



# ENVISION NEW BRAUNFELS UPDATE

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN *OCTOBER 2025*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION & GOALS OF ENGAGEMENT

## Purpose of the Community Engagement Plan

A successful comprehensive plan reflects the voices and values of all residents. This Engagement Plan ensures the process is inclusive, transparent, and accessible, fostering meaningful participation across diverse communities to shape a shared vision for New Braunfels' future.

## Project Background and Context

The Envision New Braunfels Update will guide long-term, sustainable growth, building on the 2018 vision. It will define the policies, programs, and projects needed to maintain the city's character while addressing the needs of a growing and diverse community.

## Engagement Goals

Building on the 2018 process, engagement for the plan update focuses on informing, involving, and empowering residents to shape every element of the plan—from land use to housing and infrastructure—while strengthening trust and civic participation.

- **Promote Broad Awareness of the Comprehensive Plan Update Process**  
Clearly communicate how residents and partners can participate throughout the process.
- **Build Community Buy-In for Future Development Scenarios**  
Engage the public early to shape and evaluate development strategies.
- **Encourage Community Ownership of Land Use Planning**  
Connect land use planning to local values and lived experiences.
- **Engage a Diverse Cross-Section of the Community**  
Intentionally include residents of all backgrounds, ages, neighborhoods, and languages to ensure equitable representation.

# 2. KEY AUDIENCES

The success of the Envision New Braunfels Update depends on capturing input from a wide range of audiences and community partners, including:

- **Underserved and/or historically marginalized populations:**  
Uplift voices often excluded from planning, including people of color, low-income households, new residents from different places, people with disabilities, seniors, and residents experiencing housing and food instability.

- **Youth and young adults:**  
Engage elementary school, middle school, high school, college students, and young professionals who will live with the plan's long-term impacts. This can include partnering with organizations such as the New Braunfels Youth Collaborative and Mill Street Youth Center as well as the local schools and school districts.
- **Neighborhood and homeowners' associations:**  
To ensure representation of localized issues and neighborhood-level priorities from across the city.
- **Renters and multifamily housing residents:**  
Capture the perspectives of those living in apartments and subsidized housing.
- **Elected Officials:**  
To ensure alignment and accountability with decision makers throughout the planning and adoption process.
- **City Departments:**  
To coordinate technical knowledge, internal goals, and implementation capacity.
- **Developers, Builders, and Real Estate Brokers:**  
Gather insight on market trends, regulatory challenges, and housing feasibility. This can include partnering with organizations such as the Greater New Braunfels Economic Development Corporation and Four Rivers Association of Realtors.
- **Business Owners, Property Owners, and Business Associations:**  
Understand priorities across retail, hospitality, office, and industrial sectors. This can include collaborating with the New Braunfels Chamber.
- **Major employers and workforce partners:**  
To align planning with regional economic goals and commuting patterns of major employers.
- **Faith-based and cultural organizations:**  
Leverage trusted community networks, especially among multilingual groups.
- **Local organizations, not-for-profits, and service providers:**  
Inform strategies addressing housing, transportation, food, health, and the environment. This can include partnering with organizations such as the New Braunfels Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity, and the New Braunfels Community Foundation.
- **Artists and cultural institutions:**  
To include creative voices and perspectives on place-making, cultural preservation, and community identity.
- **Educational institutions and school districts:**  
Partner with schools and youth programs to address access, safety, and educational needs.

- **General public and visitors:**  
To gather broad community perspectives on quality of life, city services, development, and vision for New Braunfels' future.
- **Utility Providers:**  
Coordinate with utility providers to understand infrastructure capacity, future service needs, and opportunities for resilience and efficiency.
- **Environmental/Resource Protection Groups:**  
Engage organizations focused on conservation, water quality, and natural resource stewardship to ensure sustainability and protection of New Braunfels' natural assets.

### 3. ENGAGEMENT TOOLS AND METHODS

The Envision New Braunfels Update will use a mix of online and in-person outreach to meet residents where they are. The approach emphasizes accessibility, creativity, and clear communication to make the planning process visible, inclusive, and well-understood.

#### Project Website

A central hub for all plan-related information, updates, and engagement opportunities. The City's website will host background documents, event details, and questionnaires.

**Goal:** Provide consistent and accessible information to the public.

**Key Audiences:** General public, stakeholders, and media.

#### Focus Groups

Facilitated discussions with key stakeholder groups who play a direct role in shaping and implementing the comprehensive plan. These sessions will explore in-depth perspectives on priority issues and provide practical insights to strengthen policies and strategies.

**Goal:** Gather actionable feedback from partners who influence development, infrastructure, economic development, quality of life, and community well-being.

**Key Audience:** Industry professionals, major employers, business owners, neighborhood leaders, advocacy organizations, builders/developers, and other implementation partners.

#### Bi-Lingual Community Questionnaires

Questionnaires offered in both English and Spanish to ensure broad accessibility and meaningful participation whether online or in-person. These tools will give residents the

opportunity to share their perspectives on the plan, identify priorities, and provide feedback on major themes in a way that is easy and convenient.

**Goal:** Gather inclusive feedback from a wide range of voices to shape planning priorities.

**Key Audiences:** General public and stakeholders

### City-Wide Community Open Houses

In-person events that provide structured opportunities for residents to learn about the plan, ask questions, and share input through interactive activities.

**Goal:** Deepen understanding and gather feedback on major planning themes and priorities.

**Key Audiences:** General public and stakeholders

### Pop-Up Events

Informal outreach at community hubs (e.g., grocery stores, libraries, festivals, community events), high traffic intersections, and preexisting well-attended community events to engage residents in everyday settings.

**Goal:** Reach people who may not participate in formal meetings and gather broad community input.

**Key Audiences:** Underserved people, families, and residents with limited time.

### Project Briefings

Presentations to City Council and the Planning Commission to provide updates and gather directional feedback throughout the planning process. These briefings will occur at key project milestones to ensure alignment with long-term goals and implementation strategies.

**Goal:** Maintain transparency, foster collaboration, and ensure alignment with policy direction and implementation strategies.

**Key Audiences:** City Council and the Planning Commission

## 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### MIG Team

The MIG Team is responsible for leading the strategy and design of engagement activities throughout the Envision New Braunfels Update process. Key responsibilities include:

### **Planning and Strategy**

- Develop the Community Engagement Plan, outlining approach, tools, and metrics.
- Attend monthly PMT meetings to coordinate engagement activities with technical tasks and plan milestones.

### **Design and Content Development**

- Create all engagement collateral, including:
  - Infographics, flyers, and event boards
  - Community questionnaires (digital and print)

### **Implementation of Engagement Activities, including organization and facilitation of:**

- Community Open Houses
- Focus groups
- Providing general support for three-person, two-day Meeting Windows aligned with each major plan task.
- City Council and Planning Commission briefings during Task 2: Place Types and Future Land Use Map Development and Task 4: Comprehensive Plan Update and Adoption.
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### **Translation and Inclusion Support**

- Provide Spanish translation for the bi-lingual community questionnaire.

### **Documentation and Reporting**

- Create a tracking worksheet for MIG and City staff to track demographic data and how many people have been engaged.
- Prepare summaries of the community questionnaires, community open houses, and focus groups.

## **City Staff**

City staff are responsible for logistical coordination, internal communication, platform management, meeting facilitation, and official noticing. Key responsibilities include:

### **Coordination and Logistics**

- Schedule all engagement-related events, including City Council and Planning Commission briefings.
- Coordinate internal review of materials and consolidate feedback for MIG.
- Ensure events and meetings are legally noticed and compliant with City procedures.

- Staff all pop-up events.
- Prepare all staff reports for City Planning Commission and City Council meetings and hearings.

#### **Implementation of Engagement Activities, including organization and facilitation of**

- Pop-up events
- City Council and Planning Commission briefings

#### **Project Website Management**

- Maintain and update the City website with project information, event listings, and engagement materials.
- Share engagement content via City social media channels, newsletters, and email lists.

#### **Community Partnerships and Outreach**

- Coordinate with libraries, community centers, and partner organizations for event hosting and promotion.
- Distribute printed materials (e.g., questionnaires, flyers) to public facilities and community spaces.
- Create a stakeholder database to manage contact information, track participation, and ensure continuity throughout the engagement process.

#### **Translation and Inclusion Support**

- Provide translations for flyers.
- Ensure interpretation services are provided during events.
- Assist with outreach to neighborhood associations, faith-based groups, and local networks to promote participation.

#### **Documentation and Reporting**

- Update the tracking worksheet created by MIG to track demographic data and how many people have been engaged at pop-ups and City-led events.
- Prepare summaries of pop-up events and other City-led events.

#### **Decision-Making Support**

- Lead City-led briefings to elected and appointed officials, using materials provided by MIG; and
- Track engagement input and responses needed for formal City Council and Planning Commission reviews.

### **Community Partners**

Community partners will play a vital role in expanding the reach and impact of the engagement process. As trusted voices within their neighborhoods and networks, they will help share project updates, circulate materials, and encourage participation, particularly among residents who may not engage through traditional City channels. By amplifying key messages and supporting outreach at the neighborhood level, community partners will help ensure the planning process reflects the voices and lived experiences of all New Braunfels residents.

## **5. METRICS OF SUCCESS**

To ensure the Envision New Braunfels Update reflects the full diversity of community voices and results in meaningful public engagement, the project team will track and evaluate success across several key metrics. These metrics will guide adjustments to outreach strategies and demonstrate transparency, accountability, and inclusion throughout the process.

### **Who We're Hearing From**

We want to make sure that participants reflect the full diversity of New Braunfels, across neighborhoods, ages, races and ethnicities, income levels, renters, and homeowners, and more. Demographic data will be tracked whenever possible to identify outreach gaps and to adjust engagement strategies accordingly.

### **How Many People We Engaged**

We'll keep track of how many people we engage both in-person and online, through open houses, questionnaires, pop-ups, and partner outreach.

### **What We Hear and How We Use It**

We'll assess both the quantity and quality of feedback and show how community input shapes ideas and decisions throughout the planning process.

### **Geographic and District-Level Reach**

We'll evaluate how engagement varies across Council districts to balance representation from neighborhoods across New Braunfels.



## 6. DOCUMENTATION

Transparent and thorough documentation ensures accountability and shows how community feedback shapes each stage of the Envision New Braunfels Update.

### Public Input Tracking

All feedback from questionnaires, open houses, pop-ups, and focus groups will be organized by theme, geography, and demographics (when available). Tracking will capture participation metrics and identify trends to inform plan content and future engagement.

### Stakeholder Database

The City will maintain a centralized database of participants and partners to manage contacts, track involvement, and support targeted outreach and ongoing communication.

### Reporting Back

After each engagement phase, “What We Heard” summaries will share how public input influenced the plan. These updates will be posted online and presented at community and advisory meetings.

### Visual Reporting

At the conclusion of the process, an infographic will summarize engagement participation and outcomes. Similar to the 2018 plan, this visual summary will highlight the depth and diversity of input that informed the plan and helped build broad community support for adoption.

## 7. ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE BY PROJECT TASKS

The Envision New Braunfels Update will advance through four major tasks, each tied to key technical milestones and supported by a robust community engagement effort. Each task includes a dedicated two-day Meeting Window, during which a range of community-facing activities, such as open houses, pop-ups, focus groups, and briefings will be conducted.

**Task 1: Data, Vision, and Outline Updates** – Confirm and refine the community’s previously developed vision, values, and goals to guide New Braunfels’ development over the next 20 years. (November – December 2025)

**Task 2: Place Types and Future Land Use Map Development** – Advance the plan’s vision by developing practical strategies that guide where and how New Braunfels develops, through place types, and scenarios. (January – February 2026)

**Task 3: Policy Refinement and Implementation** – Refine the existing policies in the comprehensive plan by incorporating community input. (April – May 2026)

**Task 4: Comprehensive Plan Update and Adoption** – Build consensus around policy recommendations and prepare a draft plan for public review and formal adoption. (July – October 2026)

## **Task 1: Data, Vision, and Outline Updates**

**Engagement Timeframe:** November – December 2025

**MIG Team Availability:**

MIG Team members will support preparation, facilitation, and documentation for engagement activities throughout this task. This includes participation in PMT coordination, focus groups, and the first community-facing Meeting Window.

**Key Planning Objectives:**

- Confirm and refine the previous shared vision and core values for the city’s future
- Identify community priorities, opportunities, and early challenges
- Integrate quantitative data (demographics, trends, infrastructure capacity) with qualitative insights from engagement activities.

**Key Engagement Objectives:**

- Build awareness of the Envision New Braunfels Update
- Encourage early public participation and excitement
- Gather foundational input that shapes the plan’s direction
- Reach historically underrepresented populations early in the process

**Engagement Forums During This Task:**

- **Focus Groups Meetings** – Up to five focus group meetings will be conducted to gather input from stakeholder groups directly involved in implementing the comprehensive plan, including the place types and related policies. These structured conversations will explore how the plan can support, streamline, or challenge participants’ work. Potential focus groups may include but not be limited to representatives from the Neighborhood & Community Planning Department, Economic & Community Development Department, Transportation

& Construction Services Department, major employers, developers, and the business community.

- **Community Open House #1** – The first Community Open House will give the public the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the updated vision framework and draft plan outline for the Envision New Braunfels Update. Building on the results of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, participants will help confirm the community’s shared vision and goals, ensuring they reflect both long-standing values and future aspirations.
- **Pop-Up Outreach Events #1 and #2** – Two intercept-style pop-ups will be held in high-traffic community locations. These events will feature informational posters, brief activities, and project staff available to discuss the Envision New Braunfels Update. Participants will be encouraged to fill out an early feedback questionnaire and share their vision for New Braunfels. Pop-ups will be held at existing community events to engage residents who may not typically attend traditional public meetings.
- **Bi-lingual Community Questionnaire #1** – A bi-lingual citywide questionnaire, will be deployed during this task to gather broad community perspectives on the comprehensive plan update. The questionnaire will ask the public about their priorities, concerns, and aspirations related to the future of New Braunfels.

#### **Communications and Outreach During This Task**

- **Project Website Update** – The engagement process will be introduced through an update to the City’s comprehensive planning website. This site will serve as a central hub for all information related to the Envision New Braunfels Update, including event listings, plan documents, engagement tools, and comment opportunities.
- **Flyer and Poster Distribution** – One (1) bi-lingual flyer and up to two (2) posters promoting the Envision New Braunfels Update and upcoming events will be distributed to libraries, community centers, recreation facilities, and other community hubs. Up to ten (10) posters will be created for the first community open house. These materials will include a link or QR code to the project website and questionnaire and encourage participation in the early engagement task.
- **Email Blasts and Social Media** – Using the City’s existing email and social media channels, outreach updates will be sent at least twice to residents and partner organizations. These updates will include information about upcoming meetings, ways to get involved, and links to online engagement tools. Targeted bilingual outreach will be sent to community partners.

## Task 2: Place Types and Future Land Use Map Development

**Engagement Timeframe:** January – February 2026

**MIG Team Availability:**

MIG will coordinate content development and facilitation for the second community Meeting Window and provide technical support for the development and testing of development scenarios.

**Key Planning Objectives:**

- Translate community vision into spatial development strategies
- Test and refine place types and land use alternatives using both quantitative data (e.g., parcel size, infrastructure capacity) and qualitative community input.

**Key Engagement Objectives:**

- Educate the public on land use concepts and place types
- Gather input on preferred development scenarios
- Facilitate meaningful dialogue on tradeoffs and priorities
- Ensure geographic and demographic representation in input

**Engagement Forums During This Task:**

- **Community Open House #2** – This open house will be focus on presenting place types, development scenarios, and community character concepts. The session will feature a short presentation followed by interactive exercises.
- **Pop-Up Outreach Events #3 and #4** – Two pop-ups will be held at strategic locations to gather public input on place types and development scenarios. Events will include visual boards, simplified maps, and interactive poster exercises to capture residents’ preferences on where and how the city should develop.
- **Planning Commission Briefing #1** – This briefing will focus on place types and draft land use policies. Staff and MIG will present early recommendations and implementation themes, seeking guidance from Commissioners on alignment with current planning goals
- **City Council Briefing #1** – MIG and City staff will present an overview of draft policy directions to City Council. The presentation will summarize community input to date, introduce the structure of the policy framework, and gather preliminary Council feedback before public release.
- **Bi-lingual Community Questionnaire #2** – A bilingual citywide questionnaire will be deployed during this phase to gather broad community input on place types and future land use alternatives. The survey will introduce key land use concepts and explain proposed development scenarios in an accessible way, helping

residents understand the tradeoffs and priorities associated with different development patterns. Participants will be asked to provide feedback on preferred place types, spatial strategies, and development scenarios, ensuring that the perspectives of the public are incorporated into the refinement of the land use map and related planning strategies.

#### **Communications and Outreach During This Task**

- **Project Website Update** – The project website will be updated with maps, background reports, and scenario summaries.
- **Flyer and Poster Distribution** – Bilingual outreach materials will be created and distributed ahead of the community open house and pop-ups. Messaging will be simplified and visual to explain complex planning ideas. This will include one (1) bilingual flyer and up to ten (10) posters to be used at the open house and pop-ups.
- **Email Blasts and Social Media** – City channels will be used to share announcements about events and the bilingual community questionnaire. City staff and community partners will be asked to forward these to their networks to increase reach. Targeted bilingual outreach will be sent to community partners.

### **Task 3: Policy Refinement and Implementation**

**Engagement Timeframe:** April – May 2026

#### **MIG Team Availability:**

MIG will lead facilitation and content development for the third Meeting Window and coordinate closely with City staff to present and test draft policies with stakeholders and the public.

#### **Key Planning Objectives:**

- Refine and develop draft policy recommendations aligned with the community vision
- Incorporate qualitative and quantitative feedback from Tasks 1 and 2 into actionable strategies.
- Begin to outline implementation priorities and tradeoffs

#### **Key Engagement Objectives:**

- Share refined and draft policies in an accessible and engaging way
- Solicit input on feasibility, alignment, and community priorities
- Continue to engage underrepresented voices in policy conversations
- Prepare the public and stakeholders for plan review and adoption

### **Engagement Forums During This Task:**

- **Focus Groups Meetings** – During this phase, up to five focus group meetings will provide an opportunity to test and refine draft policy recommendations with stakeholders who play a direct role in implementing the comprehensive plan. Building on previous discussions of place types, land use alternatives, and development scenarios, these sessions will focus on the feasibility, alignment, and potential tradeoffs of proposed policies. Participants will be asked to provide practical insights on how the draft recommendations may support or challenge their work and how they can be tailored to reflect community priorities. The outcomes of these conversations will help shape the implementation strategies that guide the plan’s review and adoption.
- **Community Open House #3** – A community open house will be held to share refined and draft policy recommendations with the public in an accessible and engaging format. Attendees will have the opportunity to review proposed policies, ask questions, and provide input on feasibility, alignment with community priorities, and potential tradeoffs. Interactive displays and facilitated discussions will help participants understand how the policies translate the community vision into actionable strategies and implementation priorities.
- **Pop-Up Outreach Events #5 and #6** – Two pop-up events will take place to share refined and draft policy concepts and gather additional feedback. Residents will be invited to review poster summaries, complete short comment forms, and discuss ideas with staff.

### **Communications and Outreach During This Task**

- **Project Website Update** – The website will include draft policy documents, summaries, and an FAQ section to address common community questions.
- **Flyer and Poster Distribution** – Bilingual outreach materials will be created and distributed ahead of the community open house and pop-ups. Messaging will be simplified and visual to explain complex planning ideas. This will include one (1) bilingual flyer and up to ten (10) posters to be used at the open house and pop-ups.
- **Email Blasts and Social Media** – Meeting recaps, draft summaries, and public comment opportunities will be shared via City email lists, social media channels, the project website, and through partners. Community leaders will be encouraged to help distribute information. Targeted bilingual outreach will be sent to community partners.

## **Task 4: Comprehensive Plan Update and Adoption**

**Engagement Timeframe:** July – October 2026

**MIG Team Availability:**

MIG will co-lead the approval and adoption process presentations with the City.

**Key Planning Objectives:**

- Finalize the draft plan with public and stakeholder input
- Build momentum and support for formal adoption
- Establish a foundation for implementation and future tracking

**Key Engagement Objectives:**

- Present the full draft plan to the public, City Council, and Planning Commission
- Communicate how input from all tasks shaped the plan
- Encourage community ownership of the plan's vision and priorities
- Provide clear pathways for continued involvement during implementation

**Engagement Forums During This Task:**

- **Planning Commission Briefing #2** – This briefing will present the complete draft plan, including place types, land use policies, and supporting implementation strategies. Staff and MIG will summarize public input and engagement outcomes, highlight alignment with planning goals, and seek guidance from Commissioners to ensure readiness for plan adoption.
- **City Council Briefing #2** – MIG and City staff will present the full draft comprehensive plan to City Council, highlighting how community and stakeholder input from previous tasks shaped the plan's vision, place types, policies, and implementation priorities. The briefing will provide an overview of key recommendations, anticipated tradeoffs, and strategies for implementation, while gathering Council feedback to inform final refinements prior to formal adoption.

**Communications and Outreach During This Task**

- **Project Website Update** – The website will include the Public Review Draft and an FAQ section to address common community questions.
- **Email Blasts and Social Media** – The City will launch a final round of email outreach and social media promotion to help spread the word. Targeted bilingual outreach will be sent to community partners.
- **Public Hearing Promotion and Final Adoption Announcements** – Announcements about public hearings, Council briefings, and adoption dates

will be shared widely. Messaging will emphasize transparency and celebrate the collaborative nature of the plan.

- **Website Archive and Next Steps** – The project website will be updated with an archive of all engagement materials and summaries. A “Next Steps” section will outline how implementation will begin and how residents can stay involved post-adoption.