

## Regional Equity in the Twin Cities

**T**his edition of the *Common Ground* is dedicated to the issue of **regional equity** in the Twin Cities. What does it mean? How do we achieve it? The Alliance is committed to creating a Twin Cities region in which all people and all communities have equal access to resources. In the context of our work, this means that we will **engage communities in promoting racial, economic and environmental justice in growth and development patterns in the Twin Cities region.**

Many organizations fighting for racial, environmental and economic justice joined together this spring in New Orleans for PolicyLink's Regional Equity '08 conference. Attendees got to hear about equity battles from around the country, tools other regions have used to combat disparities and emerging issues that will face our communities. More than 60 Minnesotans attended the conference, but we wanted to make sure that even more people back home got to learn from them. That's why we're bringing you this issue full of stories from both around the nation and around the Twin Cities describing the opportunities before us.

Development decisions are often a root cause of disparities. You'll learn about an effort underway in St. Paul to create a **racial equity impact policy** to make sure new development does not disproportionately and negatively

impact communities of color. You'll read about different types of equity impact policies from around the country that link public policies to equitable outcomes. (page 4)

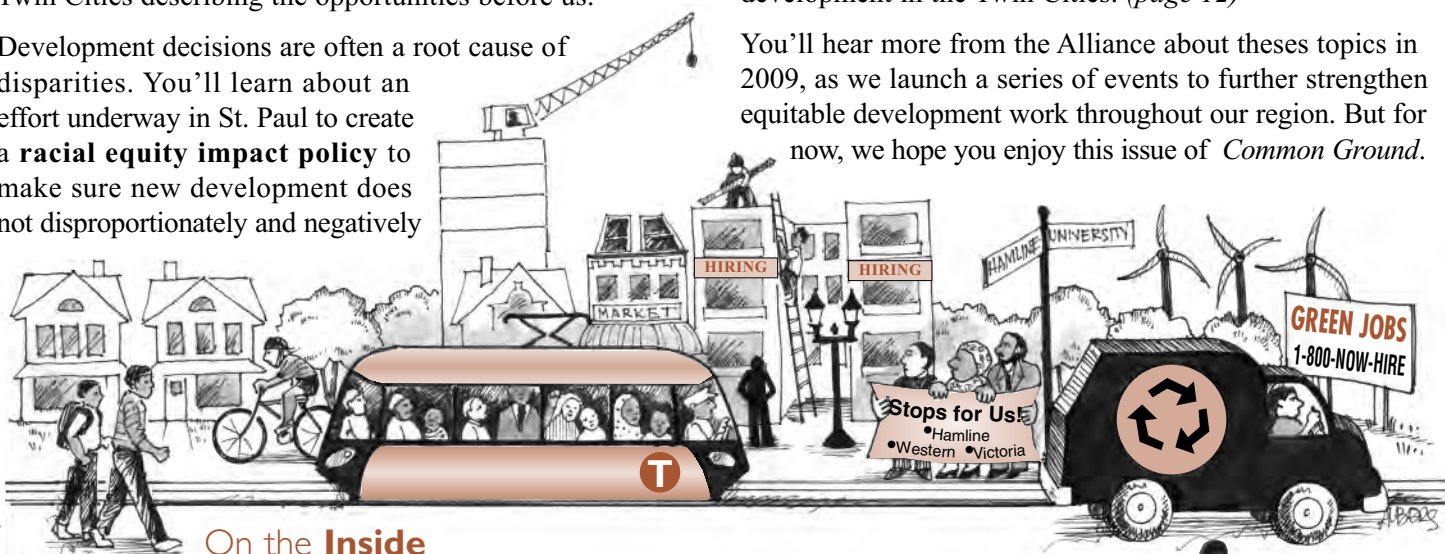
You'll also learn about the burgeoning national movement for green jobs, and what local groups are doing to ensure that the **emerging green economy helps lift people out of poverty.** (page 8)

This issue also contains news about communities that are struggling with how to welcome new development, while ensuring that it results in **benefits for existing residents.** The Stops for Us Coalition is trying to make sure that happens along the Central Corridor LRT line, and you'll read about a similar transit equity effort in MA. (page 14)

You'll read about the Local Initiative Support Corporation's (LISC) national policy agenda for **building equitable communities**, and about Twin Cities LISC's partnership with the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers to create a stronger voice for community development in the Twin Cities. (page 12)

You'll hear more from the Alliance about these topics in 2009, as we launch a series of events to further strengthen equitable development work throughout our region. But for now, we hope you enjoy this issue of *Common Ground*.

Graphic: Shari Albers



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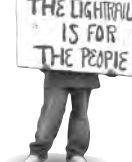
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### Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

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The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is a coalition that links faith-based, social justice and environmental organizations to address the issues of economic development, fair and affordable housing, transit, and the environmental consequences of sprawling growth. We engage communities in eliminating racial, economic and environmental disparities in growth and development patterns in the Twin Cities region.

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Transit for Livable Communities  
University UNITED  
Women's Environmental Institute

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**Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock**  
and by individual contributions from people like you.

### From the Director's Desk



## The Responsibility of Community Organizers

In an unlikely twist, community organizers were thrust into the national spotlight during the presidential campaign this fall. Sarah Palin, Rudy Giuliani and former New York Governor George Pataki all took swipes at Barack Obama's early experience as a community organizer. In a comparison of their early work experience, Governor Palin observed, "I guess a small-town mayor is sort of like a community organizer — except that you have actual responsibilities."

At the time, that line produced a hardy laugh from the Republican National Convention delegates, but it hardly paints a clear picture of the profession that has served dozens of movements throughout our nation's history — from the abolitionist and suffragist organizing of the 19th century, to the labor struggles at the turn of the century, right up to the modern civil rights era.

The American narrative is laden with stories of ordinary people who refused to wait around for someone to solve their problems for them. Community organizers are charged with identifying these individuals and bringing them together. They are responsible for helping these folks develop a shared agenda and pursue solutions that are right for their families and their communities.

Community organizers know that the best ideas are not always developed by "the experts" or distant policymakers but by people who are directly affected by a problem where they live and work. They respect and elicit the community's latent wisdom and experience, knowing that all people can accomplish tremendous things if they understand their full potential. Organizers are responsible for developing leaders within communities or movements not just to solve a problem at hand, but to leave those communities and individuals stronger and more resilient over time.

Sometimes the problems that face us — a faltering economy, climate change, crime, racism — feel so large that it seems impossible for individuals to make a difference. Organizers are responsible for confronting this reality with strategies that help community members break down huge problems into manageable tasks. Whether the cause is stopping speeding cars from racing down residential streets, removing a polluting industry from a neighborhood or demanding better jobs, community organizing helps ordinary citizens participate fully in the civic arena. These are issues that regular folks can truly make progress on together.

Every American has benefitted from community organizing. If you enjoy the drinkable water coming out of your sink's faucet or the breathable air in your neighborhood, thank an environmental organizer. If you appreciate the



40-hour work week, workplace safety rules, and your company's health care plan, thank a labor organizer. And if you value your child's access to early childhood education, after-school programs and more nutritional school meals, thank the community organizers who started the Parent Teacher Association for all of us — including Governor Palin — to participate in.

Throughout this issue of the *Common Ground*, you'll read stories from around the nation and from right here in Minnesota about how organizers are working with communities to make real improvements in people's lives. Stories about the new movement for green jobs, efforts to increase racial equity through public policy, and

communities working against gentrification and displacement in new transit corridors all demonstrate the power of people working together to take the future of their communities into their own hands.

Our national fabric has always been strengthened by the hard work and vision of community organizers, people who know that democracy is much more than our right to cast a vote. Democracy depends on an engaged citizenry who come together to talk about issues, develop ideas for how to make their lives better, and take action together to solve problems. It is the responsibility of community organizers to help make that happen.

—Russ Adams, *Executive Director*

## Twin Cities Organizers Share Knowledge and Experience at Roundtables

For several years, the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability has been bringing grassroots organizers together to discuss critical community issues and tools to strengthen their work. The Twin Cities has a rich organizing landscape, with a wide variety of organizations and approaches. Roundtables are a chance for organizers to learn from each other and leverage their knowledge and experience to make our collective work stronger and more effective.

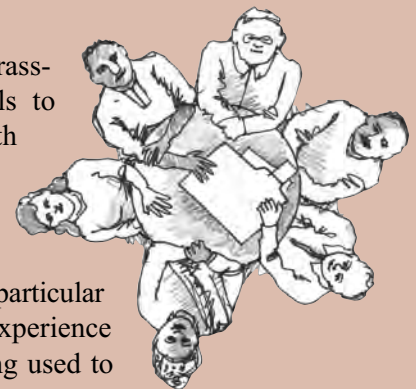
Organizer Roundtables usually feature a few expert organizers who can speak to a particular topic, but are primarily a chance for participants to share their knowledge and experience with peers. Our fall series of events focused on organizing practices that are being used to successfully win campaigns for racial and economic justice.

In mid-September, organizers joined together to learn about popular education techniques at the ***Staying Rooted in Community Knowledge and Experience*** roundtable. Renowned local expert Larry Olds discussed the theory behind popular education tools, which begin by facilitating dialogue to reveal grassroots community members' knowledge and experience. Participants were able to see that theory in action when Brian Payne of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers/Workers Interfaith Network and Victor Cole of Twin Cities Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed Working Group led organizers in two popular education exercises.

A few weeks later, another group gathered to talk about ***Building Strong Leadership*** in organizing campaigns. Participants discussed ways to support and nurture leaders that represent communities directly affected by an issue. Attendees heard about how other local organizers — Sina Black of Community Action Partnership of Ramsey and Dakota Counties, Ned Moore of All Parks Alliance for Change and Phyllis Hill of ISAIAH — have intentionally developed leadership within their organizations.

The final roundtable in the series was devoted to ***Building Strong Partnerships***. Organizers met to discuss their own examples of how effective partnerships and coalitions can elevate organizing campaigns to win lasting change for a community. Lance Knuckles of Northway Community Trust and Juan Linares of the East Side Neighborhood Development Company presented their own experience with inter-organization partnerships.

To read more about these Organizer Roundtables, visit our web site at [www.metrostability.org](http://www.metrostability.org).



# The Need for Equity Impact Analysis

By Jennifer Jimenez, *Alliance for Metropolitan Stability Organizer/Researcher*

**T**he U.S. remains the richest economy in the world despite current economic setbacks. This progress and prosperity, however, is not shared by all members of our society. Major disparities continue to persist for significant portions of our population—largely for people living in poverty and communities of color—in income, housing, schools, transportation, health, environmental concerns and other quality-of-life measures.

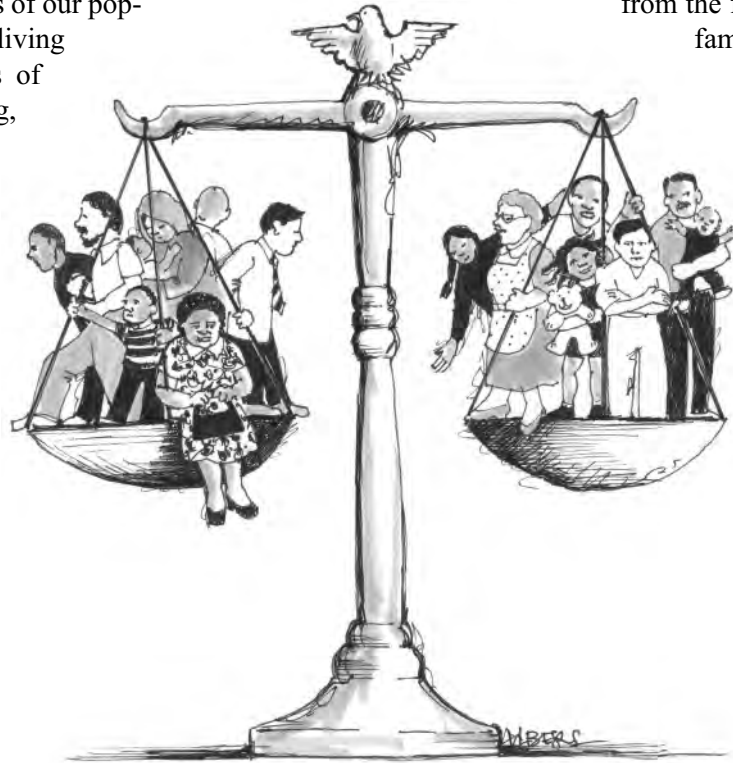
The income gap between rich and poor continues to grow and has disproportionately affected communities of color. According to the 1998 report of the Council of Economic Advisors for the President's Initiative on Race, white people nationally attend schools with smaller class sizes, go to college more often, earn higher salaries, are more likely to keep their jobs in economic downturns, are more likely to have health insurance and access to health care, and have higher rates of home ownership than people of color.

## SOCIAL POLICIES WIDENED THE GAP

Increasingly, research shows that many of these inequalities were created and maintained through misguided public policies. One frequently cited example is the low-interest mortgage and down-payment waiver offered to veterans returning from World War II. Due to the restrictive lending practices favoring white segregated neighborhoods at that time, more white veterans were able to purchase homes than their peers of color. This federal investment in housing has created many of today's suburbs, which remain overwhelmingly white today.

Through homeownership, many white families started the process of wealth creation, allowing them to build good credit, send their children to college and create a cycle of generational prosperity. In contrast, Native American,

African-American and Latino veterans were confined in segregated neighborhoods and did not have the same opportunity to build wealth. The social policies created in the 1930s and 1940s transferred an estimated \$100 billion from the federal government to white families.



## IMPACT ANALYSIS: AN ADAPTABLE TOOL?

A policy passed to increase community health was the environmental impact statement, mandated under the National Environmental Policy Act. This law requires an environmental impact study to review possible consequences of any development activity funded through federal money.

After several decades of implementing environmental impact studies, communities are beginning to wonder if a similar

tool could be used to assess racial disparities caused by public policies. As evidence mounts about the list of disparities, there is a growing recognition that government needs an equity impact statement to explicitly and directly address these issues in order for programs and policies to be more effective.

## KING COUNTY IS LEADING EXAMPLE

One leader in this field is King County, Washington, home to the city of Seattle. The county's statistics painted disparate pictures depending on a resident's skin color or place of residence: for example, a child in south King County is twice as likely to drop out of high school compared to a child in east King County; a youth of color is six times more likely to spend time in a correctional facility compared to a white youth; a working adult making between \$15,000 and \$25,000 a year is ten times less likely to have health insurance than someone making \$50,000 a year. King County realized that it was in its

own interest to ensure that opportunities are available to all people in order build healthier communities with economic vitality, better-educated residents, less expensive health care and a lower cost of criminal justice.

King County made sure that equity and social justice were central to their policy development and to the delivery of social services. One of the key tools they are testing is an equity impact assessment tool. In addition, they created equity and social justice curriculum for managers and new employees, developed an internal mechanism for support and oversight to ensure promoting equity is integral in every employee's work, and will collect data to illuminate inequities and track the progress being made to correct them.

Another key component of King County's equity and social justice efforts is ensuring meaningful participation of the communities facing the greatest inequities. Starting this year, King County has begun holding community dialogues and empowerment education programs to ensure all people have equal access to decision-making processes. See <http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/equity.aspx> for more information on the King County initiative.

There are numerous similar efforts to intentionally incorporate racial equity and social justice concerns in policymaking decisions. Some examples are:

- **Alameda County, California** — Place Matters Initiative: promoting more equitable distribution of social goods by influencing policies in housing, education, economic development, incarceration, land use and transportation (see <http://www.acphd.org/healthequity/place-matters/index.htm>).
- **Multnomah County, Oregon** — Health Equity Initiative: addressing health inequities by directly engaging communities (see <http://www.mchealth.org/healthequity/calendar.shtml>).
- **City of Seattle, Washington** — Race and Social Justice Initiative: seeking to reduce disproportionality in economic opportunity, education, civic engagement, health and criminal justice, fostering more inclusive civic engagement, ensuring equity in business and personal practices and delivering services relevant to Seattle's diverse populations. (see <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/rsji/whatIsRSJI.htm>)

Equity impact analysis remains a highly politically sensitive issue, and will not be an easy task for these local governments to implement. What is important, though, is the recognition that inequalities exist and that public policies and government actions have led to these disparities. By being intentional in applying an equity lens, and by sharing the decision-making processes with the very communities that will be impacted, public programs may finally begin to address the root causes of inequalities.

See article on regional racial and social justice, next page

## Spotlight on Seattle's Racial and Social Justice Initiative

The city of Seattle is one of the communities that is leading the way in thinking about how racial disparities can be reduced through proactive public policy. The city's Race and Social Justice Initiative is an effort to create a community where residents and employees experience cultural and ethnic diversity as an asset.

Seattle has committed to eliminating institutional attitudes, practices, and policies that result in racial disparities. City leaders have committed themselves to transforming civic and citizen engagement processes to address institutional barriers to progress for racial and ethnic communities.

Mayor Greg Nickels' administration has set six goals for the project:

1. Assessing the impact of race on organizational culture, policies, practices and procedures
2. Creating an organization free of institutionalized racism
3. Transforming business practices by aligning personnel and contracting activities with the city's race and social justice goals
4. Increasing the relevance of city programs and services to a multi-cultural citizenry
5. Creating a more inclusive citizen engagement process
6. Implementing strategies to combat community splintering and factionalization

The city expects a variety of positive outcomes for its residents of color, including improved customer service, greater inclusion in programs and policies and increased sensitivity to the interests of ethnic communities. Some programs may even be redesigned or revised to meet the needs of groups that traditionally have not received the same attention as others.

For more information on Seattle's program, visit <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/rsji/whatIsRSJI.htm>.







# A Racial Equity Impact Policy for St. Paul

**D**espite Minnesota's reputation for homogeneity, the number of people of color who call the Twin Cities home continues to increase. People of color now make up nearly 20 percent of the region's total population. That represents a growth rate of 110 percent between the last two censuses.

Minnesota is also known for being a relatively prosperous and progressive state. But as our demographics change, we have begun to experience widening achievement gaps between races. People of color are living at higher rates of poverty — more than 23 percent, compared to just 5.6 percent of whites. In 2002, the average family of color in Minnesota earned 72 percent of what the average white household made. People of color are significantly more likely to be homeless, be the victim of crime and lag behind in quality-of-life indicators such as health and school achievement.

## DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING POLICIES WIDENED THE GAP

Measures like educational attainment, health and poverty rates are directly related to how development in our region is planned: where people can afford to live, what types of jobs are located there, how they get around and what

community amenities are available. The disparities created by development decisions are usually not due to bad intentions of cities and developers, but rather to a lack of attention to how development decisions will affect certain communities.

*Measures like educational attainment, health and poverty rates are directly related to how development in our region is planned: where people can afford to live, what types of jobs are located there, how they get around and what community amenities are available.*

The Alliance and our partner organizations are introducing a new tool — a **racial equity impact policy** — to help communities of color ensure that cities and developers have considered, quantified and documented the impacts new development projects may have on different racial and economic groups.

## STUDY REQUIRED FOR SUBSIDIZED PROJECTS

The goal of our racial equity impact policy campaign is to secure city of St. Paul support for a policy that would require an equity report to be created for all development projects that receive a subsidy of \$100,000 or more. The result of this report would be a shared understanding by the community, the developer and the city of the impacts and benefits of the development project. This policy would expand upon the typical economic and environmental impact reports conducted by the city by including measurements of the racial and economic impacts of development.

Graphics: Shari Albers

## Organizations that have contributed to the Racial Equity Impact Policy include:

### COALITION PARTNERS

- Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
- Aurora/Saint Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation
- Community Stabilization Project
- Jewish Community Action
- Organizing Apprenticeship Project

### RESEARCH ALLIES

- Crossroads Resource Center
- HECUA
- Organizing Apprenticeship Project
- Minnesota Community Research Partners

The racial equity impact policy working group has been convening since mid-2007 to develop and advocate for the policy. The draft policy identifies the following criteria as critical to ensuring racial and socioeconomic equity in development policy:



• **Fiscal equity:** Will the use of public funds reduce racial disparities rather than increasing them or neglecting to consider them?



• **Transportation equity:** Will transit access (or lack thereof) differentially impact people of different racial and economic statuses?



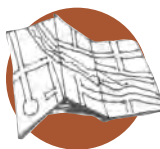
• **Housing equity:** Will the use of public funds for housing development differentially impact people of various racial and economic backgrounds?



• **Employment equity:** Are jobs created and retained as part of a strategy to reduce poverty across different racial and ethnic lines?



• **Environmental equity:** Are environmental hazards distributed unevenly across residents based on race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status?



• **Zoning and planning equity:** Are zoning and planning policies adversely impacting people differently based on socioeconomic, ethnic or racial status?

Based on this criteria, city staff and the developer will compile a racial equity impact report, which will aid them in making better development decisions by proactively asking difficult questions around race. For instance, the report will not only ask how many jobs will be created, but will ask for whom jobs will be created. This will help cities overcome common problems associated with standard economic analyses that assume all people have equal access to resources.

### TOOL PROVIDES INFORMATION BEFORE DEVELOPMENT BEGINS

This report will also be a effective tool for community

*This report will also be a effective tool for community leaders who will have access to information about potential community benefits or negative consequences that may be derived from future housing, commercial and industrial projects — before development begins.*



leaders who will now have access to information about potential community benefits or negative consequences that may be derived from future housing, commercial and industrial projects — before development begins. Leaders will then be able to determine which development projects deserve community support, which must be improved with the involvement of the community, and which should be opposed outright.

The policy could also have a positive impact on the kinds of projects developers bring to the city. Because every project will be evaluated for its racial and economic impacts, developers will be encouraged to consider community benefits from the outset. They'll also be able to identify points of tension and work out concerns of the community at an early stage in the project, saving time and money that often accompany lengthy community battles.

### SAINT PAUL PLANNING COULD BE A MODEL FOR THE NATION

St. Paul City Council President Kathy Lantry and City Attorney John Choi are supportive of the concept, and have asked the city planning department to identify a development project to pilot the racial equity impact report within the next year. The pilot report will be used to hone the policy to make sure it is relevant to the city, developers and the community. The city planning department will then bring the policy for consideration by the St. Paul City Council. If passed, the racial equity impact policy will be the first of its kind in the nation, and will serve as a model for different cities in our region and around the country.



# The Emerging Green Jobs Movement

By Jennifer Jimenez-Wheatley, *Alliance for Metropolitan Stability Organizer/Researcher*

**G**rowing a green economy is one solution for curbing climate change while providing millions of stable, living-wage jobs. Formerly unfamiliar allies from a broad array of leaders from the environmental movement, labor, business and local communities are coming together to advocate for more investments in green jobs that contribute substantially to restoring our economic health and environmental quality.

## UNLIKELY PARTNERSHIPS EMERGING

Environmental groups, such as the Sierra Club, are natural proponents of the green jobs movement. But in the movement's short lifetime, a remarkable list of allies, including

labor unions and communities of color, have formed a broad base of support for a new green economy.

The Blue Green Alliance is a partnership that was borne out of the nation's largest manufacturing union, the United Steelworkers of America, and the largest environmental group, the Sierra Club. They have not always shared the same agenda, but with this partnership they want to prove that reducing our carbon footprint does not mean jeopardizing good union jobs. Together, they are advocating for expanding investments in clean energy, accelerating green building and energy efficient retrofits, creating more investments in green job opportunities, and pushing for stronger environmental and

worker protections in trade agreements.

## CREATING A GREEN PATHWAY OUT OF POVERTY

For many community leaders and activists, the job-creation potential of the green economy is the main pull of the green jobs movement. Communities of color are often beleaguered with low employment levels and are disproportionately affected by environmental issues. But issues like climate change and global warming are not always front and center in the concerns of disadvantaged communities when more pressing economic issues are at hand.

Advocates believe that creating access to new, living-wage jobs in green sectors can give people of all socioeconomic backgrounds a better stake in fighting issues like global warming. This is especially important since several recent studies have shown that the adverse health effects caused by climate change will be disproportionately borne by communities of color. Green For All is one of the national groups at the forefront of advocating for a green economy that will provide a green pathway out of poverty. The organization was founded in 2007 by Van Jones of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights and Majora Carter of Sustainable South Bronx.

## GREEN JOBS FOR ALL

Green for All emerged from Jones' prior work in creating the Green Jobs Corps in Oakland, California. The Green Jobs Corps is a job readiness training program for the "hard to employ" (e.g., at-risk youth, formerly incarcerated people, low-income people and the underemployed), helping them to obtain jobs in green industries like solar, bio-diesel and wind energy. Green For All is hoping to replicate local and state efforts like the Green Jobs Corps on the federal level.

To that end, the organization co-organized "Green Jobs Now: National Day of Action to Build the New Economy" on September 27, 2008. Hundreds of communities across the United States held events to highlight the need to increase investments in green industries that could translate into millions of green jobs, especially for low-income communities. This event was organized in collaboration with environmental groups 1Sky and WE Alliance for Climate Protection, which are both strongly advocating for the creation of new jobs in emerging green industries.

### What is a Green Job?

The Apollo Alliance, a national organization that seeks good jobs from a clean energy economy, defines a green job as work that "provides high enough and good benefits to support a family, opportunity to advance and build a career, and reduces waste, pollution and other environmental risks."

There are a number of broad job categories being considered by proponents, including:

- **Manufacturing:** solar panels, wind turbines, hybrid cars and other high-tech products
- **Building and construction:** green buildings and energy-efficient retrofits
- **Brownfield remediation:** cleaning up polluted land
- **Transportation infrastructure:** construction of mass transitways
- **Agriculture:** production of biofuels



## WHAT'S THE POTENTIAL OF THE GREEN JOBS MOVEMENT?

So with all of this energy being directed toward the green economy, how many green jobs could ultimately be created? According to the Apollo Alliance's 2004 report, *New Energy for America*:

- A \$300 billion investment in America's economic and energy future over 10 years would produce 3.3 million jobs and a \$1.43 trillion gain in GDP.
- 932,000 of the jobs would be in energy diversity.
- 900,000 jobs would be in industries of the future, such as hybrid cars and energy efficient appliances.
- 827,000 would be in retrofitting buildings and constructing new green buildings
- 679,000 would be in infrastructure investment, including transit construction

Another study released in September by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst under commission by the Center for American Progress indicates that investing \$100 billion

in green technologies and industries "would create four times more jobs than spending the same amount of money within the oil industry, and would reduce the unemployment rate to 4.4 percent over two years."

Green jobs advocates recognize that while demand for these industries will increase, many of these investments will be slow to happen. They also recognize there is a need for stronger job training programs that will provide workers for these industries—and avenues for low-income people to obtain these jobs. Advocates are calling for local, state and federal policies that will increase investment and fund job-training programs.

There are precedents in place already. Green For All helped shaped the Green Jobs Act as part of the 2007 Energy Bill. It authorizes Congress to allocate \$125 million to train 35,000 workers in environment friendly fields.

While skeptics remain, these are hopeful times for the green jobs movement. There are links and connections being created not only around the issues of achieving economic growth and social justice through environmentalism, but also among the diverse leaders and constituents who are working toward this new green economy.

# Local Groups Demand Green Jobs Now!

By Russ Adams, *Alliance for Metropolitan Stability executive director*

**A**t the Alliance, we believe in the interdependence of people, places and issues — that transit, housing, jobs and land-use patterns are connected to one another and to social justice considerations about how resources are shared in a metro region.

These equitable development principles also apply to the green jobs movement, which is gaining momentum in the Twin Cities. There are a number of opportunities for green manufacturing and green development cropping up around the region, and low-income communities and communities of color are beginning to ask themselves questions like: when a major green

manufacturing project is built with public subsidies, how can that project be wielded in a way that promotes new

economic development and opportunity in the affected communities? Will the people most impacted by the project participate in planning for and benefiting from the development? Can the significant levels of private and public investment in these opportunities be utilized in a way that not only lures new businesses, but helps lift people out of poverty?



Activists gathered on September 27 to celebrate the National Green Jobs Day of Action. Photo: Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota

Local grassroots organizations, particularly environmental justice groups and place-based community organizations See **Local Groups Demand Green Jobs Now!**, page 10

## Local Groups Demand Green Jobs Now! *continued from page 9*

### A Native American Perspective on Minnesota's Green Economy



*"Tribes in Minnesota and across the country are proving that it's possible to take control of our future by looking to clean energy, food sovereignty and the promises of the growing green economy. In recognizing the links between food, health, fuel poverty and energy, we can address the global challenge of climate change and peak oil and the economic and health challenges afflicting our communities. By investing in energy efficiency, more efficient buildings, renewable energy and local food systems, Minnesota tribes can help secure a place in the developing green economy and ensure a sustainable future.*

*In the end, we as Indigenous peoples need to control our own destinies by exercising food and energy sovereignty. Our future generations will be counting on our actions."*

— Winona LaDuke

"Launching a Green Economy for Brown People," a publication of *Honor the Earth*, 2008, found at [www.nativeworkplace.com](http://www.nativeworkplace.com)

are taking a hard look at the promises and challenges related to the burgeoning green jobs movement. They are looking at the major job areas that might spin out of a national realignment of our energy and investment priorities — like green building, transportation and renewable energy — and they are interested in positioning low-income communities and communities of color in ways that could capture and reap the rewards of this movement.

### GREEN JOBS FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

Mayor Chris Coleman of St. Paul has made the development of green manufacturing jobs a high priority — and opportunity appears to be knocking. Recently, the St. Paul Port Authority announced that they were buying the abandoned 3M site on the East Side to clean up and prepare the site for a new green manufacturing facility. The Port Authority has a reputation for successfully attracting light manufacturing firms that pay living wages, and for setting local hiring goals for St. Paul workers of up to 70 percent. Local neighborhood leaders and community development groups are in the early stages of thinking about how to organize around this project. And residents are beginning to ask important questions about how the old 3M site will be redeveloped, how East Side residents can get access to the job opportunities, and how the project can contribute to a more inclusive and equitable community.

In other parts of St. Paul, neighborhood-based groups like the West Side Citizens Organization (WSCo) are interested in doing an in-depth land-use analysis of their community to identify polluted sites. They aim to organize a campaign to clean them up and attract green manufacturing jobs — creating new employment opportunities for local residents and eliminating neighborhood blight in the process.

Community groups believe that it's not enough to celebrate the growth in jobs in this sector. Instead, they are organizing to explore ways to proactively create career pathways for local people to study, apprentice and be certified in the trades. Organizations like ALANA (a coalition representative of African, Latino, Asian and Native American leaders) will be approaching state legislators to support educational programs and trainings at community colleges and vocational technology schools to help create a green pathway out of poverty.

Additionally, local organizations led by people of color, like the Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota (EJAM), have partnered with traditionally white-led environmental and labor groups to move this vision forward among Minnesota's policy and decision makers. EJAM hosted a large gathering for the Green Jobs Now National Day of Action, with 150 people attending and pledging to make green jobs a reinvestment priority in Minnesota. EJAM has an interest in retrofitting residential homes on the Northside of Minneapolis, in the hopes of low-

## Minnesota's Forecast for Energy-Related Green Jobs

While new federal investments could create millions of new jobs, local employment goals and projections are just starting to be formulated. The Blue Green Alliance, a unique collaboration between the Sierra Club and the United Steelworkers union, released a report that estimated the benefits of developing 185,000 megawatts of alternative renewable energy in Minnesota, and projected more than 18,000 new energy component manufacturing jobs.

Number of firms/businesses:	1,070
Number of wind-related jobs	9,246
Number of solar-related jobs	5,238
Number of geothermal-related jobs	1,477
Number of biomass-related jobs	2,444
<b>Total Number of Jobs</b>	<b>18,405</b>



\* Minnesota's Road to Energy Independence, Blue Green Alliance report, 2008

Graphic: Shari Albers

ering the utility bill for thousands of residents and also generating a local jobs program for energy auditing and retrofitting.

### GREEN JOBS AND CLIMATE EQUITY

EJAM and the Women's Environmental Institute (WEI) have identified important health equity concerns related to our carbon-based economy. They note that as temperatures rise in urban areas, so will cases of asthma and heat-related fatalities. People without health care are likely to be most impacted. The effects of climate change will be compounded by existing inequalities. This health equity concern is why EJAM, WEI and other allied groups are pursuing an agenda for local action, job creation and public policies that will contribute to the state legislature's goal of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent.

A special task force convened by Governor Pawlenty in 2007–2008 also recommended changes to reduce Minnesota's

greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050. Meeting the 80 percent reduction goal will require a coordinated effort to encourage changes in individual and societal behavior. It will require significant reductions in point source emissions from industry and coal-fired power plants, reductions in vehicle miles traveled by drivers, a commitment to cleaner cars and trucks, expanded investment in our regional transit system, and changes to our land-use and growth patterns that would better connect compact development with jobs, transit and a range of housing choices.

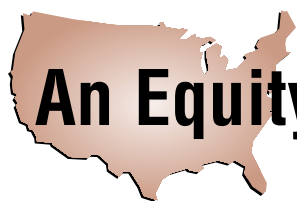
But reducing our carbon footprint doesn't have to be all about sacrifice. The green jobs movement is just one of the responses to climate

change that could boost our economy and provide career-path jobs for people who need them.



*Alliance Board Member Rachel Dykoski and her family attend an event to demand green jobs. Photo: Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota*





# An Equity Agenda for Community Development

**T**he Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) recently issued a report detailing its analysis of the public policies that have worked around the nation for promoting equity and sustainability in community development.

The good news from the report is that there are examples where the right public policy infrastructure is creating opportunities for all people to contribute fully to their communities. LISC cites Saint Paul as among a handful of places where, despite all the bad news about unemployment and a faltering economy, affordable homes are replacing blighted properties, business and shopping opportunities are expanding, crime is dropping below average, the middle class is growing and property values are rising.

The report, *Building Sustainable Communities for 21st Century America: A Public Policy Framework*, notes that communities that are succeeding in developing a more stable environment vary widely in their circumstances. However, they do share a few common characteristics, including:

- **Regular collaboration** among strong community-based organizations, the private sector and government.
- **Market-stabilizing physical improvements** such as new and renovated housing for families of varied incomes.
- **A comprehensive vision** that takes a variety of local issues into account.

In addition to these factors, LISC cites several existing public policies that have helped create this environment. In their estimation, “to address any number of national priorities successfully, public policies should build on local efforts to help low-income communities to become truly sustain-

able.” Policies that have worked around the country include low-income housing tax credits, new markets tax credits, federal housing grants, earned income tax credits, and other policies that stabilize low-income working families.

The report also cites support for the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), a federal law that requires banks to make loans in low-income areas in which they take deposits. Despite being passed into law in 1977, the CRA has recently come under fire from conservative lawmakers and commentators as one of the underlying problems of the current financial crisis. The CRA has been successful in leveraging billions of dollars of responsible and profitable bank lending and investments for low-income people.

For community developers to have maximum impact in supporting equitable and sustainable communities, all levels of government must play a role. LISC urges lawmakers to continue proven policies that are benefiting low-income people, and to look for opportunities to expand their underlying principles to policies that address other critical issues. Any new programs created should be flexible enough that communities can apply them in ways that make sense for local situations. And government should respect community institutions and partnerships already in place, because local people are best suited to address set priorities and implement policies effectively – and because they will ultimately be the people who have to live with the results.

*LISC is dedicated to helping community residents transform distressed neighborhoods into healthy and sustainable communities of choice and opportunity. You can download Building Sustainable Communities for 21st Century America: A Public Policy Framework at [www.lisc.org](http://www.lisc.org).*





# 20 Years of Development in the Twin Cities

**P**eople who live in the Twin Cities may not know it, but they are surrounded every day by many positive contributions community development corporations (CDCs) have made to our region. CDCs have been instrumental in providing opportunities to struggling communities through business development, residential housing programs and civic engagement initiatives.

This year and next, the two primary community development support organizations in the Twin Cities are sharing a big milestone. Alliance member groups Twin Cities Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) and Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD) are celebrating their respective 20th anniversaries of working for equitable and sustainable development in our region.

Opened in 1988, Twin Cities LISC has grown to become one of the strongest, most productive LISC offices in the country. Twin Cities LISC combines corporate, government and philanthropic support to provide CDCs with financial tools, technical assistance and policy support.

The goal is to build durable organizations, transform neighborhoods through physical and economic development, build community beyond bricks and mortar and support a strong community development environment.

While MCCD was founded in 1982 as an association of nonprofit community development organizations committed to expanding the wealth and resources of neighborhoods through housing and economic development initiatives, the organization was formally incorporated in 1989. MCCD members work together to increase opportunities for development of quality, community-based projects through collaborative action on public policy issues, loan fund

development, public education efforts and long-term strategic planning.



*The American Indian Housing and Community Development Corporation, developed Many Rivers, a mixed-use development in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis.*



*Ripley Gardens, an Aeon development in north Minneapolis, is a mixed-income development providing rental and home ownership opportunities for households at very-low, and moderate-income levels.*

But LISC and MCCD are doing more than just celebrating their achievements this year. The two organizations have joined forces in 2008 to create a strong shared vision for community development work in the Twin Cities.

The groups have asked their members and partners to jointly envision the next 20 years of community development's role in promoting neighborhood vitality and regional stability. The groups came up with a vision with a four-pronged focus:

## **1) Community benefits:**

Community development is about increasing prosperity, creating access to opportunity, and improving the physical, economic, social and cultural vitality.

## **2) Community participation:**

Community development work should be done by people who want to make where they live and work a better place. The more participation, the better

our neighborhoods will be.

**3) Comprehensive approach:** A wide range of organizations will need to be involved to transform communities. CDCs should partner with organizations that emphasize human and social development, arts, culture, youth and leadership development.

**4) Local opportunities:** Successful community development reflects the unique opportunities in neighborhoods throughout our region.

All of this visioning work culminated on November 19 and 20, when the two organizations, their partners and local policymakers celebrated outstanding community development work in the Twin Cities at their 20/20 Community Development Expo. To download presentations made at the expo on transit, foreclosures and other topics, visit [www.2020cdexpo.org](http://www.2020cdexpo.org).



# Massachusetts Community Fights for Rail Stops

**E**ight passenger train lines pass through Somerville, MA, every day. Only one of them stops. The town, just northwest of Boston and near the college town of Cambridge, is the most densely populated city in New England. Not only that, but more than 25 percent of Somerville's residents do not own a car. So why haven't the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority and the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization allocated more resources to helping Somerville residents get to where they work, shop and go to school?

That's what the Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership wants to know. Similar to the fight communities of color are taking on in Central Corridor LRT planning in the Twin Cities, the volunteer-led organization is embroiled in a battle to get regional, state and federal agencies to recognize the disparities in transportation funding allocation in their region.

## DIVERSE AND TRANSIT-DEPENDENT COMMUNITY DEMANDS STOPS

All eight commuter trains that run through Somerville used to stop in the city of about 80,000 people. According to STEP, Somerville residents are the second-most reliant on public transit to get to work in the greater Boston area, yet they are now allocated only one "T" stop (the commuter rail system that connects Somerville to Boston) daily. STEP leaders think that Somerville deserves more stops, especially since they pay just as much to the transit authority as do neighboring communities well served by rail lines.

But it's not just an issue of taxpayers wanting their fair share. STEP is also fighting for more stops because it's an environmental justice issue. According to the STEP web site, "Environmental justice policies require that transportation benefits and burdens be shared fairly, with special protection extended to neighborhoods like East Somerville that have high concentrations of immigrants and of moderate and low-income residents." Overall, the city has 6,000 immigrants per square mile, making it one of the most diverse communities in the state.

Furthermore, Somerville has the highest rates of lung cancer and heart attack deaths per square mile in Massachusetts.

*"Urban transit systems in most American cities (are) a genuine civil rights issue . . ."*

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

STEP points to high levels of air pollution caused by traffic congestion as one reason for this public health phenomenon. All of these indicators point to a need for more investment in public transportation options for Somerville residents.

## POLICYMAKERS ARE STARTING TO LISTEN

And after years of organizing Somerville residents for transit equity, STEP is finally making progress. The biggest achievement to date? "State and federal officials are listening to us," the group claims. STEP has built a powerful and dedicated base of concerned residents that attend monthly meetings, contact city, state and federal officials, participate in trainings, and talk to their neighbors about transit equity issues.

STEP leaders have been invited to sit on a transit authority advisory committee that is charged with planning a highly sought-after line that would pass through Somerville into Boston. They have a promise from the state for that line to stop in Somerville, but they still face hurdles at the state department of environment, the federal Environmental Protection Agency, and the planning commission — not to mention that the Massachusetts legislature has not yet supported funding for the line.

STEP is also advocating for another train to stop in a less developed area of the city to kick start mixed-use development that could improve the economy. But they are running into a "chicken-and-egg" problem: the state won't agree to the line until the city moves forward on economic development activities in the area, but the city says development is contingent upon access to transit.

## A NEW BARRIER

Despite near-unanimous support for the rail-line expansions in Somerville, the projects have reached a new dilemma. The state transit office is now telling residents that if the new lines are extended to Somerville, the city will need to support a new 12-acre rail maintenance yard to support the expansion. With very little room for development of this size, the rail yard would thwart the city's plans for new tax-base supporting initiatives planned for the city's inner corridor.

STEP maintains that the existing rail yard — a 43-acre



parcel that serves trains that run through Somerville should be able to serve the new lines without creating a new facility. The city is evaluating possible alternatives and will bring its own recommendations to the transit authority in the coming months.

*For more information about how the Somerville community is demanding social and environmental justice in transit planning or to watch a video STEP produced about their fight for a rail line stop in their city visit [www.somervillestep.org](http://www.somervillestep.org).*

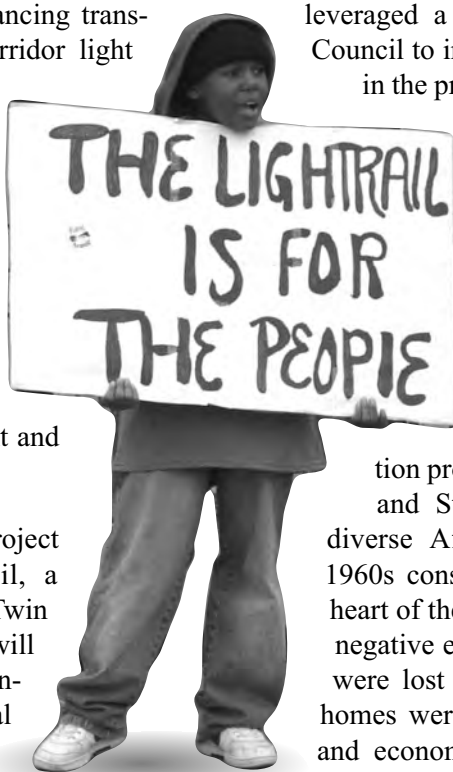
## Stops for Us! Coalition Fights for Three More Central Corridor LRT Stops

By Joan Vanhala, *Alliance for Metropolitan Stability Coalition Organizer*

**T**he Stops for Us! Campaign is advancing transportation equity in the Central Corridor light rail transit project by organizing for the construction of three additional stations at the intersections of University Avenue and Hamline Avenue, Victoria Street and Western Avenue by the completion of the line. Without these stations the low-income, diverse, transit-dependent communities on east University Avenue will miss out on many of the benefits of the light rail. Our campaign is rooted in the values of equitable development and environmental justice.

The Central Corridor LRT is a \$915 million project implemented by the Metropolitan Council, a regional body that serves the seven-county Twin Cities metro area. The Central Corridor LRT will connect the downtown Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul and is part of a larger regional transportation plan.

Although the full construction of three stations is not a part of the final design plans, our coalition has successfully



leveraged a commitment from the Metropolitan Council to include the foundations for the stations in the project plans. Our coalition continues to push for the full build out of the station with a campaign strategy that challenges the statistical, financial and political barriers. Our larger goal is to increase local political power to leverage resources long overdue to this community.

The last time a major transportation project was built to connect Minneapolis and St. Paul, it devastated a vibrant and diverse African-American neighborhood. The 1960s construction of Interstate 94 through the heart of the Rondo neighborhood has had lasting negative effects. During that time 70 businesses were lost or destroyed and over 600 families' homes were torn down. Despite the geographic and economic destruction of the heart of their neighborhood, the east University Avenue Rondo neighborhood lives on through strong relationship networks, community leadership and community spirit.

### NEGATIVE IMPACT ON DIVERSE COMMUNITY

The Central Corridor LRT line will run parallel to I-94 just a few blocks to the east of the former Rondo neighborhood along University Avenue. Without the three additional stations, this major transportation project will also have negative impacts on this diverse community. The proposed project will reduce bus line service, build stations one mile apart in the most populated section of the line, create four years of construction disruption and devastate small businesses by reducing the on-street parking

See **Stops for Us!**, page 16



Photos: Arthur Sidner

## Stops for Us! *continued from page 15*

by 85 percent. This LRT project also will inevitably bring gentrification along University Avenue, and displacement to community residents and small businesses.

### METRO COUNCIL ANALYSIS DISPUTED

The Metropolitan Council has stated in their supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement that “the analysis determined that minority or low-income populations within the study area are not subject to any disproportionate impacts associated with the development of the Central Corridor LRT; furthermore, the benefits of the project are fairly distributed. No mitigation is proposed at this time” (Section 3, pg. 153). Our coalition emphatically disagrees with this analysis. We have studied the data and found that there is an 80 percent minority population near the three stops in comparison with 40 percent on the rest of the line. We also found that the community at the three stations has higher poverty rates and is more transit-dependent than other areas of the line. We believe this reality makes a strong case to build the three stations based on environmental justice principals and laws.

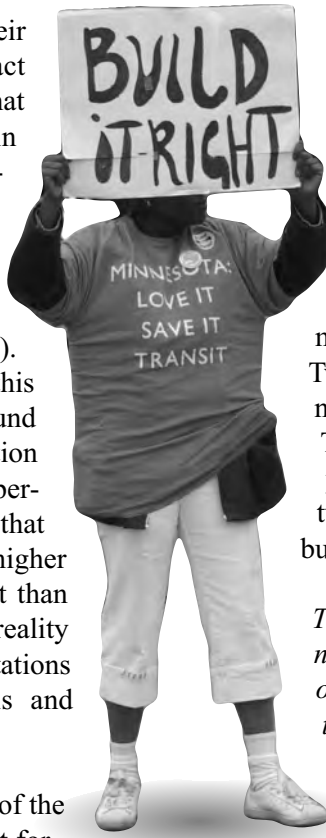
Our coalition is also challenging the barrier of the cost effectiveness index, which has been put forward as the deciding argument against building the stations. The cost effectiveness index is a Federal Transportation Administration formula that calculates federal criteria which includes capital costs, operating costs, ridership and travel time. Our coalition has been told many times that when the construction of the three stations is plugged into this formula, the route does not meet federal criteria and the stops cannot be built within the initial project plans.

The Stops coalition is moving forward to meet with federal

and local elected officials to overcome the barriers and biases of the CEI. We will advocate to leverage new sources of funding for the three stations and continue to make our case to the Metropolitan Council and the Environmental Protection Agency that this is an issue of environmental justice.

The Metropolitan Council and elected officials have a choice: are we going to repeat the past and settle for a transit project that continues to build inequities into our infrastructure or are we going to build the Central Corridor LRT to benefit all communities and bring prosperity to the east University Avenue communities? The new light rail line must connect the Twin Cities’ most diverse and transit-dependent neighborhoods to the economic hubs of our region. The Central Corridor LRT must not become a pass-through but instead be a viable transit opportunity for east University Avenue residents and businesses.

*The Stops for Us coalition is comprised of neighborhood, advocacy and social justice organizations that are united with a single focus: to build stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western by the completion of the line. For a complete list of partners involved in Stops for Us, visit [www.metrostability.org](http://www.metrostability.org).*



Photos: Arthur Sidner

## The Alliance is pleased to welcome new board members Natalia Pretelt & Lea Schuster

**Natalia Pretelt** joined the Alliance board earlier this year representing the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD). Natalia is MCCD's loan program associate manager. She has 5 years of experience in loan servicing and loan originating for businesses around the Twin Cities. Natalia is originally from Bogota, Colombia, and moved to Minneapolis to pursue her undergraduate degree from Augsburg College. She expects to graduate from the University of St. Thomas with an MBA in December. Prior to joining MCCD, Natalia completed an internship at the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Minnesota. Natalia serves as the treasurer of the Alliance Board of Directors.



**Natalia Pretelt**

**Lea Schuster**, executive director of Transit for Livable Communities (TLC), joined the Alliance Board of Directors earlier this year. Lea was hired as TLC's first full-time executive director in 2001. She formerly served as executive director of the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group (MPIRG), assistant director of the Sacramento AIDS Foundation, and program coordinator for the national fundraiser "Bike-Aid." Lea also practiced labor and employment rights law, representing nonprofit entities. She received her J.D. from University of California, Davis, and a B.A. in international relations from Stanford University.



**Lea Schuster**

## Jennifer Jimenez-Wheatley joins the Alliance staff

**Jennifer Jimenez-Wheatley** joined the Alliance in September 2008 as our coalition organizer/researcher.

Her community development work started in the Philippines as a community organizer working on urban poor and housing issues. She also worked as a community organizer in Chicago's West Ridge neighborhood where she initiated coalition-building efforts among various local institutions and faith-based organizations to address issues on immigration reform, affordable housing and other local issues. She moved to Minnesota in 2006. Her most recent work prior to joining the Alliance was with the Trust for Public Land, where she completed a community assessment of parks and open space needs of inner city neighborhoods in Minneapolis and St. Paul.



**Jennifer Jimenez-Wheatley**

Jennifer holds a master's degree in urban planning and policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She completed her undergraduate degree at the University of the Philippines as a social science major in behavioral studies.

## Fund for an OPEN Society and Women's Environmental Institute Join the Alliance

The Alliance was pleased to add two new members in October: the **Women's Environmental Institute (WEI)** and the **Fund for an Open Society (OPEN)**.

WEI is an environmental research, renewal and retreat center designed to create and share knowledge about environmental issues and policies relevant to women, children and identified communities especially affected by environmental injustices; to promote organic and sustainable agriculture skill building and ecological awareness; and to promote activism that influences public policy and supports social change.

OPEN promotes thriving racially and ethnically integrated communities. OPEN envisions people of different racial and ethnic groups not only living near one another, but living in open communities where people interact and form friendships, support and/or become elected officials, participate in schools and religious congregations, and generally have a wide range of experiences across racial and ethnic lines.

We look forward to a strong partnership with OPEN and WEI!



# Developments to Watch

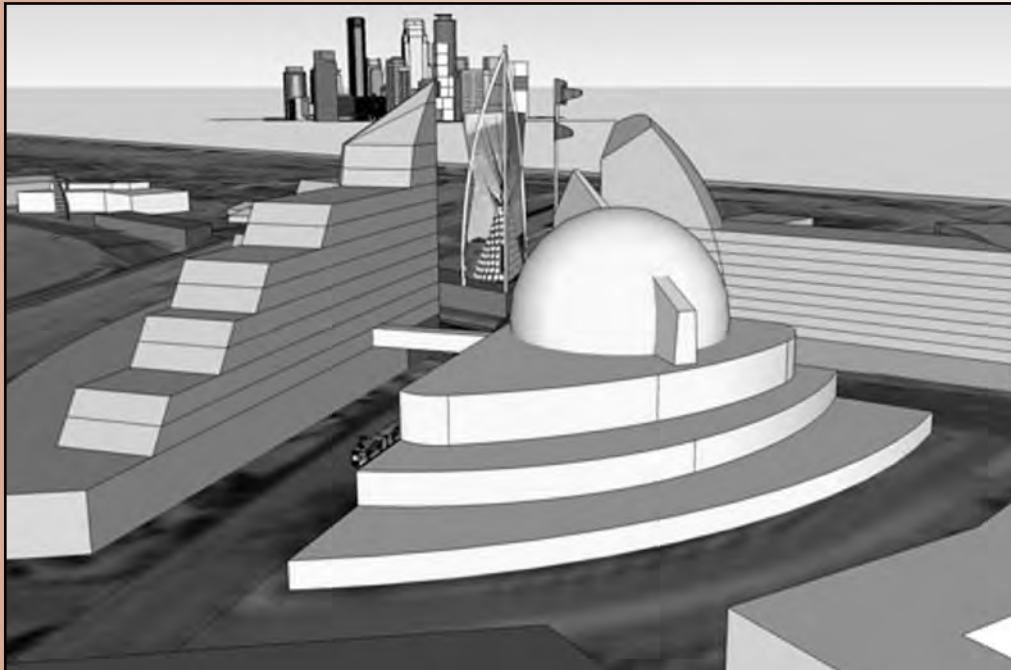
*New developments are cropping up all around the Twin Cities. These local development projects have regional significance because they have the potential to provide new jobs, incorporate affordable housing, make transit connections and revitalize communities. Here are a few we have our eye on.*



## American Indian Cultural & Economic Corridor

The Native American Community Development Institute recently completed a four-part design workshop series that engaged community leaders in exploring development concepts for Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. The vision for the corridor, which begins at the intersection of Franklin and Cedar Avenues and proceeds west down

Franklin Avenue to 11th Street, is to create the first urban American Indian destination corridor in the country.



***A potential reuse scenario for the American Indian Cultural Corridor in Minneapolis.***

According to NACDI President Justin Huenemann, “Significant numbers of American Indian people wish to remain within their historic, recognized community area. There remains a strong desire to preserve and strengthen community and place for American Indians, and yet two challenges persist: a lack of strategic alignment and

investment among American Indian non-profits and their leaders to work on projects that leverage their collective assets to truly produce poverty-reduction outcomes; and a lack of community and economic development capacity to create the new prosperity envisioned by many Indian residents, businesses and organizations.”

The American Indian Cultural and Economic Corridor is a community-driven vision to overcome those barriers. This month, NACDI released concept drawings that bring the community’s vision for the corridor to life.

*More information and images of the design vision can be found at <http://www.nacdi.org/>.*



Graphic: Shari Albers



**One of the existing buildings on the UMore Park site.**  
 Photo: Ashley's Natural Images.

## UMore Park

The University of Minnesota is planning to build an ambitious, large-scale residential and academic campus on 5,000 acres in the southeastern suburb of Rosemount. This community will be home to 20,000-30,000 people and will be developed over a 25- to 30-year period. Called UMore Park, the University describes the project as “a vibrant, culturally rich, sustainable new community for the 21st century.” Indeed, the development will be on the cutting edge of new technologies for building energy-efficient communities, creating life-cycle learning opportunities, emphasizing environmental health and providing access to innovative transit systems.

But a big question remaining is whether all members of our community will have access to this revolutionary vision for a livable neighborhood. The Housing Preservation Project (HPP) has been monitoring the UMore Park project for the past year. HPP has approached the university and offered its expertise in utilizing various tools to build mixed-income multi-family housing and keep it affordable. “This is a great opportunity for the university to use its housing research in this new marketplace to produce mixed-income housing,”

HPP’s Mona Langston says. “We are very interested in seeing

this development become more inclusive of people with a wide range of incomes and look forward to the next phase in the planning process.” *More information about UMore can be found at <http://www.umorepark.umn.edu/>.*

## St. Paul 3M Site

When the old 3M industrial plant closed down in St. Paul, the impact wasn’t just felt in the East Side neighborhood surrounding the facility. It was felt throughout the region since the loss of hundreds of manufacturing jobs hurts everyone, including local merchants, industrial supply chain businesses, and 3M workers. In late September 2008, the St. Paul Port Authority announced that it would be purchasing this industrial site with the intent to clean it up, and prepare the land to host a green manufacturing facility. If that site is redeveloped, how can community members help to shape a new development for the area and our region that is as strong an asset as the plant once was?

This is an opportunity for community based organizations and neighborhood leaders to take advantage of city support for the emerging green jobs movement that is sweeping the country. The property holds a number of empty buildings, which the port authority will raze to ready the land for redevelopment. This 45-acre site could support new green manufacturing jobs, and if the port authority’s vision is met, up to 70 percent of the jobs would be held by residents of St. Paul who would earn an average wage of \$11 per hour.

# Join the Movement for a Just and Equitable Region

## Support the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability!

**Yes!!!** I support the work of the *Alliance for Metropolitan Stability* to engage communities in eliminating racial and economic disparities in growth and development patterns in the Twin Cities region.

☐ *You can count on me! Here's my tax-deductible contribution to support your efforts:*

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25    \_\_\_\_\_ \$50    \_\_\_\_\_ \$25    \_\_\_\_\_ \$100    \_\_\_\_\_ \$250    \_\_\_\_\_ \$500    \_\_\_\_\_ (Other \$\_\_\_\_\_)

☐ *Stay up-to-date with bi-weekly news about regional development by subscribing to the Metro Organizer e-newsletter. My e-mail is:* \_\_\_\_\_

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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to: Alliance for Metropolitan Stability*  
*and send to: Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, 2525 E. Franklin Ave., Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55406*



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