

Planning Commission 2024 Annual Planning Report and 2025 Work Plan to City Council

City of Grosse Pointe Woods, MI

The Commission's Annual Report is intended to serve as a planning document that outlines the work plan for the next fiscal year and is a communication tool to share recent achievements and plans for future goals to the community.

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) Act 33 of 2008, as amended, the Planning Commission shall submit a report of its 2024 activities.

"A planning commission shall make an annual written report to the legislative body concerning its operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development."

In addition to fulfilling this requirement, the Annual Report and Work Plan increases information-sharing between staff, boards, commissions, and the governing body and allows for the anticipation of upcoming priorities, in order to prepare and budget.

MEMBERSHIP

We thank the following Commission members for their time, commitment and good work:

- Stephen Gerhart, Chair (Jan/Feb 2024)
- James McNelis, Chair (March-Dec 2024)
- Donna O'Keefe, Vice Chair
- Christian A. Fenton, Commissioner
- Michael Fuller, Commissioner
- Grant P. Gilezan, Commissioner
- Douglas Hamborsky, Commissioner
- Mollie Mackinnon, Commissioner
- William Marx, Commissioner
- John A. Vitale, Commissioner

MEETINGS

The Planning Commission met twelve times in 2024.

1. Tuesday, January 23rd, 2024
2. Tuesday, February 20th, 2024
3. Tuesday, March 26th, 2024
4. Tuesday, April 23rd, 2024
5. Tuesday, May 28th, 2024
6. Tuesday, June 25th, 2024
7. Tuesday, July 23rd, 2024
8. Tuesday, September 24th, 2024
9. Tuesday, October 22nd, 2024
10. Tuesday, October 29th, 2024 (Special Meeting)
11. Tuesday, November 19th, 2024
12. Tuesday, December 10th, 2024

2024 in Review

The following tables outline various Planning Commission activities, including development reviews (site plan, special land use, etc.), and Zoning Ordinance and map amendments (rezonings) that were considered by the City in 2024. Please find an overview of the additional projects addressed by Planning Commission in 2024, it includes work on the Master Plan rewrite and Ordinance Amendments.

| Meeting Date | Project Type | Location | Project Description | Request | Planner's Report | Planning Commission Motion / Result | City Council Result |
|--------------|---|--|--|--|------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| January 23 | Site Plan Review | 19271 Mack (Churchill's Cigar Lounge) | Enclosed outdoor dining space and patio awning for year-round outdoor dining | Permanent To operate an outdoor dining area year-round in the C-F District; TO erect a screened-in awning and welded frame around the existing outdoor dining area | Recommend Tabling | Tabled | - |
| | Site Plan Review | 20419 Mack Ave. (BeautiLofts) | Building Interior Renovation; Parking Variance Request | Complete interior build-out of an existing vacant retail lease space to include 15 salon-like rooms as well as a laundry and break room, waiting area, and restrooms | | Tabled | - |
| | Discussion of Master Plan | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Permitted Uses (Home-based business, Mixed Occupancy, and Outdoor Cafes) | - | - | - | - | Public Hearing Scheduled | |
| February 20 | Discussion of Master Plan (Draft Master Plan and Mack Future Land Use) | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Site Plan Review | 20030 Mack Ave. (Eastside Dermatology) | Building Addition & Demolition; Parking Reconfigurations | Construct one-story addition; selective demolition of existing structure and garage; Reconfigured parking lot and ingress/egress | Recommend Approval with Conditions | Approved with Conditions | - |
| | Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Permitted Uses (Home-based business, Mixed Occupancy, and Outdoor Cafes) | - | - | - | - | Approved for City Council consideration, with edits | Approved |
| March 26 | Public Hearing: Rezoning | 20100-20102 Mack Ave. | Rezoning | Rezone vacant property from | Recommend Approval | Approved | Approved |

| Meeting Date | Project Type | Location | Project Description | Request | Planner's Report | Planning Commission Motion / Result | City Council Result |
|--------------|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| | | (Friendship Factory) | | Restricted Office to Commercial | | | |
| | Special Land Use Review | 20100-20102 Mack Ave. (Friendship Factory) | Building Remodel | Pending Rezoning, SLU request to open Children's Event Space | Recommend Approval | Rezoning Approved; SLU approved with conditions | Approved |
| | Site Plan Review | 20100-20102 Mack Ave. (Friendship Factory) | Building Remodel & Re-occupancy | Renovation of and occupancy of an existing vacant building into Children's Event Space | Recommend Approval | Tabled | |
| | Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance Amendments (Section 50-4.27 Portable Storage Units) | - | - | - | - | Approved for City Council consideration, as written | |
| | Site Plan Review | 20419 Mack Ave. (BeautiLofts) | Building Interior Renovation; Parking Variance Request | Complete interior build-out of an existing vacant retail lease space to include 15 salon-like rooms as well as a laundry and break room, waiting area, and restrooms | Recommend PC Discussion | Denied | - |
| April 23 | Site Plan Review | 20100-20102 Mack Ave. (Friendship Factory) | Building Remodel & Re-occupancy | Renovation of and occupancy of an existing vacant building into Children's Event Space | Recommend Approval, with Conditions | Approved, with conditions | |
| | Site Plan Review | 20331 Mack Avenue (Nino Salvaggio's Café) | Building Remodel | Repurpose and renovate a 1-story, 2,350 square feet building on a 0.07-acre lot to be a market style café; Demolish and reconstruct façade and interior. | Recommend Approval, with Conditions | Approved, with Conditions | |
| | Master Plan Update Discussion | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| May 28 | Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance Amendments (Section 50-4.36, Permanent Makeup Services) | - | - | - | - | Approved for City Council consideration, as written | |
| | Zoning Ordinance Amendments (Section 50-6.5 Outdoor Café Permit) | - | - | - | - | Approved for City Council consideration, as written | |

| Meeting Date | Project Type | Location | Project Description | Request | Planner's Report | Planning Commission Motion / Result | City Council Result |
|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| | Master Plan Update Discussion | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| June 25 | Master Plan Recommendation to Council | - | - | - | - | Approved for City Council consideration, as written | |
| July 23 | Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance Amendments (Section 50-5.22, Exterior Lighting) | - | - | - | - | Approval for City Council consideration, with conditions | Approved |
| | Public Hearing: City Code of Ordinances Amendments (Section 26-5 and Section 26-34 Residential Plot Plans and Site Plan Submittals; Site Grading) | - | - | - | - | Approval for City Council consideration, with conditions | - |
| September 24 | Master Plan Public Comment Discussion and Amendments | - | - | - | - | Recommended Amendments | - |
| October 22 | Public Hearing: Master Plan Adoption | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Public Hearing: Special Land Use for Class C, SDM Licensed Restaurant | 20710 Mack Avenue (Daily Jam) | Building change of use (liquor) | SLU for a sit-down restaurant, with liquor. | Recommend Approval | - | - |
| | Site Plan Review | 20710 Mack Avenue (Daily Jam) | Building remodel and change of use and occupancy | Renovation of building and change of occupancy and use of building to include a bar | Recommend Approval, with conditions | - | |
| | Public Hearing: Special Land Use for Class C Licensed Restaurant | 20195 Mack Avenue (Lola's Taco Bar) | Building change of use (liquor) | SLU for a sit-down restaurant, with liquor. | Recommend Approval | - | |
| | Site Plan Review | 20195 Mack Avenue (Lola's Taco Bar) | Building remodel and change of use and occupancy | Renovation of building and change of occupancy and use of building to include a bar. | Recommend Approval, with conditions | - | |
| October 29 (Special Meeting) | Continued Public Hearing: Master Plan Adoption | - | - | - | - | Recommended for Adoption | - |
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| | Site Plan Review | 20710 Mack Avenue (Daily Jam) | Building remodel and change of use and occupancy | Renovation of building and change of occupancy and use of building to include a bar | Recommend Approval, with conditions | Approved with conditions | |
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| | Site Plan Review | 20195 Mack Avenue (Lola's Taco Bar) | Building remodel and change of use and occupancy | Renovation of building and change of occupancy and use of building to include a bar. | Recommend Approval, with conditions | Approved with conditions | |
| November 19 | Master Plan Priorities and 2025 Goal Setting Discussion | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| December 10 | Site Plan Review | 20030 Mack Avenue (Eastside Dermatology) | Building demolition and remodel; Creation of new parking structure | Demolition and construction of a one-story addition to an existing medical office building; Demolition of adjacent residential home and garage for surface parking lot | Recommend Table | Tabled | - |
| | Rezoning Request | 20030 Mack Avenue – Parcel A & B (Eastside Dermatology) | RO-1 to C Commercial Rezoning Request for 20030 Mack – Parcel A; R1D to C Commercial Rezoning Request for 1670 Ford Court – Parcel B | Rezone both parcels to support the creation of a surface parking lot at Parcel B and align the zoning districts of the two parcels used for the same business purpose. | Recommend Approval, with conditions | Tabled | - |
| | Master Plan Priorities and 2025 Goal Setting Discussion | - | - | - | - | - | - |

REZONINGS (CITY COUNCIL)

| Date | Location / Project | Description | Status |
|-------|--|--|----------|
| May 6 | 20100-20102 Mack Ave. (Friendship Factory) | Rezone from RO-1 (Restricted Office) to C (Commercial) | Approved |

VARIANCES (ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS)

| Date | Location / Project | Description | Status |
|-------|--------------------|---|----------|
| May 6 | 20620 Fairway Lane | Variance for side yard setback to build an addition to their home | Approved |

LIQUOR LICENSES (CITY COUNCIL)

| Date | Location / Project | Description | Status |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|
| September 9 | 20710 Mack Avenue (Daily Jam) | New Class C and SDM Liquor License | Approved |

SIGN REVIEWS (ADMINISTRATIVE)

| Date | Location / Project | Status |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| January 30 | 21304 Mack Ave./AAA | Approved |
| February 20 | 19865 Mack Ave./The Family Barbershop | Approved |
| March 8 | 20497 Mack Ave./Bank's Vacuum | Revisions |
| March 21 | 20535 Mack Ave./GBC Autism Services | Approved |
| June 5 | 20871 Mack Ave./Zestia | Revisions |
| August 21 | 20100 Mack Ave./Friendship Factory | Revisions |
| November 8 | 20916 Mack Ave./Bowline Financial | Approved |
| November 11 | 19700 Mack Ave./Bank of America | Approved |
| November 15 | 19325 Mack Ave./Village Pharmacy | Revisions |
| November 21 | 20095 Mack Ave./Village Day Spa | Approved |
| December 17 | 20845 Mack Ave./Carlyle Center, LLC | Revisions |

MASTER PLAN REWRITE

The Planning Commission, City Administration, and other relevant parties, in conjunction with their planning consultants from Giffels Webster, underwent a comprehensive update to the community's Master Plan, which was last updated in 2006. During multiple surveys, planning commission meetings, special meetings, and an open house in October 2023, the consultants gathered input and an understanding of the community assets and challenges of the City. A new Master Plan was adopted in 2024, and has since directed further projects engaged by city departments and the boards and commissions within the City.

ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Over the past year, Planning Commission worked on the following amendments to the City's Ordinances:

Zoning Ordinance

1. Home Occupations (and Home-Based Businesses)

Planning Commission worked with the City Planner to meet the needs of a changing remote-work economy to allow residents to work from home and run their own business within residential districts.

2. Mixed Occupancy along Mack Avenue

Planning Commission worked with the City Planner to maximize space along the main commercial corridor, allow for a variety of commercial uses, and to assist in the preservation of Community Facilities along Mack Avenue.

3. Year-Round Outdoor Cafes/Dining in the Public Right of Way

Planning Commission worked with the City Planner to enhance the dining experience within the City and to meet post-pandemic dining norms, through the allowance of year-round dining, including both outdoor cafes, semi-open structures, and enclosed dining structures. Standards were also designed for enclosed structures.

4. Rooftop Open/Semi-Open Dining

Planning Commission worked with the City Planner to enhance the dining experience of Mack Avenue by defining and permitting enclosed or semi-enclosed rooftop dining, following a set of use standards to ensure safety and coherent design.

5. Portable Storage Units

Planning Commission worked with the City Planner to allow for the temporary use of dumpsters, which are necessary for home renovation projects and in other regular instances.

6. Permanent Makeup Services as Accessory Use

Planning Commission worked with the City Planner to allow for permanent makeup services as an accessory use to salons and medical offices in the C Commercial Business and RO-1 Restricted Office district.

7. Exterior Lighting

Planning Commission worked with the City Planner to create measurable indicators to improve visibility and minimize nighttime lighting disturbances more consistently and proactively.

City Code of Ordinances

1. Site Grading for Residential (Plot Plan) and Commercial Development Projects

Planning Commission worked with the City Planner and engineers from AEW to provide clarity to site grading requirements on commercial versus residential projects.

Looking Ahead: 2025 Work Plan

The following are additional projects for the Planning Department and Commission to accomplish in 2025:

| Task | Lead | Involved | Priority |
|---|---|--|----------|
| <p>Master Plan Implementation Following the adoption of the Master Plan in 2024, continue to set priorities and lay the groundwork for Master Plan goal implementation.</p> | Planner, City Manager, Building | Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, Building Official | High |
| <p>Master Plan Priority: Provide additional crosswalks, with emphasis on access to Parcels Middle School and the Library, along the Mack Avenue corridor, as needed.</p> <p>Establish the best location for another crosswalk as per Mack Avenue Vision 2020, along with the cost. Consider the addition of crosswalks as part of Special Land Use Developments (ex. Hotel Overlay).</p> | Planner, City Manager, Building | Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, Building Official, DPW, Wayne County Commission | High |
| <p>Master Plan Priority: Consider enhancements of neighborhood gateways throughout the City.</p> <p>Invite City Staff to work with DTE on possible light improvements at the gateways.</p> | Planner, City Manager, Building | Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, Building Official, DTE, Engineer | High |
| <p>Master Plan Priority: Improve street lighting and implement traffic calming measures along Mack Avenue to enhance safety for pedestrians and nighttime users.</p> <p>Enhancing City “gateways” and corresponding cost. Focus on gateway points for such enhancements, such as on Vernier from GPS and HW, on Allard at Harper Ave, and Mack Ave on the north and south ends. Include bump outs where fit as streetscape resurfacing projects occur and other curb reconfigurations.</p> | Planner, City Manager, Building | Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, Building Official | High |
| <p>Master Plan Priority: Consider establishing programs to provide assistance and support to residents for pocket parks and other neighborhood spaces.</p> <p>Invite the Beautification Commission to focus on this task.</p> | Planner, Recreation Department, Beautification Commission | Planning Commission, Recreation and DPW Dept., City Council | Medium |
| <p>Zoning Ordinance Update Conduct comprehensive review and update to the Zoning Ordinance that evaluated the zoning districts, where commercial mixed use should be expanded to, and additional design guidelines as necessary (i.e.</p> | Planner, City Manager, Building | Planning Commission, City Manager, City Council, Building Official | High |

mixed-use buildings, design along the alley, creating a hotel overlay district, etc.).

Ordinance Text Amendments

- Evaluate and consider amendments to the Zoning Ordinance for Short Term Rentals.

Planner,
Building Official

Planning Commission,
City Manager, City
Council, Building Official

High

Zoning Map Amendments

Evaluate and consider amendments to the zoning map based on the final Future Land Use Map in the Master Plan.

Planner

Planning Commission,
City Manager, City
Council, Building Official

Medium

Joint Planning Commission and City Council Roundtable

Maintain communication channels between City Council and Planning Commission by attending a joint roundtable session to discuss ongoing planning priorities and issues is important. It is especially important as we implement the Master Plan to ensure priorities between the entities align.