



Public Engagement Plan

To: City of Othello
From: Aren Murcar, SCJ Alliance
Date: January 15th, 2026
Project: City of Othello 2027 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update
Subject: Othello Comprehensive Plan – Public Engagement Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to establish clear goals and expectations for community engagement during the City of Othello's Comprehensive Plan Update. Public participation is a required component of the periodic update process and is essential to ensuring that the updated Comprehensive Plan reflects the priorities, needs, and vision of Othello residents, businesses, and stakeholders.

The core elements of public engagement for this project will consist of:

- ◆ Stakeholder Interviews
- ◆ Community survey
- ◆ Public open houses
- ◆ Planning Commission and City Council workshops

Most public-facing materials will be posted on the project website. The City will maintain the project website, and SCJ Alliance will provide content, graphics, and supporting materials for online distribution.

The following describes each engagement element in more detail.



Stakeholder Interviews

To ensure the Comprehensive Plan reflects local priorities, opportunities, and concerns, the planning team will conduct a series of targeted stakeholder interviews. These interviews will gather qualitative input from individuals who represent key sectors of the community and who can provide valuable insight on topics such as housing, economic development, transportation, community character, infrastructure, and public services.

A total of **12 interviews will be conducted**, each approximately 45 minutes in length. Interviews may be held in person or virtually, depending on participant preference and availability. Each session will be semi-structured, using a consistent question framework while allowing flexibility to explore issues raised by interviewees.

Expectations

- ◆ SCJ will coordinate interview scheduling and confirm logistics with participants.
- ◆ Interview prompts or discussion guides will be provided to interviewees in advance when appropriate.
- ◆ AI tools may be used to support preparation of initial interview summary notes for efficiency.
- ◆ All AI-generated materials will be reviewed and edited by SCJ Alliance prior to distribution.
- ◆ Final summaries will be incorporated into the planning team's overall engagement findings and may be shared with City staff as part of internal documentation.

Stakeholder Interview Candidate Ideas

The following are **potential perspectives and roles** that may be included in the interview roster. One person may represent multiple perspectives, and the final list will be selected based on availability and local priorities.

1. Housing Developer/Builder
2. Realtor
3. Planner
4. Small business owner
5. Housing service provider
6. Public/social service provider
7. School district representative
8. 1-2 Planning Commissioners
9. Councilmember (acting as council liaison)
10. Healthcare representative
11. Port representative
12. Senior Center Representative
13. Non-profit representative
14. Business owner(s)/Major Employer
15. Beautification Committee Member
16. Church Representative
17. Agriculture Representative
18. Youth Representative



Public Open Houses

Two public open houses will be held at convenient, accessible locations within the City of Othello. These events may be scheduled as standalone engagement opportunities or paired with existing community gatherings to help increase participation. Open houses will provide residents with the opportunity to **learn** about the Comprehensive Plan Update, **review** draft materials, and **share** feedback with project staff.

Recommendations

- ◆ Provide broad public notice before each event. Social media, newspaper announcements, flyers, the City website, and utility bill inserts are effective ways to promote participation.
- ◆ Offer incentives such as snacks, childcare or children's activities, and hands-on or interactive stations to encourage community involvement and create a welcoming environment.

Community Survey

A **community survey will be used to collect broad input** from Othello residents throughout the Comprehensive Plan Update. Surveys will primarily be available online, with printed copies available at City Hall and the Othello Public Library. QR code flyers will be placed throughout the community, and the survey link will be shared through social media, newspaper postings, the City website, and utility bill inserts.

All surveys will be provided in both **English and Spanish to ensure accessibility** for Othello's diverse community.

Survey results will be posted online for public review within 30 days of the survey's closing date.

Council/Commission Workshops

Two combined City Council/Planning Commission workshops will provide opportunities for City staff and the consulting team to **share updates** on project progress, **present draft content**, and **receive feedback** from decision-makers. These meetings will be open to the public and will include an opportunity for public comment, but will mainly focus on discussion among city council and planning commission members. SCJ Alliance will lead these workshops and will provide clear agendas and discussion items 7 days in advance.



Expectations

- ◆ Each workshop will be open to the public.
- ◆ Agendas will be provided at least 7 days in advance.
- ◆ The City will record each workshop and provide the recording to SCJ Alliance.
- ◆ Summary notes will be distributed to workshop participants no later than 14 days after each meeting.

Schedule

The following public engagement schedule outlines the **anticipated timeline for key engagement activities**, including stakeholder interviews, the community survey, public open houses, and City Council and Planning Commission workshops. The schedule is approximate and may be adjusted as the Comprehensive Plan Update progresses.

The project team will strive to balance consistent communication with the community while avoiding outreach fatigue. Engagement activities will be spaced appropriately to allow meaningful participation and ensure the public remains informed and involved throughout the entire planning process.

Table 1: Public Engagement Schedule

Date	Event	Objectives
2026	January	Outreach to Stakeholder Interviewees
		Gauge interest, establish contact, finalize list, and start scheduling.
	February	Gather focused input on City's direction for the next 20 years.
		Establish connections between stakeholder takeaways and survey questions.
	March	Launch Community Survey
	April	Monitor Survey Responses and Adjust as Needed
	May	Public Open House #1
	June	Council/Commission Workshop #1
	July	Public Open House #2



2027	August	Close Public Survey & Analyze Results	Consolidate public feedback results.
	September	Plan Development	
	October	Council/Commission Workshop #2	Provide updates on plan development and gather feedback.
	November	Plan Development	
	December	Plan Development	
	January	Plan Development	
	February	Public Launch of Plan	Post Draft Plan online and open public comment.
	March	Plan Revisions	Respond to public feedback.
	April	Planning Commission Public Hearing	Adoption procedures.
	May	City Council Public Hearing	Adoption procedures.
	June	Final Adoption	Adoption procedures.

