When military bases shut down, communities face a daunting task. How can they overcome the loss of military jobs and capitalize on new opportunities? Base re-use plans can revitalize communities—or they can result in under-used and unsafe sites, as competing visions and complex layers of bureaucracy bog down the process. In early 2012, however, the City of Concord demonstrated how to do it right. After six years of work, the City Council unanimously approved a visionary plan for the shuttered 5,000-acre Concord Naval Weapons Station. This comprehensive blueprint lays the foundation for strengthening the city’s economy and enhancing its quality of life by creating walkable neighborhoods, affordable homes near transit and services, local construction jobs and open space that everyone can enjoy.

What made the difference in Concord? Rather than fighting it out, a broad range of groups collaborated on a proposal that addressed the full spectrum of community needs. The Community Coalition for a Sustainable Concord (CCSC)—a groundbreaking alliance of housing, labor, faith-based, neighborhood and environmental organizations—has been at the center of this effort. The Coalition (which includes CNWS Neighborhood Alliance, East Bay Housing Organizations, Contra Costa Building Trades Council, Greenbelt Alliance, Public Advocates and Save Mount Diablo) emerged when initial plans for the eight-square-mile site were heading in the wrong direction—toward the same costly sprawl that drove the housing bust and kicked off the Great Recession. The coalition worked closely with elected officials and city staff, and along with hundreds of community members, it turned out to dozens of public meetings to build a shared vision.

Turning Swords into Plowshares: A Visionary Blueprint for Concord

What made the difference in Concord? Rather than fighting it out, a broad range of groups collaborated on a proposal that addressed the full spectrum of community needs. The Community Coalition for a Sustainable Concord (CCSC)—a groundbreaking alliance of housing, labor, faith-based, neighborhood and environmental organizations—has been at the center of this effort. The Coalition (which includes CNWS Neighborhood Alliance, East Bay Housing Organizations, Contra Costa Building Trades Council, Greenbelt Alliance, Public Advocates and Save Mount Diablo) emerged when initial plans for the eight-square-mile site were heading in the wrong direction—toward the same costly sprawl that drove the housing bust and kicked off the Great Recession. The coalition worked closely with elected officials and city staff, and along with hundreds of community members, it turned out to dozens of public meetings to build a shared vision.

A Visionary Blueprint for Concord

What made the difference in Concord? Rather than fighting it out, a broad range of groups collaborated on a proposal that addressed the full spectrum of community needs. The Community Coalition for a Sustainable Concord (CCSC)—a groundbreaking alliance of housing, labor, faith-based, neighborhood and environmental organizations—has been at the center of this effort. The Coalition (which includes CNWS Neighborhood Alliance, East Bay Housing Organizations, Contra Costa Building Trades Council, Greenbelt Alliance, Public Advocates and Save Mount Diablo) emerged when initial plans for the eight-square-mile site were heading in the wrong direction—toward the same costly sprawl that drove the housing bust and kicked off the Great Recession. The coalition worked closely with elected officials and city staff, and along with hundreds of community members, it turned out to dozens of public meetings to build a shared vision.

What made the difference in Concord? Rather than fighting it out, a broad range of groups collaborated on a proposal that addressed the full spectrum of community needs. The Community Coalition for a Sustainable Concord (CCSC)—a groundbreaking alliance of housing, labor, faith-based, neighborhood and environmental organizations—has been at the center of this effort. The Coalition (which includes CNWS Neighborhood Alliance, East Bay Housing Organizations, Contra Costa Building Trades Council, Greenbelt Alliance, Public Advocates and Save Mount Diablo) emerged when initial plans for the eight-square-mile site were heading in the wrong direction—toward the same costly sprawl that drove the housing bust and kicked off the Great Recession. The coalition worked closely with elected officials and city staff, and along with hundreds of community members, it turned out to dozens of public meetings to build a shared vision.

What made the difference in Concord? Rather than fighting it out, a broad range of groups collaborated on a proposal that addressed the full spectrum of community needs. The Community Coalition for a Sustainable Concord (CCSC)—a groundbreaking alliance of housing, labor, faith-based, neighborhood and environmental organizations—has been at the center of this effort. The Coalition (which includes CNWS Neighborhood Alliance, East Bay Housing Organizations, Contra Costa Building Trades Council, Greenbelt Alliance, Public Advocates and Save Mount Diablo) emerged when initial plans for the eight-square-mile site were heading in the wrong direction—toward the same costly sprawl that drove the housing bust and kicked off the Great Recession. The coalition worked closely with elected officials and city staff, and along with hundreds of community members, it turned out to dozens of public meetings to build a shared vision.

What made the difference in Concord? Rather than fighting it out, a broad range of groups collaborated on a proposal that addressed the full spectrum of community needs. The Community Coalition for a Sustainable Concord (CCSC)—a groundbreaking alliance of housing, labor, faith-based, neighborhood and environmental organizations—has been at the center of this effort. The Coalition (which includes CNWS Neighborhood Alliance, East Bay Housing Organizations, Contra Costa Building Trades Council, Greenbelt Alliance, Public Advocates and Save Mount Diablo) emerged when initial plans for the eight-square-mile site were heading in the wrong direction—toward the same costly sprawl that drove the housing bust and kicked off the Great Recession. The coalition worked closely with elected officials and city staff, and along with hundreds of community members, it turned out to dozens of public meetings to build a shared vision.