

Zoning Ordinance Development Process

What do the Planning Department and Planning Commission do?

Implement the comprehensive plan.

Translate long-term goals (housing, transportation, environment, economic development) into policies.

Protect public health, safety, and welfare.

Address issues like traffic, fire safety, noise, flooding, and incompatible land uses through zoning and development standards.

Provide clear, predictable rules for development.

Give property owners, developers, and neighbors a clear framework so decisions aren't arbitrary or ad hoc.

Balance private property rights with community interests.

Allow reasonable use of land while preventing uses or intensities that harm neighbors or the broader community.

Respond to new issues and technologies.

Create or update rules for things the old code didn't anticipate (energy storage, short-term rentals, data centers).

Ensure legal defensibility.

Develop ordinances that are consistent with state law and case law so decisions can be upheld if challenged. Note: Local zoning cannot prohibit land uses allowed under Michigan law.

Guide elected officials.

Provide researched, publicly vetted recommendations so the governing body can adopt sound, well-supported ordinances.

What are the steps taken to develop a zoning ordinance?

