

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN, CITY OF BELLEVILLE, & SUMPTER TOWNSHIP
JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA
Wednesday, July 29, 2026 – 5:30 PM
Belleville City Hall
330 Charles Street, Belleville, MI 48111**

CALL TO ORDER:

ROLL CALL:

ITEM #1: CITY OF BELLEVILLE
ITEM #2: CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN
ITEM #3: SUMPTER TOWNSHIP

APPOINTMENT OF A CHAIRPERSON:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

PUBLIC COMMENT

GENERAL DISCUSSION & UPDATES:

ITEM # 1: GENERAL UPDATES & DISCUSSION FOR EACH COMMUNITY

ADJOURNMENT:

Notice of Special Meeting Planning Commission

**The Van Buren Township Planning Commission invites the
Planning Commissions of the City of Belleville and
Sumpter Township to discuss planning topics of interest
and future planning coordination.**

**Wednesday, July 29, 2025 5:30 p.m.
Belleville City Hall
330 Charles St.
Belleville, MI 48111**

Posted: July 22, 2026.

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN, CITY OF BELLEVILLE & SUMPTER TOWNSHIP
JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
January 29, 2026
MINUTES**

Director Akers called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

City of Belleville Planning Commission:

Present: Jim Courage, Julie Kissel, John Juriga, Mark Kowalski and Gerald Keeder III.

Elected Officials: None.

Staff: Steve Jones and Colleen Wynne.

Van Buren Township Planning Commission:

Present: Peter Creal, Jackson Pahle and Brian Cullin.

Elected Officials: Kevin Martin.

Staff: Director Akers, Kendyl McWilliams, Merrie Coburn, Elana Manalp and Secretary Harman.

Sumpter Township Planning Commission:

Present: Matthew Oddy, Richard Pokerwinski, Vincent Warren and Nicole Van Assche.

Elected Officials: None.

Staff: None.

APPOINTMENT OF A CHAIRPERSON:

Director Akers asked the Commissioners to nominate a chairperson for the meeting.

Motion Creal, Pokerwinski second to nominate Commissioner Brian Cullin as Chairperson. Commissioner Cullin accepted. Motion Carried.

Chairperson Cullin welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion Oddy, Van Assche second to approve the agenda of January 29, 2026 as presented.

Motion Carried.

Planning Commission members did round table introductions.

GENERAL DISCUSSION & UPDATES:

Resident inquired about the impact of the new data center on our community in regard to energy, water and taxes. Director Akers provided a brief overview of the project and informed there is a lot of information available on the Township website. The project is being developed by a company named Pannatoni, they are an international developer and they do have a specific end user for the project. The data center is projected for 1 gigabyte electricity usage, there will be 3 data center buildings and an approximately 30,000 square foot office building, the data center buildings range in size at approximately 240,000, 400,000 and 80,000 square feet and are spread across the site. The network building is about 10,000-20,000 square feet. Resident inquired if

this is already approved and what is the approval process. Director Akers informed the application will be going before the Planning Commission at the 2-11-26 meeting for preliminary site plan approval. At the meeting there will be a full presentation by the applicant, along with DTE, Township consultants and staff reviews. Resident inquired if anyone has any knowledge of the impact of water, energy and blackouts? Resident heard the amount of energy created for the 1 gigabyte facility is enough to power 1 million family homes. Director Akers informed there have been a lot of issues with data centers and news stories in other parts of the country, as part of the review process staff looked at a lot of those issues. The site does use a lot of water, but state law requires that they purchase it rather than taking water from the ground like other data centers do. They will have a dedicated line that ties them directly into GLWA distribution. The amount of water is not going to impact the ability to provide water to the residents or effect water pressure. There is no direct discharge into any of the watersheds or the ground, all of the processed water will go into the sanitary sewer system and off to a wastewater treatment center in Brownstown. Resident commented there is going to be a lot of noise from generators and pollution. Director Akers informed the site does have backup generators, the primary power generation from the site is going to come from a substation connected with a direct feed to the ITC corridor. They do have backup diesel generators on the site, but they are solely intended as a backup purpose. The generators do have testing cycles once per month where they test 2 generators at a time. Resident inquired it is already zoned for that area? Director Akers informed yes. Director Akers guided the resident with Township website where there is more information available and a number of questions and answers in the FAQ set up for the data center. Resident is concerned once this goes up there is no recourse. Director Akers informed they have to meet our ordinance standards.

ITEM #1: GENERAL UPDATES & DISCUSSION FOR EACH COMMUNITY

CITY OF BELLEVILLE UPDATES:

Julie Kissel informed the City of Belleville Master Plan is currently in its 63-day review period and hard copies were available for each community to review. The review period will run until their March Planning Commission meeting, where it will come before the Commission for a public hearing and then on to the Council for final approval. Belleville has a new DPW Director, Nathan Johnson. Steve Jones informed there are seven (7) open projects. Other than the City Hall project, Belleville is working on a bank stabilization project in which they received a \$750,000 transportation grant to improve the bank at Horizon Park, the bank will be two tiered instead of the current sloped bank, it will have two (2) retaining walls with plantings, the lakeside will look better and it will reduce soil erosion. They are currently in the process of replacing the water main on Liberty Street, it should be finished around March and then the road will be milled and capped. The road was part of a 2-step project, last year they milled and capped High Street. The same contractor is going to resurface the intersection as part of the Denton Road bridge project so when it opens, they will not have to shut down the intersection for repairs. The paving projects will take place in early spring. Belleville also is working on a catch basin project in which they have identified 60-70 catch basins that need to be addressed. In conjunction with Belleville High School (BHS) New Tech, Belleville is looking to have cemetery GIS mapping done this summer, previously they have had cooperation with Eastern Michigan University (EMU). With the help of high school students over the summer, they identified pieces of water mains, hydrants, catch

basins and identified and marked in GIS all of the street lights. The new DPW Director Nathan Johnson and the instructor at the high school are really excited about doing the cemetery project. They plan not only to locate the graves but to also take photos of them and make a compilation where you can search online for your loved ones and see what their headstones look like and have a search directory. The students are very excited about the project. The move to the new City Hall on Charles Street is 4-5 weeks away and once they have moved in the old building will be put up for sale. Julie Kissel would like to volunteer the new City Council Chamber space for the next tri-community meeting and she will invite everyone to the open house.

Commissioner inquired if there is anything new with the drug store or hardware store? Steve Jones informed the property owner is holding onto the drug store as an investment. The property owner doesn't really want to sell as they are still getting paid. In regard to the hardware store, Belleville has a newly formed subcommittee that has some ideas, the business incubator is still one of them. There is an idea to put in a food truck where the truck rental space was previously located and inside the building to have rental spaces available for businesses to incubate to try to move them up to a storefront. Also, possibly having a coworking space that has tables and chairs where meetings could be held.

VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATES:

Merrie Coburn of the Van Buren Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) provided an update. In the previous meeting they were working on preparing the easements and rights-of-way for the Belleville Road construction between Ecorse and Tyler Road. The road is currently a 2-lane and is being expanded to 3-lanes with one being a dedicated turn lane. Part of the project is the replacement of the water main on the east side of Belleville Road, which will be installed on the west side, there will never be disruption of water service during the installation. There will be three levels of testing to make sure that there is no debris or sediment in the lines, as they are being moved over to the new lines, residents and businesses will always have access to water. As part of the project, the intersection is being realigned and the left turn lanes will have a dedicated turn signal. The Township owns 181 acres at the northwest corner of the intersection and are donating a portion of the property for the intersection to be realigned. The sidewalk on the west side will be continued all the way down to Ecorse Road and on the east side there will be a 10-foot pathway from Tyler Road to Ecorse Road. The traffic pattern during construction will always be dedicated south, the only one that will have access to the north is the Fire Station. The DDA will provide additional signage if needed during the break-in period of the revised traffic flow for construction. There have been significant delays with the federal government and environmental permitting and with the endangered species of bats that live in the area there is only a small construction window in the winter to do vegetation or tree removal. The project will most likely not start until later in 2026, possibly in the winter. There will be open houses to talk about the traffic detour routes.

The Tyler Road pathways have received the section 106 permitting approval, state historic preservation, but the DDA is still waiting on environmental permitting. Also, due to the endangered species, the project may not be able to start soon due to the large amount of vegetation removal. The pathway is from Belleville Road to Morton Taylor Road on the south side of Tyler Road and is a 10-foot pathway. There will be pockets of areas with trash cans and

tire changing stations. Last year the DDA did a Safe Streets for All study for the entire Township to target areas that have the most severe major fatality injuries, to strategize on how to make them priorities for funding from outside agencies with Wayne County and MDOT in order to make corrections. As part of that, they looked at the Belleville Road Corridor to see where the areas are that they need to look at to mitigate. The first project will start in 2026, through a Safe Streets Now TAP grant for \$150,000, this project will update the pedestrian crosswalks. The pedestrian crosswalks will now have a number countdown out loud. The Township is also working on the 5 different tasks for the 181-acres that the Township owns on the northwest corner of Belleville Road and Tyler Road. They have done community engagement and market analysis to see what is feasible, what the market calls for and what the community would like to see. They are also doing environmental due diligence looking at where there are areas that will prohibit development. They will have conceptual designs that will be phased since it is a large piece of property. They will market the information as part of the RFP that is put together for developers and will have everything put together into a report.

In early 2025, it was discussed how to make better connectivity between all three communities. There are two opportunities right now, the Safe Routes to School mini grant that is due March 6th and the SEMCOG planning assistance grant that is due the middle of May. Each grant creates a plan in order to put something in place that would be phased for us to implement applying for funding for the sidewalk gaps. The schools would need to be included to help with the bus routes and where the sidewalk gaps are for the kids who are living near schools but don't have safe streets. The DDA has had several conversations with New Tech at the high school that is helping Belleville with GIS, they are very engaged with the community and incorporating them to assist with surveys of the schools, the students and where they see the need is. The DDA is exploring this right now to see if the coordination with New Tech fits into their schedule or if they need to look at it for next year. The DDA is drafting a business retention and attraction strategy, something that will comply with PA57 law that DDA's have to follow. The strategy looks at ways to keep businesses or attract new businesses, finding struggles, how to find tenants to occupy and how to work with property owners.

Director Akers started with provided updates on infrastructure. The Denton Road Bridge project is still on track for June and the colors have been identified for the stain on the block. The project will be ready to start back up in the spring. In addition to the Belleville Road project, Van Buren Township is partnering with Wayne County to pave Morton Taylor Road between Tyler and Ecorse Roads. That will be started late spring, early summer.

Director Akers informed Van Buren has been partner with Belleville over the past 2-3 months to provide building department services and inspection services, it has been going really well. Director Akers provided updates on the following residential development projects.

- Clover Communities, the senior residential high-rise on Belleville Road has received their temporary certificate of occupancy and people are moving in.
- Brookwood senior housing located on the north side of Tyler Road will have 124 single-story attached residential units with garages is a 55 and older community. Brookwood is getting ready to start building in the fall and the units will be available for rent.

- There has been a lot of interest on residential properties in some developments, they haven't received any formal applications yet. Pulte Homes was looking at building at the northwest corner of Ecorse and Tyler Roads. They decided not to move forward with their project they found some wetlands on the site.
- Van Buren Township received a grant from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to look at incorporating missing middle housing to portions of the zoning ordinance and hired the planning consultant McKenna Associates to do an analysis on the housing gaps and to come up with some solutions. The Planning Commission moved forward with a few weeks ago with the Mixed Residential Overlay District (MROD) standards that allow the ability to drop mixed residential units in various commercial areas throughout the Township.

Director Akers provided comments on the following Commercial Industrial Projects:

- Tractor Supply is close to opening. Staff has been talking to them about the steps they need to do to get their certificate of occupancy in February or March.
- Costco off of Belleville Road is building a large expansion, they have been working on the project for a year and a half and are getting close to getting their final approval to get things started. It is a about a 50,000 square foot addition onto a warehouse and staff has been working with them on getting upgraded signage to help push the truck traffic to where it is supposed to be.
- Chick-Fil-A is getting ready to start construction in the spring on Belleville Road in front of Menards.
- McDonalds on Belleville Road has been demolished and they are in the process of reconstruction.
- Sheetz at the southwest corner of the Haggerty and Ecorse intersection is going to begin construction in the spring.
- U.S. Signal a small data center located at the northeast corner of Tyler and Haggerty Road, is building an expansion and is going to the site plan review process and have received preliminary site plan approval.
- Stellantis Mopar warehouse on Ecorse Road and approximately 2,000,000 square foot warehouse building receive final site plan approval from the Planning Commission. They are currently working on site grading and foundation.
- Ashley Capital has 3 additional buildings on the Crossroads North site, 2 have already been approved and are just waiting on building permits. They are about 150,000 square feet and they still have one more 600,000 square foot building on the site to be constructed.
- The proposal for El Car Wash was table at last night's Planning Commission meeting and will be returning at a future meeting.
- Staff is in the process of plan review for Battery Energy Storage facility (BESS) on Rawsonville Road near Bemis Road on an industrial property.
- There is a large data center development under consideration and it comes before the Planning Commission on 2-11-26. There is a lot of information and the Township has an open house and public hearing to take as many questions as they could. Director Akers is putting the questions and answers on the Township website. If anyone has any questions, reach out to Director Akers and/or visit the Township website for more information. Staff is doing a sound analysis of a comparable facility down in Ohio and

they should have a summary of the reports before the 2-11-26 meeting and will be added to the website.

Commissioner commented there is quite of bit of erosion and trees falling into the lake, is Van Buren Township going to do anything about it. The Township needs to get out on the boat and take a look at the shoreline, some of the property belongs to Van Buren. Director Akers knows the Parks Department has evaluated the erosion at Van Buren Park and they have looked at some fixes at the park specifically. Director Akers is aware of a handful of locations where they have had erosion complaints along Belleville Road, Quirk Road and High Street. Commissioner commented there are trees down into the lake that have been there for years at properties that probably should be condemned or at least looked at and to have a conversation with the owners. Director Akers commented the township has entered into a contract with a company called Progressive that does limnological assessments to look at some possible solutions for invasive species and other environmental concerns. Commissioner spoke with Supervisor McNamara at the last meeting and he said there are issues that they are planning on addressing at the lake. Director Akers informed they are supposed to have the study in the spring and they will provide options and information on how to fund those fixes.

SUMPTER TOWNSHIP UPDATES:

Matthew Oddy informed Sumpter has had a lot of staff turnover and they have a new Township manager, Finance Director, Payroll HR Director and DPW Director. Sumpter brought on Carlisle Wortman in May to run the Building Department. They reviewed deficiencies, updated paperwork and updated ordinances. Sumpter is working on a moratorium for data centers until they can get some more information and have their planners working on language. They currently have a moratorium on wetlands as they had a wetland bank that got specked in their community. Mr. Oddy recommended other communities that have land get an ordinance in place because it is not up to the community, they will notify you and you can have public hearings, but the final say of whether it goes into your community or not is from EGLE. They don't use wetlands they take prime farmland and turn it into wetlands. In Sumpter they didn't know it was coming until they were building it, it was approved for the public hearing and somehow it didn't make it before the Board and they are not required to come before the Board to get any type of approval. Representative Miller is working on legislation to ensure that in the future for any wetland banks they have to get approval from local municipalities and have notifications to all of the residents and stakeholders in the community. It also locks the tax base. Sumpter Township is working with Representative Millier's office to look at what can be done about the taxes on it, because it is agriculturally zoned property they get to stick to the agricultural zone and the Township cannot increase their taxes.

Sumpter has a paving agreement with the County to pave Judd Road from Bohn Road to Rawsonville Road. The road has gotten so bad that it is a public safety issue, you can only drive 2 miles per hour at time, making it challenging during emergencies. The road is a major passthrough to Rawsonville Woods, which is a large community. They are hoping the County will fund more money due to it being an emergency issue. Sumpter worked on their cemetery project last year with GIS and lidar received a lot of data. The Cemetery Committee got put on hold with the changes in staffing and they are getting ready to get it moving again. Karen Armatis and Scott

Holt are still working on the project they have a video that they are going to be putting out on the webpage that details all of the veterans from the Spanish American War and they are working to getting the VA to pay for repairing and replacing headstones. Commissioner Oddy will be reaching out to Belleville see if they can deploy a few of the students into working Sumpters project.

Sumpter is looking at replacing 1.6 miles of water main on Willow Road, it's not an old water main, there are a lot of breaks. They are going through their system now looking for other areas and they may potentially go out for a bond as it's about a \$3.5 million project just for Willow Road. Sumpter has a mapping program to map their entire system with all the gate valves and sizes. Commissioner inquired where on Willow Road? Commissioner Oddy informed it going to be on the east side of Sumpter heading towards Huron. Sumpter also just bought an excavator to do some of their own projects. Most of the community is on pressurized sewers not gravity flow, they have issues with their pump stations and are in the process of replacing the pump station on Martinsville, it is about a \$270,000 project. They spent about \$150,000 on the pump station at the corner of Sumpter and Willis a couple of years ago and they put in a bio machine that mitigates the smell. Sumpter has the EPA in their community for a site that they are mitigating on Savage Road, somehow a .59-acre site ended up with material that was brought in from steel mills back in the 70's. They are into a \$2.7 million remediation of that property with a house on it and will be here for a few months. Sumpter is still looking into how the material got there, it looks like somehow the Township issued that person a landfill permit back in 1972.

Business development has been a struggle due to the infrastructure. When putting the new car wash in, it is on a pressurized line and the Township had to ensure that it had a big enough tank to hold the amount of water that would be pumped into the system and ensure that it wasn't going to damage the system in pumping that amount of water. The industrial area over at Bemis and Rawsonville where Van Buren is talking about the battery plant going has been for sale for about \$13,000,000 for the past 8 years. There has been interest there as this one of the limited areas for Sumpter to get industrial development because of the infrastructure. Sumpter would have a hard time getting residential areas in unless they were able to extend the sewer down Rawsonville. They would love to have started homes come in but they would have to be on a half-acre minimum. The new Township Manager Ken Martin is working on figuring out the areas that they do have enough infrastructure to attract some businesses that would be beneficial to the community.

Commissioner inquired if there is anything in their ordinance for solar farms. Commissioner Oddy informed they are revisiting solar farms. Commissioner inquired if they have any solar car chargers. Commissioner Oddy informed no, they have looked at where to put them.

ITEM #2: JOINT SUB COMMITTEE UPDATES

Julie Kissel informed the sub committee met twice. A lot of what has been discussed is how to reach out to the public and how to get people to know where they live, to educate the public and coordinate safe schools. Director Akers informed the conversation was good, they did some exercises where they identified common themes

Commissioner inquired if there is any update on Camping World? Director Akers informed they have the C of O and have given indication that they want to open in the spring.

Commissioners agreed to have the next Joint Planning Commission meeting on 7-29-26 at 5:30 p.m. at the new City Council Chamber located at 330 Charles Street in Belleville.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion Juriga, Oddy second to adjourn the meeting at 6:16 p.m. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Harman
Recording Secretary