

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *Uplifting Voices for an Equitable, Regional LA Sustainability Plan*

- **Year Complete:** 2021
- **Local Government:** Los Angeles County, CA
- **Local Foundation:** California Community Foundation; Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

Project Purpose

To employ innovative, empowering engagement strategies to build meaningful community partnerships that reverse oppression to provide input into a cutting-edge sustainability plan.

Key Lessons Learned

Lessons about strategies, tools, and tactics that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.

The team developed a presentation that highlights best practices in the appendix of the [Stakeholder Engagement Summary](#). Key takeaways include:

- Spend at least 20% of project funding on stakeholder engagement.
- Partner with organizations trusted by communities of interest.
- Utilize a co-hosting model, where trusted community organizations lead engagement.
- Pursue more flexible funding sources, like Partners for Places, to fund crucial activities like childcare, food, door prizes, and other such activities that are useful to residents, but infeasible to fund with public dollars in most cases.
- Include a land acknowledgement in all your work if appropriate, but especially in your long-range planning documents.

Lessons for developing a collaborative relationship between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s)

Push the boundaries. Place-based foundations are interested in partners who are trying something new and different to better the community. The team showed that they could deliver on this new approach to stakeholder engagement, which led to additional partnership on the most innovative approaches.

Meet the moment. Year two of the grant overlapped with the nation's racial justice reckoning. The team was willing and eager to make space, modifications, and rethink approaches when it came to work during that time. That flexibility built trust with partners affirming that the sustainability office was the best place invest to make real change.

Additional Information and Resources

Read more about the new Our County Sustainability Plan [here](#).