

NEW NATIONAL REPORT HAILS PROGRAMS IN FIVE CITIES FOR INNOVATIVE

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New National Report Hails Programs in Five Cities for Innovative Contributions to the Renewal of America's Cities

New York, NY, February 8, 2006-Innovative programs in five urban centers are the focus of a new report released today that highlights efforts to revitalize America. The report, *Shared Prosperity, Stronger Regions: An Agenda for Rebuilding America's Older Core Cities*, is the work of PolicyLink, the national organization that uses research, communications, capacity building, and advocacy to recommend solutions to some of the nation's seemingly most intractable problems related to economic and social inequity.

"Each of the programs cited in this report could be adapted in other older urban centers to support economic revitalization and expand opportunity for all residents," said Radhika K. Fox, principal author of the report. "For that reason alone," she continued, "they deserve recognition for supporting the well-being of the city and its residents and should be congratulated for the success they've demonstrated."

The five cities are Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh. Often referred to as rust belt, weak market, slow growth, or undercapitalized cities, they have been hit hard by a changing economy, decades-long out-migration of people and resources, and a devastating ebb in state and federal government support.

Each of these cities is home to unique collaborations among public, private, philanthropic, and community institutions that are advancing innovative approaches and strategies. The report highlights over 50 programs and policies that are reinvigorating older core cities by promoting economic development; engaging anchor institutions; promoting equitable transportation policies; reclaiming vacant and abandoned property; making all neighborhoods stable, healthy, and livable; and increasing affordable housing in opportunity-rich neighborhoods. ([Click here to view the full list -- PDF](#))

Among the programs cited in the report:

- The Baltimore chapter of the Service Employees International Union's "Unfinished Business" campaign, which is recognized as an example of labor leaders going beyond the bargaining table to advocate for living wages with benefits for health care workers.
- In Cleveland, the Westside Industrial Retention and Expansion Network (WIRE-Net), for helping companies stay and prosper in the region, and for helping thousands of West Side residents begin careers in manufacturing. While the region as a whole experienced a 21 percent decline in manufacturing jobs between 1993 and 2000, the West Side community experienced a 9 percent increase.
- The faith-based community organization MOSES, working in Detroit and its surrounding suburbs, for sparking vigorous public debate about the importance of advancing more equitable patterns of transportation investment.
- The Campaign for Working Families—a coalition of 17 organizations led by the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition—for helping working families save and build assets by expanding the use of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit program, as well as other state tax credit programs. Their effort has put over \$45.2 million in federal and state tax credits and public benefits into the pocketbooks of low-income Philadelphians, while also helping to boost the local economy.
- Whole Foods in Pittsburgh's East Liberty Neighborhood, for providing all residents with affordable, high-quality, healthy food options, and for creating 250 jobs. Statewide, in Pennsylvania, the public sector Fresh Food Financing Initiative was applauded as an innovative effort to develop new grocery stores and farmers' markets in distressed communities—promoting both statewide economic development and neighborhood revitalization.

"Many of our nation's struggling urban centers helped define American industry, culture, and civic life, but many Americans are tired of hearing about their plight," Fox concluded. "This report tells the positive story, the one that talks about revitalization, renewal, and restoration of these and other cities."

PolicyLink in the News

"Fred Blackwell Speaks On Blacks Being Left Out of Urban Development," The Loop 21

"HUD Awards Grant to Oakland to Create Better Community," San Francisco Chronicle

"Innovative Policies Are Essential to Save Men Who Are at Risk," The Sacramento Bee

"On Jobs and Safety Net, Lawmakers Must Focus on Hard-Hit Minorities," CNN.com

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The information in Shared Prosperity, Stronger Regions, was compiled through extensive research, interviews, and analysis that points the way back from stagnation to a future where older core cities are economically competitive places and all residents have the opportunity to participate and prosper.

In developing the report, PolicyLink worked with leading community organizations in each of the five cities: the Baltimore Neighborhood Collaborative, Neighborhood Progress (Cleveland), Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation, the Philadelphia Neighborhood Development Collaborative, and Sustainable Pittsburgh.

[Click here](#) to purchase or download a copy of [Shared Prosperity, Stronger Regions: An Agenda for Rebuilding America's Older](#). For more information or to arrange interviews with Radhika K. Fox or representatives of local programs cited in the report, please contact Milly Hawk Daniel, mdaniel@policylink.org, or 212-629-9570, ext. 212.

PolicyLink is a national nonprofit research, communications, capacity building, and advocacy organization dedicated to advancing policies to achieve economic and social equity based on the wisdom, voice, and experience of local constituencies, with offices in Oakland, CA and New York, NY. PolicyLink bridges the traditional divides between communities and the world of policymakers by lifting up what works®.

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