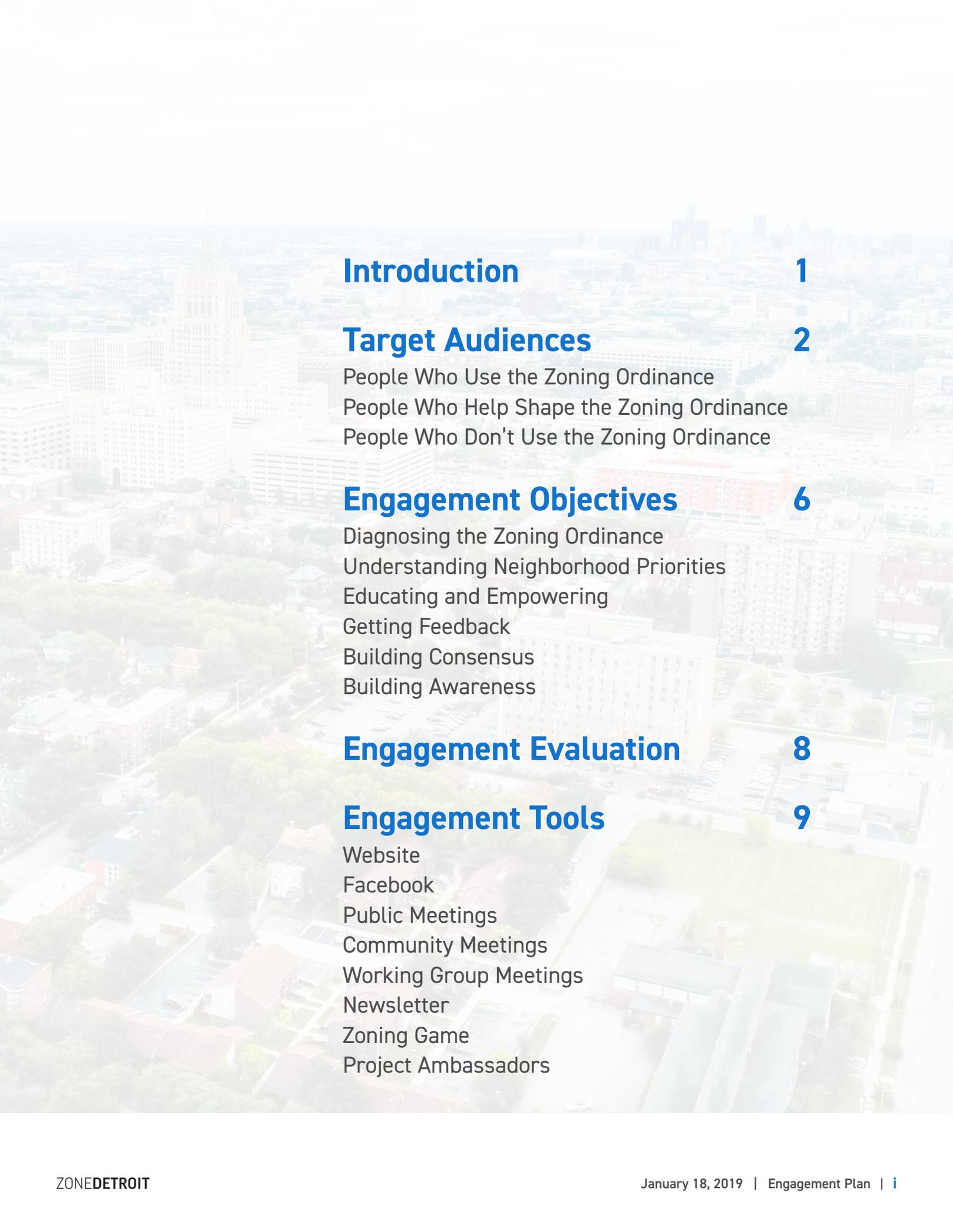




# ENGAGEMENT PLAN

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**ZONEDETROIT**



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# INTRODUCTION

**ZoneDetroit** will have a strong community engagement process that will involve a broad set of strategies to allow the greatest number of people to engage and interact with the process. Successful planning reflects the aspirations of all citizens and measures will be taken to try and engage groups who are typically excluded from the planning process.

## TARGET AUDIENCES

The community engagement process for **ZoneDetroit** will be inclusive. A variety of engagement techniques will be used—including inventive, forward-looking techniques and traditional, time-tested ones—to solicit a wide range of feedback. People who use the Zoning Ordinance, people who shape the Zoning Ordinance, and people who may not directly use or shape the Zoning Ordinance but who are nonetheless affected by it will be reached out to. Residents, employers, employees, schools, neighborhood and non-profit organizations, appointed and elected public officials, and City staff will all be included in this outreach strategy. In addition to public meetings, an on-line engagement platform and targeted stakeholder listening sessions will be used. Interactive and accessible activities and publications will be developed to broaden the reach of the project. Throughout, a concerted effort will be made to connect with underrepresented segments of the population, such as youth, seniors and immigrants.

Very broadly, there are three target audiences: people who use the Zoning Ordinance, people who shape the Zoning Ordinance, and people who don't use or shape the Zoning Ordinance, but who are nonetheless impacted by it (i.e. the general public).

## PEOPLE WHO USE THE ZONING ORDINANCE

People who interact with the Zoning Ordinance or have influence over city zoning policies:

- » Developers
- » Architects/Landscape Architects
- » Planners
- » Land use attorneys
- » Real estate professionals
- » Contractors/builders
- » Business owners
- » Community development corporations
- » Block clubs and other neighborhood organizations
- » Major institutions
- » Financial/lending entities
- » Economic development professionals
- » Community-based organizations
- » Citywide advocacy groups
- » Statewide policy groups
- » Foundations

The purpose in engaging this set of individuals is to understand what works and what doesn't work about the existing Zoning Ordinance. How clear and user friendly is the Zoning Ordinance? Where are there contradictions and redundancies? What does the Zoning Ordinance allow, and how does the Zoning Ordinance help or hinder development activity.

## PEOPLE WHO HELP SHAPE THE ZONING ORDINANCE

- » City Staff
  - City Planning Commission staff (CPC)
  - Historic Designation Advisory Board staff (HDAB)
  - Planning and Development staff (PDD)
  - Board of Zoning Appeals staff (BZA)
  - Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental staff (BSEED)
  - Law Department staff
  - Mayor's Office staff
  
- » Elected and Appointed Officials
  - Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)
  - City Planning Commission (CPC)
  - City Council

The purpose in engaging this group is to get further insights on what works and what doesn't work about the Zoning Ordinance, and gather opinions about how it can be rewritten to both be more straightforward and user-friendly, and be more able to facilitate the kind of development that the City wants to see.

## PEOPLE WHO DON'T USE THE ZONING ORDINANCE

One doesn't have to use or interact with the Zoning Ordinance to be affected by it, especially considering the influence it has over everyday lives. The purpose in engaging this group is to ensure that this project is done in a way that reflects the priorities of members of the community. A major goal here will be to educate and empower people with knowledge about the Zoning Ordinance necessary to make decisions about it.

This general public category can be broken down into three subcategories, each of which could be targeted with different engagement tools:

### Engaged Citizens

Detroit is fortunately home to a large number of engaged citizens who turn out regularly for public meetings, and who closely follow what is happening in their city.

### Hard to Reach Citizens

Youth, busy working adults, and residents of neighborhoods far from typical meeting places can all be left out of the process. Digital literacy and access to Internet and e-mail can also be a marginalizing factor. Language is an especially important challenge to overcome—Detroit has significant Arabic, Spanish, and Bengali-speaking communities, as well as smaller communities speaking Polish, Hmong, or other languages. All of these groups should be involved to the maximum extent possible in every phase of this project.

### Leaders and Interest Groups

Detroit of course has a number of major institutions and employers (both nonprofit and for profit), representatives of which may not attend a public meeting or encounter activities.

# ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The community engagement component of **ZoneDetroit** has many interrelated objectives.

## **Diagnosing the Zoning Ordinance**

What works and what doesn't work about the existing Zoning Ordinance? Where is it redundant? Where does it contradict itself? Which components are outdated? What is missing? What are the barriers to redevelopment? What is hindering economic development? A major objective of the engagement effort will be to diagnose the Zoning Ordinance by listening closely to the variety of groups and individuals that interact with the Zoning Ordinance in some way.

## **Understanding Neighborhood Priorities**

What do residents think about their city? About the neighborhood they live in? What is important to them, and what needs improvement? What would a robust, healthy, thriving City look like in the future? What can zoning do to help fix or improve their issues? In order to ensure that the Zoning Ordinance facilitates people's priorities, these are some of the basic questions that need to be asked in the early phases of the project. In order to avoid public outreach fatigue, engagement activities will be supplemented by reviewing neighborhood plans and other planning documents that may already allude to some or all of the neighborhood priorities.

## **Educating and Empowering**

What is a zoning ordinance? Why does Detroit's have to be updated? How has zoning shaped Detroit in the past? How can zoning shape the future? How are decisions about zoning made and who makes them? Educating residents about the Zoning Ordinance will be key, and empowering them with the tools they need to participate in shaping it will be important.

## **Getting Feedback**

In addition to diagnosing the Zoning Ordinance and understanding neighborhood priorities, feedback loops will be developed. How well do proposals address problems with the existing Zoning Ordinance? How much do proposals help create the kinds of neighborhoods people want to live in?

## **Building Consensus**

Ultimately, a successful project will require achieving some level of consensus amongst a variety of constituents. In order to achieve this, tough conversations about trade-offs between density, open space, economic development, preservation and affordability will have to be held.

## **Building Awareness**

Throughout the process, it will be essential to keep residents up to date on what is happening with the project. This means widely advertising the date, time, and location of meetings and other upcoming public events. It also means communicating what has been heard to date, showing how that input is being incorporated, and clearly outlining the various ways in which people can interact with the City and have influence over outcomes.

## ENGAGEMENT EVALUATION

Concurrent with this process, statistics about the types of people participating will be used to see which audiences are failing to be reached and to determine the effectiveness of the various strategies at soliciting feedback. The process of outreach will be iterative, as methods are refined to help ensure all voices are heard. Thus, the list of engagement tools and techniques presented here are not definitive, but rather will be evaluated and refined throughout the duration of the project.

# ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

## WEBSITE

### General Description

A website will serve as this project's primary public outreach tool. It will serve as a platform to announce upcoming events, archive older materials, and collect on-line responses. It will also be a one-stop repository to house draft documents and provide a mechanism to keep people updated. The website will be designed to work on tablets, mobile phones and personal computers.

### Deliverables

A temporary one-page project website ([www.ZoneDetroit.com](http://www.ZoneDetroit.com)) has been developed. A more comprehensive website is currently under development and is scheduled for release in early 2019. It will include the following pages:

- » About
- » Get Involved
- » News
- » Events
- » Documents

### Draft Schedule

Content updates will be ongoing for the length of the project. At the completion of the project, the project website will be folded into the City's full website.

ZoneDetroit Website (coming soon).



## FACEBOOK

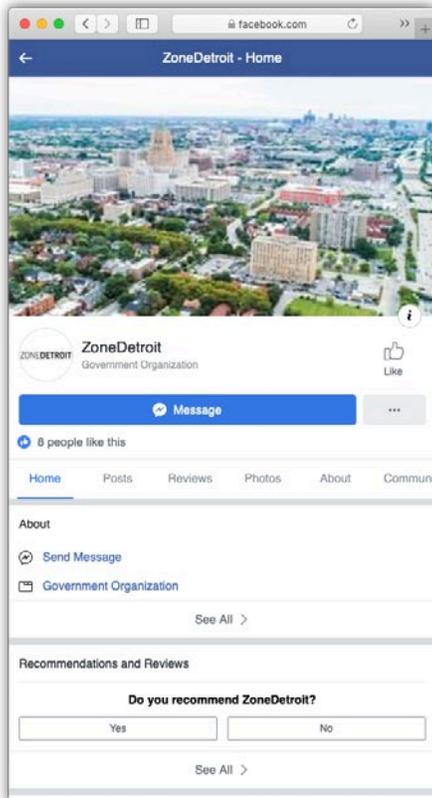
### General Description

A Facebook page has been created specifically for this project ([www.facebook.com/zonedetroit](http://www.facebook.com/zonedetroit)). Posts will include relevant stories, topics people have raised, and they will notify people about upcoming events and about opportunities to provide input. This is one of the strategies that can potentially reach younger audiences.

### Deliverables

- » A project specific Facebook page has been created and is up and running.
- » A strategy needs to be developed to increase the overall number of followers.
- » The Facebook page will be moderated with regular posts and responses to comments, as well as management of any discussions.

A Facebook page has been created specifically for this project.



### Draft Schedule

- » Content information will be posted at least 3 times per month except during peak times, when timely posts will be made to encourage people to attend events or provide feedback on important documents

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

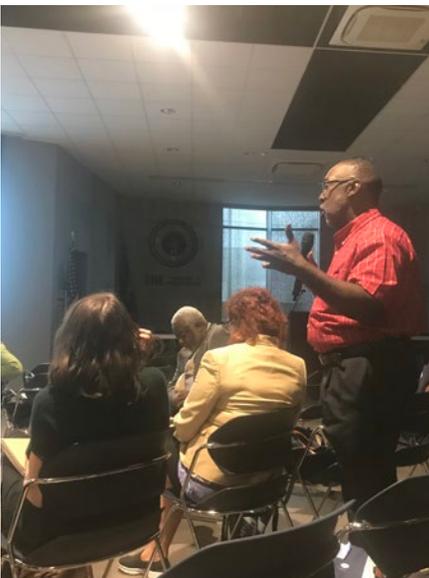
### General Description

Public meetings, likely held in the evening to accommodate work schedules (ideally with childcare, translation services and snacks provided), will be a combination of presentations, large group discussions, and smaller table sessions and work sessions on particular topics or questions. Each public meeting will be designed to be both informative and interactive, with very focused and engaging presentations and meaningful work for participants to engage in.

Each meeting will be at least 2 hours long, with the possibility of a more focused session earlier in the day for those who want to delve into content in more detail. Each meeting will provide key information on a major deliverable, provide an update on the process, highlight progress made, and outline the future time-line. There will also be an opportunity for Q&A in front of the larger audience at the end of the presentation. One-on-one questions can also be asked following the presentation.

Public meetings will be conducted in a series of at least 3 meetings on 3 different evenings in the same week. Each meeting in the series will cover the same material and meetings will be spread out across the City in 3 different locations (one in the west, one central and one in the east). Care will be taken to ensure meeting locations are accessible and free parking is available. Also, transit accessibility will be considered when selecting meeting locations.

A series of large public meetings will be held at key milestones throughout the project.



The goal is to use appropriate technology at all stages - sometimes allowing people to use the newest interactive technology to preview work or sometimes asking people to share their thoughts with markers on big pieces of paper. The technology used will be in service of the conversation and will always be as simple as possible.

### Deliverables

- » Publicize meetings in creative way (not just email).
- » Organize and conduct a series of 3 public meetings in a single week.
- » Preparation of education and presentation material for each public meeting.
- » Post a written summary of key discussion topics and outcomes of each meeting on the project website and Facebook page.

### Draft Schedule

Generally, public meetings will be held at the following times:

- » Fall 2018: Public Kick-off
- » Summer 2019: Release of Recommendation Report
- » Summer 2020: Release of the Public Review Draft
- » Fall 2020: Public Hearings

## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

### General Description

Attend (and facilitate, if needed) meetings out in the community, on an as-needed basis. These could be stand alone meetings specifically for this project or community meetings or events that are already happening. Community members might be more likely to participate and engage during an event that is already happening rather than going to a meeting on a topic they might know nothing about.

The goal of this outreach method is to be responsive to neighborhood concerns and have a mechanism for hearing directly from community members in their own setting, while at the same raising awareness of the project and helping to educate as the project evolves.

### Deliverables

- » Publicize meetings in creative way (not just email).
- » Participate at community meetings or events, on an as-needed basis.
- » Preparation of education and presentation material for each meeting, if needed.
- » Post a written summary of key discussion topics and outcomes of each meeting on the project website and Facebook page.

### Draft Schedule

- » Attend at least 7 community meeting or events throughout the duration of the project.

A series of smaller, more intimate community meetings will also be held.



## WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

### General Description

The Interdepartmental Working Group and Zoning Advisory Group are two key groups of stakeholders that will provide invaluable feedback throughout the project.

### Interdepartmental Working Group (IWG)

The IWG will be made up of representatives from key City departments and partner agencies, including:

- » Primary Group (review all draft material)
  - City Planning Commission staff (CPC)
  - Planning and Development staff (PDD)
  - Buildings, Safety, Engineering, and Environmental staff (BSEED)
  - Law Department staff
  - Board of Zoning Appeals staff (BZA)
  - Historic Designation Advisory Board staff (HDAB)
  - Office of Sustainability staff
  
- » Secondary Group (review topical material)
  - Housing and Revitalization staff (HRD)
  - Water and Sewerage staff (DWSD)
  - Land Bank staff (DLBA)
  - Public Works staff (DPW)
  - Detroit Economic Growth Corporation staff (DEGC)
  - General Services staff (GSD)
  - Innovation and Technology staff (DoIT)

The IWG will be made up of representatives from key City departments and partner agencies.



IWG meetings will be held on an as needed basis - they will review all key deliverables.

### Zoning Advisory Group (ZAG)

ZAG is a sounding board comprised of outside interests who have a working knowledge of the Zoning Ordinance or have zoning related knowledge. ZAG includes building and design professionals; developers; representatives from local business, arts, and urban agriculture communities; community development organizations and foundations; and engaged citizens and community leaders who represent the interests of Detroit residents. ZAG reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity, and geographic representation found across the City.

ZAG is not a policy or decision-making body and is not expected to come to any consensus about the issues brought before it. Rather, ZAG meetings are an opportunity to test out ideas, highlight “hot button” issues, update key stakeholders on how the project is progressing, and listen to ideas and concerns from Detroiters before draft material is shared with the broader community.

ZAG members will meet on a monthly or bi-monthly basis, depending on the preparation and availability of content. To the extent feasible, ZAG will review all draft material before it is released to the general public.

ZAG is a sounding board comprised of outside interests who have a working knowledge of the Zoning Ordinance or have zoning related knowledge.



## NEWSLETTER

### General Description

A newsletter will be a key outreach component for educating the general public about important zoning issues and for communicating timely information about the project. Its intention is to capture interesting aspects of the City and portray Detroit residents' aspirations in a unique, fun and engaging format. The newsletter will be designed to serve three primary needs: 1) to educate and empower residents with the knowledge needed to participate in the process, 2) to present findings in an engaging and accessible way, and 3) to update people on where things are in the process.

Below are some features the newsletter may include:

- » Update on the Process
- » Zone of the Month
- » Ask a Planner
- » Demystifying Zoning
- » Person-on-the Street Interviews

The newsletter will be published on-line via the project website and Facebook page, emailed out and printed in paper form. Copies of the paper version will be made available at public meetings and engagement events. Copies will also be available in relevant City department offices (CPC, BSEED, PDD), and will be distributed to neighborhood locations such as public library branches and community centers.

An example newsletter used in the Envision Cambridge planning process.



Newsletters will be structured in two formats.

### E-Blast

A smaller newsletter (or e-blast) will be prepared on a bi-monthly basis or as key documents are made available for public review. This smaller newsletter will serve to provide key project updates and notifications. This newsletter will be emailed out using the mailing list compiled from public meetings and sign ups on the project website. The newsletter will also be posted on the project website and Facebook page.

### Printed Newsletter

A second, larger newsletter will be produced. This newsletter will be printed out for larger distribution - a total of two issues will be prepared. The exact size and content of each issue will be dependent on how much funding can be made available under the current budget. This larger newsletter will be emailed and posted on the project website and Facebook page.

An e-blast will be emailed on a bi-monthly basis or as key documents are made available for public review.

The first issue will provide an introduction to key zoning concepts and observations on how the existing Zoning Ordinance affects Detroit. It will also include a report on the key findings from the assessment and analysis phase. Its publication will coincide with the June 2019 round of public meetings. The second issue will be released in mid 2020 and will coincide with the release of the draft Zoning Ordinance.



## ZONING GAME

### General Description

Towards the goal of educating Detroit residents about zoning, some sort of zoning game will be formulated. A zoning game would give stakeholders and other interested citizens a hands-on tool to explore and experiment with different zoning strategies. These types of tools are useful for visualizing urban design and planning concepts that can often be complex and abstract, even for seasoned experts. Using interactive models and other hands-on tools, participants can show—rather than simply describe—what is important to them. Another benefit of using interactive tools is that people can test out their own ideas and theories and see for themselves whether they would work well or not—sometimes it can be more effective to allow the participant answer their own question, rather than have an “expert” simply tell them what is best.

### Deliverables

The exact method and content for such a game has not been determined yet. Some examples worth looking at include:

#### Board Games

- » [www.welcometocup.org/Projects/EnvisioningDevelopment/WhatIsZoning](http://www.welcometocup.org/Projects/EnvisioningDevelopment/WhatIsZoning)
- » [www.blocksandlots.net/](http://www.blocksandlots.net/)

#### On-line Interactive Games

- » [www.whatisfar.org](http://www.whatisfar.org)
- » [www.streetmix.net](http://www.streetmix.net)

#### Draft Schedule

- » January 2019: Content/design
- » February 2019: Construction/development
- » March 2019: Testing/revision
- » April 2019: Deployment

An example of an interactive game used in the Envision Cambridge planning process.



## PROJECT AMBASSADORS

### General Description

Project ambassadors are local citizens who choose to become more actively involved in the project. They will:

- » Help raise the profile of the project, increase public debate and build local support for the many issues affecting Detroit today.
- » Serve as a resource for those who want to learn about the project, attend project events, connect with others, and share feedback.
- » Be a local point of contact and support for the members of the community interested in the project.

### Proposed Role

- » Project ambassadors will be provided with hard copies of promotional material. Project ambassadors will be asked to distribute hard-copies of outreach material.
- » Project ambassadors will be asked to join the Facebook page and will be asked to promote the page.
- » Project ambassadors will be asked to promote the project website.
- » Project ambassadors will be given direct notice of key meetings and events. Project ambassadors will be asked to talk to friends and colleagues and encourage them to come to appropriate meetings.
- » Once cleared for distribution, key project deliverables will be emailed to project ambassadors.
- » In March, an orientation meeting will be held for all potential project ambassadors. This will be an informal meeting to set expectations and discuss the anticipated role for ambassadors.

### Draft Schedule

In January, February and March effort will be made to recruit volunteers from the community.