

From *Community Health and Economic Prosperity: Engaging Businesses as Stewards and Stakeholders—A Report of the Surgeon General*

Who Can Businesses Work With to Strengthen Community Health and Economic Prosperity?

Businesses seeking to invest in communities can join with partner organizations that are already working to improve community health and increase economic prosperity. These organizations include community development financial institutions (CDFIs) and community development corporations (CDCs), which are proven partners for capital and service investments to improve the vital conditions that shape health, wealth, and well-being. Other organizations with complementary strengths and skills include social enterprises, public health agencies, foundations and philanthropies, and anchor institutions.

Collectively, these organizations are called community changemakers. Cross-sector partnerships and collaborations among community changemakers and other businesses, government entities, and nonprofit organizations can accelerate improvements in community health and economic prosperity.

Community Changemakers



Affordable housing developers. Although many CDCs develop affordable housing as part of their suite of local activities, there are also larger regional and national organizations dedicated solely to developing affordable housing.



Anchor institutions. These institutions are economic engines that power sustainability and long-term well-being in their communities. Businesses can partner with—or become—anchor institutions to strengthen and expand an inclusive local economy. Hospitals and universities are prime examples of anchor institutions that leverage their own assets to create economic opportunities for individuals, businesses, and communities.



Community development corporations. These nonprofit organizations, typically based in low-income communities, work to improve the future of the neighborhood for the benefit of the people who live there, through activities such as real estate development, economic development, and community organizing. Approximately 4,600 CDCs exist in the United States.



Community development financial institutions. These mission-driven financial institutions provide access to affordable capital and financial services for low-income communities. CDFIs leverage federal resources, awarded through the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, to attract private sector investment, which they use to provide financing for projects like affordable housing development, small business creation, and community facilities. The CDFI industry manages more than \$150 billion among more than 1,100 certified CDFIs nationwide.



Community members. Community members engage in community development in a variety of ways, including as board members of involved organizations, as members of advisory committees, and through community meetings. Many CDCs have risen from individual community members coming together. The field increasingly recognizes that to create lasting change, it must partner in more intentional and meaningful ways with community members.



Foundations and philanthropies. These organizations harness the power of wealth to tackle entrenched health and social problems. Business and philanthropic partnerships can spread prosperity and opportunity in struggling communities through programs, grants, and capital investments.



Nonprofit service providers. Besides revitalizing low-income neighborhoods through real estate development, the community development field also works to develop human capital. Nonprofit service providers play a critical role by building relationships with and offering direct services to low-income clients, from young children to older adults. These services (1) address immediate needs, such as through a food bank or homeless shelter, and (2) focus on longer term economic stability and wealth creation through activities that target educational readiness, workforce skills, and financial capability, for example.



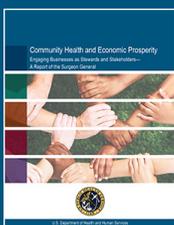
Public health agencies. Public health agencies provide critical services and infrastructure to improve the health of people in communities. Partnerships between public health departments and local businesses address issues like healthy behaviors, worker safety, food and nutrition, neighborhood livability, and criminal justice reform. Public health departments can serve as chief health strategists in their communities.



Social enterprises. These are companies with socially driven missions that have aligned their profits with improving health, wealth, and well-being. These businesses meet a need in the community, such as preventing evictions or providing jobs, and meet the business imperative of being profitable.

Businesses are essential to the lifeblood of communities and can take a variety of actions to help improve the well-being of the people they reach and the places they serve. Businesses have opportunities to be key leaders and influencers—improving the health of employees, families, and communities and influencing broader societal conditions. The impact of businesses will be greater and their work will be more efficient and effective when they join with others to improve community health and increase economic prosperity together.

ABOUT THIS FACT SHEET | The content of this fact sheet is adapted from *Community Health and Economic Prosperity: Engaging Businesses as Stewards and Stakeholders—A Report of the Surgeon General*.



The complete Surgeon General's report describes the U.S. health disadvantage and the importance of strengthening communities and improving the health of residents. It also offers recommendations for how businesses can address the U.S. health disadvantage by engaging with and investing in communities, while creating value, lowering business costs, and improving the health of employees and other stakeholders.

For more content—including supporting references and additional resources—view the complete report, business digest, fact sheets, and other supplementary materials at <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/>



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