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March 6, 2018

Hon. Village President and Council Members  
Village of Lake Orion  
21 East Church Street  
Lake Orion, MI 48362

Subject:

**Village of Lake Orion  
Planning Commission**

**2017 Annual Report and 2018 Work Plan**

*Prepared by the Village of Lake Orion Planning Commission, with assistance from McKenna*

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Hon. Village President and Council Members:

The Village of Lake Orion Planning Commission functions under and has their powers and duties set forth by the *Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006, as amended*, and the *Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended*. The *Michigan Planning Enabling Act* provides for the creation, organization, powers and duties of the Planning Commission. The *Michigan Zoning Enabling Act* provides for the adoption of zoning ordinances and the establishment of zoning districts and prescribes powers and duties of certain officials, including the Planning Commission. In accordance with Section 19 of the *Michigan Planning Enabling Act*, the Planning Commission is required to prepare and submit a summary of the previous year activities and anticipated work plan.

Please note that the 2018 Work Plan was designed to further the Village's adopted Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, especially in regards to the core value of being future oriented, and to *Promote Proper Management of Capital Assets and Infrastructure*, and *Promote Economic Vitality*. The 2018 Work Plan will promote the community's economic strength and serves as a "next step" for Planning Commission progress.

**Planning Commission Application and Permit Related Business**

The Planning Commission met a total of ten times in 2017 and the meetings are typically scheduled for the first Monday of the month, at 7:30 PM, at Village Hall. All meetings are held in compliance with the *Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976, as amended*.

In 2017, the Commission reviewed a total of 14 applications, as detailed on page two of this report. Compared to 2016, the Planning Commission has experienced an activity increase of 75 percent. Lake Orion remains a very desirable place to live, and do business in. With the recovery of the regional economy and the culture of downtown reinvestment, the likelihood of additional growth and Planning Commission activity can be expected for 2018.



In addition, a number of permits were reviewed administratively, which are impacted by both Zoning Ordinance standards and Planning Commission decisions. The number of permits in 2017 are also detailed in the table below. The volume of permits in 2017 also increased from 2016 by 18 percent. It is important to note that approximately 12 Event permits in 2017 are not included in the above calculation. Event permits are administratively reviewed for zoning and public safety and require coordination between Planning and Zoning staff and multiple departments, including DPW, the Police Chief, and the Fire Chief.

Village of Lake Orion Planning Commission Application / Permit Type in 2017	Number
<b>Applications (Total)</b>	<b>14</b>
Site Plan and Site Plan Revision	8
Administrative Site Plan	0
Special Land Use	4
Land Split / Combination	2
<b>Permits (Total)</b>	<b>81</b>
Building Permits	50
Fence Permits	7
Right-of-Way Permits	17
Sign Permits	7 <sup>1</sup>

### 2018 Work Plan

The Planning Commission looks forward to the 2018 year ! In addition to improving the breadth of services we offer to the business and development community, many of the projects listed below will allow the Village to take advantage of the State’s placemaking initiatives. These initiatives will allow Lake Orion to focus on marketing and building on the community’s authentic character to continue our viable business environment and high quality of life that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

The following is a list of priority Planning Commission projects for 2018:

#### 1. Zoning Ordinance and Map - Technical Review and Revisions

Since 2016, it has been recommended that the Planning Commission consider a technical review to the Zoning Ordinance, which was originally adopted in 2010. The current Zoning Ordinance would benefit from having a “health check-up” to reflect best planning practices; remove errors and inconsistencies; and be reformatted to be more streamlined and user-friendly.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2017, an annual event sign permit to the Lions Club and Lake Orion United Methodist Church was issued. This significantly reduced the number of applications each group had to submit (as compared to 2016 when there were a total of 15 sign permits).

Reviewing and amending the Zoning Ordinance (where appropriate to address ever-evolving planning trends) is a critical project for the Planning Commission in 2018. This single document provides the standards to which redevelopment and new construction will be held – directly impacting the quality of life of the citizens of Lake Orion, its business owners, and its visitors for years to come.

## **2. Master Plan Update**

The last update to the Village's Master Plan was in 2008. The Village should begin a select update (focusing specifically on redevelopment areas and opportunities, and the Future Land Use Map) to the 2008 Master Plan for a number of reasons:

- a) Fulfills 5 Year Statutory Requirements;
- b) Promotes Civic Involvement;
- c) Supports Zoning Credibility;
- d) Acts as a Vehicle for Sustainability Planning;
- e) Provides a Source of Revenue Projections;
- f) Provides a Source of Community Pride;
- g) Response to Current and Future Economic Developments and Incentives; and
- h) Respect and Protect Historic Village Character.

## **3. Downtown Parking Strategy**

As identified during several of the recent development projects within the downtown district of Lake Orion, downtown parking is at a premium. A parking study and accompanying management strategy would be highly beneficial to the Village for many reasons. Such a study would determine current parking trends and provide an analysis of parking demand. A parking strategy would also identify specific opportunities for additional parking areas through the reuse and redesign of spaces, and would act as a management plan, guiding Ordinance and policy changes so that businesses, residents, and visitors of the downtown can efficiently find and utilize parking.

A downtown parking strategy would be a collaborative effort among the Village and Downtown Development Authority (DDA), resulting in sound policy decisions across the various entities operating in the Village. The parking strategy is also aligned with the Village's adopted *Mission, Vision, Values and Goals*, which is to explore options for expanding parking facilities and opportunities within the downtown area.

## **4. Planning and Zoning Fee Schedule and Applications**

It is important to review and update if necessary, the Village's Planning and Zoning Fee Schedule to ensure Lake Orion remains competitive, current, and strikes the appropriate balance between being development friendly and recouping the costs of attracting and streamlining such developments. Additionally, many of the Planning and Zoning application forms should be reviewed and updated. This will help streamline the application process for the Planning Commission, but also clarify and present critical information in a more digestible manner for the public and potential applicants. All applications and forms should be electronic, fillable PDF's for ease of use.

#### **5. Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC)**

The Planning Commission, in conjunction with the DDA, should consider work towards RRC certification for Lake Orion. This process would involve working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) program “to streamline the development approval process by integrating transparency, predictability, and efficiency into daily development practices”. With this certification, the State will promote and market up to three Redevelopment Ready Sites for the community. The Planning Commission would be charged to develop a list of incentives for redevelopment, including flexible zoning, market information, DDA programs and resources, and redevelopment opportunities.

Proactive planning is key to maintaining our commercial districts – so that they are sustainable: economically, environmentally, and socially. The RRC process will help provide guidance necessary for retaining and growing existing businesses, and recruiting and attracting new business and industry to the Village over the next several years.

A proactive work program can help maintain a quality community, and we look forward to working with the Village Council as it actively seeks to preserve and grow its economic base.

Respectfully submitted,

**Village of Lake Orion Planning Commission**

cc: Mr. K. Joseph Young, Village Manager  
Mrs. Susan Galezka, Village Clerk