GATES FAMILY FOUNDATION

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Supporting a connected and prosperous Colorado through housing, community assets, business ownership, and community agency.

WHO WE ARE

For 80 years, Gates Family Foundation has partnered with communities across Colorado to help build a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable future. Deeply rooted in the state, **the Foundation invests in people, places, natural resources, and civic institutions that strengthen communities and create opportunity for future generations**. Guided by values of **respect, creativity, engagement, place, and equity**, the Foundation works alongside communities to expand opportunity across Colorado.

Through listening, learning, convening, and investing alongside local leaders, the Foundation supports community-driven solutions that strengthen communities today and for the future. Guided by trust, learning, innovation, and a commitment to helping communities shape their own futures, the Foundation works as a collaborative partner in creating lasting impact across Colorado. This work includes a focus on **responsive capital and strategic grantmaking** across four core focus areas: **Community Development, Informed Communities, Natural Resources, and Public Education**. Together, these investments expand pathways to economic opportunity, strengthen access to trusted information, steward Colorado's lands and waters, and support great teaching and student success.

By investing in both the conditions and the systems that help communities thrive, the Foundation seeks to create lasting benefits for Colorado today and for generations to come.

WHY THIS WORK MATTERS

Throughout the state, many communities continue to face rising housing costs, widening economic disparities, displacement pressures, and barriers to meaningful participation in local decision-making. The impacts of the pandemic, increasing economic uncertainty, and federal policy volatility have intensified these challenges.

Strong communities depend on more than individual programs or projects. They require **housing stability, pathways to ownership and wealth-building, community-serving infrastructure, and meaningful resident engagement.** While important state and local policy victories have been achieved, implementation capacity and community agency remain significant gaps. **We see an opportunity to help bridge those gaps and support lasting community-driven change across Colorado.**

OUR APPROACH

We invest in community-level leaders and organizations that are building proof of what works while simultaneously supporting the policies and infrastructure needed to scale that impact. Lasting change requires work at multiple levels, from community-based solutions to systems change.

Our approach emphasizes matching the appropriate form of capital to each opportunity, including grants, Program-Related Investments (PRIs), Capital Grants, and Mission-Related Investments (MRIs).

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

FUNDING STRATEGIES

GATES FAMILY FOUNDATION

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Supporting anti-displacement strategies and pathways to ownership so more Coloradans can remain in and invest in their communities. We prioritize intermediaries, financing vehicles, and scalable systems that increase housing opportunities.

ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Expanding business ownership, employee ownership, access to capital, and workforce development opportunities that help Coloradans build wealth.

SHARED COMMUNITY ASSETS

Supporting community-owned physical and civic infrastructure that creates vibrant places, strengthens local identity, and provides lasting value to residents.

AGENCY & CONNECTION

Investing in resident participation, civic infrastructure, and community leadership so individuals and families can meaningfully shape the development decisions that affect their future.

WHAT WE LOOK FOR

- Ownership and wealth-building approaches that create long-term economic security
- Investments that strengthen implementation capacity and community agency in development decisions.
- Multi-year partnerships and catalytic capital that support durable outcomes.
- Opportunities in urban and rural communities across Colorado, with particular attention to communities facing persistent barriers to opportunity.

WHAT HAS CHANGED

- We have moved from a broad community development framework to four distinct, interconnected areas of focus: Affordable Housing, Economic Mobility, Shared Community Assets, and Agency & Connection.
- Housing has been elevated from one strategy among many to a standalone priority area.
- Economic mobility is now more focused on creating opportunities for individuals and families to build wealth, own businesses or assets, and have greater control over their economic future. We support scalable workforce development solutions but do not fund individual workforce training programs.
- Resident agency, civic engagement, and community power are now a named pillar of our work.
- Shared community assets now include a deliberate focus on community ownership of places and spaces.
- We are making fewer, deeper investments and increasing the use of flexible capital tools to support impact at scale.

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