



2022 Annual Report Ypsilanti Planning Commission

INTRODUCTION

The Planning Commission of the City of Ypsilanti is governed by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, State of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, and by the City of Ypsilanti's Zoning Ordinance.

In 2022, the Planning Commission's membership was as follows –

Matt Dunwoodie (Chair)	Jessica Donnelly (Liaison to the ZBA)
Michael Simmons (Vice Chair)	Phil Hollifield
Marc Arthur (Resigned August 2022)	Carl Schier
Eric Bettis	Amanda Smith (Joined May 2022 – 2025)
Mike Davis Jr.	Brian Jones-Chance (Joined December 2022 – 2024)

Under the Planning Enabling Act, the Commission must provide an annual report to City Council, as the legislative body of the City. This report discusses –

1. The operations of the Commission during the past year,
2. The status of any on-going planning activities,
3. Recommendations to the legislative body related to planning and development.

At the end of 2021, the City Planning Department cited the following work objectives for 2022. This report will show that the Planning Department and fellow City department projects made a great deal of progress outlined as objectives for 2022 –

- Implementation of more Master Plan policy recommendations, including goals of housing affordability, density, and sustainability.
- Implementation of Non-Motorized Transportation Plan policy recommendations.
- Re-development of Water Street, 220 N Park, 206-210 N Washington
- Members of Planning Commission have expressed interest in reviewing and potentially revising certain parking standards in the Zoning Ordinance.
- The Planning Commission will continue to provide review of the annual Capital Improvements Plan prior to adoption by City Council, per state act.

PLANNING COMMISSION OPERATIONS

The Planning Commission held 9 total meetings during 2022. In September, Andy Aamodt resigned his position as City Planner. The Planning Department hired Holli Andrews at the end of October to fulfill the duties of staff city planning.

Overall, Planning Commission acted on 32 items in 2022.

Applications

The Commission reviewed 9 site plan review-related applications – 3 as full site plan reviews, 2 sketch plans and 4 limited site plans. The Commission also reviewed seven special use permit applications. All but one site plan review and one special use permit applications were eventually approved; one was tabled first for more information or clarity, then approved.

There were five zoning ordinance text amendments. One was proposed by City staff to address “bug-fixes” in Chapter 122 sections 122-203, 122-416, 122-452, 122-518, 122-538, and 122-685(e) to include the following condition –

- To change the total width of two tiers of spaces plus maneuvering lane to 28 feet one-way, and 30 feet two-way in Section 122-685(e).

The other zoning text amendments in 2022 include –

- Section 122-441 | Childcare as permissible use in CN-SF, CN-Mid, and CN zoning districts.
- Sections 122-203, 122-446, and Article V Division 1 | Research and Development (and similar uses) as permissible uses in Center zoning district.
- Article III Development Procedures and Administration, Division 2 Permits, Subdivision III Temporary Use Permits, Section 122-335 | Temporary Mobile Healthcare Establishments as permissible use in Center, Parks, GC, NC, HHS, and PMD zoning districts.
- Section 122-451 and Article V Division 1 | Roominghouses as permissible use in HC zoning district.

Three **Planned Unit Developments** were approved this year. The PUD applications and plans launched the following actions –

- Planned Unit Developments
 1. Dorsey Estates at 220 N Park | Affordable Housing as Missing Middle Neighborhood
 2. 845-945 W Clark | Senior Housing
 3. 611 Cross Street
- Planned Unit Development Workshop
- Community Benefits Ordinance
 1. Drafted and adopted in 2018-2019.
 2. First used on 845 – 945 W Clark PUD.

Affordable Housing Developments rounded out 2022 in December –

- Ground-breaking event at the Freighthouse for Dorsey Estates. Media coverage.
- 206-210 N Washington | Avalon Housing variances application was approved with HDC’s work and support.

1. 122-556, Supportive Housing. The approved variance removes the limit of 8 occupants and the requirement for an on-site resident manager, due to low-income development fiscal budget feasibility.
2. 122-685, Parking dimensions. For 90-degree parking, this would require a 22' drive aisle width. The variance grants a 12' drive aisle width.
3. 122-691, Minimum and maximum number of parking spaces. This would require 1.5 spaces for each dwelling unit, plus guest spaces (1 per 10 units) which would require (35) parking spaces. The variance grants 2 parking spaces and one van accessible space.

Figure 1 Planning Applications by Type | Past Five Years

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Site Plan Review	12	8	13	6	9
Site Plan Amendment	1	1	--	3	1
Special Use Permit	11	5	12	8	7
Zoning Map Amendment	4	--	--	--	1
Zoning Text Amendment	8	4	3	3	5
Master Plan Update/ Amendment	--	--	1	1	--
Planned Unit Development	1	--	--	--	3
Amend Approved PUD	--	--	--	--	1
Alley/Street Closure/Vacation	--	--	--	1	--
Change in Non-conforming Use	--	--	--	--	--
Capital Improvements Reviews	1	4	--	1	1
Special Topic Planning (begins 2010)	1	--	2	2	1
Study Item (begins 2010)	--	--	--	--	--
Conditional Rezoning	--	1	--	--	3
Total Applications / Deliberations	39	23	31	25	32

Figure 2 Planning Commission Actions by Year | Percent

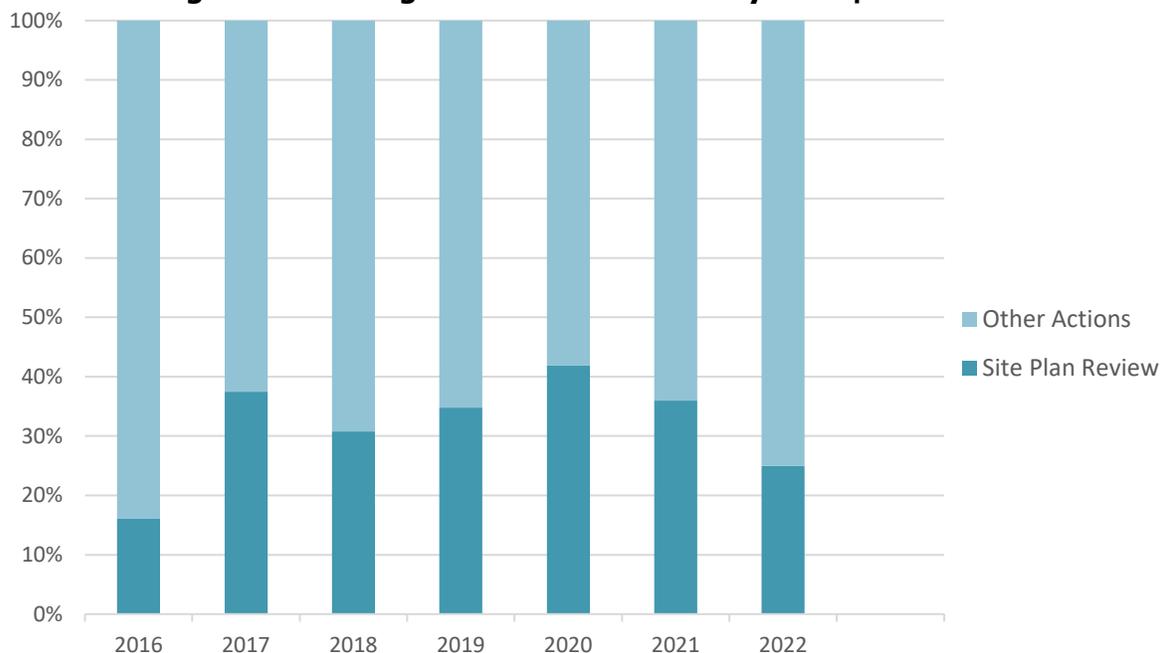


Figure 3 | Planning Decision Stats

Item	Decision/ Motion Date	Action	Key
Bug Fixes	Approved	ZTA	Orange
Childcare	Approved	ZTA	
Research and Development	Approved	ZTA	
Temp Mobile HC Establishments	Approved	ZTA	
Roominghouses	Approved	ZTA	
340 Ecorse	Approved	SUP	Red
300 W Michigan	Approved	SUP	
202-206 E Forest	Approved	SUP	
212 N Summit	Denied	Sketch	Blue
599 S Mansfield	Approved	Sketch	
845 & 945 Clark	Approved	PUD	Purple
220 N Park	Postponed April; Approved May	PUD	
611 W Cross	Approved	PUD	
340 Ecorse	Approved	LSP	Dark Blue
300 W Michigan	Approved	LSP	
202-206 E Forest	Approved	LSP	

Marijuana (MJ) Related

12 E Forest	Approved March; Amended June	MJ SUP	Red
539 S Huron	Denied	MJ SUP	
1420 Washtenaw	Approved	MJ SUP	
401 E Michigan	Approved	MJ SUP	Blue
12 E Forest	Approved March; Amended June	MJ SPR	
1420 Washtenaw	Approved	MJ SPR	
401 E Michigan	Approved	MJ SPR	Dark Blue
539 S Huron	Denied	MJ LSP	
Moratorium MJ Business Permits	Approved by Council Effect 8/18	MJ Emergency Ordinance	Yellow
Moratorium MJ Business Permits	Approved by Council Effect 9/22	MJ Emergency Ordinance	
Moratorium MJ Business Permits	Approved by Council Effect 10/26	MJ Emergency Ordinance	

Action	#Decisions	Key
Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA)	5	Orange
Special Use Permit (SUP)	7	Red
Special Planning Topic	3	Yellow
Sketch Plan	2	Blue
Site Plan Review (SPR)	3	Light Blue
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	3	Purple
Limited Site Plan Review (LSP)	4	Dark Blue

Total Items 27
Marijuana (Site Specific) 29.6%

Special Planning Topic | Marijuana Industry Management

In 2022, the Planning Commission and City Council worked together to slow the rapid growth of Ypsilanti's pioneering marijuana industry to gauge impacts, plan development, buffers and sustainability. A six-month moratorium on new marijuana business permits took effect on October 26, 2022 and will remain in place until April 23, 2023. During the moratorium planning process beginning midyear, new applications decelerated – allowing the City Planning Department to research other municipalities for caps and other management strategies. See Figure 3.

Master Plan Implementation

These goals and subtitles are taken directly from the Master Plan updates adopted May 2021. [Items implemented in 2022 – checked and in blue font.](#) On-going lists are in black.

Center

- Curbless “festival” street on Washington.
- Use vacant storefronts for temporary retail uses.
- Permanent year-round home for Depot Town Farmer’s Market.
- Increase walkability (2-way streets & raised intersections).
- Curbless “festival” street on River and Cross Streets.
- Create a public space at new train station.
- Separate Cross and Washtenaw.
- Create a “front door” for EMU with reconfiguration of Cross and Washtenaw.
- ✓ [YCUA Water Infrastructure](#)
The Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority (YCUA) will be making improvements to both existing water and wastewater utilities within the M-17 and US-12 corridors in the City of Ypsilanti. The project will be completed over the course of the next 2 years with work starting in the vicinity of South Hamilton Street, South Huron Street, and Interstate 94 and proceeding northerly from there; ultimately the project encompasses Washtenaw (West Cross to Hamilton), Hamilton (Washtenaw to I-94), Huron (Cross to I-94) and Michigan (Ballard to the Huron River). The work will include water and sewer main replacements and water service line replacements. Up-to-date information will be posted at cityofypsilanti.com/RoadRenovation.
- ✓ [Continue and expand the number, type, and location of festivals and events.](#)
[First Fridays](#)
[Bicentennial Events Planning](#)
[NYE First Night](#)
[Summer Movie Series](#)
[Freighthouse Programs](#)
[Return of Beerfest](#)
[Post-pandemic Impacts on Events](#)

- ✓ Continued efforts to fill upper stories.
- ✓ Maintained and expanded transportation options.
- ✓ Drafted a business attraction plan for Downtown, Depot Town, and Cross Street.
- ✓ Encouraged business and event activity during the day and evening.
- ✓ Established a permanent year-round home for Downtown Farmer’s Market.
- ✓ Created a marketing campaign for the City of Ypsilanti. Bicentennial events, branding and celebration.,

Neighborhoods

- Create “Eco-Districts” in neighborhood parks.
 - Assist continuation and expansion of EMU Live Ypsi program.
 - Revisit home occupation requirements and consider live-work space.
 - Revise family/occupancy caps.
 - Create visibility requirements.
- ✓ Re-survey of the Historic District
 - ✓ Consider new opportunities for accessory dwelling units.
 - ✓ Relax dwelling size, lot area, and lot dimensions requirements.
 - ✓ Allow for density increases in residential zoning districts for the purpose of housing affordability.
 - ✓ Continue and increase rental inspections and enforcement.
 - ✓ Preserve Bell-Kramer residential land uses.
 - ✓ Regulate the form of buildings to preserve the character of neighborhoods.

Corridors

- Designate the appropriate building form for each corridor based on existing patterns and vision for that corridor.
 - Require a pedestrian friendly building form while allowing a mix of uses for both students and residents along Huron River Drive, LeForge & Railroad corridors.
 - Coordinate regulations for Washtenaw Avenue with the Washtenaw County Re-Imagine Washtenaw Plan.
 - Restore Harriet Street as the Main Street of adjacent neighborhoods.
 - Restore two-way function to Cross, Huron, and Hamilton Streets.
- ✓ Huron River Drive (Cornell to LeForge)
The City is planning to reconstruct Huron River Drive in 2023. As part of this reconstruction, we plan to add sidewalks to the north side, upgrade crosswalks

at Cornell, Oakwood, and LeForge, and convert a travel lane to a center turn lane, resulting in safer travels for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

- ✓ Lane Reduction Project on Hamilton, Huron, and Washtenaw (M-17)
- ✓ MDOT Sidewalk Gap Infill, M-17
- ✓ MDOT will construct new sidewalk on Washtenaw Road (M-17) west of Anna, as well as install modern ADA ramps crossing Anna along the south side of Washtenaw, adjacent to Dom's Bakery. This project is complete.
- ✓ MDOT Pavement Rehabilitation; and Pedestrian Crossing of I-94. Shortly after YCUA's project begins, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) will begin construction of a [pedestrian pathway over I-94](#) by converting the westernmost southbound lane of Huron to a shared-use path. MDOT will also follow YCUA's infrastructure work with a pavement maintenance and road diet project. MDOT will also be adding and updating many pedestrian crosswalk ramps, including on Michigan Avenue downtown. Once the pavement work is complete, the roadways will be restriped with bike lanes, improved crosswalks, and improved bus stop markings. For more information about the road diet project, please visit [here](#). Up-to-date information will be posted at cityofypsilanti.com/RoadRenovation.
- ✓ Retain the mix of uses within each corridor but allow them throughout the area.
- ✓ Reinforce preservation of historic buildings.
- ✓ Maintain River Street as a historic boulevard.

Districts

- Update regulations to create walkable areas at the border of the City and Campus.
- Create regulations that support the existing building form but assure access by all modes of transportation.
- Allow renewable energy facilities, such as solar panels, on industrial land.
- Reduce minimum lot size and width in the industrial park to create more opportunity.
- Align economic development incentives and programs to encourage emerging sectors that align with the Guiding Values and the employment potential of residents.
- Create "Welcome to Ypsilanti" packages for new EMU students, including web version.
- Encourage use or redevelopment of unused parking lots.
- Create a "front door" for EMU in the area created by the reconfiguration of Cross Street and Washtenaw Ave.

LOOKING FORWARD

At the end of 2022, these planning projects remain in progress:

- Implementation of more Master Plan policy recommendations, including goals of housing affordability, density, and sustainability.

- Implementation of Non-Motorized Transportation Plan policy recommendations.
- Re-development of Water Street.
- Developing policies surrounding marijuana regulation.
- Parking reduction standards in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Improving our lighting standards and enforcement policy by researching other municipalities.
- Approaching the end of the Marijuana Business Permits Moratorium in April with a plan in place to manage and regulate the zoning of marijuana operations for sustainability and business longevity.