

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.

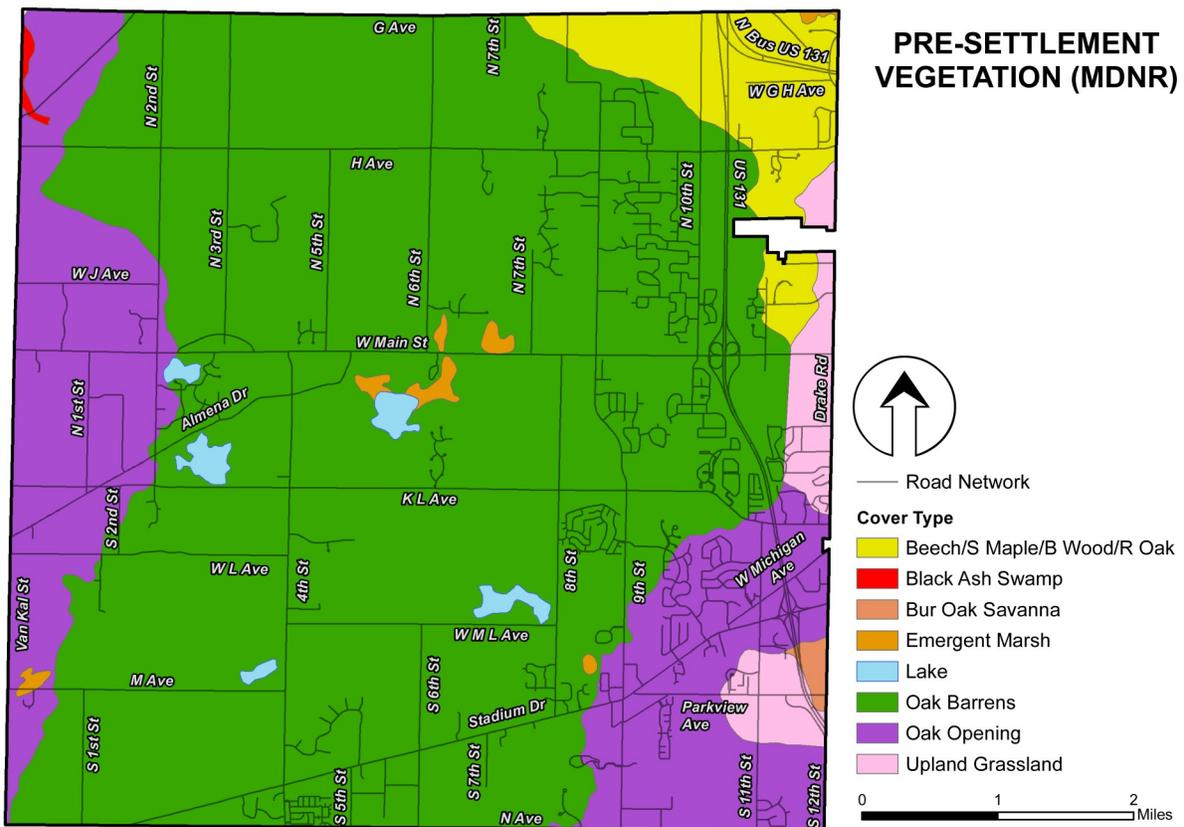
Based on these maps, most of Oshtemo Township was once covered by Oak Barren, which is a fire-dependent savanna dominated by wide-spaced oak trees. Black oak and white oak were typically found and the ground layer was predominately grasses. Oak barrens are established on droughty soils and are characteristic 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, savannas 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.

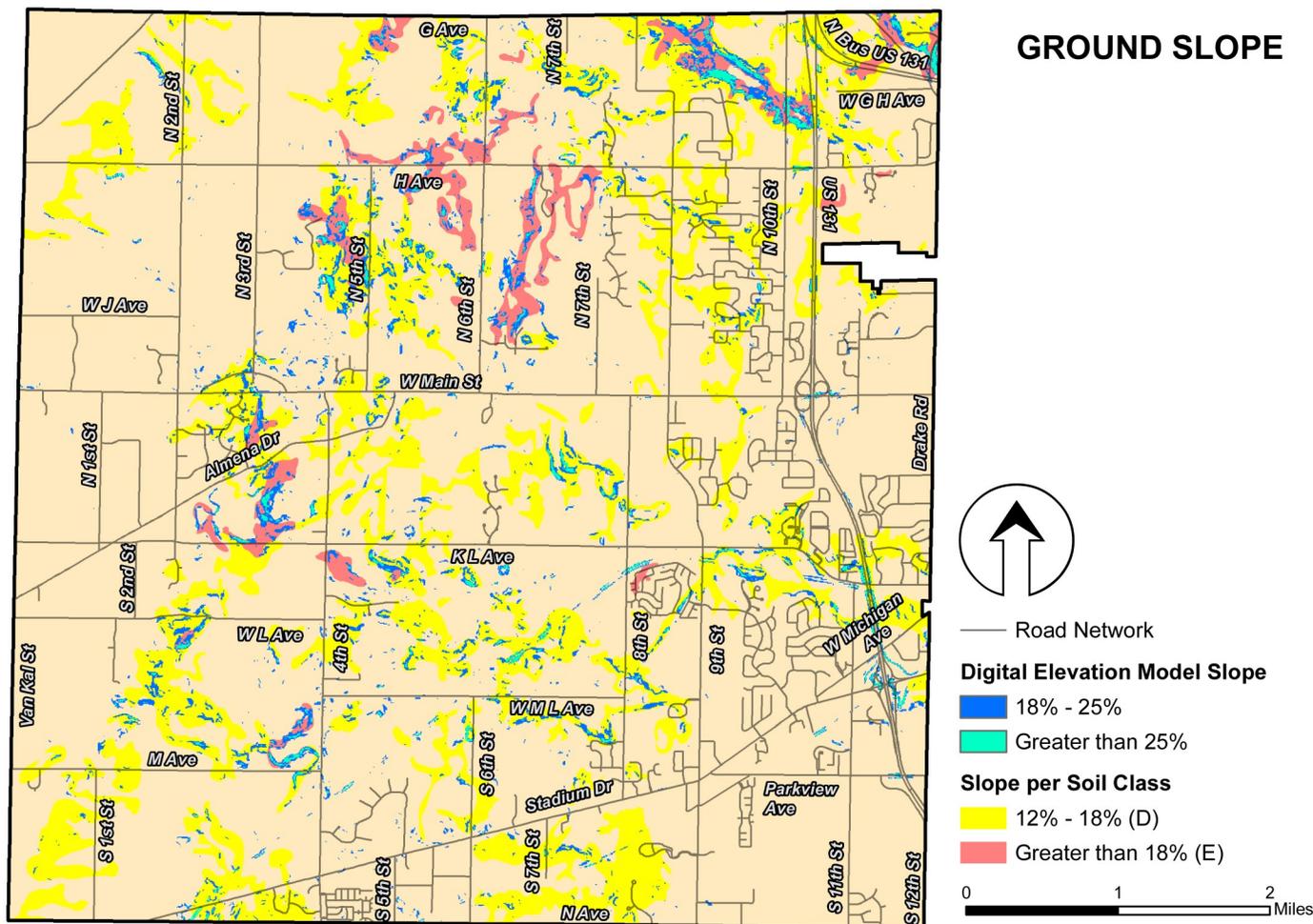


Topography

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 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.

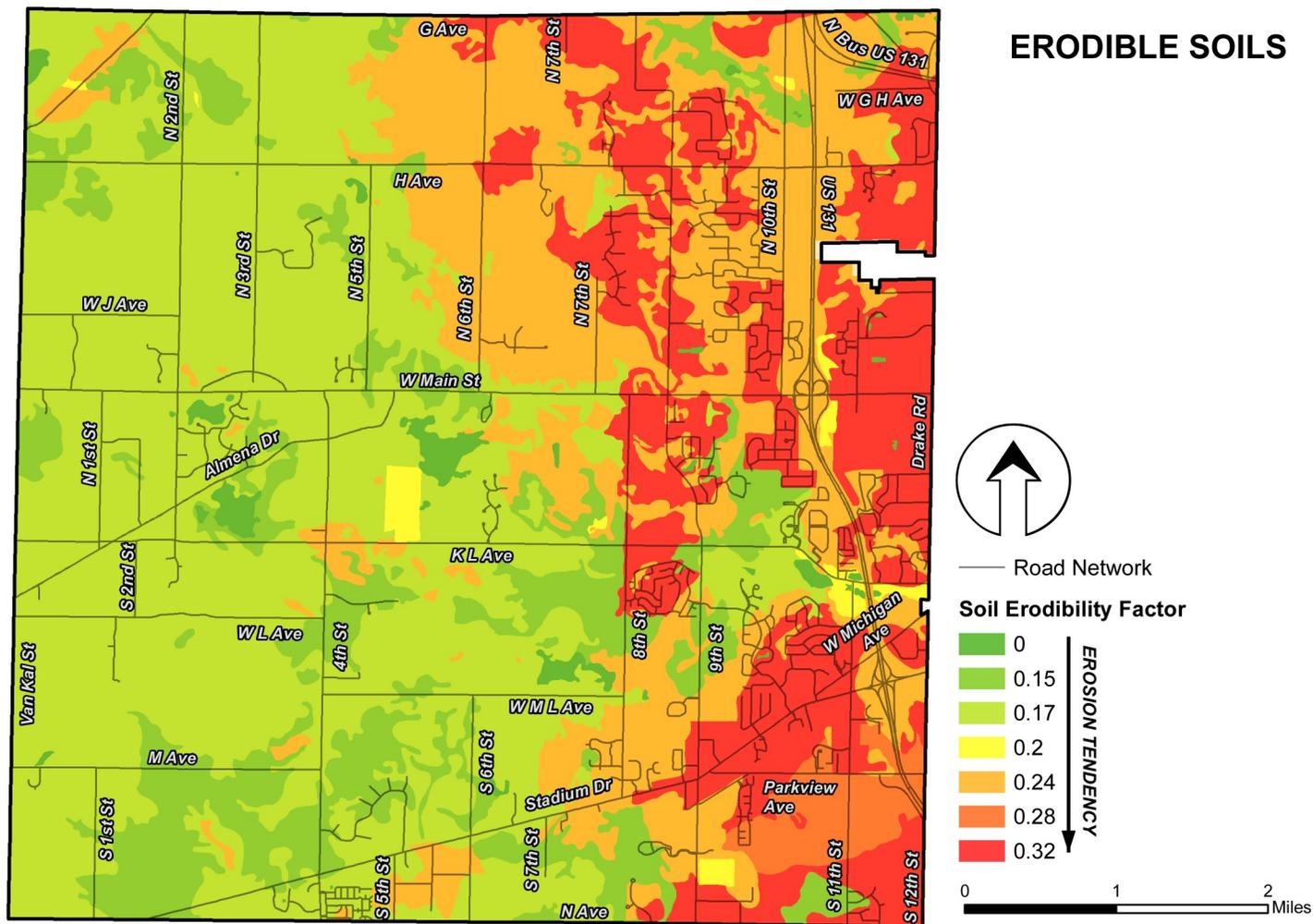
The National Resource Conservation Service designates any slope over 8 percent consistently to be “rolling,” over 15 percent to be “hilly,” and over 30 percent to be “steep.” As can be seen on the Topography Map, much of Oshtemo is rolling and hilly.



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.

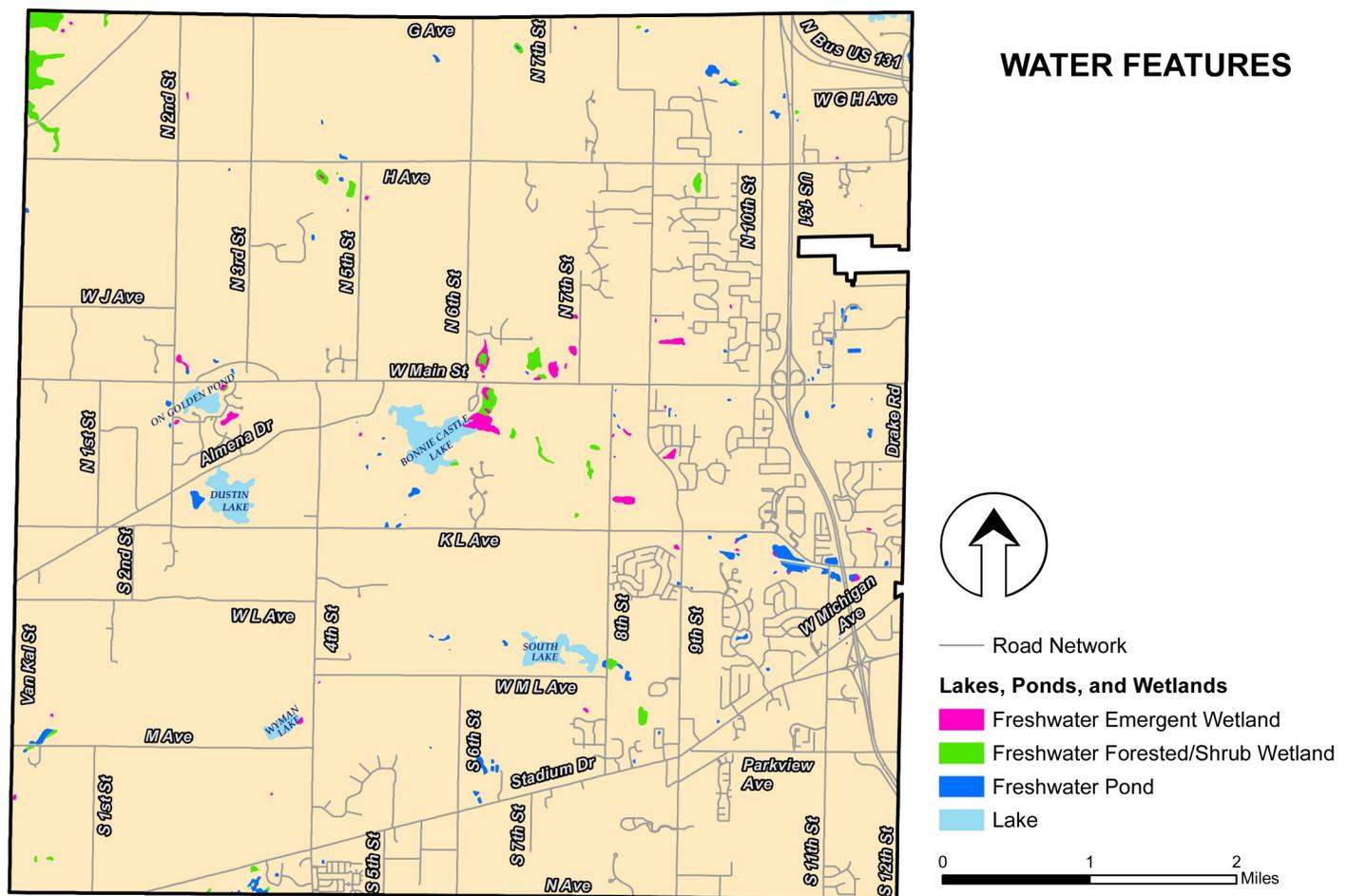
Soil erodibility has implications for most types of land use and a soil erodibility factor (K) is generally used to determine the best soils for development. The “K factor” considers the susceptibility of a particular soil to erosion and the rate of water runoff from that soil. Soils with low K values (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.



Water Features

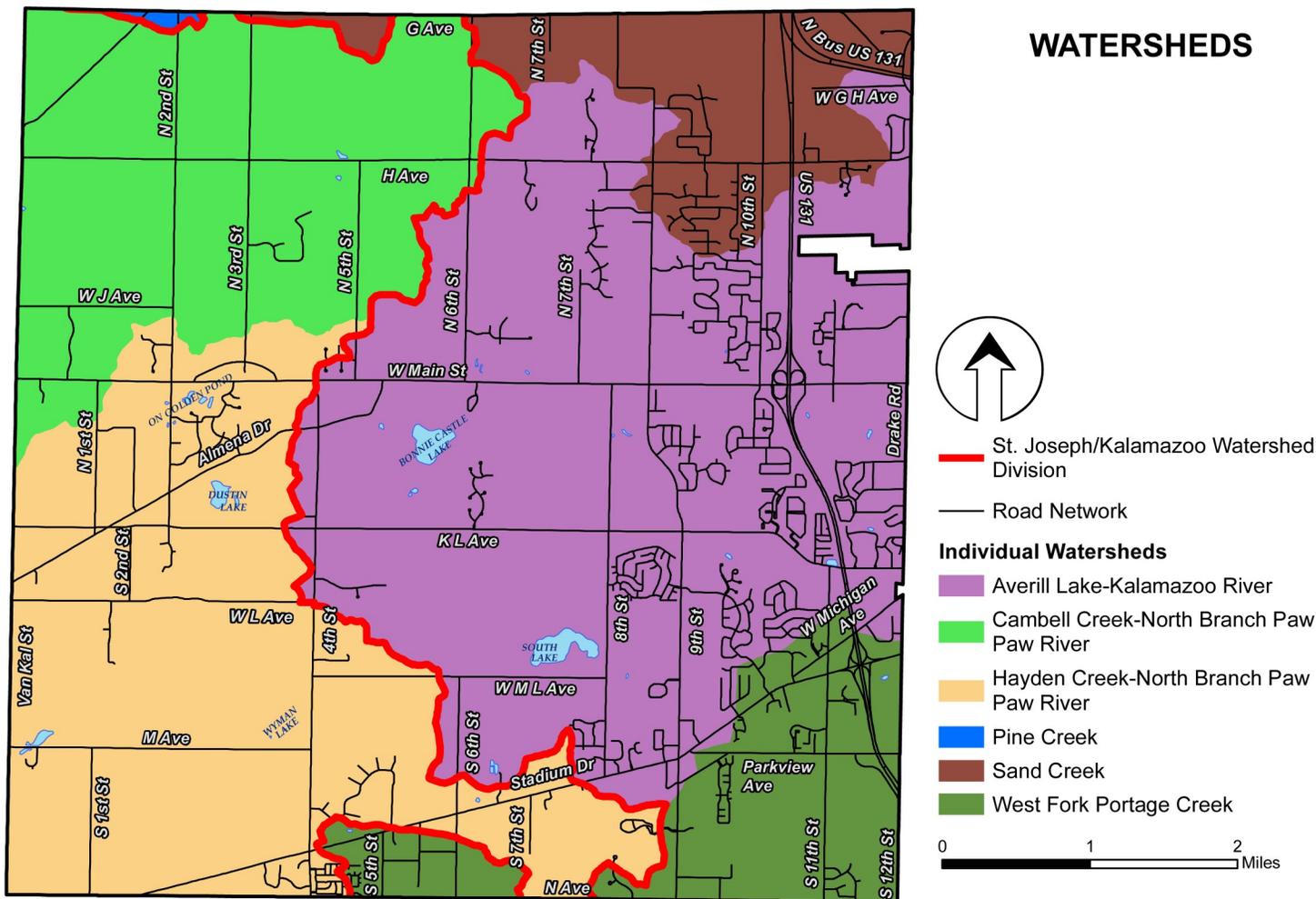
Water features and wetland areas are scattered throughout the Township but comprise very little of the total land mass of the community at only 1.6 percent. Water features are generally valued for their aesthetic views and the sense of tranquility that they provide. Wetlands are identified by the Michigan 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

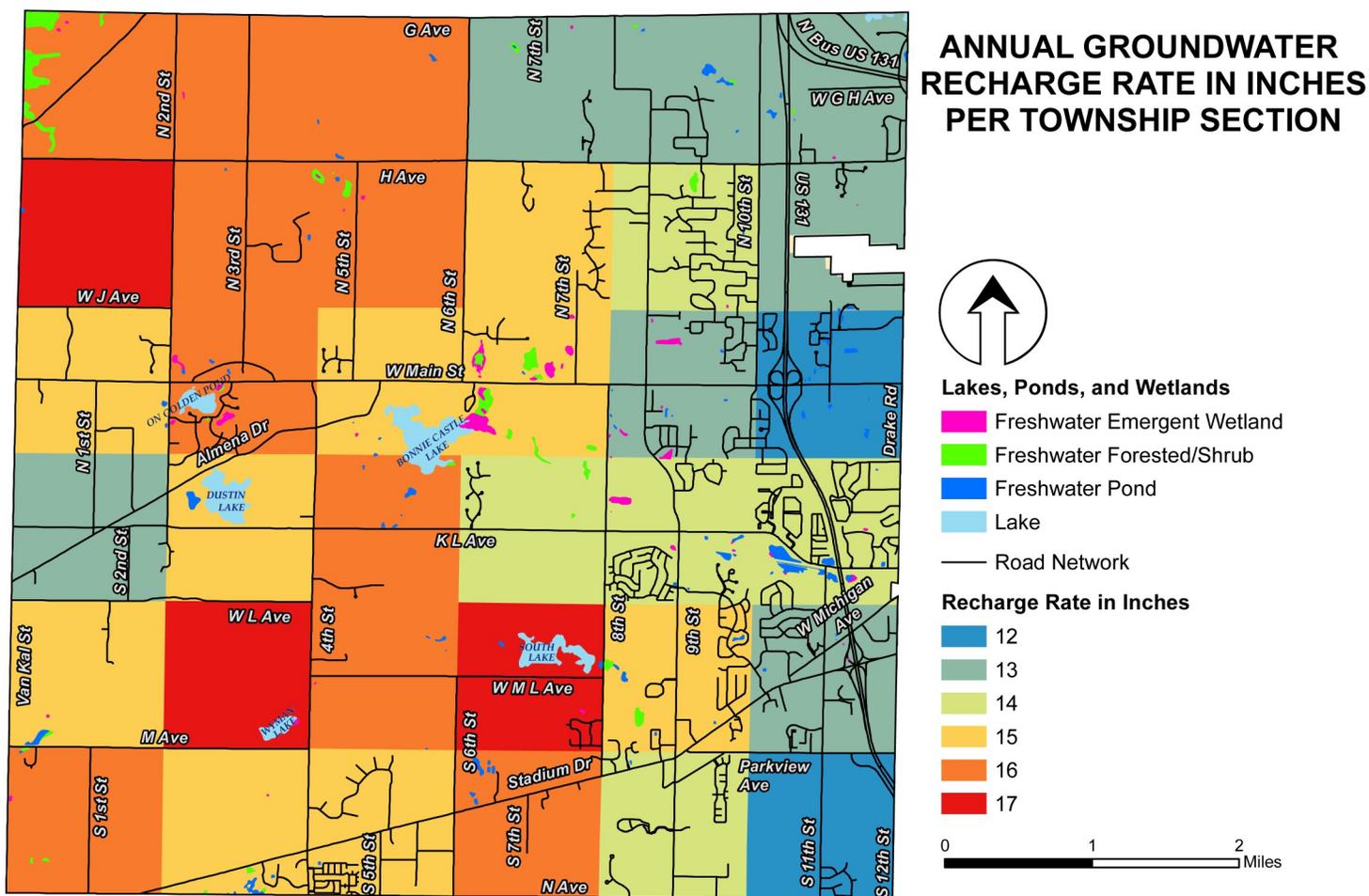
While streams and rivers are few in the Oshtemo, the Township does serve six watershed areas. A watershed is an area of land that drains rain water and snow melt into streams, lakes, or wetlands. The groundwater, which is the drinking water for the Kalamazoo area, is connected to the surface water network 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 Branch Paw Paw River watersheds.



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.

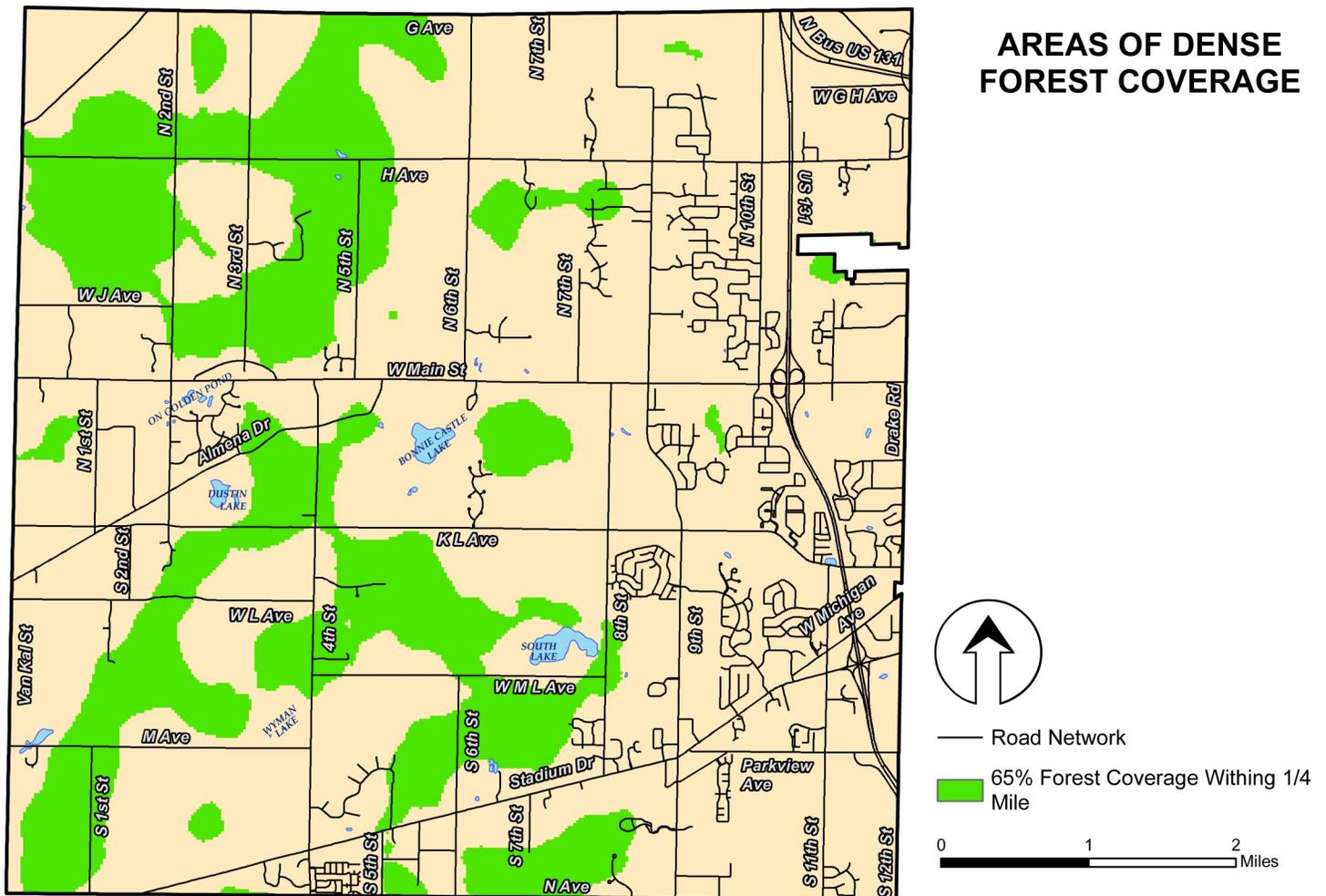


Woodland and Vegetation Cover

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.



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 9th 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
Total Housing Units	10,657	100%	10,936	100%	11,289	100%
Vacant Housing Units	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.

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

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
OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP FACILITIES																							
Drake Farmstead	26	1									•												•
Flesher Field	24	3	•							•	•	2	•	•		•			2				•
Grange Hall Playground	2	4		•									•	•									•
Oshtemo Township Park	70	3		2		•				•	•	2	•	•				2	•				•
OTHER FACILITIES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC																							
Govt./Non-Profit																							
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.	•												•
Public Schools																							
Prairie Ridge Elementary	NA													2									•
West Hills Athletic Club	NA																					•	
PRIVATE FACILITIES																							
Private Schools																							
Heritage Christian	NA		•	•										•		•							•
Kalamazoo Christian	NA													•		•							•
Churches																							
Centerpoint Church	NA																					•	
Lighthouse Community	NA		•											•									•
Voyage Church	NA										•			•									•
W. Kzoo Christian	NA																					•	
Manufactured Home Communities																							
Colonial Manor	NA																•						
Fountain Springs	NA													•			•						
Huntington Run	NA													•			•						
Woodland Estates	NA													•									
Apartment Complexes																							
Canterbury	NA																•						•
Danford Creek	NA																•						•
Mill Creek	NA																•						•
The Paddock	NA																•						•
The Wyatt	NA			•													•			•			•
58 West	NA									•			•				•			•			•
Summer Ridge	NA			•													•			•			•
Other																							
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 3rd 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 9th 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 7th 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 4th 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 9th 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 12th 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.

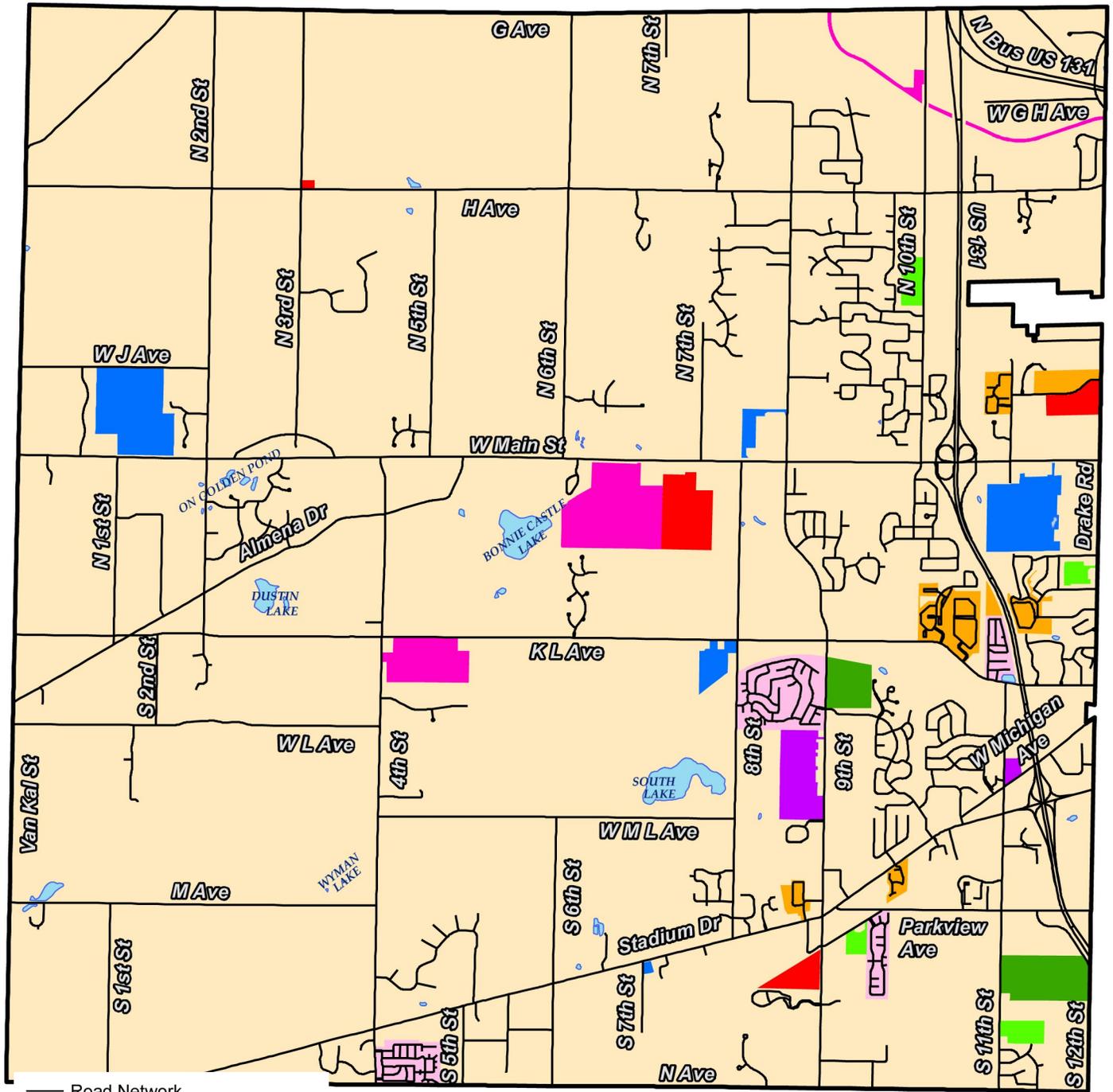
Markin Glen Park (Kalamazoo County)

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 Township Recreational Facilities Public and Private



— Road Network

Recreational Facility Type

- 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 10th 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.

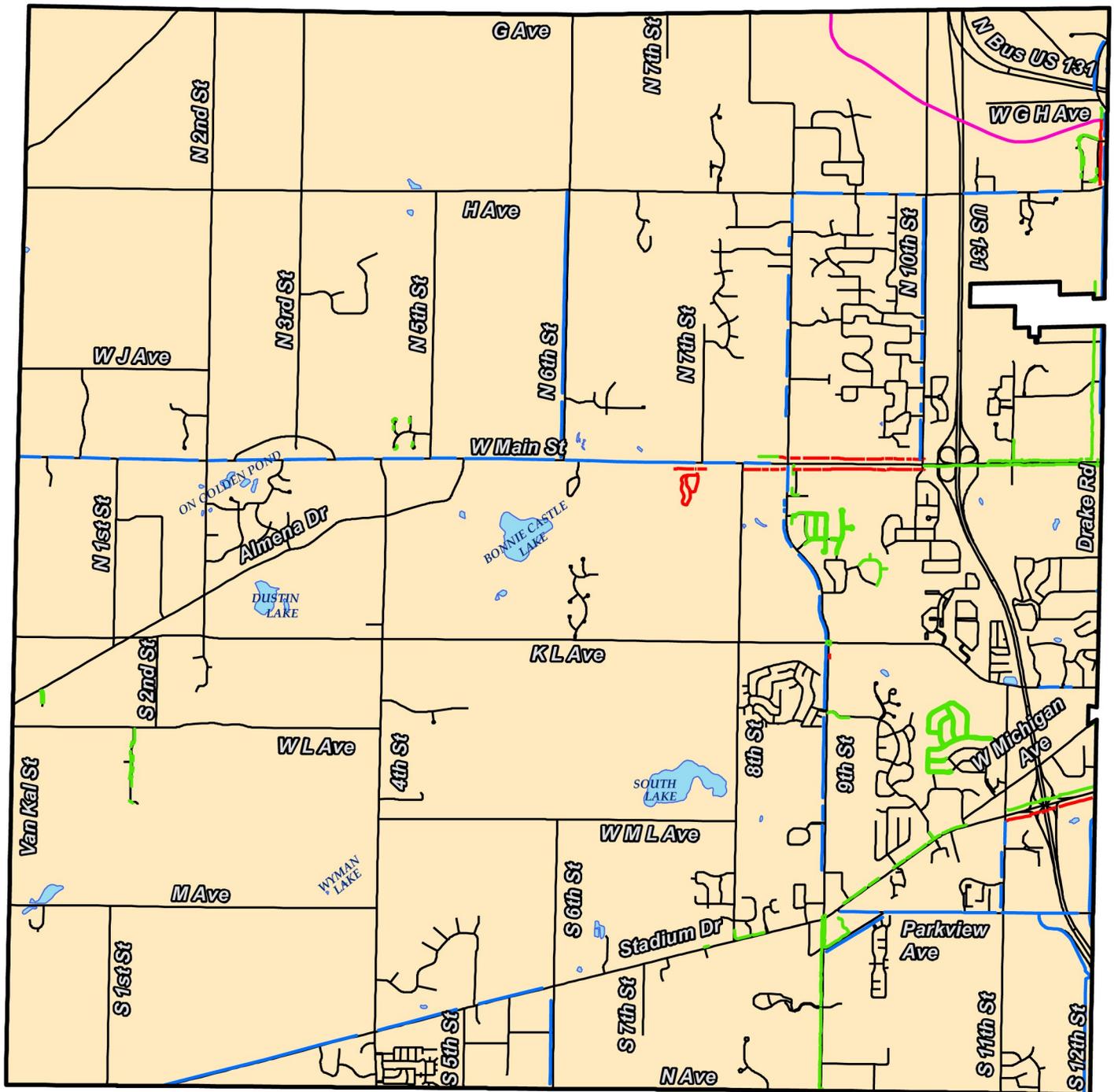
In Oshtemo Township, nonmotorized transportation has seen the most significant progress in planning and construction over the last ten years. The first nonmotorized plan for the Township was in 2005, when a feasibility study was completed. This study was enhanced in 2008 with additional nonmotorized 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 9th Street moving east to 10th 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 9th Street east to 11th Street. A sidewalk is also found along the west side of 9th 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 Ordinance 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, 9th Street, and Stadium Drive are the primary roads where extended paved shoulders are available for nonmotorized transportation.

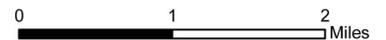
Existing Nonmotorized Transportation Facilities



— Road Network

Facility Type

- Paved Shoulder/Bike Lane
- 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.

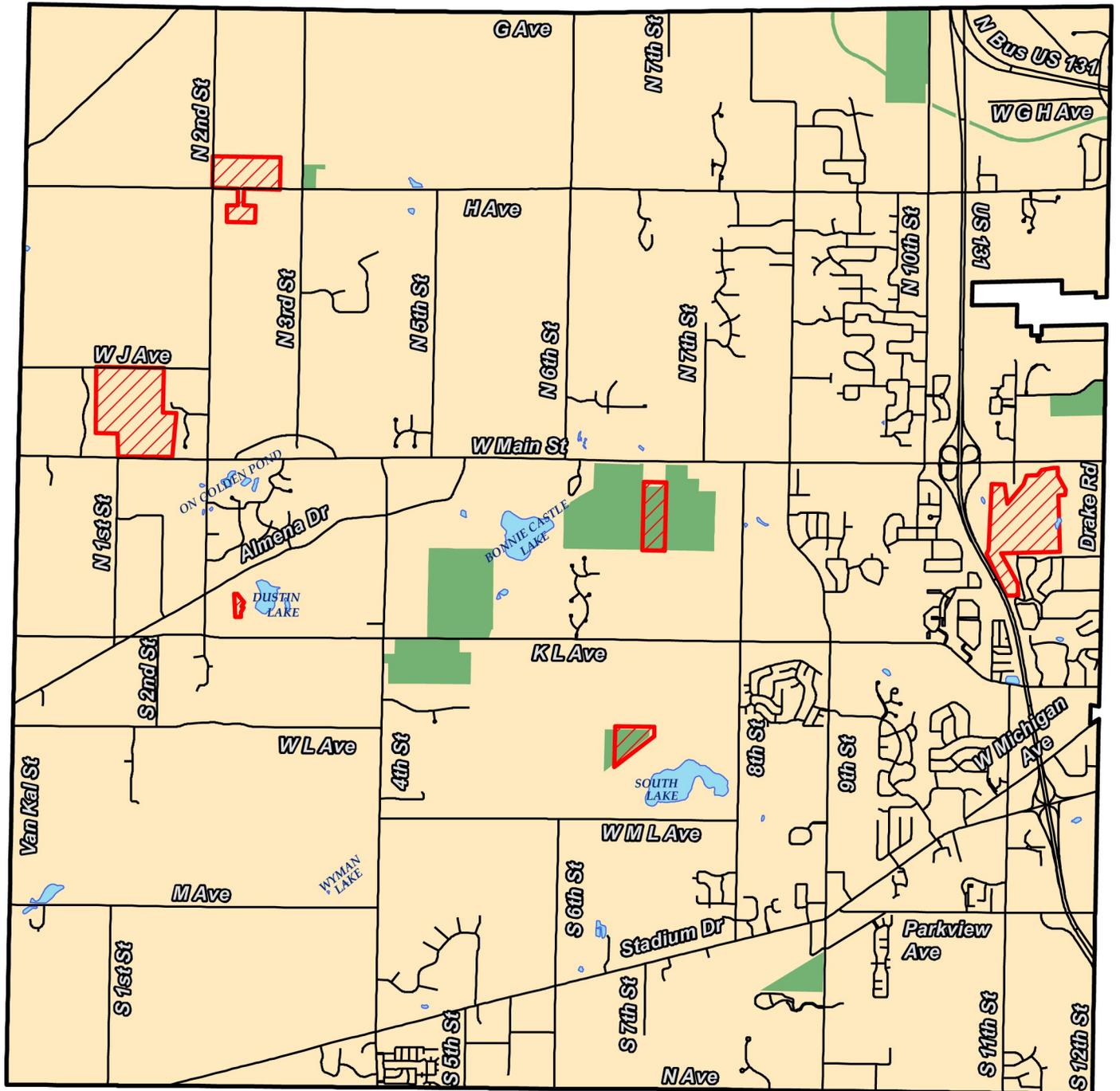
The Lillian Anderson Arboretum was established in 1998 and comprises 140 acres of marsh, meadow, pine plantation and second-growth deciduous forest. Its primary mission is to conserve the natural qualities of the property in which the Arboretum is located. In addition, Kalamazoo College utilizes the 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 4th 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



- Road Network
-  Kalamazoo CARL Listing
-  Other Environmentally Sensitive Property

