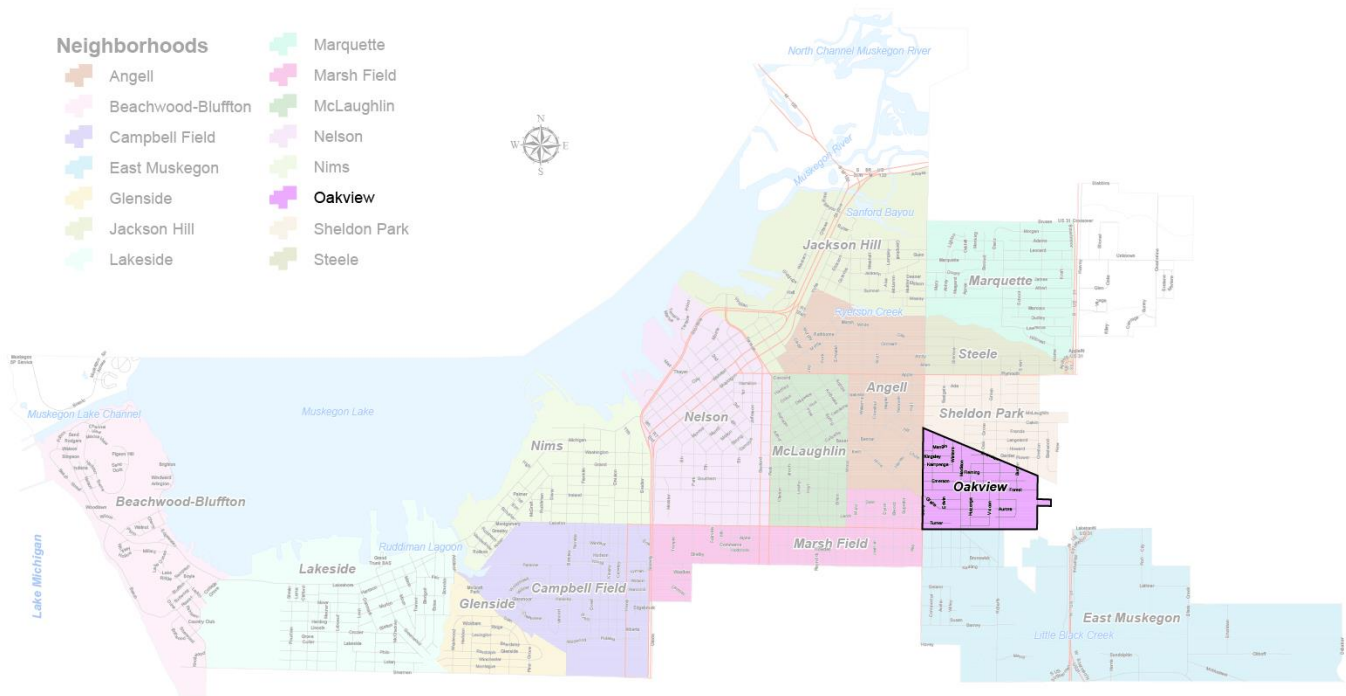


Oakview

City of Muskegon
Neighborhood Association Map



Neighborhood Description

The Oakview Neighborhood is primarily residential, but is also home to a number of businesses along the major streets that border it. A centrally-located elementary school and quiet residential streets serve as a draw for existing and potential residents, as does Oakview’s convenient access to the greater Muskegon area via a series of major streets and a regional highway.

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Zoned Land Use

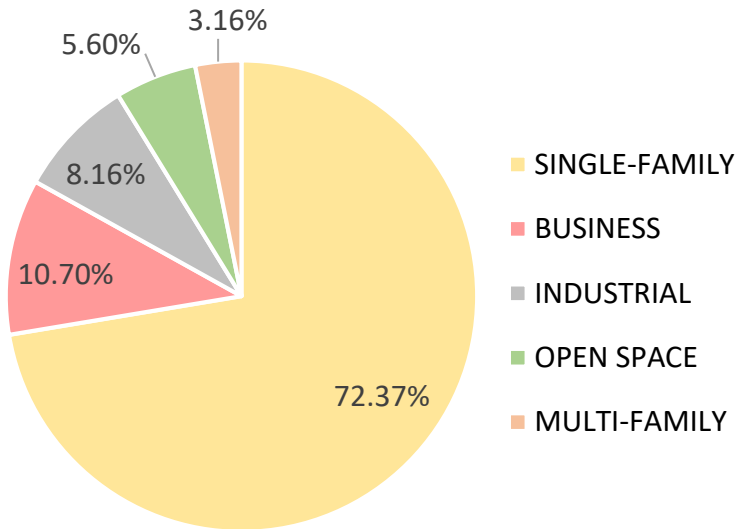


Chart 1: Oakview zoned land use as a percentage of the neighborhood's total land area

Nearly three-quarters of the Oakview neighborhood is zoned for single-family detached housing. Land designated for multi-family residential use is limited to a small area at Laketon Avenue and Vulcan Street. Business and industrial zones exist only at the edges of the neighborhood, in pockets lining Getty Street and Laketon. Reese Park is zoned for open space.

Housing Choice

A very small percentage of the land in Oakview is zoned for multi-family housing, and it is restricted to one assisted living facility and the surrounding property. Over one-third of the housing stock is rental housing, but almost all of those units are single-family detached houses. Many houses along Getty Street are improperly zoned for commercial land uses, and these properties have alley access and are large enough to accommodate some missing middle housing types.

Commercial Inventory

Getty Street Corridor – The section of this business corridor in Oakview consists mainly of heavy commercial (auto repair, etc.), light industrial, and some scattered residential uses. Neighborhood-serving convenience stores are within walking distance of most residents.

Laketon Avenue Corridor – This area contains large, commercial buildings some of which are underused and beginning to show signs of deterioration. Buildings tend to be set back far from the street with mostly unused parking lots immediately fronting the street. Redevelopment efforts should focus on building placement closer to Laketon Avenue with active frontages that restrict parking. Residential uses should also be considered for redevelopment.

Interior Commercial Buildings – 1774 Madison and 1073, 1099, 1101, and 1111 Evanston

Industrial Inventory

Scattered light industrial uses are located along Getty Street and Laketon Avenue.

Parks/Recreational Opportunities

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

- Reese Playfield
- Laketon Avenue Trail
- Sheldon Park (in nearby Sheldon Park neighborhood)
- McCrea Playfield (in nearby Angell neighborhood)

Community Nodes

Madison Street and Forest Avenue Intersection – Although it does not presently contain the concentration of activity common to a community node, this area has the potential to serve as the preferred destination for public gatherings and moderate commercial activity. Both streets allow uninterrupted travel through the Oakview Neighborhood, east and west from Getty Street to Creston Street, and north and south from Evanston Avenue to Laketon Avenue. The existing small apartment building on the southwest corner of the intersection was formerly mixed-use and could again contain neighborhood-serving businesses, such as a corner store or retail.

The potential of this intersection is magnified by the presence of the small vacant lot on the northeast corner of the intersection. This lot, along with the unused portion of the property belonging to the faith-based institution, could be utilized for public gatherings, a food truck court, and/or mixed-use development. The residential properties on the northwest and southeast corners of the intersection could provide additional residential units or mixed-use buildings should such development be sought in the future. The existing faith-based institution and associated facilities currently serve as a gathering space for the community, however, the intersection has the potential to expand that gathering space. The faith-based institution's facilities also offer potential for higher density residential and mixed-uses in the event the current occupant relocates.

Evanston Avenue and Oak Grove Street – A school, a faith-based institution and a group of small retail buildings provide outdoor and indoor gathering spaces, bridging the Oakview and Sheldon Park neighborhoods.

Transportation

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

- Laketon Avenue
- Getty Street
- Creston Street
- Evanston Avenue
- Roberts Street

Possible road diets could occur on Evanston, Creston, and Roberts.

Active transportation options include a nearly complete sidewalk network throughout the Oakview neighborhood. The Laketon Avenue Trail is located at the southern border of Oakview, connecting the neighborhood to the Musketawa Trail through East Muskegon neighborhood.

Public transportation serving the neighborhood includes MATS Routes 2, 22, and Go2 Service. The Oakview neighborhood is connected to the citywide street network via Laketon Avenue and Getty Street. Access to the regional highway system is also convenient, with entrance and exit ramps at Laketon Avenue.

Blight/Beautification

Outdoor storage of goods and inoperable vehicles along Getty Street.

Lack of street trees and public amenities along Getty Street.

Excessive, under-used parking lots along Laketon Avenue.

Historic Preservation

The Oakview neighborhood does not presently contain any designated historic districts, sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or sites listed in the State Historic Register. The neighborhood does contain some older structures and some may be considered architecturally or historically significant.

Significant Redevelopment Properties

1230 and 1290 E. Laketon Avenue – Existing buildings at these locations are occupied, though out-lots could be formed from the parking lots fronting Laketon.

1165, 1173, 1185, and 1191 E. Forest Avenue – Nearly 1.5-acres of vacant land is zoned for multi-family housing and single-family detached housing.

1198 Evanston Avenue – A faith-based institution occupies a portion of this property which contains a considerable amount of vacant land, some of which is used for parking. If the current occupant were to ever leave this location the existing civic building and surrounding land are limited to reuse only as single-family housing.

Future Land Use

See future land use map in Appendix

Project 1: Plan for housing in areas that have underperformed with their commercial designations.

Many houses along Getty Street are zoned for business due to past efforts to expand commercial development in the area. This expansion never came and seems unlikely to happen today. Vacant commercial buildings reflect a decrease in demand for commercial development along Getty, Apple Avenue, and Laketon Avenue with the rise of online shopping and other consumer trends. This area could instead benefit from more diverse housing options to meet the proven need and support remaining neighborhood-serving businesses.

Action Steps

- Review commercial zoning designations to identify properties that would be better suited for residential use.
- Recommend dense residential to buffer between commercial zones.

Project 2: Create a community node at the intersection of Madison Street and Forest Avenue.

Although this intersection contains a faith-based institute and former mixed-use building, its zoning classification only allows for single-family detached housing. This restricts the mix of land uses that are characteristic of a community node, and limits options for reuse of existing buildings.



An array of building types and space for new development highlights the potential of this intersection.

Action Steps

- Research the area and decide which properties could contribute to strengthening the community node. Assess redevelopment potential of existing structures and consider allowing accessory commercial units. Update land use regulations based on the findings of this research.

Project 3: Replace unnecessary parking spaces with more productive land uses.

Excessive minimum parking requirements plague commercial corridors in the neighborhood. Parking lots often sit underused or even unused. Such large expanses of pavement contribute to the urban heat-island effect, provide little benefit to neighborhood residents, spread destinations farther apart (negatively affecting walkability), and add to the negative effects of stormwater runoff.

Better management of stormwater runoff will reduce the overall effect of runoff on the larger ecosystems of the city (namely Muskegon Lake).

Action Steps

- Amend minimum parking requirements to better reflect parking demand in the area. Authorize shared parking agreements to meet minimum requirements. Consider parking maximums to ensure that supply does not unnecessarily exceed demand.
- Adopt an incentives package for green infrastructure projects such as reclamation of unused pavement for use as natural stormwater collection/retention swales.

Project 4: Increase pedestrian safety and mobility by right-sizing oversized streets.

Streets like Evanston Avenue and Creston Street would benefit from narrowed travel lanes and possibly a reduction in or elimination of parking lanes. Most commercial and residential properties in the neighborhood contain off-street parking spaces (driveways, parking pads, parking lots, etc.), lessening the use of on-street spaces. Unused on-street parking lanes effectively create wide driving lanes which encourage speeding. Further, this additional pavement is still maintained in the form of snow removal, maintenance, and repaving, even though the extra space rarely serves its intended purpose.



Roberts Street is an excessively-wide neighborhood street where the width of the lanes and/or inclusion of parking lanes may not be necessary. When the street was last resurfaced, its design was not changed.

Action Steps

- Inventory the location of on-street parking lanes throughout the neighborhood and evaluate their usefulness to adjacent properties. Seek input from neighborhood residents regarding the street's design and functionality. Consider temporary, reversible, alternative uses for any street space that could serve a better purpose for the neighborhood.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of each street redesign to determine whether the changes should be made permanent. If yes, make the changes permanent with the next scheduled construction project for the street. If no, repeat with another method, or return the street to its original design.

Project 5: Redevelop lots near Laketon Avenue to provide a greater number of residents the ability to utilize its central location, pedestrian amenities, and transportation choices.

Turner Avenue offers another potential area to introduce new housing options. Lot sizes could accommodate additional housing units within smaller missing middle housing formats like duplex and small-multiplex buildings. Its limited access to the neighborhood and proximity to a major street (Laketon), transit, and the Laketon Trail make it a candidate for additional residential development.



Possible trail-oriented and transit-oriented development along Laketon Avenue Trail at Madison Street.

Action Steps

- Research which properties near Laketon have the best capabilities for supporting dense residential development.
- Update land use regulations based on the findings.

Project 6: Establish a non-motorized trail on the former railroad right-of-way between Madison Street and Getty Street.

The Laketon Trail currently serves as Oakview’s non-motorized connection to the citywide and regional non-motorized trail network, though two privately-owned parcels comprising the former railroad right-of-way could accommodate a secondary, non-motorized trail leading from the neighborhood into downtown. The potential route begins at Laketon Avenue and Madison Street and runs about three-tenths of a mile northwest to Getty where it would cross the street and continue in the same direction. Such a project would also serve the Angell and McLaughlin neighborhoods.

Action Steps

- Research the steps needed to utilize the former right-of-way property and privately-owned properties for a non-motorized trail connection. This may include property acquisition, participation in the rails-to-trails program, or securing access easements.
- Determine estimated acquisition costs to use along with construction costs for the trail when evaluating the project during capital improvement planning.