



CITY OF LINDEN

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

April 2021

A. PURPOSE:

This plan is a guide to gather public input during the planning and the development review and approval procedures. This plan shall serve as a guide for seeking and gathering public input, and to create a uniform understanding of all requirements and goals of the City in utilizing public opinion.

B. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOALS:

The City will enable the public to participate in decision-making processes by providing clear information on the issues, how they can participate and how the public can contribute to the decisions made.

All meetings of the City Council, the commissions and committees are open to the public.

The City will inform the public how they can play a role in the decision-making process by using the best approach to accomplish this objective. Whether it is by social media, surveys, website, or postings around the City. The municipality will continue to seek new and innovative ways to engage and keep the public involved throughout the process.

The following goals and strategies are outlined below:

- The City shall conduct all matters of public business in an open and accessible manner.
 - Objective: Review the website annually to ensure content and posts are up to date.
 - Objective: Continue to make agendas and packets available to the public within 3 days of regular scheduled meetings.
- The City will seek to better engage local organizations and service groups.
 - Objective: Keep an updated list of contacts for the local groups and businesses.
 - Objective: Receive annual reports for boards and commission to present at the Council meetings.
 - Objective: The City of Linden will work with the seniors by working more closely with the Senior Center to present virtually or during breakfast events.
- The City will better utilize technology to increase engagement opportunities.
 - Objective: Will continue to provide residents with a quarterly newsletter.
 - Objective: The City of Linden will continue to work with PEG TV channel to provide a means of getting information out to local residents.

C. KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

As previously mentioned, the City is committed to welcoming input of all stakeholders within the City.

This list represents, but is not all inclusive, of interested stakeholders:

- Residents
- City Council
- Planning Commission
- Board of Appeals
- Fenton & Linden Chamber of Commerce
- Linden Public Schools
- Commercial Developers
- Potential Investors
- Senior Citizens
- Local Business Owners
- Civic and Social Groups.
- Students and Student Groups
- Neighboring Communities
- Other Pertinent Stakeholders
- Places of worship
- Linden employees
- Adjacent municipalities
- County, Regional and State elected officials
- Downtown Development Authority

D. STATE AND LOCAL REGULATIONS:

The City of Linden is subject to a number of State and local regulations pertaining to public participation. City Council, Planning Commission, and committees follow the guidelines contained within the following acts:

- The Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976)
- The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008)
- The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006)
- Home Rule City Act (PA 33 of 2008)
- Linden City Charter
- Linden City Code of Ordinances
- Zoning Codes
- Downtown Development Authority Act (PA 197 of 1975)
- Other pertinent local and/or State legislation.

E. REVIEW BODIES:

The public has an opportunity to provide feedback at City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Appeals, and Downtown Development Meetings. All meetings are open to the public and public hearings are held at such meetings. Public

comment is offered at each of these meetings and interested parties who provide comments or questions to any of these public bodies are recorded in the meeting minutes.

1. PLANNING COMMISSION:

The Planning Commission is responsible for preparation and adoption of the City Master Plan that guides the physical development of the City. In preparing a new master plan or master plan update, the city shall, at a minimum, follow the public notification provisions of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008. In preparing a new zoning ordinance or any amendment to the zoning ordinance, the City shall, at a minimum, follow the public notification provisions of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006. The planning commission is also the primary advisory commission to the city council on development related applications including zoning petitions, conditional use permits, site plans, subdivisions, capital improvement plans and other related land use proposals.

The planning commission follows requirements of the Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006 for public hearings. Such notice is provided at least 15 days in advance of the public hearing to the applicant, the property owner, or all property owners within 300 feet of an affected property and by publication in the Tri County Times, City Hall entrances, the City website. The notice will include date, time, place, virtual instructions, and/or procedure of the hearing and topics to be considered. The applicant and the city council receive written notification of the Planning Commission's recommendation.

2. CITY COUNCIL:

Linden City Council is the legislative body for the City and is responsible for the creation of policies and ordinances related to the development process. City Council is also responsible for final decisions on several development application related processes. All meetings are open to the public, and public hearings are frequently held at such meetings. Through both formal public meetings and more informal opportunities for the public to comment on agenda and non-agenda related items, the community at large is provided the opportunity to voice their opinion directly to City Council members.

3. OTHER BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

All meetings of the City's various boards and commission are open and accessible to the public. Public comments are taken during these meetings, allowing stakeholders in the City of Linden to voice their opinions and recommendations.

Beyond the City Council and City Planning Commission, public hearings may be held at various boards and commissions in regards to specific planning and development proposals. At these times residents may express their opinions and comments on developments slated for the City, as well as ask questions

concerning the development request. Boards and Commission most likely to consider such requests:

- Downtown Development Authority
- Historic District Commission
- Zoning Board of Appeals

F. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW OR PROJECTS WITH BROAD COMMUNITY INTEREST:

The City will follow the provisions of the local and State regulations to review development projects related to planning and zoning applications, permits, and business assistance. This applies to the review process for site plans and conditional use permits, rezoning and variance request applications or downtown redevelopment assistance and industrial facilities exemptions. In such circumstances, the city council and its boards and commissions will hold public hearings, noticed in accordance with State legislation, and allow for public comment on the proposed development project during its regular meetings. If development applications will involve matters of broad community interest or result in a need for heightened public involvement, the city may decide to engage the public through more intensive means. Such means will be tailored to each project based on interest and city capacity. Methods could include additional community meetings, focus groups, workshops, or other proactive engagement activities. The city will work with community leaders and the developer to determine the best mix of additional outreach.

The City will track the effectiveness of outreach by:

- Asking stakeholders how they heard about the meeting or activity they are attending.
(Word of mouth/newspaper notice/ mailing sent to their home.)
- Following up with a brief survey with stakeholders who attend major events such as a master plan community workshop. This could be done at the end of the event or with an online survey.

Documentation will be the responsibility of the relevant department head. Materials will be submitted to the City Manager, who will oversee posting results to the City website.

As projects reach completion, City staff and department heads should review the public participation and assess how effective their efforts have been. Staff should keep records of the date, time, and place the meeting and events, as well as who facilitated the event and how many members of the public attended. They should also assess and record if any particular group was over and underrepresented and any ideas, they have for improving outreach in the future.

This survey should be made available at public events and meetings. Some organizers may wish to encourage survey completion with prize, drawing or other incentive.

See Appendix A for Community Survey Example.

G. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MATRIX

As stated previously throughout this section, the various outreach strategies have a multitude of different uses and applications. Some processes lend themselves better to certain strategies. The table below provides a guide of when certain outreach methods may be optimal based upon which type of process the City is undergoing.

	Master Plan	Zoning Amendments	Capital Improvement Plan Projects	Parks and Recreations Planning	Major Development
Pre-Application Meetings					Recommended
Surveys	Recommended	Optional	Recommended	Recommended	
Open House Meetings and Communication Workshops	Recommended	Optional	Recommended	Recommended	Optional
Charrettes/Design Workshops	Optional			Optional	Optional
Walking Tours	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
One-on-One Interviews	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
Focus Groups	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional
Digital Tools of Communication	Recommended	Optional	Optional	Recommended	Recommended
Public Hearing	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required

H. METHODS OF SHARING COMMUNICATION:

The City recognizes that to properly utilize public input, it is necessary at times to communicate the results of these efforts back to the public. These efforts increase transparency and allow the city to gain a clearer understanding of public opinion. The city will utilize avenues of communications to present and make information easily available to the public. These methods of communication will include, but are not limited to the following:

TOOLS	HOW THE RESULTS WILL BE COMMUNICATED
City Website Lindenmi.us is the home page for the City of Linden and it is where you can expect to find all relevant and important information that the City shares. It provides a wide range of information, including: important dates, plans, ordinance forms, postings, city news and can be a portal to reach other important information for a resident, business and visitors.	The posting of relevant information to plan and development projects on the website, as well as records of relevant meetings will be documented.
Newspaper Posting and Press Release The City will utilize our local newspaper as a means of distributing information. Sometimes this is a legal requirement for public meetings and hearings. Other times, the City may be interested in sharing news on events and happenings using press release that summarizes the details of what is being announced, allowing the media to read and share the relevant pieces of information in their articles. The Tri-County Times is	Copies of press releases and public notices sent out by the City to traditional media sources will be documented.

Linden's newspaper of general circulation and for that reason, the City coordinates with the paper on posting its notices and press releases.	
<i>City Hall</i> Announcements can be made during meetings, and public notices posted on City Hall property as a means of informing committee members and the public.	These announcements will be presented through the same media medium(s) as the meetings.
<i>Community Newsletters</i> The City of Linden currently sends out quarterly newsletter along with their utility bill. The newsletters hold news, events and announcements going on with the city.	These newsletters will be presented in quarterly billings, on the website and City social media.
<i>Social Media</i> The City currently uses social media to announce events and etc. The staff responds to comments on posts and messages. The information is shareable to other unofficial pages as well.	Social media sites retain posts and responses, so they will be accessible to the public.
<i>Public Hearings</i> Public attendance at meeting is encouraged through meeting announcement and is formally solicited during scheduled public commented per the meeting and hearing agendas.	Feedback and comments submitted at hearing and meetings are through the same medium(s) as the meetings.
<i>Advisory Committees</i> The City uses advisory committee for specialized aspects of our community to enhance collaboration between city staff and the public.	Advisory committee meetings updates are verbal report at the Council meetings.

I. OTHER OUTREACH ACTIVITIES:

The City may hold interviews with various stakeholders to get specific information on a topic. In general, the information collected during interviews will be kept confidential unless requested otherwise. The information may be compiled and analyzed together with other information collected from stakeholders on a specific topic. The City may form a group to gather the community's opinions on a specific issue, etc. The City might employ surveys to identify key concerns.

J. ACCESSIBILITY:

The City of Linden recognizes that all information and public events must be as accessible to all members of the public as possible to gather a broad and representative body of public input. The City therefore strives to foster an environment of accessibility. City hall is barrier-free and accessible to the entire community.

Approved minutes of all public meetings are maintained by the City Clerk and are made available to the public online or at City Hall.

K. CONTACT INFORMATION:

The following contact information should be utilized for questions on the public participation process for each council or commission.

City Council – Clerk's Office – 810-735-7980

Downtown Development Authority – Clerk's Office 810-735-7980

Planning Commission or Zoning Board – Clerk's Office 810-735-7980

Appendix A

Community Event Survey
Date of Event:
Type of Event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Council Meeting<input type="radio"/> Planning Commission Meeting<input type="radio"/> Other _____
How did you hear about this event? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> City website<input type="radio"/> Social Media<input type="radio"/> Public Announcement<input type="radio"/> Tri-County Times<input type="radio"/> Other _____
Was this event held at a convenient place and time? (1=not at all, 5=very much) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> 1<input type="radio"/> 2<input type="radio"/> 3<input type="radio"/> 4<input type="radio"/> 5
Are you glad you came to this event? (1=not at all, 5=very much) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> 1<input type="radio"/> 2<input type="radio"/> 3<input type="radio"/> 4<input type="radio"/> 5
Would you improve this event in anyway? If so, how? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> No<input type="radio"/> Yes <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>