



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING COMMISSION  
2024 Annual Report**

TO: Mayor Milewski and Councilmembers  
 FROM: Chairman Bailey and Planning Commissioners  
 DATE: February 5, 2025  
 RE: 2024 Community Development and Planning Commission Annual Report

This report is submitted to fulfill Article II, Section 19 of Public Act 33 of 2008 (Michigan Planning Enabling Act) and pursuant to Section 1202.05 of the Ionia Code of Ordinances.

The Municipal Planning Enabling Act states that, “a planning commission shall make an annual written report to the legislative body concerning its operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body relating to planning and development.” This report summarizes 2024 operations of the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and community development activities.

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Membership**

<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>Expiration of Term</b>
Logan Bailey, Chair	12/31/2027
Michael Donaldson	12/31/2027
Ryan Gregory	12/31/2026
Keturah Kelley	12/31/2025
Tim Lee, Vice-Chair	City Council Representative
Jason Perry	12/31/2026
Judy Swartz, Secretary	12/31/2025

**Schedule and Attendance**

The Planning Commission met 14 times including a special workshop session focused on residential zoning changes on March 13 and a joint work session with the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority on October 21. The following table shows attendance throughout the year.

Meeting Dates														
Commissioner	1/10	2/14	3/13	3/13*	4/10	5/8	6/12	7/10	8/14	9/11	10/9	10/21	11/13	12/11
Logan Bailey	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A
Michael Donaldson	A	P	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	A	P	A	A	P
Ryan Gregory	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	A	A	A	P	P
Keturah Kelley	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	A
Tim Lee	P	A	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Judy Swartz	A	P	P	P	P	A	A	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
<b>New Member</b>														
Jason Perry	N/A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P

\*A special workshop session was held on 3/13 in addition to the normal meeting to discuss proposed residential zoning changes.

During these meetings, action was completed on a variety of matters, including the following:

**Site Condominium/Site Plan/Special Land Use Permits**

During 2024, the Planning Commission reviewed the following site plans and special land use requests:

- Approval was recommended to City Council for the final site condominium plan submitted by AC Development for 12 condominiums at 533 E. Washington Street.
- Approval was granted for a site plan submitted by Central Michigan Building Services for an expansion at 985 E. Main Street.
- Approval was granted for a site plan submitted by Enwork for an expansion at 510 Apple Tree Drive.
- Approval was granted for a site plan submitted by Mark Purkey, LLC. for an expansion to the existing gas station at 703 W. Lincoln Avenue.

**Zoning Ordinance Amendments**

During 2024, the Planning Commission drafted and recommended approval to City Council the following ordinances:

- Ordinance No. 584 – Amendment to Chapter 1285: AC Development Planned Unit Development (PUD) District for 533 E. Washington Street.
- Ordinance No. 585 – Rezoning of 310 Cleveland Street from the B-1, Neighborhood Business District to the I-1, Light Industrial District.
- Ordinance No. 588 – Amendment to the City’s residential zoning requirements and renaming of the residential zoning districts into Low, Medium, and High-Density Residential Districts with greater flexibility.
- Ordinance No. 589 – Rezoning of 165 parcels to various residential zoning districts in order to align with the newly created Low, Medium, and High-Density Residential Districts and reduce the number of nonconforming parcels.
- Ordinance No. 591 – Amendment and renaming of Chapter 1262 from the I-1, Light Industrial District to the T, Technology Innovation Business District.

**Miscellaneous Matters**

- Hosted a community workshop session with finance and real estate professionals, downtown property owners, and the general public to discuss residential zoning updates.
- Reviewed a variety of nonconforming parcel issues in the City and evaluated the reasons for their existence along with strategies for bringing parcels into compliance with City ordinances.
- Completed a variety of community engagement activities for the Master Plan update resulting in the involvement of more than 1,000 participants in the following ways: two neighborhood gatherings, a pop-up planning event at the Ionia Fireworks Display, a community workshop focused on Deerfield-Riverside, and an online survey.
- Held a special joint work session with the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to discuss long-term planning and future development opportunities for the former Deerfield-Riverside correctional facility property.
- Conducted work sessions for the Master Plan focusing on Housing, Downtown Development, Complete Streets, and Parks.

**Future Priorities**

As the Planning Commission looks ahead to 2025, priority items on its list include:

- Adopting the updated Master Plan
- Continuing review of zoning nonconformities
- Updating outdated sections of the Planning and Zoning Code
- Following through with Master Plan goals

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

**Membership**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Expiration of Term</b>
Logan Bailey, Vice-Chair	Planning Commission Representative
Jim Denny	12/31/2024
Mike Kirgis, Chair	12/31/2027
Amanda Ondersma	12/31/2026
Troy Waterman, Secretary	City Council Representative

**Schedule and Attendance**

The Zoning Board of Appeals met once in 2024. The following table shows the meeting’s attendance.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>
	1/8
Logan Bailey	P
Jim Denny	P
Mike Kirgis	P

Amanda Ondersma	P
Troy Waterman	P

**Approvals**

- Approval was granted to Sozo Coffee for a requested change in nonconforming use of equal or less nonconformity at 310 Cleveland Street in accordance with section 1278.03 (d) to allow the storage and roasting of coffee on the property through a use variance.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

**Code Enforcement**

The following chart tracks all closed code enforcement cases by month in 2024. A total of 374 cases were opened throughout the year, but ongoing cases have not been included in this report.

2024 Enforcements Closed by Month														
Category	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2024 Total	2023 Total
Abandoned Vehicles	1	1	0	2	0	0	2	1	1	6	1	1	16	11
Animals	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	1
Blight	5	3	7	12	2	3	11	11	5	11	4	5	79	84
Dead Trees	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Front Yard Parking	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	4	1
Garbage	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Leaves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0
Paint Conditions	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Property Maintenance	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	9	11
Public Nuisance	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	1
Sidewalk Hazardous	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	2
Sidewalk Overgrowth	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	5	6
Trash Container	3	15	2	45	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	69	2
Vegetation	1	0	0	0	42	10	8	7	5	2	0	0	75	140
Zoning	0	0	0	5	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	10	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>263</b>

The City’s part-time Code Enforcement Officer Warren Conley started in March 2023. In addition to his other code enforcement activities throughout 2024, Warren evaluated one-quarter of the City’s sidewalks in accordance with the City’s sidewalk maintenance and replacement program. His evaluation revealed 29 sidewalks in need of replacement. Each property was notified and given a period of time to fix their sidewalk, or the option to wait for the City to hire a contractor to complete the work. City Council approved a 25% City cost share for each replacement as part of the program. Another section of the City will be evaluated in 2025.

Individuals seeking to submit a code enforcement complaint can email [CodeEnforcement@ci.ionia.mi.us](mailto:CodeEnforcement@ci.ionia.mi.us), call (616) 523-0157, or submit one online using the “Report a Concern” form on the City’s website at [cityofionia.org](http://cityofionia.org).

**Permits**

The chart below summarizes all community development permit activity by month in 2024.

<b>2024 Permits Issued by Month</b>														
<b>Category</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>2024 Total</b>	<b>2023 Total</b>
<b>Accessory Structure</b>	0	0	0	1	1	3	2	0	2	2	0	1	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Alcohol – Special Event</b>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Curb Cut</b>	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Demolition</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Home Addition</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Fence</b>	0	1	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	2	1	0	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Land Division</b>	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Mobile Food Vending Unit</b>	0	0	1	0	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>New Home Construction</b>	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1	0	1	0	2	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Public Infrastructure (Tap-In)</b>	4	0	1	1	0	2	5	2	0	2	1	5	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Right-of-Way</b>	4	3	1	0	3	7	3	5	3	3	2	3	<b>37</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Sidewalk (Construction)</b>	0	0	0	0	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Sign</b>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Street Closure</b>	0	0	0	0	5	0	3	0	4	0	1	0	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Peddler License</b>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>Vertical Pole Banners</b>	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>118</b>

**Rental Registration**

The following chart tracks all issued certificates for fire inspections and the rental registration program by month in 2024.

<b>2024 Certificates Issued by Month</b>														
<b>Category</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>2024 Total</b>	<b>2023 Total</b>
<b>Fire Inspections</b>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	2
<b>Rental Units</b>	9	2	7	3	19	1	1	10	5	4	1	3	65	74
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>76</b>

Royal Shilton is the City’s rental and fire inspector. Royal joined the City in late 2022 serving as Public Safety’s first full-time firefighter and paramedic. Chapter 858 of the City of Ionia Codified Ordinances was amended in 2014 to establish the rental registration program. All residential property being rented in the City must be registered and receive a certificate of compliance in accordance with the ordinance. Property owners interested in renting their residential property should contact Royal at (616) 527-4431 to schedule an inspection or visit the City’s Code Enforcement & Rentals page of the website at [cityofionia.org](http://cityofionia.org) for more information.

As approved by the Planning Commission at its January 8, 2025, regular meeting.