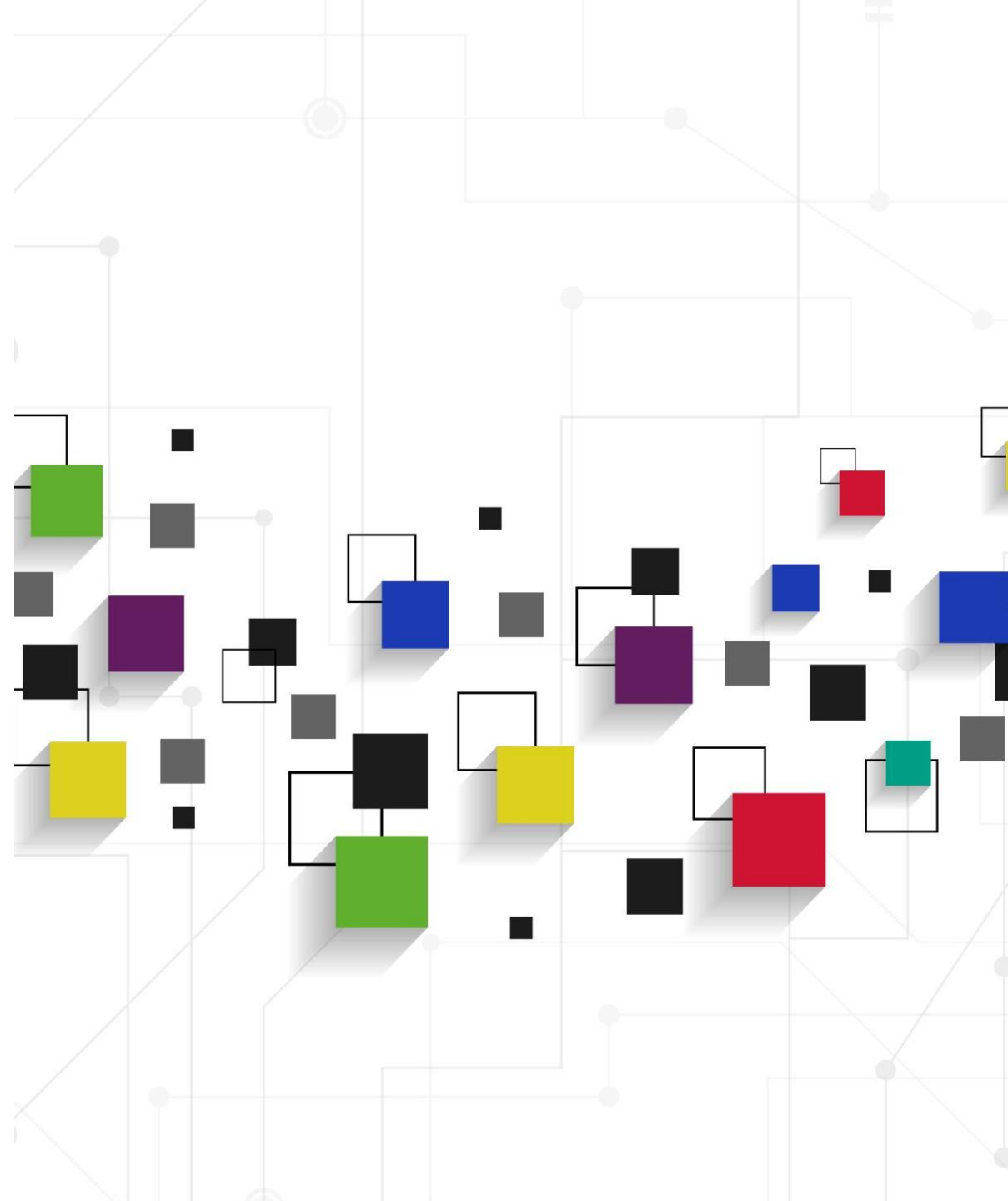

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS

Local Food Policy Councils Funded
Through SNAP-Ed FY2023



Environmental Support: Having a supportive internal and external climate for your program

	To little or no extent					To a very great extent		Not able to answer
1. Champions exist who strongly support the program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program has strong champions with the ability to garner resources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program has leadership support from within the larger organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program has leadership support from outside of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program has strong public support.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

AVERAGE SCORE: 5.5/7

- Challenges
 - Getting partners to take ownership of FPC activities
 - Getting people to wrap their minds around the scope and purpose of the FPC or around policy, in general
 - Getting elected officials involved
 - Getting residents involved
 - Limited time of members and organizers

“All of the external partners that are part of the coalition are definitely happy that it exists and they show up to meetings, but it's hard to get the shared leadership and to get people to feel ownership and do the work between the meetings. And I feel like I like things to happen. I want to make things happen, so I often just end up taking things on, even though it would probably be better for the coalition if I reached out to someone else to do it and they might take a lot longer to get it done. So that's definitely a goal for this year.”

- Strengths

- Existing coalition to bring into the food work
- Established organization with trust built in the community
- Community level support
- Multi-sector representation
- Mix of grassroots and agency involvement
- Partner support having a council, show up to meetings, are active, and some people are reaching out wanted to take on a leadership role
- Strong champions

“In terms of leadership, I think leadership is really, the people who want to be leaders have said they want to be leaders. I didn't have to say, for example, [location name], [person's name] reached out to me and said, ‘Hey, I want to get involved. This is a project I really want to do.’ I have a farmer that called me yesterday and said, ‘Hey, what do I need to do? Do I need to bring anything?’ I said, ‘Bring some other farmers with you to the next meeting.’ When you have people, leaders who say they want to be a part of something versus you saying, ‘I want you to do it,’ now, I've done that with a couple of them but they didn't say no. So making sure leadership has a high level of commitment, I believe. At least so far they do. Let's see, what's next.”

Funding Stability: Establishing a consistent financial base for your program

	To little or no extent					To a very great extent		Not able to answer
1. The program exists in a supportive state economic climate.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program implements policies to help ensure sustained funding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program is funded through a variety of sources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program has a combination of stable and flexible funding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program has sustained funding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

AVERAGE SCORE: 2.74/7

- Challenges
 - Finding funding for staffing, stipends, subscriptions, website, and to pay other bills
 - Not sure where to identify a revenue stream
 - Budget isn't developed yet
 - Haven't started looking at funding sustainability or currently no sustainable funding streams
 - Too reliant on grant funding
 - Getting funders to understand and prioritize FPC work

“If there's grant funding and we apply for it and we get it, because even if you write the grant, there's still no guarantee you get it. But assuming we get it, then we can jump from two to six, but if not, then it is an issue. So it is a challenge, but it's a challenge, I guess, that all nonprofits are experiencing and that's just the entire environment. I think though to that same point be because of the challenges in the food arena, I think funders as well as even just donors are understanding the need to shift from some of the things that we thought were so important into the food arena because they're starting to realize that, ‘Hey, this is becoming a really tough issue.’”

- Opportunities

- Creating a sustainability committee
- Making it a collective effort
- Could ask county government
- Interest from healthcare sector
- Developing a budget and messaging
- USC sharing about funding opportunities
- Know where other FPCs are getting funding
- Grant writer position was larger organization
- Past grant writing experience
- Do a better job education state elected officials

- Sources – Current or Potential

- Colleges and universities
 - County
 - State legislature
 - Financial contributions from partners
 - Grants
 - In-kind
 - Molina Healthcare
 - United Way
 - Fundraisers
-

Partnerships: Cultivating connections between your program and its stakeholders

	To little or no extent					To a very great extent		Not able to answer
1. Diverse community organizations are invested in the success of the program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program communicates with community leaders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. Community leaders are involved with the program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. Community members are passionately committed to the program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The community is engaged in the development of program goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

AVERAGE SCORE: 5.37/7

- Challenges
 - Turnover in partnership organization positions
 - Time taken on CFA slowed down partnership engagement
 - Finding organizations that can contribute
 - Getting partners to do things
 - Limited time
 - Hard to engage people around policy
 - Not always the right people at the table
 - Not as diverse as desired

“I'll say this, as we're working with engagement and we really are in a space where we need to tailor that message for everybody, all the different types of community members and I think that it's hard. It's hard in a space, like how do you engage people around policy? People are starting to steer policy here. There's a lot of unnecessary stuff going on here in [name of place], but I think we can come at it in an easier way, an easier gateway into policy may be how we engage, especially the community in this space. I've just been really reflecting on how do we do better.”

- Strengths

- Community members core to the work
- Consortium selected food insecurity as the issues to prioritize
- People reaching out to partner
- Diverse involvement

- Strategies for Identifying Partners

- Already established coalition to engage
- Food Summit
- Food distributions
- Convening people are immediate needs
- Having a good story to tell
- Having specific asks
- Being a part of other groups
- Speaking engagements
- Committee structure
- Wants to have a resident ambassador
- Planning to use strategic plan to recruit
- Planning to use community garden

“I mean, we obviously have worked really hard to engage community members around this work and to find out what issues they feel like we should prioritize or what solutions they're most excited, passionate about. That's been at the core of a lot of what we do. We would definitely say that the community has been engaged in the development of the food policy council goals and that we do have the community members that are really committed to the food council. The level of engagement with those folks really varies.”

Organizational Capacity: Having the internal support and resources needed to effectively manage your program and its activities

	To little or no extent							To a very great extent	Not able to answer
1. The program is well integrated into the operations of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA	
2. Organizational systems are in place to support the various program needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA	
3. Leadership effectively articulates the vision of the program to external partners.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA	
4. Leadership efficiently manages staff and other resources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA	
5. The program has adequate staff to complete the program's goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA	

AVERAGE SCORE: 4.89/7

- Challenges

- More staff needed
- Group still too reliant on organizer
- Having time and support to get organizational systems set-up
- Communications

- Strengths

- Always the organizations plan to start a FPC
- Sees FPC as the organization's commitment to the community
- Good supports from larger network
- Other organizational staff can lend support
- Volunteer staff in addition to paid staff
- PSE work integrated into organization
- Regular meetings established; places to hold meetings
- Communications accounts already in place

“But just staff, we don't have what we need and maybe two or three more. One full-time person, full FPC, but at least another part-time person where you could have separately engaged in different work, and I'm saying another part-time because I do a lot of work around it, but having somebody else that can, their only focus is food policy council.”

Program Evaluation: Assessing your program to inform planning and document results

	To little or no extent					To a very great extent		Not able to answer
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
1. The program has the capacity for quality program evaluation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program reports short term and intermediate outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. Evaluation results inform program planning and implementation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. Program evaluation results are used to demonstrate successes to funders and other key stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program provides strong evidence to the public that the program works.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

AVERAGE SCORE: 4.2/7

- Challenges

- Lack of internal capacity
- Making more of a case to the general public
- Measuring impact
- Need a more diverse, representative sample of people completing surveys
- Not formal or scientifically conducted
- Not to the point to have things to evaluate yet
- Difficult to identify what policies are already in place
- Sharing results back out
- Knowing what other FPCs are doing

- Current Methods Used/Planned

- Partnering with another entity
- Using internal organization experience
- Storytelling
- Surveys (wants to do a follow-up more in-depth one)
- Community impact report
- Anecdotal
- Outputs being captured
- Looking at existing data

“And then I think that whole team, I think you've got some core people on our coalition that sort of understands that this is all data driven. We look at the data and, we decide where do we go, what do we need to do? What do we need to evaluate? So I think that as far as we are concerned, we understand, we get it and we understand the evaluation and assessment is vitally important.”

Program Adaptation: Taking actions that adapt your program to ensure its ongoing effectiveness

	To little or no extent					To a very great extent		Not able to answer
1. The program periodically reviews the evidence base.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program adapts strategies as needed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program adapts to new science.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program proactively adapts to changes in the environment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program makes decisions about which components are ineffective and should not continue.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

AVERAGE SCORE: 4.13/7

- Challenges

- Changes make it difficult to people to keep up with what the FPC is doing
- Partners set in their ways of doing things
- Food desert framing
- Lack of time and staffing to be strategic
- Haven't been around long enough to need to adapt yet

- Examples

- Being responsive to the community
- Attending meetings and listening
- Looking at data and trends
- Communications strategies
- Creating community ambassador program
- COVID
- Aligning in the future with what the state and other LFPCs are doing

“Then also just the whole concept of food deserts. People don't want to let that go. I mean, I know that food deserts are a thing, and there are food deserts in [county name], but that is not the big issue that we should be concerned about. That is an issue, but that is not the only issue. And even more concerning is the fact that some communities have these big fancy grocery stores in their backyard, and they cannot shop there because they cannot afford it, because the food is too expensive, their housing costs are too expensive. And so why are we talking about food deserts when we need to be talking about even bigger issues?”

Communications: Strategic communication with stakeholders and the public about your program

	To little or no extent					To a very great extent		Not able to answer
1. The program has communication strategies to secure and maintain public support.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. Program staff communicate the need for the program to the public.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program is marketed in a way that generates interest.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program increases community awareness of the issue.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program demonstrates its value to the public.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

AVERAGE SCORE: 4.7/7

- Challenges

- Branding needed to ensure consistent, clear messaging
- Broad and tailored communications strategy needed
- Getting FPC members to be the spokespeople
- Limited time and resources
- Training needed to help members know their role in policy
- Too soon to be marketing value to the community

- Internal Capacities

- Communications staff person
- Contract with branding company
- Hispanic staff hired
- Identified a communications chair

“Actually, the meeting I was just in before, I just got us another council member who's going to be on our media communications. She's going to be the chair. We just asked in the last meeting or just pointed out that we really need to know from the council members what might be needed for them to feel more comfortable to go out and engage more people in the community about this. I think that they're running into the same issue of, "How do we explain this in a way that doesn't feel like too big and overwhelming?" It does feel tangible and a real actionable thing, but that kind of meets people where they're at in their different role that they might have in the food system.”

- Strategies Used/Planning to Use

- Brochure
- Church bulletin
- Community ambassadors
- Community food gatherings
- Convening people to respond to immediate issues
- Data walks
- Door to door
- Email
- Flea market
- In-house studio to do interviews

- Radio
 - Media
 - Newspaper
 - Newsletter
 - Targeted outreach
 - Texting
 - Through churches
 - Storytelling
 - Making sure everything is in Spanish
 - Will be part of strategic plan
-

Strategic Planning: Using processes that guide your program's direction, goals, and strategies

	To little or no extent					To a very great extent		Not able to answer
1. The program plans for future resource needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program has a long-term financial plan.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program has a sustainability plan.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program's goals are understood by all stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program clearly outlines roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

AVERAGE SCORE: 3.7/7

• Challenges

- Concerned about not having enough people involved
- Getting FPC members and not staff to do these things; ensuring shared leadership
- Deadline/short-term driven, hard to fit it in
- Still developing the FPC
- Not sure if the strategic plan should be integrated with another effort or standalone
- Don't know what a financial or strategic plan looks like
- Difficult to do in a grant-driven environment

• Opportunities

- County overall is in a planning phase
- Loose plan developed that needs tightening up
- Integrated strategic plan into CFA
- Plans in place to start working on it
- Working to ensure FPC would exist with or without staffing
- Members starting to look for resources
- The future is bright

“The future is bright. And starting everything, even if it's a garden from seed. We're not just growing gardens, we're growing a community. And I feel as, if once this garden season starts really kicking off and taking off, those food champions will rise to the occasion and they will help reinvigorate some of the food policy work we're already trying to do. It brings in some new fresh members, new ideas. And the future is bright and I can't wait to really get started. This is really going to be the first step in a long journey. And hopefully we can continue going at it together.”

OTHER COMMENTS

- Connecting with other LFPCs helpful
 - Want to be a part of national networks
 - Need to tell our stories at the state-level
 - Policy guidance needed
 - Continued one-on-one check ins with USC needed
 - Submitting templates quarterly
 - Doing the sustainability assessment again in 6 months
-