

SUBPLAN A

An amendment to the 2007 Alpine Township Master Plan & the 2015 Master Plan Update for the 4 Mile Road NW corridor (Fruit Ridge to Cordes Avenues)

1. Legal authorization

Section 35 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008 as amended, allows the Planning Commission to adopt plans for specific geographic areas of the Township where a more detailed plan is needed because of unique physical characteristics of the area. These detailed plans, known as subplans, serve as the basis for site plan review of development and redevelopment of the subplan's geographic area.

The general purpose of a subplan is to guide and accomplish development that, among other things, considers the character of the Township and its suitability for particular uses, weighing local trends in land and population development. Subplans may include, among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for: A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets and provide for safe and efficient movement of people and goods by motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users (such as illustrating locations of driveways and service road and pedestrian and bicycle facilities), Good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds (such as denoting where landscaping, parking lot and building locations, preservation of natural features, and require design standards in order to address a particular land use concern), Public utilities (such as sewage disposal and water supply) and Recreation facilities.

2. Master Planning process

Over several months PC reviewed data and maps and discussed the area
PC Open House for property owners: September 19, 2019
PC reviewed open house and other property owner feedback
PC developed draft Future Land Use map
PC Open House for property owners: January 16, 2020
Pause due to pandemic
PC finalized Future Land Use map and text: September 17, 2020
PC Public Hearing: January 21, 2021, amended March 18, 2021
Township Board approval: April 19, 2021

3. Why Subplan A?

Within the 2007 Master Plan and the 2015 Master Plan Update, Sub Areas 1 and 2 along the 4 Mile Road corridor were developed for areas that have been zoned for commercial uses since the 1960s. There was a concern that if proper access management and other design criteria were not in place, the areas could develop as strip commercial in such a way as to negatively impact the surrounding area. *Subplan A's* planning area includes the north side of 4 Mile Road from Fruit Ridge Avenue east to Bristol Avenue. Renamed Sub Area 1 will remain at the corner of Fruit

Ridge Ave. and renamed Sub Area 2 has been expanded from Walker Ave. east to Cordes Avenue.

Alpine Township decided to expand the planning area to help ensure there wouldn't be development pressure for intensive large-scale land uses that would negatively impact the Township's residential development goals on land near and adjacent to 4 Mile Road or negatively impact its farmland preservation goals on land further to the north (north of 5 Mile Road). Currently, the land to the south in the City of Walker is developing and is planned to continue to develop for mostly industrial uses.

The Township is looking ahead to provide opportunities for small-scale less intense uses that support neighborhood-scale needs and provide support services to the industrial uses to the south. The planned uses along 4 Mile Road are intended to serve as a buffer to the planned residential and agricultural uses further north of 4 Mile Road.

4 Mile Road is a three-lane county primary road and sees an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volume of 12,000 vehicles per day near M-37 and a low of 7,000 vehicles per day near Fruit Ridge Avenue. Traffic will continue to increase because of continued development at the I-96 / Walker interchange in the City of Walker, continued industrial development along Northridge Avenue in the City of Walker, the location of Kenowa Hills Middle and High Schools and the general development of land along the corridor in both Alpine Township and the City of Walker.

4. General Description of the Area (west to east along 4 Mile Road)

Beginning at the northeast corner of 4 Mile Road and Fruit Ridge Avenue, this parcel consists of about 30 acres and has been zoned for commercial use since the 1960's. The site is utilized by Hofacker Equipment, a sales and service business for lawn and garden equipment. The majority of the property is vacant and has potential for development.

Next comes several homes (one with 40 acres) and the Kenowa Hills High School and Middle School Complex followed by a small area zoned commercial for the recently vacated Roth Trucking business. This is followed by about a dozen homes and the Gracewil Golf course; all of which is zoned for residential uses.

The area between Walker and Baumhoff Avenues is zoned for commercial use to a depth of 500 feet from the right-of-way line for a distance of about one-half mile. This equals about 30 acres of commercially-zoned land. This zoning has existed since the 1960's. The area contains one parcel of 15 acres which is vacant. The remainder consists of parcels ranging from one-half to five acres. Four single family dwellings occupy the smaller lots while the Kenowa Hills School Administration building occupies a five acre parcel and a package delivery business is located on a 3-acre former vehicle sales lot. A small business building is located near the northeast corner of 4 Mile Road and Walker Avenue.

Property from the Gracewil Golf Course entrance to the midpoint between Bristol and Cordes Avenues is not served by gravity sanitary sewer. Development would necessitate construction of a gravity sanitary sewer main down to the Gracewil sewer lift station.

The area between Baumhoff and Cordes Avenues is characterized by three large farmland parcels and three small parcels with homes on them.

Most of the recent changes along the corridor have been in the City of Walker. Alpine Township reviewed the existing and planned land uses in the City prior to establishing *Subplan A* in Alpine Township. In the City of Walker, existing and planned land uses west to east are as follows:

- Fruit Ridge Ave. to Hendershot Ave. is occupied by orchard and rapidly expanding industrial uses and planned for light industrial uses
- Hendershot Ave. to Walker Ave. is occupied by homes and planned for low density residential uses.
- Walker Ave. to Shippers Dr. is occupied by a couple of homes and the Michigan State Police and planned for light industrial/office uses.
- Shippers Dr. to Bristol Ave. is occupied by a FedEx distribution facility, the future home of the Kent County Road Commission and commercial greenhouses and is planned for light industrial uses.
- Bristol Ave. to Cordes Ave. is occupied by an electrical substation, homes and a golf course and is planned for public/semi-public uses, mixed residential and master planned commercial uses.

5. Future Land Use Designations (as they appear west to east along 4 Mile Road NW)

Commercial: This area was known as Sub-Area 2 in the 2007 Master Plan and 2015 Master Plan Update. This parcel consists of about 30 acres and has been zoned for commercial use since the 1960's. The site is utilized by Hofacker Equipment, a sales and service business for lawn and garden equipment. The majority of the property is vacant and has potential for development. Access Management (number and placement of driveways) is important at this busy intersection. The future land use designation of 'Commercial' is included in the revised and renamed Sub-Area 1.

Public Park: This designation recognizes the lack of public recreation facilities in the area (either in Alpine Township or the City of Walker) and seeks to plan an area for such adjacent to the Alpine Meadows manufactured housing community and nearby residential development to the east. In addition, a partnership could be established with the adjacent Kenowa Hills School District for shared recreation facilities. A public park would also act as a buffer to the industrial uses planned to the south.

Institutional: This designation acknowledges the investment Kenowa Hills School District has made to the Middle and High School campuses at this location. The Township anticipates that the school district will continue to invest in the campuses and adapt them to the needs of their students.

Commercial PUD: This designation recognizes a small portion of the site was utilized until recently by Roth Trucking, a trucking business at the northeast corner of 4 Mile Road and Hendershot Avenue. The balance of the area is mostly vacant and has potential for future commercial development. All future development or redevelopment will have specific design and operational criteria within a PUD so that any future commercial development does not negatively impact the adjacent school campuses or residential development.

Low Density Residential: This designation acknowledges the existing residential uses in the area on both sides of 4 Mile Road and plans for future residential expansion if Gracewil Country Club redevelops in the future.

Commercial Border: A part of this area was known as Sub-Area 1 in the 2007 Master Plan and 2015 Master Plan Update. The former Sub-Area 1 portion encompassed properties from Walker Avenue east to Baumhoff Avenue for a depth of about 500 feet from the right-of-way line. This approximate 30 acres of land has been commercially zoned since the 1960's. *Subplan A* expands the commercially planned area from Walker Avenue east to Bristol Avenue and its depth has been adjusted in spots to recognize existing property lines. However, most of the area is again planned for commercial to a depth of 500 feet from the right-of-way line.

This area is envisioned to provide support retail, commercial and office services for the industrial development to the south. Envisioned uses are to be much less intense in use and scale as compared to those uses on M-37. To minimize the potential negative impacts of strip commercial development, access management provisions limiting the number and locations of driveways will be required. In addition, drive-through establishments such as restaurants and oil change businesses will not be permitted since the operations of such (number of customers, nighttime headlights, large delivery vehicles during the night, etc.) are disruptive to adjoining planned residential areas. At the time of this writing, there is no public gravity sanitary sewer serving this area. When gravity sanitary sewer becomes available to this area, all existing businesses must connect to the public sanitary sewer system. All new businesses shall connect to gravity sanitary sewer. The future land use designation of 'Commercial Border' is included in the expanded, revised and renamed Sub-Area 2 encompassing land from Walker Avenue to Cordes Avenue.

Office: This area is located between the Bristol and Cordes Avenue intersections and is planned for office uses to a depth of 500 feet from the right-of-way line. Office uses were chosen because office uses are a good transitional use between the more intensive uses planned to the south in the City of Walker and the residential uses planned to the north in Alpine Township and because there is very little opportunity for office development elsewhere in Alpine Township. Financial institutions with drive-up windows are acceptable in this designation.

At the time of this writing, there is no public gravity sanitary sewer serving the western half of this area. When gravity sanitary sewer becomes available to this area, all existing businesses must connect to the public sanitary sewer system. All new businesses shall connect to gravity sanitary sewer. The future land use designation of 'Office' is included in the expanded, revised and renamed Sub-Area 2 encompassing land from Bristol Avenue to Cordes Avenue.

Alpine Twp. Subplan A Future Land Use for 4 Mile Rd. corridor April 2021

