

Introduction: Solutions at Scale



Unlocking opportunity

Kent County has untapped potential for housing development, thanks to the infrastructure already in place. The Kent County Corridor Strategy shows how coordinated efforts can make the most of this opportunity and address housing needs while dramatically increasing community-based return on investment and protecting what makes West Michigan special.

Reimagine the region

Kent County boasts dozens of underdeveloped road corridors with existing sewer, water, and transportation infrastructure. Focusing on just 32 of these corridors, Housing Next has found ample vacant and underdeveloped land to support much of the regional growth needed. **Using less than 20% of those identified opportunities, Kent County communities can support 35,000 new homes on roughly 3,000 acres, benefiting both renters and first-time homebuyers.** These homes can be built in vibrant, place-based neighborhoods with a mix of apartments, condos, townhomes, small cottages, and single-family houses. And this amount of new development is estimated to generate more than \$10 billion in new investment and more than \$100 million of additional local and county tax revenue.

To tackle the housing shortage, Kent County stakeholders need to collaboratively do three things well:

1. Update local regulations to match what the market can afford to produce and sell for a reasonable profit.
2. Invest in streets, parks, and trails to create lively, desirable neighborhoods
3. Bring together impact investors, private capital, and public financing to focus on building the types of homes and neighborhoods our community needs and wants, at prices people can afford.

This analysis shows that with this targeted effort there is room to provide more than **70,000 new homes over the next 25 years without extending sewer and water systems beyond their current boundaries** and without sprawling into precious agricultural lands and open spaces. Equally as important, this place-based approach will create dynamic new neighborhoods with an abundance of housing types and price points to serve families of all sizes, all ages, and all incomes.

This strategy would be a financially sustainable and scalable approach to regional growth. It supports talent attraction and job creation through placemaking while simultaneously creating abundant housing that is affordable to local families. As an added benefit development pressures on existing open space is dramatically decreased while supporting improved economic mobility for every household in our region.