

Environmental Justice Planning Grants

Development Without Displacement

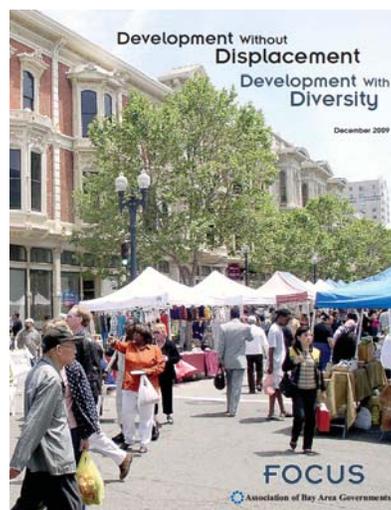
- **Grant Amount:** \$198,000
- **Grant Recipient:** Association of Bay Area Governments
- **County:** Nine-county San Francisco Bay Area

Project Area – Case Studies in the cities of Richmond, in Contra Costa County, Oakland, in Alameda County, and San Francisco

Project Focus – Like many metropolitan areas, the Bay Area is growing and struggling with how to accommodate future population. ABAG estimates that urban infill and transit-oriented development (TOD) development could accommodate 50 percent of the region's growth between now and 2030. Historically, the economic benefits resulting from transit-oriented development have not been spread equally in the community. In many instances the urban areas best suited for future growth—around transit stations and frequent bus lines are located in low income communities, and gentrification leads to the displacement of low income residents. New transportation services, which are often intended to serve transit-dependent residents and provide them with greater access to regional economic opportunities, frequently attract higher-income residents whose purchasing power drives up the local costs of living, forcing the intended communities to seek housing on the outskirts of the region. In addition to having a disproportionately negative impact on minority and low-income communities,

this common trend exacerbates regional sprawl and drives up transportation costs for both public agencies and consumers.

Project Goals – There is agreement among stakeholders that infill development should benefit existing communities, yet there is a lack of common understanding of the policies and tools that could prevent low-income residents from being displaced as a result of development. By sharing collective policy and research tools, analysis, presentation materials to impart knowledge and inspire action, the project can be an effective program to prevent unintended and undesirable outcomes of smart growth. This project proposes to integrate environmental justice into both regional planning and local decision-making, and to build the capacity of local populations to maintain the benefits of transportation investments within their communities.



Community Outreach – The Development without Displacement program provided civic engagement grants to fund community-based anti-displacement efforts. To maximize the impact of limited funds available for

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engagement, efforts were directed toward cities that were applying for regional Station Area Planning grants. The intention was to link engagement efforts to a larger planning process and be better positioned to influence local policy. Limited resources allowed the funding of only three efforts. The partnerships and their areas of focus are: City of Oakland and Asian Health Services: Community Engagement; the City of Richmond and the Richmond Equitable Development Initiative: Housing; the City and County of San Francisco and the Mission Economic Development Agency: Small Business.

Environmental Justice Community Involvement- Two-way communication was the essential ingredient of the Community Engagement Process. Four community workshops provided community members with an overview of the Lake Merritt Station Area planning process, an introduction to transit-oriented development concepts, information about the demographics and history of the area, and an

opportunity to share their concerns, ideas, and questions. Meetings offered food and simultaneous translation into several languages, drawing a large representation from Chinatown and other neighborhoods that surround the area.

Project Outcome-The project culminated with a report that looks beyond efforts to limit displacement, but also looks at positive steps to build regional social equity, moving from development without displacement to development with diversity. This report emphasizes that livable neighborhoods are those that sustain their social, cultural, and racial/ethnic diversity—and do not lead to displacement as a byproduct of neighborhood improvement—and that this is a critical goal of regional planning. This goal will serve a more significant purpose as we seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through more compact development that clusters jobs, transit, and housing around existing infrastructure.

Challenges

- To fully realize the benefits of TOD, it is essential that Bay Area communities take action to ensure that the opportunities created through TOD are available to all, including low-income residents who are most in need of the cost savings and potential health benefits of living near transit.

Successes

- Three focused case studies were developed for community strategies to embrace redevelopment while guarding against displacement.