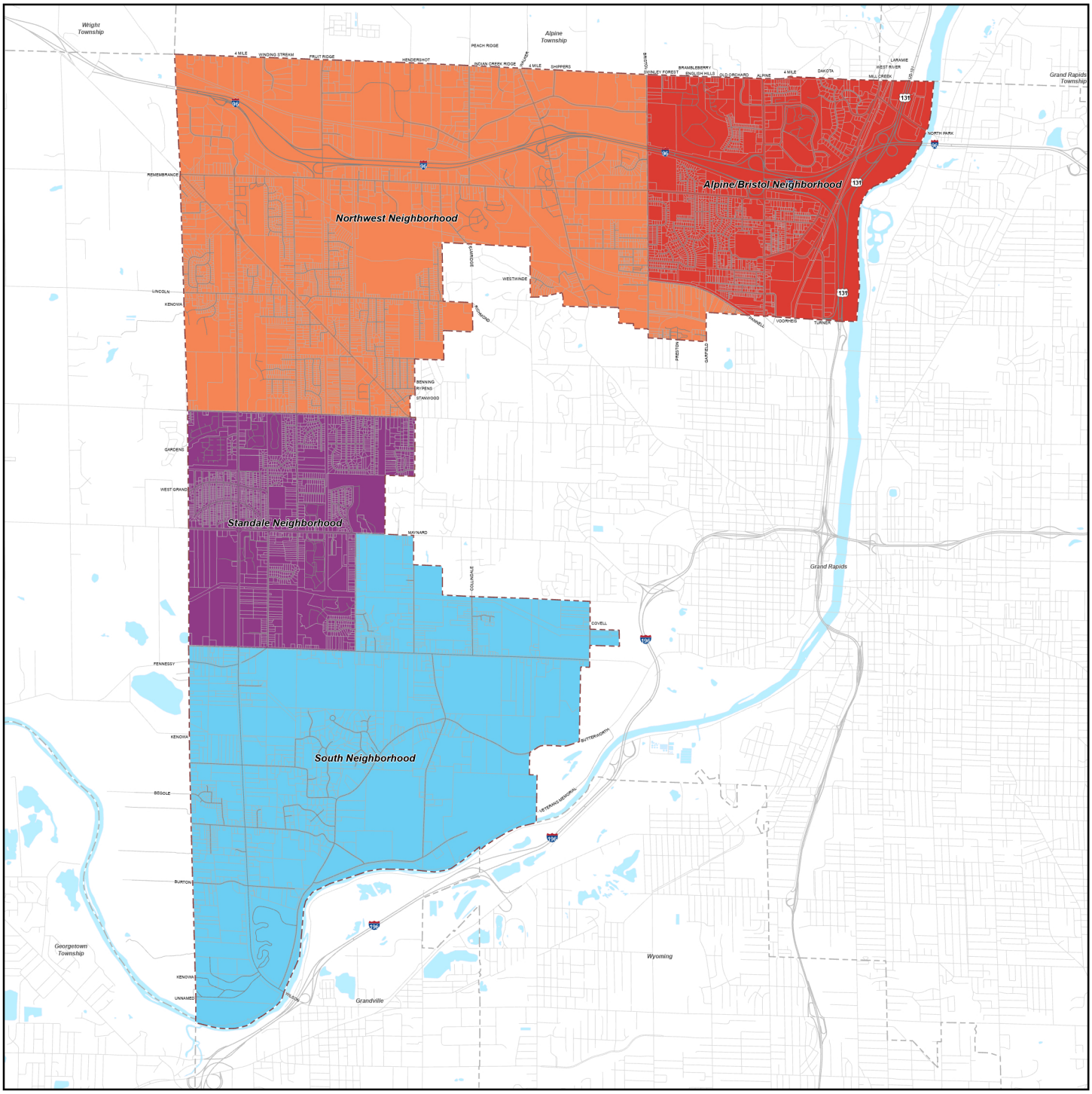
- Retaining rural character through the use of "cluster" residential developments, creating a network of preserved open space.
- Maintaining the tree-lined character of major corridors, such as Wilson Avenue and Butterworth Drive.
- Redeveloping the "Fenske" site, where Wilson Avenue meets the Grand River, into an industrial park that is designed to respect the quiet and privacy of the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as the ecological needs of the Grand River.
- The preservation and protection of existing residential neighborhoods.
- The reclamation of the gravel mines into residential neighborhoods, once they have ended their useful life.
- Improved connectivity, in the form of new road and trail connections, new transit routes, and new road designs that improve efficiency for all modes of travel.

The South Walker Neighborhood Cluster is shown in blue on the map on the following page.

2024 Amendment:

In 2024, this plan was amended to address the following topics:

- Confirming that the City will use Net Density to calculate the allowable housing density on a property, and defining that term.
- Updating the Significant Undeveloped Lots to reflect development and new priorities since 2020.
- Creating a new RPUD-3 zoning tool to allow for higher density housing development, while ensuring long-term quality of life for the residents of those developments.
- Re-evaluating the West Standale development site, and creating a detailed vision for the creation of a mixed-density, mixed-use neighborhood on that site.



Neighborhood Clusters

City of Walker, Michigan

July 2, 2024

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Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
Data Source: City of Walker 2019. McKenna 2024.

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2.

Existing Conditions

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 South Walker of 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 South Walker to the City of Walker as a whole, in addition to comparisons 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

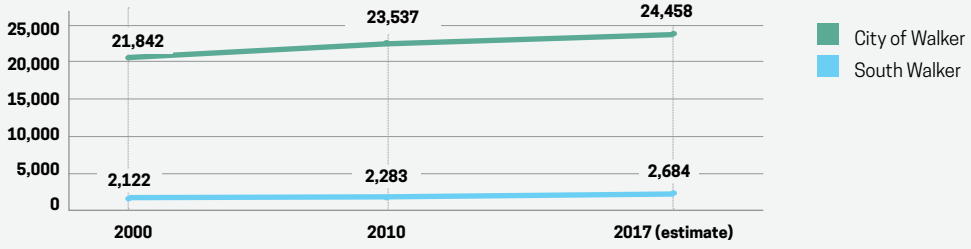
Changes in the number of people in an area serves as an important indicator of community health; examining these trends is an integral tool in community planning. Table 2b.1 shows the relative populations of South Walker in comparison with the City of Walker as a whole, as well as Kent County and the State of Michigan.

Table 2b.1: Population Change, 2000-2017, South Walker

	2000	2010	2017 (estimate)	% Change 2000-2017	Average % Growth/ Year
South Walker	2,122	2,283	2,684	26.48%	1.45%
City of Walker	21,842	23,537	24,458	11.98%	0.748%
Kent County	574,335	602,622	629,352	9.58%	0.635%
State of Michigan	9,938,444	9,883,640	9,909,600	-0.29%	-0.00007%

Source: U.S. Census (2000, 2010); 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates

Figure 2b.1: Population Change, 2000-2017, South Walker



South Walker experienced a larger gain in population than surrounding areas, with an average yearly growth rate of 1.45% over the last 17 years. This area is seeing more than two times the growth rate of the City of Walker as whole. As populations increase in this neighborhood, the City of Walker must plan to be a place that can retain this growth and maintain quality of life for its residents.

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 2b.2: Median Age, 2010, South Walker

The figure below compares the median age (the mid-point where half the population is younger and half is older) of South Walker and the comparison communities.

38.1 South Walker

34.6 City of Walker

34.4 Kent County

38.9 State of Michigan

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

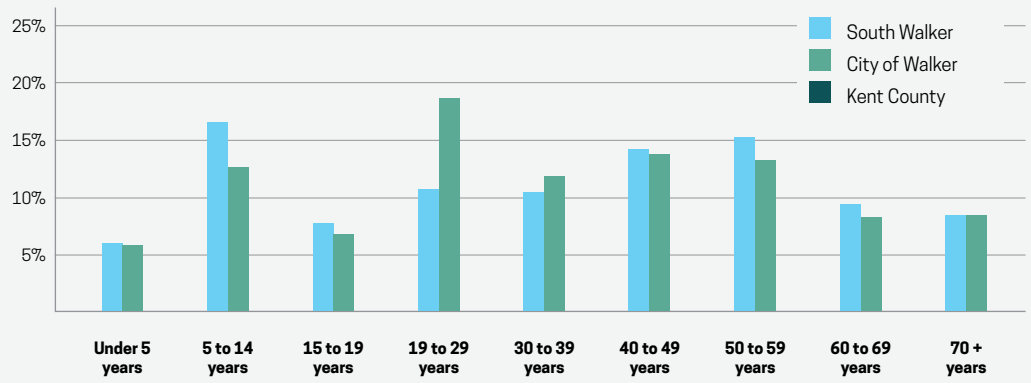
Age structure (analyzing which proportions of a municipality's populations are in which stages of life) gives a nuanced view of the makeup of a community. The age range in this neighborhood skews slightly older, with about 47% of residents being over the age of 40, as well as having a higher median age than comparison communities. Table 2b.2 illustrates age structure in comparison with the surrounding City of Walker.

Table 2b.2: Age Structure, 2010, South Walker

	South Walker		City of Walker	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Under 5 years	136	6.0%	1,396	5.93%
5 to 14 years	385	16.86%	2,994	12.72%
15 to 19 years	177	7.75%	1,625	6.90%
19 to 29 years	251	10.99%	4,379	18.60%
30 to 39 years	239	10.47%	2,794	11.87%
40 to 49 years	323	14.15%	3,255	13.83%
50 to 59 years	355	15.55%	3,139	13.34%
60 to 69 years	211	9.24%	1,936	8.23%
70 years and Over	188	8.23%	2,019	8.58%
Total:	**2,283**	**100.0%**	**23,537**	**100.0%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2b.3: Age Structure, 2010, South Walker



Racial Distribution

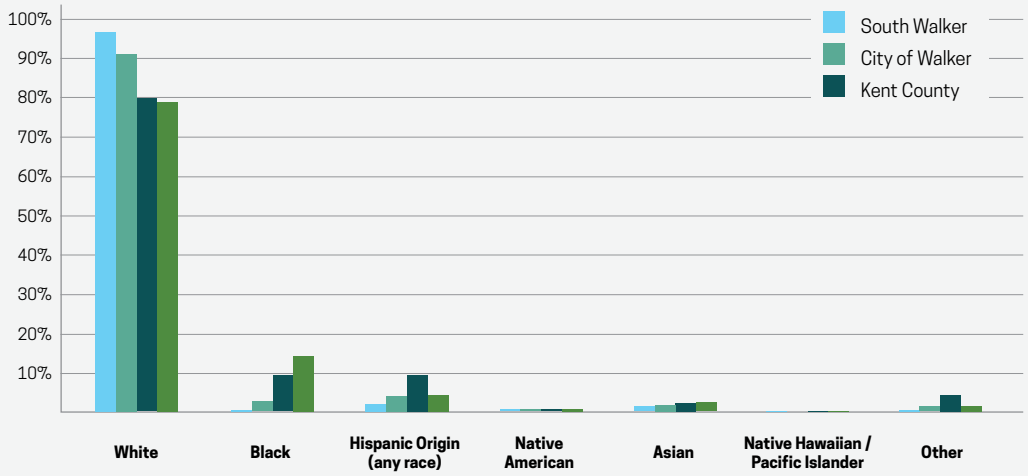
South Walker is considerably less diverse than the City of Walker as a whole, with only 3.5% of residents self-identifying as a person of color. Table 2b.3 illustrates these racial distributions for the area in comparison with the City of Walker, as well as Kent County and the State of Michigan.

Table 2b.3: Racial Distribution, 2010, South Walker

	White	Black	Hispanic Origin (any race)	Native American	Asian	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Other
South Walker	96.5%	0.7%	1.6%	0.4%	0.7%	0.0%	0.4%
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 2b.6: Racial Distribution, 2010, South Walker



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 South Walker's housing stock.

Housing Units

As of the 2010 Census, South Walker area had 798 total housing units, only about 7.65% of the total housing units in the City of Walker. Each housing unit represents one dwelling unit- a house, apartment, condominium, etc.

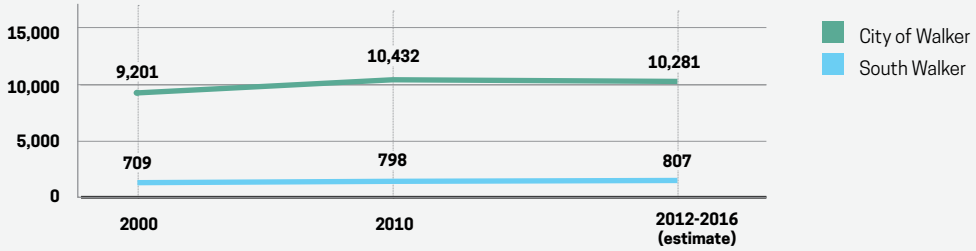
Following its 26.48% population increase in recent years, South Walker has also experienced an 13.82% increase in the total number of housing units. In comparison to the City of Walker as a whole and the surrounding Kent County, the rate of growth in housing units between 2010 and 2019 is about 2% more than that of encompassing areas.

Table 2b.4: Change in Number of Housing Units, 2000 - 2016, South Walker

	2000	2010	2012-2016 Estimates	Change in Number of Housing Units (2000 - 2016)	Change in Percent of Housing Units (2000 - 2016)
South Walker	709	798	807*	98	13.82%
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
** Change in Number of Housing Units and Change in Percentage between 2010 and 2016*

Figure 2b.7: Change in Number of Housing Units, 2000-2016, South Walker



Housing Tenure

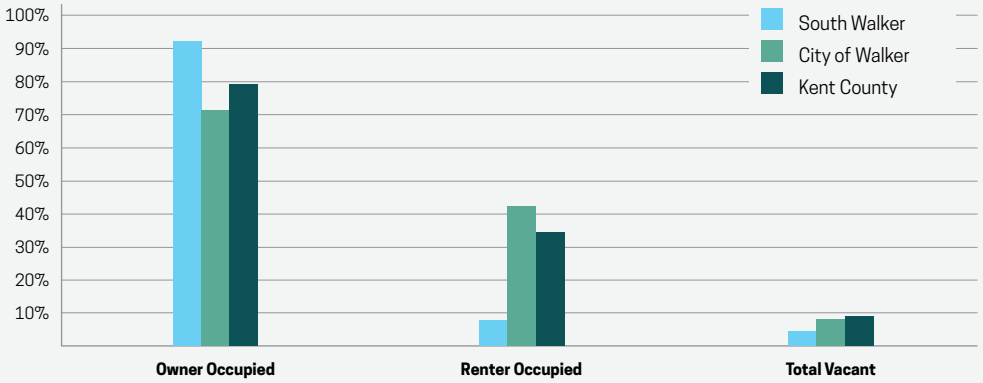
Housing tenure describes how housing is occupied – by the owner, by a renter, or whether it is vacant. The table below shows that, in South Walker, there is a much larger proportion of home owners than in the surrounding areas, with about 92% of the housing units being owner-occupied. In comparison, only 62.8% of units the occupied units are owner-occupied in the City of Walker as whole.

Table 2b.5: Housing Tenure, 2010, South Walker

	Total Occupied Dwellings	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied		Total Vacant		Total Units
		Units	Percentage*	Units	Percentage*	Units	Percentage	
South Walker	759	699	92.1%	60	7.9%	39	4.9%	798
City of Walker	9,684	6,081	62.79%	3,603	37.21%	748	7.17%	10,432
Kent County	227,239	158,301	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 2b.8: Housing Tenure, 2010, South Walker



Households

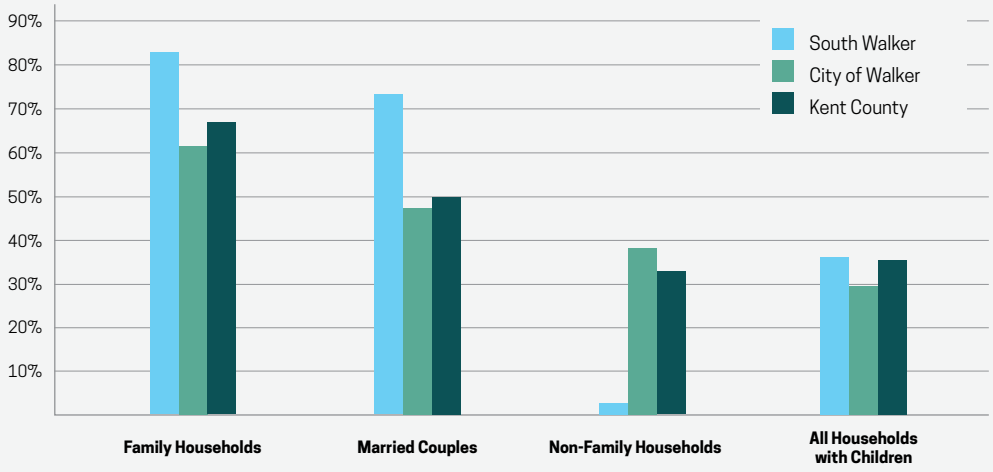
Table 2b.6 below breaks down the types of households in South Walker area, as well as the City of Walker and Kent County. South Walker generally has a larger average household size, as well as a larger number of family households, reflected in the larger average household size, in comparison with the City of Walker as a whole.

Table 2b.6: Households by Type, 2010, South Walker

	Total	Family Households	Married Couples	Non-Family Households	All Households with Children	Average Household Size
South Walker	759	82.5%	73.6%	2.9%	36.5%	2.75
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 2b.9: Households by Type, 2010, South Walker



Existing Conditions: Economy

Economic Profile

This section describes the employment distribution, income, educational attainment, and other economic information of the population of this Subarea. It compares South Walker with the City of Walker as a whole, 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 South Walker.

Occupation Summary

This section addresses the employment of residents of the South Subarea in comparison to the City of Walker as a whole. 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 South area include services, retail trade, and manufacturing.

Table 2b.7: Occupational Sectors, 2016, South Walker

Industry	South Walker*	City of Walker
Total Employed Persons Over 16 Years of Age	**1,283**	**13,211**
Agriculture/Mining	2.7%	0.5%
Construction	15.7%	4.0%
Manufacturing	16.8%	15.3%
Wholesale Trade	1.2%	2.7%
Retail Trade	8.3%	12.9%
Transportation/Utilities	2.5%	3.8%
Information	0.5%	2.1%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	7.9%	7.2%
Services	41.3%	49.2%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	N/A	11.1%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	N/A	22.5%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	N/A	11.1%
Other services, except public administration	N/A	4.5%
Public Administration	3.1%	2.2%
Total	**100%**	**100%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
**ESRI forecasts for 2018 utilizing converted U.S. Census 2000 data into 2010 geography*

Top 5 Occupational Sectors

South Walker

1. Unspecified Services
2. Manufacturing
3. Construction
4. Retail Trade
5. Finance / Insurance / Real Estate

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 for the South Subarea is $93,006, 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 the City of Walker is $55,781 and $57,302 for Kent County, according to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. This places South Walker at an income bracket that is about $37,000 more than the median income for the surrounding area.

According to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, about 8.0% of the households in South Walker earned an income in the last 12 months that places them below the poverty level.

Educational Attainment

This section is analyzes the educational attainment in South Walker and the comparison communities for persons age 25 and older. Generally, South Walker has similar levels of educational attainment compared to the City of Walker as a whole.

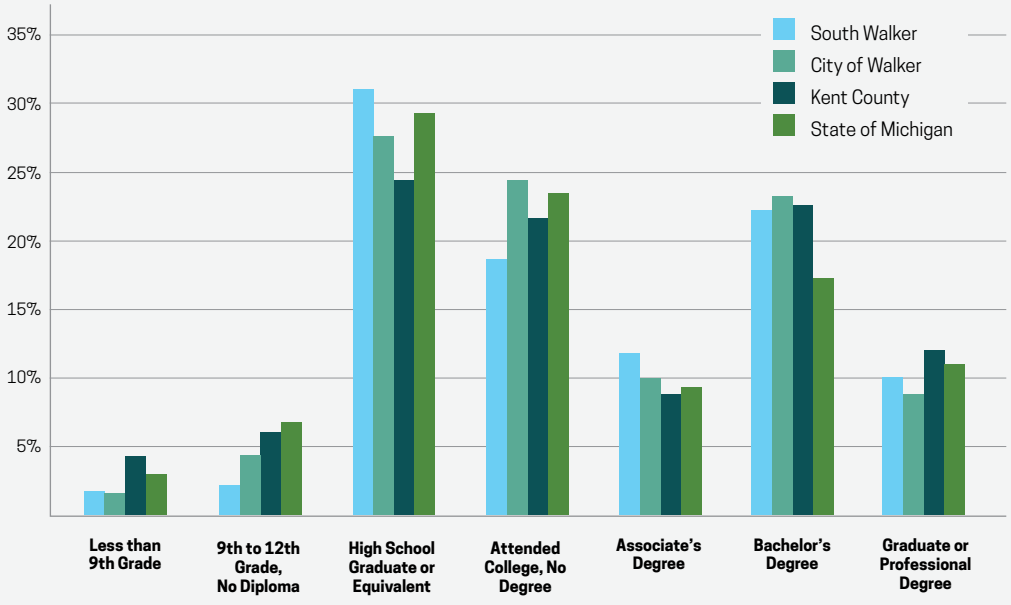
Table 2b.8: Educational Attainment, South Walker

Education Level	South Walker* (2018)	City of Walker (2017)	Kent County (2017)	State of Michigan (2017)
Less than 9th grade	2.5%	1.6%	4.2%	3.0%
9th to 12th grade, No Diploma	2.8%	4.4%	6.0%	6.7%
High School Graduate or Equivalent	31.0%	27.7%	24.5%	29.3%
Attended College, No Degree	18.2%	24.4%	21.7%	23.6%
Associate's Degree	12.9%	10.0%	8.9%	9.3%
Bachelor's Degree	22.6%	23.3%	22.7%	17.1%
Graduate or Professional Degree	10.0%	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 2018 converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography*

Figure 2b.10: Educational Attainment, 2010, South Walker



Commuting

An indication of this area's economic position relative to the surrounding City and 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 2b.9 illustrates that the majority of the residents in South Walker's travel time to work is in the 10 to 25-minute range. This would mean the majority of residents are commuting to jobs in Walker, Grand Rapids, Wyoming, and surrounding areas.

Table 2b.9: Commuting Destinations, 2016, South Walker

Travel Time to Work	Places of Work Within this Commute Radius	% of Population
Under 10 minutes	Walker/Grand Rapids	12.0%
10 to 25 minutes	Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Hudsonville	53%
25 to 40 minutes	Grand Rapids/Holland/Dorr/Rockford	22.7%
40 to 60 minutes	Muskegon/South Haven/Big Rapids/Portland	3.7%
Over 60 minutes	Lansing/Chase/Ludington/Benton Harbor	4.1%
Total		**100%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 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 South Corridor, there are four major segments which can provide information about the neighborhoods.

South Walker neighborhood falls under one Tapestry Segment due to the similar demographic and socioeconomic characteristics throughout residents of this cluster.

Green Acres

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 in the home. 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

Single family residential developments are located throughout South Walker, and consist of single-family detached homes at typical suburban densities. Single family residential neighborhoods in South Walker are typically contained neighborhoods, concentrated around amenities such as schools, parks, and Lake Michigan Drive.

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. Rural Residential development is spread throughout Walker's South Walker, and is in proximity to open spaces.

Commercial

Commercial sites are those that contain real estate intended for use by for-profit businesses, such as grocery stores, and restaurants. Commercial districts in South Walker are concentrated along Lake Michigan Drive, and most notably include Meijer, as well as various small businesses and restaurants along that corridor.

Major Impact

Industrial and Major Impact sites are areas reserved for manufacturing and related uses that provide employment and/or services but are generally not compatible with other areas with lower intensity use. The number of industry and major impact sites in this neighborhood are limited by this definition, consisting only of an electrical substation.

Extractive Mining

Extractive Mining sites are those that include a wide variety of mining activities, both surface and subsurface. Included in this category are gravel, sand, and clay pits, stone quarries, etc. They are characterized by disturbed ground, usually with depth, extractive machinery, buildings and roads for heavy equipment. Extractive mining is a prevalent land use in the South Walker Neighborhood, with about six major sites dedicated to extracting rocks and minerals.

Public/Semi-Public

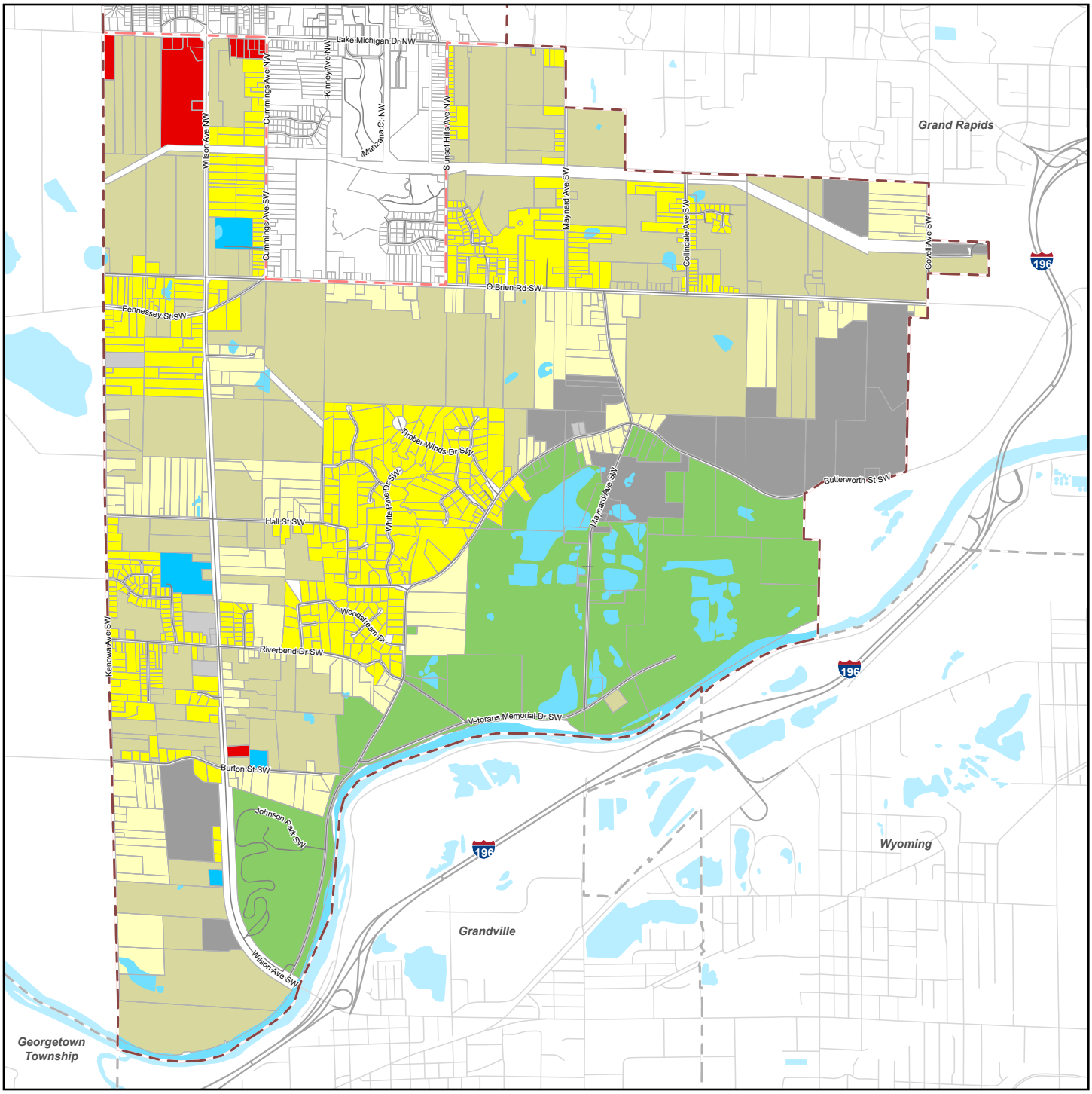
Public/Semi-Public sites include any site for facilities such as governmental offices, hospitals, and churches that serve the public. Public/Semi-Public uses in the South Walker area include mainly churches and schools, such as Covenant Christian High School and Hope Protestant Reformed Church. Schools are also included in this category.

Agriculture/Open Space

Agricultural and Open Spaces are rural areas that are used for agricultural purposes or are left open as woodland, prairie, grass etc. Agricultural and open spaces are those that are currently undeveloped or exist as a productive farm, such as Versluis Orchards. Agriculture and open spaces make up much of the land in the South Walker Neighborhood and greatly contribute to the rural character of the Cluster.

Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation areas are any site that is public park or recreation space for the enjoyment of the community in perpetuity. In Walker's South Walker, parks and recreation spaces include Millennium Park, Johnson Park, and various trail systems. These provide valuable green space and recreational opportunities to residents and the region as a whole.



Existing Land Use

South Neighborhood
City of Walker, Michigan

November 1, 2019

Legend

- 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
- City of Walker Boundary
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Roads
- City of Walker Parcels
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains

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Feet

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

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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 South Walker is a major connecting point in the Grand Rapids region, which leads to high volumes of traffic along Wilson Avenue (M-11) and Lake Michigan Drive (M-45). Wilson Avenue is a natural two-lane corridor that runs between 3 Mile and 28th Street. Hills on this street restrict visibility of intersections in some portions. Additionally, the lack of a dedicated left turn lane at the intersection between South Bound Wilson Avenue and East Bound Butterworth Street increases congestion on Wilson.

Due to the rural nature of South Walker, most of the streets are small collector or local streets, which are intended for local use and see much lower volumes of traffic. Butterworth Street serves as the main access road to Millennium Park where it intersects with Maynard Avenue, as well as providing the residents of South Walker with direct access to downtown Grand Rapids through its connections to Wealthy Street and Seward Avenue. O'Brien Road runs parallel to Lake Michigan Drive, between Wilson Avenue and Butterworth Street, and provides access to many of the rural residential properties in South Walker.

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 South Walker Neighborhood;

Regional Street

Regional streets are those that carry traffic between South Walker 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. Lake Michigan Drive runs through the upper part of the South Walker neighborhood and serves as a regional street, as well as Wilson Avenue which runs perpendicular to Lake Michigan Drive.

Major City Street

Major City Streets are those that carry traffic throughout South Walker and the City of Walker a whole, as well as to adjacent parts of the region. Major City Streets include O'Brien and Kenowa Avenue.

City Collector

City Collector streets provide shorter distance movements in South Walker, collecting traffic from local streets and higher volume Regional and Major City Streets. Butterworth Drive and Maynard Avenue serve as City Collector streets.

Local/Residential Streets

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 South Walker are generally found in single family residential neighborhoods, such as Timber Winds Drive and Hall Street.

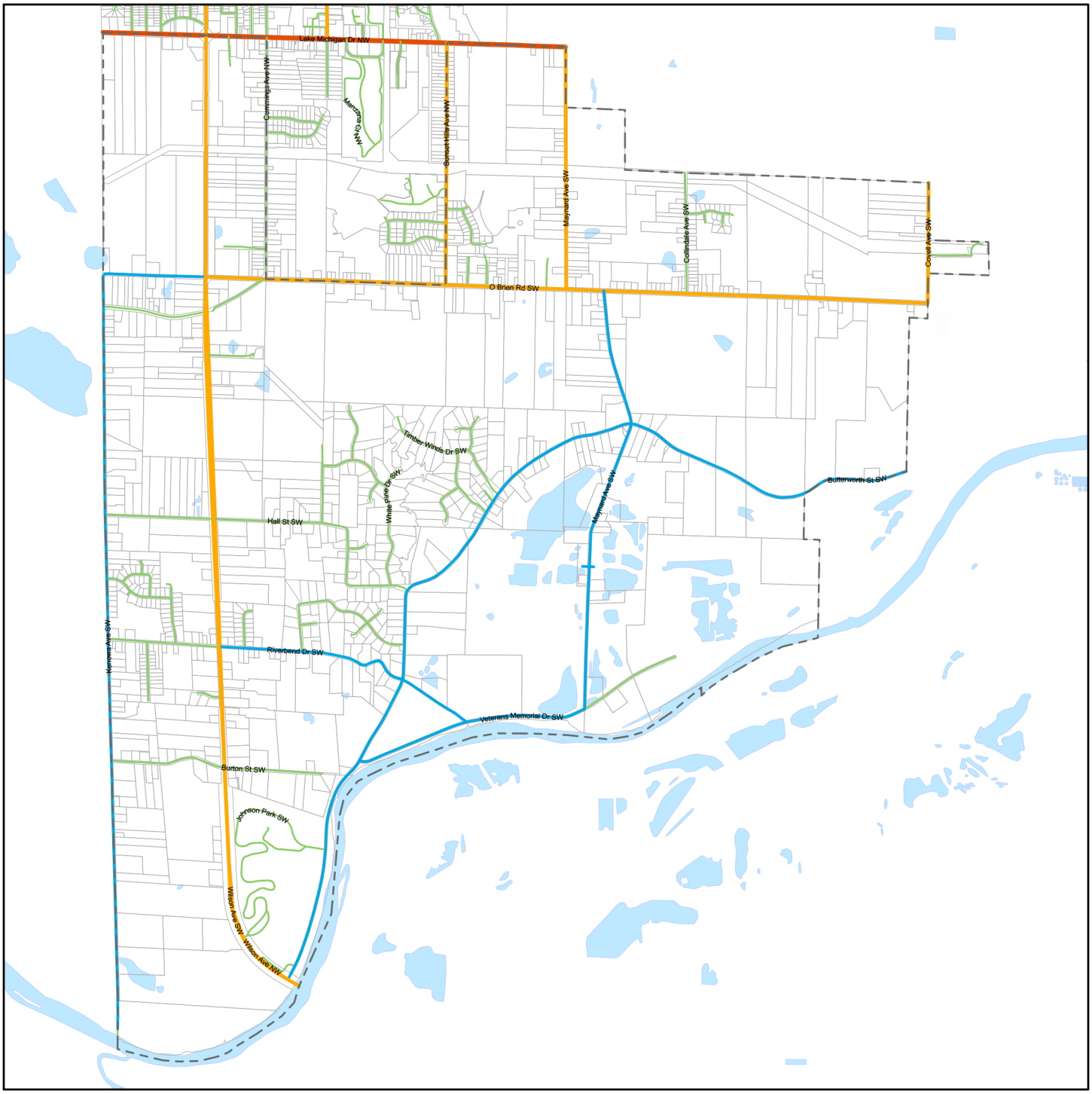
Access Management

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 development of new housing in the area and the presence of more traffic on Wilson Avenue, good access management design will reduce potential congestion on streets, vehicle-pedestrian conflict points, and on-site congestion.

The City and MDOT will continue to use the 2007 M-11 Access Management Plan, which is supported by this plan, and is not superseded by any of the recommendations in this plan.

Transit Service

The Rapid, a public transit system operated by the Interurban Transit Partnership, provides service to the Grand Rapids metropolitan area and beyond. In South Walker, access to the Rapid is available at a transit stop at the Meijer grocery store on Lake Michigan Drive. Routes 12 and 50, which run along Lake Michigan Drive into downtown Grand Rapids, as well as Route 7, which runs on Wilson Avenue north of Lake. Michigan Drive, all periodically stop at this location.



Existing Road Network

South Neighborhood Cluster
City of Walker, Michigan

June 15, 2020

Legend

- Regional Road
- Major City Street
- City Collector
- Residential/Local Street
- Freeways
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains
- Neighborhood Boundary

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Feet

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

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Non-Motorized Transportation

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

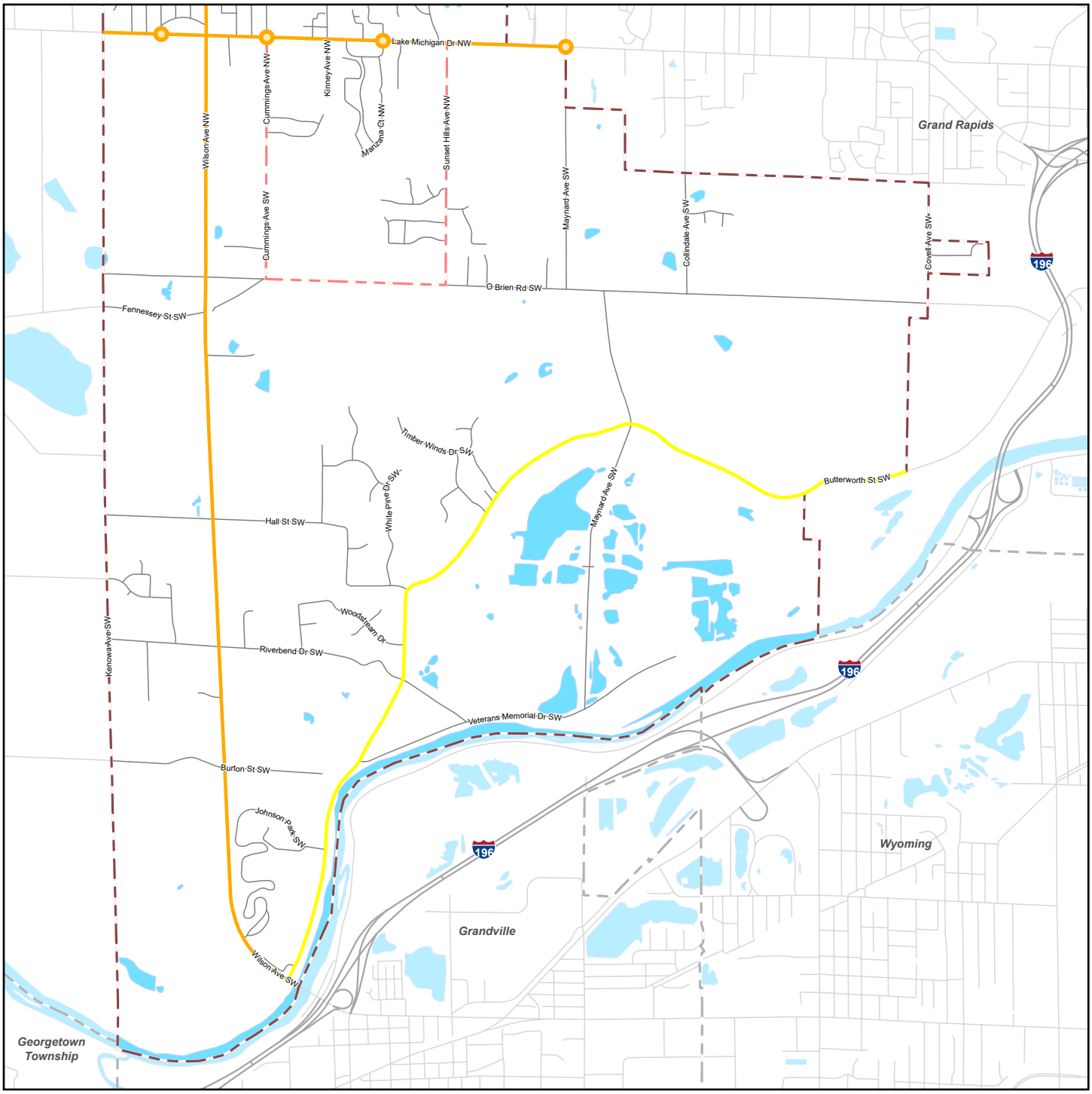
Pedestrian Networks

As a rural enclave in the Grand Rapids region, much of the pedestrian infrastructure in South Walker lies closer to Lake Michigan Drive. This neighborhood is almost entirely car-dependent due to its rural character. The lack of protected crosswalks and sidewalks in South Walker place barriers in the way of pedestrian safety.

Bicycling

Bicycling is an environmentally friendly and healthy travel mode, as well as a key component of a multi-modal transportation system. South Walker has a fairly robust bicycle trail system running throughout the area, with access to three major trail systems. Fred Meijer's Standale Trail and Millennium Trail network are major assets to residents and the region, and connect directly to Kent Trails that runs through Millennium and Johnson Park in Walker, and connect to areas within the greater Grand Rapids region. These systems are connected to one another and provide residents with safe recreational opportunities.

However, narrow shoulders and a lack of bike lanes or pathways on major roads in the South Walker region, such as Wilson Avenue, restrict the ability of bicycling to serve as a viable and safe mode of transportation and recreation for residents along these corridors.



Transit Routes

South Neighborhood
City of Walker, Michigan

November 1, 2019

Legend

- BRT Stops
- High Priority Transit Route
- Future Transit Route
- City of Walker Boundary
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Freeways
- Roads
- Walker_SurroundingRoadsx
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains

0 1,000 2,000
Feet

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

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Existing Conditions: Infrastructure

Water and Sewer

Existing Conditions

Most of the developed parcels in the South Walker Subarea are served by on-site water wells and septic systems. The City of Grand Rapids provides water and sanitary sewer to those parcels served by public utilities. Sanitary sewer is limited to the area north of O'Brien Street; the remaining parcels in South Walker are served by on-site septic systems. The City's water system south of O'Brien St. has transmission mains on Wilson/M-11 from O'Brien St. south to Veterans Memorial Drive (16-inch), Burton Street and Veterans Memorial Drive from Kenowa Ave to the east City limit (60-inch) and Maynard Avenue from O'Brien to Veterans Memorial Drive (12-inch). The area between Lake Michigan Drive (M-45) and O'Brien St. has a grid of 12-inch transmission/ distribution mains.

The South Walker Subarea is the least developed and least dense of the subareas. The absence of municipal water and sanitary systems has contributed to this development pattern.

Capacity and Development Considerations

Currently, the water and sewer systems have sufficient capacity to serve the existing land use for the served parcels. Most of the future considerations for this area would be based on expanding service areas and making connections to allow looping in the water system. Currently, the water system on Wilson Avenue/M-11 has east and west dead end branches. Upgrades and expansions identified in the City of Grand Rapids 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan update are focused on looping and increased reliability.

No specific sanitary sewer projects were identified in the Master Plan update; however, some areas south of O'Brien Street could be served by gravity sanitary sewer. Topography limits the extent to which the sanitary sewer can extend southward.

The former Fenske landfill site is a large parcel along Wilson Avenue with Grand River frontage. Several development plans have been proposed for this parcel which included extension of municipal water and sanitary sewer. Municipal water can be extended easily from the City of Grand Rapids' existing water system to serve a variety of uses (industrial, residential, or commercial). Sanitary sewer service could potentially be provided by a connection to the City of Grandville system by constructing a force main under the Grand River. It is unlikely that the site would be served by City of Grand Rapids sanitary sewer because of the challenges identified above.

Intensity and type of development will drive whether or not upgrades or expansions to the water and sanitary sewer system are needed. Ultimately, the determination of which district municipal utilities will be supplied by will be a function of topography, location, and system capacity and capabilities that must be addressed with each proposed development. A universal approach to utility planning is not the best fit.

The City of Grand Rapids completed a 2015 update to their Comprehensive Master Plan that included intensive study of their water distribution and sanitary sewer systems. The following projects were identified in the update for the South Walker Subarea:

1. 2,250 feet of 12-inch water main on O'Brien Street from Wilson Avenue/M-11 to the Ottawa County Line
2. 3,500 feet of 12-inch water main on O'Brien Street from east of Maynard Avenue to east of Sunset Hills
3. 2,900 feet of 12-inch water main on Butterworth Street from River Bend Drive to Maynard Avenue
4. 2,950 feet of 12-inch water main on Maynard Avenue from Veterans Memorial Drive to O'Brien Street
5. 7,850 feet of 12-inch water main on Hall Street from Kenowa Avenue to Butterworth Street
6. 3,100 feet of 16-inch water main on Wilson Avenue from Lake Michigan Drive/M-45 to O'Brien Street
7. 4,350 feet of 16-inch water main on Maynard Avenue from Butterworth Street to Veterans Memorial Drive

It is advised that these projects be constructed when they coincide with the major projects listed in the mobility plan as a cost savings and to minimize disruption to the public.

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3.

Goals and Objectives

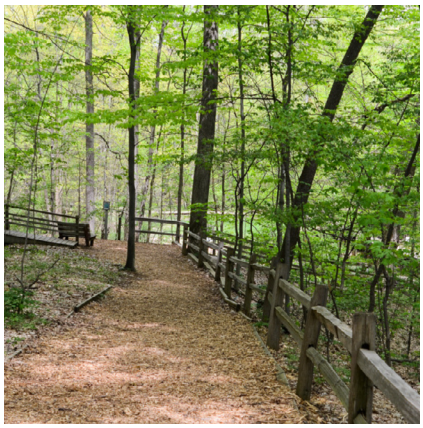
Goals and Objectives

Housing & Neighborhoods

1. **To maintain Walker's place in Kent County as a City that provides safe, attractive, and vibrant neighborhoods that can accommodate residents at all stages of life.**
    a. Respect existing residential areas by ensuring new residential development is limited to that which is compatible in character and form with existing development.
    b. Ensure new residential development is clustered, and that clusters are distributed evenly throughout the subarea.
    c. Maintain the semi-rural character of the subarea by requiring strategic preservation of open space.

Transportation

2. **Invest in improving and maintaining Walker's vehicular and non-motorized infrastructure to ensure that the City's transportation network provides accessibility and connectivity to City destinations, is designed for individuals, and responds to advances in transportation technology.**
    a. Maintain the subarea's existing network of highways, roads, streets, and sidewalks to accommodate the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians.
    b. Promote the use of alternative modes of transportation such as ridesharing, bicycling, and walking, throughout the subarea.
    c. Improve the subarea's network of trails, bicycle amenities, and other connections.
    d. Implement a comprehensive pedestrian network that focuses on creating safe intersections and crossings, encourages pedestrian-scale streetscapes, and supports walkable land use arrangements, where appropriate.
    e. Partner with Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to program safety improvements along the Wilson Avenue corridor that create a safer environment for pedestrians, and for vehicles making crossing and turning movements.



Sustainability & Resiliency

3. **Support land use planning efforts that encourage environmentally-friendly development including efforts that promote air pollution and greenhouse gas reduction as well as energy and water conservation.**

    a. Promote land use patterns that increase sustainability and resiliency in buildings and transportation systems by making sustainability a critical element when developing new zoning regulations.

    b. Conserve and restore open spaces, waterways, tree canopies, and other natural resources to increase resiliency, adaptability, and biological integrity.

    c. Think beyond first costs and consider long-term, cumulative impacts when making infrastructure and policy decisions.

    d. Prepare the public and city staff for emergencies by updating emergency plans and expanding emergency management initiatives.

Economic Development Goals

4. **Retain and promote Walker's mix of commercial and industrial uses in defined locations throughout the City that provide desired employment, goods, and services for residents, visitors, and workers alike. Encourage economic development that responds to the changing economy while positioning the City to enhance its tax base and maintain a stable and diverse revenue source.**

    a. Assist the education and business communities in developing a competitive workforce to provide job skills demanded by the regional market place and employment opportunities for local graduates.

    b. Encourage the redevelopment of the Fenske site into an industrial park, designed to respect the quiet and privacy of the neighbors and the ecological needs of the Grand River.

Parks, Trails and Open Space

5. **Reinvest in existing recreation facilities, and consider new facilities, to provide quality of life benefits for Walker residents, including active living, accessibility to recreation, and environmental preservation.**

    a. Ensure that the context of future development in areas surrounding Millennium and Johnson Parks is compatible with the natural beauty of the parkland areas, and provides an appropriate transition to nearby areas of existing development.

    b. Maintain a strong and healthy partnership with Kent County Parks to ensure that future programming and design elements at Millennium and Johnson Parks make a positive contribution to the character of the subarea, as well as to the desires of Walker residents.

    c. Pursue funding sources and develop partnerships and advocates to ensure open space preservation, and study creation and management of future nature preserve areas within the subarea.

    d. Improve the subarea's network of trails, bicycle amenities, and other connections.

Infrastructure Goals

6. **Invest in improving and maintaining City infrastructure to ensure that City services can be available for all current and future development. Implement innovative and effective strategies for maintenance and improvement of the stormwater, wastewater, solid waste, and recycling systems to ensure the health and safety of Walker's residents, and strengthen partnerships with agencies associated with these systems.**

    a. Invest in and implement comprehensive and innovative urban stormwater management, green infrastructure practices, and renewable energy systems.

    b. Provide appropriate resources for staff to maintain and improve infrastructure systems.

    c. Explore opportunities for infrastructure system improvements as new technology becomes available.

    d. Increase the use of renewable resources to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

Urban Design

7. **Achieve a positive and lasting community image by encouraging high quality and durable materials as well as current best practices for human scale and aesthetic character. Strive to incorporate design elements that contribute to a sense of place within the community.**

    a. Incorporate unique and functional community design components with all new developments, public spaces, and streetscapes.

    b. Develop detailed policy guidance, such as form-based codes and pattern books, to ensure the predictable future development of residential units in the subarea.

    c. Enhance landscaping along major corridors to reinforce the sense of place in the subarea.

    d. The Fenske site industrial park should have low-slung buildings that can be hidden amongst retained trees, and should be designed with minimal impact to woodlands and wetlands.

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4.

Community Character Plan

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use map shows the generalized, at-a-glance development pattern that is planned for the South Walker Neighborhood Cluster. 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 improvements appropriate to their existing character.

Character Areas:

- Neighborhood Preservation

2024 UPDATE

Net Density

The City of Walker has determined that the allowable housing density on a piece of property shall be determined by "net density."

Net density is determined by subtracting the acreage of regulated wetlands, flood plains, and other protected lands that cannot be built on due to County, State, or Federal regulations. Permanent water bodies on the site will also be subtracted out, as well as steep slopes exceeding 20% grade. Multiplying the maximum allowable housing units per acre, based on this Plan, by the remaining acreage gives the number of housing units permitted on the property.

The purpose and intent of using net density is to accurately determine the actual carrying capacity of a given parcel, by removing site features that are difficult or impossible to develop. This ensures that the character of a development is consistent with the intent of purpose of the various zoning districts in the City, rather than protected land being used to create out-of-scale developments.

Further, the City of Walker considers **natural features preservation to be an expectation of every new development in the City, not a special design feature to be rewarded. Therefore, all references to density in this plan should be consisted to be referencing net density.**

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. They 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

Residential: Growth 8-12 Units Per Acre

This future land use category indicates areas that are planned for high density residential growth, with the resulting built-out neighborhood featuring around 8-12 residential units per gross acre of land, although slightly lower densities would be appropriate as well. The type of residential unit may vary (single family, duplex, townhouse, small apartment buildings, etc). A mix of housing types is encouraged within these high density areas.

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. They 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. They 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

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

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:

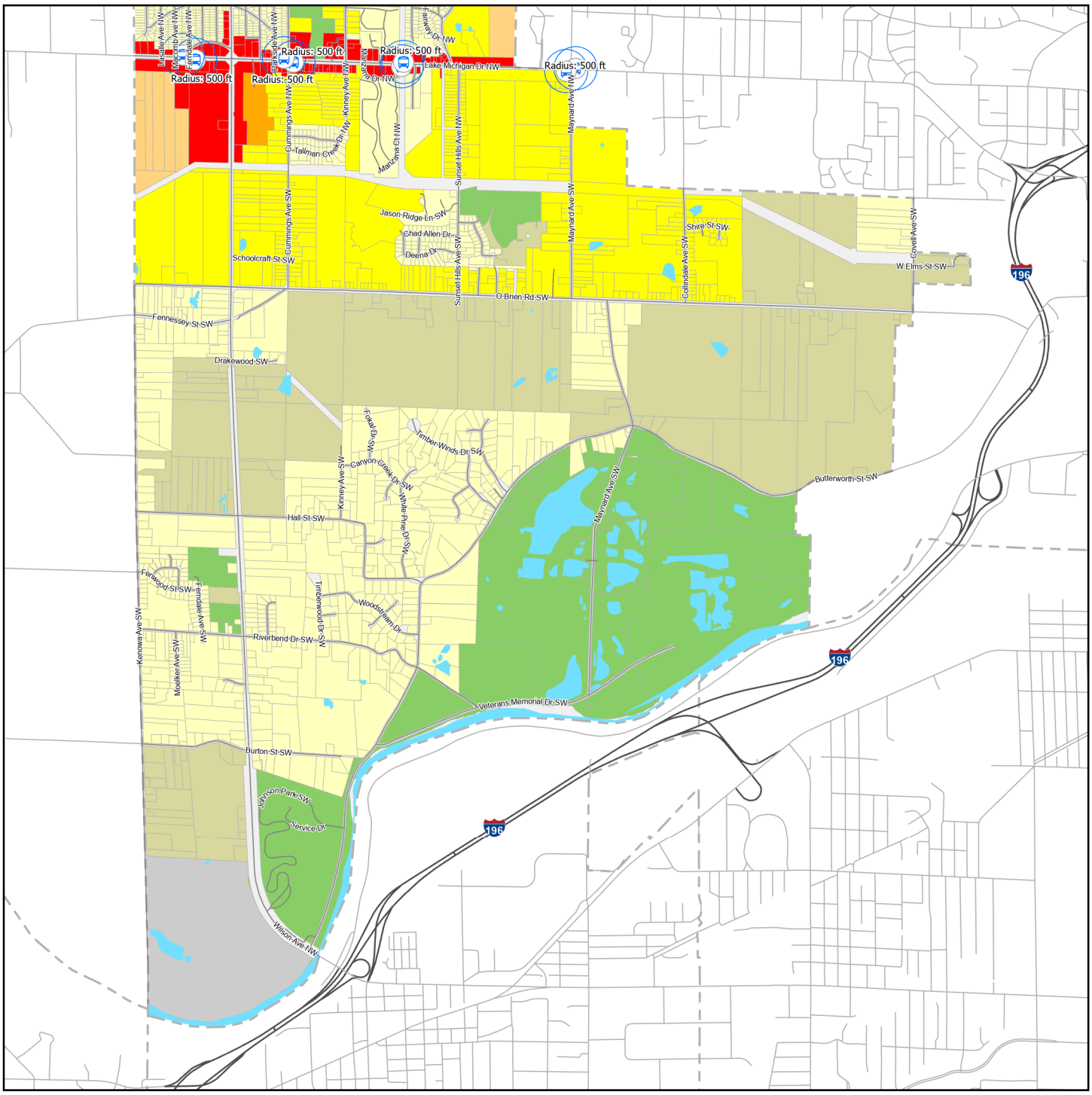
- Neighborhood Corridor
- Retrofit Mixed Use

Parks and Open Space

This future land use category indicates areas that are not planned for development, or are planned for agricultural or recreational uses.

Character Areas:

- Parks



Future Land Use

South Neighborhood
City of Walker, Michigan

Adopted August 12, 2024

LEGEND

- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Transit Oriented Development
- Rural Residential (0-1 Units/ Acre) - RR
- 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)
- Residential Existing Density - RED
- Business - B
- Mixed Use - MU
- Public/Semi-Public - P/SP
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains

0 500 1,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
City of Walker 2023. McKenna 2023.

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Community Character Plan

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.

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.

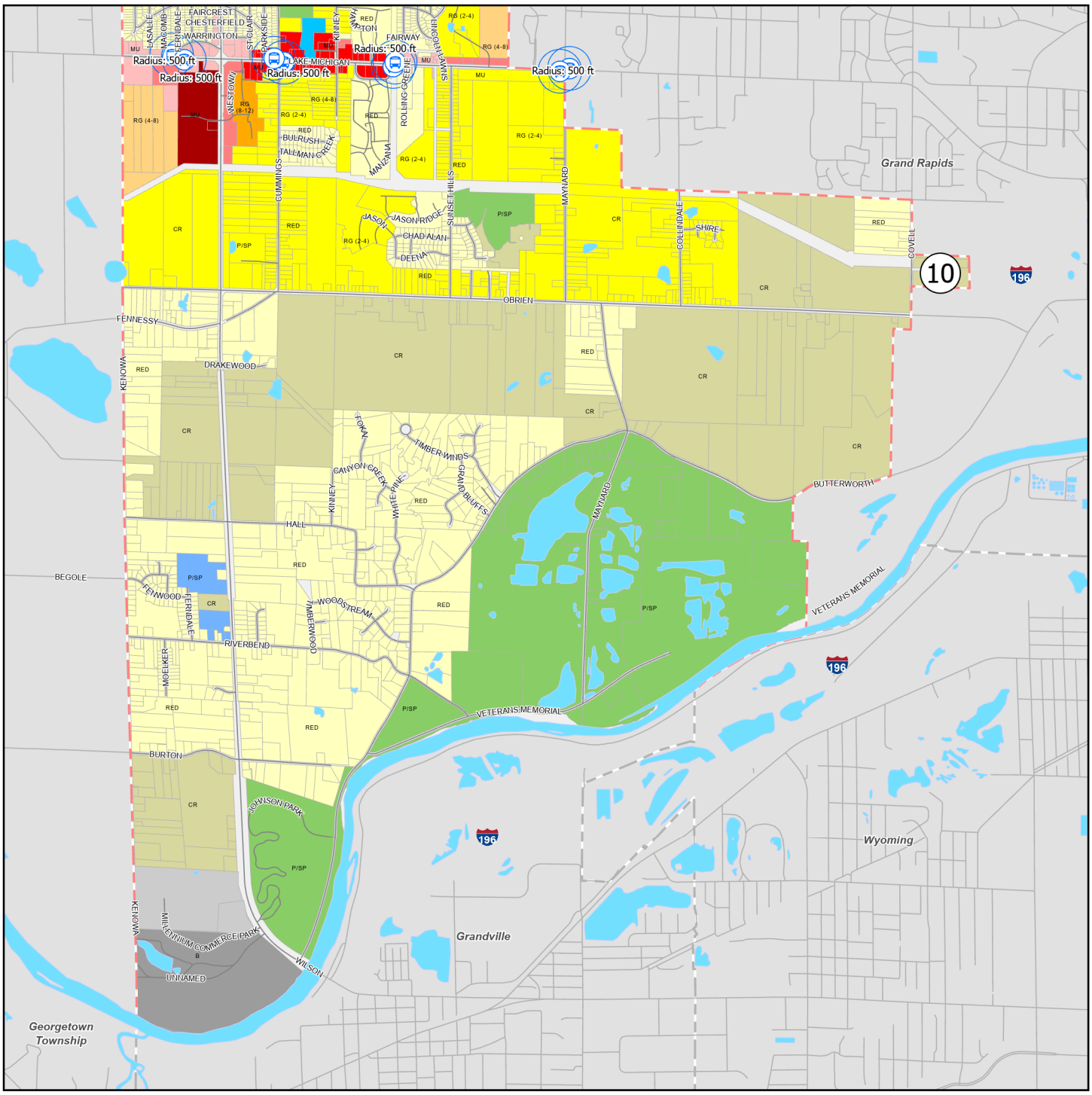
The purpose of a Community Character Plan is to recognize distinct land use areas like residential, industrial, and commercial, and identify all of the parts that add up to create character, such as use, design, and density. The Plan establishes several Community Character categories, each with the following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



Community Character

South Neighborhood
City of Walker, Michigan

Adopted August 12, 2024

LEGEND

- Neighborhood Boundary
- Transit Oriented Development
- Neighborhood Preservation - NP
- Rural Residential (0-1 Units/ Acre) - RR
- 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 Corridor - NC
- Neighborhood Node - NN
- Urban Corridor - UC
- Retrofit Mixed Use - RMU
- River Enhancement - RE
- City Municipal - CM
- School - 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, v. 17a. City of Walker 2023. McKenna 2024.

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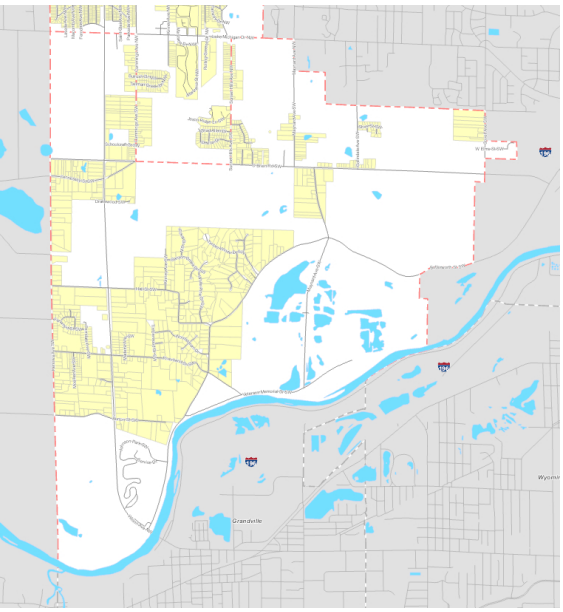
South Walker Community Character Map Footnotes:

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.

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 Cities and 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

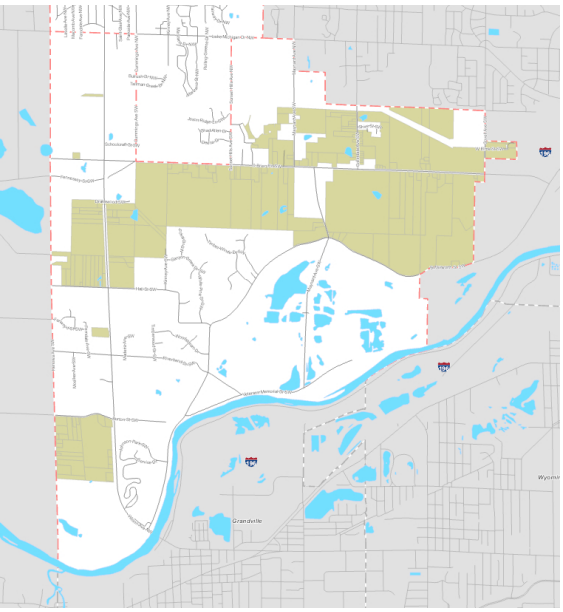
Front porch
Lawn / greenscape
Trees and landscaping

(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



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 or low density non-single family homes and preserved open spaces will be the primary uses. Small areas within the preserved open space for active 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

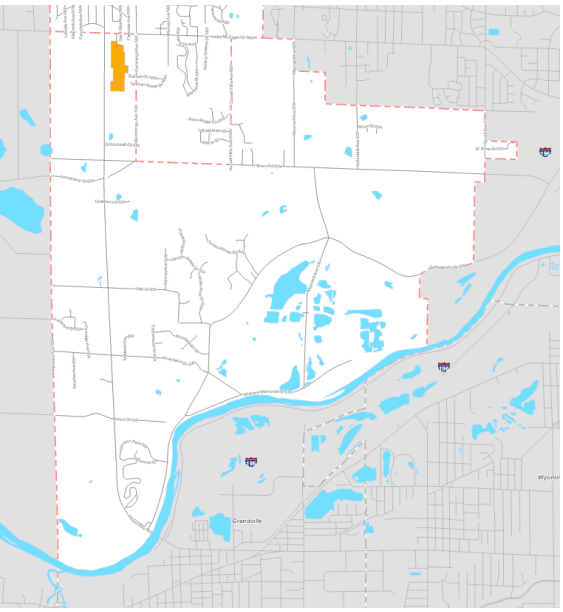
Street Frontages

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 commercial uses to create neighborhoods centers within the clusters.

Residential Growth 8-12 Units Per Acre



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.

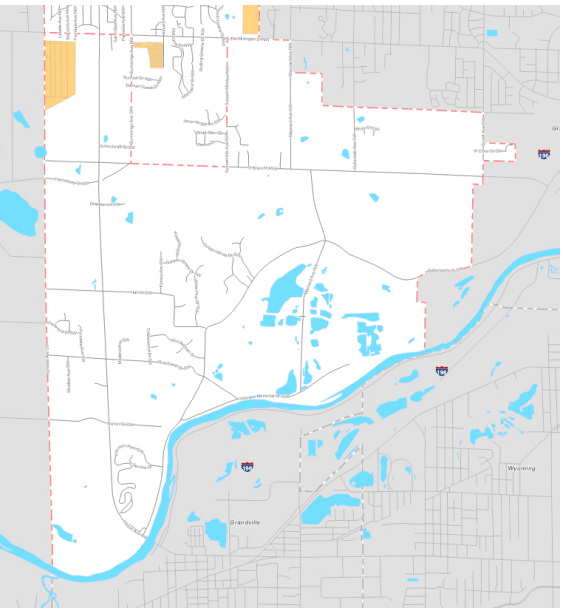
Street Frontages

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
- A2 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 "missing middle" 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

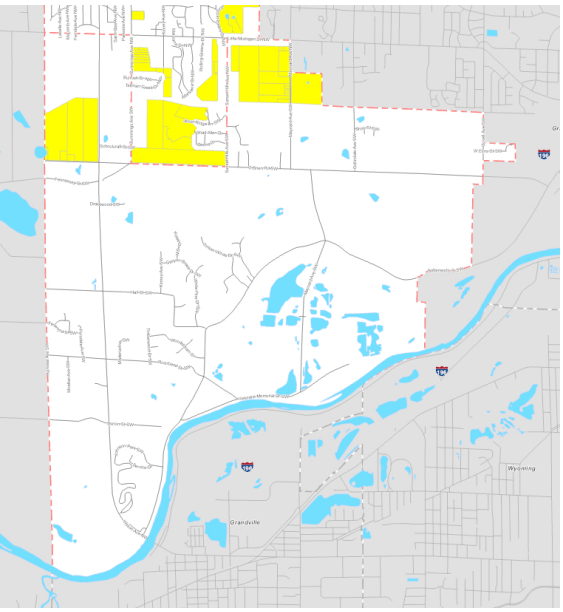
Street Frontages

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 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 retaining 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

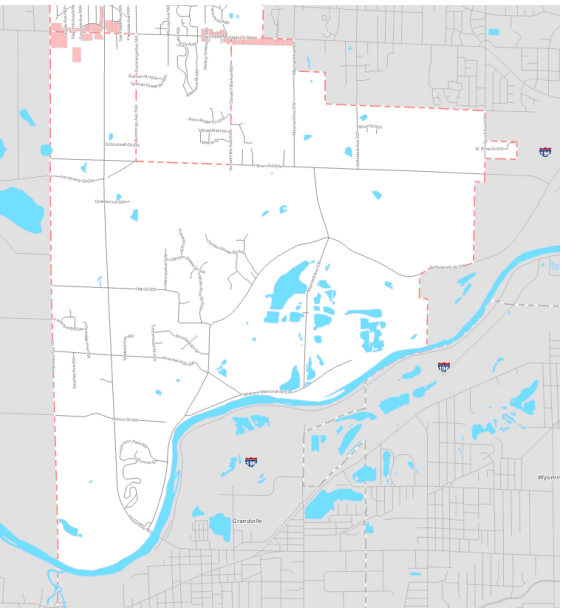
Street Frontages

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.

Neighborhood Corridor



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).

Appropriate Zoning Districts

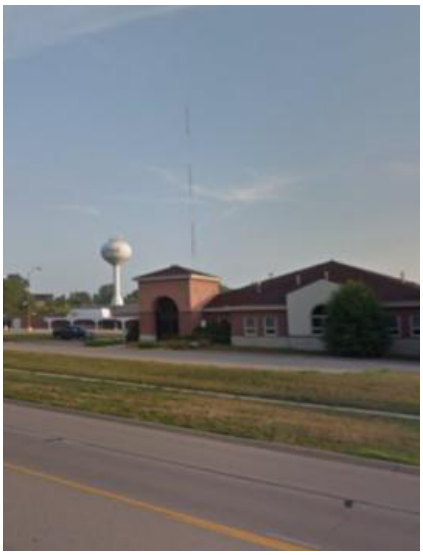
- ORP Office Research and Parking
- C-1 Local Commercial
- ARM Multiple Family
- ARM Multiple Family-1
- MPUD Mixed Use PUD
- P-SP Public/Semi-Public
- RPUD-2 High Density Residential PUD
- Consider creating new "Suburban Mixed Use" Zoning District

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

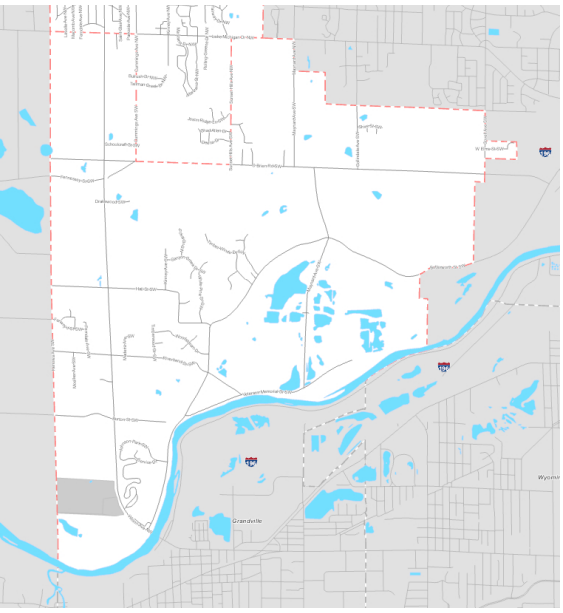
Street Frontages

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.

Community Enterprise



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.

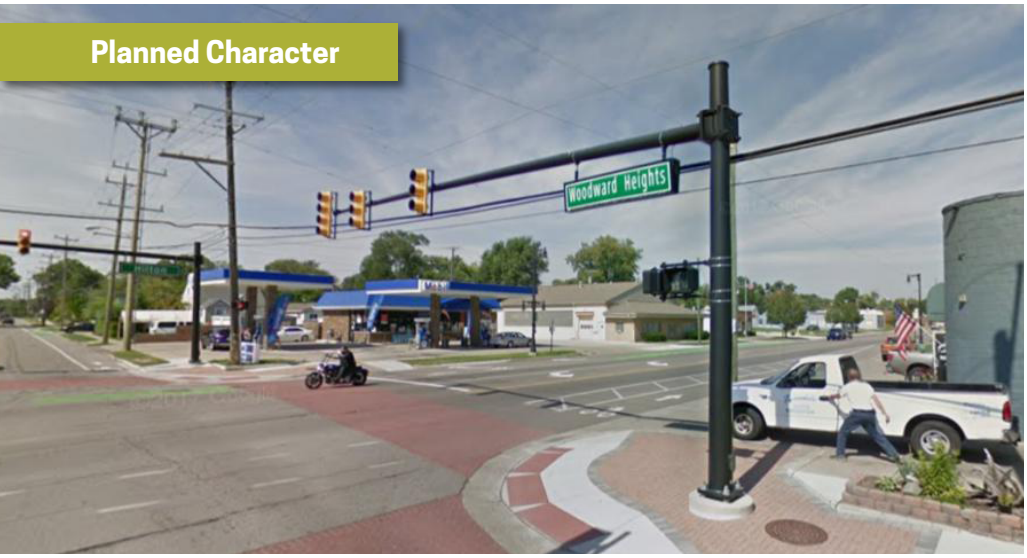
Building and Site Design

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

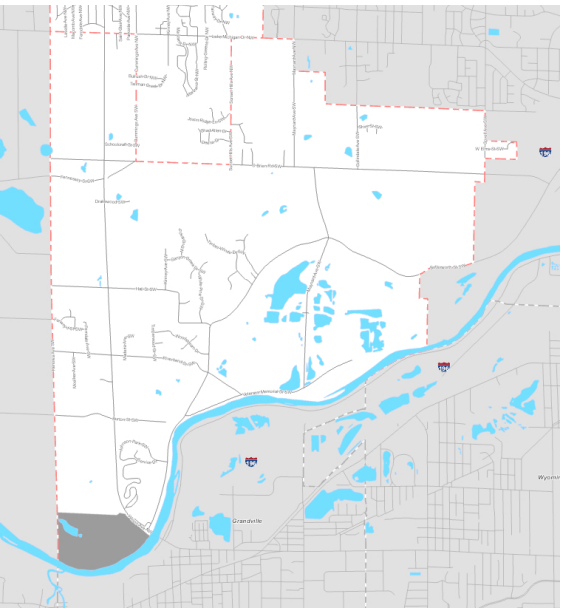
Street Frontages

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, and make them apply when residential is across the street or across a railroad right-of-way from industrial or commercial.

Enterprise



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

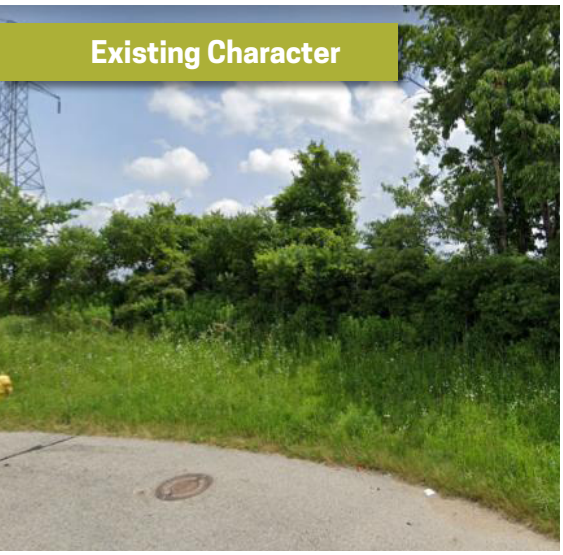
Roads in the industrial areas should be designed to be sufficient for truck traffic, without making them unsafe for pedestrians or bicyclists. New road connections should be built as needed to connect the industrial districts with arterial roads without disturbing residential areas. Connecting 3 Mile Road to West River Drive is an example of such an improvement (see Mobility Plan).

Building and Site Design

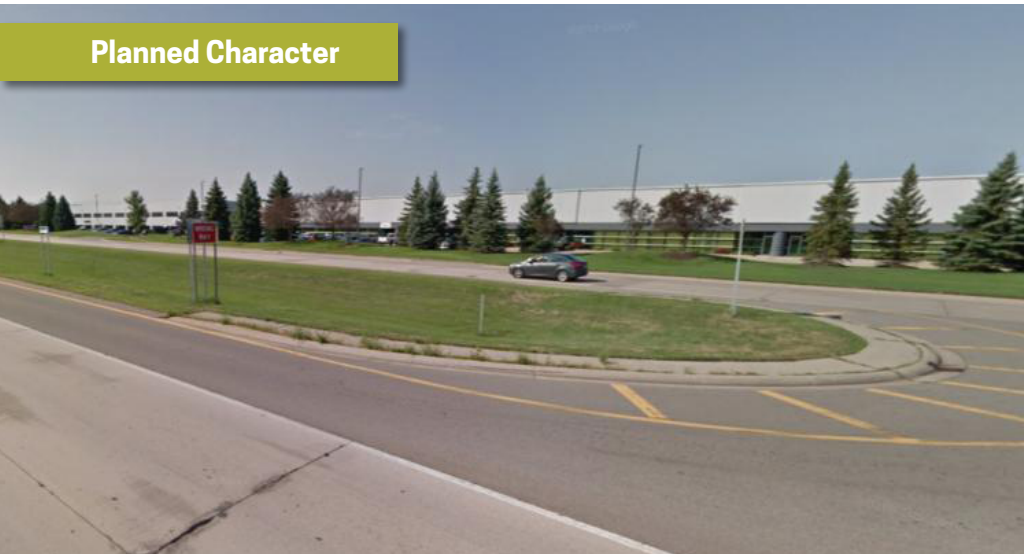
Buildings in this district should be designed to be long-lasting and to support efficient industrial and/or business practices. High-quality appearance is encouraged, however, sites should be designed to minimize off-site impacts and reduce pollution and site contamination to the extent possible.

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: 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

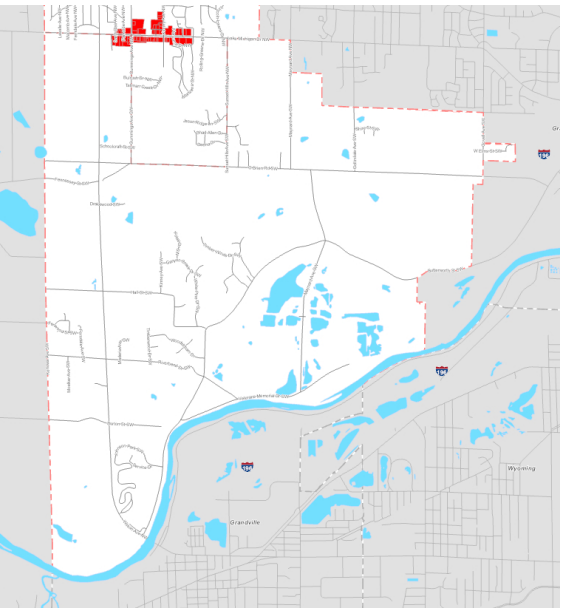
Street Frontages

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 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



Appropriate Zoning Districts

- MPUD Mixed Use PUD
- New Urban Mixed Use Zoning District
- CPUD Commercial Planned Unit Development in certain circumstances
- C-1 Local Commercial
- C-2 Community Commercial

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, 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). Lake Michigan Drive, however, is a Regional Boulevard with slip streets through the area designated as "Urban Corridor." The slip streets allow improved local mobility and pedestrian safety.

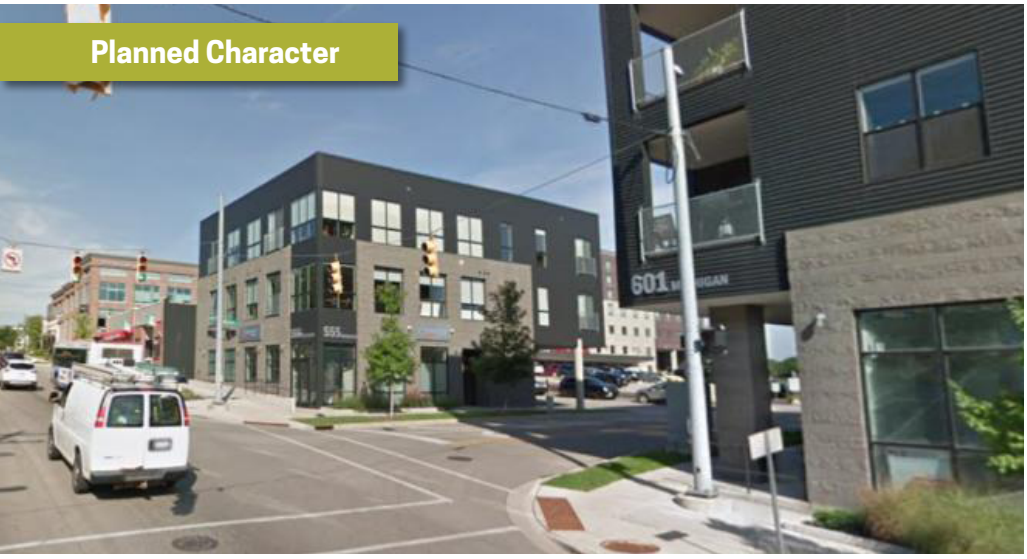
Building and Site Design

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: 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, except where excessive height would negatively impact nearby residential.

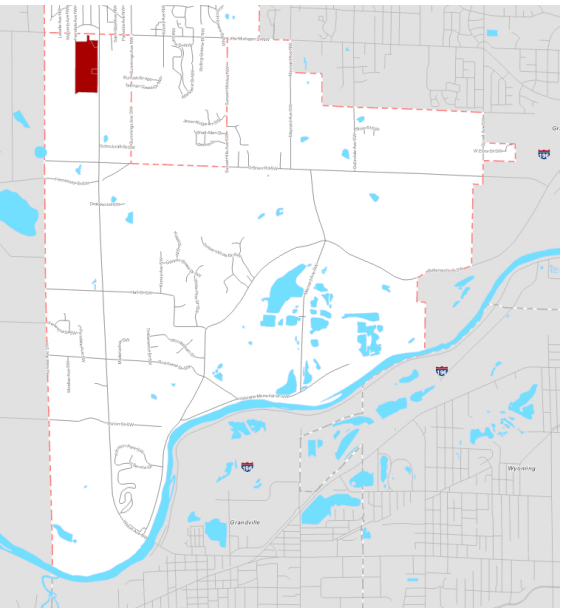
Street Frontages

Storefronts

Recommended Zoning Amendments

- Create a zoning system where property owners have the option to redeveloping 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 to 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



Appropriate Zoning Districts

- MPUD Mixed Use PUD
- New Retrofit Mixed Use Overlay
- CPUD Commercial Planned Unit Development in certain circumstances
- RPUD-3 Additional Density PUD

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 in the rear of sites and should be open to the public, with attractive landscaping and screening. Wayfinding signage should promote parking areas to visitors.

2024 UPDATE

RPUD-3

The RPUD-3 tool, as described in the Zoning Plan in Book 1, is a key implementation option for Retrofit Mixed Use developments. Allowing housing or mixed use developments at densities higher than 8 units per acre, RPUD-3 is appropriate zoning for parcels designated as Retrofit Mixed Use.

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

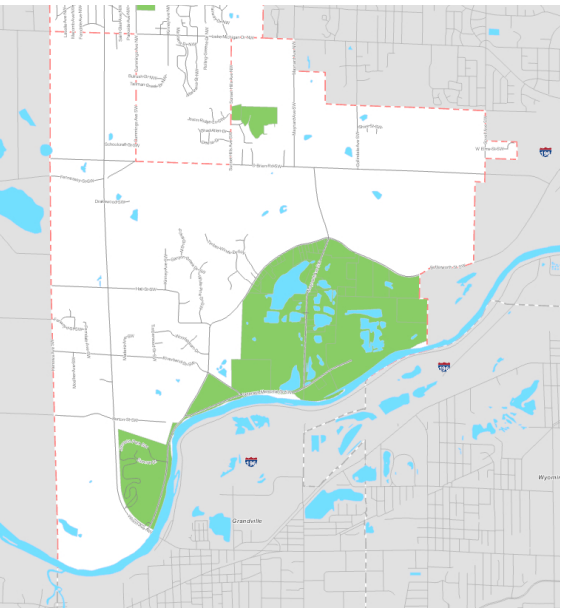
Street Frontages

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.

Parks



Appropriate Zoning Districts

- P-SP Public/Semi-Public

General Characteristics

This designation identifies park land and open space as well as land not owned by the City or County 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

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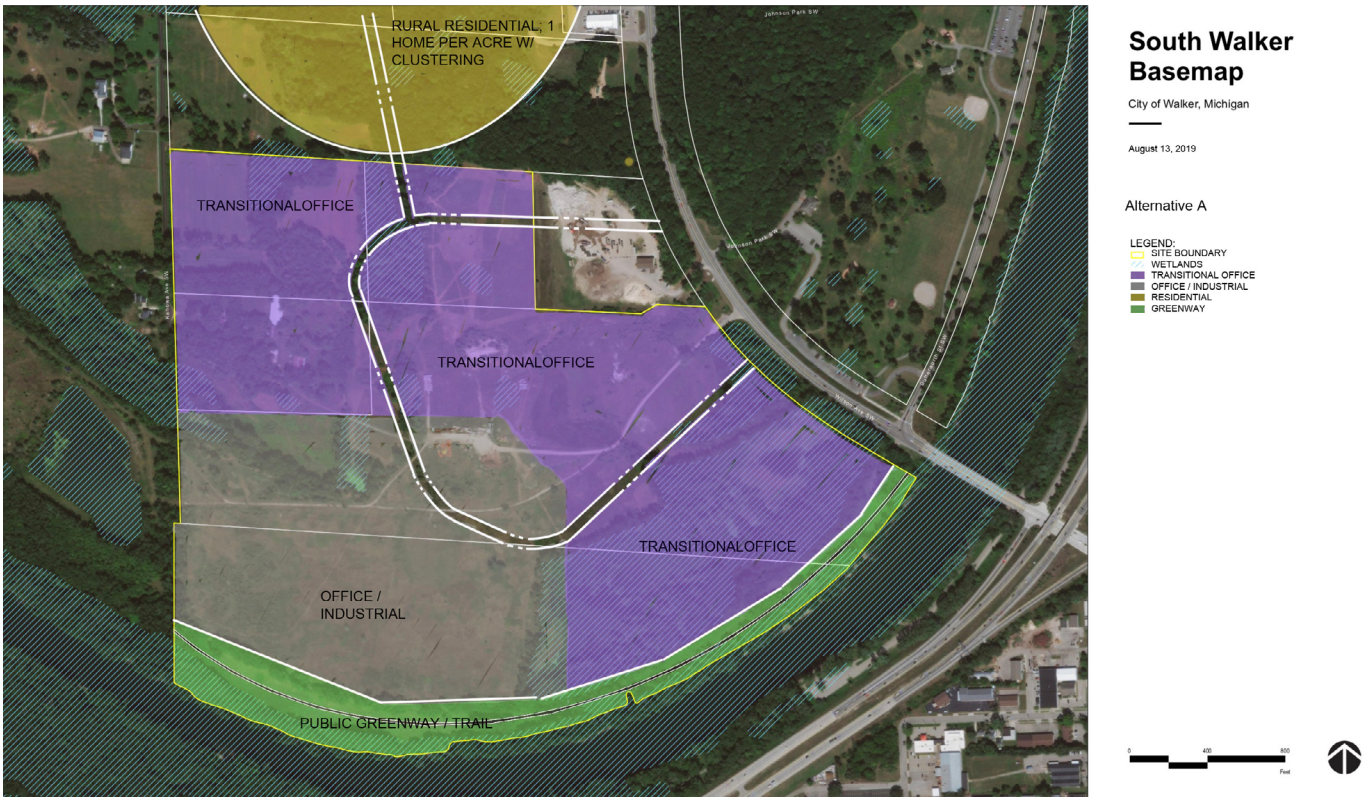
5.

Community Redevelopment Plans

Fenske Site Development Plan



The following text is from the 2007 Sub-Area 2 Plan. The full Sub-Area 2 Plan can be found in Book 4. Following the public engagement process for the 2020 City of Walker Master Plan, it was determined that the Sub-Area 2 Plan should be kept in place as the City's official vision for this site.

The City of Walker Planning Commission, following State of Michigan Law, held an official review of the draft Sub-Area #2 master plan amendment on, June 6th, 2007.

Although not required by law, the Planning Commission noticed the meeting as a public hearing and accepted additional public comments. The final draft of the Sub-Area #2 master plan / future land use map is shown below.

The Sub-Area #2 future land use map incorporated previous public comments and attempted to address several primary public concerns, including:

- Potential for traffic management at major intersections during peak hours
- An improved open space and natural area buffer for existing residences
- A public greenway / trail along the Grand River
- Maintenance of rural residential and industrial land uses.

Future land use details applicable to the 2007 Sub-Area #2 Future Land Use Map include the following:

General Concepts

- The design intent of the 1998 Master Plan has been refined to raise expectations for creative site planning and the integration of multiple sites and uses under one comprehensive planning umbrella.
- Transitions from use to use should be gradual and assisted by public open spaces, context sensitive streets, landscaped areas and pedestrian connections.
- Sub-Area #2 will be designed to evolve over time and adapt to changing conditions.
- Sub-Area #2 will exhibit a sustainable foundation of land use design, form and function for the City of Walker in the 21st Century.
- It is understood that, given the current economic climate, the master plan for Sub-Area #2 will likely not reach fruition in the near future. In the interim, the status quo will continue under the current zoning of the affected properties.

Parks, Open Space, Buffers and Natural Areas

- A public trail system / greenway would be established along the Grand River.
- The Grand River floodway, floodplain, backwaters and wetlands would be preserved.
- Existing trees along perimeter public streets would be preserved.
- A significant buffer area would be created/preserved between the office/industrial areas and the rural residential neighborhoods.

Streets, Traffic Management and Pedestrian Safety

- An internal connector / collector public street system would be constructed concurrent with development from Wilson Avenue north to Burton Street. The transition from office/industrial to rural residential would be accommodated by using context sensitive roadway design applications. Street connectivity will be essential.
- Internal sidewalks and/or trails would be linked into the future public trail system along the Grand River.

Future Land Use Categories

- The area south of the current Weller Trust lot line to the Grand River floodplain would become Office / Industrial Park & Transitional Office.
  - » Industrial and office uses in a business park setting would be placed outside of the Grand River floodplain and in the brownfield reclamation area.
  - » Transitional office outlots would ring the site, fronting on Wilson Avenue and providing a buffer for the rural residential neighborhoods to the North.
  - » The majority of parking spaces would be moved to the sides or rear of buildings.
  - » Sidewalks would link parking areas to buildings in a safe and creative manner.
  - » Landscaping would use development park design details and techniques.
  - » The use of ground signs and canopy signs would be encouraged instead of pylon signs and typical commercial wall signage.
  - » Stormwater management systems would treat both runoff quantity and quality using creative design tools.
  - » Shared driveways, parking lot connections, shared parking lots, service drives and connected streets would be used to implement local and regional access management techniques.
  - » In summary, this area should be comprehensively designed to fit and function as one business park, not a jumbled collection of independent sites.
- The area north of the current Weller Trust property line would become Rural Residential.
  - » The physical design of this residential area would either by large lot residential or clustered subdivisions, placed to take advantage of their relative locations, and enhanced by pedestrian access, trails, parks and open spaces.
  - » The maximum overall housing density allowed would be one (1) unit per acre.
  - » The preservation/enhancement of existing natural features would be a priority.
  - » Existing topography would be preserved or minimally altered.
  - » Adequate parking for visitors would be provided in strategic locations.
  - » Stormwater management systems would treat both runoff quantity and quality using creative design tools.
  - » In summary, this area should be comprehensively and creatively designed to meet housing market needs, take advantage of relative location and work with the existing topography and natural features.

Policy Recommendations For Implementation

1. The AA – Agricultural zoning district should be amended to allow clustered lot developments. Densities should be limited to one unit per acre. The revised AA ordinance should establish a quantifiable process for reviewing cluster developments, in order to avoid excessive densities and to clarify the site design process.
2. The land south of the current Weller Trust lot line should eventually be rezoned to Industrial Planned Unit Development (IPUD) or Industrial Park (MP) to coordinate land planning, design and development.
3. Funding mechanisms such as Special Assessment Districts should be considered to complete public street and utility improvements, drainage upgrades and pedestrian access.
4. The City of Walker should continue to work with MDOT and the Kent County Road Commission regarding future improvements to and access management on Wilson Avenue.
5. The City of Walker should continue to work with the Kent County Parks Department to extend a greenway / trail system along the Grand River.

6.

Mobility Plan

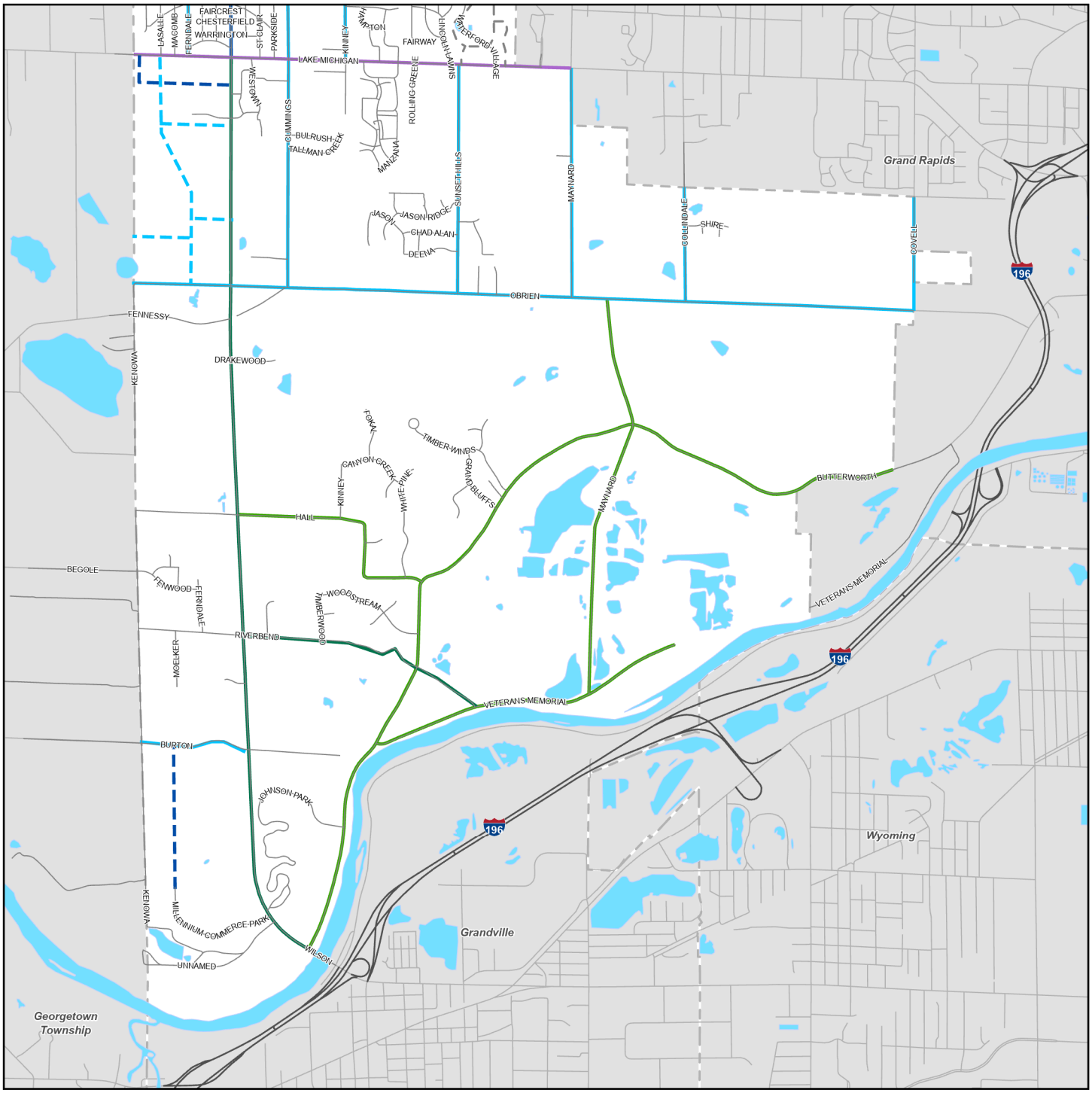
Corridor Design Plan

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.

Note: MDOT has not approved the designs shown for M-11 in this plan.



Corridor Design Plan

South Neighborhood
City of Walker, Michigan

Adopted August 12, 2024

LEGEND

- Proposed Business Connector
- Proposed Neighborhood Connector
- Proposed Neighborhood Street
- Regional Throughway
- Urban Throughway
- Business Connector
- Neighborhood Connector
- Natural Beauty Corridor
- Natural Beauty Throughway
- Neighborhood Street
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Freeways
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains

0 500 1,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
City of Walker 2023. McKenna 2024.

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South Walker Corridor Design Map Footnotes:

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **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.

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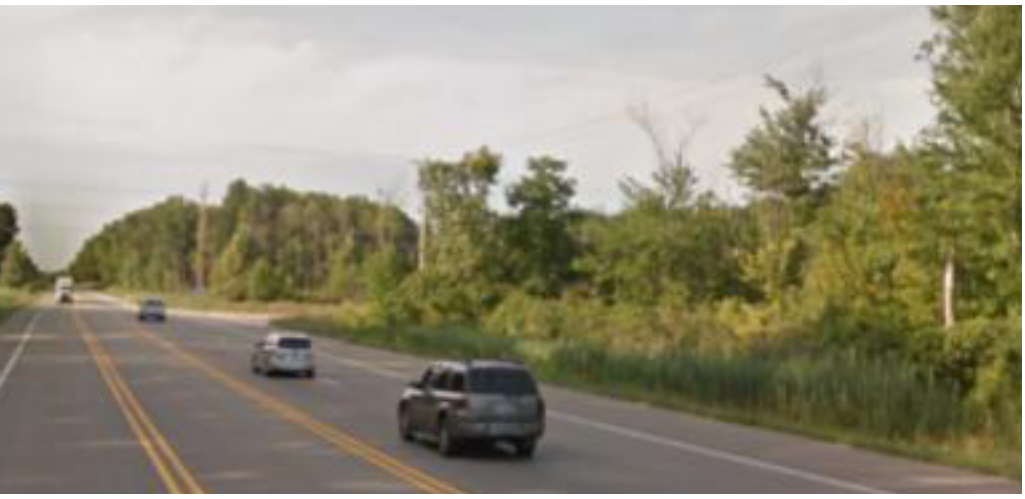
Business Connector

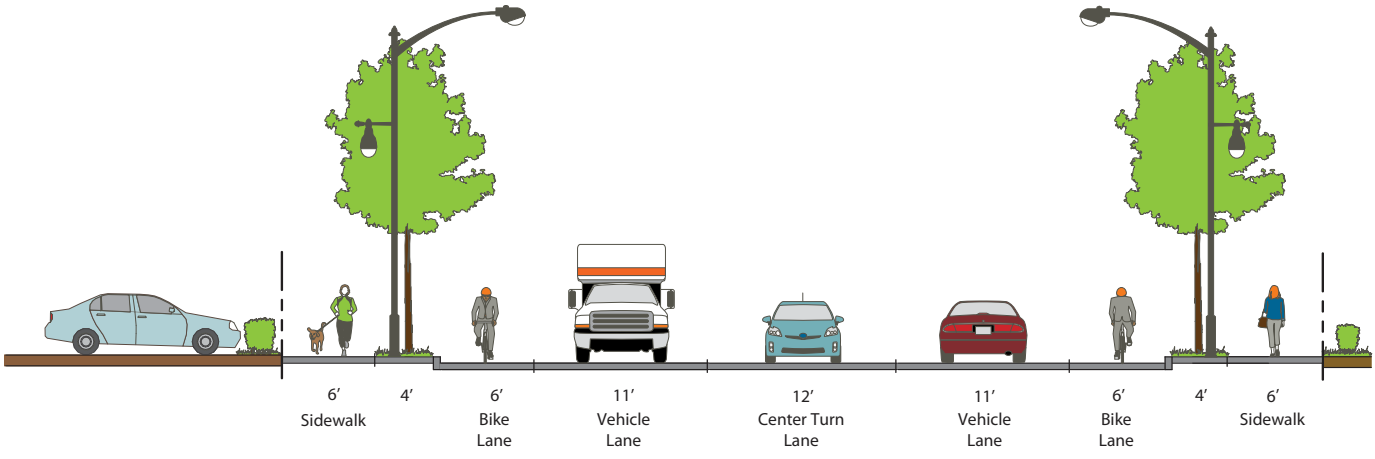


General Characteristics

- 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



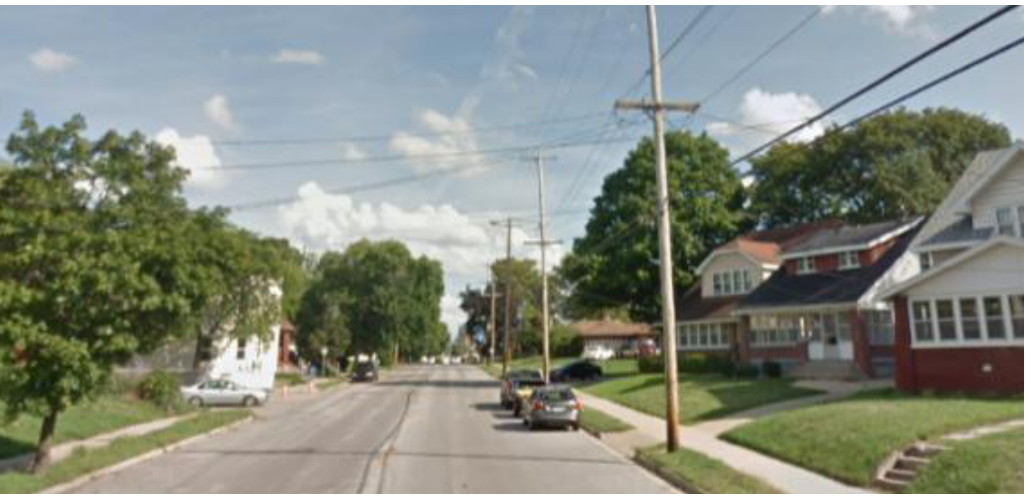
Business Connector

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 within the South Walker Neighborhood Cluster

- **M-11/Wilson Avenue – O'Brien Road to M-45/Lake Michigan Drive**

Neighborhood Connector



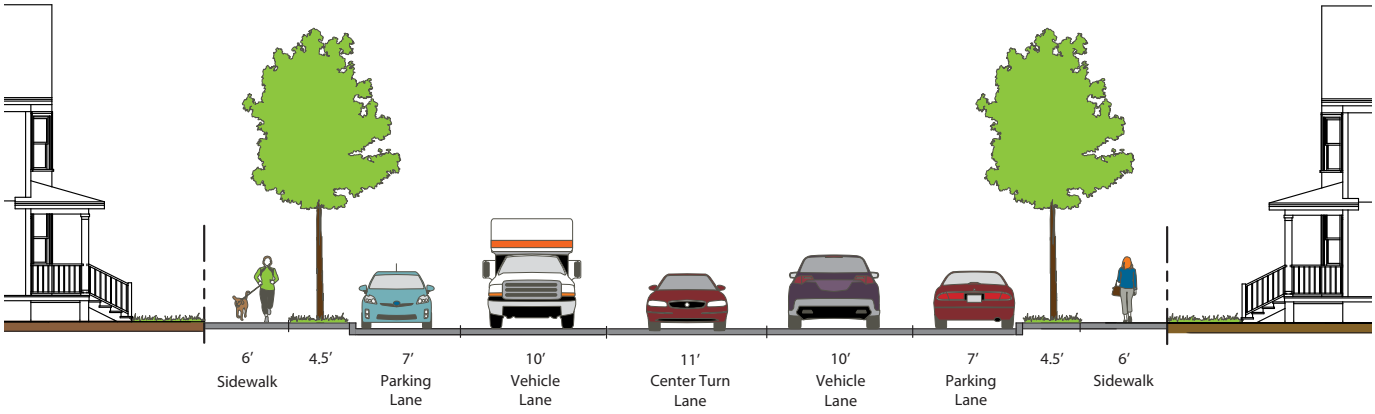
General Characteristics

- 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.

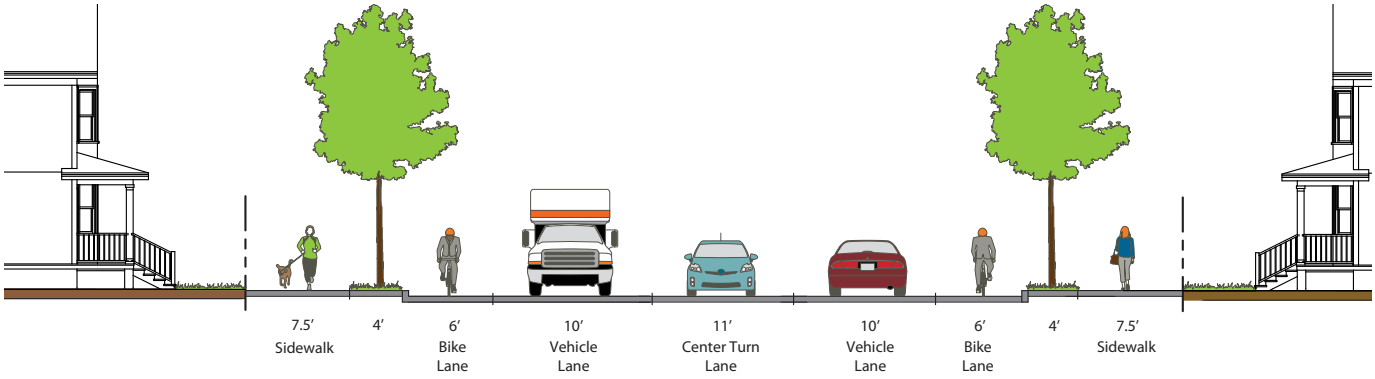
Guidelines for Neighborhood Connectors

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.



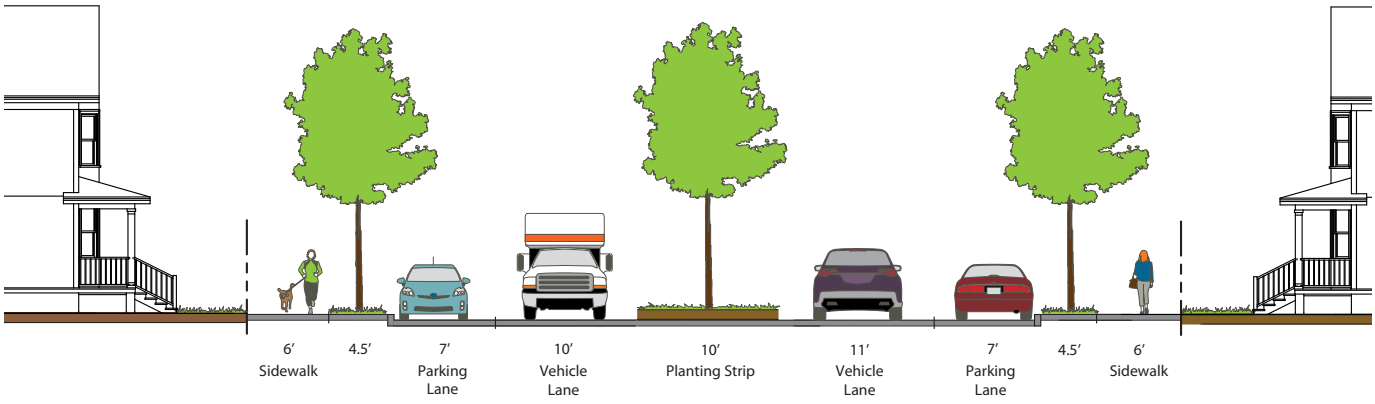
Neighborhood Connector - On Street Parking

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 within the South Walker Neighborhood Cluster

- **Burton Street (Wilson to Kenowa)**
- **Riverbend Drive (Wilson to Kenowa)**
- **Hall Street (Wilson to Kenowa)**
- **Fennessy Street (O'Brien to Kenowa)**
- **O'Brien Broad (Wilson to Kenowa)**
- **Cummings Street (O'Brien to Lake Michigan Drive)**
- **Maynard Avenue (O'Brien to Lake Michigan Drive)**
- **Collindale Avenue (O'Brien to City Limits)**
- **Covell Avenue (O'Brien to City Limits)**
- **Kenowa Avenue (O'Brien to Dead End)**
- **Planned Butterworth Drive extension west of Wilson**
- **Planned Kenowa Avenue extension south of current dead end**

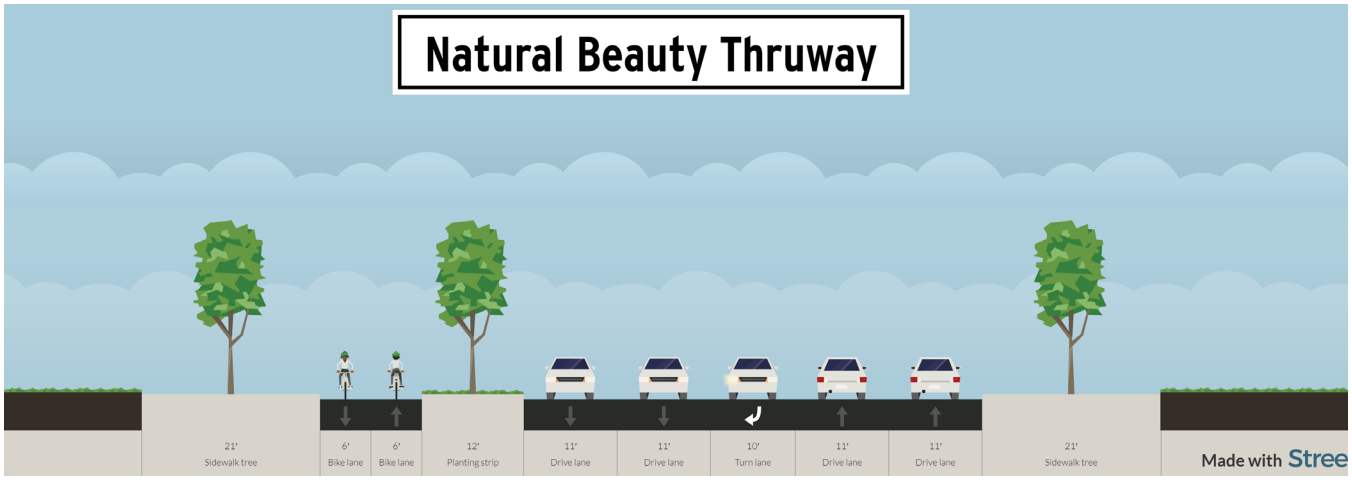
Natural Beauty Thruway

General Characteristics

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

Natural Beauty Thruway 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

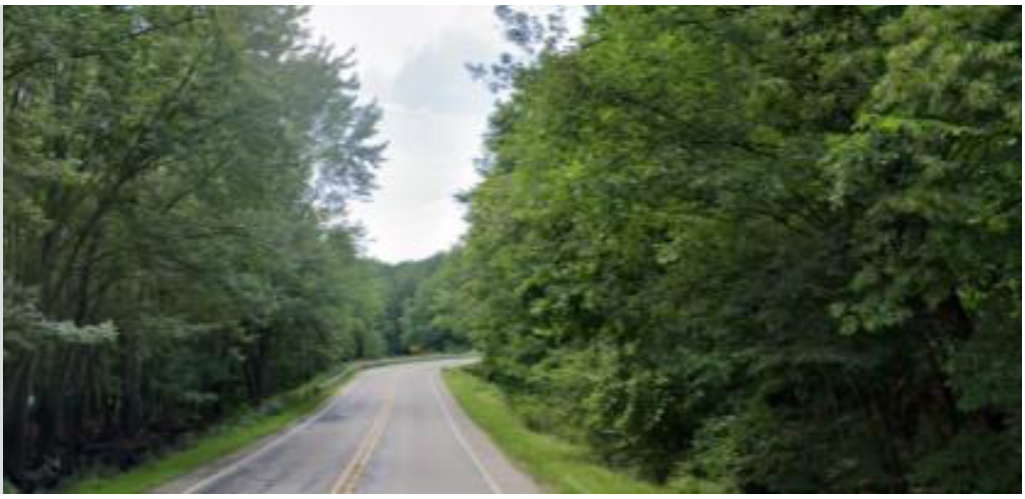


1. Natural Beauty Corridors should be designed with a **five lane cross section** more lanes may even be appropriate if traffic levels warrant.
2. **"Michigan Lefts"** may be appropriate near intersections, if there is sufficient right of way.
3. **Cycle tracks/bike paths** should be prioritized alongside 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 within the South Walker Neighborhood Cluster

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

Natural Beauty Corridor

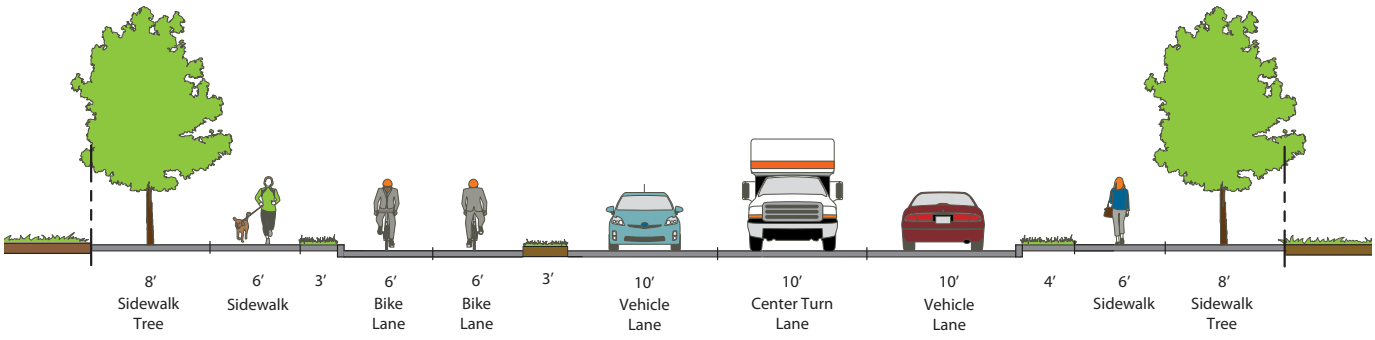


General Characteristics

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

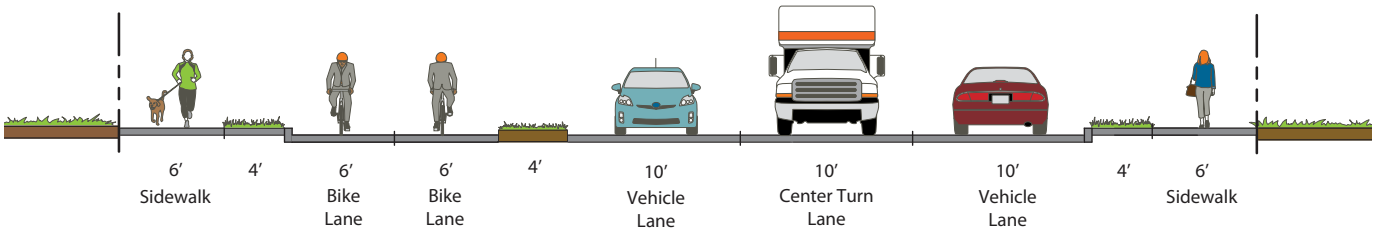
Natural Beauty Corridors are roadways that run through undeveloped and natural areas that are planned to remain in that character. The roadway should be designed to complement the natural surroundings.

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.



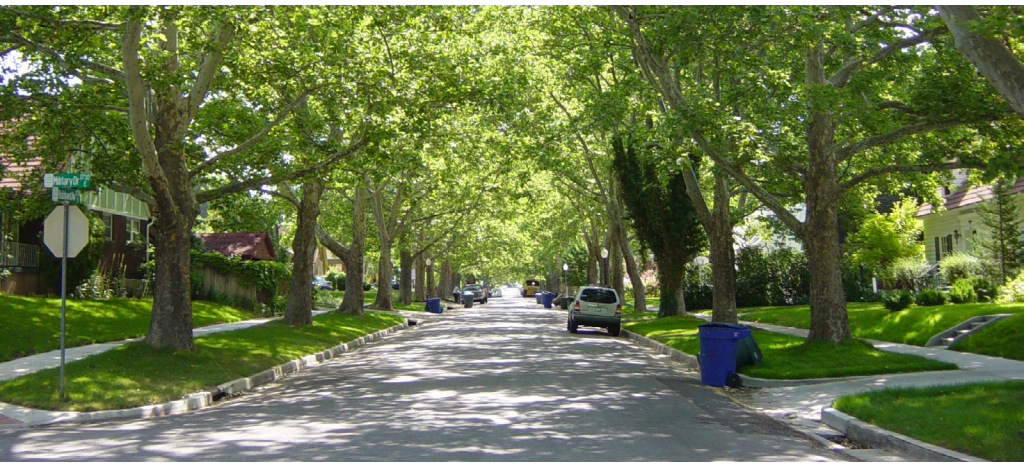
Natural Beauty Corridor-66′ R.O.W.

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 within the South Walker Neighborhood Cluster

- **Butterworth Drive (Wilson to City Limits)**
- **Riverbend Drive (Wilson to City Limits)**
- **Hall Street (Wilson to Butterworth)**
- **O'Brien Road (Wilson to City Limits0**
- **Maynard Avenue (O'Brien to Veterans Memorial)**
- **Veterans Memorial Drive (Butterworth to Dead End)**

Neighborhood Streets

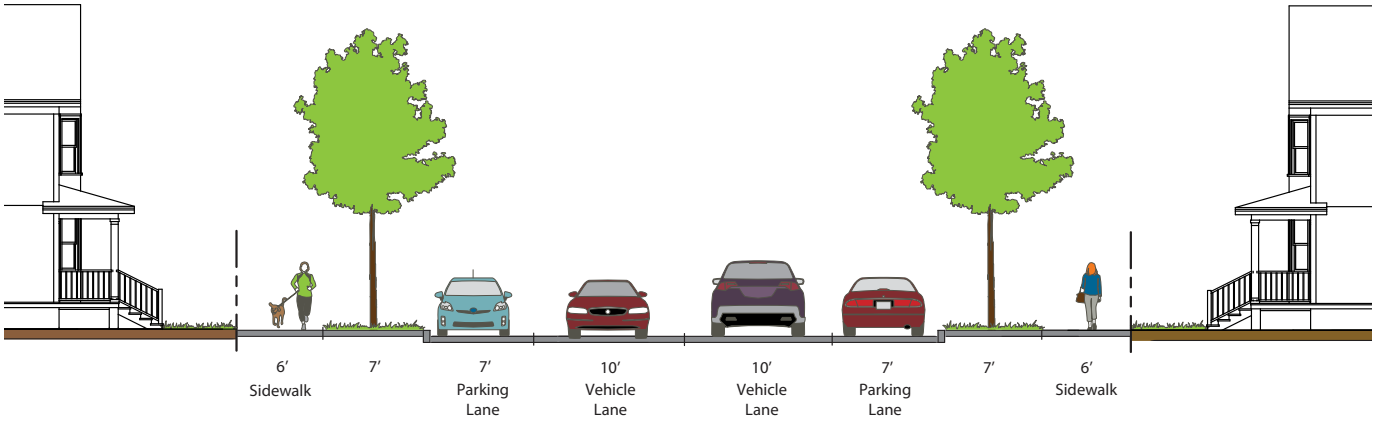


General Characteristics

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

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

Guidelines for Neighborhood Streets



Neighborhood Street

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 South Walker Neighborhood Cluster include all roadways not listed in one of the other categories.

New Road Connections

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.

LaSalle Avenue and Associated West Standale Road Network: LaSalle Avenue should be a precise-platted public road, connecting to a broader network of roads as described in Book 2c.

Expressways

- There are no expressways in South Walker. However, improvements to Wilson Avenue and development on the Fenske site must take into account the I-196 interchange across the Grand River in Grandville.

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 South Walker Neighborhood Cluster, the following roads are designated as truck routes. On all other roads, truck traffic should be discouraged.

- Wilson Avenue
- Butterworth Drive (until the sand mines cease operation, at which time truck traffic should be discouraged)

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 South Walker Neighborhood Cluster, the following routes are designated for transit:

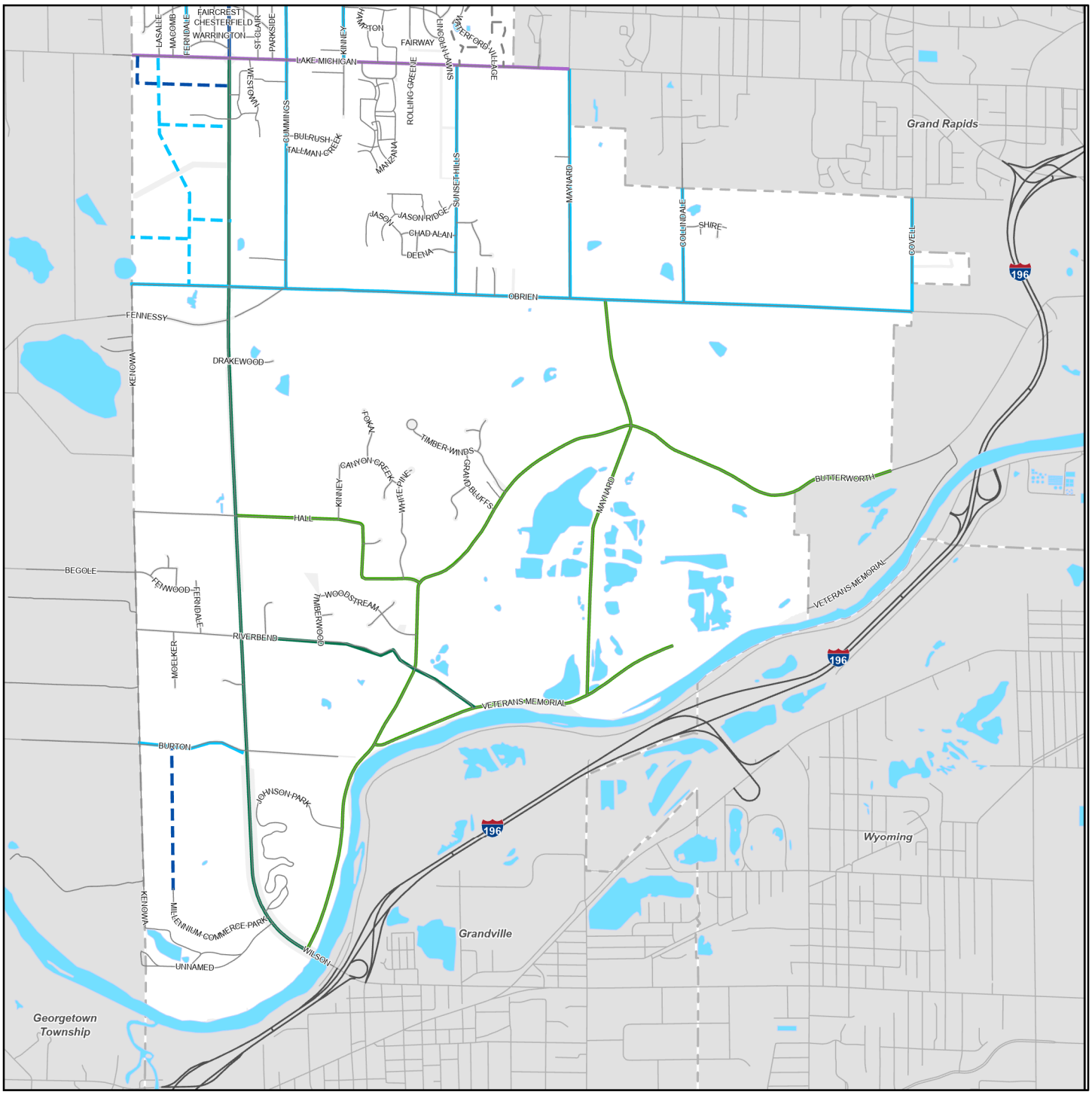
High Priority

» There are no high priority transit routes in the South Walker Neighborhood Cluster.

Future Vision

» **Butterworth Drive.** Once Millennium Park reaches its full build-out, and if and when a high-density development is constructed on the Fenske site, a new bus route running from downtown Grand Rapids to John Ball Park, Millennium Park, and Johnson Park.

» **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, and Standale (including the Laker Line Bus Rapid Transit, and other Rapid routes).



New Road Connections

South Neighborhood
City of Walker, Michigan

Adopted August 12, 2024

LEGEND

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

0 500 1,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
City of Walker 2023. McKenna 2024.

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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 South Walker Neighborhood Cluster, the following bike paths already exist:

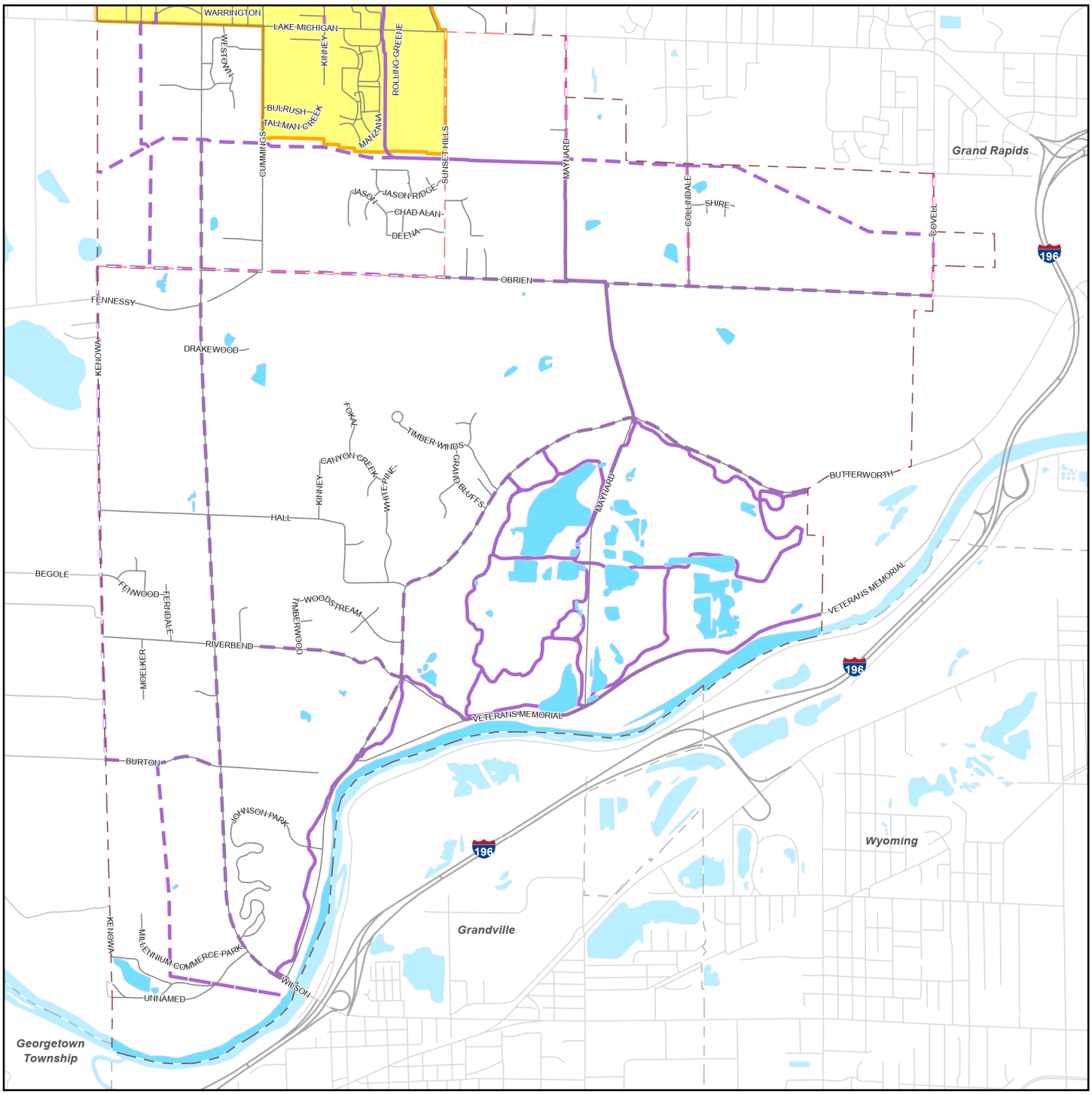
- The Fred Meijer Standale Trail, running along Maynard Avenue, O'Brien Road.
- The Kent Trail along the Grand River.
- Millennium Park's network of trails.

The following additional bike paths are proposed:

- An extension of the Kent Trails riverfront trail west of Wilson.
- Wilson Avenue, from the Grand River to Lake Michigan Drive (and beyond).
- Burton Street, Kenowa Avenue, and O'Brien Road, creating a loop serving the neighborhoods west of Wilson.
- Riverbend Drive, Wilson to Butterworth.
- O'Brien Road, Wilson to City Limits
- Butterworth Drive, Wilson tot 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.

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 South Walker Neighborhood Cluster, and none planned, although some of the bike paths describe above could be bike lanes instead – notably Butterworth, O'Brien, and the Burton/Kenowa/O'Brien loop.



Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

South Neighborhood
City of Walker, Michigan

Adopted August 12, 2024

Legend

- Sidewalk Improvement Zone
- Existing Bike Path
- Proposed Bike Path
- Existing Bike Lane
- Proposed Bike Lane
- City of Walker Boundary
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Freeways
- Roads
- Walker Surrounding Roads
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Drains

0 1,000 2,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
Data Source: City of Walker 2019. McKenna 2024.

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7.

Action Plan

Action Plan

The Action Plan table on the following page 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 2b.10: South Walker Action Plan

Land Use	Mobility	Infrastructure	Open Space and Parks
Key Partners: Developers, Business Owners	**Key Partners:** MDOT, Kent County Road Commission, The Rapid	**Key Partners:** City of Grand Rapids	**Key Partners:** Kent County Parks
2020 - 2025			
Develop zoning regulations for cluster housing developments	Construct non-motorized pathways along Wilson Avenue, Butterworth Street, and O'Brien Road	Construct a water main loop to serve South Walker, as described in this plan	Parner with Kent County Parks on the continued build out of Johnson Park and Millennium Park.
Parner with Kent County Parks on the continued build out of Johnson Park and Millennium Park.	Partner with The Rapid to create a bus route along Wilson Avenue		Preserve the wooded and rural character of South Walker through cluster development, natural beauty roads, and other means.
	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		
2026 - 2030			
Ensure that cluster housing developments, as they are developed preserve generally the areas envisioned by this plan	Construct non-motorized pathways through the neighborhoods west of Wilson, including within the Fenske site	Evaluate infrastructure needs to determine if additional water or sewer is needed. Do not provide sewer unless the planned residential density requires it.	Preserve the wooded and rural character of South Walker through cluster development, natural beauty roads, and other means.
2031 - 2035			
Continue cluster housing developments as envisioned by this plan	Evaluate the non-motorized pathway system and determine if additional pathways are needed in South Walker	Evaluate infrastructure needs to determine if additional water or sewer is needed. Do not provide sewer unless the planned residential density requires it.	Preserve the wooded and rural character of South Walker through cluster development, natural beauty roads, and other means.
2036 - 2040			
Continue cluster housing developments as envisioned by this plan	Evaluate the overall transportation system and update 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.	

Planning Consultants:

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Carrie Leitner ..... Art Director
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