

Entertainment District Focus Group Charter

Purpose

This charter establishes shared expectations for behavior, communication, and participation among members of the **Entertainment District Focus Group**. This charter is designed to facilitate a respectful, inclusive, and productive environment where diverse perspectives can be heard and considered in service to the City of Roanoke.

Guiding Principles

1. **Public Service Mindset**

We recognize that this focus group exists to inform public decision-making. Our participation is grounded in service to the community, not personal agendas.

2. **Respect Without Requirement of Agreement**

We will treat one another with dignity and courtesy at all times. Respect does not require agreement; it requires listening and civility.

3. **Equitable Voice**

Every participant has the right to be heard. No single voice will dominate, and space will be made for all perspectives.

4. **Constructive Dialogue**

We commit to sharing ideas, concerns, and experiences in ways that are solution-oriented and focused on improvement.

5. **Community-Centered Focus**

We will consider how our input impacts the broader community, including individuals and groups not represented in the room.

Behavioral Expectations

Focus group members agree to:

- Listen actively and attentively without interrupting.
- Speak from personal experience and perspective, using "I" statements when possible.
- Disagree thoughtfully and challenge ideas, not individuals.
- Avoid personal attacks, sarcasm, dismissive language, or side conversations.
- Remain open to learning from viewpoints different from our own.
- Respect the role of the Moderator and follow agreed-upon discussion processes.
- Stay engaged and present for the duration of the session.

Open Meetings, Public Information, and Trust

- All focus group meetings are open to the public in accordance with applicable open meetings and public records laws.
- Members should be aware that comments, statements, documents, and information shared during meetings may become public information and part of the public record.
- Participants are encouraged to share perspectives thoughtfully and avoid disclosing confidential, sensitive, or personal information they would not want made public.
- While respectful dialogue and discretion are expected among participants, confidentiality of statements made during meetings cannot be guaranteed.
- Trust within the group is fostered through transparency, professionalism, and mindful communication.

Accountability

- Members are encouraged to self-monitor their behavior and support others in upholding this charter.
- The City Council representative, Public Safety personnel or Moderator may pause discussion or redirect behavior that does not align with these expectations.
- Repeated or significant breaches of this charter may result in removal from the focus group.

Commitment

By participating in this focus group and signing this charter, members acknowledge and agree to uphold the expectations outlined in this charter in the spirit of collaboration, respect, and public service.