



▲ Division
▲ Midway
▲ Alliance

Community Visioning Session 2018

Division Midway Alliance (DMA) conducted a community visioning session on May 12, 2018. The goal of the session was to better understand community needs, their business aspiration, and civic life; identify ways to support their needs, and to inform the communities about DMA's programs and services working with immigrants and refugee communities living in the district. As a result of the community visioning session, DMA is in the process of developing community-specific program models to support the community with entrepreneurship skill development and civic engagement.

A total of 90 members from five different immigrant and refugee communities attended the session including Afghani, Bhutanese, Burmese (Karen and Kachin community), Latino/Hispanic, Somali, and Tongan. Community members also learned some of the policy issues shared by elected officials House Representative- Diego Hernandez, County Commissioner- Jessica Vega Pederson, and Metro Councilor- Shirley Craddick. A facilitated discussion was led by community-specific liaisons for all communities. Discussion question used for the session is attached at the end of the report.

DMA would like to thank our funding partner Prosper Portland, our programs partners PSU Business Outreach Program and SE Works; and community partner East Portland Community Office.

Bhutanese Community

Refugees from Bhutan began arriving in the United States in 2008 to flee the Bhutanese government's discriminatory social and political rule. Data from the Office of Refugee Resettlement shows that in 2010, Bhutanese refugees represented 17 percent of the total refugees resettling in the United States. In 2011, they increased to 26 percent of the total number of refugee arrivals. Oregon alone has roughly 400 Bhutanese Population.

01

Community Strength as defined by the participants- Hardworking, Loyal, Curious to learn new skills.

02

Current Entrepreneurship Skills and Business Development ideas as shared by the participants- Sewing, Handicrafts, Food Vendor, Growing and selling produce from a community gardens.

03

Civic Engagement to the community- Community members have little to no understanding of civic engagement. The Community is interested in learning about civic engagement.

Community Needs

- ESL and ASL classes, employment resources, Capital /Knowledge/Skills to establish a business, knowledge on how to sell produce from a garden, cost of land for gardening, and cost of restrooms at a community garden.

Community ideas on possible DMA involvement and support

- Providing resources to establish a business, access to banking, IDA programs, and business registration. Establish a free sign language class, gardening skills, civic education classes, and meeting skills.

Community Identified Barriers

- Language, understanding different policies and procedures in establishing a business. No information available on accessing resources to develop business.



Latino/Hispanic Community

The Latino population in Oregon is growing and reached a total of 473,729 people in 2014, according to five-year American Community Survey estimates. According to Oregon Community Foundation Report, 2016- The number of U.S.-born Latino Oregonians has increased 21 percent, compared to 1 percent growth in the number of foreign-born Latino Oregonians. A majority of Oregon's Latinos are Mexican descent, but the state boasts representation from multiple Central and South American countries as well.

01

Community Strength as defined by the participants- Family values, Strong work ethics, Culture and Food.

02

Current Entrepreneurship Skills and Business Development ideas as shared by the participants – Food and catering business, build a business plaza, micro-enterprises, increase floating and pop-ups market.

03

Civic Engagement to the community- Community members think that this is the greatest, enhance challenge: To make Latinos understand that they need to participate for the community's improvement.

Community Needs

- Safe and accessible roads, bridges and pedestrian cross. Spanish language access, over on-call interpreter or service person.

Community ideas on possible DMA involvement and Business Development Support

- Transit education, help food establishment businesses in the district, access to capital- low interest rate, grants, IDA and other matching funds, help in accessing business spaces at a reasonable price, and enhancing women's role in business.

Community Identified Barriers

- No pedestrian education and cultural usage of streets for youth or newcomers Spanish speaking population.
- Products for micro-enterprises/small businesses are expensive than mainstream, which makes it difficult to find a market and generate profit.



Myanmar Community

Refugees from Myanmar began arriving in the US in 2007 to flee Burmese military ruler's discrimination of minority ethnics, persecution of minority religion, and dictatorship. Outer East Portland metro area in Multnomah County has roughly 1500-1800 Burmese population.

01

Community Strength as defined by the participants- Organized, Volunteer minded, Well Established Communication Network, and Spiritual.

02

Current Entrepreneurship Skills and Business Development ideas as shared by the participants – Auto mechanic Skills, Cleaning (janitorial service) skills, caregiver, cab driver, farming. Start restaurants, auto shops, and gas station

03

Civic Engagement to the community- Community members have little to no understanding of civic engagement. The community is interested to learn more.

Community Needs

- ESL classes, employment resources, housing, and accessing information in Karen languages (Karen community specific).

Community ideas on possible DMA involvement and Business Development Support

- Providing resources to establish a business, classes that teach financial skills, help in connecting to resources to start a business, and providing office space for community meetings.

Community Identified Barriers

- Language, cultural shock, transportation, and the community does not have financial resources to start a business.



Somali Community

The majority of Somalis arriving in Portland are refugees, fleeing civil war, famine and drought. Oregon Somali Community Needs Assessment, 2016 reports that the current estimates of Somalis living in Oregon is 12,000-15,000. According to the Portland Public School District, Portland has 582 Somali students, identified from the new data collection form used in the district. Somali community started resettling in 1970s.

01

Community Strength as defined by the participants- Family unity, Islamic values, peaceful community and helpful when in need. Some members already have businesses.

02

Current Entrepreneurship Skills and Business Development ideas as shared by the participants – Auto repair and mechanic skills, Home care and child care giver. Initiate beauty supplies businesses and auto care businesses.

03

Civic Engagement to the community- Community members is different from what is defined in the United States. Therefore, there is lack of participation and need resources, classes to learn more.

Community Needs

- Language access and resources to meet cultural specific needs.

Community ideas on possible DMA involvement and Business Development Support

- Some community members already have home based businesses, restaurants, halal markets, general and medical related transportation businesses.
- Businesses are located in NE/SE Glisan and Burnside.
- The community is interested in getting help to understand ways to access loans, tax code and regulations, bookkeeping, bad debt, and marketing strategies.
- DMA can support through program partnership for organizing business development workshops, ESL classes, civic education classes, and grant opportunities.

Community Identified Barriers

- Supporting youth to prevent involvement in criminal activities, and providing funds to organize skill building workshops.



Tongan Community

According to Oregonlive, Tongans are still a small minority in the United States, but their ranks are increasing quickly: About 57,000 Tongans lived in the United States in 2010 The American Community Survey found 500 Tongans in Multnomah County in 2010, but according to a count by the Coalition for Communities of Color, more than 1,200 Tongans live here.

01

Community Strength as defined by the participants- collective community, “Friendly Island”, Hardworking, willing to learn new stuff and a supportive employment network.

02

Current Entrepreneurship Skills and Business Development ideas as shared by the participants – Construction business, senior care giver, home based handicrafts business. Start food business and health care professional business.

03

Civic Engagement to the community- Community members strongly feel the need to share their voice therefore, need awareness in the community for greater participation.

Community Needs

- Language and educational need, knowledge of US labor market, increase community members employed in professional jobs, and access to community resources.

Community ideas on possible DMA involvement and Business Development Support

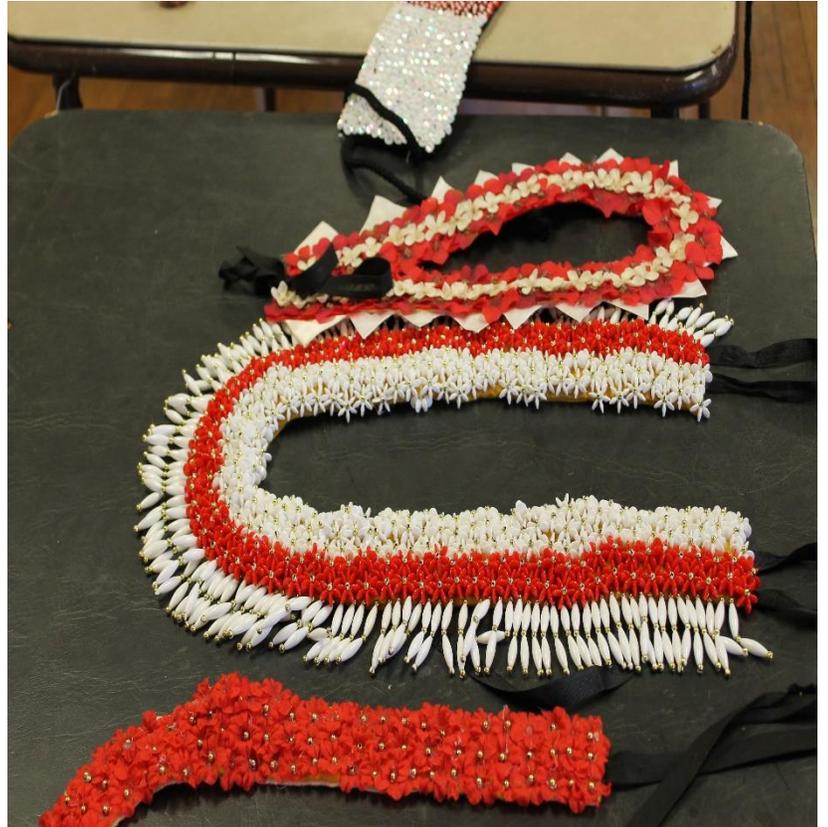
- Connect to business training opportunities, understanding the market and product development, and business advice.
- Offer orientation classes to become aware about civic engagement and offer a community space.
- Help connect with local elected officials to better understand local policy issues.

Community Identified Barriers

- Community does not understand municipal business to start their own business.



Afghani Community- There were 2 participants from the Afghani Community who actively shared their thoughts. Their concerns were language, health care needs, employment. There are no business owners from their community but they welcome the idea of getting business development trainings from DMA. They also are in need of ESL classes and drivers license test trainings.





Facilitated Discussion- Prompts for group facilitators/leaders

Thank you for their time and interest.

Start with general introduction- Name, Language spoken, what do they do and where do they live, also include – do they know about DMA before today’s program? If yes, how?

Key themes

1. Community Needs

(Start with saying- each community is different and unique. Such uniqueness also represents strength within the community. Because, most of us came to the US as immigrants or refugees, we also have our own share of struggle. Therefore, we would like to talk about those strengths and challenges. Begin with strengths and positive attributes)

- a. What are the three major strengths of your community? (What do you do better?)
- b. What are major three issues that community is facing?
- c. What are the available resources or support to address the issues?
- d. What do they think on what DMA may do to address some of the issues? (Also reiterate that DMA may not be able to address all of the needs but in future DMA may develop programs based on today’s outcome of the discussion)

2. Business aspiration and needs

(Start with sharing- division midway area is home to many refugee/ immigrant groups. The way of living is different from dominant culture, and as a result their day-to-day needs are different- for example- food culture. Will you feel the neighborhood is welcoming when you see stores or cafes/restaurants that sell the food you eat?)

- a. Are there business owners from your community?
- b. How many and where are they located?
- c. What are the hands-on business skills your community has? Check if anyone in your group has any home-based businesses? Prompt questions if they want to get help to establish it as a business.
- d. What kind of business or entrepreneurial venture they would like to initiate?
- e. Are there any barriers? If yes, what are those?
- f. How can DMA help connect to resources and overcome those barriers?

3. Civic Engagement (Explain what civic engagement means in the United States)

- a. How does their community understand civic engagement?
- b. How would they define civic engagement? (Seek definition of civic engagement- it may be different for different groups- VERY IMPORTANT)

- c. How can DMA help them to be civically engage?

4. DMA vision

(DMA is one of the neighborhood prosper initiative. We want to reach out to many diverse communities that live in Division Midway area. Our service area is beyond East of I-205 and up to city limits. We provide store front grant to businesses located between 117th-148th SE Division street)

- a. How would they like to be involved with DMA?
- b. What needs to happen for them to continue relationship with DMA? (for example: DMA needs to provide space if they want to run an ESL class)