

ESGVAP Community Visioning Workshop @ Carolyn Rosas Park, Rowland Heights

DRP Staff present: Adrine Arakelian, Mi Kim, James Drevno, Alejandrina Baldwin, Caroline Chen, Diana Gonzalez, Jolee Hui, Zoe Axelrod

Date/Time: Saturday, Nov. 16, 2011 - 9:30am-11:30am

Meeting Notes:

DRP organized the meeting to get feedback on values, community issues and opportunities for the unincorporated communities of East San Gabriel Valley with a focus on Rowland Heights.

Postcard notices were sent to approx.. 54,000 residents in the unincorporated communities of East San Gabriel Valley. Email invites were sent to the Fourth Supervisorial District. A Mad Mimi email notification was sent out to the ESGVAP mailing list weekly and the workshops were advertised on Twitter, Facebook, and Nextdoor.

The meeting began with an icebreaker, giving attendees an opportunity to introduce themselves to the other attendees at their table and share a favorite place to eat in the community.

DRP then provided a 20-minute presentation on community planning and the background of the East San Gabriel Valley Area Plan.

The first activity followed the Place It! methodology. Participants were given 10 minutes to create their favorite childhood memory and roughly 10 minutes to share their ideas with the broader audience. Based on the values identified from the first part of the activity, attendees were given 10 minutes to create an ideal city with the other people at the table they were sitting. The participants then shared with the larger group.

In the second activity, attendees were asked to write down issues and opportunities in their communities related to Housing & Neighborhoods, Land Use & Community Design, Transportation, and other categories as needed. Each table was then asked to prioritize the issues and opportunities as a group and to share with the larger room.

Attendees: Approximately 40 people attended. The majority of attendees were from Rowland Heights. Several attendees were also from Hacienda Heights.

Participant Activity Responses and Feedback:

A. Responses to Activity #1 – Favorite memories and what we value in places

Group Responses

- Open space, nature, outdoors, trails, hiking
- Puente Hills Mall - Places for teenagers to gather and hang out, and have jobs
- Walkable neighborhood.
- Rowland Heights used to have many pathways and trails around the community to walk and bike on. They are mostly now gone and built over.
- Sense of community
- Farms and agricultural roots

B. Responses to Activity #1 - What elements make up your ideal place to live?

Group Responses

- Vibrant downtown as a center of activity with night markets and places for gathering, placemaking elements
- Good walking and biking infrastructure, bike and pedestrian-friendly
- Short commutes
- Well-connected and easy to get around
- Easy to use, good coverage, and accessible transportation systems and public transit
- Senior-friendly with a senior center
- Gathering places for family activities, parks and other community spaces
- Preserves open space with good access to open space
- Community involvement in decision-making about land uses
- Sense of place and community
- Neighborhood serving stores, mom& pop establishments
- Street trees/shade
- Housing opportunities near transit and commercial centers, and mixed uses
- Signage in multiple languages
- Lots of parks and amenities, including skateboard parks
- Consistency to design and scale of buildings
- Clean energy cars and buildings
- Suburban lifestyle
- Mixed and diverse community
- Safe

C. Activity #2 Community Opportunity & Issue Priorities:

Group Priority Responses

- Housing & Neighborhoods:
 1. Affordable housing
 2. Higher density housing near transit and freeways
 3. Lower density housing on outskirts
 4. We have many renters and seniors, need more housing options and density
 5. AirBnb party houses and parking problems
 6. Retain single family homes and neighborhood character.
 7. Preserve large residential properties and prevent subdivision.
 8. Code enforcement for landscape maintenance is needed.
 9. Each neighborhood should have a mini-park
 10. Need rent control
 11. Displacement concerns
- Land Use & Community Design:
 1. Create a strong, dedicated downtown with placemaking and landscaping

2. Preserve open space/nature, no development on ridgelines or in VHFHZ
 3. Preserve wildlife corridors
 4. Need consistent community design and scale buildings to match context, need community design standards update.
 5. More social community gathering spaces
 6. More open space and parks
 7. Mixed use buildings in commercial areas
 8. Horse trails are needed.
 9. Keep Royal Vista Golf Course as open space
 10. Keep good eateries
 11. Less density
 12. Require commercial to have parking in rear of structures
 13. Design standards should require earthtone colors.
 14. Create restaurant row
- Transportation:
 1. More and improved transit options
 2. Reduce traffic congestion
 3. Street resurfacing, potholes
 4. Goldline extension needed
 5. More & wider N/S roads
 6. Expand and dedicated shuttle routes to transit lines
 7. Wider sidewalks for accessibility
 8. On-demand transportation/shuttle, ex La Mirada
 9. Direct connection to Orange County
 10. Need better transit connections to El Monte County facilities
 11. Synchronize traffic lights
 - Other:
 1. More community meeting rooms/YMCA
 2. Library with more technology available to users
 3. Safety