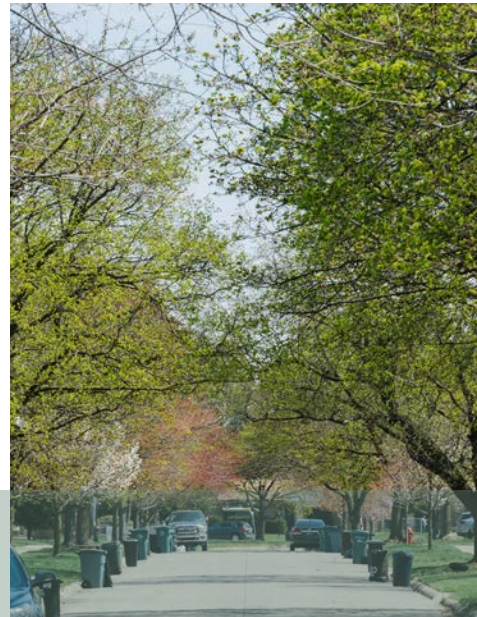
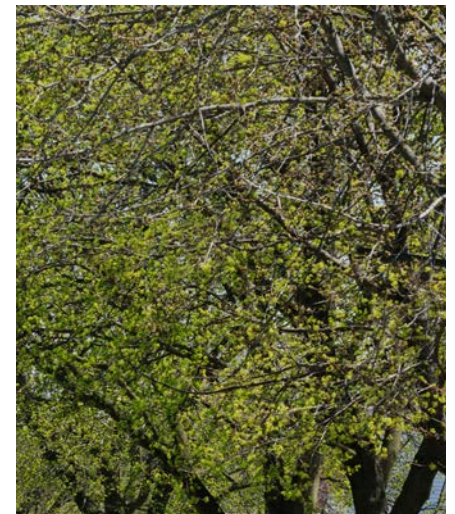
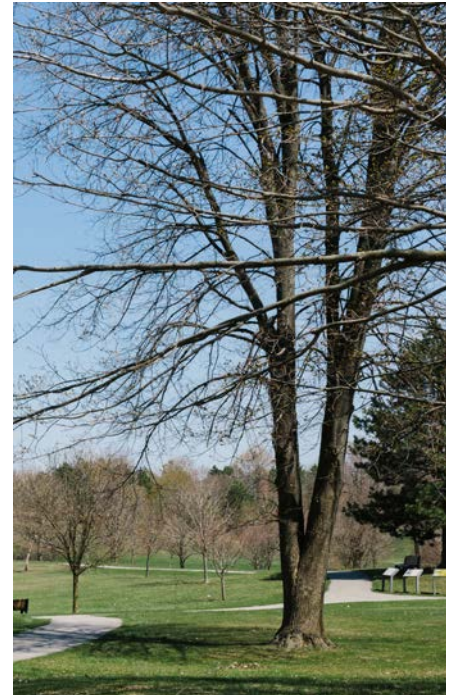




APRIL 2023



# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

# Acknowledgments

## PROJECT CONTRIBUTORS

This plan was created as part of a graduate student project at the University of Michigan Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning.

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The team would like to thank the following contributors:

Nani Wolf and McKenna Associates - Project Partner

Larissa Larsen and Julie Steiff - URP 507 Course Instructors

Kurt Heise - Plymouth Township Supervisor

Township Hall Staff - Interview Participants

Frank Ruggirello and Nick Brandon - Plymouth-Canton Schools Communications Team  
and the Residents of Plymouth Township - Survey Respondents.

All photographs are credited to sara faraj of Planning Participation.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plymouth Township is a community that actively participates in their local governmental process regarding issues that concern them. Local government works well when residents and government are collaborative and engaged in transparent communication. To foster this vision in Plymouth Township, the Township partnered with a class of graduate students from the University of Michigan’s Master of Urban and Regional Planning program to create a Public Participation Plan. The Plan was created over the course of four months in 2023 through a process of research and outreach, and sought to figure out where Township engagement was working and where it wasn’t.

Embedded within the plan are the takeaways from literature reviews regarding the best practices in public participation, one-on-one interviews with Township residents and representatives from Plymouth-Canton Schools, and over 200 survey responses from residents. Using this information and input, we created a plan to leverage the Township’s strengths to elevate current communications methods and recommend supportive processes.

To create plans that embody community values and needs, the following recommendations are formulated according to three goals for public participation:

- (1) Engage a representative community
- (2) Foster collaborative and continuous discussion
- (3) Build trust and transparency

These goals aim to establish a culture of open communication, accountability, and understanding between residents, planners, and public officials joined by their aspirations for a brighter future.

In Plymouth Township, there are various stakeholders who are vital to the decision-making process. The following list (p.8) offers an overview of the stakeholders that should be involved in any actions led by the Township. The current list documents a point in time and should be updated regularly as the community grows and evolves. The stakeholders range from board members, committees, departments, Homeowners Associations (HoAs), the school district, faith-based organizations, etc. Stakeholders offer their unique perspective or suggestions, which will ensure transparent and comprehensive results.



To ensure a comprehensive participation plan, we used various resources such as:

- Village of Blissfield Participation Plan
- Michigan Economic Development Handbook
- Michigan Open Meetings Act
- Interviews and Surveys

For community employees or organizations who are unfamiliar with the array of strategies and techniques associated with public participation, this plan includes an engagement toolbox. Engagement should take place along the timeline of a project, requiring different strategies for each stage. In pursuit of the named goals, the plan uses the International Association for Public Participation five strategies: (1) **Inform**, to provide the public with objective information (2) **Consult**, to obtain feedback (3) **Involve**, to work directly with the public throughout the process (4) **Collaborate**, to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making process (5) **Empower**, to place final decision-making in the hands of the public. This plan provides scenario-specific engagement techniques to display how to implement the toolbox.

For Plymouth Township to bolster two-way communication, assess the effectiveness of its public participation efforts, and locate and understand gaps in engagement – monitoring, releasing, and evaluating results is vital. By ensuring that there are standards to collect, analyze, and share relevant information, Plymouth Township can better meet the expectations of the public and cultivate transparency and trust within the process. Fortified channels for consistent communication with residents should bolster future engagement efforts and establish a sense of local ownership over initiatives.

In pursuit of the named goals, this plan recommends specific action items to guide future public participation:

 **Clarify and consolidate information**

 **Invest in youth engagement**

 **Diversify engagement opportunities**

 **Offer volunteer opportunities**

 **Enhance communication and notification**

 **Create accessible feedback channels**

 **Make engagement fun**

 **Provide project checklists**

 **Increase document accessibility**

 **Debrief events and projects**

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# Introduction

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## WHY CREATE A PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN?

Each of the goals defined by Plymouth Charter Township’s 2025 Master Plan addresses quality of life and community identity in some way. When Township planners and public officials engage a diverse array of local residents, the decisions and outcomes better reflected shared priorities. Public participation can provide a platform for residents to take ownership of their community’s future while assuring that planning efforts address different groups’ assets and needs.

Effective public participation promotes joint fact-finding and decision-making in order to build trust between public officials and the communities they serve. When done correctly, participatory planning identifies the most effective areas for engagement and stimulates collaborative visioning for the future. Without a guiding framework for participation, planners risk perpetuating exclusion by channeling engagement through the same people and networks. Plymouth Township already has abundant amenities, high quality of life, and pride of place. While these traits support a vibrant community now, the population is projected to change in size and composition. Because most Township meeting attendees are older white residents, the current public participation structure may miss critical perspectives from young families and disconnect plans from the community they seek to serve.

Public participation plans are place-based, and we know that efficiency is important to Plymouth Township’s residents, who pride themselves on having one of the lowest tax rates in Wayne County. The following Public Participation Plan aims to structure future efforts to establish a culture of collaboration and uplift pride of place.





## VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Under the guidance of its Public Participation Plan, Plymouth Charter Township is a more inclusive, vibrant, and engaged community. Local leaders and stakeholders use the public participation plan regularly to direct community engagement in a way that supports representation, collaboration, and transparency. Residents feel capable of meeting their needs in the Township and they take an active role in their thriving community. If residents recognize an unmet need or an opportunity for improvement, they feel confident that there are effective communication channels to advocate for changes with public officials. The public participation process supports democratic decision-making through frequent opportunities for residents to have their voices heard. Township officials and community members collaborate to tailor planning and policy for a brighter future created by Plymouth Township, for Plymouth Township.



## GOALS

### *Engage a representative community*

To include diverse groups of all ages and abilities through a variety of engagement opportunities by time, location, and format across the project's duration.

### *Foster collaborative and continuous discussion*

To encourage public ownership of the decision-making process; maintain open communication channels between planners, local elected officials, and the public; and ensure plans reflect community objectives.

### *Build trust and transparency*

To use and value local knowledge in a manner that residents feel is consistent with their perspectives and to provide residents with a clear understanding of when and how their input will be incorporated.

# Key Stakeholders

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To ensure the success of a public participation plan, it is necessary to include the various stakeholders from the Township. Stakeholders have a vested interest in the community and come from different backgrounds. From individuals to local businesses, shareholders, or community members, stakeholders play an important role in the participation plan. The Township is dedicated to ensuring a transparent and inclusive decision-making process. While some residents consistently participate in Township meetings, they do not necessarily reflect its diversity. The Township is dedicated to expanding outreach to individuals who do not currently have an active role with the Township or with any stakeholder. All of these stakeholders can engage in the planning process in various ways and ensure that the Township has the necessary input to guide the decision-making process.





# STAKEHOLDER LIST

Stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- **Boards and Commissions**
  - Board of Trustees
  - Board of Review
  - Civil Service Commission
  - Downtown Development Commission
  - Election Commission
  - Environmental Leadership Commission
  - Historic District Commission
  - Planning Commission
  - Plymouth District Library Board
  - Zoning Board of Appeals
- **Departments and Employees**
  - Assessing Department
  - Clerk
  - Building Department
  - Plymouth Township Planning and Zoning Department
  - Emergency Management
  - Finance/Accounting
  - Fire Department
  - Human Resources
- Information Services
- Police Department
- Public Services
- Public Works
- Solid Waste/Trash Collection
- Supervisor
- Treasurer
- **Government and Jurisdictional Units**
  - Plymouth-Canton School Districts
  - Plymouth Charter Township
  - City of Plymouth
  - State of Michigan
- **Home Owners Associations**
  - Woodland Pond Condos
  - Andover Lakes West
  - Huntington Park
  - Tuscan Hills Condos
  - Pine Bluff Estates Condos
  - Fox Pointe
  - Pine Ridge Estates
  - Andover Forest
  - Emrich Orchards Estates Condos
  - Hunter Park Condos
  - Verona Park
  - Hilltop Golfview Estates Condos
- Portsmouth Crossing
- Walnut Creek
- Glenview Estates Site Condos
- Hidden Creek Condos
- Woodgate Condos
- Beacon Hollow Condos
- The Reserves
- Tuscany Reserve
- Trailwood No. 2
- Trailwood No. 3
- The Woods
- Village Manor Condos
- Saddlebrook Condos
- Arboretum Condos
- Woodlore South
- Westbriar Village No. 1
- Westbriar Village wNo. 2
- Trillium Woods Site Condos
- Brecken Ridge Condos
- Whispering Pines Estates Condos
- **Business owners**
- **Nonprofit and volunteer organizations**
- **Parent Teacher Associations**

- **Faith-based organizations**
  - Baptist State Convention of Michigan
  - Calvary Baptist Church
  - Praise Community Church
  - Eastern Catholic Church
  - Our Lady of Good Council
  - St. Kenneth
  - St. Michael Melkit
  - Church of Christ West
  - Iglesia Ni Cristo
  - Plymouth Church of Christ
  - Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witness
  - Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
  - Detroit Laestadian Lutheran Church
  - St. Peter's Lutheran Church
  - Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church
  - Lake Pointe Bible Church
  - Mata Tripta Ji Gurdwara Sahib (Hidden Falls)
  - Living Word Church
  - First United Methodist Church
  - St. John's Episcopal Church
  - Way of Life Christian Church
  - Risen Christ Lutheran Church
  - Community of Christ
  - Northridge Church
  - Plymouth First United Methodist Church
  - Farrugia Savior
  - Friend of Unity
  - Woodside Bible Church
  - First Presbyterian Church of Plymouth
  - The Book Church of Christ
  - Trinity Presbyterian Church
  - The Salvation Army
  - Rayyan Center
- **Local real estate representatives**
- **Senior and assisted housing organizations**
- **Elected officials**
- **Potential investors**
- **Community groups**
- **Civic/social organizations**



# Community Engagement Toolbox

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## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STATEMENT:**

Plymouth Charter Township strives to bolster meaningful resident engagement in its strategic planning processes to identify and implement local priorities that are accountable to community objectives.

To help us achieve these goals, this public participation plan uses the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) framework to organize engagement strategies into five categories: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower. The categories are defined as:

**Inform:** To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and/or solutions.

**Consult:** To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.

**Involve:** To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

**Collaborate:** To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

**Empower:** To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Different categories are appropriate for different situations, and some projects may use engagement strategies from more than one category.

For example, a master plan update may send out notices (*inform*), a survey (*consult*), and establish a steering committee (*collaborate*). Conversely, a sewer line reconstruction project may only send out notices (*inform*) because the project is both essential and lacks alternatives.



## STRATEGY CHART:

	<b>Inform</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Involve</b>	<b>Collaborate</b>	<b>Empower</b>
<b>Public Participation Objective</b>	The Township will provide the public with balanced and objective information to build collective knowledge of the problems, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.	The Township will seek public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	The Township will work directly with the public to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood, considered, and incorporated into plans.	The Township will partner with the public throughout the decision-making process, including identification of preferred solutions and development of alternatives.	The Township will place the final decision-making power in the hands of the public.
<b>Public Engagement Strategies</b>	<p>Notices</p> <p>Public Body Meetings</p> <p>Mailing Lists</p> <p>Public Access TV and YouTube</p> <p>Newsletters</p> <p>Posted Signs</p> <p>Neighborhood Meeting Visits</p> <p>PTO Meeting Visits</p> <p>Press Releases</p>	<p>Public Hearings</p> <p>Surveys</p> <p>Social Media</p> <p>Feedback Interviews</p>	<p>Town Hall Meetings</p> <p>Focus Groups</p> <p>Public Workshops</p> <p>Walking Tours</p> <p>Youth Engagement</p> <p>Volunteer Events</p>	<p>Charrettes</p> <p>Working Groups</p> <p>Citizen Advisory Council</p>	<p>Ballot Measures</p> <p>Voter Education</p> <p>Scenario Planning</p>



## Notices

Public notices are postings, either physically in person, or virtually online that inform the public of the date, time, and location of an upcoming public meeting or hearing. Public notices also inform the community about public advisory committees, workshops, or recruiting for focus groups. Per state law, public notices are required in advance of some types of meetings and projects such as master plan updates.

The following list contains examples of locations for physical and digital notices:

- Newspaper postings
- Township front page website
- Township calendar
- Social media posting such as Facebook
- Flier posted on the exterior of Township Hall
- Direct e-mail to residents who signed up for contact from Township
- Direct e-mail to Homeowner Associations (HOAs)
- Door-hangers placed on residential homes
- Announcements at Township Council meetings

The Township will strive to utilize multiple notice methods that are tailored to individual projects and its target stakeholders, especially those who have been historically underrepresented in terms of Township meeting attendance and other forms of participatory decision-making.

## Public Body Meetings

Public body meetings are the meetings of boards, commissions, councils, and other public bodies that are open to the public. State law requires some meetings to have a dedicated time for public comment, but many others do not, such as internal working sessions. Opportunities for public comment are currently available at any meeting of the Board of Trustees or Township's commission and boards in accordance with the provisions in the boards and commissions' bylaws and other operating policies. Public meetings must be held in buildings/locations that are accessible to everyone, regardless of age or ability.

## Press Releases

Press releases are short status updates on Township policy and planning projects that are distributed to local media outlets for dissemination. These may be printed in local newspapers, posted online, or broadcast over the radio, depending on the audience.



## **Mailing Lists**

Mailing lists are lists of residents to which the Township sends direct updates, either via postal mail or email. Mail lists may be about general Township business or may be established for a specific project and used to inform interested stakeholders. Per the Michigan Open Meetings Act, any citizen can contact the Township to request that public bodies put them on a mailing list so they are notified in advance of all meetings.

## **Public Access TV and YouTube**

Public access television (TV) is a local TV station that anyone may have a segment on. Typically, municipalities use public access TV to broadcast notices on upcoming meetings and projects, as well as recordings of past meetings. The Township has a YouTube streaming platform for the live distribution of public meetings.

## **Newsletters**

Newsletters are bulletins, typically 1-2 pages in length, that are issued periodically and contain information on upcoming events, projects, meetings, and other news. They may contain information about upcoming engagement opportunities and/or report out the results of past efforts. Newsletters can be physical or digital and can be sent directly to stakeholders or posted on public forums, such as social media homepages or posting boards at public facilities. The Township currently releases a physical newsletter to all residents quarterly via postal mail and is also available at Township Hall.

## **Posted Signs**

Posted signs take two forms: signs on buses, billboards, or benches that advertise major initiatives, like a master plan update or code rewrite, or signs at Township buildings or project sites that identify a development, inform of an infrastructure project, or indicate a project's completion.

## **Neighborhood Meeting Visits**

Neighborhood meetings are meetings that are conducted by homeowners' associations, neighborhood groups, or other public coalitions at which Township staff are welcome. Staff is often given a short segment during which they provide informational updates on relevant projects and policy initiatives that may impact the community.





## Public Hearing

Public hearings are the meetings of boards, commissions, councils, and other public bodies that are required by local and State enabling legislation. Public hearings may also be held when the body deems them to be otherwise prudent. Unlike public body meetings (above), all public hearings must provide the opportunity for public comment on specific topics and record those comments for consideration. The Township will hold public hearings in buildings/locations that are accessible for everyone, regardless of age or ability. The Township will continue to advertise these meetings on the Township website and follow all legislative requirements, including the timely posting of clear, concise minutes and meeting handouts.

## Surveys

Surveys are questionnaires that gather individual opinions on planning and policy projects, and they are useful for identifying specific areas of interest or concentration from a broad scope of ideas or issues. The Township may use a survey to identify where to start in the planning process, the general climate surrounding a topic, or reactions to different alternative solutions. The Township will make all general-public surveys available in both a physical and digital format so they are accessible to as many people as possible.

## Social Media Feedback

Beyond posting notices, social media provides a platform to gather public feedback through comments, online polls, forums, and other mediums. Public comments on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Nextdoor, and Instagram posts can be collected as a part of the planning process. It is important to remember that only one segment of the population uses social media, and the Township will weigh all comments appropriately against other forms of feedback.

## Interviews

Interviews are one-on-one meetings with stakeholders that are conducted to gather in-depth information. Interviewing community leaders can both yield valuable information and help build public consensus for a project. However, one interview reflects the opinion of one individual and should not be considered the views of the entire community. The Township will conduct interviews either in person or via phone (depending on what is suitable) and strive to conduct multiple interviews to gather a diversity of feedback.



## Focus Group

Focus groups are small-group meetings, typically facilitated by a municipality or consultant, that are made up of stakeholders (residents, community leaders, public body members, etc.). Focus groups gather feedback about a specific project or initiative and typically ask people to brainstorm ideas or weigh alternatives. Like interviews, focus groups can help to narrow down concepts or get a specific side of the story from different perspectives. The Township will use emerging best practices for focus groups to ensure that strong voices do not overwhelm the conversation.

## Town Hall Meetings

Town hall meetings are informal meetings, typically held near the beginning of a project, where community members and municipal employees gather together to have an open two-way conversation about the project. Town hall meetings gather information on attendees' thoughts, concerns, and questions about the project, and generally give them a place to voice their opinion without having to register a formal public comment, like at a public hearing. The Township will hold town hall meetings in buildings/locations that are accessible for everyone, regardless of age or ability. The Township will provide multiple opportunities for feedback (written, spoken, etc.) at town hall meetings so people can respond in the way they find most comfortable.

## Pop-up Events

Pop-up events are events that capitalize on places where people are already gathering to disseminate project information and get feedback. For example, a booth at a farmers' market, a side table at a school board meeting, or a station at a Township fair that ask the public for feedback are all considered pop-up events. Pop-up events are a very good way to get feedback from people that do not regularly attend traditional Township meetings.

## Public Workshops

Public workshops (also called open houses) are interactive meetings that educate the community on a project and gather their input. Unlike traditional public body meetings or hearings, workshops can be as simple as a series of Q&A sessions or as creative as interactive map exercises. Typically, a workshop begins with a formal informational presentation and is followed by less formal activities that facilitate the exchange of information. They provide a more casual and fun setting to encourage participants to think critically and creatively about important issues. The Township will conduct interviews either in person or via phone (depending on what is suitable) and strive to conduct multiple interviews to gather a diversity of feedback.



## (Public Workshops continued)

The Township will hold workshops in buildings/locations that are accessible for everyone, regardless of age or ability. The Township will provide multiple opportunities for feedback (written survey, spoken comment, sticky notes on maps, etc.) at workshops so people can respond in the way they find most comfortable.

## Walking Tours

Walking tours are tours of a project area led by a municipal staff member with attendance by the public, and they are used to gather candid and casual feedback from participants. They can be paired with community workshops or charrettes to measure the perceived safety and comfort of pedestrians in a downtown, neighborhood, or corridor. Walking tours can also be modified into biking tours or multimodal tours.

## Volunteer Events

Volunteer events are opportunities for community members and municipal staff to work hand-in-hand to donate their time for a community purpose, ranging from a cleanup of a park to the construction of a new playground. Through volunteer events, attendees gain ownership of community projects, while also providing the opportunity for casual feedback on Township projects.

## Youth Engagement

Youth engagement is an opportunity to engage with our community members of today and tomorrow. Youth involvement can consist of visiting schools for engagement curriculum, park workdays, open fire-station visits, student externships, student advisory councils, and volunteer events. Engaging with youth provides opinions of a younger generation while also promoting the involvement of the whole family in civic affairs.







## Focus Group

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## Town Hall Meetings

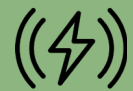
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## Scenario Planning

Scenario Planning offers a way to think creatively about the future. Through structured workshops, communities can build resilience and preparedness while they navigate uncertainty and plan for the preferred future scenario. Citizens should lead visioning discussions to self-determine community objectives, while staff planners act as facilitators to guide conversation, mediate conflict, and provide administrative support.

## Ballot Measures

Ballot measures bring planning and policy decisions to a local vote for members of the affected jurisdiction to decide. Depending on state and local law, the public purchase of land, amendment of the zoning code, and other public decisions may require a ballot measure. The Township will continue to use ballot measures as required by law for applicable planning and policy decisions.



## Voter Education

Before planning and policy decisions come to ballot, the Township should provide nonpartisan resources to assemble information on ballot measures and voting procedures in one place, including but not limited to polling locations, voter registration, updated wait times, and explanation of ballot measures. Voter education promotes accurate information and ensures that decisions are made according to community values and priorities.

# Scenario Specific Engagement Strategies

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These engagement strategies are starting points for future plans and are flexible. To reflect best practices, techniques, and changing conditions, Plymouth Township will add or remove engagement strategies upon their review.

## Zoning Code Amendments

Zoning code amendments and updates are subject to state regulations on engagement. Plymouth Township will follow the regulations in the Michigan Zoning Meetings Act and Zoning Enabling Act.

Beginning	Middle	End
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice to adjacent property owners through the mail</li> <li>• Press release</li> <li>• Public body meeting</li> <li>• Newsletter</li> <li>• Mailing list</li> <li>• Email HOAS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public body meeting</li> <li>• Town hall meeting</li> <li>• Charrette (for form-based codes)</li> <li>• Focus group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice</li> <li>• Public hearing</li> </ul>

## Infrastructure / Public Development Projects

Beginning	Middle	End
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice to key stakeholders through the mail</li> <li>• Newsletter</li> <li>• Mailing list</li> <li>• Email HOAS</li> <li>• Neighborhood meeting visit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Charrette or public workshop</li> <li>• Walking tour</li> <li>• Pop-up event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice</li> <li>• Public body meeting</li> <li>• Newsletter</li> </ul>

## Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Projects

Beginning	Middle	End
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice to key stakeholders through the mail</li> <li>• Press release</li> <li>• Town hall meeting</li> <li>• Public body meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Social media feedback</li> <li>• Pop-up event</li> <li>• Focus group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice</li> <li>• Public body meeting</li> <li>• Newsletter</li> </ul>



## Private Development Projects with Substantial Impact

Beginning	Middle	End
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice to key stakeholders through the mail</li> <li>• Newsletter</li> <li>• Public body meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Walking tour or neighborhood meeting visit (led by developer)</li> <li>• Posted signs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice</li> <li>• Public body meeting</li> </ul>



# Monitoring, Release, and Evaluation

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## MONITORING AND MEASURING SUCCESS

The metrics collected throughout the planning process will vary depending on the engagement tools or methods implemented. Collecting these metrics over time is vital to understand what participation methods generate engagement and meet residents where they are.

For example, the success of an online or in-person survey could be measured by the number of respondents or positive feedback provided. Citizen advisory councils, working groups, town hall meetings, public workshops, and other group activities could be measured by metrics tracking attendance or shared positive feedback. Engagement efforts on social media platforms inherently track metrics and measure participation through “likes,” comments on posts, the number of “followers,” the number of times the content is shared, and the number of times posts are viewed.

The Township can measure these metrics to efficiently tailor engagement strategies and schedules to increase participation and its success over time. To monitor each engagement strategy, Plymouth Township will set and track metrics for each significant planning or policy project.

## SHARING RESULTS

Plymouth Township should publish engagement activities, results, and public notices to ensure compliance with state and local law, as specified in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA), Michigan Open Meetings Act (OMA), and Plymouth Township Code of Ordinances.

The Township aims to maintain transparency and open communication channels by sharing information in accessible ways. Officials will compile public engagement and planning events notices, information, and results in user-friendly formats that will be available to the public through online or print publications or requests (for small projects that do impact the community at a large scale). The following table summarizes the participation methods the Township is using or plans to use to communicate public feedback and information.

## Techniques for Sharing Results

I N F O R M	<b>Notices</b>	All public notices will be posted online on the Township website and published through Township and other communication channels. Hard copies of the notices will be available in the Clerk’s office.
	<b>Public Body Meetings</b>	All public meeting agendas and minutes will be posted online on the Township website after the minutes are approved. A hard copy of the minutes will be available in the Clerk’s office once approved. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.
	<b>Mailing Lists</b>	Relevant public information, notices, and events will be shared with mailing lists.
	<b>Public Access TV and YouTube</b>	Relevant public information, notices, and events will be shared with mailing lists. Public access TV and YouTube information and results will be publicly available on all social media platforms. Feedback will be incorporated into reports and planning efforts where relevant. General information will be shared with the public, but names and specific details of participants will be kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise.
	<b>Newsletters</b>	All public newsletters will be shared on the Township website and through Township and other communication channels. Hard copies of the newsletters will be available in the Clerk’s office and around City Hall.
	<b>Neighborhood Meeting Visits</b>	Notes and photographs will be taken during the neighborhood meeting visits. These notes will be posted in the relevant section of the Township’s website. General information will be shared with the public, but names and specific details of participants will be kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.

## Techniques for Sharing Results

C O N S U L T	<b>Posted Signs</b>	Posted signs will be available at relevant locations to provide notice and information about developments, planning efforts, and site-specific details to inform and engage the public where relevant.
	<b>Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) Meeting Visits</b>	Notes and photographs will be taken with permission during the parent-teacher organization meeting visits. These notes will be posted in the relevant section of the Township’s website. General information will be shared with the public, but names and specific details of participants will be kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.
	<b>Press Releases</b>	All press releases will be posted online on the Township website and published through Township and other communication channels, such as Hometown Life and other news outlets. Hard copies of the press releases will be available in the Clerk’s office.
	<b>Public Hearings</b>	All public hearing agendas and minutes will be posted on the Township website after the minutes are approved. A hard copy of the minutes will be available in the Clerk’s office.
	<b>Survey</b>	A summary of the results will be posted in the relevant section of the project webpage on the Township’s website. A hard copy of the results will be available in the Clerk’s office. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.
<b>Social Media Feedback</b>	Social media feedback will be publicly available on all social media platforms. Feedback will be incorporated into reports and planning efforts where relevant. General information will be shared with the public, but names and specific details of participants will be kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise.	

## Techniques for Sharing Results

I N V O L V E	<b>Interviews</b>	A summary of the results will be posted in the relevant section of the project webpage on the Township’s website. General information will be shared with the public, but names and specific details of participants will be kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise.
	<b>Town Hall Meetings</b>	All town hall meeting agendas and minutes will be posted online on the Township webpage after the minutes are approved. If there were interactive activities beyond public comment, a summary or scan/photo of these activities will be provided alongside the minutes. A hard copy of the minutes will be available in the Clerk’s office. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.
	<b>Focus Groups</b>	A summary of the results will be posted on the Township website for the relevant project. General information will be shared with the public, but names and specific details of participants will be kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.
	<b>Public Workshops</b>	Notes and photographs will be taken during public workshops. These notes will be posted in the workshop-specific section of the project webpage on the Township’s website. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.
	<b>Youth Engagement</b>	Notes, progress updates, and results from youth engagement efforts will be posted in the relevant section of the Township webpage.
	<b>Volunteer Events</b>	Notes, progress updates, and results from volunteer events will be posted in the relevant section of the Township website. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.



## Techniques for Sharing Results

<b>C O L L A B O R A T E</b>	<b>Charettes</b>	<p>Notes and photographs will be taken during charettes. These notes, as well as scans/photos of the sketches and recommendations resulting from the charette(s), will be posted in the relevant section of the Township’s website. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.</p>
	<b>Working Groups</b>	<p>All working group agendas, meetings, and results will be posted online on the Township website and publicly shared during relevant Township meetings where minutes are recorded. If there were interactive activities beyond the working group's efforts, a summary or scan/photo of these activities will be published on the relevant webpage on the Township website. Meeting minutes can be found on the Township website. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.</p>
	<b>Citizen Advisory Council</b>	<p>All Citizen Advisory Council agendas, meetings, and results will be posted online on the Township website and publicly shared during relevant Township meetings where minutes are recorded. If there were interactive activities beyond the Citizen Advisory Council’s efforts, a summary or scan/photo of these activities will be published on the relevant webpage on the Township website. Meeting minutes can be found on the Township website. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.</p>

## Techniques for Sharing Results

<b>E M P O W E R</b>	<b>Ballot Measures</b>	<p>Current and past ballot measures will be publicly posted on the Township website. Relevant information will be shared with the public through relevant communication channels to provide updates about measures and provide channels for residents to inquire about measures. Relevant event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.</p>
	<b>Voter Education</b>	<p>Voter education material and engagement events will be publicly posted on the Township’s website under the relevant project webpage. Notices of engagement events will also be shared in relevant communication channels such as Township social media platforms, newsletters, mailing lists, and notices. Engagement will be held in public areas with materials made available at the local library.</p>
	<b>Scenario Planning</b>	<p>Notes and photographs will be made during scenario planning events. These notes, as well as scans/photos of the sketches, recommendations, and plans resulting from the scenario planning engagements, will be posted in the relevant section/webpage of the Township’s website. Event dates will be posted in the Township Calendar on the Township website.</p>

## EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS

The Township should measure the effectiveness of participation strategies, methods, and tools through the various metrics gathered and monitored and general feedback from Township residents when provided, if applicable and relevant. Township staff should monitor the metrics at the beginning and completion of each technique to determine its effectiveness. The Township acknowledges that the various effectiveness measures and metrics collected have advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, Township staff should monitor multiple effectiveness measures and metrics to ensure the most balanced and comprehensive evaluation of participation techniques.

The Township should also evaluate the effectiveness of participation techniques and strategies by developing goals for participation and measuring them with the metrics gathered. The development of goals and the evaluation of the effectiveness through measuring metrics will allow the Township to monitor the engagement of underrepresented groups and relevant populations to ensure adequate representation when developing projects or plans.

The Township should review this Public Participation Plan periodically to evaluate the effectiveness of the techniques and tools outlined in this document. Appropriate Township departments should routinely review the recorded public participation metrics and measurements to maintain efficiency and ensure the methods and recommendations in this plan encompass the participants' needs and input.

The Public Participation Plan is a living document; it will be revised as needed after Township staff evaluate outputs and outcomes from implemented public participation techniques. As the Township discovers new and more effective ways of public participation, it will update this Public Participation Plan to reflect the most efficient strategies for engaging the public in planning decision-making processes.



# Action Items

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## GOAL 1: ENGAGE A REPRESENTATIVE COMMUNITY

- 1 Clarify and consolidate information:** Maintain an updated list of opportunities publicizing how to get involved as a Township resident, including information regarding the citizen advisory council, volunteer events, and a community calendar that encompasses Township, school, and community events.
- 2 Invest in youth engagement:** Offer youth engagement activities to promote generational involvement in public decision-making. These opportunities can range from high school externships, tailgates, and volunteer events.
- 3 Diversify engagement opportunities:** Increase the variety of engagement opportunities by time, location, and type to reduce barriers and ensure efforts are meeting all residents where they are at. By offering public participation opportunities in different formats with more accommodations (i.e., child care, hybrid format, various meeting times), the Township can gather a greater sense of resident needs and visions.
- 4 Offer volunteer opportunities:** Establish channels for meaningful action wherein residents can engage directly with projects and the current conditions they seek to address, all in order to have a better understanding of planning and policy objectives.





## GOAL 2: FOSTER COLLABORATIVE AND CONTINUOUS DISCUSSION

- 1 Enhance communication and notification:** Promote community-wide awareness of events and opportunities for input through newsletters, social media posts, or an online bulletin.
- 2 Create accessible feedback channels:** Current discourse is available on social media, by calling Township officials, or visiting Township Hall. More user-friendly feedback channels could include public surveys, private online comment boxes, and comment drop boxes at the township hall to invite input from residents of all comfort levels.



## GOAL 3: BUILD TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY

- 1 Make engagement fun:** Create opportunities for low-stakes activities hosted in neutral settings. Examples could include tailgates at youth soccer games, Small Business Saturdays, and ice cream socials.
- 2 Provide project checklists:** Use the community participation toolbox to organize project checklists at the beginning of each project. Publicize the checklist to establish accountability throughout the engagement process.
- 3 Increase document accessibility:** Upload relevant documents to the Township website before and after public meetings, including meeting minutes, agendas, event handouts, engagement results, and recorded meetings.
- 4 Debrief events and projects:** Follow up with internal and external stakeholders to review project scope and impact through listening circles, which emphasize storytelling and unlock collective knowledge.

