



DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

CITY OF HILLSDALE, MICHIGAN

Everything a developer needs to know about
locating in the City of Hillsdale.

June 2024

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Why Hillsdale?

Established in 1839 and chartered in 1869, the City of Hillsdale is located in the rolling, fertile hills of South Central Michigan, bordering Indiana and Ohio. A community of approximately 8,000 residents, it is the county seat of Hillsdale County and home to nationally-recognized Hillsdale College as well as Jackson College. Hillsdale is also home to Hillsdale Hospital, a private, independent, non-profit institution and the only acute care hospital in Hillsdale County.

Conveniently located in south central Michigan near the Indiana and Ohio borders, the **City of Hillsdale** and its business community are still strongly tied to its manufacturing and agricultural roots. Hillsdale has a quiet, small-town lifestyle, but is a close commute to larger metropolitan areas including Lansing, Jackson, Battle Creek, and Ann Arbor, Michigan and Toledo, Ohio. I-69 and I-80 can both be reached in 30 minutes or less and I-94 is just 45 minutes away.

The city-owned Hillsdale Municipal Airport can handle commercial air traffic with a recently upgraded 5,000' x 100' runway. Other nearby airports include: Lansing Capital City Airport, Detroit Metro-Wayne County Airport, and Ft. Wayne International Airport.

Everything you need to make your business venture successful is available here: buildable land and available buildings; a skilled workforce; reliable and economical utilities; entrepreneurial, educational and workforce development resources.

Working in partnership with local and regional economic development and government agencies, our economic development support system is designed to be responsive to the needs of existing and new businesses and entrepreneurs.

About the Development Guide

This guide provides a general overview of the City of Hillsdale development approval process. It is meant to help residents, developers, investors, and others understand the review and approval process for any size project from concept through occupancy. Consultation with staff and/or outside professionals is recommended for most projects. You can also learn more online at www.cityofhillsdale.org.

Demographics

Hillsdale offers businesses an ideal location to start or grow their business. We have everything you need: an excellent, skilled workforce, existing infrastructure, available land and buildings, local and state incentives, first-class utilities, access to local financing, and both educational and workforce development resources.

Target Industries

The City of Hillsdale has identified the following as industries for business attraction:

- Advanced Manufacturing
 - Dairy Product Manufacturing
 - Animal Slaughtering and Processing
 - Agriculture, Construction, and Mining Equipment Manufacturing
 - Engine, Turbine, and Power Transmission Equipment Manufacturing
 - Electrical Equipment and Component Manufacturing
 - Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing
 - Aerospace Product and Parts Manufacturing
 - Other Transportation Equipment Manufacturing
- Call Centers
- Data Centers
- Leisure and Hospitality
- Education and Health Services

Hillsdale Manufacturing and Technology Park

Situated in the northwest corner of the City of Hillsdale, adjacent to state highway M-99, the 360-acre Hillsdale Manufacturing and Technology Park provides light industrial, manufacturing, and technology related businesses the space and services they need to succeed.

- 170 acres of vacant, buildable land free of environmental contaminants
- 135 acres with Technology Overlay
- 72 strands of high-speed fiber-optic network with triple redundancy available for commercial traffic
- Municipally owned and operated electric, water, and wastewater treatment with competitive rates
- Paved all-weather roads
- Uniform building requirements

- 24/7 Police & fire protection
- Centrally located: Close to highways and other urban centers
- Accessible raw material sources
- Local public transportation for employees



Hillsdale Manufacturing Park Aerial

Hillsdale Municipal Airport

The Hillsdale Municipal Airport is a State of Michigan licensed "Public Use-General Utility Airport". The runway was recently reconstructed and expanded to 5000 feet by 100 feet. The crowned and grooved construction offers superior drainage for excellent braking/steering characteristics and the weight bearing capacity rating has been increased up to the "Gulfstream" category of business aircraft. Future development includes a new terminal building/parking area, hangars, fuel farm and full length taxiway.

The airport is accessed via two instrument approaches (VOR, GPS) with an additional two WAAS based GPS approaches in development and scheduled for publication by late 2012/early 2013. These approaches will significantly improve access and safety during inclement weather conditions. Weather conditions at the airport are continuously monitored and broadcast by AWOS automated weather observation station. Flight crews have access to weather data via the WSI Weather Brief station in the Terminal/FBO building.

Full-time staffing at the airport ensures timely and continuous daytime runway monitoring and clearing during the winter season. On-call runway clearing services are available for night/early morning departure and arrivals via the Fixed Based Operator (FBO).

The Existing Terminal Building offers a heated and air-conditioned public waiting area, conference room and pilot lounge. There are vending machines, complimentary coffee and water service and free public Wi-Fi service through the FBO. The Terminal also has contains a Gift Shop which carries souvenirs and routinely used pilot supplies. Groundbreaking and construction for a New Terminal Building will begin in June of 2024.

Twenty-four hour self-serve fuel is available. Full-service fuel is available through the FBO during daytime hours seven days a week and available upon request after hours. Products include Jet-A fuel and 100LL Avgas. Rental cars are available locally with airport pick-up/drop-off via the Fixed Based Operator. Flight crews also have a free courtesy vehicle available.

Hangar facilities are available on a space/size limited basis as are heated storage facilities for larger aircraft through the FBO. Aircraft maintenance, car rental and aircraft management services are available through the FBO Monday through Friday daytime hours. On-call service available weekends and evenings as well. Property may be acquired for non-aviation businesses as well as for private and corporate hangar construction.

For more information please contact the Airport at: 517-320-4411

Key Staff

City Manager's Office		
David Mackie, City Manager	517-437-6444	dmackie@cityofhillsdale.org
Laura Sergent, Human Resource Director	517-437-6443	lsergent@cityofhillsdale.org
Planning, Assessing, & Code Enforcement		
Alan Beeker, Planner/Zoning Administrator	517-437-6449	abeeker@cityofhillsdale.org
Kim Thomas, Assessor & Code Enforcement	517-437-6456	kthomas@cityofhillsdale.org
Olivia Smith, Appraiser	517-437-6455	ojones@cityofhillsdale.org
Kristen Bauer, City Engineer	517-437-6479	kbauer@cityofhillsdale.org
City Clerk's Office		
Katy Price, City Clerk	517-437-6441	clerk@cityofhillsdale.org
Peter Merritt, Treasurer	517-437-6454	treasurer@cityofhillsdale.org
Economic Development		
Samuel Fry, Coordinator	517-437-6426	econdev@cityofhillsdale.org
Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities		
David Mackie, Director	517-437-3387	dmackie@cityofhillsdale.org
Jake Hammel, Electric Distribution	517-437-6418	jhammel@hillsdalebpu.com
Jeff Gier, Water & Wastewater	517-437-6412	jgier@hillsdalebpu.com
Technology Services		
Brandon Janes, IT Director	517-437-6499	bjanes@hillsdalebpu.com
Public Safety		
Scott Hephner, Police Chief	517-437-6460	shephner@cityofhillsdale.org
Public Services		
Jason Blake, Director	517-437-6490	jblake@cityofhillsdale.org

Outside Agencies

Additional agencies may hold jurisdiction on particular development issues within the City of Hillsdale depending on the project. The following list includes the most commonly involved outside agencies.

Hillsdale County Road Commission

Bob Griffis, Manager (517) 474-4458 hillsdale@hillsdalecrc.org

Hillsdale County Drain Commissioner

William Word, Commissioner (517) 437-4181 drains@co.hillsdale.mi.us

Michigan Department of Transportation

Doug Jordan, Engineer (517) 780-5103 jordanr@michigan.gov

MISS DIG

811 (248) 370-6424

Economic Development Partnership

Susan Smith, Executive Director (517) 260-2544 ssmith@hillsdaleedp.org

Boards & Commissions

Most development applications are considered by the Planning Commission. Other boards or commissions may become involved in your application if appeals, variances, rezoning or text amendments, or incentives are involved. Staff can direct you to the appropriate boards for your particular case.

City Commission

Meets 2nd and 4th Mondays

Staff Liaison: David Mackie

Planning Commission

Meets 3rd Wednesday

Staff Liaison: Alan Beeker

Zoning Board of Appeals

Meets 2nd Wednesday, as needed

Staff Liaison: Alan Beeker

Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA)

Meets 3rd Tuesday of odd months

Staff Liaison: Alan Beeker

Economic Development Corporation (EDC)

Meets 3rd Tuesday of even months

Staff Liaison: Samuel Fry

Master Plan

The City updates its Master Plan every five years. The most recent update was adopted in 2021. The Planning Commission uses the opportunity to look into the future. Public participation is encouraged and public meetings are held during the update process to find out what the people of Hillsdale would like as the focus of that vision. You can view the current Master Plan on our website, or contact the City Zoning Administrator for a copy.

https://www.cityofhillsdale.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning_and_zoning/page/133/final_master_plan_update_2021_with_resolution.pdf

Planning and Zoning

The zoning ordinance regulates the use and development of land within the City of Hillsdale. Standards are in place that apply both citywide and in each specific zoning district. You are encouraged to review the zoning ordinance and consult with staff before initiating any change of use or construction project within the City. You can view the Hillsdale Municipal Code of Ordinances at www.municode.com or contact the City Zoning Administrator.

The City Zoning Administrator offers pre-planning meetings upon request. The following information will be required for review: parcel or lot information, proposed use of the project, and preliminary site plans.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission for the City of Hillsdale is a seven member board. Their duties include review of site plans for potential building projects, regulation of land use, zoning ordinance adoption and amendment, re-zoning requests, preparation of a Master Plan, Capital Improvement Plan and review of capital projects. **They meet regularly on the third Wednesday of every month at 5:30 PM at City Hall.**

Site Plan petitions are required for submission of review by the Planning Commission. There are application fees for site plan review and the applications are available online. https://www.cityofhillsdale.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning_and_zoning/page/1781/commercial_site_plan_review_packet_2022.pdf

Commercial Site Plan Review Procedure:

- Submit Commercial Site Plan Review Application to the Zoning Administrator by the first of the month.

- A review fee of \$400.00 is required upon submission. Fees may be paid in the City Clerk's Office or pay online by following the link to "Pay my Bill" on the City's home page.
- Zoning Administrator will schedule a review meeting with the Project Owner, Project Architect/Engineer and relevant Department Heads.
- Site Plans, with any revisions required from Department Head review, are to be submitted no later than one week prior to Planning Commission meeting.
- Final Site Plan submittal is included in Planning Commission packet.
- Planning Commission will review and vote to grant or deny zoning approval.
- Upon approval, Zoning Administrator will issue a Zoning Permit.
- Upon denial, Owner may submit an Appeal to the Zoning Board of Approval.

Re-zoning Applications must be initiated by property owners or by the Planning Commission. Requests for re-zoning must be submitted 21 days prior to the regular meeting to insure compliance with notification requirements. There is a \$500.00 filing fee and must be submitted with the application. Recent zoning amendments are available online. https://www.cityofhillsdale.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning_and_zoning/page/1781/rezoningapplicaton-2016.pdf

Zoning Board of Appeals

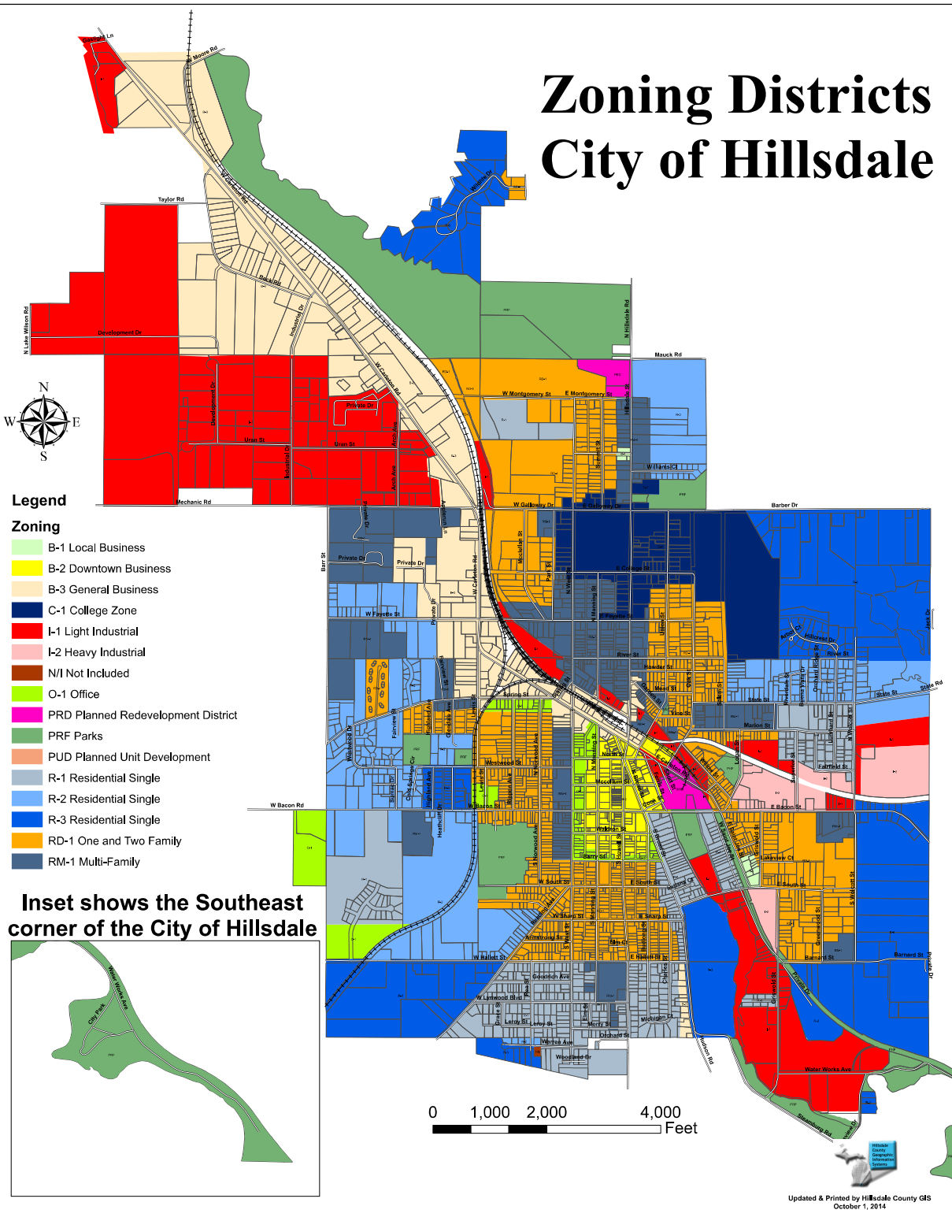
The Zoning Board of Appeals is a seven member board. **They meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers of City Hall as needed.**

Their duties include review of Zoning Administrator and Planning Commission decision appeals, non-conforming alterations, variance requests, temporary structure placement and requests for variance from the zoning or sign ordinances.

An application to the Zoning Board of Appeals must be accompanied with a filing fee of \$300.00. They must meet within 30 days of the request to hear the appeal.

Zoning Ordinance Map

Zoning Districts City of Hillsdale



Board of Public Utilities – Information and Rates

Board of Public Utilities

The mission of the BPU is to meet or exceed customer needs and expectations for reliable, economic, and environmentally responsible public utility services that merit being the supplier of choice. The Board of Public Utilities provides reliable electric, water, and wastewater services to the City of Hillsdale. For additional information, please go to

<https://www.cityofhillsdale.org/bpu/page/utility-rates>

Non-Residential Electric Rates

There are four types of Non-Residential Electric Rates. Most often the size of service and usage demand will determine which rate the non-residential customer will be placed.

Business Rate – (B1 or B3) Applicable to any customer for general service at secondary voltage where the demand is less than 25 kW.

Small General Secondary Service

Customer Charge for Single Phase: B1	\$16.38	per month
Customer Charge for Three Phase: B3	\$43.45	per month
Energy Charge Single Phase:	\$0.11119	per kWh
Energy Charge Three Phase:	\$0.11119	per kWh

Commercial Rate – (C1, C3, C1A, or C3A) Applicable to any customer for general service at secondary voltage where the demand is 5 kW, but not greater than 100 kW. Where demand is 5 kW but less than 25 kW, the customer shall have the option of being placed on this rate or the Small General Secondary Service Rate. If demand is greater than 25 kW the customer shall have the opportunity to choose between the C1/C3 demand rate or the alternative C1/C3 non-demand rate. Once this choice is made, the account shall remain on that rate for no less than 12 months.

Medium General Secondary Service (C1, C3)

Customer Charge for Single Phase:	\$46.75	per month
Customer Charge for Three Phase:	\$76.38	per month
Demand Charge (5 kW minimum) Single Phase:	\$13.02	per kWh
Demand Charge (5 kW minimum) Three Phase:	\$13.34	per kWh

Energy Charge Single Phase:	\$0.05701	per kWh
Energy Charge Three Phase:	\$0.05700	per kWh

Alternative General Secondary Service (C1A, C3A)

Customer Charge for Single Phase:	\$38.19	per month
Customer Charge for Three Phase:	\$76.38	per month
Energy Charge Single Phase:	\$0.13653	per kWh
Energy Charge Three Phase:	\$0.13653	per kWh

Large Commercial Rate – (C2 or C2A) Applicable to any customer for general service at secondary voltage where the demand is greater than 100 kW for five consecutive months in the last 12 months. If demand is greater than 100 kW the customer shall have the opportunity to choose between the C2 demand rate or the alternative C2A non-demand rate. Once this choice is made, the account shall remain on that rate for no less than 12 months.

Large Secondary Service (C2)

Customer Charge for Single Phase:	\$106.63	per month
Demand Charge (100 kW minimum)	\$16.80	per kW
Energy Charge	\$0.04988	per kWh

Alternative General Secondary Service (C2A)

Customer Charge for Single Phase:	\$106.63	per month
Energy Charge	\$0.13625	per kWh

Industrial – (I) Applicable to any customer for general service at primary voltage where the actual demand is 25 kW or greater, and where the customer furnished and maintains all necessary transforming, controlling and protective equipment.

General Service

Customer Charge for Single Phase:	\$173.25	per month
Demand Charge (25 kW minimum)	\$16.31	per kW
Energy Charge	\$0.04923	per kWh

Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) rate can vary month to month. A base amount (cost) for energy is in our rates, however if the actual cost to provide you with energy is higher or lower, that difference must be passed on. The major items that will affect the price of power is overall customer demand and the cost of fuel.

Operation Roundup – this program rounds up the monthly bill to the next whole dollar. The amount collected is used to assist BPU customers that meet strict criteria established by the Community Action Agency and the Hillsdale BPU.

Electric Rates Effective 7-1-2023

Water & Sewer Rates

Customer Charge is based on the size of meter located at the account. The customer charge is assessed each month whether there is usage on the meter or not. Usage is billed per 1,000 gallons.

Water Rates:

Customer Charge: \$ 15.00 per month ($\frac{3}{4}$ " meter)
\$ 17.00 per month (1" meter)
\$ 41.00 per month (1½ " meter)
\$ 64.00 per month (2" meter)
\$128.00 per month (3" meter)
\$208.00 per month (4" meter)
\$438.00 per month (6" meter)

Commodity Charge: \$5.41 per thousand gallons

Sewer Rates

All sewer is charged a Readiness-to-Serve Charge and a Commodity Charge as follows:

Readiness-to-Serve Charge

The Readiness-to-Serve Charge is per month per dwelling unit and is based on the water meter size.

Customer Charge: \$ 16.00 per month ($\frac{3}{4}$ " meter)
\$ 19.50 per month (1" meter)
\$ 39.50 per month (1½ " meter)
\$ 58.00 per month (2" meter)
\$ 126.00 per month (3" meter)
\$ 224.00 per month (4" meter)
\$ 504.00 per month (6" meter)

Commodity Charge: \$8.61 per thousand gallons

*Water and sewer rates incur a 88% surcharge when service is provided outside the City of Hillsdale corporate limits.

Water & Sewer Rates Effective 7-1-2023

All Rates subject to change. Contact BPU at (517) 437-6410 to confirm utility rates.

Incentives

A variety of development incentives may be available for your project. The City has a tax increment financing authority (TIFA) and other opportunities to help make your project a reality.

<https://www.cityofhillsdale.org/econdev/page/tifa-programs>

Land Use Applications

This section is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of each type of land use application. This overview does not preempt or supersede any regulations contained within the City of Hillsdale Zoning Ordinance.

Most land use applications are circulated to other reviewers outside of Planning and Zoning for comment.

The table below demonstrates the role of the various review entities regarding the approval of the various Planning/Zoning Applications outlined in this document.

	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Approval</i>			
	Planning Commission	Planning Commission	City Commission	Zoning Board of Appeals	Administrative
Site Plan		X			X (limited)
Special Use Permit		X			
Rezoning / Conditional Rezoning	X		X		
Text Change / Ordinance	X		X		
Zoning Compliance					X
Variance				X	
Appeal				X	

Zoning Compliance

A zoning compliance permit from the City of Hillsdale may be required prior to the issuance of a building permit by the Hillsdale County Inspection Department.

Permits are also required in the City of Hillsdale for the placement of fencing (including replacement of existing fencing), and placing temporary signs or the placing/re-facing of permanent signs. Zoning/Sign permit fees vary dependent upon project. For related fees, see the City Fee Schedule on the following page.

The County Inspection Department is responsible for the administration of all construction, plumbing, electrical, mechanical and soil erosion permits. The County Inspection Department is located in the Courthouse Annex at on the corner of McCollum and Broad Streets, 517-437-4130.

Right of way permits may be required for any use or construction within or for access utilizing the right of way. To find out if this permit is required for your project, please call the Department of Public Services at 517-437-6490.

For permits or applications, please contact the Zoning Administrator at 517-437-6449.

Zoning Amendments

Zoning divides land into categories according to their use and sets regulations for these categories. When a property owner wants to use land in a way that is not permitted by the zoning of the property, the owner must request to rezone the property to a classification which permits the desired use. A rezoning is a legislative process that will amend the zoning map and/or text of the zoning ordinance. The City Commission (with recommendation from the Planning Commission) has the authority to approve or deny rezoning requests.

The City Commission may of its own motion, or upon petition by the owner(s) of a property proposed for rezoning, prepare an ordinance amending or changing the district boundaries or the district regulations. <https://www.cityofhillsdale.org/citycouncil/page/code-ordinances-preface-page>

Links

Municode Link:

https://www.municode.com/library/mi/hillsdale/codes/code_of_ordinances

Tax Exemptions link:

http://www.michigan.gov/taxes/0,4676,7-238-43535_53197---,00.html

TIFA info:

<http://www.cityofhillsdale.org/tifa-district.aspx>



Developers' Guide to Incorporating Effective Citizen Participation

The Importance of Citizen Participation:

Developers are encouraged to notify citizens and neighborhood groups of proposed developments in their community early on in the development review process. For large projects it is recommended that the developer facilitate and host a citizen participation meeting where developers introduce the project to the community.

...Strategies for Effective Citizen Participation Meetings

Citizen participation efforts provide excellent opportunities for developers to introduce their project to the community, answer questions, build trust, learn about success stories and project issues in the area, and alleviate concerns before the project reaches a public hearing. If led effectively, citizen participation can establish collaborative working relationships between developers and residents that last throughout the development review process. To ensure that your citizen participation efforts are successful, follow these guidelines:

- Reach out to neighborhood groups, downtown TIFA, corridor authorities and other interested parties and organizations to introduce yourself, gather public contacts, learn about the community and understand their concerns.
- Create a social media project page and/or website that utilize tools for public comment and feedback.
- Maintain and post various project documents related to the project including fact sheets, event timelines, status updates, schedule for public events, frequently asked questions and other significant project activities.
- Email & mail announcements to area businesses, neighborhood associations, TIFA, corridor authorities, and interested parties list.
- Explain how the proposed development will be reviewed by Staff, Planning Commission, and City Council, emphasizing the additional opportunities for public input.
- Make meetings and explanations brief and to the point, and then provide ample time to listen to residents' comments, questions, and concerns.
- Provide a variety of visuals such as maps, plan view, drawings, computer-generated images, and elevations to help residents better understand the proposed development. Visuals can be displayed on posters, a PowerPoint presentation, or handouts. Handouts should include basic information about the project as well as your contact information.

To facilitate this outreach, the City of Hillsdale will assist developers with the following:

- Coordination of initial meetings with neighborhood representatives, TIFA representatives, City department heads, Chamber of Commerce, etc.;
- Coordination of presentations before City Council, Boards, Neighborhood Associations, Chamber, etc.;
- The creation and provision of fact sheets, FAQs, timelines, contact information, etc., to keep the community informed; and
- Creation of municipal web links, dependent on the size and scope of project, with all pertinent project information available to the public.