



CASE STUDY: Bay Area for All

Center for Community Health and Evaluation

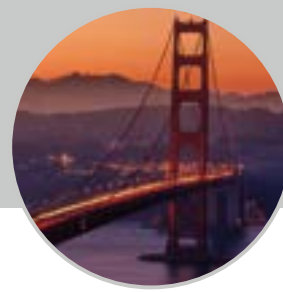
The Strong, Prosperous, and Resilient Communities Challenge – or SPARCC – invested in and amplified local efforts in regions of the United States to ensure that major new investments in the places we live, work, and play lead to equitable and healthy opportunities for all. Over six years starting in 2017, SPARCC addressed barriers experienced by communities of color, especially low-income, by advancing a community-driven development model that prioritizes racial equity, health, and climate resilience. At the heart of SPARCC were local, multi-sector collaboratives or “tables” that worked in partnership with SPARCC’s national implementation team and funders. As illustrated in the theory of change (see image on page

2), SPARCC expanded cross-sector collaboration to advance racial equity and contribute to systems changes in community development.

This case study provides an example of how SPARCC came to life in the Bay Area, including SPARCC’s contribution to changes in local community development systems, collaborative infrastructure and relationships, policy and practices, and capital investment strategies. While it highlights key examples of work and their connection to local systems changes, it is not a comprehensive or exhaustive account of all the work that occurred in the site during SPARCC.



Bay Area for All



SPARCC COLLABORATIVE TABLE: BAY AREA FOR ALL (BA4A)

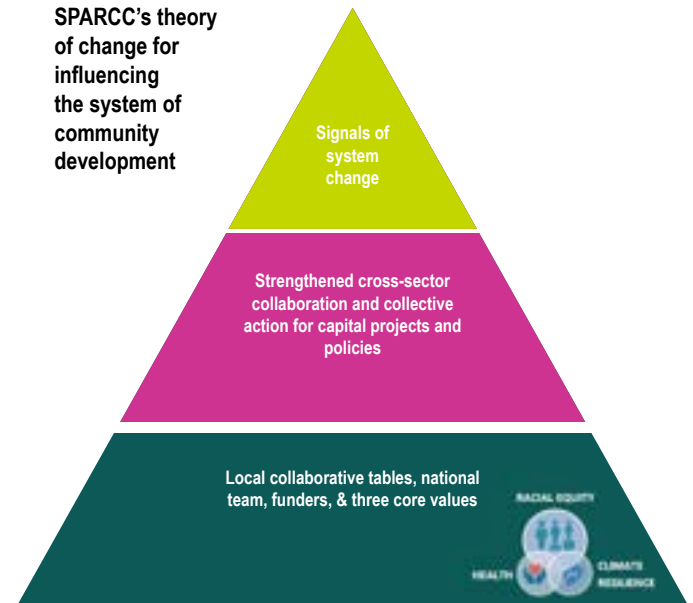
The foundation of the SPARCC theory of change was local collaboratives called “tables” that provided the infrastructure for multi-sector partnership to advance SPARCC’s goals. Tables received operating funding from SPARCC to support collaboration and partnership development. In the Bay Area, three existing collaboratives working on the regional housing crisis came together for SPARCC, forming a table called Bay Area for All (BA4A).

In the decades prior to SPARCC, the Bay Area experienced uneven job and housing growth, causing an affordable housing and displacement crisis in the region that put many low-income residents living near transit at risk. In 2016 and 2017, voters responded by approving new housing and transportation funding. The region’s transportation planning agency, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, launched an initiative to bring together a broad set of stakeholders to advance solutions to the region’s housing crisis. Around the same time, the SPARCC initiative began and BA4A was formed.

BA4A structure: Three key partners lead BA4A.

- 6 Wins for Social Equity Network (6 Wins) is a group comprised of over 30 social justice, faith, public health, and environmental organizations that advance transit, housing, employment, and sustainability policies.
- Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII) is a coalition comprised of the Bay Area’s public health departments and 250 partners driving programmatic, systems, and policy changes toward health and economic prosperity.
- Great Communities Collaborative/ San Francisco Foundation (GCC) is a group comprised of over 30 regional policy leaders, community groups, businesses, government agencies, and funders working to address the challenges of regional land use, transportation, housing, and climate resilience.

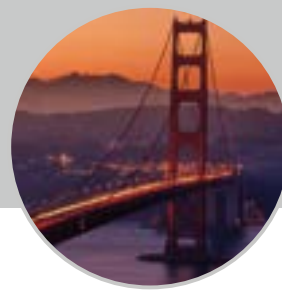
SPARCC’s theory of change for influencing the system of community development



BA4A priorities: They focus on building community power to counteract the housing crisis in the Bay Area.



Bay Area for All



BA4A target geography: BA4A's work touches four Bay Area cities allowing it to have a broader regional footprint. In each city one or two organizations led the work:

- **San Jose lead:** Working Partnerships USA, a community organization that leads collaborative campaigns for quality jobs, healthy communities, equitable growth, and a vibrant democracy.
- **Oakland leads:** Urban Habitat, a community organization that works to democratize power and advance equitable policies for low-income communities of color, and the Oakland Community Land Trust, which provides California families with permanently affordable housing and community facilities.
- **Concord lead:** Monument Impact, a community-based nonprofit dedicated to building skills, resources, and power within immigrant, refugee, and low-income communities.
- **Vallejo lead:** Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC), an Urban Habitat program focusing on housing justice in Vallejo.



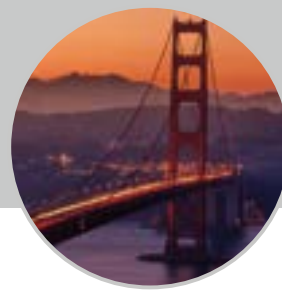
POWER BUILDING FOR RACIAL EQUITY DROVE BA4A'S WORK, AND THIS GRASSROOTS FOCUS ACTIVATED COMMUNITIES TO INFLUENCE SYSTEMS CHANGES FOR EQUITABLE HOUSING.

The SPARCC theory of change suggests that local tables contribute to systems change by developing and strengthening relationships and collaborative infrastructure. With the aim of creating both an annual snapshot of collaboration within the tables and understanding change over time, the SPARCC evaluation administered an annual survey with all table members. This survey consisted of scaled questions addressing the six essential elements of collaboration [see image]. Perceptions of concrete accomplishments and collaborative effectiveness were determined by taking the average of several individual item ratings within each of the six elements in the collaboration model.

BA4A used SPARCC resources to strengthen its collaborative infrastructure by engaging in strategic planning processes and supporting coordination time between representatives from the three lead organizations and five geographically focused organizations. As a result, BA4A increased its ratings in all domains since the beginning of SPARCC, signaling a stronger collaborative infrastructure to support the advancement of collective priorities. Highlights from a few table elements are described below.

Essential elements of collaboration





SHARED PURPOSE

This domain of the annual collaboration survey was consistently the highest rated by BA4A members, reflecting the high level of focus all partners shared on affordable housing. In the last year of the survey, the most significant increases were in “Articulates a vision and goals for its SPARCC work” and “Shares an understanding of context, problems, and opportunities.” This was evident in how the work was approached across the region. Although each city’s particular strategies differed, **their collective focus was on the “3Ps of housing,”** which emphasized:

- **Preserving** existing affordable housing, including through community ownership
- **Producing** more affordable homes by utilizing public land for community benefits as part of the development process
- **Protecting** tenants of color (with a focus on those with low income), which became a bigger part of their work in response to pressure on renters brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic

BA4A’s approach to addressing the housing crisis was influenced by SPARCC’s emphasis on racial equity, health equity, and climate justice.

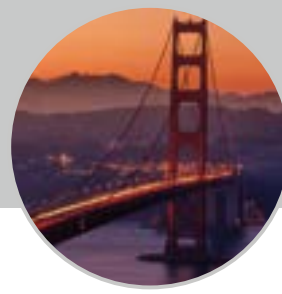
- **BA4A members’ housing preservation work in Oakland impacted all three of these areas.** Their selection criteria for acquiring houses centered residents of color, and their rehabilitation strategy improved the houses’ health conditions and climate resilience. This is discussed in more detail here.
- **A racial equity analysis brought BA4A’s focus to Vallejo** where displaced Black residents from the inner Bay have been moving. Since residents there are also at risk for displacement, BA4A thought Vallejo could benefit from power building for housing affordability.
- **Led by health partner BARHII, BA4A was part of developing and supporting the creation** of the [Federal Health Equity for All Coalition](#) and a Federal Health Equity Framework. They supported pilot language for health equity funding to advance community health equity and health centers..
- **SPARCC’s charge to lead with racial equity positively affected one of BA4A’s leads, the Great Communities Collaborative (GCC).** A new leader joined GCC during the SPARCC initiative and put a lot of intention into working with the community and strengthening their focus on equity.



ESSENTIAL PEOPLE AT THE TABLE

BA4A asserts that to address the disproportionate impact the housing crisis has on residents of color with low incomes, **housing preservation efforts must advance racial equity and economic inclusion by centering and supporting tenants and organizers from the beginning of the process.** BA4A increased the capacity of critical local partners often overlooked by philanthropy by establishing structures that allocated the majority of their SPARCC funding to the leadership of these community-based organizations. BA4A’s resident engagement and leadership approach includes a deep partnership with grassroots organizations to keep work aligned with resident priorities. For example, one of BA4A’s leading organizations, 6-Wins, is structured to have their priorities originate from a resident leadership group. The ratings in this domain of the annual collaboration survey were mixed, with the highest scores related to involving all members in the decision-making process.

Bay Area for All



ACTIVE COLLABORATION

Pre-existing relationships served as a springboard to deepen connections and learning across BA4A.

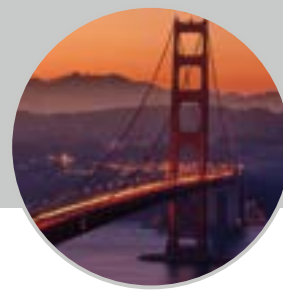
Many of BA4A's partners had worked together before SPARCC, and at the beginning of the initiative, they dedicated time and effort to build on existing trust and knowledge of each other. This facilitated smoother communication and accelerated their ability to jump into collective action.

Participation in the BA4A collaborative facilitated connections between similar advocacy campaigns around the region. Through their geographic focus areas, BA4A brought together a variety of organizations and geographies with different levels of experience in organizing and advocacy. Although Oakland and San Jose had more developed advocacy infrastructure and more public and philanthropic resources than Concord and Vallejo, BA4A partner organizations in each area benefited by learning from and supporting each other.

Additionally, SPARCC funding supported a heightened level of coordination between partners focused on housing preservation in Oakland. BA4A partners and the Oakland Property Acquisition Collaborative (made up of affordable housing developers) met regularly to coordinate preservation-related work, including acquisitions, program development, identifying financing sources, and policy development and implementation. This new level of coordination accelerated campaigns for changes to local policy and programs to facilitate acquisition-rehabilitation deals.

The ratings in this domain of the annual collaboration survey demonstrated growth from the beginning of the initiative, particularly in the areas of trust, defined roles, holding each other accountable to decisions and the fair distribution of funds.





BA4A CONTRIBUTED TO POLICY AND PRACTICE CHANGES THAT ADVANCED HOUSING PRESERVATION, PRODUCTION, AND PROTECTION.

SPARCC's aim was systems change. This included changing practices, policies, and investments in the built environment to be more equitable, so communities are healthier, more climate-resilient, and opportunity-rich places for all. The SPARCC theory of change posited that strengthened local and national collaboration would result in capacity outcomes and ultimately lead to systems changes in community development policies and practices. BA4A's policy and practice change work focused on the 3 Ps of housing. While many strategies were city-specific, some were shared across BA4A. For example, BA4A members from Vallejo and San Jose joined city-specific committees influencing local development policies. Additionally, BA4A members in Concord and Oakland engaged in updates to the Housing Element in their cities, which every eight years provide a blueprint for how the city will meet their regional housing needs.

Housing preservation

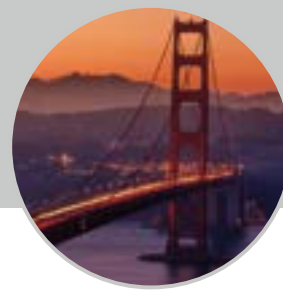
- In Oakland, BA4A partners worked with the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project to **develop a tool to support tenant-centered preservation, education and organizing**. This tool maps vulnerable properties with a combination of data on ownership, evictions, code violation and pre-foreclosures. Engaged residents also hosted community tours designed to educate people about the housing crisis, the role of corporate investors, and potential solutions for long-term affordability.
- **The Great Communities Collaborative and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation Bay Area published an issue brief about how national philanthropy can support housing preservation work.** The brief urged philanthropy to:
 - ◇ Provide acquisition capital to community-based developers
 - ◇ Fund capacity building of tenant organizations and community-based developers
 - ◇ Fund organizing and advocacy to pass anti-speculation policies
 - ◇ Create tools for identifying properties to acquire
 - ◇ Convene multi-sector collaboratives to connect tenants to resources and partners
 - ◇ Fund organizing groups to engage tenants

Housing production on public lands

- **In San Jose, BA4A partners were instrumental in influencing three major technology companies and landowners to commit to building affordable housing.** When Google purchased public land in 2018 next to the Diridon BART station in San Jose, Working Partnerships USA engaged over 1,800 residents in survey research and hundreds in public actions to put pressure on Google to stem the tide of displacement. SPARCC funding contributed to developing a report about what would happen to rent prices if Google built its new campus without including any affordable housing. The media picked up the story, and soon afterward, Google announced significant community benefits and a commitment to build affordable housing. The resulting ripple of influence on other technology corporations was striking. Later Facebook worked with Working Partnerships USA on its affordable housing plan, and Apple also announced a similar plan.



Bay Area for All



- **In Concord, BA4A partners continued their fight for a community-driven planning process for the development of the Concord Naval Weapons Station.** Local key stakeholders came to see BA4A as “players to be reckoned with” because of the community connectedness and credibility in affordable housing policy analysis that they brought to the table. As part of this process, Monument Impact trained community leaders to bring resident voices to public disposition discussions. Although the process has been protracted, the development may have significant affordable housing and community ownership elements due to their extensive organizing.
- Also in Concord, Monument Impact has engaged with public parcel lands near a local BART station. They have advocated for discounts on the land above the required base level of affordable housing in the development.

Tenant protection

When the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated housing pressures on renters, BA4A expanded their housing focus to include tenant protections.

- At the beginning of the pandemic, BA4A partners in all four cities fought for and won local and county-wide eviction moratoria using similar local strategies.
- In Vallejo, SPARCC resources supported community organizing through the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC), which resulted in various tenant protections, including an eviction moratorium. During the height of the pandemic, VHJC led virtual tenant clinics providing information and referral services to residents and led virtual workshops to engage residents around the city’s housing strategy.
- In Concord, BA4A partners amplified diverse community voices that helped Concord’s city council see the connections between land use, affordable housing, and tenant protections. This resulted in a fast and uncontested local eviction moratorium in 2020.
- Additionally, Monument Impact was instrumental in the passage of a new landlord anti-harassment ordinance. They also advocated for a local rent stabilization ordinance and a just cause for eviction ordinance.



BA4A CONTRIBUTED TO SYSTEMS CHANGES RELATED TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL STRATEGIES AND INVESTMENTS.

Along with policy and practice changes, SPARCC was designed to shift the systems of community development. This includes both:

- New capital investment approaches, partnerships, and products; improved capital flow to development that supports racial equity, health, and climate resilience; and options for residents and businesses to remain and thrive.
- Observable changes in the built environment that reflect equitable access to opportunity.

Capital projects

Since 2017, BA4A developed seven capital projects that received SPARCC financial support and helped promote the community land trust (CLT) model. CLTs are a response to the housing crisis that remove land from the speculative market and offer long-term ground leases to residents and businesses to guarantee permanent affordability and community control. BA4A’s capital projects occurred in Oakland and Vallejo, where SPARCC contributed both catalytic funding and technical support. BA4A worked closely with a member of the SPARCC national team who had deep expertise in capital processes and played a critical intermediary and advocacy role. BA4A’s work highlighted the need to influence community development financial institutions’ practices to be supportive of small projects and comfortable with community ownership, thus shifting power to residents on the ground.

Bay Area for All



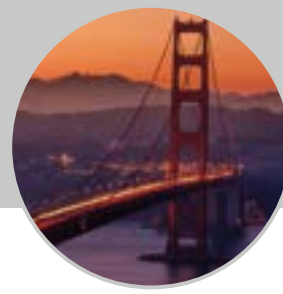
In Vallejo, SPARCC supported the establishment of a new community land trust and a pilot acquisition and rehabilitation program.

- SPARCC funding and technical assistance from the Northern California Land Trust helped **establish and staff a new community land trust in Vallejo that received \$2 million in a state CalHome grant for first-time homebuyers** and housing rehabilitation assistance.
- **SPARCC supported a pilot for a CLT to acquire and rehab a single-family home, adding another housing unit onsite to increase housing density and affordability.** In 2022, SPARCC granted \$300k to the Vallejo Community Land Trust pilot program. This is a model process where the Northern California Land Trust acquires an existing single-family home in target neighborhoods identified by the community steering committee and conducts an energy efficiency rehab and installation of a second modular, prefab, Net Zero housing unit on the site. They then sell each structure to an income-eligible CLT household. This project will provide a proof of concept for Vallejo and Solano County and includes plans for a series of nine single-family purchases that will yield 18 units of affordable homeownership.
- Funds will go to acquisition equity, due diligence, pre-development activities, initial construction expenses for one site, and the renovation/construction of two associated units. The funds will leverage hard debt (acquisition and construction loan, residential mortgage), CalHome Down Payment Assistance funding, and other grant sources to complete the purchase, renovation, and construction. **Funds may roll over to subsequent home purchases** as buyer financing, CalHome assistance, and other subsidy sources are secured for the first site.

In Oakland, SPARCC supported a cooperative real estate fund and the acquisition of five properties by local CLTs. The Oakland Community Land Trust (OakCLT), a BA4A member, worked collaboratively with grassroots organizations and affordable housing developers who were focused on housing for low-income residents in Oakland. For example, OakCLT worked with the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment Action to identify properties that will be sold to help tenants purchase the building to prevent displacement of low-income residents of color. The five properties listed below were determined by community organizers working with current tenants. In several cases, OakCLT used SPARCC capital grants to acquire homes while waiting for the slower-moving subsidy from the City of Oakland. Once the city subsidy arrived, OakCLT reused the grant capital for additional acquisitions.



Bay Area for All



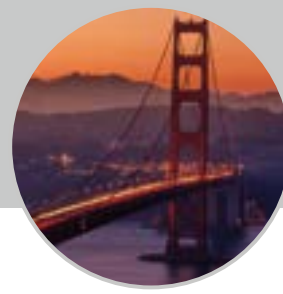
BA4A developed several criteria for prioritizing properties to acquire:

1. Building tenants are mostly very or extremely low-income
2. Building tenants are mostly people of color
3. Building tenants experiencing landlord issues such as evictions and significant rent increases
4. Building tenants include members of BA4A base-building partners or have self-organized
5. Buildings located where base-building partners work with vulnerable communities
6. Buildings at risk of being sold on the speculative market, near transit or new development
7. Buildings for sale with a reasonable opportunity for tenant or nonprofit purchase

Oakland's preservation work aligned with the three priorities of the SPARCC initiative: racial equity, health equity, and climate resilience. SPARCC was structured to support sites in thinking about the intersections between these concepts and shaping their work to positively impact all three. The preservation work in Oakland focused on single-family homes and small buildings (2-4 units), which resulted in numerous intersecting impacts.

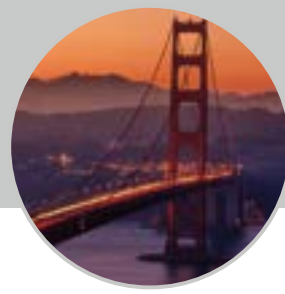
- **Racial equity:** These small units are more likely to house tenants of color who are lower income.¹ They are also more likely to be owned by landlords of color, who may have fewer financial resources to maintain stability for their properties and tenants. As part of a broader effort towards “just recovery” from the COVID-19 pandemic, BA4A focused on communities of color that were historically denied opportunities to own land and housing and subjected to predatory real estate schemes.
- **Health equity:** After the initial acquisition, rehabilitation measures were often taken, including upgrades to improve the health, safety, and environmental sustainability of the building (such as removing mold and pests that can exacerbate asthma).
- **Climate resilience:** BA4A prioritized housing near transit with low-income residents, whom they have found are more likely to use transit than other residents. This resulted in reduced greenhouse gas emissions and a healthier environment.

¹ For more about why this is the case see <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/owners-and-renters-62-million-units-small-buildings-are-particularly-vulnerable-during-pandemic>



CAPITAL PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Project details	How the funds were used
East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative (EBPREC), Oakland (\$150,000 grant)	
<p>EBPREC is a BIPOC-led cooperative that brings people and resources together to create community power, including stewarding real estate in the community. Through the Esther’s Orbit Room project, EBPREC will revitalize an anchor cultural institution in a historically Black business district. (2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100,000 seeded a liquidity reserve to backstop investment in EBPREC’s real estate fund. Funds will be restricted for reserve purposes for ten years, then converted into a grant fund. • \$50,000 for sliding scale share offering to community members. • The increased investor equity stimulated by these will help EBPREC move on to additional acquisitions.
Oakland Community Land Trust acquisitions, Oakland (\$66,700 loan, \$404,000 in grants)	
<p>OakCLT acquired 19 units across 3 buildings in Oakland. (2021-2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds contributed to the purchase price of the buildings. In one case, OakCLT repaid the loan with the proceeds from a senior loan and Measure KK gap resources from the City of Oakland. In another case, city funds were used to take out the lender and replenish the grant, and the balance was used for repairs.
Hilton Street Apartments, Oakland (\$200,000 grant)	
<p>The Northern California Land Trust acquired 16 units in two neighboring buildings from the largest corporate landlord in the world. After the acquisition, the rehabilitation scope included upgrading energy efficiency and seismic resilience. (2020)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds offset costs related to seismic retrofit and transaction costs associated with switching lenders to accommodate the project’s public funding needs.



CONCLUSION

Since joining SPARCC in 2017, BA4A has strengthened and tested strategies to build community power and collectively move forward community-centered responses to the housing crisis in the Bay Area. Sometimes using distinct strategies, the four cities were guided by the “3Ps of housing,” focusing on preserving and producing more affordable homes while protecting tenants of color with low incomes. The results rippled across the Bay Area:

- In response to the housing challenges exacerbated by the pandemic, BA4A activated their existing networks to win numerous tenant protections
- The SPARCC grants and loans helped advance housing preservation work with a focus on community ownership
- BA4A partners organized local communities to push for expansions in affordable housing in the development of public land

BA4A's work is far from done; they are committed to pushing for a more equitable Bay Area for years to come.

Center for Community Health and Evaluation
Part of Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute

www.cche.org

The Center for Community Health and Evaluation is an evaluation partner for foundations, nonprofits, and government agencies to determine what works to improve community health. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded this evaluation.

