



Public Engagement Plan

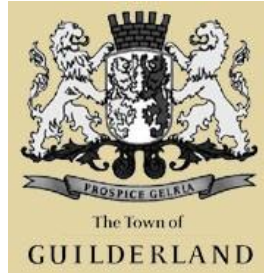
Town of Guiderland Comprehensive Plan Update

DRAFT – November 2022



Engineering and
Land Surveying, P.C.





Town of Guiderland

Comprehensive Plan Update

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Introduction

Background

The Town of Guilderland has undertaken an effort to update its Comprehensive Plan. A Comprehensive Plan is a document that evaluates a community's current state (existing conditions), identifies a consensus-based future state (Town Vision), and maps out the steps to achieve that desired vision through a series of implementation steps. The Town's existing Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2001.

The planning process is being guided by a nine-member Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) chosen by the Guilderland Town Board. The planning process will include a robust public engagement component to gather input from residents, visitors, business owners, property owners, and other stakeholders in the community.

Project Team

The project team for the Comprehensive Plan Update includes Town staff, a Comprehensive Plan Update Committee chosen by the Town Board, as well as the Consultant Team.

The **Town of Guilderland** will ultimately adopt the Comprehensive Plan Update. Representatives of the Town of Guilderland during the Comprehensive Plan Update process include:

- Peter G. Barber, Town Supervisor
- Ken Kovalchik, Town Planner
- Jessica Montgomery, Secretary to the Town Supervisor

The **Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC)** is made up of nine members selected by the Guilderland Town Board. The nine members of the CPUC are listed in alphabetical order below.

- James Abbruzzese
- Cody Betton
- Richard Brustman
- Tara Cristalli
- Caitlin Ferrante
- Lisa Hart
- Elizabeth Lott
- Dominic Rigosu
- Stephen Wilson

The **Consultant Team** will assist the Town and the CPUC throughout the planning process through the facilitation of meetings, preparation of materials, publicity and public engagement. The consultant team is led by M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C. (MJ) and supported by E. M. Pemrick & Company and Community Planning & Environmental Associates.

Scope of Work

This effort involves the following work tasks:

Task 1: Project Initiation & Management

Task 2: Public Participation

Task 3: Preparation of Plan Update

- Task 3A: Prepare Community Profile & Inventory
- Task 3B: Articulate Goals
- Task 3C: Identify Strategies

Task 4: Prepare Draft Plan Update

Task 5: Prepare Final Plan Update & Support Plan Adoption Process

Public Engagement Plan and Planning Process Overview

This Public Engagement Plan for the project outlines opportunities to gather information from members of the public and stakeholders about the study. Input is critical to making informed decisions that are supported by the Town residents.

This plan has been developed to define a communication channel between the public, the Town, applicable regulatory agencies, and the Project Team throughout the duration of the study. This plan aims to achieve this communication by sharing information with the public regarding the planning process, and by providing a variety of occasions for the public to provide input at key milestones throughout the process.

The Public Engagement Plan includes a range of outreach activities designed to inform the public and gather input through multiple platforms. An emphasis will be made to reach traditionally under-engaged groups. The following community participation activities are anticipated in this effort:

- Website
- Key Stakeholder Meetings
- Public Meetings (4)
- Online Community Survey
- Student Engagement
- Pop-Up Activities (up to 2)
- Social Media Outreach
- Promotional Video
- Additional Promotional Platforms
- Marketing & Branding Initiative
- Town Board Public Hearing

A preliminary schedule for each of these outreach activities is outlined below.

Outreach Activity	Date
Project Website / Social Media Outreach	Ongoing
Key Stakeholder Group Meetings	Winter 2023
Public Meetings (4)	Winter 2023, Spring 2023, Summer 2023, Fall 2023
Online Community Survey	Winter 2023
Student Engagement	Spring 2023
Pop-Up Activities	TBD

Communication Strategy

A communications strategy has been established to keep the community informed about the process and to notify the public of opportunities to participate. The intent is to reach all interested stakeholders using a variety of outreach methods. Public engagement materials will be prepared by the Consultant Team for distribution by the Town and the CPUC.

Opportunities for Public Participation

A variety of methods will be utilized to inform the public about the process and gather input. Opportunities for public participation include:

- Website
- Social Media
- Email Communication
- Pop-Up Activities
- Student Engagement
- Online Community Survey
- Key Stakeholder Group Meetings
- Public Workshops (4)

Website

MJ will develop and manage a project website throughout the duration of the project. The website will include project updates, materials, as well as a feedback form to keep the public engaged and informed. A link to the project website will be placed on the Town's website (www.townofguilderland.org). The project website and social media will be used to provide updates throughout the process and share

materials. The website will also include a comments form to allow the public to share their thoughts throughout the project. This is just one of several ways of gathering community input throughout the process. The intent is to reach all interested stakeholders using a variety of outreach methods. Digital media is a preferred method of sharing and gathering information by many. Materials available on the website may include, but not be limited to the following:

- Upcoming Engagement Opportunities
- Surveys
- Meeting materials
- Comment Form

The project website is located at the following link: PathwaytoGuilderlandsFuture.com

In addition to the project website, announcements of public engagement opportunities will also be posted through the Town website at: <https://www.townofguilderland.org/>

Social Media

The Town will utilize its social media outlets, such as Facebook, to advertise public engagement activities.

Email Communication

To keep the public informed of upcoming engagement opportunities, community members may sign up to receive emails through the project website.

Online Community Survey

Date: TBD Winter 2023

Purpose: The purpose of the Online Community Survey is to identify the community's needs, vision and priorities for the future of the Town of Guilderland. The information gathered will help shape the vision and goals for the Guilderland Comprehensive Plan Update. It is anticipated that the launch of this survey will coincide with the timing of Public Workshop #1. The MJ team will prepare a summary of survey highlights and post to the project website.

Platform: The electronic survey will be developed through SurveyMonkey and will be shared on the project website and the Town of Guilderland website. In addition, hard copy survey cards will be available at key locations throughout the Town to raise awareness of the survey. Hardcopies of the survey may also be made available if necessary.

Publicity:

- Posting to project website

- Posting to Town website
- Flyer for Town and Committee to distribute and post to social media
- Survey Cards available at key locations throughout the Town

Key Stakeholder Group Meetings

Date: Winter 2023

Purpose: The Project Team will organize meetings (virtual or in person as appropriate) and or telephone interviews with key stakeholders and partners. To the extent possible, stakeholder meetings will be coordinated with other scheduled public engagement. After these meetings and interviews are conducted, findings will be summarized, reviewed, and discussed with the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee. These conversations will be helpful in understanding the needs, opportunities and vision of the broader community.

Platform: (TBD) Stakeholder Group Meetings are proposed to be web-based, to more easily accommodate stakeholder schedules.

Publicity:

- Invitations will be made to those whose experience with a specific issue warrants a targeted discussion. Invitees will be determined in consultation with the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee and may include Town Staff, landowners, school district representatives, citizen groups, state and regional agencies, etc.

Pop-Up Events

Up to two (2) pop-up events will occur at popular locations in the community during the project. A pop-up event is typically facilitated by the project team and/or Comprehensive Plan Update Committee ambassadors. Pop-up events are quick, easy, unannounced ways to capture input from people where they live, conduct business, and recreate. Pop-ups are situated at key locations such as community events, local markets, coffee shops, gas stations, or public parks. At these events, the project team would provide an overview of the Comprehensive Plan Update project, promote any ongoing community surveys, while creating another opportunity to capture input from pedestrians passing through the area. A pop-up event may also piggy-back on a larger community event or public engagement event that is already scheduled.

Public Open House & Visioning Workshop #1

Date: Winter 2023

Purpose: The purpose of the first Public Workshop will be to introduce the project to the public. The workshop will include a brief presentation and an overview of the purpose, scope, and schedule of the project. This workshop will also provide an opportunity to gather input from the community on the needs and opportunities for the Town of Guilderland. Input will be gathered at hand-on activity stations, as well as via comment cards and interactions with project team members and Town staff.

Platform: This public workshop may be in-person, web-based, or a hybrid of the two modes.

Publicity:

- Posting of materials as outlined in the Publicity Distribution Table including:
 - Press release to local media outlets including print media, cable, and radio.
 - Posting of flyers to social media outlets, local community organizations, and businesses.
 - Posting to Town and project website
 - Flyer distributed to Town

Public Workshop #2

Date: TBD Spring 2023

Purpose: The second workshop will include facilitated, topic-based speed round table discussions. Each table will represent a different topic area and will be facilitated by a member of the project team. Each group will then answer a series of questions based on the table topic. After ten (10) minutes, each group will switch tables to engage with a series of topics such as transportation/mobility, economic growth, neighborhoods/housing, recreation, natural resources, agriculture, infrastructure and governance. The workshop will also include a presentation from the project team explaining what has already been completed in the comprehensive planning process and the next steps.

Platform: It is anticipated that this public workshop will be held in-person, although it may be held via a web-based/hybrid format, depending on the required safety protocols at the time.

Publicity:

- Posting of materials as outlined in the Publicity Distribution Table including:
 - Press release to local media outlets including print media, cable, and radio
 - Posting of flyers to social media outlets, local community organizations
 - Posting to Town and project website
 - Flyer distributed to Town

Public Workshop #3

Date: Summer 2023

Purpose: The third workshop will include a presentation of the vision, goals, strategies and preliminary recommendations to the public. The workshop will provide an opportunity to gather feedback from the community prior to the development of the Draft Comprehensive Plan document.

Platform: The public workshop may be in-person or web-based depending on the required safety protocols at the time.

Publicity:

- Posting of materials as outlined in the Publicity Distribution Table including:
 - Press release to local media outlets including print media, and cable
 - Posting of flyers to social media outlets, local community organizations
 - Posting to Town and project website
 - Flyer distributed to Town

Public Workshop #4

Date: Fall 2023

Purpose: The final public engagement activity for this effort will be combined with a Committee Public Hearing to present the Draft Comprehensive Plan Update to the public. The workshop will include an overview of the Draft Comprehensive Plan, including process and plan highlights.

Platform: The public workshop may be in-person or web-based depending on the required safety protocols at the time.

Publicity:

- Posting of materials as outlined in the Publicity Distribution Table including:
 - Press release to local media outlets including print media, and cable
 - Posting of flyers to social media outlets, local community organizations
 - Posting to Town and project website
 - Flyer distributed to Town
 - Public Hearing noticing as required

Town Board Public Hearing

Date: TBD

Purpose: Following the Committee preparation of a Draft Comprehensive Plan Update, the Committee will advance the Draft Plan to the Town Board for their consideration for adoption. The Town Board is required under Town Law 272-a to hold a public hearing.

Platform: The public hearing would likely occur during a regularly scheduled Town Board meeting.

Publicity:

- Public hearing noticing as required

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