

GUIDE TO DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES
DEPARTMENT
CITY OF
MUSKEGON

2025

231.724.6702
933 TERRACE ST
ROOM 202
MUSKEGON, MI 49440

WWW.SHORELINECITY.COM



KEY CONTACT LIST

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 Name JONATHAN SEYFERTH, CITY MANAGER

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PLANNING & ZONING

 Name MIKE FRANZAK, PLANNING DIRECTOR

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 Name TIM KOZAL, DIRECTOR

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UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL KEY CONTACTS
ARE LOCATED IN CITY HALL:

933 TERRACE STREET, MUSKEGON, MI 49440

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS CONTACTS

CITY COMMISSION

ANN MEISCH, STAFF LIASON

WORK SESSIONS ARE HELD - THE MONDAY BEFORE EACH 2ND TUESDAY @ 5:30 P.M.

REGULAR MEETINGS ARE HELD - THE 2ND AND 4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH @ 5:30 P.M.

PLANNING COMMISSION

MIKE FRANZAK, STAFF LIASON

MEETINGS ARE HELD - THE THURSDAY FOLLOWING THE 2ND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 4:00 P.M. IN COMMISSION CHAMBERS, RM 107

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

MIKE FRANZAK, STAFF LIANSON

MEETINGS ARE HELD - THE SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 4:00 P.M. IN COMMISSION CHAMBERS, RM 107

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

JAMIE PESCH, STAFF LIASON

MEETINGS ARE HELD - 1ST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 4:00 P.M. IN CITY HALL, RM 204

BOARD OF REVIEW

DONNA VANDERVRIES, STAFF LIASON

231.724.6386

MEETINGS ARE HELD - MARCH, JULY, AND DECEMBER IN CITY HALL, 1ST FL CONFERENCE ROOM

HOUSING COMMISSION

JONATHAN SEYFERTH, STAFF LIASON

MEETINGS ARE HELD - 3RD MONDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 12:30 P.M. IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOM AT HARTFORD TERRACE

HOUSING CODE BOARD OF APPEALS

TIM KOZAL, STAFF LIASON

MEETINGS ARE HELD - THE 1ST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 5:30 P.M. IN COMMISSION CHAMBERS, RM 107

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/BROWNFIELD BOARD

JOCELYN HINES, STAFF LIASON

MEETINGS ARE HELD - THE 2ND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 10:30 A.M. IN CITY HALL, RM 204

FEE SCHEDULE

Planning & Zoning



Planning Commission

Ordinance Amendment	\$ 800
Rezoning	\$ 800
Special Use Permit	\$ 800
PUD - Preliminary	\$ 600
PUD - Final	\$ 800
PUD - Amendment	\$ 800
Special Meeting (additional fee)	\$ 500
Vacation - Alley or Street	\$ 800

Zoning Board of Appeals

Variance - Residential	\$ 400
Variance - Commercial/Industrial	\$ 500
Ordinance Interpretation -Residential	\$ 400
Ordinance Interpretation -Com./Ind.	\$ 500
Zoning Appeal - Residential	\$ 400
Zoning Appeal - Commercial/Industrial	\$ 500
Special Meeting (additional fee)	\$ 400

Site Plan Review

Minor Site Plan Review - Staff Review	\$ 250
Major Site Plan Review - Staff Review	\$ 500
Planning Commission Review	\$ 700

Development Permit

Development Permit - Fences, Sheds, Paved areas, Chicken Coops	\$ 30
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Fee's can be paid by cash, check, or credit card. A payment processing fee of 2.8% is charged per transaction for all credit card use.









APPROVAL AUTHORITIES TABLE



APPROVING AUTHORITY ↓ REQUEST TYPE →	STAFF/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR	PLANNING COMMISSION	ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS	HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION	CITY COMMISSION
MINOR SITE PLAN REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL	
MAJOR SITE PLAN REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL	
PLANNING COMMISSION SITE PLAN REVIEW		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RECOMMENDATION			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL
SPECIAL LAND USE PERMIT		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL			
REZONING		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RECOMMENDATION			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL
VARIANCE			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVAL	

APPROVAL AUTHORITIES

TABLE CONTINUED

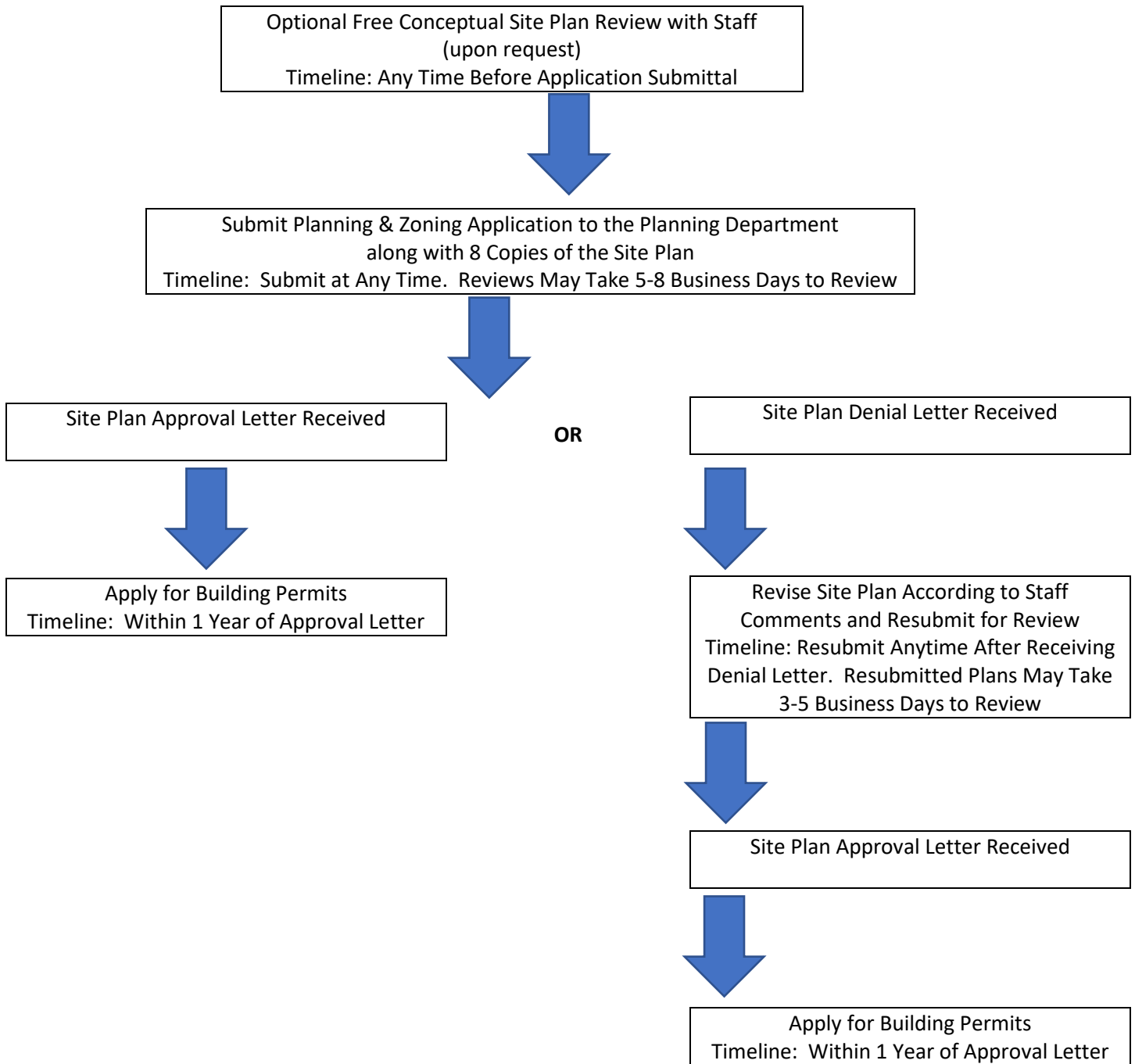
APPROVING AUTHORITY ↓ REQUEST TYPE →	CODE COMPLIANCE INSPECTOR OR ZONING ADMINISTRATOR	PLANNING COMMISSION	ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS	HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION	CITY COMMISSION
DEVELOPMENT PERMIT (FENCES, SHEDS, PAVED AREAS, CHICKEN COOPS)	 APPROVAL				
ORDINANCE AMENDMENT		 RECOMMENDATION			 APPROVAL
PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PRELIMINARY & FINAL)		 RECOMMENDATION			 APPROVAL
MINOR PUD AMENDMENT	 APPROVAL				
MAJOR PUD AMENDMENT		 RECOMMENDATION			 APPROVAL



City of Muskegon Site Plan Review Procedures

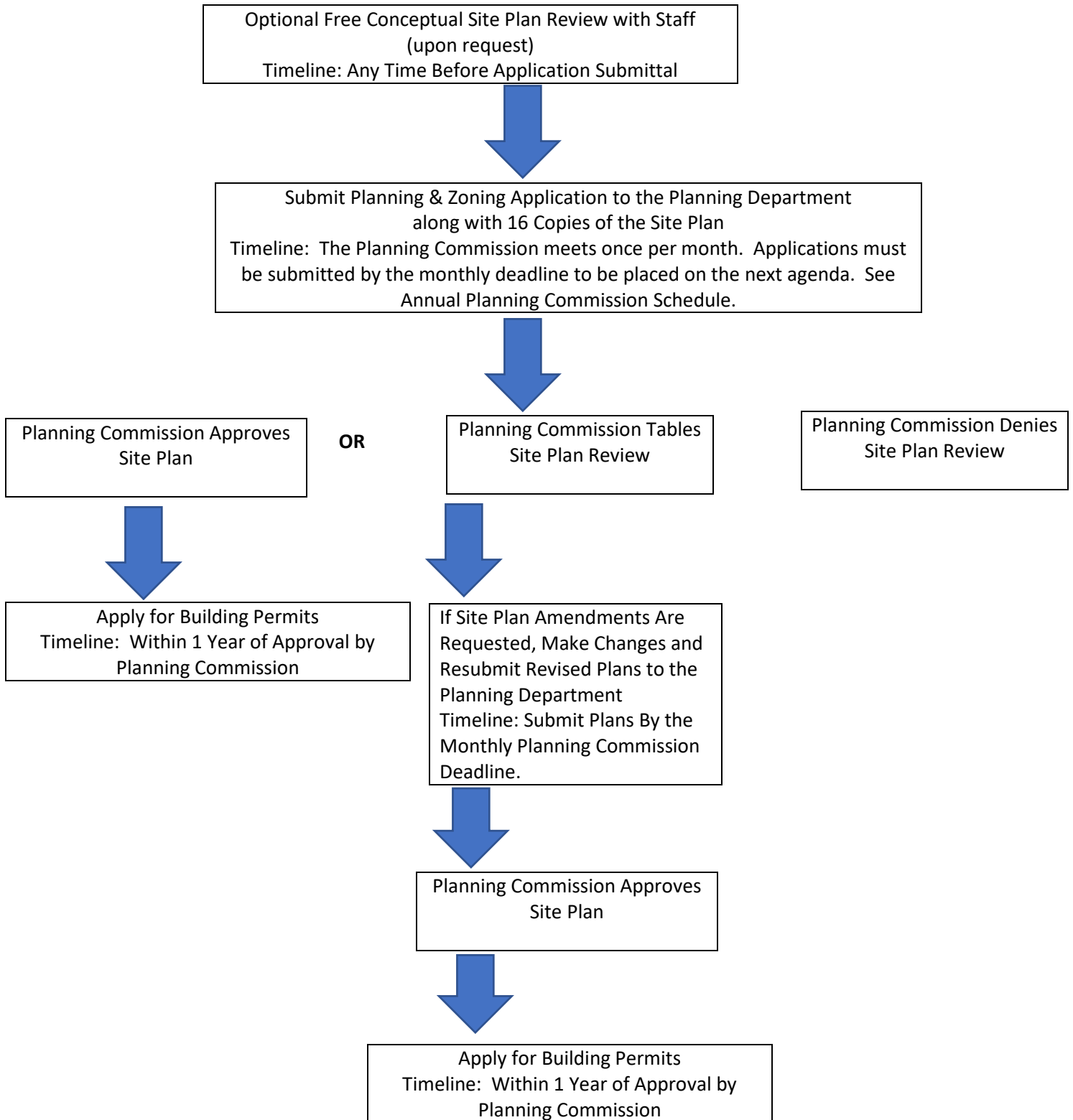
All site plans involving less than a 10,000 sq ft building addition or the development of less than two acres of property shall be reviewed by staff.

Staff Review Procedures



All site plans involving a 10,000 sq ft or more building addition or the development of more than two acres of property shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Planning Commission Review Procedures



PLANNING & ZONING

Zoning Ordinance

The zoning ordinance regulates the usage of properties and buildings while determining the parameters for new construction in the City of Muskegon. Regulations can apply city-wide, or be specific to the designated zoning district. The city currently has three zoning ordinances; Lakeside Form-Based Code, Downtown Form-Based Code, and a standard Zoning Ordinance. Please get in touch with the Planning Department if you have any questions regarding the ordinances. To view all three ordinances, please see:

[City of Muskegon - Zoning Ordinance](#)

Zoning Map

The zoning maps display the different zoning districts established throughout the City. Zoning districts regulate specific uses, design standards, and layouts for developments. The City of Muskegon offers a mapping application that shows three distinct zoning areas and allows you to search by address or owner name. The mapping application can be found here:

[City of Muskegon - Zoning Viewer Map Application](#)

Zoning Schedule of Uses, Area, Height, and Placement Requirements

The zoning ordinance has information on permitted uses and special uses for each zoning district in both residential and non-residential/mixed zones, as well as the requirements/restrictions on development dimensions and lot sizes. The zoning ordinance will help property owners and developers better understand the functions permitted for sites in each zoning district.

For information on residentially zoned properties, as well as the residential design criteria for new construction:

[Article IV - Single-Family Residential Districts](#) (page 48)

[Section 2319: Residential Design Criteria](#) (page 164)

For information on commercial and industrial areas:

[Article X through Article XIX: Commercial and Industrial Districts](#) (pages 89-138)

For information regarding Downtown Form-Based Code:

[City of Muskegon - Form-Based Code](#)

For information regarding the Lakeside Form-Based Code:

[Lakeside Form-Based Code](#)

Master Plan

The Planning Department uses the City's vision, value, and mission statements to plan for the community's short- and long-term future. The Master Land Use Plan sets the 20-year strategy for growth and development and guides decision-making related to the built environment and its effects on the people who live, work, and visit the city. The Master Plan is the basis for the zoning ordinance, which governs how land is used and the form, placement, size, and spacing of buildings and other structures placed on land.

The City's current Master Plan can be found here:

[City of Muskegon - Master Land Use Plan 2023](#)

Pre-Development Meetings

Pre-development meetings offer a collaborative environment where you can discuss your project with representatives from the Planning, Economic Development, Building & Inspection Services, Public Works, Fire, and Public Safety departments which will provide constructive feedback, and outline any additional information or permits that may be required.

To schedule a pre-development meeting, follow the steps located here:

[Pre-Development Meetings](#)

APPLICATIONS & PROCEDURES

Ordinance Amendments & Rezoning (Planning Commission)

An amendment to change zoning districts can be launched by property owners (or with written permission from the property owner), the Planning Commission, or the City Commission. Ordinance amendments can be initiated by the City Commission, from time to time, on recommendation from the Planning Commission, or on its own motion, or petition. Members of the community can also initiate a request to amend ordinances.

The application can be found here:

[Planning & Zoning Application](#)

Applications must include a complete application form, legal descriptions of the property (if rezoning), the associated fee, and a detailed explanation that describes the necessity for the rezoning and how the change complies with the City's Master Plan.

Applications for ordinance amendments must also include clearly written technical language that would be used to replace the current ordinance language.

Review Process

Once a complete application is received, a public hearing will be held before the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will then recommend approval or denial of the amendment. Once the recommendation has been made, the request will go before the City Commission for final approval/denial. More information about amendments or zone changes can be found here:

[Section 2404: Zone Changes and Amendments](#) (page 225)

Special Land Use Permit

Each zoning district has permitted uses by right and those that are considered a special use. These vary from one zoning district to another.

The application can be found here:

[Planning & Zoning Application](#)

Applications must include a complete application form, the associated fees, site plans, and any information that may help describe the special use that you are requesting (ex. Business Plan).

Planned Unit Development

A Planned Unit Development (PUD) is a tract of land or lot, that is developed under single ownership, or management as a separate neighborhood/community unit. The development will be based on an approved site plan which allows flexibility of design that may not be offered under normal zoning district requirements. The plan may contain a mixture of housing types, commercial/industrial uses, common open space, and other land uses as described in the Zoning Ordinance.

Review Process

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the application and can choose to approve the application, approve the application with conditions, or deny the application based on the submitted materials and public comment. The Planning Commission will base its decision upon a review of the individual standards of that special use or activity and the general standards in the zoning ordinance.

More information about Special Use Permits and Planned Unit Developments can be found here:

[Section 2332: Special Land Uses and Planned Unit Developments](#)

Site Plan Review (Staff & Planning Commission)

The State of Michigan “City and Village Zoning Act” defines site plan as “the document and drawings specified in the zoning ordinance necessary to ensure that the proposed land use or activity complies with local ordinance, and state and federal statutes. The Zoning Administrator determines that a site plan presents problems or issues that should be further reviewed for approval or rejection by the Planning Commission.

Smaller developments under 10,000 square feet or 2 acres in size, only need staff review. Staff reviews every site plan and will forward comments and recommendations to the Planning Commission as appropriate.

Larger projects (expansions and new development of over 10,000 square feet or 2 acres), and multi-family developments over 8 units, must go before the Planning Commission.

More information about Site Plan Reviews can be found here:

[City of Muskegon - Ordinance Section 2330: Site Plan Review](#) (pg. 188)

Application forms, review information, and checklists for Site Plan Review can be found here:

[City of Muskegon - Site Plan Review](#)

Variances (Zoning Board of Appeals)

The Zoning Board of Appeals interprets the zoning ordinance and has the authority to grant Variances from specific requirements in cases where topography, size, shape, or other situations where the literal enforcement of the Ordinance would create undue hardship. The board also has the authority to grant use variances. A use variance is a process by which the Zoning Board of Appeals evaluates the allegation that there is no beneficial use and can provide relief from the regulations by granting additional development potential and beneficial use of the property.

Applications must include a complete application form, the associated fee, a site plan (if applicable), and the completion of 8 questions that are required for all variances.

Review Process

The Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on the application where they will review the staff reports, maps, and other pertinent information. The public, as well as the applicant, is given an opportunity to be heard. The Zoning Board of Appeals will either grant the petition in whole, or in part, or will deny the request based on the current ordinance requirements.

If there is an objection to the decision rendered by the Zoning Board of Appeals, the applicant, or any other person, can submit an appeal to the Circuit Court of Muskegon County.

More information about Variances can be found here:

[City of Muskegon - Variances](#)

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Once a complete application or appeal has been submitted, staff will start the public hearing/meeting process as defined in the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (P.A.110 of 2006, as amended), which requires the following: A legal notice is published in a newspaper of general circulation and served personally or by mail at least 15 days prior to the day of the meeting. These notices are also sent to property owners and/or occupants of property within 300 feet of the property in question.

A portion of each meeting is open to public comment regarding agenda items. Each request that requires a public hearing, will also have a window of time that is open to the public to speak regarding that specific request. Comments are limited to 3 minutes per person.

Requests that require a public hearing are:

Special Use Permits

Rezoning

Variances

Planned Unit Developments

The meeting calendar can be found on the City's website here:

[Meetings and Event Calendar](#)

To sign up for email alerts, or find out more information about active projects in the City of Muskegon:

[Connect Muskegon](#)

HISTORIC DISTRICT

In order to preserve its history and protect the structures that chronicle that history, in 1973, the City made a commitment to historic preservation and adopted the Historic District Ordinance.

There are nine areas throughout the City that are defined as Historic Districts, which can be found here:

[City of Muskegon - Historic District](#)

Applications for, among other things, proposed new construction, demolitions, major exterior repairs, or alteration of the exterior appearance of a building, site, or structure, are reviewed by the Historic District Commission.

Historic District Commission

The Historic District Commission (HDC) serves to identify and evaluate structures or sites worthy of preservation and be involved in projects or programs to this end. The HDC disseminates public information concerning these structures and sites and considers ideas regarding them with groups of individuals interested in historic preservation. The HDC makes appropriate recommendations to the City Commission that will encourage and achieve historic preservation.

More information regarding the HDC, meeting dates, standards, and guidelines can be found here:

[City of Muskegon - Historic District](#)

DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

Development permit applications are necessary for the following projects, each item has a link to further information:

Fences

Accessory Structures (sheds, gazebos, raised garden beds, and chicken coops)

Paved Areas

Driveways

Community Gardens

Once an application is received and paid for, staff begins their review to determine if the project is within the guidelines and requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Processing times can vary; however, the standard approval/denial wait time is one week.

A development can be found here:

[City of Muskegon - Development Permit Application](#)