WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING/WORKSHOP AGENDA

July 1, 2026 6:00 pm

Whitewater Township Hall 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, MI 49690

Phone: 231-267-5141 / Fax: 231-267-9020

Click this link to view the meeting live: https://www.youtube.com/@whitewatertownship/live

At this time, the PC invites everyone to silence their electronic devices

Whitewater Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to individuals with disabilities upon reasonable advance notice. Contact the Township Clerk at clerk@whitewatertownshipmi.gov at least 5 days in advance of the meeting.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Microphone check**
4. **Roll Call of PC Members**
5. **Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda**
6. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest pertinent to agenda items**
7. **Presentation of information on Article 6** – Andy Aamodt, Giffels-Webster: Corridor Overlay Planned Unit Development Zoning District with new overlay district named M-72 Corridor Overlay District
8. **Public Questions – In house: Any person shall be permitted to address a meeting of the PC. Public comments shall be carried out in accordance with the following rules and procedures.**
    a. Comments shall be directed to the PC with questions directed to the Chair.
    b. Any person wishing to address the PC shall speak from the lectern and state his/her name and address.
    c. No person shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same matter, excluding the time needed to answer a PC member's questions.
    d. Public comment shall be limited to 3 minutes per person.
    e. Questions for the presenter will be responded to once the question has been posed.
9. **Correspondence**
10. **Adjournment**

memorandum

DATE: June 23, 2026

TO: Whitewater Township Planning Commission

FROM: Andy Aamodt, Giffels Webster

SUBJECT: Bundle 1.E. COPUD Section Memo and Text Amendment

Introduction

Several needed updates to the Corridor Overlay Planned Unit Development (COPUD) section of the zoning ordinance have been identified through the zoning audit and conversations with staff. These include procedural improvements, development requirements, and alignment with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA). For example, parts of this section have been identified to be contradictory with the site plan and special land use review processes, as well as the Special Use Permits. Additionally, a review of the development standards such as density, uses, landscaping, building facades, and others have been called for.

M-72 is important both locally and regionally as a major access route to Traverse City and across (east-west) the Township. The COPUD currently applies to area 500 feet north and south of the centerline of M-72, from Cook Road westward to the west township line.

As this amendment has progressed, Planning Commission's intention has been to treat this as more of a true zoning overlay, not a PUD. As is the case for all new zoning requirements, it is important to remember that overlay requirements like this will only apply when triggered by certain site changes/ site development; they do not apply retroactively to existing properties in operation as they have been.

Amendment History

- **October 1, 2025** – The Planning Commission reviewed the existing language. It was noted that the Commission did not have any experience with the COPUD. Purposes of the COPUD that are provided in the language were rated, with the main purposes being to:
    - Provide applicants the greater flexibility of a PUD regulated via performance-based standards and cooperation in design (score: 4.0/5.0)
    - Preserve/enhance the visual character of the corridor for the economic benefit to local landowners and the region (score: 3.6/5.0)
    - Encourage the preservation of scenic vistas and viewsheds; Protection and enhancement of property values and encourage commercial/industrial development (score: 3.6/5.0)
- **November 24, 2025 –** The Planning Commission reviewed the drafted text. It was noted that the Commission did not have any experience with the current COPUD language. Because of this, and because lack of a distinct vision created by the Master Plan or other planning efforts, we decided to scale back and focus on simpler, tangible improvements. We made the following changes:

- Continue permitting the underlying district's permissible land uses.
- Delineate the geography of this overlay as the lots fronting M-72 from the western Township border to Cook Road, but excepting the V-1 zoned lots which will be under V-1 jurisdiction only.
- Utilize simple screening of waste receptacles, mechanical equipment, and parking lots.
- Ensure long facades are visually interesting with architectural features.
- Provide for access management standards, including pedestrian access and shared access drive allowances.
- Provide for landscape standards that are measurable/quantifiable, rather than encouraged or subjective. Foundation planting and frontage greenbelt standards are provided.
- Require any signage to be in the form of freestanding ground signs and/or wall signs.

- **February 4, 2026** – The Planning Commission suggested removing the frontage sidewalk requirement for now.
- **March 4, 2026** – The Planning Commission reminded us to delete mentions of the public frontage sidewalk as one reference to that remained. We have deleted that. We also unified the frontage greenbelt requirements so that they are now more similar to the general landscaping requirements, with the small extra requirement that shrubs/flowers/native grasses/sedges also need to be mixed in.
- **April 1, 2026** – The Planning Commission set the public hearing for this text amendment for this May meeting.
- **May 6 and June 3, 2026** – The public hearing for the text was held at the May meeting. After consideration of the fact that this amendment will inevitably require changes to the zoning map (rezonings), Planning Commission did not send this text amendment to the Township Board yet. Planning Commission paused this text amendment for the purpose of conducting community outreach to the four property owners currently zoned COPUD as well as all property owners within the proposed M-72 overlay. Only typos within the draft text have been fixed since the draft presented in May. Please see the map on the following page showing how these rezonings may conceptually look.

The public workshop on July 1st at 6:00 pm will cover this COPUD/M-72 Overlay topic.

Policy Impacts of Proposed M-72 Overlay

Please see the attached comparison chart which shows the existing COPUD language versus the proposed M-72 Overlay language. We would like Planning Commission to consider a few important questions at this July meeting, including:

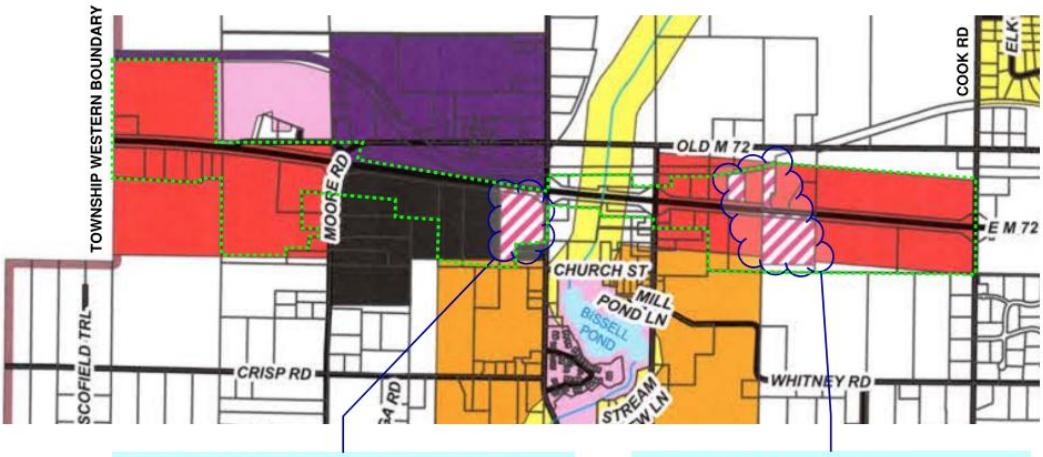
- **Proposed Section 6.03.** We would like to ask Planning Commission if they are favorable to language that instead states "within this Corridor Overlay, only development projects requiring site plan review shall employ the applicable provisions of this article described in sections 6.05 through 6.10 below." This way, changes of use or small expansions (1,000 sq. ft. or 10 percent of the building, whichever is less) that do not require site plan review will not have these overlay requirements applied.

- **Proposed New Subsection.** While our current draft does not have outdoor display limits, upon discussing with the Township staff, we recommend placing the provisions of Section 6.08 back into the draft amendment to cap outdoor display of vehicles, equipment, boats, etc. at four (4) vehicles. Then, all other vehicles for sale would need to be stored in a building or in a screened area approved by Planning Commission.

Next Steps

If Planning Commission desires, a public hearing could be set for the text amendment and the rezonings at an upcoming meeting.

Supplemental Documentation
Proposed Zoning Map Amendment (Rezoning)



Existing COPUD-zoned property at M-72 and Williamsburg Rd to be rezoned to N-1.

Existing COPUD-zoned properties on M-72 to be rezoned to C-1.

Legend: Existing Zoning Districts

- R-1 Residential
- R-2 Residential
- R-3 Residential
- RC-1 Recreational
- A-1 Agricultural
- C-1 Commercial
- N-1 Industrial
- V-1 Village
- CO-PUD Corridor Overlay PUD
- PUD Planned Unit Development
- MHP Manufactured Home Park
- Parcels (2024)

Legend: Proposed Amendment

Proposed new M-72 Corridor Overlay

Please note that this boundary is approximate for the purposes of this map visual. The proposed zoning text amendment states the following: "The M-72 Corridor Overlay zoning district shall apply to all lots fronting M-72 from the Township's western boundary to Cook Road, excepting lots zoned V-1 which shall remain V-1 without this overlay applied."

Proposed Text Amendment

Due to the extent of amendments to this Article, we are proposing new language altogether. This will mean the existing Article 6 will be repealed in its entirety and replaced with this Article.

ARTICLE 2 – DEFINITIONS

[Delete "Corridor Overlay Planned Unit Development" definition]

2.01 DEFINITIONS

~~CORRIDOR OVERLAY PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (COPUD): A corridor overlay zone which employs the methods and techniques of a planned unit development~~

ARTICLE 3 – ZONING MAP AND DISTRICTS

[Delete reference to "COPUD Corridor Overlay PUD" and amend the zoning map to replace the four COPUD zoned properties to N-1 and C-1 as applicable.]

3.01 ZONING DISTRICTS ESTABLISHED

For the purpose of this Ordinance, Whitewater Township is hereby divided into the following zoning districts, which shall be known by the following respective symbols and names, and shall have boundaries as delineated on the Official Zoning Map.

R-1 Residential
R-2 Residential
R-3 Residential
RC-1 Recreational
A-1 Agricultural
C-1 Commercial
N-1 Industrial
V–1 Village
~~COPUD Corridor Overlay PUD~~
PUD Planned Unit Development
MHP Manufactured Home Park

ARTICLE 6 – M-72 CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

[Repeal and replace entire Article 6 with new Article 6.]

6.01 PURPOSE AND INTENT

The M-72 Corridor Overlay ("Corridor Overlay") district is herby established consistent with the goals and objectives of the Whitewater Township Master Plan and pursuant to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act.

A. The intent of the M-72 Corridor Overlay District is to enhance the economic climate of the M-72 corridor while preserving the visual character of the corridor, including scenic vistas and viewsheds. Further, it is intended that the district provide for various types of land uses planned in a manner which shall encourage the use of land in accordance with its character and adaptability; conserve natural resources and energy, encourage innovation in land use planning, provide enhanced housing, employment, shopping, traffic circulation, and recreational opportunities for the people of the township; and bring about a greater compatibility of design and use.

B. The purpose of the M-72 Corridor Overlay District shall be to encourage development and redevelopment of property in accordance with the township master plan and in a manner that will promote the image of the M-72 corridor as a high-quality corridor and an attractive investment environment; allow mixed-use development; promote development that is compatible with the character of the township; encourage the redevelopment and reuse of certain properties which are no longer capable of serving their intended purpose; ensure safe and complementary vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns; and, control vehicular access to M-72.

C. The provisions of this overlay district are specifically intended to establish the M-72 Corridor as an area which:

   1) Promotes the goals of the master plan

   2) Encourages economy and efficiency in the use of land, natural resources, energy and the provision of public services and utilities, thereby encouraging a compatible mixture of uses in close proximity to each other

   3) Enhances the visual appearance of the corridor by preserving scenic vistas and viewsheds and coordinating building design, site arrangement and landscaping, signage, lighting and other elements

   4) Encourages redevelopment of property by removing or making material modifications to the existing structures, discontinuing the existing nonconforming use on the property, and establishing a new use consistent with the intent and provisions of this section

   5) Manages access to existing properties and future development while simultaneously preserving and improving the flow of traffic on the surrounding road system in terms of safety, capacity needs, and speed.

6.02 DELINEATION OF THE M-72 CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

The M-72 Corridor Overlay zoning district shall apply to all lots fronting M-72 from the Township's western boundary to Cook Road, excepting lots zoned V-1 which shall remain V-1 without this overlay applied. Please reference the zoning map for the M-72 Corridor Overlay's geography.

6.03 APPLICABILITY OF THE M-72 CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

Within this Corridor Overlay, all development projects, including both new uses and structures as well as newly installed or renovated structures and/or site features, must employ the applicable provisions of this article described in sections 6.05 through 6.10 below.

6.04 PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL:

A. Site plan review. For those uses that are permitted principal uses in the underlying zoning districts, the site plan review procedures found in Article 12 must be met and all required materials for site plan review submitted.

B. Special land use review. For those uses that are noted as special land uses in the underlying zoning districts, the special land use procedures found in Article 13 must be met and all required materials for special land use review submitted.

6.05 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A. The land uses permitted in the Corridor Overlay shall comply with the uses permitted in the underling zoning district.

B. All development projects shall follow the regulations in this Zoning Ordinance applicable to lot size, lot width, lot coverage, setback, parking and loading, and general provisions. However, if any overlay requirements of this Article conflict with other regulations of this Zoning Ordinance, the requirements of this Article shall apply.

6.06 SCREENING

A. Waste management. Solid waste collection areas, including recycling and composting if applicable, shall be placed in a side or rear yard and shall be screened with a masonry enclosure with a solid wood gate. The masonry enclosure shall be a minimum of six feet in height, or a height required to fully screen the receptacles. Any receptacles accessed by a trash hauler shall be placed on a concrete pad.

B. Screening of mechanical equipment. Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware on the roof, ground, or elevations of a structure shall, whenever possible, be located so as not to be visible from any public ways or adjacent residential areas. Where such limitation on location is not possible, the facilities shall be screened from public view with materials harmonious with the building.

C. Parking lots shall be screened from public right-of-way view by one of the following methods:

   1) Three (3) to four (4) foot high screen wall constructed of masonry or stone.

   2) A continuous evergreen hedge of three (3) to four (4) foot high.

   3) A continuous three-and-one-half (3 ½) to four (4) feet high berm. Such berm shall contain varying landscape plantings, including one tree, or an intentional landscape bed containing a cluster of hardy perennial shrubs, for every fifty (50) feet of linear parking lot frontage.

6.07 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW AND STANDARDS

A. Natural wood siding, log or quarter log siding, brick, stone, or other materials of similar texture and appearance are considered appropriate to the township character. Reflective surfaces are not acceptable. Metal or plastic surface materials which are visually similar in color and texture to natural materials may be considered.

B. Colors of paints, stains, and other finishes or materials shall be nature-blending in colors natural to the predominant hues of spring, summer and fall, with generally no more than three colors per building. Semi-transparent stains are recommended for application on natural wood finishes.

C. Facades of over one hundred (100) feet in length shall be broken up with varying building lines, windows, and architectural accents.

6.08 ACCESS MANAGEMENT

A. Site access and circulation shall be designed to promote vehicular and pedestrian safety. Site layout shall minimize curb cuts and reduce the potential for congestion and conflict between travel modes.

B. A maximum of one vehicular approach and driveway is permitted per lot. However, lots containing greater than 500 feet of frontage may contain two vehicular approaches so long as no approach is within 100 feet of another approach on the same lot or adjoining lots.

C. Shared access encouraged. A vehicular approach and driveway is not required if shared access is provided to- and from an abutting site and complying with the following requirements:

1) The shared access drive meets the requirements for maneuvering lane width in Article 10. The shared access drive may be in the form of a parking lot maneuvering lane/aisle, but shall comply with the provisions of this Section 6.08.

2) Legal agreement to utilize the shared access drive is granted between properties, and the Township is provided a copy of such agreement or easement as part of the development of the shared access drive.

3) Emergency access is approved by the Fire Department.

6.09 LANDSCAPING STANDARDS

A. Landscaping objectives: The information required for Site Plan Review shall include a detailed and comprehensive Landscape Plan for the entire project which achieves the following objectives:

1) Addresses the functional aspects of landscaping, such as drainage, erosion prevention, wind barriers, provision of shade, sound absorption, dust abatement, and reduction of glare.

2) Enhances architectural features, strengthens vistas and important axis and sight lines.

3) Achieves unity of design by repeating certain plant varieties and other materials and by correlation with adjacent developments.

4) Enhances parking areas and related vehicular and pedestrian trafficways with landscaped areas, including trees and tree groupings.

5) Protects plants from injury by pedestrians or motor traffic with appropriate curbs, tree guards, or other devices.

6) Controls run-off of fertilizers and pesticides.

7) Minimizes watering and maintenance requirements.

8) Avoids monotony by offering visual variety to structural masses and helps the man-made structures achieve harmonious appearance with the retained natural trees, vegetation and features and with the setting as a whole.

B. Standards

1) Foundation landscaping shall be planted along the front façade of buildings. Such foundation landscaping shall take up no less than 50% of the linear frontage of the façade, and shall have a minimum planting bed width of four feet as measured from the front façade outward. The foundation landscaping contain a variety of perennial shrubs, perennial flowers and/or annual flowers, and flowering or ornamental trees when feasible.

2) A frontage greenbelt shall be provided in the front yard abutting the front lot line (street right-of-way line) and shall comply with the following standards:

a. The frontage greenbelt shall measure at least ten (10) feet in width, measured from the front lot line (street right-of-way line). If utility easements prevent the greenbelt placement at the front lot line, then such greenbelt shall be set back outside of such utility easement(s). If demonstrated that a greenbelt cannot be installed at either of the preceding areas, the Planning Commission may waive this requirement with the finding that sufficient front yard landscaping is provided where feasible in a front yard area, or in the form of larger parking lot islands if a parking lot occupies the front yard

b. One deciduous canopy tree shall be planted for every forty (40) linear feet or fraction of frontage abutting a public thoroughfare. Remaining greenbelt areas shall be planted with lawn, and a variety of native grasses/sedges or flower/shrub beds shall be included where feasible.

6.10 SIGNAGE

A. Signage in the Corridor Overlay shall be limited to the following sign types.

1) Freestanding ground-type signs where the entire bottom of the sign is in contact with a base structure or the ground. Such freestanding sign area shall not exceed 100 square feet and 10 feet in total height. If separate from the sign face, the base shall be excluded from the sign area calculation, so long as it does not extend more than two feet wider than the sign face and the overall sign structure remains less than 10 feet in total height.

2) Wall signs. Such wall sign shall be located on the front façade of the building, and its area shall not exceed 20% of total façade area or 100 square feet, whichever is less.

B. A maximum of one freestanding sign and one wall sign is permitted per lot. A multi-tenant or multi-suite building may contain separate sign faces, so long as the total area and height comply with the maximums provided in A.1 and A.2 above.

Whitewater Township Zoning Rewrite

COPUD – M-72 Overlay Amendment June 15, 2026

The chart below compares the current COPUD article of the zoning ordinance (Article 6) to the proposed ordinance amendment to Article 6 (M-72 Overlay). Please visit www.whitewatertownshipmi.gov/planning-commission to view the existing zoning ordinance and the proposed M-72 Overlay amendment in full.

Current Ordinance: COPUD	Comparison	Proposed Amendment: M-72 Overlay
Section 6.02 All land adjoining M-72 from Cook Road westward to the west township line and lying 500 feet north and 500 feet south of the centerline of the M-72 right-of-way.	**Geographical Boundary**	*Proposed Section 6.02* All lots fronting M-72 from the Township's western boundary to Cook Road, excepting lots zoned V-1 which shall remain V-1 without this overlay applied.
Section 6.03 All development projects containing principal structures of at least 4,000 sq. ft.	**Applicability**	*Proposed Section 6.03* All development projects, including both new uses and new structures as well as renovated/expanded structures and/or renovated/expanded site features.
Section 6.12 Generally follows the planned unit development (PUD) process, including: • Requires a rezoning. • Requires a Planning Commission public hearing, including notice to the newspaper and all properties within 300 feet. • Requires Planning Commission site plan review and Township Board final approval. • A community impact statement is required for properties 10 acres or greater.	**Development Process**	*Proposed Section 6.04* If a permitted use, then the development goes through site plan review by the Planning Commission, subject to Article 12. If a special land use, the development goes through special land use review by the Planning Commission, subject to Article 13 (which requires site plan review as well).
Section 6.04 Must follow underlying zoning district's requirements.	**Lot Area, Lot Width, and Lot Coverage**	*Proposed Section 6.05* Must follow underlying zoning district's requirements.
Section 6.05 • Front: 75 feet minimum • Side: 25 feet minimum • Rear: 30 feet minimum • Maximum Frontage Buildout (percentage of lot width allowed to be occupied by buildings): 60%	**Building Setbacks and Frontage Buildout**	*Proposed Section 6.05* Must follow underlying zoning district's requirements.
Section 6.06 Parking lots must be screened from public view from roads.	**Parking**	*Proposed Section 6.06* Parking lots must be screened from public view from roads.
Section 6.08 Waste collection areas are required to be screened from public view.	**Waste Management**	*Proposed Section 6.06* Waste collection areas are required to be screened from public view by six foot high masonry enclosure, and be located on a concrete pad if accessed by trash hauler.

(Continued on next page)

Current Ordinance: COPUD	Comparison	Proposed Amendment: M-72 Overlay
Section 6.08 • Limits buildings to maximum 300 feet in width (dimension parallel to roadway) • Pitched roofs shall have a minimum slope of 4/12. • Building materials are required to be wood siding, log siding, brick, stone, or similar materials. Use of metals or other materials are discretionary, only if approved by the Planning Commission.	**Architectural Design Standards**	*Proposed Section 6.07* • No maximum size requirement, however a requirement that facades of over 100 feet in length shall be broken up by varying building lines, windows, and architectural accents. • No roof shape requirement. • Building materials are required to be wood siding, log siding, brick, stone, or similar materials. Use of metals or other materials are discretionary, only if approved by the Planning Commission.
Section 6.08 Outdoor display of vehicles, equipment, boats, etc. for sale shall be limited to four (4) vehicles, except for those stored away from public view in a building or area Planning Commission approves.	**Outdoor Display**	No outdoor display limits in the proposed Article 6
Section 6.08 Required to provide streetscape improvements, decorative light fixtures, fountains, sculpture, benches and tables, planters, retaining walls, pedestrian and bicycle paths, bicycle parking structures, trash receptacles and enclosures, vendor areas, bollards and fences.	**Streetscape Improvements**	No streetscape improvement requirements in the proposed Article 6.
Section 6.08 Generally refers to the sign ordinance (Article 14), however leaves discretion to the Planning Commission to approve/deny signage.	**Signage**	*Proposed Section 6.10* Signage shall be limited to freestanding ground type (aka “monument sign”) and wall signs.
Section 6.09 Landscape standards are discretionary, left to the Planning Commission to approve/deny.	**Landscaping**	*Proposed Section 6.09* • Foundation landscaping for the building is required to take up at least 50% of the linear frontage of the building. • Frontage greenbelt will be required in the front yard, with at least one canopy tree per every 40 feet of frontage.
No existing requirements.	**Access Management**	*Proposed Section 6.08* • One vehicle driveway approach per lot, however an extra one may be provided for lots containing greater than 500 feet of frontage. • Vehicle driveway approach not required if property gets access through a shared access drive.