



Planning and Economic Development (PED) Annual Report 2017



Introduction to the Planning and Economic Development Department (PED)

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

PED staff provide relevant zoning and land development assistance to existing and perspective 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 also assist businesses by establishing and implementing a business expansion and retention program, site and facility location assistance, providing guidance when seeking state and local incentives for establishing and/or locating a business, and introductions to resources that support companies' talent and business development needs.

PED staff provide support to the Planning Commission, Zoning/Sign Board of Appeals, Historic Districts Commission, Mayor's Business Council, the City Council's Historic Districts Study Committee, Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, Local Development Finance Authority, Economic Development Corporation, and SmartZone™.

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 2017 and provides information on future actions planned for 2018.

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.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Site Plans

Total Site Plan Reviews			12
Name	Square Feet	PC Decision	Date (2017)
Fire Station No. 4	9,663 sq. ft.	Approved	February 21
Cedar Valley Apartments	186 units	Approved	February 21, September 19 & November 21
Beyond Self Storage	111,279 sq. ft.	Approved	February 21
Emagine Theater Expansion	15,226 sq. ft.	Approved	April 4
ARaymond Headquarters Building	21,982 sq. ft.	Approved	April 4
2020 Rochester Rd. Gas Station	2,700 sq. ft.	Approved	April 18
Innovation Hills	NA	Approved	June 20 & August 29
Oakridge Dental	5,000 sq. ft.	Approved	August 15
Silver Spoon Ristorante	3,986 sq. ft.	Approved	August 15 & August 29
Premier Academy	14,911 sq. ft.	Approved	August 29 & December 19
Detroit Meeting Room	1,300 sq. ft.	Approved	October 17
The Winchester District	151,333 sq. ft.	Approved	December 19

Cedar Valley Apartments was considered by the Planning Commission three times. The first approval was to construct 86 apartment units in two buildings east of Rochester Road and north of Eddington Boulevard. The second approval was for a revised plan containing 99 units. The third consideration (November 21) for revised elevations was denied.

Innovation Hills, the City park located near the intersection of Hamlin and Adams Roads was first considered on June 20, where the matter was postponed to allow the City to address resident concerns, and then ultimately approved on August 29.

The site plan for Silver Spoon Ristorante was approved

on August 29 after postponement at the August 15 Planning Commission meeting because of resident and Planning Commission concerns.

The site plan for Premier Academy was first on the August 29 Planning Commission agenda. Several residents expressed concerns regarding area traffic and site layout and the matter was postponed and reconsidered at the December 19 meeting, where the site plan was approved.

All other site plans noted above were approved in a single meeting.

Subdivisions & Site Condominiums

Total Site Condo Reviews			3
Name	# Units	PC Decision	Date (2017)
Saddlebrook Orchards	9 units	Recommended Approval	January 17
Pine Woods (Extension only)	28 units	Recommended Approval	July 25
Commons South	12 units	Recommended Approval	December 19

Saddlebrook Orchards, on the north side of Auburn Road between Crooks and Livernois, proposed 9 units on 5 acres using the lot size averaging option in the R-4 District. The applicant has yet to submit plans to proceed to City Council for approval of the site condo.

The Final Site Condo Plan approval for Pine Woods Site Condos (located south of Auburn and east of Livernois in the R-4 District) was extended by the City Council on August 14, 2017. This is the final extension and is valid for a period of one year.

The Final Site Condo Plan for Commons South, a 12 unit R-4 development on the north side of Shortridge, east of Livernois will be considered for approval by the City Council at the beginning of 2018.

The Planning Commission did not consider any platted subdivision requests in 2017.

Conditional Use Recommendations

Total Conditional Use Reviews				6
Name	Square Feet	PC Decision	Date (2017)	
Cruise Transmission	3,100 sq. ft.	Recommended Approval	January 17	
The Jagged Fork	2,000 sq. ft.	Recommended Approval	April 18	
Chopin Day Care	(Existing Home)	Recommended Approval	July 25	
Premier Academy	14,911 sq. ft.	Recommended Approval	August 29 & December 19	
Silver Spoon Ristorante	3,986 sq. ft.	Recommended Approval	August 15 & August 29	
The Winchester District	151,333 sq. ft.	Recommended Approval	December 19	

Cruise Transmission ultimately received approval from the City Council on January 23, 2017 to occupy an existing building in order to operate their auto repair business at the northwest corner of Livernois and Hamlin Roads.

Jagged Fork received approval from the City Council on May 1, 2017 of a conditional use for alcohol sales at the Village of Rochester Hills.

Chopin Day Care was seeking approval for operation of an in-home day care for 7-12 children. After a positive recommendation from the Planning Commission, the applicant has elected not to move forward to City Council consideration at this time.

Premier Academy is seeking approval of a conditional use to operate a day care at the intersection of Adams and Tienken Roads. The conditional use was recommended for approval at the December 19, 2017 Planning Commission meeting and is expected to be heard by the City Council at the January 22, 2018 meeting.

Silver Spoon Ristorante was recommended for conditional use approval for operation of a restaurant in the FB-1 district located at 6780 Old Orion Court, west of Rochester Road and north of Tienken. At their request, they have not pursued final approval of the conditional use with the City Council at this time.

The Winchester District concerns the redevelopment of the existing vacant shopping center at Avon and Rochester Roads. As part of that redevelopment, the existing Burger King restaurant will be relocated

elsewhere on the site. This relocation necessitates approval of a conditional use for operation of the Burger King drive-through on the site. The matter is expected to be considered by the City Council at their January 22, 2018 meeting.

Tree Removal Permits

Total Tree Removal Permit Reviews					6
Name	Acreage	# Trees on Site / # Trees Removed	PC Decision	Date (2017)	
Saddlebrook Orchards	5 acres	221 / 102	Approved	January 17	
Cedar Valley Apartments	5.5 acres	240 / 223	Approved	February 21 & Sept. 19	
Innovation Hills	110 + acres	500 removed	Approved	June 20 & August 29	
Oakridge Dental	2 acres	140 / 72	Approved	August 15	
Premier Academy	1.4 acres	12 / 0	Approved	August 29 & Dec. 19	
The Winchester District	12.9 acres	7 / 0	Approved	Dec. 19	

All tree removal permits approved by the Planning Commission in 2017 were associated with approved site plans previously noted in this report.

Wetland Use Permit Recommendations

The Planning Commission did not consider any Wetland Use Permits in 2017.

Natural Features Setback Modifications

Total Natural Features Setback Modifications				2
Name	Acreage	PC Decision	Date (2017)	
Cedar Valley	5.5 acres	Approved	February 21 & September 19	
Silver Spoon Ristorante	3.03 acres	Approved	August 15 & August 29	

All natural features setback modifications approved by the Planning Commission in 2017 were associated with approved site plans previously noted in this report.

Rezoning & Planned Unit Developments

Total Rezoning and PUD Reviews			2
Name	Acreage / # Units	PC Decision	Date (2017)
Terraciano Rezoning	24 acres	Recommended Denial	June 20
Crestwyk Estates PUD	4.4 acres / 16 units	Recommended Approval	November 21

The rezoning concerned a request to rezone a 24 acre parcel south of Mead Road and east of Sheldon Road from RE One Family Residential to R-1 One Family Residential. This request was denied as it was not in compliance with the recommended density on the Future Land Use map.

The PUD request for 16 units on the east side of John R between Hamlin and School Roads was approved by the City Council on December 11, 2017.

Ordinance Amendments

Planning staff has been working on amendments for the past year, along with input from the City's planning consultant Giffels Webster, the City's Building Department, the Zoning Board of Appeals and the City Attorney. The Planning Commission recommended these amendments for approval at their final 2017 meeting and they are expected to be considered by the City Council at their January 22, 2018 meeting.

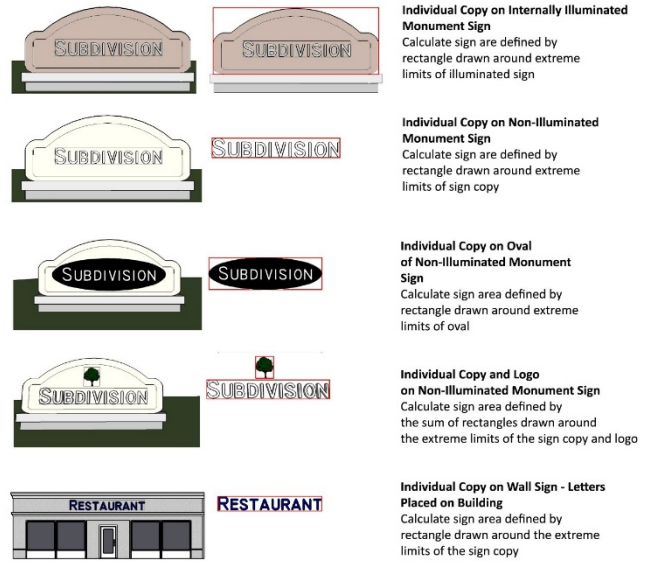
The Planning Commission recommended approval of the following amendments:

- On-site signage for proposed rezonings and conditional use requests.
- Places of Worship, Libraries and Museums changed from permitted use to conditional use in single family residential districts and additional restrictions proposed.
- Provide provisions for Average Front Setback and eliminate the Established Building Line.
- Relocate sign regulations for the FB District to the Sign Ordinance.
- Include a sliding scale for size limitations for detached accessory structures based on parcel size.
- Update fence regulations and incorporate regulations for residential fences.
- Eliminate references to 'proposed right-of-way' in favor of 'right-of-way'.

Staff also made recommendations to the Planning Commission on amendments regarding State Licensed Residential Facilities and the Temporary

Outdoor Display and Sales of Goods. The Planning Commission provided feedback on the proposals and staff is currently exploring how to address those comments.

In addition, the Planning Commission reviewed and commented on the new Sign Ordinance, which if approved, will be incorporated into the City Code. The City Council is expected consider the new ordinance at the January 22, 2018 meeting.



Sign Area Calculation Guidelines

Miscellaneous Items

Per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the Planning Commission approved the Capital Improvements Plan for 2018-2023 at their April 18, 2017 meeting.

The Commission also considered a number of items for discussion purposes only throughout the year. These included the following:

- General discussion on the regulation of crematoriums;
- Potential PUD for 55 townhomes on Auburn, east of Livernois (Sterling Townhomes);
- Potential 56 unit townhome development near Walton and Brewster; and
- Mixed-use development near Rochester and South.

Meetings

The Planning Commission held ten regularly scheduled meetings in 2017. The meetings were generally held on the third Tuesday of each month. In addition, two special meetings were held in April and August.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS (ZBA)

Dimensional Variances

Total Dimensional Variances in 2017			7
Address	Request	ZBA Decision	Date (2017)
3971 Piccadilly	6.58 ft. variance - rear building setback	Denied	January 11
260 Winry	4.4 ft. variance - side building setback	Approved	March 8 & July 12
3785 Donley	Permit parking of commercial vehicle in R-4	Denied	May 10
320 Lehigh	Interpretation of Established Building Line	Upholds definition	May 10
281 Orchardale	12.31 ft. variance from established building line	Approved	May 10
110 South	9 ft. variance - side parking setback	Approved	May 10
1497 Walton	12.6 ft. variance - established building line	Approved	September 13

Several of the requested dimensional variances were related to provisions in the Zoning Ordinance for the Established Building Line. The section has since been removed from the Zoning Ordinance. Average Front Setback, which takes into account the circumstances of these variance requests, has replaced Established Building Line.

Sign Variances

Total Sign Variances in 2017			6
Address	Request	ZBA Decision	Date (2017)
1015 E. Auburn	Panel change to existing nonconforming sign	Denied	March 8
1020 E. Auburn	Structural alterations to existing nonconforming sign	Denied	April 12
92 E. Auburn	Permit signage with internally lit plastic letters	Approved	May 10
1601 Star Batt	Permit an "off premise" sign, allow a pole-mounted sign, variances in height and size	Denied	November 8
2230 - 2248 Star Court		Denied	November 8
1159 South		Denied	November 8

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) also acts as the Sign Board of Appeals for the City and in doing so denied the majority of sign variance requests presented in 2017. Two of those requests dealt with changes to nonconforming signs. As City Codes and Ordinances seek to curtail nonconforming properties, signs, etc. any expansion of or change to a nonconforming sign is not permitted. The other three denials concerned potential "off premise" signs which would be pole mounted and exceed the height and size standards of the Sign Code.

Miscellaneous Items

At the January 11, 2017 meeting the ZBA held a public hearing on and considered an appeal of staff's determination that a proposed crematorium facility is not a permitted use in the City's Zoning Ordinance. The appeal was denied and the Board resolved that the Planning Commission and staff consider developing an ordinance in this regard.

Meetings

The Zoning Board of Appeals held seven meetings in 2017. The meetings were generally held on the second Wednesday of each month.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION (HDC) AND HISTORIC DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEE (HDSC)

Historic District Commission Reviews

Total HDC Reviews in 2017			6
Address	Request	HDC Decision	Date (2017)
1841 Crooks	Notice to Proceed for Demolition	Approved	April 13, May 11 & December 14
1385 Washington	Certificate of Appropriateness – New Construction	Approved	May 11
1461 Mill Race	Certificate of Appropriateness – In-ground Pool	Approved	June 15
1590 Washington	Certificate of Appropriateness – Addition & Recladding	Approved	August 10
3861 Adams	Certificate of Appropriateness – Siding, Windows, BF Access & Site Design	Approved	September 14
1939 Washington	Certificate of Appropriateness – Alteration to Garage Roof, Dormers & Doors	Approved	December 14

All of the Certificate of Appropriateness requests presented to the Historic District Commission (HDC) in 2017 were considered and approved.

The Notice to Proceed for demolition of the property at 1841 Crooks Road was considered at three separate meetings. A discussion on the item was held at the April 13, 2017 meeting. The request was denied at the May 11, 2017 meeting. Following that denial, the applicant presented information corroborated by City staff showing the property in its current state to be a hazard to the safety of the public, among other considerations. Approval of Notice to Proceed with the demolition was granted by the HDC at that time.

Meetings

The HDC held six meetings in 2017. One special meeting was held in June. The Historic District Study Committee did not meet in 2017.

PLANNING STAFF REVIEWS

Concept Plans

The Planning and Economic Development Department regularly hosts concept meetings for potential applicants. This is an opportunity for applicants to have their initial site design reviewed by the City's development team, who then meet with the applicant's team to go over their comments. Twelve of the sixteen concept plan reviews completed in 2017 went on to have full site plans submitted and in some cases approved.

Total Concept Plan Reviews		
Name	Project Description	Status
Clear Creek Phase 6	17 unit site condo	Concept meeting held
2020 Rochester Rd. Gas Station	Construct 2,700 sq. ft. gas station	Approved by PC
Meijer Outlot Hotel	89 room hotel	Site plan submitted
Sterling – Auburn & Livernois	55 unit attached condo	Concept meeting held
Pulte on Brewster	56 unit attached condo	Concept meeting held
RH House	Redevelop former Yaya's chicken as restaurant	Site plan submitted
Gateway of Rochester Hills	4 story hotel plus mixed-use building	Site plan submitted
Legacy of Rochester Hills	368 unit apartment building – Hamlin & Adams	Amended Consent Judgment submitted
Premier Academy	14,911 sq. ft. day care	Approved by PC
Action 1 Quick Service	3,891 sq. ft. addition	Concept meeting held
Candlewood Suites	4 story hotel on Star Batt	Site plan submitted
Campus Corners Outlot	8,154 sq. ft. retail/restaurant	Site plan submitted
Rochester Ridge	13 unit site condo	Site plan submitted
First State Bank	2,500 sq. ft.	Site plan submitted
Hamlin/Livernois Dental	5,000 sq. ft.	Approved by PC
Hampton Plaza Outlot	8,087 sq. ft. retail/restaurant	Site plan submitted

Minor Amendments to an Approved Plan

The Zoning Ordinance grants the authority to the Planning and Economic Development Department to administratively review and approve site plans in certain instances. These include minor amendments to a previously approved site plan, accessory buildings that meet certain criteria, a minimal increase in the square footage of an existing building and a change in building use. Following is a brief summary of the staff level approvals conducted in 2017.

Total Administrative Staff Reviews			5
Name	Request	Status	
Bader USA	Parking area & landscape upgrades at 2944 Waterview Drive	Approved	
Burger King – Crooks Road	Updated site design to incorporate new double drive-through	Approved	
Adams Road Water Booster Station	Construction of water booster station on Adams High School site	Approved	
ARaymond Connector	Building connection between two existing ARaymond facilities at northeast corner of Technology and Research Drives	Applicant to submit final details	
Plas-Tec Accessory Building	2,300 sq. ft. accessory building located in rear of site – north side of Northfield Drive, east of Crooks Road	Applicant to submit final plans	

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE AUTHORITY (LDFA)

Items Considered

A number of items were considered by the Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA) in 2017. These are detailed as follows:

- The LDFA 2018-2020 Budget was first discussed at the April 13, 2017 meeting and approved at the July 20, 2017 meeting.
- The Technology Drive Pathway Project was approved at the April 13, 2017 meeting. Proposed to be constructed in 2018, the pathway would go within the existing right-of-way on Technology Drive running from Auburn Road to Adams Road and connecting to the Clinton River Trail.
- The Beautification Grant for Rochester Hills Executive Park was approved at the July 20, 2017 meeting. A 50/50 match grant program, this approval funded the landscaping and wayward signage installed at the new pathway connection that was completed in 2016 in partnership between the LDFA and the Rochester Hills Executive Park.

- Jenoptik Automotive hosted the July 20th LDFA board meeting and took members on a tour of its new 100,000 square foot technical campus. This LDFA provided necessary public site improvement support after the City sold the 15 acres to Jenoptik.

Meetings

The LDFA held a total of two meetings in 2017, including one special meeting in July.



Entranceway beautification funded by the LDFA as part of the Beautification Grant for Rochester Hills Executive Park.

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (BRA)

Meetings

The Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) held one meeting in 2017. At that meeting officers were elected and the 2018 meeting schedule approved.

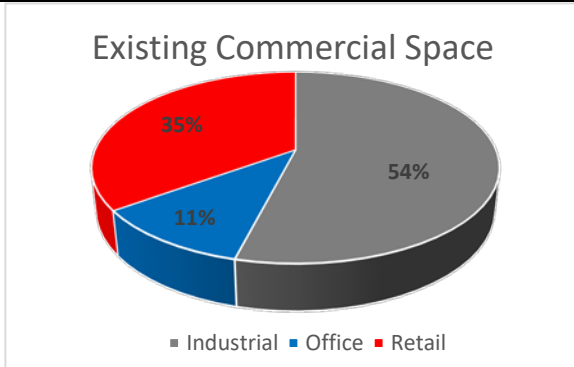
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

The mission of the City's Economic Development team is to retain and attract good companies to the area in order to provide jobs for our residents and attract talent to the larger region.

Reaching out to existing businesses to better understand their needs is one way to maintain business retention. In 2017, City staff made 128 retention visits with area companies.

2017 Business Statistics

Business Stats	
•	14.5 million sq. ft. of existing commercial space
•	1,600 businesses with a physical presence in the city
•	35,000 jobs created in the community
•	50 international companies
•	Represents \$139 million in taxable value



The past year saw an increase in international business development – foreign direct investment:

- Jenoptik completed a \$15 million, Phase I campus development on former City-owned property on Hamlin Road.
- ARaymond, a French company operating 4 different divisions in the City and employing 400 people, is constructing Phase I of its new North American headquarters.
- Molex is finishing up construction at their new Global Headquarters for the Industrial and Transportation Division, purchasing the former VW building on Hamlin Road and investing \$19 million, resulting in the addition of upwards of 400 jobs.

- BADER, a manufacturer of high-end automotive leathers, purchased a building on Waterview Drive and completed a major renovation. A fourth-generation company based in Germany, this Rochester Hills location will act as its North American product design center and showroom. This \$2 million investment will create 25 new jobs in Rochester Hills



Prototype center within Bader USA's new Rochester Hills' facility.

over the next two years.

All these companies bring high-wage job opportunities to our residents and continue to provide opportunities for expats to move into the area.

Presently, the City's business vacancy rate is the lowest it has been in 10 years: 3.5% in industrial/technology parks, 5% in retail and 7% in office. At 2.9%, the City's unemployment rate is also one of the lowest in Michigan and below the national average.

LOOKING AHEAD

One of the purposes of the Annual Report is to look ahead to 2018 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:

Continue to facilitate the right type of development in the City and maintain the high quality of life for all to enjoy.

1. Facilitate a positive conversation about the future of the City through the Master Plan process.
2. Become Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) certified to reinforce City's business friendly climate.
3. Continue and expand retention visits to proactively meet business needs.
4. Continue to assist applicants in the various PED processes and procedures to result in the best development for the City.

Improve communication and transparency with public.

1. Promote and utilize new PED "Notify Me" subscription service for PED related information.
2. Use of Master Plan process to get people involved on overarching development policy.
3. Better utilize website to post relevant and timely information.
4. Use Homeowners Associations to get word out on development proposals.

Improve coordination and efficiency with other City Departments

1. Assist in implementation of the BS&A PZE module.
2. Work with Engineering as it relates to traffic issues on development proposals (short term) and in Ordinances, Master and Thoroughfare Plans (long term).
3. Work with Parks & Natural Resources to ensure natural feature preservation, recreation, and art are incorporated into development proposals (short term) and in Ordinances, Master and Park Plans (long term).

Although it is impossible to predict everything that will arise within the upcoming year, it is anticipated that staff will be focused on the following additional items in the near future:

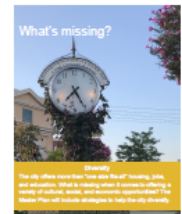
- Implementation of the Auburn Road Corridor Study
- Continued work on Zoning Ordinance Amendments
- Continued work on redevelopment of brownfield sites
- Implementation of the items recommended by the RRC Evaluation including the development of the following:
 - Development Manual
 - Public Participation Plan
 - Conceptual Review Checklist
 - Development Flow Chart
 - Updated Business Attraction Strategy

Preserve.

Enhance.

Diversify.

Master Plan.



Share Your Thoughts in 2018:

Open Houses + Picture This!™ + Online Survey + Crowd Polling



www.RochesterHills.org/MasterPlan