What Our Partners Are Saying

"[GCC coalition members] all have their issues that they are primarily promoting, but affordable TOD was on the agenda for all."

—LAURA SIMPSON, PLANNER, CONCORD

"The plans in which [GCC partners] were involved had higher levels of steady community involvement from beginning to end, and gave the city a fuller understanding of what mattered to the community."

—LAURA COMINZKI, PLANNER, OAKLAND

"The Catalyst Grant was exactly what the Mission community needed at exactly the right time. Without the grant, I believe the project never would have happened."

—JEREMY SHAW, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MISSION COMMUNITY MARKET

Great Communities Collaborative

Current Funder Network

- The San Francisco Foundation (Co-Chair)
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation (Co-Chair)
- Ford Foundation
- The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation
- The California Endowment
- The Kresge Foundation
- Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund

Current Advisory Board

- Allison Brooks, Bay Area Joint Policy Committee
- Ellen Wu, Urban Habitat
- Craig Adelman, Low Income Investment Fund
- Carlos Romero, East Palo Alto Envision-Transform-Build
- Derecka Mehrens, Working Partnerships USA
- Amie Fishman, Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California
- Jeff Hobson, TransForm
- Jeremy Madsen, Greenbelt Alliance
- Amanda Montez, Silicon Valley Leadership Group
- Miya Yoshitani, Asian Pacific Environmental Network

In addition to the foundations and organizations listed above, GCC works with many other partners throughout the region, including advocacy groups, community-based organizations, and think tanks.

Learn more about Great Communities Collaborative at **greatcommunities.org**.

Great Communities Collaborative is an initiative of The San Francisco Foundation.

THE SAN FRANCISCO FOUNDATION

Great Communities Collaborative

GCC Evaluation 2015 Interim Report:
Advancing Equitable Growth

Great Communities Collaborative is a network of organizations dedicated to creating healthy, thriving, and affordable neighborhoods in the Bay Area, anchored by transit and linked to all the opportunities and amenities that make a good community truly great. We shape regional and local policy, plans, and projects by mobilizing residents; convening regional policy leaders, community groups, businesses, and public agencies; and forging financial solutions.

This report looks back at GCC's wins and assesses what they mean for our work moving forward. It summarizes findings from the second year of a three-year evaluation of GCC's impact conducted by ICF International that focuses on two key aspects of GCC's work: the seven station area plans that were adopted between April 2014 and April 2015 and the six catalyst grant projects funded between 2012 and 2014.

GCC Is Advancing Equitable TOD in the Bay Area

In spite of the rising cost of living and mounting challenges to creating affordable housing, GCC has successfully worked to foster equitable and sustainable transit oriented development (TOD).

- Five of the seven GCC station area plans increase funding or create developer incentives for affordable housing.
- Five plans include inclusionary targets for affordable housing.
- Six plans include TOD-appropriate parking policies that create more livable streets and reduce the cost of TOD.
- All seven plans include improved active transportation facilities.
- GCC adapted to constraints on requiring affordable housing in station areas by pursuing new approaches such as creating renter assistance programs, downzoning potential TOD sites to increase the likelihood that developers will provide affordable housing in exchange for density or height bonuses, and securing commitments from local governments to monitor affordability issues.

Adopted station area plans include policies addressing key GCC priorities 75 percent of the time, and in over 60 percent of those cases the policies are mandatory.

GCC Is Securing Commitments to Build More Housing, Affordable Housing, and Jobs Near Transit

GCC's station area work aims to concentrate housing and jobs around stations to make it easier for more people to take transit and create more vibrant and walkable communities. Collectively, these seven GCC station area plans included more than 19,000 new housing units and 47,000 new jobs. If inclusionary housing targets are met, over 2,700 of these units will be deed-restricted affordable housing.

Impact of GCC Plans

Several communities have already made strides toward realizing the equitable TOD vision that GCC has helped to establish in station area plans.

- Concord and Oakland are both developing bicycle and pedestrian master plans, and Mountain View is conducting a feasibility study of protected bike lanes on El Camino Real.
- Oakland hired a consultant to study new impact fees, including an affordable housing fee that would address issues raised by GCC in the Lake Merritt and Broadway/Valdez plans.
- Downtown Concord, Oakland Lake Merritt, and South San Francisco won grants from MTC for pedestrian improvements, and GCC partners helped with some grant applications.
- In South San Francisco, Caltrain has committed $49 million and the City has contributed $6 million to extend the Caltrain station and open up a new entrance in the city's downtown.
- Five station areas have seen at least one private development project move forward.
- Broadway/Valdez and Mountain View have seen extensive development, with a combined total of over 1,800 new housing units currently underway and many more projects proposed, including several that will provide affordable housing or other community benefits.

Planned New Housing Units, Affordable Housing Units, and Jobs For Year 2 Station Areas

	Total planned new housing units	Total planned new affordable housing units	Total planned new jobs
San José Diridon	2,588	388	16,788
Mountain View El Camino Real	1,540	154	650
Downtown Concord	3,465	347	4,000
Oakland Lake Merritt	4,900	1,054	4,100
Oakland Broadway/Valdez	1,800	504	4,100
Warm Springs/South Fremont	3,350	286	15,000
South San Francisco	1,400	-	2,400
Total	**19,043**	**2,733**	**47,038**

Catalyst Funding Engages New Partners in New Approaches

Between 2012 and 2014, GCC gave catalyst grants to six projects, with the goal of helping grantees leverage other funding to implement plans for sustainable, equitable neighborhoods. These projects provided GCC with an opportunity to experiment with new approaches to implementation.

Successes of Catalyst Grants

- Grantees report that catalyst funding **enabled them to take on projects that they would not otherwise have been able to tackle.**
- Three of the six grantees **leveraged additional funding for their projects,** either from private donors or public agencies.
- City staff were generally very positive about grantees' work, which indicates that selected grantees had strong existing relationships with their communities and a track record of success.

Summary of Catalyst Grant Projects

Project	Lead Grantee	Description
Mission Community Market Mercado Plaza	Mission Community Market (MCM)	Conduct outreach to inform the design of a planned public space adjacent to the Mission Community Market
Balboa Park MUNI Upper Yards Affordable Housing	People Organizing to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights (PODER), Filipino Community Center (FCC) and Coleman Advocates	Advocate for equitable TOD on a publicly-owned site near BART
Dogpatch-Potrero Green Benefits District	Build Public (formerly UP Urban, Inc.)	Implement a new tax assessment district that will help maintain and create green space in two San Francisco neighborhoods
Study of Former Redevelopment Properties	Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH)	Identify publicly-owned sites near transit that provide opportunities for affordable housing development
East Palo Alto Anti-Displacement	Peninsula Interfaith Housing (PIA), Urban Habitat, Youth United for Community Action (YUCA)	Organize low-income residents to participate in the Westside Area Plan and prevent displacement
Childcare Facility at San Leandro BART	BRIDGE Housing	Design and develop a child care center at San Leandro Crossings, a new mixed-use TOD near BART

Moving Beyond Station Area Planning

With station area plans now in development or in place across the Bay Area, GCC is shifting its focus from planning to implementation. Our evaluation reveals potential points of engagement. These are strategies that GCC and its partners took on during some station area planning processes.

Pros and Cons of Different Approaches to Implementation

Point of Engagement	Opportunities	Challenges
Housing Elements	Housing is a growing focus given the high cost of living in the Bay Area Best opportunity to achieve citywide affordable housing policies All cities create housing elements, so best practices can be shared among partners	Housing Elements provide few opportunities to address transportation, access to jobs, or open space Housing Elements are adopted every eight years, and the last round of adoptions is nearly complete
Grant-funded Follow-up Plans and Infrastructure	GCC has a track record of success helping cities apply for funding Grant applications provide opportunities for GCC to become a valued stakeholder The number of grant sources is growing due to cap and trade funding	Grant applications may not always be successful Opportunities vary widely from city to city Jointly applying for grants would require work up front to understand opportunities and build relationships
Development Proposals	Development proposals provide promising and visible opportunities to implement plans	Engaging in development projects is is very time- and labor-intensive Lack of public process limits opportunities for engagement