

Marvie Neubauer...

FVI: Mayor Bryan Barnett, Planning Department, City Council... Planning Department please forward this letter to all Planning Commissioners.

Just like last month I have chosen not to attend the July workshop.

Bordine's of Rochester Hills

Last month I was livid when I read our planning director plans to redevelop Bordine's of Rochester Hills, only continues to prove she is not listening to the concerns of City Council and the residents of Rochester Hills. Glad now I hope that idea is out of the plan!

US news and World Report

US news and World Report ... to claim Rochester Hills is number one in Michigan based on a magazine that went out of the printing business in 2010 and now is in a city play to pay survey business; questionable by many experts, is a far-fetched reach. Page 4 Rochester Hills master plan. This instantly diminishes the plan's credibility. US news and World Report ... Carmel Indiana, Troy MI and Traverse City MI also participated in this play to pay survey. Carmel Indiana #2, Troy MI #10 and has same score as Rochester Hills #9 but R does come before T. Traverse City MI #250 the lowest score in the survey... WOW! Multiple studies and rankings for decades consistently identify Traverse City MI in the top #100 worldwide as a travel destination. That puts Traverse City MI on the same list with The Great Wall of China, Paris France, The Taj Mahal, The Pyramids of Egypt etc. The Traverse City area was recently recognized by The Wall Street Journal as one of its "10 Best Places to Go in 2025." The Wall Street Journal a credible newspaper still publishing.

Troy Michigan

Also multiple studies and rankings for decades consistently identify Ann Arbor & Troy as among the most livable cities in Michigan ... source google

- Troy does have a would class boulevard and a downtown it is indoors, The Somerset Collection, A collection of high end retail stores that can not be found anywhere else in Michigan one would have to go as far as New York or Chicago to find the same stores.
- Troy just approved a new multi-million dollar University of Michigan regional hospital and a multi-million dollar infill development to replace the The former Kmart headquarters. \$600-\$750 million ... source google
- Troy is building a new multi-million dollar library built near the Troy Community Center. potentially costing between \$33-\$43 million ... source google
- Troy public high school ranked consistently in the top three public high schools in Michigan ... source google
- Troy, City of Rochester and Oakland Township all have consistently throughout multiple decades higher per square foot single family residential home values, compared with Rochester Hills ... source Zillow
- Troy master plan has comprehensive in-fill plans for all their mile roads. Troy is continuing to rebuild Rochester Road as a boulevard for safety and congestion concerns ... source Troy master plan
- Troy currently is working on a landscape beautification project; Big Beaver Road and I-75 exit 69 ... source google

What does Rochester Hills have to show as of late; approval of 3 new modern looking gas stations that are going to be converted into large liquor stores and two car washes. A questionable spot-zoning northeast part of town apartment building in the middle of a R-1: One Family Residential district.

M-59 right-of-way and landscaping boulevards

Rochester Hills master plan has no plans to improve the look of the M-59 right-of-way. The interchange of Rochester Rd and M-59 is nothing more than during spring, summer, fall months ... grass that for the most part is tall weeds that only get cut only 4 times per year and a few trees in dry hot weather that don't look happy. Crooks Rd and M-59 ... Adams Rd and M-59 the same sad look. Have you ever driven M-59 through Macomb County, all kinds of wonderful clean cut landscaping and a lot of new trees. Sterling Heights has a new public art sculpture ... yes the brunt of many jokes ... art can bring out the best in us ... Sterling Heights boulevards are some of the prettiest in the entire state. Nothing definitive in our master plan to improve the landscaping look of our existing boulevards (except sad to say a lot more gateway signage) ... nothing in Rochester Hills even close to the look of the boulevards in Sterling Heights. Hundreds of thousands of perennial flowers bloom through spring, summer and fall. But ... desperate to wonder where the intelligence in this decision came from; our planning director want's the city to spend \$226,188.00 on a new 36' wide by 12' tall "Gateway Sign" about a 1/2 mile north of our border with Troy MI on the northeast corner of Rochester Rd and M-59 surrounded by weeds and sad trees. WHY?

generic fluff copy

What do we have in our master plan so far... As feared 85 pages of text that is no different than many other mundane community master plans. \$100,000.00+ of time and money, page after page of nothing more than generic "fluff copy," bullet points and paragraphs of already known givens. "Generic fluff copy" refers to writing that is vague, unspecific, and lacks valuable information. Filler or padding that adds length without adding meaning ... source google Many "fluff copy" community involvement pages, with so far to date (with exception to the survey) less than 65 participants from our neighborhoods, our young new home-buyers, places of worship and the business community. note: Carmel Indiana over 1000+ participants source master plan one page no "fluff copy", page 05.

new land-use map

There is some creativity with the new land-use map with less colors, will this not render a lot of confusion with our current zoning map? We also have increased a lot of density in our R-4 districts to "Neighborhood Residential" which would allow now 6 homes per acre from 4 homes per acre. page 28 master plan. Why new spot-zoning southwest corner Auburn Rd and Livernois Rd. currently zoned 4 homes per acre now master plan 6 homes per acre, more density. Why?

where all mile roads are turned into parkways

Why are we spending time and money in our master plan dividing up our city based on schools? ... we are one city! 40 years 'the north end of town is where the money is south end of town not so much.' 'North end of town they get the Village south end of town they get Walmart.' Why does our planning director want to create a master plan that would continue to divide us. We are one beautiful residential community and we need a plan that will unite us. A plan where all mile roads are turned into parkways, a city wide bike street plan, bike streets are 10 feet wide and are separate from roadways 10 to 15 feet with green space.

Walton Boulevard

Walton Boulevard could have a 15 year plan to become a 4 lane boulevard from Oakland University to the City of Rochester MI city limits. With a full blown landscaping plan, separate from the roadway a bike street on the south side and were needed 5-foot wide sidewalks, and a pedestrian pathway on the north side. Single-family home prices would increase, Walton Boulevard becomes the prestige boulevard to live on in Rochester Hills! Walkable, bike-friendly, safe bus and auto experience ... a stunning parkway that links Oakland University to Downtown Rochester MI. None of this visionary thinking is in our new master plan. note: It's called Street Typologies page 48-55 Carmel Indiana master plan. Carmel Indiana master plan is visionary thinking!

Rochester Rd.

To render most of extremely dangerous five-lane 50 mph highway Rochester Rd, from the Rochester MI south bridge to the Troy border flexible business development that would allow four story dense development. Conflicts with the desire of the community and City Council. Current proposal in new master plan. Rochester Rd could have a 20 year plan to be rebuilt as a four-lane and six-lane ... (six-lane from M-59 north to Barkley Circle) ... boulevard, A new gateway cable stayed bridge that crosses a stunning wetland, open water and M-59 that drops down into a new downtown Rochester Hills with a new central park. Rochester Boulevard would also have a full blown landscaping plan, separate from the roadway a bike street on the east side and were needed 5-foot wide sidewalks, and a pedestrian pathway on the west side. The corner of Tienken Rd and Rochester Rd would also be rebuilt. Tienken Rd and Rochester Rd become a boulevards with "Michigan Lefts" at that intersection. This area of our town becomes the "East Village" A commercial, office, residential, mix-use development that would also have a central park. A mix of traditional architecture that would tie the 'look' of the district together. Signage, walk-ability, bike-friendly and public art would also tie this new district together. None of this visionary thinking is in our new master plan.

four new village districts and a new downtown

Rochester Hills would only have five concentrated flexible business districts that would also include residential living apartments. Current new master plan proposal long flexible business commercial strips throughout the city including four-story apartment buildings. We could name them Downtown, Auburn and Rochester Rd, Auburn Road Brooklands District, University Village, Walton boulevard and Adams Rd, East Village, Tienken Rd and Rochester Rd, and the West Village, Adams Rd and M-59. None of this visionary thinking is in our new master plan. Rochester Hills could have a twenty year goal to concentrate all mix-use development to only five walkable, bike-friendly "small town in architectural character, all with their own central park" districts. 80+ percent the city would remain single-family residential! This could be part of our new mission statement in the new master plan. Page 02

Legacy Apartments

To even suggest Legacy Apartments was a good solution to clean up a brown-field site is beyond comprehension. Legacy Apartments is despised by its surrounding two story single family neighbors. Our planning director wants not only publish a paragraph on how our community gave away 13 million in tax revenue to quote 'clean up the site' in which the actual cost was around 3 million leaving the out of town Pittsburgh Pennsylvania developer a 10 million profit at our cities expense. Our planning director also wants to publish a photo of this development... Why is our planning director not listening to the concerns of our residents, no more four story apartment buildings in single family residential neighborhoods. Why would we have a photo of that in the master plan?

landfill sites become passive recreation

I have been promoting for decades that all landfill sites after federal and state cleanups could become property ownership of the city of Rochester Hills. Rochester Hills could lease the land to those who would promote passive recreation. A golf course, soccer fields, driving ranges, baseball and football fields, running or bike track, nature trails, ski or toboggan run, etc. Rochester Hills could sign short-term leases to those who would build indoor farming, greenhouses, and 55 and older upscale attached one and one-half garage manufactured home developments. Housing opportunities for those who may want to downsize their homes or in retirement years want two homes in cool and warmer climate states.

low-rise campus of tech incubator buildings

Landfill southeast corner of Adams Rd and Hamlin Rd, just north of M-59. (A former illegal dumping ground known as the Christiansen Adams Landfill, 28-acres. This site operated from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s.) This landfill could be cleaned up and turned into green-space and a low-rise campus of tech incubator buildings for young new startups business, this area could also tie in with Oakland University. Become part of the OU INC: Oakland University's Smart-Zone. None of this visionary thinking is in our new master plan. Our planning director solution is more 4-story apartment buildings and promotes that idea in the new Rochester Hills master plan. I would strongly recommend we take out any and all references to the Legacy Apartments development and landfill redevelopment.

architectural character

Page 78 City of Rochester MI master plan 95.2% residents want to preserve its traditional architecture small town look, and new development would also reflect that look in City of Rochester MI. It's a pie chart. IMO I also would conclude the residents of Rochester Hills have the same sentiments. I have brought up this concern numerous times but have concluded our planning director is a today's modernist. We have a new billboard in Brooklands promoting the construction of a new three-story modern building not at all small town in character. Billboard designed by our city's planning department. Page 30 our new master plan is a chapter on redevelopment and building facades and the visual is a nondescript modern building. Multiple studies modern buildings destroy small town character. I gifted our Mayor and Planning Commission a list of links written by credible experts. Our planning director can be a modernist all day long that is her choice, but she works for the public sector and the overwhelming majority of residents in our community prefer traditional architecture. So why will there be redevelopment photos of modern buildings in our master plan.

our master plan cover

Our cover photo proposal of our new master plan is a photo of Rochester Hills that makes Rochester Hills look flat as a pancake ...why? Are we not Rochester Hills. IMO ... personally I write this off to a "lazy" graphic approach to the plan. To say that an approach to an urban plan is "lazy" due to its graphic design suggests that the visuals are not effectively communicating the plan's message or engaging the audience ... source google Marvie Neubauer... please share my 3 mile cover vista idea and this entire letter with City Council and Planning Staff. Possible if it comes from your email they may read it. Concept idea, street, eye level photos ... three mile views in Rochester Hills ... shot by a professional photographer at sunrise or sunset we have these three mile views all over town; best photo would make a great master plan cover photo and other three mile views ... would also make a great thread throughout the plan.

conclusion

Over the past many months and planning workshops I have spent many fun free time hours (planning is a hobby for me) gifting our Mayor and Planning Commission long letters and PDF flyers of proven national and international ideas, (not my ideas) to make our city even a more fun place to live, work and play... Yet none of these wonderful ideas are in our new master plan, +40 years of my life dedicated to the betterment of Rochester Hills completely ignored! I only get 3 minutes to speak in planning workshops. And I'm not allowed to sit at the table. Scolded, lectured at for going a sentence over by chairperson Deborah Brnabic. Ridiculed and laughed at by Dale Hetrick, 'oh this is a Beaton idea I might agree with.'

Marvie Neubauer... always thanks for your time and returning comments to all my many letters... (I wish other Council members would respond to this letter.) You are a fantastic representative I, we all thank you for your endless time and service.

Architecture is art, but unlike art that can be hung inside a gallery architecture is public art and can have either good or bad consequences affecting a cities character and charm.

Scot Beaton – semi retired five time national, international NYC Clio award winning designer
Political experience former Rochester Hills City Council member 1988 to 1997 President, Rochester Hills City Council.
655 Bolinger Street Rochester Hills MI 48307

starting over

note: IMO The master transportation plan and the master plan should be one plan, the density of the master plan has conflicted with capacity of our roads in the transportation plan in Rochester Hills for decades.

note: IMO if this current master plan does not take a drastic turn towards less “fluff copy,” and more innovation unique to Rochester Hills, I would strongly suggest not only you look for a new planning consultant but also may conceder looking for a new planning director who truly reflects the wishes of City Council and the residents of Rochester Hills in 2026.

note: IMO Ed Anzek are former planning director was a visionary thinker. His leadership created the Brooklands main street district ... none of this kind of visionary thinking is in our new master plan, just 85 pages of text of nothing more than generic “fluff copy,” bullet points and paragraphs of already known givens.

note: IMO I would not present this draft master plan to the public for review, and I would strongly recommend the Rochester Hills City Council pass a resolution to start over.

note: IMO I feel the Mayor, Bryan Barnett has done an excellent job upholding his charter obligations. Day to day city responsibilities, presenting a solid budget, spokesperson for the city, etc. an excellent job selling the city survey though I thinks a snail mail could be a better idea with better results ... many don't like to give away their email address.

note: IMO It is important to remember the charter obligation of City Council, and that is to set city policy; bring new visionary thinking, innovation, creativity up for public discussion. Sad to say none of that is so far is in the new master plan.

thank you for your time

note: I just turned 70, after 70 years... though I'm in good health I could drop dead tomorrow. Still very much living the dream, please make this entire letter public record at the next Planning Commission meeting master plan workshop and the next joint City Council, Planning Commission meeting.

