Grantmaking Strategies
Research Paper
Regional Planning: Building Sustainable Land Use and Transportation Plans to Secure the Future of Silicon Valley and its Residents
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Silicon Valley is a diverse region in terms of its population, its productivity and its physical geography. As this dynamic region continues to change and grow, better land use and transportation policies will be key to ensuring that our society, economy and natural environment continue to improve without impairing or degrading future generation’s quality of life. To meet this goal, land use and transportation policies must be created in a manner that is inclusive, transparent and responsive to local needs and that fit into a comprehensive regional strategy.

Silicon Valley Community Foundation will help shape a better future for the region by creating a model for innovative land use and transportation plans that result in greater coordination, civic engagement and, ultimately, more sustainable communities—answering the charge of participants in the Community Input Project for more effective and inclusive local planning. Because local planning requires the incorporation of public values, the community foundation will increase civic participation by coordinating and partnering with community, city, county, state and business groups to create sustainable and equitable plans that improve the quality of life for current and future Silicon Valley residents.

Problem Statement
Currently there is a mismatch of resources in Silicon Valley. There are significantly more jobs than housing units in the area. By 2030, population size is projected to increase and exacerbate an already tight housing market. The cost of living in Silicon Valley outpaces the rise in median household income. Middle- and lower-income individuals are often unable to live in the area where they work because of unaffordable and sky-rocketing rental rates and home prices. Residential areas that are located farther from employment areas often lack good public transportation options, which disproportionately affect lower-income individuals who depend upon alternative modes of travel versus owning an automobile.

In search of affordable homes and rentals, Silicon Valley workers increasingly commute from outside the region and dilute Silicon Valley’s sense of community. This leads to longer commute times, increased transportation costs, traffic congestion and diminished individual free time. Increasing tailpipe emissions, due to increased commutes, degrade the region’s air and water quality and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and pose potential health risks.

While planning processes are geared toward improving a community’s quality of life, local residents—particularly those in low-income or immigrant communities or communities of color—are often disconnected from the process. Local governments—along with developers, planners and other public agencies—typically design plans without much civic engagement despite the requirement to incorporate public values. In part, community-based organizations typically lack the technical knowledge inherent to planning and best practices used to maximize efficiency and use of land. As a consequence, plans often do not have well-informed community input to better a community’s quality of life. The lack of participation is lasting, as decisions about the physical development of cities and public investments are based on the requirements outlined in general plans.

Compounding matters, Silicon Valley contains pockets of poverty where there is less access to good public transportation and social services, fewer local job opportunities and less economic investment. These neighborhoods often house communities of color, immigrants and lower-income residents who are disproportionately impacted by land use and transportation plans that do not address their needs due to inadequate public participation. These neighborhoods often remain fallow, residents are at a higher risk for asthma and childhood obesity, and they live closer to toxic dump sites and lack access to open space or social services.

More and more of the Silicon Valley workforce, as detailed above, live outside the region and commutes into the area. As part of the nine county region of the Bay Area, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties’ land use and transportation plans also impact Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, Solano and
Sonoma counties. In fact, more workers are starting to live and commute from what people are calling the greater Bay Area, which includes the neighboring counties of Mendocino, Lake, Colusa, Yolo, Sacramento, Placer, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, San Benito, Monterey and Santa Cruz.\textsuperscript{13}

The challenge that Silicon Valley faces is how to accommodate growth in a sustainable and equitable manner while maintaining the uniqueness and diversity within neighborhoods and the region, and yet ensure its growth plans integrate into a greater Bay Area plan. Here in Silicon Valley we should not think of the counties of San Mateo and Santa Clara in isolation, but as part of the nine-county Bay Area and an even broader region.

**Context**

Market forces, voter action and public agency decisions have created a window of opportunity for developing and coordinating sustainable local and regional land use and transportation plans. Silicon Valley is a unique and a diverse area of breathtaking protected and preserved open space,\textsuperscript{14} urban and suburban areas, large immigrant populations, agricultural lands and global venture capital and high-tech firms. With a robust job market, Silicon Valley continues to be a place of high economic and population growth that attracts people from other U.S. and global regions. To accommodate this growth, the region needs more affordable housing while preserving its landscape and its cultural diversity. Cities are shifting toward a more sustainable model that supports and connects work, community, family, transportation, health and recreational needs into regional and local plans.

In response to concerns—of global warming, economic slow-down and health issues—Silicon Valley residents have begun to change habits in how they go to work, what kind of vehicles they drive and how they consume energy.\textsuperscript{15} Public transit ridership to work increased from 2006 to 2007.\textsuperscript{16} More people are purchasing fuel efficient cars and energy efficient appliances to reduce economic costs and decrease their carbon footprint.\textsuperscript{17} In alignment with seeking a healthier lifestyle, 55 percent of Bay Area respondents to a poll by the Metropolitan Transit Commission, also referred to as MTC, said they wanted to live in mixed-use neighborhoods where they could walk to stores, schools and services.\textsuperscript{18}

Since 2001, Silicon Valley voters have approved $12 billion for public transit.\textsuperscript{19} This money will fund new rapid transit lines, the establishment of new stations, and improvements to existing lines and stations that will better link the greater Bay Area to Silicon Valley. Local and state propositions could add another $11 billion of funding for urban and green space development, transportation funding, and affordable housing development in urban and transit-oriented development areas.\textsuperscript{20}

At the public agency level, the Association of Bay Area Governments, or ABAG, completed a public process to develop a “Smart Growth Vision” for the nine-county region in 2002. The visioning process concluded that aggressively pursuing high-density development of lands within the Bay Area’s existing urban footprint could reduce the need to develop farms and natural areas by ninety-five percent. Using “smart growth” plans could create transit-oriented, walkable, bikeable and compact settings that lessen the need for automobile use.

Similarly, MTC’s 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update identifies transportation and planning projects throughout the Bay Area to be developed by 2035. The plan is mandated by federal law and must detail the commission’s strategies to address regional transportation needs (public transit, highways, freight, airports, etc.) and include all proposed planning projects. MTC has made a commitment to ensure all of its projects support equity for communities in need and meet goals related to improving environmental quality in the region. As part of the plan, MTC offers Station Area Planning Grants to local governments to plan housing in infill areas and near transit areas.

California Assembly Bill 32, also referred to as AB 32 – California’s Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 – calls for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The Air Resources Board will establish reporting rules and adopt a plan by January 1, 2009 for how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
through regulation, market mechanisms and other actions. With pending action, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, or BAAQMD, is preparing regional plans to reduce and attain 1990 greenhouse gas emissions levels or face potential penalties. Forty-one percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the Bay Area come from vehicles.\textsuperscript{21} The Bay Area has seen a steady increase in vehicle miles traveled, or VMT, a measurement of greenhouse gas emissions, since 2000.\textsuperscript{22} BAAQMD could set city and county restrictions on VMT, which would impact local land use and transportation planning as AB 32 is enforced. There is pending legislation, California Senate Bill 375, that if passed would require VMT reductions to be included in land use and transportation plans.

Because of market, funding and policy factors, transit agencies and local jurisdictions began drafting land use and transportation plans in 2005 for areas near existing and future transit stations. According to MTC, now is the critical time to draft these plans as they will dictate growth, housing, transportation and quality of life needs to accommodate the predicted population growth the area will reach by the year 2030. In addition, city and county governments are currently engaged in 10-year planning efforts\textsuperscript{23} that can shift past patterns of development into more sustainable ones. While governments, planners and developers are skilled to design plans, well informed community-based organizations can help and ensure the incorporation of public values—a requirement—into the plans. It is imperative that communities—through representative nonprofit organizations or neighborhood associations and collaboratives—are proactive and provide well-informed and cohesive input early on to ensure that their needs are addressed.

The Case
The community foundation has a unique opportunity to help shape local and regional planning efforts that increase civic participation, address mismatches of resources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions attributed to increased commute times, and to capitalize on voter and public agency actions. With many local and regional efforts emerging to capitalize on state funding, the community foundation can help lead and support these efforts to focus on sustainability, affordable housing and transit-oriented development into comprehensive regional and local plans. Connecting work, housing, community, transportation, health and recreational needs into plans will help dictate how well the region grows and prospers over the next 22 years to accommodate the expected influx of 1.7 million new residents by 2030.

Many city planning departments are increasing efforts to obtain public input as they update their 10-year plans. Unfortunately the percentage of community and neighborhood groups that participate in community planning activities is extremely low. In addition to city-specific planning efforts, several regional planning efforts have emerged to capitalize on potential state funding, to address the need for sustainable land use and transportation plans, to develop more affordable housing, and to include community-based groups and individuals in the planning process.

For example, the Great Communities Collaborative, also referred to as the GCC, is a Bay Area regional planning cooperative comprised of five Bay Area nonprofit organizations, the East Bay Community Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation and, as of April 2008, Silicon Valley Community Foundation. The collaborative has undertaken a number of partnerships with government agencies, community groups and local industry to identify sites throughout the Bay Area and to fund sustainable mixed-use, mixed-income developments around station area plans. The goal of the collaborative is for half of the Bay Area’s new homes, between now and 2030, to be located in walkable neighborhoods near transit. To do so, the collaborative plays a leadership role in encouraging civic engagement in the crafting of station area plans to assure the inclusion of urban design features and land uses that make communities livable. Within the community foundation’s two-county region, East Palo Alto and San José’s Diridon Station are on the collaborative’s top priority list, while the collaborative has a secondary focus on the El Camino Real/Grand Boulevard Initiative (see below), San José’s North First Street area and transit-oriented development in the city of Santa Clara.

Similarly, the Grand Boulevard Initiative – led by a partnership of Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network, the San Mateo County Economic Development Association and the two counties’ transit authorities – and
ABAG’s Corridor Program both focus on revitalizing the historic El Camino Real along its route from Daly City to central San José. The initiative seeks to coordinate planning efforts of 19 cities, the two counties and local and regional agencies. The GCC collaborates with these efforts but on an ad hoc basis. In addition, regional planners are working to realize past plans to improve connections between Santa Clara County and regional transit systems (Bay Area Rapid Transit and Caltrain). The California High Speed Rail Authority has identified San José’s Diridon station as a major station on the proposed system map, potentially connecting Los Angeles to Silicon Valley.

MTC is currently reviewing 15 to 20 Station Area Planning Grant proposals for the Bay Area. A significant percentage of the proposal sites are in Silicon Valley, and include East Palo Alto, South San Francisco, Millbrae, Mountain View, Hillsdale, North Fair Oaks, San Carlos and San Mateo County. This year the community foundation already supported planning efforts in East Palo Alto, with a $50,000 grant to the Community Development Institute. The community foundation’s grant, along with a grant from the San Francisco Foundation, will serve as the required match for funding from MTC. GCC is also considering sites upon which to focus its efforts during the next few years and is trying to align with MTC’s selections to maximize its impact. However, the two efforts operate independently and share information and planning efforts on an ad hoc basis.

A fourth planning effort, Focusing Our Vision or FOCUS – designed to create a shared development and conservation strategy for the Bay Area – is supported by ABAG, MTC, BAAQMD and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission. These agencies, along with local governments, created a methodology that directs new housing to existing communities and areas near jobs and transit for the period from 2007 through 2014.24

Silicon Valley Community Foundation is well-positioned to lead and to support new and existing planning efforts. Community foundation staff brings depth of knowledge and expertise to these issues. Moreover, staff and board leadership within the organization have relationships with strategic partners who can help advance this work (e.g., Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network, Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Great Communities Collaborative, city managers, Peninsula Partnership Leadership Council).

**Grantmaking Strategies**
Regional and local land use and transportation planning efforts are currently under way in Silicon Valley. Silicon Valley Community Foundation will launch a five-year grantmaking strategy that focuses on affordable housing and transit-oriented development that enables us to leverage current efforts as well as make important and strategic investments. Funding at the local level aims to increase municipalities’ and neighborhoods’ capacities to participate in regional planning while meeting their local community planning needs for development of priority areas. Funding at the regional level aims to ensure a comprehensive approach that connects local needs into a sustainable regional plan.

**1. Investment in Regional Planning Effort**
Great Communities Collaborative, also referred to as the GCC, is a collaborative of five nonprofit organizations, the East Bay Community Foundation and the San Francisco Foundation, to develop walkable neighborhoods near transit. The collaborative (which Silicon Valley Community Foundation joined in April 2008 at the core partner level) is completing a strategic plan for the third phase of its work and identifying transit station planning sites to focus its funding and resources for the next two years. Silicon Valley Community Foundation will invest in the collaborative to help advocate and direct for more GCC work in Silicon Valley. With its area knowledge and contacts, the community foundation will play a lead role in GCC’s Silicon Valley work while utilizing the GCC framework and tools to support other Silicon Valley sites currently not part of the GCC’s focus. Lastly, the community foundation will utilize the GCC’s broad network of partners and connections in the state to strengthen its regional efforts.

In addition, the community foundation will support and at times lead strategic regional convenings.
2. Investment in Local Planning Efforts that Promote Regional Integration
At the local level, grants would be made available to support enhanced community participation in the
development of town, city, or specific area plans. Grants will fund collaborations to increase public
participation in local planning efforts taking place throughout the region, and increase the capacity of
communities to articulate and address identified needs that are sustainable and aligned with planning
processes. Grant applications criteria include: technical assistance, consulting services, mediation,
facilitation and legal counseling costs. In addition, funding will help fund site specific transit-oriented
development implementation.

3. Investment in Public Education and Outreach
Public education and outreach efforts will help disseminate the benefits of sustainable land use and
transportation practices. They will also focus on promoting alternative modes of transportation, providing
information on public transportation, providing ways to reduce household CO2 emissions and water
usage, and alerting Silicon Valley residents to local and regional planning efforts. Grants could support
public education and outreach efforts, such as public service announcements, an advertising series on
a Silicon Valley sustainable living campaign, or other media opportunities. This would help increase
awareness and action to cultivate the leadership capacity of community and individuals to engage more
effectively with planning efforts.

Other Community Impact Strategies
The community foundation can leverage our grantmaking with other strategies to have greater impact
on local and regional land use and transportation plans. The combination of all these strategies will help
mobilize the additional resources and support needed to shift land use patterns into more inclusive,
sustainable plans that are regionally focused.

Convening
The community foundation can play a role in convening existing efforts to form a unified regional plan
and methodology to accommodate growth. There are three major planning efforts in the Bay Area that
have separate methodologies, processes, partners and focus areas. These efforts occasionally overlap, but
no formal collaboration exists to unify these efforts. In addition, there are multiple proposition dollars,
funding sources, developers, corporations, individuals and governments that could be mobilized to assist
in creating a regional approach to land use and transportation.

Donor Involvement
Donors’ financial, social and intellectual capital can further the design and implementation of local plans
funded through grantmaking. In addition, donors can play a key role through their land development
connections and financial investments to encourage revitalization projects and support innovative land
use and transportation plans in areas not funded by the grantmaking strategy.

Policy Development
There is a huge need for Silicon Valley planning advocates to be engaged locally and in Sacramento. The
community foundation can play a leading role in reaching out to foundations around the state to establish
an ongoing cross-sector, statewide network to track and influence local and state policy. Such a network
would allow a broad range of sustainable and quality planning advocates to better prepare and react to
proposals made at the state level and to proactively pursue positive policies and funding priorities.

Anticipated Results
Silicon Valley Community Foundation is well-positioned to support new and existing planning efforts with
its strategy that will 1) increase community capacity to participate in decision-making around planning, 2)
increase collaboration within the region between community and neighborhood organizations, nonprofits,
private sector and governments, and 3) improve the quality of life in Silicon Valley by supporting improved
design and sustainable (economic and environmental) programs for future developments. Specific results
for the three key grantmaking strategies are:
1. **Investment in Regional Planning Effort**
   - Form a regional partnership with fellow community foundations to leverage resources and to become a regional leader on transit-oriented development.
   - Broadly disseminate the Great Communities Collaborative model and expertise to assist communities not formally affiliated with the GCC and local governments in Silicon Valley that are engaged in similar planning processes.
   - Increased regional and state dialogue that leads to a comprehensive regional planning strategy for the greater Bay Area and influences state policy decisions.

2. **Investment in Local Planning Efforts that Promote Regional Integration**
   - Increased number of community-based and neighborhood organizations participating in local and regional planning processes.
   - Ten to 30 new local, city or county plans developed that address identified community needs in a sustainable and equitable manner.
   - Plans include transit-oriented development, condensed and mixed housing, green space access, multiple public transportation options and access to amenities and social services.
   - Five to 10 new transit sites development begun.

3. **Investment in Public Education and Outreach**
   - Increased knowledge of Silicon Valley residents about sustainable land use and transportation development, and the benefits they provide.
   - Increased capacity of communities and residents to participate effectively in planning efforts.
   - Increased use by Silicon Valley residents of alternative modes of transportation and decrease CO2 emissions.
Footnotes

1Productivity is a measurement of the value added per employee. In 2007 Silicon Valley productivity rose for the sixth consecutive year and surpassed previous highs from the dot-com boom. Index of Silicon Valley, 2007. Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network

2Sustainable communities is defined as communities that include affordable housing, dense mixed-use urban areas, adequate parks, spaces for cultural and artistic expression, diverse neighborhoods, sites for essential community facilities like schools and health clinics, neighborhood-serving retail outlets, and multiple modes of public transportation into and out-of neighborhoods and the region.

3Since 1980, the Bay Area job growth has increased by 45 percent while housing supply only increased by 24 percent. This means that workers live elsewhere and commute long distances to those jobs. State of the Bay Area: A Regional Report, Revised May 2004. Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Communities and the Northern California Council for the Community.

4Since 2005, Silicon Valley has had three straight years of population growth with a net increase of 38,097 people from 2006 to 2007; this exceeds California’s growth rate for a second time. Silicon Valley jobs grew by 1.7 percent over the past year. Index of Silicon Valley, 2007.

5Close to a quarter of Silicon Valley families live below the income needed to adequately meet their basic needs for a family of three without subsidies of any kind, Self-Sufficiency Standards or SSS. In San Mateo County 22 percent of residents live below the SSS level ($57,501) and 25 percent of Santa Clara County residents live below the SSS level ($65,598). To afford a median priced home of $722,500 in 2006, San Mateo County homebuyers needed a yearly income of $206,428 versus the median household income of $95,000. In Santa Clara County, the 2006 median home price was $662,150. To afford this, homebuyers needed a yearly income of $189,185 and the median income was $105,500. Housing and Basic Needs Issue Brief, 2007. Silicon Valley Community Foundation

6From 2006 to 2007, rental rates rose 7 percent. This increased twice as fast as median household income rose. Index of Silicon Valley, 2007. In San Mateo County, the 2006 fair market rent or FMR, for a two-bedroom apartment is $1,551. The household income needed to afford this is $62,040. Forty-eight percent of renters have incomes lower than this amount. In Santa Clara County, the 2006 FMR for a two-bedroom apartment is $1,284. The income needed to afford this is $51,360 - 39 percent of renters have incomes lower than this amount. Housing and Basic Needs Issue Brief, 2007.

7To afford a median priced home of $722,500 in 2006, San Mateo County homebuyers needed a yearly income of $206,428 versus the median household income of $95,000. In Santa Clara County, the 2006 median home price was $662,150. To afford this, homebuyers needed a yearly income of $189,185 and the median income was $105,500. Housing and Basic Needs Issue Brief, 2007.


9Nearly 20 percent of all Bay Area workers have a commute of 45 minutes or more. A Place to Call Home: Housing in the San Francisco Bay Area, 2007. Association of Bay Area Governments.

10Daily commute time increased (7 percent in San Mateo and 5 percent in Santa Clara counties) and vehicle miles traveled (23.4 miles in San Mateo and 18.6 miles in Santa Clara counties per capita) increased per person per day from 1993-2000. Carbon emission caused by combustion of fossil fuels for electricity and transportation increased from 2.3 tons per person in 1993 to 2.7 tons/person in 2000; an increase of 17 percent. Bay Area Indicators: Measuring Progress Toward Sustainability, 2004.


14Protected open space in Silicon Valley grew by 5 percent (10,074 acres) and protected accessible lands increased by 13 percent (17,462 acres) over the past five years. While urban/developed land grew at just 1 percent. A total of 22 percent of lands in the Bay Area are protected lands, which is a 16 percent increase of total lands from 1989. San Mateo County has 67 percent and Santa Clara County has 66 percent of protected land at low risk for development. Ten percent (400,000 acres) of the Bay Area’s open space is at risk of being lost to low density housing development. Bay Area Indicators: Measuring Progress Toward Sustainability, 2004.

15Index of Silicon Valley, 2007.

16Ibid.

17Ibid.


19Proposition 1(B) will provide $12 billion to Bay Area Rapid Transit, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and others for transportation improvements.

20Proposition 40 is a bond measure that could provide up to $3.7 billion to fund the development of green space. Proposition 42 could provide up to $1.4 billion per year from a tax on gasoline for the purposes of building and improving transportation. While Proposition 1(C) provides $5 billion towards affordable housing development near transit oriented development and urban areas. State and local agencies, however, have not determined whether this funding will be available, and if so, to
whom it will be available, nor what criteria will be used to determine potential fundees.

21 Next 10, California Green Innovation Index, 2008.
22 Urbanist Issue 466, November 2007.
23 The city of San Mateo recently approved its general plan update and is in the process of developing the zoning and regulations to execute the plan. The cities of Redwood City, San Carlos and San José anticipate completion of their general plan updates in Fall 2009.
24 The Regional Housing Needs Allocation agency mandates local jurisdictions to develop regional plans to meet regional housing needs. The current regional plan is for 2007-2014.
ABOUT SILICON VALLEY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The vision of Silicon Valley Community Foundation is to be a comprehensive center for philanthropy that inspires greater civic participation throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

The mission of Silicon Valley Community Foundation is to strengthen the common good, improve quality of life and address the most challenging problems. We do this through visionary community leadership, world-class donor services and effective grantmaking.

We value:

Collaboration
Diversity
Inclusiveness
Innovation

At a Glance
Silicon Valley Community Foundation is a catalyst and leader for innovative solutions to our region’s most challenging problems. Serving all of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, the community foundation has more than $1.9 billion in assets under management and 1,500 philanthropic funds. The community foundation provides grants through donor advised and corporate funds in addition to its own Community Endowment Fund. In addition, the community foundation serves as a regional center for philanthropy, providing donors simple and effective ways to give locally and around the world. Silicon Valley Community Foundation launched in January 2007 following the landmark merger of Community Foundation Silicon Valley and Peninsula Community Foundation and is now one of the largest community foundations in the nation.

Find out more at www.siliconvalleycf.org.

MORE INFORMATION
For a schedule of information sessions, supporting research papers, issue briefs and other information, go to www.siliconvalleycf.org

Requests for proposals will be issued beginning in September 2008 and continuing through 2009.