



## 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

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Prepared with Assistance by:

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## INTRODUCTION

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended) requires the Planning Commission to prepare, file and present an annual written report to the City Council. This document is intended to meet the state requirement as well as provide an overview of 2019 accomplishments.

The Planning Commission in Lathrup Village is comprised of seven members, many of whom have been on the Planning Commission for several years. These members come from a variety of professional backgrounds in architecture, business, finance, city planning, and education. The various perspectives and knowledge brought by these members creates a well-rounded Commission that maintains fair and thoughtful deliberations.

## 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION ROSTER

Name	Term Ending
Bruce Copus (Vice Chairperson)	2/27/20
Jason Hammond (Secretary)	5/21/21
Charo Hulleza (Member)	5/21/21
Bruce Kantor, City Council Liaison	
Mark Piotrowski, (Chairperson)	3/1/22
Les Stansbery (Member)	3/1/22
Anna Thompson (Member)	3/1/22

## COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT STAFF

Susan Stec, Community & Economic Development Manager. Ms. Stec joined this city this year.

Giffels Webster assists the city with planning and zoning services. Our team assists city staff with technical planning and zoning related calls, emails, and visits to the city. We also prepare reviews, memoranda, and reports for the Planning Commission, ZBA, and City Council, as needed. We attend all Planning Commission meetings as well as City Council meetings as requested. The GW team is directed by Jill Bahm, AICP, partner at GW, and supported by Matthew Wojciechowski, associate planner as well as our GIS team.

## 2019 DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

### Development Reviews

In 2019, the Planning Commission reviewed 6 development applications (this includes 2 Zoning Board of Appeals applications).

**Site Plan Reviews.** Site plan review takes place when an application is submitted for new construction or additions to ensure that development plans meet the standards of the Zoning Ordinance. These standards are primarily non-discretionary standards – these are objective standards such as setback, landscaping, lighting, and parking requirements.

Four site plans were reviewed by the Planning Commission in 2019. These site plans included applications for “by right” development (permitted uses) as well as special land uses. Site plan approvals are valid for twelve months, with a one-year extension permitted by the Planning Commission. These site plans included:

- 26727 Southfield Road (Gas station)
- 27047-27051 Southfield Road (re-occupancy by office/massage therapy)
- 28601 Southfield Road (restaurant)
- 26710-26780 (multi-tenant shopping center)

**Special Land Uses.** Special land uses are uses that may be permitted in certain locations within the city, provided that certain standards are met. The Zoning Ordinance provides general standards for special land uses, and some uses have their own additional standards. Generally, most standards are non-discretionary, but there are some discretionary standards that the Planning Commission considers during the review process. Two special land use requests were reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission, including one gas station (26727 Southfield Road) and a restaurant serving alcohol (28601 Southfield Road).

**Public Input/Public Hearings.** The Planning Commission meetings are open to the public, and “public comment” is an agenda item at every meeting. Public hearings are required for PUD, special land use, and rezoning applications. Throughout 2019, two public hearings were held on these requests. Additional public hearings were held for zoning ordinance amendments discussed below.

## ZONING UPDATES

The Planning Commission worked on several amendments to the Zoning Ordinance this year:

- **Planned Unit Development.** In April of this year, the Planning Commission was approached with a concept for a drive-through facility in the Village Center district, where such uses are currently not allowed. The Planning Commission discussed the potential economic benefit of allowing properties to develop in a way that reflects the market, while reinforcing the concept of a walkable Village Center for the city. Recognizing the benefit of the “planned unit development” tool as a way to review and approve projects that meet certain city goals and objectives, the Planning Commission reviewed new zoning language to include standards and a process for Planned Unit Developments. These amendments were adopted in June 2019.
- **Drive-through standards.** The Planning Commission created standards for drive-through uses that will apply throughout the city. They are aimed at improving the appearance and safe pedestrian and vehicular circulation for such uses. This amendment was adopted in June 2019.

## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- The Planning Commission, City Council and DDA had two joint meetings this year to improve communication between the boards and commissions as well as to develop a shared vision for the future.
- The Community & Economic Development Department continues to work with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to ensure that the city retains its Redevelopment Ready certification.

## MEETINGS

Body	Number of Meetings
Planning Commission	11
Zoning Board of Appeals	2
Joint City Council, Downtown Development Authority & Planning Commission	2

## THE YEAR AHEAD

**Comprehensive Plan.** In 2019, the city’s Master Plan was ready for its five-year review, which is required by state law. This review was initiated by the Planning Commission in 2019 and the Planning Commission found that an update is needed. Since the Recreation Plan and Downtown Plan also need to be updated, the city launched a process to update all three plans as a Comprehensive Plan. This will allow the city to see how each of these plans relate to each other as well as encourage all boards and commissions responsible for implementation to see how their efforts are connected. This plan will be completed in 2020.

**Zoning Amendments.** The Comprehensive Plan will likely include zoning action strategies that recommend specific changes that may be needed to the Zoning Ordinance. Zoning-related work will likely occur after the planning process is complete.