

City of Gladstone Public Participation Plan



Overview

As Gladstone continues to move forward, A Public Participation Plan is being developed as an essential tool to outline how our Elected Officials, Boards and City Staff engage the public on topics affecting everyone in the City. Without the consensus of all stakeholders, progress is hampered. Wide reaching community involvement is critical so that everyone can have a say in the future of Gladstone.

Another purpose of the Public Participation Plan is to ensure accountability and transparency and to provide feedback to the public on actions that ultimately affect everyone. The City of Gladstone wants to include everyone in planning for the future!

The City of Gladstone recognizes the value of engaging all stakeholders to participate in establishing plans and accomplishing goals. The City wants to engage community members on a regular basis to help promote buy-in and increase the probability of success. The City strives to remove uncertainty on community projects which may deter developers from considering a Gladstone project. Finally, Gladstone strives to encourage community members to become engaged and active in community events, become involved on various City Boards, and run for office.

Goals

- The City of Gladstone wants and needs a diverse group of stakeholders to help guide planning, land use, development, and day to day operations of the City.
- Gladstone will make reasonable efforts to insure involvement of citizens and community groups in all aspects of the planning and review process.

- The City will look for broad and representative involvement of community residents. This will certainly require different methods of communication and outreach to ensure hearing of diverse and unique points of view.
- Gladstone will support and encourage participation and will strive to distribute information on a timely basis so that citizens can be involved and aware at various stages of the review and approval process.
- The City will record results of public participation to the extent possible and insure reporting to all stakeholders.
- Gladstone will create an environment conducive to proactive and inclusionary forms of public participation during all phases of project planning.
- The City will encourage a variety of methods to solicit public participation with the goal of reaching as many citizens as possible.

Regulations

The City of Gladstone is committed to following all local and state regulations which are currently in effect. Although not intended to be a comprehensive list of all applicable regulations, some key regulations are:



- Michigan Open Meetings Act – Public Act 267 of 1976 as amended
 - This act covers a wide variety of regulations for conducting public meetings including establishing meeting locations, notification procedures, change notifications, and a variety of rules regarding all public meetings in the State of Michigan.

Here are some links helpful in understanding the Open Meetings Act requirements:

Legislation detail

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-267-of-1976.pdf>

Open Meetings Act Handbook

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/ag/OMA_handbook_287134_7.pdf

Michigan Municipal League Resources on the Open Meetings Act

http://www.mml.org/resources/information/oma_foia.htm

- Michigan Planning Enabling Act – Public Act 33 of 2008 as amended
 - Outline the processes for crafting master plans including notification and timeliness.
- Downtown Development Authority Act – Public Act 197 of 1975 as amended
 - This act covers the formation and regulations regarding Downtown Development Authorities within the State of Michigan.
- The City of Gladstone’s City Charter
- Any and all other local and state regulations

Key Stakeholders

There are many important groups that assist and enhance the public participation process. Some of these stakeholders are not often at the visioning table and the City of Gladstone strives to include everyone who has a voice in matters regarding the City. These important stakeholders include:

- **City Residents**



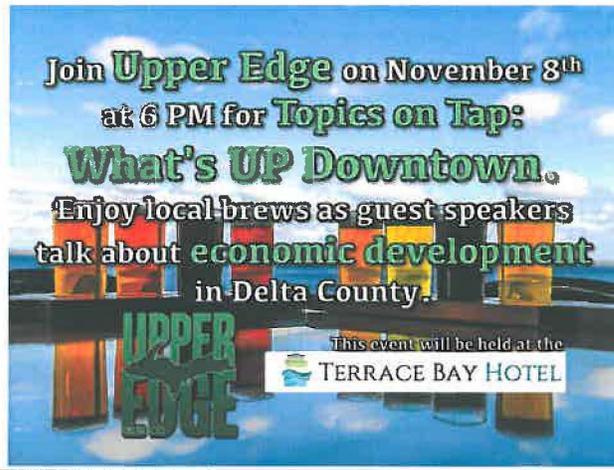
- Nonresident employees of companies in Gladstone
- Gladstone Public Schools
- City Commission
- Downtown Development Authority
- Senior Citizens
- Delta County Upper Edge Young Professionals Group

- Commercial business owners
- Potential investors and developers
- Volunteer organizations
- State Agencies
 - MEDC
 - MDOT
 - Michigan Treasury
- Delta County Chamber of Commerce
- Gladstone Planning Commission
- Gladstone Housing Commission
- Delta County Chamber of Commerce
- Delta County Economic Development Alliance
- Other relevant Stakeholders

Communication and Outreach Tools

Part of the City of Gladstone’s public involvement strategy includes:

- Public Meetings
 - Link to all Commission and Board Agendas & Minutes
<https://gladstonecitymi.documents-on-demand.com/>
- Newspaper postings
- Current and relevant website postings
- Attachments to utility bills
- Transmission of City Commission meetings through electronic media including video availability of City Commission meetings in real time and archived for later viewing
- Public surveys
- Community meetings
- Workshops



In addition to these typical methods of public communication, Gladstone will use the following methods of encouraging public participation:

- Radio spots by the City Manager and Board and Commission members after meetings to discuss important decisions and matters of public interest
- Charrettes designed to incorporate feedback loops on large and important projects.
- One on one and small focus group interviews to insure participation for those not normally attending larger, more formal groups and meetings.
- Walking tours of the community

Strategies for Outreach

The City of Gladstone strives to plan for public input rather than reacting and encourages participation sooner, rather than later, in the process. Public input is critical, especially when developing or updating:

- The Master Plan
- Challenging & Major Projects
 - Ninth Street Reconstruction Project
 - North Shore Project
 - Major events, i.e., Fourth of July, Old Fashioned Christmas
 - Private and public development projects which may have a significant impacts on neighboring businesses or residents.
- Annual Budget Development
- Parks and Recreation Plan
- Farmers Market Operations
- Zoning Amendments
- Community Improvement Plans

To help increase participation, Gladstone will not only schedule meetings at City Hall, but will explore other options for public meetings to increase participation and openness of discussion such as alternative venues and electronic participation.

The City of Gladstone believes that it is always in the best interest of private developers to conduct early stakeholder outreach for projects especially if a project is projected to have a significant impact on surrounding properties or neighborhoods.

Early outreach increases the likelihood of a more amicable process as the project unfolds since feedback can usually be incorporated early and at much less cost.

While conducting early outreach is ultimately up to the developer, the city is able and willing to assist with the following activities to encourage this early outreach:

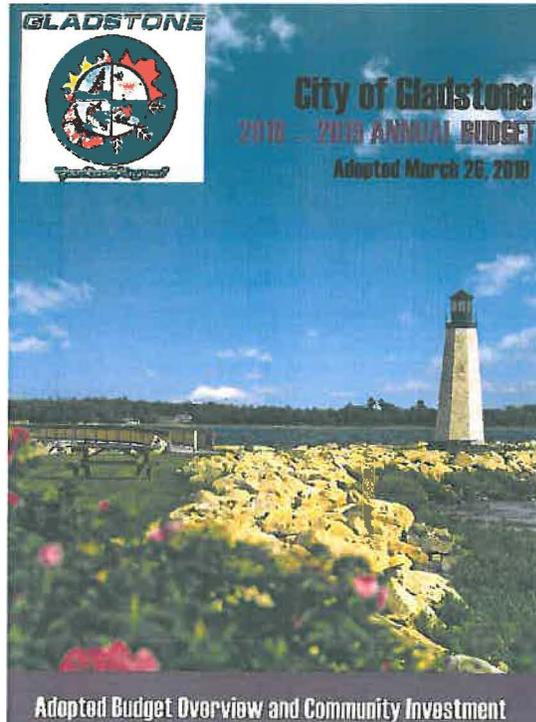
- Providing contact information for neighboring properties
- Making meeting space available at no cost
- Announcing and publicizing upcoming meetings
- Assisting in understanding local zoning requirements
- Facilitating developer input and involvement at critical events like City Commission, Downtown Development Authority, and Planning Commission meetings.
- Providing easy access and contact information for City Staffs critical to project implementation such as DPW, Water & Sewer, Electric Department, etc.



Public Participation Matrix

	Master Plan	Zoning Amendments	CIP Planning	Budget Development	Challenging & Major Projects	Parks & Recreation Planning
Surveys	R	P	R	P	R	P
Workshops	R	P	P	R	R	P
Focus Groups	P	P	P		R	P
1 on 1 Interviews	P		P	P	P	P
Website / Social Media	R	P	R	R	R	R
Newspaper Postings	R	P	R	P	R	P
Charrettes					P	P
Walking Tours					P	P
Public Meetings	R	R	R	R	R	P

R = Recommended; P = Potentially Used





Communicating Results

- City Commission Meetings
 - All meetings will be available through video which can be accessed through the City of Gladstone website
 - All City Commission meetings will be structured to allow for public comment on all topics – whether relating to items on the formal agenda or not
- All other Board Meetings
 - Agenda and minutes will be published on the City website of every Board meeting on a timely basis
- Focus Group and One on One Meetings
 - The results of these sessions will be kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise
- Board and City Commission Sub-Committee Meetings
 - All meetings are open to the public and participation is encouraged
- Gladstone Website – www.gladstonemi.org
 - The City of Gladstone website is a valuable resource used to distribute a wide variety of information to the public. As warranted, information on major projects will be updated and posted on the City website at the City's discretion.
- Surveys, Charrettes, Workshops, Etc.
 - Results will be included as appendices to related plans or documents.
- All meetings are open to the public and minutes of all subcommittee meetings will be found on the Documents on Demand section - <https://gladstonecitymi.documents-on-demand.com/>



Evaluating Effectiveness

In order to ensure Gladstone's public participation efforts are as effective as possible, the City will continually evaluate public participation activities and update this plan as needed. When evaluating the effectiveness of existing activities, Gladstone will use the following:

- Track the number of public comments made at official meetings such as the City Commission, DDA, or special hearings;
- Track the number of followers on social media account; and
- Conduct follow-up surveys after workshop, charrettes, etc. to capture feedback

As part of the planning commission annual report, the city will review the year's public engagement activities to determine if changes are warranted.

Summary

The City of Gladstone will endeavor to follow open and transparent processes on all activities within the City. Gladstone will insure that:

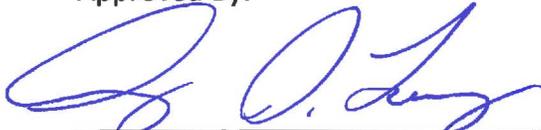
- All meeting schedules, agendas and minutes are published on a timely basis on the City Website. Agenda and minutes are available at <https://gladstonecitymi.documents-on-demand.com/>
- Gladstone's website will provide a variety of information pertaining to strategies, planning documents, application and fee structures, maps, a developer's toolkit, information on special events and is committed to acting in good faith on public requests to add information which is determined to be in the public's interest.

The purpose of The City of Gladstone's Public Participation Plan is to insure that the public is provided with the information needed to actively participate in the decision and planning process. This plan is not intended to list every and all of the specific details of any one item, but is intended to show that the City of Gladstone is fully committed to keeping all stakeholders informed and that trust and transparency is held in the highest regard. This plan will be provide on the City Website, and will continue to be revised periodically as necessary.

City of Gladstone

Approved By:

Date:



City Manager



GLADSTONE



Updated 8/9/2018