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**NOTICE  
OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Regular Agenda  
Thursday, November 8, 2018  
6:00 p.m.**

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items
4. Approval of Minutes: October 25, 2018
5. Agritourism Ordinance Review
6. *GO!* Green Oshtemo Master Plan Update Review
7. Conditional Rezoning Ordinance Amendment Review
8. Any Other Business
  - a. Designated Highways Setback Ordinance Amendment – Postponed until Jan. 2019
9. Planning Commissioner Comments
10. Adjournment

**Policy for Public Comment**  
**Township Board Regular Meetings, Planning Commission & ZBA Meetings**

All public comment shall be received during one of the following portions of the Agenda of an open meeting:

- a. Citizen Comment on Non-Agenda Items or Public Comment – while this is not intended to be a forum for dialogue and/or debate, if a citizen inquiry can be answered succinctly and briefly, it will be addressed or it may be delegated to the appropriate Township Official to respond at a later date.
- b. After an agenda item is presented by staff and/or an applicant, public comment will be invited. At the close of public comment there will be board discussion prior to call for a motion.

Anyone wishing to make a comment will be asked to come to the podium to facilitate the audio/visual capabilities of the meeting room. Speakers will be invited to provide their name; it is not required unless the speaker wishes to have their comment recorded in the minutes.

All public comment offered during public hearings shall be directed, and relevant, to the item of business on which the public hearing is being conducted. Comment during the Public Comment or Citizen Comment on Non-Agenda Items may be directed to any issue.

All public comment shall be limited to four (4) minutes in duration unless special permission has been granted in advance by the Supervisor or Chairperson of the meeting.

Public comment shall not be repetitive, slanderous, abusive, threatening, boisterous, or contrary to the orderly conduct of business. The Supervisor or Chairperson of the meeting shall terminate any public comment which is in contravention of any of the principles and procedures set forth herein.

(adopted 5/9/2000)  
(revised 5/14/2013)

**Policy for Public Comment**  
**6:00 p.m. "Public Comment"/Portion of Township Board Meetings**

At the commencement of the meeting, the Supervisor shall poll the members of the public who are present to determine how many persons wish to make comments. The Supervisor shall allocate maximum comment time among persons so identified based upon the total number of persons indicating their wish to make public comments, but no longer than ten (10) minutes per person. Special permission to extend the maximum comment time may be granted in advance by the Supervisor based upon the topic of discussion.

While this is not intended to be a forum for dialogue and/or debate, if a citizen inquiry can be answered succinctly and briefly, it will be addressed or it may be delegated to the appropriate Township Official to respond at a later date.

Anyone wishing to make a comment will be asked to come to the podium to facilitate the audio/visual capabilities of the meeting room. Speakers will be invited to provide their name; it is not required unless the speaker wishes to have their comment recorded in the minutes.

Public comment shall not be repetitive, slanderous, abusive, threatening, boisterous, or contrary to the orderly conduct of business. The Supervisor shall terminate any public comment which is in contravention of any of the principles and procedures set forth herein.

(adopted 2/27/2001)  
(revised 5/14/2013)

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF A PLANNING WORK SESSION HELD OCTOBER 25, 2018**

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**Agenda**

**GO! GREEN OSHTEMO MASTER PLAN UPDATE REVIEW**

**ZONING ORDINANCE RE-ORGANIZATION REVIEW**

**AGRITOURISM ORDINANCE REVIEW**

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A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, October 25, 2018, commencing at approximately 6:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Charter Township Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT:                      Cheri Bell, Chairperson  
   Fred Antosz  
   Dusty Farmer, Secretary  
   Micki Maxwell  
   Mary Smith  
   Bruce VanderWeele, Vice Chairperson

MEMBER ABSENT:                      Ollie Chambers

Also present were Julie Johnston, Planning Director, James Porter, Township Attorney, Jamie Baker, Public Works Department, Natalie Bond, Planning Department Intern, Martha Coash, Meeting Transcriptionist, and one interested person.

**Call to Order**

Chairperson Bell called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

**Agenda**

Chairperson Bell asked for additions or deletions to the proposed agenda. Hearing none, she asked for a motion.

Mr. Antosz made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Ms. Farmer supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

The Chair determined no one in the audience cared to comment regarding non-agenda items and moved to the next agenda item.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 11, 2018**

The Chair asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the Minutes of October 11, 2018. Hearing none, she asked for a motion.

Ms. Maxwell made a motion to approve the Minutes of the meeting of October 11, 2018 as presented. Ms. Farmer supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **GO! GREEN OSHTEMO MASTER PLAN UPDATE REVIEW**

Chairperson Bell moved to the next agenda item and asked Ms. Johnston for her review.

Ms. Johnston said the *GO! Green Oshtemo* planning effort has been underway since around the first of the year. The intent of the project is to provide amenities and conserve important natural lands through coordination of the parks, recreation, nonmotorized, and conservation plans of the Township into one guiding document. This is especially important as development continues to the western portion of the Township. This Plan will not only assist the Township in achieving its overall vision, but will support grant applications made to state and local agencies.

She explained that to ensure the *GO! Green Oshtemo* Plan is supported to the fullest extent it will be incorporated as part of the Township's Master Plan. To accomplish this goal, the Plan must go through the state mandated public hearing process for community master plans, which includes a public hearing before both the Planning Commission and Township Board. The *Go! Green* portion of the Master Plan will be reviewed along with the full Master Plan every five years. Consultant help will likely be needed as an update to the full Master Plan can be very time consuming. Staggering updates of certain portions of the Plan may be considered if the workload proves too difficult to be done all at once.

During the course of development, she said individual study groups were created for the different components of the Plan – parks and recreation, nonmotorized, and conservation. These study groups have been meeting regularly to help guide the public process, provide input for development of the plan, and offer a citizen's perspective.

Ms. Johnston reported the design of the Plan changed since the initial submittal to the Planning Commission for the September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. To facilitate a plan that is

user-friendly and graphically interesting, a Summary Report booklet was developed. Outlined in the booklet are the appendices, which provide the more detailed information utilized to create the Plan, as well as the detailed Action Plans. Since most will be accessing this Plan through the Township's webpage, the document was also designed for the online user, allowing the appendices to be separate links. This will make it easier for individuals to concentrate on the material they are most interested in.

She provided the first draft of the Summary Report, as well as the Action Plan appendices to Commissioners. The remaining appendices are still being organized by Staff but will be made available by the November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. The goals and action strategies were reviewed by the study groups and have been presented at a public open house. She said comments or requested changes would be appreciated as work continues to complete the development of the Plan.

She introduced Mr. Jamie Baker, Public Works Technical Specialist, who walked through the nonmotorized map details, describing the network planned to allow people to get around in the Township, including possible easements from Amtrak AT&T, and the different types of paths and costs involved in construction.

Chairperson Bell expressed concern about increased pedestrian traffic on nonmotorized paths crossing private property. The importance of communicating with affected residents was stressed.

It was felt barriers or directional signs for paths crossing residential property might be helpful and could be included in the technical support documents.

Ms. Smith noted the experience in other localities of property owners who appreciate easy accessibility to bike paths and trails passing through their property.

Mr. Baker noted easements for nonmotorized paths can be obtained as properties are sold.

Ms. Johnston added it will likely take 50-100 years to complete the plan.

The Chair suggested the number of miles of each type of nonmotorized pathways planned be added to the report.

Ms. Johnston then discussed the conservation map developed as a first foray into conservation in the Township, stressing the need to work with partners and property owners to create a program, as well as determining a way to continuously finance this effort. She also mentioned that there are programs that permit development rights of a property to be either transferred for sold, allowing the land to remain undeveloped.

In conclusion, Ms. Johnston said there will be a lot of work to do over the next several years: investigate programs, refine mapping, adopt a new map as new

information is gleaned about natural features including prairies and savannahs, and encourage people to consider easements/deed restrictions for conservation.

Ms. Johnston will have the plan ready with all appendices attached for the November 8 meeting.

Commissioners felt the document was easy to read and very well done.

## **ZONING ORDINANCE RE-ORGANIZATION REVIEW**

Chairperson Bell moved to the next item on the agenda and asked Ms. Johnston for her review.

Ms. Johnston provided the updated re-organized Zoning Ordinance, as well as the tables and graphics prepared by Wade Trim. She indicated the graphics will be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance when it is uploaded to the Encode webpage that hosts the Township's Zoning Ordinance.

She noted the only changes to the text to be included were part of the re-codification:

Section	5.40.A
	20.20.D and F
	27.20.H
	49.70
	65.20
	65.30

Ms. Johnston said the language has been made clearer and more concise, no sweeping ordinance changes were made, and existing language was put into tables and graphics for ease of use.

The Planning Commission was comfortable with the updates, graphics, and tables, and agreed with Ms. Johnston's recommendation to set the public hearing for the re-codification for the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **AGRITOURISM ORDINANCE REVIEW**

It was agreed to postpone this discussion to the November 8 meeting along with the discussion of setbacks and conditional rezoning.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business to consider.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business to consider.

**PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Mr. Antosz reported he had initiated discussion regarding adding an alternate position to the Planning Commission to provide an opportunity for hands-on training for a possible subsequent full-term appointment on the Board.

Ms. Farmer asked Commissioners to remind people elections are run by local people and that if any problems are encountered by voters they should contact the Township Clerk. The goal is for elections to run as smoothly as possible.

Chairperson Bell stressed she wants to be sure that as *Go! Green* moves forward Staff and funding needs to be addressed. She also noted Mr. Antosz' last meeting as Commissioner will be December 13.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no further comments, Chairperson Bell adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:25 p.m.

Minutes prepared:  
October 27, 2018

Minutes approved:  
\_\_\_\_\_, 2018



November 2, 2018

**Mtg Date:** November 8, 2018  
**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Julie Johnston, AICP  
**Subject:** Agritourism draft ordinance review

The attached document has the revised language previously recommended by the Planning Commission from past work sessions in **bold** or ~~striketrough~~ type. The new changes to Category 3 from the September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting have been captured in **red**.

Next steps will be to finalize any remaining changes the Planning Commission wishes to see to the draft ordinance and then decide on next steps. Typically, we would set a public hearing to forward the draft language on to the Township Board. However, the Planning Commission may want to consider an additional public meeting before the "official" public hearing to receive input from those that live in the rural area of the Township, as well as agricultural and agritourism businesses. This would allow the Planning Commission to consider any additional changes before forwarding the draft ordinance to the Township Board.

Thank you.

## Definitions

- A. Agribusiness: Any business catering exclusively to agricultural production, which may include, but is not limited to, supplying services or goods (such as feed or supplies) to producers of marketable agricultural products like greenhouses, nurseries, and farm cooperatives.
- B. Agritourism: An agriculturally based operation or activity that brings public to a working farm for the purpose of enjoyment, education, or active involvement in the farm operation. Agritourism enterprises are further classified as follows:
  - 1. Agritourism, Category 1: An agritourism enterprise limited to u-pick fruits and vegetable operations, direct on-farm product sales, and farm markets.
  - 2. Agritourism, Category 2: An agritourism enterprise that includes education, entertainment, agricultural related uses and products, and limited non-agricultural related uses and products including: educational tours; historical agricultural exhibits; educational classes, lectures and seminars; petting farms, animal display and pony rides; ~~riding stables; greenhouses~~; outdoor mazes of agricultural origin, such as straw bales or corn; wagon, sleigh and hayrides; nature trails; outdoor picnic areas; the use or rental of farm buildings for periodic special events; and, other similar uses.
  - 3. Agritourism, Category 3: An agritourism enterprise that utilizes the rural character or agricultural buildings on site for nonresidential special events or activities, including: educational tours, classes, lectures, and seminars; celebratory gatherings such as weddings; retail events such as farm markets, barn markets, and agricultural sales; day camps; and, other similar special events or activities.
- C. Agricultural products: Includes but is not limited to, crops (corn, wheat, hay, potatoes); fruit (apples, peaches, grapes, cherries, berries, etc.); cider; vegetables (sweet corn, pumpkins, tomatoes, etc.); floriculture; herbs; forestry; husbandry; livestock and livestock products (cattle, sheep, hogs, horses, poultry, ostriches, emus, farmed deer, farmed buffalo, milk, eggs, and fur, etc.); aquaculture products (fish, fish products, water plants and shellfish); horticultural specialties (nursery stock, ornamental shrubs, flowers and Christmas trees); maple sap, etc.
- D. Agriculturally related products: Items sold at a farm to attract customers and promote the sale of agricultural products. Such items include, but are not limited to, all agricultural and horticultural products, animal feed, baked goods, ice cream and ice cream-based desserts and beverages, jams, honey, food stuffs, and other items promoting the farm and on-site production.
- E. Non-agriculturally related products: Items not connected to farming or the farm operation, such as novelty t-shirts or other clothing, crafts and knick-knacks imported from other states or countries, etc.
- F. Agriculturally related uses: Those activities that predominantly use agricultural products, buildings or equipment, such as pony rides, corn mazes, pumpkin rolling, sleigh/hay rides, and educational events, such as farming and food preserving classes, etc.

- G. Non-agriculturally related uses: Activities that are part of an agricultural tourism operation's total offerings but not tied to farming. Such non-agriculturally related uses include amusement rides, concerts, special events, etc.
- H. Farm Market: The sale of agricultural products directly to the consumer from a site on a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operation or agricultural land. This definition includes farm stands and roadside stands.
- I. U-Pick: A fruit or vegetable-growing farm that provides the opportunity for customers to pick their own fruits or vegetables directly from the plant.
- J. Seasonal: A recurrent period characterized by certain occurrences, festivities, or crops; harvest, when crops are ready; not all year round.

## PERMITTED USES WITH CONDITIONS

### A. Agribusiness

1. Total building floor area for the agribusiness shall not exceed 2,000 square feet.
2. The maximum portion of any building used for agribusiness sales shall not exceed 600 square feet.
3. **Outdoor storage of agribusiness materials shall be limited to 1,000 square feet and shall be located in the rear yard only.**
4. Access to an agribusiness use must be from the County primary road **or State highway**.
5. On-site vehicle parking shall be provided on agribusiness property as follows:
  - a. The total number of required spaces shall be calculated as one space for every 1,000 square feet of the total building floor area, plus one space for every two employees. This shall not include areas dedicated to agricultural production.
  - b. Parking lots shall be clearly demarcated through some physical means like timbers, fences, stakes, etc.
  - c. The on-site parking shall be arranged so no vehicle movements occur in the public right-of-way and to avoid the accumulation of parked cars on the public roads.
  - d. Parking and driveway surfaces may be pervious or hard surface.
6. A written narrative will be provided with any application describing the use in detail, including all the types of items, goods and merchandise that are proposed to be sold; the proposed hours of operation; measures that are to be taken to assure that the operation of the use will take place only in a safe and convenient manner; and other information describing the use and which will assist the reviewing body in determining whether the application meets the conditional use requirements.
7. If the proposed agribusiness use would cause undue impacts to surrounding properties related to drainage, traffic, noise, or other general health and safety issues, as determined by the Planning Director, **or if the size of the agribusiness exceeds the maximums allowed herein**, review and approval by the Planning Commission as a Special Use shall be required.

### B. Agritourism, Category 1

1. Farm markets with a sales area of 100 square feet or less, seasonal in nature, and where no permanent structure exists, are exempt from this ordinance.
2. **The maximum area for farm markets shall be 3,000 square feet, which includes both the floor area of the building and the outdoor storage/display.** Farm markets larger than 3,000 square feet shall be a Special Use reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission.

3. Farm market buildings equal to or less than 200 square feet in size shall be located not closer than 15 feet from the road right-of-way line or 25 feet from the edge of pavement, whichever is greater. Farm market buildings greater than 200 square feet in size shall comply with the minimum required setback distances for the district in which such building is located.
4. Retail sales.
  - a. At least 75 percent of the products marketed and offered for sale (measured as an average over the farm's marketing season) must be grown or produced on and by the affiliated farm. For purposes of this requirement, affiliated means a farm under the same ownership or control (e.g. leased) as the farm market whether or not the farm market is located on the property where production occurs.
  - b. The remainder 25 percent of products sold must be agriculturally related products as defined by **Article 2: Definitions**.
  - c. For purposes of determining the percentage of products being marketed, the primary measure will be retail space used to display products offered for retail sale during the affiliated farm's marketing season. If measurement of retail space during the marketing season is not feasible, then the percent of the gross sales dollars of the farm market will be used.
5. Access to an agritourism use must be from the County primary road **or State highway**.
6. On-site vehicle parking shall be provided on agritourism property as follows:
  - ~~a. The total number of required spaces shall be calculated as one space for every 1,000 square feet of the main public activity area, plus one space for every two employees. This shall not include areas dedicated to agricultural production.~~
  - ~~b. 24 foot two-way or 20 foot one-way circulation aisles shall be maintained. To ensure drive aisles are maintained, the location of parking spaces shall be defined by providing some type of marker at the center of the space to be placed every 64 feet for two-way traffic and 60 feet for one-way traffic.~~
  - c. Parking lots shall be clearly demarcated through some physical means like timbers, fences, stakes, etc.
  - d. The on-site parking shall be arranged so no vehicle movements occur in the public right-of-way and to avoid the accumulation of parked cars on the public roads.
  - e. Parking and driveway surfaces may be pervious or hard surface.
7. A written narrative describing the use in detail, including the proposed hours of operation; measures that are to be taken to assure that the operation of the use will take place only in a safe and convenient manner; and other information describing the use and which will assist the reviewing body in determining whether the application meets the conditional use requirements.

8. If the proposed agritourism use would cause undue impacts to surrounding properties related to drainage, traffic, noise, or other general health and safety issues, as determined by the Planning Director, review and approval by the Planning Commission as a Special Use shall be required.

## SPECIAL USES

### A. Agritourism, Category 2

1. Narrative. A written narrative describing the use in detail, including both agriculturally related and non-agriculturally related products and uses; proposed hours of operation; measures that are to be taken to assure that the operation of the use will take place only in a safe and convenient manner; special events; and other information describing the use and which will assist the Planning Commission in determining whether the application meets the Special Use requirements.
2. General Standards:
  - a. Parcel size. Parcels must be a minimum of 10 acres. The Planning Commission may consider a smaller parcel size depending on the agritourism uses planned. Their consideration of a smaller parcel size will be based on the intensity and scale of the proposed agritourism use, compatibility with surrounding property owners, and will be harmonious with the existing character of the area.
  - b. Maximum floor area. The maximum floor area for all buildings related to the agritourism use shall be 10,000 square feet. Clusters of smaller, architecturally appropriate structures are encouraged to maintain rural character of the agritourism use. This maximum floor area does not include greenhouses.
  - c. **Outdoor storage/display. The maximum area for the storage/display of agricultural products for sale shall be one acre. This requirement does not apply to u-pick operations.**
  - d. Architectural character. All buildings shall incorporate a rural theme in terms of style and design. This means new agritourism uses involving new structures shall complement and enhance the rural environment. For example, gable or gambrel roofs, roof ornamentation such as cupolas, dormers, porches, and decorative shutters.
  - e. New uses **and buildings**. New uses **and buildings** shall be located, designed and operated so as not to interfere with normal agricultural practices on and off site. Non-agricultural uses should be limited to lands with poor agricultural soils or lands otherwise not suitable for agricultural purposes.
  - f. Use and product percentages. Agricultural products produced on site, agriculturally related products and uses, and non-agriculturally related products and uses are permitted based on the following percentages:
    - i. At least 50 percent of the products (measured as an average over the farm's marketing season) and uses marketed and offered must be grown or produced on and by or have a direct relationship with the affiliated farm. For purposes of this requirement, affiliated

means a farm under the same ownership or control (e.g. leased) as the farm market whether or not the farm market is located on the property where production occurs.

- ii. A maximum of 30 percent of the products and uses marketed and offered may be other agriculturally related products and uses as defined by **Article 2: Definitions**.
  - iii. A maximum of 20 percent of the products and uses marketed and offered may be non-agriculturally related products and uses as defined by **Article 2: Definitions**.
  - iv. For purposes of determining the percentage of products and uses being marketed and offered, the primary measure will be square footage of space used for each individual product or use. If measurement of retail space during the marketing season is not feasible to determine percentage of product, then the percent of the gross sales dollars will be used.
- g. Parking. On-site vehicle parking shall be provided on agribusiness property as follows:
- i. The total number of required spaces shall be calculated as one space for every 1,000 square feet of the main public activity area, plus one space for every two employees. **The main public activity areas shall be defined as the primary buildings and outdoor spaces where the public congregates for the agritourism use.** This shall not include areas dedicated to agricultural production.
  - ii. 24-foot two-way or 20-foot one-way circulation aisles shall be maintained. To ensure drive aisles are maintained, the location of parking spaces shall be defined by providing some type of marker at the center of the space to be placed every 64 feet for two-way traffic and 60 feet for one-way traffic.
  - iii. Parking lots shall be clearly demarcated through some physical means like timbers, fences, stakes, etc.
  - iv. The on-site parking shall be arranged so no vehicle movements occur in the public right-of-way and to avoid the accumulation of parked cars on the public roads.
  - v. Parking and driveway surfaces may be pervious or hard surface.
  - vi. **Accessible spaces must be provided in accordance with the requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, utilizing the most current design standards.**
  - vii. **The Planning Commission may reduce or defer the number required parking spaces if the applicant provides a parking study that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Planning Commission, that a reduced number of parking spaces will meet the parking needs of the Agritourism uses. If parking is deferred, the location of those deferred spaces must be shown as such on the required site plan.**
- h. Lighting. Any exterior lighting installed related to an agritourism use or activity shall be appropriately shielded and directed downwards to minimize light pollution. All lighting shall meet the standards of **Article 49: Lighting**.

- i. Trash receptacles. Trash receptacles shall be provided. **If dumpsters are provided, they shall be placed on a hard surface** and shall be completely obscured from view by a screen fence or wall.
  - j. Screening. **Opaque** screening, consisting of an earth berm, evergreen screen, or an obscuring wall or fence, shall be provided **near the primary public activity areas** on those sides abutting or adjacent to a residential use. **The use of natural landscape materials is encouraged.** The Planning Commission may waive the screening requirement in specific cases where cause can be shown that the distance between the agritourism and residential use would not require screening.
  - k. Restroom facilities. ~~Permanent~~ **Public** restroom facilities, **temporary or permanent**, shall be provided on site. ~~The number of which shall be based on Building Code requirements.~~
  - l. Maximum capacity. The Fire Marshall or Building Official shall establish a maximum **occupant** capacity for meetings, training, educational or similar events which shall be appropriate to the site and facilities in terms of safe capacity in buildings, parking area and sanitation limitations of the site.
  - m. Hours of operation. **Hours or operation must be provided by the applicant.** The Planning Commission may ~~establish~~ **alter the requested** hours of operation for the agritourism uses, or specific elements thereof, consistent with the character of the land uses in the vicinity and may further approve an enforcement mechanism to ensure ~~that~~ **adherence to** the established hours of operation ~~are adhered to.~~
  - n. Access. Access to an agritourism use must be from the County primary road **or State highway.**
  - o. Livestock. The keeping of livestock for ~~agricultural purposes and agriculturally related~~ **agritourism** purposes like riding stables, petting farms, pony rides, etc., shall be subject to the provisions of **Article 52: Miscellaneous Protection Requirements.**
3. Special Agritourism Events.
- a. A maximum of ~~six~~ **10** special events shall be permitted **annually, beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.**
  - b. **The agritourism operator/property owner shall submit the annual list of the special events to the Planning Commission for review within 30-days of the first requested event. The Planning Commission may eliminate a special event if said event would be unduly disruptive to the general peace and enjoyment of the rural and/or residential character of the surrounding area.**
  - c. **The special event must be related to and enhance the primary agritourism use of the property.** ~~between May and October. An additional two events shall be permitted between November and April.~~

- d. Each special event may not last more than three consecutive days, with a minimum of 14 days between events unless otherwise approved by the Planning Commission.
- e. A reserved parking area shall be provided on-site to be utilized for special events. If the agritourism use intends to hold special events, this reserved area must be displayed on a site plan.
- f. The reserved parking area must be of adequate size to accommodate the anticipated additional traffic of the special event. The size of the reserved parking area shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission.
- g. For special events lasting more than one day and with an expected daily attendance exceeding 100 hundred individuals, the on-site manager or owner shall notify all adjacent neighbors bordering the subject property in writing of the date, time, duration and description of the event. Notification shall occur at least five business days prior to the beginning of the event.

4. Prohibited uses.

- a. Motorized off-road vehicle racing or other similar motor vehicle activities.
- b. Other uses that the Planning Commission determines would disturb the general peace and enjoyment of the rural and/or residential character of the surrounding area due to excessive traffic, noise, smoke, odors, or visual clutter.**

B. Agritourism, Category 3

- 1. Intent. The intent of the Category 3 Agritourism option is to allow opportunities for limited nonresidential special events or activities that make use of existing rural character and agricultural buildings.
- 2. Narrative. A written narrative describing the special events or activities, including proposed hours of operation; expected attendance; measures that are to be taken to assure that the operation of the use will take place only in a safe and convenient manner; and other information describing the events or activities which will assist the Planning Commission in determining whether the application meets the Special Use requirements.
- 3. General Standards:
  - a. Parcel size. Parcels must be a minimum of 10 acres. The Planning Commission may consider a smaller parcel size depending on the agritourism uses planned. Their consideration of a smaller parcel size will be based on the intensity and scale of the proposed agritourism use, compatibility with surrounding property owners, and will be harmonious with the existing character of the area.
  - b. Architectural character. All buildings shall incorporate a rural theme in terms of style and design. This means new agritourism uses involving new structures shall complement and enhance the rural environment. For example, gable or gambrel roofs, roof ornamentation such as cupolas, dormers, porches, and decorative shutters.

- c. Access to an agritourism use must be from the County primary road or State highway.
- d. Parking. On-site vehicle parking shall be provided on agribusiness property as follows:
  - i. **The total number of required spaces shall be calculated as one space for every 1,000 square feet of the main public activity area, plus one space for every two employees. The main public activity areas shall be defined as the primary buildings and outdoor spaces where the public congregates for the agritourism use. This shall not include areas dedicated to agricultural production.**
  - ii. **24-foot two-way or 20-foot one-way circulation aisles shall be maintained. To ensure drive aisles are maintained, the location of parking spaces shall be defined by providing some type of marker at the center of the space to be placed every 64 feet for two-way traffic and 60 feet for one-way traffic.**
  - iii. **Parking lots shall be clearly demarcated through some physical means like timbers, fences, stakes, etc.**
  - iv. **The on-site parking shall be arranged so no vehicle movements occur in the public right-of-way and to avoid the accumulation of parked cars on the public roads.**
  - v. **Parking and driveway surfaces may be pervious or hard surface.**
  - vi. **Accessible spaces must be provided in accordance with the requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, utilizing the most current design standards.**
  - vii. **The Planning Commission may reduce or defer the number required parking spaces if the applicant provides a parking study that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Planning Commission, that a reduced number of parking spaces will meet the parking needs of the Agritourism uses. If parking is deferred, the location of those deferred spaces must be shown as such on the required site plan.**
- e. Lighting. Any exterior lighting installed related to an agritourism event or activity shall be appropriately shielded and directed downwards to minimize light pollution. All lighting shall meet the standards of [Article 49: Lighting](#).
- f. **Trash receptacles. Trash receptacles shall be provided. If dumpsters are provided, they shall be placed on a hard surface and shall be completely obscured from view by a screen fence or wall.**
- g. **Screening. Opaque screening, consisting of an earth berm, evergreen screen, or an obscuring wall or fence, shall be provided near the primary public activity areas on those sides abutting or adjacent to a residential use. The use of natural landscape materials is encouraged. The Planning Commission may waive the screening requirement in specific cases where cause can be shown that the distance between the agritourism and residential use would not require screening.**

**h. Restroom facilities. Public restroom facilities, temporary or permanent, shall be provided on site.**

i. Maximum capacity. The Fire Marshall or Building Official shall establish a maximum capacity for special activities or events which shall be appropriate to the site and facilities in terms of safe capacity in buildings, parking area and sanitation limitations of the site.

5. Special Events or Activities.

a. A maximum of ~~six~~ **10** special events shall be permitted **annually, beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.**

b. A minimum of 14 days shall be provided between events unless otherwise approved by the Planning Commission.

c. For special events with an expected attendance exceeding 100 hundred individuals, the on-site manager or owner shall notify all adjacent neighbors bordering the subject property in writing of the date, time, duration and description of the event. Notification shall occur at least five business days prior to the beginning of the event.

**d. Hours of operation. Hours or operation for the special event or activities must be provided by the applicant. The Planning Commission may alter the requested hours of operation for the agritourism uses, or specific elements thereof, consistent with the character of the land uses in the vicinity and may further approve an enforcement mechanism to ensure ~~that~~ adherence to the established hours of operation.**

6. Prohibited uses.

a. Motorized off-road vehicle racing or other similar motor vehicle activities.

**b. Other uses that the Planning Commission determines would disturb the general peace and enjoyment of the rural and/or residential character of the surrounding area due to excessive traffic, noise, smoke, odors, or visual clutter.**



November 1, 2018

**Mtg Date:** November 8, 2018  
**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Julie Johnston, AICP  
**Subject:** *GO!* Green Oshtemo Plan

The draft Plan provided in your packet is almost complete. There are still a few appendices to be finalized, which staff will provide to you at the Planning Commission meeting. These include Appendix H: Parks Administrative Structure and the Technical Support Documents. Staff is requesting Township Board approval on November 13<sup>th</sup> to distribute the Plan to our neighboring jurisdictions. While not ideal for Planning Commission input on these appendices prior to the Township Board meeting, there will still be ample time to make additions and corrections before the Planning Commission public hearing, which is scheduled for January 24, 2019.

Many of the updates/changes/corrections requested by the Planning Commission have been incorporated into this draft of the Plan. Staff is still working with the graphic designer to consider alternatives to the cover page and logo requested at the October 25<sup>th</sup> meeting. We expect to have a new design to present to the Commission on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you.



# GO! Green

## *Oshkemo*

Parks & Recreation ↔ Nonmotorized Transportation ↔ Conservation



Summary Report, Adopted ??

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this Plan was a collaborative effort, created through the engagement of citizens and stakeholders of the Township at various meetings, workshops, and online engagement. This Plan recognizes the contributions of all who participated in the planning process.

### Township Board

Libby Heiny-Cogswell, Supervisor  
 Nancy Culp, Treasurer  
 Dusty Farmer, Clerk  
 Dave Bushouse  
 Deb Everett  
 Zak Ford  
 Ken Hudok

### Planning Commission

Cheri Bell, Chair  
 Bruce Vanderweele, Vice Chair  
 Dusty Farmer, Township Board Liaison  
 Frederick J. Antosz  
 Ollie Chambers  
 Micki Maxwell  
 Mary Smith

### Parks Committee

Cheri Bell  
 Deb Everett  
 Libby Heiny-Cogswell  
 Paul Sotherland

### Parks and Recreation Study Group

Bree Bennett  
 Courtney Colia  
 Deb Everett  
 Libby Heiny-Cogswell  
 Dave Walch  
 Jenn Wright  
 Mary Smith

### Nonmotorized Transportation Study Group

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 Deb Everett  
 Libby Heiny-Cogswell  
 Harry Jachym  
 Barb Malsom  
 Paul Sotherland

### Conservation Study Group

Tyler Bassett  
 Richard Brewer  
 Dusty Farmer  
 Libby Heiny-Cogswell  
 Chad Hughson  
 Paul Sotherland  
 Lorri Walch  
 Jenn Wright

### Consultant Assistance

Ken Peregon, OCBA Landscape Architects  
 Norm Cox, The Greenway Collaborative  
 Carlyne Prudhomme, The Greenway Collaborative  
 Nate Fuller, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy

### Staff Support

Jamie Baker, Public Works Technical Specialist  
 Natalie Bond, Planning Intern  
 Ben Clark, GIS Specialist  
 Karen High, Parks Director  
 Julie Johnston, Planning Director

The Township also wishes to thank the residents and interested citizens who attended the public outreach meetings throughout the development of the Plan. Your assistance was invaluable to the planning effort!

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 Trends and Needs.....Pg. 10  
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 Goals and Actions .....Pg. 15

The intent of this document is to provide a summary report of the complete *GO! Green Oshtemo Plan*. The full Plan can be found on the Township’s website at [www.oshtemo.org](http://www.oshtemo.org) under the Parks or Planning Department’s webpages. The full report includes the appendices outlined below:

Appendices:

- A. Existing Conditions Inventory
- B. Trends and Needs Overview
- C. Public Input Summary
- D. Parks and Recreation Action Plan
- E. Nonmotorized Transportation Action Plan
- F. Conservation Action Plan
- G. Collective Plan Goals and Action Strategies
- H. Parks Administrative Structure
- I. Resolution of Approval

Technical Support Documents:

- J. Park Plans/Maps
- K. Nonmotorized Corridor Recommendations
- L. Capital Improvement Plan
- M. Complete Streets Policy



Wiffleball at Township Park



Oshtemo Fun Days: Flesher Field

*“One may lack words to express the impact of beauty but no one who has felt it remains untouched. It is renewal, enlargement, intensification. The parks preserve it permanently in the inheritance of the American citizens.”*  
 ~~Bernard DeVoto

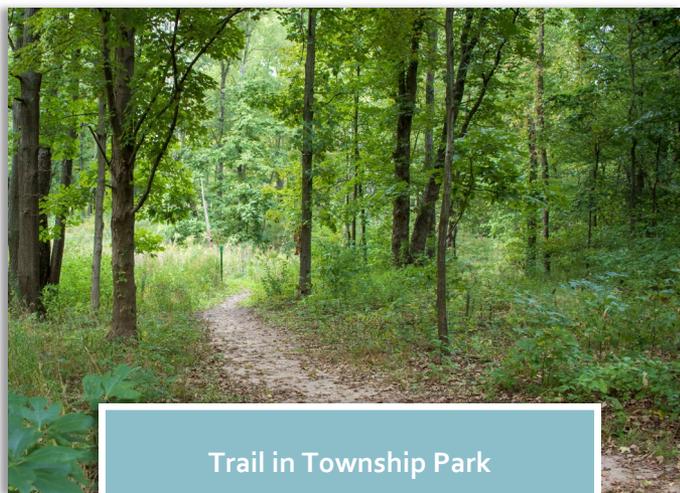
# OVERVIEW

## Introduction

The GO! Green Oshtemo Plan is the first of its kind for Oshtemo Township where parks, recreation, nonmotorized facilities, and conservation of open space and greenways is planned in a comprehensive and coordinated way. The Plan is a guide that addresses expressed community desires related to these important amenities, which play a vital role in the lives of Township residents by providing:

Active recreational opportunities.	Passive enjoyment of rural areas and natural landscapes.	Opportunities for environmental preservation and sustained rural character.	Improved community health and quality of life.
------------------------------------	--	---	--

The Township prides itself on the existing parks and nonmotorized facilities within the community that are extensively utilized by Oshtemo and neighboring residents. In addition, the open space opportunities provided by Township partners such as the Lillian Anderson Arboretum owned by Kalamazoo College and the Wolf Tree Nature Trail Preserve owned by the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy offer those natural outdoor experiences for residents in close proximity to where they live. The Township’s desire to continue to address conservation of open spaces and greenways is not only to provide habitat protection but to preserve rural character and add to the overall aesthetic value of the community. Finally, the planned nonmotorized network is the framework that connects residents to these important destinations.



Trail in Township Park

Caring for and preserving these resources, as well as adapting to the changing needs of the community is essential to Oshtemo’s health and sustainability. As population continues to increase, understanding and planning for these changes will be critical to future capital improvement decisions. The GO! Green Oshtemo planning effort included a thorough process of public input, inventory, and data collection. The public input has provided Township leaders and staff a better understanding of its residents’ needs and desires. The GO! Green Oshtemo Plan captures these needs and provides goals and action strategies to accomplish the desired improvements.

## Did You Know....

- ◆ The Township has approximately 122 acres currently dedicated to parks and recreation:
  - ⇒ Flesher Field Park - 24 acres
  - ⇒ Oshtemo Township Park - 70 acres
  - ⇒ Drake Farmstead Park - 26 acres
  - ⇒ Grange Hall and Playground - 2 acres
- ◆ Two community buildings are available for rent to Oshtemo residents:
  - ⇒ Community Center
  - ⇒ Grange Hall
- ◆ Between 2011 and 2017, almost \$3 million has been spent on improvements to the facilities within the parks and the community buildings. Of this total, approximately 61 percent or \$1.75 million was funded through grants and private donations.
- ◆ Oshtemo has approximately 17 miles of nonmotorized facilities, including multi-use paths, sidewalks, and trails.
- ◆ In 2017, the Township Board adopted a Natural Features Protection District as part of the Subdivision/Site Condominium Ordinance in an effort to preserve open space and important natural features found in the more rural part of the Township.
- ◆ Additional recreation and conservation opportunities in the Township managed by other organizations include:
  - ⇒ Lillian Anderson Arboretum
  - ⇒ Wolf Tree Nature Trail Preserve
  - ⇒ Kal-Haven Trail and Kalamazoo River Valley Trail

### Township Board Core Values

The *GO!* Green Oshtemo Plan works to realize the Township Board’s set of core values as they relate to the development of parks, recreation, and nonmotorized amenities, as well as the conservation of lands, as follows:

- \* **Public Service** - Fair treatment of all people.
- \* **Sustainability** - Meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations. Consider the environment through practices that reduce impacts.
- \* **Innovation** - Provide the best value-conscious technology currently available.
- \* **Professionalism** - Commitment to continuous improvement to government operations.
- \* **Integrity** - Transparent governmental practices are of the highest priority.
- \* **Fiscal Stewardship**—Tax payer investments are spent wisely, effectively, and efficiently.



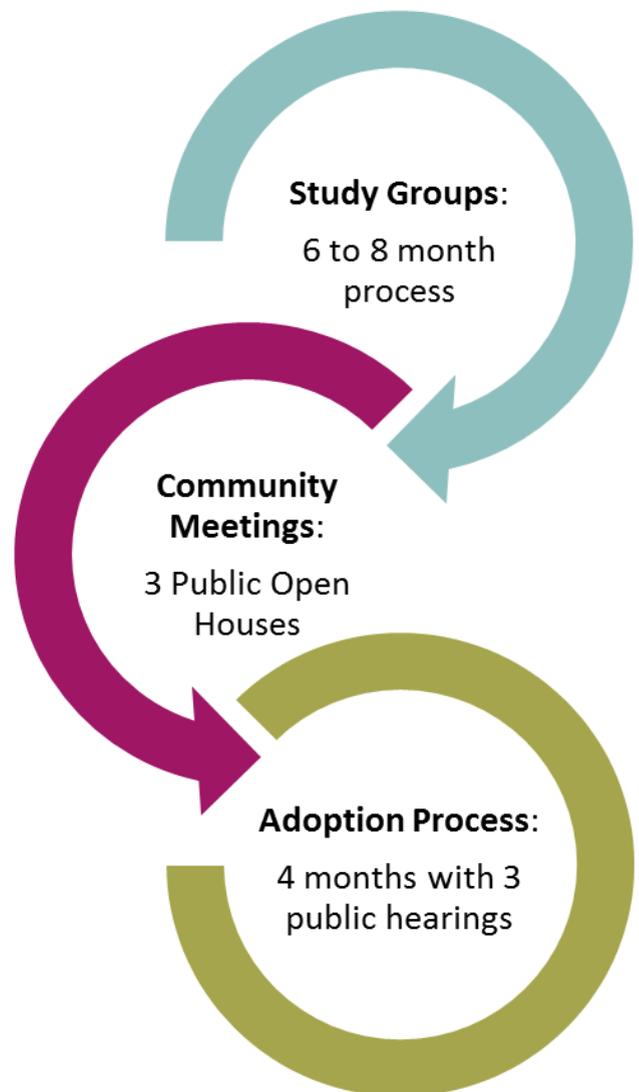
*GO!* Green Oshtemo Kick-Off Meeting

### Resident-Driven Plan

Public participation played an integral role in the *GO!* Green Oshtemo planning process. Three study groups were established - Parks and Recreation, Nonmotorized Transportation, and Conservation - to help guide the development of the larger plan. The study groups included interested residents, Township Board, Parks Committee, Planning Commission members, and staff. The groups generally met monthly to discuss the public process, review research conducted by staff, provide input on the goals, action strategies, and intended outcomes of the Plan.

Three public outreach meetings were held throughout the development of the *GO!* Green Oshtemo Plan to garner resident feedback. During the first workshop and for a month after in an online format, the Township requested residents complete a survey with questions related to parks, nonmotorized transportation, and conservation. Over 200 citizens responded to the survey, providing important insight into resident desires.

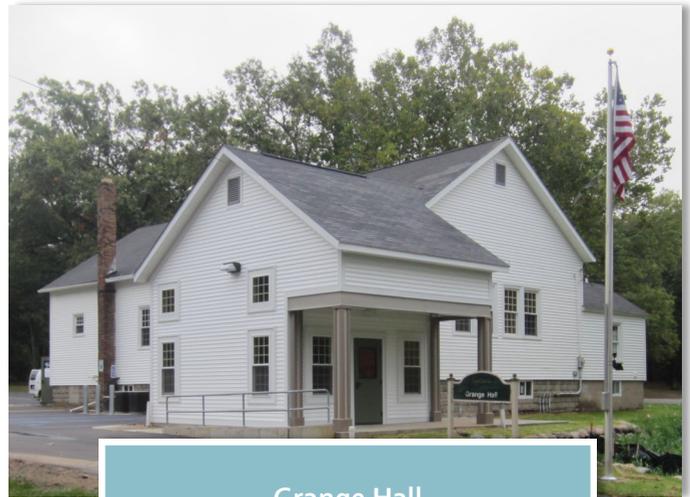
Finally, an adoption process was designed to allow for three public hearings, providing the residents of Oshtemo opportunities to weigh in on the draft plan. Public hearings were held in November of 2018, January of 2019, and the final hearing was held by the Township Board in February of 2019.



## Existing Inventory

### Grange Hall and Playground - Neighborhood Park and Community Building

The Grange Hall is a historic building located in the rural north-west quadrant of the Township on North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. It has ties to Oshtemo’s agricultural heritage hosting the Grange Association and is a popular location for country and square-dancing sessions. The building was renovated in 2017 making it fully accessible, with an elevator to both levels and barrier-free restrooms. The site also contains a small new playground, picnic area, and basketball court, classifying it as a neighborhood park.



Grange Hall



Flesher Field: Music in the Park

### Flesher Field Park - Community Park

Flesher Field, located on 9<sup>th</sup> Street south of Stadium Drive, is a popular destination for field games, family gatherings, and special events. A key attraction of this 24-acre park is the large open sports field available for soccer, football, and other games. The newly upgraded park also features a playground, two picnic pavilions, two wiffleball fields, accessible restrooms, a 0.17-mile paved loop trail, and a gazebo and garden area.

In addition to the active recreation area, Flesher Field has 12 acres of woodlands west of the sports field. The woodlands feature a canopy of white oaks interspersed with red and black oaks and hickory trees that support many species of wildlife, especially birds and butterflies. Future plans call for continued forest management, invasive species control, and improvements to the informal walking trails located here.

### Oshtemo Township Park - Community Park

This park measures roughly 70 acres and is located behind the Township Hall at West Main and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets. It features both an active recreation area and a hilly, wooded area for passive recreation. The park includes two paved loop trails, a playground, two picnic shelters, two tennis courts, two basketball courts, a wiffleball field, restroom building, and parking lot. One of the biggest draws is the 18-hole disc golf course that weaves through the wooded area of the park. Unpaved walking trails are also found in the wooded area with an overlook, which was constructed in 2012. Township Park has become extremely popular, attracting both visitors from within the Township and surrounding county.



Group Hike at Township Park

**Drake Farmstead Park** - Community Park and Historic Building

Drake Farmstead Park is a 26-acre park currently under development at the eastern edge of the Township on Drake Road north of West Main Street. A master plan was developed with public input in 2015 that proposes new recreational uses for the property while preserving the historic character and rural atmosphere of the Farmstead.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the site contains an historic brick farmhouse that is being restored by volunteers with the Oshtemo Historical Society. Touring the restored farmhouse will allow visitors to better understand life in the early years of the Township.

Walking trails, a picnic shelter, interpretive signs, and a parking lot will be developed in 2019 with funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and Oshtemo Township. A 1,200 square foot multi-purpose building will also be constructed in 2019. Built in the style of the former carriage barn, it will host year 'round recreation activities and educational programs focused on nature and local history. The building will also house the park's restrooms.

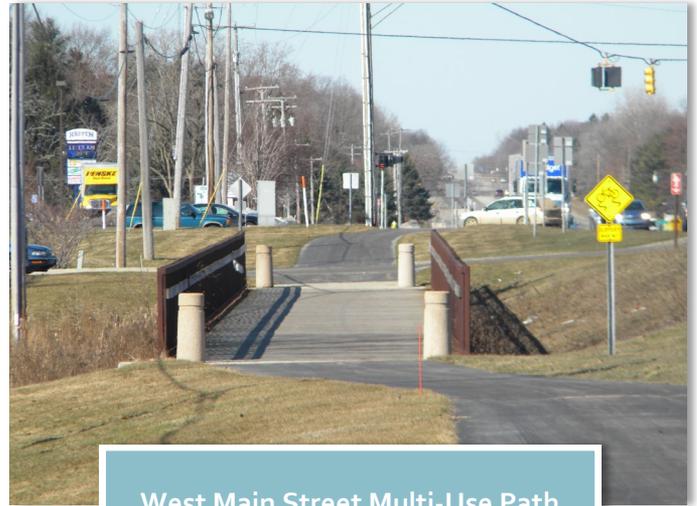
Park trails will traverse a variety of natural communities, from reconstructed prairie to savanna to managed woodlot. Future plans for the park include development of an event lawn for outdoor community events, a gazebo and garden area for concerts and small events, and an educational garden.



Drake Farmstead

**Nonmotorized Network**

The first nonmotorized plan for Oshtemo Township was developed in 2008, with updates to the plan completed in 2012. In addition, nonmotorized transportation needs were outlined in the Township's 2011 Master Plan. As nonmotorized planning is



West Main Street Multi-Use Path

relatively new to the Township, a full network of multi-use paths, bike routes, sidewalks, connector trails, and other nonmotorized facilities is still developing. Ultimately, this network is intended to connect Oshtemo residents to parks, regional trail facilities, retail areas throughout the Township, and to surrounding communities.

A step in this direction is the recent approval of a Complete Streets Policy for the Township. The policy defines complete streets as a design framework that enables safe and convenient access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and citizens of all ages and abilities. Recognizing that the Township's transportation system needs to be about more than moving vehicles efficiently and safely, the network also needs to meet the needs of all users. In addition, the Township's Subdivision and Site Condominium Ordinance requires sidewalks in all new developments.

Currently, Oshtemo has approximately 17 miles of nonmotorized facilities. This includes facilities like the 10-foot multi-use path along West Main Street, sidewalks within neighborhoods, and unpaved off-road trails within the parks.

In addition, the Kalamazoo Region has just over 250 miles of non-motorized facilities, many of which are dedicated shoulders for pedestrians and bicyclists. The region has over 70 miles of off-road, shared use paths, like the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail (KRVT) and the City of Portage Eliason Nature Reserve Trail, and the trails through Portage Creek Bicentennial Park. Nearly 55 miles of bike lanes currently exist in the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) region, which encompasses Kalamazoo County and an eastern portion of Van Buren County.

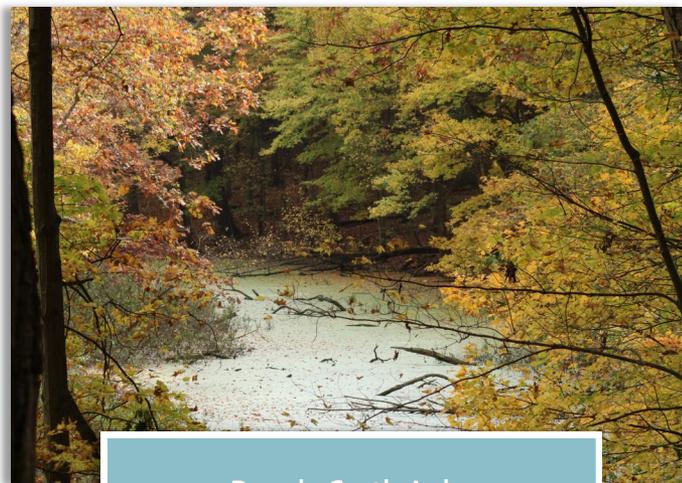
Conservation

*“Savvy states and communities are starting to think about green space in a more thoughtful and systematic way. They realize that green infrastructure is not a frill - it is smart conservation for the twenty-first century.”*

~Mark. A Benedict and Edward T. McMahon  
Conservation Fund

Conservation of important natural features has been a priority of the Township’s for many years, as evidenced by previous Master Plan goals and Zoning Ordinance regulations that seek to preserve open spaces. This, however, is the Township’s first comprehensive review and planning effort to address natural features directly. They are an important element of the character of Oshtemo Township, particularly in the less developed western portion of the community. Natural features are not easily restored after they are degraded, and they provide numerous existing and potential areas for parks and recreation, particularly conservation and greenway opportunities.

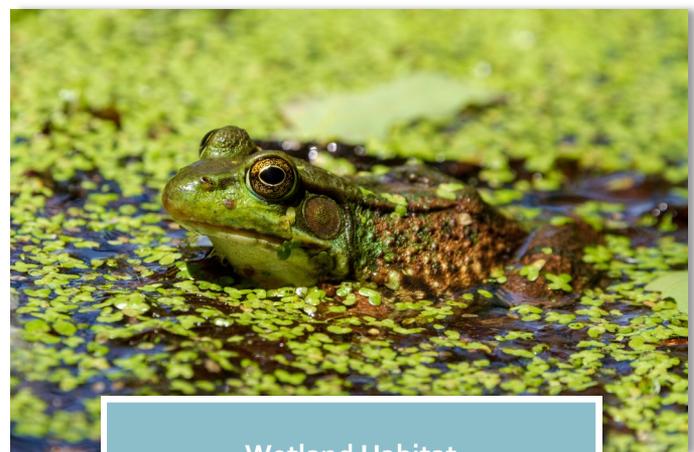
The pre-settlement ecosystems within the Township included oak savanna, prairie, oak and beech and maple forests. Oak savanna, a plant community where herbaceous and woody plants co-dominate, was formerly a defining feature of southern Lower Michigan, and is now one of the rarest plant communities. Remnants of these pre-settlement ecosystems present a unique opportunity within Oshtemo Township, because they are areas that have been relatively undisturbed by human influence. Possible remnant ecosystems may be found in wetlands



Bonnie Castle Lake

near the northwestern boundary of the Township, at the south-east Township boundary near the Al Sabo Preserve in Texas Township, within the Arcadia Creek area along the eastern boundary of the Township, cemeteries, and areas along railroads.

Woodlands comprise over 33 percent of total land area in Oshtemo and are found throughout the Township. They play an important role in wildlife habitat, air quality, and recreation. In both the rural and more developed areas of the Township, proximity to these woodlands should be considered an asset and preservation should be a priority as recreational use of these woodlands – including hiking, biking, or simply natural areas – can become an amenity for residents.



Wetland Habitat

Small lakes, ponds, and wetland areas are scattered throughout the Township. Water features are generally valued for their views, sense of tranquility, and recreational opportunities that they provide. Wetlands which are valued for water quality improvement, flood storage, and wildlife habitat are located primarily near the small lakes found in Oshtemo. The Township Master Plan indicates that water is the smallest undeveloped land use category, comprising 3 percent of undeveloped land and just over 1.6 percent of total land in Oshtemo Township.

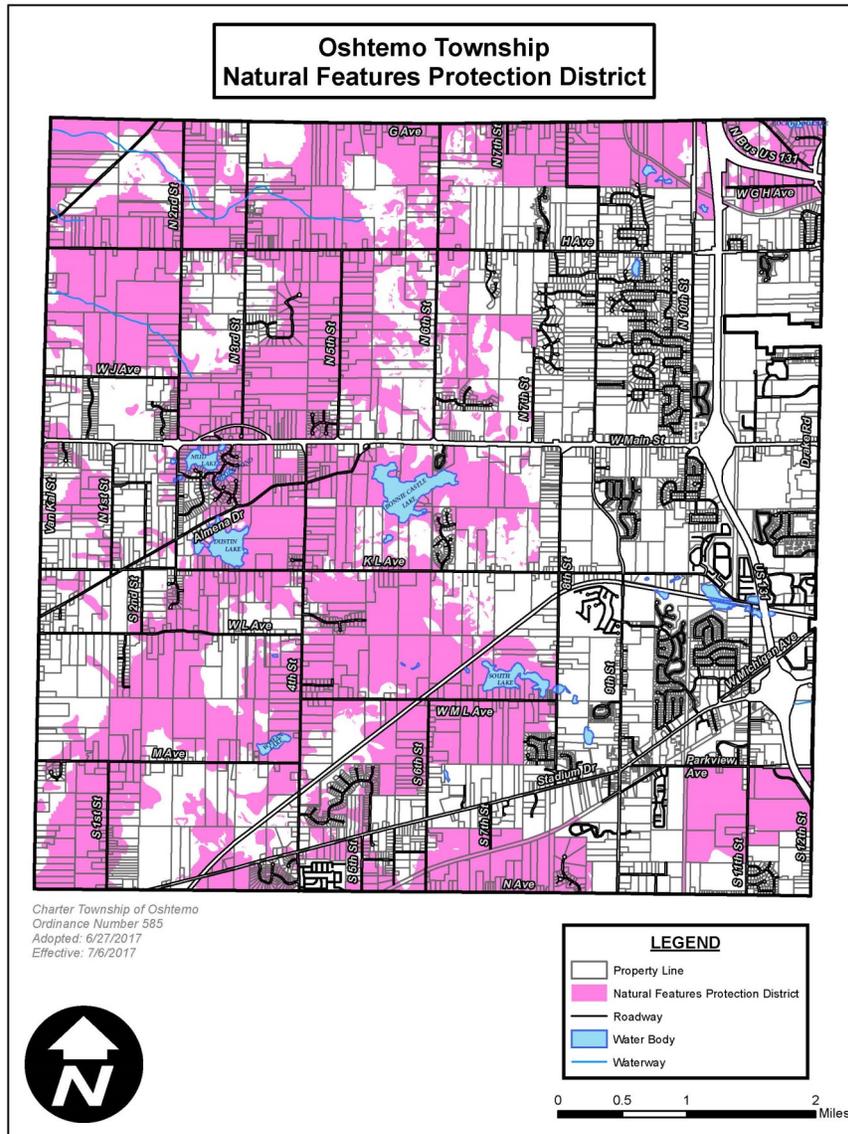
Soils in Oshtemo Township are generally sandy loams, which have high value locally as an agricultural resource and present a number of limitations to development that should be considered when determining areas for conservation or future park development. Because of sandy soils and high permeability, the Township generally has elevated annual groundwater recharge potential from 12-17 inches per year. Groundwater is the only source of drinking water in Kalamazoo County. Therefore, clean accessible groundwater is a critical quality of life

indicator for the Township, particularly for those areas that do not have access to treated water through the City of Kalamazoo’s public system.

The Western Michigan University Upjohn Center for GIS and Geographical Change provided a Natural Features Preservation report to the Township. The goal of this project was to accurately locate natural features and existing protected areas and greenspace that contribute to the quality of life and rural character of Oshtemo. This report contributed to the development of the first Natural Features Protection District, which was developed as part of the Township’s Subdivision/Site Condominium Ordinance. The intent of the ordinance is to preserve up to 40 percent of a parcel located within the District if it is ever developed under the Subdivision/Site Condominium Ordinance. In addition, as properties develop the preserved land must attach to any neighboring open spaces, ultimately creating a connected network of greenways throughout the Township.



Woodland Habitat



# TRENDS AND NEEDS

## Transforming Trends

### Changing Demographics

- Oshtemo’s population is expected to increase by 47% by 2040.
- By 2021, approximately 21% of the Townships population will be 65 years and older.
- More than 13% of the population has a disability, and this number increases as the population ages.

Implications:

- More parks will be needed.
- Loss of open space and natural areas as new development is constructed.
- Multi-modal and accessible facilities will be critical.

### Lifestyle Trends

- Main lifestyle segments\* in Oshtemo are:
  - \* College Town - students or university employees - seek new experiences, variety, and adventure.
  - \* Retirement Communities - generally 55 and older - are health conscious and enjoy organized recreation.
  - \* Green Acres - Average age is 43 - prefer country living and active outdoor sports, like hiking.

Implications:

- A need for more organized sports and activities within the parks.
- Development of hiking and biking trails.
- Connections of nonmotorized facilities to destinations and greenspaces.

### Health Concerns

- According to Michigan Department of Community Health\*\* for Kalamazoo County:
  - \* 65% are overweight or obese (BMI 25+).
  - \* 12% have been diagnosed with diabetes.
  - \* 22% of adults do not engage in any physical activity.
- #1 cause of death in Kalamazoo County is heart disease.

Implications:

- Encourage participation in active recreation and outdoor activities.
- Support greenways that allow for walking, hiking, and biking.
- Ensure facilities are accessible to all ability levels.

### Increased Development

- Dominant land use is residential, with 49% listed as rental units.
- Approximately 575 new housing units were built between 2010 and 2016.
- Commercial/industrial land uses total approximately 10% of Oshtemo acreage.
- Rural character continues to be vital to Township residents.

Implications:

- Conservation of open spaces is vital to maintain rural character.
- Natural features within the developed areas need protection.
- Habitats are threatened by continued development.

\*Esri Tapestry Segmentation, 2016 (2017 Master Plan Update)  
 \*\*Community Health Needs Assessment, Bronson Methodist Hospital, December 2016.

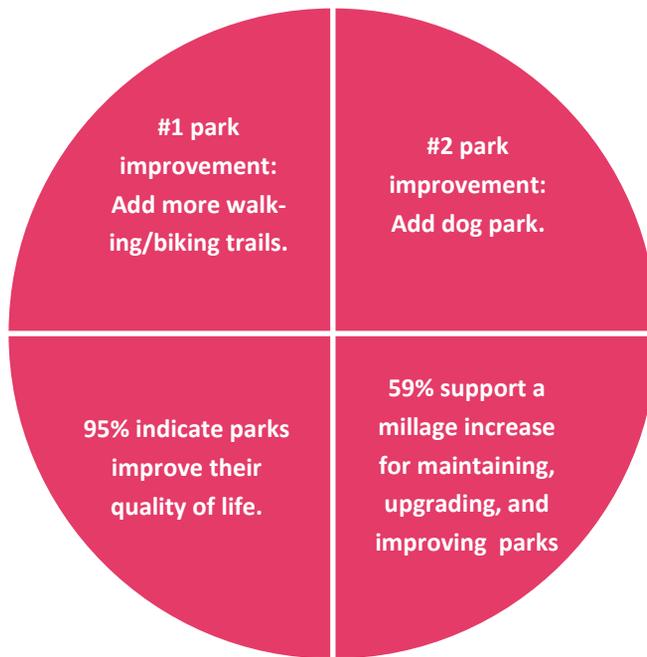
## Community Input

Residents who attended the *GO! Green Oshtemo* Kick-Off Meeting provided a myriad of input on parks and recreation, nonmotorized transportation, and conservation within Oshtemo. As the meeting progressed, the following top six themes emerged as most important to the participants:

- Increase connectivity to destinations within the Township (township hall, parks, library, retail centers, nature preserves, etc.)
- Increase safety for nonmotorized pedestrians and bicyclists; think of needed functional requirements.
- Consider additional neighborhood parks in the urban area of the Township.
- Provide more passive and active recreation opportunities in the parks, including winter options.
- Protect important natural features in the urban area of the Township.
- Focus primary conservation efforts for greenways, trails, habitat corridors in the western “rural” area of the Township.

In addition, subsequent open houses asked residents to indicate desired amenities within the parks. The top three responses included basketball courts, walking/biking trails, and water spray park.

2017 Community Survey



### 2018 *GO! Green Oshtemo* Survey - Sample Questions:

What benefit of nonmotorized facilities are most important to you? (choose all that apply)	
Transportation to Work	10.94%
Connectivity to Destinations	39.06%
Access to Nature/Outdoors	55.73%
Recreation/Fitness	73.44%
Other	10.42%

If the Township works to conserve greenways/open spaces, should paths/trails be developed within those areas?	
Definitely	36.18%
Maybe, but Strategically Placed	30.65%
No, Preserve as Natural	30.15%
Not Sure	1.51%
Other	1.51%

### What level of millage would residents support for parks, sidewalks, trails, and conservation?



## Organizational Needs

In addition to understanding the demographic trends and input from Oshtemo residents, comparing the Township’s existing amenities against recommended guidelines developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) assists Township officials to determine possible future needs. It is important to note that the Township cannot meet all of its residents recreation needs. Therefore, an understanding of other local facilities owned and maintained by partner organizations or private entities helps to fill those possible recreation “gaps.” A full analysis of existing facilities is provided in Appendix A, but the following information details specifics for the Township based on the 2017 population estimate of 22,710 persons.

What the table to the right is outlining is a deficiency in neighborhood parks at approximately 3 to 7 parks totaling 43 additional acres. While the Township meets the minimum number for recommended parks under the Community Park category, the DNR guidelines suggest more acreage may be needed.

**MDNR Guidelines for Recommended Number of Parks and Park Acreage based on Township Population**

	Neighborhood Park (5 - 10 acres)	Community Park (30 - 50 acres)
Recommended Park Acres/1,000 Population	2 acres	5 to 8 acres
Recommended Number of Parks for Oshtemo	4 to 8 parks	3 to 6 parks
Recommended Park Acreage for Oshtemo	Approximately 45 acres	Approximately 181 acres
Existing Township Parks	1 park	3 parks
Existing Township Park Acres	2 acres	120 acres

\*Township population estimated at 22,710 persons.

**MDNR Facility Standards Comparison  
Sampling of Suggested Facility Development Standards  
Oshtemo Township and within 1/2 Mile of the Township**

Activity/Facility	Service Radius	No. of Units per Population	Suggested No. based on Oshtemo Population	No. of Township Owned	No. of Other Local Facilities	Township Deficiency	Total Deficiency
Basketball	1/4 - 1/2 mile	1 court per 500	5	2	4	3	1 surplus
Tennis	1/4 - 1/2 mile	1 court per 2,000	11	2	8	9	2
Soccer	1 - 2 miles	1 field per 10,000	2	1	11	1	9 surplus
Local Walking Paths	N/A	N/A	Unknown	1	7	Unknown	Unknown
Baseball	1/4 - 1/2 mile	1 field per 500	5	0	2	5	3
Football	15 - 30 minutes travel time	1 field per 20,000	1	0	1	1	0
Volleyball	1/2 - 1 mile	1 court per 5,000	5	0	1	5	4
Regional Multi-Use Trails	N/A	1 system per region	1	0	1	0	0

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In the development of the *GO! Green Oshtemo Plan*, six guiding principles were created to help direct the long-term vision for the community. Guiding principles are constant and articulate the core ideals that both guided the *GO! Green Oshtemo* planning effort, as well as the direction of the goals and action strategies over the Plan's 5-year time horizon and beyond.

### Health and Wellness

With the rising rates of chronic disease and an increased prevalence of sedentary lifestyles of many Americans, the affordable and accessible solution of local parks and recreation opportunities becomes more important. Beautiful, well-maintained parks and nonmotorized facilities are a source of pride for the Township and reflect our community's priorities to improve quality of life and help make healthy lifestyle choices possible for all members of the community.

In addition to personal health, parks and recreation opportunities are a livability factor for the community as a whole. According to the National Recreation and Parks Association, recreation opportunities are often cited as one of the most important factors in surveys regarding community livability. Parks, in particular, are a gathering place for all individuals to promote fun, learning, and enjoyment regardless of their socioeconomic status.



Family Activity: Music in the Park



Accessible Trail: Township Park

### Accessible and Connected

Oshtemo Township has a dual nature. The roughly east third of the Township is urbanized with higher residential and commercial densities, while the western two-thirds is predominately rural residential, with scattered subdivisions and large relatively undeveloped parcels. A guiding principle of this Plan is to find ways to link these disparate development patterns through connections between conservation, parks, and nonmotorized planning.

In addition to connecting the urban and rural areas, this Plan intends to link people to their community. Both popular destinations within Oshtemo and the natural environment will be networked through nonmotorized facilities and greenways. Partnerships with conservation organizations will provide outdoor opportunities and environmental education programs to connect residents to the natural world.

Finally, implementation strategies and Township policies should ensure the fair, just, and equitable distribution of public amenities. Addressing equity in policy decisions is vital for the Townships well-being, economy, and health of the population. For example, nonmotorized facilities can assist those without access to a motor vehicle reach their place of work, and accessible recreation facilities will provide opportunities for physical activity free from memberships and fees. As local government becomes ever more responsible for providing these amenities, considering our diverse population will be essential to creating a thriving, healthy, and equitable community.

### Conservation and Preservation

The natural environment is an important characteristic of Oshtemo Township. Once impacted, the natural features on the land cannot be easily restored. To help protect this green infrastructure, the Township will actively conserve land, preserve landscapes in the built environment, and develop sustainable practices for the responsible management of Township owned facilities.



Opportunities for Greenways/Trails

### Improvements and Maintenance

Continuous improvements and innovation help ensure that our parks, recreation, nonmotorized, and greenway facilities are efficient and relevant to the community. Ensuring that past projects are completed and existing facilities are maintained will continue to be a consideration of the Township as capital improvement planning is conducted each year.



Grange Hall Improvements



Volunteers at Flesher Field Park

### Prioritization and Implementation

Funding is an essential part of providing parks, recreation, greenway, and nonmotorized facilities and amenities in Oshtemo Township. Each year, the Township completes a five-year capital improvement plan, which prioritizes facility development. While this Plan delineates implementation, as grants become available the Township may need to be nimble and allow priorities to shift based on available funding.

### Partnerships and Relationships

Engaging the Oshtemo community is a key aspect of this Plan as well as any future implementation efforts. Transparency related to planning, budgeting, and facility improvements will be continuous priorities.

Both the public and private sectors will be important partners to maximize limited resources for conservation, parks, and nonmotorized planning. Improving relationships and coordinating efforts will improve outcomes for the benefit of all Oshtemo residents

# GOALS AND ACTIONS

## Goals

The goals outlined in this Plan are intended to be broad, visionary statements that are not time specific and are intended to serve as a guide to future Township leaders and staff. In addition, they are integrated with and support the overall Master Plan for the Township. The action strategies, which can be found in detail in Appendices D through G, translate these goals into more specific direction that will help implement the overall vision of the Plan. The development of these goals and action strategies were accomplished through:

- An understanding of current conditions within the Township;
- The public input process both conducted for the development of this Plan and other Master Plan and Township outreach efforts;
- The vision of the current Township Master Plan, and past Park and Recreation, and Nonmotorized Plans; and,
- Direction from the *GO!* Green Oshtemo Study Groups.

The goals identify a desired future outcome for the entirety of the Township, creating a cohesive whole that allows each segment of the *GO!* Green Oshtemo effort to interrelate and support the other. They also describe broad public purposes towards which the individual action strategies are aimed.

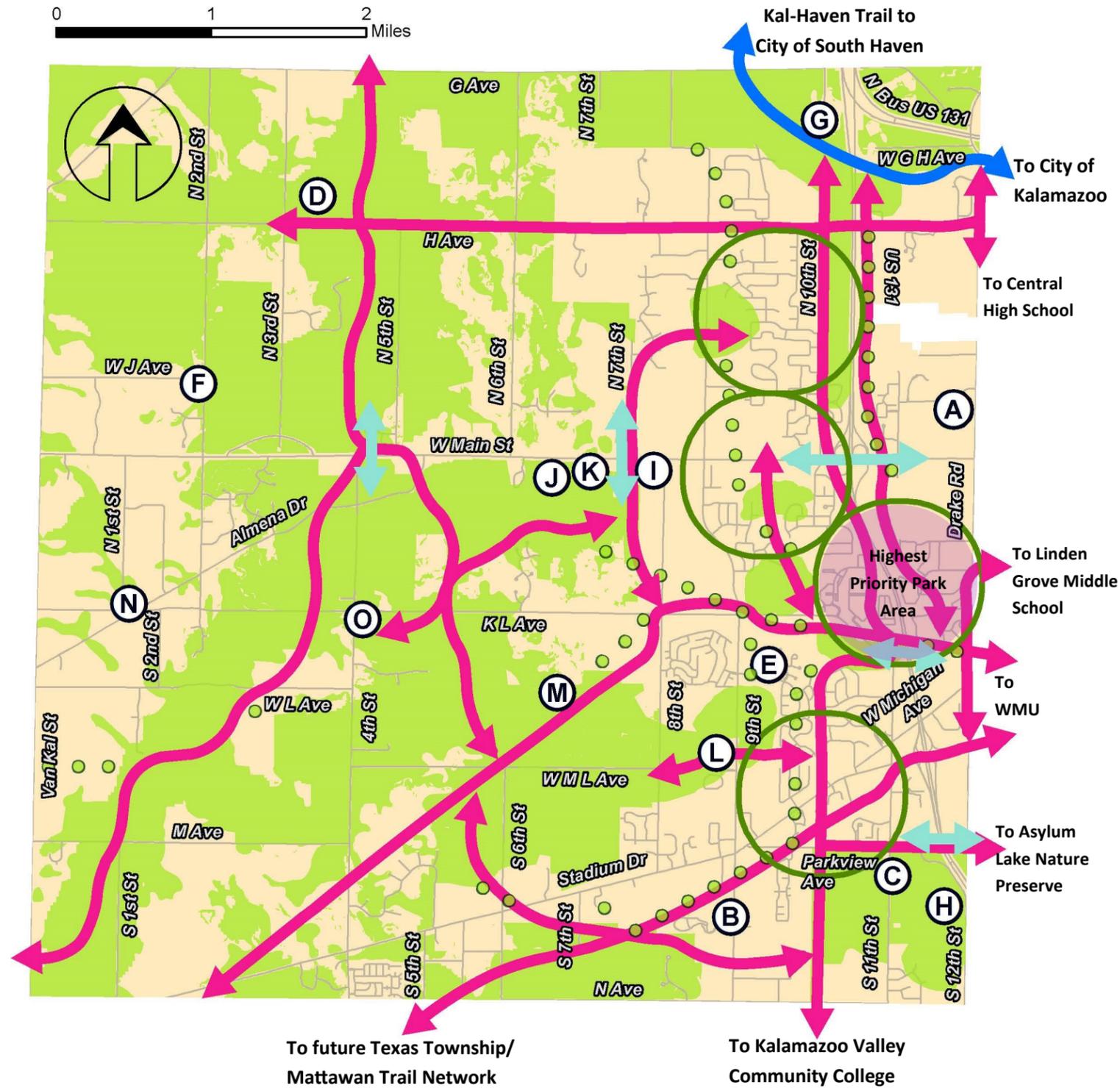
## Conceptual Framework Map

The *GO!* Green Oshtemo Plan is all about connections. Connecting our residents to those amenities that support and enhance the quality of life in Oshtemo Township. As a community that sustains both a suburban and rural environment, linking these dual characteristics is critical to enriching all lifestyles. The Conceptual Framework Map on the following pages provides that “big picture” plan; linking east to west, parks and conservation, and a far-reaching nonmotorized network that connects it all.

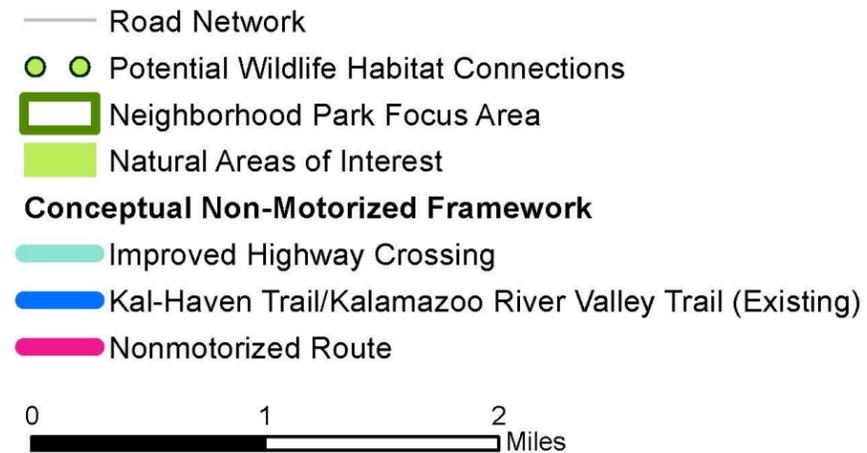
The Natural Areas of Interest outlined on the map are those areas of the Township where significant natural features may be found and where future conservation efforts may be targeted. The Neighborhood Park Focus Areas delineate where the Township will concentrate efforts for possible future park development, due to population and development densities. Finally, the Conceptual Nonmotorized Framework is a high level model of how the future network may develop over time. It is intended to convey important linkages and how this system interacts with destinations, neighborhoods, commercial areas, and future conservation opportunities.



# Conceptual Framework Map



DESTINATION	
A	Drake Farmstead Park
B	Flesher Field Park
C	Genessee Prairie Cemetery
D	Grange Hall & Playground
E	Heritage Christian Academy
F	Hill Cemetery
G	Kal-Haven Trail State Park
H	Kalamazoo Christian Elementary
I	Kalamazoo Public Library
J	Lillian Anderson Arboretum
K	Oshtemo Township Park
L	Prairie Ridge Elementary
M	Schellenberg Nature Preserve
N	West Osthemmo Cemetery
O	Wolf Tree Nature Preserve Trails



**PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS**

The following goals are specific to the development, maintenance, and operation of the existing parks in the Township, as well as the acquisition and improvement of new parks.



**GOAL: Exceptional Park Experience**

Deliver an exceptional park user experience through proper maintenance and continuous improvements, recognizing that our parks are a source of community pride.



**GOAL: Accessibility and Diversity**

Provide a diversity of recreational opportunities, both active and passive, that meet the needs of the Oshtemo community.



**GOAL: Acquisition**

Explore land acquisition opportunities to develop new parks.



**GOAL: Development of Existing Facilities**

Continue progress towards development of existing park facilities in established and undeveloped Township park land.



**GOAL: Environmental Stewardship**

Foster environmental stewardship through the preservation of important natural features and sustainable design practices within parks, supporting efforts to make Oshtemo a leader in environmental conservation.



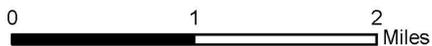
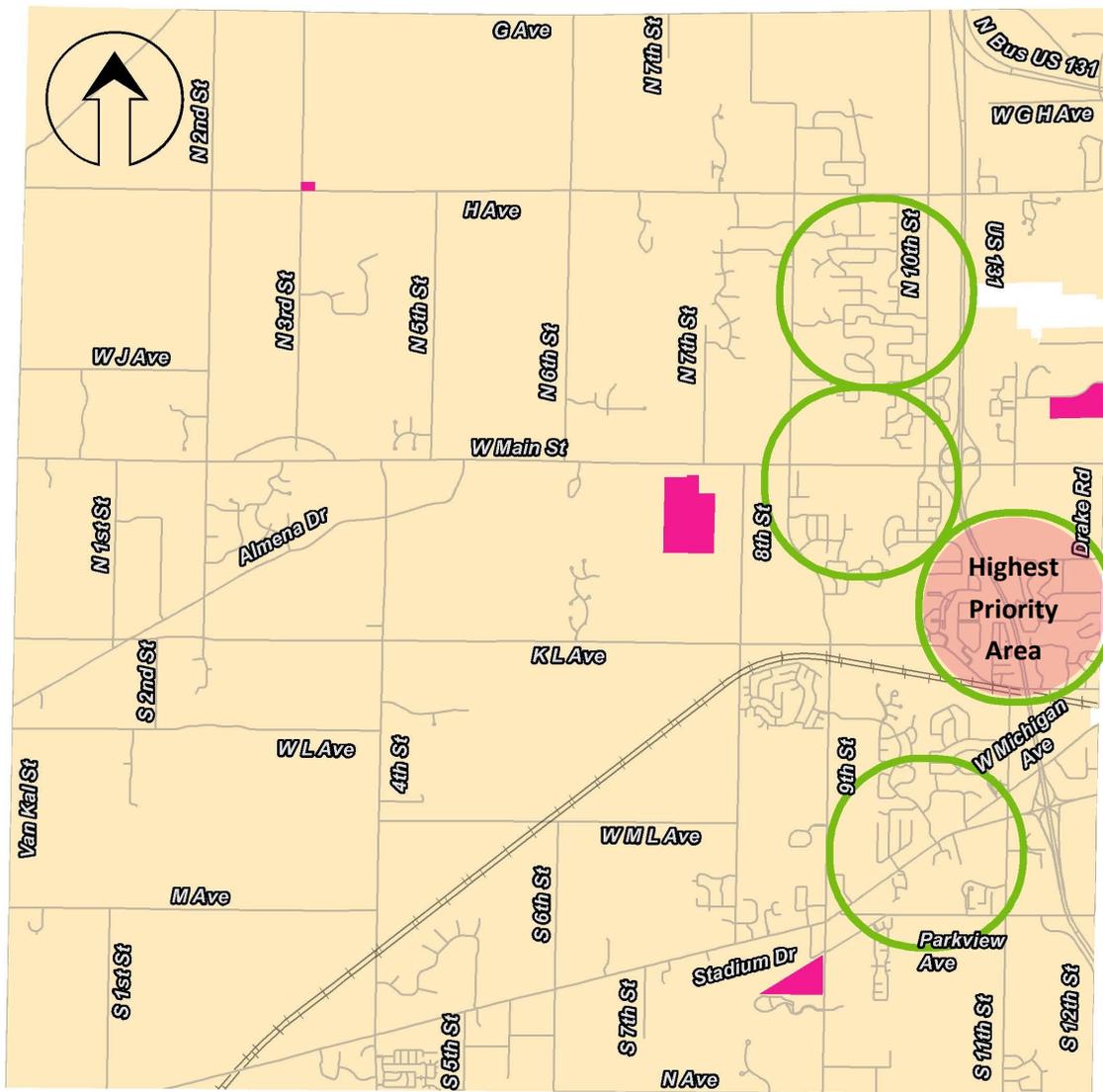
Recreation Variety in Oshtemo Township

## Parks and Recreation Implementation

Based on the MDNR’s suggested classification system for parks, the Township is deficient in neighborhood and/or mini parks. As shown in this Plan, the residents of the Township have indicated a desire for additional parks in the more densely populated areas of the community. A key implementation strategy is to address this issue with the acquisition of property within the priority areas outlined in the Neighborhood Park Priority Map. These areas were determined based on population density and distance to the existing Township community parks.

To ensure movement towards achieving the Plan goals, the Township anticipates completing a number of capital improvement projects over the course of this 5-year Plan and beyond. To see these projects to fruition, many will need support of both State and local grant dollars. Appendix D provides the complete outline of the capital improvements planned for the existing parks.

### Neighborhood Park Priority Areas



- Road Network
- +— Railroad
- Existing Township Park
- Neighborhood Park Focus Area



## NONMOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION GOALS

The goals and action strategies for the nonmotorized plan are intended to establish a physical and cultural environment that supports and encourages safe, comfortable, and convenient ways for a diverse population of pedestrians and bicyclists to travel throughout the Township and into the surrounding communities.



**GOAL: Connectivity**

Increase connectivity between residential neighborhoods and nearby nonmotorized facilities to connect residents to commercial areas, employment, recreation, and public transportation.



**GOAL: Safety and Accessibility**

Provide for complete streets, as appropriate, on all Oshtemo roadways to emphasize safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel to all users of roadways.



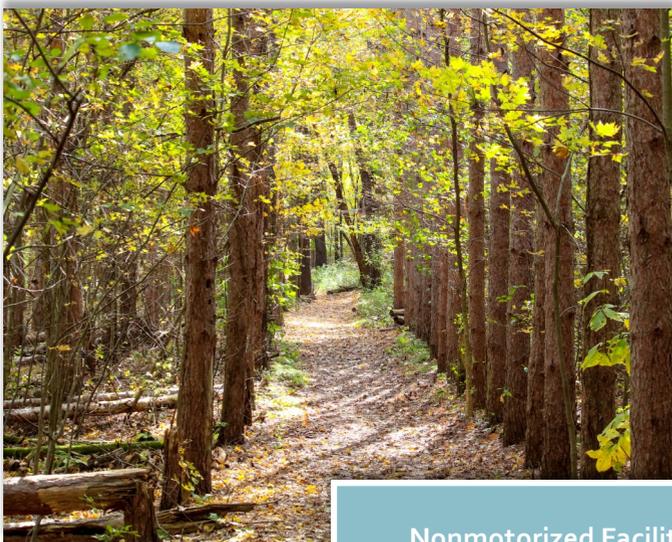
**GOAL: Planning**

Incorporate nonmotorized best practices and recommendations into all relevant Township ordinances, policies, and plans.



**GOAL: Education**

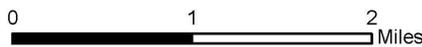
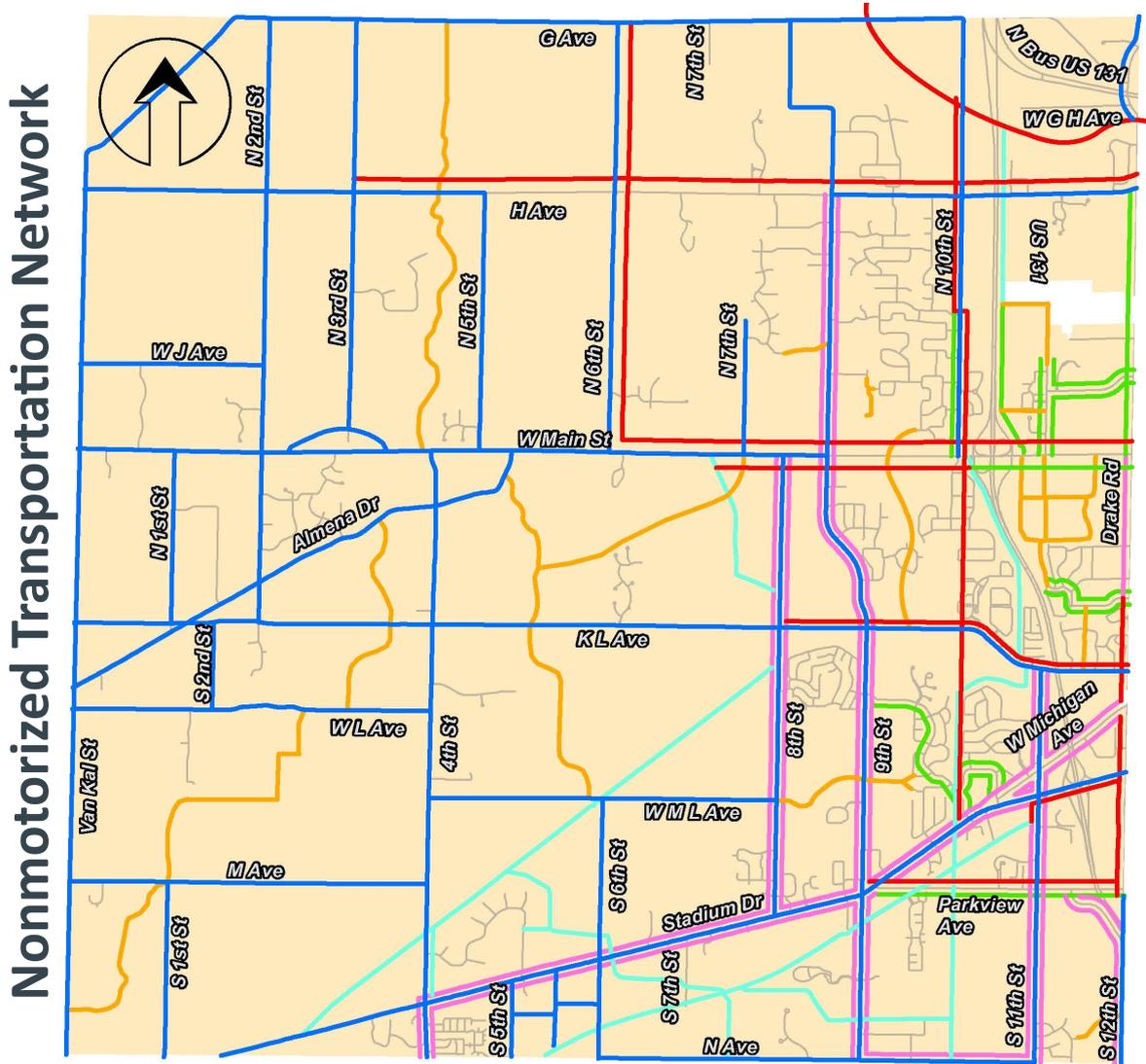
To achieve the above goals, increase awareness of the benefits of nonmotorized transportation and provide information regarding safe integration of motorized and nonmotorized modes of transportation.



Nonmotorized Facilities in Oshtemo Township

## Nonmotorized Transportation Implementation

The Nonmotorized Transportation Network Map provides both multi-use paths and sidewalks that follow roadways, as well as ideas for off-road connections intended throughout the Township. This is a long-range plan of existing and envisioned facilities that will connect the entire Township. The intent of the future nonmotorized efforts is to create a network of links to adjacent jurisdictions, provide access to destinations within and around the Township, and ensure a system of “loop connections” throughout the community.



- Road Network
- Facility Type**
- Conceptual Nonmotorized Link
- Connector Trail
- Paved Shoulder/Bike Lane
- Sidewalk
- Six Foot Shared Use Path
- Ten Foot Shared Use Path



## CONSERVATION GOALS

The goals and action strategies below are intended to provide both a long-range vision for the Township, as well as specific short-term action strategies that foster the burgeoning conservation efforts of the community.

### GOAL: Conserve the Natural Environment

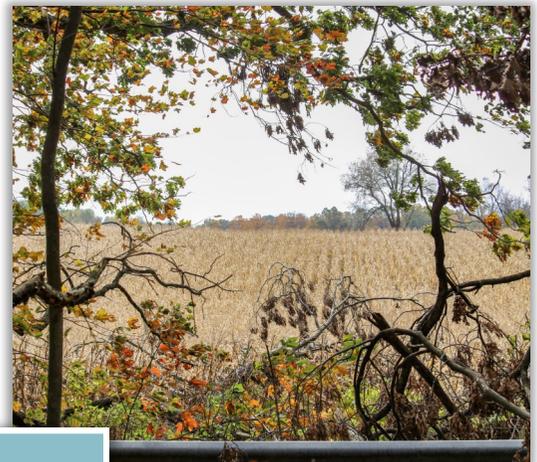
Conserve the natural features and character of Township lands by protecting undeveloped open spaces.

### GOAL: Connect Nature and People

Advance a greenway network that connects natural features and people to community and regional destinations.

### GOAL: Enhance Rural Character

Enhance the rural character of the Township through the preservation of natural features that strengthen the desirability of our community as a place to live, work, and recreate.

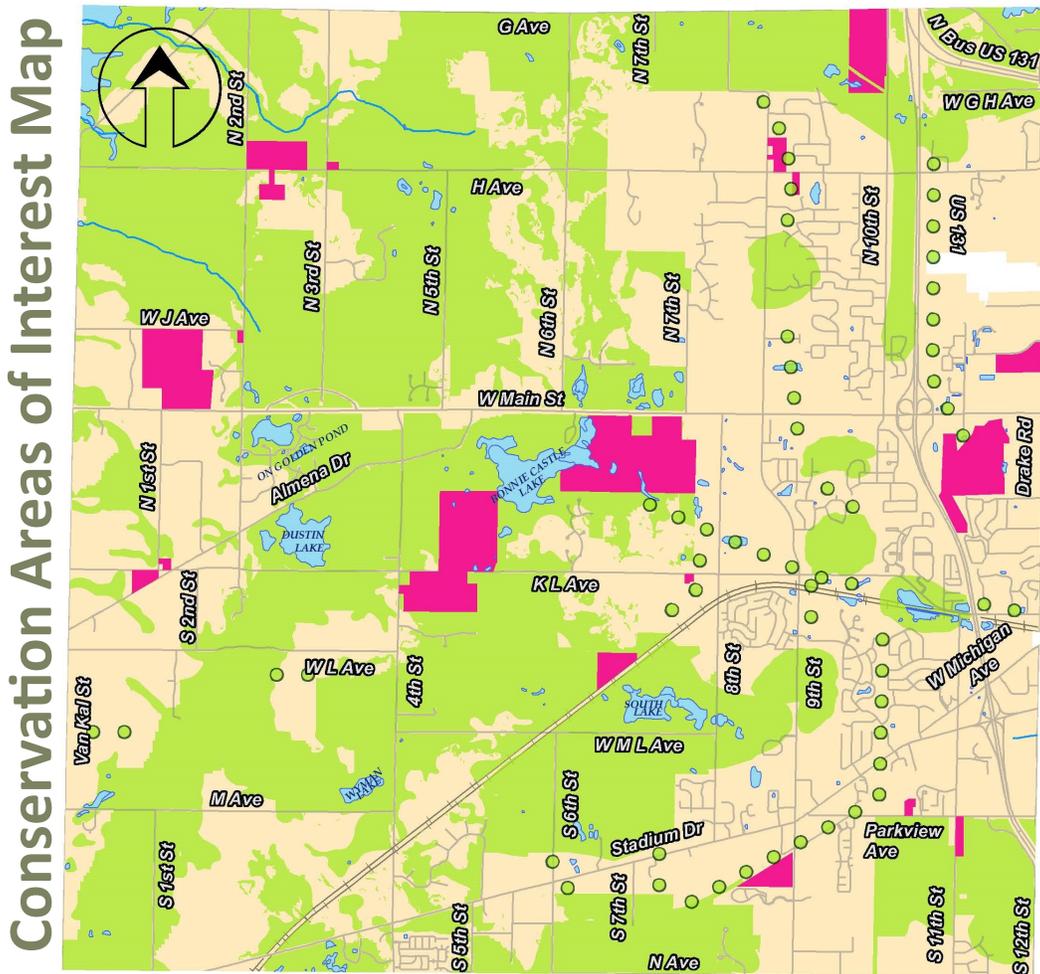


Conservation of Rural Character

## Conservation Implementation

Conservation of properties is a new endeavor for the Township and therefore much of the work during this 5-year Plan period will be establishing priorities, developing criteria, and field work. With that said, the Township will capitalize on any opportunity to work with residents, developers, and conservation partners to preserve lands. The Conservation Areas of Interest Map outlines the areas of priority for conservation in the Township.

In addition to assisting residents, developers, and conservation partners with land conservation, the Township also hopes to establish catalyst projects as part of this Plan. The acquisition of property will be contingent on the Township securing state and/or local grants.



- 0 1 2 Miles
- Road Network
- +— Railroad
- Potential Wildlife Habitat Connections
- Waterway
- Lakes, Ponds, and Wetlands
- Other Areas of Interest (Recreation, Nature Preserves, Cemeteries, Historic Farmsteads, Etc.)
- Areas of Natural Interest



## COLLECTIVE PLAN GOALS

These goals and associated action strategies are intended to be broadly focused and generally touch on all aspects of the Go! Green Oshtemo effort.

### **GOAL: Enhance Partnerships**

Enhance partnerships with community organizations, governmental units, and civic groups, and work towards better public/private partnerships with the development community to improve recreation and conservation opportunities.

### **GOAL: Lead by Example**

Make Oshtemo a leader in environmental conservation and sustainability and strive to reduce the Township's impact on the local and global environment.

### **GOAL: Sound Fiscal Management**

Develop stable sources of funding and practice sound fiscal management of the parks, recreation, conservation, and nonmotorized systems.



Good Times in Oshtemo Township

## APPENDIX A: EXISTING CONDITIONS INVENTORY

### OVERVIEW

The Existing Condition Inventory provides a wide variety of information about Oshtemo Township and the surrounding region. Existing infrastructure will be reviewed for parks and nonmotorized transportation, as well as the physical and natural characteristics of the Township. This information provides valuable insight when determining future development of parks, recreation amenities, nonmotorized facilities, and conservation of lands. In addition, it is also a useful resource when completing background information on grant applications.

Oshtemo Township is located on the west side of Kalamazoo County, abutting the west side of the City of Kalamazoo. The Township is bordered by Alamo Township to the north, Alma Township to the west, Texas Township to the south, and the City of Kalamazoo and Kalamazoo Charter Township to the east. All are in Kalamazoo County, except Alma Township, which is located in Van Buren County.

The first settlement in Oshtemo Township was recorded in 1830, and the Township was established later that decade in 1839. The Township has grown and prospered given its proximity to the City of Kalamazoo, I-94, and US-131. The development of the community has been evident in residential, office, industrial, and commercial growth. The beautiful rolling hills and rural atmosphere found in the western half of the Township in close proximity to employment, universities and colleges, and major transportation routes have made Oshtemo an attractive place to live and work.

### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The following is a description of the physical characteristics of Oshtemo Township, including land use and natural features. This information is important in understanding the potential for the type, location, and extent of future park, recreation, and nonmotorized improvements, as well as potential areas for land conservation.

#### Natural Features

Natural features are an important element of the character of Oshtemo Township, particularly in the less developed western portion of the community. Natural features are not easily restored after they are impaired, and they provide numerous existing and potential areas for parks and recreation, particularly conservation and greenway opportunities.

The following outlines much of the existing natural features within the Township. A great deal of this information was gathered by the W.E. Upjohn Center for the Study of GIS and Geographical Change at Western Michigan University to assist with possible areas of conservation in Oshtemo, particularly the western 2/3rds of the Township.

#### Pre-Settlement Vegetation

The best record of Michigan's pre-European settlement native landscape was documented between 1816 and 1856 by surveyors from the federal General Land Office. These surveyors included information related to wetlands, lakes, streams, soils, timber quality, etc. Biologists from the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, an organization tasked to preserve Michigan's unique natural heritage, developed a methodology to translate this information, along with other references, into the pre-settlement vegetation maps that can be utilized by researchers and the general public.

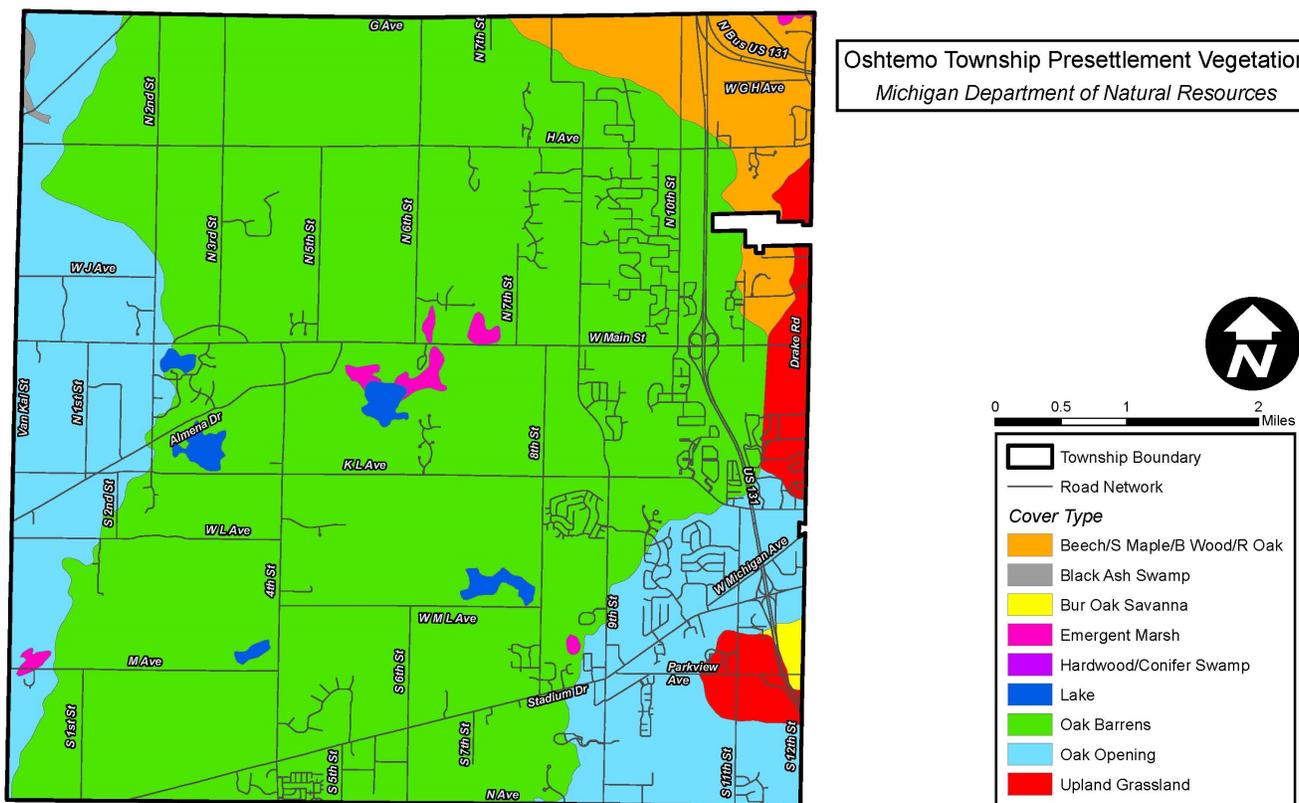
Based on these maps, most of Oshtemo Township was once covered by Oak Barren, which is a fire-dependent savanna dominated by wide-spaced oak trees. Black oak and white oak were typically found and the ground layer was predominately grasses. Oak barrens are established on droughty soils and are characteristic to nearly level to slightly undulating glacial outwash areas in Lower Michigan. This is consistent with Oshtemo Township, as most of the community is located on high lands consisting of sandy soils formed by the Kalamazoo moraine. Unfortunately, savanna forests like oak barren are now one of the rarest plant communities in lower Michigan.

The native plants identified in the Pre-Settlement Vegetation Map are important as they are generally the plants that are best adapted to the soils, land forms, and climate of the Kalamazoo region and Oshtemo Township in particular. Therefore, they are likely the best habitat for local wildlife and should be low maintenance and cost-effective in any landscape management plans. But, much has changed since the European settlement of Oshtemo, and fully restoring habitats to the pre-settlement conditions could be very difficult to achieve. However, utilizing the Pre-Settlement Vegetation Map can assist with selecting lands that should be targeted for conservation and restoration efforts that may be achievable.

Per the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, the Oshtemo Pre-Settlement Vegetation Map can help shape answers to questions like:

- Is restoration of a wetland or prairie in this area a good idea?
- How does the current landscaping of my property fit in with what grew here over 200 years ago?
- What plants naturally occurred here and how did they support local wildlife?
- What is required to sustain pre-settlement vegetation?

The Pre-Settlement Vegetation Map is one piece of the puzzle in discerning the natural environment of Oshtemo Township, aiding in the understanding of our local wildlife habitats.



**Topography**

One of the most unique features of the Township is its topography. The rolling hills and valleys are unusual in this region, creating a unique and scenic landscape that attracts many to the community. Although it may be feasible to build on elevated slopes, careful consideration should be given to drainage and erosion concerns. Steep slopes should be targeted for future acquisition or deed restrictions to assist with continued protection. Not only will this safeguard important and sensitive areas, but it will also provide interesting natural places for passive recreational use.

Slopes of over 25 percent are generally considered unfit for development. Locally high slopes are outlined on the Topography Map in very dark brown. Three prominent areas are in the northeast sections of the Township, the uplands surrounding Dustin Lake and its wetlands, and the uplands around Wyman Lake.

The National Resource Conservation Service designates any slope over 8 percent consistently to be “rolling,” over 15 percent to be “hilly,” and over 30 percent to be “steep.” As can be seen on the Topography Map, much of Oshtemo is rolling and hilly.

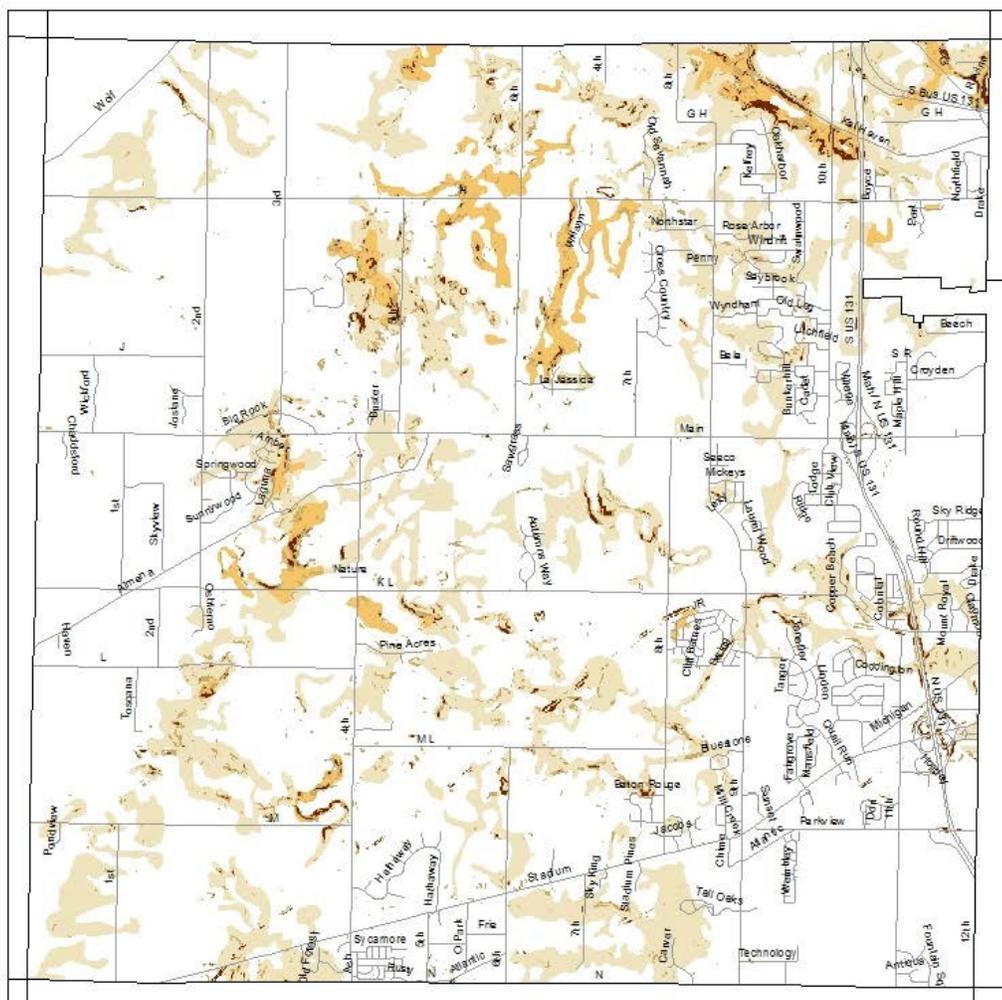


Figure 3. Slope as derived from digital elevation models and SSURGO slope classes.

DEM\_Slope, Soil\_Slope\_Class

**Soils**

Soils in Oshtemo Township are generally sandy loams, which have high value locally for agriculture, but present a number of limitations to development. These drawbacks could be viewed as possible opportunities when determining areas for conservation or future park sites. Soils with higher erodibility should receive a priority when considering conservation, particularly in an area that also has hilly or steep slopes.

Soil erodibility has implications for most types of land use and a soil erodibility factor (K) is generally used to determine the best soils for development. The “K factor” considers the susceptibility of a particular soil to erosion and the rate of water runoff from that soil. Soils with low K values (less than 0.15) resist erosion and are not generally found in Oshtemo Township (Figure 5). Most Oshtemo soils are sandy and coarse-textured that still have fairly low K value (0.15-0.20). Medium textured soils are found in the eastern third of the Township. These soils produce moderate runoff and are somewhat susceptible to detachment. As this is the most developed portion of the Township, reliable storm water management becomes important. There are no highly erodible soils (over 0.40) in Oshtemo.

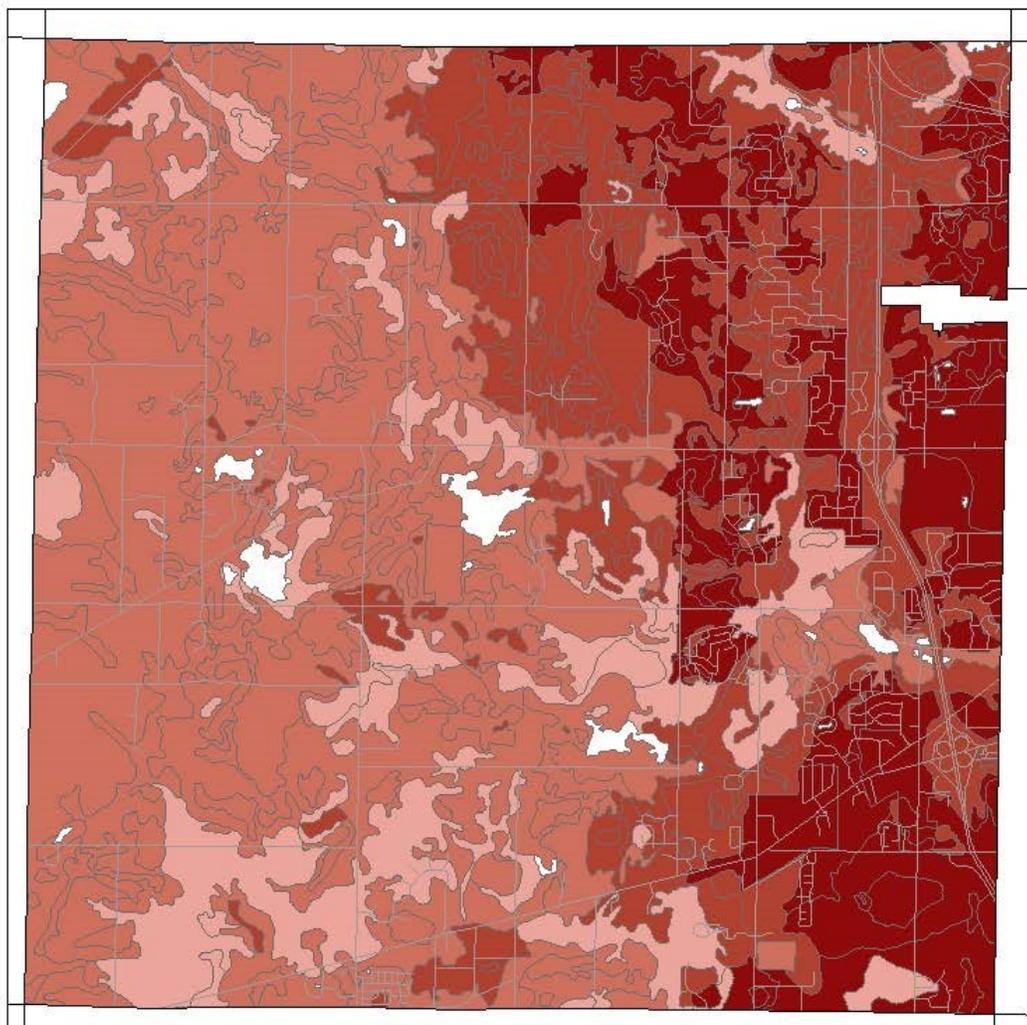
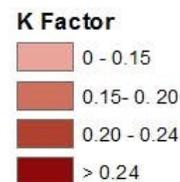


Figure 5.  
Soil erodibility “K” factor as defined by NRCS for use with the RUSLE.

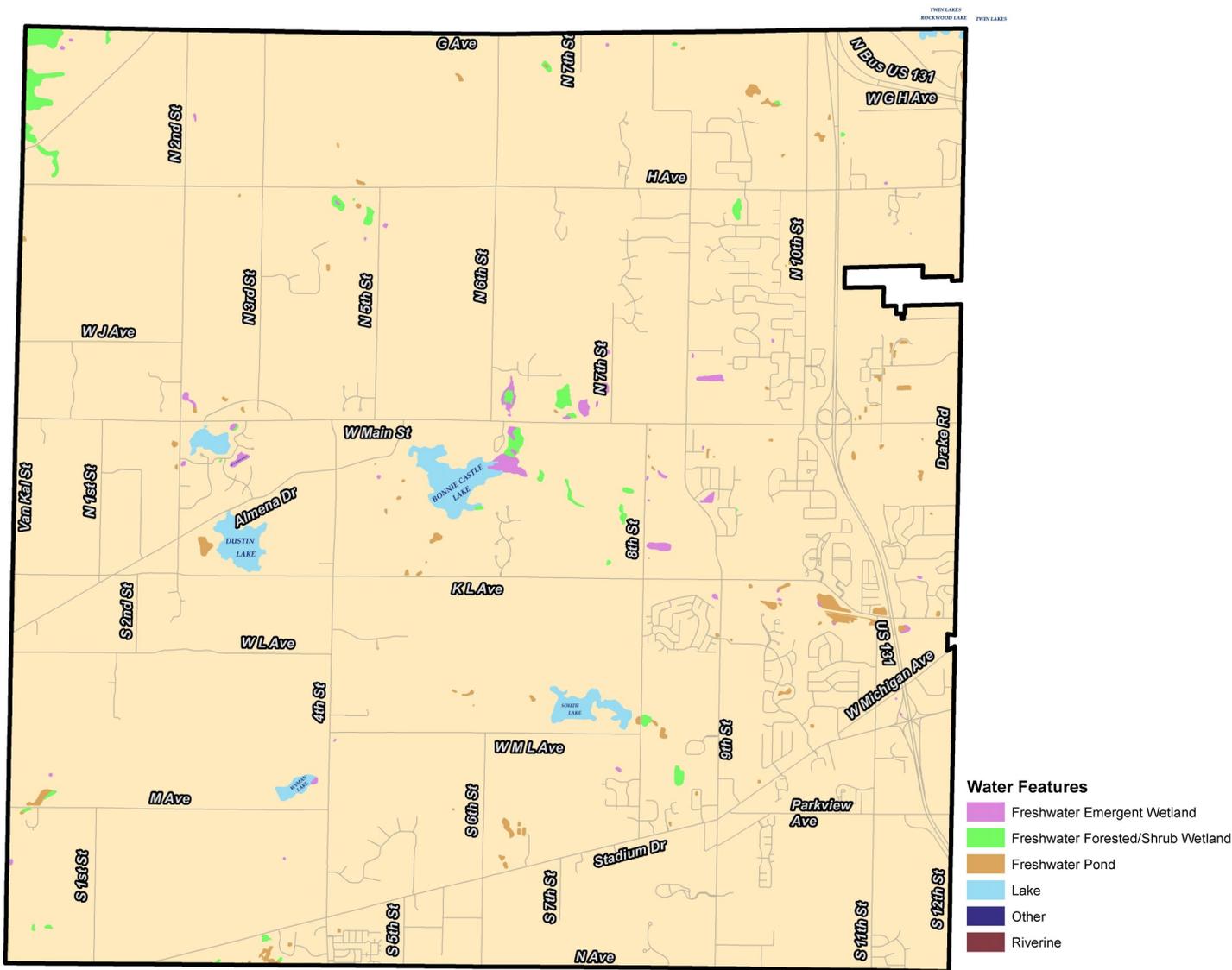


SoilErodibility

**Water Features**

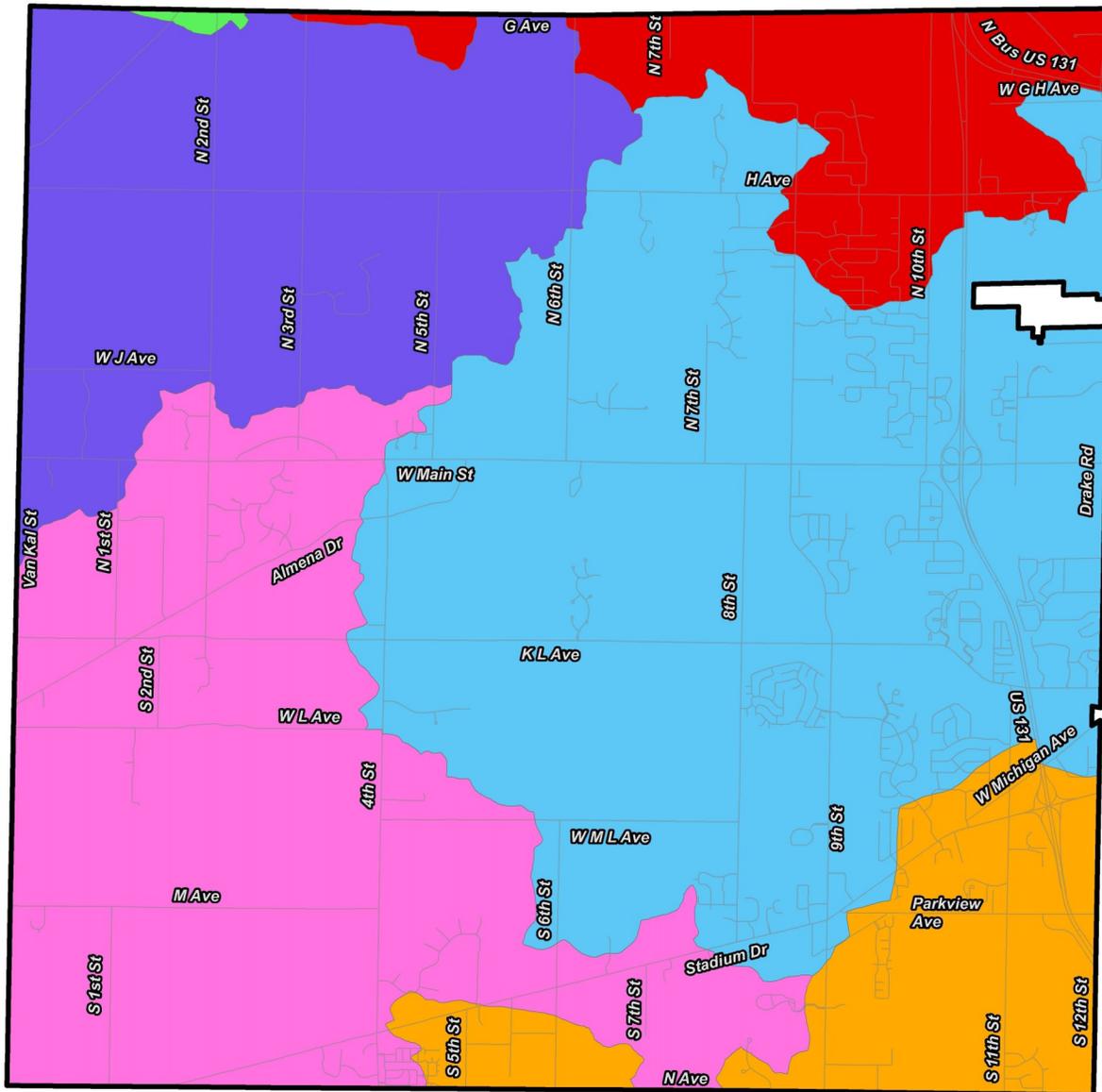
Water features and wetland areas are scattered throughout the Township but comprise very little of the total land mass of the community at only 1.6 percent. Water features are generally valued for their aesthetic views and the sense of tranquility that they provide. Wetlands are identified by the Michigan Resource Information System maps and the National Wetland Inventory, which shows mostly combinations of wetlands with wetland soil areas and are located primarily near small lakes. The largest wetland complexes are associated with Dustin, South, and Bonnie Castle lakes. Given the manmade nature of some of the smaller wetlands found in the Township, verification of the habitat quality will be needed prior to any future conservation decisions. Future conservation of water features will likely be a combination of Township efforts and preservation by land developers during the development review process. Sensitive wetland areas should be high on the priority list for conservation, with possible passive recreational spaces, to provide greater future protection.

There are few streams and or rivers in the Township. However, portions of three branches flow through the northwest corner of Oshtemo.



**Watershed Areas**

While streams and rivers are few in the Oshtemo, the Township does serve six watershed areas. A watershed is an area of land that drains rain water and snow melt into streams, lakes, or wetlands. The groundwater, which is the drinking water for the Kalamazoo area, is connected to the surface water network of the watershed. Therefore, it is not only necessary to protect watershed areas for wildlife, but for future generations who will need this important resource. The two largest watershed areas in Oshtemo are the Averill Lake-Kalamazoo River and Hayden Creek-North Paw Paw River watersheds.



Proper name, specific term, or expression by which a particular geographic entity is known

- Averill Lake-Kalamazoo River
- Cambell Creek-North Branch Paw Paw River
- Hayden Creek-North Branch Paw Paw River
- Pine Creek
- Sand Creek
- West Fork Portage Creek

**Groundwater Recharge**

As stated, groundwater is the only source of drinking water in Kalamazoo County. Therefore, clean accessible groundwater is a critical quality of life indicator for the Township, particularly for those areas that do not have access to treated water through the City of Kalamazoo’s public system.

Groundwater recharge estimates, by section, were accessed from the U.S. Geological Survey Michigan Water Science Center by the W.E. Upjohn Center for the Study of GIS and Geographical Change. Due to sandy soils and high permeability, the Township generally has high annual groundwater recharge potential from 12-17 inches per year. Lower values are consistently found in the eastern part of the Township where development has increased the amount of impervious surface. While there are no specific standard cutoffs for when groundwater recharge should be protected, those areas with high annual recharge should be prioritized for possible conservation in the future.

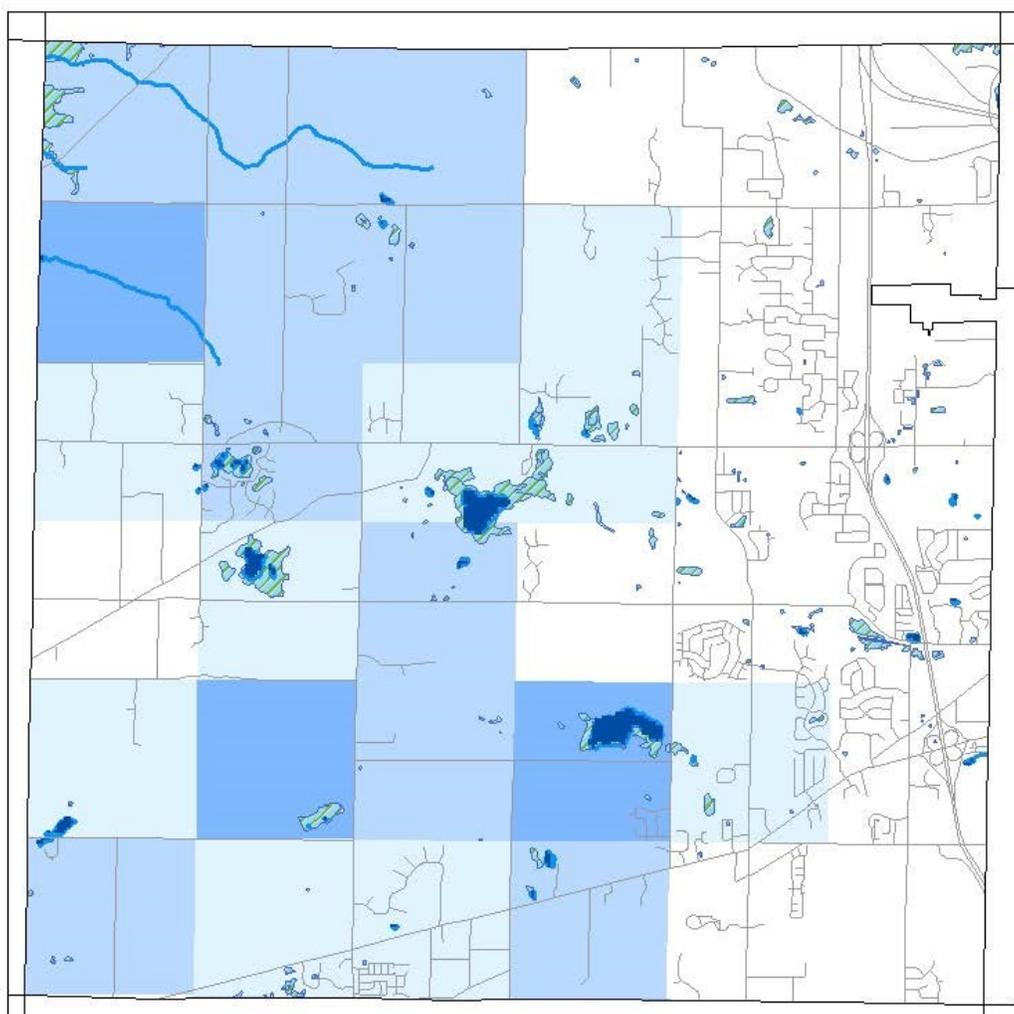
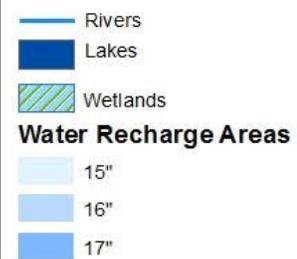


Figure 2. Hydrologic resources including water recharge, wetlands, lakes and river systems.



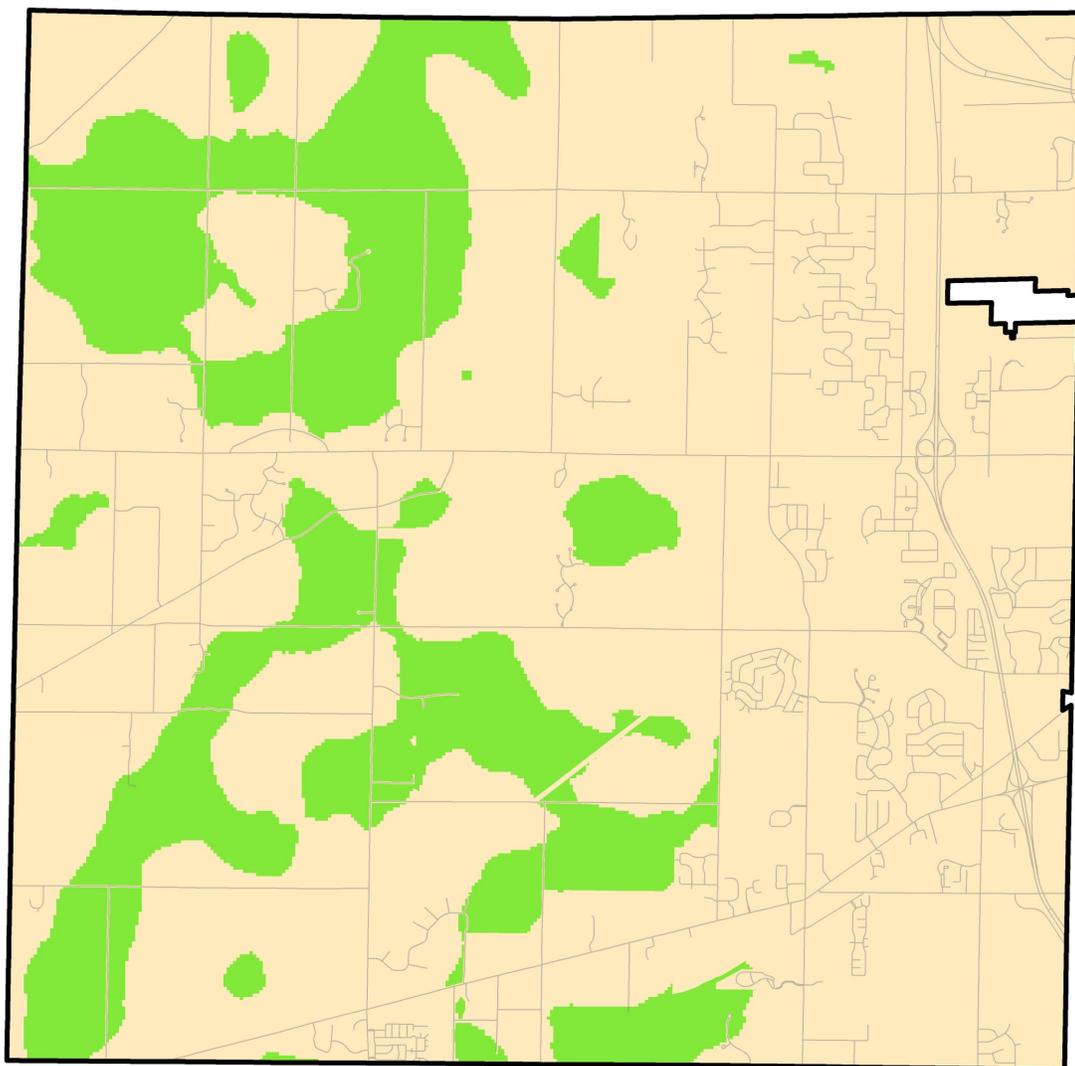
Kalamazoo\_NWI, EstimatedGWRecharge, KzooCARL, hydro\_raster

**Woodland and Vegetation Cover**

Another important natural feature in Oshtemo are the wooded and forested areas. Woodlands comprise over 33 percent of the total land area in Oshtemo and play an important role in species habitat, air quality, and recreation.

The W.E. Upjohn Center for the Study of GIS and Geographical Change at Western Michigan University utilized the National Land Cover Dataset to access information on land use and land cover at 30m resolution for Oshtemo. Areas with high forest cover were identified as critical for maintaining diversity of native species, integrity of fresh water resources, and contributing to the aesthetic quality of Oshtemo Township. High forest cover areas were described as those areas that are at least 65 percent forested at the quarter mile. It is important to note that quantifying high-density forest is an imprecise science and the Center created some general data layers to serve merely as indicators.

In both the rural and more developed areas of the Township, proximity to these woodlands should be considered an asset and preservation should be a priority. Recreational use of these woodlands – including hiking, biking, or simply natural areas – can become an amenity for development.



65%+ Forest Coverage within .25 Miles

Land Use

The Township has historically been a rural community, but continues to grow and develop with a variety of land uses, particularly east of 9<sup>th</sup> Street. The predominant land uses in Oshtemo are residential, agricultural open space, and increasingly commercial as the Township continues to become a major shopping and retail center in the western Kalamazoo region.

Single-family residential units are either located on larger parcels, often with acreage attached, or within platted subdivisions or similar site condominium developments. Generally, subdivisions are found east of 9th Street and are of a density that creates a neighborhood setting, often increasing the demand for park facilities and nonmotorized connections. In addition, nearly half of the housing units in the Township are in multi-family developments, most of which are located in large complexes. While many of these provide some recreational amenities to their tenants, there are likely other recreational needs to be addressed. In addition, multi-modal transportation opportunities are generally more in demand near multi-family developments.

In 2010, the Census reported a total of 10,336 housing units in the Township. This number increased by 655 units according to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey estimates. The Esri’s Housing Profile for Oshtemo Township shows these numbers to be even higher, as can be expected in a community with a growing population. Overall, demand for housing is on the rise, as evidenced by a decline in the housing vacancy rate from 8.9 percent in 2010 to 7.3 percent by 2021. This comparatively low vacancy rate (the State-wide vacancy rate is approximately 15 percent) also demonstrates a tightening housing market.

Category	2010		2016		2021	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	10,657	100%	10,936	100%	11,289	100%
<b>Vacant Housing Units</b>	949	8.9%	859	7.9%	824	7.3%

Source: Esri Housing Profile, 2016

The Township continues to experience an increase in commercial developments, particularly along West Main Street (M-43), Stadium Drive, and Drake Road. In addition, the industrial market has increased with new developments occurring along Stadium Drive and KL Avenue.

The majority of future growth will continue to be directed to the eastern portion of the Township, consistent with the Township Master Plan. As growth is inevitable, the Township must plan accordingly to ensure valuable natural features are protected, potential park development opportunities are capitalized upon, and nonmotorized transportation is integral to new development.

## Transportation

Township residents rely on the local and regional circulation networks to access Township destinations, parks, and other recreational facilities. The existing road system consists of an irregular grid network of roads. Portions of the Township are served by the City of Kalamazoo’s Metro, which provides a fixed route bus system for the Kalamazoo region. Additionally, the entire Township is served by the on-demand Metro County Connect service. To ensure that an integrated public transit system is provided at a county-wide level, the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority was formed in 2006 to work collaboratively with Metro Transit to provide quality public transportation alternatives to Township residents.

Oshtemo Township is served by several bus lines including: Route 14, West Main; Route 3, West Michigan; and Route 7, Alamo. Metro’s ten-year vision (adopted in 2015) includes a recommendation to convert two of these routes into “high frequency fixed routes,” which would operate at 15-minute intervals during the busiest travel times.

3 West Michigan		7 Alamo		14 West Main	
	M-S 6:00a to 9:55p		M-S 6:15a to 10:08p   M-F 6:45a to 6:08p		M-S 6:15a to 10:08p   M-S 6:45a to 5:38p
★ WMU Campus	:00	★ Rose, Bay 9	:15 :45	★ Rose, Bay 3	:15 :45
★ Village Apts.	:15	★ North/Douglas	:18 :48	★ W Main/Berkley	:18 :48
★ Maple Hill Mall	:30	★ Kal Central	:30 :00	★ Maple Hill Mall	:30 :00
★ W Main Mall	:35	★ Maple Hill Mall	:35 :05	★ Meijer	:37 :07
★ WMU Campus	:55	★ W Main Mall	:40 :10	★ Maple Hill Mall	:50 :20
Late Night Bus leaves WMU Campus M-F at 10:00 and 11:00 pm.		★ Kal Central	:50 :20	★ Rose, Bay 3	:08 :38
Sundays 8:15 am to 5:08 pm.		★ Fox Ridge	:55 :25	Late Night Bus leaves downtown M-F at 10:15 and 11:15 pm.	
Service to Westland Meadows at :30 M-Sun from 10:30a to 2:30p.		★ Rose, Bay 9	:08 :38	Sundays 8:15 am to 6:08 pm.	
		Late Night Bus leaves downtown M-F at 10:15 and 11:15 pm.		Service to Evergreen North at :03 and :30 M-Sun from 10:03a to 3:03p.	
		Sundays 8:15 am to 6:08 pm.			
		No :50 Kal Central service 9a-3p.			

The Township is fortunate to be served with a substantial regional transportation network, including US-131, M-43, and nearby I-94. The major east-west roads within the Township are M-43 (West Main Street) and Stadium Drive. The major north-south roads within the Township are US-131, Drake Road, 9th Street, and Van Kal Street. The system of roads in and near Oshtemo provides reasonably good access by automobile to recreation facilities in the Township and in surrounding communities. M-43, US-131, and I-94 provide connections to regional and state recreational facilities, as well as shopping and entertainment venues in Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, and Lake Michigan shoreline communities.

Access to destinations, parks, and recreation facilities can be difficult for certain segments of the population, primarily children and older adults. Existing recreation facilities are primarily located on busy roadways or in adjacent communities, which requires travel on rural roads or across major roads and highways. Efforts have been made recently to expand the bike lanes and nonmotorized pathways throughout the Township, but continued work is needed.

## PARKS INVENTORY

Information used in this inventory was collected from field work, internet research, aerial photography investigation, and analysis of parks and recreation plans of surrounding communities. Oshtemo Township operates four parks and three historic community buildings. It also owns one undeveloped property that may be developed for passive recreation at some point in the future.

Each of the parks and/or recreation facilities below are broken into categories based on type. These categories are suggested by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and are meant to aid in determining the primary purpose and uses of existing facilities in the Township. The table on the following page, Oshtemo Township Recreation Inventory, shows facilities owned and operated by Oshtemo Township, other facilities located within the Township that are operated by public entities and are generally open to the public, and private facilities that may meet the recreation needs of residents but may require membership or fees for use.

### Barrier-Free Accessibility

The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires all areas of public service, including parks and other recreation facilities, to have barrier-free accessibility. In accordance with the MDNR standards, Oshtemo facilities were evaluated based on a five-point system to determine if a person with any of the following criteria can safely and independently access and use the park or facility: has limited sight or is blind; uses a wheelchair; has a hearing impairment or is deaf; uses a walking aid; and/or has a mental impairment. The system is described below and the accessibility rankings for each park can be found in the Oshtemo Township Recreation Inventory table on the following page.

- Level 1. The park is not accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. The site includes little paved areas and the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.
- Level 2. The park is somewhat accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Either the parking area or pathways are paved, but not both. Many of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.
- Level 3. The park is mostly accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Most of the parking areas and pathways are paved, and some of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are accessible but may not be completely barrier-free.
- Level 4. The park is completely accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Parking areas and pathways are paved, and most of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are easily accessible.
- Level 5. The entire park was developed or renovated using the principles of universal design, a design approach which enables all environments to be usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, regardless of age, ability, or situation.

Oshtemo Township Recreation Inventory

Facilities	Acres	Accessibility Eval	Baseball/Softball	Basketball	Biking trail/path	Disc Golf Course	Dog Park	Football Field	Golf Course/Range	Hiking/Walking Trail	Nature Area/Garden	Pavilion	Picnic Facilities	Play Area	Roller Skating Rink	Soccer Field	Swimming Pool	Tennis	Wiffleball	Volleyball	Indoor Facility	Outdoor Facility	Combined Facility
<b>OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP FACILITIES</b>																							
Drake Farmstead	26	1									•												•
Flesher Field	24	3	•							•	•	2	•	•		•			2			•	•
Grange Hall Playground	2	4		•									•	•								•	
Oshtemo Township Park	70	3		2		•				•	•	2	•	•				2	•			•	•
<b>OTHER FACILITIES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC</b>																							
<b>Govt./Non-Profit</b>																							
Kal Haven Trail/KRVT	NA	3			2 mi.					2 mi.	•												•
Kal Haven Trail Head	5	3			•					•		•	•										•
Lillian And. Arboretum	140	2								Unkwn	•												•
Wolf Tree Nature Trails	69	1								1.5 mi.	•												•
<b>Public Schools</b>																							
Prairie Ridge Elementary	NA													2									•
West Hills Athletic Club	NA																					•	
<b>PRIVATE FACILITIES</b>																							
<b>Private Schools</b>																							
Heritage Christian	NA		•	•										•		•							•
Kalamazoo Christian	NA													•		•							•
<b>Churches</b>																							
Centerpoint Church	NA																					•	
Lighthouse Community	NA		•											•									•
Voyage Church	NA										•			•									•
W. Zoo Christian	NA																					•	
<b>Manufactured Home Communities</b>																							
Colonial Manor	NA																•						
Fountain Springs	NA													•			•						
Huntington Run	NA													•			•						
Woodland Estates	NA													•									
<b>Apartment Complexes</b>																							
Canterbury	NA																•						•
Danford Creek	NA																•						•
Mill Creek	NA																•						•
The Paddock	NA																•						•
The Wyatt	NA			•													•			•			•
58 West	NA									•			•				•			•			•
Summer Ridge	NA			•													•			•			•
<b>Other</b>																							
Golf Services Driving Range	NA								•														•
Meadow Run Dog Park	25					•				•	•												•
Prairies Golf Club	122								•														•
Ridgeview Golf Club	117								•														•
Rollerworld	NA														•							•	

## Township Managed Parks

### Grange Hall and Playground - Neighborhood Park and Community Building

- ⇒ The Grange Hall is a historic building located in the rural northwest quadrant of the Township on North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. It has ties to Oshtemo's agricultural heritage hosting the Grange Association and is a popular location for country and square-dancing sessions. The building was renovated in 2017 making it fully accessible, with an elevator to both levels and barrier-free restrooms. The site also contains a small new playground, picnic area, and basketball court, classifying it as a neighborhood park.
- ⇒ Accessibility Ranking: 4
- ⇒ Grant Information: The Grange Hall playground received improvements funded by a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Oshtemo Township park fund, and private donations.

### Flesher Field Park - Community Park

- ⇒ Flesher Field, located on 9<sup>th</sup> Street south of Stadium Drive, is a popular destination for field games, family gatherings, and special events. A key attraction of this 24-acre park is the large open sports field available for soccer, football, and other games. The newly upgraded park also features a playground, two picnic pavilions, two wiffleball fields, accessible restrooms, a 0.17-mile paved loop trail, and a gazebo and garden area.

In addition to the active recreation area, Flesher Field has 12 acres of woodlands west of the sports field. The woodlands feature a canopy of white oaks interspersed with red and black oaks and hickory trees that support many species of wildlife, especially birds and butterflies. Future plans call for continued forest management, invasive species control, and improvements to the informal walking trails located here.

- ⇒ Accessibility Ranking: 3
- ⇒ Grant Information: Park improvements were funded through a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund with financial support from the Oshtemo Township Rotary Club, the Consumers Sunburst Run, and Oshtemo Township park fund.

### Oshtemo Township Park - Community Park

- ⇒ This park measures roughly 70 acres and is located behind the Township Hall at West Main and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets. It features both an active recreation area and a hilly, wooded area for passive recreation. The park includes two paved loop trails, a playground, two picnic shelters, two tennis courts, two basketball courts, a wiffleball field, restroom building, and parking lot. One of the biggest draws is the 18-hole disc golf course that weaves through the wooded area of the park. Unpaved walking trails are also found in the wooded area with an overlook, which was constructed in 2012. Township Park has become extremely popular, attracting both visitors from within the Township and surrounding county.
- ⇒ Accessibility Ranking: 3
- ⇒ Grant Information: Park improvements were funded through a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund with financial support from the Oshtemo Township Rotary Club, the Consumers Sunburst Run, and Oshtemo Township park fund.

### **Drake Farmstead Park - Community Park and Historic Building**

⇒ Drake Farmstead Park is a 26-acre park currently under development at the eastern edge of the Township on Drake Road north of West Main Street. A master plan was developed with public input in 2015 that proposes new recreational uses for the property while preserving the historic character and rural atmosphere of the Farmstead.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the site contains an historic brick farmhouse that is being restored by volunteers with the Oshtemo Historical Society. Touring the restored farmhouse will allow visitors to better understand life in the early years of the Township.

Walking trails, a picnic shelter, interpretive signs, and a parking lot will be developed in 2019. A 1,200 square foot multi-purpose building will also be constructed in 2019. Built in the style of the former carriage barn, it will host year 'round recreation activities and educational programs focused on nature and local history. The building will also house the park's restrooms.

Park trails will traverse a variety of natural communities, from reconstructed prairie to savanna to managed woodlot. Future plans for the park include development of an event lawn for outdoor community events, a gazebo and garden area for concerts and small events, and an educational garden.

⇒ Accessibility Ranking: 1

⇒ Grant Information: 2019 park improvements will be funded through a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund with financial support from the Oshtemo Township Rotary Club and Oshtemo Township park fund. Funding for the multi-purpose carriage barn is from the Capital Campaign led by the Oshtemo Friends of the Park and Oshtemo Historical Society.

### **Undeveloped Township Parkland**

In addition to the developed park facilities, the Township also owns one vacant property that has the potential to be developed into an active and/or passive recreational facility. The former KL Avenue Landfill occupies 87-acres of land on KL Avenue, just east of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Currently, the area is divided into four parcels, of which the Township owns one 22.5-acre parcel. The remaining three parcels are owned by Kalamazoo County. Additionally, the Township owns a vacant 26-acre parcel directly to the west of the landfill site. Much potential exists for a partnership with Kalamazoo County to develop a park on the 113-acre site. If fully developed, this area could possibly function as a large urban or regional park for both Oshtemo and Kalamazoo County residents.

### **Additional Recreation Facilities**

Some of the recreational facilities provided in the Oshtemo Township Recreational Inventory table on page 15 include nonmotorized trails and nature preserves that offer passive recreational opportunities. While important to express the overall picture of recreational offerings in the Township, more detailed information about these facilities is included later in this report when detailing existing nonmotorized and conservation amenities in the Township. A brief overview of the remaining facilities is included below.

### **Public Schools**

Prairie Ridge Elementary is located on 9<sup>th</sup> Street just north of Stadium Drive and includes a playground with a myriad of outdoor play equipment designed for children aged five to eleven years old.

West Hills Athletic Club is owned and operated by Western Michigan University. While a university facility, anyone is able to become a member through an annual membership fee. The facility includes all of the physical fitness equipment expected, as well as an indoor track and indoor tennis courts.

### **Private Schools**

Kalamazoo Christian Elementary and Middle School is a private school located on South 12<sup>th</sup> Street south of Parkview Avenue. The school grounds currently house an outdoor play area and a soccer field. Heritage Christian Academy, located at the northeast corner of South 9th Street and Quail Run Drive, has a soccer field, baseball field, basketball court, and play area.

### **Private Facilities within Oshtemo**

There are a number of private recreation facilities within Oshtemo Township, from amenities offered by apartment providers to fitness facilities requiring membership. While these facilities do not publicly serve all citizens of Oshtemo Township, they assist with meeting the overall recreation needs of the community. Most of the private recreation facilities offered in the Township are outlined in the Oshtemo Township Recreation Inventory table.

### **Facilities within a half mile of Oshtemo Township**

Access to park and recreation facilities does not stop at jurisdictional borders. Residents of neighboring communities utilize Oshtemo facilities just as Oshtemo residents likely access adjacent amenities. To get a better picture of these facilities generally within walking distance for Oshtemo residents, the following amenities were reviewed:

#### *Frays Park—Mini/Neighborhood Park*

The park measures 11 acres and is located on Canterbury Avenue, east of Drake Road. Park amenities include play equipment, picnic facilities, tennis and volleyball courts, and an 880-foot running track.

#### *Asylum Lake Preserve—Regional Park*

The 274-acre Asylum Lake Preserve is located on the west side of the City of Kalamazoo and is owned by Western Michigan University. The lake and adjoining property are preserved as a passive recreation area under an agreement between WMU and the City of Kalamazoo. It provides a popular hiking, walking, and fishing area for residents. The preserve also serves as a research area for WMU students and faculty.

#### *Kalamazoo Community Soccer Complex*

This facility on Drake Road just to the east of the Township boundary contains 10 soccer fields and is home to six different soccer leagues. Restrooms and support facilities are provided as well.

#### *Linden Grove Middle School*

Linden Grove Middle School serves Kalamazoo and Oshtemo Township children and has outdoor tennis and basketball courts for active recreation.

#### *Kalamazoo Central High School*

Located within the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Central High School provides a number of recreational facilities like a football field, outdoor tennis courts, etc. It should be noted that these facilities are dedicated to school related programs.

**Additional Local/Regional Parks**

Many of the communities near Oshtemo have their own park facilities, and while not directly supported by Oshtemo residents, these parks are generally open for all Kalamazoo County residents to use and enjoy and are located within a short distance of the Township.

*Mayor's Riverfront Park (City of Kalamazoo)*

The park measures 380 acres and is located on Mills Street near downtown Kalamazoo. It offers basketball courts, a playground, pavilion and picnicking, paved trails along the Kalamazoo River, and a canoe launch.

*Bicentennial Park and Celery Flats (City of Portage)*

This 205-acre park is located along Portage Creek and contains 3.5 miles of multi-use trails, over eight miles of paths, canoeing, fishing, playgrounds, shelters and picnicking. The park also contains the Celery Flats Interpretative Center and historical area. Celery Flats highlights the heritage of celery farming in Portage and Kalamazoo County and includes four relocated structures as part of the historical area. The facilities are available to rent for events.

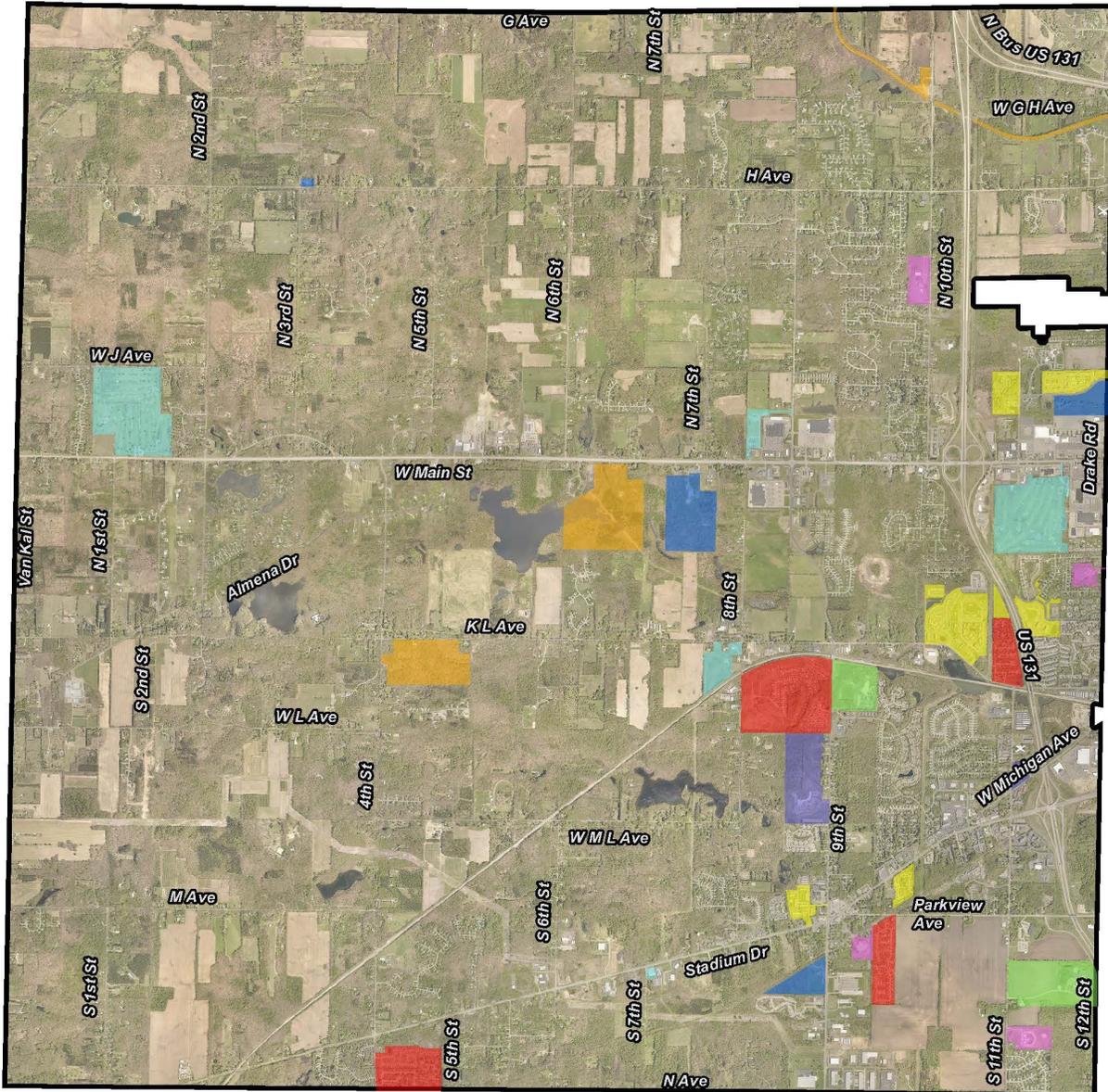
*Markin Glen Park (Kalamazoo County)*

Markin Glen Park straddles North Westnedge Avenue north of G Avenue in Cooper Township. Area residents can enjoy barrier-free access to 160 acres of woodlands, meadows, and lakeshore. Amenities include fishing, camping, a swimming beach, tennis courts, picnic facilities, and an extensive system of trails.

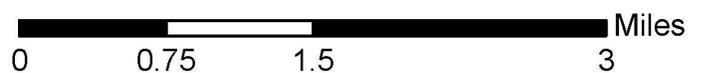
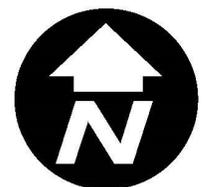
*Prairie View Park (Kalamazoo County)*

Located in Schoolcraft Township and owned by the County since 1960, Prairie View Park offers regional-scale amenities such as boat launches and a swimming beach on Hogset Lake. Multiple sports fields, playgrounds, picnic areas, and hiking trails round out the available facilities. A beach house with fireplace provides winter-time patrons with a warm place to gather.

# Oshtemo Charter Township All Recreational Facilities



- Apartment Complex
- Church
- Gov./Non-Profit
- Manufactured Home Community
- Private School
- Public School
- Township Facility
- Other



## NONMOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION INVENTORY

Currently, the Kalamazoo region has just over 250 miles of nonmotorized facilities, many of which are dedicated shoulders along primary roadways. The region has over 70 miles of off-road, shared use paths, like the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail (KRVT), the Eliason Nature Reserve Trail, and the trails through Portage Creek Park. Nearly 55 miles of bike lanes currently exist within the Kalamazoo communities according to the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS).

The Kal-Haven Trail/KRVT crosses Oshtemo at the northwest corner of the Township. This is an important asset for Oshtemo, as it connects residents to both the City of Kalamazoo and the wider Southwest Michigan region. The Kal-Haven Trail State Park is a 35-mile linear park that links the City of Kalamazoo with the City of South Haven. A trailhead is located off of North 10<sup>th</sup> Street, which is also the terminus for the KRVT. The trailhead includes a parking lot, pit-toilets, benches, and a train caboose that serves as a small office and visitor center. Once completed, the KVRT will connect Kalamazoo to the City of Battle Creek, providing continuous nonmotorized access from Battle Creek to the City of South Haven and Lake Michigan.

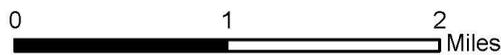
In Oshtemo Township, nonmotorized transportation has seen the most significant progress in planning and construction over the last ten years. The first nonmotorized plan for the Township was in 2005, when a feasibility study was completed. This study was enhanced in 2008 with additional nonmotorized information provided in the 2011 Township Master Plan. Finally, an update was completed in 2012, which was outlined as a strategic plan to help focus construction efforts.

Based on these plans, improvements have been made to the nonmotorized network of paved shoulders, sidewalks, and multi-use paths. A 10-foot shared use path was developed along West Main Street from 9<sup>th</sup> Street moving east to 10<sup>th</sup> Street where it connects to an existing sidewalk on the south side of the street to cross US-131. This sidewalk continues east down West Main Street through a large commercial and retail area of the Township, ultimately connecting with Drake Road and Kalamazoo Township.

Sidewalks also exist on Drake Road, north of West Main Street and Stadium Drive from approximately 9<sup>th</sup> Street east to 11<sup>th</sup> Street. A sidewalk is also found along the west side of 9<sup>th</sup> Street from Stadium Drive south to N Avenue. This sidewalk is located adjacent to Flesher Field, providing some connectivity to this important Township Park. Sidewalks can also be found intermittently within existing neighborhoods. The Subdivision/Site Condominium Ordinances was amended in recent years to require sidewalks within all new developments. Unfortunately, that leaves many existing neighborhoods without this important amenity for connectivity.

Finally, the Township has been working towards better bicycle connectivity by providing increased paved shoulders along primary roadways. West Main Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, and Stadium Drive are the primary roads where extended paved shoulders are available for nonmotorized transportation.

## Existing Nonmotorized Transportation Facilities



— Road Network

**Facility Type**

- Existing Paved Shoulder / Bike Lane
- Existing Shared Use Path
- Existing Sidewalk
- Kal-Haven Trail/Kalamazoo River Valley Trail

## CONSERVATION INVENTORY

The current inventory of conservation areas within the Township are comprised of either property owned by partner organizations or are deed restricted properties. The two most prominent and publicly accessible conserved parcels are the Lillian Anderson Arboretum owned and maintained by Kalamazoo College and the Wolf Tree Nature Trails preserve owned and maintained by the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy.

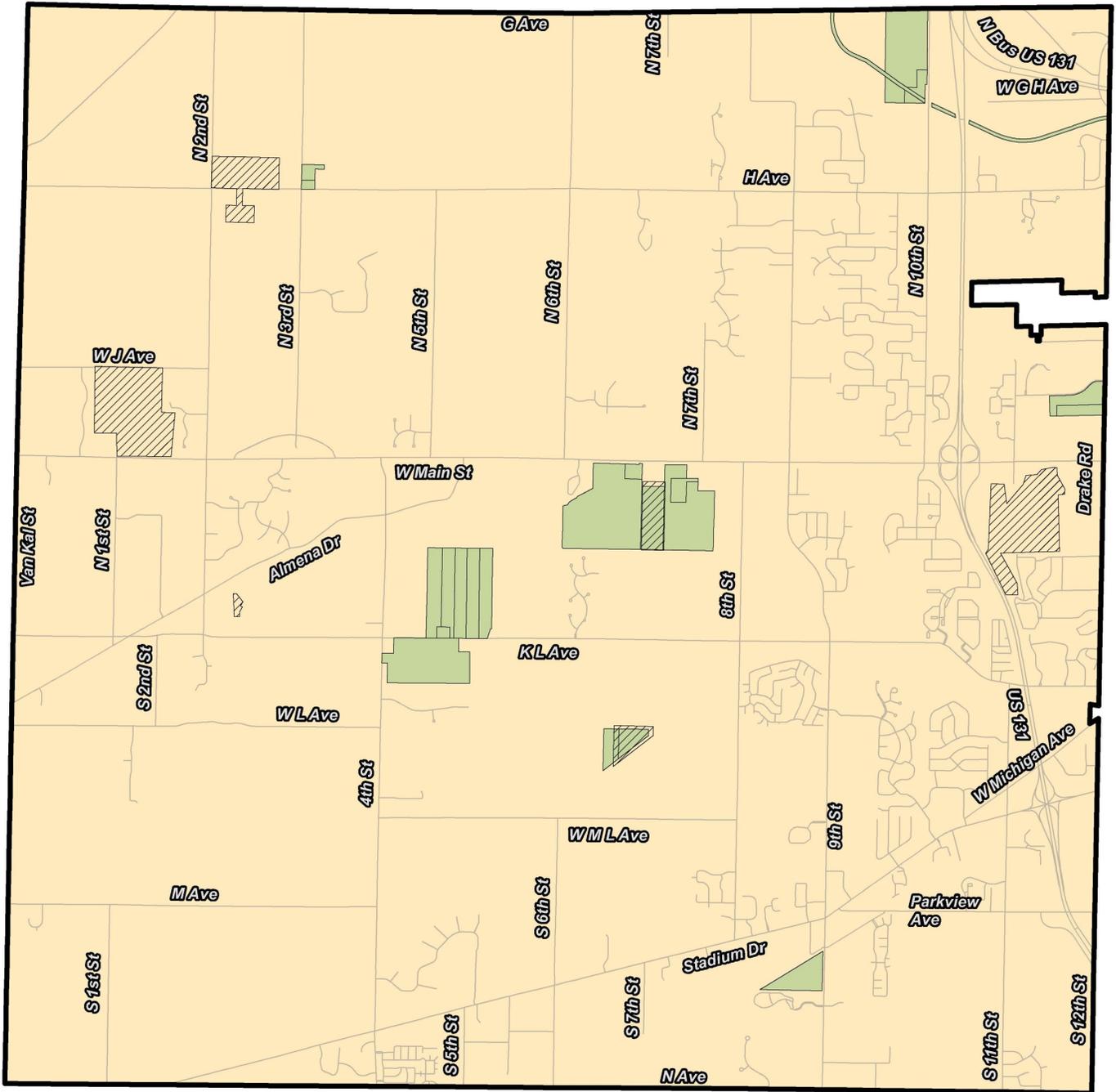
The Lillian Anderson Arboretum was established in 1998 and comprises 140 acres of marsh, meadow, pine plantation and second-growth deciduous forest. Its primary mission is to conserve the natural qualities of the property in which the Arboretum is located. In addition, Kalamazoo College utilizes the Arboretum for a myriad of university studies, community building, solitary contemplation, and passive recreation. The trails are open to the public for hiking/running in the summer and snow-shoeing/cross-country skiing in the winter. In addition, the Arboretum is located to the immediate west of Township Park where pedestrian trails connect to allow access to both properties.

The Wolf Tree Nature Trails is a fairly new addition to Oshtemo Township, with its acquisition by the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy in 2011 and public opening in 2016. The preserve is located at the southeast corner of 4<sup>th</sup> Street and KL Avenue and comprises 69 acres of land, which includes two ¾-mile passive recreation trails that wind through forest and meadows, providing scenic views of the Township.

In addition to the two dedicated preserves, there are a number of subdivisions or site condominiums within the Township that were developed under ordinances requiring the preservation of land. This means that at least 40 percent of the property included in the project has been dedicated as open space. Based on a review of the Townships GIS database, there are 12 subdivisions or site condominiums in the Township that developed as either open space communities or planned unit developments. Of these projects, almost 209 acres have been dedicated as undeveloped open space.

Finally, in 2017 the Township Board adopted a new Subdivision/Site Condominium Ordinance that included a Natural Features Protection District. The Township worked with the Western Michigan University W.E. Upjohn Center for GIS and Geographical Change to accurately locate natural features and existing protected areas that contribute to the quality of life and rural character of Oshtemo. The final report by the Center contributed to the development of the Natural Features Protection District, which will preserve up to 40 percent of a parcel located within the District if it is ever developed under the Subdivision/Site Condominium Ordinance. In addition, as properties develop the preserved land must attach to any neighboring open spaces, ultimately working towards a connected network of greenways throughout the Township.

### Conservation, Recreation and Environmentally Sensitive Lands



-  Kalamazoo CARL Listing
-  Other Environmentally Sensitive Property

## APPENDIX B: TRENDS AND NEEDS OVERVIEW

### OVERVIEW

Life is never static and the dynamic nature of developing trends, lifestyles, and growth of the Township’s population will affect future decisions for parks, recreation, nonmotorized transportation, and conservation. Evaluating current conditions against anticipated trends will help the Township keep pace with these expected changes. The following report outlines existing demographics for Oshtemo, as well as future trends related to population, households, lifestyle preferences, etc. The report also summarizes health trends for Kalamazoo County and other factors the GO! Green Oshtemo study groups considered important to the future development of parks, recreation, nonmotorized transportation, and land conservation.

### DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

#### Population Trends and Projections

Over the past 50 years, Oshtemo has transformed from a predominately agricultural community to a largely suburban township with a rapidly rising population. The population saw a 28 percent increase from 2000 to 2010, and a 4.6 percent increase from 2010 to 2017 according to the U.S. Census estimates. This increase is significant when considering this time period included the Great Recession, when almost no development occurred nationwide. Oshtemo kept pace with the County but more than doubled the State of Michigan’s growth rate.

Population Growth Trends: 2010-2017				
Unit of Government	2010	2016	2017	% Change 2010-2017
Oshtemo Township	21,705	22,468	22,710	4.6%
Kalamazoo County	250,327	258,605	263,113	5.1%
State of Michigan (millions)	9.88	9.90	10.1	2.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Population projections are also expected to be steady and strong. Projections from the 2011 Master Plan suggest that the Township’s population will continue to increase steadily, reaching more than 33,000 residents by the year 2040.

#### Household and Family Growth

An additional demographic data source, Esri’s Demographic and Income Profile, indicates that over the next five years, the number of citizens, households and families within the Township is expected to expand at an annual rate that is close to the national average. However, Oshtemo Township’s annual population, household and family growth rates are nearly triple those of the State of Michigan as a whole. This expected growth will result in continued demand for services and amenities like parks and nonmotorized transportation generally provided by local government.

Population, Household and Family Trends and Estimates			
Category	2010	2016	2021
Population	21,705	22,671	23,575
Households	9,708	10,077	10,465
Families	4,787	4,897	5,048

Source: Esri Demographic and Income Profile, 2016

Population, Household and Family Growth Rates			
Geography	2016—2021 Annual Growth Rate		
	Population	Households	Families
Oshtemo Township	0.79%	0.76%	0.61%
Michigan	0.23%	0.28%	0.16%
United States	0.84%	0.79%	0.72%

Source: Esri Demographic and Income Profile, 2016

### Population Density

While total population numbers are important to understanding continued growth of the Township, where that growth is occurring is equally as necessary to future planning efforts. As Oshtemo Township is both a suburban community of the City of Kalamazoo, as well as a rural Township, population density is not evenly distributed. As can be expected, the Oshtemo population becomes denser closer to the eastern Township boundary. Understanding the spatial distribution of population becomes particularly critical when considering where new parks and nonmotorized facilities should be placed. The greater the population density, the higher demand for services and amenities.



**Household Types and Size**

There are 10,178 total households in Oshtemo Township according to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey of the US Census. Of these households, approximately 22.7 percent have children 18 years of age or younger and 36.4 percent house persons 60 years of age or older. A little more than half of these households are considered “family households” by the US Census at 5,276. Family households are two or more people that are related by birth, marriage, or adoption and reside together. The average household size in Oshtemo is 2.18 persons.

**Generational Composition and Age Trends**

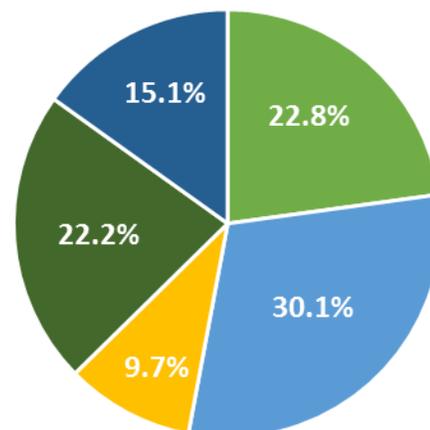
The planning efforts for the GO! Green Oshtemo Plan must respond to the services and amenities needed by the differing age groups in the Township. Therefore, it is important to identify the composition of local residents by age cohort. The graphic below shows the generational composition of Oshtemo Township as of 2010. The interesting trend found in the Township is the relatively small number in “Generation X.” At only 9.7 percent, this age cohort is often called the “lost generation” as it is sandwiched between the two mega-generations: “Baby Boomers” and “Generation Y.”

Two key generational trends are occurring at the national level. First, the Baby Boomer generation is aging. This is demonstrated by the growth in the age groups containing citizens 55 years and older. Within the U.S. between 2015 and 2060, the 55 to 64 age population will increase from 83 million to 97 million. During this same time, the 65+ age population will double from 48 million to 92 million. The 85+ age population will triple from 6 million to 18 million.

The Baby Boomer generation began reaching age 65 beginning in 2009; this plan recognizes that they, along with existing senior citizens (those already 65 or older), will represent a significant part of the population, larger than at any time in the past, and have unique needs regarding recreation, transportation, and other community services. As the population of the Township becomes generally older, issues that address an aging population need to be considered within this plan; for instance, improving access to park amenities and other destinations in Oshtemo.

**Oshtemo Township Generational Composition, 2010**

Generational Composition by Age
Generation Z: Less than 20 years old in 2010
Generation Y: Between 20 and 34 years old in 2010
Generation X: Between 35 and 44 years old in 2010
Baby Boomers: Between 45 and 64 years old in 2010
Veteran Generation: 65 and older in 2010



- Generation Z
- Generation Y
- Generation X
- Baby Boomers
- Veteran Generation

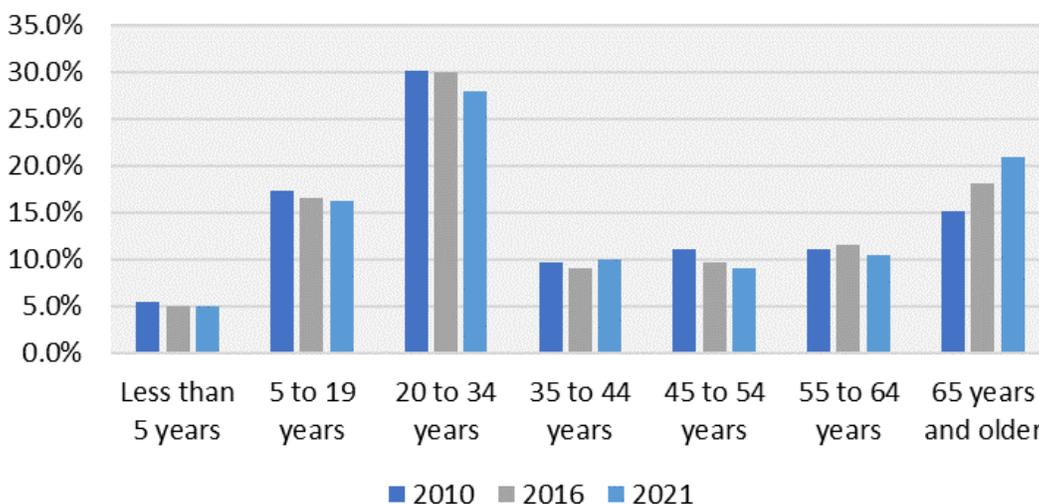
<sup>1</sup>Paragraph Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Projections Show a Slower Growing, Older, More Diverse Nation a Half Century from Now. U.S. Census Bureau, December 12, 2012.

A second key generational trend is the growth in Generation Y, which numbered 73 million in 2000, and will increase to 82 million by 2030. The growth in the U.S. population aged 20 to 29 alone will increase from approximately 38 million citizens to 44 million citizens over a 15-year span.<sup>1</sup>

For future planning purposes, age is an important statistic to ensure that facilities and programs are developed in a manner that is consistent with, and proportionate to, these characteristics; thus, a variety of offerings are necessary.

The graphic below illustrates the various age groups within Oshtemo Township and their changing composition (percentage) of the overall Township population as of 2010, 2016 and 2021. The only age group which grew as a percentage of the total population between 2010 and 2016, and which is also expected to grow through 2021, is the 65 years and older age group. (The 35 to 44 years age group declined between 2010 and 2016, but is expected to grow slightly through 2021.) The age group with the sharpest decline between 2010 and 2021 was the 20 to 34 years age group (2.1 percentage point decline). However, the 20 to 34 years age group still makes up the largest segment of the Township’s population. This could be attributed, in part, to the large amount of rental housing that caters to students. The 2012-2016 American Community Survey estimated that 3,868 residents of Oshtemo Township were enrolled in college or graduate school. The recreational and multi-modal transportation needs of the student-aged population need to be considered as the Township moves forward with goal setting and future development plans.

Oshtemo Township Age Group Trends and Estimates, 2010-2021



Median age trends and estimates also demonstrates an aging population. The Township’s median age increased from 32.3 years in 2010 to 33.6 years in 2016. The median age is expected to further increase to 35.6 years by 2021.

**Diversity**

Understanding the diversity of the Township population is important to the GO! Green Oshtemo effort to ensure future plans and programs provide both equitable treatment and opportunities to our changing demographics. To ensure future relevancy of amenities and services, an inclusive approach to policies and practices are needed.

At both the national and local level, trends point toward increasing population diversity. For the United States, the following statistics demonstrate changing demographics<sup>2</sup>:

- Minorities account for 37 percent of the U.S. population as of 2012.
- Minorities will account for 57 percent of the U.S. population by 2060.
- The Hispanic population will more than double, from 53 million in 2012 to 129 million by 2060.
- The U.S. will become a majority-minority nation for the first time in 2043.

Within Oshtemo Township, based on Esri’s Demographic and Income Profile, the white population will dip from 80 percent of the total population in 2010 to 76 percent in 2021, while minority races will all increase during the same time period.

**Persons with Disabilities**

This same consideration of inclusiveness is needed when considering accessibility. Understanding the status of persons with disabilities will assist in planning appropriate facilities and locations for existing and future recreational and nonmotorized transportation activities. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires that all public services, including parks, recreation facilities, and nonmotorized transportation be subject to barrier-free requirements. The Act also requires that public recreation providers eliminate any eligibility requirements for participation in programs, activities, and services.

As the population ages, the proportion of persons with one or more disabilities steadily increases. This trend is consistent with the figures indicated for Oshtemo Township. According to the 2012 – 2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2,996 or 13.3 percent of the residents in Oshtemo have a disability. Of those under 18 years of age, 8.68 percent or 227 persons have a disability while just over 60 percent of those 65 and older have some type of disability measured by the U.S. Census.

Population by Age and Disability			
Age	Total Population	With Disability	% Disabled
Under 5 years	1,327	0	0.00%
5 to 17 years	2,616	227	8.68%
18 to 34 years	7,191	299	4.16%
35 to 64 years	7,370	1,021	13.85%
65 to 74 years	1,903	351	18.44%
75 years and over	1,820	1,098	60.33%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

<sup>2</sup>Paragraph Source: Projections of the Population by Selected Age Groups and Sex for the United States: 2015 to 2060. U.S. Census Bureau, December 2012.

The information in the table below is broken down to show the various disability types, as measured and determined by the Census, present in the Township. From a facility design standpoint, all are important. The principles of Universal Design are based on the principles of providing spaces that can be accessed and enjoyed by everyone. The inventory of facilities in the Township will provide an analysis of accessibility

Disability Type by Age						
Age Group	Hearing Difficulty	Vision Difficulty	Cognitive Difficulty	Ambulatory Difficulty	Self Care Difficulty	Independent Living Difficulty
Under 18	22	0	205	0	0	0
18 to 34	0	18	175	85	14	60
35 to 64	286	109	519	560	293	445
Over 64	787	337	337	985	390	755

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

### Lifestyle Trends

Various commercial data services, including Esri, provide demographic analyses which identify certain lifestyle characteristics from traditional demographic data. These analyses go beyond income, age, and employment and assess the lifestyle characteristics of populations and address subjects like housing type preferences, spending habits, leisure preferences, and family associations. Esri’s Tapestry Segmentation is a geodemographic system that identifies 68 distinctive markets in the U.S. based on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics to provide an accurate, comprehensive profile of U.S. consumers. Of the 68 tapestry segments within the United States, six are found in Oshtemo Township, the largest segment being the College Town segment, followed by Retirement Communities and Green Acres. As developed by Esri, a detailed “profile” for each of the six tapestry segments found within Oshtemo Township is included at the end of this Appendix.

Oshtemo Lifestyle Tapestry	
Tapestry Segment	2016
College Towns	37.3%
Retirement Communities	17.0%
Green Acres	13.5%
Exurbanites	10.8%
Middleburg	10.7%
Old and Newcomers	10.7%
Totals	100.0%

Source: Esri Tapestry Segmentation Area Profile, 2016

## Who Are We?

### Top 3 Community Tapestry Segments in Oshtemo Township

**College Towns:** About half the residents of College Towns are enrolled in college, while the rest work for a college or the services that support it. Students have busy schedules, but make time between studying and part-time jobs for socializing and sports. Students that are new to managing their own finances tend to make impulse buys and splurge on the latest fashions. This digitally engaged group uses computers and cell phones for all aspects of life including shopping, school work, news, social media, and entertainment. College Towns are all about new experiences, and residents seek out variety and adventure in their lives.



**Retirement Communities:** Retirement Communities neighborhoods are evenly distributed across the country. They combine single-family homes and independent living with apartments, assisted living, and continuous care nursing facilities. Over half of the housing units are in multi unit structures, and the majority of residents have a lease. This group enjoys watching cable TV and stays up-to-date with newspapers and magazines. Residents take pride in fiscal responsibility and keep a close eye on their finances. Although income and net worth are well below national averages, residents enjoy going to the theater, golfing, and taking vacations. While some residents enjoy cooking, many have paid their dues in the kitchen and would rather dine out.



**Green Acres:** The Green Acres lifestyle features country living and self-reliance. They are avid do-it-yourselfers, maintaining and remodeling their homes, with all the necessary power tools to accomplish the jobs. Gardening, especially growing vegetables, is also a priority, again with the right tools, tillers, tractors, and riding mowers. Outdoor living also features a variety of sports: hunting and fishing, motorcycling, hiking and camping, and even golf. Self-described conservatives, residents of Green Acres remain pessimistic about the near future yet are heavily invested in it.



Content and Imagery Source: Esri Tapestry Segmentation Profile

## HEALTH TRENDS

The health statistics and trends outlined in this report are from organizations that provide information on a county level. Data at the township level was not available. However, the county statistics can still provide a clear picture of the likely health trends occurring in Oshtemo.

### Access to Exercise

According to the County Health Ranking and Roadmaps Program, which is a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, approximately 85 percent of the Kalamazoo County population has access to exercise. This indicator is defined as the percentage of individuals who live reasonably close to a location for physical activity (parks or other recreational facilities like YMCA's, gyms, etc.). The County is keeping pace with the State of Michigan, where 86 percent of the population has adequate access to a location that offers physical activities. In addition, the County ranks 26 out of the 83 Michigan counties.

While access to locations that provide exercise is critical, actually utilizing the facilities is the next step. According to the 2012-2014 statistics from the Michigan Department of Community Health, 22 percent of Kalamazoo County adults do not engage in any physical activity.

### Health Risks

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), approximately 39.8 percent of Americans in 2016 were considered obese. This number has increased by almost 10 percent since 2000. Obesity-related conditions include heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancers, which are some of the leading causes of preventable death. The CDC indicates that in 2008, \$147 billion was the estimated annual medical costs of obesity in the United States.

In Kalamazoo County, 65 percent of the population is either considered overweight (body mass index of 25.0 to 29.9) or obese (body mass index 30.0 or higher) per statistics gathered by the Michigan Department of Community Health between 2012 and 2014. This percentage is identical to the statistics reported for the United States during this same time period. In addition, 12 percent of Kalamazoo County residents have been diagnosed with diabetes. Finally, the number one cause of death in Kalamazoo County is heart disease.

## DESTINATIONS

When determining the placement of possible new parks, the development of the wider nonmotorized transportation network, and feasible locations for conservation of land, the important destinations in and around Oshtemo Township need to be considered. Many of these destinations were outlined in the Existing Inventory Appendix, but they warrant further review when contemplating the current and future needs of Oshtemo residents.

From a nonmotorized connectivity standpoint, ensuring facilities link residential neighborhoods to the major commercial centers in the Township is key. Utilizing primary roadways and possible off-road trails to connect the wider residential community to the West Main Street commercial corridor, the Oshtemo Village, and surrounding commercial businesses on Stadium Drive will be critical for accessible and multi-modal travel. In addition, connections to governmental facilities like the United States Post Office, Oshtemo Branch Library, Oshtemo Township Hall, and the Township Community Center must be considered. Finally, connections to other recreational opportunities like the Oshtemo Township parks, Kal-Haven and Kalamazoo River Valley Trails, Lillian Anderson Arboretum, and Wolf Tree Nature Trail preserve are important. These preserves will also be critical when considering future conservation efforts.

The Destinations Map provides a listing of some of the important destination venues within and around the Township.

Destinations Map—Still under development.

**PARK FACILITIES ANALYSIS**

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) provides recommended guidelines for understanding the number of parks and recreational facilities which might be needed based on a community’s population. Comparing the Township’s existing amenities against these recommended guidelines assists Township officials to determine possible future needs. It is important to note that the Township cannot meet all recreation needs. Therefore, an understanding of other local facilities owned and maintained by partner organizations or private entities helps to fill those possible recreation “gaps.” A full analysis of existing parks and facilities in the Township is provided in the tables below based on a 2017 population estimate of 22,710 persons.

This first table offers an overview of the MDNR guidelines on the total number of parks and park acreage a community should have based on population. As can be seen, the Township has a deficiency in neighborhood parks of approximately 3 to 7 parks totaling 43 additional acres. While the Township meets the minimum number for recommended parks under the Community Park category, the DNR guidelines suggest more acreage may be needed.

MDNR Guidelines for Recommended Number of Parks and Park Acreage based on Township Population		
	Neighborhood Park (5 - 10 acres)	Community Park (30 - 50 acres)
Recommended Park Acres/1,000 Population	2 acres	5 to 8 acres
Recommended Number of Parks for Oshtemo	4 to 8 parks	3 to 6 parks
Recommended Park Acreage for Oshtemo	Approximately 45 acres	Approximately 181 acres
Existing Number of Township Parks	1 park	3 parks
Existing Township Park Acres	2 acres	120 acres
Deficiency in Number of Parks	3 to 7 parks	0 to 3 parks
Deficiency in Park Acres	Approximately 43 acres	Approximately 61 acres

\*Township population of 22,710

In addition to number of parks and acreage, the MDNR also provides guidelines for recreational facilities. The Facilities Comparison table provides the recommended number of facilities needed in the Township and the surplus or deficiency of facilities.

The column labeled "Township Owned" identifies facilities and amenities provided within parks operated by the Township. The column labeled "Local Facility" identifies services and amenities provided by other entities that are generally open to the public. This information is included to demonstrate that while certain amenities may not be provided by the Township, the need is being fulfilled within the larger community by other providers. Some of these facilities may be located just outside the Township and therefore serve a wider population than Oshtemo. Therefore, the surpluses may not be as great as demonstrated.

MDNR Facilities Standards Comparison							
Within Oshtemo Township and Within 1/2 Mile of the Township							
Activity/Facility	Service Radius	No. of Units per Population	Suggested No. based on Oshtemo Population	No. of Township Owned	No. of other Local Facilities	Township Deficiency	Total Deficiency
Basketball	1/4 - 1/2 mile	1 per 5,000	5	2	4	3	0
Tennis	1/4 - 1/2 mile	1 court per 2,000	11	2	8	9	1
Soccer	1 - 2 miles	1 per 10,000	2	1	11	1	0
Local Walking Paths	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	7	0	0
Baseball	1/4 - 1/2 mile	1 per 5,000	5	0	2	5	3
Football	15 - 30 minutes travel time	1 per 20,000	1	0	1	1	0
Volleyball	1/2 - 1 mile	1 court per 5,000	5	0	1	5	4
Regional Multi-Use Trails	N/A	1 system per region	1	0	1	1	0
1/4-Mile Running Track	15 - 30 minutes travel time	1 per 20,000	1	0	1	1	0
Swimming Pool	15 - 30 minutes travel time	1 per 20,000 (accommodate 3 to 5% of population)	1	0	1	1	0
Handball	15 - 30 minutes travel time	1 per 20,000	1	0	0	1	1
Field Hockey	15 - 30 minutes travel time	1 per 20,000	1	0	0	1	1
Badminton	1/4 - 1/2 mile	1 per 5,000	5	0	0	5	5
Golf Driving Range	30 minutes travel time	1 per 50,000	0	0	1	0	0
Ice Hockey	1/2 - 1 hour travel time	1 per 100,000	0	0	0	0	0
Archery Range	30 minutes travel time	1 per 50,000	0	0	0	0	0
Skeet/Trap Field (8 Station)	30 minutes travel time	1 per 50,000	0	0	0	0	0
Golf							
Par 3 (18-hole)	1/2 - 1 hour travel time	—	Unknown	0	0	0	0
9-hole Standard		1/25,000	0	0	0	0	0
18 hole Standard		1/50,000	0	0	2	0	0
Beach Areas	1/2 - 1 hour travel time	N/A	0	0	0	0	0

## Level-of-Service Trends

Level-of-service (LOS) standards are measures of the minimum amount of a public facility or service which must be provided to meet that community's basic needs and expectations. For example, a community may set a standard for how many park acres are needed per 1,000 population. However, every community is different and there is no “one-size-fits-all” LOS standard. But, by adopting LOS standards, a community says that all residents, regardless if they pay taxes or use the park and recreation facilities, have equal opportunity to share in the basic services in the standard.

With that said, there are tools provided by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) that allow communities to evaluate themselves against similar jurisdictions they view as peers. Each year, the NRPA develops the Park and Recreation Performance Benchmarks to provide some general national standards and to provide local communities with information for comparison. However, this comparison should be tempered with an understanding of Oshtemo's specific needs to help identify the most optimal parks and recreation program for our community.

The 2018 NRPA report contains data from 1,069 park and recreation agencies across the United States as reported between 2015 and 2017. These agencies range from very large cities with robust park and recreation departments to small villages. According to NRPA, the average parks agency has the following metrics:

- Has 10.1 acres of park land per 1,000 residents
- Spends \$78.26 in operating expenditures per capita
- Employs 7.9 staff members per 10,000 residents
- Recovers 28 percent of operating expenditures through revenue generation
- Has 1 park for every 2,114 residents

The 2017 American Community Survey indicates Oshtemo Township's current population is 22,710 persons. When comparing to the national metrics provided by the NRPA, the Township has the following statistics:

- Has 5.4 acres of park land per 1,000 residents (includes Drake Farmstead, Grange Hall Playground, Flesher Field, and Township Park for a total of 122.4 acres)
- Spends \$5.18 in operating expenditures per capita (this is based on a four-year average of \$117,347 in operating expenditures – actual expenditures for 2015 – 2017 and the current 2018 budget)
- Employs 1.1 staff members per 10,000 residents (Parks Director and a percent of maintenance staff time)
- Recovers 24 percent of operating expenditures through revenue generation (rental fees and interest earned – does not include grants or general fund monies)
- Has 1 park for every 5,668 residents

Once a community establishes LOS, it is used to measure whether existing standards are adequate to serve its citizens, or whether there are deficiencies that should be corrected. They also serve as yardsticks to measure whether existing capacity is adequate to handle new development, or to determine what improvements will be required to avoid overloading existing facilities and services. As the community grows, LOS can help to assure that facilities and services will keep pace with that growth.

There are a multitude of ways to consider LOS. Below are a handful of examples:

- Acres of parkland per resident
- Distance of residents from parks (example - every resident within 1 mile of park)
- Township budget for parks per capita
- Establishment of parks based on population density (example – 1 acre of parkland for every acre with a population density of 40 residents per acre)
- Establishment of parks based on residential development density (example – 1 acre of parkland for every 10 acres of land with a density of 6 dwelling units or more)
- Distance of residents from parks in areas over a certain density (example – parks will be within a ½ mile distance from every resident located in an area with a population density of 40 residents per acre)
- A LOS that only addresses certain types of parks (example – the Township already has three “community parks” so develop a LOS that focuses on “mini- and neighborhood parks.”)

As part of the analysis for the *GO! Green Oshtemo Plan*, the Parks and Recreation Study Group reviewed a LOS based on budget per capita. Their reasoning for this recommendation is based on the clear development and population density patterns found in our community. Both existing development and the Township’s Future Land Use Plan provide a distinct demarcation in development at around 8<sup>th</sup> Street, with nonresidential development and higher density residential patterns to the east. Because of this difference, none of the other suggested LOS seemed to work for Oshtemo.

If the LOS was based on population or residential density, all facilities would be concentrated towards the east side of the Township. If it was based just on parkland per resident, the east side could be underserved. Determining a LOS on distance to a park would not work because of the large parcel development pattern on the west side. In addition, facilities like trails, greenways, conservation areas, etc. would be difficult to include in these LOS standards.

The Study Group reviewed operating budget per capita for neighboring Townships and found the following for 2018 budgets:

- Oshtemo Township - \$118,483 operating budget / 22,710 population = \$5.21 per capita
- Kalamazoo Township - \$14,650 operating budget / 22,445 population = \$0.65 per capita
- Comstock Township - \$242,500 operating budget / 15,336 population = \$15.81 per capita
- Texas Township - \$69,000 operating budget / 16,105 population = \$4.28 per capita

The operating budget for these communities was gathered from data provided on their websites. It should also be noted that each of these communities has very different park and recreation facilities. Comstock Township has a large softball complex and a lake park, while Kalamazoo Township has a number of small mini or neighborhood parks at two acres or less.

When reviewing Oshtemo’s budget for both operating and capital expenditures averaged over four years (2015 – 2017 actuals and 2018 budget), the following total is calculated:

Total Parks Budget = \$421,467 / 22,671 population = \$18.60 per capita

At this time, a LOS related to budget per capita has not been established. However, the Township Board has indicated an interest in continuing to evaluate the Parks Department per capita budget as Oshtemo’s population inevitably grows.

## DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE

According to the 2011 Township Master Plan, approximately 9,625 acres or 41.37 percent of the Township has been developed with both residential and nonresidential uses. Since that time, Planning Department staff estimate an additional 309 undeveloped acres were added to the total to reach approximately 9,934 acres or 43 percent. This total was derived by analyzing site plan review and plat review applications since 2010.

Of these newly developed acres, approximately 141 were for new residential construction, both single-family and multi-family projects. Around 575 new housing units were built in Oshtemo since 2010 according to the US Census 2016 5-Year Estimates. Based on the data provided by the Township Assessor from the building permit database, roughly 301 of these units were single-family residential. It is unclear how many of these 301 permits were constructed as part of the new 141 acres of subdivision and site condominium developments noted above or were single builds on large parcels within the Township.

Roughly 168 undeveloped acres were converted to nonresidential uses since 2010. Based on information from the 2011 Master Plan, 866 acres were dedicated to commercial/industrial uses. This increase since 2010 raises that number to approximately 1,034 acres devoted to nonresidential uses. Site plans and building permits have certainly increased in the Township since the economic recovery of the Great Recession. In 2010, only three development applications were submitted to the Township and of those, only one was for new construction. By October of 2018, 28 applications were submitted to the Township. Seven of those applications were for brand new construction and 10 were for redevelopment or expansion of existing buildings.

Development pressure is the primary threat to wildlife habitats in Oshtemo, as well as the rural character found in the western half of the Township. Conservation of these lands through deed restrictions, ordinance requirements, acquisition, or donation is key to protecting these lands from further conversion.



## APPENDIX C: PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

### OVERVIEW

The public process for the development of the *GO! Green Oshtemo Plan* was designed to follow both the legislative requirements for master plan adoption and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources local adoption process. This would allow the final document to be incorporated into the Township's overall Master Plan, as well as ensuring eligibility for possible recreation grant consideration in the future.

Public participation played an integral role in the *GO! Green Oshtemo* planning process, including study groups, open houses, an online survey, and the public hearings for adoption. The information below provides a summary of the meetings and public input received throughout the months of planning for *GO! Green Oshtemo*.

### KICK-OFF MEETING

The first public meeting held in March of 2018 provided an overview of existing conditions in the Township related to parks, recreation, nonmotorized transportation, and conservation. Existing plans, ordinances, and Township policies were discussed. But, much of the kick-off meeting was designed to hear from the participants and their desires for these important amenities. The following outlines some of the comments heard at that meeting:

#### Nonmotorized Transportation

- Needed on 9th Street (from KL to Main) & needed on KL Avenue (from 9<sup>th</sup> to apartments).
- Oshtemo plans should connect with the KATS "Map 7" plan.
- Provide connections to Kal-Haven Trail and to Grange Hall.
- Utility corridors – Use & connect w/neighbors through existing or planned utility corridors.
- Current Plan is rectilinear (and along existing roads). Natural features follow different boundaries. The system for non-motorized should consider natural features too.
- Where sewer is installed between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> on KL Ave– new stretch works well for bike lane/bicyclists.
- Destinations for non-motorized include: Fish Hatchery, Wolf Tree Preserve, and the KRVT.
- Coordinate non-motorized projects with sanitary road construction projects.
- How to cross M43, West of 9th St.? This is a problem.
- Think about functional requirements of non-motorized users
- Road shoulders- are they safe enough?

#### Parks and Recreation

- Current park facilities are good.
- They are lovely in Spring and Fall.
- Parks need Winter options for recreation, such as cross-country skiing.
- Drake Farmstead – Good location for new park activities.
- More playground at Grange Hall is needed.
- Add electric vehicle charge option at parks, especially Flesher Field.
- Is there a park re-use plan for KL Landfill?
- Water features would add community benefit.
- Maximize number of shelters in the parks.
- Use solar panels for power in the parks.
- The diversity of activities at Township Park is good.
- Provide an all-weather shelter in one of the township parks?
- Provide more tennis/pickle ball courts.

- Provide more basketball courts.
- Add more parks – large and neighborhood parks, and provide passive recreation: (picnic & trails), and active recreation (areas for football, soccer) and less mowed areas to save on maintenance dollars.
- The County property south of landfill on KL Ave is an opportunity for conservation.

### Greenways/Conservation

- What is happening with natural features conservation on the East side of Oshtemo Township?
- Use GIS as a tool with overlays (will enhance discussion).
- Greenways will provide a “perk” for neighborhoods.
- There should be protection of natural features (woods, etc.) on East side of township.
- Use buffer zones along sensitive areas (example; given that such buffer resulted in an increase in land values).
- What impact on property owners will greenways have? (Cost, land value, etc.). This question needs more vetting.
- Can the powerline be used for greenway corridor?
- Likely to result in greater property value on greenbelts (if connected to something).
- Provide trail ways everywhere? Or conserve some corridors for wildlife only?
- There is value in preserving wildlife corridors.

### STUDY GROUPS

During the kick-off meeting, participants were asked to volunteer for one of three study groups convened for the *GO!* Green Oshtemo planning effort, one for each focus of the plan. The study groups included interested residents; Township Board, Parks Committee, and Planning Commission members; and staff. The groups generally met monthly to discuss the public process, review research conducted by staff, provide input on the goals, action strategies, and intended outcomes of the Plan.

### Open Houses

Two *GO!* Green Oshtemo open houses were held on June 6<sup>th</sup> and August 2<sup>nd</sup> in order to gauge public opinion on parks and recreation, nonmotorized transportation, and conservation. The open houses were advertised via Township Newsletter, email, Facebook, and Nextdoor. Public input was given via informational stations at the open house and through emails and phone calls before and after the event. Oshtemo residents in attendance participated in survey activities that allowed them to share their input on all elements of the plan, and plan process.

The first open house was designed to receive input on the draft maps created for the three differing amenities, as well as ranking of facilities within the parks. The main themes generated from the meeting in no particular order included:

- Provide more hiking/walking paths/trails.
- Protect natural features in the Township from encroachment and development.
- Ensure connectivity of neighborhoods and Township destinations through nonmotorized facilities.
- Access to nature/outdoors should be promoted.
- Safety of pedestrians and bicyclists is paramount.

The second open house was intended to gather community input on the goals and action strategies of the Plan. Comments were provided on the nonmotorized transportation and conservation goals, assisting with some refinement of these action strategies.

## SURVEY

During the kick-off meeting and for a month after in an online format, the Township requested residents complete a survey with questions related to parks, nonmotorized transportation, and conservation. Over 200 citizens responded to the survey, providing important insight into resident desires.

## PUBLIC REVIEW AND HEARINGS

The plan was made available for public comment from October 23, 2018 through final adoption. A digital copy of the plan was posted on the Township website and e-mailed to a broad audience, including public meeting attendees, neighboring jurisdictions, and Township boards and officials. A hard copy of the plan was made available at the Township Hall.

**Include any public comment here.**

Finally, an adoption process was designed to allow for three public hearings, providing the residents of Oshtemo opportunities to weigh in on the draft plan. Public hearings were held in **November of 2018, January of 2019, and the final hearing was held by the Township Board in February of 2019.**

## APPENDIX D: PARKS AND RECREATION ACTION PLAN

### Goals

The following goals are specific to the development, maintenance, and operation of the existing parks in the Township, as well as the acquisition and improvement of new parks. These are long range goals, many of which will require more time than the 5-years allotted to this plan to achieve. It is the intent of the Township to continually work towards realizing this future vision.

#### **GOAL: Acquisition**

Explore land acquisition opportunities to develop new parks.

#### Action Strategies:

- A. Focus land acquisition efforts for parks in the urbanized area of the Township.
- B. Concentrate acquisition efforts on the development of neighborhood or mini-parks, with an acreage size between one and ten acres.
- C. As the Township continues to develop, provide for future park development and more uniform distribution of facilities, in terms of both geography and population.
- D. Work towards ensuring that the majority of Oshtemo residents within the urbanized area of the Township are within ½ mile of a park.

#### **GOAL: Accessibility and Diversity**

Provide a diversity of recreational opportunities, both active and passive, that meet the needs of the Oshtemo Community.

#### Action Strategies:

- A. Incorporate amenities and facilities missing in Township parks or identified as a priority by the community such as walking/biking paths, basketball courts, pickleball courts, and a spray park.
- B. Maintain a logical balance between active and passive pursuits in the parks, to address the recreation needs of all users.
- C. Seek citizen input when designing park and recreation facilities and programs, especially from children and families when designing playgrounds and youth-oriented recreation facilities and from seniors to address the specific needs of the aging population.
- D. Coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions to provide a wider diversity of recreation opportunities that help to meet the needs of Oshtemo residents.
- E. Explore opportunities, such as updating Township ordinances, to require developers to provide private recreation facilities within new developments.

**GOAL: Exceptional Park Experience**

Deliver an exceptional park user experience through proper maintenance and continuous improvements, recognizing that our parks are a source of community pride.

**Action Strategies:**

- A. Annually assess and update the Long-Term Capital Maintenance Forecast to assist with projecting recreational facility replacement and operational needs.
- B. Continue to evaluate improvements needed to enhance universal access that provide equal levels of experiences for all age groups and abilities and their specific recreational needs.
- C. Review the Township's park rules and policies and routinely seek public input and feedback on ways they might be improved.
- D. Develop a system to encourage park users to report maintenance issues and other concerns.
- E. Explore opportunities to establish a greater staff presence in the parks during busy times, to enforce park rules, ensure a welcoming environment, and increase safety.
- F. Consider ways to simplify and improve the reservation system and web-based interactions.
- G. Continue to repair and renew facilities at existing parks, such as the disc golf course at Township Park, which is heavily used and showing signs of deterioration.
- H. Continue to restore and maintain the unique historic amenities like the Drake Farmstead, Community Center, Grange Hall, etc. that are managed by the Parks Department.
- I. Explore nature-based play opportunities where children can engage with the natural environment.
- J. Pursue opportunities to bring art into the parks.

**GOAL: Environmental Stewardship**

Foster environmental stewardship through the preservation of important natural features and sustainable design practices within parks, supporting efforts to make Oshtemo a leader in environmental conservation.

**Action Strategies**

- A. Develop programs for the "greening" and naturalization of the parks and facilities through improvements such as:
  - field maintenance;
  - reestablishment of native trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers;
  - storm water improvements;
  - lighting upgrades; and,
  - energy audits.
- B. Preserve natural features during design and development of park sites to the maximum extent feasible, in consideration of the type of park planned.
- C. Collaborate with adjoining property owners to coordinate environmental stewardship efforts in areas such as Township Park, Lillian Anderson Arboretum, and adjacent environmentally sensitive lands.

- D. Restore and preserve natural areas in the parks to improve habitat, prevent the spread of invasive species, and increase the enjoyment of park users.

### **GOAL: Development of Existing Facilities**

Continue progress towards development of existing park facilities in established and undeveloped Township park land.

#### Action Strategies:

- A. Develop a long-range master plan for the property owned by the Township and Kalamazoo County located on KL Avenue just east of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, to meet future needs.
- B. Continue to implement the park master plans for Drake Farmstead Park, Flesher Field, and Township Park.
- C. Develop and implement a plan to provide additional outdoor recreation facilities at Grange Hall.
- D. Develop and provide educational programs with a focus on nature and history at the Drake Farmstead Park.

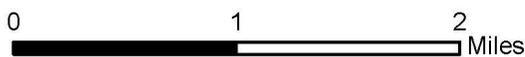
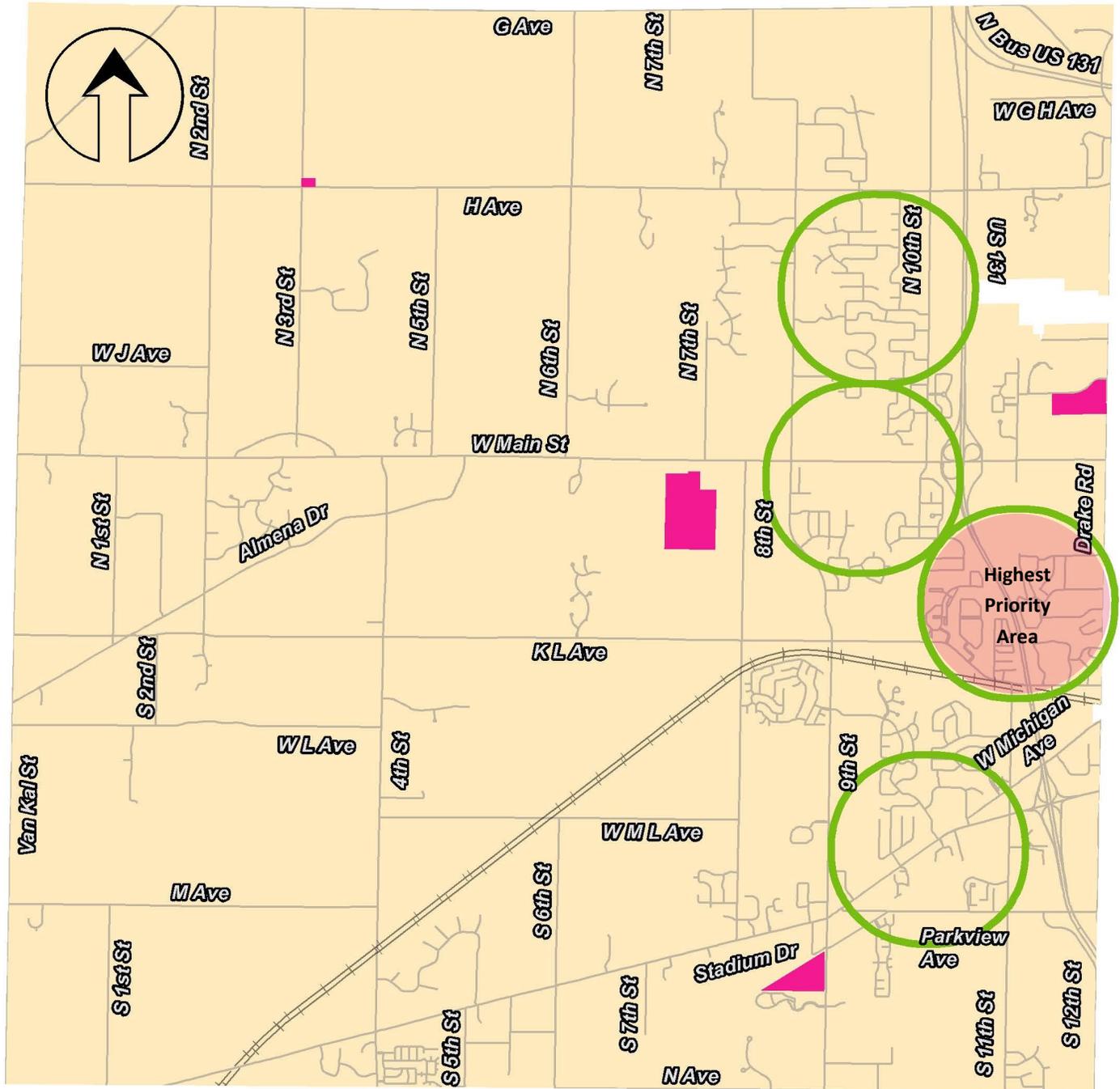
### **Parks and Recreation Anticipated Projects**

To ensure movement towards achieving the Goals outlined above, the Township anticipates completing a number of capital improvement projects over the course of this 5-year Plan. To see these projects to fruition, many will need support of both State and local grant dollars. These projects include:

#### **New Parks**

Based on the MDNR's suggested classification system for parks, the Township is lacking in neighborhood and/or mini parks. In addition, as shown in this Plan, the residents of the Township have indicated a desire for additional parks in the more densely populated areas of the community. The Township hopes to address this issue with the acquisition of property within the priority areas outlined in the Neighborhood Park Priority Map. This map utilizes the information provided in the Trends and Needs section of the Plan to assist with the selection of the Priority Areas. These areas were determined based on population density and distance to the existing Township community parks. It is anticipated that the Township will work towards acquiring property, developing concept plans, and then constructing the park facilities within the time period of this Plan.

# Neighborhood Park Priority Areas



- Road Network
- Railroad
- Existing Township Park
- Neighborhood Park Focus Area



## Existing Parks

### Drake Farmstead Park:

As a new park in the Township, there are a number of items from the Drake Farmstead Park Plan which are still to be developed. The Township will continue to improve the Carriage Barn, which will be constructed in 2019, to assist with accessible design, such as wall-mounted handicap door push buttons. Also, there is an ongoing relationship with the Oshtemo Historical Society to support the continuing restoration activities to the historic Drake House, including the improvements to the heating and cooling system. Finally, continual implementation of the Drake Farmstead Park Plan will be a focal point during this 5-Year Plan. This will include picnic shelters, outdoor classroom, trails, interpretive signs, gravel parking lot, improvements to the existing driveway, development of a new access point to Croyden Road, gazebo, event lawn, educational garden, and new storage shed.

### Flesher Field:

The new facilities to be developed in Flesher Field would include a basketball court, trail improvements, parking lot extension, and the expansion of the existing playground to include music, water, or traditional play equipment. In addition, the Township intends to develop a forest management plan for the underutilized 12-acre wooded area of the park to control invasive species and improve wildlife habitat.

### Township Park:

One of the most utilized facilities within Township Park is the disc golf course. The Township intends to complete course improvements, particularly signage and erosion control measures. All other improvements to the Park will include upgrades/refurbishments to the asphalt paths, trails, playground equipment, picnic shelters and tables, restroom buildings. Finally, the tennis and basketball courts will receive a new clear coat, seal, and striping to include new pickleball courts. New nets will also be furnished.

## Community Buildings

The Township owns two community buildings, the Community Center and Grange Hall, which are managed by the Parks Department. The improvements planned for these structures include:

- Grange Hall - heating and cooling upgrades.
- Community Center - heating and cooling upgrades, and roof replacement.

## APPENDIX E: NONMOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION ACTION PLAN

### Goals

The goals and action strategies for the nonmotorized plan are intended to establish a physical and cultural environment that supports and encourages safe, comfortable, and convenient ways for a diverse population of pedestrians and bicyclists to travel throughout the Township and into the surrounding communities.

#### **GOAL: Connectivity**

Increase connectivity between residential neighborhoods and nearby nonmotorized facilities to connect residents to commercial areas, employment, recreation, and public transportation.

#### Action Strategies:

- A. Fill the gaps within the existing nonmotorized facilities found within the Township to support accessibility and connectivity. Connect existing nonmotorized segments by filling gaps between them.
- B. Place an emphasis on connecting the east and west sides of the Township bisected by US-131 via bike paths and/or sidewalks, especially through coordination with MDOT when bridges crossing US-131 are rehabilitated or replaced.
- C. Provide connections to parks, neighborhoods, schools, and major areas of activity through neighborhood greenways and conservation trails or bicycle and pedestrian-focused corridors.
- D. Provide north-south bike path access from the Oshtemo Village District to the Kal-Haven Trail.
- E. Coordinate nonmotorized planning with neighboring communities.

#### **GOAL: Safety and Accessibility**

Provide for complete streets, as appropriate, on all Oshtemo roadways to emphasize safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel to all users of roadways.

#### Action Strategies:

- A. When road construction occurs, coordinate efforts with all involved road agencies to install sidewalks, bicycle paths/lanes, streetscapes, and other related improvements, as appropriate to the amount of roadwork, to maximize safety, efficiency, and cost effectiveness.
- B. Provide well-designed crosswalks to increase motorist awareness and pedestrian safety.
- C. Complete an ADA-transition plan to address known accessibility issues in the bike path and sidewalk network.
- D. Work with the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County to ensure proper roadway bicycle facilities, such as modifying roadway painting to extend existing bike lanes and widened shoulders through intersections.
- E. Develop and coordinate a nonmotorized path maintenance program.

**GOAL: Planning**

To achieve the goals noted above, incorporate nonmotorized best practices and recommendations into all relevant Township ordinances, policies, and plans.

**Action Strategies:**

- A. Assess existing policies, ordinances, regulations, and planning processes and identify changes that will further nonmotorized transportation.
- B. Ensure Township sidewalk and street standards comply with appropriate national guidelines, including AASHTO standards, to accommodate safe pedestrian, bicycle, barrier free, and vehicular uses.
- C. Establish a regular maintenance program for sidewalks, barrier-free facilities, pathways, and bicycle facilities and revise policies and/or ordinances accordingly.
- D. Implement the Township's Complete Streets Policy adopted in September of 2018 as it applies to all future infrastructure projects.
- E. Continue to require provisions for nonmotorized transportation facilities with site plan approval and seek appropriate easements when necessary.
- F. Pursue right-of-way, easements, and other private lands to allow for expansion of nonmotorized facilities.
- G. Review existing water and sewer easements to identify opportunities to upgrade the easements for nonmotorized facilities too.

**GOAL: Education**

Increase awareness of the benefits of nonmotorized transportation and provide information regarding safe integration of motorized and nonmotorized modes of transportation.

**Action Strategies:**

- A. Promote the nonmotorized transportation plan to the general public and encourage the use of nonmotorized systems as an alternative mode of transportation.
- B. Develop strategies to educate the community on the benefits of nonmotorized transportation, key safety issues, and traffic laws.
- C. Develop a branding strategy to establish the Township as a nonmotorized friendly community.
- D. Partner with regional organizations to promote bicycling, running, and walking activities.

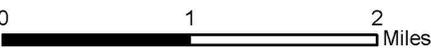
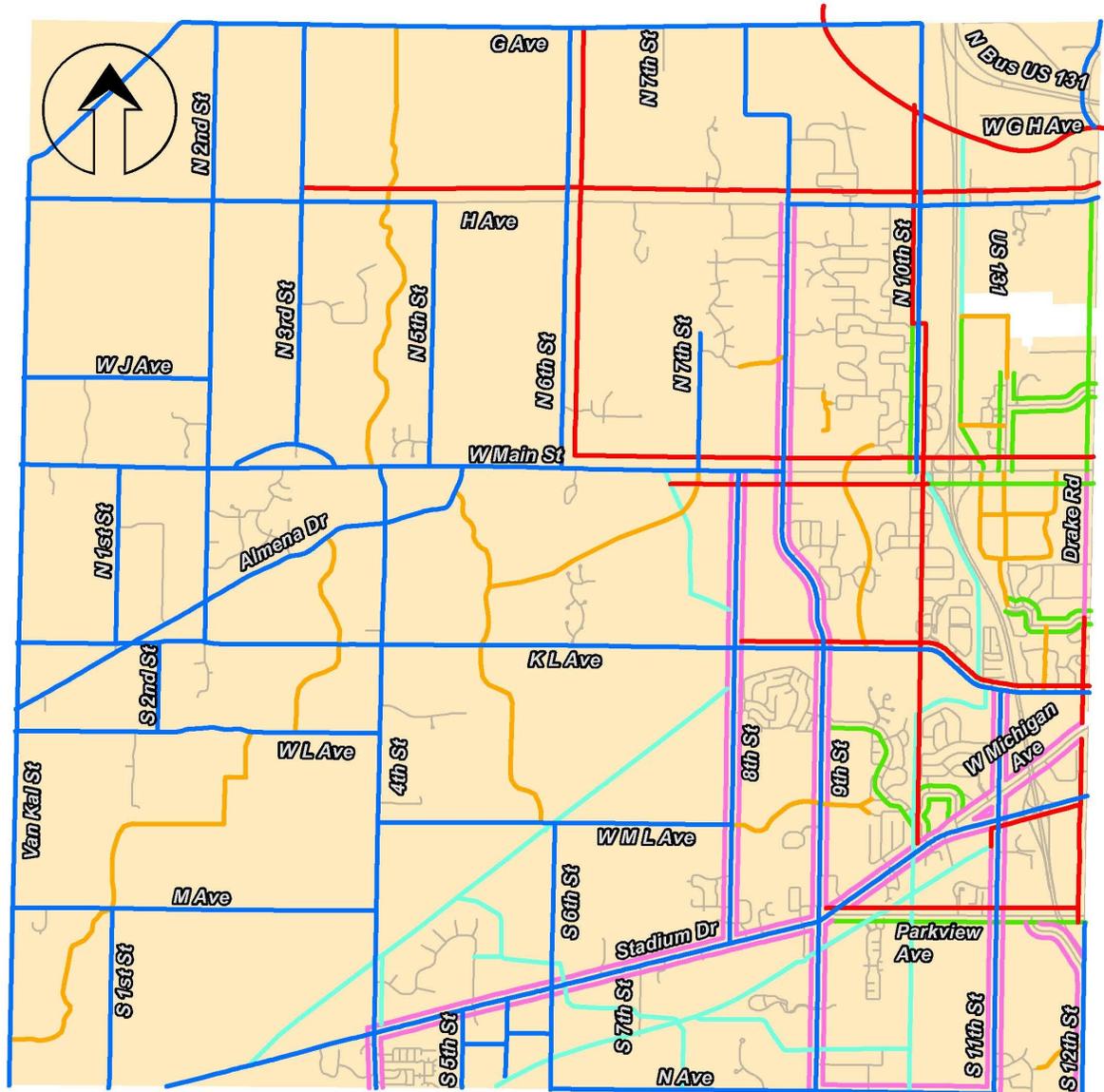
### Nonmotorized Anticipated Projects

The GO! Green Oshtemo Plan is all about connections. Connecting our residents to those amenities that support and enhance the quality of life in Oshtemo Township. As a community that sustains both a suburban and rural environment, linking these dual characteristics is critical to enriching all lifestyles. The Nonmotorized Framework Map below provides that “big picture” plan; a high level illustration of how the future network may develop over time. It is intended to convey important linkages and how this system interacts with destinations, neighborhoods, commercial areas, and future conservation opportunities.



The Nonmotorized Transportation Network Map is intended to convey the full long-range plan of existing and envisioned facilities that will connect the entire Township. The goal of this map is to create a network of links to adjacent jurisdictions, provide access to destinations within and around the Township, and ensure a system of “loop connections” throughout the community.

# Nonmotorized Network Map

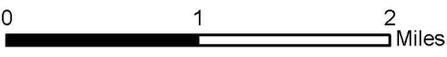
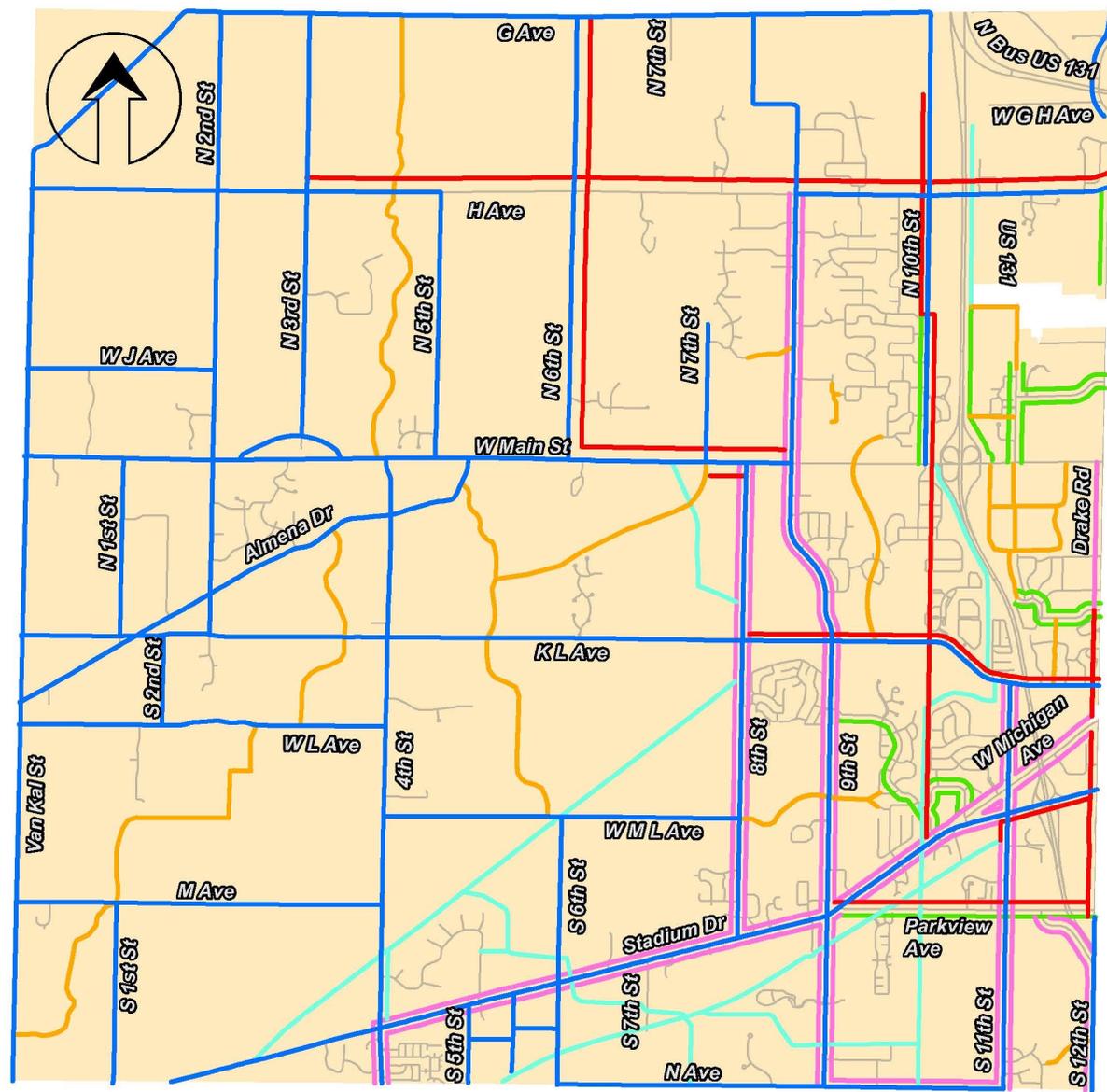


- Road Network
- Facility Type**
- Conceptual Nonmotorized Link
- Connector Trail
- Paved Shoulder/Bike Lane
- Sidewalk
- Six Foot Shared Use Path
- Ten Foot Shared Use Path



Finally, the Nonmotorized New Facilities Map provides both paths and sidewalks along roadways, as well as ideas for off-road connections intended throughout the Township. This is a long-range plan of envisioned facilities that will connect to existing infrastructure to support multi-modal transportation throughout the Township.

Nonmotorized Transportation New Facilities



- Road Network
- Facility Type**
- Conceptual Nonmotorized Link
- Connector Trail
- Paved Shoulder/Bike Lane
- Sidewalk
- Six Foot Shared Use Path
- Ten Foot Shared Use Path



During the timeframe of this 5-year Plan, the Township has a number of nonmotorized projects planned. The major projects include the following:

#### Roadway Adjacent Facilities:

- Drake Road Shared Use Path - This path will be developed on the west side of Drake Road from West Main Street to Stadium Drive. It will include a 6-foot shared use path from West Main Street to Green Meadow Drive, where the path will transition to a 10-foot path through to Stadium Drive. This path is located along the eastern boundary of the Township and is a joint project with the City of Kalamazoo and the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County. It will provide a critical north/south link along the most densely populated areas of the Township, as well as two major retail districts of both Oshtemo and the City of Kalamazoo.
- 9th Street Shared Use Path - Located between Erie Street north to West Main Street, this project will likely be installed in two phases, the first phase between Erie Street and Quail Run Drive. This project is expected to be 6-foot one-way paths on both sides of the street. A portion of the 9th Street Shared Use Path is located in the Oshtemo Village, which is also the Downtown Development Authority district, who will help fund the project. This project will facilitate connecting both a public elementary school located on 9th Street and private elementary school found on Quail Run Drive to the wider nonmotorized networks in the Township.
- Stadium Drive Shared Use Path - This project includes a 6-foot one-way path on both sides of Stadium Drive from 11th Street moving west to 8th Street. This project will also be in two phases due to funding sources. A grant has been provided from the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study for the area between 11th Street and roughly Quail Run Drive. The remainder of the project is located within the Downtown Development Authority district, who will be seeking additional grants for the project. This is a critical component of both the Township and regional nonmotorized network. It will offer better access to the City of Kalamazoo and the retail and employment centers found within, as well as providing a link to the Oshtemo Village.
- KL Avenue Shared Use Path - The Township plans to construct a 10-foot wide shared-use facility along the north-side of KL Avenue from Drake Road west to Copper Beech Boulevard. The Township anticipates submitting an application to MDOT for Transportation Alternative Program grant funds. This path is another vital portion of the overall network. It will connect to Drake Road in an area of the Township with some of the highest population densities. In addition, there are ongoing pedestrian safety concerns in this area that the path will help to resolve.

#### Off-Road Facilities:

Currently, Oshtemo does not have any off-road facilities that are owned and maintained by the Township. The State owned Kal-Haven Trail facility, which connects the City of Kalamazoo to the City of South Haven, crosses Oshtemo near its northern boundary. As outlined in the Trends and Needs, residents of Oshtemo are interested in expanding the off-road trail network in the community. To accomplish this goal, the Township will likely begin with projects that are in within existing utility and/or other infrastructure corridors. Utilizing established easements and/or properties owned by a governmental or quasi-governmental entity, with the approval of the easement or property holder, can assist with the development of the trail. The first trail under consideration is the AT&T corridor that runs from Flesher Field Park southwest through the Township to the Texas Township border. This trail would support area residents with both recreation needs and connections to important destinations like Flesher Field and Oshtemo Village.

## APPENDIX F: CONSERVATION ACTION PLAN

### Goals

The goals and action strategies below are intended to provide both a long-range vision for the Township, as well as specific short-term action strategies that foster the burgeoning conservation efforts of the community.

#### **GOAL: Conserve the Natural Environment**

Conserve the natural features and character of Township lands by protecting undeveloped open spaces.

#### Action Strategies:

- A. Work with ecological partners to complete inventory mapping and field verification of plant biodiversity, and wild-life habitats and corridors in the Township.
- B. Develop a prioritization system of land conservation-based mapping completed through an assessment of preservation value and threat of loss.
- C. Prioritize the protection of wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and the headwaters of the river systems.
- D. Map existing open space properties that are deed restricted through the Open Space Community zoning ordinance or are privately deed/conservation restricted and identify possible greenway linkages between these lands.
- E. Develop incentive programs to conserve land within the Township. These programs should consider both the conservation of open space within proposed subdivision/site condominiums as well as incentivizing individual parcel owners to conserve land.
- F. Work with property owners to restore native ecosystems to the Oshtemo region through the development of programs with local conservation organizations.
- G. Establish operation and maintenance Best Management Practices (BMP's) for open space lands within the more developed areas of the Township.
- H. Develop a regional approach to conservation through partnerships with adjacent jurisdictions, conservation organizations, Kalamazoo County, Southcentral Michigan Planning Council, etc.
- I. Consider acquisition techniques, such as fee-title acquisitions, purchase of development rights, donations, or tax incentives.

#### **GOAL: Connect Nature and People**

Advance a greenway network that connects natural features and people to community and regional destinations.

#### Action Strategies:

- A. Develop a set of criteria for determining when greenway/open space lands should be permanently protected in their undeveloped state and when passive recreation should be permitted for the use and enjoyment of Oshtemo residents, promoting the balance between recreational opportunities and natural resource protection.

- B. Structure the passive recreational component of the greenway system so that connections to the larger Township nonmotorized plan provide linkages to local and regional destinations, particularly Oshtemo parks and other publicly accessible open spaces.
- C. Investigate opportunities for acquisition of undeveloped lands within the more urbanized area of the Township to allow for community open spaces and greenways where available natural areas may be scarce.
- D. Develop a generalized map for where acquisition of land/easements should be prioritized within the Township.
- E. Develop policies and practices for the maintenance and upkeep of the passive recreation greenways within the Township.
- F. Review current ordinances for improvements and investigate new techniques to minimize loss of natural features when new development occurs in the urbanized area to maintain a more naturalized environment.

### **GOAL: Enhance Rural Character**

Enhance the rural character of the Township through the preservation of natural features that strengthen the desirability of our community as a place to live, work, and recreate.

#### Action Strategies:

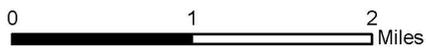
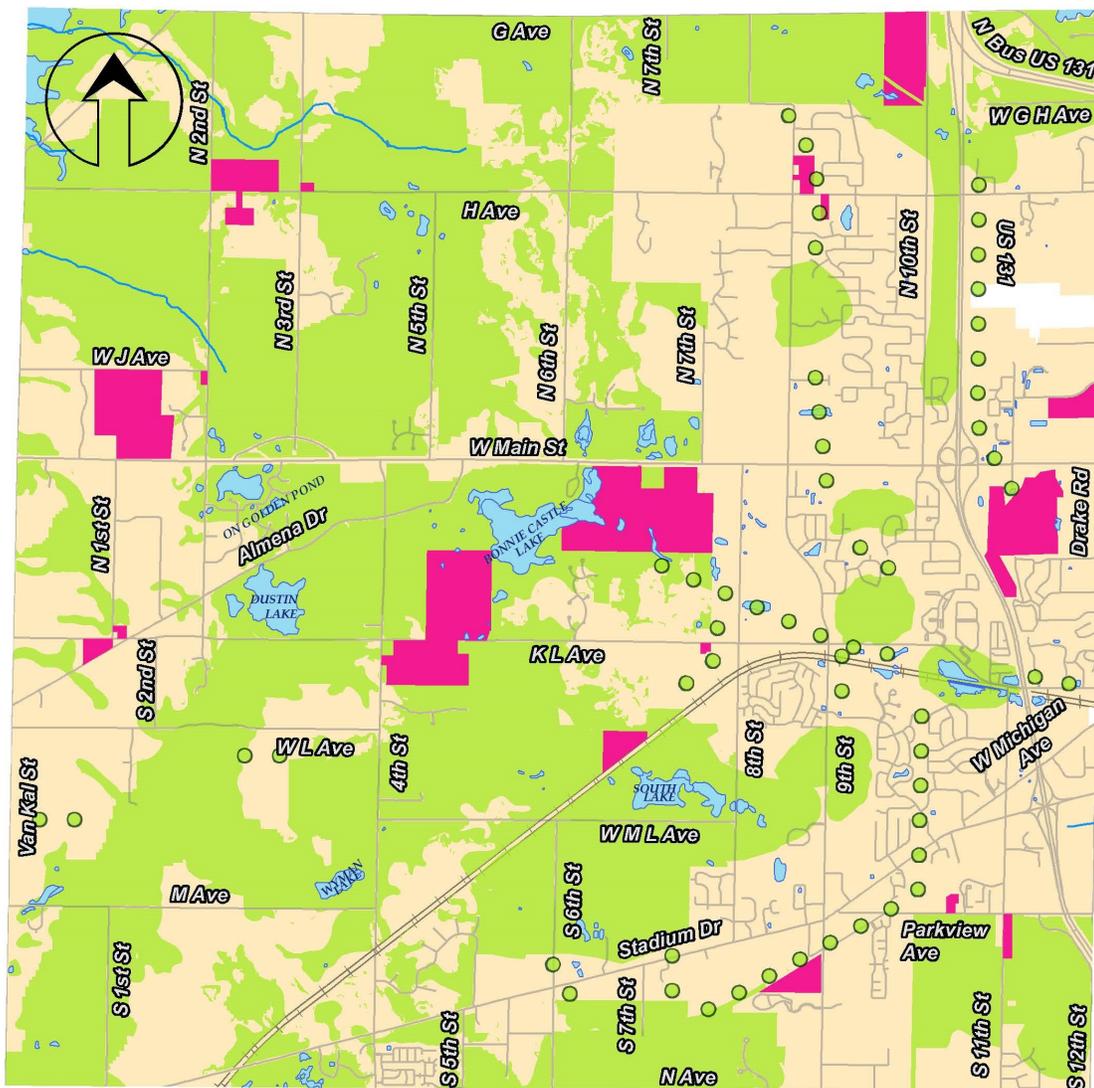
- A. Seek to create a network of Natural Beauty Roads through the State of Michigan program to support rural character and a healthy natural environment, via the establishment of natural buffer strips along the edges of primary and secondary roadways.
- B. Review existing “low impact development” ordinances for improvements and investigate new planning and design practices to simultaneously reduce infrastructure costs, conserve and protect natural resource systems, and reduce potential environmental impacts.
- C. Require management plans for the open space/conservation areas within new subdivision and site condominium projects.
- D. Continue to support the Future Land Use Plan of the Township’s Master Plan to direct appropriate growth in the more urbanized locations of the Township, allowing for the opportunity to preserve undeveloped parcels in the rural area of the community.
- E. Review current ordinances for improvements and investigate new techniques to minimize loss of natural features when new residential development occurs.

### **Conservation Anticipated Projects**

Conservation of properties is a new endeavor for the Township and therefore much of the work during this 5-year Plan period will be establishing priorities, developing criteria, and field work. With that said, the Township will capitalize on any opportunity to work with residents, developers, and conservation partners to preserve lands. The Conservation Areas of Interest Map found on the following page outlines the areas of priority for conservation in the Township. These areas have been delineated based on the data provided in the Existing Condition Inventory and Trends and Needs sections of this Plan.

In addition to assisting residents, developers, and conservation partners with land conservation, the Township also hopes to establish one to two catalyst projects as part of this Plan. In the Township’s 2019-2024 Capital Improvement Plan, funding has been set aside for the acquisition of possibly two open space conservation areas. Property for these areas will be located within the part of the Township delineated in the Conservation Areas of Interest Map. The acquisition of these properties will be contingent on the Township securing state and/or local grants.

# Conservation Areas of Interest



- Road Network
- +— Railroad
- Potential Wildlife Habitat Connections
- Waterway
- Lakes, Ponds, and Wetlands
- Other Areas of Interest (Recreation, Nature Preserves, Cemeteries, Historic Farmsteads, Etc.)
- Areas of Natural Interest



## APPENDIX G: COLLECTIVE PLAN GOALS AND ACTION STRATEGIES

### Goals

The goals and action strategies outlined below are intended to be broadly focused and generally touch on all aspects of the Go! Green Oshtemo effort. These goals focus on organizational and administrative functions rather than infrastructure or facility development.

#### **GOAL: Enhance Partnerships**

Enhance partnerships with community organizations, governmental units, and civic groups, and work towards better public/private partnerships with the development community to improve recreation and conservation opportunities.

#### Action Strategies:

- A. Develop a comprehensive list of community organizations involved in parks, recreation, and conservation and strengthen these partnerships to support recreation and outdoor activities in Oshtemo Township.
- B. Work with Friends of the Parks to develop and implement a parks and programming communication plan.
- C. Encourage greater volunteer participation in all aspects of parks, recreation, and conservation activities.
- D. Continue to build on the successful relationship with the Oshtemo Branch of the Kalamazoo Public Library by continuing to partner on projects and programs made possible by the library's close proximity to Township Park.
- E. Explore incentive opportunities to the private development community to include both private and public recreation opportunities within their development projects.
- F. Investigate volunteer opportunities and "adopt a mile" programs for the maintenance of the publicly accessible greenway system.
- G. Develop a volunteer group of environmental experts who will complete a natural features inventory for interested property owners, to both promote an understanding of the importance of conservation and to assist in the Township's efforts to map wildlife habitats and corridors.

#### **GOAL: Sound Fiscal Management**

Develop stable sources of funding and practice sound fiscal management of the parks, recreation, conservation, and nonmotorized systems.

#### Action Strategies:

- A. Explore the potential of a replacement and acquisition fund for maintenance of parks and recreation assets.
- B. Complete a comprehensive analysis of total costs related to the Township's rental facilities and establish cost recovery rates that will generate revenue for these expenditures.
- C. Pursue all available funding sources for acquisition, capital improvements, operations and maintenance, including local sources, the Township endowment, a parks and recreation millage, state and federal grant programs, local businesses, sponsorships, and other sources.

- D. Explore opportunities for greater private sector participation in the provision of recreation services in the Township.
- E. Continue to build the Oshtemo Parks and Recreation Endowment Fund.
- F. Assess and update the Long-Term Capital Maintenance Forecast as a budgeting tool.
- G. Explore funding opportunities that will assist the Township in leveraging capital for recreational greenways within the Township.

**GOAL: Lead by Example**

Make Oshtemo a leader in environmental conservation and sustainability and strive to reduce the Township's impact on the local and global environment.

- A. Structure the passive recreational component of the greenway system so that connections to the larger Township nonmotorized plan provide linkages to local and regional destinations, particularly Oshtemo parks and other publicly accessible open spaces.
- B. Investigate opportunities for acquisition of undeveloped lands within the more urbanized area of the Township to allow for community open spaces and greenways where available natural areas may be scarce.
- C. Develop a generalized map for where acquisition of land/easements should be prioritized within the Township.
- D. Develop policies and practices for the maintenance and upkeep of the passive recreation greenways within the Township.
- E. Review current ordinances for improvements and investigate new techniques to minimize loss of natural features when new development occurs in the urbanized area to maintain a more naturalized environment.

November 2, 2018



**Mtg Date:** November 8, 2018  
**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Julie Johnston, AICP  
**Subject:** Conditional Rezoning Ordinance Amendment

This requested amendment was brought to the Planning Commission at the September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, requesting changes to address how the Township revokes a conditional rezoning. In reviewing Section 53: Conditional Rezoning, we find the following language under Section 53.510:

*“If approved development and/or use of the rezoned land does not occur within the time frame specified under Subsection 53.500 above, then the land shall revert to its former zoning classification as set forth in MCL 125.3405. The reversion process shall be initiated by the Township Board requesting that the Planning Commission proceed with consideration of rezoning of the land to its former zoning classification. The procedure for considering and making this reversionary rezoning shall thereafter be the same as applied to all other rezoning requests.”*

According to this Section, Township staff would first have to request the reversion process be initiated at a Township Board meeting then, if approved, the Planning Commission would have to hold a public hearing and the Township Board would have to hold two readings.

The ordinance seems redundant and over-regulatory as Section 53.510 clearly states that if the use is not established according to Section 53.500, which provides a 12-month window, the land reverts to its former zoning classification. To ensure this happens, the Township would just need to record a revocation of conditional rezoning with the County Registrar of Deeds, removing the conditions established on the property.

The language below in **red** is from the original review at the September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. The new language in **blue** was developed from the Planning Commission’s discussion of the draft amendments.

Section 53.510 – Reversion of zoning.

If **the** approved development and/or use of the rezoned land does not occur within the time frame specified under Subsection 53.500 ~~above~~, then the land shall revert to its former zoning classification as set forth in MCL 125.3405 (**Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Public Act 110 of 2006**).

The reversion process shall be initiated by **Township staff who will send a notification letter to the property owner indicating a Revocation of Conditional Rezoning will be recorded with the County Registrar of Deeds. The property owner will have 30 days from the date of the notification letter to provide proof to the Planning Director that the development and/or use**

of land has commenced. If satisfied, the Planning Director will halt the Revocation of Conditional Rezoning. If proof is deemed unsatisfactory, the Planning Director will notify the property owner who may then **appeal the Revocation to the Township Board** within this same 30-day period. **If no appeal is filed ~~within the 30-day period~~, the Revocation of Conditional Rezoning will be recorded and the land shall revert to its former zoning classification.**

~~the Township Board requesting that the Planning Commission proceed with consideration of rezoning of the land to its former zoning classification. The procedure for considering and making this reversionary rezoning shall thereafter be the same as applied to all other rezoning requests.~~

Thank you.