



City of Hastings Community Engagement Statement

December 2020



City of Hastings

Community Engagement Statement

Objectives

The City of Hastings will continue to involve the entire community as "key stakeholders" in the future development of our City.

- The City of Hastings evaluates each project on an individual basis to determine project scope, stakeholders, project limitations, approving body, points of community impact during the decision making process, internal and external resources, and level of appropriate community involvement.
- The City of Hastings makes information available in a timely manner to enable interested parties to be involved in decisions at various stages of the review and approval process.
- The City of Hastings engages citizens in a transparent manner, making information easy to access for all interested members of the community.
- The City of Hastings seeks public participation for matters involving future development of the City, such as the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance update process.
- The City of Hastings seeks creative ways to involve a diverse set of community stakeholders in planning, land use, and development decisions.
- The City of Hastings uses comments and information received from interested members of the community to make decisions regarding planning, land use, and future development.
- The City of Hastings tracks and analyzes the results of all public participation to the extent feasible and provide summaries back to the public.

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State & Local Regulations

- Hastings City Charter
- City of Hastings Code of Ordinances
- Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976)
- Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008)
- Home Rule City Act (PA 279 of 1909)
- Local Development and Finance Authority (PA 281 of 1986) and (PA 57 of 2018)
- Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act (PA 381 of 1996)
- Downtown Development Authority Act (PA 197 of 1975)
- Plant Rehabilitation and Industrial Development Districts Act (PA 198 of 1974)
- Personal Property Exemption Act (PA 328 of 1998)
- Other applicable local, state, and federal regulation

Key Stakeholders in the City of Hastings

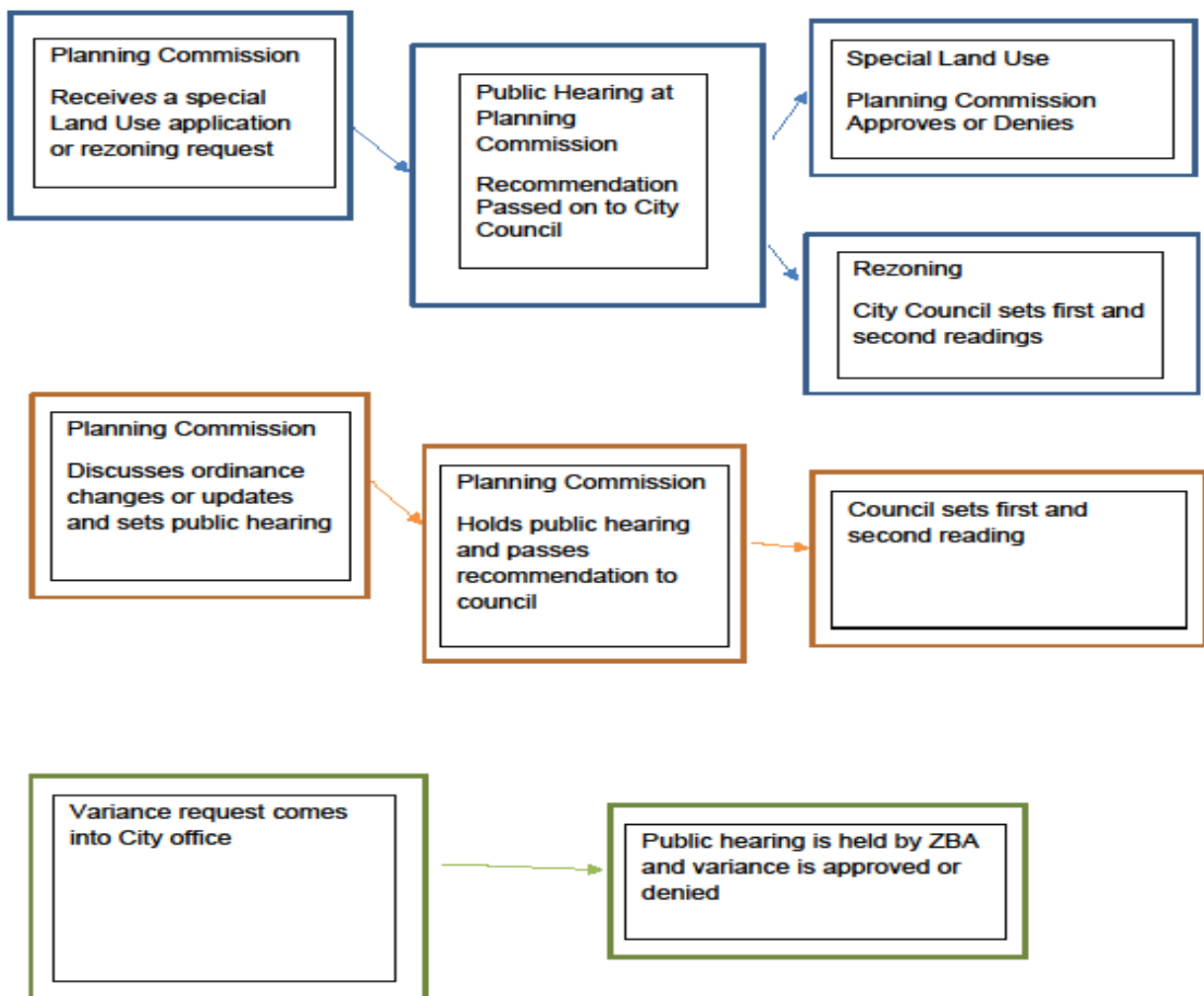
In the City of Hastings, each project will be evaluated on an individual basis to ensure inclusion for all stakeholders in the community. Each will vary according to the project being reviewed. Possible key stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Residents
- Neighboring jurisdictions
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Municipal employees
- Emergency personnel
- BCCCEDA (Barry County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Alliance)
- Commercial business owners and their employees
- Barry-Eaton Health Department
- Spectrum Health-Pennock Hospital
- Industrial facilities located in the City
- Neighborhood groups
- Real estate professionals
- City boards and commissions
- Churches
- Schools
- Senior groups
- Community visitors and tourists
- Utility providers
- Financial institutions

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Processes for Development

There are various times in the planning process when the City Council, the Planning Commission, and/or the Zoning Board of Appeals request public input. These processes include public hearings for rezoning of land, development of the Zoning or Sign Ordinances, the Master Plan, requested variances and Special Land Uses. The flowchart below outlines these processes:



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Development Review Bodies

The City encourages citizen participation in local government planning and policy decisions. All residents are invited to apply for appointments to City boards and commissions. Vacant positions are advertised on the [City of Hastings website](#)

City Council

Hastings City Council is composed of 9 members, the mayor and two representatives for each of the 4 wards. All City Council positions are voted in by the citizens of Hastings. For many processes (excluding site plan and variances) council is the final approving body.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is composed of 9 members. Six members are appointed by the Mayor for 3-year terms. Three members shall be ex officio members who shall include the Mayor, City Manager, and one member of the City Council. Planning Commissioners deal with development issues in the City such as rezoning, special land uses, and site plans. Often, they are the recommending body to City Council. They are also responsible for writing the zoning and sign ordinance and updating the City's Master Plan.

Joint Planning Commission

The City of Hastings and Rutland Charter Township have an 425 Agreement which sets the rules for township property coming into the City. This agreement made provisions for the Joint Planning Commission, comprised of 3 City residents and 3 township residents. When there is a development issue with a property that has been brought into the City through 425, the Joint Planning Commission has jurisdiction.

ZBA

The Zoning Board of Appeals has 5 full members and 2 alternate members. Each member is appointed by the Mayor for overlapping three-year terms. When a resident of the City cannot meet the zoning or sign ordinance requirements, an application for variance is filed with this body.

There are many other boards and committees throughout the City. Agendas and dates/times of the meetings can be found on the City of Hastings' website www.hastingsmi.org.

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Open Meetings

All meetings of the City 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 notices for these meetings are printed in the paper and displayed at City Hall. The following processes require that neighbors within 300 feet of a property are personally notified:

- Rezoning of property
- Special Land Use
- Variance requests

Statutes require these processes be noticed in a newspaper of general distribution in the City (The Hastings Banner) as well as mailed to neighbors within 300 feet at least 15 days prior to the meeting. All meetings are held in a facility accessible to persons with disabilities, and the City provides and will provide reasonable accommodations. Individuals with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations or services should contact the Clerk's Office.

Interested persons are encouraged to contact the City Clerk or to check the City's Website at: www.hastingsmi.org in order to be kept informed of any meeting schedule, agendas, variations, or location changes. Meeting agendas and packets are available on the City's website in advance of the meeting.

Methods for Community Participation

Each project's initial evaluation will determine the necessary level of involvement for the project. The following are methods that may be used to reach appropriate level of public participation when acting on land use or development applications. The City of Hastings 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.

Inform - provide information and assist public understanding

- **Website:** www.hastingsmi.org announces meetings, posts packets and agendas, minutes, and sometimes will contain pages or links for topics of major interest.
- **Newspaper:** The Hastings Banner is the City of Hastings' newspaper. New editions are available on Thursdays.
- **Cable:** City Council meetings are televised on the local Hastings cable station, "Hastings Public Access Cable".
- **Printed postings:** Available for viewing on the information board in the City Hall lobby.

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- **Newsletter:** A monthly newsletter is **enclosed** with each water bill sent to property owners in the City
- **Announcements:** Announcements during meetings of the City Council, Planning Commission and other boards and commissions.
- **Press releases and Articles:** At various times, the City will issue press releases and information for articles to various newspapers and TV stations
- **Email or postal mail:** Interested parties may request to the City Clerk that they be notified personally of meetings/topics for discussion and postal mailings to neighbors within 300 feet, according to statute.

Consult - obtain public feedback

- **Social Media:** The City currently uses Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to announce street closures, storm news, etc.
- **Public Hearings:** Public attendance at meetings is strongly supported and allows for an appropriate venue for public input.

Involve - work directly with public throughout the process

- **Open Houses:** In order to create two-way communication, the City will hold open house events for projects and initiatives as needed.
- **Community workshops:** Issues that require community feedback can benefit from a noticed workshop.

Collaborate - partner with public in each aspect of decision making

- **Advisory Committees:** The City uses advisory committees for specialized aspects of our community to enhance collaboration between city staff and the public.
- **Focus Groups:** Bringing together stakeholders to discuss and brainstorm decision making options.

Communicating Results

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

Updating the Community Engagement Plan

Like all documents, the City of Hastings understands that the Community Engagement Plan will need to be reviewed and updated on a routine basis. This plan will be updated as needed, at a minimum of every 5 years, in conjunction with the City's Master Plan. Updates to this plan will be drafted by staff, reviewed and recommended by Planning Commission, and approved through City Council. At least one public hearing will be held during the process to gather community input and to generate new ideas.