



SACOG MTP 2035 UPDATE

environmental justice focus group summary

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table of contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)	i
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2035	i
Process for Conducting Focus Groups	i
Key Findings of Focus Groups	ii
Next Steps	iii

INTRODUCTION

Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)	1
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2035	1
SACOG's Current Environmental Justice Outreach Efforts	1
Purpose of the Environmental Justice Outreach	2

PROCESS FOR CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS

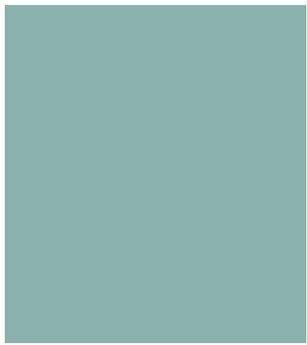
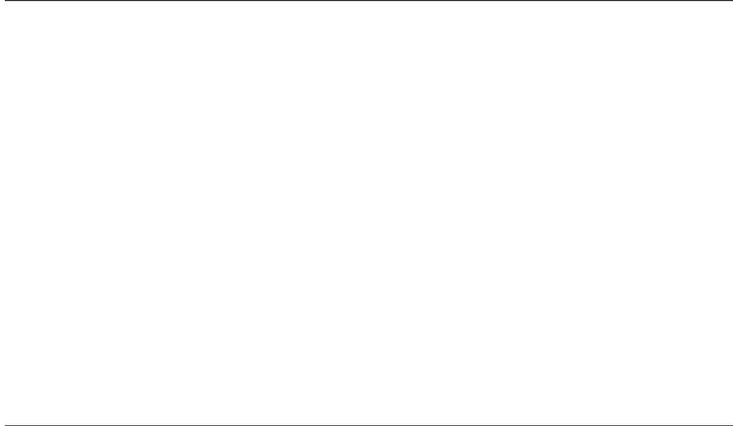
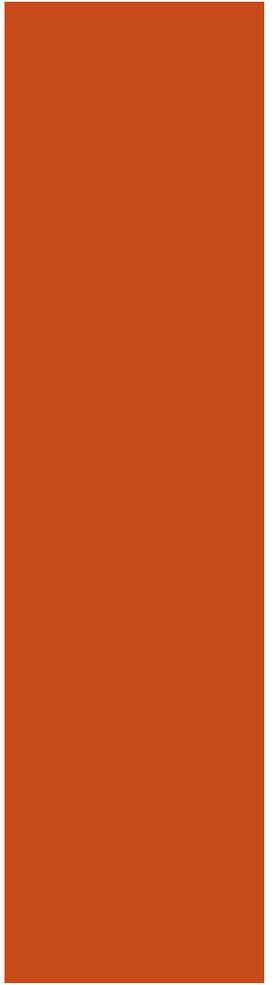
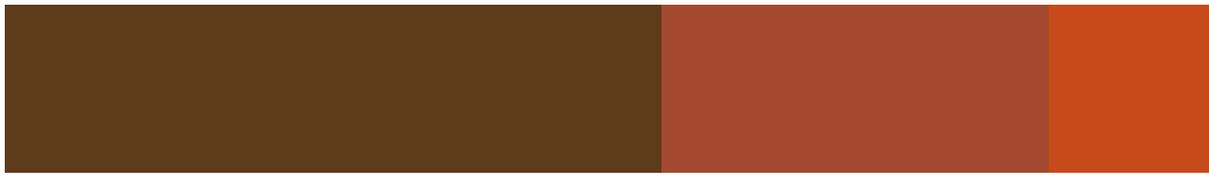
Outreach and Recruitment	5
Focus Group Composition	7
Focus Group Format	7

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

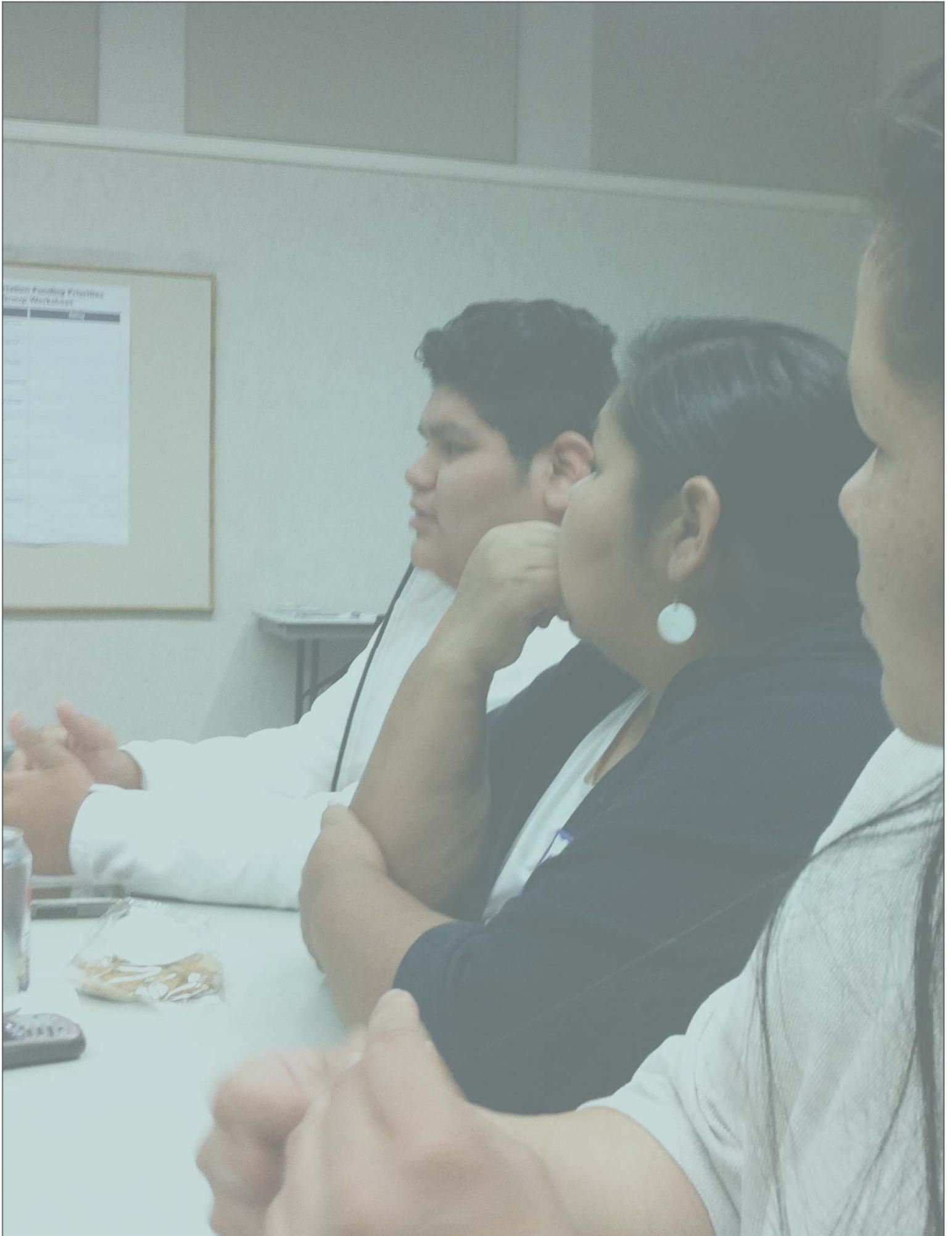
Living in the Sacramento Region	11
Frequent Travel Modes	11
Recent Transportation System Changes	12
Transportation System Successes	13
Transportation System Issues	14
Motivating Factors	16
Barriers to Taking Transit, Biking and Walking	17
Transportation Gap Solutions	18
Funding Priorities	20
Future Vision for Transportation	20

APPENDICES

A - Focus Group Results	
B - Outreach and Recruitment Materials	
C - Facilitator's Guide	
D - Funding Priorities Results	
E - State Highway System Key Findings	
F - Mapping Exercise Results	
G - SACOG Executive Order 12898	



executive summary



executive summary

This report provides a background summary of focus groups conducted with environmental justice groups for the update of SACOG's 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

SACRAMENTO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (SACOG)

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is an association of local governments in the six-county Sacramento region. Its members include the counties of El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba, as well as 22 cities. SACOG provides transportation planning and funding for the region, and serves as a forum for the study and resolution of regional issues. SACOG is overseen by directors chosen from the elected boards of its member governments.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP) 2035

The MTP 2035 is a long-term plan for transportation improvements in the six-county region that is updated every four years. The Plan seeks to enhance the quality of life and economic health of the Sacramento region by ensuring access to jobs, school, entertainment, recreation and critical services with a transportation system of roads, transit, bikeways and sidewalks. Local transportation improvements must be included in the regional MTP to receive state and federal funding.

PROCESS FOR CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS

In 2007, SACOG worked with the National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) to develop an outreach methodology based upon the Federal definition of environmental justice populations and U.S. Census 2000 region-wide racial/ethnic data. In that process, NRC and SACOG convened eight focus groups with different environmental justice populations across the region to provide input to SACOG's transportation planning efforts. SACOG wanted an approach for the 2010 MTP 2035 update to mirror the 2007 methodology for gathering input from traditionally underrepresented groups and allow comparison of results.

Consistent with the number, composition and location of the 2007 focus groups, eight focus groups were held in 2010, as follows:

- Asian-Pacific Islander, with Vietnamese/Mandarin interpreter Sacramento
- African American, In English Sacramento
- Low Income #1, in English Yuba City
- Low Income #2, in English Sacramento
- Native American/American Indian, in English Sacramento
- Hispanic/Latino #1, in Spanish Sacramento
- Hispanic/Latino #2, in Spanish Woodland
- Low Income #3, in English Placerville

The consulting firm MIG, Inc. worked closely with SACOG and conducted outreach to recruit and confirm low income, minority and limited-English proficiency persons to participate in the focus groups. MIG used the following recruitment methods for focus group participants: job postings on the region's Craigslist.org website in English and Spanish; an on-line participant screening survey; community-based organization postings and working through networks; and participant screening phone calls.

A total of 89 people participated in the eight focus group sessions. All groups included a variety of ages, occupations, education levels, and primary travel modes. Facilitators for each focus group followed the same format to maintain consistency on how each meeting was conducted.

KEY FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUPS

Living in Sacramento

- Participants in all focus groups appreciate the following positive aspects of the Sacramento region: small town feel and close-knit community; centrally located; high quality parks, community centers and schools; and travel opportunities, transit options and roads.
- Most participants drive or take public transit on a daily basis.

Perceptions of the Existing Transportation System

- Participants in all focus groups said they have seen an increase in the amount of traffic and congestion during peak commute hours in recent years; and a reduction in bus routes, hours of operation and frequency, while transit fares have increased.
- Some participants have started to drive, walk or bike because transit is unavailable, and/or they cannot afford or do not have the time to take the bus or light rail.

- Participants described the following transportation system successes:
 - Driving is convenient and affordable if you live near the freeway or in rural areas and avoid commute traffic.
 - Increased security, new shelters and regular maintenance at transit stations and on trains deter criminal activity.
 - New bike lanes and infrastructure improvements on urban and rural streets provide opportunities for bicyclists.
 - Sidewalk improvements make a significant difference.
- Participants described the following transportation system issues:
 - The existing road system does not link cities and communities; there are gaps in connectivity throughout the region.
 - Participants in Sacramento-based focus groups expressed frustration regarding bus and light rail fare increases, elimination of Regional Transit's free transfer pass, and reduced operating hours and cancelled bus routes.
 - Transit fares and parking lot fees are unaffordable for many people, according to most participants.
 - Bus and light rail are unreliable and late; participants shared experiences of waiting for hours for transit.
 - Bus transit and light rail routes and schedules are not coordinated properly.
 - Operating hours should be extended on weekdays and weekends.
 - Bicycle safety on roads is a concern for participants. Issues noted include the narrow width of Sacramento urban streets and bicycle lanes, bicycle lane proximity to vehicle lanes, a need for more bicycle lanes, and the absence of road shoulders in the Placerville area.
 - There are not enough sidewalks in the region for pedestrians.

Access and Barriers

- Participants are encouraged to use transit, walk, bike, or share rides, and drive less when:
 - Transit takes them where they need to go and is safe.
 - Transit is affordable, convenient and frequent.
 - Transit, bicycling and walking are enjoyable.
 - There are available transit, bicycle, and walking facilities and amenities.
 - They live in mixed-use neighborhoods.
 - They are motivated by environmental and/or health consciousness.
- Participants identified specific places and the barriers that prevent them from traveling by public transit, bicycle and on foot to work, food and clothing shopping, entertainment, and to visit family and friends. These barriers include:
 - There is no public transit service to desired destinations.
 - Bus stop and light rail stations are inconvenient.
 - Public transit, biking or walking takes too much time.
 - Public transit is unaffordable.

Opportunities

- Participants identified transportation gap solutions including:
 - Improve connectivity between freeway networks and improve access to freeways.
 - Use shuttles to serve local neighborhoods and rural areas, and transport people from their homes to central bus stops; determine the most strategic places to locate shuttle stops.
 - Reduce transit fares (especially for seniors, youth and low income riders) and reinstate RT transfer passes.
 - Extend public transit operating hours on the evenings and weekends.
 - Restore all bus routes and expand routes to connect regionally and serve between cities, the airport and shopping centers.
 - Initiate a bike share program in the region.
 - Increase the number of crosswalks in the Sacramento region.

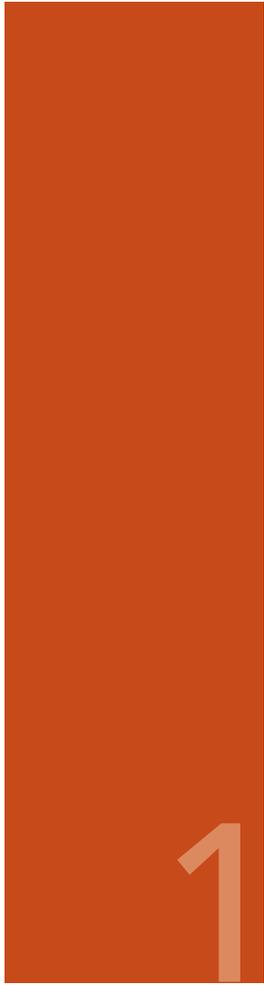
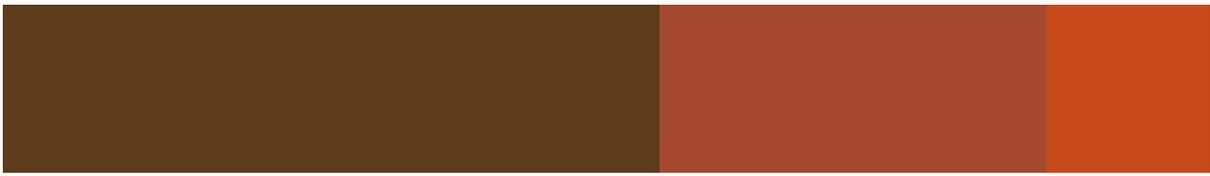
- Participants provided feedback regarding potential and current supplemental services to meet transportation needs in the region, as follows:
 - In general, participants were supportive of a car share program in the Sacramento region. Many participants requested clarification regarding the program's general concept, fee and insurance requirements.
 - If the program is secure and personal insurance is protected, loaning a car to a car share organization could be viable.
 - There is an opportunity for neighborhood rideshare programs in some urban areas.
 - Some participants used taxi services, though expensive, as an occasional transportation mode.
 - Some participants find that renting a car is sometimes useful or necessary.

Future Funding Priorities and Vision

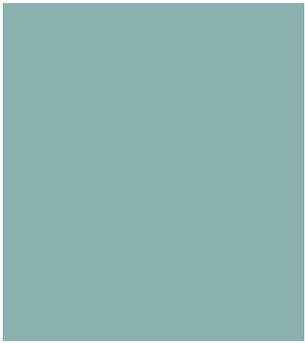
- Participants were asked to prioritize funding resources to improve transportation options in the Sacramento region. Participants prioritized projects to provide bicycle lanes, sidewalks and safer neighborhood streets, to improve public transit services, and to fix local streets and roads.
- Participants were asked to imagine themselves, their family and the Sacramento region in 20 years. Predictions and hopes for the region's future transportation system included:
 - The Sacramento region will support a comprehensive transportation system that provides transportation opportunities throughout the region.
 - There will be positive improvements in public transit services, road, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

NEXT STEPS

SACOG will review the results of the focus groups and consider how to address participants' issues and suggestions, along with public input from other sources, in the update of the MTP 2035.

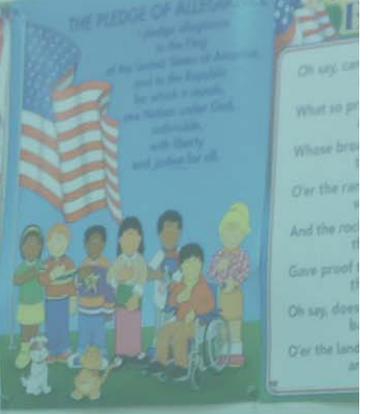
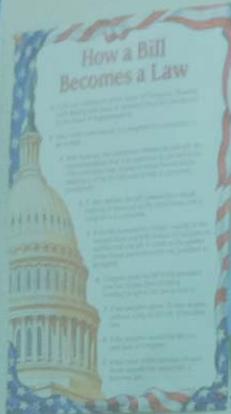


CHAPTER ONE



1

introduction



introduction

This report provides a background summary of focus groups conducted with environmental justice populations for the update of SACOG's 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The report describes the process for conducting the eight focus groups; summarizes the results of the community input; and compares results to input received by SACOG in 2007. Where possible, the report also documents specific input from the different environmental justice groups.

SACRAMENTO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (SACOG)

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is an association of local governments in the six-county Sacramento region. Its members include the counties of El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba, as well as 22 cities. SACOG provides transportation planning and funding for the region, and serves as a forum for the study and resolution of regional issues. SACOG is overseen by directors chosen from the elected boards of its member governments.

SACOG endeavors to link transportation and land development more closely through the Sacramento Regional Blueprint, a vision for growth adopted in 2004. The Blueprint promotes compact, mixed-use development and more transit choices as an alternative to low density development, and through implementation activities including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2035 and the Rural Urban Connections Strategy.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The MTP 2035 is a long-term plan for transportation improvements in the six-county region. The MTP is updated every four years. The Plan seeks to enhance the quality of life and economic health of the Sacramento region by ensuring access to jobs, school, entertainment, recreation and critical services with a transportation system of roads, transit, bikeways and sidewalks. Local transportation improvements must be included in the regional MTP to receive state and federal funding.

SACOG'S CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OUTREACH EFFORTS

SACOG Executive Order 12898 describes SACOG's commitment to environmental justice outreach and analysis in the MTP and other SACOG projects. (See Appendix G for complete text.)

As an example, development of the MTP 2035 included an 18-month public priority-setting process to identify a list of transportation improvement projects to best meet the needs of the region as a whole. In early 2010, SACOG embarked on a comprehensive outreach plan for the MTP 2035. SACOG hosted focus groups with a broad range of community stakeholders, including environmental justice groups, to gather input on priorities for performance indicators in the summer of 2010. In October 2010, SACOG hosted nine community workshops in El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties to solicit input regarding transportation in the Sacramento

region. In November 2010, the eight environmental justice focus groups described in this report provided an opportunity for traditionally underrepresented low income, minority and limited-English proficiency community members to offer more detailed feedback regarding the region's transportation system.

PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OUTREACH

SACOG seeks to increase the breadth and depth of community participation from those typically not engaged early in planning processes. By reaching out to environmental justice communities, SACOG gains a better understanding of the unique transportation needs of specific ethnic and low-income communities.

As part of the innovative outreach for the MTP 2035, and sponsored through a Public Participation Engagement Contract grant from Caltrans District 3, SACOG hosted eight focus groups during November 2010. These focus groups were held to solicit feedback from environmental justice populations on current travel behavior; perceptions of the region's transportation system, including roadways, public transportation, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and potential and preferred transportation system improvements.

Comparing the results of this outreach process with those of a similar effort in 2007 will help SACOG determine if behavior and perceptions among environmental justice populations have changed over the past few years, and if they have been influenced by the economic recession. Results will also enable SACOG and Caltrans to better understand the transportation needs of such communities since the economic downturn and to promote partnerships and transparency in planning. These regional partnerships also help lay the groundwork for Caltrans' future roadway improvement outreach processes.

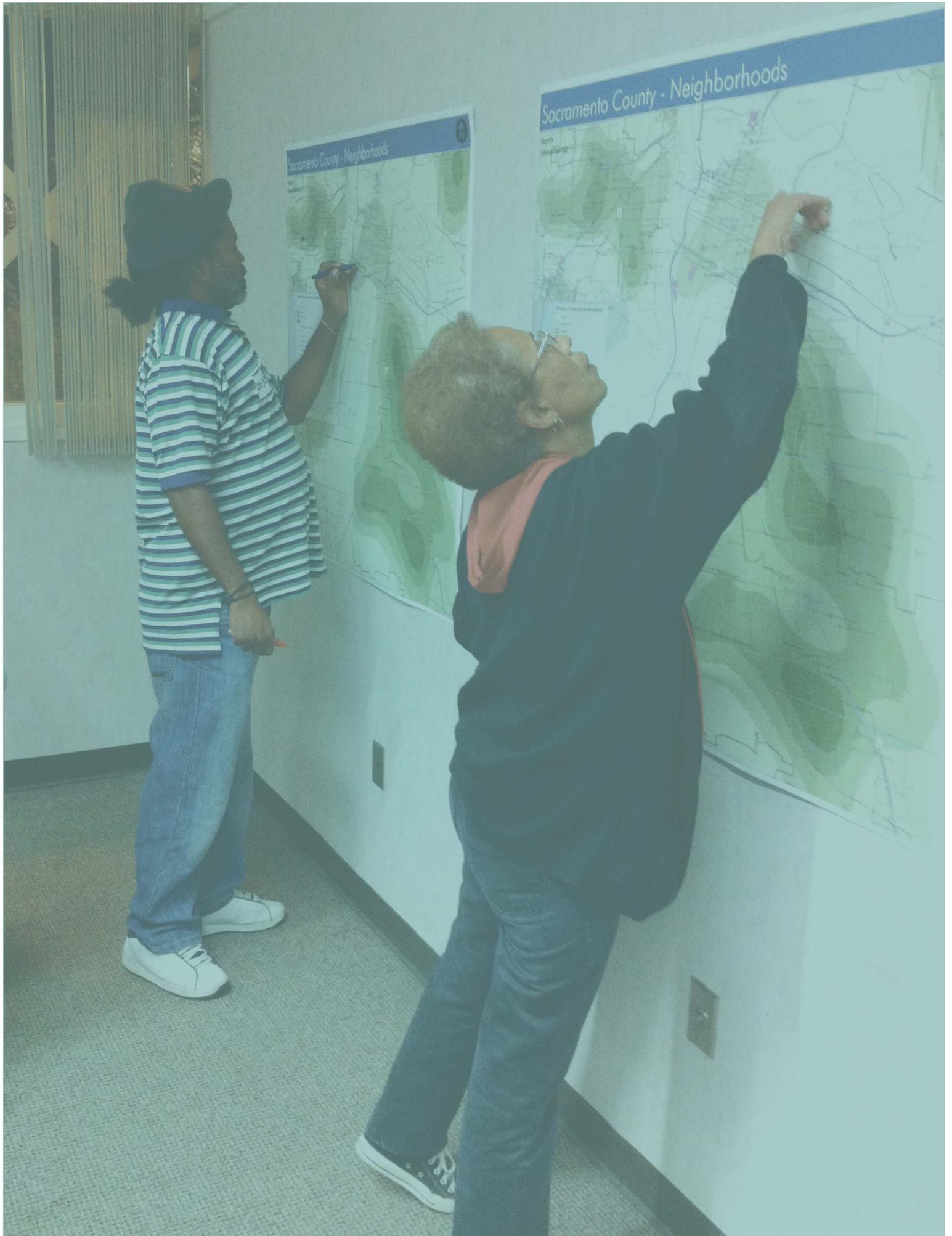
The feedback received from these eight focus groups will: inform SACOG's MTP 2035 update; provide Caltrans with a key perspective of issues and challenges in the State Highway System; help the region's transportation system respond better to the needs of people who are low-income, identify as an ethnic minority and/or who speak languages other than English; and help improve access to services regardless of race, language or national origin.

CHAPTER TWO



2

process for conducting focus groups



process for conducting focus groups

In 2007, SACOG worked with the National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) to develop an outreach methodology based upon the Federal definition of environmental justice populations and U.S. Census 2000 region-wide racial/ethnic data. SACOG used U.S. Census 2000 data to identify racial/ethnic populations by county and to determine where these populations were located, paying particular attention to outlying areas in the region, in order to draw group participants from these populations. In that process, NRC and SACOG convened eight focus groups with different environmental justice populations across the region to provide input to SACOG's transportation planning efforts.

SACOG wanted the approach for the MTP 2035 update in 2010 to mirror the 2007 methodology and allow comparison of results. With support from Caltrans and the consulting firm MIG, Inc., SACOG determined that a similar focus group or small group discussion format (about 10 to 15 people) would provide a comfortable setting to receive information and share comments. The smaller group size would also help ensure that each member had an opportunity to speak and that meeting interpreters were able to communicate easily with participants.

MIG, Inc. provided assistance to SACOG to recruit focus group participants, provide meeting logistics support, facilitate the focus groups and record comments, and analyze and report the results of the process.

The focus groups were consistent with the number, composition and location of the 2007 focus groups. In 2010, eight focus groups were held, as follows:

- Asian-Pacific Islander, with Vietnamese/Mandarin interpreter Sacramento
- African American, In English Sacramento
- Low Income #1, in English Yuba City
- Low Income #2, in English Sacramento
- Native American/American Indian, in English Sacramento
- Hispanic/Latino #1, in Spanish Sacramento
- Hispanic/Latino #2, in Spanish Woodland
- Low Income #3, in English Placerville

The MIG team included facilitators who were Asian, African American, Native American, Hispanic and Caucasian, so that the focus group facilitator was of the same race/ethnicity as the focus group participants.

OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT

MIG worked closely with SACOG and conducted outreach to recruit focus group participants using a variety of methods.

Web-Based Recruitment Activities

Focus group outreach and recruitment was conducted by posting job announcements on Craigslist.org in the "etcetera jobs" category for approximately three weeks prior to each focus group. The \$60 participation stipend

served as an attractive incentive. One job posting advertised focus group dates and times conducted in English and the second, translated into Spanish, advertised meetings conducted in Spanish. (Both announcements are included in Appendix B.)

Announcements requested participation from Sacramento region residents in a study regarding regional transportation planning. Interested applicants were directed to select one meeting date and complete an on-line survey to be considered for the requested focus group.

Community-Based Organizations and Agencies

MIG also worked with multiple community-based organizations and agencies to recruit focus group participants with limited access to the Internet or who rarely use on-line services.

The Sacramento-based Asian Resources Center hosted the Asian-Pacific Islander focus group, and 15 of the Center's English as a Second Language (ESL) students participated in the focus group. The Center provided a Mandarin/Vietnamese interpreter to work with the facilitator and recorder.

Several key community contacts assisted in recruitment for the Native American/American Indian focus group. Dr. Roselynn Lwenya, Environmental Resources Director with the Buena Vista Rancheria in Sacramento, announced the opportunity to numerous Native American/American Indian community service agencies and community leaders. These leaders included Joseph Arthur with Tribal Point and Naida Enriquez with the Sacramento Native American Health Center, who both recruited focus group participants from their client base.

Ruby Maciel, Membership Manager at the Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, announced

Hispanic/Latino focus group opportunities in Woodland and Sacramento to Chamber members and other Hispanic/Latino community members.

The Consolidated Area Housing Authority of Sutter County hosted the Low Income #1 focus group in Yuba City. The Authority also posted focus group announcements throughout its affordable housing complexes to recruit residents.

Participant Screening Process

MIG fielded inquiries from on-line applicants and over the phone from interested parties who had learned of the focus group opportunities via newsletters or other postings, or who did not have access to the internet. Postings listed a toll-free number for potential participants to use.

On-line and phone applicants were required to complete a survey to be considered as a focus group participant and represent low-income, minority and/or limited-English proficiency communities. The survey featured screening questions that helped MIG determine if the applicant met focus group criteria, including: race/ethnicity and household income, plus gender, age, occupation, education level, and primary travel mode (to achieve a balance within different groups).

Based on 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year estimates, SACOG research staff determined an income threshold for Low Income focus group participants, as follows:

- Yuba City Low Income \$28,453 and below
- Sacramento Low Income \$28,551 and below
- Placerville Low Income \$30,015 and below

A link to the survey was included in the Craigslist job announcement, and other applicants answered screening survey questions over the phone. Some participants

did not formally apply and learned of the opportunity from family and/or friends, so an informal screening was conducted by phone. Appendix B includes the screening survey.

Qualified residents were invited to join the focus group. They were sent a congratulatory email or received a phone call that requested attendance confirmation and included directions to the designated meeting venue.

FOCUS GROUP COMPOSITION

A total of 89 people participated in the eight focus groups. All groups included a variety of ages, occupations, education levels, and primary travel modes.

The table on Page 8 summarizes the date and time, location, meeting language and number of participants of each focus group.

FOCUS GROUP FORMAT

Facilitators for each focus group followed the same format to maintain consistency on how each meeting was conducted. Upon arrival, participants were asked to sign in and were provided a nametag. Participants were then seated around a table. Regional maps were posted on a wall and used for a mapping exercise.

The Low Income, African American and Native American focus groups were conducted in English, the Asian-Pacific Islander focus group was conducted in Vietnamese and Mandarin, and the two Hispanic/Latino groups were conducted in Spanish. Meeting materials were available in the focus group's designated language(s). If an Asian-Pacific Islander participant wanted to make a comment or ask a question, he or she could communicate with the interpreter in Vietnamese or Mandarin, and the translator would translate the comment or question into English to be addressed by the facilitator. The facilitator and the interpreter ensured that all focus group participants had the ability to participate and voice their ideas.

Facilitators opened each focus group with welcoming remarks and introduced the recorder. The facilitator briefly reviewed the agenda, shared the meeting purpose, and introduced the meeting's main discussion topics:

- Current transportation in the area and region including driving, taking transit, biking and walking.
- Issues and barriers related to the transportation system.
- Suggestions to improve the transportation system in the near future.

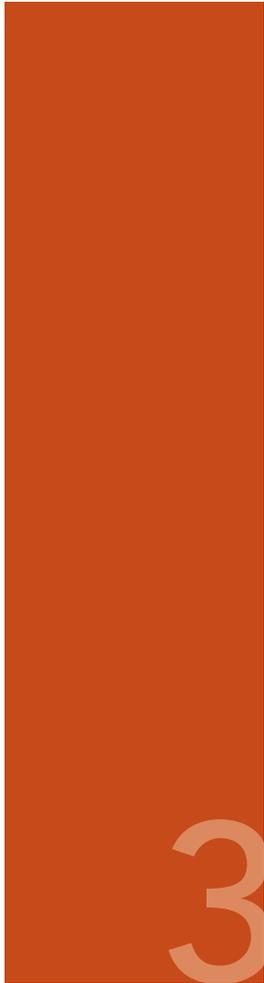
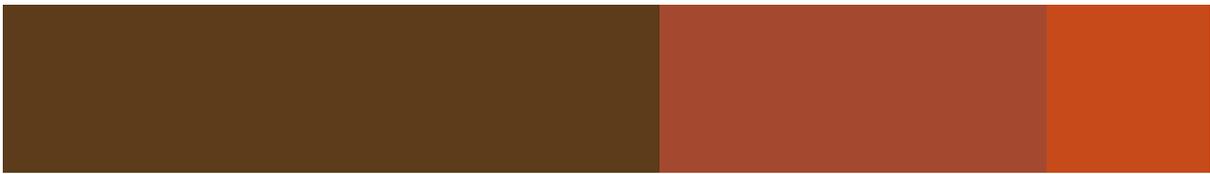
Participants were encouraged to actively participate and be honest. They were reminded it was most important to share their opinion, even if it was contrary to that of the other group members, rather than to achieve consensus on the discussion topics.

A recorder took detailed notes and made an audio recording of each meeting. The two Hispanic/Latino focus groups were conducted and notes were recorded in Spanish. At the Asian-Pacific Islander focus group, English-speaking facilitators and recorders worked closely with the language interpreter to ensure each participant's comments were captured.

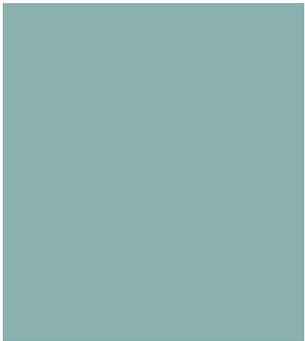
Participants received a \$60 stipend at the end of the meeting and signed to confirm receipt. If they confirmed attendance prior to the meeting, they received a check in their name. Otherwise, participants received \$60 in cash. Refreshments were also available at each meeting.

2010 FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE AND PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

Focus Group	Date	Place	Time	Location Address	Language	Number of Participants
Asian-Pacific Islander	Monday, November 8	Sacramento	9:00am-11:00am	Asian-Pacific Islander Resources Center 5709 Stockton Boulevard Sacramento, CA 95824-1613	English with Vietnamese/Mandarin interpretation	15
African-American	Monday, November 8	Sacramento	6:30pm-8:30pm	Pannell Community Center 2450 Meadowview Road Sacramento, CA 95832	English	12
Yuba City Low Income	Wednesday, November, 10	Yuba City	6:30pm-8:30pm	Sutter County Housing Authority 448 Garden Highway Yuba City, CA 95991	English	11
Sacramento Low Income	Saturday, November 13	Sacramento	10:00am-11:30am	Oak Park Community Center Room A/B 3425 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. Sacramento	English	16
Native American/American Indian	Monday, November 15	Sacramento	6:30pm-8:00pm	Pannell Community Center 2450 Meadowview Road Sacramento, CA 95832	English	12
Sacramento Hispanic/ Latino	Tuesday, November 16	Sacramento	6:30pm-8:00pm	Pannell Community Center 2450 Meadowview Road Sacramento, CA 95832	Spanish	7
Woodland Hispanic/ Latino	Wednesday, November 17	Woodland	6:30pm-8:00pm	Woodland Yolo County Fair Mall 1264 E Gibson Rd. Woodland, CA 95776	Spanish	7
Placerville Low Income	Wednesday, November 17	Placerville	6:00pm-7:30pm	El Dorado County Library 345 Fair Lane Placerville, CA 95667	English	9



CHAPTER THREE



participant responses

participant responses

LIVING IN THE SACRAMENTO REGION

Participants were asked to share their name, community and one positive aspect of living in the Sacramento region. Participants described the following positive aspects:

- Small town feel and close-knit community, in which people are friendly and neighborhoods are quiet. (All focus groups)
- Parks, community centers and schools are high quality. (All focus groups)
- The area is centrally located, in proximity to numerous natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities. (All focus groups)
- Travel opportunities, transit options and roads meet community needs. (All focus groups)
- Lots of trees, nice landscaping and weather in the Sacramento region. (Asian-Pacific Islander, Sacramento Low Income, Placerville Low Income, Native American)
- Family lives in close proximity and this is my home. (African American, Native American, All Low Income groups)
- Diversity of community. (Sacramento Low Income)
- Supportive Native American community. (Native American)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- 2007 participants liked the region for similar reasons: weather and the availability of small towns.
- 2007 participants also appreciated the relatively low cost of living and access to “city life.”
- Participants in 2007 commonly disliked crime in the area.

FREQUENT TRAVEL MODES

Focus group participants were asked to share their predominant mode of transportation from the following modes: drive, walk, bus, light rail, bike or carpool.

Participants responded that they used the following modes:

- Most participants drive or take transit on a daily basis. (All focus groups)
- Native American and African American participants are more likely to walk and take transit than other focus group participants. (Native American, African American)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- A majority of participants in both 2007 and 2010 drove themselves in their own cars on a daily basis; those without cars most commonly used the bus and light rail.
- Many 2007 participants felt there was not an alternative to the car due to a lack of public transportation.
- A higher proportion of 2010 Native American and African American participants take the bus and/or light rail compared with other focus groups, and more African Americans said they walk for transportation.
- Participants in 2007 tended to prefer their cars; more participants in 2010 preferred an improved transportation system that includes transit, biking and walking opportunities.

PARTICIPANT FREQUENT TRAVEL MODES BY FOCUS GROUP*

	Asian-Pacific Islander Community, Sacramento	African American Community, Sacramento	Native-American/American Indian Community, Sacramento	Yuba City Low Income	Sacramento Low Income	Placerville Low Income	Sacramento Hispanic/Latino	Woodland Hispanic/Latino
Drive	66%	91%	75%	68%	50%	77%	71%	71%
Walk	20%	66%	8%	4%	6%	0%	14%	0%
Bus/ Light Rail	0%	100%	58%	27%	33%	22%	57%	14%
Bike	20%	40%	58%	0%	6%	11%	0%	0%
Carpool	0%	25%	30%	18%	6%	55%	14%	0%

* Please note that several participants selected more than one frequent travel mode; therefore, focus group responses total more than 100% in some cases.

RECENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CHANGES

Focus group participants who have lived in the Sacramento region for at least five years compared their current travel experiences with those of five years ago. Feedback from the focus groups is summarized below.

- There has been an increase in the amount of traffic and congestion during peak commute hours and several participants have shifted their commute hours to avoid traffic. (All focus groups)
- Participants noted reductions in bus routes, hours of operation and frequency, while transit fares have increased. Several participants drive, walk or bike because transit is unavailable, and/or they cannot afford or do not have the time to take the bus or light rail. (All focus groups)
- In Yuba City and Placerville, participants recognized transit improvements, including Dial-A-Ride, responding to population growth. (Yuba City Low Income, Placerville Low Income)
- Road are in worse condition and poorly maintained. (Asian-Pacific Islander, Placerville Low Income)

- Roads are constantly undergoing construction near Placerville. (Placerville Low Income)
- Some participants are driving more because they earned their license, live and/or work in a different location, or transport their children. (African American, Yuba City Low Income, Sacramento Low Income)
- Some African American focus group participants are driving less because they moved to an urban area that is well served by transit, such as Downtown Sacramento. (African American)
- Gas prices have increased and some participants are taking transit, walking and/or biking to avoid paying for gas. (Native American, Sacramento Low Income, Placerville Low Income)
- Some Hispanic/Latino focus group participants are carpooling more in order to drive less. (Hispanic/Latino)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- 2007 participants also commented on recent increases in population and vehicle traffic when discussing the transportation system.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM SUCCESSES

Focus group participants were asked to share what works well in the Sacramento region's transportation systems (including driving, public transit, biking and walking).

Driving

- Driving is convenient and affordable if you live near the freeway or in rural areas and avoid commute traffic. (African American, All Low Income groups)
- Paving improvements and freeway expansions, such as State Route 99, were commended by participants. (African American, Yuba City Low Income)
- Cars provide flexibility and independence. (African American)
- Widened roads near schools and street light timing have improved mobility along Gray and Queens Avenues in Yuba City. (Yuba City Low Income)
- Street lights and signs work well in Woodland. (Hispanic/Latino)

Transit

- Increased security, new shelters and regular maintenance at transit stations and on trains deter criminal activity. (Native American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian-Pacific Islander)
- Light rail and bus service line extensions provide opportunities to travel and visit in the region. (Native American, African American)
- Light rail is cost effective when compared to Downtown Sacramento parking and car insurance costs. (Native American, Asian-Pacific Islander)
- Transit takes people many places they need to go: to visit family, shopping, work, the airport and medical appointments. (All Low Income groups, African American)
- Transit uses natural gas, which is cleaner and better for the environment. (African American)
- The Sacramento Regional Transit website is helpful when planning transit trips. (African American)
- Light rail improvements reduce congestion along urban streets in Sacramento. (Sacramento Low Income)
- Transit is accessible and affordable for people with disabilities and seniors. (Yuba City Low Income)
- Placerville's and Yuba City's local bus services are reliable, affordable and the drivers are friendly. (Yuba City Low Income, Placerville Low Income)
- Transit agencies respond well to rider needs. (Placerville Low Income)
- Dial-A-Ride, a shuttle service for residents with disabilities and seniors, works well when a ride is reserved in advance. (Yuba City Low Income, Placerville Low Income)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- Some 2007 participants said that bus and light rail schedules and routes were more convenient than a car.
- In 2007, participants expressed greater satisfaction with light rail than with buses or with traffic. 2007 participants commented that light rail was faster and felt safer and more comfortable than the bus.

Bicycling

- New bike lanes and infrastructure improvements on urban and rural streets provide opportunities for bicyclists. (All Low Income groups, Native American, Hispanic/Latino)
- Riding a bicycle is more affordable than taking transit or driving a car. (Asian-Pacific Islander)
- Asian-Pacific Islander focus group participants enjoy biking for exercise and serenity. (Asian-Pacific Islander)

Walking

- Sidewalk improvements make a significant difference. (Native American)
- School crossing guards and crosswalk audio signals work well in Woodland. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Walking is the easiest mode of travel for some, if they have enough time and it is during the summer months. (African American)
- Asian-Pacific Islander focus group participants enjoy walking outside for exercise. (Asian-Pacific Islander)

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ISSUES

Focus group participants were next asked to share what they felt does not work well in the Sacramento region's transportation systems (including driving, public transit, bikes and walking). Key perceptions from the focus groups are described below.

Driving

- The existing road system does not link cities and communities; there are gaps in connectivity throughout the region. (All Low Income groups, Hispanic/Latino)
- Participants are adverse to increasing traffic, impolite drivers and congestion in the Sacramento region. (Hispanic/Latino, All Low Income groups)
- On-going road construction, changing traffic detours and unfinished road improvement projects frustrate participants from the Placerville area, including: Highway 49 in downtown Placerville, Carmichael pavement texture, Hazel interstate exit and eastbound on Highway 50 in El Dorado Hills. (Placerville Low Income)

- Participants suggested that larger street signs were needed in Placerville. (Placerville Low Income)
- Participants identified specific road segments that need maintenance, including: 16th Street tunnel adjacent to the John Muir Park in Downtown Sacramento, and segments in El Dorado Center, Placerville. (Sacramento Low Income, Placerville Low Income)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- Participants in 2007 similarly perceived traffic on freeways and downtowns to be an issue in the region.
- Common driving-related participant concerns in 2007 included: traffic volume, downtown congestion, gas prices, streetlight timing and road conditions such as potholes and lack of road shoulders, and lack of access to developments.

Transit

Routes, Hours and Fares

- Bus transit and light rail routes and schedules are not coordinated properly. (All focus groups)
- Transit fares and light rail station parking fees are unaffordable for many people, according to most participants. (All focus groups)
- Participants expressed frustration regarding bus and light rail fare increases, elimination of Regional Transit's free transfers, reduced operating hours and cancelled bus routes. (Asian-Pacific Islander, African American, Sacramento Low Income, Placerville Low Income, Native American, Hispanic/Latino)
- Certain bus routes and schedules have been truncated significantly and, as a result, are overcrowded; for example, Regional Transit's Route 51 with the elimination of the 50E. (African American)
- Responding to increasing fares, numerous transit riders are deterred from taking the bus or light rail and forced to drive, bike, walk or stay within their neighborhood. (African American)

Extent of Service and Timelines

- Dial-A-Ride is overbooked, often late and under-resourced. (Yuba City Low Income, Placerville Low Income)
- Bus service and light rail are unreliable and late; Hispanic/Latino participants, in Woodland and Sacramento, and the African American participants shared experiences of waiting for hours for transit. (African American, Hispanic/Latino)
- There are not enough buses to serve all residents and areas frequently. (Hispanic/Latino, Native American)
- The buses are inefficient and take too long. (Asian-Pacific Islander)
- Participants who live in rural areas, such as Yuba City and Placerville, are inadequately served by transit. (Yuba City Low Income, Placerville Low Income)

Safety

- Participants suggested that buses avoid small neighborhood streets to increase road safety. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Some participants felt that buses, trains and shelters are occupied by vagrants and are unsafe, particularly at night. (African American, Native American)
- Participants shared how they witnessed illegal activity on buses and at bus stops. (Native American)

Accessibility

- Bus stops are located in inaccessible and inconvenient locations. (All Low Income groups, African American)
- Transit information and signage is not clear or easily accessible. (African American)
- Non-English speakers find schedules and audio instructions hard to understand and follow. (Asian-Pacific Islander)
- Restrooms at transit stops were desired by several participants. (Native American)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- Similar to 2010, safety was a concern for participants in 2007 at bus stops, light rail stations and parking areas.
- Participants in 2007 and 2010 mentioned the need for shelters and benches at bus stops.
- 2010 participants tended to enjoy the opportunity to relax and read on transit. In 2007, participants expressed concern about the loss of privacy on transit.

Bicycling

- Bicycle safety on roads was a concern for participants, including the narrow width of Sacramento urban streets and bicycle lanes, bicycle lane proximity to vehicle lanes, the lack of bicycle lanes in many areas, and the absence of road shoulders in the Placerville area. (Asian-Pacific Islander, All Low Income groups)
- Participants noted that some bicyclists do not follow road rules, endangering drivers, pedestrians and themselves. (Native American, All Low Income groups)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- Similar to 2010 responses, 2007 participants discussed the lack of bike lanes in the region; many participants did not feel safe bicycling short distances.
- For shorter distances, 2007 participants said they would be willing and eager to walk or ride a bicycle if street lights, bike lanes, sidewalks and shoulders were more prevalent and connected activity centers.

Walking

- Many participants do not walk because it takes too much time; participants are deterred by the distance to services and daily destinations. (Hispanic/Latino)
- There are not enough sidewalks in the region for pedestrians. (Native American)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- Similar to 2010 responses, 2007 participants discussed the lack of lighting and sidewalks in the region; many participants did not feel safe walking short distances.

MOTIVATING FACTORS

Transit, Walk, Bike and Shared Rides

Participants were asked to describe what encourages them to use alternate modes, and drive less.

Key findings from the focus groups are described below. Participants are encouraged to take transit, bike, walk and share rides, thereby driving less, when and if:

Transit takes them where they need to go and is safe.

- Transit routes and destinations serve residential, shopping and employment areas. (All Low Income groups)
- Transit stations and parking lots are safer. (Native American)

Transit is affordable and easy.

- Cost of transit and buses is reduced. (All focus groups)
- Fares that reflect the distance of the transit trip, free transfer passes and Downtown fares are available. (All focus groups)

Transit is convenient and frequent.

- Transit operating times are extended in the evenings and on the weekends. (All focus groups)
- Transit operates more frequently, especially during commute hours, reducing time between transfers. (All Low Income groups, African American)

Driving costs more.

- Downtown parking costs and gas prices increase. (All focus groups)
- Transit and bicycling is faster and less expensive than owning, insuring and operating a car. (All focus groups)

Transit, bicycling and walking is enjoyable.

- Transit, bicycling and walking encourage travel independence and an alternative to driving. (All Low Income groups, Native American)
- Transit, bicycling and walking are appropriate for family outings and visitors to the Sacramento region. (African American, Native American)
- Transit provides “alone time” to read and relax. (Sacramento Low Income)

The following facilities and amenities are available:

- Covered bus shelters, bus stop seating and lighting are provided to bus riders. (All focus groups)
- Ample bicycle lanes, amenities on buses such as bicycle racks, and bike facilities at offices, such as secure parking areas, are available. (All focus groups)
- Sidewalks and short city blocks encourage people to ride their bike and/or walk. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Bicycle parking areas are secure and safe. (Native American)
- Bicycles are available through a bike share program. (Native American)

Neighborhoods are mixed-use.

- Neighborhoods that include grocery stores and other goods and services in proximity to residents promote walking and bicycling. (Hispanic/Latino)

They are motivated by environmental and/or health consciousness.

- People take transit, bicycle and walk to support a clean environment and healthy lifestyle. (Sacramento Low Income)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- 2007 Native American and low-income participants limited their driving due to gas prices and environmental concerns.

BARRIERS TO TAKING TRANSIT, BIKING AND WALKING

Participants were asked if there are specific places they would like to go by public transit, biking or walking, but are unable to travel to now. Specific places and the barriers that prevent participants from going there were identified. Key findings from the focus groups are described below.

Destinations

Participants want to travel by public transit, bicycle or on foot to the following primary destinations:

- Work. (All focus groups)
- Food and clothing shopping including Sam’s Club, Costco, WinCo Foods, Wal-Mart, Westfield Galleria at Roseville and flea market, El Dorado Center, and other shopping and grocery stores. (All focus groups)
- Entertainment including: Arco Arena, Downtown Sacramento activities and night clubs, area casinos and local movie theaters. (All focus groups)
- Homes of family and friends. (All focus groups)
- Schools and other educational facilities including the Asian Resource Center, community colleges and preschools. (Hispanic/Latino, Asian-Pacific Islander, All Low Income groups)
- Medical facilities including County hospitals and local doctors’ offices. (Asian-Pacific Islander, All Low Income groups)
- Cultural events including Second Saturday Arts Walk in Sacramento (All focus groups); powwows in Elk Grove, Downtown Sacramento, Oroville, and Stanford (Native American).
- Daily goods and services including: laundry services, the bank and the library. (Hispanic/Latino, All Low Income groups, Asian-Pacific Islander)
- Places of worship including churches and temples. (Asian-Pacific Islander)
- Sacramento Airport. (Sacramento Low Income)
- Communities in and outside the region including: Natomas, Roseville, Folsom, Dixon, and the San Francisco Bay Area. (African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American)

Barriers

Participants identified the following barriers to reaching desired destinations:

- No public transit service to desired destinations. (All focus groups)
- Bus stop and light rail stations are inconvenient. (All focus groups)

- Public transit, biking and walking take too much time. (All focus groups)
- Public transit is unaffordable. (All focus groups)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- Some 2007 participants felt that they had “no other choice” but to drive to destinations.
- 2007 participants identified the following barriers to driving less and taking transit or walking more: unconnected transportation grid, safety, loss of control of personal environment on transit, lack of courtesy from bus drivers, cost of transportation modes, time to complete transportation improvements, decision-makers’ misconceptions regarding transportation issues and improvement needs, and need for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Mapping Essential Destinations in the Region

Participants were asked to identify on a map of the area where they live and essential destinations for themselves and/or their family’s well-being and quality of life.

Participants who mostly drive used a red pen to mark the map, and people who mostly do not drive used a blue pen.

The exercise demonstrated that participants travel outside their neighborhoods to reach essential destinations.

Participants in all focus groups, whether traveling by car or transit, make cross-town as well as cross-county trips. Some Hispanic/Latino participants, for example, live in Woodland and commute to work in Sacramento County, crossing numerous jurisdictions every day.

Essential destinations included, but are not limited to: pharmacies and medical clinics, community centers and libraries, churches and places of worship, education centers, shopping districts, tourist areas, and employment areas.

A complete summary of mapping exercise results are included in Appendix F.

TRANSPORTATION GAP SOLUTIONS

Participants were asked what ideas they had for helping themselves and others get to their preferred destinations. Suggestions from the focus groups are described below.

Driving

- Improve connectivity between freeway networks and improve access to freeways. (Hispanic/Latino, Sacramento Low Income)
- Promote carpool lanes as a viable option; connect existing carpool facilities. (Hispanic/Latino, Sacramento Low Income)
- Develop bridges to extend over the American River. (Placerville Low Income)
- Repave local, arterial and interstate roads. (Placerville Low Income)

Transit

- Use shuttles to serve local neighborhoods and rural areas, and transport people from their homes to central bus stops; determine the most strategic places to locate shuttle stops. (All focus groups)
- Reduce transit fares (especially for seniors, youth and low income riders), reinstate transfer passes, and provide more ticket purchasing facilities and mobile payment options. (All focus groups)
- Extend public transit operating hours on the evenings and weekends. (All focus groups)
- Restore all bus routes and expand routes to connect regionally and serve between cities, the airport and shopping centers. (All focus groups)
- Improve transit in specific areas including Elk Grove and Live Oak. (African American, Yuba City Low Income, Placerville Low Income)
- Coordinate light rail, bus and shuttle schedules to facilitate time-efficient travel and seamless travel mode shifts. (Native American, African American)
- Partner with businesses and faith-based organizations to provide transportation and car shares for community members to attend music venues and events. (Yuba City Low Income, Placerville Low Income, Hispanic/Latino)

- Extend Dial-A-Ride hours of operation during the evenings. (Yuba City Low Income, Placerville Low Income)
- Ensure public transit is routed to serve recreational areas for youth and families. (Yuba City Low Income)
- Use existing, underused public transit buses for public or private shuttles. (Sacramento Low Income)
- Enhance amenities for transit riders with disabilities, such as space for more than two wheelchairs on buses, and provide information and training for people with disabilities who are electric scooter and wheelchair users on how to use the public transit system. (Yuba City Low Income)
- Upgrade existing buses to be faster and more reliable. (Native American)
- Reward frequent transit riders with discounted tickets and passes. (Native American)
- Promote transit information and make transit schedules and routes accessible and easy to understand. (Hispanic/Latino, Yuba City Low Income, Sacramento Low Income)

Comparison 2007 – 2010

- Participants in 2007, similar to 2010, suggested the bus and rail system be expanded to enable access to public transportation; some participants noted that they would use transit if services were accessible and schedules were convenient.
- Possible amenities proposed for transit, including Internet access and more frequent buses, were less important to 2007 participants than other public transportation issues.
- 2007 participants suggested translating bus and light rail schedules and providing telephone information lines in Spanish, Cantonese, Russian and Hmong.
- Participants in 2007 recommended security and safety measures including: employing bus drivers of various cultural backgrounds, and providing security on transit and in parking lots.
- 2007 participants suggested new facilities including: change machines at transit facilities, additional transit ticket sales locations, bus stops and benches.
- 2007 focus groups suggested reduced price transit passes offered by employers and/or sliding scale fares.

Bicycling

- Initiate a bike share program in the region. (Yuba City Low Income, Native American)
- Develop and maintain multi-use pathways and protected bike lanes using best practices from Germany and Copenhagen. (Asian-Pacific Islander, Low Income)
- Extend linear parks through the region for bicyclists and pedestrians using the Linear Park in Solano County as a model. (Yuba City Low Income)
- Widen roads in the Placerville area for cyclists. (Placerville Low Income)
- Develop an overpass over I-5 in Woodland for bicyclists and pedestrians. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Increase bicycle facilities on transit; provide more space for bicycles and increase bike rack capacity on buses and light rail. (Native American)
- Provide ample water fountains for bicyclists and pedestrians. (Sacramento Low Income)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- Participants in 2007 also recommended security and safety measures to increase bicycling, including lighting and bicycle lanes.

Walking

- Increase the number of crosswalks in the Sacramento region. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Install flashing safety lights at all crosswalks near schools. (Hispanic/Latino)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- Participants in 2007 also recommended pedestrian security and safety measures, including lighting and sidewalks to increase pedestrian traffic.

Supplemental Service Solutions

Participants were asked for their feedback on potential and current supplemental services to meet transportation needs in the region.

Car Share Program

In general, participants were supportive of a car share program in the Sacramento region. Many participants requested clarification regarding the program's general

concept, fees and insurance requirements. Key comments included:

- The availability of a car share program would enable several participants to sell their personal vehicle. (Native American, African American)
- It would work well in certain locations such as Downtown and Midtown Sacramento. (African American)
- Program must be intuitive, accessible and user-friendly. (Asian-Pacific Islander)
- Program is not affordable for low income residents; a car share program must be affordable to be effective in the region. (All Low Income groups)
- A need for the program should be identified before it is established in the region. (Sacramento Low Income)
- Other transportation system improvements may benefit a larger, more diverse population than a car share program. (Sacramento Low Income)
- If the program is secure and personal insurance is protected, loaning a car to a car share organization could be viable. (African American, Native American)
- There may be high demand for vehicles during certain time periods, such as weekday evenings and weekends. (Native American)
- Car share vehicles should be electric so that the program is economical and environmentally sound. (Native American)
- It is important to determine the repair procedure when a car has mechanical difficulties. (African American)

Ride Share Program

- There is an opportunity for neighborhood ride share programs in some urban areas. (African American)
- Some community members will not be interested in participating because they enjoy their autonomy, like to take public transit, or are hesitant to trust drivers they do not know. (African American)
- Difficult to determine how to compensate the drivers and car owners in a ride share program. (African American)
- Carpooling to school saves time, reduces traffic and improves air quality. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Concerns that unskilled drivers will be driving and ride share will be dangerous. (Yuba City Low Income)

Taxi Services

Some participants shared that taxi services, though expensive, are a viable transportation mode when buses stop running, for local trips, grocery shopping and medical appointments, on the weekends, and traveling to and from Amtrak stations. According to some participants, taxis are sometimes unreliable and hard to find. Participants do appreciate, though, that taxis take them to a specific location. Most participants who use taxis use them infrequently and when there is no other alternative available.

Car Rentals

Some participants shared that renting a car is sometimes necessary, especially when they need transportation during an evening or weekend. Participants tend to rent a car when traveling longer distances and while on vacation. Renting a car helps participants to reduce wear and tear on their personal cars and to minimize the cost of owning a car.

Other Supplemental Services

Some participants suggested other unique supplemental services including: horses and horse trails, private shuttle services and a rickshaw share program.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Participants were asked to prioritize funding resources to improve transportation options in the Sacramento region. Participants received five “votes” and could choose to use all votes on one improvement project or to spread them among several improvement projects. A summary is shown in the table on Page 21. Appendix D shows detailed funding priorities by focus group.

For those who mainly drive, the top three priorities were to:

- Provide bicycle lanes, sidewalks and safer neighborhood streets
- Improve public bus services
- Fix local streets and roads

For those who mainly take transit, bicycle and/or walk, the top three priorities were to:

- Provide bicycle lanes, sidewalks and safer neighborhood streets
- Improve public bus services
- Improve light rail services

FUTURE VISION FOR TRANSPORTATION

Participants in 2010 were asked to imagine themselves, their family and the Sacramento region in 20 years. Focus group participants shared their predictions and hopes for the region’s future transportation system. Key thoughts from the focus groups are described below.

Driving

- People will still be driving, since cars provide autonomy that other modes do not provide and the region’s infrastructure is designed around traveling by car. (Hispanic/Latino, African American, Low Income)
- There will be new technology, fewer large cars, electric cars and abundant outlets to charge electric cars. (Hispanic/Latino, Low Income)
- Car ownership and use will decrease. (African American)
- Roads and interstates will be improved and widened in current bottleneck locations. (Hispanic/Latino, Low Income)
- Traffic will be worse. (Sacramento Low Income)
- Traffic will be better. (Yuba City Low Income)
- There will be new road infrastructure, such as a third bridge to bypass the town of Marysville. (Yuba City Low Income, Sacramento Low Income)
- Carpool lanes will extend through Downtown Sacramento to Interstates. (Native American)

PARTICIPANT FUNDING PRIORITIES

Priorities	All Participants		Participants who Mostly Drive		Participants who Mostly Take Transit, Walk, and/or Bike	
	Total Votes	% of Total Votes	Total Votes	% of Total Votes	Total Votes	% of Total Votes
Projects to provide bicycle lanes, sidewalks and safer neighborhood streets	78	17.7%	47	15.6%	31	22.3%
Improve public transit services: Bus Service	76	17.2%	46	15.2%	30	21.6%
Fix major streets and local roads	50	11.3%	43	14.2%	7	5.0%
Improve public transit services: Light Rail	41	9.3%	24	7.9%	17	12.2%
Improve public transit services: Commuter Bus (or rail)	33	7.5%	20	6.6%	13	9.4%
Improve public transit services: Neighborhood Shuttles	33	7.5%	24	7.9%	9	6.5%
Expand local streets and roads	45	10.2%	37	12.3%	8	5.8%
Maintain major freeways and highways	27	6.1%	25	8.3%	2	1.4%
Expand freeways and highways	30	6.8%	18	6.0%	12	8.6%
Support for car-sharing or other alternatives to reach "lifeline" destinations	24	5.4%	15	5.0%	9	6.5%
Other:						
o Improve sidewalks for wheel-chairs (Yuba City Low Income)	4	0.9%	3	1.0%	1	0.7%
o Express Bus/Light Rail (Native American/American Indian)						
o Extend carpool lanes on freeway (Hispanic/Latino)						
o Transportation directly to destinations in cities (Placerville Low Income)						

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- Participants in 2007 predicted a futuristic scenario, involving flying cars or other technology that would transform contemporary transportation.

Transit

- The Sacramento region will support a comprehensive transportation system that provides transportation opportunities throughout the region. (All focus groups)
- Buses will be frequent and former routes will be reinstated; routes will be direct and there will be express transit routes. (All focus groups)
- Transit will be affordable, enjoyable and used by everyone. (African American, Hispanic/Latino)
- Transit will extend in and beyond the region to link with other urban areas, including Davis and the San Francisco Bay Area. (African American, Placerville Low Income)
- Transit amenities and facilities will be vastly improved and will include: fare equipment upgrades and change machines, bus shelters at all bus stops, emergency phones, public pay phones and signage improvements. (Hispanic/Latino, Sacramento Low Income, Placerville Low Income, Native American, African American)
- Transit schedules and information will be available in various languages to serve the region's diverse population. (Asian-Pacific Islander)
- Air quality will improve, accident rates will decrease, and quality of life will be strong since people will be taking transit. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Technology, such as a mobile transit trip planning service that is available via buses, shelters, and smart phones, will make taking transit easier. (African American)
- Transit operators will be friendly and conscientious. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Transit stations, buses and light rail cars will be safe. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Transit will be adequately funded. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Transit will have adequate amenities for seniors and people with disabilities. (Native American)

Bicycling

- The region will be bicycle-friendly, with more bikeable roads. Participants expressed an interest in biking more often. (Sacramento Low Income)
- Children will be biking in small towns. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Everyone will be on bikes since gasoline is going to run out. (Native American)

Walking

- There will be ADA-accessible sidewalks in all populated areas. (Yuba City Low Income, Hispanic/Latino)
- Crosswalks will be located mid-block in areas with long city blocks. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Pedestrians will be able to reach lifeline destinations via connected pedestrian routes. (Hispanic/Latino)
- Streets will be pedestrian-friendly. (Placerville Low Income)
- Pedestrian bridges will extend over Highway 99 and I-5 in Placerville and Yuba City. (Yuba City Low Income, Placerville Low Income)

Other Predictions

- The region's population will be larger. (Placerville Low Income)
- Nothing will be different in the transportation system in the region's bedroom communities. (Yuba City Low Income)
- Transportation options for seniors and the aging population, such as Segways, wheelchair lanes and paratransit, will be abundant and accessible. (Yuba City Low Income)

Comparison 2007 and 2010

- 2007 participants tended to distrust public officials' spending habits and projected timeframes.
- With the exception of African-American participants, 2007 participants, unlike 2010 participants, generally felt disempowered to make change and disinclined to expect change. 2010 participants generally expressed optimism for positive change in the future.