

# APPENDIX I: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF THE WABASH COLLEGE COLLABORATION

In collaboration with enFocus and the City of Elkhart, the Wabash Democracy and Public Discourse (WDPD) initiative hosted a public housing meeting for both housing issues and solutions in the State and Division Neighborhood in Elkhart City.

Key facts about the event:

- **Date:** March 28, 2019
- **Time:** 6:00-8:00 pm
- **Place:** Open Gate Praise & Deliverance Church; 137 Division St, Elkhart, IN
- **Who:** 35 participants including residents and stakeholders in neighborhood, public servants, City of Elkhart staff, Wabash Public Democracy and Discourse Initiative staff, and news media, enFocus

The facilitation consisted of these sections: Welcome, General Discussion, Housing Strategy Overview, Feedback and Follow up, and Closing Remarks and Post Survey. Participants were split up into groups of 6-8 people with each table also containing one Wabash College facilitator, one digital notetaker, and one easel note-taker.

## KEY FINDINGS<sup>1</sup>

- Regarding neighborhood strengthening, 33% of participants supported a tool lending library as a way to ease the cost burdens of home repairs. In the same vein, 83% of tables voiced concerns over the historic designation of the neighborhood due to the restrictive guidelines to perform home repairs
- During the financial discussion, 100% of the participants were interested in the idea behind renter equity, as a way to motivate both homeowners and renters to maintain their homes. 50% of participants found that soft second loans were appealing due to the high cost of buying and repairing historic homes.
- During the discussion about community partnerships, 33% of participants discussed a lack of community connection and of those, 50% of them would support an open-air activity such

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<sup>1</sup>It is assumed that one table out of the six present constitutes 16% of the general opinion. In the original document, facts were presented in units of tables but in this document, they are presented in terms of percentages.

as a potluck. Last, 50% of the participants expressed a desire for a neighborhood or housing manager.

- During the urban planning discussion, 100% of participants discussed the need to increase all modes of transportation around the city. 67% of participants specifically suggested improving walkability of the State and Division Neighborhood.
- During the discussion about housing policy, 33% of participants were skeptical about the feasibility and effectiveness of tools such as tax abatement programs. 50% of participants did not support rezoning the neighborhood due to the stress it would present on infrastructure.

During the infrastructure discussion, 100% of participants noted the need for infrastructure updates including new alleys and maintained streets. 83% of participants mentioned that updating the City of Elkhart website would be an effective way to communicate with the