



# City of St. Johns

## Public Participation Plan



 **City of St. Johns, Michigan**  
Mint Festival City

**Effective**  
**08/05/2020**

## Objectives

The City of St. Johns will continue to involve the entire community as “key stakeholders” in the future development of our City.

- The City of St. Johns 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 St. Johns 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 St. Johns engages citizens in a transparent manner, making information easy to access for all interested members of the community.
- The City of St. Johns seeks public participation for matters involving future development of the City, such as the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance update process.
- The City of St. Johns seeks creative ways to involve a diverse set of community stakeholders in planning, land use, and development decisions.
- The City of St. Johns uses comments and information received from interested members of the community to make decisions regarding planning, land use, and future development.
- The City of St. Johns tracks and analyzes the results of all public participation to the extent feasible and provide summaries back to the public.

## State and Local Regulations

- St. Johns City Charter
- St. Johns City 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)
- 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)
- Corridor Improvement Act (PA 280 of 2005)
- Other applicable local, state, and federal regulation





## Key Stakeholders in the City of St. Johns

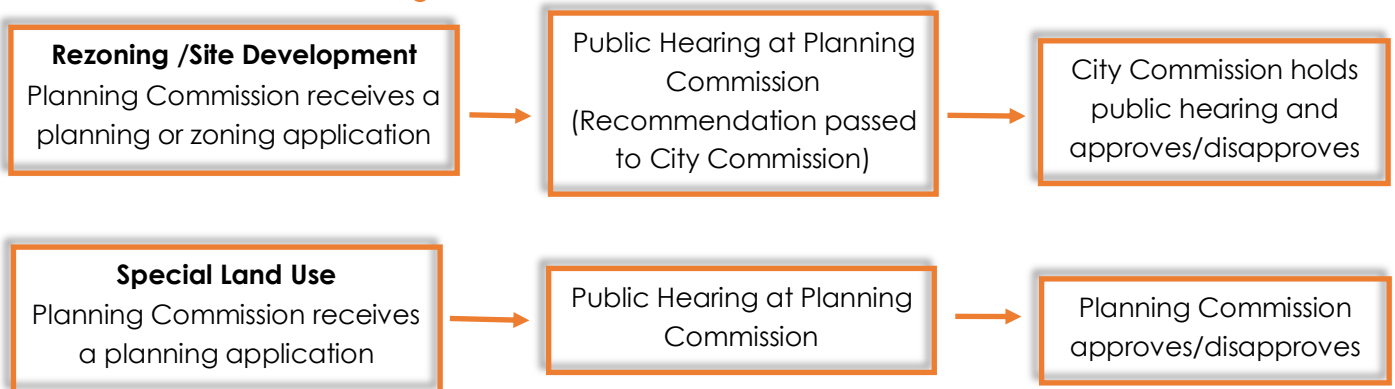
In the City of St. Johns, each project will be evaluated on an individual basis to ensure inclusion for all stakeholders in the community. Each will vary according to the project being reviewed. Possible key stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Residents
- City Commission
- PSD / DDA
- Clinton County Chamber of Commerce
- Clinton County Economic Alliance (CCEA)
- Commercial & Industrial Business Owners
- St. Johns Public Schools
- Clinton County
- Community Organizations
- City Boards and Committees
- Potential Investors & Developers
- Senior Citizens
- Churches
- Neighborhood Groups
- Students and Young Professionals
- Public Employees
- Major Employers
- Taxing Jurisdictions
- Utility Providers
- Relevant State Agencies
- Other Relevant Stakeholders

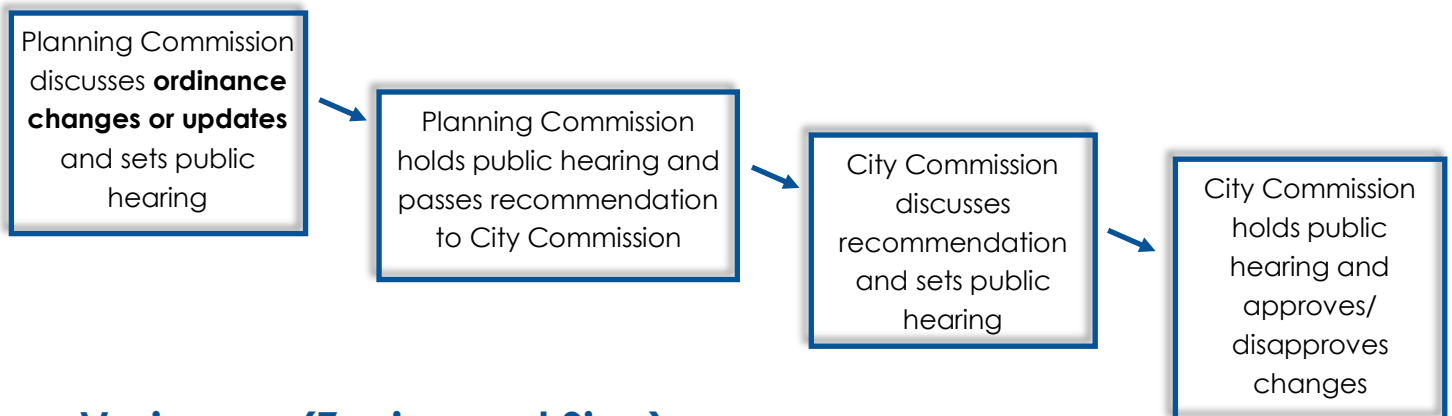
## Processes for Development

There are various times in the planning process when the City Commission, the Planning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals request public input. These processes are used for land developments, rezoning requests, special land uses, zoning and sign variances, ordinance updates, and community master plan review. The flowchart for these processes is listed below:

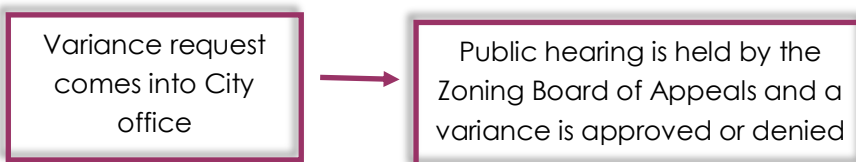
### Site Development



### Ordinance Review



### Variances (Zoning and Sign)





## Development Review Bodies

### City Commission

The St. Johns City Commission is composed of 5 members each serving a term of four years. These members include a mayor and vice mayor chosen by the Commission after the general election. All City Commissioners are voted in by the citizens of St. Johns. For many processes, excluding special land uses and variances, the City Commission is the final approving body.

Commission Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month (except in December only one meeting is held on the 2nd Monday of the month) at 6:00 p.m. in the Clinton County Courthouse, 2nd Floor, Suite 2200.



# 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 Committees. The Boards and Committees General Application can be found at the following link:

[https://cityofstjohnsmi.com/egov/documents/1589492746\\_68223.pdf](https://cityofstjohnsmi.com/egov/documents/1589492746_68223.pdf)

## Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is a nine member body consisting of the Mayor, one member of the City Commission, and seven other appointed community members. Terms on the Planning Commission are for three years. The Planning Commission meets monthly on the second Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. to review requests for site plans, special use permits, and rezonings.

## Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals consists of seven members appointed by the City Commission, serving three year terms. This board meets when required to review variance requests or for interpretations of the Zoning and Sign Ordinance.

## Other Boards and Committees

- Board of Review
- Local Officers Compensation Board
- Parks & Recreation Board
- Property Review Committee

## Open Meetings

All meetings of the City Commission, and its various boards and committees, 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 hung at City offices (as required by the Act). The following processes require that neighbors within 300 feet of a property are personally notified:

- Site Development
- Rezoning of property
- Special Land Use
- Variance requests

Statutes require these processes be noticed in a newspaper of general distribution in the City 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. Individuals with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations or services should contact the City Clerk's Office.

Interested persons are encouraged to contact the City Clerk or to check the City's Website at: [www.cityofstjohnmi.com](http://www.cityofstjohnmi.com) in order to be kept informed of the many different meeting schedules, 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 taking action on land use or development applications. The City of St. Johns 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.CityofStJohnsmi.com](http://www.CityofStJohnsmi.com) announces meetings, posts packets and agendas, minutes, and sometimes will contain pages or links for topics of major interest.
- Newspaper: The St. Johns Independent and Clinton County News are the City of St. Johns newspaper(s).
- Printed postings: Available for viewing at the City offices located at the county courthouse.
- Announcements: Announcements during meetings of the City Commission, 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 (including the Lansing State Journal and Clinton County News) 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 to announce street closures, storm news, etc. and may also use Facebook to notify the community of meetings.
- Surveys: Utilizing online and paper surveys allows for the collection of large amounts of data and opinions from the public.
- Public Hearings: Public attendance at meetings is strongly supported and allows for an appropriate venue for public input.

# Methods for Community Participation

## **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.
- Charrettes: Multiple day design charrettes and information gathering sessions allow a larger group of people to participate in the community engagement activity

## **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 strives to be consistent and transparent with information. The City's website is the primary source of information including meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes. Additionally, the City of St. Johns may periodically report a summary of special meetings, social media usage, or other related planning and development efforts.

## Evaluation

The City of St. Johns will review this Public Participation Plan periodically in order to monitor the effectiveness of the procedures outlined in this document. All public participation efforts will be recorded by the various City departments and reviewed on a routine basis. Following evaluation of the outcomes of the Public Participation Plan, the City may revise these methods to incorporate new and innovative ways to involve the public in the decision-making process.