





CHAPTER 9

Genesee Prairie Sub-Area Plan

The Genesee Prairie Sub-Area Plan provides additional analysis and evaluation necessary to conduct in-depth planning. This key sector of remaining open space and undeveloped land in the Township faces a variety of development pressures in this planning period. A large portion of the planning area contains significant prairie and agricultural lands that are important for both their contributions to the natural environment as well as the rural character of the Township. Also included is the Colony Farm Orchard property, owned by Western Michigan University.

Although there has been little new development in this area since the last Plan, there has been significant new development surrounding the designated sub-area as well as substantial planning activity that will prompt additional development in the future. Recognizing this, the Township met with stakeholders, property owners, neighbors, and other interested parties to develop a deeper understanding of the area and a specific plan for the future.

Genesee Prairie Sub-Area Plan

The Genesee Prairie Sub-Area Plan was prepared to allow for an in-depth look at an area of the Township facing increasing development and likely to see land use change in the near future. While there have not been many changes in the area since the last Sub-Area plan was completed in 1997, much has changed in the areas that surround it:

- Kalamazoo Valley Community College and development along the 9th Street corridor continue to grow.
- Oshtemo continues to focus energy into revitalizing the village area centered at 9th Street and Stadium Drive.
- New offices and residential conversions have occurred along South 11th Street and are approaching Parkview Avenue.
- Western Michigan University (WMU) developed the Business, Technology, and Research Park at Drake Road and Parkview Avenue, and it is nearing capacity.
- The State of Michigan lifted the deed restriction on the Colony Farm Orchard allowing WMU significantly greater flexibility in the use of this land.
- The WMU Foundation purchased the land at the southwest corner of Stadium Drive and Drake Road and has removed the trailer park.
- Parkview Avenue was improved between Drake Road and Stadium Drive including a widened bridge over US-131 and signalization of the intersection with Stadium Drive.

The 1997 Genesee Prairie Focus Area Plan called for this area to have low-density residential uses with areas set aside for open space preservation (primarily the Colony Farm Orchard), agriculture, and minor office and commercial use. Considering the surrounding development pressures and increased inquiries regarding development potential of this area, it was therefore prudent to take a new look at this area and how it should develop in the future.

Existing Conditions

Regional Location

The Genesee Prairie Sub-Area, approximately 700 acres, is located in the southeast portion of the Township. It consists of two study segments. The primary Genesee Prairie study segment is Section 36 of the Township. It is bounded by 12th Street to the east, N Avenue to the south, generally the utility corridor to the west, and Parkview Avenue to the north. The other study segment of the Sub-Area consists of the Colony Farm Orchard (CFO) located across US-131 and the ten acre property north of the CFO. These properties are bounded by US-131 to the west, Stadium Drive to the north, Drake Road to the east, and Parkview Avenue to the south.

The Genesee Prairie Sub-Area represents the largest concentration of undeveloped land in the eastern portion of Oshtemo; the eastern portion of Oshtemo has historically experienced more development pressure than the other parts of the community.

- To the north, there is a mix of commercial, single family, and multi-family residential uses influenced by the Stadium Drive corridor and the village area.
- To the west is the South 9th Street corridor, which primarily includes industrial and commercial uses.
- To the south lies Texas Township. Given the 9th Street interchange with I-94, there are many highway-oriented commercial uses, with plans indicating potential for more in the future. The Texas Township Master Plan calls for Regional Commercial uses from 9th Street east to the gas/electric corridor with office uses extending east from there, with the exception of the existing residences along N Avenue.
- To the east is the City of Kalamazoo. The Genesee Prairie portion of the Sub-Area abuts a residential area of the City west of the US-131 freeway. The Colony Farm Orchard and abutting ten acres are on the other side of the freeway and immediately adjacent to the City. South of the Orchard is WMU's BTR Park and to the east is the Asylum Lake Preserve, also owned by WMU.

Regionally, there has been a shift in development to the west and south with the greatest increase occurring in Oshtemo and Texas Townships as well as the Mattawan area. With this shift, growing enrollment at KVCC, further development along 9th Street (at I-94, the village area, and at West Main Street), and the establishment of the BTR Park, traffic levels have increased in this area, stressing the current infrastructure. These trends add to the pressure to develop the large parcels within the Sub-Area.

Natural Resources

It is important to evaluate the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area because of the potential for future land use changes, but also due to the value of its open space and natural areas. This area has a rich natural history that has influenced its current land use and will influence future land use planning. Due to the unique nature of the two study segments of the Sub-Area, they are described separately.

GENESEE PRAIRIE

The Genesee Prairie was a mesic or tall grass prairie. It was the first land settled in Oshtemo and has almost entirely been plowed over and farmed. It contains some of the most fertile soils in the area, which attracted settlers to the site and continues to provide excellent farming conditions. Few, if any, remnants of the mesic prairie remain.

In July of 2010, the Kalamazoo Nature Center completed a Natural Features Inventory Planning Process report, the first of many steps toward a Natural Features Inventory of the entire Township. In this report, the area in the southeast corner of the Genesee Prairie was noted as an undeveloped, forested area with little additional information available. It was identified as a priority area worthy of on-site evaluation to determine exactly what is present.

The southeast portion of the Genesee Prairie area is within the wellhead capture area of the City of Kalamazoo's station 22 which feeds the public water supply. Refer to Chapter 4 of this Master Land Use Plan which provides more detail about wellhead capture areas.

COLONY FARM ORCHARD (CFO)

The Colony Farm Orchard (CFO) was part of the working farm and orchard for the state mental hospital formerly located across Drake Road, on what is now the Asylum Lake Preserve. The 54-acre CFO was deeded to WMU by the State with the restriction that it be used only for public park and recreation uses or left as open space unless the legislature, by statute, modifies the restriction to allow for some other public

purpose. In 2009, the State passed a bill lifting the deed restriction and allowing WMU to use the Orchard property for another public purpose.

Since its use as a working farm, the CFO has mostly lied fallow. For the past 50 years, Michigan State University used portions of the property for insect research. The property is mostly overgrown; the orchard section is a combination of fruit trees and grape vines that are slowly being taken over by invasive box elders. The orchard is surrounded on the north and south by large wooded areas, which are buffered by small grass lands. Interspersed throughout are relics of the site's past history as a working farm and association with the Asylum.

For the purposes of this Sub-Area plan, the ten acre property immediately north of the CFO will be included in the CFO segment. This property was once a trailer park and had a house upon it as well. The WMU Foundation has since purchased the property and removed the trailer park and house.

This section is part of the Asylum Lake Watershed; the north boundary of the Orchard is adjacent to a spring-fed pond and stream that feeds into Asylum Lake. Groundwater, stormwater, and runoff from the CFO property, as well as from nearby public right-of-ways, flow directly into this watershed and into Asylum Lake. Unfortunately, the Lake is already experiencing challenges due to runoff from development on Stadium Drive and the US-131 interchange.

The entire area is within the wellhead capture area of the City of Kalamazoo's station 12 which feeds the public water supply. Refer to Chapter 4 of this Master Land Use Plan which provides more detail about wellhead capture areas.

Due to its location near existing development and the sensitive resources that could be identified on the site, the Kalamazoo Nature Center identified the Orchard property as a high priority in the Natural Features Inventory Planning Process Report.

Existing Land Uses

Genesee Prairie has experienced some development, although significantly less than other portions of the Township. Most of the area remains predominately agricultural row crops. Residents and property owners pointed out the fertile soil and prime farmland as strengths of the area needing preservation. Nonetheless, this is the only significant farming in the eastern third of the Township and is isolated from other agricultural uses by nonagricultural development. This makes it increasingly difficult to move equipment and farm vehicles between this land and other farms and increases pressure to develop the land. The farmland is surrounded by predominately single family residences on individual lots lining the roads. One subdivision, Rose Arbor, exists within the area as well as a church, school, cemetery, day care center, and National Guard Armory.

This plan sets forth the future vision for this area before development occurs to minimize conflicts with existing uses and to ensure adequate services and infrastructure are provided to support it.

Public Services / Infrastructure

TRANSPORTATION

The Genesee Prairie Sub-Area is served by several major roadways that provide access to the area, to adjacent activity centers, and to nearby highways. However, connectivity within and throughout the Sub-Area is lacking.

The Colony Farm Orchard (CFO) is bordered on the north by Stadium Drive, on the east by Drake Road, and on the south by Parkview Avenue. Drake Road is a boulevard maintained by the City of Kalamazoo with public transit available along it. Parkview Avenue, from Drake Road west, is maintained by the Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC). Both are classified as Urban Minor Arterials, primary roads, and truck routes (Parkview east of 12th Street only) providing quick access to US-131 via Stadium Drive to the north. Any development of this land will have access off of Drake Road due to the limited frontage on Parkview Avenue and Stadium Drive.

The roads in the Genesee Prairie area are all maintained by the KCRC. Public transit is available on Parkview Avenue as well as on Stadium Drive and 9th Street just outside the study area. Through truck traffic is permitted on 12th Street, N Avenue and Parkview Avenue (east of 12th Street only). With the development and growth that has occurred nearby, traffic has increased significantly on these roads, particularly on 11th and 12th Streets. During the public input session, residents were concerned

about the amount of through traffic on these roads. The intersections within the Sub-Area, particularly the 11th street intersections at Parkview Avenue and N Avenue, were cited as unsafe and congested.

Another concern is the lack of east-west connectivity and an internal road network within the Sub-Area. This is largely due to the lack of development that has occurred to date and the large agricultural parcels that remain. As these parcels develop, provisions must be made to create an interconnected local road network that provides increased east-west connectivity. This will reduce conflicts on the primary road network, reduce congestion at the intersections, and allow for safer travel within the area.

UTILITIES

Public water and sanitary sewer service are available to the CFO section. A sanitary sewer connection is available at the southern end of Drake Road and a water line extends along all of Drake Road within this section.

Although public water and sanitary sewer service are present in the Genesee Prairie section, not all parcels are served. Services have not been extended throughout the area but are planned and could be extended as development occurs. Sanitary sewer is currently available along N. Avenue and 12th Street and public water lines extend along N Avenue, 12th Street, Parkview Avenue, and partially along 11th Street.

FIGURE 9.1

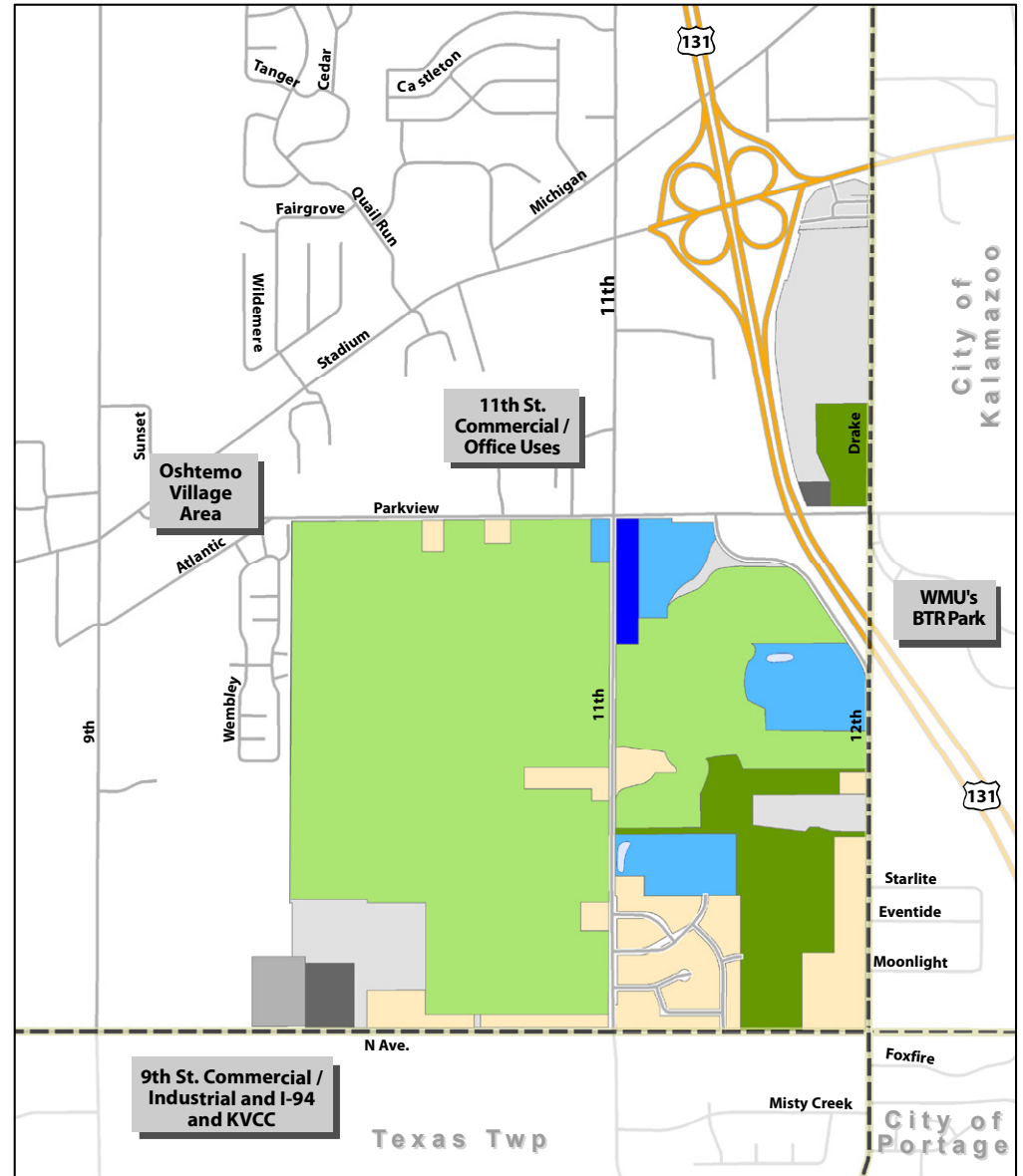
Genesee Prairie Sub-Area Existing Land Use

Oshtemo Charter Township, Kalamazoo County, Michigan

LEGEND

- Agricultural
- Low Density Residential
- Institutional
- Public / Semi-Public
- Woodland
- Vacant or Undeveloped
- Industrial
- Utility
- Water

Base map Source: MiGCI v6b & v7b
Data Source: Oshtemo Township, 2008;
McKenna Associates, 2010



Public Input

Overall Public Input

Township-wide public input was gathered for the Master Plan in general. Because this comprehensive effort was well-received and involved the entire Township, the results still carry weight for individual parts of the community. A review of these results provides some guidance for this particular area as well.

In the fall of 2008, Oshtemo Township conducted a visioning workshop consisting of several different exercises. This was followed in the spring of 2009 with a Township-wide survey. The Master Plan provides an overall description of the process and results as well as a detailed summary of the full results are provided in the Appendix. Below are some specific items that are relevant to the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area Plan:

- Visioning session participants indicated that “protecting natural features” was the top priority for the Township and “improving quality of life” was the second.
- Responses from the visioning session participants indicated a perceived need for more industrial land in Oshtemo.
- The visioning session and opinion survey responses indicated that residents prefer industrial development focused on “research and development” and “high-tech / life sciences”. Responses also indicated a preference for industrial development as a “corporate campus and business park” rather than as stand-alone parcels.
- Approximately two-thirds of visioning session participants and opinion survey respondents indicated industrial development should be located in proximity to WMU’s BTR Park.
- Visioning session participants indicated that Genesee Prairie should have industrial land uses, particularly on the west side of the area. High density residential (adjacent to mobile home park), low density residential (adjacent to Rose Arbor), and commercial (along Parkview Avenue) land uses were also indicated in the area.
- Preservation and requiring development to reduce its impact on the environment were most important among those who participated in all of the public input formats.

Design Workshop

To focus on the vision for the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area, a design workshop was held in September, 2010. The program included a driving tour of the Sub-Area, four focus group stakeholder meetings, a design session, and an evening presentation to the Joint Meeting of the Township Board, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals.

The tour allowed the design team, consisting of the Township staff and consultants, to directly observe the Sub-Area and its current uses. Opportunities and existing uses were inventoried.

Focus group sessions were scheduled with four groups of stakeholders:

- Western Michigan University
- Neighbors and Residents
- Natural Resources and Transportation
- Government

Although the discussion at each session was allowed to wander depending on the comments received, a similar format was used for each discussion in order to ensure consistent information was collected for each group. Attendees were asked to identify the positive attributes of the area, the challenges that exist there, and the principles that should be applied to future development. The results of these discussions are provided in the appendix of the Master Plan.

Neighbors and residents were also asked to allocate future land uses on a map of the sub- area in accordance with their vision for the future. Working in small groups, the participants discussed the best layout for future uses and illustrated their ideas on the map. This allowed them to understand the challenges faced by the Township and the Planning Commission and also gave them direct input in the planning process.

All of the information gathered was used by the design team to formulate a preliminary draft plan for the Sub-Area. The preliminary plan included principles for development and a draft land use map. The preliminary plan was presented at the Joint Meeting that evening where feedback was collected from board members and the public.

Vision, Goals, & Principles

The Master Plan has Goals and Objectives that apply to the Township as a whole; see the Goals and Objectives Chapter of the Master Plan. These overall goals and objectives apply to the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area and will shape the development here. However, due to the unique circumstances in this Sub-Area, a specific vision and set of goals have been crafted that will shape its development.

As indicated in the vision for the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area above, there are three components to sustainability. Instead of looking at sustainability solely as an environmental issue, it is important to account for all three components of sustainability when this Sub-Area develops.

Due to the mix of uses surrounding this Sub-Area, the undeveloped nature of the area currently, and the potential length of time before anything happens, there are a wide variety of possibilities for development and how it occurs. However, the one vision for this area that was consistent throughout all of the public input and discussions was sustainability.

Vision for the Sub-Area Future development within the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area will occur in a manner that has a net positive impact on the overall sustainability of the area and will respect all three components of sustainability: environment, economy, and community.

Goals for the Sub-Area

Three goals have been established for this Sub-Area following the three components of sustainability. Principles have also been established that will guide the future use and development of the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area. The development principles have been sorted and placed under the appropriate goal.

Future market conditions may change, development trends may evolve, and new ideas may emerge that were not anticipated; this plan is flexible enough to accept such changes. Regardless of the type of development, the consistency will be in these principles of development and they will guide development and ensure that this Sub-Area is consistent with the vision presented by the community.

GOAL ONE

Environment: Future development in the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area will respect the current and historic natural features and occur in such a manner that has little to no negative impact on the environment.

- Utilize best management practices in development particularly in storm water management.
- Seek opportunities to reestablish prairie plantings and tall grass prairie lands as stand-alone parcels and within developments, regardless of land use.
- Create net positive impact on the Asylum Lake, Asylum Lake Watershed and wellhead capture areas.
- Coordinate with property owners, farmers, and developers to maintain agricultural uses at some scale and open space in the area.
- Establish incentives and mechanisms to encourage protection of open spaces as development occurs within campus-like settings for the nonresidential areas.

GOAL TWO

Economy: Future development in the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area will promote the economic viability of Oshtemo and the greater Kalamazoo region.

- Foster regional collaboration with neighboring communities and the development of industries complementary to those nearby.
- Create opportunities through programs, infrastructure, and regulations that foster appropriate and desired development in designated areas.
- Create and retain jobs in the community.
- Build Township tax base.

GOAL THREE

Community: Future development in the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area will occur in a manner that enhances the existing quality of life of all those who live, work, and play in the Sub-Area.

- Protect the integrity and quality of life of existing neighborhoods.
- Promote new low-density residential development in quality neighborhoods with provisions for the protection of the natural environment.
- Work with Western Michigan University to ensure development of Colony Farm Orchard is consistent with principles of this Sub-Area Plan.
- Create an internal street network that provides transportation outlets, reduces traffic speeds, limits impacts on residential areas and improves intersections.
- Work with the Kalamazoo County Road Commission on a Complete Streets design philosophy that integrates pedestrians and bicycles into the road network.
- Provide trails and connections within the Sub-Area and with existing networks and activity centers outside the Sub-Area.
- Provide buffers that allow different land uses adjacent to each other to coexist.

Future Land Use

The future land use for the Genesee Prairie and Colony Farm Orchard portions of this Sub-Area differ; as such, they will be described individually. Following these individual descriptions is a future land use map of the entire Sub-Area with descriptions of each of the designations illustrated on the map.

Colony Farm Orchard and Adjacent Acreage

The Colony Farm Orchard property is owned by Western Michigan University (WMU); a state land grant university. WMU has stated on many occasions that they desire to work with the Township as the land develops. With the amendment to the deed restrictions approved by the State Legislature in 2009, the opportunities available to WMU are broad.

The University has also stated, both publicly and privately, that they intend to develop their property similar to how the BTR Park is developed. The BTR Park is home to the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and a number of research, development, biotechnology, engineering, and related companies. It is near capacity, and WMU is preparing for the time when expansion is necessary.

During the 1970s, the property was transferred to WMU as open space. This was noted in the Sub-Area plan adopted by Oshtemo in 1997. However, much has occurred since that time, not the least of which is the economic and environmental success of the BTR Park. The Park has attracted jobs and increased the tax base for the City of Kalamazoo. At the same time, it has utilized innovative stormwater management systems and erosion control techniques to ensure there are no negative impacts on adjacent properties and to improve the quality of the water moving through the site.

It is envisioned that the same approach to stormwater management will occur on the CFO property as well. Numerous natural areas with native plantings were created on the BTR campus and this is also anticipated on the Orchard property.

“WMU’s intention would be to utilize similar principles of sustainable design and development. As has been the case with the original BTR Park, the University would seek to recruit, retain and create high technology companies willing to partner with the University in its core missions of research and instruction.”¹

Recognizing the University’s intentions to develop the Colony Farm Orchard similar to the BTR Park, the Township will work with WMU before and during the development of the CFO property to ensure the principles of development for the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area are integrated into future development. The Township will also work with

the WMU Foundation and future owners of the ten acres north of the Colony Farm Orchard to ensure that the principles of development defined earlier are integrated into this site.

Genesee Prairie

The public input process presented two distinct statements regarding how the Genesee Prairie section should be developed, shown below:

1. This area should be used for low density residential development with provisions for the protection of open space and prime agricultural land.
2. This area should be used for campus-style industrial development particularly in the fields of research, development, and high technology.

Most stakeholders believe these two statements are not mutually exclusive. According to input received during the design workshop and the presentation of the draft Sub-Area plan it was concluded that development can include residential and non-residential uses that are not detrimental to each other. This allows for expansion of the Research Office designation on the Township-wide Future Land Use Map as well as the BTR Park. However, critical to this is the protection of the existing residential neighborhoods and stand-alone parcels as well as respecting the heritage and natural resources of the area. This was once prairie land, and as a result contains prime soils and fertile farmland. While there are challenges to farming in this area, it must be noted that this farmland is highly productive.

This has always been an area of productivity. In time, that productivity may shift from food production to more durable goods. Regardless of the particular use or arrangement, growth in this area will integrate the principles of development defined in this plan to ensure sustainability and will be consistent with the overall vision for the Sub-Area.

Sub-Area Plan

The following map illustrates the desired future land use for the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area. It is a supplement to the Township wide Future Land Use Map.

Also illustrated in the Sub-Area Map are a variety of opportunities and constraints that exist in the area. These are issues that can be capitalized on as the area grows and must be addressed in order to improve the quality of life and remain consistent with the plan’s principles of development.

¹ Robert Miller, Associate Vice President, Community Outreach, Western Michigan University, 1 November 2010.

FIGURE 9.2

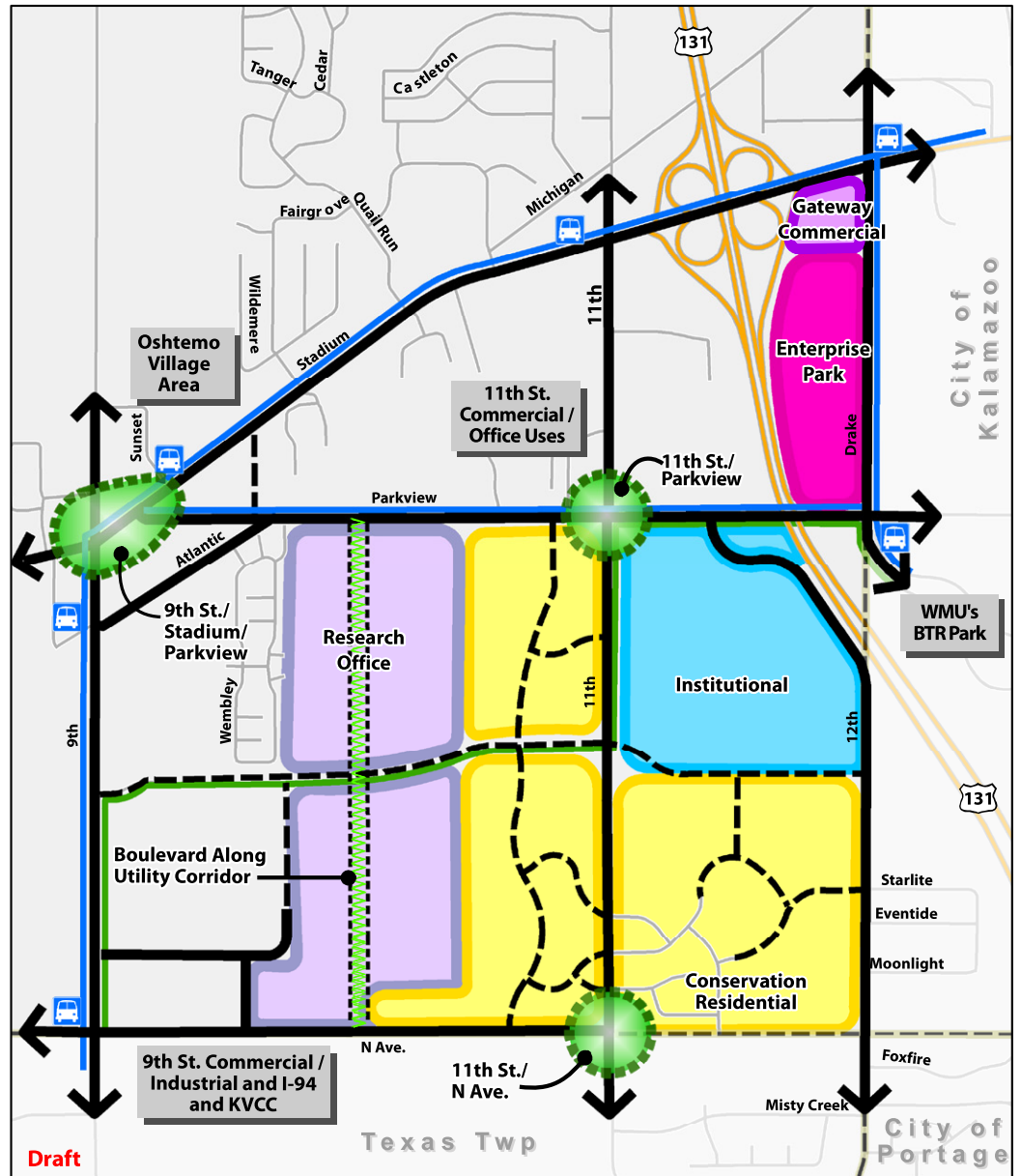
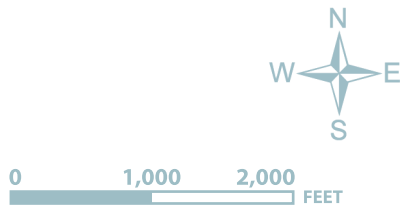
Genesee Prairie Sub Area Plan

Osthtemo Charter Township, Kalamazoo County, Michigan

LEGEND

- Non-motorized connection from KVCC to BTR Park
- Public Transit Routes
- Proposed Roadways
- Intersection needing attention

Base Map Source: MiGDL v6b & v7b
Data Source: Osthtemo Township, 2008;
McKenna Associates, 2008



McKenna
ASSOCIATES

Sub-Area Plan Designations

Conservation Residential

Areas designated Conservation Residential will remain much as they are currently. This includes a mix of agriculture, open space, rural residential and low density residential neighborhoods. As development occurs, it must be consistent with the principles of the Sub-Area. As large scale agriculture becomes less viable, small organic or community-supported farms may be established in conjunction with low density residential development to capitalize on the prime soils and provide a local food supply.

Opportunities will be sought to re-establish portions of the former prairie through tall grass prairie restoration efforts as either stand-alone parcels or within residential neighborhoods. Open space, rights of way, public lands, and common areas will be used to create continuous corridors and adjacent pieces of prairie restoration.

Preservation of open space will be important in the conservation residential designation. There are a variety of ways open space preservation can be achieved, including:

- Purchase of land by the community, a foundation, or a conservancy.
- Conservation easements placed on the land by the owner limiting development.
- Purchase of development rights from property owners, their transfer to another area where development is intended, and their use to increase the allowable density in the receiving area.
- Clustered development onto a portion of a site with the remainder of the property set aside as permanent open space.

These tools are anticipated to allow future low density residential development while conserving the character of the nearby land and natural resources. However, formal policies regarding these tools will be necessary.

Transportation improvements to support additional vehicles, non-motorized users, and residents will be critical as development occurs. Interconnection of the local street network needs to be established to reduce conflicts and reliance on 11th Street and 12th Street. Intersection improvements, particularly at 11th & Parkview and 11th & N Avenue will be considered to ensure safe and efficient traffic flow. Finally, bicycle and pedestrian amenities are needed to reduce potential for accidents and improve the quality of life for residents and their mobility options.



ZONING / IMPLEMENTATION

The Conservation Residential designation may be implemented in the following ways:

- Creation of a new conservation residential zoning district
- Establishment of proper mechanisms and incentives to protect open space and agricultural land and to restore prairie areas
- Coordination with property owners and farmers
- Inclusion of transportation and infrastructure improvements in Township CIP

Research Office

The Research Office designation is located on 9th Street at the southern gateway to the Township; see the Township-wide Future Land Use map. This portion of the Township traditionally provided many valuable jobs and it is important that it remains an employment center for Oshtemo. This designation has been extended east from 9th Street to encompass land along both sides of the utility corridor where a future boulevard is envisioned. It is also envisioned that development in this designation will provide high quality employment opportunities to residents. Uses may include offices, research and development, life science, corporate center, light industrial with limited impact outside the building, indoor recreation facilities, public or quasi-public institutions, financial institutions, and health care facilities.

As sites develop, care must be taken to minimize impacts on adjacent properties. Increased setbacks, buffers, and/or screening will be used to provide adequate separation for sites adjacent to residential or open space uses. Where practical, buffer areas should integrate tall grass prairie plantings as part of broader prairie restoration efforts.

As large parcels develop, use of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) will be encouraged. This will result in coordinated and consistent development addressing issues such as site layout, drainage, access, parking, utilities, lighting, design, signage, screening, and landscaping.

Access management principles will be applied along the new boulevard and internal street network as well as Parkview Avenue and N Avenue to limit access points and encourage shared driveways and development of service drives.

ZONING / IMPLEMENTATION

The Research Office designation may be implemented in the following ways:

- Rezoning to IR
- Establishment of a new zoning district or an amendment to the IR zoning to guide development consistent with principles of Sub-Area
- Establish TIF district or other funding mechanisms to finance infrastructure and road improvements
- Seek public / private partnerships to coordinate development

Enterprise Park

The Enterprise Park designation is envisioned as an expansion of the BTR Park to the southeast. It provides space for expansion consistent with the principles of development for the Sub-Area.

Due to the evolving nature of the economy, technology, and industry in general, it is challenging to pinpoint specific uses that may develop in this area. The current vision supports research, technology, office, life science, and similar employment-based uses. Uses with primarily a more traditional industrial focus are not appropriate for this designation and are directed to those areas of the Township designated as General Industrial on the Future Land Use Map. It is intended that, regardless of the uses, this designation be developed in a coordinated fashion with similar design, infrastructure, and operational characteristics. This will lead to the development of campus or park-like settings that improve the appeal of the site and make it easier to coordinate other issues like stormwater management and groundwater protection.

Further, where adjacent to sensitive natural areas, such as Asylum Lake, best management practices must be used to ensure development will not negatively impact these adjacent areas and possibly make a positive impact.



ZONING / IMPLEMENTATION

The Enterprise Park designation may be implemented in the following ways:

- Establishment of a new zoning district to guide development consistent with principles of Sub- Area
- Working with WMU to ensure principles of this plan are integrated into development
- Establish TIF district or other funding mechanisms to finance infrastructure and road improvements
- Seek public / private partnerships to coordinate development

Gateway Commercial

North of the Colony Farm Orchard, at the southwest corner of Drake Road and Stadium Drive, is a small parcel of land currently owned by the WMU Foundation. The Foundation purchased the land as a real estate investment several years ago.

Located on a major transportation artery, this property acts as a gateway to the Township to the west and north, the City of Kalamazoo to the east, and Western Michigan University's property to the south. South of this site, Western Michigan owns all of the land on both the east and west side of Drake Road down to the BTR Park and its College of Engineering and Applied Sciences. This property marks the entry into Western's Parkview Campus. Therefore, it is important for this site to develop as a gateway for the Township, the City of Kalamazoo, and WMU.

Considerable attention must be paid to the stream on the south side of the property that feeds into Asylum Lake and the wellhead capture area encompassing this land. Development must integrate the principles of the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area and create no negative impact on Asylum Lake.

Because of the stream and sharp topography separating this site from the Colony Farm Orchard, it is unlikely this will be used as an extension of any development on the Orchard property. Due to its prominent location on a busy intersection near a freeway, a more commercially-oriented use is envisioned.

ZONING / IMPLEMENTATION

The Gateway Commercial designation may be implemented in the following ways:

- CR Zoning
- Working with WMU Foundation to ensure planned development is consistent with desired gateway for University and Township

Institutional

The Institutional area covers three properties; the Genesee Prairie Cemetery, the National Guard Armory, and Kalamazoo Christian West Elementary (and the remaining property owned by Kalamazoo Christian Schools). All of these uses are quasi-public uses, and are located at 12th Street and Parkview Avenue. Due to the likelihood that these properties will remain under current ownership and use for the foreseeable future, they were given a separate designation.

Much of the land within this designation is undeveloped and leased to farmers creating a rural/agricultural character and vista when crossing US-131 via the Parkview Avenue bridge. If the agricultural use ceases, the open space on these properties will be excellent opportunities for tall grass prairie restoration efforts.

The Armory is one of the highest intensity uses in the Sub-Area due to the outdoor storage of the trucks and other large vehicles. Screening the outdoor storage will help to minimize its impact on adjacent properties, public rights-of-way, and the overall rural character of the area.

ZONING / IMPLEMENTATION

The Institutional designation may be implemented in the following ways:

- Establishment of proper mechanisms to create incentives to protect open space and agricultural land
- Coordination with property owners on future plans

