

ELMINA B. SEWALL FOUNDATION Healthy People Healthy Places in Lewiston-Auburn

Summary Report of Community Recommendations

OCTOBER 2020

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Background

Healthy People Healthy Places (HPHP) is a program of the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation focused on improving the health and wellbeing of people and the environment in Maine. Over the past couple of years, Sewall has identified several areas in which to focus the work of HPHP. One of those focus areas is the "twin cities" of Lewiston and Auburn (L-A).

Through a Co-Design process that took place in August – September 2020, a representative group of community members from L-A re-imagined the HPHP program by asking:

- What kind of community is L-A?
- What do we need to pay attention to now and over the next five years?
- What is Sewall's role in L-A?
- What are new ways of working that Sewall is exploring as a foundation?
- What should HPHP focus on in L-A to achieve the greatest impact?
- How will the program work?
- What is highest priority?
- What kind of impact are we seeking?
- · How will we know if it's making a difference?
- What recommendations do we have for how HPHP is implemented?

This report is a summary of the Co-Design team's recommendations for the purpose, structure, and implementation of the HPHP program in L-A.

CO-DESIGN TEAM

The HPHP Co-Design team included 11 community members, 2 Sewall staff, and 3 consultants. The team was formed through community guidance regarding racial, ethnic, and age diversity, as well as balanced representation of sectors across the two municipalities.

Team

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Lewiston-Auburn

Voices from the Community:

Lewiston-Auburn is vibrant. It's a colorful place and we're proud of our diversity—of the people and cultures, our young and our old. It's a place of natural beauty and it's a place that feels like home.

We have many known struggles. There is an economic divide that shows up through poor infrastructure and health outcomes. There is discrimination and prejudice. Our community can feel chaotic and divided and we sometimes experience challenges of self-esteem.

But we are resilient. We are motivated. And we are hopeful. We care deeply and will keep asking questions, listening to each other, and staying open-minded. We know what we need to do. And we know that we need to work together to achieve it. We can collaborate despite differences. We can build up our systems to be equitable. We can establish a united sense of community.

We'll do it by raising up our ordinary heroes who work hard to make a difference. We'll build relationships to change hearts and perspectives. We'll collaborate to break down siloes and come together—the grassroots and the grasstops, across sectors, and break down barriers. We'll do it by thinking and acting long-term, for our children and our children's children.

Everyone is invited. We all have a role to play.



We want Sewall to:

- Help stakeholders to work together
- Help stakeholders to see the whole system
- Build capacity for collaboration and leadership
- Influence sector leaders
- Bring an equity lens
- Innovate, and make it easier for others to do the same
- Deploy capital to work towards community priorities

Healthy People Healthy Places L-A

The Healthy People Healthy Places (HPHP) program can play an important role in Lewiston-Auburn. There are many collaboratives, groups, organizations and individuals working hard to enhance the health and wellbeing of people and the environment. HPHP should make a unique contribution by looking at the whole—bringing a systems perspective and an equity lens to the forefront of every conversation. The program should be designed to:

Build Equity

The HPHP program should apply an equity lens to all program areas and shine a light on how power is operating. Through advocacy and training HPHP should increase awareness of structural racism in various systems, including municipal agencies and law enforcement, education and employment, housing and health.

Take a Systems Approach

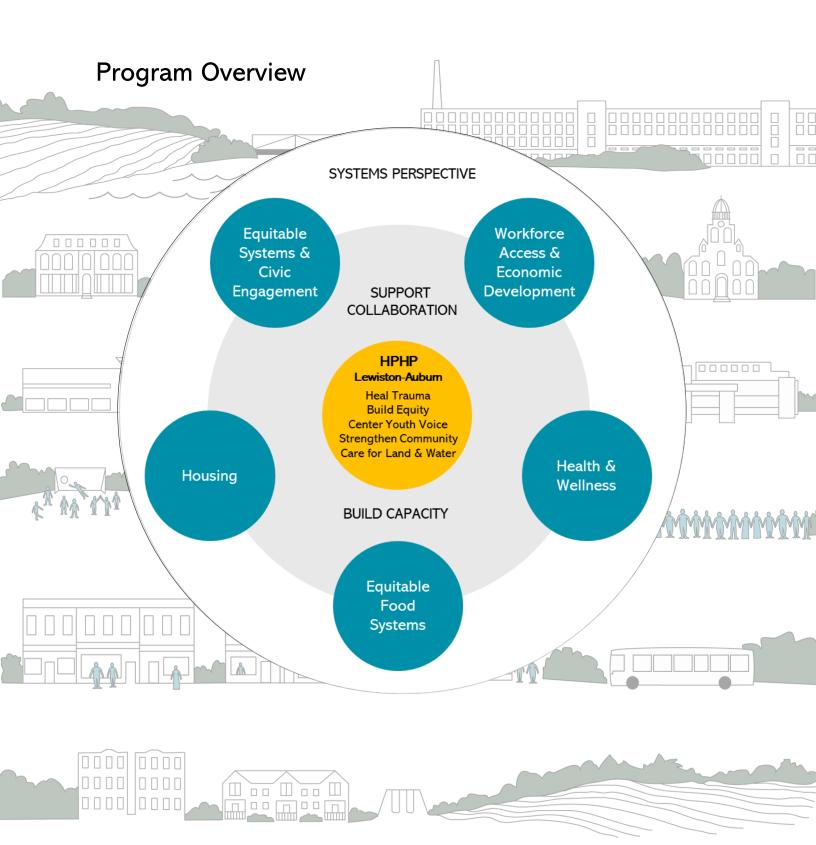
The issues facing Lewiston-Auburn are interconnected. The HPHP program should increase alignment and transparency in order to bring systems together and increase coordination of community-wide efforts. Through systems mapping, alignment and resource sharing, the HPHP program can facilitate more effective strategies and outcomes.

Foster Collaboration

The HPHP program should create environments that are physically, culturally and emotionally safe for collaboration, and help break down siloes and build relationships for a better community. Through bridging, connecting and convening, individuals and groups can work better together instead of competing with each other.

Build Capacity

The HPHP program should help build capacity, strengthen infrastructure and provide investments and program support to address several priority areas of interconnected issues: equitable and sustainable systems, healthy housing, a stronger economy, equitable access to healthy food, and enhanced social and environmental health in L-A.



Supporting Collaboration & Building Capacity

GOALS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS:

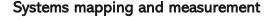
- Strengthen non-profit leadership and collaboration skills
- Coordinate, nurture and sustain collaborative efforts
- Increase communication across sectors, collaborations and siloes
- Help schools to work more closely with other groups

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ACTION:



Building

Capacity



Bring awareness to all the work being done within the priority areas to assess gaps and duplication. Look for opportunities to align and maximize resources, reduce competition and duplication, and help groups to work together. Focus granting and support on addressing the gaps. Track the impact of programs and system changes.

Support Relationship Building

Increase equity among community partners. Support small, equity-seeking organizations in accessing other funding sources. Build opportunities for people who are from distinct communities to connect.

Build Cross-Collaborative Connections

Increase awareness of each others' work, share learnings with each other, and provide opportunities to dialogue and work together.

Build Capacity

Build capacity of collaboratives through leadership development, enhancing the communications toolkit, sharing resources, support staffing, etc. Create coaching opportunities. Build youth leaders through mentorship and engage youth in training, projects and programs.

Improve Granting Processes

Focus on equity, diversity and representation. Build capacity through the application process by helping applicants write stronger proposals rather than simply judging their weaknesses.

Develop sustainable funding streams. Fund multi-year grants, operating budgets, and capacity-building activities. Build mechanisms for collaboration into the fund-raising processes. Designate funds specifically for collaborative efforts.

We need to work together with:

Schools & Colleges, L-A Metro Chamber of Commerce, collaboratives such as Healthy Neighbourhoods, Community Partnership for Protecting Children, LA Public Health Initiative, Green & Healthy Homes, Childcare coop group, Good Food 4 LA, New Mainer Collaboratives, Harward Center for Community Partnerships at Bates College, Maine Association of Non-Profits and other training/resource entities, Uplift L-A, relevant missionspecific state or national associations, skilled consultants

We need to pay attention to:

A current lack of collaboration between the two city councils. For some, there is no interest in collaboration.

ISUKEN FOOD TRUCK | PHOTO FROM MARCEL GAGNE

We'll know we're making progress when:

Sustained, integrated collaborative entities function across diverse populations.

Each collaboration includes robust youth participation and there is a collaborative of youth-led and serving organizations.

Organizations report expanded capacity as well as greater efficiency and productivity due to relationship building with other organizations or entities.

Something new or something deeper is accomplished as a result of communication and working together because people are more aware of who is doing what around them.

Priority Areas

Equitable Systems & Civic Engagement

GOALS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS:

- Increase awareness and reduce structural racism in municipal, education and health systems
- Increase immigrant representation in city systems
- Build trust across different groups and organizations
- Center youth voice
- Create a representative narrative for L-A and focus on community priorities
- Increase civic participation and establish mechanisms for community decision-making

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ACTION:



Mobilizing Communities

Coordinate Training & Assessment Opportunities

Build understanding of what trauma-informed means and develop shared language, best practices, and measurement practices. Build understanding of how to look at community services and supports with a cultural lens. Provide support for knowledge to be applied in school, municipal, and healthcare settings. For example, strengthen the cultural appropriateness of school communications and health care providers. Establish a directory of trainers and consultants who have been vetted.

Establish Municipal Position Focused on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Address equity issues and systemic racism specific to L-A. Bring awareness to policy-level barriers for equity-seeking populations. Support processes and policies that decrease barriers to public-sector funding for immigrantled organizations.

Advocate for Community Voice in Decision-Making

Develop a pipeline for civic engagement and train youth and adults in how to engage in civic activities and city government. Enhance volunteer coordination. Make space for new voices as decision makers. Listen to and raise the voice of youth and young adults, and support mentorship opportunities for them. Sewall can become a thought partner for others looking to establish mechanisms for community voice in decision-making by demonstrating and sharing successes of community-led processes in L-A.

Focus on Community Priorities and Create a Shared Direction Forward

Create a new narrative that is representative of L-A. Reinforce community priorities. Get stakeholders, sectors and leaders "rowing in the same direction."

Support Youth and Youth Leaders

Support activities such as "coffee with a cop" to build relationships between youth and police. Start youth centers run by people of color. Use the arts to engage with youth. Create a diverse group with youth to address problems in schools and promote respect of students. Provide programmatic support for youth leadership development, especially for youth of color, and create more opportunities for youth leadership within existing programs that align with youth interests, and ensure youth are compensated for their time. Explore mentoring programs in which seniors mentor freshmen. Provide youth and young people with professional training and opportunities to learn outside of the city and/state.

Work towards Equitable Land and Water Access

Shift the narrative between Lewiston and Auburn, and influence decisionmakers and policy changes to provide equitable access to land and water in both municipalities. Learn from other models of shared gifting, shared leadership, and participatory decision making (such as Haymarket People's Fund and Maine Initiatives).

We need to pay attention to:

Current lack of diversity in city leadership and the same people in leadership and attending meetings. Community members often feel powerless. Language barriers exist. Lack of innovative thinking; many are stuck in old ways of doing things. Lack of communication and engagement with the business sector. Youth not seen as assets.

PHOTO FROM FOWSIA MUSSE

We need to work together with:

Elected Officials & City Administrations, Schools, Area Colleges, Businesses, Women of Color and organizations that support them, Youth-Serving organizations like Tree Street PAL Center, People of Color, Working Parents, Youth, Lewiston Youth Advisory Council, Hospitals & Clinics, Immigrant Resource Center, Recreation Departments, YWCA & YMCA, Faith Leaders, Healthy Neighborhoods, Raise-Op, Community Concepts, Community Experts (especially ECBOs), Facilitators, L-A Art Collaboratives.

We'll know we're making progress when:

There is a common understanding of issues among disparate entities (police dept./schools/New Mainers/children/social service providers, etc.) and there is a common language for discussing issues.

There are more youth centers led by youth, and when youth are more active in building up the community and looking for and correcting transparency within our systems such as schools and local government.

Effective training programs (including English language instruction) are planned by and with immigrants who need them.

Workforce Access & Economic Development

GOALS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS:

- Build more education-to-employment pathways
- Remove barriers (education, transportation, child care) to the workforce
- Increase supports for immigrant integration in the workforce
- Advocate for livable wages

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ACTION:





Establish more Education & Employer Partnerships

Expand, standardize and streamline internship processes, co-op programming, and community hours programs. Connect Bates College internships with high schools. Expand Jobs for Maine Grads. Collaborate with L-A Metro Chamber to host meaningful networking events. Partner and train people based on needed skills and positions. Provide employee support to increase retention.

Reduce Barriers to Employment

Align childcare options to support parents entering the workforce. Reduce language barriers. Expand supports for navigating job search for immigrant workers. Partner with L-A adult education organizations to provide licenses, professional development, and language learning to first generation immigrants to support them getting into the work force. Support creation of "maps" that illustrate what certifications/skills people need to do certain jobs. Support programming to build hard and soft skills to ensure people are employable.

Support Entrepreneurship

Support people who want to start businesses and offer them mentoring by people who look like them. Foster an ambassador program to train immigrants in the community to be a resource for those who want to start businesses, and who need help navigating language barriers and accessing employment opportunities. Offer 0% interest loans and other resources.

Promote Mentorship by the Business Community

Work with the Chamber and cultural trainers to support businesses in improving hiring practices and diversity training for workforce development. Build the pipeline and shift narrative about lack of opportunity.

We need to work together with:

Schools & Colleges, L-A Metro Chamber of Commerce, City Departments, Large employers, Career Center, Lewiston Regional Technical Center, Jobs for Maine Grads, Harward Center (Bates College), Take 2 Youth Build, AVCOG, Coastal Enterprises, Cooperative Development Institute, food systems organizations & collaboratives, immigrant business owners.

We'll know we're making progress when:

There are integrated pathways for diverse individuals to achieve satisfying work.

Schools and businesses work hand in hand to provide skills training to meet workforce needs in the community.

There's enough childcare and transportation for L-A's workforce to thrive

There are diverse employment opportunities—small & large businesses, health care, constructionrelated, restaurants—Including for young entrepreneurs

People are able to get loans with 0% interest for business start-ups

People are able to find work easily and can connect to agencies that can quickly find them work.

When youth and others looking for work are able to survey the work landscape, know what opportunities are available to them and where the entry points are.

NEW ROOTS GROUNDBREAKING | PHOTO FROM MARCEL GAGNE

Health & Wellness

GOALS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS:

- Improve access to health care
- Increase mental health supports
- Increase supports for substance use disorder
- Address senior isolation
- Increase culturally-relevant recreation opportunities
- Explore interconnection between Western and traditional healing
- Look upstream to social determinants of health

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ACTION:



Supporting Programs

Enhance and Expand Cultural Training and Competencies in Healthcare

Effective training is needed to change institutional practices. People of color need to be involved in delivering training and facilitating conversations. Convene healthcare sector to support education on patient culture, interconnecting Western and traditional practices, and other culturally relevant issues. Create systems to integrate and align. Adopt guidelines for culturally appropriate healthcare delivery. Hire more people of color in healthcare.

Create awareness of Substance Use Disorder and Opioid Crisis

Focus on youth and immigrant and refugee populations. Work with faith communities, Healthy Androscoggin, and other existing programs in an authentic way. Expand education around prescription medications.

Address Senior Isolation

Build congregate spaces to offer meals, socialization, projects, and cultural connection. Provide supports for interest groups, such as the Walkabouts, to meet regularly. Address connection between isolation, post-traumatic stress disorder and other health issues. Consider part-time work programs to increase dignity for seniors.

Improve Health of and Access to the Natural Environment

Provide services (e.g., monitoring air and water quality, flood protection) in order to support the health of our natural environment and of our community. Increase public greenspace (parks, recreation areas, and trails) that complements economic development. Explore converting empty city land into recreational areas and provide equitable access. Expand meaningful outdoor learning activities in schools and programs serving children and youth. Develop a youth center for sports and recreational activities. Bring communities into conversations about the impacts of climate change.

We need to work together with:

LA Public Health Committee, B Street Health Center, NMHPI, Hospitals, Statewide Public Health Council, Connector/Cultural Experts, Youth and people working with youth, Steering Committee, DHHS, United Way, ECBO collaboratives, Healthy Homeworks, Healthy Androscoggin, YWCA & YMCA, Androscoggin Land Trust, L-A Trails, City Recreation Departments, Outdoor Afro

We'll know we're making progress when:

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All people understand and are able to access culturally appropriate healthcare. Healthcare integrates social determinants of health into all practices and includes clinical, social, and emotional aspects.

The built environment supports healthy communities. Health care professionals reflect the population of the community We are able to make opiates and opioid abuse disappear from our community There are more culturally aware recreational opportunities/improved access There are effective drug education programs for parents and youth When families have the support they need to address their mental health challenges

Housing

GOALS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS:

- Increase healthy affordable housing
- Incorporate new housing models that lead to self-sufficiency

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ACTION:



Informing

Policy

Capital Investments for Affordable Housing

Sewall should use its influence and advocacy power to build capital for affordable housing; not necessarily for monetary return. Make capital investments in affordable housing that is targeted to priority populations. Explore congregate living, supportive housing, and co-op models and systems that can help residents to become self-sufficient.



Identify and convene organizations and determine whether a formal collaboration is needed to achieve goals for supportive and healthy housing. Develop the capacity of the collaborative.

Support Systems Navigation

Encourage transitional housing that includes education and support for long-term safe healthy housing. Provide supports for people navigating the housing system.

Anti-Racism Education

Offer anti-racism training to people involved in the housing sector, including municipal agencies and private landlords.

Address Lead Issues

Support lead education ambassador programs in communities, and leverage resources to invest in lead-free, toxin-free housing renovation and construction.

We need to pay attention to:

Lewiston's Choice grant will bring housing but only for one neighborhood and the model doesn't offer large enough units.

Need to explore whether there is support for a formal collaborative to address housing issues.

Need to ensure all work is focused on people in need.

We need to work together with:

Lewiston Housing, Auburn Housing, transitional housing providers, all housing companies in L-A, Mental Health, Healthy Androscoggin, New Beginnings, Care Managers (who connect youth to housing), Community Concepts, DHHS, existing housing funders, Raise Op Cooperative, Avesta, Lead-Free Housing Empowerment Center, Efficiency Maine, Revision Energy, Muskie School of Public Service.

We'll know we're making progress when:

There is a common understanding among diverse entities of what constitutes safe and healthy housing.

All resources are aligned to support safe and healthy housing (medical, financial, educational, city).

There is more affordable housing available so that people can choose to rent or own a house.

People know how to access home ownership education opportunities.

Equitable Food Systems

GOALS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS:

- Stabilize food system in response to community needs •
- Develop local food infrastructure
- Ensure stable access to healthy, culturally appropriate foods
- Promote food justice
- Improve access to farmland
- Conserve farmland

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR ACTION:



Generating

Knowledge

Support Immigrant & Refugee Farmers

Create pathways to own farmland through investments. Establish shared infrastructure to get products to markets.

Increase Nutrition Education 1

Support existing efforts, and bring in more stakeholders, for nutrition education to address issues such as budgeting for healthy eating, feeding large families, and food storage. Offer hands-on education for youth and youth in transition. Ensure culturally appropriate food and nutrition education.

Expand Community Gardens

Expand space for community gardens. Consider grants or investments to leverage empty lots.

Build Capacity within Food Systems

Identify all of the components of the food system and gain a deeper understanding of needs in L-A. Convene buyers, sellers, and different sector groups to strategize and address needs and leverage shared resources. Research innovative practices.

Expand Access to Healthy Food for People with Low Incomes

Prioritize supports for people with low incomes, especially those just above the line for assistance. Expand scope of food pantries so they are responsive to community needs. Create easy, inexpensive, accessible and even free food systems that people in the community can access.

We need to pay attention to:

L-A' s strong food system collaboratives that are leading this work.

FROM MARCEL GAGN

We need to work together with:

Schools, farmers, Somali Bantu and other immigrant farmers, Healthy Androscoggin, stores and restaurants, food pantries, St. Mary's Nutrition Center, DHHS, Auburn Agriculture Committee, WIC, Local Food Local People, Good Food Bus, shelters, Good Food 4 L-A, City Councils and Administrations, grocery stores, Androscoggin Land Trust, Land in Common, Maine Farmland Trust, Auburn Community Garden Initiative, Youth Gardener Programs, ReTreeUS, Androscoggin Farm to School Network, Maine School Garden Network, Maine Farm to Institution Network, Androscoggin Gleaners, Cooperative Development Institute.

We'll know we're making progress when:

All food systems are aligned with a common understanding of what is healthy, available and culturally appropriate food.

We have an integrated food system from planting the first seed to processing and distributing food.

Healthy food is as easy for L-A residents to get as junk food.

L-A is known as a hub of good immigrant-owned markets and restaurants.

Families can put meals on the table without worry.

Farmers have access to shared infrastructure to facilitate getting their products out to more markets.

We have significantly reduced food waste.

Recommendations for Implementation

The following recommendations for implementing the HPHP program in Lewiston-Auburn over the next 5 years are intended to continue to bring the community voice into Sewall's decision-making processes, foster collaboration, and respond to community needs.

Set up a Community Advisory Body

Establish a community advisory body to support Sewall in decision-making through the implementation of the HPHP program in L-A. The advisory body should be representative of the Lewiston-Auburn community and use an authentic recruiting process similar to what was used in building the Co-Design team. The advisory body should include representatives from the interconnected priority areas identified by the Co-Design team, including decision makers, people with lived experience of relevant issues, and youth. The role of the advisory body would be as a sounding board for Sewall to share and get feedback on their ideas and actions, and continue to support open communication between Sewall and L-A organizations, collaboratives, and communities.

Begin Systems Alignment Work

The work needed to support collaboration and build capacity—such as, increasing communication across sectors, collaborations and siloes, strengthening leadership and collaboration skills, and asset-based systems mapping and alignment—should be prioritized in years 1-2. This will build the foundation needed for collaborations to be more sustainable and for resources to be utilized effectively. The outcomes of a systems mapping process will help inform the HPHP program in years 3-5.

Prioritize Resource Allocation based on Community Needs

The Co-Design team recommends that priority be given to: creating equitable systems and civic engagement, enhancing health, and promoting workforce and economic development. Housing was prioritized next. Creating an equitable food system will require relatively fewer resources, since many funders and collaborators are already working together in significant ways. Sewall's role in each of these five areas will be different depending on the scope of work to be done in each area, and the relative availability of resources from other sources to do that work.

Work towards Community-Based Decision-Making for Grant Allocation

The eventual goal should be a community-based decision-making model whereby the community—those affected by the issues and those working alongside them—will decide how available funding will be allocated.

But first some significant power struggles and dynamics among organizations and sectors in L-A need to be addressed. Currently there is too much competition and not enough trust. Therefore, in years 1-2, the Co-Design team recommends that Sewall continue to provide operating and program grants directly to organizations and groups whose work aligns with the HPHP program priorities. Sewall should also support relationship building, collaboration, and capacity building so that by year 3, the community will be ready to transition to community-based decision making.

There is shared understanding that grants can create reliance and dependency, on the one hand, or sustainability and interconnectedness, on the other. The community needs to move away from thinking about grants as a payout, which keeps organizations in siloes and dependent on grant dollars, and towards thinking about grants as an investment that builds community from a holistic systems perspective.

For this approach to be successful, it will be important to:

- Ensure that the decision-making group are representative of the people impacted in that focus area
- Include decision-makers with specific expertise
- Include decision-makers that represent different sectors such as business, nonprofits, government, faith communities, community residents
- Commit to principles of transparency, respect, trust, and greater good
- Provide strong facilitation support to groups as they determine how to allocate resources
- Address power imbalances
- Establish readiness criteria to increase success

Consider involving all organizations who are interested in getting funding to be part of the decision-making group. Look to the Maine Network of Community Food Councils for their guidance and lessons learned in group allocation processes.

Readiness can be determined at a different pace for each of the five priority areas. It should be possible for some areas to embrace community-based decision making even if other areas are not yet ready.

Continue working with other funders

Sewall should continue working with other funders whose interests align with the HPHP program goals to expand the potential impact of the work.

Ensure Sewall is connected to Lewiston-Auburn

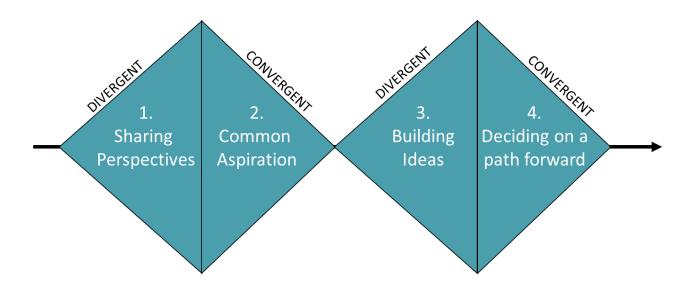
Don't just give money. Come visit. Walk alongside the community. Sewall can learn alongside L-A how to build a new model and teach others how to work better together. Continue to bring people together and always look for ways to share learning with the community and with others. Welcome real dialogue about the challenges the community is facing and take a partnership mindset.

Appendix A: Co-Design Process

Co-Design is a methodology for bringing diverse members of a community together to develop creative new ideas, design innovative approaches to persistent problems, and build alignment and momentum for action.

The Tamarack Institute sees co-design at the intersection of innovation and community engagement, and it requires us to push past default practices—of developing solutions in isolation, or consulting with the community on pre-determined solutions—and instead bring the community into a collaborative ideation process.

A co-design process helps to align diverse perspectives, combat polarization, produce creative and customized solutions that are pre-vetted for success by community members, provide community ownership, build trusting relationships, and increase the community's capacity to understand, brainstorm, and mobilize.



L-A co-design sessions were hosted virtually between July-August 2020, once a week for 2 hours, with the following agenda focus:

Session 1 - July 30, 2020

- Welcome & Introductions
- Framing of Co-Design sessions
- Focus on Lewiston-Auburn

Session 2 – August 6, 2020

- Finding alignment Community priorities from Phase 1 & 2, Sewall priorities
- What is Sewall's unique contribution in L-A?



Session 3 – August 13, 2020

- Confirm Sewall's unique contribution does this capture your hopes for the HPHP program?
- Exploring new ways of working for a Foundation

Session 4 – August 20, 2020

- Detail how program areas might work
 - City systems & civic engagement
 - Sustainable workforce & economic dev
 - Housing
 - Food security
 - Health
 - Collaborations & capacity building

Session 5 - August 27, 2020

- Final HPHP program overview
- Prioritize resource allocation across priority areas
- Recommendations for Implementation

Appendix B: Being the Change

12 Ways Foundations are Transforming Themselves to Transform Their Impact

Report from FSG | April 2018

Abigail Stevenson and Valerie Bockstette with Andria Seneviratne, Miya Cain, and Tracy Foster

Source: https://www.fsg.org/publications/being-change

FIGURE 1. NINE COMMON APPROACHES FOR CREATING CHANGE



Address underlying conditions: mental models, power dynamics, and relationships