

Engaging Low-Income Communities:

Strategies for Broadening Participation in Transit Access Planning



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Who We Are

Oakland, California

Founded in 1975

Mission:

Vibrant and livable *urban* neighborhoods are the building blocks of sustainable regions.



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What We Do:

**Participatory Urban Design and
Land Use Planning**

**Follow-up Advocacy, Policy
Development and Capacity-
Building to Implement Plans**



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Where We Work:

San Francisco Bay Area

Disenfranchised Communities

Neighborhoods where car ownership is low, and streets and sidewalks are hazardous



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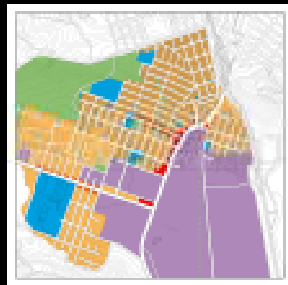
Recent Projects



**24th Street
BART Plaza**



**Clinton Park
Plan**



**Visitation
Valley**



**23rd Avenue
Action Plan**

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Case Study: 16th Street BART Station

Setting:

S.F. Mission Neighborhood

Mixed-Income

**Predominantly Low-
Income**

**Entrenched local drug
dealing and prostitution**



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Case Study: 16th Street BART Station

Failing Station:

Desolate and intimidating

Looked like fortress

Criminal Activity

**Piecemeal planning had
made it less safe**



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Community Planning Process:

1. Teamed up with Mission Housing
2. Initial comm. mtg.
3. Focus groups/surveys
4. 2 Community Design Workshops
5. Unveiling



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Case Study: 16th Street BART Station

1st Design Workshop:

1. Common-ground vision
2. Problems/Opportunities
(Large Group)
3. Brainstorm Design
Solutions with 3-D
models (Small Groups)



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Case Study: 16th Street BART Station

2nd Design Workshop:

1. Urban Ecology presented design alternatives
2. Participants critiqued (large and small groups)
3. Participants selected preferred elements of each alternative



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Problems Identified:

1. **Plazas unsafe/dominated by small-time criminals**
2. **Visual and physical barriers**
3. **Disorientating and unwelcoming**
4. **Disconnection to surrounding buildings**

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Solutions:

- 1. Activate plazas: enable diversity of uses and users (examples: performance space, vendors)**
- 2. Eliminate fence and other barriers blocking sight lines**
- 3. Welcoming design, with amenities like sitting steps, benches and lighting**
- 4. Way-finding signs**
- 5. Plaza-oriented development**

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Case Study: 16th Street BART Station



Existing NE Plaza

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Case Study: 16th Street BART Station



Proposed NE Plaza Design

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Case Study: 16th Street BART Station



Proposed SW Plaza

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Case Study: 16th Street BART Station



SW Plaza: Final Design

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Case Study: 16th Street BART Station



Success!

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Lessons Learned

Three Keys to Successful Engagement:

1. Relationships

2. Credibility

--partner with community-based organizations--

3. Meet People Where They're At

a. Location

b. Language

c. Identify, then speak to
their self-interests

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Lessons Learned

Keys to Collaborative Visioning and Design:

1. **Field Trips that take people out of their daily experience**
2. **Simplify (avoid "planerese")**

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Lessons Learned

Keys to Collaborative Visioning and Design (cont.)

3. Photo simulations and 3-D modeling



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Lessons Learned

Keys to Collaborative Visioning and Design (cont.)

4. Seize opportunities to have participants train one another



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We'd Love to Hear From You!

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