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DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of the Ohio State University

By

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*****

The Ohio State University
2000

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ABSTRACT

The central focus of this dissertation is the role of Community Development Corporations (CDCs) in the promotion of community development in Boston's African-American community. The dissertation uses three independent variables to explain the behavioral role of CDCs in the community development process in Boston: the city's political and governmental environment, government led redevelopment policies, and structures and processes of community oriented funding. My research into the structure of power and governance in Boston suggests that African-American CDC led community development is constrained by the strong mayoral form of government, weak linkage with Boston city council, the non-empowering nature of Black bureaucratic appointments, the competitive nature of government redevelopment, funding considerations, and the lack of Black electoral strength and accountability in Boston.

African-American CDCs in Boston have attempted to overcome the constraints of the political and governmental environment, government led redevelopment policies, and the funding limitations by developing linkage with Boston city government, city government departments, Black elected officials, indigenous community organizations, and federal and state funding entities. These alliances have produced mixed results.
The majority of the African-American CDCs examined in the study are beholden to the community development wishes of the city’s economic and political elite. As such, African-American CDCs tend to be limited in their ability to act as alternative means of Black community development in Boston. Further, this research indicates that the absence of a strong Black indigenous, umbrella organization has severely reduced the political power and public-policy bargaining ability of African-Americans in the city. The future of Black incorporation and empowerment is dependent on the ability of African-American CDCs to develop a strong Black agenda to counteract the non-empowering nature of the political and governmental environment, government-led redevelopment policies, and funding processes on Black community development in Boston.
Dedicated to my family – both biological and spiritual
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I wish to thank my adviser, Dr. William E. Nelson, Jr, for his stern yet unwavering support throughout my graduate school experience. His intellectual rigor, encouragement, and diligence has made this dissertation possible. I thank him for his time, his talent, and his patience in correcting my stylistic blemishes.

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Finally, none of this would be possible without the grace and mercy of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
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CHAPTER 1

THE EVOLUTION OF GRASSROOTS POLITICS IN AMERICA
Overview

America has long been a nation of community action. The movement on the part of the people to obtain goods and services through grassroots political activity has been an integral aspect of the history and democratic spirit of the United States. No matter how great or small, it has been the constant movement by the people, for the people, that has pushed America forward. One movement that helped push America forward took place during the 1960s and set the stage for the emergence of a new contingent of community activists, most notably Blacks, poor people, and youth. The movement, often referred to as the *War on Poverty*, created government funded programs, including the Job Corps, Head Start, Community Action Programs, Model Cities, and Community Development Corporations (CDCs), to promote the “maximum feasible participation” of urban citizens historically left out of the decision making process. The rise and prominence of CDCs in responding to housing, employment, and overall community revitalization needs, represent the central areas of concern of my dissertation research.

Formally identified as 501 (c) 3 non-profit organizations, Community Development Corporations are designed to provide community residents with developmental autonomy and decision making power to determine the course of neighborhood growth and maturation. Over the past thirty years, CDCs have attempted to redevelop and advance the physical, geographical, and economic outlook of downtrodden urban areas. The fundamental mission of CDCs is to foster community-controlled and operated neighborhood development. The

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predominant method of CDC community-controlled development has been the construction and effective implementation of affordable housing, job training, and urban renewal projects. Today there are more than two thousand individually operated Community Development Corporations in the United States. Encompassing a wide array of programmatic missions including mortgage lending, tenant management, and commercial development, many of these non-profit entities are attempting to maintain credibility, voice, and financial/technical support in a number of major American cities.

The purpose of this dissertation is to seek to understand the nature of community development in Boston. Community development is operationalized as a set of official and unofficial initiatives designed to promote economic uplift, social advancement, and political empowerment in historically disadvantaged urban communities. Specifically, this study examines the process of community development by focusing on the efforts of African-American CDCs. Moreover, this research examines the factors that impact the capacity of these community service organizations to revitalized downtrodden urban areas. Central to our analysis of community development in Boston are strategies and tactics used by African-American CDCs to overcome the constraints of the developmental environment to effectively promote affordable housing, job training, land grants, and economic/political incorporation and empowerment. The term incorporation refers to the extent to which African-Americans are represented in key public policy and decision making arenas. By empowerment, this research seeks to illuminate the extent to which African-Americans are

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key economic and political players in the community development process of Boston.

The fundamental question posed by this research is whether or not African-American CDCs in Boston act as mechanisms of service delivery (i.e., community development) in the communities in which they operate. One of the major assumptions of this research is that as federal government devolution, intercommunity development competition, and changing political climates continue to impact the overall social, economic, and political status of African-American communities, many African-American CDCs will be faced with the growing task of contributing in a multiplicity of ways to the maintenance and enhancement needs of their community clients.

I have chosen a qualitative research design because I believe it is particularly well suited to my research objectives. Three variables -- government funding, political and governmental environment, and government led redevelopment -- will be examined as they relate to community development initiatives of the nine African-American CDCs in the Boston area that serve as my unit of analysis.

**Political and Governmental Environment:** The political and governmental environment variable examines the political climate of Boston from both a historic and present day perspective as it relates to the political empowerment of African-Americans in Boston. Moreover, it examines the effects of various city administrations' racial politics on the ability of African-American CDCs to foster community development in Boston.

**Government Led Redevelopment:** The government led redevelopment variable examines the effect of government sponsored development such as enterprise and empowerment zones on the ability of African-American CDCs to foster community development in their communities. In particular, this variable examines the impact of government led redevelopment initiatives over time on African-American community development in Boston.

**Government Funding:** The government funding variable examines the effect of changes in the allocation and distribution of development money to local CDCs. In particular, this variable analyzes the impact of changes in funding policies at the federal, state, and local level over time, the impact of the kind (government and non-government funds) and level of
funding on community development projects, and the limits of community development because of lack of funds.

In order to assess the impact of these three factors, I engaged in extensive qualitative field research in Boston, Massachusetts. I conducted interviews with staff members of nine African-American CDCs in the city. The interview process also involved extensive formal conversations with community residents, community activists, governmental officials, and scholars in the Boston area. The interviews primarily relied on interview questions developed prior to my fieldwork. I also gathered and analyzed secondary materials such as news articles, budgetary reports, and census data. In addition to academic research interviews in the African-American community, I conducted interviews with representatives of Latino community interests in the Boston area.

This research is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the historical legacy of federal government involvement in local community development. In particular, this section examines how the strategies of Black CDCs in Boston are shaped by the cutback policies of the federal, state, and local government, varying city administrations, and government led redevelopment policies. The first chapter of the dissertation focuses on the early efforts and failures of the community development movement including community action programs, Model Cities, partisan mutual adjustment, New Federalism, and the Community Development Block Grant Program of 1974. An examination of these federally initiated efforts is necessary to set the stage for the analysis of the present community development movement led by community development corporations in Boston.

The second part of this research consists of in-depth discussions of the processes of Black service-delivery in Boston. Specifically, chapters two and three examine the
Theoretical framework of the African-American experience in Boston. These chapters explore the rise of CDCs in Black communities in Boston and assess whether or not they provide an alternative means of community development in the city. Chapter three explores the impact of the political and governmental environment on the African-American CDC led community development movement in Boston. Chapter four considers the impact of government led redevelopment on community development led by African-American CDCs. Chapter five analyzes the structural constraints of the funding process on community development led by African-American CDCs. Finally, chapter six considers the dynamic effects of race and the impact it has on the political incorporation and empowerment of African-Americans in Boston.

The Analytical Context: Citizen Participation and Community Action

Taking office during a critical turning point in American history, the announcement of a "war" on poverty in 1964 was newly appointed President Lyndon Baines Johnson attempted to make a name for himself in 1964 by announcing a "a war on poverty". Initiated during a time of both racial and economic tensions, the war, at best a short-lived invasion, was Johnson's attempt "to protect and restore man's satisfaction in belonging to a community where he can find security and significance". The Johnson administration's best effort to address the needs of the poor was written under Title 4 of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Outlined under Section 2 (a), a community action program was defined as a program "developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible

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participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups to be served.\textsuperscript{4} Title 2 commissioned \textit{community action programs} (CAPs) designed to encourage the "maximum feasible participation of the people" in the development of effective solutions to urban problems. Community action programs (CAPs) were designed to transfer some of the decision making power of the local government from the traditional political / business establishment to community residents.

Historically relegated to the back burner of local government agendas, the creation of community action programs, bankrolled by the federal government, allowed African-American organizations to develop and promote local entities not financially or politically dependent on the local government. In effect, "community action was a means whereby the poor themselves would participate in formulating and administering their own local programs of social reform."\textsuperscript{4} Once big city mayors, many of whom initially supported the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, realized that their own hegemony was threatened, they quickly retreated and discouraged the formulation of new agencies and community groups to help fight the problems of the inner city.\textsuperscript{5}

The denial of community action support by many mayors was ironic in that the problems and needs of the poor had been outlined in OEO workbooks distributed to them prior to enactment of the "maximum feasible participation" clause. The avid resistance of mayors seemed to indicate that even if the Johnson administration and Office of Equal


Opportunity had real intentions of empowering the poor, such intentions would be severely limited by the quest of big city mayors to preserve their power and governing authority. One result of mayoral influenced community development was the mobilization of the poor outside the regular framework of city government. Many public-private partnerships created by the mayor’s office and private businesses would prove detrimental to the interests of the poor. In an analysis of the possible disincentives of private businesses, one author suggests:

Without special incentives, private capital flows to where the potential for return on investment is greatest. Having engaged in a prolonged process of disinvestment from the inner city communities, private businesses are unlikely to be the engine of economic opportunity for the people who live there.

Beyond the lack of support and genuine enthusiasm from mayors and downtown business development, community action programs were also targeted by Congress for significant cutbacks. Congressional budgetary hearings questioned the validity of federal dollars dispensed into the hand of local community residents. Although only a few community action programs transformed the interests of the poor into substantive policy goals, many members of Congress believed that government funded community action programs should fall under the direct jurisdiction of the mayor’s office.

The limited gains of community action were inevitable because “it is quite difficult for cities to combat problems of urban areas that have been long ingrained in the private

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market and institutional structures of the government.” In effect, federal funds were more widely distributed but power remained in the mayor’s office. The final blow to the community action program, however, was the internal structure of many CAP’s which lacked the experience, organization, and technical support necessary for community action associations to stay afloat. The majority of the community action initiatives fostered at the local level were ill suited to be run by community residents because they lacked the training and skill necessary to carry out the administrative and organizational duties associated with the positions. As such, when the dust cleared, a few individual success stories of rent control and neighborhood health centers could not compensate for the overall disappointment of neighborhood residents whose interests were not substantially advanced by CAP agencies.

**Model Cities and Nixon’s New Federalism**

Less than three years into the “war” on poverty, President Johnson was experiencing serious opposition on and off Capitol Hill for his “war on poverty.” The general consensus by many critics on Johnson’s *Great Society* programs was that the President was throwing good money after bad by encouraging the organization and political mobilization of *urban guerillas*. Unwilling to abandon ship, Johnson called on the department of Housing and

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Urban Development to develop a solution to the increasing discontentment with his poverty programs. Prior to the creation of HUD, federal urban development consisted primarily of grant money for “general urban development such as highways, airports, hospital construction, and waste treatment.”\(^{12}\) In many ways, HUD would serve as the federal government’s best effort to provide real service delivery to inner city residents, many of whom had never gotten in earshot of federally funded initiatives.

The most well known policy HUD embarked upon was the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (Model Cities). Under the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, aid in the form of federal grants was used to improve the living conditions of urban and rural residents. The main objective of the program was “closing the gap between the living conditions of disadvantaged and minority groups [by] undertaking measures to eliminate racial and social segregation in such areas as housing, education, and employment.”\(^{13}\)

The bulk of the funds for Model Cities came from narrowly defined, single purpose categorical grants. Similar to other community action efforts, the administration of the Model Cities initiative was predominantly controlled by local city administrators. Unlike other community action programs, however, financial allocations related to model cities flowed directly from the mayor’s office. “In many respects Model Cities was set up to minimize rather than foster the participation of neighborhood residents in program planning


and governance." 14 A little over one year into the program, Model Cities, like other Johnson administration programs, engendered sizeable debate. Republicans charged that the community action programs of the war on poverty were nothing more than “democratic pork barrel” to generate the urban vote.

The lack of trust on the part of the Republicans spawned the Green Amendment which made community action agencies “instrumentalities of state and local government.” 15 Under the Green Amendment “maximum feasible participation” equaled community action stipulated and implemented by state and local officials. In effect, “maximum feasible participation” of the poor became a non-issue. Undoubtedly, the Green amendment was a devastating blow to the community action movement. The failure of partisan mutual adjustment to provide a systematic and concerted effort to ensure the stability, productivity, and overall technical support vital to the success of community action can be traced back to the mastermind of the program, Lyndon B. Johnson. Under partisan mutual adjustment key federal government agencies shared the burden of social service programming implementation, technical support, and financing.

However, in an effort to “do something” in response to mounting domestic and foreign turmoil, Johnson shifted gears and focused his presidential politics away from the “war on poverty” toward the “War in Vietnam”. Johnson’s shift in policy came as congressional oversight and mayoral dissatisfaction of social service programs were at an


all time high. In short, President Johnson fell victim to his own policy mismanagement.
Model Cities never stood a chance because of inconsistency in partisan mutual adjustment at the national level.\textsuperscript{16}

The inability of partisan mutual adjustment to coordinate the varying roles of several federal offices in the design, implementation, and evaluation of Model Cities was arguably, in large part, the result of a lack of federal oversight, coordination, and gentle persuasion on the part of the president. As envisioned by Johnson's task force, Model Cities, via partisan mutual adjustment, would reflect the efforts of various federal agencies working together like a finely tuned machine constantly being oiled by the strong hand of the chief executive.\textsuperscript{17} Similar to the experiences of the community action movement, the Model Cities program failed to supply the resources it promised to deliver. In addition to the lack of federal support, model cities also failed because at the local level Model Cities programs fell victim to a competitive, misleading, and heavily mayor influenced political agenda. Many mayors were fed up with progressive politics at the national level and desired more loosely defined urban renewal and development (i.e., downtown development) without the strings attached criteria implicit in categorical grants.\textsuperscript{18} The Republican lead call for devolution and


revenue sharing further distanced big city mayors from the Great Society approach of the waning Johnson administration.

New Federalism

Where community action failed, Model Cities programs were to provide the missing link between the organization of the poor and the substantive delivery of services by the federal government to decrease the downward spiral of decline endemic to the inner city. In the end, however, Model Cities would amount to not much more than a shot in the dark blinded by mayoral control, intercommunity competition, and the rapid decline in federal funds allocated to Johnson’s programs. In 1969, newly elected Republican President Richard M. Nixon announced a new system of federal involvement. In particular, Nixon called for the return of power by the federal government to state and local administrative units.19

Under Nixon’s “New Federalism”, the responsibilities of many of Johnson’s federally funded social service programs would be transferred or devolved to state and local governments. The fundamental premise of the New Federalism was the need to sort out the appropriate activities of each level of government. Nixon did not believe that all levels of governments should be involved heavily in all policy areas. Rather, he believed the national government should concentrate on what it did best, transferring income, primarily, whereas sub-national units should provide services, such as manpower training, community redevelopment, and protecting public health.20 The argument behind Nixon’s “New

Federalism” was that state and local areas knew best how to govern the needs of their respective communities. As such, “the pursuit of distinctive national goals were relaxed in favor of state and local discretion.” Nixon recommended both devolution and revenue sharing to achieve this end.

Ironically, Nixon’s call for “relaxed national government intervention” came at a time which was inconvenient for African-American interests in that it came during the aftermath of the urban riots of 1968 where thousands of angry Blacks took to the streets in protest and frustration with the ambivalent responsiveness of federal, state, and local authorities to their interests. With such powerful and dramatic places as Chicago, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia going up in smoke, Nixon persuaded many opponents of devolution and revenue sharing that the time had come to end the wasteful war on poverty.

President Nixon’s first wave of devolution emphasized revenue sharing as a replacement for the categorical grant process. Revenue sharing was a Republican led initiative originally introduced as a means of curtailing what many critics believed was the over allocation of funds endemic in categorical grants. “New Federalism” revenue-sharing was “an approach which would provide federal funds to state and local governments without any strings attached to how the money could be used.”

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The problem with revenue sharing was that it misled many mayors and local officials. Nixon failed to tell key supporters of the New Federalism that revenue sharing was not going to “allocate a portion of the nation’s tax collections to states.” Revenue sharing did consist of no strings attached money distributed four times a year; however, the bulk of the funds were taken from categorical grants enacted under Johnson.25 Whereas money was available to be used at the mayor’s discretion, funds earmarked to continue the fight against poverty were severely restricted. As a result, mayors receiving devoluted funds often ignored problems that would potentially promote effective development in poor communities.

Interestingly, in his zeal to cancel out the needs of the poor and minority groups, Nixon forgot to account for the greed and ambition of many big city mayors who used the “no strings attached” approach to build political careers. Many cities took advantage of the loose guidelines of the revenue sharing program by under-funding renewal projects and then applying for special-revenue funds to complete projects.26 Revenue sharing also became a major source of funds for basic city service functions such as trash removal during the fiscal crisis of the 1970s.


The Rise of Community Development Corporations

The 1974 Housing and Community Development Act signed by President Ford solidified the new wave philosophy of 'more with less' federal devolution of urban grant policies by President Nixon. Under the Act, seven categorical grants, including the Model Cities program, were consolidated into one all encompassing block grant aimed at addressing the needs of economically and socially depressed, riot scared, inner-city communities. Whereas the Johnson administration categorical grant process incorporated community input, the no strings attached policy created under Nixon's New Federalism gave city governments great leeway to skirt the interests of local communities. With little accountability to the citizens the war on poverty programs was created to empower, many big city mayors used federal dollars to enact their own, downtown development, visions of community action. Many of the public-private partnerships created by the mayor’s office and private businesses would prove detrimental to the interests of the poor.

Community Development Corporations (CDCs) in the Black community emerged in response to mayoral usurpation of power, the cutback administrative policies of both Nixon and Ford, and growing community dismay produced by mounting social and economic crises in distressed urban areas. Responding to urgent community needs, the first wave of Community Development Corporations represented the next era of community action.

During the 1960s the raised yet unmet aspirations of people living in deprived areas had many consequences. The failure of the poverty program to reduce poverty though at the same time supporting community organizations of various kinds laid the basis for a new movement, where people tried to do in their own neighborhoods what government and the
Disturbed by what many neighborhood groups perceived as "business as usual," local residents organized independent, "self-help" and empowerment organizations focused on "public goods" such as healthcare, police patrol, and affordable housing. "In almost all cases, sheer frustration, and a loss of patience with external institutions" served as catalysts for cooperative action by community leaders and neighborhood residents. The systematic reduction of the amount of federal funds and oversight available to community organizations to promote community development, meant that many neighborhood groups were driven to raise and struggle with issues of economic disinvestment, housing and job discrimination, educational neglect, punitive and arbitrary social welfare policy, and political disenfranchisement at the neighborhood level.

Community Development Corporations also formed in direct response to the policies of urban renewal, redlining, and encroachment by many downtown business districts. In Boston, some of the first African-American operated community development corporations

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formed in response to the hostile takeover of attractive urban areas to expand as well as create new development for downtown business interests, the state highway system, privately owned hospitals, and public and private universities in the city. Often explained away as some of the costs associated with urban renewal, many of Boston's neighborhood redevelopment efforts displaced neighborhood residents. As one observer noted, “the other side of Boston's revival involved the displacement of thousands of minority and working-class residents from the downtown and nearby neighborhoods.”

Other CDCs developed to address the needs of a particular ethnic and/or cultural population. For example, the Pico Union Neighborhood Council located in Los Angeles formed to address the needs of its low-income, heavily illegally immigrant populated, Hispanic community which constituted almost three-fourths of neighborhood residents. At its height, Pico Union Neighborhood Council developed 260 new housing units and reduced the number of abandoned buildings, absentee landlords, sweat shops in the area. Still, the majority of community development corporations were organized as multi-purpose community controlled corporations designed to improve the physical, commercial, and residential character of an area.

One of the most successful Community Development Corporations, the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (BSRC), was founded in 1967. BSRC evolved into a


well developed 501(c)3 involved in a variety of neighborhood developments related to land renewal, job / vocational training, and corporate sponsorships / partnerships.\textsuperscript{33} The Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation’s (BSRC) innovative community building caught the attention of Senators Ted Kennedy and Jacob Javits both of whom used their clout with the Special Impact program to fund some of BSRC’s renewal and development projects.\textsuperscript{34}

The strength of BSRC was its ability to set the standard for what a successful community development corporation could produce. BSRC showed the potential versatility of CDCs by expanding beyond the usual array of housing to forge relationships with the private sector. In one of many public-private partnerships initiated by BSRC, IBM joined forces with the organization to create a manufacturing site in the heart of the community.\textsuperscript{35}

As the CDC movement has evolved, so too have the programmatic missions of many of the CDCs. Whereas the early efforts of CDCs focused on procuring affordable housing and minimum wage employment for neighborhood residents, the vast majority of modern CDCs have diversified their interests far beyond the “brick and mortar” policies of early

\textsuperscript{33} Stewart E. Perry, Communities On The Way: Rebuilding Local Economies in the United States in Canada (Albany: State University of New York, 1987), pp. 113-114.


community development efforts. Vastly aware of the failures of first wave CDCs because of financial mismanagement, a lack of financial and technical support, changing political environments, and long term community development policy agendas, some of the presently active community development corporations have begun to engage in profit-maximizing projects to procure financial capital. The present diversification of community development corporations in areas such as commercial development has become an integral part of the long-term solvency of these corporations.

In spite of the varying interests CDCs are in competition with for economic and political power in urban regimes, the accomplishments of CDCs in the area of housing development should not go unnoticed. Over the last three decades, CDCs have built over 320,000 housing units, 80,000 of which were developed between 1991 and 1995. The ability of community development corporations, in particular African-American CDCs, to produce similar results in the coming decades remains to be seen.

The Boston CDC Experience

Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD) was one of the first CDCs established in Boston. Created through funds from the Ford Foundation’s “Gray Areas Project,” ABCD became a strategic partner in the Boston growth coalition’s “ambitious renewal plan which encompassed redevelopment in more than one-quarter of the city’s land


area." As Nelson suggests, "ABCD quickly became an urban bureaucracy controlled by elites in the interests on elites." The interests of downtown elites were so prominent that the early years of Boston's urban renewal program focused almost solely on the removal of Blacks from prime real estate areas surrounding the downtown area. Even Mayor White, who had created "little city halls" in many Black and Latino communities, became vulnerable to the strong pull of the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

The major problem with the first phase of Boston's urban redevelopment pertained to the disparity of interests between the business community and Boston's racial/ethnic communities. Whereas downtown interests viewed community development as those projects vital to downtown attractiveness and expansion, many racial/ethnic communities viewed community development as those projects aimed at beautifying their neighborhoods and protecting them from outside invasion. These conflicting interpretations of community

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development often created a wide gap between officially sanctioned redevelopment policies and the needs and expectations of Boston’s minority communities.

The bulk of the goods and services delivered to Boston’s racial and ethnic groups were in the form of low-income and affordable housing outside of the central city area. Even the relocation of Blacks outside the central city was only a temporary safe haven from the long arm of the growth coalition. Many of these areas also became attractive development sites for gentrification. During the years of growth coalition dominance, two events happened which changed the course of downtown redevelopment and community action in Boston. The first change in the politics of community development was the election of Mayor Ray Flynn in 1980. Known as the mayor of the people, Flynn ran and was elected on a progressive platform that promised to return power back into the hands of Boston’s community residents. In effect, the new community-centered politics of Boston attempted to redistribute power from a downtown elite growth coalition to neighborhood groups and their constituents.

The second transaction that changed the course of urban renewal, often described as urban removal, was the formal and informal organizing of neighborhood groups in protest of Boston’s downtown expansion. One such group, Community Assembly for a United South End (CAUSE), formed in 1968 to block the leveling of Black homes in the South End of Boston. The involvement of local groups in direct protest to the hostile takeover by the downtown elite of many of Boston’s Black communities was an effort to protect their turf from further BRA usurpation.

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The combined efforts of the mayor's office along with organized neighborhood leadership would mark a new age of development in Boston that emphasized the community as much as the downtown area. Mayor Flynn was instrumental in changing the flow of redistributive policies in Boston. He advocated strengthening tenants rights, enforcing rent control, and linkage and inclusionary housing policies. During this time of mayoral activism, community development corporations in Boston's racial and ethnic communities began to significantly increase in visibility and number.

One of the premier Community Development Corporations (CDCs) in Boston is the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI). Founded in 1985 through the private contributions of the Reilly Foundation, DSNI has been heavily involved in the development of low-income housing, job training, and land grants. DSNI was able to persuade Mayor Flynn and the city council to grant it eminent domain status in spite of strong objections from the Boston Redevelopment Authority. DSNI was also successful in designing community development initiatives that encompassed a broad range of resident interests. The mass appeal of DSNI has been recognized nationally as a model community development program for community controlled redevelopment.

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There are, to be sure, some limitations of the CDC experience in Boston. First, the political climate of Boston still continues to be hostile to minority interests. With the bulk of Boston’s CDCs focusing on the “marginalized” interests of racial and ethnic minorities, barriers to political incorporation of minority groups in Boston through the political activities of CDCs remain very high. Even the “progressive” Mayor Flynn was “unwilling to grant many neighborhood groups veto power ... arguing that such vetoes could potentially conflict with the administration’s responsibility to site low - income housing, homeless shelters, and group homes for the mentally ill.”

CDCs in Boston are also limited by the powerful role of downtown business elites in the regeneration process. For a long time, the politics of community development in Boston equaled downtown development and expansion. Although this paradigm has shifted, there still remains concern regarding the ability of neighborhood groups to compete for resources and decisionmaking authority with downtown business interests. The overarching question, in this regard, is whether or not CDCs will be able to overcome the effects of marginalization and limited resources to serve as effective instruments in the process of community development.

The number and strength of CDCs in a locality depends heavily on the willingness and ability of local political and business leaders to make neighborhood development a priority. Cities with an active group of effective CDCs tend to be places where the local business community has a strong tradition of civic activity and has made neighborhood development a

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Given the long history of negative race relations in Boston, coupled with the objectives of the growth coalition, business community and political leaders, a viable relationship between African-American CDCs and the power elite may not be easily forged.

Further, many CDCs in Boston lack the technical support, staff, and resources to respond to the growing needs of their constituencies. Many CDCs operate as individualized entities strapped for resources and lacking an overarching umbrella organization to engage in collective bargaining. Instead of collectively lobbying city hall for improved service delivery, many CDCs become immersed in bitter competition to obtain vital resources from city hall. Finally, the rise of enterprise zones as a form of government-led redevelopment in Boston may further heighten the “strapped” pockets of many of Boston’s community development corporations. Designed as an alternative means of community development, enterprise zones promote private-public partnerships between businesses and neighborhood residents. Through the enterprise zone concept businesses that do invest in urban communities are provided lucrative tax incentives for developing satellite offices in minority areas.

Conclusion

This dissertation seeks to understand what impact the community development activities of African-American CDCs have on Black political incorporation and empowerment in Boston. Moreover, the study examines the factors that contribute to the

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strength or weakness of African-American CDC led community development in Boston and the implications this type of development may have on the future of the development movement in Boston. This research attempts to examine the extent to which CDCs have been able to prosper in the community development industry in spite of these factors. The ability of Community Development Corporations to successfully advance Black community development amidst dynamic political and governmental environments, government led redevelopment programs, and changes in federal, state, and local funding in cities like Boston remains to be seen. This research attempts to examine to extent to which CDCs have been able to prosper in the community development industry in spite of these factors.
CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS AND THE POLICY PROCESS
CDCS and the Policy Process

An outgrowth of the war on poverty efforts of the Johnson administration, Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are one of many ongoing efforts being used to provide concrete service delivery to overlooked and underdeveloped African-American communities. CDCs are designed to improve the overall economic, geographic, and social output of urban areas. Initially funded through the Special Impact Program of the Equal Opportunity Act, CDCs represent the federal government’s attempt to return power and autonomy back to disenfranchised communities.1 Many of the early CDCs were faith based, predominantly white leadership organizations heavily involved in community activism. Other CDCs, for example Pico Union Neighborhood Council, were developed to protect certain racial and ethnic minorities from slum lords, black market labor, and the like.2 Many community residents created self-help community organizations as a means of protecting themselves from the economic, political, and structural divestment that appeared to be strangling the viability of urban communities. As Halpern observed,

Finally inner-city residents themselves were driven to raise and struggle with issues of economic disinvestment, housing and job discrimination, educational neglect, punitive and arbitrary social welfare policy, and

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political disenfranchisement at the neighborhood level, for they had no other place to do so.3

Urban communities were driven to raise and struggle with these issues because the local government, political machines, business community, and other economically influential city stakeholders tended to ignore their requests for assistance.

In the last three decades, CDCs have produced 320,000 units of housing. Between 1991 and 1995, CDCs rehabilitated and/or reconstructed an additional 80,000 units of housing which raised their non-profit building median to 21 units, only four less than for-profit builders median of 25 units.4 Operating primarily in large metropolitan areas like Atlanta, New York, and Detroit, presently there are over 2,000 CDCs in the United States. Despite government cutbacks and small levels of philanthropic support, CDCs at the grassroots level have displayed remarkable amounts of vitality and capacity for concrete service delivery to the communities they serve. Still, CDCs face enormous financial, political, and environmental constraints that limit their community development efforts.


The Policy Environment

The extent to which CDCs are able to promote community development is determined in great measure by the policy environment in which they operate. In recent years that environment has been significantly shaped by federal devolution policies. Federal devolution involves the shifting of urban resources and policy control from the federal government to state and local governmental units. Initiated by Nixon’s call for “relaxed federal government intervention,” the effects of devolution on American cities have been devastating.

By the late 1970s, political support for urban programs had weakened. Funds for social and urban programs began to decline, and when Ronald Reagan won the presidential contest, it was clear that federal assistance to cities would be reduced. In the ensuing years, federal spending for the cities dropped sharply. All attempts by mayors and other urban interests to resist this trend were to no avail because for the Republican party, city voters had become politically unimportant.⁵

Although the Clinton administration has attempted to reverse some of the negative effects of devolution on urban interests, there still remains an enormous amount of unfinished work in the area of federal - city relations.

The policy environment of American cities has also been impacted by changes in the global economy. Whereas before cities were in competition with each other to attract potential corporation investors, the openness of the global market has now made cities susceptible to international competitors. Instead of businesses investing in the domestic economy, many major corporations have become proponents of international flight

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wherein they become global consumers of lower to no tax rates, cheap labor, and worldwide recognition.

In his seminal work on the fiscal constraints of cities, Paul E. Peterson argues that the policy latitude of cities is severely limited by larger economic forces. These forces, both domestic and global, directly impact the ability of cities to make and implement public policy. Peterson argues that endemic to cities are "interests" that work to enhance or improve the fiscal conditions of a locale. Central to Peterson's argument is his conceptualization of cities as competitors in a market environment. "Cities, like private firms, compete with one another so as to maximize their economic position."\(^6\) Peterson argues that cities are limited in their capacity to bargain because unlike federal and state governments, cities have no market protection when, and if, corporations and/or citizens leave the area.

Because cities have limits, one explains urban public policy by looking at the place of the city in the larger socioeconomic and political context. The place of the city within the larger economy of the nation fundamentally affects the policy choices that cities make. In making these decisions, cities select those policies which are in the interests of the city, taken as a whole. It is these city interests, not the internal struggles for power within cities, that limit city policies and condition what local governments do.\(^7\)

Thus, according to Peterson, cities engage in policies that do not have the potential to advance the overall interests of the community but policies that fundamentally address the maintenance and enhancement needs of corporate interests whose support is essential to the expansion of the city's fiscal priorities.


Peterson divides city policies into three categories – developmental, redistributive, and allocational. Developmental policies are defined as those which enhance the city's ability to compete for mobile wealth. These policies, designed to make the city look attractive to potential investors, focus on infrastructure improvements and tax abatements. Developmental policies tend to be insulated from political actions because they are necessary to the life of the city. Redistributive policies are defined as those which relocate wealth into the hand of the city's most needy. Redistributive policies usually are social service oriented and are not necessarily in a city's best interest because they do not yield positive returns. Allocational policies are those which focus on the day to day maintenance of the city such as garbage removal and policing. Peterson argues that if interest group politics is present in a city, it is in the arena of allocational politics (i.e., city housekeeping) where no real city interest is at stake.

Research by Paul Kantor suggests that the failure of city governments to address the social service needs of citizens is not inevitable. In an examination of the dependent nature of city government, Kantor contends that the behavior of local elected officials represents a political choice based on decisions made by all levels of government in response to the decline of urban America.

...the economic dependency of cities is by no means a creature of the nation's economic transformation. It is a political consequence of more than two decades of federal urban policies that have limited the national government's urban presence, permitting an explosion of postindustrial economic competition among localities and states to drive public policy making.8

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As such, public policies that may simply appear to be economically rational are also closely linked to prevailing political alignments. Thus, many local governments are constrained in their redistributive efforts not by their resource bases, but by the political obligations and behavior of local officials. The fundamental result of this process is the development of politically democratic but economically constrained urban governments.

Kantor contends that economic dependency exacerbates the social dilemmas of many American cities, rendering decision makers unable to respond to the most needy citizens.

The economic rivalry that pits jurisdiction against jurisdiction in a struggle for survival makes it difficult for local governments to allocate resources, be they cash, land, capital, staff, amenities, and even intergovernmental resources, to assist the poor. Thus, homelessness, racial segregation, and budget cutbacks for vital human service programs mark the urban scene today more than ever.⁹

Kantor suggests that we must resolve this dilemma by finding ways to distribute benefits to those with the greatest needs. He argues that citizens and groups lacking political influence need to mobilize around popular control mechanisms (campaigns, elections, community organizing) and make their voices heard. In essence, citizens and community groups must hold local elected officials as well as the larger governmental environment accountable.

Todd Swanstrom also questions Peterson's equation of city interests with policies favoring business and the private sector. He suggests that cities are offering enormous and, probably unnecessary, incentives to corporations to the detriment of city interests.

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Swanstrom argues that cities over-emphasize the provision to big business of lucrative tax abatements; he contends that such policies are not beneficial to cities' real interests, which should focus on the provision of services to city residents. More often than not, suggests Swanstrom, the relationship between big business and the city is not based on rational decision making. In this case, the interests of the business community outweighed any city interest.

Research by Barbara Ferman suggests that the character of city policy environments is also shaped in significant ways by the type of city governing regimes. In an examination of the policy agendas of two urban areas, Pittsburgh and Chicago, Ferman addresses the question of why some environments are more favorable to progressive governance than others. The author addresses the ability of neighborhood organizations to garner economic and political resources from the local government. Ferman suggests that cities with progressive urban regimes tend to be favorable to incorporating all of the city's varied economic, social, and political interests in the governing coalition.

Ferman asserts that prior analysis of urban regimes have come up short because they have not taken into account the external factors that shape "non-elite" political organizing and participation. Contextual factors such as the institutional framework and political culture of the locale impacts both the political environment and the key players in the decision making process. According to Ferman, a majority of local governments function within a specified arena or "sphere of activity" dictated by their political culture and larger institutional framework.
Local political systems are made up of numerous arenas – electoral, civic, business, intergovernmental. Which institutions within the city are prominent and how they operate depends largely on which arena is the primary home of activity.\(^\text{10}\)

The type of operating arena largely determines the expected behavior and benefits of the key players. The type of arena a city operates within also tends to make it favorable to some interests and unfavorable to other interests. Ferman contends that the success of Pittsburgh’s neighborhood organizations was a direct result of its civic sector arena which emphasized community cooperation.

Berry, Kent, and Thomson suggest that involvement in the political system by neighborhood residents as well as increased levels of political knowledge are a direct result of local government responsiveness to community interests. The authors credit the community organizing efforts of neighborhood associations for their active role in providing neighborhood residents with voice and direct linkages to elected officials.

Neighborhood associations directly contribute to the sense of community by offering a source for unified political advocacy on behalf of the neighborhood. People perceive them as organizations that defuse conflict and are open to their concerns.\(^\text{11}\)

Although neighborhood organizations are critical to the initial stages of community activism, there is still room for debate as to how effective such grassroots coalitions are over the long run.

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The findings seem to suggest that participation does lend itself to greater levels of political empowerment for certain grassroots groups. Still, the economically biased nature of many urban regimes / arenas tends to provide greater access to policy arenas to individuals and interests with greater resources. This finding has important implications for minority groups such as African - Americans whose stock of effective political resources tends to be very low.

Research by Fainstein and Fainstein suggests that grassroots political activity and mobilization is severely limited by underlying racial tensions in cities. The authors argue that race plays a deterministic role in the economic, social, and political outcomes of African - Americans in central city regimes. They contend that understanding the racial dynamics of local decision making is as crucial to the examination of policy outcomes as economic factors.

The demobilization of black political activism by the mid-1970s was both a cause and an effect of the shift in the agenda of urban politics from social justice to economic restructuring and development. As a result, the political capacity of blacks to command governmental resources was reduced substantially.12

In arenas where Black interests are on the decline, Fainstein and Fainstein advocate the establishment of race conscious agendas to protect African-American interests from further usurpation via gentrification, redlining, and government / private sector divestment.

Clarence Stone has called attention to the fact that the character of the policy environment of cities is determined significantly by "regime politics." "An urban regime

may thus be defined as the informal arrangements by which public bodies and private interests function together in order to make and carry out governing decisions." Urban regimes are able to do this by developing cooperative linkages with key community actors (business, elected officials, and community leaders) focused on expanding the institutional scope of the city. Thus, urban regimes play a critical role in determining who and what will have economic and political leverage within the city.

Urban regimes also are critical action agents in local politics because of the inability of mayors and other local officials to act independently of larger environmental influences. An overwhelming majority of mayors lack the resources and authority to govern without paying close attention to business and private sector stakeholders. Many of these elected officials are forced to respond to the logic of systemic power. Under systemic power, elected officials make decisions based on the economic, associational, and social status/lifestyle considerations of their constituency base. Many mayors find themselves paying close attention to the resources of their economically secure constituency base because the nature of local government makes them structurally dependent on these interests.


Feeling the brunt of central city economic decline, federal government devolution, and inner city service delivery demands, many mayors have very little chance to implement public policies without reliance on economically solvent business and private sector support.

As Stone contends,

Public officials make their decisions in a context in which strategically important resources are hierarchically arranged. Because this system of stratification leaves public officials situationally dependent on upper strata interests, it is a factor in all that they do.¹⁵

Fuchs also speaks to the role of politics in city government policy making. In an analysis of the fiscal status of New York and Chicago, Fuchs examines the impact of interest groups and political parties on the cities public policy. She contends that the nature of the political structure — centralized vs. decentralized — plays a pivotal role in both in the political leverage of the mayor and the fiscal stability of the city.

In strong-party cities, where conflict is controlled through the political party, a stable political environment is likely to develop. In weak party cities, where interest groups proliferate, a substitute for the party must be found to resolve conflict. Mayors in these cities have generally chosen, or are compelled by circumstances, to minimize conflict through spending. Mayors in strong-party cities can avoid the wasting of resources that is endemic to the decentralization that develops when interest group demands must be coordinated through local government. Without the instrument of a strong party at their disposal, mayors find it difficult to centralize the fiscal decision making process and cannot control the demands of interest groups.¹⁶


Whereas the centralized, machine driven structure of Chicago politics insulated the city government from interest group demands, the same was not the case for New York City. The very decentralized, interest group laden, weak mayoral system of New York made it more susceptible to interest demands. Thus, the city government of New York was not able to protect itself from the redistributive and allocational demands of its residents. As a result, the city fell into fiscal crisis and was almost locked out of the bond market.

**African-American CDCs and Community Development**

One of the key dimensions of the new Black politics has been the emergence of African-American CDCs as key instruments in the process of community development. The decline of mass-based protest activity in Black communities has produced a vacuum in political leadership and policy implementation that has been filled in many cities by community-based CDCs. Emerging in the wake of war on poverty programs of the 1960s, CDCs have functioned as mechanisms to promote the goals of grassroots policy linkage, community control, and mass-based community mobilization. In this regard, they have served as alternatives to the top-down strategy of urban policy development pursued so religiously and vigorously by big city regimes.

African-American CDCs face a broad array of obstacles in their efforts to promote effective community development agendas for the Black community. In this regard, it should be noted that the policy priorities and commitments of African-American CDCs tend to run at cross purposes with the logic of growth politics in the cities. Because city regimes emphasize the establishment of partnerships with private corporate interests, they do not view African-American CDCs as useful allies and do not readily respond to their policy initiatives. African-American CDCs are unswervingly
committed to redistributive policies; economically strained central cities are inclined to view such policies as a burden rather than a blessing. Thus, the policy priorities of African-American CDCs are often incompatible with the central policy and political priorities of the downtown competitive establishment. This fact places African-American CDCs in a highly disadvantaged position in their efforts to promote constructive and meaningful policy initiatives for the Black community.

The dilemmas faced by African-American CDCs in the policy process are poignantly captured in the research of E.E. Schattschneider. Schattschneider notes the existence of a "mobilization of bias" that locks the interests of groups without effective political resources out of the policy-making.\(^{17}\) African-American community based policy institutions have been the historic victims of the mobilization of bias. Confirmation of this fact is found in the research of Micheal Parenti. Parenti's study of community politics in Newark, New Jersey found that lower strata Blacks in that city were the consistent objects of "nondecision making." Parenti defines nondecision making as the ability of institutions controlled by downtown political interests to block the penetration of the policy concerns of lower strata groups into the central and pivotal realms of decision making.\(^{18}\) Penn Kimball has also noted the existence of structural biases that leave the interests of lower strata groups disconnected from the political


African-American CDCs are compelled to confront and overcome biases in the political process that stifle the effective penetration of African-American citizens and their institutions into the crucial arenas of decision-making in city politics. Browning, Marshall, and Tabb suggest that African-Americans can overcome these biases by joining dominant biracial and multiracial governing coalitions. In reaching this conclusion, Browning, Marshall, and Tabb fail to take into account the host of political and personal factors that make biracial and multiracial coalitions difficult to forge and maintain in city political systems.

African-American CDCs face a rich variety of internal constraints on their ability to promote community development. One constraint has been the dependence on Black mayors in the search for solutions to community problems. Research has shown that the leadership capacity of Black mayors has been undermined by their inability to develop and maintain effective governing coalitions operating outside the control of white dominated downtown power structures. Black mayoral leadership has also been constrained by the use by Black mayors of deracialized campaign strategies and policy agendas. The leadership problems associated with Black mayors underscore the disadvantages that accrue from heavy reliance by Blacks on electoral strategies to promote political empowerment. This reliance is, at best, problematic because the vote is only one of many necessary instruments of Black community empowerment. It should

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be noted in this regard that the emphasis on electoral strategies has had the concomitant effect of suppressing the use of protest strategies that stood as the pivotal foundation for Black empowerment efforts for many years.

Growing economic and political cleavages between powerful and powerless interests in the Black community have also undermined Black community development. Most notably, class conflicts in the Black community have made the building of cohesive political alliances difficult. Internal class conflicts have engendered questions regarding who can best represent the interests of Black people in the political process. Inherent in the existing conflict is a competition for scarce resources. Black community stakeholders are often pitted against each other in the search for economic, social, and political resources. African - American CDCs are challenged to intervene in this situation in order to create a process that will bring the representation and articulation of Black interests under cohesive structural umbrellas.

Research Issues

My research on community development corporations attempts to add to the growing literature on African - American political incorporation and empowerment by providing an in-depth analysis of the ways in which African - American CDCs are able to promote community development in the areas they serve. Fundamental to this study are the ways in which CDC led community development fosters economic and political development for neighborhood residents and how such development impacts Black power in Boston.
Community Development

The concept of community development has been evolving since the early 1950's. Early conceptions of community development emphasized downtown redevelopment and revitalization initiatives. Many municipal economic and political stakeholders focused on this type of development as a means of attracting corporate businesses, empty nesters, and other financially solvent city dwellers. Dreier suggests that this kind of community development has usually been associated with the urban renewal era. This type of community development, as Peterson suggests, focuses on the promotion of business and private sector interests. Under this framework, community development consists of the construction of office buildings, sports arenas, shopping centers, and/or the greater expansion of hospitals and universities already present in a community.²¹ Specifically, local government development efforts are exhausted in efforts to make their municipalities attractive to potential investors. As Norman Krumholz and Philip Star contend,

While troubled neighborhoods and their residents languished, mayors and civic elites in the 1980s addressed most of their attention to building new hotels, sports arenas and stadiums, and convention centers—embellishing their cities' image as they prepared for a tourist-driven economy in the future... There is also little doubt that local political and civic leadership generally has responded to the rising tide of neighborhood disinvestment and poverty by downplaying it and emphasizing their “successes” in building new downtown projects.²²


City government emphasis on downtown growth has tended to overshadow community-based development. By community-based development, this research refers to development focused on rehabilitating economically and politically divested urban areas. Michael Shiffman suggests that this type of development is an integrative approach recognizing the economic, social, and physical needs of a community. Expanding on this conception of community development, Krumholz and Star assert that the fundamental component of this type of development is collective, community-controlled revitalization efforts as essential to inner city empowerment and incorporation.

This approach suggests that although individual efforts within neighborhoods have had some positive impact, ultimately they are limited since they provide only for a piecemeal approach. The community-building movement is based on a holistic approach that suggests all efforts must be integrated into a plan that has been developed by all the stakeholders in the neighborhood.^

Community-building and holistic community development, development which focuses on the economic, social, and physical needs of distressed communities, is at the crux of this analysis.

Community development which goes beyond the traditional downtown establishment developmental agenda is necessary on many different levels. On purely an economic level, community development is critical because of the systematic retrenchment of federal, state, and local government assistance in the promotion and growth of urban areas. The absence of redevelopment funds has drastically reduced the ability of Black community development stakeholders to respond to the various health

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care, educational, employment, and housing needs of inner city Boston. The wide gap in social service responsiveness is further exacerbated by business and manufacturing disinvestment which has also contributed to present the state of economic blight and decay.

In an analysis of short-lived federal government urban policy initiatives, W. Dennis Keating and Janet Smith point to government devolution and the subsequent rise of conservatism, the financial abandonment of inner cities, HUD favoritism towards politically affluent developers, and the drastic decline of community reinvestment since the late 1960s as key factors contributing to the present state of despair in America’s urban areas. As one observer of the community development movement noted,

> The future of CDCs depends on the nation’s commitment to the development of the inner city. So far, the necessary commitment of resources, time, and attention has not been made and unless it is made, all development programs are condemned to marginal significance. 24

The ability of CDCs to rise above the lack of public and private funding and create their own resource channels will impact the success of their community development efforts. The community development efforts of African-American CDCs, especially those emphasizing economic, education, and employment, have the potential to reverse the downward spiral of economic and social decay in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan. Further, a clear cut, bottom-up, community controlled and financed redevelopment agenda also may reverse Black economic, social, and political dependency on Boston’s economic and political elite.

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On a political level, Black community development strategies and tactics are necessary to overcome the structural constraints of the political environment of Boston. African-American CDC community development strategies and tactics may work to reverse weak African-American political and economic incorporation in Boston. Black community development efforts which focus on both traditional and non-traditional electoral and incorporation strategies have the ability to overcome local government non-decision making, policy subterfuge, and other institutional processes that tend to skirt around Black interests in Boston. African-American CDC community development has the potential to organize and mobilize new Black voters to press Boston city government to respond to its economic, political, and social service needs. African-American CDCs have the potential to act as neighborhood agents of change in a political environment that has tended to ignore Black interests. As Bennett suggests,

Since the early 1970s, the governmental/public policy context within which Uptown groups have operated has been quite different.... What groups such as ONE, VOP, and to some degree the Coleman-Shiller movement, were able to do in the 1980s was move into a particular public policy “niches” and by way of aggressive organizing and the careful cultivation of private foundations, business alliances, and remnant sources of governmental assistance, develop viable organizational programs and structures.25

Consistent with the community development efforts of Uptown Blacks in Chicago, African-American CDCs may fill the void of Black leadership and interest articulation contributing to weak incorporation and empowerment in Boston.

Similar to the work of Arvis Vidal, my conceptualization of community
development reflects the fact that African-American CDC led community development
success is dependent on tangible and intangible support mechanisms. In an analysis of
the impact of CDCs on neighborhood revitalization, Vidal found that the success of CDC
led community development is shaped by several complimentary environmental factors.

Regardless of the activities being undertaken, CDCs need three basic
types of assistance from their supporters: funding, technical assistance,
and political support. When the support system is at its best, these key
elements are designed and coordinated into programs that meet the
particular needs of CDCs and their communities ... many members of the
support system are in a position to provide less tangible — but quite
valuable— kinds of assistance. These include networking, advising,
coordinating activities and resources to make them readily available and
mutually supportive, building a local culture conducive to charitable
giving, and advocating community based approaches as the preferred
vehicle of social and economic development.²⁶

Specifically, my conceptualization of community development takes into consideration
the fact that depending on the nature of the local environment, community development
can be a range of activities including more traditional “bricks and mortar” policy as well
as less traditional grassroots mobilization strategies and tactics. As such, community
development is a variety of tangible and intangible community needs and interests
articulated by community actors including traditional civil rights organizations,
community leaders, churches, and other non-profit community organizations including
African-American CDCs.

²⁶ Arvis Vidal, “CDCs as Agents of Change: The State of the Art” in W. Dennis Keating, Norman Krumholz,
and Philip Star (eds.) Revitalizing Urban Neighborhoods (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996),
155.
Additionally, my conceptualization and measurement of community development sets a typology of strong, moderate, and weak development. This typology relates both to the development of Boston, specifically the African-American community, as well as the developmental capacity of the CDCs. This typology examines the community development capacity of African-American CDCs in terms of leadership, operational capacity, membership base, outreach, and finances. African-American CDC led community development is categorized as strong, moderate, or weak in terms of its capacity to yield influence in Boston.

In order to effectively measure the impact of African-American CDC community development in Boston we must keep in mind the fact that Black representation and interest articulation involves more than presence. Clearly, there is a notable African-American presence in the city of Boston. What remains absent, however, is significant African-American incorporation and empowerment in key public policy and decision-making arenas. The extent to which African-American CDCs via community development strategies and tactics can impact Black political and economic leverage and power may determine the preconditions for effective decision making and interest articulation in Boston and other urban areas.

My model of community development examines the factors that enhance, maintain, or limit African-American CDC led community development. In particular, my research considers the impact of the political and governmental environment, government led redevelopment initiatives, and funding considerations on African-American CDC community development. My independent variables reflect research by both Arvis Vidal and Peter Dreier, both of whom detail the impact of economic and
political structural constraints on the effectiveness of grassroots community
development. Specifically, Vidal suggests the success of CDCs to develop communities
is dependent on the ability of these organizations to procure economic resources,
strategically leverage themselves in the political environment, gain technical assistance,
and react to competing models of development.\textsuperscript{27}

I have chosen to focus on the nature of the political and governmental
environment, government led redevelopment efforts, and the funding and the impact of
these variables on community development in Boston. These variables are reflective of
some of the structural barriers of Boston city government and culture that have limited
Black representation, empowerment, and community development. Given the long
history of Brahmin influence and racial antipathy in Boston, the political and
governmental environment of the city has tended to be closed to racial and ethnic
minorities. Thus, the impact of the political and governmental environment on Black
community development is measured by the absence of Black representation in
influential positions in the mayor's office, the low numbers and subordinate positioning
of Blacks in the city bureaucracy, the lack of Boston city council responsiveness to Black
interests and public policy, the absence of an effective and meaningful affirmative action
agenda, and the overall lack of Black leadership in key city government decision-
making arenas.

The impact of government led redevelopment policies is measured by the absence
of Black participation in the conceptualization of the Boston Enterprise Zone, the

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid, p. 255 - 256.
absence of linkage programs directly targeting Black communities in Boston, the weak
distribution of enterprise zone funds to the Black community, the absence of community
based sub-groups to implement government funded programs, the lack of grassroots
involvement in the structure and service delivery of city government redevelopment
initiatives. The fact that there is no direct, effective linkage between Boston’s Black
community and these city government led redevelopment efforts is a measure of the
limitations of African - American CDC community development in Boston.

The impact of funding is measured by the absence of continuous funds, the lack
of control over the distribution of federal, state, and local government community
development funds, and the inconsistent and competitive nature of philanthropic funds.
The ability to effectively produce tangible community development is directly related to
funding resources and opportunities. The fact that there is not any community based or
city government funding entity is a measure of the limitations of Black community
development in Boston. It must be noted that these variables are conceptualized on the
basis of their failure to realize the supposed intentions of Black community
empowerment in Boston. The extent to which these variables can shed light on the
nature of Black community development may provide penetrating insights into the
progress as well as unfinished work of African - American CDC led community
development in America.

Political and Governmental Environment

The political and governmental environment variable examines the political
climate of Boston from both a historic and present day perspective as it relates to the
political empowerment of African-Americans in Boston. Moreover, it examines the
effects of various city administrations racial politics, Black electoral incorporation, and group competition, on the ability of African-American CDCs to foster community development in Boston. On the basis of this variable we can set forth the following hypothesis:

\[ H_1: \text{CDCs with effective linkage to the political and governmental environment are more likely to achieve higher levels of community development than CDCs without linkage.} \]

**Government Led Redevelopment**

The government led redevelopment variable examines the effect of government sponsored development such as enterprise and empowerment zones on the ability of African-American CDCs to foster community development in their communities. On the basis of this variable we can set forth the following hypothesis:

\[ H_2: \text{CDCs impacted by government led redevelopment initiatives are no more likely to achieve higher levels of community development than CDCs not directly impacted by government led redevelopment.} \]

**Government Funding**

The government funding variable examines the effect of changes in the allocation and distribution of development money to local CDCs. This variable analyzes the impact of changes in funds at the federal, state, and local level over time, the impact of the kind (government and non-government funds) and amount of funding on community development projects, and the limits of community development because of lack of funds. On the basis of this variable we can set forth the following hypothesis:
Hi: CDCs with linkage to substantive funding resources are more likely to achieve higher levels of community development than CDCs without funding resources.

Research Design

My dissertation is guided by a qualitative research design. I have chosen a qualitative research design because I believe it is particularly well-suited for my research objectives. Specifically, a qualitative research design provides greater opportunity to understand the meaning, context, and process of the economic, social, political events and actions occurring in a particular setting. As Joseph A. Maxwell contends,

The strengths of qualitative research derive primarily from its inductive approach, its focus on specific situations or people, and its emphasis on words rather than numbers. [Additionally,] the perspective on the events and actions held by the people involved in them is not simply their account of these events and actions, to be assessed in terms of its truth or falsity; it is part of the reality that you are trying to understand.28

Further, I choose a qualitative research design because of its ability to integrate multiple views and perspectives, provide detailed descriptions, and strong interpretive power. In implementing a qualitative research design, several methodological issues were considered. In an effort to avoid systematic biases as well as validity threats, my data collection combined a triangulation of methods including personal interview data, CDC annual reports, City of Boston, Department of Neighborhood Development, and Boston Empowerment Zone statistics, Boston Globe, and community news articles to measure the level and degree of African-American CDC community development in Boston.

Methodology

My data collection began in the Fall of 1998. I spent two and one half months in Boston engaged in extensive research on African-American CDCs in the city. Prior to my fieldwork, I developed a four page questionnaire to measure the impact of the governmental and political environment, government led redevelopment, and funding on the community development initiatives of these CDCs. In an effort to avoid leading my respondents, close attention was paid to the question wording and ordering of questions. As such, I employed open-ended questions to measure the impact of the political and governmental environment, government led redevelopment policies, and funding on Black community development in Boston. I used an open-ended questionnaire format because it gave respondents a greater opportunity to provide information they deemed appropriate. Also, the broad yet specific nature (i.e., ability to focus on one topic) of open-ended questions allowed the interviewer to cover a great deal of information in a short period of time. Clearly, there are some disadvantages to open-ended questionnaires. Most notably, open-ended questions can provide the researcher with more information than necessary and may lead to false and/or superficial responses (see addendum).

Before traveling to Boston, I mailed a one page, formal introductory letter to the CDCs which indicated my research objectives. Approximately two weeks later, the introductory letter was followed-up with personal phone calls. While in Boston, I conducted 28 in-depth, formal personal interviews as well as a host of informal interviews. These interviews consisted of a cross-section of community stakeholders including executive directors (9 formal interviews) and staffers of CDCs (3 formal and
informal), members of the CDC trade association (3 formal interviews), community service organizations / organizers (4 formal interviews and 3 informal interviews), elected officials (5 formal interviews, 1 informal interview), members of the business community (2 formal interviews, 6 informal interviews), scholars (2 formal interviews), and community activists (4 informal interviews). On average, each formal interview was approximately 65 minutes. The informal, less structured interviews ranged from 25 to 75 minutes.

My status as an outsider in the African-American CDC community made the personal interviews the most difficult part of my data collection. Many executive directors, community organizers, and public officials were hesitant to speak with me. The overarching fear was that I would share ‘confidential’ information with competitors and critics. In order to gain their trust, I had to engage in a lot of last minute “why don’t you come to our community event and then perhaps we can sit down and talk.” activity. In many instances, I was granted partial interviews that became complete interviews once respondents actually had an opportunity to interact with me. I also had the opportunity to observe respondents at various organizational meetings, community events, and public hearings. These observational experiences were helpful in that they enabled me to see how these activists operated in the real world.
Chapter 3

AFRICAN-AMERICANS CDCS AND THE POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL ENVIRONMENT OF BOSTON
Overview

The central focus of this study is the role of African-American CDCs in the advancement of community development in Boston. To analyze this phenomenon we have established community development as the dependent variable. We have also established independent variables dealing with the structure of the political and governmental environment, government lead redevelopment projects, and the availability of funding. Our fundamental concern is the illumination of the extent to which the independent variables impact on the capacity of African-American CDCs in Boston to promote community development. Themes related to these issues will be developed in the substantive analytical chapters that follow. The present chapter focuses primarily on the interrelationships existing between the political and governmental environment of Boston and the development capacities of African-American CDCs.

The Political and Governmental Environment

The nature of the role of African-American CDCs in the community development process in Boston, in many respects, has been shaped by the overarching political and governmental environment in the city. Barbara Ferman has suggested that the governing environment of city regimes has a direct and important impact on the success of community based CDCs.1 In concert with this proposition, this chapter analyzes the impact of key components of the governmental environment in Boston on the role and policy making capacity of African-American community based CDCs in that city.

An examination of African-American community based CDCs on development is important for several reasons.

First, an analysis of the political and governmental environment is necessary because the nature of that environment (supportive or non-supportive of Black interests) has the potential to determine the level of incorporation and empowerment of African-Americans. This chapter explores the validity of the proposition that the nature of the political and governmental environment can either support or stifle the community development efforts of African-American CDCs. If this proposition is correct, then it logically follows that the ability of African-American CDCs to foster a healthy relationship with key figures in the political and governmental environment may enhance their developmental efforts. This chapter will shed light on these propositions in the context of the interaction between African-American community based CDCs and the governmental environment of Boston.

An examination of the political and governmental environment is also beneficial because it has the ability to identify key power brokers in city government. Analysis of the political and governmental environment may identify the leaders, organizations, and institutions that shape the policy outcomes in Boston. Going beyond the structural limitations of city government to explore the real impact of city stakeholders can shed light on the willingness of city governments to include as well as exclude certain interests and groups.² Given the economic and structural constraints many big city mayors are operating within, understanding the nature of local government dependencies may help

us to understand the key mitigating factors that shape the relationship between the political and governmental environment and the Black community.  

Finally, an examination of the political and governmental environment is necessary because it helps to explain the potential as well as limits of Black community development in Boston. A clear understanding of the impediments on Black community development may discourage the emergence of the “blame the victim” mentality that tends to accompany theories of African-American political behavior and political empowerment. In this regard, it should be noted that one of the major hypotheses of this research is that the often marginalized status of the Black community in many urban areas may have more to do with the pre-established relationships between city hall and business/economic interests than the inability of the Black community to organize and lobby the mayor’s office.

In this chapter, I explore the nature of the political and governmental environment and examine the impact of the structure of city government, mayoral administrations, indigenous African-American organizations and institutions, and group competition on the ability of African-American CDCs to foster community development in Boston. One of the critical aspects of this chapter is an examination of the linkage strategies of CDCs with key actors and agencies in the political and governmental environment.


Specifically, this chapter explores the issue: “How well have Blacks been able to fashion effective links to the mayor’s office, city council, elected officials, the bureaucracy and civil rights groups?”

**Boston’s Economic and Ethnic Strongholds: Brahmin and Irish Influence**

Historically, the politics of Boston has been exclusive. Dating back to the eighteenth century, the city has been ruled by an upper class elite that has set the political agenda of the city.⁶

Operating chiefly through the Federalist Party, Brahmin leaders controlled the election of mayors and city councillors, and dominated the process of decision-making in local government... preserving their class status through financial trusts and intermarriage, Boston’s Yankee elites continue to play a major role in the setting of the public agenda and the implementation of important policy decisions.⁷

The tendency of Boston’s city government has been to distribute material benefits to those groups and interests with the wealth, power, and influence to demand access to the system.

Control of the city government by economic elites has not gone unchallenged. Although the Brahmin influence on Boston politics is clearly relevant, the political and governmental environment has also been shaped by the electoral astuteness of the Irish in Boston. Desiring to improve their economic, social, and political standing within the city, Irish Americans in Boston strategically used their numerical majority as an electoral

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In many instances, they were able to wrestle away governing power from the Brahmin elite. The political incorporation and empowerment of Boston’s Irish community was the result of the community’s ethnic loyalty. Aware of the Brahmin stronghold on the political and governmental environment in the city, the Irish community counter-attacked by voting their own politicians into elective office. The Irish community’s use of electoral office as a means of breaking into the system resulted in a shift of political power at the local level. Unlike other ethnic groups residing in Boston, the Irish community was able to create a political and electoral niche that challenged the Brahmin economic stronghold in the city. The electoral niche of the Irish did not, however, result in a radical redistribution of economic benefits.⁸

The success of the Irish community in Boston was, in part, a result of structures of opportunity made available by demographic shifts. The increase in Irish immigrants to Boston gave them numeric leverage in the political and governmental environment.⁹ According to Doug McAdams, under- represented groups are best able to mobilize and organize when expanding political opportunities, and indigenous organizational strength, and when the presence of certain shared cognitions are present in the community.¹⁰

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¹¹ Ibid., pp. 14-17.
essence, there needs to be certain “opportunities” within the structure of the larger political and governmental environment that are favorable to community organizing and development.

The Irish were able to take advantage of these opportunities in their rise to power in Boston politics. Because of the history of Brahmin influence and Irish dominated politics in Boston, opportunities for political incorporation and empowerment by other racial and / or ethnic minorities has tended to be weak. In Boston, the limited political incorporation of Blacks may have resulted from the Irish’s reluctance to share power with other upwardly mobile groups.\textsuperscript{12} African - American political incorporation and community development have been limited by the lack of expanding political opportunities in Boston. Black political incorporation and empowerment in Boston have used a variety of tactics, including protest and electoral politics. Despite active organizational efforts on the part of the Black community, African - American penetration of the policy environment has been limited. The Black community in Boston has primarily been subjected to symbolic acts of local government support. The problem with symbolic acts of mayoral, city council, and business community support is that they do little to tap into the economic, social, and political issues plaguing Boston’s African - American community.

As one respondent explained:

\begin{quote}
Politically, we still don’t have any power. Basically the ministers are on the Menino bandwagon so basically there is no major economic or political development in the Black community or in the city for that matter. So what, a Black person may win the housing lottery developed
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{12} Steven Erie, 1988, pp. 33-35.
by the city .... but one house doesn't address the homeless or lack of affordable housing problem in the community.¹³

Mayoral photo-ops at community events do little to address the high crime, poverty, and infant mortality rates of Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan where over 80 percent of the city’s African-American community resides. Further, symbolic representation does little to increase the power of the two African-American city council members, address the issue of mayoral co-option of Black leaders, and address the continued gentrification and redlining of African-American communities.

African-American community based CDCs have surfaced as major vehicles for the enhancement of Black linkage in the policy making process. Despite their expanding organizational strength and active involvement in promoting Black community influence with the larger political and governmental environment, their impact on Black incorporation and empowerment has often been subverted by the actions of citywide institutions and policy actors. Commenting on the strategies of policy makers, McAdams wrote:

Polity members resist changes which would threaten the current realization of their interests even more than they seek changes which would enhance their interests.¹⁴

The extent to which polity members work to limit Black community development is a significant measure of the larger political and governmental environment stakes involved. The question becomes whether the barriers to Black decision making input are

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¹³ Boston Interview.

intractable, or can be overcome through continuing social, economic, and political actions by African-American community based CDCs. This issue is one that runs to the heart of our analysis of contemporary Black politics in Boston.

**Structure of City Government**

There are many structures of opportunity in Boston that are beneficial to certain economic and political stakeholders. Conversely, there are opportunities within Boston’s political and governmental environment that are not beneficial to the city’s minority community development and political empowerment stakeholders. The result of such a conflicting environment is that there will be people who fall into one of two possible categories -- dominant and subordinate. In large measure, African-Americans in Boston tend to be subordinate actors in the political process. For the sake of this research we view the subordinate status of African-Americans as a significant factor in the determination of the capacity of African-American CDCs to play a meaningful role in the community development process in Boston. By subordination, we mean the “nonempowering” deferential role played by African-Americans CDCs in community development process in Boston. On the issue of subordination, Keiser notes,

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Minority group members may increase their political participation and even win benefits of office from the power-holding groups, without achieving any gains in empowerment. When benefits are symbolic and imply no reallocation of political power, that is, no authority to influence political decision-making outcomes for the benefit of the power-seeking...

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minority group, I label this subordination.\textsuperscript{16}

The ability or inability on the part of key African - American community based institutions such as CDCs to promote effective linkage and empowerment within the larger political and governmental environment, are key factors that will shape the future direction and quality of Black life in Boston in immensely important ways.

\textit{The Mayor's Office}

One of the defining characteristics of the political and governmental environment in Boston is the city's strong mayoral form of government. Adopted by city charter in 1949, Boston's change in structure to a strong mayoral form of government represented an effort to consolidate and centralized power. Under the charter, the mayor was granted chief executive status. As chief executive the mayor's formal powers ranged from extensive budget-making authority to the appointment of cabinet officers.\textsuperscript{17} Increased mayoral power has not always been conducive to fair representation of all of the city interests. Mayors tend to forge alliances with business and economic interests that provide tangible assets to the city. Often times, these partnerships are developed without the needs of the larger community in mind. The history of politics in Boston has been one of uneven partnerships between city government and private interests on the one hand, and city government and the mass electorate on the other.


The campaign for urban renewal in Boston in the 1950s made the city extraordinarily dependent on key financial, educational, and healthcare institutions for its continuing governing capacity and financial solvency. Perhaps had the BRA (Boston Redevelopment Authority) taken a community friendly approach to redevelopment, the economic and political unevenness that presently haunts the city would not be as critical. The unwillingness of the city government to renegotiate its relationship with the business community has contributed to the “non-empowering” status of Blacks in Boston. Until the African-American community is viewed as an electoral and/or economic base of significant power by the larger political and governmental environment, effective Black CDC promotion of community development and political empowerment in Boston will remain “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen.”

City Council

In 1981, in a citywide referendum, the structure of Boston’s city council was changed. Whereas prior to the referendum the nine city councillors were elected by district, the citizens of Boston agreed to increase the number of city councillors from nine to thirteen. The four additional council seats would be voted on at-large in city wide elections. Although the four at-large positions expanded the size of the city council, these council seats have done very little to expand the scope of influence of the council relative to the mayor’s office. City councillors in Boston still need a two-thirds vote to override a mayoral veto, must run for election every two years, and have no power to amend mayoral budget proposals. The strong mayoral form of government does not

allow for the exercise of significance influence by city councillors. As a result, the majority of the decision making power in the political and governmental environment in Boston is concentrated in the mayor's. Any group interested in influencing the political and governmental environment ought first be interested in influencing the mayor's office.

The commanding role played by the mayor in Boston City Government renders the mayor's office a prime target for political actors interested in promoting Black access and incorporation. In Boston the reality of access is dependent on the values, personality, philosophy, and political priorities of the individual mayor.¹⁹

On occasion, African-Americans have attempted to break the concentration of decision making power in the mayor's office by lobbying city council. However, efforts to use city council as a community development ally has been an unsuccessful strategy. One key reason that Boston's city council has not been an effective tool of Black community development and political empowerment is that African-Americans only hold two of the thirteen council seats in the city. If, as Browning, Marshall, and Tabb posit, city councils act as a concrete means of Black political representation and incorporation, the Boston city council experience suggests that the absence of substantial Black representation may represent a source of major political weakness for the Black community.²⁰ In an analysis of the limits of city council representation of Black interests, Nelson commented:

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In Boston, structural and demographic constraints have prevented the Black community from satisfying these preconditions for minority incorporation through city council action. We should note in this regard that the structural allocation of council seats, 4 at-large and 9 in districts, presents formidable barriers to Black political incorporation.21

The historic legacy of racial exclusion in the city has contributed to the present difficulties in Black city council representation and interest articulation. Further, the visible, yet relatively powerless position of the two African-American city councillors has helped solidify the subordinate status of African-Americans in the political and governmental environment in the city.

The Bureaucracy

In Boston a large amount of the day to day city maintenance and operational functions are controlled by the bureaucracy. The ability of underrepresented groups, specifically African-Americans, to gain leverage in the political and governmental environment by obtaining key positions in the government bureaucracy may help advance their economic, social, and political interests. In Boston, the bureaucracy provides multiple points of access for the Black community. Black bureaucratic appointments have been symbolically helpful but substantively harmful to Black community development and empowerment in Boston. Symbolically, Black appointments to the bureaucracy are beneficial because “what we had was a change, a new level of excitement in the community because of what these positions seemed to indicate.”

Under mayor Kevin White, for instance, Black municipal employment went from 6 percent to 20 percent. Still, the majority of these positions were low skill and low paying

clerical jobs.  

Even when Blacks were appointed to high level positions, these posts tended to be under mayoral jurisdiction and resulted in minor arenas of influence for the Black community. Substantively, Blacks have achieved a certain level of political incorporation in bureaucratic positions but the majority of these positions tend to be gatekeeper and buffer roles. Presently, the city's most influential bureaucratic agency – The Boston Police Department – has instituted a community advisory board to help facilitate better police - community relations. Although the board meets on a bimonthly basis, the concerns being leveled and the responses given seem elementary. One respondent commented:

The B-2 and B-3 are not all that effective. Sometimes I bring issues to them that they can address but they don't. Take for example all of the youth loitering in front of our offices and businesses. They can easily have a police presence to curtail that but they claim that it is impossible to respond without running all over the city. I think they deliver services when they want to and when they don't, they won't.

Beyond the police presence, there are those in the community who tend to feel that basic city government services, such as trash removal, traffic light and pothole repairs are overlooked in Boston's Black communities. "The same traffic light has been out for two weeks now .... have we seen any city workers here to fix it? Why is it that we always


24 Boston Interview.
have to beg for the basics? He [ Menino ] is getting the job done alright."^25

Developing effective empowerment strategies with key administrators in the mayor’s office, city council, and the bureaucracy has been difficult. For the most part, African-Americans in Boston have been concentrated in non-empowering bureaucratic positions. The tendency of Boston’s mayors to engage in lip service politics with the Black community has not helped to reverse this course. More often than not, Black interests in Boston tend to be marginalized, overlooked, or ignored. As a result, African-Americans CDCs in Boston have sought alternative means of political linkage.

White, Flynn, and Menino: Mayoral Support and Black Community Development

The strong mayor form of government in Boston has rendered city hall a key player in the community development process. The mayor’s influence can sometimes complicate the tactics and strategies of those engaged in community development. African-American CDCs, Black leaders, and community activists interested in promoting community development must walk a fine line between Black interest articulation and mayoral cajoling.

Part of the Black community’s political and governmental environment vulnerability extends back to its early efforts at political empowerment in the city. During the first half of this century, African-Americans in Boston were systematically excluded from all facets of the policy process in the city.

^Boston Interview.
As Nelson noted,

During the first half of the Twentieth Century, effective linkage between the Black community and mayoral administrations was non-existent. Under mayors Curley, Haynes, and Collins, Blacks were thoroughly locked out of the key corridors of urban power and influence.26

In spite of their systematic exclusion, Blacks in Boston continued to lobby city hall for equal representation and policy implementation. Over the years, as the mayoral leadership in Boston has taken on a more progressive style of governing, the symbolic political incorporation and empowerment of African-Americans has also increased.

In many respects, the progressive and populist leadership of Kevin White, Ray Flynn, and present Mayor Thomas Menino set the tone for a new era of Black community development in Boston.27 These three mayors took steps to increase Black representation in the city government. Kevin White, for instance, was the first mayor to use the bureaucracy as a means of African-American employment. White's action were more symbolic than substantive; they did not reverse the pattern of Black exclusion from key bureaucratic agencies. Black administrators in the White administration were limited basically to "non-empowering" subordinate positions in city government. This pattern of Black subordination was not limited to the White administration. Some observers of Boston mayoral politics have charged that over the past thirty years, Blacks have been

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reduced to mainly symbolic roles in the administration of Boston city hall affairs. As one respondent commented:

'The look at me ... I did it first approach' that city hall takes when it comes to the Black community makes it difficult to trust the mayor and his cohorts. Publically, he is 'getting the job done' but politically he [ the mayor ] is of no help to us."^*

Given the seemingly mixed nature of city government support in the Black community, the question becomes whether or not substantive Black community development and interest articulation in Boston is possible? More importantly, are there structures of opportunity in the political and governmental environment that can move African - Americans from subordination to empowerment? Finally, what role will African - American CDCs play in this process?

1967 to 1983: Kevin White's Sweet Sixteen

The election of Kevin White in 1967 set the stage for a new agenda of mayoral leadership in Boston. The election of White, a self-identified civil rights leaner, ushered in a new wave of city interests. The African - American community became one of the primary beneficiaries of White's progressive urban leadership agenda. For the first time in the city, the mayor appeared to support Black interests. White appointed African - Americans to key city government and administrative positions. As Nelson explained,

White made conscientious efforts to place Blacks in highly visible positions in his administration. Among the most notable Black appointments was the selection of Reginald Eaves to head the Office of Human Rights and Paul Parks to serve as Director of the Model Cities Program.^29

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^28 Boston Interview.

^29 Nelson, Chapter 3, p 6.
During his first term, White fostered an atmosphere of concrete service delivery to Boston's Black communities. Under White, African-Americans had linkage with an instrumental figure in Boston's institutionalized power structure. Undoubtedly, White received an enormous amount of electoral support and praise from the African-American community for his community development efforts. Still, the praise of the Black community would not drown out the loud roars of Boston's white ethnic communities that branded him "mayor Black." The white ethnics in Boston feared that White's support of the Black community would weaken their own patronage opportunities in the city. As McAdam contends, "often times groups that stand to lose power and control work to subvert the organizational capacity of underrepresented groups." The backlash against White may have represented one such coup d'État.

Aware of the growing cynicism in the white community, mayor White began to shift his focus. By the end of his first term, White moved away from the Black community towards downtown redevelopment and expansion.

Mayor White's complete abandonment of Black community development came in the wake of his 1970 gubernatorial defeat where he failed to carry the white ethnic vote. In an effort to maintain his mayoral post, White abandoned the service delivery notions of his "Little City Halls program". He made Little City Halls another facet of his highly centralized, tightly controlled governing machine. In the end, White's

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30 Nelson, Chapter 3, p.7.


32 See Nelson, Chapter 3.
abandonment of Black interests and embrace of downtown interests made African-Americans in Boston vulnerable to the whims of the business centered growth coalition. White’s effort to make a name for himself through the revitalization of Boston’s business and economic districts overrode any efforts the city government could have taken to protect the Black community from redlining, gentrification, and school segregation. Black community development was forfeited for the interests of the larger political and governmental forces with the power, resources, and influence to demand access and opportunities from the government.

1983 to 1994: Ray Flynn and the Promise of Populism

In 1983 one of the most memorable mayoral races in Boston took place. Ray Flynn and Mel King, two liberal populists, one white, one Black, ran for office. Both candidates promised to match neighborhood development in Boston’s ethnic communities with that of the city’s downtown urban redevelopment efforts. With African-Americans comprising less than 24 percent of the population in the city of Boston, Mel King’s electoral chances were slim. In the end, Flynn whose city council ties gave him and inside connection to some of Boston’s white ethnic communities, won the mayoral race.

More than any mayor before or after him in the city, Flynn adopted a progressive governing style that sought to protect Boston’s racial and ethnic neighborhood interests from further exploitation. As Dreier observed:

Actively reaching out to include neighborhood residents in city government, Flynn turned the tables on the idea that “you can’t fight city hall.” More often than not, it was city hall working with neighborhood groups fighting the banks (for redlining), the developers (to require linkage and other concessions to neighborhood preservation), the
landlords (for promoting gentrification), the elected school committee (for ignoring the needs of the students), the state government’s Beacon Hill establishment (for treating Boston, the state capital, like a Third World colony), and even the federal government (particularly Reagan’s HUD).\textsuperscript{33}

The progressive policies of the Flynn administration were responsible for increasing tenants rights. Specifically, Flynn was a strong proponent of rent control and effectively lobbied for the passage of city government legislation banning condo conversion/eviction in the city.\textsuperscript{34}

CDCs in the city also experienced a developmental transformation under the Flynn administration. In this regard it should also be noted that the Flynn administration developed partnerships linking CDCs with some of the city’s businesses/foundations. The goal of these joint ventures was to expand the developmental scope of CDCs. Commenting on the successful housing partnerships initiated by the Flynn administration, Dreier wrote,

\textit{At the end of Flynn’s second term in 1991, CDCs had built or rehabilitated more than 5,000 housing units.” The BHP projects accounted for less than one-half of this figure but its role in expanding CDC capacity helped the nonprofit groups take on additional projects on their own.}\textsuperscript{35}

Still, for all of Flynn’s progressivism, many charge that he provided very little for the


\textsuperscript{34}Dreier, p. 74.

\textsuperscript{35}Dreier, 1996.
African - American community. In particular, Flynn’s progressivism was very selective in terms of what communities, neighborhood groups, and CDCs benefited from the mayor’s policy agenda.

The loudest criticism of Flynn has been his “turn the other cheek” governing philosophy in relation to hostile Black community / police relations, banking industry redlining in Roxbury, and his administration’s lack of incorporation of Black interests within his “inner” governing circle.³⁶ Whereas the White administration abandoned Black interests, the Flynn administration never developed an agenda to ignore them. Flynn took a trickle down posture in his relation with the Black community. The assumption of his administration may have been that as the overall situation of Boston’s white ethnic communities improved so to would the economic, social, and political opportunities in the Black community. The problem with the trickle down assumption is that the structural, political, and societal inequality in the Black community was so deeply entrenched, that they could not be substantially reversed with cosmetic or symbolic gestures. The obstacles to Black community development were not going to miraculously disappear without long-term and concrete political and governmental reform.

The posture of both White and Flynn that African - American community development could be developed with tangential ties to the municipal government was unrealistic. Some contend that Flynn was keenly aware of the limits of Black community development. Discussing the nature of the relationship between the Flynn

³⁶Nelson, Chapter 3, 12.
administration and the Black community, one respondent commented:

Flynn led under what we termed defined maintenance. By this, his administration had a clear understanding of its commitment to development. Symbolically, Flynn wanted the city administration to represent the community – his heart was in the right place. Still, Flynn was a political animal and the bottom line was always votes.37

Perhaps it was the Flynn administration’s belief that the Black community offered very few political incentives (i.e., votes) that allowed his administration to knowingly engage in a largely symbolic campaign of Black political empowerment and community development. If symbolism is all Blacks have gained under two of the city’s most progressive leaders, the question becomes what will it take for African-Americans to achieve significant economic, social, and political power in Boston. One possible answer might be the development of strong African-American community-based CDCs to provide the organizational base and political leverage needed to penetrate higher circles of governing power and authority, and open major avenues of enduring policy influence by the Black community in the process of interest articulation, resource distribution, and societal transformation.

1994 to the Present: Thomas Menino – “Getting the Job Done!”

Boston’s present mayor, Thomas Menino, has been championed as the “neighborhood mayor.” Elected in the fall of 1994, Menino, the first Italian American to hold the post, has over 15 years of government service. Prior to his ascension to the mayor’s office, Menino represented the Hyde Park area in city council. One respondent suggested that Menino’s history in the community has made him the most effective

37 Boston Interview.
mayor in recent history. "I remember Tom from his door knocking campaigns for
council. His title has changed but his commitment to the people of Boston is just as
sincere as it was 10 years ago. He is an urban mechanic."

There are others who think that mayor Menino has done little for African-American constituents in the city.

If we look at community development as a process, what has he [Menino]
really done for the Black community. What you see on Blue Hill Ave.
has not changed since 1968. Some of the buildings that were burned
down then are still boarded up - it is difficult to conclude that there has
been significant development here. Compared to other communities in the
city, all we have are some green signs, white picket fences, and trees.
Where are our supermarkets, drug stores, playgrounds? In this respect,
Menino's commitment to the Black community is relative - it's in
relationship to what? In relationship to what we had, yes he is better. But
in relationship to what other communities have, he is just like everyone
else.38

Menino has strategically placed African-Americans in high powered positions in the
city government. Two of his most notable appointments have been Chuck Grigsby,
Director of the Department of Neighborhood Development and Reginald Nunally,
Director of the Boston Empowerment Center. Still, as one respondent noted, these
appointments mean little in terms of African-American linkage to the city government.

Similar to tactics used by White and Flynn, there has been a tendency for the Menino
administration to co-opt Black leaders. Some charge that Menino is particularly good at
co-opting vocal community leaders and activists. One example cited by respondents is
the appointment of Reggie Nunally as director of the Boston Empowerment Center.

Prior to his appointment as director of the Boston Empowerment Center, Nunnally was
executive director of Grove Hall Neighborhood Development Corporation. As executive

38 Boston Interview.

39 Boston Interview.
director Nunnally had become very vocal about the lack of service delivery in the Grove
Hall section of Roxbury. Some claim that Nunnally’s appointment represents a form of
leadership co-optation.

Chuck [Grisgby] and Reggie are not responsible to the Black community
... they are responsible to the mayor. Now that doesn’t mean that Black
people in the city government aren’t interested in assisting the Black
community. What it does mean, however, is that there is very little that
they alone can do.\(^{40}\)

Commenting on the relationship between Menino and Black leaders, Nelson suggests

As Mayor, Menino has consistently identified a special set of Black
leaders with whom he believes he can work and uses these leaders as
buffers between the Black community and the city administration.\(^{41}\)

As a result, very few African-Americans with stakes in the community development
process in the city are willing to publicly criticize him. Black supporters of Menino saw
little, if anything, wrong with his replacement of Black school superintendent Lois
Harrison-Jones and his decision to turn over Boston State Hospital to private interests.\(^{42}\)

The Menino administration tends to ignore criticisms emanating from the Black
community, encouraging critics to look at Menino’s record of race relations in the city.
One of the byproducts of this pattern of mayoral-Black community relations is that
some in the community do not feel that the city takes their concerns seriously.

Politics here is still very racist. We aren’t respected by the political
system because we don’t have a collective bargaining apparatus. He

\(^{40}\)Boston Interview.

\(^{41}\)Nelson, Chapter 3, p. 15.

\(^{42}\)Nelson, Chapter 3, 16.
[Menino] doesn't listen to us and we are the organized part of the community. Can you imagine how the unorganized, uneducated, and poor are treated?\[^{43}\]

In spite of these controversial opinions Mayor Menino, with the help of the city's Department of Neighborhood Development (DND), has waged a successful community redevelopment campaign in the city. The campaign, identified by large hunter green signs that read "getting the job done!", is designed to rebuild and redevelop some of Boston's most economically depressed racial and ethnic communities. Menino's highly publicized and politicized emphasis on the Blue Hill Avenue corridor has received an incredible amount of praise from the state and media for its innovative approach to revitalizing Roxbury. Still, some charge that "Menino is taking credit for a job being done by others over the last fifteen years." Others tend to believe that "getting the job" done is a mayoral initiated gentrification ploy.

The Blue Hill Avenue corridor? I hear that they want to put a GAP store in Dudley commons. Why? The city has of late been so committed to revitalizing Roxbury but for who and for what purposes? Houses are on the market for $192,000 in this community? What is the motivation behind pumping 1.5 million dollars into the Franklin Park Zoo? I don't buy it because gentrification is real in this city.\[^{44}\]

Some contend that this line of thinking is laced with paranoia and fear. Still, while in the field it was difficult not to notice the comfortable presence of yuppies waiting for the bus in Roxbury along side some of the areas b-boys and Buppies.

Undoubtedly changes in the structural relationship between the Black community and influential members of the city's power elite are necessary to change the present course of Black community development. Perhaps the mayor's office and city council

\[^{43}\text{Boston Interview.}\]
\[^{44}\text{Boston Interview.}\]
can follow the lead of its bureaucratic agencies and institute citizen advisory boards, conduct open budgetary sessions, and the like. The opportunities available to the city government to make the political and governmental environment more equitable are present. The leaders in this environment must be willing to move African-Americans from non-empowering to empowering positions and leadership roles in the city. Until a collaborative effort of this kind takes place to promote community development, the Black community will remain in a subordinate position in the governing process, and Black human development will remain an elusive goal in the public agenda.

**Alternate Methods of Black Political Linkage and Community Development in Boston**

Mayoral domination of the policy process in Boston has engulfed Black community leaders and institutions in a politics of uncertainty. Virtually shut out of the city’s decision making processes, African-Americans involved in community development have sought alternative means of political power and incorporation. In particular, African-Americans have sought linkage with other influential players in Boston’s political and governmental environment.

*Boston School Committee*

Prior to mayoral usurpation, the Boston School Committee was an effective source of Black political linkage and policy implementation. For years, the school committee had been an effective alternate power base in the city. Dating back to Boston’s tumultuous school desegregation battles, it was the school committee not the

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45Nelson, Chapter 3, pp. 14-17.
mayor's office that refused to comply with the state’s Racial Imbalance law and the 1974 State Supreme Court desegregation ruling.\textsuperscript{46} Anyone paying attention to local politics in the city was aware of the power of the committee. For years, African-Americans unsuccessfully ran for the school committee. The at-large election structure of the committee made it difficult for Blacks to gain incorporation on the board because Black electoral support was not enough.

In 1981, similar to the referendum to change the structure of the city council, the structure of the Boston school committee also went to a citywide vote. The proposed legislation sought to change the school committee from an at-large to a more district oriented assembly. The passage of the referendum changed the structure of the school board from a 5 member at-large entity to a 13 member committee with nine members elected from districts and four members elected at large.\textsuperscript{47} The new structure of the school committee was most beneficial to African-Americans who previously had only been able to elect two African-Americans to the school committee. Some jokingly suggest that these two appointments would not have occurred if the two members, John O’Bryant and Jean McGuire, did not have Irish sounding names.\textsuperscript{48}

African-Americans elected to the school committee became very powerful and vocal proponents of the Black community. For the first time in the city, Blacks had direct linkage to one of the cities major policy making entities. In some respects, African


\textsuperscript{47}Nelson, Chapter 3, p. 18.

American school committee power overshadowed that of Black city councillors. In an analysis of shifts in the Black power structure in Boston, Nelson explains,

Over time, the center of gravity for Black policy began to shift decisively in the direction of Black members of the school committee. Through their actions, the school committee became a major sounding board for the articulation of Black grievances across the entire spectrum of the political system. Here it should be noted that, in some respects, Black school committee members were in a better position to represent the interests of the Black community than Black city councillors because their policy priorities were more focused, and their bases of political support were more independent of direct party control.\(^4^9\)

The power allotted to Black members of the board gave the community the institutional backing and legitimacy it needed. To be sure, the institutional authority and voice African-Americans now had to press the city to equitably distribute resources to its communities, threatened some of the city’s power elite. African-American pull on the school board did not seem to reflect the slow and symbolic nature of the city’s Black policy agenda. If anything, it was the complete opposite. The gravitational pull of Black interests toward the school committee made it appear to be a bastion of power for the African-American community. Concerned with the seemingly unchecked power of the school committee, Mayor Flynn persuasively petitioned the state legislature to make the Boston school committee an appointed, mayoral governed entity.

Flynn was granted temporary control of the Boston school committee. However, per state legislative instructions, in 1996 control of the school committee also faced a citywide referendum. The people’s decision to allow control of the school committee to remain in the mayor’s office was most devastating to Blacks. The elimination of the

\(^{4^9}\)Nelson, Chapter 4, p. 3.
elected school committee, in many ways, equated to an elimination of the only effective linkage of Black political influence and community development in the city.

*Black State Legislators*

Another source of Black political linkage and community development in Boston is the Massachusetts Black Legislative Caucus (MBLC). Blacks have relied on this political entity because political parties and interests groups in the city have been overshadowed by the strong ethnic centered leadership of Boston’s neighborhoods. As a legislative body, the MBLC has been instrumental in providing the Black community with resources to improve the quality of life in the districts they represent. Formed in 1972, the Massachusetts Black Legislative Caucus has also supported Black community development. African-American CDCs have been effective in lobbying the MBLC. African-American CDCs have developed workable relationships with some of the MBLC’s most prominent and influential members. In recent years, two of these Black state legislators – Dianne Wilkerson and Charlotte Golar Ritchie – have been responsible for major legislative initiatives that directly benefit the African-American community. Members of the community praise Senator Dianne Wilkerson for her aggressive Insurance Community Reinvestment legislation which provides lucrative incentives for the state’s insurance industry to invest in community development. State Representative Charlotte Golar Ritchie’s Brownsfields Bill has also received critical acclaim. The Brownsfields Bill gives community organizations input in determining the use of inner city, environmentally contaminated lots.

Many African-American CDC executive directors are enamored by the pioneering work and commitment of Representative Ritchie. Ritchie made history by
being the first freshman legislator to receive a chairmanship. In her post as chair of
Housing and Urban Development, Ritchie has worked to ensure equal representation and
distribution of benefits to the Black community. In some respects, Ritchie’s growing
popularity has appeared to overshadowed longtime community favorite, Senator Dianne
Wilkerson. As one respondent commented:

“It’s really quite simple. Charlotte comes to the community asking,
“What can I do for you? Tell me what you need. How I should vote?”
Her approach is very grassroots. Dianne’s style is different. She hasn’t
quite gotten it that intelligence is in the power of the people.”

Still, Ritchie is only one person and is limited in her capacity to respond to all of the
needs of the African-American community.

There seems to be growing discontent in the Black community regarding the lack
of commitment and service delivery of some Black state legislators. Commenting on the
increasing cynicism in the Black community towards Black elected officials, one
community organizer commented:

A lot of African-Americans politicians do not seem to care about people
of color anymore. The only time you see them in the district is either
during an election year or when something tragic happens in the
community. Even then, we have to question their commitment ... hoping
that they aren’t using another tragedy as a public relations campaign for
what they are going to do in the Black community. We need them to stop
talking because poverty, crime, and youth violence may not impact
Beacon Hill but they are everyday realities here.

Even if Black state legislators improve their service delivery, there is very little evidence

50 Boston Interview.

51 Boston Interview.
that they will be able to reverse the subordinate status of African-American interests in
the local political and governmental environment. One of the major obstacles of Black
legislators is that these men and women exist in their own policy enclaves. Black state
legislators may be committed to Black community development. However, their domain
of policy articulation tends to be a few steps removed from the masses of the Black
community in need of economic, educational, and socio-political assistance. As a result,
Black state legislators have been severely limited in their efforts to provide effective
avenues of Black community development and political linkage in Boston. Given the
structural constraints African-American state legislators operate within their legislative
experiences have been similar to African-American city councillors. Both of these
advocates of Black interests "have not built indigenous organizational networks or
substantially contributed to the growth of cognitive liberation and insurgency politics in
the Black community."\textsuperscript{52} The inability of African-American CDCs to foster concrete
and consistent relationships with key entities in the political and governmental
environment in Boston has impacted their community development efforts. The
inconsistent nature of Black linkage in the political and governmental environment has
not provided the community with any overarching institutional authority and leverage in
the city. Until African-American CDCs, community leaders, and activists, are able to
develop substantive relationships with the city's power structure, Black community
development in Boston will remain fragmented, marginalized, and inclusive only to
certain "special" interests.

\textsuperscript{52}Nelson, Chapter 5, p. 10.
Wading in the Water: The Structure of the Black Community in Boston

The internal structure of the African-American community in Boston also plays a major role in the ability of African-American CDCs in Boston to promote community development in their service areas. Considerable scholarly research supports the proposition that the extent to which a community is organized can either enhance or undermine its movement toward empowerment and incorporation. The often unorganized, conflictual, and competitive nature of Boston's African-American community has made it difficult for African-American CDCs, Black elected officials, Black churches, civil rights organizations, and community activists/organizers to take advantage of its potential leverage in the political system. Since the late 1960s the Black community is Boston has been divided by various factions. This state of affairs has substantially inhibited its ability to maximize its influence in the political process.

This research notes the tremendous amount of skill, resourcefulness, and political awareness existing in the Black community in Boston. However, it is clear that the existence of resources does not automatically translate itself into operational capacity. The realization of the latter objective requires leadership, vision, cooperation, and accountability. These complementary resources materialize only in the context of a process of community wide mobilization.

Civil Rights Organizations

For years the economic, social, and political interests of the African-American community in Boston have been represented by a select few civil rights organizations, settlement houses, and community health centers. There may be debate as to whether or not the formal charters and guidelines of these organizations legislated their active
involvement in Black community development. Still, the commitment of these organizations to the full emancipation and incorporation of Blacks in every facet of life can not be debated. During the first part of this century, it was the diligent political direction and leanings of these indigenous service organizations that propelled Black interests to a prominent position in the larger political and governmental environment in Boston. Even before the formal organization of civil rights organizations in the early nineteen century, Boston had become a hotbed for African-American activism. Boston was a safe house for runaway slaves, abolitionists, and other vocal proponents of freedom and equality. Among the most vocal was homegrown, Harvard educated, political activist William Monroe Trotter. With the help of his paper _The Guardian_, Trotter was instrumental in making the Black community aware of its unalienable right to racial equality in the city. Trotter became one of the leading Black civil rights figures in Boston.

_The NAACP_

In 1911 the first branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was established in Boston. The primary goal of the Boston chapter of the NAACP was the slow and steady articulation and incorporation of Black interests in the city. Unlike the racial agitation tactics of Trotter, “they [the NAACP] believed their interest and that of the community could best be served by the avoidance of controversy rather than the promotion of racial conflict.” Guided by the leadership of Boston’s “Black Brahmins”, the NAACP sought strategic alliances with major players in the

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52 Nelson, Chapter 5.
political and governmental environment. Consistent with the mission of the national organization, the Boston chapter of the NAACP sought representation and protection of Black interests through the judicial system.\textsuperscript{54}

Although for over 50 years the NAACP in Boston served as the major voice of African - American interests, the elitist nature of the organization did little to address the feelings of alienation and discontent within Boston's rising Black underclass. Part of the discontent between the NAACP and its growing Black grassroots population was the approach used by the organization to address the innate inequalities in the Black community.

"Members of the Black elite infiltrated the key policy committees of the NAACP, moving the political orientation of the organization in the direction of reconciliation rather than confrontation ... the concept of reconciliation translated into an inviolate commitment to integration."

Undoubtedly, the NAACP's subtle approach to the overt problems of racism, poverty, and police brutality in the city did not go over well with Black leaders and community organizers familiar with the rich history of insurgency politics in the Black community.

The community development potential of the NAACP fell victim to the misguided and selfish motivations of certain subsets of the African - American community in Boston. Over the years, the NAACP in the city has lost both voice and credibility in the Black community. When asked about the role of the NAACP in Black community development in Boston, one respondent replied:

Again, the question is where are their paychecks coming from? They

\textsuperscript{54}Nelson, Chapter 5, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{55}Boston Interview.
have a minor impact but the overall needs of the community are not being addressed. They [NAACP] lack leadership and vision. We can't afford to have organizations with good intentions and a lack of vision anymore. Until then, they [NAACP] will remain ineffective.56

Another respondent, a community youth organizer, suggested that part of the problem with traditional civil rights organizations is that they have failed to expand their scope beyond their primary constituency.

The average brother may not even be aware of the programs and services available. The onus is on these organizations to reach out to the community ... to be visible in a meaningful way. Because we have lost a lot of activism from the 1960's to the 1990's, they need to change their image and include all of the community. How can we criticize young people for not caring when our own organizations don't care?57

Although the Boston chapter of the NAACP has in recent times lost some of its vision, strength, and organizational capacity, it currently appears to be on the rebound; this development has enormous significance for the efforts by African-American CDCs to promote community development for the Black community. The ability of the NAACP to rebound from its present state of community indifference has the potential to greatly assist the community development efforts of African-American CDCs in the city.

On the other hand, some analysts suggest that Black indigenous organizations like the NAACP may run the risk of undermining the community development efforts of African-American CDCs by becoming pawns of the power elite. In essence, the NAACP and other indigenous organizations may believe that their interests should set the agenda of Black interest articulation in the city.

56 Boston Interview.

57 Boston Interview.
Another school of thought suggests that ongoing structural organizations run the risk of engaging in destructive behavior.

Specifically, the creation of formal organizations renders the movement increasingly vulnerable to the destructive forces of oligarchization, co-optation, and the dissolution of indigenous support. Should insurgents manage somehow to avoid these dangers while maintaining adequate flow of resources the movement is likely to endure.58

The crucial determinate of the success of indigenous organizations and African-American CDCs will be their ability to sidestep some of the external and internal booby traps such as mayoral co-optation that may await them. If these two indigenous organizations can do this they have the potential to be powerful arbitrators of Black community development and political power in Boston.

*The Urban League*

The Boston chapter of the National Urban League also has been unable to development effective community development and political linkage within the Black community. Focused primary on job training, the League has shied away from the activist mobilization approach of one of its most visionary leaders — Mel King. Under King, the Urban League redirected both its physical location and political agenda. To give the community a greater sense of connection to the mission of the League, King moved its headquarters from downtown Boston to the Dudley area of Lower Roxbury.

As Nelson observed:

King’s strategy was a product of a new political orientation by Black community activists that called for the hammering out of innovative strategies to place pressure on the downtown power structure for fundamental change. The specific objective of the new strategies was to

58 See, Doug McAdams, 1982, p 43.
use the mobilization resources of the Black community to promote Black advancement in economic development, housing, health, education, and other primary policy areas.59

Unfortunately, the activist approach of the Urban League has faded. Similar to the NAACP, some within the Black community charge that the League is out of touch with the economic, social, and political aspirations of its constituency base. One Boston youth coordinator commented:

I think at the point in time when we had more community-minded activists, leaders, and politicians, we had a little more substance. They [service organizations] understood what we were fighting to accomplish. We fought to get more policies and legislation from the city and state to help those agencies and the community. Instead of people staying with the mission and being committed to working with the people in the community, many of them took the posture of if whose hareem am I going to join? They are more accountable to the white leaders and philanthropic organizations than they are to the community.60

The Urban League is taking steps to repair the sometimes strained relationship it has had with the Black community. Most notably, the Urban League has teamed up with several African-American CDCs to form a employment information linkages. Although well intended, some leaders in the CDC movement claim that these types of collaborative efforts are difficult to maintain.

Collaboration takes a lot of time. Part of the problem is that organizations aren’t always doing the same things or committed to doing the same thing. Sometimes you can spend so much time bickering over the details that it takes away from the purpose of the partnership.61

Part of the problem with collaborations is that there seems to be a tendency for CDCs and

59 Nelson, Chapter 5, p.7.
60 Boston Interview.
61 Boston Interview.
other community organizations to get overly consumed with the who shall lead and who shall follow syndrome. On more than one occasion, I was privy to information about some executive directors getting upset because another CDC was going to be given the lead billing on the collaborative or given more money because of their larger service area. Also, some CDCs are engaged in bitter turf wars and recognition battles. As a result, they either begrudgingly work together or refuse to work at all.

Clearly, the present tension endemic in the Black CDC community is not helping alleviate the conditions of the poor, uneducated, and unorganized. If African-American CDCs are to step up to the plate they must be willing to set aside ego and programmatic agendas for the greater needs of the community. Until they do this, they may be no better off than some of the other indigenous organizations criticized by the larger community.

*The Black Church*

Where traditional civil rights organizations have missed the mark, the Black church in Boston may be blessed with the vision to fill the gap of hope, service delivery, and community development in the city. The large membership, independent financial base, and charismatic leadership endemic in the Black church in Boston makes it a very viable source of Black community development and political empowerment in the city.

Throughout most of its history the Black church in Boston has been a crucial resource in the mobilization of political power for the Black community ... it exercises a claim of the money, minds, and loyalty of Black citizens unmatched by any other institutional force.62

Still, the internal conflicts between Black church leaders and the Black community continue to darken the light on the economic, political, and spiritual potential of Black

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62 Nelson, Chapter 5, p. 15.
There are many factors that help to explain the dysfunctional relationship between the Black church and the Black community in Boston. Some charge that the lack of community ties by Black ministers cause them to be less vested in the struggle for community development and economic and political authority in the city. Critics of Black church leadership charge that the suburban zip codes of many Black ministers highlight one component of their disconnect with the community.

We have a lot of Black ministers who don't even live in the Black community. They preach their message, collect their offerings, and go back to their suburban enclaves. How effective can they be in terms of community needs when this is their modus operandi? The Black church should create an environment where they could create some real community healing. Of course they would have to get out of the business they are in right now. All of this grandstanding and serving two Gods isn't beneficial to our people.63

Another criticism of the Black church is its unwillingness to work cooperatively with other community organizations, elected officials, and CDCs. Some believe that the underlying conflict that seems to limit unity and cohesion is a strategic choice on the part of Black church leadership. Some contend that Black ministers are being coopted by mayor Menino and are selling out the Black community.

By in large, I think the Black church has failed. Some of them [Black ministers] are so busy trying to be in the paper with the mayor that they have created a conflict of interest in terms of real community development. They are great at church development .... but church development constitutes a very small component of the needs in the community.64

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63 Boston Interview.

64 Boston Interview.
Many in the community have not forgiven those Black ministers, in particular Reverend Eugene Rivers III and his Ten Point Coalition, who supported the mayor’s takeover of the elected school board and his forced resignation of African-American school superintendent Dr. Lois Harrison-Jones.

Some suggest that the movement of Black ministers beyond the pulpit to the political arena is another ploy. They contend that Black ministers are motivated by the developmental resources of city hall. In regards to the political behavior of Black church leaders, one respondent replied:

One of the problems today is no one is willing to respect boundaries ... just look at how some of the Black churches are positioning themselves. Now they are throwing their hat in the 501(c) 3 fray. Do they really expect us to believe this is about spiritual development? C’mon, give me a break, we all know about their political and economic alignment with Menino.65

Claiming that they can provide the spiritual guidance that must accompany economic, social, and political healing, some Black churches are in the process of developing their own CDCs. The impact of these faith-based entities remains to be seen. Still, the chatter in the community has already begun. There are a few within the community that fear the Black church will add even more fuel to the competitive CDC funding, influence, and political leverage fire in the city.

As one respondent commented:

The church needs to think about whether it makes sense to join the bandwagon. They should really ask if this is what they do best. I don’t know if it makes sense for them to tap into a realm that is already full of experts who supposedly use a holistic approach to community

65Boston Interview.
In contrast to the strong positions held by some in the community, others seem open to the Black church developing “faith based” community development corporations to help tackle the growing needs of the Black community in Boston.

With the December 1, first wave of Welfare reform rapidly approaching, I embrace all who are committed to making this transition easy. They [Black churches] can help more than hurt because they are used to dealing with people in need. I am excited about their leadership ... I welcome them.

The reaction to the Black church and its potential to be a leading proponent of Black community development in Boston is mixed. However, the Black church’s membership, resources, and leadership has the potential to make it a key contributor to Black community development.

Black churches may be able to do what African-American CDCs have not been always able or willing to do. Black churches may be able to unite under a common bond – saving souls – and take community development to the next level.

The Black Middle Class

Another internal source of Black community development in Boston is the Black middle class. Since the 1940s Boston’s Black middle class has been a leading authority of Black community development. Nelson details the influential role of the Black middle class.

The early Black middle class was instrumental in the founding and management of the community’s most venerable institutions, including the Urban League, the NAACP, Freedom House, Roxbury Community College, Roxbury Multi-service Center, and Lena Park Community

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66 Boston Interview.
The early community development efforts of the Black middle class have not been sustained. Many of these service organizations have fallen prey to financial mismanagement, institutional misdirection, and grassroots decay. Many in the community credit the Black middle class with the decay of many of the community's indigenous organizations. They charge that the Black middle class has refused to "maintain operational and emotional attachments to inner-city Black neighborhoods."

Some suggest that the Civil Rights movement opened up the door for a great exodus of members of the Black middle class from the inner city.

A lot of the Black middle class ran away. Integration allowed them to do that. The problem was that the only time they [Black middle class] came back was to go to church or get their hair done. The departure of our most solid base of Black leadership obviously left a vacuum. CDCs became a key element to bring up the community.

The tendency within the Black community has been for members of the middle class to serve in overseer roles. Even though very few members of the Black middle class tend to be foot soldiers of Black community development, many of them serve as members of the board of many African-American CDCs and community organizations.

Others seem to believe that the Black middle class can no longer relate to community needs and tend to look down on those who do not engage in the more sophisticated, traditional modes of political incorporation and empowerment. The protest tactics of pioneers like Mel King are looked upon as backwards and outdated. One respondent had this to say:

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67 Boston Interview.

68 Boston Interview.
Here we are inside this very upscale establishment conducting a little business, enjoying some of the festivities and outside of this very same establishment Mel King and his buddies are protesting the exclusive nature of the club. I'm thinking to myself why don't you come in and join us? "Minimally, put the sign down cause we are way past the 1960s."

It is not surprising that some members of the Black middle class get a bad rap considering the belief by some that Blacks in Boston have overcome and protest politics is obsolete. Certainly there are members of the Black middle class that are the beneficiaries of entree into some of the most exclusive circles in the city. These men and women navigate and negotiate with some of the city's power elite on a daily basis. Still, the majority of the Black community is in dire need of economic and political justice. It may be difficult to celebrate the special status and treatment of the Black middle class when the majority of the Black community in Boston is in disrepair. The Black middle class may need to work to transfer some of it empowerment to the masses of powerless in the community. In order to do this, the Black middle class first has to acknowledge the gap between itself and the Black underclass. Additionally, members of the Black middle class ought to make a commitment to alleviate some of the problems. Perhaps working along side African - American CDCs, the Black middle class can provide the olive branch needed to repair relations between itself and the larger community.

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69 Boston Interview.
African - American CDCs in Boston: An Organizational Profile

The investigation of minority politics in Boston contained in this study clearly shows that African - American CDCs have served as alternative sources of policy development in the Black community. An understanding of their policy development functions requires a meticulous examination of their formal structures and organizational capacities. There are twenty - four CDCs in the city of Boston. Almost half of these ( 11 ) are African - American community based CDCs. My research consists of data gathered from nine of the eleven African - American community based CDC in the city. Although all of these community organizations are supposedly in the same game -- economic and geographic redevelopment -- the scope and influence of these organizations vary tremendously. The impact of the size, budget, and / or leadership of a CDC ( i.e., organizational capacity ) can be either beneficial , indifferent, or detrimental to Black community development in Boston. For the purposes of this study, the organizational capacity of an African - American CDC is operationalized as the scope and influence of an organization's budget, staff, mission, service delivery, leadership, linkage with elected officials and community organizations, and the impact of these factors on the ability of African - American community based CDCs to promote Black community development.
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Figure 2.1: African - American CDC Organizational Capacity

The basic assumption of such a categorization is that African - American CDCs with strong organizational capacity will tend to be more effective and visible in their community development efforts. Conversely, African - American CDCs with weak organizational capacity will tend to be limited in their ability to promote Black community development in Boston. My analysis of the organizational capacity of African - American CDCs makes a distinction between CDCs with strong, moderate, and weak organizational capacity. Given the weak incorporation of Black interests in the city government and the intra community conflicts within the African - American community, African - American CDCs with strong organizational capacity seem best suited to overcome the myriad of external and internal obstacles that presently limit
Black community development in Boston.

**Strong Organizational Capacity**

Of the nine African-American community based CDCs in this study, there are four African-American CDCs that fall into the category of strong organizational capacity. By this I mean that these CDCs have the budgets, staffing, service delivery, community/political linkage, and track records that make them significant promoters of Black community development in Boston. These CDCs are profiled below.

**Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative**

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative was founded in 1984 by community residents in response to the illegal dumping and abandonment of property, redlining, and gentrification in Roxbury and Dorchester. The mission of DSNI is “to empower Dudley residents to organize, plan for, create and control a vibrant, diverse and high quality neighborhood in collaboration with community partners.”


Dudley Street consists of a staff of 18 and has an operating budget of approximately one million dollars. Dudley Street has constructed 287 homes and redeveloped 170 rental units. These two redevelopment projects have totaled over 54.5 million dollar in reinvestment to the area.

Dudley Street has waged a massive economic empowerment campaign. It organized a successful Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) campaign, grew 35,000 pounds of produce which was sold at the Farmer’s Market in Dudley Town Common, and received $750,000 from the Massachusetts Highway Department to develop a community

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greenhouse on Brownfield land. Dudley Street also went on line this past September and has created a “Virtual Marketplace” for local entrepreneurs.

Dudley Street has benefitted from over 17 years of activism and organization in the community. It continues to work toward its goal of creating an “urban village” which emphasizes economic power, environmental justice, resident empowerment, and issues around children, youth, and families.

**Madison Park Development Corporation**

The Madison Park Development Corporation has been committed to community development and economic revitalization for over 30 years. Formed in 1967 by their parent corporation, the Lower Roxbury Community Corporation (LRCC), Madison Park sought to “create a permanent institutional framework for community redevelopment.” Since its inception, Madison Park has redeveloped and/or constructed 536 housing units. Madison Park Village is its largest development site with separate housing communities for the elderly, small families, and home owners. Madison Park which desires to “involve local residents in a manner which builds individual and collective capacity,”71 is guided by its developmental agenda that focuses on housing, commercial development, labor force development, and educational enrichment. With an operational budget of over $500,000, Madison Park employs 52 people in various administrative, property management (including maintenance), and security capacities.

Madison Park has developed a very successful and innovative human capital program. One of the CDC’s most innovative programs is the “Customer Service

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Training Program.” The program is a three month skills program in customer relations, negotiation techniques, computer training, and basic business/accounting skills. The two year initiative is primarily designed for women attempting to make the transition from welfare to work. Graduates of the program have been employed in various sectors and average $22,000 annually.

In 1996, Madison Park developed a strategic plan for community economic development. Many of their successes in service delivery reflect the CDC’s mission to “empower its constituents through initiatives that promote job creation and community-wide stability, while preserving the health and dignity of local residents.”

Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation

The Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC) was established in 1979 to renovate four abandoned houses. Dorchester Bay has developed and/or rehabilitated 538 housing units in the Columbia-Savin Hill and Upham’s Corner area of Dorchester. These housing units are a combination of owner-occupied, rental rehabilitation, mixed use, and cooperative developments. One of Dorchester Bay’s most innovative housing developments is the Alexander-Magnolia Cooperative Center which houses 38 low income families. The cooperative center, which was developed in 1994, also provides meeting space for up to 85 people, a child care room, and office space. The cooperative also received national recognition by the Fannie Mae Foundation for its commitment to excellence in the production of low-income housing.

721998 Madison Park Annual Report.
Operating on an annual budget of approximately $500,000, Dorchester Bay’s 15 member staff focuses its community development efforts in four areas: job creation and economic development, housing, retail development, and social development. Whereas Dorchester Bay’s early programmatic mission emphasized housing, most recently the CDC has been committed to “community organizing and human development.”^73 The CDC has engaged in extensive crime and block watch campaigns. In terms of economic development, Dorchester Bay is near completion on its Enterprise Park. The innovative development effort is rehabilitating an abandoned manufacturing warehouse in the community in an effort to provide employment opportunities to neighborhood residents. Beyond the Enterprise Park, over the last eight years Dorchester Bay has been able to assist over 100 micro-businesses through its Small Business Assistance Program. Undoubtedly, Dorchester Bay’s emphasis on community organizing is helping the CDC “to engage more people, more residents and businesses, and more resources than ever in the pursuit of what makes a healthy neighborhood fabric — safety, good schools, good jobs, decent housing, and quality social and religious organizations.”^74

**New Vision (Quincy-Geneva) CDC**

Formerly known as Quincy-Geneva Housing Development Corporation, New Vision CDC was founded in 1983 to respond escalating quality of life needs in the Grove Hall, North Roxbury, and North Dorchester areas of Boston. New Vision CDC has an organizational staff of 45 and had an operational budget of 1.5 million dollars in fiscal


year 1998. The mission of New Vision is to “seek to improve the living standards and quality of life of citizens ... carving out a path of organizational growth, financial stability, and industrial leadership.” Committed to providing “innovative and forward thinking community service,” New Vision CDC has a four part community building agenda focusing on education, employment, home ownership, and family life.

Over the past fifteen years, New Vision has been able to remain true to its organizational mission. New Vision CDC has constructed over 471 affordable units (384 of these units are retained by the CDC) that house more than 1500 people and has completed 7,000 square feet of commercial/retail space. As is the growing trend among many large CDCs, New Vision is structured as a “hybrid organization that combines aspects of neighborhood association activity with traditional CDC activities.”

Moderate Organizational Capacity

Three African-American CDCs fall into the realm of moderate organizational capacity. These CDCs have a certain degree of organizational capacity (i.e., budget, staff, mission) but seem to lack an overarching programmatic agenda that directly impacts the community. These African-American community based CDCs are profiled below.

CDC of Boston

Since its inception in 1969, CDC of Boston has been committed to urban economic development. Its primary focus has been job employment and long term

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development projects. The mission of CDC of Boston is to “provide the leadership, financial incentives, training, and support necessary to bring economic growth to the community.” CDC of Boston has primarily engaged in long term, industrial park development. One of the CDCs most notable accomplishments is the CrossTown Industrial Park. CrossTown was developed in partnership with the city of Boston’s Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC). The 62,000 square feet assembly plant was opened in 1980 and housed the Digital Equipment Corporation. Over 50 percent of the employees at Digital were minorities that lived within a seven mile radius of the plant (CDC of Boston). The significance of the Digital plant was that it accomplished one of CDC of Boston’s goals which was the hiring of community residents.

More recently, CDC of Boston redeveloped the Gilmore/Vines Building which houses the CDC and a biotechnology center of Boston’s University’s School of Medicine. With a staff of five and an operational budget of approximately $100,000, CDC of Boston “will continue to apply its wealth of experience to developments that create livelihood, economic wealth, and a viable future to the areas low income neighborhoods.”

**Grove Hall NDC**

Grove Hall Neighborhood Development Corporation has been in operation for 15 years. Primarily focused on economic development, Grove Hall is attempting to

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revitalize one of the city’s hardest hit areas. With a staff of three and an annual budget of approximately $100,000, Grove Hall NDC is working “to identify leaders with the ability to focus on the vision of this community.” The victim of banking and business redlining, Grove Hall NDC’s strategic plan emphasizes the redevelopment of its target areas business district, commercial properties, and small businesses. Many of the businesses in the district were destroyed in 1976 by supporters of the Grove Hall Welfare Office sit-in. One of Grove Hall’s most successful ventures was the rehabilitation of Grove Hall Square. In addition to housing the CDC’s headquarters, the 1.6 million dollar venture leases space to several small businesses, including Big Load Laundry and Keith’s Place. Presently, Grove Hall and New Vision CDC are partners in a joint venture strip mall/commercial development project.

With the assistance of the CDC, residents in Grove Hall have also successfully worked to combat drug and violence in the community. The “Drop A Dime” program, an anonymous crime and violence tip line directly linked to the Police department and Attorney General’s office, was created by a Grove Hall NDC resident. The “Drop A Dime” Program has reversed the visibility of drug trafficking in the community.

**Lena Park CDC**

In 1968 Lena Park CDC was founded by local residents concerned with the “pressing housing needs and juvenile delinquency” in the area. Lena Park has a three-fold mission. “The mission is to provide high quality services and programs to the

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79 Boston Interview.

80 Lena Park Historical Overview Information Packet.
underserved residents in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan through community focused educational programs, services and facilities, and providing safe/secure affordable residential and supervised housing to families in need and empowering community members.” The CDC has a staff of 17 and an operational budget of approximately $400,000. The CDC owns 236 subsidized housing units, 60 cooperative town homes, and four residences for the mentally retarded. Lena Park has also been instrumental in providing children and youth services. The CDC is a licensed daycare provider, has an after-school program, and has a thriving recreation program.

The CDC has experiences some “dark moments.” In 1997, the CDC declared bankruptcy. The CDC cited weak management and the economic recession of the late 1980s as factors. To its credit, the CDC was able to maintain all of its community services.

**Weak Organizational Capacity**

There are two CDCs that fall in the realm of weak organizational capacity. These CDCs lack at least one determinant of organizational capacity (budget, staff, mission) necessary to significantly impact on Black community development. These African-American community based CDCs are profiled below.

**Roxbury Action Program**

Roxbury Action Program (R.A.P.), founded in 1968, is one of the oldest African-American CDCs in Boston. The primary mission of Roxbury Action Program was the redevelopment of the Highland Park area. The CDC has developed 189 units of housing and rehabilitated four houses. The CDC also manages 143 rental units. The main focus of the CDC is community and housing development, housing management, physical
Roxbury Action Program has a staff of three. At present, the CDC claims to have no operational budget. The bulk of the CDCs resources come from rental unit revenues. Although the CDC has future plans to develop resident management councils, empowerment training programs, and small business assistance, at present the CDC is not actively engaged in community and economic development.

**Mattapan CDC**

In 1995, the newest African-American CDC, Mattapan CDC was founded. The CDC was formed in 1995 to address the economic development needs of Mattapan. The CDC has a strategic plan which aims to develop affordable housing, research the economic development needs of the community, provide youth services, provide communication networks for residents, and organize residents around crime and community perception issues. Mattapan CDC has a staff of three and an operational budget of approximately $50,000. The CDC has developed linkage with private institutions and the BRA. One of the goals of the CDC is to get the job done in an area that has tended to be overlooked.

**Structural Constraints and African-American Community Based CDCs**

Constraints endemic in the structure of Boston’s governmental and political environment have had a significant impact on the capacity of African-American CDCs to advance the fundamental goals and objectives of community development. Three aspects of the city’s structural and political environment are especially critical in this regard: the centralization of power in the mayor’s office; the routine operation of the city bureaucracy; and the co-optation of Black leadership by dominant white forces in city
government. In the paragraphs below, we examine the impact of these factors on the policy influence of African-American CDCs and the strategies they have adopted to overcome these constraints.

African-American CDCs and the Centralization of Authority

As we have seen, the strong mayoral form of government has had the effect of concentrating an extraordinary degree of decision-making power in the mayor’s office. The key feature of the history of mayoral politics in Boston has been the reluctance on the part of mayoral regimes to share power with Black leaders and organizations or to provide free access to the instruments of mayoral decision-making to key institutions and actors in the Black community. Thus the pattern of policy decision making in Boston is one that has leaned predominantly in the direction of weak Black community access and incorporation. When Black interests are represented in decision making, Black institutions and actors tend to be consigned to symbolic, subordinate, “non-empowering roles.” This pattern of weak incorporation is a product of an ongoing system of hierarchical race relations that limits Black influence on policy options and choices in the policy making process.

The weak incorporation of Black policy interests in Boston is reflected in the policy status of African-American CDCs in the policy process. Despite strenuous efforts by many of these CDCs to play major roles in the policy process, the existing pattern of race relations and structural arrangements has severely limited their organizational capacity to profoundly influence that process. Operating in an

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81 Nelson, Chapter 3.
82 Nelson, Chapter 3.
environment that systematically produces Black subordination, African-American CDCs have found it difficult to effectively lobby the mayor’s office for substantial policy benefits for the Black community. The consequence of this constraint has been monumental: African-American communities have been denied access to “key” policy decisions and have tended to receive scarce allocations in terms of developmental resources emerging through mayoral systems of benefit distribution.

It is important to note that this constraint is not limited to power relations with the mayor’s office. The Mayor of Boston is a pivotal component in a sequence of power relations critical to Black linkage to broad arenas of public and private power. The reach of mayoral authority operates decisively to shape the character of Black power relations with the city council, school board, the city bureaucracy, the party system and the corporate sector; its ramifications can also be seen in the level of motivation displayed by community residents to participate in politics and leverage themselves as stakeholders in the governing process.

Within the context of the constraints noted above, African-American CDCs have attempted to accumulate political resources and develop political strategies that would maximize their influence in the policy process. One strategy they have adopted to overcome the constraints they have faced from the political and governmental environment has been the development of vehicles for the promotion of organizational autonomy. It should be noted that African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacity, including Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Dorchester Bay, Madison Park, and New Vision, have been most successful in developing linkage with the key figures in the political and governmental environment.
The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative has developed linkage with the City of Boston through the acquisition of the power of eminent domain. The quest for eminent domain power was a key objective of DSNI in the early days of its development. In support of this objective lenders of DSNI lobbied the Flynn mayoral regime for the right to exercise this power. DSNI's leaders used the "Don't Dump on Us" campaign to strategically capitalize on the Flynn administration's campaign promises to equitably revitalize all of Boston's neighborhoods. The Flynn mayoral regime was forced to create a structure of opportunity for DSNI because it had virtually ignored the illegal trash dumping and the proliferation of vacant land resulting from owner induced arson fires in the Dudley area of Roxbury. Flynn, who ran against Black activist Mel King, "lacked support in minority communities and was looking for ways to boost his popularity in Roxbury. He immediately saw the political advantages of siding with a scrappy neighborhood group and offered some city resources to assist DSNI."^^WWW.DSNI.ORG. Dudley Street used the structure of opportunity created by the Flynn administration to pressure the dominant white power structure to redistribute some developmental resources and policy making power to the Black community.

Undoubtedly, DSNI's quest for eminent domain was a bold, yet necessary, step in the economic and political emancipation of the Black community from the dominant power structure. After four years of court battles and intensive power struggles with city hall, DSNI was granted eminent domain. It is important to note that DSNI's power of eminent domain was the catalyst that moved the CDC from subordination to

^3WWW.DSNI.ORG.
empowerment in the political and governmental environment. As the present executive
director commented, "What changed the balance of power for us was gaining eminent
domain. We were able to negotiate a direct line with the mayor's office. We have a
place at the table." Through one of the CDC's subsidiaries, Dudley Neighbors, Inc.
( their Urban Redevelopment Corporation ), 132 units of housing are being built on land
owned, operated, and controlled by the organization. The exercise of eminent domain
power has been a critical component of DSNI's organizational development. This power
has not only given DSNI control over a vast amount of property, but significantly
elevated its visibility and power in the community development process.

Clearly, the DSNI case does not represent the norm of Black political
incorporation and empowerment in Boston. Some in the African - American CDC arena
contend that DSNI has been able to receive considerable city government resources
because of its organizational alliances with members of the dominant white power
structure. DSNI was able to strategically leverage itself with key economic, political,
and institutional stakeholders and forced the city to create a structure of opportunity to
advance its community development efforts.

DSNI's organizational alliance with the Riley Foundation provided the legitimacy
and authority it needed to be considered as a key community stakeholder by the larger
political and governmental environment. DSNI's elevation from subordination to
empowerment reflects the contradictory nature of Black service delivery and the
underlying racial enmity in Boston. Also, the Riley Foundation's economic and political

\(^{84}\) Boston Interview.
backing was instrumental in changing the perception of the dominant white power
structure that Roxbury was unworthy of investment. Several African-American CDCs,
including Madison Park, Dorchester Bay, and New Vision, have organizational capacity
comparable to DSNI and have not received city government resources compatible to
DSNI's. As one CDC executive director commented,

You have got to be kidding me if you think we are not aware of what is
going on here. We have been in this community for more than 15 years
but still we can not get nothing from none of them [Department of
Neighborhood Development and Mayor's Office]. We are just as good as
Dudley Street .... we have produced units comparable and provided similar
services but if you let them tell it the only successful Black CDC is
Dudley. Do not get me wrong, I do not have anything against Greg [Watson, executive director of Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative]. I
just want us to get the same respect and money he gets.  

Clearly, African-American CDCs, even those with strong organizational capacity, face
enormous mayoral and bureaucratic structural constraints and tend to be excluded from
the policy making process because they lack strong organizational alliances with
economically and politically profitable institutions and organizations.

Some African-American CDCs have attempted to overcome the strong mayoral
influenced structure of city government by developing linkage with other key
administrators, elected officials, and bureaucrats. New Vision CDC, for example, has
hosted an “Elected Officials Appreciation Day.” The half day event is used to praise the
work of the community’s politicians and civic leaders and share community concerns and
developmental needs with politicians. Although the “Elected Officials Appreciation
Day” is a step in the right direction, the highly symbolic event has not appeared to

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85 Boston Interview.
produce any tangible results that have impacted the community development efforts of African - American CDCs. Obviously, if African - American CDCs are going to be able to tackle the historic legacy of racial subordination and powerlessness in Boston, a little more than donuts, coffee, and shop talk is necessary. Still, this event is a step in the right direction.

It is critical to our understanding of minority politics and community development in Boston to note that the majority of African - American CDCs with moderate and / or weak organizational capacity are in the pre-strategy stage of political development. For example, Roxbury Action Program CDC has been so enmeshed in the struggle for day to day survival that it has not had the political space, incentives, or resources to develop a substantial strategic plan to combat prevailing structural and governmental constraints. This one time pioneer of African - American CDC led community development now suffers from weak organizational capacity and is severely limited in its ability to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. The leaders of other African - American CDCs with weak organizational capacity also expressed considerable resignation regarding the ability of their organizations to move the political initiatives of the downtown power structure in a different direction.

We have been around long enough to understand the racist nature of this city. We watched three different mayors come and go promising to give back to the Black community. One building in the heart of the inner city does not equal community development. We have had to fight for everything we got. They [ city government ] did not give us anything.86

86Boston Interview.
This sense of resignation is not a universal phenomenon among African-American CDCs. Indeed, many of them are engaged in concerted efforts to confront and reform the existing policy making process. The key point that should be observed is that Black community development efforts have been advantageous to some African-American CDCs and disadvantageous to other CDCs.

**African-American CDCs and Bureaucratic Constraints**

Although the mayor's office represents a significant part of the policy making process of the city, African-American CDC supported community development is also limited by the routine operation of the city bureaucracy. It is critical to our analysis of Black community development that the long reach of mayoral power and influence is understood. Mayoral autonomy extends to the city bureaucracy wherein the mayor, not city council, has the power of bureaucratic appointments and removals. The reluctance on the part of Boston mayoral administrations to share power and access with Black leaders and institutions can also be evidenced in the systematic appointment of African-Americans to symbolic, "non-empowering" bureaucratic positions. The small number and diluted power of Black bureaucrats has done little to reverse the patterns of weak Black political incorporation, non-decision making, and the mobilization of bias that has limited the economic, social, and political empowerment of African-Americans in the political and governmental environment. The inability of African-American CDCs with varying degrees of organizational capacity to unite together in an attempt to overcome the structural constraints of the political and economic environment has limited their ability to develop organizational alliances with key policy makers responsible for implementing the day to day operations of the city.
In recent years, Boston mayoral regimes have appointed African - Americans to powerful positions in the city bureaucracy. These positions, usually under the direct control and influence of the mayor, have been instrumental in elevating the status of individual African - Americans, but offer little economic and political leverage for the larger Black community. As one Boston resident commented:

"It's nice that Reggie got a promotion but what does his appointment mean for us? The challenge for the Black community is to organize and develop a plan of action. We need to develop empowerment strategies so we can force city hall to give us our fair share of the development pie. A brother getting another raise is fine but what we need is for the city to raise up the whole community. Until that happens, ain't nothing changed." ^87

The historic legacy of symbolic, "non-empowering" Black mayoral appointments in city government seems to reflect the disheartening reality that Black faces in the city bureaucracy do not necessarily equate to Black policy articulation and representation in Boston.

In spite of limited linkage with key bureaucratic policy makers, all nine of the African - American CDCs examined, regardless of organizational capacity, have been able to build decent relationships with the city's police, fire, and maintenance departments. The preponderance of these organizational alliances resulted from mayoral and city government neglect and non-decision making regarding basic city government services such as timely trash removal and police / fire responsiveness. These African - American CDCs were forced to take on more of an community advocacy role in response to the gap in service delivery perpetuated by the city government's neglect of inner city crime, insurance arson fires, and illegal trash dumping.

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^87 Boston Interview.
The organizational alliances African-American CDCs have developed with these city government departments have been critical to the reallocation of city resources and service delivery in the Black community. The key point that should be observed is that African-American CDCs have been able to use their organizational capacity to develop organizational alliances with city government departments responsible for the day to day safety and maintenance of the Black community. The relationships that African-American CDCs with strong, moderate, and weak organizational capacity have fostered with city government departments are critical because their service areas are receiving services that have not always been provided; this is especially true of African-American CDCs with moderate and weak organizational capacity.

For a while, it really did not matter what we did. We could call the police and give them the exact details of what was going down [drug deal, stolen goods, prostitution] and either they would not come or they would take their sweet time getting over here. I guess to them it was just the usual stuff that goes on in the "hood." At some point, we just got fed up. We formed our own neighborhood watch ... started documenting when they would come, how long it took, you know that sort of thing. By the time we finished we had a long list that we distributed to our representatives, the Boston police, the mayor. Now, let me pick up this phone and call, you will see at least two squad cars heading in this direction real quickly.88

These improved organizational alliances of African-American CDCs with city government departments have been effective in reversing the patterns of inconsistent Black service delivery reflective of the nature of weak Black political incorporation and policy decision making in Boston.

88Boston Interview.
African - American CDCs and City Council Constraints

African - American CDC community development has also been impacted by the low number of African - American city councillors. In Boston, African - Americans hold only two of the thirteen city council seats. Although there are four at-large city councillors, the two African - American councillors -- Charles Yancey (District 4) and Gareth Saunders (District 7) -- receive very little support from the at-large councilors and are single-handedly expected to represent Black policy interests. The at-large councillors’ unwillingness to support Black public policy has limited the ability of the Black city councillors to gain legislative support critical to Black interest articulation and develop biracial governing coalitions in the city council. The inability of African - American city councillors to develop governing coalitions may be impacted by the strong mayoral scope of power. White city councillors may be reluctant to develop coalitions with African - American city councillors because they do not want to have policy alliances that conflict with the policy preferences of the mayor and the dominant power structure. Also, the strong mayor form of government fosters an aggressive political environment wherein all city councillors are in competition for scarce city government resources. The aggressive nature of the city council environment does not explain the virtual absence of the involvement of the four at-large city councillors in Black policy representation and decision making.

The conservative nature of the city council has also impacted the community development efforts of African - American CDCs. With the city council being led by James M. Kellt, one of the founding members of the anti-busing organization R.O.A.R (Restoring Our Alienated Rights), Black city councillors have had a difficult time
gaining policy support and Black interest articulation in city council. The underlying racial tensions that are endemic to the politics of Boston city government have caused some to believe that the city council’s policy adaptation is biased towards the dominant power structure. On more than one occasion, the city council has either dismissed or refused to support legislation proposed by Black councillors. For example, Councillor Yancey’s “black church bombing resolution was dismissed on the grounds that it was irrelevant since no such incidents had occurred in Boston.”

African - American CDCs have attempted to overcome the structural constraints endemic in the majority white city council by developing linkage with, and publically supporting the two African - American city councillors. On more than one occasion, African - American community based CDCs, including Lena Park, New Vision, and Roxbury Action Program, have used their community influence to support the councillors’ legislative proposals. In October 1998, for example, New Vision CDC and Project Right (a local community organizing entity) organized and provided transportation for community residents to sit in on council hearings on affirmative action. These two indigenous Black organizations helped to fill the committee room with community leaders, organizers, and neighborhood residents. The council meeting was an open hearing on the necessity of affirmative action in the Boston police and fire department. At one point the meeting became so intense that the council threatened to forcibly remove people. The strong community turnout at the hearing was significant because it symbolized the Black community’s willingness to fight for public policy

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89 Nelson, Chapter 4, p.20.
beneficial to their interests. In the absence of strong Black indigenous organizations and national mobilization efforts, the majority of the African-American CDCs examined have attempted to filled the void of public policy advocacy and support in the Black community by mobilizing and organizing Black community development stakeholders.

The constraints of the larger political environment have impacted the flow of resources and information between African-American CDCs and Black city councillors. The often times strained relationship that has developed between these two Black community development stakeholders has limited their capacity to effectively redistribute mayoral, city council, and bureaucratic resources. In spite of the ineffectual nature of their relationship, these two entities [African-American CDCs and Black City Councillors] are not shy about discussing the shortcomings of the other in terms of the nature of Black community development in Boston.

One of the loudest criticisms of African-American city councillors is their powerlessness and subordination in city government. As one Boston academician commented,

What we have are people who hold office. Our councilmen do not have any real power, leadership, and vision. One of the critical missing links in the community is the absence of real leadership in city hall. They [Saunders and Yancey] are not effective because they have not learned to utilize community resources.90

Undoubtedly, the powerful influence of Mayor Menino and the conservative tilt of the city council has contributed to the inability of the two city councillors to gain power and influence in city hall.

90Boston Interview.
Although the structural make-up of Boston city government has limited the ability of African-American city councillors to provide consistent service delivery, Black community development in Boston may also be limited by the councillors' personal agendas. For example, Councilman Charles Yancey did not resign from city council during his unsuccessful congressional campaign causing some in the Black community to question his effectiveness as a city councillor. Personal agendas aside, Black city councillors in Boston are also limited by the unwillingness of the Black community to maintain consistent political activism and mobilization entities. Black voter registration and turnout in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan consistently ranks in the lowest quartile in the city. One city councillor criticized African-American community based CDCs for not maintaining community organizing and mobilization entities.

Everyone knows my number when its [funding] deadline time and that is fine ... I don't mind assisting my district. The flip side of that is don't get upset when a piece of legislation isn't passed when you [African-American CDCs] have not taken the time to inform or organize the community on the issues.®

Yancey and Saunders have attempted to overcome low voter participation by operating in a united policy front. The policy alliance of the two councillors appears to have had limited effectiveness. African-American city councillors have had a difficult time gaining legislative support because of the incongruent nature of their policy preferences. Also, the uncontested nature of their council seats does not warrant a great deal of respect from key players in Boston city government. As one respondent commented, "They are lame ducks." Some in the city joke that the city's first African-American city

®Boston Interview.
Ron Cobb – has more power and influence than the two city councillors. Interestingly, prior to being appointed by Mayor Menino, Cobb, a native Bostonian, was fired by councillor Saunders.

In addition to the centralization of authority in the mayor’s office and the routine nature of the city bureaucracy, the community development efforts of African-American CDCs with varying levels of organizational capacity have also been limited by the co-optation of Black leadership by dominant white forces in city government. Some suggest that the appointment of Cobb as city messenger represents another casualty of Mayor Menino’s Black leadership co-optation operation. Menino’s co-optation of Black ministers represents his largest victory to date. Black ministers have had a tendency to give the mayor unwavering support, even when the mayor’s policy directions are harmful to the policy directives of the larger community. Black ministers have acted as policy buffers in the context of highly detrimental assaults on Black community interests. For example, Black ministers avidly supported Mayor Menino’s forced resignation of Black Boston school superintendent Lois Harrison - Jones even though the elimination of Jones would drastically reduce the autonomy and power of Black leadership in the city.

Commenting on the debilitating effect of Black ministers on the community development process, a CDC executive director with weak organizational capacity asserted:

The role of the Black church is to be quiet and listen. I really think it would help the community if they stuck to what they do best. They can raise issues and tell their congregations what to do but they have no business in the political arena.  

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92Boston Interview.
The intra community conflicts arising out of the structural constraints of the larger political and governmental environment have created a “survival of the fittest” mentality in respect to Black community development in Boston. The dominant white power structure has strategically placed “key” Black leaders and institutions at odds with each other. The resulting discontent and disconnect in the Black community has severely limited the potential for African-American organizations and institutions to develop indigenous organizational alliances capable of lobbying the dominant power structure for equal representation and policy implementation in Boston city government.

African-American CDCs have attempted to overcome leadership crisis and conflict in the Black community by developing linkage with Black indigenous organizations and the Black middle class. For the most part, these linkage partnerships have been pursued by African-American CDCs with strong and moderate organizational capacity. For example, New Vision CDC has developed a job training program with the Boston chapter of the National Urban League. Still, these organizational alliances have not been easily developed and maintained. Part of the difficulty African-American CDCs with strong and moderate organizational capacity have encountered has to do with the weak organizational and economic capacity of Black indigenous organizations in Boston. Internal financial, leadership, and organizational constraints have limited the organizational capacity of Black indigenous organizations, including Freedom House, the NAACP, and Roxbury Multi-purpose Center to develop community organizing strategies capable of combating the systematic nature of subordination and powerlessness in the Black community. Further, many of these long-standing Black organizations have fallen prey to bankruptcy, policy misdirection, and mayoral co-optation. As a result,
these former community advocacy institutions, along with African-American CDCs with weak organizational capacity, have tended to be seen as community development liabilities not assets.

African-American CDCs with strong and moderate organizational capacity have also attempted to overcome the structural constraints of the political and governmental environment by developing strong linkage with members of the Black middle class. African-American CDCs have used their organizational capacity to solicit members of the Black middle class to serve in advisory and leadership roles in their organizations. Of the nine African-American CDCs examined, seven CDCs have strong Black middle class participation on the board of directors. Black middle class affiliation with African-American CDCs is significant because members of the Black middle class may be able to develop the organizational legitimacy and institutional alliances necessary for African-American CDCs to gain leverage and access to key policy makers, including the mayor, city council, political parties, the school board, the bureaucracy, and the private sector. Also, the Black middle class provides an indigenous organizing entity to help CDCs eradicate the systemic subordination and weak policy incorporation of African-Americans in the city.

The development of Black indigenous organizational alliances as well as the creation of outside institutional alliances is critical to the long term success of Black community development in Boston. Specifically, the extent to which African-American CDCs can maintain and improve upon these alliances has the capacity to positively impact the ability of African-American CDCs to overcome the constraints endemic in the structure of Boston’s political and governmental environment to effectively promote
Black community development and political empowerment in Boston. It is important to note that the extent to which African-American CDCs in Boston can maintain favorable organizational capacity, and, in some instances, improve their organizational capacity is also directly related to the ability of these indigenous community service entities to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.

Clearly, this research has indicated that African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacity have tended to be in the forefront of the Black community development movement in Boston. Specifically, African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacity are effective in developing linkages with key city government administrators and city service departments, including the Police, Fire, and maintenance services. It is important to note that these relationships have been instrumental in reversing the patterns of inconsistent Black service delivery in Boston. Several African-American CDCs, including New Vision, Dorchester Bay, Grove Hall, Madison Park, and Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, have reported faster police and fire responsiveness as well as consistent trash pick-up as a result of their direct alliances with these city government entities.

African-American CDCs in Boston have also developed effective linkages with the two African-American city councillors — Charles Yancey and Gareth Saunders. Although the two city councillors’ policy efforts tend to be undermined by the conservative nature of Boston city council, they remain very supportive of African-American CDC led community development in Boston. Most notably, both Councilmen Yancey and Saunders have been instrumental in writing funding support letters, participating in community events, and contacting city government agencies on behalf of
the African-American CDCs in their electoral districts. In addition to Boston City Council, African-American CDCs, especially those with strong organizational capacity, have forged relationships with members of the Massachusetts Black Legislative Caucus (MBLC) -- State Senator Dianne Wilkerson and former State Representative Charlotte Golar Ritchie. These African-American women have been very instrumental in spearheading legislative proposals beneficial to African-American interests. Senator Wilkerson's Insurance Community Reinvestment Act and former Representative Ritchie's Brownsfield Bill have provided community development resources to several African-American CDCs including Dorchester Bay, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, and Madison Park CDC.

In spite of these efforts, the capacity of African-American CDCs in Boston to effectively promote Black community development is still limited by the strong mayoral form of government, the co-optation of Black leadership, and intra community conflicts. In terms of the mayor's office, African-American CDCs, regardless of organizational capacity, face the tremendous burden of attempting to develop linkage with a highly centralized, top-down policy oriented mayoral regime. Current Mayor Thomas Menino's "father knows best" Black community development mentality has severely limited the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development on their own terms. The relatively weak political incorporation and empowerment of Black interests in Boston's public policy and decision-making arenas tends to make African-American CDCs susceptible to the community development wishes of the Mayor.

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African-American CDC led community development in Boston is also weakened by Black leadership co-optation. The tendency of Boston mayoral regimes to use top-level city government cabinet positions to reward loyal African-American supporters does little to reverse the patterns of weak Black political incorporation and policy subordination. The dominate white power structure has tended to strategically position key Black leaders and institutions at odds with each other. The "pawn" like positions of many of these men and women tend to make them less willing to engage in linkage with members of the Black community, especially if such partnerships have the potential to jeopardize their own power and influence. The absence of a significant working relationship between African-American CDCs and key Black bureaucrats has severely limited the capacity of these community service organizations to overcome the constraints of the political and governmental environment to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.

Finally, African-American CDC led community development in Boston is limited by intra community conflicts in the city. The increasing class cleavages between Boston's Black middle-class and underclass appears to be the most pressing conflict. There seems to be a growing perception in Boston's Black community that the vast majority of African-American CDCs in the city are endorsing Black middle class community development policy agendas to the detriment of the Black underclass. Specifically, several African-American CDCs including New Vision, Madison Park, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Lena Park, and Dorchester Bay have been criticized for their apparent abandonment of grassroots advisory boards and community resident-based board of directors. These African-American CDCs contend that the use
of the Black middle-class is instrumental in their ability to develop organizational legitimacy and institutional alliances crucial to the promotion of Black community development in Boston. The increasing conflict between the Black middle class and Black underclass has done little to promote a cohesive Black political and economic agenda to overcome the constraints of Boston's political and governmental environment.

Consistent with my hypothesis, African-American CDCs that have established linkage with key figures in the political and governmental environment of Boston tend to have stronger mayoral, city council, and state elected official support of their community development efforts. However, the nature of the relationship between African-American CDCs and the political and governmental environment is very top down and mayoral and bureaucratically controlled. The centralization of authority in the mayor's office tends to make African-American CDCs with linkage to the political and governmental environment susceptible to leadership co-optation and Black community development usurpation. For the most part, African-American CDCs are symbolic pawns in a highly competitive and uneven redevelopment game in Boston. Even African-Americans with power and influence in the political and economic environment are sold to the highest mayoral or private sector bidder. For example, the resignation of State Representative Charlotte Golar Ritchie from the Massachusetts legislature and her subsequent appointment as head of the Department of Neighborhood Development shocked many in the African-American community. Some in the Black community are concerned that the tenacious and community-oriented focus of former Representative Ritchie will be tamed by the long reach of her new boss, mayor Menino. Although the impact of the centralization of mayoral authority is yet to be seen, if Ritchie is like any of
her Department of Neighborhood Development predecessors, the African - American
community should be concerned.

One phenomena that my hypothesis of the nature of the political and
governmental environment failed to consider was the vulnerability of African - American
CDCs with linkage to key figures in the political and governmental environment of
Boston. Although African - American CDCs with linkage to the political and
governmental environment tend to have more support of their community development
efforts, my findings indicate that these CDCs are also more susceptible to the
developmental desires of city government officials. African - American CDCs
experience mayoral usurpation of the relatively weak economic and political status of the
Black community in Boston. Unlike other racial and ethnic communities in Boston,
African - Americans have no major political or economic apparatus to lobby on their
behalf. Even traditional political alliances, for example the Democratic party, have been
an ineffectual means of Black political power and authority. because the structure of
Boston city government is not open to weak political and economic actors.

If African - American CDCs desire to have effective linkage to the political and
governmental environment and not be susceptible to the redevelopment whims of
political and economic stakeholders, their community development agendas must be
expanded and redefined to include political organization and mobilization strategies and
tactics. African - American CDCs, and the Black community as a whole, must revisit
and reimplement the non - traditional political and protest mechanisms of the 1950s and
1960s. The Black community in Boston may have been careless in its move from Protest
to Politics. As such, the extent to which African - American CDCs can develop

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strategies and tactics to improve the relatively weak nature of Black representation and interest articulation in Boston will significantly determine their capacity to improve Black incorporation and empowerment in Boston. In sum, achievement of the dependent variable, community development, has been greatly inhibited by the features of the city's policy environment operating as independent variables analyzed in this chapter.

In the next chapter, we will continue our analysis of the structural constraints of the larger political and governmental environment by examining the impact of government led redevelopment policies on the capacity of African-American CDCs to promote community development in Boston.
Overview

In addition to the structural constraints of the political and governmental environment outlined in the previous chapter, African American CDC led community development is also impacted by the constraints of government led redevelopment policies emanating from the city government, private industry, and other community development stakeholders in Boston. The central focus of this chapter is an examination of our second independent variable - government led redevelopment policies - on the capacity of African American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. Government led redevelopment is operationalized as local revitalization and renewal projects initiated, financed, and controlled by the city, state, and/or national government. Government led redevelopment policies may expand in scope to include local developers (both for-profit and non-profit); however, primary developmental autonomy is controlled by the government entity created to implement the public policy initiative. The primary emphasis of this chapter will be the impact of government led redevelopment policies on the ability of African American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.

The Nature of Government Led Redevelopment Policies in Boston

In Boston the nature of the role of African American CDCs in the community development process has been shaped, in part, by the expansive government led redevelopment agenda of the city government and its business/private sectors stakeholders. Clarence Stone has suggested that the nature of the relationship between the city government and the its business/private sector interests has a direct impact on the developmental and public policy agenda of a municipality. Operating under a
systemic power policy domain, many mayors are forced to govern and implement public policy based on the economic, associational, and social status/lifestyle considerations of their constituency base. Many mayors find themselves paying close attention to the resources of their economically secure constituency base because the nature of local government makes them structurally dependent on these interests. It is key to our understanding of the nature of African-American CDCs engaged in Black community development to note that African-American CDCs in Boston are operating within an urban regime wherein the mayor is strategically dependent on private business interests. As a result, the public policy directives of the mayor may be more beneficial to private interests than the overall public good. In concert with this proposition, this chapter analyzes factors impacting on the capacity of African-American led CDCs to promote Black community development in the context of a policy process controlled by the mayor's office and heavily weighted in favor of the revitalization of private business community objectives.

An examination of the impact of government led redevelopment policies on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote community development is important for several reasons. First, an examination of government led redevelopment efforts in Boston illuminates the complex nature of the community development process in Boston. Peter Dreier suggests that for some, community development equates to the

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expansion of the downtown area to attract new businesses and empty nesters.\textsuperscript{2} This type of community development has usually been associated with urban renewal projects that assume a trickle down effect of community development to neighborhood residents. Conversely, Shiffman suggests that community development requires an integrative and comprehensive approach that recognizes the social, economic, and physical needs of the community which seeks to develop opportunities for community growth.\textsuperscript{3} Of particular importance to our analysis are the ways in which key business, economic, and political leaders interpret community development and how these figures utilize government led redevelopment policies to promote community development.

An examination of the government led redevelopment policies of Boston is also important because it highlights the difficult nature of coordinated revitalization and redevelopment. Often times the developmental agenda of the city is not complementary to the needs or desires of neighborhood groups. The dominance of the business centered growth coalition development agenda in many urban areas has the effect of excluding the Black community from the policy making processes. The end result of the system of dominance is that the city and business community determine the developmental agenda of the city. The key point here is that the government not the community dictates the agenda, finances, and turf of the developmental agenda of the city. As Arvis Vidal suggests, the capacities of African - American CDCs to effectively promote community


development is impacted by the willingness on the part of the political and business community to “make neighborhood development a priority.” The governing coalition’s distribution of developmental resources and opportunities becomes a key mitigating factor on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.

In this chapter, I explore the nature of various government led redevelopment policy streams including the Enterprise Zone, the Department of Neighborhood Development, and urban gentrification, and the impact, if any, these local government policy initiatives have on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. Specifically, this chapter explores the issue: “How well have African-American CDCs been able to develop effective strategies for coping with the constraints of government led redevelopment policies?”

The History of Government Led Redevelopment in Boston

The history of Boston clearly illuminates the impact of federal-city government relations on the developmental capacity of urban regimes. Since the 1950s, Boston city government has engaged in a federally financed developmental renaissance designed to revitalize its downtown business and commercial district. Assisted by the leadership of the BRA (Boston Redevelopment Authority), the policy agenda of the city of Boston has operated in favor of its business centered governing regime; the principle policy focus of this regime has been the development of major downtown office complexes.

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Undoubtedly, Boston has developed into a first rate city. The development of Boston, however, has occurred to the detriment of many of Boston’s racial and ethnic communities. One of the major problems with Boston’s early redevelopment efforts was that it mainly focused on downtown, business oriented development. Under the direction of the BRA, more than 7,000 people were relocated to make way for upscale city sponsored gentrification projects.5

Gregory Squires has noted the existence of this pattern of development as a major trend in the arena of urban growth and revitalization.

Redevelopment (since WWII) has shared an ideological commitment to private-sector growth and the public-sector as a junior partner.... most partnerships are firmly rooted in the historic unequal relationship between the public and private sectors – an inequality that has give rise to the unequal development of communities so characteristic of U.S. Cities.6

Many in the African-American community dubbed the city’s Urban Renewal project “Negro removal” for the city’s harsh systematic relocation of Black residents to surrounding areas and the city’s subsequent underdevelopment of those Black neighborhoods organized against Boston City Government urban renewal programs. In Boston, some African-American CDCs were formed in direct protest to the I-95 corridor proposal and other urban renewal projects that sought to unfairly burden and displace Black interests in the city. Many of these community organizing groups would eventually evolve into 501(3) c, non-profit entities.


The Lower Roxbury Community Corporation (LRCC) was established in 1966 by indigenous Lower Roxbury activists who sought to create a permanent institutional framework for building affordable, resident controlled housing. LRCC created the Madison Park Development Corporation (MPDC) in 1967 to pursue its physical redevelopment program focused on replacing the many housing units eliminated by the city. Ostensibly designed to economically revitalize Boston, Urban Renewal was a plan which manifested the literal removal and fragmentation of whole functioning communities, including Roxbury. 7

The creation of indigenous community organizations reflects the strong will and determination of the Black community in Boston to stand up to the uneven nature of government led redevelopment and policy implementation of the dominant white power structure of the city.

A vast majority of the African - American CDCS examined in this study evolved out of larger political and governmental environment neglect of the development needs of the Black community. Many African - American community groups organized and used Model City funding to develop autonomous indigenous organizations to combat mayoral, city council, and business community government led redevelopment. One of Boston oldest African - American CDCs, CDC of Boston, is a direct descendant of Model Cities legislation in Boston. Established in 1969, CDC of Boston was designed to tackle the business and resident disinvestment from inner city Boston. CDC of Boston has focused on commercial development projects and has been instrumental in the revitalization of the Albany Street area of lower Roxbury. Although health centers became the tangible legacy of the Model Cities initiatives, CDC of Boston was able remain active in Black community development long after the national government

7 Boston Interview.
abandoned the Model Cities program.

One of the most effective strategies of CDC of Boston was the procurement of 75 acres of urban renewal land to expand its redevelopment efforts beyond "bricks and mortar" development to the more lucrative commercial property development arena. The CDC also gained a great deal of autonomy by obtaining city, state, and national government sign offs on its developmental proposals. The policy mismanagement of the Model Cities program and its ultimate demise under the Nixon era, in many respects, halted the community development efforts of some African-American community organizations and CDCs. The inability of Model Cities to effectively reverse the tide of poverty, disinvestment, and decay in many inner cities created an even greater chasm of hopelessness and despair in Boston's Black communities; this process left many Black community residents susceptible to the developmental wishes of the city government.

The proliferation of community development corporations represented the next phase of national government public policy to address problems of urban blight and disinvestment. Community development corporations were created to address prior community development disasters and fill the void of service delivery resulting from the top down initiatives of local, state, and national government led redevelopment policies. As Robert Halpern observed "in almost all cases, sheer frustration, and a loss of patience with external institutions" served as a catalyst for community leaders and neighborhood residents willingness to work together.\(^8\) Roxbury Action Program represents one of several African-American CDCs in Boston created to reverse the downward spiral of

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decay and neglect in city’s Black communities. Primarily focused on the redevelopment of the Highland Park area of Roxbury, the CDC used private philanthropic funds to develop its own autonomous self-help entity. In its prime, Roxbury Action Program was a pioneering voice of Black leadership in the community and effectively promoted a self-determination philosophy of Black community development in Boston.

African-American CDCs received a considerable amount of recognition and policy favor from the Flynn administration. As Peter Dreier observed, “the city government recognized the weaknesses of the CDC sector. The administration understood that it needed to help expand the capacity of the CDCs to undertake large-scale, financially complex projects, or else the sector would repeat the mistakes of the past.” The most successful Flynn administration policy initiative was the Boston Housing Partnership (BHP) which created twenty financial sources for CDC housing and rehabilitation developments. African-American CDCs, including New Vision CDC, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, and Groove Hall NDC, all used BHP start-up funds in many of their early housing ventures. The proliferation of African-American CDCs has been part of a concerted effort on the part of Black community stakeholders to return and refocus government-led redevelopment projects toward their intended beneficiaries—minority communities.

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They intended to develop the city without us. The reason why we are in existence today is because we understand what it means to fight. We have not let any of the switch and bait tactics of the government undermine us. It has to be understood that they [political and business community stakeholders] intended to develop Boston without the input of the Black community. This system does not recognize Black voices. Why we are here today is because we have not let anything intimidate us...we have not allowed them to stifle our mission.¹⁰

The strong sentiments echoed above reflect the growing frustration of many African-American CDCs regarding the economic, political, and developmental constraints endemic in the Boston policy process that have tended to limit their capacity to effectively promote Black community development in the city.

The newest phase of Boston redevelopment policies impacting on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development has been Boston’s Enhanced Enterprise Zone. In 1995 the city of Boston was awarded national status as an enterprise zone. Under this Republican initiated legislation, certain urban areas throughout the United States were allotted federal government funds to redevelop and revitalize their communities. As an Enhanced Enterprise Zone, Boston has been awarded over 90 million dollars in Economic Development Initiative (EDI) and private sector fund. Essentially, the city has a designated ‘empowerment zone’ designed to improve the economic and employment outlook of an outlined geographic area. Boston’s enterprise zone is operated under the auspices of the mayoral appointed Boston Empowerment Center. The Empowerment Center acts as a development and financial

¹⁰Boston Interview.
underwriter for businesses and community interests located within the zone. The composition of Boston’s zone is a zigzag of neighborhoods and downtown area that includes the South End of Boston, a small part of Mission Hill, a large portion of Roxbury, and the majority of the city’s downtown area. There are five African-American CDCs that are located within the boundaries of the enterprise zone: Madison Park, Grove Hall NDC, New Vision CDC, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, and Roxbury Action Program. Madison Park, Grove Hall, New Vision, and Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative have all been able to acquire zone funds to engage in some type of commercial and/or housing development.

Enterprise zones have been touted as the government of the future for the hands off approach adopted by the federal government in regards to this local government policy initiative. In some respects, Enterprise Zones represent a new and improved, modern Model Cities program. In an analysis of the future prospects of urban revitalization efforts, Krumholz and Star observed,

The EZ program includes many parallels to the 1966 Model Cities program, which was an important part of President Johnson’s War on Poverty. Like EZ, the Model Cities emphasized concentration of resources on distressed target neighborhoods, coordination among existing efforts, participation and empowerment of community residents, and a comprehensive strategy that went beyond bricks and mortar to include investments in education, job training, and employment.11

In theory, enterprise zones represent an innovative policy approach which provide federal government funding of local government designed community development and revitalization projects. In practice, enterprise zones are plagued by the failure of local

government officials to evenly distribute development, resources to all of Boston’s communities. Similar to other government led redevelopment policies, enterprise zones have the potential to become another top down policy initiatives that are not beneficial to Boston’s neediest communities, especially the Black community. The unwillingness of key economic, business, and political leaders to evenly distribute the enterprise zone development pie has severely limited the community development efforts of African-American CDCs in Boston. In the next section, we will examine the impact of local government redevelopment policies and the implications, if any, these various mayoral, bureaucratic, and public-private partnership policy streams have on the capacity of African-American CDCs in Boston to effectively promote Black community development in the city.

Government Led Redevelopment Policies in Boston

The strong mayoral form of government provides Mayor Thomas Menino a great deal of developmental and public policy authority in the city’s government led redevelopment agenda. The policy scope of the city’s developmental agenda encompasses a broad range of environmental, housing, commercial, and public-private partnership projects designed to strengthen the overall economic vitality of the city. Under the direction of Mayor Menino, Boston has engaged in extensive government led redevelopment activities. These activities have been designed, in part, to combat national Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) charges of racial neglect in its housing developments, city and state wide criticism of its “Big Dig” project, and allegations of abject insensitivity in response to its relaxed posture in relation to the state’s December 1st welfare reform initiatives that impacted 35,000 city residents.
The overall progressive developmental policy approach of the local government promoted by Boston's dominate economic, business, and political stakeholders has given members of the Black community reason to pause. Given the nature of the structural constraints endemic in the government led redevelopment policies of the city government, Black community developers have had to develop alternative strategies of linkage, inclusion, and policy cooperation in Boston. The often uneven nature of community development and lack of access to the city's public policy and decision making processes has made it difficult for African-American community stakeholders to share the euphoria associated with the city's latest government led redevelopment boom. Many of the policy streams flowing from the mayor's office have been exclusive and have had a tendency to subvert African-American interests. The primary benefactor of Boston's government led redevelopment policies has been the dominate white power structure. The section below provides detailed analysis of the government led redevelopment policy directives of Boston city government.

The Enterprise Zone

One of Boston's most aggressive government led redevelopment policies is the city's enhanced enterprise zone. In 1994, the City of Boston applied for empowerment zone status from the national government. The federal empowerment legislation, a 3.5 billion dollar federal government program, is designed to assist urban cities revitalize their most distressed communities. In 1995, Boston was designated as an enhanced enterprise community to develop social services and infrastructure programs. The city received $22 million in HUD EDI funds, $22 million in HUD 108 funds, and $2.95 million in human services and job training funds. Additionally, the Boston enterprise
zone was able to solicit $35 million in flexible loans for businesses within the zone from five major banks: The Bank of Boston, Citizens, Fleet, State Street, and U.S. Trust.

The government led redevelopment policies emanating from the enterprise zone have primarily focused on the revitalization of the seven areas that constitute its constituency base. Each of the five areas of the zone reflect a consortium of Boston neighborhoods with unique developmental and revitalization needs. Enterprise zone financed community development efforts include the $70 million Boston Police Headquarters project, $8 million commitment to revitalize Washington Street, $5.1 million study to launch an Urban Ring Transit system, $2 million Harry Miller project, and $750,000 day care Critical Link grant. The success of the enterprise zone is unquestionable. In less than 5 years, the government led redevelopment policies of the city’s enterprise zone have enhanced the city’s status as a first class city. The question remains, however, government led redevelopment for whom and at what cost to the interests of the African - American community in Boston?

Many Black community stakeholders are concerned with the seemingly non-user friendly nature of the Boston redevelopment policies promoted in the African - American community. One of the loudest criticisms of the Empowerment Center has to do with the technical nature of its application process.

Even the SBA [ Small Business Assistance ] application is a long, complicated process consisting of approximately 15 different documents. It is confusing and a bit intimidating. I am on the Board of Directors of the Empowerment Center and I’m not certain my application would be approved.12

12Boston Interview.
The top down and highly bureaucratic nature of many of the enterprise zone sponsored community development projects do not appear to make its initiatives accessible to all of the city's community stakeholders. The proposition that the Boston Empowerment Center may foster a develop on and not a develop with public policy agenda has been widely discussed by many in the Black community. Specifically, Black community development stakeholders point to the Harry Miller project as a clear indicator of the city government's intent regarding Black community development in Boston.

The Harry Miller project was the first zone project in the Black community. Centrally located on the periphery of Roxbury, the $3.4 million dollar project was developed without any input from the Black community as to its own redevelopment and revitalization needs. After a considerable amount of community upheaval and public debate pertaining to the underhanded nature of city's redevelopment policies, the Boston Empowerment Center tried to highlight the economic / employment opportunities of the Harry Miller site. Completed in February 1997, a new textile manufacturing company was supposed to provide community based employment opportunities. Many individuals in the Black community have noted that the highly touted employment outcomes for the community associated with this project have not been forthcoming. Commenting on the "Harry Miller fiasco", one community leader responded:

They [ city government ] tried to pull a fast one. The problem was that by the time we knew what was going on it was too late; the building was practically finished before the news broke that the Miller thing was another backroom deal. Menino and Miller go way back so it was a done deal. Then they put Reggie Nunally [director of the Boston Empowerment Center ] up there talking about the opportunities for the community. Where are the jobs the Miller project was supposed to create? Where is the economic vitality it was supposed to create? That area looks
more like a ghost town today than it did before.\textsuperscript{13}

The Harry Miller project was supposed to create 57 new jobs in the community. Almost three years later, there still are no ‘new’ economic opportunities for the residents that surround the Miller building. In fact, there have been very few economic and developmental enterprise zone opportunities in the Black community that have not been designed and controlled by the Boston Empowerment Center.

Another top down Black community designated enterprise zone development project that does not reflect the economic and political needs of neighborhood residents is the new Boston Police Headquarters project. Many Black community stakeholders question the validity of city government’s characterization of the $70 million Boston police headquarters as a fundamental component of the development and revitalization of the Ruggles Center / Roxbury Crossing quadrant of the enterprise zone. Roxbury is one of Boston’s poorest and economically strapped neighborhoods. The average median income household in Roxbury is $19,716 compared to the median zone average of $21,521. The city’s willingness to invest 70 million dollars into a police station in an area where 56.8 percent of the residents live in poverty does not seem to be consistent with the needs or the nature of Black community development in this area. It is crucial to our analysis of the nature of government led redevelopment policies in Boston that a clear understanding of the basic day to day community needs of the Ruggles Center / Roxbury Crossing are addressed. In addition to the Ruggles Center / Roxbury Crossing area being one of the poorest communities in the city, the area lacks adequate transportation services.

\textsuperscript{13}Boston Interview.
(the expansion of the orange line into the heart of Roxbury continues to be debated), any major grocery or surplus food chain, and sub-par educational facilities.

Obviously what the Ruggles Center / Roxbury Crossing area needs is community redevelopment and revitalization initiatives aimed at reversing the downward spiral of neglect in all of the areas mentioned above. The Black community would greatly benefit from government led redevelopment policies that provide concrete and substantive decision making and service delivery. To date, no such enterprise zone sponsored community development initiative has been launched. Beyond the predominantly symbolic Blue Hill Avenue Task Force, a mayoral appointed advisory committee, government led redevelopment policies in the Ruggles Center / Roxbury Crossing area of the city’s enterprise zone remains a tightly controlled, heavily top down, approach to community development that has produced little in the way of substantive redevelopment. The majority of the African - American CDCs examined in this research have not been able to play a major role in the decisional areas of the enterprise zone because of the weak incorporation of Black interests in Boston’s public policy and decision-making arenas. African - American CDCs with moderate and / or weak organizational capacity have been very ineffective in developing linkage with the Empowerment Center. Some in the Black community development arena charge that the exclusionary practices of Boston City Government is to blame.

His [Mayor Menino’s] widespread exclusion of certain CDCs and neighborhoods makes his getting the job done bull a joke. They [city government] come here, wave the poor little black poster child around, and make all these promises but they do not give us any money. It does not make any sense. We are a part of the ‘zone’ but have yet to directly benefit from it; unless you qualify the new Police headquarters as ours. It is all a scam to strategically leave out neighborhood residents and the
local officials honor it. They have all these outreach officers down there at the Empowerment Center but the general public does not even know about them. Why? They need to do more to make sure that the people who live here are included not excluded from the process. But we also have to do more .... we have to educate the people who are here and make them more aware of what is at stake. We also have to press the government, banks, insurance industry, and private businesses to make sure they are not unjustly usurping the indigenous populations that live in our communities.14

The sentiments echoed above do not reflect the nature of the government led redevelopment relationships of all of the African - American CDCs examined in this research. Some African - American CDCs have been able to meaningfully confront the vast power of the enterprise zone. African - American CDCs with strong organizational capacity such as Lena Park, DSNI, and Drchester Bay -- have been more effective in developing linkage with the enterprise zone and other government led redevelopment projects. Still, these CDCs only have been able to gain entree into the policy process by promoting redevelopment projects that are in concert with the predominantly commercial and housing orientation of the city’s government led redevelopment policies.

One of the largest beneficiaries of the top down nature of enterprise zone government redevelopment policies is Madison Park CDC. The CDC is engaged in the Ruggles Station commercial development project and the Hope IV Orchid Gardens mixed - income housing project. Madison Park was selected by the Empowerment Center through a city wide open bidding campaign. The fact that Madison Park has consistently worked with the City of Boston, informing the city of its community development initiatives, may also contribute to their linkage with the Empowerment

14Boston Interview.
Center. As one of Madison Park’s community outreach directors commented,

We make it a point to acknowledge and affirm every project we do. We call city hall officials and let them know we are taking a step towards creating innovative programs and projects. We take every opportunity we can to advertise what kind of work we do. In effect, we let them know what potentially can happen and, in effect, solicit their support.

Clearly, Madison Park has benefitted from its strong organizational capacity. The CDC has effectively marketed itself in a very competitive community development arena by fostering positive relationships with the key figures in Boston city government. The fact that Madison Park has developed linkage with city officials and government-led redevelopment agencies has aided in the CDC’s prominence in Boston.

In spite of such a positive relationship with the city’s government-led redevelopment entities, the developmental projects undertaken by Madison Park have received a fair share of criticism. Some of Madison Park’s community residents as well as members of the larger Black community believe that the CDC has sold out to the developmental interests of its private partners. The controversy surrounds the Hope IV project which is an enterprise zone collaborative between Madison Park and Northeastern University.

Some members of the community feel that Madison Park has allowed Northeastern to control the project and reserve a disproportionate amount of the mixed-income rental units for student housing. Madison Park executives view the situation as a win-win situation and look to the long term impact of the collaborative on residents of Madison Park.

We have gotten a lot of criticism for the Northeastern project but we believe that we are doing the right thing for our organization and our neighborhood residents. The partnership has opened up educational training linkages that did not exist prior to the collaboration. We have worked hard to maintain our vision; the partnership has not jeopardized
that. Everyone has something to say about what we should have done.
But I believe that if many of them [ other African - American CDCs ] had
a similar opportunity they would do the same thing.\textsuperscript{15}

However, the overall impact of the CDC's developmental efforts may not be beneficial to
the interests of the larger Black community. The problem with African - American
CDCs developing enterprise zone controlled and influenced community revitalization
projects is that these indigenous community based organizations have been excluded
from the central zones of the policy process; consequently they have been compelled to
assume the role of reactors to city policy initiatives rather than initiators themselves of
community based policy perspectives. Specifically, African - American CDCs were
created as an alternate means of community development and economic vitality. If
CDCs are engaged in developmental partnerships that limit their community
accountability and productivity, their capacity to effectively promote Black community
development in Boston becomes severely limited. Further, African - American CDCs
engaged in these type of developmental partnership also run the risk of being co-opted by
key figures in the larger political and governmental environment. In the case of Madison
Park, serious questions can be raised regarding its possession of a strong enough resource
base to stave off the co-optive powers of private entities such as Northeastern, and the
city administration.

The role played by Madison Park in the development of this project highlights
one of the central dilemmas faced by African-American CDCs in the community
development process. Namely, African - American CDCs appear to be caught in a never-

\textsuperscript{15}Boston Interview.
ending cycle of criticism from both sides of the community development arena. These community service organizations are criticized when they are out of the government-led redevelopment and community development process. Conversely, when African-American CDCs do develop linkage and partnerships they are accused of "selling out" and being coopted by the "powers that be." Either way, it appears that African-American CDCs are damned when they do and damned when they do not engage in community development projects with the city's economic and political stakeholders.

Another African-American CDC that has benefitted from the enterprise zone is Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative; again, the success of DSNI appears to be directly related to its strong organizational capacity. Dudley Street has tapped into zone resources to complete its Urban Village "Main Streets" revitalization project. The "Main Streets" revitalization project is a Boston city government central business district and historic revitalization effort. Upon completion, the Dudley Common's area will serve as the central commercial and business district of the community. One key issue raised by the Dudley Street project is that of community representation through indigenous leadership. Although it is solidly community based, Dudley Street does not bill itself as a Black CDC, but a CDC that represents "people of color." A number of individuals in the Black community have wondered whether or not the multiethnic orientation of Dudley Street provides sufficient space for Black input into its policy direction or sufficient sensitivity to Black community needs. Another criticism of DSNI relates to the seeming elitism and community exclusivity of the organization.16

16Nelson, Chapter 6, pp. 19-20.
Persons who tend to be active in DSNI are folk who can afford to be active. They have not done anything for folk who are renters. A lot of tenants are living in substandard housing conditions that everyone knows about. The organizing of that group by DSNI is not happening. DSNI is notorious; if it's not in the Dudley neighborhood you do not see them. When we were doing the mobilization around the [Reverend Accelynne] Williams' death, no one from DSNI was there, they were conspicuously absent. They have a three part development agenda, physical development, which is a housing and infrastructure, economic development, and something they call human development. This is where I have the strongest criticism. Anything that didn't fit into the economic development or physical development that was still an issue, got dropped into human development. So everything from family day care to doing a community wide forum on the war on poverty became defined as human development. The political work that was needed in Dudley never happened. We have nothing defending us.17

The lack of a political organizing entity has limited the overall capacity of African-American CDCs like DSNI to effectively promote community development in the areas they serve.

The major policy involvement of Madison Park and Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative represents the exception not the rule for African-American CDC linkage in the Empowerment Zone process. The overwhelming majority of African-American CDCs either have very limited developmental linkage or no developmental linkage with the enterprise zone. Individually, many of these community organizations have not had the organizational capacity or economic and political incorporation necessary to effectively lobby the Boston Empowerment Center for developmental funds. As a result, these CDCs have either been forced into city government controlled collaborations with other Black community organizations or excluded from the developmental process altogether.

One such example of a collaboration is the joint developmental activities being

17 Nelson, Chapter 6, p. 20.
undertaken by New Vision CDC and Grove Hall NDC. The executive directors of these CDCs have agreed to set aside longstanding disagreements and turf wars. The two CDCs are joint developers of the Grove Hall “Main Streets” revitalization project. This commercial development project, tentatively slated to include a satellite office of the Department of Motor Vehicles, scheduled to open Summer 2000, is located in the central business district of the Grove Hall square.

Some African-American CDCs have failed to forge linkage of any kind with the city controlled Empowerment process. Many of these African-American CDCs have been unable to overcome internal organizational weaknesses, thus undercutting their capacity to effectively lobby the Boston Empowerment Center for community development funds. One poignant example of an African-American CDC that has been excluded from the Empowerment Zone process is Roxbury Action Program. Roxbury Action Program, which is strategically located in the heart of enterprise zone development projects (the CDC is less than 5 minutes away from three major enterprise zone projects: the Boston Police Headquarters, Roxbury Community College, and the Ruggles Station / Washington Street revitalization development) has not received any enterprise zone resources. Numerous explanations can be offered for the lack of linkage experienced by Roxbury Action Program. The CDC has been troubled by dwindling financial resources and increasing residential social service needs. While these factors play a crucial role in determining the organizational capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development, this research seems to indicate that Roxbury Action Program also appears to be suffering from a lack of charismatic and visionary leadership. Although the CDC is attempting to either utilize
“connections” within the zone to facilitate future Black community development projects, Roxbury Action Program may need to refocus its efforts on strengthening its leadership capacity and community base.

As indicated above, the impact of the enterprise zone on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development has varied tremendously. Whereas African-American CDCs with strong organization capacity seem to be positively affected by the addition of government resources, this research seems to indicate that African-American CDCs with moderate and weak organizational capacity may be especially vulnerable to the co-optive powers of the downtown controlled Empowerment zone process. Indeed, as we have seen in the case of Madison Park, even African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacity may be compelled to function at a subordinate level in the policy process. African-American CDCs with weak organizational capacity appear to be the victims of a process of “mobilization of bias” that renders them almost completely powerless in the competition for benefits and decision-making initiatives flowing from the Enterprise Zone process. Clearly, the difficulty African-American CDCs have experienced in exerting commanding influence in the Enterprise Zone process is not unrelated to the internal features of their operational environment. In addition to the constraints of government led redevelopment policies, African-American CDC led community development is also impacted by a host of internal constraints including the weak nature of Black indigenous organizations, co-optation of Black leadership, and intra-community conflicts and turf wars.
An examination of the internal conflicts of African-American CDCs are important in our analysis because the absence of an umbrella community development organization makes it difficult for African-American CDCs to overcome the constraints of government led redevelopment policies both individually and collectively. Moreover, the fact that African-American CDCs must involve themselves in issues that are not directly related to the strong scope of government led redevelopment tends to weaken the ability to engage in successful fightback strategies in Boston. It is critical to our analysis of Black community development in Boston to understand that African-American CDCs do not have the luxury of solely focusing on developing the economic and geographic needs of Black communities. The Black leadership and social service void left by the demise and irrelevance of traditional civil rights organizations in Boston has forced African-American CDCs to serve in a multiplicity of facets. As a result, the ability to effectively respond to the constraints of the developmental environments they operate within tend to be ineffectual.

One of the most important constraints on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston is the weak nature of Black indigenous community organizations in the city. The declining significance and political clout of longstanding community organizations like the NAACP and Urban League has forced African-American CDCs, already strapped for resources, technical support, and staff, to provide even more community services with even fewer community organizational networks to help assist in the advancement of Black community development in Boston. African-American CDCs in Boston are also impacted by the co-optation of Black leadership by the larger dominate power structure.
The apparent ease and willingness of certain influential Black leaders to sell their community development and leadership skills to the highest city government or private sector bidders does little to reverse the cycle of economic disenfranchisement and weak political incorporation of Black people in Boston. The proliferation of Black leadership co-optation by key city government and private sector entities has significantly reduced the leverage and political power of Black community development stakeholders in Boston because they lack the voice, leadership, and power of key Black figures capable of elevating Black community needs to the top of the public policy making agenda of Boston city government.

The community development efforts of African-American CDCs are also negatively impacted by intra-African-American CDC conflicts. The bitter developmental turf wars and resource allocation battles that some African-American CDCs have been engaged in does little to advance the needs of their constituency base—the Black community. Some leeway could be granted to African-American CDC leadership if the intra-community conflicts pertained to the advancement of Black community development in Boston. However, the politics of personality that seems to guide many of these conflicts serves to undermine and stifle Black community development in Boston. It is widely known throughout the city that certain African-American CDC executive directors do not get along with one another. On numerous occasions I was told about the resource and clout competition that goes on in the Black community development arena. On conditions of anonymity, several respondents talked about how certain executive directors use the white "race card", personal city administration connections, and negative characterizations of other CDCs as a means of
leveraging themselves in the political and governmental environment.

African-American CDCs are also impacted by competition from other racial and ethnic CDCs in Boston. The proliferation of Latino CDCs in Boston has been especially troubling for African-American CDCs. In less than five years, Latino CDCs, (for example, Nuestra Comunidad -- Our Community), have been able to infiltrate the Black community and make themselves leading Latino community developers in Roxbury—the heart of Black Boston. Some African-American community stakeholders are perturbed by what they deem as backroom city government dealings and double standard policy relationships fostered between the power structure and certain Latino CDCs. On conditions of anonymity, a number of community, educational, and political leaders discussed the impact of the personal relationship between the executive director of Nuestra Comunidad and the city’s director of the Department of Neighborhood Development. These Black community development stakeholders seem to believe that the success of Nuestra has more to do with the inside connections fostered as a result of this relationship than on the leadership, financial acumen, and technical savvy of the CDC.

The turf wars and financial battles presently fought by African-American and Latino CDCs have the ability to significantly alter the capacity of these indigenous community organizations to effectively promote minority interest articulation and community development in Boston. As William E. Nelson indicates,

> Because the scope and activities of CDCs are usually limited to a particular geographic area, the ability of these enterprises to deliver political benefits for the entire community is innately circumscribed. It should be noted in this regard that in Boston, no comprehensive citywide
network of CDCs has materialized.\textsuperscript{18}

Specifically, the economic and political leverage of community based groups within the larger political and governmental environment may be weakened and/or subject to increasingly levels of non-decision making and mobilization of bias by Boston city government. The intense nature of non-decision making and mobilization of bias that goes on in the city of Boston may be attributed to the lack of systematic organization and fightback strategies on the part of African-American CDCs in Boston. The scope and influence of African-American CDC led community development has tended to be usurped by the ability of government-led redevelopment programs to dominate the policy agenda of Boston city government. The dominance of mayoral initiated and city government administration led redevelopment limits the ability of African-American CDCs to act as alternative means of community development and empowerment in the city. The fact that African-American CDCs, regardless of organizational capacity, are dependent on traditional modes of economic and political incorporation and empowerment, limits them from effectively challenging the top down nature of government-led redevelopment. For the most part, African-American CDCs in Boston are consigned to a “go along to get along” community development posture. As a result, they tend to engage in government-led redevelopment projects that are incompatible with the best interests of the Black community. It must be noted that African-American CDC led community development has been severely limited by the tendency of Boston city government to usurp and/or undercut Black community development in Boston.

\textsuperscript{18}Nelson., Chapter 6, p 21.
The strong mayoral form of government coupled with the relatively weak economic and political incorporation of African-American interests in Boston city government has fostered an environment wherein key economic and political stakeholders dominate and dictate the policy agenda of the Black community. As a result, the ability of African-American CDCs to effectively establish and promote a Black community development agenda has been severely limited.

Another source of government led policy-making is the city’s Department of Neighborhood Development (DND). The Department of Neighborhood Development is the community oriented development entity of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and serves as a critical mayoral-community development policy link in Boston. The government led redevelopment policies of the DND focus on business development, capital construction, homeowner assistance, housing development, and real estate services. The main goal of the DND is to revitalize the city’s neighborhood’s by strategically investing public resources into the various racial and ethnic communities. Mayor Thomas Menino has waged an effective DND neighborhood revitalization campaign touting himself as the city’s neighborhood mayor who is “getting the job done.”

The government led redevelopment policies of the Department of Neighborhood Development have yielded a significant number of community development projects throughout Boston. The most effective DND program is the “getting the job done” campaign inner city revitalization project. The high tech development and mayoral public relations campaign provides city sponsored community development projects with bold, hunter green signs highlighting the city’s governmental initiative in a particular
area. The predominantly symbolic nature of the “getting the job” done campaign has many questioning Mayor Menino’s real commitment to African - American community development. Commenting on what appears to be bait and switch tactics promoted by the getting the job done policy agenda, one respondent commented:

Every time the mayor comes here he is on Blue Hill Avenue surrounded by Black politicians and leaders. They all cheese for the camera as the mayor throws a little dirt and breaks ground on a new “getting the job done” project. I am perplexed by the whole nature of the campaign. You mean to tell me that the only part of the Black community that needs the help of the city is Blue Hill Avenue? What about all of the surrounding areas and streets off of Blue Hill Avenue? Why has not the mayor gone on Winthrop or Lorna and got the job done? This whole getting the job done thing is a high tech public relations job. Menino could care less about the Black community development.¹⁹

The getting the job done campaign has produced limited substantive service delivery to the Black community. Several vacant lots, abandoned buildings, and local establishments have received facade treatments and external make-overs. Still, the overwhelming benefactors of the mayor’s government led redevelopment policies have been individuals who have resided outside of the city’s Black community. For the most part, African - American political access and policy incorporation remains symbolic and outside of the policy influence of the city’s dominant white power structure. The mayor has been able to consistently persuade Black leaders to give up independent power bases and align themselves with the city government. The strong nature of Black leadership co-optation is most recently evidenced in the resignation of Charlotte Golar Ritchie from the Massachusetts State Legislature to lead the city’s Department of Neighborhood Development.

¹⁹Boston Interview.
The impact of the Department of Neighborhood Development on the capacity of African-American CDCs has not gone unnoticed. The problem with the mayoral "getting the job done" infiltration of Blue Hill Avenue symbolically is that it makes the city appear to be the leading proponent of development in the three neighborhoods that Blue Hill Avenue encompasses. To a certain extent, the city of Boston has disregarded and overlooked the myriad of community development initiatives already spearheaded by African-American CDCs and community organizations. The city's corporate takeover like tactics in African-American communities with active and visible CDCs have some Black community stakeholders concerned about the city's long term policy orientation and interest articulation in Boston’s African-American communities. The question pondered by many is whether or not the present wave of mayoral sponsored community development and revitalization equates to another city government gentrification scheme.

Some African-American CDCs have attempted to overcome the dominance of the Department of Neighborhood Development’s "getting the job done" campaign by bidding on city controlled development projects. The impact of these linkage strategies have yielded limited results and developmental discrepancies seem apparent. For example, the White leadership based Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation has developed 130 units of mixed housing (rentals and ownerships) for the city. Conversely, Madison Park and New Vision CDC, both African-American leadership based, have only been allotted a total of 48 units (New Vision - 28 and Madison Park - 20) to develop. The DND's developmental discrepancies can be attributed to many factors. Many involved in Black community development believe it reflects the nature and responsiveness of the dominate policy structure to White interests.
and leadership in the city. The strong influence of mayoral created city government
departments such as the DND severely limits the capacity of African - American CDCs
to effectively promote Black community development; the city of Boston has the
resources and power to organize around the public policy wishes of the CDCs. The vast
power and resources of the DND as well as other city government departments enables
them to organize around African - American CDC led community development. The end
result of the city of Boston’s community development monopoly is that African -
American CDCs, regardless of organizational capacity, tend to be caught in a bitter web
of policy manipulation and inter-community conflicts and competition for resources and
city government recognition.

One successful strategy that has yielded tangible government led redevelopment
policy results for several African - American CDCs has been the DND’s “Boston Main
Streets” initiative. The initiative, a partnership between the City of Boston and the
National Trust for Historic Preservation, is designed to help neighborhoods revitalize
their business district. Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Grove Hall NCD, and
Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation have received matching funds from
the Department of Neighborhood Development to redevelop their central business
districts.

The impact of the Department of Neighborhood Development on the capacity of
African - American CDCs has been mixed. The capacity of African - American CDCs to
effectively promote Black community development in Boston seems to be negatively
affected by the aggressive mayoral initiated “getting the job done” community
development and public relations campaign. However, the DND’s “Boston’s Main
Street" project appears to be a step in the right direction. The extent to which the Department of Neighborhood Development can continue to develop programs like the "Main Streets" project has a direct impact on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development. The proliferation of community oriented programs can make a difference in the direction and scope of Black policy articulation and interest incorporation in the city.

There has been a tendency, however, for these city government redevelopment partnerships to overtake the community development agendas of African-American CDCs. Some Black community development stakeholders claim that even African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacity have been and/or run the risk of being overpowered by Boston City Government redevelopment. For example, Madison Park CDC (strong organizational capacity) has been accused by some Black leaders and its own community residents of being co-opted by mayoral purse strings because of its uneven housing partnership with the Boston Redevelopment Agency to build residential housing in conjunction with Northeastern University. The ability of city government redevelopment agencies to use their resources to overlook, undermine, and, in some instances, lure away African-American CDC led community development, limits both the organizational capacity and policy influence of these Black community organizations. Moreover, the fact that the Black community lacks any overarching community network to effectively lobby and pressure city government makes it especially vulnerable to the financially secure purse strings of Boston City Government redevelopment.
The Boston Housing Authority

The Boston Housing Authority (BHA) is perhaps the city's most controversial advocate of government led redevelopment policies. The BHA, which operates 13,000 apartments for low-income and elderly persons, was placed under federal government investigation for allegedly violating its own 1996 civil rights protection plan. Nine minority families living in predominantly white housing developments charged that the Boston Housing Authority ignored their claims of racial harassment by white residents in Bunker Hill and Old Colony. The government led redevelopment policies of the BHA have been retrograde as evidenced by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's findings of "systemic discrimination" against minority tenants from 1992 through 1996. The mayor has attempted to overcome the findings of HUD by engaging in a symbolic public relations campaign designed to highlight strides made by the BHA's "Diversity Training" program, a program intended to minimize discrimination in the city's public housing units. The city has been slow to respond to the 53 point recommendation list provided by HUD to improve its historic legacy of racially insensitive and tormented developmental projects in the city.

For years, the Boston Housing Authority refused to protect Black citizens. In an analysis of the effects of government led redevelopment policies, Mel King suggests that Black community program neglect has been part of a larger governmental development program designed to protect the city's White ethnic populations.

"Displacement" was further compounded by the failure of the Boston Housing Authority to provide secure places for people of color who want to live in neighborhoods like East Boston or South Boston. The pressure for people of color to leave these neighborhoods came at a time when the
Authority had hundreds of uninhabited units on its hands – the result of vandalism and the failure to use protective maintenance. The ineffectual nature of the Boston Housing Authority’s government led redevelopment policies reflects the lack of Black political linkage and weak political incorporation in Boston’s public policy domain. The Boston Housing Authority is attempting to develop linkage with Black community stakeholders and overcome its negative, racially insensitive image by engaging in numerous strategic developmental alliances with African-American CDCs and community stakeholders.

Presently, the BHA is engaged in two multimillion dollar housing redevelopment collaborations with Madison Park and Lena Park CDCs. Madison Park and the BHA are co-partners in the HOPE IV Public Housing Revitalization project. The $50 million dollar rehabilitation project is centrally located in the Mission Main Development which is also part of the enterprise zone commercial development effort of Ruggles Station. Lena Park CDC has teamed up with the BHA in a HOPE IV Public Housing Revitalization project. The $30 million dollar redevelopment project has revitalized public housing units in the Orchid Park Development located in lower Roxbury.

Assessments of the two redevelopment efforts on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development have yielded mixed results. Specifically, exterior improvements have been instrumental in changing the perception of these areas as crime ridden and unsafe. As one community organizer commented,

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The leadership of Lena Park has to be given credit because they have actually made that place look like a neighborhood. They have got rid of the brick and painted the place in pastel colors. There even is grass in many of the yards. Back in the day, people used to be afraid to rid through Orchid during the day time. Now, it looks like other up and coming neighborhoods. It is hard to look at the kids outside playing and think of it as a bad area. It may still be bad internally, but externally things have changed.\(^21\)

Although the partnerships fostered by the Boston Housing Authority are helping to change the perceptions of some about the Black community, these government led redevelopment policies also suffer from top down, dominate power structure decision making.

It is important to note that the city government, along with the Boston Empowerment Center, have set the developmental parameters of the Madison Park and Lena Park / BHA collaborations. African - American CDCs have been asked on after the fact. The second class nature of the relationship developed between the city government and Black community development stakeholders undermines the ability of African - American CDCs to be pro-active community developers and public policy advocates. The end result of such weak Black political incorporation and influence on government led redevelopment policies is that some African - American CDCs may unintentionally become city government policy buffers, a role that has the capacity to severely undermine the more than 30 years of economic and political accomplishments of these indigenous Black community organizations in Boston.

\(^{21}\)Boston Interview.
Urban Gentrification

The capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston is also impacted by the city's urban gentrification policies. Dating back to the 1950s redevelopment (i.e., Black community displacement and removal strategies) agenda of the Boston Redevelopment Agency, African-American community development interests have been unfairly biased and overlooked by the dominate white power structure that controls the city's growth and development. The housing, land, and turf wars that have ensued represent the varying holdings of key city and community stakeholders.

In the 1970's, the battle over housing was fought between the realtors and the Boston Redevelopment Authority on one side, the agents who have sought to "gentrify" the South End, to make it suitable for the gentry, the middle and upper class white professionals; and, on the other side, indigenous communities, mostly, low-income, unemployed or working class whites and people of color who have fought against being displaced from the South End by developing their own community controlled housing.22

Numerous community based organizations, including Lower Roxbury Community Corporation and Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion, organized to protest the onslaught of Boston Redevelopment gentrification policies. The organizational capacity of these indigenous community organizations wa instrumental in blocking the hostile takeover of Black community property.

On numerous occasions both private and city developers have usurped valuable Black property to expand business, educational, and health care institutions. Many of these projects have misled the Black community because of the strong support given by minority contractors and developers.

The primary beneficiaries of these strategies have been Black developers who have effectively positioned themselves to take advantage of link development programs created by the Flynn administration. A parcel to parcel program authored by Ricardo Millett, Deputy Director of the BRA under Flynn, gave Black developers a piece of the neighborhood redevelopment action. This program resulted in primary participation by Black developers in major construction projects in the Black community such as the building of a site for the State Water Resources Department and Bureau of Motor Vehicle Registration in lower Roxbury, and the construction of a new police headquarters in the Dudley Triangle. Although these projects have favorably served the economic interests of Black developers, their impact on community development has been negligible.23

It is crucial to our analysis of the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development to understand that the relationship between these CDCs and the long legacy of government-led gentrification in Boston is of David and Goliath proportions. African-American CDCs were born out of protest and activism of city-led gentrification projects. These protest activities have done little to curtail the gigantic scope and power of the city government-led redevelopment policies. In an effort to appeal upscale and financially secure White citizens, Boston city government has actively pushed Blacks out of prime central city neighborhoods. Further, political and business leaders have been able to effectively go around African-American community interests and usurp certain territory in the name of economic revitalization.

23Nelson, Chapter 3, p.12.
The impact of government led gentrification on the Black community has been severe. In addition to displacing thousand of neighborhood residents, gentrification has also been responsible for exorbitant increases in Black community real estate. Between 1975 and 1984, Boston housing prices in gentrified areas more than tripled increasing from a low of $25,000 to a high of $81,300 making the city the highest housing market in the country. 24

The capacity of African - American CDCs to effectively combat the negative impact of gentrification has been severely limited by the lack of indigenous community organizational networks. African - American CDCs appear to be hard pressed to develop effective strategies to offset the takeover of significant African - American resources and developmental space by the city redevelopment entities. As one African - American CDC executive director observed:

Black CDCs are doing everything possible to stop gentrification but the city of Boston is a for - profit developer. We do not have the resources or staff to even begin to wage an effective campaign against them. Look at how it has handled the zone. Enterprise zone money has been here for four to five years and not a cent has gone into the community. 25

The sentiments echoed above reflect those of many Black community members who are suspicious of the city's developmental agenda. Without autonomous community controlled organizations and leadership bases, there appears to be very little that African - American CDCs can do. The gentrification struggles faced by many African - American CDCs are further exacerbated by the strong decision making authority of the


25 Boston Interview.
Boston Empowerment Center and its influence over the developmental capacity and resources of CDCs located within the zone.

Unquestionably, the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively respond to government gentrification is directly linked to their weak political incorporation and access to the decision making apparatus of city government. If African-American CDCs are going to have a positive impact on Black community development in Boston, they must be willing to risk city government economic and political alienation in order to preserve and protect the interests of the larger Black community. African-American CDCs should look to the rich history of Black political organizations in Boston and draw from their most valuable resources -- the Black masses. The extent to which African-American CDCs are able to mobilize the community in response to these hostile government led redevelopment policies may have a significant impact on the future pattern of social policy development in Boston.

*The Big Dig*

One of the most expansive and expensive government led redevelopment policies in the history of Boston is the "Big Dig" central artery development project. The 20 year endeavor is the "largest public works project in America." The three part, 7.5 mile corridor, consists of a new four underground artery and the construction of the Charles River crossing. These renovations are designed to improve access to Logan International Airport. The history of the Big Dig extends back to the city’s 1960s BRA initiated "urban renewal or "Black urban removal" policies. Many of the Black developmental protests activities of the late 1960's were in direct response to city government land usurpation for highway and artery development. Essentially, the city became
factionalized; pro-downtown expansionists were on one side and pro- Black community development stakeholders on the other side.

In the broadest of terms, the two sides involved in the history were pro-highway and anti-highway. The pro-highway faction was made up of contractors, unions, and those who sought to open up access to the suburbs. The anti-highway faction was a grass-roots movement in working class, inner city-neighborhoods that had seen homes bulldozed to make room for highways.  

Although the “Big Dig” has created over 15,000 new jobs in the city, the escalating costs and delayed completion date have caused many in the political and economic environment to question the solvency of the developmental project. An unspecified amount of federal funds designated for other developmental projects, namely community development efforts, have been used to help expedite the completion of the 12 billion dollar highway infrastructure and expansion project. The Big Dig has also been subject to a scathing investigation by the federal Department of Transportation’s Inspector General that portrayed the humongous hole in the ground as “out of control, and recommending a cap on funding.”

As in the case of Enterprise Zone policy, the Big Dig represents a case of top down decision making with important implications for Black community development. The Big Dig is a massive urban development project with an enormous impact on the distribution of public benefits. The primary beneficiaries are corporate interests linked to the rearrangement of public space to promote new road and tunnel construction to the


airport, middle and upper income housing development, and the construction of major shopping centers and office complexes. The geographic location of the Black community means that it will be the direct target of negative fall out from the Big Dig. The alteration of property values and the distribution of property in the Black community have served to undermine the long term economic interests of the Black stakeholders. These developments, coupled with the bias loan policies of banks, have made gentrification a burning issue in the Black community.

The fiscal fallout of the Big Dig has been significant in other ways. Because of its enormous price tag, the Big Dig is soaking up a great deal of federal funds coming into Boston earmarked for community development. The trenchant political reality African-American CDCs with varying organizational capacity face is the existence of a major downtown project that not only restricts their capacity to establish physical development goals for the Black community, but also absorbs many of the financial resources needed to promote effective redevelopment outside of the downtown core. In the face of this clear usurpation of community based decision making power, Black community organizations have been compelled to recall the protest strategies utilized in the 1960s to block the development of the I-95 corridor, and seriously consider the possibility of replicating these strategies. The absence of autonomous and political and economically strong indigenous Black community organizations and civic leaders, makes replication of 1960s like fightback strategies difficult. Today, in Boston, these fightback strategies are limited because a significant portion of the Black leaders and community organizations that rallied against the government led redevelopment policies of the 1960s are either defunct, mayoral policy buffers, or no longer involved in Black community
development in Boston. Surely, African-American CDCs may be able to fill in the gap in some of these areas. However, African-American CDCs have yet to develop an umbrella organization to collectively attack Boston City government redevelopment policies.

Social Services (Welfare Reform)

Another government led redevelopment policy that has the potential to significantly alter the impact of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston is the top down state government welfare reform policy. On December 1, 1998, over 35,000 welfare recipients in Boston lost state welfare benefits and were forced to find alternate means of support. Although welfare reform is a state government policy initiative, the effect of this policy trickles down to the local government. A majority of Boston's community residents living in low-income areas receive some type of government assistance. Further, an inordinate number of African-American CDC affordable housing fall into the aforementioned category.

Several African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacity, including Dorchester Bay, Madison Park, New Vision, and Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, have prepared for the December 1, 1998 cut off by developing pro-active agendas. These CDCs have provided residents with a number of training and skill oriented welfare to work programs. Two African-American CDCs – Madison Park and Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation – developed workforce initiatives. Madison Park is in its third year of the “Customer Service Training Program” which is a welfare to work transition program. The training program has had a certain amount of success. The CDC indicates that graduates of the class of 1997 are, on average, earning $22,000
annually in public sector jobs. Dorchester Bay also has tried to develop a progressive welfare to work agenda. The CDC has implemented a computer skills training program. The computer network employment training (C-NET) was originally an after school youth initiative. However, Dorchester Bay was forced to expand the program to a welfare to work training program when the CDC learned that over 800 of its affordable housing residents were first wave welfare devolution candidates. The success of the Dorchester Bay welfare to work initiative has produced minor results. Residents have received training and job assistance, but the small amount of C-NET resources (the program only has five computers available for resident training) makes it difficult for the CDC to adequately prepare itself for the impact on the hundreds of residents affected by the state’s tough welfare reform efforts.

Whereas African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacity appear to have taken an activist approach to the issue effectively impacting the state’s welfare reform government led redevelopment policy, other CDCs, specifically African-American CDCs with moderate and weak organizational capacity, have not had the time, resources, or organizational capacity to organize neighborhood residents. African-American CDCs, especially Roxbury Action Program and Mattapan CDC, appear most limited in their responsiveness to welfare devolution. These CDCs, which tend to rent to low-income, single parent tenants, have felt the brunt of government led social service devolution. Seemingly resigned to the fact that the impact of welfare reform is going to be “tough” on certain residents, one African-American CDC executive director commented:
There really is very little we can do. We have knowingly rented units to residents that are on aid. When they fall behind, we send them notices. If they do not respond to the notices we call them in. For some residents this becomes the normal mode of operation; they pay three months but then they fall behind four months. I do not know what these women are going to do now 'cause everyone has got a sob story.\textsuperscript{28}

The impact of the state’s tough welfare policies seems to fly in the face of the city’s aggressive neighborhood and community development campaign. While the mayor is running around touting himself as the “neighborhood mayor”, many of his neighborhood residents have been subjected to unneighborly government led redevelopment policies. If the mayor was truly “getting the job done” he would have realized that community development is more than “bricks and mortar” housing development; for African-Americans in Boston, community development is a three-fold developmental, economic, and political mission.

\textbf{The Future of Government Led Redevelopment Policies in Boston}

Government led redevelopment policies in Boston have significantly altered the ability of African-American CDCs to gain leverage and political power in city politics. Strong mayoral and business influence in city politics tend to produce top down government led redevelopment policies that are biased towards the dominate white power structure. The growth focused developmental agenda of key city government and business leaders has been responsible for the relegation of Black interests to second class status in the articulation of issues and the making of public policy. The strong economic and business community developmental sway in Boston must be attributed to the

\textsuperscript{28} Boston Interview.
systemic bias endemic in the structure of politics in Boston.\textsuperscript{29}

Since the Boston Redevelopment Authority government led policies of the 1950s, the city of Boston has depended on the banking and business industry to assist in the city’s revitalization. The dependent nature of Boston city government on outside financial resources reflects growing national government trends wherein local governments, strapped for cash and developmental resources, are forced to govern based on the interests of economically solvent political interests.\textsuperscript{30} The end result of this type of governing system is that community interests become subverted and or ignored. The weak nature of Black political incorporation has also not allowed African-American CDCs engaged in Black community development entree into the system. As a result, the community development capacities of African-American CDCs tend to remain local to their particular area and/or limited to city designated development projects.

African-American CDCs have not been able to find refuge or significant developmental capacity within government initiatives that have been designed to produce bottom up approaches to community development. Boston’s status as an Enhanced Enterprise Zone has provided very limited opportunities for African-American CDCs to promote effective Black community development and public policy articulation. Similar to the Model Cities program, the Enterprise Zone reflects another top down, tightly controlled bureaucratized entity that tends to obstruct minority community development.


The policies emanating from the Enterprise Zone do not reflect the economic, social service, and political needs of the Black community it professes to represent. Many of the policies, for example the $70 million dollar Boston Police Headquarters, do nothing to address the educational, employment, and healthcare disparities of Boston’s Black communities. Further, there clearly seems to be a tendency for the zone to develop more substantive projects in areas that have greater political significance. As one civic leader commented:

South Boston is getting more because they do more to demand more. They are a strong supporter of the Mayor ... point blank, they vote. The reason why service has been slow there [Roxbury] is because the Black community is not organized, does not participate in politics, and has the lowest voter registration and turnout rates in the entire city. If you are asking whether or not Tom cares about them, the answer is yes. But if you are asking if the Black community is his first priority, clearly his policies indicate the opposite.31

African - American CDCs have attempted to overcome the developmental biases of the Enterprise Zone by working on developmental projects funded by the zone. These types of policy linkages have produced symbolic results; both Madison Park CDC and Lena Park CDC are primary developers on the HOPE IV $80 million dollar zone public housing and apartment rehabilitation projects.

Created to be alternative means of Black political power and community development, African - American CDCs are caught in an abyss of governmental policy dictates and power usurpation. The central tendency in Boston has not only been towards the co-optation of African - American CDCs by the downtown leaders of the Enterprise Zone process, but the severe undercutting of the capacity on the part of these CDCs to

31Boston Interview.
serve as originators and initiators of baseline community development strategies and policies in the Black community.

With regards to my hypothesis on the impact of government led redevelopment in Boston the following observations can be made. In theory, African-American CDCs impacted by government led redevelopment initiatives are no more likely to achieve higher levels of community development than CDCs not directly impacted by government led redevelopment. In practice, however, African-American CDCs directly impacted by these policies have achieved higher levels of community development. It must be noted that although African-American CDCs impacted by government led redevelopment yield higher rates of community development, they are also more likely to lack developmental autonomy. Additionally, African-American CDCs impacted by these efforts are also more likely to have community development agendas that conflict with the redevelopment wishes of key city government agencies and departments.

The Boston Department of Neighborhood Development, for example, is one of many city government agencies that has pursued policy initiatives that have seriously affected the delivery capacity of African-American CDCs. The city’s “getting the job done” takeover of policy making in Black communities with visible African-American CDCs has undermined the ability on the part of these CDCs to exercise autonomous decision making authority. African-American CDCs are unfairly disadvantaged by the Department of Neighborhood Development’s Black community development efforts; these efforts lack the financial resources and political clout of the DND. As a result, they are unable to compete with the city government for certain development projects and
public-private community development resources. African-American CDCs have been able to develop linkage with another city government department – the Boston Housing Authority. However, the community development public policies emanating from these partnerships are tightly controlled by the city government. In spite of the constraints of Boston City Government, African-American CDCs have been able to develop limited linkage with the Boston Empowerment Center, Department of Neighborhood Development, and Boston Housing Authority. Four African-American CDCs – Madison Park, Grove Hall, New Vision, and Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative have all developed partnerships with the Empowerment Center. The four African-American CDCs are engaged in enterprise zone funded housing and/or commercial development projects. Still, some Black community residents charge that the Boston Empowerment Center fosters a top down, develop on, not with policy agenda. Critics of the Boston Empowerment Center point to the Harry Miller project and the new Boston Police Headquarters as examples of the Empowerment Center’s tendency to overlook and/or ignore the community development desires of the Black community.

The impact of the history of gentrification in Boston has also been a key factor in the determination of the impact of government led redevelopment on African-American CDC community development. Many African-American CDCs were born out of the hostile Boston Redevelopment Authority urban renewal Black community displacement and land usurpation policies of the late 1960s. The Black community in Boston has experienced a myriad of neighborhood pillages in the name of economic revitalization. Many of these city government initiated efforts have been designed to attract empty
nesters and economic and business interests back to the city. Even the community
development efforts of African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacity
(Madison Park, New Vision, and to a lesser extent New Vision) have been limited by
the strong influence of these policies. African-American CDCs have not been able to
effectively counter the escalating property values and housing costs in many of its city
and private developer co-opted neighborhoods because they lack an organized,
indigenous community based entity to effectively organize and mobilize the Black
community. One of the most debilitating effects of the Black community’s move from
protest to politics has been the demise of long standing community organizations and the
coop-tation of Black leadership, both of which have been instrumental to Black
community development in Boston.

The Big Dig and welfare reform also play a significant role in the community
development efforts of African-American CDCs in Boston. The infrastructure
expansion of the Big Dig limits African-American CDC led community development
because its enormous price tag is soaking up a substantial amount of developmental
dollars earmarked for Black community development. Further, the southward expansion
of the Big Dig may limit the physical development of African-American CDCs and
become another Black community development displacement beast. The prime location
of the Big Dig to downtown and upscale housing, shopping, and business development
makes the potential of gentrification a clear and present danger for African-American

Neighborhood Agenda.” in W. Dennis Keating, Norman Krumholz, and Phillip Star (eds.).
CDCs involved in Black community development in Boston.

The state led welfare reform policy has also impacted African-American CDC-led community development. The fact that a significant number of the CDC owned dwellings are occupied by government assistance recipients has a direct effect on the ability of African-American CDCs to engage in comprehensive community development efforts; the majority of these community services organizations have been forced to shift their agendas away from development to social service. African-American CDCs have attempted to provide welfare to work transition programs to assist the more than 17,000 living in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan impacted by the December 1, 1998 cut off date. The overall impact of these transition programs remains to be seen.

The impact of government led redevelopment on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston has clearly been evidenced throughout this chapter. The community development efforts of African-American CDCs in Boston are severely limited by the top down, highly centralized nature of government led redevelopment in the city. Inconsistent with my hypothesis, however, African-American CDCs impacted by government led redevelopment initiatives are more likely to achieve higher levels of community development than CDCs not directly impacted by government led redevelopment. We must be careful to note, however, that higher levels of African-American CDC led community development have city government strings attached. African-American CDCs benefitting from government led redevelopment initiatives do not experience the developmental autonomy and decision-making authority of CDCs not directly impacted
by the Department of Neighborhood Development, the Boston Enhanced Empowerment Center, and other city government redevelopment initiatives. For the most part, African-American CDCs in Boston are subjected to the government-led redevelopment interests of the mayor, the Boston Empowerment Center, and the Department of Neighborhood Development. As a result, African-American CDCs tend to engage in community development partnerships that are not conducive to the overall needs or interests of the Black community.

My hypothesis of the nature of government-led redevelopment also fails to account for the impact of intra-community conflicts, resource competition, and turf wars on Black community development in Boston. The growing tension and competition inside the Black community development arena has made fightback strategies and/or the mounting of city-wide African-American CDC umbrella organization non-existent.

The inability of African-American CDCs to unite around a collective agenda of political and economic empowerment has also impacted their ability to develop substantive linkage with other city government departments including the Department of Neighborhood Development and the Boston Housing Authority. Both the Department of Neighborhood Development and the Boston Housing Authority have engaged in top-down policy and community development linkage with African-American CDCs including Madison Park, Lena Park, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, New Vision, and Grove Hall CDC. Both of these city government entities have not been willing to consistently engage in equal partnerships with Black community development stakeholders. The inability of African-American CDCs to gain leverage within key city government departments has reduced their ability to determine the nature and scope of
Black community development in Boston. The Department of Neighborhood Development and the Boston Housing Authority, not Black community developers, have set the parameters of Black community development. The strong influence of Boston city government redevelopment has severely limited the capacity of African-American CDCs to act as alternative vehicles of Black community development, political empowerment, and incorporation.

In this chapter we have investigated the impact of our second independent variable on the capacity of African-American CDCs to promote community development. On this issue our research shows that the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development is negatively impacted by Boston city government redevelopment. Specifically, the absence of Black participation in the conceptualization and public policy implementation of key city government redevelopment agencies including the Boston Enterprise Zone, the Department of Neighborhood Development, and the Boston Housing Authority is reflective of the weak nature of Black power and incorporation. Our research also shows how the absence of linkage programs directly targeting Black communities in Boston, the weak distribution of enterprise zone funds to the Black community, the absence of community based sub-groups to implement government funded programs, and the lack of grassroots involvement in the structure and service delivery of city government redevelopment initiatives also contributes to the strong influence of Boston city government redevelopment. Finally, the absence of direct and effective linkage between Boston’s Black community and Boston city government policies also serves as a measure of the limitations of African-American CDC community development in Boston.
The extent to which African-American CDCs, especially those with strong organizational capacity, are able to mobilize and demand to be included in the public policy and decision making processes of Boston redevelopment initiatives has a profound impact on the determination of whether or not the present state of Black economic and political linkage will be significantly changed. Moreover, the extent to which African-American CDCs engage in fightback strategies against the top-down nature of Boston city government will determine the extent to which city hall administrators will be willing to recognize that Black community development in Boston is just as important and worthy of support as the Big Dig and other city government development agendas.

In the next chapter, we will continue our examination of the nature of Black community development in Boston and examine the impact of public and private funding sources on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.
CHAPTER 5

AFRICAN-AMERICAN CDCS AND THE NATURE OF THE FUNDING PROCESS IN BOSTON
Overview

The capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston has been impacted by a variety of external and internal factors. The two previous chapters outlined the impact of the political and governmental environment and government-led redevelopment policies on African-American CDC led community development in Boston. This chapter reflects a continuation of the previous analysis and focuses on the impact of the third independent variable – funding – on the Black community development efforts of African-American CDCs in the city. For the purposes of our analysis, the funding variable examines the nature of the Boston city government budgetary processes, the impact of Boston’s economic stakeholders, and the strategies and tactics used by African-American CDCs to overcome the constraints of the funding environment. The underlying emphasis of this chapter is an examination of the tactics and strategies used by African-American CDCs to overcome the Black community development vacuum created by strong funding constraints in Boston City Government.

The Nature of the Funding Process in Boston

An examination of the city of Boston’s funding process is important for several reasons. First, an analysis of the city’s financial resources and distribution processes is important because it illuminates the multiplicity of economic constraints African-American CDCs involved in Black community development must overcome. It is crucial to our analysis of the funding process in Boston to understand that the financial allocations of the city of Boston are constrained by the city’s massive redevelopment projects. A large amount of city government funds earmarked for community
development have been siphoned into the central artery project. As a result, Black community development stakeholders have limited success effectively lobbying the city government for community redevelopment and urban revitalization funds.

An examination of the funding process of the city of Boston is also important because it illuminates the role of key city government, public and private budgetary actors. Specifically, analysis of the breakdown of city government revenue and expenditures sheds light on those city government cabinets and departments that are substantively (i.e., financially) supported by Boston City government. It is important to note that Boston City Government has tended to relegate African-American public policy and cabinet departments/programs to a sub-par policy and funding domain.

City of Boston Budgetary Breakdown — FY 1998

General Revenue

The overall budget for the city of Boston in fiscal year 1998 was approximately $1.415 billion. This sum reflects a 4.9 percent increase in recurring revenues and expenditures from the previous fiscal year. The overall city budget also included $4.3 million dollars in "non-recurring revenue and expenditures which brings the total budget increase to 5.2%."¹ The city of Boston FY 1998 budgetary summary suggests that three-fourths of the city’s increased revenues came from the property tax levy ($27.2 million) and state aid ($25.6 million). The city has also experienced small FY 1998 budgetary increases in recurring payment, in lieu of taxes ($18.3 million) and excise taxes ($58.4 million) revenues. The city of Boston has fourteen separate revenue generating taxes

designed to channel funds to city government departments, programs, and public policy initiatives.

The most successful of all these independent sources of revenue is the property tax levy; from FY85 to FY 97, the property tax levy consistently increased ranging from $28 million to $41 million. This particular revenue source has been "the City’s most dependable source of major revenue growth during the past thirteen years."\(^2\) The dependability of the property tax levy is clearly demonstrated in that it comprised 52.8 percent of the FY98 revenue for the city. The major factor affecting the city’s property tax levy is Proposition 2 1/2. Passed in 1980, the Proposition 2 ½ legislation limits the property tax levy “to no more than 2.5% of the total fair cash value or all taxable real and personal property” in a city or town.\(^3\) Another substantive source of city government revenue is state aid. In FY98, 28.4 percent of Boston’s revenue consisted of state aid appropriations. The majority of state aid funds are in the form of Chapter 70 educational grants given directly to the local municipality. The amount of state educational aid for the city of Boston continues to increase. In the past fiscal year, state aid (Chapter 70 educational aid) rose from $23.4 million to $29.1 million.\(^4\) The increases in educational aid have been consistent with annual need-based proposals the city of Boston submits to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

\(^2\)City of Boston Fiscal Year 1998 Annual Report, p.2.
\(^3\)City of Boston, Fiscal Year 1998 Annual Report, p.2.
\(^4\)City of Boston, Fiscal Year 1998 Annual Report, p.2.
Some of the city’s revenue sources have not been as consistent and dependable as the property tax levy and state aid. The city of Boston has experienced a decline in Urban Redevelopment Chapter 121A revenue. In an effort to promote redevelopment and reduce the developmental burdens of property taxes, this special legislative referendum allows municipalities to grant a special tax status to qualifying corporations in a particular area. In Boston, Chapter 121A legislation was instrumental in the development of the Fleet Center. Chapter 121A revenue is divided into two legislative categories: Section 10 and Section 6A. Section 10 is an in-lieu-of-tax that the city of Boston is the primary collector and distributor of resources. Section 6A revenue is an individualized corporation formula paid directly to the city. In the past four years, Chapter 121A. Section 10 revenues have slipped from $35.17 million (FY95) to $30.51 million dollars.\(^5\) The city of Boston indicates that downward trends in Chapter 121A revenue are a bit misleading in that some 121A. Section 10 designated corporations have terminated their special tax statuses for regular Chapter 59 property taxation. The city contends that any declines in 121A revenue are compensated for by increases in the property tax levy.

**City of Boston FY98 Expenditures**

*City Departments*

The City of Boston has an extensive array of cabinet departments that account for the more than $1 billion in annual expenditures. In FY98, city departments appropriations increased by 1.7 percent over FY97 allocations. The increase in revenue

\(^5\)City of Boston, Fiscal Year 1998 Annual Report, pp 4-5.

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to City Departments has been attributed to Mayor Menino's emphasis on public safety and economic development. Almost three-fourths of the city department expenditures are concentrated in four basic city service areas: Police, Fire, Public Works, and Health Benefits. Appropriations for the Police and Fire Departments increased by $9.6 million and $4.4 million respectively. Many of the increases in city appropriations are a result of Enterprise Zone-funded redevelopment projects such as the new Boston Police Headquarters building. As previously mentioned, the city's new Boston police headquarters community development effort is incongruent with the basic health, educational, and employment needs of the vast majority of the African-American community.

In terms of specific city government cabinets, several trends should be noted. The largest city government cabinet -- Education -- has consumed 49.3 percent of the overall FY98 city government expenditures. Many of the education cabinet expenditures are targeted toward funding the city's collective bargaining contracts as well as basic school maintenance costs. Educational pilot schools, school to work, and full-day kindergarten programs have also been funded through the education cabinet. The impact of educational cabinet expenditures on Black community development is very limited in that many African-American school age children are housed in overcrowded schools, receive sub-par educational resources, and score some of the lowest testing results in the state. If African-American community development stakeholders were able to channel educational cabinet funds back into the Black community, some of the educational disparities in Boston might be reversed.
Although the Public Safety cabinet received significant budgetary increases in FY98, these fire, police, and health benefit services only comprised 24.5 percent of the total city government cabinet expenditures. A large portion of the Public Safety expenditure was budgeted to fund two classes of firefighters and one class of police officers in the city. Another $3.3 million was allocated to the Boston Police Department to cover moving costs associated with the opening of the new Boston Police Headquarters. The third largest city government cabinet is Basic Services. This cabinet, responsible for trash collection and sewage, received a net increase of $3.6 million in FY98. The additional revenue received by Basic Services brought its cabinet expenditures to 12 percent of the overall city government appropriations. The city government attributes the increase in Basic Service expenditures to Public Works trash collection and disposal contracts. Similar to other urban areas, the city of Boston spends a significant amount of money on basic maintenance, i.e., allocational, services. In FY98, city government Public Works department expenditures totaled $56,597,302 million dollars.

The city’s Human Services cabinet also received a net increase in FY98. The $4 million dollar allocation predominately reflects “the $3.9 million increase in the appropriation to the Public Health Commission, a quasi-independent authority and successor to the Department of Health and Hospitals.” The city’s Human Services cabinet has also funded the Office of Community Partnership’s early education and

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6 City of Boston, Fiscal Year 1998 Annual Report, p.6.

7 City of Boston, Fiscal Year 1998 Annual Report, pp. 6-7.
childcare initiative aimed at addressing the education and social service needs of children in Boston from birth through kindergarten. It appears as if the early education and childcare initiative is the city's attempt to pro-actively address some of the educational and social service inequalities of inner-city Boston. Still, the substantive commitment of the city of Boston to urban communities does not appear to be as substantial. In FY98 the Community Partnership only received $1.3 million, which is minute compared to the $176.5 million the city allocated to the Boston Police Department. As such, the Community Partnership may be another mayoral led symbolic politics ploy.

The city of Boston cabinets that have a direct impact on Black community development are the Office of Environmental Services and the office of Economic Development. These two offices provide services specifically designed to address the economic, political, and social service needs of its minority communities. The department of Environmental Services Building Inspections Unit is primarily responsible for the implementation of the city's Price Equity program. The Price Equity program is designed to ensure the equitable sale / resale of abandoned property. Because of the long history of urban gentrification in Boston, the impact of the Price Equity program on Black community development has the potential to act as a buffer for the Black community against economic and land use exploitation.

The Environmental Services department has also embarked on two additional community focused initiatives to improve the quality of life for its community residents. The first initiative is designed to address the vast amount of abandoned and blighted buildings in the city. The impact of this also has the potential to significantly impact Black community development. Members of Boston's Black community may have the
opportunity to rid themselves of many of the burned out and riot scarred eye sores that have undermined the physical structure of the community since the late 1960's. The second quality of life program is designed to improve the living conditions of children and families residing in the central city. The overall intent and impact of this city government program are presently being detailed. The Environmental Services programs appear to be very promising. However, similar to the small amount of funds received by other community-based city government-funded programs, this cabinet department received a total of $10,984,607 dollars and comprised only 1 percent of the total city government cabinet expenditures.  

Even more disturbing to Black community development is the total amount of FY98 funding the city of Boston allocated to the Economic Development cabinet. The Economic Development cabinet received a total of $6,988,776 dollars to address the urban redevelopment and revitalization needs of the city's neighborhoods. The largest amount of the FY98 allocation - $4.4 million - went to the Department of Neighborhood Development. The Department of Neighborhood Development's Main Streets program - a community based central business district revitalization project - was the primary beneficiary of the Economic Development cabinet appropriation. Other Economic Development cabinet appropriations were allocated to the city's Rental Housing Resource Center, which received $809,087 dollars and the Minority / Women Business program, which received $376,004 dollars.  

Not surprisingly, the city's Special Events

\[\text{\textsuperscript{8}}\text{City of Boston, Fiscal Year 1998 Annual Report, pp. pp. 7-8.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{9}}\text{City of Boston, Fiscal Year 1998 Annual Report, pp. pp. 7-8.}\]
and Tourism unit, which also falls under the Economic Development cabinet, received more funding than these two programs. In FY98, Special Events and Tourism received a total of $1,011,693 dollars from Boston City Government.

The obvious unwillingness of the city of Boston to support Black community development is substantiated by the paltry levels of funding committed to this process. These minuscule amounts of city government funds are not consistent with the financial needs of Black community developers. This analysis seems to indicate that Boston City Government has done very little to move beyond lip service promotion of racial equality and Black community development. The examination of the funding process appears to substantiate the fact that the city government continues to act as a Black public policy buffer. The city of Boston has waged a diminutively funded, highly symbolic, Black community development campaign that has severely limited the ability of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development.

The overwhelming majority of the fiscal priorities of Boston City Government are not geared toward grassroots community development. In fact, other than large downtown redevelopment schemes such as the Big Dig, the city government's funding of community-based development projects has drastically declined over the last thirty years.

The Impact of Decreases in Federal Community Development Support

The ability of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development has also been constrained by the distribution of federal grant money to state and local governments. The reduction in federal support for community development presently faced by African-American CDCs in Boston is part of a larger national government cycle of devolution.
Over the last thirty years, state and local governments have attempted to respond to federal cutbacks by implementing a variety of special legislative initiatives and referendums.

The city of Boston, for example, developed the property tax levy as a way to supplement federal community development cutbacks. These special legislative efforts have done little to address the needs of many of the federal government's targeted constituency groups -- minorities and poor people. The top down and politically salient nature of many state and local government initiatives have tended to exclude community development stakeholders with weak levels of political incorporation and empowerment. The net result of such systematic exclusion is that local governments have tended to monopolize the process of resource distribution in local political arenas. The top down nature of federally funded community development is clearly demonstrated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In Massachusetts, the State Department of Community Development and Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development receive and distribute federal Community Development Block Grant funds. Any community entity desiring federal community development assistance must apply to these state or local government agencies. There are tremendous numbers of regulations and requirements that community organizations must meet to be eligible for CDBG funds. There are also a tremendous number of loopholes that can serve to restrict the flow of CDBG resources to African-CDCs. For example, because the city of Boston receives direct funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, CDCs in the city are not allowed to apply for state-based funds. Thus, the city of Boston has sole control over the
distribution of community development funds; any African - American CDC interested in promoting Black community development in Boston must first be committed to developing some type of linkage with key city government leaders and departments with access and influence in the distribution of city redevelopment resources.

The Department of Neighborhood Development received a total of $101,678,499 in federal government Department of Housing and Urban Development funding for fiscal year 1999. The city's Community Development Block Grant, which totaled $34,339,958, was the largest single revenue source. The federal Housing 2000 City Funds appropriation ( $10,000,000 ) and Section 108 Loan Guarantees ( $11,580,000 ) also serve as significant city of Boston Department of Neighborhood Development federal funding sources. It is important to note that the more than $34 million in CDBG funds reflects a net increase of $10 million from FY'98. In FY'98, the Department of Neighborhood Development received $24,737,000 in CDBG resources.¹⁰

There are several possible explanations that may shed light on the increased funding situation of the City of Boston. The City of Boston's status as an Enhanced Enterprise Community may have increased national government CDBG funding. The fact that the City of Boston has demonstrated effective use of Enterprise Zone resources may have made it appear worthy of increased federal funds. Also, the City of Boston may have experienced an increase in federal CDBG funds because of its active procurement of HUD "HOPE IV" redevelopment funds. Interestingly, the increase in CDBG funds has done little to alter the direction of the city's Black community

¹⁰City of Boston, Department of Neighborhood Development 1998 Annual Report.
development agenda. African-American CDCs in Boston are still largely limited by the symbolic nature of the city of Boston’s commitment to Black community development and empowerment.

Many Black community development stakeholders have not trusted the city government to make good on its promises of developing “all” of its neighborhoods. At the same time, the economically and politically strapped nature of many Black community organizations has not put Black community development stakeholders in a position to hold the city of Boston accountable for its failure to promote significant development in certain communities. The ability of African-American CDCs in Boston to effectively lobby and leverage the more than 100 billion dollars worth of federal government community development funding is crucial to their role as delivery mechanisms in the process of community development.

As public resources shrink and neighborhood conditions deteriorate, the nation depends even more heavily on low-income people to take the initiative in addressing the problems of poverty and community improvement. There is increasing verbal support for self-help and mutual help for empowerment and local initiative. But the resources which are available to support neighborhood self-help efforts remain pitifully small and are -- because of deep cuts in government programs -- shrinking rapidly.\(^{11}\)

African-American CDCs in Boston know first hand the potentially negative effects that reduced funding can have on community development and self-help efforts. The degree to which African-American CDCs are able to sidestep some of the obstacles that limit their Black community development campaigns will determine the long-term success of Black political incorporation and empowerment in Boston.

\(^{11}\text{See Andrew Mott, 1989.}\)
The Web of Political Interests: The City of Boston and its Economic Stakeholders

As in any large metropolitan area, there are many interests that vie for mayoral consideration and city government influence. The city of Boston is no different; it has an enormous array of community, governmental, public, private, and commercial development stakeholders. Perhaps, what is different in the city of Boston is the degree to which certain interests are incorporated into and out of the political decision making arena. Nelson (forthcoming) asserts that African-Americans in Boston continue to suffer from a mobilization of bias in the public policy arena that is detrimental to the economic and political aptitude of the Black community.

The uneven nature of policy distribution in Boston makes an analysis of who get what, when, and how critical to our assessment of impact of funding on African-American CDC led community development. If, as Michael Parenti suggests, certain interests are subject to city government non-decision making, the extent to which African-American CDCs are incorporated into the city’s political web becomes critical to our understanding of their ability to leverage tangible economic and political benefits from Boston city government. As such, it becomes necessary to analyze the governmental, public and private sector community and commercial development structural constraints in the city of Boston. The following section offers an in-depth examination of the economic, political, and private sector interests that tend to block Black community development in Boston. Specifically, our analysis focuses on the public and private buffers that limit the capacity of African-American CDCs to obtain city government 

\[^{12}\text{See Michael Parenti, "Power and Pluralism: A View From the Bottom.}\]
economic resources necessary to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.

**Boston City Government**

Two of the most obvious and significant impediments of African-American CDC led community development are the Office of the Mayor and Boston City Council. The Office of the Mayor and the City Council have substantive impacts on Black community development because they determine who and what will receive city government funding priority in a particular fiscal year. The fact that these two government entities work hand in hand to develop the fiscal priorities of the city seems to suggest that the lack of city government Black community development reflects a political choice not governmental necessity. As the city’s Office of Budget and Management Deputy Director indicated, “these budgetary priorities reflect a combination of public policy initiatives that are important to the mayor as well as city cabinet recommendations.”

The office of the mayor clearly stands at the center of the decision making process on fiscal issues in Boston. In the absence of effective political linkage by Black organizations with the mayor’s office, the structure of decision making around key fiscal issues affecting development issues in the African-American community is unidirectional. Mayoral domination of the budgetary process helps to significantly explain the importance of fiscal issues and the pattern of decision making regarding these issues, as key independent variables in the analysis of community development in Boston.

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13 Telephone Interview, August 1999.
Boston City Government Cabinets

Beyond the mayor and city council, the city government cabinet departments act as the primary city government institutions affecting the political incorporation of the Black community, and the articulation of Black interests citywide. The weak incorporation of Black policy interests in the city’s cabinet departments has limited grassroots involvement in basic city government operations. The city cabinets control over the redistribution of city government economic, maintenance, and social services has limited African-American CDC led community development in Boston. The lack of Black political incorporation and leadership within the cabinet has limited the capacity of African-American CDCs to build alliances and linkage with the Mayor’s “eyes and ears.” Many of these cabinet departments are supposed to act as service providers for members of Boston’s minority communities, but choose to ignore this role in order to pursue personal policy goals. The Department of Education, for example, receives the largest portion of the city’s budget but does little to ensure that all Boston public school children receive equal educational opportunities. Similar to mayoral policymaking, the Boston School Committee has a solid record of symbolic reassurance but has an unstable record of substantive follow through.

The Boston School Committee has consistently neglected its promise to reduce the educational disparities of its students. Instead of investing in quality teaching and resources, the Boston School Committee has opted to pour more money into its bricks and mortar agenda. The appointed Boston School Board has also refused to acknowledge the underlying racial tensions that exist between the Committee and the Black community. The School Committee has consistently set the public agenda without
considering the input of Black community residents. Most recently, Boston School Superintendent Thomas Payzant ruled that race cannot play a role in school designation in Boston. The Boston School Board has successfully limited Black community development by implementing a top down policy agenda which exists to stifle Black community organization and policy articulation in the city.

Similar trends in city government can be found in the city’s Public Works and Environmental Services departments. Perhaps more disturbing, however, is the treatment of the Black community by city government departments with Black cabinet heads. Often, the mayor uses these cabinet appointments to symbolically appease and buffer Black economic and political demands. In Boston, both the Department of Health Services and the Department of Neighborhood Development are headed by African-Americans. The inabilities of these two departments to strategically address the myriad of issues concerning Boston’s Black communities reflect the departments’ limited policy autonomy in city government. The city’s Department of Health Services, under the leadership of Juanita Wade, has not substantially reduced the healthcare disparities that plague the African-American and Latino community in Boston. Despite the advances being made by Boston’s medical community, African-American infant mortality rates in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan remain astonishingly high. In this regard, in a study by William E. Nelson, Jr., one of his respondents provides the following assessment of the health care status of Blacks in Boston:

Blacks in Boston have fared poorly in the area of health. Their situation in 1996 is worst than it was in 1986. We have the highest negative indicators in every disease category you can name in this city: highest incidences of heart disease, highest incidences of high blood pressure, highest incidences of respiratory problems in children in particular
because of toxins they inhale every day in the communities they live in, the air they breathe. Six years ago we were second only to Washington, D.C. in the highest infant mortality rate in the country.¹⁴

The city has attempted to resolve some of these problems by developing community-wide healthcare initiatives. However, the majority of these community-based initiatives appear to be highly symbolic and feel good public relations campaigns.

African-American CDC led community development has also been limited by the buffering role played by the Department of Neighborhood Development and the Enhanced Enterprise Zone Center. The Department of Neighborhood Development's slow incorporation of Black community interests in its neighborhood development campaign is difficult to explain given the increase in federal CDBG funds to the city. Black community development in Boston may not be a part of the larger developmental agenda of Boston city government because the Black community is not viewed as a political asset. Clearly, African-American community interests are being constrained by factors that are not related to the financial position of Boston city government. Obviously, if the city government was strapped for cash, it would be unable provide the more than $10 billion estimated to complete the Big Dig. As William E. Nelson contends:

Key factors that shape and limit choice in the policy making process are well beyond the grasp or influence of the Black community. Decisions regarding the distribution of services, for example, are often made at the level of individual departments. Boston's Black community does not have sufficient influence on the decision making process at the departmental level to guarantee it will receive its fair share of services . . . city departments also maintain ongoing political and administrative relations with non-Black constituent groups whose superior political and economic

resource bases place them in a position to block Black demands for priority consideration in the policy making process.\textsuperscript{15}

The ability of these dominant powerhouses to block Black community development is also impacted by the lack of autonomous African-American CDC economic and political resources which might otherwise give grassroots organizations some input in the legislative policymaking arena.

The extent to which Boston's academic, banking, commercial development, and business interests control the policy objectives of Boston city government is clearly indicated by the policy priorities of city government entities such as the Boston City Council, the Department of Neighborhood Development, and the Enhanced Enterprise Center. City government cabinets have promoted redevelopment and revitalization projects that allow private interests to determine public goods and services. As a result, community groups and organizations tend to be subject to the policy whims of the city of Boston's economic and political top guns. William E. Nelson suggests that the increased significance of the business community in city government is a result of the weak party system in Boston which has fostered the creation of public and private sector political alliances.

The relatively modest role of parties in bankrolling campaigns means that financial and political support must be mobilized through high powered public relations campaigns. These political and financial requirements have elevated the importance of the media and business groups in the electoral process . . . business groups constitute a crucial source of

campaign funding. Since the early days of urban renewal and downtown development, business groups have played a critical role in the setting and implementation of the public agenda.\(^\text{16}\)

The influential position of the business community in the policy making arena must also be attributed to the dominate role of the “Vault” in Boston. In an effort to rebound from economic decline and develop Boston into a “first class” city, the business community took an aggressive downtown development and urban renewal posture.

Urban redevelopment strategies materialized out of marathon brainstorming sessions sponsored by business leaders at Boston College. To spearhead and guide economic recovery, a new business group was formed in 1959 officially named the “Coordinating Committee” but popularly known as the “Vault” because its initial meetings were held in the board room of a safe deposit and trust company.\(^\text{17}\)

Many of the current urban redevelopment strategies adopted by the city’s economic stakeholders reflect the uneven nature of community development promoted by the Vault, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and the City of Boston. The legacy of Black land usurpation and uneven community development in Boston reflects the lack of commitment these entities have to the interests of the city’s racial and ethnic community stakeholders.

In the section below, we will examine strategies and tactics of some of Boston’s dominate economic stakeholders. The main thrust of this section will be an examination of the scope of influence of Boston’s major economic players in the determination of the scope and influence of Black community development in Boston. Specifically, it is

\(^{16}\)William E. Nelson, Jr., Chapter 3, p.3.

\(^{17}\)William E. Nelson, Jr., Chapter 2, pp. 6-7.
important to understand the impact of private entities and their funding resources on the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. The fundamental issue at hand is the degree to which Boston’s banking, real estate, medical and academic communities are supportive of neighborhood centered community development. Depending on the particular developmental need, these influential economic and political stakeholders may be either supportive of or opposed to African-American CDC led community development. As such, they may be more or less willing to provide African-American CDCs with the funding necessary to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.

**The Banking Community**

African-American CDC led community development in Boston has been significantly impacted by the lending policies and practices of Boston’s banking community. The overtly racist lending and community redlining policies of many of the city’s financial institutions have severely undermined Black economic and community development. Many of the city’s banking institutions have systematically refused to lend African-Americans, claiming that the Black community is a high risk lending group. A Federal Reserve Bank of Boston mortgage loan investigation sees things a bit differently; it found racial biases in the banking communities lending practices to be “both statistically and economically significant.”

The initial cover-up and disclaimer of the racially biased lending practices of Boston major lending institutions were vast. Even the Federal Reserve claimed that the finding had been withheld because the results were statistically insignificant. Press coverage of the racial disparities by the city’s lending institutions made it difficult to
cover up the suspicions by Black community development stakeholders that banks in Boston were discriminating against minority development projects. In an effort to respond to the embarrassing findings, the banking community developed a statewide Community Reinvestment Program designed to assist in the development and funding of low-income housing. The banking industry’s reinvestment program was a half-hearted effort to comply with federal Community Reinvestment Act legislation.

The recently proposed merger between Fleet Bank and Bank Boston stands to severely limit and potentially reverse the positive inroads accomplished by the African-American community and the banking community. Further, the merger has the potential to severely limit the funding of the state’s Community Reinvestment program. Many Black community development stakeholders are concerned about the possible reduction in community development lending, small business lending, and capital access that will surely impact the city’s African-American and Latino residents. Senator Dianne Wilkerson believes that the merger may negatively impact Community Reinvestment compliance as well.

Given what we know for a “fact” to be the past history of these two institutions, we know that there is reason for grave concern as to how people of color will fare when the number of major banks is whittled down to two in Massachusetts... Also, because this is the fourth merger of these two banks in nine years, some of us who look at the past post-merger activity and see that after the last three mergers small business lending and mortgage lending to African-Americans and Latinos dropped dramatically, we get concerned and think those concerns ought to be raised.\(^\text{18}\)

The implications of the Fleet Bank and Bank of Boston merger do not appear to be

\(^{18}\text{Dianne Wilkerson, Memo to List Serve Members, Boston’s Blacks on Line, 1999.}\)
promising for future Black community development efforts of African-American CDCs in Boston. Given the banking industry's historic legacy of racial exclusion and redlining, the proposed merger may reinforce the weak economic and political incorporation and empowerment of Blacks in Boston.

The Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce

Another powerful city government economic and political gatekeeper is the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce which represents more than 1,700 businesses. The Chamber represents members of Boston's five leading industries -- financial services, health care, high technology, knowledge creation, and the visitor industry -- which comprise more than half of all employment in the region. The 1997 Boston Redevelopment Authority's Boston Economy report confirms these industry trends. "Employment gains in the 1992 - 1996 period was led by financial services, health care, education, social/cultural/nonprofit services, and business, professional and personal services. Construction, manufacturing, and wholesale and retail trade also posted gains."19 The fact that businesses represented by the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce have significantly contributed to the economic and employment prosperity of Boston gives the Chamber a great amount of political power in city government.

Aware of its preferred position in Boston city government, the Chamber has launched an "aggressive" legislative agenda focused on Convention Center Development, Seaport District Public Transit and Zoning, Federal Research Funding, Logan Airport

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Modernization, and Managed Care. The main objective of the Chamber’s “aggressive 1999 legislative campaign” is to ensure the continued economic growth and job creation of its major industries. Although the Chamber’s aggressive public policy agenda is beneficial to its constituency base, its legislative campaign endorses developmental projects and expansion plans that have the ability to severely restrict the economic and geographic potential of Black community development in Boston. The Chamber’s endorsement of the Seaport District -- a city government lobby to develop a new neighborhood and civic attractions near the new convention center -- has the potential to further usurp Black community development in Boston. Clearly the strong economic and political lobby of the Chamber on behalf of neighborhood expansion projects such as the Seaport District outweigh any Black community development claims on city government resources.

The lack of support for minority interest public policy legislation by the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce may also reflect the trickle down assumptions of the organization. The Chamber may not see the need to include fair hiring practices, affirmative action and other minority policy interests on its legislative agenda because it assumes that the employment booms of its leading industries have spread to the city’s minority communities. To the extent that the African - American community has received tangible employment benefits in the city, the majority of the jobs have been low skill, low paying, entry level and service oriented positions. As Nelson contends, “underutilization and exclusion of Blacks are the standard practice of businesses in the private sector in a rich variety of fields: banking, education, printing and publishing,
communications, and retail sales.\textsuperscript{20} The Chamber has tended to overlook the economic, employment, and community development needs of Boston's minority communities in favor of more economically profitable constituency groups.

The Greater Boston Real Estate Board

Another city government economic stakeholder that impacts the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston is the real estate community. Responsible for more than $700 billion dollars worth of commercial and private development in Boston, the real estate community plays a commanding role in the city's community development efforts. Members of the real estate community have financed major infrastructure improvements and construction projects designed to improve the accessibility and attractiveness of Boston. Many of these downtown development projects have received Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) funding and political support.

The real estate community in Boston is represented by a very powerful, nationally recognized trade association -- The Greater Boston Real Estate Board (GBREB). This trade association works to advance the interests of the profession in the public and private sector. The GBREB acts as an advocacy agent in both the State House and in City Hall. It has been instrumental in procuring "Brownsfield" tax credits, bond financing, direct loans, and loan guarantees for its constituents. More recently, the organization established a political action committee to enhance its lobbying efforts in

\textsuperscript{20}William E. Nelson, Jr.
the political arena and "give us greater visibility in the halls of the State House." The GBREB is a powerful organization; the creation of a political action committee designed to enhance its political presence may subvert the political influence of smaller, economically constrained development entities such as African-American CDCs. Also, the GBREB appears to be a highly professional, white collar, trade association whose developmental goals may not be consistent with the developmental needs of the Black community. As a result, members of the GBREB engaged in development in urban areas may have a tendency to ignore Black community needs in the development process.

The tendency of outside real estate interests to promote a top down model of development in the Black community has been well documented. Major public and private sector redevelopment projects -- the Harry Miller, Orchid Park, the Big Dig -- have used a top down development approach. It is critical to our understanding of the economic and political constrictors of Black community development in Boston, to note that a large portion of the real estate community has not been concerned with the community development efforts of African-American CDCs and community organizations. Often, the real estate community has been in partnership with members of Boston city government (i.e., the Boston Redevelopment Authority) in an effort to strategically undermine the developmental contributions of Black community development stakeholders.

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21 Greater Boston Real Estate Board 1997 Statement of Purpose.
The Department of Neighborhood Development (DND) has attempted to provide community residents with a neighborhood developmental authority. However, the DND is a top-down, tightly mayoral controlled government community development entity. For these reasons, its role as an instrument for the promotion of Black community development has been limited.

**Boston’s Academic and Medical Community**

Some of Boston’s most prestigious academic and medical institutions have propelled themselves to the top of the city’s public policy agenda. Many academic and medical institutions have been able to make the city take note of their developmental efforts through their positive impact on the economy and service industry in the city. The city of Boston has not been able to overlook the economic and developmental benefits of the seventy-three colleges and universities and the twenty-seven inpatient hospitals located within the metropolitan area. The Boston Redevelopment Authority estimates that over an eight-year span (1984-1996) the medical community invested approximately $1 billion in new and upgraded medical and research facilities. The city’s higher education institutions have engaged in similar developmental activity.

From 1991 through 1996, large projects at educational institutions in the City accounted for approximately $300 million of investment. These included new construction at Boston University, Northeastern University, Tufts University, Boston College, the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy, and Harvard University as well as major renovations by Emerson College and Suffolk University. Recently completed projects include: the Boston University School of Management and the Photonics Center; Emerson College dormitory and administration space in renovated buildings; Suffolk University dormitory space; and, at Northeastern University, the Marino Recreation Center and a new Engineering and
These substantial, predominately institutionally funded, development projects have motivated the city to develop linkage with these entities via the Boston Redevelopment Authority, Department of Neighborhood Development, and The Boston Enhanced Enterprise Center.

The increased significance of the city’s academic and medical institutions in neighborhood development stands to threaten the community development accomplishments of African-American CDCs. Specifically, the city’s large urban academic and medical institutions have used their inside connections with Boston City Government to usurp Black community geographic space for their own developmental purposes. Financially and politically constrained, the majority of Black community development stakeholders have been unable to block the hostile takeover and relocation of the Black community by these institutions. Even African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacities have been overtaken by the strong arm of academic and medical institution community development in Boston. Madison Park CDC is engaged in an uneven city government Enhanced Enterprise Zone fostered “community partnership” with Northeastern University.

The multimillion dollar housing rehabilitation project appears to have produced very limited results. Similar to the Department of Neighborhood Development’s business facade improvement campaign, many of these Enterprise Zone partnerships are highly symbolic veneers designed to give the appearance of substantive city government

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commitment to Black community development in Boston. In reality, however, African-American decision-making is subject to non-decision making and public policy subterfuges by the city’s dominate economic and political stakeholders.

Overall, African-American CDC led community development in Boston is impacted by a multiplicity of city government economic considerations. In addition to city government budgetary constraints, African-American CDC led community development is also limited by the developmental and public policy making goals of the city’s economically affluent banking, business, institutional, and real estate community development stakeholders. The strategies and tactics adopted by African-American CDCs to overcome these constraints significantly impact their capacity to attract, maintain, and develop funding resources to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. The following section outlines the economic status of the nine African-American CDCs examined in this research. This section also details the various efforts undertaken by these community-based organizations to gain funding to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.

**African-American CDCs in Boston: An Economic Profile**

The analysis of African-American CDCs as an alternate means of Black community development and political empowerment in Boston clearly outlines the myriad of economic, structural, and public policy constraints that limit the capacity of grassroots neighborhood development in urban areas. In spite of these obstacles, some African-American CDCs have been able to development the economic autonomy and capacity necessary to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.
For the purposes of this analysis, the economic capacity of African-American CDCs is operationalized as the scope and influence of an organization’s operational budget, net assets, public, private, and philanthropic resources/partnerships, and leadership on their capacity to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. My analysis of the economic capacity of African-American CDCs makes a distinction between African-American CDCs with strong, moderate, and weak economic capacity (see chart).

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strong Leadership</th>
<th>Strong Net Assets</th>
<th>Linkage with Public, Private, and Philanthropic Funding Entities</th>
<th>Strong Operational Budget</th>
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<tr>
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Figure 2.2: African-American CDC Economic Capacity

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The underlying assumption of such a categorization is that African-American CDCs with strong economic capacity are more likely than those with weak and moderate economic capacity to develop the resources necessary to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.

**Strong Economic Capacity**

There are four African-American CDCs -- Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, New Vision, and Madison Park -- that have strong economic capacity. By this, we mean that these African-American CDCs have the budgets, net assets, public, private, and philanthropic resources, and leadership necessary to effectively promote Black community development in Boston.

**Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative**

The economic capacity of Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative is exemplary. The CDC has an operating budget of more than $1 million and over the past ten years has been instrumental in the estimated $75-80 million dollars' worth of neighborhood investment in Roxbury. Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative has waged a massive economic empowerment campaign. The CDC has developed linkage with key public, private, and philanthropic institutions. In addition to federal Department of Housing and Urban Development resources ($2 million dollars), DSNI has received Casey Foundation grant money ($2 million dollars), State of Massachusetts Brownsfield appropriations ($300,000), Department of Neighborhood Development Facade Improvement Funds (approximately $1.5 million) and a host of other private, banking industry, and public funds.
The strong economic capacity of Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative reflects the active political and community organizing efforts of the CDC. From its inception, DSNI has worked vigorously to maintain direct grassroots community involvement. As a result, the CDC has tended to be privy to an organized constituency bloc capable of pressing the city government and private industries for access to and public-policy representation in the city’s decision-making processes.

Madison Park CDC

Madison Park CDC has an annual operating budget of approximately $550,000 dollars (FY98) and net assets of $105 million. The CDC has worked to maintain its viable economic profile by developing community development economic relationships with a variety of public and private sector entities. Madison Park CDC has consistently received federal, state, and city community development support. In fiscal year 1998, the CDC was the recipient of the highly competitive national HUD Drug Elimination Grant (approximately $100,000), a Massachusetts Department of Community Development CEED grant ($40,000), and Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporation community organizing grant ($25,000). The CDC is also engaged in a multimillion dollar housing development collaboration with the Department of Neighborhood Development and Northeastern University. Finally, Madison Park has developed economic linkage with the Boston Enhanced Enterprise Zone Center and is in the final stages of $7 million dollar commercial development project in Ruggles Station.

One of the crucial determinants of Madison Park’s strong economic capacity is the CDC’s ongoing relationship with the city of Boston. Madison Park has one of the best city government tract records. As one staffer commented, “our competitors think
that we have a safety net.” The fact that Madison Park has a successful tract record with
the city government is particularly noteworthy given the fact that the CDC is led by an
African - American executive director. Some Black community development
stakeholders suggests that Madison Park does not represent the norm of city government
community development funding. One of the underlying sentiments that seems to follow
funding discussions is the belief by some within the African - American community that
the funding process is unfavorably skewed toward White, Latino, and African - American
CDCs with White executive directors. The final section of this chapter will examine
what, if any, impact race has on African - American CDC led community development
funding.

_Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation_

The annual operating budget of Dorchester Bay CDC is estimated to be
approximately $1 million ( FY98 ) with net assets totaling more than $55 million. The
CDC has used their prominence in the city of Boston to develop economic linkage with
key community development funding powerhouses including the federal Department of
Housing and Urban Development ( $125,000 ), Brownsfield Funds ( $200,000 ), the
Boston Homeowner Service Collaborative ( $130,475 ), and the Massachusetts
Association of Community Development Corporations ( $75,000 ). The CDC has
received “generous” Department of Neighborhood Development CDBG support on its
$7.3 million dollar Ceylon Field Apartments redevelopment project.

_Dorchester Bay has been able to maintain strong economic capacity by focusing
on the internal community development and empowerment. The CDC focuses primarily
on the economic empowerment of community residents. The CDC contends that the

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commitment to “holistic” community development has provided a myriad of economic opportunities and resources to effectively revitalize its service area.

*New Vision (Quincy Geneva) CDC*

New Vision CDC is another African-American CDC with strong organizational capacity. The CDC has increased its annual operating budget from $250,000 to $1.5 million (FY98) by soliciting several federal government grants. The CDC has total assets of $3.5 million and its “subsidiaries control real estate holdings and investments with replacement value of $40 million.”^23 The CDC has developed a very aggressive economic development agenda. Under the leadership of the New Vision’s directors of Economic Development and Funds Development, the CDC has procured funding from public and private sources. These economic development partnerships include the ArrowHead Real Estate joint venture with the Department of Neighborhood Development ($25,000 annual), Massachusetts Department of Community Development Community Enterprise Economic Development (CEED) resources of $50,000, and a three-year grant from Parents United for Childcare ($9,000). Although the CDC’s HUD Drug Elimination Grant was not renewed (approx. $50,000), the CDC effectively lobbied the banking industry and received $36,500 in support of their drug elimination efforts. The CDC has also developed a four-year comprehensive capital campaign totaling more than $6 million which has been targeted for real estate, housing, community and economic development, job training, and youth education.

Although African-American CDCs with strong economic capacity appear best positioned to receive a variety of public, private, and philanthropic funds, these CDCs may also be most susceptible to dominant white power structure policy manipulation, power usurpation, and Black leadership co-optation. Critical to our analysis of African-American CDCs with strong economic capacity is the nature of the linkage and developmental autonomy established between the CDC and the funding entity. In Boston, a majority of African-American CDCs that have developed linkage with government and private sector funding entities find themselves in highly symbolic and non-empowering developmental and decision making roles. The relatively powerless position of African-American CDCs is reinforced and maintained by the dominant white power structure. As a result, African-Americans CDCs spend a substantial amount of time responding to instead of determining Black community development initiatives.

**Moderate Economic Capacity**

Two African-American CDCs -- Grove Hall and CDC of Boston -- have moderate economic capacity. The capacity of these CDCs to effectively promote Black community development is constrained by budgetary deficiencies and the lack of comprehensive linkage with key public, private, and philanthropic community development funding entities.

*Grove Hall Neighborhood Development Corporation*

Grove Hall NDC has an annual operating budget of $100,000 which is $250,000 dollars less than what the CDC proposed for fiscal year 1998. The predominante source of the CDCs funding are government and philanthropic institutions with "social service
agendas.” The CDCs has received state and city CDBG grant appropriations. These allocations constitute approximately 40 percent of the overall operating budget of the CDC. At present, the Grove Hall NDC receives no direct federal government community development support. The remaining 60 percent of the organization’s budget comes from private and philanthropic institutions including Fleet Bank, the Haymes Foundation, and the Boston Foundation. The CDC is presently engaged in pre-strategic planning initiatives that may have the potential to attract a new crop of community development funding resources.

*CDC of Boston*

The approximate annual operating budget of CDC of Boston is about $100,000 dollars. The CDC has been impacted by declines in federal government support of urban renewal and community development. As a result, the CDC has developed linkage with a variety of public and private funding entities including the Boston Enhanced Enterprise Center, the Boston University School of Medicine, and numerous CDCs and community organizations. The CDC’s predominate revenue emanates from partnerships and grant collaborations with other community organizations. The CDC also uses revenue created by its commercial tenants to remain economically solvent. In spite of CDC of Boston’s limited economic capacity, its longstanding reputation as Boston’s leading African-American nonprofit commercial developer provides it with entree to some of the city’s most powerful economic and political stakeholders. Discussing the impact of African-American CDC leadership on Black community development in Boston, one respondent commented, “Marvin’s [Vines] presence is felt whether he is in attendance at a meeting or not. He has been around long enough to be able to make his presence known.”
It should be noted that African-American CDCs with moderate economic capacity appear to be the most hard pressed to attract new developmental resources. The organizational size and face value capacity of African-American CDCs with moderate economic capacity seems to limit them from receiving large scale funding; these CDCs do not have the organizational capacity necessary to demand multimillion dollar grants. Similar, these CDCs are not seen as weak enough to be viewed as "charity cases" by the funding community. As a result, African-American CDCs with moderate economic capacity may be more strapped to develop innovative funding and linkage with public, private, and philanthropic funding entities.

Our funding situation is always an up, down, yes, no situation. We need money but we also have community support. In the past, we thought that we could get by relying on internal community development projects. The problem is that we would just get by. We have developed an economic agenda but now we have to drag financial institutions to the table.24

One potential funding source for African-American CDCs with moderate economic capacity may be the city of Boston. The city has more than 100 million dollars of federal community development support and a variety of community revitalization and redevelopment projects that may be tailored to meet the needs of African-Americans CDCs with moderate economic and organizational capacity. African-American CDCs with moderate economic capacity may also be able to tap into the $95 million dollar in Enhanced Enterprise Zones funds as well.

Grove Hall NDC has used its organizational savvy to develop linkage with the city based funding entities. The CDC has received Department of Neighborhood

24Boson Interview.
Development "Main Streets" funding and also is in an Enhanced Enterprise Center
developed partnership with New Vision CDC to redevelop the central business district of
Grove Hall. In spite of the success of African-American CDCs like Grove Hall and
Madison Park, some Black community development stakeholders maintain that the city is
providing the Black community with a very tiny slice of the development pie. The
underlying sentiment by some members of the Black community is that the city gives
African-American CDCs (specifically those with African-American leadership)
benevolent crumbs compared to what it gives other CDCs in the city.

Some African-American CDCs believe that the entire funding community is
biased against Black oriented community development. On more than one occasion,
leaders of African-American CDCs with varying levels of economic capacity spoke of
the uneven nature of funding in the city:

It can be very difficult to get money from the government. It is as if they
do not believe they can trust us to do what we say we are going to do with
the money. If our leadership were not savvy enough to work the inside
connections, we probably would not be as successful as we have been.
The ironic thing is that other CDCs seem to have money being thrown at
them. Every time I look up, they are developing something new. They
have even made their way over here -- they are in our area building stuff.
Of course, you can wonder why they are doing so well but the answer is
obvious once you look at the make-up of their leadership and board.\(^{25}\)

Some African-American CDCs leaders are more direct and contend that the lack of
community development funding is a result of the racist tendencies of Boston city
government.

\(^{25}\)Boston Interview.
We do get as much money as we should because the city does not want to give us money. We can call it whatever we want but the fact of the matter is that Black people here are victimized because of the system is stacked against us. Boston has been colored but it is still racist at its core.26

Clearly, the structural constraints and underlying racial overtones present in the political and governmental environment of Boston plays a role in the city’s funding considerations. Some of these considerations have been beneficial to Black community development; others have not. Similarly, some of the blame for the lack of Black community development funds must be given to African - American CDCs. Some of these CDCs have refused to accept the leadership challenge and crisis of the Black community and opted to receive “sure thing” public and private funding instead of pressing the web of city government economic stakeholders for “real” representation and policy articulation. As Adolph Reed Jr., contends some members of the Black community have done more with less to continue the cycle of Black policy and representation subterfuge that occurs in pro-growth, business oriented urban regimes.

Weak Economic Capacity

There are three African - American CDCs -- Lena Park, Mattapan CDC, and Roxbury Action Program -- with weak economic capacity. These CDCs lack the internal budgetary resources and / or external linkage with key public, private, and philanthropic funding sources necessary to effectively promote Black community development.

26Boston Interview.
Over the past two years, Lena Park CDC has worked to reverse the financial difficulties which caused the organization to file for bankruptcy. The “dark times” experienced by the CDC has severely impacted the organization’s ability to effectively promote Black community development in the city. Although community development stakeholders estimate the CDC to have an operating budget of $250,000 dollars, the executive director claims that the CDC is without an operating budget. In an effort to regain credibility and voice in the Black community, Lena Park launched a four year strategic plan which outlines the housing, social service, and economic development goals of the CDC.

In spite of the organization’s “dark times,” under the visionary leadership of their executive director, the CDC has solicited more than $400,000 dollars in philanthropic support. Lena Park has also developed economic linkage with the Department of Neighborhood Development. The CDC is one of the primary developers on the Boston State Hospital Development project which has an estimated developmental cost of $210 billion. The CDC is also engaged in $3.5 million dollar housing redevelopment joint venture with the Boston Enhanced Enterprise Center.

Similar to the funding strategies of African - American CDCs with strong economic capacity, Lena Park has also used its leadership to attract funding support. The CDC has been able to attract more than $400,000 dollars in philanthropic support in spite of its 1997 bankruptcy. The CDC credits the leadership of its executive director for this accomplishment. One of the CDCs community organizers offers a simple explanation for the success of Lena Park:
Our new executive director [E. Loraine Baugh] has a reputation for saving Black institutions. She has proven herself time and time again so it is not surprising that the community [funding] would trust her with their money. They understand that in order for the CDC to rise again that we are going to need some help.27

For the most part, African-American CDC linkage with philanthropic funding entities seems to remain an untapped revenue source. Many of these CDCs are in the early stages of developing philanthropic funding strategic plans. Part of the problem of untapped philanthropic support may have more to do with the nature of the institution than with African-American CDC efforts. In Boston, it seems as if large philanthropic organizations are more attracted and comfortable funding CDCs that have celebrity status in the city. This does not mean that African-American CDCs should shy away from philanthropic support; it means that they should be aware of the funding profile of the particular institutions. Other African-American CDCs with weak organizational capacity are presently attempting to develop linkage with philanthropic institutions in the city. The weak economic capacity of Mattapan CDC, for example, is a temporary condition and reflects the relative newness of the organization.

Mattapan CDC

In existence for four years, Mattapan CDC has only had a full-time executive director for the past year and a half. In spite of these organizational setbacks, the present director has worked to develop linkage with key economic, political, and philanthropic institutions. The CDC has received financial support from former Executive Office of Communities and Development, the Boston Police Department, and the Department of

27Boston Interview.
Neighborhood Development. The CDC has also submitted request for funding proposals to various economic institutions in the city. Unlike some African-American CDCs, the economic and organizational capacity of Mattapan Park CDC is great. The untapped community and organizational resources of Mattapan CDC has the potential to set a new stage of Black community development in Boston that is not beholden to downtown interests. If successful, the CDC will be able to usher in innovative approaches and new faces and possible resuscitate the seemingly fledgling Black community development movement in Boston.

*Roxbury Action Program*

The Black community development efforts of Roxbury Action Program are also impacted by the lack of internal and external financial resources. Presently, the CDC has no operating budget and primarily survives off of residential property management revenues and small state and city government grants. The net assets of Roxbury Action Program are approximately eight million dollars. The CDC is in the process of developing a comprehensive economic development strategic plan to tap into the millions of Boston Enhanced Enterprise Zone and Department of Neighborhood Development dollars that surround the prime located African-American grassroots community development organization.

Some African-American CDCs with weak economic capacity appear to have been severely impacted by government cutbacks in urban renewal and community development. Many of these CDCs unwittingly relied on government funds to support their community development agendas. Unfortunately, as government funds have dried up, so to have the community development efforts of some of these indigenous
community organizations. Seemingly resigned to the fact it is no longer a pioneering African - American CDC, one executive director contends that the “system” works against Black community development.

What can we do? They [ government ] know that we are here. We have tried to get money from the government but there is always some red tape, some form we did not fill out properly. If you look at our record, we set the tone for what is being done now. A lot of these new groups are getting money because of work we did in the 1960's and 1970's. He [ Menino ] throws us a few scraps but they ain’t enough to make a major difference here. It is all strategic really. See if we go away then this area can really be gentrified. As long as we stay open, they cannot just come in and take over.  

Undoubtedly, African - American CDC led community development is impacted by a multiplicity of city government economic considerations. In addition to Boston city government budgetary constraints, African - American CDC led community development is also limited by the developmental and public policymaking goals of the city’s economically affluent business, institutional, and real estate community development stakeholders. The strategies and tactics adopted by African - American CDCs to overcome these constraints significantly impacts Black community development in Boston. Further, African - American CDCs ability to respond to these constraints has the ability to offset declines in Black community development as well as determine their course of service delivery in the new millennium.

At present, African - American CDCs in Boston have been limited in their ability to respond to the nature of the funding process in Boston. Many of these CDCs are engaged in uneven community development partnerships, constrained by internal staffing

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28Boston Interview.
and resource limitations, and, in some instances, completely overlooked by the larger funding community. As a result, the character and community development agenda of many of the African-American CDCs examined in this research tends to be shaped by the willingness of outside funding entities to underwrite Black community development in Boston.

Further, African-American CDC led community development in Boston is also impacted by the growing competition from Latino CDCs in Boston. African-American and Latino CDCs have been engaged in bitter funding and turf wars throughout the city.

Some in the African-American community are concerned with the “preferred status” of some Latino CDCs in the city. City government support of one Latino CDC -- Nuestra Comunidad — is especially troubling for some Black community development stakeholders. Many in the community believe that the Latino CDC has unfairly benefitted from Department of Neighborhood Development connections. One community resident commented on the absence of city government ethics regarding its treatment of Nuestra.

Everyone in the city knows that Nuestra is benefiting from the personal relationship between Evelyn and Chuck [Grisby] that seems to be the only explanation available to explain the CDC’s success. Before she got involved with community development, Evelyn was in social work. It seems pretty peculiar that in less than five years, Nuestra is one of the leading CDCs in the community.²⁹

In spite of these concerns, some African-American CDCs have teamed up in joint-venture development initiatives with Nuestra Comunidad. It should be noted that only two CDCs — Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Dorchester Bay -- have

²⁹Boston Interview.
developed linkage with Nuestra Comunidad. The overwhelming majority of the African - American CDCs examined in this study have not yet developed effective linkage with Latino CDCs. Many of these CDCs have opted to develop linkage with other African - American CDCs and / or build up their own community development resources. Several African - American CDCs including Dorchester Bay, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, and New Vision are utilizing a variety of fight back strategies and tactics to overcome the strong web of influence economic stakeholders in Boston. It should be noted that the majority of these strategies are by African - American CDCs with strong economic capacity.

African - American CDCs have attempted to overcome the constraints of the funding environment by developing direct linkages with federal and state funding entities. Aware of the vested interest the government has in the effective development of its urban communities, several African - American CDCs in Boston have sought after national government funding resources. The main reason some African - American CDCs have directly lobbied the federal government has been to cut out the bureaucratic red tape of state and local government. Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Dorchester Bay CDC have been most effective in forging relationships with national government funding entities including the Department of Housing and Urban Development ( HUD), the Environmental Protection Agency( EPA ), and the Department of Health and Human Services( DHHS ).

The majority of these government community development resources have been used to increase community awareness on social issues as well as increase neighborhood safety. Moreover, direct federal government CDC funding has given African - American
CDCs a sense of developmental autonomy in that they are not always forced to play the
“politics” game with state and local government funding sources. There is a downside to
central government African-American CDC led community development funding. This
research indicates that African-American CDCs with direct federal government funding
have not always prepared for grant cutbacks and reductions. New Vision CDC, for
example, was caught off guard when its three year “Drug Elimination Grant” was not
renewed by HUD. The CDC found itself scrambling around at the last minute trying to
find $35,000 worth of matching funds to continue its very effective teen drug awareness
initiative.

African-American CDCs in Boston have also attempted to overcome the
constraints of the funding environment of Boston by developing linkage with state
funding entities. Both Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Dorchester Bay CDC
have effectively tapped into state government funding entities. Within the state, African
-American CDCs have used resources from two separate funding sources — the
Community Enterprise Economic Development grant and the Brownfield grant.
Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, New Vision, Madison Park, and Dorchester Bay
CDC have all received state community development funds via the CEED grant. The
CEED grant is a $500 million dollar federal government state issued grant to assist in the
development of urban and rural communities, businesses, and start-ups. African-
American CDCs with strong economic capacity have been especially successful in obtain
the $100,000 dollar CEED grants.
The other state funding source -- the Brownsfield Bill -- is a fairly new $35 million dollar Environmental Protection Agency grant designed to clean up and redevelop contaminated sites in urban areas. Both Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Dorchester Bay CDC received Brownsfield Bill grant money. Dudley Street is using the $300,000 dollar grant to help in the development of its community greenhouse. Dorchester Bay is using its Brownsfield Bill money towards the development of a manufacturing plant. Both of these CDCs used their linkage with former State Representative Charlotte Golar Ritchie to obtain these resources. Ritchie, who co-sponsored the legislation, was the state Representative for both of these CDCs. The Brownsfield Bill provides another potential funding source for African-American CDCs. The problem with Brownsfield legislation is that it appears to only benefit African-American CDCs that have the economic and organization capacity to take on large and costly developmental projects. As such, the Brownsfield Bill is a very limited funding avenue for African-American CDCs in Boston.

Another fight back strategy African-American CDCs are using to overcome the constraints of the city's economic stakeholders is the development of independent bases of economic autonomy. Several African-American CDCs in Boston have launched profit-maximizing businesses. Aware of the constrained and competitive nature of the funding process, these CDCs hope to provide a pipeline of financial security and autonomy. Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative took advantage of vacant land made available through state-funded Brownsfield legislation to develop its "urban greenhouse." The 10,000 square foot site is an extension of the CDCs "Food Project". The Food Project is a youth initiative; last year the Food Project produced 35,000 pounds of...
produce which was sold at the Dudley Town Commons Farmer’s Market. New Vision CDC has taken an even more autonomous approach and has launched “In-Touch Global Communications.” The wireless telecommunications business center is projected to gross $48,000 during its first year of operation. In addition to providing the CDC with resources, “In - Touch” is a promising venture because it will employ approximately 40 community residents in various administrative and telecommunication roles.

It is too early to give an assessment of the impact of these economic initiatives on the capacity of African - American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development. However, the development of these programs and their potential for success has serious political implications. First, the development of independent, profit-maximizing funding resources provides African - American CDCs with the financial freedom to determine their own developmental agendas. At present, African - American CDCs are bound to the city’s economic interests to the detriment of Black community development in Boston. Even when these CDCs receive “lead” developmental status they are still in a relatively weak decision-making position. Thus, African - American CDCs are still subject to government and private sector non decision making and mobilization of bias.

The creation of autonomous funding sources may also reduce the increasing levels of funding competition among African - American CDCs. The overlapping service areas of many African - American CDCs, coupled with funding reductions, often pits CDCs against each other. The resulting turf wars and financial feuds have done very little to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. The ability of African - American CDCs with independent funds to remove themselves from certain

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funding arenas may elevate some of the tension in the Black community development arena. Obviously, such an assumption is predicated on the fact that some African-American CDCs would be benevolent enough to sacrifice their own funding resources for the good of the community. At present, such an assumption is not reasonable. Even if some African-American CDC are in a position to sacrifice certain funding opportunities, some Black community development stakeholders are not convinced that African-American CDCs have the intentions of the community at heart. Commenting on the unguided egoism and lack of comprise that seems to debilitate Black community development, one Black community development stakeholder replied:

At one point in time, we had more progressive leaders and politicians -- people with teeth. CDCs have moved away from the mission and are accountable to the people in power not the people in need. Some executive directors are disgruntled private entrepreneurs who look at community development as any easy way out. They could not cut in it the private sector so they come over here and ripe the Black community apart.30

The politics of personality that seems to guide Black community development has flourished because the Black community in Boston lacks an indigenous organizational network to unify Black community interests and groups.

One obvious fight back strategy that African-American CDCs have failed to consistently engage in is grassroots community mobilization. This research indicates that the majority of the African-American CDCs examined fail to engage in direct community mobilizations tactics because they do not believe these tactics to be effective. As one CDC consultant commented, “protest tactics of the 1960s are no longer

30Boston Interview.
relevant. Furthermore, people here do not usually turnout for anything unless there is some type of monetary incentive.\textsuperscript{31} Sentiments such as these are not as clearly echoed throughout the African - American CDC world. It should be noted that five out of the nine African - American CDCs examined operate in Roxbury which consistently has the lowest voter turnout rates in the Commonwealth.

Some in the Black community contend that African - American CDCs get caught up in a cycle of survival of the fittest that may not always allow them to seek community input. Discussing the multiplicity of demands and responsibilities placed on African - American CDCs, one elected official commented:

\begin{quote}
Some may question the true motivation of the CDCs. They have to pay such close attention to the business and political aspects of community development that it may be difficult to get hyped up about residents. Resident input on the [ CDC ] board is needed and ought to be implemented but it cannot be done if CDCs do not have resources to do so.\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

The majority of the executive directors interviewed tend to downplay grassroots mobilization as something reserved for their “community organizers” or something that they plan to do once they received funding to “get a community organizer on board”.\textsuperscript{33} Interestingly, the two African - American CDCs ( Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Madison Park ) that do employ full-time community organizers also tend to receive

\textsuperscript{31} Boston Interview. \\
\textsuperscript{32} Boston Interview. \\
\textsuperscript{33} Boston Interview.
the loudest criticisms for engaging in “deals with the devil[ Boston City Government ]”\(^{34}\).

Some African - American CDCs are attempting to overcome grassroots mobilization, resource, and leadership shortages by working with each other on joint - venture development projects. Many of these strategic alliances are designed to increase the developmental profile and reputation of African - American CDCs. Joint collaborations have the potential to be very significant in reversing some of the negative images that have plagued Black community development in Boston. These partnerships may serve to soften the image of some of the more brazen community organizations. At the same time, joint collaborative ventures may pose a myriad of obstacles and constraints that may not be beneficial to Black community development in Boston.

The fact that many of these collaborative efforts tend to be long, drawn out, and very detailed processes seems to do little for what appears to be the “right now” needs of many of Boston’s Black community residents. It seems highly unlikely that Black community residents dealing with the demise of rent control, welfare, indigenous organizational networks have time to ponder what CDC should host pre-construction planning meetings. Further, joint collaborations appear to be plagued with the politics of public accommodation and private animosity. Many of the African - American CDCs engaged in joint collaborations seem overly preoccupied with whether or not their “partner” is getting more from public and private sources than they are.

Again, this research indicates that the motivation behind many of these joint - ventures is profit not the welfare of community residents. Some believe that the economic

\(^{34}\)Boston Interview.
motivation of CDCs helps fuel the underlying intra-community tensions in Boston’s Black community development arena.

The CDC is an excellent way to promote the needs of community residents. The problem, however, is that the community gets dropped out of the CDC process; there is a great deal of tension that exists because of this. The community does not trust CDCs, the CDCs do not trust us, we question some of the motives and intentions of the CDCs because they fall in the mode of traditional developers.35

The belief that some African-American CDCs mirror traditional development policies is also substantiated by claims of an African-American CDC Black middle class policy centered domain.

CDCs have helped to maintain the Black middle-class in Boston. Look at who they employee, who buys -- not rents -- buys their homes. Right now it is hip to be a Black homeowner, a member of the Black community. CDCs are aggressively supporting middle class Black interests. I am not convinced that CDCs are unaware of the serious class chasms they are advancing.36

One community organizer believes that the present undermining of a substantive Black community development movement in Boston extends beyond African-American CDCs to the political and governmental environment:

The government teases people. It gives us a little here, a little there and it is never enough. We have not overcome yet. It is all an illusion! It is a tool to make you think you are equal but you really are not. Living in this community is a day to day struggle; the city government has the revenue to send us some of the excise taxes to fix things up but they have not. It is all about money ... all about keeping the people down.37

35Boston Interview.

36Boston Interview.

37Boston Interview.
Similar to Parenti's findings in Newark, New Jersey, Blacks in Boston are subject to systematic political manipulation and symbolic policy controls. The City of Boston operates under the assumption of unilateral Black community development. Specifically, the city's economic stakeholders assume that hiring/consulting Black developers, cabinet executives, and community leaders somehow meet the needs of the entire Black community. Adolph Reed contends that "neo-pluralist" assumptions of "the system working well for everyone" fails to dissect the myriad competing political agendas within the Black community.38 The assumption of a uniform blanket of Black interests flies in the face of the intra-community conflicts that have consumed Black community development in Boston.

Economic Development Strategies: The Future of African-American CDC Led Community Development in Boston

The difficulty of some African-American CDCs in attracting community development funds is directly related to the absence of and/or the weak nature of Black political incorporation and empowerment in Boston. The lack of substantive Black political mobilization and power, coupled with the decline of key indigenous Black community organizations, has assisted in the development of an urban regime in Boston that systematically relegates Black faces and interests to the bottom of the decision making and public policy agenda. The inability the Black community to coalesce around a common political and policy agenda further exacerbates the politics of racial exclusion in the city. Boston's web of economic stakeholders has been able to capitalize on

38 Adolph Reed Jr., 1988.
African-American discord by developing their own community development agendas. Often, the community development campaigns of the city’s economic stakeholders are in direct competition and contrast to the overall needs of the Black community. The tendency for the city of Boston to play up to its “corporate center” interests has usually left the Black community with the short end of the development stick.

In spite of these seemingly insurmountable funding constraints, several African-American CDCs have been able to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. As the two previous chapters have indicated, African-American CDCs with strong organizational capacity — Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Dorchester Bay, Madison Park, and New Vision — have been most effective in developing linkage with outside (federal, state, and private) funding entities. One of the most powerful funding linkages African-American CDCs have fostered is with the federal government. Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Dorchester Bay, and Madison Park have used Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funds to advance their community development agendas. Most notably, Madison Park has been the recipient of a highly competitive, HUD Drug Elimination grant totaling $100,000 dollars. The CDC has used funds from this three year grant to sponsor a youth outreach / drug awareness after-school program. One of the fundamental benefits of African-American CDCs using federal government money is that they are less dependent on, and therefore beholden to, Boston City Government and its strong political and economic stakeholders. Still, African-American CDC dependency on federal government community development resources also is problematic.
African - American CDCs are compelled to approach the federal funding process with caution because these CDCs may be left in a funding vacuum. The experience of New Vision CDC illustrates this point. If the CDC had not quickly responded to HUD’s termination of it’s Drug Elimination grant by soliciting local banks and funding entities, the CDCs “Girls First” teen-age mentoring program would have been discontinued. The fact that New Vision was able to quickly respond is reflective of the CDC’s strong organizational capacity. The CDC’s strong economic capacity was in jeopardy of being reduced. African - American CDCs need to be careful not to become dependent on outside community development resources.

African - American CDCs have also used state government resources to promote Black community development in Boston. Both Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Dorchester Bay CDC have used “Brownsfield” funds to develop community - based, economic ventures. Dudley Street used the $300,000 Brownsfield grant to assist in the development of the CDCs’ “Urban Greenhouse” project. African - American CDCs using state funds also run the risk of becoming dependent of these seemingly “sure thing” funding resources. Long - term dependency on state and federal government resources is not realistic given the nature of year to year budgetary constraints. State and federal Black community development also tend to be biased in favor of African - American CDCs with strong economic capacity. African - American CDCs with moderate and / or weak organizational and economic capacity have not been privy to state and government community development resources. Constraints on the process of community funding emanating from the interaction of African - American CDCs and state and local agencies illuminate in a poignant way the range of limitations inherent in the struggle for
community development through leadership resources of community based CDCs. As long as African - American CDC led community development is dependent on outside forces, Black interests in Boston are at risk of being overlooked, ignored, or mobilized out of the decision making and public policy processes.

If African - American CDCs are going to effectively promote Black community development in Boston, they must move beyond the helping handouts of federal and state government assistance and develop autonomous, in-house funding strategies. Several African - American CDCs are in the process of developing profit-maximizing businesses. New Vision CDC, for example, established “In - Touch” global telecommunications to create autonomous community development resources as well as provide employment opportunities for community residents. New Vision is also engaged in a joint - venture with Grove Hall CDC. The city of Boston’s “Main Streets” initiative will produce a one - story strip mall which will house a major retail chain. Both of these business ventures have been projected to increase the financial resources of the CDC. The development by African - American CDCs of varying independent organizational and economic resources is crucial to Black interests moving from subordination to empowerment in Boston. As long as the Black community remains economically and politically weak, African - American interests will continue to be relegated to a sub-par policy position.

What then has been the impact of the funding process on the capacity of African - American CDCs to promote community development? Again, our research makes clear that a number of factors associated with this independent variable have shaped the achievement of community development through the action of African - American CDCs in a multiplicity of critical ways. Consistent with my hypothesis, African - American
CDCs with continuous funding sources are more likely to be active Black community development participants. However, it is important to note that the level of effectiveness of African-American CDCs remains open to debate. The main reason the effectiveness of African-American CDC led community development must be examined further revolves around the fact that the city of Boston has tended to use community development resources to co-opt and control Black community development stakeholders.

Beyond Boston City Government, African-American CDC led community development is also impacted by the financial purse strings of the city’s strong academic, economic, medical, real estate, and political stakeholders. This research indicates that Boston city government and other funding entities have not allocated sufficient, no strings attached, financial resources to support African-American CDC led community development. The absence of a community based or city government funding entity, coupled with philanthropy and foundation reluctance to fund CDCs, has also severely limited the scope of Black community development. More often than not, African-American CDCs focus on procuring development dollars to the detriment of community needs. As was the case with Madison Park CDC, this research indicates that African-American CDCs may not always act in a manner that is beneficial to Black community interests. Economically beholden to outside funding interests, on a whole, African-American CDCs have not been able to step up to the plate to challenge these dominate economic and political forces. The end result of such zero sum positioning is that African-American CDCs in Boston often become another pawn in the community development process led and controlled by the mayor’s office and the downtown business power.
structure. In sum, achievement of the dependent variable, community development, has been greatly inhibited by the features of the funding environment of Boston. African-American CDCs must continue to develop strategies and tactics, including the development of autonomous financial resources, to overcome the top down and highly competitive nature of the funding environment and effectively promote Black community development in Boston.
CHAPTER 6

THE FUTURE OF BLACK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN BOSTON

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Overview

The central focus of this research has been on the role of CDCs in the promotion of community development in Boston's African-American community. Boston has been the site of one of the most vibrant and vigorous community development corporation (CDC) movements in America. This movement has emerged in the wake of the destructive consequences of federal urban renewal programs on the social, economic, and physical status of the African-American community in Boston. War on poverty initiatives introduced by the Johnson administration were not sufficiently constructive in Boston to reverse or moderate the negative impact of urban renewal in the Black community and stimulate the mounting of a grassroots political campaign to elevate Black involvement in local decision making. Principle responsibility for filling the resultant vacuum has been left in the hands of CDCs. This dissertation investigates critical factors impacting on the capacity of CDCs in Boston to promote social, economic, and political development in Boston's African-American community.

The dissertation uses three independent variables to explain the behavioral role of CDCs in the community development process in Boston: the city's political and governmental environment; government led redevelopment policies; and structures and processes of community oriented funding. The underlying theoretical assumption of the dissertation is that a focus on these variables will illuminate external and internal constraints on the operational capacity of CDCs; problems of governmental linkage and intra-community competition and conflict; and present and future prospects for African-American community development and political incorporation. These issues are extremely important in the search for meaning and direction in African-American community development.
politics in Boston. They also constitute important ingredients in the testing of empirical assumptions regarding the linkage between government action and neighborhood development, the organizational capacity of community based organizations, the potential impact of community mobilization on the general policy environment, the impact of private interests on public policy, and preconditions for the formation and maintenance of intra-communal, biracial and multiracial coalitions. These issues have been meticulously examined through the use of qualitative research methods that have included the conducting of interviews with a broad range of respondents in the Boston area and the collection of primary and secondary data from a host of public and private sources. I am convinced that the methods used in this dissertation have effectively captured the broad patterns as well as the subtle nuances of community development politics in Boston’s African - American community. The following sections summarize and analyze the key findings of this research.

The Political and Governmental Environment

One of the most arduous obstacles faced by African - American CDCs engaged in Black community development is the political and governmental environment of Boston. Historically, the political and governmental environment of Boston has been skewed in favor of economic and political elites. The long history of Brahmin and Irish influence in the city reflects such a tendency. It should be noted that the success of the Irish community in Boston was, in part, the result of structures of opportunity made available by demographic shifts.
Boston's Irish community was able to take advantage of expanding political opportunities, indigenous organizational strength, and a shared cognition to press the political system for representation and empowerment.¹

Despite strong community and organizational efforts, African-American political linkages to the political and institutional structures of Boston city government have been limited. For the most part, African-American penetration of the public policy domain has been weak. The weak political and economic incorporation of African-Americans is linked to their subordinate status in the larger political and governmental environment. Three aspects of the city's political and governmental environment that appear to have the most debilitating impact on the promotion of African-American linkage are the centralization of power in the mayor's office, the routine operation of the city bureaucracy, and the co-optation of Black leadership.

My research into the structure of power and governance in Boston suggests that African-American linkage has been limited by the strong mayoral form of government. The reluctance of the mayor's office to share power with and/or provide Black leaders and organizations access to key city administrators has been an effective method of Black policy avoidance and institutional subordination. Mayoral domination of the public policy agenda also contributes to the weak form of Black community access and incorporation in Boston.² African-American CDCs, especially those with strong


organizational capacity, have attempted to reverse weak Black incorporation patterns in the political and governmental environment of Boston City Government by developing direct linkage with the Office of the Mayor and key city administrators. Their efforts have enjoyed mixed success.

Four African-American CDCs — Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Dorchester Bay, Madison Park, and New Vision — have been successful in developing linkage with key figures and institutions in Boston's political and governmental environment. Most notably, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative has used the structure of opportunity created by the Flynn mayoral regime to press the dominate white power structure to redistribute some of the city's political power and developmental resources to the Black community. It must be noted that the success of Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative is the exception and not the rule of Black political incorporation and empowerment in Boston. Some in the Black community development arena contend that the success of DSNI is a direct product of the CDC's organizational alliances with the dominate white power structure. DSNI's organizational alliance with the Riley Foundation is credited with providing the African-American CDC with the legitimacy and credibility necessary for the City of Boston to grant the CDC eminent domain.

Both Madison Park and New Vision CDC have organizational capacity similar to DSNI's but have not been as successful in lobbying Boston city government for comparable community development resources.

The inability of Madison Park and Lena Park CDCs to develop concrete linkage with Boston City Government may be linked to the "racial composition" of these CDCs. Some individuals contend that Boston city government officials are less likely to provide
substantive service delivery and develop political linkage with African-American leadership based CDCs. Both Madison Park and New Vision CDC are directed by African-Americans. If such an assertion is true, New Vision may be doubly disadvantaged by the fact that it is regarded as an "African" not African-American constituency based CDC. One other possible explanation for the success of Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative may be the internal organizational structure of the CDC. This research indicates that DSNI appears to be at a greater advantage than Madison Park and New Vision because of its ability to press the city government via community mobilization strategies and tactics. Specifically, DSNI has two full-time community organizers on staff that are responsible for informing as well as organizing the community around critical neighborhood issues and needs. The fact that the city government has experienced the success of these community mobilizations tactics first hand (for example, the "Don’t Dump on Us" campaign) has made it less likely to ignore the community development desires of DSNI.

My research on the centralization of power in the mayor’s office also indicates that city government non-responsiveness is also a by-product of the lack of Black electoral strength and accountability in Boston.

Executive centered leadership in Boston has been a graveyard for effective Black political linkage. The reason for this is not very complicated: Blacks do not have the electoral strength to impact significantly on the mayor’s programmatic agenda. Turnout in mayoral elections in the Black community tends to be far below the community’s electoral potential. Unfortunately, the linkage efforts of African-American CDCs have done little to reverse the overwhelming patterns of racial subordination in the
city's political and governmental environment.¹

Executive centered leadership in Boston also tends to be a graveyard for effective Black political linkage because of the highly symbolic and non-empowering roles of Black mayoral appointments. The strong mayoral control over top administrative appointments has made it difficult for African-American CDCs, on a whole, to develop effective linkage with Black bureaucrats. There are a few CDCs, including Grove Hall (moderate organizational and economic capacity) and Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (strong organizational and economic capacity), who have developed effective linkage with some of the city's Black mayoral appointments. Grove Hall has developed a very positive relationship with Reggie Nunally — the mayoral appointed director of the Boston Empowerment Center. Because of this linkage the CDC has received enterprise zone funding and technical support.

Some members of Boston's Black community contend that the preferred status of Grove Hall is a result of director Nunally's close, personal relationship with members of the CDC. Specifically, prior to being appointed to the Empowerment Center, Mr. Nunally was the executive director of Grove Hall CDC. When asked whether or not the CDC benefits from its prior relationship with Mr. Nunally, both parties emphatically said "No!" Clearly, both entities understand that it is in the best interests of their respective organizations to denounce any "special favors." However, it is interesting that Grove Hall's (moderate organizational and economic capacity) linkage with the Empowerment Center is stronger than New Vision CDC (strong organizational and economic capacity).

My time spent in Boston leads me to believe that in spite of what Mr. Nunnally and Grove Hall NDC claim, some type of behind the scenes favoritism explains the prominence of the CDC within the empowerment zone.

African-American CDCs have attempted to overcome the constraints of the political and governmental environment of Boston by developing linkage with city government departments. The Black community development efforts of these service organizations have been responsible for improved police and fire responsiveness as well as more consistent city service trash removal. Because Boston city government has not been an effective vehicle for Black policy delivery, African-American CDCs have been compelled to step in and fill this critical void in the delivery process. Although linkage with city government departments has improved community relations with these city departments (i.e., African-American CDC executive directors tend to view these as positive gains), faster fire and police responsiveness have not produced substantial change in the quality and quantity of benefits distributed by city government to the Black community. African-American CDCs have been able to create a police presence in their service areas. However, they have not been able to effectively eliminate the detrimental affects of crime, drug abuse, youth loitering, and prostitution in these same service areas. The real measure of African-American CDC led community development is determined by its ability to develop linkage with Boston City Government and other key members of the political and governmental environment that develop public policy measures to wipe out the societal ills plaguing Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan. It must be noted that these societal ills are present throughout various racial and ethnic communities in the city.
However, my observations indicate a more pronounced effect in Boston's Black communities. As such, it is incumbent upon African-American CDCs to press Boston City Government to address this critical Black community development concern.

Lacking a base of support in the mayor's office or the city bureaucracy, African-American CDCs have attempted to use the city council as an alternative source of political linkage and leverage. Unfortunately, they have found that the city council has not substantially enhanced their role in the policy process. One major reason for this is the under-representation of Black interests on the council. The Boston City Council has two Black members. Further, the dominance of conservative interests on the council has undercut the ability of Black city councillors to promote linkage between African-American CDCs and the city policy process. My research indicates that some of the difficulty experienced by African-American CDCs is the result of the conservative nature of the Boston city council. Under the leadership of James M. Kelly, one of the founding members of the anti-busing organization R.O.A.R. (Restore Our Alienated Rights), Boston City council has tended to overlook, ignore, and dismiss Black legislative proposals on the grounds that they are not relevant to the overall needs and interests of the city.

The highly sophisticated non-decision making tactics of Boston City Council have been effective in stifling the policy articulation and community development agenda of the Black community. Operating within such a constrained policy environment, African-American CDCs have only been able to develop symbolic linkage with Boston city council. New Vision CDC, for example, has developed linkage with Boston's Black elected officials. The CDC's most prominent linkage is its annual "Black Elected
Official Appreciation Day” which celebrates the accomplishments and community commitment of local and state representatives. Although African - American CDC support of Black elected officials is noteworthy, it does little to effectively leverage Black interests within the policy domains of the council.

Several African - American CDCs – Dorchester Bay, New Vision, DSNI, Lena Park, and DSNI have gone beyond the local political arena to develop linkage with Black state representatives. These community service organizations have developed the most effective linkage with State Senator Dianne Wilkerson and former State Representative Charlotte Golar Ritchie. The linkage developed with Black state representatives has been instrumental in the distribution of state government community development resources such as Brownsfield grants. The downside of linkage with Black state representatives is that it tends to do very little to reverse the top down, nonempowering relationship between Boston city government and Black community development stakeholders. As one respondent commented:

Our representatives have adopted an “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” mentality. They have become professional politicians, abandoning our activist legacy of change. Black leaders are not loyal to the people anymore. They are loyal to their title, position and prestige in city hall or in the state house.4

The inability of state level elected officials to influence long standing city level non decision making, severely limits the capacity of African - American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. Further, the low numeric representation of African - Americans in Boston City Government, coupled with low

4Boston Interview.
Black voter registration and turnout, reinforces city wide perceptions of the ineffectual nature of Black group mobilization, incorporation, and empowerment strategies and tactics.

Some of my own experiences in Boston echo these sentiments. I found certain state and local Black politicians as well as one African-American CDC executive director unable to answer questions about the nature of Black community development in their service areas. Although these men and women could talk about what they plan to do, they were ineffective in speaking about what the Black community as a whole has done to counteract mayoral, city government, philanthropic, and private institution Black community development neglect. My research in Boston indicates that one of the main reasons why some African-American leaders are ineffectual is because they are single focused on their own public relations agendas. On several occasions, my initial contact with certain Black Bostonians focused on who they are in the community and more importantly whether or not I knew who they are in the community. One state representative was so self-absorbed that during our interview that she told me that she “does not normally grant interviews to undergraduates without any knowledge of by whom she is being interviewed.” She went on to tell me that in the future “I need to make sure I contact her office manager in advance because this type of last minute stuff will not be tolerated.” Fortunately, I brought along my initial contact letter dated September 14, 1998 to let her know that her December 4, 1998 interview was not last minute.
African-Americans interests have not been incorporated within the political and governmental environment because Black elected officials, community leaders, and community development stakeholders have failed to effectively organize and mobilize the Black community on a consistent basis. Unlike other racial and ethnic communities in Boston, African-Americans have not been able to effectively take advantage of structures of opportunity to press the political and governmental environment for greater levels of political incorporation and empowerment. The controversy surrounding which Black leadership establishment -- civil rights organizations, the Black church, Black elected officials -- will be the “official” voice of the Black community continues to hinder the development of a collective Black agenda in Boston. Black leadership conflicts such as the endorsement of Mayor Menino’s appointed school committee by some Black clergy members significantly undermine the forging of a collective leadership process in Boston’s Black community. More often than not, these strange bedfellows have tended to be to the right of the public policy interests of the Black community. African-American penetration of the political and governmental environment of Boston has also been limited by the intra-community class conflicts in Boston Black community.

The inability and unwillingness of the Black middle class to substantively “give back” to Black community residents has contributed to the increasing discontent of Boston’s Black working class and lower class residents. Boston’s Black middle and upper class tend to engage in symbolic linkage but have few, if any, substantive day to day relationships with Black community residents. As a youth coordinator commented,
"Yeah, they may work here but that is about all they’ve done. At 5pm they are out.”

The disconnect between Boston’s Black elite / middle class and the Black working class / poor is one of the mitigating factors responsible for the lack of unity and cohesion in the community. My research in Boston indicates that both sides of the dividing class line tend to view the other as responsible for the lack of economic and political incorporation and empowerment in the city. Boston’s Black elite and middle class blame the Black working class and poor because of their low levels of electoral participation and voter turnout. Boston’s Black working class and poor blame the “out of touch” nature of the Black elite and middle class for the lack of leadership and Black leveraging power in the city.

African - American linkage in the political and governmental environment of Boston has also been weakened by the move from protest to politics by Boston’s Black leadership establishment. Over the last 35 years, many Black leaders in Boston have abandoned protest and pressure strategies in pursuit of more traditional electoral political strategies. In the process, the Black leadership establishment has alienated its greatest potential ally – the Black underclass. Concrete linkage within the political and economic environment of Boston is also limited by the inability of African - American CDC leaders to develop an all inclusive, multi-faceted, economic, social, and political agenda. Moreover, African - Americans in Boston have not yet developed coalitions with other racial and ethnic minorities with similar incorporation and empowerment agendas.

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5Boston Interview.
The capacity for Black service delivery continues to be undermined by the absence of a strong indigenous umbrella organizational network to press the mayor’s office, city government, Black bureaucrats, and other economic and political stakeholders for benefits to support community development in the Black community. For this reason, African-Americans have been relatively ineffective in penetrating the policy environment of Boston because they are powerless political actors operating in a political environment where clout, influence, and financial resources determine mayoral responsiveness. African-Americans are powerless political actors because they lack an organized political base and have not been able to galvanize a mass base of electoral support. As a result, Black influence tends to revolve around symbolic, “feel good” measures such as New Vision’s Black Elected Official Appreciation Day. Clearly, such linkage measures are necessary and important; the impact of symbolic politics on Black electoral mobilization and group consciousness can not be overlooked. However, sole emphasis on symbolic politics does little to change the subordinate and ineffective posture of the Black community in the legislative process. Moreover, the highly centralized nature of the political and governmental environment is not conducive to the successful promotion of Black community development in Boston.

My hypothesis on the nature of the political and governmental environment outlines the mayoral, City Council, bureaucratic, and Black leadership constraints on African-American CDC led community development in Boston. African-American CDCs must develop effective linkage and political mobilization strategies to overcome the top down nature of the political and governmental environment of Boston.
Government Led Redevelopment Policies

This research also assessed the impact of government led redevelopment policies on the community development capacity of African - American CDCs. We hypothesized that government led redevelopment policies would have an important impact on the resource base and policy alternatives of African - American CDCs. The hypothesis was confirmed by our research. For more than thirty years, the city of Boston has embraced an aggressive, downtown centered, redevelopment agenda that has displaced and gentrified Black interests economically, geographically, and politically. Already disadvantaged by the structural barriers of the political and governmental environment, African - American CDCs are further disadvantaged by the top down and uneven nature of the city’s redevelopment policies. Government led redevelopment such as the Enterprise Zone and the Big Dig operates as a competitive force in the policy making process in the Black community. Moreover, these policies have undermined the capacity of African - American CDCs to initiate and implement development policies in behalf of their constituents. African - American CDCs face a difficult task in that many of the city’s redevelopment policies emanating from the city of Boston are not in concert with the overall empowerment and incorporation needs of the Black community.

The one redevelopment policy that poses the biggest threat to the community development efforts of African - American CDCs is the city’s Enhanced Enterprise Zone. As part of a national government initiative to redevelop and revitalize communities, Boston, in 1995 received more than 90 million dollars to improve its economic and geographic outlook. In theory, enterprise zones represent a pragmatic, hands off approach to development. In practice, however, enterprise zones are plagued with the
same bureaucratic obstructions as other government sponsored community development initiatives. In Boston, the enterprise zone has unevenly distributed redevelopment funds as well as enforced a top down redevelopment agenda. Critics of the enterprise zone point to the Harry Miller project and the new Boston Police Headquarters as examples of the top-down nature of zone funded development in the Black community. It must be noted that the unwillingness of the enterprise zone to consistently confer and collaborate with Black community developers has contributed to tense relations between the zone and Black community residents.

Some African - American CDCs have attempted to overcome the uneven and top down nature of Boston’s redevelopment policies by fostering linkage and development with key enterprise zone administrators. Many of these relationships have produced multi-million dollar community development projects for certain African - American CDCs in Boston. Both Madison Park CDC and Lena Park CDC are engaged in lucrative enterprise zone funded redeveloping projects totaling more than 13 million dollars. Still, some in the Black community development arena charge that Madison Park and Lena Park CDC are nothing more than developmental pawns. Madison Park CDC has been accused of selling out community interests for the developmental needs of its private partners. The criticisms leveled against Madison Park CDC have not been unfounded. Beyond the uneven nature of the partnership, the CDC engaged in an uneven joint - partnership with Northeastern University which provides more student dorms than low - income housing. Leaders of Madison Park have also been criticized for not informing neighborhood residents of the details of the partnership, refusing to back out of the deal, and dismissing community concern about the joint-venture.
As one Madison Park executive commented, "others [African-American CDCs] are jealous of this relationship; they would do the same thing if they were in our shoes. As far as our residents, the majority of them were misinformed to begin with." It is important to note that the majority of the relationships established between African-American CDCs and government led redevelopment agencies/private developers tend to be highly structured, top down, development relationships; African-American CDCs have little developmental autonomy and control. As a result, African-American CDCs, even those with strong organizational capacity, are beholden to the developmental wishes of the city's economic and political stakeholders.

Another government led redevelopment policy that has impacted the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston is the Big Dig. This multi-million dollar artery project has the potential to usurp both Black land and community development capacity in Roxbury and Dorchester. The major reason the Big Dig poses a threat to African-American CDCs is that it expands in the direction of the African-American community. Similar to the I-95 controversies, the Big Dig has the potential to displace and gentrify the Black community. The fact that urban living in Boston is presently popular and attractive makes the prime location of Roxbury a developmental "hot spot" for city government and private developers interested in developing new, trendy neighborhoods. Some suggest that government led redevelopment gentrification is already evidenced in lower Roxbury. Black community development stakeholders point to the astronomically high real estate prices of city

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^Boston Interview.

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government refurbished homes as well as the 1.5 million dollar restoration of the Franklin Park Zoo as indicators of gentrification in the Black community.

African-American community development stakeholders have not been able to effectively fight off the long reach of Boston city government. For example, the operation of the Big Dig has been beyond the control of African-American CDCs because the "deep pockets" of the economic and political supporters of the artery project far outweigh the organizational and economic capacity of African-American CDCs. Further, many of the African-American CDCs that organizationally may have been in a position to challenge the gentrification tactics of Boston City Government tended to be economically dependent on these same city government departments. The only realistic solution African-American CDCs may have to counter the threat of government led redevelopment is to establish some type of resistance organization. Still, the development of an umbrella organization may not be all that effective because some African-American CDCs may not want to upset the long reach of Mayor Menino. The strong mayoral form of government operating in Boston forces African-American CDCs that want to impact Black community development to first develop linkage with Mayor Menino and the Department of Neighborhood Development (DND).

The Department of Neighborhood Development is another government led redevelopment entity that has the potential to severely stifle the community development efforts of African-American CDCs. The neighborhood revitalization component of the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the DND has worked to rebuild and reinvest in some of the city's most decayed areas. Under the leadership of Mayor Menino, the DND has waged an all out effort to revitalize "every community" in Boston. In spite of his efforts,
the “getting the job done” campaign has done little to provide substantive service
delivery to the Black community. For the most part, mayoral commitment to Black
community revitalization has been highly symbolic and superficial. As one respondent
observed:

Do you recall the criticism of 911 being a joke in communities of color? To me, the DND represents a similar joke. The DND has waged a
symbolic campaign that gives an appearance of a commitment to Black community development. If you look beyond all of the hype, you see that
once again the city has tricked the community by using its puppets to champion the cause; just look at the Mayoral photo-ops. The usual
suspects [Chuck Grigsby, Charlotte Golar-Ritchie, Reggie Nunnally, and Dianne Wilkerson] always seem to be close by.7

The DND has undermined African-American CDC led community development
because the city government agency has not been willingly to cooperate with the existing
and on-going efforts of the CDCs in the area. The strong presence of the DND makes it,
not African-American CDCs, appear to be the leading proponent of Black community
development in Roxbury and Dorchester.

The corporate like takeover of the Black community has some individuals
questioning the motives of the DND. Specifically, some wonder whether the strong
interest of the city is reflective of Big Dig-like urban gentrification agendas designed to
displace Black interests geographically and politically.

I thinking it is foolish not to wonder if they [DND] are up to something. C’mon, it would not be the first time the Black community has been
undermined by the “progressive” agenda of Boston’s big wigs. The
difference this time is that we are more hip to the game. The city might
think we are asleep but some of us are watching and waiting for the city to
make a foul move. This time we are not going to go down without a fight.
If nothing else, we will make people think twice before they try to

7Boston Interview.
Community wide group mobilization strategies may be the only effective tactics Black community stakeholders have to counteract the well financed, top down neighborhood development agenda of the Department of Neighborhood Development. The fact that the DND is financed by both the city of Boston and the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development puts it in a developmental league unmatched by any of the African-American CDCs examined in this research. As a result, the city government is able to dictate the neighborhood development agenda of both the DND and the African-American CDCs in the area. The lack of developmental autonomy and creativity produced by the monopolistic control of the Department of Neighborhood Development makes African-American CDC led community development vulnerable to the city's most influential economic and political stakeholders.

Clearly, the unspoken expectation of African-American CDCs and community stakeholders that they will comply with the wishes of the city's most influential economic and political stakeholders places them in a peculiar conundrum; African-American CDCs are beholden to both the community development desires of the city government and neighborhood residents. The Madison Park community development partnership with Northeastern University (partly funded through city of Boston redevelopment funds) is reflective of the peculiar situation the absence of autonomous community development resources places African-American CDCs in. In this instance, Madison Park acquiesced to the economic influence of Northeastern University.

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8Boston Interview.
Funding Constraints

African - American CDC led community development is also impacted by the nature of the funding process in Boston. The fact that African - American CDCs operate in a policy environment that is beholden to many economic and political stakeholders places limits on their ability to lobby key city government departments and financial institutions for community redevelopment resources. In addition to the impact of external funding constraints, the capacity of African - American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development is limited by internal funding constraints including the lack of autonomous financial resources, intra community resource competition, and the absence of indigenous organizational networks to counteract city government fostered Black community conflicts.

One of the largest external funding constraints faced by African - American CDCs is the structure of the city of Boston’s funding process. The highly centralized, top-down nature of the city budgetary process has not been favorable to Black interests. The one city government cabinet department directly responsible for community development -- the Office of Economic Development -- received the lowest amount of FY '98 city government allocation. Weak Black city government representation and co-optation also contribute to the paltry funding of African - American CDCs. The absence of community development allies in city government does little to reduce the racial funding biases that appear to determine mayoral support of Black community development initiatives. This absence is directly linked to the position of the Black community in the electoral process. The mayor has been able to effectively redistribute Black community redevelopment funds in whatever manner his administration deemed appropriate because
he has not been dependent on Black votes for re-election. The fact that Blacks in Boston turnout far below their electoral potential has done little to develop and / or maintain a system of electoral accountability. In the absence of some type of checks and balance system, the Black community continues to be victimized by the absence of consultation and policy linkage. Thus, this research illuminates the fact that African - American CDCs in Boston fundamentally operate in a political and governmental environment that largely provides symbolic reassurance rather than substantive goods. In this context, it should be underscored that the structure of influence is almost entirely unidirectional rather than bidirectional. This means that while the Black community is compelled to respond to initiatives flowing from the top down, it is rarely able to significantly influence the policy process from the bottom up.9

Black community development in Boston is also limited by the city government's highly symbolic, top down community revitalization campaign. For example, the Department of Neighborhood Development's "Main Streets" initiative represents a highly symbolic effort to provide facade ( exterior building fix - ups ) improvements to areas of Roxbury that have been damaged since the riots in the late 1960s. Clearly, the facade improvements are necessary. Still, it seems quite difficult to believe that it has taken the city of Boston more than 25 years to realize that certain areas were in need of city government assistance. Facade improvements do little to redirect and redistribute substantive governmental resources and public policy initiatives to the Black community. Some of the city government non-decision making experienced by Black community

residents is a direct result of the abandonment of insurgency politics. The move from protest to traditional forms of electoral politics in Boston’s Black community has left a leadership and group mobilization vacuum. Without viable community representatives lobbying on behalf on Black interests, Boston city government is able to circumvent the development of a Black agenda.

The dilemma the Black community faces is that individuals who would be willing to take on this vital interventionist role would not probably qualify (from the mayor’s perspective) for appointment, and, if appointed, would be removed, like Doris Bunte, because they were deemed not to be loyal to members of the mayor’s team.\textsuperscript{10}

More recently, the forced resignation of Boston School superintendent Lois Harrison-Jones reflects the mayor’s low tolerance level for community oriented Black leaders.

The capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development has also been impacted by the unwillingness of outside funding entities such as the banking community to substantially fund Black community development efforts. Several of the African-American CDC executive directors interviewed spoke of the difficulties encountered trying to convince outside funding entities of their “worthiness” and credibility. As one executive director commented:

\begin{quote}
We are looked at differently because of the perception of some in the financial industry that Black CDCs lack the business and investment acumen necessary to let money make money. I do not dispute the fact that some CDCs have mishandled resources but I do challenge those in the community who use this as an excuse not to fund other CDCs. It makes no sense to me that certain “affluent” CDCs get money without even trying while others of us are constantly having to beg for pennies.\textsuperscript{11}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{11}Boston Interview.
There are some in the Black community development arena who believe that the unwillingness of funding entities to commit to African-American CDC led community development has more to do with race than worthiness and credibility. Black community development stakeholders point to the collapse and waning influence of traditional civil rights organizations such as Freedom House and The NAACP (both organizations reflect a long legacy of African-American executive leadership) as possible reasons why certain funding entities are hesitant to reinvest in Boston's Black community.

Additionally, the state Attorney General audit and subsequent bankruptcy filing of Lena Park CDC adds to the dark cloud hovering over the strained funding linkage of African-American CDCs in Boston. The growing perception in the dominate white power structure may be that Black leaders in Boston are irresponsible with funds; thus they may be no longer willing to throw good money out the window. Some in the Black community believe that the funding environment of Boston is racially biased. As one respondent commented, "I really do not care what you have been told because history has shown that race determines just about everything in this city."\(^\text{12}\) Given the long history of racial antipathy towards Blacks in Boston, comments such as these do not appear to be far out of line.

Interestingly, African-American CDCs with White executive directors have a different take on the funding situation. White executive directors tend to believe that CDCs with skills are able to leverage themselves within the proper funding entities. While the pluralistic notions of these directors sound good in theory, the funding

\(^{12}\) Boston Interview.
experience of the majority of the African-American CDCs examined in the research detail difference practices. African-American CDCs in Boston, even those with strong organizational capacity, have been unable to consistently solicit on-going, long term financial resources from funding entities.

The waning financial support of foundations and other philanthropic organizations also contributes to the tense funding situations of some African-American CDCs in the city. My research in Boston indicates that one of the reasons why foundations have reduced their community development contributions is because of the perception that the Black communities' needs have been met by the city of Boston, the federal government, and community service organizations. During an informal interview with a State Street Bank executive, these sentiments were confirmed. “It's not always clear to us what our role should be or if our support is needed ... especially given what mayor Menino is doing in many of those communities.” In addition to some of the misinformation in the foundation community, some African-American CDCs are to blame for the limited role of philanthropic and foundation funding support. Some African-American CDCs claim that they are unable to adequately apply for certain types of outside support because they lack the technical assistance (i.e., grant researchers and writers) needed to effectively procure these funds. My research in Boston indicates that African-American CDCs with full-time technical support staff (DSNI and Dorchester Bay) have fared well in soliciting outside philanthropic and foundation funds.

In spite of the success of these two CDCs, the influx of African-American CDC led community development needs have caused some lenders to reject proposals and loan applications that suffer from community development replication. It appears that
traditional funding solicitation practices (i.e., grant proposals and traditional loan applications) have become obsolete in the eyes of many funding entities. Thus, many funding entities are no longer willing to fund duplicate projects in the same service area.

In an effort to reduce the potential threat of funding rejection, some African-American CDCs, including New Vision, Grove Hall, and Dorchester Bay, have engaged in joint-ventures and partnerships. It must be noted that such partnerships are very few in number. African-American CDCs have been reluctant to engage in joint partnerships with each other for fear of losing name recognition, developmental autonomy, and city government resources. As one Boston community resident commented,

> CDCs have become so turf consciousness that at times they have engaged in some real questionable attacks on each other. Some of these [CDC] directors take every thing so personal that they refuse to put ego aside for the good of the community. There is no need for outside forces to make us look bad because left to our own devices, we have done a pretty good job ourselves.\(^{13}\)

It must be noted that African-American and Latino CDCs have been hesitant to join forces. This fact is reflective of the undergirding political and governmental environment in Boston which has pitted these community organizations against each other for city government economic and political resources.

African-American and Latino CDCs partnerships are limited by intra-community funding competition and turf wars. This research indicates that the funding competition and subsequent turf wars are the result of overlapping community development and service areas. The fact that certain areas of Roxbury and Dorchester are saturated with African-American and Latino CDCs with very similar missions and

\(^{13}\) Boston Interview.

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purposes makes it difficult to distinguish the community development work of these very different constituency-based CDCs. Unable to make clear distinctions, some funding entities have refused to sponsor redevelopment projects on the grounds that CDCs in the area are engaged in similar efforts. Although some African-American and Latino CDCs have developed partnerships through the assistance of the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative and Nuestra Comunidad are engaged in a 150 unit rehab project), this research indicates that the absence of a citywide, indigenous umbrella CDC organization limits the likelihood of widespread multi-ethnic collaborative partnerships. The unfortunate reality is that many of these minority based CDCs are fighting the wrong enemy. My experience in Boston has shown that the political and governmental environment, government led redevelopment, and the absence of community development funds, not African-American and Latino CDCs, are responsible for the ineffectiveness of Black community development in Boston.

African-American CDCs have attempted to mount fight back strategies by establishing autonomous businesses and promoting direct linkage with state and federal government agencies. These strategies are intended to by-pass city agencies, and avoid the constraints on program distribution posed by the highly centralized and racially biased funding process operating at the city level. New Vision CDC, for example, launched its global telecommunications network this past October to generate both internal organizational resources as well as community employment opportunities. “In-Touch” has received a great deal of community-wide support and it is slated to do well. As one Boston city resident commented:
In-touch [Global Communications Network] has great potential because it has community-wide support. It provides a community-centered employment bank which enables those without transportation to gain employment. The other positive of In-touch is that New Vision did not go beyond the realistic resources of the community—they have created a business that can is compatible with the skill and training capacity of community residents.\textsuperscript{14}

Clearly, "In-Touch" represents an innovative approach to overcoming financial dependency on outside sources. This research indicates that similar autonomous funding efforts are necessary if African-American CDCs are to gain political and economic voice in the political and economic environment of Boston. The tendency of Boston's economic and political elites to overlook Black interests makes the development of autonomous financial resources critical to the long term success and viability of Black community development in Boston.

One major benefit of autonomous financial resources is its capacity to move African-American CDCs beyond the constraints imposed by key economic and political actors in the political and governmental environment. As one CDC executive director commented:

We recognize that we need independent resources and are in the process of developing a realistic, long term financial plan. Right now, our hands are somewhat tied because the community does not provide us with funds sufficient enough to allow us to move away from the political nature of the funding process. So what can we really do? It can be frustrating. One the one hand, we are attacked by the community for not doing enough. On the other hand, when we attempt to forge economic partnerships and linkage so that we can get the funds necessary to do some things, we are criticized and called sell-outs.

\textsuperscript{14}Boston Interview.
A few CDCs have been able to solicit banking and philanthropic funds sufficient enough to engage in multi-faceted community redevelopment and revitalization projects. Specifically, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative has been able to effectively lobby city, state, federal, and private bodies for developmental resources. As one Dudley community organizer commented:

We have been lucky. The majority of our projects have been able to get off the ground because early on we developed an aggressive funding approach. We recognized that this was tough business [community development] so we were forced to put our best foot forward and show people what we could really do. Our successes with the “Don’t Dump on Us” campaign and other community organizing events showed our skeptics that we were responsible and could get things done.\(^{15}\)

The success of Dudley Street does not reflect the overall financial difficulties faced by the majority of the African-American CDCs examined in this research.

There are several long standing African-American CDCs in Boston that have not been able to effectively lobby funding entities at all. Some of these CDCs, for example Roxbury Action Program, were once completely funded by outside philanthropic entities. During its early years of community redevelopment and Black community empowerment, Roxbury Action Program received a $92,000 dollar no-strings grant from the American Friends Service Committee. At present, Roxbury Action Program is barely functioning. Operating on a shoe string budget dependent on property management revenues, Roxbury Action Program has not been able to sustain the community activism and development that marked its founding. Several factors have contributed to the weak influence of Roxbury Action Program. First, the militant, pro-Black community

\(^{15}\)Boston Interview.
development agenda of the CDC has tended to be out of line with the more subtle, integrationalist approach of Boston’s downtown establishment and Black middle-class. Secondly, Roxbury Action Program has suffered from internal constraints including financial mismanagement, consistent service delivery, and the lack of innovative, charismatic leadership. As one Boston city resident commented, “somewhere along the line Lloyd [King, executive director of Roxbury Action Program] lost his drive. I guess the brother just stopped getting hungry.” Although Mr. King is in the process of developing a long term plan of action, at present, the financial difficulties of the CDC has caused it to become relatively inactive.

Clearly, the capacity of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston is impacted by a myriad of funding constraints. The extent to which African-American CDCs continue to develop linkage with state, federal, and private funding bodies to circumvent these constraints is essential to the promotion of Black interests from subordination to empowerment in the political and economic environment of Boston.

Conclusion

This dissertation analyzes the nature of community development in Boston and the role of African-American CDCs in the process. My research indicates that African-American CDCs have had a limited impact on the community development process because the structure of Boston’s development process is not amenable to Black interests.

It must be noted that this research is a first attempt to illuminate the unique

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16 Boston Interview.
developmental situation of Boston. With the long history of negative race relations, pro-growth downtown development tendencies, and the strong mayoral form of government in the city, Boston provides an interesting backdrop of the potential for grassroots, neighborhood centered redevelopment. My research on Black community development can be used as a springboard for further analysis on the nature of urban redevelopment in the city.

Although my research could have been strengthened by the inclusion of key "missing data", specifically I was unable to obtain a personal interview with mayor Thomas Menino, I believe that my findings as well as my insights on the future of Black community development in Boston have not been compromised. I believe my survey instrument did a good job of garnering perspectives on Boston’s mayoral leadership and redevelopment agenda. Clearly, future researchers should be sure to include the most important public policy figure, the mayor, in their analysis. Future researchers may also want to spend more time in other racial / white ethnic communities in the city to assess whether or not the redevelopment trends of the city are race based, class based, or both. In spite of these research shortcomings, my research on the nature of Black community development in Boston produced some interesting results.

African - Americans CDCs were designed to fill in the void of service delivery left by the failure of Johnson administration War on Poverty efforts. However, the inability of these community service brokers to initiate public policy as well as leverage themselves within key economic and political decision making arenas has severely limited Black community development. This research indicates that one of the fundamental obstacles to Black community development in Boston has been the absence
of concrete political linkage. Political linkage can be defined as the strategies and tactics used by politically and economically subordinate groups to gain access and influence in the dominate power structure. As William E. Nelson, Jr contends:

The concept of political linkage is one that seeks to illuminate the extent to which racial minorities are able, over time, to promote political incorporation and empowerment by increasing their ability to effectively influence the making of governmental decisions affecting their well being in society.17

In Boston, Black political linkage appears to be impacted by the structurally subordinate and weak economic and political resources of African-Americans.18 Additionally, the strong mayoral form of government, the routine operation of the city bureaucracy, the co-optation of Black leadership by dominant white forces in city government, government led redevelopment, uneven redevelopment partnerships, the reduction of federal, state, and local redevelopment funds, funding competition, and the absence of redevelopment funds contribute to the ineffectual nature of Black community development in Boston.

Unable to effectively mobilize an indigenous constituency base, African-Americans in Boston have failed to take advantage of structures of opportunity resulting from expanding political opportunities and demographic shifts in the community. Further, this research indicates that the long legacy of Brahmin and Irish influence in Boston city politics has contributed to the subordinate status and relatively weak nature


of Black incorporation and empowerment. The absence of a clearly articulated, well organized, indigenous Black umbrella organization has further contributed to the ineffectual nature of Black community development in Boston. African-American interests in Boston suffer from policy neglect, non decision-making, and mobilization of bias.

Consistent with the findings of Arvis Vidal, my research indicates that the success of African-American CDC led community development is dependent on three types of assistance – funding, technical assistance, and political support. Vidal contends that the ability of CDCs to fulfill internal organization and larger community needs are best met when this three prong support structure is in place. She writes, “when the support system is at its best, these key elements are designed and coordinated into programs that meet the particular needs of CDCs and their communities.” 19 My research on the community development efforts of African-American CDCs clearly details how the absence of funding, technical assistance, and political support all contribute to the relatively weak bargaining and leveraging power of African-American CDCs in the city. My research on the impact of CDCs in the community development process goes beyond Vidal in that it considers the impact of government led redevelopment and the impact such development has on the ability of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development. My research clearly indicates how government led redevelopment negatively impacts Black community development by creating a

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competitive developmental environment wherein the majority of African-American CDCs, even those with strong economic and organizational capacity, are unable to counteract the deep pockets of the city-led redevelopment emanating from the Department of Neighborhood Development, the Boston Enhanced Enterprise Zone, the Boston Housing Authority, and the Big Dig.

My research also details the impact of the absence of strong political, economic, and technical support networks. The lack of these support networks significantly reduces the ability of African-American CDCs to effectively promote Black community development in Boston. Moreover, the overall strength and vitality of Black political incorporation and empowerment is weakened by the absence of these critical community development components. As a result, African-American CDCs have been relegated to the bottom of the public policy and decision-making arenas of Boston.

My research on Black community development in Boston underscores the necessity of the formation of autonomous, pro-active, indigenous community organizations which actively seek to represent the interests and needs of the entire Black community. The interests of all Black community residents -- the Black elite, middle-class, and underclass -- must be represented and given voice. It must be noted that the future of Black economic and political incorporation and empowerment is dependent on the ability of African-American community development stakeholders to penetrate the racially biased, politically charged, and economically influenced environment of Boston City Government. Further, my research contends that the success of African-American CDC-led community development is contingent on the ability of Black community development stakeholders to resolve and/or at least minimize the internal conflicts
within the Black community. African-Americans CDCs in Boston can not afford to allow different policy agendas, organizational tactics, and financial resources to stifle the future of Black community development in Boston. As Nelson contends:

The culture of competition must be replaced by the culture of unity. Conflicts over funding and policy agendas are antithetical to the achievement of the primordial goal of incorporation and empowerment. Too much energy has been expended and too many lives have been lost in the effort to bring Africans in the Black Atlantic to the doorstep of liberation to have important political opportunities shattered because of internal disagreements.\(^{20}\)

The future of Black community development in Boston is also dependent on the ability of Black community development stakeholders to develop economic and political entities similar to the “organizational centers of the 1960s protest movement.” African-American CDCs must development organizational alliances with each other that force the city government to recognize their economic and political acumen. As Nelson contends,

Strong, committed, independent, well financed non-profit organizations must continue because the service needs of the Black community are mounting. Cities in the United States and Europe are becoming the home of high cost Black citizens whose human needs are not being fully satisfied by the public sector. Black communities cannot afford to farm the problems of their citizens out to other communities. They must find a way to give their citizens the benefits that they need through their own unimpeachable resource networks.\(^{21}\)

African-American community development stakeholders can no longer allow the funding cutback tactics and divide and conquer strategies of Boston City Government to divide the Black agenda. African-American CDCs in Boston must organize to


\(^{21}\) William E. Nelson, Chapter 11, p. 21.
counteract the potentially disastrous effects welfare reform, the end of rent control, and
gentrification in the Black community. Otherwise, the Black community leadership
vacuum left by the economic decline of Black social service and civil rights
organizations including Freedom House, the NAACP, and the Urban League will
continue to decrease the significance of Black interests in Boston.

The ability of African-American CDCs to overcome the constraints of the
political and governmental environment, government-led redevelopment, and community
oriented funding and effectively promote Black community development is critical to the
formation of concrete political linkage as well as the incorporation and empowerment of
Black interests in Boston. Black community development stakeholders, specifically
African-American CDCs, must work to develop an economically strong and politically
independent Black agenda to counteract the non-empowering nature of Boston city
government and transform the present state of Black policy subordination in Boston.


Barbara Ferman, *Challenging the Growth Machine: Neighborhood Politics in Chicago and Pittsburgh* (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1995).


Doug McAdams, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930 -
1970 (University of Chicago Press, 1982).


Alan Twelvetrees, *Organizing for Neighbourhood Development: A Comparative Study*


WWW.DSNI.ORG.


City of Boston Fiscal Year 1998 Annual Report.


Greater Boston Real Estate Board 1997 Statement of Purpose.
APPENDIX A
Interview Questions

Black Community Development

1. Describe the nature of community development in Boston. What role, if any, has your organization played?

2. From your point of view, what have been the key elements that have gone into the community development process in Boston?

3. What impact, if any, has your CDC had on Black community development as it relates to:
   a) the structure of service delivery to the community?
   b) flow of economic and / or political benefits to the community?
   c) responsiveness of local gov’t to the needs of the Black community?
   d) access to federal, state, local and private funds for community development?
   e) redistribution of major benefits such as housing, educational / social services to the Black community?

4. How would you compare your impact in the area of Black community development with other CDCs of larger or equal size? What obstacles have limited your development?

5. What is your assessment of the key contributions being made to the process of Black community development by:
   a) your CDC
   b) other CDCs
   c) federal/ state / local gov’t
   d) private corporations
   e) Black churches / community groups
   f) gov’t led re-development programs

6. What factors do you consider to be the most critical to the success and / or failure of your CDC as it relates to Black community development for the area your serve?
7. How does your CDC measure its success and/or failure in the area of Black community development (i.e., do you compare yourself to):
   a) other CDCs
   b) competing community organizations in the area
   c) enterprise/empowerment zones in the area
   d) Black churches in the area

8. How would things be different in this community if your CDC didn’t exist?

**Balance of Funding**

1. Describe the nature of your organizational budget. Into what categories is your budget divided?

2. What is the total dollar amount of your budget? *Is this information public?*
   In terms of dollar amounts and percentages, how is your budget broken down?
   What percentage comes from:
   a) federal government
   b) state government
   c) city/county government
   d) private resources
   e) other sources

3. How have these figures and/or the funding process changed in the past few years?

4. In your estimation, are these financial resources sufficient to satisfy the objectives of your programmatic mission of community development? If not, what are the shortfalls?
   a) what steps are you taking to fill the gap between needs and resources?

5. How have the kind and level of funding you've receive impact your CDC’s contribution to Black community development?
   *Do you perceive funding to be a major obstacle for your CDC? Why/Why not?*

6. Does your funding situation differ from other CDCs in Boston? If so, in what ways?
   How can you account for the difference?
7. What types of community development projects has your CDC been able to accomplish with existing funding?

   a) Which community development projects have been limited because of a lack of sufficient funding?
   b) What steps have taken to overcome present financial constraints in your CDCs community development efforts in this project area?

8. In your opinion, what are the primary obstacles to fund raising?

9. If your CDC had unlimited funds to develop community outreach programs, what programs would you adopt?

**Political and Governmental Environment**

1. How well have Blacks been able to fashion effective links to the city council and the mayor's office?

2. What is the nature of the relationship between your organization and the:
   
   a) mayor's office
   b) city council
   c) BRA
   d) Boston Empowerment Center
   e) major political parties
   f) business interests
   g) civil rights groups

3. Describe the nature of the city government. Is it supportive of community development efforts? If so, what type of community development does it favor?

4. Describe the strategies of Boston's business community in its efforts to influence policy with the city government?
   What other organizations (Black churches, other CDCs, grassroots) been able to influence key areas of city government (i.e., the mayor's office, city council, etc.)?

5. How have the activities of these other organizations impacted your ability to develop effective community development projects in the city?
6. Has your CDC been able to establish ongoing, viable relationships with the city government, the business community, Black churches/leadership organizations, other CDCs, etc.? Please specify.

7. In general, how would you describe the political and socio-economic climate of Boston? Is it geared toward a certain group of interests (grassroots, business, private development corporations).

**Government Led Redevelopment Programs**

1. Have city policies promotes gentrification, redlining, and/or overall neighborhood displacement for Black residents in Boston?

2. Comment specifically on the ongoing functional and political relationship between the Boston enterprise/empowerment zone program.

3. In your opinion, have these relationships enhanced or stifled the capacity of your CDC to promote community development in the Black community?

4. What role have Black CDCs played in the development of enterprise zones in Boston? What, if any, continuing linkage do Black CDCs have to this process of community development?

5. Have government led redevelopment programs such as enterprise zones undermined the community development work of Black CDCs? If so, please specify.

6. What other government led policies have impacted the work of your CDC to promote community development?

7. In general, how would you characterize the approach of the city government toward community development?
Wrap - Up Questions

1. Do you see yourself as being a part of a movement or do you see yourself as an independently operating entity in the community development process?

2. In your opinion, are there any advantages or disadvantages associated with viewing your CDC as part of a movement or as a independently operating entity?

3. To what extent are you in competition with other CDCs in Boston? If so, how do you manage this competition?
   Is the nature of Black community development in your area limited because of the competition between your CDC and:
   a) other CDCs
   b) existing neighborhood organizations
   c) enterprise / empowerment zones
   d) Black churches / civil rights organizations
   e) other organizations

4. In your opinion, what has been the primary accomplishment of the CDC movement in Boston?
   a) what issues / factors remain on the unfinished agenda?