



HUNTINGTON WOODS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

This Development Guide is an overview of the City's development review process. Its intent is to help residents and developers understand the review process for any size project, whether it is a single-family addition or a new commercial development. It includes contact information, explains the review process, and provides links to forms and other relevant information.

This Guide is general and does not remove the responsibility of an applicant or property owner to speak with staff or retain professional guidance. Every project is unique and may require modification of the general process. In the event of a conflict between this Guide and applicable laws, this Guide will be superseded by those laws.

After reviewing this Guide, we encourage setting up a free pre-application meeting to discuss your project and familiarize yourself with the City's approval process.

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1. Contact information

The City of Huntington Woods' website is www.hwmi.org and it contains maps, applications, agendas and schedules of meetings. City Hall hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 – 5 p.m. and it is closed from 1 – 2 p.m.

The following is a list of key staff members in the development process and their contact information.

Key Staff

Building Department

Duaine Franks	Building Official	248.581.2635	building@hwmi.org
Amy Hood	Building Clerk	248.581.2633	ahood@hwmi.org

Business Licenses

Heidi Barckholtz	City Clerk	248.581.2638	hbarckholtz@hwmi.org
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City Engineer

Tim Germain	Engineer	248.332.7931	tgermain@nowakfraus.com
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City Manager's Office

Amy Sullivan	City Manager	248.581.2632	asullivan@hwmi.org
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Department of Public Work Department

Rocco Fortura	Public Works Director	248.547.1888	rfortura@hwmi.org
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Fire Inspector

Lt. Jordan	Lieutenant	248.541.1180	jjordan@hwmi.org
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Planner

Ben Carlisle	Planning Consultant	734.662.2200	bcarlisle@cwaplan.com
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Planning and Zoning Department

Hank Berry	Zoning Administrator	248.581.2637	hberry@hwmi.org
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Taxes

Tim Rowland	Finance Director	248.581.2640	trowland@hwmi.org
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Water Department

Kevin Wayne	DPW Supervisor	248.547.1888	kwayne@hwmi.org
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2. Site plan review process

The following section explains why a site plan review is important and describes the steps for a site plan review. The site plan requirements are found in Chapter 40 of the City Code, [Article 7](#).

What is a site plan review?

The site plan review is the process to verify that a development is in compliance with the City's ordinances and other applicable state and federal laws. By applying a consistent and uniform method of review, the City can assure that the project will achieve efficient use of the property and can encourage innovative design solutions where necessary. The review process is to ensure safety for both internal and external vehicular and pedestrian users, to achieve innovative stormwater management solutions, and to prevent adverse impact on adjoining or nearby properties. Single-family design architectural [standards](#) are in section 5.14 of the zoning ordinance.

Anyone interested in building in the City should meet with the Zoning Administrator to determine if a site plan review is required for the project. Building that is exempt from the site plan review process will be approved administratively by the Zoning Administrator and the applicant may apply for a building permit.

The following developments require a site plan review by the Planning Commission:

- (1) New single-family dwellings. A new single-family dwelling is a dwelling proposed for construction on a vacant lot or an existing dwelling where more than 50 percent of the existing floor area is being altered as determined by the City Building Official or his/her designee.
- (2) Additions to single-family dwellings except those additions which meet all the following:
 - (a) Are to the rear of the existing building;
 - (b) Are no higher than the existing building;
 - (c) Are no closer to the side lot lines than the existing building;
 - (d) Are no larger than 50 percent of the floor area of the existing building;
 - (e) Are of the same predominant exterior material and proportion as the existing building; and

- (f) Have windows on all elevations so that no elevation has a large expanse of blank wall.
- (3) Additions or alterations to nonconforming uses, buildings containing nonconforming uses and/or changes in the off-street parking connected therewith. Any addition or alteration to a nonconforming use or building containing a nonconforming use shall require approval of a variance by the Zoning Board of Appeals prior to submission of the site plan.
- (4) All residentially-related buildings and uses, such as, but not limited to: places of worship, schools, clubhouses, public facilities, and additions thereto.
- (5) Nonresidential buildings and accessory buildings, and additions or alterations to nonresidential buildings and accessory buildings.
- (6) Off-street parking areas for three (3) or more vehicles in connection with subsections A (1) through (5) above.
- (7) Semicircular driveways.
- (8) Special land uses.

Site plan review process

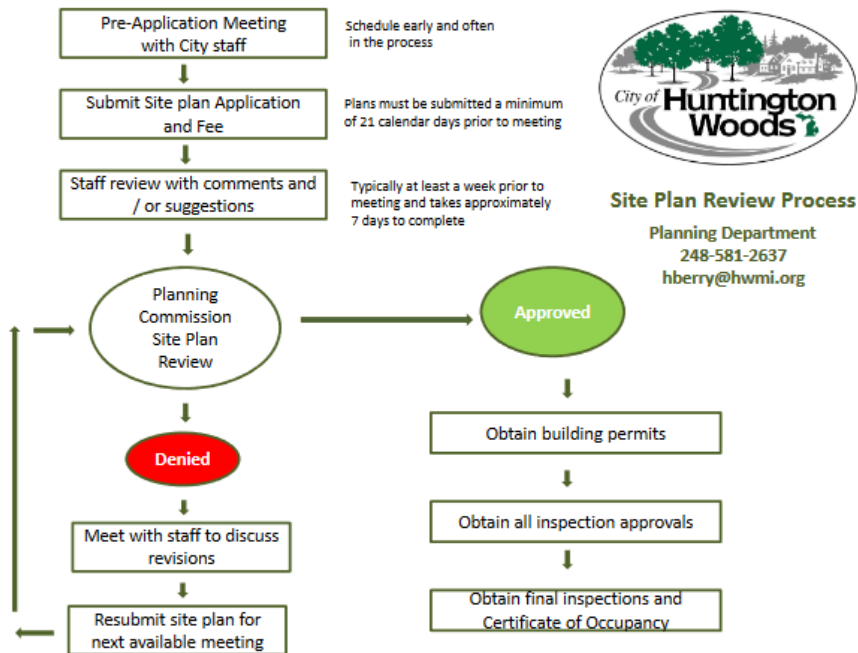
In the event that permission for a Special Land Use is also required for the development, the special land use shall be applied for and reviewed by the Planning Commission concurrent with review of the site plan.

If an application to the Board of Zoning Appeals requires site plan approval by the Planning Commission, the applicant shall first receive site plan approval then make application to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The following outlines the Site Plan Review process via a flow chart followed by a description of each step.

A link to the Site Plan Review flow chart is here:

<https://www.hwmi.org/Site%20Plan%20Review%20Process%20Planning.pdf>



1. Pre-application meeting (if requested) – Prior to submission of a site plan application, applicants should request a pre-application meeting with the Zoning Administrator. At the meeting, the applicant provides a preliminary concept for the project and conceptual plans if available. City staff will explain what portions of the zoning ordinance impact the project and the general timeline. It is an opportunity for the applicant to ask questions before final plans are prepared and to identify any potential roadblocks that might delay the project. A [form](#) to request a pre-application meeting is available on the City’s website.

Timeline: Generally, within 1 week of request.

Staff contact: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

2. Submit Site Plan Review application and fee – A completed site plan review application, 10 copies of the proposed plan and a fee is submitted to the Building Department, located in City Hall. The site plan application and plans need to be submitted at least 25 days before the Planning Commission meeting to give adequate time to review the project and provide notice to surrounding property owners. The site plan review [application](#) is available on the City’s website. The fee is determined by the type of site plan:

- \$200.00 for new residences;
- \$200.00 for commercial, office or institutional building additions;
- \$300.00 for new commercial, office or institutional buildings;

- \$100.00 for parking lots or semi-circular driveways (not in conjunction with one of the above);
- \$200.00 for engineering review (required for all new buildings and other construction as determined by the Planning Department)

Timeline: Applications accepted Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. at City Hall
 Staff contact: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

3. Staff review and comment period – City staff and outside consultants, if necessary, will review the site plan and provide a recommendation based on the zoning ordinance and other applicable standards. The Zoning Administrator will prepare a report for the Planning Commission and place it on the next Planning Commission agenda.

Timeline: Generally 1- 2 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting

Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator – review compliance with Zoning Ordinance

Lt. Jordan, Fire Department – review compliance with Fire Code

Rocco Fortura, Department of Public Works – review impact on City property

Nowak and Fraus, Engineers – review drainage control

Carlisle Wortman, Planners – consulting as necessary

4. Notices sent out regarding the site plan -- the applicant and the property owners within 300 feet of the site are notified of the time and place of the Planning Commission meeting a minimum of 15 days prior to the meeting. Comments submitted to the city prior to the meeting are collected by Hank Berry who shall forward to the Planning Commission. The plans are available for review by the public by scheduling with Hank Berry.

5. Planning Commission review –The Planning Commission will receive the report from staff and the applicant can make a presentation. The Planning Commission may approve the plan as presented or approve with conditions which must be resolved before a building permit can be issued. The Planning Commission shall grant approval to a site plan which meets all of the [standards](#) in section 7.06. The Planning Commission may also deny the plan or table the plan so issues can be addressed and resubmitted the following month.

Timeline: Planning Commission meetings are scheduled the 4th Monday of the month (except for holidays). A [calendar](#) of the dates is available on our website.

Staff contact: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

6. If Site Plan approved – the applicant applies for building permits which are valid for one-year from date of Planning Commission meeting. At the time a building permit is issued, the Planning Department will verify what is submitted is the same as what was approved by the Planning Commission. A link to the Building Permit is here:

<https://huntingtonwoods.seamlessdocs.com/f/BuildingApp2>

Staff contact: Amy Hood, Building Clerk

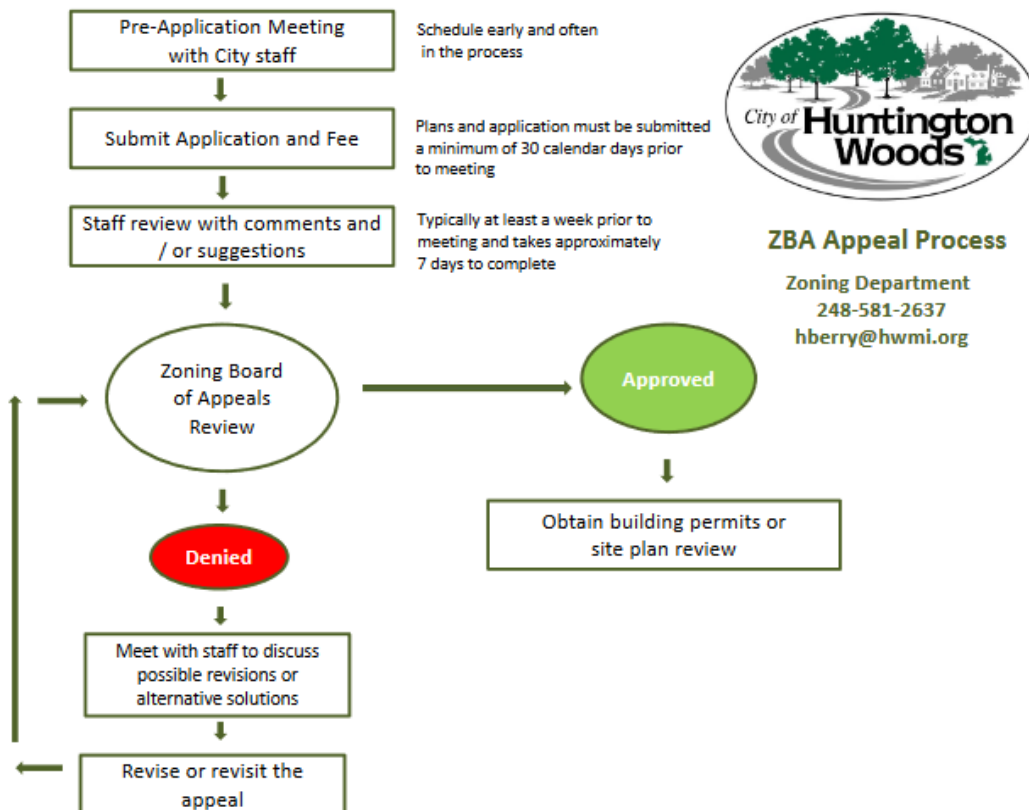
Timeline: Generally within 1 week of submittal.

7. If Site Plan denied or tabled -- meet with Hank Berry to discuss revisions for next meeting.
8. If Site Plan approved but zoning variance required for a building permit -- schedule a Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. The link to a Zoning Board of Appeals application is here: https://www.hwmi.org/document_center/Zoning_Board_of_Appeals_Application.PDF
Staff contact: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

Zoning Variance Process

Under certain circumstances, physical characteristics of a property, such as shape or orientation of the home, may make complying with the zoning ordinance difficult or not possible. When characteristics exist outside the control of the property owner, a variance may be requested by the owner and considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals. The duties and authority of the Zoning Board of Appeals can be found in Chapter 40 of the City Code, [Article 12](#).

The following outlines the variance request process via a flow chart followed by a description of each step. A link to the Zoning Board of Appeals flow chart is here: <https://www.hwmi.org/ZBA%20Appeals%20Process.pdf>



1. Pre-application meeting – Prior to submission of a zoning application, applicants should meet with the Zoning Administrator to determine what variance is requested and to review the practical difficulty requiring the variance.

Timeline: Generally, within 1 week of request.

Staff contact: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

2. Submit Zoning Board of Appeals application and fee – A completed Zoning Board of Appeals application, 10 copies any material supporting the request and a fee is submitted to the Building Department, located in City Hall. The application and plans need to be submitted at least 25 days before the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting to give adequate time to review the project and provide notice to surrounding property owners. The Zoning Board of Appeals [application](#) is available on the City’s website. The fee is determined by the location for the variance request:

- \$150 in residential zones
- \$200.00 for all other zones
- \$850.00 for a use variance in all zones

Timeline: Applications accepted Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – noon at City Hall

Staff contact: Amy Hood, Building Clerk

3. Staff review –The Zoning Administrator will prepare a report for the Zoning Board of Appeals and place it on the next agenda.

Timeline: Generally, 1 -2 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting

Staff contacts: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

4. Notices sent out regarding the variance request -- the applicant and the property owners within 300 feet of the site are notified a minimum of 15 days prior to the meeting of the time and place of the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. Comments submitted to the city prior to the meeting are collected by Hank Berry who shall forward to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The plans are available for review by the public by scheduling with Hank Berry.

5. Public hearing –The Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing to consider the variance request. The Zoning Board of Appeals shall review the facts and conditions of the request and base their decision on the applicable [standards](#) in section 12.04 of the zoning ordinance.

6. Zoning Board of Appeals review –The Zoning Board of Appeals will receive the report from staff and the applicant can make a presentation. The Zoning Board of Appeals may approve the variance as requested or approve with conditions. The Zoning Board of Appeals may also deny the request or table the request so issues can be addressed and resubmitted the following month.

Timeline: Zoning Board of Appeals meetings are scheduled the 2nd Monday of the month (except for holidays). A [calendar](#) of the dates is available on our website.

Staff contact: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

7. If variance approved – the applicant can apply for building permits which are valid for one-year from date of Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. A link to the Building Permit is here: <https://huntingtonwoods.seamlessdocs.com/f/BuildingApp2>

Staff contact: Amy Hood, Building Clerk

Timeline: Generally within 1 week of submittal.

8. If variance denied or tabled -- meet with Hank Berry to discuss revisions for next meeting.

3. Special land use approval process

The zoning ordinance requires a special land use approval for certain developments which because of their unique characteristics, require special consideration in relation to the welfare of adjacent properties and the community as a whole. The following section explains the procedures for special land use review. The special land use requirements are found in Chapter 40 of the City Code, [Article 8](#).

What is a special land use review?

A special land use review allows practical latitude for the applicant and at the same time, maintain adequate provision for the protection of the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the community. Among the purposes for special land use review are to:

1. Provide for public input on decisions involving land uses that may be more intense, less desirable or potentially more problematic.
2. Reduce negative impacts of potentially conflicting land uses.
3. Provide greater flexibility to integrate land uses within the city.
4. Permit certain land uses that might not otherwise be permitted, provided such uses comply with established standards and specific conditions that may be imposed by the Planning Commission.

Anyone interested in building in the City should meet with the Zoning Administrator to determine if a special land use review is required for the project. A list of developments subject to a special land use approval is in the zoning ordinance [Schedule of Regulations](#) in section 4.08.

The following developments require a special land use review by the Planning Commission:

- Senior housing
- Multiple-family housing
- Group day care homes
- Retail or personal service establishments over 6,000 square feet
- Drive throughs
- Gas stations

Special land use review process

1. Pre application meeting — Prior to submission of a special land use [application](#), applicants should request a pre-application meeting with the Zoning Administrator. At the meeting, the applicant provides a preliminary concept for the project and conceptual plans if available. City staff will explain what portions of the zoning ordinance impact the project and the general timeline. It is an opportunity for the applicant to ask questions before final plans are prepared and to identify any potential roadblocks that might delay the project. A [form](#) to request a pre-application meeting is available on the City's website.

Timeline: Generally, within 1 week of request.

Staff contact: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

2. Submit Special Land Use application and fee – A completed application, 10 copies of any material supporting the request and a fee is submitted to the Building Department, located in City Hall. The application and plans need to be submitted at least 30 days before the Planning Commission meeting to give adequate time to review the project and provide notice to surrounding property owners. The special land use [application](#) is available on the City’s website. The fee is determined by the location of the proposed development:

- \$200 in residential zones
- \$500 for all other zones

Timeline: Applications accepted Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – noon at City Hall

Staff contact: Amy Hood, Building Clerk

3. Staff review – The Zoning Administrator will prepare a report for the Planning Commission and place it on the next agenda.

Timeline: Generally, 1 -2 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting

Staff contacts: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

4. Notices sent out for the special land use public hearing -- the applicant and the property owners within 300 feet of the site are notified a minimum of 15 days prior to the meeting of the time and place of the Planning Commission meeting. Comments submitted to the city prior to the meeting are collected by Hank Berry who shall forward to the Planning Commission. The plans are available for review by the public by scheduling with Hank Berry.

5. Public hearing –The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider the special land use approval. The Planning Commission shall review the particular circumstances and facts of each proposed use and shall consider the [standards](#) in section 8.03 and any specific standards established for a particular use.

6. Planning Commission action - They will receive the report from staff and the applicant can make a presentation. The Planning Commission may approve the special land use as requested or approve with conditions. The Planning Commission may also deny the request or table the request so issues can be addressed and resubmitted the following month.

Timeline: Planning Commission meetings are scheduled the 4th Monday of the month (except for holidays). A [calendar](#) of the dates is available on our website.

Staff contact: Hank Berry, Zoning Administrator

7. If special land use approved – the applicant can apply for building permits which are valid for one-year from date of Planning Commission meeting. A link to the Building Permit is here: <https://huntingtonwoods.seamlessdocs.com/f/BuildingApp2>

Staff contact: Amy Hood, Building Clerk

Timeline: Generally within 1 week of submittal.

8. If special land use denied or tabled -- meet with Hank Berry to discuss revisions for next meeting.

4. Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals

The Planning Commission reviews and recommends to the City Commission zoning ordinance amendments and reviews site plans. The Planning Commission reviews site plans for residential and commercial development. They meet the fourth Monday of the month and the completed application must be submitted at least 25 days prior to the meeting to allow sufficient time to process and send out notices of the meeting where the site plan will be considered.

The Zoning Board of Appeals interprets the zoning ordinance and considers requests for variances from the zoning ordinance. The Zoning Board of Appeals meets the second Monday of the month and the completed application must be submitted 5 weeks before the meeting to allow sufficient time to process and send out notices of the meeting where the variance will be considered.

More information on these bodies can be found on our website including meeting schedules, agendas, minutes and board members.

Planning Commission

https://www.hwmi.org/residents/boards_commissions_and_committies/planning_commission.php

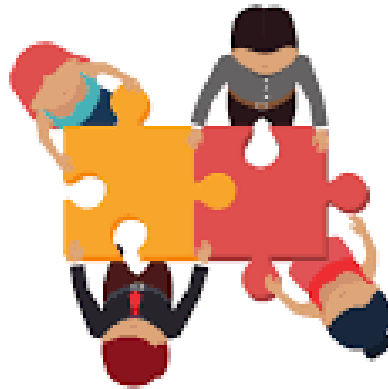
Zoning Board of Appeals

https://www.hwmi.org/residents/boards_commissions_and_committies/zoning_board_of_appeal.php



5. Pre-application meeting

A free pre-application meeting is strongly encouraged for any developer or resident interested in building a new structure or remodeling an existing one. At the meeting, the applicant provides a preliminary concept for the project and conceptual plans if available. City staff will explain what portions of the Zoning Ordinance impact the project and the general timeline. It is an opportunity for the applicant to ask questions before final plans are prepared and to identify any potential roadblocks that might delay the project. A [form](#) to request a pre-application meeting is available on the City's website.



6. Zoning information

The zoning ordinance is the tool used to regulate the use of land. In general, what types of uses, building size and location, parking area size and location, screening, landscaping, access, design standards and signage are described. The purpose of the zoning ordinance is to implement the development strategies described in the Master Plan, and other development policies adopted by the City Commission. The Master Plan was formulated with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated and adjusted development and redevelopment of the city, which will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote efficiency and economy in the process of development. The zoning ordinance will provide for the adequate distribution of traffic, safety from fire and other dangers, adequate provision for light and air, the healthful and balanced distribution of housing and population, the regulation of the density of population, the promotion of good development design and arrangement, the wise and efficient expenditure of public funds, and the adequate provision of public utilities and other public requirements. The zoning ordinance is further designed to lessen congestion on public streets to facilitate adequate provisions for public transportation, streets, highways, sewers, water mains, schools, recreation areas and other public facilities, as carefully analyzed and conceived by said Master Plan and development policies.

Prior to purchasing or developing property, it is important to verify the zoning of the property. Planning is closely related to administration of the zoning ordinance, which regulates the use and development of land within the city.

Click here to access the City's zoning ordinance on the Municode website:

https://library.municode.com/mi/huntington_woods/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_CH40ZO

Click here to view the Zoning map on the City's website:

https://www.hwmi.org/huntingtonwoods/departments/uploads/Zoning_Map.PDF

Click here to view the 2010 Master Plan and the 2015 Master Plan update:

Master Plan

https://www.hwmi.org/city_master_plans/docs/HW_Master_Plan.pdf

Master Plan Update

https://www.hwmi.org/city_master_plans/docs/HW_Master_Plan.pdf

7. Building Permit Process

Building Department [applications and fee schedule](#) are available on the City's website under the City Services tab at the top of the home page.

1. Submit construction documents, the permit application(s) and fees – permit [applications](#) are available on the City's website and must be submitted to the Building Department in City Hall. Fees can be paid in cash, by check or by credit card.
2. Inspection – approved permits will have at least one rough inspection and a final inspection. To schedule an inspection, call the Building Department at 248.581.2633.

Building Department Staff

- a. Building inspector
Duaine Franks dfranks@hwmi.org 248.581.2633
Tuesdays and Thursdays 1 – 4 p.m.
 - b. Plumbing inspector
Ken Borycz bldg@hwmi.org 248.581.2633
Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:30 – 11 a.m.
 - c. Electrical inspector
Sean Dare bldg@hwmi.org 248.581.2633
Tuesdays and Thursdays Noon – 2 p.m.
 - d. Mechanical inspector
Ken Borycz bldg@hwmi.org 248.581.2633
Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:30 – 11 a.m.
3. Certificate of occupancy – a certificate of occupancy will be issued upon request following the approval of the final inspection and the bond will be returned upon successful completion of the project.

8. Fee schedule and Financial Tools

Building Department [applications and fee schedule](#) are available on the City's website under the City Services tab at the top of the home page.

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC): [MEDC](#) offers many funding incentives geared towards gap financing for community and business development infrastructure and acquisition projects. In most cases, business development funding is contingent on job creation. The City Manager can assist businesses by facilitating meetings with MEDC staff to discuss MEDC opportunities further.

At this time, there are no financial assistance programs established, but the City will cooperate with a developer who is applying for financial assistance and will consider opportunities for the City to support a project if any are identified.

