

Little Tokyo Service Center, a Community Development Corporation

Summary of the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan

Reflection, self-evaluation and thinking broadly about future directions are an important process for organizations to better fulfill their mission and goals. With grant support from the California Community Foundation, Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC) took this opportunity in 2007 and has completed a 5 year Strategic Plan to guide our work.

Who We Are



The Plan starts with a re-affirmation of who we are -- a social service and community economic development organization based in Little Tokyo, serving those in need in the greater Los Angeles area. Our origins are in Little Tokyo, where we strive for a vibrant and healthy multi-

ethnic neighborhood that preserves and celebrates its rich Japanese-American heritage. Our roots are also in the Nikkei community (Japanese-American and Japanese immigrants) of the Southland, where we serve as a main linguistically and culturally sensitive multi-service provider for those in need. As we gained experience over the years in social services and community economic development, we expanded our work to address needs among disadvantaged groups of all ethnicities and backgrounds. We have done this by collaborating with community-based organizations that are addressing needs in low-income and Asian Pacific Islander (API) communities.

Our Values and Work Areas

From our inception, five core values have guided our work and will continue to do so into the future. These values can be understood in terms of five commitments:

- Addressing the most pressing and unmet needs
- Respecting and appreciating all cultures
- Nurturing the spirit of collaboration and partnership
- Promoting community-based and grassroots approaches
- Advancing social justice



Guided by these values, LTSC focuses its work in three overlapping work areas:

- ❖ Little Tokyo neighborhood
- ❖ Nikkei (Japanese & Japanese American) community in the Southland
- ❖ Asian Pacific Islander (API) and Low Income communities.

Little Tokyo

In our work in Little Tokyo, we are dedicated to preserving it as a place that celebrates the historical contributions and contemporary culture of Nikkei. We also strive to enhance it as a vibrant home to low-income residents, workers, small businesses, and others from various ethnic backgrounds.



Economic forces are generating changes that could greatly impact these qualities of the neighborhood. Therefore, preserving the cultural and historic character of Little Tokyo remains a key priority for LTSC's work, and towards this end continuing to strengthen the local community coalition will be important. Along with these efforts, LTSC will continue to try to preserve and create more affordable housing units for all ethnic backgrounds. And as always, we will provide services to ensure that low-income seniors and residents have a dignified quality of life.

Broader Nikkei / Japanese and Japanese American



Our work in the broader Nikkei community in the Southland takes us to places like Gardena, Torrance, Venice, and other places that serve as centers of community life in those areas. There are important community centers and Nikkei-serving institutions in these communities, and we hope to strengthen service partnerships with them.

For our work, we see focusing on addressing pressing and unmet social service needs – with an emphasis on seniors, both Japanese-speaking, and the growing number of second and third generation Japanese Americans who need culturally sensitive services. In addition, the community's future will be shaped by its youth, and we want to help connect new generations of Nikkei young people to the community through service.

Asian Pacific Islander and Low Income

LTSC has always believed in working to change the social and economic inequalities facing *all* ethnicities and backgrounds, and in the power of local community-based organizations to best deliver services in their community. The needs in Asian Pacific Islander and other Low Income communities across Los Angeles are vast. To make the best contribution to addressing them, LTSC needs to focus on strategies that best match our capacities, in collaboration with community-based partners.



In central L.A., we have developed large, ethnically diverse affordable housing projects. For the residents of these projects and the neighborhoods that they live in, we are committed to providing an array of services from early childhood years on through to retirement years. In work with other communities, we put emphasis on building collaborations and partnerships, especially in developing affordable housing, and other areas where we can contribute expertise and capacity. Our approach is to work with these community-based partners to assist them to deliver direct services and address needs in their communities.

Looking Forward

Accomplishing these goals, of course, cannot happen without the necessary organizational capacity. That starts with LTSC's greatest strength – its staff. The Strategic Plan addresses providing the organizational conditions and apparatus that can enable staff to best carry out their work. Like any organization, capacity is also based on resources – LTSC will continue to develop its fund development capacity with an emphasis on diversified sources of income so our future work isn't hinged on any one area.



In each of LTSC's 3 main work areas, there are significant changes and developments taking place. Social and economic change, demographic and generational shifts all are continually re-shaping the Little Tokyo, Broader Nikkei and API and Low-Income communities in which we work. Through this Strategic Plan, LTSC has re-affirmed its history and values as a foundation, and established a framework, responding to the new and changing conditions, to guide the work over the next 5 years – with the ultimate goal of helping people, building community.