Village of Cass City
Guide to Development
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**Village of Cass City Contact Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mailing Address</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Fax</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6506 Main Street</td>
<td><a href="http://www.casscity.org">www.casscity.org</a></td>
<td>(989) 872 – 2911</td>
<td>(989) 872 – 4855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO Box 123</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cass City, MI 49726</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ccvillage@casscity.org">ccvillage@casscity.org</a></td>
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**Key Development Contacts**

**Village Manager and Zoning Administrator**
Debbie Powell | (989) 872 – 2911 | ccmanager@casscity.org

**Village Clerk/Treasurer**
Nan Walsh | (989) 872 – 2911 | cctreasurer@casscity.org

**Department of Public Works (Cass City)**
(989) 872 – 5643 | dpwcc@casscity.org

**Police Department (Cass City)**
Craig Haynes, Police Chief | (989) 872 – 2911 | ccpolicechief@casscity.org

**Fire Department (Elkland Township)**
Glen Guilds, Fire Chief | (989) 670 – 0155

**Assessor (Elkland Township)**
David McArthur, Assessor | (989) 553- 2789 | davemac88@live.com

**Building Department and Inspections (Tuscola County)**
SAFEbuilt | (989) 262-4546 | tuscolapermits@safebuilt.com

**Partner Organizations**

**Chamber of Commerce (Cass City)**
(989) 872-4618 | ccc@casscitychamber.com

**Economic Development Corporation (Tuscola County)**
Steve Erickson, Executive Director | (989) 673–2849 | directorerickson@tuscolaedc.org

**Utility Providers**

**DTE Energy** | Electric Service
(989) 872-6107

**Emterra** | Trash Service
(989) 658-2784

**Semco** | Natural Gas
Residential 800-860-4277 ext. 5004 | Commercial 800-860-4277 ext. 5042

**Village of Cass City** | Water and Sewer
(989) 872 - 3153
**Board and Commissions**

**Approval Authorities**

Village staff and different boards and commissions all play a part in the development process. It is important that residents, business owners, and developers understand who holds approval authority over the different applications and stages of this process. This table provides a general understanding who makes recommendations [O] and who provides final approval [X].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Administrator</th>
<th>Planning Commission</th>
<th>Zoning Board of Appeals</th>
<th>Downtown Dev. Authority / EDC</th>
<th>Village Council</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoning Permit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site Plan Review (Single-Household Residential)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Site Plan Review (All Others)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Land Use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planned Unit Development</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rezoning/Ordinance Amendment</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Appeal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development Incentive</td>
<td>O</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>X</td>
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**Regularly Scheduled Meetings**

All regularly scheduled meetings take place in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, located at 6506 Main Street. For meetings that take place after business hours (8:30AM to 4:30 PM, M-F), doors generally open 15 minutes prior to the meeting time.

**Village Council**

Last Monday of the Month, 6:00PM

**Planning Commission**

Third Wednesday of the Month, 7:00PM

**Downtown Development Authority (DDA) / Economic Development Commission (EDC)**

Second Tuesday of the Month, 1:30PM

**Special Meetings**

**Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)**

The ZBA schedules a regular meeting during the month of May each year and schedules special meetings as required. To request a meeting of the ZBA, a completed application and fee are required. Requested meetings must comply with local and state laws regarding public notices.
**Development Resources**

Zoning Ordinance and Map

The Village of Cass City Zoning Ordinance regulates the development and usage of properties and buildings within Village limits. Regulations may apply to the entire village or to specific, designated zoning districts, which may be found on the zoning map. To view the full zoning ordinance, please see the [Chapter 46: Zoning Ordinance](#) on the Village’s website. Please consult the Village’s Zoning Administrator with any questions.

Master Plan

The Village’s Master Plan summarizes the community vision for Cass City’s future and guides local policy regarding development and redevelopment. In addition to compiling demographics and characteristics, as well as identifying opportunities and goals for the community, the Master Plan provides a Future Land Use map, that serves as the basis for rezoning properties to align development with the community’s interests. The [2019 Master Plan](#) is available on the Village’s website and is updated once every five years.

Capital Improvement Plan

The Village’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a tool approved by the Village Council and utilized by Village staff to coordinate the location, timing, and financing of capital improvements, such as roads and water utility infrastructure, over a six-year period. This document is revised annually, typically in December, and may be found on the Village’s “New Development” page.

Fee Schedule

The Fee Schedule, available on the Village’s website, provides the fees and other costs associated with applications and other development processes. The fee schedule is generally updated in December of each year by the Village Council and runs through the next calendar year.

Development Incentives Policy

The Village Council has adopted a Development Incentives Policy, which sets the criteria in applying for and guides the Council’s decision in approving a tax abatement (after a district has been established) or other incentive. In 2021, the Village of Cass City established a Commercial Redevelopment District in the Downtown, streamlining the process to apply for a tax abatement in that area. Developers may request the establishment of tax abatement districts under either the IFT or CRD acts.

For more information on the policy, or to obtain an application, visit the Village’s website or contact the Village Manager.

Applications and Forms

The Village provides development applications and forms [online](#) and at the Village Offices. For information or clarification on any of the following applications, please contact the Zoning Administrator.

- Zoning Permit Application
- Special Land Use Permit Application
- Zoning Board of Appeals Application
- Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment and Rezoning Petition
- Development Incentives Application
- Signage Permit Application
- Fencing Permit Application
- Tree Removal Permit Application
Building Permits

Developers are eligible to seek a building permit once they obtain a Zoning Permit from the Village of Cass City. Tuscola County has contracted with SAFEbuilt for all building permits. SAFEbuilt may be contacted at (989) 262-4546 or tuscolapermits@safebuilt.com.

Business Licenses

Doing Business As / Assumed Name
The Tuscola County Clerk offers an online Business Registration Certificate. For more information, contact the Tuscola County Clerk’s office at (989) 672 – 3780 or clerk@tuscolacounty.org.

State Business Licenses
The Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) handles business licensing on a state-level, including corporations, limited liability companies, limited liability partnerships, and non-profit corporations. For more information, contact LARA at (517) 335 – 9700.

Sales Tax Licensing
The Michigan Department of Treasury provides both online registration and fillable forms for sales tax licensing. For more information, contact the Treasury’s General Information Hotline at (517) 335 – 7508 or the Treasury Sales and Use Tax Hotline at (517) 636 – 6925.

Liquor License
The Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) and the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) handling liquor licensing for businesses. For more information, contact MLCC at (866) 813 – 0011 or LARA-MLCC-Licensing-Information@michigan.gov.

Food Licensing
The Tuscola County Health Department (TCHD) manages licensing for food businesses within the county. For more information, contact TCHD at (989) 673 – 7490.

Marijuana Licensing
Per the Village of Cass City Code of Ordinances (48-21), recreational marijuana facilities are prohibited within the Village. Under certain circumstances, the Village of Cass City may grant licenses to medical marijuana facilities within the Cass City Industrial Park (46-41). For more information, contact the Village Manager at (989) 872 – 2911.
Paths to Development

Conceptual Review Meeting

Prior to submitting a Zoning Permit Application, Zoning Board of Appeals Application, or any other permit, prospective applicants are encouraged to meet with the Zoning Administrator for a conceptual review of the project. These meetings are free of charge and provide an opportunity for an informal consultation of the project with Village staff to identify any barriers and opportunities prior to applicants investing substantial time and resources into a formal site plan draft and review. To schedule a conceptual review meeting, please contact the Zoning Administrator at the Village.

Zoning Permit Application

Developers are required to obtain the proper permits from the Village prior to any construction; Zoning Permit Applications may be obtained at the Village offices or online. Once a completed application and related fees are received by the Village, the Zoning Administrator will facilitate a staff site plan review.

Staff Site Plan Review

Upon receiving a zoning permit application, the Zoning Administrator shall forward materials to a joint review committee, make a determination on the applicant’s compliance with the Zoning Ordinance, and inform the applicant about which next steps are necessary for approval (if applicable).

Development Classification

- Permitted (By-Right) Land Use: The proposed project is explicitly permitted by the Zoning Ordinance; approval from Zoning Administrator/Planning Commission.
- Special Land Use: The proposed project is conditionally permitted by the Zoning Ordinance; approval from Planning Commission.
- Variance Request: The proposed project partially aligns with the Zoning Ordinance, but conflicts with certain specifications; approval from ZBA.
- Rezoning/Text Amendment: The Zoning Ordinance does not allow the proposed project; requires Village Council amendment.
Permitted (By-Right) Development

Permitted (by-right) development projects within the Village of Cass City are subject to site plan review and inspection prior to the issuance of a zoning permit. With the exception of single-household residential development, which may be approved by the Zoning Administrator, all permitted use projects shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission at their monthly meeting. Chapter 46-6.1 outlines the Site Plan Review Process with the Village of Cass City Planning Commission.

For single-household dwellings, the Zoning Administrator shall:

1. Approve the site plan if it is found to satisfy the requirements of this zoning ordinance. The Zoning Administrator will mail out a zoning permit within 15 days of approval.
2. Deny the site plan if it is found that the proposed site plan fails to satisfy the requirements of this zoning ordinance. In the event of denial, the applicant shall be informed of the decision in writing, with the reasons for denial contained in the letter. Applicants may appeal the decision to the Zoning Board of Appeals (see Chapter 46-7.2.C Appeal in the Zoning Ordinance).

For all other development projects, the Planning Commission will:

1. Approve the site plan if it is found to satisfy the requirements of this zoning ordinance. The Zoning Administrator will mail out a zoning permit within 15 days of approval, valid for 1 year after the date of issuance.
2. Place conditions on the site plan approval to ensure that it satisfies the requirements and intent of this zoning ordinance. This may include a requirement that the applicant obtain a variance from the ZBA prior to a zoning permit being issued.
3. Deny the site plan if it is found that the proposed site plan fails to satisfy the requirements of this zoning ordinance. In the event of denial, the applicant shall be informed of the decision and reasoning in writing. Applicants may appeal the decision to the Zoning Board of Appeals (see page 10).
Special Land Use Development

A special land use approval is required for development projects which are listed as special land uses in the Zoning Ordinance. Chapter 46-6.2 outlines the Special Land Use Review Process as overseen by the Planning Commission.

To obtain a zoning permit for a special land use project, applicants must fill out a Special Land Use Application (available from the Village offices or online), along with a Zoning Permit Application, which will be submitted to the Planning Commission for a site plan review process. These materials shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission at their monthly meeting, where they will schedule a public hearing on the proposed special use project.

Per the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006), scheduling a public hearing requires that the Village publish notice of that hearing in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 15 days before the date of the hearing. Additionally, notice must be given to all persons to whom real property is assessed within 300 feet of the proposed project property and to the occupants of all structures within 300 feet of the subject property.

After site plan review and a public hearing, the Planning Commission will:

1. Approve and permit the special land use, provided that the use: is not injurious to the district and environs; is not contrary to the spirit and purpose of this chapter; is not incompatible with already existing uses in the area; would not interfere with the orderly development of the area; and would not be detrimental to the safety or convenience of vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
2. Issue a conditional approval of the project, provided that the use aligns with the above criteria, and subject the project to additional inspection to ensure the conditions placed upon approval are met.
3. Deny approval for the project and inform the applicant of the decision and reasoning in writing. Applicants may appeal the decision to the Zoning Board of Appeals (see page 10).

Once a permit is approved, it shall be mailed out within 15 days of the approval and valid for 1 year after the date of issuance.
Variance Request or Appeal

Chapter 46-7.2.C of the Zoning Ordinance provides information on requesting a variance or appealing a decision of the Zoning Administrator or the Planning Commission. To formally begin this process, an applicant must file a Zoning Board of Appeal Application with the Village and pay the required fee. Applications may be obtained from the Village offices or online. In appealing for administrative review, an application must be filed within 30 days of a denial issued by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission. Once an application and related fees are received by the Village, the ZBA will schedule a hearing to review an appeal (generally within 30 days of application).

Per the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006), scheduling a public hearing requires that the Village publish notice of that hearing in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 15 days before the date of the hearing. Additionally, notice must be given to all persons to whom real property is assessed within 300 feet of the proposed project property and to the occupants of all structures within 300 feet of the subject property.

Once an application and related fees are received by the Village, the ZBA will schedule a hearing to review an appeal (generally within 30 days of application). During the ZBA hearing, the Board will:

1. Decide in favor of the applicant, approving the variance or granting an approval overriding the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission’s decision. The ZBA may grant a variance in cases where the strict application of the zoning regulations enacted would result in peculiar or exceptional practical difficulties to, or exceptional undue hardship upon the owner, provided that the relief granted is without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantially impairing the intent and purpose of the zoning ordinance. Should the ZBA approve a variance, the board may attach special conditions to the approval.

2. Issue a denial of the applicant’s request; there is no appeal process for a decision by the ZBA.
Zoning Petition and Rezoning Request

Amending the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map of the Village is the responsibility of the Village Council, following formal recommendation from the Planning Commission, pursuant to 46-7.8 of the Zoning Ordinance and the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance, including specific property rezoning, may be initiated on petition to the Planning Commission. The Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment and Rezoning Petition may be obtained online or from the Village Offices. Once initiated, an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance or Map generally takes 90 - 120 days.

Once the Village receives a completed petition and any applicable fees, the petition will be placed on the Planning Commission’s agenda for review during a regular meeting. During their initial review of the request, the Planning Commission will schedule a public hearing for input on the proposed changes to the zoning ordinance.

Per the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006), scheduling a public hearing requires that the Village publish notice of that hearing in a newspaper of general circulation not less than 15 days before the date of the hearing. Additionally, notice must be given to all persons to whom real property is assessed within 300 feet of the proposed project property and to the occupants of all structures within 300 feet of the subject property.

Following the Planning Commission’s public hearing, the board will make a formal recommendation to the Village Council to adopt or reject the proposed zoning amendment.

Unless the Village Council decides to consult a professional opinion on the proposed change, the zoning petition is generally reviewed during the next regular meeting. Following the first reading, the Council will schedule and hold a public hearing (subject to noticing), and then vote on the proposed changes after the public hearing and second reading. The Village Council may:

1. Approve the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. Notice must be published in a paper of general circulation within 15 days of adoption before the change goes into effect.
2. Deny the request; decisions may not be appealed to the ZBA.
Guide to Development Feedback

The Village of Cass City strives to provide a streamlined and user-friendly development process. In an effort to continually improve our procedures, the Village Manager invites you to complete this short development review survey and provide your honest feedback about any and all aspects of your development experience with the Village. Completed surveys or additional feedback may be returned via email to ccvillage@casscity.org or to the Municipal Building at 6506 Main Street PO Box 123, Cass City, MI 48726.

Date: _____/_____/_______

1. Which of the following describes you (check all that apply):
   - □ Resident
   - □ Business Owner
   - □ Rental Property Owner
   - □ Property Developer
     - ○ Single-Household Residential
     - ○ Multi-Household Residential
     - ○ Commercial
     - ○ Industrial
     - ○ Mixed Use
   - □ Other (specify): ____________________

2. I found the Guide to Development well organized and informative:
   - □ Highly Agree
   - □ Agree
   - □ Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - □ Disagree
   - □ Highly Disagree

3. If you engaged in a conceptual (pre-application) meeting, how effective was that meeting in outlining the application process, timelines, and other requirements?
   - □ Highly Effective
   - □ Effective
   - □ Neither Effective nor Ineffective
   - □ Ineffective
   - □ Very Ineffective

4. Did the Village of Cass City adhere to the development timelines as listed in the Guide to Development?
   - □ Faster Than Expected
   - □ About as Expected
   - □ Slower Than Expected

5. Do you have any other comments about the development review process?

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________