CREATING SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS CHANGE TO IMPROVE LOCAL AND REGIONAL HEALTH

A framework for a cross-sectoral approach in the San Gabriel Valley
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- Members of the HSGV Design Team, including: Debra Ward (YWCA-SGV); Miki Carpenter (City of Azusa); Jocelyn Estiandan (LA County Department of Public Health); Sally Mansour (Counseling Center Azusa Pacific University); Nancy Clifton-Hawkins (City of Hope); Noel Bazini-Barakat (LA County Department of Public Health)
- Shawnalynn Smith Thomas, HSGV historical report consultant
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Executive Summary

There is no shortage of need in the San Gabriel Valley—from poverty and homelessness to violence and food insecurity. It will take all of us to address the myriad health and social issues that our communities face. Today’s fast-paced marketplace requires mutually beneficial partnerships to leverage creativity, experience and resources that can help us arrive at culturally responsive solutions that contribute to achieving health equity in the San Gabriel Valley.

Healthy San Gabriel Valley (HSGV) is committed to building a healthy, safe and resilient San Gabriel Valley by creating a synergistic effort among organizations, across all sectors, that include health care systems, education, government, business and non-profit, as well as community stakeholders. Through this collective action, we are changing the systems necessary to address our most complex community concerns. This regional movement engages communities and organizations committed to impactful cross-sector collaboration and systems change.

Systems change takes work, commitment, shared resources and most importantly, trust. To that end, HSGV has embarked on an approach that embraces the many assets of the region while focusing on one San Gabriel Valley community, Azusa. The Azusa initiative, known as “All in for Azusa”, is a unique opportunity to illustrate how changing systems to address a specific community challenge in one city can be modeled and scaled across all communities in the region and through Los Angeles county. This blended approach, utilizing a systems model both regionally and locally in an interconnected way, is one of the strategies that makes this initiative unique.

Using the power and strength of the organizational collaborations built over the last 10 years is the driving force behind this work and what makes HSGV a compelling story. We invite you to learn more about the movement and become part of the collaborative effort to improve health and well-being for everyone in the San Gabriel Valley.

Miki Carpenter, HSGV Chair
Director of Community Resources
City of Azusa

Debra Ward, HSGV Backbone Lead
Chief Executive Officer
YWCA San Gabriel Valley
I. Introduction

For nearly a decade, the YWCA-San Gabriel Valley (SGV) has pursued collaborative opportunities highlighting the importance of multisector partnerships in addressing the health and social service issues in the San Gabriel Valley. Such efforts led to the creation of the HSGV Initiative (HSGV), comprising CEOs, other senior management from public and private organizations, with the YWCA-SGV as the backbone agency or convener.

In 2017, the HSGV was successful in becoming an Accountable Community for Health (ACH) Accelerator Site—a designated grantee of the California Accountable Community for Health Initiative (CACHI)—with an initial award of 18 months, followed by a second grant extended through the end of 2019. The CACHI model is a framework to enhance collaboration across multiple sectors to improve community health based on seven foundational elements: shared vision and goals; partnerships, leadership and governance; backbone; data analytics and capacity; Wellness Fund; portfolio of interventions; and resident engagement. In June 2019 after new funding was announced, HSGV applied and was awarded funding for a new two-year grant beginning September 2019.

Prior to this funding announcement, the YWCA-SGV completed a research project to gather information from key informants on the history and evolution of HSGV, its vision and strategic priorities, its embrace of the tenets of the ACH model, and how that will shape the Initiative going forward. The findings identified mental health, access to healthcare and social services, chronic illnesses, homelessness and violence as important health issues facing the San Gabriel Valley (SGV). HSGV partners’ focus areas span the range of priority issues with varying degrees of depth in each area (see page 10). Participants concurred that HSGV’s key strength is its ability to attract and maintain a broad-based coalition, giving it the best opportunity for the SGV to move towards healthier communities both locally and regionally.

Through a blended approach of local and regional efforts, HSGV aims to create effective and efficient systems to improve health in one city and scale it across the region to address health issues unique to other cities. Using history to guide its efforts, HSGV is pursuing additional funding opportunities as well as new multi-sector partners across the region to lay the groundwork for stronger collaborations that not only improve health, but the overall quality of life for everyone in the region.

II. Vision and Mission

➢ Vision: A healthy, safe, and resilient San Gabriel Valley

➢ Mission: To create a healthy, safe, and resilient San Gabriel Valley by creating a regional movement that engages communities and organizations committed to impactful cross-sector collaboration, addressing our most complex community concerns.
HSGV Background and Context in The San Gabriel Valley

HSGV is a multisector collaborative of public and private sector organizations that have functioned informally for more than 10 years and now work together in applying the Accountable Communities for Health (ACH) model to address local and regional health issues. Since the beginning, HSGV’s focus has been addressing the many social inequities that exist in the region and drive health disparities. The purpose of HSGV is to create a regional movement that engages communities and organizations committed to impactful cross-sector collaboration. Recent key informant interviews focused on three key areas: history of HSGV; strategic alignment; value and relevancy and governance.

HSGV is an effort to create a synergistic effect among organizations in the San Gabriel Valley across sectors that include health care systems, education, government, business and non-profit, as well as community stakeholders. HSGV embraces the many assets of the region and also partners to address our most complex social issues across sectors.

HSGV defines “health” broadly and it refers to a state of well-being across multiple dimensions such as economic, physical, social, and emotional, as well as the built environment experienced by individuals, families and neighborhoods. Health may be experienced individually or at the community level. Efforts to address health at different levels require different approaches. HSGV is intended to address community level health.

To that end, HSGV’s identified the following goals:

• Develop a regional communication/data network to create a healthier region
• Advocate for resources collaboratively
• Support local efforts that improve the health of individuals and communities
• Advance positive systems change in the SGV

A. History of HSGV

Key milestones in the development of HSGV and its current work using a multisectoral approach to systems change at the local and regional levels is demonstrated in the following timeline:

➤ 2009: Los Angeles County Department of Public Health funds the City of Azusa to address obesity and enhances the YWCA-SGV partnership with SGV stakeholders.

➤ 2010: Community organizations join the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership to consider options for establishing a San Gabriel Valley Nonprofit Resource Center.

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1 HSGV-ACH Presentation, October 10, 2018.

2 Evolution and Future Direction of the Healthy San Gabriel Valley Initiative, July 31, 2019.
March 2010: President Obama signs the Affordable Care Act into law, which authorized the Accountable Communities for Health Model.

2011: Key SGV healthcare community partners meet to discuss the viability of forming a collaboration utilizing the Building Healthier Communities with YWCA as the backbone organization.

October 2012: YWCA starts the Healthy Communities Department with its first contracts with the City of Azusa and the Safe Routes to School Initiative. The function of the department was to nurture the YWCA’s partnership with healthcare organizations.

October 2013: Azusa Pacific University hosts “World Café: Community Strategies for Prevention.”

August 2015: The YWCA-SGV launches the first “Roadmaps and Intersections Forum,” providing an opportunity for multi-sector information sharing, best practices, etc.

March 2016: YWCA-SGV convenes its healthcare collaborative Steering Committee and agrees to apply to CACHI under the name: Healthy San Gabriel Valley Initiative.

2017: HSGV participants issue a CACHI “Intent to Commit” based on the Building Healthier Communities Model, focusing on integrating systems change.

September 2018: YWCA-SGV and the HSGV co-sponsor the LA County Health Agency community meeting on the Health Equity Action Plan.

August 2019: HSGV is awarded funding to pursue a multi-sectoral, systems change approach to preventing multiple forms of violence in the City of Azusa.

B. Social Determinants of Health and Data in the San Gabriel Valley

Key informants acknowledge the role of HSGV as invaluable in the San Gabriel Valley where there is pervasive fragmentation due to its large geography (Figure 1)—31 communities and five large unincorporated areas over an area of 400 square miles with nearly 1.8 million residents. Many of the key informants live in the SGV and/or have grown up in the region, and they value how the HSGV advances the day-to-day work in the organizations they represent.

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Social determinants of health have long-standing adverse impacts on health outcomes. To solve these health challenges through collaboration and systems change efforts requires a thorough understanding of the data to identify who is most impacted and where the need is greatest.

Historically, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health collected data across eight Service Planning Areas (SPAs). The San Gabriel Valley (SPA 3), which as noted above includes a wide geographic area across many communities and unincorporated areas. It was immediately clear in the early reviews of data collected for SPA 3, that the experiences of residents in local communities didn’t match up with the aggregated data of such a large and diverse region. Overall, SPA 3 appeared to be doing oftentimes very well when comparing health indicators with other SPAs in the County. It was also known that this data was being used to determine how resources were allocated across the County. This initiated a deeper dive into the limitations of data that was available at smaller levels of geography across Los Angeles County and really the beginning of HSGV. Various partners held convenings and advocated for a disaggregated look at more local and city data to expose opportunities for better resource allocation. This led to a local data collection effort of five cities in the SGV, El Monte, Azusa, La Puente, Baldwin Park and Pomona, led eventually to a project of the YWCA San Gabriel Valley and in turn launched an informal HSGV project. More than a simple academic exercise, this effort paved the way to highlight the hidden health disparities in areas formerly overlooked. Having this new local data to tell the story allowed
HSGV to apply for funding opportunities, including the first CACHI grant. Eventually, this local data collection effort was picked up by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

Similar to the drive for this need for new ways of collecting and reviewing data, connecting with partners across the San Gabriel Valley and other areas of Los Angeles County to advance systems change is a driving force of work today and a hallmark of our identity that continues to strengthen.

Dr. Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd, Director Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, speaks at the 2020 HSGV Roadmaps and Intersections.

IV. HSGV Partnerships: A Vision of a Healthier San Gabriel Valley

A. Strategic Alignment

Key HSGV organizations share strategic alignment and already include HSGV in their strategic planning. Interview participants explained that their ongoing involvement in HSGV is viewed as providing support of their organization’s mission and strategic priorities. The HSGV, led by the YWCA-SGV, has created an environment that enables a broad group of public and private sector organizations to collaborate and develop strong partnerships. Through this strategic alignment (Figure 2), HSGV is set up to address better regional health comes for the region. A variety of organizations regularly contribute to HSGV activities and convenings, including those that participated in key informant interviews including: Azusa Pacific University; City of Azusa; City of Hope; Center for Non Profit Management; East Valley Community Health Center; Emanate Health (formerly Citrus Valley Health Partners); First Christian Church; Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Park; Los Angeles County Department of Public Health; Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health; San Gabriel Valley Consortium on Homelessness; San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership; and YWCA-San Gabriel Valley.
This strategic alignment of HSGV partners and their areas of focus correlates with the identified priority health issues mentioned earlier. Table 1 shows the overlap of partner depth in each area compared to the ranking of the priority health issues, allowing HSGV to address better regional health outcomes.

### Table 1. HSGV Partners with Focus Areas in the Top Priority Health Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Priority Health Issue Ranking</th>
<th>Partner Depth in Focus Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Illness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Care and Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Health/STDs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Equity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### B. Shared Roles and Responsibilities

These partnerships of community-based organizations, businesses, cities, County agencies, and others that have collaborated since 2009 led to establishing HSGV in 2016 without a formal governance structure guiding its efforts. HSGV has evolved to a point in which a governance structure is necessary to demonstrate to potential donors and statewide partners, for example, that it has the resources and
commitment among its coalition to support a large community or regional effort. Table 2 identifies the roles and responsibilities interview participants indicate that their organizations would feel most comfortable providing to support an HSGV governance structure.²

Table 2. HSGV Shared Roles & Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HSGV Participant Roles &amp; Responsibilities</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications/Marketing</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Management, Fund Development</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Evaluation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A governance structure (see page 1) has been approved and includes a charter outlining the roles of the steering/advisory committee with term limits, staff to handle communications (meeting scheduling, meeting minutes/summaries and materials), and a steering/advisory subcommittee with fundraising and fund management responsibilities.

V. The Blended Approach

A. How local efforts can create regional change in Azusa

Using a blended regional and local approach, HSGV will continue its efforts as a regional (strategic) voice for systems integration and improvement, while narrowing the geographic focus for our portfolio of interventions to the city of Azusa. The aim is to leverage the relationships cultivated and built at the regional and county level and deploy them in one smaller geographical area. This will allow a more targeted portfolio of interventions and a greater likelihood of success and sustainability, including wide-scale replication in the region and throughout Los Angeles County – the most populous County in California.

Key informant interviews revealed the perceived value and relevancy of HSGV and include: building and maintaining a broad-based coalition, understanding the social determinants of health and its effect on health outcomes, and providing the framework for how local efforts can create regional change. HSGV offers the best opportunity to move towards a healthier community and region—i.e., to create a different paradigm.

HSGV has identified Preventing Multiple Forms of Violence in the City of Azusa as the focus area with a shared vision for a healthy, safe, and resilient City of Azusa. Known as All in for Azusa, the
initiative is interdisciplinary and involves multiple sectors—all intended to create a stronger system of care for the residents of Azusa.

Steering Committee Members include representation from city departments including Community Resources (Recreation, Family and Senior Services, Transportation), Community and Economic Development, Library, and the Police Department; and outside entities including the Azusa Unified School District, Azusa Pacific University (Nursing and Social Work), CA Walks, Department of Public Health, Department of Mental Health, San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership, My Third Place Afterschool Program, Emanate Healthcare (Get Enrollment Moving, Welcome Baby, and Foothill Presbyterian Hospital Diabetes Prevention Outreach), El Proyecto Health Center, Union Station Homeless Services, Options for Learning (Headstart), and the YWCA San Gabriel Valley; and participant representation from resident groups including the Parks and Recreation Commission, Azusa Rotary, Azusa Women’s Club, Azusa Golden Days, and Azusa Learners as Leaders.

**B. All in for Azusa**

*All in for Azusa* is the first citywide initiative supported by Healthy San Gabriel Valley (HSGV). This Initiative that works to create deeper, meaningful and more impactful collaboration across sectors and organizations citywide, in order to drive the development and integration of expanded programs and services for the residents of Azusa. The City of Azusa is the facilitator of this initiative in partnership with Azusa Pacific University and Azusa Unified School District, and many local nonprofit and government service providers, guided by resident need and voice.

A key element of the *All in for Azusa* initiative is the development of a Portfolio of Interventions (POI). The POI is an interwoven set of interventions offered collectively by various entities that minimizes duplication and maximizes impact through coordination and communication between service providers. This POI is intended to be easily navigated by residents as the vision is for the POI to be a “no wrong door” offering that is also co-designed by residents themselves.
1. **Focus Area: Preventing multiple forms of violence**

Various protective factors can reduce the likelihood that a community will experience multiple forms of violence. They include:

- Better coordination of community services
- Increased access to mental health and substance abuse services
- Supporting community connectedness

To help prevent multiple forms of violence through the protective factors noted above requires a coordinated, integrated approach across multiple sectors, breaking down service delivery silos and building new linkages.

This strategy is one that has been adopted by the CDC and in California by the CA Partnership to End Domestic Violence, Futures without Violence and others. Studies show that the multiple forms of violence that occur across the lifespan are interconnected and influenced by risk and protective factors that exist on an individual and community level. The Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA), professional association of Chiefs and Sheriffs representing the largest cities in the United States and Canada, also highlights the importance of several critical elements needed to reduce community violence, including community engagement and partnerships. formed in 1949, MCCA provides a forum for executives to share ideas, experiences and strategies for addressing the challenges of policing large urban communities. This synergy between various sectors underscores the need for a systems change approach that cuts across multiple sectors. Other evidence from Los Angeles points to fostering collaborative relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve and protect. Coined “relationship-based policing” by Urban Peace Institute, this model focuses is built on authentic community relationships that focus less on crime statistics and more on the health and well-

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being of the community.\textsuperscript{6} Utilizing these evidence-based approaches to implement activities in Azusa, HSGV hopes to create a successful, collaborative systems change model in Azusa, which can be scaled and shared with other cities throughout the region and potentially to the entire County of Los Angeles.

To achieve its vision of a healthy, safe and resilient City of Azusa, HSGV plans to implement activities in the following domains provided by the CACHI model (Table 3) to address multiple forms of violence: Clinical Services, Community Programs and Social Services, Community-Clinical Linkages, Public Policy, Systems and Environment Change.

Specifically, HSGV plans to implement these activities as part of the All in for Azusa initiative which will promote equity by helping to providing resources based on the specific community needs and building protective factors to decrease multiple forms of violence to achieve specific goals (Table 4).

\textit{Table 4. Goals targeting city systems and individuals.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Intervention</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **System Level**      | 1. Improved coordination of services among community agencies  
                       | 2. Increased community support and connectedness  
                       | 3. Policies passed/Programs initiated: City and School District Shared Use policies; Homeless initiatives; Pedestrian Master Plan; Parks Master Plan |
| **Individual Level**  | 1. Increased family support services  
                       | 2. Increased access to mental health and substance abuse services  
                       | 3. Increased connections to a caring adult  
                       | 4. Increased opportunities to associate with like-minded peers  
                       | 5. Increased skills to solve problems non-violently: by Azusa residents |

\textbf{C. Governance}

\textit{Figure 5. Proposed governance structure of the blended HSGV and All in for Azusa.}

VI. Recommendations and Next Steps

Because of its regional focus, HSGV’s overarching strategy has been to engage multiple sectors and create dialogue to facilitate more and deeper relationships among members, strengthening our vision, trust and capability to create change at a systems level. This systems work, especially at the regional level, is extremely important and has been the central focus of its work to date. However, HSGV has also recognized the complexities of serving a region as large, spread out and diverse as the entire SGV and has explored the benefits of focusing on a smaller geography which allows for more concentrated resource deployment and a more ambitious and tangible portfolio of interventions leading to concrete evidence of change.

Left to right: Jocelyn Estiand, Senior Public Health Analyst, San Gabriel Valley (SPA3), Los Angeles County Department of Public Health; Noel Bazini-Barakat, Regional Health Officer, San Gabriel Valley (SPA3), Los Angeles County Department of Public Health; Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Director, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health; Thomas Mone, CEO, One Legacy; Debra Ward, CEO, YWCA of San Gabriel Valley.