

Hammond Downtown Development District Master Plan Update



Public Participation Plan



May 10, 2019

The Public Participation Plan

The purpose of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) is to detail all engagement and outreach activities in the Hammond Downtown Development District Master Plan (“Master Plan”) update process.

The Master Plan update will require varying levels of participation from community stakeholders. The PPP is designed to accommodate a range – from those wishing to be engaged in every step of the planning process, to those simply desiring to be informed of its progress.

Key elements for effective public engagement are:

1. Clearly defined purpose and objectives for each phase of community engagement;
2. Identification of stakeholders to be invited for direct involvement and those identified for consultation and information at key milestones;
3. Designation of appropriate techniques for engaging the public in the process through events, meetings or other formats.

The following desired outcomes should guide all communications and engagement activities:

- Community trust is earned.
- Project participants represent a range of socioeconomic, racial and ethnic, neighborhood, and cultural perspectives.
- Opportunities to participate are physically, geographically, temporally, linguistically, and culturally accessible.
- Materials and published documents clearly convey the significance and potential effects of the Master Plan to a broad range of participants.
- Participants feel respected, valued and that their time has been well-spent.
- People understand how their input will influence decisions and outcomes
- Public comments are useful, relevant, and constructive, leading to better strategies and decisions.

Role of the AR Team in Public Engagement

The AR team is responsible for development and managing the PPP for the Hammond DDD Master Plan. Chelsea Tallo, DDD Executive Director, will coordinate with the Asakura Robinson (AR) Team to ensure active and constant communication. The AR Team will work with the Hammond DDD to ensure that feedback and data gained from community engagement efforts provide meaningful and useful insights for the Master Plan product.

For each of these meetings, our team will generate all project materials for advertising and marketing, including:

- Brand standards, based on the existing District branding, for board templates, presentations, the report document, and other project materials.
- Project tool kit, including:
 - » Fact Sheet
 - » Content and graphics for a project webpage
 - » Fliers for outreach and events
 - » Powerpoint presentations about the Master Plan
 - » Presentation boards, handouts, and materials for all outreach events

Phase 0: Project Kickoff

April 25 through May 10

Deliverable for this Phase:

- Project Management Plan
- Public Participation Plan

Objectives

1. Identify stakeholders to the DDD planning process (including residents, businesses, NGOs/faith community, workers, students).
2. Establish the tone for public communication regarding the project through branding and graphic identity.

Tactics

Thursday, April 25: Planning Kickoff

Core stakeholders, including DDD staff and committee members, partner organizations, and members of the City Council convened to discuss broad goals for the project. Key dates for public engagement and graphic standards were determined.

Stakeholder analysis

Key stakeholders:

- City officials
 - » City Planning
 - » Historic District Commission
- DDD Committees
 - » Merchant, Residential, Design, Events, Farmers Market
- Tangipahoa African American Heritage Museum
- Area colleges and universities
 - » Southeastern Louisiana University
- Tangipahoa Parish Convention and Visitors Bureau of the Greater Hammond Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown area residents
- Residents immediately outside the DDD boundary and near Zemurray Park

Project branding and graphic identity

To establish a recognizable project brand and graphic identity across all materials, the AR team will use the DDD's new style guide to create an updated project branding and graphic identity that includes colors, text, and annotation styles. Maps, reports, and memos will follow this graphic standard.

Public communications

The AR team will provide guidance to the DDD as needed in the development of official communications, such as through:

- Press releases
- Project fact sheet/brochure
- Website content
- Newsletter
- Social media posts
- Direct mail or door hangers
- Other materials as needed

Phase 1: Needs Assessment

May 13 through August 9

DDD Events:

- T 6/4: DDD Merchant Committee Meeting
- Th 6/6: DDD Design Committee Meeting
- Th 6/6: Hammond Farmers Market Committee Meeting
- W 6/12: DDD Board of Directors Meeting
- F 6/28: Playing the Staircase
- T 7/9: DDD Merchant Committee Meeting
- Th 7/11: DDD Design Committee Meeting

Deliverable for this Phase: Needs Assessment Report

Objectives

- Inform Hammond stakeholders (including residents, businesses, NGOs/faith community, workers, students) of the planning process purpose, timeline, and opportunities for involvement.
- Begin to identify priorities, values, and themes from key stakeholders and community members.
- Identify community assets, community narratives, and potentials through a Community Priorities Survey.

Tactics

Thursday, May 22: Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders will be organized and convened by topic area in focus group-style interviews on May 22. AR will prepare and submit a summary of the stakeholder interview findings to the DDD.

The stakeholder interviews will engage relevant parties in discussion of Downtown development and growth, planning priorities, and definitions of project success. This will also be an opportunity to build stakeholder support and buy-in for the resulting plan update.

Tentative groupings are as follows:

- Downtown business: Merchants Committee
- Downtown design: Design Committee, City Planning, Historic District
- Downtown living: Residents Committee, Southeastern
- Downtown culture: Events Committee, African American Heritage Museum, Southeastern, Convention and Visitors Bureau

Sample interview questions:

- What have been some challenges to development/growth in Downtown?
- What do you think are the pros and cons of expanding the district?
- What is currently missing from Downtown?
- What is an important value for planning Downtown Hammond? What does this look like?

May through mid-July: Community Priorities Survey

Well-designed and administered surveys are effective tools for measuring public attitudes toward various challenges and potential strategies to overcome them. AR will develop a community survey with the intent of capturing key concerns and priorities for change in downtown from a broad cross-section of community members. Survey questions will be designed to gain a greater understanding of the needs of various Hammond Downtown stakeholders.

Asakura Robinson will develop, maintain and analyze results of a survey targeting businesses, residents, shoppers, students and other Downtown stakeholders. This survey will both aid in the needs assessment and determination of priorities for improvements to Downtown Hammond. In addition to hosting an online survey, we will create an attractive, concise and user-friendly print version for distribution at public locations, such as libraries, schools and events, and aid in the collection and entry of data. We will compile a summary of survey responses to share at the public events.

The target audience for the survey will be the following:

- Downtown business owners (outreach via DDD email list)
- Downtown residents
- Downtown employees
- Downtown visitors (shoppers, diners, etc.)

Methods for distribution:

- Paper copies at events, meetings, and public locations
 - » Committee meetings
 - » DDD office
 - » Others?
- Bi-weekly announcements and reminders via social media
 - » Facebook: Hammond DDD page
 - » Instagram: Hammond DDD account
 - » Twitter: Hammond DDD handle
 - » Other accounts?
- Emails and newsletters
 - » Email DDD Newsletter (general)
 - » Others?
- Intercepts
 - » Farmers market
 - » Downtown
 - » Southeastern Louisiana University campus

Preliminary Survey Outline:

1. I am a (select all that apply):

- Resident of Downtown Hammond
- Employee who works in Downtown Hammond
 - » If they select Employee: Optional question - where do you work?
 - » This is meant to disaggregate employees, who can be in the service industry, have white collar jobs, etc. Also can let us know if we're getting overrepresentation from one business/sector.
- Customer who spends money in Downtown Hammond
- Business owner of an enterprise in Downtown Hammond
 - » If they select Business owner: Optional question - what business do you own?

2. How is Downtown at providing the following amenities? Select one for each category: Excellent / Good, but could be better / Neutral / Not great / Awful

- [Under development and will include at a minimum: parking, open space, safety, events/activities]

3. What is your favorite thing about Downtown Hammond? (short answer)

4. What do you think could be improved in Downtown Hammond? (short answer)

5. Optional demographic questions

- ZIP code
- Race
- Gender
- Age bracket
- Income bracket

Phase 2: Visioning

July through September

DDD Events:

- Sat 7/13: Visioning Charrette
- W 7/17: DDD Board of Directors Meeting
- F 7/26: Playing the Staircase
- F 8/23: Hot August Night
- F 8/30: Playing the Staircase

Deliverable for this Phase: Draft Master Plan

Objectives

- Visualize the physical changes that people want to see downtown.
- Gather feedback from community members on the project team's initial interpretation of data generated in Phase 1.
- Identify potential policy and physical changes.

Tactics

Saturday, July 13: Public Workshop 1 - Visioning Charrette

At this public event, the AR Team will playfully present contents of the Needs Assessment Report. Participants will be asked to prioritize needs and concepts based on the information presented them.

The workshop will give Downtown Hammond stakeholders the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities to provide input on Downtown's future vision and solutions, and consider how changes in Downtown can influence larger goals, such as mobility, public health, safety, environment, and economic development. These will include hand-drawn mapping exercises and facilitated roundtable discussions, and the option of joining a team-led walking tour before or after the event.

The AR team will prepare all materials and facilitate activities with the assistance of DDD staff. The goal of the activities will be to reach consensus on the top problems to address and most significant opportunities to solve them.

The audience will be visitors to the Downtown area, workers and business owners at the farmers market and Downtown, and other stakeholders who will be invited to the gathering.

Phase 3: Plan Development

September through October

Deliverable for this Phase: Final Master Plan

Objectives

- Hammond community validates final recommendations and findings.
- Adopt Master Plan Update

Tactics

Thursday, August 29: Public Workshop 2 - Implementation

Whereas the first public workshop is dedicated to the “what” of the Master Plan should accomplish, the second will concentrate on prioritizing concepts, and “how” to advance them. At this public event, the AR team will present draft concepts and solicit feedback regarding the recommendations and findings, with the aim of reaching consensus on priority projects, policies and programs for the DDD to pursue. This will also involve validating implementation tools, which may include local capital and operating funding sources, public/private partnerships, and local policy and regulatory changes.

September 9-13: Destination Downtown

The DDD and Hammond will be the host of the annual Destination Downtown. AR will prepare visual materials showcasing the future of Downtown Hammond.

October (date to be determined): Presentation to DDD Board of Directors

AR will create a graphic-rich presentation of the Master Plan update document and the planning process and submit for DDD staff review for any edits prior to the board meeting date. AR will attend the meeting to deliver the presentation and respond to any DDD director questions.