



2024

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The City of Inkster
Byron Nolen, Mayor



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PURPOSE & SCOPE 01

Outlines the overall goals and objectives of the public participation plan, as well as defining its boundaries and focus areas.

CENTERING THE COMMUNITY 05

This section emphasizes the importance of putting the community at the heart of decision-making processes, ensuring their needs, perspectives, and voices are central throughout.

SHARING POWER 08

Explore strategies and mechanisms to distribute decision-making power more equitably between the community and stakeholders, fostering collaboration and inclusivity.

EVALUATE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION 09

This section discusses methods and criteria for assessing the effectiveness and impact of implemented policies on the community and stakeholders.

CONCLUSION 09

Summarizes key findings and outcomes, reaffirming the commitment to ongoing community engagement and participation.

Public Participation Plan

PURPOSE & SCOPE

This plan offers a structured framework to ensure that public participation is meaningful and inclusive, fostering informed decision-making that aligns with community needs and priorities. The strategies outlined alongside the goals serve as pathways to achieving these objectives and are intentionally broad, with specific steps and action plans developed during the implementation phase. The priorities of this plan, listed in order of presentation, are:

Plan Priorities

MEASURING IMPACT (GOALS)	STRATEGIES
1. Laying the Groundwork	1.1 Form a Core Team 1.2 Create a Road Map & Budget 1.3 Develop a Communication Strategy & Materials
2. Centering the Community	2.1 Listen, Learn, & Gather Stories 2.2 Document Frequently Used Tools 2.3 Facilitate Cross-Sector Collaboration 2.4 Master Plan 2.5 Boards & Commissions
3. Make Data-Driven Decisions	3.1 Organize & Analyse the Data 3.2 Evidence-Based Recommendations 3.3 Public Reporting & Sharing Stories
4. Make Government Accountable	4.1 Sharing Power 4.2 Build Community Trust 4.3 Build Capacity
5. Evaluate Policy Implementation	5.1 Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 5.2 Continuous Improvement & Strategy Updates

STATE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

The City of Inkster is committed to fostering diverse public participation in its planning processes, guided by state statutes and local policies.

MICHIGAN OPEN MEETINGS ACT

Under the Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976), all meetings of the City of Inkster will be held at the City Hall Council Chambers, located at 26215 Trowbridge, ensuring accessibility for the public.

- Regular Meetings: The public will receive notice within 10 days of the first meeting of each calendar or fiscal year. A list stating the dates, times, and locations of all regular meetings will be publicly posted at the principal office of the public body.
- Schedule Changes: Any changes to the meeting schedule will be posted within three days of the meeting where the change was decided, indicating the new dates, times, and locations of regular meetings.
- Special and Irregular Meetings: Notices for special and irregular meetings will be posted at least 18 hours in advance.
- Recessed Meetings: If a regular meeting of a public body is recessed for more than 36 hours, it can only reconvene with an 18-hour advance notice.
- Emergency Sessions: Emergency sessions may be held without prior notice or time constraints if public health, safety, or welfare is severely threatened, and two-thirds of the body's members approve.
- Public Notification: Citizens can request to be added to a mailing list to receive advance notice of all meetings by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (313)-563-9769.

MICHIGAN PLANNING ENABLING ACT

According to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), the following entities will be notified by the planning commission (or legislative body if no planning commission exists) via first-class mail, personal delivery, or electronic mail regarding the intent to plan and requesting cooperation and comments:

- The county where the municipality is located.
- The regional planning commission for the region where the municipality is located.
- If no county planning commission exists, the county planning commission is the county board of commissioners for the county where the municipality is located.

- Each public utility company, railroad company, and public transportation agency owns or operates within the local government's jurisdiction, along with any government entity that registers its name and mailing address for planning commission notifications.
- If the master plan includes a master street plan, the county road commission and the state transportation department.

After submission of the draft master plan to the legislative body for review and approval, it will be distributed to the entities for their review. Before approving the proposed master plan, the planning commission will hold at least one public hearing, scheduled after the comment deadline specified in the act.

MEASURING IMPACT

1. Laying the Groundwork

1.1 Form a Core Team

- **Key Stakeholders:** The City maintains vital partnerships with community groups, boards and commissions, and neighboring governments, essential for our community's growth and prosperity. These organizations include:
 - Inkster Chamber of Commerce
 - Inkster Task Force
 - Commission on Ageing
 - Planning Commission & ZBA
 - Michigan Department of Transportation
 - Michigan Economic Development Corporation
 - South East Michigan Council of Governments
 - Starfish Family Services
 - Wayne Westland-Schools
 - Wayne County¹
 - We Rise Program

¹ **Recommendation:** Establish a dedicated core team comprising stewards who work within the municipality, representing key departments and functions. This team will oversee and coordinate all aspects of the public participation initiative, ensuring diverse perspectives and expertise are integrated into the planning process. For more information on the process of developing a core team, please see **Appendix A**.

1.2 Create a Road Map & Budget

- Develop a comprehensive road map outlining the public participation plan's timeline, milestones, and objectives. Allocate a realistic budget to support outreach efforts, technology infrastructure, and personnel and public training.

1.3 Develop a Communication Strategy & Materials

- The City of Inkster utilizes a blend of traditional and modern tools to inform and engage residents, organizations, and businesses. This approach ensures effective communication, active participation in local governance, and transparency in decision-making processes. The following table outlines a range of tools that can be used:

Communication Tools Table

Tool	Use Description
Website	A central hub for municipal information, including announcements, meeting schedules, documents, and services. https://www.cityofinkster.com/
Social Media	Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc., for reaching a broad audience, sharing updates, conducting polls/surveys, and interacting with residents. Facebook pages currently include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>City of Inkster: City Hall</u>• <u>City of Inkster: Staff</u>• <u>City of Inkster: Dept. of Public Services</u>• <u>City of Inkster: Dozier Recreation Complex</u>
Email Newsletters	Regular emails to subscribers providing updates on meetings, initiatives, project updates, and opportunities for public input.
Public Meetings	In-person or virtual meetings (town halls, forums, workshops) to engage residents directly, gather feedback, and address concerns.
Press Releases & Media	Issuing press releases to local media to inform the public about announcements, policy changes, and community events.
Public Notices	Physical notices in public spaces and publishing in local newspapers to announce meetings, hearings, and important decisions.

Newspaper Posting	Announcements and advertisements in local newspapers to inform the community about upcoming meetings and events.
Code Red System	City of Inkster's emergency notification system for delivering alerts and updates to residents via phone calls, texts, and emails in times of emergencies or urgent situations
Surveys and Feedback Forms	Online tools for residents to provide feedback on projects, policies, services, etc., helping guide decision-making
Community Events and Workshops	Hosting events and workshops to facilitate face-to-face interaction, dialogue, and relationship-building with residents
Collaboration Platforms	Online platforms (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Slack, Google Workspace) for internal communication, project coordination, and information sharing among staff, elected officials, and appointees.
The City of Inkster App	A comprehensive and accessible hub for all civil-related information, fostering transparency, awareness, and active participation.

MEASURING IMPACT

2. Centering the Community

2.1 Listen, Learn, & Gather Stories

- **Community Forums:** Schedule community town halls and forums regularly (e.g., monthly or quarterly) to create consistency and make it easier for residents to participate. This regularity helps build trust and anticipation among community members.
- **Surveys and Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement surveys, online forms, and feedback boxes at community centers and online platforms to gather input from residents.
- **Storytelling Sessions:** Host storytelling events or workshops to encourage residents to share personal narratives and community histories. They create opportunities for individuals to share their voices, celebrate and preserve their histories, and work together towards a more understanding and unified community.

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² **Storytelling Sessions: Why They Matter:** When people hear each other's stories, they gain a deeper understanding of their neighbors' experiences and backgrounds, leading to increased empathy and a sense of belonging. Funders are often more moved by personal stories and real-life examples than by abstract data or statistics alone. For more information on implementing story telling formats, please see **Appendix B.**

2.2: Document Frequently Used Tools

- **Resource Directory:** Develop and maintain a comprehensive directory of local resources, services, and programs available to residents.
- **Digital Platforms:** Create a user-friendly online portal or app such as Code Red where residents can easily access information about local government services, utilities, emergency contacts, etc.
- **Workshops and Tutorials:** Offer workshops or online tutorials to educate residents on how to utilize available tools and resources effectively.

2.3: Facilitate Cross-Sector Collaboration

- **Partnership Forums:** Host regular meetings or workshops bringing together representatives from government agencies, non-profits, businesses, educational institutions, and community organizations.
- **Joint Initiatives:** Collaborate on joint initiatives such as community events, educational programs, or infrastructure projects that benefit multiple sectors.
- **Resource Sharing:** Establish mechanisms for sharing resources, expertise, and funding opportunities among different sectors.

2.4 Master Plan

- As part of our commitment to shaping a vibrant and thriving community, the City is currently in the process of updating its Master Plan. The Master Plan centers the community by incorporating several key approaches that ensure the needs, values, and aspirations of residents and stakeholders are at the forefront of the planning process.
- The City of Inkster is updating its Master Plan to guide future policies on housing, economic development, and infrastructure, prioritizing input from residents, business owners, and stakeholders to align with community aspirations. We engage the public by encouraging participation through surveys, interactive maps, and community sessions, ensuring input from residents, business owners, and stakeholders shapes Inkster's future. Residents also have the opportunity to participate directly by attending upcoming input sessions at City Hall or National Night Out.

2.5 Boards & Commissions

- Integrating planning-related boards and commissions into the public participation plan strengthens community engagement, transparency, and the effectiveness of planning processes. By fostering collaboration and sharing information, the municipality can ensure that the voices of stakeholders and experts in urban planning contribute to shaping a sustainable and inclusive future for Inkster.

MEASURING IMPACT

3. Make Data-Driven Decisions

By analyzing data, the City of Inkster can identify specific community needs, measure the impact of their initiatives, allocate resources more effectively, and enhance transparency and accountability. This approach not only improves the efficiency of participation efforts but also ensures that they are responsive to the actual needs and preferences of the community, fostering continuous improvement and stronger public trust.

3.1 Organize & Analyze the Data:

- Establish a systematic approach to collecting relevant data, including demographic trends, economic indicators, environmental assessments, and community feedback.
- Utilize data analytics tools to organize and analyze the collected data, identifying key insights and trends that inform planning decisions. Here are some commonly used tools:
 - **Tableau**
 - **Microsoft Power BI**
 - **Google Analytics**

3.2 Evidence-Based Recommendations:

- Develop recommendations based on the analysis of data, ensuring they are grounded in evidence and aligned with community priorities and goals identified through public participation.
- Present findings and recommendations in clear, accessible formats to facilitate understanding and engagement among stakeholders.

3.3 Public Reporting & Sharing Stories:

- Regularly report on the findings from data analysis and planning processes to the public through various channels, such as the city website, social media, and public meetings. Establish a clear timeline for data reporting, such as quarterly or annually.
- Share success stories and case studies that illustrate the impact of data-driven decisions on improving community outcomes, and fostering trust and accountability.³

³ **Reporting in Action: A Sample Success Story:** The City of Inkster utilized air quality testing data to identify pollution hotspots and implement targeted measures, which improved air quality by 18% and increased resident satisfaction with environmental initiatives.

MEASURING IMPACT

4. Sharing Power

4.1: Sharing Power

- Evaluate the establishment and effectiveness of advisory committees or task forces.
- Approval opportunities are allocated to or shared with community partners before final decisions are made.
- Assess the impact of shared power initiatives on policy outcomes and community satisfaction.

4.2 Build Community Trust

- Measure changes in community trust by gathering data and narratives that include self-reported feelings and observations of the public participation process. Here are some sample questions you can ask the public about community trust:

How much do you trust local government representatives and employees to:

- **Give you a say in decisions that affect you?**
- **Resolve problems that affect your community?**
- **Treat you as an equal?**
- **Ensure transparency and ethical conduct in their actions?**
- **Handle public resources responsibly?**
- **Uphold ethical standards in their work?**

4.3: Build Capacity

- Train government officials and residents on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives and policies to promote understanding and implementation within the community.
- Secure adequate funding to support comprehensive training and capacity-building initiatives including leadership and management, policy development, civic engagement, and technology and data analytics for government officials and community stakeholders.

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⁴ For a sample survey to collecting community data, please see **Appendix C**.

MEASURING IMPACT

5. Evaluate Policy Implementation

5.1 Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is a measurable value used to assess the effectiveness and impact of engagement activities and processes. KPIs provide specific metrics that help evaluate how well the public participation efforts are meeting their objectives and goals.

- Develop a set of relevant and measurable KPIs aligned with project goals and objectives.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate KPI performance to assess progress and identify areas needing attention.
- Use KPI data to inform decision-making, prioritize resource allocation, and demonstrate the impact of policies on community outcomes.

Key KPIs might include:

- **Participation Rates:** The number of residents attending meetings, responding to surveys, or engaging in other activities.
- **Timeliness:** How quickly feedback is collected and acted upon.
- **Satisfaction Levels:** The degree of satisfaction expressed by the public regarding the process and outcomes.
- **Impact of Task Forces or Stakeholder Groups:** The effectiveness of task forces or key stakeholder groups in addressing issues, making recommendations, and achieving specific objectives.

5.3: Continuous Improvement & Strategy Updates

- Implement feedback mechanisms and stakeholder consultations to gather input for continuous improvement.
- Track the frequency and scope of policy updates and strategy revisions based on evaluation findings.
- Utilize findings from impact assessments to inform policy adjustments, strategic realignment, and resource allocation based on community needs and feedback.

Conclusion

By centering the community, sharing power through transparent governance practices, and continuously evaluating policy implementation, we aim to ensure that decisions reflect the diverse needs and aspirations of our residents.

Appendix A

A. Form a Core Team

Sample roadmap may include the following activities:

August 2024 – September 2024

Define Objectives and Scope

Establish goals, target audiences, and key components of the public participation plan. Allocate initial funds for planning and staff time.

September 2024

Recruit Core Team

Identify, reach out, and select core team members.

September 2024 – October 2024

Onboard Core Team

Provide orientation, set up initial meetings, and develop a detailed work plan.

October 2024 – November 2024

Develop Budget and Resources

Finalize the implementation budget, including costs for events, materials, and outreach.

November 2024 – December 2024

Launch Initial Activities

Start awareness campaigns, distribute promotional materials, and conduct initial public meetings or events. Set aside funds for marketing, venue rental, and event logistics.

December 2024 – January 2025

Continued Public Engagement

Continue with public meetings, workshops, and feedback collection.

January 2025 – February 2025

Monitor and Evaluate Progress

Collect and analyze data on participation rates, feedback quality, and effectiveness.

February 2025

Review and Adjust the Plan

Analyze feedback and performance data, and make necessary adjustments to the plan including the budget.

Public Participation Plan Core Team Members

To ensure that the Public Participation Plan reflected the needs of all City of Inkster residents, it is crucial to ground the planning process in research and engage a broad range of organizations and community members including **local government officials, community leaders, business leaders, educational institutions, public health and safety experts, environmental and planning professionals, residents with lived experience, and technical and data specialists.** To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of your core team, it is advisable to keep the team size to a manageable number of stakeholders. This approach will facilitate clearer communication, streamline decision-making, and foster greater cohesion among members.

The following table offers an example of potential stakeholders for a core team in a public participation plan, featuring fictional names to illustrate possible roles. This sample may not include every relevant stakeholder from the categories listed above

Table 1. INKSTER STRATEGIC PLANNING MEMBERS

Alex Johnson	Councilmember, District 1
Jordan Lee	Social Media Administrator, City of Inkster
Taylor Smith	Community Planning & Development Director
Morgan Brown	Marketing Specialist & Consultant
Riley Green	Police & Fire Representative
Avery Davis	Data Analyst
Jamie Wilson	Resident and Community Volunteer

Table 1. INKSTER STRATEGIC PLANNING MEMBERS (Blank Table)

Appendix B

B. Story Telling Sessions

Here is a list of storytelling session formats that can be effectively implemented to collect data from residents as part of a public participation plan:

1. Community Story Circles

- **Description:** Small, informal groups where residents share personal stories and experiences related to the topic. Facilitated discussions help draw out common themes and insights.
- **Setting:** Community centers, local libraries, or online platforms.

2. Thematic Workshops

- **Description:** Sessions focused on specific themes or issues where participants tell stories and discuss their experiences related to the theme. Workshops may include activities or prompts to guide storytelling.
- **Setting:** Conference rooms, school auditoriums, or virtual meeting rooms.

3. Public Hearings

- **Description:** Formal meetings where residents present their stories and testimonies to a panel or audience. Public hearings can be structured with time limits for each speaker and opportunities for questions and discussion.
- **Setting:** City council chambers, town halls, or online streaming platforms.

4. Focus Groups

- **Description:** Facilitated group discussions with a small number of residents, encouraging detailed storytelling and dialogue about their experiences and perceptions on specific topics.
- **Setting:** Meeting rooms or virtual conferencing tools.

5. Interactive Surveys

- **Description:** Surveys that include open-ended questions allowing residents to share stories and detailed feedback. These can be enhanced with multimedia options, such as video or audio submissions.
- **Setting:** Online survey platforms or in-person survey stations.

6. Story Mapping

- **Description:** Participants create visual maps to tell their stories about their experiences with specific locations or community features. This can be done through drawing or using digital mapping tools.
- **Setting:** Community workshops or online mapping tools.

Appendix C

C. Community Trust Survey

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your responses will help us understand community trust levels and identify areas for improvement. Your feedback is invaluable in shaping our public participation plan and implementing key strategies.

Section 1: General Perceptions

- **How would you rate the overall trust within our community?**
 - Very High
 - High
 - Moderate
 - Low
 - Very Low
- **How confident are you in the ability of local government officials to make decisions in the best interest of the community?**
 - Very Confident
 - Somewhat Confident
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat Unconfident
 - Very Unconfident
- **Do you feel that local government and community organizations:**
 - **Give you a say in decisions that affect you?**
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - **Resolve problems that affect your community?**
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

- **Treat you as an equal?**
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
- **Ensure transparency and ethical conduct in their actions?**
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
- **Handle public resources responsibly?**
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
- **Uphold ethical standards in their work?**
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
- **Do you believe that City Council members use public participation as a legitimate way to vote on important issues?**
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

Section 2: Community Engagement

4. **How frequently do you feel your input is sought and valued by local government and community organizations?**
 - Very Frequently
 - Frequently
 - Occasionally
 - Rarely
 - Never
5. **How satisfied are you with how community organizations and local government communicate with residents?**
 - Very Satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Unsatisfied
 - Very Unsatisfied
6. **Do you feel that community engagement efforts effectively address the concerns and needs of diverse groups within the community?**
 - Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

Section 3: Personal Experiences

7. **Can you share a recent experience where you felt that your concerns were either well-addressed or poorly handled by local authorities?**
(Open-ended response)
8. **What improvements would you like to see in how local government and community organizations build and maintain trust with residents?**
(Open-ended response)
9. **Are there specific community events or activities that you believe effectively build trust and engagement? Please provide examples.**
(Open-ended response)

Section 4: Demographic Information (Optional)

10. **Which of the following best describes your role in the community?**

- Resident
- Business Owner
- Community Leader
- Local Government Official
- Other (please specify)

11. **How long have you lived or been involved in the community?**

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-7 years
- 8-15 years
- More than 15 years

12. **Please indicate your age group:**

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 and over

Thank you for your participation! Your feedback is crucial in helping us build a more connected and trustworthy community.