Midpoint Summary - Public Engagement Data

Background

To date, two public engagement sessions have been held as part of the Ann Arbor Greenbelt strategic planning process. The first was held on July 29, 2019 and drew 16 attendees, including 4 members of the Greenbelt Advisory Commission (GAC), one of whom also serves on City Council. The second was held on August 15, 2019 and drew 10 attendees including 2 members of the GAC. The desired outcomes of the public sessions were to: build shared understanding of the successes and challenges of the first 15 years of the Ann Arbor Greenbelt; elicit stakeholders' values and visions of success for the Greenbelt; and gather stakeholder input to help inform strategic direction and priorities for the future.

The two-hour meetings were facilitated by Francine Alexander and Anica Madeo of local firm Bridgeport Consulting. The Bridgeport team prepared the following summary of *preliminary data from the first two public sessions.*

Priorities

Participants were asked to complete a worksheet allocating 10 points across a series of priority areas. The list included 6 existing priority domains and space to write in, and score, additional priorities. The following represents the percent distribution of all points allocated across the first two public sessions:

Domain:	Percent of total points:
Huron River / Water Quality*	20.8%
Farmland Complexes	14.6%
Local Food and New Farmers	12.9%
Recreation and Access	12.1%
Parcel Level Priority / Contiguity (write-in)	10.0%
Regional Planning and Partnership (write-in)	6.7%
1,000 Acre Blocks	6.3%
Viewsheds	5.0%
Streamline Administration / Closing (write-in)	3.8%
Other (write-in responses): Education and outreach, sustainable farming, local farms, environmental practices	7.9%

* Multiple respondents noted a preference for expanding "Huron River" to "all water sources," including tributaries, and emphasizing *water quality* in general.

General Feedback

- When asked to rate the Greenbelt's performance to date on a scale of 1 (Poor) to 4 (Great), the average score was 3.47. Ratings included:
    - 4 - Great (10 respondents, plus 1 who wrote in "3.8")
    - 3 - Good (9 respondents)
    - 2 - Fair (1 respondent)
    - 1 - Poor (0 respondents)

- When asked what the "most important" Greenbelt strategy was from their perspective the most frequently cited strategies were:
    - **Regional Planning** – Many participants supported the idea of regional planning, including the City of Ann Arbor, the townships, preservation organization, and other partners. Several people mentioned a revival of the Preserve Washtenaw effort or something similar. Some felt the program should even change its name to be more inclusive to township interests.
    - **Education and Outreach** – Participants noted that the Greenbelt is largely an "unsung" success story. "While very successful, it has very low visibility and is poorly understood by the public and some decision-makers, incl. current City Council members."

Demographics

- A total of 24 people completed the survey.
- 12 reported living in Ann Arbor and 11 outside Ann Arbor.
- 8 reported working for a conservation organization.
- 4 were farmers or farm owners.