

*Mt. Pleasant*

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2018 annual report  
MT. PLEASANT PLANNING COMMISSION

# **CITY OF MT. PLEASANT PLANNING COMMISSION - 2018**

Lesley Hoenig, Chair  
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Glen Irwin  
Michael Kostrzewa  
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Christine Ortman  
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## **STAFF**

Jacob Kain, AICP, City Planner  
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# INTRODUCTION

This report is provided in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008. It reports the Commission’s operations during the 2018 calendar year and the status of planning activities.

# APPLICATION SUMMARY

The following table and chart provide a summary of the number of planning applications processed by the City in 2018, as well as the previous five years.

**Planning Commission Applications by Type**

<b>Application Type</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Special Use Permits	13	12	17	15	21	14
Site Plan Reviews	20	21	24	24	19	12
Map Amendments (Rezoning)	3	1	0	2	1	0
Text Amendments	3	1	9	2	1	3
Street and Alley Vacations	0	2	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>29</b>

In 2018, the Planning Commission held 11 meetings, including a joint meeting with the City Commission in May and a special meeting in August.

All but one of the applications reviewed by the Planning Commission and/or staff in 2018 was reviewed and approved under the new zoning ordinance. In total, 10 of the applications approved in 2018 would not have been approvable under the prior zoning ordinance. In addition, 4 of the applications approved in 2018 were either held back by the applicant awaiting approval of the new zoning ordinance or were resubmitted under the new zoning ordinance due to more favorable regulations for the subject development.

# PROJECT ACTIVITY

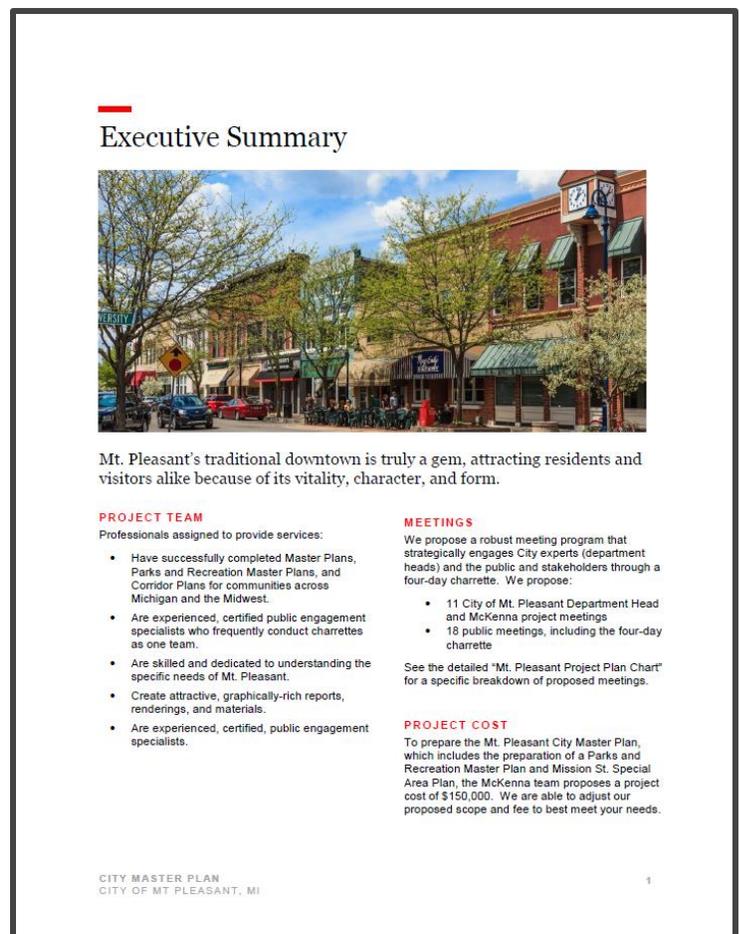
The year began with a transition to the City’s new zoning ordinance and map, adopted by the City Commission in January, from the prior zoning ordinance which was adopted in 1984.

The new ordinance is different from the prior ordinance in many significant ways, including an emphasis on form over use; a reduction in the number of zoning districts from 18 to 10; the elimination of minimum vehicular parking requirements citywide (the first code to do so in the State of Michigan); loosening of use and development requirements in the industrial district; and the creation of the City's first special district for parks and other civic-oriented sites and spaces. In addition, the ordinance's visual presentation is a major advancement with graphics and tables increasing the user-friendliness of the ordinance.

In March, the Planning Commission moved to start work on a new City Master Plan. A request for proposals was developed and released in June and eight proposals were received. Following interviews, the Planning Commission recommended the selection of McKenna, with whom a contract was executed in October.

In May, the Planning Commission moved forward the first amendments to the new ordinance. The most significant of these was the inclusion of medical marijuana facilities regulations in the zoning ordinance. These new regulations align with the City Commission's action to "opt-in" to the Michigan Medical Marijuana Facilities Licensing Act (MMMFLA) in June 2018. Those regulations were the result of nearly two years of study and analysis by the Planning Commission, City Commission, and the medical marijuana ad-hoc committee on which Planning Commission Chair Lesley Hoenig and then-Planning Commissioner, current City Commissioner Will Joseph served.

At the end of 2018, the City became eligible for certification as a Redevelopment Ready Community by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. This was in part due to completion of several items to align with RRC program best practices in 2018, including: adoption of the new zoning ordinance; creation of a Public Participation and Engagement Strategy; and adoption of an updated Economic Development Action Plan.



*Excerpt from McKenna master plan proposal.*

## DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

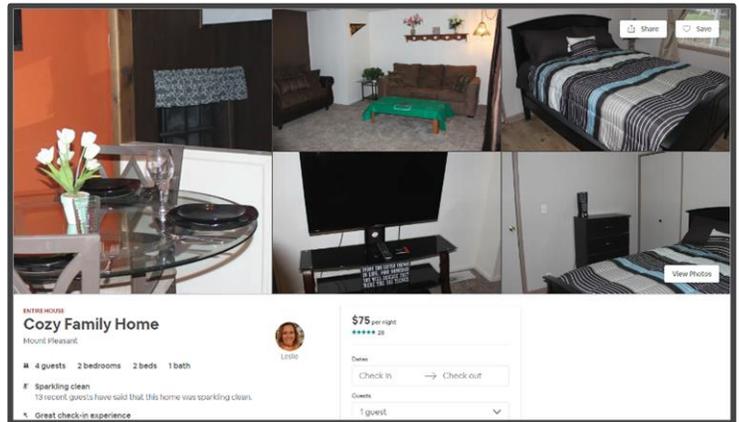
Five special use permits were approved in 2018 in response to the new opportunity to operate short-term rentals under the new zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance defines a short-term rental as a dwelling unit providing temporary accommodations for periods of less than 28 days. They are also sometimes referred to as an “Airbnb” in reference to the popular listing site that helped to popularize this type of short-term housing situation. A short-term rental offers an alternative to a more traditional lodging type such as a hotel, motel, or bed and breakfast.

A new, sixty-unit multiple-family apartment complex was approved and is under construction at the northwest corner of W. Broomfield and S. Crawford. Called The BraVado, the apartments are being marketed as the “highest quality living in Mt. Pleasant.”

The first accessory dwelling unit was approved under the new zoning ordinances on N. Arnold Street. Accessory dwelling units were illegal under both the 1971 and 1984 zoning ordinances.

The first project approved under the new zoning ordinance was a remodel of the McDonalds restaurant on S. Mission. This renovation included the addition of a second drive-through lane and a cross-connection to the adjacent shopping center and grid street, Central Drive.

A new rooming dwelling was approved at 1015 Douglas Street. The rooming dwelling has two units and will house 4 occupants per unit. Construction is underway.



*From top: AirBnB listing; The BraVado under construction; Renovated S. Mission McDonalds; Rendering of 1015 S. Douglas.*

Following a trend from 2017, two additional liquor stores were approved in 2018. The first approval will allow liquor sales at the 7-Eleven store on W. Broomfield. The second approval will allow beer and wine sales at the Speedway gas station at S. Mission and E. Michigan Streets.

Two new financial institutions were approved. Isabella Community Credit Union received approval to construct a new branch office and drive through on E. Broomfield. Chase Bank received approval to open a branch with drive-through in the existing Central Commons shopping center.

## MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Mt. Pleasant Master Plan, adopted in November 2014, includes an implementation checklist for the Planning Commission to track progress on achieving identified initiatives during the 5 year period following adoption. A copy of that checklist is below which includes all checklist items, the timeframe identified in the 2014 plan, and progress to date.

Many initiatives were accomplished through the adoption of the new zoning ordinance; for the purpose of brevity, "Complete-NZO" has been shown in the *Progress* column for those initiatives.

Checklist to Implement Planning Commission Initiatives	Timeframe			Progress
	Now	Near Future	Short Term	
	2014 & 2015	Completed by end of 2017	Completed by end of 2020	
Complete the Mission Street Redevelopment Overlay Zone to include the area on Mission Street that is north of Pickard and on Pickard east of Mission to the City limits.	X			Complete-NZO
Encourage new residential developments to provide contiguous internal recreational amenities.			X	Complete- NZO
Create a vehicular access management ordinance and shared parking standards.			X	Complete- NZO
Modify the CBD zoning district to ensure redevelopment, increased viability, adequate parking, walkability, and the reuse of the upper floors of existing structures.	X			Complete- NZO / Fire Suppression Grant Program
Create a Chippewa River overlay zone to ensure natural feature preservation.			X	
Create a Main Street overlay district in order to provide a mixture of single-family and two-family residential uses along with office uses along the Main Street corridor which connects the central business district to multiple-family residential uses and CMU.			X	
Evaluate the adequacy of the noise, air and lights standards of applicable City ordinance(s), and ensure those provisions account for new technologies such as LED lights, etc.		X		Complete- NZO
Consider additional environmental protection language for all zoning districts.			X	Complete- NZO
Restrict incompatible commercial and industrial land uses along the Chippewa River.			X	
Conduct a study to investigate the creation of a new zoning district for City park land.			X	Complete- NZO
Consider a comprehensive amendment to the sign ordinance.			X	Complete- NZO
Housekeeping amendments to the zoning ordinance that may come up from time to time.			X	3 amendments made in 2018
Develop storm water management regulations that comply			X	Complete-Storm Water Ordinance

with NPDES Phase II requirements (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) and encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs are the use of structural, vegetative, or managerial practices designed to treat, prevent, or reduce degradation of water quality due to storm water runoff). Phase II of the NPDES program, administered by the MDEQ, requires all municipalities, industrial dischargers, construction sites of one acre or more, and other large property owners, have NPDES permits for their storm water discharges.				
Update the Plan for the Mission Street/Pickard Avenue Corridor that would give clear guidelines for streetscape and pedestrian improvements.		X		Complete- NZO
Develop a Downtown Plan that would take into account Downtown issues including parking management (include relevant aspects of the Residential Neighborhood Parking Study), streetscape improvements, and pedestrian amenities.			X	No action to date. Central Business District-TIFA board voted against providing funding for these elements as part of the proposed new City Master Plan. However, a downtown element will be included in the new City Master Plan.
Adopt a Complete Streets policy that promotes walkable developments and street layouts, encourages non-motorized use, and increases safe and accessible motorized and non-motorized transportation opportunities for all legal users of the public right-of-way. Use the Greater Mt. Pleasant Area Non-motorized Plan as the City's Complete Streets resource guide to advise staff and decision makers on how to treat the construction or reconstruction of roadways in order to accommodate all legal users in a way that considers the City's Complete Streets policy.	X			The Complete Streets Ordinance was adopted in 2015.
Detailed M-2 Study: Study and inventory all structures that are bounded by High on the north, Mission on the east, Bellows to the south, and the railroad tracks to the west for the purposes of identifying guiding principles for redevelopment projects that can ultimately foster neighborhood cohesiveness and avoid site and building designs that are incompatible with adjacent single-family residential uses. The study should identify the type of existing structures (single-family residential, apartments, duplex, registered student organization, etc.), date of construction, presence of rental license(s) per structure, and the number of licensed occupants per structure within the study area.	X			The City contracted with ROWE Professional Services for the completion of this study in 2013.
Then after the above M-2 study is completed, give consideration to a study to help determine housing redevelopment opportunities in the neighborhoods located east of Main Street, north of High Street, and up to Broadway, more commonly known as the "tree" neighborhoods.			X	
Create development design guidelines as a means of preserving the existing architectural character of the City. The emphasis of the guidelines shall be placed upon major renovation projects and new construction.			X	Complete- NZO
Create incentives for the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential structures.			X	Under development by the Neighborhood Resource Unit.

## 2019 WORK PLAN

The Planning Commission discussed the 2019 work plan during a work session in December 2018. The principal focus of the Planning Commission in 2019 will be the development of the 2050 City Master Plan. The Planning Commission will also consider and prioritize potential amendments to the new zoning ordinance. Another major focus will be the implementation of

zoning regulations for medical marihuana facilities and the potential development of regulations for recreational marihuana facilities.

## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AWARDS

Each year since 1979 the Planning Commission has presented Community Improvement Awards to recognized projects for their outstanding contributions to improving our community. For 2018, the following properties and owners are being recognized.

*Residential Award*  
313 E. Gaylord  
Rentwood Management LLC



*Commercial Award*  
1804 S. Mission  
McDonald's

