CALIFORNIA FUNDERS’ CONVENING ON GENTRIFICATION & DISPLACEMENT PROCEEDINGS SUMMARY
On July 20, 2015, we convened funders and practitioners working on gentrification and displacement issues in California to deepen a shared understanding of the problems and solutions and lay the foundation for potential alignment of strategies.
This gathering sought to…

- move toward shared understanding of the root causes and solutions for gentrification and displacement
- better understand the funding strategies of those in the room
- begin to identify opportunities and gaps in philanthropic funding
- begin to identify next steps for joint learning and action
Who attended?

Akonadi Foundation  
Antioch University  
Bay Area Justice Funder’s Network  
California Community Foundation  
Causa Justa::Just Cause  
City Heights Community Development Corporation  
Color of Democracy Collaborative  
Community Development Technologies Center  
Cornerstone Partnership  
Council of Community Housing Organizations  
East Bay Community Foundation  
East LA Community Corporation  
Ella Baker Center  
Fresno Leadership Council  
Gerbode Foundation  
Hewlett Foundation  
James Irvine Foundation  
Kresge Foundation  
Movement Strategy Center  

Northern California Grantmakers  
Oakland Rising  
Occidental College  
Open Society Foundations  
PolicyLink  
Public Advocates  
Public Counsel  
Right to the City Alliance  
Rose Foundation  
San Francisco Organizing Project  
Santa Ana Building Healthy Communities  
Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
Solidago Foundation  
Southern California Grantmakers  
Strategic Alliance for a Just Economy  
The California Wellness Foundation  
The Funder’s Network  
The San Francisco Foundation  
UC Berkeley  
University of Southern California  
Urban Habitat  
Y&H Soda Foundation
What did we talk about?

- Available research and analysis
- Solutions
- Root causes and drivers of gentrification/displacement
- Power analysis
- Next steps
WHAT THEMES EMERGED?
Root Causes and Drivers

Overview

• Dr. Manuel Pastor opened with a keynote discussing rising economic inequity, urban demographic shifts, and the drivers of gentrification.

• Dr. Martha Matsuoka presented a framework for understanding the root causes of gentrification and placed the causes and the categories of policy solutions within the context of power.
Root Causes and Drivers

Highlights

• Gentrification/displacement is fundamentally about power (imbalance of economic and political power).
• Systemic conditions and drivers of gentrification include urban disinvestment, the housing crisis, concentration of power & wealth, structural racism, inadequate market regulations, and a dominant narrative that considers gentrification “good” or “inevitable.”
• Gentrification is regional and cannot exclusively be addressed one city at a time.
Root Causes and Drivers

*Highlights*

- Communities want development but they don’t want displacement. **Better neighborhoods, same neighbors.**
- Consider gentrification as a battle between a community-driven agenda and a profit-driven agenda.
- Need to grapple with values related to urban revitalization & transit oriented development. Consider displacement as an unacceptable side effect of revitalization.
- Resource equity, community control, & racial justice must be grounding principles in development. **For what and for whom is development happening?**
Research and Analysis

Overview

• Experts from the field shared research highlighting that in many CA regions, particularly the Bay Area and LA, it is not a question of if gentrification is happening, but what stage of gentrification.

Presenters:

• Miriam Zuk, UC Berkeley: Gentrification, Displacement and the Role of Public Investment: A Literature Review, March, 3, 2015; and Research on Gentrification and Displacement in the Bay Area
• Dawn Phillips, Causa Justa :: Just Cause (CJJC): Development without Displacement: Resisting Gentrification in the Bay Area, April 2014
• Tony Samara, Urban Habitat: Rise of the Renter Nation: Solutions to the Housing Affordability Crisis, June 2014; and Tom Slater, The Eviction of Critical Perspectives from Gentrification Research, December 2006
Research and Analysis

Highlights

• There are specific solutions for the specific stages of gentrification.
• People of color are overrepresented among renters and the housing affordability crisis is particularly acute for renters.
• There is a need for more critical research into gentrification.
Solutions and Strategies

Overview

Experts from the field discussed their successes and challenges and shared ideas for strategic investments in solutions.
Solutions and Strategies

**Overview**

**Presenters:**
- Rachel Laforest, Right to the City Alliance: national network model and 5 policy pillars for development without displacement.
- Sam Tepperman, Public Advocates: the importance of regional and statewide advocacy grounded in local power building.
- Rachel Silver, Cornerstone Partnership: locking in affordability, inside/outside strategies, and the inclusionary calculator to support inclusive development.
Solutions and Strategies

Overview

• Joe Donlin, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE): Community Benefits Agreements and the importance of supporting intersectional coalitions and resident leadership development

• Ana Urzua, Santa Ana Building Healthy Communities: importance of combining organizing and strategic communications with market analysis that supports development without displacement

• Dawn Phillips, Causa Justa :: Just Cause (CJJC): need community controlled investment, community owned land & housing, and community planning to stop racialized displacement and promote democracy
Solutions and Strategies

*Highlights*

- There is **no one magic bullet solution.** There is a range of **policy solutions** that fall into different categories. Solutions within and across categories must be deployed strategically and often simultaneously. The policy solution categories presented as part of the framework included affordable housing policies, community stabilization policies, community planning, community economic development, affordable housing development, community ownership.

- **Consider different packages of solutions and protections needed for communities in different stages of gentrification** (communities already gentrified, susceptible to gentrification, or receiving those displaced from gentrified areas). The stages of gentrification discussed include: susceptible, early type 1, early type 2, middle, late, and ongoing.
Solutions and Strategies

*Highlights*

- Solutions should be chosen and pursued with an intentional focus on building power. Without increasing political power in communities most impacted, policies will not be effective. **Solutions that do not build power will not create sustained change.**
- Efforts must address whether the scale of solutions is significant and for long term or short term. Do they affect thousands or millions? The opposition has more powerful solutions - e.g. pre-emptive state laws.
- It is important to address the full protection of the current community beyond housing needs, including solutions related to small business viability, access to jobs, and cultural preservation.
- **Demand transformational and comprehensive approaches.** No one solution can stand alone.
Solutions and Strategies

*Highlights*

- Important to address the issue of control of land, and especially to leverage public land to capture permanent value for the community. E.g. community land trusts.
- **Affordable housing can’t be won on a project by project basis.** But in the end, it needs to be institutionalized through public policies that are enforced and maintained through ongoing community organizing.
- Without civic engagement, there will be no long-term solutions or shift in power.
- **Secret sauce to success includes:** controlling the narrative, community-led processes, comprehensive community and economic development, and anchor organizations that are committed in the long term.
WHAT COMES NEXT?
We should continue to build out the draft issue framework and power analysis presented at this meeting.

Funders need to **share specific funding strategies** and **identify gaps in funding**.

Need conversations to identify funder agreements/disagreements on theories of change.

**Potential pooled or aligned fund.**

Need to educate and organize more funders from a variety of angles/issues.

Create links between funders and field to government, CDC world, and private development industry.

**Better alignment between field and funders.**
Critical funding needs

- Community organizing
- Narrative work
- Policy work
- Land acquisition
- Capacity building for accessing capital
Strategy questions and conversations

• Need to further explore power dynamics and *how* to seize community power.
• Need to learn about the investors driving gentrification in order to counter their power.
• **What are our long-term, high impact strategies** that can counter current state level preemptive measures?
• What are the **strategic gaps in funding** to support systemic change on this issue?
Short-term questions

• How can funders learn from and participate in state/regional policy organizing efforts?
• Is there a 10-year plan for the Bay Area? Elsewhere?
• Are there successful case studies we can learn from? E.g. New Haven - successful union/community partnership.