



Arcadia Neighborhood Association  
December 2, 2004

To: Kalamazoo City Planning Commission  
From: Doug Williams, President, Arcadia Neighborhood Association

Re: West Side Study (WSS) Proposal

In June 2003, the Arcadia Neighborhood Association had formally expressed support for all but two components of the new West Side study. We explained then that we remained opposed to (1) the development density allowances and (2) the Drake-Kendall connector road proposed for the undeveloped WMU Foundation parcels. Additional discussions with City Staff and the WSS Advisory board took place over the course of many months. On June 7, 2004, the Arcadia Neighborhood Association prepared for the Kalamazoo City Commission a summary of the 1998 land use plan for Arcadia and repeated our concern about the density of new development proposed in the WSS. In August, 2004, City staff and WMU Foundation met with us and agreed to uphold the overall density limitations recommended for the Arboretum parcels in the 1998 land use plan.

However, much uncertainty remains about the eventual development that will take place on Parcel C. Student-dominated housing surrounds Arcadia Neighborhood on all sides except for the WMU Foundation parcels. Residents remain wary of the potential to create another boundary such as that along W. Michigan Avenue if the proposed Drake-Kendall connector road is constructed. The justification for the proposed road in the West Side Study draft is vague and highly subjective. Several key aspects of the proposed road remain uncertain. These include the size of the road and the likelihood of new proposed connections to Emajeau and to WMU. Surveys conducted by the WSS consultants (Oct 2002) and by Arcadia Neighborhood Association (May 2003) found that residents were strongly opposed to the connector road proposal.

City staff have indicated to us that a traffic impact analysis is usually required before approval of a road such as the proposed Drake-Kendall connector. On October 22, 2004, they offered to revise the WSS draft to specify this requirement and that the analysis will compare the effect of no east-west connection. We are grateful for this clarification, but do not believe that it is adequate. The West Side study update will serve as an operational guide to the Planning Commission for future land development decisions. We believe that controversial components such as the Drake-Kendall connector road should not be proposed at all without careful and critical justification. We ask for removal of the connector road proposal from the transportation plan until a detailed and comparative justification has been done.