



# IMAGINE VINE 2025: A Neighborhood Plan for Vine, Kalamazoo

In collaboration with the Michigan State University School of Planning, Design, and Construction

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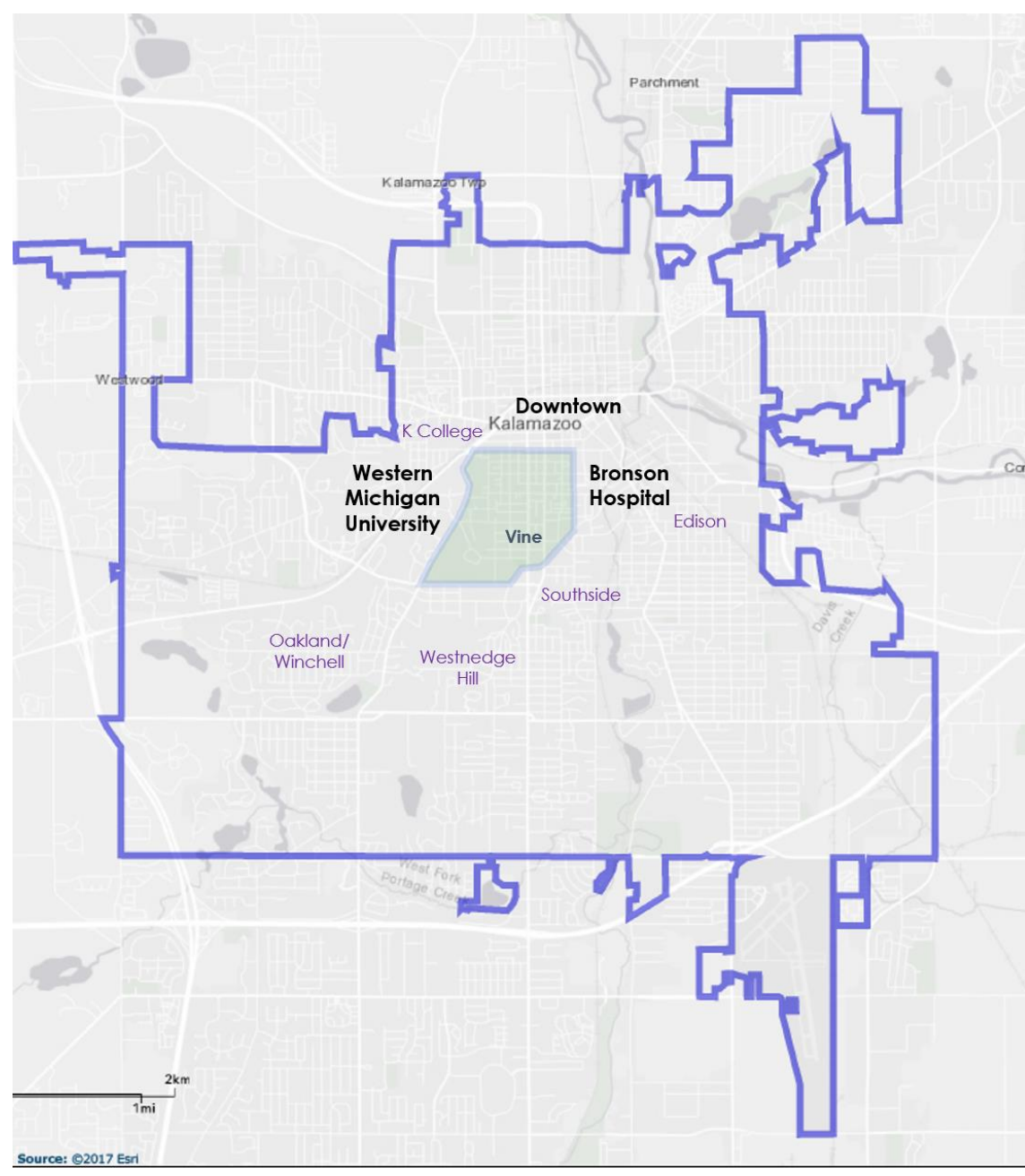
## INTRODUCTION

**Project Goal:** to assist in the development of a comprehensive neighborhood plan for the historic Vine Neighborhood, in accordance with the neighborhood planning process defined by the City of Kalamazoo in its master plan, *Imagine Kalamazoo 2025*.

Vine is the first of twenty-two neighborhoods that will go through this process in the coming years. The neighborhood is located immediately south of downtown Kalamazoo, and east of Western Michigan University. Its land area is one square mile defined by West Lovell to the north, Oakland to the west, Howard to the south, and Crosstown and Burdick to the east.

This work was prepared for the City of Kalamazoo and the Vine Neighborhood Association. We would like to thank our clients, Kathleen Reilly, Christina Anderson, and Steve Walsh, for their support throughout this process.

**The goals and recommendations found within this report are a direct product of the valuable input received from residents who live the story of Vine Neighborhood every day. First and foremost, this document is for them, because of them, and can only be successful when implemented with them.**



Vine Neighborhood context within Kalamazoo: Esri Business Analyst (2018)

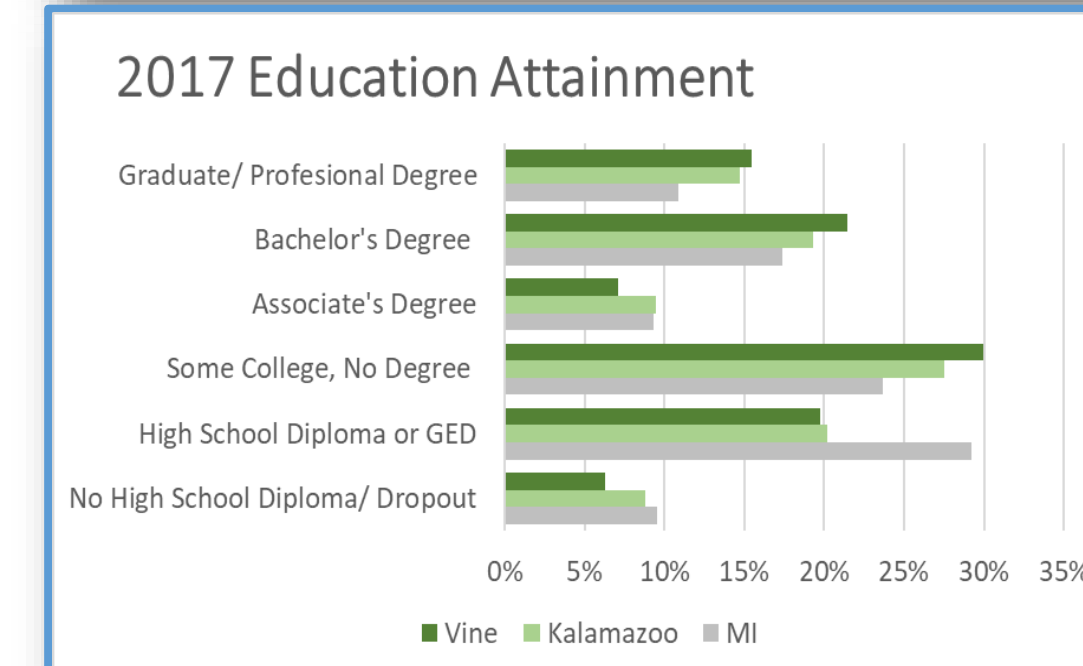
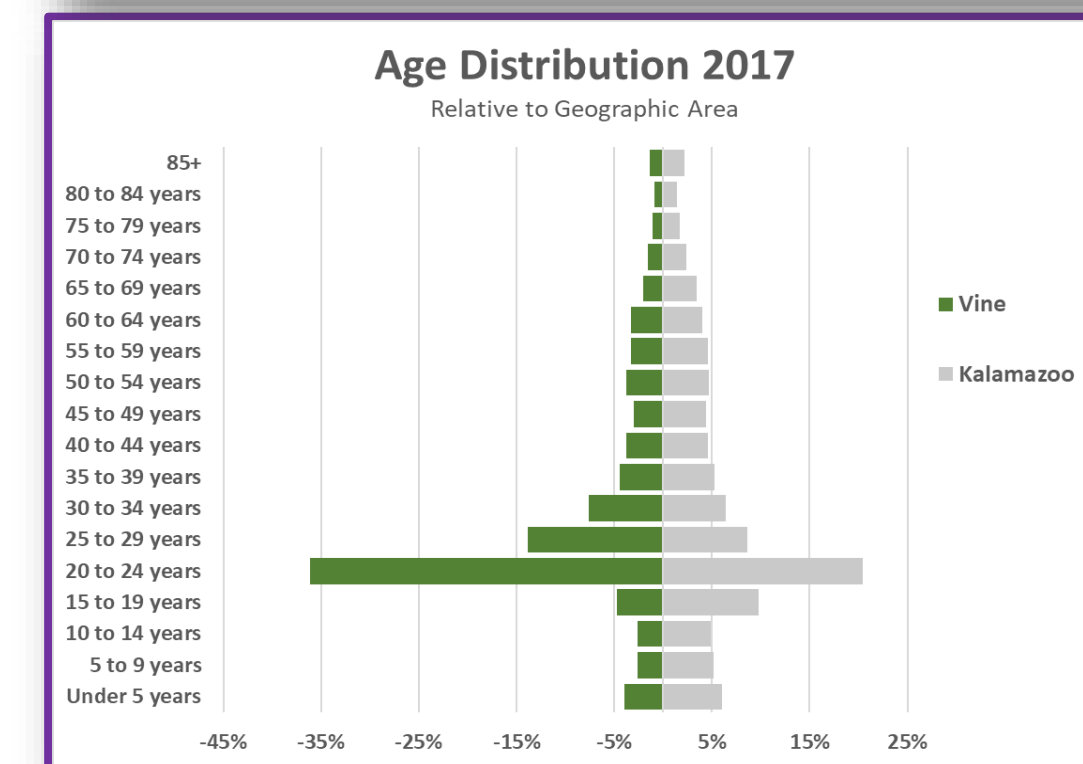
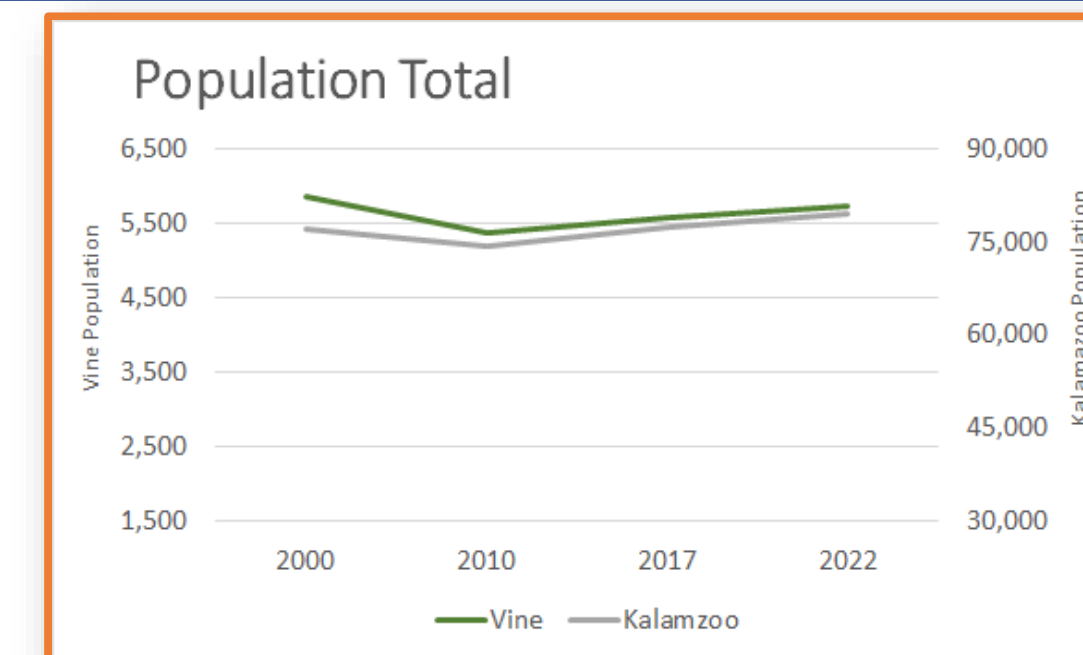


Photographs of mural and housing in Vine

## COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS & TRENDS

Vine Neighborhood has an estimated population of 5,572; approximately 7.2% of the City of Kalamazoo's 77,327 residents live within this neighborhood (Esri Business Analyst, 2017). The population, economy, and housing characteristics of Vine differ from the rest of the City. Major themes are summarized below:

- The median age in Vine is 25, largely reflective of the many student renters in the neighborhood.
- Vine is growing in diversity, with the two largest non-white, minority groups being African Americans and Hispanics.
- The neighborhood's educational attainment exceeds that of both the City and state. Approximately 75% of its population has completed at least some college.
- The median income is \$22,359, far below City and state medians. Many students work part-time, and Vine offers many jobs in food service.
- Median home value for Vine is \$89,483, while the median rent is \$592 per month. Both have been rising. Vine is primarily a renter market.
- The vacancy rate has remained at nearly 13% since 2010. This exceeds vacancy rates for the City of Kalamazoo and is expected to stay constant through 2022.



## COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSESSMENT

A major goal of the *Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 Master Plan* is fostering 'complete neighborhoods'. A neighborhood is said to be complete when it has reached certain criteria in seven different categories. A neighborhood should be capable of providing for the everyday needs of its residents. We looked at existing neighborhood conditions to determine whether Vine was meeting the criteria for a complete neighborhood as specified by the city plan. Vine is considered incomplete for 4 of the 7 categories. However, in some instances, the neighborhood is just short of meeting the criteria. Simple measures could elevate Vine's status by the year 2025.

COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSESSMENT SUMMARY TABLE			
Criteria	Definition of Completeness	Complete (Y/N)	Gaps/ Notes
<b>ABILITY TO MEET DAILY NEEDS</b>	Neighborhood must have safe access to shopping, gathering spaces, and basic services	Y	While meeting the criteria, Vine is lacking a grocery store and other services. Retail is available, but this may not constitute meeting one's daily needs.
<b>ACCESS TO PARKS AND OPEN SPACE</b>	All residents must live within ¼ mile of a public park/green space	N	Residents in the northwest and southwest corners of Vine do not have a public park within ¼ mile. In addition, existing public green spaces need updating.
<b>WALKABILITY</b>	Sidewalk must be available on at least one side of every street; AND sidewalks must be ADA-compliant in width and intersection accessibility	N	While sidewalk is available on one side of every street, not all sidewalks/intersections are ADA-compliant. See Figure 4.4 in the full report.
<b>ACCESS TO TRANSIT AND BIKE NETWORKS</b>	Must have access to at least one transit route AND at least one bicycle route within the neighborhood	Y	While meeting the criteria, Vine residents provided a lot of feedback regarding needed transportation improvements. These included increased biking infrastructure, trash receptacles and benches at bus stops, and better display of route maps.
<b>ACCESS TO FOOD</b>	Neighborhoods must have access to affordable food stores with fresh fruits and vegetables, a year-round farmers' market, or a year-round ability to grow food	N	The nearest grocery store is a 40-minute round trip walk. This severely limits those without a car.
<b>ACCESS TO MULTIPLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES</b>	Neighborhoods must offer robust housing opportunities to meet the needs of diverse residents	N	Rental units are abundant, but opportunities for homeownership are rarer. Homes on the market are unaffordable to average Vine resident.
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS</b>	A neighborhood must have a public elementary school with a district boundary that includes the whole neighborhood or have a school building that serves as a meeting or activity center	Y	Vine meets the requirements for schools despite not having a public elementary school that serves the entire neighborhood. There are a variety of educational opportunities, and multiple buildings provide space for community gatherings.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our analyses and resident feedback, 14 *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-based (S.M.A.R.T.)* goals were developed. Goals were organized into tables which included the goal name, recommended actions, lead and partners, timeline, cost, and metric for evaluating success. The table below lists the 14 goals, each accompanied by one example action from our report.

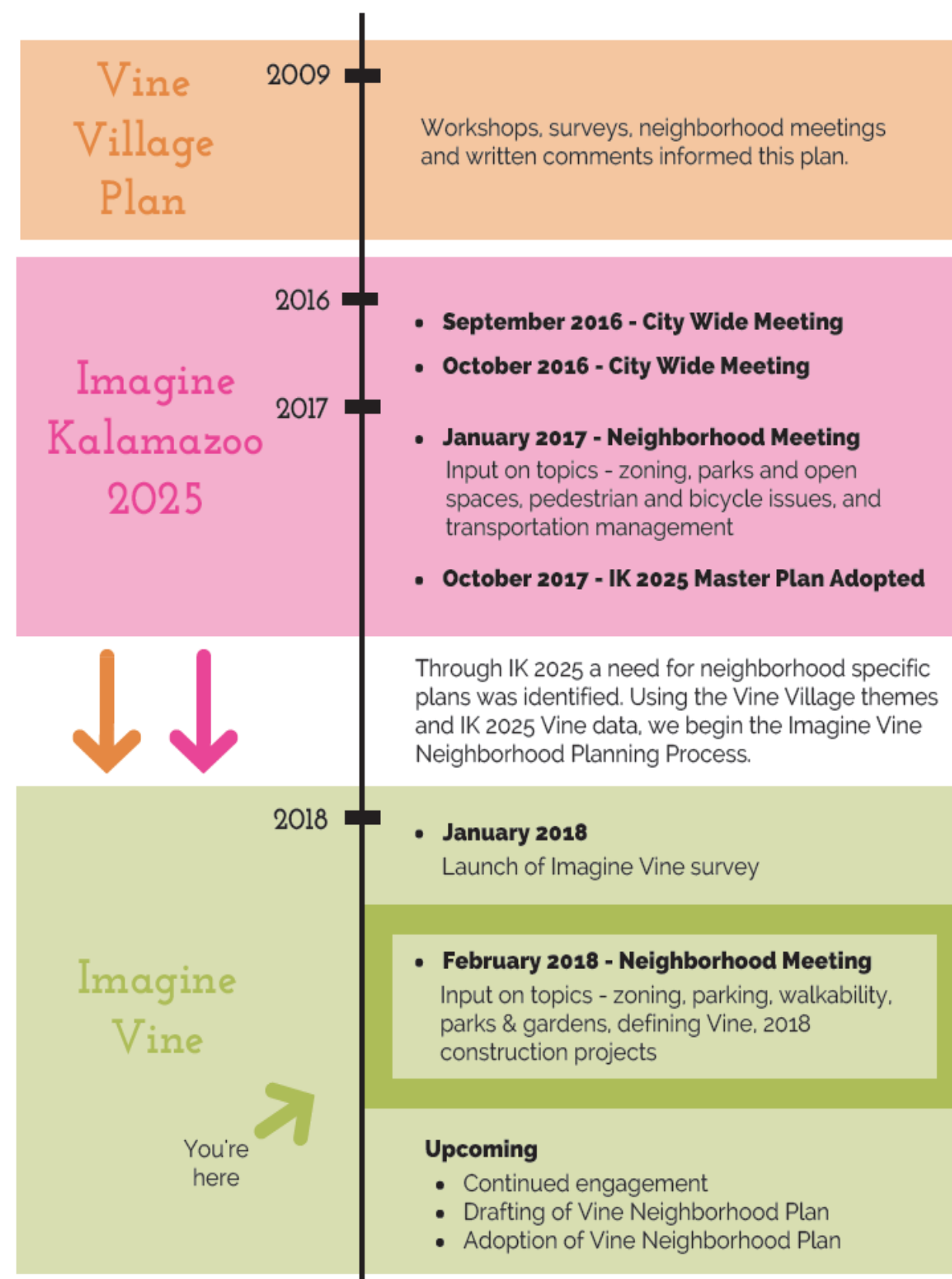
S.M.A.R.T. GOAL	EXAMPLE RECOMMENDATION
1. Ensure safe, affordable housing	Create a tenant-landlord council for Vine.
2. Stimulate local business growth	Initiate refurbishment program for businesses that need assistance with building repairs, maintenance, and façade improvements.
3. Improve street lighting	Produce a map of priority locations for street light improvement.
4. Initiate traffic calming	Test pedestrian walk signs along Park and Westnedge.
5. Improve sidewalk conditions and promote walkability	Develop and maintain infrastructure in accordance with Safe Routes to School (SRTS) framework.
6. Increase connectivity to downtown and campuses	Implement bike lanes along major travel corridors such as Burdick and Westnedge.
7. Increase outdoor recreation opportunities	Increase park programming, incorporating such activities as: yoga, movie nights, environmental education campus, and outdoor boot camps.
8. Improve biodiversity and sustainability in parks	Implement 'no-mow' zones in passive parks like Westnedge and future pocket parks.
9. Improve network of edible landscaping	Implement a tool-sharing system through the Vine Neighborhood Association so that residents collectively own the equipment needed for maintenance of edible landscaping.
10. Increase access to healthy food options	Build a 'Hoop House' on the site of the Vine Neighborhood Community Garden.
11. Support youth development	Fill a position on the Vine Board with a youth representative.
12. Improve neighborhood communications	Create and maintain a social media presence for Vine Neighborhood.
13. Promote local arts and music	Hold a neighborhood art contest and display winning pieces in popular public spaces.
14. Initiate a branding campaign for Vine	Add "Welcome to Vine" and other wayfinding signs at neighborhood entry points.

You can find this poster and presentation, as well as see the work of other MSU practicum teams, by following this weblink or scanning the QR code to the right:

[http://www.canr.msu.edu/spdc/programs/urban\\_and\\_regional\\_planning/uc\\_archive\\_practicum\\_projects](http://www.canr.msu.edu/spdc/programs/urban_and_regional_planning/uc_archive_practicum_projects)



## METHODOLOGY & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



**Methodology:** we compiled an extensive socioeconomic profile, summarized trends in current and future land use, conducted a complete neighborhood assessment, analyzed input from past resident engagement, and assisted in further outreach. From these, a set of goals and recommendations was developed.

The flyer to the left was handed out at a neighborhood meeting in February. It provides an overview of engagement during the planning process.

Our team was directly involved in the February meeting, the *Imagine Vine* survey, and focus groups that took place in March and early April.

Timeline created by Amanda Cockroft, *Neighborhood Projects Coordinator at the City of Kalamazoo*

## IMAGINE KALAMAZOO 2025 ALIGNMENT

To ensure compatibility with the city-wide master plan, the 14 S.M.A.R.T. goals were aligned with the strategic vision outlined in *Imagine Kalamazoo 2025*. The developed goals and recommendations for Vine Neighborhood are consistent both with the desires of the neighborhood and with those of the community at large.

Vine Neighborhood Plan	Shared Prosperity	Connected City	Thriving Public Spaces	Environmental Prosperity	Safe Community	Youth Development	Complete Neighborhoods	Strength Through Diversity	Economic Vitality	Good Governance
GOALS	SP	CC	IPS	EP	SC	YD	CN	SD	EV	GG
Ensure safe, affordable housing										
Stimulate local business growth and economic vitality										
Improve street lighting										
Initiate traffic calming										
Improve sidewalk conditions										
Increase connectivity to downtown and campuses										
Increase outdoor recreation opportunities										
Improve biodiversity and sustainability in parks										
Improve network of edible landscaping										
Increase access to healthy food options										
Support youth development										
Improve neighborhood communications										
Promote local arts and music										
Initiate a branding campaign for Vine										

Many thanks to our instructors and clients, and to the residents of Vine Neighborhood. We could not have done this without you.