

LOCKE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA  
JAN. 16, 2024 7:00 PM  
LOCKE TOWNSHIP HALL, 3805 BELL OAK RD, WMSTN

1. Call to order by Chairperson Lackey / Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval / Additions to agenda
3. Action on October 17, 2023 minutes  
Action on November 21, 2023 minutes
4. Public comment [3 minute limitation]

5. New Business

\*Williams & Works Senior Planner Bradley Kotrba, AICP; **Master Plan kick off**

Master Plan Committee or PC Workgroup?

Outline the process

*[Who, when Letter of Intent to prepare new MP mailed?]*

Main points of contact to answer questions quickly

What deliverables will look like for certain meetings

Topics to be discussed at each meeting

Expectation of engaged PC team that contributes a lot of info via opinions,

Experiences, observations, etc in the Township

\*Insert Ord 2023-03 Wind Energy Systems into Zoning Ordinance books, add/delete info

\*Insert Ord 2024-04 Solar Energy Systems into Zoning Ordinance books, add/delete info

\*Election of Officers: Chairperson [currently Sarah Lackey]

Vice chairperson [currently Marcy Shepler]

Secretary [currently Sarah Lackey]

6. Unfinished business

7. Public comment/communications [3 minute limitation]

11-15-2023 Williamstown Twp Planning Committee, intent to prepare new Twp Master Plan

11-06-2023 Williamston Comm Schools, urgent need for additional housing inventory

12-01-2023 Woodhull Twp Plan Comm, intent to prepare new Twp Master Plan

**MI Housing Readiness Incentive Grant Program for Master Plans that encourage increasing  
Housing supply and affordability**

The Twp Guide to Planning and Zoning, Building the Future

8. Concern/comments of PC members, Zoning Administrator and Consultants

9. Meeting adjournment

Individuals needing special services to fully participate may contact the Locke Township Clerk  
@ 517 468-3405 at least 72 hours in advance to request the necessary assistance.

2024 meeting dates: Jan 16 Mar 19 Apr 16 May 21 June 18 July 16 Aug 20 Sept 17 Oct 15 Nov 19

Current Planning Commission members/terms:

12/31/2024 Ben Howard

11/20/2024 Marcy Shepler-ex official Twp Bd member

12/31/2025 Jordan Smith & Ty Hull

12/31/2026 Sarah Lackey



LOCKE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA w/PUBLIC HEARING  
OCTOBER 17, 2023 7:00 PM  
LOCKE TOWNSHIP HALL, 3805 BELL OAK RD, WMSTN

Call to order by Chairperson Lackey 7:00

Present: Lackey, Shepler, Hull, Howard, Smith

Public Present: Please refer to attached sign in sheets

2. Approval of agenda (Shepler, Smith)

3. Motion to approve September 19, 2023 2023 PC minutes (Shepler, Smith)

4. Chairperson announces the opening of Public Hearing @ 7:04 PM for Solar Energy System [SES] and Wind Energy System [WES] Amendments to the Locke Township Zoning Ordinance, Ordinance #3 of 2005 as amended.

Lackey opened the floor for public comment.

No public comment.

Chairperson formally announces the close of the Public Hearing @ 7:07 PM.

5. No public comment

6. New Business:

The PC deliberated on the Solar Energy System amendment and motioned to send the amendment as written to the board for approval. (Shepler/Smith)

The PC deliberated on the Wind Energy System amendment and motioned to send the amendment as written to the board for approval. (Smith/Hull)

Motion to approve the proposed PC meeting schedule for 2024, of every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month with the exception of no meeting in February. (Hull/Lackey)

Shepler discussed and shared information on the alternative energy bus tour.

7. Comments: Smith expressed appreciation for the public's involvement. He applauded their commitment and courage. We are a small township, but a strong one.

Shepler thanked Foster Swift for their service.

No other comment from ZA or consultants.

8. Move to adjourn 7:18 pm (Lackey/Shepler)



LOCKE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
NOV. 21, 2023 7:00 PM  
LOCKE TOWNSHIP HALL, 3805 BELL OAK RD, WMSTN

Call to order by Member Ty Hull at 7:04 PM.

Present: Ty Hull, Supervisor Hart.

Declared quorum not present.

Adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Respectfully,  
Dorothy G Hart  
Locke Twp Sprvsr

2024 meeting dates: Jan.16 Mar 19 Apr 16 May 21 June 18 July 16 Aug 20 Sept 17 Oct 15 Nov 19

Current Planning Commission members/terms:

12/31/2023 Sarah Lackey  
12/31/2024 Ben Howard & Marcy Shepler-ex official Twp Bd member  
12/31/2025 Jordan Smith & Ty Hull





~ Serving Our Neighbors ~

**Williamstown Township**  
4990 Zimmer Rd., Williamston, MI 48895  
WilliamstownTownship.com  
P: (517) 655-3193 | F: (517) 655-3971

✓ RECEIVED  
11-20-23  
JH

November 15, 2023

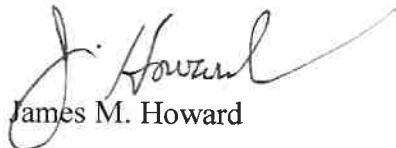
Locke Township Planning Commission

Dear Planning Commissioners:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you that the Williamstown Township Planning Commission, Ingham County, MI, intends to begin the preparation of a new Township Master Plan in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P. A. 33 of 2008, as amended. Pursuant to Section 39(2) of the Act, the Planning Commission requests your cooperation and comment as it undertakes this task.

Thank you.

On behalf of the Williamstown Township Planning Commission,

  
James M. Howard







November 6, 2023

Dear Williamston City Council Members and Williamstown Township Trustees,

**We, the Williamston Community Schools Board of Education, are writing to convey the urgent need for additional housing inventory in Williamston. As you are aware, representatives of Williamston Community Schools (WCS) have advocated for many years to add homes. As outlined in those presentations and discussions, data strongly support the need for immediate attention to the housing requirements of our community.**

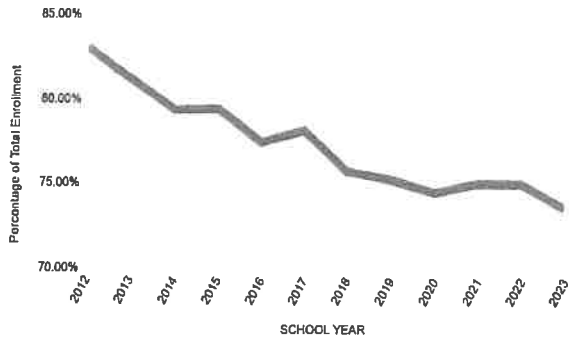
Despite the conclusiveness of data, no noticeable progress has been made, even as the communities around us continue to strategically add inventory. We have also observed that despite the hardships created by our housing shortage, exploring solutions to address the situation is not a priority. It is incumbent that both the City of Williamston and Williamstown Township take immediate steps to create the conditions for a sustainable population for the community and a consistent student enrollment base for the school district.

Williamston Community Schools faced an enrollment and fiscal crisis from approximately 2010 - 2016. The factors impacting that crisis included Michigan's unique economic challenges and the national recession. State funding cuts and families moving out of the area to seek employment resulted in dire financial circumstances for the District. To recover, WCS aggressively marketed the strong academic attributes and co-curricular programs synonymous with the District's long-standing record of excellence.

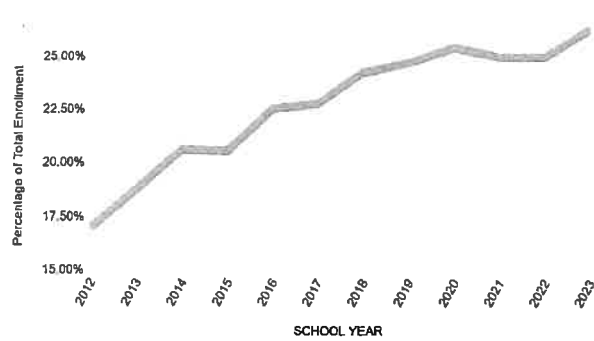
Marketing the District was and continues to be, a success. An influx of students have enrolled seeking enhanced educational opportunities. In fact, in 2019 WCS recorded its largest student enrollment since 2007. A part of the marketing plan, which was communicated to the City and the Township, was the anticipation that both entities would add housing inventory so District enrollment would become consistent and sustainable. Unfortunately, the City and Township have not expanded housing options or availability. Williamston Community Schools is now reliant on unpredictable School of Choice (SOC) and Non-Resident enrollment to maintain our quality academic and co-curricular programs.



Percentage of Resident Students Enrolled at WCS



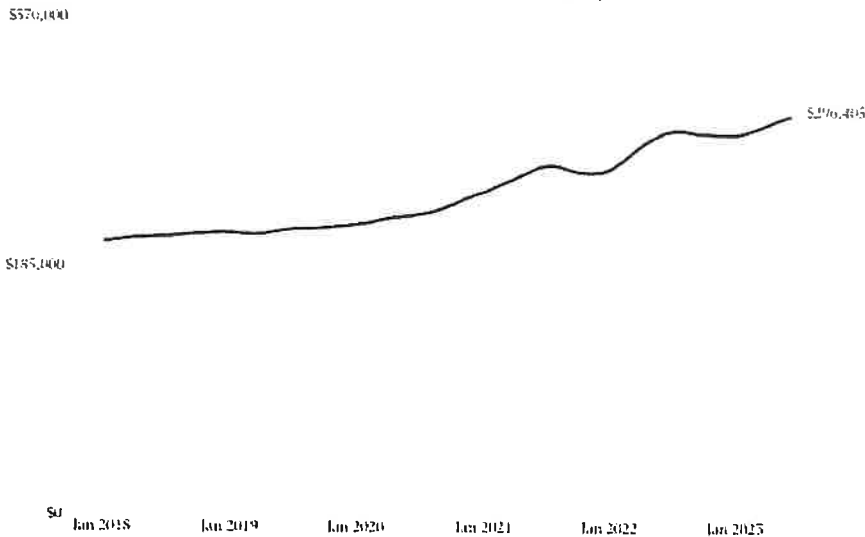
Percentage of SOC/NR Students Enrolled at WCS



Citation: Audited District Fall Student Count Numbers, 2012-2023

The combination of a highly rated, desirable school district and a decade of inaction on housing construction has resulted in skyrocketing home prices. According to data published by Zillow in July 2023, Williamston ranks 41st in Michigan for the highest housing price increase over the past five years. The consequence of a 43.7% increase during this period is a price of \$296,405 for a typical home. It is virtually unobtainable for most young families and working professionals to purchase a house in Williamston.

Home Values in Williamston, MI



Source: Zillow. Data represents monthly typical home value

Citation: [https://www.iosconews.com/news/state/image\\_9306a2e4-e700-53a3-9a7a-bf76546cb581.html](https://www.iosconews.com/news/state/image_9306a2e4-e700-53a3-9a7a-bf76546cb581.html)

The District not only loses students but also exceptional teaching candidates. Even with record salary increases over the past several school years, many educators cannot afford to reside in or commute to Williamston. As of November 2022, only 39% of the professional staff working for WCS resided in the District. Furthermore, many children of faculty who live outside the District cannot attend WCS. The costs and logistical challenges of commuting make it impossible for their attendance. Given the highly competitive nature of the current educational job market, the

lack of housing has a profound negative impact on the District's ability to recruit and retain outstanding educators.

School of Choice and Non-Resident enrollment create the impression that the District (and in turn, the community as a whole) has a strong economic foundation. It does not. The residential population of the school district is in steep decline. It is imperative that our local governments take immediate action.


This is not a debate over rampant pro-growth versus maintaining a rural environment. It is about providing the resources necessary to sustain current expectations and quality of life in Williamston. Remedy the housing shortage.

**The Williamston Community Schools Board of Education respectfully requests housing become the foremost priority of the City and the Township, and that the necessary proactive steps be taken to solve this serious immediate and long-term issue.**

The Board is eager and willing to problem-solve and collaborate with the City, Township, and community members. We must find mutually agreeable housing solutions to ensure the ongoing success of our school district and the entire Williamston community.


Sincerely,

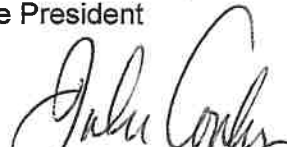
The Williamston Community Schools Board of Education

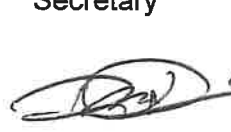
  
Mrs. Nancy Deal  
President


  
Mrs. Sarah Belanger  
Vice President

  
Ms. Amanda Hathaway Frattarelli  
Secretary

  
Dr. Christopher Lewis  
Treasurer

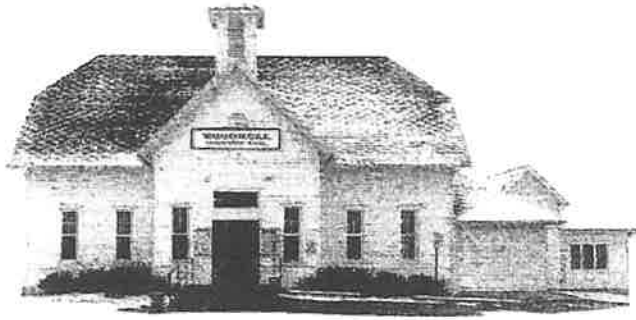
  
Mrs. Julie Conley  
Trustee

  
Mr. David Indish  
Trustee

  
Mrs. Deborah Wolf  
Trustee

CC:

Alaiedon Township  
Leroy Township  
Locke Township  
Meridian Township  
Wheatfield Township



**WOODHULL TOWNSHIP HALL**  
*Designated Historical Landmark 2016*

7315 Beard Rd, Shaftsbury, MI 48882  
**(517) 675-5122**

December 1, 2023

Locke Township

Locke Township Planning Commission,

Dear Planning Commissioners:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you that the Woodhull Township Planning Commission, Shiawassee County, Michigan is starting the process of a new Township Master Plan in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33. Pursuant to Section 39(2) of Act, the Planning Commission requests your cooperation and comment as it undertakes this task.

Thank you,

On behalf of the Woodhull Township Planning Commission,

*Stacey  
Brewer*

Stacey Brewer  
Woodhull Township Planning Commission  
Recording Secretary





**MSHDA**

# Housing Readiness Incentive Grant Program



**HOUSING READINESS INCENTIVE**

The Housing Readiness Incentive Grant Program provides funding to eligible applicants to implement actions that encourage increasing housing supply and affordability. The program is authorized pursuant to Section 1028 of the State of Michigan's Fiscal Year 2024 Budget.

## **Funding Available & Maximum Grant Amount**

\$5,000,000 is allocated to the program.

- \$3,000,000 is available in Category A.

- \$2,000,000 is available in Category B.

The maximum grant amount per award is \$50,000. Match and/or leverage funds are not required. Up to two disbursements are available per grant. The first may be an advance upon MSHDA's receipt of an executed contract to support the proposed activities; the second will be a reimbursement upon completion of the proposed activities.

## Eligible Activities

Eligible activities include costs associated with the adoption of land use policies, master plan updates, zoning text amendments, and similar actions to encourage increasing housing supply and affordability. The work may be performed by existing and/or contracted employees and/or third-party consultants. Indirect rates and grant administration are ineligible expenses.

## Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants in Category A are cities, villages, and townships that do not have an Engaged, Essentials, and/or Certified designation from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's "Redevelopment Ready Communities" program.

Eligible applicants in Category B are [cities, villages, and townships that have an Engaged, Essentials, and/or Certified designation from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's "Redevelopment Ready Communities" program.](#)

Eligible applicants may only submit one application.

## Register Now for the HRI Application Portal

The Housing Readiness Incentive (HRI) grant online application portal is hosted on software called IGX. In order to access the application, the applicant must first have an active IGX profile. It can take up to 48 hours for a profile to be approved in the IGX system. It is recommended this step is completed as soon as possible in order to be able to access and submit an online application when the HRI program launches January 16, 2024, 8:00 a.m., EST.

- IGX: <https://mgs.michigan.gov/>
- Written instructions on how to set up an IGX profile: [HERE](#)
- Step-by-step video: [HERE](#)
- To help applicants best prepare, a copy of the application questions: [HERE](#)



Counties, councils of government, universities, and for-profit and not-for-profit entities are among the organizations that are ineligible to apply.

## **Grant Rounds & Review**

The online application portal for all applicants will open January 16, 2024, and remain open until funds are no longer available. There is no application deadline. Applications will be reviewed and awarded in the order in which they are received.

## **Grant Term**

Grants will have an initial term of 24 months, beginning on the date the grant was awarded.

## **Contact**

For questions, email [MSHDA-OHS@michigan.gov](mailto:MSHDA-OHS@michigan.gov).

### **Housing Readiness Incentive Grant Program**

Copyright State of Michigan



# Introduction

## Building the Future

**T**he ability to plan for the future use of land, and to adopt regulations to implement that planning is one of the most valuable a township government possesses. Many of the planning and zoning actions taken by a township affect land use not only within its boundaries but in neighboring communities as well. These actions can be directly related to land use, such as rezoning a district from agricultural to residential, or they can appear indirectly related, such as building a fire station, installing a sewer system, building a park or applying for an economic development block grant. Each decision can affect the way people move into or out of a township, where they choose to live and work, and how they feel about their community.

As a result, township planning and zoning officials must be aware of the big picture of the township's vision and its place in the region that surrounds it, as well as the day-to-day details that effect change. They must work to develop a community consensus on the township's planning goals and policies to prepare realistic plans for future growth. Once those growth goals have been determined, the land use tools outlined in the master plan and zoning ordinance are used by township leaders to shape the township's future.

### **The mission**

Township planning and zoning officials are charged with the mission of building the township's future. Few other volunteer, community service positions are asked to assume a task as critical to the well-being of the township and its residents. Along with this responsibility comes great rewards—watching how decisions become homes, businesses and places for recreation can create a great sense of accomplishment. On the other hand, the “wrong” decision can bring great disappointment and create problems for years to come.

Building a township's future requires joining a wide variety of views, interests and ideas into a combined vision. The process begins with a thorough discussion of the hopes and concerns of the township's residents and property owners, and ends with a plan that fulfills the vision. It is the job of township planning and zoning officials to carry out this process.

### **Land use principles**

Township planning commission, zoning board of appeals and township board members, and other land use decision-makers should be guided by a well-defined set of principles. Some of those principles are:

- *Owners of property are afforded certain rights to use their property.*

The need to address a wide variety of views highlights one of the most difficult aspects of exercising local land use control: the need to balance the various, often competing interests of property owners and the township's residents.

These competing interests are most evident in the concept of property rights. On one hand, zoning laws provide residents with the right to peaceful and quiet neighborhoods and protection of property values. On the other hand, that same law demands that all property owners be permitted use of their property and a reasonable financial return from the use of that property. When the use of one property involves an activity that other property owners or residents find objectionable, planning officials are faced with the dilemma of protecting the property rights of both parties. Planning decisions often weigh the rights of competing property owners with state and federal law and the vision for the community.

- *The public is entitled to participate in the planning and zoning process.*

Various zoning approvals require public participation in the decision-making process, usually in the form of public hearings. As more communities experience growth, public hearings are becoming increasingly volatile as residents feel they are pitted against land developers. Planning officials find themselves trying to determine what weight to give public comments and complaints in the decision-making process.

Many land use decision-makers quickly learn that people do not generally come to a meeting to support a request. They have concerns to express or may simply oppose what is proposed. The foremost objective of each decision-maker is to ensure fairness for both the applicant and those making a complaint and to make a decision that is in the whole community's best interest.

- *Any land development will affect the environment and the community.*

The changes many townships have already experienced give practical meaning to planning concepts about growth management. Change is noticeable even in very rural communities where only modest residential building is occurring. A few more cars on the road, rooftops where trees once stood and more children in the classrooms are all signs that life is changing. Issues that were once of concern only in urban neighborhoods are beginning to show themselves in nearly every community. The problems that many new residents acknowledge they were trying to leave behind when they moved to rural areas are following them.

### **Growth and vision**

Ultimately, the planning commission must ensure that the township's long-term character, as determined by the vision expressed in the master plan, is not adversely affected by growth and new development. For example, rural townships often seek regulations that will help protect their most valuable agricultural lands or maintain a rural residential character. Such communities must recognize the property owner's right to a reasonable use of his or her property, while at the same time ensuring that new residents will not greatly affect agricultural operations or change the area's rural character.

At the same time, the township may have to recognize the practical realities of its geographical position, particularly those communities located near metropolitan areas. Often the rural or suburban character that attracted residents to a township continues to attract new ones. Though seeking a low-density community and relaxed lifestyle, these new residents often demand the urban services and conveniences they had elsewhere. Complaints about poor roads, unkempt lawns and junk cars become more frequent. Urban and urbanizing townships must wrestle with many of the same problems that plague metropolitan areas, but often without the same financial resources and statutory authority available to cities.

To maintain its future vision, the township must develop a strategy that balances the practical realities of its location with the character of the community and its ability to meet the demands of growth. The desire to maintain the rural atmosphere and preserve valuable agricultural land, for example, may not always be an appropriate strategy in all cases. On the other hand, if the expanding population cannot be adequately served with water, sewer, police and fire protection, densities must be limited, while recognizing the rights of landowners to receive a fair return from their property. This challenge necessitates a strong relationship between long-range planning and zoning regulation efforts.

### **A team effort**

The township's future is not shaped by the planning commission alone. The entire community must be involved, beginning with the township board. The township board is required by statute to work with its planning commission to implement many of the tools necessary to accomplish the township's vision. A close working relationship between the board and the planning commission is essential; without it, efforts to build the community everyone wants will be difficult, if not impossible.

Other planning team members can include township staff members, such as the zoning administrator or building inspector, professional planning consultants, engineers, the township attorney, county and regional planning commissions, and representatives from adjacent communities. Of course, individuals from the community, such as residents, business owners, school officials and others, should be actively involved in the township's planning process.

**Getting started—How to use the *Guide***

Planning commissioners are generally not experts in land use planning, engineering or other professional disciplines. This should not be expected of them. Instead, the planning commission's foremost function is to design the course for the township's future, employing the advice and guidance of planning and other professionals where necessary to develop a master plan. Once the plan is adopted, the planning commission sits in judgment on individual land use projects to determine if they are consistent with the guidelines and goals established in the plan. The purpose of this book is to serve as a reference for those involved in the planning process. This book provides information tailored specifically for township officials on the duties of township bodies and officials involved in the planning and zoning process, how to use the master plan and zoning ordinance to implement the township's vision, and land use issues such as rural character and open space preservation that are uniquely significant to townships.

The items contained in this guide are for informational purposes only and the Michigan Townships Association makes no representation regarding the accuracy or correctness of the contents of this guide. Accordingly, a township should not rely exclusively or primarily upon the information contained in this guide, but should consult with its professionals, including a township planner or consultant and/or township attorney regarding specific planning and zoning matters.