



City of Hartford * County of Van Buren * State of Michigan

TO: Mayor Hall and the Hartford City Commissioners
FROM: Nicol Brown, City Manager *NB*
DATE: March 24, 2025
RE: **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONTRACT WITH MCKENNA FOR MASTER PLAN**

ITEM BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

The item before the Commission is to approve a professional service contract with McKenna to draft the City of Hartford's master plan.

DISCUSSION:

The city has hired McKenna as its planner. McKenna has supported the City of Hartford staff in securing the \$50,000 Housing Readiness Grant. With the work plan, McKenna proposes a seven-step process. The City will engage the public in drafting a new Master Plan document.

The Work Plan consists of seven steps:

- Task 1 – Kick-off and Strategic Issues
- Task 2 – Hartford 2025: Identify, Quantify, and Analyze
- Task 3 – Public Participation and Community Outreach
- Task 4 – Pathways to a Sustainable Hartford: Goals and Objectives
- Task 5 – Hartford Master Plan: A Roadmap for the Future
- Task 6 – Implementation Strategies
- Task 7 – Adoption

McKenna submitted a proposal to complete the master plan for \$45,000 and the city will receive \$5,000 for administering the grant.

RECOMMENDATION:

The City of Hartford City Commissioners approve a \$45,000 professional service contract with McKenna to draft the City's master plan.



City of Hartford Master Plan

CITY OF HARTFORD, MICHIGAN

JANUARY 31, 2025



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Executive Summary



PROJECT OVERVIEW

On behalf of the City of Hartford, McKenna has supported staff to secure a Housing Readiness Incentive Grant in the amount of **\$45,000**. This grant program aids municipalities in covering costs associated with the “*adoption of land use policies, master plan updates, zoning text amendments, and similar actions to encourage increasing housing supply and affordability*” (MSHDA).

To effectively and efficiently utilize the full extent of this grant, we propose the following work plan as it relates to the aforementioned items that are eligible activities through MSHDA. We anticipate all expenses related to the tasks outlined in this scope will be covered entirely through the MSHDA grant award. The project will be completed within 13 months.

FEE

Lump Sum Fee: \$45,000 for the Master Plan Update.

We can work with you to customize our proposed scope of work to eliminate, add or modify elements, with our overall fee being adjusted accordingly.

MEETINGS

Our team will prepare for and attend the following meetings:

- Bi-Monthly Staff Review Meetings (virtual)
- Kickoff Meeting with the Planning Commission
- Full Draft Review Meeting with the Planning Commission and Approval for Distribution
- City Council Approval for Distribution
- Planning Commission Public Hearing and Adoption
- City Council Adoption

Additional meetings requested by the City will be invoiced hourly at the rates included in this proposal.

Project Work Tasks – Master Plan



We have designed the following work plan for the City of Hartford that will engage the public and, ultimately, result in a new Master Plan document.

Our work plan consists of seven steps:

- Task 1 – Kick-off and Strategic Issues
- Task 2 – Hartford 2025: Identify, Quantify, and Analyze
- Task 3 – Public Participation and Community Outreach
- Task 4 – Pathways to a Sustainable Hartford: Goals and Objectives
- Task 5 – Hartford Master Plan: A Roadmap for Future
- Task 6 – Implementation Strategies
- Task 7 – Adoption

TASK 1. KICKOFF & STRATEGIC ISSUES

Project initiation consists of tasks and processes necessary to get the project up and running. These include:

1. **KICK-OFF AND STRATEGIC ISSUES MEETING.** We will meet with City leaders, Planning Commission members, and community stakeholders as identified by the City, to review the work plan and finalize a structure for review and management of the plan process to:
 - establish a working relationship,
 - reach an understanding of expectations,
 - answer questions,
 - make mutually agreed upon adjustments in the work plan, and
 - identify preferred method of communication (e.g., email, mail, telephone, etc.).

At the kick-off meeting, we will also finalize procedures for public input and the framework for public workshops, public exhibits, press releases and mechanisms for public input; and will identify stakeholder groups. Finally, we will engage the Planning Commission and other participants in a preliminary discussion of strategic issues of importance to the City that will be critical for review and analysis during the planning process. Key stakeholders will be identified, those whom the Planning Commission will want to make special efforts to consult.

2. **STATUTORY NOTIFICATIONS.** Pursuant to the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, McKenna will assist the City in guiding the Master Plan Update through the required adoption process. The first step in this process is the distribution of the Notice of Intent. McKenna will assist the City in notifying all entities required by the MPEA of the City's intent to update their master plan.
3. **EVALUATION OF PAST STUDIES.** McKenna will evaluate the ideas and concepts in the 2015-2025 Joint Master Plan between the Township and the City of Hartford, determine whether ideas have been implemented, and develop a new Master Plan that incorporates applicable past planning efforts and future visions. McKenna will also review any previous studies and incorporate applicable findings and recommendations into the Master Plan as deemed appropriate by City leadership.



TASK 2.
HARTFORD 2025: IDENTIFY, QUANTIFY AND ANALYZE

1. **Hartford 2025 – Existing Conditions Analysis.** This section will be the analysis of existing conditions. In particular, we will review the following:
 - a) **Regional Context.** Using data from the City, Van Buren County, the U.S. Census, and other available sources, the plan will include an overview of the City’s position in the region as it relates to development patterns, arterial roads and highways, and natural features and open space.
 - b) **Natural Features** – A Natural Features Inventory will be performed, and maps will be included in the Master Plan to provide an easy-to-understand picture of the City’s natural features.
 - c) **Existing Land Uses** – An existing land use survey will be conducted. The Team will use the City’s most recent existing land use survey data (which may be supplemented by the Commission) and aerial photographs for the base data. The information will be mapped to visually illustrate the existing conditions.

Quantities of land uses will be computed and compared with any previously collected data to determine significant changes or trends. Conflicting land uses or land uses potentially incompatible with future development will be identified and analyzed.

- d) **Population, Housing and Economics** – Characteristics of the City of Hartford’s population will be compared to the population in the region and adjoining communities. Population trends and projections and demographic characteristics of the community will be identified and analyzed to understand the impact on the community and future development.

Data on income, education, and employment will be included. This may also include a comparison of the sources of the City’s tax base, depending on the data that is available, and general economic outlook considerations. McKenna will investigate employment needs and analyze how these data fit in with future plans.

McKenna will describe the existing housing situation in the City of Hartford and note trends and relationships. Factors to be described and analyzed will include number of units by type, age, occupancy, tenure, and value.

Demographics
 Meridian Township is a community that continues to grow in the heart of Mid-Michigan. The demographic and housing data tells the story of a community that has large numbers of established older residents as well as younger, transient adults. The Township has put effort into providing services and recreational opportunities for all to enjoy.

Aging Population
 The population reached an all-time high in 2014, with an estimated population of just over 40,000. As the population grows older as a whole, it is extraordinarily important to plan for amenities, recreational opportunities, and housing types that will support an older population.

Community Snapshot
 Population, 1950-2024
 Population by Race / Ethnicity
 Population by Age
 Educational Attainment, Population 25+
 Population by Generation
 *201000 Population
 \$35,817 Median Household Income
 \$20,784 Per Capita Income
 479 Total Businesses
 3,335 Total Employees
 \$5,654 Avg. Spent on Mortgage and Basics
 9.6% Percent of Income for Mortgage
 79.4% Drive Alone to Work
 21.6 Minutes Mean Commute Time

Samples of existing conditions and community snapshot analysis.

- e) **Community Facilities** – Community facilities data will be obtained from the City, school districts, Police Department, Fire Department, utility companies, parks and recreation agencies and departments, major institutions, State of Michigan, and Van Buren County. The following will be included in the Community Facilities Analysis:
1. **Description of public and private utilities and community facilities** that includes name, location, size, condition, function and any plans for continuation, expansion, curtailment or closure.
 2. **Evaluation of Public Facilities based on secondary data** in terms of generally accepted standards and results of socio-economic analysis and previous studies.
 3. **Recommendations for facilities** based on:
 - Deficiencies in comparison to standards and recommendations of previous studies and community perception.
 - Improvements needed for public recreation, community facilities and utilities in terms of additional land area, buildings, and facilities.
 - Sources of potential funding.
- f) **Transportation** – Using data provided by the City, Van Buren County Road Commission and MDOT, McKenna will prepare an inventory of existing conditions (traffic volumes, surface conditions, right of way requirements, special traffic generators, pedestrian improvements, and accident data among other factors). Traffic projections, from the applicable road agencies, will be included in the analysis. The Team will consult with State, County, and local transportation officials to identify other factors that may influence the City's Plan.
- g) **Infrastructure** – The City's infrastructure will be described, and recommendations given for the following:
- Public water and sewer
 - Stormwater
 - Streets, alleys, and major structures (bridges, overpasses, etc.)
 - Information technology infrastructure (local telephone service, long distance, cable, Internet connectivity (T-1, DSL satellite, etc.)



TASK 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We propose a public engagement process that has proven successful in many of our past planning efforts. The public will have a variety of opportunities to comment on the plan. The process described below is structured to gain input from multiple stakeholder groups in a relatively short period of time, while respecting the schedules of the busy professionals and community members with whom we will be collaborating.

The purpose of the collaborative process is to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), as well as to prioritize the City's most important assets to build upon and issues to overcome.

1. **Survey.** A survey offers a flexible on-demand opportunity for residents to share their thoughts. McKenna will create an easy-to-use on-line survey instrument utilizing Survey Monkey. Essentially, the community survey will serve as a benchmark for the Master Plan update. The survey will be designed to elicit a wide sampling of community input on issues that simultaneously permits citizens to be involved in the process without investing too much time. Hard copies of the survey can be prepared (via direct mail or at public places for pick-up) for members of the public who are more comfortable with a non-computer-based survey. We also recommend linking the survey to the City's website.
2. **Postcard.** McKenna's graphic design professionals will create a postcard to advertise the Master Plan update process and notify the community of the public survey. The postcard will be mailed to each property owner of record in the City and the postcard will include both an online link and QR code for easy access. McKenna will handle the design, printing, and mailing of the postcard.
3. **Workshop.** McKenna proposes to host and facilitate a Master Plan workshop. The Master Plan workshop is intended to be an open house format, where participants and the community at-large can attend in-person to participate. The workshop will be the keystone public participation event, but it will not be the only opportunity for the public to be involved in the development of the plan. All Planning Commission and City Council meetings will be open to the public, along with the required public hearing.
4. **Website.** McKenna will host and design a webpage. McKenna will prepare a series of online surveys throughout the process and host a website to provide continuous engagement and feedback opportunities. A "Virtual Issues Map" of the City of Hartford can be created on the website where participants can comment on where areas of concern are within the City as it relates to zoning regulations. A strong sense of "Aha!!!" takes place when residents and interested persons can gather online and share their thoughts and ideas with the planning team.
5. **Walking Tours.** Ideas and visions best come to life in conversations that take place on-site. We propose hosting walking tours of desired character areas within the Town for groups of 10 to 20 participants. As part of the real-time conversation that takes place, our team members can begin sketching design standards, identifying precedents (both good and bad) from existing development, and gaining an understanding of the Town's-built fabric at an intimate level.



**TASK 4.
PATHWAYS TO A SUSTAINABLE HARTFORD: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

McKenna will review the results of the survey, and other input received. Using that as the foundation, we will refine the goals and objectives for the new Master Plan.

**TASK 5.
CITY OF HARTFORD MASTER PLAN: A ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE**

We understand the Master Plan update is a new document, as the last Master Plan was a joint plan with the Township.

1. **Future Land Use Plan.** The City of Hartford Master Plan will identify both desired future land uses and recommended characteristics for the various areas of the City. The Plan will make recommendations beyond land use to create or preserve community character and quality of place. The quality of the built environment, the quality of public spaces and open spaces, the preservation of natural resources, and the mixture of land uses are some aspects that define community character.

The plan and map will identify recommendations on:

- a) Land use (e.g., residential – high, medium, and low density, commercial, industrial, open space, etc.)
- b) Transportation
- c) Community Facilities
- d) Natural Features (e.g., floodplain, water resources, wetlands)
- e) Priority sites

2. **Transportation Plan.** In order to provide a transportation system that meets the needs of the City and provides a high quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors, the City must work with MDOT, the Van Buren County Road Commission and others to provide various transportation options, including non-motorized travel. The Transportation section of the Master Plan will be prepared to fulfill the requirements of Michigan’s Complete Streets legislation.

The Plan will recognize the important role automobiles currently play in the City of Hartford’s transportation system. However, it will analyze the potential for non-motorized transportation to play an increasing and defining role in the City and surrounding area. McKenna will explore ways to extend and expand existing pedestrian facilities and improve the function and capacity of street and public transit systems. To achieve this balance, the Transportation Plan will address:

- Existing transportation infrastructure, including sidewalks, non-motorized trails and pathways;

- Existing travel patterns (generalized) and regional influences;
- Functional classifications of existing streets;
- Planned improvements by road agencies;
- The impacts of future land use changes proposed by the Future Land Use Plan
- Improvement priorities and funding options
- Opportunities for new neighborhood connections

3. Community Assets. Schools, parks and recreation, public safety, utilities, and communication infrastructure are critical components for creating a desirable, quality, sustainable community. These assets provide a foundation for the City’s character and help to differentiate it from other communities. This section of the plan will focus on maintaining and enhancing the City’s assets and evaluating how these facilities provided by other agencies will impact the City’s plan and development.

4. Housing. The Future Land Use section of the updated Master Plan will include an analysis of housing types and opportunities in the City. This may include expanding or enhancing neighborhood residential areas, examining areas where additional housing types could be permitted, permitting innovative housing solutions, identifying opportunities for mixed uses, and more. This analysis will also identify areas in the City where mixed uses may be permitted and encouraged. Further, we will examine areas of the City where housing density is most appropriate, surrounding the City of Hartford’s limits and potentially along key corridors. The Master Plan will be updated to reflect today’s market and trends and clearly articulate where future development and redevelopment should occur, and also identify important preservation areas. This analysis will also be in align with the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan. The housing section will include the following content:

- Intent and Purpose
- Housing Goals
- Snapshot
- Characteristics of Housing
- SWOT
- Housing Strategies



Scenario 1: High Density



Scenario 2: Medium Density



Scenario 3: Low Density

Our team integrates future land use planning with key transportation principles, resulting in high-impact strategies for future corridor development (The example above is from McKenna’s density study of Tecumseh, Michigan).

**TASK 6.
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

The entire plan will be focused on implementation. An Implementation Roadmap will be crafted to provide a concise list of implementation-ready projects and strategies that the City should pursue in order to fulfill the vision presented and the goals and objectives stated in the Plan. This portion of the Plan will include the following two elements:

1. **Action Plan Matrix.** A matrix that includes specific recommendations, priorities, capital expenditures, programs, and actions will be provided.

The matrix will identify:

- a) Each project based on goals,
 - b) Its level of importance / priority,
 - c) A timeframe for completing the project,
 - d) The person, body or organization responsible for overseeing the project, and
 - e) Funding opportunities for the project.
2. **Zoning Plan.** Consistent with the requirements of the MPEA, PA 33 of 2008 as amended, McKenna will create a zoning plan for the Future Land Use Plan. The Zoning Plan will include a description of what zoning districts correspond to planned land use categories, where new zoning districts will be required, overlay district locations, and other recommended zoning techniques to implement the updated Master Plan.

Zoning Plan Comparison Example:	
Land Use Area	Corresponding Zoning Districts
Residential	
Residential Reserve	ARG
Suburban Single Family	R-1
Traditional Single Family	R-2
Multiple Family Residential	RM-1
Manufactured Housing	MHP
Commercial	
Neighborhood Commercial	BUS
Regional Commercial	BUS
Industrial	
Light Industrial	IND
Industrial Park	IND

**TASK 7.
MASTER PLAN ADOPTION**

McKenna will assist the City with the adoption of the new Master Plan as follows:

1. **Distribution of Draft Plan.** McKenna will prepare the draft Master Plan, include all elements described above and present it for review by the Planning Commission and City Council. Based on the input and direction received, we will revise the draft and submit it to the Planning Commission for recommendation to the City Council for dissemination as required by the MPEA. An electronic copy of the draft plan will be provided for the City to disseminate to the required entities for review and comment, with notices per the MPEA.
2. **Final Review, Planning Commission Public Hearing, and Adoption.** Upon conclusion of the draft review and comment period for noticed entities, McKenna will review all comments received and, if deemed necessary, make modifications to the draft. McKenna will attend the Planning Commission public hearing to explain the Plan to the public, respond to review by entities, and assist with the adoption by the Planning Commission. McKenna will also attend, present the Plan at the public hearing, and assist with adoption.

Project Schedule

We will work out a mutually acceptable schedule for preparing the 2025 Master Plan with you. Following is our proposed timeline of tasks and meetings, estimated to take 13 months.

MONTH STEP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Kick-off and Strategic Issues	XXX												
2. Hartford 2025: Identify, Quantify, and Analyze			PC										
3. Public Participation and Community Outreach													
4. Pathways to a Sustainable Hartford: Goals and Objectives						PC	CC						
5. Hartford Master Plan: A Roadmap for the Future													
6. Implementation Strategies								PC	CC				
7. Master Plan Adoption											PC		

- We anticipate that the master plan process will begin in March of 2025 and will conclude with an adopted plan thirteen months later in April of 2026.
- There will be up to five (5) workshops, up to three (3) with the Planning Commission and two (2) with the City Council.
 - There will be an initial kick-off meeting with staff, and both the Planning Commission and City Council.
 - In the initial kick-off meeting with the City staff will establish the schedule, the work plan, the communication style, administrative meetings, and outreach.
 - We propose a goals and objectives meeting workshop with the Planning Commission.
- As part of the community engagement there will be a website developed with a link to an online survey, we propose to translate this survey into Spanish, then hold an open house meeting a month after the survey has been available online.
- There will be administrative staff meetings monthly.

Cost Proposal

FEE

The following is an itemized breakdown of the fees to complete the 2025 City of Hartford new Master Plan, as described in this proposal. We propose to complete the project for a lump sum of **\$45,000**.

TASK	ITEMIZED FEE
1. Kick-off and Strategic Issues	\$3,000
2. Hartford 2025: Identify, Quantify, and Analyze	\$6,000
3. Public Participation and Community Outreach	\$10,000
4. Pathways to a Sustainable Hartford: Goals and Objectives	\$8,000
5. Hartford Master Plan: A Roadmap for the City's Future	\$8,000
6. Implementation Strategies	\$7,000
7. Adoption	\$3,000
	\$45,000

Additional services beyond the scope can be provided, at the City's request based on McKenna's professional fee schedule (below) or a separate negotiated fee.

MCKENNA PROFESSIONAL FEE SCHEDULE

Professional Classification	Rate Per Hour*
President	\$200
Executive or Senior Vice President	\$180
Vice President	\$170
Director	\$165
Senior Principal or Manager	\$160
Principal	\$130
Senior	\$120
Associate	\$110
Assistant	\$100

REQUEST FOR ACTION

Our team is available to start immediately upon received your permission to commence work. If you are satisfied with the Scope of Work described, then please return one signed copy of this letter for our files. Your signature will authorize McKenna to proceed with this project.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

McKENNA



Hillary Taylor

Senior Planner

cc: Donovan Smith, AICP, dsmith@mcka.com

AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED

CITY OF HARTFORD VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Signature

Title

Date

Name (printed)