

## **CORE's 2010 Policy Agenda**

CORE is an advocacy and policy coalition focused on regional outcomes, and our goal is to identify and advocate for policies related to the built environment that will create more equitable and sustainable communities. In 2010 the Coalition on Regional Equity (CORE) will focus its efforts on three key areas by developing and supporting workgroups to accomplish defined policy and advocacy goals. These workgroups are Transportation Equity, Food Access and Senate Bill 375 Implementation. SB 375 is the landmark legislation passed last year that links regional transportation and housing planning in an effort to reduce green house gas emissions. In addition to the three work groups, CORE has begun research on a leadership program to increase the voice of low income communities on boards and commissions in the region.

In 2010 CORE will examine current state, regional and local policies related to food access and how these policies affect low income communities. CORE will collaborate with stakeholders to work implement food access policies that will support healthy communities. This work group will collaborate with local and regional partners to identify policies to address food deserts, and food insecurity and preservation of agricultural land. in the region.

CORE's work on Senate Bill 375 will focus on analyzing the legislation, reviewing the proposed regional implementation plan as well as providing comment and technical assistance on our areas of expertise in an effort to ensure that the regional implementation plan supports healthy, sustainable and equitable development and that it benefits low income communities.

Work on Transportation Equity will examine transportation policy at the local, regional, and state level. The work group will assess current regional policies, the distribution of transportation funding and the affect that funding streams and earmarks have on transportation access in low income communities. CORE's goal will include identifying and advocating for regional policies that will improve multi modal transportation access in underserved communities.

CORE is evaluating the creation of a Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute aimed at developing regional equity leaders to serve on boards and commissions in the region. CORE is currently evaluating similar programs and meeting with potential partners.

## **Transportation Equity: Building Sustainable Paths for Growth**

**Purpose: This work group on Transportation Equity will examine transportation policy at the local, regional, and state level; assessing current regional policies as well as the distribution of transportation funding and the affect they have on low income communities.**

A large portion of federal transportation dollars is earmarked for use on highway expansion projects and existing infrastructure and mass transit is grossly underfunded due to these earmarks. The Transit Equity work group seeks to understand the key processes at play in local, regional and state transportation funding and decision-making, as well as how these processes can be utilized to help bring equity to underserved communities. This group will also focus on the variety of modes available other than automobile, and the efficacy of utilizing current and future political processes to create an equitable and varied menu of transportation modes.

### **Critical Issues:**

- How does transportation funding work and what authority do local, regional and state decision makers including transit entities such as Regional Transit have over transportation funding?
- How does the current status of funding affect transportation access for low income communities in the region?
- What regional policies currently exist that support and/or hinder equitable access to transit in the Sacramento region?
- What role does transit play in the revitalization and redevelopment of low income communities?

### **Anticipated Outcomes:**

- Identify ways in which we can help guide policy makers to more equitably distribution of transit routing and funding at the local, regional, state, and national level.
- Identify opportunities to influence policies that improve regional and local access to transit in low income communities.
- Understand what affects the implementation of SB375 will have on access to transit in low income communities and communities of color in the Sacramento region.
- Identify what points of entry exist for policy advocacy on behalf of transit equity in the Sacramento region. Identify local, regional, state and federal allies.

## **SB375 - The Connection: Housing and Transportation**

**Purpose: This work group will focus on Senate Bill 375, the California legislation that links transportation planning with housing in an effort to reduce green house gas emissions. The work group will focus its efforts on analysis of this legislation, reviewing the regional implementation plan as well as providing comment and technical assistance on our areas of expertise in an effort to ensure that the regional plan (the Sustainable Communities Strategy) benefits low income communities.**

The concept of Regional Equity seeks to address the socio economic disparities within a region that create barriers for success. Recognizing that access to affordable housing and transportation are two critical factors towards healthy outcomes in our communities, SB375 may serve as an opportunity to address these issues in underserved communities while fundamentally reducing the overall green house gas emissions.

### **Critical Issues:**

- How does the legislation address or fail to address the needs of low income communities?
- Through the linkage of transportation and housing, does SB375 implementation in the Sacramento region accomplish its' goal of reducing green house gas emissions?
- How, specifically, will SB375 change the Regional Transportation Plan?
- How does the bill affect the development of affordable housing?
- How can SB 375 be used to reduce urban sprawl?

### **Anticipated Outcomes:**

- Identify points of entry for advocacy regarding SB375 implementation that will protect low income communities in the region.
- Develop a cross section of coalition allies that monitor the implementation of SB375 and its' affects on disparate groups in the region.
- Develop implementation standards and a frame work for SB375 that benefits low income communities in the region.
- Identify how the implementation of SB375 can be linked to positively affect transit expansion and support ideas such as complete streets and safe routes to school in the region.
- More compact and affordable development.

## **Food Access: All Food Is Not Created Equal**

**Purpose: This work group on Food Access will examine current state, regional and local policies related to food access in low income communities. This group may work with regional partners to identify policies to address food deserts, and food insecurity issues in the region.**

It is increasingly apparent that fresh, nutritious food is an essential element to personal and community health and wellbeing, and that this vital resource is often unavailable in low income communities. Many advocates, community groups, and regional residents are interested in bringing quality, affordable, and fresh foods to low income communities. This work group seeks to find policy levers and implementation strategies to make this goal a reality and create some structural changes that will reinforce nutrition and health in these communities.

### **Critical Issues:**

- What conditions create food deserts in urban communities?
- What state, regional or local policies contribute to food deserts in the Sacramento region?
- What policies at the state, regional and local level can support low income communities' access to fresh affordable food?
- What national and state groups are working on food access issues in relation to food deserts and the large number of people that are food insecure?

### **Anticipated Outcomes:**

- Identify local and regional policies that impede access to fresh food for low income communities.
- Identify opportunities to influence policies that improve local and regional access to quality fresh foods in low income communities.
- Understand private food provider dynamics that influence choices to pull out of communities or avoid certain communities.
- Develop policy strategies to support access to fresh foods in low income communities
- Research and promote models of successful policies and programs that aid in access to fresh foods. Connect food access policies to the preservation of agricultural land, rural communities and also to the reduction of urban sprawl.

## **CORE 2009 Projects and Activities**

### **ACHIEVE**

This Centers for Disease Control project brings together a diverse group of community organizations, health providers, business leaders, Sacramento County health professionals, and community organizations to research the current conditions in South Sacramento to develop a plan to improve the health of this area through a coordinated policy effort focusing on increasing access to healthy food, physical activity, and tobacco cessation. A CORE staff member is on the steering committee for this project, and attended a week-long training and workshop series in Denver in July.

### **AGENA-Stop SNGS**

CORE has worked with the Avondale Glen Elder Neighborhood Association and Legal Services of Northern California to organize and educate the neighborhood regarding the potential hazards of the proposed Sacramento Natural Gas Storage facility under their homes. CORE helped organize and inform the community in May 2009 and again in September 2009 to participate in the Public Utilities Commissions' (PUC) public participation hearings held on the project. CORE staff reviewed the environmental document and provided comment to the PUC. CORE staff provided both written and verbal testimony against the projects location in this low income community of South Sacramento. CORE staff continues to review all communications from the PUC on behalf on the neighborhood association and to provide strategic input and evaluation.

### **California Endowment: Building Healthy Communities Initiative**

CORE has been involved with the Building Healthy Communities planning initiative as part of the California Endowment's 10 year plan to achieve specific outcomes for the South Sacramento community through targeted and community-driven grant making. Specifically, CORE has been involved with the Infrastructure and Assets Group as well as the Community Outreach Group. CORE will continue to engage this collaborative in the coming year.

### **Cal Expo/ Kings Arena Proposals**

CORE worked with a team of UC Davis graduate students to conduct research on potential impacts of an arena at Cal Expo, best practices for a community benefits agreement (CBA) for the potential development, and strategy for future efforts on this proposal. This project produced a wealth of resources on CBAs that CORE will be able to use for future arena proposal campaigns, as well as other large development proposals. CORE continues to monitor this and other arena proposals as they are released, as well as the Sacramento First task force.

## **CORE 2009 Projects and Activities, continued**

### **Capacity Building**

- With Pesticide Watch, CORE held a day-long legislative advocacy training with Pesticide Watch for regional advocates and community members. This event helped build the capacity of over 20 individuals/organization on advocating for change using media and elected officials.
- With Alliance for Justice and other organizations, co-sponsored a day-long workshop for non-profits on the administrative nuances of running a successful nonprofit organization.
- CORE co-sponsored a presentation on climate change given by Dr. Deb Niemeier from UC Davis. Dr. Niemeier is the director of UC Davis' John Muir Institute and an authority on climate change. The event was attended by over 60 people.
- CORE sends out weekly e-mail bulletin that include a collection of upcoming events relevant to regional equity to over 180 individuals.

### **Curtis Park Village**

As this development progresses, CORE has attended public meetings, met with the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association, and disseminated information on the progress to CORE members. CORE has written a letter of support on behalf of the neighborhood association. CORE has supported the SCNA in their efforts to have the development reflect the existing community and exhibits smart growth principles of higher density, affordable housing, and multimodal transit. With the proposal likely to go to Planning Commission soon, more action will likely be taken to ensure that equity objectives are met in this large development.

### **Healthy City/Sacramento Data Collaborative**

Healthy City, a comprehensive services and data mapping platform based in Los Angeles, is planning to build regional hubs in the coming months. CORE is working with Healthy City, Community Services Planning Council/211, and the UC Davis Center for Regional Change to create a plan to implement the platform for the Sacramento Region. This will provide service information and data resources to local communities and service providers, increasing the democratization of data and information.

### **Mapping**

CORE works with organizations in need of mapping resources to determine their needs and produce maps for use in advocacy campaigns. For example, CORE staff worked with the Committee Addressing Racial Equity and their Diverse Accountable Leadership Action Team to develop a work plan to investigate and publicize issues relating to racial equity among Boards,

## **CORE 2009 Projects and Activities, continued**

### **Mapping, continued**

Commissions and Committees in Sacramento County. This ongoing project involves GIS mapping to compare Supervisor District racial breakdowns with representation on boards, commissions and committees that represent those districts.

### **Neighborhood Stabilization Program**

CORE and SHA, along with various stakeholders worked with SHRA to ensure that funding from this program is used to effectively revitalize communities. SHRA implemented changes to the program recommended by the group, including gearing part of the program toward mission-based organizations.

### **Policy Recommendations**

Through a series of over 20 interviews with CORE members, we developed a set of specific policy recommendations, which were further honed at the 2009 Fall CORE Convening. Through this process, we produced a document that clearly outlines these goals and actions for 2010 for an equitable Sacramento region. This process also spurred the development of the new CORE Work Groups, to be launched in 2010.

### **Public Transit Advocacy**

CORE staff attended Regional Transit board meetings during their budget discussions and hearings on potential service cuts and fare increases. Multiple letters were sent to RT expressing the importance of effective and affordable public transportation for low-income communities, communities of color, as well as the elderly and disabled people living in the region. Ultimately, far fewer service cuts were made than originally intended by RT.

### **Resource Clearinghouse**

Collect, review and disseminate information about new practical, academic, and popular publications on topics relating to regional equity and community health.

### **SB 375**

As this legislation nears implementation, CORE is working with Housing California, ECOS and other interested organizations to monitor implementation and develop regional strategies to ensure that it is implemented effectively.



## **CORE 2009 Projects and Activities, continued**

### **SCORECARD**

A collaboration between CORE and the UC Davis Center for Regional Change, this project includes a report on current conditions of the region, to be updated with new information as available. It also includes community-based data gathering, focusing on participatory methods that empower communities to create their own data. This project will create resources for advocacy, organizing, and building a critically-informed people's movement for regional equity and health.

### **Speaking Engagements**

CORE staff have made presentations to a variety of groups interested in regional equity in 2009. Kendra Bridges conducted a seminar on the coalition's work on public participatory geographic information systems in South Sacramento to a master's class in the UC Davis Community Development Graduate Group in October 2009, and previously presented research on GIS and its use in regional equity advocacy, with CORE as the main example cited, to UC Davis graduate group events multiple times in Spring 2009. Constance Slider served as a panelist for the Building Healthy Communities Collaborative's Infrastructure Assessment and Asset Building Workshop.

### **2009 Coalition Events Hosted**

- CORE hosted a successful Fall Convening on October 16, with over 35 people in attendance, representing over 25 regional organizations and communities. During the Convening, policy priorities for 2010 were set, and work groups to help plan and implement these policy recommendations were sketched out. A new relationship with a regional equity organization in the Bay Area, Urban Habitat, was formed through the use of Bob Allen, their Transportation and Housing Director, as keynote.
- As a follow-up to the Fall Convening, CORE hosted an Open House and Policy Launch on December 2 to present the finalized 2010 Policy Recommendations, as well as the fully-detailed plans for the new CORE Work Groups. Over 20 people attended this event.