

Gemeinsam Stadt machen!

Guidelines for the participation of citizens in urban spatial development

Short version



Senate Department
for Urban Development
and Housing

berlin Berlin

The whole city is participating

How were the guidelines created?

The guidelines are intended to promote the participation of citizens. What could be more appropriate than to work up these guidelines together with Berliners – as a joint project of the urban community, politics and public administration?

Initial ideas were collected in a public city forum held in June 2017. The motto of the forum: “Participate! How should we talk about urban development in the future?” From this a working committee drew up suggestions for the guidelines. This committee was made up of 12 Berlin citizens and 12 members from politics and the public administration. The committee involved the public in its work intensively: in three major public workshop events with online participation and through other events with organisations from many areas, including the housing industry and the social sector.

The suggestions of many people from all over Berlin and from all areas of life were input into these guidelines during the formation process. The result was passed by the working committee in June 2019.

Why “Guidelines for the participation of citizens in urban spatial development”?

Many people are very involved in the development of our city. Urban development is vitalised by this commitment. A framework is required, which motivates people to participate in development of the city in order for the diverse interests to be appropriately heard and noted. It ensures that the citizens, public administration, politics and private enterprises establish mutual trust with which they can agree on good joint solutions. The framework also makes decisions transparent. This framework is provided by the “guidelines”, a short version of which is presented here.

These guidelines set standards for all forms of participation in urban development not covered by the law, for example, public debates, workshops and online participation. They apply to urban spatial development projects in the State of Berlin, but can also be applied in the city’s districts (Bezirke).

Participation takes time and costs money. However, if interests and ideas can be contributed and discussed early, this accelerates the finding of a solution. Numerous perspectives can be incorporated, which are supported by many.

What is important to us?

All citizens of our city should be able to participate. To achieve this, many things need to be considered at an early stage, long before a participation process begins. For example, different cultural backgrounds must be taken into account in all communication, because Berlin’s population is very diverse.

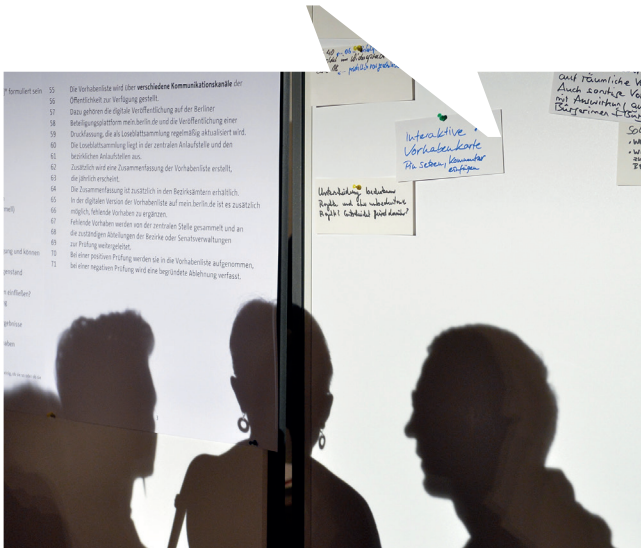
Participation must also address children and young people, because their future is particularly affected. Participation must be barrier-free, so that nobody is excluded.

In future, therefore, during the preparation, attention will be paid to ensuring that information is made easy to understand and participation is made easy to access for people with and without disabilities.

The guidelines oblige the public administration to be transparent, this means: For each participation, the public administration must provide written feedback explaining which of the population’s recommendations have been taken into consideration and which have not. If recommendations have not been adopted, reasons will be given to explain why not, because the ideas and suggestions of the citizens are taken seriously.

What happens next?

In the next step, an implementation concept for the guidelines will be worked up with all the public administrations involved. Representatives of the working committee will provide information and support for this step. At the same time, the contact points and the participation advisory panel will be set up. Implementation of the further instruments, such as the “projects list” and “participation concept”, will be prepared.



4 Inform and involve early

Citizens should be involved as soon as the objectives of a project are formulated. Because this is where important courses are set for the planning. Anyone who wants to participate needs time to inform themselves.

5 Involve many different persons and groups

Participation is only useful if different groups of the population contribute their needs and wishes. To this end, different age groups are addressed, as well as citizens who rarely participate or those who are only affected indirectly by specific planning.

6 Ensure information and transparency

Which projects are pending? What are they about and what effects do they have on the city? All this important information is published honestly, transparently and in a clearly understandable way in a projects list and is updated continuously.

7 Report results

What has become of the suggestions and objections of the citizens? Anyone who has participated rightly expects feedback. This will be given in

**Inform early
and
understandably**

Basic principles

Many people have contributed to the guidelines. Together they formulated nine basic principles for participation, which should be binding for all participants. Here is a short version of these basic principles:

1 Treat each other well

Different views are respected, objections are documented and are answered by the public administration. Neutral moderation ensures that preference is not given to any one opinion or position and that all persons deal with each other with respect and openly.

2 Strengthen participation

The guidelines should make participation in urban development easier overall. For example, by informing about projects early, by establishing future contact points for participation and by actively encouraging participation.

3 Define scope for decision-making and ensure plain speaking about the results

What exactly needs to be decided and who decides what? About what, how and until when can citizens participate in an open and unbiased way? Are there any options? Is there any leeway? Who makes the final decisions? This information will be disclosed in the participation concept at the start of a participation process.

future: Information on the results of a participation process will be provided in writing and publicly – in a transparent and clearly understandable way. If recommendations have not been taken into consideration, reasons will be given to explain why not.

8 Provide adequate funds

Involving citizens costs money. The necessary funds will be earmarked in good time in the State of Berlin's budget, for example for a central “contact point” and for the “projects list”. Private developers will be encouraged to also contribute funds for public participation.

9 Continue to develop guidelines

A participation advisory panel will be set up which, together with the public, will monitor the implementation of the guidelines, discuss their effectiveness and draw up ideas for their further development. The experiences from different participation procedures are incorporated into this process.

For further information and to download the detailed draft guidelines, visit:

→ leitlinien-beteiligung.berlin.de

→ stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/leitlinien

Instruments

Five instruments are provided for in the guidelines to implement and to encourage the participation of citizens practically. They are realised step-by-step (for more information, see “What happens next?” on the back).

Contact points

A central contact point and contact points in the districts will be set up so that citizens can find out in person, at any time, where participation is currently possible and how they can participate. They have fixed opening hours convenient for the public. The teams of the contact points inform, advise and network on the topic of participation in urban development. They support citizens by motivating them to participate and by helping them to organise themselves. They help to organise further training for civil society, the public administration and politics.

The central contact point is run jointly by the public administration and by a free, non-profit provider. This ensures the neutrality of the contact point and it can support and inform citizens independently.

More influence
for citizens

Projects list

Which urban development projects are currently in progress, which are planned, what effects do they have? Where is it planned for the public to participate and where (and why) not? In future, citizens will find all this information in a projects list, which will be available on the internet (at mein.berlin.de) and in printed form. The list provides early information about projects in a clearly understandable language and will be updated regularly. Citizens can also add missing projects, which will then be published in the digital version.

Initiating participation

Time and again, there are projects of particular importance for citizens or for the future of the city. In the case of such projects, the public administration generally organises public participation.

In case of projects in the projects list for which participation is not planned initially, citizens can initiate participation themselves. The suggestion can be submitted to the central contact point informally or by formal request. It will be presented to the competent senators. If it is rejected, reasons must be given in writing. This applies to the projects of the State of Berlin, and is similarly also aimed for by the city's districts (Bezirke).

Participation concept

A participation concept should be worked up in advance for each participation process so that everyone knows what it is about. It clearly describes what the participation is about, how it is to take place, who can participate and how the results are incorporated into the project. This concept will be published in good time on the internet via a link in the digital projects list.

Participation advisory panel

An advisory panel will monitor the implementation of the guidelines. It will examine the experiences acquired from the process of working up the guidelines. It can also give recommendations for participation in planned and current projects. It is manned for four years by members from the public administration, politics, civil society and citizens. Through this diversity, many different perspectives will be involved.

Participation concept: Guiding principles for participation



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