



Focus Group Summary

The Indianapolis MPO and BRAG Community hosted a series of Focus Group Meetings for the Binford Village Study on July 21 at Divine Savior Lutheran Church. The purpose of the Focus Group Meetings to gain a clear comprehension of the community's desired improvements and key issues related to the Binford Village Study.

One hour meetings were schedule from 9 am to 9pm with stakeholders including Local Government, Not-for-Profit Organizations, Developers & Builders, Local Business Owners, Neighborhood Association Leaders and Residents. During each focus group meeting, stakeholders were asked to identify project opportunities, threats, and action items; prioritized critical success factors for the project; and participated in an open discussion regarding desired improvements and key issues.

96 people signed in for the Focus Group Meeting and the following pages summarize the comments received. Detailed notes taken during the focus group meetings are available upon request.



Opportunities, Threats and Action Post-it Exercise

Each participant was given post-it notes to identify project opportunities, threats, and action items as they relate to the project. These post-its were then organized and fit into the general categories summarized below. These are listed in priority order.



Opportunities:

- Increase economic development opportunities by attracting and retaining businesses and jobs thus increasing the tax base in the BRAG area.
- Create a destination which is a dynamic, attractive, multi-use village center for the BRAG community.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle options through the construction of sidewalks and paths.
- Ease traffic congestion by providing options for alternative transportation modes.
- Improve connectivity and accessibility making a destination which is convenient to get to.
- Attract and retain residents.
- Build a sense of community.
- Improve environmental quality.
- Intensify underdeveloped land and properties.
- Promote a healthier lifestyle.
- Improve financial stability for existing residential and business properties.

Threats:

- Final destination will not reflect BRAG's community values.
- Opposition, lack of buy-in, or loss in project momentum.
- Increase in crime.
- Lack of funding.
- Increase in traffic congestion.
- Existing uses limit redevelopment.
- Negative environmental impacts.
- Existing infrastructure limitations for redevelopment.

Action:

- Design the destination to reflect BRAG's community values.
- Continue to coordinate and communicate among all stakeholders.
- Create an implementation plan which focuses on economic development.
- Secure funding.
- Continue to secure buy-in from stakeholders.
- Incorporate a complete streets design.
- Identify redevelopment incentives.
- Revise zoning code to allow for destination to be developed to reflect BRAG's community values.

Focus Group Questions and Answers

Each focus group had approximately a half hour to ask and respond to questions related to the project. The items below highlight the main themes emphasized during these detailed discussions.

What type of uses/develop does the community want to see?

- A mix of uses, more intense development
- Locally owned, family-friendly neighborhood businesses
- A destination for community gathering
- Accessible and connected
- Complete streets design (pedestrian friendly)
- Safe crossing of Binford
- Sidewalks and trails
- Greenspaces/open spaces



What Housing opportunities should be looked at?

- Provide living options for every age group (providing options for young professionals to seniors)
- Condos/townhomes with multi-uses
- Quality design and construction

What is working in the BRAG community?

- Committed and active residents and businesses
- Strong BRAG organization
- Good mix of land uses
- Convenient location and accessible
- Amenities
- A safe community

What are some issues in the BRAG community?

- Not bicycle and pedestrian friendly
- Traffic safety needs to be safer for children and seniors
- Property/real estate taxes
- The community needs an identity
- Binford is a divider and a safe crossing is needed
- Improvement basic infrastructure (streets, drainage, sanitary sewers)

What partnership opportunities should be taken advantage of?

- Bike program with DPW
- Public health and exercise
- Community development and the reuse/redevelopment of vacant/abandoned properties
- Economic Development and creating employment opportunities
- Tax incentive programs/development incentives
- Smart code zoning code to articulate community vision
- Support and invest with locally owned businesses
- Commuter services to improve congestion
- AARP

What other examples of places you really liked?

Chicago, New York, Toronto, Holland, San Francisco, Boulder, Eugene, Edmonton, Monclair NJ, Mountainview CA, Fairview Park OH, Naperville IL, Carmel IN, San Antonio, Portland, Oak Park, Austin, Olatha KS,

Critical Success Factors

10 critical success factors were identified for the Binford Village Study. Each participant was given three dot stickers to place by the three critical success factors they felt would be most important for the project. The prioritized results are in the table below.

Dot Stickers	Critical Success Factors
66	Create a series of safe travel routes for multi-modal transportation. (More walkable)
51	Create a mix of uses (Residential, Retail, Recreational, Office) that will promote activity throughout the day and week
40	Design to provide opportunities for future rapid transit
30	Sustain and improve the existing neighborhoods
29	Make sustainability a key in all design decisions. (Energy efficient design, water conservation, reuse and recycled materials, storm water management, etc.)
25	Design to encourage high quality building design and landscape treatments.
24	Enhance safety through better lighting, visibility and street life
16	Provide open spaces and opportunities for recreation.
14	Provide opportunities for people to interact.
7	Enhance the community's unique character and values in the design.

