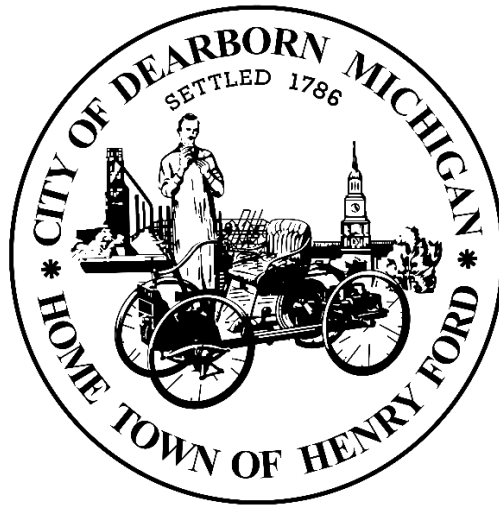


PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

City of Dearborn



Created: April 2, 2015
Revised: January 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Participation Goals and Objectives	3
State Regulations	4
Outreach Strategies	5
Key Stakeholders	6
Public Participation Toolbox	9
Communicating Results	13
Evaluation and Improvement	13
Closing	14
Appendix One: Assessing the Community’s Readiness for Engagement	15
Appendix Two: Engaging Historically Marginalized Stakeholders	17
Appendix Three: Hosting Public Participation Meetings and Events Planning Worksheet	18
Appendix Four: Community Participation Event Satisfaction Survey	20
Appendix Five: Internal Public Participation Event Evaluation	21

INTRODUCTION

Public participation, when properly executed, builds community consensus and strengthens sense of place. Creating a culture of collaborative visioning enriches democracy by allowing citizens to voice their ideas, not just their complaints. A public participation plan is essential for outlining how the public will be engaged throughout the planning and development process. The plan allows for interactions to share and receive information in ways that are adjusted in content and intensity to the size and scope of the project at hand. In addition, the plan acts as a tool for accountability and transparency, requiring the city to often seek public input as well as record and share the results of those efforts. Furthermore, the public participation plan conserves resources in the long-run by evaluating the most valuable ways to engage the public. The plan will be updated regularly to reflect success and areas in need of improvement, leading embedding of an increasingly strong culture of public involvement the city government.

PARTICIPATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The City of Dearborn strives to be a city *of the people*. City staff draws on a variety of methods of communication and outreach in order to understand what our citizenry want and think. The goals of our Public Participation Plan are outlined below.

Solicit public participation in each phase of planning processes. Throughout the multiple phases of a planning process, extensive participation components are, and will continue to be, incorporated to foster public participation. Proactive participation denotes early and continuous involvement in important policy or project decisions before they are finalized. There are many opportunities for the public to play a role in shaping short- and long-term needs, solutions and funding priorities. The earlier the public is involved in the process, the greater the opportunity to influence important land-use decisions.

Seeking broad identification and representative involvement of all residents of the community. The diverse characteristics and needs of residents require different communication and outreach techniques.

Utilize effective and equitable avenues for distributing information and receiving comments. There are many techniques and mechanisms available to ensure that a diverse public is well-informed and able to play a role in the planning process. Recognizing that no single technique or mechanism will work in all cases, it is up to the city to consider the special communications needs of the public and use the best approaches to accomplish this objective.

Provide educational materials and design participation initiatives that will support and encourage active and effective participation. Effective participation in the decision-making process requires an understanding of land-use issues and the framework for making local investment decisions. Planning professionals and officials need to be well-versed in and employ visualization techniques that optimize public understanding of issues and concepts. Visualization techniques can be especially helpful with specific sites or areas of re-development.

Develop and maintain staff expertise in all aspects of participation. This includes techniques for bridging language, cultural, and economic differences that affect participation; approaches to convey issues and information in meaningful ways to various cultural groups; and means for ensuring equitable representation for all segments of the population and sectors of the economy.

Support and encourage continuous improvement in the methods used to meet the public need for information and involvement. Public information and involvement methods are continually evolving. The municipality is committed to seeking new and innovative ways to engage and keep the public involved throughout the process.

Record results of public engagement and recount these results back to the public. To properly capture the concerns, priorities, and vision of the public, the city will develop a system to track the various techniques and mechanisms of public input. To maintain transparency and consistency, the city will develop a method for sharing participation and the results with the public.

Measuring success of public engagement. Creating measurable outcomes where possible and tying those to the evaluation section of the public participation strategy. This will help determine the best and most effective outreach the community may provide without exhausting available resources.

STATE REGULATIONS

State of Michigan legislation details the minimum requirements for public participation. Dearborn abides by this legislation and strives to go above and beyond the traditional practices to be proactive in soliciting public input for all projects. Below are the laws regarding public input set by the state.

OPEN MEETINGS ACT (PA 267 OF 1976)

The Michigan Open Meetings Act was created to require most meetings of public bodies to be open to the public, to require notice and the keepings of minutes of the meetings. The entirety of the act can be accessed at the following website address: <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-267-of-1976.pdf>

MICHIGAN PLANNING ENABLING ACT (PA 33 OF 2008)

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act was created to provide for county, city, and village planning and codify laws regarding it. In particular, the minimum notice and public hearing requirements for creation and adoption of a community master plan are specified in detail. The entirety of the act can be accessed at the following website address: <https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-33-of-2008.pdf>

MICHIGAN ZONING ENABLING ACT (PA 110 OF 2006)

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act was created to provide for the adoption of zoning ordinances regulating the development and use of land by local units of government. In particular, it establishes minimum notice and public hearing requirements for the following:

- Adoption/amendment of zoning ordinances and maps (including rezonings) by the City Plan Commission and City Council
- Consideration of zoning variances by the Zoning Board of Appeals
- Consideration of zoning ordinance interpretations by the Zoning Board of Appeals
- Consideration of site plans by the City Plan Commission
- Consideration of special land uses by the City Plan Commission
- The entirety of the act can be accessed at the following website address: <https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-110-of-2006.pdf>

RECODIFIED TAX INCREMENT FINANCING ACT (PA 57 OF 2018)

This act was created to provide for the establishment of downtown development and corridor improvement authorities by local units of government to focus and coordinate efforts to improve

downtown areas in those communities. The act defines the structure, roles, responsibilities and powers of the authority, including required public notices and hearings for the establishment of the authority and its operations. The entirety of the act can be accessed at the following website address:
<https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-57-of-2018.pdf>

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT FINANCING ACT (PA 381 OF 1996)

This act was created to provide for the establishment of brownfield redevelopment authorities by local units of government to oversee the use of various incentives to aid in the redevelopment of brownfields (contaminated and/or obsolete properties). The act defines the structure, roles, responsibilities and powers of the authority, including required public notices and hearings for the establishment of the authority and its operations. The entirety of the act can be accessed at the following website address:
<https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-381-of-1996.pdf>

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ACT (PA 338 OF 1974)

This act provides for the creation of public economic development corporations by local units of government to provide additional tools for economic development and revitalization efforts in that community. The act defines the structure, roles, responsibilities and powers of the authority, including required public notices and hearings for the establishment of the authority and its operations. The entirety of the act can be accessed at the following website address:
<https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-338-of-1974.pdf>

OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Stakeholder engagement, feedback and participation within city affairs ensures that planning decisions made by the City of Dearborn align with community priorities. The city strives to include public involvement in the planning process, from early stages through final implementation. While the city welcomes resident engagement throughout the year, participation within the processes listed below actively determines the long-term development of the community:

- Master Land Use Plan updates
- Parks & Recreation Plan updates
- Capital Improvement Program updates
- Downtown Development Authority and Corridor Improvement Authority Plan updates
- Zoning Ordinance Text and Map Amendments
- Brownfield Plans
- Zoning Board of Appeals Hearings
- Planning Commission Special Land Use & Site Plan Review Hearings

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Below is a list of groups that are able to assist in and enhance the public participation process, as well as identify groups that are often not at the visioning table. During each public event the list will be reviewed in order to make sure that the appropriate people and groups are involved. Since groups and businesses, and their associates, are constantly changing, this list only serves as a reference on which to build upon for each event.

- City Authorities, Boards and Commissions
 - Office of the Mayor
 - City Council
 - Planning Commission
 - Zoning Board of Appeals
 - East and West Dearborn Downtown Development Authorities
 - East and West Dearborn Development Area Citizens Councils
 - Parking Advisory Commission (public parking systems in downtowns)
 - Warren and Dix-Vernor Business District Improvement Authorities
 - Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
 - Economic Development Corporation
 - Disability Concerns Commission
 - Historical Commission
 - Housing Commission
 - Library Commission
 - Recreation & Parks Commission
 - Senior Citizens Commission
 - Youth Affairs Commission
- City Departments
 - Communications
 - Public Health
 - Police Department
 - Fire Department
 - Economic Development Department
 - Public Works & Facilities Department
 - Parks & Recreation Department
 - Historical Museum
 - Dearborn Public Libraries
- Other Government Agencies
 - Dearborn Public Schools: School Board, Administration & Parent Teacher Student Associations
 - Henry Ford College: Administration & Student Council
 - Neighboring Cities
 - Detroit
 - Dearborn Heights
 - Melvindale

- Allen Park
 - Wayne County Departments/Agencies
 - Economic Development
 - Health, Human & Veteran Services
 - Public Services
 - Environmental Services
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Wayne County Sheriff
 - Great Lakes Water Authority
 - Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
 - SMART (Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation)
 - State of Michigan
 - Department of Transportation
 - Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
 - Department of Health and Human Services
 - Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity
 - Department of Natural Resources
 - Michigan State Police
 - Michigan Economic Development Corporation
 - University of Michigan-Dearborn: Administration & Student Organizations
- Local Organizations
 - ACCESS
 - American Arab Chamber of Commerce
 - Bike Dearborn
 - Dearborn Allied War Veterans Council
 - Dearborn Area Board of Realtors
 - Dearborn Area Chamber of Commerce
 - Dearborn Area Interfaith Network/ Religious Institutions
 - Dearborn Community Arts Council
 - Dearborn Community Fund
 - Dearborn Education Foundation
 - Friends of the Library-Dearborn (FOLD)
 - Friends of the Rouge
 - Friends for the Animals of Metro Detroit
 - Healthy Dearborn
 - The Henry Ford
 - Leaders Advancing & Helping Communities (LAHC)
 - Neighborhood Associations/ Dearborn Federation of Neighborhood Associations
 - Subdivision & Condominium Homeowners Associations
 - Service Clubs (Exchange, Goodfellows, Kiwanis, Rotary Club, Museum Guild, Lions Club, AAUW, Garden Club, etc.)

- Large employers
 - AAA Michigan
 - Beaumont Health
 - Cleveland Cliffs Steel
 - Dearborn Public Schools
 - Ford Motor Company
- Large Land Owners
 - Ford Land
 - Centennial Water Fairlane LLC (Fairlane Town Center)
- Important stakeholder groups not represented by agencies/organizations
 - Persons with barriers to participation based on issues such as language, childcare, work schedule, transportation, and/or disabilities
 - Unaffiliated residents
 - Business owners & landlords outside defined business district authority areas
 - Workers that are employed in Dearborn but do not live in the city (daytime population increases about 50% with commuters coming to the city), these are patrons of local businesses and potential future residents

The Downtown Development Authorities and Chamber of Commerce have a great track record of getting the businesses community involved in the public participation process. Many community members and local groups, such as homeowner associations, also remain active in public participation. Dearborn is fortunate to be full of active residents that strive to make their community better. However, the city is always trying to get more and more residents involved. The city uses various methods of communication to attempt to reach a variety of audiences.

accessibility to downtown the most limited within the city. Schools, parks and libraries are dispersed throughout the city, making them ideal locations to reach out to each neighborhood.

Minority populations are traditionally underrepresented in public processes. Dearborn's population is roughly 86% White, 4% Hispanic, 4% Black, 2% Asian, and 4% other (including 2 or more races). Using a variety of communication methods to get residents to a workshop, such as postcards, flyers, emails, and texts, could increase representation from minority populations. Having meetings in neighborhood spaces, instead of downtown areas, could increase minority representation.

The majority of Dearbornites speak English; 48% speak only English. There are several other languages spoken in Dearborn, with Arabic representing the majority. In order to prevent miscommunications, the City makes accommodations if it is found that a language barrier may be a factor in reaching the intended audience for a public outreach effort. Minority representation is just as important as representation from all ages, races, education levels, income levels, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

BASIC ANNOUNCEMENT METHODS FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS INCLUDE:

- Announcements sent to traditional media: newspapers, radio, TV
- Website postings
- Flyers
- Council meeting announcements
- Postcard mailings
- Attachments to water bills
- Local cable TV announcements
- City social media and eNewsletter accounts

Strong partnerships and stakeholder engagement make education and collaborative visioning possible. Committed to getting wide-ranging public input, Dearborn uses creative and innovative strategies along with the more traditional methods. Below is a list and description of methods employed in the past, and those likely to be explored in the future.

SURVEYS

Surveys are useful for identifying specific areas of interest or concentration from a broad scope of ideas or issues. These areas of interest can then be further explored using other methods like the ones outlined below. A community may use a survey to identify where to start in the planning process, or the general climate surrounding a topic. They should not be used as the sole method of public input. It is helpful for a municipality to administer surveys with partners. For example, schools can send surveys home with children, churches can have them available to fill out and neighborhood groups can distribute them. As with most public input efforts, it is best to vary the delivery method (mailed, handed out, electronic) and include bilingual messages where applicable. Technology has increased delivery methods of surveys, including via social media and mobile phone texting.

WORKSHOPS

Workshops can be as simple as a series of question-and-answer sessions or as creative as developing a board game. Often, workshops are a great way to educate the community and hear concerns, questions, and ideas.

There are a variety of venues in Dearborn that offer the needed space for workshops, depending on the scope of the project and expected attendance. The Ford Community and Performing Arts Center, Dearborn Administrative Center, libraries, school buildings, and meeting space in local businesses are often used for public meetings.

Asking a consultant to lead public involvement adds an objective and professional supervision to help participants resolve disagreements and develop effective solutions. During the last master plan process, McKenna & Associates were hired to conduct a thorough input process that included two visioning forums, a series of focus groups and a web survey.

FOCUS GROUPS

During the last master plan input process, focus groups were identified by the City Plan Commission and staff to prioritize issues and gather input on specific questions. Groups that were involved in the five meetings, ranging in size from three to 20 people, included:

- Downtown Development Authorities
 - Dearborn Schools PTSA's
 - City residents in specific areas or with specific areas of interest
 - Civic & Neighborhood Organizations
 - Seniors/Library Board/Historical Society
 - Chamber of Commerce & Businesses
- ACCESS

STEERING COMMITTEES

These are focus groups that repeatedly meet and will differ depending on the needs of a community. They are perfect for concerned residents, underrepresented groups, or groups that may have specific needs in a community, such as students or seniors. This is an opportunity for a municipality to draw from the expertise of residents, perhaps organizing a steering committee of real estate professionals, business owners and brokers to offer feedback on a specific plan or issue.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Technology offers a unique opportunity to give and receive information to a mass of people. Municipalities can post events, share information and even solicit feedback. This public participation method is best used in conjunction with other methods because it excludes those who do not use social media.

Social media's ability to drive community information, news, and opinion in real time helps the City realize operating efficiencies, garner resident engagement, and realize strategic objectives.

The City has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is "announced" or "spoken" on behalf of the City on social media sites. A written policy establishes internal procedures for the use of social media by City of Dearborn employees when posting for the City of Dearborn. Social media sites include Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram and other approved sites that are similar in content and/or character.

The Department of Communications manages and approves all social media accounts. This department is responsible for maintaining a robust social media presence. Staff from other departments

may be approved to post in order to convey project specific content. Target audiences may differ by social media site. For example, business owners and professionals through LinkedIn or parents and creatives by Pinterest, Instagram, and Facebook generally have a wider audience that spans age groups, and Twitter skews to a younger audience.

Social media can be used to update audiences on progress of a project, distribute meeting notifications, solicit feedback from surveys or general comments, and generally engage and inform users. The City's complete Social Media Policy can be found at the Dearborn Administrative Center.

- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Dearborngov>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/dearborngov/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Dearborngov/>
- TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@dearborncitygov?lang=en>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofdearborn>

WEBSITES

Websites offer an ever-present, easily-accessible method for distributing information, 24 hours a day, and 365 days a year. Users know where to go to get the information or can search for content online. Dearborn's website offers a practical platform to access an abundant database of contact information, service offerings, project information, and much more.

- Website: <https://cityofdearborn.org/>

PHONE/MOBILE

Texting is considered to be a technology that most people have access to and know how to use. Texting potentially reaches the widest audience. Children and young adults with mobile devices are more likely to communicate via text than other traditional and social media methods. Senior and low-income populations are the most likely to not text, but more and more are gaining access every day. Texting technology, such as Nixle, is becoming more affordable and widespread.

LOCAL EVENTS

Local events provide an opportunity to engage the public out in the community. Different events will provide access to different demographics and opportunities for different types of engagement activities. Outreach at local events should be tailored to the issue, target audience and venue in order to create a productive result, even if that is just to make citizens aware of an issue and direct them to other opportunities to engage.

NEWS/MEDIA

As with social networking and for the same reasons, the Department of Communications manages the official contacts with news & media outlets.

COMMUNICATING RESULTS

Results from public participation sessions will be communicated back to the public by including it in the final plan document. Media can also be released immediately following a public input session to publish how many people attended and solicit further participation for future meetings. Where required or appropriate meeting minutes will be published to the city website. This demonstrates that the responses were heard, shows that public input is desired, and creates an environment of transparency.

Surveys: Surveys will be compiled by a consultant or city staff after the survey is complete. Results will be posted online or in the appendix of the plan.

Community workshops: City staff is in charge of taking notes during workshops and charrettes. These notes will be shared at the end of the event as well as posted on a plan website if applicable. The notes will also be part of the plan appendix.

Focus groups: Focus groups results will be kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless otherwise requested.

Steering committees: Meeting minutes will be taken by the committee secretary or staff and made available to the public when appropriate.

Social networking, Website, Phone/Mobile and News/Media: The Department of Communications shares results, when applicable by these channels.

Local events: City staff is in charge of taking notes during workshops and charrettes. These notes will be shared at the end of the event as well as posted on a plan website if applicable. The notes will also be part of the plan appendix.

EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Continuous review of our public input processes is the only way that Dearborn will remain a thriving and connected community. The residents are what make Dearborn such a great city to live in. Dearborn residents' passion, dedication, and creativity are irreplaceable in the planning processes of the City. Therefore, reflection on communication and involvement efforts is needed to verify that optimal methods are used. The Department of Communications will engage appropriate departmental staff to track participation.

Each plan and project shall include a Public Participation Review. Documentation will contribute to a public participation process that is continuously evolving to better obtain public input. To ensure that methods are always cutting edge and effective, the Public Participation will be reviewed annually and updated when necessary. Methods that have failed will not be removed from the P3, but will be reviewed and documented so that the same mistakes will not be made in the future.

CLOSING

The strength of our City can only be measured by the satisfaction of our residents and business owners. An inclusive and easily accessible Public Participation plan will ensure that the future of Dearborn is secure and represents the best attributes of our community. Creating a culture of collaborative visioning enriches democracy by allowing residents the opportunity to engage and influence their government. This plan is to be used and reviewed as a daily guide to best incorporate the public into decisions that affect their community.

APPENDIX ONE

Assessing the Community's Readiness for Engagement

1. What are we hoping to achieve through community engagement? When we receive that input, will we be able to act on it?
2. When is it critical that we collect this input? Should some input gathering be postponed to a later phase of the project? How will postponing engagement to a later phase affect the long-term project goals?
3. Do the engagements we want to host and the questions we want to ask reflect the current situation? How can we adapt our questions to acknowledge what is going on in the community and offer space for community members to talk about any issues they are currently dealing with?
4. Will anyone respond productively to our questions at this phase of the project?

APPENDIX TWO

Engaging Historically Marginalized Stakeholders

Historically marginalized communities have, by definition, been historically underrepresented in civic discourse by the existing processes of public participation. Therefore, to effectively connect with historically marginalized stakeholders, city staff must develop a purposeful engagement strategy that leverages the city's networks, civic hubs and engagement opportunities. In the list below we itemize a few discussion questions and strategy ideas to get staff on track for designing engagement that proactively reaches out to these stakeholders and identifies/removes barriers to their participation.

1. What individuals, businesses, organizations, institutions, etc. do you already work with or have worked with in the past and what communities of interest in the city are they members of or represent? What communities of interest are not represented?

2. What individuals, businesses, organizations, institutions, etc. are in or near your project area? What communities of interest in the city are they members of or represent? Are you missing any key communities of interest with relation to the scope and goals of the project?

3. What type of goals are going to be addressed by the project? Who will you need to help you reach these goals?

4. What barriers may exist that would prevent members of key stakeholder communities of interest from engaging fully in public participation events?
 - a. How can those events be located and scheduled to reduce those barriers?
 - b. What services can be provided at the events that would reduce those barriers?
 - c. How can the event be structured to reduce those barriers?

APPENDIX THREE

Hosting Public Participation Meetings and Events Planning Worksheet

1. Method of Engagement:

2. Goal(s) of Engagement:

3. Description of Activities/Brief Outline of Agenda:

4. Date(s)/Times(s):

5. Location/Space (consider capacity/ space setup requirements):

6. Number of People to be Engaged:

7. Partners:

8. Volunteers (number, source, training):

9. Goods/Services Provided (amenities such as food, drinks, childcare, etc.):

10. Licenses/Permits/Insurance Needed:

11. Promotion Methods:

12. Budget (itemized materials/services & costs):

13. Funding Sources:

14. Metrics (Measures of success to be tracked):

APPENDIX FIVE

Internal Public Participation Event Evaluation

- 1. Title/purpose of event:**

- 2. Date:**

- 3. Type of public participation:**

- 4. Location of event:**

- 5. How as event promoted:**

- 6. Who facilitated/hosted the event:**

- 7. How many people intended? How does this compare to target attendance? Were there underrepresented groups?**

- 8. Are there ways this could be improved for future events?**