

**East Bay Housing Organizations
Planning for Successful Events Workshop
March 21, 2012**

BIG EVENT QUESTIONS

Events are some of the most challenging, time-consuming *and* rewarding and wonderful activities that you can undertake for your organization, congregation or agency. Great events, no matter how elaborate or simple, start with great planning. Answer these basic questions first.

- **WHY** are we considering doing an event?

Is an event the right way to reach your goals right now? Are you organizing an event because you feel you should, because other organizations do it, or because you truly have something to share or celebrate?

- **WHAT** are our goals?

Celebrating a milestone, or a person or group? Educating a particular target group of people? Motivating people to action? Raising funds? Making new contacts? Gaining visibility in the media? Note that some goals are compatible, but not all can be top priority at once. For example, events that are meant to raise funds can also educate and raise visibility but the explicit purpose of fundraising must be built in from Day One.

- **WHO** is our key audience?

*Do you want to **broaden, deepen, or diversify** your usual audience? These three goals take slightly different strategies. Or are you trying to reach new partners and audience? If so, targeted messaging and outreach, location, programming will all play a role.*

- **WHO** do we need on the team (staff, board, volunteers, consultants)?

Do you have capacity on your current team? Do you have buy-in from the leadership and board, even if they're not directly involved (and should they be directly involved)? Does it make sense to take care of details in-house, or should you delegate (remember, staff time is money!)? Do you have a committed corps of volunteers?

- **WHERE** will the event happen?

Should it be on-site at your organization or housing development? Should it be in a new neighborhood that will reach different audience or introduce you usual audience to a new environment? How easy will it be for your target audience to get there? What is the atmosphere and cost?

- **WHEN** should we schedule our event?

What else is happening – both inside our organization that will stretch our capacity, and outside in the world that could provide both opportunities and competition?

- **HOW** will we get the word out?

Is your constituency more likely to respond to mailed invitations, phone calls, an announcement at a community meeting, or a facebook event? Or all of the above?

- **HOW** will you know your event was successful?

*There are many measures of success – they're up to you and they should correspond to your goals. Will you send out an evaluation? Will you make sure to keep track of head count, costs, and other concrete indicators? **Examples:** 75% of our core members send a representative. Two local media outlets mention our organization positively. We net \$5,000 on the event. We establish contact with three new ally organizations.*