CITY OF PARCHMENT

MASTER PLAN

2020

ADOPTED:

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*Cover Photo Credit: Matt Dean

Vision for Parchment

Drawing on its heritage as Jacob Kindleberger's "model community for the world," The City of Parchment will enhance its natural, social, and built advantages, while also implementing programs and policies that demonstrate creative and sustainable solutions to 21st century challenges.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This section gives a brief overview of the Master Plan and the process used to develop the plan.

Purpose and Planning Process

The purpose of the City of Parchment Master Plan is to provide guidelines for future development within the community, while also protecting natural resources. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended, states a City may adopt, amend, and implement a master plan.

The plan is centered around a strategic vision for the City. All sections reflect the goals established by the Planning Commission in the planning process. The goals were established after receiving input from City residents via a community-wide survey. The goals referenced in this plan are a guide for the City as it sets budgetary and land use priorities.

This plan also presents background information on social and economic data, natural resources, and existing land uses. By documenting existing conditions such as natural features, socio-economic and land use within a master plan, the City is able to track progress toward accomplishing its goals and objectives.

The Master Plan was developed for the City of Parchment Planning Commission by the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research through the Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC).

The Status of Planning and Zoning in the City of Parchment

The City adopted a Master Plan in 1994. This Master Plan is the first comprehensive planning process undertaken by the City. This was followed by City-wide survey conducted by the WMU Kercher Center for Social Research in 1998. The City of Parchment recognizes the need for developing a Master Plan in compliance the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended. Two key reasons are to provide a legal foundation for the City Zoning Ordinance and to plan for and manage the redevelopment of the City. Furthermore, the master plan is used as a basis for re-examining the City's zoning districts and land use development controls.

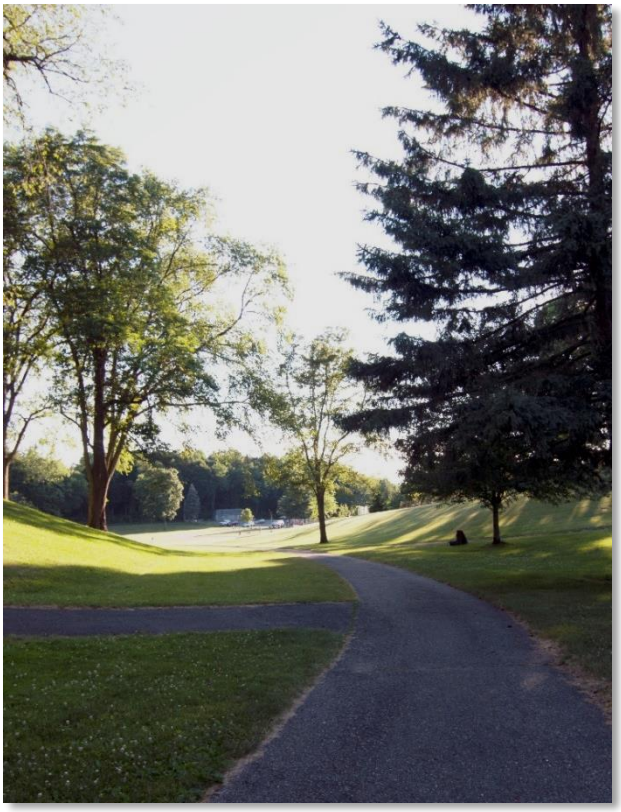


Photo Credit: Matt Dean

CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

This section of the Master Plan is an analysis of social and economic factors that help define the character of the City. The most important component in any community is the population of the area, the actions of which directly impact the character and future of the community. Residents' diversity of backgrounds as well as their similarities merge to give the community its unique character and personality.

Location and Regional Setting

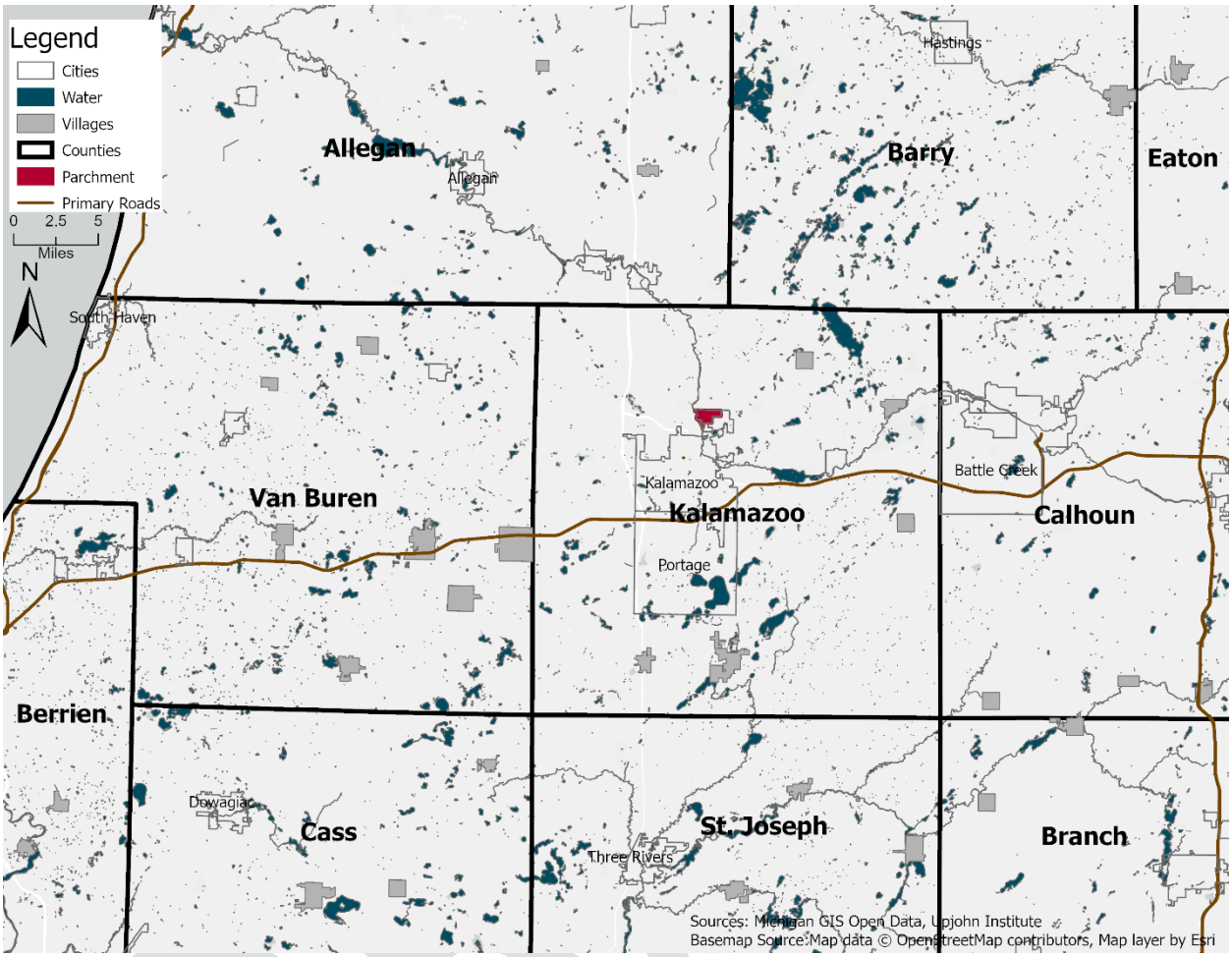
The City of Parchment lies in southwestern lower Michigan, in the north central portion of Kalamazoo County. The City is approximately one square mile in area. The Kalamazoo River forms the City boundary on the west side and Cooper Township lies adjacent to the north. The City of Kalamazoo forms a portion of the south and east boundaries, along with Kalamazoo Township.

Riverview Drive transverses the City north to south and provides a major transportation link to the City of Kalamazoo. Parchment developed as a factory town and model city alongside the Kalamazoo Vegetable Parchment Company in the early 20th century. Other than the now vacant mill, very little vacant land is available in the City, with most of the land area used for residential purposes. The City operates under the Council-Manager form of government.

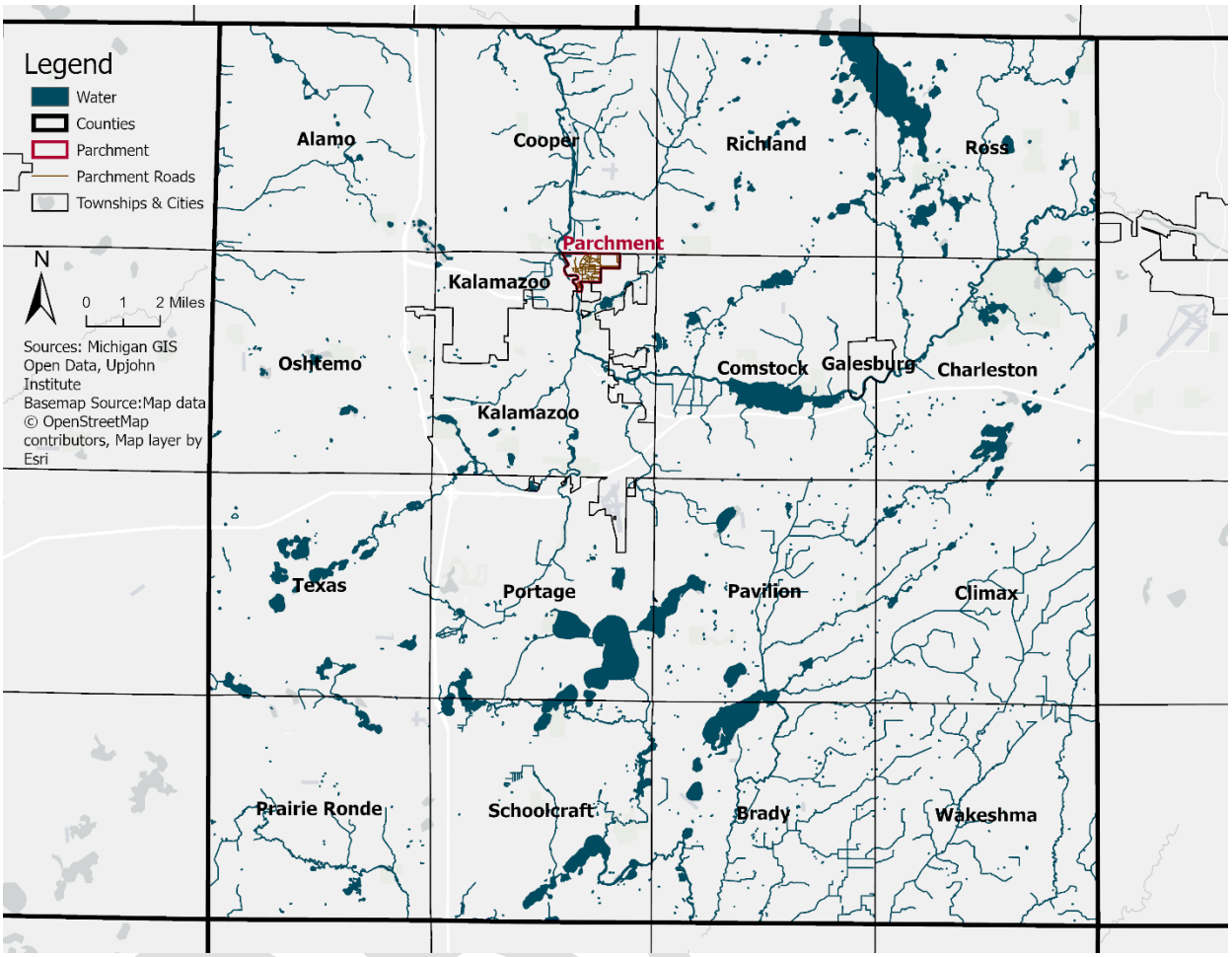
Ariel View of Parchment, circa 2009

Photo Credit: Kalamazoo County via Pictometry Online

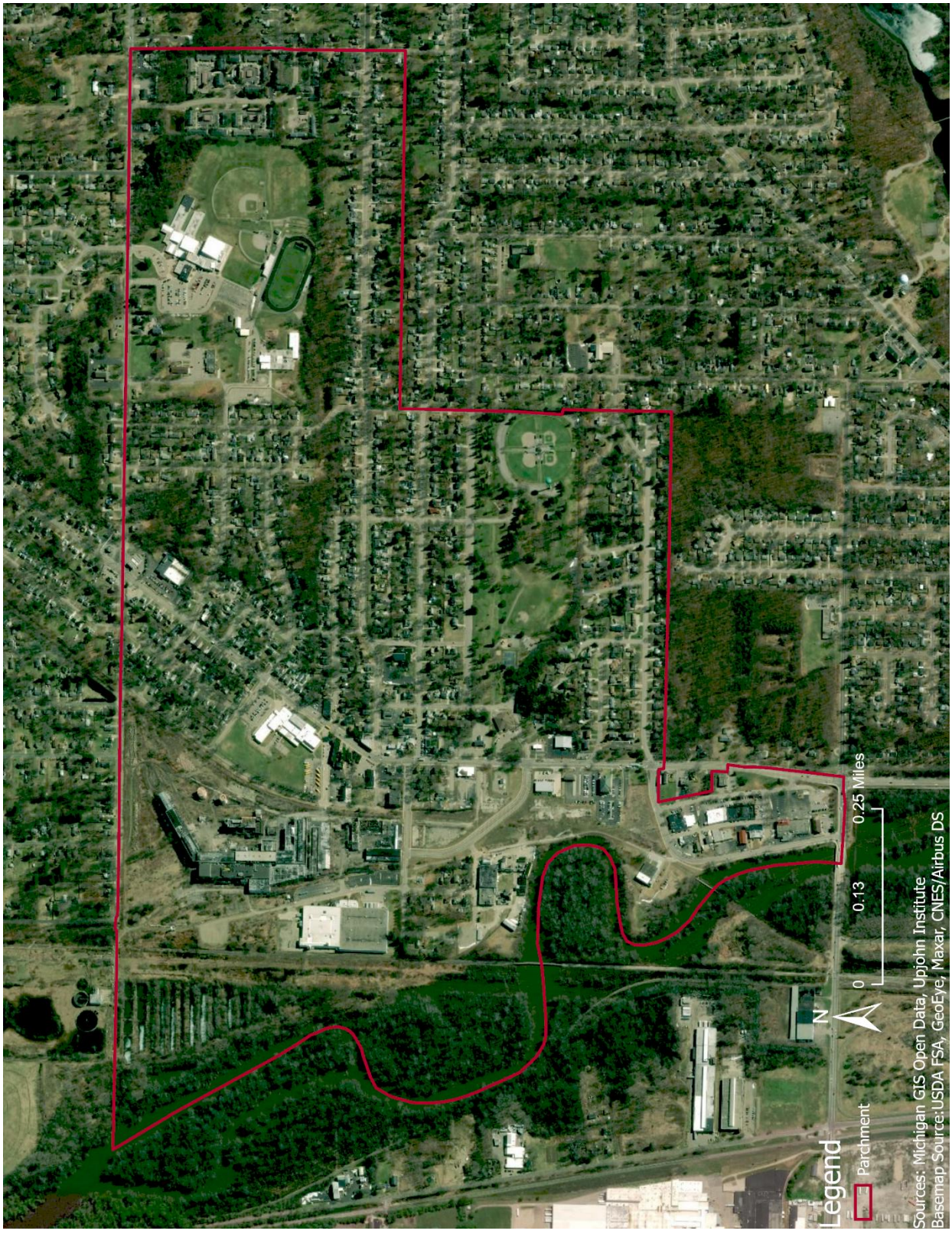
Map 2-1: Location within Southwest Michigan



Map 2-2: Location within Kalamazoo County



Map 2-3: Aerial Map



Socioeconomic Conditions

The purpose of this section is to identify the characteristics of the population and housing in order to anticipate which needs may exist in preparation of the master plan. For example, a population comprised of young families indicates a need for multiple bedroom dwellings, active recreation areas, primary education facilities and employment opportunities. Similarly, comparing average income levels to an area's housing values and monthly rents will indicate potential housing needs within a community.

Population Stability

While the population of Kalamazoo County continues to grow at an average rate of around 1,000 persons per year for the last five decades, the City of Parchment's population record has more closely resembled that of the City of Kalamazoo. Table 2.1 compares these population trends since 1980.

TABLE 2.1
CITY OF PARCHMENT, KALAMAZOO CITY AND CITY POPULATION COMPARISONS, 1980-2017

Municipality	1980	1990	2000	2010	2017
City of Parchment	1,817	1,958	1,936	1,804	1,931
City of Kalamazoo	79,722	80,290	77,145	74,262	75,833
Kalamazoo County	212,411	223,411	238,603	250,331	259,830

Source: U.S. Census, General Population Characteristics

Historically, the City of Parchment has not shown population growth, fluctuating between 1,800 and 1,950 residents since 1960. This is due in part to the fact that there is very little vacant land within the City's boundaries. The existing homes are occupied for the most part by families who have lived in Parchment all their lives. For new and younger families to move into the community, existing residences must become available. Because the City has offered many services and opportunities to its residents and because the school system is well regarded, many homes are sold before they are listed.

The lack of ability to expand, combined with the fact that the family unit is becoming smaller, has accounted for the lack of population growth in the City. This was exacerbated by the closing of the paper mills in the early 2000s. 2017 U.S. Census population estimates indicate that the city is still recovering from the 2007-2009 housing crisis.

Household Size

Since the 1960s, household size in Parchment has declined. This trend has evolved due to both a decline in the number of children per household and an increase in single person households. Single person households are comprised of both longer average life expectancy which leaves a widowed elderly person living alone and young adults putting off marriage while living alone.

Table 2.2 depicts the persons per household ratios for the City for the U.S. Census years 1980 through 2017.

TABLE 2.2
PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD TRENDS
CITY OF PARCHMENT, 1980-2010

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2017 est.
PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD	2.49	2.37	2.36	2.17	2.23

Sources: U.S. Census, General Population Characteristics and Housing Characteristics 2000-2017; and U.S. Census, General Population Characteristics, Michigan 1980; Selected Population & Housing Characteristics 1990.

DRAFT

Of significant interest is the change in the difference between average owner household size verses the average rental household size shown in Table 2.3.

Average household size for homeowners has trended smaller while household sizes for renters has trended larger since 2000.

TABLE 2.3
PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLDS ESTIMATES
CITY OF PARCHMENT, 2000-2017

	OWNER OCCUPIED	RENTER OCCUPIED	AVERAGE
2017	2.23	2.44	2.33
2016	2.24	2.42	2.33
2015	2.35	2.42	2.38
2014	2.32	2.33	2.33
2013	2.43	2.02	2.28
2012	2.59	2.01	2.36
2011	2.64	2.00	2.42
2010	2.47	1.73	2.17
2000	N/A	N/A	2.36

Source: Derived from U.S. Census American Factfinder, 2010-2017 by Southcentral Michigan Planning Council

Age Distribution and Trends

The City considers age groupings of the population in this plan. Various age groups typically have different recreational desires, educational needs, and travel patterns. To some extent, age groups also determine municipal service and emergency service needs of the community.

Table 2.4 shows both the changing age brackets within the city and compares the 2017 estimated figures with the county and the state. First, the impact of the 2008 economic recession upon the city appears in the low percentage of 15- to 19-year-olds in the city in 2017. Second, the county figures for 20- to 24-year-olds is skewed by the large student population from Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College.

In other respects, the population under 5 in Parchment shows a significant jump, indicative of younger families moving into the City. This indicates that Parchment continues to be both affordable and a desirable place to live and raise children.

TABLE 2.4
PERCENTAGE AGE DISTRIBUTION AND COMPARISON
2000-2010 & 2017

CITY OF PARCHMENT Kalamazoo County, Michigan				COUNTY	STATE
Age	2000	2010	2017	2017	2017
<5 years	6.7	6.9	8.3	6.1	5.8
5 - 9 years	7.9	5.8	5.9	5.9	6.1
10-14	8.0	7.1	7.5	6.2	6.4
15-19	7.0	7.7	4.2	7.3	6.8
20-24	5.6	5.5	8.4	12.4	7.3
25-29	5.6	5.9	8.7	6.8	6.3
30-34	6.6	7.2	7.6	6.3	6.0
35-39	7.6	6.3	5.9	5.6	5.8
40-44	9.9	6.9	3.9	5.9	6.0
45-49	7.4	7.6	8.6	5.7	6.6
50-54	6.0	9.3	5.8	6.0	7.2
55-59	4.8	6.8	8.1	6.0	7.3
60-64	4.0	5.2	6.0	6.0	6.6
65-69	2.6	3.0	5.6	4.8	5.3
70-74	3.6	3.2	2.0	3.1	3.8
75-79	2.9	1.8	1.2	2.3	2.7
80-84	2.2	1.9	0.9	1.7	1.9
85+	1.8	2.0	1.2	1.9	2.1
Median Age	37.0	38.5	34.4	34.1	39.6

Source: US Census QT-P1, 2000, 2010, and 2017 estimates

The table also compares Parchment to county and state figures from 2017, which demonstrates the City's lower retirement age population. This would support the conclusion that younger families are moving in, which is also shown by the lower median age reported in the 2017 estimates.

Photo Credit: Matt Dean

Educational Attainment

Another important characteristic of any population is their educational attainment level. According to the 2017 American Community Survey, 36.9% of the City's residents over the age of 25 had obtained a college-level degree, with 22.9% having obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. Given the county's large university population, the City has a lower level of educational attainment than the County as a whole; Parchment also lags far behind the state. While 37.3% of Michigan residents have a college-level degree and 28.1% have at least a bachelor's degree, only 24.2% of the City's population have a college-level degree.

TABLE 2.5
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, Population over 25 Yrs. of Age

	City	County	State
Total Population 25 years & over	1,266	161,274	6,719,972
Less than 9th grade	12	2,711	204,526
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	99	7,330	452,157
High school graduate & equivalency	309	36,031	1,966,110
Some college, no degree	378	39,278	1,588,068
Associate's degree	178	15,913	622,070
Bachelor's degree	185	35,464	1,147,842
Graduate or professional degree	105	24,549	739,199

Source: US Census 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates

Parchment Public Schools have an 80.67% graduation rate, which is similar to schools in the Kalamazoo Intermediate School District (80.64%), and higher than the Kalamazoo Public Schools graduation rate of 75.24%.

The Parchment Public School system has one high school (grades 9-12), a single middle school (grades 6-8), North Elementary School (grades 4 and 5), two elementary schools (grades K-3), an alternative school (grades 6-12) and a pre-kindergarten facility.

Parchment Middle School

Photo Credit: Lee Adams

TABLE 2.6
PARCHMENT SCHOOLS AND ENROLLMENT

SCHOOL	STUDENTS	GRADES
High School	450	9-12
Middle School	375	6-8
North Elementary	225	4-5
Central Elementary	275	K-3
Northwood Elementary	175	K-3
Barclay Hills Education Center	100	6-12
TOTAL	**1,600**	

Source: www.parchmentschools.org, 2019

Income

A reliable measure of the economic health of a city is median household income, or the midpoint of incomes for all households. Residents in Parchment have average income levels that fall well below the county as a whole; the income levels in the City are also below state averages.

The economic downturn in 2008 resulted in a general drop in median household income throughout the country. Parchment also experienced this decline, but it has since rebounded well. Table 2.7 presents information on the median household income for the City of Parchment, Kalamazoo County, and the State of Michigan.

TABLE 2.7
Household Income & Poverty, City of Parchment

	City	County	State
Median Household Income ($)	$43,493	$51,945	$52,668
Average Household Income ($)	$53,151	$72,473	$72,091
Per Capita Income ($)	$22,952	$29,258	$28,938
Individual Poverty Rate (%)	18.3%	16.7%	15.6%

Source: US Census 2013-2017 ACS estimates

The U.S. Census estimates that median household income in the City of Parchment between 2013 and 2017 was $43,493. There were 18.3% of residents in poverty during the 2013-2017 survey; which is slightly higher than the county and state levels of 16.7% and 15.6% respectively during that same period. Further supporting this finding, City of Parchment households also have much lower average and per capita incomes than those found at the County or the State levels.

Housing

Housing is another important feature of any community. Vacancy rates, the size and age of homes, and other key metrics give public officials information to make development plans. At present, the City has a healthy mix of housing, with 26.9% apartment buildings, 3.2% duplexes, and 69.9% single-family homes. There are no mobile homes in the City.

TABLE 2.8
Housing Inventory, City of Parchment

Total housing units		898	100%
	Duplexes	28	3.2%
	Apartment buildings	241	26.9%
	Mobile homes	0	0%
	Single Family	628	69.9%
Bedrooms			
	No bedroom	3	0.3%
	1-bedroom	119	13.3%
	2-bedroom	355	39.5%
	3-bedroom	283	31.4%
	4-bedroom	123	13.7%
	5+	15	1.7%
Year built			
	2014-present	3	0.3%
	2010-2013	0	0.0%
	2000-2009	11	1.2%
	1990-1999	21	2.3%
	1980-1989	80	8.9%
	1970-1979	97	10.8%
	1960-1969	98	10.9%
	1950-1959	251	28.0%
	1940-1949	143	15.9%
	1939 or earlier	194	21.6%
Year moved into unit			
	2015-present	131	15.8%
	2010-2014	328	39.7%
	2000-2009	170	20.6%
	1990-1999	88	10.6%
	1980-1989	59	7.1%
	1979 or earlier	51	6.2%

TABLE 2.8, Housing Inventory continued		
Occupied housing units	827	92.1%
Vacant housing units	71	7.9%
Median value ($)	$106,900	
Median monthly rent ($)	$782	
Homeowner occupancy rate		51.5%
Rental occupancy rate		48.5%

Source: US Census 2013-2017 ACS estimates.
For family living, 46.8% of the dwellings have three or more bedrooms and another 39.5% are two-bedroom units, the latter typically being starter homes.

TABLE 2.9
AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL HOME VALUES
STATE EQUALIZED VALUATION

YEAR	PARCHMENT CITY	KALAMAZOO COUNTY	KALAMAZOO CITY
2017	$49,877	$74,552	$46,840
2016	$47,619	$71,114	$44,415
2015	$46,659	$67,457	$42,069
2010	$51,114	$65,974	$45,612
2008	$59,628	$73,190	$52,076
2005	$54,936	$64,973	$46,986

Source: Kalamazoo County Equalization

The bulk (65.5%) of Parchment homes were built prior to 1960. Fewer than 5% of existing homes were built after 1990. These trends are consistent with communities of similar age to Parchment.

In 1990, the City had a 98.5% housing occupancy rate. By 2017, it is estimated that the housing occupancy rate had fallen to 92.1%. The mix of owner-occupied and rental housing evolved between 1990 (61.4% and 38.6% respectively) and 2017 (51.5% and 48.5% respectively).

Housing Value

Since 2010, Parchment's housing value has not kept pace with the average value of housing in Kalamazoo County. In 2010, the County's median value of owner-occupied housing was $145,900; and in 2017, this was estimated to be $146,100. For the City of Parchment, the 2010 median value was $122,200, and is estimated to have fallen to $106,900 by 2017. (Source: US Census 2013-2017 ACS estimates). The decline in housing value in Parchment relative to County housing values is indicated in Table 2.9.

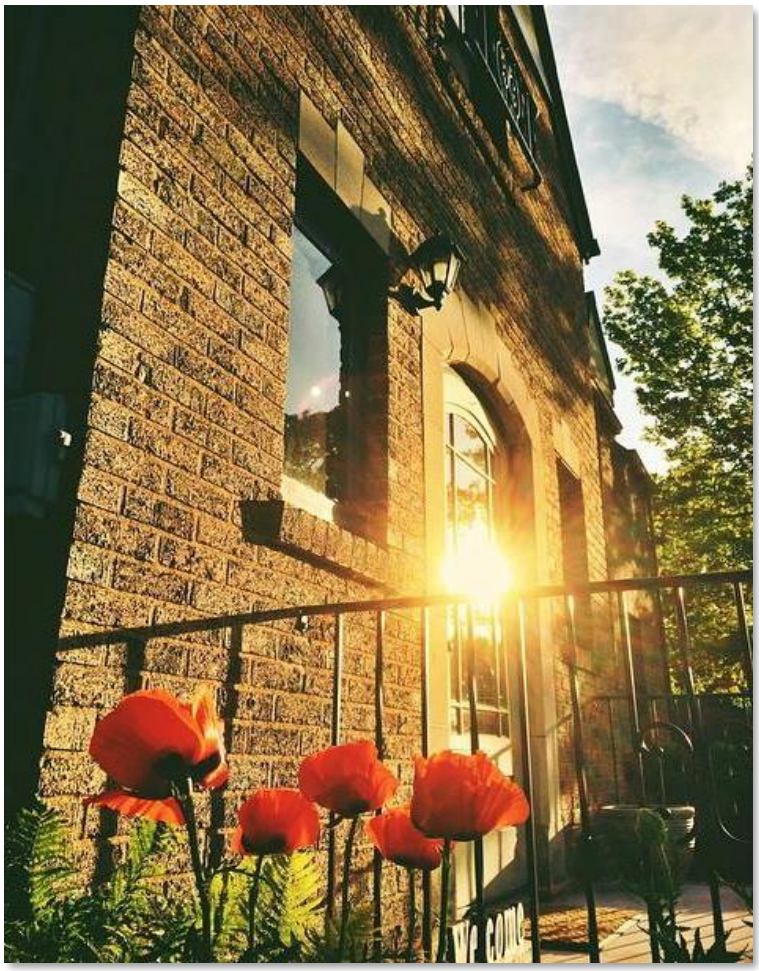


Photo Credit: Matt Dean

Housing Affordability

The generally accepted guideline for housing expenses is that they should not exceed 30% of the household's income. By this calculation, a typical household in Parchment with the annual median household of $43,493 should not have monthly housing expenses of more than $1,087.

In terms of housing costs, Parchment's homeowners are doing better than its renters. In 2018, around 9% of the City's owners had housing costs take up more than 35% of their incomes. In the same year, almost 47% of renters spent more than 35% of their incomes on housing costs (U.S. Census, Table DP04). Although the median monthly rent is below 30% of the area median income, lower average earnings mean that housing costs account for larger proportions of renters' income. Therefore, the City should explore how to provide more affordable housing options for Parchment households who currently rent.

Employment & Unemployment

The unemployment rates for Kalamazoo County have historically been lower than those for the State of Michigan and the United States. However, Kalamazoo County's economy, like the state of Michigan, was stronger in the late 90's than it is today. The annual average unemployment rate for Kalamazoo County began to rise in 2000, until finally reaching over 7.3% in 2014, equaling that of the State of Michigan. The unemployment rate in Parchment did not stabilize after the 2008 recession, reaching 9.5% in 2017.

TABLE 2.11
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (%)

YEAR	*CITY*	*COUNTY*	*STATE*
2017	9.5%	6.6%	4.5%
2010	7.4%	7.3%	7.3%
2000	4.3%	4.6%	3.2%

Source: US Census 2013-2017 ACS estimates

From 2013-2017, 62% of the population in Parchment was in the labor force. The sectors of the economy that employ much of the Parchment's workforce are education, health care, and social services. The largest occupational groups included manufacturing, arts, and retail trade. Those occupations comprise 72.3% of the workforce.

TABLE 2.10
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, AS % OF POPULATION

Industry	*City*	*County*	*State*
Ag, forestry, & mining	0.0	1.0	1.2
Construction	2.6	6.5	5.1
Manufacturing	18.2	17.7	18.4
Wholesale trade	2.1	2.2	2.4
Retail trade	14.2	11.1	11.1
Transport & warehousing & utilities	5.6	2.6	4.2
Information	0.7	1.4	1.4
Finance, insurance, & real estate	5.5	5.9	5.5
Professional, scientific, & management	7.0	9.3	9.5
Education, health care, & social	23.3	27.0	23.5
Arts, entertainment, rec., accommodation & food services	16.6	10.5	9.4
Other services, except public	2.9	4.6	4.7
Public administration	1.4	2.7	3.5

Source: US Census 2013-2017 ACS estimates & 2000, 2010 Decennial Census

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE CONDITIONS

Prior to developing a future land use plan and map, a community must first assess its existing land uses. This chapter presents information on the types and location of existing land uses and land cover. The process identifies both developed lands along with natural land cover types like woodlands and wetlands. The maps presented in this chapter reflect land cover and land use currently seen in the City.

The existing uses of land in the City of Parchment have developed over many years. The City has a total area of 601.6 acres, of which 12.8 acres is water, primarily the Kalamazoo River. Vacant lands, the Kalamazoo River floodplain, and public/private rights-of-way comprise over one-third of Parchment's land area, or 204.33 acres. Some of these lands are in private ownership and thus are included in the following categories.

Photo Credit: Lee Adams

Residential

Residential uses are the dominant land use in Parchment. These comprise single-family, duplexes and apartment buildings. Residential uses comprise 179.87 acres or 30.5% of the total city land area. The dominant character of residential areas in Parchment are narrow lots with homes close to the street, and detached garages to the rear of the property.

Commercial

Commercial uses account for a small share of the overall City land area: 9.0% or 52.73 acres. The majority of the commercial-related uses are located in the central business district, along Parchment's primary commercial arterial, Riverview Drive.

A large concentration of commercial uses is located along the southern entrance into the community at Mosel Street, and along Riverview Drive. These uses include restaurants, service establishments, grocery, and the post office. Another commercial concentration is located along Riverview from Hercules Avenue north to G Avenue (the north City limit). Current uses include offices, gasoline stations, financial institutions, grocery, retail, and restaurants. A secondary area of commercial development is located near the multi-family residential complexes along G Avenue near Haymac Drive, on the City's northeast side. Several professional offices are located in this area.

Industrial

Because Parchment was founded as a paper manufacturing company town, the proportion of land devoted to industrial uses is higher than would be typical for a community of this size. The City has 129.62 acres classified as industrial use, which is 22.0% of the City's land area. This land use is in the process of change following the closing of the paper mill. Redevelopment of that area will almost certainly result in a change of classification on at least part of the industrial class areas.

Public & Semi-Public

Public and semi-public land uses cover over 116 acres of land in Parchment. This includes government buildings, public and private park lands, schools, and religious institutions. Public infrastructure uses primarily occupy roughly 70 acres. Schools, such as Parchment High School in the northeast quarter of the City and Parchment middle school in the northwest section along Riverview Drive, cover the largest land areas of this type of use. Kindleberger Park, located in the center of the City, is the City's most highly used asset. This park covers 38 acres, and provides the following amenities:

- play areas,
- baseball and softball fields,
- tennis courts,
- pickle ball courts,
- performance stage
- natural settings, and
- formal garden.

Transportation Infrastructure

Act 51 Streets

The City of Parchment has no state designated roads. County primary roads stop at the city limits. These include: G Avenue from Riverview Drive east to the city limit, and Mosel Avenue from Riverview Drive west to the city limits. City major streets include: Riverview Drive (entire length), Parchmount Avenue from Riverview Drive east to Clarnin, Oakgrove Avenue from Wilson Avenue to Riverview, Island Avenue from Eunice to Riverview, Glendale Boulevard from Riverview to Orient St., Commerce Lane, and Shoppers Lane.

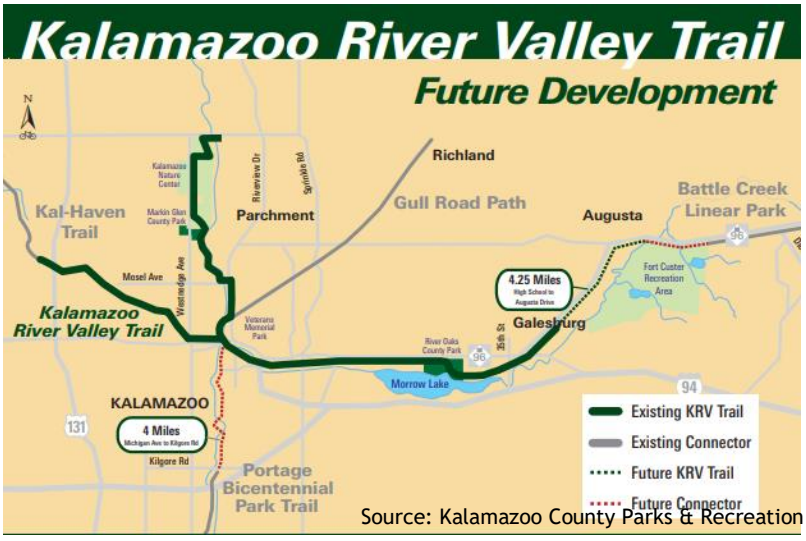
The City maintains 3.55 miles of major streets, and 7.59 miles of local streets. Funding for major streets comes primarily from the State of Michigan's Public Act 51 of 1951. Funding for local streets can be either from the City's general fund or, at the property owner's request, from special assessment districts for individual street. Map 4-1 depicts roads in Parchment.

Sidewalks & Walking Trails

The City has an extensive system of sidewalks along all major streets and most secondary streets.

Cycling Facilities

Of all the City streets, only Riverview Drive and G Avenue present any challenges for cyclists. G Avenue has paved shoulders suitable for bicycle travel, while Riverview Drive has parking lanes on both sides and wide lane widths but no marked bicycle lanes.



Source: Kalamazoo County Parks & Recreation

Recreational Trails

The Kalamazoo River Valley Trail is 22 miles of paved multiuse trail that primarily runs east-west and north through multiple municipalities in Kalamazoo County. The trail has three legs that all connect in downtown Kalamazoo. The western leg runs through the urbanized areas of Kalamazoo City and Kalamazoo Township and joins the Kal-Haven Trail in Oshtemo Township. The northern leg of the KRVT passes very close to Parchment as it runs along Riverview Drive and turns west on Mosel Ave; from there the trail travels along the western bank of the Kalamazoo River through the Nature Center and terminates at D Ave. The eastern leg also hugs the Kalamazoo River but on the southern bank (the River turns North near Downtown Kalamazoo) through Comstock and terminates in Galesburg. Future plans for this east leg include a connection with the Battle Creek Linear Park which is part of plans to connect to a larger trail system that will connect Lake Michigan to Lake Huron. A southern leg which will connect to the Portage and Vicksburg trail system is also anticipated.

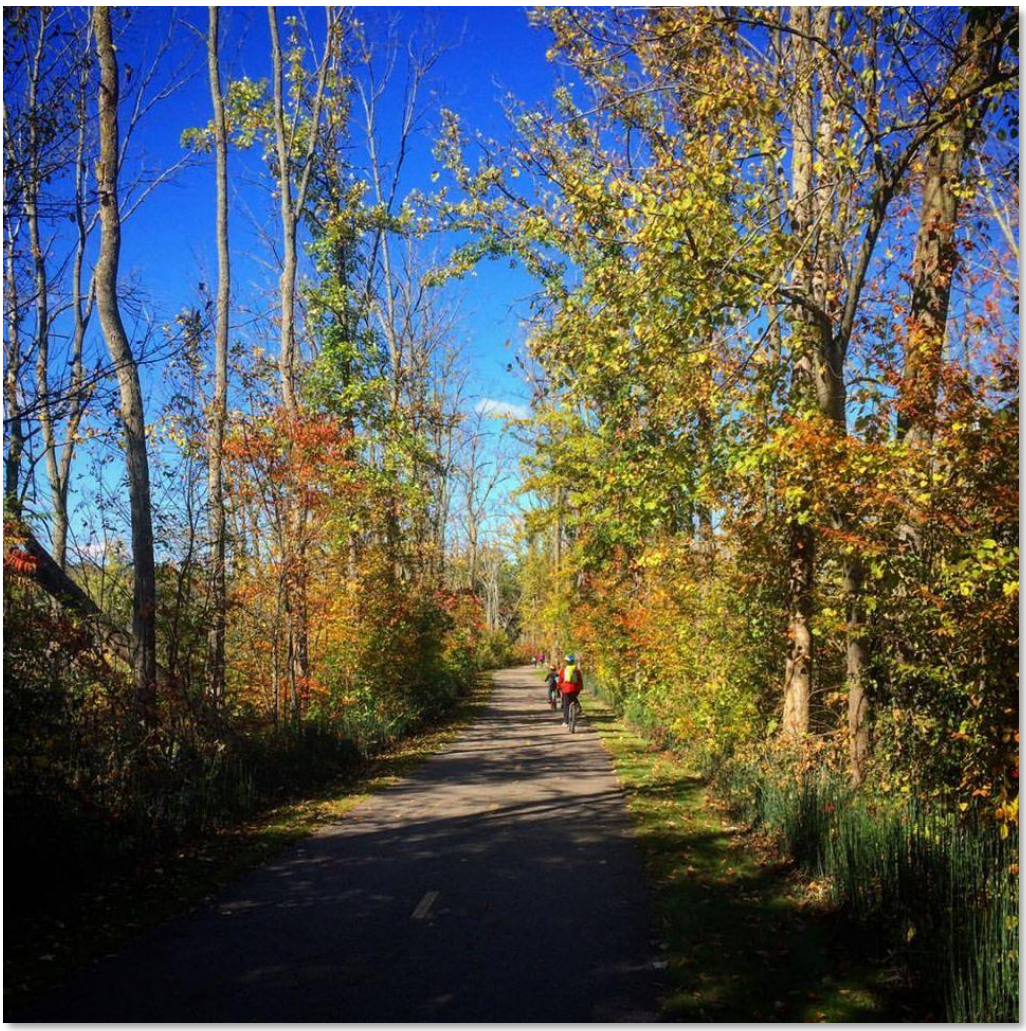


Photo Credit: Matt Dean

Public Transit

Public transit is provided for Parchment by the Central County Transit Authority (CCTA). The primary route serving Parchment is CCTA Route 6, which begins in downtown Kalamazoo at the multimodal bus/rail station at Burdick Street and Kalamazoo Avenue. Route 6 runs north on Burdick to Paterson, east to Riverview Drive, north to Mt. Olivet Road, northeast to Virginia Street, north to Mosel Avenue, west to Commerce Lane, back to Riverview, north to G Avenue and east to the Walmart on Gull Road where it connects with the Gull Road transit route. This route provides public transit access within a quarter mile to most households within Parchment.

Rail & Air
Access to passenger rail service and to the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport is provided through either the Metro Transit system specifically through the intermodal station at Burdick Street and Kalamazoo Avenue in the City of Kalamazoo. Access to the intermodal stations can also be obtained via several area taxi cab and rideshare services.

Limited rail freight service provided by Grand Elk is operational within the City of Parchment. Other rail freight service is not operational within the City of Parchment, although rail right-of-way still exists and could be re-established. Rail freight service is available from three lines running through the City of Kalamazoo.

Air freight services can be reached in Battle Creek at W.K. Kellogg Airport. This facility also serves as a U.S. Customs Port of Entry Foreign Trade Zone.

Other Infrastructure

Public Utilities
The City's Public Works Department (DPW) maintains the streets, parks and recreation facilities, stormwater system, and city buildings. Much of the work assigned to DPW is seasonal in nature and includes snow removal, street maintenance and pothole patching, sidewalk repair, property maintenance and mowing, storm drain cleaning and repair, and maintaining City Hall and other City facilities. The City also contracts for additional municipal services with adjacent communities.

Municipal water
The City discovered historical industrial groundwater contamination in its water supply system. The contamination managed to infiltrate the City's well field aquifers. To ensure safe drinking water was provided to its residents, the City sold its water supply system to the City of Kalamazoo.

Municipal sanitary sewer
The City of Parchment's sanitary sewer system is connected to the Kalamazoo wastewater treatment plant located south of Parchment. The wastewater system is maintained by the City of Kalamazoo.

Emergency Services

Fire Protection Services
Fire protection is provided through a cooperative services agreement with the Charter Township of Kalamazoo, which maintains four fire stations. The nearest Township Fire station is located just south of the Parchment city limits, in the Northwood Neighborhood, at the corner of North Burdick and East Mosel.

Police Protection Services
The City of Parchment entered into a cooperative services agreement with the Charter Township of Kalamazoo for the provision of police services. The Kalamazoo Township Police Department provides dedicated road patrol, investigations, detective work, school liaison, and administrative and records keeping to the residents of Parchment. The main police station is located at 1720 Riverview Drive.

Parchment Firetruck No. 1, circa 1940

Photo Credit: Parchment Community Library

Natural Features

Significant site features are those surface characteristics which serve to "shape the community," in some instances discouraging development, and in others, attracting particular land use activities. The first of these to be examined is topography.

Topography

The topography of the City of Parchment slopes gradually downward from east to west towards the Kalamazoo River. Land elevations range from a height of about 850 feet above sea level along the City's eastern boundary to a low of 750 feet above sea level along the Kalamazoo River. Areas where significant grade changes occur are in the vicinity of Kindleberger Park and the Parkview subdivisions in the southeastern portion of the City; in the Elmhurst Park area; and east of Riverview Dr.

Steep slopes are readily apparent on Map 4-2. These are areas where contour lines are close together and cross hatching is provided.

Photo Credit: Matt Dean

Wetlands

In 1979, the Goemaere-Anderson Wetland Protection Act was enacted by the State of Michigan. This legislation was passed to protect wetlands by restricting their use to certain activities (fishing, boating, farming, among others) while allowing other activities only after permit approval by the State of Michigan. Permits are approved only upon a review of an environmental assessment filed by the petitioner upon a finding that the activity is in the public interest. This act folded into Michigan's Environmental Protection Act in 1994, of which the wetland provisions have been amended twice: P.A. 98 of 2013, and P.A. 631 of 2018.

Under the provisions of the Act, in effect since 1980, a wetland is defined as "land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support and that under normal circumstances does support wetland vegetation or aquatic life and is commonly referred to as a bog, swamp, or marsh." The operative words here are wetland vegetation. Therefore, the Act excludes those areas that are flooded in the spring but rarely have water in them at any other time of the year and, as a result, do not support aquatic plants and animals.

Once a wetland is designated as such, the next question concerns jurisdiction. In Michigan, three different parties have interests in wetlands: the federal government, state government, and local jurisdictions. A three-part test is used to determine if an area falls under the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's authority:

1. Has a permanent surface water connection or is in otherwise direct physical contact with an inland lake or pond, river, stream or a Great Lake;
2. Is a seasonal or intermittent stream (need not have year-round water and may be as small as 1-foot wide by 3 feet deep) or surface water connection to an inland lake, pond, river, stream, or to the Great Lakes, or if it,

3. Is greater than five acres in size and in a county of more than 100,000 population.

The Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior has conducted a wetland inventory that includes the City of Parchment. This inventory is shown on Map 4-3.

Woodlands

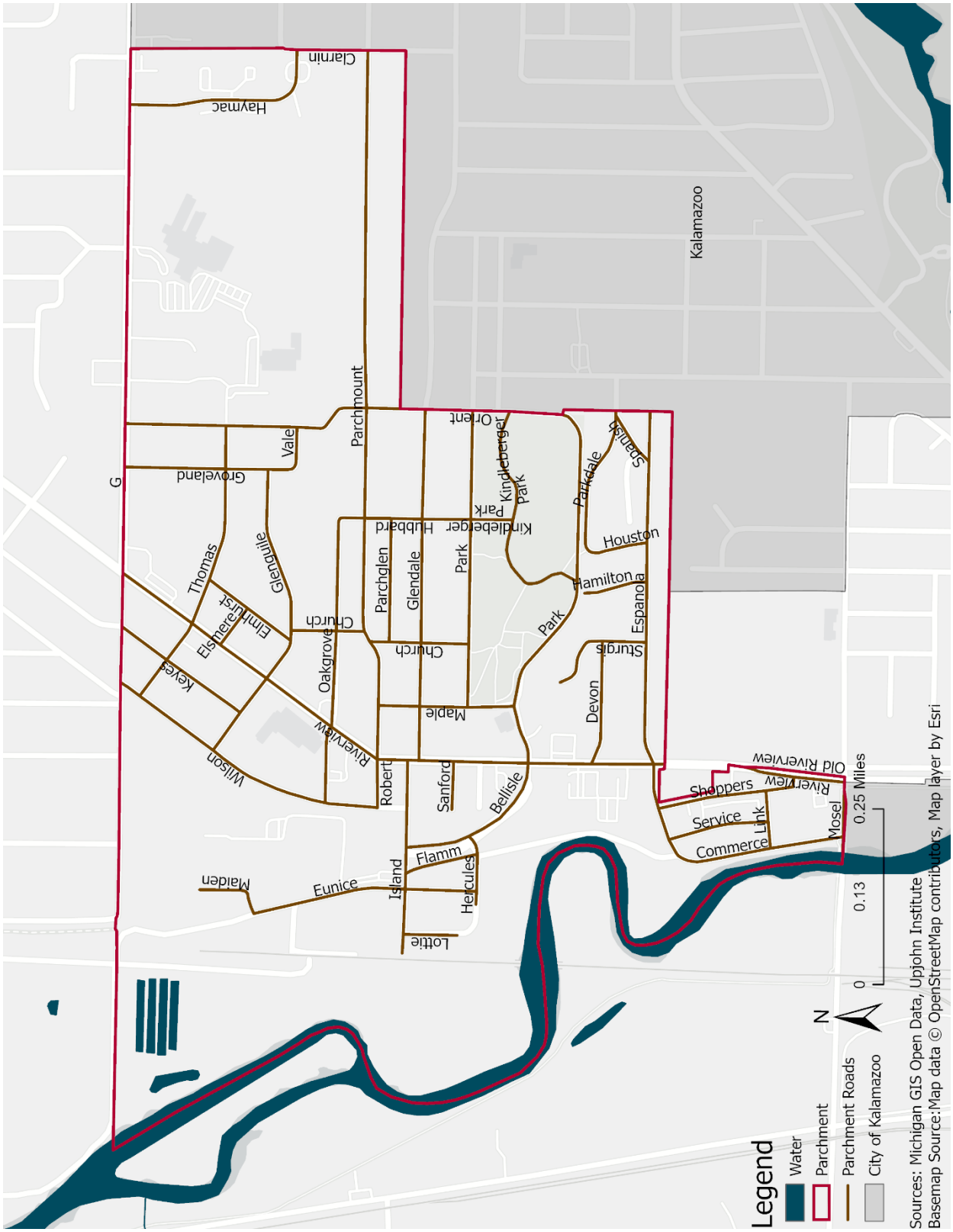
The existence of several woodlands throughout the community are also shown on Map 4-3. The largest woodland in Parchment is located along the Kalamazoo River, on the western edge of the City. There are also several smaller woodlands in the eastern half of Parchment.

Floodplains

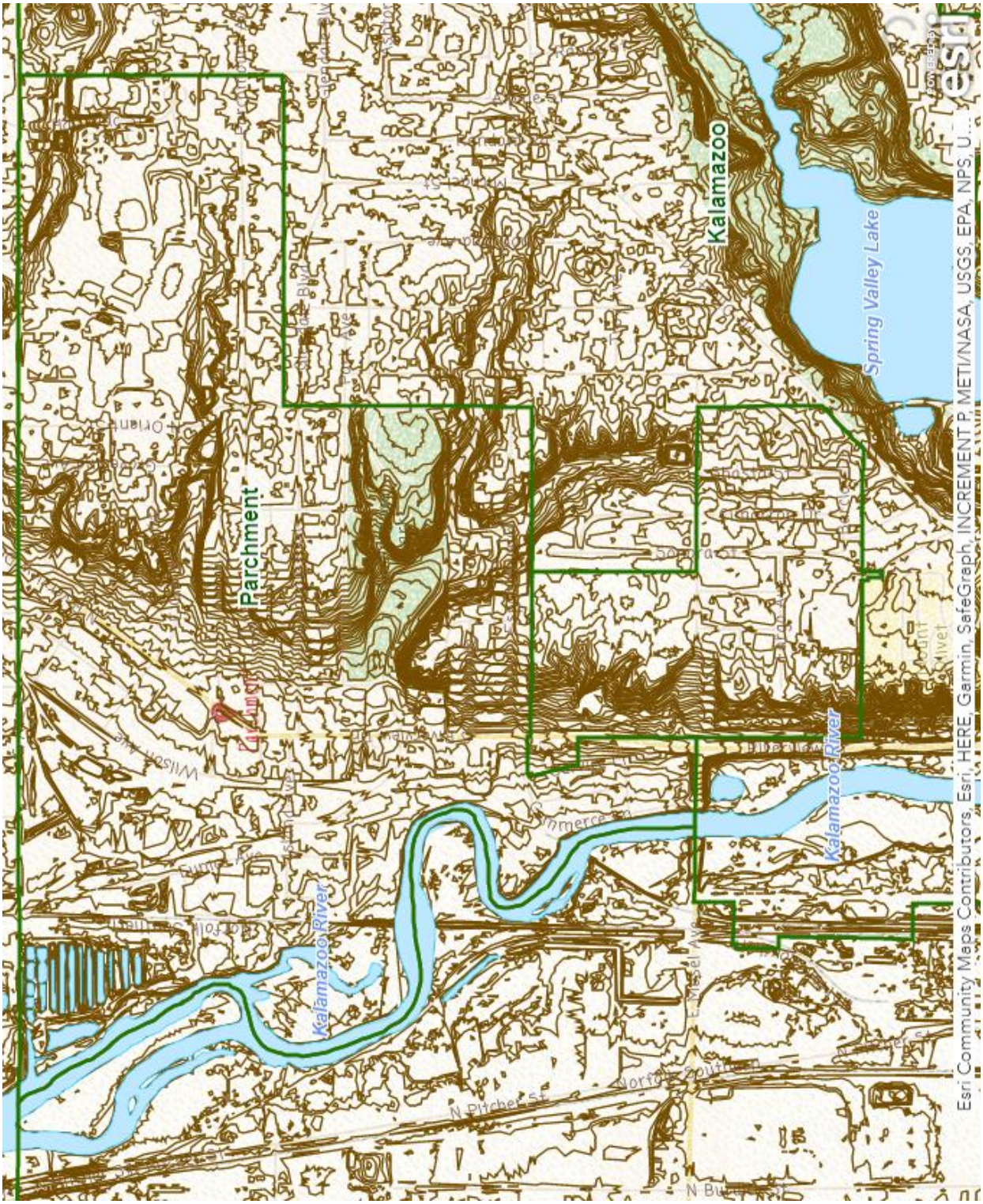
In 2010, new floodplain maps were adopted for Kalamazoo County by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Map 4-4 depicts the Flood Hazard Area boundaries along the Kalamazoo River within the City of Parchment. These maps are used by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the insurance industry to determine insurance requirements and limitations on construction. Generally new residential construction is prohibited within a Flood Hazard Area and repairs are limited to no more than 50% of the pre-flood structural value after which the structure must be elevated above the flood elevation. Commercial structures can be flood-proofed under certain conditions. All construction within a floodplain is also regulated under the Michigan building codes. It should be noted, however, that these soil interpretations are general in nature and will not eliminate the need for an on-site study and testing of specific sites for the design and construction of specific uses. This data can be used to plan more detailed investigation and for avoiding undesirable sites for temporary uses.

Photo Credit:
Matt Dean

Map 4-1: Roads

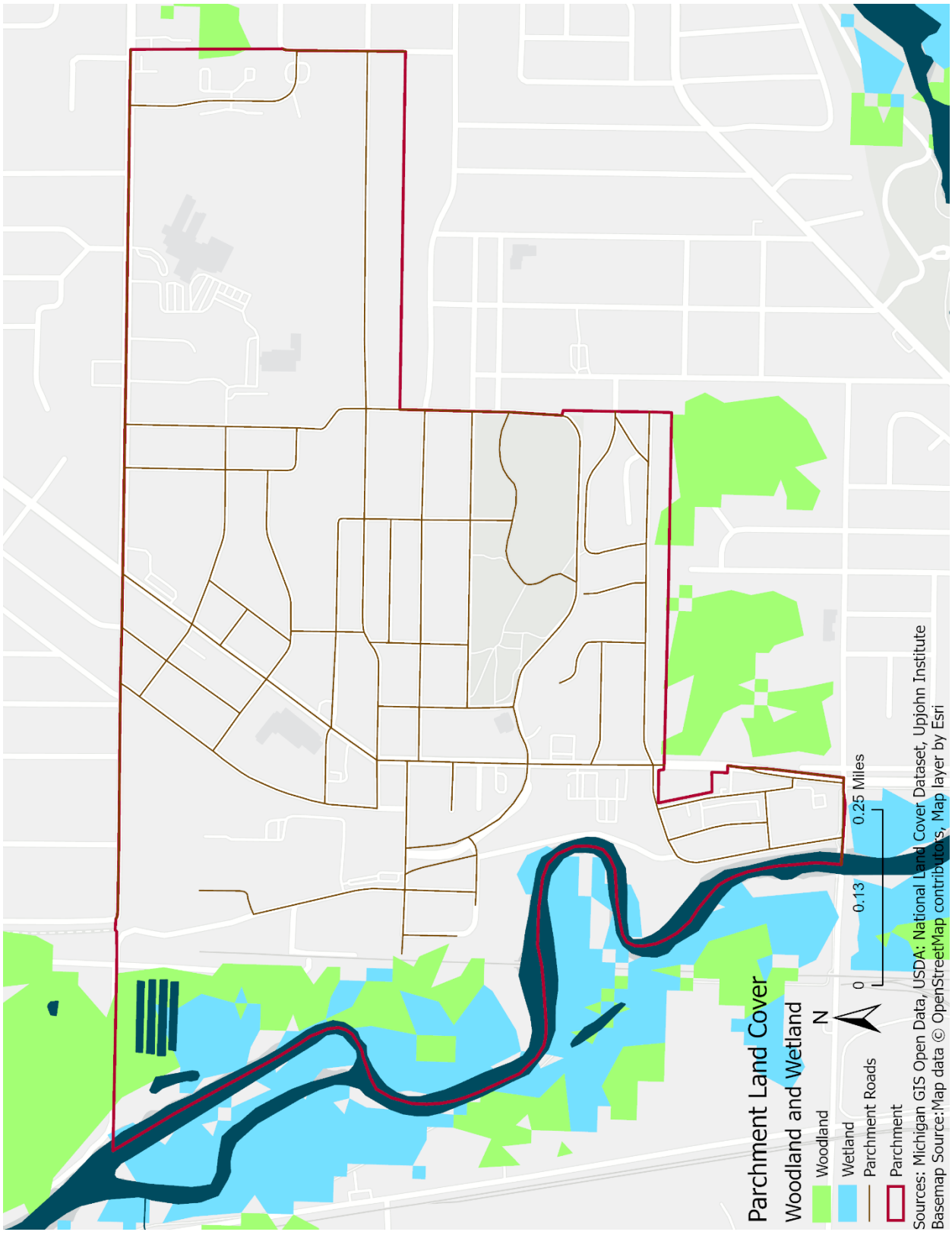

Kalamazoo
Clarnin
Haymac
Parchmount
Orient
Kindleberger Park
Parkdale
Stanley
Houston
Hamilton
Espanola
Sturgis
Devon
Park
Vale
Groveland
G
Thomas
Glendale
Elmhurst
Elsmere
Church
Oakgrove
Parchglen
Glendale
Hubbard
Park
Maple
Riverview
Wilson
Keyes
Robert
Sanford
Bellisle
Old Riverview
Shoppers
Service
Commerce
Link
Mosel
Flamm
Island
Hercules
Eunice
Malden
Lottie
N
0
0.13
0.25 Miles
Legend
Water
Parchment
Parchment Roads
City of Kalamazoo
Sources: Michigan GIS Open Data, Upjohn Institute
Basemap Source:Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Map layer by Esri

Map 4-2: Topography

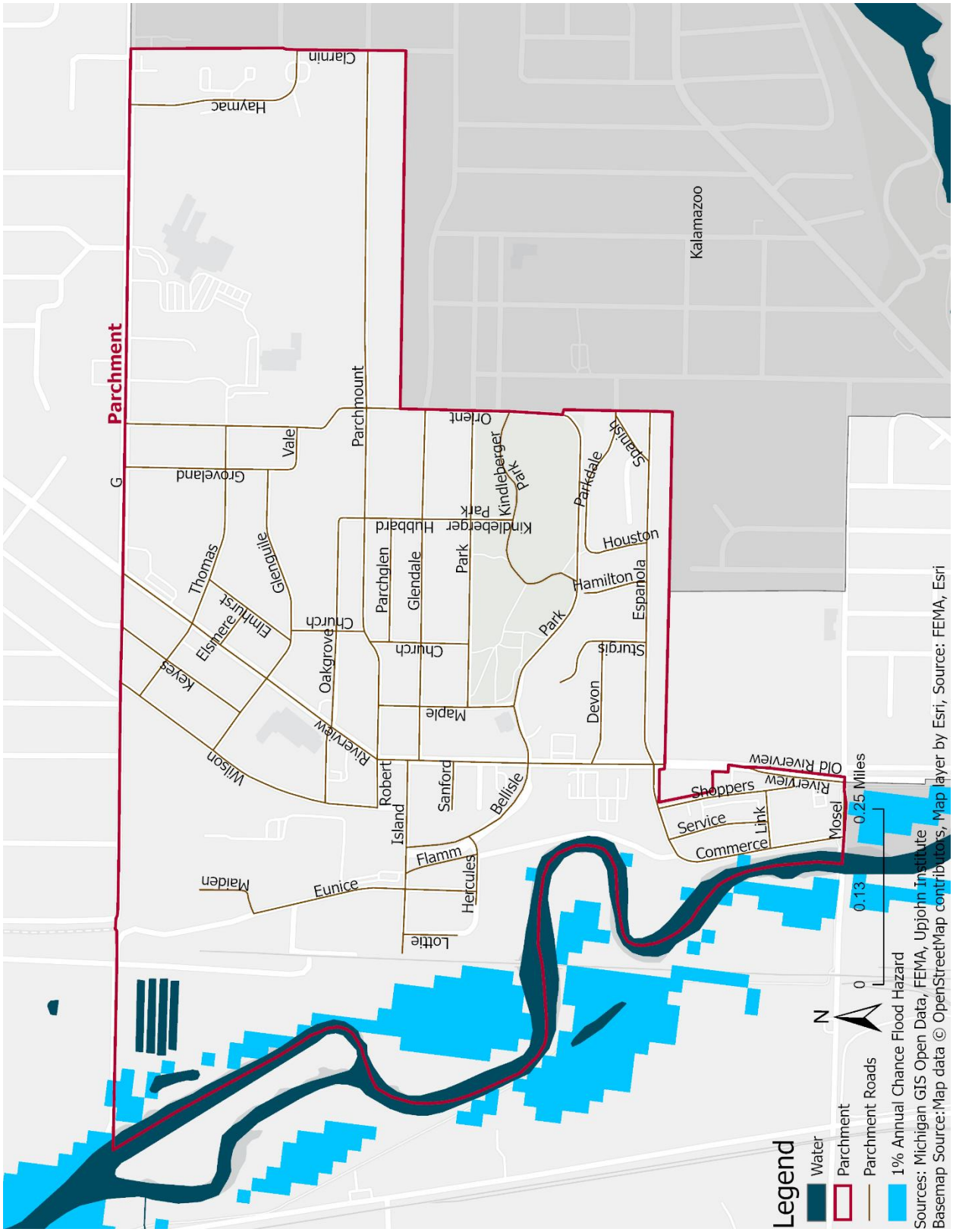


Map produced through Kalamazoo County GIS Mapping Software

Map 4-3: Woodlands & Wetlands



Map 4-4: Floodplains



CHAPTER 4: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter of the Master Plan outlines the goals for the City of Parchment, their related objectives, and implementation strategies. Goals are an important way for the City to articulate the long-term direction of the community. The goals reflect the vision of the City Officials, business owners, residents, and others in the community regarding the future of Parchment. Goals also shape the policies implemented by the City. To this end, the following goals, objectives, and strategies are achievable, relevant, and represent current community attitudes.

1. **Goal: Enhance the City's existing advantages:**
    a. **Sub-goal:** Increase recreational opportunities within and near the City
        i. **Objective**: Preserve or increase the amount of park land
            - Target properties in the mapped floodplain and other undevelopable properties for acquisition
            - Maintain the City's Parks & Recreation Plan, update every three years and actively pursue grants.
            - Obtain local matching funds for state and federal grants through local foundations and/or a local targeted parks and recreation millage, local resident and business fundraising, and/or increased fees for city sponsored team-sports programs
            - Use crowdsourcing to help fund park developments
                - The Michigan Economic Development Corporation has a matching program through their crowdsourcing platform
            - Develop a volunteer network to help offset some maintenance costs
        ii. **Objective**: Increase the reach of trails
            - Develop a set of proposed routes
                - Prioritize those routes based on impact and return on investment
                - Target abandoned rail beds, acquire the rights-of-way using the Rails-To-Trails program
                - Coordinate with the Kalamazoo County Parks Department on route prioritization
            - Find routes that qualify for the Safe Routes to School program to help offset costs
    b. **Sub-goal:** Capitalize on Parchment's advantageous location
        i. **Objective**: Take advantage of the proximity to Downtown Kalamazoo
            - Play off the character of downtown Kalamazoo as an arts and entertainment center, review the zoning ordinance to ensure that it allows for businesses that can link to Kalamazoo's character
            - Advertise Parchment events in downtown Kalamazoo

        - Set up a table/booth at downtown Kalamazoo events like Lunchtime Live and Art Hop
    ii. **Objective**: Take advantage of proximity to shopping on Gull Road
        - Recognize that Gull Road/M-343 has become a "big-box" commercial corridor, and design zoning to encourage local/small-scale business development to serve as an alternative to the Gull Road corridor
        - Support increased metro-transit service from Parchment to the entire Gull Road corridor
    iii. **Objective**: Take advantage of proximity to hospital services
        - Within the zoning ordinance provide for medical-related offices/clinics as permitted uses along the primary commercial streets outside of the Central Business District
        - Work to attract Bronson or Borgess outpatient facilities closer to Parchment
    iv. **Objective**: Take advantage of proximity to employers
        - Demonstrate the strengths of Parchment to local realtors
            - Create a community "open house"
        - Work with company recruiters to advertise the positive aspects of Parchment
        - Work with human resource departments to share the positive aspects of Parchment during new hire orientation
        - As a part of site plan review within the zoning ordinance, require facilities for bike-to-work and walk-to-work from nearby residential areas
- c. **Sub-goal:** Enhance and improve Parchment's **s**mall-town feel
    i. **Objective**: Encourage civic engagement
        - Hold government open houses to help familiarize the public with the nuts and bolts of government functions
        - Make government more accessible
            - Occasionally hold City Commission and/or Planning Commission meetings in Kindleberger Park
            - Set up a table/booth about specific topics during busy events in the park
            - Routinely ask for feedback from the public on City programs, services, or policies
            - Create a student liaison program
                - Each Spring, have the future senior class nominate a member for the Planning Commission or the Parks Commission
    ii. **Objective**: Encourage community interaction
        - Schedule community-focused events
            - Block parities
            - Large events in the Park
            - Create a community scavenger hunt to help folks familiarize themselves with many aspects of the City
            - Create a parade of homes event
        - Examine the possibility of implementing the Building Blocks program used in Kalamazoo (www.bbkazoo.org)

iii. **Objective**: Develop community identity
- Find aspects of the community that most people appreciate and highlight those
- Conduct an Historic Architecture Survey of the City and publish the results

d. **Sub-goal:** Take advantage of the Kalamazoo River as a community resource
i. **Objective**: Encourage activity near the river that celebrates and protects Parchment's natural resources.
- Develop clear guidelines based upon Federal Emergency Management Authority/National Flood Insurance Program rules/regulations that allow development within the floodplain which include floodproofing requirements for commercial/industrial development
- In the zoning ordinance, allow recreational-type commercial development within the floodplain in accordance with FEMA and NFIP rules

ii. **Objective**: Incorporate the Kalamazoo River into the City's identity
- Establish a Planning Commission sub-committee to develop a riverfront re-development plan
- Include the river in City branding
- Hold events around the river

iii. **Objective**: Orient city investments toward the river
- Re-zone the river-front areas for commercial/recreational development
- Encourage sustainable business development near the river, particularly investments that enhance Parchment's existing natural resources.

Gazebo at Kindleberger Park Sunken Garden

Photo Credit: O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock, & Associates, Inc

2. Goal: Reestablish Parchment as a model community

a. **Objective**: Thoughtfully enhance housing options in the City's zoning ordinance
   i. Provide for alternate, innovative housing-types, where appropriate, in Parchment through amendments to the zoning ordinance to allow:
      - Dwelling units as small as 400 square feet ("micro-housing")
      - Guest houses
      - Accessory housing ("granny-flats", "mother-in-law" apartments)
      - Row houses (zero lot line development)
      - Boarding houses
      - Short-term rentals (AirBNB, VRBO, etc.)
      - Duplexes in single-family zoning districts
      - Mixed use residential/commercial zoning
      - Live-work zoning (dwellings over/behind commercial uses)
   ii. Participate in the state's Redevelopment Ready Community program
      - Review the zoning ordinance for unnecessary impediments
      - Create a diagram of the development process
      - Identify stakeholders and develop a public participation plan

b. **Objective**: Seek out partnerships with other communities
   i. Continue participation in the Kalamazoo Area Building Authority
   ii. Consider coordinating zoning districts with Kalamazoo and Cooper Townships
   iii. Consider adopting a joint parks and recreation plan with Cooper and Kalamazoo Townships and Parchment Public Schools
   iv. Develop a corridor improvement plan for Riverview Drive with Kalamazoo Township and the City of Kalamazoo
   v. Develop a corridor improvement plan for G Avenue with Cooper Township, Kalamazoo, Comstock, and Richland Townships.

c. **Objective**: Encourage community involvement and a sense of community ownership in residents
   i. Schedule neighborhood charettes targeted to specific topics:
      - Housing
      - Businesses
      - Recreation
      - Non-motorized transportation
      - Community services
      - Streets

Photo Credit: Lee Adams

   ii. Objective: Cultivate community-focused local businesses and institutions
      - Within the zoning ordinance, provide for business incubator developments designed for local start-ups
      - Create startup guides for small businesses
      - Create a fund aimed at helping small businesses

3. Goal: Make Parchment a sustainable community:

a. Support sustainable businesses and attract new amenities that serve residents and visitors
    i. **Objective**: Determine what businesses the local market could support and work to encourage those
        - Acquire vacant/tax reverted commercial/industrial properties for redevelopment as city-owned properties and set rents at a reasonable level to allow small businesses to succeed
        - Have a market analysis prepared in order to identify needed businesses and business types that are most likely to succeed
    ii. **Objective:** Work to attract employers who are engaged in stable industries
        - Look to organizations like the W.E. Upjohn Institute for industry projections and use that information to select a few industries on which to focus

b. Increase funding resources
    i. **Objective**: Increase tax base
        - Implement efficient land use practices through the zoning code to maximize the amount of taxable value per acre
    ii. **Objective**: Seek grants and other outside funding
        - Seek funding from foundations and government sources for specific projects
    iii. **Objective**: Examine non-traditional sources of funding
        - Encourage private individuals/corporations to establish a community foundation for Parchment
        - Consider a Tax Increment Financing Authority (TIFA)
        - Consider a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA)
        - Create an equity investment fund for local residents or others to invest in Parchment properties

c. Protect the environment
    i. **Objective**: Assemble and empower a dedicated group of citizens
        - Appoint an environmental review sub-committee of the Planning Commission, including representatives from citizens groups and/or local scientist or civil engineers
    ii. **Objective:** Create programs to clean and promote river water quality
        - Prepare a Natural Resources Inventory of the Kalamazoo River floodplain and immediately adjacent upland areas
        - Require development/redevelopment proposals for the riverfront area to prepare Environmental Impact Statements
        - Partner with businesses and organizations to create programs that encourage more recreational use of the river
    ii. **Objective**: Examine regulations and policies that help to protect the environment
        - Include environmental protection requirements in the site plan review section of the zoning ordinance
        - Require pollution prevention plans for all new commercial and industrial developments and redevelopment projects
        - Require storm water management designs for all new developments and for redevelopments of existing properties

d. Ensure multiple transportation options are available by enhancing the walk-ability and bike-ability of the City
    i. **Objective**: Install pedestrian-friendly infrastructure
        - For new developments and redevelopments, require sidewalks where there are missing links
        - Look to utilize Michigan Department of Transportation and Federal transportation funding sources to install pedestrian-friendly features like crosswalks, curb bump outs, and sidewalks/trails
    ii. **Objective**: Install cycling-friendly infrastructure
        - For new developments and redevelopments, require bicycle racks
        - Install sharrows, striped bike lanes, and off-road paved paths
            - Use federal and state funding where available
    iii. **Objective**: Introduce traffic-calming measures
        - Look to install roundabouts, speed bumps, four-way stops, and other features where appropriate
    iv. **Objective**: Increase street-facing businesses
        - In the zoning ordinance, reduce the street-front setbacks for commercial uses and all uses in the downtown area
        - Using the most recent parking usage studies, reduce the parking requirements in the zoning ordinance and limit parking lots to no more than 125% of the required parking
    v. **Objective**: Create additional access points to trail network
        - Partner with local businesses to use existing parking lots at trailheads
e. Encourage and support alternative energy systems
    i. **Objective**: Loosen zoning code to allow for installations of solar power generating facilities on rooftops
    ii. **Objective**: Seek to make City facilities energy efficient
        - Install solar panels, efficient lighting, and efficient heating and cooling systems

vi. **Objective**: Install alternative energy demonstration projects on City-owned facilities
• Partner with Consumers Energy or find grants to reduce costs

Photo Credit: O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock, & Associates, Inc

4. Goal: Maintain and enhance a diverse housing stock

a. **Objective**: Create a housing management system
   i. Inventory housing in the city
      - Identify houses that may need assistance with staying in livable condition
   ii. Strengthen rental opportunities and adopt a rental housing registration program with a property inspection and maintenance requirement

b. **Objective**: Create programs that help homeowners maintain their homes
   i. In conjunction with a property maintenance ordinance, create a home-owner assistance fund/grant program

c. **Objective**: Protect the primarily residential character of the community by retaining existing housing stock, and use the zoning code to maintain the diversity of the City's housing ecosystem
   i. For new developments, promote a mix of housing types and costs while discouraging single-family developments that do not provide for other types of housing
   ii. Craft the zoning ordinance in a way that would allow for innovative yet appropriate housing products

d. **Objective**: Incentivize housing products needed in the City
   i. In the zoning ordinance, provide for density bonuses for diverse housing types and reduced public utility costs for smaller dwelling units

Photo Credit: Lee Adams

CHAPTER 5: FUTURE LAND USE & REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

This chapter presents an overview of the intended land uses and zoning designations that will shape the future of Parchment City. The chapter also identifies priorities for redevelopment that will be aligned with the intended zoning designations.

FINDINGS

The future land use plan is based on the following findings:

- The City is almost exclusively urban with most of the land already developed. Very few undeveloped or underdeveloped areas exist within the City limits. The uses of land are most likely going to remain as they exist today.
- The City is primarily residential with small amounts of commercial, industrial, and recreational lands. Institutional facilities occupy a significant portion of the City.
- Kindleberger Park is a large recreational facility that occupies a significant portion of the City
- Limited wetlands and open space exist near the Kalamazoo River.
- The City most recently adopted a zoning ordinance in 2018.

FUTURE LAND USE and ZONING PLANS

This Future Land Use Plan will serve as the blueprint for future development of the City until amended or replaced. The Zoning Plan will describe the zoned uses and articulate the relationship between the current zoning and Future Land Use Plans.

1. Residential

Future Land Use & Redevelopment Plan

Residential uses are found in heavy concentrations throughout the City. While the diversity of housing is somewhat limited, it does vary to some degree. To ensure the housing stock in the City continues to the meet the changing needs of residents, the City should work to increase its housing diversity. Additional multifamily family, senior housing, row houses, and condos are needed. New multifamily construction should be encouraged while new single-family housing should be considered carefully. Future residential development should meet the following objectives:

1. To protect the residential character of designated areas by excluding activities and land uses which are not compatible, such as but not limited to principle commercial and industrial uses;
2. To encourage a suitable environment for family life by permitting appropriate neighborhood facilities such as religious institutions, schools, playgrounds, and open space;
3. To provide various housing options to satisfy the preferences for those currently living, and looking to live, in Parchment.
4. To encourage development of residential areas that are attractive, consistent with family needs, and conducive to constantly improved environmental quality;

5. To permit certain institutions and utility facilities considered necessary in, or compatible with, residential neighborhoods; and
6. To protect residential areas from unnecessary traffic and to restrict volume of traffic to the greatest degree possible.

Single Family Residential
Although most of the land within the City of Parchment has been developed, the large Mill site and several smaller sites remain available for development. Future single-family development offers opportunities for creative solutions on the available land, such as clustered subdivisions. Single-family units can be designed in small groups with reduced lot sizes, so long as connection to public sanitary sewer and water supply systems can be maintained. Natural areas gained through decreased lot size can then be used collectively for park areas to serve the subdivision. Clustered subdivisions should be encouraged and should include a density bonus as a means of preserving fragile or environmentally important lands.

Multiple-Family Residences
Approximately 26 acres of land area have been allocated for multiple-family development. Permitted uses within this district would be group housing for the elderly, garden apartments, townhouses, multiplex and duplex units. Projects can either be condominium or rental development.

Permitted development densities may range between four to five units per acre (duplex) and ten to fifteen units per acres (townhouses/rowhouses) depending upon the dwelling unit type. Each dwelling unit, of whatever type, must be served by both municipal sanitary sewer and water. Individual developers are responsible for providing facilities and sufficient services to serve the needs of their prospective markets.

Residential Transition
The Future Land Use Plan allots just over 11 acres for residential transition uses. This land use designation is proposed in response to a need for convenient, small scale offices and commercial establishments to house the service sector economy as well as office functions and live-work opportunities. The residential transition district is designed to be compatible with surrounding residences through the maintenance of residential appearances and reduced signage.

The portion of the City designated as residential transitional has easy access to both the downtown and Riverview Drive commercial corridor. The area south of the Central Business District is seen as an area where office/commercial development should be encouraged. The area north of the Central Business District should have its residential character maintained as much as possible, while allowing a limited amount of office/commercial conversions.

Photo Credit:
Lee Adams

Zoning Plan
The City has three residential districts: R-A, R-T, and R-M. R-A is the primary single-family residential district. R-T is residential district that serves transition areas between housing and nonresidential uses; the residential buildings in this district are eligible for both residential and commercial uses. R-T designation allows for homes to transition to uses that are more in line with the surrounding commercial character. R-M districts allow for medium density multifamily housing and serves as a transition between nonresidential uses and single-family housing.

To increase the diversity of housing, the City should create new, or expand existing, areas of R-M where appropriate. The City should also examine the possibility of dividing the R-M regulations into two districts based on the scale of the building. This would create one district for lower density multifamily housing such as townhouses, rowhouses, and duplexes; and another district would be for larger multifamily facilities. This would allow a more targeted approach for certain types of multifamily housing where it is appropriate.

2. Commercial Development

Future Land Use & Redevelopment Plan
Commercial development is an important aspect for the growth of any community, in terms of offering adequate goods and services to residents as well as providing a stable tax base and growing employment opportunities. The size of potential markets for different commercial uses determines the extent of the City's economic base. Some commercial uses are designed to serve a relatively small, local market, and depend almost exclusively upon the population residing within the community. Other retail sales and services demand a much larger market area extending well beyond the City boundaries. Ensuring a balance between local and regional commercial uses is a key priority for this redevelopment plan.

The existing Land Use Plan allots approximately 50 acres for various types of commercial and business development, but a substantial portion of this land is already developed and/or zoned commercial. This is an important consideration because these businesses impact nearby commercial activity, traffic patterns, and neighboring land uses.

Currently, commercial development is mostly located along Riverview Drive. Almost all the properties along the entire length of Riverview Drive in the City are used for commercial activities. Future commercial development should remain along Riverview Drive. Additional

Photo Credit: O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock, & Associates, Inc

areas appropriate for commercial development are found along Commerce Lane, and generally between Riverview Drive and the western boundary of the City limits.

Proximity to existing businesses can increase consumer attraction by grouping commercial activities in one area. Uses that provide needed community services, products, or professional offices will be prioritized along Riverview Drive. Additionally, these sites provide the appropriate traffic volumes needed for commercial corridor development. Strategies for commercial redevelopment on Riverview will concentrate new businesses to the south of the Central Business District and target redevelopment projects on currently underutilized and vacant lots along the corridor. Additionally, the City will create a Design Standard Overlay ordinance to ensure that new commercial and industrial establishments conform to and complement the aesthetics of existing businesses in Parchment.

Given the current nature of internet-based commerce, the market-dominance of 'big-box' stores, and consumers' preference for automobile travel, it is recommended that the City concentrate commercial development on small-scale, locally-owned retail businesses identified by the Community Survey completed in 2019. These include businesses like coffee shops, specialty boutiques, or an outdoor store. An active recruitment program is recommended, including possible purchase of vacant buildings by the City, with the intent that specific shops be leased to target businesses only.

These recommendations are based upon local population densities, regional trends, and traffic patterns. Future commercial rezoning requests, which are not in compliance with the Future Land Use Plan, must be carefully analyzed in terms of their potential effect upon existing, vacant, and commercially zoned properties. Indiscriminate rezoning of properties for commercial use will hinder the development of existing commercially zoned properties, and will result in an uneven pattern of commercial development that does not serve the local population or use the City's limited, valuable land effectively.

Zoning Plan
Three districts that allow commercial development by right exist in the City (C-1 – Central Business District, C-2 – Commercial Service District, and C-3 – General Business District) are appropriate for current and future uses. C-1 is designed to allow relatively dense commercial activity in a dense, pedestrian friendly setting. C-1 districts allow most office and retail uses without special requirements. C-2 districts are intended for businesses that are often incompatible with pedestrian traffic. Businesses in these districts generate traffic and have significant parking requirements. C-3 districts are intended for large-scale commercial development. The current zoning districts are adequate to meet the future commercial needs of the City.

3. Mixed Use Industrial Development

Future Land Use & Redevelopment Plan
The City of Parchment has a longstanding history of industrial uses. Today, those uses are generally found in areas west of Riverview Drive. Specifically, these areas are comprised of the former KVP/Crown Vantage Paper Mill site northwest of N. Wilson Ave, the L.C. Howard warehouse at 400 Island Ave, and the Drug and Lab property at 411 E. Hercules Ave. Industrial uses are acceptable in these areas since they are typically separated from residential uses by commercial uses. Additionally, those areas have the infrastructure required to support further industrial uses. The lands to the west of Riverview Drive are close to the Kalamazoo River and wetlands related to the River; the impact of industrial uses on the River and wetlands need to be understood when industrial activities are considered. The area is also suitable for limited commercial activity.

The City has established several priorities for the redevelopment of the industrial mixed use district:

1. Redevelopment should serve the needs of the City's residents, while also bringing visitors and customers to Parchment
2. Redevelopment should contribute to a mixed, yet balanced, local economy
3. Redevelopment should be concentrated in areas with compatible uses
4. Redevelopment should complement Parchment's aesthetics and align to standards in the Design Standard Overlay ordinance
5. Redevelopment should ensure continued protection of Parchment's ecology and natural resources while promoting pedestrian and trail access to the Kalamazoo River

Parchment has several tools to enforce these priorities and to encourage industrial redevelopment that fits the current state of the City while also serving the needs of residents and visitors:

- Redevelopment at these sites will be more likely to succeed if the City targets small-scale industries, specialty goods manufacturing, start-ups, or incubator-type projects. These industrial uses should also align with existing commercial entities in the City to create synergies that increase business activities.
- The City could purchase vacant buildings or retain tax-foreclosed properties for incubator projects.
- The City could utilize additional funds from the Kalamazoo County Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund, the Michigan Department Environment, Great Lakes & Energy, and the US Environmental Protection Agency to continue addressing potential environmental contaminants in these properties that delay future development.
- Finally, the City could adopt a phased approach to industrial and commercial redevelopment that will establish Parchment as a model community that celebrates its sustainable and recreational amenities. Chapter 6 goes into more detail about how amenity-supported business development would help to accomplish this vision.

Zoning Plan

The zoning code has one industrial classification (I – Industrial Manufacturing District). The industrial districts generally allow warehousing and low-impact manufacturing uses. Since Parchment is predominantly residential, industrial uses should only produce limited traffic, noise, odor, and vibration. The areas currently zoned industrial are appropriate now, and for the foreseeable future.

Moving forward, the zoning code should make provisions to allow commercial activities that serve as a buffer to uses adjacent to industrial properties. Commercial activities can also support the industrial activities in the district.

4. Agriculture

Future Land Use & Redevelopment Plan
The City makes no allocations for agriculture uses outside of allowing greenhouses in the industrial districts. Small-scale agricultural uses such as gardens for individual households are appropriate for an urban city like Parchment.

Zoning Plan
No Agriculture zoning districts are anticipated in the City. The City allows some urban gardens and the raising of up to three chickens.

Photo Credit:
Matt Dean

5. Recreational

Future Land Use & Redevelopment Plan
Recreation is a significant land use in the City; Kindleberger Park is a very large park that serves as a focal point in the City. Areas along the Kalamazoo River are potential recreation sites as well.

Zoning Plan
The City has one recreation designation (R-C - Recreation Conservation District). This is appropriate for the City's current and future needs even if the areas along the River are developed for recreational uses.

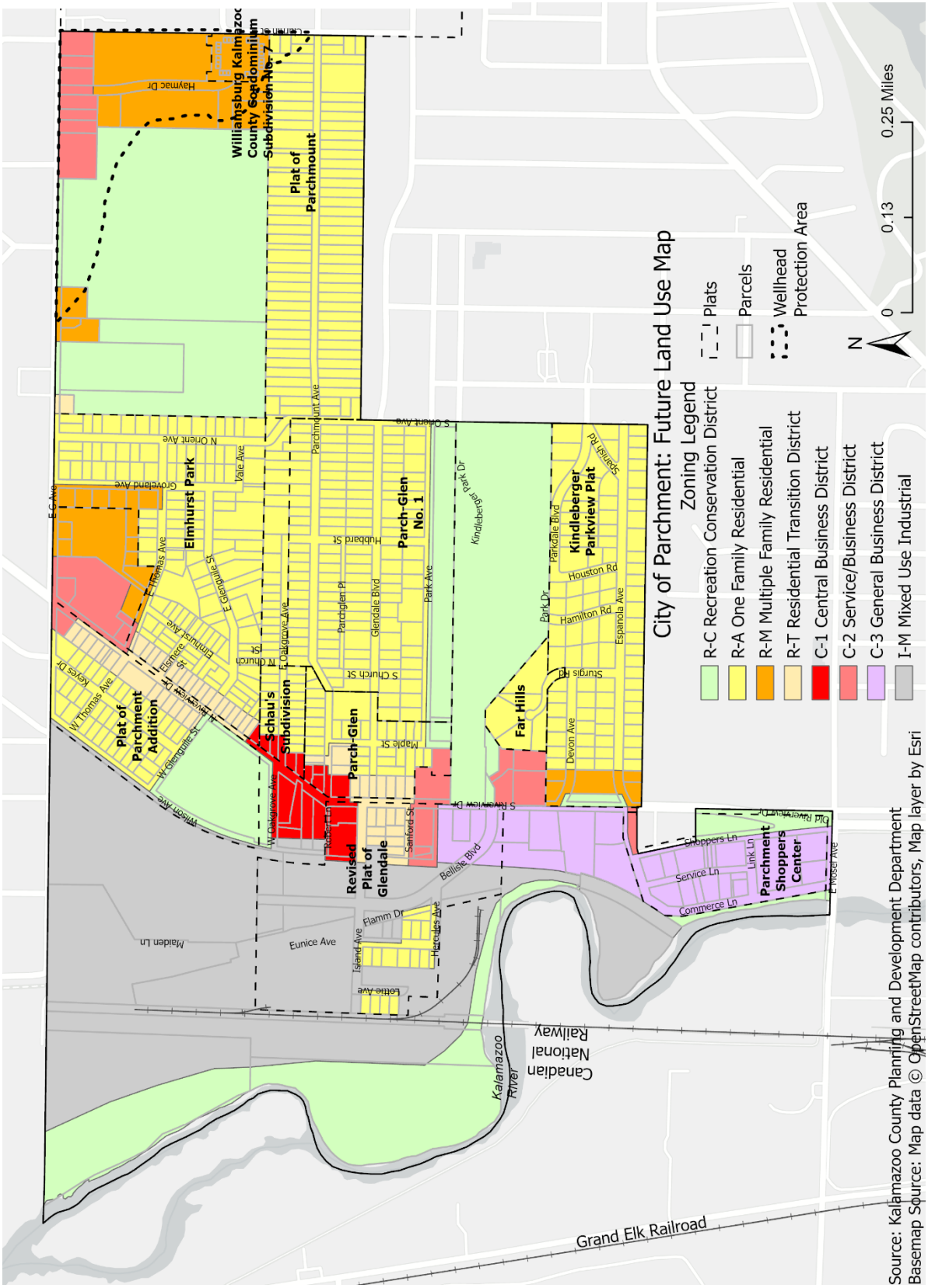
Public Uses & Transportation Facilities
Future Land Use & Redevelopment Plan

Public institutional uses occupy a significant amount of land in the City. Parchment Public Schools own and operate multiple large facilities in the City. The other institutional uses are smaller, consisting of City Hall, the Parchment Community Library, and a small number of religious buildings. The transportation facilities found in the City are roads; those are outlined in greater detail in the Existing Land Use Chapter.

Zoning Plan
No zoning needed to regulate public facilities.

Photo Credit:
Matt Dean

Map 5-1: Future Land Use Map



CHAPTER 6: ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

This chapter outlines the economic development plan for the city as a whole and the former KVP Paper Mill Site specifically. The economic development plan includes strategies designed to spur economic development while working to accomplish other priorities expressed in this plan.

Former KVP/Crown Vantage Paper Mill Site

Comprising more than 65 acres and a large portion of the City's available land, redevelopment at the former KVP/Crown Vantage Paper mill property is critical for the economic and cultural future of Parchment. Originally purchased for paper production in 1909, the site has undergone numerous transformations in the decades since then and has recently entered a new phase after being purchased by the City. To further catalyze the transformations and priorities that align with this Plan, the City should adopt a phased and targeted redevelopment approach for this property, to catalyze business development that celebrates Parchment's sustainable and recreational amenities.

Amenity-Supported Business Development Strategy

Background

The primary approach to redevelopment of the mill property and to business development in general entails attracting more amenities to Parchment and increasing the number of local economic activities that capitalize on the City's existing assets. The ecology and history of the City are particularly important aspects to consider for this approach. Parchment is located near the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail (KRVT), on the Kalamazoo River, and is close to numerous natural areas, which create opportunities for increasing environmental stewardship and recreational, outdoor amenities within the City. Similarly, the celebrated historical aspects of the City – such as developments at the mill site, and Kindleberger Park - also have the potential to draw regional visitors to Parchment. Aligning new amenities with ongoing commercial endeavors and bringing them to the mill site are critical to the success of this approach.

Photo Credit: Parchment Community Library

This approach is meant to attract businesses and amenities to Parchment that build upon the City's existing assets, balance land uses, welcome visitors and new residents, and increase tax revenues. Commercial operations that serve industries like outdoor recreation, competitive sports, low-impact industrial facilities that focus on outdoor equipment, or scientific and technological research could all potentially serve as catalysts for this approach. Increased commercial or industrial activity would attract retail businesses like food and beverage establishments that would benefit residents as well. Furthermore, new jobs and opportunities that result from increased economic activity would likely spur residential development to house these additional workers.

The goal for the mill in this redevelopment approach is to transform the site into a hub of economic and social activities in Parchment. This goal is accomplished by increasing commercial, retail, and low-impact industrial activities at the site. Commercial and retail operations that provide amenities to residents and visitors such as professional offices, water sports or bicycling outfitters, training facilities, fitness centers, a sports center, or a brewpub can be targeted first for commercially zoned areas to build momentum and lower risk for other tenants. Instead of investing significant amounts of City revenue into this activity, staff could work with local economic development partners to attract these businesses to existing buildings.

Targeted preservation and stabilization of buildings on the mill site is vital to the success of this approach. The City should create a process for identifying the most crucial buildings to preserve; allocate a yearly budget of investments in these structures; and target new funding sources for historic renovation and preservation. The City and its partners can then market the stabilized structures to potential new businesses.

Although remediation and stabilization at the mill site would require spending City revenues initially, these capital investments will be necessary to spur continued business development at the site. The City could pursue grants to help reduce the overall investment amount. Once these investments are made, Parchment could then work to attract artisan, specialty, or craft manufacturing firms to the portions of the mill site zoned Industrial, as these types of firms would contribute positively to the City's existing amenities while providing increases to the tax base.

Amenity Inventory and Plan

The first step to implementing this redevelopment strategy is to inventory the city's existing amenities. As this work would focus heavily on park and recreational amenities, this inventory should coincide with the creation of a parks and recreation plan. The inventory should include all recreational, historical, cultural, retail, and infrastructure amenities in and around the City. Finally, those involved in the creation of the asset inventory should identify competitive advantages of local amenities in comparison with similar areas in the Great Lakes Region. With the inventory and an understanding of local competitive advantages, the City should create a marketing campaign, comprised of branding, placemaking, and event planning, to showcase local amenities and attract new businesses to Parchment.

The inventory of amenities should lead to the creation of an amenity maintenance, improvement, and development plan. This plan should outline the estimated cost of maintaining the existing resources, a prioritized list of improvements to existing resources, and phased approach to developing new amenities. These amenity planning actions are relatively low-cost, adaptable, and generate opportunities for local feedback and fundraising that can improve the approach going forward.

One potential idea is a water trail, or a heritage trail. To bring this about, the City could partner with the National Parks Service and other former paper mill communities in the Kalamazoo area to create "The Paper Trail." The Paper Trail would be an industrial heritage pathway connecting former paper mill sites in southwestern Michigan. Recreational activities along the Paper Trail could spur commercial development opportunities in Parchment and in nearby communities as well, such as Plainwell, Kalamazoo, and Vicksburg. This type of project could have many positive community benefits, such as increased commercial investments and greater collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions. However, it would also require regular investments in those partnerships, in maintenance of trail infrastructure, and in the attraction of new commercial and industrial businesses to Parchment.

Photo Credit: O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock, & Associates, Inc

Build Up Recreational and Business Amenities around the Mill Site

The City's purchase of the mill site in 2019 opened the door for new business opportunities and renewed economic activity at the property. The City should work to develop recreational, restaurant, shopping, and other commercial activities on and around the Mill Site. To do so the City should:

- Identify portions of the mill property that are most suitable for commercial rezoning;
- Plan for stabilizing investments that will encourage business activity in existing buildings on the mill property;
- Implement the Design Standard Overlay through streetscaping and tree-planting along Riverview Drive;
- Ensure that pedestrians and vehicles can safely reach the property, the river and access points, and the KRVT;
- Create and implement a comprehensive parks and recreation plan that addresses river access for canoes, kayaks, and other non-motorized watercrafts, to maintain recreation amenities on the Kalamazoo River; and
- Gradually develop a mix of commercial and light industrial uses at the mill site that builds upon the city's natural and environmental resources.

To catalyze further transformation of the mill site, the City should first identify and stabilize the remaining viable structures on the property, which will protect the physical assets that firms need to locate there. During this process, the City should form strategic partnerships with organizations that can provide creative ideas and design expertise to the redevelopment process, such as universities with capstone classes, or a commercial developer. These partnerships will help the City to determine and solidify the strategic direction for the mill's redevelopment.

Implementation of the Design Standard Overlay is then an opportunity for the City to ensure that future developments align with and support the city's commercial and recreational amenities. This Overlay ordinance should cover the mill property so that business activity and streetscaping treatments are consistent and aesthetically connect commercial areas. The Overlay will also be a crucial tool for the City to use when aiding businesses in their development decisions. A parks and recreation plan is another instrument that can incentivize business development that contributes to and supports the existing amenities of Parchment.

Developing Business Activity in and around the Mill Site

Once buildings are stabilized and the strategic direction for the mill property is determined, the City (as the property owner of the mill site) should explore offering incentives to businesses that rent or purchase properties on the mill site, such as investing in building improvements for tenants, assisting businesses with grant or loan applications, or providing matching grants for specific projects. These incentives should generate economic activity on the property and, in turn, start to change local perceptions of what happens at the mill site. Commercial and light industrial development at the mill property will need to remain an ongoing and prioritized activity of the City and Planning Commissions in order to sustain businesses in and around the mill site.

The City should make local economic linkages that strengthen the synergy between industrial, commercial, and retail sectors through business development. Starting with existing local businesses, the City can start with simple interventions like giving free advice on available real estate, providing trainings, or offering small matching grants for storefront improvements. The City's primary criteria for providing these services should be to maintain a diverse mix of small-scale, locally-owned retail businesses, as indicated in the Community Survey results.

Building trusted relationships with existing local businesses and understanding their needs will help inform the search for tenants at the mill site and can also surface leads for potential new businesses that would complement other commercial activities in the area. Additional research, outreach, and relationship-building is necessary to continue to attract needed amenities and businesses. The City should annually evaluate their approach and make any needed adjustments to address new opportunities and challenges.

One potential approach to mill redevelopment is to return viable structures to productive but low-impact industrial uses. The City could partner with a developer to renovate buildings for several small- and medium-scale, light industrial tenant businesses. Leasable operating spaces could be designed for businesses in food and beverage production, furniture-making, specialty manufacturing, professional trades, wholesale trades, or artisan products. These types of products have strong external markets, but they also fit the local context and can be used to grow other community-serving businesses as well.

Attracting these types of industries to the mill site would help to increase economic activity elsewhere in the City as well. Commercial and retail spin-offs of firms located at the mill could add to the momentum by attracting more entrepreneurs and businesses to Parchment.

Attracting tenant businesses to the mill would also spur residential developments in the City to accommodate this new workforce. New residents, in turn, would attract new community-serving retail like restaurants, bars, and pharmacies, as well as other additional amenities.

This approach does not come without its drawbacks, however. It would require large and long-term investments from the City to build and maintain relationships with private developers, and to share responsibilities during planning and construction such as convening work groups and assembling potential funding streams. The variability of external markets would also have effects on the City's ability to secure tenant leases, and would require that additional economic development strategies be used to protect local industry from downturns.

The City could make some restrictions on the type of business and use of the mill site to help enforce its priorities for low-impact development and improved access to the Kalamazoo River, but these restrictions may limit the interest of some businesses.

The City can help attract businesses through non-monetary incentives as well, such as:

- Commission of a marketing study of the mill property and structures to share with prospective businesses;
- Re-zone the site to the classification that is most likely to appeal to businesses, based on the marketing study mentioned above;
- Pre-approve a site plan that meets the community's desires while anticipating business needs;
- Work with utility providers to understand the capacity of the infrastructure on the site and improve the capacity if needed;
- Apply for state and federal grants to improve the infrastructure on the site;
- Negotiate financial incentives with state and federal agencies

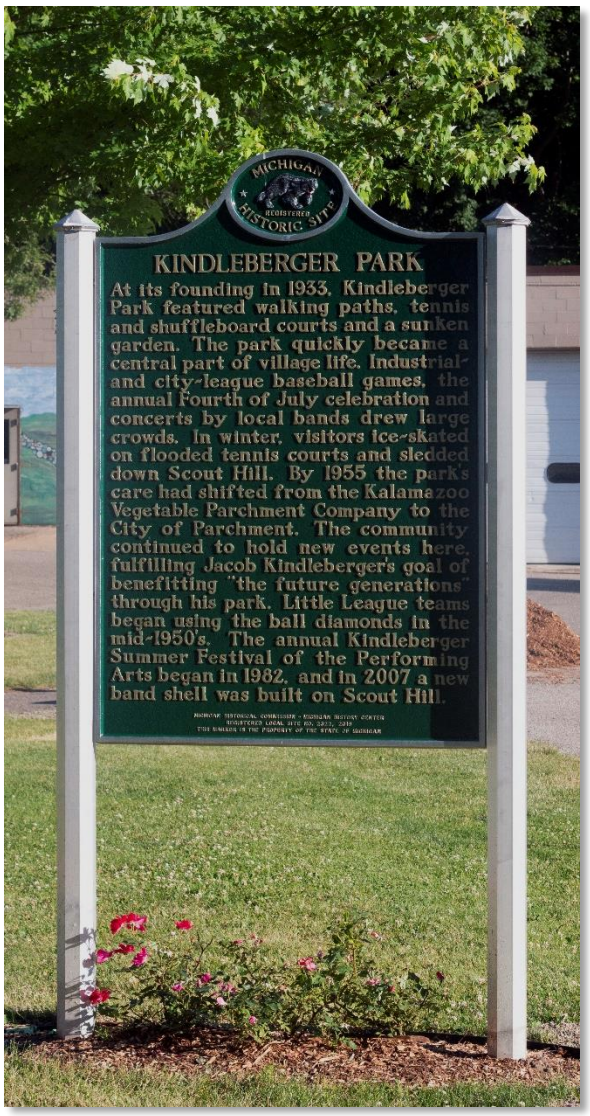


Photo Credit: Matt Dean

CHAPTER 7: PLAN PREPARATION AND PUBLICATION

PLAN PREPARATION:

The planning process followed a strategy-first process. This process required the Planning Commission to establish goals and objectives before defining strategies, land use priorities, or examining community characteristics. A strategy-first approach will base all aspects of a master plan on the goals and objectives established by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission created and distributed a survey the results of which drove the strategic planning discussions. Staff from the Southcentral Michigan Planning Commission helped to interpret the results of the survey and led the Planning Commission through a strategic planning process using the previous version of the master plan as a starting point.

Once the strategic direction was established by the Planning Commission the planning work moved on to developing strategies designed to accomplish the goals and objectives. After the strategies were established, the Planning Commission reviewed the existing land use patterns and compared those to the strategic direction. A future land use plan was established from the analysis of the existing land use patterns and the strategic direction of the City. The Planning Commission reviewed the community characteristics, introduction, and plan preparation and publication chapters to complete the master plan.

The 2020 Master Plan is based on the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended. Public input was accepted during all Planning Commission meeting at which the master plan was discussed, at the public hearing, and from communications received during the 63-day review period all of which are included in the appendix.

Publication:

The Parchment City Commission has reserved the right of final approval of the Master Plan. The City Planning Commission recommended the 2020 Master Plan Update to the City Commission for distribution on _____.

The City Commission authorized distribution on _____, and comments were reviewed by the County Planning Commission on _____. (minutes in the appendix)

The Parchment City Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed Master Plan (minutes in the appendix) on _____ and voted to recommend the plan to the City Commission on _____.

The Parchment City Commission approved the 2020 Parchment City Master Plan Update on _____.

CERTIFICATION:

I, the undersigned duly qualified Clerk of Parchment City, Kalamazoo County, Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of the 2020 Master Plan and Future Land Use Map adopted by the City Commission, County of Kalamazoo, Michigan at a regular meeting held on [MONTH ___, 2020] at [7:00P.M]. and that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with the Open Meetings Act, being Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976.

_____

[name], Clerk

APPENDICES