



Whether you’re a zoning administrator, member of the planning commission or zoning board of appeals, or part of your township’s planning and zoning team, your knowledge of the planning and zoning process is vital to your community. As new developments and projects approach your township, it’s important to be prepared to make tough decisions. Join your peers from around the state on Oct. 29-30 for the [Planning & Zoning Team Retreat](#). Held at the Bavarian Inn Lodge in Frankenmuth, this retreat offers premier educational programming and excellent networking opportunities. Educational sessions include:

**Legislative News You Need to Know**

The number of bills introduced each session affecting planning and zoning is higher than you might think. Often these bills limit local control—sometimes they even eliminate it! Whether it’s short-term rentals, the siting of sand and gravel or renewable energy facilities, zoning for housing or beyond, all impact your role. Learn what is at the forefront this session, the nuances of these issues, what specific actions you can take and why those actions matter, and leave with a deeper understanding on how to work together and have a positive impact.

**Clarifying Roles, Following Rules**

A blueprint for effective zoning teamwork and transparent public process, this session transforms confusing jurisdictional tangles into a well-oiled municipal machine by clearly defining who does what, when and how. Discover the secret sauce for seamless teamwork between the planning commission, zoning administrator, zoning board of appeals and the township board. Get tips for navigating the Open Meetings Act and foolproof strategies for public notices, engaging hearings and transparent decision-making that keeps your community informed.

**It’s All Part of the Master Plan (Or is it?)**

Learn how to harness the power of public engagement and navigate legal requirements to create a master plan that becomes your secret weapon for smart growth and defensible zoning decisions. Join us as we reveal insider strategies that successful townships use to build consensus, avoid costly mistakes and create a lasting legacy that guides your vision for your township for decades to come.

**Zoning in on the Hot Topics**

This session brings the most talked-about planning and zoning issues front and center. A condensed version of MTA’s popular summer workshop series, this fast-paced session delivers practical, real-world strategies for navigating emerging land use issues. Plus, take away tips tailored for tackling these tough topics during your planning commission meetings.

**Watt Works for You: Renewable Energy Ordinances that Fit**

As solar, wind and battery energy storage systems grow in popularity—and policy—townships must be ready to respond. With Public Act 233 setting new standards, how can your township create ordinances that balance local priorities with statewide energy goals? This session breaks down the impact of PA 233 and offers practical guidance to help you shape renewable energy ordinances that reflect your community’s needs, values and vision.

**The Power of Possibility: Flexing Your Zoning Ordinance**

A well-crafted zoning ordinance doesn’t need constant amendments—it needs built-in flexibility. Learn how to make your zoning ordinance work smarter, not harder, by using tools like the special use permit process and strategic administrative discretion. Can we streamline reviews and approvals, while staying within the bounds of your ordinance? Yes, we can!

**By Special Request: Making Sense of Special Land Uses**

Conditional or special land uses are a common feature of every zoning ordinance, but getting from application to approval can be anything but easy. Join us as we discuss the legal foundation for conditional land uses, the value for using them and how to enforce when things don’t go as planned.

**Next-level Zoning: Navigating Complicated Projects**

Join us on a deep dive into complex land uses that turn controversial for their impact on adjacent properties. Uses like gravel mining operations, mixed-use developments and agritourism require careful assessment and strong communication from start to finish. This session will help you identify potential trouble-spots early in the process and explore best practices for handling public hearings and noticing in a way that builds trust and maintains transparency with the community.

**Agenda**

**Wednesday, Oct. 29**

- 8 a.m. .... Check-in
- 8:30 a.m. .... Welcome
- 8:35 a.m. ... *Legislative News You Need to Know*
- 9:45 a.m. ... *Clarifying Roles, Following Rules*
- 11:15 a.m. .... Vendor introductions
- 11:30 a.m. .... Vendor showcase
- Noon ..... Lunch
- 1 p.m. .... *It’s All Part of Our Master Plan (Or is it?)*
- 2:25 p.m. .... *Zoning in on the Hot Topics*
- 4 p.m. .... Bavarian Belle riverboat cruise
- 6:30 p.m. .... Dinner

**Thursday, Oct. 30**

- 8 a.m. .... Breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. .... *Watt Works for You: Renewable Energy Ordinances that Fit*
- 10:25 a.m. .... *The Power of Possibility: Flexing Your Zoning Ordinance*
- 11:55 a.m. .... Lunch
- 1 p.m. .... *By Special Request: Making Sense of Special Land Uses*
- 2:45 p.m. *Next Level Zoning: Navigating Complicated Projects*
- 4:15 p.m. .... Adjourn

**R E G I S T R A T I O N   F O R M**

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☐ Check enclosed (payable to MTA) ☐ Invoice my township (members only)  
☐ Charge to: MasterCard or VISA

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**Planning & Zoning Team Retreat  
October 29-30**

**Bring another member of your team and save \$60 off full-program rates!**  
Discount applies to second registrant who is attending the same retreat.

**Full-program rates:** Includes 10+ hours of education, breakfast and lunch each day, plus dinner and a riverboat cruise down the scenic Cass River.  
☐ Early-bird rate \$367/person  
☐ Regular rate \$417/person within three weeks of event  
☒ **BONUS: I saved \$60 on a second full-program registration!**

**Single-day rates:** Include that day’s sessions, breakfast and lunch. Dinner and riverboat cruise can be added for an additional fee.

**Check the day you wish to attend:** ☐ Day 1 OR ☐ Day 2

☐ Early-bird rate \$230/person  
☐ Regular rate \$280/person within three weeks of event

**TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$** \_\_\_\_\_  
*Rates are for MTA members; non-members, call MTA for rates.*



Special thanks to our sponsors!



Product and service providers

You'll get networking time with vendors targeting your role in the township. The vendor showcase can help you find and use products and services that streamline your township services.

Special dietary or accessibility needs

Participants with special needs should contact Kristin at (517) 321-6467, ext. 230 or email [kristin@michigantownships.org](mailto:kristin@michigantownships.org) at least a week in advance.

Continuing education credit

Elective credits for *Township Governance Academy* candidates; no project required.



Elective and chapter credits for *Red Book Ready* candidates; icon appears next to qualifying sessions.



Cancellation and substitution

Written cancellation requests received at the MTA office four weeks prior to the event will receive a full refund; two weeks prior will receive a half-refund. No refunds will be issued thereafter without extenuating circumstances. Those that select "Invoice my township" as payment type but fail to cancel by these deadlines will still be required to pay balance due. You may substitute another individual from your township for the same retreat. Please contact MTA to let us know of the switch. Changes to hotel reservations must be made directly with the Bavarian Inn Lodge.



Getting there

Held at the Bavarian Inn Lodge located at One Covered Bridge Lane in Frankenmuth. The event will be held in the Conference Center on level two. Event check-in begins at 8 a.m.

Lodging

Make your reservations with the Bavarian Inn Lodge directly. Online reservation links and hotel details are available at <https://bit.ly/mtaretreats> and in your confirmation email, OR call (989) 652-7200 and reference the *MTA Planning & Zoning Team Retreat (Group # 13W6T7)*. Discounted lodging is limited—reserve your hotel room today.

The Lodge offers comfortable rooms that include mini-fridges, microwaves and free Wi-Fi. Amenities include a fitness center, multiple pools and whirlpools, a gift shop, gourmet coffee bar and a variety of restaurants. Live entertainment is featured in the lounge every evening. The Lodge is also home to the new Bavarian Blast, Michigan's biggest indoor waterpark and family fun center, featuring 16 waterslides, a wave pool, ropes course and climbing wall, mini bowling and more.

Check-in: 4 p.m. Check-out: 11 a.m.

MTA discounted room rates: \$162.28/standard, \$172.98/premium  
(rate includes resort fee and local occupancy tax; does not include 6% sales tax)

Discounted rates end Oct. 14. Don't delay, make your reservations today!



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Exclusive event  
for your township  
planning & zoning team



Township Planning & Zoning Team Retreat

October 29-30, 2025  
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth

