



CITY OF BUCHANAN PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 08, 2026 – 6:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

AGENDA

The City of Buchanan Planning Commission, in compliance with Michigan's Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a Planning Commission meeting to be held in the Chamber of City Hall.

** Comments may also be submitted in writing at least 4 hours in advance to the Zoning & Community Development Director Kristen Gundersen at kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com*

** Buchanan City will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aide and services to those individuals with disabilities who wish to attend the public meeting upon receiving at least one (1) week's prior notice. Any such individual requiring such aids or services should contact the city in writing or by telephoning: Buchanan City Clerk; 302 North Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, 269-695-3844.*

I. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

C. Opening of Hearing and Statement of Purpose of the Hearing

The purpose of the public hearings is to receive public comments regarding the proposed amendments to the City of Buchanan Unified Development Code

D. Announcement of the Rules of the Hearing

E. Proposed map amendment (rezoning) from N Natural to I Industrial for the property located at the northeast corner of East Third Street and Skyline Drive, now known as 805 E. Third Street.

1) Presentation by the Applicant/City Staff

2) Public Comment

3) Applicant/City Staff Response, if necessary

F. Proposed amendments to the Unified Development Code allowing creation of Downtown Design Review Overlay District and standards for review – Amendments to Sections 71-5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12, 71-33.E and 71-34.G and Article V Definitions

1) Presentation by the Applicant/City Staff

2) Public Comment

3) Applicant/City Staff Response, if necessary

G. Proposed amendments Unified Development Code – New Section 71-28 Fencing, Lighting, Screening and Landscaping Standards and deletion of Sections 71-26 Buffering, 71-28 Tree preservation and landscape standards and 71-29 Fencing standards and changes to Article V Definitions

1) Presentation by the Applicant/City Staff

2) Public Comment

3) Applicant/City Staff Response, if necessary

H. Proposed amendments to the Unified Development Code Section 71-30 Sign standards and Article V Definition.

- 1) Presentation by the Applicant/City Staff
- 2) Public Comment
- 3) Applicant/City Staff Response, if necessary

I. Closing of Hearing

II. **Regular Meeting - Call to Order**

III. **Pledge of Allegiance**

IV. **Roll Call**

V. **Public Comments - Agenda Items**

VI. **Approve Agenda**

VII. **Approve Minutes**

- [A.](#) Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from August 11, 2026.

VIII. **New Business**

- [A.](#) Public Hearing - Consideration of Map Amendment from N Natural to I Industrial for property at northeast corner of East Third Street and Skyline Drive - now known as 805 E Third Street
- [B.](#) Public Hearing - Consideration of Text Amendment Sections 71-5.Z, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12, 71-33.E and 71.34G and Article V Definitions - related with creation of Downtown Design Overlay District and establishment of design standards
- [C.](#) Public Hearing - Consideration of text amendment to modify and establish regulations pertaining to Fencing, Lighting, Screening and Landscape Standards found in Sections 71-26, 71-27F and H, 71-28, 71-29, 71-32 and Article V Definitions
- [D.](#) Public Hearing - Consideration of Text Amendment Section 71-30 Signs and Article V Definitions - Relating to Sign Regulations
- [E.](#) Resignation Announcement, Vacancy and Appointment of Chairperson

IX. **Old Business**

- [A.](#) Master Plan - Review Revised Future Land Use Map, Objectives-Goals and Tasks and Next Steps

X. **Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only**

XI. **Zoning & Community Development Director Comments**

XII. **Commissioner Comments**

XIII. **Adjournment**



August 18, 2026

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF BUCHANAN, MICHIGAN
PLANNING COMMISSION**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the City of Buchanan Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Buchanan City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, Michigan 49107. The purpose of the public hearing is to hear public comments on proposed map amendment/rezoning from N Natural to I Industrial for the property located at the northeast corner of East Third Street and Skyline Drive (Property Number: 11-58-0700-0006-02-0). The City of Buchanan is representing the property owner Ingersoll Rand Company, Davidson, North Carolina.

All materials concerning this request are available for public inspection at Buchanan City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, during normal business hours.

The public and/or counsel are invited to attend, be heard and submit evidence and written comment. Written comments may also be submitted in advance of the meeting to Kristen Gundersen, either by delivery to Buchanan City Hall or via email to kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com City hall and the meeting room are handicap accessible.

If you are receiving this notice as the manager or owner of any single structure containing more than four (4) dwelling units or other district spatial areas owned or leased by different persons, please consider this notice to be a formal request that you post this notice at the primary entrance to this structure pursuant to Michigan law (MCL 125.3103(2))

Kristen Gundersen
Planning and Community Development Director

Kalla Langston
City Clerk



302 Redbud Trail No
Buchanan, MI 49107
Tel: (269) 695-3844
Fax: (269) 695-4330

Item I. F.

POSTED: August 20, 2026

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF BUCHANAN, MICHIGAN
PLANNING COMMISSION**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the City of Buchanan Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Buchanan City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, Michigan 49107. The purpose of the public hearing is to hear public comments on proposed amendments to modify and establish regulations pertaining to creation of the Downtown Design Review Overlay District and review processes found in Sections 71.5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12, 71-33.E and 71.34.G and Article V Definitions and any other sections of the Unified Development Code that may be necessary.

At the hearing, all interested parties will be allowed to be heard. All materials concerning this request are available for public inspection at City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, during normal business hours.

Written comments may also be submitted in advance of the meeting to Kristen Gundersen, either by delivery to Buchanan City Hall or via email to kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com

Kristen Gundersen
Planning and Community Development Director

Kalla Langston
City Clerk



POSTED: August 20, 2026

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF BUCHANAN, MICHIGAN
PLANNING COMMISSION**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the City of Buchanan Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Buchanan City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, Michigan 49107. The purpose of the public hearing is to hear public comments on proposed amendments to modify and establish regulations pertaining to Fencing, Lighting, Screening and Landscape Standards found in Sections 71-26, 71-27F and H, 71-28, 71-29, 71-32 pertaining to the Zoning Board of Appeals and Article V Definitions associated with planter, fence yards and mechanical equipment and any other sections of the Unified Development Code that may be necessary.

At the hearing, all interested parties will be allowed to be heard. All materials concerning this request are available for public inspection at City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, during normal business hours.

Written comments may also be submitted in advance of the meeting to Kristen Gundersen, either by delivery to Buchanan City Hall or via email to kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com

Kristen Gundersen
Planning and Community Development Director

Kalla Langston
City Clerk



POSTED: August 20, 2026

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF BUCHANAN, MICHIGAN
PLANNING COMMISSION**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the City of Buchanan Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Buchanan City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, Michigan 49107. The purpose of the public hearing is to hear public comments on proposed amendments to modify and establish regulations pertaining to Sections 71-30 Sign standards, Section 71-33, 71-34, 71-36 and Article V Definitions at it relates to sign standards, administrative and planning commission review processes including sign modifications and definitions associated with signage and mechanical equipment and any other sections of the Unified Development Code that may be necessary.

At the hearing, all interested parties will be allowed to be heard. All materials concerning this request are available for public inspection at City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, during normal business hours.

Written comments may also be submitted in advance of the meeting to Kristen Gundersen, either by delivery to Buchanan City Hall or via email to kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com

Kristen Gundersen
Planning and Community Development Director

Kalla Langston
City Clerk



CITY OF BUCHANAN PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2026 – 6:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

- I. *The City of Buchanan Planning Commission, in compliance with Michigan's Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a Planning Commission meeting to be held in the Chamber of City Hall.*
- II. ** Comments may also be submitted in writing at least 4 hours in advance to the Zoning & Community Development Director Kristen Gundersen at kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com*
** Buchanan City will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aide and services to those individuals with disabilities who wish to attend the public meeting upon receiving at least one (1) week's prior notice. Any such individual requiring such aids or services should contact the city in writing or by telephoning: Buchanan City Clerk; 302 North Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, 269-695-3844.*
- III. **Regular Meeting - Call to Order**
 Meeting called to order at 6:01pm.
- IV. **Pledge of Allegiance**
 Houser led in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- V. **Roll Call**
 Present: Vigansky, Houser, Brown, Pleasant, Lysy, Garry
 Absent: Wregglesworth
 City Staff Present: City Clerk Kalla Langston-Weiss, Planning & Community Development Director Kristen Gundersen
- VI. **Approve Agenda**
 Pleasant moved, seconded by Brown to approve Agenda as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.
- VII. **Public Comments - Agenda Items**
 Dennis Mori – Mori apologized for his behavior at the previous meeting and thanked the Board for approving the sign text changes.
- VIII. **Approve Minutes**
 A. Consider the Public Hearing & Regular Meeting Minutes from July 14th, 2026.
 Brown identified a typo and Garry had a question about the public comment section.
 Brown moved, seconded by Lysy to approve the July 14th, 2026 Minutes as amended. Voice vote carried unanimously.
- IX. **Old Business**
 A. Review and Discuss Master Plan Draft Objectives, Goals and Actions
 Staff reviewed the proposed goals, objectives, and action items for the Master Plan. The previous Master Plan contained numerous individual goal areas, and the current draft consolidates those items into five broader categories.
Strong Neighborhoods
 The Commission reviewed goals relating to housing diversity, housing improvements, housing incentives, and vacant and underutilized buildings.

The Commission requested that language regarding aging in place be included within the housing objectives.

Vibrant Community

The Commission reviewed goals relating to natural resources, trail connections, walkability, architecture, community heritage, historic character, gateways, parks, and streets.

The Commission discussed historic preservation and agreed that language encouraging applications for National Register Historic Preservation designation would be more appropriate than creating a separate Historic Preservation Commission.

Infrastructure / Public Assets

The Commission discussed broadband and public Wi-Fi opportunities. Staff will add an action item to investigate broadband/public Wi-Fi opportunities, particularly within the downtown area.

The Commission also discussed:

- Sidewalk, trail, and corridor extensions and improvements;
- Public transportation and continued coordination with DART and regional/countywide transportation efforts;
- Long-term opportunities for an Amtrak stop in the Buchanan area; and
- Identifying consistent funding sources for tree maintenance, watering, and planting.

Effective Government

The Commission reviewed goals related to zoning and development regulations, land use, code enforcement, communication, technology, and governmental services.

Staff provided an update regarding upcoming technology improvements, including the City's website, agenda management software, financial software, and future building permit software.

The Commission discussed methods of improving public communication, including text and email notification systems.

The Commission also discussed continued cooperation and possible shared services with neighboring governmental units, including public safety/fire services. Staff will develop additional language addressing intergovernmental cooperation and public safety.

Economic Vitality

The Commission discussed economic development and marketing goals.

Members discussed increasing the City's social media presence and coordinating marketing efforts with organizations such as the DDA, Buchanan Area Chamber of Commerce, Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber, and regional tourism organizations.

Staff will develop additional language regarding marketing opportunities, including heritage tourism and other methods of promoting Buchanan.

The Commission agreed to continue refining the Master Plan goals at a future meeting.

B. Review and Discuss Unified Development Code - Signs draft language

There will be a public hearing next month. Staff recommends a minimum clearance for signs over sidewalks of 6'8" and does not recommend allowing open flags be allowed below that. There was discussion on different Open flags in different communities and what clearance is best. Gundersen refined the code to allow for either a sandwich board or an open flag in the public right of way.

Pleasant moved, seconded by Brown for Table 71-T District Regulations to be updated with a minimum clearance for wall mounted signs be decreased from 8' to 6'8" when located over public or private

sidewalk and continued use of 15' when located over public or private streets/alleys or drive-aisles.

Yes: Brown, Pleasant, Lysy, Garry, Vigansky

No: Houser

Houser thought this motion was to lower the minimum clearance below 6'8".

Vigansky moved, seconded by Lysy to void the previous motion. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Pleasant moved, seconded by Brown to decrease the minimum clearance of a projecting sign from 8' to 6'8" when located above a sidewalk. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Brown moved, seconded by Pleasant to recommend that where in the draft sign ordinance regulations it references 1 and 2 family be changed to 1 and 4 family to comply with regulations established in table 71-T. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Houser moved, seconded by Vigansky to support the draft language found on page 22 of the August 11, 2026 Planning Commission packet which allows temporary signage in the D (Downtown) District either as sandwich boards or open flag sign as presented.

Lysy noted that the open flag sign could be lower and meet ADA standards if there was a barrier beneath it. Brown asked Mori if the open flags were meant more for pedestrians or drivers, Mori answered they were meant for walkers and reiterated that signs with a lower clearance could be ADA compliant if a barrier was below them. A lower clearance allows for a more visible sign and is easier for business owners to put up and take down. Houser thinks lower signs are a visibility issue.

Yes: Vigansky, Houser, Brown, Pleasant, Garry

No: Lysy

Motion carried.

C. Review Recommendations from Design Review Committee Associated with Unified Development Code

Staff reviewed proposed amendments establishing a formal Downtown Design Review Overlay District and standards for the Downtown Design Review Committee.

The proposed amendments would:

- Establish the Downtown Design Review Overlay District;
- Define the purpose and responsibilities of the Downtown Design Review Committee;
- Establish standards for architectural review;
- Allow certain applications to be reviewed administratively by staff;
- Establish the Downtown Design Review Committee as a decision-making body;
- Establish the Planning Commission as the appeal body for denied applications; and
- Add applicable definitions to the Unified Development Code.

The Commission discussed architectural standards, including building character, materials, windows, doors, paint, masonry, mechanical equipment, and the importance of documenting the reasons supporting Design Review Committee decisions.

The Commission also discussed whether adjacent property owners should receive mailed notice of Design Review applications. Staff noted that adding such notice would require changes to the existing application deadlines.

Staff was directed to:

- Change references from "Design Review Committee" to "Downtown Design Review Committee" where appropriate;

- Reconcile references in the applicable tables;
- Modify the proposed overlay district description/map to include additional identified green space/parcels facing Redbud Trail; and
- Prepare the amendments for public hearing.

D. Review Final Draft Fencing, Screening, Lighting and Landscaping Amendments to Unified Development Code

Staff reviewed proposed amendments relating to fencing and landscaping. The Commission agreed that chain-link fencing could be referenced generally rather than limiting the provision to vinyl-coated chain link. Chain-link fencing would remain limited to appropriate side and rear yard locations.

Staff also reviewed a list of permitted tree species developed with assistance from Tree Friends. If the proposed species is not included on the list, staff may review the request and consult with the Tree Board as necessary.

X. New Business

XI. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

XII. Zoning & Community Development Director Comments

Gundersen is finishing up this round of changes to the Unified Development Code and expects September and October to be quieter due to staff being away at conferences and City Hall updates to computer software.

XIII. Commissioner Comments

Vigansky – None.

Pleasant – Grateful the Board is making progress.

Brown – The discussion they are having is important. It is important to have a dialogue with the community.

Lysy – None.

Garry – Appreciates having a deep discussion. Thanked Langston-Weiss and Gundersen for their hard work.

Houser – Resigned from the Planning Commission Board.

XIV. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk

Memorandum



Date: August 24, 2026

To: Buchanan Planning Commission

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: **Introduction - Consideration of a Map Amendment (rezoning) from N Natural to I Industrial district for property at northeast corner of E Third Street and Skyline Drive – 805 E Third Street**

Background

The City of Buchanan is requesting a map amendment (rezoning) from the N Natural to I Industrial district for the irregularly shaped 4.82-acre parcel located near the northeast corner of East Third Street and Skyline Drive and has recently been given the street address of 805 E Third Street. The property is owned by Ingersoll Rand Company – Trane Technologies Company LLC

A portion of the property is improved with a 10' wide trail for McCoy Creek along with a surface parking lot. The remaining portion of the property has vegetation and is enclosed with a fence. The previous zoning map had the property designated as I-2 Heavy Industrial and the property owner has stated they were not aware of the Unified Development Code or any proposed changes to the zoning map that took place in late 2025.

This property was previously owned by Clark Equipment and has an ongoing due care plan under the Michigan Natural Resources Environmental Protection Act (NREPA). The due care plan is based on the property being in an industrial zoning district. There is a Declaration of Restrictive Covenant from 2007 which restricts the use of the property. An easement was granted in 2001 to allow the construction of the 10' wide pedestrian path.

Table 71-H Industrial Standards require a minimum lot width of 60' and no minimum lot area. The existing parking lot would be considered nonconforming as Table 71-H requires parking to be located 20' behind the minimum 10' building setback or 30'.

Table 71-J Use Matrix allows governmental uses in the I Industrial district. The table only references cultural (library, museum, gallery) as a special use in the I Industrial district.

Standards for Review

Section 71-36 Specific standards for development approvals and within 71-36.B.2 standards for Amendments to text or the zoning map are stated. The Planning Commission needs to review and discuss the standards before a motion is made. Following is the language from Section 71-36.B.2 of the Unified Development Code:

2. Standards. The advisability of amending the text of this chapter or making an amendment to

Memorandum

the zoning map is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the city commission. In determining whether to adopt or disapprove the proposed amendment, the city commission must consider the following factors:

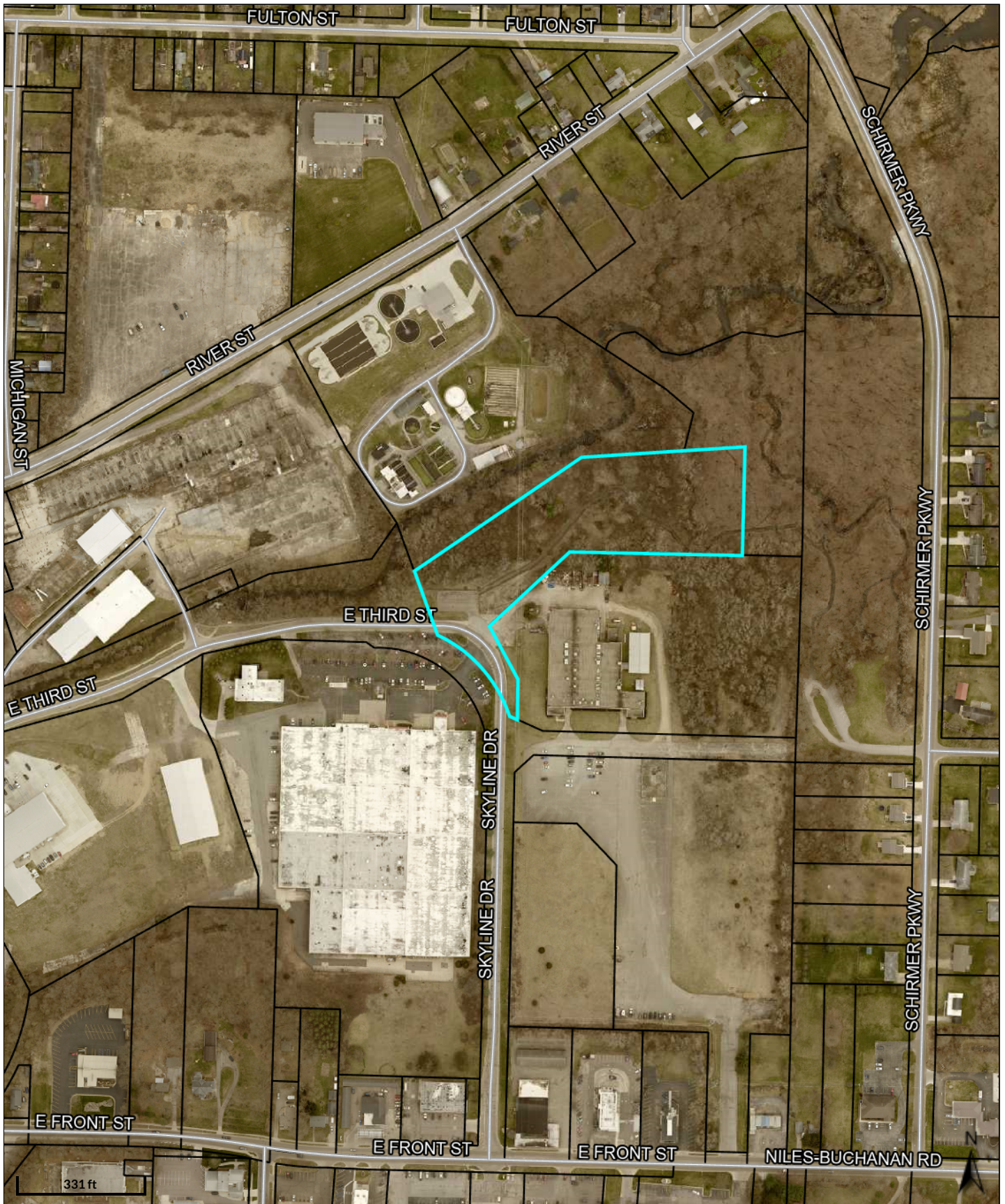
- a. Consistent with master plan and vision plan. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is consistent with the master plan and the vision plan.
- b. Changed conditions. Whether and the extent to which there are changed conditions that require an amendment.
- c. Community need. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment addresses a demonstrated community need.
- d. Compatible with surrounding uses. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the subject land, and is the appropriate zone district for the land, or the proposed amendment to the text of this chapter will maintain or improve compatibility among uses and will ensure efficient development within the City.
- e. Development patterns. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment would result in a logical and orderly development pattern.

Recommendation

Conduct the necessary public hearing for an amendment to zoning map for the property and deliberate the request while reviewing the standards found in Section 71.36.B.2 of the Unified Development Code.

An example motion for approval can be: Move to recommend approval of the map amendment (rezoning) from N Natural District to I Industrial District for the property located at the northeast corner of East Third Street and Skyline Drive or 805 East Third Street based on the application provided in the September 8, 2026 Planning Commission agenda packet as the proposed amendment is consistent with the standards for text or map amendment changes as found in Section 71.36.B.2 of the Unified Development Code.

Location Map - Northeast corner of E. Third Street and Skyline Drive



Zoning Map – Northeast corner of East Third Street and Skyline Drive



Zoning Districts

-  Natural (N)
-  Neighborhood Edge (NE)
-  General Neighborhood (GN)
-  Neighborhood Center (NC)
-  Downtown (D)
-  Suburban Commercial (SC)
-  Industrial (I)
-  Planned Unit Development (PUD)



Photographs – Northeast corner of East Third Street and Skyline Drive



View looking northeast from East Third Street.



View looking northeast from East Third Street.



Map Amendment (Rezoning) Application

Please print legibly. All portions must be completed. Do not leave any section blank, use N/A. Incomplete forms will be returned. If additional space is needed, please use additional sheets of paper.

Property Information

Property Address (es): Northeast corner of E Third and Skyline

Property Code Number(s) (Tax Number): 11-58-0700-0006-02-0

Briefly Explain Request: Map amendment from N Natural to I Industrial -

to allow existing Due Care Plan based on I Industrial district to remain. Returns to previous zoning district prior to UDC adoption in December 2025.

Applicant Information

In case of trust, provide the name, address and telephone numbers of all trustees and beneficiaries of the trust. An LLC or corporation must provide a copy of Articles of Incorporation. In case the applicant is not the property owner, written permission from the property owner is required.

Name of Applicant: City of Bucchanan

Relationship to Property Owner: _____

Mailing Address: 302 N Redbud Trail

City: Bucchanan State: MI Zip Code: 49107

Telephone Number: 269.695.3844 Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Name of Property Owner: Ingersoll Rand Company

Mailing Address: 800 E Beaty St

City: Davidson State: NC Zip Code: 28036

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Attorney: Grant Gilezan

Mailing Address: 777 Woodward Ave Ste 400

City: Detroit State: MI Zip Code: 48226

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: ggilezan@dykema.com

Engineer or Architect: N/A

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Site Information

General description or characteristics of the site: wooded with a ravine and trail running through property from west to east and surface parking lot

Master Plan Designation: Open Space

Existing Zoning and Land Use: N Natural - McCoy Creek Trail and parking

Proposed Zoning and Land Use: I Industrial - McCoy Creek Trail and parking

Existing square footage of property: 4.82-acres or 209,959 square feet

Proposed square footage of Property: 4.82-acres or 209,959 square feet

Existing square footage of all buildings on the property: no buildings

Proposed square footage of all buildings on the property: no buildings

Existing zoning and land uses of adjacent parcels:

North: I Industrial and N Natural, City Wastewater plant and vacant

South: I Industrial, industrial building

East: N Natural, McCoy Creek Trail system

West: I Industrial, McCoy Creek Trail system and industrial building

Is there floodplain or wetlands on the property? Yes: XX No: _____

Map Amendment Standards

If needed use additional sheets of paper to respond to Standards.

Section 71-36.B.2 Standards. The advisability of amending the text of this chapter or making an amendment to the zoning map is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the City Commission. In determining whether to adopt or disapprove d the proposed amendment, the City Commission must consider the following factors:

- a. Consistent with master plan and vision plan. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is consistent with the master plan and the vision plan.
The Master Plan designates the property as Recreational and Land Conservation. The property is improved with the McCoy Creek Trail and small surface parking lot. No changes are proposed to the existing use of the property.
- b. Changed conditions. Whether and the extent to which there are changed conditions that require an amendment.
Prior to the adopted of the Unified Development Code in Dec 2025, this property was located in the I Industrial District. There is an existing Due Care Plan based on the previous zoning of I-2 Heavy Industrial associated with Phase I Audit from 1993 along with recorded restrictive covenants which limits allowable uses.
- c. Community need. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment addresses a demonstrated community need.
To remain compliant with the Due Care Plan, the property must remain in an Industrial zoning district. Representatives of the property owner have stated they were not aware the property was being rezoned as part of the new Unified Development Code and would have addressed the issue at that time.
- d. Compatible with surrounding uses. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the subject land, and is the appropriate zone district for the land, or the proposed amendment to the text of this chapter will maintain or improve compatibility among uses and will ensure efficient development within the City.
The property was previously located in the I-2 Heavy Industrial district along with other owned properties to the south and southwest which are now both located in the I Industrial District. The existing surface parking lot and trail, both associated with the McCoy Creek Trail will remain.
- e. Development Patterns. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment would result in a logical and orderly development pattern.
The use of the property for a trail and surface parking lot will not change. The Due Care Plan based on underlying zoning of I Industrial and the restrictive covenants limits the uses on the property. The existing trail and surface parking are allowed.

MAP AMENDMENT (REZONING) APPLICATION CERTIFICATION

The Applicant certifies and acknowledges and agrees that:

- A. The statements contained in this application are true and correct to the best of the Applicant's knowledge and belief. The owner of the subject property, if different from the applicant, states that they consent to the filing of the application and that all information contained is true and correct to the best of their knowledge;
- B. The Applicant understands that an incomplete or nonconforming application will not be considered. In addition, the Applicant understands that the City may require additional information prior to the consideration of this application;
- C. The Applicant shall make the property that is subject of this application available for inspection by the City at reasonable times;
- D. If any information provided in this application changes or becomes incomplete or inapplicable for any reason following submission of this application, the Applicant shall submit a supplemental application or other acceptable written statement containing the new or corrected information as soon as practicable but not less than ten (10) days following the change, and that failure to do so shall be grounds for denial of the application;
- E. The Applicant understands that if the application is approved with conditions, those conditions will need to be met as part of any permit issued; and
- F. The Applicant understands they are responsible for all application fees. Fees are non-refundable and there is no guarantee the application will be approved or permits issued. There should be no outstanding monies owed to the City (i.e., water bill or taxes).

On the 10th, day of August, 2026, I/We have read the above certification, understand it, and agree to abide by its conditions.

[Signature] City of Buchanan Kristen Gundersen
 Signature of Applicant or Authorized Agent Name of Applicant or Authorized Agent

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN

To before me this 10 day of
Aug, 2026

[Signature]
 Notary Public

KALLA LANGSTON
 NOTARY PUBLIC - STATE OF MICHIGAN
 COUNTY OF BERRIEN
 My Commission Expires June 09, 2032
 Acting in the County of Berrien

MAP AMENDMENT (REZONING) APPLICATION OWNER'S CONSENT FORM

I/We, the Owner(s) of the property listed below, hereby grant permission for the Applicant,
City of Buchanan - Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director
 (Company name and contact person) to seek Map Amendment Request from N Natural to I Industrial
 (state request that can be made) as required by the City of Buchanan, Michigan for the
 property commonly known as irregularly shaped parcel at northeast corner of Third Street and Skyline Drive
 (street address) and having the Property Code Number (Tax Number) of 11-58-0700-0006-02-0

On the 6th, day of August, 2026, I/We have read the above certification, understand it, and agree to abide by its conditions.

Terri Hamill

Signature of Property Owner

Trans Technologies Co LLC Successor
in trust to Ingersol Rand Company

Name of Property Owner

Signature of Property Owner

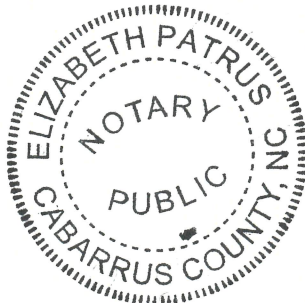
Name of Property Owner

State of North Carolina
County of Mecklenburg
 SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN

To before me this 6th day of
August, 2026

Elizabeth Patrus
 Elizabeth Patrus
 Notary Public

My Commission expires
5/12/2029



Memorandum



Date: August 24, 2026

To: Buchanan Planning Commission

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: **Public Hearing - Consideration of an Amendment - Unified Development Code – Creation of Downtown Design Review Overlay District and standards for review – Amendments to Sections 71-5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12, 71-33.E and 71-34.G and Article V Definitions**

Background

The Unified Development Code was adopted in late 2025 and included language for staff to administratively review and approve requests “downtown applications”. The language did not include any standards for the committee to review, nor did it establish an appeal process.

Review of the previous zoning ordinance that dates back to 2003 found Section 22.07 Planning Commission Review of Façade Plan which stated, “The Planning Commission shall review the building façade plan and make recommendations to the applicant based on façade design and aesthetic standards established by the Downtown Development Authority and approved by resolution of the City Commission.” No standards were found in the zoning ordinance.

In 2007, the Downtown Design Standards established 6 goals with 7 areas of review and had the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation attached. In addition, the City Commission approved changes to Section 11.04 of the zoning ordinance which created the Design Review Committee and process.

The different documents appear to have created confusion on the process and the Unified Development Code from late 2025 did not completely address the concerns. Staff brought several concerns to the Planning Commission which referred to the discussion and drafting of regulations to the Design Review Committee. The Committee also discussed its purpose and understood the need to allow improvements in the downtown area while working to maintain the character of the area and its design elements. The draft changes do not reference historic preservation, rather call out best practice principles for historic downtowns. The discussions also included the creation of a Downtown Design Review Overlay District be created.

The Committee has reviewed and discussed the draft document during their April, May, June and August meetings and recommended to the Planning Commission the changes be reviewed and a public hearing scheduled. The Planning Commission reviewed the document during their August 11, 2026, meeting and directed staff to schedule the necessary public hearing and complete the necessary applications and documents. Following are some of the changes made:

- Established the Downtown Design Review Overlay District and included language addressing the intent of the district.
- Changed the name from Design Review to Downtown Design Review. This will help eliminate confusion of what properties the Committee reviews.

Memorandum

- In keeping with past practice, no public hearing or notice is required for applications under review.
- Established the Planning Commission as the appeal board/commission.
- Provided written purpose statement pertaining to the review of applications, established the review process, along with adopting standards to be used when reviewing applications for both Committee review and administrative reviews.
- Added the definition of the overlay district, similar to the Short-term rental overlay district created earlier this year.

Standards for Review

Section 71-36 Specific standards for development approvals and within 71-36.B.2 standards for Amendments to text or the zoning map are stated. The Planning Commission needs to review and discuss the standards before a motion is made. Following is the language from Section 71-36.B.2 of the Unified Development Code:

2. Standards. The advisability of amending the text of this chapter or making an amendment to the zoning map is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the city commission. In determining whether to adopt or disapprove the proposed amendment, the city commission must consider the following factors:
 - a. Consistent with master plan and vision plan. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is consistent with the master plan and the vision plan.
 - b. Changed conditions. Whether and the extent to which there are changed conditions that require an amendment.
 - c. Community need. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment addresses a demonstrated community need.
 - d. Compatible with surrounding uses. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the subject land, and is the appropriate zone district for the land, or the proposed amendment to the text of this chapter will maintain or improve compatibility among uses and will ensure efficient development within the City.
 - e. Development patterns. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment would result in a logical and orderly development pattern.

Recommendation

Conduct the necessary public hearing for an amendment to the Unified Development Code to create the Downtown Design Review Overlay District and establish regulations, processes and standards for review as found in Sections 71.5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12, 71-33.E and 71.34.G and Article V Definitions and any other sections of the Unified Development Code that may be necessary. Deliberate the request.

Memorandum

An example motion for approval can be: Move to recommend approval of the text amendment to modify and establish regulations pertaining to the creation of the Downtown Design Review Overlay District and review processes and standards in Sections 71.5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12, 71-33.E and 71.34.G and Article V Definitions and any other sections of the Unified Development Code that may be necessary as found in the September 8, 2026 Planning Commission agenda packet as the proposed amendment is consistent with the standards for text or map amendment changes as found in Section 71.36.B.2 of the Unified Development Code.



Text Amendment (Changing Language in Unified Development Code – zoning ordinance) Application

Please print legibly. All portions must be completed. Do not leave any section blank, use N/A. Incomplete forms will be returned. If additional space is needed, please use additional sheets of paper.

Property Information

Applicable Section of Zoning Ordinance that amendment is requested: Sections 71-5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12 establishing the Downtown Overlay District and 71-33.E, 71-34.G and K providing review process

Briefly Explain Request: Creation of a Downtown Design Review Overlay District, review process, standards for review and appeal process

Are there other requests associated with application?: If yes, explain: No, please see attached redline and draft language.

Applicant Information

In case of trust, provide the name, address and telephone numbers of all trustees and beneficiaries of the trust. An LLC or corporation must provide a copy of Articles of Incorporation. In case the applicant is not the property owner, written permission from the property owner is required.

Name of Applicant: City of Buchanan - Kristen Gundersen, Planning/Community Dev. Director

Relationship to Property Owner: staff

Mailing Address: 302 N Redbud Trail

City: Buchanan State: MI Zip Code: 49107

Telephone Number: 269.695.3844 Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com

Attorney: Butzel

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Engineer or Architect: N/A

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Proposed Language Change (please use additional paper if needed)

Existing section and language from Zoning Ordinance: See attached

Proposed new language for the Zoning Ordinance: See attached

Explain how the proposed new language supports the goals and objectives of the adopted Master Plan: The draft changes will help to ensure the development review process is simple, efficient, predictable and easily accessible (4-1) by establishing the Downtown Design Review Overlay District and establishing set processes, standards for review and appeal process. While the proposed overlay district and standards for review do not reference historic preservation, many elements of historic preservation have been incorporated to help educate on the history and architecture of the community while allowing opportunity for new development and redevelopment of existing buildings to happen (2-2 and 10-4).

Text Amendment Standards

If needed use additional sheets of paper to respond to Standards.

Section 71-35.B.2 Standards. The advisability of amending the text of this chapter or making an amendment to the zoning map is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the City Commission. In determining whether to adopt or disapprove d the proposed amendment, the City Commission must consider the following factors:

- a. Consistent with master plan and vision plan. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is consistent with the master plan and the vision plan. Proposed amendments are consistent with 4-1 to ensure the development review process is simple, efficient, predictable and easily accessible. The proposed amendment establishes standards for reviewing applications and eliminates confusion of previously adopted documents.
- b. Changed conditions. Whether and the extent to which there are changed conditions that require an amendment. Several ordinances over time have been adopted relating to design review in the City, however, they were stand alone documents. The proposed amendment will eliminate the need for the stand alone documents and relies on regulations found in the UDC. The draft language has also moved away from historic preservation with the understanding the need to allow appropriate redevelopment.

- c. Community need. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment addresses a demonstrated community need.

The Unified Development Code did not include any standards for the Downtown Design Review Committee to review as part of requests before them. The draft language also incorporates an appeal process before the Planning Commission.

- d. Compatible with surrounding uses. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the subject land, and is the appropriate zone district for the land, or the proposed amendment to the text of this chapter will maintain or improve compatibility among uses and will ensure efficient development within the City.

The proposed text amendment pertains to properties or uses described in the language. It is believed the proposed amendment creates, clear and concise regulations.

- e. Development Patterns. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment would result in a logical and orderly development pattern.

Properties relying on the proposed amendment for improvements to private property will help to maintain a logical and orderly development pattern.

TEXT AMENDMENT APPLICATION CERTIFICATION

The Applicant certifies and acknowledges and agrees that:

- A. The statements contained in this application are true and correct to the best of the Applicant's knowledge and belief. The owner of the subject property, if different from the applicant, states that they consent to the filing of the application and that all information contained is true and correct to the best of their knowledge;
- B. The Applicant understands that an incomplete or nonconforming application will not be considered. In addition, the Applicant understands that the City may require additional information prior to the consideration of this application;
- C. The Applicant shall make the property that is subject of this application available for inspection by the City at reasonable times;
- D. If any information provided in this application changes or becomes incomplete or inapplicable for any reason following submission of this application, the Applicant shall submit a supplemental application or other acceptable written statement containing the new or corrected information as soon as practicable but not less than ten (10) days following the change, and that failure to do so shall be grounds for denial of the application;
- E. The Applicant understands that if the application is approved with conditions, those conditions will need to be met as part of any permit issued; and
- F. The Applicant understands they are responsible for all application fees. Fees are non-refundable and there is no guarantee the application will be approved or permits issued. There should be no outstanding monies owed to the City (i.e., water bill or taxes).

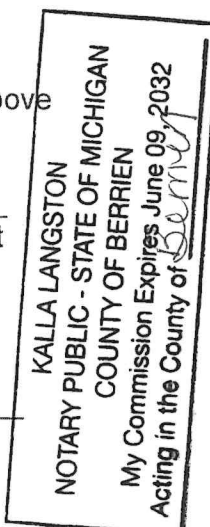
On the 10th, day of August, 2026, I/We have read the above certification, understand it, and agree to abide by its conditions.

[Signature] City of Buchanan Kristen Gundersen
 Signature of Applicant or Authorized Agent Name of Applicant or Authorized Agent

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN

To before me this 10 day of
Aug, 2026

[Signature]
 Notary Public



NOTE: Language to be deleted is shown with strikethrough. New language is shown with highlight. Final formatting will take place in adopting ordinance.

Section 71-36 Specific standards for development approval.

~~H. Downtown applications:~~

~~1. Applicability:~~

~~a. This subsection applies to all proposed exterior work in the D Downtown District subject to the Downtown Design Standards, including new construction, façade alterations, cosmetic upgrades, and signage.~~

~~2. Administrative approvals. The community development director may approve proposed work when all of the following criteria are met:~~

~~a. The work does not involve the addition or removal of architectural features that define the character of the building, including but not limited to cornices, transoms, storefront configurations, or decorative masonry.~~

~~b. The work is consistent with the City of Buchanan Downtown Design Standards, including any applicable design guidance or previously issued staff interpretations.~~

~~c. The work is located on a non-primary façade or is minimally visible from the public right-of-way, unless the proposed materials and design match the existing conditions.~~

~~d. The work is limited to repainting, signage, awning replacement, lighting, window or door replacement of the same size and material, or similar minor treatments.~~

~~e. The proposal does not require interpretation of discretionary design guidance or involve requests for exceptions to adopted standards.~~

~~3. DRC referral. The community development director may refer any application to the DRC when the proposed work is unusual, precedent-setting, or potentially inconsistent with the Downtown Design Standards.~~

~~4. Effect of noncompliance. Proposals determined not to comply with Downtown Design Standards may not proceed until amended to achieve compliance and receive approval from the appropriate review authority.~~

PROPOSED DRAFT LANGUAGE

Sec. 71-5 Zoning districts established

A. Zoning under this chapter is limited to the following district designations.

9. Downtown Design Review Overlay District establishes specific geographic areas where exterior design review by the Downtown Design Review Committee is required

Sec. 71-14 Zoning districts

A. Official zoning map – Figure 71-A (Zoning Map shall have the following language added under “Zoning Districts”)

Overlay District

Downtown Design Review Overlay District – see Sec. 71-16.H.12

Sec. 71-16 General requirements

Section 71-16.H Establishment of zoning districts and regulations

1. through 10 - intentionally left blank (in future Tables 71-C through 71-H will be retitled)

11. Short-Term Rental Overlay District (STROD)

12. Downtown Design Review Overlay District (DDROD)

a. Intent. The Downtown Design Review Overlay District is established and applies to the area shown on the map in Section 71-16.H.12.c. The intent of the Downtown Design Review Overlay District is:

i. Preserve and promote the historic and architectural qualities of the downtown and thereby preserve the distinctive character of the City. The downtown business district has special historical, cultural, and design significance and contains historic or unique sites deserving protection. The preservation and appropriate development of these sites require rules and regulations specifically addressing these distinctive characteristics.

ii. To effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of improvements and areas of special character or special historic and aesthetic interest or value which represent or reflect elements of the City’s cultural, social, economic, and architectural history or distinction.

iii. To maintain the local, "small town" atmosphere of and the downtown business area within the City.

iv. To insure compatibility of new development with the existing characteristics of the area.

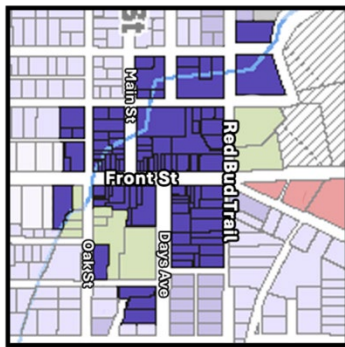
v. To protect sensitive areas of transition from one land use to another.

vi. To protect and enhance the downtowns attractiveness to visitors and the support and stimulus to local business provided thereby.

vii. To strengthen the economy and promote improvements in the City.

viii. To promote the use of areas within the Downtown Design Review Overlay District for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the residents of the City.

b. Downtown Design Review Areas. The Downtown Design Review Overlay District will consist of all properties located in the D Downtown District and those properties located in the N Natural District located between Days Avenue and South Oak Street between East Roe and East Front Streets in addition to parcels abutting the west side of South Oak Street between Charles Court and West Front Street and land located between East Front Street and south of unimproved East Dewey Street and east of North Redbud Trail.



 Natural (N)

 Downtown (D)

c. Applicability, Exception

i. The placement of allowed non-permanent items such as sandwich board signage, outdoor seating, planter boxes and other similar items in accordance with adopted regulations and policies shall be excluded from the Downtown Design Review Overlay District standards of review as found in ____.

Sec. 71-33 Review and decision making bodies.

E. Downtown Design Review Committee

1. Powers and duties. The Downtown Design Review Committee has the following powers and duties under this chapter:

a. Downtown Design Review Overlay District. To review, hear, consider and approve, approve with conditions or disapprove applications .

b. Appeals to administrative decisions. To hear, review, consider and affirm, modify, or review decisions of the Zoning Administrator as allowed under Sec ____.

2. Appeals. An appeal of a decision by the Downtown Design Review Committee must be filed with the City of Buchanan Planning Commission in writing within 60 days after the decision is made or within 21 days after the Downtown Design Review Committee approves the meeting minutes, whichever comes first.

Sec. 71-34 General provisions.

G. Timing of notice. Unless otherwise provided in the Michigan statutes and laws or this chapter, notice will be provided as shown in [Table 71-U](#).

TABLE 71-U NOTICE TIMING		
Application	Notice Required	
	Written	Published
Text amendment	None	Planning Commission: Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing. City Commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing.
Zoning map amendment	Planning Commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing. City Commission: reasonable time prior to public hearing	Planning Commission: Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing. City Commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing.
Special use permits	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing.	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Variance	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Appeal	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Downtown Design Review Overlay District	None	None

K. Review of applications by decision-making bodies.

4. Downtown Design Review Overlay District. After submission of an Application for Downtown Design Review, the Downtown Design Review Committee will hear comments on the application during a public meeting. -The Downtown Design Review Committee will either approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the application based on actual conditions and the relevant review standards.

Sec. 71-36 Specific standards for development approval.

A. General. Table 71-V summarizes the development review procedures for all types of applications.

TABLE 71-V DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES						
Procedure	Authority					Notices
	Staff	PC	ZBA	CC	DRC	
Text amendments	R	[R]		[DM]		N
Zoning map amendment	R	[R]		[DM]		W, N
Special use permit	R	[DM]				W, N
Variance	R		[DM]			W
Appeals of administrative decision			[DM]			W
Administrative adjustments	DM		[A]			
Site plan review	DM					
Sign permit	DM		[A]			
Temporary use permit	DM		[A]			
Certificate of zoning compliance	DM					
<u>Downtown</u> design review	DM	A			DM	
Interpretations	DM		[A]			

TABLE 71-V DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES						
Procedure	Authority					Notices
	Staff	PC	ZBA	CC	DRC	
Key						
Planning Commission		PC				
Zoning Board of Appeals		ZBA				
City Commission		CC				
Downtown Design Review Committee		DRC				
Review & Recommendations		R				
Decision Making Body		DM				
Appellate Body		A				
Public Hearing Required		[]				
Published Notice		N				
Written Notice		W				

H. Downtown design review.

4. Purpose. Downtown design review is required for properties located within the Downtown Design Review Overlay District as established in Sec. 71-16.H.12.a. and applies to all proposed exterior work in the Downtown Design Review Overlay District associated with exterior alterations to existing buildings related but not limited to windows, doors, awnings, signage, lighting; changes to the façade such as new siding or paint; and new construction.
2. Approval Process Options. No building or sign permit may be issued for work on the exterior of a building located within the Downtown Design Review Overlay District

until either an Administrative approval has been issued by the zoning administrator, or the Downtown Design Review Committee has approved the request.

a. Administrative approvals. The Zoning Administrator along with the City Manager considers and may approve, approve with condition or disapprove downtown design review applications for proposed work when all of the following criteria are met:

- i. The work does not involve the addition, removal, or covering of architectural features that define the character of the building, including but not limited to cornices, transoms, storefront configurations, or decorative masonry.
- ii. The work is limited to repainting, signage replacement, awning replacement, lighting, window or door replacement with units of the identical size, material, and construction, or similar minor treatments.
- iii. The repair or replacement of a roof surface when not visible from the street and retaining the original roof design.
- iv. The proposal does not require interpretation of discretionary design guidance or involve requests for exceptions to adopted standards.
- v. The Zoning Administrator or City Manager may choose not to review a request and instead send it to the Downtown Design Review Committee for action.

b. Downtown Design Review Committee approvals. The Downtown Design Review Committee is authorized to review and approve, approve with conditions or disapprove an application for modifications or new construction for properties located in the Downtown Design Review Overlay District in accordance with Objectives and Standards found in Sec. 71-36.c.____

4. Objectives and Standards

The Downtown Design Review Committee shall review the following Objectives and Standards when reviewing applications for exterior work within the Downtown Design Review Overlay District.

a. Building character, context and mass

- i. Objective. Each new development or exterior renovation should relate and contribute towards a positive image in terms of architectural style and details, placement, shape, scale, character, and materials, as well as relationship to adjacent buildings.
- ii. Standard: New development must maintain setbacks, and should maintain building proportions, roof and cornice lines, façade divisions, rhythm and proportions of openings, building materials, and colors that are consistent with or similar to surrounding commercial buildings, where present, and shall adhere to the established regulations found within this code pertaining to bulk standards and façade type requirements.

b. Architectural Style.

- i. Objective. To ensure general consistency with historic architectural styles found in downtown Buchanan.
- ii. Standard. For new construction, historic architectural styles need not be replicated. The contemporary adaptation of elements of historic commercial architectural styles found in downtown Buchanan is encouraged. Elements should be based upon, and consistent with, an architectural inventory of the existing downtown district. Elements of multiple architectural styles should not, however, be mixed in a single building. For renovations of or additions to existing buildings, the architectural style of the existing building will inform the design of the new work, which will be consistent and harmonious with the existing building.

c. Roof Treatment.

- i. Objective. Roof forms should provide visual interest that is consistent with the roof forms of adjacent buildings.
- ii. Standard. Flat roofs and low-pitch (no more than 2:12) roofs are the most common traditional downtown roof form and should be used on all new buildings. Detailed cornices or parapets are encouraged to emphasize the roofline and conceal the roof.

d. Corner Buildings.

- i. Objective. To emphasize the importance of corner locations for pedestrian circulation and visibility.

- ii. Standard. New buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and both public streets. Both street-facing facades should be built up to the established building façade line on each block. Corner entrances may be desirable but are not required. However, both street-facing facades should maintain similar articulation, detailing, and rhythm of window openings.
- iii. Existing buildings on corner lots should maintain or create orientation on both public streets.

e. Building Widths and Facades

- i. Objective. To reflect typical existing building widths found in the downtown and to avoid long building facades with a monolithic or monotonous appearance.
- ii. Standard. Buildings of more than 40 feet in width shall be divided into smaller increments (between 20 and 40 feet each) through articulation of the facade. This can be achieved through combinations of the following techniques and others that may meet the objective, as long as they all conform to a single architectural style: stepping back or extending forward a portion of the façade; using different textures or materials drawn from a common palette; dividing the storefronts with separate display windows and entrances; varying the rooflines by alternating parapets, stepped roofs, or other roof elements; using arcades, awnings, window bays, arched windows, and balconies as focal points or defining elements.

f. Materials – All elevations and roof

- i. Objective. To ensure that high-quality, durable and authentic materials typical of Buchanan's traditional downtown continue to be used.
- ii. Standard:

Primary materials: New buildings should be constructed of high-quality materials, including but not limited to the following: brick, natural stone, precast concrete units and decorative concrete block (provided that surfaces are molded, serrated or textured giving the wall surface a three-dimensional character), stucco, jumbo brick (which may be used on up to 30 percent of any façade, provided that it is used only on the lower third of the building wall), EIFS (exterior insulating finish system, which may be used as an accent but not a primary material), architectural metalwork.
- ii. The following materials are prohibited: unadorned plain or painted concrete block, tilt-up concrete panels, reflective or darkly tinted glass, or pole buildings.

- iii. Accent materials may be used on up to 15 percent of the building's façade. These may include metal, glass, block, painted wood panels, spandrel glass or similar materials as approved by the Downtown Design Review Committee (DDRC).
- iv. Existing buildings should be rehabilitated using original materials to the extent feasible. If original features or materials cannot be restored or replicated, the primary materials listed above may be used.
- v. Roofs, generally flat or low pitch (2:12 or less). Asphalt shingles and asphalt roll roofing are prohibited on flat or low-pitch roofs. New roofing material may not be terminated on the fascia or the wall below the roof, that is, the existing fascia must be retained or replaced in kind and may not be covered by the roofing material.

g. Architectural Details.

- i. Objective. Incorporate architectural details to serve as identifiable and visually interesting enhancements to building facades and help to establish a pedestrian supportive environment.
- ii. Standard. Architectural design shall be sensitive to the massing and proportion of adjacent structures, and reflect or complement the detailing of surrounding buildings, with elements such as lintels, cornice lines, balconies and decorative brick or stonework. Exterior lighting, awnings and signage shall be installed without damaging the building or visually impairing distinctive architectural features. Fasteners will be placed in mortar joints and not into masonry units.

h. Openings in Front

- i. Objective. To establish the visual importance of the primary street entrance, and to ensure those entries contribute to the visual attractiveness of the building and are readily visible to the customer.
- ii. Standard. The main entrance should always face the primary street, with secondary entrances to the side or rear. Entries to corner-oriented buildings may face the corner rather than either primary street. The main entrance of commercial, office and mixed-use facilities should be placed at sidewalk grade to facilitate ease of access.

i. Windows and Doors

- i. Objective. Preservation of the historic character of the building and downtown.
- ii. Standard. Historic windows and doors should be rehabilitated or repaired if possible. Replacement of historical windows or doors will either replicate or simulate the appearance of the historical unit.

- iii. The removal of existing doors and windows and replacement by a solid wall is typically not allowed unless the applicant can provide detailed information regarding why the removal is necessary.
- iv. Original or historic windows and doors should be rehabilitated or repaired whenever possible. Options for dual glazing (storm panels) is the preferred method to improve energy efficiency. When rehabilitation or repair is not possible, replacement is allowed.

Door and window openings shall not decrease in size. When it is proposed to increase the size of an existing opening or create a new opening, clear and detailed information must be provided in the application. Care must be given not to damage or remove any existing architectural elements.

When original or historic doors are to be replaced, the new units must be of a similar style, have the same number and placement of panels, lights, etc., and have similar molding profiles. Historic pattern or decorative glass (glue-chip, etched, beveled, etc.) must be replaced with identical materials. When non-historic doors are to be replaced, the new doors should be of a style appropriate to the architectural style of the building.

When original or historic windows are to be replaced, the new units must be of a similar style (i.e. double-hung, casement, fixed, etc.), have the same number and placement of lights (i.e. 6 over 6, 3 over 1, etc.), and have similar muntin widths (with no more than 1/8" variation from the original). Historic pattern or decorative glass (prism, reeded, glue-chip, etched, beveled, etc.) must be replaced with identical materials. If the window sash are not true divided light, grilles simulating muntin's must be permanently installed on both the inner and outer sides of the glass.

When non-historic windows are to be replaced, the new windows should be of a style appropriate to the architectural style of the building and should otherwise follow the standards for replacement of historic windows above.

Triple-track storm units are not allowed.

j. Color and Use of Paint.

- i. Objective. To ensure that building colors are aesthetically pleasing and compatible with surrounding buildings.
- ii. Standard. Principal building colors shall consist of subtle, neutral or muted colors, with low reflectance. Allowed colors include browns, grays, tans, beiges, and muted greens, blues and reds. No more than two principal colors may be used on a façade or storefront. Bright, white, or primary colors shall be used only as accents, occupying a maximum of 15 percent of a building's facades. This standard does not apply to murals or other works of public art.

iii. Buildings that currently have painted masonry may change paint color as stated above.

iv. Painting masonry surfaces is strongly discouraged as it cannot be easily removed without damaging the masonry, often creates conditions that lead to the accelerated deterioration of the masonry, and turns a maintenance-free surface into a maintenance-required surface. Any application to paint an unpainted masonry building must include clear, detailed, and persuasive reasons as to why painting the masonry is necessary. Simple aesthetic preference is not a sufficient reason.

v. Removing the paint from historically painted masonry surfaces is also strongly discouraged. Any application to remove paint in such situations must clearly demonstrate why the removal of the paint is necessary, what methods and materials are to be used in the removal, the plan for repairing or replacing deterioration which is revealed, and the planned material to be used to treat or finish the newly exposed brick.

k. Mechanical Equipment and Service Areas.

i. Objective. To ensure that views of rooftop equipment and services areas from public streets or pedestrian ways are minimized.

ii. Standard. All rooftop equipment shall be screened from view six feet above by an adult standing at ground level on adjacent streets, public rights-of-way, or properties. Preferably, rooftop equipment should be screened by the building parapet or located out of view from the ground. If this is not feasible, the equipment shall be grouped within a single enclosure. This structure shall be set back a distance of 1 ½ times its height from any façade fronting a public street. Screens shall be of durable, permanent materials (including wood) that are compatible with the primary building materials.

If ground mounted outdoor mechanical units or storage, service, or loading areas face adjacent residential uses or are visible from a public street, alley or walkway, they shall be screened from view by masonry walls or plant material. Screen walls shall be architecturally compatible with the primary structure. Loading docks and loading doors shall be located to the side or rear of the building.

5. Appeal process.

a. A decision by the Zoning Administrator may be appealed to the Downtown Design Review Committee. The applicant shall submit a complete application for such request to the Downtown Design Review Committee on such forms provided by the City for that purpose and subject to the fees set by the City Commission prior

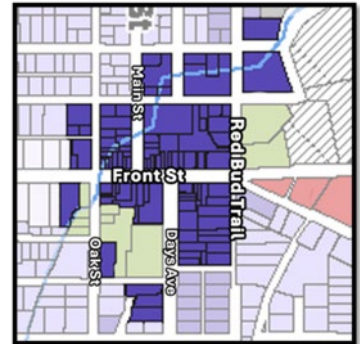
to the posted submittal deadline prior to the next regularly scheduled Downtown Design Review Committee meeting.

- b. Appeals of a decision of the Downtown Design Review Committee shall be made to the Planning Commission on such forms provided by the City for that purpose and subject to such fees set by the City Commission and within 60 days after the decision or within 21 days after the Downtown Design Review Committee approves the meeting minutes, whichever comes first.
- c. A building permit shall not be issued for proposed exterior work unless the Downtown Design Review Application has been approved or approved with conditions. An occupancy permit will not be issued until the Zoning Administrator has inspected the work and finds it is in compliance with the plans approved by the Zoning Administrator or the Downtown Design Review Committee.

Article V. DEFINITIONS

Overlay District:

Downtown Design Review Areas. The Downtown Design Review Overlay District will consist of all properties located in the D Downtown District and those properties located in the N Natural District located between Days Avenue and South Oak Street between East Roe and East Front Streets in addition to parcels abutting the west side of South Oak Street between Charles Court and West Front Street and land located between East Front Street and south of unimproved East Dewey Street and east of North Redbud Trail.



Final draft 08222026 PC changes

Memorandum



Date: August 24, 2026

To: Buchanan Planning Commission

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: **Public Hearing - Consideration of an Amendment - Unified Development Code – Creation of Downtown Design Review Overlay District and standards for review – Amendments to Sections 71-5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12, 71-33.E and 71-34.G and Article V Definitions**

Background

The Unified Development Code was adopted in late 2025 and included language for staff to administratively review and approve requests “downtown applications”. The language did not include any standards for the committee to review, nor did it establish an appeal process.

Review of the previous zoning ordinance that dates back to 2003 found Section 22.07 Planning Commission Review of Façade Plan which stated, “The Planning Commission shall review the building façade plan and make recommendations to the applicant based on façade design and aesthetic standards established by the Downtown Development Authority and approved by resolution of the City Commission.” No standards were found in the zoning ordinance.

In 2007, the Downtown Design Standards established 6 goals with 7 areas of review and had the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation attached. In addition, the City Commission approved changes to Section 11.04 of the zoning ordinance which created the Design Review Committee and process.

The different documents appear to have created confusion on the process and the Unified Development Code from late 2025 did not completely address the concerns. Staff brought several concerns to the Planning Commission which referred to the discussion and drafting of regulations to the Design Review Committee. The Committee also discussed its purpose and understood the need to allow improvements in the downtown area while working to maintain the character of the area and its design elements. The draft changes do not reference historic preservation, rather call out best practice principles for historic downtowns. The discussions also included the creation of a Downtown Design Review Overlay District be created.

The Committee has reviewed and discussed the draft document during their April, May, June and August meetings and recommended to the Planning Commission the changes be reviewed and a public hearing scheduled. The Planning Commission reviewed the document during their August 11, 2026, meeting and directed staff to schedule the necessary public hearing and complete the necessary applications and documents. Following are some of the changes made:

- Established the Downtown Design Review Overlay District and included language addressing the intent of the district.
- Changed the name from Design Review to Downtown Design Review. This will help eliminate confusion of what properties the Committee reviews.

Memorandum

- In keeping with past practice, no public hearing or notice is required for applications under review.
- Established the Planning Commission as the appeal board/commission.
- Provided written purpose statement pertaining to the review of applications, established the review process, along with adopting standards to be used when reviewing applications for both Committee review and administrative reviews.
- Added the definition of the overlay district, similar to the Short-term rental overlay district created earlier this year.

Standards for Review

Section 71-36 Specific standards for development approvals and within 71-36.B.2 standards for Amendments to text or the zoning map are stated. The Planning Commission needs to review and discuss the standards before a motion is made. Following is the language from Section 71-36.B.2 of the Unified Development Code:

2. Standards. The advisability of amending the text of this chapter or making an amendment to the zoning map is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the city commission. In determining whether to adopt or disapprove the proposed amendment, the city commission must consider the following factors:
 - a. Consistent with master plan and vision plan. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is consistent with the master plan and the vision plan.
 - b. Changed conditions. Whether and the extent to which there are changed conditions that require an amendment.
 - c. Community need. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment addresses a demonstrated community need.
 - d. Compatible with surrounding uses. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the subject land, and is the appropriate zone district for the land, or the proposed amendment to the text of this chapter will maintain or improve compatibility among uses and will ensure efficient development within the City.
 - e. Development patterns. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment would result in a logical and orderly development pattern.

Recommendation

Conduct the necessary public hearing for an amendment to the Unified Development Code to create the Downtown Design Review Overlay District and establish regulations, processes and standards for review as found in Sections 71.5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12, 71-33.E and 71.34.G and Article V Definitions and any other sections of the Unified Development Code that may be necessary. Deliberate the request.

Memorandum

An example motion for approval can be: Move to recommend approval of the text amendment to modify and establish regulations pertaining to the creation of the Downtown Design Review Overlay District and review processes and standards in Sections 71.5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12, 71-33.E and 71.34.G and Article V Definitions and any other sections of the Unified Development Code that may be necessary as found in the September 8, 2026 Planning Commission agenda packet as the proposed amendment is consistent with the standards for text or map amendment changes as found in Section 71.36.B.2 of the Unified Development Code.



Text Amendment (Changing Language in Unified Development Code – zoning ordinance) Application

Please print legibly. All portions must be completed. Do not leave any section blank, use N/A. Incomplete forms will be returned. If additional space is needed, please use additional sheets of paper.

Property Information

Applicable Section of Zoning Ordinance that amendment is requested: Sections 71-5.A, 71-14.A, 71-16.H.12 establishing the Downtown Overlay District and 71-33.E, 71-34.G and K providing review process

Briefly Explain Request: Creation of a Downtown Design Review Overlay District, review process, standards for review and appeal process

Are there other requests associated with application?: If yes, explain: No, please see attached redline and draft language.

Applicant Information

In case of trust, provide the name, address and telephone numbers of all trustees and beneficiaries of the trust. An LLC or corporation must provide a copy of Articles of Incorporation. In case the applicant is not the property owner, written permission from the property owner is required.

Name of Applicant: City of Buchanan - Kristen Gundersen, Planning/Community Dev. Director

Relationship to Property Owner: staff

Mailing Address: 302 N Redbud Trail

City: Buchanan State: MI Zip Code: 49107

Telephone Number: 269.695.3844 Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com

Attorney: Butzel

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Engineer or Architect: N/A

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Proposed Language Change (please use additional paper if needed)

Existing section and language from Zoning Ordinance: See attached

Proposed new language for the Zoning Ordinance: See attached

Explain how the proposed new language supports the goals and objectives of the adopted Master Plan: The draft changes will help to ensure the development review process is simple, efficient, predictable and easily accessible (4-1) by establishing the Downtown Design Review Overlay District and establishing set processes, standards for review and appeal process. While the proposed overlay district and standards for review do not reference historic preservation, many elements of historic preservation have been incorporated to help educate on the history and architecture of the community while allowing opportunity for new development and redevelopment of existing buildings to happen (2-2 and 10-4).

Text Amendment Standards

If needed use additional sheets of paper to respond to Standards.

Section 71-35.B.2 Standards. The advisability of amending the text of this chapter or making an amendment to the zoning map is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the City Commission. In determining whether to adopt or disapprove d the proposed amendment, the City Commission must consider the following factors:

- a. Consistent with master plan and vision plan. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is consistent with the master plan and the vision plan. Proposed amendments are consistent with 4-1 to ensure the development review process is simple, efficient, predictable and easily accessible. The proposed amendment establishes standards for reviewing applications and eliminates confusion of previously adopted documents.
- b. Changed conditions. Whether and the extent to which there are changed conditions that require an amendment. Several ordinances over time have been adopted relating to design review in the City, however, they were stand alone documents. The proposed amendment will eliminate the need for the stand alone documents and relies on regulations found in the UDC. The draft language has also moved away from historic preservation with the understanding the need to allow appropriate redevelopment.

- c. Community need. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment addresses a demonstrated community need.

The Unified Development Code did not include any standards for the Downtown Design Review Committee to review as part of requests before them. The draft language also incorporates an appeal process before the Planning Commission.

- d. Compatible with surrounding uses. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the subject land, and is the appropriate zone district for the land, or the proposed amendment to the text of this chapter will maintain or improve compatibility among uses and will ensure efficient development within the City.

The proposed text amendment pertains to properties or uses described in the language. It is believed the proposed amendment creates, clear and concise regulations.

- e. Development Patterns. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment would result in a logical and orderly development pattern.

Properties relying on the proposed amendment for improvements to private property will help to maintain a logical and orderly development pattern.

TEXT AMENDMENT APPLICATION CERTIFICATION

The Applicant certifies and acknowledges and agrees that:

- A. The statements contained in this application are true and correct to the best of the Applicant's knowledge and belief. The owner of the subject property, if different from the applicant, states that they consent to the filing of the application and that all information contained is true and correct to the best of their knowledge;
- B. The Applicant understands that an incomplete or nonconforming application will not be considered. In addition, the Applicant understands that the City may require additional information prior to the consideration of this application;
- C. The Applicant shall make the property that is subject of this application available for inspection by the City at reasonable times;
- D. If any information provided in this application changes or becomes incomplete or inapplicable for any reason following submission of this application, the Applicant shall submit a supplemental application or other acceptable written statement containing the new or corrected information as soon as practicable but not less than ten (10) days following the change, and that failure to do so shall be grounds for denial of the application;
- E. The Applicant understands that if the application is approved with conditions, those conditions will need to be met as part of any permit issued; and
- F. The Applicant understands they are responsible for all application fees. Fees are non-refundable and there is no guarantee the application will be approved or permits issued. There should be no outstanding monies owed to the City (i.e., water bill or taxes).

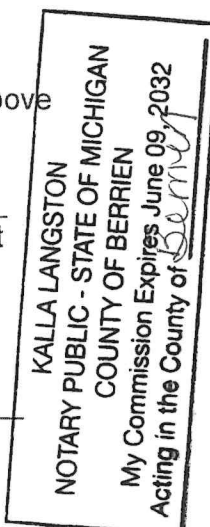
On the 10th, day of August, 2026, I/We have read the above certification, understand it, and agree to abide by its conditions.

[Signature] City of Buchanan Kristen Gundersen
 Signature of Applicant or Authorized Agent Name of Applicant or Authorized Agent

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN

To before me this 10 day of
Aug, 2026

[Signature]
 Notary Public



NOTE: Language to be deleted is shown with strikethrough. New language is shown with highlight. Final formatting will take place in adopting ordinance.

Section 71-36 Specific standards for development approval.

~~H. Downtown applications:~~

~~1. Applicability:~~

~~a. This subsection applies to all proposed exterior work in the D Downtown District subject to the Downtown Design Standards, including new construction, façade alterations, cosmetic upgrades, and signage.~~

~~2. Administrative approvals. The community development director may approve proposed work when all of the following criteria are met:~~

~~a. The work does not involve the addition or removal of architectural features that define the character of the building, including but not limited to cornices, transoms, storefront configurations, or decorative masonry.~~

~~b. The work is consistent with the City of Buchanan Downtown Design Standards, including any applicable design guidance or previously issued staff interpretations.~~

~~c. The work is located on a non-primary façade or is minimally visible from the public right-of-way, unless the proposed materials and design match the existing conditions.~~

~~d. The work is limited to repainting, signage, awning replacement, lighting, window or door replacement of the same size and material, or similar minor treatments.~~

~~e. The proposal does not require interpretation of discretionary design guidance or involve requests for exceptions to adopted standards.~~

~~3. DRC referral. The community development director may refer any application to the DRC when the proposed work is unusual, precedent-setting, or potentially inconsistent with the Downtown Design Standards.~~

~~4. Effect of noncompliance. Proposals determined not to comply with Downtown Design Standards may not proceed until amended to achieve compliance and receive approval from the appropriate review authority.~~

PROPOSED DRAFT LANGUAGE

Sec. 71-5 Zoning districts established

A. Zoning under this chapter is limited to the following district designations.

9. Downtown Design Review Overlay District establishes specific geographic areas where exterior design review by the Downtown Design Review Committee is required

Sec. 71-14 Zoning districts

A. Official zoning map – Figure 71-A (Zoning Map shall have the following language added under “Zoning Districts”)

Overlay District

Downtown Design Review Overlay District – see Sec. 71-16.H.12

Sec. 71-16 General requirements

Section 71-16.H Establishment of zoning districts and regulations

1. through 10 - intentionally left blank (in future Tables 71-C through 71-H will be retitled)

11. Short-Term Rental Overlay District (STROD)

12. Downtown Design Review Overlay District (DDROD)

a. Intent. The Downtown Design Review Overlay District is established and applies to the area shown on the map in Section 71-16.H.12.c. The intent of the Downtown Design Review Overlay District is:

i. Preserve and promote the historic and architectural qualities of the downtown and thereby preserve the distinctive character of the City. The downtown business district has special historical, cultural, and design significance and contains historic or unique sites deserving protection. The preservation and appropriate development of these sites require rules and regulations specifically addressing these distinctive characteristics.

ii. To effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of improvements and areas of special character or special historic and aesthetic interest or value which represent or reflect elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, and architectural history or distinction.

iii. To maintain the local, "small town" atmosphere of and the downtown business area within the City.

iv. To insure compatibility of new development with the existing characteristics of the area.

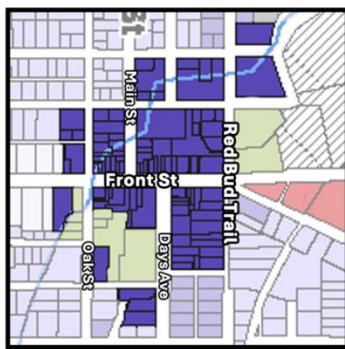
v. To protect sensitive areas of transition from one land use to another.

vi. To protect and enhance the downtowns attractiveness to visitors and the support and stimulus to local business provided thereby.

vii. To strengthen the economy and promote improvements in the City.

viii. To promote the use of areas within the Downtown Design Review Overlay District for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the residents of the City.

b. Downtown Design Review Areas. The Downtown Design Review Overlay District will consist of all properties located in the D Downtown District and those properties located in the N Natural District located between Days Avenue and South Oak Street between East Roe and East Front Streets in addition to parcels abutting the west side of South Oak Street between Charles Court and West Front Street and land located between East Front Street and south of unimproved East Dewey Street and east of North Redbud Trail.



 Natural (N)
 Downtown (D)

c. Applicability, Exception

i. The placement of allowed non-permanent items such as sandwich board signage, outdoor seating, planter boxes and other similar items in accordance with adopted regulations and policies shall be excluded from the Downtown Design Review Overlay District standards of review as found in ____.

Sec. 71-33 Review and decision making bodies.

E. Downtown Design Review Committee

1. Powers and duties. The Downtown Design Review Committee has the following powers and duties under this chapter:

a. Downtown Design Review Overlay District. To review, hear, consider and approve, approve with conditions or disapprove applications .

b. Appeals to administrative decisions. To hear, review, consider and affirm, modify, or review decisions of the Zoning Administrator as allowed under Sec ____.

2. Appeals. An appeal of a decision by the Downtown Design Review Committee must be filed with the City of Buchanan Planning Commission in writing within 60 days after the decision is made or within 21 days after the Downtown Design Review Committee approves the meeting minutes, whichever comes first.

Sec. 71-34 General provisions.

G. Timing of notice. Unless otherwise provided in the Michigan statutes and laws or this chapter, notice will be provided as shown in [Table 71-U](#).

TABLE 71-U NOTICE TIMING		
Application	Notice Required	
	Written	Published
Text amendment	None	Planning Commission: Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing. City Commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing.
Zoning map amendment	Planning Commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing. City Commission: reasonable time prior to public hearing	Planning Commission: Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing. City Commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing.
Special use permits	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing.	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Variance	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Appeal	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Downtown Design Review Overlay District	None	None

K. Review of applications by decision-making bodies.

4. Downtown Design Review Overlay District. After submission of an Application for Downtown Design Review, the Downtown Design Review Committee will hear comments on the application during a public meeting. -The Downtown Design Review Committee will either approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the application based on actual conditions and the relevant review standards.

Sec. 71-36 Specific standards for development approval.

A. General. Table 71-V summarizes the development review procedures for all types of applications.

TABLE 71-V DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES						
Procedure	Authority					Notices
	Staff	PC	ZBA	CC	DRC	
Text amendments	R	[R]		[DM]		N
Zoning map amendment	R	[R]		[DM]		W, N
Special use permit	R	[DM]				W, N
Variance	R		[DM]			W
Appeals of administrative decision			[DM]			W
Administrative adjustments	DM		[A]			
Site plan review	DM					
Sign permit	DM		[A]			
Temporary use permit	DM		[A]			
Certificate of zoning compliance	DM					
<u>Downtown</u> design review	DM	A			DM	
Interpretations	DM		[A]			

TABLE 71-V DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES						
Procedure	Authority					Notices
	Staff	PC	ZBA	CC	DRC	
Key						
Planning Commission		PC				
Zoning Board of Appeals		ZBA				
City Commission		CC				
Downtown Design Review Committee		DRC				
Review & Recommendations		R				
Decision Making Body		DM				
Appellate Body		A				
Public Hearing Required		[]				
Published Notice		N				
Written Notice		W				

H. Downtown design review.

4. Purpose. Downtown design review is required for properties located within the Downtown Design Review Overlay District as established in Sec. 71-16.H.12.a. and applies to all proposed exterior work in the Downtown Design Review Overlay District associated with exterior alterations to existing buildings related but not limited to windows, doors, awnings, signage, lighting; changes to the façade such as new siding or paint; and new construction.
2. Approval Process Options. No building or sign permit may be issued for work on the exterior of a building located within the Downtown Design Review Overlay District

until either an Administrative approval has been issued by the zoning administrator, or the Downtown Design Review Committee has approved the request.

a. Administrative approvals. The Zoning Administrator along with the City Manager considers and may approve, approve with condition or disapprove downtown design review applications for proposed work when all of the following criteria are met:

- i. The work does not involve the addition, removal, or covering of architectural features that define the character of the building, including but not limited to cornices, transoms, storefront configurations, or decorative masonry.
- ii. The work is limited to repainting, signage replacement, awning replacement, lighting, window or door replacement with units of the identical size, material, and construction, or similar minor treatments.
- iii. The repair or replacement of a roof surface when not visible from the street and retaining the original roof design.
- iv. The proposal does not require interpretation of discretionary design guidance or involve requests for exceptions to adopted standards.
- v. The Zoning Administrator or City Manager may choose not to review a request and instead send it to the Downtown Design Review Committee for action.

b. Downtown Design Review Committee approvals. The Downtown Design Review Committee is authorized to review and approve, approve with conditions or disapprove an application for modifications or new construction for properties located in the Downtown Design Review Overlay District in accordance with Objectives and Standards found in Sec. 71-36.c.____

4. Objectives and Standards

The Downtown Design Review Committee shall review the following Objectives and Standards when reviewing applications for exterior work within the Downtown Design Review Overlay District.

a. Building character, context and mass

- i. Objective. Each new development or exterior renovation should relate and contribute towards a positive image in terms of architectural style and details, placement, shape, scale, character, and materials, as well as relationship to adjacent buildings.
- ii. Standard: New development must maintain setbacks, and should maintain building proportions, roof and cornice lines, façade divisions, rhythm and proportions of openings, building materials, and colors that are consistent with or similar to surrounding commercial buildings, where present, and shall adhere to the established regulations found within this code pertaining to bulk standards and façade type requirements.

b. Architectural Style.

- i. Objective. To ensure general consistency with historic architectural styles found in downtown Buchanan.
- ii. Standard. For new construction, historic architectural styles need not be replicated. The contemporary adaptation of elements of historic commercial architectural styles found in downtown Buchanan is encouraged. Elements should be based upon, and consistent with, an architectural inventory of the existing downtown district. Elements of multiple architectural styles should not, however, be mixed in a single building. For renovations of or additions to existing buildings, the architectural style of the existing building will inform the design of the new work, which will be consistent and harmonious with the existing building.

c. Roof Treatment.

- i. Objective. Roof forms should provide visual interest that is consistent with the roof forms of adjacent buildings.
- ii. Standard. Flat roofs and low-pitch (no more than 2:12) roofs are the most common traditional downtown roof form and should be used on all new buildings. Detailed cornices or parapets are encouraged to emphasize the roofline and conceal the roof.

d. Corner Buildings.

- i. Objective. To emphasize the importance of corner locations for pedestrian circulation and visibility.

- ii. Standard. New buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and both public streets. Both street-facing facades should be built up to the established building façade line on each block. Corner entrances may be desirable but are not required. However, both street-facing facades should maintain similar articulation, detailing, and rhythm of window openings.
- iii. Existing buildings on corner lots should maintain or create orientation on both public streets.

e. Building Widths and Facades

- i. Objective. To reflect typical existing building widths found in the downtown and to avoid long building facades with a monolithic or monotonous appearance.
- ii. Standard. Buildings of more than 40 feet in width shall be divided into smaller increments (between 20 and 40 feet each) through articulation of the facade. This can be achieved through combinations of the following techniques and others that may meet the objective, as long as they all conform to a single architectural style: stepping back or extending forward a portion of the façade; using different textures or materials drawn from a common palette; dividing the storefronts with separate display windows and entrances; varying the rooflines by alternating parapets, stepped roofs, or other roof elements; using arcades, awnings, window bays, arched windows, and balconies as focal points or defining elements.

f. Materials – All elevations and roof

- i. Objective. To ensure that high-quality, durable and authentic materials typical of Buchanan's traditional downtown continue to be used.
- ii. Standard:

Primary materials: New buildings should be constructed of high-quality materials, including but not limited to the following: brick, natural stone, precast concrete units and decorative concrete block (provided that surfaces are molded, serrated or textured giving the wall surface a three-dimensional character), stucco, jumbo brick (which may be used on up to 30 percent of any façade, provided that it is used only on the lower third of the building wall), EIFS (exterior insulating finish system, which may be used as an accent but not a primary material), architectural metalwork.
- ii. The following materials are prohibited: unadorned plain or painted concrete block, tilt-up concrete panels, reflective or darkly tinted glass, or pole buildings.

- iii. Accent materials may be used on up to 15 percent of the building's façade. These may include metal, glass, block, painted wood panels, spandrel glass or similar materials as approved by the Downtown Design Review Committee (DDRC).
- iv. Existing buildings should be rehabilitated using original materials to the extent feasible. If original features or materials cannot be restored or replicated, the primary materials listed above may be used.
- v. Roofs, generally flat or low pitch (2:12 or less). Asphalt shingles and asphalt roll roofing are prohibited on flat or low-pitch roofs. New roofing material may not be terminated on the fascia or the wall below the roof, that is, the existing fascia must be retained or replaced in kind and may not be covered by the roofing material.

g. Architectural Details.

- i. Objective. Incorporate architectural details to serve as identifiable and visually interesting enhancements to building facades and help to establish a pedestrian supportive environment.
- ii. Standard. Architectural design shall be sensitive to the massing and proportion of adjacent structures, and reflect or complement the detailing of surrounding buildings, with elements such as lintels, cornice lines, balconies and decorative brick or stonework. Exterior lighting, awnings and signage shall be installed without damaging the building or visually impairing distinctive architectural features. Fasteners will be placed in mortar joints and not into masonry units.

h. Openings in Front

- i. Objective. To establish the visual importance of the primary street entrance, and to ensure those entries contribute to the visual attractiveness of the building and are readily visible to the customer.
- ii. Standard. The main entrance should always face the primary street, with secondary entrances to the side or rear. Entries to corner-oriented buildings may face the corner rather than either primary street. The main entrance of commercial, office and mixed-use facilities should be placed at sidewalk grade to facilitate ease of access.

i. Windows and Doors

- i. Objective. Preservation of the historic character of the building and downtown.
- ii. Standard. Historic windows and doors should be rehabilitated or repaired if possible. Replacement of historical windows or doors will either replicate or simulate the appearance of the historical unit.

- iii. The removal of existing doors and windows and replacement by a solid wall is typically not allowed unless the applicant can provide detailed information regarding why the removal is necessary.
- iv. Original or historic windows and doors should be rehabilitated or repaired whenever possible. Options for dual glazing (storm panels) is the preferred method to improve energy efficiency. When rehabilitation or repair is not possible, replacement is allowed.

Door and window openings shall not decrease in size. When it is proposed to increase the size of an existing opening or create a new opening, clear and detailed information must be provided in the application. Care must be given not to damage or remove any existing architectural elements.

When original or historic doors are to be replaced, the new units must be of a similar style, have the same number and placement of panels, lights, etc., and have similar molding profiles. Historic pattern or decorative glass (glue-chip, etched, beveled, etc.) must be replaced with identical materials. When non-historic doors are to be replaced, the new doors should be of a style appropriate to the architectural style of the building.

When original or historic windows are to be replaced, the new units must be of a similar style (i.e. double-hung, casement, fixed, etc.), have the same number and placement of lights (i.e. 6 over 6, 3 over 1, etc.), and have similar muntin widths (with no more than 1/8" variation from the original). Historic pattern or decorative glass (prism, reeded, glue-chip, etched, beveled, etc.) must be replaced with identical materials. If the window sash are not true divided light, grilles simulating muntin's must be permanently installed on both the inner and outer sides of the glass.

When non-historic windows are to be replaced, the new windows should be of a style appropriate to the architectural style of the building and should otherwise follow the standards for replacement of historic windows above.

Triple-track storm units are not allowed.

j. Color and Use of Paint.

- i. Objective. To ensure that building colors are aesthetically pleasing and compatible with surrounding buildings.
- ii. Standard. Principal building colors shall consist of subtle, neutral or muted colors, with low reflectance. Allowed colors include browns, grays, tans, beiges, and muted greens, blues and reds. No more than two principal colors may be used on a façade or storefront. Bright, white, or primary colors shall be used only as accents, occupying a maximum of 15 percent of a building's facades. This standard does not apply to murals or other works of public art.

iii. Buildings that currently have painted masonry may change paint color as stated above.

iv. Painting masonry surfaces is strongly discouraged as it cannot be easily removed without damaging the masonry, often creates conditions that lead to the accelerated deterioration of the masonry, and turns a maintenance-free surface into a maintenance-required surface. Any application to paint an unpainted masonry building must include clear, detailed, and persuasive reasons as to why painting the masonry is necessary. Simple aesthetic preference is not a sufficient reason.

v. Removing the paint from historically painted masonry surfaces is also strongly discouraged. Any application to remove paint in such situations must clearly demonstrate why the removal of the paint is necessary, what methods and materials are to be used in the removal, the plan for repairing or replacing deterioration which is revealed, and the planned material to be used to treat or finish the newly exposed brick.

k. Mechanical Equipment and Service Areas.

i. Objective. To ensure that views of rooftop equipment and services areas from public streets or pedestrian ways are minimized.

ii. Standard. All rooftop equipment shall be screened from view six feet above by an adult standing at ground level on adjacent streets, public rights-of-way, or properties. Preferably, rooftop equipment should be screened by the building parapet or located out of view from the ground. If this is not feasible, the equipment shall be grouped within a single enclosure. This structure shall be set back a distance of 1 ½ times its height from any façade fronting a public street. Screens shall be of durable, permanent materials (including wood) that are compatible with the primary building materials.

If ground mounted outdoor mechanical units or storage, service, or loading areas face adjacent residential uses or are visible from a public street, alley or walkway, they shall be screened from view by masonry walls or plant material. Screen walls shall be architecturally compatible with the primary structure. Loading docks and loading doors shall be located to the side or rear of the building.

5. Appeal process.

a. A decision by the Zoning Administrator may be appealed to the Downtown Design Review Committee. The applicant shall submit a complete application for such request to the Downtown Design Review Committee on such forms provided by the City for that purpose and subject to the fees set by the City Commission prior

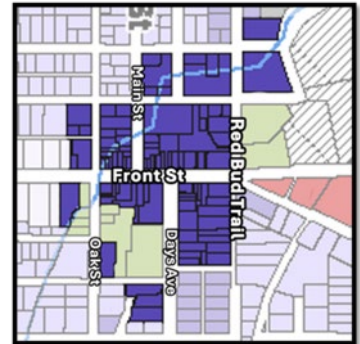
to the posted submittal deadline prior to the next regularly scheduled Downtown Design Review Committee meeting.

- b. Appeals of a decision of the Downtown Design Review Committee shall be made to the Planning Commission on such forms provided by the City for that purpose and subject to such fees set by the City Commission and within 60 days after the decision or within 21 days after the Downtown Design Review Committee approves the meeting minutes, whichever comes first.
- c. A building permit shall not be issued for proposed exterior work unless the Downtown Design Review Application has been approved or approved with conditions. An occupancy permit will not be issued until the Zoning Administrator has inspected the work and finds it is in compliance with the plans approved by the Zoning Administrator or the Downtown Design Review Committee.

Article V. DEFINITIONS

Overlay District:

Downtown Design Review Areas. The Downtown Design Review Overlay District will consist of all properties located in the D Downtown District and those properties located in the N Natural District located between Days Avenue and South Oak Street between East Roe and East Front Streets in addition to parcels abutting the west side of South Oak Street between Charles Court and West Front Street and land located between East Front Street and south of unimproved East Dewey Street and east of North Redbud Trail.



Final draft 08222026 PC changes

Memorandum



Date: August 24, 2026

To: Buchanan Planning Commission

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: **Public Hearing - Consideration of an Amendment - Unified Development Code – Section 71-30 Sign standards and Article V Definitions**

Background

The Unified Development Code was adopted in late 2025. Staff have been using the document daily to better understand it and to answer questions. In January 2026, staff brought several concerns to the Planning Commission associated with the Sign standards and the Planning Commission directed staff to work on amendments.

Draft language was reviewed, discussed and modified during the February, March, April, May and August Planning Commission meetings and the public hearing is scheduled for September 8th. The proposed changes help to create a user-friendly document which addresses the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court ruling associated with temporary signage. Following are some of the changes made:

- Included a purpose statement to explain the reasoning on why the regulations have been established along with standard language pertaining to substitution/no discrimination against non-commercial signs or speech.
- Expanded list of exempt signs and prohibited signs.
- Modified sign standard table by including maximum height of sign structure, decreased the maximum square footage for some signage types and the number of permitted signs on a property or business. Decreased the minimum clearance of wall sign from 8' to 6'8".
- Expanded the list of allowable temporary signage and included regulations.
 - The 2015 US Supreme Court ruling prohibits the reading of text on signage. To eliminate reading, temporary signs include a maximum size, height. The standard that many communities have adopted in sign ordinances that comply with the Supreme Court ruling allow residential dwellings (not apartment complexes) to have a total of 24 square feet of signage with the maximum size sign of 6 square feet. The signage that falls into this category includes the following type of signage: construction, real estate, political, express (advertising a business or school or sport) to name a few. Temporary signage for other uses is set at a maximum of 32 square feet.
 - Limited the use of pennants, feather flags and portable changeable signage.

Memorandum

- Expanded signage on the public sidewalk in the D Downtown District to allow not more than one temporary sign on the public sidewalk or hanging over the public sidewalk. A business owner has the option of either a sandwich board or a hanging attention device. During the August 11th Planning Commission meeting, staff prepared draft language in response to the Buchanan Business Boosters interest in providing “open flag” signs to the businesses. The Planning Commission was supportive of the request and draft language. The discussion also included decreasing the minimum clearance required from 8’ to 6’8” as part of the discussion. While preparing information for the introduction and Planning Commission public hearing, staff believes the proposed signage should not be limited to “open” only and has changed the name to “hanging attention device”. A definition has been included which also references flags and windsocks and excludes the display of business name or logo on the device.
- Establishes how setback, overall height and sign area is measured along with illumination standards.
- Incorporates standards for changeable message centers/boards/reader boards.
- Establishes off-premise advertising regulations (billboards).
- Expands regulations pertaining to removal of unsafe, abandoned, obsolete and prohibited signs and sign structures along with nonconforming signs.
- Introduced language that allows the Planning Commission to review and approve sign modifications (variances) for certain requests and under certain conditions.
- Within Article V Definitions, modified and added definitions associated with signs.

Standards for Review

Section 71-36 Specific standards for development approvals and within 71-36.B.2 standards for Amendments to text or the zoning map are stated. The Planning Commission needs to review and discuss the standards before a motion is made. Following is the language from Section 71-36.B.2 of the Unified Development Code:

2. Standards. The advisability of amending the text of this chapter or making an amendment to the zoning map is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the city commission. In determining whether to adopt or disapprove the proposed amendment, the city commission must consider the following factors:
 - a. Consistent with master plan and vision plan. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is consistent with the master plan and the vision plan.
 - b. Changed conditions. Whether and the extent to which there are changed conditions that require an amendment.

Memorandum

- c. Community need. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment addresses a demonstrated community need.
- d. Compatible with surrounding uses. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the subject land, and is the appropriate zone district for the land, or the proposed amendment to the text of this chapter will maintain or improve compatibility among uses and will ensure efficient development within the City.
- e. Development patterns. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment would result in a logical and orderly development pattern.

Recommendation

Conduct the necessary public hearing for an amendment to the Unified Development Code to modify and establish regulations pertaining to sign standards as found in Section 71-30 Sign standards and Article V Definitions.

An example motion for approval can be: Move to recommend approval of the text amendment to section 71-30 Sign standards and Article V Definitions which includes the deletion of existing language associated with sign or signage and replacing with the draft language found in the September 8, 2026 Planning Commission agenda packet as the proposed amendment is consistent with the standards for text or map amendment changes as found in Section 71.36.B.2 of the Unified Development Code.



Text Amendment (Changing Language in Unified Development Code – zoning ordinance) Application

Please print legibly. All portions must be completed. Do not leave any section blank, use N/A. Incomplete forms will be returned. If additional space is needed, please use additional sheets of paper.

Property Information

Applicable Section of Zoning Ordinance that amendment is requested: _____
Section 71-30 Sign standards and Article V Definitions.

Briefly Explain Request: Updated sign standard regulations while addressing missing regulations
and modified and added definitions associated with signage

Are there other requests associated with application?: If yes, explain: No, please see
attached redline and draft language.

Applicant Information

In case of trust, provide the name, address and telephone numbers of all trustees and beneficiaries of the trust. An LLC or corporation must provide a copy of Articles of Incorporation. In case the applicant is not the property owner, written permission from the property owner is required.

Name of Applicant: City of Buchanan - Kristen Gundersen

Relationship to Property Owner: staff

Mailing Address: 302 N Redbud Trail

City: Buchanan **State:** MI **Zip Code:** 49107

Telephone Number: 269.695.3844 **Emergency Number:** _____

E-mail Address: kgundersen@cityofbuchanan.com

Attorney: Butzel

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Engineer or Architect: N/A

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Proposed Language Change (please use additional paper if needed)

Existing section and language from Zoning Ordinance: See attached

Proposed new language for the Zoning Ordinance: See attached

Explain how the proposed new language supports the goals and objectives of the adopted Master Plan: The draft changes will help to ensure the development review process is simple, efficient, predictable and easily accessible (4-1) by adding purpose statement, layout, sign categories and definitions. Creates a process where the Planning Commission can grant sign modifications without going to Zoning Board of Appeals for requests.

Text Amendment Standards

If needed use additional sheets of paper to respond to Standards.

Section 71-35.B.2 Standards. The advisability of amending the text of this chapter or making an amendment to the zoning map is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the City Commission. In determining whether to adopt or disapprove d the proposed amendment, the City Commission must consider the following factors:

- a. Consistent with master plan and vision plan. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is consistent with the master plan and the vision plan. Proposed amendments are consistent with 4-1 to ensure the development review process is simple, efficient, predictable and easily accessible. The proposed amendments improved the flow of the section while providing detailed information for sign regulations and standards.

- b. Changed conditions. Whether and the extent to which there are changed conditions that require an amendment. The existing language did not provide enough information to easily make decisions. The 2015 US Supreme Court ruling regarding temporary signs found existing language was unclear and would be difficult to enforce. Clear and concise information is needed in sign regulations to decrease confusion.

- c. Community need. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment addresses a demonstrated community need.

The maximum allowable size of a free-standing sign was similar to an off-premise billboard sign. Limiting the font size was difficult for others to design signage. Standards needed to be provide improved to allow those using the standards to easily understand and design compliant signage.

- d. Compatible with surrounding uses. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment is compatible with existing and proposed uses surrounding the subject land, and is the appropriate zone district for the land, or the proposed amendment to the text of this chapter will maintain or improve compatibility among uses and will ensure efficient development within the City.

The proposed text amendment pertains to properties or uses described in the language. It is believed the proposed amendment creates, clear and concise regulations.

- e. Development Patterns. Whether and the extent to which the proposed amendment would result in a logical and orderly development pattern.

Properties relying on the proposed amendment for improvements to private property will help to maintain a logical and orderly development pattern.

TEXT AMENDMENT APPLICATION CERTIFICATION

The Applicant certifies and acknowledges and agrees that:

- A. The statements contained in this application are true and correct to the best of the Applicant's knowledge and belief. The owner of the subject property, if different from the applicant, states that they consent to the filing of the application and that all information contained is true and correct to the best of their knowledge;
- B. The Applicant understands that an incomplete or nonconforming application will not be considered. In addition, the Applicant understands that the City may require additional information prior to the consideration of this application;
- C. The Applicant shall make the property that is subject of this application available for inspection by the City at reasonable times;
- D. If any information provided in this application changes or becomes incomplete or inapplicable for any reason following submission of this application, the Applicant shall submit a supplemental application or other acceptable written statement containing the new or corrected information as soon as practicable but not less than ten (10) days following the change, and that failure to do so shall be grounds for denial of the application;
- E. The Applicant understands that if the application is approved with conditions, those conditions will need to be met as part of any permit issued; and
- F. The Applicant understands they are responsible for all application fees. Fees are non-refundable and there is no guarantee the application will be approved or permits issued. There should be no outstanding monies owed to the City (i.e., water bill or taxes).

On the 10, day of August, 2026, I/We have read the above certification, understand it, and agree to abide by its conditions.

[Signature], City Buchanan
Signature of Applicant or Authorized Agent

Kristen Gundersen
Name of Applicant or Authorized Agent

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN

To before me this 10 day of

Aug, 2026

[Signature]

Notary Public

KALLA LANGSTON
 NOTARY PUBLIC - STATE OF MICHIGAN
 COUNTY OF BERRIEN
 My Commission Expires June 09, 2032
 Acting in the County of Berrien

NOTE: Deleted language is shown with strikethrough and new language is shown with highlight. For ease of review all of Section 71-30 Sign standards was deleted along with associated definitions. In several cases, the current language can be found in the new draft language.

Sec. 71-30 Sign standards

This section establishes the standards for the number, size, placement, and physical characteristics of on-premise signs visible from a public sidewalk or adjacent property.

A. ~~These regulations do not restrict the content of signs.~~

B. ~~Permits required. All signs with the exception of the following require a sign permit:~~

1. ~~A frame ground sign;~~
2. ~~Small signs. Any sign that does not exceed four square feet in area;~~
3. ~~Window signs;~~
4. ~~Official sign. Notices required by law, signs erected by a governmental agency or public utility; and~~
5. ~~Temporary signs. Not more than one temporary sign is permitted per facade and may not exceed 32 square feet in area. Temporary signs must be removed within 48 hours after the event. Temporary signs may not be displayed longer than the event or 30 days.~~

C. ~~Removal. The zoning administrator or their designee is authorized to remove any sign deemed to be unsafe or a hazard to the public. The cost of the removal will be billed to the property owner.~~

D. ~~Non-conforming signs.~~

1. ~~If a sign display is not current, is in a state of disrepair, or is left blank for a continuous period of 60 days, it is considered abandoned, within 30 days after abandonment the owner of the property must remove or replace the sign or the message. The sole exception to this provision is signs installed as an integral component of a building.~~
2. ~~Illumination may not be added to a nonconforming sign.~~
3. ~~A nonconforming sign may not be replaced except to bring it into complete conformance with this section.~~
4. ~~If a sign is removed or damaged to the extent that the cost of restoration exceeds 50 percent of the original value of the sign it must be removed or brought into complete conformance with this section.~~

E. ~~Prohibited signs. Signs with the following features are prohibited:~~

1. ~~Off-premise signs, including snipe or bandit signs and vehicular signs;~~
2. ~~Signs located within the clear sight triangle according to [Figure 71-B Clear site lines](#);~~
3. ~~Signs extended above the parapet or eave of a roof;~~
4. ~~Signs utilizing animation or which contain the optical illusion of sign movement;~~
5. ~~Signs incorporating noisy mechanical devices or emitting smoke or steam;~~

- ~~6. Inflatable signs;~~
- ~~7. Portable signs, except a frame ground signs; and~~
- ~~8. Any unsafe sign.~~

~~F. Permitted signs and restrictions.~~

- ~~1. Permitted sign types are limited by district and the following restrictions according to [Table 71-T](#):~~
 - ~~a. The number of signs per type;~~
 - ~~b. The area of signs; and~~
 - ~~c. The height of sign copy.~~
- ~~2. All signs must be a minimum of eight feet clear over sidewalks and vehicular areas.~~
- ~~3. No sign may be placed in or over a public right of way with the exception of the following:~~
 - ~~a. A-Frame signs are permitted on a public sidewalk during hours the associated business is open, but must maintain a five foot clear path for pedestrian travel;~~
 - ~~b. Awning and/or canopy signs;~~
 - ~~c. Hanging signs;~~
 - ~~d. Marquee signs; and~~
 - ~~e. Projecting signs.~~
- ~~4. All signs may be double-sided by right, if the configuration of the sign permits. Only the larger side contributes to the calculation of sign area.~~
- ~~5. All signs may be illuminated by an external light source or internally illuminated if neon with the exception of signs located in NE and GN.~~
 - ~~a. If externally illuminated, the source of the light must be enclosed and directed to prevent the source of light from shining directly onto traffic or a residential property.~~
- ~~6. All signs must comply with the building and electrical codes of the City of Buchanan. Underground wiring is required for all illuminated signs.~~

TABLE 71-T SIGN STANDARDS

Sign	Signs (max)	Area (max)	Copy Height (max)	N	NE	GN	NC	D	SC	I
A-Frame	1 per tenant	9 sq. ft.	n/a				■	■	■	■
Awning	1 sloping plane & 1 valence per awning	75% awning area	16 in. on sloping plane, 8 in. on valence				■	■	■	■

Banner	1 per event	76 sq. ft.	n/a				■	■	■	■
Canopy	1 per canopy	2 sq. ft. per linear ft.	30 in.				■	■	■	■
Hanging	1 per tenant	6 sq. ft.	n/a				■	■	■	
Marquee	1 per entry	4 sq. ft. per linear ft.	30 in.					■	■	
Monument	1 per facade	36 sq. ft.	n/a		■	■	■		■	■

TABLE 71-T SIGN STANDARDS

Sign	Signs (max)	Area (max)	Copy Height (max)	N	NE	GN	NC	D	SC	I
Mural	1 per facade	no max.	n/a				■	■	■	■
Off-premise	Not permitted	n/a	n/a							
Pole	1 per property	200 sq. ft.	30 in.						■	■
Projecting	1 per tenant	6 sq. ft.	8 in.				■	■	■	■
Reader board	1 per tenant	6 sq. ft.	12 in.						■	■
Wall	1 per tenant	3 sq. ft. per linear ft.	18 in.					■	■	■
Window	1 per window	25% of glazed area	12 in.				■	■	■	■

■ Permitted

G. Maintenance and liability.

1. Painted or paper-faced signs must be maintained free of peeling paint or paper, sun fading, staining, rust or other conditions which impair the legibility of the sign.
2. Any permitted signs, including all supports, braces, guys and anchors, must be maintained in a manner not to cause a hazard to the public.
3. The city requires proof of current, in force liability insurance in the aggregate amount of at least \$500,000.00, as a condition of granting a sign permit or as a condition of allowing the continued use of an existing sign, in the following instances:
 - a. Signs that extend over the city right-of-way.
 - b. Freestanding signs whose height exceeds the horizontal distance of the base of the sign to the nearest city right-of-way

Sec. 71-36 Specific standards for development approval**I. Sign permit.****1. Procedure.**

- a. Action. After the application is determined sufficient, the zoning administrator will review the application and determine if the application complies with the standards in [Sec. 71-30](#).
- b. Approval. If the zoning administrator finds that the application complies, the zoning administrator will approve the sign permit.

c. ~~Fails to comply.~~

i. ~~If the Zoning Administrator determines the application fails to comply, the applicant will be provided comments explaining why the application fails to comply, and an opportunity to submit a revised application. A revised application will be reviewed and approved, approved with conditions or disapproved, based on the standards in [Sec. 71-30](#).~~

ii. ~~If the application is not resubmitted within 30 days, the application will be considered withdrawn.~~

Article V Definitions

Signs: A devise, structure, fixture, or placard using graphics, symbols, and/or written copy designed specifically for the purpose of advertising or identifying an establishment, product, service or activity. Multiple types of signs exist and are defined below:

Awning or canopy: ~~a fixed or movable shading structure, cantilevered or otherwise entirely supported from a building, used to protect outdoor spaces from sun, rain, and other natural conditions. Awnings are typically used to cover outdoor seating for restaurants and cafes.~~

Flag: ~~Any fabric, banner or bunting containing distinctive color, letters or symbols.~~

Freestanding sign: ~~A temporary or permanent sign erected by the City of Buchanan, Berrien County, or the state or federal government, including temporary signs as necessary in conjunction with the improvement of public infrastructure.~~

Inflatable sign: ~~a sign composed of an inflatable, nonporous bag, and exceeding 20 cubic feet.~~

Marquee: ~~a permanent structure constructed of rigid materials that projects from the exterior wall of a building.~~

Marquee sign: ~~a sign affixed flat against the surface of a marquee.~~

Mural: ~~a design or representation painted or drawn on a wall.~~

Off-premises sign: ~~a freestanding sign owned by a person, corporation or other entity that engages in the business of selling or donating the display space on that sign, commonly referred to as a billboard.~~

Permanent sign: ~~a sign that has a permanent location on the ground or which is painted on or attached to a structure having a permanent location and which meets the structural requirements for signs as established in the building code.~~

Projecting sign: ~~a double faced sign attached to and not parallel with a building or wall.~~

Reader board: ~~a portion of a sign on which copy can be changed periodically, either manually or electronically.~~

Temporary sign: ~~a sign intended for a limited period of display, including all portable signs, banners, and/ or balloon signs.~~

Wall sign: ~~a single faced sign painted or attached directly to and parallel to the exterior wall of a building.~~

Window sign: ~~a sign placed on the inside of a window and intended to be viewed from the outside.~~

Sec. 71-30 Sign standards

71-30.A General Provisions

1. Purpose

This section establishes the standards for the number, size, placement, and physical characteristics of on-premises signs visible from a public sidewalk or adjacent property. Signage regulated is located on private property and does not include directional, emergency, or traffic related signs owned or required by city, county, state or federal governmental agencies. The regulations are designed to protect the interest of public health, safety and welfare while accommodating the need for signs to inform, direct, identify, advertise, advocate, promote, endorse and otherwise communicate information to residents of the City of Buchanan, the business community and visitors.

The regulations also promote the goals of the master plan by improving the visual character of thoroughfares and fostering business retention while attracting new businesses. Accommodation for special circumstances or events may create a need for temporary signs or modifications to adopted regulations. The need to eliminate potential hazards to motorists and pedestrians resulting from sign clutter and visual distractions and preventing blight is necessary.

While these regulations allow for a variety of sign types and sizes, they do not necessarily ensure every property owner or business owner's desired level of visibility. It is not the intent or purpose to regulate the message or content displayed on any sign.

2. Compliance and applicability of other regulations

It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, relocate, enlarge, alter, modify or maintain a sign or allow a sign to remain on property in the city except for compliance with this Section. All regulations in this section shall be in addition to any other applicable laws, rules and regulations concerning signs. If any provision in this section is inconsistent with the provisions of any other law presently existing or enacted in the future, the more restrictive will apply.

3. Exclusions

Government signs are not regulated by this section.

4. No vested rights.

Nothing in this section shall be interpreted or construed to give rise to any permanent vested rights in the continuation of any particular sign, and it is hereby declared to be subsequent amendment, change or modification as may be necessary for the preservation of public health, safety and welfare.

5. Substitution/no discrimination against non-commercial signs or speech.

The owner of any sign which is otherwise allowed by this section may substitute non-commercial content in lieu of any other commercial or non-commercial content. This substitution of content may be made without any additional approval or permitting. The purpose of this provision is to prevent any inadvertent favoring of commercial speech or non-commercial speech or favoring of any particular non-commercial message over any other non-commercial message. This provision prevails over any more specific provisions to the contrary in this section.

The clause shall not be construed to allow content, which is obscene, profane, threatening, discriminatory or otherwise not protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or art. 5 of the Michigan Constitution.

71-30.B Sign regulations.

1. Permits required

- a. A permit is required to erect, alter, place, or replace any sign or sign structures as regulated and required by this section or by the City's Code of Ordinance. A permit is also required for substantial maintenance or repair to an existing nonconforming sign.
- b. To obtain a sign permit, a completed application as provided by the city shall be filed with the City in accordance with Section 71-26I Sign Permit.

- c. Properties located within the D Downtown District are required to obtain Downtown Design Review in accordance with Section 71-36H Downtown Applications.

2. Signs exempt from obtaining permits.

The following signs may be installed or erected without a permit:

- a. Donor signs up to two square feet in size.
- b. Historic markers placed under the authority of the local, state, or federal government and not exceeding two square feet in size.
- c. Home occupation sign, not to exceed 3 square feet and nonilluminated (from section 71-23.A.5)
- d. Nameplate or plaques up to 2 square feet in size, bearing the name of the building occupant, one per occupant.
- e. Official legal notice.
- f. On-site informational signs.
- g. Vehicle signs, where the vehicle on which the sign is displayed does not regularly go unoperated for a period exceeding seven consecutive days.
- h. Signs located on or within a building, in compliance with MCL125.3205d (or Article I, Section 5 of MI Constitution), that commemorate any of the following:
 - i. Any of the following who die in the line of duty: police officers, firefighters, medical first responders, members of the United States Armed Forces or correction officers;
 - ii. Veterans of the United States Armed Forces.
- i. Window signs when applied to the interior or exterior of the window or door glass does not exceed 25% of the glass area. Windows that are immediately adjacent, on the same wall face of the same building, maybe averaged together. (25% per existing code)

3. Prohibited signs.

The following signs as described are prohibited:

- a. Abandoned signs.
- b. Inflatable signs or devices except for balloons used in temporary, non-commercial situations.
- c. Neon, LED, or other light types permanently outlining windows or doors.
- d. Pornographic or obscene signs.
- e. Roof signs.
- f. Signs emitting smoke, vapors, particulate matter, odor or open flames.
- g. Signs imitating or resembling official traffic or government signs or signals that confuse, mislead, or create a safety hazard.
- h. Signs prohibited under federal, state, or local laws, rules or regulations.
- i. Signs utilizing animation or which contain the optical illusion of sign movement.
- j. Snipe signs.
- k. Signs that emit noise.

4. District sign regulations

Table 71-T sets forth the sign types, maximum size, height and number of signs allowed, minimum setbacks, prohibited or permitted signs. All permitted signs require a sign permit prior to installation unless exempt under section ____ or allowed as temporary under section ____ of this chapter.

Table 71-T Permanent Sign Standards

Table 71-T District Sign Regulations

	N, NE, GN, NC - One to Four Residential Dwellings Units	N, NE, GN, NC - Five-Family or more Residential Dwelling Units or Non-Residential Use	D	SC	I
Wall Signs: Awning, Canopy, Wall	Permit Required				
Maximum square footage for business frontage		One times (1 x) the building frontage	Two times (2x) the building frontage not to exceed a combined total of 150 square feet		
Number allowed		1 per building frontage	3 per building frontage		
Maximum square footage for side or rear wall having a secondary entrance (not on building frontage)		20 square feet			
Number allowed on a side or rear wall having a secondary entrance (not on building frontage)		1 per wall			
Maximum height		20 feet or below the bottom of any second floor window, whichever is less. Shall not extend above the roof deck or parapet and shall not be located on a penthouse or elevator overrun.			
Minimum vertical clearance		Six feet eight inches (6'8") when located over public or private sidewalk; 15 feet over public rights-of-way or drive aisles. If projection less than 4" no minimum vertical clearance			
Maximum projection		12" from face of building			
Illumination - see section ___ for additional information					
Wall Signs: Projecting or Hanging	Permit Required				
Maximum square footage			6 square feet		
Number allowed			1 per building frontage		
Maximum projection from wall of building			4 feet		
Maximum height			Below the bottom of the second floor window		
Minimum vertical clearance			6 feet 8 inches		
Illumination - see section ___ for additional information					

	N, NE, GN, NC - One to Four Residential Dwellings Units	N, NE, GN, NC - Five-Family or more Residential Dwelling Units or Non-Residential Use	D	SC	I
Ground Signs			Permit Required		
Number allowed, total	1 per development entrance	1 per parcel			1 per parcel
Maximum size	32 square feet	32 square feet			50 square feet
Maximum Height - Monument	6 feet	6 feet			8 feet
Maximum Height - Pole		6 feet		15 feet	
Minimum setback	3 feet from any lot line	3 feet from any lot line			3 feet from any lot line
Minimum vertical clearance for pole sign					6 feet 8 inches
Illumination - see section ___ for additional information					
Changeable message board - see section ___ for additional information					
Billboards, see Section ___ for additional information					Permit Required
Number allowed					1 per parcel
Maximum size					260 sf
Maximum height					30 feet
Minimum setback					50 feet
Distance between signs					300 feet
Minimum clearance from ground					6 feet 8 inches
Illumination - see section ___ for additional information					

5. Temporary signs allowed under certain conditions

- a. Temporary signs which allow for the freedom of expression or promotion of temporary events while minimizing clutter, visual distractions, obstructions, and nuisances when meeting the following:

General regulations:

- i. Shall not be illuminated;
- ii. Shall not have supports or borders wider than two inches on any side; and
- iii. Shall be removed no more than seven days after an event concludes if the sign is associated with a particular commercial event.

- b. Signs placed on a lot where the primary use is a single-family or two-family residential use

- i. The maximum overall sign height is four feet.
- ii. The maximum sign area is six square feet.
- iii. The maximum total area of all temporary signs displayed concurrently on one lot is 24 square feet.

- c. Signs placed on parcels where the use is not a single-family or two-family residential use

- i. The maximum overall height is eight feet.
- ii. the maximum total area of all temporary signs displayed concurrently on one parcel is 32 square feet.

- d. Temporary signage in the D Downtown District - sandwich board or hanging attention device are allowed under the following:

- i. A business is limited to one temporary sign that is placed on or hangs over the public sidewalk that complies with the following:

a. Sandwich Boards

- i. One sandwich board sign per business
- ii. Maximum height of 4 feet
- iii. Maximum size is 8 square feet.
- iv. Maximum width 30".
- v. Displayed outside during business hours and stored inside when the business is closed.

- vi. Shall not have moving parts or attachments, including but not limited to, balloons, pinwheels, streamers, pennants, flags, or similar adornments.

- viii. Shall not be illuminated or have sound amplification.

- ix. Shall be constructed of wood, metal, or other similarly durable material and shall have adequate support to prevent tipping or movement of the sign and shall not present a tripping hazard to pedestrians.

- x. Must be placed to allow unobstructed ADA compliant route to business and surrounding areas.

b. Hanging Attention Device

- i. One hanging attention device.

- ii. Minimum clearance of 6'8" from the ground to the lowest hanging portion of device.

- iii. Maximum projection of equipment from building of not more than 24".

- iv. Maximum size of 3.5 square feet. For circular items the square footage is based on drawing a rectangle around the largest portions of the item.

- v. Displayed outside during business hours and stored inside when the business is closed.

- vi. Wording shall not include business name or logo.

- vii. Shall be constructed of fabric or similar material that blows in the wind.

- e. Pennant signs are allowed under the following:

- i. Shall be displayed for not more than thirty (30) days when associated with a business grand opening.
- f. Feather flag signs are allowed under the following:
 - i. No more than two feather flag signs per commercial property.
 - ii. Shall be located on private property.
 - iii. Shall only be displayed during business hours.
- g. Portable Changeable Message signs are allowed under the following:
 - i. No more than one portable changeable message sign is allowed on an non-residentially zoned property or on properties which have non-residential uses.
 - ii. Shall be displayed on private property no more than one week prior to advertised event.
- h. Sandwich boards located on private property are allowed under the following:
 - i. One sandwich board sign per business
 - ii. Maximum height of 4 feet
 - iii. Maximum square footage of 8 square feet.
 - iv. Maximum width 30".
 - v. Displayed outside during business hours and stored inside when the business is closed.
 - vi. Shall not have moving parts or attachments, including but not limited to, balloons, pinwheels, streamers, pennants, flags, or similar adornments.
 - vii. Shall not be illuminated or have sound amplification.
 - ix. Shall be constructed of wood, metal, or other similarly durable material and shall have adequate support to prevent tipping or movement of the sign and shall not present a tripping hazard to pedestrians.
 - x. Must be placed to allow unobstructed ADA compliant route to business and surrounding areas.

71-30.C Sign design standards in all districts

1. Corner lot clear sign lines
No sign shall be located within the required corner lot clear sight line as established in Section 71-16.G of this Code.
2. Setback – minimum distance
The minimum required distance between any sign, building or property line is measured by drawing a straight horizontal line that represents the shortest distance between the sign and other sign, building or property line.
3. Sign height/overall height.
The height of a sign is measured from the existing average finished grade level of the premises where the sign is located to the highest point of the sign structure. Freestanding signs located in raised planter boxes shall have the height measured from the existing average finished grade outside the planter box. The ground beneath a sign shall not be raised to artificially raise the height of a sign.
4. Sign area measurement
 - a. The area of a sign shall be measured as the area within a single, continuous perimeter composed of either the smallest square, or rectangle, which encloses the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblem, logo, or any other figure of similar character, together with any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the background against which it is placed, excluding only the structure necessary to support the sign. Reader boards shall be included in the sign measurement.
 - b. The area of a freestanding or projecting sign that has two or more faces shall be measured by including the area of all sign faces, except if two such faces are placed back-to-back shall be counted as one face. If the two back-to-back faces are of unequal size, the larger of the two sign faces shall be counted as one face.

5. Illumination

- a. Any permanent wall or free-standing sign may be internally or externally illuminated.
- b. If externally illuminated, the source of the light shall be located, shielded and directed to prevent the source of light from shining directly onto any public right-of-way or residential property.
- c. Uniform lighting shall be used throughout a sign to create a uniform appearance rather than creating some areas that appear brighter than others.
- d. Signs shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 pm and 6:00 am, except that a business open after 11:00 pm or before 6:00 am may have illumination during business hours.
- e. All signs must comply with the building and electrical codes of the City of Buchanan. Underground wiring is required for all illuminated signs.

71-30.D Changeable message centers/boards/reader boards

1. In addition to other regulations contained in this section, the following provisions shall apply to changeable message boards, where allowed:
 - i. One changeable message board is permitted per business; however, no more than one changeable message board is permitted per lot where the business is located.
 - ii. Changeable message boards shall only advertise on-site products or services or non-commercial public information such as time/temperature, safety alerts, and community/civic events.
 - iii. Changeable message boards are permitted only on free-standing signs and shall not be attached to the exterior wall of a building.
 - iv. Changeable message boards shall be integrated into a free-standing sign in order to create a cohesive, single-looking sign and shall not occupy more than 50% of the total sign face on each side.
 - v. With the exception of wall mounted signage located in the D Downtown district, Illumination shall not exceed 0.0 foot-candles at any lot lines that are adjacent to or across a right-of-way from a residential use. In all other cases, the illumination shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candles at the lot line.
 - vi. Changeable message boards shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 pm and 6:00 am, except that a business open after 11:00 pm or before 6:00 am may have the changeable message board illuminated during business hours.
2. Electronic message centers (EMC) must comply with the following additional regulations:
 - i. An EMC shall not be used or displayed in a way that presents multiple screens within a single sign face, whether simulated or actual.
 - ii. Transition from one message to another shall be instantaneous, without movement or other transition effects between messages.
 - iii. Messages must remain on display for no less than seven seconds. Scrolling and flashing display messages is prohibited.
 - iv. Illumination shall not exceed 0.0 foot-candles at any lot lines that are adjacent to or across a right-of-way from a residential use. In all other cases, the illumination shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candles at the lot line.
 - v. Any new EMC must be equipped with both a programable dimming sequence as well as an additional overriding mechanical photocell that adjusts the brightness of the display to the ambient light at all times of day. Such programming and mechanical equipment shall be set so that the electronic sign, from dusk to dawn or in overcast conditions, will be no more than 40% of the daytime brightness level. Manufacturers' information must be submitted with the sign permit application.
 - vi. A copy of the manufacturer's operating manual for the EMC, including any recommended standards for brightness, display operations and any interfaced computer programs, must be available for immediate access at the business location where it is operating and must be provided to the zoning administrator upon request.

3. Electronic vehicle fuel station signs displaying fuel prices must comply with the following:
 - i. A maximum of three fuel products may be displayed per sign face, limited to fuel product pricing only.
 - ii. The maximum electronic message area is 12 square feet or five square feet per fuel product displayed.

E. Billboards.

The following standards shall apply to all billboards unless specifically exempted in this section:

- a. A sign face shall not exceed 260 square feet per side, and the total area of a double-faced sign shall not exceed 520 square feet. A double-faced sign shall consist of the two sign faces being parallel to each other and facing opposite directions.
- b. Billboards greater than 100 square feet in size shall be located a minimum of 50 feet from the nearest property line and 100 feet from any residential use or district, public park, religious institution or any public or private school.
- c. Billboards must have a minimum ground clearance of eight feet and may not exceed 30 feet in height.
- d. Billboards must have a minimum separation of 300 feet from any other billboard or any public waterway.
- e. Billboards shall be located perpendicular to the nearest street.
- f. Billboards must be free-standing and shall not be attached to, erected on, cantilevered over or constructed above any other structure.
- g. Billboards shall not incorporate flashing or rotating lights, beacon lights, running lights, animated copy, electronic message centers or digital displays.

Exemption: Billboards lawfully existing on the date this chapter becomes effective shall be allowed to continue in their current location and size even if in conflict with the provisions of this chapter. However, all other regulations shall continue to apply to such billboards.

F. Maintenance

1. Signs and sign structures must be maintained free of broken or torn materials, peeling paint or paper, sun fading, staining, rust or other conditions which impair the legibility of the sign.
2. Any permitted signs, including all supports, braces, guys and anchors, must be maintained in a manner not to cause a hazard to the public.

G. Removal of unsafe, abandoned, obsolete and prohibited signs and sign structures.

1. Public Property or Rights-of-Way. Any unauthorized sign or sign structure located in a public right-of-way or on public property may be removed without notice and may be destroyed after seven days of being removed.
2. Abandoned, Obsolete, Unsafe or Prohibited Signs. If upon inspection, the zoning administrator finds that a sign or sign structure located on private property is abandoned, obsolete, unsafe, and/or prohibited, the zoning administrator shall issue a written order to the sign owner and the property owner upon which the sign or sign structure is located stating the nature of the violation and requiring them to repair, remove, or conform the permanent sign or sign structure within 30 calendar days of the date of the order, or to remove temporary signs or sign structures within five calendar days of the order.
3. Imminent Danger. When any sign or sign structure is found to be in such condition as to make it an imminent danger to the life or safety of the public, in addition to any other remedy in this chapter, the zoning administrator is hereby authorized and empowered to immediately order

the necessary work to be done as is necessary to render such sign or sign structure temporarily safe. In such event, the owner of the premises upon which the sign is located is responsible for such costs and the zoning administrator shall cause such appropriate action as is necessary to recover those costs.

H. Non-conforming signs.

Every permanent sign which was erected legally and which lawfully exists at the time of the enactment of this article, but which does not conform to the provisions of this chapter as of the date this chapter is effective, is hereby deemed to be nonconforming and may remain except as provided in this section.

1. Nonconforming status shall not be granted to any temporary sign, banner, or other non-permanent sign. In addition, a sign illegal at the time of the adoption of the ordinance from which this section derives shall not become a non-conforming sign by reason of such adoption, but shall remain an illegal sign.

2. The right to maintain any nonconforming sign shall terminate whenever any of the following occurs:

a. The nonconforming sign is dimensionally or structurally altered, enlarged, modified, added to, reduced or changed, except as may be required by law, unless it is made to conform with this chapter.

b. The nonconforming sign is located on property that is being modified as requested and initiated by the owner of the property or owner's representative, for an application that involves a public hearing request before the planning commission (examples include: map amendment (rezoning), text amendment, special use permits, or planned unit developments) or zoning board of appeals (example, a dimensional variance).

c. The principal structure associated with the sign or the non-conforming sign is demolished or destroyed by fire or other casualty loss when restoration will constitute more than 50 percent of the value of the structure.

d. The principal structure associated with the sign is renovated or remodeled when renovation or remodeling will constitute more than 50 percent of the value of the structure on the date the renovation or remodeling begins.

e. The nonconforming sign is unsafe, abandoned, obsolete and/or prohibited.

3. The nonconforming sign shall not be relocated or moved in whole or part to any other location on the same or any other lot unless every portion of such sign is made to conform to the regulations of this chapter and other applicable regulations of the city.

ARTICLE IV. ADMINISTRATION AND PROCESS

This article outlines the bodies with review, approval, and appellate authority in administering this chapter.

Sec. 71-33 Review and decision making bodies.

B. Planning Commission. The Planning Commission establishment, organization, powers and duties are enumerated in Chapter 70 of the City of Buchanan Code of Ordinances and include review, hear, consider and approve or disapprove Sign Modifications, Mural requests or Iconic Sign Designation.

Sec. 71-34 General provisions.

G. Timing of notice. Unless otherwise provided in the Michigan statutes and laws or this chapter, notice will be provided as shown in [Table 71-U](#).

TABLE 71-U NOTICE TIMING		
Application	Notice Required	
	Written	Published
Text amendment		Planning commission: Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing City commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Zoning map amendment	Planning commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing City commission: reasonable time prior to public hearing	Planning commission: Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing City commission: not less than 15 days prior to public hearing
Special use permit	Not less than 15 days prior to public hearing	
Variance		
Appeal		
Sign modification or mural	No notice is required	

Sec. 71-36 Specific standards for development approval.

A. General. [Table 71-V](#) summarizes the development review procedures for all types of applications.

TABLE 71-V DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES						
Procedure	Authority					Notices
	Staff	PC	ZBA	CC	DRC	
Text amendments	R	[R]		[DM]		N
Zoning map amendment	R	[R]		[DM]		W, N
Special use permit	R	[DM]				W, N
Variance	R		[DM]			W
Appeals of administrative decision			[DM]			W
Administrative adjustments	DM		[A]			
Site plan review	DM					
Sign permit, modifications, mural and iconic designation	DM or R	DM	[A]	A		

Temporary use permit	DM		[A]			
Certificate of zoning compliance	DM					
Downtown application	R				DM	
Interpretations	DM		[A]			

TABLE 71-V DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

Procedure	Authority					Notices
	Staff	PC	ZBA	CC	DRC	
Key						
Planning Commission	PC					
Zoning Board of Appeals	ZBA					
City Commission	CC					
Design Review Committee	DRC					
Review & Recommendations	R					
Decision Making Body	DM					
Appellate Body	A					
Public Hearing Required	[]					
Published Notice	N					
Written Notice	W					

B. Sign permit.**1. Administrative review of sign applications.**

- a. Action. After the application is determined sufficient, the zoning administrator will review the application and determine if the application complies with the standards in [Sec. 71-30](#).
- b. Approval. If the zoning administrator finds that the application complies, the zoning administrator will approve the sign permit.
- c. Appeals from any interpretations, determinations, or denials made by the zoning administrator shall be made to the planning commission and submitted on such forms provided by the city for that purpose and subject to such fees set by the city commission prior to the posted submittal deadline prior to the next regularly scheduled planning commission meeting.
- d. Applications denied by the zoning administrator for the reason that the proposed sign requires a sign modification of the sign regulations by the planning commission as provided under section ____- of this section, the applicant shall submit a complete application for such request to the planning commission on such forms provided by the city for that purpose and subject to the fees set by the city commission prior to the posted submittal deadline prior to the next regularly scheduled planning commission meeting.
- e. Appeals from a decision of the planning commission shall be made to the city commission on such forms provided by the city for that purpose and subject to such fees set by the city commission and within 30 days after the decision in writing, or within 21 days after the planning commission approves the meeting minutes.

2. Planning commission review and approval of certain sign modifications and murals

Subject to the standards and limitations set forth in this section, the planning commission shall have the authority to review certain sign applications and grant approvals. Any

approval granted shall be valid for not more than 180 days.

a. Authority to Grant Requested Modifications of Sign Regulations. The planning commission has no authority to grant a modification for signs prohibited under section _____ of this section. However, the planning commission has authority, in connection with an application, to grant approval of a request for modification of the sign regulations for permitted signs, subject to the following regulations.

1. Review. The planning commission shall, within 60 days of receiving a complete application, either grant approval of the application by written findings stating the reasons therefor, deny the application, or grant the application with modifications or conditions. Failure of the planning commission to act within 60 days, or such further time to which the applicant may agree, shall be deemed to be a decision of denial.
2. Authorized Modification. The planning commission may grant an applicant's request to modify the provisions of this section as follows:
 - (a) To increase by no more than 20 percent the maximum allowable height of any free-standing sign.
 - (b) To increase by no more than 20 percent the maximum area of signage otherwise allowed.
 - (c) To increase by no more than one sign the maximum number of signs or sign types otherwise allowed.
 - (d) To allow no more than one sign type to be located on a lot where signs of such types are not otherwise allowed.
 - (e) To adjust the required spacing between any signs, structures or lot lines.
3. Factors for Approval of Modifications. The factors to be considered by the planning commission for permitted modifications shall include, but are not limited to the following:
 - (a) Minimum Request. The modification requested is the minimum change necessary to alleviate the hardship while addressing the unique and specific needs of the applicant.
 - (b) General Standards. Carrying out the strict letter of the provisions of this Ordinance would create a particular hardship or a practical difficulty not caused by an act or omission of the applicant.
 - (c) Unusual Physical Limitations. The subject property or the structure on which the sign is proposed to be located is burdened with an unusual physical limitation, such as irregular shape, unusual geographic location, exceptional feature, or other extraordinary physical condition, that is peculiar to the subject property and is more than merely an inconvenience or cost consideration to the applicant.
 - (d) Location Factors. The subject property location supports the permitted modification, reviewing such factors as size and use of parcel, setbacks, adjacent property uses, and speed of adjacent roadway(s).
 - (e) Adverse Impacts. The modification, if granted, would have no significant adverse impact on any abutting or adjacent property, the essential character of any part of or all of the neighborhood, or the use, enjoyment or value of other nearby properties.
 - (f) Public Health and Safety. The modification, if granted, would have no significant adverse impact on and would not endanger the public health or safety of the public.

b. Authority to Approve Requested Mural Installations. The planning commission has authority, in connection with an application to grant approval of a request for installation of a mural as defined in Article V subject to the following regulations.

1. Review. The planning commission shall, within 60 days of receiving a complete application, either grant approval of the application by written findings stating the reasons therefor, deny the application, or grant the application with modifications or conditions. Failure of the planning commission to act within 60 days, or such further time to which the applicant may agree, shall be deemed to be a decision of denial.
2. Factors for Approval of Murals. The factors to be considered by the planning commission for installation of a mural shall include, but are not limited to the following:
 - (a) Art Work. The mural design does not include elements that would be considered inappropriate and/or indecent by community standards and the art work provided is

sufficient and accurate for review.

- (b) Location Appropriate. The proposed mural placement on the building does not negatively impact vehicular or pedestrian traffic once installed and does not disrupt the properties landscaping and maintenance activities.
- (c) Placement in Neighborhood/Surrounding Area. How many murals are in the neighborhood/surrounding area and what impact could the new mural have on existing ones.
- (d) Scale and Placement on Building. Is the scale of the mural on the exterior wall and view from public right-of-way properly designed and placed. Does the mural design minimizes alterations to the existing façade of the building including windows or doors.
- (e) Enhancement and Activation. How will the proposed mural enhance and activate the pedestrian and streetscape experience.
- (f) Installation Process. The applicant has sufficiently documented how the exterior wall will be prepared prior to installation of the mural, how the mural will be installed and what if any city permits will be required (right-of-way permit), documentation regarding public utilities being disturbed either on the building or overhead.
- (g) Maintenance and Removal. Written document has been provided regarding the future maintenance and/or removal of the mural.

3. Authority to Grant Iconic Sign Designation and Maintenance. The planning commission has authority, in connection with an application, to grant approval of the application for iconic sign designation, subject to the following regulations.

- a. Review. The planning commission shall, within 90 days of receiving a complete application, either grant the application by written findings stating the reasons therefor, deny the application, or grant the application with modifications or conditions. The failure of the planning commission to act within 90 days, or such further time to which the applicant may agree, shall be deemed to be a decision of denial.
- b. Factors for Approval of Iconic Sign Designation. Iconic sign standards are intended to provide for the preservation of the city's unique character, history, or identity as reflected in its historic and iconic signs. A sign may be designated as an iconic sign if the planning commission determines that the sign is structurally safe or capable of being made so without materially altering its historical character or significance, and the applicant presents a proposed maintenance program that addresses general maintenance, repair, restoration, and other potential future modifications (e.g., text changes).

In addition, the planning commission must determine that the sign meets a majority of the following criteria:

- 1. The sign has been in continuous existence at its present location for at least 10 years.
 - 2. The sign is associated with historic figures, events, or locations within the city; is recognized as a popular focal point in the community; or reflects the history or historical use of the building or the history of the city.
 - 3. The sign is of exemplary technology, craftsmanship, or design for the period in which it was constructed; uses historic sign materials or means of illumination; or is unique in that it demonstrates extraordinary aesthetic quality, creativity, or innovation.
- c. *Factors for Approval of Iconic Sign Repair or Restoration.* Any repair or restoration to an iconic sign requires a permit and shall be reviewed by the planning commission by the above described process, and must comply with the following:

1. The sign will be restored and repaired to its substantially original condition, using the same color scheme, graphics, and materials to the extent practicable in order to replicate the original appearance of the sign;
 2. Text changes either match or are compatible with existing text in material(s), letter size, font/typography; and
 3. Restoration or repair of the sign is not expanded beyond the original sign area.
- d. *Iconic Sign Removal.* Nothing in this chapter prohibits the voluntary removal of an iconic sign. Once removed, an iconic sign cannot be replaced unless it is removed as part of an approved sign restoration.

ARTICLE V. DEFINITIONS

This Section provides definitions for terms in this chapter that are technical in nature or that may not reflect a common usage of the term.

***** definitions A – Z with exception of sign related language not included *****

Signs: An object, devise, structure, fixture, or placard using graphics, symbols, and/or written copy designed specifically for the purpose of advertising or identifying an establishment, product, service or activity. Multiple types of signs exist and are defined below:

Awning or canopy: a fixed or movable shading structure, cantilevered or otherwise entirely supported from a building, used to protect outdoor spaces from sun, rain, and other natural conditions.

Banner: a temporary lightweight sign that is made of flexible, nondurable materials such as fabric, cloth or plastic and is typically affixed to a building or accessory structure. A banner sign does not include a feather or pennant sign.

Billboard: An off-premises sign which contains a message unrelated to or not advertising a business transacted or goods sold or produced on the premises on which the sign is located.

Business frontage: The maximum linear width between exterior wall(s) of a building, or in the case of a multi-tenant building, the maximum linear width between the exterior and/or demising walls of an individual tenant located at street level and having an individual exterior entrance. Building frontage must abut a public street or a parking lot abutting a public street; it is measured in a single straight line parallel, or essentially parallel, with the abutting public street or parking lot. The building frontage is used to determine the maximum square footage of wall signs. A corner lot is considered to have a building frontage abutting each public street or parking lot; maximum signage is calculated individually per building frontage.

Donor or memorial sign: a sign that contains names, acknowledgements, or factual information to acknowledge or honor a benefactor, volunteer, or individual associated with the structure or site upon which it is located.

Electronic message center: an electronic changeable message board, including an electronic screen or monitor, which is not an animated sign.

Expressive sign: a temporary sign that promotes or expresses an individual's personal non-commercial ideology, belief, value, or message. Examples of expressive signs include, but are limited to, signs expressing political beliefs, supporting clubs or sports teams, and expressing religious views.

Feather flag: A temporary sign applied to cloth, paper, flexible plastic, or fabric of any kind with only such material for backing, are generally a single sign attached to a support post and typically having a dimensional ratio of four high to one wide and move in the wind to attract attention. This can also be referred to as a feather banner or feather sign.

Flag: Any fabric, banner or bunting containing distinctive color, letters or symbols.

Freestanding sign: A sign that is not affixed to a separate structure or building but is affixed to the ground, including but limited to pole signs or monument/ground signs.

Hanging attention device: A temporary visual display, sign, or object extending from the face of a building typically by a pole on an angle used to draw attention to the space or business. Examples can include flags, balloons or windsocks or similar items

Historical marker sign: a plaque bearing historical information related to the nearby structure, land or area upon which it is located (i.e., date of construction, early owners and builder, etc.)

Iconic sign: A sign found in its sustainably original form or construction that exemplifies historical, cultural or architectural features or is deemed to be unusual, significant, or meaningful to the city streetscape or the city's history.

Inflatable sign: a sign composed of an inflatable, nonporous bag.

Marquee: a permanent structure constructed of rigid materials that projects from the exterior wall of a building.

Monument sign: A base-mounted, freestanding sign placed on the ground and not attached to any building or other structure. A monument sign includes a solid supporting base of at least twelve inches in height and a width equal to or greater than the width of the sign face.

Mural: A design, graphics, or representation painted or drawn on a wall or other structure which does not contain commercial copy, advertising symbols, lettering, trademarks or other references to a particular entity, product or service located on the premises where the mural is located, or any other premise.

Obscene: Any material that meets all of the following criteria:

a. The average individual, applying contemporary community standards, would find the material, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest.

b. The reasonable person would find the material, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

c. The material depicts or describes sexual conduct in a patently offensive way

Official legal notice: Notices required by law, signs erected by a governmental agency or public utility

Off-premises sign: A sign which contains a message unrelated to or not advertising a business transacted or goods sold or produced on the premises on which the sign is located. Sometimes referred to as a billboard and can be free-standing or attached to a building.

On-site informational sign: a sign that identifies entrances and exits, safety precautions, open and closed information, warnings and other such incidental information for the property upon which the sign is located, including drive-thru menu boards, which is of a minimum size and height to provide the necessary information while not extending above the parapet, eave or wall of the building. On-site informational signs are located on entirely on private property and do not extend or have the ability to extend over lot lines.

Pennant sign: a geometric piece of fabric or other material, commonly attached by string, with rows of loose materials, streamers, shapes, or strands, or supported on small poles intended to flap in the wind and used to draw attention. A pennant sign is not a feather flag.

Permanent sign: a sign that has a permanent location on the ground or which is painted on or attached to a structure having a permanent location and which meets the structural requirements for signs as established in the building code.

Pole sign: a freestanding sign that is affixed, attached, or erected on a pole that is not an integral part of or attached to a building or structure.

Portable changeable message board or sign: A sign containing a changeable message and designed to be transported or moved and not permanently attached to the ground, a building, or other structure.

Projecting sign: a double-faced sign attached to and not parallel with a building or wall.

Reader board: a portion of a sign, with written representation, emblem, graphic, logo, symbol or other display that can be changed periodically, either manually or electronically without altering the face surface of the sign, whether or not displayed is periodically rearranged. This definition excludes sandwich boards.

Roof sign: a sign which is erected, constructed and maintained above any portion of the roof or parapet.

Sandwich board sign: a free-standing, portable, temporary sign consisting of two faces connected and hinged at the top and whose message is targeted to pedestrians; it is also known as an A-frame sign or inverted T-shaped sign.

Sign: An object, device, display or structure, or part thereof situated outdoors which is used to advertise or identify an object, person, institution, organization, business, product, service, event or location by any means including words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, colors, motion illumination or projected images.

“Signs” do not include the following:

- a. Flags which do not advertise a business, product or service, not larger than 30 square feet and affixed to permanent flagpoles or flagpoles mounted to buildings, subject to the maximum building height of the zoning district it is in and located on private property. However, if such flags are greater than 30 square feet, they are considered signs and are subject to regulations in this Section 71-30 Sign standards.
- b. Seasonal decorations which do not advertise a business, product or service.
- c. Interior signs that are not visible from adjacent property or public rights-of-way.
- d. Merchandise, pictures or models of products or services incorporated in a window display.
- e. Governmental, educational, military, religious, fraternal, and civic symbols or crests.
- f. Tablets or plates containing only the building’s name and/or date the building was installed when cut into the masonry surface or permanently affixed to the building.
- g. Time and temperature devices not related to a product and not larger than six square feet.
- h. Works of art, including murals, which do not advertise a business, product or service.
- i. Address numbers in compliance with the International Property Maintenance Code, Premises identification.

Sign structure: poles, posts, walls, frames, brackets, or other supports holding a sign in place.

Snipe sign: Any sign tacked, nailed, posted, pasted, glued, or otherwise attached to trees, poles, stakes, fences, public benches, streetlights, or other objects, or placed on any public property in the public right-of-way or on any private property with or without the permission of the property owner for commercial uses.

Temporary sign: Any sign which is erected or displayed on a non-permanent basis for a limited period of time. Examples of temporary signages include, but not limited to, a banner sign, construction sign, garage sale sign, political sign, expressive sign, real estate sign, and sandwich board sign.

Transported sign: A sign attached to or pulled by a vehicle that may be displayed or affixed to a moveable object such as but not limited to a car, truck, trailer, or similar transportation device. A transported sign is not a vehicle sign.

Vehicle sign: A sign, painted or otherwise, attached to an operable vehicle or pulled trailer that is regularly used and moved. A vehicle sign is not a transported sign.

Wall sign: any sign mounted or attached to and supported by the wall of any part of a building or structure and in which the horizontal sign surface is parallel to the building wall or structure.

Window sign: any sign painted on, affixed to or placed against any window intended to be viewed from the outside.

Memorandum



Date: September 1, 2026

To: Planning Commission Members

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: Resignation Announcement, Vacancy and Appointment of Chairperson

Background

Tony Houser submitted a written resignation letter to city staff on Wednesday, August 12th stating he was resigning from the Planning Commission effective immediately. Mr. Houser's term expires in June 2027 and was serving as Chairperson.

There are seven members on the Planning Commission which includes one City Commissioner. Terms end June 30th each year and appointments are made for 3-year terms or to fill an unexpired term. Members can remain on the Commission until an appointment has been made. Below is the existing membership with term expirations:

<u>Membership</u>	<u>Term Ending</u>
Vacant	2027
John Wegglesworth	2029
Jen Gerry	2027
Jake Brown	2028
Matt Pleasant	2029
Peter Lysy	2028
Dan Vigansky	2026 City Commissioner

The Planning Commission Bylaws state "members must be qualified electors of the City of Buchanan or another local unit of government except that no more than two (2) members may reside outside of the city. Earlier this year when there was a vacancy the second applicant withdrew their name from consideration. Please let staff know if we should contact the individual or post the vacancy.

The adopted Bylaws state the Commission elects a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary annually after July 1st. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall serve as Acting Chairperson for the meeting. Since the Chairperson has resigned from the Commission, it would be appropriate for the Commission to elect a new Chairperson until the term ends on June 30th. If the new Chairperson holds an elected position, it would be appropriate to fill the vacant created.

A simple motion to elect someone as Chairperson with a roll call vote is needed.

To Whom IT may Concern.

I Anthony Houser Resign From the Buchanan
City Planning Commission Effective Today
8/12/26

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. Houser', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Memorandum



Date: September 1, 2026

To: Buchanan Planning Commission

From: Kristen Gundersen, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: **Master Plan – Review Revised Future Land Use Map, Objectives-Goals-Tasks and Next Steps**

Future Land Use Map

During the July 14th meeting, Marcy Hamilton from the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission attended the meeting and reviewed the Future Land Use map with the Commission and changes were made. The purpose of the map is to envision the future land uses on property. This map does not change the adopted zoning map but helps to guide future development.

Staff have worked with Ms. Hamilton, and additional changes have been made for the Planning Commission to review and comment on. Attached is the draft revised map for review and discussion, below is summary of the changes:

- The Future Land Use categories have been updated to better reflect the current zoning map and the intent of the districts. Open Space has been expanded to include the city owned cemetery.
- The multiple-family and assisted living developments near Rynearson and Carrol Street have been changed from Neighborhood Center (NC) to Residential as NC would allow for numerous commercial uses within the established residential neighborhood.
- The Industrial area south of River Street and north of McCoy Creek has been changed to Mixed Use.
- The Mixed Use area near Jordan Street and South Redbud Trail has been expanded to include the one residential parcel, thus making the entire block Mixed Use.
- The Industrial area located north of the railroad and west of Liberty Street has been expanded to the west to include two parcels owned by the industrial area and Indiana and Michigan Power
- The Downtown area has expanded along West Front Street to include the post office and the art center and along South Oak to include City owned parking lot and city center property in addition to the block bounded by Chicago, Roe, Days and Oak Streets which currently has a mix of residential, mixed-use, institutional/open space and downtown.
- The two parcels on the west side of South Oak between East Alexander and Smith Streets are shown as residential rather than industrial.

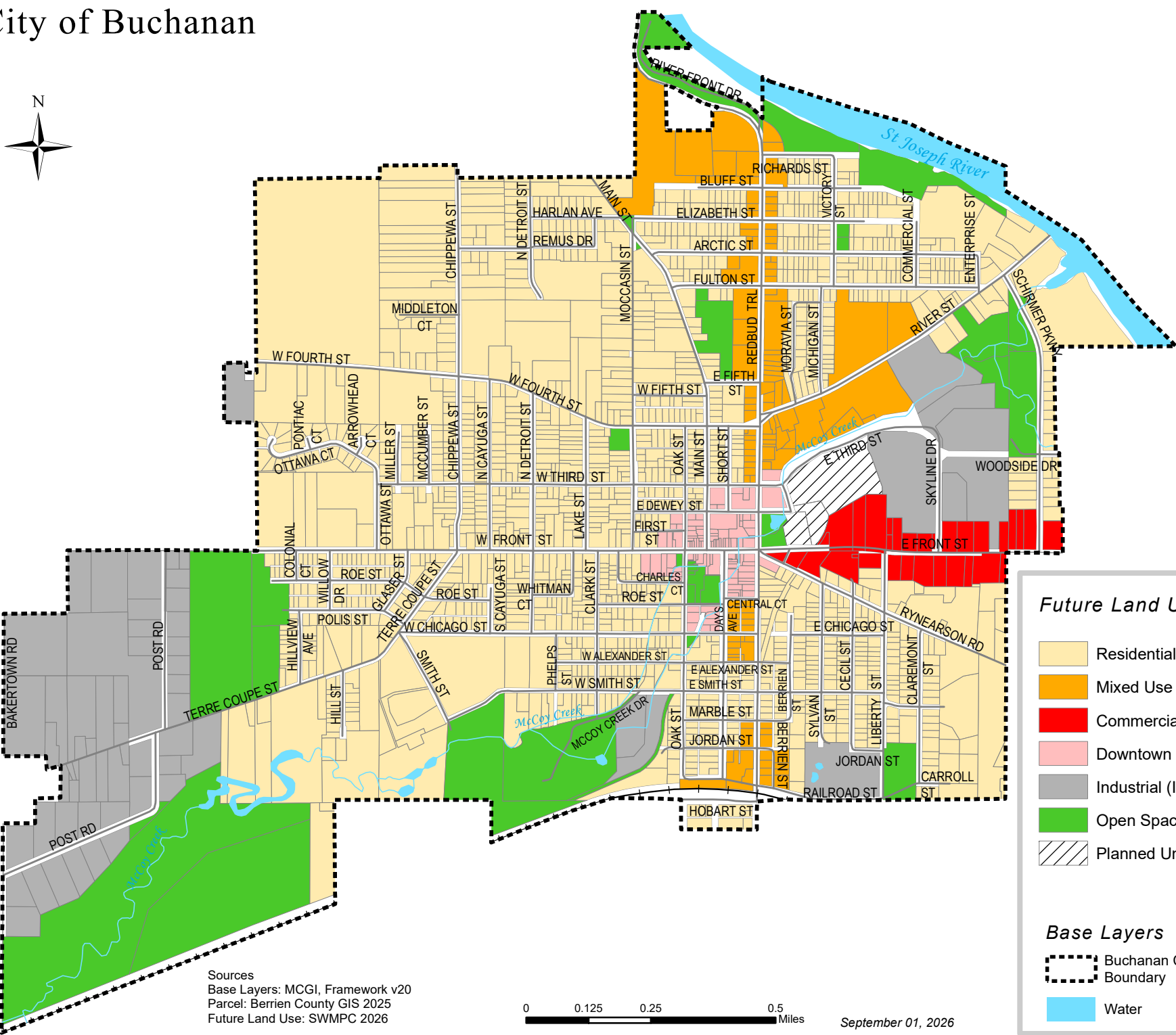
Memorandum

Objectives, Goals and Tasks

The Commission reviewed the initial draft during the August 11th meeting. Staff have incorporated the changes and included comments heard from Planning Commission members after the meeting and city staff. Attached is the updated document for review.

Next Steps

Review and discuss the draft documents. If complete, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission can continue to work on the text of the document for review at a future meeting.



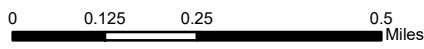
Future Land Use

	Residential (R)
	Mixed Use (MU)
	Commercial (C)
	Downtown (D)
	Industrial (I)
	Open Space (OS)
	Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Base Layers

	Buchanan City Boundary		Road
	Water		Railroad

Sources
Base Layers: MCGI, Framework v20
Parcel: Berrien County GIS 2025
Future Land Use: SWMPC 2026



September 01, 2026

DRAFT 2 - OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND ACTIONS FOR MASTER PLAN (PC08112026 additions)

1. Strong Neighborhoods and Housing – increase housing options, diversity, and supply, support existing housing improvement program, housing incentives, vacant and underutilized buildings/properties, built environment, short-term rentals

#	Goal	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Tool
1.1.a	Diversity and Supply	Educate community regarding need for additional housing options. Prepare information for website and possible newsletters.	On-going		
1.1.b		Support new landlords and renters with “Welcome to Buchanan” resources.	Near		
1.1.c		Continue work on the UDC to improve and address concerns.	On-going		
1.1.d		Review building permits issued to determine if changes are needed to the zoning ordinance to help provide additional housing options.	On-going		
1.1.e		Study and discuss tiny house developments to determine if appropriate and recommend changes to zoning ordinance.	Short		
1.1.f		Monitor the short-term rental regulations and certificates issued and recommend changes asneeded.	On-going		
1.2.a	Housing Improvement	Investigate funding opportunities to help property owners improve dwellings.	On-going		
1.2.b		Work with other organizations and development community to create opportunities to improve the existing housing stock.	Short		
1.2.c		Develop an accessible housing renovations patter book.	Short		
1.2.d		Identify residential properties that need improvement.	On-going		
1.2.e		Investigate and develop resources for aging in place.	Short		
1.3.a	Housing Incentives	Investigate funding incentives, opportunities, and sources to help create low and moderate housing options in the community.	On-going		
1.3.b		Work with development community to educate the housing incentives available on a local and statewide basis.	On-going		
1.3.c		Promote the Buchanan Promise program.	On-going		
1.4.a	Vacant and Under-Utilized Buildings	Implement adopted ordinance requiring registration of vacant and under-utilized buildings.	On-going		
1.4.b		Work with property owners to reactivate buildings and properties.	On-going		

2. Vibrant Community –natural resources (wetlands, forested areas, streams, river), connecting trails, walkability, complete streets, architecture, historic districts, art, culture, education, non-profits, public events					
#	Goal	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Tool
2.1.a	Maintain and Enhance Natural Resources	Encourage the use of natural landscaping in community parks, around public facilities and on private land, where appropriate.	Long		
2.1.b		Encourage development along water ways while providing public access to the water.	On-going		
2.1.c		Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).	On-going		
2.2.a	Connect trails, improve walkability	Continue to promote the 50/50 sidewalk replacement program.	On-going		
2.2.b		Look for opportunities to expand existing trail systems within the community while eliminating any known gaps.	Long		
2.2.c		Establish regulations for sidewalk to be installed when vacant property is developed.	Short		
2.2.d		Pursue Trail Town designation	Short		
2.3.a	Architecture, heritage, historic character	Establish list of appropriate locations in need of placemaking activities.	Near		
2.3.b		Encourage activating alleys in commercial areas to be enjoyed by the community.	Short		
2.3.c		Pursue placemaking funding opportunities.	Short		
2.3.d		Investigate opportunities for façade grants or low interest loans for historic buildings.	Near		
2.3.e		Promote community events.	On-going		
2.3.f		Encourage private property owners with eligible historic buildings to pursue designation on the National Register.	On-going		
2.4.a	Gateways, parks and streets	Expand beautification efforts (entryway signage and landscaping) to enhance the appearance of the public places and gateways into the City.	Near		
2.4.b		Enhance streetscapes and public places to include pedestrian-friendly features such as trees, street furniture, bike racks, trash receptacles, and pedestrian scale lighting.	On-going		
2.4.c		Improve linkages between downtown and established trails.	Long		
2.4.d		Implement the goals and objectives identified within the BARB Master Plan.	On-going		
2.4.e		Update parks plans as required every 5-years.	Short		
2.4.f		Ensure all parks are accessible by non-motorized transportation and provide safe and convenient bike parking.	On-going		
2.4.g		Pursue grant funding to support identified park projects.	On-going		

3. Infrastructure, Public Assets, Utilities and Services – streets, alleys, sidewalks, trails, sewer, water, stormwater, city owned buildings, asset management, parks/recreation facilities and programming, canopy trees (Tree City USA), public parking, broadband, capital improvement planning, public transportation, waste disposal and recycling, brush/yard waste, snow removal

#	Goal	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Tool
3.1.a	Public Assets	Establish and maintain a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for large budget projects.	On-going		
3.1.b		Continue to evaluate the condition of local streets and utilities on an annual basis.	On-going		
3.1.c		Develop plans to implement sidewalk, trail extensions and corridor improvements leading to destination points and visual elements in the City.	Long		
3.1.d		Continue developing the City's geographic information system (GIS) to assist with management of community planning and the development of city assets.	On-going		
3.1.e		Create a plan for the ongoing maintenance of vegetation within and along rivers, creeks and other water bodies.	On-going		
3.1.f		Evaluate city owned buildings to determine existing and future needs.	Near		
3.1.g		Investigate and develop a community wide WIFI/broadband project.	Short		
3.2.a	Tree City USA	Create a comprehensive plan for the City's tree canopy that identifies a strategy to replace dead or diseased trees, prune trees when needed, manage the spread of tree diseases, and maintain or increase the city's overall tree canopy.	Short		
3.2.b		Support the ongoing street tree planting program and designation as a Tree City USA community.	On-going		
3.2.c		Identify a consistent funding source for tree planting, maintenance and watering.	Near		
3.3.a	Waste, Brush and Recycling	Provide efficient and accessible solid waste disposal options within the city.	Near		
3.3.b		Continue to host City-wide clean-up days annually.	On-going		
3.4.a	Parking and Transportation	Improve city owned parking lots and work to address needs of business owners for waste, recycling and grease removal.	Short		
3.4.b		Improve overnight parking opportunities for residents living downtown.	Short		
3.4.c		Promote the need for an Amtrak flag stop near Redbud Trail.	Long		
3.4.d		Investigate and develop opportunities for providing additional public transportation.	Long		
3.4.e		Connect with and educate elected and appointed officials the need for a flag stop.	On-going		
3.4.f		Pursue grants that will support the establishment of an Amtrak flag stop.	On-going		

4. Effective Government – responsive, transparency, communication, public participation, fair treatment, land use and zoning, code enforcement, attain/maintain Redevelopment Ready Certification and implement best practices, participate in regional bodies/efforts (NATS, economic development organizations, etc), cooperation with local governments and the County

#	Goal	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Tool
4.1.a	Responsive, transparent and clear communications.	Ensure the city's communication programs are accurate, maintained, and easily accessible for all community members including individuals with no internet access and those with disabilities.	On-going		
4.1.b		Provide clear, consistent written correspondence and information when necessary.	On-going		
4.1.c		Encourage the use of the City's website to disperse information, such as planning-related resources, news releases, agendas, meeting minutes, financial information, adopted regulations and plans and any forms.	On-going		
4.1.d		Communicate with property owners and tenants of the responsibilities and expectations of the city based on established rules and regulations.	On-going		
4.1.e		Communication with property owners and tenants should be done via printed materials and through online opportunities to reach as many as possible.	On-going		
4.1.f		Look for ways to streamline approval processes.	On-going		
4.1.g		Investigate other avenues for communication such as text alters or email blasts.	Near		
4.1.h		Develop work order/maintenance system for city assets.	Near		
4.2.a	Public Participation and Fair Treatment	Encourage public participation in local government, including voting, services on board and commissions and volunteerism.	On-going		
4.2.b		Work to obtain a diverse group of volunteers for appointment boards and commissions	On-going		
4.2.c		Provide different opportunities for community engagement while meeting public notice requirements.	On-going		
4.2.d		Conduct joint meetings annually of the City Commission, Planning Commission and Downtown Development Authority.	On-going		
4.2.e		When appropriate conduct community and neighborhood public forums to solicit public feedback from all demographic sections of the City.	On-going		
4.2.f		Identify populations that are missing from critical community conversations, committees, and leadership positions, and develop relationships to bring all groups to the table.	On-going		
4.2.g		Evaluate and update programming as needed to meet community needs and to diversify offerings.	On-going		

4. Effective Government – responsive, transparency, communication, public participation, fair treatment, land use and zoning, code enforcement, attain/maintain Redevelopment Ready Certification and implement best practices, participate in regional bodies/efforts (NATS, economic development organizations, etc), cooperation with local governments and the County

#	Goal	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Tool
4.3.a	Land Use, Zoning, Development Regulations	Consistently enforce the current Unified Development Code and other City Ordinances.	On-going		
4.3.b		Work to ensure the Unified Development Code is consistent with goals and objectives of Master Plan.	Short		
4.3.c		Follow and research advances in land use, zoning and code enforcement to help maintain the goals and objectives of the community while creating an accommodating atmosphere for the different types of development.	On-going		
4.3.d		Review changes to the UDC associated with green infrastructure such as the use of permeable pavers, solar panels, rain barrels to minimize impact on adjacent property owners.	Long		
4.3.e		Create payment in lieu of parking provisions.	Near		
4.3.f		Conduct annual review of goals and tasks found in the Master Plan. At a minimum review the Master Plan at five-year intervals per state law.	On-going		
4.4.a	Code Enforcement and Property Maintenance	Consistently and fairly enforce Unified Development Code and other City Ordinances.	On-going		
4.4.b		Review existing regulations pertaining to blight and property maintenance and recommend needed changes.	On-going		
4.4.c		Continue to improve property maintenance ordinances and enforcement.	On-going		
4.4.d		Research and establish a property maintenance program.	Near		
4.5.a	Engement with state, regional and local agencies	Work with different agencies to help advance the needs of the community.	On-going		
4.5.b		Participate in workshops to increase knowledge of opportunities available.	On-going		
4.5.c		When appropriate investigate opportunities to create shared services with surrounding communities.	On-going		
4.5.d		Where possible become involved with boards and commissions of professional organizations.	On-going		

4. Effective Government – responsive, transparency, communication, public participation, fair treatment, land use and zoning, code enforcement, attain/maintain Redevelopment Ready Certification and implement best practices, participate in regional bodies/efforts (NATS, economic development organizations, etc), cooperation with local governments and the County

#	Goal	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Tool
4.6.a	Staffing and Training	Review staffing levels to determine if and where changes may need to take place to address changing needs of the community.	On-going		
4.6.b		Allocate sufficient resources to ensure adequate staffing and the ability to fund training opportunities for staff along with elected and appointed officials.	On-going		
4.6.c		Improve and expand skills and services of public safety employees and volunteers.	On-going		
4.7.a	Encourage prudent use of City financial resources.	Encourage the use of standards of the Certificate of Financial Achievement Award as best practices for the City.	On-going		
4.7.b		Encourage the City to continue to maintain a General Fund balanced budget.	On-going		
4.7.c		Coordinate implementation and capital improvements plan efforts with the City Commission and appropriate departments.	On-going		

5. Economic Vitality – downtown, DDA, commercial, industrial, tourism, economic development, redevelopment, marketing, business and entrepreneurship support					
#	Goal	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Tool
5.1.a	Balanced growth while maintaining small town character	Encourage and recruit businesses that provide goods, services, recreation, and employment opportunities that contribute to the vibrance of the community while meeting the needs of the community while attracting new residents.	On-going		
5.1.b		Work with the various cultural and arts organizations to promote arts and cultural programs in the city.	On-going		
5.1.c		Promote the vitality of downtown by emphasizing the entertainment and cultural center, restaurants, library, parks and shopping.	On-going		
5.2.a	Economic Development	Work with the Buchanan Chamber, DDA, Southwest Regional Chamber, Cornerstone Alliance and local businesses to enhance the City's economy and ability to provide affordable housing opportunities.	On-going		
5.2.b		Continue working toward Certified status through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Redevelopment Ready Communities program.	Near		
5.2.c		Continue to promote and implement the City's Brownfield Redevelopment Authority programs.	On-going		
5.2.d		Investigate and promote state funding programs to help fill gaps in funding needed for both new and redevelopment opportunities	On-going		
5.2.e		Adopt policies regarding the implementation of specific incentive tools.	Near		
5.2.f		Identify priority development sites to help property owner market.	Near		
5.2.g		Establish façade improvement program for commercial buildings.	Near		
5.2.h		Create and maintain available resources for financial assistance for business community.	On-going		
5.2.i		Determine if a corridor plan for the area east of Redbud Trail along East Front Street is needed and if so move forward with the process.	Short		
5.3.a	Marketing	Coordinate with local agencies on the marketing of the community.	On-going		
5.3.b		Identifying a branding program for the community and downtown area.	Near		
5.3.c		Implement wayfinding program to direct residents and visitors to the City's cultural, architectural and institutional resources.	Near		