



# City Planning Commission

## ROLES AND FUNCTION

- Advise City Council on matters relating to the physical and environmental development of the city
- Create reports and recommendations for City Council on ordinances, ordinance amendments, annexations, zonings, and resolutions
- Prepare an annual Capital Improvements Plan
- Advise City Council in the preparation of and continuance of the Master Plan
- Review and advise City Council on private development petitions

## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

- Alex Milshteyn, Chair
- Sarah Mills, Vice Chair
- Shannan Gibb-Randall, Secretary
- Zach Ackerman, City Council
- Ellie Abrons
- Erica Briggs
- Sara Hammerschmidt
- Lisa Sauve
- Wendy Woods

*The Planning Commission consists of nine citizen volunteers nominated by the Mayor and approved by City Council, representing different professions and occupations having an interest in the growth and development of the city. All members of the Planning Commission are appointed for a three-year term, with the exception of the member of City Council representative, who is appointed for a one-year term. The staff of the Planning and Development Services Unit acts as the primary provider of administrative support and professional advice to the Planning Commission.*

## COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Planning Commission generally meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7pm in Council Chambers (2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Larcom City Hall) and has a working session on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month. Visit [www.a2gov.org/planning](http://www.a2gov.org/planning) for the Planning Commission meeting schedule.

A quorum consists of five members of the Planning Commission, meaning that a vote of five members is required for the Planning Commission to act on any matter. All meetings of the Planning Commission and its committees are open to the public and conducted in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Minutes are typically adopted by the Planning Commission the month following a meeting. Approved minutes are provided in the City of Ann Arbor’s Legislative Information Center at [www.a2gov.legistar.com](http://www.a2gov.legistar.com).

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

There are several ways to provide comments to the Planning Commission:

- Email or write to the Planning and Development Services Unit before a meeting.
- Speak at a Planning Commission meeting. An individual may speak for up to three minutes. City Planning Commission agendas provide two opportunities for audience participation:
  - Speakers at the first Audience Participation agenda item may address the Planning Commission about any item on the agenda that does not have its own public hearing scheduled.
  - Speakers at the second Audience Participation agenda item may address the Planning Commission about any item related to the Planning Commission’s business.
  - Additionally, at public hearings, individuals are permitted to speak for up to three minutes, and people who represent a registered neighborhood or business association may speak for up to five minutes.

For more information about the Planning Commission, please visit [www.a2gov.org/planning](http://www.a2gov.org/planning) or contact the Planning Unit at 734.794.6265 or [planning@a2gov.org](mailto:planning@a2gov.org)



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## HOW NOTICE IS PROVIDED

### For all public hearing items:

- 15 days before a hearing, a hearing notice is published in the “Public Notices” section of the Washtenaw County Legal News [www.legalnews.com/washtenaw](http://www.legalnews.com/washtenaw).
- On the Friday late afternoon preceding the Planning Commission meeting, a link to the agenda and staff reports is available on the City’s Legislative Information Center at [www.a2gov.legistar.com](http://www.a2gov.legistar.com). A reminder that the agenda is available is sent to subscribers of the City’s e-mail notification service, GovDelivery. To sign up for this service, go to [www.a2gov.org](http://www.a2gov.org) and click on the envelope icon.
- On the Thursday preceding the Planning Commission meeting, the Planning Commission agenda is published in the “Public Notices” section of [www.legalnews.com/washtenaw](http://www.legalnews.com/washtenaw).

### The following notices are also provided for development petitions:

- Upon receipt of a petition, usually about seven weeks before a hearing, the area plan or site plan is displayed in the lobby of Larcom City Hall.
- Two weeks before a Planning Commission hearing, letters are sent to property owners, residents and registered neighborhood and business groups who are within 300 feet of the property being considered.
- One week before the hearing, an orange sign is posted on the property containing the time and place of the hearing.
- Additionally, any project that requires a public hearing needs to comply with the City’s Citizen Participation Ordinance, available at [www.a2gov.org/planning](http://www.a2gov.org/planning).

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Successful planning relies on effective communication. When attending a public meeting or citizen participation meeting, or even when speaking or writing to planning staff or Planning Commissioners, it is best to follow the guidelines explained below:

- **Be Informed:** Be sure of the facts and details of the particular project or issue at hand. Your statement will have more impact if you are accurate, informed, and objective.
- **Do Your Homework:** Find out in advance what, if any, the speaking limit will be. Prepare your statement ahead of time to ensure it fits within the allotted time.
- **Explain Why:** The most constructive comments relate to City Code, the Master Plan, or specific ways a project will affect your community. Simply being for or against a project without saying why does not provide useful information.
- **Be Courteous:** Avoid personal attacks. Be civil, courteous, and respectful. Testimony will not be persuasive if it antagonizes and alienates others.

- **Stay on Point:** Be clear, concise and to the point. Try to communicate with facts rather than relying on rhetoric.
- **Have an Open Mind:** Attend meetings with an open mind. Try to be receptive, ready to learn, and open to perspectives different than your own.

Remember, you don't need to be an expert or an experienced public speaker to participate. Simply become informed about the issues, get involved, and share your thoughts. We look forward to hearing from you!

### HOW TO REGISTER YOUR ASSOCIATION

To receive mailed notices for a neighborhood or business association, register your group by visiting [www.a2gov.org/neighborhoods](http://www.a2gov.org/neighborhoods) and click on the Registration Form link. Or, contact the Planning & Development Services Unit at the contact information below.

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