



innovative *by* nature



The

Annual Report

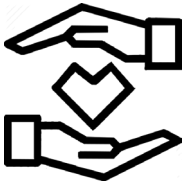
Planning and Economic Development Department
City of Rochester Hills



Introduction

The mission of the Planning and Economic Development (PED) Department is to support and promote quality development. By preserving what Rochester Hills already has, enhancing those elements that can be improved and diversifying options, Rochester Hills can continue to be among the nation's preeminent places to live, work and raise a family for many years to come.

PRESERVE



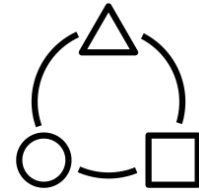
- ▶ Established neighborhoods
- ▶ Irreplaceable natural environment
- ▶ Healthy business community
- ▶ First-rate quality of life
- ▶ Historical assets

ENHANCE



- ▶ Role as a regional destination
- ▶ Commitment to sustainability
- ▶ Real estate options
- ▶ Pedestrian environment
- ▶ Access to cultural resources

DIVERSIFY



- ▶ Housing choices
- ▶ Transportation alternatives
- ▶ Employment opportunities
- ▶ Businesses & services
- ▶ Tax base

Responsibilities

- ▶ **PED staff provide relevant zoning and land development assistance** to existing and prospective residents and businesses including guidance to applicants seeking approval for zoning ordinance amendments or rezonings, variances, site plans, planned unit developments (PUDs), wetland use permits, tree removal permits, historic preservation certificates of appropriateness, and brownfield redevelopment plans for Tax Increment Financing.
- ▶ **PED staff assist businesses by establishing and implementing a business stabilization, expansion and retention program**, providing site and facility location assistance, and offering guidance when seeking state and local incentives for establishing and/or locating a business and economic recovery. Introductions to resources that support companies' talent and business development needs are also a service the PED staff provides.
- ▶ **PED staff provide support to the Planning Commission, Zoning/Sign Board of Appeals, Historic Districts Commission, Mayor's Business Council, the Historic Districts Study Committee, Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and Local Development Finance Authority.**
- ▶ **The PED Department continues to provide coordination with other City departments**, organizes the Development Review Committee (DRC) and sits on a number of other internal committees. Externally, the PED Department engages with various local, regional and state agencies such as Rochester Regional Chamber, Automation Alley, Oakland County, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), Michigan Association of Planning, the Small Business Development Center and the German Chamber of Commerce among others.

Legislative Requirements

Section 125.3819 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended) requires the Planning Commission to prepare an annual report documenting its operations and status of planning activities. This report fulfills this obligation for 2020 and provides information on future actions planned for 2021.

The PED Department has expanded the scope of the report to further document the activities of all of the boards and commissions staffed by the PED Department and the administrative plan reviews of the PED staff. By doing so, the report provides a more complete picture of the Planning, Zoning and Economic Development activities in the City.

2020 PED in Numbers

Approved Developments



16

single family homes



223

multiple family units



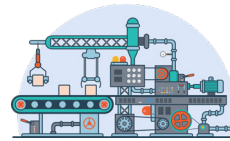
12,025

sq. ft. retail



210,000

sq. ft. office



65,000

sq. ft. industrial

COVID-19 Business Support

350

PPE kits given to businesses



Helped Oakland County distribute

\$422,000

in grant funding to 90 businesses



15

concept meetings hosted by PED. By meeting with the applicant before a formal submittal is made, staff is able to identify major site issues for the applicant early in the process, saving time and plan development costs in the long run.



Even with the restrictions due to COVID-19, PED was able to host **11** of the 15 meetings **virtually** with great success.

19

COVID-19 permits approved



600

businesses assisted in their immediate and long term needs



City Vacancy Rates

4.0%

industrial

4.4%

retail

6.7%

office

as of 12-31-2020

2020 Department Highlights

► January

Pamela Valentik Appointed to the RRC Board



Pamela was appointed to a three-year term on the Rochester Regional Chamber of Commerce Board. This is the first time a City employee (non-City Council member) has been offered a seat on the Board. She was also invited to participate on SEMCOG's 2020 Economic Development Strategic Plan Task Force. Her vast expertise and passion for local, regional, national and global B2B assures that she is the right fit for the both positions. Congratulations, Pam!

► May

We've Been Certified!

Rochester Hills became the 6th community in Oakland County to achieve **Redevelopment Ready Community®** Certification from the MEDC! To be certified, Rochester Hills underwent review by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to confirm that the city integrates transparency, predictability and efficiency into our daily development practices.



This certification recognizes that our community has a vision for the future and the fundamental practices in place to get there. **A proud achievement!**

► June



COVID-19 Special Event Permits Available During the Pandemic

In partnership with City Council and Building Department, PED developed a COVID Special Event Permit that loosened regulations and help businesses open under the state guidelines. The permit allowed many businesses stay open that otherwise would not, possibly closing their doors for good.

Allowances for igloos, tents and other temporary structures indicated our continual support for local businesses and determination to ensure the City of Rochester Hills maintains its level of successful partnerships with the business community.

2020 Department Highlights

► July

Rochester Hills Hosts Global Dignitaries

PED was proud to help coordinate visits and showcase Rochester Hills businesses to some French dignitaries. This included the **French Ambassador to the U.S. Philippe Etienne** and **Consul General of France, Guillaume Lacroix**, based out of Chicago at the French Corner. AdduXi's CEO Xavier Ovize welcomed the VIPs and shared his experience with how Rochester Hills provided a prosperous community for his company to do business.



Xavier Ovize, Mayor Bryan Barnett, Philippe Etienne, Guillaume Lacroix

► August

Approved Planning Unit Developments (PUD), providing housing diversity in the City

Redwood PUD, a unique housing option which will result in 121 ranch style attached homes for rent. Located near the Yates Cider Mill, this development will provide a highly sought after housing type currently not offered in the city.



Rochester University PUD continues the trend of providing more diversified housing options. Rochester University is offering 72 for sale townhouses near campus, abutting the Clinton River.



► September

PED hosted Congresswoman Elisa Slotkin, SBA Regional Administrator Robert Scott, and SBA Detroit Director Connie Logan on a small business tour to discuss the needs of our business community during these difficult times and resources the federal government can make available as we work to stabilize our economy.

as we work to stabilize our economy.



Robert Scott, Congresswoman Elisa Slotkin, Twigs & Branches Floral's owner Kevin Miller, Mayor Bryan Barnett



Mayor Bryan Barnett, business owner Robert Scott, Steve Opatich, Congresswoman Elisa Slotkin, business owner Shaun Llewellyn, SBA Detroit Director Connie Logan

2020 Department Highlights

► October

PED accepted the Urban Design Award from Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) for our design of the Auburn Road Redevelopment project.

Much more than just a road project, the Auburn Road Redevelopment project resulted in the creation of a safe and desirable business district and neighborhood. A jury of American Planning Association Michigan chapter professionals recognized the team’s comprehensive approach to placemaking and appreciated the well thought out vision to create a truly unique district in the City.



“...the project was not just a quality improvement, but has already been a truly transformational project that has generated economic development and placemaking impacts.” — MAP Award Juror



Hired Economic Development Specialist

Michelle Carley joined the team on October 26th. She has 25 years experience working with B2B marketing and communications in a variety of industries.. Michelle’s friendly, positive attitude will be a great asset to the businesses in Rochester Hills and to the PED team. Glad to have you on board Michelle!

► November

MBC/RHISE Virtual Event featuring Rochester Hills’ own Erik Qualman “Equalman”

2020 did not offer many in-person opportunities, but we persisted to ensure we brought our Mayor’s Business Council and RHISE (Rochester Hills Innovators and Senior Executives) members in front of valuable influencers, even if it was virtually.

Best selling author and keynote speaker **Erik Qualman** was the event’s feature presenter. Equalman, as many call him, shared answers and solutions to the challenges of focusing in an unfocused world. His latest book, *The Focus Project*, is a guide to pursuing less in order to achieve more, both personally and professionally.

Erik, a Rochester Hills native (attended Adams High School), was welcomed with a virtual standing ovation and we hope to hear from him again!



Economic Development

Supporting the Business Community during the COVID-19 Crisis

In the spirit of “we will get through this together”, the City’s Economic Development team has been diligent in its efforts to help our business community. Together with our strategic partners, our team has taken an active role in the following economic stabilization initiatives:

Assisted businesses in understanding the numerous federal, state and county public health recommendations orders and protocols.

Sat on a review committee to distribute over \$422,000 to 90 Rochester Hills businesses through the Oakland County Stabilization Grant program.

Participated in weekly calls with Rochester Regional Chamber of Commerce members to provide regular updates on government news and hearing the needs of the businesses. Promoting the many outreach and business support services of the RRC.

Connected businesses and employees with the Michigan Works/Oakland County Workforce Development programs.



Promoted the free business counseling and webinars offered to small businesses by the SBA, and Oakland County One Stop Shop.

Coordinated a small business tour with SBA Regional Administrator Robert Scott and Congresswoman Elisa Slotkin to share feedback on current and future federal stimulus programs.

Assisted businesses in completing their grant/loan applications.

Participated on the City team to develop the COVID Special Permit Program allowing all businesses flexibility in their efforts to operate in a safe manner while still following public health protocols.

Coordinated the distribution of 350 PPE Reopen Kits to businesses and nonprofits in Rochester Hills.

Connected PPE businesses with local supply and grant opportunities, including securing donations of face masks and sanitizers for our Fire Department.

Promoted federal PPP and EIDL grant/loan programs and state MEDC grant programs.

And finally, we supported our businesses in the best way we could—promoted that they are open, encourage residents and visitors to patronize these businesses and support their workforce needs. This included:

- ▶ Assisted 30 businesses with securing free billboard advertising along M-59
- ▶ Worked with City Council members Ryan Deel, Dr. Susan Bowyer and Dale Hetrick who graciously donated 200 gift cards valued at \$1,000 from local restaurant gift cards, used in implementing promotional programs such as:
 - » Restaurant Bingo
 - » Shop, Spend & Win
 - » Caught Shopping Local



Mayor Bryan Barnett caught patrons Shopping Local

Economic Development

In 2020, the economic development team's efforts assisted over **600** Rochester Hills businesses in their immediate and long term needs. It is the role of economic development to constantly monitor the market and needs of all businesses within our City, and we will continue to pivot our priorities, resources and outreach to support the long term vision of the City of Rochester Hills to retain and attract good companies in order to provide quality careers for our residents and talent to the larger region.



Stories of the Year

Auburn Pharmaceuticals Company relocated to Rochester Hills

Auburn Pharmaceutical Company is a privately-held company that specializes in just-in-time logistical distribution of generic drugs to independent pharmacies. Started in 1993, this family-owned business has experienced consistent growth – in customers, product lines, operations and employees. Wanting to construct a state-of-the-art headquarters and logistical optimization center, Auburn Pharmaceutical leadership began the search for a new home. No surprise, they found it in Rochester Hills. In June, the company began construction on a new 65,000 square foot headquarters on vacant land located at the intersection of Rochester Industrial and Horizon Court.



This \$9 million investment and relocation will bring 100 jobs to the community. In June, City Council approved a real property tax abatement. Auburn Pharmaceutical Company prides itself in

being a good corporate citizen, too. At a time when the community needed its corporate partners the most, Auburn Pharmaceutical graciously donated PPE equipment to our first responders.

Prefix Corporation receives Sunrise Pinnacle Award Business of the Year



Prefix Corporation has long been a staple business along Hamlin Road in Rochester Hills. Founded in 1979, the company, which initially provided engineering services to the automotive industry has advanced to high tech and high profile prototypes for the automotive, aviation, amusement and movie industries. Operating with four Michigan facilities, their headquarters is in Rochester Hills. Last year the company celebrated 40 years in business. During this health and economic crisis, Prefix was one of the first Rochester Hills' companies to immediately jump in and pivot to PPE supplies, still providing jobs to their employees by producing face shields—some for sale, some donated.



Prefix President Erik Zeile receiving award from RRC President Alaina Campbell.

Nominated by the City, Prefix Corporation was selected by the Rochester Regional Chamber to as the 2020 Sunrise Pinnacle Business of the Year.

Planning Commission

Meetings

The Planning Commission held ten regularly scheduled meetings, with one being a joint meeting with City Council, and one training session. The meetings were generally held on the third Tuesday of each month.

Site Plans - Total Reviews

Name	Project Description	Location	PC Decision/ Admin. Approval	Meeting Date
Tienken Traillofts	12 unit townhomes	North of Tienken, west of Rochester	Approved	4-21-20
Auburn Pharmaceuticals	65,000 sq. ft. office/ warehouse	West of Livernois, south of Avon	Approved	4-21-20
Hamlin Outdoor Storage	Recreational vehicle storage	North of Hamlin between John R and Dequindre	Approved	5-19-20
Speedway Gas Station	4,600 sq. ft. conve- nience store with gas station rebuild	Southwest corner of Avon and Rochester	Approved	5-19-20
North Row	20 unit multiple family attached	Old Orion Ct., west of Rochester	Approved	6-2-20
Hillside	150,000 sq. ft. office	South of Hamlin, west of Adams	Approved	8-18-20
Rochester Hills Surgery Center	60,000 sq. ft. medical office	North of South Blvd., west of Dequindre	Approved	11-17-20
North Row (revised)	20 unit multiple family attached	Old Orion Ct., west of Rochester	Approved	12-15-20
Chief Financial Credit Union	Redevelopment of 7,425 sq. ft. building to drive-through credit union	Northeast corner of Rochester and Diversion	Approved	12-15-20

Rezoning/Planned Unit Developments -

Name	Square Feet/Units	Location	PC Decision	Date
Rochester University Townhomes	72 units	North of Avon, east of Livernois	Recommended Approval	2-18-20 (Preliminary) 7-21-20 (Final)
Rochester Hills Research Park	25 acres	West of Livernois, south of Avon	Recommended Approval	4-21-20
Redwood at Rochester Hills	121 units	Southwest corner of Avon and Dequindre	Recommended Approval	7-21-20
First Amendment to the Rochester University PUD	NA	North of Avon, east of Livernois	Recommended Approval	7-21-20

— Conditional Use Recommendations —

Name	Project Description	Location	PC Decision	Date
Chief Financial Credit Union	Redevelopment of 7,425 sq. ft. building to drive-through credit union	Northeast corner of Rochester and Diversion	Recommended Approval	12-15-20

- Subdivisions and Site Condominiums -

Name	Square Feet/Units	Location	PC Decision	Date
Cambridge Knoll	16 units	North of Avon, east of Rochester	Approved	8-18-20 (Preliminary) 11-17-20 (Final)

Wetland Use Permit Recommendations

Name	Square Feet Impacts	Location	PC Decision	Date
Hamlin Outdoor Storage	5,471 sq. ft.	North side of Hamlin between John R and Dequindre	Recommended Approval	5-19-20
North Row	4,094 sq. ft.	Old Orion Ct., west of Rochester	Recommended Approval	6-2-20
Redwood at Rochester Hills	11,700 sq. ft.	Southwest corner of Avon and Dequindre	Recommended Approval	7-21-20
Rochester University Townhomes	3,175 sq. ft.	North of Avon, east of Livernois	Recommended Approval	7-21-20
Rochester Hills Surgery Center	14,375 sq. ft.	North of South Blvd., west of Dequindre	Recommended Approval	11-17-20
North Row (revised)	7,884 sq. ft.	Old Orion Ct., west of Rochester	Recommended Approval	12-15-20

Natural Features and Setback Modifications

Name	Linear Feet Impacts	Location	PC Decision	Date
Auburn Pharmaceuticals	125 ft.	West of Livernois, south of Avon	Approved	4-21-20
Hamlin Outdoor Storage	424 ft.	North side of Hamlin between John R and Dequindre	Approved	5-19-20
North Row	450 ft.	Old Orion Ct., west of Rochester	Approved	6-2-20
Redwood at Rochester Hills	3,260 ft.	Southwest corner of Avon and Dequindre	Approved	7-21-20
Rochester University Townhomes	400 ft.	North of Avon, east of Livernois	Approved	7-21-20
Rochester Hills Surgery Center	825 ft.	North of South Blvd., west of Dequindre	Approved	11-17-20
North Row (revised)	657 ft.	Old Orion Ct., west of Rochester	Approved	12-15-20

Tree Removal Permits

Name	Trees Removed	Location	PC Decision	Date
Tienken Traillofts	1	North of Tienken, west of Rochester	Approved	4-21-20
Auburn Pharmaceuticals	51	West of Livernois, south of Avon	Approved	4-21-20
Hamlin Outdoor Storage	171	North side of Hamlin between John R and Dequindre	Approved	5-19-20
Speedway Gas Station	7	Southwest corner of Avon and Rochester	Approved	5-19-20
North Row	48	Old Orion Ct., west of Rochester	Approved	6-2-20
Redwood at Rochester Hills	45	Southwest corner of Avon and Dequindre	Approved	7-21-20
Rochester University Townhomes	737	North of Avon, east of Livernois	Approved	7-21-20
Cambridge Knoll	55	North of Avon, east of Rochester	Approved	8-18-20
Hillside	236	South of Hamlin, west of Adams	Approved	8-18-20
Rochester Hills Surgery Center	39	North of South Blvd., west of Dequindre	Approved	11-17-20
Chief Financial Credit Union	7	Northeast corner of Rochester and Diversion	Approved	12-15-20

Ordinance Amendments

- ▶ Multiple family parking update adopted to require increased visitor parking and clarify regulations.
- ▶ Amendments adopted to address to require on-site signage for PUDs, require five-foot sidewalks on all public and private roads with an existing or planned right-of-way less than 120 feet, require average lot widths to equal the minimum lot width of the underlying zoning district when the Lot Size Variation option is utilized, clarify when an accessory structure is considered attached, remove parking lot double striping standards and require street trees on private roads.

Miscellaneous Items

Per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the Planning Commission approved the Capital Improvements Plan for 2021-2026 at their June 2, 2020 meeting.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

Meetings

The Zoning Board of Appeals held five regularly scheduled meetings in 2020. The meetings were generally held on the second Wednesday of each month.

Dimensional Variances

Address	Request	ZBA Decision	Date
47441 Dequindre	Variance of 3.85 ft. from front yard setback (25 ft. required)	Approved	1-8-20
47347 Dequindre	Variance of 9.97 ft. from front yard setback (25 ft. required)	Approved	2-5-20
493 John R	Variance to allow a detached garage in the front yard	Approved	9-9-20
3441 John R	Variance to allow accessory structures more than 1,000 sq. ft.	Denied	12-9-20

Sign Variances

Address	Request	ZBA Decision	Date
1711 E. Auburn	Variance to allow visible sign illumination	Withdrawn	10-14-20

Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

The Brownfield Redevelopment Authority did not meet in 2020.

- Historic Districts Commission (HDC) and - Historic Districts Study Committee (HDSC)

Meetings

The HDC held six regularly scheduled meetings in 2020. The meetings were generally held on the second Thursday of each month.

Historic Districts Commission Reviews

Name	Trees Removed	PC Decision	Date (2020)
1185 Washington	Construct a monopole for wireless communication	Denied	1-9-20
6425 Winkler Mill	Replacement of porch windows and door	Approved	2-13-20
1590 Washington	New home construction	Approved	5-14-20
960 E. Tienken	Moving existing fence and adding new fence	Approved	5-14-20
1431 Washington	New in-ground pool construction	Approved	8-13-20
1841 Crooks	New senior assisted living construction	Approved	11-12-20

Historic District Study Committee

The HDSC considered no official requests in 2020.

Planning Staff Reviews

Name	Project Description	Status
A-Star Convenience	Remodel of existing gas station at southeast corner of Walton and Livernois	Concept meeting held
Rochester Hills Surgical Center	60,000 sq. ft. medical office north of South Blvd., west of Dequindre	Plan approved
10 E. Auburn Restaurant	2,900 sq. ft. drive-through restaurant on south side of Auburn, east of Rochester	Concept meeting held
Vital Qi Acupuncture	Re-development of existing single family home into medical office	Plan approved
1811 E. Hamlin	2,300 sq. ft. north side of Hamlin, west of Dequindre	Concept meeting held
1841 Crooks Rd.	12 bed senior living	Concept meeting held, plan submitted
Priya Senior Living	235,000 sq. ft. senior living northeast corner of Adams and South	Concept meeting held
3325 John R Subdivision	14 single family homes	Concept meeting held
Yates Cider Mill	Parking lot expansion	Concept meeting held
Zeenat Plaza	30,000 sq. ft. mixed use at corner of Auburn and Gerald	Concept meeting held, plan submitted
Auburn and Livernois PUD	16 duplexes and 15 single family homes on east side of Livernois between South and Auburn	Concept meeting held
Rochester Place	3-story multiple family west of Winchester shopping center	Concept meeting held
Bebb Oak Meadows	111,000 sq. ft. 4-story apartment at former Barnes and Noble	Concept meeting held
R. Youngblood & Co.	Landscape plant nursery at 930 Mead Rd.	Concept meeting held

Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA)

- ▶ LDFA held one meeting in 2020.
- ▶ LDFA approved its 2021-2023 budget at the July 19, 2020 meeting, including design of the Adams Rd. crosswalk.
- ▶ The LDFA welcomed a new member, Ryan Price. Mr. Price is the In-Vehicle Networking Director for Molex. Molex recently moved to Rochester Hills along the newly reconstructed Hamlin Road. Mr. Price has lived in Rochester Hills for seven years.
- ▶ Under the current plan, LDFA is scheduled to sunset in 2025. While there is the potential to extend the LDFA, in 2019 the board worked with staff to identify current and future revenues and fund balances and develop a list of capital projects that will involve investment in infrastructure within the district. Due to market circumstances, the timeline was adjusted. The list below reflects those projects and respective start dates:

Name	Project Description	Timeline
Waterview Dr.	Road Reconstruction Installation of sidewalk and street trees	2021/2022
Old Adams/Forester Blvd.	Road reconstruction	2022/2023
LDFA District Signs	Construct gateway entrance signs	2023
Bond Street	Installation of sidewalk and street trees	2025
Research Drive	Installation of sidewalk and street trees	2025
Leach Road	Road Reconstruction Installation of sidewalk and street trees	Dependent on market demand
Industrial Drive	Obtain jurisdiction Road reconstruction Installation of sidewalk and street trees	Dependent on market demand

Looking Ahead

One of the purposes of the Annual Report is to look ahead to 2021 and anticipate those items that the City desires to address or work on over the next twelve months and beyond in the area of Planning and Economic Development.

Departmental goals include:



Facilitate sustainable development in the City and maintain the high quality of life for all to enjoy

- ▶ Assist applicants in the various PED processes and procedures to result in the best development for the City
- ▶ Investigate changes needed to policies, codes and ordinances to implement the recommendations of the Master Plan
- ▶ Incorporate desirable quality of life place making efforts into City road projects including upcoming plans for Avon, Hamlin, and Adams Roads
- ▶ Develop a streetscape and gateway plan that creates a distinguishable and attractive aesthetic to the City of Rochester Hills
- ▶ With the assistance of the PNR Department and the Paint Creek Center for the Arts, begin to create a framework for introducing art into the city through private development, parks, roundabouts, gateways, streetscapes, DIA Inside Out Program, etc.

Implement the recommendations of the Economic Development Strategy

- ▶ Strive to develop and support an ecosystem that embraces entrepreneurship
- ▶ Retain and attract “good” companies that are garnering national attention as “Movers and Shakers” within their industry
- ▶ Identify and market the community’s attractiveness for international business investment
- ▶ Grow and market Rochester Hills’ talented workforce
- ▶ Partner with existing developers to maintain Class A commercial real estate and promote Rochester Hills to innovative developers

Improve coordination and efficiency within PED and with other City Departments

- ▶ Limit the amount of paper that crosses the PED Department by going to electronic plan review and commission packets
- ▶ Assist in implementation of the BS&A PZE module to be fully integrated into City Departments associated with plan review and inspections to maximize efficiency and customer service

Successfully balance work and home life to ensure happy and healthy employees

- ▶ Be flexible with employees to accommodate personal priorities and appointments while still maintaining deadlines and quality service
- ▶ Provide a friendly and comfortable place to work/sense of comradery that makes employees want to come to work



innovative *by* nature



Planning and Economic Development Team

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