COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PHILANTHROPY

Community development and philanthropy are central players in both housing and green space development, representing the private organizational and financial backbone that can make or break projects. Traditionally operating behind the scenes, these organizations quietly shape the flow of money and access to capital. They can also be a powerful lever for community agency and resetting standards for what considerations development takes into account.

AUDIENCE

- Community development corporations
- Community wealth-building organizations
- Cooperative businesses and business hubs
- Job skills and technical training centers
- Grant-writers and reviewers
- Private philanthropic agents

GUIDING CONSIDERATIONS

1) Measuring the success of development should consider questions of land and business ownership
2) Community development is just one tool to build community wealth and power, not the end goal; in this context, development is not a universal desirable good
3) Democratizing access and participation includes democratizing financial control
4) Long-term implementation, evaluation, and community organizing needs are vital yet under-funded components of community development

Example Best Practices

- Embed anti-displacement mandates into grant applications and funding allocation
- Support the development of local, independent, and community-controlled financial institutions
- Set up financial support systems that incentivize collaboration across environmental and housing sectors
- Include community in financial processes, as board members, grant reviewers, and organization staff
- Establish infrastructure through which local residents can become owners and/or investors in neighborhood development projects