

“ The City of Heritage ”



2025/2026

ULUNDI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

Corporate Services Directorate
Cnr Princess Magogo & King Zwelithini Streets
Ulundi, 3838
Telephone (035) 874 5100
Facsimile (035) 870 5176
Website: www.ulundi.gov.za

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1. Introduction

The Ulundi Local Municipality has always been committed to bringing the participatory democracy closer to its communities. Its commitment goes beyond legislative requirements to make public participation an integral part of the planning, budgeting and service delivery processes ensuring sensitivity and responsiveness to community needs.

The contents of this strategy serve to provide mechanisms, processes and procedures to facilitate the achievement of the objectives and goals related to effective public participation. These mechanisms and processes will provide opportunities for the residents of the Municipality to gain direct access to information, participate in consultation and decision-making processes and to make meaningful contributions to the planning, design and implementation of programs and projects that directly or indirectly affect their lives.

The involvement of communities in the affairs of the municipality is a legislative requirement which assists community members to understand how government or municipality's function. An Integrated Development Plan (IDP) which is a strategic document or a 5 - year plan of the municipality must be informed by the needs of its communities. Community involvement is very much important from the planning phase for the IDP to be credible.

2. Definitions

"Council"	Municipal council of Ulundi Local Municipality
"Councillor"	Member of the Municipal Council
"Public" or "local community"	Body of people comprising of: - <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The residents of the municipality• The ratepayers of the municipality• Any civic organization and non- governmental, private sector or labor organization or bodies which are involved in the local affairs of the municipality
"Community Development Workers"	Work with communities to bring about social change and improve quality of life.
"Constitution"	Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996
"Consultation"	The action or process of formally consulting or discussing

"Integrated Development Plan (IDP)"	The principle strategic planning instrument which guides and informs all planning and development, in a municipality
"Municipal Manager"	The person appointed by council as head of the administration of the municipal council as prescribed in Section 54A of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000
"Performance Management System (PMS)"	Two-way communication process between the municipality and the community that measures specific targets, standards and priorities that were agreed on during the IDP process.
"Performance Management Regulations"	The Municipal Performance Management Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers Directly accountable to Municipal Managers.
"Petition"	A formal written request, typically one signed by many people, appealing to authority in respect of a particular cause.
"Public Participation"	<p>An open, fair and accountable process through which individuals and groups within selected communities can exchange views and influence decision making.</p> <p>It is further defined as a democratic process of engaging people, deciding, planning and playing an active part in the development and operation of services that affect their lives.</p>
"Stakeholder"	An individual or group with an interest in a particular issue addressed by government, e.g. ratepayer's association or trade unions.

"Ward Committee" A committee of a municipal ward, established in terms of Chapter 4, Part 4 of the Municipal Structures Act

"War Room" A ward level integrated service structures involving the government, municipality, business and other stakeholders.

3. ABBREVIATIONS

CDW	Community Development Worker
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
MTREF	Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework
MFMA	Municipal Finance Management Act
PMS	Performance Management System
SDBIP	Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan

4. Legislative Framework

The South African Constitution deals extensively with the promotion of participatory governance

4.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No.108 of 1996.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996, Section 152, stipulates that, the objects of local government are (a) to provide democratic and accountable government for local community; (b) to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner; (c) to promote social and economic development; (d) to promote a safe and healthy environment; and (e) to encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government.

Section 195 (1) (e) stipulates that "[people's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policymaking, whilst Section 195(1)(9) stipulates that •transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information."

Chapter 7 further prohibits the passing of by-laws, unless the proposed by-law has been published for public comment in terms of Section 160(4). Section 162 restricts the enforcing of promulgated by-laws, unless they have been published in the official provincial government gazette and made accessible to the public by the municipality concerned. Chapter 10 expounds the basic values and principles that must govern public administration. The Constitution further demands that enabling legislation to be promulgated in order to give effect to the Bill of Rights and the values and principles enshrined in it.

4.2 Local Government: Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998

Section 72 states that the object of a ward committee is to enhance participatory democracy in local government and Section 74 further make provision on functions and powers of ward committees that ward committees may make recommendations on any matters affecting their wards to the ward councillors

4.3 Local Government: Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000

The Act defines. "the legal nature of a municipality as including the local communities within the municipal area, working in partnerships with the municipality's political and administrative structures to provide for community participation".

Section 4(1) of the Act stipulates that, the Council of a municipality has the right to-

- (a) Govern on its own initiative the local government affairs of the local community.
- (b) Exercise the municipality's executive and legislative authority, and to do so without improper interference; and
- (c) Finance the affairs of the municipality by-
 - (i) charging fees for services; and
 - (ii) imposing surcharges on fees, rates on property and, to the extent authorized by national legislation, other taxes, levies and duties

(2) The council of a municipality, within the municipality's financial and administrative capacity and having regard to practical considerations has the duty to-

- (a) Exercise the municipality's executive and legislative authority and use the resources of the municipality in the best interests of the local community.
- (b) Provide, without favor or prejudice, democratic and accountable government;
- (c) Encourage the involvement of the local community.
- (d) Strive to ensure that municipal services are provided to the local community in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner.
- (e) Consult the local community about-
 - (i) The level, quality, range and impact of municipal services provided by the municipal services provided by the municipality, either directly or through another services provider; and
 - (ii) The available options for service delivery.
- (f) Give members of the local community equitable access to the municipal services to which they are entitled;

- (g) Promote and undertake development in the municipality.
- (h) Promote gender equity in the exercise of the municipality's executive and legislative authority;
- (i) Promote a safe and healthy environment in the municipality; and
- 0) Contribute, together with other organs of state, to the progressive realization of the fundamental rights contained in Sec 24,25,26,27and 29 of the Constitution of RSA.
- (3) A municipality must in the exercise of its executive and legislative authority respect the rights of citizens and those of other persons protected by the Bill of Rights.

4.4 Municipal Finance Management Act

The MFMA, was put in place to bring about transparent and effective financial management in municipalities and municipal public entities. The MFMA outlines ways in which the community can be informed of the financial situation of a municipality.

4.5 Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act No. 6 of 2004

The Act stipulates that the public must participate in decisions relating to municipal property rates.

4.6 White Paper on Local Government

The Batho Pele principles as contained in the Transforming Public Service Delivery White Paper (1997) endorses the need for openness and transparency as citizens should know how government structures are run, how resources are spent and who is in charge of particular services. Importantly the White Paper notes that the development of a service-oriented culture requires the active participation of the wider community, with municipalities requiring constant feedback from service users in order to improve their operations. The Access to Information Act No 2 of 2000 also put a very strong emphasis on the need of the community to have access to all government information.

The White Paper on local Government Act No. of 1998 encourages citizen's participation in Integrated Development Plan, Performance Management System, Budget, Policy Formulation, Monitoring and Evaluation of decision making and implementation.

5. Purpose of the strategy

Ulundi Local Municipality acknowledges and values the contributions of the community in achieving its service delivery, developmental and strategic objectives. The contents of this strategy serve to provide mechanisms, processes and procedures to facilitate the achievement of the objectives and goals related to effective public participation. Such mechanisms and processes will provide opportunities for the citizens of the Municipality to gain direct access to information, participate in consultation and decision-making processes and to make meaningful contributions to the planning, design and implementation of programs and projects that directly or indirectly affect their lives.

The strategy promotes an integrated approach to ensure mainstreaming of the interests of vulnerable groups and special sectors such as youth, women, children, people with disabilities and older persons.

6. Municipal Stakeholders

- 6.1 Media
- 6.2 Sector departments
- 6.3 Non-governmental Organization
- 6.4 The Public
- 6.5 Religious Leaders
- 6.6 Vulnerable groups
- 6.7 Youth & Youth Organizations
- 6.8 Business Community
- 6.9 Women Organizations
- 6.10 Municipal Employees
- 6.11 Ward Committees
- 6.12 CDW's
- 6.13 Traditional Leaders
- 6.14 Councilors

7. Communication

Ulundi Local Municipality utilizes the following communication mechanisms to engage with its community:

- 7.1 Municipal Bulletin (monthly newsletter)
- 7.2 Municipal website-www.mnguma.gov.za
- 7.3 Local newspapers
- 7.4 SMS notifications
- 7.5 Loud haling
- 7.6 Public meetings
- 7.7 Social Media platforms (Facebook), Tweeter, Instagram and WhatsApp
- 7.8 Local Community Radio

8. Guiding principles public participation

inclusivity - embracing all views and opinions in the process of community participation.

Diversity - in a community participation process it is important to understand the differences associated with race, gender, religion, ethnicity, language, age, economic status and sexual orientation.

Building community participation - capacity-building is the active empowerment of role players so that they clearly and fully understand the objective of community participation and may in turn take such actions or conduct themselves in ways that are calculated to achieve or lead to the delivery of the objectives.

Transparency - promoting openness, sincerity and honesty among all the role players in a participation process.

Flexibility- Being flexible in terms of time, language and approaches to public processes and engagements

Accessibility -ensuring that participants in a community participation process fully and clearly understand the aim, objectives, issues and the methodologies of the process, and are empowered to participate effectively. Accessibility ensures not only that the role players can relate to the process and the issues at hand, but also that they are, at the practical level, able to make their input into the process.

Accountability - the assumption by all the participants in a participatory process of full responsibility for their individual actions and conduct as well as a willingness and commitment to implement, abide by and communicate as necessary all measures and decisions in the course of the process.

Trust Commitment and Respect- the Municipality should build trust, confidence, integrity, sincerity and honesty in the community so that they believe that their views will be heard, respected and considered when decisions are taken by the Municipality.

Integration - that community participation processes are integrated into mainstream policies and services, such as the IDP process, service delivery issues and Budget and Performance Management Systems.

9. Value of Public Participation

9.1 Increases involvement in the democratic process

9.2 Encourages openness and transparency in community engagement

9.3 Builds capacity in communities to engage effectively with their councils

9.4 Participation also encourages and strengthens internal accountability structures in community organizations

10. Mechanisms for Public Participation

Mechanisms need to be created to encourage good relationship between the municipality and communities in its area of jurisdiction. Such mechanisms should ensure that there is on-going communication, debates, engagements and participation between the municipality and its

community. Importantly, methods or mechanisms listed below should not be viewed in isolation from each other.

10.1 Ward Committees

Ulundi Local Municipality must establish Ward Committees in all its 24 Wards, and they serve as community representatives to Council. Ward Committees are very important structures to ensure that the programs and the activities of the municipality are communicated to the communities. They serve as a link between the municipality and the local communities in terms of dissemination of information. Decisions taken by the Council will be communicated to community members through Ward Committees.

Ward Councillors shall convene Ward Committee meetings on a monthly basis and report to the office of the Speaker to ensure that there is continuous communication between the municipality and the people it serves. The Public Participation Division shall provide administrative support to Ward Councillors. The Ward Secretary shall provide secretarial duties in Ward Committee meetings and the Ward Councillor shall chair the meetings and request the PR Councillor to chair in cases where he/she will not be available.

Ward Committees working with Ward Councillor and other community organizations will identify priority needs of the ward and ensure that these needs are included in the budget proposals and plans.

10.2 Ward Meetings

These are the meetings between the Ward Councillor and the community in the ward or local residents. These meetings shall assist the Ward Councillor and the Ward Committee to understand better the needs of the community. Ward meetings shall give an opportunity for all the voices in the ward to be heard.

Ward Councillors shall convene ward meetings at least once per quarter, preferably after the ordinary Council Meeting so that a report back is tabled to their respective wards on resolutions taken by council and projects and programmes to be implemented by the municipality in the near future. Reports of such meetings shall be submitted in the office of the Speaker.

Ward Councillors shall identify a centre of the ward where ward meetings shall sit, and it should be an area which is central to all members of the ward so that all villages of the ward can be represented. In wards where it is not sufficient to convene all citizens of the ward, ward meetings shall be held village by village or villages may be clustered depending on their vastness.

10.3 Council Meetings

The community members of Ulundi Local Municipality shall be allowed to council meetings to observe on how the Council goes about dealing with matters of service delivery as per the Standing Rules of Order of Council. Council meetings shall be advertised in local newspapers 7 days before for Ordinary Council Meetings, 3 days before for Special Council meetings and 2 Days before an Extra-Ordinary Council meeting.

10.4 IDP Representative Forum

The Executive Mayor through the Municipal Manager shall ensure that the community participates in the IDP development and review process by establishing the IDP Representative Forum. The municipality shall every year launch the IDP Representative forum, and every effort shall be made to ensure that all the stakeholders of the municipality are represented in the forum. The local community and other stakeholders will ensure that their needs and aspirations are channeled through this forum and other community participation structures.

10.5 IDP, Budget and PMS Road Shows

Road Shows shall be held as per the IDP process plan to inform the public about projects and programs of the municipality. Wards shall be clustered and if the budget so allows, shall be held in each ward. Road Shows for the review of the IDP shall be held on the third quarter of each financial year and the final IDP and budget is adopted by Council before the end of the financial year in June,

10.6 Petitions

All petitions must be submitted to the office of the Speaker.

Council must establish mechanisms and processes for managing all public petitions.

Council aims to achieve the following:

- 10.6.1 To provide information and acknowledge to the public on how to interact with Council in an open, transparent and productive manner.
- 10.6.2 To efficiently address all written public request and grievances timeously

10.7 Public Notices, Pamphlets, Flyers and Loudspeakers

Public notices, pamphlets, and flyers shall be developed and distributed to relevant communities to publicize municipality events. The Loudspeaker shall also be used to publicize municipality events and to sensitize communities on a particular issue.

10.8 Newsletters

The municipality shall develop a newsletter to disseminate information to various stakeholders including members of the public. It shall mainly cover residents who may not be in a position to attend ward meetings, especially those who are economically active and/or employed. The newsletter shall allow residents to get information about services rendered, what the municipality is doing currently and what it is planning to do in the near future so that readers can enter into a discussion with the municipality on those issues.

10.9 Newspapers

Ulundi Local Municipality shall make use of the following newspapers:

City Press
Sunday times
Daily News
Ilanga
Isolezwe
Municipal Newsletter
Ibayede

10.10 Surveys

The municipality, depending on the availability of the budget, shall conduct customer satisfaction surveys in order to get a sense of what communities feel about the services rendered. Customer satisfaction surveys shall be structured in such a way that communities go beyond evaluating services rendered but provide suggestions to improve service delivery.

Community Development Workers (CDWs) and Ward Committees shall be engaged in the process of conducting customer satisfaction surveys. Before CDWs and Ward Committees are engaged in conducting the survey.

10.11 Radio Stations

The following radio stations shall be used:

SABC Ukhozi

Zululand FM

Nguna FM

Nongoma FM

10.12 Television stations

The municipality shall make use of the following television stations:

1KZN

Bay TV

10.13 Public meeting (Service Delivery meetings)

The Mayor as the driver of service delivery in the area, shall convene community service delivery meetings in all wards at least once per quarter. Community Service delivery meetings shall afford the municipality an opportunity to get a sense of what the members of the public feel about the services rendered and to better understand the needs of communities it serves. Through these meetings, the municipality shall ensure that areas that need special attention as far as service delivery is concerned are attended, especially the quick win issues.

The meetings shall also afford the municipality to report to the members of the public about projects and programmes implemented, up and coming projects and programmes to be implemented in the near future.

10.14 Outreach Programmes

The Mayor and the Speaker shall have a regular programme to visit the wards, listen to the needs, complaints and aspirations of the people of Ulundi. There shall be meetings with the business sector, the faith organizations, government departments and parastatals and

other stakeholders of Ulundi that should be arranged regularly by the offices of the Speaker and the Mayor for briefings about the Municipal services and programmes.

10.15 Community Development Workers

They shall serve as an important link between the National, Provincial and the Local government. As they operate at a ward level, CDW's shall work very close with Ward Councillors and Ward Committees to ensure that members of the public have access to information and government services. They shall complement the Ward Councillor in accelerating service delivery.

10.16 Project Steering Committees

Project Steering Committees shall be established for each infrastructural development project that is implemented in the ward and shall monitor the implementation of the project and report to the Speaker's office on any challenges and/or problems that they encounter as communities with the implementation process of the Project.

These committees shall be ad hoc committees whose work will end with the completion of the project.

10.17 Operation Sukuma-Sakhe (War Room)

The centers would be used for among other things planning and communication of completed service delivery programmes to local communities. CDW's are the secretaries of the war rooms at a ward level.

War Rooms are Ward Based and all-inclusive structures with all relevant stakeholders to deal with all social ills and wage war against poverty, unemployment, corruption and under development in general. War rooms endeavor to bring together communities and government department from all spheres of governance to plan, monitor and evaluate service delivery programme at a Municipality ward level

11. REVIEW

The Communication Participation Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

12. APPROVAL

The Municipal Council is responsible for the approval of this strategy and amendment thereof.

13. AUTHENTICATION

This strategy will be effective once it has been approved by Council 26th June 2019.