



Michigan State University Extension
Land Use Series

How to end a planning and zoning program – repeal of the zoning ordinance and planning commission ordinance

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This publication is to review things to consider if a municipality (city, village, or township) or county is considering ending its planning¹ and zoning² program.

Ending planning and zoning might be done for a number of reasons. In Michigan having a planning commission is optional. Having zoning is also optional. Repeal of planning and zoning may be for a number of reasons:

- Need to transfer a municipal³ planning and zoning (or just one) program to a joint planning commission⁴
- Need to transfer the township planning and zoning to a county planning and zoning program
- Political desire to not have planning or zoning (so the community does not have zoning)
- Budget consideration that makes it necessary to cut planning and zoning
- A county that no longer wishes to have a county planning function, or county-wide zoning.

*“Thirty seven million acres is
all the Michigan we will ever have”*
William G. Milliken

¹ Done pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, MCL 125.3801 *et seq.*

² Done pursuant to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, MCL 125.3101 *et seq.*

³ Municipal means city, village, and township (not county).

⁴ Created pursuant to the Joint Municipal Planning Act (PA 226 of 2003, as amended) MCL 125.131 *et seq.*

This is a fact sheet developed by experts on the topic(s) covered within MSU Extension. Its intent and use is to assist Michigan communities making public policy decisions on these issues. This work refers to university-based peer reviewed research, when available and conclusive, and based on the parameters of the law as it relates to the topic(s) in Michigan. This document is written for use in Michigan and is based only on Michigan law and statute. One should not assume the concepts and rules for zoning or other regulation by Michigan municipalities and counties apply in other states. In most cases they do not. This is not original research or a study proposing new findings or conclusions.

The important consideration is that to end planning and zoning it is not as simple as just ending the activity. There are certain steps that need to be taken such as adoption of an ordinance to repeal the planning commission ordinance, or a similar action to repeal the zoning ordinance. Then there needs to be certain tasks the government administration (or elected body⁵) should decide needs to be assigned to another department to do, or the task needs to no longer be done at all.

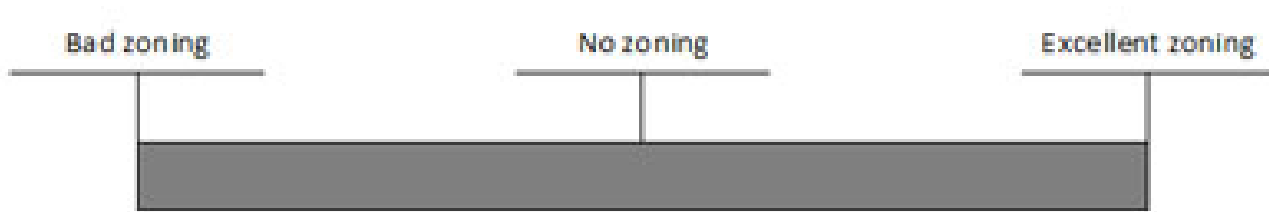
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Bad Zoning

Sometimes it may be better not to have zoning. Bad planning and zoning can do greater harm than good in a community, and is even worse than having no zoning at all. Everyone strives for the best possible planning and zoning because it can be a great benefit to a community. It is a continuum—bad zoning being the least optimal outcome, great zoning the most optimal, and no zoning somewhere in between.

⁵ In this document “legislative body” and “elected body” means Township board of Trustees, Village Council, City Council, or County Board of Commissioners.



There are many factors that can result in a community's successful planning and zoning program. It ranges from the purely technical process practices; study and intimate understanding of what policies will help or harm the long-term development of a community, and more.

A few examples of bad zoning would be having zoning without adequate funding to hire qualified zoning administrators, AICP planner, attorney; an out-of-date zoning ordinance or an ordinance not based on a plan; zoning and plan's simply copied from some other municipality; members of the planning commission or appeals board not getting formal training; using zoning decisions or enforcement as political or personal retribution; planning commission or ZAB members regularly showing misfeasance or malfeasance; It might be more useful to run down a list of strategies and practices that the people involved with planning and zoning should follow. If a community focuses on those things, then the difference between harmful and good planning and zoning is often directly related to the following factors:

- Amount of continuing education, training of appointed officials, employees, and contractors have had.
- Zoning that truly is based on the community's Master Plan, and an effort to keep it that way over time.
- Commitment to enforcement of various ordinances in a proper but strict matter.
- Commitment to professional administrative system where the community puts what it has learned through continuing education into day-to-day practice.
- Detailed record keeping.
- Recognition of, and in practice respecting and following the governmental checks and balance separation of powers: legislative, administrative, quasi-judicial.
- A budget and funding level that makes it possible to do the above.

MSU Extension has self-evaluation tools so that a community can use to conduct a performance audit of its planning and zoning program. These performance audits can be done "in-house" or can be done with the assistance of an MSU Extension Land Use professional. To find the Extension Land Use professional for your part of the state go to the Land Use website: lu.msue.msu.edu.

The MSU Extension self-help performance audit tools can be found at lu.msue.msu.edu.⁶

- E3051—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #1 "Basic Setup"
- E3052—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #2 "The Plan"
- E3053—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #3 "Planning Coordination"
- E3054—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #4 "The Zoning Ordinance"
- E3055—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #5 "Administrative Structure"
- E3056—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #6 "Special Land Use"
- E3057—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #7 "Planned Unit Development"

⁶ http://www.canr.msu.edu/planning/planning_and_zoning_resources/planning-zoning-a-syst

- E3058—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #8 “Site Plan Review”
- E3104—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #9 “Capital Improvement Programming”
- E3105—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #10 “Subdivision and Land Splitting Reviews”
- E3106—Planning and Zoning*A*Syst #11 “Capital Improvement Review”

These publications can also be found at this website: <http://lu.msue.msu.edu/pamphlets.htm#audit>

However, repealing the township zoning ordinance is not the only thing that needs to be done.

The elected officials also has to decide if it want to continue to have a planning commission (without zoning authority) or not. If they want to dissolve the planning commission then they also have to adopt an ordinance to repeal the Township Planning Commission Ordinance. A sample of this ordinance is found below.

However, repealing the township zoning ordinance is not the only thing that needs to be done

If the township wanted to keep its planning commission (without zoning powers) it could do nothing, or it could amend the Planning Commission Ordinance to strike the specific grant of zoning power – leaving the rest of the duties, if any, in place.

Who does planning and zoning?

There is not current data about the number of county planning commissions, or counties with zoning. The most current information available is from 2004 and found at http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/to_plan_or_not_to_plan_current_activity_within_michigans_local_governments

At that time about 1,226 municipalities and counties, out of 1,691 responding to the survey question have adopted a master plan (e.g., they have or had a planning commission. About 1,273 out of 1,695 responding to the survey question have zoning. The total number of municipal and county governments in Michigan is 1,858. About 61 counties had adopted a county master plan. (So the assumption might be made if the county has a master plan, because the only way to properly adopt a master plan is with an existing county planning commission, then at some point in 2004 or earlier that county had a county planning commission.) In 2003 there were 24 counties had county zoning in place.⁷

Sample Ordinance to repeal zoning

The following is offered as sample ordinance. It is intended as a starting point for a community to use when considering this issue.

This is a sample, meaning that it is not a definitive recommendation by the authors or MSU Extension. A sample is a starting point for discussion and development of an ordinance, ordinance amendment, or zoning ordinance amendment that is appropriate for a particular community. Conversely a model ordinance, or amendment, would be presented as the ideal or utopia intended as a recommended

⁷ MSU’s Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR); “To Plan or Not to Plan: Current Activity within Michigan’s Local Governments” Found at http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/to_plan_or_not_to_plan_current_activity_within_michigans_local_governments.

approach. This is not a model ordinance, or ordinance amendment. That means any numerical standard (dimensional standard) offered in the sample zoning amendment is just a starting point for discussion. Often there is already discussion about the standard in the commentary which is intended to provide a community with information to decide what the numerical standard should be for a particular community.

This document is written for use in Michigan and is based only on Michigan law and statute. One should not assume the concepts and rules for an ordinance or zoning by Michigan municipalities and counties apply in other states. In most cases they do not.

The process to repeal a zoning ordinance is done exactly the same as the process to adopt, or amend, a zoning ordinance.⁸

If zoning exists: If this is being done in a city, village, township, or county with its own existing zoning, then these provisions must be adopted pursuant to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. A step-by-step checklist of procedures to amend a zoning ordinance is available from Michigan State University Extension's *Land Use Series*: "Checklist # 4: For Adoption of a Zoning Ordinance Amendment (including some PUDs) in Michigan" is available from www.lu.msue.msu.edu.

The process to repeal a zoning ordinance is done exactly the same as the process to adopt, or amend, a zoning ordinance.

There are many different ways for a zoning ordinance to deal with the issues outlined here. The sample provided here is just one. It is written with the following assumptions: The municipality's attorney whom is experienced in municipal law (planning and zoning) will review any proposed amendments before they are adopted.

Following are the sample ordinance to repeal a zoning ordinance:

**AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL AN
ORDINANCE ENTITLED "[_Name of_] ZONING
ORDINANCE" WHICH WAS ADOPTED [date], AS AMENDED, AND
TO REPEAL ANY FORMER ZONING,**

[Choose one] **WITH THE INTENT THERE SHALL BE NO ZONING IN EFFECT AT ALL**

[or] **WITH THE INTENT TO BE SUBJECT TO COUNTY ZONING**

[or] **WITH THE INTENT TO TRANSFER ZONING TO THE ___ JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION.**

THE [_municipality/county_] OF [_Name county_], COUNTY, MICHIGAN, ORDAINS:

- A. That the [_Name of_] Zoning Ordinance of [date], as amended, is hereby repealed.
- B. That any previous zoning ordinance which may have been in effect is also repealed. The intent is to eliminate all zoning in the [_municipality/county name_], [chosed one] so there shall be no zoning in effect at all [OR]

⁸ See Land Use Series "Check List #2 For Adoption of a Zoning Ordinance in Michigan" at http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/check_list_2_for_adoption_of_a_zoning_ordinance_in_michigan and "Check List #4 For Adoption of a Zoning Ordinance Amendment (including some PUDs) in Michigan" at http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/check_list_4_for_adoption_of_a_zoning_ordinance_amendment_including_some_pu. Both can be found at http://www.canr.msu.edu/planning/zoning_ordinance_resources/zoning-administration-and-checklists.

the intent is to be subject to county zoning [or] with the intent to transfer zoning to the ___Joint Planning Commission.

C. **CONFLICTING ORDINANCES:** All other ordinances and parts of ordinances, or amendments thereto, in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

D. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** This Ordinance shall take effect on _____, upon publication in the [local newspaper's name].

Planning without a Planning Commission

A municipality or county does not have to have a county planning commission. It is optional. However an elected body cannot “decree the legislative body is the planning entity”. If there is no planning commission, then there is no planning done at all.

Anybody can make plans, so one might ask why we have to have a planning commission to plan for our local government activities. More than once Michigan State University Extension educators in land use hear questions like this. And the initial point is correct – anyone or any government can engage in planning for itself.

However, when it is government doing the planning, and depending on what is being planned or what the topics of the plans are, the requirement is that plans be done in conformance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA). The MPEA requires, among many other things, that a planning commission conduct planning.

So, when can government make plans that do not need to follow the MPEA, and when must procedures of adoption and contents of plans follow the MPEA? There is not a clear line which distinguishes the difference, so there will be grey areas. When in those areas of grey the prudent government will err on the side of doing the plan under the requirements of the MPEA. This is because the stakes are high, and the consequences can be very costly. Issues which can create trouble revolve around citizens’ various constitutional rights and protections.

The answer as to whether to follow the MPEA or not when planning comes down to what the plan is about. Planning without following the MPEA and without a planning commission maybe can be done if:

- The plan is 100 percent about what is owned by the local government (land, buildings) and does not include anyone else’s property.
- The plan is 100 percent about the activity of the local government and does not include activity, operations, and decisions of any entity or organization that is not under the direct control of whom is doing the planning.
- The plan is not part or the local government’s entire capital improvement program (CIP), since that is specifically covered in the MPEA.

This is because governments can create plans which may cover topics and things which have an impact on private property and activities, and other government’s property and activities. When government reaches into private property and activities, and other government’s property and activities that is when the MPEA must be followed. The MPEA includes many processes, notice requirements, hearings and more – all designed to make sure due process, private property rights and public

When government reaches into private property and activities, and other government’s property and activities that is when the MPEA must be followed.

participation are done. These things are in place as safeguards for people and other entities which may be subject to government's planning.

For example, if a local government elected body wishes to do some strategic planning about how it wants to fix up and remodel its town hall, that project can be done by the elected body because the topic is "internal." In this case, the local government does not need to follow the MPEA and having a planning commission. But if that plan includes adopting a new zoning regulation that restricts construction on neighboring land because the government may want to expand into that area – the plan now includes discussion about someone else's property. So now the strategic plan must be adopted using the MPEA and be done by a planning commission. If the strategic plan includes a goal to purchase adjacent property for expanding the hall, that would be a grey area. Government purchase of land is done under various statutes which include process and protections of another's property rights, but it also is now a plan that talks about more than just the government's land and activities.

Probably one of the most significant "planning" activities governments do that is "internal" is adopting the annual budget. The budget, by its very definition, is only about things that that government has direct control over (except in some cases those entities receiving grants of funds, or money spent on contracted services). The budget is a planning document that does not need to follow the MPEA – setting priorities, making decisions about how many are hired, what they are paid, what departments exist, at what level of funding and so on is internal.

So yes, government elected bodies, departments, appointed boards and commissions can make internal plans. It is when those plans go into areas of others' property, activity and CIP that the plan must be done by a planning commission in conformance with the MPEA.

Ending the Planning Commission

Simply eliminating funding for a county planning commission is not enough. If the intent is to no longer have a planning commission, then the elected officials must also do two things:

1. Repeal the ordinance which created the planning commission in the first place. (That means one will have to find that original ordinance, so it can be properly cited in the ordinance to repeal.
2. Take action to reassign certain duties and responsibilities to other offices/departments, and terminate other functions so that they are no longer done.

There are some functions, the government must stop doing if there is not a planning commission. These tasks can only be done if a planning commission exists. There are some functions state statute directs to specific other offices if there is not a planning commission.

There are other functions that the legislative body will need to take formal action on to (1) transfer the job to another, or (2) stop performing. Below is a list of what those things are.

In light of the "new economy" and what communities in Michigan should be doing to rebuild Michigan's economy, there should be serious consideration for continuing planning. This is especially true for a county. Elected officials should seriously weigh the pros and cons over having a planning commission and county planning commission. Competition in the global economy will require a regional level of economic development and placemaking strategies. By "regional" it means at a minimum an area the size of a county – thus the importance for county planning. "Placemaking" is a vital part of today's economic development and is very much a part of planning and zoning. County planning as well as municipal planning can be an important part of that "regional" approach. Areas of Michigan where county planning,

or county planning in partnership with multi-county regional planning agencies work, promote, and push new economy principles are the areas research shows will likely do better in the future. While county planning is not the only way to pursue this, it can be an effective and powerful tool toward that end. If a county planning commission is not already focusing its energies on these issues, and working to also have municipalities on a similar focus – maybe the action needed is to re-focus the county planning commission rather than eliminate it.

There are a number of MSU Extension Land Use Educators which have more detailed materials about the various functions of a county planning commission, the new economy, for communities wishing this type of assistance. Contact information for MSU Extension Land Use Educators can be found at http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/land_use_education_services

List of things planning should be doing:

Fundamental duty/purpose of a planning commission

- Studies of existing conditions, probable growth
 - Economic development
 - Social development
 - Physical development
- To create plans for development
- Cooperate with local, state, federal, governments; other agencies of its government
- If a county planning commission: Coordinating Agency for all planning in the county (intergovernmental coordination) (Now more important than ever with the New Economy and the need for local government to bring Michigan back to economic prosperity.)
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for capital expenditures of the government.
- Infrastructure Reviews of proposed physical improvements in the government.
- Subdivision (site-condo) reviews as well as development of a land division / subdivision / site-condo ordinance.
- Prepare Annual report
- Prepare and submit budget for the next year
- Prepare Annual work program
- Zoning
- Purchase of Development Rights program

Powers to perform its duties

- Hire a planning director and/or zoning administrator (if in budget, if delegated to the commission)
- Contract for services (if in budget, if delegated to the commission)
- Apply for, receive, grants (if okay with legislative body)
- Can act as zoning board (if duties were transferred (includes power to engage planning expert if approved by legislative body)
- Reviews adjacent municipality, county plans, and regional plans.
- If a county planning commission: Reviews city, village, township (within and adjacent); adjacent plans.
- If a county planning commission: Reviews township zoning.

Other possible functions of Planning Commission

- Office for zoning (and sometimes building)
- Can/may be assigned other duties
- Planning often becomes the “office of default.” (Building expansion, local census count, soil survey, soil erosion, recycling, etc.)
- Local governments try to consolidate boards and commissions: so planning may have more than one hat:
 - Parks and recreation
 - Economic Development (or at the least, coordinating with economic development efforts)
 - Grant writing
 - G.I.S.
 - Prepare environmental assessments
 - Census bureau liaison
 - If a county planning commission: remonumentation plan board, RC&D, soil erosion appeals, Emergency management coordinator, Address administration and E9-1-1 MSAG, solid waste planning agency.

Must stop doing if the planning function is eliminated

If a planning commission is eliminated, ONLY a planning commission can do these things (which means the county must stop doing them altogether):

- Preliminary subdivision (plat) review.
- Review of Infrastructure
- Adopt formal (legal) plans. (Zoning shall be based on a plan)
- Formal legal review land use issues from DNR, federal government.
- Coordination of plans
- Review of farmland preservation agreements
- Zoning ordinance (must repeal the zoning ordinance).
- Purchase of Development Rights Program (must repeal the PDR ordinance)
- Having a planning director or planning staff (debated)

Must assign to another entity

If there is not planning, these must be assigned to another office, if they are not already:

- Reviews plans from city, village, township (within and adjacent); adjacent counties (legislative body inherits)
- If a county planning commission: Review of township zoning (county board inherits, or county board acts to waive all future reviews (irreversible?))
- Capital Improvement Program
- If a county planning commission: remonumentation plan board, RC&D, soil erosion appeals, solid waste planning agency.

Assign to another entity or stop doing

If there is not planning, these may be dropped or assigned to another (if not done by another already):

- Recreation/parks planning/commission
- Economic Development
- Address administration and E9-1-1 MSAG
- Grant writing
- G.I.S.
- Prepare environmental assessments
- Census bureau liaison
- If a county planning commission: Emergency management coordinator

Sample Ordinance to Repeal a Planning Commission Ordinance

The following is offered as sample ordinance or ordinance amendment language. It is intended as a starting point for a community to use when considering this issue.

This is a sample, meaning that it is not a definitive recommendation by the authors or MSU Extension. A sample is a starting point for discussion and development of an ordinance, which is appropriate for a particular community. Conversely a model ordinance, or amendment, would be presented as the ideal or utopia intended as a recommended approach. This is not a model ordinance, or ordinance amendment. That means any numerical standard (dimensional standard) offered in the sample is just a starting point for discussion. Often there is already discussion about the standard in the commentary which is intended to provide a community with information to decide what the numerical standard should be for a particular community.

This document is written for use in Michigan and is based only on Michigan law and statute. One should not assume the concepts and rules for an ordinance or zoning by Michigan municipalities and counties apply in other states. In most cases they do not.

This document is written for use in Michigan and is based only on Michigan law and statute. One should not assume the concepts and rules for ordinance or other regulation by Michigan municipalities applies in other states. In most cases they do not.

The process to repeal the ordinance to create a planning commission is done exactly the same as the process to adopt, or amend, the police power ordinance.

If the ordinance is for a township: The ordinance needs to be adopted according to statute requirement for ordinance adoption by a township (MCL 41.181 *et seq.*).

If the ordinance is for a general law village: The ordinance needs to be adopted according to statute requirement for ordinance adoption by a general law village (MCL 67.1 *et seq.*).

If the ordinance is for a home rule village: The ordinance needs to be adopted according to both statute requirement for ordinance adoption by a home rule village (MCL 78.1 *et seq.*) and any further requirements found in the village charter.

The process to repeal the ordinance to create a planning commission is done exactly the same as the process to adopt, or amend, the police power ordinance.

If the ordinance is for a home rule city: The ordinance needs to be adopted according to statute requirement for ordinance adoption by a home rule city (MCL 117.3 *et seq.*) and any further requirements found in the city charter.

If the ordinance is for a county: The ordinance needs to be adopted according to statute requirement for ordinance adoption by a county (MCL 46.11(j) *et seq.*)⁹

There are many different ways for an ordinance to deal with the issues outlined here. The sample provided here is just one. It is written with the assumption municipality's attorney whom is experienced in municipal law will review any proposed ordinance or amendments before they are adopted.

Following are the sample ordinance with commentary.

**AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL AN
ORDINANCE ENTITLED "[_Name of_] PLANNING COMMISSION
ORDINANCE" WHICH WAS ADOPTED [date], AS AMENDED, AND
TO REPEAL ANY FORMER PLANNING COMMISSION ORDINANCE(S),
[Choose one] WITH THE INTENT THERE SHALL BE NO PLANNING COMMISSION AT ALL
[or] WITH THE INTENT TO BE SUBJECT TO COUNTY PLANNING
[or] WITH THE INTENT TO TRANSFER PLANNING AND ZONING TO THE ___ JOINT PLANNING
COMMISSION.**

THE [_municipality/county_] OF [_Name county_], COUNTY, MICHIGAN, ORDAINS:

- A. That the [_Name of_] Planning Commission Ordinance of [date], as amended, is hereby repealed.
- B. That any previous planning commission ordinance(s) which may have been in effect in is also repealed. The intent is to eliminate the planning commission and so there shall be [choose one] no zoning in effect at all [OR] the intent is to be subject to county zoning [OR] with the intent to transfer planning and zoning to the ___Joint Planning Commission.
- C. **CONFLICTING ORDINANCES:** All other ordinances and parts of ordinances, or amendments thereto, in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.
- D. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** This Ordinance shall take effect on _____, upon publication in the [local newspaper's name].

⁹ For many types of ordinances chances are the county does not have authority to adopt a police power ordinance. Enabling legislation for general ordinance powers by a county are very limited. See: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/county_government_powers_are_very_limited. For a county to be able to adopt an ordinance specific enabling legislation to do so must exist. A county planning commission can prepare sample or model ordinance language to present and/or recommend for adoption by each municipality in the county.

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Appendix A: Additional Resources

- Does your Planning Commission prepare its annual report? December 1, 2017 | Ryan Coffey | The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires Planning Commissions to prepare an annual report to their legislative body that is often overlooked or ignored, but is an important part of a properly functioning local government.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/does_your_planning_commission_prepare_its_annual_report
- Planning commissions and zoning board of appeals required to have three year staggered terms December 19, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Michigan statute requires three-year staggered terms of office. But many communities have gotten off that pattern. It is a problem that needs correcting.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_are_required_to_have_three
- Our Planning Commission has a vacancy, now what? May 27, 2016 | Bethany Prykucki | The correct way to address a vacancy of a position on the board is through the bylaws.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/our_planning_commission_has_a_vacancy_now_what
- Code of conduct for planning commissioners and zoning board of appeals members January 28, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Use of a code of conduct/oath of office is recommended for planning commissioner and zoning board of appeals members. It helps underscore a person's role, expected behavior, and differences between elected officials and members of administrative bodies.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/code_of_conduct_for_planning_commissioners_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_memb
- Function of a county planning commission and department | Kurt Schindler | In an era of increased need for coordination, cooperation, and regionalization between local governments, the role of county planning is much more important.
 - Part One: November 18, 2015, Public involvement is a major tool for three successful county planning programs.

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/function_of_a_county_planning_commission_and_department_part_1

- Part Two: November 19, 2015, Technical assistance, education and mapping are important tools for successful county planning.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/function_of_a_county_planning_commission_and_department_part_2
- How planning commissions are appointed can have an impact on success June 2, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Communities struggle with finding local volunteers for commissions. Empowering appointed officials, broadening their duties and formal representation can help.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_planning_commissions_are_appointed_can_have_an_impact_on_success
- A metropolitan county planning commission can, and should, apply to both urban and rural counties January 23, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Metropolitan county planning commissions are about more cooperation and intergovernmental coordination in planning. It is not something for just urban or metro-like counties.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_metropolitan_county_planning_commission_can_and_should_apply_to_urban_and_rural_counties
- Putting planning back into the planning commission October 8, 2014 | Glenn Pape | The primary role of the planning commission is implementing the master plan. There are several tools to make that job easier.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/putting_planning_back_into_the_planning_commission
- Your planning commission prepares an annual report, but what about a work program? December 7, 2012 | Brad Neumann | Since 2008, an annual report has been required of all planning commissions in Michigan, but it is the work program that sets the agenda for next year's planning commission initiatives in tandem with the annual budget request.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/your_planning_commission_prepares_an_annual_report_but_what_about_a_work_program
- What's in a planning commission's annual report? | November 9, 2012 | Brad Neumann
 - Part One: The annual report is a requirement of all local government planning commissions and is an opportunity to provide those in charge of the "purse strings" with a dashboard of planning commission achievements.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/your_planning_commission_prepares_an_annual_report_but_what_about_a_work_program
 - Part Two: The annual report is a requirement of all local government planning commissions and is an opportunity to provide those in charge of the "purse strings" with a dashboard of planning commission achievements.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/whats_in_a_planning_commissions_annual_report_part_2
- Does your personal opinion matter as a planning commissioner? October 1, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Developing Complete streets provide for a variety of users to coexist in the public right-of-way.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/does_your_personal_opinion_matter_as_a_planning_commissioner
- Ten traits of a successful county planning commission May 16, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | As planning commissions form to make changes in their counties, consider adopting these characteristics for greater success.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/ten_traits_of_a_successful_county_planning_commission
- Planning commissions and zoning board of appeals are required to have governing bylaws April 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | There is a minimum content for bylaws, but normally there is much more,

including specifying which parliamentary authority is used.

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_are_required_to_have_bylaw

- Planning commission is much more than zoning March 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Planning commissions have a large job that includes coordination, intergovernmental cooperation, master plan, zoning administration, infrastructure, land division, subdivision reviews and capital improvement planning all contribute to a master plan.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commission_is_much_more_than_zoning
- Regional planning:
 - Part 1: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/regional_planning_part_1
 - Regional planning: Part 2:
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/function_of_a_county_planning_commission_and_department_part_2