 Charter Township of Garfield Planning Department Report No. 2017-11		
Prepared:	February 23, 2017	Pages: 1 of 14
Meeting:	February 28, 2017	Attachments: <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject:	2016 Annual Report	

Introduction

This 2016 annual Planning Report was prepared pursuant to the requirements of Section 19(2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, which states:

"A planning commission shall make an annual written report to the legislative body concerning its operations and the status of planning activities, including recommendations regarding actions by the legislative body related to planning and development."

This report is intended to serve as the Planning Commission's report to the Township Board, as required above, and will also outline the activities of the Planning Department in the 2016 year.

Boards & Commissions

The Planning Department participates in various committees and provides support services to various Commissions and Boards, which include:

- Garfield Township Board
- Garfield Township Planning Commission
- Garfield Township Zoning Board of Appeals
- Joint Traverse City and Garfield Township Planning Commission (Grand Traverse Commons)
- Joint Traverse City and Garfield Township Recreation Authority
- Garfield Township Parks & Recreation Commission
- Hickory Hills Advisory Committee
- Traverse Transportation Coordinating Initiative (TTCI) *formerly* TC-TALUS
- Among others

Administration

The Planning Department continues to be very active as it moves towards finalizing the Master Plan, preparing the new Grand Traverse Commons Ordinance, and ensuring that development projects are completed efficiently as required by the Planning Commission and Township Board.

Routine tasks also include dialogue with the development community to ensure that development applications are complete and ready to be brought before the Planning Commission, which can take weeks or months depending on the applicant's consultant. The management and oversight of active Natural Resources Trust Fund projects occupies a substantial amount of Staff time.

As current documents and plans are finalized in 2017, attention will be shifted to successor documents and ordinances to help the Township realize the goals of recently adopted documents. These may include sub-area plans, corridor planning, lake protection plans, etc. This, combined with yet another projected year of strong growth, as well as planning for upcoming grant applications, will continue to demand efficiency in the administration of the Planning Department.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission meets the second and fourth Wednesday of each month and is responsible for reviewing development applications, preparing plans, and advising the Township Board on development matters and zoning amendments. The meeting schedule allows the Planning Commission to hear, review and decide on projects during the first meeting and to advance the interests of the community by holding a work session during the second meeting of the month. This schedule will continue throughout 2017 as the Commission works to finalize its Master Plan.

Garfield Township Zoning Ordinance

Following several years of work by the Planning Commission, the new Garfield Township Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 2015 and has proven to be far more user friendly than the antiquated ordinance it replaced. Our goal is to continue to address areas of the ordinance that fail to meet the intent of a more efficient and more user friendly ordinance. A brief description of those changes is provided further along in this report.

Master Plan

A community survey was drafted and mailed to a random sampling of Garfield Township residents to solicit public opinion on how we are growing and where we are heading. The information received has assisted the Planning Commission in creating and supporting current and future Master Plan goals and objectives. In addition to public opinion it is very important to collaborate with community leaders, emergency services, schools and other public service entities to understand how their future plans coincide with ours.

Staff has an ongoing discussion with community stakeholders such as TCAPS, BATA, Cherry Capital Airport, GT Metro Fire, and the Sherriff's Office to understand each agency's current and future infrastructure needs and how each need relates to our community now and into the future. In addition to the Master Plan survey, the Planning Commission discussed the current

Future Land Use Map and made adjustments to encourage infill of dilapidated or underutilized properties rather than encouraging the outward growth of our community. Corridor Planning was a big topic of discussion this year as was residential growth and density. The Planning Commission is preparing to bring the document before the public for comment in the first or second quarter of 2017.

Continued Collaboration

Cherry Capital Airport

Frequent meetings with Kevin Klein (Cherry Capital Airport) have certainly helped Staff understand the long and short term plans associated not only with the airport property but properties within the flight paths as well. The relocation or "bending" of Garfield Road does not appear to be on the radar any longer as the FAA has worked with Mr. Klein on approach lighting and runway expansion concessions. This runway expansion will affect the Michigan Aeronautics Commissions (MAC) Accident Safety Zones, as they are measured from the edge of a runway outward. Staff will continue to monitor the changes and reference the "Compatible Land Use Matrix" provided by the MAC when land use development or redevelopment is proposed within the designated safety zones. The Compatible Land Use Matrix provides land use strategies for addressing density, development guidelines, landscape, height limitations etc.

TCAPS

Staff continues to meet with Paul Soma (TCAPS) and the TCAPS Board to discuss population shifts and growth patterns within our community. Growth and development patterns can significantly alter the student population from one year to another, so it is important that we have an open dialogue with the school system. For example, the development occurring on LaFranier Road has the potential of increasing the student population at Cherry Knoll or Traverse Heights elementary by several hundred kids over the next 2-3 years. This population increase could prove challenging for administrators if they are not informed in advance of a project of this magnitude. According to TCAPS, Garfield Township is the only community that meets regularly with TCAPS representatives and their Board to discuss growth and we will continue to do so moving forward.

BATA

BATA has started providing us with ridership numbers so that we can properly plan for an increase in BATA stop locations. According to these numbers, the Grand Traverse Mall is a popular commuter destination. The Planning Commission and Staff continue to encourage multi-modal transportation by requiring developers to incorporate bus stops within mixed use or high density projects. The intent of this regulation is to avoid on-street bus stops on roadways that do not have safe off road pedestrian circulation. We will continue to work with BATA to provide safe transportation alternatives to those in need.

Grand Traverse County Sherriff

The Sheriff's post within the township hall continues to be an asset to Staff and residents alike. A continuous dialogue and willingness to assist Staff with violations, crime statistics and plan review continue to prove beneficial.

Conceptual Reviews

Conceptual reviews were established in 2010 to allow developers and applicants the ability to appear before the Planning Commission with little more than a concept and basic site plan. This procedure provides the applicant with valuable feedback to gauge the Planning Commission's interest in the project before an application is submitted. This process has been very useful to developers as they are able to discuss a potential project without having to first secure a planner, engineer, surveyor, etc. to complete an application. The following projects were brought before the Planning Commission for discussion in 2016:

1. Crown Golf Course - Transient Dwellings
2. Ashland Park PUD - Major Amendment
3. Grand Traverse Mall - Sign proposal

Administrative Reviews

The Director of Planning can now administratively approve projects provided they fall within the confines of the zoning ordinance. This procedure improves efficiency on minor requests. The following requests were administratively reviewed.

1. Reid Day Care - 7-12 Children- (approved)
2. Ashland Park - Minor adjustments to combine units- (approved)
3. GDO Investments - Olesons Grocery Store addition- (approved)
4. Lucky's Market - Building footprint expansion- (approved)
5. Ridges @ 45 PUD Concept for south acreage- (approved)

Development Reviews

The Planning Commission reviewed and approved numerous projects in 2016, which included Site Plan Reviews, Planned Unit Developments, Special Use Permits and zoning text and map amendments. A brief description of those reviews follows.

SUP 2015-01 - The Ridges at 45 – LaFranier Road – (approved)

The applicant was approved for a 232 unit Multi-Family Residential project along LaFranier Road. The market rate project incorporates a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units to serve future Garfield Township residents. The applicant worked amicably with the Township and GTCRC to incorporate a bike path along the property and add a center turn lane to LaFranier Road to address both non-motorized and vehicular safety. The Ridges at 45 welcomed their first

residents in December and anticipate having occupancy for the additional 3 buildings by May of 2017.

SUP- 2016- 03 Bill Marsh Paint / Body Repair - (approved)

An application to construct a 2,400 square foot used vehicle sales office and a 3,800 square foot addition to an existing body and repair shop located on Barlow Street was approved by the Planning Commission. Although limited vehicle sales are now a permitted use (with conditions) in the I-G (General mixed-use industrial business) district it does require a SUP if those conditions are to be exceeded.

SUP 1991-10-L - Crown PUD Transient Residential (recommended/ withdrawn)

The Crown PUD, located on West Silver Lake Road was approved in 1991 as a mixed use residential and commercial project situated around a golf course. The applicant requested approval to construct four "stay and play" transient dwelling units within the project. Following several public meetings, amended applications and two contentious public hearings, the applicant received a positive recommendation to the Township Board. The Township Board, following two public meetings remanded the project back to the Planning Commission for additional discussion on the location of the proposed "stay and play" units. The applicant has since formerly withdrawn the application.

SPR - 2015-01/ 1990 -04-E Grand Traverse Mall - Dicks Sporting Goods (approved / withdrawn)

Representatives of the Grand Traverse Mall requested approval to demolish a portion of the mall previously occupied by a movie theater to accommodate a Dicks Sporting Goods store. The applicant received approval by the Planning Commission on January 27, 2016 and quickly made application to the ZBA for a variance request on February 22, 2016. Within days of the Planning Commission approval, staff was provided a copy of a letter from Dicks to the Grand Traverse Mall terminating their agreement with the mall. The approvals are still active however no action is anticipated with Dicks Sporting Goods.

SPR 2016- 01 - Oleson's Service Drive - US-31 (approved)

Large acreage parcels along major corridors are required to install a service drive and pedestrian walkway prior to the development of the property. The property is approximately 200 acres and located on the west side US-31 South, between Rennie School Road and Meadow Lane Drive. The service drive was constructed along roughly 1,500 feet of the property's northern road frontage on US-31.

SPR – 2005-05- F - Lone Tree PUD - Traverse Medical Properties - (approved)

TC Medical Properties purchased the two vacant commercial office units within the Lone Tree PUD located at the corner of North Long Lake Road and Lone Pine Road. Following a minor amendment to combine the properties, the applicant proposed the new Crystal Lake Medical Center, which is presently under construction and set for a May 2017 opening.

SPR - 2016-02 - PUD Buffalo Ridge PUD - (Lucky's Market) (approved)

An amendment to allow a proposed market within the approved Buffalo Ridge PUD was delayed due to the applicant's refusal to resolve an ongoing violation (installing a pedestrian pathway). This appears to be the only incident over the past 8 years that an owner has signed and acknowledged a Report and Decision Order only later to refuse to honor his signature. Once before the Courts, the Judge required the owner to secure an agreement with the township to construct the pathway as agreed to in the document. Following the filing of an application, and review of the approval, the project was approved as a part of the settlement.

SPR - Storm Water Request - (approved)

The application was a request to allow onsite storm water containment to be located in the Agricultural zoning district to support the recently rezoned Kings Court expansion (see Z-2016-02 below). The use of this area for storm water containment is permitted due to the split zoning of the property and can be authorized by the Planning Commission pursuant to Section 325.B.7 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Z-2016-01 - LaFranier Road Rezoning - (withdrawn)

The subject property is located at the northwest corner of Garfield and Hammond Roads. The property is currently vacant and zoned A-Agricultural. The applicant requested to rezone approximately 19-acres of the 76-acre parcel from the current A-Agricultural District to the C-G General Commercial District, without restriction. Following discussion with the Planning Commission the applicant withdrew the application from future consideration.

Z-2016-02 Kings Court Expansion - Rezoning - (approved)

The applicants request to rezone approximately 37 acres of land from the A-Agricultural District to the R-M Mobile Home Residential District, was approved. The application affects two properties to the north of Lloyd Lane, to the west of LaFranier Road and to the east of Keystone Road. (Lloyd Lane was formerly a dead-end of Hammond Road, and was renamed when Hammond Road was extended to Keystone Road in 2010). The applicant is in the process of submitting the project to the State of Michigan for review.

Zoning Ordinance Text and Map Amendments

Amendment #1 - The following changes were presented by Staff, recommended by the Planning Commission and approved by the Township Board.

- To allow multi-family residential within the commercial zoning districts.
- To change the approval process from SUP to Administrative approval for Child Care 7-12 children.
- To reduce setbacks for multi-family projects.
- To allow an increase in density for projects in the R-3 multi-family district.
- To allow additional uses in the C-P Planned Shopping Districts.

Amendment #2 -

- Amended the sign portion of the C-P Planned Shopping District to clarify new language.
- Amended the Zoning Map to fix a typo.

Amendment #3 -

- Rezoned 30-acre property on LaFranier Road from A-1 to R-3 Multi-family

Amendment #4 -

- Amended out Section 611 Group Housing due to it being antiquated and less lenient than the development options available.
- Amended the H-C Highway Commercial district to change reviewing authority to the Planning Commission from ZBA.

Amendment #5 - *(introduced 2016, anticipated early 2017 adoption).*

- Amends and simplifies sign approvals within PUDs (Section 630.J) and Planned Shopping Centers (Section 630.G), including allowances for Planning Commission to increase sign size if certain standards demonstrating need are met.
- Eliminates Comprehensive Sign Plan due to non-necessity and the high degree of confusion observed among the one applicant who has attempted this procedure.
- Creates Section 108 to prohibit submittal of more than one pending development application, per parcel or parcels under the same ownership, at the same time.
- Amends and clarifies the review procedure and standards of approval for amendments to PUDs (Section 426.F) and PURDs (Section 427.E).

Joint Traverse City & Garfield Township Planning Commission

The Joint Planning Commission is comprised of City and Township residents, appointed from their respective Planning Commissions and one member jointly appointed by both municipalities. John Racine and Terry Clark (retired) have represented the township for several years as have Traverse City's representatives John Serratelli, Jan Warren and jointly appointed Chairwoman Carol Hale.

Following numerous public and stakeholder meetings on the draft Grand Traverse Commons Zoning Ordinance, the joint planning commission unanimously recommended adoption of the document to the City Commission and Township Board. The City Commission and Township Board held a joint meeting on January 23, 2017 to discuss the ordinance and were favorable of the document. This form-based code will regulate the specific Commons area campus and will be separate from the Township's regular Zoning Ordinance.

Parks & Recreation

PARKLAND PROJECTS

BOARDMAN VALLEY NATURE PRESERVE:

The Boardman Valley Nature Preserve (BVNP) is a 200-acre park and natural area located on the Boardman River. Though the park is primarily in a natural state, certain areas have been targeted for improvement to support active and passive recreation

In 2015, the Township submitted a grant application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for a grant to make a number of improvements to the Boardman Valley Nature Preserve which included a canoe/kayak ramp, a parking lot with a turn around, vault pit toilets and changing rooms, a pavilion as well as a pickleball court. All of these improvements are on the north end of the site near the old YMCA building.

The 2015 request was successful, and in September of 2016 a fully executed grant agreement was received for \$100,000 from the State, with the Township matching \$100,000. The Township was also awarded a grant from Rotary Charities in the amount of \$40,878 to help fund the pickleball courts, which will go towards the required local match.

Upon receipt of the grant agreement, the Township sought proposals from consulting Civil Engineering & Landscape Architecture firms to provide professional design services for the grant improvements. Four firms submitted proposals.

On October 4, 2016, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended Prein&Newhof with a bid amount of \$26,000. On October 11, 2016 the Township board accepted the bid and entered



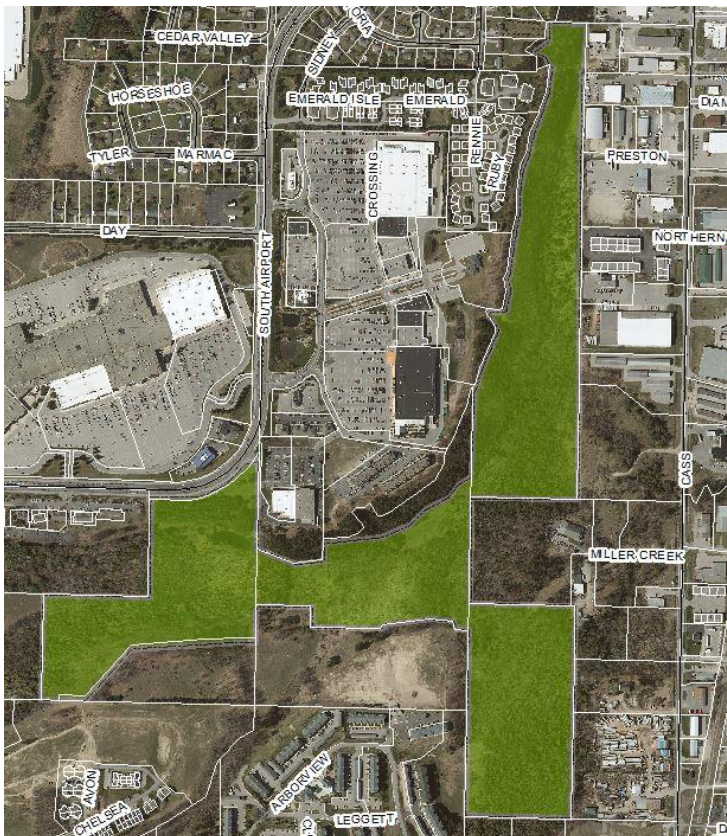
into an agreement for services. It is anticipated that construction will occur in 2017.

At the end of 2015, the Township acquired the Verizon property from the Land Conservancy and the Templeton property through a Trust Fund grant. The purpose was to expand the BVNP whereby accommodating a future parking area as well as a number of potential improvements as indicated above. Existing buildings on the site included a dilapidated farmhouse and agricultural structures that needed to be removed. An existing 2,500-square foot utility building was retained to house Township assets used to support outdoor public recreation, such as sporting equipment or grounds management equipment.

Funding for the farmhouse demolition was allocated in the Township’s 2016 Park budget. The buildings have been demolished and a final reimbursement request to the DNR will be submitted in early January to finalize the project.

The Township also closed on two additional acquisitions to the BVNP; the Balyeat parcel, a small acquisition on the west side of the river, and the Fraser parcel, an additional 10-acres on the east side of the river. Since 2012, the BVNP has more than doubled in acreage, from 92 to just over 200 acres while also expanding to the east side of the river.

MILLER CREEK NATURE PRESERVE:



From 2015 and into 2016, the Park Commission worked with consultant Wade Trim to prepare a conceptual development plan for a new trailhead area, which would be located near Aldi off of South Airport Road. The conceptual plans, if formally adopted into the Park Plan, will become the guideline for the development of this area.

The focal point of these plans is on the most recent addition to this park, the "Hanson" parcel, which is the westernmost parcel on the map at left. The overarching goal is to help the public recognize that this park even exists.

The Park Commission recommended a

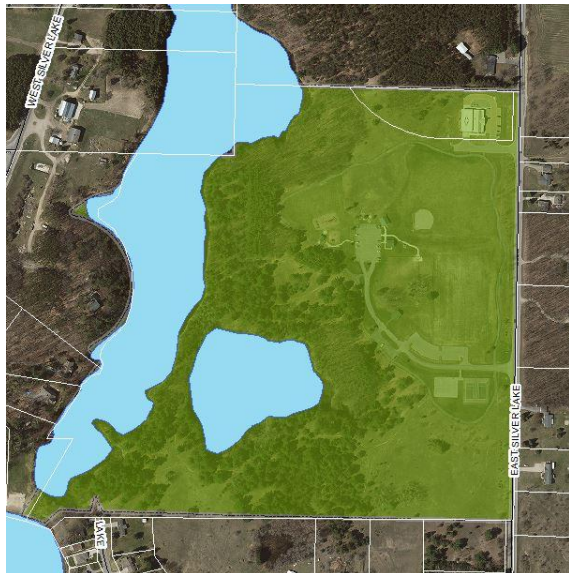
general construction budget allocation for 2017 and will research and recommend potential improvements, such as a boardwalk among the Hanson parcel wetlands, a pavilion or gathering area on the uplands, or improved access to a fishing pond.

KIDS CREEK PARK:

As described further below, the most exciting development for this park in 2016 was the completion of Phase II of the Buffalo Ridge Trail. In 2017, the Township will look to contract with the Conservation District to build a connector trail between the two resources, providing users from the YMCA and West Middle School with easy access to this beautiful pocket park.



Unfortunately, the dilapidated power generating structure remains a sticking point. Having previously ruled out the possibility of saving the building, the Township must decide on how to address this building. There appear to be two possibilities; construct a replica structure on the site, or simply demolish the building and fill the foundation. The reason that this has not yet occurred is because of a desire to protect the remaining power generating mill in the foundation of the building; either through protecting it in place or removing and relocating the equipment to dry storage for the time being.



SILVER LAKE RECREATION AREA:

SLRA is our most popular Township Park, with 113 pavilion reservations for 2016. The busiest months, of course, were June, July and August, with 71 reservations. The ball diamond was used by the little league Saturdays in June. The dog park continues to be very popular, drawing a regular user base from well outside of Grand Traverse County.

After the completion of some additional sidewalks in 2015, the concrete contractor finished up the

project in 2016 with the last completion to a pavilion. Each of the picnic pavilions, as well as the dog park, are now fully accessible to persons of limited mobility. Additionally, the Conservation District completed construction of an additional footpath along the east side of "Hidden Lake," allowing trail users to make a loop of the lake and providing new scenic views.

The Parks Commission was approached this year by a community member who wanted to donate an 18 basket disc golf course to the Township to be placed in this park. The Commission found this proposed use of parkland consistent with the park plan and began working towards the installation of the course. However, the location and positioning of the course arose as a contentious issue with neighbors living near the park. Public input was sought regarding the matter and ultimately the donation was withdrawn by the donor.

GRAND TRAVERSE COMMONS NATURAL AREA:

In early 2016, with the help of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, the Township submitted a public use deed to the Michigan DNR to acquire a parcel commonly known as the "State 40."

This property abuts the west line of the Township's 140 acre Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area. Though not known by many members of the public, it is an intrinsic part of the Commons park and trail network. The future public use of this property became imperiled when the DNR placed it on a real-estate "dispose of" list.

In November the Township received notice that the DNR had given preliminary approval to the request, provided that the parcel will be restricted to recreational uses. The Township should hear back soon on final approval. After the property is deeded to the Township, and pending clarification on possible deed restrictions of the existing Natural Area, the Park Commission intends to begin developing a comprehensive, multi-use plan for this complex park.



TRAIL PROJECTS:**BUFFALO RIDGE TRAIL PHASE II:**

The Township finally secured all necessary easements and approvals to build Phase II of the Buffalo Ridge Trail.

The trail was professionally designed by Wade Trim and bid out for construction in 2015. After an unsatisfactory bid result for summer of 2015 construction, this project was rebid and construction was completed in 2016. This would not have happened without partners such as the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA, Oleson Foundation, Great Wolf Lodge, TART, and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy in making this trail a success.

In 2016, a construction contract was awarded to AJ's Excavating, who promptly and professionally constructed the trail, on time and within budget. The trail is already heavily used and the Township has received great feedback from trail users. In 2017, the Conservation District is expected to construct a connector trail to Kid's Creek Park.

**CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY HICKORY HILLS PARK DEVELOPMENT:**

This property is seen as an integral connector between the Hickory Meadows and Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area properties and as such the Township has continued to participate in discussions regarding the future of this park. Opportunities have arisen to make the park more accessible year-round and to more user groups, which the Parks Commission believes would be a long term benefit to Township residents. The City of Traverse City in conjunction with the non-profit organization Preserve Hickory, have begun a fundraising campaign for the project.

CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY BOARDMAN LAKE TRAIL COMPLETION:

The Township continues to work with the City of Traverse City, Grand Traverse County, and TART to complete the final leg of this trail, which will start at 14th Street and extend south along the western shore to Logan's Landing.

Following an extensive public input process, Prein&Newhof completed professional design plans which, when implemented, will complete the loop around the Boardman Lake Trail and provide enhanced access to the trails farther south along the Boardman River.

Infrastructure Update (NW Corner)

Water storage has been limited in the northwest portion of the township due to changes at the MDEQ level and high growth rate in that area. The township has worked diligently to rectify the water storage issue so that growth can continue without concern. These efforts included coordinating utility projects with the GTCRC road improvements along Cedar Run, Harris and Zimmerman Roads to lower water and sewer installation costs.

The township's ability to secure a high elevation parcel presented another cost saving opportunity as we were able to utilize a ground level tank rather than the more expensive elevated tank alternative. Construction on the tank and final utility installation is anticipated to begin summer of 2017.

Conclusion

2017 should be a very busy and exciting year as we anticipate adoption of the new Garfield Township Master Plan and Grand Traverse Commons Form Based Zoning Ordinance. Following the adoption of the above mentioned documents the Planning Commission will likely be shifting focus to implementing the goals of the Master Plan and identifying roadways

in our community most in need of a corridor plan. It is also expected that development projects will continue to increase.

RECOMMENDATION:

The following motion would be appropriate if the Township Board is prepared to accept and file the 2016 Annual Report:

MOTION THAT the 2016 Planning Commission Annual Report, as contained in PD Report No. 2017-11 BE ACCEPTED as required by Section 19(2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.