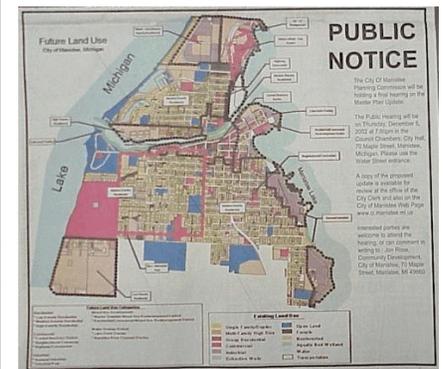
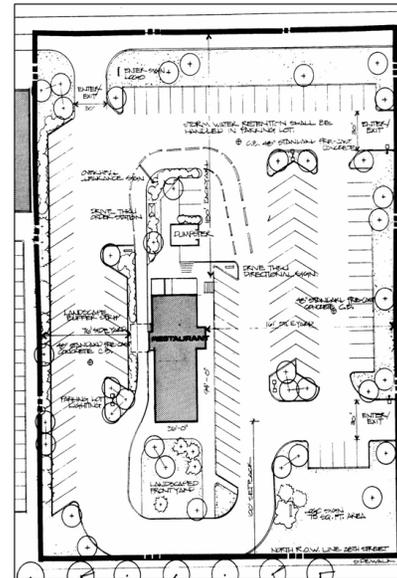


PLANNING AND ZONING*A*SYST. #2
A community planning and zoning assessment system.

Community Planning & Zoning Audit

The Plan

June 23, 2008



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION
Land Use Team

back of title page

Hard copy price: \$9.00

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The *Community Planning and Zoning Audit* is a comprehensive assessment of local government planning and zoning in Michigan. It covers basic topics and practices that members of every local planning and zoning entity should understand and should be doing. Each chapter of the *Community Planning and Zoning Audit* contains key points in the format of questions, checklists, and tables to assess your community's land use planning and zoning, including the adoption and amendment process, day-to-day administration and record keeping, and decision making about special land uses, planned unit developments, and site plan reviews.

Purpose of the Audit

The *Community Planning and Zoning Audit* is intended for use by local units of government in Michigan to help perform a self-evaluation of the basics of the community's planning and zoning system. The reason for doing an assessment is to learn of shortcomings and problems before they become controversial issues. As a result of going through this booklet, local officials will be alerted to things that need "fixing" and deficiencies in the community's files. The document helps accomplish three objectives:

1. Identify liability risks from not following proper procedures and practices, and not having adequate documentation of those procedures and practices.
2. Learn to better manage the planning and zoning administration in your community.
3. Take corrective steps to improve your planning and zoning system.

Organization and Content

This publication is one of a series of eight Michigan State University Extension *Community Planning and Zoning Audits* available to walk a community through a performance audit. Topics are:

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The authors would like to thank the following individuals for their review and assistance with this publication:

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- Leslie Johnson, EDITOR, MSU Agriculture and Natural Resources Communications.
- Debbie Lakatos, Planning Commission Secretary, Fairfield Township (Lenawee County)
- Mary Lou Millard, Township Planning Commission Secretary, Onekama Township (Manistee County)
- Patricia E. Norris, MSU Professor of Agricultural Economics, Guyer-SeEVERS Chair in Natural Resource Conservation
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1. **Basic Setup** to make sure your planning commission, and zoning board of appeals are set up properly a system is in place to make sure the community keeps up-to-date.
2. **The Plan** reviews the process of plan and plan amendment adoption (to make sure that it was done properly) and a review of an existing plan to determine if it needs to be updated, and reviews what should be in a plan.
3. **Planning Coordination** covers the process of coordination with neighboring government planning (review of each other's plans); coordination with state, federal and other government agencies; coordination practices; and joint planning commissions.
4. **The Zoning Ordinance** reviews the process of zoning ordinance and zoning amendment adoption (to make sure that it was done properly) and what needs to be in the file to document that the proper steps were taken. This publication also reviews what should be in a zoning ordinance.
5. **Administrative Structure** provides a performance audit for the operation of the planning commission, zoning administrator, and zoning board of appeals. It covers office procedures, job descriptions, filing systems, bylaws, rules of procedure, compliance with the Open Meetings Act, minutes, and process for meetings and decision making.
6. **Special Land Uses** provides a review of the administrative structure for handling special use permits: preapplications, applications, public notification, record keeping, and use of standards in making decisions.
7. **Planned Unit Development** provides a review of the administrative structure for handling planned unit development handled as a special use permit and as a zoning amendment: pre-applications, applications, public notification, record keeping, and use of standards in making special use decisions or basis in the plan for zoning amendment decisions.

8. **Site Plan Review** provides a review of the administrative structure for handling site plan reviews: applications, public notification, record keeping, and use of standards in making decisions.

Each of these *Community Planning and Zoning Audits* is available at www.msue.msu.edu/lu or from your county Extension office.

How to use the Audit

The *Community Planning and Zoning Audit* is not difficult to complete. However, it does take time and the ability to search for and find various records in your local government. The actions taken as a result of this exercise should help reduce liability risk and improve your community's planning and zoning program.

The *Community Planning and Zoning Audit* can be utilized by local units of government in a variety of ways. A community can go through this booklet as a group (e.g., the planning commission or a subcommittee) or a community can have an individual do so. The advantage of performing the assessment as a group is that reviewing the community's documents and files in detail is a great educational experience for local officials. Alternatively, a staff person within the planning department may be able to perform the audit quicker because of having greater familiarity with how the unit or government maintains its records.

Additionally, a community can perform the *Community Planning and Zoning Audit* with certain chapters reviewed by various groups or individuals. For instance, the planning commission could review a few chapters of the audit while the zoning board of appeals addresses another set, and the legislative body performs the evaluations in the remaining chapters. Regardless of the approach taken, the main idea is to take the time to find out where various documents are and to

make sure that proper documentation is on file. Then, where necessary, take action to correct any shortcomings.

Upon completion, if your community still has questions or wants help, please contact your county Extension director. That individual can contact the Michigan State University Land Use Team to provide further assistance and educational programming.

Organization and Content

The *Community Planning and Zoning Audit* contains the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. The Plan
3. Smart Growth

The audit is based on Michigan Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended (the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, M.C.L. 125.3101 *et seq.*), Public Act 33 of 2008 (the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, M.C.L. 125.8101 *et seq.*), recommendations from members of the MSU Extension Land Use Team, and intergovernmental coordination and plan content “best planning practices” derived from a proposed Coordinated Planning Act developed by the Michigan Association of Planning.

The *Community Planning and Zoning Audit* is not designed to be a substitute for reading and understanding the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act or the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Nor is this document a substitute for legal advice or for professional planner services. It is important to document each step of the process in planning and zoning a community. Keep detailed minutes, affidavits of publication and mailing, open meeting notices, letters of transmittal, and communications all on file so that years from now they are still

available.

Defined Terms

“*Appeals board*” means the zoning board of appeals (ZBA).

“*Certified*” (resolution, minutes, ordinance, etc.) means the keeper of the records for the local unit of government (secretary of the planning commission or clerk of the local unit of government for the planning commission or the clerk of the municipality for the legislative body) provides an affidavit that the copy provided is a true and accurate copy of the document.

“*Elected official*” means a member of a legislative body.

“*Legislative body*” refers to the county board of commissioners of a county, the board of trustees of a township, the council of a city or village, or any other similar duly elected representative body of a county, township, city, or village.

“*Local unit of government*” means a county, township, city, or village.

“*Municipality*” means a city, village, or township.

“*Plan*” means any plan or master plan adopted under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act or one of the three former planning acts, regardless of what it is titled.

“*Planning commission*” means a zoning board, zoning commission,¹ planning commission, or planning board².

¹On or before July 1, 2011, the duties of the zoning commission or zoning board shall be transferred to a planning commission. Thus, the zoning commission or zoning board will no longer exist (M.C.L. 125.3301(2)).

²On or before Sept 1, 2008 “planning boards” will need to be named “planning commissions” even if a charter, ordinance, or resolution says otherwise (M.C.L. 125.3811(1)).

Chapter 2: The Plan

To perform this review, you will need:

1. Files documenting the adoption of your plan or the amending of your plan.
2. Copy of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.
3. Copy of the community master plan.

This set of questions should be reviewed for **each** plan amendment that

has been adopted. Thus, you may be going through these questions several times. If the question is answered “yes” or “not applicable”, good. If the question is answered “no”, this missing item needs to be found and included in the file. If it cannot be found, consult with the local unit of government attorney for steps necessary to correct the issue.

Plan Adoption

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>1. Do you have on file a certified copy of the legislative body’s minutes (including the resolution or ordinance) of the session at which creation of the planning commission took place?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Try to recover the documentation and include it in the files. If the documentation can not be recovered, consult with the local unit of government attorney about adopting a new ordinance recreating the planning commission (see <i>Land Use Series: “Checklist 1B: Sample Planning Commission Ordinance”</i> at www.msue.msu.edu/lu).</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>2. Do you have on file adopted bylaws for the planning commission? (M.C.L. 125.3819(1))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Try to recover the bylaws and include them in the files. If they can not be recovered, adopt new bylaws (see <i>Land Use Series</i>: “Checklist #1E: Sample Bylaws for Planning Commission” at www.msue.msu.edu/lu).</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>3. Do you have on file a copy of the notices sent explaining that the planning commission intends to prepare a plan and is requesting recipients’ cooperation and comment (“we are starting to prepare a plan” notice)? (M.C.L. 125.3839(2))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Sending such notice is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the notices is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so immediately (see <i>Land Use Series</i>: “Checklist #1G: Adoption of a Plan in Michigan” at www.msue.msu.edu/lu).</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>4. Do you have on file a copy of the list to whom the “we are starting to prepare a plan” notice was sent (adjacent municipalities, municipalities within your local unit of government, your respective county, regional planning agency, and others)?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so immediately.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>5. Do you have on file a copy of an affidavit stating that the “we are starting to prepare a plan” notice was sent?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so immediately.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>6. Do you have on file notes or minutes of joint meetings or copies of letters showing cooperative work with others (neighboring jurisdictions, other agencies, etc.)? (M.C.L. 125.3831(2) and 125.3831(3))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so immediately.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>7. Do you have on file the initial copies of studies, documents, and reports leading up to the preparation of the plan? (M.C.L. 125.3831(2)(a))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so immediately (see <i>Land Use Series</i>: “Checklist #1F: Content of a Plan” at www.msue.msu.edu/lu).</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>8. Do you have on file a copy of the review of the plan (letters, minutes, other) by county planning (or regional planning commission) or a professional planner?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because this optional step was not done.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so immediately.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>9. Do you have on file the initial draft text of a plan, maps, and other supporting documents?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so immediately.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done. Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>10. Do you have on file a certified copy of the minutes approving submission of the proposed plan to the legislative body?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This action is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the minutes is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done. Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>11. Do you have a certified copy of the legislative body's minutes approving distribution of the proposed plan? (M.C.L. 125.3841(1))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This action is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the minutes is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done. Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>12. Do you have on file a copy of the letter of transmittal sending a copy of the proposed plan out? (M.C.L. 125.3841(2))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Sending the proposed plan is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the letter is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>13. Do you have on file a copy of the list to whom the proposed plan was sent (adjacent municipalities, municipalities within your local unit of government, your respective county, regional planning agency, and others)?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>14. Do you have on file a copy of an affidavit stating that the proposed plan was sent?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>15. Do you have on file a copy of a statement sent to the county planning commission/county board verifying and listing to whom the proposed plan was sent? (M.C.L. 125.3841(2)(e))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Not applicable because the proposed plan is a county plan.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Sending the statement to the county is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the statement is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>16. Do you have on file (or maybe in the appendix of the plan) a copy of each comment submitted (from municipalities adjacent, within your local unit of government, your respective county, regional planning agency, and others)?</p> <p>(See MSU Land Use Team’s <i>Land Use Series</i>: “How a Planning Commission Should Respond to Submissions” at www.msue.msu.edu/lu.)</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not applicable because no submissions were received.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>17. Do you have on file (or maybe in the appendix of the plan) a copy of the response to each submission, with changes to the proposed plan or reasons why it was not changed?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because no submissions were received. OR Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so immediately (see <i>Land Use Series</i>: “Checklist 1: How a Planning Commission Should Respond to Submissions” at www.msue.msu.edu/lu).</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>18. Do you have on file a certified copy of the resolution adopted by the planning commission to hold a public comment period (M.C.L. 125.3841(3)) and then a hearing (M.C.L. 125.3841(1)) on the proposed plan?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>19. Do you have on file a copy of the list to whom the hearing notice was sent (adjacent municipalities, municipalities within your local unit of government, your respective county, regional planning agency, and others)? (M.C.L. 125.3843(1))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because hearing notices accompanied the proposed plan in an earlier mailing.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Sending the notice of the public hearing is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the list is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>20. Do you have on file a copy of the hearing notice published in a local newspaper of general circulation? (M.C.L. 125.3843(1))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> The notice publication is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the newspaper notice is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>21. Do you have on file a copy of an affidavit stating that the hearing notice was published by the local newspaper?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>22. Do you have on file a certified copy of the minutes of the planning commission's public hearing?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>23. Do you have on file (or maybe in the appendix of the plan) a copy of each comment submitted for the public comment period or at the hearing?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because no submissions were received.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>24. Do you have on file (or maybe in the appendix of the plan) a copy of the response to each submission, with changes to the proposed plan or reasons why it was not changed?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because no submissions were received.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so immediately (see <i>Land Use Series</i>: “How a Planning Commission Should Respond to Submissions” at www.msue.msu.edu/lu).</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>25. Do you have on file a copy of the resolution adopted by a majority vote (for townships or counties) or not less than two-thirds (for cities or villages) of the entire membership of the planning commission adopting the final version of the plan? (M.C.L. 125.3843(2))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> The resolution of adoption is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the resolution is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>26. Do you have on file a certified copy of minutes of the planning commission meeting at which the vote was made to adopt the resolution of plan adoption?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>27. Do you have on file a copy of the adopted plan?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>28. Do you have on file a certified copy of the legislative body's minutes adopting the resolution that asserts the right of the legislative body to adopt the plan? (M.C.L. 125.3843(3))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not applicable because the legislative body chose not to adopt such a resolution. OR Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>29. If the legislative body reserved the right to adopt the plan, do you have on file a copy of the planning commission's letter transmitting the plan to the legislative body?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not applicable because the legislative body chose not to adopt such a resolution. OR Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>30. If the legislative body reserved the right to adopt the plan, do you have on file a certified copy of the legislative body's minutes for the meeting at which adoption took place?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the legislative body chose not to adopt such a resolution. OR Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>31. Do you have on file a copy of the letter of transmittal sending out the adopted plan? (M.C.L. 125.3843(5))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Sending copies of the adopted plan is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the transmittal letter is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>32. Do you have on file a copy of the list to whom the letter of transmittal sending out the adopted plan was sent (adjacent municipalities, municipalities within your local unit of government, your respective county, regional planning agency, and others)?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/> Sending copies of the plan is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Filing a copy of the list is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
33. Do you have on file a copy of the affidavit stating that the letter of transmittal was sent?	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Good. Go to the next question.</p> <p>NA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not applicable because the plan being reviewed was adopted prior to January 9, 2003.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>This is recommended but not required. If desired, start the practice of doing so from this point forward.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Is the Plan Current?

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
1. Is your plan less than 5 years old? (M.C.L. 125.3845(2))	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Good. Go to Question 3.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Five-year plan reviews are required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (see <i>Land Use Series</i>: “Checklist #1H: Five-Year Plan Review” at www.msue.msu.edu/lu). Go to the next question. Continue with question 2A.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>2A. If the plan is more than 5 years old, starting in the fifth year:</p> <p>Has the planning commission reviewed the plan and determined the plan is still current and adequate? (M.C.L. 125.3845(2))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Good. Go to Question 3.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Five-year plan reviews are required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Review the plan immediately to determine if amendments need to be made. Continue with question 2B.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>2B. If the plan is more than 5 years old, starting in the fifth year:</p> <p>Has the planning commission reviewed the plan and determined that amendments need to be made, and the process for making those amendments has started? (M.C.L. 125.3845(2))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Good. Go to the Question 3.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Five-year plan reviews are required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Review the plan immediately to determine if amendments need to be made (see <i>Land Use Series</i>: “Checklist #11: Adoption of an Amendment to a Plan” at www.msue.msu.edu/lu). Continue with question 2C.</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate when improvement is done.</p>
<p>2C. If the plan is more than 5 years old, starting in the fifth year:</p> <p>Has the planning commission reviewed the plan and determined that a new plan is needed, and the process for creating a new plan has started? (M.C.L. 125.3845(2))</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Good. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Five-year plan reviews are required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Review the plan immediately to determine if a new plan is needed (see <i>Land Use Series</i>: “Checklist 1G: Adoption of a Plan in Michigan” at www.msue.msu.edu/lu).</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Question	Affirmative (we are doing it) answer	Negative (need to correct) answer	Action to correct has been done
<p>3. To tell if your plan needs updating (amendments), needs to be replaced (a new plan), or is still current and adequate, determine if any of the following has happened in the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The community was recently sued and lost. b. A major development has occurred that changes the community's needs. c. There has been a turnover of people, and new ideas or new thinking is taking place. d. Repeated contentious planning or zoning meetings are occurring on a number of issues. e. The population projections in the plan are not close to the actual census count that is now available; therefore, basic conclusions in the plan based on population are no longer accurate. f. The projected needs for various types of land uses are not close to the actual changes in land use; therefore, basic conclusions in the plan based on those projections are no longer accurate. g. The projected needs for various infrastructure are not close to actual infrastructure needs; therefore, basic conclusions in the plan about infrastructure are no longer accurate. h. Other conditions, projections, etc. (soil types, special and unique areas, new knowledge about the environment or endangered species, a major economic change in the labor market area) assumed or presented in the plan are no longer accurate. i. The plan is more than 5 years old. 	<p>Has not happened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None of the statements applies in the community – the plan does not need to be amended. Go to the next question.</p>	<p>Has happened <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A number of the statements reflect things that have happened in the community – updating or adopting a new plan should be considered. See <i>Land Use Series: “Checklist #1H: Five-Year Plan Review”</i> at www.msue.msu.edu/lu).</p>	<p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate this is an improvement that needs to be done.</p> <p>Check this box: <input type="checkbox"/> to indicate when improvement is done.</p>

Plan Content

Communities have great latitude when determining the contents of their master plans. Plan content will vary depending on the type, size, and complexity of your community. If your community administers zoning, your plan will likely have different content than that of a neighboring county that does not administer zoning. Likewise, the rate of growth and type of development in your community may warrant certain elements in your plan that are not components within your neighbors' plans.

A number of types of master plans might be prepared by a planning commission for "best planning practice" (using the Michigan Association of Planning's proposed Coordinated Planning Act). Types of master plans are described below, progressing from basic to very advanced:

1. The first, or most basic, is a **general plan** for county planning commissions that do not administer a zoning ordinance.
2. For municipalities that administer a zoning ordinance, or if a county plan is intended to be a document that a municipality in the county can adopt by reference as the basis of that municipality's zoning ordinance, then the planning commission should also prepare a **future land use plan** type of master plan. The planning commission can combine the general plan and the future land use plan into one document.
3. If a more complete planning program is desired, then a **comprehensive plan** type of master plan should be prepared. A comprehensive plan should include options for more detailed analysis and recommendations related to a broad range of social, environmental, and economic issues. The planning commission can also combine the general plan, the future land use plan, and the comprehensive plan into one document.
4. The situation in the community may warrant a **growth**

management plan or a **redevelopment plan** type of master plan, including a mechanism for phasing growth or redevelopment efforts. The planning commission can also combine the general plan, the future land use plan, the comprehensive plan, and the growth management plan into one document.

Any part of a plan may be part of the above plans or can be adopted as a separate plan. Also, a plan can incorporate by reference relevant portions of other plans (adopted under other statutes or specifically for another statutory purpose or specific territory in the local unit of government). For instance, a municipality may adopt the relevant portion of a county plan as the municipal plan if that portion of the county plan meets the requirements in the statute.

Another way to look at a plan is to consider it as two (perhaps three) distinct volumes:

1. A **fact book** to present background research, studies, and scientific analysis necessary for the plan.
2. The **plan** itself, to present the goals, objectives, strategies, and future vision for the community.
3. (Optional) A **summary** of the plan (easy to read, with pictures, for use as a public relations document or to promote the plan in a poster, pamphlet, or small book format).

These two or three sections can be parts within one document or two or three separate documents. Communities may also include information and policies by reference to other plans or documents. A sample table of contents is presented at the end of this chapter. It is a very detailed example, reflecting a very complete plan. It is likely that your community's plan will have less material than the sample. The sample table of contents is presented so you have a complete list of what might be included.

Using the tables below, review your plan(s) and write in each

column where the material is found in your community’s plans. On the basis of which rows in the table you are able to mark page numbers for and which ones are left blank, you can construct a list of what has been done and what has not been done on the basis of which rows in the table are marked with page numbers and which ones are left blank. Each time a community updates the plan, a general strategy is to try to increase the number of items in the above table that are done. Over time, the plan will become more substantial. One should also consider that there is a point at which a community does not need a more substantial plan (such as a small, rural, or not complex community).

Thus, in a county without zoning, the items listed as part of a general plan might be enough – but for a county most likely not. If it is a community with zoning, then only the elements for the general plan and the land use plan may be enough. This is a judgment call that should be reassessed each time the community updates or replaces its plan.

Minimum Plan Content Required by the Act

According to the Michigan Planing Enabling Act, at a minimum, the following elements are to be a part of a plan.

Minimum Statutory Plan Content	Where the element is found in the <i>fact book</i>	Where the element is found in the <i>plan</i>	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
<p>A section addressing land use and infrastructure issues and may project 20 years or more into the future. (M.C.L. 125.3833(1)) Maps, plats, charts, and descriptive, explanatory, and other related matter. (M.C.L. 125.3833(1)) A future land use map is required as a part of the land use plan element of the master plan. (M.C.L. 125.3833(2)(d)) The planning commission’s recommendations for the physical development of the planning jurisdiction. (M.C.L. 125.3833(1)) Recommendations for implementing any of the master plan’s proposals. (Sec. 33(2)(e)) Note: All jurisdictions should have a section detailing recommendations for implementation. (M.C.L. 125.3833(2)(e)) Documentation that the planning commission made careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth within the planning jurisdiction with due regard to its relation to neighboring jurisdictions or copies of the surveys and studies. (M.C.L. 125.3831(2)(a))</p>						<p>Shall be included Shall be included</p>	

Minimum Statutory Plan Content	Where the element is found in the fact book	Where the element is found in the plan	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
<p>Documentation that the planning commission consulted with representatives of adjacent local units of government in respect to their planning so that conflicts in master plans and zoning may be avoided. (M.C.L. 125.3831(2)(b))</p> <p>Documentation that the planning commission cooperated with all departments of the state and federal governments and other public agencies concerned with programs for economic, social, and physical development within the planning jurisdiction and sought the maximum coordination of the local unit of government's programs with these agencies. (M.C.L. 125.3831(2)(c))</p> <p>For a local unit of government that has adopted a zoning ordinance, a zoning plan (M.C.L. 125.3203(1)) (see also M.C.L. 125.3305(a)): A proposed schedule of regulations by district that includes at least building height, lot area, bulk, and setbacks. (M.C.L. 125.3833(2)(d))</p> <p>For a local unit of government that has adopted a zoning ordinance, a zoning plan (M.C.L. 125.3203(1)) (see also M.C.L. 125.3305(a)): the standards or criteria to be used to consider rezonings consistent with the master plan.</p> <p>For a local unit of government that has adopted a zoning ordinance, a zoning plan (M.C.L. 125.3203(1)) (see also M.C.L. 125.3305(a)): An explanation of how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map. (M.C.L. 125.3833(2)(d)) Prerequisite to this requirement is first a description of each zoning district and second a proposed zoning map.</p>						<p>Shall be included</p> <p>Shall be included</p> <p>If there is zoning, then these elements shall be included</p> <p>If there is zoning, then these elements shall be included</p> <p>If there is zoning, then these elements shall be included</p>	

Minimum Statutory Plan Content	Where the element is found in the fact book	Where the element is found in the plan	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
<p>For a local unit of government that has adopted a zoning ordinance, a zoning plan (M.C.L. 125.3203(1)) (see also M.C.L. 125.3305(a)): a description of each of the zoning districts (including proposed new ones), the general purpose of each district, a general description of the class of uses to be permitted in each district, and the general locations for those types of districts. Use classes include single-family residential, multiple-family residential, commercial, office, industrial, agricultural, forestry, mining, etc.</p> <p>For a local unit of government that has adopted a zoning ordinance, a zoning plan (M.C.L. 125.3203(1)) (see also M.C.L. 125.3305(a)): a proposed zoning map showing the location of proposed zoning districts. This could be accomplished by referring to the existing zoning map and then including a map with proposed district changes and the circumstances under which those changes should be made in a manner consistent with the master plan.</p> <p><i>Plans might also include, if "reasonably can be considered as pertinent to the future development of the planning jurisdiction":</i> for a county, documentation that the master plan may include planning in cooperation with the constituted authorities for incorporated areas in whole or to the extent to which, in the planning commission's judgment, they are related to the planning of the unincorporated territory or of the county as a whole. (M.C.L. 125.3831(1)(a))</p> <p><i>Plans might also include, if "reasonably can be considered as pertinent to the future development of the planning jurisdiction":</i> for a township that on the effective date of this act had a planning commission created under former 1931 P.A. 285, or for a city or village, the planning jurisdiction may include any areas outside of the municipal boundaries that, in the planning commission's judgment, are related to the planning of the municipality. (M.C.L. 125.3831(1)(b))</p>						<p>If there is zoning, then these elements shall be included</p> <p>If there is zoning, then these elements shall be included</p>	

Minimum Statutory Plan Content

Plans might also include, if “reasonably can be considered as pertinent to the future development of the planning jurisdiction”: a classification and allocation of land for agriculture, residences, commerce, industry, recreation, ways and grounds, public buildings, schools, soil conservation, forests, woodlots, open space, wildlife refuges, and other uses and purposes. (If a county has not adopted a zoning ordinance under former 1943 P.A. 183 or the Michigan zoning enabling act, 2006 PA 110, M.C.L. 125.3101 to 125.3702), a land use plan and program for the county may be a general plan with a generalized future land use map. (M.C.L. 125.3833(2)(a)) Note: given this requirement, most, if not all, jurisdictions should include the majority of these elements in the master plan.

Plans might also include, if “reasonably can be considered as pertinent to the future development of the planning jurisdiction”: the general location, character, and extent of streets, railroads, airports, bicycle paths, pedestrian ways, bridges, waterways, and waterfront developments; sanitary sewers and water supply systems; facilities for flood prevention, drainage, pollution prevention, and maintenance of water levels; and public utilities and structures. (M.C.L. 125.38(2)(b)) Note: given this requirement, most, if not all, jurisdictions should include the majority of these elements in the master plan.

Plans might also include, if “reasonably can be considered as pertinent to the future development of the planning jurisdiction”: recommendations on the general character, extent, and layout of redevelopment or rehabilitation of blighted areas; and the removal, relocation, widening, narrowing, vacating, abandonment, change of use, or extension of streets, grounds, open spaces, buildings, utilities, or other facilities. (M.C.L. 125.3833(2)(c)) (Recommendations for redevelopment may or may not be included as pertinent, and all the elements of a zoning plan [above].)

Where the element is found in the fact book	Where the element is found in the plan	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)

Minimum Statutory Plan Content

Plans might also include, if “reasonably can be considered as pertinent to the future development of the planning jurisdiction”: if a master plan is or includes a master street plan, the means for implementing the master street plan in cooperation with the county road commission and the state transportation department shall be specified in the master street plan in a manner consistent with the respective powers and duties of and any written agreements between these entities and the municipality. (M.C.L. 125.3833(3)) Note: given this requirement, most, if not all, jurisdictions should include the majority of these elements in the master plan.

Where the element is found in the fact book	Where the element is found in the plan	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)

This is the first of three ways to evaluate the content of your plan. The table above should be considered the legal minimum. Most plans should contain much more.

Best Planning Practice Plan Content

The following checklist is adapted from materials developed by the Michigan chapter of the American Planning Association, from its

work toward a Coordinated Planning Act (never adopted). It provides a rather complete list of the analysis that should be a part of a plan and fact or data book.

Following this table is a sample table of contents for a plan, data or fact book, and summary. It gives just one example of how information in a plan might be organized.

Michigan Association of Planning's "Best Planning Practice" Plan Content	Where the element is found in the <i>fact book</i>	Where the element is found in the <i>plan</i>	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
<p>General Plan (<i>Only for a county with no zoning.</i>) A policy-based plan with generalized future land use maps that:</p> <p>Includes a section on affordable housing needs and a strategy to meet those needs.</p> <p>Includes a section on job development and a strategy to meet those needs.</p> <p>Addresses the relationships between jobs, housing, and transportation within the county or region.</p> <p>Includes a section on multimodal transportation, including streets and highways, public transit, airports, railroads, ports, and pedestrian and bicycle ways.</p> <p>Includes a section on capital facilities owned and/or operated or privately contracted for by the county, together with long-range fiscal plans for the provision of new capital facilities.</p> <p>Serves as the basis for the county or regional capital improvement program, including capital improvements to be done by a county road commission, drain commissioner, parks and recreation commission, department of public works, or other county board or commission.</p> <p>Provides an analysis of all the municipal or joint municipal plans of municipalities within the county to ensure coordination and consistency, including buildout, economic, fiscal, environmental, and social impact analyses.</p> <p>Incorporates by reference plans or portions of plans adopted by other agencies of political subdivisions, or regional agencies, or plans adopted jointly by multiple municipalities, this state, or the federal government.</p> <p>Includes such other elements as determined by the planning commission.</p>							
<p>Future Land Use Plan (<i>The minimum for a local unit of government with zoning.</i>) Most of everything above.</p>							

Michigan Association of Planning's "Best Planning Practice" Plan Content	Where the element is found in the <i>fact book</i>	Where the element is found in the <i>plan</i>	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
<p>Depicts the arrangement of future land uses, as well as the intensity and density of such uses, and includes:</p> <p>An explanation of the degree to which future land uses are or are not compatible with the future land use plans and zoning regulations of adjoining jurisdictions, municipalities within the county, or the management plans of state or federal agencies with public lands within the county.</p> <p>A section on future land use described in the text and depicted on a future land use map showing the general location and arrangement of future land uses but not parcel lines.</p> <p>A future transportation network, including roads and streets, bridges, railroads, airports, bicycle paths, and pedestrian ways.</p> <p>Provisions for a network of electronic communication facilities.</p> <p>Future capital facilities.</p> <p>A zoning plan for the control of the height, area, bulk, density, location, and use of buildings and premises for current and future zoning districts.</p> <p>An explanation of the zoning plan's relationship to the future land use plan.</p> <p>A description of how the community intends to move from present conditions – illustrated on the current zoning map and described in the zoning plan – to the proposed future relationship of land uses illustrated on the future land use map.</p> <p>A discussion of measures considered and included in the development of the future land use plan to avoid possible takings of private property without just compensation if land use regulations were to be subsequently adopted or amended consistent with the plan.</p> <p>Goals, objectives, policies, and strategies to be employed in fulfilling the plan that are incorporated in each of the elements of a future land use plan mentioned above.</p>							

Michigan Association of Planning's "Best Planning Practice" Plan Content	Where the element is found in the <i>fact book</i>	Where the element is found in the <i>plan</i>	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
<p>Maps and, if helpful, plats, charts, and tables, accompanied by descriptive explanatory text, that are incorporated in each of the elements of a future land use plan mentioned above.</p>							
<p>Comprehensive Plan Each element of the general plan and land use plan, above.</p> <p>Recommendations for the social, environmental, economic, or physical development or redevelopment of the jurisdictional area. The plan should identify the amount and source of the fiscal and other resources to be used to implement the recommendations in the plan, including:</p> <p>An analysis of existing community social and economic disparities in employment, income, housing, transportation, education, and crime, and recommendations for public and private measures to rectify disparities.</p> <p>A section on multimodal transportation facilities, together with long-range fiscal plans for the provision or replacement of transportation facilities. (This may be part of the future transportation network [master street plan] element of a plan.)</p> <p>Information on capital facilities necessary for the comprehensive plan to serve as the basis for the development and annual updating of a capital improvement program, including a map of the location of new capital facilities on which construction is proposed to begin within a period at least as long as that covered by a capital improvement program.</p> <p>Maps and text with an analysis of existing conditions and strategies to address identified problems and/or opportunities for housing, including the condition of existing housing and specific needs for affordable and assisted housing, and analysis of options for meeting those needs.</p> <p>Maps and text with an analysis of existing conditions and strategies to address identified problems and/or opportunities for economic development, including both job retention and promotion strategies.</p>							

Michigan Association of Planning's "Best Planning Practice" Plan Content	Where the element is found in the <i>fact book</i>	Where the element is found in the <i>plan</i>	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
<p>Maps and text with an analysis of existing conditions and strategies to address identified problems and/or opportunities for natural resources management, including agricultural and forestlands, mineral lands, wetlands, floodplains, headwaters areas, sand dunes, areas at high risk of erosion, other sensitive areas, endangered or threatened species habitat, and land use related to preserving biodiversity.</p> <p>Maps and text with an analysis of existing conditions and strategies to address identified problems and/or opportunities for measures to define, protect, enhance, or change community character.</p>							
<p>Growth Management Plan Each element of the general plan, land use plan, and comprehensive plan above.</p> <p>A plan for phasing growth or redevelopment efforts within the boundaries for expansion of capital facilities and/or public services of local units during the period of the plan, including:</p> <p>Descriptions of maximum density of land use based on available public services and facilities and specified level of service standards for those services and facilities.</p> <p>Consistency with P.A. 110 of 2006, as amended (the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, M.C.L. 125.3101 <i>et seq.</i>), as applicable for a purchase of development rights program and/or, to the extent permissible by law, transfer of development rights program.</p> <p>Maps showing the locations of proposed future road rights-of-way and other public facilities beyond 5 years in the future.</p> <p>A strategy and locations to target for the provision of affordable housing.</p> <p>A strategy that links future jobs, housing, and transportation in mutually supportive ways.</p> <p>A strategy for land assembly and redevelopment.</p>							

Michigan Association of Planning's "Best Planning Practice" Plan Content	Where the element is found in the <i>fact book</i>	Where the element is found in the <i>plan</i>	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
Other elements as necessary to implement the growth management or redevelopment goals of the plan.							
<p>Include as part of the plan, or as separate plans as needed, elements related to:</p> <p>Soil and water conservation.</p> <p>Open space protection.</p> <p>Intergovernmental coordination.</p> <p>Human services, including childcare services, senior citizen programming, and mental health services.</p> <p>Historic preservation.</p> <p>Coastal zone management.</p> <p>Solid waste management.</p> <p>Energy conservation.</p> <p>Watershed planning and management.</p> <p>Community corrections.</p> <p>Annexation.</p> <p>Redevelopment.</p> <p>Special purpose, subarea (M.C.L. 125.3835), functional, neighborhood, corridor, or strategic plans.</p>							

Michigan Association of Planning's "Best Planning Practice" Plan Content	Where the element is found in the <i>fact book</i>	Where the element is found in the <i>plan</i>	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
<p>Incorporate by reference to relevant portions of other plans, including any of the following adopted plans that apply to the territory covered by the planning commission:</p> <p>A development plan adopted by a tax increment finance authority under P.A. 450 of 1980, as amended (the Tax Increment Finance Authority Act, M.C.L. 125.1801 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A development plan adopted by a downtown development authority under P.A. 197 of 1975, as amended (the Downtown Development Authority Act, M.C.L. 125.1651 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A development plan adopted by a local development finance authority under P.A. 281 of 1986, as amended (the Local Development Financing Authority Act, M.C.L. 125.2151 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A development plan adopted by an international tradeport development authority under P.A. 325 of 1994, as amended (the International Tradeport Development Authority Act, M.C.L. 125.2521 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A brownfield plan adopted by a brownfield redevelopment authority under P.A. 381 of 1996, as amended (the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, M.C.L. 125.2651 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A plan adopted by a county or regional economic development commission under P.A. 46 of 1966, as amended (the County or Regional Economic Development Commission Act, M.C.L. 125.1231 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A project plan adopted by an economic development corporation under P.A. 338 of 1974, as amended (the Economic Development Corporations Act, M.C.L. 125.1601 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A plan adopted by a housing commission under P.A. 18 of 1933 (Extra Session), as amended (the Housing Facilities Act, M.C.L. 125.691 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A development plan approved by a planning commission and supervising agency under P.A. 250 of 1941, as amended (the Urban Redevelopment Corporations Law, M.C.L. 125.901 <i>et seq.</i>).</p>							

Michigan Association of Planning's "Best Planning Practice" Plan Content	Where the element is found in the <i>fact book</i>	Where the element is found in the <i>plan</i>	Where the element is found in other adopted plans	Where the element is found in the optional summary, poster, pamphlet, etc.	Does this element of the plan(s) need updating?	The element is of minor importance in our community at this time, thus not in the plan	This is something we want to add to our next plan(s)
<p>A county or regional park or recreation plan adopted by a county or regional park commission under P.A. 261 of 1965, as amended (the County and Regional Parks Act, M.C.L. 46.351 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A plan adopted by a historic district commission under P.A. 169 of 1970, as amended (the Local Historic Districts Act, M.C.L. 399.201 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>An airport approach plan adopted by the aeronautics commission under P.A. 23 of 1950 (Extra Session), as amended (the Airport Zoning Act, M.C.L. 259.431 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A school district plan adopted by a public school district or charter school.</p> <p>A sewer or water plan adopted by a local unit or joint sewer and water authority.</p> <p>A solid waste management plan adopted pursuant to Part 115 of P.A. 451 of 1994, as amended (the Solid Waste Management part of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, M.C.L. 324.11501 to 324.11550).</p> <p>A blighted area rehabilitation plan adopted pursuant to P.A. 344 of 1945, as amended (M.C.L. 125.71 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A neighborhood area improvement plan adopted pursuant to P.A. 208 of 1949, as amended (the Neighborhood Area Improvements Act, M.C.L. 125.941 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>A plan for redevelopment of principal shopping areas under P.A. 120 of 1961, as amended (the Principal Shopping Districts and Business Improvement Districts Act, M.C.L. 125.981 <i>et seq.</i>).</p> <p>Enterprise or empowerment zone plans.</p> <p>Any capital facility or other metropolitan plan prepared by a metropolitan council under P.A. 292 of 1989, as amended (the Metropolitan Councils Act, M.C.L. 124.651 <i>et seq.</i>).</p>							

Sample Table of Contents

Seldom are plans organized in a format as presented in the above table. The following is a more typical table of contents for a community plan. However, there is no right or wrong way or order in which to arrange a plan. A community has a great deal of flexibility in this area.

1. **Background/Fact Book** Possible List of Contents

- a. Introduction, Part A
 - i. Acknowledgments, Chapter A1
 - ii. Summary, Chapter A2
 - iii. About the fact book (explanation of its use, purpose), Chapter A3
 - iv. Former plans, Chapter A4
- b. The Big Picture, Part B
 - i. International, Chapter B1
 - ii. National, Chapter B2
 - iii. State and region, Chapter B3 (Michigan Trend Future, Michigan Land Use Leadership Council Smart Growth recommendations)
- c. Background, Part C
 - i. Geography and climate, Chapter C1
 - ii. History, Chapter C2
 - iii. Former land uses, Chapter C3
 - iv. Natural resources, Chapter C4
 - v. Environment, Chapter C5
 - vi. Scenic resources (community character), Chapter C6
 - vii. Recreation (parks), Chapter C7³
 - viii. Population (demographics), Chapter C8

- ix. Human services, Chapter C9
 - x. Economics (jobs), Chapter C10
 - xi. Housing, Chapter C11
 - xii. Infrastructure (drains, sewer, water, roads, airport, port, etc.), Chapter C12
 - xiii. Land ownership, Chapter C13
 - xiv. Existing zoning analysis (continuation of current trends, buildout, critique, etc.), Chapter C14
- d. Appendices, Part D
 - i. Public input (opinion survey methodology detail, results)⁴, D1
 - ii. Other detail, D2 and so on.

2. **Plan** Volume Possible List of Contents

- a. Introduction, Part E
 - i. Summary, Chapter E1
 - ii. About the plan (context, legal authority, purpose), Chapter E2
 - iii. International, national, state, relationships, Chapter E3
- b. Conclusions/Land Use Plan Map, Part F
 - i. Land use plan, Chapter F1
 - ii. Industrial activities, Chapter F2
 - iii. Commercial activities, Chapter F3
 - iv. Residential development, Chapter F4
 - v. Rural residential activities, Chapter F5
 - vi. Resource protection (farmland, forestland preservation), Chapter F6
 - vii. Sensitive or environmentally limiting lands, Chapter F7
 - viii. Special areas/community character (scenic, historic,

³Recreation plan is often a separate plan/document.

⁴Or results are incorporated throughout the document.

- cultural, environmental), Chapter F8
 - ix. Zoning plan, Chapter F9
- c. Conclusions/Other Plan Topics, Part G
 - i. Housing, Chapter G1
 - ii. Human services, Chapter G2
 - iii. Education, Chapter G3
 - iv. Infrastructure, Chapter G4
 - v. Economic development, Chapter G5
 - vi. Air, water, groundwater, solid waste, soil erosion, energy, etc., Chapter G6
 - vii. Environmental protection (beds of rivers and lakes and their margins), natural resources management, Chapter G7
- viii. Indigenous peoples, Chapter G8
 - ix. Other (special issues for a particular county), other chapters dealing with issues identified, Chapter G9
 - d. Appendices, Part H
 - i. Public participation, H1
 - ii. Adoption documentation, H2
 - iii. Listing of comments on the plan and response to comments on the plan, H3
 - iv. Other appendices, H4 and so on.
- 3. **Summary** (optional) in the form of a poster, heavily illustrated flier, or other public relations material on the plan.

Smart Growth

The materials covered here are the basics for plan content. However, in Michigan there is a push for communities to adopt smart growth principles. (See the last chapter of this document for the assessment on smart growth.) The applicability of the smart growth

principles to your community may warrant the addition of sections to your plan that are not included in the sample table of contents.

Chapter 3: Smart Growth

The purpose of this section is to provide basic information and introduce communities to the 10 tenets of smart growth. Covered here are the basics necessary for the administration and operation of zoning. If your community is interested in incorporating the principles of smart growth into its ordinances and develop according to the smart growth principles, the Smart Growth Readiness Assessment Tool (SGRAT) can be used to guide your community through an evaluation of the plans and implementation tools currently used to guide growth. This assessment can also help your community identify tools that may help produce a smart pattern of growth in the future.

This document represents the first stage of a community assessment. To go on to the next step in assessing your community's planning and zoning, you should review the Smart Growth Readiness Assessment Tool on the Internet. Go to <http://www.landpolicy.msu.edu/sgrat/>.

1. The Governor's Land Use Leadership Council used the following smart growth tenets⁵ for many of the recommendations contained in its report on land use in Michigan. These 10 tenets can form the basis for establishing a set of state land use goals.
 - a. Mix land uses.
 - b. Compact building design.
 - c. Increase housing choice.
 - d. Encourage walking.
 - e. Offer transportation variety.

- f. Create a sense of place.
- g. Protect farms, unique natural features, open spaces.
- h. Direct new development to existing communities.
- i. Make development process fair, predictable, efficient.
- j. Involve stakeholders.
4. What is smart growth?
 - a. Smart growth is development that serves the economy, the community, and the environment.
 - b. It provides a framework for communities to make informed decisions about how and where they grow
5. Why smart growth? It makes dollars and sense because it is: financially conservative, environmentally responsible, and socially beneficial.
 - a. Financially conservative
 - i. Make responsible use of public money.
 - ii. Reuses existing buildings.
 - iii. Uses existing roads and highways.
 - iv. Uses existing water/sewer infrastructure.
 - v. Uses higher density to maximize the value of publicly funded facilities and services.
 - vi. Keeps taxes and public service costs low.
 - b. Environmentally responsible
 - i. Uses and/or reuses developed areas.
 - ii. Keeps impervious surfaces to a minimum by concentrating dense development.
 - iii. Builds to fit existing land rather than changing the land to fit what is built.
 - iv. Avoids oversized lots and yards to reduce excessive mowing, fertilizing, etc.

⁵Smart Growth Network. *Getting to Smart Growth*. Washington, D.C.: Smart Growth Network. [Online, cited 8/3/03.] Available: <http://www.smartgrowth.org/PDF/GETTOSG.pdf>

For more detail and examples see <http://www.smartgrowth.org/pdf/gettosg.pdf>.

- c. Socially beneficial
 - i. Encourages people to live close enough to one another for comfortable interaction.
 - ii. Designs residential areas for conversation from the sidewalk

- iii. Encourages “eyes on the street” at all hours to reduce crime and fear of crime.

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