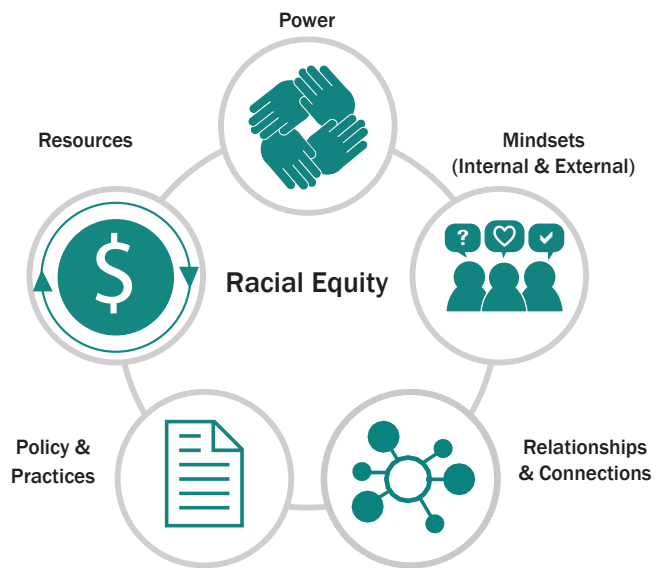# SPARCC

OVERVIEW:

Strong, Prosperous, and Resilient Communities Challenge – or SPARCC – is investing in and amplifying local efforts in six regions to ensure major new investments in the places we live, work, and play lead to equitable and healthy opportunities for all. Since 2017, SPARCC has been addressing the barriers facing communities of color, especially low-income, by advancing a community-driven development model that prioritizes racial equity, health, and climate resilience.

In 2020, SPARCC began its second three-year phase, just prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. This report highlights key findings and reflections from 2020-2021.

PUBLICATION DATE: FEBRUARY 28, 2022

SYSTEMS CHANGE FRAMEWORK: DOMAINS OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Power

Mindsets (Internal & External)

Resources

Racial Equity

Relationships & Connections

Policy & Practices

ULTIMATE GOAL:

- Reduced barriers facing communities of color, especially low-income
- Community-driven development model advanced in six sites and nationally
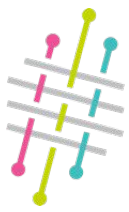
SPARCC

SYSTEMS CHANGE

CHICAGO

Systems change takes decades and collective, ongoing work to sustain. Even so, in just 4 1/2 years SPARCC contributed to progress in all domains of the community development system, signaling SPARCC's theory of change is working.

The SPARCC evaluation used a logic model approach (see Appendix A) and systems framework to understand SPARCC's outcomes and contribution to advancing a community-driven development model that promotes healthier, more climate-smart, and opportunity-rich places for all people.

BECAUSE OF SPARCC:

There are signals SPARCC's design is working to achieve capacity outcomes (e.g., cross-site collaboration and learning) and systems outcomes (e.g., improved capital and policy that support development that prioritizes racial equity, health, and climate resilience).

A major driver of success is the work of dismantling structural racism the SPARCC national team has prioritized putting into practice over the last several years, combined with collaboration across sites and national intermediaries. This includes elevating leadership of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), embedding restorative, healing practices into activities, co-designing, and power sharing processes with sites. It is long-term work to manifest the vision where all people across SPARCC sites are healthy, empowered, and live in resilient, opportunity-rich places, and will require ongoing investment to scale.

There is expanded capacity to organize community, lift existing expertise, and intentionally catalyze BIPOC in shaping investments in communities.

SPARCC supports collaborative infrastructure that offers affected residents opportunities to step into power to influence development policies and practices. This power shifting is advancing community-controlled versus corporate-controlled development in the SPARCC regions and nationally.

This expanded community organizing capacity has prompted SPARCC's national intermediaries to begin to change organizational policies, practices, and capital products to center BIPOC voice and leadership and better share power for social good.

SPARCC has contributed to this change through consistently integrating racial equity, and climate justice, linking residents and organizers with national capital and policy institutions, and stimulating the intermediaries to rethink how they typically operate (e.g., CDFIs reconsidering definitions of risk, developing more flexible products, and lifting community voice versus speaking for community).

> *"The idea was to make sure people understood that ETOD (Equitable Transit-Oriented Development) is not just this thing happening over here in planning and development, it's actually a tool that can help us recover from all of these crises [like COVID] and come out stronger and better. The centrality of essential workers, for instance, is at the core of all the housing projects that we support."*
>
> **(Chicago table member)**

6 sites were poised to act to the global pandemic and Black Lives Matter (BLM) movements because a foundation was laid

6 sites advanced existing work and added new work in 2020-21

6 sites engaged in responsive, direct services as a result of contextual circumstances in 2020-21

4 sites had shifted to equitable recovery at the time of this report

1 2020 showcased what SPARCC was built for as SPARCC brought its history of adaptation, established relationships, and systems to address barriers facing communities of color, especially low-income, by advancing a community-driven development model.

SPARCC's **collective work in the first three years** laid the foundation for systems change that allowed organized, collaborative entities to advance existing priorities, and effectively respond to the challenges of 2020.

- SPARCC's **flexibility in funding and history of adaptation** contributed to its ability to effectively respond. SPARCC demonstrated the power of funding flexibility: it expanded ways funds could be used (e.g., for emergent local needs and opportunities) and sped up how fast intermediaries and funders can change gears. Flexibility in funding also made clear that power and trust exist between sites and partners. In addition, the national team increased transparency and collective decision making.

- Sites were poised to act when COVID-19 hit **because of relationships and trust built** with grassroots partners, the **leadership pipelines** they supported, the policy platforms they established that interconnect racial equity, health, and climate justice, and their positions as **information hubs** and safe spaces to talk about the pandemic's impact on Black and brown people.

- Although in the spring of 2020 some work had been delayed or cancelled due to COVID-19, by fall all sites offered examples of work **moving forward invigorated by the Black Lives Matter movement, COVID-19 inequities, and the racial reckoning** that continues.

- All sites engaged in **direct-service actions responding to COVID-19** (e.g., housing, basic needs, transportation) well into 2021, and were prepared to do so through grassroots table membership and previous organizing. However, by mid-2021 four sites more explicitly began shifting strategically towards COVID recovery.

- Sites stated COVID-19 response work is largely the same as their existing SPARCC work because both address racial inequities, just amplified and given more urgency. This underscores the **importance of general operating funds**, so tables are equipped to respond when the need arises.

2 In its fourth year SPARCC became a majority BIPOC-led initiative; expanded community voice, power, and dignity for often marginalized and disinvested places and individuals; and contributed to narratives on racial justice.

OAKLAND

- After some transitions, site leaders are majority people of color from organizations focused on BIPOC majority communities. All sites advanced community leadership and power shifting by changing who's at the table, how they collaborate, and how governance is structured for sustainable collaborative decision making.

- SPARCC elevated the relationships between racial, health, and climate justice in many forums.[1] All sites provided examples of shifts local partners have made, such as directing funding to BIPOC-led organizations and bringing a racial equity perspective to local planning or policy processes. The national team's articles, research papers, and tools on these topics, across multiple channels supported sites and others to build political will to shift local policy and investment decisions. Representatives from all three national organizations observed (1) internal changes in discussions, such as how their organization can more deeply add value to communities or increase capital products that are flexible to meet community needs, and (2) more attention being given to community-level leadership and voice.

- All sites offered clear examples of getting new voices in decision-making spaces, which influenced planning and policy processes and priorities, and pushed a broad range of decision makers to shift the direction of policies and practices to be more explicitly equitable. For example, five sites dedicated staff to focus full time on community engagement and supporting ongoing feedback loops between residents and decision makers, often placing people with lived experiences in specific geographies in positions of influence. The sixth site invested early on in existing community-based organizations acting as bridges with neighborhood residents.

Mindsets
(Internal & External)

Power

- All sites shared other examples of actions to promote BIPOC community leadership beyond their tables. A key strategy was supporting or investing in community organizing and ensuring residents were defining the table's priorities and influencing the flow of resources. This included formal leadership development programs in Atlanta and Denver. Chicago launched an Equitable Development Ambassadors Initiative that targets residents from Chicago neighborhoods affected or bypassed by TOD to explore how to influence neighborhood development with community-driven action. How funding flows continued to be an integral illustration of where power lies. While several sites were successful in directing financial resources to BIPOC residents or small businesses, there was acknowledgement that funding is needed to support BIPOC communities in further building power, which would have a longer impact.

"How do we collectively tell the story and have conversations about language and how we name things. Sometimes we put the burden of the challenges on those who are experiencing the burden versus shifting the conversation to those who are impeding progress for residents. How do we shift to talk about decision makers and policy makers and what they are doing/ not doing that's making things harder for people?"

Atlanta table member

[1] Climate Change and Displacement in the U.S. – A Review of the Literature, Climate Change and Displacement in U.S. Communities, When Corona Met Climate Change, and Transitioning to a Just and Equitable Green Economy Panel.

3 While COVID-19 restrictions kept us all in place in 2020, overall effectiveness of collaboration within site tables increased, and the partnership between and across SPARCC national and sites continued to yield benefits.

- A primary data source for understanding effective collaboration was an annual survey of table members. Tables' **efforts to strengthen collaboration** paid off and engagement among local table members remained high despite myriad competing priorities.

- Half of the sites implemented **efforts to build trust** either within the table itself or with community partners and/or residents. For example, to overcome historical dynamics where racial/ethnic groups have been pitted against each other for political power and resources, SPARCC's Memphis table used a restorative organizing approach (art, poetry, music, and storytelling) to lift collective community voice and reclaim their narrative through its **One Minute Memphis Stories**.

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, **four policy workgroups established by SPARCC sites and the national team** provided a space for SPARCC table members and partners to share best practices and explore policy possibilities while also serving as a space for emotional support, self-reflection, and healing.

- **Table effectiveness** survey score averages in six domains increased from Y1 to Y4 (see Figure 1) meaning the average participant's ratings moved from "adequate" to "good."[2]

FIGURE 1: Average ratings for each domain of collaboration, by site (2017-2020)

Note: Please click **here** to enlarge Figure 1
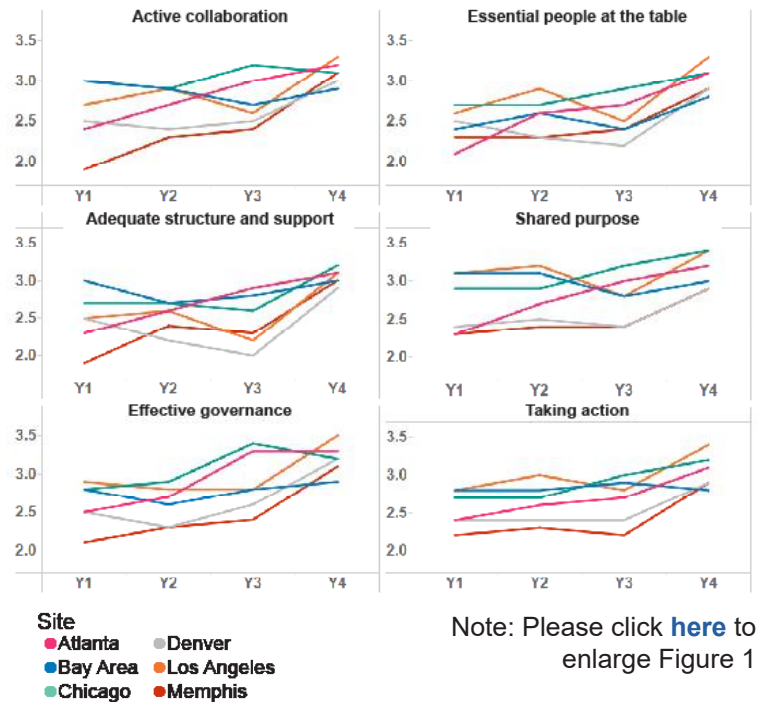
four years in:
42%
of table member respondents rated themselves as *"highly engaged"* in the table's work, and another
24%
rated themselves as *"engaged"*

Relationships & Connections

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[2] Survey items were rated on a scale of 1 through 4 (1=needs improvement, 2=adequate, 3=good, 4=outstanding). Averages are weighted, with each of the six tables given equal weight to account for variation in number of respondents and response rates.

4 2020 and 2021 were active years for SPARCC policy and practice change at both an initiative level, and across sites, including organizational changes within SPARCC national organizations.

- **SPARCC policy platform:** Through structured collaboration across sites and the national team, SPARCC created "Our Power: Pathways to Community Prosperity," a framework for sites and national partners to pursue desired policy change from the ground up, building on ongoing coordination with Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Transportation (DOT), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

- **Federal policy work:** This was fueled by hope of a new administration more aligned with SPARCC priorities. Since December 2020, SPARCC staff and sites met and shared recommendations with seven federal departments and followed up with memos providing supplemental information. The SPARCC national team and site partners also submitted responses to Requests for Information on racial equity to three federal departments, and gave expert testimony by sharing recommendations that originated from SPARCC to the Senate Banking Committee and the House committee on Financial Services (subcommittee on Housing, Community Development, and Insurance).

- **Organizational practice change:** Organizational representatives report direct SPARCC contributions have influenced internal practice change within all three national partners – **Enterprise Community Partners**, Low Income Investment Fund (**LIIF**), and Natural Resources Defense Council (**NRDC**). SPARCC influenced the organizations' approaches to racial equity. For example, LIIF's strategic plan focuses on racial equity both internally and externally by mobilizing capital to build communities of opportunity, equity, and well-being. Enterprise's strategic plan names racial equity as one of its three priority areas and the goals are more people focused than real-estate unit focused. NRDC requires existing and new projects conduct an internal evaluation process using an equity tool. SPARCC's influence also strengthened internal practices regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion, and fostered changes in internal culture like promoting a learning culture. SPARCC also continued to influence other programs or initiatives. For example, LIIF and Enterprise have started new work that aligns with SPARCC, such as focusing on climate resilience and supporting developers of color.
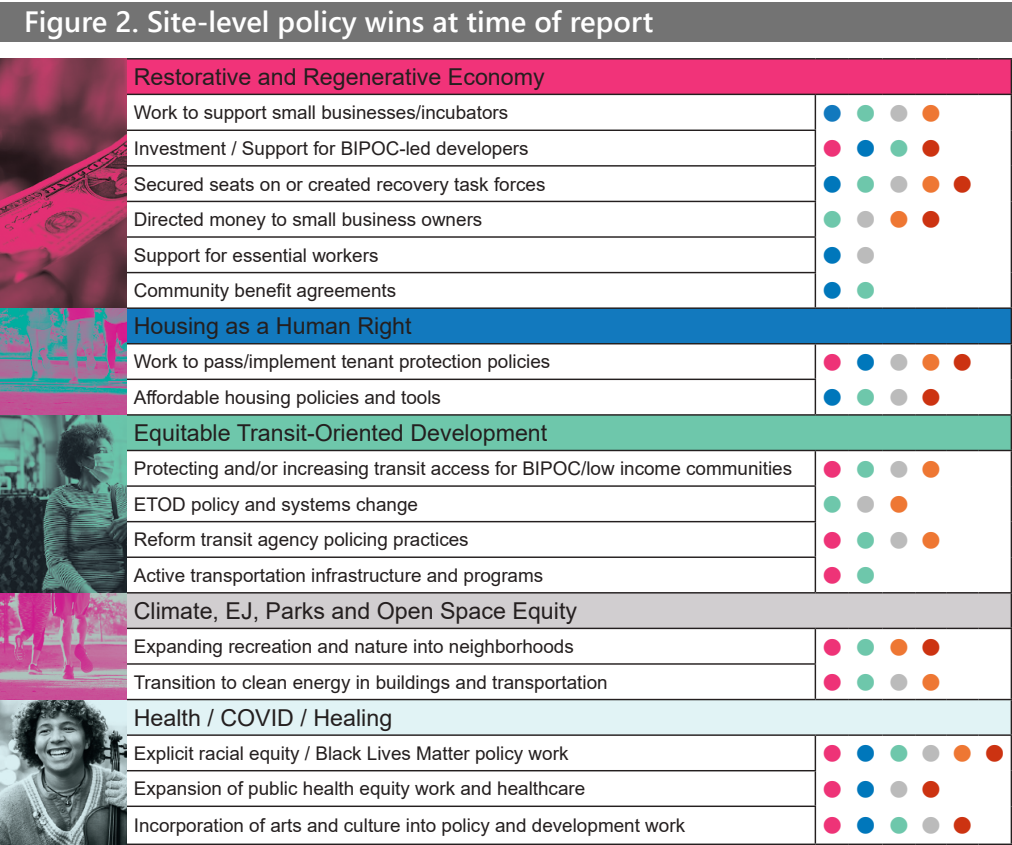
How racial equity, health, and climate resilience show up in SPARCC policy and capital efforts: SPARCC policy efforts and real estate projects proposed by site table partners are opportunities that apply the values of racial equity, health, and climate resilience. Starting with racial equity, SPARCC national and local partners look for evidence of community voice and benefit, and BIPOC leadership and ownership, as threshold issues for working together. They use the SPARCC capital screen to understand projects relative to others SPARCC has funded. They consistently look for opportunities to support community efforts to strengthen each policy or project's health, climate, and equity attributes. Over the years, SPARCC national has used trainings, toolkits, issue champions, and direct TA to shape or influence policies and capital projects. A successful approach has been the SPARCC team deeply engaging with site partners to identify project-specific, community-driven, low-cost, high benefit opportunities. SPARCC then funds the identified changes using capital grants, in addition to the project's baseline financial needs.

CHICAGO

OAKLAND

- **Local policy:** Across SPARCC sites, areas of policy success in at least five sites were: tenant protections, explicit racial equity policy work, incorporation of arts and culture into policy and development work, and gaining or creating seats on recovery task forces (see Figure 2).

- All sites cultivated their **regional policy environments** to increase the likelihood future formal policies align with SPARCC values. They did this through relationship building, increasing awareness, and influencing practice change within government agencies or entities that reach across a county or region (e.g., transit agencies, planning commissions) or establishing regional collaborative infrastructure (e.g., the Healthy L.A. coalition). This work helped advance long-advocated-for policy solutions.

Example 1:
In Atlanta, a site table member spotlighted a local arts foundation for their historic redlining of Black-led arts organizations, which resulted in the arts foundation changing their funding practices to be more inclusive.

Example 2:
The Bay Area partners successfully advocated for a $150 million community benefit plan focused on anti-displacement, housing, education, small business support, and a Community Opportunity to Purchase Act, around a new Google campus in San Jose.

Figure 2. Site-level policy wins at time of report

	Atlanta	Bay Area	Chicago	Denver	Los Angeles	Memphis
Restorative and Regenerative Economy						
Work to support small businesses/incubators		●	●	●	●	
Investment / Support for BIPOC-led developers	●	●	●		●	
Secured seats on or created recovery task forces		●	●	●	●	●
Directed money to small business owners			●	●	●	●
Support for essential workers		●		●		
Community benefit agreements		●	●			
Housing as a Human Right						
Work to pass/implement tenant protection policies	●	●		●	●	●
Affordable housing policies and tools		●	●	●		●
Equitable Transit-Oriented Development						
Protecting and/or increasing transit access for BIPOC/low income communities	●		●	●	●	
ETOD policy and systems change			●	●	●	
Reform transit agency policing practices	●		●	●	●	
Active transportation infrastructure and programs	●		●			
Climate, EJ, Parks and Open Space Equity						
Expanding recreation and nature into neighborhoods	●		●		●	●
Transition to clean energy in buildings and transportation	●		●	●	●	
Health / COVID / Healing						
Explicit racial equity / Black Lives Matter policy work	●	●	●	●	●	●
Expansion of public health equity work and healthcare	●	●		●		●
Incorporation of arts and culture into policy and development work	●	●	●	●		●

Site
- Atlanta
- Bay Area
- Chicago
- Denver
- Los Angeles
- Memphis

Note: Please click **here** to enlarge Figure 2

Policy & Practices

5 SPARCC continued to direct funding to community-driven projects that aim to benefit Black and brown residents and influence the broader field of community development by building on existing relationships and lessons learned.

- **Community-driven capital development projects** moved forward in five sites. SPARCC capital resources, including a mix of grants and debt products, plus SPARCC technical assistance brought projects to a crucial milestone or provided capital that would not otherwise be secured or secured in the timeframe needed. SPARCC capital grants totaling $3.8 million supported residential community ownership, community-based organization ownership, and other project types (see Figure 3). Of this, $1.4 million in SPARCC capital grants, combined with $6 million in SPARCC loans, was leveraged into an additional $19.2 million from other sources (secured or pending) for SPARCC-aligned development projects.

"Rather than asking 'how Black developers should change to access capital,' LIIF and National Affordable Housing Trust are asking how we should change. Therefore, the Black Developer Capital Initiative line of credit product focuses on [developers'] experience rather than wealth as the main underwriting criteria for qualification," said Eliisa Frazier, director of racial equity and impact lending at LIIF.

Both SPARCC CDFIs continued to evolve their own capital-related practices to ensure investments advance racial equity. For example, LIIF in partnership with the National Affordable Housing Trust, launched a $70 million initiative to support the growth of Black-led for-profit and nonprofit affordable housing developers. This initiative is an opportunity to rethink how CDFIs assess and perceive "risk" and how to partner with systemically oppressed communities.

Example:
In Denver, the site table partnered with a local development association to advance a community-driven project in West Denver: conversion of an old bottling plant into a business incubator.

Figure 3. Total Capital Grant $ by Site and Project Type 2017-2021
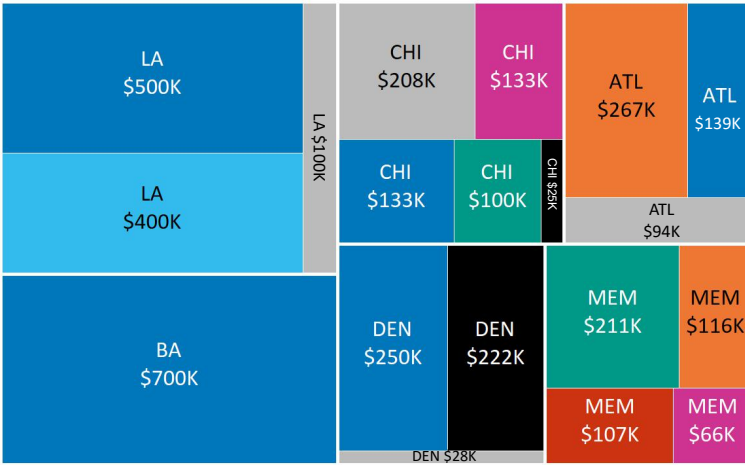
Project Type	
■ Arts & Culture	■ Healthy Places
■ Commercial & Small Business Ownership	■ Housing
■ Commercial Community Ownership	■ Parks & Open Space
■ Community Based Organization Ownership	■ Residential Community Ownership

Note: Please click **here** to enlarge Figure 3

- All SPARCC sites and the national team promoted and expanded **knowledge, capacity, and infrastructure** to support community ownership models. All sites were actively working on community ownership models or evaluating the feasibility of them, and all sites made progress with **community land trusts (CLT) and/or community investment trusts:**

> Los Angeles partners are building a regional network that is organizing policies and resources to support community ownership. In conjunction with a policy win that supports investment in CLTs as a strategy for a sustainable housing system, SPARCC partnered with five CLTs and provided $500,000 of partially recoverable funding to launch the initial CLT projects. That $500,000 from SPARCC also helped them access $14 million in federal CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) funding to acquire four properties.
>
> The Chicago site table and the local Enterprise Community partners office seeded funding for the Here to Stay Land Trust.
>
> The Memphis table funded a "Just Growth" champion to expand the Binghampton CLT work to other neighborhoods, which includes an audit of geographic focus areas in North Memphis to look for acquisition opportunities.
>
> The Bay Area table and Northern CA CLT used $200,000 of SPARCC funding to acquire the Hilton Street Apartments, two 8-unit buildings in East Oakland previously owned by a speculator landlord (i.e., one driven by maximizing profitability vs. community investment or additional social benefits).

- The SPARCC national team invested in field building efforts: They partnered with Community Science to research and articulate models of community ownership, culminating in a literature review/**resource guide and report**, and a member of the national team published lessons learned from SPARCC in **Shelterforce**.

ATLANTA

Racial Equity   **Health**   **Climate**

Based on a synthesis of evaluation data to date, including information previously reported in 2020 and 2021, the evaluation team's experience with other initiatives, and interpretation with SPARCC national partners, we share four reflections.

Initiatives that focus on racial equity and health should invest in people and relationships, especially BIPOC, early and in an ongoing way.

The regional leaders and organizations who invested in their collaborative infrastructure and planning during the early years of the initiative demonstrated significant and sustained growth of their partnerships and ability to advance the work. This was supported by SPARCC's early and ongoing investment in fostering a community of practice that valued building trust, healing-centered leadership, and leaning in together in good partnership.

National team changes related to power dynamics and flexibility with resources over time have been key to SPARCC's success because these changes allowed a deeper level of partnership and learning across sites and national intermediaries.

SPARCC was designed to be adaptive and respond to what the sites and community leaders brought. Once SPARCC's sites were selected and engaged, SPARCC developed more precisely what it would do and how it would operate. Over time the national team shifted to work more in partnership with the sites instead of strictly as an intermediary, created space for site and BIPOC leadership, and created flexible funding and support in multiple ways. The frame changed from "How does the national team get sites ready to propose SPARCC-friendly projects?" to "How can SPARCC fund and leverage resources to realize the types of projects you want and need?"

For capital projects to contribute to racial equity, health, and climate resilience the project scope needs to integrate explicit goals from the beginning and be community driven, and the community development field needs to redefine measures of success in capital deployment.

When capital projects are community-driven it can fuel local economic development with more residents investing locally, support development without displacement, result in enhancements that often are not included because they're costly in the short-term but yield long-term gains (e.g., energy efficiency upgrades), and promote non-extractive community wealth building. To measure success the community development field should look beyond only the number of financial deals closing for their capital projects, to differences in practice and process that signal different kinds of deals are being made. For example, in SPARCC, this looks like tracking (1) the level and type of tailored technical assistance (TA) provided to help match community-driven projects to resources, (2) lessons and successes shared from the type of TA provided to inform future projects, (3) barriers to funding or development removed, (4) the number of projects being driven by Black-led organizations, and (5) the number of capital projects that can make SPARCC financing work.

When an initiative has a bold vision to change the status quo, where nobody else to our knowledge has figured out how to change it, concrete examples can help complex visions gain traction with partners. However, concrete examples can take years to bring to fruition, and sometimes even require a change in federal administration to materialize.

SPARCC's concept to apply the values of racial equity, climate resilience, and health in strategies and outcomes has been challenging to pitch to partners in SPARCC's network and even within SPARCC participants early on. It's taken nearly five years for SPARCC's capital project pipeline to grow with proof-of-concept projects where the three concepts are present, such as the Latinos Progresando Community Center project. With the 2021 change in federal administration, and publication of SPARCC's first policy platform, there are also policy cases where the three concepts are present.

MEMPHIS
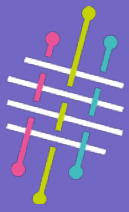
A final report looking back at six years of SPARCC is planned for 2023. The Center for Community Health and Evaluation serves as the evaluation and learning partner to SPARCC with funding and support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

LOS ANGELES

ATLANTA

SPARCC

GOAL: Address the barriers facing communities of color and low-income communities by advancing a community-driven development model that prioritizes racial equity, health, and climate resilience.

Implement SPARCC strategies at a regional scale

▶

Shared outcomes for SPARCC partners and sites

6 LOCAL SITES　　**3 NATIONAL PARTNERS**　　**4 NATIONAL FUNDERS**

- Influence local & national policies using the Policy Platform
- Engage federal leaders on policy implementation
- Invest directly in community-led projects
- Identify the financial strategy for climate resilience in capital pipeline projects
- Influence greater investment in community-led projects, centering POC in capital access
- Advocate for investment in and build knowledge base for community stewardship

Short term outcomes
1-3 years

CAPACITY OUTCOMES
- More equitable & effective tables
- Cross-site collaboration & adaptive learning
- Cross-organizational collaboration by national SPARCC partners
- Improved individual & collective ability to engage in equity actions

Intermediate outcomes
4-9 years

SYSTEMS OUTCOMES
- New capital investment approaches, partnerships, & products; improved capital flow to SPARCC-type development that supports racial equity, health, & climate resilience & creates options for residents & businesses to remain & thrive
- Spread of new models for prioritizing racial equity, health, & climate resilience in investment decisions
- Observable changes in the built environment that reflect equitable access to opportunity

Aspirational long-term outcomes
10+ years

PEOPLE OUTCOMES
All people across SPARCC sites are healthy, empowered, & live in resilient, opportunity-rich places

PLACE OUTCOMES
Healthier, more climate-smart, & opportunity-rich places for all people

RACIAL EQUITY

HEALTH　　**CLIMATE RESILIENCE**

Evaluation and learning
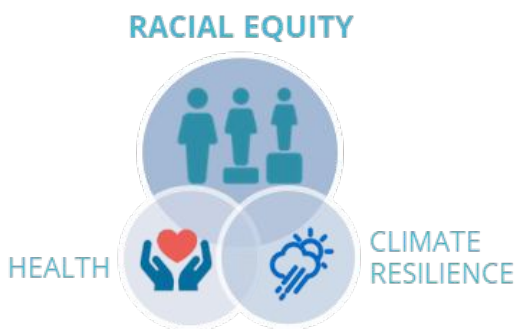
The SPARCC evaluation maps indicators of progress to five conditions of systems change: power, mindsets, relationships and connections, policy and practices, and resources

	Denver: Mile High Connects (MHC)	Chicago: Elevated Chicago (EC)
Key organizations	Community advocates, CDFIs and banks, community-based organizations, advocacy organizations, philanthropy, affordable housing agencies, and business collaboratives.	Chicago Department of Public Health, community foundation, CDFIs, think tanks, affordable housing developers, and community-based organizations.
Geographic focus	West Denver, South Adams, and East Denver	Initially The ½ mile radius around 7 Chicago Transit Authority stations in neighborhoods located in the NW, W, and S sides of Chicago; currently expanded to stations across the city.
Table history* Governance structure	Existing MHC staff, Steering Committee, Operations Committee, Coordinated Action Committee, Data and Evaluation Committee, Champion Circle, Funder Caucus	New EC staff, Steering Committee, Leadership Council, three working groups, and four community tables. Resident engagement through the community tables. Connected to City through a join ETOD working group.
Capital Project Spotlight	• Montbello FreshLo Initiative: SPARCC provided a $45k technical assistance grant to support the predevelopment stage; MHC and SPARCC also provided guidance and support. • The Montbello FreshLo Initiative is community ownership in action. The Montebello Organizing Committee lobbied to purchase land from the Regional Transportation District to bring a grocery store back to the neighborhood and develop community offices, a performing arts center, and affordable housing units. MHC helped to bring 15 local funders to the table and funded a technical assistance grant to advance the project efforts.	• Esperanza Health Centers: SPARCC provided a $100K capital grant and a $500K loan. • The Pink Line California eHub was awarded the fund to expand the capacity of Esperanza Health Centers, a Federally Qualified Health Center and COVID-19 first responder, serving the Southwest Side of Chicago. Esperanza has undergone rapid growth in the last decade to meet the demands of its largely Latino immigrant neighborhoods. With the additional clinical space and capacity, Esperanza will be able to provide 20 percent more patient visits annually and ensure social distancing.
Recent accomplishment highlights	• Influenced policy recommendations through participation in COVID-19 recovery-specific task forces, including Department of Transportation and Infrastructure's COVID-19 Mobility Task Force and Economic Recovery Task Force. • Partnered with community organizers to develop a Community Alert Database to ID residential & business properties at risk of being sold & support action. • Advanced community-driven projects by providing SPARCC capital resources in West Denver, including the conversion of a bottling plant into a business incubator. • Mobilized flexible COVID-19 response subgrants, providing $30k to local nonprofits, resident leaders, and table members organizing food assistance, COVID-19 testing and mental health support, in addition to providing technology supports to small organizing groups.	• The City of Chicago adopted the first ever equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD) policy plan, co-drafted and co-led by EC. A ETOD pilot program is already underway. • Launched the JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) Leadership Cohort, where city leaders explore ways to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion principles into city planning. • Launched the Equitable Development Ambassadors Initiative, where residents learn about Chicago's planning and development process and how to influence neighborhood development principles. • EC and Enterprise Community Partners seeded the Here to Stay Land Trust, a model of community ownership. • Emmett Street Apartments broke ground in 2020, the first true ETOD in the heart of Logan Square eHub. • EC disbursed $500K in capital grants for community-driven projects (community centers, mixed-use, business incubators).

*Table history is categorized as either "Existing"—existing tables that explored how to connect to other sectors or partners, "New"—tables that did not exist before SPARCC, or "Aligned"—multiple tables aligning/coordinating in a networked approach.

	Los Angeles: LA SPARCC Collaborative	Atlanta: TransFormation Alliance (TFA)
Key organizations	The Alliance for Community Transit-LA, Esperanza Community Housing Corporation, Inclusive Action for the City, Long Beach Forward, Social Justice Leadership Institute.	Atlanta Regional Commission, Enterprise Community Partners, Georgia Stand-Up, Partnership for Southern Equity, Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement, West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, Atlanta Bicycle Coalition, and Generator Inc.
Geographic focus	LA County; Cities of LA, Inglewood, and Long Beach	The Lee Street Corridor in city of Atlanta focusing on three MARTA station areas.
Table history* Governance structure	Aligned Network of existing tables. Coordinating committee made up of representatives from 5 key organizations representing 22 member organizations.	Existing Director, executive committee, 7 champions, 35 member organizations. Plans for resident members on the executive committee.
Capital Project Spotlight	• LA County CLT Demonstration Project: SPARCC provided $500,000 to purchase 6 buildings. • Supported a Community Opportunity to Purchase Act: SPARCC provided $500k for a recoverable grant to conduct due diligence. • Little Tokyo Service Center: SPARCC loaned $3,150,000.	• Atlanta Land Trust: SPARCC invested $500k in the Tucker Avenue project. • Reverend James Orange Park Recreation Center: SPARCC invested $40,000 to renovate and update the master plan.
Recent accomplishment highlights	• Supported Healthy LA-a new coalition focused on equitable response to the pandemic. • Supported Cambodiatown Thrives-a new coalition focused on zoning in Long Beach. • Organized community advocacy for shifting LA City Council funding from policing to housing and public transit. • Led a new policy to legalize street vending. • Transportation justice wins with LA Metro for free transit for some populations, prioritizing community safety over policing on transit, restoring service that was cut due to the pandemic, and convening of a new public safety advisory committee. • LA CLT Coalition launched a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act campaign.	• TFA increased flexibility of their subgrants to focus on rapid response to COVID-19, including $60k to local nonprofits, and TFA member organizations organizing food assistance, voter registration, COVID-19 testing and mental health support. • The Transformation Academy completed its third year of training to build new leaders' capacity in ETOD, and the intersections between health, racial equity, climate, transportation, and housing. • The Culture Resilience Environmental Workforce program, a green-infrastructure workforce development project, implemented flood prevention projects and supported participants through training, job placement, and a fellowship. • Spotlighted a local arts foundation for historic redlining of Black-led organizations and changed their funding practices.

*Table history is categorized as either "Existing"—existing tables that explored how to connect to other sectors or partners, "New"—tables that did not exist before SPARCC, or "Aligned"—multiple tables aligning/coordinating in a networked approach.

	Memphis: North Memphis VOICE Coalition (NMVC)	San Francisco Bay Area: Bay Area 4 All (BA4A)
Key organizations	Center for Transforming Communities (CTC) as the backbone organization, Memphis residents, and community-based organizations.	6 Wins for Social Equity Network; Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative; Great Communities Collaborative/The San Francisco Foundation.
Geographic focus	Spans across nine hubs, representing 30 neighborhoods along the Interstate 240 belt loop.	9-county Bay Area region; focused on cities of Oakland, Concord, San Jose, and Vallejo.
Table history* Governance structure	New Neighborhood organizing infrastructure through a consensus-building model. Includes 4 workgroups made up of institutional partners, residential leaders, and youth ambassadors to support **Just CHANGE** workgroup model (**just**ice & safety, **c**limate and environment, **h**ealth, **a**rts & culture, **g**rowth & economics, and **e**ducation).	Aligned Network of existing tables/organizations. Coordinating committee made up of representatives from 3 key organizations above and Working Partnerships USA, Monument Impact, Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition, Urban Habitat, and the Northern CA Land Trust. Preservation and public lands working groups work semi-independently.
Capital Project Spotlight	• Memphis Land Trust: SPARCC $100K investment in the Community Ownership Incubation Lab. • CTC is establishing the Memphis Land Trust and hiring a consultant to replicate the work done by the Binghamton Community Land Trust (BCLT) to other parts of Memphis. The goal is to increase affordable housing opportunities and stabilize households across disinvested and gentrifying neighborhoods.	• Northern CA CLT acquisition: SPARCC contributed $200k to purchase the Hilton Street Apartments, two 8-unit buildings in East Oakland that were previously owned by a speculator landlord. The tenants, most of whom were long-time residents of color, were at severe risk of displacement prior to NCLT's acquisition with SPARCC capital.
Recent accomplishment highlights	• Established new consensus-building voting structure to help further elevate community voices. • Expanded its capacity and recruited 10 "connectors" or organizers for outreach to each of the nine hubs. • Leveraged art, poetry, music, and storytelling to build community: M.E.M.P.H.I.S and "One Minute Memphis Stories." • In the process of acquiring a historic school in Shelby County that is no longer in use, Carnes Elementary School, to launch the first community ownership model in the neighborhood; the community has outbid competing developers for the project, which is a significant milestone. • Launching a series of capacity-building workshops in North Memphis neighborhoods on Community Land Trusts and Community Investment Funds.	• Successful advocacy around new Google campus in San Jose for a $150 million community benefits plan focused on housing, education, and small business support. • Created a new data tool to centralize tenant protections and ownership data for organizers working to preserve properties. • Supported capacity building within the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition to move forward local CLT work. • Passed commercial linkage fee in San Jose, which will increase commercial development will support affordable housing. • Contributed to passage of eviction moratoriums in all 4 geographic focus areas in the Bay Area.

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EVALUATION GOALS

The Center for Community Health and Evaluation (CCHE) leads the evaluation of SPARCC, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The evaluation has two primary goals:

1. Understand and document SPARCC's contributions to systems changes related to community development at the local, regional, and national levels
2. Provide ongoing feedback and lessons learned to SPARCC national team partners and sites on what's working and what can be strengthened

WHAT IS THE SPARCC EVALUATION?

Measuring outcomes. In collaboration with the SPARCC national team, the evaluation team developed an evaluation plan to guide the assessment of SPARCC's progress using a systems change framework and case study methodology. The plan balances the need to understand work on the ground at all six sites individually with cross-site and national investigation to identify progress and lessons from the SPARCC initiative as a whole.

Facilitating learning. Throughout the initiative, the evaluation team shares results and provides opportunities for reflection to promote learning, highlight progress and effective strategies, and identify opportunities for improvement or course corrections.

DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS THAT INFORMED THIS REPORT

The evaluation team collected data from multiple sources. This allowed triangulation of information to understand progress and learning in SPARCC. Data sources that informed this report included:

- Virtual site visits and interviews with key partners at the six sites, one to two times per year
- Annual survey of collaborative table members at each of the six sites
- Annual interviews with members of the SPARCC national team
- Interviews with leadership representatives from Enterprise, LIIF, and NRDC
- Annual grant reports from the sites and national team
- National team publications and reports
- Observations at learning convenings

Data were analyzed at multiple levels: within each site, across six sites, and for the initiative overall by synthesizing data from the national team and sites. CCHE conducted qualitative analysis of data from interviews and open-ended questions in the survey using a code list derived from the SPARCC logic model and learning questions. Coding was supported by Atlas.ti where appropriate. Qualitative analysis of coded data from sites and the SPARCC national team were organized and synthesized into code memos using a systems change framework to facilitate cross-site analysis, identify themes, and draw conclusions across the cohort. Findings were reviewed in structured team meetings to ensure consistent use of codes and resonance of themes, as well as facilitate team understanding; these also served to add rigor and ensure accurate representation and interpretation of what was observed in the data. Additionally, the evaluation team engaged representatives from the SPARCC national team in discussions related to SPARCC's contribution to progress and key lessons learned to inform analysis and interpretation. Quantitative survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Stata, and Tableau software. Final results were shared with national team members and site representatives to ensure accuracy.

LIMITATIONS
The work of SPARCC tables in each site is unique in nature, occurs in complex political and social environments, and encounters unanticipated events both positive and negative. Differences in the table strategies and approaches vary widely. The evaluation is not attempting to identify findings that can be generalized to place-based and cross-sector work, or draw conclusions that value certain types of progress over others. Rather, the evaluation aims to capture lessons unique to SPARCC, identify promising practices, illustrate what is possible, and inform the field overall.

ABOUT THE EVALUATION TEAM
The evaluation team for SPARCC is led by CCHE, in partnership with Beth Altshuler Muñoz.

Center for Community Health and Evaluation
www.cche.org

Based in Seattle, CCHE evaluates health-related programs and initiatives throughout the United States, to improve the health of communities. We partner with foundations and health organizations, and take a collaborative approach to evaluation, sharing data and evaluation findings with our clients when it is most helpful for their decision-making. CCHE brings expertise in community-based evaluation, community health and the drivers of health, and cross-sector partnerships.