

**A. Project Profile (1 page maximum)**

Project Name: A New Vision for the Bay Area

Lead and Partner Organizations: Gamaliel of California

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Sub-Grant Program: Housing the Workforce / **Equity** / Economic Prosperity

Project Type: Equity Initiative Sub-Grants

Total Grant Amount: \$50,000

Total Match (if any): N/A

Geographic Coverage of Project: the Bay Area: Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa and Sonoma Counties.

Brief Description (150 words maximum):

Gamaliel of California affiliates, Genesis and North Bay Organizing Project, will strengthen our efforts to build an equity strategy in 5 counties in the Bay Area. We will focus on building regional equity for transportation access through training ordinary citizens to impact the decisions of regional planning.

Images: Attach Separately in JPEG Format

## **B. Project Description (1 page maximum)**

1. Goals and Objectives *Describe what the project expected to achieve, why there was a need for this project, who would have benefited, and how they would have benefited.*

Regional planning in the Bay Area has, for the most part, been a Sisyphean task—with racial and economic equity being frustrated. Municipalities/counties are free to undercut each other and often do. For example, Emeryville touts perhaps the best commercial location in the Bay Area, wedged between Oakland, Berkeley and San Francisco Bay. More than 20 years ago, Emeryville’s founding leadership set up a platform of ruthless acquisition of businesses. Through this philosophy, thousands of jobs and a large tax base was lost by the poorer areas of the Bay to Emeryville. The lack of unity in regional planning is felt throughout the poorest areas in the Bay Area.

“Compared with a white child in the Oakland Hills, an African American born in West Oakland is 1.5 times more likely to be born premature or low birth weight, seven times more likely to be born into poverty, twice as likely to live in a home that is rented, and four times more likely to have parents with only a high school education or less” (*April 2008, Alameda County Public Health Department , “Life and Death from Unnatural Causes: Health and Social Inequity in Alameda County”*). In Sonoma County, 44% of the working poor are white and 45% are Latino, although Latinos constitute 24% of the total population in the county. While Sonoma County constitutes a beautiful vista of communities, up to 40% of its people live in the shadows and face political, social and economic inequities every day.

With this as a backdrop, Gamaliel of California created an alliance amongst congregations and institutions from Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Sonoma, and Napa Counties through our affiliates, Genesis and North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP). Our community organizations are institution based, uniting multi-racial, multi-denominational congregations with community institutions. We propose to create a regional strategy where leaders across these counties will train, build relationships and work together to build a regional organizing campaign in order to build a “New Vision for the Bay Area.”

Low-income communities of color are most impacted when regional decision-makers fail to provide adequate transit service, affordable housing, and environmental policies that protect the areas in which they live. Our cross sector campaign to increase funding for bus service, provide free bus passes for youth and students will incentivize cities and counties to include poor residents in their planning process and demand affordable housing options in opportunity neighborhoods. Training our leaders in community organizing methodology we planned to build a regional campaign, testify at agency meetings and organize community accountability sessions to ensure that decision makers met our community needs.

Our goals:

1. Integrate equity goals and principles in local and regional decision-making processes and outcomes;
2. Meaningfully engage under-represented communities in identifying needs, developing recommendations, and implementing projects to improve access to affordable housing and economic opportunities;
3. Catalyze policy and systems change at the local, sub-regional, and regional level to promote equity;
4. Collaborate with a wide range of partners and stakeholders , including the housing and economic prosperity work groups to maximize equity outcomes;
5. Expand the network of non-profit partners, community leaders, local jurisdictions, regional agencies, and philanthropic entities in the region to integrate equity in local and regional planning, implementation, and decision-making process; and
6. Build organizational and leadership capacity among under-represented communities and community-based organizations to sustain the work beyond the term of this grant program.

2. Work Plan *Describe the key tasks and deliverables for the project. Include information on outreach and engagement activities.*

**Task 1: Grant Administration and Project Coordination**

Manage Project and coordinate work plan with project partners and staff.

**Task 2: Outreach and Engagement**

Plan for regular meetings of leadership and new leaders in communities of color.

**Task 3: Regional Training/Leadership Development Training**

Plan and conduct regional and statewide trainings in order to train and engage advocates to build equity campaigns.

One state-wide training in November 2014.

Regional trainings.

Genesis and NBOP are organized with the same structure, through which we organized the “Visions of a New Bay Area” project. Each member institution selected talented, volunteer leaders to represent them on various teams. It is here that the relationship building among the various institutions took place, as leaders have to cross racial, geographic and socioeconomic lines. Through this grassroots approach, under-represented communities were engaged.

The Clergy/Community Leader Caucus of each organization met monthly and set direction for the organizations to assure faithfulness to the values reflected in our different traditions. Genesis recruitment of new community and faith leaders in the Tri Valley region of Alameda County took place through this vehicle and through the campaign to win passage of Measure BB, a new measure to gain increased funding for Alameda County Transit that included Youth Bus Pass funding as part of the measure. These caucuses shared issue campaign details and trained leaders on how to bring the issues to their institutions. The Issue Task Forces became the vehicle in which leaders from each of the Member Organizations worked together to build the Issue Campaigns.

NBOP recruited new community leaders through outreach and training. NBOP did community trainings, research actions with elected officials, presentations and actions in order to win a one year pilot program for free transit on SCT for university and college students. NBOP also won increased funding for transit with a commitment by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to allocate 10% of a new road repair measure (that will be on the ballot in June 2015) to transit. This measure will generate 2 million dollars a year to transit as well as funding for road repair.

Genesis represented the two organizations by attending the monthly Equity Collaborative meetings. We hope to have the opportunity for both NBOP and Genesis to present to this Collaborative on our experience in regional organizing.

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**C. Challenges and Outcomes (1 page maximum)**

4. Challenges *Describe the main challenges faced of implementing the project. How did your team address them? Describe what worked well and what did not work. What would you have done differently if you could start over?*

Challenges:

Including new geographies in our work, reaching into Napa county and the Tri-Valley were challenging because of the travel distance and because of the historical contextual differences between these communities and the

rest of the region.

The timeline is a challenge due to the distances and the slow nature of the work of the MTC and regional planning agencies. This should be a multi year funding grant, because of the time necessary for developing leaders, creating the relationships with public officials, establishing trust and engaging in the research necessary to change the structures of participation, increase funding to transit and sustain the long term campaigns to win equity.

Worked well: The funding was key in increasing the development of our collaboration, both between our organizations and with our other allies. Funding for this project contributed to positive outcomes by sustaining staff organizers, enabling transportation and time to travel to regional meeting. The collaborative and brought together leaders across the region to discuss the problems they were facing and to join in advocacy and one day trainings and week-long training.

5. Outcomes *Describe key outcomes, achievements, successes, deliverables, findings and/or lessons learned for the project. Describe who benefited from this project (may be individuals, groups or organizations) and how.*

- We successfully built relationships among advocates in all four of the five counties who became champions in working to change transportation, land use and environmental policies by advocating for equity in the MTC and engaging their representatives around the issues that most affected their lives and communities.
- Leaders across these counties were trained, built relationships and worked together to build a regional organizing campaign in order to build a “New Vision for the Bay Area.” This meant working together on a transit operating strategy (dubbed the “Campos Amendment”), training together and has lead to a statewide convening in April by Gamaliel of California where housing and transit problems are each being proposed as the focus of statewide work in 2015.
- Learning will be shared on running effective ground campaigns to win electoral progress for increased funding to transit. Winning Measure BB taught 2 important lessons: the role of youth leadership, Genesis youth in leading a media campaign and gaining important endorsements and the role of a faith based organizing project in developing new relationships in areas that had not been included previously.
- Lessons learned in utilizing research actions with public officials led to understanding the local initiatives and winning increased funding for transit led to winning the free bus pass pilot program on Sonoma County Transit for 40,000 university and college students.
- NBOP was successful in integrating equity into the roads measure that was developed by the Board of Supervisors, this led to 10% of these funds being allocated to transit in Sonoma County. Genesis successfully engaged voters (increasing the yes vote by 4 points) in the Tri Valley region to invest in youth and transit by voting for Measure BB. This was a change from 2012 when this section of Alameda County voted against the measure.
- Genesis and NBOP lead an Education/Advocacy Day where 48 leaders (close to 20 youth) visited with every MTC commissioner in the 9 county region. Commitments were made to build a comprehensive transit operations funding strategy.
- Completed 8 regional trainings and one week-long training for over 800 leaders.

#### **D. Replicability and Dissemination (1 page maximum)**

6. Replicability *Describe what, how and where (within the region) the above mentioned project outcomes may be applied to address similar issues as your project.*

- Youth advocates: Genesis and NBOP have used this project to build a cohort of youth who are educated on these issues. Because of the connection of the issues on youth into the issues in June 2014 during the Education/Advocacy Day, we were able to develop many of the same leaders through our campaigns in 2014. In fact, during the November 2014 electoral activities, many of our youth leaders were the face of

our media strategy.

- Clergy and community leader training: During the spring of 2014, our clergy and community leaders were able to do research meetings with MTC staff (i.e. Commissioner Amy Worth in May 2014 at the Genesis Clergy Meeting). These meetings were used to give clarity and understanding on regional issues that seemed very technical. Our leadership is able to see the necessity of connecting throughout the region.

7. Tools and Resources *List the tools and resources developed through this project. These may include policies and strategies, analysis and communication tools, collateral material, key findings, etc. Please attach copies of the materials to this report.*

8. Sharing and Dissemination *Describe how and with whom you will share these tools and resources over the next 12 months. How can other communities access the tools and resources developed through this process?*

Learning is shared in monthly staff meetings

Learning was shared with our allies in our coalition work.

This process will be replicated in the regional organizing work on housing, advancing transportation policies that create equity and in developing a broad base of members. These are members who use transit, face hardship due to lack of service, have lost housing and are facing the difficulty of finding secure affordable housing and transportation. Youth across the region are identifying their need for transit and their right to transit that works for them, is free, and efficient.

Development of a narrative that is inclusive across class, culture and race, reflects the daily struggles of people's lives and shows how we connect across differences and throughout our region through the policies that shape decisions and affect housing and transit.

Gamaliel provides successful training, that teaches people to act.

Leaders share their hard won knowledge with each other, in regional and statewide convenings and trainings between affiliate members of Gamaliel of California:

In April 2015, we will gather 40 leaders from throughout the state for training on strategic campaigns, analysis of structural racism, and the problems with housing, transportation and education. During this training we will share our regional narrative and leaders will make decisions about the direction of statewide campaigns that connect across the state.

In October 2015, we will gather 50 women leaders from through the region for a women-focused training. In November 2015, we will gather 50 community leaders for a National Leadership training. At both trainings, we will share our regional narrative and call on leadership to build on issue campaigns that connect across the region.

## **E. Recommendations and Next Steps (1 page maximum)**

9. Recommendations *List and describe the top four to five recommendations from your project.*

*Recommendations may include but are not limited to (1) policies, projects and/or programs that may be adopted at the local and/or regional level (name agencies and/or organizations where possible); (2) tools, approaches and/or methodologies that may be adopted for analysis, communication and/or decision-making; (3) funding, capacity-building and/or engagement strategies for target communities (specify geographic areas where possible); and/or (4) implementation of specific projects and/or programs to support regional goals.*

1. Youth and Student bus passes for all.

2. Regional Trainings and Week-Long Training planned throughout 2015 and 2016 to increase leaders trained in power analysis, policy analysis, effective meetings and relationship building.

3. Increase funding for outreach and leadership development to create the structures of participation necessary for more leaders to engage in policy and transit planning.

4. Increase transit funding and greater local control over transit dollars.

10. Next Steps *Describe the next steps for your project and how the proposed recommendations will be institutionalized in your community.*

Gamaliel of California: is convening a statewide meeting on April 17 and 18 that will include training, issues analysis, decision making on joint goals and strategic campaign training.

Genesis and NBOP will continue to collaborate on regional equity and obtaining free youth and student bus passes for all.

We seek funding to increase our capacity to do this work. We seek funding to hire additional organizers and send leaders to trainings.

In collaboration with our partners and allies, Gamaliel, Genesis and NBOP will win policy changes that place greater equity at the center of the decision making process for fair and equitable housing and transit that works for everyone.