



# Lake Orion Master Plan, 2021 Amendment

Village of Lake Orion, Oakland County, Michigan

DRAFT – July 1, 2021



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Adopted by the Village Council of Lake Orion on \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

Prepared with the assistance of:



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# Part I: Introduction and Background

Welcome to the Village of Lake Orion's 2021 Master Plan Amendment. This amendment reflects the village's strategies for addressing redevelopment and opportunity areas, as well as the future land use map. Further, this amendment strives to promote civic involvement, support zoning credibility, act as a vehicle for sustainability planning, and respond to current and future economic developments and incentives.

## PURPOSE AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE VILLAGE'S 2002 MASTER PLAN

As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended, at least every five years after adoption of a master plan, the Planning Commission must review the plan and determine whether to begin the procedure to adopt a new plan or amend the existing plan. Due to a number of reasons, including recent development activity, the village has decided to consider an amendment to the plan. This text and the map that follows constitute the proposed amendment (Amendment #2), and must be interpreted in the context of the overall Master Plan 2002 - 2022. Amendment #2 replaces the 2008 "Amendment #1: Future Land Use Plan" of the Master Plan 2002 - 2022.

The purpose of this Amendment #2 to the master plan is to define a path forward to improvements that will benefit the property owners, existing residents and the business community, and the general public by creating a more vibrant, walkable, and economically healthy Lake Orion. Amendment #2 shall be used as a guide for the village, landowners, and developers during future development processes.



On-line Web Platform and the Hard Copy Engagement Packet



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The Lake Orion community was invited to participate in the master plan process throughout the fall and winter of 2020 through an interactive website. A paper version of all the website activities was also created and available at Village Hall offices and the Downtown Development Authority offices for those who preferred not to use the online platform. The website contained a variety of surveys regarding general land use questions, as well as specific development scenarios, and preferences on topics such as building design and architecture. Key public engagement findings were discussed with the village and are available for viewing on the village's website.





# Part II: Future Land Use and Zoning Plan

In a master plan, generalized land use areas are identified on the future land use map and reflect the patterns of existing development, analysis of existing conditions, and community goals and objectives. The future land use map indicates growth areas of different densities, provides locations for mixed use areas, parks and community uses, as well as commercial uses, and acts as a guide for any amendments proposed to the zoning ordinance, which is the primary regulatory tool for the village to implement land use changes.

## ZONING PLAN

A zoning plan is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) and Zoning Enabling Acts (MZEAs). Section 33(d) of the MPEA (PA 33 of 2008), as amended, requires that the master plan shall serve as the basis for the community's zoning plan. Additionally, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006), as amended, requires a Zoning Plan to be prepared as the basis for the zoning ordinance. The zoning plan must be based on an inventory of conditions pertinent to zoning in the municipality and the purposes for which zoning may be adopted.

Table 1: Zoning Plan on the following page presents the zoning districts that apply to each of the proposed future land use map designations. Rezoning requests should be reviewed against this table to determine whether the requested district is supported. In some cases, a new zoning district may be the most effective way to implement the vision of the future land use map.

This future land use map sets a vision for the Village of Lake Orion by creating opportunities for vibrant mixed-use and walkable districts, transition zones to the downtown, and residential neighborhoods at a variety of scales and densities.

## ZONING PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Key recommended revisions to the zoning ordinance are discussed in the next section, and table 1 below details the zoning plan. Each of the 'notes' on the following pages detail recommended revisions to the zoning ordinance and zoning map in order to further implement the vision of the future land use plan.

Table 1: Zoning Plan (Future Land Use and Zoning Map Correlation)

Future Land Use Designation* *See Footnote A	Corresponding Zoning District	Zoning District Revisions / Recommendations
Lake Single-Family Residential	RL, Lake Single-Family Residential	-
Village Single-Family Residential	RV, Village Single-Family Residential	-
Multiple-Family Residential	RM, Multiple-Family Residential	District Revisions - See Note 1
Mixed Use: Downtown	DC, Downtown Center	District Revisions - See Note 2
Mixed Use: Transition	N/A	New District - See Note 3
Mixed Use: M-24 Corridor	MU, Mixed Use	District Revisions - See Note 4
Corridor Commercial	CC, Corridor Commercial	District Revisions - See Note 5
Civic / Institutional / Recreation and Open Space	Varies	N/A
-	HD, Height Overlay District	See Footnote B
-	PUD, Planned Unit Development	See Footnote C

**Footnote A:** No industrial land uses are identified on the future land use map. Due to the relatively small size of the village, and proximity of residential uses to almost every site, these uses are considered incompatible with the overall land use plan and objectives.

**Footnote B:** Incorporate the Height Overlay District into Article 12: Schedule of Regulations.

**Footnote C:** Revise the PUD, Planned Unit Development standards to reflect more modern standards, to incentivize quality development, provide greater flexibility for unique developments, and to ensure regulations are clear for developers and the public to understand.

# Lake Single-Family Residential

Corresponding Zoning District: RL, Lake Single-Family Residential

Recommendation: n/a

Historically, this housing stock was characterized by small homes and small accessory structures, oriented for views of the lake and access for recreation. Recently, the trend is the construction of additions or larger new homes on the lakefront. The majority of variance requests in the village are for dimensional variances on lakefront property. Lake Single-Family Residential areas are limited to single-family residential uses and customary accessory uses. This category does not include accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Lot sizes in the Lake Single-Family Residential areas vary. The platted lot areas are generally smaller than lot areas in other parts of the village. The average lot on the islands, with the exception of Park Island, is approximately 6,500 square feet. Based upon development trends along the lake, even the smallest, 30-foot wide, lot has significant development value. Consideration should be given to providing flexibility in the required lot area for parcels within this land use category to be more consistent with the existing conditions and to reduce the degree of nonconformity.

The overall size and massing of residential structures are regulated by lot coverage, setbacks, and building height limits in the zoning ordinance. Houses in the Lake Single-Family Residential category should be built or modified with respect for the mass, scale, and lake views of surrounding properties. While there is value in the smallest lots along the lake, the development of these lots should not negatively impact the value of the surrounding properties and neighborhood. Adequate open space in the form of front, rear, and side yard setbacks, reasonable lot coverage, and building height limits should be required to protect the character of the neighborhood and the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Building placement is where the buildings are located on a lot relative to property lines, typically regulated through setbacks. Building placement is critical for maintaining the character of the village, providing adequate light and air, and ensuring public safety. One particular challenge to lakefront parcels is the limited space for making home improvements. Side yard setbacks are often non-conforming to the zoning ordinance schedule of regulations and any home addition tends to increase the extent of the non-conformity. It is recommended that the village consider sliding scale side yard setbacks that are based upon lot width.

The character of Lake Single-Family Residential homes is changing from simple cottages to larger homes. This is largely a result of the increasing value of the land adjacent to Lake Orion. While the home sizes will continue to change, it is important that the look and feel of lake homes remain consistent with the traditional architectural elements of the historic lakeside dwellings. These elements include: peaked roofs, front porches, one to two stories, traditional building materials, and a vertical orientation.

# Village Single-Family Residential

**Corresponding Zoning District:** RV, Village Single-Family Residential

**Recommendation:** District Revisions (Note 1)

Parcels within this category typically have only one frontage, which is the street frontage. Village Single-Family Residential areas are typically walkable, with important neighborhood amenities such as sidewalks, street trees, and connections to neighborhood parks. These areas are limited to single family residential uses and customary accessory uses, which include the addition of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) where appropriate.

The lot sizes in this area are generally larger than lot sizes within the Lake Single-Family Residential setting. In many locations, the platted lot size is slightly smaller than the minimum lot area or width required in the zoning ordinance. Land combinations and/or lot line reconfigurations can help to eliminate some of these non-conformities. The village housing stock is characterized by relatively larger single-family residences and accessory structures; homes are typically one to two stories.

New development should respect the traditional architectural character of the village. A front porch is a typical feature on the older, Victorian homes in the Village Single-Family Residential area. Front porches are important because they provide a semi-public separation between the public areas of the front yard and street and the private areas of the house. Front porches should be encouraged in all Village Single-Family Residential areas.

Front building setbacks should relate to the existing patterns in the immediate neighborhood. Similar to the Lake Single-Family Residential areas, the building facing the street should maintain a public facade that is not dominated by garage doors. Consequently, all attached garages should be recessed at least 5-feet behind the facade with the front door and the garage door occupying not more than 50% of the building width at the property line. In the case of small lots, this may require a one car garage, or a tandem two car garage. Garages should be setback a minimum of twenty (20) feet from the road, and side loaded if possible.

The small-town character of the Village Single-Family Residential neighborhood areas is important to maintain. Many of the homes in these areas are historic with Victorian architectural finishes. The village should ensure that infill development is respectfully and sensitively folded into the existing neighborhood. Other character recommendations include:

- Maintaining the open area between the street and the yard area of houses;
- Ensuring the continuity of sidewalks;
- Maintaining large diameter street trees; and
- Encouraging front porches when building additions or new construction is undertaken.

# Multiple-Family Residential

Corresponding Zoning District: RM, Multiple-Family Residential  
Recommendation: District Revisions (Note 1)

Multiple-Family Residential includes dwellings of two (2) or more units, such as townhouses, apartments, and duplex-style residential uses and customary accessory uses. In large part, the density of Multiple-Family Residential areas will be determined by the site plan and the specific conditions contained in the zoning ordinance. Generally, the density will be between eight (8) and fifteen (15) units per acre. It is recommended to refine the RM, Multiple-Family Residential District standards to allow for greater unit density when warranted for projects that exhibit exceptional site layout and building design, among other amenities. Currently, the maximum multiple-family residential density is ten (10) dwelling units per acre, which, when compared to communities such as the Village of Oxford, the City of Rochester and the City of Clawson, is significantly more conservative. The future land use plan recommends a density for multiple family developments of fifteen (15) dwelling units / acre.

Since multiple-family developments are more dense, the provision of open space within the development is critical. Multiple-family developments should include common open spaces for the residents of the development, as well as private outdoor space (i.e., a balcony or patio).

Building height should be limited to three (3) stories so as not to dwarf nearby single-family uses. A high standard of development is desired: a variety of architectural details should be provided to ensure that the project is compatible in appearance with the single-family character of the community. Well-designed townhouse units and loft style apartments are generally preferred over conventional, garden style apartment buildings.

Developments should face the street with parking located behind the buildings or in garages to maintain the pedestrian orientation of the village. Adequate spacing should be provided between buildings for open space and to allow window openings. Access drives in new developments should be connected with abutting local streets. Multiple-family developments should generally have more than one point of access to enter and leave the development.



# Mixed Use: Downtown

Corresponding Zoning District: DC, Downtown Center

Recommendation: District Revisions (Note 2)

The category is intended to provide opportunities for the continued development of the village's downtown by permitting flexibility in allowed uses and encouraging high quality design that follows basic tenets of downtown development. A mix of uses is desirable for a vibrant downtown and pedestrian orientation is paramount. Uses and site features that are automobile-oriented, such as automobile service businesses and drive-through facilities, should be prohibited in the downtown. Uses that provide retail shopping, restaurant, or entertainment activities should be encouraged, especially on the ground floors. Office, residential, and service uses should be encouraged to locate above the first floor.

Buildings within this district cover as much as 100% of the lot. On-site parking should not be required for new development and any parking lots should be located to the rear of the buildings. Buildings should be contiguous along the street frontage without large gaps or breaks for parking. Single story buildings should be prohibited. New development should respect the continuity of building form in the downtown, by creating infill development which complements the downtown's historic buildings.

Maintaining and enhancing existing historic architecture is the primary plan for this area. The façades facing the street should reflect the established façade model of village downtown commercial buildings, with individual storefront bays and large windows or showcases. Buildings should front and have the primary entrance along the street. Secondary entrances should be provided on side streets and parking areas. New development should incorporate existing traditional building elements, such as architectural features, windows, building materials and color, signs, and awnings.

The village should refine the DC, Downtown Center standards to incorporate a form-based code, including architectural standards, to create a greater sense of place and unique identity, including design standards for parking garages. These basic elements should be formalized to ensure that the downtown retains its pedestrian-friendly, historical character. Additionally, the village should consider creating an overlay district for the downtown commercial district that would enforce design standards and preserve historic buildings.

# Mixed Use: Transition

Corresponding Zoning District: n/a

Recommendation: New District (Note 3)

Create a new zoning district to correspond to the Mixed Use: Transition future land use category. This designation is intended to contain a mixture of neighborhood commercial and residential uses that are somewhat small in scale, in keeping with the development that is already in the area. Such a transitional district should include uses not currently provided for, such as live-work spaces, maker space, and other mixed use facilities. A maker space is a building designed to be used for small-scale, low-impact artisan production of wholesale goods such as artwork, foodstuffs, beverages, jewelry, furniture, and other handcrafted small-batch products. A live-work building is a building containing units that include both residential and non-residential space.

This transitional district should also incorporate 'missing middle housing' typologies. Missing middle housing is a planning term which refers to a variety of residential building types that are often at a similar scale to walkable, single-family neighborhoods and only require small amounts of parking. Examples of residential housing to incorporate in such a transitional zoning district include accessory dwelling units, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses.

There is an opportunity to allow and encourage such missing middle housing within the village by implementing the above zoning district in areas of the village that already act as a transition between single-family and multiple-family developments, or between single-family and commercial/office uses. This slight increase in density could help encourage redevelopment in areas of the village that are along those transition zones.

# Mixed Use: M-24 Corridor

Corresponding Zoning District: MU, Mixed Use

Recommendation: District Revisions (Note 4)

This designation is also intended to contain a mixture of office/commercial and residential uses that are somewhat small in scale in keeping with the development that is already in the area. It contemplates a transition from the highway into the existing single-family neighborhoods, local commercial and the lake.

The area is planned for a mix of neighborhood-serving office/commercial uses and residential uses. Ideal uses include sit-down restaurants, office and uses which can incorporate public access to the lake (or at a minimum, open or enhance viewsheds to the lake for the public to enjoy). Drive-through restaurants and similar uses are not as appropriate for this corridor.

This is a transition from the highway to the lake west of M-24 and to the historic downtown and residential areas east of M-24. As such, building mass and lot coverage should be compatible with what is existing. On one hand, maintaining or enhancing views of the lake are important, while on the other hand, fitting new development into the existing historic setting is key. Any new development should match the scale of existing buildings. It is also intended that commercial/office uses would be placed closer to the roadway in keeping with the typical building placement in the historic downtown area, where possible. Deviations to this standard may be warranted when access to the lake and the preservation of lake viewsheds can be accomplished. There should be shared access and parking to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces, to protect the environment and to minimize traffic impacts.

Streetscapes and landscape areas will be important elements when reviewing plans for development. Connectivity is key to development within the Mixed Use: M-24 Corridor. Buildings should be pedestrian-focused in orientation and scale with sidewalks linking the areas together. Also, architecture and design elements of the downtown should be incorporated into building projects, particularly rectangular windows (width-to-height ratio of 1:2), high quality (brick) building materials, roof lines, and building mass.

Moving forward, the village should consider refinement of the MU, Mixed Use standards to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety along M-24 and to require more appropriate buffers for the lake and/or residential neighborhoods. Creating provisions for gateway standards to target urban design to announce arrival into the village, including landscaping, signage, and public art, will also help define the Mixed Use: M-24 Corridor area.

# Corridor Commercial

Corresponding Zoning District: CC, Corridor Commercial

Recommendation: District Revisions (Note 5)

Corridor Commercial uses are characterized by automobile-oriented establishments that serve both a local and regional market, such as restaurants (fast food and standard), automobile fueling and services, and strip centers with neighborhood commercial uses. "Big box" retail uses are not appropriate in this district. The uses in this category are intended to be accessed by automobile, although pedestrian access should also be encouraged through site design. The village should refine the CC, Corridor Commercial ordinance standards to avoid the further proliferation of strip commercial development, as this results in hazardous traffic conditions, an unattractive streetscape and long-term reuse issues associated with obsolete strip commercial buildings.

Corridor Commercial uses occupy smaller buildings with significant impervious surface on the site. Building mass should be appropriate to the proposed use with consideration toward the future use of the building.

Corridor Commercial uses should have buildings set close to the road. It is preferable for these uses to provide parking to the sides and rear, where appropriate. The village should consider reducing parking requirements for Corridor Commercial uses to reduce the amount of pavement on these lots, which would reduce surface runoff and help protect the water quality of nearby Lake Orion.

Sites for Corridor Commercial establishments are typically dependent on high traffic, accessibility and visibility. These uses have the potential to generate high vehicular traffic volumes, bright lights, noise, and often undesirable visual clutter. Therefore, the interface between Corridor Commercial uses and single-family residential uses must be carefully treated.

To minimize the negative effects of Corridor Commercial uses on village neighborhoods, such businesses are planned to be restricted to a concentrated district and not to be permitted to spread and encroach into neighborhoods. Potential negative impacts on residential districts are further planned to be minimized by providing transitional mixed, attached, and multiple-family residential land uses that serve as a buffer. In areas where there is no land use transition, special attention should be paid to ensuring that the off-site impacts of commercial uses are minimized with visual screening and landscaping.

The sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting requirements for the village should be emphasized in these areas; this will help to enhance the sense of place along M-24. It is important that Corridor Commercial uses are not developed with typical franchise architecture and details, but instead with high quality building materials and architectural elements of the village's downtown commercial architecture.



# Civic/Public/Recreation & Open Space

Corresponding Zoning District: Varies

Recommendation: n/a

This category includes a variety of public and semi public institutions, parks and open space. These lands are located to provide needed community recreation areas and facilities, village aesthetics, and environmental protection.

The retention and enhancement of these properties and facilities are expected to satisfy the local recreational needs and services required by village residents. It is recommended that the village maintain a current Parks and Recreation Master Plan, updating the plan on a regular basis per the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) standards to continue to be eligible for grant funding. Development of stable sources of funding and practicing sound fiscal management of the parks and recreation system will ensure its protection.

Public buildings should be located to define the village's public spaces, which in turn, can provide a memorable and significant frame for civic events. Public buildings, especially schools, should be located to provide or enhance residential neighborhoods and their individual identity and character. Civic presence should be enhanced by height, mass, and high-quality materials. Architectural features should be designed to take advantage of vistas along streets to visually connect the public buildings with surrounding neighborhoods. Public buildings should be located to be accessible to residents and visitors of all ages and incomes, by car, transit, bicycle, or foot. Parking lots should be placed strategically so that they do not dominate the building or site.

This category includes uses which are open to a limited public, such as churches and private land that is used for open space. As most of these uses are located in or adjacent to single-family residential uses, the potential reuse of these sites is therefore limited to a similar public or semi-public use, or single family residential use of compatible density with surrounding neighborhoods.

Semi-public buildings located close to single family neighborhoods should be designed to enhance residential neighborhoods and their individual identity and character. Additionally, semi-public buildings located close to commercial neighborhoods should be compatible with the architectural design of existing structures. Because semi-public buildings are important to the community life of village residents, they are held to a higher standard of development. High-quality design, high quality building products, and landscaping are required.

Semi-public buildings should also be located to incorporate accessibility to residents and visitors of all ages and incomes by car, transit, bicycle, or foot. Parking lots should be placed so that they do not dominate the building or site. Green spaces planned for semi-public use should be maintained and landscaped to ensure that they do not become nuisances.

# Future Land Use

Village of Lake Orion, Oakland County, MI

June 18, 2021 **DRAFT**

- LEGEND**
- Village Boundary
  - Lakes and Rivers
  - Character Change Areas
  - Future Land Use Category**
  - Lake Single-Family Residential
  - Village Single-Family Residential
  - Multiple-Family Residential
  - Corridor Commercial
  - Mixed Use: Downtown
  - Mixed Use: Transition
  - Mixed Use: M-24 Corridor
  - Civic/Institutional/Recreation and Open Space



BaseMap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a  
 Data Source: Village of Lake Orion 2021, Mckenna 2021







