

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Are you aware of any prior government agency projects for which a study was prepared and data was collected in your neighborhood? If so, what was the project and what agency was involved?

2. Are there predominant employers that serve the neighborhood?

3. Who would you say are the neighborhood leaders? How long have they been in leadership positions?

4. Would you characterize your neighborhood as close-knit? Do individuals seem to know each other and interact with each other?

5. Do you have a feel for the level of trust that groups or individuals in your neighborhood may have in the *(Insert the name of your agency)?* Explain.

6. Is your neighborhood changing? How?

7. What are people's attitudes towards the project?

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

First, we want to know how you feel about your neighborhood. (Please mark x in the box beside the best answer or answer the question to the best of your ability.)

1. Would you say the quality of life in you neighborhood is:

- Improving Getting worse
 Staying the same Don't know/No opinion

2. How is your neighborhood changing? (If you don't think your neighborhood is changing, or if you don't know/have no opinion, then skip to the next question.)

3. How do you feel about living in your neighborhood?

4. Do you interact with your neighbors? In what way? How often?

5. What neighborhood businesses, public facilities (parks, senior center, library, etc.), and private facilities (religious institutions, clubs, etc) do you frequent? Please list them.

6. For those places listed in question 5, how do you typically get there (car, bike, walk, etc.), and what route do you usually take?

7. How long have you lived in the neighborhood? Years _____

8. Do you plan to remain in the neighborhood? Yes No

9. Do other members of your family live in your neighborhood, but not in your house? Yes No

10. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood? If not, please explain. Yes No

11. Did you know about the project before you read this survey? Yes No

If you answered "Yes," how did you hear about it?

Friends/Neighbors Local Newspaper Project Newsletter

Other (Please indicate) _____

12. How do you feel the project would affect your neighborhood?

13. Studies of similar projects have shown that they created some benefits. Below are some possible benefits of the project. How important is each of these to you?

	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
A. Faster route in and out of your neighborhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Temporary economic boost from work force and related jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Increased commercial services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Other benefits (please write in and rate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Studies of similar projects have also shown that they created negative effects. Below are some possible negative effects of the project. How important is each of these to you?

	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
A. Relocation of you, your friends, neighborhood businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Loss of your sense of living in a neighborhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Dangerous for children getting to and from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Some neighborhood residents will move away	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Harder to walk through neighborhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Air pollution and noise increased	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. More traffic in your neighborhood, harder to get to local streets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Other issues (please write in and rate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. How do you believe the proposed project will affect your neighborhood? (Check as many as you want)

- I will have to move
- My family will have to move
- My business will have to move
- The project will take part of my land
- I will end up living too close to the project
- The project will not affect me or my family directly
- Don't know/No opinion
- Other ways the project would affect me

16. Do you favor the proposed project?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/No opinion

Now we would like to know about you. This information helps us to understand what you have told us and what it means to you.

17. What is your gender? Male Female

18. How old are you?

- 16-30 years old 41-50 years old 61-70 years old
 31-40 years old 51-60 years old 71 years old and over

19. Please indicate your level of education.

- Did not complete High School 4 year college degree
 High School graduate degree More than 4 year college
 Some college (specify) _____ other
 2 year college degree

20. How many people live in your house, including you?

- 1 person 4 people
 2 people 5 people
 3 people more than 5 people

21. Do you have any children who are of school age?

- Yes No

22. What is your race or ethnic background?

- White, except Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native
 Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander
 Black Other (fill in) _____

Thank you very much for your time and help. You can contact our office if you have any questions about the study by writing or calling the contact person listed below:

Now that you have finished the survey, please put it in the enclosed, postage-paid envelope and place it in the mail by the following date: _____

GENERAL COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

Technique	Description
Trend Projection and Correlation	<p>These are statistical analysis techniques that make use of historical data to forecast potential future impacts of project alternatives. Trend projection analysis estimates a future condition by extrapolating historical time series data into the future and assuming that the underlying factors that created the observed historical trend will remain substantially the same. Trend correlation analysis determines the most likely future state by examining the observed relationship between one or more factors (independent variables) that create the historical trend (dependant variable) and developing a mathematical model (regression equation) to explain that relationship.</p>
Case Study Comparison	<p>Case study comparison uses the experience of similar transportation actions in other locations to determine potential project impacts. Projects and areas should be as similar as possible in size, project type, location, design, geography, available data sources and any other relevant characteristic. The technique begins with identifying existing case studies that describe before and after conditions or creating new case studies by collecting the required information through survey, interview and other secondary data source collection techniques. Next, likely impacts are determined based on the experience of all available case studies and by estimating likely impacts of the proposed project alternatives. Analogies are made and similarities and differences are examined over time or across areas.</p>
Visual Imaging and Computer Simulation	<p>This technique involves the use of computer software to generate a visual simulation of the project corridor with and without proposed project alternatives. It can be used to compare and contrast the potential impacts of various project alignment and design concepts in a manner that is simple to comprehend. It gives the user the capacity to ask "what if" questions that can be answered visually using the simulation procedure.</p>

<p>Geographic Information Systems/Mapping Overlays</p>	<p>This technique involves superimposing various corridor features (physical characteristics, demographics, and project alternatives) to analyze and understand spatial relationships. GIS has the capacity to store and process enormous amounts of data and can perform numerous analytical tasks including determining physical proximity. For example, noise contour data can be compared to minority population data to determine potential civil rights impacts. A wide variety of information is available from many public and private sources, dramatically reducing data collection time.</p>
<p>Panel or Peer Review</p>	<p>This technique solicits the expert opinion of knowledgeable professionals in a face-to-face environment to estimate likely project alternative impacts. The analyst provides the expert panelists with background information and facilitates a discussion on likely outcomes. Because the experts are gathered together in a meeting, each has an opportunity to argue his or her point of view and be persuaded by other points of view. This can lead to a deeper understanding of each expert's opinion, but can also allow dominant personalities to overwhelm equally valid positions. The desired outcome is consensus on potential project impacts.</p>
<p>Charrette</p>	<p>A charrette is a meeting of stakeholders and interested parties to resolve a problem or focus on a single issue with a range of potential solutions. Within a specific length of time, participants work together intensively to reach a resolution and consensus. In a charrette, issues requiring resolution are defined. Then participants are broken into small groups, each assigned a specific issue or part of an issue to resolve. Staff members facilitate the process and provide technical support. Each group develops solutions to an issue and shares their ideas with the broader group. The whole group then discusses the solutions and consensus is reached.</p>
<p>Brainstorming</p>	<p>Brainstorming is the generation of ideas through quick response reactions in a freethinking forum. In a brainstorming session, a group of stakeholders are asked to respond to a series of questions and situations. All ideas are listed without comment or evaluation. Each idea is then evaluated with participants having the opportunity to ask questions and hear responses from the person who generated the idea. Ideas are then grouped and consensus is reached.</p>

Delphi Technique	<p>The Delphi technique is a systematic, structured way to use expert opinion to determine likely project impacts. Experts provide their judgments about the potential impacts of project alternatives anonymously by responding to several rounds of questionnaires. Each expert is originally provided with the same background material from which to develop their opinions and a questionnaire to complete. The first questionnaire, in most cases, consists of open-ended questions. The analyst summarizes and statistically analyzes the results of the first round and submits the results to the experts for their reconsideration and response along with a new, often more structured, questionnaire. This continues for several rounds until consensus or a clearly defined difference of opinion is reached. The process differs from other expert opinion techniques in that it allows experts to reconsider their opinion in light of other reasoned opinions without allowing lobbying or other personal interaction.</p>
Scenario Writing	<p>Scenario writing attempts to anticipate a possible future condition based on a series of probable events given a set of assumptions. Scenarios are written out in narrative form starting with the present condition and moving logically through time to a predetermined horizon year. Between those two fixed points in time, the narrative assumes a logical progression of as many hypothetical developments and changing conditions as is possible. In that manner, all possible conditions can be accounted for and logically incorporated into the progression of the scenario until the horizon year is reached. The basic steps include developing a vision of the future, developing a problem statement and a list of critical issues, selecting a horizon year for the potential future scenario, collecting relevant data and information, and writing out the possible scenarios including any and all logical and potential information.</p>
Alternative Futures	<p>The alternative futures technique focuses on specific problems or issues through the development of multiple broad visions of future conditions. Comparing several possible future visions based around the same issue provides a better sense of possible causes and effects related to project design and potential project alternative impacts. The technique focuses on what conditions can coexist together, not on how they developed. This technique allows the visions of more than one stakeholder group to be considered simultaneously and focuses on specific endpoints such as community aesthetics or cohesion.</p>

Indicators Analysis	<p>Indicators use relatively small, measurable pieces of information to represent broader community issues and conditions. For example, neighbor-to-neighbor interaction can be used as an indicator of community cohesion. Indicators analysis involves the collection of specific, measurable pieces of data and the comparison of that data against a pre-established standard or goal. Assessing a number of indicators as a whole provides insight into the general socio-economic condition of a neighborhood or community. Tracking a set of indicators over time provides a means for assessing relative changes in that socio-economic condition. Indicator analysis can be used to 1) assess socio-economic conditions within a community or neighborhood, 2) develop policy and evaluate the efficacy of existing government activities and programs, and 3) compare conditions between two or more neighborhoods or communities.</p>
Matrices	<p>A project evaluation matrix is a grid on which two distinct lists are arranged (e.g., project alternatives along the side and potential social impacts across the top) for the purpose of comparison. The relative effects of various actions can be determined by comparing the values, descriptive or numerical, in a given cell of the grid. A scoring or ranking system and a weighting system can be applied to the various interactions to assist the decision-making process.</p>
Focus Groups	<p>A focus group is a carefully planned discussion that is designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest. It is facilitated by a person knowledgeable of group dynamics and the topic of discussion. The emphasis is on revealing perspectives, insights, and opinions of participants through conversation and interaction. Successful focus groups require a well-defined purpose. Once the purpose has been defined, the analyst must determine who can provide the needed information. Focus group participants are typically from homogeneous target populations to ensure that they feel comfortable speaking in the group atmosphere. All participants should share some important characteristics that have been determined based on the purpose of the focus group research. Typically, at least two focus groups are held with each targeted population group so that data can be compared and contrasted. The result is information related to the opinions of local people that can provide insight into public reactions to specific issues at one point in time.</p>

Checklists	Checklists provide a list of common or likely impacts along with questions related to the factors that contribute to those impacts. Checklists structure the analysis process and reduce the likelihood that effects will be overlooked. They also provide a means of concisely presenting potential impacts.
Visual Preference Surveys	Visual preference surveys are used to identify community and design characteristics that stakeholders prefer. In this technique, images are displayed for about 5 seconds and stakeholders are asked to rank their initial reaction to the image on a scale from -10 to +10. The results are then tallied by adding the total points and dividing by the number of participants. The results can be sorted in a variety of ways to gain insight into stakeholder preferences.
Nominal Group Method	In the nominal group process, participants come together in a non-threatening group situation where balanced input from all parties is ensured and each participant's unique knowledge and experience is utilized. The meeting facilitator presents the topic or issue that is the focus of the meeting, often in a question format. Participants are asked to write as many responses or ideas as possible. A round robin discussion of all the ideas and responses follows and all are listed, clarified, and discussed. Participants are then asked to rank or prioritize the list of ideas or responses in order of importance. This approach is very useful in a group setting as it allows for and encourages the individual generation of ideas without the possibility of dominance by an individual group member.