

# **Twin Cities Sustainable Harbor Initiative: Visioning Charrette**

## **Communications and Outreach Plan**

August 2018

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### **Background:**

Michigan is home to more than 100 public marinas and harbors, managed by state, county, and local governments. They are part of a boating culture that draws \$2.4 billion in economic activity to the state each year.

The Twin Cities of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor on the Lake Michigan coast, as well as St. Joseph Charter Township, share a harbor and are seeking a clear, shared vision for the Twin Cities Harbor that reflects the entire community.

The Sustainable Harbors Initiative helps communities develop plans to invest in their harbors and spur economic development through a community charrette, a facilitated planning process that is open to the public. Participants offer ideas for amenities and improvements they feel would generate more waterfront activity and improve their community.

The Twin Cities Harbor Conservancy invited the project partners to facilitate a charrette process and assist the cities and township in creating a strategy for implementing a shared harbor vision that will lead to a vibrant and prosperous community.

### **Partner Organizations:**

- Twin Cities Harbor Conservancy
- Michigan Office of the Great Lakes
- Michigan Sea Grant
- Michigan State University Extension

### **Project Goals:**

The goal of the Twin Cities Sustainable Harbor Initiative is to facilitate the development of long-term, sustainable strategies that enable Michigan's Great Lakes coastal communities to maximize the benefits of their harbors and waterfront.

### **Action Steps:**

- Engage with communities to introduce and plan for charrette process
- Identify key players and local leadership
- Create presentation to share with local groups and leaders
- Create and maintain online presence (i.e. website, Facebook) to keep community members up-to-date and provide accessible platform for sharing ideas
- Meet with local leaders to grow buy-in

- Hold charrette process
  - Initial visioning meeting – 1 day, 19 September 2018
  - Design charrette – 3 days, 9 - 11 October 2018
  - Final presentation – 1 day – TBD December 2018/January 2019
- Start governance discussions – November - March 2019

**Audiences:**

- Community members, including youth
- Elected officials
- Faith community leaders
- Neighborhood associations
- Harbor users – recreational and commercial

**Connecting to Audiences:**

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Delivery Method</b>	<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Message Type</b>	<b>Messenger</b>
<b>City of Benton Harbor</b>	Presentation	8/6/18, 7:00 PM	PPT	Don
<b>City of St Joseph</b>	Presentation	8/27/18, 6:00 PM	PPT	Don
<b>St. Joseph Township</b>	Presentation	8/6/18, 12:00 PM	PPT	Don
<b>City of Benton Harbor Key Constituents</b>	Presentation	Before September 19 meeting	PPT, flyer	Don/Emily
<b>City of St. Joseph Key Constituents</b>	Presentation	Before September 19 meeting	PPT, flyer	Don/Emily
<b>DDA and/or Chamber of Commerce</b>	Technical Meetings	September 19 and/or during Oct 9-11 charrette	PPT, flyer	Charrette team
<b>Planning Commissions</b>	Technical Meetings	September 19 and/or Oct 9-11 charrette	PPT, flyer	Charrette team
<b>Parks and Rec Commissions</b>	Technical Meetings	September 19 and/or Oct 9-11 charrette	PPT, flyer	Charrette team
<b>Public Safety (Sheriff, Coast Guard) and Transportation (TC Area Transportation Authority)</b>	Technical Meetings	September 19 and/or during Oct 9-11 charrette	PPT, flyer	Charrette team
<b>Youth (i.e. Boys and Girls Club, After school programs, YMCA)</b>	Facilitated Focus Groups	September	PPT, flyer, banner	Morgan
<b>Environmental Groups (Audubon, Two Rivers Coalition, Andrews University, TNC, Steelheaders Assoc., Trout Unlimited, Berrien County Conservation District, etc.)</b>	Facilitated Focus Groups	September	PPT, flyer, banner	Khalil/Don
<b>Faith based communities (Maurice McAfee)</b>	Facilitated Focus Groups	September	PPT, flyer, banner	Khalil/Don
<b>Neighborhood Associations (Edgewater Group, Arts District, Island Point Condo Association, Below the Bluff, etc.)</b>	Facilitated Focus Groups	September	PPT, flyer, banner	Khalil/Don

<b>Commercial and Recreational Harbor Interests (Central Dock, Pier 33, Harbor Shore, St. Joe River Yacht Club, Whirlpool)</b>	Facilitated Focus Groups	September	PPT, flyer, banner	Khalil/Don
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**Topline Messages:**

- Project partners were invited to the St. Joseph and Benton Harbor communities to work with the local Harbor Conservancy and assist the two cities and St. Joseph Charter Township in creating a shared harbor vision.
- Project partners will honor the essence of Benton Harbor, St. Joseph, and St. Joseph Charter Township, in their distinct and shared identities.
- Land use, economic development, community wellbeing, natural systems, and connectivity are topics that will be explored in the community charrette visioning process.
- It is important that community members are engaged in the process and that the vision reflects the perspectives and voices from the communities and is not a top-down approach. Project partners help facilitate community vision and do not control it.

**Outreach Tools:**

- Project PowerPoint presentation
- Fact sheet and 1-page project profile/flyer
- Media advisories and press releases as needed
- Social media platforms
- Strategically use partner organization (i.e., Harbor Conservancy, Kinexus) networks and connections to promote awareness and local buy-in for the project.
- Make efforts to be transparent and responsive to inquiries.

**Evaluation:**

- Were the right audiences identified and contacted?
- Did community buy-in occur from groups in both cities?
- Did the communities commit to pursuing next steps?
- Did the communities and stakeholder groups get their “win”?