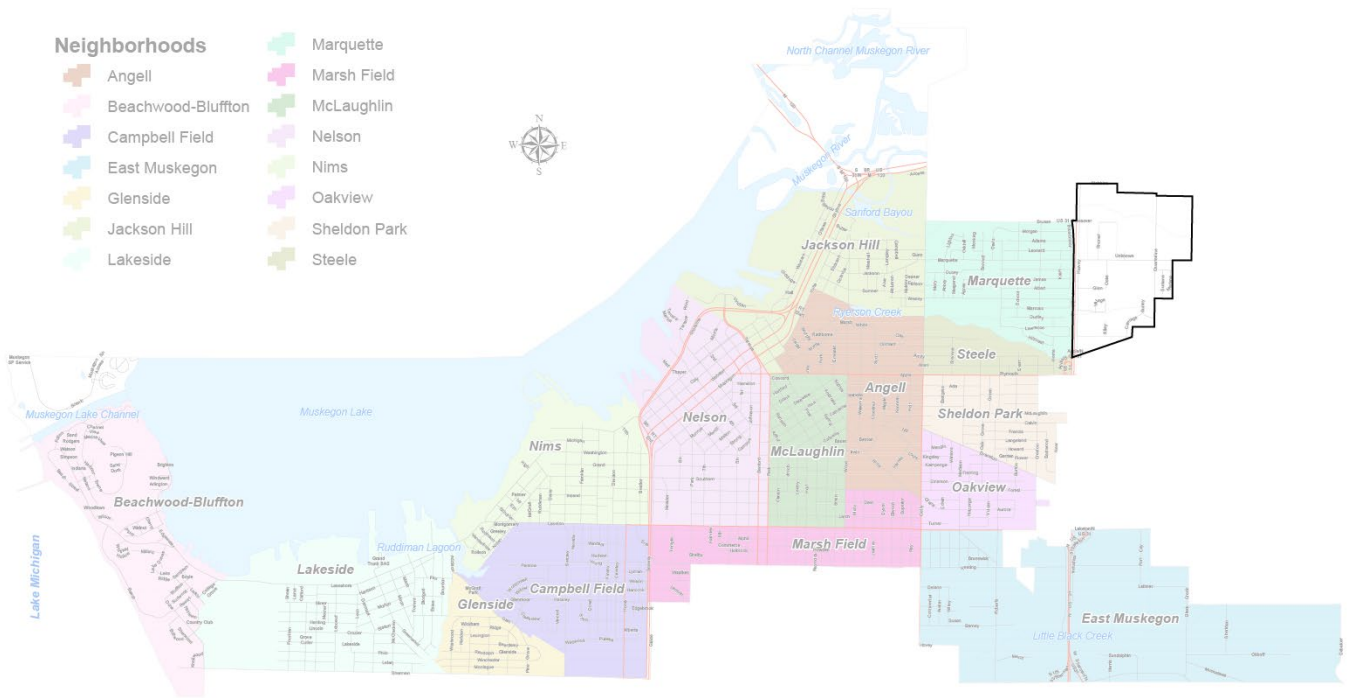


Northeast

City of Muskegon
Neighborhood Association Map



Neighborhood Description

Located east of the Marquette Neighborhood and US-31 the Northeast Neighborhood is the only one in the city that does not have an official neighborhood organization. The area spans from Apple Avenue on the south to the city limits on the north and east.

Marquette Avenue, Quarterline Road, and Harvey Street constitute the main streets in the neighborhood and most other streets are private and internal to the number of large apartment complexes and campuses. The two primary campuses serve both educational and government purposes with Muskegon Community College and Muskegon County calling the area home.

A small group of businesses are centered on the intersection of Marquette and Quarterline, and a few blocks of low-density housing exists along and east of Quarterline.

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Zoned Land Use

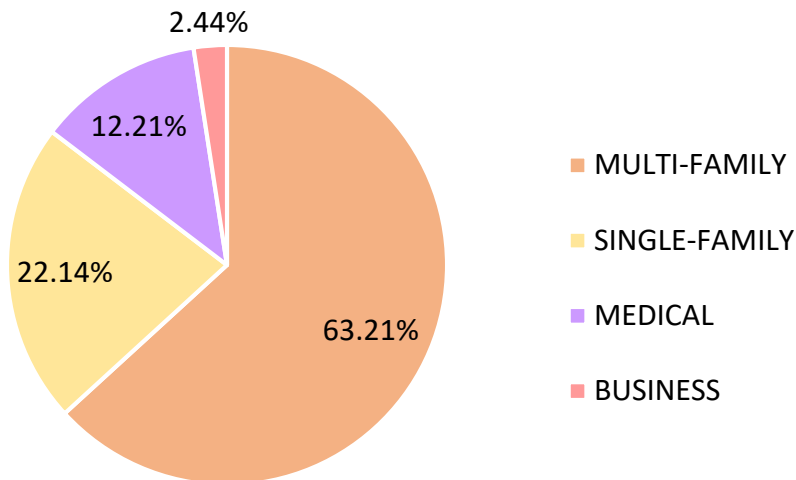


Chart 1: Northeast zoned land use as a percentage of the neighborhood's total land area

The Northeast neighborhood consists primarily of multi-family residential zoning districts, with under one-quarter of the neighborhood's land zoned exclusively for single-family detached housing. The percentage of land zoned for single-family detached housing is misleading as a significant portion of that encompasses the college's golf course.

Medical land uses comprise over 10% of the neighborhood, but the closure of the hospital – a major tenant since the 1960s – has left this area inappropriately zoned. A significant amount of vacant land surrounding the former hospital along with underutilized office buildings leaves potential for a wide array of potential redevelopment opportunities.

Business zones are concentrated at two intersections along Marquette Avenue, and contain a handful of existing businesses.

Housing Choice

A high concentration of apartments for rent defines the neighborhood's housing options. Although small pockets of low-density detached housing can also be found east of Quarterline Road.

Commercial Inventory

Marquette Avenue and Quarterline Road Intersection – Five parcels containing three buildings are zoned for commercial uses, though only one building contains an active business. As an intersection of two major streets in close proximity to surrounding residential areas, this area offers room for business expansion.

Marquette Avenue and Harvey Street Intersection – Two parcels permitted to allow commercial land uses on the southeast corner of the intersection contain three existing buildings.

Former Hospital Site – Still zoned for medical uses, this property contains a considerable amount of vacant land and large vacant buildings.

Industrial Inventory

None

Parks/Recreational Opportunities

Northeast neighborhood parks, community gardens, public/private park and open spaces, etc.:

- Sports Fields (private, college campus)
- Fourmile Creek hiking trail (college campus)
- Apartment complex greenspaces (private)

Community Nodes

Marquette Avenue and Quarterline Road Intersection – Limited commercial uses exist at this intersection with much room for expansion, but the majority of land in this community node is zoned for housing at varying densities. Permitting mixed uses would allow for additional housing to support expanded retail options, and road diets, along with support for existing public transportation and improve active transportation options could better connect the node to surrounding neighborhoods.

Transportation

The Transportation and Mobility section of the Master Plan contains further discussion and recommendations. Major Streets in the Northeast Neighborhood include:

- Marquette Avenue (US-31 east to City limits)
- Quarterline Road (section within City limits)
- Harvey Street (Marquette south to City limits)
- Oak Avenue (Harvey east to City limits)

Possible road diets could occur on Marquette Avenue.

Active transportation options include a nearly complete sidewalk network throughout the Northeast neighborhood, but few sidewalks are present in the area north of Marquette Avenue and internal to some of the apartment complexes. The neighborhood is distant from the citywide network of non-motorized trails though Marquette Avenue contains space that could accommodate an on-street non-motorized trail connection west to the Lakeshore Trail.

Public transportation serving the neighborhood includes MATS Routes 11, 12, and Go2 Service. Despite bordering US-31, no direct access to the highway is available from the neighborhood. Still, Marquette Avenue, Quarterline Road, and Harvey Street provide convenient routes to the regional highway system.

Blight/Beautification

The departure of the hospital left a large building and site with low demand for redevelopment. Many existing ancillary uses have struggled to lease office space without the hospital serving as an anchor. Large multi-family developments have little presence on surrounding streets, but could benefit from engaging with the public realm through ground-level active uses such as retail or office uses.

Historic Preservation

The Northeast neighborhood does not presently contain any designated local historic districts, sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or sites listed in the State Historic Register. The neighborhood contains few older structures that could be considered architecturally or historically significant, though the college campus was designed in the 1960s by prominent Michigan architect, Alden B. Dow.

Significant Redevelopment Properties

Former Hospital Site – 26 acres of vacant property and 227,000 square feet of existing buildings tied to the former hospital campus are currently zoned for medical use. Nearly 7 acres of additional property lies just to the east containing office buildings in need of major upgrades.

Marquette Avenue and Quarterline Road Intersection – Underutilized land in all quadrants of this intersection could be put to more productive use typical of a commercial area adjacent to a considerable number of housing units.

Marquette Avenue and Harvey Street Intersection – Similar to the intersection with Quarterline to the east, underutilized properties abut this intersection, but only on the east side of Harvey. The presence of US-31 is likely limiting redevelopment interest in the area, though development west of the highway does not reflect the same lack of activity.

Future Land Use

See future land use map in Appendix

Project 1: Organize a neighborhood association and create an official name.

This area of the city is often underrepresented at planning and goal-setting meetings. It also has a high concentration of renters, a demographic that is also underrepresented at City functions. An official neighborhood organization could help the local government hear the voice of marginalized groups.

Action Steps

- Contact neighborhood stakeholders such as the apartment complexes and schools to explain the role and importance of neighborhood associations in the city.
- Communicate with other, established neighborhood associations to aid in organizing the structure and elected officers of the new association.

Project 2: Redevelop the former hospital campus.

The 26-acre site contains the vacant former hospital building. The existing medical care zoning designation will eventually need to be updated to accommodate redevelopment efforts when a project is identified. Vacated street rights-of-way could be reestablished to create a more traditional street grid.

Action Steps

- Evaluate any submitted development proposals to determine the appropriate zoning designation(s) for the site.
- Provide conceptual site plans to developers that indicate possible street connections and places to reestablish access through the site.

Project 3: Revitalize the office park adjacent to the former hospital property.

There are 15 office buildings on Wagner Avenue, Wells Avenue, and Riley Street, but they remain mostly vacant or underutilized and have had difficulty attracting tenants since the hospital closed. These properties are owned independently and are not associated with the hospital property. Many of the buildings are vacant and starting to deteriorate with owners reluctant to invest in an area with much development uncertainty.

Action Steps

- Consider appropriate zoning designations that allow a wide range of potential uses and permit existing uses.

Project 4: Create a community node at the intersection of Marquette Avenue and Quarterline Road.

Dense residential development, the college, and office uses bring many people to this area, but there is no place for residents to gather. Civic buildings are limited as the college's facilities are often restricted to students. This intersection is close to surrounding apartment complexes and offers opportunities for community improvements through private investment. New development should promote high residential densities, mixed-uses, small setbacks, and pedestrian amenities.

Action Steps

- Consider zoning classifications that expand the number of permitted uses and building types, reducing building setbacks to create active street frontages.
- Work with the major property holders surrounding the intersection to evaluate uses permitted on underutilized land.
- Better connect with surrounding residences through active transportation infrastructure improvements.

Project 5: Complete a road diet on Marquette Avenue between US-31 and Quarterline Road.

The moderate traffic seen on Marquette Avenue makes the street a good candidate for a four- to three-lane conversion. A west-bound route could connect the Northeast Neighborhood with the Marquette and Jackson Hill Neighborhoods, reclaiming space within the roadway and tying into the non-motorized trails proposed in those neighborhoods. Changes in the street's design also has the potential to calm traffic and improve the pedestrian experience at the Marquette and Quarterline community node.

Action Steps

- Complete a traffic study on Marquette Avenue that considers expanded commercial options and additional housing, but acknowledges
- On a trial basis, install on-street bike lanes to determine the most appropriate configuration for such a route and to study traffic patterns during the period of the trial.