CITY OF WAKEFIELD

Public Participation Plan

Prepared by: Robert A. Brown Jr, City Manager
509 Sunday Lake Street
Wakefield, MI 49968
906.229.5131

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INTRODUCTION

Efficacious public participation is both functional for planning and meaningful to the community. The result of functional planning is better decisions and more thoughtful planning. Stimulating public participating and soliciting community input provides credibility, diversity, and a sense of ownership to the planning processes.

The Public Participation Plan reaches to engage as many citizens as possible in the decision making processes. Through constructive dialogue, the City and public can share opinions and ideas that will shape a vision for the City, assisting community leaders in adopting plans.

The adoption of any short or long term planning requires a coordinated, cooperative approach amongst various stakeholders, such as citizens, private and non-profit sectors, and the general public.

Therefore, the City establishes this Public Participation Plan to provide a model for public involvement, which contains written procedures and guidelines to ensure the inclusion of the public in the City's planning process.

The Public Participation document is a "living document" that is updated periodically to respond to changes in technology, staffing, legislation, and community needs.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The City adopts and adheres to the five guiding principals for public involvement:

- Public participation is a dynamic activity that requires teamwork and commitment at all levels of City government
- One size does not fit all. Gathering input from all ages and socioeconomic segments of the community enhances the public participation process.
- Public outreach and involvement require relationship building with residents, businesses, non-profits, and other government entities.
- Engaging public interest is challenging, yet possible, by ensuring the process is relevant, removing barriers to participation, utilizing multiple media routes to deliver information, and communicating clearly with compelling language and visuals.
- The public participation planning process shall be open and transparent to empower disadvantaged segments of our community to participate in decision making that affects them.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

As required by law, the City of Wakefield will provide the public with 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.cityofwakefield.org, or social media pages such as Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/cityofwakefield) to be kept informed of any meeting/hearing changes or cancellations.

All City Council meetings take place in the Wakefield Municipal Building Council Chambers and are open to the public. 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:

Wakefield Municipal Building – 509 Sunday Lake Street, Wakefield, MI 49968

On the City's website: www.cityofwakefield.org, on the City's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/cityofwakefield

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

STATE AND LOCAL REGULATION

The Wakefield City Council, along with all the boards and commissions of City, follow the local and state regulations listed below. These regulations include provisions for the public review process, public participation, and public hearings.

- Home Rule City Act (PA 279 or 1909)
- The Charter of the City of Wakefield
- City Ordinances of the City of Wakefield
- City of Wakefield Zoning Ordinance
- The Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976)
- The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008)
- Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act (PA 381 of 1996)
- The New Personal Property Exemption Act (PA 328 of 1998)
- Other relevant local and State Legislation

STAKEHOLDERS

A stakeholder is an individual, a group of people, or an organization that can affect or be affected positively or negatively by projects of the City. When identifying stakeholders, the City considered the following question:

A. Who is affected positively or negatively by the project?
B. Does the organization represent a larger body of residents, businesses, non-profits, or tourists?
C. Does the individual or organization represent a part of the community that might be disproportionately burdened by a project?
D. Who would be upset if they have no input into the planning process?
E. Who could take legal action to block the implementation of a decision?
F. Who will be committed to following the process, including attending meetings, gathering information, and other practical, logistical, and tactical requirements of the process?
G. Who is committed to the various interest groups, such as community groups or business groups, and will be responsible for acting as liaison and leader?

The above questions are used to help identify as many stakeholders as possible and will not be used as a rubric to exclude individuals and organizations that would like to participate.

The City has identified the following stakeholder within the City and the greater community of Wakefield:

- City Council
- Major Employers
- City Boards and Commissions
- City Residents
- Wakefield Marenisco School
- Gogebic Community College
- Gogebic County
- Senior Citizens
- 4 The Kids
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9084
- American Legion Post 11
- Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Regional Commission
- Wakefield Senior Center
- Local Churches
- Potential Investors and Developers
- Forward Wakefield
- Wakefield Chamber of Commerce
- Commercial Business Owners
- Commercial Brokers and Real Estate Professionals
- Wakefield Township
- Gogebic Medical Care
- Keenagers
- Youth Sport Non-Profits
- Public Employees
- Relevant State Stakeholders
- Student Organizations
- Social Organizations
- Any Other Relevant Stakeholders

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

The City of Wakefield 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
    - 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 the Facebook page to communicate events, news, meeting cancelations, etc.
- Educational Sessions:
    - Training about potential changes or opportunities
    - Public Workshops for projects and planning

- Gathering Information
    - Public Hearings to gather input on ordinances and plans
    - Surveys to gather feedback on controversial topics and plans. It 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.
    - Gathering stakeholders for multiple-day workshops for large projects that require significant public input.

SHARING RESULTS

A crucial component in building successful long term relationships with stakeholders is communication. Depending on the public involvement strategy deployed and the type of project being presented, the City will adjust the medium used to communicate with stakeholders. Adoption of plans that are not controversial will be accessible to the public on the City's website and a link to the document posted on the City's social media accounts. Recognizing a significant segment of the City's population is elderly. It may not be

technologically proficient, the City will notify the public of any adopted plans by press release, and when possible, by inclusion in the City's monthly newsletter.

STRATEGY SELECTION GUIDE

Type	Strategy	Process/Project					
		Zoning Update	Planning Process	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
	Tax Bill Attachment		O	O	O		O
	Press Release	O	X	X	X	O	X
	Update Website	X	X	X	X		X
	Social Media	X	X	X	X	O	X
Education Session	Trainings	O	O				O
	Workshops	0	0*	X	0		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
	Workshops with Public Officials	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Charette	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 hose a pubic workshop. The developer is required to handle all noticing.

EVALUATING EFFORTS

The City will deploy the following tools to document success and lessons learned during the public participation process:

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

The City Clerk will be responsible for keeping records of the participation efforts and the City Manager will be responsible for compiling the data and presenting it the City Council and public with suggestions for actions,.

GOALS

The City of Wakefield embraces and seeks to maintain an open and transparent relationship with the community. Improving communication, establishing trust, promoting the sharing of new ideas, and garnering community support for initiatives, benefits the community as a whole. The Council therefore sets the following goals:

1. Solicit and encourage participation in all areas of governmental planning and decisions.
2. Utilize effective and equitable avenues for distributing information and receiving comments.
3. Maintain and develop staff expertise in all aspects of participation.
4. Support and encourage continuous improvements in the methods used to meet the public need for information and involvement.
5. Record results of the public engagement and recount these results back to the public.