

Built Environment Policy & Advocacy Fund (BEPAF) Progress Report May – September 2020



September 9, 2020

Background

- This document is compiled by First 5 LA staff to help provide updates on Prevention Institute's intermediary contract for BEPAF.
- The goal of BEPAF is to maximize policy- and systems-change advocacy strategies to improve children and families' access to: 1) high-quality parks, open space, and recreation facilities; 2) safe and reliable transportation/opportunities for mobility; and 3) food security.
- BEPAF advances this goal supporting community-based organizations to develop and implement effective, culturally competent built environment policy- and systems-change advocacy initiatives in the Best Start geographies.
- BEPAF is a multi-cycle grant program implemented through an Intermediary model, building on lessons learned from ECE PAF.
- Prevention Institute serves as the Intermediary for this initiative (Contract #10209), with a contract start date of October 15, 2019.

BEPAF Grantees

	Name of Organization	Best Start Region	Best Start Community	Grant Type	Priority Area	Funding Request	Rec. Funding Amount
Implementation Grants							
1	Community Coalition	2	Broadway-Manchester West Athens	Implementation	Parks	\$92,672	\$100,000
2	Investing in Place	1, 2	Broadway-Manchester Metro LA Watts-Willowbrook	Implementation	Transportation	\$99,998	\$100,000
3	East LA Community Corporation/ACT-LA	1, 2	East LA Metro LA SE LA County Cities Watts-Willowbrook	Implementation	Transportation	\$100,000	\$75,000
4	Proyecto Pastoral/ Promesa Boyle Heights	1, 3	East LA NE SF Valley Panorama City & Neighbors SE LA County Cities	Implementation	Parks	\$100,000	\$100,000
5	United Parents and Students	1, 2	Broadway-Manchester East LA SE LA County Cities Watts-Willowbrook West Athens	Implementation	Food	\$91,852	\$75,000
Incubation Grants							
6	Just Environment Long Beach/ Walk Long Beach	4	Central Long Beach	Incubation	Parks & Transportation	\$49,960	\$40,000
7	Physicians for Social Responsibility LA	1, 2	Broadway-Manchester Compton-East Compton Metro LA SE LA County Cities Watts-Willowbrook West Athens	Incubation	Parks	\$50,075	\$50,000

Please note: Descriptions of the BEPAF projects are included as an Appendix at the end of this document.

Summary of Activities: Convenings and Technical Assistance

- 1. Convenings and Technical Assistance:** Prevention Institute hosts monthly convenings with BEPAF grantees. First 5 LA staff attended the first grantee convening on June 1, 2020. Representatives and subcontractors from the 7 BEPAF grantee organizations attended. Themes from the conversation were: 1) How to do robust digital community engagement with parents and residents in the Best Start geographic areas, and 2) How to better advocate for shifts in public funding related to the built environment areas as it relates to children and families, especially at a time when public budgets are decreasing.



Summary of Activities: Evaluation Framework

2. Evaluation Framework: Working with Ersoylu Consulting, Prevention Institute completed the BEPAF Evaluation Framework and a grantee baseline assessment survey to help inform the technical assistance approach, grantee convenings, Learning Sessions, and distribution of Strategic Response Fund grants.

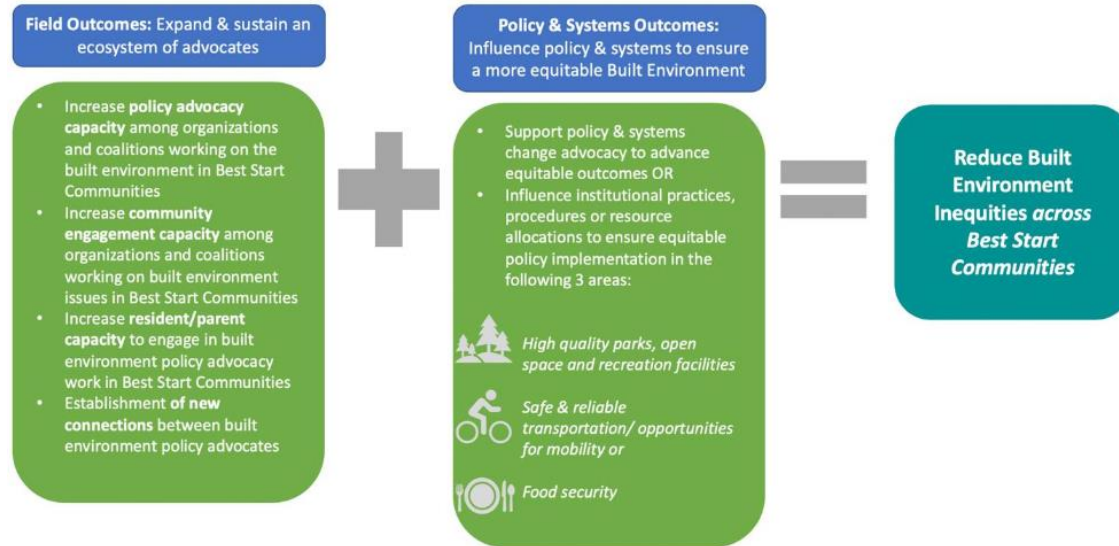


Figure 1: Representation of the field outcomes and policy and systems change outcomes for BEPAF

Summary of Activities: Evaluation Framework

BEPAF Grantees hope to experience growth in these advocacy competencies over the next 3 years...

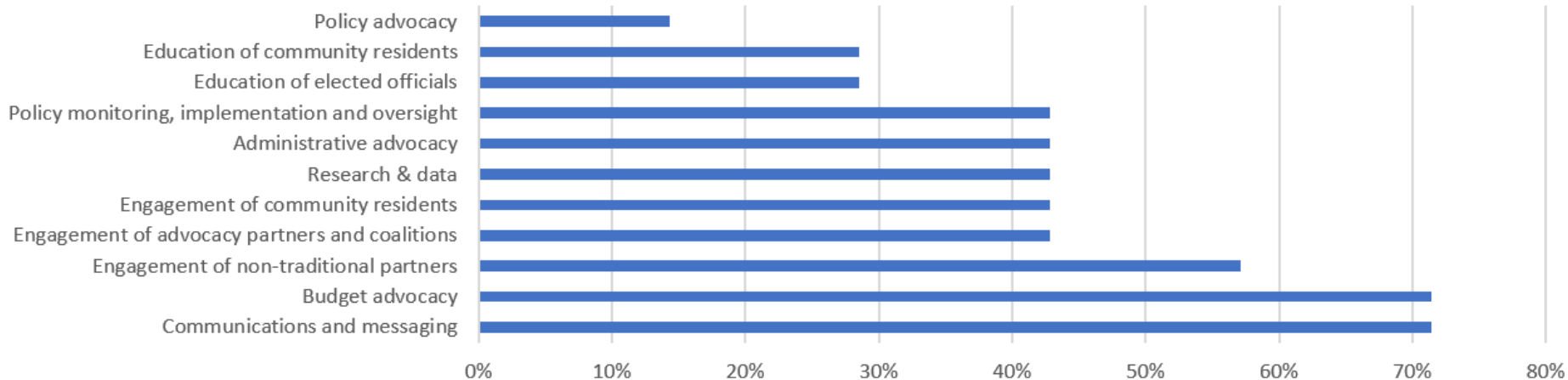


Figure 2: A sample of the type of data collected from the baseline assessment survey. This question assessed what types of competencies BEPAF grantees would like to strengthen in the next 3 years. These findings are helping to refine the services Prevention Institute will offer to BEPAF grantees.

Summary of Activities: Responding to COVID-19 Context

3. Responding to COVID-19 context: In May-July 2020, First 5 LA staff collaborated with Prevention Institute to transform the Rapid Response Fund into the Strategic Response Fund to help BEPAF grantees pursue urgent policy opportunities and to increase resident and parent engagement in advocacy opportunities. First 5 LA provided a \$125,000 augmentation to Prevention Institute's budget (during the remainder of the contract period, July – October 2020). The resources would help with: a) Providing grants up to \$12,500 for Implementation grantees and up to \$10,000 for Incubation grantees, b) A contract with Advancement Project to host Learning Sessions with BEPAF grantees on budget advocacy during COVID-19, and c) Summarizing the lessons learned from responding to COVID-19 to help inform the *Measures Matter* report.

Strategic Response Fund grantee augmentations: Working with First 5 LA staff, Prevention Institute distributed a Strategic Response Fund application to the 7 grantees. In alignment with the proposal First 5 LA staff submitted to the COVID-19 Response Funding committee, the selection criteria included:

- Technology support
- Direct assistance to support the immediate needs of parents/residents/members that grantees are organizing
- Staffing to monitor and address emerging policy opportunities
- Costs related to engagement of community members and other stakeholders
- Indirect costs (e.g., overhead/operations expenses): Should not exceed 15% of total request

Prevention Institute received applications from all 7 grantees. First 5 LA staff from Communities Department provided final approval.

Summary of Activities: Strategic Response Fund grants

APPENDIX D
BEPAF Progress Report
May- September 2020

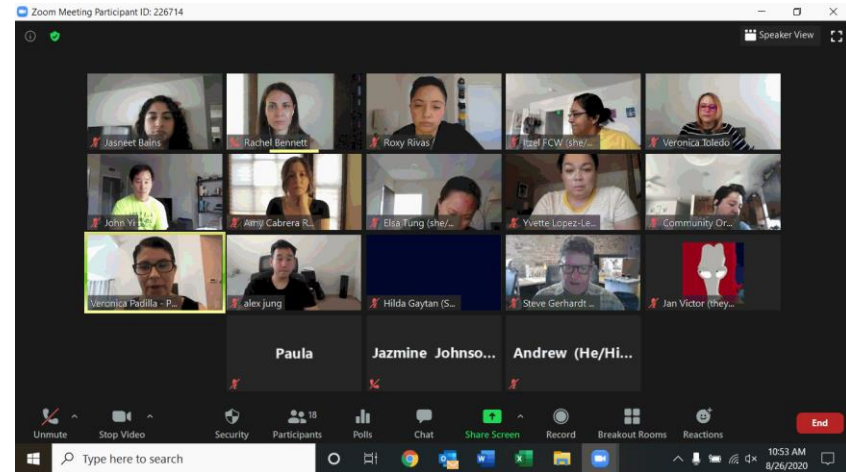
Organization	Amount	Type of Request
Community Coalition	\$12,500	Hiring 5 part-time outreach workers to conduct a community-wide assessment to collect 30,000 in-person and digital survey responses from South LA residents and youth to inform parks and open space advocacy. Additional resources to strengthen digital communications infrastructure with information on COVID-19 related policies, safety precautions and resources.
Investing in Place	\$12,500	Additional communications support to amplify the urgent policy recommendations published in their report, "Moms and Mobility." Funding also helps provide additional support to East Side Riders and South Central LAMP for digital engagement with residents in the Best Start geographic areas.
Just Environment Long Beach/Walk Long Beach	\$10,000	Supporting the training of resident leaders to help conduct focus group discussions around priority built environment issues (i.e. Green Zones) in Best Start Central Long Beach. The augmentation also boosts digital communications infrastructure, including building an online engagement tool.
KIWA/ACT-LA	\$12,500	Supporting leadership development, organizing, and general staff capacity to advocate for greater investments in transportation at LA County Metro. For example, this advocacy is crucial for transit-dependent families in the Best Start geographic areas at a time when Metro is considering a 20% budget cut to bus services.
Proyecto Pastoral/Promesa Boyle Heights	\$12,500	Provides technology support to increase resident and parent engagement on urgent parks and open space issues (i.e. Measure A implementation). Promesa Boyle Heights is developing a digital training curriculum and materials for Park Equity Alliance members and residents to more fully participate in BEPAF activities.
Physicians for Social Responsibility	\$12,500	Provides technology support to monitor the policy and community landscape related to parks and open space, increase engagement in emerging alliances like the Healthy LA Coalition and LA Climate Commons to impact budgets at the local and state level, and helps with exploring budget advocacy opportunities for land remediation and proper clean-up process for parks development in Best Start communities.
United Parents and Students	\$12,500	Provides additional support for UPAS staff to monitor: a LA County Board of Supervisors food security motion calling for the Chief Sustainability Officer to debrief lessons learned from COVID-19, and CARES Act Spending Plans, which has \$60 million allocated for various food security programs.

Summary of Activities: Strategic Response Fund, Learning Sessions

In response to COVID-19 and urgency to advocate for greater investments in the built environment in Best Start geographic areas, Prevention Institute brought on Advancement Project as a technical assistance provider to the BEPAF grantees. Last month, Advancement Project hosted their first webinar with BEPAF grantees on budget advocacy on the local and county level (LA City, LA County, and LA County Recreation Parks and Open Space District).

Key takeaways from the first webinar:

- Local municipalities and LA County are in the middle of budget cuts because of the pandemic – this impact might be compounded during a looming economic recession or downturn. **Budget advocacy is one way to align community priorities on the built environment with equitable spending.**
- We're seeing stronger partnerships between municipalities and local CBOs to get wraparound services out to people. **How can this type of partnership be a model?**
- Some revenue streams are safer (Measure A/parcel tax) while others (Measure H/sales tax, Measure M/sales tax) have been impacted; LA City parks report a \$30-\$40 million deficit because of lack of revenue from fees, permits, and reservations. **How to ensure equitable spending in Best Start geographic areas?**



Next steps

- First 5 LA's agreement with Prevention Institute will renew on October 15, 2020, a 12-month term. The item is on Contracts Consent for the September 10, 2020 Board Meeting.
- Prevention Institute is compiling two documents: 1) Lessons learned from implementing the Strategic Response Fund and how these efforts connect with COVID-19 and the *Measures Matter* report, and 2) Lessons learned from implementing BEPAF during the first year, and how this program can influence philanthropic investments in the built environment as it relates to children and families.

Appendix: BEPAF Project Descriptions

Community Coalition – CoCo will work on cultivating a cohort of 35 community leaders, 12 of whom live in Best Start Broadway-Manchester and West Athens to build their capacity to address built environment policy opportunities, particularly around parks and open space. Part of this work includes engagement and education on pertinent policies, particularly tax and fiscal reform, to ensure that parks and open space meet the needs of families. Includes a list of activities like galvanizing a base of 75-100 community members (35 from the Best Start geographies), a parks needs assessment, and large-scale convenings within the Best Start area focused on parks and open space.

Investing in Place – Focused on the access and safety for women and young children to travel to meet their basic needs – to school, work, healthcare, parks, and more. The partnership is with South Central LAMP, East Side Riders Bike Club, and Los Angeles Walks (on-the-ground community partners). BEPAF funding helps expand their Moving Moms policy project in four ways: 1) shift the narrative around the importance of improving transportation options for women and children, 2) integrate gender disaggregated data to inform transportation policy, 3) advocate for budget changes to increase access for women and children, and 4) community engagement in Best Start communities.

KIWA/ACT-LA – ACT-LA is a non-profit organization with a coalition of over 37 LA County organizations focused on building a grassroots movement for more equitable public transit systems and budgets. They do so by building resident power to shape policies at LA Metro and City of LA – for example, they worked on Transit-Oriented Communities policy at Metro and Measure JJJ at the City of LA. The project seeks to increase transit affordability and access, particularly through their #PeoplesTransit campaign that seeks free transit for all users. Their workplan includes engagement with community leaders in the Best Start geographies and with their members-based coalition organizations. They will also advance policy research to support the campaign, including influencing Metro’s congestion pricing models to meet the needs of low-income residents, and they will recruit a base of over 100 transit riders to engage in campaign activities. Other partners at the table include East LA Community Corporation.

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Proyecto Pastoral/Promesa Boyle Heights – Proyecto Pastoral is a member of the Park Equity Alliance and will seek to strengthen resident and organizational capacity for policy-systems change for parks and open space through three ways: 1) building capacity of five residents leaders in Best Start East LA geography to engage the Measure A Advocacy and Oversight committee and to create a Park Equity organizing guide – this is what they call the Salazar – Parks and Open Space Committee (SPOSC); 2) With partners Pacoima Beautiful and From Lot to Spot, will organize community trainings and develop cohorts of core residents from Best Start communities of NEV, PCN, and SELA to form their own Parks and Open Space Committees (POSC) to monitor, attend, and assess Measure A oversight; and 3) Resident leaders from each of the POSC in each of the four Best Start communities will create shared goals for park advocacy activities and campaigns. The workplan also includes building a Park Equity Educational Materials and Advocacy Toolkit. Proyecto is also bringing on several subcontractor organizations including Pacoima Beautiful, From Lot to Spot, the Wilderness Society, and the Advancement Project.

United Parents and Students (UPAS) – UPAS is a non-profit organization that has been advocating for improved access to healthy, affordable, and high-quality food in the Best Start geographies (East LA, Watts/Willowbrook, Broadway/Manchester, SELA, and West Athens) for several years. Their project seeks to increase the quality of existing grocery stores, enable and equipty entrepreneurs to focus on healthy and affordable foods, and increase large-scale high-quality grocery stores in Best Start communities through policy change. Their partners include the LA County Department of Public Health and American Heart Association. Their workplan includes engagement and cultivation of their base of residents and parents (many who live in Best Start geographies) and building a coalition with DPH, AHA, and FreshWorks to help with financing entrepreneurs to provide increased access to affordable, healthy food in low-income communities. They plan to work with LA County Board of Supervisors in helping to track the Improving Supermarket Quality motion and Good Food Zones motions.

Appendix: BEPAF Project Descriptions

Just Environment Long Beach/Walk Long Beach – This is the only proposal in Long Beach that made it through the rigorous review process and is an incubation grant. Walk Long Beach is the lead applicant and a member of the Just Environment Long Beach coalition. The project seeks to engage residents on their needs and concerns around environmental hazards, park equity, and mobility equity to form the Green Zones policy, a policy similar to City of LA’s Clean Up Green Up which seeks to regulate land-use and restrict environmental hazards in sensitive neighborhoods by providing business incentives. The workplan includes ground-truthing workshops, resident and Best Start member engagement, and policy research and crafting of policy. The project is in partnership with Long Beach Forward, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, and City Fabrick. LB Forward will help provide technical assistance for strategic communications, policy research and analysis, and grant writing.

Physicians for Social Responsibility Los Angeles (PSR-LA) – PSR-LA is a long-standing environmental justice organization. Their incubation proposal strongly connects the science of child development with the impacts of environmental pollution. Their project focuses on building a toolkit that would help inform parks and open space development, called Toolkit for Integrative, Equitable, Restorative, Remedial, and Advanced Solutions for Healthy Future Generations (TIERRA). Vacant land is tough to come by, and most vacant land in under-resourced communities are brownfields or contaminated sites. The TIERRA project would help to remediate that by identifying how to safely clean up and convert these abandoned sites. The workplan includes resident and community engagement to develop tools and best practices on soil clean up, financing, and understanding the regulatory framework; policy research; policy development; and the TIERRA toolkit that could be used by community members and advocates to help inform policy makers’ decisions on land-use.