

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Opportunity Collaborative

Baltimore, MD

Challenge

Using a set of cooperative, regional solutions to reduce the socioeconomic disparities that run along stark racial and jurisdictional lines in the Baltimore area and prevent residents from reaching their full potential.

Innovation

The Collaborative's work was hailed in *The Baltimore Sun* as "a road map to a shared regional destiny that is clear and even bold." Baltimore City used the plan as a strategy for economic recovery, the State of Maryland has cited the Collaborative's work in a complete redesign of the region's bus network, and the region's public housing authorities have received HUD funding to pilot a program incentivizing affordable housing in high opportunity areas.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation served as the lead philanthropic partner of the Opportunity Collaborative, the consortium formed to develop Baltimore's Regional Plan for Sustainable Development through a \$3.5M fiscal year 2011 HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. The Collaborative produced comprehensive and silo-busting regional plans in housing and workforce development, all of which are now being used to drive state, local, and regional policy in greater Baltimore. The Collaborative identified strategies to reduce disparity by blending human and capital investment in the traditionally siloed planning areas of housing, workforce development, and transportation. Led by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, the 25 public and nonprofit partners of the Collaborative spent 3 years researching and developing these plans, funded demonstration projects to pilot new innovations, sent delegations on learning tours of peer regions, and gave voice to the public through the Opportunity Fellowship, a leadership development program. The Regional Plan for Sustainable Development was released in June 2015, just weeks after the civil unrest that drew the nation's eyes to Baltimore's challenges.

Public Sector Partners

The Baltimore Metropolitan Council; Baltimore Development Corporation; the City of Baltimore; Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford, and Howard Counties; State of Maryland; and HUD

Other Partners

1000 Friends of Maryland; Associated Black Charities of Maryland; BRIDGE; Citizens Planning and Housing Association; Greater Baltimore Committee; Innovative Housing Institute; Morgan State University; and University of Maryland, National Center for Smart Growth Research & Education

