

GAINES CHARTER

TOWNSHIP

PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



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Executive Summary

Section 19(2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008) requires the Planning Commission to “make an annual written report to the legislative body concerning its operation and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development.”

The 2021 Planning & Zoning Department Annual Report provides the Planning Commission and Township Board with the following information:

- An update of development activities within the Township
- The meeting activity of both the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals
- Code enforcement activities
- Internal department activities
- A review of Master Plan implementation actions

The Annual Report offers information that is intended to be relevant to the Planning Commission, Township Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Township staff and the general public. The work program will help guide the department’s actions throughout the upcoming year and serve as a benchmark when preparing the subsequent year’s Annual Report.

The following statement serves as the Department’s vision:

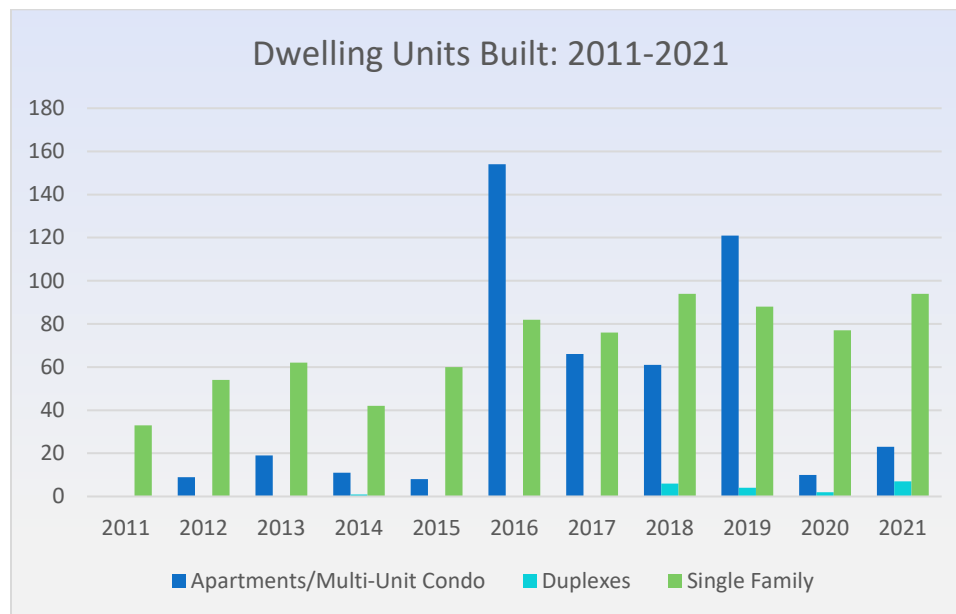
In our capacity as Planning and Zoning Department staff, we are committed to providing the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Township Board with professional assistance so that together we may work towards the vision created in the Township Master Plan. As staff, we see ourselves as the facilitators between the many various stakeholders within the Township and strive to develop consensus on the multitude of land use issues that come before the Township. As always, our ultimate goal is to provide for the health, safety, and general welfare of the community as a whole. We take seriously this obligation and strive to accomplish this goal in every facet of our department’s actions.

Current Planning Division

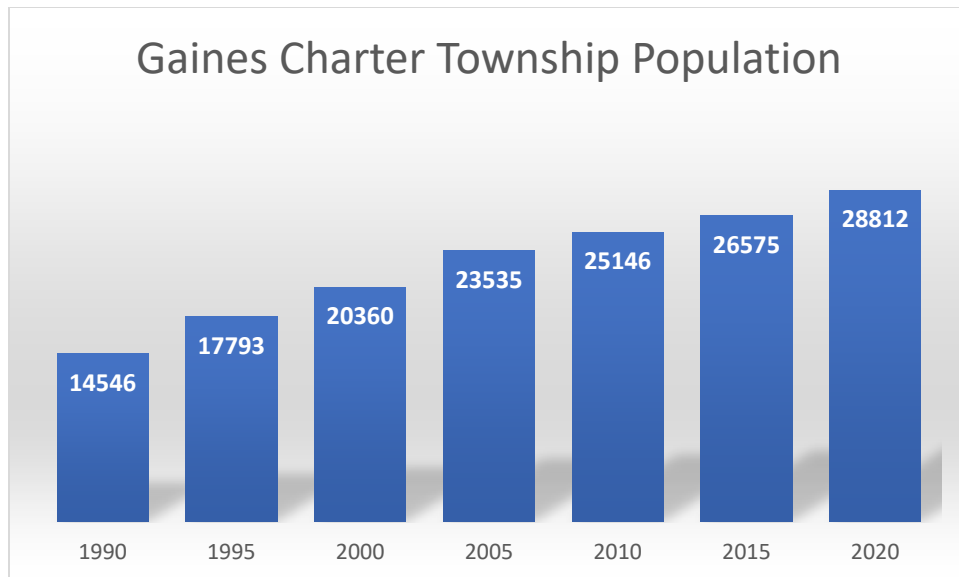
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS

Table 1 details the number of new dwelling units per year over the last 10 years 2011 to 2021. This includes single-family dwellings as well as attached units and apartments/condos.

	Apartments/ Multi-Unit Condos	Duplexes	Single Family Homes/Condos /Mobile Homes	Total Units
2021	23	7	94	124
2020	10	2	77	89
2019	121	4	88	213
2018	61	0	94	161
2017	66	0	76	142
2016	154	0	82	236
2015	8	0	60	68
2014	11	1	42	54
2013	19	0	62	81
2012	9	0	54	63
2011	0	0	33	33



Gaines Charter Township Population



PROJECT REVIEWS

Table 2.

Summary of 38 application reviews completed by the Planning Commission, and subsequent Township Board action if applicable. The items are listed by the order in which they were considered.

Development Name/Address	Request Type	Description	Planning Commission Action	Township Board Action
1089 68 th St.- Cooks Crossing PUD Phases 3-5 Amendment Request	Major PUD Amendment	Amendment to the Cooks Crossing Planned Unit Development Phases 3-5; increase the total number of dwelling units, vary the dwelling types, adjust lot lines, add landscaped park areas, and modify the private street layout.	Approved	Approved
2410 68 th St.-Hoffman Meadows Phase 1 Preliminary Plat	Tentative Preliminary Plat	Phase 1 is 14.85 acres and includes 40 single-family lots.	Approved	Approved
6658 E Paris Ave.	Major PUD Amendment	OTP (AKA Korona Court) Amendment to allow for the construction of a multi-tenant industrial building and associated site development.	Approved	Approved
866 76 th St.	Special Use Permit	To allow for a total of 1,330 square feet of accessory buildings.	Approved	No Action
10241 Eastern Ave.	Special Use Permit	To allow for a total of 3,600 S.F. of accessory buildings.	Approved	No Action
1171 68 th St.	Major PUD Amendment	To allow for a 3,000 square foot addition to connect the two existing buildings within the Crystal Manor PUD.	Approved	Approved
2307 68 th St.	Tentative Preliminary Plat	Three-lot residential development.	Approved	Approved
9499 East Paris Ave.	Special Use Permit	To allow for a total of 3,568 S.F. of accessory buildings.	Approved	No Action
42 Manila St.	Special Use Permit	For Eight Foot Fence, and Conditions of Special Use Permit.	Approved	Approved

Development Name/Address	Request Type	Description	Planning Commission Action	Township Board Action
1439 and 1469 Eastport Dr.	Major PUD Amendment	Amendment to the Crossings PUD to allow for the construction of a 26,650 S.F., four-story Staybridge Suites hotel.	Approved	Approved
2410 68 th St.-Hoffman Meadows	4:1 Ratio Waiver	Related to a remainder parcel of land that was created through the land division process.	Approved	No Action
6174 and 6200 Wing Ave.	Rezone	Conditional Rezone from RL-10 to R-3.	Denied	Withdrawn
2471 84th St.	Special Use Permit	To allow for a total of 4,426 S.F. of accessory buildings.	Approved	No Action
4495 68th St.	PUD Site Plan Review	Two Amazon product distribution facilities: one 279,000 square foot sortation facility and one 219,000 square foot delivery station.	Approved	No Action
389 68th Street	Special Use Permit	Temporary tent for summer & fall sales.	Approved	No Action
3422 76th St.	Special Use Permit	To allow for a total of 4,452 S.F. of accessory buildings.	Approved	No Action
6567, 6615, and 6645 East Paris Ave.	Special Use Permit	To allow for a contractor facility.	Approved	No Action
6879 Dutton Industrial Dr.	Site Plan Amendment	For a 11,000 square foot building addition.	Approved	No Action
8001 Patterson Avenue	Special Use Permit	For Outdoor Recreational Facility Equine Building.	Approved	No Action
8720 Breton Ave. and 2801 92nd St.	4:1 Ratio Waiver	To transfer land between owners.	Approved	No Action
2701 and 2571 76th St.	Tentative Preliminary Plat Review- Phase 1	58 single-family lots for the first phase of the Alexander Trails PUD.	Approved	Approved
6100 East Paris Avenue	Site Plan Amendment	New 312,114 square foot data center at Switch's existing campus.	Approved	No Action
7884, 7788, 7920 Eastern Ave.	PUD Rezone/Site Plan	PUD plan and rezoning for Everett's Landscaping facility and nursery site.	Approved	Approved
8676 Breton Avenue	Special Use Permit	To allow for a total of 5,000 S.F. of accessory buildings.	Approved	No Action
62 Coleman St.	Special Use Permit	To allow Consumer Scale Ground Mounted Solar Energy Collector	Approved	No Action
3500 and 3540 60th St.	PUD Rezone/Site Plan	To build a market-rate apartment complex of 348 dwelling units	Approved	Approved
4670 60th St.	Major PUD Amendment	For signage	Approved	Approved
9725 Hanna Lake Ave.	Special Use Permit	To allow for a total of 3,906 S.F. of accessory buildings.	Approved	No Action
280 60th St.	Site Plan Review	To allow Streams of Hope a 6,650 square-foot expansion to connect the existing buildings	Approved	No Action
6174 and 6200 Wing Ave.	Rezone	Rezone from RL-10 to O-S	Approved	Approved
6640 Madison Ave	Special Use Permit	For Group Child Day Care Home	Approved	No Action

Development Name/Address	Request Type	Description	Planning Commission Action	Township Board Action
1449 68th St.	Special Use Permit	To replace a monument sign with an internally lit LED electronic messaging center.	Approved	No Action
2100 60th St.	Special Use Permit	To replace a monument sign with an internally lit LED electronic messaging center.	Approved	No Action
6350 Division Ave.	Special Use Permit and Site Plan Review	Gasoline service station with car wash facility improvements	Approved	No Action
8390 Eastern Ave.	Rezone	RL-14 to C-1	Approved	Approved
8460 Kalamazoo Ave.	PUD Rezone/Site Plan	Mixed-use town center and residential development with 499 dwelling units	Approved	Denied
9315 Westview Dr.	Special Use Permit	To allow for a total of 2,536 S.F. of accessory buildings.	Approved	No Action

Table 3

Summary of 14 application reviews completed by and Township staff as administrative approvals.

Development Name/Address	Request Type	Description	Planning Staff Action
300 68th St.	Site Plan Amendment	Minor exterior addition and interior demolition and renovation for dining hall at Pine Rest Van Andel Pavilion.	Approved
6670 Kalamazoo Ave.	Site Plan Amendment	Patio Addition at Red Geranium.	Approved
6900 Dutton Industrial Dr.	Site Plan Amendment	50 feet by 60 feet (3,000 square foot) building addition to Micro Manufacturing be used for cold storage.	Approved
1675 84th St.	Site Plan Amendment	Cornerstone United Methodist Church 1,919 square-foot audio-video room addition.	Approved
3555 68th Street	One Day Event	Artesian Love to conduct a one-day outdoor market in the parking lot of the Village Mill Mall.	Approved
3555 68th Street	One Day Event	Bag toss competition 6/12 event at Railtown Brewing.	Approved
6720 Hanna Lake Ave.	Site Plan Amendment	Addition of a series of paved asphalt sports courts along the south and west sides of Dutton Christian School.	
3555 68th Street	One Day Event	Bag toss competition 9/25 event at Railtown Brewing.	Approved
3555 68th Street	One Day Event	"Jeep Night Trunk or Treat" 10/27 event at Railtown Brewing.	Approved
1545 Edgeknoll Dr.	Site Plan Amendment	Addition of six parking spaces along the western edge of the existing parking lot at Chick-fil-A.	Approved
1545 Edgeknoll Dr.	Site Plan Amendment	Addition of a 54' by 24'8" canopy on the south side of the building to cover ordering stations at Chick-fil-A.	Approved
3286 Hanna Lake Industrial Dr.	Site Plan Amendment	36 feet by 90 feet (3,150 square foot) building addition to Truck & Trailer Specialties.	Approved

VARIANCES

Table 4 provides a summary of the variance requests in 2021.

Address	Variance Type	Description	Staff Recommendation	Action
9345 Eastern Ave.	Dimensional	Request for a five-foot setback from access easement boundary for a single-family house.	Approval	Approval
7542 Regal Ave.	Dimensional	Request for a 17-foot rear yard setback in R-3 for a single-family house.	Approval	Approval
1449 92 nd Street	Dimensional	Request for a 4-foot side yard setback for an accessory building.	Approval	Approval
6122 Division	Dimensional	Request for a 5-foot side yard setback for a monument sign.	Approval	Approval

ORDINANCE UPDATES

One text amendment to the Gaines Charter Township Zoning Ordinance was initiated:

1. Zoning Board of Appeals Reduction of Variance Standards; Reduction of standards from nine to five for dimensional and use variances. Added definitions for “self-created problem”, “unique circumstance”.

REZONINGS

Table 5 provides information on the four rezoning applications received in 2021.

Development Name/Address	Description
8190 Division	Request to change RL-10 and RL-14 parcel to PUD for a 125-unit apartment building project.
2410 68 th Street	Request to change RL-14 parcel to RL-10 Low-Density Residential for a subdivision plat.
8460 Kalamazoo	Request to rezone the property from Agricultural-Residential to PUD for a mixed-use town center development.
3500 60 th Street	Request to change RL-10 parcels to PUD for a multi-unit apartment building project.
6174 & 6200 Wing Ave.	Request for a rezoning of two parcels from Residential (RL-10) to Office Service (O-S).
8390 Eastern Ave.	Request for the conditional rezoning of a parcel from Single Family Residential (RL-14) to Neighborhood Commercial (C-1).

Long-Range Planning Division

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Planning Staff has initiated a collaborative Master Plan with Grand Valley State University Planning Department Students. A new Master Plan update will be developed over the first half of 2022.

As a part of the 2002 Master Plan, an Implementation chapter was prepared to help guide future planning activities.

Table 6 lists the proposed implementation tasks and their current status. Planning Department staff performed work on 4 of the 12 implementation steps laid out in the 2002 Master Plan.

Task	Status	Comments
Evaluate and Revise the Zoning Ordinance	Continued Action	One ordinance text amendment initiated in 2021 regarding variance standards.
Inventory Key Natural and Cultural Features	No Action	These tasks have been done on a case-by-case basis through PUDs, but not on a Township-wide, or Subarea basis.
Develop A Program for Natural Buffers and Scenic Easements	No Action	
Develop Performance Standards for the PUD District	Continued Action	A Guide to architectural and design standards for apartment complexes has been reviewed by Planning Commission.
Prepare a Sub-Area Plan for the Dutton Village Area	Completed	This was accomplished as part of the 2008 Master Plan Update.
Prepare a Sub-Area Plan for the Cutlerville Village Center	No Action	The need for a subarea plan for Division Avenue will be reevaluated as part of the 2022 Master Plan update.
Prepare a Corridor Plan for Kalamazoo Avenue	Completed	The Kalamazoo Avenue/84 Street Subarea plan was passed by the Planning Commission in November 2015 and was approved by the Township Board in March 2016.
Establish Consistent Standards for Calculating Density	Mixed Results	No formal action taken on this item. We have been consistent in measuring density using the net density approach, but with no formal standards.
Improve Public Understanding of Growth Management Benefits	No Action	The Department has not actively been pursuing this area.
Promote the Purchase of Development Rights	No Action	The Department has not actively been pursuing this area.
Promote Transfer of Development Rights	No Action	The Department has not actively been pursuing this area.
Improve Non-Motorized Transportation Network	Positive Action	Establishment of sidewalks has consistently been enforced for new development projects.

PARKS & RECREATION

Township Planning Staff in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Committee continued work on an update to the Gaines Charter Township Parks & Recreation Plan. Funding was allocated to have the Plan completed by a consultant in 2022. The committee continues to focus on the management of Prairie Wolf Park, and Staff attends its meetings on a regular basis.

Staff also met with Dan Deloof, Director of Kent County Parks and Tony Halloran of Stoneco to see if there was a possible end use of the Stoneco quarry for a Kent County park. Stoneco is 2-3 years away from determining whether to close operations or seek additional land to mine and may be willing to convert some of their land to open space. Those decisions will be made in the future, but the connection was valuable.

Code Enforcement Division

The Planning Department continued to use BS&A software to register and track code enforcement cases in 2021. Filed cases are those where a complaint has been received and registered in the software, and staff has completed a physical inspection of the property and contacted the property owner regarding a potential violation. Warning letters are sent, and followed up with a second letter or Sherriff's Deputy site visit. Complaints that have no corresponding enforceable ordinance are not included (e.g., high grass or weeds).

Table 7 is a summary of the enforcement cases undertaken by planning staff.

Address	Category	Date Filed	Status
7390 HAMMOND AVE SE	Trash/Junk	01/27/2021	Civil Infraction Issued
7225 REGAL AVE SE	Inoperable Vehicle	01/29/2021	Closed
113 LILLY ST SE	Zoning	01/29/2021	Closed
80 MANILA ST SE	Noise	01/08/2021	Closed
106 FONTENELLE ST SE	Inoperable Vehicle	02/23/2021	Closed
3487 76TH ST SE	Trash/Junk	03/23/2021	Ongoing Enforcement
6899 BROOKLYN AVE SE	Inoperable Vehicle	04/13/2021	Closed
3127 84TH ST SE	Nuisance Parking	04/20/2021	Closed
36 WAVELL ST SE	Trash/Junk	04/28/2021	Closed
754 SUNBROOK DR SE	Trash/Junk	05/07/2021	Closed
6816 LINDEN AVE SE	Nuisance Parking	05/05/2021	Closed
551 FENDALE ST SE	Animal Control	05/12/2021	Closed
6690 EASTERN AVE SE	Nuisance Parking	06/11/2021	Closed
773 COLEMAN ST SE	Nuisance Parking	07/23/2021	Closed
6845 HAMMOND AVE SE	Trash/Junk	07/30/2021	Warning Issued
7213 REGAL AVE SE	Temporary Dwelling	08/19/2021	Closed
1701 SOUTH PARK SE	Inoperable Vehicle	08/19/2021	Closed
1610 SUNNY GLEN SE	Nuisance Parking	08/19/2021	Closed
51 76TH ST SE	Outdoor Storage	08/25/2021	Closed
6722 SUMMER SHORES	Inoperable Vehicle	08/25/2021	Closed
1166 60TH ST SE	Zoning	08/30/2021	Closed
10506 DIVISION AVE SE	Inoperable Vehicle	08/25/2021	Closed
6908 HAMMOND AVE	Zoning	09/08/2021	Warning Issued

883 61ST ST SE	Zoning	10/07/2021	Closed
627 79TH ST SE	Zoning	10/11/2021	Case Closed
1439 EASTPORT DR SE	Outdoor Storage	11/01/2021	Warning Issued
8474 DIVISION CT SE	Trash/Junk, Inoperable Vehicle	11/17/2021	Warning Issued
471 SUNBROOK DR SE	Trash/Junk	12/01/2021	Warning Issued
84 84TH ST SE	Trash/Junk	12/20/2021	Warning Issued

Department Administration

PLANNING COMMISSION

During 2021, The Planning Commission held 12 regular meetings.

Table 8 lists the members of the Planning Commission during 2021. Brad Burns did not opt to remain on Planning Commission in 2022. Ryan Wiersema replaced him on Planning Commission on January 2022.

Member	3-Year Term Ends	Member Since	Officers
Connie Giarmo	December 2022	2008 (1991 – 2000)	Chairperson
Ronnie Rober	December 2023	2002	Vice-Chairperson
Lani Thomas	December 2022	2006	Secretary
Tim Haagsma	Township Trustee	2002 (1992 – 1997)	
Brad Burns	December 2021	2014	
Talimma Billips	December 2022	2017	
Brad Waayenberg	December 2021	2018	

Table 9 illustrates the attendance at Planning Commission Meetings in 2021.

2021 Meeting Attendance							
	Billips	Burns	Haagsma	Giarmo	Rober	Thomas	Waayenberg
January	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
February	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
March	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
April	Absent	X	Absent	X	X	X	X
May 20 (Special)	Absent	X	X	X	X	X	X
May 27	Absent	X	X	X	X	X	X
June	X	Absent	X	X	X	X	X
July	X	X	Absent	X	X	X	X
August	X	X	Absent	X	X	Absent	X
September	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
October	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
November	Absent	X	X	X	X	X	X
December	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
No. of Absences	3	1	3	0	0	1	0

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Zoning Board of Appeals met on four occasions in 2021.

Table 10 lists the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals in 2021. Ryan Wiersema replaced Michael Brew in 2021 and will serve as liaison to the Planning Commission in place of Connie Giarmo in 2022.

Member	3-Year Term Ends	Member Since	Officers
Tom Werkema	December 2022	2012	Chair
Ruth Ringnalda	December 2022	2002	Vice Chair
Ryan Wiersema	December 2023	2021	
Connie Giarmo	December 2022	2014	
Don Hilton	December 2023	2018	Secretary
Phil Tietz	December 2023	2018	Alternate

Table 11 lists the meeting dates of the ZBA in 2021.

2021 Meeting Attendance						
	Werkema	Giarmo	Hilton	Ringnalda	Wiersema	Tietz
January	Meeting Cancelled					
February	X	X	X	X	X	X
March	Meeting Cancelled					
April	Meeting Cancelled					
May	X	X	X	Absent	X	X
June	Meeting Cancelled					
July	X	X	X	X	X	Absent
August	Meeting Cancelled					
September	Meeting Cancelled					
October	Meeting Cancelled					
November	Meeting Cancelled					
December	X	Absent	X	X	X	X
No. of Absences	0	1	0	1	0	1

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

Community Development Director Dan Wells continued to serve as planning and zoning administrative staff in 2021. Planning Consultant David Jirousek, AICP continues to assist with plan reviews, larger projects and complete work on the Township Master Plan. Jeff Gritter of Vriesman & Korhorn Civil Engineering continued to provide support and guidance to the Planning Department.

BUDGET

The Department is committed to providing work in the most efficient and cost-effective manner. The following Tables represent information related to recent and historical Department budgets.

Table 12 lists the adopted budgets for the Planning and Zoning Department for fiscal years 2015-2021 and also shows the Department's Budget as a percentage of the overall General Fund Budget.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
P/Z Budget	\$163,816	\$209,274	\$209,815	\$222,837	\$219,223	\$236,439	219,031
% of Gen. Fund	4.9%	5.7%	5.9%	5.9%	5.2%	4.5%	4.0%

Table 13 presents the actual dollar amount spent in the fiscal years 2013 – 2021 and is also expressed as a percentage of the approved Planning and Zoning Department's Budget.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Actual Expenditures	\$126,029	\$109,962	\$173,548	\$174,995	\$189,710	\$204,153	198,665	170,485
% of Budget	72.5%	67.1%	82.7 %	83.4%	85.1%	93.1%	84%	72%