



# IMPROVING LIVABILITY IN HEALTHY CITIES GRANT PARTICIPANT PROFILES

## Citrus Heights

Incorporated in 1997, the City of Citrus Heights is located in the northeast portion of the Sacramento Metropolitan Area and has the highest population density in the region. Consistent with the City’s history of inclusion and collaboration, Citrus Heights residents participated in drafting the General Plan, identifying quality of life expectations, defining the city’s vision and mission, and establishing priority areas to enhance quality of life. Healthy City activities in Citrus Heights have included clean up and beautification programs, leadership development, safety programs and more. The latest Healthy City initiative just completed was a survey and outreach effort leading up to the development of a proactive walkability planning process targeting the rapidly growing older adult population, as well as people with disabilities, in the hopes that it will serve all its residents. The City, with support from Healthy Cities also sponsored development of a community-led community garden and is continuing Year 2 work on accessible route plans to services for the older adult and disabled populations.

## Goals

Building on previous Healthy City accomplishments, Citrus Heights is increasing participation of older adults in policy development and advocacy by increasing involvement in city and regional planning issues. The City is developing a Green Planning Academy curriculum geared toward older adult residents which would emphasize smart growth and green environmental approaches to home, community and self-management/wellness. In addition, the City will engage prospective participants, neighborhood leaders and stakeholders in the Academy curriculum development and in the City’s General Plan Update, slated for commencement in late-2009.

## Demographics<sup>1</sup>

Population: 84,547  
 Median Age: 36 years  
 Median Household Income: \$43,859  
 Ethnic Diversity:

White	84.6%	Native American	1%
Black	2.9%	Asian/Pacific Islander	2.8%
Other/Multi-Race	5%	Latino (any race)	10%

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## El Monte

The City of El Monte, incorporated in 1912, is the 10th largest city in Los Angeles County and the “hub” of the San Gabriel Valley located at the intersection of two major freeways. With a dense urban environment and physical challenges related to the bifurcation of the community by a major interstate and rail corridor, El Monte has recently embarked on several major initiatives that build on the strengths of its diverse population to create a healthy community. In July 2007 in partnership with the city and key public and private sector partners, the California Community Foundation launched the El Monte Community Building Initiative to revitalize three underserved neighborhoods. Under the El Monte Policies for Livable, Active Communities and Environments (PLACE) Initiative, begun in 2008, the city is creating a Health and Wellness Element of its General Plan with a variety of policy goals to facilitate and promote healthier, active lifestyles among El Monte residents. Additionally, El Monte has recently completed a 1-mile circuit walking path that includes “nodes” of civic, educational, retail and health care facilities. In August 2008, El Monte became the newest California Healthy City.

## Goals

To increase physical activity and encourage use of the newly improved walking path, El Monte will be organizing walking clubs targeted at Latino adults (25-55 years old) and older adults (55+ years old). Trained walking guides will facilitate and support participants’ efforts to increase their level of physical activity and improve their health. Nutrition education, cooking classes and defense lesson components will enhance the walking clubs and motivate and sustain participation rates.

## Demographics<sup>2</sup>

Population: 111,889  
 Median Age: 31.6 years  
 Median Household Income: \$42,363  
 Ethnic Diversity

White	5.6%	Native American	0.2%
Black	0.6%	Asian/Pacific Islander	24.6%
Other/Multi-Race	0.4%	Latino (any race)	68.6%

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## Selma

Selma is located in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, one of the fastest growing areas in California. Selma began its Healthy City's work using the Center for Civic Partnership's Community Compass®, a visioning, assessment, and action planning tool. Selma's Healthy Youth Lifestyles program, to increase youth safety through visual and performing arts and volunteer service, was Selma's response to the community's youth development priority. The latest Healthy City initiative helped Selma conduct a survey on the housing, transportation, health and service interests of this rapidly growing population. Selma's survey included current and "future seniors" (45-55 year olds), to plan for the changing interests of the next generation of older adults. Focus groups were also conducted to ascertain more detailed and contextual data on housing and transportation. Results from the survey and focus groups were incorporated into the Housing Element of the City's General Plan Update. Selma also established a Senior Advisory Committee to help guide planning for older adults.

## Goals

Building on last year's success, the City of Selma is creating a pilot education program for transportation options to Fresno. Based on survey and focus group data collected, City department heads will continue to layout City plans in preparation for the aging of its population. The City is also working on expanding the resource center offerings at the City's Senior Center to include more lifelong learning and volunteer opportunities, as well as access to exercise/fitness and fall prevention resources for older adults.

## Demographics<sup>3</sup>

Population: 19,444

Median Age: 28.4 years

Median Household Income: \$34,713

Ethnic Diversity:

White	44%	Native American	2%
Black	1%	Asian/Pacific Islander	3%
Other/Multi-Race	50%	Latino (any race)	72%

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California Healthy Cities and Communities is one program of the Center for Civic Partnerships. For more information on the Center and its other programs, visit our website at [www.civicpartnerships.org](http://www.civicpartnerships.org) or call (916) 646-8680.

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## Willits

The City of Willits lies in the center of rural Mendocino County, 35 miles east of the Pacific Ocean and 150 miles north of San Francisco. Willits has an impressive history of undertaking innovative strategies toward improving community health in partnership with talented, energetic, and visionary local groups. In spite of the challenges associated with creating a pedestrian and bicycle friendly community when your city's Main Street is part of U.S. 101, that's exactly what Willits is doing. It's proactive and collaborative approach to building a healthier community began in 1999 with a three-day Walkable Communities Workshop. In 2008, its first year as a California Healthy City, Willits developed and adopted a Bicycle and Pedestrian Specific Plan (BPSP), in concert with community residents. As a component of Willits' General Plan, all development approvals must be consistent with the policies of the BPSP. Implementation of the plan will result in a citywide system of interconnected paths, lanes, routes and support facilities that will encourage and facilitate residents' and visitors' choices to walk or bike to work, school, shopping, entertainment and other services. The objective is to double the current level of walking and bicycling in Willits by 2020.

## Goals

Willits will continue its efforts to create safe and attractive walkable spaces with the design of the downtown portion of Main Street (U.S. Hwy 101) to enhance health and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well users of all modes of transportation. The Main Street corridor was identified as the having the most critical safety issues and was therefore selected as the next logical step in implementing the BPSP. A series of design charrettes and workshops involving downtown merchants, residents and local business and environmental groups will be held to determine the design features that will enhance environmental, financial and social health, as well as the more obvious physical health aspects to create a vibrant, healthy downtown Willits.

## Demographics<sup>3</sup>

Population: 5,073

Median Age: 35.8 years

Median Household Income: \$26,283

Ethnic Diversity

White	83.7%	Native American	3.5 %
Black	0.6%	Asian/Pacific Islander	1.2%
Other/Multi-Race	3.8%	Latino (any race)	14.7%

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<sup>1</sup>Source: US Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

<sup>2</sup>Source: US Census Bureau, 2005-07 American Community Survey

<sup>3</sup>Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census