

Harbor Community Benefit Foundation Organizational Planning Session Summary Report

BACKGROUND

Harbor Community Benefit Foundation (HCBF) administers the Port Community Mitigation Trust Fund (PCMTF). PCMTF was established to mitigate the off-port impacts of port operations. It aims to help communities that are near industrial activity.

PCMTF funding is winding down. It is anticipated that the fund will have a balance of approximately \$403,000 at the end of December 2022. During a planning session with HCBF's board on August 23, 2021, Sheikh/Impact facilitated a discussion about what comes next for the organization.

DISCUSSION

The discussion with HCBF's board centered around three possible scenarios:

1. Continue operations as solely a grantmaking entity.
2. Sunset the organization.
3. Pivot to continue operations/serving the community in a different way.

When asked why HCBF still needs to exist, board members offered compelling reasons. Responses included:

- Port pollution is still a problem.
- HCBF helps to mitigate the negative impacts of port pollution.
- HCBF is the *only* organization of its kind.
- HCBF serves as a neutral party between the Port of Los Angeles and surrounding communities.

If HCBF was to continue as a grantmaking entity, possible revenue streams to support HCBF's work were also discussed. These include:

- Settlement funds.
- Terminal operators.
- Freight-movement equipment and parts manufacturers.
- Railroad operators.
- Trucking industry.
- Refineries.
- Oil and gas companies.
- Warehouse developers and operators.
- State and federal grants.
- Private, individual donors.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Pre-survey results revealed that most board members want HCBF to continue operations as a grantmaking entity. However, the new revenue streams outlined above are uncertain and to some extent unreliable. In addition, some donors/funders may be hesitant to provide support to HCBF if it is solely an intermediary or a pass-through entity. Instead, these donors/funders may prefer to give directly to the types of organizations that HCBF supports.

If HCBF is to have any success in securing support moving forward, it will need to demonstrate how it uniquely fills an unmet need. It must also determine what it offers beyond simply being a grantmaking entity, so it can begin to talk about the work it does in a different, more compelling way. **Essentially, what else does HCBF do to positively-impact the community** (other than provide pass-through funding to community-based organizations)?

What is most needed to offset the impact of the port on local communities?

Based on the board planning discussion, the following are valued-added components of HCBF's work. In order to move forward, we need to look at the activities/services below (as well as other work) and determine:

- 1) Do these activities/services offset the impact of the port on local communities? If so, how?
- 2) What else, if anything, do we do to offset the impact of the port on local communities?

Convening: HCBF has longstanding relationships with a variety of community organizations, port officials, elected officials, government staff and others. It is a well-respected organization in the community and is viewed by others as an organization that can bring people together to collaborate. HCBF can leverage this role to serve as a liaison between the Port of Los Angeles and surrounding communities.

Research: HCBF has published reports on land use and noise that demonstrate the off-port impacts of port operations and the ongoing need for resources and programs in port communities like Wilmington and San Pedro. HCBF can leverage these reports to bring attention to the problem of off-port impacts of port operations — while also positioning itself as the “go to” organization for future studies or data collection activities.

Grantmaking: Since its inception, HCBF has invested \$7.5 million in more than 140 grants to 75 organizations to benefit harbor-area communities. These funds have helped offset the impacts of the port in many ways, including:

- Mitigating health risk: HCBF helped increase health care access in the communities of Wilmington and San Pedro by partnering with local medical centers to provide health screenings, treatment, and referrals through mobile care units and local health fairs. This in turn helped reduce the number of emergency department visits, unscheduled clinic visits, and overnight hospitalizations among children and adults with active asthma, as well as school absenteeism.

- Transforming land use: HCBF helped increase access to green space through a community garden and urban farm in Wilmington.
- Improving air quality: HCBF helped to supply air purifiers to low-income households and install air filtration systems in two preschools in Wilmington and San Pedro to help children breathe easier.

HCBF's work has also resulted in other positive outcomes for grantees. For example, HCBF helped one grantee convert a vacant lot in Wilmington into an urban farm with a longer-term lease. In addition, grantees are also connected to other partner organizations through HCBF.

NEXT STEPS

Outlined below is an action plan that details steps that should be taken in order to determine what comes next for the organization.

Action Item	Responsibility	Timeline	Notes
Confirm the problem: Off-port communities are impacted by port pollution.	HCBF staff	ASAP	
Define what HCBF does to solve the problem.	HCBF staff and board	Prior to September board meeting.	HCBF's mission is to invest in the quality of life of communities impacted by port-serving industries. You may also want to consider: Is "invest" the best word to describe what HCBF does? Should the organization consider changing its name and/or mission?
Determine if those activities and/or services meet a need that can be demonstrated and/or documented.	HCBF staff and Sheikh/Impact (as needed)	Around and/or after September board meeting.	
Determine if HCBF can measure impact for those activities and/or services.	HCBF staff and Sheikh/Impact (as needed)	Around and/or after September board meeting.	
Determine which, if any, of those activities and/or services are fundable and by whom.	Sheikh/Impact cumulative	Prior to October board meeting.	