



Village of Lake Isabella

Public Participation Strategy

Introduction

The Public Participation and Engagement Strategy is intended to be a resource to staff of the Village of Lake Isabella (hereafter “the Village”) when communicating and engaging with members of the Lake Isabella community.

Philosophy

- The Village recognizes that an educated, informed, and engaged citizenry is essential to the present and future success of our community.
- The Village will meet or exceed all applicable federal, state, and local statutory requirements for public notice and participation.
- The Village will strive to be clear, consistent, and comprehensive, and creative in all communications with and engagement of the public.
- The Village will work towards reaching a broad and representative cross-section of stakeholders of the community.
- The Village will be attentive to the needs of stakeholders who face barriers to participation in the village affairs, including but not limited to cultural, linguistic, physical, and socio-economic barriers.
- The Village will regularly evaluate the use of various methods of communication and engagement and make adjustments to this strategy as needed.

Stakeholders

The Village recognizes that the stakeholders for each project or initiative will be different. The following is an extensive but not comprehensive list of common stakeholders with which communications or engagement should be considered.

These stakeholder’s groups are also likely partners in communication with the community through their meetings, publications, and other avenues.

- Village Council
- Village Boards and Commissions
- Residents & Property Owners
- Business Owners

- Property Owner Associations
- Chippewa Hills School District
- Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
- Isabella County
- Sherman & Broomfield Townships
- Nottawa-Sherman Twp. Fire Department
- East Michigan Council of Governments
- Isabella County Road Commission
- Isabella County Transportation Commission
- Relevant state agencies
- Other interest groups

State and Local Regulations

The Village will meet or exceed all applicable federal, state, and local statutory requirements for public notice and participation.

Boards and Commissions

The Village aims to provide residents and community members with various and extensive ways in which to participate in local government. One of the most important ways residents can participate is through service on a Village board or commission.

Village Council

The Village Council is the legislative and policy-making body for the Village government. Seven members are elected at large for staggered four-year terms. The President, President Pro Temp, Clerk and Treasurer are selected by the Council. The council also hires the Village Manager, who is responsible for the day to day administration of the Village government.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is a seven-member citizen advisory board, whose task is to guide the physical development of the Village and advise the Village Councils on a suggested policy for growth. Members are appointed by the Village President and serve staggered three-year terms without pay.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Village Zoning Board of Appeals is a seven-member board (five regular members and two alternates) citizen advisory board responsible for hearing appeals on decisions regarding

enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance. Board members are appointed by the Village President and serve staggered three-year terms without pay.

Public Meetings

All meetings of the Village Council and its various boards and commissions shall be open to the public in accordance with the Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976 as amended), except closed session meetings as provided for in the Act.

Public notice of meetings shall be given in accord with the Act.

All meetings shall be held in a facility accessible to persons with disabilities and the Village shall provide reasonable accommodations. Individuals with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations or services should contact the Village Hall.

Interested persons are encouraged to contact the Village Hall or check the Village's website at www.lakeisabellami.org in order to review the schedule of public meetings.

Individual boards and commissions hold public meetings pursuant to their respective bylaws and state and local statutes. Meeting agendas and packets are made available on the Village's website in advance of each meeting.

Meeting minutes are coordinated by the staff and posted on the Village's website following approval by said board commission.

Public Comments

Opportunities for public comment are available at any meeting of the Village Council or Village boards and commissions pursuant to their respective bylaws. The meeting agenda allows for public comments under the 'Public Comment' section. The participation of interested persons shall be recorded in the meeting minutes. Approved meeting minutes are made available to the public through various methods, including being posted on the Village's website.

Public Hearings

The Village Council and its various boards and commissions holds 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.

Village Council

The Village Council holds public hearings that are required under local and state statute. Notices are published in the Morning Sun. Additional notification by mail occurs as required under local and state statute.

Planning Commission

Notification of a public hearing before the Planning Commission is published in the Morning Sun in accordance with state statute and provided by mail to the owners and occupants of property within 300 feet of the subject property.

Other Boards and Commissions

Public hearings are held as needed and pursuant to their respective bylaws. Public hearings are noticed as required in advance of the meeting.

Planning & Development

Public participation and engagement is a critical component of all projects, and proper planning is curial to ensure the appropriate stakeholders are reached.

Prior to seeking to inform, educate, engage, or partner with the community on a specific project or issue, Village staff are encouraged to consider the following questions:

- What is the objective of this participation or engagement? Is it to inform, educate, engage, or partner with the community?
- What are the minimum requirements for public participation and engagement under local and state statutes related to this project or issue?
- Who are the key stakeholders?
- What are the key messages?
- How much time is available?
- What is the budget for this issue?
- Are there limitations on how the public can impact the outcome of the project or issue? For example, notifying the public about an emergency repair versus development of a new Village program.
- What methods are most likely to reach these groups? Multiple methods may be necessary to reach different stakeholder groups for one project.
- Is this a large or potentially controversial project? Additional outreach may be necessary.
- Has the developer requested assistance in outreach efforts? If so, staff should assist in providing appropriate contact information to the impacted stakeholders. Developers are strongly encouraged to begin the engagement process early in their planning and

permitting process. The Village will make available at reasonable times the Council Chambers for developers to meet with interested members of the community.

Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation of methods is necessary in order to ensure successful engagement of the community. Surveying participants is one means by which methods can be evaluated.

Results of these surveys will be used to refine this document, will inform future participation and engagement strategy development, and will be shared with staff and the public as a measure of how the Village is doing.

Each plan and project shall include a Public Participation Review. The Public Participation Review sample can be found in Appendix B. Documentation will contribute to a public participation process that is continuously evolving to better obtain public input. To insure that methods are effective, the toolbox will be reviewed annually and updated when necessary. Methods that have failed will not be removed from the toolbox, but will be reviewed and documented so that the same mistakes will not be made in the future.

Communicating Results

The Village will publicly communicate all results of community input on planning and development issues. The Village will utilize one or more of the “Inform” methods to relay results back to the public.

Toolbox

Public participation and engagement is a critical component of all projects, and the Village has numerous methods of public participation and engagement at its disposal. Each method offers distinctive benefits and limitations. Most projects and issues will require a combination of methods for comprehensive participation and engagement.

The use of the Village website or social media should be conducted in accordance with guidelines developed by the Village Hall.

Appendix A contains a list of participation and engagement methods used by or available to the Village along with factors relevant to their usage. This list will continue to evolve as methods change over time.

Appendix A

Method	Required by law in Certain Circumstances	Level of Participation			
		Inform	Educate	Engage	Partner
Door to Door, including Door Tags		X	X	X	
Newsletter		X	X		
Website		X	X		
Open House		X	X		
Items Specific Webpage		X	X		
YouTube		X	X		
Facebook		X	X	X	
Community Calendar		X	X		
Village Hall Display Case Posting	X	X			
Emailed Notices		X			
Code Red		X			
Newspaper Ad	X	X			
Press Release		X			
Yard Signs		X			
Association Meetings		X	X	X	X
Focus Groups				X	
Ad-hoc Committees				X	X
Public Hearings	X			X	
Surveys				X	

Appendix B

Community Event Satisfaction Survey
Event:
How did you hear about this event?
Was this event held at a convenient location and time? What time or location would have been more ideal?
Are you glad you came to the event? How would you improve it?

Internal Public Participation Evaluation
Type of public participation:
Date and Time:
How was the event advertised?
Where was the event held?
How many people attended? Was there a group under-represented? Over-represented?
Who facilitate the event?
What ways could the event have been improved?