

APPENDIX E:

Public Participation Plan

Community engagement is a vital part of the planning process, ensuring that recommendations in various plans are based on a well-rounded understanding of community needs, values, issues, and opportunities. While land use and demographic analysis provide a baseline understanding of “facts on the ground” in the community, the voices, ideas, stories and observations of those who live, work, and play in Ironwood provide the critical expertise that shapes the values, vision, and priorities of key plans.

The City of Ironwood and any third party consultants facilitating public engagement, shall use the Public Participation Plan as needed on a per project basis. The City of Ironwood may utilize the public engagement strategies and tools that best engage the public based on, the size and scope of the individual project, state laws, and the effectiveness of that strategy.



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ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES (CONT.)

WALKABOUTS

Walkabouts offer candid feedback from a variety of stakeholders when discussing a specific area. They can be paired with community workshops or charrettes to measure the perceived safety and comfort of pedestrians in a downtown, neighborhood or corridor. Walkabouts are also useful for identifying desired design, problem properties or safety concerns. The public can be notified by the various methods mentioned in the basic announcement approach.

CHARRETTE

The charrette differs from a workshop because it is a multi-day event where designers and planners work on a plan in-between what are called “feedback loops.” Usually between three and seven days, citizens can come to the “charrette studio”, which is an office on a or near the location of the proposed plan or project. Citizens offer ideas while the charrette team facilitates and observes. From these suggestions, the designers and planners change the plan to suit community input and present their creation the next day where the community offers feedback again. This makes up one cycle of a “feedback loop”. There can be up to five feedback loops, resulting in a final plan shortly thereafter.

FOCUS GROUPS

Organizing focus groups oriented around key topics. The strategy brings people with common interests together to engage in a conversation about the plan or the vision. Focus groups can help to narrow down the concepts or get a specific side of the story. Stakeholder groups identified make ideal participants.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Technology offers a unique opportunity to give and receive information to a mass of people. The City posts 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. The City of Ironwood can use social media applications like Facebook and etc. depending on the type of feedback needed.

COMMUNITY WORK SESSIONS

Community Members may be invited to participate in planning processes and used to develop vision and planning directions during activities that may include:

- Listening Sessions
- Hands-on Community Workshop
- Student Workshops
- Community Pin-Up

STATE REGULATIONS

MICHIGAN OPEN MEETINGS ACT

In accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976), the municipality will hold meetings in the Ironwood Memorial Building located at 213 S. Marquette St., Ironwood, MI 49938, which is accessible to the general public.

The public will be notified within ten (10) days of the first meeting of a public body in each calendar or fiscal year; the City of Ironwood will publicly post a list stating the dates, times and places of all of its regular meetings at its 213 S. Marquette Street.

If there is a change in schedule, within three (3) days of the meeting in which the change is made, the City of Ironwood will post a notice stating the new dates, times and places of regular meetings.

For special and irregular meetings, the City of Ironwood will post a notice indicating the date, time and place at least eighteen (18) hours in advance.

A regular meeting of the City of Ironwood which is recessed for more than 36 hours, can only be reconvened if a notice is posted eighteen (18) hours in advance.

The City of Ironwood will hold emergency sessions without a written notice or time constraints if the public health, safety or welfare is severely threatened and if two-thirds of the body’s members vote to hold the emergency meeting.

Any citizen can request that public bodies put them on a mailing list so that they are notified in advance of all meetings by contacting the City of Ironwood, City Clerk at (906) 932-5050 x 121 or gullank@cityofironwood.org.

MICHIGAN PLANNING ENABLING ACT

In accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) the following parties will be notified via first class mail, personal delivery or electronic mail by the planning commission (or legislative body if no planning commission exists) of the intent to plan and request the recipient’s cooperation and comment:

- The county in which the municipality is located.
- The regional planning commission for the region in which the municipality is located, if there is no county planning commission for the county in which the municipality is located. If there is a county planning commission, the municipal planning commission may consult with the regional planning commission but is not required to do so.
- The county planning commission, or if there is no county planning commission, the county board of commissioners for the county in which the municipality is located.
- Each public utility company, railroad company, and public transportation agency owning or operating a public utility, railroad, or public transportation system within the local unit of government, and any government entity that registers its name and mailing address for this purpose with the planning commission.

- If the master plan will include a master street plan, the county road commission and the state transportation department.

In the event of a master plan update.

After the draft master plan has been submitted to the legislative body for review and approval for distribution, the draft plan will be submitted to the previously listed entities for review.

Before approving a proposed master plan, a planning commission will hold not less than one public hearing on the proposed plan. The hearing will be held after the expiration of the deadline for comment as outlined in the act.

The planning commission will give notice of the time and place of the public hearing not less than 15 days before the hearing by publication in the newspaper of general circulation within the local unit of government. The planning commission will also submit notice of the public hearing by first class mail, personal delivery or electronic mail to the previously listed entities for review.

After the adoption of the master plan, a planning commission may publish and distribute copies of the master plan or of any report, and employ other means of publicity and education.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AGENCIES

Local and Regional Agencies are a key resource in the planning process. These agencies provide technical resources, financial resources and are also responsible in some cases for providing services or infrastructure in the community.

- Aspirus Grandview
- Bessemer Township
- Carey Township
- Chamber of Commerce
- Charter Township of Ironwood
- City of Hurley
- City of Bessemer
- City of Wakefield
- County Forester
- County Sherriff
- Daily Globe Newspaper
- Erwin Township

- Gogebic Iron Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Gogebic County
- Gogebic County Airport
- Gogebic County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
- Gogebic County Extension
- Gogebic County Road Commission
- Gogebic County Soil Conservation Office
- Gogebic County Solid Waste (Garbage)
- Gogebic County Transit
- Gogebic County Community Action Agency
- Gogebic Community College
- Gogebic Range Water Authority
- Iron County
- Iron County Clerk
- Iron County Extension
- Ironwood Area School District
- Kimball Township
- MDEQ
- MDNR
- MDOT
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center
- Michigan State Housing Development Authority
- Michigan Works
- Ojibway Correctional Facility
- Oma Township
- Ottawa National Forest
- Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region
- Western Upper Peninsula Michigan Works
- WIDOT
- Xcel Energy

KEY STAKEHOLDERS (CONT.)

CIVIC & COMMUNITY GROUPS

Various civic and community groups are potential vehicles to disseminate information and receive feedback. Many groups have regularly scheduled programs and are in need of speakers. Most importantly, these groups often meet on a regular basis and present an opportunity to engage a captive audience (not creating another meeting obligation).

- Rotary
- Kiwanis
- Boy or Cub Scouts
- ROTC
- Lions Club
- Knights of Columbus
- Legion
- Masons
- Professional Women's Club
- PTOs



FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups are defined on a per project basis, depending on its direct focus. Focus groups can sometimes be made up of stakeholders that aren't normally at the visioning table. Focus groups consist of entities like:

- Industry specific businesses
- Ironwood Economic Development Corporation
- Downtown Ironwood Development Authority
- Ironwood Parks and Recreation Committee
- Historic Ironwood Theatre
- Theater North
- Downtown Art Place
- Other Focus Groups may be necessary and identified

STRATEGIES FOR OUTREACH

STRATEGIES

Proactively engaging stakeholders fosters a sense of ownership and prevents delays caused by unforeseen issues. The communication toolbox is consulted, depending on the situation and participation being sought. The following are common times at which public input are solicited:

- Master plan update
- Zoning ordinance update
- Downtown development plan
- Corridor improvement plan
- Parks and recreation plan
- Low controversy development project
- High controversy development project

COMMUNICATING RESULTS

STRATEGIES

The City of Ironwood employs techniques to effectively communicate the results of the public participation facilitated. There are many ways to communicate results and techniques are chosen in venues that make sense for the scope and type of project in consideration. The following are examples of ways to communicate public feedback:

- Public meetings: The City Commission meetings are visually recorded and live streamed to the internet. Minutes are available in a timely manner after the meeting.
- Surveys: Surveys are compiled in a timely manner after the survey was completed. The results are posted online and available for people to see.
- Community workshops/charrettes: Notes are taken during community workshops and charrettes. The notes will be available in a timely manner after the workshop or the charrette. The results of these events are communicated in a wrap up community meeting.
- Walkabouts: The facilitator of the walkabout takes notes during the walkabout. The results are compiled and available within a timely manner after the walkabout.
- One-on-one interviews: Interview results are kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise.
- Focus groups: Focus group results are kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise.
- Standing committees: Meeting minutes are taken and a draft shall be available.

- Social networking: Community Development Assistant and the Code Enforcement Officer are responsible for monitoring the municipal Facebook page. They respond to public posts in a timely manner after the post was made. They can post on behalf of the municipality concerning community events and public participation results.

PARTICIPATION GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Solicit public participation in each phase of the master planning process.
- Seek broad identification and representative involvement of all residents of the community.
- Utilize effective and equitable avenues for distributing information and receiving comments.
- Provide educational materials and design participation initiatives that will support and encourage effective participation.
- Maintain and develop staff expertise in all aspects of participation
- Support and encourage continuous improvement in the methods used to meet the public need for information and involvement.
- Record results of public engagement and recount these results back to the public.

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

EVENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

Following the completion of a public participation event, a followup survey is used to determine the effectiveness of the public participation event.

The Community Development Assistant, City Clerk or Deputy Clerk record the public participation efforts done for each event.

The Public Participation Plan is reviewed every 5 years along with the review of the City of Ironwood Master Plan.

See sample Public Participation Event Satisfaction Sample Survey on page 1-8.

CLOSING

The City of Ironwood Public Participation Plan is designed to show all forms of public participation and when it is appropriate to implement a specific form of participation. This plan is a guiding document used to guide how the City of Ironwood captures public input and guides the best ways to communicate with the public in specific situations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPER PUBLIC

Developers seek public input for site plan review, by utilizing one or more of the public engagement strategies identified in this plan, to mitigate any potential problems with the development to the surrounding community.

Developers are encouraged as part of the site plan review to engage the public and allow the public to voice opinions and concerns in a public manner.

ANNUAL REVIEW

Public participation is recorded in the Community Development Database Public Participation Tracking spreadsheet.

This Public Participation Plan is under annual review starting at the beginning of each calendar year. City of Ironwood staff reviews ways to improve or modify the plan as determined by analyzing the results of the various methods used throughout the year found in the Community Development Database Public Participation Tracking spreadsheet. Public Participation annual review is presented to the Planning Commission and City Commission by including it in the Planning Commission Annual Report.