

Stockton, CA: *Investing in People*



Background:

Stockton is the county seat of San Joaquin County in the Central Valley. With a population of over 300,000, Stockton is the 13th largest city in California. The city joined the HEAL Campaign in 2015, the same year Stockton exited from Chapter 9 bankruptcy. HEAL was an opportunity to reinvest in the city's residents and create an environment that promoted health.

"Parks and recreation centers are community assets and provide a positive rate of return in terms of human capital."

- Christina Fugazi, City Councilwoman

Accomplishments:

Sugar Sweetened Beverage Ordinance – In 2016 Stockton became the second city in the country to pass an ordinance requiring either water or milk to be served as the default beverage in children's meals. The "healthy-by-default" rule – passed unanimously by the Stockton City Council – to tackle the city's skyrocketing childhood obesity rate and worsening type II diabetes epidemic.

Promoting Strong Communities – Measure M, also known as the Strong Communities initiative, is a ballot measure approved by Stockton voters in June 2016. The measure created a dedicated revenue stream for recreation and library programs and services through a one-quarter (0.25%) cent sales tax generating \$10 – 11 million annually. Measure M also established a Citizen's Advisory Committee that provides recommendations on expenditures to the City Council.

Stockton has invested in developing its parks and recreation infrastructure to promote physical activity and community engagement. The city currently has five multi-purpose recreation centers with extensive programming. A sixth recreation center with a library is currently being developed. The city's Capital Improvement Program funds the building construction and land development. Measure M funds the programming and staff in the facilities.



General Plan – Stockton updated its' general plan in 2016 and imbedded health throughout the various elements in the plan. The city also created a dedicated community health element which identifies five key goals that represent the city's priorities:

1. *Healthy People* – Support the ability of the entire community to maintain healthy lifestyles.

2. *Restored Communities* – Restore disadvantaged communities to help them become more vibrant and cohesive neighborhoods with high quality affordable housing, a range of employment options, enhanced social and health services, and active public spaces.
3. *Skilled Workforce* – Expand opportunities for local enterprise, entrepreneurship, and gainful employment.
4. *Affordable Housing* – Ensure that all residents have a safe, high quality, and stable place to call home.
5. *Sustainability Leadership* – Exhibit leadership in sustainability for the Central Valley and beyond.

A city is only as healthy as its people. We need to feel safe and have access to good food and the outdoors, and our collective well-being and chance for positive change depends on strengthening bonds between community members. When people in Stockton connect with one another and make choices together to improve their lives, neighborhoods, and the community, it builds a sense of belonging that enhances overall health and livability for everyone in the city.
 – Envision Stockton 2040 General Plan http://www.stocktongov.com/files/Adopted_Plan.pdf

Lessons Learned:

- Ensure the community is driving the planning process and invest in the time and resources to maintain their engagement.
- Invest in youth leadership to build their buy-in. Youth are also critical to educating and engaging families.
- Develop city leadership and collaboration across agencies.
- Overcome differences by finding common goals and working towards them together.



“We are a healthier city and a more informed populous our city. It is woven in.”

– Christina Pughazi, City Councilwoman