



PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT

2025 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 2025 Planning & Zoning Department Annual Report provides the Planning Commission and Township Board with the following information:

- An update on 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 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 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 from 2014 to 2024. 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
2025	144	0	102	246
2024	244	0	61	305
2023	205	16	85	306
2022	48	4	192	244
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

TABLE 1

In lieu of recent changes to the Zoning Ordinance, staff reimagined how the Township tracks long-term housing supply data. **Table 2** arranges housing supply data using an updated method that provides more consistency with objectives outlined in the Zoning Ordinance and Master Plan.

Table 2: Building Permits Issued in 2024, New Categorizations

	Apartments	Single Family Attached	Single Family Detached	Mobile Homes	Total Units
2025	60	84	85	17	246
2024	136	108	48	13	305

HOUSING APPROVALS

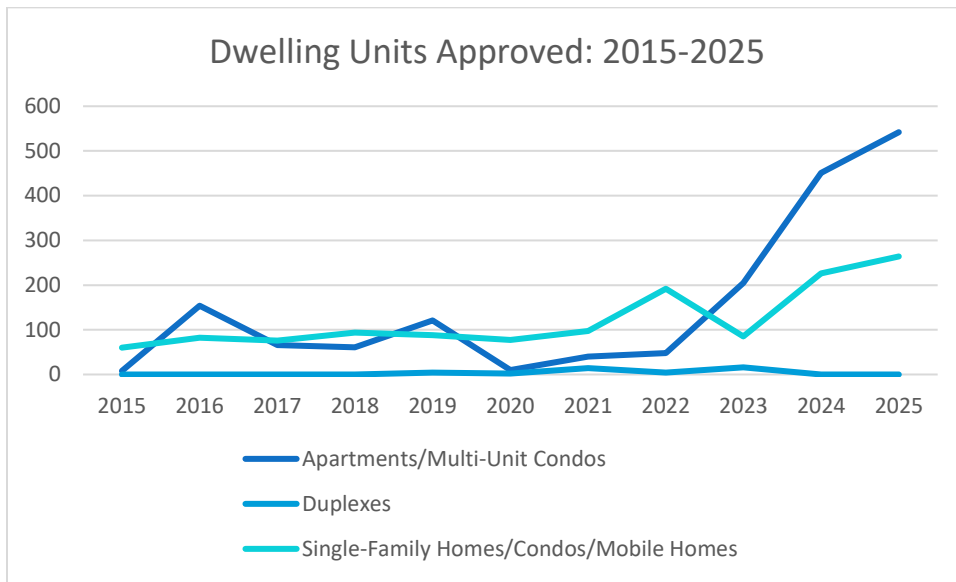


EXHIBIT 1

Similarly to data provided on building permits issued, staff has decided to additionally restructure the way in which dwelling unit approvals are tracked over time. The same categories from Table 2 have been applied to the housing approval data outlined in Exhibit 2. Since only two years worth of data is available using the new categorizations, a pie chart is used, however, in future years, the data will be presented using a line graph similarly to Exhibit 1. Staff has included a line graph as well which will build and become more cohesive over time as data gets added.

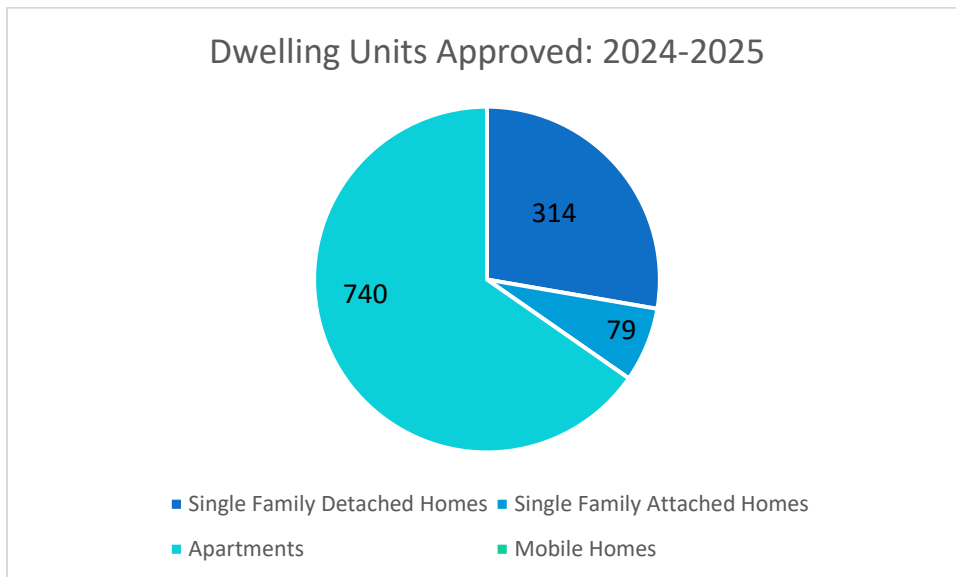


EXHIBIT 2

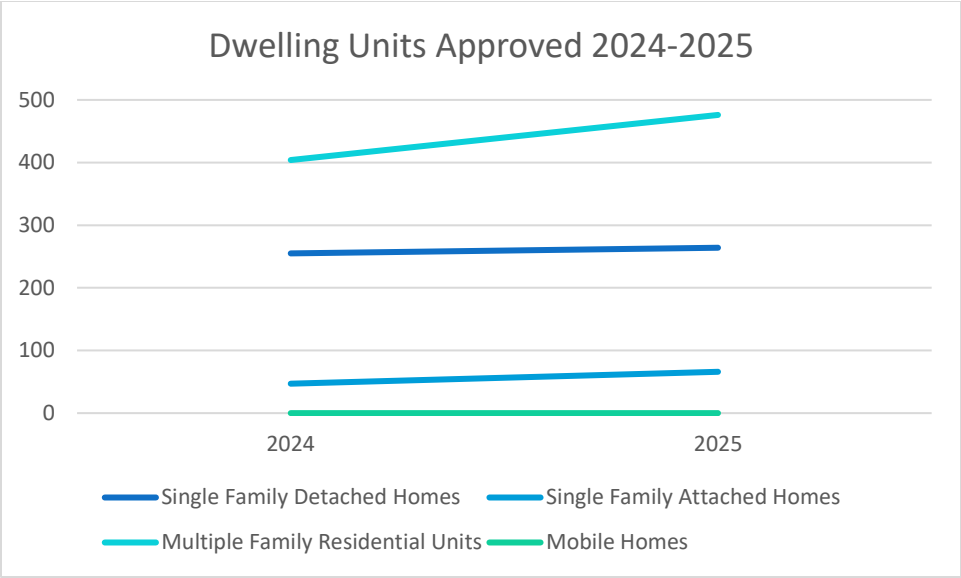


EXHIBIT 3

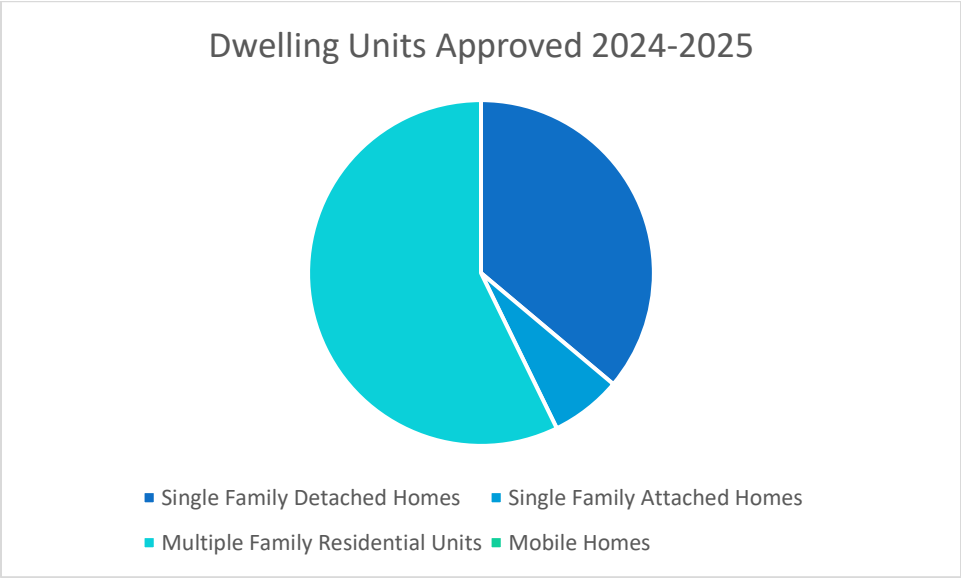


EXHIBIT 4

POPULATION DATA

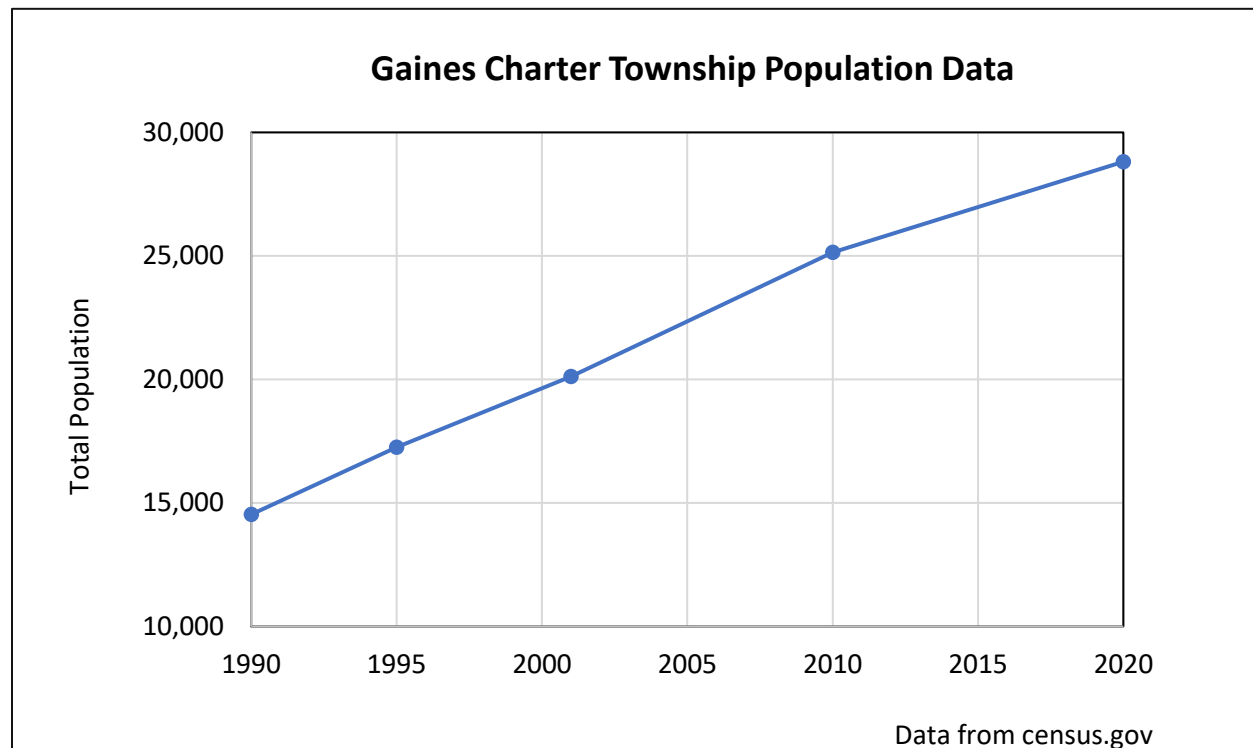


EXHIBIT 5

PROJECT REVIEWS

Table 3.

Summary of 25 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
6326, 6330, and 6338 Hanna Lake Avenue	PUD Rezone and Site Plan Review	Authentix Gaines PUD – 336 multifamily units with amenities and parking	Approved; two public hearings	Approved
1230 76 th Street SE	Special Use Permit	Keeping of chickens in the SR zoning district.	Approved	N/A
1718 68 th Street SE	Special Use Permit	To allow a 1,600 SF accessory building in the SR zoning district.	Approved	N/A
1184 60 th Street SE	Site Plan Amendment	Site Plan Amendment for Eden Forest Phase 1	Approved	N/A
9744 Meadow Valley SE	Special Use Permit	To allow a 3,200 SF accessory building in the ARR zoning district.	Approved	N/A

Development Name/Address	Request Type	Description	Planning Commission Action	Township Board Action
1856 100 th Street SE	Annual Review/ Operating Plan	Stoneco annual review and 2025 operating plan.	Approved	N/A
10505 Hanna Lake Avenue	4 to 1 Ratio Wavier	Granting relief from the 4 to 1 ratio for two proposed parcels in a land division yielding five parcels total.	Approved	N/A
6207 East Paris Avenue	Site Plan Review	To allow a 82,880 SF industrial building in the LI zoning district.	Approved	N/A
2319 Crystal Meadows Street SE	Tentative Preliminary Plat	Phase III of the Hoffman Meadows Plat – 50 single family detached homes, 20.19 acres.	Approved	Approved
3316 68 th Street SE	Preliminary Major Condominium	Phase II of Dutton Center PUD – 51 single family homes, switching land division method from plat to condominium	Approved	Approved
1264 100 th Street SE	Preliminary Major Condominium	Stoneworks; 53 single family detached homes, 32 single-family attached homes, 6 parcels with frontage on Pease	Approved	Approved
3316 68 th Street SE	Final Site Plan Review	Phase I of Dutton Center PUD; 37 for-rent townhomes, 14 for-sale veranda homes, retention basin	Approved	N/A
8460 Kalamazoo Avenue SE & 1920 84 th Street SE	PUD Site Plan Amendment	Prairie Wolf Station PUD; reduction from 515 to 497 dwelling units, reconfiguration of site layout.	Approved	Approved
4645 100 th Street SE	Revocation of Special Use Permit	To allow a vehicle repair as a home occupation in a residential accessory building in the A-R zoning district.	Approved	N/A
4495 68 th Street SE	Site Plan Review	216,018 SF warehouse building within the Amazon campus in the LI zoning district.	Approved	N/A

Development Name/Address	Request Type	Description	Planning Commission Action	Township Board Action
3316 68 th Street SE	Final Major Condominium	Phase II of Dutton Center PUD, 51 single-family homes.	Approved	N/A
1920 84 th Street SE	Preliminary Major Condominium	Phase I of Prairie Wolf Station PUD, 28 single-family detached units.	Approved	Approved
1920 84 th Street SE	Preliminary Major Condominium	Phase II of Prairie Wolf Station PUD; 14 detached condos, 32 veranda homes, 34 townhouse units.	Approved	Approved
All Parcels	Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment	Request to allow ECM signs for institutional users in the SR zoning district with issuance of a special use permit.	Approved	Approved
2844 100 th Street	Special Use Permit	8,880 SF ground mounted solar array in the ARR zoning district.	Approved	N/A
8460 Kalamazoo Ave SE	Site Plan Review	Senior living facility in the Prairie Wolf Station PUD.	Approved	N/A
6100 East Paris Avenue SE	Site Plan Extension	1-year site plan approval extension for an electrical substation on the Switch campus.	Approved	N/A
6925 Dutton Industrial Drive	Site Plan Review	1-year site plan approval extension for an electrical substation on the Switch campus.	Approved	N/A
8136 Breton Avenue SE	4 to 1 Ratio Wavier	Granting relief from the 4 to 1 ratio for two proposed parcels in a land division yielding four parcels total.	Approved	N/A
8610 Kalamazoo Avenue SE	Special Use Permit	4,800 square-foot residential accessory building in the ARR zoning district.	Approved	N/A

Table 4 provides a summary of three application reviews completed by Township staff as administrative approvals.

Development Name/Address	Request Type	Description	Planning Staff Action
6100 East Paris	Parking Modification	Switch Phase II	Approved
4510 100 th Street	Authorization Request	Cell Tower Maintenance	Approved
3555 68 th Street	Temporary Event	Railtown Trunk or Treat	Approved

VARIANCES

Table 5 provides a summary of the six variance requests heard by the ZBA in 2025.

Address	Variance Type	Description	Staff Recommendation	Action
4422 76 th Street	Dimensional	Reduce rear yard setback from 100 feet to 50 feet to construct a single-family dwelling in the ARR zoning district.	Approve	Approve
10676 Eastern Avenue	Dimensional	Reduce front yard setback from 60 feet to 15 feet to construct a 1,040 SF residential accessory building.	Approve	Approve
1095 68 th Street	Dimensional	Increase square footage of a free-standing ground sign from 32 SF to 48 SF.	Deny	Deny
7761 Hanna Lake Avenue	Dimensional	Reduce street side yard setback for a residential dwelling from 60 feet to 7.2 feet in the ARR zoning district.	Deny	Postpone
9720 Hanna Lake Avenue	Dimensional	Reduce street side yard setback from 60 feet to 20 feet for a residential accessory building in the ARR zoning district.	Deny	Deny
440 72 nd Street	Dimensional	Increase maximum square footage of an interior site sign from 8 SF to 49.97 SF in the OS zoning district.	Deny	Deny

ORDINANCE UPDATES

Over the last three years, substantial efforts to overhaul and update the Zoning Ordinance have been underway; the updated ordinance was approved by both the Township Board of Trustees and the Planning Commission and adopted in April of 2025. Efforts to update the ordinance were largely spearheaded by Community Development Director Dan Wells, in collaboration with Planning Consultant David Jirousek, AICP. The Zoning Ordinance Steering Committee also provided valuable feedback and thoughts on proposed updates, helping to ensure that the updates were user friendly and in alignment with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.

Since adoption in April of 2025, department staff has executed several project reviews using the new Zoning Ordinance which has proved to be far more effective, efficient and organized; staff also notes that residents and applicants have had an easier time navigating the document than before. The implementation of new processes and omission of redundant or arbitrary requirements in the Zoning Ordinance have optimized both review and application processes in the Planning Department. The Zoning Ordinance has since been amended through December of 2025 to address clerical concerns and resolve minor issues including typos and numbering errors.

REZONINGS

Table 6 provides information on the two rezoning applications received in 2025. Although four applications were received, only two were granted approval.

Development Name/Address	Description	Planning Commission Action	Township Board Action
7147 Patterson	Rezone from Steelcase PUD to LI (Light Industrial)	Postpone	N/A
1264 100 th Street	Rezone from Agricultural/Rural Residential (ARR) to Village Residential (VR)	Approve	Approve
6326, 6330, and 6338 Hanna Lake Avenue	PUD rezoning from Suburban Residential (SR) to Authentix Residential PUD	Approve	Approve
7147 Patterson	Rezone from Steelcase PUD to LI (Light Industrial)	Postpone	N/A

Long-Range Planning Division

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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

Table 7 lists the proposed implementation tasks and their current status.

Task	Status	Comments
Evaluate and Revise the Zoning Ordinance	Positive Action	The updated Zoning Ordinance was approved by the Planning Commission and Township Board and adopted in April of 2025.
Inventory Key Natural and Cultural Features	Continued Action	The Township accepted a bid from EnviroScience, based in Stow, Ohio, to complete a Natural Features Inventory for the Township to assess geographical assets and environmentally sensitive areas. This will assist in guiding development objectives during the next Master Plan update.
Develop A Program for Natural Buffers and Scenic Easements	Continued Action	
Develop Performance Standards for the PUD District	Positive Action	The 2025 Zoning Ordinance update refined standards and parameters for establishing new Planned Unit Developments.
Improve Non-Motorized Transportation Network	Positive Action	Staff and the Planning Commission worked with developers on specific projects to enhance the non-motorized transportation network throughout the township.

PARKS & RECREATION

In 2022, Township Planning Staff in conjunction with the Parks and Trails Committee and MCSA Group, Inc., made major progress to update the Gaines Charter Township Parks & Trails Plan. The five-year plan is completed and was approved by the Township Board of Trustees in January of 2023. The committee continues to focus on the management of Prairie Wolf Park.

Township Supervisor Bob Terpstra initiated discussion among the Parks and Trails Committee regarding long-term goals and objectives pertaining to the future of parks and green space in the Township. Terpstra engaged the Committee through an exercise called “forced prioritization”, in which Committee members identified goals and objectives, and then ranked initiatives based on what is most important to each member. Insight gained from these sessions will be used for an open house in early 2026 to gain feedback from residents on what initiatives are of high priority to them and why. The five initiatives presented to the public will include:

1. Trail Connectivity
2. Land Acquisition
3. Prairie Wolf Park Upgrades
4. Development of Cody’s Mill
5. Education Center at Prairie Wolf Park

Code Enforcement Division

The Planning Department continued to use BS&A software to register and track code enforcement cases in 2025. 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 8 is a summary of the enforcement cases undertaken by planning staff.

Address	Category	Date Filed	Status
1541 Fairwood Court	Building Violation	05/29/2025	Case Closed
1664 Crescent Pointe	Keeping of Chickens	10/13/2025	Case Closed
3127 84 th Street	Keeping of Chickens	06/09/2025	Case Closed
6527 College	Keeping of Chickens	06/30/2025	Cased Closed
6684 Vantage	Illegal Buildings	04/02/2025	Case Closed
6535 Creekside	Illegal Sign	08/25/2025	Civil Infraction Issued
6984 Terra Cotta	Illegal Use	12/29/2025	2 nd Warning Issued
60 79 th Street	Inoperable Vehicles	05/08/2025	2nd Warning Issued
416 60 th Street	Inoperable Vehicles	07/02/2025	Case Closed
483 Kenton	Inoperable Vehicles	08/20/2025	Case Closed
690 68 th Street	Inoperable Vehicles	01/03/2025	Case Closed
1080 68 th Street	Inoperable Vehicles	09/03/2025	Warning Issued
3083 Glencreek Court	Inoperable Vehicles	05/08/2025	2 nd Warning Issued
3131 84 th Street	Inoperable Vehicles	06/17/2025	Case Closed
6135 Campus Park	Inoperable Vehicles	03/25/2025	Case Closed
6472 Avalon	Inoperable Vehicles	08/20/2025	Case Closed
6488 Sunny Spot Court	Inoperable Vehicles	10/21/2025	Case Closed
6730 Vantage	Inoperable Vehicles	06/30/2025	Case Closed
6860 Sienna	Inoperable Vehicles	09/23/2025	Case Closed
6935 Deer Cove	Inoperable Vehicles	03/25/2025	Case Closed

6984 Terra Cotta	Inoperable Vehicles	02/27/2025	Case Closed
7040 Division	Inoperable Vehicles	07/17/2025	Case Closed
6816 Linden	Inoperable Vehicles	01/03/2025	Case Closed
4645 100 th Street	Inoperable Vehicles	06/03/2025	Case Closed
2269 Vantage Court	Nuisance Parking	07/07/2025	Case Closed
6460 Vantage	Nuisance Parking	05/29/2025	Case Closed
439 68 th Street	Rubbish	02/26/2025	Case Closed
600 76 th Street	Rubbish	07/23/2025	Case Closed
1346 100 th Street	Rubbish	11/24/2025	1 st Warning Issued
6488 Sugarmill Court	Rubbish	08/06/2025	Case Closed
6491 Bentree	Rubbish	08/20/2025	Case Closed
6755 Crystal Downes	Rubbish	10/13/2025	Case Closed
7243 Sundale	Rubbish	07/03/2025	Citation Issued
7320 Hanna Lake	Rubbish	11/25/2025	Case Closed
Summer Shores Condos	Rubbish	09/15/2025	Case Closed
7655 Hanna Lake	Rubbish	11/11/2024	Case Closed
6132 Division	Sidewalk Displacement	06/06/2025	Case Closed
1164 Brownell	Sidewalk Obstruction	08/27/2025	Case Closed
2297 68 th Street	Sidewalk Obstruction	06/26/2025	Case Closed
Division Corridor	Sidewalk Obstructions	01/28/2025	Case Closed
6568 Division	Illegal Sign	05/13/2025	Case Closed
10650 Eastern	Short Term Rental	09/12/2025	Case Closed
2637 100 th Street	Zoning Violation	06/26/2025	Case Closed
6896 Madison	Zoning Violation	07/07/2025	Case Closed
7769 Jonagold	Zoning Violation	10/13/2025	Case Closed

Department Administration

PLANNING COMMISSION

Table 9 lists the members of the Planning Commission during 2025.

Member	3-Year Term Ends	Member Since	Officers
Connie Giarmo	December 2024	2008 (1991 – 2000)	Chairperson
Ronnie Rober	December 2023	2002	Vice-Chairperson
Lani Thomas	December 2025	2006	Secretary
Tim Haagsma	Township Trustee	2002 (1992 – 1997)	Member
Ryan Wiersema	December 2024	2022	Member
Talimma Billips	December 2025	2017	Member
Brad Waayenberg	December 2023	2018	Member

Table 10 illustrates the attendance at Planning Commission Meetings in 2025.

2025 Meeting Attendance							
	Billips	Wiersema	Haagsma	Giarmo	Rober	Thomas	Waayenberg
January	X	X	Absent	X	X	X	X
February	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
February Special Meeting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
March	X	X	X	X	X	Absent	X
April	Absent	X	X	X	X	X	X
May	X	Absent	X	X	X	X	X
June	X	X	Absent	X	X	X	X
July	X	X	Absent	X	X	X	X
August	Absent	X	Absent	X	X	X	X
September	X	Absent	X	X	X	X	X
October	X	X	X	X	X	Absent	X
November	X	Absent	X	X	X	X	Absent
December	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Absences	2	3	4	0	0	2	1

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Zoning Board of Appeals met on three occasions in 2025.

Table 11 lists the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals in 2025.

Member	3-Year Term Ends	Member Since	Officers
Ruth Ringnald	December 2024	2002	Chair
Don Hilton	December 2025	2018	Secretary
Ryan Wiersema	December 2025	2022	Member (PC Liaison)
Matt Kooiman	December 2023	2022	Secretary
James Peacock	December 2025	2022	Member
Mark Krier	December 2027	2024	Alternate Member
Rob DeWard	December 2027	2024	Alternate Member

Table 12 lists the meeting dates of the ZBA in 2025.

	Ringnald	Kooiman	Hilton	Peacock	Wiersema	DeWard	Krier
March	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A
April	X	Absent	X	X	X	N/A	X
May	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A
August	X	Absent	X	X	Absent	X	N/A
December	X	Absent	X	X	X	N/A	X
No. of Absences	0	3	0	0	1	N/A	N/A

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

Community Development Director Dan Wells has led planning efforts for the Township since taking office in March 2020. The Planning Department hired a full-time Assistant Planner, Dakota Swan, in January of 2024 who assists with plan reviews, zoning enforcement, and larger projects on an as-needed basis. Planning Consultant David Jirousek, AICP continues to assist with plan reviews and has contributed largely to the Zoning Ordinance overhaul. 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 13 lists the adopted budgets for the Planning and Zoning Department for fiscal years 2016-2023 and also shows the Department's Budget as a percentage of the overall General Fund Budget.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
P&Z Budget	\$222,837	\$219,223	\$236,439	\$219,031	\$339,256	\$416,706	\$356,450	\$356,525
% of Gen. Fund	5.9%	5.2%	4.5%	4.4%	7.2%	7.89%	6.12%	5.7%

Table 14 presents the actual dollar amount spent in the fiscal years 2016 – 2023 and is also expressed as a percentage of the approved Planning and Zoning Department's Budget.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Actual Expenditures	\$189,710	\$204,153	\$198,665	\$156,395	\$261,558	\$274,784	\$276,489	\$306,341
% of Budget	85.1%	93.1%	84%	71.4%	77.1%	57.5%	77.6%	85.9%