
Reviving the Corridor

Reimagining Commercial Zones for Housing,
Transit, and Community Well-Being



Introduction

The Need

Statewide Housing Needs

119,000 homes, apartments, condos, and townhouses are needed *right now* across the state.



County Housing Needs

Kent

33,150 homes

Ottawa

16,300 homes

Muskegon

9,100 homes

Grand Traverse

11,300 homes

Kalamazoo

8,300 homes

**78,000 homes
needed in just
five counties**

Kent County Housing Gap

34,699

New Homes Needed by 2027

70,000

New Homes Needed by 2050

Status Quo

Where will housing be built if we don't take new action?

Acres of vacant land zoned for residential:

129,516 acres

Potential new homes under current zoning:

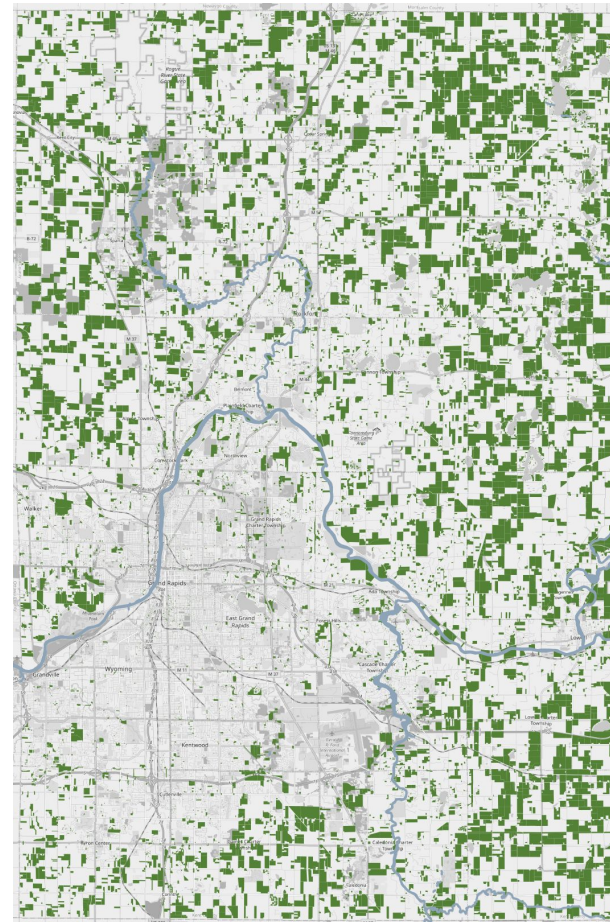
79,244 new homes

Average density of these new homes:

0.61 homes / acre

...if *all* vacant property zoned for residential use were fully developed to current zoning.

Vacant Parcels



Status Quo: Single Family Homes

98% of vacant residential land
(117,683 acres) is zoned exclusively
for single family homes

Avg purchase price for a
new single family home
in Kent County:

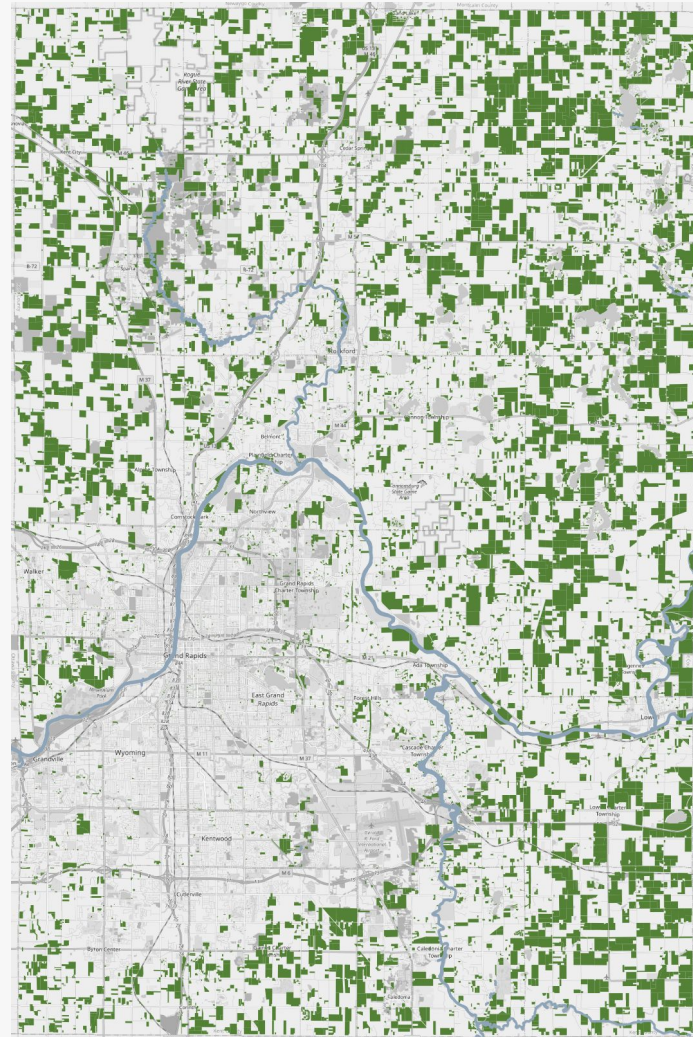
\$504,000

Monthly mortgage + tax:

\$3,700 / mo

Minimum income required to
afford most new housing in
Kent County today:

\$149,000/yr



Min Lot Width Required:
78 ft

Min Lot Area Required:
32,000 sq ft - 71,400 sq ft

Single Family Home

Average lot cost

\$75–100k

Average home cost
2,200 sq ft

\$425k – \$500k

Annual household
income required

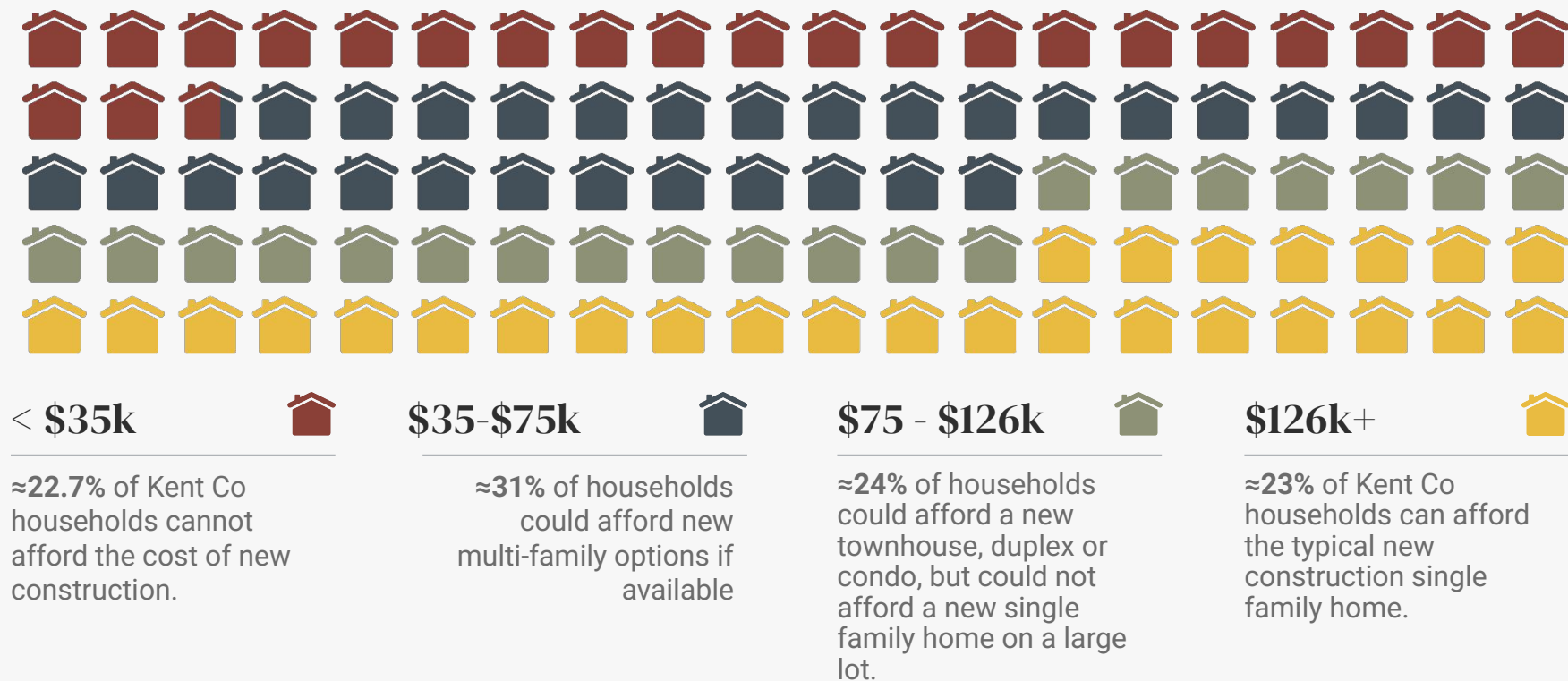
\$120,000 min.

New infrastructure
(Sewer, water, road)

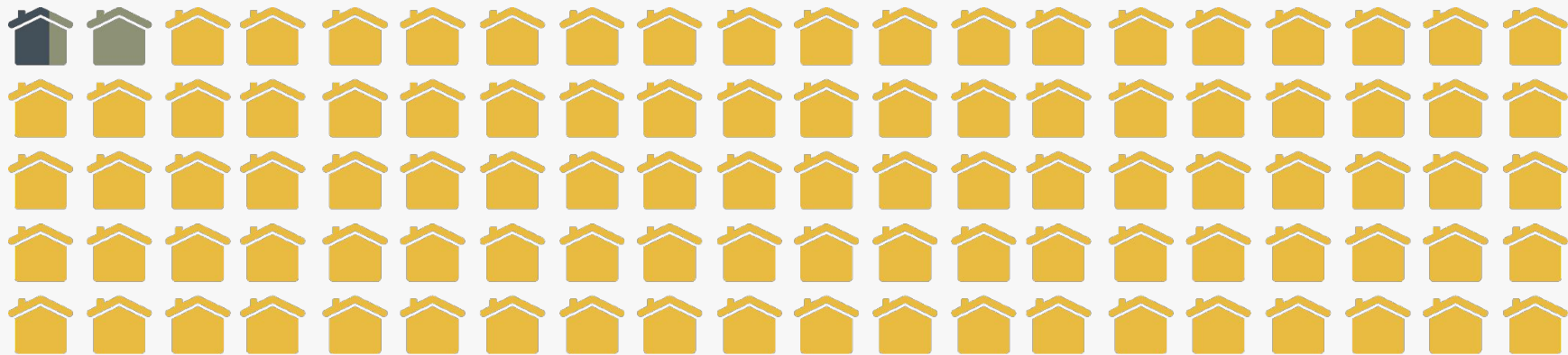
78 ft avg



What can Kent County Families Afford in Today's Market?



Status Quo Zoning Distribution of Vacant Residential Land



Multi-Family: 4+



0.5% of available land

Requires
\$66,000/yr income
\$1,650/mo rent

Attached + Small: 2-3



1.6% of available land

Requires
\$78,000/yr income
\$1,950/mo rent / mortgage

Single Family



98% of available land

Requires
\$140,000/yr income
\$3,500/mo rent/ mortgage





Planning to build this...

Struggling to preserve this...

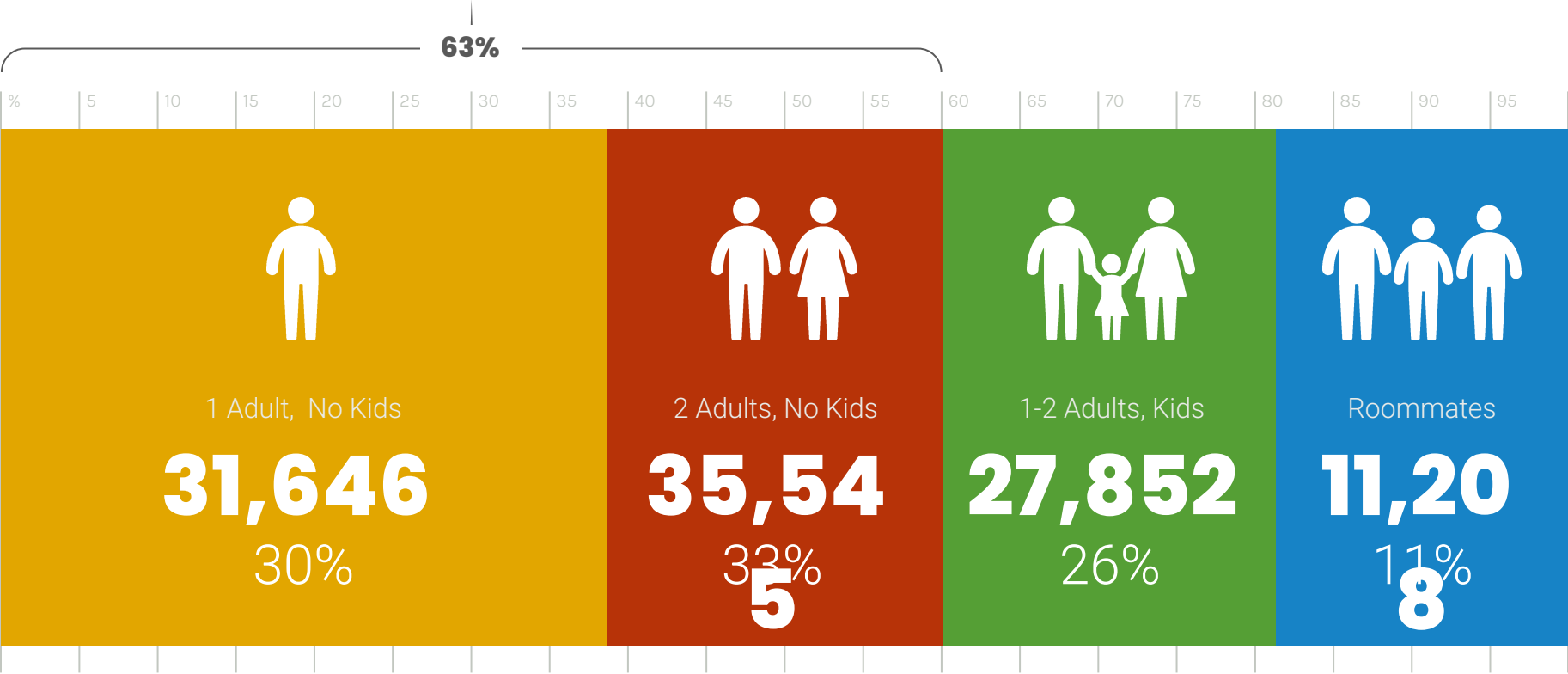


Failing to serve us...



Implications of the Status Quo

Shifting Household Demographics





52% of prospective homebuyers express strong preference for walkable neighborhoods & less maintenance when looking for a home.

National Association of Realtors

Housing Mismatch

3% Total regional land allows for walkable neighborhoods.

9% Residents currently live in walkable neighborhoods

56% Residents would prefer to live in a walkable neighborhood

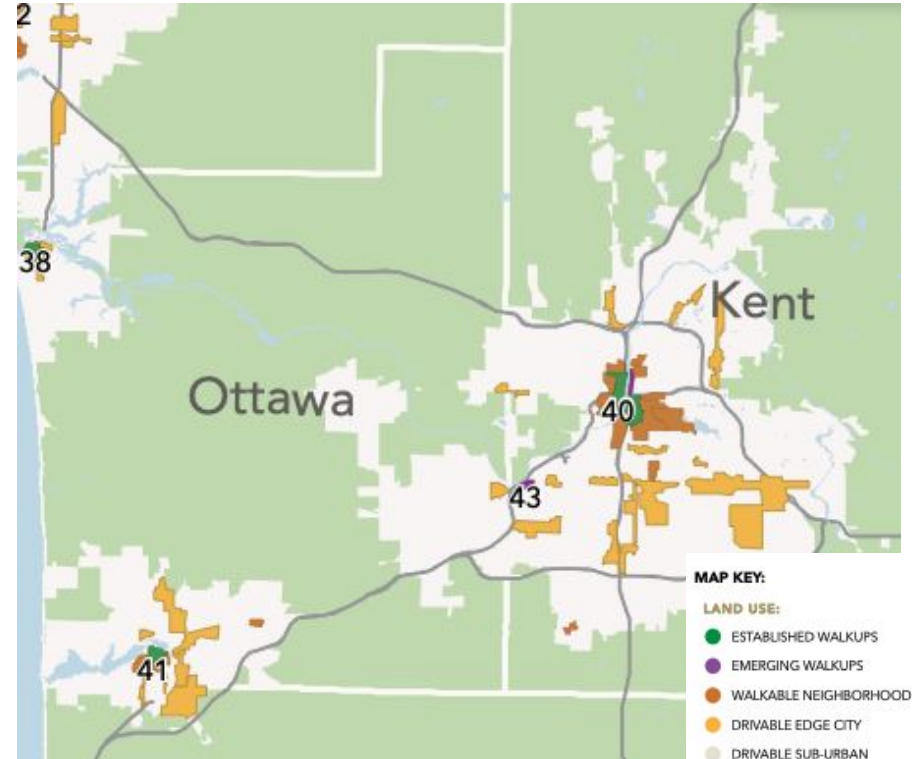


Image Credit:
Christopher Leinberger, University of Michigan

New Infrastructure Costs

COST PER FOOT

INFRASTRUCTURE

\$450

Water Line

\$500

Sewer Line

\$350

Public Road

\$1,300

Total

\$101,400

Per 78ft

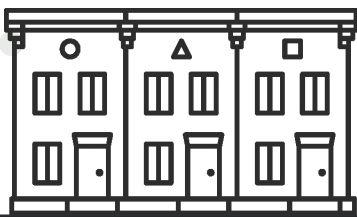
35 YEARS



With a local tax bill of \$722 each, it would take **35** years for one new single family home on each side of the street to pay off the cost of new infrastructure.

\$722 in tax

16 YEARS



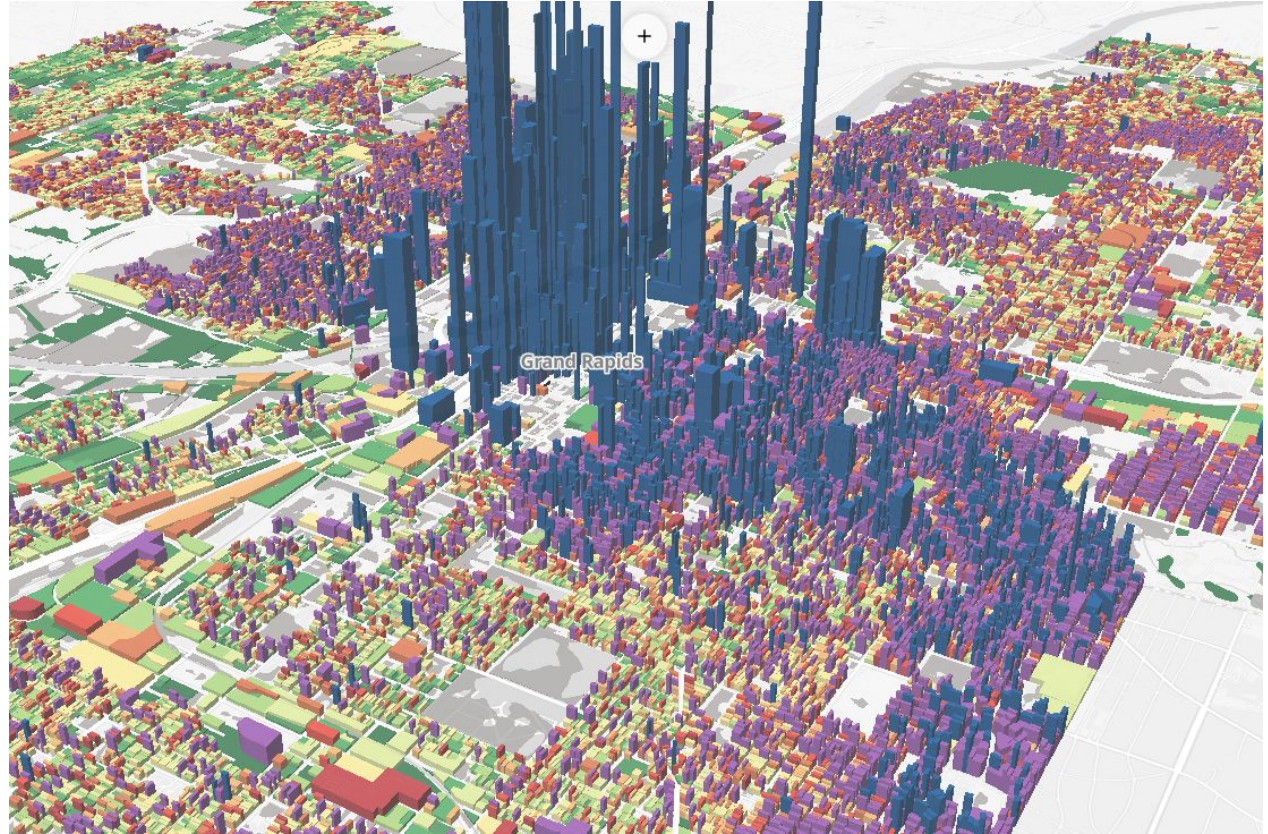
With a local tax bill of \$516, each, it would take **16** years for three new townhomes on each side of the street to pay off the cost of new infrastructure.

\$1,548 in tax

Taxable Value Per Acre Map

Guess which neighborhoods
have high density

...and which neighborhoods
have lower density



Status Quo

Acres

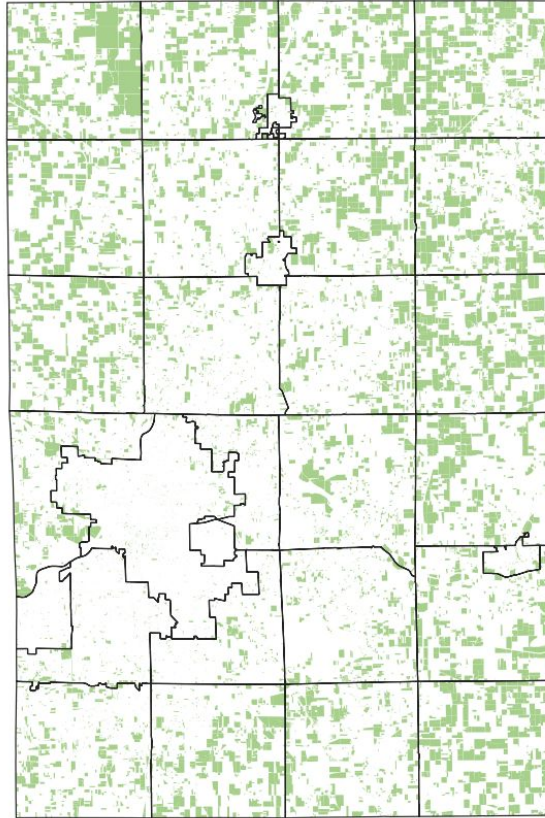
120,000

Housing Units

79,224

New Infrastructure

\$4B



100% Build-out
County Wide

Corridor
Strategy

Acres

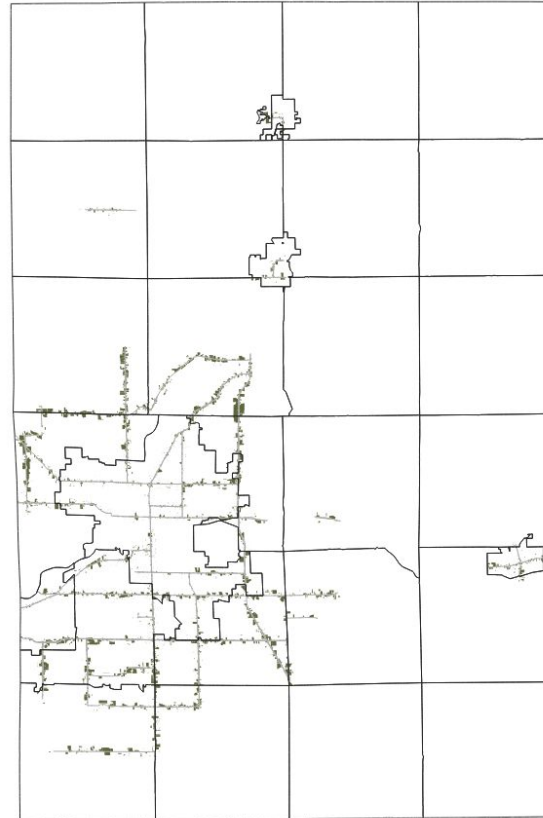
3,103

Housing Units

78,736

New Infrastructure

\$250M



18% Build-out only on
corridors



Guiding Principles

Options for Everyone

Build a diversity of housing types at all price points to create real choices in the market for every individual and family and at every stage of life.

Smart Investments

Establish financially sustainable patterns of development for long-term growth and prosperity in every neighborhood.

Meaningful Green Spaces

Well planned pocket parks, neighborhood parks, and regional trails are great ways to connect people to nature and reduce land costs for housing.

Vibrant Places

Supporting a vibrant community with a high quality of life for every resident of Kent County.

Locally Driven

Key decisions are made by local leaders. Regional context is important and local priorities are paramount.



INDIGO

DESIGN + DEVELOPMENT

Indigo is a unique real estate firm combining the disciplines of architecture and real estate development to build community enriching projects primarily in West Michigan.



Townhomes of Breton Village

- Infill On Tiny Parcel of Land Behind Shopping Center
- Just “Off” Major Commercial Intersection
- 9 For Sale Townhome-Style Condos
- 2 Stall Garage (Rear Fed)



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DESIGN + DEVELOPMENT

Townhomes of Breton Village

Vicinity Map Showing
Adjacency to Breton Village
Shopping Center





Townhomes of Breton Village

Some Initial Neighborhood Opposition

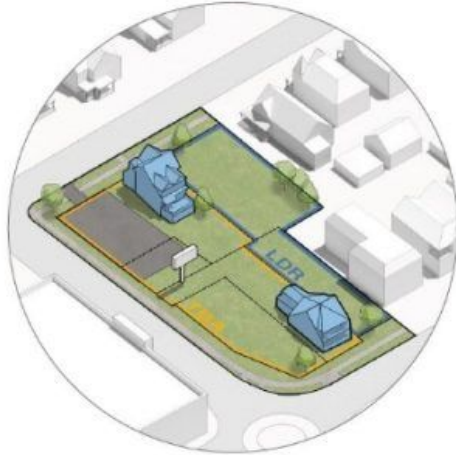
Strong Support from City as Transition Between
Neighborhood and the Shopping Center

Received by Market Very Well - Sold Immediately



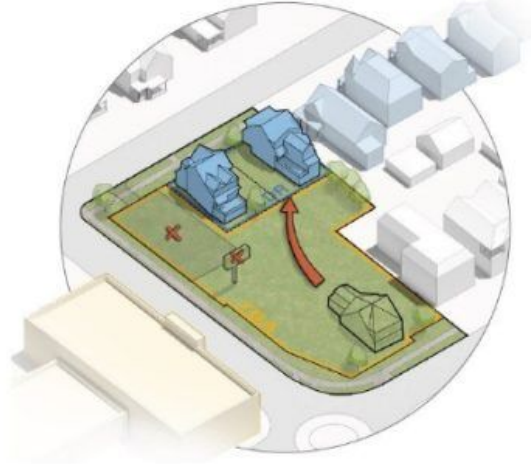
ORIGINAL CONDITIONS

PARCEL OUTLINES MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL HISTORIC HOMES



SITE MODIFICATION

SITE MODIFICATIONS MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL HISTORIC HOMES



NEW DEVELOPMENT

OFFICE SPACE APARTMENT UNITS TOWNHOMES HISTORIC HOMES



Heritage Court

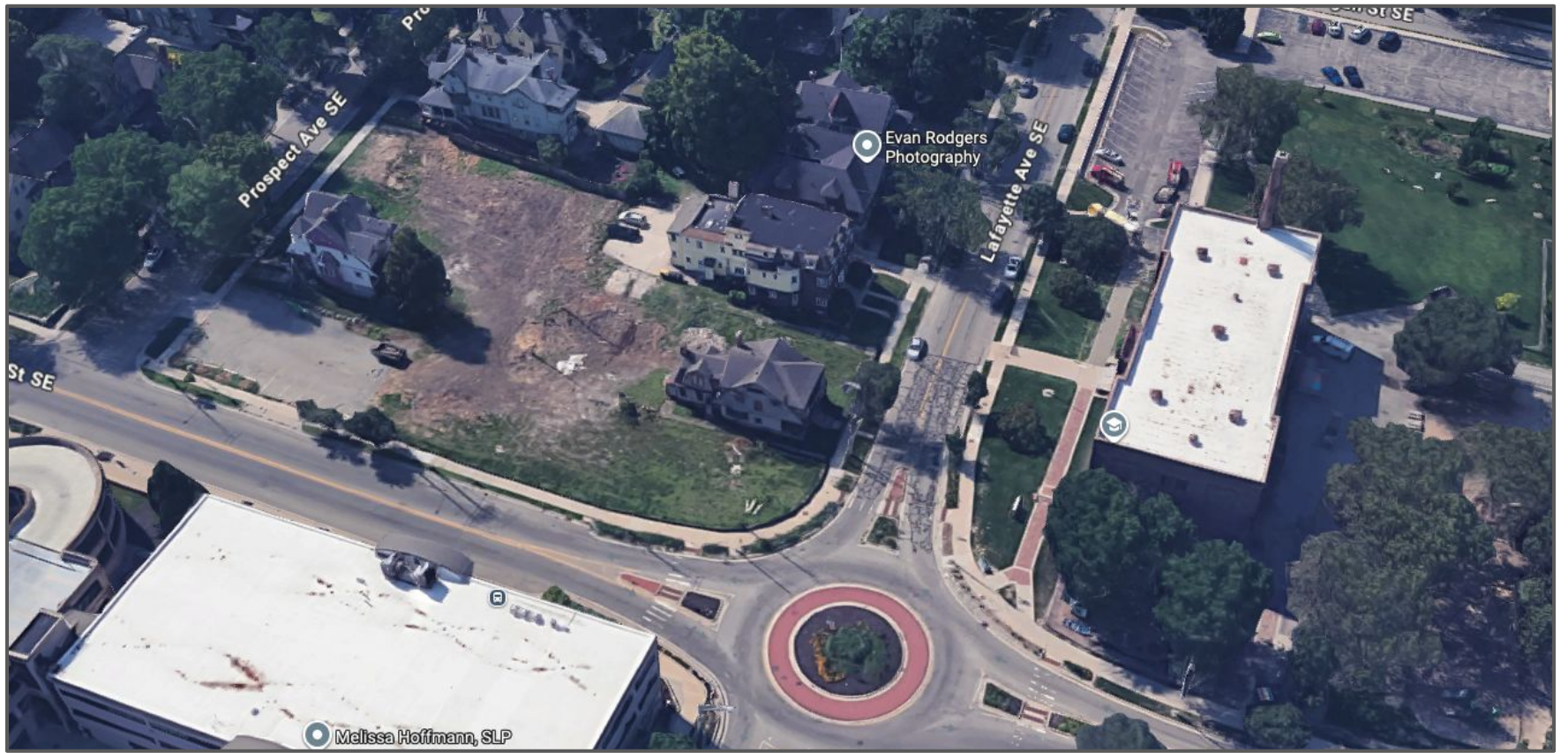
Contaminated Site, 6 Parcels, 2 Zoning Districts, Historic Neighborhood, House Relocation, Billboard and Utility Line Conflicts, Etc.

2 Historic Homes + 14 Townhomes + 6 Flats + 2 Commercial Suites



INDIGO
DESIGN + DEVELOPMENT







Heritage Court

415 Prospect SE

Relocated from Lafayette to Prospect to allow for new mixed-use development

Full Historic Restoration - 3,500 sf, 4 bedrooms,
3.5 bathrooms, 2 Stall Attached Garage, Roof Deck



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Site Work Underway, Vertical Construction Coming Soon

Delivery of First Condos in Late 2026

(2) 2,000 Commercial Suites (Office or Retail)

For Sale or Lease



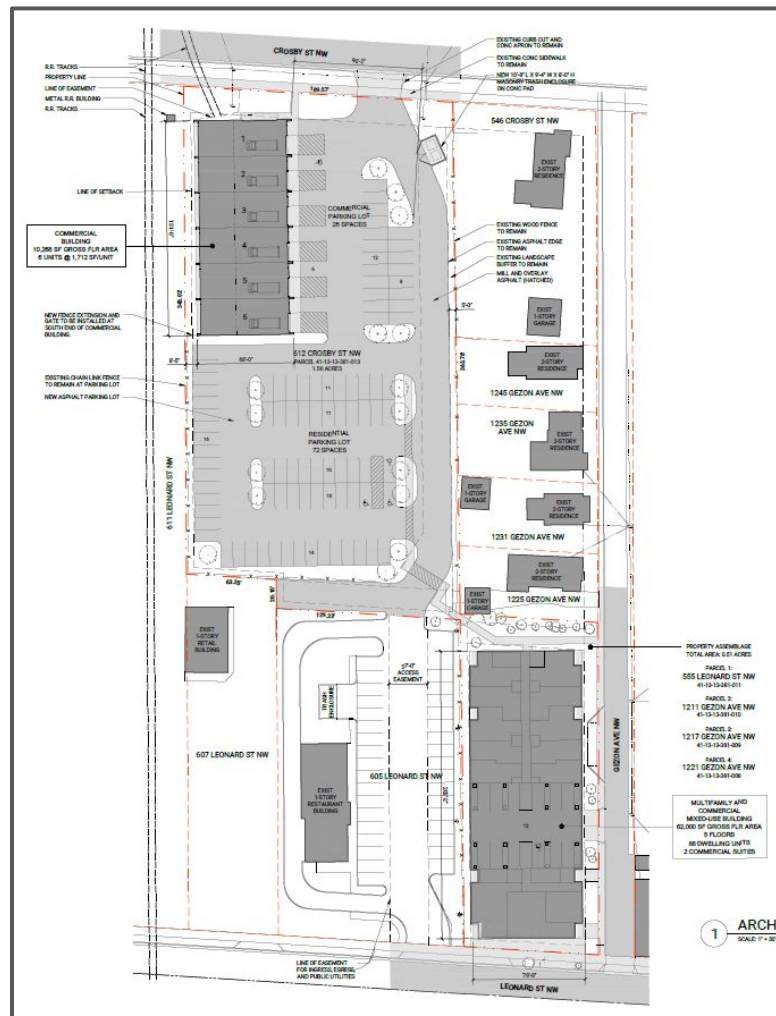
555 Leonard NW + 612 Crosby NW

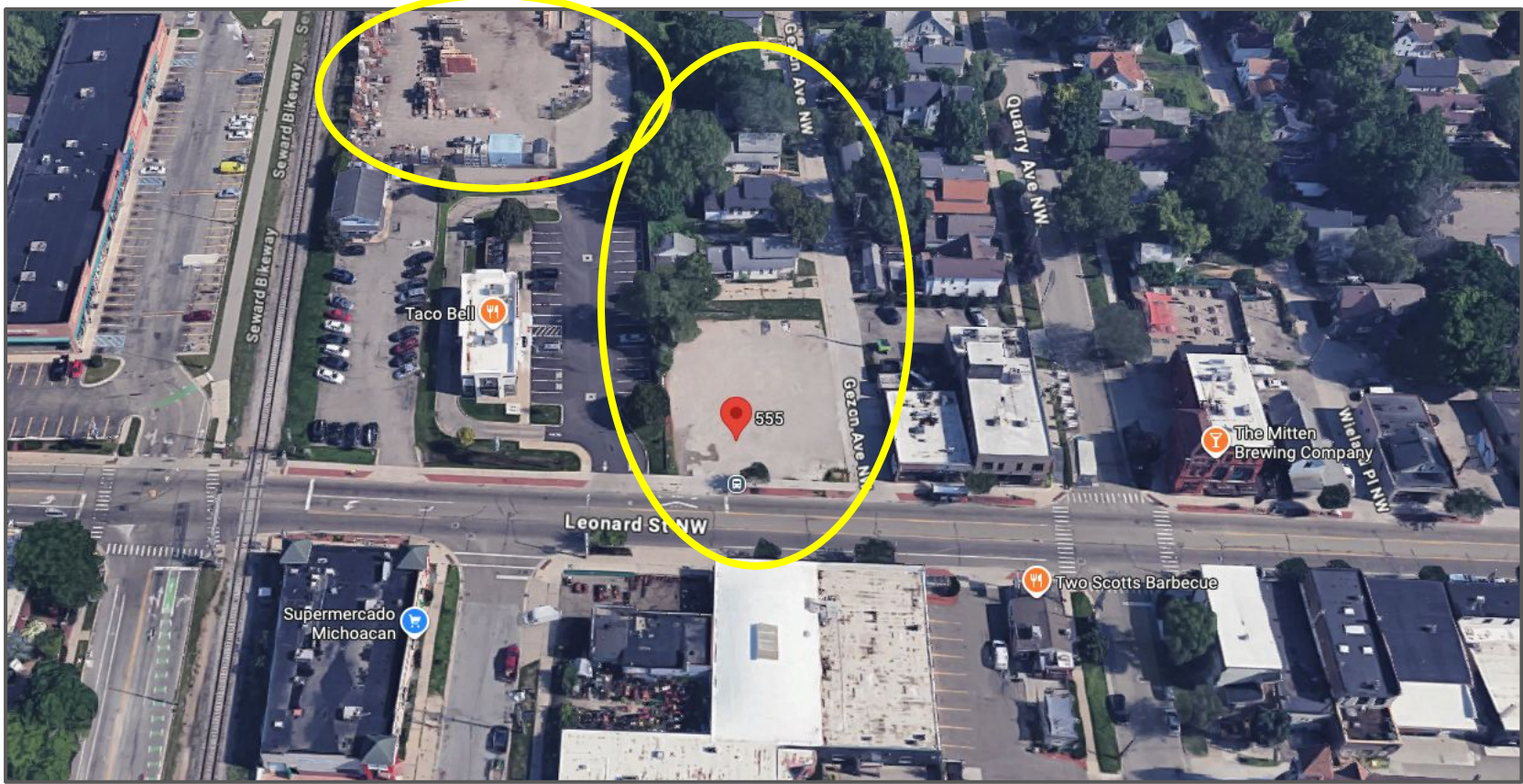
5 Parcels, Contaminated Site, 2 Dilapidated Homes,
Deed Restrictions, 3 Zoning Districts, Etc.

Been “In Development” for a long time, but we’re finally
breaking ground in 2026!



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555 Leonard NW + 612 Crosby NW

72+ Apartments and Amenity Space

3,000 sf of Ground Floor Retail
w/ Dedicated Retail Parking
(space could be easily subdivided)

10,000 sf of Flex Industrial/Commercial
on Crosby Street



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Lake Odessa - Infill on Former School Yard

On a Commercial Corridor with Various Other Uses - Not "Main Street"

Complicated Site with Multiple Easements and Little Buildable Area

No New Rental Housing In Years

54 Apartments Planned - Under Consideration by Planning Commission

Commercial Across Street, But No New Retail Planned Here



Representative Image - Lake Odessa Building Not Yet Designed



City of Wyoming - Infill on Former Estate Residential (Single Family)

On a Commercial Corridor with Various Other Uses - Not Traditional "Main Street"

56 Townhome Apartments Planned

Site Planned Approved

Housing TIF Request Under Consideration

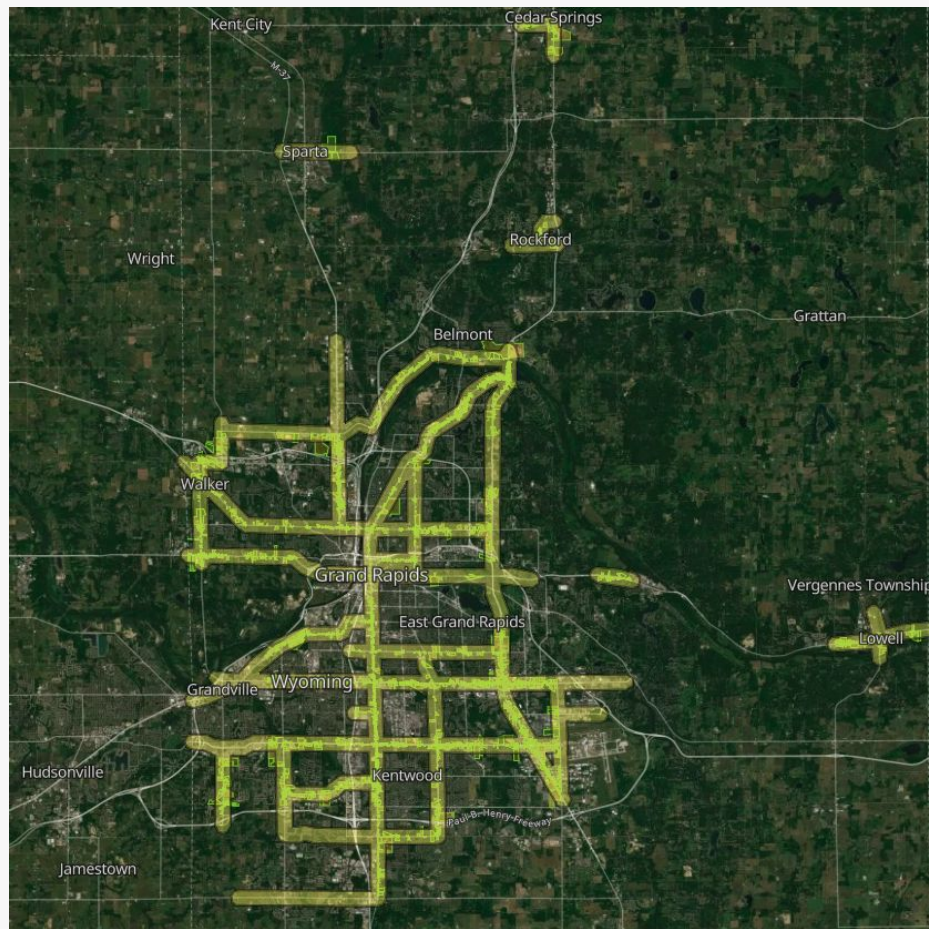


INDIGO
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Kent Co, MI

17,000+ Acres of vacant / underutilized land with access to existing sewer, water, and high traffic corridors.

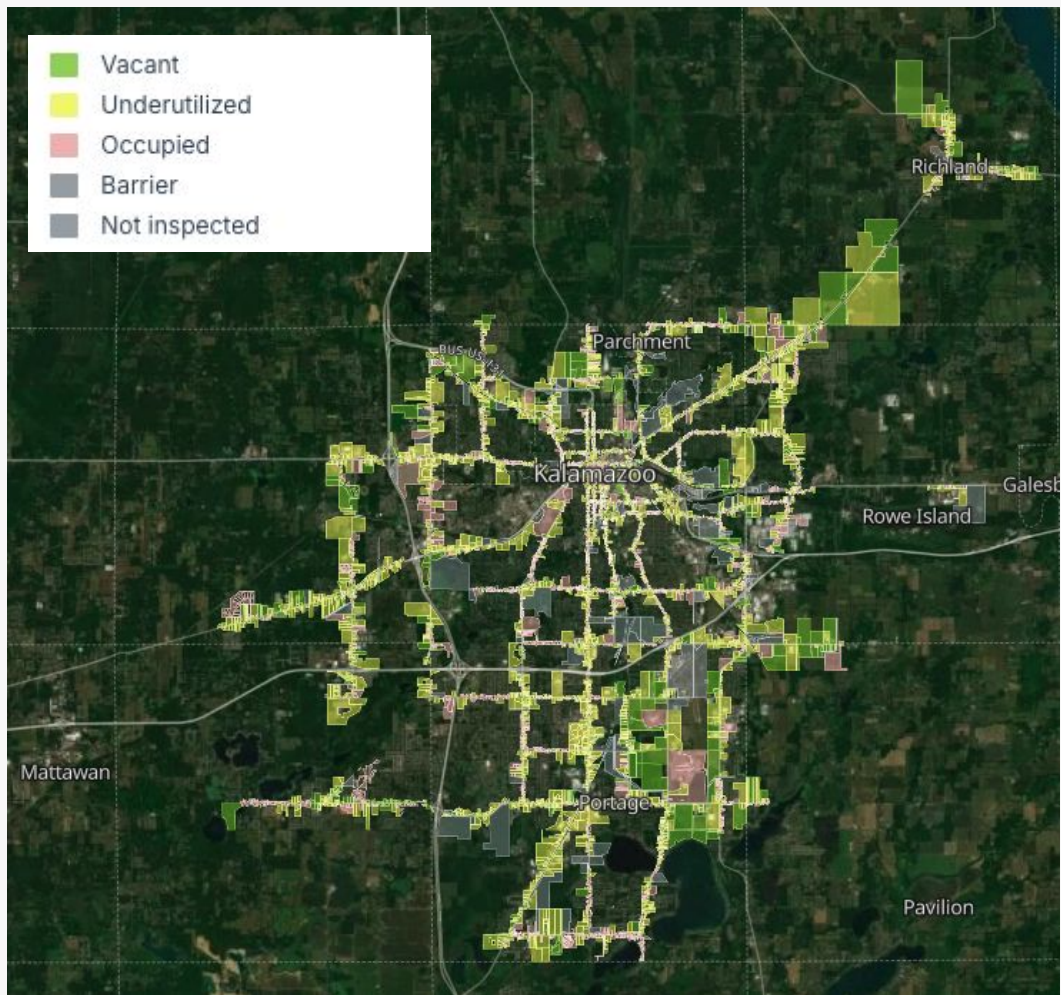
Many are on a bus line and in strong local school districts.



Kalamazoo Co, MI

3,000+ Acres of vacant / underutilized land with access to existing sewer, water, and high traffic corridors.

Many are on a bus line and in strong local districts.



Creating Housing Options at All Price Points

Options at All Price Points

What would our communities be like if they offered diverse housing types at all price points?

What if we offered real choices in the market for every individual and family?

Min Lot Width Required:
78 ft

Min Lot Area Required:
32,000 sq ft - 71,400 sq ft

Single Family Home

Average lot cost	\$75–100k
Average home cost 2,200 sq ft	\$425k – \$500k
Annual household income required	\$120,000 min.
New infrastructure (Sewer, water, road)	78 ft avg



Min Lot Width Required:
20 ft

Min Lot Area Required:
2,400 sqft

Townhomes

Average lot cost	\$10-25k
Average home cost 1,000 sq ft	\$315,000
Annual household income required	\$85,000/yr
New infrastructure (Sewer, water, road)	20 ft/home



Min Lot Width Required:
50 ft

Min Lot Area Required:
5,000 sqft

Stacked Fourplex

Average lot cost	\$15-25k
Average home cost 850 sq ft	\$275,000
Annual household income required	\$65,000/yr
New infrastructure (Sewer, water, road)	0* ft

*When permitted on existing lots in established neighborhoods.



Suburban

\$3,462

	Parks & Recreation	\$129
	Solid Waste	\$185
	Fire Department	\$406
	Governance	\$297
	Police	\$360
	Transportation	\$171
	Libraries	\$72
	School Bussing	\$87
	Culture / Economy	\$36
	Roads, Sidewalks, Curbs	\$474
	Storm & Waste Water	\$613
	Water	\$197

Urban

\$1,416

	Parks & Recreation	\$69
	Solid Waste	\$185
	Fire Department	\$177
	Governance	\$158
	Police	\$192
	Transportation	\$91
	Libraries	\$38
	School Bussing	\$13
	Culture / Economy	\$19
	Roads, Sidewalks, Curbs	\$53
	Storm & Waste Water	\$147
	Water	\$42

Four Key Elements

Put People First

Safer streets enable mobility for all ages and abilities

- Housing
- Small business
- Mobility

Integrate Nature

Large, shared green spaces & small private gardens

- Street trees
- Stormwater mgmt
- Great Parks
- Keep rural places rural

Small Lots

Smaller lots are more cost effective

- Antifragile
- Equitable & Emerging Developer Initiatives
- Simple Financing

Proximity is Paramount

Density works best when close to local amenities

- Shops & Restaurants
- Libraries & Schools
- Parks & Playgrounds

Getting Streets Right



The Building Blocks & Values of Great Streets

Every street is built from the same parts—the difference is what we choose to value.

The building blocks of every street are the same: the roadway, sidewalks, street trees, parking, setbacks, lighting, and crossings. How we arrange these building blocks can create radically different environments that prioritize different behaviors (and resident health outcomes).

If we want people to choose the street over the car, the street has to win their heart.

Designing Beautiful, Beloved Places

Beauty is linked to perceived safety.

Sidewalks close to buildings create enclosure and comfort.

Street trees provide shade, shelter, and visual appeal.

Narrower streets calm traffic and make movement predictable.

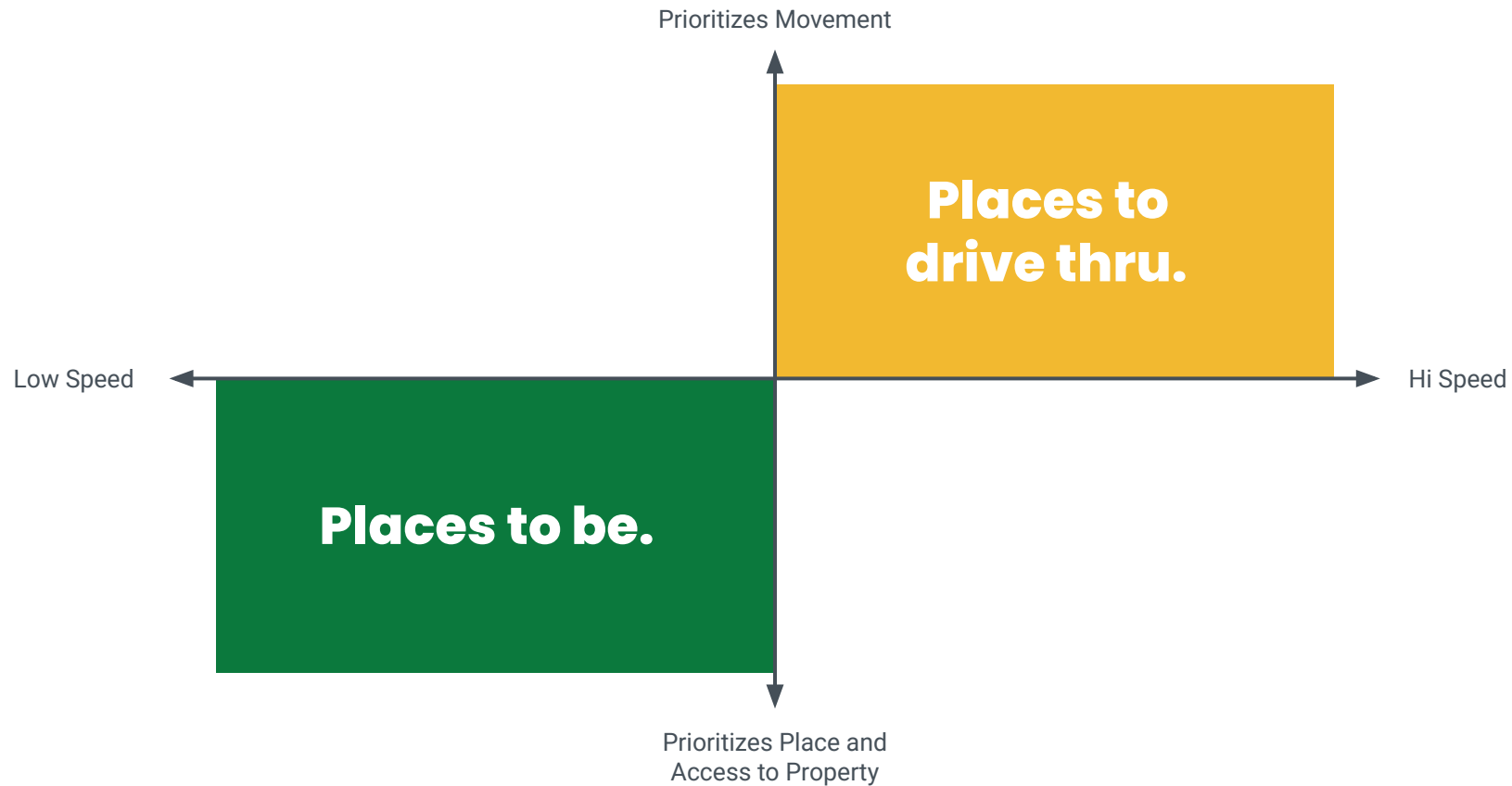


What we used to build.



What we've built since 1950's





Infrastructure as Invitation





**Design your
street for the
economy and
quality of life
you want.**

Prioritizing:
Vehicle Throughput

Shared Residential Street



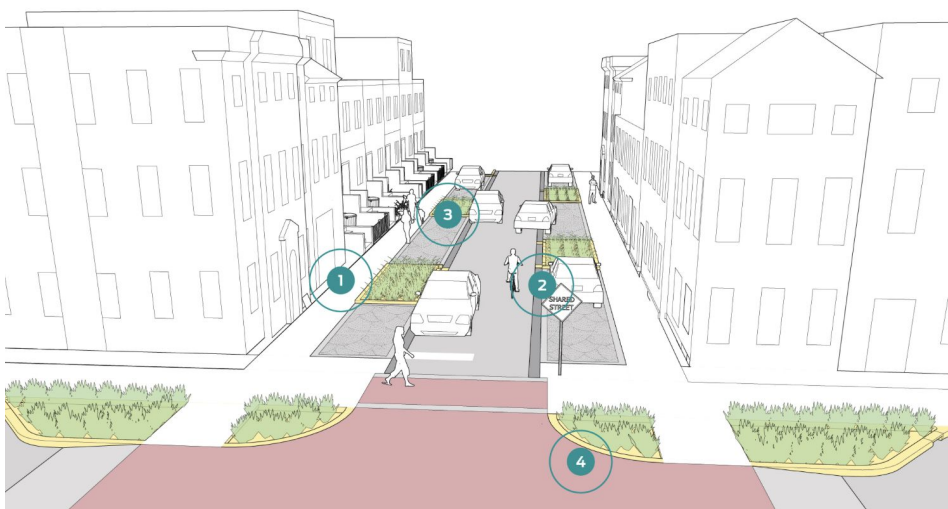
New housing and shared street in Charleston, SC

Shared Residential Street



Before

This street is primarily single use and designed for cars going through rather than to a residential area. No visual cues to delineate or slow vehicular traffic making an uncomfortable environment for pedestrians.



After

- 1: Textured or permeable pavers manage stormwater.
- 2: Trench drains collect runoff and direct into Bioretention Planters.
- 3: Grading the street provides accessible, level walking surface while directing stormwater flow to green or gray stormwater infrastructure.
- 4: Gateway treatments slow or restrict traffic flow.

Neighborhood Streets



Neighborhood Streets



Before

Auto-oriented streets require the use of a vehicle, which in turn, requires more land use dedicated to cars and less space for homes, offices, and shops. This building pattern spreads out land use and drives up the cost of construction and the household budget.



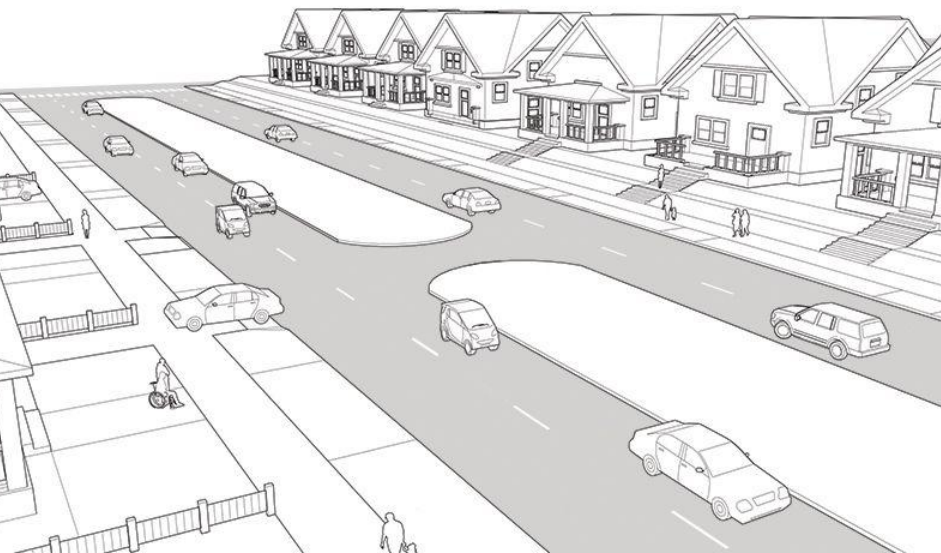
After

Streets set the tone for an entire neighborhood. Simple improvements like trees, seating, and traffic calming can enhance everyone's experience while increasing property values and quality of life.

Thoroughfare Streetscape



Thoroughfare Streetscapes



Before

Busy streets can reduce property values and start a cycle of disinvestment when they are not properly managed for both traffic and residential livability.



After

A boulevard treatment offers significant opportunity to slow traffic while remaining highly efficient. It creates ample greenspace and reduces potential for crashes. In return, the neighborhood produces higher property values and improved quality of life for its residents.



Walkable Streets as Amenities

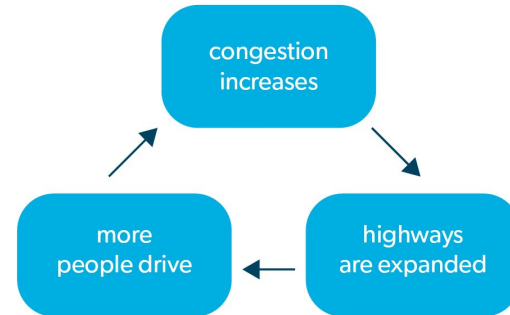
Density in isolation does not add value. Amenities are what make density enjoyable.

ONE MORE LANE WILL FIX IT



Adding Lanes Doesn't Fix Traffic

Increased roadway capacity has shown to induce additional demand





Kid-Friendly Cities

**If a city works for an 8-year-old,
it works for everyone.**