



# LATHRUP VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

Part of being a welcoming & business-friendly community is having a clear, understandable process. This guide outlines the development process and answers questions so business owners are comfortable setting up shop in Lathrup Village.

Community & Economic Development



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## Welcome to Lathrup Village!

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Starting a business and/or developing commercial property is never as easy or straightforward as we think it will be. Oftentimes, figuring out the city regulations, understanding the process, and getting the necessary approvals are viewed as some of the most daunting tasks... but they don't need to be.

The Lathrup Village Development Guide (LVDG) takes the confusion out of developing commercial property in the City of Lathrup Village. This document will provide an overview of the city's processes, general timelines, contact information, and other relevant information. Links are provided throughout the document for easy access to the most up-to-date forms, applications, and more. All of the linked documents may also be found on the city's website on the Community & Economic Development page at [www.lathrupvillage.org](http://www.lathrupvillage.org). Please keep in mind that the LVDG is not intended to include all the requirements of the city code. Applicants and their development professionals should review the specific ordinances and talk to city staff about their projects. We are here to help you on the path to success!

## Community Vision & Important Planning Documents

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The City of Lathrup Village is a small, bedroom community (1.5 square miles) that is surrounded by the City of Southfield. Bounded by 12 Mile (north) and Lincoln (south), Evergreen (west), and a quarter-mile east of Southfield Road, which serves as the city's primary corridor. The Lathrup Village Downtown Development Authority (LVDDA) boundaries encompass the commercial areas of 11 Mile, 12 Mile, & Southfield Roads.

### Lathrup Village Master Plan & Downtown Plan

The Master Plan is one of the primary tools used by the City of Lathrup Village. 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. Per the Planning Enabling Act, communities are required to review and update their master plans every five years. The city recently kicked-off the update process and will be working towards a Comprehensive Plan which includes the city-wide Master Plan, Downtown Plan, and Parks and Recreation Plan. Consolidating the plans into a single document will ensure continuity and

## Contact Information

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Below are the individuals and departments who will work with you to get your project underway and completed.

### **Community & Economic Development (CED)**

Susie Stec, Manager  
[sstec@lathrupvillage.org](mailto:sstec@lathrupvillage.org)  
248.557.2600 ext. 223

*Can answer questions about...*

- Development process
- Zoning Ordinance
- Site Plan Review & Variance requests
- Downtown Development Authority
- Business assistance & resources

### **Planning**

Jill Bahm, Planner  
[jbahm@giffelswebster.com](mailto:jbahm@giffelswebster.com)

*Can answer questions about...*

- Zoning Ordinance
- Site Plan Review

### **Building**

Kelda London, Government Operations  
[klondon@lathrupvillage.org](mailto:klondon@lathrupvillage.org)  
248.557.2600 ext. 237

*Can answer questions about...*

- Building permits
- Schedule inspections

Jim Wright, Building Official  
248.343.8627  
[jwright@mcka.com](mailto:jwright@mcka.com)

*Can answer questions about...*

- Building codes
- Building plan reviews
- Sign permits

### **Engineering**

Scott Ringler, Engineer  
[sringler@giffelswebster.com](mailto:sringler@giffelswebster.com)

*Can answer questions about...*

- Engineering site requirements

coordinated implementation strategies. The updated plan is expected to be completed in mid-2020. In the meantime, prospective developers should review the City’s current Master Plan to see how their proposed project aligns with the goals of the plan. The 2014 Lathrup Village Master Plan can be found [here](#). For projects in the Village Center, please review the [Downtown Master Plan](#).

### Southfield Road Preferred Alternative

The city’s main thoroughfare is Southfield Road, which is maintained by the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC). While Southfield Road is fantastic for motorists, it does not meet the needs of all users nor does it further the city’s walkability goals. To that end, the City of Lathrup Village has been working with RCOC and our neighboring communities of Beverly Hills and Southfield to develop the “Preferred Alternative Design” for the reconstruction of Southfield Road. The city is working collaboratively with our partners to finalize our application for this project. Developers are encouraged to review the [proposed design](#) and accompanying [Environmental Assessment memo](#).

### Lathrup Village Zoning Ordinance

The city’s Zoning Ordinance regulates land uses and development throughout the community. Follow the hyperlinks to



Figure 1: Lathrup Village Zoning Map

access the [Lathrup Village Zoning Ordinance](#) and [Zoning Map](#). For questions related to zoning, contact the Manager – Community & Economic Development at 248-557-2600 ext. 223 or [sstec@lathrupvillage.org](mailto:sstec@lathrupvillage.org). Planning and zoning applications (Site Plan Review Applications, Special Land Use Requests, Zoning Board of Appeals Applications, Rezoning Requests, etc.) can be found on the Planning & Zoning page.

### Village Center Design Guidelines

To assist business and property owners wishing to develop in the Village Center area, the LVDDA developed Design Guidelines to clearly illustrate the multitude of ways in which the design standards may be implemented. Here is a link to the [Village Center Design Guidelines](#).

### Sign Ordinance

The city allows for a variety of different signage types in each of the different zoning districts. All signs require a permit prior to installation. Sign regulations can be found in [Chapter 52 of the Code Of Ordinances](#).

### Development Review Process

As was stated earlier, the development process doesn’t need to be overly complicated or difficult, and Lathrup Village staff is available to walk you through the process. The following sections answer typical questions and outline the development review process, including estimated timelines, required applications and submittal materials, as well as a summary of the process following Planning Commission approval.

## Pre-Application Meeting

Anyone wishing to develop a commercial property is encouraged to meet with the city's building and planning staff prior to submitting an official application. 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. During this meeting staff will provide the prospective applicant with background information on the site, an overall opinion of the proposed idea, and an outline of the approval process and timeline. Contact the Manager – Community & Economic Development at 248-557-2600 ext. 223 or at [sstec@lathrupvillage.org](mailto:sstec@lathrupvillage.org) to schedule a free consultation.

## Site Plan Review Process Requirements & Applications

To initiate the site plan review process the following documents should be submitted to the Building Department. **Incomplete submissions will not be accepted.**

- Completed site plan review application, including site plan checklist
- Application fees
- First submission:
  - 1 set of signed, sealed & folded site plans
  - PDF of the plans
- Second/Revised submission:
  - 2 sets of signed, sealed & folded site plans
  - 11 ledger-sized plans
  - PDF of the plans

All plans must be submitted to the Building Department one month prior to the date of the Planning Commission meeting in order to be placed on the agenda. Consult [Article 6.0 of the Zoning Ordinance](#) to learn when a project requires site plan review. Some projects may qualify for administrative review.

## Site plans were submitted, now what?

After a complete application is submitted, the Community & Economic Development Department will distribute site plans to the following departments for review and comment: Planning, Engineering, and Building. Plans may be reviewed by other internal and external agencies, such as Road Commission of Oakland County (RCOC), as needed. The city's planning consultant will provide a review letter and applicants will have an opportunity to make revisions prior to being placed on the Planning Commission agenda.



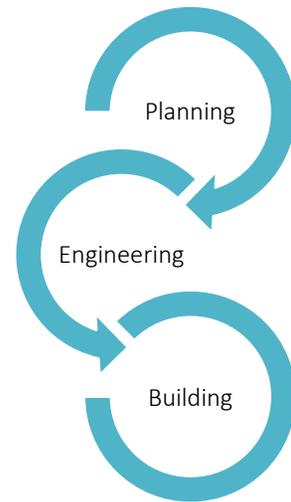
## Planning Commission Review and Action

The Planning Commission may approve, approve with conditions, or deny a site plan. They may also require modifications to the proposed site plan or additional information prior to moving on to the next phase of the development process. Once the Planning Commission has approved site plans, applicants may move on to the Engineering and Building Plan Review phase of the project.

## Engineering Review, Building Plan Review, & Permits

Applicants will know prior to being placed on the Planning Commission agenda if their project will require full Engineering Review (ER). Generally, the engineer reviews and approves the grading, clearing, stormwater management, and underground utilities. If ER is not required, applicants may move directly on to Building Plan Review and Permitting.

Building Plan Review is required for nearly all projects and includes electrical, plumbing, & mechanical systems. The Building Official reviews the building plans and distributes the plans to the relevant trades for their review. Once building plans are approved applicants may begin pulling the necessary permits. Upon completion of construction, as-built plans must be submitted prior to obtaining a certificate of occupancy.



To initiate the Engineering Review and Building Plan Review process the following documents should be submitted to the Building Department. **Incomplete submissions will not be accepted.**

- Completed Building Permit application
- Application fees
- 2 sets of signed, sealed & folded site plans
- PDF of the plans

## Other Types of Land Use Approvals

While the site plan review process is the most common type of land use approval required in Lathrup Village, some projects may require additional approvals. All of the approvals listed in the following section require public hearings and notification to property owners within 300' of the subject property. As such, applications for the land use approvals discussed below must be submitted at least one month in advance of the Planning Commission meeting. Additionally, please note that the Planning Commission is a recommending body for these projects, with final approvals granted by City Council. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Manager – Community & Economic Development at [sstec@lathrupvillage.org](mailto:sstec@lathrupvillage.org) for project specific requirements & approvals.

## Planned Unit Development (PUD)

This is a tool which allows for land use flexibility for proposed projects while still substantially adhering to the goals and objectives of the city's Master Plan. Applicants seeking to use a PUD for their proposed project must consult with city staff prior to submitting an application.

## Rezoning

The requirements and process for standard and conditional rezoning are identified in [Article 7.6 of the Zoning Ordinance](#). Property owners may initiate a rezoning process by submitting an application to the Community Development Department.

## Special Land Use

There are some permitted land uses that require an additional layer of review and approval before the project may proceed (i.e. gas stations, drive-thrus, day care facilities, etc.); these are called special land uses. Projects requiring special land use approval will need to obtain site plan approval concurrently.

## Variance Review Process

Lathrup Village allows for dimensional and use variances. Variance requests are subject to a specific set of standards which are identified in [Article 7.7 of the Zoning Ordinance](#). Applications are available online and must be submitted a minimum of one month in advance. All variance requests are considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

## Other types of licenses

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### Business License

All businesses must obtain a Business License prior to opening. Application is reviewed by the Community & Economic Development Department and Building Official will conduct an inspection to ensure zoning compliance. Business Licenses are valid for a year and must be renewed by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Renewals received after that date will be assessed a late fee. Home-based businesses are also required to obtain a Business License; however, there is no inspection required.

### Encroachment License

In some instances, commercial property/business owners cannot provide sufficient parking on-site. To alleviate these constraints, Lathrup Village has developed encroachment license standards to allow the use of alleyways and other public right-of-ways for parking. The city has also developed model construction standards for those that may wish to add parking in the side street rights-of-way.

## Boards & Commissions

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Designated City Boards and Commissions will review your proposed project. Their roles in the development process are described below, including meeting dates and times. Meetings take place at Lathrup Village City Hall in City Council Chambers, located at 27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, MI 48076, unless otherwise noted.

### *Planning Commission*

Considers site plans, special use permits, rezoning requests, and other land use applications. Creates and updates the Comprehensive Plan, and reviews Zoning Ordinance amendments.

3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm.

### *City Council*

Reviews rezoning requests and Zoning Ordinance and City Code amendments..

#### Study Sessions:

1st Monday of the month at 6:00pm.

#### Regular Meetings:

3rd Monday of the month at 7:00pm.

### *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.

3rd Monday of the month at 7:00pm.

### *Downtown Development Authority Board*

Manages ongoing maintenance, security and promotion of economic activity and continual operation of the downtown district.

2nd Friday of the month at 12 Noon

The Meeting Place (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### When do I need Site Plan Review?

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 land 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 land use permit will likely also be required, unless a current site plan is in effect. Please contact the Manager – Community & Economic Development at [sstec@lathrupvillage.org](mailto:sstec@lathrupvillage.org) for project specific requirements and approvals.

### How long will the Site Plan Review process take?

Typically, the entire planning approval process takes 45 to 60 days for a site plan review 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 resolve any required revisions identified in the initial plan review letter. Generally, the city strives to ensure projects are ready for a favorable recommendation prior to appearing before the Planning Commission.

Applicants are encouraged to schedule a pre-application meeting with city staff and consultants to identify any issues or areas of concern prior to finalizing their site plan review application.

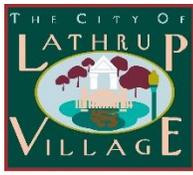
### Who will review my Site Plans?

All projects are reviewed by multiple departments (Planning, Engineering, and Building) at the outset to assist you in determining the project’s feasibility and to reduce costly surprises in the (re)development process. Some projects may also require review by the city attorney, fire marshal, and/or police.

### Business Resources & Available Incentives

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The city recognizes that developing a property may require some assistance, whether it be crafting a business plan, securing financing or tackling a brownfield project. This is one reason why the city strives to create and maintain strong relationships locally, regionally, and state-wide. For example, new and established businesses are often directed to our partners at the Oakland County One Stop Shop, where they can get one-on-one business counseling, market study information, traffic counts, business planning assistance, and much more. Additionally, as an associate-level community in the Main Street Oakland County program, the city has access to a vast array of resources & technical assistance. The city is also a certified Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and as such, projects in Lathrup Village are eligible for Community Revitalization Program (CRP) funds, as well as other state-funded programs. Finally, the LVDDA offers sign grant funds and other business assistance funds to eligible businesses.



## Fee Schedule

The city reviews, and updates as necessary, our fee schedule on an annual basis. Below is a snapshot of the Planning and Zoning Fees which went into effect on January 1, 2020. The full fee schedule may be found online.

<i>Planning Review Fees</i>	
<b>Application Type</b>	<b>New Fee</b>
Lot Split	\$400 + \$10/lot
Rezoning	\$895 plus \$15/acre over 10
Special Land Use Request	\$1,750
Multi-Family Site Plan Review	\$1,225 + \$1/unit
Commercial Site Plan Review	\$1,300
Engineering Plan Review	\$500
Planned Unit Development	\$1,000 plus \$100/acre or fraction thereof
Administrative Review	\$250
<i>Zoning Board of Review</i>	
Commercial (Dimensional)	\$500 for 1st variance; \$150/additional variance on the same site
Residential (Dimensional)	\$300 for 1st variance; \$100/additional variance on the same site.
Use Variance	\$850
Extra Pre-Application Meeting	\$300