



**For Immediate Release**

TransFormation Alliance

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**TRANSFORMATION ALLIANCE AWARDED \$1 MILLION TO HELP EQUITABLY ADVANCE LOCAL TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING INITIATIVES, MODEL INNOVATIONS FOR COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE U.S.**

**ATLANTA, February 15, 2017** – TransFormation Alliance today announced that Atlanta was selected to join the Strong, Prosperous, And Resilient Communities Challenge (SPARCC). SPARCC is a three-year, \$90 million initiative that will bolster local groups and leaders in their efforts to ensure that, as major new investments in transportation are made, they improve equity, health, and environmental outcomes for all residents.

Atlanta's transit and community investments are at a transformational point, potentially increasing by billions of dollars. The award from SPARCC will enable Atlanta to create a new model of an equitable, healthy, and climate-wise development and ensure benefits for all residents.

Following a competitive application process in 2016, Atlanta is one of six sites chosen to receive initial funding and expert technical assistance from SPARCC. The others are Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Memphis, and San Francisco Bay Area.

TransFormation Alliance – a diverse group of organizations representing government agencies, business partners, metro Atlanta's transit agency, and the nonprofit community – was awarded \$1 million in direct grant and technical assistance funds over the next three years. Collectively, the SPARCC sites will have access to an estimated pool of \$70 million in financing capital, as well as \$14 million in additional programmatic support.

"We are honored to be selected as a SPARCC recipient," said Meaghan Shannon-Vikovic, vice president and southeast market leader of Enterprise Community Partners, one of the members of TransFormation Alliance. "As we look to improve and expand our city's public transportation, equity must be part of the conversation. This investment will ensure that Atlanta remains an economically and culturally diverse city and that residents from all of our communities are connected to good jobs, schools, health care, and transportation."

With the award, TransFormation Alliance will:

- Demonstrate the potential for a new development style that focuses on equity, health, and environmental outcomes. The demonstration focus area is the Lee Street corridor, from the West End MARTA station to the Oakland City MARTA station in southwest Atlanta.

- Advocate for racial equity during the MARTA expansion and continued development of the BeltLine through both policy changes and the built environment.
- Address shortcomings and challenges that result from spatial segregation, including the health and climate disparities that disproportionately impact black neighborhoods.
- Ensure residents and organizations are involved in the decision-making process, by deepening capacity-building opportunities for established and emerging community leaders and civic institutions, and by incorporating arts and culture-based community engagement.
- Advocate for policies to increase resources for strategies that reinforce SPARCC principles, including advocating for the allocation of additional budget and funding toward affordable housing preservation and development.
- Use innovative capital strategies, including advancing the early acquisition of sites for affordable housing, healthy food initiatives, healthcare facilities, infrastructure development, the leveraging of green and energy efficiency rehab programs, and advancing models of permanent affordability.

These efforts will result in altering the inequitable development trajectory of our region and create a new approach to transit and community development investments. This new approach is underpinned by racial equity, incorporates arts and culture-based community engagement, responds to community needs and shapes future health and climate outcomes.

“In the past, policy and programmatic decisions about how to invest in the places we live, work, and play have all too often led to deeper poverty and less opportunity for people of color and low-income communities,” said Brian Prater, executive vice president of strategy, development, and public affairs at the Low Income Investment Fund, one of the national partners of SPARCC. “This is a critical moment when big infrastructure investments are coming, or are already underway, and people of all races and incomes should benefit. We are excited to support the SPARCC sites and look forward to seeing the results of these local efforts to positively shape our cities and regions for generations.”

Atlanta’s history has been a tale of two cities, with investment and growth favoring communities to the north of Interstate 20, while poverty and disinvestment concentrated south of Interstate 20. Atlanta’s communities bear the result of historical racism that affected policies, plans, and public investments, contributing to a stark economic and racial divide.

“Historically low-wealth communities of color have played a key role in subsidizing metro Atlanta’s transit,” said Nathaniel Smith, founder and chief equity officer at the Partnership for Southern Equity. “It will be important that these communities are positioned to benefit from investments in new transit and infrastructure improvement.”

In addition to funding support, each SPARCC site has access to an extensive learning network, and advisory services from a range of experts, to help advance local efforts.

SPARCC is an initiative of Enterprise Community Partners, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, the Low Income Investment Fund, and the Natural Resources Defense Council, with funding support from the Ford Foundation, The JPB Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and The California Endowment. Long term, SPARCC’s intention is for other cities, communities and regions to adopt similar approaches to achieving more just economic, health and environmental outcomes, using the success of SPARCC sites as a model.

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### **About TransFormation Alliance**

TransFormation Alliance is a diverse group of organizations representing government agencies, business partners, metro Atlanta's transit agency, and the nonprofit community dedicated to creating thriving, mixed-income communities anchored by transit and linked to all the opportunities and amenities that make Atlanta great. Our mission is to change how transit and community development investments shape the future to offer all residents the opportunities for a high quality of life, linked by our region's critically important transit system.

For more information, please visit [atltransformationalliance.org](http://atltransformationalliance.org).

### **About SPARCC**

The Strong, Prosperous, And Resilient Communities Challenge - or SPARCC - is supporting local efforts to make sure that everyone benefits from major new investments in the places we live, work and play. By supporting locally driven initiatives, SPARCC aims to improve equity, health and environmental outcomes to positively shape our cities and regions for generations. SPARCC is an initiative of Enterprise Community Partners, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, the Low Income Investment Fund, and the Natural Resources Defense Council, with funding support from the Ford Foundation, The JPB Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and The California Endowment.

For more information on SPARCC and the selected jurisdictions, please visit [sparcchub.org](http://sparcchub.org).

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