



FUNDERS FORUM
on Accountable Health



South Stockton Promise Zone Case Study

Stockton, CA
2018

THE FUNDERS FORUM ON ACCOUNTABLE HEALTH

The Funders Forum on Accountable Health is a collaborative at George Washington University's Milken Institute School of Public Health that works to advance accountable communities for health (ACH) models by promoting dialogue and catalyzing change among public and private funders of ACH efforts across the country.

The Forum is a common table for funders of ACH efforts to share ideas and experiences, explore potential collaborations, support common assessment approaches, and build a community of practice.

Visit our website at accountablehealth.gwu.edu to learn more!

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FUNDERS FORUM CASE STUDIES

The Funders Forum on Accountable Health conducted ten case studies of different accountable health models to better understand the key implementation challenges and opportunities they face.

Accountable Communities for Health (ACH) are community-based partnerships formed across sectors to focus on a shared vision and responsibility for the health of the community. They pursue an integrated approach to health that focuses not only on the clinical setting, but also on how the broader community can support health care's "Triple Aim"¹ of better care for individuals, better health for populations, and lower health care costs.

The Funders Forum interviewed leadership from ten ACH sites in order to better understand the various approaches to governance structure, portfolio of interventions, investments in technology, funding sustainability strategies, and anticipated short- and long-term outcomes of their ACH efforts.

The purpose of this report is to provide an in-depth overview of the South Stockton Promise Zone in Stockton, California. We wish to thank all the participants in this case study.

Reports on all ten case studies are available on our website at accountablehealth@gwu.edu.

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1. Berwick, D. M., T. W. Nolan, and J. Whittington. 2008. "The Triple Aim: Care, Health, and Cost." *Health Affairs* 27(3).

South Stockton Promise Zone

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What is the South Stockton Promise Zone?

In 2014, the South Stockton Promise Zone (SSPZ) was created as a collaborative initiative between the City of Stockton, California and public and private partners from a broad range of sectors, including health, housing, education, social services, law enforcement, and community organizations. The SSPZ's mission is grounded in a 20-year commitment to align public and private resources towards transforming a defined geographic region of South Stockton that has suffered from decades of public and private divestment, poverty, and limited economic opportunity. This area is home to around 100,000 people, close to a third of the city's residents.

Under this broad charge, the SSPZ aims to advocate for the needs of South Stockton residents; develop and implement aligned strategies across partners to “affect the root causes of intergenerational poverty,” including education, housing, economic growth, health and safety; and create civic engagement structures for South Stockton residents. Within this framework, cross-sector collaboratives are implementing strategies targeted at improving indicators related to: child literacy; community safety and trust with law enforcement; access to quality, affordable housing; physical and behavioral health; addressing trauma; and career and college readiness among high school youth. These areas of focus aim to build long-lasting infrastructure in South Stockton that can support residents along the entire cradle to career continuum.

San Joaquin County and South Stockton leaders are also addressing the high rates of trauma experienced by many residents in the area. Healing South Stockton, a comprehensive effort to reduce trauma through the Accountable Communities for Health (ACH) model, is aligning strategies and programs across health care, social service agencies, schools, nonprofit organizations, and others to build alliances for a healthier county as a part of the SSPZ.

Origins of the South Stockton Promise Zone

The roots of the SSPZ date back to the election of Michael Tubbs to the Stockton City Council in 2013. A South Stockton native finishing his degree at Stanford, 21 year old Tubbs decided to return and run for office in his home city following the murder of one of his cousins. His path to election to the Stockton City Council, and eventually his election as Mayor of Stockton in 2016, was grounded in a campaign platform to reverse the history of neglect in South Stockton.

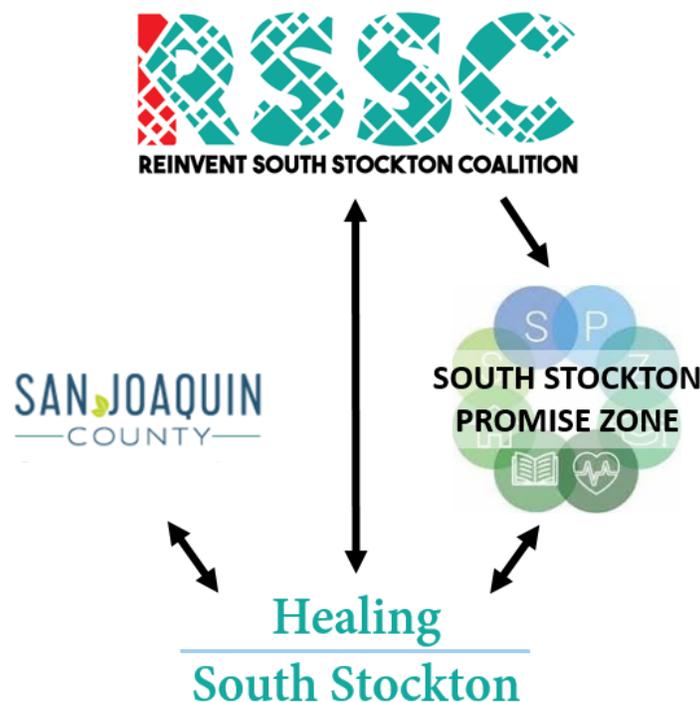
In 2014, Tubbs founded the Reinvent South Stockton Coalition (RSSC) to support cross-sector alignment and partnerships to transform South Stockton over the next 20 years. Rather than a stand-alone non-profit entity, the RSSC was a partnership coalition made up of local government agencies, schools, non-profit service providers, and health care providers.

The RSSC quickly identified the Department of Housing and Urban Development's new Promise Zone program as a powerful opportunity for the community to partner with the federal government around the 20 year vision for the Cradle-to-Career initiatives they were developing. The RSSC submitted a proposal in 2014 but was not selected in the initial round. However, the coalition learned from the application process and tried again in 2015. They obtained \$100,000 in funding from the City Council to hire a consulting group (PolicyLink) to help the coalition assemble a stronger proposal for the second round. Through community listening sessions and meetings with partners regarding individual organizational priorities, the RSSC began developing an agenda that reflected community needs, while being well-aligned with partners' individual work. PolicyLink assisted the coalition in developing an evidence-based implementation plan and measureable indicators of success that were tied to five community priorities: 1) early literacy, 2) violence prevention, 3) affordable housing, 4) healthy living, and 5) successful transitions to adulthood.¹ In 2016, the RSSC applied to be a HUD Promise Zone for a second time. While it ultimately was not selected as a federal Promise Zone, partners all

1. [http://www.sjcphs.org/Disease/documents/20161104_South%20Stockton%20Promise%20Zone%20\(SSPZ\)%20Plan%209-28-16.pdf](http://www.sjcphs.org/Disease/documents/20161104_South%20Stockton%20Promise%20Zone%20(SSPZ)%20Plan%209-28-16.pdf)

agreed to proceed with this ambitious collaborative effort regardless. Furthermore, as a result of being a finalist, the coalition is still in regular contact with HUD leaders. They receive ongoing mentoring and strategic advice around how to align their work with other federal initiatives as well as leads on interesting initiatives happening in other communities that they may want to consider using in South Stockton.

In 2016, the scope of the SSPZ’s work expanded to include addressing trauma. Building on the existing efforts to reduce community violence, a group of partners formed the Healing South Stockton coalition. This coalition aims to build community support structures necessary to help families mitigate the effects of trauma, and to integrate considerations of trauma across all other work of the SSPZ. This effort received funding and designation as an Accountable Community for Health under the California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative (CACHI), a new state-wide public-private venture supporting multi-sector initiatives to build healthier local communities.²



Governance Structure

At the leadership level, the SSPZ is governed by a steering committee made up of representatives from the City of Stockton, and all steering committee members within the RSSC. This includes a major local health system, the local housing authority and public health department, a dominant affordable housing provider, South Stockton schools, and a number of community-based non-profit organizations and social service providers. This steering committee meets quarterly and is in charge of making final decisions regarding pursuit and distribution of funding officially linked to the SSPZ, and agenda-setting.

For each of the SSPZ’s five priorities, a “mini” backbone organization takes the lead in managing partner coordination and implementation of strategies targeting that specific area. Many of these mini backbone organizations were leading efforts to address these priorities in Stockton prior to the establishment of the SSPZ. Their work served as starting points from which the SSPZ could expand upon and target certain projects to its promise zone region. For example, the University of Pacific’s Beyond our Gate’s initiative, which was already focused on improving early literacy across the entire San Joaquin County, serves as a mini backbone to the early literacy work of the SSPZ. Partners noted that it was important to have this decentralized model of

2. <http://cachi.org/profiles/san-joaquin-county>

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governance, where no one entity has control over the entire SSPZ, in order to overcome historical competitive and distrustful environments among some partners.

The Director of the RSSC and its few staff serve as the primary backbone across all of the SSPZ's work. As the primary backbone they play a central role in facilitating collaboration, building bridges and connections across partners, and managing administrative and strategic planning work to support growth of the SSPZ.

The work of the Healing South Stockton Coalition, while linked into the SSPZ, holds a separate governance structure, including its own leadership team and a broader steering committee of partnering organizations. The ACH leadership team includes the following organizations: Community Medical Centers, Dignity Health, Health Plan of San Joaquin, Kaiser Permanente, Public Health Advocates, Reinvent South Stockton Coalition, San Joaquin County Health Care Services Agency, and Stockton Unified School District. RSSC staff serve as backbone coordinator for this work as well.

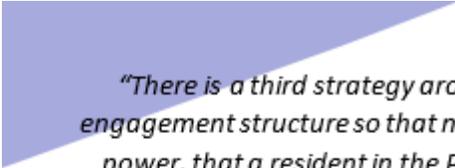
Rebuilding Community Trust

In many respects, the SSPZ's core mission is to reverse the damage that decades of underinvestment in South Stockton has exacted on its residents. This has included working to rebuild the trust of residents and partners, which has greatly eroded over the years. South Stockton is a predominately minority community that for years has been characterized by high unemployment, transient residents, drug trafficking, lack of development, limited affordable high quality housing, and neglect on the part of both state and local government. Partners discussed how for years private real-estate development and public resources were disproportionately invested in more affluent North Stockton while South Stockton schools, roads, housing and other infrastructure needs were overlooked, thereby further destabilizing an already impoverished community.

Through these years of neglect, many residents became weary of revitalization projects labeled as "engaging" the community. In the past, these types of efforts were often characterized by outside organizations "dropping-in" to the community for a short-period of time, surveying residents, gathering significant, sometimes sensitive information, and then never truly addressing residents' needs. These experiences left many residents feeling distrustful of such efforts.

The impact of this neglect was not limited to South Stockton residents. Interviewees noted that limited resources flowing into South Stockton also fostered a competitive environment among community organizations in the past.

Building relationships with residents and across partner organizations has required reversing this history of distrust. Among residents, the RSSC has strived to find ways to genuinely engage and connect with community residents. While the coalition has used surveys and listening sessions to help garner resident feedback in building its agenda, it has also tried to build relationships with residents through more informal venues, like hosting block parties. SSPZ also holds monthly community meetings for residents. Partnering with community organizations that have a long history of working within the community has been important in building credibility with residents. Partners noted



"There is a third strategy around building civic engagement structure so that no matter who's in power, that a resident in the Promise Zone or in South Stockton is able to have a voice. We feel that one of the reasons why a lot of neglect over those 40 to 50 years was because there was a lack of voice by the residents. They weren't empowered to have that voice...The idea is if we can get the residents and we build trust with them, then we start building these civic engagement structures that leads to them having a voice, leads to them being engaged in the creation of the strategies that make up the Promise Zone Initiative."

Hector Lara
Executive Director
Reinvent South Stockton Coalition

that rebuilding trust within the community is a goal of the SSPZ in and of itself, in order to empower residents to engage in political processes and reverse past political disenfranchisement. They hope that the 20-year commitment to this project will reverse trends of sporadic and ineffective reinvestment in the community.

Leadership Changes Drive Culture Change

Leadership changes within the City of Stockton and various city-level government agencies have been instrumental to the success of the SSPZ to date. Michael Tubbs' leadership and commitment to this effort, both as City Council member and then Mayor of Stockton, has helped galvanize support for the SSPZ in numerous ways. Partners noted that his steady commitment to listening to residents and breaking down silos across sectors has helped ensure that the SSPZ remains loyal to its original community-centered agenda. He has been able to bring both national and state level attention to the coalition efforts in South Stockton. This has drawn funder interest and has helped attract new talent to local government. For example, new leadership in South Stockton's Unified School District and the local housing authority came to Stockton because they were motivated by the work of the SSPZ. These new leaders have helped change institutional culture within their agencies and break down historical silos and barriers to collaboration.

Partners have seen these changes in government leadership and government involvement in the SSPZ translate to lasting changes in city government culture and priorities. In the most recent update of Stockton's general city plan, the City of Stockton opted to carry out listening sessions in every Stockton neighborhood, reflecting a new cultural emphasis on community engagement. Partners also reported that the City Council and government agencies are now paying greater attention to needs of historically disenfranchised communities in their policy decisions and activities. While it is politically hard work, there is new optimism that these changes are helping rebalance political power between previously disenfranchised communities and the business community and wealthier neighborhoods.

Aligning a Cradle to Career Portfolio of Interventions

The Promise Zone comprises a broad swath of initiatives that have three main objectives for transforming the community: 1) creating awareness of and advocating for the strengths and needs of South Stockton, 2) aligning long term strategies and resources to improve South Stockton, and 3) developing civic engagement structures that will provide residents with a voice in decision-making. The interventions the community has prioritized are framed around a Cradle-to-Career Continuum. In building the South Stockton Promise Zone's initial agenda, the coalition was intent on finding the sweet spot where community needs aligned with existing activities and priorities of community partners. Instead of creating new initiatives, the hope was that the Promise Zone could leverage existing partner assets, and not overburden partners. This approach to agenda setting was seen as critical in building partner buy-in to the effort.

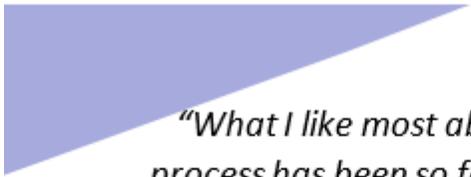
Improving educational opportunities is a major focus and includes increasing pre-school enrollment and third grade literacy and decreasing truancy from school as well as enhancing the transition to adulthood through increased high school graduation rates and employment rates for those out of school. This is deeply connected to a separate initiative spearheaded by Mayor Tubbs, called Stockton Scholars. This initiative has secured \$20 million to guarantee any high school graduate of the Unified Stockton school district a scholarship to California State University once admitted. The Promise Zone activities will help with leveraging this opportunity through related efforts to improve high school education outcomes in the region.

Other efforts to strengthen the community center around making South Stockton a vibrant community. This includes efforts to reduce violence, improving the quality and quantity of affordable housing, reducing homelessness, and increasing job opportunities. The coalition is engaging the community and law enforcement in co-developing strategies for increasing trust and rooting everyone in a common understanding

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of how they can help each other. The coalition is also in the process of creating a vision for bringing economic opportunities and investors to Stockton, and is exploring how to link these efforts with climate change initiatives and other efforts to improve mobility and transportation in the area. As part of these efforts, they hosted a meeting with public private funders with the goal of developing a coordinated funding strategy for expanding their work in the coming years.

To inform coalition activities to improve early literacy indicators, partners across sectors met with principals from all public elementary schools in South Stockton's Unified Stockton School District to better understand what supports they needed to improve their early childhood education infrastructure. They began by asking principals, "How can we help?" Principals shared frustrations with the limited resources available to support their teaching staff, high teacher turn over, and the relatively young, inexperienced teachers coming into the schools. As a result of this dialogue, partners are now working with the schools to advocate for additional funding and resources for instructional coaching for early childhood education teachers. Coalition partners are going through a similar process with area high schools to assess what additional supports schools need to improve college readiness among teens in South Stockton.



"What I like most about what our process has been so far is it's full of brainstorming, it's full of, where can we go? Let's wipe the slate clean as to where we've been."

Barb Alberson
San Joaquin County Public Health Department

Throughout all the work of the SSPZ, partners have strived to ground their activities in the actual needs and perspectives of community residents. The Healing South Stockton Coalition's efforts to address the trauma treatment and prevention needs of the community have exemplified the strengths of such a community-centered approach.

To inform how to improve existing counseling and trauma-related support services, and to identify what additional services are needed, the Healing South Stockton Coalition held seven listening sessions within the community. In these sessions, many participants expressed discomfort using the traditional counseling services available in South Stockton, which were primarily in clinical settings. Residents discussed wanting more services within their neighborhoods, provided by members of their community, like peer counseling services. As a result of these discussions coalition members are now developing strategies to expand access to counseling and support services in more community-based settings. Partners are working to bring nonprofits that already provide community-based trauma recovery support services into traditional touch points for families, like schools. Community medical centers are also considering how to build out peer support groups.



"Our number one thing is you have to listen to the residents. You, as hired staff, can't decide what's good for the community."

Fred Sheil
STAND

This coalition also features a "Trust Builders" Program that involves training and hiring outreach workers from within high-risk communities who can serve as case managers and refer residents to needed services. The hope is that hiring trusted members from within these communities will help build resident comfort in discussing trauma-related needs. Partners envision a day when EMS and police staff will be able to share information with these outreach workers to identify at-risk families that these trust-builders may want to visit.

In addition to integrating trauma-related supports into residents' daily communities, the Healing South

Stockton coalition is working to incorporate trauma-informed practices into partner SSPZ organizations. This priority was born out of recognition that residents affected by trauma may interact with a diversity of stakeholders in an effort to obtain help, from schools, to interpretation services, to jobs training programs. Coalition members wanted to ensure that the experience of interacting with these agencies was not a secondary trauma or a stigmatizing deterrent to seeking help. To this end, the Healing South Stockton Coalition is using its CACHI grant funding to provide trainings on trauma-informed best practices to SSPZ coalition member organizations. With this training, organizations are working to incorporate evidence on trauma informed policies into their own organizational policies, systems, and cultures.

Outside of the official work of the SSPZ, the Mayor's office is also leading implementation of progressive programs to reverse the cycle of violence and poverty in South Stockton. The city is currently testing a demonstration program that provides a minimum basic income to 130 low-income South Stockton residents. In addition, the city is piloting a violence prevention program- Advance Peace- that engages individuals who are at highest risk of committing violent crimes in an intensive case management program. Partners emphasized that they see these efforts as linked closely to the work of the SSPZ and part of its broader effort to build community supports all along the cradle to career continuum. They also spoke to the importance of this work to the community wide effort to reduce trauma, as reducing violence and poverty is key to reducing upstream risk factors that drive exposure to trauma in the first place.

Building Infrastructure to Attract and Manage Funding Opportunities

To date, the SSPZ has braided funding from a range of philanthropic foundations and federal, state, and local government agencies to support its work. The RSSC has received a number of small grants from foundations to support small-scale initiatives and to help it build organizational capacities and infrastructure. Funding from CACHI has been leveraged to pay for trauma-informed care trainings for various SSPZ partners, and to provide some level of compensation to organizations completing trainings, in recognition of the time and work that they are committing to that process. Interviewees noted that having city agencies actively involved in the SSPZ has made it easier to strategically leverage existing government funding streams to support this work. Social service agencies, public schools, and the housing authority are now making a conscious effort to align their own funded work with the broader goals of the SSPZ. Establishing the RSSC has also helped some partner non-profit organizations build relationships and garner new financial support from city agencies. The SSPZ has also sought out more creative, indirect ways to obtain government funding to support its work, from using tax credits and incentives to finance affordable housing developments to certifying community-based counseling providers as eligible for Medi-Cal reimbursement.

A new and exciting opportunity that is part of the ACH is establishing a local Wellness Fund that weaves together a variety of funding streams. Local businesses, health plans, hospitals, Medi-Cal managed care plans and the San Joaquin County government are coming together to invest in strategies to improve the health of the community. This collaboration will encourage others to align efforts to address issues such as trauma that affect the health and wellbeing of everyone in the community.

Long-term, partners are optimistic that they will garner additional funding support. Mayor Tubbs has brought considerable public attention to the SSPZ at the national level, and with that has come increasing public and private funder interest in its work. RSSC leaders have also established strong working relationships with federal agencies, including HUD, and have even hosted a convening of federal agencies to showcase its work.

The RSSC recently went through an intensive strategic planning process and hired a marketing firm to help build out a polished presentation of the SSPZ's mission, structure, and work. As a culmination of this strategic planning, the RSSC hosted a convening of local, state, and national foundations to educate these stakeholders on the SSPZ's work and investment opportunities. The hope is that these investments in organizational

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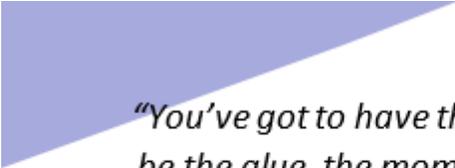
capacities will allow the RSSC and partners within the SSPZ to turn funder interest into meaningful financial investments.

Even without new funding, partners expressed interest in sustaining a culture of collaboration in South Stockton. One interviewee noted that agencies and organizations have been able to see that the sum of partners' work is bigger than their individual parts. As long as institutional cultures continue to foster trust and eliminate silos, partners hope that at least some level of collaboration will survive long-term.

"I think we're finally ready to make a case to the philanthropic partners to say Stockton is a place to invest. Look at all the partnerships. Look at all the strategies. And your dollars go far in this capacity." - Hector Lara, Reinvent South Stockton Coalition

Challenges

The SSPZ has dealt with a number of challenges since its founding. One big challenge was developing the organizational expertise to manage such a large portfolio of activities, even with a distributed leadership structure. Key informants indicated this is one of the reasons they were not selected for the Promise Zone. They were told that a lot of federal agencies were interested in supporting South Stockton, but did not see enough organizational capacity to manage large federal grants. Overflowing inboxes also led to other missed opportunities and served as a wake-up call for the coalition to hire project managers and others to strengthen their organizational capacity. This included hiring a marketing firm to help them to publicize all the work they were doing after they received feedback (and funding) from the James Irvine Foundation that they couldn't find anything on what South Stockton was doing, other than what the Mayor was doing. The foundation realized it was deeper than that and wanted to help the coalition better communicate this effort to more people, and thereby get more support and more funding for their work.



"You've got to have the paid staff to be the glue, the mom, to help make things happen long term. It just doesn't work without it."

Barb Alberson
San Joaquin County Public Health Department

The coalition realized they needed to place more emphasis on "bridge building" which can include helping partners to better strategize and use collective power as well as identifying and removing barriers. For example, they found that training individuals, such as they did for their Mental Health 101 program, was an important component but didn't help the organization to grow and evolve as people moved on to other organizations. Now they are focused more on addressing systemic barriers, such as helping to change policies so that they can get more organizations who are already engaged in trauma and mentorship eligible to be reimbursed by MediCal for services provided on campuses. As Hector Lara from Reinvent South Stockton Coalition emphasized, "We can bring all these dollars and resources. But if we don't make the changes at the city, at the school district, at behavioral health, at the county, to really start looking at how do they change some of these things, we're not going to move as far as we need to really make an impact."

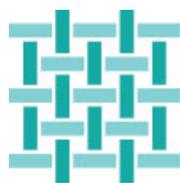
Finally, interviewees emphasized that balancing the priorities of partners and the priorities of neighborhoods and South Stockton residents is an ongoing challenge. While the coalition aims to keep the community at the center of all its work, sometimes the priorities of residents and partners are conflicting. Working with limited resources, this can sometimes necessitate adapting priorities in order to maintain partner alignment.

Lessons Learned

Partners shared a number of lessons learned from the work of the SSPZ thus far. Interviewees emphasized that having committed leadership in key agencies of power, and coalition leaders with adept facilitation skills is critical to building fruitful collaborative relationships. They also emphasized the importance of having a paid staff person dedicated to coordinating coalition efforts and building bridges across organizations. While this work can sometimes be thankless, they emphasized that it is key to keeping the wheels of progress moving. They emphasized this effort cannot be left to volunteer efforts.

Partners shared pros and cons to carrying out such collaborative work in an under-resourced environment. On the one hand, limited funding can help support collaboration as people know that the only way work will actually get done is by leveraging every partners' in-kind support and manpower. However, this same environment can build up silos if partners feel that they must compete with one another in order to sustain their individual work.

Partners note that building strong collaborative relationships takes time. However, organizations are beginning to see the benefits of truly working together. One interviewee noted that coalition members have been able to actively "back-up" partners when making politically challenging decisions that were right for the community. This type of support has gone a long way towards growing relationships across organizations and bolstering partner commitment to the process.



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