

GUIDE TO DEVELOPMENT

The Little City with a BIG HEART!



This Guide to Development includes a snapshot overview of the development review process in the City of Clawson. It explains the review process, policies, steps, and other relevant information for applicants. Links are provided throughout the document for easy access to the most up-to-date forms, applications, and more information.

This document is meant to be a helpful guide and is not intended to include all of the requirements of the City Code. It is not a replacement for the Zoning Ordinance or any other local ordinance. Applicants and their development professionals should review the specific ordinances and talk to city staff about their development projects.

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Contact Information

The City of Clawson’s [website \(www.cityofclawson.com\)](http://www.cityofclawson.com) contains maps, applications, the City’s Land Development Regulations and Master Plan, and much more. The [Building & Planning documents](#) link provides quick access to permit applications, while the [Business Resource](#) link details incentives and business resources.

City of Clawson
 425 N. Main Street
 Clawson, MI 48017
 248.435.4500

Monday – Thursday
 7:30am – 5:30pm

Fridays – Closed

Contact Quick Reference

Discipline	Contact Person	Contact Information	Contact For
Economic Development	Susie Stec, Economic Development Coordinator	(248) 435-4500 ext 126 sstec@cityofclawson.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General (re)development approval process questions • General Zoning Ordinance requirements • Economic development assistance & site selection
Planning	Greg Elliott, Planner	(248) 435-4500 ext 127 or (248) 596-0920 gelliott@mcka.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed Zoning Ordinance requirements • Site Plan Review • City Master Plan • Variance requests
Downtown Development	Joan Horton, DDA Director	(248) 435-5299 ddadirector@cityofclawson.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown promotion • Downtown business assistance • Downtown Master Plan
Building	James Albus, Director of Building & Planning	(248) 435-4500 ext 115 jalbus@cityofclawson.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Code requirements • Required Building Permits • Sign code
Public Works	Doug Ballard, Superintendent	(248) 288-3222 dballard@cityofclawson.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility locations • Water & sewer requirements and tap fees
Engineering	Harry Drinkwine, Engineering Services	(248) 288-3222 hdrinkwine@cityofclawson.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed site design requirements • Engineering requirements
Fire	Jim Albus, Interim Fire Marshal	(248) 435-4500 ext 115 jalbus@cityofclawson.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Inspections

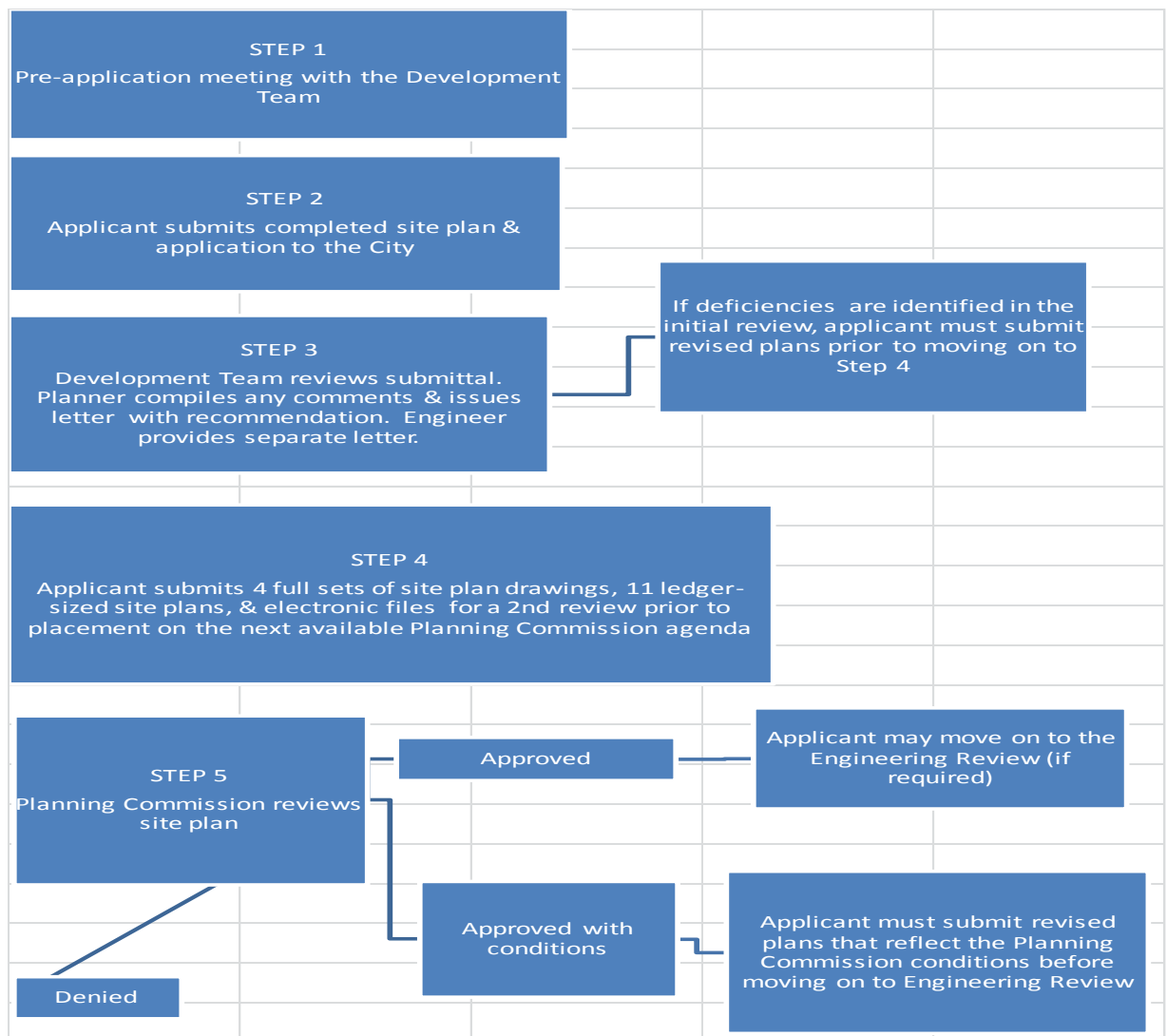
The Development Review Process

The following outlines the development review process. This guide describes the relevant reviewing bodies for development projects in the City. It outlines the planning and zoning approval process, estimated timelines, required applications and submittal materials. It also provides a brief overview of the process following Planning Commission approval.

All projects are reviewed by multiple departments at the outset to assist you in determining the project's feasibility and to reduce costly surprises in the (re)development process.

In general, other than the construction of single-family homes, most building construction and land modifications require a site plan review application. Certain uses may also require a special use permit. When a change of use is proposed for a property, even where no construction is occurring, site plan review and/or a special use permit will likely also be required, unless a current site plan is in effect. Please contact the City's Economic Development Coordinator for project specific requirements and approvals.

Development Review Process Flowchart



Reviewing Bodies for Development Applications & Timeline

The City's [Zoning Ordinance](#) outlines the procedures for development applications. Depending on the nature and location of the project, select City Boards and Commissions will review the project. Click [here](#) for a complete list of Boards and Commissions and more information about these entities; their roles in the development process are described below, including meeting dates and times. Meetings take place at City Hall unless otherwise noted.

- **Zoning Board of Appeals:** Interprets and grants variances from provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and Sign Ordinance; conducts hearings and resolves disputes regarding the decisions of the Zoning Official; reviews temporary use requests.
 - Third Thursday of the month at 7:30pm
- **Downtown Development Authority Board:** Manages ongoing maintenance, security and promotion of economic activity and continual operation of the downtown district.
 - Third Wednesday of the month at 8:00am
- **Planning Commission:** Creates and updates the Master Plan reviews Zoning Ordinance amendments, rezoning requests, site plans, special use permits, and other land use applications.
 - Second & Fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm
- **City Council:** Reviews rezoning requests and Zoning Ordinance and City Code amendments.
 - First & Third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm

Typically the entire planning approval process takes 45 to 60 days for a site plan application that is diligently pursued. The timeline for the approval process of site plan applications depends on how quickly the project architect or engineer can turn around any required site plan revisions identified in the initial plan review letter. Generally, the City of Clawson strives to take make sure projects are ready for a favorable recommendation before taking them before the Planning Commission.

Pre-Application Meeting

The prospective developer(s) or representative(s) of an entity wishing to (re)develop a property in the City is encouraged to meet with the City's Development Team, which is comprised of staff from Building & Planning, Engineering Services, Public Works, Police and Fire, prior to submitting an official application. Contact Economic Development Coordinator Susie Stec at 248-435-4500 ext. 126 or at sstec@cityofclawson.com to schedule a free consultation.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to bring their design professionals and any conceptual drawings or plans to the pre-application meeting, as this may allow for more effective review and comments (or, ideally, to submit these plans in advance of the

meeting). During this meeting, the applicant may outline the proposed development idea and any initial conceptual designs available. The staff will provide the prospective applicant with background information on the site, whether previous plans were submitted, the community vision for the site, an overall opinion of the proposed idea, and an outline of the approval process and timeline.

Community Vision: The Master Plan

The Master Plan is one of the primary tools used by the City of Clawson. It is a broad based policy document for the physical, economic, and social development of the City as it relates to land use. It has a long-range perspective that provides a coordinated approach to making important decisions.

Prospective developers should review the City's Master Plan to make sure the proposed project helps fulfill the goals of the plan. The plan can be found [here](#). For projects in the downtown, please review the [Downtown Master Plan](#) for the vision for Clawson's ever-growing downtown.

Zoning Information

Click [here](#) to access the City's Zoning Ordinance and [here](#) to access the City's Zoning Map. Zoning regulations are contained in [Article X of Chapter 34](#) of the City Code. Sign regulations can be found in [Chapter 36](#). The City recently updated the zoning regulations for the City Center District and created standards for the new Central Mixed District and Core Residential District, all of which are form-based. To assist to business and property owners wishing to redevelop in these areas, the DDA developed Design Guidelines to clearly illustrate the variety of ways in which the new design standards may be implemented. Here is a link to the [DDA Design Guidelines](#).

For general questions related to zoning, contact the Economic Development Coordinator at (248) 435-4500 ext 126 or Building Department at (248) 435-4500 ext 121. For specific zoning questions, please contact our planner Greg Elliott at gelliott@mckKa.com or at (248) 435-4500 ext 127 or (248) 596-0920.

Planning and zoning applications (Zoning Determination Requests, Site Plan Review Applications, Special Land Use Requests, Zoning Board of Appeals Applications, Rezoning Requests, etc.) can be found here under "[Clawson Board Applications](#)".

Site Plan and Special Use Permit Review Process

Requirements & Applications

To initiate the site plan and special use permit approval process the following documents should be submitted to the Building & Planning Department:

- Completed [site plan review application](#), including site plan checklist
- First submission: 8 sets of signed, sealed & folded site plans prepared by a registered design professional; Second submission/revised plans: 4 sets of signed, sealed & folded plans, 11 ledger-sized plans and PDF of the plans
- Application fees

Review Process

After the complete application is submitted, the Building Department and City's planning consultant will distribute site plans to the following City departments for review and comment: Engineering, Fire, Police, and Public Works. Plans may be submitted to additional internal and external agencies, such as Oakland County Road Commission, MDOT, as needed. It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit plans as required.

Any required site plan revisions will be detailed in a review letter by the planner and/or engineering. The review letter indicates the proposed project's compliance with all of the applicable City laws, ordinances, and codes. Once all site plan requirements are met a final review letter is prepared by the planner who will recommend action on the application including any conditions that would ensure compliance with policies and regulations. This final review letter and the site plan will then be forwarded to the Planning Commission. All plans must be received three (3) weeks prior to the date of the Planning Commission meeting in order to be placed on the agenda.

The required site plan elements are detailed in the [application](#) form. Consult Section 34-601 of the [Zoning Ordinance](#) to determine when a project requires site plan review. Some projects may qualify for administrative review. If administrative approval is applicable, the Building Official has the discretion to forward any site plan submitted to the Planning Commission for final determination.

Planning Commission Review and Action

The Planning Commission can approve, approve with conditions, or deny the site plan. After reviewing the final review letter the Planning Commission will determine whether additional information is needed in order to make a decision. Completed site plans need to be submitted three (3) weeks prior to a meeting to be considered for the agenda. The agenda is typically set on the Thursday prior to a scheduled meeting. The Planning Commission will review the site plan application and may suggest and/or require modifications to the proposed site plan or require additional information, which must be completed and resubmitted prior to moving on to the process.

Final Site Plan Submittal and Review

The final site plan incorporates all conditions of approval. If applicable, the applicant would also secure and submit copies of all required zoning variances, permits or approvals from other agencies. Once a final site plan has been submitted and approved, next steps include:

1. If necessary, the city engineer reviews and approves the grading, clearing, stormwater management, underground utilities, and site construction elements of the final site plan and related engineering drawings.
2. Upon engineering approval, the Building Official may issue required construction permits in accordance with City Codes and procedures.
3. If the applicant wishes to obtain a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy before all required site improvements have been completed, the applicant will need to make a formal request to the Planning Commission. The request must be made in sufficient time for the matter to be included on the Planning

Commission's next agenda. If granted, a bond or irrevocable bank letter of credit in the amount equal to the estimated cost of the uncompleted improvements be deposited with the City to ensure the timely completion of the required improvements.

Time limit of approval and work completion

The site plan or special use permit approval remains valid for 12 months from the date of its approval. If construction permits have not been pulled within the 12-month limit, the approval shall automatically become null and void and all rights under the site plan approval lapse. An extension of up to six months can be granted by the Planning Commission, if requested prior to expiration. An application to reactivate a previously approved, yet expired site plan may be made to the Planning Commission provided that the zoning requirements have not changed since the original site plan approval and the applicant agrees to ensure the site's compliance with the approved plan.

Once a building permit is obtained and work on the proposed development site has begun, the work must be diligently pursued otherwise the approval becomes null and void. A request to extend the time limit can be submitted to the Building Official and they can grant a 12 month extension for a good cause.

Variance Review Process

Use variances are not allowed in the City of Clawson. Dimensional variances and sign variances are allowed. Variance requests are subject to a specific set of standards identified in [Section 34-542\(3\)](#). Applications are available online, [here](#). All variance requests are considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Rezoning

The requirements and process for standard and conditional rezoning are identified in [Section 34-487](#). Property owners may initiate a rezoning process by submitting an application found [here](#). All proposed rezonings shall be referred to the Planning Commission for public hearing and recommendation prior to consideration by City Council.

Permits

For permits, applications, and fee schedules, please visit the Building & Planning [Documents & Permits](#).