



# 2021 FUTURE LAND USE MAP

## ALPINE TOWNSHIP KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN

As amended by *Subplan A*, adopted April 19, 2021 by the Alpine Township Board

### INTRODUCTION

The Alpine Township Master Plan consists of text, charts, maps, and analysis regarding the development within the community and its purpose is to:

- promote the public health, safety, and general welfare;
- encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability;
- avoid overcrowding of the land by buildings and people;
- lessen congestion on public roads and streets;
- facilitate a transportation system, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation and other public improvements; and,
- consider the Township's character and suitability for particular uses.

Although the Master Plan has no regulatory power, it states specific land development and preservation goals that are intended to guide both the Planning Commission and the Township Board in making both day-to-day and long-range land use decisions.

This Master Plan has been developed based upon several factors: the existing natural resources of the Township, especially the prime, unique and valuable agricultural land; current land use trends; the need for different types of land use including a mix of land uses within a single unified project; the location of public water and sewer; the future land uses in the City of Walker and adjacent townships and the desired community character as expressed through work sessions with local officials and Township residents.

### Use of the Plan

The Master Plan's function is to serve as a decision making framework, by providing information valuable to land use decisions, and providing a sound rationale for recommended land uses.

The Master Plan does not dictate the timing of development but rather the Plan sets forth recommendations for what type of land uses can be established in the Township, where they can be established and under what conditions they can be established.

The Alpine Township Master Plan is intended to be flexible in order for the Township to be able to react to changes in the economy and other unforeseen factors. It is not necessarily intended to establish the precise boundaries of land use areas or the exact locations of individual future land uses.

Each community has a vision for its future, and a sense for its desired character. However, growth is inevitable in a thriving community. The Master Plan, more than any other document, provides direction for Alpine Township officials in managing growth while retaining the desired community character, and providing the best quality of life possible for current and future residents.

**Relationship to Zoning**  
The Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map are the primary implementation tools of the Master Plan; they contain the regulatory power to ensure the compatibility of land uses, to protect natural resources and to protect property values.

### VISION STATEMENT

"Alpine Township is a dynamically diverse family-oriented community that strives for managed growth with proper supporting infrastructure within a framework of a vibrant agricultural base and a small town feel."

### GOALS

Planning goals are statements that express a community's long range desires and are intended to provide a basic framework upon which day-to-day and long term development decisions may be made by public and private agencies.

- Goal 1: Maintain and implement the Alpine Township Farmland Preservation policy which is to preserve the prime, unique and valuable agricultural land in Alpine Township for present and future generations.
- Goal 2: Plan for safe, creative and desirable residential neighborhoods that are suitable for people of varying ages, lifestyles and incomes.
- Goal 3: Maintain and plan for a safe, efficient and functional transportation system for all users, both motorized and non-motorized.
- Goal 4: Maintain and plan for efficient, functional and fiscally sound utility systems.
- Goal 5: Encourage dynamic commercial and industrial districts.
- Goal 6: Maintain and develop Township-school relationships.
- Goal 7: Maintain and expand inter-governmental cooperation and relationships.
- Goal 8: Maintain and expand natural, recreational and cultural resource assets.

### FUTURE LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS

The Future Land Use Map recommends a number of different future land use classifications that explain the type, intensity and location of the proposed uses. Although the Future Land Use Map provides the basis for the Zoning Map, these future land use classifications will not automatically change the zoning for an area. A property owner is permitted to use the land as it is currently zoned even if the zoning designation is different from the Future Land Use designation. The names of the Future Land Use designations do not always match the names of the zoning districts.

#### AP, Agricultural Preservation

The intent of this category is the long term preservation of farmland in Alpine Township. The Future Land Use Map identifies the majority of Township land as being within this category. The principal land use is agriculture or agricultural support services which help to enhance and stabilize the farming industry. Single family dwellings for farmers and migrant workers are also allowed. Non-farm dwellings would be limited by the Sliding Scale zoning regulations established in 1989 which allow landowners to create up to four buildable lots from a parcel which is over 80 acres.

Land is recommended for AP use in Sections 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31 due to the LESA scoring system and the adjacent existing and

planned RE, Residential Estate buffer zone which will protect these lands from conflicts caused by intensive non-farm uses. Additional AP designated lands are north of 6 Mile Road and reflect the LESA scoring system, large tracts of productive farmland, history of agricultural use and zoning, and compatibility with land uses in Wright Township to the west and Sparta Township to the north.

#### RE, Residential Estate

The RE classification is intended to provide for residential development in a rural setting adjacent to Agricultural Preservation land use areas. The 1.5 acre minimum lot size requirement and agricultural activities recommended for the RE land use classification are intended to satisfy a demand for a rural life style without using up prime agricultural land.

The RE classification is intended to serve as a transition or buffer zone between the AP classification and more intense land uses of the Alpine Township Master Plan which is to preserve productive farmland from urban encroachment and encourage the agricultural economy of the Township. Subdivisions in the RE zone, whether they take the form of traditional plats or condominiums, will need to be served by public sanitary sewer.

#### LDR, Low Density Residential

This land use category recognizes existing subdivisions and makes provision for new residential areas. LDR is analogous to the R-1 zoning district. For properties with public sewer utilities, a maximum density of 3.2 dwelling units per acre is recommended. The single family detached house will be the predominant style in this area although two family (duplex) units will be permitted along arterial streets. Low Density Residential areas are required to be served by public water and sewer and should be located close to schools, parks and shopping opportunities. LDR areas could also be developed as Open Space Neighborhoods. Certain non-residential uses compatible with single family residences, i.e., parks, churches and schools are also permitted within the Low Density Residential class.

#### MDR, Medium Density Residential

This land use category is designed to accommodate up to 8 units per acre with a variety of housing types such as two, three and four family dwelling units, including attached condominiums. Mobile home parks fit into this category due to their density. The Master Plan does not recommend any new areas for mobile home parks as three parks already exist in the Township.

Medium density residential areas can be located along or near urban arterial streets and can also serve as a buffer or transition zone between non-residential uses and low density or Residential Estate areas. Public water and sanitary sewer are necessary to serve this type of land use. The MDR designation is the same as the R-2 zoning district. The Plan does not recommend any new MDR areas due to the large number of existing multi-family dwellings in the Township and because future multi-family dwellings can be accommodated within the Mixed Use PUD areas.

#### HDR, High Density Residential

High density residential areas are intended for multi-family dwelling units, such as apartments (renter occupied) or condominiums (owner occupied). A maximum density of 12.5 units per acre is recommended for this land use category which shall be served by public utilities. HDR is the same as the R-3 zoning district. Rental housing accounts for about 44 percent of the total housing stock in the Township. This high number of rental units has increased the need for Township services, especially fire, police and emergency medical services. Traffic volumes have also increased significantly in these areas. The 2010 occupancy rates were 52% owner-occupied, 37% renter-occupied, and 11% vacant, which achieves a Master Plan goal of providing diversified housing opportunities. The Master Plan therefore recommends that no more land be planned for High Density Residential development.

#### MPUD, Mixed Use Planned Unit Development

The intent of the Mixed Use PUD land use category is to encourage land developers to provide a variety of housing options within a unified development project with open space and other amenities for residents in exchange for higher density than allowed by the Low Density Residential category. Within a Mixed Use PUD a variety of dwelling unit types and lot sizes would be required. Single family detached dwellings may very well be the predominant type but two family and multi-family buildings up to eight units per building including townhouses are also permitted within this category.

Residential uses would be allowed at a maximum overall density of 6 dwellings per acre depending on compatibility with the uses and character of adjacent lands. Senior housing and related medical care facilities would be allowed at a density of 8 units per acre, although the Zoning Ordinance would allow the Planning Commission to approve a higher density for senior housing.

As a further means to encourage creativity in neighborhood design and function some limited office/service uses and neighborhood convenience retail uses would also be permitted within a Mixed Use PUD. This will promote another Plan objective of locating employment opportunities within walking distance of residential areas and provide places and opportunities for interaction among neighbors. Commercial use within a Mixed Use PUD would be limited to a certain percentage of the site area perhaps in the range of 25 to 33 percent.

Specific design standards are required in MPUD developments with emphasis placed on preserving the natural terrain, providing usable open space, community or village type greens to promote opportunities for social interaction, providing sidewalks and foot trails in open space areas along with a variety of lot sizes and building setbacks to create a sense of neighborhood which is often missing from traditional subdivision design. Any use within a MPUC shall be served by public utilities. MPUD areas, because of the flexibility proposed in design standards, can be appropriate in a variety of locations.

#### O, Office

Office development is similar in many ways to high density residential in terms of characteristics (traffic, appearance, height, etc.) and compatibility with other uses. This makes offices a

suitable transition or buffer use in many locations. Office uses should be served by public utilities and generally located along or near the Alpine Avenue corridor. Office uses at major intersections are desirable; as such uses generate less traffic than commercial uses and serve as a buffer for less intensive uses located away from the intersection. Although the Plan does not recommend many specific sites for Office use the category is valid and should be given consideration as a transition use in the appropriate location.

#### C, Commercial

The majority of the commercial land uses recommended in the Plan are already generally located between 4 and 8 Mile Roads along the Alpine Avenue Corridor. This area serves both the day to day shopping needs of the community as well as the highway traveler. The commercial areas between 7 Mile and 10 Mile Roads consist of existing uses established long before current zoning regulations were adopted, and do not necessarily reflect current Township attitudes toward commercial development. Commercial areas should be served by public utilities and developed with safe and convenient access through proper site plan review regulations. The implementation of various access management techniques are required as commercial development occurs to control traffic generated by these existing and future commercial uses.

#### CB, Commercial Border

Properties from Walker Ave. East to Baumhoff Ave. for a depth of about 500 feet from the right-of-way line have been commercially zoned since the 1960's. Subplan A expands this area East to Bristol Ave. and its depth has been adjusted in spots to recognize existing property lines. However, most of the area is 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. Drive-through establishments such as restaurants and oil change businesses will not be permitted since the operations of such are disruptive to adjoining planned residential areas. At the time of this writing, there is no public gravity sanitary sewer serving this area. All new businesses shall connect to gravity sanitary sewer.

#### CPUD, Commercial Planned Unit Development

This land use category is provided as it is recognized that for certain areas in the Township, commercial uses may be appropriate if developed under the unifying, flexible and protective regulations of a Planned Unit Development. A Commercial PUD would permit a broad range of commercial uses which would be designed to provide shopping opportunities for nearby Township residents and workers and to lessen extent passing traffic. Other uses within a CPUD which would serve to support and complement the commercial uses would be offices and senior housing. Commercial PUD's are expected to be developed according to specific site development standards within a single unifying site plan to ensure that all uses relate well to each other in both function and design. Commercial PUDs must be served by public water and sewer.

#### Industrial

The Plan recommends that industrial development occur in those areas where utilities exist or are planned for, with access to an urban arterial (M-37) and railways and which can be protected from conflicting uses. All new industrial uses should be served by public utilities.

#### Public Parks / Recreation

This category recognizes government lands, buildings and public recreation areas such as the Township offices, fire stations, the Alpine Township Sports Complex, Wahlfeld County Park, and land planned for parks.

#### Social, Cultural & Institutional

The Future Land Use Map illustrates existing churches, schools, cemeteries and the Alpine Historical Museum as Social, Cultural and Institutional uses.

#### Sub-Area Plans

##### Sub-Area 1

The parcel at the Northeast corner of 4 Mile Road and Fruit Ridge Ave. 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.

Traffic on Fruit Ridge Ave. and 4 Mile Road is expected to increase due to development to the South in the City of Walker and development to the East on 4 Mile Rd. including uses associated with Kenowa Hills High and Middle Schools. In order to provide for safer driving conditions in this area, the number and placement of driveways along 4 Mile Rd. and Fruit Ridge Ave. is proposed to be limited. Driveways would be connected by private service roads or parking lots depending on how the property develops. There are specific site development standards in the associated Zoning Overlay.

##### Sub-Area 2

The future land use designation of Commercial Border is located from Walker Ave. to Bristol Avenue. Properties from Walker Ave. to Baumhoff Ave. for a depth of about 500 feet from the right-of-way line have been commercially zoned area East to Bristol Ave. and its depth has been adjusted in spots to recognize existing property lines. Most of the area is planned for commercial to a depth of 500 feet from the right-of-way line. This area is envisioned to provide enough support retail, commercial and office services for the industrial development to the South. Drive-through establishments such as restaurants and oil change businesses will not be permitted since the operations of such are disruptive to adjoining planned residential areas.

The future land use designation of Office is located from Bristol Ave. to Cordes Ave. for a depth of 500 feet from the right-of-way line. 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 the 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 portion of Sub-Area 2. All new businesses in Sub-Area 2 shall connect to gravity sanitary sewer. There are specific site development standards in the associated Zoning Overlay.

##### Sub-Area 3

The area includes the Rasch homestead at 930 6 Mile Road, extending easterly to contain the West Central Storage site, then southerly to include the mobile home sales business lots, the Gregware Equipment lots, the Oasis Hot Tubs property and the Van Luster homestead. Their combined area is approximately twenty acres, which is divided into eight lots. The boulevard design of this section of Alpine Avenue restricts left turning movements from these sites but seems to facilitate high speeds and mass movement of vehicular traffic.

The grouping of outdoor sales and the exposed storage of inventory, when combined with frequent semi-truck deliveries, raises commercial-residential compatibility issues similar to those stated in Sub-Area 2. This sub-area plan seeks to balance the sustainability of local businesses with quality of life issues for present and future residential dwellers on adjacent lots. There are specific site development standards.

##### ★ Planned Neighborhood Shopping Center

A neighborhood convenience shopping center offers consumer convenience goods, foods and pharmacy, as well as personal services such as laundry and dry cleaning, barbering and shoe repairing, for daily living needs of an immediate neighborhood. The amount of gross leasable area in a neighborhood convenience shopping center may range from 5,000 to 10,000 square feet. The site area for a neighborhood convenience shopping center should range between two to four acres and the support population will range from 3,000 to 6,000 persons within a ten minute driving time.

The Master Plan recommends a Planned Neighborhood Shopping Center in the area of Lamoreaux extended and Bristol Avenue to serve the convenience shopping needs of future residents in Sections 26, 27, 34 and 35. This location offers good access once Lamoreaux is extended, will be convenient for future residents, and will provide a destination for children.

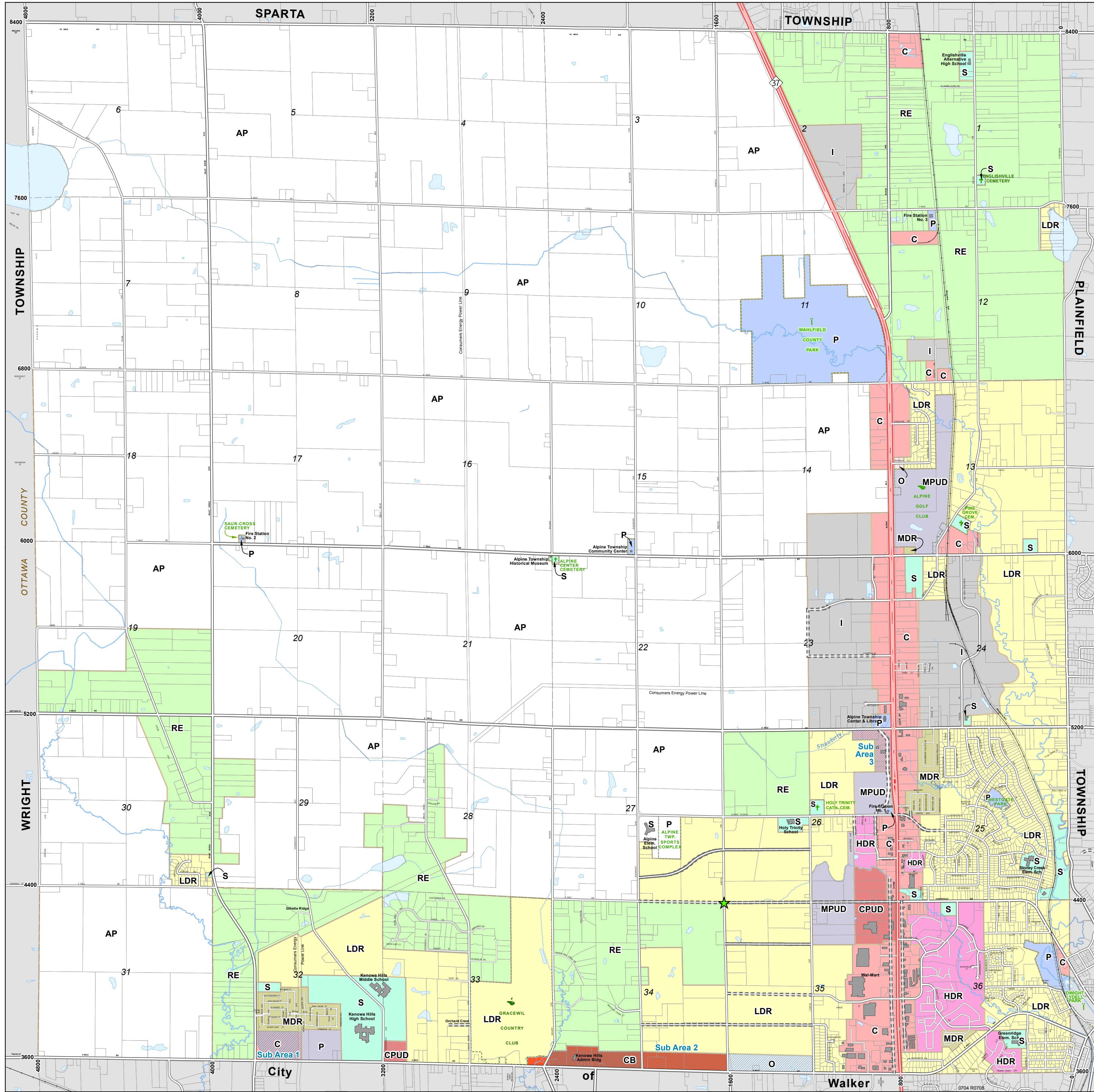
### Future Streets

By illustrating future streets on the Future Land Use Map, the Township is indicating that such streets will improve access in and around the Township and must be part of any development for that property. The Future Land Use Map shows the general location of future roadways; exact location and alignment will likely not be determined until the property is proposed for development. Payment for the street will also need to be determined by Township officials, but to date payment for streets has been by developers.

- Lamoreaux Drive extended to Baumhoff Avenue** The Plan proposes that a segment of 5 Mile Road be constructed between Baumhoff Avenue and Alpine Avenue. This roadway would serve as a minor arterial to permit access from the proposed residential areas in Section 26, 27, 34 and 35 to the shopping and service areas on Alpine Avenue. It is proposed that this roadway intersect at Alpine Avenue opposite Lamoreaux Drive resulting in a major controlled intersection.
- Alpine Church Street Extended** This proposal would extend Alpine Church Street eastward from Alpine Avenue to connect with Westgate Avenue.
- East-West Collector Road System** This consists of public roads through the planned residential areas in Sections 26, 27, 34 and 35. These east west roads would serve to distribute the traffic movement in these future neighborhoods and allow residents to travel to the shopping and service opportunities along Alpine Avenue.
- Vitality Drive** This is a local loop road providing interior access to future industrial land in Section 23. The northern portion aligns with Vinton Avenue.
- Fruit Ridge Avenue Additional Right-of-Way** The Plan recognizes the importance of Fruit Ridge Avenue for future north-south travel through Alpine Township. Traffic is expected to increase as drivers seek alternate routes to M-37. The Plan anticipates that Fruit Ridge may be widened to accommodate future traffic volumes; therefore, additional right-of-way may be needed.
- Service Road System** The Plan strongly recommends that the service road /commercial service drive system serving private properties along Alpine Avenue be continued.
- 4 Mile Road Additional Right of Way** Consideration needs to be given to requiring greater setbacks for buildings along 4 Mile Road as future widening may require additional right-of-way.
- Aldun Ridge Extended** Obtain necessary right-of-way and either extend Aldun Ridge north to Alpine Church Street or develop Syracuse Avenue south to the service drive in the Churchill Place apartment complex.

**Complete Street Information** See the Transportation Master Plan map for transit and non-motorized transportation details.

**For full descriptions of the land use designations and the Township's land use goals, please see the Master Plan Text.**



**LEGEND**

Freeway	Primary	Railroads	Rivers & Streams
Freeway Ramp	Secondary	Section Lines	Lakes & Ponds
Highway	Private	Parcels	Building Footprints
		Parks, Cemeteries, Etc.	Government Units

REGIS

MAP SCALE 1:21,000

0 875 1,750 3,500 5,250 7,000 Feet

ALPINE TOWNSHIP  
KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

