

Survey Results: Resident Engagement

[Survey Info](#) - This survey was sent on behalf of City of Grand Rapids to the FlashVote community for Grand Rapids, MI.

These FlashVote results are shared with local officials

596

Total Participants

581 of 1187 initially invited (49%)
15 others
Margin of error: ± 4%

Applied Filter:
Locals only

Participants for filter:
512

Response Time (ho...



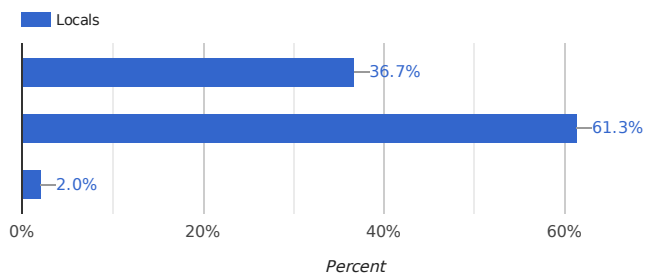
Started:
Jun 15, 2021 12:18pm EDT

Ended:
Jun 17, 2021 11:01am EDT

Target Participants:
All Grand Rapids

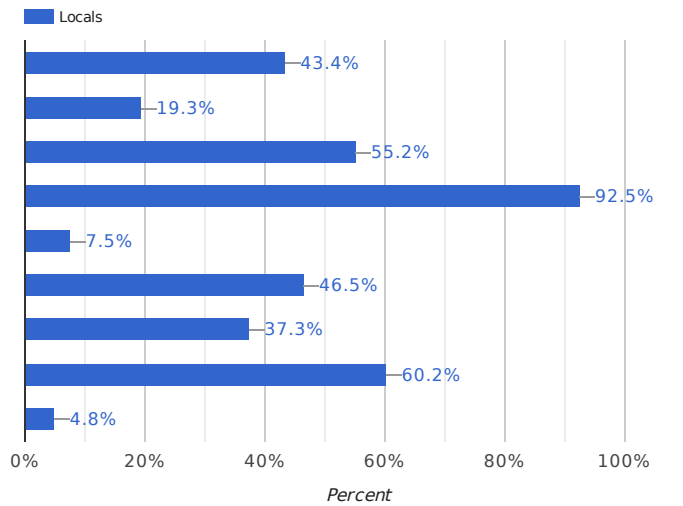
Q1 Have you ever attended a City of Grand Rapids public meeting in person (including those hosted by an individual department such as GRPD, Planning, Equity, etc.)?
(512 responses by locals)

Options	Locals (512)
Yes	36.7% (188)
No	61.3% (314)
Not Sure	2.0% (10)



Q2 In the last few years, which of the following City engagement opportunities have you participated in, if any? (Choose all that apply, if any)
(482 responses by locals)

Options	Locals (482)
Watched a public meeting on television or live video stream	43.4% (209)
Participated/spoke at a public meeting, in-person or remotely (public comment, presentation, etc.)	19.3% (93)
Contacted a City department or elected official (emailed/phoned/etc.)	55.2% (266)
Voted in an election	92.5% (446)
Served on a City board, commission, advisory or planning work group	7.5% (36)
Answered a City survey (other than FlashVote surveys)	46.5% (224)
Attended a community event hosted by the City or visited a City resource table at a local event	37.3% (180)
Followed the City on social media and/or commented on posts	60.2% (290)
Other:	4.8% (23)



Neighborhood association board member and attend monthly meetings

Neighborhood Association board

Attended a public meeting in-person, but did not speak

planning meeting

use Nextdoor for resident to resident communication; pick-up flat-tire road nails, screws, etc.

Use the 311 app

City web site and contacted the planning commission

We just moved back into the city pre-COVID.

Read the GR newsletter.

Served on Community Relations Commission provided domestic violence training to police department.

Participated in the Garfield Park meetings discussing updating the City Plan.

Grand Rapids election worker

Had coffee with city staff, attended election fundraiser

Listened to he podcast of City Commission meetings available through Michigan Radio.

Worked as a chairperson in Ward 2-45 for elections. Met with GR city clerk pre election meetings.

neighborhood association

Email the mayor and commissioners

Election worker

None

Served as a Precinct chairperson at elections

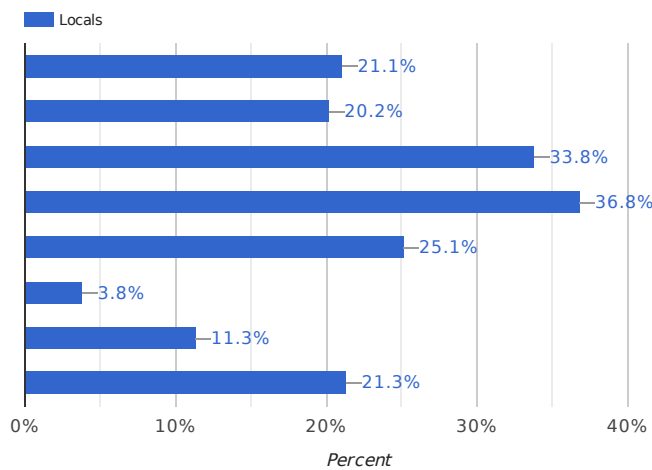
worked election site November 2020

Hosted public engagement events about city government, petitioned government on action, protested

Q3 Which of the following have kept you from engaging in more City activities like those in the previous questions? (Choose all that apply)

(470 responses by locals)

Options	Locals (470)
Don't feel comfortable speaking up or speaking freely	21.1% (99)
Don't feel like I understand the issues enough to participate	20.2% (95)
Don't feel like my participation would make a difference	33.8% (159)
Too busy to follow these things or attend	36.8% (173)
Times aren't convenient	25.1% (118)
Not really worth my time	3.8% (18)
Just not that interested in participating	11.3% (53)
Other:	21.3% (100)



year input aware feel public
 person issue info event interest
 work know time hear
 value etc new gr need
 find thing meeting much hard
 go attend happen keep informed
 participate city like busy
 live also comment commission run want

I don't trust most of them to do the right thing.

I want too, but the timing of the meetings don't work for me sometimes.

Did not know it existed.

Not always aware of when they are.

No idea when events are happening

Don't know when meetings are

City and DGR INC and LDGR continually deny serious issues and am exhausted.

Not physically able to attend any meetings

My role is not well framed or defined or articulated. But when clearly posed, I do reply.

If we would go to meeting planning we have to know about it YOU OUT NO INFO

I already am quite involved.

Topics of interest

Many conflicting demands on my time; challenge of staying informed on local issues

More visible / open as to when meetings are being held

I don't know when these things happen

I feel like I never know when events are happening

Letting younger persons do the work

I would definitely engage in person if I was an expert or passionate re the issue being discussed

I never know about them in advance

Hard to keep track of when things happen along with other events to keep track of.

Don't hear about them until after they're over

Turned off when DNN Advisory insisted urban pedestrian accidents are caused by systemic racism

Not aware of meeting times, agendas, etc

I often learn about commission meetings after they've happened.

Lack of info

I am non verbal

Senior citizen hard to get to meetings

I am willing to write my input and to share info with my neighbors.

I get pulled in different directions.

Not aware of the times of the meetings

na

Just moved back to GR last year.

Finding the right venue

Don't have faith that anyone at the City would ever agree with me

Need more options (like phoning in for public comment)

I feel free to speak or otherwise participate in city meetings.

Other voices need to take priority over mine.

Don't know they are happening.

Work too late to attend any of the meetings.

I feel that it is time for others to step up. After decades I am getting tired.

I don't know why....as a previous City employee I would have some insight as to policies, etc.

New to City of GR

Pandemic. Also a new resident.

I know my viewpoints are being represented.

Also, I think the current composition of the City Commission has their minds made up ahead of time/

I have participated.

Don't know how to get involved

Need to put virtual meetings on calendar instead of relying on FB live notifications

Feel like I dont know what's going on and when. If I were informed about more, maybe I would attend

I have only lived in the City during pandemic.

I don't know about the meetings. There aren't good ways of getting news these days.

Participation moments seem ridged, lack of pre-event info, not sure my comments are valued.

Just moved downtown a year and half ago and just getti

Run a small business. Not much extra time for much.

Being victimized / persecuted for speaking my opinion. Don't agree with "woke" culture.

The only activity I left unchecked was serving on a commission or committee. The others I do.

Sometimes I wonder if our opinions really matter.

I'm not aware of that the issues are or how to participate.

Don't know when events are happening or where

My failure to participate, due to scheduling

Felt that things are running smoothly.

Don't know what's meeting are/about.

Wondering if I'm being heard.

I do not think that the City Commission follows or acts upon any public input that doesn't awithin.

Generally I am confident in the city's leadership except in the are of gun shootings.

I am a part time GR resident.

I see commissioners often in community and communicate personally.

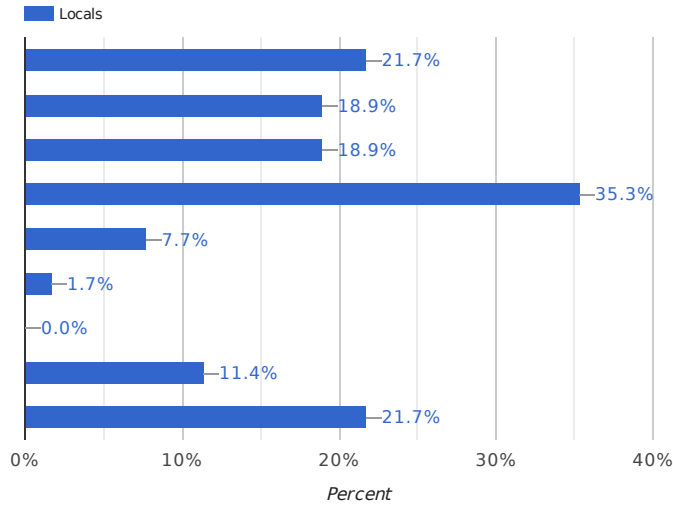
Not sure of parking and location of meetings
Not sure when they are
burnout- too frustrating to attend meetings and hear development and tourist interests dominate
The individuals at public meetings never value public feedback. It is ignored. Too focused on agenda
Don't feel like my opinion is valued by city officials.
Don't have timely info on issues before decisions are made
Serious hearing issues keep me pretty much under the radar.
Many projects are already to a pretty final stage before public gets to know about or comment on them
Unfamiliar with times and where to go
Some issues I care about have not been up for discussion
I have a two-year-old, so I have a difficult time attending anything outside of work.
I am 85 years old and have a hard time getting to meetings. I do enjoy information that is released
Lack of understanding for how to engage! I don't know where to readily find the information.
Just moved to the City in November 2020.
life is too busy I haven't had room in my schedule to add it.
It is hard to stay in the know/relevantfull information from multiple perspectives
Don't hear about it early enough
Retirement
COVID
Info is not well written or readily available to attend/participate & uninterested officials
We listen to the 5%'s too much!
Wasn't notified when something came up where the city was interested in receiving input
haven't taken the time to find out about dates/times of meetings, etc
Times aren't regularly advertised
I don't know how to find agenda topics in advance.
City commission and mayor just want an echo chamber. Our voices and input don't matter to them.
Haven't received notification that meetings and alike are happening.
Just getting back to a more normal life after caring for my husband for 3 years

Q4 Looking ahead as things reopen, which of the following challenges might keep you from participating in-person meetings?

(465 responses by locals)

Options	Locals (465)
Just not that interested in participating	21.7% (101)
Locations aren't convenient	18.9% (88)
Meeting agendas/formats aren't convenient	18.9% (88)
Times aren't convenient	35.3% (164)
Lack of childcare	7.7% (36)
ADA accessibility	1.7% (8)
Language access	0.0% (0)

Options	Locals (465)
COVID fears	11.4% (53)
Other:	21.7% (101)



I served the public for more than 20 years and have had my fill of meetings.

Public comments are never addressed, which is so frustrating. Why have them at all?

Unaware of times, locations, topics

Same reasons from previous page.

Nothing ever changes, city is only interested in their hotel district and positive propaganda.

Please keep a virtual option!

See previous: my role is not clearly framed/articulated. What am I being asked & why matters it?

Not physically able to attend

Social anxiety

Have to have info you are meeting

Depends on if I feel I have something to contribute or to learn on the particular topic

I;m better behind the scenes

Often out of town.

Lack of communicating when and where

I feel I won't be listened to

The Mob and its slurs on Social media

Needing to give myself space while I adjust to being with people again

Needing to find full-time employment

Not wanting to deal with extreme folks who harass others and berate anyone who disagrees with them

Not aware of meeting times or agendas

Nothing

will it make a difference

I am non-verbal

The woke mob doesn't speak for most of us... but they will destroy you and go after your job..

very shy

Anxiety about large groups

Fear of the cancel culture

I have no idea when or where these things are held.

Scheduling conflict or not being aware of the meeting times

na

I don't know what's going on

Schedule being too busy

Too much of an uphill battle, the valley between us is deep

My experience is that elected officials just don't care, this is all a game.

No fears or blockages.

Don't know they are happening.

Timing — bedtime, dinner, dog walk, etc. fall during meeting time.

Nothing

Comfort level

I will vote. Proof is by actions. Like hiring a fired Kalamazoo chief of police.

Time in general

Usually find out after the fact

I am interested and will probably participate.

Would prefer zoom now that it's a viable option

Knowing when meetings are and putting on my calendar

locations must be assessible via public transport

Depends on specific issue.

None just moved down here when Covid hit

Prefer online

Just too busy. If I did attend a meeting it would have to be on Zoom so I didn't have travel time t

Only interested in attending meetings that pertain to me. Attending commission meeting in the past

Speaking out publicly about sensitive issues can be dangerous

I don't think schedules/agendas are promoted. If it's not in my face, it's not getting my attention

Lack of time

Don't favor in person format on city scale

No challenges. I will continue to participate.

Don't know where to find the agenda or how to participate more.

not aware of issue being considered

Length of meetings.

I'm somewhat shy and would want to attend with someone I know.

I think the biggest challenge is that information isn't available in easy to digest ways

I only participate if it's an issue that impacts me

In person is less convenient and accessible than live streamed, which can be done anywhere

I'll be there. Not scared

We must offer a remote/online option to build community.

I would need to know in advance the agenda.

Just remembering that meetings are now open again.

Minds are made up and my two cents worth wouldn't make a bit of difference.

Would love to get info on issues when it goes to boards & commission

Don't think City really cares what a conservative thinks.

See last answer

Too busy

Fear of violence

We will be relocating to another state so no longer have a vested interested in Grand Rapids.

Prefer to participate virtually

No challenge other than finding out when and how to participate!

None

Topics/issues aren't always of interest to me.

Regarding neighborhood initiative meetings, the leaders are mostly looking for public support.

currently I have been content with how things are going.

Usually links aren't posted in a timely manner and/or they are buried

don't know schedule well

Retirement

Prayers at beginning of meetings and meetings held in churches it's exclusionary

not knowing about them or having conflicting appointments

too busy

Move all tax votes to November, then I will believe they want my input.

None

Not a fan of driving and parking downtown

Q5 Any other comments or suggestions to improve the City's community engagement efforts?
(136 responses by locals)

inform police work commission email social effort
 media input help keep meet also resident provide
 option public good time issue feel
 see way like city make think
 agenda people engage live
 ask neighborhood need go
 attend listen citizen commissioner year use

Keep public meetings available online for streaming even after public is allowed to attend again.

Listen to the organization that have a positive impact on our local community. Like the folks who contribute to enhance the Pickleball courts at Belknap Park. Why has the city not contributed more of an effort to support this club? Other organizations are huge cost centers, but this club has a positive impact on our community at little to no cost to the city.

How do we learn about such events?

I think the city does a good job of providing information that is relevant to me and my neighborhood.

Get rid of donations by corporations for re-elections and start taking care of this community...homelessness is an abysmal reflection on what this city prioritizes, which clearly are those with deep pockets.

There's so much out there that it's hard to understand and keep track of everything. Finding a way to make it easier to follow things would help a lot.

This survey is a pathetic way to gain information. How about someone in person asking important questions. This is biased information. Removing myself from your questions which lead to nowhere.

My neighborhood in Heartside is never photographed or portrayed realistically unless a Christian non-profit wants money. It is exhausting to live here and I wish I could move and warn everyone not to move here.

Please keep virtual engagements as an option. It's easier to stay engaged and be aware with more options to connect to issues!

I have recently emailed city commissioners and the mayor and NEVER received a response. At least acknowledge receipt of my correspondence.

Pretty good survey wording. But the first one left me wondering if library-hosted discussion or guest speaker counts. I like the survey navigation - being able to jump backward to initial page to reread the text, for instance. I wonder if visual prompts for FlashVote feedback would produce richer replies to certain survey topics?

I'm not sure that the City is making progress in addressing about police interactions with people of color.

Yes info as to what is going to be torn down or built no just go ahead and do it with no input.

Calling 311 works but I'd rather speak to a person in a particular department

The ease of being able to attend and comment on city commission meetings virtually has been very beneficial to me, in that I feel I can be involved and heard based on my schedule. Losing these available options will make it hard for me to be as involved in the happenings of my city.

I appreciate the challenge of engaging community members in view of multiple demands on people's time, the challenge of educating people on complex issues, and the difficulty of encouraging engagement in the face of a political environment that encourages partisan divisions and distrust of governmental entities.

Add a calendar to your IG or other social. If one exists add links or advertise it better

I wish they would email out or post agendas out to the public. The public has to search high and low.

I'd like the City to listen when the will of the people makes itself known, such as with the defunding of the GRPD.

Please continue to host all meetings with online participation for hosts and attendees

I would love to see more educational material that explains in simple diagrammed terms how municipal government operates so that it's easier to understand which parts of government govern which and how they are able to make decisions or where jurisdiction falls in some cases

Engagement needs to happen where people live. It should happen in partnership with trusted organizations and a times that make sense for working people. Engagement should not be focused on presenting but instead on listening. People should have multiple ways to provide feedback and a reasonable amount of time to digest information and respond. For those who can't or won't participate in person, other options should be provided. The City should do more than just announce these opportunities on social media or through email - not everyone is connected electronically. I think providing snapshots after events to affirm the City heard or understood the community is valuable both for outcomes and public trust. Providing opportunities for people to further get involved would be wonderful.

Commissioners need to better respond to community input. I've emailed my commissioners a handful of times and only heard back once. Commissioner Moody asked me to watch a Zoom meeting about gun violence... deflecting my concern.

Coffee meet ups have proven informative for staff and elected and appointed committee persons

use this form keep it in confidence and get more of a true sense of the community's feelings as it relates to trending issues that are happening. this is still too general and more specific questions could be asked

Dont be bullied by angry groups. Angry is a new fad way in this Internet age. You do a good job of advance notice and it pays off. Don't ever apologise .

Allow email responses to events, meetings, personnel, staff, commissioners, etc..... Let our voices be heard and respected.

Our city leaders have an agenda that will not be altered by its' citizens participation.

Provide ways for people to provide input that aren't just showing up at meetings. I do really appreciate the FlashVote approach and hope to see more opportunities to provide input.

When engaging on an issue, please try to inform/educate as well. most issues are complicated/complex and sometimes the public reacts without information causing more harm to the issue they are wanting to address.

If so much of our time was not having to be spent making money to pay bills, etc. we would have more time to engage in improving our city and our democracy. Living wages, UBI, reparations, and Universal Healthcare are some solutions that I feel would radically change how we spend our time leaving those interested in getting involved more time to engage in meaningful efforts that improve all of our lives. Thank you !

Would be great if commissioners responded to emails! Commissioner moody in particular has quite the reputation for not being somebody you can contact via email.

City Commission should conduct more resident listening activity rather than so often hiring outside paid consultants to create studies before actions are taken. We have elected our officials to show leadership. The no-risk outside consultancy route does not show leadership.

I serve on a few boards for the City. Zoning and Planning hold meetings during the day which makes it very difficult for people to attend the meetings. They should be held in the evening.

I engaged with the forestry department in order to have a damaged tree removed from our yard. They were very responsive and helpful! Recently, I called 311 and was connected to the forestry department to report a down tree at my neighbor's house that was blocking the road. Again, they were responsive and helpful. The tree was gone and the road cleared within an hour of my call.

Actually listen to your residents you are fake and we see it

Require city commissioners to be out in their wards more often. They should be hosting "coffee with a commissioner" open houses or something like that, so that we can get to know them, get to know the issues they'll be voting on, and they can hear from us.

Written communication is convenient but does not seem to hold the same weight in a public comment meeting.

Quit genuflecting to special interest groups that represent a small segment of the city AND are based upon race, creed, religion, sex, sexual preference, etc. Identity politics will have us all divided into our own camps quickly. The city is throwing gas on this fire — and making relations between groups worse than ever.

Appreciate the existence of the concept. Now that settled in here and retired...I may participate more.

None. I just wish the public would be more supportive of the Police. The first thing I learned in my Criminal Justice class was that the Police alone cannot be expected to do the job of law enforcement. They need help from the public. I know this if off topic. Also, Chief Payne and Mayor Bliss get high marks! Thank you both for your strong leadership! With them we have stability.

I would be willing to learn more about city affairs and share info in small groups in my neighborhood.

Communication to the community in a variety of ways would continue to at least keep us informed of the options to attend meetings. I like this flash vote option.

offer food/ open environments/ outside entertainment/ open spaces

Why participate, it won't make a difference

I think that when public spaces are being impacted by city redesign efforts that on the ground outreach needs to be done to contact neighbors, business owners and invite them to attend convenient and accessible feedback forms. I think this has gotten a little better over time but there is still SO MUCH ROOM for more community feedback. In addition, I would love to see the Commissioners regularly asking for small feedback groups from residents from different neighborhoods on topics of interest and contacting those neighbors or signing them up to participate through the neighborhood associations to form true partnerships.

We just moved back into the city pre-COVID so still learning the ropes

I would love to be more involved in local issues and policy but I honestly do not know where to start or who to contact.

Stand up to the fascist governor who has ruined our state

Keep phone in options for public comment for city commission and other meetings.

Coordinating with neighborhood associations might be useful.

Listening to the concerns of citizens. Recognizing that citizen concerns are important to that individual and should not be treated as frivolous.

I work during the day, so if the meetings are during typical office hours, I can't attend. Also, outside of Facebook, I don't hear much about these meetings.

I 100% want to get more involved. I watched a meeting several months ago where people called in to support or oppose defunding the police. I think I watched for 4 hours before I went to bed. So it's tough to dedicate that much time to a meeting but in general this is important to me.

Regarding city commissioner related meetings specifically, I don't feel as though the commissioners really take into account the public's voice.

Feels like you are doing what you can. Perhaps make signs to put in public busses about city projects and how to get involved.

Have newsletters available in coffee shops and barbershops/salons for people to read while they wait.

Frustrating when City asks for our input but they have already predetermined solutions. Seems they don't want my input. They only want to check a box that says they had a community meeting.

I think keeping the video options would be great. That way, I can participate without having to skip other responsibilities.

It'd really be great to have some reporting on happenings of boards and commissions. Not full minutes, but just highlights to stay informed. It would also be helpful to have a more publicized agenda of items that will be up for discussion and/or voted on prior to the meeting. I know these are available already, but they're not very accessible.

Keep publicizing meeting info so the public is fully aware

Collect this kind of info at the city social event. Don't just rely on meetings. Meetings aren't for everyone - they can be long, boring, don't fit the schedule, need childcare, hard to do after a long day of work. But for surveys and connect cards into fun family activities

Get "normal" regular people out to look at unique situations and find ways for the City can coordinate with other groups to resolve issues....don't just focus on community policing....community everything.

I really enjoy these surveys. They are quick, easy, and I feel like I can voice my opinions freely.

I would like to be engaged. I need a good way to be sure I'm getting information about where and when (and agendas) of meetings are happening. I am retired from many years of living and working out of state; went to MSU but am now a full-time Michigander. I vote here--I always vote, and am interested in the community. So--making sure I have news of when and where meetings are: that is what would help me.

As I stated previously, I think the left leaning Mayor and Commissioners have no interest in hearing contrary positions.

Don't really think that involvement will change anything unfortunately. The city will do what is already planned and budgeted for.

I am particularly discussed with the 311 system, I do not like repeating my concerns to someone who tells me that they will send an email to whomever and most often not getting a return call. I really wish that those that be would take the time to talk to those who are their neighbors. It has always been the personal touch that is the foundation of our city.

More neighborhood specific events and engagement would be great!

Going into those areas that need the most help & reaching out to them to see what can be done. I just feel there's a disconnect between what's happening in the way of policing and city policies here in Grand Rapids.

I like the option of online meetings it has made participating easier.

Virtual engagement with camera and chat would be welcomed, prioritized. More social media discourse and engagement would be nice. Specific neighborhood engagement more applicable.

As an older and nearly life long thoughtfully progressive resident of GR, I feel like my input is not valued and is disparaged. It seems like leadership is on a mission to impose values that are alien to people like me who have devoted a great deal of time and effort to building GR. I feel unwanted in my own city.

I applaud the City's efforts to improve community engagement efforts, and I hope, to the extent the GRPD is involved, that you increase (not defund!) the police department budget in a manner commensurate with the additional efforts in engagement. Thanks!

These meetings should all be accessible on line, all the time. If you truly want citizens to participate.

None

Actually LISTEN to the people who speak up/call in/comment. NOT just the ones that confirm your pre-existing opinions.

I'm a republican and the city really doesn't care what I think

Make it mandatory that elected city officials respond to citizen emails. They do not always need to agree but at least show common courtesy and respond when citizens take the time to write them

Get neighborhood/resident input on proposals before they are finalized!

No suggestions

More info to the Public on issues coming up for discussion and/or decision would be helpful.

Mail announcements of votes and meetings. I am a techie and I still don't spend any money time on your social media, but if I get mail from the city, you have my attention. I'm in my 40's and likely 35-45% of our citizens are older than me or have very little or no access or presence on the internet. It is important we keep those people involved and lazy 40 somethings like me to pay attention. Thank you for your service to our community!

None, but I do look forward to being in attendance at some of the future meetings.

The monthly GR Mayor video helps i get through emails.

Keep options for involvement, that are other than in person, valid and open.

Don't be easily offended.

City does a good job communicating.

Shorten meeting and conduct virtual opportunities.

Should do a hybrid live and Zoom

Somehow we need reporting or a feed of information. It is impractical for any citizen to follow all of the commissions, etc. It is difficult to track issues between commissions. So it is impossible for a citizen to stay reasonably informed.

not at the moment. Thanks!

I am a city employee and the city's policy of having everything go through the Communications dept can make community engagement difficult if the departments are unable to have their own forms of community engagement.

Continue to include a zoom/remote option for meetings

Stop pandering. Defund the cops.

Work better to provide greater context when talking about something. I am unfamiliar with many topics talk about and how they might be relevant to me.

Why would the city cut off community by ending remote/on line options?

The City Commission had their own agenda that they follow. If your viewpoints don't align with their agenda, they dismiss your viewpoint. They've never dealt with the panhandling issue. It is the worst Commission I have seen in 27 years.

posting upcoming meetings and issues on Twitter

Info on topics and locations... How do I find them?

I think continuing the livestream and public access makes these meeting more open to all. I'm able to attend a meeting while multitasking or on the go. It's really a valuable way to connect.

Perhaps more attention to using good representation from neighborhood organizations. "Good" means that these representatives fairly know and express neighborhood issues.

If the city genuinely wants serious engagement with residents - OF WHICH I AM INCREASINGLY SKEPTICAL - then agendas for meetings need to come out WAY BEFORE ~48 hours of a meeting, which is far to common. Agendas for meetings of the City

Commission should be available WEEKS before the meeting. How are people supposed to provide informed feedback when they don't even know what is coming up? I've been on calls where Neighborhood Associations talk about this with Commissioners ... and Commissioners always have the excuse that they don't set/control the agenda. So, in this [theoretically] elected municipal government who does? If even those serving their Neighborhood Associations struggle to track what the City is doing how seriously is the City interested in engagement? And that's setting aside how the City and elected officials *USE* Neighborhood Associations as a buffer to avoid fulfilling their role as civic leaders.

Thank you for reaching out and trying to make a difference

Let people know about parking options (is parking free if you attend a meeting, what lot[s]). Might not be possible, but it would be nice if the meetings, on occasion, could be held in neighborhood locations instead of always in the City offices.

I think actually making changes to the police department that people keep asking for would probably be a good first step. How has the department changed/shifted resources in the last year to show that they are listening and responding to the community.

Be honest with yourselves and in communications whether it is really community engagement. Or if it's a one-sided info push onto residents, to check an engagement box. I've worked in community engagement, and it is a long, slow, relationship-based process. Also, prioritize resident needs (affordable housing, the Homeless Outreach Team, infrastructure, clean environment, long-term stable jobs in certain sectors) over flashy development incentives for tourism and "live, work, play." As we've seen in covid, those markets can disappear in a blink. Corporations pull up roots all the time, after getting tax benefits. Show true investment in our underclasses, not just the wealthy players, and the community will engage. Of course that's very difficult when funding comes from a few large donors. Good luck navigating the politics. But if GR is a place where people can live and work, those people will keep it flourishing, without relying on other people coming to play. Thank you for your work.

Unfortunately, my husband and I have "checked out" of Grand Rapids. We are a retired couple that has seen all of the changes over the years. While there have been many improvements, it also feels as if we no longer belong, the busy-ness of the city has gotten overwhelming, and it doesn't feel like home anymore. We will be more to a smaller town to find a better quality of life for us.

I love the city ambassadors on the downtown sidewalks

This is a good way. Also the City staff should be active in chiming in and following social media sites that are relevant. Some do but most don't.

I've lived here for 35 years. I have never been approached to engage with city leaders. I'm moving, partly because I don't think the city is moving in the right direction. I think you rich people have a plan that you are going to push through, no matter what I say or do. I watched the police bang their bicycles into peaceful protesters and it made me wonder about your values. You banned smoking in parks OUTSIDE! which isn't illegal so I am unable to use the parks I have built with you. I hate how you have "improved the roads" with bikelanes that no one uses except to park in. To engage with the community you have to actually care about everyone not just your little bicycle happy group. Actually I am not aware of any effort to engage the community. You expanded housing without thinking about infrastructure and traffic congestion. As a whole I think you could have done better. Goodbye.

Reach younger citizens by leveraging various social media platforms - how might the city incorporate feedback into those platforms? (i.e Instagram stories with open-ended question or quick poll). Share what is going on in a more engaging storytelling way

Campaign to connect youth and young adults to flash surveys. Campaign on TV and radio and by social media, but mostly things like billboards or radio. Prizes for participants (like raffles). Young people seeing it in their schools. Universities. etc.

Keep providing opportunities for citizen input especially with police reform efforts.

Most projects are already quite far along - new developments, road designs, etc. before the public is invited in. Having participated in a number of meetings, I always see the same handful of staff and they definitely have full plates. Our take is that you do not have enough staff to do the kind of engagement needed. Then there are projects with little to no engagement like the most recent riverfront work. A few focus groups and the blessing of the Grand Action Committee does not equal engagement.

Community engagement in regards to road construction and other important notifications is done last minute if at all. I barely heard about Neighborhood Summit and other engagement efforts at the city and I am involved with neighbors. Its also hard to get a reply back from the neighborhood connectors. I would say resident engagement has a LONG way to go.

I think the City does well with community engagement opportunities.

I would like to see more commercials on tv about local events.

Please keep meeting available to stream or participate online. It removes a lot of barriers for people and allows for more engagement. Watching on a stream is nice, but being able to submit a question or speak on the mic while virtual is invaluable

I don't know if you already do this, but Zoom-ing the meeting would be amazing.

a large number of people expressed a desire to defund the police, i do not feel like i am listened to or my community is not listened to about this important matter.

Need ways to get the info out on social media that is more robust than Facebook. It controls what I see and often times something shows up in my feed days after it has happened.

Define the agenda first

I would appreciate better written reply's to my emails.

Support your Police Department and stop pandering to the vocal few. The violent crime today is a direct result of very limited proactive policing. The work we did in the early 90's accounted for a drastic reduction in crime at that time and over the next several years. Let the police do their job or you will see problems like we've never seen before! Mark my words...you will have blood on your hands. The police aren't the problem.

Inform people better about dates/times/options for providing input far enough ahead of time

Should be an ongoing commission of African American parents in a paid position meeting monthly with suggestions, recommendations with how to make GR more INCLUSIVE

There needs to a timeline that schedules things out so that there is time to plan to engage. Often agendas are posted with only the minimum amount of time with no advance warning of topics coming up. Each board/commission should have a high level tentative schedule that outlines topics quarterly. Additionally, there should be direct connections to the strategic plan, vision and/or goals. The DGRI could serve as a model - each of their agendas link to the overall goals in a way that is clear and effective in building understanding around the work and the alignment toward the goals. Currently, meetings are disjointed and there is no communication around how the work supports any kind of strategic vision.

is there a mailing list for meeting announcements?

Focus as much attention on the community members complaints that are called into dispatch at grpd in the "lower middle class and poorer" areas as they do for the upper middle class areas. I've lived in both and can see a huge difference. Also take non-shooting and non-car accident non-corporate store break-ins more serious. The goal is to serve and PROTECT not get there after the fact or when they feel like it. I've been stalked harassed and had my online accounts broken into and they took seven hours to get to me then the officer was patronizing and refused to do anything to help me / about this.

Just remember to meet people where they are. This tool is great for engagement. However passively asking people to sign up rather than engaging them in the communities where they live, (door knocking, neighborhood associations, community groups, etc.) will limit effectiveness of any/all engagement made or attempted by the city. And inauthentic engagement leads to apathy from members of the community.

Hold meetings in each district since each district has their own problems/suggestions (ex. North, West, South, East)

I've live here my entire life and the city do not care about it's Black residents