



# RRC Baseline Report

Village of Roscommon

December 2017

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MICHIGAN ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) is a certification program supporting community revitalization and the attraction and retention of businesses, entrepreneurs and talent throughout Michigan. RRC promotes communities to be development ready and competitive in today's economy by actively engaging stakeholders and proactively planning for the future—making them more attractive for projects that create places where people want to live, work and invest.

To become formally engaged in the RRC Program, communities must complete the RRC Self-Evaluation, send at least one representative to the best practice trainings, and pass a resolution of intent, outlining the value the community sees in participating in the program. Representatives from Roscommon's village staff attended trainings in March 2017 and submitted the village's self-evaluation in May 2017. In June 2017, Village Council passed a resolution of intent to participate in the program.

Through participation in the RRC certification process, Village of Roscommon will have the opportunity to strengthen its collaborative efforts with local partners and have the potential to both support existing talent and attract new talent. Continuing to strengthen local partnerships with the planning commission, Sawmill Rural Business Center, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development Authority, residents, local officials, and business owners can help the village share the workload to complete the RRC best practices. Developed by experts in the public and private sector, the RRC best practices are

the standard to achieve certification, designed to create a predictable experience for investors, businesses and residents working within a community; communities must demonstrate that all best practice criteria have been met to receive RRC certification.

In order to reach certification, the village will need to continue its proactive efforts in planning and zoning and work on keeping an updated website and strengthening its public outreach efforts. Roscommon's last update to the master plan was in 2010 and the plan will need to be updated to ensure the village is in compliance with Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Public Act 33 of 2008. Conducting an annual master plan review and developing a timeline to implement key objectives will help ensure the community vision stays on course. As the master plan is being updated it will be important to the village to identify future zoning amendment recommendations to implement the vision for Roscommon. The development of a public participation plan will ensure that process of engagement and feedback is consistent throughout the village.




The RRC process is designed to help communities build capacity and establish a different way of doing business; completing the best practices as a collaborative community effort aligns with the ideals of being a redevelopment ready community. Ultimately, RRC is built on the idea that community development is a collaborative effort and is only successful when multiple stakeholders come to the table.

The basic assessment tool for evaluation is the RRC Best Practices. These six standards were developed in conjunction with public and private sector experts and address key elements of community and economic development. A community must demonstrate all of the RRC best practice components have been met to become RRC certified. Once received, certification is valid for three years.

Measurement of a community to the best practices is completed through the RRC team's research, observation and interviews, as well as the consulting advice and technical expertise of the RRC advisory council. The team analyzes a community's development materials, including, but not limited to: the master plan;

redevelopment strategy; capital improvements plan; budget; public participation plan; zoning regulations; development procedures; applications; economic development strategy; marketing strategies; and website. Researchers observe the meetings of the community's governing body, planning commission, zoning board of appeals and other committees as applicable. In confidential interviews, the team also records the input of local business owners and developers who have worked with the community.

A community's degree of attainment for each best practice criteria is visually represented in this report by the following:

	Green indicates the best practice component is currently being met by the community.
	Yellow indicates some of the best practice component may be in place, but additional action is required.
	Red indicates the best practice component is not present or significantly outdated.

This baseline report represents the community's current status in meeting all the redevelopment ready processes and practices. This report establishes a foundation for the community's progress as it moves forward in the program. All questions should be directed to the RRC team at [RRC@michigan.org](mailto:RRC@michigan.org).

# Evaluation snapshot

Village of Roscommon has completed 29 percent of the Redevelopment Ready Communities® criteria and is in the process of completing another 71 percent.						
1.1.1	1.1.2	1.1.3 (N/A)	1.1.4	1.2.1	1.2.2	1.2.3
2.1.1	2.1.2	2.1.3	2.1.4	2.1.5	2.1.6	2.1.7
2.1.8	3.1.1	3.1.2	3.1.3	3.1.4	3.1.5	3.1.6
3.1.7	3.1.8	3.1.9	3.2.1	3.2.2	4.1.1	4.1.2
4.2.1	4.2.2	4.2.3	4.2.4	5.1.1	5.1.2	5.1.3
5.1.4	5.1.5	5.1.6	6.1.1	6.1.2	6.2.1	6.2.2

## Best Practice 1.1—The plans

Best Practice 1.1 evaluates community planning and how the redevelopment vision is embedded in the master plan, downtown plan and capital improvements plan. The master plan sets expectations for those involved in new development and redevelopment, giving the public some degree of certainty about their vision for the future, while assisting the village in achieving its stated goals. Local plans can provide key stakeholders with a roadmap for navigating the redevelopment process in the context of market realities and community goals.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Public Act 33 of 2008, requires that the planning commission create and approve a master plan as a guide for development and review the master plan at least once every five years after adoption. Village of Roscommon's existing master plan was last adopted on February 22, 2010, and has not undergone a formal review or update since that time. The village is currently in the process of updating the plan with hopes of completing it by spring 2019.

Master plans project how cities, townships or villages are shaped based on public input. Over the years, as populations grow, infrastructure needs change, the way people live, move around and new technology shapes policies such as transportation laws, building codes, building design and street layout. It is important for local municipal governments such as Village of Roscommon to keep up with those changes.

In order to meet the RRC best practices, Roscommon will need to update the plan to reflect today's realities and tomorrow's needs. The updated plan should also include additional components called for in the RRC best practices including an implementation table with goals, actions and timelines, complete streets concepts as found in the DDA tax increment finance plan, and a more detailed focus on redevelopment areas and strategies. The master plan update process presents a perfect opportunity to work with the DDA and community to look at identified sites by the DDA and focus in on a redevelopment area priority list.

Once updated, the plan should be reviewed on an annual basis. Roscommon may use the existing matrix

table available in Chapter 7 of the master plan in which the community has reviewed elements of the master plan. The matrix provides a section on what needs to be reviewed, what recommended changes the community have and a section for recommended changes. This table has the opportunity to be revamped and used annually to review the implementation section of the master plan to help the community and its partners make measurable progress on the goals and objectives identified in Chapter 5.

The existing plan did a good job of seeking input from the public. The two surveys administered in 2007 and 2009 provide valuable feedback as to what the residents of Roscommon value as a priority. While developing the new master plan, the village should consider initiating a new survey and comparing priorities to have a strong background on how the village should prioritize its planning for the future and what next steps the village needs to take. As the master plan has already indicated, the document is used as a guide to shape the future of Roscommon, which is why it is important for Roscommon to have a zoning plan. Zoning is law, and with so much great feedback from the community, a list of recommended zoning changes as to how Roscommon will accommodate priority items is essential.

The downtown plan for Village of Roscommon can be found in the "Amended and Restated Development Plan" and "Tax Increment Financing Plan" adopted by council. Alignment of the downtown plan with the CIP will help to ensure that the infrastructure will be in place to allow for future economic development opportunities. This will also support downtown revitalization. The plan provides great information such as:

- Roscommon's DDA map and legal description
- Roscommon's DDA accomplishments
- Roscommon Proposed Projects And Costs
- Tax increment financing plan
- Existing infrastructure and proposed

The DDA plan also provides illustrations of proposed projects, alongside the estimated costs and time frames. As an added benefit to the matrix table dates or times can be added to near term, short term and midterm as found in the text of page 8 of the DDA plan. When updating the

## Best Practice 1.1—The plans *continued*

master plan it will be important to align the information found in the DDA plan which includes language on design guidelines, shared parking agreements, marketing strategy, complete streets and downtown living.

The village should work to emphasize a strong connection from the master plan to the capital

improvements plan (CIP) and downtown plan. A comprehensive CIP is an essential tool for the planning and development of the physical and economic wellbeing of a community. Ensuring the CIP aligns with the master plan and downtown plan is another critical piece for the village's future while meeting the RRC best practices.

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
1.1.1	The governing body has adopted a master plan in the past five years.	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a current master plan which meets the RRC best practices	16 months
1.1.2	The governing body has adopted a downtown plan.	✓	
1.1.3	The governing body has adopted a corridor plan.	N/A	
1.1.4	The governing body has adopted a capital improvements plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate the CIP with the updated master plan <input type="checkbox"/> Post the CIP online	16 months

## Best Practice 1.2—Public participation

Best Practice 1.2 assesses how well the community identifies and engages its stakeholders on a continual basis. Public participation aims to prevent or minimize disputes by creating a process for resolving issues before they become an obstacle.

Village of Roscommon has met the basic engagement practices required for Michigan communities by following the open meetings act, sending postcard notifications, and posting required notifications in fliers and newspapers. The village also maintains an active social media presence on Facebook. Proactive methods used include individual mailings, community workshops and use of surveys. While more can always be done to engage citizens, the village has a history of going above the basic requirements. While the village updates the master plan, the village should track successful efforts that are made to reach as many residents and stakeholders as possible. For instance, Chapter 4: Community Input, of the master plan indicates that Village of Roscommon administered two surveys to seek input from the public on how Roscommon can be improved. Another process mentioned in the DDA plan is located on page 8 is the community vision session.

In order to help identify which methods may be the best fit for the village going forward and also to ensure the village is making the most effective use of

limited resources, a public participation strategy should be created. This document would establish goals and identify stakeholders, identify methods of engagement, formally indicate how the village will share results of engagement activities and establish a method to track the effectiveness of methods so adjustments can be made. RRC provides a guide on how to create this strategy document and can also provide examples from other communities.

Given that the master plan will undergo a new update, Village of Roscommon has the perfect opportunity to work with key stakeholders such as;

- Village council
- Village manager
- Zoning commission
- Planning commission
- DDA
- Chamber of Commerce
- Non-profit entities
- Neighboring municipalities
- Local residents
- Business owners

While this list is not all-inclusive, all stakeholders, which can be identified in the public participation plan, should have a say and assistance in shaping the future of Roscommon.

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
1.2.1	The community has a public participation plan for engaging a diverse set of community stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a public participation plan that defines outreach strategies and how the success of these strategies will be evaluated	8 months
1.2.2	The community demonstrates that public participation efforts go beyond the basic methods.	✓	
1.2.3	The community shares outcomes of public participation processes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Create a method to track success of various outreach methods <input type="checkbox"/> Once the tracking method has been completed, share results in a consistent and transparent manner	8 months



## Best Practice 2.1—Zoning regulations

Best Practice 2.1 evaluates the village's zoning ordinance and assesses how well it implements the goals of the master plan. Zoning is a significant mechanism for achieving desired land use patterns and quality development. As the legal framework for helping a community meet the goals of their master plan, the ordinance should include several key provisions in order to meet the RRC best practices including place-making (mixed-use development, historical preservation, etc.), housing diversity, parking, non-motorized transportation, and sustainable infrastructure. The village's ordinance has several of these components in place but will require some updates in order to fully meet the RRC best practices.

Foundationally, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA), Public Act 110 of 2006, requires that a zoning ordinance be based on a plan to help guide zoning decisions. Village of Roscommon is currently operating under a zoning ordinance that became effective in 2002, and according to the self-evaluation, last amended on June 24, 2013, to allow for outdoor seating in concentrated areas of development. The self-evaluation has identified no alignment of the master plan vision and zoning regulations, the village will need to fully evaluate the code after the master plan update to ensure alignment. As mentioned earlier, zoning is regulatory and an updated master plan with a true community supported vision provides a great foundation to lay out regulations to shape the village of Roscommon.

Village of Roscommon has two zoning districts identified for concentrated areas of development. The Downtown Commercial District, (C-1, Commercial "1" District) and Mixed Development District (MDH) that stretches from South line street, through the village's core downtown and ends on North Sixth Street. The C-1 district allows the following permitted uses by right:

- Professional and administrative offices and services
- Banks and other financial institutions
- Personal service business
- Commercial retail facilities

Under the same zoning district and beneath special uses permitted, Roscommon has a category titled

accessory uses, in which living units are allowed on the second story of a building. The MDH district uses the C-1 language to determine uses permitted by right. Per Section 3 definitions of the zoning ordinance, an accessory use is any use customarily incidental to the main use of the premises. If the intent is to allow residential above a commercial use, this use should be placed in the uses permitted by right per the zoning district.

The zoning code states that there are no minimum setback requirements in the C-1 district, which allows for a build-to-line development. In the MDH district, the front yard setback shall conform to a line equal to the setback of the majority of principal structures along the block face of the lot. When reviewing the master plan and reviewing existing land uses and determining future land use, Roscommon should look into the MDH district from a concentrated area of development perspective and consider amending the zoning ordinance to regulate build-to line development in the MDH district to accommodate placemaking elements and user-friendliness.

To help improve on being more pedestrian friendly the village should include development standards that improve non-motorized transportation. This could be traffic calming practices, pedestrian scale lighting requirements or public realm standards to improve walkability. This would also be the perfect opportunity to determine if form-base code elements can be included. The village's ordinance allows numerous types of housing such as cluster housing live/work units, and attached single-family units.

For flexible tools, the village meets the intent through clear special land use procedures under section 10 of the zoning ordinance. Per the self-evaluation new-economy-type business are considered on a per project basis in the site-review basis. Looking at the uses allowed in the C-1 district the zoning ordinance states, "When determining what facilities fall into the above listed categories, the decision of the planning commission shall prevail"

In order to not deter a potential business idea or developer from interpreting the code, it will be important to include a more detailed list of uses permitted or requiring special use in commercial or industrial

## Best Practice 2.1—Zoning regulations *continued*

districts. The use permitted should also match the off-street parking requirements list. This list could include the following items:

- Commerce
- Sales
- Medical
- Research
- Film
- Indoor recreation
- Breweries/distilleries
- Catering services
- Arts and craft studios

It is important to be aware of the environment and character of Roscommon as the village continues to develop. In regard to green infrastructure standards, Roscommon is very close to meeting the intent by providing a section in the zoning ordinance called buffer yard criteria which encourages environmental preservation. The same environmental preservation can be seen on site plan review standards for the planning commission under environment review. Green standards will help preserve the unique environmental amenities that the village provides. The purpose of the buffer yard criteria is to provide a flexible method of protecting various uses permitted in the zoning ordinance from adverse impacts associated with adjacent uses. The village should also consider adopting provisions to support historic preservation in the downtown.

The village should also consider adopting the following standards to minimize adverse impacts associated with adjacent uses:

- Rain gardens, bioswales and other treatment techniques
- Green roofs
- Pervious pavement
- Landscaping that encourages or requires use of native, non-invasive species
- Preservation of existing trees

While looking into green infrastructure standards Roscommon should also expand on Section 5. Buffer yard criteria of the zoning ordinance and look into the benefits of street trees and parking lot landscaping to mitigate the impacts of heat island effects. This could be an opportunity to encourage the use of native non-invasive species landscaping when determining what types of plant materials are required for the buffer yard criteria.

Off-street parking requirements are not applied in C-1 district. The ordinance notes the C-1 district is designed to accommodate a traditional downtown area with on-street parking and centrally located off-street parking. While Roscommon has met the intent of this best practice the village could consider other forms of parking flexibility standards that would allow developers or small business owners in other commercial districts to meet parking regulations such as parking waivers, bicycle parking or payment in lieu of parking.

The current zoning ordinance is easily accessible online to the public. While the ordinance is available online, it is not formatted for ease of use. Roscommon should consider making the ordinance “web-friendly” by making words searchable and linking the table of content to zoning classifications. Another way to make the zoning ordinance user-friendly is to add a matrix table which includes zoning classifications that clearly indicates what uses are permitted by right or require special use approval in commercial, residential and planned unit development districts.

## Best Practice 2.1—Zoning regulations *continued*

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
2.1.1	The governing body has adopted a zoning ordinance that aligns with the goals of the master plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Update the zoning ordinance to correlate the updated master plan	14 months
2.1.2	The zoning ordinance provides for areas of concentrated development in appropriate locations and encourages the type and form of development desired.	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt provisions to support historic preservation in the downtown <input type="checkbox"/> Look into considering form-based code <input type="checkbox"/> Review zoning code to allow mixed-use by right in designated area of concentrated development	14 months
2.1.3	The zoning ordinance includes flexible tools to encourage development and redevelopment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a more detailed list of uses permitted	14 months
2.1.4	The zoning ordinance allows for a variety of housing options.	✓	
2.1.5	The zoning ordinance includes standards to improve non-motorized transportation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt provisions in the ordinance to support non-motorized transportation and pedestrian-safety options	14 months
2.1.6	The zoning ordinance includes flexible parking standards.	✓	
2.1.7	The zoning ordinance includes standards for green infrastructure.	<input type="checkbox"/> Include regulation for green infrastructure as stated in the report <input type="checkbox"/> Include language or standards on benefits of street trees and parking lot landscaping to mitigate the impacts of heat island effects	14 months
2.1.8	The zoning ordinance is user-friendly.	<input type="checkbox"/> Fix broken links to the zoning ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Correct formatting errors in the ordinance PDF file	14 months

## Best Practice 3.1—Development review policy and procedures

Best Practice 3.1 evaluates the village's development review policies and procedures, project tracking and internal/external communications. An efficient site plan review process is integral to being redevelopment ready and can assist a community in attracting investment dollars while ensuring its zoning ordinance and other laws are followed.

Roscommon's site plan review process can be found in Section 11 of the zoning ordinance. The village's self-evaluation indicates that all site plans requiring special use permit must be approved by the planning commission. A site plan review is also required before the commission if the site plan meets one of the conditions:

- The proposed project will have more than four dwelling units
- The proposed project is commercial or industrial
- The project will require 50 or more parking spaces as determined by the off-street parking requirements in Section 6
- The project is larger than five acres and involves a use other than a single family residence
- The proposed project has indicated the need for a site plan review based on the answers to the "Wellhead Protection Site Plan Review Questionnaire."

If a zoning application requires a site plan review by the planning commission, an application must be received by the zoning administrator fifteen (15) days before the date of the planning commission public meeting. A site plan review application requires a fee to be submitted along with at least four copies of the site plan. Roscommon has representatives from the zoning administrator, public works director, Wellhead protection coordinator and Higgins Township or their designees to review the plan and comment on it. The zoning administrator is also given the task to submit a site plan for review to any other department of the village or county government that he or she believes would have an interest in the project. All comments are recorded and sent the planning commission for their review.

For planning commission approval, the ordinance lays out a fairly clear process for permitted and special uses. A site plan for a permitted use does not require a public

hearing unless any party submits a written request to the zoning administrator prior to the planning commission meeting at which the site plan is to be considered. For a special use permit, a public hearing is required. One notice of a public hearing is published in a newspaper and sent by first class mail or personal delivery to owners of property for which approval is being considered to all persons whom real property is assessed within 300 feet of the boundary of the property in question and to all occupants of a structure within 300 feet. In order ensure a clear process of approval, a simple flowchart with timelines to visually show the development process should be created.

As indicated on the self-evaluation the community does not define and offer a conceptual site plan review for applications. This would be an effective tool to offer in order to ensure a complete package is submitted to the planning commission and the applicant fully understands the approval process. Significant public opposition or concerns can slow down the review and approval of a project and ultimately cost the developer time and money. Often, public concern arises out of limited or incorrect understanding of a project. By soliciting public input early in the process, well before required public meetings and planning commission reviews, neighboring residents, business owners and interested stakeholders can make concerns known to the developer, potentially preventing or minimizing disputes before they become an obstacle. Holding a conceptual site plan review meeting and encouraging applicants to meet with relevant stakeholders can help clear any confusion on a project.

To simplify and clarify policies, operate in a transparent manner and increase efficiency to create an inviting development climate, sound internal procedures need to be in place and followed. This includes an internal staff review policy that articulates roles, responsibilities and timelines. This documentation ensures process consistency regardless of staff turnover or other situations in which various village staff must step in and complete an action in the process. The village should document internal review procedures to ensure all involved understand roles and responsibilities and the process remains consistent for applicants.

## Best Practice 3.1—Development review policy and procedures *continued*

The village currently keeps track development projects through progress reviews and inspection. It is unclear as to how staff receives feedback on the site plan approval, permitting, and inspection process. The feedback should be reviewed by the site review team and planning commission to identify potential improvements to the process.

Based on the information obtained during this evaluation, this report recommends the following to help the village reach RRC certification:

- Outline pre-development meetings with staff and create a checklist of expectations to help ensure these meetings are as productive as possible for both village staff and the developer.

- Create a policy to guide the internal review process steps and expectations.
- Create or provide a feedback mechanism to gather input from developers after they go through the process.
- Create simple flowcharts with timelines to visually show the development processes.

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
3.1.1	The zoning ordinance articulates a thorough site plan review process.	✓	
3.1.2	The community has a qualified intake professional.	✓	
3.1.3	The community defines and offers conceptual site plan review meetings for applicants.	<input type="checkbox"/> Create a checklist of expectations for pre-development meetings with village staff	6 months
3.1.4	The community encourages a developer to seek input from neighboring residents and businesses at the onset of the application process.	<input type="checkbox"/> As part of the public participation strategy, identify tools and a process for how developers could conduct early stakeholder outreach	8 months
3.1.5	The appropriate departments engage in joint site plan reviews.	✓	
3.1.6	The community has a clearly documented internal staff review policy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish a policy to govern the internal review process including roles, timelines and expectations	6 months
3.1.7	The community promptly acts on development requests.	<input type="checkbox"/> Create flowcharts to visually show the various development review processes	8 months
3.1.8	The community has a method to track development projects.	✓	
3.1.9	The community annually reviews the successes and challenges with the site plan review and approval procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide additional information to your RRC planner on the how Roscommon receives feedback from applicants <input type="checkbox"/> Review feedback at least annually	8 months



## Best Practice 3.2—Guide to Development

Best Practice 3.2 evaluates the availability of the community's development information. A guide to development is another tool a community can use to help attract investment dollars. Having a guide allows residents and developers the opportunity to clearly understand the village's development processes and recognize the type of development wanted in the community.

A guide to development can help with transparency and efficiency by including items that village of Roscommon already has available. Documents that should be made available online include the application for development plan review, quick links to important zoning ordinance language, building permit applications, and the fee schedule. Other information such as contact information, department responsibilities and development plan review, relevant meeting schedules, flow charts, special meeting procedures, financial assistance tools, variance and rezoning request procedures should also be made available.

It is essential that these documents are updated regularly. These documents should be interconnected and when the remaining missing documents are developed, they should be added to the website. The guide should be easy to follow and give a clear indication of the village's development review process.

Currently, Village of Roscommon has a web page dedicated to building and zoning in which you can find:

- Zoning administrator responsibilities
- Builder permit application

- Demolition permit
- Zoning permit and sign permit
- Driveway approach permit
- Mechanical, plumbing and electrical permits
- Master plan, zoning ordinance, zoning map and recreation plan

Items that should be added include:

- Pre-conceptual meeting procedures once created
- Easy-to-follow step-by-step flowcharts of development processes, including timelines once created.
- Links to relevant ordinance sections to review prior to submission of a site plan

It is difficult to find where Roscommon's fee schedule is online unless you click on the building permit tab or planning commission board tab. If a potential applicant is seeking costs for planning commission review, permits and zoning information it should all be located in one spot, such as the building and zoning webpage. It is important that developers understand review and permitting costs at the start of the process, so there are no surprises later. According to the Roscommon website credit cards purchase will be soon available, providing a convenient payment method for applicants. The village should review the fee on an annual basis In order to ensure that fees and costs are fair to applicants an annual review should continually be conducted.

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
3.2.1	The community maintains an online guide to development that explains policies, procedures and steps to obtain approvals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Include documents, policies and charts as they become available per the baseline report on 3.2 <input type="checkbox"/> Make fee schedule easily accessible	16 months
3.2.2	The community annually reviews the fee schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept credit card payment for fees	3 months

## Best Practice 4.1—Recruitment and orientation

Best Practice 4.1 evaluates how a community conducts recruitment and orientation for newly appointed or elected officials. Such officials sit on the numerous boards, commissions and committees that advise village leaders on key policy decisions. Having a clear process in place for recruitment and onboarding of appointed officials can help the village recruit the best candidates for each position, thus making the village’s planning and development processes more predictable and efficient.

To attract the best candidates, a community will need to have a clear recruitment process that includes online applications and a clear explanation of desired skill sets and expectations for members. Currently, boards have a dedicated webpage online with a clear explanation of what the commissions do and who the current members are.

By offering applications online and publishing desired skill sets and expectations of board members online, this helps interested candidates identify which board(s) they may be interested in serving on based on their background and available time commitment. For example, the planning commission would benefit from members who have backgrounds in architecture,

urban planning, real estate, civil engineering, etc. While these shouldn’t be hard-and-fast rules, they should provide guidance in the appointment process. Setting expectations for meeting attendance, training, and other items can also help interested individuals figure out if they can commit the time needed to do the job correctly. To meet this best practice, the village should establish skill sets/expectations for at least development-related bodies such as the planning commission, downtown development authority, and zoning board of appeals.

Once the village has filled a position, it will need to ensure that individual is prepared for their new duties. This can be achieved through an orientation packet. Roscommon provides orientation packets that include council/commission rules and procedures and references to the village law handbook. Additional information should be included such as:

- Meeting schedules
- Applicable plans and ordinances
- Key village contacts
- By-laws

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
4.1.1	The community sets expectations for board and commission positions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish desired skillsets and expectations for development-related boards and commissions	8 months
4.1.2	The community provides orientation packets to all appointed and elected members of development-related boards and commissions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Include additional orientation packet information relevant to boards and commissions	8 months

## Best Practice 4.2—Education and training

Best Practice 4.2 assesses how a community encourages training and tracks educational activities for appointed and elected officials and staff. Trainings provide officials and staff with an opportunity to expand their knowledge and ultimately make more informed decisions about land use and redevelopment issues which increases predictability for the development process overall. An effective training program includes four components: financial resources to support training, a plan to identify priority topics and track attendance, consistent encouragement to attend trainings and sharing of information between boards and commissions to maximize the return on investment for the community.

The village's self-evaluation indicates that the village budget funds training for staff and elected officials. In order to reach certification, more detail will be needed for this criteria, but it's clear the intent is there. The next component, a plan which identifies priority trainings and tracks attendance, is unclear for Roscommon. It should be clarified how Roscommon keeps track of which official has attended a certain training. However, despite the lack of a training plan village staff does identify trainings and occasionally encourage officials to attend trainings associated with the Michigan Municipal League and emailing commission members training opportunities.

The village can also find many training opportunities

through the Michigan Association of Planning, American Planning Association, Michigan Municipal League, as well as visiting the MEDC Community Development website ([www.miplace.org](http://www.miplace.org)). A valuable resource the village has is its website and social media. Bi-weekly announcements of available trainings can be posted to get members and potential future members more involved.

The final component, information sharing, goes beyond training alone and calls for the community to share information on each board's activities in addition to information learned at trainings. The village indicates on its self-evaluation that some information sharing does happen via email, personal contact, and board and commission minutes, but no formal process is in place. RRC best practices recommend that the village establish a joint annual meeting between the village council, DDA and planning commission as the foundation of information sharing. This could also be a great opportunity for joint training. The planning commission should also prepare an annual report (as required under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act), in order to ensure all ideas and opportunities for improvement are being discussed and possibly implemented. Finally, time should be made on agendas for training attendees to share what they learned with those who weren't at trainings.

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
4.2.1	The community has a dedicated source of funding for training.	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide additional information to your RRC planner on the how Roscommon budgets funds for training	5 months
4.2.2	The community identifies training needs and tracks attendance of the governing body, boards, commissions and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a training plan for development-related boards and commissions <input type="checkbox"/> Create a system to track attendance at training events	6 months
4.2.3	The community encourages the governing body, boards, commissions and staff to attend trainings.	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish a process to encourage training on a regular basis	6 months
4.2.4	The community shares information between the governing body, boards, commissions and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold an annual joint meeting to discuss development and planning issues in the village <input type="checkbox"/> Publish a planning commission annual report	6 months



## Best Practice 5.1—Redevelopment Ready Sites®

Best Practice 5.1 assesses how a community identifies, visions for and markets their priority redevelopment sites. Communities must think strategically about the redevelopment of properties and investments and should be targeted in areas that can catalyze further development around it. Instead of waiting for developers to propose projects, Redevelopment Ready Communities® identify priority sites and prepare information to assist developers in finding opportunities that match the village's vision.

Several redevelopment areas are identified within the DDA, which is being actively promoted through Village of Roscommon Downtown Development Authority website. Once on the webpage, one has the ability to click on any of the sites that are being actively marketed and there is some basic information available on each site.

Basic information includes:

- Location
- Photo of site
- Building size
- Lot size
- Potential use
- Owner contact information

In order to be more consistent, the same basic information should flow throughout all sites being actively marketed on the Roscommon DDA webpage. The links for additional information, should also go to the actual site available as well. It would be to the benefit of Roscommon to add information such as what utilities are available on site, and what zoning district the site is located in. The more information is given on one location the better, to give the potential developer or buyer necessary information to research.

The village and DDA should consider working collaboratively to identify at least one downtown site that should be developed into a complete property information package (PIP) which includes an expanded list of more technical items (as applicable) such as environmental conditions, traffic studies, etc. Finally, once a completed property package has been developed the site should be actively marketed via the village and its economic development partners. RRC can also provide examples of a complete property information package for Roscommon to review.

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
5.1.1	The community identifies redevelopment sites.	✓	
5.1.2	The community gathers basic information for prioritized redevelopment sites.	✓	
5.1.3	The community has developed a vision for each redevelopment site.	✓	
5.1.4	The community identifies potential resources and incentives for prioritized redevelopment sites.	<input type="checkbox"/> Information to be included in property information package	10 months
5.1.5	A property information package for the prioritized redevelopment site(s) is assembled.	<input type="checkbox"/> Package a site to include information in best practice evaluation criteria 5.1.5	10 months
5.1.6	At least three redevelopment sites are actively marketed	<input type="checkbox"/> Market the packaged site on the village website	10 months

## Best Practice 6.1—Economic development strategy

Best Practice 6.1 evaluates goals and actions identified by the community to assist in strengthening its overall economic health. Strategic economic development planning is critical to attract jobs and new investment in communities. As indicated in the self-evaluation, Roscommon does not currently have a formal economic development strategy.

In order to reach certification, the village should include a detailed economic development section in the updated master plan or create a standalone strategy. This strategy should include an analysis of the village's strengths and challenges and specific recommendations for addressing those strengths and challenges along with goals, actions, timelines and responsible parties. When creating this strategy, the village should be sure to align

with other regional economic development strategies and Roscommon's capital improvements plan. This is the perfect opportunity to work with regional and local stakeholders such as:

- Sawmill Rural Business Center
  - DDA
  - Planning commission
  - Chamber
  - Village staff
  - Neighboring municipalities
  - Northeast Michigan Council of Governments
- Once a formal strategy has been developed, it should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant and adaptable to changing circumstances.

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
6.1.1	The community has approved an economic development strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop an economic development strategy	12 months
6.1.2	The community annually reviews the economic development strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish a process to annually review the strategy	12 months

## Best Practice 6.2—Marketing and promotion

Best Practice 6.2 evaluates how the community promotes and markets itself. Marketing and branding is an essential tool in promotion of a community's assets and unique attributes. Consumers and investors are attracted to places that evoke positive feelings and to communities that take pride in their town and their history.

Through reading online Roscommon documents and exploring the village online, and via social media it is clear the village has developed strong stakeholder partnerships. Using the 2014 downtown market strategy and working closely with local stakeholders the village should develop a formal brand (not required for certification) and accompanying marketing strategy for the village as a whole. The brand should elicit an immediate connection to the village and be consistently used on all village materials, including the website.

The marketing strategy should lay out the messages and avenues the village will use to attract businesses, consumers and real estate investment. The strategy should be sure to include the village's key partners in efforts to spread the word about Roscommon.

A key component of getting the word out about the opportunity in Roscommon is to ensure the village's website is up-to-date with key information, especially information on planning and development. Currently, the village has some information available, more remains to be done. In many cases, the information that will need to be updated hasn't been created yet. As the village moves through the RRC process, it should continue to populate the website with all key planning and development related information identified in this RRC best practice.

Status	Evaluation criteria	Recommended actions for certification	Estimated timeline
6.2.1	The community has developed a marketing strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a marketing strategy for the village	10 months
6.2.2	The community has an updated, user-friendly municipal website.	<input type="checkbox"/> Add missing items from the RRC best practices as they are developed or updated	18 months

The RRC program assists communities in maximizing their economic potential by embracing effective redevelopment tools and best practices. By going through the RRC process, communities make key investments in themselves which can lead to more development that aligns with their community goals and visions. Upon receipt of this report, village staff and leadership should review the recommendations and determine if they align with the village's priorities and vision. If, after review, the village believes that RRC is still a good fit, council should pass a resolution of intent to continue with the process. Upon receipt of that resolution, the village will enter final phase of the process:

officially working toward certification. During that phase, the village will be able to make progress on RRC items at its own pace and receive regular support from its RRC planner. It will also have continued access to the RRC online library of resources and an extensive network of other RRC-engaged communities, while also becoming eligible for matching technical assistance dollars from RRC (once the village has shown at least one quarter of progress). In order to guide this, RRC recommends the creation of an RRC workgroup consisting of village staff, officials and community representatives. We look forward to a working with the village on achieving the best practices in the coming years.