



GLADSTONE PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

City Hall Chambers – 1100 Delta Avenue
January 06, 2026
5:00 PM

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL AND/OR CORRECTIONS OF:

- [1.](#) Planning Commission Meeting Minutes - October 7, 2025

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARINGS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- [2.](#) 2025 Zoning Annual Report
- [3.](#) 2026 Regular Meeting Schedule

PUBLIC COMMENT

INFORMATION SHARING

- [4.](#) Future Land Use Map
5. City Manager Updates
6. Gladstone Ski Hill Updates
7. Sign Ordinance Amendment Updates
- [8.](#) "The Depot" Park
9. Winter Tax Bill Error

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

The City of Gladstone will provide all necessary, reasonable aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon five days notice to the City of Gladstone. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City of Gladstone by writing or calling City Hall at (906) 428-2311.

Posted: 12-30-2025 | Patricia West, Community Development Director |
pwest@gladstonemi.gov



GLADSTONE PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

City Hall Chambers – 1100 Delta Avenue
October 07, 2025
5:00 PM

Item 1.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Zoning Administrator, Patricia West, called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM ET.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT	ABSENT
Howard Haulotte	
John DeFiore	
Sam Hewitt	
Mike Kennedy	
Jason Leonard	
Nick Nastoff	
Jennifer Harding	

City Commission Present: Mayor, Joe Thompson

Staff Present: Patricia West

1. Election of Officers

Motion made by DeFiore, seconded by Leonard to appoint Howard Haulotte as the Planning Commission Chairperson.

ROLL CALL	VOTE
Howard Haulotte	Yea
John DeFiore	Yea
Sam Hewitt	Yea
Mike Kennedy	Yea
Jason Leonard	Yea
Nick Nastoff	Yea
Jennifer Harding	Yea

MOTION CARRIED.

Motion made by Hewitt, seconded by Leonard to appoint John DeFiore as the Planning Commission Vice-Chair/Secretary.

ROLL CALL	VOTE
Howard Haulotte	Yea
John DeFiore	Yea
Sam Hewitt	Yea
Mike Kennedy	Yea
Jason Leonard	Yea
Nick Nastoff	Yea
Jennifer Harding	Yea

MOTION CARRIED.

Zoning Administrator, Patricia West, then handed the meeting over to Commission Chairperson Haulotte. Item 1.

APPROVAL AND/OR CORRECTIONS OF:

2. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes - September 2, 2025

Motion made by Kennedy, seconded by Leonard to approve the Planning Commission Meeting minutes from September 2, 2025.

Voting Yea: Haulotte, DeFiore, Hewitt, Kennedy, Leonard, Nastoff, Harding

MOTION CARRIED.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

3. Planning Commission Term Reappointments | Sam Hewitt & Jason Leonard

Both Commissioner Hewitt and Commissioner Leonard expressed interest in continuing with the renewal of their term appointments. The Planning Commission collectively supported the recommendation of both commissioners to the Mayor for reappointment to the Planning Commission, subject to the approval by a majority vote of the members elect of the City Commission.

4. Delta County Planning Commission Liaison

Motion made by DeFiore, seconded by Hewitt to appoint Commissioner Leonard as a liaison to the Delta County Planning Commission.

Voting Yea: Haulotte, DeFiore, Hewitt, Kennedy, Leonard, Nastoff, Harding

MOTION CARRIED.

5. Site Plan | Gladstone Senior Corporation (303 N 8th St)

Motion made by Leonard, seconded by Hewitt to approve the construction of the proposed garage at 303 N 8th St as presented.

Voting Yea: Haulotte, DeFiore, Hewitt, Kennedy, Leonard, Nastoff, Harding

MOTION CARRIED.

6. Site Plan | Construction Resource Management Site Plan (202 Delta Ave)

Motion made by Hewitt, seconded by Kennedy to approve the construction of the proposed addition at **202 Delta Ave** as presented.

Voting Yea: Haulotte, DeFiore, Hewitt, Kennedy, Leonard, Nastoff, Harding

MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

INFORMATION SHARING

In addition to the items below, West also shared that the City of Gladstone is seeking an alternate the Board of Review. Chairperson, Haulotte, currently serves on the Board of Review and provided an overview of responsibilities.

7. DDA's Facade Grant Deadline

The deadline for the grant opportunity is October 31, 2025, and the DDA has set aside \$30,000 in funding to be used in 2026. An overview of the grant requirements is available on the DDA's webpage.

Item 1.

8. Fernwood Cemetery Clean-Up

The City of Gladstone is reminding the community that our Fernwood Cemetery clean-up is currently taking place. Individuals are encouraged to collect the belongings that are placed at the gravesite of their loved ones in preparation for the winter the months. These items can be placed back out in the spring.

9. New Business | Gladstone Savers

Gladstone Savers has joined our downtown community, and is located at 11 S 9th St.

10. New Business | R.E.E. LeDeau

R.E.E. LeDeau is a new outpatient facility working with autism in adolescent youth. They will be located at 2141 County 21st Rd 420, formally known as the Caddyshack or Oaks Restaurant.

11. Notice of General Election on November 4, 2025

Reminder of the upcoming election for the three City Commission seats.

12. The Oaks Golf Course

A lease agreement is in the works for the Oaks Golf Course, with the intent of it to return to use as a golf course.

13. Sign Ordinance Review

West shared that she will be coordinating a meeting for the Sign Ordinance Subcommittee during the month of October, and has set a goal to have the ordinance amendment drafted for the spring.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Chairperson, Haulotte, shared a funding opportunity for pollinator plots through the Delta County Conservation District. The Planning Commission brainstormed potential locations, and ideas included the Native American Statues near the Gladstone Pavilion, as well as the pocket park at 701 Delta Ave.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 PM ET.



Board:	Planning Commission
Agenda	January 6, 2026
Date:	
Presenter:	Patricia West

Staff Report

Agenda Item Title:

2025 Zoning Annual Report

Background:

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires each Planning Commission to prepare an annual written report to its legislative body summarizing:

- The Commission's operations
- The status of planning activities
- Recommendations to the governing body related to planning and development

The attached draft report provides a comprehensive summary of:

- Membership and meeting activity
- Development review actions taken in 2025
- Zoning permit and administrative activity
- Zoning Board of Appeals activity
- Training and professional development completed by Commissioners and staff
- Significant transitions in staffing and Commission composition
- Other key planning actions undertaken in 2025
- Goals for 2026 to guide future work

Because 2025 was a year of transition with changes in both administrative staffing and four new Planning Commissioner appointments, the draft report places particular emphasis on training, orientation, and major capacity-building efforts. It also outlines several high-impact planning initiatives now under development.

Fiscal Effect:

None

Supporting Documentation:

[DRAFT] 2025 Zoning Annual Report

Recommendation:

Before the report is presented to the City Commission, staff is seeking Planning Commission review to confirm that the document accurately reflects the work completed throughout the year and appropriately conveys the Commission's 2026 goals.

Gladstone

PLANNING COMMISSION

2025 Annual Report

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Membership
3. Meetings
4. Planning Commission Responsibilities
5. Planning Commission Activity in 2025
6. Zoning Permit Activity
7. Zoning Board of Appeals Activity
8. Training
9. Planning Commission Goals

1. Introduction

The City of Gladstone Planning Commission operates under the authority granted by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) and the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006). The Planning Enabling Act establishes the creation, organization, powers, and duties of municipal planning commissions, while the Zoning Enabling Act provides the framework for adopting and administering zoning ordinances, establishing zoning districts, and outlining the responsibilities of officials involved in zoning matters, including the Planning Commission.

In accordance with Section 19 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MCL 125.3819), the Planning Commission is required to prepare an annual written report to the Gladstone City Commission summarizing its operations and outlining the status of planning activities completed during the past year.

The Commission works closely with City staff to develop and annually update the City's planning efforts, administer the Zoning Ordinance and related land use regulations, and collaborate with developers and community partners.

Zoning is one of the Commission's core responsibilities. As a public regulation of land use, zoning divides the community into districts and establishes standards for the use, placement, size, and density of structures and land. These regulations are adopted to protect public health, safety, and welfare; conserve property values; promote compatibility among land uses; prevent overcrowding; and safeguard natural resources. The Gladstone Code of Ordinances further outlines the Commission's membership, duties, and role in master planning, zoning, development review, and long-range community planning.

2. Membership

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires that Planning Commission membership be broadly representative of key segments of the community, including economic, governmental, educational, and social interests, and reflect Gladstone's diverse land use and development characteristics.

Consistent with statutory requirements and the City of Gladstone Planning Commission Bylaws, the Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Commission. Members serve three-year terms.

2025 Planning Commission Members

- Howard Haulotte, Chairperson
- John DeFiore, Vice-Chairperson / Secretary
- Jennifer Harding, Planning Commissioner
- Samuel Hewitt, Planning Commissioner
- Michael Kennedy, Planning Commissioner
- Jason Leonard, Planning Commissioner
- Nicholas Nastoff, Planning Commissioner

3. Meetings

At its organizational meeting on February 4, 2025, the Planning Commission confirmed its regular meeting schedule for the year. The Commission meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the Gladstone City Hall Chambers (1100 Delta Avenue). All meetings were noticed and conducted in compliance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976).

Two meetings were rescheduled to avoid conflicts with local elections:

- May meeting → May 13, 2025
- November meeting → November 11, 2025

In 2025, the Planning Commission held six (6) regular meetings. Meetings scheduled for January, April, May, June, November, and December were canceled due to a lack of actionable business.

Meetings Held in 2025

- February 4, 2025
- March 4, 2025
- July 1, 2025
- August 5, 2025
- September 2, 2025
- October 7, 2025

4. Planning Commission Responsibilities

The Planning Commission is responsible for fulfilling the duties established in their bylaws, Code of Ordinances, and state enabling legislation, including:

- Developing, reviewing, recommending, and periodically updating the City's Master Plan.
- Reviewing and recommending zoning ordinances, zoning district boundaries, and other land-use regulations to ensure consistency with the Master Plan and state law.

- Reviewing development proposals, including subdivision plats, site plans, zoning amendments, and other land-use applications, and making findings and recommendations based on established standards, compatibility, infrastructure, and public welfare.
- Ensuring that public infrastructure, utilities, parks, open spaces, and transportation systems are coordinated with land use planning.
- Overseeing amendments to the Master Plan and related subplans, monitoring implementation progress, and recommending adjustments as needed.
- Serving as the public hearing or recommending body for land use matters in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.
- Preparing and submitting an annual report documenting its operations and planning activities.
- Advising the City Commission, staff, and partner agencies on planning, zoning, development, and capital improvement matters.

Through these responsibilities, the Planning Commission promotes thoughtful, sustainable growth and implements the long-term vision for the City of Gladstone.

5. Planning Commission Activity in 2025

The year 2025 represented a significant period of transition, growth, and capacity-building for both the Planning Commission and the Community Development Department. In July, longtime Zoning Administrator Renée Barron retired, and Patricia West assumed the role, prompting updates to administrative processes and renewed focus on long-term planning priorities.

During the same year, four of the seven Planning Commission members resigned and were replaced. With a majority of the Commission newly appointed, much of 2025 was dedicated to training, orientation, and establishing a shared understanding of zoning procedures, development review standards, and the Master Plan. This foundational work positioned the Commission to enter 2026 with a unified and informed approach to planning.

Although formal development activity was modest, the Commission's work in 2025 laid critical groundwork for several high-impact planning initiatives, including zoning ordinance modernization, long-range planning updates, and improvements to development review processes.

2025 Required Reporting Actions

Action Type	Count
Special / Conditional Uses	0
Planned Unit Developments	0
Zoning Amendments	0
Site Plans	2
Subdivisions / Site Condominiums	1

Grand View Estates Subdivision

A public hearing was held during the August 2025 Planning Commission meeting to review the preliminary plat for Grand View Estates #4. Representatives from Dynamic Design Group presented engineering plans on behalf of Phil & Lee's Homes, the owner of the property proposing the subdivision expansion.

Following the hearing, the Planning Commission approved the preliminary plat and forwarded its recommendation to the City Commission, which approved it on August 25, 2025 after holding an additional public hearing.

Construction is anticipated to begin in 2026, adding 24 new residential lots to the Grand View Estates subdivision.

Other 2025 Planning Commission Activities

City Utility Waiver

In September 2025, the Planning Commission granted a waiver from the City’s utility-connection requirement for a property facing unique infrastructure constraints, including limited easement access and distance from existing mains.

Sign Ordinance Subcommittee

Also in September, the Commission formed a subcommittee to evaluate amendments to the City’s sign ordinance in response to administrative challenges and evolving legal standards following *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* (2015). Recommendations are expected in 2026.

Commission Appointments

New commissioners appointed in 2025 included Michael Kennedy, Nicholas Nastoff, Samuel Hewitt, and Jennifer Harding, replacing four outgoing members and contributing to renewed Commission engagement and alignment.

Sale of City-Owned Land

In August 2025, the Commission reviewed and approved adding the Escanaba Township properties to the City’s list of lands available for sale.

6. Zoning Permit Activity

Demolitions

Two residential demolition permits were issued in 2025. One was the result of a house fire, and the other was at the property owner’s request due to the required amount of investment in the property in order to make the home inhabitable.

Fence Permits

Approved Denied Withdrawn		
27	0	0

Land Divisions

Two land division applications were approved in 2025. Both involved lot-line splits within platted subdivisions and were exempt from the limited splits allowed under the State Land Division Act.

Sign Permits

Approved Denied Withdrawn		
3	0	0

Zoning Compliance for Business Use

All submissions were permitted uses within their applicable districts. One application for an automotive repair facility was withdrawn before Planning Commission review.

Approved Denied Withdrawn

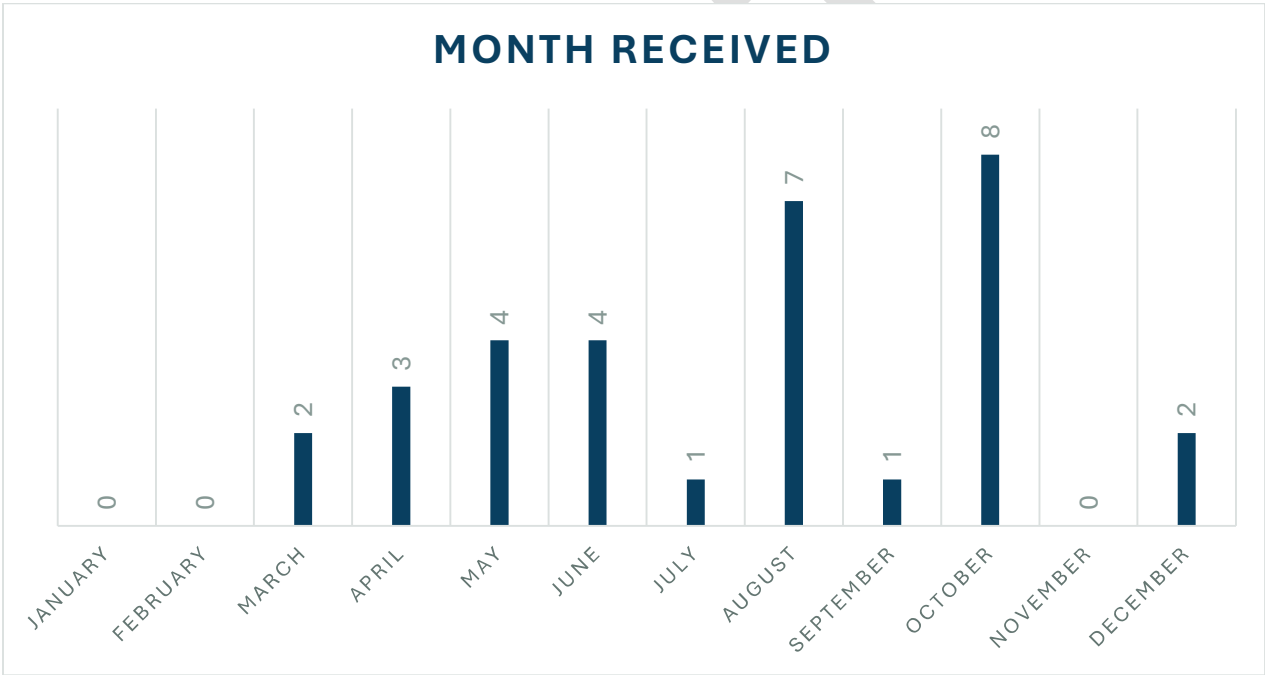
12 0 1

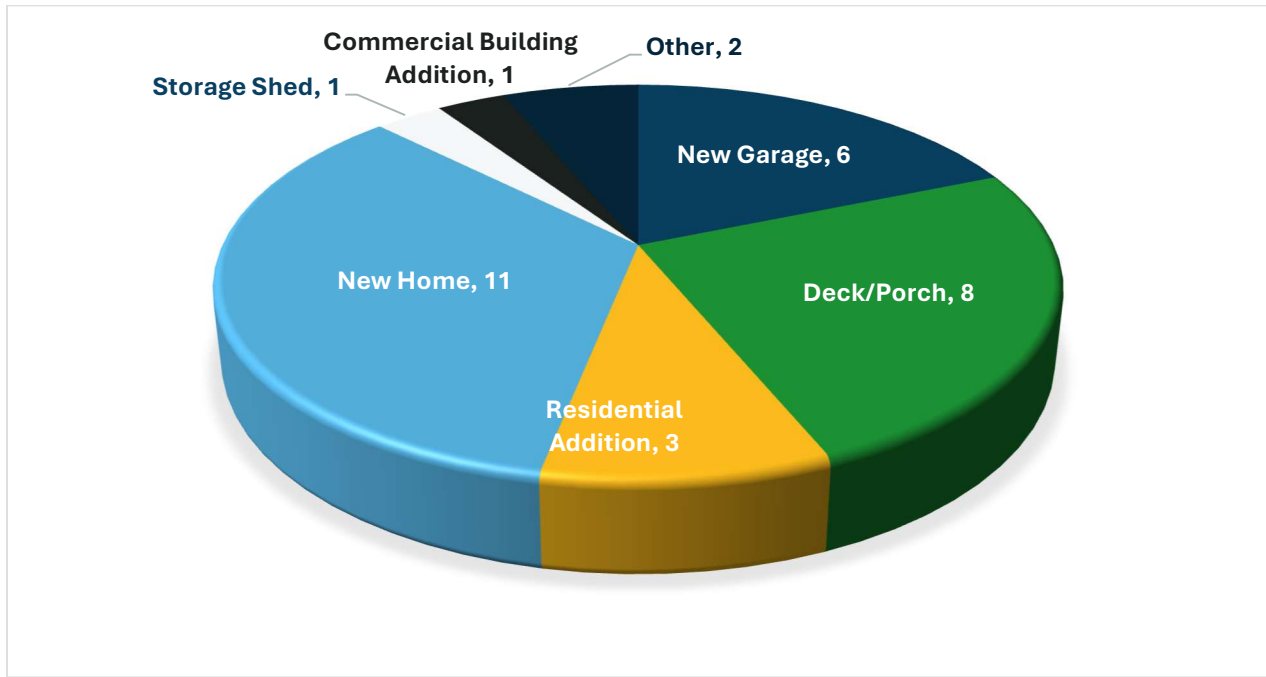
Zoning Land Use Applications

Of the 31 submissions received, two required Planning Commission review due to their location within a Business or Industrial District.

Approved Denied Withdrawn

31 1 0





7. Zoning Board of Appeals Activity

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) provides relief in situations where strict application of the zoning ordinance would cause practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship. The ZBA's responsibilities include appeals of administrative decisions, variance requests, ordinance interpretations, and consideration of certain nonconforming situations.

In Gladstone, the ZBA is composed of the City Commission.

There were no ZBA cases filed in 2025.

8. Training

Because 2025 involved significant transitions in both staffing and Commission membership, substantial emphasis was placed on professional development.

2025 Planning Commissioner Training

Training Program	Leonard Kennedy Nastoff Hewitt		
MAP – Michigan Sign Guidelines	✓	✓	✓
MSU Extension – Citizen Planner	✓	✓	✓

2025 Zoning Administrator Training

Training Program	West
EGLE – Land Division Act	✓
MAP – Michigan Sign Guidelines	✓
MAP – Planning & Zoning Essentials	✓
MIDEAL – AG FOIA Presentation	✓

Training Program	West
------------------	------

MSU Extension – Citizen Planner	✓
---------------------------------	---

Zoning Administrator, Patricia West, is scheduled to complete the MSU Extension Zoning Administrator Certificate and the Leading Rural Michigan Program in 2026.

9. Planning Commission Goals for 2026

The following goals reflect the Commission's commitment to strengthening Gladstone's planning framework, improving intergovernmental coordination, and enhancing development review efficiency.

1. Adopt and Implement Sign Ordinance Amendments
2. Collaborate with the Incoming City Manager to Develop and Maintain a Capital Improvement Plan
3. Use the Master Plan to Guide Municipal Budget and Policy Decisions
4. Strengthen Collaboration with City Boards and Commissions
5. Build Regional Partnerships through the Delta County Planning Commission
6. Incorporate MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) Best Practices
7. Implement BS&A Software to Modernize Internal Planning and Zoning Processes

Gladstone

PLANNING COMMISSION

2026 Regular Meeting Schedule

The regular meeting schedule for the Gladstone Planning Commission will occur on the **first Tuesday of each month at 5:00 PM Eastern Time** unless otherwise noted by an asterisk in the **City Hall Chambers, 1100 Delta Ave, Gladstone, MI.**

In adherence to the Planning Commission By-Laws & Rules of Procedure, a schedule of the meeting dates, times, and places is set at the first meeting of the Planning Commission meeting in each calendar year.

Date	Time
January 6, 2026	5:00 PM
February 3, 2026	5:00 PM
March 3, 2026	5:00 PM
April 7, 2026	5:00 PM
May 5, 2026	5:00 PM
June 2, 2026	5:00 PM
July 7 2026	5:00 PM
August 4, 2026	5:00 PM
September 1, 2026	5:00 PM
October 6, 2026	5:00 PM
*November 10, 2026	5:00 PM
December 1, 2026	5:00 PM
January 5, 2027	5:00 PM

**Meeting deviates from regular schedule.*



Board:	Planning Commission
Agenda	January 6, 2026
Date:	
Presenter:	Patricia West

Staff Report

Agenda Item Title:

Future Land Use Map

Background:

A unique circumstance has presented itself involving a property located at 1301 Delta Avenue. The original structure was lost due to a fire in 2024, and only the basement and foundation remain. The property is currently zoned B-2 (General Business District).

While the surrounding properties are primarily residential in use and considered legal nonconforming structures, the former building on the subject parcel operated as a commercial use consistent with the district.

Recent inquiries have raised questions about the feasibility of residential redevelopment on the site. Under the current zoning ordinance, standalone residential use is not permitted in the B-2 district.

The City's adopted Master Plan and Future Land Use Map designate this area as Central Business District (CBD). As a result, any consideration of a zoning change would need to be evaluated in the context of the Future Land Use Map and broader planning goals, rather than the conditions of a single parcel alone.

Fiscal Effect:

None

Supporting Documentation:

Code of Ordinances | Sec. 30-507. – Nonconforming uses and structures

Code of Ordinances | Sec. 30-548. – B-2 District

Future Land Use Map

Master Plan | Future Land Use Map (Page 31)

Michigan State University Article | How to spot a spot zoning

Recommendation:

The intent of this agenda item is for discussion. There is no current recommendation being proposed by staff.

Sec. 30-507. - Nonconforming uses and structures.**Item 4.**

- (a) **Nonconforming uses and structures within the city are those which do not conform to a zoning provision or requirement of this article VIII, but were lawfully established prior to December 18, 1986, or lawfully established prior to any amendment of this article VIII.** Class A nonconforming uses or structures are those which have been designated by this article or the zoning board of appeals, after application by an interested person or the zoning administrator, upon findings that continuance of such use or structure would not be contrary to the public health, safety or welfare, or the spirit of this article; that the use of the structure does not and is not likely to significantly depress the value of nearby properties; that the use or structure was lawful at the time of its inception; and that no useful purpose would be served by strict application of the provisions or requirements of this article with which the use or structure does not conform. All nonconforming uses and structures not designated as class A are class B nonconforming uses or structures.
- (b) All residential structures lawfully existing on December 18, 1986, are designated as class A nonconforming uses with the right to alter, enlarge and rebuild within the limits set forth in this article for R-2 zoning districts.
- (1) *Procedure for obtaining class A designation; conditions.* A written application shall be filed setting forth the name and address of the applicant, giving a legal description of the property to which the application pertains, and including such other information as may be necessary to enable the zoning board of appeals to make a determination on such designation. The zoning board of appeals may require the furnishing of such additional information as it considers necessary. The notice and hearing procedure before the zoning board of appeals shall be the same as in the case of an application for variance. The decision on such application shall be in writing and shall set forth the findings and reasons on which such decision is based. Any conditions shall be attached to the notice, including any time limit, where necessary, to assure that the use or structure does not become contrary to the public health, safety or welfare, or the spirit and purpose of this article. A vested interest shall not arise of a class A designation, whether it arises from designation in this article or by action of the zoning board of appeals.
- (2) *Revocation of class A designation.* A class A designation shall be revoked, following the same procedure required for designation, upon a finding that, as a result of any change of conditions or circumstances, the use or structure no longer qualifies for a class A designation.
- (3) *Regulations for class A nonconforming uses and structures.* A class A nonconforming use shall not be resumed if it has been abandoned or has been changed to a conforming use for any period of time. A class A structure shall not be used, altered or enlarged in violation of any condition imposed in the designation of such structure as a class A nonconforming structure.
- (4) *Regulations for class B nonconforming uses and structures.* It is the purpose of this article to eliminate class B nonconforming uses and structures as rapidly as permitted by law without payment of compensation. A class B nonconforming use shall not be resumed if it has been abandoned or has been changed to a conforming use for any period of time, or if the structure in which such use is conducted is damaged by fire or other casualty to the extent that the cost of reconstruction or repair exceeds 50 percent of the reproduction cost of such structure. A class B nonconforming structure shall not be enlarged or structurally altered, nor shall it be repaired or reconstructed if it has been damaged by fire or other casualty to the extent that the cost of reconstruction or repair exceeds 50 percent of the reproduction cost of such structure. A class B nonconforming use shall not be changed to a substantially different nonconforming use, nor enlarged so as to make use of more land area than used at the time of becoming nonconforming.
- (c) The legislative body may acquire, by purchase, condemnation, or otherwise, private property or an interest in private property for the removal of nonconforming uses and structures. The legislative body may provide that the cost and expense of acquiring private property may be paid from general funds or assessed to a special district in accordance with the applicable statutory provisions relating to the creation and operation of special assessment districts for public improvements in local units of government. Property acquired under this subsection by a city shall not be used for public housing.
- (d) The elimination of the nonconforming uses and structures in a zoning district is declared to be for a public purpose and for a public use. The legislative body may institute proceedings for condemnation of nonconforming uses and structures under 1911 Public Act No. 149, MCL 213.21 to 213.25.

(Code 1976, § 150.37; Ord. No. 453, § 511, 12-8-1986; Ord. No. 574, 10-27-2008)

State Law reference— Nonconformities, MCL 125.583a.

Sec. 30-548. - B-2 district.

- (a) *Scope and intent.* This section applies to the B-2 district. The intent of the B-2 district is to establish and preserve general commercial areas within the city that are convenient and attractive for a wide range of retail uses and business, government and professional offices. The intent of this district is to encourage the concentration of commercial business to the mutual advantage of both the consumers and merchants and thereby promote the best use of land at certain strategic locations.
- (b)

Permitted principal uses. Permitted principal uses within the B-2 district shall include retail establishments selling gifts, hardware, clothing, drugs, sporting goods, antiques, baked goods, arts and crafts, studios, beauty shops and barbershops, banks, restaurants, cocktail lounges, offices, clinics, personal service establishments, hotels, motels, funeral homes, theaters (except drive-in), and gas stations. Residential occupancy shall be permitted above the ground floor in the district. Item 4.

(c) *Conditional uses.* Conditional uses within the B-2 district shall include open-air business uses, such as sales and rental establishments for trailers, mobile homes, boats, farm equipment, automobile dealers for new or used cars, and the same conditional uses as permitted in the R-3 district.

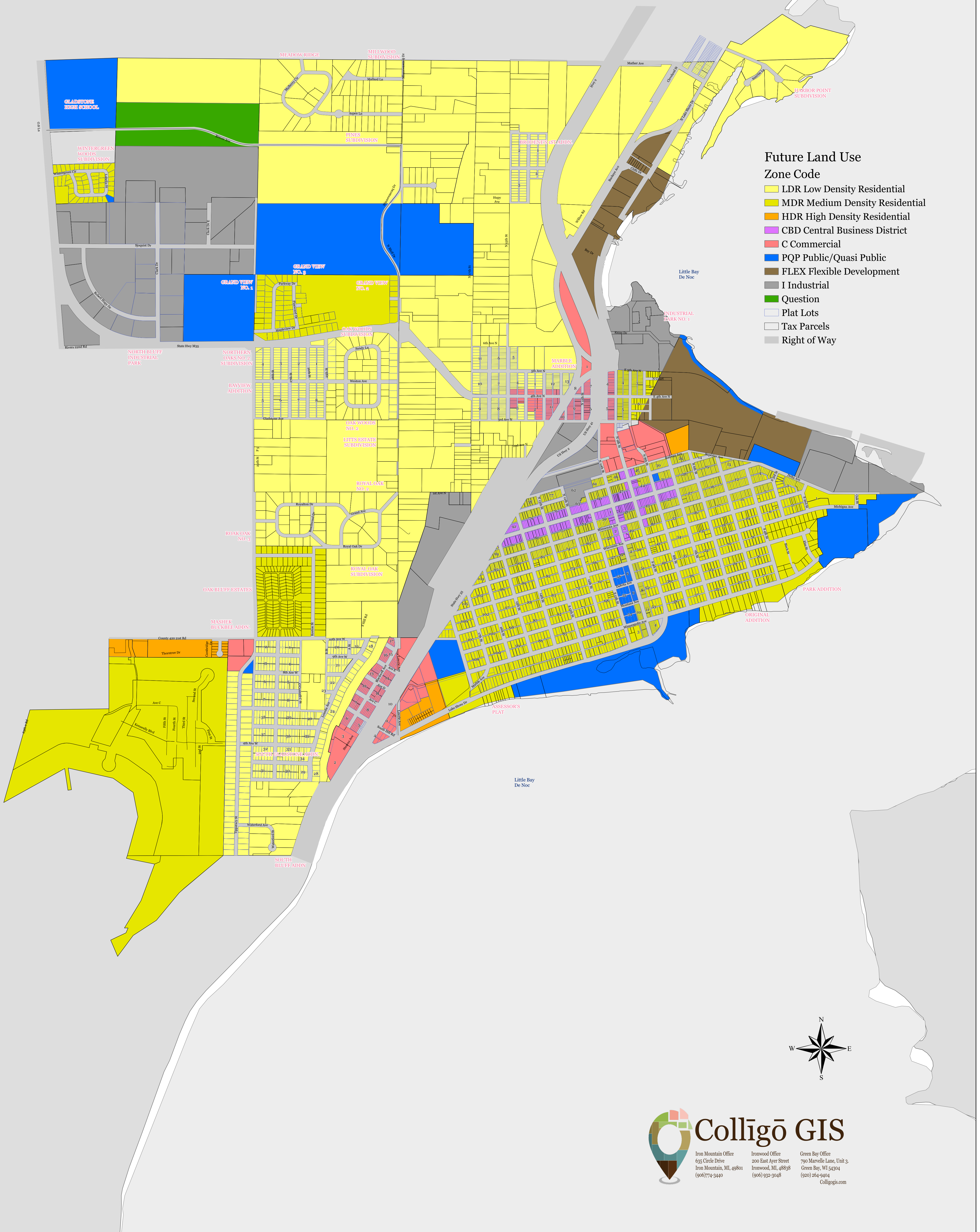
(d) *Prohibited uses.* Prohibited uses within the B-2 district shall include junkyards.

(Code 1976, § 150.11; Ord. No. 453, § 207, 12-8-1986; Ord. No. 503, § 207, 2-26-1996)

Cross reference— Businesses, ch. 10.

State Law reference— Mandatory permitted uses, MCL 125.583b, 125.583c.

CITY OF GLADSTONE | FUTURE LAND USE ZONING MAP



Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use map considers the preceding plans and provides a generalized set of land use classifications. The classifications on this map do not correspond one-to-one with the districts on the current zoning map, but are rather intended to guide future changes to the zoning map and districts established by the Zoning Ordinance. The map divides the city into the following future land use classifications.

Low Density Residential (LDR)

Low Density Residential areas are planned for single family homes on modest-to-large lots and open space conservation developments. Special land uses such as places of worship, unlighted golf courses, and group child care homes are also accommodated in these areas.

Medium Density Residential (MDR)

Medium Density Residential areas are planned for single family homes on relatively small lots, attached single family housing, and planned developments such as site condominiums and manufactured housing parks.

High Density Residential (HDR)

High Density Residential areas are planned for multi-family housing.

Flexible Development (FLEX)

Flexible Development areas are planned for mixed-use development, including retail, hospitality, restaurant, office, high density residential, and public or private open space uses. One possible development tool for these areas is planned unit development, but a new zoning district for these areas would be designed to respond to market demand for varying types of development.

Commercial (C)

Commercial areas are planned primarily for automobile-oriented retail uses, including grocery stores, gas stations, branch banks, convenience and general merchandise stores, and quick-service restaurants. Office uses, including medical offices, are also appropriate for these areas.

Central Business District (CBD)

The Central Business District is Downtown Gladstone. It is planned for mixed use, with a primary focus on municipal uses, specialty retail, galleries, entertainment, quick-service and full-service restaurants, bars, small offices, personal services, and upper floor residential.

Industrial (I)

Industrial areas are planned for industrial uses, including resource processing, manufacturing, assembly, transportation, logistics, construction, recycling, research, technology, and other more intensive activities.

Public/Quasi-Public (PQP)

Public/Quasi-Public areas include schools, parks, playgrounds, the public library, the campground, and miscellaneous municipal uses.

How to spot a spot zoning

Brad Neumann<neuman36@msu.edu>, [Michigan State University Extension](#) - April 13, 2023

When considering a rezoning, remember four key criteria to avoid creating a spot zone.



Photo via iStock.com.

Planning commissions are occasionally presented with requests to change the current zoning of a parcel or parcels to a different zoning district. Sometimes, it is the planning commission that proposes a rezoning of one or more parcels. A rezoning is an amendment of the zoning map and it requires a specific set of steps to be followed in order to ensure due process (see "[For Adoption of a Zoning Ordinance Amendment](#)"). It is the same process for amending the text of the zoning ordinance.

Rezoning property requires consistency with the community's master plan, according to the [Michigan Planning Enabling Act](#). The master plan should include criteria, or guidance for considering zoning amendments. The plan should guide the planning commission with the appropriate zoning district to rezone a property and move towards consistency with the plan. The plan should also guide the planning commission as to when the rezoning is appropriate; for instance, once there are public utilities in place that can serve residential use of a certain density. The [zoning plan](#) portion of the master plan will be key to this review for consistency (also see "[All rezonings are not good rezonings](#)").

A rezoning is sometimes alleged as being a spot zoning. This practice gets its name from the appearance of a small spot of a different color (i.e., zoning district) on a zoning map that otherwise has a large contiguous area in a single zoning district around the spot. Spot zoning is not easily defined and identified, though generally, to be considered a spot zone, the circumstances in question must satisfy the following four criteria:

- The area is small compared to districts surrounding the parcel in question.
- The new district allows land uses inconsistent with those allowed in the vicinity.
- The spot zone would confer a special benefit on the individual property owner not commonly enjoyed by the owners of similar property.
- The existence of the spot zone conflicts with the policies in the text of the master plan and the future land use map.

Rezonings that have the characteristics of spot zoning run a high risk of invalidation if challenged in court and not consistent with the master plan. In some cases, master plans anticipate these relationships and provide for them (for example, a small commercial area may serve a residential neighborhood). In those cases where the master plan supports a relatively small zoning district that is dissimilar to the zoning that surrounds it, this is probably not a spot zone.

The most important thing is consistency with the master plan. Remember, the master plan should have been prepared with extensive public engagement and that process is intended to create a consensus vision of future land use and infrastructure – including the future configuration of zoning districts.

To learn more about spot zoning, read the [Michigan State University Extension](#) public policy brief, "[Removing Spot Zoning From the Fabric of Zoning Practice](#)," or contact a [land use educator](#) for assistance.

