



Public Participation Plan



Involved

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906-667-0333
411 South Sophie Street
Bessemer, MI 49911

INTRODUCTION

The purpose for establishing this Public Participation Plan is to have a clear set of policies, procedures, and methods to apply across a wide range of City initiatives to ensure the public has appropriate venues and timing for feedback. This is meant to be a “living document” that is updated periodically to respond to changes in staffing, noticing, and community needs.

The following goals provide the framework for this strategy’s intent:

- Ensure transparency and a clear planning and development process
- Conduct effective and engaging planning processes (through planning and zoning projects)
- Encourage developers to engage impacted stakeholders at various stages of the development process
- Anticipate the need for engagement and proactively seek timely input
- Provide educational and informative opportunities
- Disseminate results
- Continually improve methods and track success
- Reach a broad constituency, diverse stakeholders, employing different techniques and approaches for different groups
- Utilize an effective communication plan to convey City updates

PERTINENT STATE REGULATIONS

Michigan Open Meetings Act

In accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976), the City of Bessemer will hold meetings in the City Hall located at 411 S Sophie, which is accessible to the general public.

The public will be notified within 10 days of the first meeting of the public body in each calendar or fiscal year; the body will publicly post a list stating the dates, times, and places of all its regular meeting at its principle office. If there is a change in schedule, within three days of the meeting in which the change is made, the public body will post a notice stating the new dates, times, and places of regular meetings.

For special and irregular meetings, public bodies will post a notice indicating the date, time, and place at least 18 hours before the meeting. Note: A regular meeting of a public body which is recessed for more than 36 hours, can only be convened if a notice is posted 18 hours in advance. Public bodies 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 Clerk’s Office at 411 S Sophie, Bessemer, MI 49911, by phone (906) 667-0333, or e-mail to jennifer.adams@cityofbessemer.org.

Michigan Planning Enabling Act

In Michigan, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act determines the rules and regulations local governments must follow when preparing the Master Plan. 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 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 that 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 that municipality is located.
- Each public utility company, railroad company, and public transportation agency owning and 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 the purpose with the planning commission.
- If the master plan will include a master street plan, the county road commission and the state transportation department

GOVERNING LOCAL AND STATE REGULATIONS

The City of Bessemer follows the Local and State regulations listed below. This includes a list for the public review process, public participation, and public meetings/hearings.

- Home Rule City Act (P.A. 279 of 1909 as amended)
- The Plant Rehabilitation and Industrial Development Districts Act (known as the Industrial Facilities Exemption) (P.A. 198 of 1974 as amended)
- Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (P.A. 110 of 2006 as amended)
- Downtown Development Authority Act (P.A. 197 of 1975 as amended)
- The Michigan Open Meeting Act (P.A. 267 of 1976 as amended) • Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act (P.A. 381 of 1996 as amended)
- The New Personal Property Exception Act (P.A. 328 of 1998 as amended)
- The Corridor Improvement Act (P.A. 280 of 2005 as amended)
- The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008 as amended) • The City of Bessemer's City Charter (Adopted 1971 as amended)
- The City of Bessemer's Code of Ordinances (Adopted February 17, 1986 as amended)
- Any Other Local and State Legislations

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION HISTORY

Over the last decade, The City of Bessemer has had an extensive history with on-going public participation in all of their planning work. The public has been actively involved in such things as the Master Plan, Downtown Development Authority Plan, and the Recreation Plans to name a few. The City realizes and understands public participation and support is critical in having a good plan.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

As required by law, the City of Bessemer will provide the public reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the Master Plan, Public Participation Plan, and Amendments to any of the plans. Interested stakeholders are encouraged to check the City's website at www.CityofBessemer.org, or social media pages such as Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/BessemerMich>) in order to be kept informed of any meeting/hearing changes or cancellations.

All City Council meetings that take place in the Bessemer City Hall Council Chambers are live streamed through the City's website. Meeting/hearing agendas and packets are available ahead of time either on the City's website, or through City Clerk's Office. Meeting/hearing minutes are posted on the City's website following approval.

Meeting agendas and packets of the City Council, Planning Commission, and other Boards and Commissions shall be made available on the City's website in advance of the meeting. Copies of the documents will be available at the following locations:

- Bessemer City Hall – 411 S Sophie, Bessemer, MI 49911
- On the City's website - www.CityofBessemer.org
- On the City's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/BessemerMich

Please Note: Documents will be made available in a format accessible to persons with disabilities upon request

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- City Council
- City's Boards and Commissions
- City Residents
- Bessemer Area Public Schools
- Gogebic Community College
- Gogebic County
- Ironwood Area Chamber of Commerce
- Western U.P. Planning and Development Regional Commission
- Commercial Business Owners
- Commercial Brokers and Real Estate Professionals
- Potential Investors and Developers
- Senior Citizens
- Public Employees
- Major Local Employers
- Civic and Social Organizations
- Students and Student Groups
- Gogebic County Transit Authority
- Relevant State Agencies
- Any Other Relevant Stakeholders

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

The City of Bessemer realizes there are numerous ways to work with the public. We have broken the methods into three categories

- Notifications:
 - Posting public notifications about meetings including public hearings are posted at City Hall, on our website, on our facebook page, and in a local newspaper.
 - Door hangers with a notice of schedule are utilized for projects potentially disrupting resident's or businesses utilities and/or roadway
 - Announcements during the Commission and Board meetings are utilized for special events and updates
 - Attachments to tax bills help inform property owners about community happenings.
 - Press Releases to newspapers to communicate events, news, etc.
 - Update the website to notify residents of adopted plans, awards, etc.
 - Update facebook page to communicate events, news, meeting cancelations, etc.
- Educational Sessions:
 - Trainings about potential changes or opportunities
 - Public Workshops for projects and plans
- Gathering Information
 - Public Hearings to gather input on ordinance and plans
 - Surveys to gather input on controversial topics and plans. Can be mailed out, posted online, or available at City Hall.
 - One on One Interviews to gather more confidential information on plans or projects
 - Public Workshops to gather more thoughts and feedback on projects and plans.
 - Focus Groups to vet ideas and concepts
 - Workshops with public officials to allow for more informal conversations among residents and public officials.
 - Charrettes for multiple day workshops for large projects that require significant public input.

Communicating Results

There are different types of communication required for different types of projects. To communicate the adoption of a plan, the City will post the plan on the website and a link to the website on their Facebook page. They will also give a press release to the newspaper. For controversial projects, the City will post a brief synopsis on the Facebook page. For Infrastructure Projects and Community Development Projects, the city will give a press release to the paper and post on Facebook. Zoning Updates will be posted on the website and posted on the bulletin board at City Hall.

WHEN TO USE THE STRATEGIES

Type	Strategy	Process/ Project					
		Zoning Update	Planning Process (Master Plan, DDA Plan, Parks and Rec Plan)	Infrastructure Project	Community Development Project	Low Controversial Development	High Controversial Project
Notification	Posting	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Door Hanger			X			O
	Announcements		X	X	X		X
	Attachment to Tax Bill		O	O	O		O
	Press Release	O	X	X	X	O	X
	Update Website	X	X	X	X		X
	Update Facebook	X	X	X	X	O	X
Educational Session	Trainings	O	O				O
	Workshops	O	O*	X	O		X
Gathering Information	Public Hearings	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Surveys	O	O				O
	One-on-One Interviews	X	X	X	X	O	X
	Public Workshops	O	O*	O	O	O	X
	Focus Groups	O	O	X	O	O	O
	Workshop with Public Officials	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Charettes	O	O		O		O

X = Required O = Optional, strongly encouraged for more controversial topics *Required for Master Planning Process

If a project is deemed highly controversial by the city, the city requires the developer to host a public workshop. The developer is required to handle all noticing.

TIMELINE

Depending on the type of project, the public input utilized may change. However, the general timeline for the project is as follows.

- Beginning: Inform the Public
- Middle: Gather feedback from the community
- End: Gain Consensus
- Final: Public Hearing and Adoption
- Post Adoption: Communicate results to community

EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS OF EFFORTS

In order to track the success of various outreach methods, the following tools are recommended to document successes and lessons learned for future events:

- Event Feedback Form
 - Utilize form to gather feedback on effectiveness of public participation
- Internal Evaluation Form
 - Utilize an internal public participation evaluation form for staff or consultants to summarize each event's planning, successes, and lessons learned
- City Reports
 - Summarize the major activities and accomplishments from each Commission
 - List the year's public engagement successes and lessons learned and include upcoming projects likely to require significant public involvement
 - Continue annual goal setting session with the Planning Commission

GOALS MOVING FORWARD

Public participation is a key to our City's future and maintaining a relationship with the community. While the city has made big strides towards encouraging communication between the City and its constituents, we have room for improvement. Improving communication, establishing trust, generating new ideas, and garnering community support for initiatives are benefits of good community engagement and involvement.

- Build upon the E-newsletter and send monthly or bimonthly updates
- Create an Alumni Email list to keep people who have left the area up to date on the city's events and happenings
- Continue to update the website
- Start using Community Event Satisfaction Survey and Internal Public Participation Evaluation

APPENDIX

Community Event Satisfaction Survey

Which event did you attend today?

How did you hear about the event?

Was the event held at a convenient time and location?

Are you glad you came to the event? Would you improve it in anyway?

Date: _____

Internal Public Participation Evaluation

Type of Public Participation:

Date:

How was the event advertised?

Where was the event held?

How many people attended?> Were there any groups that were underrepresented?

Who facilitated the event?

What improvements could be made for future events?