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Learning Together in Highland Park to Build Civic Capacity

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning at Virginia Commonwealth University

by

Grace Leonard, Master of Urban and Regional Planning

Director: Dr. Meghan Gough, Associate Professor & Program Chair

L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

Virginia Commonwealth University

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As I finish this paper I am months away from the ten-year anniversary of my move to Richmond, and this work builds on a decade of learning in, and engaging with, a place. Richmond is the city that I will forever see as the community where I found my own footing. As I learned to find language for the city's assets, and needs, I began to find language for my assets and needs.

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ABSTRACT

LEARNING TOGETHER IN HIGHLAND PARK TO BUILD CIVIC CAPACITY

By: Grace Leonard, Master of Urban and Regional Planning

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Urban and Regional Planning at Virginia Commonwealth University

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2018

Director: Dr. Meghan Gough, Associate Professor & Program Chair, Urban and Regional Planning

This thesis examines the work of nonprofit organizations collaborating with communities to build civic capacity in North Highland Park, a neighborhood in Richmond, Virginia. Place-focused planning strategies during the twentieth century led to disinvestment and racial discrimination which diminished civic capacity in the community and fostered isolation. Today, collaborative community work in Highland Park is incorporating the assets, resources and knowledge held in the community into strategies to improve quality of life using collaborative learning. A case study approach closely analyzes community engagement and revitalization processes in North Highland Park between 2011 and 2017. Nonprofit organizations mobilized and led a group of community-based collaborators, including nonprofit staff members, government officials, nonprofit funders, and residents. In Highland Park, nonprofit organizations collaborate with communities, emphasizing shared ownership and collaborative learning, to build civic capacity in the community.

Keywords: Civic capital, collaborative learning, revitalization, empowerment, nonprofit

Chapter I: Introduction & Problem Statement

The Role of Civic Capacity in Revitalization

Civic participation in the United States is a way for residents of a community to vote for elected leadership, advocate for particular kinds of governance, and gain trust and support from fellow community members. When a community does not have the civic capacity to provide leadership, ownership, or participation in community planning processes, external stakeholders make decisions for residents about the kind of change that is needed in the built environment and in related local policies (Stoeker 1997). Planning processes have often neglected the experiences and perspectives of residents in communities that do not have the capacity to participate in traditional engagement meetings, resulting in projects focused on physical interventions and not empowering people (Sandercock 2003, Innes & Booher 2004).

Nonprofit organizations are situated to collaborate with the community as they build civic capacity to own and lead aspects of community change work that will improve quality of life. Nonprofit associations have long been seen as democratic groups where people can address identified needs, congregate, build trust, and contribute to the improvement of the broader community (Anheier 2002, de Tocqueville 2003, Berry 2005). Nonprofits have the capabilities to mobilize residents around collective issues to improve conditions (Hawkins & Wang 2012, Kim 2015). These organizations, which are often founded with the intention to meet a particular social need, are inherently relational, flexible, and contextual in the ways they apply programs and strategies to the community environment (Kim 2015, Sites et al. 2007). Nonprofit organizations provide pathways for residents to collaborate with residents and other community stakeholders.

Revitalization initiatives in communities lacking civic capacity requires a people-centered approach. In particular, there has been debate about two different frameworks for building civic

capacity in under-resourced urban communities. Community building leverages community assets and resources to address community needs, while community organizing focuses on conflict between residents and institutions to develop community power (Chaskin 1990, Stoeker 1997, Saegert 2006). Saegert has argued that both community organizing and community building strategies are needed: "the attainment of civic capacity requires the ability to form distinct interests and goals, to develop shared agendas, and to act collectively. It requires cultivating strong and weak ties, recognizing allies and enemies, and the changing cast of characters as contingencies shift" (Saegert 2006). When historically underrepresented populations are equipped with civic capital, their assets and resources are more readily be applied to community planning work (Howell 2016). Nonprofit organizations are situated to build networks through relational work that brings a variety of community stakeholders together.

Unlike the nonprofit sector, the public and private sectors often do not have adequate time or resources dedicated to civic capacity in communities where it is lacking. The public sector been critiqued for relying on ineffective community meetings to engage residents in urban planning revitalization processes that meet legal requirements but do little to reach a representative set of stakeholders (Sandercock 2003, Innes & Booher 2004). Likewise, the private sector has been critiqued for revitalization work favoring amenities, housing, and jobs that cater to middle and upper income people, which only perpetuates the lack of voice, representation, and opportunity of existing residents in a community lacking civic capacity (Zukin 2009). Strategies that are not responsive to community context cannot apply community assets to community needs in a way that leads to empowering and sustainable community solutions (Kruzman 1996, Saegert 2006, Dale & Newman 2008).

The need for revitalization anchored in engagement and capacity building is compounded in black communities. Black communities in American cities were disenfranchised and discriminated against by planning processes during the urban renewal era (Silver 1984, Lake 2006). A focus on improvement of the built environment by erasing blight and slum clearance was experienced by black residents as forced migration that erased neighborhoods and isolated communities from access to social and economic capital (Sutton 2010, Ashley 2015). An overt focus on improving the place neglected to examine how the strategy impacted people. This neglect of knowledge, perspectives, and culture of black communities by the public and private sector calls for particular engagement strategies today (Sandercock 2003).

Revitalization work requires a unique strategy in communities where there is not adequate civic capacity within the community to participate in planning and development work. When residents have learned not to trust those involved in planning efforts based on the negative experience of urban renewal, engagement efforts must be specifically interested in moving beyond a traditional community meeting to spend time with residents in the community on their own terms (Sandercock 2003, Walker 2014). In order to involve those who will benefit from revitalization, time-intensive and relational engagement processes must build trust and develop leadership within the community (Goodman, et al. 1990, Saegert 2006). Historic lack of engagement of black communities in developing planning processes and outcomes calls for attention to people-focused revitalization strategies that leverage community assets and resources.

Without people-focused collaborations, revitalization projects in communities lacking civic capacity can define quality of life for the community without input from the community and can design interventions that negatively impact opportunities for current residents through gentrification, economic development that aims to import cultural values and a new workforce into

the community and limiting attention to public transportation (Zukin 2009, Carr & Servon 2009). Place-focused revitalization has been criticized as a new kind of renewal that recreates the same kind of discrimination and displacement of black communities involved in urban renewal.

This study proposes that in the twenty-first century, revitalization work requires a different approach than traditional community development. Community-focused nonprofit organizations are collaboratively learning with a variety of community stakeholders across sectors to synchronize the development of civic capacity and the development of places for the community in adaptive and creative ways. These collaborations often involve community building and community organizing strategies. In education and in organizations, achieving social change and increasing capacity in the classroom or the office has been linked to the theoretical framework of collaborative learning or co-learning (Watkins & Marsick 1993, Rutherford 2011, Hammersley 2016).

Collaborative learning in higher education in particular as a way for students to link their education to their own civic identity through civic participation (Harkavy & Puckett 1994). Collaborative learning is a strategy that situates actors to "learn from, with and about each other; share the roles of expert, teacher, and novice; apply and re-create knowledge; act in mutually beneficial processes that require participation; and become involved in deciding what and how to learn" (Rutherford 2011). The goals of collaborative learning relate to the goals of collaborative planning processes (Innes & Booher 2015). The role of collaborative learning in developing the civic capacity of a community outside of a office or classroom setting has not been established. Nonprofit organizations are situated to carry out relational and collaborative work that links people and place focused strategies in an intentional way. This chapter will introduce the case study and examine civic capacity and nonprofit work in the Highland Park community over time.

Civic Capacity in Highland Park

The residential neighborhood of Highland Park is situated north of Richmond, Virginia. Much of the region known as "Northside" was developed into several residential neighborhoods at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. Many of these outer-ring suburbs were originally in Henrico County but were annexed into the city of Richmond during the early twentieth century. The following section will describe the history of the Highland Park neighborhood and the impact of various economic, governmental, and social changes on the community's civic capacity.

Civic capacity has been demonstrated to be an important prerequisite for revitalization work that aims to achieve resident empowerment (Saegert 2006, Dodge & Ospina 2016). Communities that lack civic capacity exhibit symptoms such as segregation, alienation, and isolation (Chavis 1990, Goodman et al. 1998, Lee et al. 2012). In Highland Park, these symptoms both resulted from, and contributed to, a lack of trust between black communities in Richmond and government leaders exacerbated during the twentieth century. Although white local government leaders attempted to annex part of Chesterfield County in the late 1960's to maintain a white majority in the city, Richmond elected the first black mayor and black-majority city council in 1977 (Williamson 2014). Highland Park's history provides neighborhood context for the civic ramifications of twentieth century racism in politics and planning. This history is indicative of the kind of civic capacity development strategies that allow for collaboration between diverse community of residents and stakeholders today. The following section will describe specific symptoms that are characteristic of a lack of civic capacity (Freire 1970, Chaskin 2003, Saegert 2006, Bess, et al., 2011, Shier et al., 2014). The causes and impacts of each symptom on the black community will be described.

History

A deep ravine isolated the Northside of Richmond from the rest of the city until 1819 when the development of a streetcar line led to the construction of the 5th Street Viaduct (Historic Richmond 2018). Highland Park was established as a streetcar suburb in the 1890's by the Highland Park Company, which was soon combined with neighboring Chestnut Hill to create a town. Several other Northside suburbs, including Battery Park and Barton Heights, developed around the same time. At the time, downtown Richmond was crowded with people, lacked transportation systems, consistent utility access, and was more dominated by industrial work (Historic Richmond 2018).

Marketing for the new community of Highland Park described Northside as a remote and tranquil community distant from the bustle and grit of downtown Richmond. Such rhetoric catered to an "anti-urban" sentiment among middle class white residents of Richmond (Virginia Commonwealth University 2011). The Queen Anne style homes in Highland Park were designed around a central business corridor that connected to a community school and a park. The developers of the homes also offered some of the first home loans in the city's history (Historic Richmond 2018). Low interest rates made the neighborhood accessible to many families, and soon the neighborhood was filled with families who were able to commute to work downtown on the streetcar (Historic Richmond 2018). In 1914, Highland Park was annexed from Henrico County into the city of Richmond.

Between the 1930's and 1970's, several factors influenced migrations within the city of Richmond. The Home Owner's and Loan Corporation produced maps of the city which graded neighborhoods based on their potential for mortgage security. The maps gave all minority communities in the city low C or D grades, a notorious practice that has become known as

redlining. Urban renewal projects prioritized slum clearance and demolished black communities to build public housing in these places. The advent of the automobile prioritized the construction of highways through the city which also displaced residents of black communities.

Segregation. The twentieth-century urban renewal era in Richmond was characterized by highways, public housing, and slum clearance. In the late 1930's the Home Owner's Loan Corporation graded Richmond neighborhoods to determine the level of risk of home investment in that community. Low-risk areas were graded A (green on the map) and high-risk areas were graded D (red on the map). All black and other minority communities in Richmond were graded C or D, contributing to the redlining of black communities from subsequent real estate growth and development (Silver 1984). Several black communities in the city were demolished as a part of slum clearance and replaced with public housing, displacing black families who looked to other areas, like Northside, for housing (Silver 1984). Interstate 95 was built through Jackson Ward in the 1950's (Silver 1984), which both displaced black families and enabled middle class families to more easily commute in their cars from suburbs in the counties west and south of the city; both contributed to population loss in the city. These twentieth century urban planning projects did not demonstrate that the city valued the black community. Richmond is more segregated by race today than it was during the nineteenth century (Richmond-Times Dispatch 2015).

Isolation. Residents around Richmond were dealing with racism both in policy and social life during the twentieth century. Owners of homes that were removed by highways or housing projects received some compensation. Renters were not compensated and other aspects of an established community were lost that are harder to recreate in a new place: a sense of community, neighbors, and established small businesses (Carr & Sevon 2009). As displaced

black families sought to find new homes, they were not warmly welcomed in Highland Park. "In 1942, almost all residents of Highland Park signed a pledge not to be the first homebuyer on the block to sell to an African American buyer" (Virginia Commonwealth University 2011). Black residents of Richmond were told in multiple ways through planning actions that their communities and their people were not valued. Discrimination and exclusion leads to isolation from economic opportunities and resources (Strouble 2015, Ginwright & James 2002

Lack of Access to Capital. Public and private disinvestment in the city of Richmond as a whole took a toll on the community's schools and access to jobs. As suburbanization and middle class black and white flight continued through the 1950's and 1960's, exacerbated by school desegregation, public and private resourced followed the suburban population and neglected Highland Park, continuing to communicate a lack of value to the black community, which isolated the black community from social and economic capital linked to opportunity in Richmond and deepened poverty in black communities (Silver 1984, Campbell 2011).

Between 1960 and 1970, the population in Highland Park shifted from almost one hundred percent white to almost one hundred percent black (Historic Richmond 2018). Resident's churches frequently migrated from downtown to Northside in order to be closer to the community, for example, First African Baptist Church moved from downtown to Northside in the 1953 (Hallman 2012). Black-owned and Asian-owned businesses opened in Highland Park. Residents living at or below poverty level could not turn to housing or zoning policy that would allow for the subdivision of expansive, aging, and expensive homes, and still cannot, today (Historic Richmond 2017). Black communities responded to economic disinvestment in their communities by reaffirming and creating cultural norms (Wilson 2009).

Trauma. Segregation of communities in Richmond over time aligned public housing and

disinvestment with black communities through discriminatory policies. The segregation of communities encourages stereotyping and exclusion which disadvantages black communities. In particular, the culmination of regular microaggressions can have negative consequences on the physical and emotional health of black youth (Jernigan & Henderson 2011). Individuals that live with regular discrimination and microaggressions experience racial trauma (Comas-Diaz 2016). Lack of collaboration and inclusion of perspectives and experiences of black communities within planning processes only reinforces trauma-inducing behavior. Black communities dealing with trauma face barriers in building civic capacity that require trauma-informed strategies that address microaggressions.

The City of Richmond. During this transition in Highland Park, the city of Richmond itself struggled to bolster collective civic participation of the new black majority as segregation removed the urgency to deal with racial tensions and continued disinvestment contributed to the growth of poverty (Williamson 2014). In 1989, under Mayor Geline Williams, Richmond created a Neighborhood Teams structure that situated civic, business, housing, and nonprofit interests in one neighborhood in a team with a city manager to determine a coordinated action plan (Means & Associates, 1989). For a time, these Neighborhood Teams provided a structure for a variety of community stakeholders to collaborate with city government that improved civic engagement and gave decision-making power to civic associations. Though the area of Neighborhood Teams was seen by some civic leaders as a high point in Richmond's community engagement narrative, the strategy was not maintained and civic participation under-resourced communities waned. The Neighborhood Teams framework is no longer in existence. While the Neighborhood Teams increased cross-sector collaboration with neighborhood residents for a period of time, collaboration between the City of Richmond and neighborhood civic associations diminished in

the late 1990's and early 2000's.

Recent Nonprofit Work in Highland Park

Civic Participation. Highland Park Restoration and Preservation Program (HP-RAPP) was formed in 1988 "to maintain the community's involvement with its own revitalization" (Kollaz 2015). The organization began to buy and revitalize vacant homes, aiming to give neighborhood residents access to improved housing (Virginia Commonwealth University 2011). HP-RAPP was led by resident Ellen Robertson, who would later become the city council representative for Highland Park. During this time, civic associations and church congregations provided community programming and services. At this time, there were not any formal community plans guiding housing, development, or revitalization in the community. This meant that changes in the built environment did not incorporate resident engagement and that the local government did not have a guiding document to steer conversations with private developers who may be interested in affordable investment options in the community. Community leaders with an interest in strategically planning for the future of Highland Park began conversations with local universities during 2010-2012. There was a need for collaboratively generated data and reports about Highland Park to provide evidence for future revitalization strategies.

Quality of Life Plan. In 2011, Master's students in Virginia Commonwealth University's Urban and Regional Planning program created a Quality of Life plan for Highland Park. Several demographic trends are notable between the time when the Quality of Life plan and 2015. The Quality of Life Plan notes a negative population change of -9.0% between 2000 and 2010; between 2010 and 2015 there was a 4% growth rate. The poverty rate has grown from 24% in 2000 to 30.5% in 2015 (Virginia Commonwealth University 2011, U.S. Census Bureau 2015). Compared to the city, Highland Park had a three percent higher rate of poverty in 2015 and

almost forty percent more of the population is black (Virginia Commonwealth University 2011, U.S. Census Bureau 2015). The demographic trends demonstrate that the population in Highland Park is growing, and poverty is growing as well. The following section will introduce nonprofit and community actors in North Highland Park have been involved in collaborative nonprofit work since the completion of the Quality of Life plan. Their efforts have involved community organizing, community safety improvements, façade improvement, and trust building.

Table 1. North Highland Park Demographics (Census Tracts 108 & 109)

	2010, North Highland Park	2010, City of Richmond	2015, North Highland Park	2015, City of Richmond
Population	6,973	201,828	7,450 (7% growth)	213,735 (6% growth)
Percent of Population Living Under the Poverty Line	24%	20%	31% (7% growth)	27% (7% growth)
Median Household Income	$31,788	$38,226	$30,589	$40,758
Unemployment Rate	22%	10%	13%	10%
Less than a high school education	37%	20%	25%	17%
High school graduate (highest education completed)	30%	24%	33%	23%
Some college (highest education completed)	28%	23%	30%	24%
College degree or higher (highest education completed)	5%	33%	13%	36%
Age 0-19	25%	26.0%	26%	23%
Age 20-64	59%	61.9%	61%	66%
Over 65	16%	12.1%	13%	11%
One race, Asian	0%	2%	1%	2%
One race, black	91%	50%	90%	48%
Hispanic/Latino	1%	6%	0%	6%
One race, white	4%	40%	7%	42%

Two or more races	3%	2%	2%	2%

Sources: Poverty Rate: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Median Household Income: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Educational Attainment for Population 25 and Over: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Hispanic or Latino by Race: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Poverty Rate: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Median Household Income: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Educational Attainment for Population 25 and Over: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Hispanic or Latino by Race: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Key Revitalization Efforts in Highland Park, 2011-2017

The "Six Points" is the main business corridor in the heart of Highland Park. The six-way intersection is the meeting of four roads: Meadowbridge Road, Brookland Park Boulevard, Second Avenue, and Dill Avenue. Boaz & Ruth, described in more detail below, is a nonprofit organization that has been located on the business corridor since 2003 and owns several properties along Meadowbridge Road. The traffic circle itself was installed to replace notoriously long stop lights at the six-street intersection. The renovation was completed in 2016. Traffic flow, sidewalks, and design elements were improved. The circle is anchored by the old Highland Park School, which was renovated by CPDC in 2017 as a housing development for low-income seniors.

City Council. The City of Richmond is represented by elected council members each represent one of the city's nine voting districts. Highland Park is included in the 6th district which starts north of Highland Park, at northern edge of the city, and extends in a narrow band south of Highland Park, through downtown, and includes two areas of Southside, the Manchester neighborhood and an industrial area surrounding Interstate 95. Ellen Robertson has been the City Councilwoman for the sixth district since 2003.

Roberson was initially working as a nurse when she and her husband moved to Highland

Park, and soon became a community advocate particularly focused on access to housing. Prior to joining city council, Robertson worked with other community stakeholders to start the nonprofit organization, Highland Park Restoration and Preservation Program (HP-RAPP) as a resident of Highland Park. Councilwoman Robertson began the process of creating a Quality of Life plan for Highland Park by approaching Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)'s L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs in 2010. In 2012, the councilwoman created a community organizing position in her office to be focused on Highland Park. This same year, she also approached the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement at University of Richmond about gathering data and research about the community of Highland Park.

Workforce Training. Boaz & Ruth was established as a nonprofit located in the heart of Highland Park's commercial district in 2003 at 3030 Meadowbridge Road. The organization's mission is to "rebuild lives and communities through relationships, training, transitional jobs, and economic revitalization." Megan Rollins is the executive director, daughter-in-law of the organization's founder, Martha Rollins. Over the next few years, the organization worked to establish social enterprises in the Highland Park community that acted as job training sites for returning citizens and businesses to serve the community. In 2007, Boaz & Ruth opened the Firehouse 15 restaurant across the street from their main location at 3011 Meadowbridge Road. In 2009 Boaz & Ruth opened Sunny Days Thrift Store at 3030 Meadowbridge Road. The organization's growth was not sustainable. By 2013 the organization was shifting its strategy and considering how to partner differently (Personal communication 2/16). The Firehouse Restaurant closed in 2014 and the thrift store closed in 2015.

College Access. Jo White is a longtime Highland Park resident who established the nonprofit organization Saving Our Youth in 2009. The organization aims to provide college and career

resources to high school youth through after-school programming. Jo is the only staff member for Saving Our Youth. Jo is also a leader of the Red Barrettes, a community safety group which organizes community events and clean-ups.

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The Quality of Life process was implemented by a Planning Studio course in the Master of Urban and Regional Planning Program at VCU in 2011 A student from this studio class, Ryan Rinn, was subsequently hired by the Sixth District City Council woman as a community organizer in Highland Park to work on plan implementation. The Highland Park community and VCU worked together to create a plan that focused on strategies that would lead to improved Quality of Life based on the needs and assets evaluated by residents of the community.

Community Design. Storefront for Community Design "improves the quality of life in the city of Richmond by facilitating access to planning and design resources" (Storefront). Storefront currently has two full-time staff members as well as an intern. In 2013, Ryan Rinn was hired as the executive director of Storefront for Community Design. The organization has a location in downtown Richmond on East Broad Street as well as the 6 PIC Innovation Center on Meadowbridge Road. In 2015, Rinn collaborated with other organizations to apply for the Robbins Innovation Grant. The application focused on developing an innovation center in Highland Park.

Community Development. Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is a national nonprofit organization. Virginia LISC is located in Richmond. "Virginia LISC works with residents and partners to forge resilient and inclusive communities of opportunities across America—great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families" (Virginia LISC). Currently, LISC works in the Fulton, Northside, and Southside communities in Richmond and is led by executive

director Candice Streett. LISC began work in North Highland Park when the Quality of Life plan was in process in 2011, and LISC initiated a community organizing and outreach strategy during the summer of 2013, led by community organizer, Veronica Fleming.

Though LISC began community meetings in Highland Park during the summer of 2013, they did not gain funding support for Highland Park work until 2015 (Personal communication 3/8). LISC funded façade improvements of storefronts along the 6 Points business corridor in 2014. LISC established two partnerships with outside nonprofits, Community Preservation and Development Corporation (CPDC) and Human Kind. CPDC is a national revitalization nonprofit which converted the Highland Park School to low-income senior apartments. Human Kind recently launched an economic opportunity program which provides low-interest car loans, financial education, and coaching to working families (Humankind.org). LISC recently worked with Timmons Group and Baskervill to complete a community enhancement plan for the 6 Points business corridor with residents and business owners. LISC has also initiated a small business grant program for established business owners in Highland Park to improve business infrastructure.

The 6PIC Collaboration. Several organizations collaborated together to complete a Robins Innovation Grant for an innovation center in Highland Park in 2015 with the goal to create a space for youth programming focused on empowerment through design. The Robins Innovation Grant is a competitive award given by the Robins Foundation. The innovation center did not win the grant in 2015, but collaborators continued to work together and pursue other avenues of funding. The collaborating organizations renovated Boaz & Ruth's space at 3001 Meadowbridge Road in 2015. Collaborating nonprofits include Storefront for Community Design, Art 180, Groundwork RVA, Saving Our Youth, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and CPDC.

Another collaborating group, the Changemakers Council, is made up of youth leaders in Highland Park (6picrva.org). 6PIC's mission is to be "a place where teens become urban leaders and residents catalyze community transformation." The daily after school programming in the space includes tutoring, environmental projects and activities, arts activities, the City Builders teen leadership program, and other innovative programs designed to empower Highland Park youth as leaders.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This project involves negotiating the tension between the theory and the practice of social change work. Aims of social change vary across discipline and across time. The phrase "social change" itself is a loaded phrase that, like "revitalization," seems to imply that the way of life for a group of people must change in order for the community to achieve a good life. While the social change described in the previous chapter could be understood as a kind of social change and was in fact rationalized as "urban renewal" that involved "slum clearance," the civic health of black communities in Richmond diminished (Silver 1984, VCU 2011). Lack of civic capacity is characterized by segregation, isolation, lack of access to capital, and trauma. When these things become characteristic of a community, people do not have opportunities to flourish (Drier 1996, Chaskin et al. 2003). A critical look at processes and outcomes in social change suggests a different way forward.

Scholarship in planning and in education makes a case for social change that is grounded in a social justice framework. Such a framework is interested in redistribution of power; pathways to social and material capital; and attention to phenomenology (Friere 1970, Stoeker 1997, Mitchell 2003, Dewey 2007, Appadurai 2006, Innes & Booher 2010, Lake & Zitcer 2012). Social equity in planning is iterative work which incorporates the lived reality of marginalized populations and must overcome embedded barriers (Michelle 2003, Appadurai 2006). Improving quality of life within the community on the community's terms requires shared ownership of planning work that aims toward empowerment of the community's members. Collaborative learning applies community context to nonprofit community work. The process gradually leads to a development of civic capacity in the community. As civic capacity is developed, the

community moves away from segregation, isolation, lack of access to capital and trauma. The community moves toward empowerment.

Empowerment and civic capacity both involve leveraging community assets and resources towards opportunities that improves quality of life within the community inclusive of residents and community stakeholders across sectors (Saeger 2006, Lake 2006, Peterson & Zimmerman 2006). Learning that is grounded in community context and that informs the improvement of social life has long been seen as characteristic of education in democracy (Dewey 2007). When participants in a social change process are interested in civic capacity, doing work together and reflect on the context of their environment and their experiences is an important strategy (Schon 1987, Bowen et al. 2010, Sandercock 2003). "Empowerment" of community residents is seen as a necessary outcome of this mobilization work through which marginalized and under-resourced residents gain their right to the city (Mitchell 2003, Peterson & Zimmerman 2004, Hardina 2006). To achieve empowerment, a process of building capacity is required which leverages assets and resources in the community (Saegert 2006). Nonprofit organizations collaborate with a variety of community actors to build civic capacity.

The literature will explore the related processes and outcomes that facilitate community empowerment. Rational planning has been criticized for its focus on outcomes without attention to community engagement throughout the planning process (Innes & Booher 2015). Community context in Highland Park suggests a need for a theoretical focus on both collaborative processes and social equity outcomes. While nonprofit organizations typically must report on the outcomes of their funding work, attention to processes in community change work requires evaluation that values both quality process and quality outcome (Stoecker 1997, Saegert 2006, Chaskin et al. 2003). Who defines quality outcomes, and how, is another question.

Nonprofit work in communities like Highland Park that lack civic capital involves a people-focused approach to the revitalization of place. The approach is characterized by engaging collaborative learning and shared ownership that seeks empowerment of community members. As civic capacity in the community is gradually established, the community begins to gain ownership of revitalization processes and outcomes over time.

Outcomes in Community Work

Aims of Nonprofit Community Work. Nonprofit organizations often situate themselves to implement revitalization work in communities that are void of civic capacity. Organizations that aim to build civic capacity are intentional about collaboration and partnership with underrepresented voices (Sandercock 2003, Bowen 2010, Bryson et al. 2015). Community development, community organizing, and revitalization work today often seeks to empower community residents by providing access to both social capital and economic capital (DeFilippis 2001, Sites et al. 2007). This section will situate nonprofit community work in relationship to communicative and radical planning theory.

Beginning in the twentieth century, community work could be categorized as social planning, community organizing, or community development (Sites, et al. 2007). The nonprofit provides services that the government is not providing and creates an organizing mechanism for residents (Sites et al. 2007, Moulton & Eckerd 2012). Organizations can respond to government failure with specific skills, tools and resources (Salamon 2012, Bryson et al. 2015). The kind of community work that a nonprofit organization does in an under-resourced community involves collaboration to varying degrees. While community development organizations are often responding to a lack of civic capacity in a community, they have been critiqued for perpetuating a lack of capacity through service provision that does not empower residents (Sites et al. 2007).

Pathways to empowerment in under-resourced communities involves collaborative nonprofit work which requires organizational capacities that are different from the capacities required to do service provision (Sites et al. 2007). The work involves both the gathering of grassroots support through organizing and community design of the place itself through revitalization. This intentional, long-term work requires the organization itself to have particular abilities and capacities. Nonprofit capacity building has been addressed as an issue for organizations that tend to have competing demands and limited resources, however, the kinds of capacities that an organization might require are broad. Effective evaluation techniques for nonprofit capacity building are still needed (Wing 2004).

A nonprofit organization's conceptions of social capital may be different from the social capital that is used to get ahead in the black community. In a neighborhood where there is little opportunity for "self-actualization and success," the informal economy calls upon black residents to create their own symbols and ways of communicating that allows individuals to gain respect (Wilson 2009:18). Distrust towards government officials, public institutions, and community members in black communities has resulted from past racism and discrimination (Stroble 2006). This distrust results from "institutional, personally mediated, and internalized racism" (Stroble 2006: 140). Planners played a significant role in demonstrating this racism towards black communities through urban renewal plans which, in Richmond, situated public housing in black communities, thus mapping communities of poverty onto communities of color (Silver 1984). Such a planning strategy values place-oriented outcomes over people oriented outcomes. For social change work in the public and nonprofit sector to achieve racial equity for black communities where concentrated poverty persists, attention to radial planning outcomes is critical.

Arnstein's 1969 *Ladder of Participation* developed a scale of resident participation that was correlated with resident power (Arnstein 1969). Nonprofit community work has been described as holding a variety of places on Arnstein's ladder, contingent on a variety of variables including capacity, resources, engagement strategies, and revitalization strategies. Empowerment for underserved residents involves radical action that seeks citizen ownership and control of their community, moving to the top of Arnstein's ladder (Michell 2003). It is critical to link collaboration to empowerment in this work because theoretical literature on process and outcomes of collaborative nonprofit work frequently name empowerment as an outcome, although it is often aspirational and difficult to achieve (Foster-Fishman, et al. 2006, Hardina 2006, Gonzalez 2017). Because empowerment has not been the norm in planning or nonprofit work, identifying community engagement approaches and strategies that truly situate marginalized residents as experts and contributors requires creativity and innovative thinking (Hardina 2006, Bess et al., 2011).

For communities that lack civic capacity, a focus on developing civic capacity dictates particular approaches to community engagement that involves both valuing the community's assets and resources, while also addressing systemic barriers to social and economic capital. There is seemingly tension between local assets and powerful capital. n interest in community empowerment as an outcome is interested in local assets and resources ultimately being transformed into sources of social and economic capital used both inside and outside the local community. Empowerment of marginalized populations is about redefining how power operates, shifting ownership and leadership of community planning processes and outcomes to community residents (Saegert 2006, Howell 2016). For collaborative social change work involving the nonprofit sector and community members to truly achieve the outcome of resident ownership

and leadership, the people-focused approaches to revitalization must value marginalized resident's right to the city.

Empowerment is not possible without a collaborative process and environment that involves citizens participating in associations or organizations and builds the capacity of the community over time (Freire 1970, Dodge & Ospina 2016). Incorporating communities that lack civic capacity into social change work requires collaboration and shared learning which will "develop the capacity of the individual to make independent inquiries about their own lives and their worlds" (Appadurai 2006: 173). This work moves beyond personal empowerment to community empowerment. Psychological empowerment and its associated causes has been defined by Zimmerman and Rappaport:

> Students and residents involved in community organizations reported a greater sense of empowerment than their less involved counterparts. Both student and resident participants reported a greater sense of political efficacy, competence and mastery, a greater desire for control, more civic duty, and a general belief that their success is a result of internal rather than external factors
>
> -Zimmerman & Rappaport 1988, 745-746

Focusing on personal empowerment is limited by individual bias (Peterson & Zimmerman 2003). Community empowerment "includes efforts to deter community threats, improve quality of life, and facilitate citizen participation" (Peterson & Zimmerman 2004: 130). It is what Goodman et al. refer to as "emancipatory learning" which raises what Freire called "critical consciousness" (Goodman et al., 1998, Freire 1970). Empowerment seeks access for residents to skills, tools, and resources that maintain and control the community (Hardina 2006). This orientation requires putting aside the fears that have historically shaped planning practice and thinking of new ways to engage residents that are accessible, relatable, and realistic (Sandercock 2003). This project focuses on collaborative strategies that support a creative and collaborative environment which can nurture civic capacity to sustain community leadership of local processes

and places. This builds off of Dodge and Ospina's finding that "empowerment is less of something that happens to individuals and more as the context created for the expression of active political identities." (Dodge and Ospina 2016: 493). A process that recognizes innovation is required to achieve empowerment is one that values civic capacity.

Community organizing has been critiqued for ruminating in an advocacy-oriented space that does not facilitate the transfer of power to community residents (Stoecker 1997). Stoekcer's analysis of Community Development Corporations includes the important conclusion that

> …we have forgotten the real issue is power and not development. Much of the art of community organizing has been lost or has not kept pace with the increasing sophistication of elites in hiding the causes of urban decay… So long as the antagonism exists between capital and community, development alone cannot achieve empowerment…. Community organizing is not impractical and unrealistic; its timetable for success is no longer than for the technical development approach and the first barrier to implementation is our inability to inspire our own imaginations. These ideals are unlikely to be achieved in the short term.
>
> -Stoecker 1997, 17-18

Stoekcer notes that giving attention to both people and place in the process of community development requires intentionality and a long-term commitment to a community that seeks community ownership of both processes and spaces. In both nonprofit theory and planning theory, the goal of empowerment for community members rejects the prescriptive goals of advocacy or neoliberalism. Both of these aims situate the community member as a "client" rather than as a "citizen" (Hardina 2006, Hasenfield & Garrow 2012, Dodge & Ospina 2016). Situating an individual as a citizen invites their own right to the community, and thus to the institutional and governmental processes that impact the community. All strategies here move beyond non-participation (Arnstein 1969), and beyond "transactional" engagement and towards "transitional" and "transformational" engagement (Bowen 2010). In Bowen's model, transformational engagement involves: "Community Decision Making; Empowerment; Supporting; Leadership; Collaboration; and Intensive Alliances" (Bowen 2010). The kinds of programs, events,

conversations, and goals held by the nonprofit organization involved in substantial resident participation will be characterized by an interest in both learning with the resident about local knowledge and power systems.

The goal of citizen empowerment runs the risk of focusing on fixing residents' deficits rather than incorporating resident's assets. Empowered citizenship is about gaining internal motivation and external access to apply one's knowledge, skills, and resources. It is critical that the organization values local knowledge and situates the engagement or planning process in a way that citizens can substantially share their own experiences, perspectives, and ideas (Lake 2017). The community is a complex system with many actors, and nonprofit organizations employ multiple roles when working towards empowerment. Collaborative participation values multiple perspectives learning together.

Collaborations can be perceived as transformational when they redistribute power and resources (Bowen 2010). These strategies provide the marginalized resident with access to power systems and processes that impact their life (Appaduriai 2006). Sustainable practices must be put into place that will provide the foundation for community ownership (Chavis 1990, Foster-Fishman 2006, Mueller & Dooling 2011). In a community that has been told by institutions for generations that it doesn't matter—it's businesses, it's schools, it's infrastructure, and by association it's people—empowerment will not be an overnight process. It requires both internal and external work by staff, residents, government actors, and the philanthropy community.

Recent empowerment frameworks situate justice-oriented engagement work both inside and outside the organization, leveraging collaboration. For a nonprofit organization to truly organize and mobilize residents, they must also be equipped to model that empowerment with their own employees (Peterson & Zimmerman 2004, Hardina 2006, Bess 2011). Citizen

engagement is contingent on participation by the nonprofit organization and the resident (Hardina 2006). Both communicative theory and the Organizational Empowerment model admit that with collaboration comes conflict (Peterson & Zimmerman 2004: 134, Innes & Booher 2004). When individuals inside and outside of organizations are situated to collaborate, they are learning from one another (Petts 2007, Bess 2011). Engaging different kinds of community knowledge may be less efficient, but it can lead to outcomes that are more culturally appropriate, sustainable, just and relevant to residents who are in the midst of attaining their own empowerment (Innes & Booher 2004, Loh 2016, Stroud 2016, Lake 2017). Collaborative processes value relationships over efficiency as pathways to collective power (Gonzalez 2017, Innes & Booher 2015). The next section will examine the kinds of organizational and community strategies that support substantive collaboration and its sustainability.

Processes in Community Work

Communicative planning embraces contextual community engagement processes that are relevant to diverse ways of knowing (Lake & Zitcer 2012). Planning processes that incorporate the perspectives, needs, values, and assets of under-resourced populations as valuable knowledge can lead to shared understanding that strengthens democracy (Sandercock 2003, Lake 2017). Co-production of knowledge in planning work requires community engagement processes that are flexible and validate a variety of perspectives (Innes & Booher 2015, Lake 2017). These include asset mapping and storytelling (Kreztman & McKnight 1996, Kim & Rokeach 2006). Collaborative strategies in civic engagement can elevate the knowledge of under-resourced populations and values democratic processes that broaden participation to further social equity (Freire 1970, Innes & Booher 2004, Sandercock 2003). Though the theoretical tendency to conceive of power and control being maintained by institutions rather than being transferred to

residents is often highlighted, power is held in relationships (Gonzalez 2017, Innes & Booher 2015). Intentionality in collaboration gradually builds trust and establishes shared power between a variety of community stakeholders.

Accepted forms of public participation in U.S. planning are built on assumptions about how knowledge is shared and created (Innes & Booher 2004). Communicative theory aims to expand the planning process to legitimize the power held within relationships as power that can contribute to community planning processes and outcomes (Innes & Booher 2015). All three sectors, private, public, and nonprofit, have been critiqued for normalizing approaches to revitalization work that lacks attention to local civic capacity. These approaches are characterized as rational planning or advocacy-oriented planning.

Rational planning sees the planning professional as the holder of knowledge about the community and does not involve community knowledge (Innes & Booher 2015). Advocacy planning is interested in addressing community needs and social inequities, but the professional advocates for change on behalf of communities that have not yet established civic capacity. These strategies in urban planning minimize participation and only fuel distrust and resentment between a variety of community stakeholders (Innes & Booher 2004). Communicative planning theorists recognize that traditional planning approaches value place over people. Addressing the need for civic capital in revitalizing communities requires a relational approach to community engagement. Such an attitude towards planning work may still be perceived inefficient, however, revitalization that prioritizes people over place is sustainable (Hardina 2006, Sandercock 2003, Hawkins & Wang 2012). When stakeholders are intentionally involved in conversation about how they perceive the past, present, and future issues in their community, a future vision can be developed that relates to the improvement of their quality of life.

Community knowledge, resources, and assets. The language of assets has become frequently used in nonprofit community work to value community knowledge and community resources in a way that does not focus on the neighborhood in terms of problems or deficits. Literature describes structural "assets" as resources for empowerment-oriented community development. By taking inventory of a community's assets related to both people and place, a community development intervention is more likely to be related to community culture and community norms. An intervention that relies on resources already in the community is also a more sustainable intervention (Kreztman & McKnight 1996).

Communicative theory is less interested in physical assets and more interested in local ways of knowing that inform an understanding of a place (Sanderock 2003). Engaging the community using processes that are locally relevant and accessible demonstrates respect toward the community and an interest in learning from the community's expertise (Appaduri 2006, Leyden et al. 2017). Processes like "communication, interaction, and dialogue" elevate these personal assets as people work together, and the practitioner learns alongside the resident (Innes & Booher 2015). The Asset-Based-Community-Development framework has emerged as a tool for nonprofit organizations involved in collaborative community work (Kreztman & McKnight 1996). The framework focuses on leveraging existing assets and resources. Community building and community organizing work involves an exchange of knowledge that is interested in both existing capacities and the establishment of new capacities in under-resourced communities.

Theoretical understandings of community building nonprofit work involves focus on collaboration while theoretical understandings of community organizing involves grassroots mobilization (Saegert 2006). Saegert demonstrates that developing civic capacity involves aspects of both. Nonprofit organizations have the flexibility and people-focus to effectively engage with

the community to involve the members of the community in defining the future of the place. Collaborative nonprofit work is interested seeking outcomes that improve quality of life for residents of a community based on a community's own terms.

The work of nonprofit organizations described hints at community action that is relational. Communicative planning theory is characterized by collaboration that situates a variety of community stakeholders as community experts. By prioritizing multiple kinds of knowledge, communicative action values bottom-up approaches that allow for more full participation of residents (Arnstein 1969). Community Development Corporations are often limited in their funding and cannot implement strategies that substantively seek empowerment (Stoecker 1997). The achievement of community empowerment involves the skills of collaborators and also the acquisition and continuation of funding sources. Two key capacity building strategies have the potential to facilitate empowerment: participation and partnership.

Participation. Both communicative theory and nonprofit community engagement literature highlight the theme of citizen participation. But, today, "both theory and practice are dominated by ambivalence about the idea of participation itself" (Innes & Booher 2004). Citizen participation strategies can range from manipulation to citizen control (Arnstein 1969). Nonprofit organizations and planning organizations which limit participation make assumptions about the needs and capabilities of the communities where their work is applied (Innes & Booher 2004, Moulton & Eckerd 2012). Professional and skill-based norms create power structures that exclude minority communities of color, and for community to participate, they must gain access, and also be able to share their own knowledge which will also inform the work (Freire 1970).

Resident participation in nonprofit community organizing work is contingent on a variety of social factors including a psychological sense of place, communication networks, nonprofit

staff with facilitation skills and connections to existing neighborhood associations (Chavis 1990, Goodman et al. 1998, Chaskin 2003, Kim & Ball-Rokeach 2006). Both nonprofit organizations and planning organizations typically face political, structural and social barriers that hinder participation of under-resourced populations (Berry 2005, Innes 2015). Trauma can contribute to distrust, disempowerment of the individual, and a range of other physical and psychological effects (Ginwright & James 2002). In a neighborhood like Highland Park where significant trauma and distrust may exist do to past racial discrimination, it can require a significant time investment on the part of the nonprofit organization to gain trust and establish shared goals with the community (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018). While trust building is often described as a social and political strategy in community organizing literature, emerging literature on trauma adds another skill set to professionalized community development work. Fostering learning in an under-resourced black community as a nonprofit also involves an understanding of trauma counseling strategies (Personal communication 1/25).

Partnerships. Nonprofits can build their own capacity to do work focused on both people and place by building relationships with other organizations in the nonprofit, public or private sector. Partnerships are often articulated as a community engagement tool (Bowen 2010, Bess 2011, Bryson et al., 2015). Several characteristics differentiate revitalization partnerships are applied to the development of civic capacity in a community. Cross-sector collaboration is a way of achieving "meaningful communication" required of communicative theory processes (Bryson et al., 2015). Bess's study of nonprofit community partnerships differentiates partnerships in three ways: transactional, transitional, and transformational partnerships (Bowen et al. 2010). Transformational partnerships involve "joint decision-making," "two-way communication," "relational trust," and "joint learning and sense-making" (Bowen et al. 2010). This analysis

introduces a level of nuance to Arnstein's association of partnership as lower than delegated power and citizen control on the ladder of participation.

> Only transformational engagement can give rise to joint benefits to both firms and communities rather than merely symmetrical ones. We would encourage others to build on this distinction between symbolic and substantive strategies. This would require researchers to get beneath the surface of community partnerships to identify the extent to which authentic learning, leadership, and empowerment have occurred.
>
> -Bowen et al. 2010

While some partnerships might be static, other kinds of partnerships can utilize learning to catalyze a move up the ladder.

Capacity is built through application to revitalization work in the community. Rather than being separate steps or isolated processes, it is the application of people-focused assets to place-focused community needs that leads to sustainable and empowerment-oriented community solutions. Sustainable empowerment involves linking the development of civic capacity to the revitalization of the community (Chavis 1990). As community leadership and civic capacity is developed among residents, it can be linked to revitalization work in several ways.

Application of Community Context. Through collaboration, organizations gain contextual knowledge about the place where they are. Nonprofit organizations located in communities of concentrated poverty sometimes begin to observe the root causes of social inequity and expand their role to advocacy or community organizing as they learn more about systemic challenges for individuals and families (Bess et al., 2011, Chaskin 2003). Organizations prioritize economic capital, social capital, and civic capital for marginalized residents to varying degrees, playing roles that are contextual and flexible (Moulton & Eckerd 2012). Community engagement involves moving beyond service provision to get to know both community assets and community identified needs. Communicative theory will provide a lens through which to observe nonprofit collaboration in Highland Park.

Placemaking. Nonprofit organizations seek to both provide access to capital, and work to elevate, value and incorporate local knowledge, and they are flexible enough to do so. One example of a strategy that addresses the need for mutual acknowledgement of assets and needs among all revitalization stakeholders is creative placemaking. Creative placemaking has been defined as a neighborhood revitalization strategy that leverages artistic collaborators from all sectors in a city or neighborhood to foster spaces where community members can come together to live their lives, celebrate traditions, and share their stories together (Marksen & Gadwa Creative 2010: 3). The workers that lead creative placemaking efforts in low-opportunity communities incorporate the values and perspectives of residents to varying degrees. Planners, workers in creative industries, and nonprofit organizations have historically faced barriers towards collaborating (Evans 2005, Marksen & Gadwa Arts 2010).

Creative placemaking recognizes that the nonprofit sector is often critical to animating built spaces and curating events, activities, and gatherings that establish and maintain a community space long after planners have left (Marksen & Gadwa Arts 2010). Strategies in placemaking relate closely to the work in Highland Park and involve both leadership and participation of people, and development of public space and private investment (Marksen & Gadwa 2010). Both are critical to the collaborative planning of community place that are useful and relevant to Highland Park residents. Placemaking can leverage public, private and nonprofit investment for community solutions that further racial and social equity in new ways. In additional to institutional revitalization partnerships, developing empowered places requires

Collaborative Learning. Collaborative learning relates to communicative theory; learning together is also about shared ownership, building trust, the establishment of shared goals, and people-focused goals that relate back to improvement of quality of life for those involved

(Sandercock 2003, Petts 2007, Loh 2016). Learning through engagement with the community and with others is about two types of learning: "instrumental" learning of new skills and "communicative" learning about how to work with others and "develop a sense of group solidarity" (Petts 2007: 301). Much of the literature on collaborative learning is situated in community-based learning through higher education (Loh 2016). This focus grows out of an emerging interest of higher education institutions in developing civic identity in their graduates (Harkavy Puckett 1994). This relates to the civic engagement work of nonprofits (Berry 2005). Knowledge is reciprocally shared between nonprofit organizations, community members, and other stakeholders in any empowerment-oriented community work (Peterson & Zimmerman: 2004). Teaching is implied in collaborative learning as stakeholders situate themselves to both give and receive information through different types of sharing. Stakeholders are both teachers and learners who contribute their knowledge while being open and willing to learn new perspectives and ways of thinking. Collaborative learning is characterized by reciprocity, mutual exploration, and co-production of knowledge (Freie 1970, Bess 2011, Rutherford 2011, Loh 2016). Collaborative learning strategies can apply community building to revitalization processes.

Organizational Learning. Characteristics of collaborative learning have also been established by Organizational Learning theory. Though this work focuses mostly internally on the organization, as opposed to considering the interplay between the organization and the community. It addresses characteristics of collaboration and decision making. Bess's work exploring decision making in nonprofit decision-making addresses structures, practices, and contexts that contribute to collaborative decision making, including facilitating communication, giving members responsibility, and "promoting inquiry, dialogue and critical thinking among

members" (Bess 2011: 238). Community empowerment is about more than mobilizing; it is also about creating space in communities and in institutions where residents can learn from others and also teach others. Learning happens when there is trust (Isobell et al. 2016, Camino & Zeldin 2002). Trust happens when there are stories, celebrations, and transparent systems. The theoretical model identifies community engagement strategies that contribute to sustained empowerment in under-resourced communities.

Resident engagement is a nonprofit posture and process that involves reciprocal teaching and learning between nonprofit and resident actors in defining quality of life in the community which informs subsequent development and design of the community (Arnstein 1969, Kreztman & McKnight 1996, Innes & Booher 2004, Moulton & Eckard 2012). A value of civic engagement within an organization "strengthens other, non-service provision outcomes" (Moulton & Eckerd 2012:674). In Chaskin's study of community-based organizations in Baltimore, Boston, and Portland, civic engagement was viewed as a primary strength of the organizations by government officials, neighborhood association members, and organization staff (Chaskin 2003: 172). When community actors are working together to co-create, access to capital is transferred and exchanged within relationships to make empowerment possible. Learning is a key facilitator of this exchange.

Theoretical Framework

The literature establishes several themes that are involved in collaborative planning processes that work toward community empowerment. When nonprofit collaborations engage in these strategies through collaboration with community members, they are building civic capacity in the community by leveraging assets and resources that exist there. Characteristics of collaborative learning and shared ownership, like long-term partnership and join inquiry, are

needed throughout capacity building work (Dewey 2007, Loh 2016). Collaborative learning processes constantly *apply* community context and *seek* civic capacity, navigating the path from processes to iterative outcomes using particular strategies. Strategies established in the literature include celebrating the community and building resident leadership. After a variety of community actors work together to initiate one of these strategies, the impact and outcomes of the work are unpacked through reflection and evaluation that involves not only funders, but also residents (Silver 2004). These relationships are described below, and each theme is described in more detail.

Emphasize collaborative learning. Both education and planning scholars value learning informed by relationships, communities, and experiences as a transformative process that can achieve empowerment (Schon 1987, Dewey 2007, Innes & Booher 2010). When there is emphasis placed on learning together, a variety of actors are seen as knowledge experts who have the capacity to both teach and learn. An interest in the process of learning suggests a balance between action and reflection which leads to improved social change outcomes informed by community context.

Learn and share community context. Like learning, attention to organizational and community context remains constant throughout social change work. A key aspect of the literature is attention to norms, experiences, and priorities where social change work is taking place (Krutzmann & McKnight 1996, Sandercock 2003, Lake & Zitcer 2012). In nonprofit work, resources can shift over time and the ways strategies are implemented is a reflection not only of the environment in the surrounding community, but also of the organizational environment.

Celebrate the community. Celebration in the community emerged as a specific strategy that builds trust between a variety of community actors and establishes a shared sense of place

(Goodman et al. 1998, Gonzales 2017). Also, celebrating small wins in a community over time is an important way of maintaining momentum and participation when the long-term outcomes related to community empowerment can still feel unachievable in the day-to-day work.

Building resident leadership. Civic capacity in the community cannot be built without the establishment of community leadership. Establishing resident leadership in a community where residents have previously been marginalized from decision-making processes involves intentional trust building and mobilization (Chaskin et al. 2003, Bowen et al. 2010). Building leadership also involves incorporating resident leaders in decision-making and ownership opportunities.

Evaluating and reflecting on the work with the community. As a variety of actors implement new kinds of social change work in the community together, it is important for the community to be involved in reflection and evaluation that connects to the work (Silver 2004). Participation in civic or nonprofit work can often be a burden for communities lacking civic capacity (Sunggeun et al. 2018). For this reason, it is important to evaluate and reflect using relational strategies that do not burden or overpromise outcomes to the community.

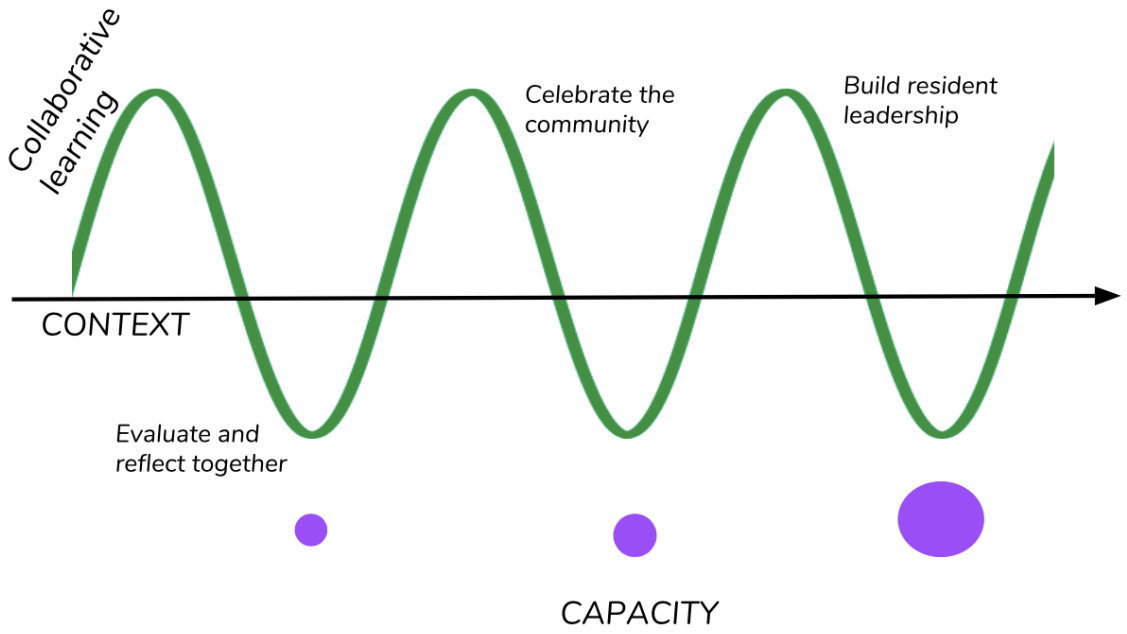


Image 1. The Role of Collaborative Learning in the Development of Civic Capacity

These people-focused strategies emphasize applying community context and community resources to change in the built environment, rather than the other way around. These are time-intensive strategies that may require the sacrifice of more technical work at certain stages of collaboration. These strategies are often developed and leveraged by nonprofit organizations. When the nonprofit collaboration situates a variety of actors to engage these strategies, the organization is has moved beyond service provision and is aiming toward resident empowerment and resident ownership. The strategies demonstrate a interest in collaborative processes and radical, empowerment oriented outcomes. These nonprofit strategies incorporate a variety of community stakeholders into a collaborative process where shared ownership is established through learning processes that value multiple kinds of community knowledge.

The strategies are broad and the cycle is iterative because relational work takes time. This cycle prioritizes the development of civic capacity as an outcome. Revitalization projects provide a laboratory for learning where contextual understanding and shared inquiry of the space informs

implementation. When nonprofit collaborators learn, celebrate, build leadership, and reflect, together, they are situated to equip the community with that civic capacity. The community can then leverage existing assets and resources while gaining opportunities and access to new resources. Collaborative learning is critical to civic capacity and revitalization because a mutual exchange occurs that informs the shared understanding of quality of life in a community.

Chapter III: Methodology

I used a single case study design to examine the nonprofit collaborative efforts that are applying community resources to planning and revitalization work to build civic capacity. Nonprofit and community revitalization in the Richmond neighborhood of Highland Park between 2011 and 2017 was examined through a case study that included interviews, observation, and document analysis. This particular case involved the collaborative roles of neighborhood champions, political and otherwise; the philanthropic community; and nonprofit organizations.

Planners and planning actors have long been critiqued in the literature for lacking reflection, holding onto power, and making decisions without citizen input (Sandercock 2003, Schon 1987). North Highland Park was selected because the approach of nonprofit organizations towards revitalization over the last seven years has prioritized a people-focused approach involving community building and community organizing strategies. The collaborations and actions of Highland Park community engagement actors seemed to be different from the typical situations that led to these theoretical critiques of planning practice, creating the rationale for a single case study (Yin 2003). In order to better understand the story of this particular case, and its implications for collaborative planning work, two research questions were addressed:

> How are nonprofits and their collaborators facilitating revitalization in Highland Park?
> What kinds of strategies are seen as important for future community collaboration in Highland Park?

The case study applies planning theory to data about nonprofit collaborative approaches in Highland Park. The story of civic engagement in Highland Park between 2011 and 2017 is a system in and of itself that has specific ways of knowing and operating (Stake 1995). The data allowed for an ethnographic interpretation that seeks to "optimize the opportunity of the reader to

gain an experiential understanding of the case" (Stake 1996). These new understandings provided space for involved actors and researchers to reflect on the "behavior, issues, and contexts" of the civic engagement that unfolded (Stake 1996). Rich description and analysis of community engagement processes in Highland Park over the last six years revealed the case as a particular world with its own norms, expectations, structures, and values. Grounded theory, "a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed," was used throughout the setup, collection, and analysis process (Corbin & Strauss 1990). Stories revealed through descriptions of collaboration are valuable in planning practice because shared power can be held in narratives which are relational (Sandercock 2003). I relied on qualitative methods, including interviews, content analysis, and observation, to study the case.

Reflective Practice & Reflexivity

Returning to a community where I have worked in the past situates me to reflect on my work and my role in it, which informs my future work (Schon 1987). Between 2008 and 2012, I mentored youth at the Youth Life Highland Park learning center and spent two summers teaching at the center, which is just a few blocks from the 6 Points. During the summer of 2011, I was awarded a civic fellowship to complete ethnographic research at the Highland Park learning center. I studied anthropology at my undergraduate institution, and my experience with ethnographic analysis in Highland Park informs this analysis. My initial academic training to produce a "thick description" of a place and its people (Geertz 1973) informs my interviews and analysis of revitalization work in Highland Park. As a planner with an anthropological background, I am interested in the cultural and social reality of nonprofit collaborations in Highland Park.

From 2012-2015, I coordinated over 200 UR students each semester to volunteer at nonprofits in Northside. My work in the neighborhood complicated my own understanding of community development and I was often wondered how to intentionally "do with" without "doing for," or if empowerment without cooptation was possible. The Bonner Center for Civic Engagement informed my understanding of reciprocal community partnerships and how to develop, nurture, and assess them. Now, as a planning student, I return to an examination of nonprofit organizations with a different perspective on the increasingly critical role these organizations play in planning practice that aims to incorporate diverse perspectives.

Nonprofit organizations create community spaces. While planners frequently focus on revitalizing communities, relational organizations can see existing assets that are integral to any intervention that claims to improve the lives of under-resourced populations. I will be situated to ask interview questions with knowledge of some past community engagement and collaboration in Highland Park. I approach this project as a planning student, though in the past I have approached this neighborhood as a volunteer coordinator. This project is situated in between the public and nonprofit sector, which is also where I find myself, personally and professionally.

Identifying Data for the Case

The case involves actors in Highland Park who are nonprofit staff, residents, funders, or government officials. Ryan Rinn is a key informant who has been both a community organizer and nonprofit staff person in the community. In 2017, the 6 PIC Innovation Center hired a consultant to complete an organizational strategic plan. As part of the strategic planning process, consultant Ebony Walden completed stakeholder interviews. Walden's notes from these interviews were analyzed for this project. I worked with Ryan Rinn and consultant Ebony Walden to identify data and participants and communicate my goals and timeline. Document

analysis for the project included the North Highland Park Quality of Life Plan completed in 2011 and the 6 PIC Innovation Center strategic plan, completed in 2017.

Semi-Structured Interviews & Site Analysis Meetings

I relied on a snowballing interview technique to gradually complete interviews and gain references for further interviews from participants. In this way, I was able to gradually build a collection of related data until I had interviewed a variety of Highland Park actors whose interviews produced theoretically similar categories. I used "theoretical sampling" to collect data about collaborations in North Highland Park that reflect my theoretical model that involves revitalization and the role of collaboration in empowerment (Bowen 2008). As Bowen notes, "an appropriate sample is composed of participants who best represent of have knowledge of the research topic" (2008). Together, the interview participants represent recent revitalization collaborations in Highland Park and were able to provide theoretical saturation regarding themes regarding processes and outcomes in nonprofit revitalization work in Highland Park (Table 2).

Through semi-structured interviews, I asked questions and collected data that details how nonprofits are facilitating collaboration in the Highland Park community and what strategies actors hope to use in future collaborations. Interview questions were built from the initial research questions (Table 3). Each interview lasted about one hour. I kept an interview log to track contact schedules and respondent background information. During interviews, data was collected through my notes and recordings of the interview.

Table 2. Interview Participants

Last Name	First Name	Title
Fleming	Veronica	LISC Program Manager; Executive Director, Partnership for Families
Harnsburger	Giles	Executive Director, Saving Our Youth

Irons	Rand	2014 UR Civic Fellow with LISC
McDonnough	Jackie	Resident
Rinn	Ryan	City of Richmond Community Organizer; Executive Director, Storefront for Community Design
Rollins	Meghan	Executive Director, Boaz & Ruth
Streett	Candice	Executive Director, LISC
Summerfield	Elaine	Community Foundation
White	Jo	Executive Director, Saving Our Youth, Resident

Table 3. Interview Questions

Research Question	**Related Interview Questions**
How are nonprofits and their collaborators facilitating revitalization in Highland Park?	What were your goals when you/your organization first began doing engagement or revitalization work in Highland Park? How have the goals changed, and why? What skills and strategies were used to reach your goals? What resources were required? Describe opportunities for participants/stakeholders to learn from one another. How was "successful" nonprofit work in the community defined and by whom?
What kinds of strategies are seen as important for future community collaboration in Highland Park?	How can 6 PIC partners embody innovation over the next three years? By 2019, what will 6 PIC be known for? What need can 6 PIC fill that is not already being served in the Richmond community?

Content Analysis & Observation

The document analysis of the Quality of Life Plan and the 6 PIC strategic plan provided a record of collaborative activity as well as language that demonstrates how community engagement was perceived. Coding was completed using the software, MAXQDA. In addition to the interviews I also attended three community meetings that connected with collaborative nonprofit work in Northside. These included a nonprofit community health meeting attended by ten organizations working to improve health and equity in Northside; a community screening and panel discussion of a film on trauma hosted by a foundation that has funded the 6 PIC Innovation Center; and a history panel lecture focused on the initial development of, and current revitalization work in, Northside. I wrote memos following these observation opportunities that were coded using MAXQDA. These opportunities allowed me to observe any similarities or differences between interview content and current collaborative work, which informed the final themes that emerged from the data.

Table 4. Storefront Consultant Interviews

Name	**Organization**	**Kind of Participant/Stakeholder**
Art Burton	Community Member	Community Member
Duron Chavis	Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden	Nonprofit Staff
Jo White	Saving Our Youth	Nonprofit Staff/Resident
Taekia Glass	Art 180	Nonprofit Staff
Amy Harris	Career Cruiser	Richmond City Public Schools
Elaine Summerfield	The Community Foundation	Funder
Mark Constantine	Richmond Memorial Health Foundation	Funder
Toria Edmunds	RVA Futures	City of Richmond Staff
Catherine Long, Elizabeth Theriault, Isacc Montero	RCHD Staff	Richmond City Health District Staff
Meghan Gough	Assistant Professor, VCU Wilder School	University Professor
Ellen Robertson	6 District Councilwoman	Government Official

Giles Harnsburger	Groundwork RVA	Nonprofit Staff

Table 5. Observations

Observation /Event	Location	Date	Involved Organizations
Northside Strong meeting	Partnership for Families	February 5, 2018	40 + community organizations in Northside facilitated by Richmond City Health District
Community film screening of the documentary *Resilience* and panel discussion	Chesterfield Career and Technical Center @Hull	Tuesday, February 13, 2018	Sponsored by Leadership Metro Richmond and the Robins Foundation (a 6PIC donor)
2018 Lecture Series: The History, Development and Revitalization of Northside Streetcar Suburbs	The Branch House	Thursday, February 22, 2018	Historic Richmond

Data Analysis & Precedents

Data analysis involved coding, analyzing the codes, and categorizing the codes to theoretical concepts. Grounded theory suggests movement from codes, to concepts, to categories, and to theoretical propositions (Corbin and Strauss 1990, Pandit 1996). I relied on deductive reasoning to link my theoretical model to interview questions and a priori codes. The predetermined codes were informed by literature surrounding nonprofit empowerment work and were primarily descriptive codes describing different community needs, assets, resources, and revitalization strategies used by nonprofit organizations. The data analysis involved doing a close read of each piece of data and relating descriptions to words in the code (Miles & Huberman 1984). Data was coded and analyzed using MAXQDA.

I created a separate MAXQDA coding files for interviews reflecting on strategies and approaches to date and interviews focused on the future of the 6 PIC Innovation Center. These pools of data related to two different research questions and had distinct purposes. I also used inductive reasoning after each interview to identify any codes that were not predetermined, but

that surfaced during the interview. New codes added strategies, approaches, and descriptions not in the literature. The constant comparative method was used throughout the process (Bowen 2008). An inventory of skills, tools and resources that were key to nonprofit collaboration was built throughout the interview process, made up of the original open codes. I began to group, or cluster, the open codes into a variety of related axial codes that are broader descriptive categories than the original coding list (Bowne 2008). Finally, the axial codes were prioritized by identifying the central themes in the data and situating other categories around the central themes reflective of consistent patterns in the data. I relied on multiple data sources and triangulation to check for consistency in the themes in the data. Once the snowball interview method had gathered a pool of data with several consistent theoretical themes, data saturation had been reached, collection stopped, and a close analysis of the theoretical themes began.

Chapter IV: Data Analysis

North Highland Park is a place where nonprofit organizations are collaborating with residents and other stakeholders to respond to build civic capacity. Discriminatory planning community processes and outcomes contributed to a lack of civic capacity in Highland Park characterized by isolation, segregation, lack of capital, and trauma. While the community does possess a variety of assets and resources, civic capital enables assets and resources to be linked to planning and development processes and outcomes within the community (Saegert 2006). Collaboration between a variety of community stakeholders is necessary in communities lacking civic capacity (Innes and Booher 2005). Collaborations that prioritize civic capacity throughout the process of revitalization work leads to resident empowerment (Saegert 2006). The nonprofit sector can allocate staff resources on the neighborhood level to collaborative intentionally with a variety of stakeholders who together contribute to innovative community work that develops leadership in the community (Dodge & Ospina 2015, Hardina 2006). The data demonstrates that seeking empowerment of Highland Park residents is a consistent goal for a variety of community stakeholders. This chapter will describe the theoretically grounded themes in a theory of practice that builds off of the literature model.

Relating data to the literature model

As described in the methodology chapter, original codes from the data were categorized. For the pool of data focused on "present" work in Highland Park, themes focused on the "how" of revitalization and engagement work in Highland Park. For the pool of data focused on "future" work in Highland Park, themes focused on the "what" of future revitalization and engagement work in Highland Park. These categories were broken into broader axial themes that contextualize relationships between codes. Finally, "selective coding" shifted axial themes to key

categories of data about nonprofit work in Highland Park (Strauss and Corbin 1990). Themes emerged from the data that echoed nonprofit strategies articulated by the literature.

Table 6. Coding Labels

Question	Axial Code
Ebony Walden Interviews	
By 2019, what will 6 PIC be known for?	• Leveraging community resources to meet community needs • Model for the city of intentional partnership and citizen empowerment
What need can 6 PIC fill that is not already being served in the Richmond community?	• Flexible, community-oriented space • Support establishment of shared sense of community and community pride • Cultivate resident leadership
Grace Leonard Interviews	
What were your/your organization's goals when you began work in Highland Park?	• Build trust. • Listen to the community. • Establish relationships.
Have the goals changed over time? What are your goals now?	• Focus on building resident leadership, specifically with youth • Address the community identified need of community safety • Engage with existing small businesses
What strategies and skills were used to reach the goals?	• Learning community context through data and relationships. • Be flexible and adaptable. • Be willing to share ownership.
What resources have been critical to the work?	• Sustainable funding • People-focused collaborators • Partners with technical revitalization skills • Partners with education skills
Describe a time when stakeholders learned from one another.	• Designing or problem solving together

How would you define successful nonprofit work in Highland Park?	• Youth leadership • Resident ownership of spaces and processes • Improved quality of life

The data analysis revealed two axial codes, collaborative learning and reflection. These two themes tied closely to theoretical strategies for empowerment identified in the literature but gained new context and description from Highland Park participants that led to more specific theoretical description that tie these terms more closely to revitalization.

A third emergent code, innovation, was not identified in the literature, but was frequently used in both sets of interviews. The use of the term innovation in interviews was related to two empowerment strategies that surfaced in the literature involving legitimizing resident ownership through revitalization decision-making processes and plans. Finally, three emergent themes are adaptability, creativity, and fostering youth leadership through innovation.

Case studies of neighborhood nonprofit community engagement rely on qualitative methods. Silver, Gonzalez, and Foster-Fishman are all single case studies that focus on nonprofit or philanthropic interventions in a community (Gonzalez 2017, Foster-Fishman 2006, Silver 2004). These studies all relied on interviews with individuals involved in the collaborative efforts. Silver was examining collaborative efforts in Chicago over multiple years and also completed content analysis of memos and meeting minutes (Silver 2004). Gonzalez was studying collaborations as they were happening, and also actively attending many "meeting, events and information sessions" to gather ethnographic data (Gonzalez 2017: 1143). These recent case studies demonstrate a conceptual framework focusing on nonprofit and government actors, their motivations, how they made decisions, and other factors influencing collaboration. The next chapter will analyze the themes that emerged in the data regarding people-focused revitalization strategies implemented by nonprofit collaborators.

Nonprofit actors in Highland Park are interested in moving beyond the traditional service provision of the sector to build civic capacity through people-focused programming and revitalization work. Organizations which are working to strengthen resources in Highland Park find that they are frequently under-resourced as organizations, themselves. The ability of organizations to learn alongside a variety of partners and stakeholders, both by choice and by necessity, is key to the survival of the community collaboration, but it also can mean sacrificing other organizational functions (Hardina 2006, Bess et al. 2011, G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 8, 2018). The nonprofit sector itself acts as a bridge between the public sector, the private sector, and community residents (Dale 2008). It is not the case that one stakeholder is the "expert" another is the "learner." Rather, collaborative actors in Highland Park, which here include residents, funders and nonprofit staff, are interested in shared ownership that works toward shared goals throughout the process of building civic capacity.

Strategies for Building Civic Capacity in Highland Park

Nonprofit staff in Highland Park collaborate with funders, residents, business owners, and higher education institutions to improve quality of life in the community. There is evidence that nonprofit collaborators are interested in the skills and resources required to initiate people-focused approaches to the community's civic capacity throughout revitalization work. Several collaborative strategies are described in the table below. Five were established by the literature: emphasizing collaborative learning; celebrate the community; build resident leadership; evaluate and reflect on the work with the community. Three strategies emerged in the data that are tied to collaborative learning: adaptability; creativity; and fostering youth leadership through innovation. The emergent themes relate to aspects of collaborative or organizational learning (Sparrow 2016, Loh 2016, Romero et al. 2012). The data demonstrates that collaborative

learning is an aspect of community engagement that seeks to incorporate multiple kinds of knowledge into community planning processes and outcomes. Celebrating the community and building resident leadership were two specific, active strategies in the literature that involve applying community context and community residents into community engagement work. Collaborative evaluation and reflection follows implementation and involves a variety of diverse community actors in defining the successes and failures of their shared endeavors, considering the impact of their work on the community, and identifying future improvements in the work. The emergent themes, creativity, adaptability, and fostering youth leadership through innovation, are aspects of collaborative learning that relate reflection to implementation of revitalization work. These are characteristics or aspects of collaborative learning that enable collaborative actors to embrace new ideas, develop shared goals, and move through conflict throughout the process.

Eight collaborative strategies involve collaborative learning to build civic capacity. Collaborative learning is the catalyst that moves throughout the process in Highland Park as an overarching capacity that ultimately seeks the establishment of civic capacity which equips the community to own and lead revitalization work.

Table 7. Collaborative Strategies for Revitalization

Strategies	*Symptom it addresses*	*When this strategy is used*	*Intended Outcomes*
A priori Themes			
Emphasize collaborative learning	Distrust (Lee et al, 2012; Walker 2014). Racism (Stroble 2006). Disempowerment/ "sense of alienation from mainstream society" (Hardina 2006: 4). Power held by institutions (Bowen 2010).	When the actors are trustworthy in the community (Lee et al., 2012: 620). When space is created for residents to share their perspective (Hardina 2006: 490). "Contextual factors" can impact learning in community-based organizations (Bess 2011). When a nimble organization is open to change while also staying aligned with their overarching mission (M. Rollins, personal communication February 21, 2018, Berry 2005). When collaborators who are sharing ownership have identified shared expectations (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 9, 2018, C. Street, personal communication, March 8, 2018).	Storytelling networks (Kim & Ball-Rokeach 2006). Trust within the community and between institutions and community members (Chavis 1990; Sandercock 2003). Stronger planning outcomes (Walker 2014). Resident ownership of revitalization processes and outcomes (G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 9, 2018).
Learn and Share Community Context	Apathy, perceptions of fear, lack of pride within community (Zimmerman & Rapport 1988, Goodman 1998, Chaskin 2003, Gonzales 2017	When trust has been established (Chaskin 2003, Dale 2008, J. McDonnough, personal communication, March 6, 2018).	Participation of the community in revitalization work (Dale 2008, Lake 2016).
Celebrate the community	Apathy, perceptions of fear, lack of pride within community (Zimmerman & Rapport 1988, Goodman 1998, Chaskin 2003, Gonzales 2017)	When occurring both inside and outside the organization to motivate participation of staff and residents (Hardina 2006). When focused on community assets (Krezman et al, 1996). Naming celebration is important because it provides a clear path to developing a "sense of community" (Goodman 1998),	Pride in community (Chavis 1990), improved planning outcomes (Portney & Cuttler 2010), trust of staff actors inside and outside the organization (Lee 2012, Hardina 2006). Legitimizing the organization in the community (Byron et al., 2015). Demonstrates "valuing residents" (Gonzales 2017: 1148).
Build resident leadership/	Organization as expert (Sandercock 2003, R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018). Disempowerment/ "sense of alienation from mainstream society" (Hardina 2006: 4).	When resident has the time and flexibility to be an active participant and is bought-in to the goals of the work (Drier 1996, Foster-Fishman et al. 2006). When the nonprofit organization has both philanthropic and community organizing capacity to steward a	Effective partnerships and relationships that achieve collaboration (Bowen 2011). Providing residents with decision-making power (Hardina 2006). Empowers residents to define quality of life for themselves and own

		new process. (Foster-Fishman 2006).	community change work (Drier 1996).
Evaluate and reflect on the work with the community	Power held by institutions (Bowen 2010), programs limited by expert knowledge rather than incorporating local knowledge (Foster-Fishman 2006, Walker 2014). Differing perception of community needs (Kissane 2004).	When the above strategies are in use/have already been used. When there is leadership development involved (Gonzalez 2017, Bowen 2010, Chaskin 2003).	Situates community members as "members" and "experts" (Dodge & Ospina 2016). Institution building (Christens et al., 2011), (Sites et al., 2007). Plans for not only programming, but also for governance (Chaskin 2003).
Emergent Themes			
Be adaptable	Rigid expectations of resident engagement processes (Sandercock 2003, J. McDonnough, March 6, 2018).	When the collaborators remain rooted in their mission while adapting to environmental change (M. Rollins, personal communication February 21, 2018). When strategic collaborative opportunities are presented	Communities are ever-changing environments and adaptable collaborations are sustainable because they adjust when new information is learned or strategies need to change (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, M. Rollins, personal communication, February 16, 2018).
Be creative in applying community assets to community needs	Rigid expectations of resident engagement processes (Sandercock 2003, J. McDonnough, March 6, 2018).	When there is trust between collaborators (J. McDonnough, personal communication, March 6, 2018)	New kinds of engagement and revitalization work that is locally appropriate and relevant. New ideas that move away from engagement processes which have fostered isolation and distrust (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018).
Fostering youth leadership through innovation	Discrimination of black youth in sentencing and isolation of black youth from economic opportunities (Ginwright & James 2002). Age segregation in the US which isolates youth from civic engagement and leadership (Camino & Zeldin 2002).	When ownership, youth-adult partnership, and facilitative policies and structures are in place (Camino & Zeldin 2002, V. Fleming, personal communication, February 13, 2018). Incorporate healing, spiritual development, sociopolitical development, and decision making (Ginwright & James 2002).	Improving quality of life for black youth (G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 9, 2018). Improving the level of civic engagement among black youth.

A priori Themes

Emphasize Collaborative Learning. The data demonstrates that learning together is a critical people-focused bridge between civic capacity and revitalization that seeks empowerment. There is evidence that learning does not happen during a particular stage in engagement or revitalization work, but that is a vehicle which seeks empowerment and relates people to place throughout collaborative work. Nonprofit collaborators in Highland Park are gaining contextual information and diverse perspectives about the community that they believe will inform sustainable, community owned, revitalization.

Contextual community narratives inform an individual's sense of a place. Sandercock elevates the role of storytelling in planning practice. In places of contention, where there is lack of trust, "it was this story-ing that got people past 'my needs versus your needs' and on to some 'higher ground' moving toward common purpose" (Sandercock 2003:15). Empowering individuals in a particular place involves bringing in new resources, but also preserving aspects of the culture which provide common identity, memories, and traditions (Hayden 1997). Stories craft narratives that elevate the characteristics of a culture. Sometimes this information will be uncovered through oral communication, and sometimes community culture is revealed through art (Sandercock 2003:17). When nonprofit organizations situate themselves to do work informed by the community's stories, it moves beyond the simplified report of needs and assets and towards deeper truths about people who dwell in the community.

This collaborative learning is grounded in an interest in prioritizing shared ownership from beginning to end of the work (Bowen et al. 2010). Sustainable interventions in the built environment require the leadership of community members (Stoecker 1997, Hawkins & Wang 2012). A variety of technical and relational skills are required by revitalization and nonprofit

organizations facilitate the transmission of these skills and topics from one stakeholder to another (Hardina 2006, Hawkins & Wang 2012). Thus, in "revitalizing" urban environments, community members determine strategies by learning from multiple knowledge sets. Developing civic capacity in Highland Park requires the transmission of knowledge throughout the process.

Collaborative learning is relational and involves listening and sharing with others. Nonprofit collaborators described how working to share knowledge situated the collaboration to equip community leaders. Participation, alone, is about community organizing (Dreier 1996). Partnership, alone, is about using an advocacy-focused strategy to improve institutional outcomes and foster competition between organizations (Sites, et al. 2007). Collaborative learning situates these three strategies to see people-focused outcomes in the work involving the improvement of the quality of life for the residents of Highland Park (Loh 2016). Ryan Rinn described his initial goals in Highland Park when he first began working on the Quality of Life as a graduate student. He describes the importance of gathering information about people in a place before initiating a plan or ideas.

> Initially as a student, [my goal in Highland Park] was just using the senses to try and decide and decipher what this place was and how I could be of service and of use in a place I knew nothing about. Um, I think as I met more people and as more people welcomed me to places of worship or businesses or front porches or into their homes, I became much more focused about quality of life, and what that means. (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018)

Ryan describes a process of building trust in which he is learning more about the community as the community is learning more about him. His initial goals were to learn more about the place from the people who worked and lived there.

Likewise, Veronica Fleming discusses time building relationships as critical to reaching LISC's goals to "gather people's interest around some specific projects." She describes the need

for extensive and dedicated time in the place where revitalization is to take place in order for collaborative actors to understand the needs and assets in the community.

> In all honesty the most important asset is time. Because time on the ground, and the time working with families was the most important thing, and yet it was the least available thing. Because that's what it takes to change how a community sees itself. Is that one on one, building relationships with individuals, cultivating their ability to build relationships with each other. Opportunities for them to come together, plan, decide. (V. Fleming, personal communication, February 13, 2018)

Veronica describes time as a key resource for intentionally partnering with the community to learn community context. She describes the role that applying community context and relationships play in building civic capacity for community-led decision-making.

Candice Streett, executive director at LISC, highlights that collaboration involves making mistakes when she discusses skills required to achieve LISC's goals in community organizing and revitalization. "Admit when you make a mistake. None of us are perfect. Admit that you're—we are all learning here—is really key to developing that trust with the neighborhood" (C. Streett, personal communication, March 8, 2018). She makes a connection between learning, and trust being established for community work to be successful (Loh 2016, Goodman 1990). All stakeholders are situated as contributors with the capacity to learn, and especially nonprofit organizations coming into Highland Park must be sensitive to misunderstandings and mistakes in relational collaboration.

Organizations that seek empowerment through innovation must be situated to welcome shared ownership of the work from the beginning of a particular process or plan. Shared ownership is an aspect of collaborative learning that fosters continued collaboration. For example, when asked about key strategies for achieving LISC's goals in community development work in Highland Park, executive director Candice Street named an ability to collaborate with others: "One attribute you have to have is a willingness to partner. Shared

ownership" (C. Streett, personal communication, March 8, 2018). Her attention to collaborative leadership demonstrates an interest in developing goals with the community that will lead to outcomes that the community calls successful and that the community is interested in sustaining. While one goal of a nonprofit collaboration in Highland Park may be focused on the built environment, an organization that is seeking civic capacity must have the capacity to establish shared ownership in revitalization processes and outcomes from the initiation of the work to its completion (Saegert 2006, Leyden 2017). Shared ownership at the beginning lays the groundwork for resident ownership at the end.

Organizations which work within under-resourced minority communities take time to get to know the people and the context within that community. In a black community that has created its own norms in reaction to racism and distrust, an organization that is white, has ties to government officials, or is a public institution, must prove that it is going to operate differently, and favor thriving communities for black residents (Lee 2012). "Community organizations play storytelling linkage roles in the overall communication infrastructure model of civic engagement" (Kim & Rokeach 2006). For staff who aim to empower residents, learning and sharing context is about apology, humility, curiosity, and commitment. Empowerment work of nonprofit staff frequently situates them as organizers, and the strategies used by organizers to bring about empowerment and social change can range from "more formal to less formal" depending on the community context (Chaskin 2003). Part of learning community context is about collecting quantitative data about the place, for example, completing a demographic analysis. Significant, also, is listening to residents in a generous and thoughtful way.

The 6 PIC Innovation Center recently completed a strategic planning process to define their goals. The collaborative describes its vision as a process of sharing knowledge. Constant

collaboration in Highland Park is not always necessary, or productive (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018). However, strong, future partnerships are seen by 6 PIC stakeholders as critical to meeting the organization's mission to equip youth as community leaders (D. Chavis, 2017, T. Glass 2017, M. Gough, 2017).

An organization interested in empowerment has structures in place that are people-focused (Hardina 2006). Giles Harnsburger, executive director of Groundwork RVA, one of the collaborators at the 6 PIC Innovation Center, described a shared ownership as a necessity to reach organizational goals and also a challenge that requires strong trust with other actors, and a willingness to sacrifice other core organizational functions for the sake of collaboration at various points. Pulling off collaborative work was described as requiring her to "maintain a hustle and maintain a desire that is outside of the business approach" (G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 8, 2018).

Collaborative learning requires substantial time and investment in relational strategies. The learning together is itself both a process and a product of the work. These examples demonstrate that learning cannot be associated with a particular stage or aspect of revitalization work.

Celebrate the community. Celebration is rarely addressed directly in the literature as a strategic goal, but when it is, it is seen as a way of building civic capacity that focuses on community assets. Gonzalez describes the work of community organizers to host barbecues and create "communal spaces" in abandoned lots in the community (Gonzalez 2017: 1148). Though doing work and making decision with community members is ultimately necessary for empowerment to take place, celebration has fewer barriers to participation. Celebration is a way of validating assets that is seen and heard by the community. It also builds trust which may be lacking

between residents and nonprofit organizations or local governments (Lee et al., 2012). Participation with the nonprofit organization is contingent on residents seeing the organization as legitimate (Byron et al., 2015, Chaskin 2003). When describing effective strategies for community engagement with LISC in Highland Park, Veronica Fleming discussed the importance of celebration and project completion in maintaining community trust.

> I think it was always important to keep folks coming to the table and keep folks believing that something would happen. And working on some of those small projects that people could visibly see some things changing. But, so we did a small façade improvement project where we, around the commercial corridor. The paint, we put up some flower and some urns and we did some weekly community—monthly community—clean ups on Saturdays along with those leaders—I think those really helped to keep at least something happening at least until we could do something bigger. And it is the bigger stuff that really makes the major difference. Makes people believe. Now you've got housing, and you've got the roundabout, and you've got larger reinvestment in the commercial corridor. So, I think it's going to continue. (V. Fleming, personal communication, February 13, 2018)

Likewise, Veronica's intern during the summer of 2014, Rand Irons describes what he learned about community development as an intern with LISC by talking about the iterative nature of improvements and community change work in Highland Park.

> I think it is really about consistency and incremental improvements. Even if it is just like, stripping paint off an abandoned building and painting over it. Do that once a month. If people see changes happening, they start believing that something i*s* happening, even if it is sort of small. You have to have this long-term vision in mind but you have to do all the little stuff in between, and you have a clear idea of what that little stuff might be, while also respecting the needs of the residents and the decisions that are made and the direction that they want to take. It's a fine balancing act and I think that's the reason why…this is my own reflection, but I think this is the reason why a lot of this type of stuff ends up failing, especially with a bottom up approach to development because it's sort of, it's often driven by money in a short time frame, and this type of stuff is not short. (R. Irons, personal communication, February 21, 2018)

Rand and Veronica indicate that it is the community, and not funders, who ultimately must determine whether a collaborative nonprofit intervention in Highland Park works or not.

Celebration of the community by multiple stakeholders also creates common bonds outside

of a decision-making context. Likewise, cultivating communal spaces within the community that bring multiple stakeholders together can also publicly elevate the community's assets to funders and local governments. Planning community events is also an important exercise for nonprofit staff. Events should be comfortable, relevant, and well-advertised for community residents. Such work empowers nonprofit staff to collaborate with each other and other stakeholders (Hardina 2006). Taking time to celebrate the community builds community capacity and morale. Candice Streett adds to the description of the role of Highland Park in measuring the outcomes of the work when she talks about a personal interaction she had with a resident of the community that was to her, a significant measure of the success of nonprofit collaborative efforts.

> The Spring Fling was so much fun last year. And some of that is a testament to the 6PIC being open, but it is also a testament to folks feeling more engaged—like someone said to me, I feel like I own my neighborhood now. Well, that's a good thing. At the end of the day, that's what we want—people to own their neighborhoods. (C. Streett, personal communication, March 8, 2018)

The focus on community ownership demonstrates the importance of moving beyond the traditional community meeting prior to a community intervention, to seeking community evaluation and opinions on an intervention after the work is done. Like other strategies, this strategy demonstrates that nonprofit innovators face a tension of seeking both presence and absence as they essentially try to work themselves out of the job by seeking community ownership in Highland Park.

Build resident leadership. Ultimately, empowerment values the reduction of nonprofit presence, which is a risk for an organization that has worked to gain legitimacy. Working together to do planning work involves shifting ownership of processes and outcomes to community members. Sustainable funding is critical to the empowerment process in a community (Hardina 2006, Silver 2004). Local grant maker and federal grant makers typically

have very specific requirements for how grants are distributed and how success of the grant is measured (Moulton & Eckerd 2012). Working toward community empowerment will likely take longer than one grant cycle. Despite incorporating nonprofits into decision-making processes, philanthropists can tend to prioritize "moderate social changes" which are beneficial to the philanthropist's own image and allow for the continuation of "structural inequities" (Silver 2004: 624). Moving beyond this dynamic involves sustainable funding sources or capital creation within the community. One 6PIC partner organization staff member sees it as important for the training program at 6PIC to be related to the community's need for affordable housing. "Buy property, renovate and figure how to rent it out – either Storefront (choice A) renovate with students and rent out space to occupant and have that fund the space – residential mixed use. Dope, powerful. – game changer- create some affordable housing but also make training program sustainable" (Chavis, D. 2017). The concept describes future work in the community as work that is sustainable and can be sustained by community residents.

Pathways to sustainable funding require the closest collaboration between philanthropists and nonprofit staff. For the funding to truly be sustainable in an empowerment process, there should also be infrastructure and staff resources put in place to do leadership and skill development with residents who will ultimately be stewarding resources (Foster-Fishman et al., 2006). Grant cycles tend to be short-lived and not geographically specific. Creating a sustainable funding structure for one neighborhood requires more collaborative learning, this time between philanthropists and community members. Though nonprofit staff members tend to act as translators and brokers between funders and community members, empowerment of these two groups requires co-creation that is informed by the knowledge of both. Building resident leadership is critical to development of civic capacity.

Evaluate and reflect on the work with the community. In addition to collaborative learning, reflection was a theme established by the literature that was validated and contextualized by the data. Inherent in trying new work in Highland Park is determining the effectiveness of new work. Power in communities is often held by government officials and philanthropists who drive a "revitalization" agenda. Hardina has noted that new, shared decision-making processes through board diversification, is key to empowerment (2006). Nonprofit presence is lessened as the community develops civic identity (Dodge & Ospina 2016). The strategy here names the role of institutions in facilitating sustainable, intra-organizational governance and collaboration (Peterson & Zimmerman 2004; Chaskin 2003). Cross-sector collaborations are "complicated dynamic systems" that involve risk taking (Bryson et al., 2015: 670). Sustainable processes should transmit knowledge about decision making and related resources from organizations to communities. Youth are described as key stakeholders with knowledge that provides important information and context that should be applied to community decision making.

Several participants expressed a desire for the funding evaluation process itself to be returned more closely to the residents of community (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, V. Fleming, personal communication, February 13, 2018, G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 9, 2018). Time to process creative work and determine what occurred and the impact of what occurred is connected to learning. Learning is incomplete without reflection (Loh 2016). Explicit in this relational work is an ebb and flow between reflection and action (Schon 1987, Goodman et al., 1998, Sandercock 2003, Innes & Booher 2004, Peterson & Zimmerman 2004). There is evidence that nonprofit innovators value reflection and do not have time to do it; in fact, one interview participant noted that he was interested in participating in student projects like this one because they allow space for reflection that may not happen

otherwise in the midst of other immediate demands of nonprofit work (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018). Reflection is a capacity that can be applied to two kinds of engagement work: celebration of small wins, and evaluation of programs. Celebration was described as a way to make collaborative revitalization work visible in Highland Park, build civic capacity in the community through community pride, and as a locally-relevant evaluation tool that invites reaction and perspectives from community members.

Emergent Themes

Emergent themes in the data that were distinct from the themes above. The emergent themes gave attention to characteristics of learning together and shared ownership that were key to both collaborative processes and empowerment-oriented outcomes. When asked about the skills, strategies, and resources needed to reach their goals in Highland Park, nonprofit collaborators tended to describe skills and resources, rather than specific strategies, demonstrating the significance of building capacity to do the work within the collaboration as well. Nonprofit organizations must be ready to change the kind of capacity it has as the community and organizational context changes. As the nonprofit collaborators build the capacity to learn together, civic capacity in the community is gradually built. The strategies of adaptability, creativity, and fostering youth leadership through innovation are interested in new ideas and multiple ways of knowing. These strategies are interested in carefully developing context-specific implementation of revitalization work in the community that leverages the knowledge in the community and provides residents access to decision-making processes in the community.

Be adaptive. Nonprofit organizations are flexible, which allows them to be mission-oriented based on the needs and assets of a social group (Kim 2015). Adaptability emerged as

related to collaborative learning. A willingness to change as a collaborative actor is a willingness to admit the value of another's knowledge and perspective about the community (Appadurai 2006, Loh 2016, Lake & Zitcer 2012). The data demonstrates a strong link between a collaborating organization's ability to be adaptable and their ability to learn together. Adaptability is applied to environmental context and was often discussed as a key capacity given the variety of stakeholders involved in nonprofit community work (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, M. Rollins, personal communication, February 16, 2018, G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 8, 2018). When Meghan Rollins, executive director at Boaz & Ruth, was asked about skills used to reach her organization's goals to grow and develop social enterprises in the community, she first talks about a willingness to change.

> Well one [skill required for implementation] is flexibility…. And a willingness to adjust based on factors that are unknown when you were starting out. Or willingness to be curious and to learn. Rather than say, here's my plan, I'm going to set out to implement my plan, and I'm not going to let anything take me off of my prescribed course of action. I haven't seen that be successful. (M. Rollins, personal communication, February 16, 2018).

Rollins links adaptability to a "willingness to learn." Being able to take in new information and apply it is required when responsiveness to a variety of stakeholders is key to the organization's viability (Silver 2004).

Relationships are critical to collaborative learning because a "mutual reflection" of knowledge occurs as trust is being built (Freire 1970). Knowledge is exchanged that allows diverse nonprofit innovators to better understand one another. In the process, actors are learning new information about the social environment, and actors change as the learn from each other (Innes & Booher 2004). Like adaptability, relationships in the community allow the organization's contextual knowledge about the place to become closer to reality on the ground.

Jackie McDonough, a long-time resident, discussed skills required for her civic engagement work as a resident in Highland Park. Her description describes the importance of being open to multiple points of view and letting those points of view inform her understanding of the community.

> Because you know it's really getting to know people and knowing people's stories… just being comfortable with people's different stories, and not having any judgement on it, and that just adds to the fabric. I've tried to work on that. I am a really highly educated person. But then, I'm in a community of people who are at all different levels. And I've worked to reach beyond that… (J. McDonnough, personal communication, March 6, 2018)

Jackie's focus on understanding other's stories is in line with Sandercock's call for the integration of more storytelling in planning work (Sandercock 2003). A community's stories are described as being central to collaborative planning efforts, because they remove the association of the planner as the sole knowledge holder regarding community work.

Be creative. Creativity was discussed as a way to think differently about collaborative work in under-resourced communities that blurred the boundaries of interpersonal organizing and design-oriented revitalization. When community meetings are seen as the traditional way, but perhaps an ineffective way, of gaining community perspectives for the built environment, creativity is required to both mobilize residents and design collaborative revitalization processes in a new way (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018). Community meetings were described as a default engagement strategy in Richmond to some extent, but as an often ineffective one (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018). There are many limiting factors in a resident's ability to participate in community organizing activities (Chavis 1990, Chaskin 2003). Thus, strategies must be creative and hospitable towards the challenges, skepticism, and conflict that are inevitable when people with diverse perspectives begin to collaborate (Sandercock 2003). Creativity is different from adaptability in that it is about applying new strategies or

processes in community work that respond to systemic community needs in new ways. Creativity is an important vehicle for collaborative learning.

Creativity allows learning to happen because it involves trying new things and generating ideas. Idea production leads to a new understanding of what works and what doesn't (Hamalainen & Vahasantanen 2011). One study on collaborative creativity defines creativity as "the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others, and entertaining ourselves and others" (Romero, et a., 2012). Importantly, creativity is situated as not only something an individual has, but also something that becomes produced and "shared" by a group (Romero et al., 2012). Thus, at different points, creative work is both process and outcome. While this definition, like many others regarding creativity in learning, is not focused on revitalization work, the data below demonstrates that nonprofit actors in Highland Park rely on creativity to achieve innovative and empowering community work.

While being interviewed for 6 PIC strategic plan interviews, Elaine Summerfield connected creative work to inspiration and knowledge found in the community when describing the purpose of 6PIC to a consultant. She is responding to a question asking what 6 PIC should be known for. This perspective describes an aspiration of future nonprofit innovation in Highland Park based on Elaine's prior experience in the community as a funder. "Known as a hub of community revitalization… A placemaking hub – but a catalyst for other innovative ideas will come out of it – a place and platform that creative ideas – incubator for community change initiatives" (E. Summerfield 2017). The description links creativity to a place that can spark creativity and foster it in a way that will lead to innovation. The participant draws on the concept of placemaking as a strategy that is a creative way of generating community change. Arts and

culture plays a prominent role in placemaking; as a revitalization strategy, placemaking is interested in development, but the infusion of nonprofit and artistic workers into collaborative placemaking work is a way to pursue both economic capital while valuing the community's assets (Marksen & Gadwa 2010, Kruzmann 1996). Creativity is linked to desirable social change.

One participant in 6PIC consultant interviews, Duran Chavez, a staff member at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, acknowledges that doing work in the community differently requires new ways of thinking that involves linking the assets of the people to the needs of the built environment. The participant is responding to a question asking what other community partners are needed to make 6 PIC a reality. "How are partners tangibly going to improve community and going to work with the neighbors that are already here to lift up the standard of housing and training people in the community do the work themselves" (D. Chavis, 2017). Chaviz is applying contextual information he knows about the community to his thinking about new kinds of nonprofit work in Highland Park. Chaviz is particularly interested in community partnerships that give community residents to ultimately address community needs themselves, rather than needs being addressed by a nonprofit organization. Chaviz is describing community empowerment as being tied to revitalization work. In the literature, community empowerment is often seen as the result of community organizing or mobilizing in under-resourced communities (Peterson & Zimmerman 2004, Camino & Zeldin 2002). The quote goes one step further by seeing empowered residents as not only an outcome, but also as part of a subsequent community-led revitalization process.

Likewise, Ryan Rinn, executive director of Storefront for Community Design, describes the nimbleness required of an organization in Highland Park. His description is in response to a question about how he would define successful community engagement in Highland Park today.

> Yeah, community engagement has to be adaptive, has to be evolutionary based on what is happening there and it really does come from the ground. So, if people are tired of being engaged around safety, something I've seen, I've had people working on safety issues in Highland Park this entire time, from a lot of different perspectives. When people were tired of just taking about the crime is bad here and we need more police, and were tired of talking about a lot of negative things, we changed the conversation to a conversation about the built environment, a conversation about (CPED) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, or a conversation about putting a mural up or beautification or changing a mindset that has an impact on issues of safety but isn't focusing on organizing around, you know, the crime rate is too high. (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018)

He uses the example of safety, which emerged in the data as a commonly identified community need over at least the last eight years and describes how the strategy used by nonprofit collaborators in Highland Park to respond to this issue changed over time. An attitude of creativity sustained community relationships and added complexity to the identified community need of safety.

Elaine Summerfield, former vice president of programs at the Community Foundation, a funder of two Highland Park-based nonprofits, discussed qualities of effective nonprofit collaboration and explained that as a funder, she learned from experience that nonprofit collaborations could not be forced on organizations that didn't have a willingness to adapt to new circumstances.

> "It just takes a certain type of organization and leadership of that organization to be open to learning. I mean, come on, not everybody is curious, right? Some people just think they know, and they think they are fine knowing what they know, and they don't want to know anything else new. So, it takes like an organization that is open to learning and curious and like, you know, wants to do things with others." (E. Summerfield, personal communication, February 2, 2018)

As a funder, Summerfield values organizations who are willing share lessons learned. Just prior

to this reflection on curious organizations, Elaine was describing a funding pitch given by Ryan Rinn and Giles Harnsburger, describing their pitch as "the most compelling presentation--they talked all about the excitement of the youth who are getting engaged, and how things are being created with them, and how that's how you get at real community change, to engage the community in the work…" (E. Summerfield, personal communication, February 2, 2018). Summerfield sees the 6 PIC Innovation Center and its goals as unique and exciting and she saw those involved as collaborative actors.

Foster youth leadership through innovation. Youth are defined as leaders and the collaborative is situated to "equip" youth, situating all stakeholders as participants with resources and capacity to learn from others. "6 PIC is an evolving youth-led, youth-driven community center that is a catalyst for justice throughout the city. We equip youth for career success, civic engagement, and creative expression while supporting resident empowered change" (6 PIC). The nonprofit organization situates itself partially to act, but also to listen and learn, and "equip" youth residents of Highland Park to build civic capacities that will prepare them to own the process and outcomes of community change in their neighborhood. Power exists in collaborative relationships (Sandercock 2003, Gonzalez 2017). In particular, youth bring new approaches that has the potential to improve quality of life in Highland Park through shared innovation of community work.

In Highland Park, collaborative actors describe innovation as a necessity for achieving empowerment. Achieving empowerment was linked to the kinds of citizen ownership described in the literature, and actors described citizen ownership as a desired outcome that has not yet been achieved in a substantive way throughout Highland Park (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, V. Fleming, personal communication, February 13, 2018, M.

Rollins, personal communication, February 16, 2018). It is important to note that while innovation in business often involves the proliferation of many kinds of new business models, as the literature has suggested, new kinds of collaborative work in nonprofit collaboration is about innovative intentionality in community involvement, rather than the proliferation of new programs, projects, or meetings. The later has been ineffective and sometimes harmed trust among collaborators in the past (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, J. McDonnough, personal communication, March 6, 2018). Nonprofit professionals from outside the community indicated that trust did not come easily sometimes, and that seeking empowerment through nonprofit work can often be lonely, because the goals of the work can easily be misunderstood by both residents and funders (G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 8, 2018). Loneliness provides evidence for the risks that collaborators are taking to do revitalization work in ways that do not yet have legitimacy to a variety of stakeholders.

In the data, 6PIC stakeholders frequently tie innovation in the community to youth empowerment. Youth ownership is a defining quality of a pathway to youth civic engagement, described by Camino and Zeldin (2002). The innovation of youth ownership makes room for future innovations designed by youth. One participant, who was a past community organizer in Highland Park, has been asked how she would describe successful civic engagement in Highland Park.

> I think that's success when you see those young folks beginning to get involved and taking leadership on. That means success. I also think it means success if they have come up with a way to reach back out to the traditional leaders and at least hear their voice and engage their voice in whatever struggle they are going through. Really intentional reaching back out and engaging their voice. (V. Fleming, personal communication, February 13, 2018)

The participant has described an aspiration regarding community organizing and engagement. There are likely to be differences in community perceptions between generations (Williams 2009, Camino & Zeldin 2002). Part of learning about the community's history together is creating space for multiple generations in the community to share stories and learn together (Camino & Zeldin 2002). This kind of youth leadership has not yet been achieved, and achieving it is an innovation that from her perspective would lead to improvements in the community of Highland Park.

Collaborative work with youth results in a community innovation. Though the literature identified two outcomes that are tied to finally achieving empowerment and involve incorporating established resident leadership and capacity into revitalization processes and plans, the literature did not describe the legitimizing of resident ownership as innovative work. Typically, a word associated with entrepreneurial business, innovation involves the generation of new ideas and the application of new ideas to a particular market of environment. As in organizational behavior, innovation is linked to relational work and contextual knowledge of the community and collaborating organizations (Amabile et al. 2016). Collaborating actors begin to try new kinds of work together that eventually culminates in a community-driven solution. By focusing on youth leadership through 6 PIC, nonprofits and community collaborators in Highland Park are producing new ideas with youth that reimagine the roles of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in community change in Highland Park.

Developing Civic Capacity in Highland Park

The data tells the story not of one revitalization process or engagement process in North Highland Park, but of nonprofit presence in Highland Park over about the last decade. The strategies that have been described have been in use in Highland Park, but their development and

implementation is iterative. While nonprofit collaborators discussed resident ownership of revitalization work as a goal, it was not seen as something that has been achieved. Nonprofit collaborators hope that ultimately communities develop the capacity to ultimately implement revitalization work on their own terms in a way that achieves their own quality of life (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, M. Rollins, personal communication, February 16, 2018, J. McDonnough, personal communication, March 6, 2017, G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 9, 2018).

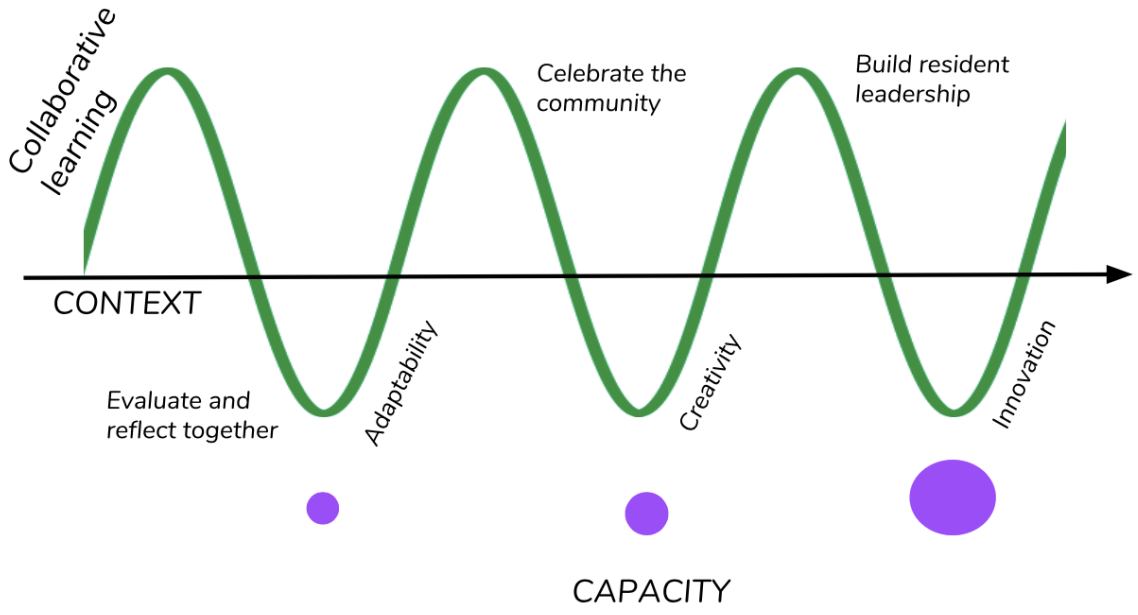


Image 2. Characteristics of Collaborative Learning that Seeks Increased Civic Capacity in Highland Park

Together, the established and emergent themes demonstrate the importance of a variety of collaborative learning strategies throughout the process of building civic capacity in Highland Park.

The emergent data builds on the literature by describing characteristics of collaborative learning throughout the process. While community development and revitalization literature has

focused on stages of engagement from trust building to empowerment, a focus on a process with a beginning and an end does not give attention to the kinds of skills and strategies that collaborative actors must be able to call upon when resources are lacking, a plan is behind schedule, or a mistake has been made. The emergent themes, adaptability, creativity, and innovation through youth leadership, have been established as aspects of collaborative learning by other disciplines (Sparrow 2016, Loh 2016, Romero et al. 2012). Strategies for collaborative learning were described as important for past, present and future nonprofit collaborative work in Highland Park. These three qualities or characteristics of learning apply organizational and community context to the implementation of specific revitalization projects. The characteristics of adaptability, creativity, and innovation lend themselves to iterative and relational work. As trust is gradually built and knowledge exchanged among a variety of collaborators, civic capacity in the community of Highland Park grows.

Chapter V: Discussion & Conclusion

The analysis has established that nonprofit collaborators in Highland Park see aspects of collaborative learning as critical to the development of civic capacity in the community. This people-focused, relational approach is underpinned by an interest in racial equity and social justice. When nonprofit organizations are situated as learners, residents can shift power to themselves by providing their perspectives, stories, and context that inform their own understanding of quality of life in a community and what, if anything, can be done to improve it. When residents are situated as learners, nonprofit organizations can equip residents with institutional knowledge and leadership opportunities. Nonprofit collaborators in Highland Park see the collaborative learning strategies of adaptability, creativity and youth leadership as key to improving quality of life within the community for current residents. The connections evident in the data between collaborative learning, civic capacity and revitalization have implications for research, practice, and theory that this chapter will address.

First, results suggest that civic capacity is a precondition for resident ownership and empowerment. In a community where nonparticipation is the norm, a variety of strategies are required in one community that gradually build civic capacity. Collaborative strategies are catalyzed by collaborative learning that seeks a substantive exchange of knowledge between nonprofit collaborators. Resident ownership and empowerment in Highland Park is still viewed as an aspiration which requires further civic capacity. An exchange of knowledge builds social capital by broadening networks, and it also can shift power dynamics by situating a variety of institutional and residential actors as having the capacity to both teach and learn.

Second, relating civic capacity to community empowerment calls for a broader definition of social change work in planning. When conditions are ripe for shared learning to occur, as in

Highland Park, implementation of shared work occurs on a variety of practically related, but theoretically divided, community-based efforts. Collaboration shifts conditions by building capacity, situating the community to successfully sustain community building, governance, organizing, revitalization, or other social change responsibilities that seek improve quality of life for existing residents. A focus on the development of civic capacity gives attention to a variety of social change efforts in a community, and the relationships between them. The following section will outline specific theoretical implications of this project.

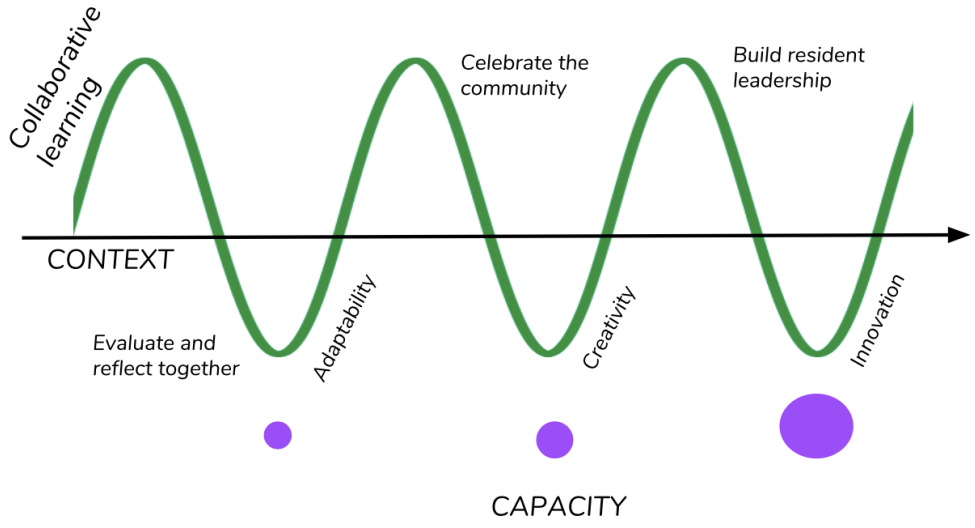
Theoretical Implications

Preconditions in the Community. Situating civic capacity as a precondition for empowerment suggests a need to define what characteristics of the community indicate readiness to fully realize resident ownership and empowerment. The conditions in the community are reflective of economic, political, cultural, and social reality. Like collaborative learning, literature on preconditions for collaboration draws on organizational management. Three stages of beginning a collaboration among a variety of actors include, "problem-setting, direction setting, and structuring," which involve actors collectively reacting to their environment (Gray 1985). During the process, participants first recognize, and later begin to value, their interdependence (Gray 1985). Conditions internal and external to the collaboration at each phase are critical to the success of the collaboration.

Attention to the preconditions for collaboration is focused on processes rather than power structures of the external environment (Gray 1985). Attention to multiple ways of knowing and the establishment of shared goals through collaborative learning does not cancel out the impacts of structural forces on individuals, but these processes do provide an iterative direction forward that gives attention to lived reality. While this project begins to address the kinds of action and

reflection that built toward the development of civic capacity in Highland Park, it is not fully understood how these strategies relate to one another and build toward a culminating moment that involves the full achievement of resident ownership and empowerment.

The theoretical model for this project is dynamic. The theoretical model demonstrates that the actions of collaborative actors do reflect the surrounding context in Highland Park, and the order and duration of these strategies shifts to adjust to changing context. Though the conditions can be perceived as systems of power, power also exists in the collaborative relationships that are able to observe surroundings, learn together about the best way forward, and proceed together with shared goals in mind, using shared strength to address surrounding context.



Interdisciplinary aspects of learning. Collaborative learning is typically connected to higher education civic engagement work or organizational management work. This project seeks to apply collaborative learning to the process of developing civic capacity. This strategy highlights people-focused strategies that can apply community assets and resources to community needs in

new ways. Collaborative learning is different from engagement in that it situates a variety of stakeholders as actors with the capacity to both teach and learn.

Significantly, Bess, et al. completed work on nonprofit organizational change management which defined organizational learning capacities as the following:

> (1) internal and (2) external organizational systems alignment, and promoting a culture of learning, including (3) an emphasis on exploration and information, (4) open communication, (5) staff empowerment, and (6) support for professional development
>
> -Bess et al. 2010

Attention to these aspects of organizational and collaborative structure and function in enables actors to learn together. While an interest in transformation to improve an organization's work over time relates to collaborative work in Highland Park, learning together calls for different capacities when the goal is to develop community civic capacity where distrust and isolation have historically limited resident engagement in planning work. Shared ownership and youth leadership are different than the capacities above when roles have not been defined in a professional setting and the direct benefits of doing quality work at a paid job may not come to involved resident volunteers in the same way. Personal pride in community and establishing a sense of community may be a benefit.

Youth leadership. The theme of youth leadership become theoretically significant for several reasons. The establishment of youth leadership in a community where civic capacity is lacking has benefits for the community, the nonprofit collaboration, and for the youth who must invest time or effort (Camino & Zeldin 2002, Ginwright and James 2002). Equipping youth as leaders, as the 6 PIC Innovation Center aims to do, requires situating youth with others in order to learn about problem solving and communication. A focus on collaborative learning is more directly applicable to youth who are currently involved in an education system. The data links together

the concepts of youth leadership and innovation, with an understanding that new ways of doing community work will involve different approaches brought to the table by youth. Innovation is tied to both creativity and collective identity (Sarooghi et al. 2013). Involving youth in developing shared goals for the community and maintain a sense of community among its members fuels creativity and innovation which foster civic capacity.

Learning and creativity. Creativity and community design are increasingly popular concepts in urban planning today that are often focused on arts and culture and design strategies as ways of involving under-resourced residents in planning processes. Two organizations in Highland Park have direct connections to community design in the mission of their work. Storefront for Community Design does work in partnership with VCU's School of the Arts, and Groundwork RVA "works with youth to facilitate environmental, economic, and social well-being in neighborhoods through the transformation of blighted and neglected areas into assets" (Groundworkrva.org). These two organizations are collaborating to develop a new "City Builders" program at 6 PIC that engages Highland Park youth in creative and collaborative programming. This unique focus in Highland Park has implications for community design theory because not all nonprofit organizations that are working to establish civic capacity are so uniquely equipped. Nonprofit organizations without familiarity of community design processes and concepts would face different challenges and barriers in using creativity as a way to complete revitalization work.

Implications in Research

Preconditions for learning are different than preconditions for empowerment. While this project explores collaborative learning strategies, addressing the conditions that culminate in empowerment requires further attention to the ways these strategies relate to one another and

continue to build momentum for increasing civic capacity. Understanding conditions for empowerment involves a holistic approach to planning research that moves beyond revitalization. Sequestering empowerment as an effect of revitalization or an outcome of community organizing limits the future possibilities of collaborative learning. For planning research and practice to identify strategies that culminate in community ownership of decision-making processes and tangible infrastructure in the community, there is a need to better understand relationships between related private, public, and nonprofit social change efforts.

Building civic capacity is dependent on participation, and capacity to participate is tied up with a variety of other community needs that have yet to be met in Highland Park. Participation is imperfect: The nonprofit sector still struggles to build participation among the most vulnerable in the community, and this also remains true in Highland Park (Lake and Newman 2002, R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018). It is important to note that not all of the collaborators interviewed for this project are paid for the community engagement work they do, but many are. Some are residents, and it was suggested that part of community empowerment in the long-term should involve paying all participants for their time, rather than asking residents of an under-resourced community to volunteer their time to participate (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018). Despite creative and flexible approaches, nonprofit organizations in Highland Park recognize that many members of the community do not have capacity to participate. They have found, however, that youth have more capacity and perhaps more potential personal benefit to participate and the 6 PIC Innovation Center is mostly focusing on the development of youth leadership through its programming, rather than focusing on all age groups. Overall, this project suggests that planning research focus more broadly on the structural and cultural conditions that facilitate learning and empowerment. Research on civic capacity is

closely tied to research on participation. Conditions that prohibit participation are understood but there is a need to closely examine the interplay between structural and cultural conditions and iterative collaborative efforts, in improving civic capacity over time.

Practical Implications

The Highland Park case presents a full picture of nonprofit collaboration that involves not only new work, but also challenges and barriers that inhibit the work. Though there has been nonprofit presence in Highland Park, there has been no consistent organizational champion over the last eight to ten years. Though many organizations have been present, their capacity has not been consistent over time (C. Streett, personal communication, March 8, 2018). The lack of a nonprofit anchor in the community has presented both challenges and opportunities. Learning throughout the revitalization process may have been inhibited because of shifting collaboration norms and capacities over time. Substantive collaboration that involves people in revitalization work is a long-term investment in which organizations are developing capacities as the communities are developing capacities.

Nonprofit collaborators in Highland Park are challenged to heavily invest time in relational and collaborative work when nonprofit staff members must also dedicate time to yearly grant funding processes in order to sustain their organizations. It is challenging for nonprofit organizations to maintain the attention of funders and residents for the duration required to achieve people-focused outcomes (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, C. Streett, personal communication, March 8, 2018, G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March 9, 2018). Improving civic capacity in Highland Park requires significant investment in collaborative learning which may limit the ability of the organization to spend time on core functions of the organization's work (G. Harnsburger, personal communication, March

8, 2018). Little of the literature on community building and community empowerment raises the disconnect between the theoretical value placed on collaboration and the practical absence of funding for time-intensive collaborative learning work.

There is a need to consider ways to incorporate cross-sector partnership and community collaboration into public sector work. The time intensive nature of collaborative learning capacity development is a deterrent to investment in this kind of work. There is some evidence, though, that planners already rely on collaborative skills. Christenson's study explores the extent to which planners define themselves as facilitators, activists, or promoters, and finds that the most common strategies described were things involving "improving communication" and "building social capital" (Christenson 2015). These strategies are important for consensus building and involve shifting between process and outcomes as capacities are built within the collaboration to inform outcomes in the community, and future processes led by the community. There is a need to legitimize collaborative learning capacities across sectors in order to incorporate related strategies in community engagement processes and outcomes.

Finally, the long-term investment in collaborative learning has implications for nonprofit funding practices. Small nonprofit organizations in Highland Park typically fund their work largely through local foundations or corporate grants (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, E. Summerfield, personal communication, February 2, 2018). These grants often come with particular impact measures of successful nonprofit work Nonprofit staff frequently find that their use of collaborative learning strategies can be negatively perceived by funders who are often focused on the number of people impacted by a program rather than the impact that a program had on a particular person. Collaborative learning allows nonprofit organizations to focus on quality engagement strategies over quantity of people engaged. There is a need for

funding strategies that value collaborative learning and recognize the time investment required to build collaborative learning capacity while sustaining an organization.

Revitalization work has historically been more focused on the capacity for technical skills rather than the capacity to learn. Learning together about Highland Park is about more than an interactive community meeting. It is about providing access to information about systems, policies, and procedures that impact daily life in order to understand how things got to be the way they are, and how things could work better for Highland Park residents. Learning together is about reconciliation, trauma, and history. Learning together is about building planter boxes for the business district and trusting your partner with the hammer. Learning together in Highland Park is about being creative because the continued legacy of disinvestment and discrimination does not improve quality of life.

Limitations & Future Research

This data collection was limited by the time constraints. While emergent themes saturated interviews with key stakeholders, a broader perspective of the collaborative work in the community could be gained by extending interviews further to talk with residents about how the collaborative work was received and perceived. Though the theme of community safety emerged as a key-community identified need that Highland Park has been addressing for at least ten years, I did not have time to focus in particular on how nonprofit collaborations have addressed community safety through revitalization and civic capacity over time.

There are assumptions built into the methodology that did not account for barriers to participation in interviews. I struggled throughout the research process with the common critique that Highland Park is weary from being "over-surveyed," and it was difficult to identify methods that would tap into resident knowledge without being a burden or a hassle to community

members (R. Rinn, personal communication, January 24, 2018, M. Rollins, personal communication, February 16, 2018). Others have suggested that the kinds of knowledge production that is incorporated in academic work should be expanded in a way that is inclusive of a wider variety of voices (Appadurai 2006). However, implementing intentional and empowering methodologies in a community that is lacking civic capacity requires its own, potentially long, trust building process.

My initial participants for this project were people I already knew or had connections to, and while I did expand beyond my network in the interviews, broadening resident representation in the data collection process would have required a different approach. Though this project aimed to understand what kinds of nonprofit collaborative work has recently happened in Highland Park, the focus on civic capacity also raises the question of how the collaboration is perceived in the community, if it is working, and for whom. The literature has established that community development work frequently makes assumptions about the kinds of social and cultural norms that are legitimized and that are often in conflict with social and cultural norms in the community. Truly understanding how civic capacity is understood by non-participants in community is a separate project, but it is worth noting that this one does not take that important step.

This study began to understand the role of collaborative learning in planning practice, but there is more to understand about how education theory could inform planning practice. While a key focus of the work is collaborative learning, the interview questions did not have an explicit question regarding what participants learned from the collaboration. Though participants talked about what they had learned when they discussed how their organizational goals had changed, they did not explicitly discuss the role of collaborative learning in their work. There is a need for

future work to better understand what precipitates diverse community stakeholders to learn from one another in a revitalization process in a way that truly establishes shared goals.

Nonprofits are heavily dependent on consistent funding to carry out the time-intensive civic capacity building work that has been described. More research is needed in the nonprofit field to understand what kinds of funding evaluations and impact measures are realistic and appropriate for collaborative learning work. An interest in shared ownership and trust building means that funders and organizations must relinquish some control over the outcomes of a funded program or activity. Achieving resident ownership and empowerment will also require attention to collaborative learning processes and social equity outcomes in the philanthropic world.

Conclusion

This project demonstrates a variety of collaborative and contextual strategies gradually equip a community with the capacity for resident empowerment and ownership. Civic capacity as a precondition for empowerment has implications for how social change research relates structural power to relational power. This also has implications for how researchers evaluate the qualities and characteristics of collaborative processes in order to identify factors that motivate and facilitate collective movement toward, and achievement of, empowerment.

Incremental change and shared ownership will continue to benefit the civic capacity in Highland Park as collaborative community work continues. It is important for involved actors to continue to name decision-making processes for shared efforts. The application of community context and leadership to philanthropic and development decision-making processes in the community may build further civic capacity. In a time when Highland Park is still working to reconcile and build relationships amidst legacies of racial discriminatory policies in the twentieth

century, a capacity for collaborative learning situates diverse stakeholders to listen, build trust, implement creative revitalization work together, and reflect together on the consequences of their work.

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