



Educational and Training Plan for the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Downtown Development Authority and other elected and appointed Boards and Commissions

Training budget and purpose. In most cases, the staff liaisons department budget includes money for board and commission training along with department staff. The DDA includes money within their annual operating budget for training. The purpose of training is to provide opportunities for elected and appointed officials along with city staff to improve their knowledge regarding development related items and trends. Turnover in officials and staff can create gaps in knowledge, which makes ongoing training essential to efficient functioning of the City's development processes.

Identification of training needs. All elected, appointed board and commission members, or staff, would benefit from introductory training provided regionally by groups like the Michigan Association of Planning, Michigan Downtown Association, Michigan Municipal League, Michigan State University Extension, and others. Veteran board members and staff could benefit from refresher training, and all could benefit from training that introduces new laws, concepts, or best practices. When determined appropriate on-site training can be arranged for elected and appointed officials along with city staff. In addition, individuals are able to find free or low-cost training for land use items on the internet.

It is strongly recommended that new Planning Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals members attend the MSUE Citizen Planner training at the beginning of their appointment. Depending the lapse of time between attending the original Citizen Planner Class and now, some members may request to attend the program again.

Notification and communication of training opportunities and activities. Staff receives email notification of training opportunities from organizations that include the Michigan Municipal League, Michigan Association of Planning, Michigan Economic Development Association and others. Each staff liaison is responsible for forwarding the training opportunities to their appointed board or commission. In many cases this takes place via email however, information can also be included within the agenda packet.

The city hopes that all elected and appointed officials will take advantage of training to broaden their knowledge. Efforts will be made to provide on-site training when beneficial to all the different boards and commissions. In the past on-site training has included the MSUE Citizen Planner Class; MAP's Planning and Zoning Essentials; Capital Improvement Programs; and Community Engagement. In addition to some staff, ZBA and PC members have attended the Risk Management class through MAP off-site.

Tracking attendance of training. Elected and appointed officials are be asked to track their training throughout the calendar year. The staff liaison will collect the information and include it in the applicable annual report that is provided to the City Commission.

Communication about training. In addition to completing the tracking document, those who attend training on behalf of the City are asked to briefly communicate at the next meeting of the elected or appointed board what they learned at the training and how the training benefits the community.