

## ONWRD Principles on the Economic Stimulus

The **Oakland NetWork for Responsible Development (ONWRD)** is a coalition of Oakland-based organizing and advocacy non-profits working to transform economic development policy & win greater community benefits.

### **We resolve that:**

The American Reinvestment Recovery Act (ARRA) has presented a significant opportunity to translate federal money into tangible benefits for Oaklanders, such as affordable housing, family-supporting jobs that are accessible and create pathways out of poverty, critical neighborhood services, and an environment that nurtures long-term health and sustainability.

We urge elected city leaders to ensure a local recovery that is equitable and benefits people most in need, specifically low-income communities of color. This means prioritizing allocation of stimulus dollars to projects and programs that yield tangible benefits for disenfranchised communities as well as requiring that projects and programs receiving stimulus funds result in family-supporting jobs for Oakland residents, affordable and safe housing and clean, healthy, stable neighborhoods.

Our coalition upholds the following principles in prioritizing funding areas for Oakland in the economic stimulus package:

**Job Creation that Provides Pathways out of Poverty-** Economic benefits of all projects should be shared equitably. Local officials should:

- Ensure that job creation is linked to successful workforce training and apprenticeship programs for those facing barriers to employment (i.e. low-income adult and youth, the formerly incarcerated, dislocated workers, etc.).
- Ensure job creation that adheres to high standards: prevailing wages, benefits, and strong labor and safety standards.
- Ensure publicly funded projects hire local residents for construction and permanent jobs, targeting low-income neighborhoods and having clearly stated goals and processes.
- Secure Project Labor Agreements (PLA) for publicly funded infrastructure projects that include local hire goals for construction.

◇ **Projects that Lead to Healthy Sustainable Communities-** All projects, not just within the green sector, should aim to achieve environmental goals. Local officials should:

- Prioritize low-income communities of color, which are most burdened by negative environmental impacts, to benefit from the green economy, not only in access to jobs but also to services of weatherization and energy-efficiency programs.
- Require environmentally sustainable building practices for the construction of infrastructure projects and invest in pollution reduction for existing and future projects in the most burdened communities.
- Invest in job training and apprenticeship programs in renewable energy and energy efficiency occupations that are accessible to those with barriers to employment.
- Invest in industries that use clean renewable energy to move us towards a cleaner and more just green economy.
- Guide federal, state and regional stimulus resources towards accessible and affordable public transit in low-income communities of color to increase mobility and access to jobs and services and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Invest in people, not just capital improvements. Ensure that projects will preserve Oakland's cultural vitality and improve community resources, such as education, healthcare and neighborhood services, which will improve the overall health of surrounding neighborhoods.

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- ◇ **Affordable, Clean and Safe Housing for All.** Housing is a critical component of rebuilding the economy and stabilizing neighborhoods. Local officials should:
  - Invest in programs and projects that create, repair, and preserve permanent affordable housing, especially for the lowest-income communities.
  - Invest in the creation of and preservation of housing for low-income families and people with special needs, through non-profit rental housing development, assistance to the Oakland Community Land Trust, and mortgage assistance programs to help working families afford to buy homes.
  - Invest in programs that increase community stability by helping low-income communities of color stay in their homes and neighborhoods, such as homeless prevention, tenant protections, mortgage counseling, weatherization, and neighborhood stabilization programs.
  
- ◇ **Looking into the Future: Securing Short-term and Long-term Gains-** We must not be short-sited. While focusing on short-term “shovel ready” projects is necessary, medium term projects are key for long-term recovery in Oakland. Local officials should:
  - Take a “phased approach” to stimulus and provide project development and planning support for key projects, so that they can be “shovel-ready” by 2010.
  - Plan for long-term investment in sectors that provide pathways out of poverty such as food & manufacturing, trade & logistics, healthcare, construction, and green jobs and align workforce development with those sectors.
  - Prioritize areas that have already been designated for development, including specific plan areas and the Oakland Army Base for infrastructure improvements to leverage future investment that will strengthen these areas.
  
- ◇ **Transparency, Accountability, and Meaningful Community Engagement-** The allocation of stimulus funds should be a transparent process and enable meaningful community participation in spending decisions. Local officials should:
  - Report to the community the type and amount of funds that Oakland will receive by formula, and which grants it applies for and receives as well as how the City plans to distribute the funds.
  - Engage community stakeholders about the plans to disburse funds and actively solicit community input on the prioritization of projects and programs.
  - Fund the monitoring and implementation of spending and report on the economic and environmental impact on projects receiving funding, including job creation, wage and benefit levels, percentage of hours worked by local residents, and emissions reduction.

**The following organizations have endorsed these principles:**

- Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), Oakland Chapter
- Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)
- Alameda Building and Construction Trades Council
- Alameda County Labor Council, AFL-CIO
- Communities for a Better Environment (CBE)
- East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE)
- East Bay Community Law Center
- Ella Baker Center for Human Rights (EBC)
- East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO)
- Just Cause Oakland (JCO)
- Public Advocates, Inc.
- Unite Here Local 2850
- Urban Habitat (UH)
- Urban Strategies Council (USC)
- The Workforce Collaborative