



# MCKENNA

March 21, 2024

Planning Commission  
City of Harper Woods  
19617 Harper Avenue  
Harper Woods, MI 48225

**Subject: 2023 Annual Report of Planning Commission Activities and 2024 Work Plan**

Dear Commissioners,

In accordance with Michigan Compiled Laws §125.3819(2.) also known as the Michigan Planning Enabling Act PA 33 of 2008, as amended, we have prepared and respectfully submit a draft annual written report to the City Council concerning Planning Commission operations and the status of planning activities for your consideration. This report includes meeting summaries for all Planning Commission meetings in 2022 with specific cases. This report also contains recommendations for 2023 planning and development efforts beyond general ordinance administration.

## MEMBERSHIP

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

- Gregory A. Vargo, Chairperson
- Lauren Mercer, Vice Chair
- Lawrence Hakim, Secretary
- David Kien
- Kevin Koresky
- Margrit Poynter
- Frank Serraiocco
- Andrea Williams

## MEETINGS

The Harper Woods Planning Commission met nine times in 2023, exceeding the MPEA's recommended four meetings annually.

- Wednesday, March 1
- Wednesday, March 22
- Wednesday, April 26
- Wednesday, July 26
- Wednesday, August 23
- Wednesday, September 27
- Wednesday, October 25
- Wednesday, November 15
- Wednesday, December 20

### HEADQUARTERS

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City of Harper Woods 2023 Annual Planning Activity Report  
March 21, 2024

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# 2023 in Review

The following table outlines various Planning Commission activities, including development reviews (site plan, special land use, etc.), and Zoning Ordinance and map amendments (rezonings) that were considered by the city in 2023.

Meeting Date	Project / Item	Location	Project Description	Planner's Report	Planning Commission Motion / Result	City Council Result
<b>March 1</b>	Master Plan Draft / Work Session	-	-	-	-	-
	Training Session – Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>March 22</b>	2022 Annual Report and 2023 Work Plan	-	-	-	Received and filed	-
	Master Plan Update Discussion	-	-	-	-	-
<b>April 26</b>	Conceptual Review	206555 Lennon / Poupard Elementary School	Conceptual redevelopment of the Poupard Elementary property.	-	-	-
	Distribution of Draft Master Plan	-	-	-	Approved	-
<b>July 26</b>	Master Plan Adoption and Public Hearing	-	-	-	Approved with conditions	Received
	Discussion - Zoning Ordinance Amendment	-	Marijuana Retail	-	-	-
	Public Hearing - Rezoning	206555 Lennon / Poupard Elementary School	Rezone from R1B, Single Family District to a PUD, Planned Unit Development.	-	-	-
<b>August 22</b>	Site Plan Review	206555 Lennon / Poupard Elementary School	Redevelop into 71 for-sale units (48 duplex condominium units and 23 attached single-family townhomes).	Recommend Conditional Approval	Approved with conditions	-
	Rezoning & Public Hearing	206555 Lennon / Poupard Elementary School	Rezone from R1B, Single Family District to a PUD, Planned Unit Development.	Planning Commission recommends Approval to City Council	Recommended City Council Approval with conditions	Approved
	Public Hearing – Special Land Use	20760 Harper / Sozo Health	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	-	-
	Site Plan & Special Land Use	20760 Harper / Sozo Health	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Public Hearing – Special Land Use	20780-20790 Harper / Altum LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	-	-



	Site Plan & Special Land Use	20780-20790 Harper / Altum LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Public Hearing – Special Land Use	20860-20876 Harper / Altum LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	-	-
	Site Plan & Special Land Use	20860-20876 Harper / Altum LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Public Hearing – Special Land Use	19550 Kelly / Kelly Woodside LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	-	-
	Site Plan & Special Land Use	19550 Kelly / Kelly Woodside LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Public Hearing – Special Land Use	19616 Kelly / 759 E. Pinconning LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	-	-
	Site Plan & Special Land Use	19616 Kelly / 759 E. Pinconning LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Public Hearing – Special Land Use	19344 Kelly Road / Center of Bangor Twp	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	-	-
	Site Plan & Special Land Use	19344 Kelly Road / Center of Bangor Twp	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Public Hearing – Special Land Use	20330-20340 Harper / Main Management LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	-	-
	Site Plan & Special Land Use	20330-20340 Harper / Main Management LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Public Hearing – Special Land Use	20490 Harper / Luffy Group LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	-	-
	Site Plan & Special Land Use	20490 Harper / Luffy Group LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Site Plan Amendment	18000 Vernier / Eastland Center Planned Unit Development	Amendment to existing site plan	Recommend Approval of Site Plan Modification	Approved Site Plan Modification	-
<b>September 27</b>	Master Plan Resolution of Adoption	-	-	-	Adopted	-
	Alley Vacation	19254-19258 Kelly / Wayne Metro	Gate off alleyway for safety and security	Recommended Denial – Seek Alternative	Tabled	-
<b>October 25</b>	Lot Split	19550 – 19554 Kelly Road / Kelly and Woodside LLC	To lot split to distance parcels from daycare to obtain retail business zoning approval.	Recommends Denial	Recommended City Council Denial	Denied
<b>November 15</b>	Table Marijuana Site Plan Special Land Use & Site Plan Requests	-	Table items 1, 2, and 3; Site Plan and Special Land Use Requests until discussion is had addressing issues	-	Postponed	-



			with the marijuana application process.			
<b>December 20</b>	Site Plan & Special Land Use	20760 Harper / Sozo Health	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Site Plan & Special Land Use	19616 Kelly / 759 E. Pinconning LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-
	Site Plan & Special Land Use	20330-20340 Harper / Main Management LLC	Marijuana Retail Establishment	-	Postponed	-

**2023 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS**

Long-term planning activities that occurred over the past year:

**Master Plan Update** – The previous plan was updated in 2013, and within the past 10 years the community has undergone both minor and major changes. Adopted on September 27, 2023, the Master Plan Update has incorporated modern planning techniques and principles and ensures compliance with the Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) program’s requirements, as well as the Michigan Planning Enabling Act’s requirements.

**Zoning Ordinance Updates** – In 2023 the City adopted an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance: Section 10-264 Marijuana Establishments.

**Training –**

The Commission completed the following staff-led training sessions in 2023:

1. Development and Parking, Streamlining Development Processes -- March
2. Sidewalks and Variances – April
3. Mixed Use Development -- July
4. Green Instructure – September
5. Public Art -- December

**Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update** – The five-year parks and recreation master plan, adopted on January 29, 2024, is not only a roadmap for parks and recreation decisions for the next five years but also maintains the qualifications of Harper Woods for funding through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

**2024 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT TASKS**

Several new and ongoing projects began over the past year and will be considered by the Planning Commission in 2024.

**Zoning Ordinance Updates** – Redevelopment Ready Communities requires a set of zoning ordinance updates to achieve Certified status. Further, the Master Plan recommends changes to the Zoning Ordinance to accomplish Plan goals. There are needed updates to the current Zoning Ordinance considering modern best zoning practices, day-to-day zoning experience gained on zoning text, maps, and administrative functions. As of March 18, 2024, the City of Harper Woods has received funding to support a Zoning Ordinance update and approved a contract to begin the process to update the Zoning Ordinance.

**Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) Requirements** – Listed below are the projects that need to be completed for RRC:

- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Public Participation Plan
- Zoning Ordinance Rewrite



**Kelly Road Corridor Improvement Project** – Continuing the work started in 2023, through a collaborative project with the City of Eastpointe, City of Detroit, SEMCOG, and other stakeholder groups, the City should continue to seek funding to support planning efforts to revamp and redesign Kelly Road to become a Complete Street that accommodates greater pedestrian space and crossings, a protected bicycle lane, outdoor dining, better roadway and parking management, and landscaping improvements.

**Fee Schedule** – The City should evaluate and update development and planning review fees to best reflect the true cost of the review process.

**Master Plan Implementation** –The RRC program requires an annual update on the City’s progress to effectuate the Master Plan vision. The following section is a report on the progress made on the 2023 Master Plan Implementation Section (starting on page 115 of the Harper Woods Master Plan). In the 2023 update column, a summary / progress report is included.

Project	MP Priority	MP Timeline	2023 Project Update
Revitalize vacant, unkept, or aging housing stock where needed.			
Communicate housing resources to residents annually, at a minimum (County-wide renovation program, non-profit housing assistance, etc.)	Medium	Ongoing	
Create an advertising program for city-owned vacant land/property.	Low	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Launch a block group ambassador / representative program to identify, enlist and train champions to report code issues.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Strengthen code enforcement programs for residential properties.			
Create a digital / mobile-friendly version of the property complaint form.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Increase the frequency of required rental inspections.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Encourage residential developments that are needed by persons of all ages, backgrounds, incomes, and physical capabilities.			
Expand the allowable types and locations for accessory dwelling units (ADUs).	High	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	To be considered in 2024 Zoning Update
Adopt the Michigan Municipal League (MML) pattern book OR commission Harper Woods-specific pre-approved house plans for alternative housing types (duplex, triplex, quadplex, etc).	Low	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Reduce permit fees and provide expedited permitting for development that incorporate universal design principles.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Train development review staff to check for age-friendly development features.	Low	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Create a pre-approved contractor list that residents can use to obtain age-friendly retrofit services.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Retrofit underutilized or vacant properties for unique, modern, and creative housing options.			
Develop neighborhood design standards for new infill housing.	Low	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Lower the requirement for minimum square footage to	High	Near Term (0-2	To be considered in



allow for a greater range of housing types.		Years)	2024 Zoning Update
Enable the transformation of Kelly Road into a mixed-use corridor.			
Increase the allowable height to 3 stories for new buildings or building redevelopments.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	To be considered in 2024 Zoning Update
Expand the allowable uses to include a mix of residential, office, semi-public, and commercial uses.	High	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	To be considered in 2024 Zoning Update
Modernize the parking requirements or eliminate parking minimums along the Kelly Road corridor to encourage infill and reoccupation of existing buildings.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	To be considered in 2024 Zoning Update
Strengthen the appearance and vitality of the Harper Road corridor.			
Expand the range of allowable uses with particular focus on pedestrian-oriented commercial.	High	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	To be considered in 2024 Zoning Update
Provide better buffering between I-94 and the Harper Road Corridor.	Low	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Ensure adequate buffering on the Vernier Road corridor.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 years)	
Improve workforce training to attract and retain talent.			
Advertise existing workforce training opportunities.	Medium	Ongoing	
Partner with Michigan Works! Center at 7 Mile and Gratiot to advertise and expand services in Harper Woods.	Low	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Connect Harper Woods High School students to local job training opportunities.	Medium	Ongoing	
Advertise and/or offer workforce-related trainings (computer skills, resume writing, etc)	High	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Attract and retain a diverse range of businesses.			
Enhance the current Guide to Development to facilitate the occupation of commercial space by small businesses, and advertise it's availability to owners and potential business owners.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Prepare priority sites by updating local policies to ensure balanced development.			
Actively market priority redevelopment sites.	High	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Ensure adequate infrastructure is in place to accommodate redevelopment at these sites.	Low	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Create a standard template for development agreements regarding infrastructure cost-sharing.	Low	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Explore the creation of commercial redevelopment districts (tax abatements).	Low	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Routinely coordinate with local and regional agencies to align economic development programs and policies.			
Annually review Wayne County and SEMCOG's economic development strategies.	Low	Ongoing	
Identify joint grant opportunities that could be pursued with neighboring communities.	High	Ongoing	
Reach out to neighboring communities to pursue joint	High	Ongoing	Collaborated with



grant opportunities.			City of Eastpointe on a SEMCOG grant for improvements to Kelly Road.
Prepare a template for annual reporting on the city's economic development progress.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Annually distribute the economic development report to neighboring governments.	Medium	Ongoing	
Deploy traffic calming where appropriate.			
Deploy traffic calming strategies on long residential streets (e.g., Woodland, Woodcrest, Woodside).	Medium	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Investigate feasibility of a road diet on Beaconsfield, south of Eastland Drive and Anita Street.	Low	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Deploy safe crossings around active school sites.	High	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Resolve potential vehicle-pedestrian conflicts on Kelly Road.			Ongoing – part of the Kelly Road Corridor Improvement Plan
Clearly delineate the interior sidewalk along the entire length of the Kelly Road corridor.	Medium	Long Term (7-10 years)	“ “
Use exterior paved islands for landscaping or planters to discourage pedestrian use and enhance the appearance of the corridor.	High	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Create additional safe pedestrian crossing points across Kelly Road to encourage access from residential areas to the Kelly Road businesses.	Low	Long Term (7-10 years)	“ “
Enhance the maintenance of commercial areas.			
Install trash cans along commercial corridors, especially Kelly Road.	High	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	Included in the Kelly Road Corridor Improvement Plan
Design, organize, and launch a business-sponsored beautification program.	Medium	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Beautify the city throughout, with particular focus on commercial areas.			
Establish a Public Arts Commission.	Low	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Develop a dedicated 'in-lieu' program for new large-scale developments whereby they contribute funds to support public art.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
De-regulate and encourage murals.	Low	Near Term (0-2 Years)	Mural installed at Salter Park
Ensure truck routes are limited to appropriate streets.			
Add appropriate signage for restricted movements and appropriate routes.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
To better accommodate the truck traffic, intersections of service streets should be designed with larger turning radius.	High	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Review Zoning Ordinance regulations to ensure that appropriate loading and service areas are adequate outside of the public right of way.	Medium	Near Term (0-2 Years)	To be considered in 2024 Zoning Update
Develop and advertise a mechanism for citizen reporting of cut-throughs or other inappropriate truck movement.	Low	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	



Improve transit stop amenities, working with partners as appropriate.			
Ensure there are accessible, paved paths to all bus stops.	Medium	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Adopt design guidelines for the streetscape at bus stop locations.	Low	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Conduct a bus stop inventory using the FHWA inventory checklist.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Enhance existing bus stop amenities to include stop information, seating, and miniature trash bins.	High	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Enhance the usability of Harper Woods streets for bicycle users.			
Study implementation feasibility of priority bicycle routes as identified in this plan.	Medium	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Implement micro-mobility/ bicycle lanes on priority routes as identified in this plan.	Low	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Improve the accessibility, maintenance, and usability of existing pedestrian crossings.			
Ensure ADA ramps are installed and maintained for all existing pedestrian crossings.	High	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Maintain pedestrian crossings across I-94 to ensure accessible passage for all users.	Medium	Ongoing	
Maintain a current Recreation Plan to ensure funding eligibility for Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) grant opportunities.			
Update the most recent (2018-2022) Parks and Recreation Plan.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	Completed
Review the Recreation Plan annually to ensure alignment with current City goals.	Medium	Ongoing	
Develop additional pocket parks as opportunities become available.			
Implement the planned Roscommon pocket park.	High	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	In the process.
Review and monitor the inventory of City-owned greenspace for additional opportunities.	Low	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Work with the Grosse Pointe School District to ensure redevelopment of Poupard School site into contemporary housing.			
Revise zoning regulations to permit the desired vision at this site.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	Rezoned to PUD.
Continue to participate in the development process to ensure the City's goals are realized.	Medium	Ongoing	Approved site plan.
Complete predevelopment/due diligence activities for Tyrone Street frontage property near Salter Park.			
Commission a survey of the property to confirm existing conditions.	Low	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Hire an appraiser to determine current value of property.	Medium	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Commission a Phase I Environmental Assessment for the site.	Low	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Assess and identify barriers to accessibility at the City Municipal Offices, the Harper Woods Library, and the 32n District court.			
Perform an accessibility self-evaluation as identified by the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	





Create (or update) the Harper Woods ADA Transition Plan.	Medium	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Monitor Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to ensure alignment with City goals.			
Update the CIP annually to include all planned public infrastructure and development projects.	High	Ongoing	
Review the CIP quarterly or semi-annually against the budget.	High	Ongoing	
Share the costs of infrastructure improvements with developers.			
Enable Ordinances that allow for sharing of costs for infrastructure.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Review cost capture mechanisms and identify opportunities for private participation in the funding of improvements.	High	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Create a clear procedure for easement dedications.	High	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Work green infrastructure into the city fabric.			
Adopt zoning language that sets maximum impervious surface coverages by district.	Medium	Near Term (0-2 Years)	To be considered in 2024 Zoning Update
Work with stakeholders to create and adopt a formal green infrastructure policy.	Low	Long Term (7-10 years)	
Ensure future parks and green spaces are designed to capture stormwater.	Medium	Ongoing	
Incentivize impervious surface reduction.			
Investigate offering a rain garden / bioswale credit pilot program.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Consider density or other design bonuses for effective on-site stormwater capture.	Low	Near Term (0-2 Years)	To be considered in 2024 Zoning Update
Enhance the existing tree canopy.			
Plant street trees in neighborhoods where they are lacking.	High	Ongoing	
Promote tree planting in City parks and other public areas.	High	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Require tree improvements as part of any development along Kelly, Harper and Vernier Roads.	Medium	Medium Term (3-6 Years)	
Review the zoning ordinance to ensure there are adequate tree requirements for parking lots.	Medium	Near Term (0-2 Years)	
Participate in regional and neighboring communities' environmental programs.			
Continue active participation in MIRDDD and disseminate information to the Harper Woods public.	Low	Ongoing	
Advertise and participate in events hosted by the Clinton River Watershed Council.	Low	Ongoing	
Disseminate sustainability information provided by the Clinton River Watershed Council to Harper Woods residents.	Low	Ongoing	
Routinely inform and partners with other agencies to ensure the most effective implementation of environmental policy.			
Annually share an update of the environmental portion of the Master Plan Implementation table with neighboring communities.	Medium	Ongoing	



Coordinate with applicants and Wayne County to ensure all developments that requires stormwater review are evaluated appropriately.	High	Ongoing	
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McKenna is excited to provide assistance to the City in implementing its recently adopted Master Plan and Parks and Recreation Plan, along with changes in the Zoning Ordinance that aim to actively preserve and expand the City's economic base. Completing the required activities for Redevelopment Ready Community certification will help the City attract more residents and commercial investment. We are looking forward to partnering with the City for a successful 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

**MCKENNA**

Paul Urbiel, AICP  
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