

STRATEGIC GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 5 UPDATE

Goal 5: Work collaboratively to increase informed citizen participation in the policy process of the Village.			
Objective	Tasks & Resources Needed	Progress to Date	Next Steps
Develop community participation plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff drafts community participation plan as required by Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Participation Plan Approved by Council in 2019. Plan available upon request. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to review Public Participation Plan to make sure everything is still relevant.
Build upon Village summaries in local newspaper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and issue press releases on newsworthy Village activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Village newsletters produced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will create press releases and other content to pass along to the newspaper and to post on elkrapids.org. Staff creating more blog posts (announcements) to post on website and share on Facebook.
Actively utilize Village website and social media accounts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize press releases as posts on the website and social media accounts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website redesign launched March 31, 2021. Regularly posting blogs and linking to Facebook. Working on Strategic Communications Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build upon current social media communication strategy. Utilize Strategic Communications Plan to further Village communication efforts. Continue to improve redeveloped website. Create space on website for “green” initiatives. Develop “Citizen’s Academy” for residents and students to increase knowledge of local government and develop future leadership. Conduct more frequent informal public workshops.

Updated September 22, 2021

NOTES:

- SURVEY RESULTS:** As you may recall from the informal survey taken at the Evening on River Street event, out of the 44 participants, 10 people listed this goal as one of their top three priorities (see graph on next page). Out of the 23 Village participants, 6 counted this as one of their top three goals. While this limited data consistently ranked this as a low priority, Village Staff are working toward a more collaborative process with citizens.
 - READING SUGGESTION:** *The New Public Service*, Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015. Kaitlyn in reading this in her *Foundations of Public Administration* course and it emphasizes the importance of citizen engagement and empowerment in the policy making process.

- **EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS:** At the May retreat, Council emphasized the importance of educating the public on different initiative and to gather citizen input in government affairs. Staff is gathering information and hopes to debut these and more workshops in 2022:
 - **Citizen Academy**
 - **Intro to Government Budget and Finance**
 - **Water Quality Workshops**
 - **“How to Run an Effective Meeting”:** **Coaching for Board and Commission Chairs**
- **MORE PUBLISHING IN THE PAPER:** Spoke with Kathleen at ER News, publishing in the newspaper is very expensive and putting in content on a regular basis is not in the budget. For example, we talked about putting a summary of the Village Manager report in the paper. A quarter page is \$180, posting twice a month throughout the year would cost the Village \$4,320. The report, like many other documents created by Staff, are available online and we are happy to help citizens navigate the website to find the information they need.
- **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN:** While the Council approved a Public Participation Plan back in 2019, there are several improvements that Staff have identified to tailor the plan specifically for our unique community. Staff will watch to see recommendations from the 13 Ways Community Project and integrate suggestions into the plan.
- **COMMUNICATION PLAN:** While not forgotten about, staff has been busy with important administrative priorities and hopes to revisit this plan with everything we have learned in the past year in mind.
- **COMMUNICATION IS A PRIORITY FOR STAFF:** Staff takes very seriously the ability and ease of communication between Council, boards and commissions, citizens, and Staff. Since joining the Village of Elk Rapids Staff in January 2021, Bryan and Kaitlyn, in conjunction with the team, have:
 - **Increased blog posts on website**
 - **Created and released quarterly newsletters**
 - **Conducted surveys on boat races and strategic goals priorities**
 - **Participated in community events such as Evening on River Street**

