

Community Owned & Stewarded Real Estate

Denver, CO

Bus Tour Information Packet

Thursday, December 5th | 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

We are thrilled to welcome you on this tour of community owned and stewarded real estate projects in Denver. Today, we will explore innovative, community-led projects that model the principles of community ownership. We invite you to engage with the content, connect with fellow practitioners, and contribute to a growing movement of community ownership and stewardship.

Contents:

- **Today's Schedule** pg 2
- **Understanding Community Ownership** pg. 3
- **Bus Tour Purpose**pg. 4
- **Your Hosts - Who Are We?** pg. 5
- **Sites, Projects, Hosts** pg. 6
- **Thank You & Next Steps.** pg. 27



Illustration by Steve McCarthy for Fine Acts

Today's Schedule

9:00 AM - Welcome & Hot Beverages

Location: Parking lot at SW corner of E. 47th Avenue & Brighton Blvd.

9:15 AM - Tour Begins

Gather for opening remarks before loading the bus

9:30 AM - Site #1: Tierra Colectiva Community Land Trust

Location: Globeville-Elyria Swansea

Host: GES Coalition

10:45 AM - Site #2: East Colfax Mixed Income Neighborhood Trust

Location: 1371 Xenia Street, Denver

Host: East Colfax Community Collective (EC3)

12:00 PM - Lunch on the Bus

Lunch provided by The Straker's Kitchen

12:30 PM - Site #3: Morrison Road Mixed-Use Redevelopment

Location: Morrison Road

Host: BuCu West & Elevation Community Land Trust

1:30 PM - Site #4: Comunidad MonteVista

Location: Comunidad MonteVista, Westwood Community Center

Host: Residents and Justice for the People Legal Center

2:30 - 3:00 PM - Tour Wrap Up

Location: Parking lot at SW corner of E. 47th Avenue & Brighton Blvd.

Host: COBRE Collective

Understanding Community Ownership



Community ownership is defined by projects or models where real estate assets and resources are owned and controlled by the community residents and businesses themselves. This approach ensures that decisions made about land, housing and businesses are made collectively, reflecting the values and needs of the community.

Community ownership reflects a commitment to long-term affordability, stability, and inclusive economic wealth by prioritizing local, place-based control of community assets to ensure that benefits, decisions and responsibilities remain within the community.

Core Principles

Local Ownership: Real estate assets are owned and controlled by residents - avoiding external influence from non-local entities.

Community Control: Residents and business owners shape development according to their needs and desires.

Equitable Voice: Everyone in the community has a voice in decision-making about property and capital.

Collective Benefit: Ensures economic stability and opportunities for the community rather than prioritizing individual financial gain.

Sustainability: Keep housing and services affordable for future generations.

Today's Bus Tour Purpose

From your participation in today's bus tour, we expect you will:

- Gain insight into how community ownership models can reshape community development.
- Explore strategies to advance economic justice and equitable growth.
- Connect with local leaders and organizations who are pioneering community-centered solutions.

Our tour is not just about visiting individual projects - although each of them is pretty sweet in their own right - it's about understanding how these projects collectively embody the transformative potential of community ownership.

While each project addresses unique and nuanced challenges within varying contexts, they are united by a shared commitment to:

- Unlocking power within communities
- Combating displacement and inequity
- Celebrating cultural preservation and justice
- Creating scalable models for change

Together, these projects are a mosaic of what is possible when communities reclaim their agency over the land they live and work on, as well as their local economies. They each represent solutions for their local communities; and when considered together, they represent a broader vision for a just, inclusive and anti-racist future.



Your Hosts - Who Are We?

COBRE Collaborative

The above principles are the foundation of the work of the COBRE - Community Owned and Benefitting Real Estate - Collaborative, a community of practice dedicated to advancing community ownership models. Through our collective efforts, we are driving toward a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable future where communities are empowered to take control of their assets and futures.

COBRE would not be possible without the steadfast support of [Gates Family Foundation](#), [The Colorado Health Foundation](#), National Equitable Recovery Alliance (NERA), and [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#).

COBRE Lead Organizations

- Center for Community Wealth Building
- Neighborhood Development Collaborative

COBRE Community of Practitioners

- BuCu West
- East Colfax Community Collective
- Elevation Community Land Trust
- Justice for the People Legal Cent
- Mile High Ministries
- Comunidad MonteVista
- Montbello Organizing Committee
- Tierra Colective

Community Ownership & Stewardship Impact Table (COSIT) National Collaboration, Field Building & Resources:

Our commitment to advancing community ownership extends beyond local projects. Through the [Community Field Notes website](#), we share insights, resources and best practices to support and inspire this work. www.futureby.community serves as a hub for learning and collaboration, fostering a national community of practice dedicated to building more equitable and inclusive futures for communities across the country.

COSIT Lead Organizations

- **Denver, CO:**
 - Center for Community Wealth Building
 - Neighborhood Development Collaborative
- **Los Angeles, CA:**
 - Esperanza Community Housing Corporation
 - Inclusive Action for the City

Sites, Projects, Hosts

Site #1: Tierra Colectiva Community Land Trust

Page 7

Site #2: East Colfax Mixed Income Neighborhood Trust

Page 14

Site #3: Morrison Road Mixed-Use Redevelopment

Page 19

Site #4: Comunidad Montevista

Page 22

GES Coalition & Tierra Colectiva Land Trust

Nola Miguel, Tierra Colectiva Executive Director
 Ana Varela, Tierra Colectiva Director of Communications
 Alfonso Espino, GES Coalition Lead Organizer
 Mercedes Gonzalez, GES Coalition Board Member
 Raymunda Carreon, Tierra Colectiva Home Owner
 Sean Dollard, program officer at the Colorado Health Foundation



Tierra Colectiva Community Land Trust

Globeville Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods of North Denver

Project Overview

Tierra Colectiva Community Land Trust (TCCLT) is a neighbor-led Community Land Trust focused on creating and preserving affordable housing and community-owned land in the Globeville, Elyria-Swansea (GES) neighborhoods of Denver, Colorado. We work to prevent displacement and promote equitable development in these historic neighborhoods..

- **Affordable Housing Development:** TCCLT is developing several affordable housing projects in the GES neighborhoods; A 4 story new development with 170 affordable rental units, community serving commercial space, and new Denver Public Library. We continue to do scattered site homeownership throughout GES and have already sold/preserved 13 single-family homes with 25 currently in the pipeline.
- **Land Acquisition and Stewardship:** We acquire land in the GES neighborhoods to preserve as green space for community use. This year, we purchased a 10,000sq ft parcel of land at 4790 Josephine street in Swansea and have started a food forest there.
- **Community Leadership and Organizing:** TCCLT works directly with GES Coalition organized neighbors through collective leadership via our land campaign, tenant organizing, and majority-neighbor Board of Directors in order to research, develop and align our community organizing with the needs of the neighborhoods, and allowing

neighbors impacted by gentrification and displacement to develop collective leadership and become part of the organization's decision-makers, developing the structure for community stewardship in the hands of neighbors for perpetuity.

Background

Tierra Colectiva Community Land Trust (TCCLT) was founded in 2017 by GES Coalition and Colorado Community Land Trust. We emerged from community efforts in the Globeville, Elyria-Swansea (GES) neighborhoods of Denver, Colorado to address the growing issue of displacement and lack of affordable housing in the area. We have since partnered with organizations like Brothers Redevelopment, Habitat for Humanity, Evergreen Real Estate and Rocky Mountain Communities as development partners.

The Community Land Trust (CLT) model for community ownership of land has been instrumental in TCCLT's mission to create and preserve permanently affordable housing. By acquiring land and holding it in trust, TCCLT preserves affordable housing for future generations, even as property values rise and outside developments continue in the neighborhood.

Community Organizing

Our Organizing is defined by neighbors organizing collectively and their immediate and long term needs through committee meetings, member events, and community gatherings. A need arose to support and help build Tenant Unions in new apartment complexes such as Vina in Elyria, the Elisabetta in Globeville, and the mobile home park Longview in Swansea. TCCLT was developed to address the impacts of gentrification and displacement on long-time neighborhood families. GES Coalition's organizing model has allowed neighbors to address large public developments in the neighborhoods, including the need to reclaim neighborhood land lost to eminent domain going back 100 years. In 2014, 60 homes and businesses were lost to highway expansion after countless were lost since the highway was first built in the 1950s. As recently as the early 2000s, more than 14 blocks of residential Elyria neighborhood have been lost to the benefit of the National Western Center and millions of dollars have since been invested in the campus- the gravel parking lots remain where neighbors used to live. TCCLT is a community-owned tool that allows neighbors to recover and redevelop the neighborhood land based on the needs of the people who live here.

Unique Attributes - Community Governance

Tierra Colectiva Community Land Trust (TCCLT) is governed by a tripartite board structure composed of community members at large, lease-holders that live on the land, and experts chosen by the community. Board members are responsible for making strategic decisions, overseeing the organization's operations, and ensuring that its mission and goals are fulfilled.

Here are some key aspects of TCCLT's board governance:

- **Community Representation:** Currently 95% of the board members are residents of the Globeville, Elyria-Swansea (GES) neighborhoods, ensuring that the community's voice is central to decision-making.
- **Expert Representation:** The board also includes individuals with expertise in areas such as finance, real estate, law, and nonprofit management, providing the necessary skills to guide the organization's growth and development.
- **Membership** The GES Coalition and Tierra Colectiva CLT share membership that is based in the GES neighborhoods. Membership will continue to build and oversee the board elections.

Unique Attributes - Wealth Building Aspect

Owning a home in a community land trust (CLT) builds wealth-stability for both individual families and the community overall:

For the Family:

1. **Affordable Homeownership:** CLTs make homeownership more accessible by separating the purchase of the land from the purchase of the house and fundraising deep subsidies. This results in a purchase price that is a quarter of market value, lower downpayments and monthly payments.
2. **Building Equity:** As homeowners pay off their mortgage, they build equity by paying off their home mortgage and gain 20% of the appreciation in their home over 10 years. This equity can be used for various purposes, such as funding education, starting a business,

or supporting retirement. The low price of the home sale stays within the collective to continue to preserve affordable housing in perpetuity.

3. **Stability and Security:** Homeownership provides stability and security improving overall well-being and mental health of household members. Being able to stay in the neighborhood and not worry about displacement is a huge relief and stability factor. In addition, conditions of housing are greatly improved and monthly payments are usually less than when the families were renting.
4. **Generational Wealth:** CLTs help break the cycle of poverty and build generational wealth. By keeping housing affordable, CLTs allow families to pass down the benefits of homeownership to future generations.

For the Community:

1. **Preserving Affordable Housing:** TCCLT preserves affordable housing in our rapidly gentrifying neighborhood. TCCLT prevents displacement and maintains the community's character by preserving land, homes, and commercial spaces as permanent community assets.
2. **Strengthening Neighborhoods:** TCCLT helps strengthen the neighborhood by fostering a sense of community and promoting social cohesion. TCCLT Homeowners become more invested in their community and more likely to participate in local organizing efforts.
3. **Economic Development:** By stabilizing our neighborhood, TCCLT contributes to economic development and supports emerging local businesses and desired community services.
4. **Environmental Sustainability:** We prioritize sustainable development practices and are in partnership with Denver's office for Climate Action and Resiliency (CASR). We have received funding for our commercial space and food forest alongside partners like Greenlinging the Block (GTB) Denver Urban Gardens, and the Denver Park Trust. Reducing environmental impacts and protecting clean air in our highway and industry adjacent homes directly improves the quality of life for our residents.

Overall, supporting TCCLT housing and land preservation offers a unique opportunity to build wealth for both individual families and the community as a whole. By prioritizing affordability,

sustainability, and community engagement, TCCLT curbs speculation while supporting a more equitable and resilient community.

Capital Stack / Framework

1. **Grants:**

- Government grants: HOST, DOH, and HUD have all contributed to TCCLT, via forgivable loan contracts or grants that give a per unit subsidy or supporting land acquisition.
- Private foundations: Philanthropic organizations may contribute to CLT projects, especially those focused on community development and social justice. These have been for operating expenses and filling project gaps. Just recently the Colorado Health Foundation is making a large contribution for TCCLT to purchase the commercial space at 4965 Washington.

2. **Public-Private Partnerships:**

- We have worked with the City of Denver to purchase land which they release via RFPs and we build a development team to respond to the RFP.

3. **Debt Financing: TC has not yet used debt financing directly**

- Developers of the project are able to take on the debt and risk as part of the development agreement.
- We are interested in the formation of partnerships with Impact Investors and CDFIs to create a fund or a batch of deals for upcoming projects in our pipeline.
- We are preparing to take on loans to move at a faster and more efficient pace.

4. **Land Donations and Affordable Land Sales:**

- Donations of land or below market sales of land ensures TCCLT control of the project and makes the development more feasible and affordable overall by taking out the price of the land.

5. **Fundraising, donations and CBAs**

- Direct donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations.
- TCCLT has 4.25M dedicated in the Fox Park Community Benefits Agreement for building out affordable homeownership in Globeville. The funds are allocated when land parcels are sold.
- We would like to work on a Community Investment Structure where neighbors can invest in their own neighborhood in the future.

Building, Construction, and Other Needs

1. Types of Building techniques- We partner with developers and General Contractors to build the desired community project. We have used modular factory built homes, “stick build”, panelized construction, and Cross Laminated Timber construction types and are interested in

any new and efficient types of building and construction to help costs and build up capacity for our system of housing.

2. Predevelopment Fund/Costs—predevelopment costs are often very difficult to cover for a small non-profit organization, usually \$10-15,000 of costs emerge when evaluating a property for development and acquisition. In order to get land acquisition dollars, pre-development costs are unavoidable. A pre-development grant fund is something our CLT and other community-led and owned groups could use to feel comfortable in moving forward in real estate projects.

3. Capital for Property and Land - We are often met with the opportunity to acquire a property to rehabilitate or restore. This way not only do we preserve affordable housing but we also protect our local history and culture. We are always interested in capital to acquire homes or commercial spaces, especially historic, that outside developers may be eager to scrape. In addition we are always looking for acquisition dollars that will initiate the possibility of a community-led project in our CLT both for open space or development options.



... - An Ask

1. Investment in our pipeline of properties, piloting project(s) for Community-led ownership, Upcoming projects include:

- Homeownership:
 - CDOT lots–7 homes for homeownership
 - Acquisition and rehab/ tandem homes–10 homes in the next 2 years
 - 4750 York St. replacement of the (12) trailer homes and right of first return for those currently renting
- Rental/Commercial
 - 4640 Brighton–60 units and fist floor Commercial space for child care cooperative or workforce Center
- Upcoming
 - Triangle at National Western
 - Longview mobile home park
 - Globeville land acquisition possibilities for open space and development

2. Predevelopment and Operating Grant Fund

- Small scale grants (10-30,000) to enable Tierra Colectiva to keep moving on projects without putting development projects in debt, and do the necessary due diligence both in pre-development and community work.

3. Credit Enhancement

- Guarantees, collateral or loss reserves to support other investors to come to the table for smaller community-led development

Thank you

Nola Miguel, Executive Director
nola@ges-coalition.org
Tierra Colectiva Community Land Trust
Globeville, Elyria, Swansea Coalition

Ana Varela, Communications Director
ana@ges-coalition.org
Tierra Colectiva Community Land Trust
Globeville, Elyria, Swansea Coalition

East Colfax Community Collective

Carson Bryant, MINT Director | carson@eastcolfaxcc.org
 Brendan Greene, Executive Director | brendan@eastcolfaxcc.org



EAST COLFAX
COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE

East Colfax MINT

East Colfax Corridor of Denver and Aurora

Project Overview

The East Colfax Community Collective (“EC3”), in partnership with Trust Neighborhoods have partnered to form a Mixed-Income Neighborhood Trust (“MINT”) along and around the East Colfax Corridor in east Denver / northwest Aurora (the “EC MINT”). The EC MINT is a housing preservation model that acquires, owns, and operates mixed-income properties throughout a neighborhood. The goals of the EC MINT are to stabilize rents and prevent displacement, create long-term affordability, improve housing conditions through renovations and better management, and establish community control of housing through a robust community governance structure.

The EC MINT formally launched in September 2024 with its acquisition of 1371 Xenia, a 23-unit apartment building in the heart of the East Colfax Corridor. With this acquisition, the EC MINT is preserving a key source of naturally-occurring affordable housing in a gentrifying neighborhood and is protecting a key source of housing that many low-income and immigrant and refugee families have called home for years.



Background

The EC MINT emerged out of a community-driven process. In summer 2022, EC3 educated and surveyed the community (majority of whom were BIPOC and <30% AMI), surveying 136 residents across 11 languages, to determine which housing models were a priority. The community selected the Mixed-Income Neighborhood Trust (MINT) as the top priority to help achieve the community's affordable housing and anti-displacement goals. After receiving the mandate from community members, EC3 undertook major efforts to launch the EC MINT, including forming a partnership with Trust Neighborhoods, hiring a full-time staff member to lead the project, and organizing a community task force to set priorities for the EC MINT.

The EC MINT has emerged out of necessity to combat the housing crisis in East Colfax with a potent, durable solution that puts control of housing into community hands. The EC MINT is doing more than meeting the immediate need for housing stability - it is building the long-term power for this community to shape its own housing destiny.

Community Organizing & Engagement

The EC MINT is deeply committed to creating and sustaining community control of housing, shifting power dynamics by empowering community members to direct the EC MINT and to hold it accountable to its core values. The EC MINT advances this commitment through its governance structure, which is centered around a set of legally-binding purposes established in the Perpetual Purpose Trust that directs the EC MINT. These purposes were informed by an extensive engagement process with community members, and seek to balance impact and long-term financial stability. They include:

- Preserving affordability
- Minimizing displacement
- Increasing housing access and language access
- Converting low-quality housing to high-quality housing
- Promoting financial stability of the EC MINT
- Increasing distributions to equity interests

These purposes are advanced and implemented by the Trust Stewardship Committee (TSC), which is a 9-person committee made up of community stakeholders, resident renters, and

representatives for community organizations. The TSC is designed to be representative of the community and to bring forward the expertise of those with lived experience in rental housing. In particular, the TSC must have:

- A majority of seats held by renters
- At least 4 relevant community languages represented
- At least 4 people who speak relevant community language other than English
- At least 3 immigrants
- At least 2 renters from EC MINT properties

This structure creates strong community control and accountability. The priorities set by community influence every aspect of EC MINT operations, and are laid out in plans and policies created by the TSC. For example, the TSC has created or is working to create policies that shape property acquisition, property management practices, language access, tenant selection, rent setting, and community partnerships.

Additionally, the EC MINT has an 'Operating Board' that provides guidance and approval for business decisions, which is mainly made up of experts in real estate and affordable housing. This board also must advance the purpose of the EC MINT through its decisions, and is ultimately accountable to the TSC, which has the power to hire and fire the Operating Board members.

Building, Construction, and Other Needs

Almost all of the buildings the EC MINT seeks to acquire are older multifamily buildings (1960-70s vintage) that have deferred maintenance needs and/or habitability issues, ranging from plumbing issues to old electrical systems to poorly-functioning HVAC systems to mold. This means that the EC MINT will be investing in renovations at all of its properties to ensure safe, dignified housing for residents. At 1371 Xenia, the EC MINT is currently carrying out renovations to improve livability for residents and the building's long-term quality, including a remodel of the boiler system, roof repairs, and security upgrades.

Capital Stack / Framework

To fund the acquisition of 1371 Xenia, the EC MINT raised a combination of loans and grants. Specifically, the financing consists of:

- \$1.0 million acquisition loan from Mercy Community Capital
- \$1.6 million acquisition loan from CHAI
- \$1.25 million in grants funding from the Colorado Health Foundation and Gary Community Ventures

As the loans for 1371 Xenia have 3-year terms, the EC MINT will need financing to pay them down. For this takeout financing, the EC MINT is seeking to secure a combination of long-term senior debt, impact investment, and financing from the Denver Department of Housing Stability (HOST).

Investment Needs - An Ask

For Phase I, EC MINT will acquire, rehab, and manage 100 units of mid-size apartments for residents at a mix of incomes, with a focus on protecting affordability in the neighborhood and improving living conditions. EC MINT has acquired 1371 Xenia, a 23-unit building in Denver, and aims to acquire an additional 77 units by the end of 2025 to complete the phase. The goal is for EC MINT's Phase I to establish the infrastructure and expertise for further expansion, with a goal of owning over 1,000 units in the next 10 years.

To complete phase 1, the EC MINT requires a total investment of approximately \$22.5 million. The EC MINT is seeking to raise a combination of senior debt, impact investment, funding from public sources, and equity (mostly in the form of grants).

Additionally, senior borrowings at acquisition close will likely require credit support in the form of a third-party guarantee. We are eager to collaborate with a funder to provide support in this form as it is critical to scaling and maximizing our fundraising efforts.

See additional handout for a detailed framework of the EC MINT's capital needs.



Morrison Road Mixed Use Redevelopment

Jose Esparza, Executive Director, BuCu West | jose@bucuwest.com | 303-936-4302

Robin Hickey, CFO, ECLT | rhickey@elevationclt.org | 720-822-2168

David Ogunsanya, VP of Real Estate, ECLT | dogunsanya@elevationclt.org | 720-822-2083

Project Overview

ECLT and BuCu West have partnered to preserve and re-imagine a 0.6 acre site located along southwest Denver's culturally vibrant Morrison Road corridor in the Westwood neighborhood. Utilizing the community land trust model, the vision for the project is to: (1) preserve the existing commercial spaces and, with BuCu West's expertise in small business development and support, ultimately offer them for sale to the current business owners; and (2) redevelop the site's underutilized portions to create new, housing options for low- to moderate-income families, through ECLT's affordable homeownership platform.



Background

Given the important location of this property within the community, BuCu West had been in conversations with the prior site owner for many years. Located on the corner of Morrison Road and Perry Streets, the main portion of the property fronts Morrison Road and includes six commercial and three residential spaces. The property also includes a residential duplex on Perry Street for a total of five existing residential units. Thanks to BuCu West's ongoing neighborhood presence, when the owner was ready to sell in 2022, ECLT was able to acquire the mixed-use property for \$1.7M in partnership with BuCu West. Together, ECLT and

BuCu West share a goal of preserving the existing commercial units and adding new residential units to the site. Currently, the residential units are managed by ECLT and the commercial units are managed by BuCu West.

Community Organizing & Governance

BuCu West has a long history of community organizing and engagement in Westwood. Although ECLT is a newer organization with a statewide reach, it has a deep commitment to community input and engagement throughout the development process. BuCu West and ECLT and the project's developers are committed to working closely with current tenants and the broader community on a visioning process for the site to gain critical feedback about community needs and hopes for the project including input on proposed site plans. ECLT has tripartite board of directors, with 1/3 of members directly representing the communities served, and its homeowner leadership council works to engage and provide ongoing homeowner support services. BuCu West, a Community Development Corporation, is governed by a board of trustees where the majority of member are stakeholders in the neighborhoods served.



Existing site

Wealth Building

Through the Community Land Trust model, the project will offer wealth building opportunities for both home and commercial business owners. Upon completion of the redevelopment, ECLT will continue to own the land in trust in perpetuity and the project will be condominium-ized so that each unit can be sold to an individual owner. The residential units will be sold to families at or below 80% of the area median income at a steeply discounted price from market value. When that owner decides to sell their home they build wealth through the equity that they've gained making their monthly mortgage payments, plus 25% of the home's market appreciation. ECLT and BuCu West are still determining the



Concept Plan

long-term affordability mechanism for the commercial units, but anticipate it being structured in a similar way and restricted to low- to moderate-income or legacy and heritage business owners.

Capital Framework

The City of Denver's Department of Housing Stability supported the building's acquisition with a \$1.8M loan which will be forgiven when redevelopment milestones are met. ECLT has a commitment for additional funding from the State of Colorado Division of Housing. The developers will seek construction financing for the redevelopment, supplemented by BuCu and ECLT fundraising efforts. ECLT and BuCu will then purchase the residential and commercial units from the developers upon completion. ECLT will sell the residential units to income-qualified homebuyers and BuCu will sell the commercial units to the existing business owners.

Investment Needs - An Ask

There are many ways that investors can get involved! ECLT and BuCu West are seeking both grant and program related investment (PRI) capital for the project. Grants will be directly invested into the redevelopment as permanent subsidy to keep the commercial and residential units affordable for generations to come. PRIs will help keep project costs down by reducing interest carry for the project and minimizing the equity investment required by ECLT, BuCu West and the developers. Both PRIs and grants can be restricted to either the residential or commercial portion of the projects if the investor has a particular mission alignment or goal. This project is a terrific opportunity to invest in community ownership and help preserve a piece of Westwood for generations to come.





Comunidad MonteVista & Justice for the People Legal Center

Presenter #1: Dre Chiriboga-Flor, Executive Director & Co-Founder of Justice for the People Legal Center, She/her

Presenter #2: Janeth Salazar, resident leader of MonteVista, she/her

Manufactured Communities & Resident Ownership: Comunidad MonteVista

Westwood Neighborhood, Southwest Denver

4501 W. Kentucky Ave. Denver, CO 80219

Project Overview

MonteVista is a mostly latinx immigrant community made up of 76 families and 80 lots in the southwest neighborhood of Denver called Westwood. When the park went up for sale in 2022, residents contacted 9to5 Colorado because of the trust built with them over the years to help assert residents' rights under the Colorado Opportunity to Purchase Act for mobile home communities. After about 2 years of fundraising and organizing, residents and allies were able to come up with the \$11.5 million to purchase the park and closed the sale on April 30th, 2024. MonteVista is one of only 5 remaining mobile home parks in Denver and is on track to be the very first resident owned park in the city. Sharing Connexion Inc. will be the interim owner for

about 3 years or until the residents are ready to take over.



Background

While 2 years seems like a relatively quick success, the most current movement for mobile home communities in Colorado began almost exactly 10 years ago when 2 mobile home parks shut down in the same Westwood community. Residents received relocation assistance from the city and from private foundations, but 90 families were still displaced from their homes and neighborhood and most were not able to remain within Denver city limits because of rising rent costs. From then on, 9to5 Colorado and later, Justice for the People, began receiving calls from across the state from mobile home residents in need of legal and organizing support. One community in Aurora, Denver Meadows, fought for 4 years to prevent the closure of their 110 household community but the park ended up closing in 2019, in large part because of a lack of legal protections. That community, however, left a long and critical legacy at the state and local level, including the passage of one of the strongest Opportunity to Purchase laws in the country.

Community Organizing, Engagement & Governance



It is important to note that these systemic and policy changes were possible because of the organizing, sacrifice, courage, and determination of hundreds of impacted mobile home owners over the last decade that made a project like MonteVista possible. As with previous community organizing efforts, residents at MonteVista lead the work and strategy every step of the way. Justice for the People helped set up a resident board at the

beginning of the project. Those leaders are spokespeople for the media, hearings with elected officials, and presentations with funders. Justice for the People does constant leadership development work so that the residents can one day operate and manage the community on their own. Residents have presented at statewide and national conferences to share their success and inspire others to do the same. We recently recruited 6 residents to be part of a Conflict Resolution subcommittee to engage in a series of trainings and eventually use what they learn to create a formal process to resolve conflict throughout the whole community. MonteVista hosts full community meetings about once a month, and the resident board meets 2-3 times a month to ensure their work stays on track.

Unique Attributes - Wealth Building Aspect

The two existential threats residents face across the country are mass displacement to make way for development, or corporate landlord ownership, which ultimately means rent hikes, predatory rules, and other practices that can cause displacement. The term "mobile home" is a complete misnomer; the reality is that once mobile homes are set on the land, it can be incredibly risky or completely impossible to move. If the home can move, it can cost up to \$20,000. Mobile homes also depreciate in value, so putting more money into a home can be a

risky investment. Lot rents for residents at MonteVista are currently locked in at \$950 a month plus utilities. The idea is that with time, the loans will be paid off and rent will decrease. Since residents no longer have to worry about mass displacement, they are able to invest in making repairs to their homes without fear. Having guaranteed stability and affordability contributes to increasing the value of their homes if residents decide to sell their unit, though the vision is to make sure homes are still affordable in perpetuity to prevent gentrification.

Capital Stack / Framework

Sources	Interest	Loan Term (Months)	Monthly Payments	Increases	Amount
Fannie Mae 1st	6.68%	60	\$33,750	\$39,770 after 6/2027	\$6,176,000
Seed Commons 2nd	3%	360	\$3,750	\$6,761 after 6/2027	\$1,500,000
Impact Development 3rd	3.5%	60	\$2,917		\$1,000,000
Impact Development 4th	3%	60	\$1,250		\$500,00
Denver- HOST Loan 5th	0%	720	N/A	N/A	\$2,600,000
Denver Foundation	3%	66	625	N/A	\$250,000
Kataly Foundation (Grant)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$250,000
Total Loan Proceeds	\$12,276,000				
Prorations	\$8,463				
Total Acquisition Sources	\$12,284,463				

Building, Construction, and Other Needs

It is common for mobile home park infrastructure to fall into disrepair before residents take over, especially if the landlord has been planning to sell the land for a long time. There have been asphalt and electricity repairs thus far, and it's likely that in the future, investments will have to be made into the sewage system as well. We are currently looking to put in 2 new homes in empty lots to rent out and receive more income.

Investment Needs - An Ask

While we successfully acquired the community, there is still a long road ahead until the residents can take over. We need continued investments in the technical assistance and organizing work that Justice for the People provides, which includes interpretation, food, space, and childcare for meetings. In addition, we are looking for grants to help subsidize loans and bring rents down as well as funds to help people make needed repairs on their homes to ensure they are safe. In some instances, mobile homes will need to be replaced due to poor conditions. Since about 90% of households have at least one construction worker, Justice for the People has helped and will continue to look for funds to help with eviction defense, especially when hours are reduced during winter months. Lastly, residents will need to go through a collective governance process with Justice for the People to decide on exactly what their limited equity cooperative will look like in the years to come.

Thank You & Next Steps

Thank you for joining us today to explore the power of community-led development. We hope you leave with a deeper understanding of how community ownership can create lasting equity, stability, and opportunity.

Let's Build the Field Together - How You Can Help

Your engagement doesn't end here! We invite you to collaborate with the COBRE Collaborative to strengthen and expand the field of community ownership and stewardship.

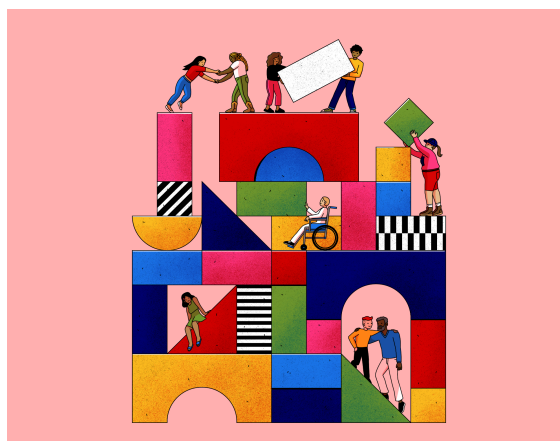
- **Connect with & Invest in Local Projects:** Each project you visited today has specific funding needs to grow and sustain their work. Your support can directly impact these communities.
- **Join the Conversations - Engage with Us Online:** Visit our growing online community hub - **Community Field Notes** at www.futureby.community - to access resources, share ideas, and join a national movement advancing community ownership and stewardship.

Our Collective Vision

The projects you toured today are not just solutions for their local communities - they represent a shared vision of a just, inclusive and anti-racist future. Together we can continue to unlock power within communities to fight displacement, celebrate cultural preservation, and create scalable models for change.

Thank You!

The COBRE Collaborative



Kim Nguyen for OBI x Fine Acts