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If your community plans for future investment, invites public input, and offers superior customer service, then Redevelopment Ready Communities certification® is for you!

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation’s Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) program works with Michigan communities seeking to streamline the development approval process by integrating transparency, predictability and efficiency into their daily development practices. RRC is a statewide program that certifies communities who actively engage stakeholders and plan for the future. RRC empowers communities to shape their future by assisting in the creation of a solid planning, zoning and development foundation to retain and attract businesses, investment and talent.

Through RRC, communities commit to improving redevelopment readiness by agreeing to undergo a rigorous assessment, and work to achieve a set of criteria as described in this document. Developed by public and private sector experts, the RRC Best Practices are the standard for evaluation. Each best practice addresses key elements of community and economic development. Evaluations are conducted by the RRC team through interviews, document review and data analysis. After the evaluation, a community is presented with a baseline report that highlights successes and outlines recommended actions for implementation of missing best practice criteria. The expectations listed with each evaluation criteria are what a community is measured against to determine if that criteria is being accomplished. A community must demonstrate how the expectations are being achieved, and when applicable, may propose alternative approaches. To be awarded certification, a community must meet all RRC Best Practice criteria.

Redevelopment Ready Communities certification signals that a community has clear development policies and procedures, a community-supported vision, a predictable review process and compelling sites for developers to locate their latest projects. Once certified, RRC communities gain access to a series of additional benefits and tools, including a specialized Redevelopment Services Team, to assist with site marketing and development. These packaged sites are primed for new investment because they are located within a community that has effective policies, efficient processes and the broad community support needed to get shovels in the ground.

In this document, parts of the best practices will have further explanation. If a word is in orange, please see the glossary for additional details. If a word is orange and underlined, it contains a hyperlink.

Contact the RRC team at RRC@michigan.org with questions or visit www.miplace.org for additional resources.
Best Practice One: Community plans and public outreach

1.1—THE PLANS

Best Practice 1.1 evaluates community planning and how a community’s redevelopment vision is embedded in the master plan, capital improvements plan, downtown plan and corridor plan. Comprehensive planning documents are a community’s guiding framework for growth and investment. Information and strategies outlined in the plans are intended to serve as policy guidelines for local decisions about the physical, social, economic and environmental development of the community.

The master plan is updated, at a minimum, every five years to provide a community with a current and relevant decision making tool. The plan sets expectations for those involved in development, giving the public some degree of certainty about their vision for the future, while assisting the community to achieve its stated goals. An updated master plan is essential to articulating the types of development the community desires and the specific areas where the community will concentrate resources. Coordination between the master plan, capital improvements plan, downtown plan and corridor plan is essential. It is important that planning documents incorporate recommendations for implementation, including goals, actions, timelines and responsible parties.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 1.1.1
The governing body has adopted a master plan in the past five years.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The master plan reflects the community’s desired direction for the future.
☐ The master plan identifies strategies for priority redevelopment areas.
☐ The master plan addresses land use and infrastructure, including complete streets.
☐ The master plan includes a zoning plan.
☐ The master plan incorporates recommendations for implementation, including goals, actions, timelines and responsible parties.
☐ Progress on the master plan is annually reported to the governing body.
☐ The master plan is accessible online.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 1.1.2
The governing body has adopted a downtown plan.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The downtown plan identifies development area boundaries.
☐ The downtown plan identifies projects, and includes estimated project costs and a timeline for completion.
☐ The downtown plan includes mixed-use and pedestrian oriented development elements.
☐ The downtown plan addresses transit oriented development, if applicable.
☐ The downtown plan is accessible online.
Best Practice One: Community plans and public outreach

1.1—THE PLANS continued

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 1.1.3**
The governing body has adopted a corridor plan.

**EXPECTATIONS**
- The corridor plan identifies development area boundaries.
- The corridor plan identifies projects, and includes estimated project costs and a timeline for completion.
- The corridor plan includes mixed-use and pedestrian oriented development elements.
- The corridor plan addresses transit oriented development, if applicable.
- The corridor plan is accessible online.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 1.1.4**
The governing body has adopted a capital improvements plan.

**EXPECTATIONS**
- The capital improvements plan details a minimum of six years of public structures and improvements and is updated annually.
- The capital improvements plan coordinates projects to minimize construction costs.
- The capital improvements plan coordinates with adopted community plans and the budget.
- The capital improvements plan is accessible online.
1.2—PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Best Practice 1.2 assesses how well a community identifies its stakeholders and engages them, not only during the master planning process, but on a continual basis. A public participation strategy is essential to formalize those efforts and outline how the public will be engaged throughout planning and development processes.

Public participation is the process by which a community consults with interested or affected stakeholders before making a decision. It is two-way communication and collaborative problem solving with the objective of being intentionally inclusive, and the goal of achieving better and more acceptable decisions. Public participation aims to prevent or minimize disputes by creating a process for resolving issues before they become an obstacle.

The best plans and proposals have the support of many stakeholders from businesses, residents, community groups and elected and appointed community officials. Public engagement should be more frequent and interactive than only soliciting input during the master plan update and public hearings.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 1.2.1

The community has a documented public participation strategy for engaging a diverse set of community stakeholders.

EXPECTATIONS

☐ The strategy identifies key stakeholders, including those not normally at the visioning table.
☐ The strategy describes public participation methods and the appropriate venue to use each method.
☐ If a third party is consulted, they adhere to the public participation strategy.
☐ The community assists the developer in soliciting input on a proposal early in the site plan approval process.
☐ The community reviews and updates the strategy on a regular basis.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 1.2.2

The community demonstrates that public participation efforts go beyond the basic methods.

EXPECTATIONS

☐ Basic practices:
  ➢ Open Meetings Act
  ➢ Newspaper posting
  ➢ Website posting
  ➢ Flier posting on community hall door
  ➢ Postcard mailings
  ➢ Attachments to water bills
  ➢ Local cable notification
  ➢ Announcements at governing body meetings

☐ Proactive practices:
  ➢ Individual mailings
  ➢ Charrettes
  ➢ Flier posting on community hall door
  ➢ Community workshops
  ➢ Canvassing
  ➢ Focus groups
  ➢ Social media platforms
  ➢ Crowd-sourcing
  ➢ One-on-one interviews

EVALUATION CRITERIA 1.2.3

The community shares outcomes of public participation processes.

EXPECTATIONS

☐ The community tracks success of various outreach methods.
☐ The community participation results are communicated in a consistent and transparent manner.
2.1—ZONING REGULATIONS

Best Practice 2.1 evaluates a community’s zoning ordinance and how it meets community goals, enables the form and type of development the community is seeking and includes modern, flexible approaches to zoning. Zoning is a key tool for plan implementation and inflexible or obsolete zoning regulations can discourage development and investment. Outdated regulations can force developers to pursue rezoning or variance requests, extending project timelines, increasing costs and creating uncertainty. Communities should look to streamline requirements and regulate for the kind of development that is truly desired. Zoning should be used to shape inviting, walkable, vibrant communities, rather than inhibit them.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 2.1.1**

- The community has evaluated the master plan’s recommendations to determine if changes to the zoning map or ordinance are needed.

**EXPECTATIONS**

- The community has adopted a zoning ordinance that aligns with the goals of the master plan.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 2.1.2**

- The zoning ordinance provides for areas of concentrated development in appropriate locations and encourages the type and form of development desired.

**EXPECTATIONS**

- The ordinance allows mixed-use buildings by right in designated areas of concentrated development.
- The ordinance requires one or more of the following elements in areas of concentrated development:
  - Build-to lines
  - Open store fronts
  - Outdoor dining
  - Minimum ground floor transparency
  - Streetscape elements (trees, seating, pedestrian-scale lighting and signage)
  - Front facing doorways
  - Parking located in the rear of building
- The ordinance addresses historic preservation.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 2.1.3**

- The zoning ordinance includes flexible tools to encourage development and redevelopment.

**EXPECTATIONS**

- The zoning ordinance includes at least two of the following flexible tools:
  - Density bonuses
  - Non-conforming regulations
  - Conditional rezoning
  - Overlay zones
  - Form-based code
  - Compatible new-economy businesses in commercial and industrial districts
Best Practice Two: Zoning regulations

2.1—ZONING REGULATIONS continued

EVALUATION CRITERIA 2.1.4
The zoning ordinance allows for a variety of housing options.

- The ordinance allows for three or more of the following housing types by right:
  - Accessory dwelling units
  - Townhouses/rowhouses
  - Stacked flats
  - Residential units above non-residential uses

- Live/work
- Co-housing
- Cluster housing
- Micro units

EVALUATION CRITERIA 2.1.5
The zoning ordinance includes standards to improve non-motorized transportation.

- The ordinance includes standards for the following elements where appropriate:
  - Bicycle parking
  - Traffic calming
  - Sidewalk connectivity
  - Pedestrian-scale lighting
  - Public realm standards
  - Block size

EVALUATION CRITERIA 2.1.6
The zoning ordinance includes flexible parking standards.

- The ordinance includes regulations for two or more of the following:
  - Reduction or elimination of required parking when on-street and public parking is available
  - Connections between parking lots
  - Shared parking agreements
  - Parking maximums
  - Elimination of parking minimums
  - Parking waivers
  - Electric vehicle charging stations
  - Bicycle parking
  - Payment in lieu of parking
  - Reduction of required parking for complementary mixed-uses
Best Practice Two: Zoning regulations

2.1—ZONING REGULATIONS continued

EVALUATION CRITERIA 2.1.7
The zoning ordinance includes standards for environmental preservation and green infrastructure.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The ordinance includes regulations for three or more of the following:
  ➢ Low impact development techniques* (rain gardens, bioswales, etc.)
  ➢ Rain water collection (blue roofs, cisterns, water harvesting, stormwater vaults, etc.)
  ➢ Green roofs
  ➢ Pervious pavement
  ➢ Steep slope protections
  ➢ Street tree planting standards
  ➢ Tree preservation or replacement standards
  ➢ Parking lot landscaping standards
  ➢ Required native or low-maintenance plantings
  ➢ Renewable energy
  ➢ Buffering standards around water bodies or other natural resources
  ➢ Off-site stormwater regulations allowing site developers to participate in district-scale stormwater management plan

EVALUATION CRITERIA 2.1.8
The zoning ordinance is user-friendly.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The ordinance portrays clear definitions and requirements using graphics, tables or charts as appropriate.
☐ The ordinance is available in an electronic format at no cost and hard copies are available for review at convenient locations.
☐ The ordinance is accessible online.

*Direct File Download
### Best Practice Three: Development review process

#### 3.1—DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

Best practice 3.1 evaluates the community’s development review policies and procedures, project tracking and internal/external communication.

The purpose of the development review process is to assure plans for specific types of development comply with local ordinances and are consistent with the master plan. Streamlined, well-documented development policies and procedures ensure a smooth and predictable experience when working with a community. It is essential for a community’s development review team to also coordinate with permitting and inspections staff.

Unnecessary steps or unclear instructions increase time and expenses associated with development. Community leaders should look to simplify and clarify policies, operate in a transparent manner and increase efficiency to create an inviting development climate that is vital to attracting investment. To do this, sound internal procedures need to be in place and followed. Tracking projects internally across multiple departments can alleviate potential delays. Offering conceptual site plan review meetings is one more step a community can take to show investors they are working to remove development barriers and cut down on unexpected time delays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.1.1</th>
<th>EXPECTATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The zoning ordinance articulates a thorough site plan review process.</td>
<td>□ The responsibilities of the governing body, planning commission, zoning board of appeals, other reviewing bodies, and staff are clearly documented.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.1.2</th>
<th>EXPECTATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The community has a qualified intake professional. | □ The community identifies a project point person and trains staff to perform intake responsibilities including:  
➢ Receiving and processing applications and site plans  
➢ Documenting contact with the applicant  
➢ Explaining procedures and submittal requirements  
➢ Facilitating meetings  
➢ Processing applications after approval  
➢ Excellent customer service |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.1.3</th>
<th>EXPECTATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The community defines and offers conceptual site plan review meetings for applicants. | □ The community has clearly defined expectations posted online and a checklist to be reviewed at conceptual meetings.  
□ The community advertises online that conceptual site plan review meetings are available. |
Best Practice Three: Development review process

3.1—DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES continued

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.1.4**

The appropriate departments engage in joint site plan reviews.

**EXPECTATIONS**

- The joint site plan review team consists of the following representatives, as appropriate:
  - Planning department
  - Public works department
  - Building department
  - Transportation department
  - Fire
  - Police
  - Assessor
  - Community manager or supervisor
  - Economic development
  - Historic District Commission
  - Consultant
  - Attorney
  - County soil erosion and sedimentation
  - County drain commissioner
  - County health department
  - County road commission
  - Outside agencies

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.1.5**

The community has a clearly documented internal staff review process.

**EXPECTATIONS**

- The internal review process articulates clear roles, responsibilities and timelines.
- Development review standards are clearly defined.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.1.6**

The community promptly acts on development requests.

**EXPECTATIONS**

- Site plans for permitted uses are approved administratively or by the planning commission.
- The community follows its documented procedures and timelines.
- The community has easy to follow flowcharts of development processes that include timelines.
- Community development staff coordinates with permitting and inspections staff to ensure a smooth and timely approval process.
Best Practice Three: Development review process

3.1—DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES continued

EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.1.7
The community has a method to track development projects.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The community uses a tracking mechanism for projects during the development process.
☐ The community uses a tracking mechanism for projects during the permitting and inspections process.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.1.8
The community annually reviews successes and challenges with the development review process.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The community obtains customer feedback on the site plan approval and permitting and inspections process and integrates changes where applicable.
☐ The joint site plan review team, including permitting and inspections staff, meets to capture lessons learned and amends the process accordingly.
Best Practice Three: Development review process

3.2—GUIDE TO DEVELOPMENT

Best Practice 3.2 evaluates the accessibility of a community’s planning and development information. Development information and applications must be assembled to help citizens, developers and public officials gain a better understanding of how the development process in the community works. Documents should be updated regularly and provide a general overview of development processes, steps necessary to obtain approvals and be readily available online.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.2.1

The community maintains a guide to development that explains policies, procedures and steps to obtain approvals.

- Relevant contact information
- Relevant meeting schedules
- Easy-to-follow step-by-step flowcharts of development processes, including timelines
- Conceptual meeting procedures
- Relevant ordinances to review prior to site plan submission
- Site plan review requirements and application
- Clear explanation for site plans that can be approved administratively
- Rezoning request process and application
- Variance request process and application
- Special land use request process and application
- Fee schedule
- Special meeting procedures
- Financial assistance tools
- Design guidelines and related processes
- Building permit requirements and applications

- The guide to development is accessible online.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 3.2.2

The community annually reviews the fee schedule.

- The fee schedule is reviewed annually and updated as needed.
- The community accepts credit card payment for fees.

EXPECTATIONS
Best Practice Four: Recruitment and education

4.1—RECRUITMENT AND ORIENTATION

Best practice 4.1 evaluates how a community conducts recruitment and orientation for newly appointed or elected officials and board members.

Diversity on boards and commissions can ensure a wide range of perspectives are considered when making decisions on development and financial incentives. Communities should seek applicants with desired skill sets and establish expectations prior to new officials and board members becoming active.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 4.1.1

The community sets expectations for board and commission positions.

EXPECTATIONS

☐ The community outlines expectations and desired skill sets* for open seats.

☐ The community has clearly documented the process for board and commission appointments.

☐ Board and commission applications are available online.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 4.1.2

The community provides orientation packets to all appointed and elected members of development related boards and commissions.

EXPECTATIONS

☐ The orientation packet includes all relevant planning, zoning and development information.

*Direct File Download
Best Practice Four: Recruitment and education

4.2—EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Best practice 4.2 assesses how a community encourages ongoing education and training and tracks training needs for appointed or elected officials, board members and staff. Planning commissioners, zoning board of appeals members, the governing body and staff make more informed development decisions when they receive adequate training on land use and development issues. Turnover in officials and staff can create gaps in knowledge, which makes ongoing training essential to the efficient functioning of a community’s development processes.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 4.2.1
The community has a dedicated source of funding for training.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The community has a training budget allocated for elected and appointed officials and staff.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 4.2.2
The community identifies training needs and tracks attendance for elected and appointed officials and staff.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The community manages a simple tracking mechanism* for logging individual training needs and attendance.
☐ The community identifies trainings that assist in accomplishing their stated goals and objectives.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 4.2.3
The community encourages elected and appointed officials and staff to attend trainings.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The community has an established process to notify its elected and appointed officials and staff about training opportunities.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 4.2.4
The community shares information between elected and appointed officials and staff.

EXPECTATIONS
☐ The community holds collaborative work sessions, including joint trainings on development topics.
☐ Training participants share information with those not in attendance.
☐ The planning commission prepares an annual report* for the governing body.

*Direct File Download
Best Practice Five: Community prosperity

5.1—ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Best practice 5.1 assesses what goals and actions a community has identified to assist in strengthening its overall economic health.

Today, economic development means more than business attraction and retention. While business development is a core value, a community needs to include community development and talent in the overall equation for economic success. The goal of the economic development strategy is to provide initiatives and methods that will encourage diversity of the region’s economic base, tap into opportunities for economic expansion and help to create a sustainable, vibrant community.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 5.1.1

The community has an approved economic development strategy.

- The economic development strategy is part of the master plan, annual budget or a separate document.
- The economic development strategy connects to the master plan and capital improvements plan.
- The economic development strategy identifies the economic opportunities and challenges of the community.
- The economic development strategy incorporates recommendations for implementation, including goals, actions, timelines and responsible parties.
- The economic development strategy coordinates with a regional economic development strategy.
- The economic development strategy is accessible online.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 5.1.2

The community annually reviews the economic development strategy.

- Progress on the economic development strategy is reported annually to the governing body.
5.2—MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Best practice 5.2 assesses how a community promotes and markets itself to create community pride and increase investor confidence. It also evaluates the ease of locating pertinent planning, zoning and economic development documents on the community’s website.

Community marketing and promotion can take many forms. Communities must develop a positive, promotional strategy through marketing campaigns, advertising and special events to encourage investment. Marketing campaigns can assist with sharing the established community vision, values and goals. Developing a brand to promote a consistent identity can position a community for future success. A community’s website is an important marketing tool and must be well-designed to provide information to the public and build a positive image.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 5.2.1
The community has developed a marketing strategy.

• The marketing strategy identifies opportunities and outlines specific steps to attract businesses, consumers and real estate development to the community.
• The marketing strategy strives to create or strengthen an image for the community.
• The marketing strategy identifies approaches to market priority development sites.
• The community coordinates marketing efforts with local, regional and state partners.

EVALUATION CRITERIA 5.2.2
The community has an updated, user-friendly municipal website.

• The community’s website is easy to navigate.
• The community’s planning, zoning and development information is grouped together with links to the following:
  ➢ Master plan and amendments
  ➢ Downtown plan
  ➢ Corridor plan
  ➢ Capital improvements plan
  ➢ Zoning ordinance
  ➢ Guide to development
  ➢ Online payment option
  ➢ Partner organizations
  ➢ Board and commission applications
  ➢ Property information packages
  ➢ Economic development strategy
Best practice 6.1 assesses how a community identifies, visions for and markets priority redevelopment sites. A redevelopment ready site is a site targeted by the community and ready for investment.

Identifying and marketing priority sites can assist a community to stimulate the real estate market for obsolete, vacant and underutilized property. Communities that have engaged the public and determined desired outcomes for priority sites create a predictable environment for development projects. A community which takes steps to reduce the risk of rejected development proposals will entice hesitant developers to spend their time and financial resources pursuing a project in their community. If a development proposal on a priority site is deemed controversial, additional public participation opportunities should be held to ensure community support. To encourage development, it is essential that communities actively package and market sites prioritized for redevelopment. Developers look to invest in places that have an overall vision for the community and priority sites.

*Note: Once a community has met Best Practices 1–5, the RRC planner will connect the community with the Redevelopment Services Team (RSTeam). The RSTeam includes experienced staff dedicated to providing hands on technical assistance for proactive site redevelopment. The RSTeam will assist your community with RR Site identification, prioritization, visioning, packaging and marketing.

### EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.1
**The community identifies and prioritizes redevelopment sites.**

- □ The community maintains an updated list of at least three priority sites.

### EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.2
**The community gathers basic information for three priority sites.**

- □ Required information to include:
  - Photo of the site and/or rendering
  - Desired development outcomes for the site
  - Owner contact information
  - Community contact information
  - Zoning
  - Lot size
  - Building size
  - State equalized value
  - Utility contact information
  - Utilities on site: Water, sewer, electricity, natural gas
  - Wired broadband infrastructure: DSL, cable, fiber

### EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.3
**The community establishes a vision for three priority sites.**

- □ The vision includes desired development outcomes.
- □ Community champions for redevelopment of the site are identified.
- □ High controversy redevelopment sites may require additional public engagement as identified in the public engagement strategy.
- □ The master plan and zoning ordinance have been reviewed for any updates needed to support the site vision.
6.1—REDEVELOPMENT READY SITES® continued

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.4**
The community identifies potential resources and incentives for three priority sites.

**EXPECTATIONS**
- The community identifies negotiable development tools, financial incentives and/or in-kind support, based on the project meeting the community’s vision and desired development outcomes. Examples include:
  - Density bonuses
  - Local grants and loans
  - Abatements
- Expedited approval process
- Waived fees
- State incentives

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.5**
The community assembles a property information package for at least one priority site.

**EXPECTATIONS**
- The property information package includes all basic information, site vision, financial incentives and the following as applicable:
  - Deed restrictions
  - Property tax assessment information
  - Property survey
  - Previous uses
  - Existing conditions report
  - Known environmental and/or contamination conditions
  - Soil conditions
  - Demographic data
  - Surrounding amenities
  - Planned infrastructure improvements as identified in CIP
  - GIS information including site location and street maps
  - Natural features map
  - Traffic studies
  - Target market analysis
  - Market feasibility studies
  - Special zone/district status
  - Density bonuses
  - Local grants and loans
  - Abatements
- The property information package is aesthetically pleasing and branded according to standards outlined in the marketing strategy.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA 6.1.6**
Priority redevelopment sites are actively marketed in accordance with the marketing strategy.

**EXPECTATIONS**
- The property information package(s) are accessible online.
Conclusion

The Redevelopment Ready Communities® program looks to foster communities that creatively reuse space, embrace economic innovation and proactively plan for the future, making them more attractive for investments that create places where talent wants to live, work and play. RRC certification signals to business owners, developers and investors that the community has removed barriers by building deliberate, fair and consistent processes.

Communities not formally engaged in the RRC program, but wanting to work toward certification are encouraged to compare their current policies and procedures to the best practice standards by completing RRC self-evaluations. The self-evaluations are available to assist any community interested in being more redevelopment ready. Completion of the self-evaluation documents does not replace the formal evaluation process conducted by the RRC team. In addition to the self-evaluations, guides have been developed to act as resources for communities working on RRC Best Practice components. Each guide is a tool describing recommended processes and sample language. Every community has different needs and capacities, so the process and document can be tailored to fit individual community requirements.

To be vibrant and competitive, Michigan communities must be ready for development. This involves planning for new investment, identifying assets and opportunities and focusing limited resources. Communities must create the types of places where talent and businesses want to locate, invest and expand.

Certified Redevelopment Ready Communities’ signal that locating a new business or growing an existing one is straightforward. Certified communities have removed barriers to development including eliminating uncertainties surrounding project timelines and approvals by implementing and executing the RRC Best Practices. Contact the RRC team at rrc@michigan.org or your CATeam specialist with questions.
1.1—THE PLANS

Page 4 Master Plan
Complete Streets

Annually Reported: Annual reporting may be accomplished in a variety of ways. Details on progress may be included in the annual report of the planning commission or the local municipal manager’s report, reviewed at a joint meeting, etc.

Downtown: A community’s principal downtown is one with a grouping of 20 or more contiguous commercial parcels or property that include multi-story buildings of historical or architectural significance. The area must have been zoned, planned, built, or used for commercial purposes for more than 50 years. The area must primarily consist of zero-lot-line development, have pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and an appropriate mix of businesses and services.

Page 5 Corridor Plan: A high impact corridor or gateway offers unique connectivity and connections to downtowns, new economic opportunities, safe and sustainable transportation, and improvement in a community’s quality of life. A corridor includes one or more routes that connect to economic activity, and often forms boundaries between neighborhoods and communities. Communities without a traditional downtown and communities with a significant corridor in their boundaries will be evaluated with these criteria.

Corridor Plan
Capital Improvements Plan

1.2—PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Page 6 Public Participation Strategy

Key Stakeholders: For example: business owners, chambers of commerce, communities’ large employers, local brokers, neighborhood groups, neighboring municipalities, potential investors, real estate professionals, religious groups, senior groups, social organizations, students and young professionals, main street director and board, and other familiar entities in the community.

Assists the Developer: For example: offering meeting space, providing mailing labels for neighbors early on, posting on social media when a neighborhood meeting is taking place to discuss a proposal, and posting proposal boards and visuals at city/village hall.

Open Meetings Act

Crowd Sourcing: A method of acquiring information on a task or project by enlisting the services of a group of people, either paid or unpaid, typically via the internet.

2.1—ZONING REGULATIONS

Page 7 Mixed-use Buildings: This is specifically referring to buildings that include residential space as well as non-residential space.

Form-based Code Elements

New-economy Business: Examples: Medical; research and development; indoor recreation; brewpub; microbrewery; small distiller; small wine producer; community gardens; studios of broadcasting, film, arts, crafts, photography, music, dance and similar uses; alternative energy; catering; heavy arts; makers’ spaces; artisanal manufacturing; machine shops.
2.1—ZONING REGULATIONS (continued)

Accessory Dwelling Units: Separate living space within a house (attached accessory dwelling unit) or on the same property as an existing house (detached accessory dwelling unit).

Townhouses/Rowhouses: A building containing three or more attached dwelling units. Typically, these dwelling units directly face the street, share common walls and occupants will own or rent all the space from the ground to roof. These units are not typically stacked.

Stacked Flats: Multi-family building with one unit at ground level and one above. Occupants for the second-floor units climb stairs to get to their homes, but once there, no additional stairs.

Live/Work: Property that combines residential living space with commercial or manufacturing space.

Co-housing: Type of planned community composed of private homes supplemented by shared facilities. Typically compact, with low-rise apartments, townhouses, or clustered detached homes.

Cluster Housing: Cluster housing concentrates smaller residential lots on a portion of a development site and the remaining area is preserved as natural or recreational open space. This results in less disturbed space and a design that is more efficient for the provision of infrastructure.

Sidewalk Connectivity: Direct connections from private development to the sidewalk network and/or transit connections, pedestrian access to primary building entrances, etc.

Page 9

Low Impact Development Techniques

Blue Roofs: A roof design explicitly intended to store water, typically rainfall.

Required Native or Low-maintenance Plantings

Renewable Energy: Examples include wind, solar, passive solar and solar gardens.

User-friendly

3.1—DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

Excellent Customer Service

Conceptual Site Plan Review: A meeting designed to provide an applicant with the opportunity to identify significant issues that could affect the basic design and feasibility of the project. Early discussions with the community will help the applicant make informed decisions about their application and avoid unnecessary processing delays. Conceptual meetings can assist with; understanding the application process, confirming what, if any, permits or licenses are needed, guiding an application to resources, determining application requirements, and identify any issues surrounding the project.

Joint Site Plan Reviews: All departments involved in the development review process should have an opportunity to review, provide comments and sign off in a timely manner.

Development Request: Site plan review, special land use, variance rezoning, permitting, inspections and all other development requests.
3.1—DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES (continued)

Page 12  Tracking Mechanism: Software or spreadsheet used to track projects from application submittal to occupancy.

Obtains Customer Feedback: This could be done through interviews, surveys, or mailers.

3.2—GUIDE TO DEVELOPMENT

Page 13  Contact Information: Local and county departments/organizations, utilities, railroads, broadband, state agencies, etc.

Flowcharts: A graphic or step-by-step instruction on the site plan review process which includes a timeline.

Conceptual Meeting: Also known as concept—or pre-application meeting. This meeting is designed to provide an applicant with the opportunity to identify any significant issues that could affect the basic design and feasibility of a project. Early discussions with the community will help the applicant make informed decisions about their application and avoid unnecessary processing delays. Conceptual meetings can assist with understanding the application process, confirming what, if any, permits or licenses are needed, guiding applicants to resources, determining application requirements, and identifying any issues surrounding the project.

Review Requirements and Application

Rezoning Request: Request to change the status of a zoning ordinance.

Variance Request: A request to allow for uses that may not meet the full intent of the zoning designation.

Special Land Use: A use that requires more review criterion under a zoning designation.

Financial Assistance Tools: Economic development programs, grants, loans, bonds, etc.

4.1—RECRUITMENT AND ORIENTATION

Page 14  Desired Skill Sets

Orientation Packet: The orientation packet should include the following: description of roles and responsibilities, board procedures and/or by-laws, conflict of interest and ethics policies, Open Meetings Act, Rules of Procedures, MI Planning Enabling Act, MI Zoning Enabling Act, master plan and zoning ordinance, zoning map, and meeting schedules. Other important information to consider: historical information on development proposals, applications, design guidelines and past meeting minutes.

4.2—EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Page 15  Tracking Mechanism

Annual Report

5.1—ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Page 16  Economic Development Strategy

Recommendations for Implementation

Economic Development Strategy: Visit the Michigan Association of Regions to find your regional planning organization. Also, consider whether your county has an economic development strategy.

5.2—MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Page 17  Marketing Strategy

User-friendly Municipal Website

6.1—REDEVELOPMENT READY SITES®

Page 18  Obsolete, Vacant and Underutilized Property

Page 19  Financial Incentives: This should include a list of financial incentives the city offers for redevelopment (i.e., OPRA, Brownfield TIF, façade grants, etc.).

CONCLUSION

Page 20  Contact the RRC Team

CATeam Specialist