

## Small Group Interviews Summary

### Introduction

In June 2018, the City of Stockton and project team for the Greater Downtown Active Transportation Plan (ATP) facilitated a series of three small group discussions with representatives from seven community-based organizations who work with the traditionally under-represented communities in Stockton. The project team’s objective was to introduce the plan and the timeline; discuss the connection between social equity and active transportation; and discuss the community outreach timeline and process, ways the community can be involved, and how the project team can partner with community-based organizations throughout the process.



**Antonio Tovar, City of Stockton and Gladys Cornell, AIM Consulting discussing the project with representatives from the Mexican Heritage Center and Vietnamese Voluntary Foundation.**

City and project team member participants included:

- Antonio Tovar, City of Stockton
- Alex Sweet, Nelson\Nygaard
- Gladys Cornell, AIM Consulting
- Nicole Zhi Ling Porter, AIM Consulting

Community-based organizations included:

- Asian Pacific Self Development and Residential Association (APSARA)
- Chinese Cultural Society
- El Concilio
- Little Manila Rising
- Mexican Heritage Center
- St. Mary’s
- Vietnamese Voluntary Foundation



**Representatives at the first group interview.**

## Discussion Summary

Representatives introduced themselves and their organization's mission. Below is a summary of their responses.

- The *Chinese Cultural Society* promotes awareness and appreciation of Chinese culture in the community. They hold an annual Chinese New Year Festival in March.
- *St. Mary's Dining Room* responds to poverty in San Joaquin County by feeding the hungry, providing healthcare, and restoring dignity.
- *El Concilio* provides social services to the community for all ages, from infancy to seniors. They also have a transportation program geared towards providing transit to medical services in the community.
- *Asian Pacific Self Development and Residential Association (APSARA)* provide social services and affordable housing to low-income families. It owns a 208-unit building behind the Oak Park Senior Citizens Center, and is building a new community center at the end of the complex. APSARA also has health programs and youth engagement programs.
- *The Mexican Heritage Center* provides cultural activities for the community, a place for Latinos to experience their culture, and teaches Mexican culture traditions.
- The *Vietnamese Voluntary Foundation* provides employment and health services to youth, families and seniors. These include behavioral health services and English-as-a-second Language programs.
- *Little Manila Rising*, formerly known as the Little Manila Foundation, advocates for historical preservation, educates youth about their historic Filipino background, advocates for youth, and looks to influence public policy to improve the City of Stockton.

Antonio Tovar, Project Manager with the City of Stockton, provided an overview of the ATP, its background, and how, upon its completion, the City of Stockton will be well-positioned to seek funding to implement the recommended bicycle and pedestrian projects.

In 2017, the City of Stockton received grant funding to develop a Greater Downtown Active Transportation Plan. Stockton is a regional employment hub, particularly in the downtown area, but only a small percentage of Stockton residents choose to walk or bike as part of their commute. As downtown continues to grow, it is important to provide residents and community members with transportation options other than driving. The Active Transportation Plan will identify and recommend bicycle and pedestrian facility projects for future implementation in the City of Stockton's Greater Downtown.



## Group Discussion

Below is a summary of the group discussions.

- **Question:** How was the project area chosen?
  - **Answer:** When the City applied for the state grant funding, the City wanted to focus on the core of downtown and other surrounding areas. By keeping the plan area more focused, there is higher potential that it could include more meaningful projects. The City's intent is to have Active Transportation Plans for other areas in the future.
- **Question:** Can the community be a part of the proposals for state grants?
  - **Answer:** Yes, the City can include letters of support when pursuing grants. These letters would be helpful for the City's applications.
- **Comment:** Transportation is a complex issue. It relates to everything around in our city. The City will need to work with nearby schools, the police, and others to participate in the program and make it work.
- **Comment:** My family's business is in the project area. Being downtown and working downtown, I see how much people walk – or don't walk. Those of us who work downtown see people Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. but after that, it is a ghost town.
- **Comment:** It may be better to hold the virtual workshop at the beginning, to obtain input from our communities early on to hear what their concerns and needs are. Then the City will not have to go back to the drawing board later.
- **Comment:** I am excited to see if this moves forward and how it will connect to Delta College and University of the Pacific. I think those are the groups that would use biking connections to downtown the most.
- **Question:** Will this plan be developed by or with San Joaquin RTD?
  - **Answer:** The Greater Downtown Active Transportation Plan is a City of Stockton project. San Joaquin RTD will be involved as a partner throughout the plan development process.
- **Comment:** People only come to downtown if they have to, or if there is something for them to do. However most of the time there isn't anything to do. I notice that everyone leaves downtown at 5 p.m., when they get off work. I visited downtown on a Saturday and nothing was open.
- **Comment:** From what I have seen, the majority of people on bicycles in downtown are homeless.
- **Comment:** There needs to be more activity downtown for people to visit. The movies do draw a lot of people, but they drive here and then park in parking lots to get there. I would like to see more stores and coffee shops in downtown.
- **Comment:** Some people are afraid to come downtown. They hear stories from other people and have concerns about their safety.

- **Comment:** There is an issue with traffic downtown by the schools; there is no place for the students to wait to be picked up or dropped off. Parents park in the street, and students run in between cars to reach them. Also, every family drives their own car from what I can see; there is no carpooling.
- **Question:** Does the project area include Lafayette Street and Sutter Street? Those streets are not ADA accessible at all. Will ADA accessibility be a component of the plan?
  - **Answer:** Yes, the project area includes the intersection of Lafayette Street and Sutter Street. Proposed projects that may be included in the Active Transportation Plan will include complete street elements, such as streets that are ADA accessible.

## Summary of Feedback

Below is a summary of responses to questions asked during the discussions and on a feedback form.

**1. Suggestions for Improved Partnerships – Based upon your understanding of the planned community outreach plan for the Downtown Stockton Active Transportation Plan, please share how we can partner with you more effectively.**

- It would be helpful if you could post the project timeline online somewhere for people to see. I would like to see more detail on the timeline to see the role we play as a community.

**2. Community-based Organizations – Please list any organizations or community leaders we have not included.**

- Fathers & Families
- San Joaquin Pride
- Delta College
- University of the Pacific
- Chinese Senior Citizen Group

**3. Communication / Notification – Please provide any existing communication links we may have access to and list contacts for each.**

- Little Manila Rising is active on Facebook and Instagram, we can share information about the project and notification about upcoming events through social media. We also have an e-newsletter.

**4. Pop-up Workshops – Please provide any standing meetings or special events that we may consider for a pop-up workshop or presentation?**

- The Mexican Heritage Center holds monthly art exhibits with artists from throughout the area, as well as an annual Day of the Dead celebration.

**5. Please share any other ideas or considerations.**

- If possible, Little Manila Rising would like to have one or a couple of the students/youth we work with at the Stakeholder Representative Group meetings or pop-up workshops to represent the youth's perspective.

## Appendix

- Agenda
- Active Transportation and Social Equity Information Sheet
- Elements of a Complete Street Information Sheet
- Public Outreach Timeline
- Feedback Form