

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS IN HENNEPIN COUNTY

**A Profile & It's Policy Implications
with Recommendations for Action**

A Report by the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans
January 2006

Asian Pacific Americans in Hennepin County

I. The Data

Population & Income

Asian Pacific Americans (APA) make-up about 6% of the total population in Hennepin County. The APA community is ethnically diverse.

Together as a whole, their numbers add up to a community that is on par for the most part with the average Hennepin citizen. But, it is the individual stories of each ethnic group that when looked at closely, present concerns and a need for action.

Hmong is the largest Asian ethnic group in Hennepin County followed by Asian Indians and then Vietnamese.

Forty-eight percent of Asians are of Southeast Asian decent and have refugee experience. Most of them reside in North Minneapolis and the Powderhorn and Phillips neighborhood of South Minneapolis, and Brooklyn Park. (Shape 2002: Hennepin County).

Asian Pacific Americans have lower medium and per capita income then the average resident of Hennepin County. Alone Asian Indians and Pakistanis have the highest medium incomes while the Japanese rank highest in per capita income.

Koreans have the lowest median income and the Hmong the lowest per capita income of all Asians.

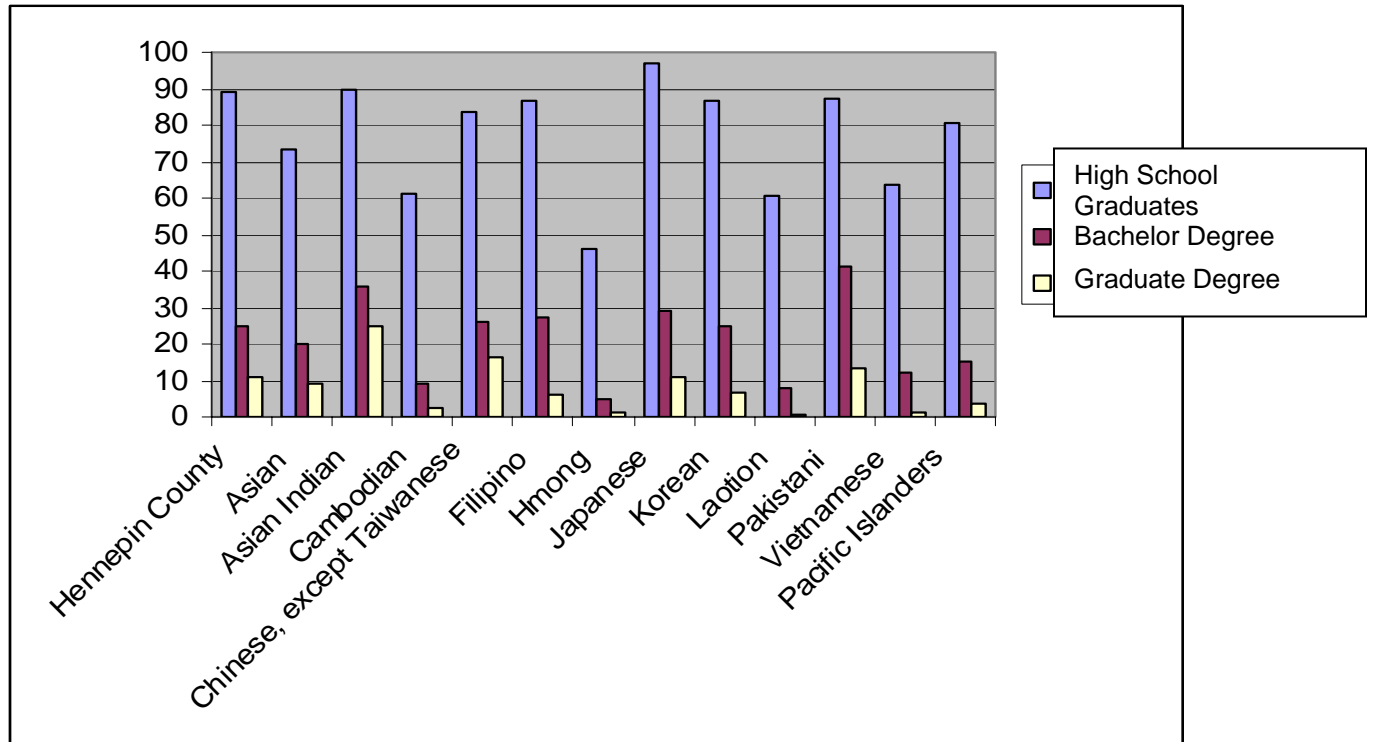
Hennepin County	1,116,200	
Asians	61,923	
Asian Indian	9,226	15%
Bangladeshi	109	0%
Cambodian	1,819	3%
Chinese, except Taiwanese	7,625	12%
Filipino	2,903	5%
Hmong	13,727	22%
Indonesian	173	0%
Japanese	2,387	4%
Korean	5,330	9%
Laotian	5,599	9%
Malaysian	124	0%
Pakistani	496	1%
Sri Lankan	243	0%
Taiwanese	224	0%
Thai	549	1%
Vietnamese	8,694	14%
Pacific Islanders	531	

Income Data	Median Income	Per Capita Income
Hennepin County	51,711	28,789
Asian	47,385	16,734
Asian Indian	61,284	27,856
Cambodian	42,452	12,711
Chinese, except Taiwanese	45,903	23,689
Filipino	56,607	23,805
Hmong	35,041	6,365
Japanese	45,357	27,247
Korean	32,255	15,973
Laotian	54,063	14,584
Pakistani	61,339	23,567
Vietnamese	47,520	16,441
Pacific Islanders	42,500	19,761

Source - Census 2000, data sets used are Asian Alone, specific ethnic groups alone, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders Alone.

Educational Attainment

There are stark differences in educational attainment for the APA community in Hennepin County. Whereas, 89% of Hennepin County residents have a high school degree or equivalent, less than half of all Hmong residents 18 and over have a high school education.



Education Attainment in %	High School Graduate			Bachelor Degree			Graduate Degree+		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Hennepin County	89	43	46	25	12	13	11	6	5
Asian	73	38	35	20	10	10	15	9	6
Asian Indian	90	54	36	36	21	15	38	25	13
Cambodian	61	33	28	9	6	3	2	2	0
Chinese, except Taiwanese	84	40	44	26	11	15	29	16	13
Filipino	87	34	53	27	11	16	11	6	5
Hmong	46	27	19	5	3	2	1	1	0
Japanese	97	37	60	29	11	18	21	11	10
Korean	87	35	51	25	10	15	13	7	6
Laotian	61	32	29	8	4	4	1	1	0
Pakistani	87	47	40	41	14	27	15	13	2
Vietnamese	64	36	28	12	7	5	2	1	1
Pacific Islanders	81	52	29	15	10	5	5	4	1

College Degrees

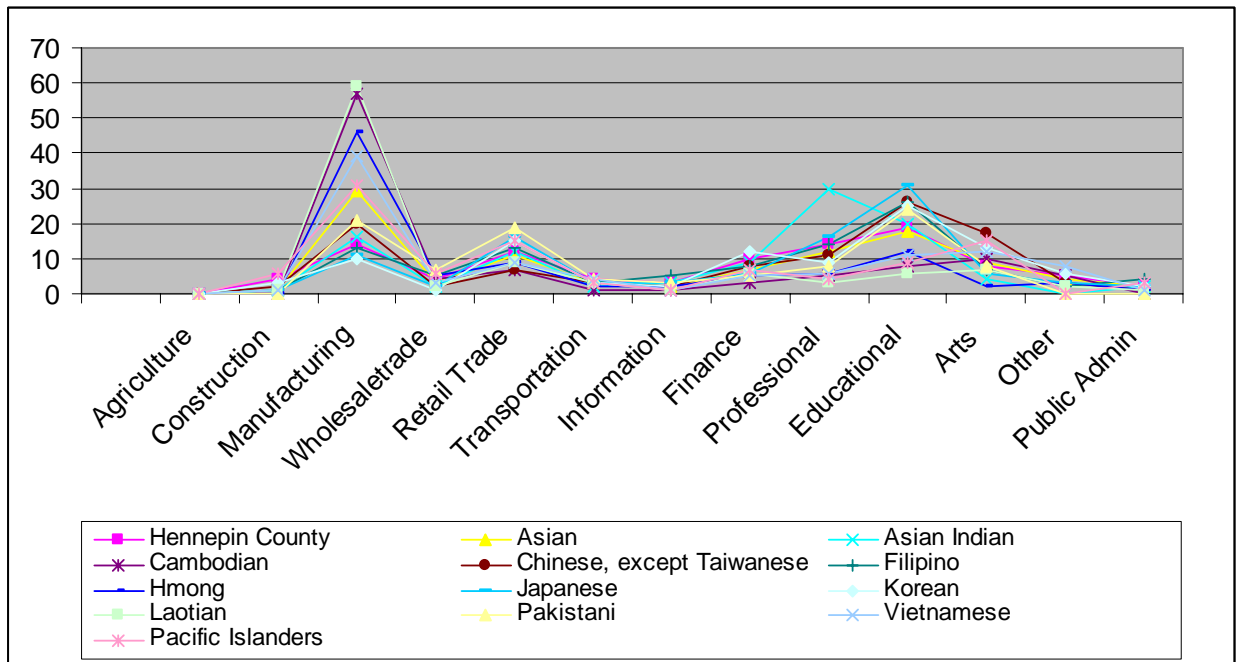
25% of all Hennepin County residents have a college degree. Pakistani and Asian Indians have significantly higher percentages than this at 41% and 36% respectively. Census data reveals that while 15% of Hmong residents have some college experience, only 5% have a college degree.

Graduate Degrees

The disparity in educational attainment is most apparent at this level. Looking at APAs as a whole, their performance at this level is 15% while the median for Hennepin County is 11%. However, upon closer inspection of the data, glaring disparities exist. Asian Indians have the highest rate at 38%, but Lao and Hmong have the lowest at 1%. The female rate for these two groups is statistically 0.

Workforce Distribution

As with education, there is a wide diversity and gap within the Asian Pacific American population with regard to the kinds of occupation that the ethnic groups hold. 59% of Lao and 48% of Hmong are employed in manufacturing as compared to only 14% of Hennepin County residents. These jobs often pay low wages and provide limited opportunities for advancement.



Workforce in %

	Constr.	Manf.	Wholes.	Retail	Trans.	Info.	Fin.	Prof.	Ed.	Arts	Other	Public Admin
Hennepin County	4	14	4	12	4	3	10	14	19	8	5	2
Asian	1	29	3	11	3	2	7	12	18	9	4	2
Asian Indian	1	16	2	12	2	3	9	30	20	4	0	2
Cambodian	0	57	4	7	1	1	3	5	8	10	5	0
Chinese, except Taiwanese	2	20	2	7	3	2	8	11	26	17	3	1
Filipino	1	13	5	13	3	5	8	14	26	7	2	4
Hmong	0	46	5	9	2	2	5	6	12	2	3	1
Japanese	1	11	2	16	3	3	6	16	31	6	3	2
Korean	3	10	1	15	3	2	12	9	25	13	6	2
Laotian	1	59	2	9	3	1	6	3	6	7	2	1
Pakistani	0	21	7	19	4	3	5	8	24	8	0	0
Vietnamese	1	39	3	9	4	1	5	6	11	12	8	1
Pacific Islanders	6	31	6	15	3	1	7	4	9	15	0	3

2003 - 2004 School Enrollment, Dropout Rate & Graduation Rate

School District	Enrollment	AsianMale	AsianFemale	TotalAsian	Asian%	DropRate	GradRate	AsianDrop	AsianGrad
Anoka-Hennepin	41254	9774	929	1903	4.60	2.65	91.33	1.23	97.58
Bloomington	9172	418	377	795	8.66	1.08	97.47	1.03	100.00
Brooklyn Center	1503	148	135	283	18.8	5.34	83.33	8.77	83.33
Eden Prairie	8887	274	265	539	6.06	0.63	98.33	0.00	100.00
Edina	6174	142	141	283	4.58	0.09	99.61	0.00	100.00
Hopkins	7189	152	115	267	3.71	0.67	97.86	0.00	100.00
Minneapolis	43397	2885	2795	5680	13	11.71	53.45	7.02	70.87
Minnetonka	6613	110	142	232	3.5	0.49	98.64	1.10	95.00
Orono	2206	22	24	46	1.08	0.24	99.50	0.00	100.00
Osseo	18556	1149	993	2142	11.54	2.20	93.90	4.50	86.86
Richfield	3508	152	162	314	8.9	3.10	88.51	6.90	81.82
Robbinsdale	11778	404	415	819	6.9	1.45	95.32	1.03	96.30
Rockford	1512	14	15	29	1.9	1.26	95.87	0.00	100.00
St. Anthony-New Brighton	1430	53	50	103	7.2	0.70	93.16	0.00	100.00
St. Louis Park	3685	94	87	181	4.9	2.95	88.89	0.00	91.67
Wayzata	8363	241	249	490	5.8	0.29	98.64	1.18	100.00
Westonka	1984	18	7	25	1.26	0.53	95.63	0.00	83.33
Hennepin County	177211	16050	6901	14131	7.97411	2.08	92.32	1.93	93.34
Statewide	842915					3.17	88.83	3.78	86.38

*Minnesota Department of Education

Asian Students as a whole are staying in school and graduating at the state and county rates as all students. In the Brooklyn Center, Osseo, and Richfield districts, Asian student drop-outs are significantly higher.

Low graduation rates in Minneapolis are alarming and while Asian students are graduating at a higher rate than the norm, 70% versus 53%, this rate still poses a problem in that 40% of all Asian students residing in Hennepin County attend the Minneapolis schools. The number of Asian students who do not graduate from Minneapolis schools is much larger than all the other districts combined.

Truancy & Educational Neglect Referrals, 1994 – 1995 through 1999-2000 School Years						
	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00
Educational Neglect	96	445	330	308	376	545
Truancy	655	900	899	836	1113	1295
Total	751	1345	1229	1444	1489	1840
% of all Truancy by Race						
Caucasian	44%	38%	43%	39%	38%	36%
African American	38%	35%	33%	36%	40%	40%
Native American	9%	10%	13%	13%	12%	9%
Asian	3%	8%	10%	11%	10%	12%
Other	5%	9%	1%	1%	1%	3%
% of All Truancy by Area						
Minneapolis	70%	67%	76%	74%	74%	59%
Suburbs	30%	33%	33%	26%	26%	41%

*2000 Hennepin County Community Indicators

Asian Pacific American students make up 8% of the total student population in Hennepin County, and the truancy rate is 12%. Within the 6 school year period, the APA truancy rate drastically jumped up 9% points from 3% to 12%. The African American rate climbed up 2 percentage points, while the Native American number stayed the same and the Caucasian rate went down 8 percentage points.

Asian Pacific American Youth within the Juvenile Justice System

Asian youth involved in the criminal justice system is ever increasing. The police and courts are seeing more and more Asian youth, while at the same time, schools are seeing less of the kids as drop-out rates increases.

Analysis of Juveniles in the Criminal Justice System in Hennepin County, source: *Race & Ethnicity of Juveniles in Minnesota's Justice System, July 2001*

Asian Pacific America youth were 7% of the population and they made-up 6% of all apprehensions in Hennepin County. Asians were the only race group to see an increase in actual numbers of Part 1 apprehensions between 1995 and 1999, from 894 to 1,199, respectively, from 4 to 8%. One third of 1999 apprehensions for Asians are for Part 1 crimes. Apprehensions for Asians for Part 2 crimes increased slightly from 2 to 4 percent, from 38,497 to 45,869

- Part 1 crimes: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft and arson
- Part 2 crimes: vandalism, driving under the influence and disorderly conduct
- Status offenses: runaways, truancy and curfew violations

In 1999, statewide court cases involving Asian juveniles was 3%, but they were 5% in Hennepin County. Probation for Asians statewide was 4% and 6% in Hennepin County. Data as to where Asian juveniles are being incarcerated is not kept.

II. Policy Implications

Community Not Understood as a Whole or Individually

When starting this research, it was nearly impossible to find collective data on the Asian Pacific American community as a whole or for individual ethnic groups for Hennepin County. The data existed, but it was not put together, so it could not tell its story. It seemed that policy makers were either not interested in the health and well being of APAs or did not think about them much. Little data and research existed to help the community much less the county think about how to address the needs of the APA community. This report is the first report ever to compile data and statistics on the APA community in Hennepin County. And while it is not comprehensive, it is a place to start.

When Hennepin County put together *Community Indicators*, the county did not desegregate the APA data, which then gave a misleading and false impression of how individual ethnic groups and neighborhood communities are doing. An example of this is the drop-out data. Within all Hennepin County school districts, APA students are doing better than the average student. Most policy makers stop at this point and see that there is no problem with APA students. But when the data is looked at more closely with other demographic data, they would realize that the good numbers from outside of the Minneapolis school district mask what is going on in Minneapolis. And that the number of APA students dropping out of Minneapolis is more than all the other districts combined. Also it should alarm policymakers that Southeast Asian students – particularly Hmong and Lao – primarily reside in Minneapolis and they are disproportionately impacted and drop out at higher levels than other APA students who tend to live in the outer suburbs of Minneapolis.

Putting this report together answered some initial questions, but it lead to many more questions. For example, why is it that among APAs, Koreans have the lowest medium income when educational and occupational factors point that the opposite should be true? Or why is it that Lao and Hmong women are not going on to graduate schools? Much research need to be conducted for the entire APA community in Hennepin County so as to ascertain their needs, challenges and issues.

Also from looking at the data, many ethnic groups have the same issues, but they are not working together to address them such as low wages and lack of higher educational attainment.

Link Between Low Incomes & Low Levels of Educational Attainment

Studies have found that there is a direct correlation between education and income. Hennepin County's workforce is diverse with many good paying high-skilled level jobs. Due to the lack of education, many APA's lose out on those highly-skilled jobs. For APA communities that have college and graduate degrees, they tend to have better and higher paying jobs.

An interesting fact that the data reveals is that for longer more established APA ethnic communities, the traditional educational model is followed, while for newer communities, the opposite is true. For example, in the Cambodian community, among 18 to 34 year olds, no one possessed a graduate or professional degree. Among 35 to 44 and 45 to 64 year olds, the number jumps to 8 and 16 respectively.

It is a fact that income increases as educational level increases. How then do we work to address the low high school graduation rates within the Lao, Hmong, Cambodian and Vietnamese communities? How do we move the community along the education ladder? How do we identify and address the barriers that are keeping some APA ethnic groups from succeeding in school?

Also the data suggests that much work needs to be done to diversify occupations for APA workers. In order for Hennepin County to be competitive and for the APA community to succeed economically, the workforce must be diversified.

Link Between Truancy & Crime

Truancy may lead to school drop-out. It has been fairly documented that truancy and crimes are linked and that targeted programs are needed and have stopped or prevented truancy. (Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention). In Hennepin County, the truancy rate dropped only for Caucasian students, while increasing significantly for APA students. What best practices are working for Caucasian students and that are the practices that can be used to help Asian students to stay in schools?

Who are the kids that are dropping out and not graduating? According to the Hmong American Mutual Assistance Association, a non-profit serving the Hmong community in Minneapolis, 50% of all Hmong youth did not graduate from high school. However, when the district releases that information, it only releases a number for Asian students. How do we then reconcile the community's perception with the data the school presents?

Who are the kids that are being arrested, sentenced, and imprisoned? Until recently, data was not kept for APA youth. Even today, ethnic specific data is not kept and is not available. This makes it extremely difficult for parents and the community to understand the magnitude and depth of the problem. For example, in the Hmong community, the perception is that youth crime is skyrocketing and that most teen-aged boys are involved in the juvenile justice system. Because there is no data, those who work with the community can not identify and report out to parents and the community what the scope of the problem is.

III. Policy Recommendations

A. The County Gets to Know its Citizens

The County must get to the Asian Pacific American community residing in Hennepin County better. The county can do this by partnering with a trusted and credible community partner to initiate dialogue and hearing sessions with the community.

As of this date, the county knows little about the community and what it can know through data and records like the Census and school data, the county is not compiling and or analyzing. When the county re-looks at its *Community Indicator*, the County should desegregate data so as to better understand and serve its APA residents.

After meeting with the community, the county should look to the data it has available to assist it in addressing the needs of the community.

B. The County Needs to Identify the Pressing Issues within the APA community

Through a community planning process, the county can get to know the issues of the community and to identify ways in which to address them.

There are many pressing issues that need to be addressed in the APA community, some of them being a diverse workforce, lack of educational attainment and the disparities between wages and income. Many APA ethnic groups are working on these issues, but they should and need to come together to work on them. But without institutional support, the community will not be able to accomplish much. Thus, the county must identify and prioritize with the APA community the pressing issues on which to address.

C. The County Needs to Identify APA Leaders and Work In tandem with the APA Community to Address the Issues

Once issues have been chosen, the county must be a partner and provide resources and assistance, at all levels, to the APA community to addressing them. The county must equally own the issue and the solution, identifying tasks for itself, while allowing the community to chose its own tasks.

D. Addressing Hidden Issues

There are many issues that the county and the community must work on that the data in this report has not alluded to. The issues of institutionalized racism, freedom of religion, acculturation, and heritage among others must be addressed.

Community Planning: A Process to Identify and Address Pressing Issues within the Asian Pacific American Community

A. Agency Background & Experience in Increasing Community Engagement

The Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans was created in 1985 by the Minnesota legislature to serve as an advisor to the governor and members of the legislature, an advocate for the Asian Pacific American and the issues that are important to them; and a bridge between and for the Asian Pacific and non-Asian Pacific communities. The work of the Council revolves around using the public policy development model to advocate and address issues and then to look inward to the community to see where we can build infrastructure and capacity to deal with and resolve the hard issues. Our belief is that if the community does not own the issues and does not want to work to address them, then it is not worth doing.

B. Proposed Activities: The Goals, Objectives and Expected Outcome

The Council will serve as the lead agency to pull together the Asian Pacific community in Hennepin County to discuss and identify the issues that are pertinent to them with the outcome being the creation of a community initiative for them and the county on work on. We will convene and manage a working group of vested community members and organizations to help craft and hopefully lead the initiative once it has been created. It is our desire to train and build this groups' advocacy skills and understanding of how public policy is crafted and used to address the greater good.

Activities	Goals	Objectives	Expected Outcomes
1. Community Convening & Planning	To conduct 6 discussions with differing Asian ethnic groups; reaching 3,000 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • educate • have open talks • share information • garnish input • obtain information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness • Created safe space to talk & gain info. • Create buy-in • Identify issues & needs
2. Creating & Training Leadership team	Create a strong collaboration of stakeholders & leaders (10 to 15 members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 lead organizations • 3 lead individuals • 3 Hennepin staff • share information • shared services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase buy-in • group accountability • increase number of org. doing this work • created advocates
3. Leadership Team Training & Retreat	Conduct day-long retreat on why and how of advocacy and public policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create buy-in • strengthen ties • educate & give skills • create advocates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased buy-in • strong collaborative • increased number of advocates who can speak on issues
4. Create Initiative	Lead team and community in creating initiative for all to work on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • id & prioritize issues • create initiative • create buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase capacity • increase buy-in • create consensus

C. Timeline for expenditure of funds

Months	Activities	Person Responsible	Expenditure
Months 1 – 6	4 Community Discussions 2 Community Forums	Council staff	\$4,000 Space & Supplies (500 per discussion, including space, copies, mailings, food, equipment) \$8,000 - staff time @ 10 hrs. per wk.
Months 1 – 6	Creating & Sustaining Leadership team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monthly meetings • monthly sub-committee mtgs. 	Council staff	\$300 meetings (\$50 per mtg, supplies, snacks, copies)
Months 3-5	Creating Initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment • research • writing 	Council staff	\$2,000 – space, equipment, copies, supplies, mailing \$2,000 – staff time
Month 6	Leadership Team Training & Retreat	Council staff	2,400 (food & lodging)
Month 6	Roll-out Initiative & dissemination	Council Staff	\$1,000 printing \$300 mailing

D. Budget & Narrative

Income

Hennepin County	10,000
Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans	10,000
Total	20,000

Expenses

	Hennepin	CAPM
Personnel	4,000	4,000
Administrative		2,000
Space/Rental	2,400	1,000
Printing	500	500
Computer/Copier	300	300
Communication		300
Travel		500
Supplies	1,000	600
Materials		500
Snack	1,500	
Mailing	300	300
Total	10,000	10,000

Total Allocation

20,000

Narrative:

This budget reflects the total costs of the project. The Council realizes that the staff person will need to be supported by administrative support – copying, phoning and other communication. The Council will pick-up the administrative support cost.

The cost of renting space to conduct the community discussions and focus-groups will be kept to a minimum. We will partner with educational institutions and community gathering spaces to lower our costs, however, we do realize that these organizations also needs to pay for their infrastructure costs and we will do our best to balance both needs.

Snack in the from of light figure food and drinks is essential in the Asian Pacific community to foster a safe, welcoming, and giving space for the community to gather, talk and share information. This cultural aspect is very important to the community and we must pay homage to it.

Our Mission

The mission of the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans is to be an advisor to policymakers, advocate for the community, and a builder of bridges

➔ Goal 1

The Council actively advises policymakers on the issues pertinent to the community and works with them on addressing those issues

➔ Goal 2

The Council zealously advocates for and believes in unleashing the internal strength and power of the community

➔ Goal 3

The Council builds bridges leveraging assets and linking communities for a common good

The Board & Staff

Council Board Members

Eleasalo Ale	Samoan
Sokunthea Bentley	Cambodian
John Doan	Vietnamese
Shahid Islam	Bangladeshi
Vinodh Kutty	Singaporean
Rungthip Langseth	Thai
Adeel Z. Lari	Pakistani
Evelyn Lee	Indonesian
Ami Nafzger	Korean
Ananda Srilal	
Liyanapathirana	Sri Lankan
Jodie Tanaka	Japanese
Mukhtar Thakur	Asian Indian
Yi Li You	Chinese

Ex-Officio Board Members

Senator	Ellen R. Anderson
Senator	Pat Pariseau
Representative	Tim Mahoney
Representative	Mat Dean

Staff Members

Kao Ly Ilean Her	Executive Director
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