



DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING & GROWTH

**Planning & Zoning Division
2021 Annual Report &
2022 Work Plan**

Contact Information

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Area Plan Commission Staff

Executive Director/Secretary	Abby Wiles	<i>August 2020</i>
Planner	Ryan Fellows	<i>August 2019</i>
Planner	Shawn Klein	<i>August 2018</i>
Administrative Assistant	Shelley Marker	<i>September 2020</i>
Commission Attorney	Mitch Heppenheimer	
ABZA Attorney	Brandie Ecker	

Member Jurisdictions

St. Joseph County	Town of Lakeville	Town of New Carlisle
Town of North Liberty	Town of Osceola	Town of Roseland

Area Plan Commission

<u>Member</u>	<u>Appointed By:</u>
Adam DeVon	St. Joseph County Council
Robert Hawley	St. Joseph County Commissioners
Elizabeth McCombs	Council on Town Affairs, Town of Roseland/Town of Lakeville <i>(as of Sept 2020)</i>
John McNamara	St. Joseph County Surveyor
Kirk Youell	Town Council, Town of Osceola
Rachel Rawls	County Agricultural Extension Educator
Dr. Jerry Thacker	School Corporation Superintendents – PHM School District
Jim Moffit	Town Council, Town of New Carlisle
Ben Webb	Town Council, Town of North Liberty

I. Introduction

I.C. 36-7-4-312 requires the Executive Director, under the direction of the Area Plan Commission, to prepare and present to the Commission with an Annual Report and an Annual Plan for the operation of the planning department. This Annual Report provides information on the 2021 activities of the Area Plan Commission and establishes the proposed work program for 2022.

The Area Plan Commission is a 9-member area plan commission, providing planning-related services to the unincorporated areas of St. Joseph County and the Towns of Lakeville, New Carlisle, North Liberty, Osceola and Roseland. The APC is staffed by the Planning & Zoning Division, which is part of the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Growth (IPG), formed in 2019. Under the IPG umbrella is the Office of the Surveyor, Division of Economic Development, Division of Planning & Zoning, and Division of Public Works. The Executive Director of the Area Plan Commission, the Executive Director of Economic Development, the County Engineer and the County Surveyor jointly manage the department.

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Growth is dedicated to enabling smart and sustainable growth in St. Joseph County to the benefit of all its residents. This merger has helped to break down internal silos, enabling a more robust and engaged group with the necessary expertise to help new and existing projects move through the S. Joseph County public process. The role, activities and responsibilities of the planning staff remain the same as the *Division of Planning and Zoning*.

II. Core Duties of the Planning & Zoning Division

Area Plan Commission Core Duties

- Makes recommendations on zoning petitions and text amendments to the legislative bodies
- As a part of the Combined Hearing Procedure
 - Hears petitions for variances – approves, approves with modifications or denies
 - Makes recommendations to County Council on special uses
- Hears appeals from the Plat Committee on subdivision plats
- Considers proposals for comprehensive plan amendments
- Considers resolutions relative to redevelopment activities
- Area Plan Commission Committees
 - *Executive Committee* - Advises and counsels the Executive Director of the Commission in budget, personnel and other administrative matters; serves as the Site Plan Committee to determine appeals of Staff decisions on major changes to approved final site plans as required by the applicable zoning ordinances.
 - *Plat Committee* – approves or denies plats

Staff Core Duties

- Prepare all necessary documentation for the monthly Plan Commission
- Administer and coordinate the rezoning application process
- Administer and coordinate the subdivision application process
- Administer and coordinate the variance and special use application process for the Area Board of Zoning Appeals
- Research and prepare text amendments to the zoning and subdivision ordinances
- Propose and prepare amendments to comprehensive plans
- Assist the public on land use related matters
- Acts as the Zoning Administrator for the unincorporated areas of St. Joseph County
- Complete plan reviews for projects in the unincorporated areas of the County and provides technical assistances to member jurisdictions
- Issues Improvement Location Permits
- Assist APC member jurisdictions on land use related matters
- Participate in special planning efforts and provide staff capacity for other projects

III. 2021 Accomplishments

Specific Accomplishments

The following accomplishments are exclusive to the Planning & Zoning Division.

- Completed the procurement process for a consultant and kicked off the planning process for the County's new Comprehensive Plan
- Laid the groundwork, including budgeting and planning, for the SJC Code Enforcement program, which commenced in early 2022
- Filled several vacant positions on the APC and ABZA, and enhanced training and professional development for existing and new APC and ABZA members
- Continued to improve the quality of staff reports, including adding aerial maps and photographs to the ABZA packets
- St. Joseph County Zoning Ordinance – completed two text amendments, including:
 - University District Development Standards
 - Child Care Homes and Changeable Copy Sign Regulations
- Completed rezonings for two parcels in North Liberty that needed to have a zoning classification assigned
- Began notification of rezonings and special uses to the Council member that represents the district in which the rezoning is located
- Initiated post-construction inspections on Planning/Zoning items, including but not limited to landscaping, architectural elements, walkways, etc.

Recurring Work Elements

- Administer zoning (map change) applications
- Administer subdivision plat applications
- Administer variance and special use applications
- Administer zoning violation complaints
- Review and issue Improvement Location Permits
- Administer the Project Advisory Team
- Research and propose ordinance text changes
- Review street and alley vacation requests
- Participate in the Building Department's Plan Review process – issuance of ILPs
- Assist the public in a wide range of zoning and plat-related property issues
- Participation in the following:
 - Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (MACOG)
 - St. Joseph Regional Water & Sewer District
 - Juday Creek Task Force (MACOG)
 - Shirley Heinze Land Trust Advisory Committee
 - AARP Age-Friendly SJC Steering Committee
 - Onsite Wastewater Advisory Board

IV. Activity Data

Area Plan Commission Petitions

The following tables include rezonings (map changes only), combined hearings (map changes and variance(s)), text amendments and subdivision appeals. No subdivision appeals were filed in 2020.

Summary

The summary table shows all petitions filed for St. Joseph County, including the unincorporated areas as well as the five member towns. Numbers shown for 2016 to 2019 include City of South Bend petitions, as South Bend left the APC effective December 1, 2019. Numbers shown for 2020 and on include only unincorporated St. Joseph County and the five member towns.

Summary	2021*	2020*	2019	2018	2017
All Petitions	22	34	37	24	48
Map Change Only	18	18	10	10	10
Combined Hearings	1	6	11	11	23
Text Amendments	2	10	15	3	15
Subdivision Appeals	1	-	1	-	-

**Does not include petitions filed in the City of South Bend*

By Jurisdiction

Petitions filed in unincorporated St. Joseph County account for the majority of the filings. Of the 19 rezonings and combined hearings, two rezonings were in the Town of North Liberty and one rezoning was in the Town of Roseland. There were no filings in the Towns of Lakeville, New Carlisle or Roseland. All text amendments were within unincorporated St. Joseph County.

Unincorporated SJC	2021	2020*	2019	2018	2017
All Petitions	19	28	20	9	20
Map Change Only	15	14	4	4	3
Combined Hearings	1	4	5	5	7
Text Amendments	2	10	10	-	10
Subdivision Appeals	1	-	1	-	-

**South Bend separated from the Area Plan Commission*

Lakeville	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	-	-	-	-	2
Map Change Only	-	-	-	-	1
Combined Hearings	-	-	-	-	-
Text Amendments	-	-	-	-	1

New Carlisle	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	-	1	1	-	-
Map Change Only	-	-	1	-	-
Combined Hearings	-	1	-	-	-
Text Amendments	-	-	-	-	-

North Liberty	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	2	-	-	-	2
Map Change Only	2	-	-	-	1
Combined Hearings	-	-	-	-	-
Text Amendments	-	-	-	-	1

Osceola	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	-	1	1	-	-
Map Change Only	-	0	-	-	-
Combined Hearings	-	1	-	-	-
Text Amendments	-	0	1	-	-

Roseland	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	1	-	1	-	-
Map Change Only	1	-	1	-	-
Combined Hearings	-	-	-	-	-
Text Amendments	-	-	-	-	-

By Decision

Jurisdiction	Fav	Unfav	No	Total	Pass	Denied	W/D
Unincorporated SJC	17*	-	-	19	17	-	2
Lakeville	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
North Liberty	2	-	-	2	2	-	-
New Carlisle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Osceola	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Roseland	1	-	-	1	1	-	-

**Two withdrawn petitions are not shown as fav/unfav recommendations*

Subdivisions

77 subdivisions were filed in 2021, compared to 66 filed in 2020.

2021 Subdivision Filings	Major Primary	Major Secondary	Minor	Replat	Total
St. Joseph County	10	13	42	12	62

Street & Alley Vacations

Numbers shown 2016 to 2019 include City of South Bend petitions, as South Bend left the APC effective December 1, 2019. All four street and alley vacation petitions reviewed in 2021 were located in unincorporated St. Joseph County.

Jurisdiction	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
All Petitions	4	4	27	32	29
Unincorp SJC	4	4	3	2	3
Lakeville	-	-	-	-	-
New Carlisle	-	-	-	-	-
North Liberty	-	-	-	-	-
Osceola	-	-	1	-	-
Roseland	-	-	-	-	-

Area Board of Zoning Appeals

Summary

The overall decrease in ABZA petitions from 2019 to 2020 can be attributed to the City of South Bend’s departure from the APC; however, as shown in the petitions by jurisdiction, petitions in unincorporated St. Joseph County only decreased from 59 in 2019 to 54 in 2020.

Summary Table	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
All Petitions	85*	56	125	127	132
Variances (#)	78	88	303	257	312
Special Exceptions	7	1	11	18	18
Conditional Uses	1	-	-	-	-

**Includes one appeal of the Zoning Administrator’s decision not reflected in the above numbers*

***One petition included a special use and a variance*

By Jurisdiction

Unincorp SJC	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	79	54	59	62	66
Variances (#)	72	82	142	97	118
Special Uses	5	1	3	3	6
Conditional Uses	1	-	-	-	-
Appeal	1	-	-	-	-

Lakeville	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	2	-	-	-	-
Variances (#)	2	-	-	-	-

New Carlisle	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	-	-	-	1	1
Variances (#)	-	-	-	2	1

North Liberty	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	4	-	1	-	1
Variances (#)	3	-	4	-	2
Special Uses	2	-	-	-	-

**One petition included both a special use and a variance*

Osceola	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	-	2	1	1	-
Variances (#)	-	6	5	1	-

Roseland	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Petitions	-	-	1	1	-
Variances (#)	-	-	1	7	-
Special Uses	-	-	-	1	-

Financials

Income increased from \$51,159 in 2020 to \$68,120 in 2021. The most substantial increase was in subdivision review fees, which increased \$12,300 to a total of \$38,000 in 2021. The reduction in income from 2019 to now can be attributed to an overall decrease in petitions filed resulting from the City of South Bend’s departure from the APC (effective December 1, 2019).

Financials	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Total	\$68,120	\$51,159	\$87,468	\$114,938	\$71,151
Zonings (Map Changes)	\$7,825	\$10,410	\$8,340	\$16,860	\$25,730
Subdivisions	\$38,000	\$25,700	\$35,600	\$50,150	\$43,365
Variances/Special Uses	\$12,150	\$6,495	\$ 18,625	\$27,100	-
Zoning Administration	\$9,300	\$7,450	\$24,275	\$20,500	-
Other Income	\$845	\$1,104	\$628	\$328	\$2,056

V. 2022 Work Plan

Staff will continue to perform core duties and reoccurring work elements, as outlined in the previous sections of this report. Additionally, the following projects and initiatives have been identified specifically for 2021:

- **Comprehensive Plan**
Continue to manage the planning process for the Comprehensive Plan, which will continue into 2023
- **Code Enforcement**
Continue the implementation of the Code Enforcement program
- **Industrial Overlay**
Develop an industrial overlay for the Indiana Enterprise Center Core Development Area to have elevated design standards and more defines uses for the area
- **Website**
Complete an overhaul of the Planning & Zoning Division's section of the website. In addition to revamping the website, staff will also focus on implementing forms and payments for online submittals.