



MEMORANDUM

Date: May 14th, 2025
To: City of Madison Heights Planning Commission [May 20th Meeting]
From: Matt Lonnerstater, AICP – City Planner
Subject: Master Plan Update – Initial Discussion

Introduction

At the May 20th Planning Commission meeting, staff would like to introduce the topic of updating the 2021 Master Plan as a discussion item.

The City of Madison Heights last updated its Master Plan in early 2021, which itself represented the first major Master Plan update since 1990. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) states that every five years after the adoption of a Master Plan, the Planning Commission for the municipality must review the Plan and determine if any amendments or revisions are warranted. In detail:

Section 45(2): *At least every 5 years after adoption of a master plan, a planning commission shall review the master plan and determine whether to commence the procedures to amend the master plan or adopt a new master plan. The review and its findings shall be recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting or meetings of the planning commission.*

Changes since 2021

While the 2021 Master Plan is less than five years old and the Planning Enabling Act does not necessarily require amendments or updates, the City of Madison Heights has seen some significant changes since the Plan's adoption, listed below:

- A new Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 2024, which was guided in no small part by the *Future Land Use* and *Implementation & Zoning Plan* chapters in the 2021 Master Plan. The Zoning Ordinance contains new districts, including a form-based *City Center* district, *Mixed-Use Innovation* districts, and *Residential-Mixed Neighborhood* district; new zoning-related development processes such as Planned Unit Developments and Conditional Rezoning; and detailed use-specific design and operational standards, among other new regulations.

Potential Master Plan Amendments: Update to align with these zoning changes, especially as it relates to the *Future Land Use* and *Zoning Plan* sections.

- The new Zoning Ordinance contains opportunities for expanded housing choices within the city, including accessory dwelling units, duplexes, multiplexes and townhomes. Additionally, in late 2024, Governor Whitmer signed HB 5557 into law which amended the Planning Enabling Act to expressly include housing as a core provision of a Master Plan.

Potential Master Plan Amendments: Analyze to ensure that housing choice and affordability goals are aligned with the new Zoning Ordinance and the revised Planning Act.

- The city received a grant from Main Street Oakland County to develop an 11 Mile Streetscape plan, with Phase 1 between John R and Lorenz scheduled to begin this summer. The first phase includes a lane reconfiguration (4 to 3 lane conversion with a center-turn lane), a wide multi-use path, on-street parking, crosswalks, landscaping, and streetscape amenities. The streetscape project is consistent with objectives outlined in the *DDA* and *Thoroughfare Plan* chapters of the 2021 Master Plan and aligns with the objective of increased walkability repeated throughout the Plan.

Potential Master Plan Amendments: Update as needed to reflect the DDA 11 Mile streetscape project.

- A number of auto-oriented developments such as gas stations, car washes, auto repair, and auto sales, have been approved over the past few years. These types of uses have created a need to analyze land use patterns and development regulations in the city to ensure their proper placement. One of the “Redevelopment Sites” listed in the Master Plan at 10/Dequindre has been developed with a gas station.

Potential Master Plan Amendments: Revise Future Land Use section to include a more nuanced discussion on land uses and redevelopment sites.

- Madison Heights has been engaged in a multi-jurisdictional Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Plan to address vehicle and non-motorized-related major injuries and deaths on city streets.

Potential Master Plan Amendments: Incorporate data, findings, objectives, and graphics from the Safe Streets for All Plan.

Based on these changes since 2021, staff believes that an amendment to the Master Plan is likely warranted. However, per state law, the Planning Commission is formally tasked with determining whether or not to commence the procedure to formally amend the plan. If the Planning Commission chooses to move forward with an update to the Master Plan, staff believes that a full-scale rewrite/reformatting is not necessary. We believe that amendments to the Master Plan can be handled through coordination with staff, the Planning Commission, and City Council. As staff can edit the Master Plan document and related maps and graphics in-house, we do not believe that a third-party consultant is necessary for these modifications.

Potential Plan Updates

Staff has reviewed the Master Plan and identified the following areas which we believe could benefit from a refresh:

- **Demographics & Local Economy:** Update to reflect the most recent data sets.
- **Existing Land Use:** Update to include the most recent data. This would include updating the section on Community Facilities to reflect the recently completed Civic Center Complex, demolition of the old Active Adult Center, and operational changes at Ambassador Park/Red Oaks Park.
- **Public Input, Goals and Objectives:** Initiate a new online survey; review goals and objectives with city officials and staff to ensure that they still reflect the city’s vision for the future, and provide additional detail as necessary.
- **Land Use Plan:** Strengthen the Housing Element to reflect the recent change to the Planning Enabling Act and align with current planning-related initiatives and best-practices aimed at

addressing the housing shortage. Expand upon Future Land Use categories to reflect different types of residential uses and varying intensities of commercial and industrial uses. Modify the Future Land Use map to align with the new Zoning Map. Review list of “Redevelopment Sites” and modify as needed. Review institutional land uses (e.g. churches, schools) to identify proper zoning.

- **Downtown Development Authority:** Modify to align with the design-related components of the *City Center* zoning district. Incorporate the ongoing 11 Mile Streetscape project into the Plan.
- **Thoroughfare Plan:** Revise to incorporate data, findings, and objectives from the Safe Streets for All Plan. Revise to include information and graphics from the 11 Mile Streetscape project.
- **Implementation:** Update the Zoning Plan section to reflect the new Zoning Ordinance and identify future large-scale zoning text and map amendments. Update Implementation chart.
- **Appendix:** Review existing appendices to see if any updates or additions are warranted.

Where to Begin?

To help facilitate discussion, we are providing the following attachments for Planning Commission review prior to the meeting

- 1) Michigan State University Extension (Land Use Series): Checklist #1H – The Five-Year Plan Review
- 2) Goals & Objectives from 2021 Master Plan
- 3) Draft survey questions for online survey
- 4) Adopted 2021 Master Plan (Full)

In determining whether to conduct a Master Plan update, one of the first steps listed in the MSU checklist is asking the Planning Commission, *“to what degree have the goals, objectives, and strategies been met since the adoption of the plan? Do the goals and objectives continue to provide guidance for a twenty-year time frame?”*

We agree that this is a good place to begin the discussion. As such, staff would like to review the goals and objectives of the 2021 Master Plan at the May 20th meeting to discuss their continued importance. We have also drafted a survey (which will eventually be put online for the public) to help guide discussion. As part of this discussion, staff would like Planning Commission input on the questions themselves to ensure that they are well-suited for public response.

If the Planning Commission determines that updates to the Master Plan are warranted, staff will begin the process of amending the Master Plan in coordination with the Planning Commission and City Council. A tentative timeline for Planning Commission review and action is listed below, which is subject to change:

Time Frame	Task
Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff issues a “Notice of Intent to Amend Master Plan” to send to adjacent communities and local governments, public utilities, and transportation agencies in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.• Finalize Master Plan survey and make public (online and hard-copy).
June/July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review updated background data, demographics, existing land use.
August/September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct comprehensive review of goals and objectives. (Joint meeting with City Council may be appropriate here).

October/November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Future Land Use Plan and categories. This is one of the (if not THE) key components of the Master Plan, so several meetings may be required.
January/February 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review DDA and Thoroughfare Plan. By this time, Phase 1 of the 11 Mile streetscape should be complete, and the Safe Streets for All Plan should be adopted.
March/April 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Implementation Plan & Zoning Plan
March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning Commission review of full draft plan. Planning Commission sends the draft plan to City Council who can then authorize distribution. If distribution is approved, staff issues a “Notice of Distribution” which begins a 42-day public comment period for the draft amended plan. (A joint meeting with City Council may be appropriate here).• Staff issues a public hearing notice.
May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning Commission holds a public hearing.
May/June 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential resolution to adopt Master Plan Amendment at Planning Commission.