

MEETING 1 · AUGUST 23, 2023

# PORT MASTER PLAN

City of Henry, Illinois - Mile 196.0 River Port

## Master Plan Kick-Off Meeting Summary

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The City of Henry, in coordination with the Illinois Department of Transportation, is conducting a Port Master Planning effort in order to elevate the economic future of the Port of Henry, the City of Henry, and the surrounding Central Illinois region. Building on existing partnerships and with direction from key stakeholders, the Master Plan will provide key insights on the best land use in and around the new port as it develops based on a detailed data driven market analysis that is grounded in local and regional business and civic expectations.



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Twenty-four stakeholders attended the kick-off meeting in August 2023. Stakeholders were briefed on the planning effort, including the approach, schedule, and the future engagement opportunities, to validate data generated results and provide input into strategies and recommendations for the future use, operations, and growth of the port and surrounding area. Participants answered a series of questions to help guide the planning process and to establish stakeholder expectations for the outcome of the planning effort.

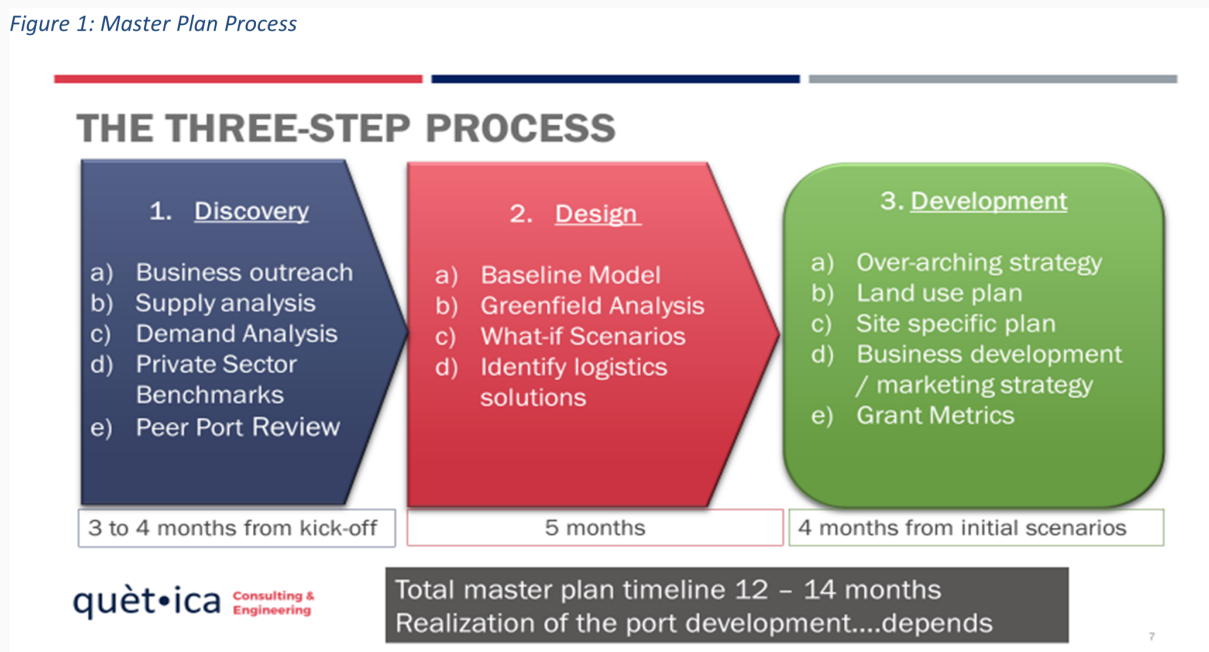
The 24 stakeholders represent various interests including the City, area businesses, Marshall County, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the regional council of governments, and elected officials or their representatives.

## Quetica-led Planning Process Presentation

The City of Henry selected Quetica Consulting and Engineering as the lead consultant to conduct the Master Plan for Port of Henry. At the kick-off meeting, the Quetica team of Mark Berndt and Ben Zietlow, along with their subconsultants Ann Schneider of Ann L. Schneider and Associates, Carolyn Chrisman of Chrisman Consulting, and Ron Hudson of Primera, were introduced and outlined the approach to the master planning process.

The presentation included an outline of the process, a high-level overview of stakeholder engagement, and the opportunities for input. The Quetica team approach includes three distinct project phases as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Master Plan Process



Each of the three phases of the project, as well as stakeholder engagement and marketing strategies, were discussed in more detail.



## Vision for the Port of Henry

Below are some ideas that were provided by stakeholders to be included in the Vision for the Port of Henry:

- Economic development, jobs/industry for the next generation, and a source of revenue for the City.
- Become an economic driver for not only the city but also the region.
- Produce long term sustainable income to grow the port district and provide benefits to the regional community.
- Economic driver for the region.
- A vibrant and active river port that becomes a hub for agricultural and other types of industrial logistics. The tax base, jobs and other benefits major projects this port will provide will be instrumental in the future of the City of Henry and Marshall County.
- A central hub that will represent all commodities transferrable via water, rail, and road.
- Thriving multimodal commerce, diverse industrial tenants, municipal recreational opportunities.
- Provide economic support for the City of Henry.
- Employment.
- Hub to move materials and goods in and out of the region.
- Provide economic development in a relatively safe environment.
- The Port of Henry would be a job creating machine, and a location to capture some of the reshoring of manufacturing. The City of Henry would benefit from increased revenues and investments in schools and infrastructure.
- Best use for economic and environmental benefits.

The key takeaways are that Port of Henry will be a catalyst for economic development, jobs, and community sustainability. Other important outcomes from a thriving port include environmental benefits, recreational opportunities, diversification of the local economy, and efficient and cost-effective multimodal transportation for locally produced products.

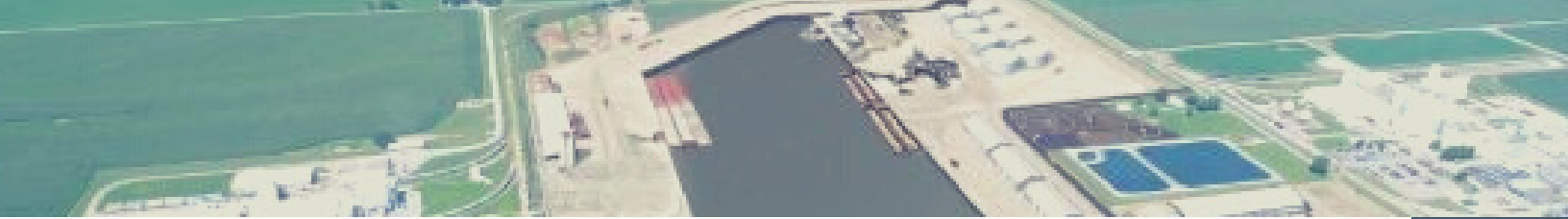
## Master Plan Geographic Area, Additional Stakeholders and Communication Findings

Stakeholders were asked about the best approach for communicating results and what geographic area should be included in the Master Plan. Based on stakeholder feedback, email, newsletters, websites, and public meetings were most preferred for communicating findings.

### Communication Findings

How should the study progress and findings be communicated?

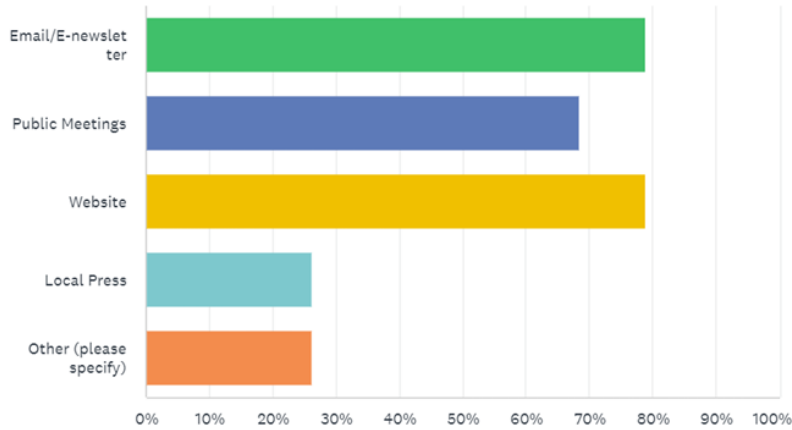
- Email
- Newsletters
- Websites
- Public Meetings
- Limited meetings for specific individuals
- Social media



- State Representative Dennis Tipword e-newsletter
- [www.portofhenry.org](http://www.portofhenry.org), city-owned website at your disposal

## How should the study progress and findings be communicated?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0

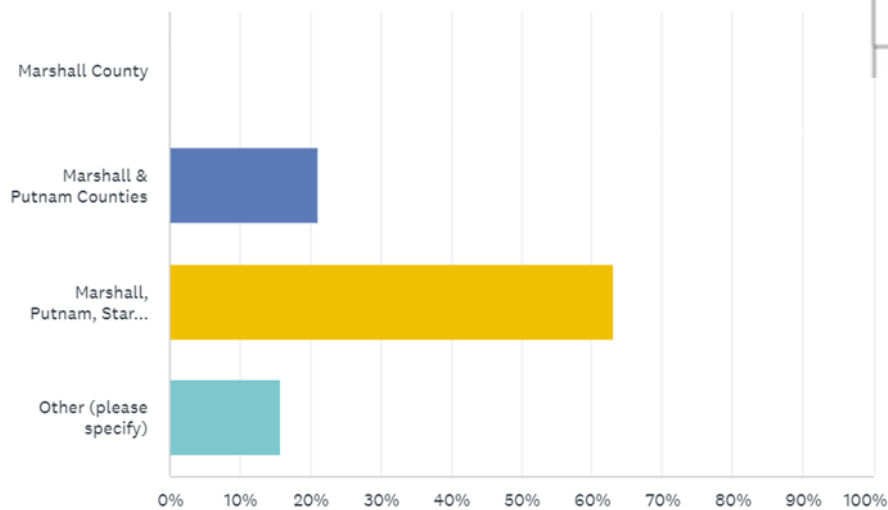


## Areas to be Included

Making sure the study area reflects what makes the most sense to stakeholders, a question was asked about how to define the study area. The consensus was to include the four counties of Marshall, Putnam, Stark and Bureau.

## How should the study area be defined?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0





### Other Stakeholders

Other stakeholders suggested by the participants include:

- Rail and marine haulers
- Soybean and corn producer organizations
- Fertilizer processors
- Upstream port
- Hartwig trucking
- EDC of Henry
- Duane Calbow at NCICG for region's CEDS
- Prospective/potential tenants
- Hometown Consulting (in attendance)
- Koch
- Silverpeak
- Ethanol producer from up river
- Bulk material shippers and receivers
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Local businesses

### Stakeholder SWOT Responses

#### Strengths – Internal to the Organization (Port of Henry and/or City of Henry)

Strengths are areas under the control of the Port of Henry and/or the City of Henry – what is it they do right?



Nine strengths were identified in the poll questionnaire, four of the strengths are actually opportunities for the Port/City to leverage:

- Great local leadership: Visionary, Resiliency, Community, Driven
- Major river access with freight opportunistic municipalities. Port development already underway with partner (Ozinga). Rail onsite, not far from I-180. Plenty of room for expansion.



- Port of Henry development is already significantly underway and has been privately funded. Ozinga and the City of Henry already have a long-term relationship and port operating agreements in place. Does not depend on government funding.
- Strong business partnerships.
- Ozinga being an experienced partner in these functions and openness of city management to bring development locally.

Strengths identified that are outside the control of the Port/City and therefore considered opportunities include:

- Existing river and rail, existing industry, location mid-way between 2 regional economies, new Rte. 18 bridge.
- Employment environment.
- Proximity to agriculture.
- Major agricultural base regionally, multimodal transportation methods, access to Lock and Dam updates, available property and ownership, strong existing businesses.
- Current Federal financial assistance availability, location on the Illinois River.

#### **Weaknesses – Internal to the Organization (the Port of Henry and/or the City of Henry)**

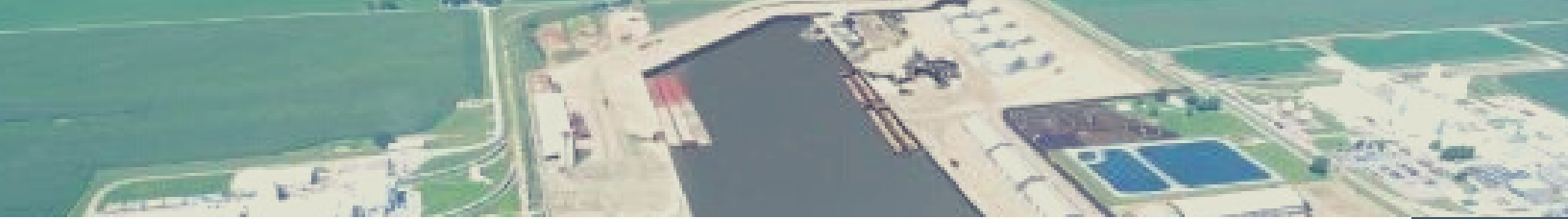
Weaknesses are areas that the Port of Henry and/or the City of Henry need to improve or that they can change.

Eight potential weaknesses were identified in the poll questionnaire. Six of the weaknesses identified can be improved in whole or in part by the Port and/or City:

- Coordinated communication strategy approved messaging to share with key stakeholders. Timely dissemination of messaging to the public, through multiple communication vehicles.
- Long timeline to fully develop port.
- Henry has lost some of its industrial and manufacturing base. Henry does not have a dedicated economic development department.
- Lack of housing for growth in the city. Numbers in labor force declining and more population in the senior citizen group (also low-income housing).
- Lack of a current plan. Little Access to capital for public private partnerships.
- Current access and infrastructure.

Three of the identified weaknesses cannot be improved upon directly by the Port of Henry and/or the City of Henry and are considered threats to assess and seek to mitigate in partnership with others:

- Inland location not as attractive compared to larger cities/ports.
- Pollution.
- Distance to interstate highway system.



## Opportunities

There are seven potential opportunities from the poll questionnaire. Six of the opportunities listed are as follows:

- Location, small town atmosphere to attract industry.
- Attracting mid to large industrial and agriculture companies. Government alignment is available.
- Access to EDA funding through the Economic Development District. Potential rail line improvements through project of bringing passenger rail services from Peoria to Chicago.
- Lure new manufacturing operations, take advantage of restoring of manufacturing back to the U.S., and especially to rural areas.
- Funding.
- New business moving to adjacent property.

One of the opportunities listed is a local strength:

- City Council members present at future meetings where possible to demonstrate collective leadership support for the project.

## Threats

There are seven threats identified in the poll questionnaire. Six of the threats listed are areas that need to be monitored with mitigation strategies included in planning efforts:

- Wheels of government move slowly and break down barriers across all entities and key stakeholders. Leverage “Regional” approach to maximize grant-funding.
- Lock and dam projects can shut down river for long periods.
- Global geopolitical uncertainty, trade wars and tariffs, changes in weather, river level fluctuation.
- Citizens skeptical of type of goods moving in and out of the Port of Henry.
- Regulations, loss of agriculture ground.
- “Change” to previous route and mode concepts.
- Turn-over (revolving door) in elected officials (City Council members) could disrupt continuity of interest, engagement, and background knowledge to maintain and supervise the City’s interest.

One of the threats listed is an opportunity to try to leverage for improvements and for future economic success:

- Funding for implementation of needed capital improvements.