2021
PLANNING COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT

PLANNING COMMISSION

1. MEMBERSHIP

MEMBER	TITLE	TERM EXPIRES
William Wascher	Chair	06-30-2024
Francis Livingston	Vice Chair	06-30-2024
Janae Fear	Secretary	06-30-2024
Tara Jenkins	Commissioner	06-30-2022
Daniel Law	Council Rep	11-12-2024
Tadd Morris	Commissioner	06-30-2023
Linda Robertson	Commissioner	06-30-2022
Thomas Taylor	ZBA Rep.	06-30-2023
Pete Yerian	Commissioner	Resigned 08/27/2021

2. ATTENDANCE (X = PRESENT)

	Wascher	Fear	Jenkins	Law	Livingston	Morris	Robertson	Taylor	Yerian
Jan	X	X		X	X	X			X
Feb	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Mar	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Apr	X	X		X	X		X	X	
May	X			X	X	X	X		
Jun	NO MEETING-LACK OF ITEMS								
Jul	X	X	X	X	X			X	
Aug	NO MEETING-LACK OF QUORUM								
Sept	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		Resigned
Oct	NO MEETING-LACK OF ITEMS								
Nov	X	X		X		X	X	X	
Dec	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	

3. MEETINGS (4th Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.)

Meeting Date	Agenda Items		
January 25	• Site Plan Review – new construction for marihuana grow	South St/Krouse Rd	Approved
	• 2020 Planning Commission Report	Review	Approved
February 22	• 2021-2027 Capital Improvement Plan	Review	Approved
March 22	• Site Plan Review – Garden Center	Review	Approved
April 26	• Master Plan	Public Hearing	Held the public hearing and the Commission tabled voting on the Master Plan
May 24	• Master Plan	Adoption	Approved
June 28	• Meeting Cancelled – Lack of agenda items		
July 26	• Site Plan Review – new construction for marihuana grow	1465 McMillan	Approved
August 23	• Meeting Cancelled - Lack of quorum		
September 27	• Rezoning (R-1 to RM-1)	702 S Park	Approved
	• Rezoning (R-2 to RM-1)	703 S Washington	Approved

	• Rezoning (R-2 to RM-1)	715 S Washington	Approved
	• Rezoning (R-2 to RM-1)	803 S Washington	Approved
	• Site Plan Review – renovations to existing buildings for marihuana grow	403 State	Approved
	• Marihuana – keep the current number of licenses for retail or increase • Add Excess Grow License to the list allowed	Voted to keep the current number of licenses for retail at 4	Approved adding Excess Grow License (unlimited)
October 25	• Meeting Cancelled – lack of agenda items		
November 22	• Rezoning (B-3 to I-1)	108 N Chipman	Approved
December 13	• Site Plan Review – new construction and renovations to existing structures for marihuana grow	1410/1420 Hathaway	Approved

4. MASTER PLAN REVIEW

The Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission and the City Council in June 2021. Following the plan's adoption, the city hired a consultant to lead City Council and staff through three strategic planning sessions (two have been completed) centered on the Master Plan. One of the outcomes from these sessions was staff correlating Council agenda items with Master Plan Goals. Each agenda item now clearly states which Master Plan goals it will work toward. This keeps the Master Plan and the identified goals front and center as the city moves forward.

Although it is too soon to assess Master Plan progress in-depth, the city has made several significant strides. CIP Planning was hired to assist with a Zoning Ordinance rewrite. Having the Zoning Ordinance aligned with the Master Plan will be instrumental in helping the city achieve its goals. The city has pursued Safe Routes to School funding to enhance walkable neighborhoods. A developer was located for the former church property at Washington and Monroe Streets, and the property was successfully rezoned to accommodate reuse of the church for apartments with additional units built around it.

Master Plan Goals:
- Goal 1: Protect health, safety, and general wellbeing of the community
- Goal 2: Provide excellent customer service to residents and investors
- Goal 3: Maintain fiscal responsibility and sustainability
- Goal 4: Identify, preserve, and enhance the community's character
- Goal 5: Increase quality of life and quality of place for all
- Goal 6: Boost local economy
- Goal 7: Strengthen public and private partnerships

5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REVIEW

The Economic Development Strategy was adopted as part of the Master Plan by the Planning Commission and City Council in June 2021.

Steps the City has taken towards achieving economic development goals include:
- Continuing to work toward Redevelopment Ready Community Certification
- The city is in the process of a Zoning Ordinance rewrite
- The city has hired a second code enforcement staff member
- The city has created and maintains an online Guide to Development
- The city continues to partner with the Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership

6. ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS		
a. Zoning Ordinance:		
June 2021 – the city contracted with CIB Planning to rewrite the zoning ordinance. This is about a 15-18 month process.		
b. Rezoning Requests:		

Address:	Rezoning Request:	Status:
702 S Park	R-1 to RM-1	Approved
703 S Washington	R-2 to RM-1	Approved
715 S Washington	B-1 to RM-1	Approved
803 S Washington	R-2 to RM-1	Approved
108 N Chipman	B-3 to I-1	Approved

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

1. MEMBERSHIP

MEMBER	TITLE	TERM EXPIRES
RANDY HORTON	Chair	6-20-2023
THOMAS TAYLOR	PC Representative	6-30-2024
CHRISTOPHER EVELETH	Vice Chair Council Rep	11-14-2022
KENT TELESZ		Resigned 09/2021
MATTHEW GRUBB	Secretary	6-30-2024
MICHAEL BRUFF	Alternate	Moved 01/2021
ROBERT TEICH	Alternate	06-30-2022

2. ATTENDANCE *(X = PRESENT)*

	Horton	Eveleth	Taylor	Telesz	Bruff	Teich	Grubb
Jan	No meeting				Moved		
Feb	No meeting						
Mar	No meeting						
Apr	No meeting						
May	No meeting						
June	No meeting						
July	No meeting						
Aug	X		X			X	
Sept	No meeting			Resigned			
Oct	No meeting						
Nov	No meeting						
Dec	No meeting						

3. MEETINGS *(3RD Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m.)*

Meeting Date	Agenda Items		
January 19	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items		
February 16	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items		
March 16	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items		
April 20	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items		
May 18	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items		
June 15	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items		
July 20	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items		
August 17	• Variance - Fence	612 W Stewart – residential	Approved
	• Variance – Fence	1225 W Stewart – commercial	Approved

September 21	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items
October 19	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items
November 16	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items
December 21	Cancelled due to lack of agenda items

TRAINING

None held in 2021

JOINT MEETINGS

None held in 2021

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The City's Public Participation Plan was adopted October 2017 and will be updated in 2022. Staff will work on reviewing and updating the plan to send recommendations to the Planning Commission and then City Council by July.

The recently approved Master Plan went above recommendations laid out in the participation plan. A committee was formed, a driving tour was conducted, numerous public meetings were held, and drafts of the plan were sent directly to key stakeholders, as was a public survey.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many challenges for citizen participation. The city pivoted to holding virtual public meetings, utilizing social media, conducting electronic surveys and more. The city also installed equipment in Council Chambers so public meetings can be live streamed, offering a hybrid participation option of in-person and online.

The city has increased its social media presence to include Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. In 2020, the city started using an email-marketing platform to send out monthly newsletters, bid notifications, employment opportunities, and emergency alerts. Staff continues to use traditional methods of communication as well, such as newspaper postings, mailing letters, and using door hangers when applicable.

SURVEY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS ASSESSMENT

This section of the annual report is for the Commission to discuss and review the development process. Some helpful questions to cover include:
- Did the Commission receive any surveys regarding the development process?
- Is there anything the Commission can do to receive more surveys?
- Are there changes the Commission can make to address concerns mentioned in the surveys?
- How does the Commission feel the process is working?

As of December 2021, the forms have been reviewed by staff and updated in terms of readability and process flow. Now having one dedicated employee to complete the review process, there seems to be fewer issues in communication and obtaining the appropriate department feedback required for the Planning Commission. This in turn puts a full packet together for the Planning Commission members to make educated decisions.

REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES

Based on feedback from communities and partners, the MEDC redesigned the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program in February 2021. The new program has two paths, the Essentials Path and the Certified Path. There has also been updates to some of the Best Practices. Owosso has selected the Certified Path, which will have more requirements but will also offer enhanced benefits to the community. Items that have been added to the RRC program are noted in red while items that were removed are shown but are crossed out.

CRITERIA	REPORT OF FINDINGS AUGUST 1, 2017	PROGRESS REPORT DECEMBER 2020	PROGRESS REPORT DECEMBER 2021
BEST PRACTICE 1: THE PLAN AND ENGAGEMENT			

(1.1) The governing body has adopted a Master Plan in the past five years and annually assesses progress.	N	In 63-day public review	Y - The Master Plan annual assessment will be a component of the Planning Commission Annual Report
(1.2) The governing body has adopted a Downtown or Corridor Plan.	N	In 63-day public review	Y (June 2021)
The governing body has adopted a corridor plan.			Y (June 2021)
(1.3)The governing body has adopted a Capital Improvements Plan.	N	Y (Feb. 2020)	Y (Feb. 2021)
(1.4)The community has a Public Participation Plan for engaging a diverse set of community stakeholders and shares outcomes annually.	N	Y	Y – The plan will need to be reviewed and updated within the next year.
The community demonstrates that public participation efforts go beyond the basic methods.	Y	Y	Y
The community shares outcomes of public participation processes annually to City Council.	N	Y	Y – Included in the Planning Commission Annual Report
BEST PRACTICE 2: ZONING			
(2.1) The governing body has adopted a Zoning Ordinance that aligns with the goals of the current Master Plan.	N	Will occur after MP update	June 2021 – began the process and will take approx. 15 months to rewrite
(2.2) Accessibility and User-friendliness	N	Will occur after MP update	June 2021 – began the process and will take approx. 15 months to rewrite
(2.3) Concentrated Development: The Zoning Ordinance provides for areas of concentrated development in appropriate locations and encourages the type and form of development desired.	N	Will occur after MP update	June 2021 – began the process and will take approx. 15 months to rewrite
The zoning ordinance includes flexible zoning tools to encourage development and redevelopment.	Y	Y	Y
(2.4) Housing Diversity: The Zoning Ordinance allows for a variety of housing options.	Y	Y	Y
The zoning ordinance includes standards to improve non-motorized transportation.	N	Will occur after MP update	June 2021 – began the process and will take approx. 15 months to rewrite
(2.5) The Zoning Ordinance includes flexible parking requirements.	N	Will occur after MP update	June 2021 – began the process and will take approx. 15 months to rewrite
(2.6) The Zoning Ordinance includes standards for green infrastructure.	N	Will occur after MP update	June 2021 – began the process and will

			take approx. 15 months to rewrite
BEST PRACTICE 3: DEVELOPMENT REVIEW			
(3.1) Defined Processes: The Zoning Ordinance articulates a thorough Site Plan Review process.	Y	Y	Y
(3.2) Point of Contact: The community has clearly identified a point of contact for development review activities	Y	Y	Y
(3.3) Conceptual Review: The community defines and offers conceptual Site Plan Review meetings for applicants.	N	Y: Complete & on website	Y
~~The community encourages a developer to seek input from neighboring residents and businesses at the onset of the application process.~~	N	Y	Y
~~The appropriate departments engage in joint site plan reviews.~~	Y	Y	Y
(3.4) The community has a clearly documented internal staff review policy	N	Implemented BS&A tracking	
(3.5) Approval Authority: Approving permitting uses at the Planning Commission or Staff level allows faster approval and respects the administrative nature of development review.			Y
(3.6) The community annually reviews the fee schedule.	N	Y: Complete & on website	Y
(3.7) Payment Methods: The community accepts credit card payments and indicates this online			Y – Completed November 2021
(3.8) The community maintains an online Guide to Development that explains policies, procedures and steps to obtain approvals.	N	Y: Complete & on website	Y
~~The community promptly acts on development requests.~~	N	Implemented BS&A tracking	Y
(3.9)The community has a method to track development projects.	N	Implemented BS&A tracking	Y
(3.10) Continued Improvement: The community annually reviews the successes and challenges with the Site Plan Review and approval procedures.	N	N	Y: The process is reviewed annually as part of Planning Commission Annual Report
BEST PRACTICE 4: BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS			
(4.1) The community has a clear recruitment and appointment process			The application is online but the appointment process will need to be more clearly defined.
(4.2) The community sets expectations for Board and Commission positions.	N	Y: Complete & on website	Y

(4.3) The community provides orientation packets to all appointed and elected members of development related boards and commissions.	N	Y: Complete & on website	Y
(4.4) Bylaws: The community has bylaws for boards and commissions available online			November 2021
(4.5) Planning Commission Annual Report: The community issues a Planning Commission annual report			Y
(4.6) Training Strategy: The community identifies training goals, funding, how training outcomes are shared, encourages the community and updates this strategy annually.			This item consolidates the 3 items below with the added task of updating the strategy annually. This still needs to be completed.
~~The community identifies training needs and tracks attendance of the governing body, boards, commissions and staff.~~	N	Implemented	Y
~~The community encourages the governing body, boards, commissions and staff to attend trainings.~~	Y	Y	Y
~~The community shares information between the governing body, boards, commissions and staff.~~	N	N	Y: Virtual Clerk
(4.7) Joint Meetings: The community holds joint meetings with boards and commissions			N

BEST PRACTICE 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

(5.1) The community has approved an Economic Development Strategy and annually assesses.	N	Included in the new Master Plan	June 2021 adopted Master Plan. The plan will be reviewed annually with the Master Plan as part of the Planning Commission Annual Report
~~The community annually reviews the economic development strategy.~~	N	N	N
(5.2) Incentives Policies: The community has adopted policies to guide economic development incentives			Y
(5.3) The community has developed a marketing ~~strategy~~ plan.	N	N	N
~~The community has an updated, user-friendly municipal website.~~	N	N	N

BEST PRACTICE 6: PRIORITY REDEVELOPMENT SITES
(USED TO BE BEST PRACTICE 5)
Best Practice 6 is for communities that are already certified.
MEDC will provide support for these items.

(6.1)The community identifies and prioritizes redevelopment sites.	N	Included in the new Master Plan	June 2021 adopted Master Plan

(6.2) Basic Information: Photos of site, owner information, building size, etc.			
(6.3) Vision: Identified project champion, identify high controversy site, Master Plan and zoning support vision			
(6.4) Potential Resources: development tools, financial incentives, etc.			
(6.5) Property Information Package: includes deed restrictions, survey, known environmental conditions, etc.			
(6.6) Marketing: Information packages are marketing in accordance with marketing strategy			
~~The community gathers preliminary background information for prioritized redevelopment sites.~~			
~~The community has development a vision for the priority redevelopment sites.~~			
~~The community identifies available resources and incentives for prioritized redevelopment sites.~~			
~~A property information package for the prioritized redevelopment site(s) is assembled.~~			
~~Prioritized redevelopment sites are actively marketed.~~			