2024-2025 FISCAL YEAR ANNUAL REPORT
CITY OF OAK PARK
PLANNING COMMISSION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires an annual report to be submitted to the legislative body in regards to planning and development. I am happy to present this report to the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and City Council.

Section 19 (2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act provides 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 related to planning and development."

Fiscal 2024-2025 was a busy year in the Economic Development and Planning Department and the Planning Commission. The implementation of a new zoning ordinance in 2021 has helped reduce the frequency for the Planning Commission to meet, as the new zoning ordinance allows administrative approvals for some site plans. Together we continue supporting our local businesses and the community of Oak Park by promoting business growth, attracting investment, and fostering innovation. This helps to create a pro-business environment in Oak Park.

Kimberly Marrone
Municipal Services Director

PLANNING COMMISSION

Long range planning for the physical development of the City of Oak Park is the primary focus of the Economic Development and Planning Department. In addition to preparing and maintaining the Master Plan, the department is responsible for the administration of the Zoning Ordinance and other planning tools to achieve the goals and objectives listed in the plan. The day-to-day operations of the planning and zoning functions for the City include addressing a considerable amount of phone calls, emails, and visits from the public, as well as administrative duties including preparation of public hearing notices, meeting minutes, scheduling of meetings and preparing meeting packets.

For those seeking project specific approvals, staff spends a substantial amount of time with potential applicants to ensure they have a clear understanding of their options as well as the process involved for each one. Staff diligently works with developers through the site plan review application and encourages all to attend a pre-application meeting prior to submission.

Planning Commission

Commissioner Burns resigned from her position on the City Council and as a member of the Planning Commission in January 2025. The City Council appointed Council Member Whitehead to serve on the Planning Commission. The Economic Development and Planning Department extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to Commissioner Burns for her many years of dedicated service to the City of Oak Park and wishes her continued health and well-being.

Commission Members
Gary Torgow, Chairperson
Joe B. Brown, Vice Chairperson
Michael Eizelman, Secretary
Marian McClellan, Mayor
Carolyn Burns, City Council Member. Resigned as of January 2025
Shaun Whitehead, City Council Member. Appointed to the Planning Commission as of March 2025.
Erik Tungate, City Manager
Michael Seligson
Howard Tkatch
Marie Walters-Gill

Summary

The Planning Commission is a nine-member volunteer board appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. They are responsible for planning the future growth of the community and reviewing specific development projects including special use permits, zoning ordinance amendments, and property rezoning requests. The Planning Commission is also charged with the preparation and adoption of plans for the City including the Master Plan and Capital Improvement Plan.

Planning enabling legislation outlines that the Commission should represent a broad spectrum of interests, including industry, transportation, commerce, education, agriculture, etc.; this same statute outlines that the Commission should represent the various geographic areas of the City. As provided for by statute, there are two City Council members appointed to the Planning Commission each with voting rights and one member of the PlanningCommission also serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Planning Commission met regularly on the second Monday of each month, at 7:00 PM in the City Council Chambers. In July 2025, following the closing of the fiscal year, the Planning Commission voted to amend its regular meeting date and time to the first Monday of each month at 6 PM, effective thereafter.

Planning Commission Meetings

During fiscal year 2024-2025, the Planning Commission conducted seven (7) regular meetings. Over the course of the year, five (5) meetings were cancelled for lack of business. Following is a summary of Planning Commission Action from the past year:

DATE	ACTION
08/12/2024	Administrative Approval, Grand Lux Events, 13181 W. Ten Mile Rd.
	Site Plan Approval, Phased Construction for 1-800-Self-Storage Facility, 21100 Coolidge Hwy.
09/09/2024	Administrative Approval - Outdoor Dining – Mother Handsome, 14661 W. Eleven Mile Rd.
	Changes to Administrative Approval. Chet's Rent-All, 20800 Coolidge Hwy.
	Conducted a Public Hearing and Recommended Approval to the City Council regarding a proposed rezoning of 21790 Coolidge Hwy. from O, Office District to IF, Industrial Flex District.
	Site Plan Approval, Conversion of Offices to Mixed-Use (Residential & Office) Development, 21790 Coolidge Hwy.
	Received the 2023-2024 Annual Report of the City of Oak Park Planning Commission.
	Voted to re-elect Commissioner Gary Torgow to serve as Chairperson, Commissioner Joe Brown to serve as the Vice Chairperson, and Commissioner Michael Eizelman to serve as Secretary.
10/14/2024	Administrative Approval, Herc Rentals, 12901 Cloverdale Ave.
	Administrative Approval, Kerr Pump & Supply, 12930 Cloverdale Ave.
	Administrative Approval, High-Top Amusement, 23137 Coolidge Hwy.
	Administrative Approval, Cascardo Art & Design, 15391 W. Eleven Mile Rd.
	Administrative Approval, Detroit Equipment, 13200 Northend Ave.
	Site Plan Approval, Forgotten Harvest, Outdoor Storage of Three (3) Conex Trailers, 15000 W. Eight Mile Rd.
11/11/2024	Site Plan Approval, New Industrial Development, 14600 &14650 W. Eight Mile Rd.

Site Plan Approval, Oak Park Event Hub and Bandshell, 14000 Oak Park Blvd.

01/22/2025 Administrative Approval, Kerry Leasing, Auto Dealer Class B, 12800 Northend Ave.

Administrative Approval, Mackey Holdings, Live-Work Residential Unit, 13200 Capital Ave.

Administrative Approval, Sunnyside Enrichment Center, 12702-12706 W. Nine Mile Rd.

Recommendation to send a letter of support to the City of Pleasant Ridge for its Draft Master Plan.

Site Plan Approval, Toras Chaim Synagogue, 14631-14651 Balfour Ave.

Site Plan Approval, Stone For You Expansion, 10700 Capital St.

Extension of Special Land Use Approval, Yeshiva Gedolah Ateres Mordechai Dormitory, 24600 Greenfield Rd.

02/10/2025 Administrative Approval, Oak Park Woods, 24198 Church St.

Site Plan Approval, CRDN Building Addition, 8797 & 8775 Capital St.

04/21/2025 Administrative Approval, 15000 W. Eight Mile, Forgotten Harvest – Client Choice Mobile Market.

Conducted a Public Hearing and Recommended Approval to the City Council regarding the proposed amendments to the City of Oak Park Zoning Ordinances in the following sections: Article 1, Division 2; Article 2, Division 2; Article 2, Division 3; Article 2, Division 4; Article 3, Division 1; Article 3, Division 2; Article 4, Division 1; Article 4, Division 3; Article 4, Division 4; Article 5, Division 1; Article 5, Division 2; Article 5, Division 3, Article 5, Division 4; Article 6, Division 1.

Received the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) 2025-2026 Annual Budget.

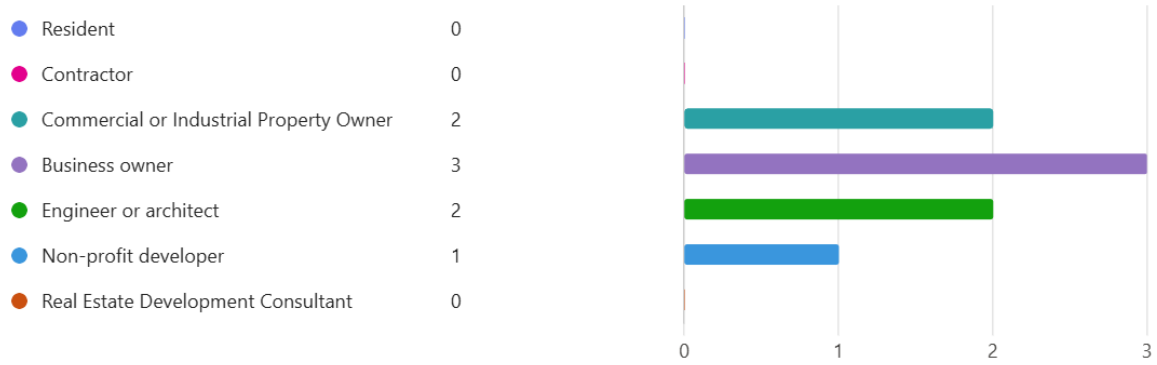
Reviewed the Parking Reform Presentation.

Site Plan Review Process – Customer Feedback As part of the City's commitment to providing a streamlined and efficient site plan review, the Economic Development and Planning Department obtains customer feedback on the Site Plan Review process, the permitting process and inspection process. Where appropriate, improvements to the process identified through this feedback are to be integrated. Internally, lessons learned are to be captured and incorporated into future projectsby the staff.

In the past year, the Economic Development and Planning Department has diligently worked with business owners to ensure compliance with local zoning and permit requirements. This included addressing cases where businesses were operating without obtaining the necessary development approval such as administrative approval (sketch plan review), site plan review, or business licenses. Through proactive assistance, the department has successfully guided many businesses through the permitting process.

A survey was created to solicit feedback to determine if the site plan process was satisfactoryor could use improvements. Below is a synopsis of the input we received.

1. Please indicate the category to which you belong below:



2. Did you find the Site Plan approval process to be well organized and easy to navigate?

3. How would you rate the pace of the Site Plan approval process. (5 is quick and efficient, 3 average, 2 slower than mos t, no action, required my constant interaction to usher the project along)

4. Do you feel the Planning Commission was thorough; understanding your concerns and addressing all of the important and relevent items?

6. Did you find the Site Plan approval to be a fair and judicious process compared to other municipalities?

7. Did you feel that the final decision was consistent with the governing guidelines of the Site Plan approval process?

8. Thank you for your feedback. Please feel free to write additional comments, suggestions or concerns below:

3 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	What set this process apart from other townships is the staff at the city. As a consultant, being able to easily contact and get responses, or the availability to set up a meeting with the city is our lifeline to a project. I was able to contact planning and building officials and ask question and receive answers in a timely manner. The PC process was explained to us early in the development of this project and there were no surprises or delays. It was a professional and pleasant experience.
2	anonymous	Oak Park was very easy to deal with.
3	anonymous	Salam is amazing and she knows here work so well. She follows up with all the clients to make sure they understand what they need and she goes beyond and above.

Master Plan

The Master Plan for the City of Oak Park outlines the goals and strategies which will guide the City over the next five years. The plan provides vision, goals and strategies to direct future land use and guidelines to enhance the community's appearance.

Implementation of the Master Plan Goals

Through the City's Master Plan the Economic Development and Planning Department has begun adopting the changes as identified in the Master Plan. A great deal of progress has been made on its numerous implementation actions. Some of these implementations are listed below:

COMMUNITY:

- **Goal 1: Cultivate a Sense of Place and Unique Public Spaces.** The City continued its effort to activate various public spaces through expanding recreational programming into visible public spaces, highlighted by its second Family Fun Fest at the Nine Mile Corridor from Scotia to Sherman, activating the Nine Mile Linear Park,

Connector Park, and Senica and Sherman Pockets Park. Additionally, The Water Tower Social Districts hosted multiple community events, such as Oaktober Fest, Oak park Tower Tailgate, oak Park Cruise and Groove, Oak Park Film Festival, and Trunk or Treat. Continuing the City's commitment to vibrant public spaces, the City supported the Event Hub and Band Shell project along with the Oak Park Woods Park within its Campus, providing unique public spaces for community gatherings and events.

- **Goal 2: Expand Housing Options.** The approval of the conversion of the office building at 21790 Coolidge Hwy. into a mixed use of residential and office development, and the approval of a live-work residential unit on the second floor of the Macky Holdings building supported projects that diversify the local housing supply. Additionally, the approval of the Dormitory for Yeshiva Gedolah Ateres Mordechai School provides housing for students and supports enrollment by accommodating students from more distant locations.
- **Goal 3. Enhance Pedestrian-scaled Street and Foster a Comfortable & Safe Environment for all Users within the Context of the City's Existing Infrastructure & Community Needs**. The City has adopted a vision zero policy to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries from the City's roads. Furthermore, the City has partnered with the Eight Mile Boulevard Association and the Cities of Southfield and Detroit to light the Eight Mile Bridge at Greenfield Road. Additionally, the City has partnered with the City of Southfield on various beautification projects along Greenfield Rd between Eight Mile Rd and Nine Mile Rd by installing street-light banners, new landscaping and gateway monument signs.

COMMERCE:

- **Goal 1: Create vibrant, dynamic commercial corridors.** The approval of a diverse range of land uses enhances a sense of vitality and activity, which results in creating flourishing commercial corridors. Some of the businesses who received administrative approval are Grand Lux Events, High-Top Amusements, Cascardo Art and Design, Sunnyside Enrichment Center, in addition to (64) new businesses that had opened during the fiscal year. The Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) has also played a key role in enhancing the physical appearance of the corridor. The CIA's Facade Improvement Grant program has supported (9) local businesses with improvements to their storefronts, including a mural for Scheers Ace, resulting in a more aesthetically pleasing and inviting atmosphere.
- **Goal 2: Attract high quality diverse restaurants.** New restaurants opened during the fiscal year, such as Hansen's Hall, Yummy Shawarma and Grill, Havana Taco's and Burger, Mother Handsome, Wallyz Grill 1 Inc, and Peking China provided a variety of dining options in the area and boosted the economic activity of the City.
- **Goal 3: Provide streamlined, business-friendly permitting process and easily obtainable resources for businesses.** The Economic Development and Planning Department continued its effort to work diligently with every architect and applicant to provide resources and speed up the appropriate development and approval processes (Administrative Approval, Site Plan Review, and Special Land Use).
- **Goal 4: Revise and improve commercial parking zoning regulations and municipal parking options.** The Economic Development and Planning Department presented at a joint meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission on best practices to reform off-street parking mandates of the zoning ordinance. Feedback was received, and the Department continues to research and develop a proposal for consideration of approval.
- **Goal 5: Update maps, zoning, and ordinances**. The rezoning of the property at

21790 Coolidge Hwy from O, Office District to Industrial Flex Districted supported the development of a mixed-use of residential and office building. Furthermore, the recently adopted zoning amendments, focused on improving clarity, enhancing flexibility in targeted districts, addressing emerging land use trends, responding to business community feedback, and ensuring consistency with both state and federal regulations. These updates contribute to a more streamlined, clear, and predictable zoning framework that supports development and redevelopment objectives. These efforts demonstrate the city's proactive approach to maintaining a modern, business-friendly zoning ordinance that supports strategic growth.

- **Goal 6: Improve Commercial Corridors Visual Appearance to Spur Investment.** The City has continued its efforts to enhance the visual appearance of the commercial corridors. During this fiscal year, the City has welcomed (64) new businesses who joined our business community.
- **Goal 7: Redevelopment of Blighted or Underutilized Buildings.** The approval of various commercial and industrial land uses such as Herc Rentals, Cascardo Art and Design, Detroit Equipment, High-top Amusement, and the new industrial development on Eight Mile Rd. has successfully transformed blighted and underutilized buildings into vibrant uses contributing to the overall sense of place in the commercial corridors and industrial park. Furthermore, the Oak Park Corridor Improvement Authority has purchased a bighted property on Nine Mile Rd. in an effort to develop it into mixed-use or live-work residential development.
- **Goal 8: Improve rental properties.** The City continues its efforts towards improving the rental properties by implementing the strategies of the rental inspection program and continuing code enforcement efforts.
- **Goal 9: Provide resources to entrepreneurs and businesses.** The Economic Development and Planning staff provides personalized assistance, helping entrepreneurs and developers navigate the development review process, and connecting them to relevant resources and financial support. The department also hosted various learning and networking events for small businesses, providing a platform for business owners to connect, learn, and share knowledge and experiences.
- **Goal 10: Improve industrial areas.** The approval of a wide variety of industrial developments such as Herc Rentals, Kerr Pump and Supply addition, Detroit Equipment, Kerry Leasing, Macky Holdings, Stone For You addition, CRDN addition will spur the development within the industrial park, improve the appearance of old and vacant buildings, and enhance the visual appearance of the park. The addition of landscaping along these projects will add value and enhance the appearance of the industrial park.

Future Planning Goals

The Economic Development and Planning Department with the guidance of the Planning Commission will continue working toward accomplishing the goals of the Master Plan to strengthen our community, enhance our diverse culture, and stimulate commerce, as summarized below:

<u>Community</u>

- Cultivate a sense of place and unique public spaces through utilizing tactical urbanism and adding streetscape amenities. *On-going*
- Improve appearance of alleys and explore better ways to utilize the space. *On-going*

- Identify opportunities and pursue areas for new public spaces. *On-going*
- Discourage new surface parking lots adjacent to pedestrian-oriented commercial corridors and encourage the placement in the rear of the building. *On-going*
- Improve connections to neighboring communities, amenities and other bike trails. *Mid-term*
- Expanding housing options by beginning with a housing market analysis. -*short term*
- Encouraging new housing styles that meet the needs of current and future residents. *On-going*
- Encourage adaptive reuse options for vacant and underutilized buildings -*On-going*
- Identify options for senior housing to meet the needs of the aging population -*Mid-Term*
- Enhance pedestrian scaled streets and foster a comfortable and safe environment for allusers within the context of the City's existing infrastructure and community needs. *On- going*

<u>Culture</u>

- Update Zoning regulations and allow green storm water infrastructure design. *On-going*

<u>Commerce</u>

- Encourage development that promotes pedestrian over auto related parking requirements. *On-going*
- Enforce regulations to ensure quality developments. *On-going*
- Continue pre-development meetings with all necessary departments to speed up the development and approval process. *On-going*
- Revise parking requirements utilizing best practices of other cities and consider sharedparking and payment in lieu of alternatives. *Short-term*
- Update Future Land Use Map. *Short-term*
- Identify opportunities and create multi-use transitional zones from commercial or industrial into neighborhoods, as well as buffers to protect residential areas. *Mid-term*
- Consider Form Based Code and create design standards for new development. *On-going*
- Review landscaping standards and add landscaping/screening buffers to industrial areasto reduce the negative visual characteristics of these developments. *Mid-term*
- Improve the overall appearance of the Industrial Park and encourage development of public spaces as part of new industrial development. *Mid-term*

Short term – within one year
Mid-term – within the next three years

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is the only board authorized to interpret, waive or modify requirements of the City of Oak Park Zoning Ordinance. This Board operates as a quasi-judicial body similar to a court of appeals. Decisions made by the Zoning Board of Appeals are final. Relief from ZBA decisions is granted only by the Circuit Court.

Board Members (Who Served During 2024-2025)

In August 2024, the terms of two board members expired: Avi (Abraham) Snider and Allyson Andrews. We welcomed two new members to the Zoning Board of Appeals: Daniel Labovic and Michael Steinberg. The Economic Development and Planning Department extends its sincere thanks to board members Avi Snider and Allyson Andrews for their dedicated service and contribution to the Board.

James Huston, Chairperson
Avi (Ibraham) Snider, Vice Chairperson, Term expired in August 2024.
Sharrista Brown, Vice Chairperson, Elected in September 2024.
Aaron Kleid, Secretary
Michael Seligson, Planning Commission
Taleesa Anderson
Allyson Andrews, Term expired in August 2024
Daniel Labovic, Joined in August 2024
Michael Steinberg, Joined in August 2024

Summary

The Zoning Board of Appeals consists of members who were appointed by the City Council.

The Zoning Board of Appeals conducts regular public meetings in City Council Chambers on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals Meetings

During 2024-2025, the Zoning Board of Appeals conducted six (6) regular scheduled meetings. Six (6) meetings were cancelled for lack of business. Following is a summary of Zoning Board of Appeals action from the past year:

DATE	ACTION
07/23/2024	**TABLED**. CASE NO. 24-01: Michael J. Gordon, RA on behalf of Dr. Duncan Mukeku, 21790 Coolidge Hwy. has made an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance from the provisions of Article 2, Division 4: Section 231 Industrial Use Table of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for main floor residential dwellings that do not meet the residential use table requirement. **APPROVED**. CASE NO. 24-02: Chet's Rent-All, 20800 Coolidge Hwy. has made an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance from the provisions of Article 2, Division 4: Section 232 Provisions Applicable to Industrial Districts of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the aboveground propane tank to be visible from public view that does not meet the requirement of subsection 232.d,as the following:

1. A waiver from the requirements of Section 232.d to allow the recently installed aboveground vertical propane storage tank to remain in its current location, with the condition upon the development and implementation of a screening plan to mitigate the visual impact of the tank.

   Conditions:
   1.1. The applicant shall submit a screening plan to the Economic Development and Planning Department for review and approval. The screening plan must demonstrate a design that effectively mitigates the visual impact of the storage tank from Coolidge Hwy. Failure to submit an acceptable screening plan or implement the approved screening plan within an agreed-upon timeframe, shall result in the requirement of removal of the aboveground storage tank.

09/24/2024 **APPROVED**. A. CASE No. 24-01: Michael J. Gordon, RA on behalf of Dr. Duncan Mukeku, 21790 Coolidge Hwy. has made an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance from the provisions of Article 2, Division 4: Section 231 Industrial Use Table of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for main floor residential dwellings that do not meet the residential use requirement, as the following:

1. A waiver from the requirements of Section 231 Industrial Use Table of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for main (lower) floor residential dwelling units.

   Conditions:
   1.1. The variance granted shall become void and invalid upon any of the following events:
   1.2. The applicant fails to obtain the rezoning of the property at 21790 Coolidge Hwy. Property ID 352-25-32-152-001 from O, Office District to IF, Industrial Flex District.
   1.3. Substantial construction on the approved development of the property pursuant to building and other required permits issued by the City does not commence within the two-year period from the adoption of the rezoning or within any extended period granted by the City Council pursuant to Article 6 Division 4 of the Zoning Ordinance.
   1.4. Substantial construction on the approved development of the property does not commence or diligently proceed toward completion within the (18) months from the date of Site Plan Approval or within any extended period granted by the City Planner or Planning Commission pursuant to Article 5 Division 1 of the Zoning Ordinance.

APPROVED. Proposed Changes to the Zoning Board of Appeals Rules of Procedure.

Voted to elect Board Member Sharrista Brown as Vice Chairperson.

10/22/2024 **DENIED**. CASE NO. 24-04: Harold “Hershel” Finman, 23610 Gardner Rd. has made an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance from the provisions of Article 3, Division 1: Section 308 Fences, Walls, and Other Protective Barriers of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for a 6-foot-high aluminum fence that does not

meet the requirement of subsection 308.b, as the following

1. A waiver from the requirements of Section 308 Fences, Walls, and Other Protective Barriers of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for a 6-foot-high aluminum fence that does not meet the opacity requirement of the Zoning Ordinance.

02/25/2025 **APPROVED.** CASE NO. 25-02: Arik Green Design, on behalf of Howard and Rifky Tkatch,14631 Ludlow St. has made an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance from the provisions of Article 2. Division 2: Residential Districts, Sec. 214, to allow for building addition that does not meet the required lot coverage percentage, as the following:

1. A variance of 2.6% of lot coverage requirement of Article 2, Division 2, Section 214 of the zoning ordinance to allow for lot coverage of 37.6%. The zoning ordinance requires maximum lot coverage of 35% of the lot area in the R-1, One-Family Residential Districts.

APPROVED. CASE NO. 25-01: Toras Chaim, 14631-14651 Balfour Ave. has made an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for variances from the provisions of Article 2. Division 2: Residential Districts, Sec. 215.d; Article 4. Division 1: Off-Street Parking, Sec. 403; and Article 5. Division 3: Conditional Land Use, Sec. 544.g to allow for the construction of a synagogue that doesn't meet the impervious surfaces percentage of the lot area, the total number of required off-street parking, the east side and rear yard setbacks, and the parking lot extension into the front building setback area, as the following:

1. A waiver of 14% impervious surfaces of the lot area from the provisions of Article 2, Division 2. Sec. 215 Required Conditions to allow 85% impervious surfaces of the lot area. The ordinance requires a maximum impervious surface of 70%.
2. A waiver of (26) spaces from the provision of Article 4. Division 1. Sec. 403 Parking Space Numerical Requirements to allow for (27) parking spaces from the (53) required spaces.
3. A waiver of (46) feet of the east side yard setback and (39.24) feet of the rear (south) yard setback from the provisions of Article 5. Division 3. Sec. 544.g Places of Worship to allow a (4) feet side (east) yard and (10.76) feet rear (south) setbacks. The ordinance requires 50 feet from any residential use or district.
4. A waiver to allow the parking area to extend into the front building setback from the provision of Article 5. Division 3. Sec. 544.g Places of Worship. The ordinance requires parking not to be provided in the front building setback area.

Conditions:

- If parking becomes an issue due to the growth of the congregation, the applicant shall work with the Economic Development and Planning Department to provide alternative parking in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

Voted to re-elect member James Huston to serve as Chairperson, member Sharrista Brown to serve as Vice Chairperson, and member Aaron Kleid to serve as Secretary.

03/25/2025 **APPROVED.** CASE NO. 25-03: Italy American Construction, on behalf of Theresia Collins, 23090 Geneva Ave. has made an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance from the provisions of Article 3. Division 1: General Provisions, Sec. 300, to allow for the construction of a detached garage that does not meet the floor area requirements.

1. A waiver to increase the detached garage area by 120 square feet to allow for a detached garage structure of 720 square feet. Article 3, Division 1, Section 300 of the zoning ordinance requires detached garages not to exceed 600 square feet.

04/22/2025 **DENIED.** CASE NO. 25-04: Allan and Annette Harris, 23011 Kenosha Ave. has made an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance from the provisions of Article 2. Division 2. Sec. 214 Schedule of Regulations to allow for the addition of a carport that does not meet the total side yard setback requirement, as the following:

1. A waiver for (6) feet from the required sum of both side yards and (4) feet from the required south side yard setback of Article 2, Division 2, Article 214 to allow for the continuation of an enclosed carport (8 ft wide by 20 ft long). The waiver will allow the sum of both side yards to be (6) feet with zero feet on the south property line. The Zoning Ordinance requires the total of both side yards to be (14) feet with a minimum of (4) feet on any side yard.

BOARD AND COMMISSION TRAINING

The City of Oak Park encourages ongoing training for staff, elected officials, and appointed officials charged with making development-related decisions for the community. Members of Oak Park's development-related boards and commissions make important decisions for the community which can reach far into the future. As such, it is important to prioritize continued education and onboarding training for appointed and elected board members and staff.

Throughout the year, the Economic Development and Planning staff will inform the members of relevant training opportunities. Members are encouraged to attend these trainings and report completed training to the staff for tracking purposes.

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) participated in the Planning and Zoning Essentials webinar hosted by the Michigan Association of Planning (MAP). This training provided board members with updated knowledge on zoning principles, legal standards, and best practices, ensuring informed and consistent decision-making aligned with state law and local planning.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The City recognizes the importance of involving the public in shaping policies, projects, and initiatives that impact the Oak Park community. Through robust public participation and engagement efforts, the City strives to promote collaboration, empower individuals, and ensure that our decisions align with the interest and values of the public we serve.

Public Participation Plan Goals and Objectives

The City of Oak Park is committed to encouraging citizen participation by encouraging a diverse set of community stakeholders. The City will continue to strive to involve the community in the decision-making process.

- Increased support for plans and projects that more effectively meet the needs of our diverse public through the involvement of residents and organizations. Creating a sense of ownership of a new project or plan within the community through community involvement.
- There are many techniques and mechanisms available to ensure that a diverse public is well-informed and able to play a role in the planning process. Recognizing that no single technique or mechanism will work in all cases, it is up to the City to consider the special communication needs of the public and use the best approachesto accomplish this objective.
- When appropriate, host joint public engagement events and share public participation data and best practices with other organizations.
- Engage all organizations within the community including faith-based organizations, professional organizations and businesses, block clubs, board and commission members, residents and other cultural and social organizations with the community.
- Offer multiple opportunities and ways for the community to engage in conversation, including: townhall meetings, social media, surveys, fliers, and e-mail. Ensure the project is promoted to the public and that they are offered the opportunity to participate.
- In addition to offering multiple opportunities for community members to engage, itis important to understand that not everyone actively engages with their local government. Meeting people where they are at (i.e. local commercial businesses, parks, special events) to engage with them provides an opportunity to solicit opinions from a wider range of community members. It is also an effective way to get more community members involved in future public meetings.
- Public information and involvement methods are continually evolving. The City is

committed to seeking new and innovative ways to engage and keep the public involved throughout the process.
- Record results of the public engagement and report the results back to the publicthrough the use of social media, video, website, and/or City Council and planning commission meetings.
- Attend other meetings within the community and communicate what the City is working with the public.

Public Engagement Update. July 1st, 2024 – June 30th, 2025

Public Meetings. The City of Oak Park strictly adheres to the Open Michigan Act (OMA) requirements to assure that due process in decision making is maximized. The following meetings were accessible to the public; a time allocated for the public to comment was provided at each of these meetings.

- City Council Meetings [Met on the first and second Monday of the month].
- Planning Commission Meetings [Met on the second Monday of the Month] The Planning Commission conducted a total of seven (7) meetings which included two (2) Public Hearings.
- Zoning Board of Appeals Meetings [Met of the fourth Tuesday of the month]. The Zoning Board of Appeals conducted five (5) meetings with Public Hearings to receive comments on various variance requests.

These meetings are posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Act, livestreamed on public access television as well as recorded and made available via the City You Tube Channel.

Community Events. The following list serves to highlight several engagement activities from the last year that were intended to go above and beyond what is required by State and Local regulations and to align with the goals and objectives set forth in the Public Participation Plan.

Numerous additional appointed boards and committees allow our residents to engage, inform and activate our community.

I. 2024-2025 Budget Year

- Quarterly City Magazine and Program Guides mailed to 16,000 Oak Park residents.
- Timely social media posts and public engagement across numerous city social media channels including:
    i. Facebook (City of Oak Park, Corridor Improvement Authority, Recreation, Library, Farmers Market, Public Safet
    ii. Instagram, LinkedIn, Next-door)
- Mayor's Message E-Blasts
- Public information and safety eblasts from the City of Oak Park Manager throughout the year as needed, i.e.: heat emergencies, snow emergencies, closures, etc.

II. Water Tower Social District

The City of Oak Park activated the Water Tower Social District with the following events:

- Oak Park Cruise and Groove
- October Fest
- Tailgate and Elevate

- Oak Park Film Festival
- Trunk-or-Treat

III. Tri-City Business Support

Through a partnership with the cities of Southfield and Lathrup Village, six (6) different events have been held to support local business development and growth; these events are promoted via flyers, social media, websites, e-blasts and more.

- Growth is not Easy – Get Comfortable Feeling Uncomfortable to Truly Succeed
- Get Your Business Holiday Ready – Ready Set Sell
- Holiday Business Mixer
- Zing Train on the Art of Giving Great Service.
- Future Proofing your Business -Succession Planning
- Business Resource Fair

IV. State of the City 2025

At the 2025 State of the City Address, Oak Park leaders celebrated 13 years of resilience, smart governance, and inclusive community growth. Under the theme *"Celebrating Strong Roots and Reaching New Heights,"* the event showcased the city's financial strength, public safety enhancements, and capital investments. A major highlight was the ceremonial groundbreaking of **Elevate Oak Park Phase 1**, a four-season Event Hub and Band Shell designed to foster community connection and activity. The city also celebrated key milestones, including an A+ bond rating, $800 million in property value growth, and national recognition for the innovative Nine Mile Redesign. City Manager Erik Tungate and Mayor Marian McClellan emphasized that Oak Park is no longer seeking a second chance—it is now setting the bar for thriving, community-driven cities.

V. Elevate Oak Park

- Inclusion in 2+ City Manager Letter of Recreation Magazine.
- Inclusion in numerous social media posts and creation of a dedicated project page.
- Construction updated page and icon created.
- Paid Metro Mode media inclusion (SOTC story, Market story, pool story, and more).
- Earned media (WXYZ, FOX, and more).
- Numerous large posters in the city hall lobby and on display in public meetings Cable TV inclusion.
- Several CM videos and employee videos regarding construction updates as well.

VI. Other Community Events:

- Summer Entertainment Series
- Farmer's Market
- Winter Fest
- 4th of July Celebration: Includes the Mayor's 5 K, the Oak Park Youth Assistance Pancake Breakfast,
- Family Fun Fest
- Summer Blast 2024
- Juneteenth Jubilee Celebration

VII. Open House in Partnership with Other Governmental Entities

- Michigan Department of Transportation.
- Oakland County Parks and Recreation Open Houses regarding updates to Shepard Park and the County's partnership with the City.