

Memorandum

To: City of Saugatuck Planning Commission
Date: November 14, 2025
From: David M. Jirousek, AICP
RE: Master Plan Process, Scope, and Priorities

Meeting Objectives

1. Recap the steps of the master planning process.
2. Provide an overview of the general suggested scope/timeline and adjust as necessary.
3. Plan roundtable discussions, focus groups, etc.
4. Discuss general priorities and areas of focus.

Formal Steps

The following are the formal steps of the master planning process per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

1. ~~Notification letters to adjacent jurisdictions and relevant agencies.~~
2. Planning process (the bulk of the project lives here!).
3. Formal draft plan.
4. Recommendation to City Council to distribute the formal draft plan to adjacent jurisdictions and relevant agencies for review.
5. City Council resolution to approve distribution for formal draft plan review and assert the right of final approval.
6. Formal review period:
 - a. 42-day review for updated master plan.
 - b. 63-day review for new master plan.
7. Public notice 15 days in advance of the public hearing.
8. Public hearing after expiration of 42/63-day review.
9. Planning Commission approval/recommendation by resolution
10. City Council approval by resolution.
11. Approval notification letters to adjacent jurisdictions and relevant agencies.

General Suggested Project Scope

Phase 1: Kickoff, Reconnaissance, Public Involvement (November to January)

1. ~~Legal notices.~~
2. Finalize scope, timeframes, milestones, and expectations.
3. ~~Community survey:~~
 - a. ~~Development.~~
 - b. ~~Implementation.~~
4. Public input process development and implementation, including but not limited to:
 - a. ~~Open house event.~~
 - b. ~~Drop in display.~~
 - c. ~~Pop ups.~~
 - d. Interviews.
 - e. Special topic roundtable discussions, focus groups.
5. Assessment of data and conditions:
 - a. Study physical conditions of the community, identify building form, and assess development patterns, assets, opportunities, and constraints (tour and study of aerials).
 - b. Housing assessment.
 - c. Demographics (population, housing, economy).
 - d. Prepare base maps.
 - i. City map.
 - ii. Transportation/mobility.
 - iii. Existing land use and/or character area map..
 - iv. Community facilities.
 - v. Environmental resources.
6. Analyze and summarize community survey data and open house input, and prepare a feedback report.
7. Discussion of what was learned and conclusion of phase 1.

Phase 2: Work Sessions and Drafting (February-April)

1. Master Plan outline and content discussion.
 - a. Introduction and vision.
 - b. Existing conditions, needs assessment, demographics.
 - c. Summary of public involvement.
 - d. Topic area chapters.
 - e. Future land use.
 - f. Zoning plan.
 - g. Implementation (action, responsible party, priority, timeframe).
2. Facilitated discussions on major topic areas/chapters.
 - a. Goals.
 - b. Principles.
 - c. Recommendations.
3. Future land use planning and mapping.
4. Implementation strategy.
5. Draft plan 1 discussion.
6. Draft plan 2 discussion.

Phase 3: Review and Adopt (May-August)

1. Final draft and distribution.
2. Optional: Public input process development and implementation, including but not limited to:
 - a. Open house event.
 - b. Drop-in display.
 - c. Pop-ups
3. Official public hearing presentation.
4. Approval meetings.