



Guide to Development

City of Livonia
2022



*Come home
to Livonia!*

Thank you for choosing to invest in Livonia! We are eager to hear more about your project and ideas! To better assist you in the early planning stages, the Guide to Development is intended to provide you with a general overview of relevant information regarding the development review process, city department areas of responsibility, forms and a variety of other business resources to assist you every step of the way.

This document is not intended to include all requirements of the City Ordinances or Codes, nor is it a replacement of the City Ordinance. We encourage you to contact with city staff members early in the development process to ensure the most efficient use of your time and to discuss zoning, permit and approval requirements as they relate to each individual project. Congratulations and we wish you the very best!

Welcome to Livonia!

Encouraging community revitalization and promoting economic opportunity for all segments of the population is a key component to ensuring a high quality of life. It is essential to retain, attract, and maintain the type of businesses that contribute positively to the local economy. Whether you are starting a new business, expanding, or preparing for land development, understanding government requirements can be challenging.

Important Departments

The chart provides a general summary to include departmental areas of responsibility. If you do not see what you are looking for on the table below, please check out our website at www.livonia.gov or call City Hall at 734-466-2200 and an operator will direct you. City Hall is open Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and closed on Saturday and Sunday. City Hall may also be closed on certain holidays throughout the year.

Planning	Building/ Inspection	Engineering	Clerk's Office	Economic Development
Mark Taormina <i>Director of Planning & Economic Development</i> Planning@livonia.gov 734-466-2290	Jerome Hanna <i>Director of Inspection</i> Inspection@livonia.gov 734-466-2580	Todd Zilincik <i>City Engineer</i> engineering@livonia.gov 734-466-2570	Susan Nash <i>City Clerk</i> clerk@livonia.gov 734-466-2228	Jacob Uhazie <i>Planning & Economic Development Coordinator</i> econdev@livonia.gov 734-466-2293
Site plan review for proposed improvements and development projects; Waiver approval process	Building Inspections & Permits: Structural, electrical, plumbing, demolition and moving, signs and zoning compliance	Permits for work within the public right-of-way	Business Licensing	Business Attraction/Retention
Demographic information, GIS Maps, Zoning Maps	License Registration for Building, HVAC, Plumbing, Electrical and Sign Contractors	Street, Streetlight, Sidewalk repairs/issues	Permits: Garage Sale, Block Party, Pets, Dog Park, Bicycles	Package State & Local Tax Incentives
Cell Towers, wholesaler car dealer zoning approval	Zoning/ordinance Violations & Complaints/Inspections	FEMA Maps	Birth & Death Records	Maintaining a supportive business climate.
Industrial, commercial & land development assistance	Issues Certificate of Occupancy	Inspect Public Construction work	Council Meetings, Agendas, Studies & Public Hearings	Business Development Assistance
Letters providing Zoning District information	Letters providing historical record on property zoning violations	Review plans for public improvements	Voting & Elections	Assistance with business expansion or relocation projects within the city

Attention Business Owners and Developers

We encourage you to contact City staff members **early in the project development stages** to ensure the most efficient use of your time and to discuss permit and approval requirements as they relate to each individual project.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Below you will find the various Planning Department Forms and Guidelines needed to submit a formal Petition. Examples of each Petition are provided to further explain the meaning of each Petition as well

as a brief summary of the approval process. Please note this reference tool is not intended to include all the requirements of the City; however, it will assist you to better plan your project.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT PETITIONS

1. Rezoning

Description	Petition to “rezone” an area from one zone to another for redevelopment or construction.
Example(s)	You request to rezone a property from P (Parking) to C-2 (General Business) to construct and conduct your business which is permitted in a C-2 zoning district.
Process	Discuss plan for business expansion with Planning Department Staff, Submit Completed Application, requires a Planning Commission Public Hearing Meeting to determine a recommendation to City Council for final approval.

2. Waiver Use

Description	Petition to expand or add existing business, services and or operations. If a business wishes to operate their business in a different zone from what is “Permitted” by the zoning ordinance, certain operations may go through the Planning Waiver Use approval process.
Example(s)	Full service restaurants (more than 30 seats) are permitted in C-3 & C-4 zoning districts. If said restaurant owner wishes to open his operation in a C-2 zoning district, this would be permitted under the city Waiver Use approval process, meaning they would go in front of the Planning Commission first for their approval and/or recommendations then on to City Council for final approval.
Process	Discuss plan for business expansion with Planning Department Staff, submit completed forms, permitted upon review by Planning Commission, requires final approval by City Council.

3. Site Plans

Description	Petition for new development and or redevelopment including but not limited to building addition, site changes or changes in use shall be subject to the site plan review process. Consult with your Planning Staff first for guidance.
Example(s)	Existing Shopping Center wishes to construct a multi-tenant retail building on current property; Current Commercial Shopping Center wishes to renovate and expand the existing shopping center, including remodel the exterior façade of the existing shopping center and reconfigure the layout of the parking lot; Demolish an existing hotel to construct a new hotel.
Process	First, prior to submitting application, discuss site plans for construction, renovations and new development with the Planning Department which may include submitting a conceptual drawing of your project to determine necessary steps to be completed. Requires a Planning Commission Public Hearing Meeting to determine recommendation to City Council for final approval.

LIVONIA ZONING REGULATIONS: Signs, Landscape, Parking, Cell Towers and more
 Whether you are in the site selection phase or you are an existing business owner considering future renovations or improvements to your property, reviewing the City Zoning regulations is always a good idea early in the planning process. On our City website go to our [Livonia 21 Zoning Ordinances](#).

PLANNING FORMS & FEE SCHEDULE

[Fee Schedule](#)

[Rezoning Application Procedure, Ordinance and Fee Schedule](#)

[Signage Application](#)

[Site Plan Application](#)

[Tax Incentive Policy](#)

[Waiver Use Application](#)

REVIEWING BODIES FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS & TIMELINE

The City’s Ordinance Code outlines the procedures for development applications. Depending on the nature and location of the project, select City boards and commissions will review the project. These groups are advisory boards to the City Council and provide recommendations to the City Council. The

relevant project development boards and commissions are described below and meet at City Hall unless noted otherwise.

Planning Commission	Reviews rezoning requests, site plans, waiver use permits, and other land use applications.	Meets Tuesdays at 7 p.m.
Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)	Hears appeals from residential and business property owners when they are unable to comply with ordinance requirements and are declined permits by the Engineering and Inspection Departments.	Meets Tuesdays at 7 p.m.
Livonia Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (LBRA)	Assists development projects that face economic challenges due to environmental constraints.	Meets held as needed

The timeline for the approval process of a development application depends on the schedule of each board and commission that needs to review the project, the public notice requirements in each case, and the publication time for media release. Be sure to discuss related timelines with your City Staff early in the development stages, as timelines may vary depending on the specifics of each project.

ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNERS AND DEVELOPERS

We encourage you to contact City staff members **early in the project development stages** to ensure the most efficient use of your time and to discuss permit and approval requirements as they relate to each individual project.

DEFINITIONS

1. What is a Petition?	A petition is a request to do something, most commonly addressed to a government official or public entity.
2. What is an Easement?	A right to cross or otherwise use someone else’s land for a specified purpose. When someone is granted an easement, he or she is granted the legal right to use the property but the legal title to the land remains with the owner. Easements are generally recorded with the Assessor’s Office . For Example: <i>the utility company has an easement through your land for the purpose of maintaining the utility.</i>
3. What is a Variance?	A form of equitable relief allowing the applicant to use his land in an efficient way by bypassing the local zoning laws. Essentially you are asking permission to do something which violates the local Zoning Ordinance. There are two types of Variances: a. Area (Non-Use) – offers an exception to the property owner encountering difficulties complying with physical requirements issues. <i>For Example: adding a second floor.</i> b. Use – allows property owner to use this property in a way that deviates from local zoning standards. For Example: <i>a use variance might allow a dentist to place his or her practice in a residential area.</i>
4. What is Vacating?	Petition to determine whether or not to vacate part of an existing utility, easement or public right of way. The general process for Vacating requests is as follows: The petitioner writes a vacating request letter addressed to City Council and submitted to the City Clerk’s office along with vacating fee . Vacating requests are first reviewed by the Engineering Division and the Law Department. The Engineering Division will forward a recommendation to City Council for action. Council may or may not refer request to Planning Department for action. If it does go to Planning, a Public Hearing date will be scheduled. For more information, please contact our Engineering Division . For Example: <i>a petitioner submitted a letter to City Council to vacate the existing sanitary sewer, storm water and water main easements on the property.</i>

INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

The Inspection/Building and Enforcement Department provides information, examines and approves plans, questions on signage, issues permits and conducts follow-up inspections for all new construction

as well as additions/alterations to both residential and commercial buildings. ***It also issues the Certificate of Occupancy for new construction & new businesses.***

Permits are issued during normal business hours, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday. Fees vary, depending on the type of permit required. Please refer to the list of Inspection/Building and Enforcement Department Application Forms below for specific permit fee requirements. If you are not sure where your project falls, in relation to required permits, please contact the Inspection Department for guidance.

INSPECTION FORMS & RELATED PERMIT FEES

[Awning Permit](#)

[Building Code of Appeals Instructions and Application](#)

[Commercial Building Application](#)

[Demolition or Moving Permit Application and Procedures](#)

[Electrical Permit Application](#)

[Fence Authorizations \(Privacy and/or Chain Link Fence\)](#)

[Fire Suppression System Application](#)

[Furnace / Boiler / Mechanical Equipment Certification](#)

[Limited Power of Attorney Instructions and Form](#)

[Mechanical Permit Application](#)

[Pennant Banner Balloon Permit](#)

[Plumbing Permit Application](#)

[Rental License Application](#)

[Residential Building & Zoning Permit Application](#)

[Sample Plot Plan](#)

[Sign Erector License](#)

[Sign Permit Application](#)

[Vacant and Abandoned Structure Registration](#)

[Zoning Board of Appeals Variance Application and Instructions](#)



ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

The Engineering Department is a Division of the Department of Public Works. They process permits for work within the public right-of-way, inspect public construction work, review plans for public improvements, conduct engineering studies, prepare plans and specifications and administer contracts for the City's public improvement projects.

Service Area Phone Numbers

Public Utility Information: 734-466-2576

Plan Review: 734-466-2574

Issue Permits: 734-466-2571

ENGINEERING FORMS & RELATED FEES

[Grade Certification Requirements](#)

[Grade Certification Requirements - Commercial](#)



[Plot Plan Submission Criteria](#)
[Sanitary Sewer Details](#)
[Sidewalk and Approach Details](#)
[Site Plan Design Standards](#)
[Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Plan Checklist](#)
[Soil Erosion Details](#)
[Storm Sewer Details](#)
[Water Details 1](#)
[Water Details 2](#)

ADDITIONAL CITY RESOURCES

[LIVONIA ASSESSORS OFFICE: 734-466-2220](#)

Tax Information, Exemption of Personal Property Taxes, Property Assessment Information and Lot Split-Combinations.

[CITY GIS e-MAPPING RESOURCES:](#)

A Zoning Map describes the control by authority of the use of land, and of the buildings thereon. Areas of land are divided by appropriate authorities into zones within which various uses are permitted.

[MASTER PLAN:](#)

The Planning Department, in conjunction with the Planning Commission, has developed a master land use plan for Livonia. Questions on present and future use of land can be directed to this department. The City adopted the new master plan in 2019.

COMMUNITY, STATE & FEDERAL BUSINESS RESOURCES & SERVICES

Starting a new business or expanding your existing business can take a lot of know-how. Whether it's financial consulting, workforce training, writing a business plan or finding the perfect business location, the City of Livonia can connect business owners with the services they need to grow and thrive in the community.

LOCAL RESOURCES

[Livonia Chamber of Commerce](#)
[Madonna University School of Business](#)
[Schoolcraft College Business Development Center](#)
[Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\)](#)
[U of M Center for Entrepreneurship](#)

STATE AND REGIONAL RESOURCES

[Michiganbusiness.org](#)
[MichiganWorks!](#)
[MI Talent](#)
[Michigan.org](#)

[Michigan Economic Development Corporation](#)

[Michigan Department of Treasury](#)

[Pure Michigan Business Connect](#)

[Small Business Association of Michigan](#)

[Southeast Michigan Council of Governments](#)

FEDERAL RESOURCES

[Grants.gov](#)

[US Small Business Administration](#)

STARTING A BUSINESS

Below are some helpful hints to add to your “business to-do-list”:

1. Have you created a business plan and a needs assessment for your business?
2. Have you identified your desired business location? Is it the proper zoning for your operation? First inquire with your Planning and Economic Development office for available properties, zoning, site-plan and development specifics.
3. If applicable, apply for a business license - Contact your Clerks office for details at 734-466-2228.
4. Should you Incorporate your business? By choosing an LLC, s corporation or c corporation you have the freedom to decide on a tax structure that works for your business. The Schoolcraft College Business Development Center is a great resource for start-ups and young entrepreneurs.
5. Apply for necessary building permits to remodel, occupancy change, zoning compliance, renovate, expand, etc. Contact your Building & Inspection Department to discuss necessary permit needs. Click here for related Applications.
6. Applying for sign permits? Depending on the scope of your project, if you are located within a City Control Zone or other related variables, signage permits may either go through Planning or Inspection.
 - a. Contact your Planning Department first to discuss details related to your sign project at 734-466-2290. Sign Ordinance details check out our Zoning Ordinance No. 543. From there you will scroll down to section 18.50 A-K.
7. Small business in need of financial and legal assistance? Contact the US Small Business Administration for guidance.
8. Network – Get involved in your Livonia Chamber of Commerce. It’s a great place to start when you’re just getting started or new to the community.

IMPORTANT UTILITY INFORMATION

Gas & Electric Connections

New Business Connection: 800-338-0178

Consumers Energy (gas): 800-477-5050

DTE Energy (electric): 800-477-4747

Cable Providers

AT&T – 734-462-1110

Spectrum – 877-824-6249

WOW – 734-756-3699

Comcast Business – 734-787-2193

CONTACT US

If you'd like to talk more about your project, business needs or if you have questions on the Guide to Development, please contact Economic Development Coordinator, Jacob Uhazie, at 734-466-2293 or email juhazie@livonia.gov.