



DRAFT

Master Plan

THE CITY OF KALAMAZOO



imagine
kalamazoo
2025



STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION

The Kalamazoo City Commission approved the 2025 Master Land Use Plan for the City of Kalamazoo at a regular meeting held on Monday, October 16, 2017. Public notice was given and the meeting was conducted in full compliance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267, 1976). Minutes of the meeting will be available as required by the Act.

Scott A. Borling, City Clerk

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Draft

"I want to see Kalamazoo [as] a city that is not only accepting of differences, but actively encourages diversity in everything"

- Kalamazoo Resident

Welcome!

Cities do not become great by accident. It is the hard work of visioning, planning, and aligning that moves the needle from plan to action. To create a master plan is to look into the future of a city and imagine what tomorrow could be. With that in mind, Kalamazoo embarked on this Master Plan update with the most intense engagement strategy possible, reaching out into the community in new and exciting ways.

This Master Plan was informed by the many voices heard through Imagine Kalamazoo (IK 2025). By participating in open houses, community picnics, Art Hops, and online surveys, people from every neighborhood contributed ideas about places, programs, policies, investments, and communal goals and values that are important to them. Together, a vision was created to enhance quality of life for all, embrace how diversity strengthens Kalamazoo, and seek continuous community engagement. As a united community, oriented around action like never before, Kalamazooans imagined a more prosperous and equitable City - a more beautiful, livable, innovative, and connected City.



Photo credit: Christina Anderson

The Master Plan is for the people who live, work, and visit Kalamazoo. It is also for those who will make up the community of Kalamazoo in the future - not only our children but also the new people who will arrive for education or job opportunities and make Kalamazoo their home.

What is the Master Plan?

The Master Plan shapes the City's future built environment by guiding growth and development, preserving Kalamazoo's unique character, and enhancing Kalamazoo's neighborhoods. This City-wide document primarily focuses on land development and transportation issues. It sets the City-wide vision and works to achieve it through the City's policies, regulations, and planning efforts. It provides direction for City staff, boards and commissions, consultants, and contractors that are working with the City on projects and policies. The Master Plan is reviewed at five-year intervals and updated at least every 10 years, thus providing a relevant guide to all who use it.

Who is the Master Plan for?

The Master Plan is a policy and action driven document. Its responsibility for implementation falls on not only City staff, but also residents, the development community, and community partners.

City. The Master Plan will shape actions ranging from the City Commission's review of priority-based budgeting (PBB) to staff discussions with potential

developers. The vision detailed in this document will provide the foundation for updating regulations and policies, including the Zoning Ordinance and the Complete Streets Policy, and set priorities for infrastructure and improvement projects in streets and parks.

Development Community. The Master Plan is a must-read for anyone interested in developing in Kalamazoo. The Future Land Development Plan details the type and scale of development envisioned by the community. The City will review all proposed projects through the lens of the Master Plan.

Residents. Residents are critical stakeholders in this document. Kalamazoo residents comprise the membership of boards and commissions critical to Master Plan implementation, particularly the Planning Commission who will use this document to review development requests. Whether serving on a board or participating in neighborhood planning and discussions, residents are guardians of this document.



Each phase of IK 2025 included opportunities for community members to define the direction of the City and identify the challenges and opportunities to achieving this vision. As each person gave us input in their own way, staff developed a framework to organize the input using five categories: **values, goal, direction, action, or metric (measurement).**

Neighborhood Leaders. The health and success of our neighborhoods are critical to the City's overall health. Understanding this, the Master Plan focuses on raising all neighborhoods up to enhance the quality of life of residents and each neighborhood's unique vision. The Great Neighborhoods section of this document provides a road map for future neighborhood planning efforts and steps the City can engage to support the neighborhood vision.

Partners. The City cannot achieve the goals of this document on its own. To move forward, the City must partner with local and state organizations, local colleges and universities, and the business community, many of who played key roles in IK 2025. Only together will the vision of a prosperous and equitable City can realized.

How was community input received?

IK 2025 was a unique, community-focused engagement process. Meetings were held

throughout the City at community-wide events and in neighborhoods. The City partnered with neighborhood leaders, local businesses, nonprofits, religious institutions, and residents to spread the word about IK 2025 events. Outreach tools were wide-ranging: City staff knocked on doors, left flyers in little free libraries, published notes in neighborhood newsletters, and engaged through social media. At the end of the process, the Public Participation Plan was written as a guide for anyone looking to engage. The Plan is an appendix to the City's Strategic Vision.

All meetings were open to the community's input on any topic at any time. Volunteers (including Spanish translators and American sign language interpreters), City staff brought maps, sample photographs, markers, notepads and sticky notes made providing input easier.

Where did my comment go?

As you read through the Master Plan, you may ask



Photo credit: Rebekah Kik



Photo credit: Northside Ministerial Alliance

yourself, “where did my comment go?” The purpose of IK 2025 was to create an opportunity to discuss all aspects of City services operating at all levels. Input came into the City through many different channels of communication, including email, surveys, discussions, maps, and drawings. Because every venue over the 16-month IK 2025 process offered up new conversations, City staff spent months sorting through the communications received. The graphic below illustrates how different comments were organized for plan inclusion and implementation.

developed out of IK 2025 all relate to one another, creating a holistic implementation strategy.

The **Strategic Vision** states the goals for the entire City. The **Master Plan** creates policy direction for land development and transportation, including zoning and policy updates to implement the vision.

The **Neighborhood Plans** give specific direction on where, what, and when it is done in each geographic area. Neighborhood Plans are detailed in the Great Neighborhoods section of this document.

Each phase of IK 2025 narrowed the direction of input, leading to more detailed information and the development of specific actions. The plans

Where Did My Comment Go?



Imagine Kalamazoo 2025

Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 responds to Citywide needs

and invites ongoing community engagement.

2016



2017

Engagement Stages

Imagine It

Through traveling presentations, pop-up engagement, Meetings on the Go, surveys, living walls, and online engagement Kalamazoo residents outlined their vision for 2025

Initial themes:

- Opportunity
- Equity
- Vibrancy
- Friendliness
- Connectivity
- Cultural Diversity
- Collaboration
- Accessibility

Plan It

Initial themes were discussed and prioritized. Focus began to turn to specific topics and policies to address housing, safe transportation, environmental improvements, and economic mobility.

Citywide goal priorities:

- Impacting poverty
- Early childhood services (non-profit and governmental)
- Healthcare access
- Criminal justice reform
- Employment and entrepreneurial support
- Safer neighborhoods
- Variety of housing
- Infrastructure - disability-friendly; alternative transportation
- Open space
- Healthy neighborhoods, active living
- Vision Zero - No pedestrian deaths on our streets
- 4- season downtown
- Daily needs in neighborhoods
- Streetscape enhancement
- Public art
- Inclusive activities

Design It

City staff traveled to neighborhoods to engage residents on issues important to their neighborhood.

Neighborhood focuses:

- Land Use/ Transportation: complete streets policy, updated non-motorized transportation map, reduce development barriers, form-based code
- Shared Prosperity/Economic Development Strategy: entrepreneurship, local hiring, local business support, youth development, workforce development
- Climate Action Plan: weatherization, extreme weather readiness, food security
- Attainable Housing Strategy: ensure everyone has quality housing
- Complete Neighborhoods: equity and quality of life, invest in open space, arts & culture

The outreach to establish the vision of Kalamazoo for the next 10 years was formed through the IK 2025 process. Over 16 months, the community provided input through surveys, art, City-wide and neighborhood meetings, and one-on-one conversations. IK 2025 built upon itself during its three engagement phases - Imagine It, Plan It, and Design It - each time confirming what was heard and asking for more detail.

Vision Alignment

Focused group discussions confirmed major themes and helped to plan alignment with the Strategic Vision.

Strategic Vision Goals fall into the following categories:

- Shared Prosperity
- Connected City
- Inviting Public Places
- Environmental Responsibility
- Safe Community
- Youth Development
- Complete Neighborhoods
- Strength through Diversity
- Economic Vitality
- Good Governance

The Master Plan works to achieve the Strategic Goals & IK 2025 vision.

By the Numbers



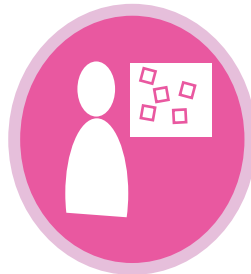
520 Meeting
on the Go
participants



1056 survey
respondents



163 online
engagements



1056 living and
graffiti wall
comments



1263 meeting
participants

4058 points of contact

Strategic Vision Alignment

The first document to result from the IK 2025 process was the City's Strategic Vision. The Strategic Vision shapes the work of the City, both internally for staff and externally to represent the community's needs. It guides all plans created by the City, including this Master Plan, as a means to implement the community's vision.

Community Themes

Three themes emerged early in the IK 2025 process. These themes became the base of the Strategic Vision and guided the later phases of IK 2025 engagement. The three themes can be found woven throughout the Master Plan.

Connected & Accessible Community. Successful communities develop strong connections between a diverse range of people and places.

Equity & Opportunity for All. Limited resources and opportunities must be shared; all people from every neighborhood share in decision-making processes.

Vibrant & Friendly Environment. It is vital that we protect and improve the quality of our local natural environment, and create strong communities with targeted, place-based, community-driven investments.

Strategic Vision

The Strategic Vision is the overarching vision for the City. Its guidance of all future City work, starts with Master Plan. The Strategic Vision goals are as follows:

Shared Prosperity. Abundant opportunities for people to achieve shared prosperity.

Connected City. A city that is networked for walking, biking, riding, and driving.

Inviting Public Places. Parks, arts, culture, and vibrant streets.

Environmental Responsibility. A green and healthy city.

Safe Community. A community where it is safe to live, work, bike, drive, walk, and play.

Youth Development. A city with places and supports that help young people thrive.

Complete Neighborhoods. Residential areas that support the full range of people's daily needs.

Strength Through Diversity. An inclusive city where everyone feels at home.

Economic Vitality. A supportive infrastructure for growing businesses and stabilizing the local economy to the benefit of all.

Good Governance. A City organization with the capacity and resources to effectively implement the community's vision in a sustainable way.

Plan Alignment

As the Master Plan is a primary tool for achieving the Strategic Vision, the strategic goals are woven throughout. The table to the right details the critical areas of overlap. This table is repeated in *Imagine Kalamazoo at Work* (see Section 5), which serves as the work plan for this document. The goals and actions of this document are organized using the Strategic Vision to ensure alignment.

Strategic Vision & Master Plan Alignment

| | SP | CC | IPP | ER | SC | YD | CN | SD | EV | GG |
|------------------------------|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Strategic Vision Goals | | | | | | | | | | |
| Shared Prosperity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Connected City | | | | | | | | | | |
| Inviting Public Places | | | | | | | | | | |
| Environmental Responsibility | | | | | | | | | | |
| Safe Community | | | | | | | | | | |
| Youth Development | | | | | | | | | | |
| Complete Neighborhoods | | | | | | | | | | |
| Strength Through Diversity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Economic Vitality | | | | | | | | | | |
| Good Governance | | | | | | | | | | |

Master Plan Sections

Connected City

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| Components of a Connected City | | ● | ● | ● | ● | | | ● | | |
| Strategic Framework | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | ● | ● | |

Great Neighborhoods

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Complete Neighborhoods | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● |
| Neighborhood Plans | | ● | ● | | ● | ● | | ● | ● | |
| Zoning as a Strength | | | ● | ● | | ● | | ● | | ● |
| Neighborhood Networks | | | ● | | ● | ● | | ● | ● | |
| Parks & Recreation | | ● | | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | |
| Historic Neighborhoods | | | | ● | | | | ● | | |

Downtown Life

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Downtown Networks | | ● | ● | | | ● | | | ● | |
| Downtown Zoning | | | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Marketing | | | ● | | | | | | ● | |
| Arts & Activities for All | | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | |

The Strategic Vision Goals align with the sections of the Master Plan as noted in this matrix.

Master Plan

The Master Plan takes the approach of viewing land use and transportation planning as two halves of the same whole. Only when working in concert, will the community vision be realized. Using this approach to shape the future built environment is demonstrated in each section of this document, from laying out the Strategic Framework to enhancing our great neighborhoods.

Section One: Connected City

The Connected City aims to create the vibrant, well-loved places envisioned for Kalamazoo and re-establish the community between residents and neighborhoods.

Land Use and Transportation.

This document recognizes that great care must be taken to direct land development in a way that promotes connectivity and recognizes its transportation needs. This is balanced with the desire of promoting shared prosperity, protecting neighborhoods, supporting affordable housing, and preserving open space.

The Land Use and Transportation Framework combines these planning practices through development standards and street types. Together, with the best practice: Smart Growth Principles (Figure 3) these support a thriving urban city with compact mixed-used development, reduced travel distances, and an active transportation (bicycling and walking) network. This contributes to a healthy community and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, while offering residents choices within the transportation network.

Beyond land use and transportation, Connected City also considers infrastructure needs. Understanding how development, transportation, and infrastructure overlap allows the City to most efficiently manage its capacity to support the needs of its residents now and in the future.

Section Two: Downtown Life.

Downtown Kalamazoo serves as the entertainment, commercial, and employment center for southwest Michigan. It is also one of Kalamazoo's 22 neighborhoods, with a growing residential population and expanding employment opportunities. To support growth on all fronts, the concept of a connected city is focused on Downtown. Recognizing the continued interest in priorities like the conversion of one-way streets and the improvement of transit and bicycle connections, recommendations are made for both the

"Every increment of construction should be done in such a way as to heal the city."

~ Christopher Alexander

public realm (streets) and land development.

Section Three: Great Neighborhoods.

Each of Kalamazoo's 22 neighborhoods has its own needs and focus. Resulting from neighborhood discussions in IK 2025, this section aims to define what a Complete Neighborhood means in Kalamazoo and how they can be realized. Providing a road map to achieving these goals, this section details neighborhood planning efforts and the support of City regulations such as the Zoning Ordinance.

Section Four: Imagine Kalamazoo (IK) at Work

Kalamazoo has worked very hard to create the vision for its future. This document details that vision and IK at Work is intended to be a work plan to achieve it. IK at Work summarizes all of the goals and actions in this

document and aligns them with the Strategic Vision. It is an outline of how Kalamazoo can track its success and tell its story, over the next 10 years.

IK at Work is also a partnership between the City, the community, and the many individuals and organizations who helped imagine the future and who have committed to help make it a reality. Implement requires partners, alliances with the community, neighborhoods, organizations, and other government agencies. Within the City itself, to further implementation, the Master Plan will be tied to Kalamazoo's priority based budgeting (PBB) process, factored into the Foundation For Excellence (FFE) aspirational project funding, and guide the work of all City Departments and staff.

Best Practice: Smart Growth Principles

Smart Growth. The Smart Growth Principles are one tool that the Master Plan uses to recreate the connections and achieve a vibrant community. They are:

1. Mix land uses.
2. Take advantage of compact building design.
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
4. Create walkable neighborhoods.
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
7. Strengthen and direct development toward existing areas.
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices.
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Acknowledgments

The Master Plan is the work of many individuals, community groups and organizations who contributed their valuable time, ideas, and support throughout the engagement process. We look forward to continuing to add to these pages!

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Arcadia Neighborhood Association
 Eastside Neighborhood Association
 Edison Neighborhood Association
 El Sol Elementary School
 Fairmont/West Douglas Neighborhood Association
 Downtown Citizen Advisory Council
 Downtown Kalamazoo Incorporated
 Fire Station #5
 Kalamazoo College
 Milwood Community Church
 Milwood Neighborhood Association
 Parkwood Upjohn Elementary School
 Northside Association for Community Development
 Oakland Drive/Winchell Neighborhood Association
 Oakwood Neighborhood Association
 Parker-Duke Neighborhood Association
 Parkview Hills Neighborhood Association
 Parkwyn Village Neighborhood Association
 Saint Mary's Church
 Stuart Area Restoration Association
 Threads Church
 Vine Neighborhood Association
 West Main Hill Neighborhood Association
 Westwood Neighborhood Association
 WMU Office of Sustainability
 WMU Student Association
 Winchell Elementary School
 Woodward Elementary School

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