

Village of Newberry Public Participation Plan



Approved by the Newberry Village Council on July 16, 2019

Table of Contents

Participation Goals & Objectives	1
State Regulations on Public Participation	2
Key Stakeholders	2
The Communication Toolbox & Communicating Results	3
Strategies for Outreach	5
Evaluating the Effectiveness of Participation Plans	7

Participation Goals & Objectives

The Village of Newberry is dedicated to fostering democratic participation, reflecting the goals and desires of the community, and responsibly leading the Village’s future growth. This Plan will create consistency in public outreach as additional plans are developed, ordinances updated and changed, and as the Village goes about the general business of governing. Engaging the public at the start of a plan or ordinance update or development project increases transparency, fosters relationships and community buy-in, and ensures development that meets the community’s needs and desires.

This document serves as a tool for daily use by the Village staff and elected representatives. Citizens will know both what to expect from the Village in terms of engagement and also that their voice can help shape the community.

This plan will support and put into practice the following values:

Inclusiveness: The Village will solicit public input from all residents and use methods that meet Village residents where they are.

Transparency: When used in the terms of open government, transparency is the practice of the government publishing government data, rather than waiting for an individual's public records request.

Civility: Respectful discourse will be ensured by all participants embracing the following points:

- Treat everyone courteously
- Listen to others respectfully
- Exercise self-control
- Give open-minded consideration to all viewpoints
- Focus on the issues and avoid personalizing debate
- Embrace respectful disagreement and dissent as democratic rights, inherent components of an inclusive public process, and tools for forging sound decisions



“Civility is not a tactic or a sentiment. It is the determined choice of trust over cynicism, of community over chaos.”

-President George W. Bush

Orderliness: The business of the Village will be conducted in an orderly fashion. Meetings will stay on topic, address agenda items, and should adhere to General Village Law and the Open Meetings Act.

Timeliness: Residents and interested parties will have access to documents and responses to their questions in a timely fashion. Questions asked at a meeting will receive a response no later than the following meeting of that body, which will be recorded into the public record.

A written policy will help the Village communicate the daily functioning of the local government, and provide guidance on outreach for less common events, such as a master plan, zoning ordinance, or legal ordinance update. Each of these purposes and circumstances will require tailored methods for effective outreach. The Village is eager to meet the standards laid out below, and exceed them. To this point, this guide is intended to serve as an internal resource for ideas on how to best engage productive collaboration with stakeholders and the public in the future.

State Regulations on Public Participation

State of Michigan legislation provides a foundation for public participation in local government. The Village, through the work of the Village Council and individual boards and commissions, follows and hopes to exceed the requirements delineated in the local and state regulations listed below. These regulations include provisions for the public review process, public participation, and public hearings.

- General Village Law
- Village Code of Ordinances
- The Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976)
- Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act (PA 381 of 1996)
- The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006)
- The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008)
- The Freedom of Information (Act 5 U.S.C. § 552)
- Other relevant local, State and Federal legislation

Key Stakeholders

Our community is made up of individuals from a variety of walks of life. To ensure that all voices are heard and that all citizens can understand policies and practices, and receive services, the communication strategies in this plan will consider how to best reach persons with diverse schedules, abilities, and interests.

The Village has partnered on many initiatives with community groups and neighboring governments. Sustained communication and partnerships are essential to the future growth and prosperity of our community. These organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts
- Chippewa/Mackinac/Luce Conservation District
- Chippewa Luce Mackinac Community Action Agency
- Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning & Development
- Helen Newberry Joy Hospital
- LMAS District Health Department
- Local Church Groups
- Local Service Groups
- Luce County Board of Commissioners
- Luce County Economic Development Corporation
- Luce County Parks & Recreation
- McMillan Township
- Media Outlets
- Michigan Department of Corrections
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Michigan State University Extension Service
- Newberry Area Chamber of Commerce
- Newberry Area Tourism Association
- North Country Trail Association
- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians
- Senior Citizen Center
- Tahquamenon Area Schools
- Tahquamenon Area Schools- youth sports and organizations
- U.S. Forest Service

The Communication Toolbox & Communicating Results

The following methods may be used to solicit public participation when taking action on land use or policy, or development applications. The Village of Newberry will always attempt to use more than one tool or method, depending on the specific project and target audience. This list is flexible and can change based on each project’s needs and circumstance.

These tools help achieve the goals of informing and engaging the residents, organizations, and businesses of Newberry, the results of each of these tools can be measured and reported back to the public in a variety of ways. Each of the tools delineated below has corresponding methods for reporting that the tool was used and presenting the feedback received back to the public. This reporting should be completed as individual plans and projects progress.

<u>Tools</u>	<u>How the Results Will Be Communicated</u>
<p><u>Website</u> Village Council meeting announcements, packets, agendas, and minutes are now posted on the website, http://www.villageofnewberry.com/. The website also has contact information, the Code of Ordinances, permits and forms, public notices, and planning documents.</p>	<p>Relevant planning and development information will be posted on the website, as well as records of relevant meetings will be documented.</p>
<p><u>Traditional Media</u> At various times, the Village will issue press releases and information for articles to various media outlets, including regional print newspapers, online news sources, and/or local cable news, specifically, the Newberry News, and 9 & 10 Cable News. Announcements related to Village business are also made on AM, FM, and digital radio stations.</p>	<p>Copies of press releases and public notices sent out by the Village to traditional media sources will be documented.</p>
<p><u>Village Office</u> Announcements can be made during meetings, and public notices posted on Village Office property as a means of informing committee members and the public.</p>	<p>These announcements will be documented through the same medium(s) as the meetings.</p>
<p><u>Utility Bill Announcements</u> The Village places announcements in the message center on the utility bills that are sent out each month.</p>	<p>Record of the bills are kept, and staff will record responses.</p>
<p><u>Partner Networks</u> Public bulletin boards and communications shared with organizational newsletters and bulletins can be another effective way to inform the public of events and meetings.</p>	<p>Copies of communications sent to partner networks will be documented.</p>

<p><u>Social Media</u> The Village currently uses Facebook to announce meetings (and cancellations), street closures, storm news, etc. Information on the Village page is shareable to unofficial pages as well.</p>	<p>Social media sites retain posts and responses, so they will remain accessible to the public.</p>
<p><u>Public Hearings</u> Public attendance at meetings is encouraged through meeting announcements and is formally solicited during the scheduled public comment per the meeting and hearing agendas.</p>	<p>Feedback and comments submitted at hearing and meetings are through the same medium(s) as the meetings.</p>
<p><u>Open Houses, Community Workshops,</u> These formats allow for direct, two-way communication between the Village and the public. These events provide an avenue for the public to directly contribute to the creation of plans and development proposals.</p>	<p>Public input from events will be reported in the appendices of plans, which should be produced for public review as soon as possible.</p>
<p><u>Charrettes, and Focus Groups</u> These formats are similar to Open Houses but are more time intensive and solicit more in-depth feedback. They often involve fewer people than surveys, open houses, and workshops, and may be reserved for larger plans and developments.</p>	<p>Public input from events will be reported in the appendices of plans, which should be produced for public review as soon as possible.</p>
<p><u>Surveys</u> Paper, digital, and in-person surveys directly solicit data and input from a larger number of people representing a variety of demographic backgrounds. Preselected questions allow for greater specificity and targeted problem solving.</p>	<p>Survey results will be reported in the appendices of plans, which should be produced for public review as soon as possible.</p>
<p><u>Advisory Committees</u> The Village uses advisory committees for specialized aspects of our community to enhance collaboration between Village staff and the public.</p>	<p>Advisory committee meeting agendas and minutes should be made available publicly through the website.</p>

Strategies for Outreach

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

MEETINGS:

The public meetings of the Village Council and related boards and commissions shall take place in a barrier-free and centrally located building, such as Newberry Village Office. Meetings may also be held in barrier-free neighborhood locations.

In addition to regular meetings, the Village Council and its various boards and commissions shall hold public hearings when called for in their local and State enabling legislation, or when otherwise prudent, to provide the opportunity for public comment on specific topics. Hearings will be advertised using more than one method. Notification methods may be adjusted according to the needs of the meeting, and can use any of the following methods:

- Press release
- Newspaper notice
- Radio announcements
- Paper posting in public place
- Website, Facebook or other social media post

Village Council

The following methods are used to advertise the public meetings of the Village Council:

- Posted notice at Village Office
- Annual notice in the Newberry News
- Meeting dates posted on the Village website

Village Council meetings welcome public attendance. At the meeting there is time for a general public comment. The meetings are recorded, and minutes can be found on the Village website.

Appointed Commissions and Committees

Other relevant boards and commissions that hold meetings open to the public include:

- Planning Commission
- Water & Light Board
- Fire Advisory Committee
- Dangerous Building & Inspection Team
- Finance
- Fire/Police Management
- Negotiation/Union
- Ordinance
- Planning Committee
- DPW/WWTP

Public hearings will be held according to the individual board and commission bylaws. Any public hearings will be noticed as required in advance of the meeting.

All committee and commission meetings will produce at a minimum a synopsis or meeting minutes. Additional reporting will occur when necessary and appear in the Village Council agendas.

PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

Plan Adoption

The Village shall follow, at a minimum, the provisions of the State legislation for the adoption of planning documents; many of these provisions can be found in the legislation listed above. The Master Plan updates in particular should solicit public involvement as widely as possible. Additional guidance can be found in state and federal guidelines, for example, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources published guidelines for the development of Recreation Plans, including public outreach.

Public input should form the basis of plan development, and often should be preceded by public education efforts. Education and input can be achieved by the following methods:

- Media outreach
- Open houses
- Community Workshops
- Charrettes
- Surveys- paper and digital
- Focus Groups

All plans should be reviewed during a public comment period in advance of being approved by the Village Council or relevant commission, board or committee. Public comment periods can be advertised using the same or similar methods as public hearings.

ORDINANCE UPDATES

The Village shall follow, at a minimum, the provisions of the State legislation regarding Ordinance updates. In addition to protecting public welfare, ordinances should reflect the vision outlined in the Master Plan. Updates, amendments and waivers should all take into account the Master Plan vision, as well as input from neighbors and related organizations.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Effective and transparent communication may prevent undue controversy surrounding developments. Local and State regulations set the minimum requirements for reviewing proposed projects, planning and zoning applications, and permitting. In addition to required postings for public hearings in front of the Planning Commission or Village Council, proposed high-impact developments may also be presented to the public through open houses, mailings to neighbors and/or related organizations, and/or press releases.

VILLAGE BUDGET AND PUBLIC SERVICES

The State of Michigan requires that municipalities post their financials online here: <https://secure.munetrix.com/Michigan/Municipalities/11-EUP/Luce-County/Village/Newberry-Village>. In addition to adhering to State law, Village audits can be downloaded on the Village website here: <http://www.villageofnewberry.com/government/Financial.php>. Notification of the meeting to approve the budget will be in the Newberry News and paper copies will be

available by request at the Village Offices. This reporting as well as other public services provided by the Village are advertised by:

- Traditional media postings
- Social media postings
- Utility bill announcements
- The Village Website

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MATRIX

To summarize the policy described in this document, Village staff can refer to the matrix below as a quick-reference for what strategies best suit the plans and projects they may be working on:

	<i>Council and Commission Meetings</i>	<i>Master Plan Updates</i>	<i>Recreation or Other Small Plans</i>	<i>Major Developments</i>
<i>Announcements or public postings</i>	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
<i>Pre-application Meetings</i>				Recommended
<i>Surveys</i>		Recommended	Recommended	
<i>Open Houses or Workshops</i>		Recommended	Recommended	Potentially
<i>Charrettes or Focus Groups</i>		Potentially		Potentially
<i>Public Hearing</i>		Recommended	Recommended	Recommended

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Plan

In addition to periodically reviewing this policy itself, the Village will ensure the strategies outlined above are effective support and implement the stated values by:

- Reviewing, publishing, and responding to survey responses
- Publicly displaying the results of these efforts, in plan appendices or at the Village office and/or website
- Recording how many bills with announcements are sent out
- Recording how many people attend meetings through sign-in sheets, which will then be preserved in the meeting minutes
- Distributing surveys to ascertain how meeting attendees heard about the meeting

Here is the survey, designed to be flexible and able to be used at all events:

Community
Event Survey



Date of Event:

Type of Event:

- Council Meeting
- Planning Commission Meeting
- Water & Light Board Meeting
- Other _____

How did you hear about this event?

- Village Website
- Social Media
- Newberry News
- Utility Bill Announcement
- Public Announcement
- Local Radio
- Other _____

Was this event held at a convenient place and time?

- Yes No

Are you glad you came to this event?

- Yes No

Would you improve this event in any way? If so, how?

- No Yes _____

