

Facilitator Guide | Small Harbors Stakeholder Focus Groups

September 24 and October 1; Benton Harbor Michigan
Small Group Discussions

Purpose & Goals:

Engage participants in a discussion around ideas, solutions, and visions to create a viable and equitable plan for the future of the Twin Cities Harbor (include simple, concise description of project goals).

GOALS

1. Orient stakeholders to current strengths and weaknesses of Twin Cities harbor and waterfront area.
2. Gather information about community understanding, values, and preferences.
3. Begin the process of developing consensus (if possible/desired) with community stakeholders around project.
4. Specify opportunities for future input and convey how feedback received will influence decision-making.
5. Other goals?

Roles:

Lead Facilitator. Plan, guide, and manage workshop to ensure objectives are met effectively and with good participation from all involved. Monitor activities and make sure session runs orderly and on time.

Table Facilitator. Will guide small group discussion, using designated activity & lead questions, and make sure it remains on track to complete its goals. (A project team member.)

Scribe—Will assist Table Facilitator by noting the feedback & questions during the discussion. (A project team member or community member.)

Introductions: Table facilitator, lead with introducing yourself and state your role clearly. Allow the participants to introduce themselves. Elect a table scribe and reporter if necessary.

Time Limit:

You have ~2 hours to complete this discussion. Please record any unanswered questions on the Bike Rack (Parking Lot) to be addressed later. (Important that project team follows up.)

Facilitator Instructions

Small Group Discussion I (50 minutes total)

(5 min.) Review the discussion goals with participants. The goal of the

discussion is to collect stakeholder feedback, ensure their perspectives, values, and interests are heard and documented, and that participants are informed on their role in the project/shaping project outcomes. (Project team to define workshop goals.)

(5 min.) Familiarize group with materials. The facilitator should familiarize the group with materials used:

1. *Maps:* Provide a map showing the project area, including clearly identifiable boundaries, streets, and any adjacent impact areas. Have participants record their information on the Registration Sheet provided. Encourage participants to “autograph” the trace overlay with their name. This will help track which participants worked on a specific map when compiling data.
2. *Post-It Notes:* Notes for participants to record information instead of drawing on map.

(40 min.) Lead group through discussion topics.

The table facilitator should lead the group through the following questions (questions are based on project/workshop goals and what we want to learn from participants):

1. Question #1: Describe your relationship with the harbor/waterfront/river. How is it different than your relationship with the lake?
2. Question #2: Mapping Exercise: Referencing the map, what are the areas you use most? Where are assets located? What about barriers (and future opportunities)? (use different color markers on trace paper). If you could make any improvements/changes, what/where would they be located?
3. Question #3: Considering what we have talked about today and other projects you have implemented/experienced in the area, what are the most important **social, economic, public health, environmental and aesthetic criteria** you feel should be incorporated during implementation? In other words, what criteria should be used by the community or the municipal leaders in determining whether an improvement/change should be implemented? (note: this relates to the value short)
4. Question #4: In your opinion, what type of education and outreach is needed to build public support for this project? Who would you suggest is important to talk with to gain future support for a shared vision?

(10 min.) Small Group Discussion I Reporting

(5 min.) Transition Break

(50 min.) Small Group Discussion II – Value Sort Activity

(10 min.) Small Group Discussion I Reporting

(10 min.) Closing Remarks: Finalize the discussion and answer any questions.

Other Recommendations

Agenda should include time for a concise and brief project overview by the project team and allow participants to ask project team questions. Bulk of session time should be devoted to feedback/dialogue activities.