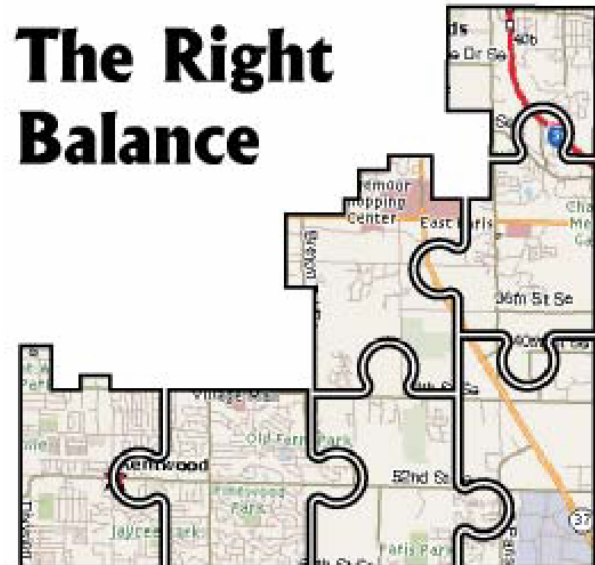


# KENTWOOD

## The Right Balance





## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Population Growth

#### *Findings*

In order to best understand the context of growth in Kentwood, it is necessary to compare Kentwood's growth with surrounding communities, the region and even the State of Michigan. Tables 1 and 2 (below) show the changes since 1960.

Table 1: Regional Population Change 1960-2000. (Source US Census)

Geography	1960*	1970	1980	1990	2000
Michigan	7823194	8875083	9262078	9295297	9938444
Kent County	363187	411044	444506	500631	574335
Cascade twp	3333	5243	10120	12869	15107
Gaines twp	6120	8794	10364	14533	20054
Grand Rapids city	177313	197649	181843	189126	197846
Grand Rapids twp	16738	6823	9294	10767	14035
<b>Kentwood city</b>	<b>19235</b>	<b>20310</b>	<b>30438</b>	<b>37826</b>	<b>45239</b>
Wyoming city	45820	56560	59616	63891	69366

\* Kentwood did not become a city until 1967

Table 2: Population Percentage Change 1960-2000

Geography	Change 1960-1970*	Change 1970-1980	Change 1980-1990	Change 1990-2000
Michigan	13.45	4.36	0.36	6.92
Kent County	13.18	8.14	12.63	14.72
Cascade twp	57.31	93.02	27.16	17.39
Gaines twp	43.69	17.85	40.23	37.99
Grand Rapids city	11.47	-8.00	4.01	4.61
Grand Rapids twp	-59.24	36.22	15.85	30.35
<b>Kentwood city</b>	<b>5.59</b>	<b>49.87</b>	<b>24.27</b>	<b>19.60</b>
Wyoming city	23.44	5.40	7.17	8.57

\* Kentwood did not become a city until 1967

The City of Kentwood — together with neighboring Gaines, Grand Rapids and Cascade Townships – has experienced the greatest percentage of population gain over the past 40 years. The growth patterns for the three municipalities, however, are different. Kentwood and Cascade Township have both experienced steep gains, followed by a gradual plateau of population growth. In the City of Kentwood, population gain over the next twenty years is projected to be a modest 12%, a decline over the average growth rate of 24% for the preceding 40 years.

#### *Analysis*

The slowing growth level in Kentwood is largely due to the decline of available undeveloped land. The impact of this is that Kentwood must carefully *identify redevelopment objectives and opportunities* while developing a strategy to *determine appropriate location and size of future developments*.

### Age Demographics

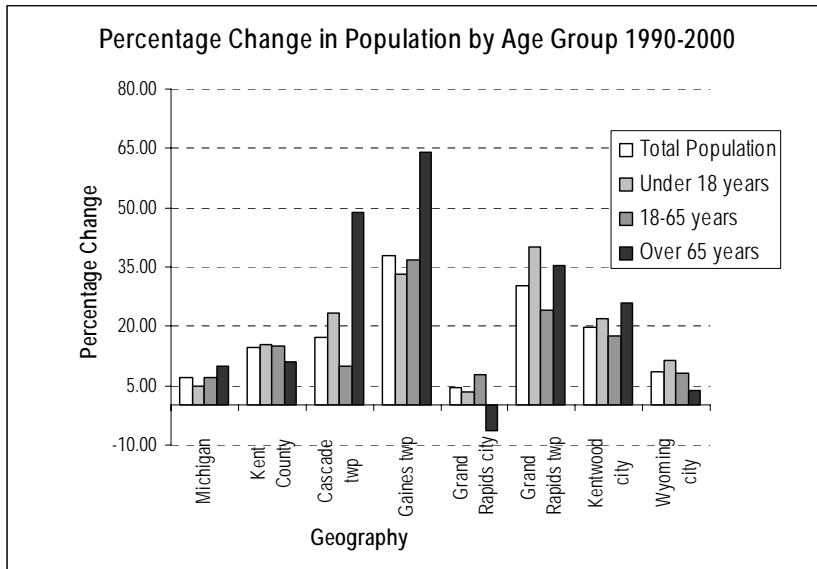
#### *Findings*

Kentwood has experienced a very balanced growth in terms of age demographics when compared with state and national trends. By comparison, Gaines and Cascade Township experienced a sizable increase in senior citizens coupled with much smaller proportional gains in the population of children and working-age adults. The shifting age demographics of Kentwood show that the City continues to attract families and working-age adults, very similar to the growth patterns of the cities of Wyoming and Grand Rapids.

#### *Analysis*

Unlike neighboring Gaines and Cascade Townships, the bulk of Kentwood's growth is in working age adults and families. *There is no current or projected need to focus on predominantly senior-oriented developments.*

Figure 1: Population Change by Age Group 1990-2000 (Source: US Census)



Certainly, the population of Kentwood will continue to age, however, projections indicate that a continued growth of the working-age population will continue to create balance.

**Population Distribution**

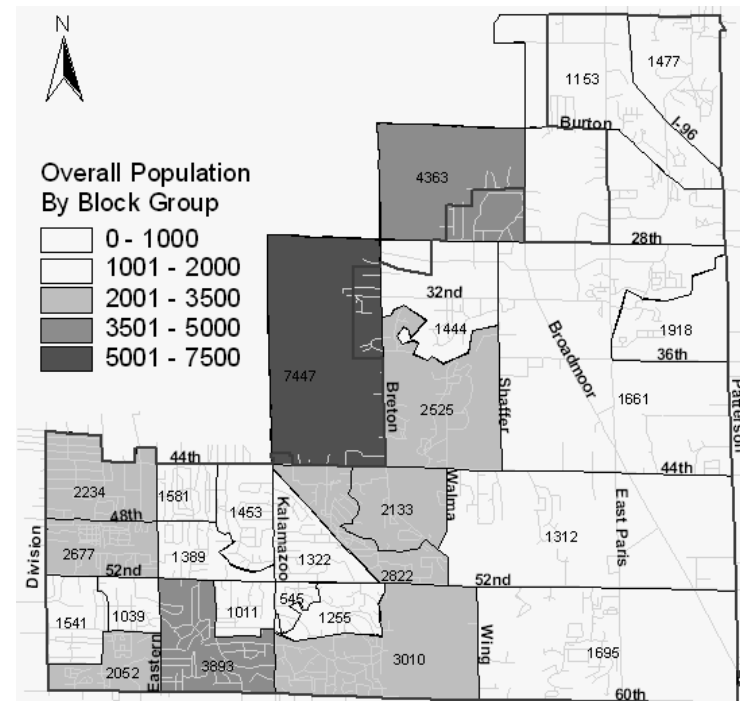
*Findings*

The distribution of Kentwood’s population, i.e. where people live within the City, presents a snapshot of Kentwood’s development. The population distribution reflects current conditions, not projected future needs or development. Residential development is scattered across the City of Kentwood. Generally speaking, the City’s population is more concentrated on the west side. The east side of the City, however, will experience population growth during the coming years as residential land is developed.

*Analysis*

As mentioned, the population distribution map merely represents a snapshot of conditions within the City at the time of the 2000 decennial census. These concentrations are expected to change over time with the expected gains being in the southeast portion of the City, where there is vacant land zoned for future residential development. This analysis is also useful for both short- and long-range planning for services and infrastructure. The far eastern portion of the City is largely zoned for industrial development, thus limiting residential development; however, both residential and industrial development (and redevelopment) will eventually require the City to evaluate long term infrastructure upgrades in those areas.

Figure 2: Distribution of Multiple Family Dwellings - 2000 Census (Source: US Census)

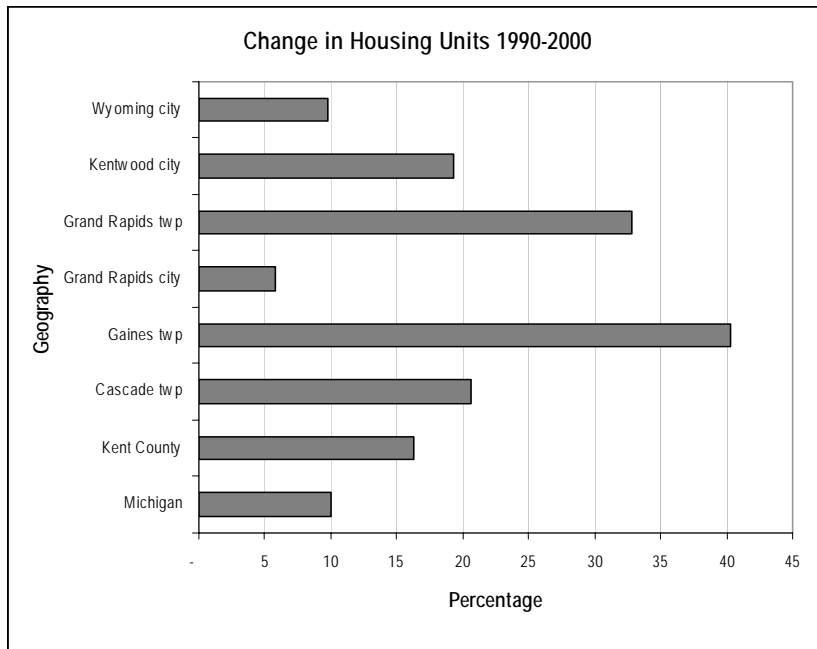


**Housing Units**

*Findings*

Housing units are another particularly effective way to measure growth and development. Figure 3 and Table 3 compares Kentwood’s recent changes in housing units versus neighboring municipalities, Kent County and the State of Michigan.

Figure 3: Change in Housing Units 1990-2000. (Source: US Census)



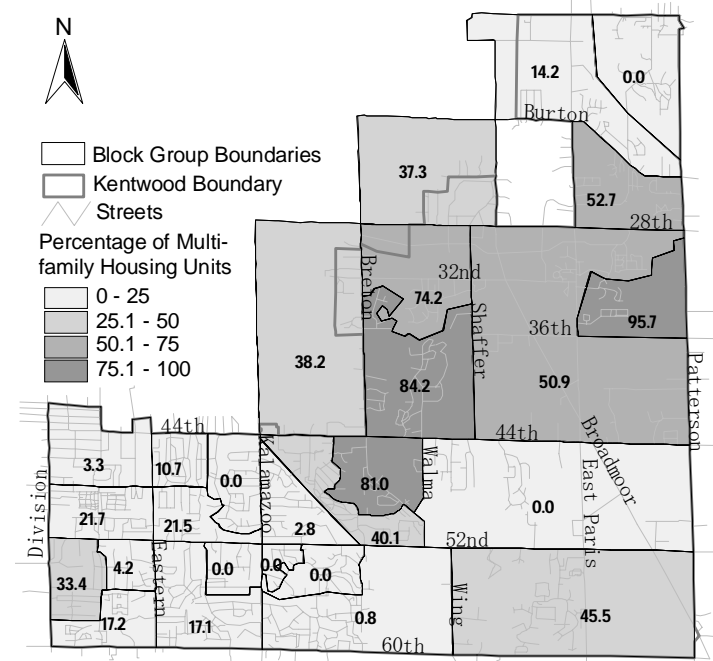
During the 1990s, Kentwood experienced a significant gain in the number of housing units as the number of units increased almost 20%. While the gain is noteworthy, it is also important to note that Kentwood added housing units at a slightly higher pace than the rest of Kent County. However, Kentwood’s increase in housing units lagged considerably behind neighboring Townships – Grand Rapids Township, Cascade Township and Gaines Township, which all had an increase in housing stock of more than 20%.

Table 3: Comparison of Housing Unit Change 1990-2000

Geography	Housing Units 2000	Housing Units 1990	Change in Units	Percentage Change
Michigan	4,234,279	3,847,926	386,353	10
Kent County	224,000	192,698	31,302	16
Cascade twp	5,638	4,674	964	21
Gaines twp	7,755	5,530	2,225	40
Grand Rapids city	78,003	73,716	4,287	6
Grand Rapids twp	5,006	3,768	1,238	33
Kentwood city	19,490	16,337	3,153	19
Wyoming city	27,505	25,056	2,449	10

Due largely to the City of Kentwood’s 70%-30% housing unit policy, 71% of the growth in housing units during the 1990s was single-family residential. Accordingly, there is less land available for multi-family dwellings within Kentwood.

Figure 4: Distribution of Multiple Family Dwellings -2000 Census. (Source: US Census)



Kentwood is almost fully developed; less than 2,700 acres of the total 13,408 acre land base of Kentwood are undeveloped. Of that 2,700 acres, a considerable amount of which has some sort of development constraint such as wetlands or flood plain. The greatest density of rental units is primarily concentrated in the middle of the City at Breton Avenue and 44th Street, as shown in Figure 4.

Occupancy status figures have a direct impact on the region’s population and future planning. The City of Kentwood has less vacant housing – less than 6% of the overall housing stock – than all of the surrounding municipalities except for Gaines Township.

Figure 5: Change in Housing Occupancy 1990-2000. (Source: US Census)

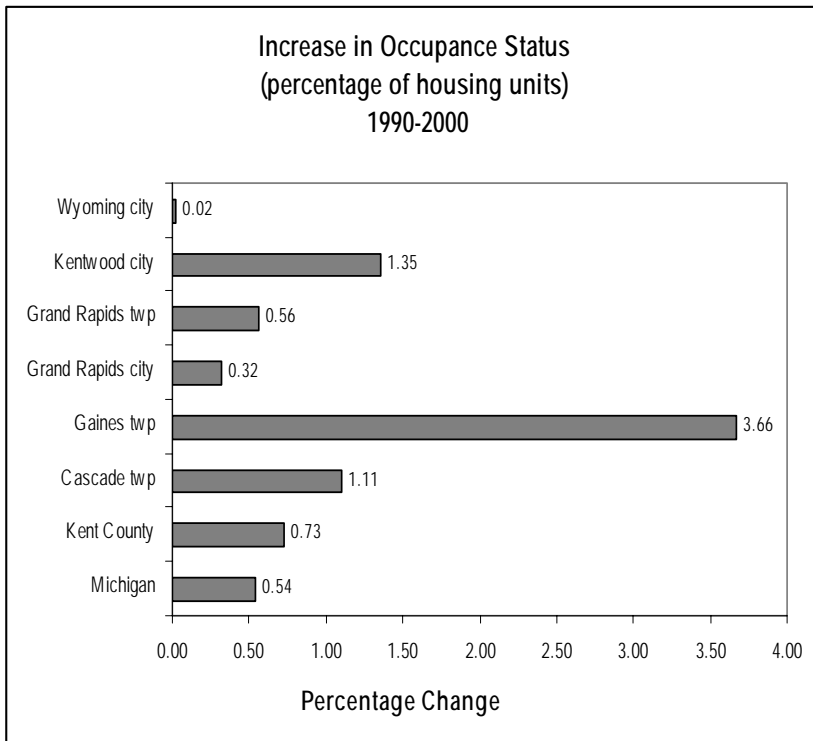


Figure 6: Change in Tenure by type 1990-2000. (Source: US Census)

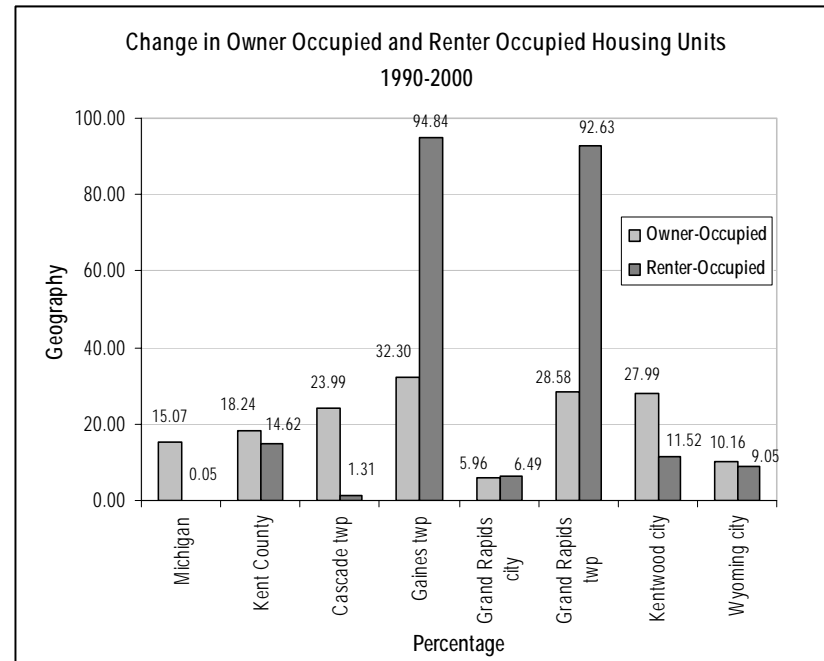


Table 4: Comparison Change Occupied Housing Units 1990-2000

Geography	Housing Units 2000	Housing Units 1990	Occupied Units 2000 (%)	Occupied Units 1990 (%)	Change in Occupied Units (%)
Michigan	423,4279	3,847,926	89.41%	88.86%	0.54%
Kent County	224,000	192,698	95.04%	94.31%	0.73%
Cascade twp	5,638	4,674	95.67%	94.57%	1.11%
Gaines twp	7,755	5,530	96.29%	92.62%	3.66%
Grand Rapids city	78,003	73,716	93.96%	93.64%	0.32%
Grand Rapids twp	5,006	3,768	96.60%	96.05%	0.56%
Kentwood city	19,490	16,337	94.68%	93.33%	1.35%
Wyoming city	27,505	25,056	96.47%	96.46%	0.02%

Table 5: Comparison of change in Vacant Housing Units 1990-2000

Geography	Housing Units 2000	Housing Units 1990	Vacant Units 2000 (%)	Vacant Units 1990 (%)	Change in Vacant Units (%)
Michigan	4,234,279	3,847,926	10.59%	11.14%	-0.54%
Kent County	224,000	192,698	4.96%	5.69%	-0.73%
Cascade twp	5,638	4,674	4.33%	5.43%	-1.11%
Gaines twp	7,755	5,530	3.71%	7.38%	-3.66%
Grand Rapids city	78,003	73,716	6.04%	6.36%	-0.32%
Grand Rapids twp	5,006	3,768	3.40%	3.95%	-0.56%
Kentwood city	19,490	16,337	5.32%	6.67%	-1.35%
Wyoming city	27,505	25,056	3.53%	3.54%	-0.02%

*Analysis*

The occupancy rate in Kentwood is well above regional and state averages. The implication of such a high occupancy rate is that Kentwood is a desirable and affordable area and that there will continue to be a demand for additional housing.

While the demand for new housing may be strong, it is important to continue to work to achieve a balance between residential and commercial development and between development and land preservation. It is also important to maintain and preserve the existing housing stock within the City.

**Household Income**

*Findings*

Median income and household income are each statistics that can be used to assess how a community is evolving, especially in a regional context. The City of Kentwood had a median household income of \$45,812 in 2000, slightly behind the \$45,980 for Kent County and slightly ahead of the State of Michigan median. The Kentwood figure, however, trails Cascade, Gaines and Grand Rapids Townships (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Regional Income Statistics 1999-2000. (Source: US Census)

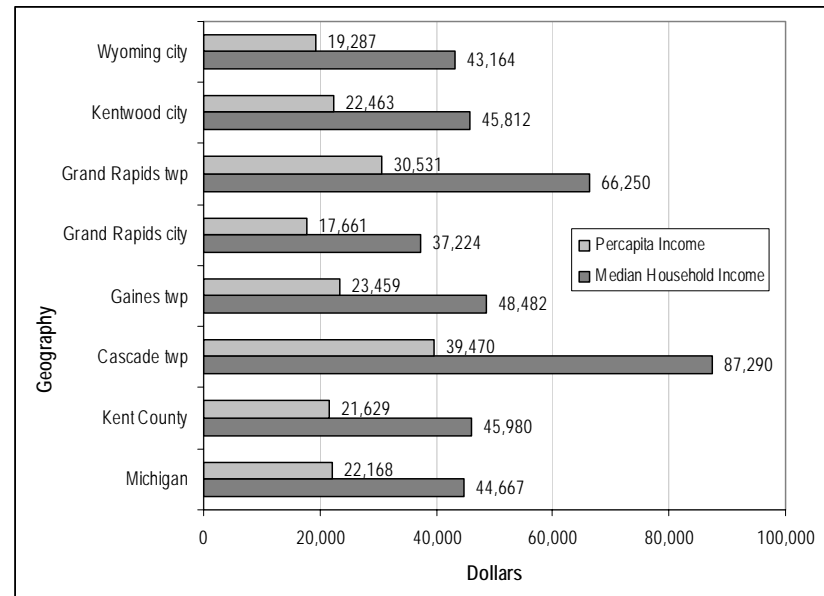
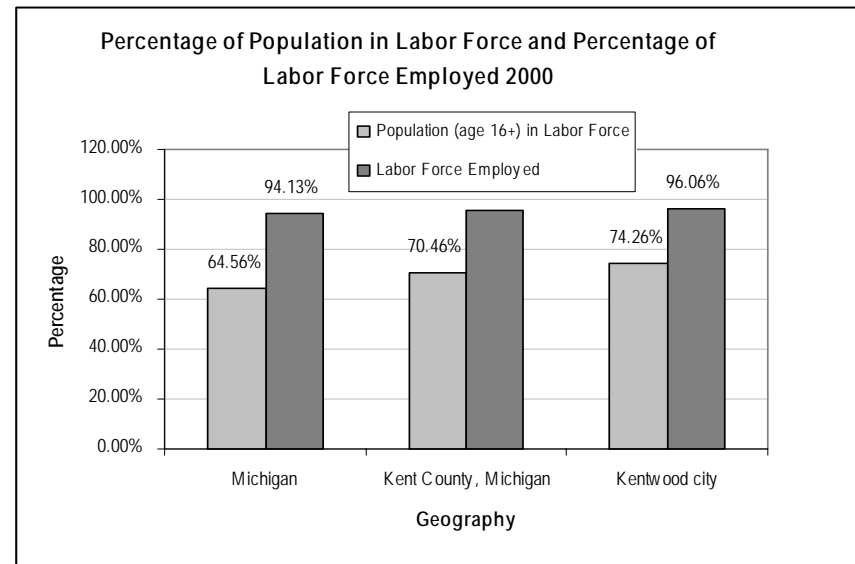


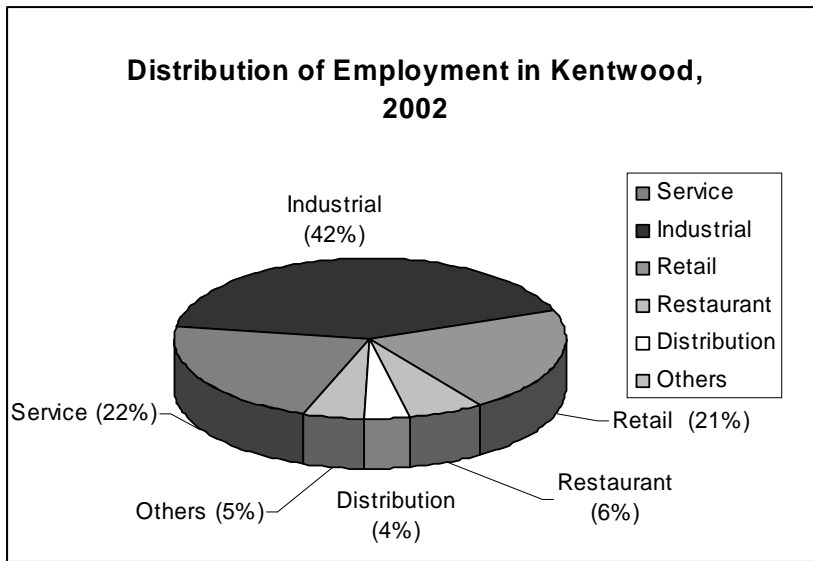
Figure 8: Labor Force Statistics. (Source: US Census)



It is difficult to consider household and personal income outside of the context of employment. The City’s employment numbers, as measured by the 2000 decennial census, are very similar to both Kent County and State of Michigan figures (Figure 8).

The largest employment sector for Kentwood residents was Industrial in 2000, accounting for 42% of all residents’ jobs. Retail accounted for the third most jobs for City residents in 2000 (Figure 9).

Figure 9: City of Kentwood Employment by Sector. (Source: US Census)



*Analysis*

Given the shift away from industrial production as a major source of employment and revenue, the fact that in 2000, 42% of the labor force was employed within the Industrial segment is of great concern. As the national, state and local economy shifts emphasis away from manufacturing and industrial development, *it is of primary importance to adapt to changing economic conditions and to attract new businesses to Kentwood in order to ensure sustainable job opportunities for*

*residents.* Considering the extent to which the local and state economy has shifted away from manufacturing and industrial activity since 2000, this should be a top priority.

**Physical Environment**

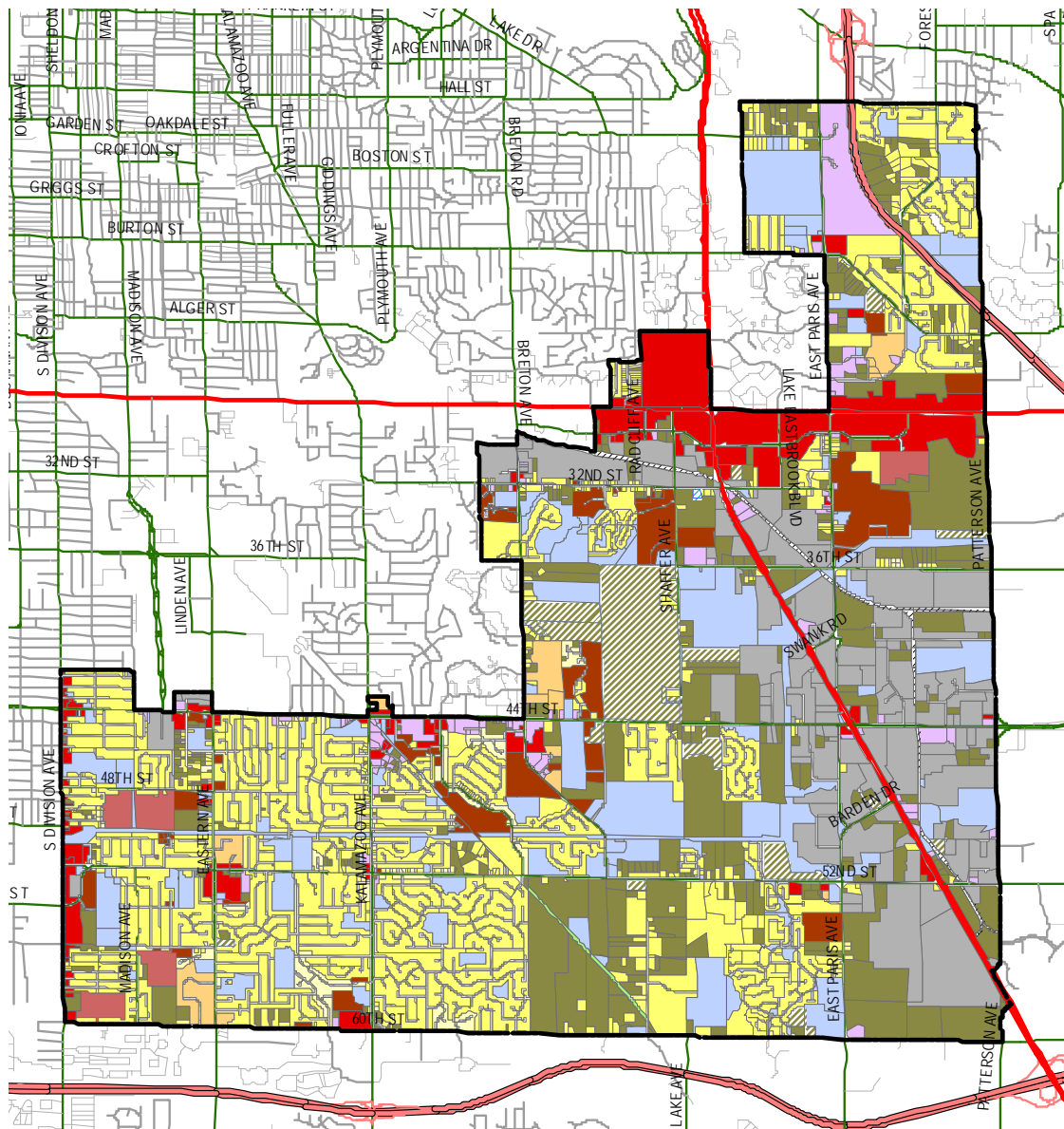
**Land Use**

*Findings*

Historically, the area that is now Kentwood was largely forested. Human settlement had an extreme impact on the landscape. Between 1800 and 1978, humans cleared much of the forest cover for farming and then farmland gradually yielded to urban and suburban development. By 1978, 43%, or 5,711 acres of Kentwood’s land base had been developed. The vast majority of the development was residential – 62% of all development was single family residential (Table 6).

Table 6: Comparison of 1978 and 1991 Land Use Totals. (Source: State of Michigan, REGIS and City of Kentwood)

Land Use	1978 Acres	1978 Percentage of total areas	1991 Acres	1991 Percentage of total areas	Percentage Change 1978-1991
Agriculture	2,673	20%	692	5%	-74%
Forest	1,139	8%	1,080	8%	-5%
Range and open land	3,786	28%	4,300	32%	14%
Water and Wetlands	99	1%	99	1%	No Change
Commercial, Services and Institutional	721	5%	1,206	9%	67%
Mining / Extractive	105	1%	23	<1%	-78%
Industrial	873	7%	1,266	9%	45%
Parks and Open Space	333	2%	335	2%	0.6%
Residential	3,539	26%	4,231	32%	20%
Transportation, Communication and Utilities	139	1%	175	1%	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,407</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13,407</b>	<b>100%</b>	



## LEGEND

Kentwood Boundary

### EXISTING LAND USE

- Single Family
- Duplex
- Multiple Family
- Mobile Home Park
- Elderly Housing
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Nonmotorized Trail
- Vacant
- Vacant (approved plans)
- Miscellaneous
- Railroad

### STREETS & ROADS

- Freeway
- Freeway Ramp
- Highway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Private
- Alley



**CITY OF KENTWOOD**  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

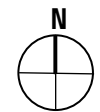
**MASTERPLAN UPDATE**  
2005

## EXISTING LAND USE MAP

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CITY OF KENTWOOD



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**MAP** 1

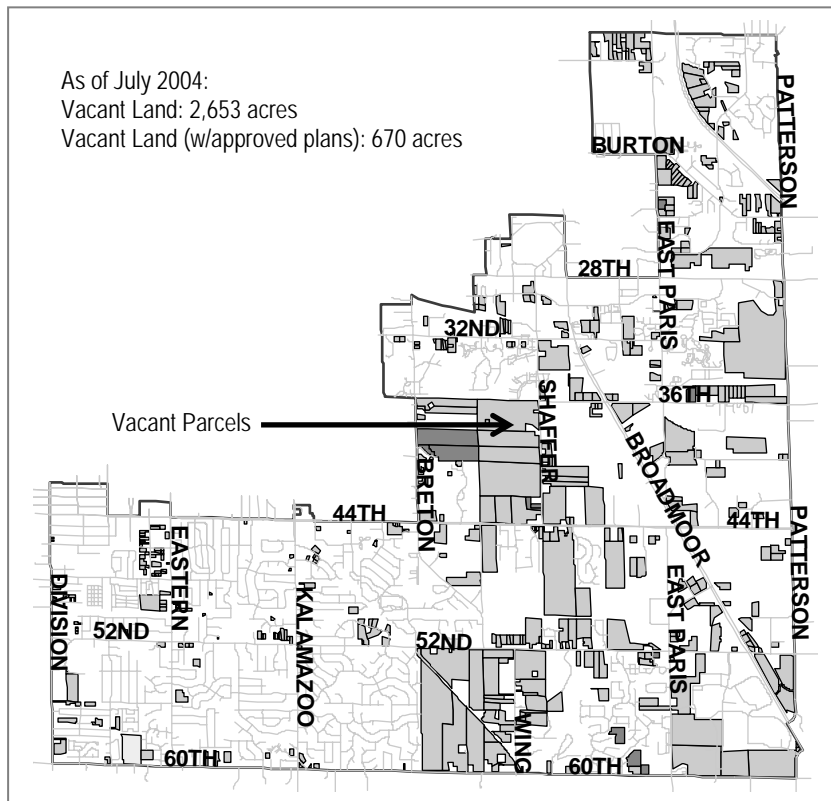
**DATE** July 2004



Table 7: 1995 Land Use Acreage Totals. (Source: 1995 Kentwood Master Plan)

Land Use	1995 Acres	1995 Percentage of Total Area
Residential	4,437	33%
Commercial / Office	844	6%
Industrial	1,158	9%
Public /Quasi Public	1,209	9%
Street / RR right-of-way	1,417	11%
Vacant / Undeveloped	4,287	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,351</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 10: Vacant Land in Kentwood



The 1978 land use data shows that Kentwood was still a developing community with a significant amount of agricultural land and open space. As the City continued to evolve over the next 13 years, the undeveloped agricultural lands experienced tremendous growth pressure and provided the land base for much of the commercial, industrial and residential development. Residential growth increased to 4,431 acres or 33% of total land area between 1991 and 1995. The 1991 and 1995 figures (Tables 6 and 7) show that Kentwood was changing from a more rural community to a mature, suburban community. This change is significant because, for the first time, re-development became the focus of planning.

Table 8: 2003 Land Use Inventory and Acreage Totals. (Source: City of Kentwood)

Land Use	2003 Acres	2003 Percentage of Total Area
Commercial	745	5.3%
Duplex	174	1.2%
Senior Housing	172	1.2%
Industrial	1,790	12.8%
Miscellaneous	2	0.0%
Mobile Home	157	1.1%
Multiple Family	543	3.9%
Non-Motorized Trail	14	0.1%
Office	320	2.3%
Public and Quasi-Public	1,828	13.1%
Railroad	59	0.4%
Roadway Right-of-Way	1,421	10.2%
Single Family Residential	3,401	24.4%
Vacant	2,653	19.0%
Vacant (with approved development plans)	670	4.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,949</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Analysis*

The most recent land use inventory was performed during 2003 by the City of Kentwood (Table 8). This inventory found that single family residential development accounted for about 25% of the total City land base. 19% of the land base was vacant land, for the most part, low-quality woodland and abandoned agricultural land. This large total of vacant land indicates there is *potential for additional growth* within Kentwood.

Table 9: 2004 Zoning Districts with total acreage

Zoning District	Description	Acreage Total	Percentage of Total Acreage
R1 A	Very Low Density Residential	558	4.2%
R1 B	Very Low Density Residential	713	5.3%
R1 C	Low Density Residential	3,879	29.1%
R1 D	Low Density Residential	889	6.7%
R2	Two Family Residential	424	3.2%
R3	Medium/High Density Residential	250	1.9%
R4	High Density Residential	577	4.3%
R5	Manufactured Housing	170	1.3%
C2	Community Commercial	734	5.5%
C3	Regional Commercial	139	1.0%
C4	Office/Business	346	2.6%
C5	Neighborhood Corridor Commercial	0	0.0%
I 1	Light Industrial	2,334	17.5%
I 2	General Industrial	158	1.2%
OS	Open Space, Public, Semi-Public	402	3.0%
RPUD - 1	High Density Residential PUD	781	5.9%
RPUD - 2	Low Density Residential PUD	223	1.7%
CPUD	Commercial PUD	180	1.3%
MPUD	Mixed Use PUD	0	0.0%
IPUD	Industrial PUD	577	4.3%
OPUD	Office PUD	10	0.1%

In Kentwood’s case, there are 2,653 acres of vacant land within the City - primarily concentrated in the eastern portion of the City. The greatest concentration of vacant, developable land is east of Breton Avenue and south of 36th Street. Much of the vacant land is currently zoned for residential development – a combination of low and medium density single family residential.

Natural features, in particular wetlands and floodplain, present significant obstacles to development on many of the vacant parcels. Furthermore, the connectivity of these natural systems is vital to their long term sustainability, which creates additional challenges for development of many of these properties.

**Zoning**

Zoning is the mechanism used to determine future land uses. Existing zoning districts are a good indicator of how a community intends to grow.

Under the current ordinance, the City of Kentwood has zoned about 63% of the land base exclusively for residential use. However, the full acreage can not be developed as housing because of site restrictions dictated by site conditions and site development standards. Table 9 details the different acreage totals for each zoning district.

**Natural Resources**

The natural features found in and around Kentwood are all part of a larger, regional ecosystem. These include Kentwood’s wetlands and water features that are minor components of much larger systems that extend beyond political boundaries.

As such, these resources must be addressed on a system basis, meaning that Kentwood must work in partnership with other communities to ensure the long term health and sustainability of these resources.



**CITY OF KENTWOOD**  
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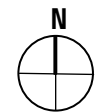
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2005

**EXISTING ZONING**

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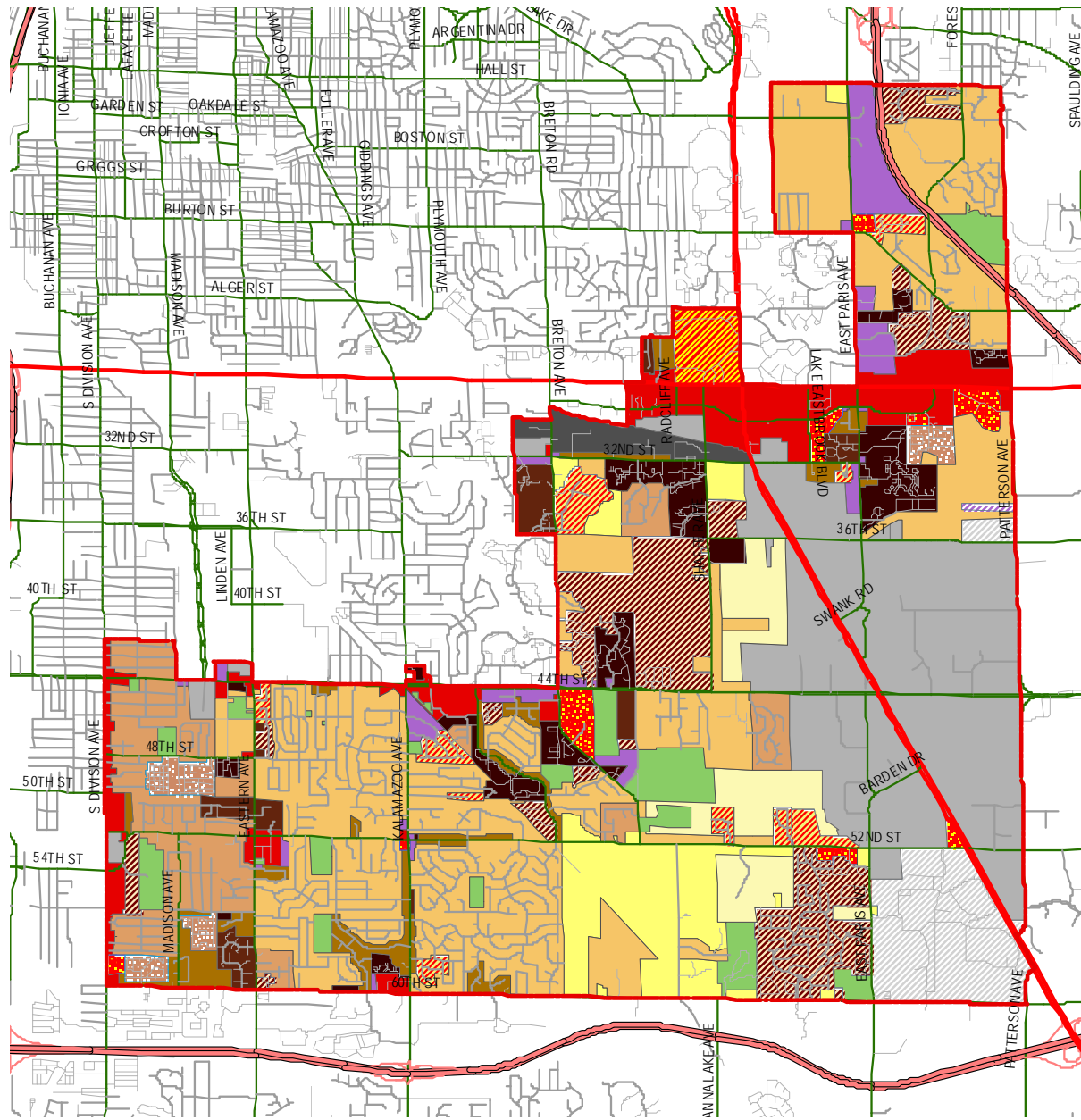
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**MAP** 2

**DATE** July 2004

**LEGEND**

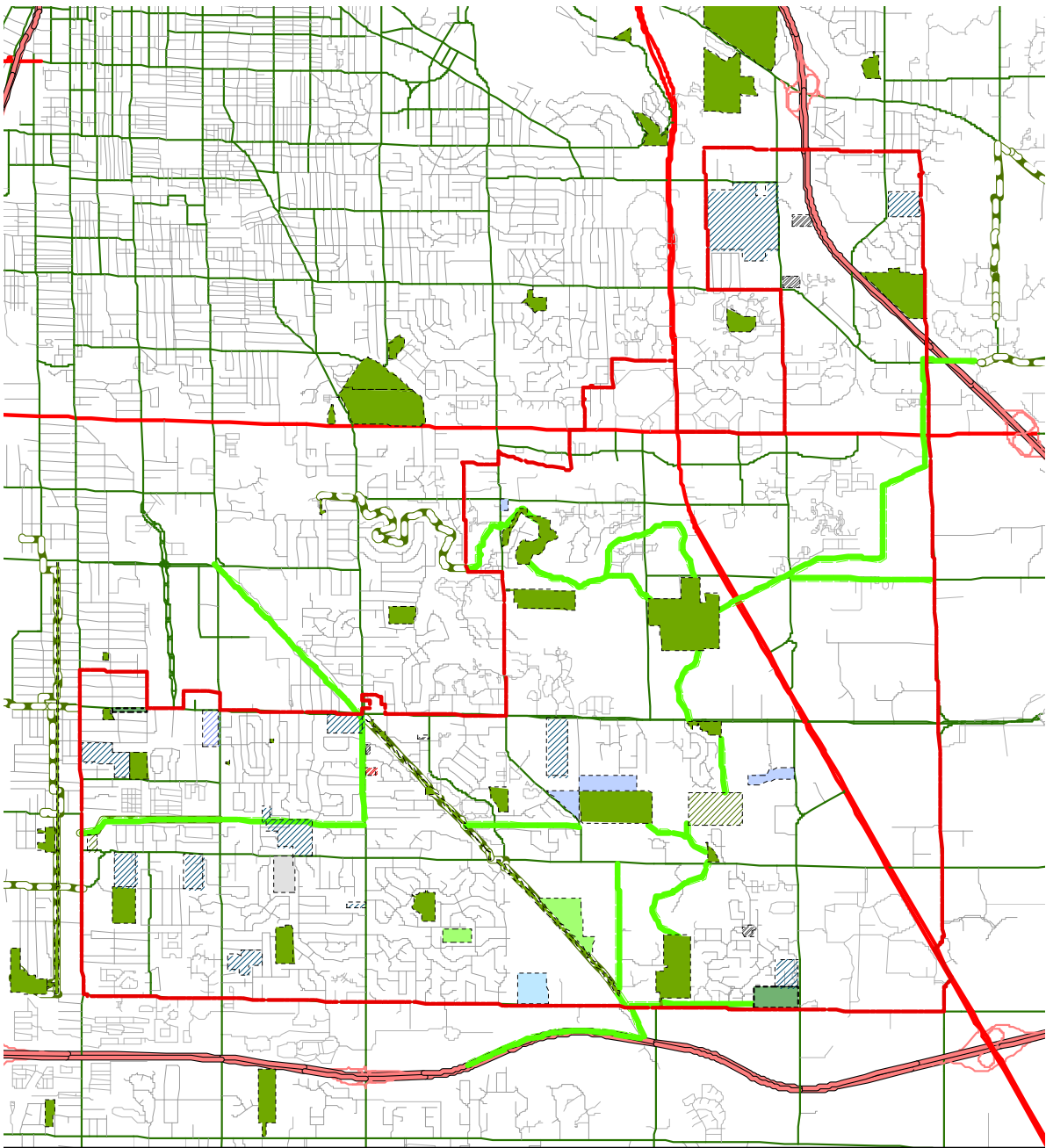
- Kentwood Boundary
- C-2 COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL
- C-3 REGIONAL COMMERCIAL
- C-4 OFFICE
- C-PUD COMMERCIAL PUD
- R1-A ESTATE RESIDENTIAL
- I-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
- I-2 HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
- I-PUD INDUSTRIAL PUD
- O-PUD OFFICE PUD
- OS OPEN SPACE
- R-2 TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R-3 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- R-4 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- R-5 MOBILE HOME PARK
- R1-B SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R1-C SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R1-D SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- RPUD-1 HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL PUD
- RPUD-2 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL PUD


































**LEGEND**

-  Kentwood Boundary
  -  Park
  -  Linear Park
  -  Future Parkland
  -  Potential Parkland
  -  Bike Trails
  -  Potential trails
  -  City-owned property
  -  Library
  -  Cemetery
  -  School
  -  Future School
  -  Private Fitness Center
  -  Water Tower
- Type of Street or Road**
-  Freeway
  -  Freeway Ramp
  -  Highway
  -  Primary
  -  Secondary
  -  Proposed/Under Construction
  -  Private
  -  Alley
  -  Unknown



**CITY OF KENTWOOD  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

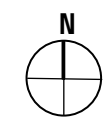
**MASTERPLAN UPDATE  
2005**

**PARK, OPEN  
SPACES AND  
CIVIC SPACES**

Map originally created by:



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**MAP 4**

**DATE July 2004**



### *Watersheds*

The City of Kentwood drains into three different watersheds - Plaster Creek, Buck Creek and the Grand River. The Plaster Creek Watershed is the largest in the City, totaling 8,846 acres or 66% of Kentwood's land area accounting. The Buck Creek Watershed covers the west side of the city and totals 4,334 acres or 32% of the land area. Only a small 226 acre area of the northeast corner of the City drains into the Grand River Watershed (Map 3).

### *Wetlands*

Wetlands are a vital part of the physical environment and serve many purposes. These sensitive areas are vital to the health and sustainability of the region's water resources and dependent plant and animal species. Some of the 1,911 acres of wetlands within Kentwood's city limits are only seasonal wetlands while others are permanently wet or flooded.

### *Floodplain*

The Plaster Creek floodplain extends the length of Plaster Creek and Little Plaster Creek throughout the City. Additionally, many of the associated wetlands between the southern border at 60th Street and 32nd Street in the northern part of Kentwood are also included in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain designation. These floodplains are also indicated on the water resources map.

### *Woodlands*

As mentioned, prior to human settlement, Kentwood was a largely forested landscape. Specifically, it is estimated that 75% of modern-day Kentwood was Beech-Sugar Maple forest prior to the 1800s. 15% of the area was made up of White Pine and mixed hardwoods. Mixed Oak savannah was the predominant forest type in the far west corner of the area, amounting to a little over 200 acres. The remainder of the land cover was either emerging marsh land or mixed hardwood swamp.

The human impact on this landscape came in the form of agriculture. These forests were cleared by early inhabitants for agricultural use. As the community evolved, farm fields and orchards replaced the forests and were, in turn, replaced by single family homes and retail centers. While there are some remaining high-quality wooded areas, these areas tend to be associated with the wetlands and streambeds along Plaster Creek.

### *Soils*

Heavy silt clays and loams dominate the soil types found within Kentwood. There are, however, pockets of sandy soils that are better drained. These soils are typically found in and along the Plaster Creek, and west of Kalamazoo Avenue. The heavier clay soils, while poorly drained, are not unworkable. Drain tile and site engineering usually are able to overcome any negative drainage situation caused by heavy soils.

### *Topography*

The general topographic condition of Kentwood can best be described as largely flat with some rolling hills. The northern portion of the City generally has more varying topography; however, the overall change in elevation is fairly small - only 40 meters (124 feet) from the low to the high point in the City.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Kentwood has an extensive park and recreation system with 23 existing and planned facilities totaling 393 acres of recreation space. Park facilities range in size from a half-acre pocket park or trailhead to the 70 acre Paris Park. Facilities include traditional active recreation facilities such as ball diamonds and soccer fields, passive facilities for hiking and nature observation, the Paul Henry Trail, community gardens, and the Kentwood Activities Center.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was updated in December, 2004. This plan prioritized acquisition of land within

the Plaster Creek floodplain for trail and park use, as well as the development of a more comprehensive non-motorized trail network that links all of Kentwood's park facilities. Another substantial goal of the plan is to ensure that all geographic areas of the City are adequately served with an appropriate acreage of parkland and open space (both the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the National Recreation and Park Association use a standard of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents).

### **School Districts**

The City of Kentwood is divided predominantly into the following four school districts: Kentwood Public Schools, Caledonia Community Schools, Forest Hills Public Schools and Kelloggsville Public Schools. The Kentwood school district is the largest of these in terms of area - serving an area of 9,200 acres - or 69% of the City.



CITY OF KENTWOOD  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

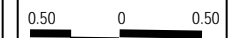
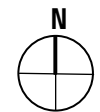
MASTERPLAN UPDATE  
2005

### SCHOOL DISTRICTS MAP

Map originally created by:



Map edited & formatted by:  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT,  
CITY OF KENTWOOD



MAP 5

DATE July 2004

## LEGEND

 Kentwood Boundary

### SCHOOL DISTRICTS

 CALEDONIA

 FOREST HILLS

 KELLOGGSVILLE

 KENTWOOD


### STREETS & ROADS

 Freeway

 Freeway Ramp

 Highway

 Primary

 Secondary

 Private

 Alley

