

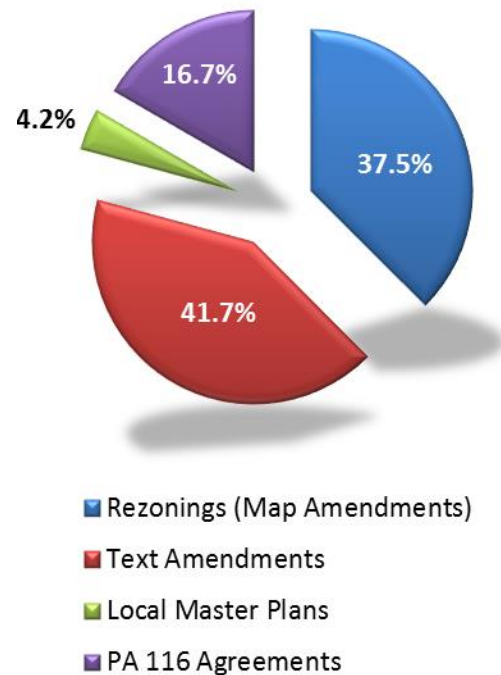


Jackson County Planning Commission

Staffed by the Region 2 Planning Commission (R2PC)
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2015 JCPC Annual Report

- 2015 JCPC Membership & Officers.** Ms. Nancy Hawley, Ms. Jennifer Morris, Mr. Jonathan Williams, and Mr. Jared Vickers served as the Commission's Members-at-Large during 2015. Commissioner Carl Rice, Jr. represented the County Board and Ms. Amy Torres represented the Industrial and Economic Interests of the County. Mr. Ted Hilleary, Mr. Jack Ripstra, and Mr. Jim Videto served the County's Educational, Environmental, and Agricultural Interests, respectively. Ms. Torres and Ms. Morris served as the Chair and Secretary of the JCPC, respectively.
- Immediate Responsibilities.** The Jackson County Planning Commission accomplished a lot during that time including, but not necessarily limited to, the following responsibilities:
 - Coordinated Zoning.** A primary responsibility of the Planning Commission is to review and recommend action on proposed amendments to township zoning ordinances. The JCPC made recommendations regarding twenty-four (n=24) proposed zoning amendments in 2015. Those amendments were split almost evenly between rezonings (n=9) (i.e., map amendments) and text amendments (n=10).
 - Coordinated Planning.** Another primary responsibility of the Commission is to review and provide feedback on municipal (i.e., city, village and township) master plans proposed within Jackson County as well as the master plans proposed by surrounding counties. The JCPC reviewed and commented upon one (n=1) proposed municipal master plan in 2015.
 - Farmland Agreements.** A secondary responsibility of the Planning Commission is to review and make recommendations regarding Farmland and Open Space Preservation (PA 116) applications to pertinent Township Boards. The JCPC made a recommendation on four (n=4) applications regarding the preservation of farmland and open space in 2015.
- Ultimate Goal and Objectives.** In the long-term, the JCPC seeks to coordinate planning throughout Jackson County while respecting the planning and zoning authority of municipal governments (i.e., the city, villages, and townships). This will be accomplished over time by:



- a. **County Master Plan.** The Commission will develop a countywide master plan upon which it will base (in part) its recommendations regarding municipal master plans and township zoning amendments (i.e., rezonings and text amendments). Towards that end, Commissioners listened to presentations which will impact the development of that plan
 - (1) **The Significance of 'People & Place'.** Mr. Tim Rogers, President & CEO of The Enterprise Group of Jackson, made a presentation regarding the County's competitiveness for business investment. 'People and place' are essential: there needs to be a skilled workforce as well as available 'shovel ready' developable land (i.e., with the needed infrastructure, zoning, and size so that building can take place in a short period of time). Finally, the community will of Jackson County must be determined regarding economic development.
 - (2) **The Emerging Jackson County Trail Network: Pathways to a Vision.** Staff informed Commissioners of the ongoing effort to create a non-motorized trail network in Jackson County which began with planning for the City's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Equity Trail and the County's Falling Waters Trail and the creation of the 2002 *Jackson County Regional Trailway Study*. Local communities have built upon the initial "stick network" of trails by planning for additional trails within their jurisdictions. The corridor created by linking the MLK. Equity Trail and the Falling Waters Trail with the extension of the Lakelands Trail State Park provides the backbone of two (2) proposed statewide trails as they traverse Jackson County. The presentation concluded with a plan of action to complete the missing gaps in that important corridor.
 - b. **Education and Advocacy.** The Commission will provide educational opportunities to Jackson County municipalities as opportunities arise and advocate for planning-related projects.
 - (1) **Planning & Zoning Notes.** Commissioners approved the first edition of the proposed collection of advisory memos on planning and zoning topics. The memos will be published in conjunction with the Lenawee County Planning Commission with the purpose of educating municipal planning commissions and other pertinent local officials. The first issue of *Planning & Zoning Notes* addresses the state mandated Municipal Master Plan Approval Process.
 - (2) **Letter of Support.** Commissioners passed a Resolution of Support regarding 2015 grant applications to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) for the Sparks Park-MLK Equity Trail Connector (Jackson County), the Fourth Street Trail Connector (City of Jackson), and the Horton Road Trail (Summit Township). The proposed trails will create several alternative loops along the Falling Water/Inter-City Trail Corridor and connect Ella Sharp Park and Sparks Foundation County Park (i.e., the Cascades) to the Corridor.
4. **Meetings.** The County Planning Commission meets on the second (2nd) Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm in the Commission Chambers on the 5th Floor of the County Tower Building.

*Submitted on the behalf of the Jackson County Planning Commission
Grant E. Bauman, AICP, JCPC Staff and Recording Secretary*