

AFFH Focus Groups @
DATE
Draft Agenda + Facilitation Guide
Revised 8-4-2017

COMMUNITY MEETING AGENDA

6:00-6:30pm (Large Group)

- Participant Sign-in
- Dinner
- Welcome/County staff introduce ourselves to residents
- Why are we here?
- Brief Overview of AFFH
- Survey: We have copies of a Housing & Neighborhood Survey available if you are interested in filling one out – or take copies to neighbors or family members who couldn't make it tonight.
 - Completing survey (or attending tonight) gives you chance to enter a drawing for Kroger gift cards.
- What we are interested in learning from you – and how the information will be used
 - Your experiences living in your neighborhood
 - What you look for in a neighborhood and how you think your neighborhood compares to the rest of Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor/the city/township
 - For those who've recently looked for housing, what your experiences were like when applying
- Ice Breaker/Go Around (5-10 min)
 - Go around the room and please state:
 - Your name
 - If not neighborhood specific meeting, what neighborhood do you live in?
 - How many years have you lived in your neighborhood?
 - In 1 or 2 words, how would you describe your neighborhood?

6:30-7:30pm

- Break out into small groups (12 people max per group) – *based on nametag color or number*
 - 1 Facilitator and 1 Scribe/Time-Keeper per group
 - Flip Charts (prepped for certain questions) + easels

FACILITATION GUIDE

(~1 hour)

Thank you again for being here tonight. Before we jump into our conversation, I want to go over a few **quick ground rules**:

GROUND RULES

- 1) There are no right or wrong answers.
- 2) Speak from your own experience.
- 3) We want to hear from each of you, so please be mindful of giving others a chance to speak.
- 4) Be respectful of each other.

Nothing you say will be reported in a way that identifies you individually. No names will be attached to anything you say, so please feel free to speak your mind.

- 1) If you could live ANYWHERE and money was no object, what would you look for in a neighborhood? [Open-ended. Don't list prompts yet. Scribe will list up on flipchart]

- ___ Safety/security
- ___ Quality of Schools
- ___ Access to Jobs
- ___ Access to Childcare
- ___ Building conditions
- ___ Streets
- ___ Public Spaces
- ___ Public Services
- ___ Public transit/Transportation
- ___ Housing quality
- ___ Housing affordability
- ___ General affordability/Cost of living
- ___ Programs
- ___ Services

2) Now thinking specifically about this neighborhood – How does your neighborhood compare across these areas you've mentioned about your ideal neighborhood?

- **[If Access to Jobs / Schools / Childcare hasn't come up yet]:**

I haven't heard anyone mention Quality of schools, access to jobs or childcare. How is your neighborhood in these areas?

- Is there ANYTHING ELSE you like/appreciate about your neighborhood that isn't covered in this list?

3) Looking at this list [reference flip chart], would you say ***your neighborhood*** is one of the best places to live in Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor/the city/township/area?

- For those who said YES, what makes you say that?
[Scribe should mark the top items people mention]
- For those who said NO, what makes you say that?
[Scribe should note items people mention]
- Is there anything missing from this list for your neighborhood, whether positive or not so much?

4) How do you learn about things like schools, programs, childcare, bus routes, et cetera in your neighborhood?

Now that we've talked a bit about what you like about your neighborhood, [what might be improved], and how your neighborhood compares to Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor/the city/township/area overall, I want to ask some quick questions about your current housing situations.

5) How many of you currently **OWN** your home? (please raise your hand and keep raised)

A. For those who own, how long have you been a homeowner?
(show of hands on each category)

- _ Less than 2 years
- _ 3-5 years
- _ 6-10 years
- _ More than 10 years

B. Do you consider your home to be affordable (thinking about mortgage, property taxes, and insurance)?

--Do you still like owning or would you prefer to rent?

6) How many of you currently **RENT**? (Please raise your hand and keep them raised)

A. If you are currently renting, do you rent from...

- Housing Commission?
- Family or friends?
- Private landlord?

B. For those who rent, how many of you currently use a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) to help pay all or a portion of your monthly rent? (please raise your hand)

[If anyone raised their hand for voucher question]

7) If you are currently using a voucher, how many years have you been in the voucher program?

8) For **everyone who is a current renter**, do you consider your monthly rent to be affordable?

--Do you still like renting or would you prefer to own?

Now, let's talk a little more about **AFFORDABILITY**.
Thinking about "Cost of Living" as your monthly mortgage or rent, plus utilities, transportation costs, and childcare...

9) How, if at all, would you say the **cost of living** in your neighborhood has changed over the past 2-3 years?

How many of you would say Cost of Living has...

__ Stayed about the same (show of hands)

__ Risen some but not enough to affect having or wanting to move away (show of hands)

__ Risen quite a bit to the point of thinking about moving (show of hands)

10) How many of you actively looked for an apartment or house to rent within the last...

_ 12 months (show of hands)

_ 2 years (show of hands)

_ 3+ years (show of hands)

11) For those of you who moved TO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD less than 2 years ago (whether you rent or own), where did you move from?

12) Theoretically, if you were to leave your neighborhood, where would you look for housing?

13) In the last [5] years, when looking for housing, what was your experience like when applying to rent or trying to purchase a home you were interested in?

A. Did you feel like your options were in any way *limited* or that you were *treated differently* than other applicants?

-If anyone says YES: Can you say more about how you felt limited or how you were treated differently?

-If prompts are needed: Did any of you ever feel like you were treated differently based on having pets? Because of your credit score? Particular health condition? Pregnancy or having kids?

-Then move to harder categories (if not yet mentioned): What about race / religion / sexual orientation/ gender?

[Scribe to make notes on any of the following that is mentioned]:

Limited by...

- _ Rent level too high/insufficient income
- _ Voucher amount not enough to cover rent/utilities

Treated differently because of...

- _ HCV income source
- _ Sexual orientation
- _ Pregnant/Children
- _ Credit Score
- _ Race
- _ Age
- _ Gender
- _ Religion
- _ Other

B. **If anyone says YES, they were treated differently:** How did you handle the situation? How did you eventually find housing?

- 14) **If major themes didn't come up (affordability, childcare, transportation, etc.), ask:** We haven't heard that much about what you all think this neighborhood needs -- can you tell me a bit more?

If themes did not come up and responses are still not very direct (to recommendations), prompt with: *Child care? Transportation? More recreation options? Better schools? Access to better jobs?*

B. What are some strategies you would suggest for making some of these improvements?

C. How welcoming do you feel your neighborhood is to residents?

- 15) **Most likely skip...** Before we wrap up, I'd like to go around the circle and ask everyone to briefly share A) the most challenging/frustrating thing about living in your neighborhood...and on the flip side B) the most positive thing about living here.

[If people have shared a lot of difficult examples of facing discrimination in housing search – just ask for the positive.]

- 16) Finally, is there anything else you think we should know about your neighborhood that hasn't been covered yet?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!