

Check land zoning

This guide is one of five packets on how to buy publicly owned land and create land based projects in Detroit. Download these resources at www.DetroitMi.gov/Land or pick up at 2 Woodward Ave.



Read on if you...

- Need to understand how to select a property and a land based project that will be allowed by the City's zoning code
- Want to look up which properties are owned by the City of Detroit or the Detroit Land Bank Authority so you can identify a property to buy

Inside you will find...

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Need internet or computer access?

Visit or call the Detroit Land Bank Authority, the Detroit Building Authority, or the Public Library. Your District Manager can provide additional information about locations where you can access the internet for free in your City Council District. Turn to **page 8**.

What is a land based project?

A land based project uses land for activities such as urban agriculture, gardening, or beautification, whether for profit or community activation.

Why do you need to know about zoning?

Zoning defines what land uses are allowed on every parcel of property in Detroit.

- If you are purchasing land, this packet can help you find a property where your project is allowed "by right." This is the cheapest and fastest way to complete your project.
- If you already have land and need a permit, this packet can help you understand what types of projects are allowed "by right" on your property.



Choosing a property and a project

The first step in completing your land based project is to choose a **property** and a **type of project** allowed within the zoning district classification in which your property is located. To simplify the process for purchasing a property and getting your permit, it is important to understand how land based projects are defined in the City of Detroit's zoning code. This ordinance was created with community input, and it defines which land uses are allowed in different parts of the City.

How does zoning affect your project?

When you apply for a permit for your project with BSEED, they will check the land use you are applying for against the zoning of your property.

Your land use will be either:

Allowed By Right: Already allowed by zoning! This is the easiest, cheapest, and fastest way to get a permit for your project. If you are purchasing land, try to choose a property where your desired land use is allowed by right!

Conditional: Needs additional consideration on how they will affect their neighboring uses. If you choose a conditional use for your property, you will need to go through a special land use hearing, site plan review, and pay additional fees.

Not Allowed: Some uses are not allowed at all in a particular zoning district. Contact City Planning Commission for assistance (see **page 8** of this packet for contact information).

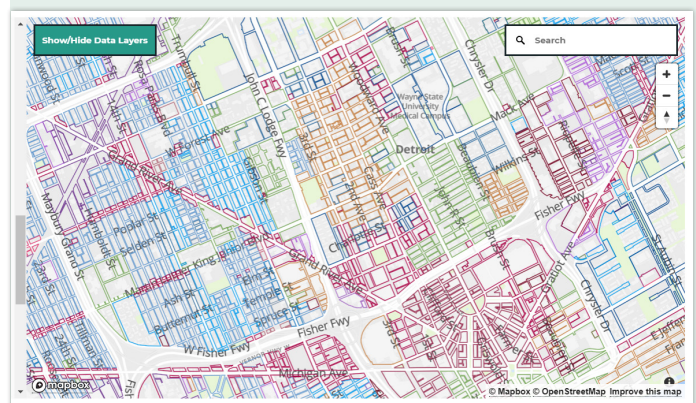
☀️ Note: When using the Detroit Zoning Portal, "allowed by right" and "permitted by right" are used interchangeably. However, building permits are still required for by-right uses!

How to look up your zoning district

Every property in Detroit falls into a zoning district such as a residential, commercial, or industrial zone.

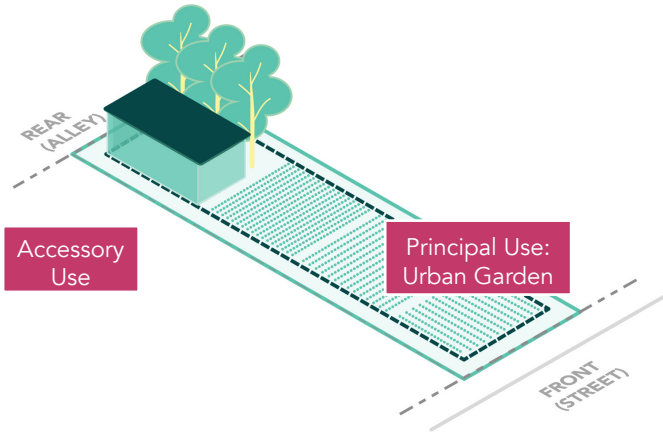
You can look up your zoning at www.DetroitDevelopment.org. See **page 6** of this packet for more information!

Additionally, the Detroit Zoning Portal has been developed as a tool to aid you in this process. To look up if your specific project type is allowed on a parcel, go to <https://zoning.detroitmi.gov/>. ☀️



Understanding principal and accessory uses

The principal use is the main use of your land. You may have other things on your property that complement that use; these are called accessory uses.



How to decide which use is principal

Using an urban garden as an example of a principal use, the garden could have a variety of accessory uses such as a shed, garage, farm stand, or hoophouse. In this case, you would look at “urban garden” in the use table on the following page.

If there is only a hoophouse on the lot, the hoophouse is then the principal use. In this case, look at “hoophouse” in the use table on the following page.

There are different lot coverage requirements for principal and accessory structures (see **page 11** of the **Plot Plan, Site Design, and Maintenance Guide**).

Zoning for land based projects

Each project has an associated land use in the City’s zoning ordinance. Use the ‘Zoning for Land Based Projects’ chart on the next page to understand where these uses are allowed by right, conditionally, or not allowed.

Types of Uses

Outdoor recreation facility: For golf course; skating rink (ice skating, roller skating, roller blading, skate boarding, and similar activities), playfield, playground, swimming pool; and/or tennis court.

Outdoor art exhibition; sculpture gardens: Collection, display, or preservation of community and cultural interest.

Agriculture up to 1 acre (Urban Garden): ✨
Property covering one acre or less used to grow and harvest crops.

Agriculture over 1 acre (Urban Farm):
Property covering more than one acre used to grow and harvest crops.

Orchard: Parcel(s) of land used to establish, care for, or harvest (for consumption) more than ten fruit or nut-bearing trees.

Tree Farm/Plant Nursery: Parcel(s) of land used to raise or harvest more than ten containerized or in-ground trees or plants.

Hoophouse/High Tunnel: A structure made of translucent, flexible material that regulates temperatures for growing plants.

Greenhouse: A solid-sided structure made of transparent materials that regulates temperatures for growing plants. Requires a footing or foundation.

Composting: Composting for use on site is generally allowed as an accessory use. Generating compost to be used off site, when it is the primary use, is restricted to a conditional use in industrial areas. All composting facilities handling over 200 cubic yards of compost are required to follow county and state regulations.

✨ While we wait for new types of uses to be added to the zoning ordinance, a small, landscaped neighborhood space that includes passive amenities such as benches or paths may be temporarily considered as an “urban garden.”


Zoning for land based projects

This chart applies to the **principal use** of your property. To look up the current zoning of your property, see **page 6**.

By right:  Conditional:  Not allowed: 

Zoning District	Zoning Code Category	Small Neighborhood Space	Outdoor recreation facility	Outdoor art exhibit; sculpture gardens	Agriculture ≤ 1 acre (Urban Garden)	Agriculture > 1 acre (Urban Farm)	Orchard (> 10 trees)	Tree Farm (>10 trees)	Greenhouse/Hoophouse*	Outdoor Composting*
Residential Areas where people live. Zones range from single-family houses to very high density areas with rental apartment units.	R1 - Single-Family Residential	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
	R2 - Two-Family Residential	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
	R3 - Low Density Residential	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
	R4 - Thoroughfare Residential	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed
	R5 - Medium Density Residential	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed
	R6 - High Density Residential	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed
Commercial/ Business Areas where retail stores and offices are located, ranging from small business areas to a large retail center.	B1 - Restricted Business	By right	By right	Not allowed	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed
	B2 - Local Business & Residential	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed
	B3 - Shopping	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed
	B4 - General Business	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed
	B5 - Major Business	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed
	B6 - General Services	By right	By right	Not allowed	By right	By right	By right	By right	By right	Not allowed
Industrial Areas for manufacturing, warehousing, and wholesale retail outlets. These areas are generally kept away from residential zones.	M1 - Limited Industrial	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed
	M2 - Restricted Industrial	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed
	M3 - General Industrial	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed
	M4 - Intensive Industrial	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed
	M5 - Special Industrial	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed
Special Development Areas where typically unrelated uses are physically and functionally integrated.	SD1 - Residential/Commercial	By right	By right	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
	SD2 - Commercial/Residential	Not allowed	By right	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
	SD3 - Technology and Research	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed

* as defined in the zoning code

 Temporarily considered "urban garden"

Other considerations for selecting a site

What is next door?

If the land use you are proposing could be noisy, smelly, or highly active with many people, consider locating your project away from neighbors. In some cases, screening or buffering of uses is required by the zoning code.

Commercial uses

You might be considering a project that includes a commercial use. For example, you might want to add an event space or a restaurant to a garden. This may become the principal use of your site, depending on the size, extent, and purpose of the operation. Discuss your idea with the BSEED Development Resource Center before you proceed:

Coleman A. Young Municipal Center (CAYMC)
2 Woodward Avenue, Room 434
313-224-2372
drc@detroitmi.gov

Site infrastructure

Consider what needs your project has before purchasing a property. If you need regular access to a water line, consider purchasing a property with water access already in place so that you will not take on the expense of installation in the future.

Working with multiple parcels

You can combine parcels of property that are next to one another. You cannot combine parcels across alleys or streets, or lots that are not next to one another. See the Parcel Combination and Project Area information in **Packet 4. Permitting**.

Selling products

Urban gardens and farms allow for the sale of products grown in the garden/farm at an accessory farm stand. Only products produced on-site, such as fresh, uncut produce, can be sold on-site.

Drainage charges

The City of Detroit issues drainage charges. Learn more from the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department at 313-267-8000.

Additional Help

Keep Growing Detroit:
313-656-4769

Detroit Future City:
313-259-4407

The Greening of Detroit:
313-237-8733

Michigan Community Resources:
313-962-3171

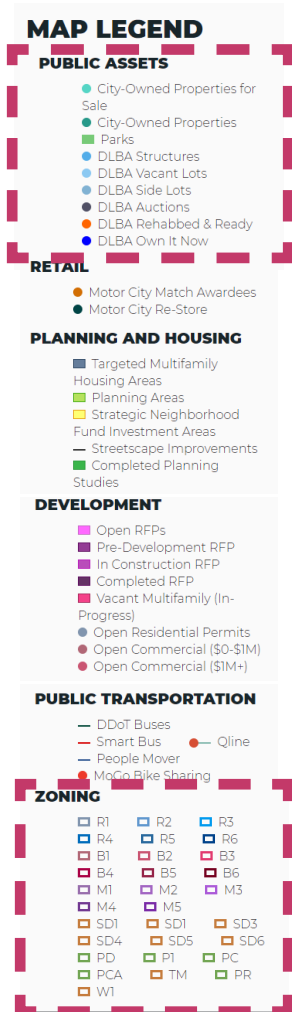
Michigan Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects:
517-485-4116

Finding a publicly-owned property to buy

www.DetroitDevelopment.org is Detroit's Real Estate Development portal. You can use the website to understand if a property is owned by the City or the Land Bank and to check property zoning. Here are the five easy steps you can follow to evaluate which publicly owned property to purchase for your land based project.

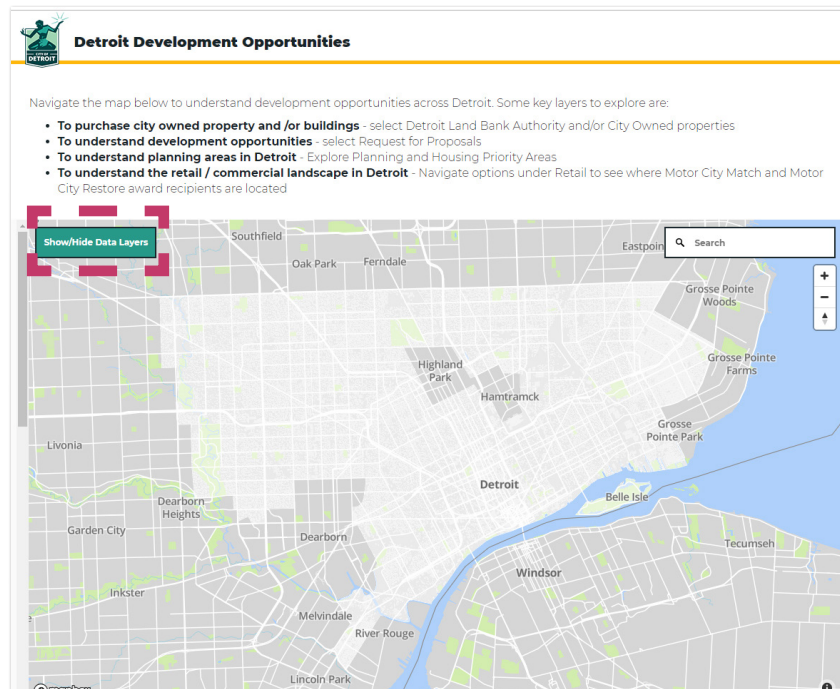


A) To begin, visit www.DetroitDevelopment.org and click on "Opportunities."



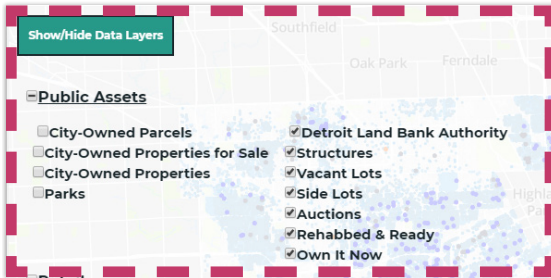
B) Check out the map legend

Use the legend to the left of the map to check for available property from the City and Land Bank, and for property zoning. Once you know what Map Legend items you are looking for, click on "Show/Hide Data Layers." You can filter the map by property ownership and zoning by clicking on different categories under "Public Assets" and "Zoning."



C) Select your map layers

After clicking on “Show/Hide Data Layers”, check the boxes to select which layers you would like to view. Only select the layers you need. The map contains many layers that many not apply to land based projects.



Website Tips!

- Start with “zoning” and “public assets” and explore more later.
- The website is not yet mobile-friendly, so use a desktop or laptop computer, not your cell phone.
- You can use a computer at the Detroit Land Bank Authority or your local public library if you don’t have one at home. See **page 8** for contact info.
- If you are looking for land to purchase, select only “Vacant lots” and “City-owned properties” and unclick “Sidelots.”

D) Find your property and view the sidebar information

Use the zoom keys (+/-) in the upper right corner of the map to find your property, or type the address into the search box. Click on any parcel to select it. This will bring up an informational sidebar to the right and a glossary of terms.

E) Record the address to apply and use in Packet 3. Purchase land

You can find more information on purchasing land in **Packet 3. Purchase land** at www.DetroitMi.gov/Land or the BSEED Development Resource Center at 2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 434.

PUBLIC ASSETS

- City-Owned Properties for Sale
- City-Owned Properties
- Parks
- DLBA Structures
- DLBA Vacant Lots
- DLBA Side Lots
- DLBA Auctions
- DLBA Rehabbed & Ready
- DLBA Own It Now

RETAIL

- Motor City Match Awardees
- Motor City Re-Store

INFO GLOSSARY

15877 BAYLIS

Key Data¹

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 15877 BAYLIS, DETROIT, MI, 48238
OWNER: GRAVES-DOUGLAS, CAMILLE
OWNER ADDRESS: 15877 BAYLIS ST, DETROIT, MI, 48238-1539
ZONING: R2
COUNCIL DISTRICT: 2

Ready to buy a property or get your permit?

If you are ready to buy a property, see **Packet 3. Purchase land** for more information on how to buy from the City and Land Bank. If you have a property and want to get your permit, see **Packet 4. Permitting**. Both of these are available at www.DetroitMi.gov/land or at 2 Woodward Avenue.

Important Contact Information

Contact	Location	Contact Information
Coleman A. Young Municipal Center (CAYMC)	2 Woodward Ave.	
Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED)	2 Woodward Ave. 4th Floor	Development Resource Center: 313-224-2372 drc@detroitmi.gov Zoning Office: 313-224-1317 zoning@detroitmi.gov Plumbing: 313-224-3157
Detroit Land Bank Authority (Land Bank)	500 Griswold St. Suite 1200	1-844-BUY-DLBA
Detroit Building Authority (DBA)	1301 3rd Ave. 3rd Floor	313-224-0174
City Planning Commission	2 Woodward Ave. Suite 208	313-224-6225
Detroit Public Safety Headquarters	1301 3rd Ave.	313-237-6394
Board of Zoning Appeals	2 Woodward Ave. Suite 212	313-224-3595
Detroit Public Library You can contact the main branch for information on your local library	Main Branch: 5201 Woodward Ave.	313-481-1300