

# You *can* get there from here...

An occasional paper series from the Social Equity and Opportunity Forum of  
the College of Urban and Public Affairs



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**Development That Adds Up:  
Accounting for the Social Bottom Line of Triple Bottom Line Investment**

Supplement E: The Social Bottom Line in Action – Seven Case Illustrations

Janet Hammer, Ph.D., Briana Meier, and Raihana Ansary  
The Initiative on Triple Bottom Line Development  
College of Urban and Public Affairs  
Portland State University

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Questions and comments about this report can be directed to Janet Hammer at 503-725-5203 or [hammerj@pdx.edu](mailto:hammerj@pdx.edu).

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Images provided by Unity Council, Rudy Bruner Award, Codding Enterprises, & The POINT (clockwise from left)

## OVERVIEW

Sustainability is defined by three integrated elements—environment, society, and economy. These elements are sometimes referred to as the Three Es—(environment, equity, economy), the Three Ps (planet, people, profit), or the Triple Bottom Line (environment, society, economy). The concept has captured increasing attention, but a number of questions remain regarding how sustainability can be achieved and measured. The social dimensions in particular are often neglected or poorly understood.

The Initiative on Triple Bottom Line Development<sup>1</sup> at Portland State University's College of Urban and Public Affairs has responded to this gap by defining the Social Bottom Line (SBL), creating this casebook of SBL projects, and listening to key stakeholders' suggestions regarding priority strategies to advance thinking and practice in this realm.<sup>2</sup> This document provides a brief overview of our work and shares seven cases that illustrate the Social Bottom Line in practice.

## DEFINING THE SOCIAL BOTTOM LINE

The first phase of our effort focused on defining the Social Bottom Line. We asked thought leaders from six development-related sectors how they define the Social Bottom Line and what it might look like in practice, and examined more than thirty-five tools for assessing the Social and Triple Bottom Lines.<sup>3</sup> Synthesizing those findings, we defined the Social Bottom Line in our briefing paper, "Development that Adds Up: Accounting for the Social Bottom Line of Triple Bottom Line Investment," and companion SBL Framework.

The Social Bottom Line is inextricably related to environmental and economic bottom lines. It considers who is being sustained and suggests that development should support human health, well-being, and opportunity. We define the Social Bottom Line as having five core elements and eighteen sub-elements (Table One). These elements are consistent with evidence regarding social determinants of health<sup>4</sup>—the places in which we live, work, and play influence our health and ability to make healthy choices. The elements align with American values about access to opportunity, reward for work, self-determination, and responsibility—suggesting that

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1 Previously named the Social Equity and Opportunity Forum (SEOF).

2 Other documents in this series can be found at <http://www.pdx.edu/cupa/publications>.

3 The six sectors include business, community, development, finance, government, and research and consulting.

4 For example, Marmot, M. and Wilkinson, R. (Eds.). (2006). *Social determinants of health (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, and Healthy People <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/about/default.aspx>.

community members should have the opportunity to define, and participate in realizing, development goals. Perhaps most importantly, the elements recognize the importance of context and avoid prescriptive, one-size-fits-all solutions.

## TABLE ONE: DRAFT SOCIAL BOTTOM LINE ELEMENTS

<p><b>Responds to Community Context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment with Community Context</li> <li>• Inclusive Engagement</li> </ul> <p><b>Fosters Healthy Living</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Completeness</li> <li>• Accessible and Affordable Housing Options</li> <li>• Mobility</li> <li>• Integration with Other Environmental Sustainability Goals</li> </ul> <p><b>Strengthens Community Fabric</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Sense of Place and Identity</li> <li>• Inviting Public Spaces</li> <li>• Social Connection and Civic Engagement</li> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Community Involvement by Project Developers and Project Businesses</li> </ul> <p><b>Fairly Distributes Burdens and Benefits of Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-Cost Accounting</li> <li>• Social Inclusion</li> <li>• Equity Ownership and Profit-Sharing Opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>Contributes to a Vibrant Community Economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Economic Development</li> <li>• Healthy and Rewarding Employment Opportunities</li> <li>• Positive Impact on Fiscal Health of Community</li> <li>• Other Innovations</li> </ul>
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## IDENTIFYING EXAMPLES OF THE SOCIAL BOTTOM LINE

Having defined the Social Bottom Line, we then set about to identify projects in the United States that illustrate the Social Bottom Line in practice. We conducted a literature review including seventy-five search term combinations in four academic databases and on the Web, consulted leading community development organizations and private development firms, and reviewed websites of relevant organizations to identify potential projects (Appendix).

Despite casting a rather broad net, our search yielded very few results. This suggests that the Social Bottom Line is not well represented in development projects, that projects containing these elements have not been written about, and/or that different terminology is used and projects were not identified in our search. We suspect that additional projects do exist and welcome suggestions. Further, we expect that the number of projects exemplifying the Social and Triple Bottom lines is likely to increase with time, as the topic has gained salience and tools and incentives to promote such development are increasing rapidly.<sup>5</sup>

To be clear, there have been many other projects and studies, over decades, that address some elements of the Social Bottom Line—for example, efforts regarding green affordable housing and smart growth development. While we recognize and appreciate that important work, our interest here is in projects that illustrate the full complement of elements that constitute the Social Bottom Line.

This casebook profiles seven development projects that exemplify the Social Bottom Line in a range of contexts.<sup>6</sup> Each case analysis consisted of a review of documents (primarily publicly available sources) and an interview with one or more key project staff focusing on lessons learned. Interviewees were provided an opportunity to review drafts for accuracy. Resources did not allow for detailed analyses such as a review of project financials or interviews with stakeholders. We recommend such analysis as a next step.

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<sup>5</sup> For example, LEED ND, BREEAM Sustainable Communities, One Planet Communities, and the HUD-EPA-DOT Sustainable Communities Initiative.

<sup>6</sup> Other potential cases were identified but not included either because of availability (staff unavailable for interview), timing (discovered too late in the review process), or redundancy (similar to existing case). These include, for example, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (MA), Hismen Hin-Nu Terrace (CA), Mission Creek (CA), and Noisette (SC).

Cases were selected to illustrate SBL elements in a range of contexts. When reviewing these cases, it is important to remember that they are intended to pique the imagination and do not exhaust the spectrum of possibility with respect to social bottom line development in practice.

The seven cases profiled include:

- Fruitvale Village—a mixed-use transit oriented development
- Hunts Point Riverside Park—a public green space
- New Columbia—a mixed-income, mixed-use neighborhood
- Sonoma Mountain Village—a green suburban retrofit
- The Village at Market Creek—a mixed-use development
- Troy Gardens—an open space conservation, mixed-income cohousing community
- Vanport Square—a mixed-use development featuring commercial condominiums.

Each of the seven profiles includes an overview of the project, highlights of how the five Social Bottom Line elements are addressed, and key observations and lessons learned. The casebook concludes with a synthesis of findings and discussion of implications.



Images provided by Unity Council

- CASE ONE:** Fruitvale Village
- LOCATION:** Oakland, California
- PROJECT TYPE:** Mixed-use transit oriented development

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Fruitvale Village is a vibrant, transit-oriented development. Phase I, completed in 2004, includes retail stores, office space, and housing, as well as a health clinic, senior center, child development center, city library, high school, children’s counseling clinic, plaza, and parking garage. The project visually and functionally connects the neighborhood’s commercial strip with a regional transit stop, bringing vitality to an area that had experienced significant decline and distress.

Unity Council (UC), a local community development corporation with deep roots in the community, has led the project. Key partners included the City of Oakland and BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit—a regional agency). Phase II of the Village project includes 275 housing units, two-thirds market rate and one-third affordable. This phase of the project is due to break ground in early 2013.

## ALIGNMENT WITH COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The project was born out of community opposition to a proposed BART parking structure. The

neighborhood had already endured numerous disruptions to its physical fabric, including from an elevated train line and highway system, and the proposed garage would further isolate and fragment the community.

Unity Council took the lead in representing and organizing area residents to develop an alternative to the proposed parking garage. The vision that emerged called for a mixed-use transit village to meet the needs of both residents and BART commuters. The project responded to community needs by clustering social services for ease of access, improving transit services, and restoring vibrancy to a deteriorated area, said Jeff Pace, Unity Council's Chief Operating Officer, in a September 2010 interview. Further, the design responds to community input by protecting important views and by evoking stylistically the heritage of the surrounding community.

Unity Council's relationship with the community was instrumental to aligning the project with the community context and to achieving a strong Social Bottom Line. Based in Fruitvale since 1964, Unity Council has developed strong relationships with area residents and a history of serving the community. UC worked with numerous traditionally marginalized groups in an inclusive and enduring multiyear engagement process. Most importantly, the project responded specifically to community input.

## FOSTERS HEALTHY LIVING

Fruitvale Village's tenant mix offers a variety of goods and services, contributing to a complete community. Commercial businesses include restaurants, a dental clinic, an optometrist, and a bank branch. Community services include a public library branch, a charter high school, a non-profit psychological health services clinic that provides counseling to foster care children, a community health provider that provides linguistically and culturally appropriate care to patients regardless of their ability to pay, a Head Start program that serves hundreds of children each week, and Fruitvale Senior Center.<sup>7</sup>

Ten of the forty-seven rental units constructed during phase one are designated affordable. Unity Council also constructed additional senior housing at Las Bouganvilleas (a few blocks from the Village) and plans are in progress for additional market rate and affordable residential units

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7 Scully, J. (2005). *Fruitvale Village I development case study*. Washington, DC: ULI — The Urban Land Institute. [www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/about/conplan/pdf/fruitvale\\_transit\\_village.pdf](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/about/conplan/pdf/fruitvale_transit_village.pdf) and <http://www.unitycouncil.org/fruitvale/index.htm> and <http://www.unitycouncil.org/fruitvale/outline1.htm>.

in Fruitvale Village II.

The sustainable transportation options of the project's first phase are notable. Fruitvale Village is designed explicitly to connect with a BART station that serves as an intermodal transit hub for ten local and regional bus lines. A taxi stand and a bicycle station, complete with "valet" parking and space for over two hundred bikes, contribute to the neighborhood's many transit options.<sup>8</sup> To encourage walkability, the project designers included large pedestrian-friendly plazas as well as traffic calming measures along the adjacent arterial street. Green building elements were not at the forefront during Phase I, however, Pace notes that Phase II includes a more explicit green focus.

## STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY FABRIC

Design features such as walkways, signage, and a plaza that invites outdoor gathering strengthen the connections between the BART station and surrounding neighborhood and contribute to a sense of place and identity. Opportunities for connection and engagement are also enhanced by the co-location of office, retail, and community serving spaces.

Several of the tenants at Fruitvale Village are nonprofit or educational institutions whose organizational missions center on the development of individual and community capacity. This includes Unity Council, whose mission is to build individual and family wealth through sustainable economic, social, and neighborhood development, and ARISE, an Oakland Unified School District Charter school whose focus is on preparing students from low-income families to attend college. In 2010, Pace said, all nineteen of the students from ARISE's first graduating class went on to four-year colleges. Twenty-two of twenty-five seniors graduating in 2011, all local Fruitvale youth, will attend college. Pace notes that ARISE is not a magnet school, but a neighborhood school with extraordinary outcomes.

The commercial vitality, reduced crime rates, and lack of graffiti and vandalism in the project area result from community support for and pride in Fruitvale Village, aggressive policing, and active maintenance.<sup>9</sup> The development has become known as an exemplary project, with Unity Council staff providing frequent tours to visiting groups. "This project put Fruitvale neighborhood on the map internationally," said Pace, "as a model for how to do inner city redevelop-

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Scully (2005), and communication with Jeff Pace, May, 2011.

ment the right way.”

## FAIRLY DISTRIBUTES BURDENS AND BENEFITS OF GROWTH

Instead of building a parking structure that would primarily serve non-resident commuters, the developers designed the project to benefit to both commuters and the surrounding neighborhood. The project aims to ameliorate disinvestment in the community and ensure that benefits of development accrue to local community members. Rather than attempting to change the neighborhood by attracting new residents, the developers focused on working with organizations that deliver services, such as job training, childcare, and health care that meet current residents’ needs.<sup>10</sup>

Developers supported locally owned businesses by limiting the number of chain stores to “no more than 20 percent of all commercial tenants in the project.”<sup>11</sup> To date, a local or regional tenant occupies all but one retail space. In addition, Pace said, nearly all of these businesses are minority or women-owned. Franchises (e.g. Subway, Papa John’s and State Farm) are operated by local, independent agents.

## CONTRIBUTES TO A VIBRANT COMMUNITY ECONOMY

The Fruitvale project has helped catalyze commercial activity in the area. The project tapped unmet market demand and is keeping dollars in the local economy. The area now stands as one of Oakland’s highest sales tax revenue sources and vacancy rates of the adjacent commercial core on International Boulevard have dropped to 1 percent from a rate of nearly 40 percent when project planning began.<sup>12</sup>

## INNOVATIONS, OBSERVATIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

Unity Council’s relationships, knowledge, and commitment to the community were integral to the project’s success. This combination helped the developer work effectively with residents, identify and respond to community priorities, structure complex financing, and navigate important partnerships and inevitable project delays. It also led to the project’s innovative clustering

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Scully (2005), p. 17.

<sup>12</sup> Scully (2005), p. 9.

of social services tailored to community needs in a mixed-use, transit-oriented environment.

Fruitvale Village is situated between two areas with distinctly different demographics, creating some confusion regarding who to market the retail components of the project to, especially in the early stages. Ultimately, Unity Council intended the project to serve as a bridge between communities. However, that vision has not been fully realized in Fruitvale's seven year history, despite numerous initiatives to encourage commuters to spend time and dollars in the community, Pace said. These efforts include a vibrant public market that has been showcased in regional magazines and TV programs, a thrice-weekly farmers market, and events. Even with the creation of beautiful and useful amenities, commuters have not become primary patrons of the Village. Pace notes that this limited interaction is thought to be attributable both to the nature of the commute (e.g., needing to get home to family and other obligations), as well as to psychological barriers and human tendencies to avoid people and areas of economic and social difference.

Development of the Fruitvale Village project has been complex, time consuming, and fluid. Pace observed that things can change rapidly and suggested the importance of being prepared to modify your pro forma—particularly when working in a poor, emerging community. In addition, although city, regional, state, and federal agencies contributed substantially to the project, the Unity Council underwrote a significant portion of the project costs. UC raised all needed funds for the project without any equity investors, Pace said, and also donated close to \$2 million of its own reserves to the effort. UC has begun to see modest financial returns on the project and anticipates that the second phase will free up some of the organization's invested funds for other efforts. Financial returns, Pace said, are primarily attributable to the achievement of stable occupancy of about 98 percent (provides predictable rents and operating costs), a complementary service density (helps stabilize tenants' business and facilitates timely rent payments), and a favorable interest rate environment (provides cost savings).



Images provided by The Point &amp; Rudy Bruner Award

- CASE TWO:** Hunts Point Riverside Park
- LOCATION:** New York City, New York
- PROJECT TYPE:** Civic amenity

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Hunts Point Riverside Park has transformed an illegal dumpsite into an oasis in New York's South Bronx. The park brings an outdoor amphitheater, grill and picnic area, floating dock, and children's play area to a neighborhood with few recreation and open space opportunities and little access to the river surrounding it.

As important as these amenities are, the park is best understood as part of a larger constellation of projects, plans, and partners. It is connected to community-based environmental education, culture, and employment programs, as well as to a greenway initiative. Driven by community leadership and determination, the project illustrates how community-based, public, and private organizations can identify opportunities for synergy and collaborate to realize shared goals. Hunts Point Riverside Park was completed in 2007, with interim park uses beginning in 1999. The greenway initiatives to which it is connected are in progress.

## RESPONDS TO COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The context for this project includes a neighborhood community experiencing high rates of environmentally related health issues such as asthma and diabetes, little access to open space and recreational opportunities, and high rates of unemployment. The adjacent river was severely degraded, with few points of access. Options for safe and enjoyable walking and bicycling, for commuting or recreation, were limited.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, a number of initiatives to address these issues began to emerge and coalesce. The Bronx River Alliance's<sup>13</sup> efforts to reclaim and restore the river include a twenty-three-mile Bronx River Greenway plan with the Hunts Point Riverside Park site as its southern terminus on the west bank of the river.<sup>14</sup> The POINT Community Development Corporation (The POINT), a member of the Bronx River Working Group that served as the Alliance's predecessor, secured funds to work with community members to clean, green and plan for the site. The City joined the effort, allocating funds for capital improvements to the park. The POINT and Sustainable South Bronx, another key community-based organization, worked with park designers and community members to identify and incorporate community priorities. The park also connects to the South Bronx Greenway project proposed by The POINT and Sustainable South Bronx and adopted by the City.

While the project is part of a larger effort to improve the Bronx River and Hunts Point, an environment was created that allowed community members to take a lead in the development process. This was facilitated by neighborhood-based organizations committed to deep engagement and partnership, particularly with traditionally disadvantaged groups of people.

## FOSTERS HEALTHY LIVING

A classic environmental justice<sup>15</sup> story, the Hunts Point community has long been a dumping ground and host to undesirable land uses. As Miquela Craytor, Executive Director of

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13 Formerly the Bronx River Working Group, the Alliance includes more than 60 partners and supporters representing community based organizations, non-governmental organizations, schools, and federal, state, and local governments: <http://www.bronxriver.org/?pg=content&p=aboutus>.

14 Bronx River Greenway Plan, [www.bronxriver.org/plans/](http://www.bronxriver.org/plans/)

15 Environmental justice addresses the disproportionate burdening of environmental harms and unwanted land uses on specific groups of people.

Sustainable South Bronx noted in a June 2011 interview, this community has shouldered a significant amount of the city's industrial and waste infrastructure but has not received a fair share of amenities or benefits. Hunts Point is heavily industrial and, not surprisingly given the land use patterns, asthma and diabetes rates are significantly higher in this area than average.<sup>16</sup> Further, though adjacent to the river, community access has been restricted both by land use patterns and the mix of unpleasant activities such as industrial activity, trash, crime, and traffic. The neighborhood has a deficit of open space and the park provides much needed green spaces for active and passive recreation.

In addition to providing access to green space and the river, the park serves as the base to a number of programmatic activities that foster healthy living. The POINT, an arts and culture organization focused primarily on community and youth development in the Hunts Point community, created a Campus for Arts and the Environment adjacent to Hunts Point Riverside Park that is home to a large community garden. The garden yields fresh produce for neighborhood residents and helps to raise awareness about urban farming. The Campus is also home to Rocking the Boat, a local nonprofit whose wooden boat building and water-based programs provide youth from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to build confidence, relationship, and professionally oriented skills. Rocking the Boat offers free rowing to the public on Saturdays from May to September.<sup>17</sup> The Hunts Point Hustle, a 5k run sponsored by Sustainable South Bronx, begins and ends at the park.

Hunts Point Riverside Park, the associated greenways, and Campus for Arts and the Environment foster healthy living by remediating contaminated sites, restoring natural habitat along the river, providing access to green space and outdoor activities, improving pedestrian safety around railroad crossings and areas of high volume truck traffic, and improving access to healthy, environmentally friendly bicycle and pedestrian corridors. Hunts Point Terminal Market, one of the largest wholesale food markets in the world, is located next door to the park. The park is used by workers at the Market and contributes to their quality of life and perception of the area. The park connects to the emerging South Bronx and Bronx River Greenways, fostering healthy living by supporting safe bicycle and pedestrian connections and improved environmental quality.

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16 Bruner Foundation. (2009). *Rudy Bruner Award: Silver medal winner, Hunts Point Riverside Park case study*. [http://www.brunerfoundation.org/rba/index.php?page=2009/hunts\\_park](http://www.brunerfoundation.org/rba/index.php?page=2009/hunts_park).

17 Rocking the Boat, <http://www.rockingtheboat.org>.

## STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY FABRIC

Hunts Point Riverside Park is an inviting space that provides residents with a connection to the river for the first time in decades. Numerous community events are held at the park, including the annual Hunts Point Fish Parade and Summer Festival, the annual Hunts Point Hustle 5K run, weekly public rowing excursions, and the annual Amazing Bronx River Flotilla. The events held at the park have served to strengthen community fabric. As Craytor notes, “running a race in their own neighborhood is huge. People are excited to participate in their own community. Activities like that strengthen the sense of ownership of that space and the neighborhood.” In addition, the adjacent Campus for Arts and the Environment hosts many activities designed to build community leadership capacity, particularly for youth.

The very process of developing the park energized community members and provided a productive avenue to channel ideas and effort. Residents built skills ranging from organizing and designing to collaborating with government and businesses. The park development process “created a feeling of competence and empowerment that carries over to other situations and projects, and allowed residents to imagine other options for their community.”<sup>18</sup> The development process appears to also have helped to strengthen relationships with neighboring business. For example, a scrap yard and a food distribution center each contributed to the project.

## FAIRLY DISTRIBUTES BURDENS AND BENEFITS OF GROWTH

Hunts Point Riverside Park begins to ameliorate long-term environmental and social injustices experienced by a neighborhood that has shouldered many physical, economic and social burdens associated with growth and change in the city. Development of the park and related projects has been made possible in part by funding from local and national organizations. However, community members have led the process and have provided significant benefit to local residents and the natural environment.

The project was catalytic in building the vision, capacity, and connections needed to effectively shape additional developments in the neighborhood. While working to create Hunts Point Riverside Park, residents began to imagine larger possibilities for their community and to establish

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<sup>18</sup> Bruner Foundation. (2009). p.29/83.

the collaborative relationships with key partners necessary to make that possible. For example, when the City's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) was planning to expand a waste water treatment plan in Hunts Point, the community was able to negotiate a community benefit agreement that allocates \$22 million for community amenities to be designed through a community visioning process. One of the three projects is slated to be a community boathouse built at the Campus for Arts and the Environment.

## CONTRIBUTES TO A VIBRANT COMMUNITY ECONOMY

As a public park, the project is not expected to be a significant generator of jobs. At the same time, it does contribute to community economic development in a number of ways. Anticipating that jobs would be generated in association with the park and greenway development, Sustainable South Bronx created the Bronx Environmental Stewardship Training (BEST) Academy to provide green collar job skills. Participants in the BEST Academy gain skills by assisting with park maintenance, while adding value to the park through their work. Notes Craytor, the program also increases awareness about the park and greenway and reconnects people to their backyard. At the POINT's Campus for Arts and the Environment adjacent to the park, local nonprofit organizations provide job training, locally produced food, and space for new initiatives and artists. An art gallery, created out of repurposed shipping containers, is scheduled to open at the campus in autumn 2011 said Adam Liebowitz, Community Development Director at The POINT, in a 2010 interview.

Also of note, both the Bronx River Greenway Plan and South Bronx Greenway Plan highlight local economic development potential associated with the greenway and articulate priorities such as worker retention, locally owned enterprises, living wage jobs, and businesses with environmental missions.<sup>19</sup> While this project is helping to stimulate environmental, social, and economic revitalization, the overall effort is still underway. "I would actually hope that [residents] are not satisfied with it," Liebowitz said, "because we're nowhere near our vision yet."

## INNOVATIONS, OBSERVATIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

One of the key lessons associated with this development pertains to the effectiveness of collaboration between the community and various organizations. The transformative potential of

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<sup>19</sup> Bronx River Greenway Plan, [www.bronxriver.org/plans](http://www.bronxriver.org/plans) and Sustainable South Bronx Greenway Executive Summary, Spring 2006, <http://www.nycedc.com/ProjectsOpportunities/CurrentProjects/Bronx/SouthBronxGreenway/Pages/SouthBronxGreenway.aspx>.

the park is anchored in the community; without the vision and effort of local residents the park would not have achieved a strong Social Bottom Line. At the same time, there was essential financial, intellectual, political, and social capital to be contributed by various public and private organizations. The park has succeeded to the extent that it has because a confluence of interests and resources was recognized and effectively harnessed, with the community able to lead the way.

Despite strong collaboration and cooperation with the City and other stakeholders, efforts to integrate local residents into the job creation components of the project were stymied by existing procurement laws. Craytor suggests that an important lesson learned pertains to the need to address contracting issues early on via appropriate engagement with elected officials, senior staff, and unions, and attention to bid documents. Another lesson pertains to the need for attention to long term sustainability of the project. This includes both allocating adequate resources for upkeep as well as building awareness, enthusiasm, and connection to the project.

The project demonstrates the value of making connections not only among diverse organizations, but between projects and spaces as well: the impact of the park is magnified because it is part of a larger greenway initiative.<sup>20</sup> The project also highlights the roles of vision and persistence in project success. When the idea of the park was first proposed, one of the CDC leaders was initially skeptical, not believing the river even touched her community until she followed her dog down a path one day.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, when the idea of a South Bronx Greenway was initially proposed by the community, many considered the idea outlandish.<sup>22</sup> But the vision was powerful, and once it took hold the partners were tenacious in the pursuit of their goals. Still a work in progress, the project illustrates how green infrastructure and civic amenities can contribute to sustainable community development.

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20 Lewis, J. (July 13, 2009), Bruner Award: Hunts Point Riverside Park, Buzz (blog), *Next American City*, <http://americacity.org/buzz/entry/1702/>.

21 Bruner Foundation. (2009).

22 New York City Economic Development Corporation. (November 20, 2006). *Mayor Bloomberg unveils South Bronx Greenway Plan*. <http://www.nycedc.com/PressRoom/PressReleases/Pages/SBxGreenway2006.aspx>.



Images provided by Housing Authority of Portland

- CASE THREE:** New Columbia  
**LOCATION:** Portland, Oregon  
**PROJECT TYPE:** Neighborhood development

## PROJECT SUMMARY

New Columbia, an eighty-two acre mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood, has won recognition for its achievements in addressing environmental quality, community livability, and economic opportunity. The development includes a range of housing types, a four acre city park and four pocket parks, retail and services, and a “community campus” comprised of an elementary school, a Boys and Girls Club, and a recreation center. Previously, the site was home to Columbia Villa, a public housing community built in 1942 for World War II shipyard workers.

The project is particularly notable for the efforts made to support existing residents with relocation during the construction period and to integrate new and existing residents. Led by the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP),<sup>23</sup> the project has included partnership with numerous other public and private entities, including the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s HOPE<sup>24</sup> VI program, to replace or rebuild distressed public housing and reduce concentrated poverty. The rental and owner-occupied housing, parks, community campus, and com-

<sup>23</sup> In 2011, HAP changed its name to Home Forward to reflect its broader geographic reach (Multnomah County rather than City of Portland) and mission (home and a way to move forward in life): <http://www.hapdx.org/>.

<sup>24</sup> Housing Opportunity for People Everywhere (HOPE).

mercial/office space were completed between 2005 and 2006.

## RESPONDS TO COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Columbia Villa, the public housing community that previously occupied this site, was one of the nation's oldest public housing developments. Safety concerns and maintenance costs were an impetus for replacement, coupled by a desire to better integrate the development with the surrounding neighborhood.<sup>25</sup> However, many of the residents felt a strong sense of community and two-thirds did not want to move.<sup>26</sup> As one resident noted, Columbia Villa "wasn't bad, it was just old."<sup>27</sup>

Prompted by concern about potential negative effects of relocation, HAP took significant steps to engage and support residents through the transition process.<sup>28</sup> Relocation Specialists and Community and Support Services Specialists were hired to assist with the transition, skillfully navigating more than a dozen native languages while delivering the services that residents needed—from finding new homes to coordinating with movers, landlords, utility providers, and schools.<sup>29</sup> Support services were available spanning a five year period before, during, and after relocation. These efforts were well received, with a large majority of residents surveyed stating that they felt cared for by staff and satisfied with their replacement housing.

Community involvement was prioritized from the grant-writing phase through project implementation: "The goal was to be transparent and inclusive throughout the entire planning and development process."<sup>30</sup> An eighteen-member Community Advisory Committee provided input on project design, financing, and supportive services, and a Relocation Task Force was formed to focus on resident relocation. A thorough review of lessons learned by other HOPE VI relocation efforts included a tour, with Columbia Villa residents, of a Seattle Housing Authority HOPE VI project to hear from residents there.<sup>31</sup>

25 Housing Authority of Portland. (March 28, 2003). *New Columbia background information: Why replace Columbia Village?* <http://www.hapdx.org/newcolumbia/pdfs/why.pdf>.

26 Gibson, K. (2007). The relocation of the Columbia Villa community: Views from residents. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 27(5), p.9.

27 Gibson. (2007), p.17.

28 Housing Authority of Portland (HAP). (December, 2007). *New Columbia: Report on development goals*, <http://www.hapdx.org/newcolumbia/developmentreport.html>.

HAP. (April 15, 2004). *Columbia Villa relocation report*, [www.hapdx.org/newcolumbia/pdfs/relocationstory.pdf](http://www.hapdx.org/newcolumbia/pdfs/relocationstory.pdf).

29 HAP. (2004).

30 HAP. (2007), p.10.

31 Smart Growth Network. (2006). *Smart growth in action: New Columbia neighborhood, Portland, Oregon*. <http://sgnarc.ncat.org/engine/index.php/resources/2006/03/17/Smart-Growth-In-Action-New-Columbia-Neighborhood-Portland-Oregon>.

## FOSTERS HEALTHY LIVING

New Columbia is designed to foster healthy, high quality living. Strategies to achieve this objective include affordable and accessible housing choices, environmental stewardship in building and site design, connectivity within the site and to adjacent areas, a mix of uses, good transit service, and active transportation and recreation options.

The development includes a range of housing types to accommodate households of diverse sizes and income levels. Housing options include market rate and affordable homes for sale, rental apartments affordable to families at or below 60 percent of median family income, senior rental apartments, and public housing units. Accessibility was addressed in two specific ways: Approximately 10 percent of rentals meet accessibility standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and designers gave close attention to “visitability” ensuring that there are no steps or barriers to entry to street level units, said John Keating, the Housing Authority of Portland’s Director of Strategic Partnerships.

The developer prioritized the creation of safe, pedestrian and bicycle friendly streets that connect to surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, developers worked with local agencies to reroute bus lines through the community. As a result, all residents are within a five-minute walk of public transportation.<sup>32</sup>

Pedestrian pathways also lead to the Community Campus—a hub for learning and wellness.<sup>33</sup> The Campus physically and programmatically connects a new LEED-certified elementary school, Boys & Girls Club, and city-owned recreation center. The design creates common green space by removing and replacing a street that separated the school and the community center. The Campus, whose shared facilities are governed by a community compact, provides opportunities for programmatic synergies and cost sharing.

Developers also implemented a number of construction and landscaping strategies to promote human and environmental health. For example, interior paints and carpets are free of volatile

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32 Housing Authority of Portland. (nd). Sustainability, <http://www.hapdx.org/newcolumbia/sustainability.html>

Smart Growth Network. (2006). *Smart growth in action: New Columbia neighborhood, Portland, Oregon*.

33 Architectural Record. (2007). *Rosa Parks School*. [http://archrecord.construction.com/projects/bts/archives/k-12/07\\_RPSPortland/default.asp](http://archrecord.construction.com/projects/bts/archives/k-12/07_RPSPortland/default.asp)

Housing Authority of Portland. (2006). (nd). *Community Campus*, <http://www.newcolumbia.org/our-roots/community-campus/>.

organic compounds (VOC's), energy efficient appliances and high efficiency plumbing have been installed, and native and drought-resistant plants have been established.<sup>34</sup> More than half of the 430 trees on site were preserved, many with diameters greater than 48 inches. Trees that could not be saved onsite were donated or relocated. All of the pre-existing concrete and asphalt rubble was reused onsite for road base and structural fill. Ninety-eight percent of all storm water is retained on site. A “green street” system includes approximately one hundred vegetated pocket swales, which serve double duty as water purifiers and neighborhood amenities, providing lush vegetation and buffers between pedestrians and auto traffic.<sup>35</sup> Two of the buildings are LEED certified—one of the first in a HOPE VI project.

## STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY FABRIC

Relocating 382 households (approximately 1,350 residents), many with strong attachments to the community, clearly presented a challenge to the goal of strengthened community fabric. However, as one newspaper headline suggested, the best course seemed to be “razing a neighborhood to save it.”<sup>36</sup> As noted above, a range of services were provided to support residents with this change. A survey of residents found that most were satisfied with their new housing. Seventy percent thought that the sense of community at their new location was the same or better than at Columbia Villa, though 29 percent thought it was worse.<sup>37</sup> Approximately one third of residents returned when New Columbia was completed—a figure higher than average for other HOPE VI projects, but lower than expected here. Residents chose not to return either because they were satisfied with their new location, did not want to move, or both.<sup>38</sup>

New Columbia includes a number of physical and programmatic features designed to strengthen community fabric. North Trenton, also known as “Main Street,” includes a mix of educational, commercial, and service uses that bring neighbors together. Inviting porches, walkways, and shared spaces such as parks, community gardens foster interaction among neighbors. The parks are well used by the diverse community members, Keating said. Original public art located throughout the site—created by local artists and reflecting many of the cultures and traditions

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34 Housing Authority of Portland. (nd). *Green building at New Columbia*. <http://www.hapdx.org/newcolumbia/sustainability.html>.

35 *ibid.*

36 Robben, J. (April 25, 2003). Razing a neighborhood to save it. *The Portland Tribune*, [http://www.portlandtribune.com/news/story.php?story\\_id=17765](http://www.portlandtribune.com/news/story.php?story_id=17765)

37 Gibson (2007).

38 *ibid.*

of residents—helps to cultivate a sense of place and identity. The New Columbia History Exhibit portrays what life was like on the site from the time it was home to the Chinook Indians to present day.

Cultural, civic, and recreational events are held regularly, including classes and events designed specifically for children, adolescents, young adults, and elders, as well as intergenerational programming. Quarterly Town Halls address community livability issues, though—as often is the case with community meetings—attendance tends not to be high. Explaining the Community Builders program, Keating notes that five housing authority staff and a seasonal summer employee work on site focusing on events and partnerships, housing stability (e.g., providing social service expertise regarding issues that affect property management), and advancement (e.g., assisting with education, job skills, and the Opportunity Housing Initiative). The Resident Community Builder program provides a small rental stipend to residents who implement a specific work plan—for example, recruiting volunteers and participants for a summer concert series, meeting, or other event. Resources are allocated for five resident Community Builders, however, the positions often are not filled. Keating attributed this to constraints on both staff resources (it takes a lot of time to identify and nurture these relationships) and resident resources (“people’s lives are very busy”).

## FAIRLY DISTRIBUTES BURDENS AND BENEFITS OF GROWTH

Developers employed a number of strategies to promote a fair distribution of project benefits and burdens. The supply of housing increased from 462 rentals to 854 rental and ownership units, with the number of low income housing units increasing. This is noteworthy, as many HOPE VI projects have been criticized for reducing the total amount of affordable housing by redeveloping at lower densities and including fewer affordable units.

Organizers targeted first-time homebuyers, members of minority groups, and residents of North and Northeast Portland for homeownership opportunities. These efforts paid off, as 79 percent of the homes at New Columbia were sold to first time homebuyers, 47 percent of homebuyers were people of color, and 48 percent of homebuyers were from North or Northeast Portland.<sup>39</sup> HAP’s goal of thirty affordable homes was exceeded: fifty-five homes were purchased by households at or below 60 percent of median family income.<sup>40</sup> Ten of the Columbia Villa families

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<sup>39</sup> HAP. (2007), p.9.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*

purchased homes as part of a program to help individuals build savings to move from subsidized rental housing to homeownership—two at New Columbia and eight at other locations—said Keating.<sup>41</sup>

As noted above, the redevelopment effort included relocating existing residents while extending the option of returning when construction was complete. All households were offered assistance with relocation, stability through the change, and opportunities for individual and family development.<sup>42</sup> Services included identification of replacement housing, transportation assistance, moving assistance, connection to schools and other services, emergency rent and utility help, youth development, and employment services.<sup>43</sup> Such services are important for strengthening social outcomes and, ultimately, the financial outcomes of the project.

## CONTRIBUTES TO A VIBRANT COMMUNITY ECONOMY

New Columbia contributes to community economic development most significantly through training, employment, and homeownership. Twenty-four percent of all contracts—\$27.6 million—were awarded to qualified disadvantaged, minority- or women-owned, and emerging small businesses, exceeding HAP's goal of 20 percent.<sup>44</sup> In addition, job skills training program graduates and local residents filled 103 construction jobs, apprentices accounted for 20 percent of the total construction hours, and 45 percent of construction hours were worked by women and minorities.<sup>45</sup> HAP's efforts led to its designation as the Public Agency of the Year by OAME, the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs.<sup>46</sup> Beyond employment, the project aimed to support the local economy during construction. For example, some of the lumber used was a certified sustainable source purchased from Warm Springs, and all windows, millwork and metal products were made in Western Oregon and Washington.<sup>47</sup>

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41 Section 8 rent payments are set at 30% of income: normally, as a person's income rises so does the amount of her or his rent. In the HAP program, as income rises, the extra amount that would be paid toward rent is placed into a savings account that can be used for a down payment on a home purchase.

42 Housing Authority of Portland. (2004b). *New Columbia community and supportive services: The first eighteen months*. [www.hapdx.org/newcolumbia/pdfs/css-story.pdf](http://www.hapdx.org/newcolumbia/pdfs/css-story.pdf).

43 HAP. (2007), p.3.

44 *ibid*, p.5.

45 *ibid*, pp.4-5.

46 *ibid*, p.13.

47 Housing Authority of Portland. (nd). *Green building at New Columbia*. <http://www.hapdx.org/newcolumbia/sustainability.html>.

New Columbia has also contributed to economic vitality by helping to stabilize the overall neighborhood. Property values of home surrounding the development have increased since its completion, according to Steve Rudman, Executive Director of HAP. Retail services are not a significant component of the development; however, a community-owned and managed healthy corner store opened in May 2011. The store is viewed as filling an important niche in providing access to quality, affordable food while building community and providing jobs and training.

<sup>48</sup> Business viability has been a challenge on this site (the original corner store and coffee shop both closed), indicating the need for additional attention to such issues as consumer preferences and perceptions, management, and start-up capital, suggests Keating.

## INNOVATIONS, OBSERVATIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

New Columbia demonstrates that redevelopment efforts can lessen rather than exacerbate affordable housing needs, relocation services can be satisfactorily delivered, support services can improve resident outcomes, and residents can participate in a meaningful way in project design and development. This project highlights both the importance of support services in the development process and the unrealistic nature of any expectation that new buildings by themselves will ameliorate the issues plaguing a neighborhood. Most importantly, these efforts are not just possible—they are associated with project success. The project also provides important insights into the nature of community attachments. The sense of community can be quite strong, contributing to quality of life and resilience. While such attachments are not to be taken lightly, this project demonstrates that relocation can be implemented in ways that lead to improved choices and outcomes. At the same time, careful consideration must be given regarding how best to assist vulnerable and “hard to house” households—those that are “economically fragile” due to such factors as age, physical or mental disability, immigrant or refugee status, or abuse.<sup>49</sup>

The New Columbia project provides important insight, Keating said, regarding “the right to return,” including the value of providing returning residents with an effective orientation to the new community, incentivizing successful reintegration, and communicating that residents have responsibilities along with rights. The project also suggests that you can “never underestimate the importance of paying attention to the children,” Keating said. The key lesson of being well tuned in to the youth includes being connected to the local schools.

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<sup>48</sup> Village Gardens. (nd). *Village Market*, <http://villagegardenspdx.wordpress.com/village-market-2/>.

<sup>49</sup> Gibson (2007).

This project also demonstrates successful integration of environmental quality into affordable housing developments. More challenging, but possible, is the integration of mixed-income, mixed-ownership, and mixed-cultures in housing, Keating observed. The project illustrates the importance of design and programming in building the relationships necessary for a successful community, particularly where demographics are diverse. There are few shortcuts here; time and skillful attention to this issue is key.

Finally, this project offers an important lesson about the management of expectations and need for patience and flexibility. The extended timeframe and emergent nature of the process can be “a bit messy,” noted Rudman. At the same time, observed Keating, while plans were modified as necessary along the way, commitment to the core vision did not waiver. Dedication to the Social Bottom Line remained central to the project and its success.



Images provided by Codding Enterprises

- CASE FOUR:** Sonoma Mountain Village  
**LOCATION:** Rohnert Park, California  
**PROJECT TYPE:** Mixed-use neighborhood development

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Sonoma Mountain Village (SOMO) is a mixed-use development that is transforming a 200-acre abandoned industrial/office park forty miles north of San Francisco into a hub for green building, economic vitality, and healthy living. Sonoma Mountain Village is the first North American project to receive the One Planet Communities (OPC) designation—a development approach that aims to create thriving, vibrant communities with an “ecological footprint” in balance with the earth’s carrying capacity.<sup>50</sup>

Currently SOMO is home to more than twenty businesses, a business incubator, and an event center; groundbreaking on homes in the neighborhood development is planned for 2012.

When complete, the project will include a range of housing types, community facilities, parks and open space, commercial space, and a biking and walking network that supports “five-min-

<sup>50</sup> The ecological footprint relates resource consumption and waste generation to the planet’s capacity to generate resources and absorb wastes. In ‘ecological footprint’ terms, the average US lifestyle requires about five planets to keep up with current patterns of resource use. Humanity as a whole requires about 1.5 planets. The One Planet Communities framework is designed to produce high quality lifestyles that consume resources and generate waste at a rate that our one planet can sustain. Sonoma Mountain Village. (nd). *Sonoma Mountain Village sustainability action plan report, v. 1.02*. [www.sonomamountainvillage.com/pdf/090721MediaSAP.pdf](http://www.sonomamountainvillage.com/pdf/090721MediaSAP.pdf).

ute" living."<sup>51</sup>

## ALIGNMENT WITH COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Like many suburban communities, the City of Rohnert Park has been grappling with declining school populations, job losses, budget deficits, and the negative consequences of resource-intensive development patterns. As detailed below, the project responds to this context by creating employment, services, and amenities for both new and existing residents. The project is integrated to the larger community via regional transit and easily accessed by foot or bike.

The project developer, Coddling Enterprises, is a family-owned and -managed company with more than seven decades of history in the area. As developers of a One Planet Community, Coddling Enterprises has committed to an inclusive engagement program throughout all project phases, said Ryan Sakata, a representative of the company, in an October 2010 interview. This includes coordinating engagement activities with the community-based Accountable Development Coalition. The developers have also provided leadership by working with businesses and policy-makers to support shifts to more sustainable practices.

## FOSTERS HEALTHY LIVING

Healthy living principles are at the core of Sonoma Mountain Village—from environmentally friendly buildings to affordable housing and active living choices. The developers worked with BioRegional, the nonprofit organization that leads One Planet Communities, to create the SOMO Sustainability Action Plan.<sup>52</sup> A review of the progress toward Action Plan targets shows significant accomplishments. Solar photovoltaic arrays contribute to renewable onsite energy production and existing buildings have been retrofitted to conserve energy. The project uses environmentally friendly materials in new and retrofit construction (e.g., FSC certified wood, Greenguard certified furniture), has achieved exceptional waste diversion rates, has planned water conservation for fixtures and landscaping, and maximizes access to natural daylight and fresh air.<sup>53</sup> In addition, developers will place thirty-five acres in permanent open space conser-

<sup>51</sup> The five-minute lifestyle refers to the time it takes to access basic daily goods and services by walking.

<sup>52</sup> The One Planet Communities principles that serve as the foundation to each sustainability action plan include: zero carbon, zero waste, sustainable transport, local and sustainable materials, local and sustainable food, sustainable water, natural habitats and wildlife, culture and heritage, equity and fair trade, health and happiness.

<sup>53</sup> Sonoma Mountain Village (SOMO). (2011). *Sonoma Mountain Village annual review*, <http://www.oneplanetcommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/SOMO-Annual-Review-2011.pdf>.  
Sonoma Mountain Village. (August 2010). *Sonoma Mountain Village One Planet Communities sustainability action plan, version*

vation easement. Pesticide use has been limited, and landscaping will include food-producing plants, such as fruit trees, as well as habitat for bees and other pollinators.<sup>54</sup>

Pedestrian walkways and bicycle paths connect with the surrounding community and with regional bicycle and transit systems. Showering facilities and storage lockers are available for employees who commute by bicycle. Community completeness is a central organizing principle, with all homes designed to be within a quarter mile of a park and within a five-minute walk of basic daily services. Plans call for thirteen new parks, including fourteen acres of open space, and approximately nine acres of pocket parks, neighborhood parks, civic parks, special purpose parks (soccer, dog), and a Town Square.<sup>55</sup> The Community Benefit Agreement, discussed below, specifies that childcare services will be offered either at the One Planet Living Center (community center) or another nearby site.

Nearly all buildings will meet universal accessibility guidelines, which exceed federal requirements.<sup>56</sup> Homes are designed so that all units with a ground floor bedroom can be converted into an accessible unit. Housing affordability is being met both by design and through set-asides. The affordable housing target guarantees a minimum of 15 percent of homes as affordable and deed restricted for households at or below 80 percent average median income (AMI), with at least a third of those units available at 50 percent AMI. Developers have agreed to strive to provide an additional 15 percent of homes, about 250 units, as affordable by design for sale or rent to households between 80 percent and 120 percent AMI.<sup>57</sup>

## STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY FABRIC

Developers are employing both design principles and programming to create and strengthen community fabric at Sonoma Mountain Village. The development's form and scale are designed to foster community connection and sense of place. Houses include front porches and are designed to encourage socialization among neighbors, Sakata said. The numerous public parks and the pedestrian and bicycle orientation of the streets invite informal interaction.

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1.4, [www.sonomamountainvillage.com/pdf/100820%20Full%20SAP.pdf](http://www.sonomamountainvillage.com/pdf/100820%20Full%20SAP.pdf).

54 *ibid.*

55 *ibid.*

56 SOMO. (2011).

57 *ibid.*

The SOMO Event Center serves as a community anchor, even before new residents arrive. The Center hosts three to five events each week, with priority given to groups with environmental and social sustainability missions.<sup>58</sup> The community is also becoming known as a hub for sports and fitness activities and events. In the future, additional community building is expected through venues such as regular farmers markets and festivals. Project partners are also working to create small systems of self-governance within cohousing, senior housing, artist housing and homeowner's association rules.

## FAIRLY DISTRIBUTES BURDENS AND BENEFITS OF GROWTH

The developers of Sonoma Mountain Village have taken a number of steps to ensure that the project's benefits and burdens are shared equitably. Many of these steps are codified in Sonoma County's first-ever Community Benefits Agreement,<sup>59</sup> negotiated and signed by Coddling Enterprises and the Accountable Development Coalition, a local nonprofit group.<sup>60</sup> The agreement addresses a range of issues, from green building practices to fair wages to affordable housing to community engagement. Key features regarding labor include payment of union-equivalent wages and benefit packages by SOMO contractors (jobs are open to both union and non-union contractors), payment of living wages by Coddling Enterprises to its SOMO employees, and creation of an online job bank to facilitate hiring of local residents by business tenants.

The developers are making significant contributions to the larger community. This includes generating revenue for a cash-strapped city, building civic and athletic facilities open to the community at large, and creating jobs and student enrollment where declines had wrought negative consequences. The developers have also agreed to provide a new larger fire station to serve southern Rohnert Park and a new first response fire vehicle. Revenues are projected from property tax, sales tax, and hotel tax as well as approximately \$79 million in one-time development fees.<sup>61</sup> These funds also contribute to public safety and transportation improvements. The project's nonprofit incubator, the Sonoma Mountain Business Cluster, received a redevelopment funds grant from the City, contingent on the incubator matching the funds dollar for dollar and

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<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Community benefit agreements are legally enforceable contracts designed to ensure that benefits of development accrue to the community. See for example, [http://www.accountabledevelopmentcoalition.org/?page\\_id=11](http://www.accountabledevelopmentcoalition.org/?page_id=11) and <http://communitybenefits.org/article.php?list=type&type=163>.

<sup>60</sup> Accountable Development Coalition. (September 18, 2009). *Sonoma Mountain Village Community Benefit Agreement*. [www.sonomamountainvillage.com/pdf/SMV-CBA-090918.PDF](http://www.sonomamountainvillage.com/pdf/SMV-CBA-090918.PDF)

<sup>61</sup> City of Rohnert Park. (July 2010). *Planning Commission Resolution No-2010-22*.

City of Rohnert Park. (nd). *Benefits of Sonoma Mountain Village project*, <http://www.ci.rohnert-park.ca.us/index.aspx?page=656>.

not relocating for a minimum of six years.<sup>62</sup>

## CONTRIBUTES TO A VIBRANT COMMUNITY ECONOMY

Sonoma Mountain Village contributes to economic vitality in a number of ways. Currently, SOMO's commercial buildings are home to more than 700 jobs, with plans to reach 1,840 permanent onsite office and civic jobs and 732 service and retail jobs. These jobs are helping to fill the void left when Agilent Technologies closed its corporate campus in 2005, eliminating 2000+ jobs.<sup>63</sup> The Sonoma Mountain Business Cluster, a nonprofit business incubator specializing in sustainable resources and socially-relevant technologies, was established in 2007. The incubator assists startup companies by providing mentoring and coaching, investment resources, support networks, and office space and services.<sup>64</sup> In 2010, the Business Cluster was named coordinator of the NorthBay iHub, one of twelve Innovation Hubs certified by the State of California to foster regional business innovation, entrepreneurship and job creation. One success is the manufacturing of high efficiency recycled steel framing systems in an onsite solar-powered factory.

The project supports worker health and well-being through walkable and bikeable locations, lockers and showers for bicycle commuters, green building materials, and commitments to living wages. Coddling Enterprises, the developer, was recognized as one of the North Bay's best places to work.<sup>65</sup> As noted earlier, the fiscal health of the community at large is being supported through increased tax receipts. The project will also bring school aged children to a district that has faced declining enrollments.

## LESSONS LEARNED AND OBSERVATIONS

SOMO has worked diligently with, and given back to, the community. This demonstration of commitment builds a strong Social Bottom Line while also contributing to the financial bottom line. One of the primary challenges of undertaking a project at the scale of Sonoma Mountain

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62 Hay, J. (August 10, 2010). Sonoma Mountain Village approve on split vote. *The Press Democrat*, <http://www.watchsonomacounty.com/2010/08/cities/sonoma-mountain-village-approved-on-split-vote/>

63 Sonoma Mountain Village. (nd). *Sonoma Mountain Village sustainability action plan report, v. 1.02*. [www.sonomamountainvillage.com/pdf/090721MediaSAP.pdf](http://www.sonomamountainvillage.com/pdf/090721MediaSAP.pdf).

64 <http://www.sonomamountainbusinesscluster.com/facilities.html>

<http://www.sonomamountainbusinesscluster.com/aboutus.html>

<http://www.sonomamountainvillage.com/leasing/business-cluster.php>.

65 Houston, L. (September 27, 2010). 2010 Best places to work winners: 20-50 employees. *North Bay Business Journal*, <http://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/25283/2010-best-places-to-work-winners-20-50-employees/>

Village is to remain financially viable across the long timeframe between project conceptualization and implementation. Sakata observed that efforts to involve the community on the front end of the project were important not only to ensure that the project's design responded to community context, but also to build the relationships that are needed to navigate changes over time. In his words, "It's an evolving process that is dynamic on both sides—it's about finding a synergistic relationship that can support buy-in from both sides."

While specific actions may change to accommodate shifts in markets and technology, overarching goals and principles do not. Developers of One Planet Communities are required to monitor performance and make mid-course adjustments for an extended period to ensure that project goals are achieved. As specified in the SOMO Sustainability Action Plan, Coddling Enterprises will be involved in keeping the project on track until 2020, with sustainability being the central focus in all property management. Coddling will submit monitoring reports every six months, and BioRegional will conduct annual independent audits of performance until 2020. From green building performance to community building goals, years of experience have demonstrated the importance of monitoring, evaluation, and accountability. The SOMO/OPL accountability and performance framework responds to this key lesson and provides a mechanism to support continuous learning, improvement, and achievement of goals.



Images provided by Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation

- CASE FIVE:** The Village at Market Creek  
**LOCATION:** San Diego, California  
**PROJECT TYPE:** Mixed-use neighborhood development

## PROJECT SUMMARY

The Village at Market is a community oriented, mixed-used development being cultivated on sixty previously neglected, underutilized acres. Completed projects include a commercial and cultural center that is home to the area's first supermarket in decades, a conference and event center, a business park, a vibrant outdoor amphitheater and cultural gathering place, a hands-on science enrichment center, and a creek restoration with footpath and interpretive features. The grocery store and amphitheater opened in 2001, the Plaza was completed in 2005, and the conference center and business park opened in 2008. Trolley Residential, the next phase of the project is expected to break ground in January 2013.

The Village at Market Creek has achieved gains in job creation, capacity building, health and safety, retail sales and revenue generation. The project has received numerous honors and awards, including designation in 2010 as one of the California's thirteen sustainable catalytic community pilot programs. These achievements are particularly remarkable given The Village's location in an area challenged by underinvestment and racial divisions.

The seeds of the project began when the Jacobs Family Foundation moved into the Diamond Neighborhoods of southeastern San Diego with a commitment to investing in and working with residents over the long-term. The Foundation and its sister organization, the Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation, are guided by a mission of resident ownership of community change. Investing in people and place, the Market Creek initiative is improving both the neighborhood and the lives of the people who live there.

## RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The Village is situated in the center of the Diamond Neighborhoods—named for the shape of the business improvement district’s boundaries. The Diamond’s population of approximately 88,000 is among the city’s most diverse. Resident engagement—across cultures, neighborhoods, generations, and faiths—has been a center point of the project from its inception. Engagement efforts are shaped by the belief that effective and sustainable change can only be achieved with resident ownership of planning, decision making, implementation, and assets of change.

In Market Creek, listening is a process, not an event, and development is something done with, not to or for, the community. Residents set priorities for the project and participate in decision making, work teams, and governance. The Village at Market Creek is a leading example of how neighborhood change can successfully engage residents in defining and realizing community goals.

## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY FABRIC

The community has been strengthened by investing in capacity building, collaboration, and celebration. Organizers, serving as talent scouts, “assume that talented people are out there and your job is to find them and learn together.”<sup>66</sup> Residents’ unique talents and gifts are recognized and cultivated, including youth. Efforts are made to grow leadership from within and to hire coordinators from the community who represent its diversity. Capacity is being built through engagement in facilitation, organizing, and survey and focus group research.

An emphasis on working and learning together in multicultural teams has allowed people to deepen their understanding and appreciation of each other while accomplishing specific tasks.

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<sup>66</sup> Site visit, March 11, 2010.

This process has created a network of people who know how to work and learn together—not a trivial matter in an area that has had a history of distance or conflict between diverse groups. This collaborative focus has increased social connection and civic engagement.

The creation of inviting public spaces and the cultivation of cross-cultural sharing has fostered a sense of place and community identity. An Art and Design Team that included residents worked to create a look and feel that would reflect the community's diverse cultures in everything from the architecture of the buildings to public art installations. More than one thousand local children worked with community artists to create hand-painted tiles for a mural. Eight cultural houses, including displays, art, and information, represent the surrounding community: African American, Filipino, Laotian, Mexican, Samoan, Somalian, Chamorro (Guamanian), and Sudanese.

## **FOSTERS HEALTHY LIVING**

The Village at Market Creek, is fostering community completeness. The project is walking distance to bus and trolley lines, the Plaza's anchor tenant is the first grocery store in the area in more than thirty years, a mix of uses and affordable housing are being developed, and there is increased integration among school, family and health programming. The physical infrastructure of compact, mixed-use, environmentally friendly facilities, as well as the social infrastructure of strengthened family and community networks, and economic opportunity, all foster healthy living.

The project has remediated more than twenty acres of brownfield. Construction has included non-toxic and recycled materials, as well as energy efficiency and water conservation technologies. Day lighting has been used for energy savings and beauty. The Cholla Creek restoration is an award-winning project that includes wetland mitigation, habitat creation, flood control, public education, art, and walking paths. In operations, green practices include the use of linens and china rather than disposable service ware and a recycling program. Attention to green aspects has been growing—for example, with interest in food gardens and LEED ND certification.

## **FAIRLY DISTRIBUTES BENEFITS AND BURDENS OF GROWTH**

The project has led to unprecedented ownership opportunities and the creation of jobs in the community. The community's focus is on creating and keeping jobs in the neighborhood, with

deliberate attention to removing barriers and opening opportunity. This includes strategies such as mentor-protégé programs, creating working lines of credit, and providing access to insurance and business skills training. More than 70 percent of the construction contracts to date have been awarded to women- and minority- owned businesses. Approximately seventy-three percent of employees at the Plaza are neighborhood residents, and community employment in the Village overall is 58 percent (with more than 80 percent minority employees).<sup>67</sup> Voluntary community benefit agreements, incorporated into national tenant lease contracts, reward businesses for increased community hiring. Similar incentives are being considered for lease agreements with locally owned and operated businesses.<sup>68</sup> Start-up business leasing rates are available for community-owned businesses. The housing phase of the project emphasizes affordability, with priority given to existing residents.

The country's first community development initial public offering (CD-IPO) provided an opportunity for residents, volunteers, and workers in the neighborhood to become shareholders in the project. CD IPO shareholders are earning a 10 percent return on their investment each year. These shareholders own 20 percent of Market Creek Partners, LLC, the wholly-owned subsidiary of the Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation that owns Market Creek Plaza. Another 20 percent of the shares are owned by the resident-controlled Neighborhood Unity Foundation, which uses the dividends to fund resident-led projects in the community. The Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation holds the remaining sixty percent of shares and plans to transition ownership to the community over time.

## CONTRIBUTES TO A VIBRANT COMMUNITY ECONOMY

When land for The Village was purchased, there was one active business, with seven jobs, in the area. Today, more than 30 businesses provide 230 full time jobs and 485 part time jobs.<sup>69</sup> An initial planning study for The Village attributed approximately \$60 million in economic leakage to the lack of stores and services in the area. Today, residents benefit from economic gains that they help to generate—Market Creek Plaza has recaptured more than \$50 million in economic leakage.<sup>70</sup>

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67 Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation. (2010). *Social and economic impact report:2009*. [http://www.jacobscenter.org/news/news\\_resource\\_frame.htm?newsvar=/jacobs/jacobscenter/jacobsnetwork/news/news\\_resource\\_content.htm](http://www.jacobscenter.org/news/news_resource_frame.htm?newsvar=/jacobs/jacobscenter/jacobsnetwork/news/news_resource_content.htm).

68 Tracey Bryan, June 2011, Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation, personal communication.

69 Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation. (2010).

70 Ibid.

The project has included a focus on local employment, entrepreneurship, and asset building, including workshops and training about finance and business development. There are training programs in public safety, non-profit management, and hospitality. Notes Tracey Bryan, of the Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation, sixty-nine interns and class participants completed 4,184 hours of training in 2009. The conference and event center has a job training component focused on culinary arts and hospitality industries, with plans to expand this effort to include a 280-hour on-the-job training program that includes 100 hours of soft skill training and 180 hours of paid hospitality training. In addition, a placement component is being added to will help graduates find employment in the hospitality industry. The commercial kitchen is available to local micro and small businesses to expand their operations and also hosts cultural and nutritional cooking classes for residents. The Market Creek Events and Venues social enterprise expects break even by June 2012, approximately four years after opening.

## INNOVATIONS, OBSERVATIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

The initiative has navigated a number of challenges, ranging from permitting delays to a massive downturn in the economy. Small, locally owned businesses have particularly struggled and attention is being given to how best to position these businesses for resilience. Despite rough spots and challenges, the project continues to make remarkable progress and community benefits accrue.

Market Creek's transferable lessons pertain to the way development is conducted rather than the specifics of the site or the presence of a single foundation with deep pockets. The success of the project is predicated on a clear commitment to resident ownership of neighborhood change, a systems approach to people- and place-based development, and a strategy of patient, responsive, collaborative engagement. This systems approach means working with a broad range of partners to address a constellation of factors shaping opportunity and well-being that residents identify as important to them.

The organizers of this project appreciate the need to meet people where they are, to move at a pace comfortable for participants, and to think in the long term but break the journey into manageable chunks. This includes creating short-term (e.g., ninety-day) work groups that have a discrete purpose and endpoint. While members typically stick around for the next increment, breaking things into shorter timeframes creates less daunting commitments. There is a recogni-

tion that community development is ultimately about people—about making the lives of people in a place better. Organizers pay keen attention to the human spirit at the center of this work, making time for celebration and cultivating beauty, optimism, connection, and joy.

Success is also rooted in the overarching attitude toward change: “We now know that if we want to see change in our neighborhoods, we all must change —take risks, reach beyond our safety zones, learn from and appreciate our differences and similarities,” said Jennifer Vanica, CEO of the Jacobs Family Foundation, during a March 2010 site visit. Partnership, innovation, risk taking, learning —these are cornerstones of the project. The project is well documented, with continuous improvement tied to setting benchmarks and tracking progress. This information is used internally and is also disseminated widely so that others may benefit from lessons learned.

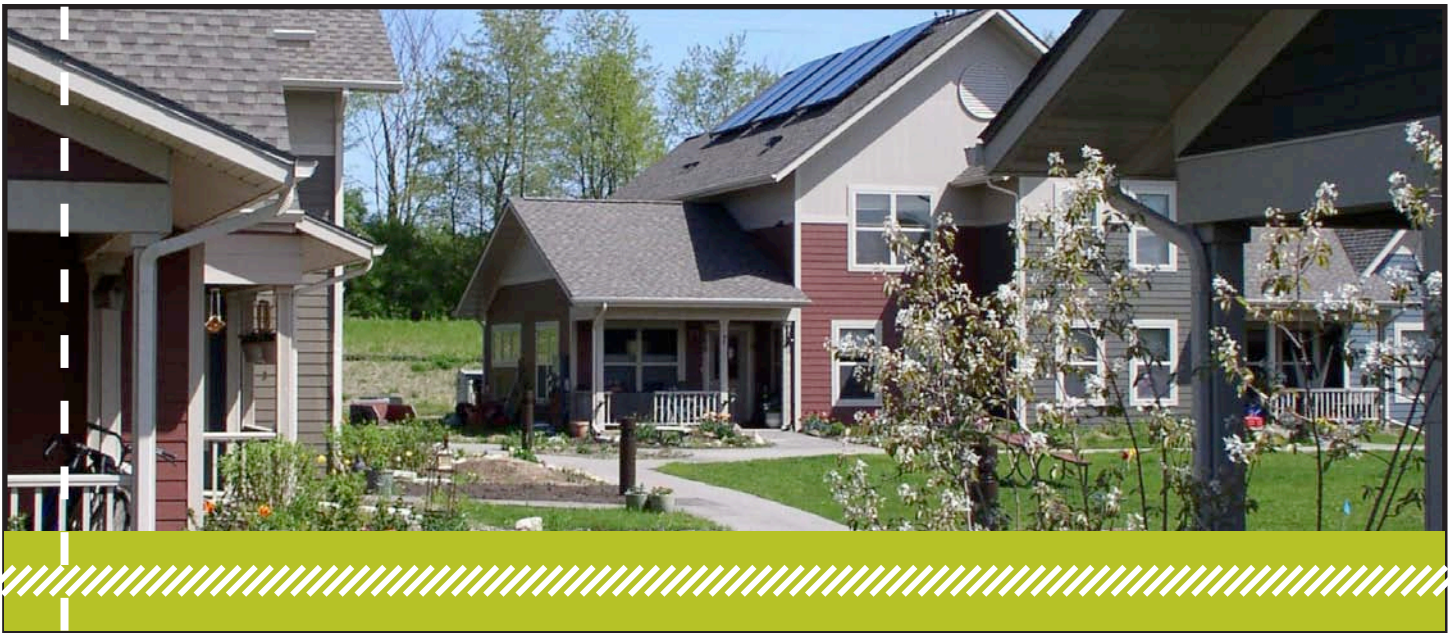


Image provided by Madison Area Community Land Trust

- CASE SIX:** Troy Gardens
- LOCATION:** Madison, Wisconsin
- PROJECT TYPE:** Housing and civic amenity

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

When a beloved parcel of open space was slated for “surplus sale” by the state, area residents and organizations rallied together to shape the outcome. That effort led to the creation of Troy Gardens, a thirty-one acre development that includes natural areas, a community farm, community gardens, and thirty units of housing—twenty of which are permanently reserved for people of moderate to low incomes.

Troy Gardens, completed in 2007, vividly illustrates the possibilities for environmentally friendly, mixed-income housing that meets goals for conservation, open space, and accessibility. The organizers successfully adopted a collaborative and integrative approach to the planning and execution of the project. The Madison Area Community Land Trust (MACLT) secured funding to purchase the land and served as developer of the housing, while local nonprofit organizations permanently protected twenty-six acres of the site through a conservation easement and manage the preserved lands with four distinct uses—organic farm, community garden, interpretive gardens, and natural areas.

## ALIGNMENT WITH COMMUNITY CONTEXT

In 1995, the State of Wisconsin placed thirty-one acres abutting the state-owned Mendota Mental Health Center on the surplus land list to be sold at market rate. Area residents had been gardening on a portion of the land for fifteen years, and using much of the rest of it to bird-watch, walk their dogs, and simply enjoy the land. A coalition of gardeners, neighbors, agencies, and organizations came together and developed a response to the proposed sale.<sup>71</sup> Based on the desires of the surrounding community, the Coalition developed an innovative proposal that preserved much of the land for open space and agricultural uses while developing mixed-income housing.

Community involvement in decision making was identified as a key goal by the developer.<sup>72</sup> As a result, a number of community planning processes were held, with input shaping aspects of the development from master plan to design of the children's garden. For example, input by neighbors and users of Troy Gardens led the developers to better fit with the community context by limiting the density of the five-acre housing site to thirty units, harmonizing building exteriors with the existing residential neighborhood, including market rate homes, and modifying the site design to reduce roadways and to move car parking to the periphery of the site, away from the open spaces.<sup>73</sup>

## FOSTERS HEALTHY LIVING

Troy Gardens fosters environmental and community well-being in both its design and programming. The project is easily accessible to the rest of the city by bicycle and transit—there is a bus stop in front of the development—and is within walking and bicycling distance to an elementary and middle school, a park, and a public library. The property invites interaction with the natural world, providing a range of outdoor experiences to both residents and the public, including nature trails and gathering spaces.

The housing component of Troy Gardens is designed for a mix of incomes and ages. Twenty of the thirty units were priced below market rates for households earning between 30 percent

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71 Troy Gardens. (nd). *Interpretive statement*. [http://www.troygardens.net/awards/index\\_assets/interpretive-statement.pdf](http://www.troygardens.net/awards/index_assets/interpretive-statement.pdf).

72 *ibid.*

73 *ibid.*

and 80 percent of area median income (AMI). The community land trust model guarantees that the income-restricted homes are affordable in perpetuity.<sup>74</sup> All homes were designed according to universal design principles, with fully accessible first floors and basements that can be converted to accommodate live-in attendants. Clustering homes around two central courtyards, with front doors and porches facing other, fosters social connection. The homes are organized as a cohousing community, another strategy designed to foster healthy social connections.<sup>75</sup>

The project demonstrates resource stewardship in a number of ways. Environmental quality in home construction was a key consideration, as was durability. Energy efficiency measures minimize operating costs and promote long-term affordability; the homes received Wisconsin Energy Star certification. Designers gave attention to indoor air quality, water conservation, and waste minimization, reuse, and recycling during construction. All buildings are oriented and designed for solar features. Ecological landscaping, beyond the habitat and open space preservation, includes managing storm water with a series of rain gardens, and low-input, low-maintenance landscaping with native plants.<sup>76</sup>

## STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY FABRIC

While the strong sense of place and identity associated with the property was clearly demonstrated by the rally to save the garden and open space, a sense of community and connection to the land continue to be cultivated in numerous ways. The preserved open space is available to the public and includes a one-mile interpretive trail, an edible landscape, a prairie grotto, picnic tables, covered shelters, and private nooks for contemplation. The property is host to many events, including multicultural festivals, harvest gatherings, fundraisers, weddings, memorial services, and informal family events. The physical space of Troy Gardens provides a welcoming atmosphere for newcomers, while the ongoing programming thoughtfully encourages first time visitors and those who have been involved for years alike to get to know each other.

Programming on site has intentionally aimed to build leadership capacity. For example, partner organizations offer summer job skills training program on site where local high school youth

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74 The community land trust (CLT) model is a land tenure concept developed in the 1960s explicitly as a means to encourage affordable, occupant-owned housing and local control of land (<http://www.iceclt.org/clt/>). A CLT is a private, non-profit organization created to hold land "in trust" for the "benefit of a community" (<http://www.iceclt.org/clt/>).

75 Originating in Denmark and now seen across the globe, cohousing blends private residential living with intentional community. While the size and characteristics of cohousing communities vary greatly, a core feature is the commitment by residents to collaborative governance and building a strong sense of community. See [http://www.cohousing.org/what\\_is\\_cohousing](http://www.cohousing.org/what_is_cohousing).

76 Home Depot Foundation. (nd). [http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/pdfs/aoe\\_home\\_madison.pdf](http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/pdfs/aoe_home_madison.pdf).

learn about natural areas restoration, land stewardship, organic farming and small business management of a weekly farm stand and farmers' market. Both Madison Area Community Land Trust and Community Groundworks (the organization that manages the farm, garden and natural areas) reserve seats on their boards of directors explicitly for community members and homeowners. In this way, community leadership is built into the governing organizations of the site.

The cohousing structure of the community also contributes to engagement, empowerment, and social connection. Fostering a sense of community was another key goal of the developers, and they were intentional in their efforts to ensure success in this regard. This included hosting monthly potlucks during the construction phase and creating work groups to help homebuyers to build the relationships and skills necessary for self-governance.

## FAIRLY DISTRIBUTES BURDENS AND BENEFITS OF GROWTH

As noted above, the housing at Troy Gardens was developed under a community land trust model in order to support permanent affordable homeownership by low- and moderate-income families. Community land trusts (CLTs) generally draw on two techniques to keep home prices low. First, a CLT home is less expensive to purchase because the land cost is not included in the price. The CLT purchases and permanently holds the land, making it available through a low cost, long-term lease (ninety-eight years in this case). Second, affordability is maintained by setting a limit on the amount of appreciation that can be recaptured when a home is sold.<sup>77</sup>

The Madison Area Community Land Trust allows homeowners to sell their homes for the purchase price plus 25 percent of the appreciated value, providing for reasonable asset-building while ensuring affordable home ownership over time. Further, the city capped the per-unit assessed value of the CLT land at \$12,000 to ensure that the assessed value would not exceed the net present value of the monthly ground lease fees over the ninety-eight year lease.<sup>78</sup> This ensures that tax burdens linked to market-driven property value increases do not impact affordability.

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<sup>77</sup> [www.affordablehome.org](http://www.affordablehome.org).

<sup>78</sup> Davis, J.E. and Jacobus, R. (2008). *The City-CLT partnership: Municipal support for community land trusts*. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, p. 27.

## CONTRIBUTES TO A VIBRANT COMMUNITY ECONOMY

While economic development was not a key goal of the project, the project does contribute to economic vitality in the community. Troy Gardens' assets are controlled by three local community-focused nonprofit organizations known for fair labor practices in their internal operations. In addition to the nonprofits' full time staff members, ongoing employment opportunities are provided onsite for grounds maintenance and farming assistance, including through the job training component for high school students.

## INNOVATIONS, OBSERVATIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

Incorporating strong green building features while maintaining affordability was a challenge and impacted the availability of funds for the community center. Another challenge emerged regarding the relationship between the cohousing community and the other land trust spaces. The project would have benefited from more careful attention to the delineation of boundaries between, and integration of, private, public, and cohousing spaces.

As Greg Rosenberg, executive director of the Madison Area Community Land Trust, notes, "Troy Gardens is a model project for how we can use land wisely, build attractive, well-designed and green homes, and collaborate with residents, neighborhoods, and other partners to design a diverse, livable community for people of all incomes and abilities."<sup>79</sup> The desirability of such development is demonstrated by the fact that twenty-nine of the thirty homes were sold before they were finished—despite a market that had begun to nosedive during construction.<sup>80</sup>

Innovation, partnership, and perseverance contributed greatly to the project's success. Troy Gardens' innovative agricultural Planned Unit Development (PUD) allowed for an unusual diversity of land uses and contributed to the City of Madison creating a model ordinance that allows for urban agriculture inside the city. In addition, Troy Gardens was among the first projects of its kind to use Federal HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to both preserve land as open space and to develop.

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79 Hope Depot Foundation. (nd).

80 Greene, K. (June 14, 2008). Communities built around themes are getting more popular – and require more homework. *The Wall Street Journal*. [http://www.troygardens.net/index\\_assets/maclt-wsj-landscape.pdf](http://www.troygardens.net/index_assets/maclt-wsj-landscape.pdf).

The project's long timeline and the developer's commitment to stakeholder input and agreement required a willingness to modify the project over time. This patience and effort paid off, yielding much more than preservation of open space for gardens and dog walking. The inclusive and integrated design process yielded a higher quality, more cost effective product while meeting diverse stakeholders' goals for conservancy, agriculture, affordable housing, and green building.



Image provided by PDC

- CASE SEVEN:** Vanport Square  
**LOCATION:** Portland, Oregon  
**PROJECT TYPE:** Mixed-use commercial

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Vanport Square is a mixed-use development that supports neighborhood stabilization and economic opportunity. Keys to the project's success include leadership by developers with roots in the community, partnership with the local development agency, strategic use of New Market Tax credits, and a leading edge model of commercial condominium ownership.

Local developers Jeana Woolley and Ray Leary broke ground on this first phase of the Portland Development Commission's (PDC) three-square block redevelopment project in 2006. In this phase, the historic Marco Industrial Building, a 42,000 square foot former factory, was renovated into sixteen commercial condominiums. The commercial spaces include office, retail, and restaurant. Opened in 2008, Vanport Square earned a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold rating from the US Green Building Council.

Ten market rate homes are planned for Phase II, which should break ground in the summer of 2011. Phase III, which is to be constructed on the 77,000 square foot site on the adjacent block to the south, is on hold because of economic conditions. A final development plan and team has

yet to be selected for the third phase, noted PDC's Vanport Project Manager Bernie Kerosky.

## ALIGNMENT WITH COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Vanport Square aligns well with priorities articulated in a number of community plans, including a neighborhood plan, two urban renewal area plans, and a commercial development strategy.<sup>81</sup> The neighborhood plan, in particular, identified the Vanport Square site as a key node for the neighborhood's economic revitalization.

After acquiring the property, PDC engaged in a community visioning process to determine an appropriate concept for the site. The visioning process was undertaken according to PDC's public involvement protocol, which includes developing a project advisory committee (PAC), comprised of representatives of the area's primary stakeholder groups. In addition to larger public events, the PAC met regularly from project conception until completion.

PDC required the project developers to negotiate a Good Neighbor Agreement with the local neighborhood associations. The agency requires these agreements for most of its larger projects to address any construction or post-occupancy issues, noted Kerosky in a September 2010 interview. PDC representatives indicate that Vanport Square has been well-received in the community, although the long timeline of the project was challenging in terms of retaining involvement and support. Also, there has been some dissatisfaction that the next phase of the project has been put on hold indefinitely due to economic conditions.

## FOSTERS HEALTHY LIVING

Vanport Square supports a number of healthy living objectives. It is designed to be appealing and accessible to pedestrians and is located along major transit routes. Increased retail and foot traffic associated with the project fosters vitality in the neighborhood. Vanport Square's sixteen retail and commercial spaces contribute to community completeness by providing a range of services for area residents including a chiropractic clinic, two restaurants, a coffee shop, a comedy club, rehearsal space, and an insurance agency office.

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<sup>81</sup> Portland Development Commission. (nd). *Vanport Square development project*. [http://www.pdc.us/ura/inner\\_ne/vanport\\_square/default.asp](http://www.pdc.us/ura/inner_ne/vanport_square/default.asp)

Striving for high environmental performance, the project designers were able to salvage 75 percent of the original building, reduce water use by nearly 80 percent and recycle 97 percent of construction debris. This phase of Vanport Square was awarded a LEED Gold rating from the US Green Building Council.

## STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY FABRIC

Vanport Square contributes to sense of place and identity by preserving and renovating an historic building and adding a pedestrian friendly public plaza. Public and meeting spaces enhance opportunities for connection and engagement. The project developers responded to residents' requests for commercial spaces that can double as gathering places, and a few of the businesses rent space for community meetings. The outdoor plaza provides a place for informal gathering. As residents of the neighborhood, the developers of Vanport Square have a continuing relationship with other residents in the community, Kerosky said.

## FAIRLY DISTRIBUTES BURDENS AND BENEFITS OF GROWTH

Vanport Square's commercial condo model is an attempt to provide opportunities for wealth building through ownership. Instead of typical lease arrangements, local small business owners were offered "business condominiums." Fourteen of the sixteen commercial spaces were designated "for sale," and two were reserved for lease. For the first ten years of financing, owners are required to secure PDC approval prior to selling their units. After ten years, owners may sell as they wish. This condominium resale restriction was implemented, Kerosky said, as a way to prevent buyers from taking advantage of favorable financing offered by PDC and to strike a balance between supporting wealth building and offering affordable condominium prices.

During the construction phase, per PDC requirements, contractors were required to make a good faith effort to hire businesses designated as Minority-owned, Woman-owned, and Emerging Small Business (M/W/ESB) and to prioritize hiring MWESB apprentices. In identifying tenants, Kerosky said, the broker worked to place minority and women-owned, small businesses including owners of African American, Asian and Latino heritage.

## CONTRIBUTES TO A VIBRANT COMMUNITY ECONOMY

Vanport Square spurs community economic development by focusing on small, local businesses, providing wealth-building opportunities through workspace ownership, and creating permanent jobs in a neighborhood that needs them. One strategy was to target existing local business owners looking to expand or relocate. For example, the owners of Old Town Pizza, a Portland business since the 1970s, live just a few blocks from Vanport Square; they wanted to be part of the revitalization of their neighborhood and opened a new location in the rehabilitated industrial building. As noted above, minority-owned, women-owned, and emerging small businesses were targeted for construction and occupancy.

One indication of the project's success is that even during the economic downturn of 2008-2010, all of the original businesses remained, Kerosky said. PDC plans to build on the success of Vanport Square in the coming years by developing the greater area into a vital commercial district.

## INNOVATIONS, OBSERVATIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

Although the project area was slated for economic revitalization for some time, a number of redevelopment efforts fell through over the years. Targeting for-sale commercial condominiums to small local businesses proved to be a workable strategy. New Markets Tax Credits (NMTCs) were key to the financing goals of this project and enabled the implementation of a business condominium structure that provided direct benefit to business owners.<sup>82</sup>

PDC credits the informal relationships and knowledge of the neighborhood that both the developers and the broker brought to the project with the success in securing diverse locally owned small businesses. The perseverance of all parties was key to project success. The long timeframe of the project, which from conception to completion took almost ten years, proved to be a challenge for all parties involved. However, through this process, Kerosky said, a successful model of commercial revitalization emerged.

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<sup>82</sup> United Fund Advisors. (nd). *Vanport Square*. [http://www.unitedfundadvisors.com/project\\_vanport.php](http://www.unitedfundadvisors.com/project_vanport.php).

## KEY THEMES AND CONSIDERATIONS

This casebook has considered seven development projects through the lens of the draft Social Bottom Line framework. We have found that while each project is unique—responsiveness to context is, after all, the Social Bottom Line’s first element—there are important key themes, lessons learned, and remaining questions to share.

These cases illustrate how social, environmental, and economic bottom lines are connected, and demonstrate the possibility of strong performance across an integrated bottom line. Further, in these cases we see that an integrated approach to development can pay off with better outcomes and in some instances long term cost savings. We also see that an integrative perspective requires involvement by the full range of system stakeholders. The organizers of Market Creek capture this sentiment when they draw on an African proverb that says, “to go fast go alone, to go far go together.”<sup>83</sup> Social Bottom Line projects respond to community-defined priorities and are informed by the features and context of the property. Whether led by citizens, the private sector, government, or philanthropy, these projects benefit from the community’s talent, resources, and wisdom.

In each of the cases reviewed we see the important role of partnership and collaboration. The types and amounts of partnership varied, but partnership was essential to securing the financial, physical, social, intellectual, and other capitals necessary for project success. Further, while relationship and trust building are important in any partnership, very careful attention and dedication to these matters was clearly a contributing factor to project success in a number of the cases.

In reviewing the projects, we see that the most powerful Social Bottom Line gains were achieved not simply by listening to community members but by engaging them in project visioning, design, and implementation. In these instances, diverse stakeholders, mutually seen as having valuable contributions to make, share power and resources. To support community-anchored development, a number of the projects invested in building community members’ skills and capacities for leadership and ownership.

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83 Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation. (2009). *Social and economic impact report: 2008*. [http://www.jacobscenter.org/jacobsnetwork/news/resource/soc\\_econ\\_rept09.pdf](http://www.jacobscenter.org/jacobsnetwork/news/resource/soc_econ_rept09.pdf).

Social Bottom Line results are shown here to accrue from sound investments in people as well as property—for example, working with tenants to adopt environmentally friendly practices, cultivating understanding and relationships across diverse groups, and building capacity of project partners and community members. This “people work” takes time, skill, and effort, and must be budgeted for accordingly. In addition, the long time horizons associated with these projects require a great deal of persistence, dedication, and start-up capital. The importance of funding streams to cover these essential project costs is evident in these cases.

Risk-taking and innovation were identified as important contributors to project success. Whether leading the way on transit-oriented development, urban agriculture, or community IPOs, these projects demonstrate the gains that can be made with a willingness to try new and creative approaches. Flexibility was also important; when markets and other contextual parameters shifted, organizers modified plans accordingly while maintaining fidelity to the project’s core vision.

Accountability for project performance was another key theme. In some cases, setting goals and tracking performance has been a productive exercise in reflection, learning, and continuous improvement. In others, performance monitoring is important for ensuring that commitments to community benefit are honored. Beyond communicating outcomes to stakeholders and enhancing organizational learning, developers and organizers have shared performance reports with the larger development community, contributing to the advancement of the field.

The cases reviewed confirm the importance and possibility of all five Social Bottom Line elements. A strong Social Bottom Line will not be achieved unless a project responds to context, fosters healthy living, strengthens community fabric, contributes to community economic vitality, and provides fair access to benefits and burdens of development.

While the projects reviewed confirm and illustrate the possibility of Social Bottom Line results, a number of questions and challenges remain. First, while Social Bottom Line projects help people flourish by ensuring access to good livelihoods and healthy, safe, supportive, and connected communities, there are subpopulations that remain difficult to house and employ. Social Bottom Line theory and practice would benefit from additional attention to questions regarding how best to serve these populations within the triple bottom line context.

Second, these cases demonstrate the importance of thoughtful, proactive attention to building and strengthening relationships—particularly when projects include people from diverse backgrounds. Both physical and programmatic designs can help community members develop understanding, trust, and collaborative capacity.

Third, we are left with the question of why social and triple bottom line projects appear to be so rare. Reviewing these cases, the challenges to doing SBL development are clear. There is no quick or easy path. Even with significant resources, collaboration, and commitment, these projects can be difficult. Long time horizons, community partnership, systems thinking, and costs without recovery are not the stuff of traditional market-based development. This finding emphasizes the importance of funding for initiatives that produce financial and extra-financial benefit that is not typically captured in the marketplace.

We aimed to identify cases that represent a range of project types, sizes, geographies, and demographics. Many of the projects we identified address legacies of abandonment, disinvestment, and exclusion (not surprising given the focus on social well-being). However, the Troy Gardens and Sonoma Mountain Village Cases demonstrate that Social Bottom Line development is applicable in suburban and middle class settings as well.

As with each of the projects we reviewed, this inquiry has been a journey. We began by asking whether any projects exist that exemplify the draft Social Bottom Line principles—and if so, what lessons they may hold. We did, indeed, identify projects that exemplify a strong Social Bottom Line. These cases have provided contours, lessons, questions, and inspiration. As existing projects mature, new projects come online, and policy and culture environments evolve, it will be important to document performance and lessons over time. In the meantime, we have a point of departure for moving forward. The draft SBL Framework can be used as a guide and a tool for continuous improvement. It does not prescribe how to do development: it tells us what direction we are trying to head in and asks questions that help us determine if we are moving in that direction.

As the adage goes, “If you keep on doing what you’re doing, you’ll keep on getting what you’re getting.” If we truly want to achieve triple bottom line results, then the Social Bottom Line must be attended to. Placing people at the center of development, our draft Social Bottom

Line framework provides a tool for considering what that means in practice. These cases suggest that attending to the Social Bottom Line requires being patient, flexible, persistent, integrative, imaginative, and collaborative with the community and its resource base. As the cases reviewed here suggest, the Social Bottom Line will manifest best in the space between contours and context. We consider the framework a draft, as this work is evolving. We hope that the framework contributes to Social Bottom Line theory and practice and look forward to hearing of your efforts in this regard.

## APPENDIX: CASE IDENTIFICATION

The literature review component of our search for cases was conducted using the following four academic databases:

- Academic Search Premier
- Academic Search Complete
- Business Source Premier
- Urban Studies Sage Full Text

The search was both targeted and expansive to increase the likelihood of identifying potential cases. The search terms used are listed in the table below. Search sets consisted of one term from each column (A\*B\*C). For example, [development project and case study and smart growth] or [development project and evaluation and complete communities]. The searches were conducted in March 2010.

A	B	C
Development Project	Case Study	Asset Building
	Evaluation	Benefits and Burdens
	Model	Community Benefit
		Community Completeness
		Community Driven
		Community Engagement
		Community Fabric
		Community Involvement
		Community Led
		Community Vitality
		Complete Communities
		Displacement
		Equitable
		Gentrification
		Healthy Living
		Inclusive
		LEED ND
		Livable
		Ownership
		Profit Sharing
		Resident Driven
		Responsive
		Smart Growth
		Social Bottom Line
		Social Cohesion
		Social Determinants Health

Organizations whose websites were reviewed for potential projects include:

- American Planning Association
- Environmental Protection Agency's Smart Growth Illustrated
- Majora Carter Group
- Policy Link
- The Partnership for Working Families
- The Project for Public Spaces
- The Urban Land Institute
- United Fund Advisors.

Agencies and organizations contacted with a request for suggested development projects that might exemplify the Social Bottom Line or clarification regarding a specific project include:

- Brightworks
- Center for Sustainable Urban Neighborhoods, University of Louisville
- City of Atlanta, Georgia
- City of Tempe
- Common Ground
- David Baker and Partners Architects
- Doug Farr and Associates
- Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative
- Earth Advantage Community Program Manager
- East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation
- East Russell Revitalization Project
- Enterprise Community Partners
- FitzGerald Associates Architects
- Harlem Children's Zone
- Holsten Real Estate Development Corporation
- ICLEI STAR Social Equity and Affordability TAC
- Jonathan Rose Companies
- Make it Right New Orleans
- McCormack Baron & Associates
- Mercy Housing
- Nohad Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning, PSU
- Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Inc.
- Shiels Obletz Johnsen, Inc.
- Slyman Planning Resources
- Telesis Corporation
- The Chicago Housing Authority
- The Housing Authority of Portland
- The Partnership for Working Families
- Urban Design Studio, University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville
- Urban Edge
- Weaver Street Market.



*This report is one in a series addressing social and triple bottom line development.*

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