



Glossary of Terms:

Canvassing Sheet—is a tool used to track specific information that you are trying to gather at each site or property during a community mapping canvass.
Community Knowledge—cultural practices and wisdom passed down through generations.

Community Mapping—is a process of documenting and visually presenting trends or patterns in a given community.

Community Visioning—is a process where a group of community members come together to develop an alternative vision or proposal for the future of their community.

Closed-Ended Questions—are questions that are answered with a yes or no response and discourage explanation or story-telling.

Data Analysis—the process of reviewing the data you collect through surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc. in order to develop research findings and recommendations for your report.

Data Collection—is a process of gathering information (through surveys, focus groups, etc.) in order to answer your research questions.

Data Entry—process of entering data that is collected by researchers.

Data Report Back—process of presenting the data you collected and analyzed back to the community or people you surveyed, interviewed, etc. to get their feedback.

Facilitator-- is someone who helps a group of people understand their common objectives and assists them to plan and achieve those objectives in a group setting.

Federal Government—is the central government of a federation of states. In the U.S., the federal government consists of the legislature (house and senate), executive branch (presidential team), and judiciary (federal courts system).

Focus Groups—are small group sessions (7-12 people) that are led by a facilitator in order to obtain qualitative data from a specific set of people.

Focus Group Guide—a set of specific questions organized thematically and used to facilitate a focus group.

Interviews—are guided conversations about a specific topic that are often done one-on-one, and tend to use open-ended questions in order to get in-depth explanations.

Interview Guide—is a set of pre-meditated questions used to guide the interview process.

Knowledge from Experience—what we learn and know from living and doing it.

Local Government—is the set of administrative authorities or governing bodies that govern over an area smaller than a state (county, city, town etc.).



Literature Review—a review of existing articles, academic studies and reports in order to find out what information already exists about the topic you are exploring.

Mainstream Knowledge—published facts and data produced by research “professionals” usually from outside the community.

Media Review—is a systematic review of a certain number of news articles or clips from a variety of sources about a specific topic to uncover the most common words or themes that emerge.

Organizing Goal—the overall policy change that you seek through your organizing work.

Open-Ended Questions—are questions used in an interview that encourage respondents to describe scenarios, tell stories, and elaborate in detail.

Policy Recommendations—the suggestions you make to elected officials, or people in power to fix the problems that you uncover with your research.

Rap—is a tool used to help canvassers and organizers prepare how they will approach and talk to different people that they want to include in their sample.

Report—a written document that summarizes your research findings and policy recommendations.

Research Findings—the conclusions you draw from your data collection and analysis.

Research Questions—a set of broad, overarching, questions that you seek to answer through your research.

Report Release—the way in which you make your research public. This could be a policy briefing, a press conference or by circulating your report online.

Respondent—is your research subject; a person who is responds to, answers, or fills out a survey, interview or focus group.

Qualitative Data—data that can be observed but not measured and is presented as stories or descriptions, usually collected through interviews or focus groups.

Quantitative Data—data that can be measured and is presented in numbers, usually collected through surveys or secondary data.

Sample—the set of people that you will talk to in order to answer your research questions.

State Government—the governing authority of a state in the U.S.



Secondary Data—data that has already been collected and analyzed by somebody for some other reason other than your current study.

Street Maps—maps used for community mapping or canvassing that map out where canvassers need to go.

Surveys—are a form of data collection that ask specific questions and tend to include short answer questions, multiple choice questions, and scaled-answer questions using a questionnaire format. Surveys can be done online, through the mail, and can be written and filled out in person.

Walking List—is a tool when canvassing or community mapping that lists out all of the properties or sites that a group of canvassers need to investigate.