

Focus Group Methodology [EXCERPT]

Introduction

The second methods used to solicit public involvement or community input was the citizen focus groups. Citizens were invited to or informed of the focus groups in a variety of ways. First, city residents who had participated in the Citizen Needs Assessment Survey were asked if they would be willing or interested in participating in the focus groups. Interested individuals were asked to provide their email address. All individuals who chose to provide their email address were subsequently invited to attend the focus groups. Email invitations included the dates, times, and locations of the focus groups. Four focus groups were held to accommodate varying schedules. Likewise, each focus group was held in a different area of the city to allow greater access for residents with limited means of transportation.

- Focus Group #1 was held on April 21st 2016 at the Theophalis May Center from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Twelve members of the Pensacola community attended and participated in the session.
- Focus Group #2 was held on April 26th 2016 at the East Pensacola Heights Clubhouse from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Ten members of the Pensacola community attended and participated in the session.
- Focus Group #3 was held on April 28th 2016 at the Tryon Library from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Twenty-six members of the Pensacola community attended and participated in the session.
- Focus Group #4 was held on April 29th 2016 at Pensacola City Hall from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Four members of the Pensacola community attended and participated in the session.

Three members of the University of West Florida faculty moderated the focus groups. The project team members began each focus group with a brief presentation on the Pensacola parks system and the purpose of City of Pensacola Parks Needs Assessment. The presentation provided the participants with a general overview of existing facilities and services, while also informing them of how their input would be used as part of the larger assessment.

Focus Group Results [EXCERPT]

Using the Nominal Group Technique process, the participants listed their desired capital improvements. Capital improvements were described to the participants as, something the city could buy or build. Participants were asked to brainstorm items they believed the city should buy or build to enhance the parks system. Once the group had generated and shared an extensive list of capital improvements, each participant was instructed to pick their top five priorities. Finally, using hypothetical dollars, participants had to prioritize five items. Table 13 contains the most popular capital improvements requested, the amount of money

allocated to each item, and the percentage of all monies allocated. The results have been aggregated for all four focus groups.

Table 13: *Top ten prioritized capital improvements*

Capital Improvement	"Dollars" Allocated	Percent of Total Allocated
Skatepark	\$72	13.8
Playground Equipment (new/updat ed)	\$58	11.2
Walking/Bicy cling Trails	\$54	10.4
Bathrooms/Water Fountains	\$44	8.5
Landscaping/T rees	\$42	8.1
General Maintenance	\$42	8.1
Benches/Tables	\$31	6.0
Splashpads /Misters	\$24	4.6
Gazebo/Shaded Ar ea	\$23	4.4
Art/Music	\$21	4.0