



CITY OF BATTLE CREEK

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT - PLANNING AND ZONING

ONE PAGER PLUS

Honey Bee Registration

How to register to keep Honey Bees

1. Read through this document to identify the requirements and restrictions on beekeeping, necessary fencing, and necessary accessory structures.
2. Consult the fences OPP and accessory structures OPP for the requirements on constructing these required structures and the associated instructions for application.
3. On the [Application and Petitions](#) page of the City of Battle Creek's website, download and complete the Honey Bee Registration Form.
4. Click the "[Online Registration for Honey Bees](#)" link to navigate to the online honey bee registration application.
5. Search for the address of the project by number and street name.
6. Click the correct line for the address of the project.
7. Follow the prompts and submit when done. If you need more assistance, please see the section at the end of this document titled "Ready to Apply?".
8. A link will be sent to the email entered during the application process when the web request is processed by City staff.

What is needed to keep Honey Bees?

- Fence Permit (for foraging wall/fence).
- Accessory Structure Permit (for hives).
- A sketch of the property showing the proposed location of the hives.
- Specifications for the hives.

Note: You may contact the Planning and Zoning Division to obtain an aerial view of the subject lot to assist in showing the location of the hives, foraging wall/fence, and other structures.

General Requirements

Urban livestock is permitted on single and two-family residential parcels when accessory to a permitted residential use. The owner of the honey bees must reside on the parcel where they are kept.

Honey bees shall be kept in the rear yard of the parcel, at least 30' from all adjacent property lines and 100' from residential structures located on adjacent properties. A 6' high solid wall or fence extending 15' beyond the hive on both sides shall be located 10-15' from the hive entrance to direct foraging bees above human height. An adequate and constant water source (as temperatures allow) shall be placed within 20' of the beehives and permanently maintained to prevent bees from congregating at other water sources where they may come into human, bird, or domestic pet contact.

Any beekeeping operations within the City of Battle Creek shall be compliant with the State of Michigan Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices for Beekeeping and Apiary Management. The section relevant for bees is located on page 120 of the 2024 document. The entire document is available at this link: [Care of Farm Animals GAAMPs 2024](#).

The property owner/contractor is responsible for making sure that the subject improvement is located within the property line and not the right-of-way or on an abutting property. An approval of a permit application by a City employee and the installation of the subject improvement does not negate this obligation.

The only way to be completely certain of the location of property lines is to have a property survey done by a licensed surveyor. If the accessory structure is being built near to a property line, it is recommended that the applicant hire a surveyor to verify the location of property lines and setbacks from those property lines.

Required Permits

Installation of the hives will require an Accessory Structure Permit. The required 6' wall or fence will require a Fence Permit. Keeping honey bees does not require a license, but it does require registration with the City of Battle Creek. The registration will identify the address, number, and placement of beehives and compliance with the requirements for keeping honey bees set forward in the Urban Livestock Ordinance ([608.30](#)).

If the property where the honey bees will be located is in a Historic District, a [Certificate of Appropriateness](#) will also be required. This application goes through the [Historic District Commission](#) and is needed to ensure that any work being done will be compatible with the existing neighborhood, that any existing historical feature is preserved to the best of the applicant's ability, and that any work being done during the project will not damage existing historic features on the property. A letter of approval from the Historic District Commission is required with the submission of an accessory structure permit for projects located in a Historic District.

To check if the property is in one of the City's local historic districts, please enter the address of the property into the map at the following link: [Historic Districts Map](#). If there are further questions about the property, please contact the Planning and Zoning Division at 269-966-3320.

Questions?

For the requirements for fence construction, please read our Fences One Pager Plus and [Section 1260.02](#) of the Zoning Ordinance. For the requirements for accessory structure construction, please read our Accessory Structure One Pager Plus and [Section 1260.01](#) of the Zoning Ordinance. For other questions related to keeping honey bees, please read [Section 608.30](#) "Urban Livestock" of the Zoning Ordinance. For other questions, please contact the Planning and Zoning Division directly at 269-966-3320.

Ready to Apply?

Honey bee keeping does not require an online application. It requires that the property owner register with the City of Battle Creek. Please begin by either reaching out to the Planning and Zoning Division directly at 269-966-3320 or by downloading and filling out the [Bee Hive Registration Form](#).

1. Please contact Planning and Zoning Staff at 269-966-3320 to confirm that the property meets the requirements for keeping bees and to answer any questions about the application process.
2. On the Applications & Petitions page of the City of Battle Creek's website, download and complete the Honey Bee Registration Form.

Honey Bee Registration

- [Bee Hive Registration One Pager Plus](#)
- [Honey Bee Registration Form](#)
- [Online Application for Honey Bee Registration](#)

3. Type in the number and street address of the project into the “Search For:” field. Press the “Search” button.

Property Search

Search By:

Search For:

4. Select the correct address from the list that appears. Click “Next”.

Owner Name	Address	Parcel Number
REEVES, LESTER R	14 FONDA AVE, BATTLE CREEK, MI 49014-4210	9030-00-017-0

Displaying items 1 - 1 of 1

5. Under “What type of permit are you applying for?”, select “Zoning” from the drop-down list. Under “Is this Project Residential or Commercial”, select “1 & 2 Family” from the drop-down list.

★ What type of permit are you applying for?

★ Is this Project Residential or Commercial?

6. As the fields appear, answer them as appropriate for the project. When prompted for what type of Residential Urban Livestock category, select “Honey Bee”.

Res Urban Livestock Permit Type selected. [Click Here](#) to select a different Permit Type.

★ Enter the category for which you wish to apply:

7. On the same page, describe the work in detail in the box provided. When finished, click “Next”.

★ Please describe the work to be done in detail:

Constructing a hive to the south of my property near a pond. Two 6' brick walls will be constructed 10' from the hive.

8. Verify that the information on the screen matches yours. If so, click the checkbox to certify that you are the homeowner and can apply for the permit. Please update the contact information with a phone number and email that are checked regularly. Click “Next”.

If the information below is incorrect, please contact the municipality to resolve the issue.

Name: REEVES,LESTER R

Address: No Data to Display

★ ☒ I certify that I am the owner of the property listed above.

Contact Information

★ Name: REEVES,LESTER R

★ Phone Number: (269) 966-3382

★ Email Address: adsulak@battlecreekmi.gov

★ Confirm Email: adsulak@battlecreekmi.gov

Homeowner Phone

Number:

Homeowner Email:

9. Select “Honey Bee Permit App – No Fee” from the list of available fees by clicking the “Add” button. Click “OK” on the pop-up to select 1 fee for a single application. Click “Next”.

Available Fees

Fee Description	Category	
Duck Permit Application Fee	Standard Item	Add
Hen Permit Application Fee	Residential	Add
Honey Bee Permit App - No Fee	Standard Item	Add
Quail Permit Application Fee	Standard Item	Add

Selected Fees

Fee Description	Fee	Quantity	
Honey Bee Permit App - No Fee	\$0.00	1.00	Remove
No additional fees found.			
Total Estimated Fees:		\$0.00	

10. Attach a completed application (which can be found [here](#)) and the required site plan showing the hive and related fences/walls as discussed in this guide and the application. Click “Next”.

Document Title	Status	Description	File Name		
Application	Optional			✓	Attach File
Enclosure Information	Optional			✓	Attach File

Add Additional Document

11. Review the information and disclaimers. Accept any disclaimers after reviewing them by clicking the checkbox. Click “Submit”.
12. After the application intake has been completed by the Administrative Assistant, payment will be made available.

Disclaimer	Accept
The property owner/contractor is responsible for making sure that the subject improvement is located within the property line and not the right-of-way or on an abutting property. An approval of a permit application and the installation of the subject improvement by a City employee does not negate this obligation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

★ Accepted By: REEVES,LESTER R

