

Annual Planning Commission Report

For the Fiscal Year July 01, 2018 – June 30, 2019

Abstract

PA 33 of 2008, known as the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, requires Planning Commissions to prepare a yearly report. Specifically, the act states “*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 action by the legislative body related to planning and development.*” The Planning Commission submits this document, prepared with assistance from the City staff, as fulfillment of this requirement.

Section 1 – Members

The City of Tawas City Planning Commission consists of seven (7) members. This is consistent with Section 15 (2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, which states “*city planning commissions shall consists of five (5), seven (7), or nine (9) members.*”

The Planning Commission had seven members for eight of the twelve Planning Commission meetings. In addition, the City Manager/Zoning Administrator and City Clerk attend the meetings.

Planning Commission Members

OFFICERS

Mary Doak, Chair
Jill VanDriessche, Vice Chair (July – January)
Brian McMurray, Vice Chair (February – June)
Robert (Butch) Short, Secretary

COMMISSIONERS

Ken Cook
Tracy Stevelinck
Jeff Bower (September – June)
Chuck Klenow (April – June)

COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Brian McMurray, Vice Chair

Section 2 – Planning Commission Operations

a. Meetings

The Planning Commission holds regular meetings the first Tuesday of each month, and special meetings as needed. Regular meetings start at 7:00 PM. For the fiscal year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, the Planning Commission held twelve (12) regular meetings, no joint meeting with City Council and no special meetings. This met the requirement in Section 21 (1) of PA 33 of 2008 which state “*the Planning Commissions shall hold not less than 4 regular meetings each year.*” Minutes of the Planning Commission meetings are available on the City’s website at www.tawas.com.

b. Election of Officers

Section 17 (1) of PA 33 of 2008 states “*a planning commission shall elect a chairperson and secretary from its members.*” In fulfillment of this requirement, elections were held at the April 2, 2019 Planning Commission meeting according to the bylaws adopted on March 4, 2014.

c. Bylaws

Section 19 (1) of PA 33 of 2008 states “*a planning commission shall adopt bylaws for the transaction of business.*” The Tawas City Planning Commission adopted by laws on March 4, 2008 and amended the bylaws on March 4, 2014. The bylaws are on file at City Hall.

d. Ordinances

The Planning Commission recommended amending the ordinance three times:

1. Adding Section 18.47 for the prohibition of recreational marihuana establishment, provided penalties for violations and repeal section 18.46. (February 5, 2019)
2. Changing Article 3, Section 3.02, Zoning Map. (March 5, 2019)
3. Amending Sections 3.02, 3.07, 3.08, 17.00, 17.02 and Article 15A to add the Riverfront District (RF). (May 7, 2019)

e. Site Plans and Commercial Permits Issued

The Planning Commission took action on three (3) site plans and five (5) commercial use permits:

620 Ninth Avenue – Manufacturing Business (July 10, 2018)

North Street – PUD for Assisted Living Facility Final Site Plan Review (August 14, 2018)

115 East Lake Street – Artisan Pizza Restaurant (September 11, 2018)

621 East Lake Street – Walmart Pick-Up Area (October 2, 2018)

211 West Lake Street – Yoga Studio (December 4, 2018)

40 East Hemlock Street – Iosco RESA Classes (February 5, 2019)

1140 West Lake Street – Tawas Masonic Temple (March 5, 2019)

215 West Lake Street – Coles Appliance Business (May 7, 2019)

f. Master Plan

The Master Plan was updated and approved in November 2018. The Master Plan’s overall goals, objectives, and action items identified in the implementation matrix will be reviewed at the Planning Commission and City Council joint meeting scheduled in January 2020.

The table below shows the progress of the Master Plan implementation matrix:

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES		
FOCUS AREA	ACTION	STATUS/PROGRESS SINCE NOVEMBER 2018
<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Economic Development</p>	Goal: Develop and promote the growth of a diverse economic base as well as the tourism economy to serve the employment and commercial needs of residents and visitors.	
	1. Consider new zoning standards that would allow a mix of commercial and industrial uses and reduce impediments for redevelopment opportunities.	In process – included with Zoning Ordinance update
	2. Review and update the zoning ordinance to correct errors and modify standards based on current development trends.	In process – included with Zoning Ordinance update
	3. Investigate alternative zoning language for the development of home-based businesses and cottage industries.	In process – included with Zoning Ordinance update
	4. Identify priority redevelopment areas.	Areas have been identified
	5. Actively market development opportunities available in the City.	
	6. Review the current development review and approval process and provide one-page guides for each type of review.	Completed
	7. Investigate amending zoning ordinance to allow parking lots in residential areas adjacent to commercial areas.	
<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Commercial Corridors</p>	Goal 1: Encourage coordinated redevelopment of US 23 as the commercial core of the City and a regional travel corridor to create a sense of place.	
	Goal 2: Establish vehicular-oriented commercial areas on M-55 for professional offices, banks, auto-related uses, and fast food restaurants.	
	1. Incorporate Complete Streets strategies into local ordinances.	
	2. Revise zoning standards along US 23 to allow for mixed-use developments and infill developments including ground-floor retail and upper-floor office or residential.	In process – included with Zoning Ordinance update
	3. Incorporate “connectivity” into site plan provisions.	In process – included with Zoning Ordinance update
	4. Create uniform access management standards along US 23 and M-55.	
5. Revise zoning to require sidewalks and standards for pedestrian connections to all new developments, and work to connect all existing developments along the corridor with sidewalks.	In process – included with Zoning Ordinance update	

	6.	Develop new architectural standards for buildings along US 23 that return building façades to their historical character to achieve a collective identity for the downtown.	
	7.	Adopt zoning standards to allow for commercial/residential uses along the Tawas River.	Completed
	8.	Install signage, landscaping, and lighting at entranceway areas of the City where there currently are none.	
	9.	Draft and implement appropriate general design standards along US 23.	
	10.	Research funding opportunities for façade improvements, signage and exterior building elements, and architectural improvements or modifications.	
3 Recreation, Open Space & Natural Resources	Goal: Provide and maintain recreational amenities, open space and natural resources within the City to enhance the overall quality of life.		
	1.	Implement the Tawas City Recreation Plan, as appropriate.	In process
	2.	Apply for grants to expand the linked trail system as opportunities become available.	
4 Public Services, Facilities, & Amenities	Goal: Continue to plan for the maintenance, replacement and expansion of community facilities, infrastructure and services that accommodate the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors in the City while being fiscally responsible.		
	1.	Adopt and maintain a Capital Improvements Plan.	
	2.	Incorporate Complete Streets standards into public development projects.	
	3.	Continue blight enforcement strategies and procedures.	Working on as staffing and time allows
	4.	Install wayfinding signs, where needed.	
5 Residential Areas	Goal: Provide for a wide variety of quality residential housing options for all ages and income levels in safe and attractive, walkable neighborhoods.		
	1.	In the Zoning Ordinance, allow a broader range of housing styles in residential neighborhoods.	In process – included with Zoning Ordinance update
	2.	Allow for mixed use developments within local zoning.	In process – included with Zoning Ordinance update
	3.	Research and evaluate existing rental inspection programs implemented in other communities.	
	4.	Develop a one-sheet flyer promoting resources for residential rehabilitation programs.	