

# City of Ferndale Planning Commission Annual 2020 Report

## 1 MEMBERSHIP

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Position	Member	Term Expiration
	Christa Azar	12-31-21
	Mathew Showalter	12-31-23
	Michael Cascio	12-31-21 (final meeting 01/15/2020)
Chair	Kate Baker	12-31-23
	Brittney Hoszkiw	12-31-23
	Patrick Braga	12-31-23 (final meeting 06/02/2021)
BZA Liaison	Ian Williamson	12-31-21 (final meeting 12/15/2020)
	Deborah Brazen	12-31-21
Vice Chair	Michelle Foster	12-31-21
Council	Greg Pawlica	12-31-22
Secretary	Jordan Twardy	Virtue of Office

## 2 MEETINGS

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The City of Ferndale Planning Commission met 10 times in 2020. This meets the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA).

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## 3 MASTER PLAN REVIEW

The “Master Plan Progress” notes below are based on the status in early 2021. Please see attached for a full “Master Plan Status” document updated in August 2021.

2020 Master Plan Progress		
Category		
	Action	Status
Land Use		
L1.5	Create design standards and guidelines for commercial corridors	Completed in Industrial and Mixed Use districts.
L1.6	Identify areas of the City where change towards a more walkable, mixed-use urban pattern is anticipated and would be appropriate for future form-based code	Completed in Industrial and Mixed Use districts.
L2.2	Revise MXD-1 and MXD-2 standards to ensure zoning promotes desired mixed-use development	Completed.
L3.1	Allow the conversion of industrial space to residential use (“lofts”) in the Industrial Sub-district subject to a special land use permit and “loft review criteria”	Partially completed with ordinance amendments in December 2019. Next step to revise residential.

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L4.2	Revise P-1 Vehicular Parking zoning district standards and reevaluate its application.	In progress. Complete in 2021 with Master Plan update.
L4.6	Enhance design standards for parking facilities abutting right of way, especially in Downtown and Mixed Land Use areas.	Mixed Use districts Completed.
Housing and Neighborhoods		
H4.1	Create a common vision and a communication plan for affordable housing.	On-going. Study underway in 2019.
H4.6	Integrate compatible housing options within the Industrial Sub-District.	Phase 1 of ordinance Completed.
Economic Vitality		
E2.2	Encourage small- to medium-scale retail storefronts associated with on-site production and manufacturing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Promote accessory retail associated with production to existing business owners</li> <li>ii. Consider restaurant/bar as permitted ancillary use to on-site principal use</li> <li>iii. Consider non-ancillary retail and restaurant/bar as permitted but limited uses.</li> </ul>	Completed.
Transportation and Mobility		
T1.2	Continue to utilize and regularly update Ferndale Moves as the City's primary non-motorized transportation resource.	On-going.
T1.3	Identify opportunities and secure a budget to expand and maintain the non-motorized network.	W. Marshall TAP grant awarded.

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T1.5	Connect to regional and national walking and biking events (or create Ferndale’s own!).	On-going. Increased participation in 2019.
T3.1	Maintain representation/advocacy position on regional transportation planning committees.	On-going.
T4.1	Support a complete bike network in Ferndale and between neighboring communities.	On-going. W. Nine Mile project with Oak Park and Woodward Heights with Hazel Park completed.
T4.2	Provide safe and convenient bike parking	On-going. Completed bike parking zoning requirements.
T4.3	Explore opportunities for a bike share program.	Complete in 2020.
T5.1	Implement “non-capacity” strategies to improve current system	On-going. Tested rideshare zones in Downtown in 2019.
Recreation and Open Space		
R1.6	Improve and activate Schiffer Park.	Completed in 2020.
City Services		
C2.1	Add recycling to public trash receptacles Downtown, at public facilities, at public events, and in parks.	On-going. Completed pilot Big Belly receptacle installation.
C3.1	Continue to convert street lighting to LED	Completed.
C3.2	Use savings from energy efficiency upgrades to create a revolving fund for future energy reduction upgrades.	On-going. Completed creation of fund.

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## 4 REVISED MASTER PLAN TIMELINE

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2020 derailed a lot of what was planned due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the items initially planned for 2020 had to be reevaluated and assessed. 2021-2022 are expected to be years of significant planning initiatives and updates as the City will be updating the Master Land Use Plan and Parks and Recreation Plan, and will complete the City's first Climate Action Plan. The items outlined below are the remaining items from the previous Master Plan adopted in 2017. Some of the items will be accomplished through the Master Plan update process (policy changes, ordinance updates etc.), while some of the other items will be reevaluated for relevancy in the new Master Plan.

- Action Item Priorities for 2021:

- **Parking and Transportation**

- **L4.2** - Revise P-1 Vehicular Parking zoning district standards and reevaluate its application.
  - Evaluate P-1 zoning based on feedback from the Planning Commission in 2019.
- Updating and adopting a new Ferndale Moves mobility plan in 2020 will consider a number of Transportation and Mobility related action items. Awarded the SEMCOG Regional Showcase Award for Ferndale Moves in 2019.
  - **L3.2** - Create an appropriate street typology for roadways within the Industrial Sub-District with contextual considerations such as the accommodation of large trucks and multiple users.
  - **L4.1** - Create a long-term parking plan with a clear vision and decision-making framework.
  - **L4.3** - Reduce parking minimums for residential uses.
  - **L4.4** - Revise non-residential parking requirements to align with transit-oriented development patterns and evolving transportation trends, such as car share, ride share, and autonomous vehicles.
  - **L4.5** - Continue to update, utilize, and promote Ferndale's payment in lieu of parking provision.
    - The payment in lieu of parking provision related to alcohol based businesses was removed from the ordinance in late 2020.
  - **T1.5** - Continue to promote Ferndale Bike Month.
  - **T3.1** - Maintain representation/advocacy position on regional transportation planning committees – Continue to participate in SEMCOG, Oakland County, NACTO, and other regional and national transportation planning committees.
  - **T4.1** - Support a complete bike network in Ferndale and between neighboring communities.
  - **T4.2** - Provide safe and convenient bike parking
    - The dot will add over 100 new bicycle parking spaces downtown.

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- **T5.1** - Implement “non-capacity” strategies to improve current system
- **T5.2** - Coordinate parking "capacity" planning with responsible decision-making strategy rooted in sustainability

## Zoning Map and Land Use Policy

- **L1.5** - Consider creating design standards and guidelines for commercial corridors.
  - Evaluate Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Overlay, C-2, C-3, and OS districts.
  - Complete Form-Based Design Guidelines.
- **L2.1** - Revise R2 and R3 standards to ensure zoning promotes dense, walkable “Urban Residential” neighborhoods and housing types.
  - Evaluate zoning amendments based on form-based code best practices and inclusive housing study.
- **L2.4** - Add “Loft” as a residential use and create “loft review criteria” for special land use review, such as in the Industrial Sub-District & L3.1 - Allow the conversion of industrial space to residential use (“lofts”) in the Industrial Sub-District subject to a special land use permit and “loft review criteria.”
  - Evaluate the upper level residential use regulations and determine if other housing types are appropriate for the Industrial districts.
- **L5.2** - Review and update city ordinances to allow for green stormwater Infrastructure design.
  - Develop a full storm water ordinance in conjunction with Oakland County in 2020.

## Community and Economic Development

- **H4.1** - Create a common vision and a communication plan for affordable housing.
  - Inclusive housing study expected to be complete in first half of 2020, including vision and communication plan.
- **E1.1** - Create a retail attraction strategy to sustain a healthy and diverse local business community. & **E5.1** Increase the number of primary jobs in Ferndale; pursue opportunities to attract one or more signature office tenants.
  - Coordinate with Versa Development to secure an office tenant for the dot’s upper-level office space and W. Troy Street commercial spaces.
- **E3.3** - Update signage and storefront design standards and codes to meet or exceed generally accepted industry standards; establish a Storefront Design Committee to approve proposed storefronts and signage.
  - Evaluate existing sign ordinance.
- **H1.2** - Support new landlords and renters with “Welcome to Ferndale” resources.
  - Communications Department is working on design and resources for a new resident “Welcome Packet”.
- **C1.3** - Create baseline standards for building upgrades and new construction.
  - The City will be hiring a Facilities Manager in 2020 that will assist with this action item.

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## Recreation and Open Space

- **R1.6** - Improve and activate Schiffer Park – Schiffer Park to be renovated in spring/summer 2020. - Complete.
  - Planned improvements to Geary Park and Wanda Park in spring/summer 2020. - Delayed due to COVID-19, but will resume 2021.
- **C2.1** - Add recycling to public trash receptacles Downtown, at public facilities, at public events, and in parks.
  - Downtown Waste Study in progress and will be complete in 2020.
- Action Item Priorities (not specified in Master Plan):
  - Continue Annual Sustainability Reports - Completed 2018 and 2019.
  - City of Michigan Green Communities Challenge Award (Silver level) - Completed 2018 and 2019.
  - Submit for 2020 Places for Bikes ranking - Improved score from 2.2 to 3.0 in 2019.
  - Prepare for 2021 update of the Master Plan, including a climate action plan.
- Action Items to Delay:
  - **L1.4** - Restore Ferndale’s public alleys.
    - Exploring costs for maintenance and improvement for all public alleys in the City to determine feasibility.
  - **C1.6** – Work with other communities to secure funding and create a plant to separate sewer systems.

## 1 APPROVED ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Ordinance	Location	Description	Status	Recommendation to Legislative Body	Date of Action
Novelty Store Use Regulations (Sec. 24- 166) and Definitions M-N (Sec. 24-458)	N/A	Text amendments remove the buffer distance between novelty stores and institutions for religious worship, included references to marihuana regulations, and define a minimum square footage.	Approved	City Council Approved 2/24/2020	1/15/2020

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Zoning Map Amendment	E. Bennett	Proposed rezoning applies to 3 parcels on E. Bennett between Hilton rd. and Fair st. Rezone from C-2 (General Commercial) to R-2 (Single/Two Family Residential)	Approved	City Council Approved 2/24/2020	1/15/2020
Ordinance No. 1087, Article VIII., Sec. 24-165, Medical Marihuana Facility, Provisioning Center, Marihuana Retailer and Safety Compliance Facility Use Regulations	N/A	Text amendments to the City's marihuana zoning ordinances to increase the number of marihuana retailers and medical marihuana provisioning centers from three (3) to five (5) permits.	Recommended to Deny.	City Council Approved 2/24/2020	2/5/2020
Ordinance No. 1087, Article X Access Management, Off Street Parking and Loading, Sections 24-233 Off Street Parking Requirements	N/A	Requirements to include all buildings and uses in the Central Business District parking exemption. Thus, eliminating the requirements for parking in the Central Business District for restaurants with additional or accessory use of the sale of alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption. The corresponding Payment in Lieu of Parking policy for such uses would be rendered unnecessary by this change.	Approved	City Council Approved 12/21/2020	11/18/2020



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## 2 APPROVED VARIANCES & WAIVERS

Below is a list of zoning variances approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals and zoning ordinance waivers approved by the Planning Commission.

Variance Type	Location	Description	Status	Date of Action
Ordinance Interpretation	831 E. Lewiston	The Board of Zoning Appeals upheld an administrative interpretation that the applicant's use of a living space did not meet the definition or use regulations of "upper-level residential".	Upheld	7/21/2020
Dimensional Variance	133 University	The Board of Zoning Appeals reapproved the applicant's request for a two-foot lot width variance. Originally approved on August 20, 2019.	Approved	11/27/2020
Dimensional Variance	3178 Hilton	The Board of Zoning Appeals approved the applicant's 18-foot rear setback variance adjacent to a public alley and residential district.	Approved	11/27/2020
Waiver Type	Location	Description	Status	Date of Action
Tree replacement, screening wall, architectural features, landscaping	244 Vester	The Planning Commission approved the applicant's requests to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay into the City's tree fund as part of the tree replacement requirements.</li> <li>• Waive the requirement for a rear screen wall adjacent to the alley due to circulation.</li> <li>• Include canopies that project on the north façade over entry doors.</li> <li>• Install pervious pavers in lieu of grass areas in patio areas.</li> </ul>	Approved	2/05/2020
Tree replacement	281 Ardmore	The Planning Commission approved the applicant's request to pay into the City's tree fund as part of the tree replacement requirements.	Approved	7/15/2020; 11/18/2020
Tree replacement,	925 E Drayton	The Planning Commission approved the applicant's requests to:	Approved	7/15/2020

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maximum parking, architectural features		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay into the City’s tree fund as part of the tree replacement requirements.</li> <li>• Exceed the maximum parking requirements contingent upon the installation of pervious pavers in the off-street parking area.</li> <li>• Waive the requirement of 20% fenestration on the south elevation.</li> </ul>		
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### 3 APPROVED DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

Project Type	Location	Description	Status	Recommendation to Legislative Body	Date of Action
Conditional Rezoning and site plan review	549 E Marshall	Conditional rezoning for 549 E Marshall St. from R-1 (Single Family Residential) to MXD-1 (Mixed Use 1). The proposed plan includes a reuse of the former church to include 3 residential units and office space.	Approved with Conditions	City Council Approved 2/10/2020	1/15/2020
Site Plan Review	244 Vester	Proposed construction of 8 units in a R3 (Single/Multiple-Family Residential). Landscaping plan was deficient and requested to make payment in lieu to the City’s Tree Fund.	Approved with Conditions	N/A	2/5/2020
Site Plan Review	256 Withington	The intended use of this property is to redevelop the site with a new 3,074 square foot multiple family residential building with five (5) units.	Tabled	N/A	7/15/2020
Site Plan Review, Parking Requirement Reduction	281 Ardmore	The intended use of this property is a five-unit multiple family dwelling, achieved by an addition of three (3) stories to the existing structure.	Approved with Conditions	N/A	7/15/2020  Amended 11/18/2020

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Site Plan Review	925 E Drayton	The M-1 (Limited Industrial) zoned property currently contains an existing industrial building that will be redeveloped for use as a medical marihuana provisioning center, which is a permitted use in the district. Request for payment in lieu of the required replacement trees, waiver requirement of 20% fenestration requirement at 8%, and to exceed the maximum parking space requirements.	Approved with Conditions	N/A	7/15/2020
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### 4 DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION ITEMS

Location/Title	Project Applicant	Description	Date of Discussion
Recreational Marihuana Ordinance	CED Staff	City Council passed a motion that staff and the Planning Commission review and recommend whether to increase the number of medical marihuana provisioning centers and marihuana retailers by two (2) additional permits, which would increase each permit type to a total of five (5) permits.	2/5/2020
22230 Woodward	Tim Hortons	Tim Horton's is exploring redevelopment of the existing business at 22230 Woodward Avenue. The project proposes to continue the use as a drive-through facility but build a new smaller footprint establishment and provide site improvements.	5/6/2020 6/3/2020
23100 Woodward	Barbat Organization  (Former Art Van Pure Sleep store)	Art Van has closed down all of its stores and is filing for bankruptcy. The Barbat Organization would like to propose a redevelopment of the property in order to convert the building to a convenience store with a brand-new exterior façade, interior floor plan and the addition of four gas pumps with canopy.	5/6/2020
140 Vester	Syndicate	Prospective business owner at 140 Vester proposed a bar/lounge/restaurant for this space. Per the current parking requirements, this use requires payment in lieu of	9/2/2020

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		parking. The applicant would need an additional 5 spaces for \$4,000 per space, and therefore a total cost of \$20,000.	
475/487/493 Withington Street	Ferndalehaus Lofts Withington	Ferndalehaus Lofts Withington was previously approved on September 5th, 2018 and site plan approval for this project expire on September 5th, 2020. The developer is taking this opportunity to adjust the project to better fit the needs of the Ferndale community and presented 3 different options, including affordable housing options.	9/2/2020
733 West Nine Mile Rd & OPRA	Khraizat Investments LLC.	Developer plans redevelopment for the new occupants, Ferndale Family Pharmacy. Discussion of redevelopment and OPRA application.	9/2/2020
Ferndale Moves update	CED staff	Discussion about the update to the community's mobility plan, Ferndale Moves (ferndalemoves.com).	9/2/2020
522 E 9 Mile Accessory Structure	Blumz by JR Design	Applicant is interested in erecting a pergola and fence area in the front of their property to provide storage and visual seasonal displays throughout the year.	10/7/2020
700 Woodward Heights	Kyle Ann Trombley	The applicant is looking into a potential event space and planning operation at 700 Woodward Heights.	10/7/2020
Pleasant Street 25-27-430-005	Five/Eighths architecture	A white-box industrial space development for a variety of businesses. Looking for guidance on a range of items for the site.	10/7/2020
940 Livernois	Associated Environmental Services, LLC	Discuss a potential multi-family development at an old gas station site that has significant existing environmental concerns. Need Brownfield tax credits for the project to be viable.	10/7/2020
503 E 9 Mile	Full Circles Community	The development would be a 55-unit affordable housing development. Looking for input on development opportunities and whether rezonings need to occur or potential planned unit development.	10/7/2020 12/3/2020
Capital Improvement Plan 2022-2026	CED staff	The 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a five year expenditure plan that provides the City with a financial strategy to support vital infrastructure improvements and major investments.	11/18/2020

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397 E Breckenridge	The Levine Group	The proposed design would require a conditional rezoning due to the proposed number of units.	11/18/2020 12/15/2020
Public Notice Requirements and Community Engagement	CED Staff	Discussion on if and when to post large signs for development and/or parcel rezoning. Suggestion from the City Attorney to consider setting a threshold. Discussion of posting on Woodward Talk. Ask for staff to come back in 2021 with more suggestions.	12/2/2020
Discussion of Fences	Commissioner Showalter	Discussion of revising the fence ordinance and possibly going to one fence per property line.	12/2/2020
Residential Development as part of the Dot Development	Versa Wanda	The design proposal is 11 multifamily units, 4 floors, 1BR and 2BR in a variety of sizes; it meets the technical requirements of the PUD in place for the site, which was originally approved by the City of Ferndale on October 27, 2017.	12/15/2020

## 5 ZONING MAP

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The City of Ferndale Zoning Map was updated on November 13<sup>th</sup> 2020 and can be found on the [City's website](#) and online [GIS portal](#). The zoning map was also updated based on recent rezoning applications on August 1, 2021.

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## 6 TRAININGS

Training/Conference	Topic	Role	Date	Location
CARH Midyear Meeting	Rural affordable housing	Michelle Foster	1/29/20	New Orleans, LA
ULI Confronting Covid-19 Through Parks, Public Spaces	Public Spaces	Brittany Hoszkiw	5/5/20	Virtual
CEDAM Navigating Difficult Conversations	Navigating difficult conversations	Michelle Foster	9/29/20	Virtual
Main Street Oakland Co Planning for Recovery Webinar	Downtown Development during Covid-10	Brittany Hoszkiw	10/6/20	Virtual
Michigan Housing Council Virtual Fall Conference	Affordable housing in Michigan	Michelle Foster	10/20/20	Virtual
MEDA Annual Meeting	Economic development best practices	Brittany Hoszkiw	10/20-21/20	Virtual
MAP Winter Institute	Various topics	Brittany Hoszkiw	11/4/20	Virtual

## 7 JOINT MEETINGS

None.