

Environmental Justice: Context-Sensitive Planning Grants

Orange Cove Community Transportation Project

- **Grant Amount:** \$144,900
- **Grant Recipient:** City of Orange Cove
- **County:** Fresno

Project Area – The city of Orange Cove is located in the southeastern section of Fresno County.

Project Focus – Residential construction has been pursued by the city as a key step in Orange Cove's economic development program. However, because most of the housing units are provided for low-income families, off-site transportation infrastructure has been largely left unplanned. The city of Orange Grove is a growing city in a predominantly rural, remote section of Fresno County. Orange Cove lacks the resources and funding to properly identify, plan and blueprint transit needs and solutions

Project Goals – This project seeks to bridge the gap and identify and recommend strategies and solutions to enhance mobility and provide citizens and visitors with easier and safe modes of transportation. This project in it's implementation and outcome is designed to generate participation from hard-to-serve communities as well as those that have purposely resisted public involvement by taking government decision-making process directly to their neighborhoods. It will also demonstrate that local planning and investment can and will directly benefit existing communities.

Community Outreach – Several focus groups were conducted with residents and students. This project was designed to develop a transportation issue advocacy group consisting of area farm worker families and residents who will participate in transportation planning activities in the city, the county, and the region.

Environmental Justice Community Involvement – Discussions were filmed and the community's responses were recorded. This feedback informed over 350 neighborhoods surveys that were conducted by both students and residents of Orange Cove. Data gathering activities were conducted in each of the 4 geographic area to compile basic respondents views on each of the issues. Based on information derived from initial base data gathering activities and review, one-on-one interviews were conducted with Orange Cove residents. The purpose of the interviews was to supplement information derived from the initial base data process and gain in depth insight into residents' views on the nature and extent of transportation and safety gaps in their community.



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Project Outcome – The city of Orange Cove will endeavor to undertake planning and engineering studies to move the recommendations of this project toward tangible results. Policy makers at the county and state levels will be able to use this study for resource allocation decisions. No formal mechanism was in place to gather and process public input before this study

was completed. The Orange Cove advisory body, formed as a result of this project, will prove to be an excellent vehicle for citizen participation with transportation agencies during project planning and implementation phases.

Challenges

- Currently the public transportation system and infrastructure in Orange Cove do not adequately address the present or future needs of its population. As the city grows, added outside support and necessary public funding from the county, state and federal governments must assist Orange Cove's ongoing efforts with efficient land-use and transportation planning.

Successes

- The Orange Cove advisory body, formed as a result of this project, will prove to be an excellent vehicle for citizen participation with transportation agencies during project planning and implementation phases.