

# The Qualitative Experience of Campus Access: Student Focus Groups

Green Action Fund Proposal  
Kansas State University  
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## **Project Description**

A substantial portion of K-State's environmental impact comes not just from the activities on campus, but from the act of getting to campus. The cumulative effect of 30,000 students, staff, and faculty driving, taking transit, biking, and walking to campus represents a significant use of energy and emission of greenhouse gases. These quantitative impacts are being estimated based on a survey to be administered in late February and early March 2017 with the help of previous Green Action Funds. While the survey will provide a critical baseline to understanding these impacts as well as likely impacts of proposed policies, it will not provide the qualitative information that fully tells the story of the student experience accessing campus.

This Green Action Fund Proposal seeks to build off the survey to identify several sets of students to participate in student-run focus groups to explore ways to reduce campus-generated greenhouse gases through fostering the use of alternative access modes. Specifically, this proposal seeks to convene six focus groups, two each focused on transit, parking, and bicycling policies. This proposal requests Green Action Fund support for student labor to organize, staff, conduct, and analyze the focus groups as well as to reimburse participants and purchase refreshments. Professor Stephanie Rolley, head of the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional & Community Planning (LARCP), supports this project. Ms. Jody Hodges, LARCP Senior Administrative Specialist, will serve as the budget officer for this project.

The project team is entirely composed of planning students currently studying transportation planning in *PLAN 699: Transportation Planning* as well as the course instructor, Assistant Professor Gregory Newmark. The analysis will provide richly detailed descriptions of student experiences accessing campus and their thoughts on different strategies to reduce the environmental impact of that access. These results will be submitted in a final report to be shared with the campus and surrounding communities. This information will be of particular use to campus development and parking plans, campus (and off campus) transit planning, and the multimodal integration plan of the Flint Hills Metropolitan Planning Organization.

This project reaches the entire campus and Manhattan community to provide student viewpoints on current and potential transportation options. The student team, a mix of undergraduate and graduate students, will enjoy a unique learning opportunity through planning, conducting, and analyzing focus groups on an issue of direct relevance to the campus experience and the environment. Furthermore, the student leaders are all studying transportation planning currently and will be able to incorporate that knowledge in a practical and professional manner.



## Budget and Funding Request

Item	Rationale	Cost	Number	Total
K-State Union Gift Cards	Focus Group Incentive	\$20.00	42	\$840
Student Workers	Assist with Focus Groups	\$7.25	120	\$870
Refreshments	Encourage Participation	\$50	6	\$300
Total				\$2,010

The success of any focus group is based on its participants. The bulk of the money requested from the Green Action Fund is to pay for incentives in the form of a \$20 K-State Union Gift Card which will be distributed to each of the 42 anticipated participants as well as a \$50 food budget for each focus group.

Focus groups require a significant amount of organization and analytical work to ensure their success. This project budgets 20 hours across the semester for six student workers.

## Success Metrics

The success of this project will be measured in terms of the response of the K-State community and the local community to the findings of the report. These findings are anticipated to advance the discussion on campus and within the city/region on effective ways to reduce driving and increase active transportation modes. The citation of these findings in campus planning and off-campus planning documents will represent a quantifiable metric for evaluation.