



Annual Report

June 1, 2017 - May 31, 2018

City of Auburn Hills Planning Commission

Under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, the Planning Commission is required to provide an annual report to the City Council. This report is intended to coincide with the City Council's review of the City budget.

This report discusses the following topics:

- Summary of the Commission's operations during the past 12 months
- The status of any on-going planning activities
- Recommendations to the City Council related to planning/development and funding

Commission Operations

The Commission is governed by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act and the City's Zoning Ordinance. During the 12 month period starting on June 1, 2017 and ending on May 31, 2018, the Commission's membership was as follows:

Greg Ouellette, Chairperson
 Sam Beidoun, Vice Chairperson
 John Burmeister, City Council Liaison (through 11-15-17)
 Chauncey Hitchcock
 Eric Mendieta, Secretary
 Ron Moniz, City Council Liaison (beginning 1-10-18)
 Laura Ochs
 Carlene Pederson
 Bob Pierce
 Carolyn Shearer

During this time period, the Commission held 11 meetings and recommendations were made to the City Council on 42 development related items.

Measurable	Y2008 -2009	Y2009 -2010	Y2010 -2011	Y2011 -2012	Y2012 -2013	Y2013 -2014	Y2014 -2015	Y2015 - 2016	Y2016 -2017	Y2017 -2018
Meetings	17	10	18	11	12	12	11	14	13	11
Site Plans	10	2	6	3	5	12	7	10	17	12
Special Land Use Permits	8	6	12	6	3	6	7	8	11	7
Tree Removal Permits	3	1	4	3	5	6	8	6	7	11
Planned Unit Developments	1	0	0	1	1	3	4	4	5	6
Rezoning	2	1	3	1	8	0	1	3	4	4
Master Plan Amendments	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	1	1
Text Amendments	4	8	1	1	5	1	2	2	4	1
Total Projects	28	18	26	15	27	28	29	34	62	42

Steve Cohen, Director of Community Development provides primary staff support to the Commission. Mr. Cohen has served the Commission since October 4, 1999. He is certified as a professional planner (AICP) with the American Planning Association. He has Bachelor and Master Degrees in Urban and Regional Planning from Michigan State University.

Shawn Keenan, City Planner also provides staff support to the Commission. He is certified as a professional planner (AICP) with the American Planning Association. He has a Bachelor of Science in Public Law & Government and Master Degree in Public Administration from Eastern Michigan University.

Notable Commission Items

1. Michigan Association of Planning Award for Best Practice – City of Auburn Hills Age Friendly Action Plan

The City of Auburn Hills received the 2017 Planning Excellence Award for Best Practice from the Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) for the Age Friendly Action Plan in September 2017. The publication became a driving force in guiding the City’s efforts to address the needs of the growing senior citizen population in the community.



2. Development Applications

Notable projects reviewed by the Commission were the following:

- INCO Corporation – 135,000 sq. ft. world headquarters and clean manufacturing/assembly facility.
- Valeo North America – 4,400 sq. ft. accessory office/testing building and test track.
- Topgolf Auburn Hills – 65,432 sq. ft. golf-themed hospitality entertainment complex.
- Fischer Automotive Systems – 43,266 sq. ft. building addition.
- 3985 Giddings Road Speculative Building – 76,923 sq. ft. industrial building.
- Sumerlyn Site Condominiums - Open space development with 36 detached one-family homes.
- The Midwest Innovation Lofts (The MiL) - a four-story, 25,243 square foot mixed-use building with first floor restaurant, second & third floor office, and fourth floor apartment units.
- Riverside Townes Condominiums – Three townhouse style buildings totaling 14, owner occupied, condominium units.
- Matrix Engineered Systems – 14,350 sq. ft. corporate headquarters and technical center.
- Kasper Machine Company – 33,520 sq. ft. corporate headquarters and manufacturing facility.

3. The Palace of Auburn Hills - Rezoning

The City initiated the rezoning of approximately 103 acres, where the Palace of Auburn Hills arena and parking lot is located, from I-2, General Industrial District to T&R, Technology and Research District. The rezoning will enable the City to move quickly and be “redevelopment ready” in expediting the potential reuse of the property in the near future, if such circumstances were to occur.

4. T&R, Technology and Research Districts – Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance

The Ordinance amendment addressed the following items:

- Allow staff to administratively approve the outside storage of vehicles on FCA US property (800 Chrysler Drive).
- Allow The Palace of Auburn Hills as a conforming use in the T&R District, when rezoned as proposed.
- Allow Oakland Community College as a conforming use in the T&R District, if the property were to be rezoned in the future.
- Clarify requirements for greenbelt width adjacent to private road easements and lighting at recreational facilities.

5. Amendment to the Master Land Use Plan – 1500 and 1700 Brown Road

The amendment changed the land use classification of the City’s DPW facility (1500 Brown Road) and Oakland County’s Animal Shelter and Pet Adoption Center (1700 Brown Road) from public to non-residential. The purpose of the amendment is to facilitate the rezoning of 1700 Brown Road from R-1, One-Family Residential District to either I-1, Light Industrial District or I-2, General Industrial District and allow it to be redeveloped into one or more industrial building sites.

6. Draft Amendment to the Master Land Use Plan

The primary editorial changes to the map include the following:

- Adding the changes to the land use map relating to the Auburn Hills DPW Facility and Oakland County Animal Control Shelter Property (2017), Northeast Corner Neighborhood Plan (2015/2016), and West Auburn Road Neighborhood Master Plan (2012) amendments.
- Adding the Riverwalk Master Plan (2009), Age-Friendly Action Plan (2015), Industrial Property Analysis (2015), West Auburn Road Neighborhood Master Plan (2012), and the Palace of Auburn Hills Site Redevelopment Study (2017) to the list of plans on the document.
- Re-writing the general description of the community, updating the land use calculations, and updating the list of public officials.
- Clarifying in the interpretation section of the master plan that residential uses may be allowed within the non-residential land use classification via Planned Unit Development Option (e.g. Five Points of Auburn Hills Apartments project).
- Removing the Clinton River District call-out map and Commonwealth Neighborhood call-out map.
- Amending the planned housing density for open-space developments within areas identified in the Northeast Corner Neighborhood Master Plan from 2.5 units per acre to 3.0 units per acre.

The primary new changes include the following:

- Changing Oakland Community College’s property from Public to Non-Residential.
- Amending the planned housing density for the parcel located on the north side of Squirrel Court, between the former Yoursource building and Riverside Park, from 10.0 units per acre to 15.0 units per acre to reflect the density of the recently approved Riverside Townes PUD.

7. Staff Training

Steve Cohen and Shawn Keenan attended the *Michigan APA Conference* held on Mackinac Island, on September 27-29, 2017. They also attended the *APA's National Planning Conference* held in New Orleans, on April 21-24, 2018.

AICP planners, like Mr. Cohen and Mr. Keenan, are required to obtain professional development training in order to maintain their credentials. AICP planners must earn a minimum of 32 CM credits (1 hour = 1 CM credit) within a designated two-year reporting period. A minimum of 1.5 credits must be on the topic of ethics, and another 1.5 credits must be on the topic of current planning law. Mr. Cohen has earned 49.75 CM credits thus far for the current reporting period of January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2019. Mr. Keenan has earned 42.25 CM credits thus far for the current reporting period of January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2019.

8. Commission Training

Training is a high priority for the Commission and City Council. Members are faced with an enormous responsibility to help guide the physical development of the community. Poor decisions could lead the City into costly litigation. The Commission has benefited greatly over the years from training; whether they are new members who want to learn about planning, or veteran members who need to keep up to date with changes in the law and planning practices.

Members Beidoun, Ochs and Pederson attended the *Michigan APA Conference* on Mackinac Island, on September 27-29, 2017.

Auburn Hills has been involved with a very limited number of development-related lawsuits over the past 19 years; which is mainly attributed to a proactive Commissioner training program and well-trained staff. It is our understanding that this record of accomplishment has helped the City lower its general liability insurance rates over the years, which saves taxpayers money.

Planning Commission Terms and Attendance Records

During this time period, the Commission held 11 meetings, of which 10 were regularly scheduled meetings and 1 was a special meeting.

Name	Term Endings	Regular Meetings	Special Meetings
Greg Ouellette	July 2021	9 / 10	1 / 1
Sam Beidoun	July 2020	10 / 10	1 / 1
John Burmeister	Nov. 2017	5 / 6	0 / 1
Chauncey Hitchcock	July 2021	9 / 10	0 / 1
Eric Mendieta	July 2021	8 / 10	1 / 1
Ron Moniz	Nov. 2019	4 / 4	0 / 0
Laura Ochs	July 2020	9 / 10	1 / 1
Carlene Pederson	July 2019	9 / 10	0 / 1
Bob Pierce	July 2019	8 / 10	0 / 1
Carolyn Shearer	July 2019	8 / 10	1 / 1

On-Going Planning Activities through May 31, 2018 and Beyond

1. Update the City's Parks and Recreation Plan
2. Finish Updating the Master Land Use Policy
3. Finish the Complete Streets Policy

Commission Recommendations to City Council

The Commission respectfully recommends that the City Council ensure that the Y2019 City of Auburn Hills Budget allows for the following items:

1. Continued staff support from Mr. Cohen, Mr. Keenan, and the City's Administrative Development Review Team
2. Funding planning activities (e.g., citizen participation, maps, printing, technical research, Master Plan and Zoning Ordinances updates, etc.)
3. Funding for educational materials and technical training for Commission members