



**Nashville Organized for Action and Hope | PO Box 331144 | Nashville, TN 37203**

## **ECONOMIC EQUITY AND JOBS**

### **What's the Problem?**

- According to the 2013 Community Needs Evaluation (Metro Social Services), Nashville's economic development has grown by 58 percent since 2002. During the same period, poverty has risen by 42 percent, including major poverty growth in 16 of 35 Council districts near our urban core.
- 20 percent of Nashville residents currently live at or below the poverty level.
- Metro offers millions in tax incentives to companies to expand or relocate in Nashville; but often the details of such deals, including jobs created and training provided for local residents, are not clear.
- By the year 2019, Nashville has a projected growth in new job creation of 115,000 jobs. Yet the Nashville Chamber of Commerce reports there are not enough skilled workers to fill these jobs.

### **Why Should We Care?**

- Growth and prosperity are not being shared in an equitable fashion and have been causing the formation of two Nashvilles within one city. The rise in poverty has consolidated deeper within pockets of our geographical boundaries.
- Low workforce participation in distressed neighborhoods often removes residents from informal networks that lead to career jobs with living wage pay. Nashville's economic growth has not alleviated these problems.
- As public investors in the city of Nashville, residents have a vested interest in knowing the return on investments for publicly funded projects.

### **What Should Be Done?**

- Publish yearly audits of all tax and financial incentives for public development that show money received, jobs created, pay and benefits of said jobs, and the distribution of jobs.
- Institute practices that require publicly assisted construction projects to use Davidson County residents for a majority of the work hours, provide high-quality training programs, and support employers who pay a living wage and treat workers fairly.
- Prioritize neighborhood accessible job training programs for current residents to fill immediate job needs in the city, with training that corresponds with local living wage jobs in demand (i.e. healthcare, information technology, financial services, hospitality, etc.).
- Attach specific, tangible and measurable community benefits packages to development projects in high poverty areas that will aid low and middle income residents through equitable neighborhood economic development (ex. Implementing a community benefit agreements within the bidding process).
- Expand the Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development to include a task force to lead a community-wealth building initiative for low- and middle-income residents by reviewing equitable development models and building on employee-owned, co-operative businesses.