



Memorandum

To: Megan Hunter, Director of Planning & Development

From: John Houseal, Principal
Brandon Nolin, Senior Associate

Date: March 3, 2014

Re: Proposed Zoning Approach

This memorandum summarizes our proposed approach to providing a draft update the City of Flint Zoning Ordinance by May 31, 2014. This memorandum outlines our general approach to organizing the new, simplified zoning ordinance and highlights opportunities for City staff and steering committee input.

1) Place Type Zoning Assessment

At the outset of the zoning update process, the Project Team will identify how each Place Type included in the adopted Master Plan would be best achieved through zoning, regardless of current districts or regulations. This will include determining:

- The appropriate regulatory approach for achieving the intended outcome within each Place Type;
- Preliminary use tables that identify permitted, conditional, and prohibited uses for each Place Type; and
- The general bulk and site characteristics that capture the intended development character in each Place Type

This task will conclude with an assessment of the need for unique development standards or overlay districts based on what Place Types cannot be fully accommodated through a combination of simple use and bulk standards.

2) Existing Zoning/Master Plan Place Types Alignment

Existing zoning districts will be assessed for their alignment with Place Type use and bulk characteristics identified in step 1 above. Standards and boundaries of current districts will be compared against Place Types to determine the transferability of current regulations based on:

- Current permitted, conditional, and accessory uses and their alignment with those determined for each Place Type.
- Current development and site characteristics of each existing district and their alignment with those determined for each Place Type.

The result will be an understanding of which portions of the City can remain in their current zoning district and still achieve the goals of the Master Plan. Where this is not the case, we will identify a conceptual approach to the creation of new districts and potential supplemental standards that can achieve specific goals in different Place Types.

3) Conceptual Zoning Framework

This step entails the creation of a conceptual zoning framework that will align potential new standards and districts with Place Types. Where current zoning district boundaries and regulations generally align with future Place Types, districts will be carried forward with minor revisions as necessary. Where current zoning districts can be applied to other portions of the City to achieve a specific Place Type, we will recommend remapping of zoning district boundaries. Where no current zoning regulations prescribe a desired type of development, we will propose new zoning districts. This will be based on a number of factors, including parcel size, intended use, desired site and building design, access, etc. New districts will be defined based on the following elements:

- Purpose Statements – Updated to reflect the goals and objectives of the Master Plan and desired Place Types.
- Use Tables – Updated to reflect the goals and objectives of the Master Plan, desired Place Types, and best practices.
- Bulk Standards – Updated to reflect the Master Plan and local site capacities within each district.
- Zoning Map – Updated to reflect a combination of existing and proposed zoning districts and highlight areas that would benefit from the application of an overlay district.

4) Staff/Steering Committee Input – Conceptual Zoning Framework Presentation (April 1, 2014)

Following the completion of Steps 1 and 3, City staff and the Steering Committee will be presented with an overview of the proposed Conceptual Zoning Framework. This framework will identify the recommended zoning districts, including overlay districts, needed to achieve the Place Types identified in the Master Plan Land Use Map. Based on feedback from this presentation, the Conceptual Zoning Framework will be modified and Draft Districts will be revised.

This meeting will also be used to seek input from Staff and the Steering Committee regarding administrative issues related to procedures, capacity of review bodies, and any problems with existing code or key policy decisions that need to be reflected. Input will also be sought to establish general agreement regarding the extent to which sustainability measures should be incorporated into land use and development regulations.

5) Outline of Special Considerations

Based on input from City staff and the Steering Committee, an inventory of special considerations will be developed to inform use and design standards as they relate to each proposed zoning district. Examples of such special considerations include:

- i) Appropriate development intensities (i.e. duplexes more appropriate than larger scale multi-family development in select areas.)
- ii) Special use standards related to highly impactful uses (i.e. scrap yards, pawn shops, adults uses, etc.)
- iii) Standards related to uses endorsed in the Master Plan that may require local sensitivity (i.e. urban agriculture and livestock)

6) Supplemental Development Standards

Supplemental development standards will be developed for all districts. While some existing standards may be maintained, many of the recommended standards developed during this step will likely be the result of research on best practices related to each desired Place Type. This step will include development of a variety of standards, including, but not limited to:

- Parking Standards;
- Buffers and Screening;
- Landscaping Standards; and,
- Sign Standards.

7) Sustainability Audit

With a significant component of the proposed Zoning Code in draft form, a sustainability audit will be undertaken to ensure that key guiding principles of the Master Plan are addressed in recommended use, bulk, and supplemental development regulations. The audit will examine the proposed code for shortcomings or barriers related to a variety of topics including green infrastructure, renewable energy, and complete streets. Revisions to the proposed code will be made based on the results of this audit and review by City staff.

8) Focus Group Outreach and Steering Committee Input

(Anticipated for early May 2014, *Potential for 2 meetings in May)

Proposed districts and related standards will be reviewed with key persons and focus groups to ensure that locally-desired outcomes can be reasonably implemented by City staff, property owners, and the development community. Interviews and focus groups will be established around specific topics (e.g. parking standards or multi-family development) or geographic areas of focus (e.g. the subject area of a proposed overlay district). A meeting will also be conducted with the Steering Committee to review draft standards.

9) Revisions to Administration

Administrative components of the zoning ordinance will be updated based on a variety of factors to address:

- Issues with current processes;
- Barriers to implementation of proposed zoning districts and Place Types; and,
- New departmental organization and staffing capabilities.

This task will also include revisions to processes related Planned Development and subdivision approval procedures.

10) Draft Zoning Ordinance

All drafted and revised components will be assembled into a Draft Zoning Ordinance for delivery to City staff and the Steering Committee by May 31, 2014.

- Presentation to Flint Planning Commission, early June 2014

11) Community Engagement & Outreach

- Jun '14- Aug'14 - MPSC, Ward Workshops, Planning Commission Public Hearing

12) Anticipated Adoption

- Fall 2014 – Planning Commission Approval, Flint City Council Adoption