



**WIXOM**  
• MICHIGAN •

# ***GUIDE TO DEVELOPMENT***

**Approval Authorities | Application Process | Review Procedure**

**Updated March 2025**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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KEY CONTACT INFORMATION	3
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS	4
APPROVAL AUTHORITIES TABLE	5
MASTER PLAN	6
ZONING ORDINANCE	6
ZONING MAP	6
ZONING SCHEDULE OF USES, AREA, HEIGHT, PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS	7
FEE SCHEDULE	8
PRE-APPLICATION MEETING	8
DESIGN GUIDELINES	8
NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES	9
HELPFUL PLANNING AND ZONING LINKS	9
SITE PLANS	10
SPECIAL LAND USE	12
SUBDIVISIONS AND SITE CONDOS	14
REZONING	16
ZONING PERMITS	18
PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS (PUD)	20
DIMENSIONAL VARIANCES	23
USE VARIANCES	25
BUILDING PERMITS	28
FINANCIAL INCENTIVES	29
BUSINESS LICENSES	30
PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS	31

# KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

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## City Manager's Office

Steven Brown, City Manager | (248) 624-0894 | [citymanager@wixomgov.org](mailto:citymanager@wixomgov.org)

Drew Benson, Assistant City Manager & Economic Development Director | (248) 624-3280 | [dbenson@wixomgov.org](mailto:dbenson@wixomgov.org)

## Construction and Development Services

Kenneth Pike, Building Official | (248) 624-0880 | [buildingadmin@wixomgov.org](mailto:buildingadmin@wixomgov.org)

Vilma Mazi, Construction and Development Services Secretary | (248) 624-0880 | [buildingadmin@wixomgov.org](mailto:buildingadmin@wixomgov.org)

## Planning and Zoning

Karen Darling, Planning and Zoning Secretary | (248) 624-0880 | [planningadmin@wixomgov.org](mailto:planningadmin@wixomgov.org)

Carlisle Wortman Associates, Planning Consultant | (248) 624-0880 | [planningadmin@wixomgov.org](mailto:planningadmin@wixomgov.org)

## Public Works and Water/Sewer

Tim Sikma, DPW Director | (248) 624-0141 | [DPWAdmin@wixomgov.org](mailto:DPWAdmin@wixomgov.org)

F & V Operations, Wastewater Treatment Operator | (248) 960-0870 | [water@wixomgov.org](mailto:water@wixomgov.org)

## City Clerk

Catherine Buck, City Clerk | (248) 624-4557 | [clerkadmin@wixomgov.org](mailto:clerkadmin@wixomgov.org)

Crystal Opalko, Deputy Clerk | (248) 624-4557 | [clerkadmin@wixomgov.org](mailto:clerkadmin@wixomgov.org)

## Community Services/Parks and Recreation

Deanna Magee, Community Services Director | (248) 624-2850 | [CS@wixomgov.org](mailto:CS@wixomgov.org)

## Finance Department

Marilyn Stamper, Finance Director | (248) 624-0885 | [Finance@wixomgov.org](mailto:Finance@wixomgov.org)

## Downtown Development Authority

Laura Cloutier, DDA Executive Director | (248) 560-1358 | [dda@wixom.us](mailto:dda@wixom.us)

## Assessing

Services provided by Oakland County's Equalization Department | (248) 858-0740 | [equal@oakgov.com](mailto:equal@oakgov.com)

# BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

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## City Council

Meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, 7:00 pm

Staff Liaison:

Steven Brown, (248) 624-0894

## Planning Commission

Meets on the first and third Mondays of every month, 7:30 pm

Staff Liaison:

Drew Benson, (248) 624-3280

## Zoning Board of Appeals

Meets on the second Monday of every month, 7:30 pm

Staff Liaison:

Drew Benson, (248) 624-3280

## Downtown Development Authority

Meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month, 7:30 am

Staff Liaison:

Laura Cloutier (248) 560-1358

## Board of Review

Meets on the first and second Tuesday in March, 6 hours with 3-hour minimum after 6:00 pm

Also meets in July and/or December, as needed

Staff Liaison:

Oakland County Equalization, (248) 858-0740

## Senior Commission

Meets quarterly, 11:00 am

Staff Liaison:

Melisa Burnham (248) 624-0894

## Parks and Recreation Commission

Meets quarterly on the second Monday of the month, 6:00 pm

Staff Liaison:

Deanna Magee, (248) 624-2850

## Cemetery Board

Meets annually on first Wednesday in June

Staff Liaison:

Cathy Buck, (248) 624-4557

## Tax Abatement Review Committee

Meets when application for tax abatement is filed with the City

Staff Liaison:

Drew Benson, (248) 624-3280

# APPROVAL AUTHORITIES TABLE

It is important that developers and residents understand the different local authorities who will approve or decline submitted applications. While the application and approval process can be discussed with the City Administration at pre-development meetings, this table provides a general view of what local authorities will be reviewing their on applications.

## APPROVING AUTHORITIES

ZONING OR PERMIT APPLICATIONS	APPROVAL AUTHORITIES TABLE	Construction and Development Services Department	Planning Commission	Zoning Board of Appeals	City Council
	Sketch Plan	X			
	Site Plan Review		X		
	Special Land Use		X		
	Planned Unit Development		X (Recommendation)		X (Approval)
	Subdivisions and Site Condominiums		X (Recommendation)		X (Approval)
	Rezoning and Ordinance Amendment		X (Recommendation)		X (Approval)
	Variance			X	
	Administrative Appeal			X	
	Building, Electrical, and other Construction Permits	X			

For more information, see: [Zoning Ordinance Chapter 18.17: Site Plan Review Requirements and Procedures](#)

# PLANNING AND ZONING

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## Master Plan

The City of Wixom Master Plan serves as an extension of the community's vision and goals for planning and land use. While the document doesn't explicitly regulate development in the City, it provides insight into what improvements or projects residents and business owners want to see in their community. The Master Plan is updated once every 5 years, keeping the document current with the perspectives of community stakeholders.

Applications of larger developments such as planned unit developments and special land use require locations, design, and uses compliant with the master plan. It is highly encouraged for developers to review the plan to ensure their proposed construction aligns with the community's vision for Wixom.

[Click here to view the City of Wixom Master Plan](#)

## Zoning Ordinance

The zoning ordinance regulates the usage of properties and buildings while determining the parameters for new construction or installation in the City of Wixom. Regulations can apply City-wide, or be specific to the designated zoning district. Please consult with City Administration if you have any questions regarding the zoning ordinance. To view the full zoning ordinance, please see:

[TITLE 18–ZONING \(Wixom Municipal Code 1992\)](#)

## Zoning Map

The zoning map displays the different zoning districts that are established in the City of Wixom. Zoning districts regulate specific uses, designs, and layouts for developments. Please consult the zoning map to determine what uses may be permitted at your site. To view the zoning map, please see:

[Click here to view the City of Wixom Zoning Map](#)

# PLANNING AND ZONING

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## Zoning Schedule of Uses, Area, Height, and Placement Requirements

The zoning ordinance has information on the permitted uses for each zoning district in both residential and non-residential/mixed zones, as well as requirements/restrictions on development dimensions and lot sizes. Reading the zoning ordinance will help developers better understand the functions permitted for sites in each zoning district. For questions regarding the schedule of uses, area, height, and placement requirements, please contact the Construction and Development Services Department to learn more about dimensional and use variances, see their respective sections in this guide.

For information on residential districts, see the following ordinance sections:

[Chapter 18.03 Residential Districts](#)

[Chapter 18.05 Manufactured Home Park District](#)

For information on commercial, industrial, and mixed use districts, see the following ordinance sections:

[Chapter 18.04 Gateway Planned Unit Development District](#)

[Chapter 18.06 Commercial Districts](#)

[Chapter 18.07 Village Center Area District](#)

[Chapter 18.08 Office and Research Districts](#)

[Chapter 18.09 Industrial Districts](#)

For additional standards that are applicable to all zoning districts, such as landscaping, lighting, and parking requirements, see the following sections:

[Chapter 18.14 General Site Development Requirements](#)

[Chapter 18.15 Off-Street Parking, Loading, Access and Circulation Requirements](#)

# PLANNING AND ZONING

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## Fee Schedule

The fee schedule, located on the City of Wixom Construction and Development Services page, provides the costs for applications submitted for Planning and Zoning approval.

[Click here to view the Planning and Zoning Review Fee Schedule](#)

## Pre-Application Meetings

While not required, applicants are encouraged to meet with City staff for a conceptual review meeting prior to beginning the development process. Pre-development meetings serve to communicate clear expectations for application packages and inform the developer or key representative of specific regulations they need to meet in all steps of the application, review, and development process. With transparent and predictable expectations, developers can save time and money in creating an application package that is complete and ready for review, and it can help to promote a smooth approval process once the formal application is submitted. This is also an opportunity to explore large-scale matters like infrastructure needs, qualifications for tax abatements, tax implications of developments, and incentives that might be available through local, county, or state programs. Key staff as may be appropriate will be included in the meeting. To the extent permitted by the Freedom of Information Act, these conversations will be kept confidential until the owner is ready to submit formal documents.

More information can be found on the [Pre-Development Meetings page](#) of the City website

## Design Guidelines

The City of Wixom Zoning Ordinance promotes creative and cohesive architectural design to enhance the visual environment of the City. Maintaining quality design will have positive impacts on the site being developed and surrounding properties and help to maintain the City's sense of place. Quality architecture and harmonious aesthetics among sites will help to improve and retain property values, encourage investment for businesses, and maintain a positive image for the City's various commercial districts.

Chapter [§18.14.010: Architectural and design requirements](#) of the Zoning Ordinance includes architectural and design requirements that apply to all developments other than single-family detached or two-family residential structures.

Development occurring in the Village Center Area (VCA) District does not follow these design requirements, as there are commercial and residential design guidelines specific to the district. These can be found in Chapter 18.07 Village Center Area District of the Zoning Ordinance.

Commercial standards can be found in [§18.07.060 Commercial architectural requirements](#)

Residential standards can be found in [§18.07.070 Residential architectural requirements](#)

# PLANNING AND ZONING

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## Notification Procedures

When certain development actions require a notification procedure compliant with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (P.A. 110 of 2006, as amended), the City of Wixom will publish notifications in a newspaper of general circulation and mail/hand deliver notification to the subject property and all persons owning property within 300 feet of the boundary of the subject property at least 15 days before the hearing. All occupants of apartment buildings within the 300 ft. boundary will be notified if the apartment has fewer than 12 units. Notices will describe the nature of the request or application review, identify subject property, state where and how the request or application review is being considered, and will indicate how written responses are being collected for the public hearing.

## Other Helpful Planning and Zoning Links

[Construction and Development Services page](#)

[Planning and Zoning page](#)

[Applications/Permits page](#)

[Future Land Use Map](#)

[Boards and Commissions page](#)

[Planning Commission – Agendas and Minutes](#)

[Zoning Board of Appeals – Agendas and Minutes](#)

[Reference Maps page](#)

# SITE PLANS

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## Why are site plans required?

To ensure orderly development, a consistent level of quality in the community, harmonious relationship between building usages, and compliance with the zoning ordinance and master plan, all development proposals must undergo site plan review and approval by the appropriate local authorities. Site plans provide general information on the property to be developed, details on the existing conditions of the property, and plans for proposed development, engineering, and building details.

## Who approves site plans, and what is the process of approval?

Different uses and construction may require different levels of review, as detailed in [§18.17.020 Uses requiring site plan review](#) of the Zoning Ordinance. Some uses or projects are subject to review and approval only from City Administration. Larger buildings, special uses, planned unit developments, and other larger-scale construction projects are subject to review and approval by the Planning Commission, and in some cases, City Council.

Site plan review procedures, submittal requirements, and standards can be found in [Chapter 18.17 Site Plan Review Requirements and Procedures](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

A key resource for those applying for site plan review and approval is the [Site Plan Application Packet](#). The packet includes:

- A checklist of required information and data for a site plan submittal
- Information on applicable fees
- Application for Site Plan Approval
- Other applicable documents such as Landscape Plan Review Checklist and Hazardous Chemical Survey

A fee will accompany the site plan review, the amount of which will vary depending on the specifics of the plan and the expenses incurred. Please view the [Planning and Zoning Fee Schedule](#) for more information.

Site plan approval will be granted to site plans that are fully completed, adhere to the zoning ordinance and all other applicable City code, and are compatible with other uses of land in the vicinity. The City shall review the site plan for completeness, and shall obtain comments, as deemed necessary, from City departments or consultants. For more information on the approval process, view the relevant zoning ordinance sections in [Chapter 18.17 Site Plan Review Requirements and Procedures](#).

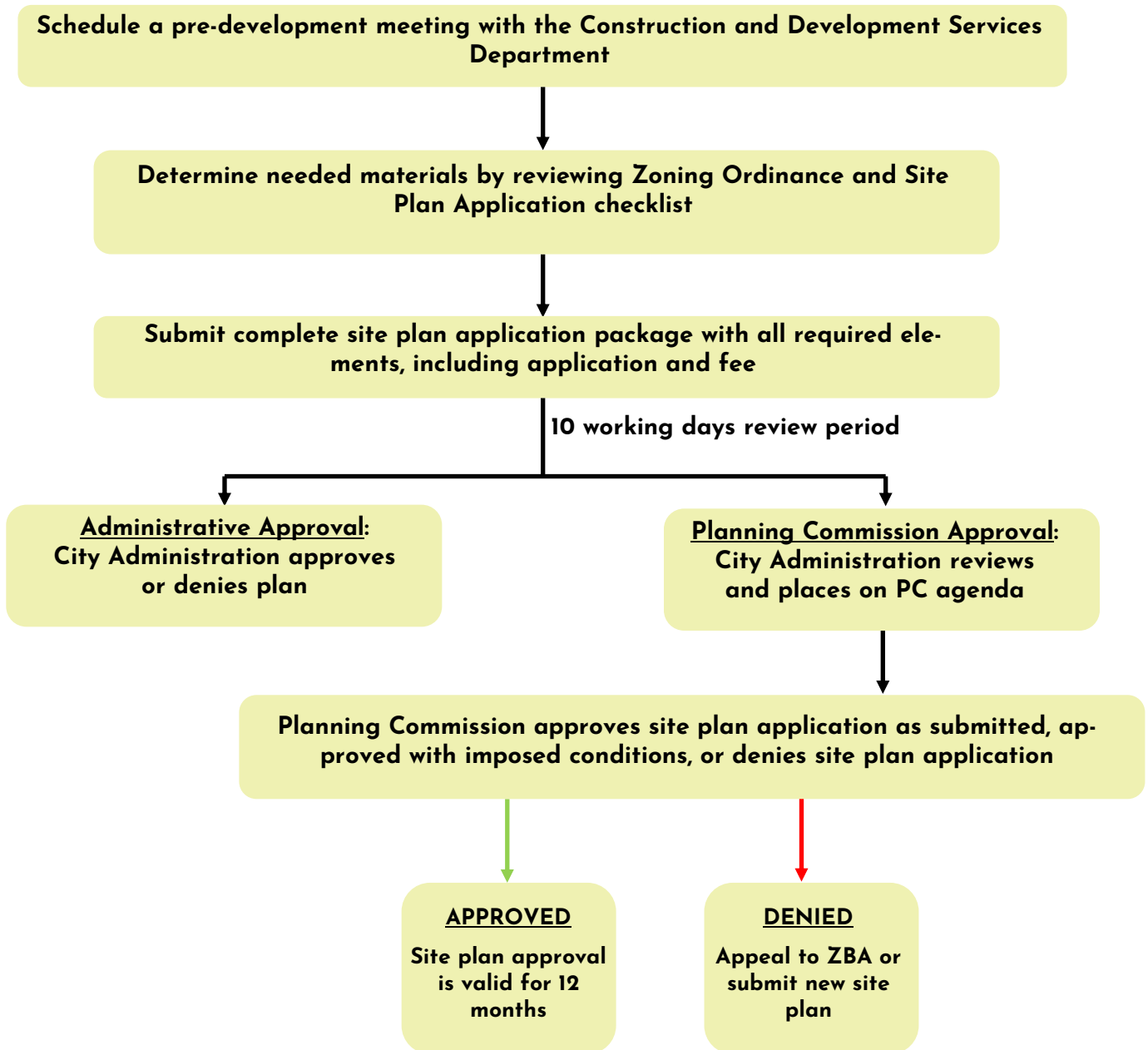
## How long does approval last?

Site plan approval is valid for a period of one year from the date of Planning Commission approval. Extensions may be authorized upon written application prior to expiration. See [§18.17.080 Validity of approved site plan](#) for more information.

# SITE PLANS

## Site Plan Application and Review Flowchart

General estimated timeframe (from submittal to City to approval by designated body): **4-6 weeks**



# SPECIAL LAND USE

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## What is a special land use permit?

Special land use permits are required for developments that may have uses consistent with the zoning district it occupies but have elements or features that are not suitable for every location within the zoning district. These elements could include increased traffic flow, odor, noise, or other nuisance effects.

## How do I know if my project requires special land use approval?

The Zoning Ordinance includes a Schedule of Uses chart for each zoning district that details which uses are permitted, special land uses, or not permitted. Because of the case-by-case nature of the permit, it is highly recommended developers meet with the City for a pre-development meeting to determine whether a special land use application will be necessary and associated procedure and requirements.

## How do I apply?

Standards for special land uses, including procedures, general and specific standards, and appeals can be found in [Chapter 18.18 Special Land Use Review Requirements and Procedures](#) of the Zoning Ordinance. A site plan is required to be submitted, in line with Site Plan Review Requirements, with the Special Land Use application.

A key resources for those applying for special land use approval is the [Special Land Use Application Packet](#). The packet includes:

- Special Land Use submittal requirements and general information
- Details on the site plan review process
- Application for Special Land Use Approval

A fee will accompany the site plan review, the amount of which will vary depending on the specifics of the plan and the expenses incurred. Please view the [Planning and Zoning Fee Schedule](#) for more information.

## What is the approval process?

Once a complete application package is received, public notice will be distributed and a public hearing will be set. The Planning Commission will then hold a public hearing on the application, and can choose to approve, approve with conditions, or decline the application based on the submitted materials and public comment. For more details on procedures and standards, please review the relevant sections in [Chapter 18.18 Special Land use Review Requirements and Procedures](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

## How long does approval last?

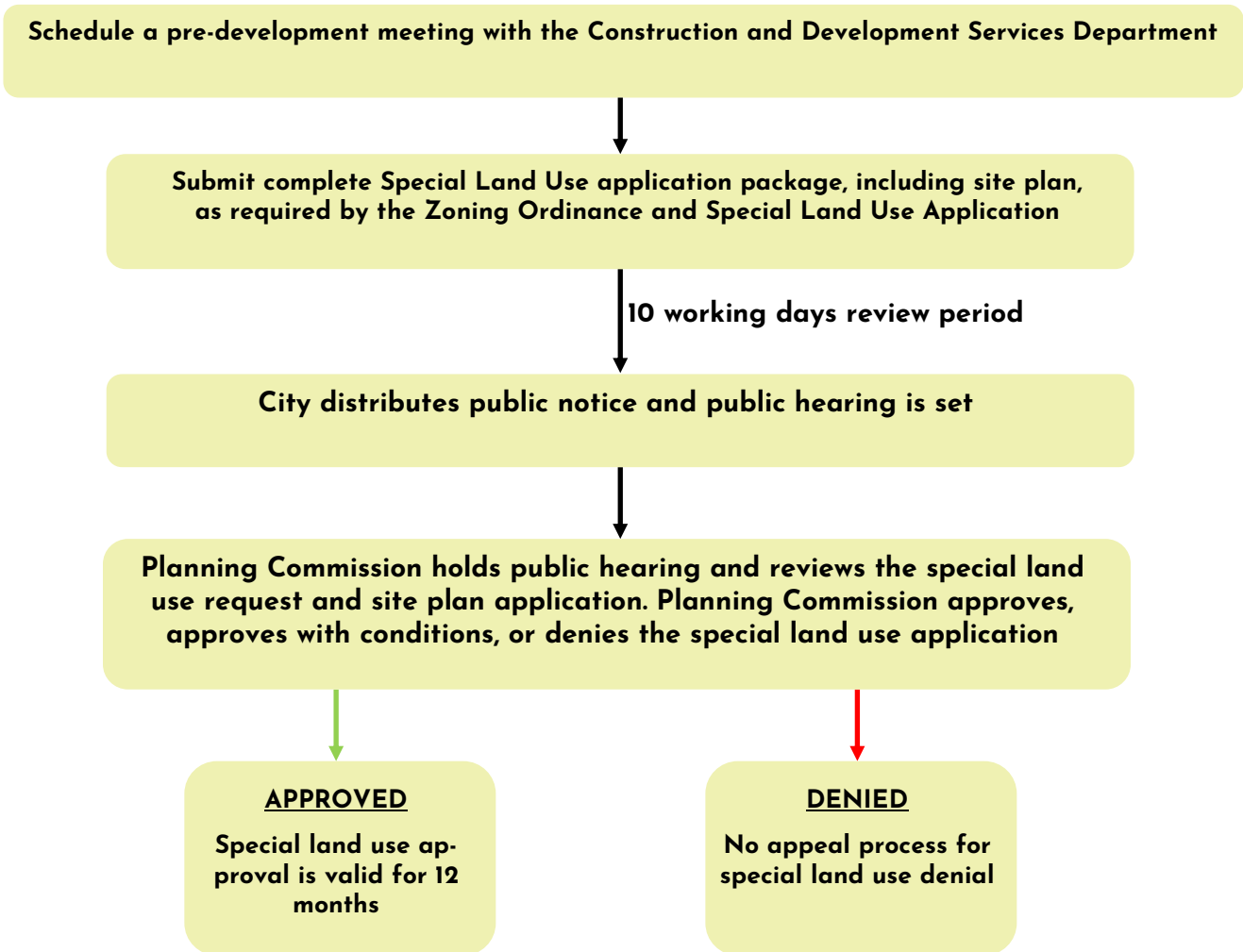
Special land use approval is valid for a period of one year from the date of Planning Commission approval. Extension may be authorized upon written application prior to expiration. See [§18.18.080 Validity of permit](#) for more information.

# SPECIAL LAND USE

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## Special Land Use Application and Review Flowchart

General estimated timeframe (from submittal to City to approval by designated body): **6 weeks\***



\* Requires public hearing, for which a 15-day publication notice is required. This is reflected in the estimated timeframe.

# SUBDIVISIONS AND SITE CONDOS

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## What are subdivisions and site condominiums used for?

Subdivision is the splitting of a development that results in one or more parcels, of less than forty acres, and is subject to the platting requirements of the [Land Division Act \(MCL Act 288 of 1867\)](#).

Site condominium is a way of developing land in which each co-owner owns exclusive rights to a condominium unit, and can be used for residential, commercial, industrial, and other uses permitted in its assigned zoning district. These are regulated by the [Condominium Act \(MCL Act 59 of 1978\)](#).

Procedure and standards for Subdivisions and Condominium Subdivisions can be found in [Chapter 16.12 Subdivisions Procedure](#) of the City of Wixom Municipal Code.

## Who approves subdivisions and site condominiums, and what is the process of approval?

Subdivision of land into plats requires two phases, preliminary and final plat. A tentative preliminary plat will be submitted in a manner similar to a site plan, then reviewed by the Planning Commission and a public hearing held. If recommended for approval, the City Council will review the preliminary plat and can grant tentative approval. A final preliminary plat can then be submitted in compliance with the Land Division Act and is subject to City Council approval. Final plat can then be submitted and approved by City Council, if in conformance with the Land Division Act. More detailed description of the process and application and plan requirements can be found in [Chapter 16.12 Subdivisions Procedure](#) of the City of Wixom Municipal Code, §16.12.010–§16.12.040.

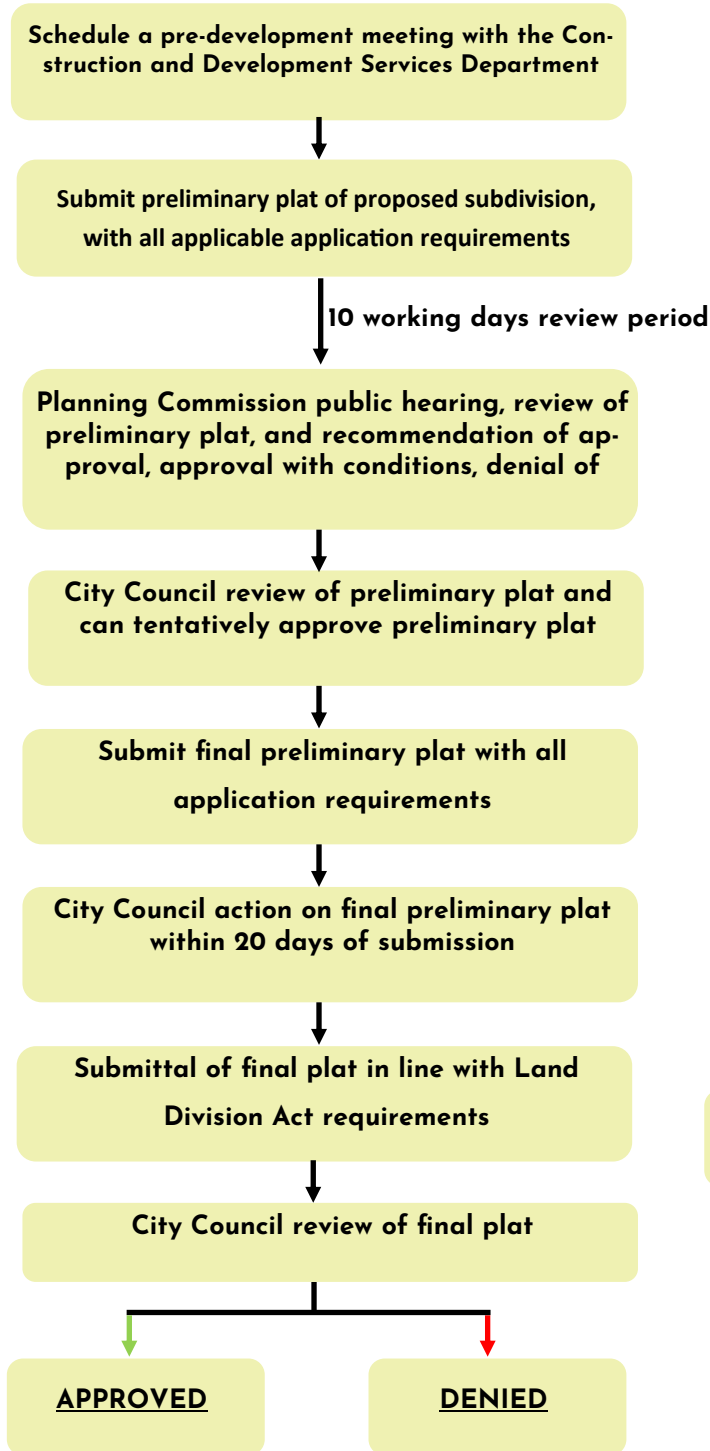
For a condominium subdivision, a preliminary plat will be submitted, to be reviewed by the Planning Commission and recommended to City Council. The City Council will review the plan and approve, approve with conditions, or deny. A final plat must be submitted and reviewed by Planning Commission and City Council, whose final approval is required, as well as compliance with the [Condominium Act](#). More detailed description of the process can be found in [§16.12.080 Condominium subdivision approval](#) of the City of Wixom Municipal Code.

# SUBDIVISIONS AND SITE CONDOS

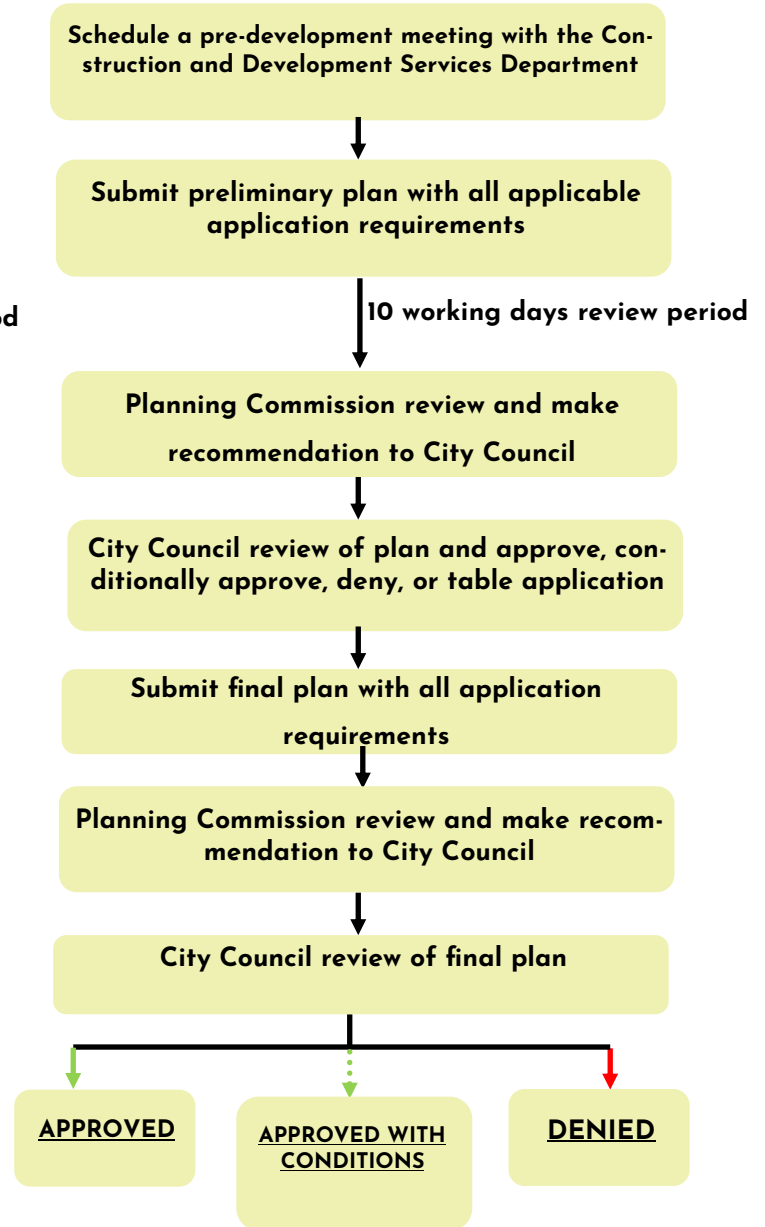
## Subdivision and Site Condo Application and Review Flowchart

General estimated timeframe (from submittal to City to approval by designated body): **12 -14 weeks\***

### SUBDIVISION\*



### SITE CONDOMINIUM



\* Requires public hearing, for which a 15-day publication notice is required. This is reflected in the estimated timeframe.

# REZONING

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## Who can initiate a rezoning?

An amendment to change zoning district boundaries can be launched by property owners (or residents with the permission of the property owners), Planning Commission, or City Council.

## What is needed to initiate a rezoning?

An amendment (initiated by a developer) is initiated by the submittal of a completed application for rezoning. Standards for rezoning, including application procedure, rezoning procedure, and criteria for rezoning can be found in [Chapter 18.23 Amendments to Ordinance](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

A key resource for those applying for a rezoning is the [Rezoning Application Packet](#). The packet includes:

- Guidelines for rezoning application
- Details on the steps of the process and associated timeline
- Requirements for rezoning signs
- Application for rezoning

A fee will accompany the site plan review, the amount of which will vary depending on the specifics of the plan and the expenses incurred. Please view the [Planning and Zoning Fee Schedule](#) for more information.

A pre-application meeting with the Construction and Development Services Department is recommended to discuss the level of detail and analysis that is involved in the rezoning application packet.

## What is the review process?

After a petition to rezone is submitted to the City, it is considered at a Planning Commission Preliminary Hearing, where the applicant can present the request. It is then scheduled for a Planning Commission public hearing for the following month. Notice will be sent to surrounding property owners and the applicant must install rezoning signs on the property. The Planning Commission will review and recommend approval or denial of the amendment. The proposed amendment and Planning Commission's recommendation will then be reviewed by City Council, who will vote to approve, modify, or deny. The action of City Council is final.

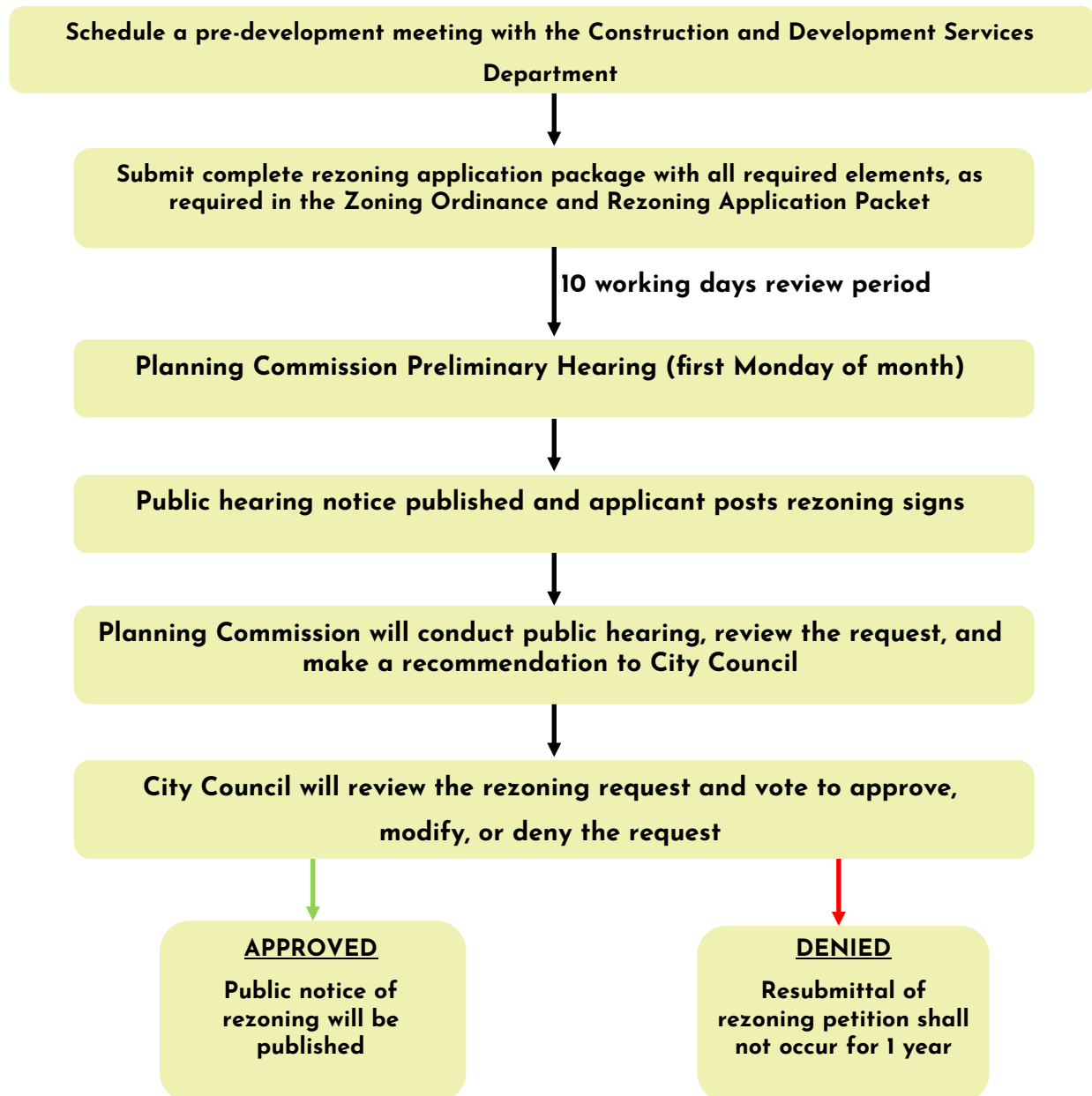
Factors that could go into the Planning Commission's recommendation and the City Council's review include Master Plan compliance, practicality of rezoning, capability of the site to support the new uses accompanying the zoning change, City infrastructure, and more. For a full list of criteria and more information on the rezoning process, please view the relevant sections in [Chapter 18.23 Amendments to Ordinance](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

# REZONING

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## Rezoning Application and Review Flowchart

General estimated timeframe (from submittal to City to approval by designated body): **6-9 weeks\***



\* Requires public hearing, for which a 15-day publication notice is required. This is reflected in the estimated timeframe.

# ZONING PERMITS

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## What is a zoning permit?

Zoning permits serve as certification that the structure being constructed or changes to a site meet the dimensional requirements and permitted use as detailed in the zoning ordinance. Anyone seeking to make site changes or erect or install a building or structure of any size in the City of Wixom must have a zoning permit before doing so.

## How do I apply for a zoning permit?

The application package for a zoning permit includes a completed [Zoning Permit Application](#), a review fee, and a plot plan or site plan as required by the Construction and Development Services/Building Department. Prior to submitting an application for a zoning permit, property boundaries and building structures must be properly staked for inspection.

## What is the review process?

The Zoning Administrator will review the application package for completeness and adherence to the zoning ordinance. Following zoning review, the Building Department will review the application and a zoning permit will be issued to the applicant. The Building Department will conduct inspections after issuing permits to ensure that construction has remained compliant with regulations listed on the zoning ordinance.

## Do I need a zoning permit for repairs or modifications?

Zoning permits are not required for alterations which do not result in change in height, floor area, lot coverage, location of walls or other structural alterations, but may still require a building permit. Further, facial alterations, installation of siding, windows, doors, shingles and replacements of existing or deteriorated materials and ordinary maintenance repairs made on all dwellings and their related outbuildings do not need zoning permits, but do still require building permits. In addition, these modifications may still require county, state, or federal permits. For more information or questions on improvements and required review, please contact the Construction and Development Services/Building Department.

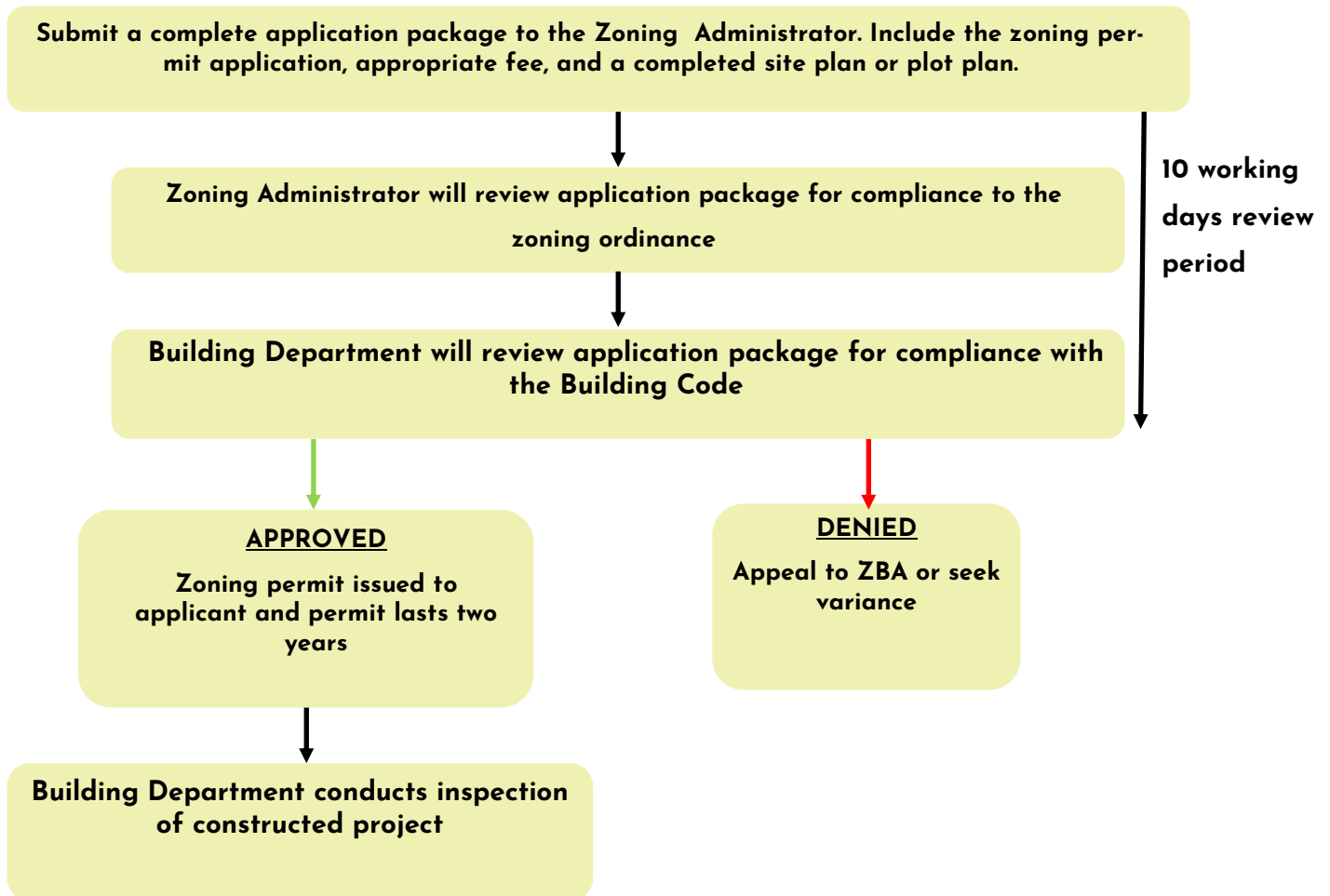
## When do zoning permits expire?

Once approved, zoning permits expire 2 years after approval, unless substantial construction has begun.

# ZONING PERMITS

## Zoning Permit Application and Review Flowchart

General estimated timeframe (from submittal to City to approval by designated body): **10 working days**



# PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

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## What is a planned unit development (PUD)?

Planned units developments are optionally created districts that allow for more flexibility and variety in regulation of land development, foster innovation in land use, ownership, and variety of design, and offer uniqueness in layout. While PUDs are more flexible in their regulations, they also seek to preserve historical, natural, and architectural features that other zoning districts may not prioritize, and seek to protect green space while providing amenities, public services, and utilities. PUDs should be developed in accordance with the goals of the master plan and promote a higher standard of quality than can be achieved through traditional zoning districts.

## What are the requirements for a planned unit development?

PUD standards are “overlay” zoning standards that apply to properties simultaneously with those of the underlying zoning district. Because planned unit developments are permitted greater flexibility in design, structure, and capacity than traditional zoning districts, successfully applying the overlay to PUD requires greater commitment and action from the applicant to uphold the community vision. This could entail many things, including preserving natural features, creating open spaces and greenway corridors, mixing land uses and housing types, renovating or removing blight, and more.

In order to qualify for PUD approval, the applicant must demonstrate that a list of qualifying conditions is met. These conditions can be found in [§18.11.040 Qualifying conditions](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

## What are the benefits of a planned unit development?

PUD standards may allow the City to relax or waive one or more of the requirements of the underlying district. The use of the PUD also allows the developer the opportunity to mix compatible uses or residential types on a single property, allows clustering to reduce construction costs, and may enhance marketability through the preservation of significant natural, historical, and architectural features.

## How do I apply for a PUD?

Prior to submitting a site plan, the applicant shall meet with City staff and representatives to review the PUD requirements and confirm that application materials are complete. An optional pre-application meeting with the Planning Commission may be requested by the applicant to discuss the concept, solicit feedback, and receive requests for additional materials supporting the proposal.

Details on application and review procedures can be found in [Chapter 18.11 PUD Planned Unit Development Overlay District](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

# PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

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## What is the approval process?

Standards for application and review procedures, site plan submittal requirements for preliminary and final PUD site plans, and standards for approval can be found in [Chapter 18.11 PUD Planned Unit Development Overlay District](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

The application, review, and approval process for a PUD involves a three-step process. After meeting with City staff, the applicant will submit the preliminary PUD site plan, meeting the requirements detailed in [§18.11.070 Preliminary PUD site plan submittal requirements](#), generally at least thirty days prior to the meeting that the Planning Commission will review the request. The Planning Commission will review the preliminary PUD site plan and hold a public hearing, and may request additional materials or recommend modifications or conditions. The Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council on the preliminary PUD site plan.

The City Council will hold a public hearing on the preliminary PUD site plan and take final action on the preliminary plan. Any conditions that are part of the approval should be reflected in the final PUD site plan submittal.

More information on the standards for the preliminary PUD site plan can be found in the following sections of the Zoning Ordinance:

- [§18.11.060 Application and review procedure for preliminary and final PUD site plan](#)
- [§18.11.070 Preliminary PUD site plan submittal requirements](#)
- [§18.11.080 Preliminary PUD site plan standards for approval](#)

The City attorney will prepare a PUD agreement that when approved by City Council, shall be entered into by the City and the applicant.

The applicant will submit the final PUD site plan, meeting the requirements detailed in [§18.11.090 Final PUD site plan submittal requirements](#), at least thirty days prior to the meeting that the Planning Commission will review the request. The Planning Commission will review the request and take final action on the final PUD site plan. If it is approved with conditions, a revised final PUD site plan will be required.

More information on the standards for the final PUD site plan can be found in the following sections of the Zoning Ordinance:

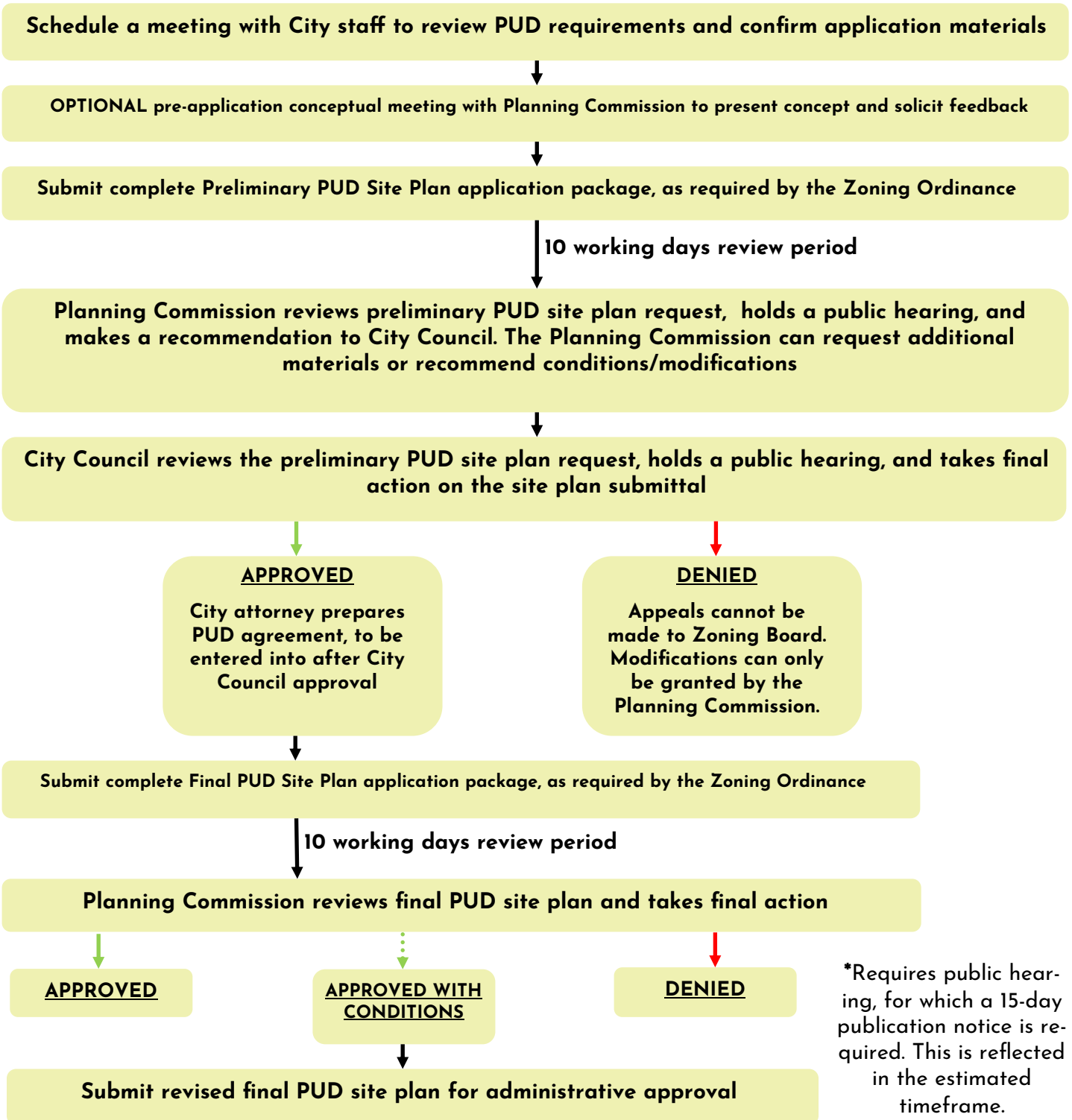
- [§18.11.090 Final PUD site plan submittal requirements](#)
- [§18.11.100 Final PUD site plan standards for approval](#)

For more information on Planned Unit Developments and the process, please view the relevant sections in [Chapter 18.11 PUD Planned Unit Development Overlay District](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

# PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

## Planned Unit Development Application and Review Flowchart

General estimated timeframe (from submittal to City to approval by designated body): **12-16**



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## What is a dimensional variance?

A dimensional, or non-use, variances are permissions or approvals of specific features and measurements on a property that are not aligned with the standards set in the zoning ordinance.

## Who grants a dimensional variance?

Dimensional variances may be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals after submission of a completed variance application and a public hearing in accordance with the zoning act. A concurring vote of a majority of members of the board is required to grant the variance. The variance granted will be the minimum required to permit the applicant full use of their site while still considering the zoning ordinance regulations.

## What are the requirements for a dimensional variance?

Non-use variances may be allowed only in cases where the applicant shows there is reasonable evidence of practical difficulty and that the following conditions are met, as noted in [§18.22.030\(E\) Dimensional and Other Non-Use Variances](#) of the Zoning Ordinance:

- Extraordinary circumstances or conditions apply to the property that do not generally apply to others in the zoning district.
- Compliance with the strict letter of the zoning ordinance would unreasonably prevent use of the property.
- Granting of the variance will not negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood in any way.
- Granting of the variance will not negatively impact public safety or welfare.
- The practical difficulty causing the need for the variance was not self-created by the applicant.

## How do I apply for a dimensional variance?

Standards for dimensional or non-use variances, including criteria and process, can be found in [Chapter 18.22 Zoning Board of Appeals](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

A key resource for those applying for a variance is the [Zoning Board of Appeals Application Packet](#). The packet includes:

- Information about variances and other responsibilities of the ZBA
- Zoning Board of Appeals hearing procedure, information on fees, and appeal process
- Zoning Board of Appeals application

Prior to submitting an application, the applicant should meet with the zoning administrator to determine if a dimensional variance is needed. After receiving the variance application, public notice will be distributed. The Zoning Board of Appeals will review the request, hold a public hearing, and decide to approve, approve with conditions deemed reasonable, or deny the dimensional variance request.

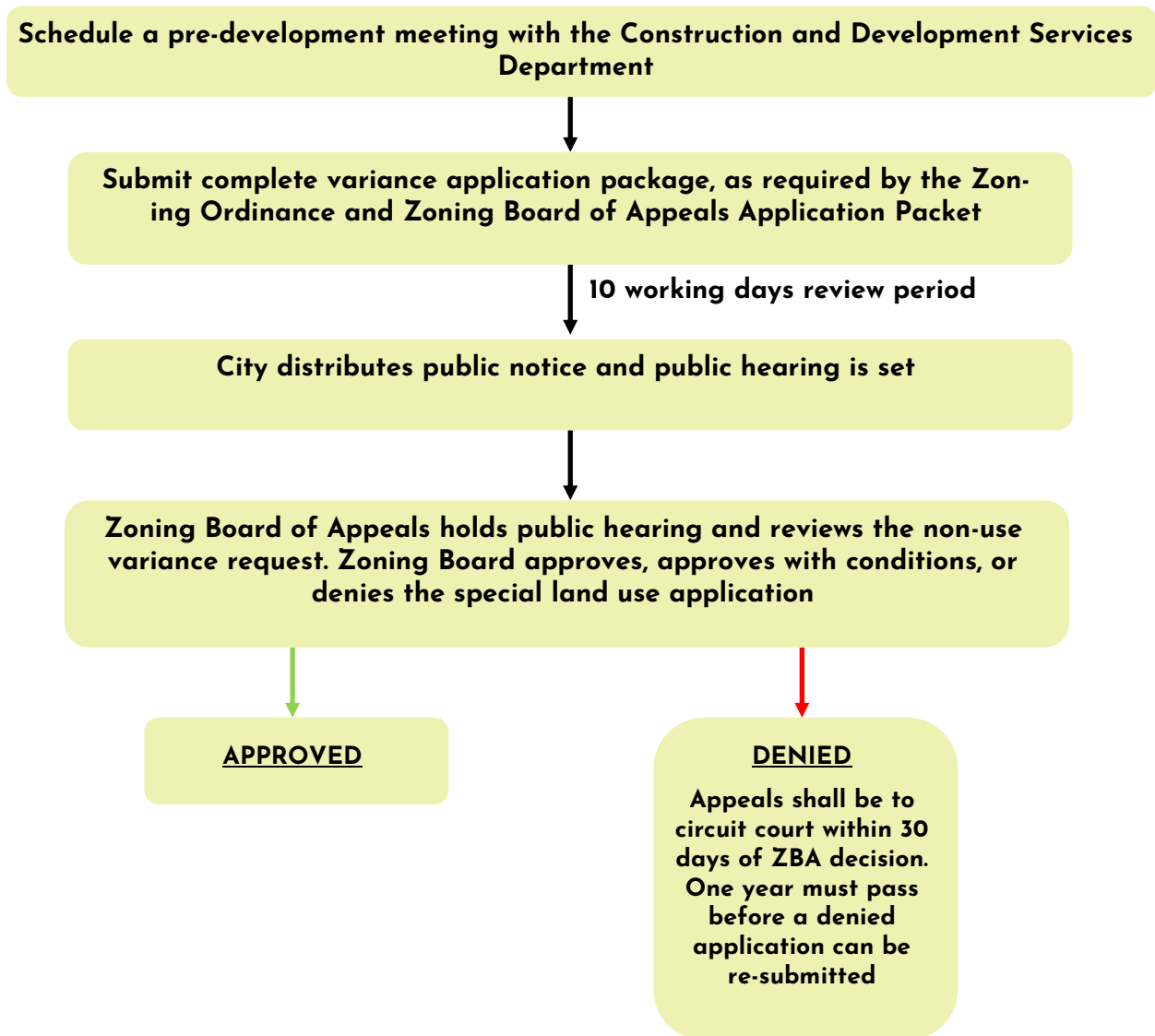
For more information on the Zoning Board of Appeals and the variance request process, please view the relevant sections in [Chapter 18.22 Zoning Board of Appeals](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

# DIMENSIONAL VARIANCES

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## Dimensional Variance Application and Review Flowchart

General estimated timeframe (from submittal to City to approval by designated body): **4 weeks\***



\* Requires public hearing, for which a 15-day publication notice is required. This is reflected in the estimated timeframe.

# USE VARIANCES

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City Website Link: [Variance Request page](#)

## What is a use variance?

Use variances are granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals for properties that cannot be used for purposes as permitted in the zoning district.

## Who grants a use variance?

Use variances may be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals after submission of a completed variance application and a public hearing in accordance with the zoning act. A concurring vote of two-thirds of the members of the board is required to grant this variance. The variance granted will be the minimum required to permit the applicant full use of their site while still considering the zoning the ordinance regulations.

## What do I need to apply for a use variance?

In addition to the information required for other variance requests, the application also requires a drawn-to-scale plan showing the specific uses/improvements proposed and proof that a use variance is necessary. As detailed in §18.22.030(F)(1), information to be included in the application to establish the proof of facts include:

- Proof that the property cannot be used for permitted purposes
- The problem preventing use is exclusive to applicant's property, and not a condition that impacts the larger neighborhood.
- Proposed use does not alter the essential character of the area.
- Applicant's problem is not self-created.
- Lack of administrative relief that would allow reasonable use of property.

## What is the approval process?

Standards for use variances, including criteria and process, can be found in [Chapter 18.22 Zoning Board of Appeals](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

A key resource for those applying for a variance is the [Zoning Board of Appeals Application Packet](#). The packet includes:

- Information about variances and other responsibilities of the ZBA
- Zoning Board of Appeals hearing procedure, information on fees, and appeal process
- Zoning Board of Appeals application

Before a public hearing with the Zoning Board of Appeals, applicants should schedule a pre-hearing meeting with the Construction & Development Services Department. The pre-hearing meeting will be used to review the procedure and identify all persons to testify and evidence presented on applicant's behalf, establish agreed-upon facts by all parties, discuss possible relief by non-use variance and explore satisfactory alternatives, and establish a need or desire for verbatim record of the hearing. The Construction & Development Services Department will determine what parties need to be present to accomplish the purposes of the pre-hearing conference.

# USE VARIANCES

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## What is the approval process? (Continued)

During the public hearing, the applicant will have the burden of proof before the Zoning Board of Appeals and must adequately display a use variance is warranted. The hearing will begin with the community representatives presenting on the zoning regulations involved. Then, the applicant will present their evidence and expert witnesses supporting their claim that a use variance is warranted. Witnesses may be required to attend, with the purpose of the ZBA asking questions regarding their testimony. Interested persons attending the hearing will also have an opportunity to present their perspective and evidence on the use variance, to which the applicant may respond. A continuation may occur if the public hearing on the use variance is not completed within the given meeting time.

The Zoning Board of Appeals may make its decision to grant or deny the use variance at the end of the meeting, or schedule a date for its decision, depending on whether review of presented evidence is necessary for members. If the ZBA decides to grant a variance to the applicant, it will do so in a manner that is most compliant with established ordinances. The variance can be in the form of a use variance, as applied for, or dimensional variances that will permit property to function in its allowed use. Conditions may be imposed on the variance, with conditions detailed further in §10.22.030(F)(4)(d).

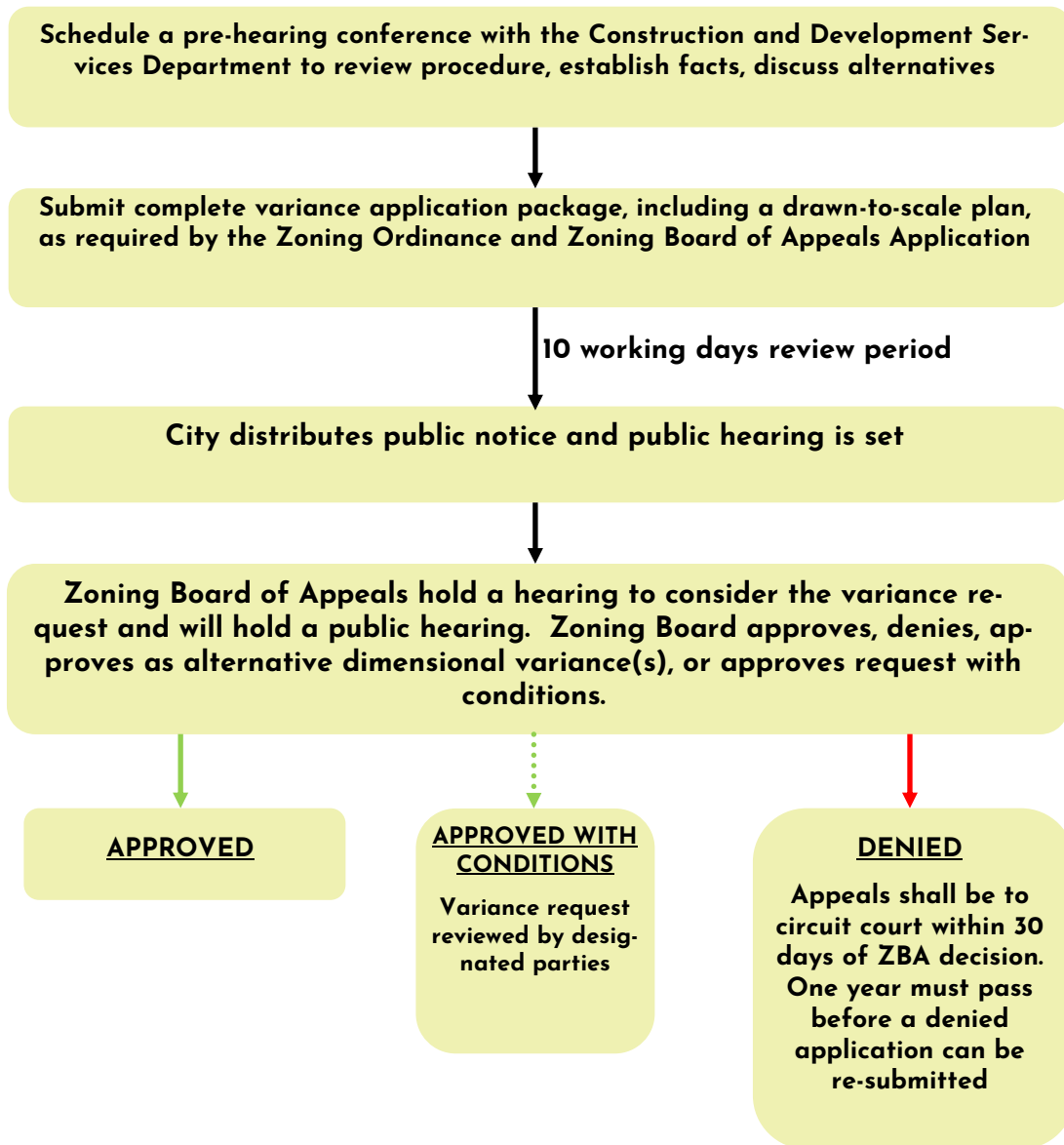
A use variance can only be allowed by the ZBA in a case where there is evidence of unnecessary hardship and that a list of conditions are met, including that the property cannot be reasonably used for uses permitted in the zoning district, that unusual conditions of the specific parcel created these barriers of use, that the character of the neighborhood will be unaffected by the use variance, that infrastructure and public services are unaffected by the potential use variance, and that the practical difficulty creating the need for the variance is not self-created.

For more information on the Zoning Board of Appeals and the variance request process, please view the relevant sections in [Chapter 18.22 Zoning Board of Appeals](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.

# USE VARIANCES

## Use Variance Application and Review Flowchart

General estimated timeframe (from submittal to City to approval by designated body): **4 weeks\***



\* Requires public hearing, for which a 15-day publication notice is required. This is reflected in the estimated timeframe.

# BUILDING PERMITS

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## Who approves construction permits such as building, electrical, and plumbing?

All permitting and inspections regarding construction and utilities are approved and scheduled by the Wixom Construction and Development Services Department. Permits are good for one (1) year from the date of issuance.

## What is required to apply?

Certain documents and information are required to be submitted with the building permit application. Information required for all buildings permits include the address of the job site, a complete signed application by the proper applicant, a set of construction plans, and permits including electrical, plumbing, and mechanical/heating. There may be further information including additional permits and certifications depending on the architecture and materials of the structure, its geographic location, or environmental factors possibly impacted by the construction. Fees accompany each permit. For a checklist of all items that need to be submitted with a building permit application, please see the City's [Applications/Permits webpage](#).

Permit type	When is it required?
Building Permit	Constructing, enlarging, altering, repairing, moving, demolishing or changing the occupancy of a building or structure.
Electrical Permit	Installing new electrical wiring, equipment, or altering electrical wiring.
Plumbing Permit	Installing new plumbing fixtures or altering present ones.
Mechanical Permit	Installing new mechanical/heating fixtures or altering present ones.
Soil Erosion Permit (Oakland County)	Moving or changing earth within 500 ft. of a lake or stream, changes that occur over 1 acre, and gravel operations within 500 ft. of a lake or stream or over 1 acre in size.

## Where can I find out more about inspections?

Inspections will be required at multiple points throughout the project, for each permit issued. Inspection scheduling is a responsibility of the developer, and should occur when the work is ready for inspection. City inspectors will perform the mandatory inspections a reasonable amount of time after the request for inspection has been made. For more information regarding the schedule of inspections or inspection contacts for each permit, please visit the [Construction and Development Services Department webpage](#).

# FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

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## Industrial Facility Tax (IFT) Abatement

To encourage greater industrial development and spur manufacturing opportunities for developers, business owners, and laborers, the City of Wixom offers tax incentives for development involving industrial-based businesses. These incentives can be applied in the expansion of pre-existing facilities, renovation of aging facilities, and constructing of new facilities, per PA 198 of 1974. The Industrial Facilities Exemption certificate can provide property tax abatement for a maximum of 12 years, based on the criteria determined by the City. For more information on the Industrial Development District, please contact Assistant City Manager & Director of Economic Development Drew Benson at [dbenson@wixomgov.org](mailto:dbenson@wixomgov.org), or visit the [City's Industrial Property Tax Abatement](#) webpage.

## Brownfield Tax Increment Financing

Brownfield Tax Increment Financing, through P.A. 381 of 1996, allows developers to receive reimbursement on environmental and non-environmental redevelopment activities. Brownfields are properties and or sites that are contaminated, blighted, functionally obsolete or hold historic value. Reimbursement for costs associated with redeveloping brownfields occurs through the collection of incremental state and local taxes as the taxable value of the property increases through the revitalization process. To benefit from brownfield TIFs, developers will need to work with the City of Wixom, as well and the [Oakland County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority](#) to produce a workplan for state review (Michigan Strategic Fund for non-environmental activities, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for environmental activities).

To learn more about the Brownfield Program, initial evaluations, and workplan development, please contact the Oakland County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority at (248) 858-5445 or at [raseganb@oakgov.com](mailto:raseganb@oakgov.com)

## Redevelopment Liquor Licenses

Redevelopment liquor licenses can be obtained by dining, entertainment or recreation businesses operating within a redevelopment district. The business must have spent or have a commitment to spend at least \$75,000 in restoring the building in which the business is operating. Further, redevelopment liquor licenses can only be obtained when standard liquor licenses are no longer available. In addition to applying to the State Liquor Control Commission, a resolution from City Council must be passed pursuant to PA 501 of 2006. [Click here to learn more about redevelopment liquor licenses.](#)

## Other Incentive Opportunities

In addition to the options listed above, the City is always looking at new and existing tools to support economic development. Other opportunities may include public infrastructure assistance, partnership opportunities, and other creative options. With that in mind, please reach out to Drew Benson, Assistant City Manager & Director of Economic Development at (248) 624-3280, or via e-mail at [dbenson@wixomgov.org](mailto:dbenson@wixomgov.org) to discuss your project, what assistance you need, and to discuss how the City can be a partner in making your project happen.

# BUSINESS LICENSES

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## Business Licenses

The City of Wixom's Business Licensing program ensures that licensed businesses comply with safety codes to provide a safe environment for employees and customers. A license also allows a business to opt into being listed on the City website and to be contacted for networking events.

Licenses are mandatory per City Code ([Chapter 5.04](#) and elsewhere), and are to be renewed annually.

If you own or represent a Wixom business and want more information about obtaining or renewing a license, click the appropriate link below. Business License administration is available 9:30-3:30 Mon.-Thu. every week (closed on City holidays).

- [New Businesses](#)
- [Existing Businesses](#)
- [Self Safety Inspection Program](#)

If you have any questions about any aspect of the licensing process, please contact us:

- By phone at (248) 624-1055
- By e-mail at [WixomBusinessLicense@wixomgov.org](mailto:WixomBusinessLicense@wixomgov.org)
- In person at the Fire Department at 1345 N. Wixom Rd.

## Liquor Licenses

Liquor licenses are required for businesses that seek to sell or serve alcoholic beverages. Applications for a liquor license must be filed to both the City of Wixom City Council and the Michigan Liquor Control Commission. Applications sent to the City Council must meet the requirements found in the following zoning ordinance:

### [Chapter 5.06–Alcoholic Liquor](#)

The Michigan Liquor Control Commission can be contacted at:

Phone: (517) 284-6310

Email: [LARA-MLCC-Licensing-Information@michigan.gov](mailto:LARA-MLCC-Licensing-Information@michigan.gov)

Redevelopment Liquor Licenses are also available as a business incentive to operations within an established business district or redevelopment area. For eligibility, please view the financial incentives pages located earlier in this guide.

# PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

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## Oakland County Economic Development

Oakland County is the economic center for the state of Michigan, providing leading-edge services and programs that help the county continue to make the transition to the economies of the future. These initiatives spearhead a positive business environment and maintain job growth and a high quality of life for our citizens. Oakland County offers a variety of services, including:

[Small Business Loans](#)

[Business Grants](#)

[Workforce Development](#)

[Regional Facts/Statistics](#)

[Federal Contracting](#)

[International Business Development](#)

[Legal and Financial Education](#)

[Business Networking](#)

[Economic Forecasting](#)

For more information about programs and services from Oakland County Economic Development, contact [info@advantageoakland.com](mailto:info@advantageoakland.com), or (248) 858-0720.

## Detroit Regional Partnership

The Detroit Regional Partnership offers confidential, no-cost assistance to domestic and international companies interested in investing in the 11-county Detroit Region. They specialize in helping companies understand and access the competitive advantages of our region. The DRP works with companies and site selectors to help manage your projects, navigate our real estate market, and support your transition into the Metropolitan Detroit community. With resources in site selection, project management, regional data, talent assessments, and regional networking, the DRP and the City of Wixom work together to ensure your business will be successful here.

For more information, head over to [www.detroitregionalpartnership.com](http://www.detroitregionalpartnership.com)

## Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), in collaboration with its economic development partners, markets Michigan as the place to do business, assists businesses in their growth strategies and fosters the growth of vibrant communities across the state. The MEDC provides a variety of services:

[Export and International Trade](#)

[Access to Business Capital](#)

[Startup and Entrepreneurial Support](#)

[Mobility and Electrification](#)

[Defense Industry Connections](#)

[Federal Contracting Assistance](#)

[Site Selection](#)

[Business Development Incentives](#)

[Talent Development Incentives](#)

For more information, head over to [www.michiganbusiness.org](http://www.michiganbusiness.org)

# PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

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## Wixom Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

The City of Wixom Downtown Development Authority serves to create development plans, protect the downtown business district from deteriorating property values, promote historic preservation, and foster general economic growth. Using funds from tax increment financing, the DDA engages in business attraction and retention through marketing, event planning, and business and development incentives.

For developers, the City of Wixom provides a list of available properties for rent or sale in downtown with information listed such as address, square footage, nearby amenities, property bio, and contact information. Developers and business owners alike can find a complete list of local incentives and financial assistance tools (many of which are listed earlier in this guide) at the on the City's website, found here: [www.wixomgov.org/business/development-tools-resources](http://www.wixomgov.org/business/development-tools-resources) or [www.downtownwixom.com](http://www.downtownwixom.com)

To contact the Downtown Development Authority, please contact the Main Street Downtown Development Authority Executive Director Laura Cloutier at (248) 560-1358 or [dda@wixom.us](mailto:dda@wixom.us).

## Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce

The Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce connects and serves West Oakland's Regional Chamber, having proudly served the communities of Commerce, Walled Lake, Waterford, White Lake, Wixom, Wolverine Lake, and the Union Lake Business District since 1950. These dynamic communities are successful centers of commerce, providing residents with opportunities for business, education and recreation.

The Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce supports the regional business community with opportunities for Business exposure, networking opportunities, access to unique regional information, and member discount programs. For questions regarding benefits of joining the Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce, please call (248) 624-2826, or visit: [www.lakesareachamber.com](http://www.lakesareachamber.com).