Community Cultural Imprints: a Guide to Alter the Space Black Americans Occupy through Culturally Competent Urban Planning

Master Thesis

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By

Chloé Blysse Greene, B.A.

Graduate Program in African American and African Studies and City and Regional Planning

The Ohio State University

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Thesis Committee:

Curtis Austin, Advisor

Kyle Ezell, Advisor

Simone Drake

Hazel Morrow-Jones

Abstract

This thesis examines the extent to which urban planners shared responsibility in creating conditions where black Americans suffered due to discriminatory, unjust state and federal planning policies, and examines the need for increased cooperation between urban planners and the black American urban community. Through an examination of previous planning models, the author indicates how urban planners have failed to address the concerns of marginalized groups, and why an alternative model is needed for urban planning practice. Addressing the need for an alternative model, the author proposes a model based in cultural competency intended to best serve black communities in need of equitable community development. The model includes the establishment of community cultural imprints, and explains the need for black Americans to be engaged in the development of their own communities.

Dedication

For Ramone

Acknowledgements

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

1 John 4:4

This work would not have been possible without my family. They have supported me through difficult times and continue to encourage me when things appear bleak. Thank you to my parents, Socrates and Sandra Greene for instilling in me the power of faith, love and perseverance. Thank you to my sisters, Candace and Caleena Greene who inspire me to be the best version of myself, and my brother, Christopher Davis for showing me the need to be present and fulfilled in life. I would also like to thank my extended family for believing that I can do anything I set out to do. Your support and love is what keeps me going.

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Lastly, thank you to The Ohio State University. The past three years have not been easy, but I have grown in my time here. My life has been enriched by the people I met at this institution and I am certain that I am leaving giving all that I had. I am excited for what is ahead and ready to make my mark in the world. I am not deceived, revolutions do not go backwards, and neither shall I.

Vita

June 2008...Fort Walton Beach High School

May 2012.........B.A. History and African American Studies, University of South Carolina

Fields of Study

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Introduction

Starting in the mid-1950s the federal government focused its attention on interstate highway development. President Eisenhower's military and war experience inspired him to create a road system that allowed for ease of access in daily travel, but also that provided fast evacuation routes in case of attack. As a result of Eisenhower's demands for interstate development, the highway act passed in the mid-1950s and cities across the nation received funds to develop the interstate system. The nature of interstate development in Columbus, Ohio is representative of several cities for various reasons.

The motivation behind highway development in Columbus, like other cities, stemmed from the desire to connect the state's major cities. By 1962, articles in *The Columbus Dispatch* indicated that the Ohio Department of Highways wanted to build Interstate 71 (I-71) to connect Columbus to Cincinnati. The Ohio Department of Highways and the City Planning Commission believed it essential to complete this missing link between two major cities and the federal government also explained that "the Columbus expressway system is a part of the Interstate highway network," and saw it as a critical link to the nation's highway system.[1] To prove how critical the federal

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[1] James Speckman, "City's Expressway System Is Part Of Interstate Network," *The Columbus Dispatch*, May 22, 1962, 1B.

government felt I-71 development to be, it approved $20,550,000 in 1961 for building the interstate with the highest share coming from the federal government.[2]

Like other cities, civil engineers made the decision on Columbus highway design. Concerned primarily with traffic flow, civil engineers often conducted traffic surveys to determine the best design. In Columbus, engineers included the traffic survey in the Bergendoff Report. The report included data that projected traffic volumes out to 1975.[3] With the traffic studies complete, urban planners then decided highway location. Early in the highway development process, it became clear that to build highways as desired, displacement would occur. By May 1962, the state had already displaced several residents. *The Columbus Dispatch* featured an article, "More Families to be Moved," indicating many had been displaced and that highways would continue to cut through residential areas, displacing thousands of families, through farm lands, business locations, over and under existing streets and thoroughfares."[4] By the end of May 1962, approximately 6,000 families had been displaced by interstate highway projects in the city, and resident relocation did not appear to be a legal obligation of the city.[5]

Displacement on this scale became common in cities nationwide. Urban planners worked closely with civil engineers to secure highway development, but often did so at the expense of the community. Urban planners failed to take a hands-on approach in resident relocation, and more importantly did not consider the specific needs of black

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[2] Ibid.
[3] James Speckman, "Master Plan of 1952 Guide to Engineers," *The Columbus Dispatch*, May 21, 1962, 1B.
[4] James Speckman, "More Families to be Moved," *The Columbus Dispatch,* May 23, 1962, 1B.
[5] Ibid.

Americans who worked and lived in these areas when planning for highway development. Planners' failure to fully consider the specific needs of the diverse groups they served became common practice throughout urban planning history, and often resulted in black communities that suffered from neglect and disinvestment. This thesis examines the extent to which urban planners shared responsibility in creating conditions where black Americans suffered due to discriminatory, unjust state and federal planning policies, and examines the need for increased cooperation between urban planners and the black American urban community.

The first chapter discusses the development of urban planning and how urban planners influenced black community development. It highlights the emergence of urban planning as a discipline, and discusses the role urban planners played in racial zoning, discriminatory housing practices, as well as the rise and decline of advocacy and equity planning practice. Through these various initiatives it becomes clear that urban planners shared responsibility in disabling black communities. The second chapter examines black activism in urban America. It involves a brief examination of the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), the black cooperative movement, the National Urban League and planning programs at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). These organizations reveal the ways in which black Americans have exercised agency to secure basic needs.

The third chapter provides an overview of urban planning models and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of each model. Examining the pitfalls of each planning model indicates how urban planners have failed to address the concerns of marginalized

groups, and why an alternative model is needed for urban planning practice. Chapter four is the author's proposal for an alternative urban planning model based in cultural competency intended to best serve black communities in need of equitable community development. It outlines the development of the author's model defined as community cultural imprints, and explains the need for black Americans to be engaged in the development of their own communities.

The aim of this work is to assist in transforming urban planning practice. Communities of color often experience neglect and disinvestment, but black Americans have a unique relationship to oppression that must be acknowledged and properly addressed in the community economic development process. Beyond the professional obligation to create a just society from which all citizens benefit, urban planners must be true to the values they claim to revere and acknowledge that black Americans have suffered as a result of past community development processes that have left their needs unmet. This acknowledgement must then lead to urban planners actively working to correct these historic ills.

Chapter One

Know Your Role: Urban Planning in Black Communities

Urban planning is viewed as a profession that seeks to improve the lives of all residents. However, a close examination of the historical relationships between black Americans and urban planning demonstrates the need for increased cooperation between the two.[6] Once properly contextualized, it becomes clear that historically, urban planners either lacked the understanding required to improve black lives or they simply ignored their needs to benefit others. This chapter underscores the historical role of urban planners in black communities and how their actions contributed to shaping the black urban experience.

Planners are charged with upholding the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct designated in 1959 by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and last revised in October 2009. Section A contains a statement of aspirational principles, Section B contains rules of conduct to which planners are held accountable, Section C contains the procedural provisions, and Section D outlines situations in which planners can be convicted of serious crimes. The clause pertaining to social justice states "we shall

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[6] June Manning Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf, *Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997), 17.

seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration. We shall urge the alteration of policies, institutions, and decisions that oppose such needs." [7] This fundamental objective is included in the section pertaining to aspirational principles. It is no surprise that social justice aims are viewed as aspirational, particularly when one critically analyzes the relationship of urban planning to racial minorities. Although black Americans play a significant role in the history of the American urban experience, in urban planning academic courses, historical reviews of the planning profession are likely to leave out the subject of race or at best mention it sporadically.[8] This haphazard recognition of the black urban experience ensures that urban planners continue to view social justice as aspirational because they lack the proper context that necessitates the need for immediate and concerted attention to expand opportunity to the disadvantaged. The problems faced in American cities today cannot be adequately addressed without recognizing the racial, class, and gender divides perpetuated by a lack of regard for and commitment to equality.

It is critical that urban planning professionals begin to recognize the ways in which the profession has crippled black Americans' efforts to gain access and opportunity. Urban planning scholars June Manning Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf successfully identify what there is to gain from enriching our understanding of this issue

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[7] "American Institute of Certified Planners Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct," American Planning Association, accessed January 18, 2016, https://www.planning.org/ethics/ethicscode.htm.
[8] Thomas and Ritzdorf, *In the Shadows*, 2.

in *Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows*. They argue
that:

> "It is time to expand the use of black urban history as a richer way of understanding
> the rise and development of U.S. cities in general and of U.S. urban planning in
> particular. In fact, one cannot fully understand the history of U.S. urban planning
> without understanding something about the black urban experience, including the
> initiatives of community organizations, activists, planners and politicians on behalf of
> their own communities."[9]

Historically, authorities have denied black Americans access to the planning
process and as a result have disempowered entire communities. The ways in which black
communities have been denied access and examples of this denial are more fully
examined later in the text. The same dynamic has been maintained to this day. As a
result, urban planners share responsibility in the disinvestment and destabilization of
urban black communities. When urban planners fail to hold themselves accountable, they
condone injustices in planning practice that foster inequitable outcomes for
underprivileged populations. Seeking social justice can no longer be viewed as an
aspirational principle if urban planners earnestly desire to transform the urban core
without further isolating black Americans.

Emergence of Urban Planning and Racial Zoning

The urban planning field emerged in the late 1800s at the ideological convergence
of three other fields—social work, public health, and architecture. The first urban

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[9] Thomas and Ritzdorf, *In the Shadows*, 3.

planning conference took place in New York in 1898 and the discourse centered on the best ways to approach the question of city building. While urban planning attracted professionals from these fields, each theorized the planning process in different ways. Architects focused on the built environment of the city, public health professionals concentrated on issues related to infrastructure, and social workers focused on improving the lives of residents.[10] In essence, each had a different approach, but recognized the need for comprehensive planning.

At that conference, and in the years that followed, any one of these early urban planning strains could have taken over as the intellectual focus of the field. However, as urban planning courses surfaced at the university level, these programs emerged primarily in architecture schools or departments. Scholars argue this development emerged in large part due to the first classes in planning being offered through the landscape architecture program at Harvard University. Succeeding programs simply followed suit. However, as urban planning took shape, the earliest plans represent reactions to the evils of the nineteenth century city. [11] Architecture's focus on the built environment provided urban planners with the tools to contain these evils to certain areas.

Many considered the influx of immigrants into the urban core as the primary "evil." After the depression of the 1890s, Europeans, primarily from Eastern and Southern countries, came to the United States. While many immigrants migrated to the

[10] Amanda Erickson, "A Brief History of the Birth of Urban Planning," *The Atlantic City Lab*, August 24, 2012, accessed January 10, 2016, http://www.citylab.com/work/2012/08/brief-history-birth-urban-planning/2365/.
[11] Peter Hall, *Cities of tomorrow: an intellectual history of urban planning and design since 1880* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 7.

United States to escape religious and political persecution, many sought relief from a lack of economic opportunities. As a result, the early 1900s saw millions of new residents flood to American urban environments. While newcomers viewed urban cores as places of opportunity, many of the more established residents viewed newcomers as a threat.

Between 1900-1920, more immigrants moved into the Northeast's urban core hoping to capitalize on employment opportunities. As time progressed, more long-term residents viewed these newcomers as a threat to their physical, economic and social security. In response to these fears, city officials made plans to separate long-term residents from newcomers and others they viewed as "undesirables." With architecture and design backgrounds, planners heavily influenced by a focus on physical space, became the ideal professionals to create opportunities for the marginalized through thoughtful design of the built environment. City officials either missed or ignored this opportunity, and instead used planners to divide the city, creating beautiful spaces at the expense of the poor.[12] A prime example of this activity is the playground movement that emerged in the early 1900s.

Progressives like Jacob Riis visited urban communities and found a lack of space for children to play safely. Seen as a social welfare measure, urban planners studied the European model for play and incorporated urban playgrounds on a large scale. Sociologist, Charles Zueblin notes that urban planners quickly incorporated the European model, explaining that, "In 1890, only one public playground existed in the United States.

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[12] Erickson, "A Brief History of the Birth of Urban Planning."

By 1917, as a result of the playground movement, 481 cities maintained 3,944 playgrounds."[13]

While the playground movement has been presented as a way to establish community, urban playgrounds emerged at the expense of addressing other more important community ills. According to urban studies scholar Benjamin McArthur, cities existed as the center of industry and as a result, "streets were inexpressibly dirty, the number of schools inadequate, sanitary legislation unenforced, and the street lighting bad."[14] Many urban residents celebrated the introduction of urban playgrounds, but when the severity of other urban issues is fully considered, the focus on children's play seems irresponsible. It appears that progressives and urban planners had an ulterior motive in focusing on urban playgrounds. While progressives and planners desired to provide children with safe havens to frolic, playgrounds also offered the chance to institute social reform and control at an early age.

Playground supporters believed that all urban children were in need of socialization, but felt it should be required for immigrant children. Cary Goodman addresses this in his book *Choosing Sides: Playground and Street Life on the Lower East Side*. He explains how reformers, primarily operating on behalf of the upper class, devised a system of organized play and imposed it on Lower East Side youth to destroy immigrant street culture.[15] Some came to see playgrounds as the best means to remove

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[13] Benjamin McArthur, "The Chicago Playground Movement: A Neglected Feature of Social Justice," Social Service Review, no. 3 (1979): 377.
[14] McArthur, "The Chicago Playground Movement," 378.
[15] Cary Goodman, *Choosing Sides: Playground and Street Life on the Lower East Side* (New York: Schocken Books, 1979), 15.

immigrants from the streets while simultaneously indoctrinating immigrant children to adopt American ideals and social norms. Rather than welcoming immigrants, city officials relegated them to slums and ghettos, and incorporated policies like the playground movement to avoid addressing community needs while also forcing assimilation on to those they claimed to be helping.

Throughout the late 1910s, urban planning continued to be used as the means to create separation and exclusivity in American cities, and the view of whom the majority population considered threatening expanded to black Americans. Driven from their homes by unsatisfactory economic opportunities and cruel segregationist laws, many black Americans headed north, where they took advantage of the need for industrial workers that first arose during the World War I. Similar to white urban residents' reactions to immigrants, they viewed black Americans as a threat to their economic security. While officials used various tactics, the most widely used regulatory tool by urban planners became zoning or the regulation of land use. First introduced in Washington DC in 1899, zoning began as height regulations implemented to control the type and intensity of land use. Shortly thereafter in 1908, Los Angeles city fathers passed the nation's first citywide zoning ordinance. Over the next two decades, state legislatures granted cities the power to regulate the height, area, location, and use of buildings in any of their corporation limits.

In 1915, *Hadacheck v. Sebastian* legally established cities' ability to dictate land use. The 1926 landmark case, *Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Corporation* reinforced city officials' power to establish zoning ordinances. In 1922, Euclid, Ohio established a

zoning ordinance that divided the village into districts. Although Ambler Realty

Company owned sixty-eight acres of land and the district layout restricted use of their

land, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of zoning.[16] The Euclid case

established traditional zoning practices that continue to be used today. It also gave city

officials the authority to implement zoning ordinances. Although the original intent of

zoning had been to separate people from institutions that could be considered a nuisance,

it quickly became the primary tool used to create the racial segregation and inequity

currently prevalent in American urban environments.

The primary objective of zoning changed once city officials recognized that

zoning could serve a dual purpose—as a tool for land use regulation and as a method of

social control. According to planning scholar Christopher Silver, zoning offered a way

not only to "exclude incompatible uses from residential areas but also to slow the spread

of slums into better neighborhoods."[17] In other words, zoning became the ideal

mechanism to slow the spread of "incompatible people" into white middle and upper

class neighborhoods. This fact becomes abundantly clear when cities across the country

began to implement racial zoning ordinances.

The city of Baltimore adopted the first racial zoning ordinance in 1910. Moved

through city council and passed into law by Mayor J. Barry Mahool, the Baltimore racial

zoning ordinance outlined the need for the quarantine of black Baltimore residents.

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[16] *Village of Euclid, Ohio v. Ambler Realty Corporation*, 272 U.S. 365 (1926), Accessed January 10, 2016. https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/272/365/case.html.
[17]Christopher Silver, "The Racial Origins of Zoning in American Cities," in *Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows*, ed. June Manning Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997), 24.

According to scholar Garrett Power, Baltimore leadership believed that blacks should be quarantined in isolated slums to "reduce the incidents of civil disturbance, to prevent the spread of communicable disease into nearby white neighborhoods, and to protect property values among the white majority."[18] Other cities took note of Baltimore's tactics to ensure racial segregation, and racial zoning quickly spread, becoming a normative practice in most eastern and southern cities. For example, Richmond, Virginia enacted racial ordinances in 1911 and Atlanta, Georgia adopted a racial zoning law in 1915.

Although racial zoning began as a southern initiative, it quickly spread and became common practice in northern and western cities.[19] The migration of blacks out of the South starting in the 1910s prompted the response. While it is important to recognize that additional factors such as income, real estate practices, and cultural preferences contributed to segregated patterns of American cities, it is equally important to understand that the racial zoning movement launched what became a comprehensive set of public policies to contain black residential expansion.[20] While racial zoning practices did not solely create the poor living and working conditions found in most black communities, it perpetuated these conditions.

Through racial zoning ordinances, cities legally limited the mobility of black Americans, and sanctioned the inclusion of disruptive, incompatible uses in black neighborhoods, undermining the quality of those communities. This practice known as

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[18] Garrett Power, "Apartheid Baltimore Style: The Residential Segregation Ordinance of 1910-1913," *Maryland Law Review* no. 42 (1983): 301.
[19] Blaine A. Brownell, "The Urban South Comes of Age, 1900-1940," in *The City in Southern History*, ed. Blaine Brownell and David R. Goldfield (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1977), p. 138.
[20] Christopher Silver, "The Racial Origins of Zoning in American Cities," 26.

expulsive zoning became common in several black neighborhoods, including those in

Baltimore, Maryland and St. Louis, Missouri. According to urban studies scholar Yale

Rabin, both communities "created alley districts which housed poor black Americans and

placed the districts in industrial districts so as to encourage their displacement by

factories."[21] American Sugar, Glidden Paint, Standard Oil, Procter and Gamble, and

Lever Brothers displaced black Americans when they located their headquarters in

Baltimore. Since black Americans had no alternative housing options outside of this area

and since whites did not experience similar restrictions in the industrial center,

overcrowding in black communities increased. As a result, racial segregation increased.

Despite this activity, the Supreme Court declared racial zoning unconstitutional in

Buchanan v. Warley. In 1917, it ruled unanimously that the denial of the full use of

property from feelings of race hostility constituted inadequate grounds to uphold the

Louisville racial zoning ordinance. Unfortunately, the *Buchanan* decision did not bring

an end to the discriminatory practice. Intent on maintaining segregation, urban planners

began to hide racist policies in master plans, capital improvement programs, and zoning

that urban professionals described as "racially informed" instead of guided by racial

hostility. Through the use of more subtle policies, exclusionary urban planning practices

continued to guide community economic development through the 1960s.

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[21] Yale Rabin, "Expulsive Zoning: The Inequitable Legacy of Euclid," in *Zoning and the American Dream: Promises Still to Keep*, ed. Charles M. Haar and Jerold S. Kayden (Chicago: Planners Press, American Planning Association in association with the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 1989), 138.

With new tools in place, cities ceased to confront head-on legal objections outlined in *Buchanan*. Nevertheless, black Americans remained aware of these tactics to destabilize their communities. As urban planners continued to retain full control over the determinacy of land use, black leaders and citizens became more wary of planning as a practice. In urban communities, beginning in the 1930s, black Americans decidedly began a tradition of openly challenging the ideas of city planners, and instead, proposed black-led, community based solutions (more on this topic in Chapter 2). The legacy of racial zoning and other discriminatory practices carried out by urban planners had a lasting impact on how black Americans perceived future planning initiatives. While city officials succeeded in establishing separate racial worlds in the early 20th century, the 1940s ushered in dramatic changes in the racial and spatial reorganization of American cities. These changes led to greater challenges from black communities who recognized the benefit in communities playing a role in addressing their own community problems.

Racial and Spatial Reorganization: 1940s-1960s

The 1940s proved to be a decade of promise and opportunity for many Americans. After World War II, the federal government provided various opportunities for more Americans to gain access to homeownership. Housing policy emphasized and supported consumer mobility through favorable lending policies and the expansion of the city into the hinterlands, thereby creating suburbs that gave homeowners access to affordable land. For example, in 1933, the government established the Home Owners Loan Corporation to save homeowners facing loss through foreclosure. As a result of protective measures like this, thousands of Americans benefitted from the wealth

generation that homeownership provided. These government policies allowed millions of whites to realize socioeconomic mobility. Unfortunately, these opportunities primarily benefitted white Americans and rarely helped lower and middle class black Americans, especially those seeking greener pastures in regions outside the rural South.

During the 1940s and 1950s, approximately five million black Americans migrated from the South to the urban North and West. Attracted by employment opportunities, large numbers of southern blacks also moved from the rural to the urban South. The promise of employment available in "war industry centers" largely concentrated in the Northeast, Midwest, and Pacific coast states initiated this relocation. Although the urban South possessed few industrial centers, its urban cores still provided more opportunities for economic advancement than rural communities. Furthermore, most black Americans sought the perceived improvement in race relations in urban spaces. With economic and social opportunity in mind, cities themselves served as a massive human magnet pulling black Americans out of the South.[22]

The population surge of black Americans in central cities proved evident in virtually every major city in the United States. Major East coast cities and most cities in the Midwest recorded sharp gains in the black population ranging from 100 percent in Philadelphia to 301 percent in Buffalo and 607 percent in Milwaukee. The West Coast proved even more startling: With a 425 percent increase, Los Angeles saw slow growth compared to Seattle (592 percent), San Diego (721 percent), Oakland (882 percent) and

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[22] Raymond A. Mohl, "The Second Ghetto and the 'Infiltration Theory' in Urban Real Estate, 1940-60," in *Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows*, ed. June Manning Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997), 61.

San Francisco (1,425 percent).[23] As a result of these significant gains, the American

metropolitan population more than doubled between 1940 and 1960, from 63 million to

133 million urban residents.[24]

   At the same time, millions of white Americans emptied out of central cities to the

suburban fringe, leading to a surge in metropolitan population growth, making the period

between 1940 and 1960 one of the most transformative structural and demographic

changes in American history. Unsurprisingly, whites did not welcome the heightened

presence of black Americans. Most regarded the move of black Americans into

previously white neighborhoods as unwarranted "infiltration." Real estate agents and

housing experts argued that the migration of blacks to the urban core inevitably

motivated white middle class Americans to move. White real estate agents believed that

black Americans' presence in the community and "unruly" behavior would lead to

decreased property values. While these claims went unsubstantiated and housing expert

Charles Abrams showed that property values actually rose as blacks moved into

transitional neighborhoods, it did not prevent real estate agents from employing

discriminatory practices. In fact, white officials made concerted efforts to ensure that

black Americans did not have access to the idealized American dream.

   Housing **professionals** denied black Americans access in various ways, but redlining

emerged as a common practice between the 1930s and the 1970s. Redlining involved the

practice of denying or limiting housing financial services to neighborhoods because its

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[23] Mohl, "The Second Ghetto," 61.
[24] Frank Hobbs and Nicole Stoops, *Demographic Trends in the 20th Century* (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 2002), 37.

residents are people of color or are poor. Through redlining, housing professionals limited black Americans' mobility options to prevent the encroachment of black people into white communities. The federal government bolstered these efforts. In 1934, Congress created the Federal Housing Administration to insure private mortgages and to decrease interest rates and down payment requirements. This mortgage insurance made home buying attainable to average income earners, but their discriminatory neighborhood rating system ensured some could not participate in this opportunity.

According to writer Ta-Nehisi Coates, under this system, "maps with green areas, rated A, indicated in demand neighborhoods that, as one appraiser put it, lacked a single foreigner or Negro. These neighborhoods became excellent prospects for insurers. Neighborhoods where black people lived received a D rating and officials subsequently considered them ineligible for FHA backing. They were colored in red."[25] This unjust, but common practice implemented by the FHA served as a continuation of redlining at the local level.

Redlining became a common practice in Chicago. As a result of redlining, black Americans typically acquired housing loans from unscrupulous lenders. One Chicago property owner, Lou Fushanis owned over 600 properties and amassed great wealth, but "he made much of this money by exploiting the frustrated hopes of black migrants."[26] A significant number of black Americans had to buy homes on land contract which meant that the borrowers paid every month, but had no equity until they paid the contract in full.

[25] Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," *The Atlantic*, June 2014, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/.
[26] Coates, "The Case for Reparations."

This often resulted in borrowers paying on contract for years. When they missed a payment, landlords evicted them without notice. This meant that they often overpaid for their property and lost any opportunity to capitalize on the purchase.

Redlining has similar objectives to restrictive covenants—to exclude black Americans from the housing market. The primary difference is that redlining occurred at the national level while homeowners' associations instituted restrictive covenants at the neighborhood level establishing codes that prevented minorities from moving into their communities. White Americans employed whatever tactics necessary to keep their neighborhoods segregated and the FHA supported them in maintaining the housing color line. According to urban studies expert, Charles Abrams, the Federal Housing Administration set itself up as "the protector of the all-white neighborhood and became the vanguard of white supremacy and racial purity—in the North as well as the South."[27]

The federal government's role in protecting white neighborhoods continued with public housing project development. Authorities created discriminatory federal public housing projects from the beginning, and local housing officials maintained this policy.[28] The major period of urban renewal began with Title I of the 1949 Housing Act. Title I provided funds for demolition of slums and the construction of approximately 800,000 housing units throughout the nation. Participating local governments received federal subsidies totaling approximately $13 billion and subsequently supplied matching funds. In preparation for the projects, city departments acquired land through eminent domain, then cleared and sold it to private real estate developers.

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[27] Mohl, "The Second Ghetto," 66.
[28] Mohl, "The Second Ghetto," 66.

While planning departments promoted urban renewal as slum clearance projects that provided quality housing to low-income residents, developers did not have to supply housing for the poor and often saw no incentives in doing so. More often than not, developers used their subsidies and tax abatements to build commercial projects and housing for the wealthy. Not only were longtime residents displaced, but between 1949 and 1964, the federal government allocated a meager 0.5 percent of urban renewal federal expenditures to family relocation. A 1961 study of renewal projects in forty-one cities found that "60 percent of the tenants (even more in large cities) were merely relocated to other slums, exacerbating the problem of overcrowding."[29] Outside of urban renewal, the interstate highway system became the primary method to disrupt black community economic development.

In June 1956, the Eisenhower administration pursued and passed the Federal-Aid Highway Act, popularly known as the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act. This Act created a 41,000-mile national system of interstate highways intended to eliminate unsafe roads, inefficient routes, traffic jams and all of the other things that got in the way of speedy, safe transcontinental travel. Eisenhower and highway advocates also believed that the interstate system would permit quick evacuation of target areas, and for these reasons, the construction of an elaborate expressway system required immediate attention and national interest.[30] The connection to national security and the president's

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[29] "Judicial Review of Displacee Relocation in Federal Urban Renewal Projects: A New Approach?" *Valparaiso University Law Review*, no. 2 (1969): 263.

[30] Mark Rose and Raymond A. Mohl, *Interstate Highway Politics and Policy since 1939* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012), 92.

support of the act ensured that local officials viewed the interstate highway system as a necessity in future city development.

For the highway system to be built, access points had to be constructed within city limits. Civil engineers who worked for local highway bureaus largely decided the design of these points of access. They used a purely scientific method to ascertain the design of the highway system. They concentrated on things they could quantify, like safety, efficiency, and durability. With these ideas in mind, civil engineers viewed interstate highways as the highest expression of these goals.[31]

While civil engineers focused on highway design, urban planners shared responsibility in determining the location of interstates. Although urban planners believed in maintaining transportation alternatives such as rail, commuter roads and bus lines, they also believed that if integrated properly with existing transportation networks, interstate highway development could benefit the built environment. As a result, urban planners set out to locate the most affordable land for the location of interstate highways, and more often than not, black Americans occupied these areas. The design process revealed that interstates would lead to displacement, but cities, following the state's recommendations, believed everything to be secondary to rapid and safe transcontinental travel.

Highway construction created physical divides within black neighborhoods disrupting and crippling the communities' ability to sustain themselves economically and culturally. Many residents mobilized in an attempt to prevent highway development. They hoped to maintain the ease of access in their community and the social interaction

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[31] U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, "America's Highways, 1776-1976," (U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 1976).

that walkable neighborhoods provided. Additionally, for communities to have the capacity to support highway development, not only would access to the highway alter the built environment, it also required the clearing of housing and institutions to provide the large amounts of space necessary for entrances to the highways. Black residents immediately recognized that interstates would hinder their mobility and, severely limit their residential options. Despite the fact that they objected to these plans, their protests fell on deaf ears. This situation is exemplified in the efforts of black communities in both Columbus, Ohio and Miami, Florida.

Overtown in Miami, Florida grew to become the epicenter of black culture in South Florida in the mid-nineteenth century. In the early 1960s, authorities built I-95 through the neighborhood. The interstate's path through Overtown split the community in half and led to the collapse of the thriving economic and cultural center. This highway construction displaced approximately 40,000 Overtown residents and the once-thriving community is now one of the poorest neighborhoods in Miami. Similarly, Bronzeville had been the preeminent black American enclave in Columbus, Ohio.[32] However, when the Department of Transportation constructed I-71 in the 1960s, it cut through Bronzeville, displacing residents and cutting the community off from downtown and the neighborhood's economic core. While the needs of these communities went ignored by authorities and people with few resources had to start anew, one community in particular staved off the advances of their highway bureau—New York City's Lower East Side.

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[32] Judson Jeffries, Willis Brown, et. al, "Rediscovering the Lost City of Bronzeville," *Urbana: Urban Affairs and Public Policy* 14 (2013): 4.

Robert Moses, a highly influential urban planner who arguably had the greatest influence on New York's built environment in the mid-20th century, proposed a plan to plunge a ten lane elevated superhighway in Lower Manhattan. Moses intended for the Lower Manhattan Expressway to cut through SoHo, Little Italy, Chinatown and the Lower East Side.[33] Deeply disturbed by Moses' proposal, Jane Jacobs, well-known urban studies author and chairperson of her neighborhood civic group, organized a collective effort that succeeded in thwarting Moses' efforts. Widely seen as the "David vs. Goliath" story in planning history, Jacobs is praised for effectively mobilizing her community in an effort that preserved New York City as the electrifying city it remains today.

Although the Lower Manhattan Expressway effort is well worth the recognition it receives for preventing highway development, it is imperative to evaluate why this effort succeeded when countless others did not. While some may argue that it took Jacobs, and her ability to marshal popular support and political will, to stop them, there were various communities who had the same will, support, and charismatic leaders. [34] The difference does not lie in the will of the community, but in the perception of the community that the development will impact.

Although this community is ethnically diverse, white, middle class citizens primarily did the organizing. While civil engineers determined interstate highway design through science, urban planners decided highway placement along racial and class lines. The complete disregard of the mobilization efforts in poor communities, and

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[33] Dwight Garner, "When David Fought Goliath in Washington Square Park," *The New York Times*, August 2, 2009.
[34] Garner, "Washington Square Park."

communities of color led to a process of highway construction in black neighborhoods that greatly altered the physical environment and confined black Americans to dilapidated inner cities, reversing the economic and social gains made in black communities. These changes led to generations of instability.

Some have argued that urban renewal projects mitigated the loss that black communities experienced as a result of highway projects, but urban renewal projects destroyed more homes than it built. In fact, urban renewal and highway projects often seemed to pursue a vigorous policy of black removal while spending less effort on the relocation of families whose housing had been taken for redevelopment purposes.[35] Urban renewal did considerable damage in destroying a significant amount of housing stock in black communities, but interstate highway development ensured that those pushed out of the community could no longer come into the neighborhood to shop and socialize because the institutions that once served them had been eliminated. As a result of urban renewal and highway development, black neighborhoods continued to lose housing, retail, and employment. Black Americans with the economic means to leave often did, but those struggling economically could not. As a result, black communities that once thrived could no longer fulfill residents' basic needs, creating bastions of concentrated poverty.

While most white Americans benefitted from the suburban boom of these times, white authorities effectively prevented black Americans from enjoying the greatest

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[35] Mohl, "The Second Ghetto," 67.

wealth-generating period in American history. Although substantial spatial and structural changes occurred, those changes created a hierarchy that spatially allocated wealth and opportunity. The period between 1940 and 1960 proved to be one of the most transformative in American history. Some Americans experienced great opportunity during this time period. Many middle class Americans benefited from pathways to wealth created and sustained by the federal government. Unfortunately, through public policy initiatives, America committed to the perpetuation of privileging whites at the expense of blacks. Indeed, the federal government's effort to stabilize middle class white America had no counterpart in black communities.

This unequal treatment did not go unnoticed by black Americans. Black communities grew tired of America's complete disregard for supplying their basic needs and as a result, community unrest in urban cores intensified. As a result of the unrest, some urban planners argued the need for partnerships with black activists to produce transformative change in the urban core. While some black Americans chose to collaborate, others sought out other opportunities to exercise their agency in the community development process.

Equity Planning and Beyond: Present Trajectory of Urban Planning

Prior to the 1960s, discrimination on a federal level proved endemic to urban planning practice. However, by the end of the 1960s, black activist efforts exposed white Americans to the many racial injustices they faced in their daily lives. Various sit-ins, marches and boycotts of the modern Civil Rights Movement highlighted the abuses black Americans faced in attempting to secure basic human rights. Furthermore, by the end of

the 1960s, racial uprisings had broken out in almost all major American cities. These rebellions proliferated primarily as a result of the anger black urban residents felt over being subjected to living in communities socially engineered to be impoverished.

White America began to understand that the racial inequity present in American cities could no longer be ignored, and if not addressed, more black Americans might see the need to become destructive. The government, at both the federal and local levels, recognized the inherent need to adopt a more inclusive approach to urban development. Although black Americans' actions forced this recognition, it still resulted in recognizable gains in the treatment of black Americans within the urban planning field.

For example, in the mid-1960s, President Johnson launched a domestic agenda focused on fighting a War on Poverty. Most of his initiatives became known as part of his Great Society program. In response to Johnson's Great Society initiative, planners focused on programs for minorities and the poor that they implemented mainly at the neighborhood level. Community Action Programs and Model Cities became the two most noteworthy of these federal efforts.

Introduced in 1964, Congress established the Community Action Program (CAP) through the Economic Opportunity Act. The program created non-profit Community Action Agencies (CAA) designed to empower local communities to combat poverty through volunteer work. Most of the agencies focused on early childhood development through Head Start programs or home improvement through energy and weatherization assistance. The larger of the two programs, Model Cities began in 1966. Target communities awarded Model Cities' block grants under the guidance of the Department

of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to create "five-year experiments in new forms of municipal government and to provide greater understanding of the lives of the impoverished, improved methods for dealing with their problems, and ultimately the elimination of urban poverty."[36] Model Cities programs emerged in several major cities across the nation and they primarily partnered with black urban residents.

Working alongside civic groups and neighborhood institutions, Model City programs gave urban residents the opportunity to collaborate with planning professionals in the community economic development process. Under these conditions advocacy planning rose to prominence in the planning profession. Through advocacy planning practice, administrators made comprehensive plans and implemented social programs with the intent to show that black communities could plan for themselves.[37] While many urban planners did not change their perspective of black America and the urban poor, some professional urban planners made a conscious attempt to devise and implement redistributive policies that moved resources, political power, and participation toward low-income groups.[38] These planners saw racial justice as an important priority and came to view themselves as advocacy planners.

While there were several prominent advocacy planners, Paul Davidoff became the primary theorist of advocacy planning scholarship. Davidoff promoted an alternative

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[36] Bret A. Weber and Amanda Wallace, "Revealing the Empowerment Revolution: A Literature Review of the Model Cities Program," *Journal of Urban History* 38 (2012): 176.

[37] June Manning Thomas, "Model Cities Revisited: Issues of Race and Empowerment," in *Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows*, ed. June Manning Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997), 147.

[38] Norman Krumholz, "Urban planning, Equity Planning and Racial Justice," in *Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows*, ed. June Manning Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997), 109.

within the urban planning profession. He believed that the city operated as a social system, and viewed urban planners' failure to foster revolts against the accepted means for distributing social benefits and social justice as a tragedy.[39] To rectify this failure, Davidoff believed that urban planners needed to advocate on behalf of interest groups traditionally ignored in the creation and implementation of community plans.

Throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, advocacy planners and social planning programs experienced success. In particular, the Model Cities program increased citizen empowerment, and assuaged community frustration over abuses experienced during urban renewal. Most importantly, Model Cities programs and advocacy planning often resulted in useful social programs.

The Model Cities program developed in Dayton, Ohio is considered one of the most successful because of its development of a planning council led by black community activists who focused on improving education, housing and health. As a part of its Model Cities program, the city of Dayton established a community school program that "kept school buildings open to offer night classes and recreational activities for residents. Some money went to adult basic education."[40] That is not to say that Model Cities and Community Action Programs did not have its problems. Some programs limited citizen participation and others, like Oakland and Detroit Model Cities, failed to recognize the need for better coordination of services and changes in the political

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[39] Paul Davidoff, "The Role of the City Planner in Social Planning," University of Pennsylvania and Director, Housing Unit, Mobilization for Youth Papers, New York, 6.
[40] Joseph Watras, *Politics, Race and Schools: Racial Integration, 1954-1994* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 150.

structure at all local government levels.[41] Limitations existed but those limitations must

not overshadow the benefit to black urban residents empowered to act through these

program. That fact alone makes these programs and advocacy planning successful

initiatives.

However, these successes proved short lived. When President Johnson left office,

urban studies scholar Joseph Watras notes that Model Cities suffered from "inadequate

resources, local political battles, uneven performance and poor federal leadership."[42]

President Nixon made it clear that he did not prioritize low-income, urban residents. In

1974, Nixon replaced Model Cities with Community Development Block Grants

(CDBG), which provides annual grants to communities to develop viable communities.

Unlike Model Cities, regulations did not ensure citizen participation and opportunity for

low-income people. The social conditions that led to the creation of Model Cities still

existed, but government programs like CDBG took part in "ensuring that programs

designed to truly redress these conditions were wiped out and substantially gutted."[43]

Following suit with the federal government, urban planners at the local level

began to view social goals as incompatible with profitable projects proposed by private

developers and rejected advocacy planning as politically naïve. Urban planners became

less concerned with promoting social justice and adopted a relatively strong ideological

preference for market approaches to public problems. Market approaches often involved

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[41] Bret A. Weber and Amanda Wallace, "Revealing the Empowerment Revolution," 176.
[42] Thomas, "Model Cities Revisited," 144.
[43] David Perry, review of *The Politics of Neglect: Urban Aid from Model Cities to Revenue Sharing* by Bernard J. Frieden and Marshall Kaplan and *Federal Programs and City Politics: The Dynamics of the Aid Process in Oakland* by Jeffrey L. Pressman, *The Journal of Politics* no. 3 (1977): 809.

planning for communities with profit in mind. Instead of providing social services for those in need, urban planners focused on providing services that appealed to middle and upper class Americans. These biases often looked like urban planners attracting specialty shops, grocers, and businesses to thriving communities while poor communities struggled to garner similar attention from the city.

After Nixon resigned from office, urban development continued to be viewed as the concern of local communities, and not the federal government. Significant changes to community development programs did not occur under the Ford and Carter administration, while President Reagan greatly reduced the federal presence in poor communities. He eliminated various social programs and left a diminished welfare and services sector as the only source of direct federal assistance to poor communities. By the 1980s, CDBG funds turned focus and financing away from poor black urban areas and toward "a wider range of more prosperous cities and suburbs, leading to an emphasis on local, public-private partnerships in community economic development."[44] This practice has characterized the state of urban planning since the 1980s. While other community programs have been introduced at the federal level, such as Clinton's Empowerment Zones and Empowerment Communities, programs since have been designed to foster locally initiated, community building partnerships with little attention paid to marginalized groups' concerns.

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[44] Thomas, "Model Cities Revisited," 144.

Presently, mirroring policy introduced at the federal level, urban planners reinvent old strategies that fail to address the structural issues underlying urban community decline. Urban planning practice has largely abandoned its social agenda of the 1960s to promote and facilitate the objectives of those with the most power and privilege. Without social justice as a primary objective of the planning profession, the needs of the underprivileged continue to be ignored, further isolating black Americans from economic and social benefits.

While it is important to recognize that urban planners are not fully responsible for the destabilization of black neighborhoods, it is clear that they share responsibility. Black Americans continuously combat discriminatory urban development practices, but their efforts have continuously gone unnoticed or blatantly ignored. As a result, urban communities of color suffer from poor housing options, food insecurity, crumbling school systems, and have few options for economic and social mobility. Now is the time to recognize the importance of social justice in planning practice as advocacy planners once proposed. If planners fail to do so, social equity will remain an afterthought in the planning profession, and so will the needs and concerns of the black urban community.

Chapter Two

All Together Now: A Snapshot of Black Activism in Urban America

It is clear that authorities often implemented urban planning initiatives at the expense of black urban residents. Understanding the negative impact these initiatives had on black communities is imperative. Equally important is the recognition of the activism of black Americans in urban communities. Black Americans have not been not idle bystanders, but instead citizen activists working to improve and define their own neighborhoods. Although the state sabotaged most of their efforts, the impact of black activism on the improvement of black urban life is significant. This chapter highlights how black urban residents defined their own lives in spite of city officials' intransigent and oppressive responses.

While four major initiatives are discussed, they do not represent the full scope of black activism efforts in black communities. This overview is not intended to be exhaustive, but instead to provide insight into how black activism evolved over the years. Furthermore, this overview is intended to reaffirm that black activism is not new or fleeting, but has existed consistently throughout American history. Each case speaks to a particular time period in black activism. Although these efforts existed independently of each other, this chapter indicates that black activism efforts are interconnected and each

resurgence of direct action brings black America closer to the overall objective of black

liberation.

The United Negro Improvement Association: Need for Unity, Emancipation and Improvement

Inspired by Booker T. Washington's biography *Up from Slavery*, Marcus Garvey

established the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in Jamaica in August

1914. Garvey established the UNIA with black liberation in mind. Under the motto "One

God, One Aim, One Destiny," Garvey and fellow UNIA supporters emphasized race

pride and liberation as global necessities. Seeking to follow in Washington's footsteps,

Garvey immediately sought investors for an UNIA industrial trade school modeled on the

Tuskegee Institute.[45] Although Garvey struggled to secure funds for the trade school and

had difficulty managing the finances of UNIA, his resolve did not waver. Realizing that

he could not rely on funding he received in Jamaica, Garvey moved to Harlem and set out

on a year-long, thirty state speaking tour. As Garvey traveled to raise funds for the

Jamaican trade school, he experienced American racism first hand.

Shortly after his arrival in the United States, one of the worst race riots in history

occurred. Racial tensions in East St. Louis, Illinois worsened in February 1917 after 470

black workers replaced white workers who went on strike against the Aluminum Ore

Company. On July 2, 1917, in response to these hires, white St. Louis residents resorted

to mob violence resulting in the worst incident of labor-related violence in 20th-century

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[45]Adam Ewing, *The Age of Garvey: How a Jamaican Activist Created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 44.

history. Illinois Governor, Frank Orren Lowden ordered the National Guard to St. Louis but "they simply stood back and watched, while some even joined the rioters."[46] Several black organizations and institutions spoke out against the violence, but Garvey called for American blacks to fight back.

At an emergency meeting held in Harlem, Garvey made clear his opinion of the state's response. He saw the riot as a crime against the laws of humanity. In a speech Garvey gave at a public meeting addressing this event, he declared the East St. Louis race riot "one of the bloodiest outrages and against mankind" and scolded "the United States for lauding its experiment in democracy before the world despite the nation's history of slavery, lynching, burning and butchering."[47] This moment proved to be critical. For black Americans, East St. Louis stood "as an important reminder that black Americans faced enormous hurdles in trying to obtain economic success. Even in places where they worked hard and began to succeed, their communities might be destroyed."[48] Partly as a result of this riot, Garvey turned his efforts away from Jamaica and established the first UNIA chapter in America in September 1917. East St. Louis represented an example of how the state destroyed black communities that desired economic success, and Garvey felt the UNIA could strengthen these communities and secure economic liberation.

Maintaining a focus on black liberation and determination, the UNIA quickly gained popularity in the United States. It initially focused on the establishment of a

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[46] Malcolm McLaughlin, "Reconsidering the East St Louis Race Riot of 1917," *International Review of Social History* 47(2)(2002): 188.
[47] Adam Ewing, *The Age of Garvey*, 71-72.
[48] Leslie Alexander and Walter Rucker, *Encyclopedia of African American History,* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 749.

separate economy of black owned businesses and touting the past glories of Africa.

UNIA member Charles Mills noted Garvey's message as revolutionary. It encouraged

black people to come together as one and to debunk myths they were told by white

America. In addition to the UNIA message, the organization only had two requirements:

a pledge to support the organization and a thirty-five cents (buying power of $6.48 in

2016) one-time membership fee. The nominal membership requirements ensured that all

black Americans that connected with the call for a united, emancipated and improved

people could take part in the movement.

By the summer of 1918, Garvey established several black owned businesses to

sustain his organization. In the same year, he opened the UNIA headquarters in Harlem

and, in an effort to emphasize their call for black liberation, named it Liberty Hall.

Liberty Halls throughout the nation filled a void within communities by providing

services that the state did not such as food, employment opportunities, shelter, and a

space for congregation[49]. In conjunction with the establishment of black owned

businesses and the opening of the Harlem headquarters, the UNIA published a newspaper

called the *Negro World* in 1918 and sold it for five cents. A weekly, the *Negro World,*

served as the voice of the UNIA. Each issue featured an editorial by Garvey and articles

on black arts, politics and culture. At its peak, the paper had a distribution of

approximately 500,000 copies weekly, much more than other important black

publications such as A. Phillip Randolph and Chandler Owen's *The Messenger*,

NAACP's *The Crisis*, and the National Urban League's *Opportunity.* Additionally, the

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[49] Amy Jacques Garvey, *Garvey & Garveyism* (New York: Collier Books, 1963), 96-97.

UNIA established businesses such as the Universal Printing House, and at its peak

employed approximately 1,000 black people in Harlem. Garvey also created UNIA

investment bonds so that supporters and members could benefit from the wealth of UNIA

businesses. By the end of 1919, UNIA had over 750,000 members and the *Negro World*

had become the black newspaper with the highest readership in the United States.

As the UNIA rose in popularity with black Americans, the federal government

became alarmed. J. Edgar Hoover, newly appointed head of the Bureau of Investigation's

General Intelligence Division, proved to be particularly concerned about UNIA's efforts.

The General Intelligence Division had been set up to monitor and disrupt the work of

domestic radicals, and Hoover quickly viewed Marcus Garvey as a "Negro agitator" that

needed to be stopped. Garvey's notoriety and success in improving the black community

compelled the FBI to hire the first full time black agent in bureau history. Known by

agent number 800, the FBI hired him to infiltrate the UNIA and to find enough

incriminating information to get rid of Garvey. Shortly after agent number 800 came

aboard, Garvey unveiled UNIA's newest and largest venture, the Black Star Line. In May

1919, Garvey incorporated the Black Star Line Steamship Company and began selling

stock in the company for five dollars per share. Envisioned as a luxurious group of

transatlantic ocean liners to "repatriate blacks to Africa and transport goods throughout

the African global economy, UNIA bought its first ship, Yarmouth, for $165,000."[50]

Garvey renamed *Yarmouth* the *S.S. Frederick Douglass* and launched it on

October 31, 1919 from New York City. Though the first voyage from New York to Cuba

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[50] Garvey, *Garvey and Garveyism,* 85.

proved successful, the ship experienced a range of problems. It needed expensive repairs

and crewmembers with conflicting loyalties might have sabotaged the ship. Not

surprisingly, Agent 800 played a significant role in the purchase negotiations with

Garvey. He convinced Garvey to purchase the ship in spite of the repairs needed. In

addition to the aforementioned crewmembers, the seller inflated the costs of the *Douglass*

for his own financial gain. Not distracted by the issues experienced by the Black Star

Line, Garvey held the Convention of the Universal Negro Improvement Association in

Madison Square Garden in August 1920. At this month long convention, Garvey named

himself the provisional president of Africa and released his "Declaration of Rights for

Negro Peoples of the World". His declaration called upon all nations to respect the rights

of black people around the world. The convention showed the black community Garvey's

commitment to the struggle and encouraged the membership to remain supportive of

UNIA efforts.

In 1922, the UNIA's growing popularity provided Garvey the opportunity to

purchase two more ships, the *SS Shadyside* and the *SS Kanawha*. While it appeared that

the UNIA might continue to grow in spite of mismanagement issues and the manipulation

of its businesses by the federal government, it all came to a halt when authorities arrested

Garvey and three other UNIA officers for mail fraud in January 1922. Garvey

vehemently defended his innocence. When asked about the charges, Garvey said that "I

have no cause to defraud anybody; for the simple reason, thank God, or whosoever gave

it to me, I was endowed with strength and ability always to do something for myself, for I

can handle a pick or a shovel, or handle a pen, or handle a wheelbarrow. I always feel in such form as to be able to earn a livelihood anywhere, even in a desert."[51]

After two years of failed appeals, New York's federal court sentenced Garvey to five years in prison in June 1923. In September 1923, the UNIA secured Garvey's release on a $25,000 bail, but in 1925 the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld his original conviction, and Garvey went to prison in February 1925. UNIA officers struggled to keep the movement alive while Garvey languished in prison. Hoping to sustain the membership by highlighting Garvey's contributions, the UNIA continued to raise funds and to circulate petitions in support of Garvey. While in jail, Garvey grew severely ill due to asthma and heart disease. Fearing that he would die in prison and become a martyr, the federal government released Garvey. In November 1927, President Coolidge pardoned Garvey and immediately deported him to Jamaica from the Port of New Orleans.[52]

UNIA members remained supportive in spite of Garvey's imprisonment, but the charges ultimately marked the end of the Black Star Line, and other UNIA businesses. The UNIA still exists, sustaining small pockets of membership globally, but the prominence of the organization ended in the 1920s after Garvey's deportation. Nonetheless, the UNIA defied odds and successfully sustained a cooperative model of black community development unseen since its time. When the state failed to place stores in black communities that provided for residents' basic needs, the UNIA responded by

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[51] Robert A. Hill, Emory J. Tolbert and Deborah Forczek, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers Volume IV September 1 1921- September 2 1922* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 369.
[52] **Garvey,** *Garvey and Garveyism,* **185-186**.

establishing laundries, restaurants, and markets that appealed to black consumers' needs. The UNIA experienced strong opposition from the state due to Garvey's emphasis on economic self-reliance. The federal government recognized the dangers associated with black economic self-determination and sought to eliminate these initiatives at all costs. In spite of the state's repressive response, Garvey and the UNIA provided support to black Americans that they would continue to look for in other cooperative forms of black resistance.

Black Cooperative Movement

In every period of American history, black Americans pooled resources to address challenges. Whether political, social or economic, they often "turned to cooperative ventures in ways that leveraged and maximized returns and reduced risks."[53] Although cooperative development is still used as a method to address community economic development, the height of cooperative development for black America occurred in the 1930s. Driven by the necessities of the Great Depression, black Americans rallied together to develop businesses, schools, and insurance companies to sustain their communities. In general, cooperatives varied in structure. Some black cooperatives were solely worker-owned, others consumer-owned, or a combination of both. The majority of black-owned cooperatives began as a study circle or involved extensive training prior to the operation stage. Explained through W.E.B. Du Bois' concept of "intelligent cooperation," most black cooperatives operated on the premise that education and

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[53] Jessica Gordon Nembhard, *Collective Courage: A History of African American Cooperative Economic Thought and Practice* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2014), 28.

planning were essential in the development and sustainability of the organization. Through education, black cooperatives gave members the tools necessary to fully understand the unique operational strategies cooperative development requires, aiding in the businesses' overall success. As a result, black Americans began to view education as a cooperative resource.

Since education played such a pivotal role, black cooperatives employed various educational strategies to sustain themselves. Participants most commonly utilized study circles, curriculum development, pre-training and orientation, in-service training, networking and conference development, leadership development, and public education. Study circles existed as weekly group meetings held to discuss economic problems and learn cooperative economics. They proved to be the most critical strategy in the early days of the organizations. Studying how cooperative business enterprises work and how they solve economic problems in unconventional ways became essential to their development and success.[54] Study circles used a "study-learn-implement" method to further the objectives of the cooperative. Curriculum development and public education focused extensively on community outreach. Through community workshops, study tours, reading lists, and newsletters, black cooperatives educated customers and the community about cooperative models and principles. While the membership played a critical role in sustaining the businesses, increasing the knowledge base of the community ensured support. Lastly, cooperative members used trainings and conferences to teach industry specific skills and to increase skill development and skill sharing amongst

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[54] Nembhard, *Collective Courage,* 87.

cooperative members. Through conferences attended by like-minded professionals, cooperative members who faced opposition from conventional businesses focused on building support networks.[55]

Black cooperatives proved to be diverse in origin and industry. While this chapter focuses on black activism in urban communities, black cooperatives were equally popular in rural communities. No black cooperative completely captures the typical methods employed by these collective organizations, but the Young Negroes' Cooperative League (YNCL), founded in December 1930, is a good example of cooperative development at the height of the movement. Unfortunately, the YNCL has not received much scholarly attention, but its work and the leadership involved shows that recognizable black activists saw the importance of black cooperative development. Its founder, George Schuyler worked as a columnist for the *Pittsburgh Courier* and wrote the novel *Black No More*, a critique of the hypocrisy surrounding America's obsession with skin color. While Schuyler became a black conservative by the 1940s, in his youth he had been known as a black radical that always challenged white racism.[56]

Early YNCL membership consisted of twenty-five to thirty black youth who responded to Schuyler's call to action. In his *Pittsburgh Courier* column, Schuyler published a brochure entitled "An Appeal to Young Negroes". In his appeal, he encouraged youth to engage in what he believed to be the only way to ensure economic power and security for black Americans—cooperative economics. He explained that the

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[55] Nembhard, *Collective Courage*, 90.
[56] Nembhard, *Collective Courage,* 112.

"YNCL offers an immediate way out of our economic and social dilemma, not ten, twenty, thirty or fifty years from now, but RIGHT NOW."[57] The goal had been to form a federation of local cooperatives and buying clubs that functioned through a network of councils. These clubs sought to gain economic power through consumer education and cooperative ownership. At the first national conference in Pittsburgh on October 18, 1931, delegates elected political activist and revolutionary, Ella J. Baker as Executive Director and George Schuyler as president.

Immediately after the conference, the YNCL published its goals in a pamphlet distributed to boost membership. The goals included having five thousand members that paid one dollar initiation fees. Each community that had five members or more could form a council to discuss economic problems. The YNCL then required these councils to develop a cooperative enterprise by March 1932. The YNCL also aspired to have a cooperative bank in each community by March 1934, a cooperative wholesale establishment in each state by March 1933, and regional factories to produce necessities like food, clothing and shelter by March 1935. The pamphlet also included YNCL bylaws of the organization, information on cooperative movements and a membership form, a partial list of YNCL organizers by state, and a membership form.

Similar to other black cooperatives, YNCL promoted education as essential to the maintenance of the organization. Members spent the first year studying the history, principles and methods of the Rochdale cooperative, and at the conference, members

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[57] George Schuyler, "An Appeal to Young Negroes," *Pittsburgh Courier,* September 19, 1931.

committed to following an educational program.[58] As a result of Baker's leadership,

gender equality became the norm, prompting the YNCL to utilize democratic

participatory methods in the decision-making process. By 1932, the YNCL formed

councils in New York, Philadelphia, Monesen, Pittsburgh, Columbus, Cleveland,

Cincinnati, Phoenix, New Orleans, Columbia, Portsmouth (Virginia), and Washington

DC.[59] While the YNCL had a strong following, budgetary challenges forced the

organization to stop paying the executive director, to give up their offices and to move all

meetings to the New York Urban League offices. Historian Barbara Ransby explains the

YNCL's financial issues by noting that, although short lived, YNCL, like many economic

cooperatives "struggled to survive the pressures of a dominant social and economic

system antithetical to its aims."[60]

Nonetheless, the League made great strides in its three years of existence. It

served as a useful experiment in collective black self-determination. Examples of

cooperative federations are few and far between, and YNCL serves as one of the few

black examples and one of the earliest. The attention paid to gender equality, youth

empowerment and democratic leadership makes it a key initiative in the black

cooperative movement. These councils also succeeded in establishing various enterprises:

a cooperative grocery store in New York, a cooperative newsstand and stationary store in

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[58] The Rochdale Principles are a set of standards for the operation of cooperatives. Established in 1844 by the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers in Rochdale, England, the Rochdale Principles have formed the basis for how cooperatives operate globally.

[59] Nembhard, *Collective Courage,* 116.

[60] Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 89.

Philadelphia, a buying club in Cincinnati, and newspaper distribution agencies in Pittsburgh and Cleveland.

In general, members engaged in black cooperatives experienced similar challenges. Often, they engaged in more discussion and research than in business development. Difficulties in financing these ventures and falling victim to sabotage by white businesses and white supremacists who did not want these efforts to succeed led to the death of many of these efforts.[61] Regardless, the black cooperative movement provided a platform for many black Americans to learn the importance of economic empowerment and to gain business skills that otherwise would have been out of their reach. Despite the difficulties faced, the cooperative movement provided a network of support for struggling black residents who could not count on financial and social services from the state. In later years, these networks emerged as the basis for urban planning efforts in many black communities.

National Urban League and HBCU Planning Programs

While the National Urban League and planning programs at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) employ different methods, they are equally representative of the black community's planning tradition of the 1960s and 1970s. Resting on a theory of black empowerment, the Urban League and HBCU planning departments succeeded in introducing black communities to formal urban planning practices and provided a platform for black Americans to address planning initiatives

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[61] Nembhard, *Collective Courage,* 111.

through their own institutions. The option to participate in addressing urban concerns through the lens of black America proved to be particularly important to the success of these initiatives.

Black Americans' experience with urban planners had historically proven contentious and constrained (see Chapter 1). Most urban black residents believed the planning profession, never attuned to the reality of blacks, could never alleviate the problems of blacks in the inner cities.[62] Recognizing that this reality prevented most black Americans from being involved in the planning process, majority black institutions like the National Urban League and HBCU planning departments provided an alternative space for black urbanites to vocalize their concerns and to address the problems of inner cities on their own terms.

In 1910, the National Urban League, originated in New York City as the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes. It sought to assist recent southern black migrants in adapting to urban life and to combat the discrimination they faced. Among others, Ruth Standish Baldwin and Dr. George Edmund Haynes originally founded the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes. White socialite Ruth Standish Baldwin had been a champion of the poor and marginalized, freely using her wealth to advance positive social change. A trained social worker, Dr. Haynes graduated from Fisk University and became the first black American to receive a doctorate from Columbia University. While others helped to establish the Committee on Urban Conditions Among

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[62] Thomas and Ritzdorf, *In the Shadows*, 243.

Negroes, Baldwin and Haynes determined the vision of the organization and led the committee in its merger with two other organizations.

In 1911, the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes merged with the Committee for the Improvement of Industrial Conditions Among Negroes in New York (founded in New York in 1906) and the National League for the Protection of Colored Women (founded in 1905), to form the National League on Urban Conditions. The National League's board reflected the interracial character of the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes. White members of the National League on Urban Conditions served as chairman of the board in its earliest years and have since served in this role. Ruth Standish Baldwin believed that they "should not work not as colored people nor as white people for the narrow benefit of any group alone, but together, as American citizens, for the common good of our common city, our common country."[63] While the National League on Urban Conditions supported an interracial approach, the clear objective had been to enable black Americans to "secure economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights."[64] The support of white Americans proved instrumental to the organization's longevity, but they intended the League to be black led and guided by a focus on black urban issues. For the majority of the League's existence, the Executive Director role has been and continues to be occupied by a black American.

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[63] Eugene Jones, "A Dream, A Quarter Century, A Reality! How the Urban League Has Served" in *Opportunity, Journal of Negro Life*, (National Urban League: Vol. 13, No. 11)(1935), 328.
[64] "Our Mission," National Urban League, accessed March 31, 2016, http://nul.iamempowered.com/who-we-are/mission-and-history.

Dr. Haynes served as the first Executive Director of the National League on Urban Conditions from 1911 to 1918. Haynes' strategies made it clear that the focus of the League would be the improvement of black urban life. Under his leadership, the fledgling organization counseled black migrants from the South and worked to bring educational and employment opportunities to blacks. Additionally, Haynes established a social work program at Fisk University to train black social workers. His emphasis on training and research into problems blacks faced in areas such as employment, housing, health and sanitation helped to grow the organization. By the end of World War I, the organization had eighty-one staff members working in thirty cities.[65]

After Haynes' tenure ended in 1918, Eugene K. Jones took leadership of the organization and significantly expanded the League's campaign to address barriers to black employment. In 1920, Jones led the organization in taking its present name, the National Urban League. Continuing the work of Haynes, Jones promoted vocational education. He also secured financial support for local Urban Leagues to expand. Additionally, due to his expertise on the urban black experience, Jones was called to review urban planning text. For example, the Citizen and Planning Council of New York recognized the expertise of Jones and asked him to review Robert Weaver's book, *The Negro Ghetto*, for their newsletter[66]. Ultimately, Jones served as the Executive Director for over twenty years before being succeeded by Lester Granger in 1941.

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[65] "Our History," National Urban League, accessed March 31, 2016, http://nul.iamempowered.com/who-we-are/mission-and-history.

[66]Felix L. Armfield, *Eugene Kinckle Jones: The National Urban League and Black Social Work, 1910-1940* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 77.

Although Granger insisted the Urban League continue its strategy of "education and persuasion," he also focused heavily on employment opportunities. Granger pushed tirelessly to integrate trade unions. His focus on employment discrimination practices led him to ensure the League supported A. Phillip Randolph's proposed March on Washington to combat discrimination in defense work and the armed services. Although the march did not come to fruition, it led to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issuing Executive Order 8802 which secured additional employment opportunities for blacks in numerous defense plants.

In the early 1960s, the Urban League turned its efforts to advancing the modern Civil Rights Movement. In 1961, Whitney Young became the new Executive Director. Trained as a social worker, Young proved instrumental in expanding the Urban League. Under his leadership, the organizational structure experienced a major overhaul. The staff size increased from "thirty-eight employees to 1200 (70 percent were black employees), and the budget increased from $350,000 in 1961 to over $1 million in 1964, and to almost $15 million by 1970."[67] Young substantially expanded the League's fundraising ability and, most critically, made the Urban League a full partner in the modern civil rights movement.[68] Led by Young, the Urban League became a co-sponsor of the historic 1963 March on Washington and produced various reports that called attention to the plight of urban black Americans during the civil rights era. Most of these reports furthered the research on urban problems started under Haynes' administration, but the League also

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[67] Nancy Weiss, *Whitney M. Young, Jr., and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1989), 97.
[68] "Our History," National Urban League.

took the opportunity to critique city leadership and to propose alternative urban planning initiatives.

In 1968, the Chicago Urban League released a research report on the racial injustices of urban planning and of federal policies, specifically the urban renewal program. The report, entitled *The Racial Aspects of Urban Planning: an Urban League Research Report*, highlighted the heinous treatment in the displacement of black households in urban communities. It noted that black people in the inner city view urban planners as the enemy due to their tendency to represent the interests of prestigious people or institutions. Although they recognized urban planners might be forced to accommodate desires of the power structure, the League implored urban planners to address the endless web of urban racism. The Urban League understood that poor blacks had little leverage under the current system. The report noted that whether the "giving is malicious or paternalistic, it does not justify that urban blacks are not involved in the determination of plans."[69] This lack of input from black residents ensured that troubling circumstances in the inner city remained unchanged, and that blacks continued to respond in kind to the constant injustice.

As an alternative to traditional planning initiatives, various Urban League chapters created their own planning documents. In response to comprehensive plans adopted by city planning departments, Urban League chapters made recommendations proposing more equitable projects. In 1967, the Chicago Urban League Research Department

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[69] Harold M. Baron, "The Racial Aspects of Urban Planning: an Urban League Research Report," (1968), found in Thomas and Ritzdorf, *In the Shadows*, 286.

prepared a *Plan for a System of Educational Parks in Chicago*. Adopted by both the

Board of Directors and Advisory Committee of the Chicago Urban League, the plan

referenced the Chicago Comprehensive Plan extensively. The document came about as a

result of six months of study and consultation. The League concluded a system of

educational parks "offered the most viable and effective means to achieve the educational

objectives of quality, integrated education."[70] Both reports pointed to the vision of the

Urban League set forth by Young during his tenure. He employed similar tactics at the

national office.

Young frequently called on national leadership to adjust the way they addressed

urban problems. He called on the government to create a "Domestic Marshall Plan," a

program to get rid of poverty and deprivation among black Americans. This plan proved

similar to the Marshall Plan that had been launched to reconstruct Europe after World

War II.[71] In the plan Young called for $145 billion in spending in black communities

over ten years to strengthen communities and fund social programs.[72] Young believed

that problems faced by black Americans could be explained by a history of injustice and

that they needed to be addressed through restorative means with the same fervor used in

solving the problems of other ethnic groups.

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[70] Chicago Research Department, *Plan for a System of Educational Parks in Chicago, 1967* (Chicago: National Urban League), 3.

[71] Daniel Geary, *Beyond Civil Rights: The Moynihan Report and Its Legacy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 85.

[72] National Association of Social Workers, *Leadership Lessons from Whitney M. Young, Jr.: A Teaching Guide To Accompany The Documentary Film "The Power Broker: Leadership Lessons from Whitney M. Young, Jr"* (Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers), 19.

Although no domestic Marshall Plan ever emerged, Young's program significantly influenced the creation of the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty legislation. His ten-point program ultimately sought to create an open society. In this open society, Young envisioned black people with a fair share of the power and wealth America possessed. In explaining his program, he noted that "blacks' hope lay not in a narrow separatism or in the cultural suicide of assimilationism, but in an open society founded on mutual respect, cooperation, and pluralistic group self-consciousness and pride."[73] While Young's untimely 1971 death abruptly ended his progress in creating an open society, the Urban League continues the struggle to secure parity for black urban America.

Though most of the Urban League leadership worked as trained social workers, their work has been closely related to that of trained urban planners. As previously discussed, architecture, public health and social work had similar objectives and practices to planning (see Chapter 1). Since states established planning programs at predominantly white universities in the early 1900s, they excluded most black Americans from the opportunity to pursue urban planning as a career. It is evident through the work of the Urban League, and similar black civic organizations, that the absence of black students in planning programs did not prevent black professionals from addressing urban problems.

Nonetheless, lacking technical planning skills undeniably placed black Americans at a disadvantage to their white counterparts. Without the technical knowledge, they could not secure planning jobs, and it is in urban planning offices that alternative policy options

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[73] Harold Sims, "Whitney Young's Open Society," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 396 (1971): 73.

are examined and proposed. Although black professionals accomplished noteworthy work through partnerships, even with allies, they did not possess sufficient power to get their proposed plans adopted. This reality encouraged black architecture educators to establish urban planning programs at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

Beginning in the early 1960s, black architectural educators realized the lack of black urban planners existed in part due to the absence of planning programs at HBCUs. The absence of HBCU planning programs stemmed from various factors. Prior to the 1960s, public and private development jobs remained closed to black Americans. President Johnson's Great Society and War on Poverty programs provided entry for blacks into the planning profession, but their presence remained limited. As a result of minimal employment opportunities, most black Americans grew up not knowing urban planning as a career. Furthermore, at predominantly white institutions, black students did not consider urban planning a field of study open to them. All of these factors ensured a lack of role models present in the urban planning field and limited black Americans' access to the planning decision making process.

Moved by the belief that black Americans needed to alleviate the problems of blacks in the inner city, HBCU architecture programs began to develop planning programs. Developed in 1969, the Ad Hoc Council of Black Architectural Schools "broadened its concerns to include skills and disciplines such as urban design and city and regional planning."[74] The council included institutions such as Hampton University, Howard

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[74] Thomas and Ritzdorf, *In the Shadows*, 243.

University, Tuskegee University, Southern University, and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Although the council proposed graduate planning programs at all of the member organizations, only Howard University could sustain a planning program for any significant period of time. Howard secured a grant from the Ford Foundation to create its planning program in 1973-74, while other programs lacked the proper funding and human resources needed to succeed. Although Howard's planning program flourished, it largely implemented the teaching practices of programs at predominately white institutions. Howard successfully trained several black urban planners, but not with the alternative practices hoped for by the Ad Hoc Council.

HBCUs with limited resources instead opted for urban studies or urban affairs programs which mirrored the policy taught in planning departments, but did not emphasize technical training in planning. While graduates of urban affairs programs worked for antipoverty programs, some viewed them as quasi-planners, lacking the technical knowledge to work for planning departments. As a result of minimizing technical skills in urban affairs programs, these programs often educated blacks as "lower-level social control technicians able to maintain social services in the ghettos."[75] By the early 1980s, the only surviving professional planning programs existed at Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University, the University of the District of Columbia, Howard University, and Morgan State University.

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[75] Thomas and Ritzdorf, *In the Shadows*, 244.

Morgan State University lived up to the planning program envisioned by the Ad Hoc Council. Designated an urban university, Morgan State committed itself to urban programs. Planning related programs at the university dated back to the late 1950s. Homer E. Favor, a young black scholar concerned with community planning, arrived at Morgan in 1956. Exhibiting a consistent commitment to community initiatives in Baltimore neighborhoods, when Morgan received a grant to establish an Urban Studies Institute in 1963, school leaders chose him as the director. In the early 1970s, the university expanded its commitment to addressing urban problems, and as a result, the Institute expanded and became known as the Center for Urban Affairs.

Along with the expansion of the Center came the introduction of a Masters program in Urban Planning and Policy Analysis. The university then added a Bachelors degree in Urban Studies and Community Service in 1971. In the initial years, a large number of white students enrolled in the degree programs, but Morgan placed an emphasis on the needs and concerns of black planning students. Morgan routinely reached out and admitted a "moderate number of black students who were nontraditional students or had incomplete academic preparation, but had high motivation and strong promise."[76] Furthermore, the planning program followed an advocacy approach to planning education with which black students could identify. Over the years, Morgan's planning program played an important role in increasing the numbers of blacks in the planning profession and in planning doctoral programs.

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[76] Thomas and Ritzdorf, *In the Shadows*, 251.

Currently, the only surviving HBCU planning programs are at Morgan State University and Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University. While most HBCU planning programs did not succeed, the presence of these programs speaks to the nature of black activism in urban communities. As this overview indicates, every effort did not achieve its objective, but the work never ceased. Since black Americans have inhabited urban environments, there has existed a concerted effort on their part to enhance the life chances of fellow black residents. The methods employed varied, but the collective vision of freedom propelled the movement forward. There remains considerable work to be done, but past efforts need to be celebrated, and in part, seen as a guide for future black activism efforts.

Chapter Three

Transforming Urban Planning: A Call for Cultural Competency

The preceding chapters reveal much about how urban planning and black activism have existed historically and they provide significant insight into how both presently function. While additional policies have come to fruition and other movements have occurred, the objectives have remained the same. Urban planning remains a field that fails to adequately address the needs and concerns of black Americans. At the same time, black activists in many urban areas continue to focus on demands for inclusion in the community development process. What may not be so obvious is the need for both groups to operate in tandem with each other. Too often, urban planners argue that they possess the skills and technical knowledge to plan, so therefore, they need to be entrusted to plan for all communities.

The historical overview of black activism indicates that urban planners are not the only professionals capable of producing results for urban communities. The majority of the Urban League leadership consisted of trained social workers committed to the struggle of urban residents and possessing the knowledge to successfully address community concerns. The success of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and black cooperative movement did not rest on policies and agendas set forth by urban

planners and the federal government, but by black activists who recognized a need and sought to fulfill it. The long and extensive record of black activism in the United States proves that urban planners are not the only people capable of contributing to community economic development in a meaningful manner. If anything, black activists have achieved more for marginalized people than urban planners. Even if urban planners were the best equipped and the only professionals possessing technical knowledge, they still could not justify dictating the entire planning process.

Not only is this treatment unfair to residents forced to accept planners' decisions, it is also impractical and unreasonable to place the onus of decision making in the hands of a select few. For too long, urban planners have dictated, rather than facilitated the community economic development process. One need only look to the historical overview of urban planning initiatives to understand the consequences of that decision. By no means are urban planners responsible for all the social ills present in American communities. They do, however, share the responsibility and contribute to the proliferation of these ills when they cling to antiquated and inequitable methods of planning. Urban planning scholar June Manning Thomas explains it best in her call for unified diversity in social action.

In her article, "Educating Planners: Unified Diversity for Social Action," Thomas notes that one of the most difficult problems facing American cities is "extremes of wealth and poverty of individuals (stratified by race and gender and of communities). The state of urban problems is such that, as a profession, we really cannot afford paralysis

when so much work remains to be done."[77] The main purpose of improving knowledge about the relationship between race and planning must be to influence planning practice for the better. In no way does cutting thousands of people out of the decision-making process benefit urban planning. If the primary obligation of urban planning is to serve the common good, the common good cannot be served by ignoring the experiences of minority populations. Minorities, like all people, deserve to be treated with fairness.

Since its inception, urban planning scholarship has wrestled with defining appropriate planning practice. While alternative models have existed, the dominant models have been the rational model, incrementalism, advocacy and equity planning, and communicative planning. The rational model emerged as the initial theory and remains the dominant paradigm in planning practice. Largely initiated in the University of Chicago graduate city planning program, the rational model relies on the scientific method to determine planning practice. Designed by urban planners who participated in planning efforts of the Progressive era, the rational model privileges efficiency and professionalization over other factors in planning practice.

Within the rational model, two schools of thought exist. Under the pure rational model, scholars argue that due to planner's technical expertise, they possess perfect knowledge. The second and more widely accepted model is the pragmatic rational model which posits that planners make good use of the knowledge they possess. Critics of the rational model argue that it works best when value conflicts have been resolved

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[77] June Manning Thomas, "Educating Planners: Unified Diversity for Social Action," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 15 (1996): 180.

beforehand, is best utilized to fix "tame" problems, and focuses on process rather than outcome. In a society where value conflicts are rarely resolved and problems seldom are tame, employing the rational model seems a dangerous choice. Additionally, as expressed by economic geographer Bent Flyvbjerg, rationality is embedded in power relationships and one of the privileges of power is the freedom to define reality and, therefore what people perceive as rational.[78] What is considered "rational" is constantly changing and rarely includes what those without power consider to be balanced and sensible. A response to the limits of the rational model is strategic planning or incrementalism.

Incrementalism rests on the thought that planning practice must be piecemeal, incremental, and pragmatic. Under incrementalism, scholars believe it is better to let adverse consequences develop and deal with them as separate problems, rather than attempt to anticipate all consequences in advance. This strategy involves decision makers comparing and evaluating in increments only and considering a restricted number of policy alternatives. Through this "strategic" process, a set of action strategies are composed that focus on this incremental vision. Like the rational model, incrementalism favors powerful members of society, because the increments are decided by the privileged few. Additionally, it offers small solutions to large problems, leaving things outside of the strategic vision unchallenged. Recognizing that both the rational model and incrementalism are both centralized top-down approaches, a small group of planning practitioners assumed major decisions need to be made by the citizenry.

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[78] Bent Flyvbjerg, *Rationality and Power: Democracy in Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 321.

Beginning in the 1960s and working throughout the 1970s, urban planner Paul Davidoff introduced the concept of advocacy to the planning profession. Davidoff recognized that many groups did not enjoy adequate representation under standard planning practice, and during such turbulent times, he argued that planning assistance needs to be available to interest groups seeking changes in the community economic development process. Without planning assistance in the form of urban planners advocating on communities' behalf, Davidoff believed that marginalized communities would continue to be ignored.[79]

Advocacy planning still promoted the importance of technical knowledge to the planning process, but also viewed the representation of previously marginalized groups as equally important. Davidoff proposed the implementation of community design centers in various American cities that offered planning services to low-income neighborhoods. Under his plans, graduate students, planning faculty, and recent graduates of planning programs needed to work together to assist low-income and minority communities to address their needs. Rather than communities having one central plan for the entire city, under advocacy planning, plural plans existed that communicated the varied interests of the diverse populations present in urban environments. Urban planner Norman Krumholz took advocacy planning a little further through the development of equity planning which suggested that the needs of the poor and marginalized must be the foremost concern of

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[79] Paul Davidoff, "The Role of the City Planner in Social Planning," 10-11.

planning departments. Krumholz suggested that these needs could only be addressed through the redistribution of wealth and resources.[80]

Advocacy and equity planning functioned well in the citizen participation era of the 1960s and 1970s (more in Chapter 1). Federal programs like Model Cities and War on Poverty initiatives supported urban rehabilitation informed by citizen participation, but the national mood shifted in the 1980s and, federal funds for social programs with a civic focus ended. While the efforts of advocacy and equity planning are noteworthy, they both rested on the rational model. Additionally, middle class whites dominated advocacy and equity planning and failed to adequately shift the power to interest groups during the community economic development process.

The latest theory for planning practice is communicative planning. Urban planning theorist, Judith Innes is largely responsible for developing the primary tenets of communicative or collaborative planning. In "Planning Styles in Conflict," Innes and planning scholar Judith Gruber recognize that the problem with previous theoretical proposals for planning practice is the belief that their method is both practical and morally correct.[81] Innes argues that communicative planning addresses that concern through sincere and comprehensible communication with communities. Rather than advocating for specific groups as seen in advocacy and equity planning, communicative planning supports planners serving the role as mediated negotiators who seek to achieve

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[80] Norman Krumholz, "Advocacy Planning: Can it Move the Center," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 60 no. 2 (1994): 150.
[81] Judith Innes and Judith Gruber, "Planning Styles in Conflict: The Metropolitan Transportation Commission," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 71 (2005), 184.

equity oriented results. Through training and practice in mediation, urban planners can produce decisions that meet the public interest, especially those interests held by minorities.

While communicative planning recognizes the need for communication between planners and the communities they serve, it presumes that planners have established relationships with these communities or, that they possess the knowledge to develop those relationships. Furthermore, it rests on compromise or consensus between conflicting groups, which in itself perpetuates the domination of minority groups in the decision making process. Communicative planning has made urban planners more aware of the ways in which their work perpetuates inequality, but it has no mechanism for limiting the continuation of inequitable practices. Unfortunately, all of these theories lack a foundational change in how urban planners perceive their skill set, and therefore, authority to commandeer the community economic development process.

It would be unreasonable to argue that urban planners relinquish all control in the planning process. It is, however, important that they recognize the need for and benefit of minority-led efforts. In this case, history indicates that black Americans have the skill set, will and interest to play a larger role in black community development. It also shows that when black Americans are kept out of the process, black communities often lose when final planning directives are implemented. If urban planners retain their authority based on their skills, then black Americans have proven that shared authority is a sensible next step in planning practice. Creating models based in shared authority and cultural competence will not be easy, but doing so is a necessary step in moving urban planning

closer to its purported claim of serving the common good, and away from the reality of only serving those with power.

The following visioning plan outlines the author's proposed urban planning model that recognizes the need for community led efforts. This plan addresses previous theories that lack a foundational change in how urban planners perceive their skill set by providing opportunities for community members to lead. As previously discussed, when the community is left out of the process, they suffer when final projects are implemented, but planners also lose the opportunity to implement community projects that are relevant and innovative. Urban planner and social justice advocate, Paul Davidoff explained that planners often fail to confront the most important questions plaguing our society and as a result, the profession has "been too slow and too uncommitted in regard to these issues," and that failure to address this could lead to a "new professional city planning organization, one concerned with areas that planners exclude."[82] Past urban planning models have proven unsustainable and archaic in these changing times. The nation is becoming more diverse both ethnically and socially, and urban planning efforts can no longer be defined by models that do not reflect that change. The following model (designed by the author) seeks to honor communities' voices and identities and provide the means for urban planning to be transformative and relevant in present day plans for community change. It is meant to be employed in neighborhood planning and development processes to influence what is built on the local cultural landscape. The model is framed within the typical planning and design review process that municipal

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[82] Paul Davidoff, "The Role of the City Planner in Social Planning," 4-5.

planners work within to protect the cultural heritage that is important to citizens within defined local geographies.

This plan is based on culturally competent community engagement with black Americans. While this plan is specific to black communities and addresses pressing concerns of black Americans, the hope is that other marginalized groups seeking justice in the community economic development process will find that this model can be tailored to their interests. The model is built by following the structure of visioning plans and is intended to protect the material history and heritage of black communities. Guided by scholarly research, past black activism efforts, and interviews with established black institutions in various states, this visioning plan assesses community options and opportunities on the basis of shared purposes and values.[83] It does not attempt to address all the shared values of black America since this population is extremely diverse and comprised of various communities with different concerns and needs. However, there is a collective vision that can exist alongside these varied interests. This visioning plan proposes some elements that need to be considered in the collective vision of black America.

The plan is intended to speak to the needs of black communities and protect the built environment. Since the model is meant to be employed by black activists and urban planners to reference and utilize, the success of this model rests on some level of common understanding between these groups. This understanding can only develop

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[83] Anna Haines, *Using Visioning in a Comprehensive Planning Process* (Madison: University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension, 2001), 1.

through communication with each other and meaningful collaboration that does not advance one group over the other. While it is important to honor urban planners' skill set, this model requires planners to recognize that communities of color have their own cultural knowledge, abilities and contacts from which planners can learn. Planners must also recognize that often this cultural knowledge has gone unrecognized and unacknowledged due to black Americans' unique experience with racism and other forms of subordination in the United States.[84] Any effort to address that subordination must intentionally seek to reverse it in order to further racial and social justice.

Hopefully, urban planners will come to recognize the consequences of not engaging black Americans in this work. When planners fail to acknowledge the importance of engaging communities of color, they also disregard the importance of cultural competence in all aspects of urban planning. Planning scholar Iris Young notes that through cultural competency, "recognition of difference should lead not to equality of treatment, but to different treatment of groups or individuals based on the extent of their cultural and group marginalization, and lack of privilege and power."[85]

As urban planners further engage black Americans, they will be made aware of the extent to which they contribute to perpetuating the underprivileged position black Americans occupy. They will also come to understand why there is an underrepresentation of planning faculty of color, planning students of color, and urban

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[84] Tara Yosso, "Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8 (2005): 72.
[85] Julian Agyeman and Jennifer Sien Erickson, "Culture, Recognition, and the Negotiation of Difference: Some Thoughts on Cultural Competency in Planning Education*," Journal of Planning Education and Research* 32 no. 3 (2012): 359.

planners of color. If urban planners continue to fail to recognize cultural difference, black Americans will lose the opportunity to engage in planning practice, as community members, but also as planning scholars. As a profession that seeks to "give people the opportunity to have a meaningful impact on the development of plans and programs" and that allows for "participation broad enough to include those who lack formal organization or influence," failing to honor cultural difference in urban planning education and practice would be hypocritical, deceitful, and self-defeating.[86]

Real, meaningful engagement is owed to black America. This recognition must not stem from the guilt of white urban planners who failed to act in the past, or because of the frustration of black Americans over ignored needs. This recognition needs to be based on the notion that everyone must be guaranteed a quality life. In America, the richest country on earth, no one should struggle economically or socially. Instead, the focus must be on maintaining economic, social and cultural prosperity for all. Unfortunately, due to inaction, the United States still struggles with securing those needs for the majority of its people. Now is the time for visioning—if the United States continues to explore the issue without acting, it silently, but deliberately condones the suffering of many to maintain the comfort of few.

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[86] "AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct," American Planning Association, accessed April 10, 2016, https://www.planning.org/ethics/ethicscode.htm.

Chapter Four

Imprinting Culture into Community: A Vision for Black Community Economic Development

"…the only genuine, long-range solution for what has happened lies in an attack—mounted at every level—upon the conditions that breed despair and violence. All of us know what those conditions are: ignorance, discrimination, slums, poverty, disease, not enough jobs. We should attack these conditions—not because we are frightened by conflict, but because we are fired by conscience. We should attack them because there is simply no other way to achieve a decent and orderly society in America…"

Lyndon Baines Johnson
Address to the Nation: June 27, 1967

"I, for one, believe that if you give people a thorough understanding of what it is that confronts them, and the basic causes that produce it, they'll create their own program. And when the people create a program, you get action."

Malcolm X, December 1964

In order for us as poor and oppressed people to become part of a society that is meaningful, the system under which we now exist has to be radically changed. This means that we are going to have to learn to think in radical terms. I use the term radical in its original meaning—getting down to and understanding the root cause. It means facing a system that does not lend itself to your needs and devising means by which you change that system.

Ella Baker, 1969

The primary objective of the following vision plan is to foster collaborative community engagement and to situate urban residents in a position of authority in the

community economic development process. It is important to recognize that this vision does not offer recommendations as seen in traditional planning documents. Instead, this plan outlines a process that can be utilized by marginalized people to envision a stronger community. As a result of the visioning process, communities will further understand their cultural identities, and will have the tools to implement a community economic development process guided by that identity.

Each step is critical to the success of the plan, and must be implemented in its entirety to achieve the desired result of communities designed and sustained by those that inhabit them. First, the plan defines cultural imprints and the process taken by communities to design their community cultural imprint. Once the cultural imprint is developed, the plan outlines the establishment of a cohort of community organizations and institutions that will work alongside urban planning departments to implement the cultural imprint and to ensure that the imprint is referenced and used as a guide throughout the planning process. While the plan focuses primarily on the development and implementation of the cultural imprint, further steps which include the establishment of a formal, sustained relationship between the community cohort and urban planning departments will be outlined in the conclusion.

Planning Staff Reports: What and Why

Before the cultural imprint and the process is defined, it is important to outline how the cultural imprint will be implemented in planning practice. While the hope is that this process will be adopted in various aspects of the planning process, the community cultural imprint must be first introduced in planning departments' staff reports. Staff

reports are documents completed by urban planning departments any time a development is proposed. When a developer submits an application for a project, whether for a new restaurant or a proposed apartment complex, the planning staff reviews the application against a set of guidelines and makes recommendations as to whether the proposed project needs to be approved. The review process along with staff recommendations, is outlined in the staff report then shared with the City's Commission or Council, which makes the final decision regarding project approval.

Staff reports are important for several reasons. First, they compel the planning staff to thoroughly review applications and to implement an organized, streamlined review process of development proposals. This report not only conveys important information for consideration to city commissioners or council members in the approval process, but it also provides applicants with direction on how best to meet city requirements and expectations. Staff reports are also significant because they serve as a historic record of staff reactions and comments to proposals that are made public to community residents. Through staff reports, community members have access to the development approval process and information that clearly expresses the nature of development in their community. Since staff reports are fairly accessible and largely determine the projects that will be implemented in communities, it is critical that cultural consideration is first introduced at this level.

While each city has different guidelines and expectations regarding community development, there are certain categories that are included in all reports. The report typically starts with the project details. This includes the type of project proposed, the

location being considered, requests made by the applicant, and the applicant's

demographic information. The project details are followed by a general overview of the

project. This portion includes general information about the area and a more detailed

account of the applicant's project. Information about the area could include past actions

taken by the city that impact the proposed project or if applicable, history regarding the

lot where the project is proposed. After extensive details are shared regarding the

applicant's plan for the project, the planning staff determines whether or not the

application complies with requirements to develop in that area. This section of staff

reports is structured differently depending on the city and location in which the project is

proposed.

While some cities have more requirements than others, there are common

requirements and considerations in most staff reports. Examples include compatibility

with the community's master plan, zoning considerations, architectural considerations,

and roadway impacts. A more extensive list of project considerations can be found below

(Table No. 1). Once planning staff considers all applicable standards, the report

concludes with staff recommendations. The recommendations can fall into three

categories: approval, rejection, or approval with proposed changes. Although the final

authority rests with city commissioners or council members, city officials rely heavily on

staff input when making decisions to approve or deny proposed projects.

Table No. 1 Common Project Considerations

1. Zoning Code: suitability with existing zoning or if zoning changes proposed, suitability of proposed changes

2. Comprehensive/Master Plan Considerations

3. Neighborhood Plan Considerations

4. Design Review Criteria

5. Historic Review

6. Compatibility with Surrounding Development

7. Environmental Impact

8. Circulation + Thoroughfare Impacts

9. Parking + Loading

10. Landscape plan + Screening*

11. Architectural Design

12. Building Materials

13. Streetscape Improvements

14. Signage

15. Storm Water

16. Public Space + Park Land

17. Fiscal Considerations

18. Outside Agencies Comments (i.e. Department of Transportation)

19. Community Input

20. Special District Design Criteria: if applicable

* Landscape screening is shrubbery, trees, and other plants that provide enclosure, definition and privacy to an area.

Planning departments understand the weight of their recommendation, and it is important to recognize that departments take great care to carefully consider applications prior to making their decision. While considerable effort goes into the staff report process, there are significant considerations that are not included in the review process. One glaring omission is cultural consideration. To understand the extent to which culture is not fully considered by planning staff, this plan includes an analysis of the top fifty cities' (determined by population size) staff reports. The author chose to analyze staff reports from the top fifty cities, because these are often the cities that have a substantive staff and professional training opportunities to incorporate the most recent planning directives.

Once the author decided on the cities to include, planning department websites were searched to locate staff reports. Most cities had access to staff report archives on their planning department websites, but others required the author to go to the city council or commission website, search their minutes which included planning staff's reports. While the author had to search both planning staff and city council/commission websites, all of the reports included the "Staff Report" heading which made it easier to determine that it was a staff report. Some of the documents did not include the staff report until the second or third page, so in some cases, finding the report required reading through the entire document.

The author reviewed two to three staff reports for the fifty aforementioned cities. The review involved identifying a system of boilerplate categories for real estate

development review and reading the report in its entirety to locate any mention of

community-specific standards beyond the common project considerations (Table No. 1).

The author searched for cultural consideration by looking for key words that identified

standards other than land use consideration. Key words searched included: heritage,

lifestyle, customs, traditions, values, convention, past, history, background, historical,

local, principles, ideals, society and legacy. These key words were chosen because they

are associated with culture or can be used in place of culture. Phrases searched included:

neighborhood identity, neighborhood consideration, community character, historical

legacy, community identity, community support, neighborhood conservation, equity

consideration and unique community traits. Similar to the key words, these phrases were

chosen because they are associated with culture and indicate that the planning staff

considers standards beyond land use.

   Cities often include reviews beyond assessing land use including aesthetics. For

example, two cities that included consideration beyond land use were Phoenix, Arizona

and Oakland, California. The Oakland staff report involved a request for a permit for

their Shoreline Park featured a redesign section. In this section the planning department

received comments from the community noting that "the design is banal and does not

reflect Oakland's unique character."[87] The staff mentioned that the proposed design will

resolve the issue by "incorporating the avant-garde design profile of Oakland's

community at this time."[88] Through this report it is clear that Oakland recognizes the

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[87] Oakland City Planning Department, *Staff Report* (Oakland: Planning and Building Department, 2015), 9.
[88] Ibid.

need for development to reflect Oakland's character, but there is no system in place that has clearly defined what Oakland's character entails beyond an "avant-garde" look. General phrases like this can easily be misconstrued if not followed by extensive guidelines detailing how to achieve this look which is absent from the staff report. Phoenix similarly outlines that "neighborhood character and identity should be encouraged and reinforced."[89] In a staff report that outlines an applicant's request to build a planned unit development, the report includes a character and identity section, but they define character as "connectivity to commercial spaces, recreation spaces, and the public trails system."[90] While connectivity to neighborhood assets are important, it does not fully articulate the character and identity of the community.

Other cities included similar community character and aesthetics sections, but none of the fifty cities' staff reports explicitly outline the character of the neighborhood relating to cultural heritage, history, and local values, or provide guidelines to ensure applicants are proposing developments that speak to the local concerns of black neighborhoods. (Table No. 2). As a result of a lack of cultural consideration, applications can advance through the planning process without acknowledging the fabric of the existing cultural heritage imprint of the surrounding geography being reviewed. This research suggests that development reviews in the fifty largest cities in the United States generally ignore the needs of community members who are often inextricably linked to the cultural heritage of the neighborhood.

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[89] Phoenix Planning and Development Department, *Staff Report: Z-3-15-1* (Phoenix: Planning and Development Department, 2015), 4.
[90] Ibid.

One reason for this oversight could be that cultural consideration requires extensive community input. While "community input" is a section included in most staff reports, this practice most often refers to public hearings managed by planning staff where community members have the opportunity to share their concerns or support of the project. By the time a public hearing is scheduled the applicant's proposal could have gone through several iterations of development reviews by the planning staff before area residents' either know about it or have a chance to review it. Also, public hearings are open to everyone, but regular attendance is unlikely due to changes in scheduling and hearing locations. These changes are made so that more people in the community can participate, but the challenge then becomes ensuring consistent input from residents with hectic schedules or limited transportation options. As a result, projects are often approved with minimal community input.

Table No. 2 Top 50 Cities Staff Report Cultural Analysis	
Surveyed: 50 Largest United States Cities	
New York City	Baltimore
Los Angeles	Oklahoma City
Chicago	Portland
Houston	Las Vegas
Philadelphia	Louisville, KY
Phoenix	Milwaukee, WI
San Antonio	Albuquerque City, NM
San Diego	Tucson City, AZ
Dallas	Fresno, CA
San Jose	Sacramento, CA
Austin	Long Beach, CA
Jacksonville	Kansas City, MO
San Francisco	Mesa City, AZ
Indianapolis	Atlanta, GA
Columbus	Virginia Beach, VA
Fort Worth, TX	Omaha City, NE
Charlotte	Colorado Springs, CO
Detroit	Raleigh, NC
El Paso, TX	Miami, FL
Seattle	Oakland, CA
Denver	Minneapolis, MN
Washington DC	Tulsa City, OK
Memphis	Cleveland, OH
Boston	Wichita, KS
Nashville-Davidson	New Orleans, LA

Community Cultural Imprints

The implementation of community cultural imprints addresses the lack of community input which often leads to development projects that are not culturally relevant to the community. Instituting cultural imprints into the development approval process will force the planning department, developers, and the community to think critically about the identity and culture of an area. Visioning is an important part of the cultural imprint process. This ensures that the community does not become stagnant and

unreceptive to emerging ideas. However, the vision needs to be informed by the present assets of the community. It must also honor the present cultural life of the community and the cultural legacy that has sustained the community over time.

Therefore, communities need to look at cultural imprints as a guiding tool for development and neighborhood initiatives. Key to understanding the nature of cultural imprints is recognizing what an imprint is. Imprints are defined as things that make a mark or an impression. While imprints do not define objects in totality, they indicate what stands out about something or they describe, the most relevant or prominent component of an entity. Community cultural imprints serve the same purpose by highlighting what makes communities stand out culturally. While cultural imprints cannot capture every unique or qualifying aspect of a community, they outline the key aspects of a community's culture that leave an impression on people—for those who reside within the community and for those who may be unfamiliar with the area.

In essence, community cultural imprints determine how communities desire to be perceived and celebrated. Once these issues are broadly understood, those who seek to contribute to communities through development projects, must do so with the culture of the community in mind. For this reason, defining a community's cultural imprint is a tedious, though extremely important process. Due to the challenging nature of the process, each step is detailed below (Graphic No. 1) and they are addressed in detail to provide all the information needed to successfully complete this process. The plan also includes examples of community organizations that can help planning departments to facilitate the cultural imprint process with community residents.

Graphic No. 1 Community Cultural Imprint Process

Community request Cultural Imprint Process	Community establishes Cultural Imprint "9 word community stamp"	Community also helps establish Y/N list and general questions to be referenced in planning staff reports
Community Cohort is Established (Organizations: Small-Mid-Large Tier)	Local Planning Office + C. Cohort co-facilitate public process with community	Cultural Imprint implemented: in effect for all projects that fall within "land use consideration matrix"
Cultural Imprint Public Process Begins	Community Cohort + Local Planning Office coordinate Public Process	Review Implementation + Revise

Step One: Community Request the Cultural Imprint Process

The initial step of the cultural imprint process is for the community to determine

that it wants to undergo the process.[91] This phase represents an important step because

the process serves as an opportunity for community members to exercise agency in the

community development process. For the process to work properly, it has to be driven by

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[91]The author recognizes that communities are not homogenous or easy to define. For the cultural imprint process, the community should be defined by the neighborhood boundaries found in planning documents. While these boundaries can be debated by residents that occupy certain neighborhoods, the process and its potential benefits, should supersede community disputes over boundaries. This is an important debate that needs to take place and deserves its own process, but it should not prevent the cultural imprint process from occurring.

the community from its inception. However, this consideration does not mean that planning departments do not play a significant role in this initial process. Nonetheless, it is up to planning departments to ensure that the communities they serve understand that having a cultural imprint is an option.

For communities to recognize the fundamental purpose of the imprint and to understand the benefits of having the imprint, planning departments must openly communicate with residents. This communication can manifest in various ways, but effective examples include sending emails to community leaders, speaking at community events and meetings, or holding meetings with prominent institutions and organizations to inform residents of the process. The idea is that once communities are made aware of the potential in the process, they will express a willingness to take part. If they do not, planning departments must not cease to communicate. They must continue to seek alternative means of ensuring that the community is aware of the process and to demonstrate their willingness to facilitate the process. Once the process is understood at the community level and community members request the establishment of a community cultural imprint, the planning department must help interested community members to organize a community cohort.
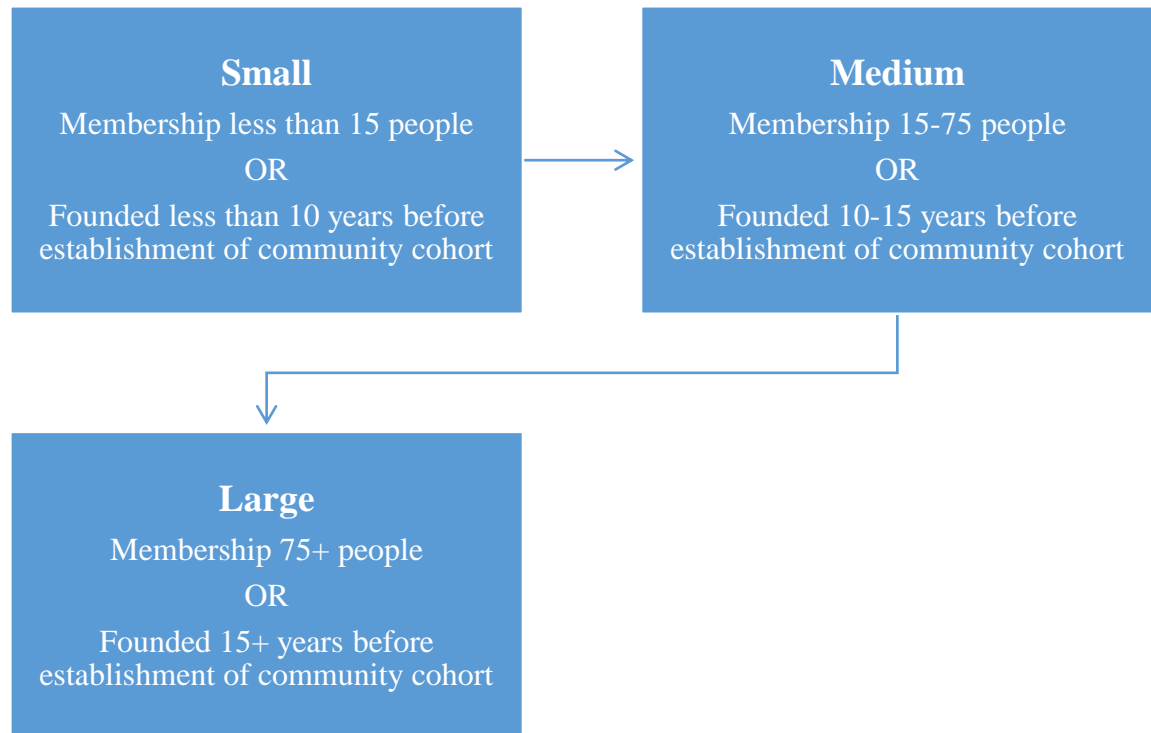
Step Two: Establish Community Cohort

The community cohort serves as a group of community organizations that will help the planning department to facilitate the public process necessary to construct the imprint. Organizations as opposed to individuals typically offer spaces to hold meetings (i.e. churches, synagogues, community and recreation center, etc.), and have access to

community members through their membership base. The community cohort's voice is not intended to supersede the opinions and preferences of community members, but instead serve as a link between the planning department and community. Often, as highlighted in previous chapters, planning departments have played a part in the destruction of minority communities. As a result, there can be a lack of trust for communities that have had contentious relationships with planners. The community cohort functions to address those issues because the cohort consists of highly respected community institutions and organizations.

The community cohort needs to include small and large organizations, organizations that have been in the community for a short period of time, and others that have existed for decades. A diverse range of organizations within the cohort is important for several reasons. It ensures that various types of organizations take part in the process, allows smaller or newer organizations that may be overlooked in the community to be heard, it reaffirms that this process is not meant to be privileged or limiting in scope. To guarantee that the community cohorts represent a wide range of community voices, community cohorts will be required to have at least one small, medium and large tier organization for the cultural imprint process to move forward. The three tiers are identified in the graphic below (Graphic No. 2).

Graphic No. 2 Community Cohort Tiers

Small	Medium
Membership less than 15 people	Membership 15-75 people
OR	OR
Founded less than 10 years before establishment of community cohort	Founded 10-15 years before establishment of community cohort

Large
Membership 75+ people
OR
Founded 15+ years before establishment of community cohort

While an organization's tier designation can be determined by either size or length of existence, the founding date of the organization needs to supersede the size in determining which tier organizations occupy. While organizing larger numbers of people is noteworthy and commendable, the ability to sustain an organization over a significant period of time shows commitment to the community and a certain level of community knowledge that must be recognized. Exceptions can be made for communities that cannot identify a small, medium, and large tier organization to participate in the process, but

meaningful efforts need to be made to fulfill this guideline. Once the community cohort has at least three organizations that agree to co-facilitate the cultural imprint process with the planning department, the public process can ensue.

Throughout the public process, the community cohort will work more closely with the community than the planning department. At each step in the process, the community cohort will meet with the planning department to plan the events that must be completed. This an important role because the planners will likely focus on general planning, but the community cohort will ensure that the community events are culturally relevant and scheduled for times and at locations that they know will help attract community members. Once the schedule is established, the community cohort will be responsible for recruiting dedicated, interested community residents to take part in the community cultural imprint process.

Once this process begins, the community cohort will focus on making sure that community needs and concerns are adequately addressed in the cultural imprint. The hope is that the community cohort is comprised of a diverse range of organizations and institutions so they can call attention to community needs that may not be represented by the community members involved. For example, through the process, the community could identify a lack of grocery stores and limited visibility of local businesses as weaknesses or needs. While these issues are relevant, community cohort institutions will help residents identify additional needs as well as community assets, and they will help the community to articulate the best ways to address needs and enhance assets.

Community cohorts do not have to consist of organizations that cover all aspects of the community, but making a genuine and sincere effort to be comprehensive in coverage increases the likelihood that the cultural imprint will address a more diverse range of community concerns. This consideration then strengthens the cultural imprint guidelines required to implement community development projects. The appendix includes community organization profiles based on interviews the author conducted. The author traveled to the organizations' cities to discuss organizational objectives and programs. These organizations are included in the profile because they recognize the need to focus specifically on black Americans' concerns and approach these concerns with cultural consideration in mind. While these organizations do not represent an exhaustive list of the range of organizations that need to be included in the cultural imprint process, they do address a diverse range of community concerns, which represents the primary purpose of community cohorts.

Step Three: Community Cultural Imprint Process

The community cultural imprint process needs to involve numerous public meetings with community members. Community members can include residents, people who work in the community, and others who frequent the area (i.e. churchgoers, artists, etc.). Once the community cohort is established, they must work with the planning department to determine the schedule for the public meetings and plan out the activities ending in the cultural imprint unveiling and implementation. The community cohort and planning department must approach this process with creativity in mind. The necessary steps to determine the cultural imprint are detailed below, but since culture is central to

this process, each community needs to highlight its unique identity when coordinating each step in the process.

The first step involves a neighborhood survey designed to further understand the community's cultural identity. The survey involves community residents and the community cohort gathering historical, political, and social information about the area. This survey could involve a host of community events at neighborhood institutions, community walks to determine community assets and needs, and community research that acknowledges the area's historical legacy. The neighborhood survey is a critical step in the process because it is intended to help the community identify what it values about the area, what needs to be preserved, and to pinpoint areas that are in need of community improvement. Since this step is so critical and significant, considerable time must be devoted to ensure it is successful. The neighborhood survey needs to include at least five to seven community events and must occur over the course of at least two to three months.

Once the neighborhood survey is complete, the community cohort and planning department need to plan the community cultural imprint meetings. The imprint cannot be determined in one meeting, so building the community cultural imprint needs to occur as a three or four-part series. The first part functions as the neighborhood survey review. A lot of information will be collected during that time, but not all of it will be pertinent. During this step, cohorts must determine what the community views as key results of the survey. These sessions can involve roundtable discussions, a World Café can be conducted where people discuss their takeaways from the survey, or participants can

organize one large group discussion about the defining moments as understood by the community. The format must be tailored to accommodate each community, but it may be best to do both small and large group discussions to ensure that all voices that want to be heard feel comfortable participating.

The next part in the cultural imprint series is to start building the imprint. The cultural imprint consists of a nine-word stamp, a checklist that addresses community concerns regarding development, and guiding questions designed by the community to further assist the planning department in compiling staff reports and making its final recommendations for proposed projects. The "nine-word stamp" guides the remainder of the process because it establishes the image the community wants people to instinctively think of while in their neighborhood. This step requires the community to think critically about how they would like the area defined and what issues they want developers to consider. This part may require several iterations to get the majority on one accord, but it is critical that the community understands this stamp will inform the checklist and questions that the planning department includes in its reports. A sample community cultural imprint for Georgetown, South Carolina is included below.[92] Any words can be used to define the community, but this example can be considered a guide for the descriptive language that is expected for the community stamp.

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[92] This cultural imprint does not stem from a cultural imprint process. The author designed the community cultural imprint process. There are no communities that have undertaken the implementation process. The Georgetown, South Carolina example is an example of what the nine word stamp would look like. Communities that go through the imprint process should see this as a guide.

Graphic No. 3 Sample Community Cultural Stamp

Georgetown, South Carolina

Audacious	Natural	Folk
Inviting	Untamed	Familiar
Genteel	Passionate	Simple

The remaining process involves determining which land uses the imprint will have to review, the checklist and guiding questions. It is at this point that the planning department's participation is particularly critical. The onus of conveying information about potential land uses to be considered, as well as providing examples of questions that are often included in staff reports, are the purview of planning departments since they are most familiar with this part of the process. The final decision of which land uses need cultural imprint consideration lies with the community, but the planning department must be clear about what the land uses are, and potential positive and negative impacts they see. Land use designations vary depending on the community, but the list below includes common designations and suggestions of whether these uses must require cultural imprint consideration before being approved.

Table No. 3 Cultural Imprint Land Use Matrix

Land Use	Cultural Imprint Consideration
Institutional	
Schools	Yes when operated and/or maintained by private organizations
Hospitals	Yes
Libraries	Yes
Churches	Yes/No*
Residential	
Rural Residential	No
Single Family	No
Urban Single Family	No
Higher-Density Single Family	Yes
Mixed Residential	Yes
Multifamily	Yes
Mixed Use	
Residential Mixed Use	Yes
Office Mixed Use	Yes
High Density Mixed Use	Yes
Commercial and Industrial	
General Office	Yes
Neighborhood Office	Yes
General Commercial	Yes
Neighborhood Commercial	Yes
Industrial	Yes
Light Industrial	Yes
Civic and Open Space	
Environmental Conservation	Yes

Continued

Table No. 3 Continued

Recreation and Open Space	**Yes when operated and/or maintained by private organizations**
Civic Buildings	Yes, when private organizations operate for public use
Utilitarian Infrastructure	Yes, unless required for environmental safety
Civic Infrastructure (i.e. signs, poles, crosswalks, etc.)	Yes

Special Purpose

Agriculture	Yes
Major Impact Facilities	Yes
Major Planned Developments	Yes
Transportation	Yes
Water	Yes

*Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA) states that cities cannot discriminate against churches. RLUIPA requires that "religious assemblies and institutions" must be treated the same as "non-religious assemblies and institutions" under zoning laws. While they can be included in the community cultural imprint process, cities cannot exclude them altogether.

Once the community determines the land uses that require cultural imprint consideration, the goal of the remaining meetings will be to determine the checklist and guiding questions. The stamp will be shown to developers when their projects fall within the land use matrix determined for the cultural imprint, but the planning department will also share information on the checklist and the questions so that applicants understand what standards need to be met. The checklist needs to consist of yes/no items. Sample

questions are: Did the applicant communicate her/his project to the community? Did the applicant address at least six out of the nine words in the stamp? The guiding questions are intended to be useful for the applicants, but particularly for planning staff members who may not have been as involved in the community cultural imprint process and need more assistance in ensuring the imprint is fully addressed.

The guiding questions must be addressed in the comments section of the staff report immediately following the cultural imprint consideration. These questions are more open ended and must attempt to ascertain the applicant's community cultural awareness and willingness to implement culturally relevant projects. Once the stamp, checklist, and guiding questions are determined and approved by the community at the public meetings, the planning staff will present the community cultural imprint to city council or commissioners and seek approval. Once approved, the cultural imprint will be implemented and included as a required field to be addressed in planning staff reports.

Step Four: Community Cultural Imprint Implementation

Once the cultural imprint is approved and implemented into the planning staff reports, the community needs to remain involved in the process by attending city council or commission meetings. Although the process is intended to ensure that the community's voice is heard and addressed in development projects, the community and planning department will need to monitor various projects that are proposed and approved once the cultural imprint has taken affect. Once the imprint has been in place for a year, every imprint approved project will need to be reviewed. At this point the

planning department, community cohort and interested community members will need to

reconvene to review the process and if needed, revise the guidelines.

Table No. 4 Community Cultural Imprint Process Outlined

Step One: Community Request	Step Two: Community Cohort Established
- Planning Department compiles short pamphlet explaining the cultural imprint process and community benefits. - Planning Department post notices informing community of process via: email, fliers, announcements at community events, or announcements at planning public meetings.	- Planning Departments works with community to bring together organizations for cohort. - If the community already comes with organizations in mind, planning department ensures that each tier is represented in the cohort (*if no large organization exists in the community, at least two more organizations are required to establish cohort*).

Continued

Table No. 4 Community Continued

Step Three: Community Cultural Imprint Process	Step Three: Community Cultural Imprint Process
Neighborhood Survey • Community Walks: 2-3 walks of the community over the course of a month. Community Events • Community wide dinners, dialogues, workshops, poetry slams, art walks, etc. • 3-4 hosted over the course of two months. Historical Neighborhood Overview Cultural Stamp Process: workshops should be held bi-weekly or monthly.	Cultural Stamp Workshop Schedule • First Workshop: Survey Debrief • Second and Third Workshops: roundtable discussions, World Café, charrettes, etc. to come up with a list of words. • Fourth Workshop: finalize nine-word stamp. Checklist and Guiding Questions • First Workshop: to determine checklist • Second Workshop: to determine guiding questions and finalize the entire cultural imprint Cultural Stamp approved by City Council or Commission.

Continued

Table No. 4 Continued

Step Four: Implementation	Step Five: Review and Revise
• Development Projects Approved and Implemented: Monitor all projects that are approved within the first year of cultural imprint being implemented. • Community Cohort and Planning Department coordinate review process • Community monitors projects from proposal through project completion.	• The one year mark will be determined by the date the cultural imprint is approved (e.g. if the cultural imprint is approved January 2017 then every project proposed between Jan 2017- Jan 2018 will be reviewed). Review process: at least two meetings to ensure proper community input. • If needed, changes are made to the cultural imprint. • Additional meetings held for revisions.

Step Five: Review and Revise

The review process needs to take place a year after the community cultural imprint has been approved. That length of time should give the community and planning staff a good sense of the effectiveness of the process and what parts of the process need to be revamped to accommodate community concerns and interests. Revising the cultural imprint may require amendments to one step of the process (i.e. the stamp or the checklist), or it may require an overhaul of the imprint in its entirety. If that is the case, the community must critically consider what part of the process led to the breakdown. Examples that could lead to a breakdown are incomplete neighborhood surveys or community cohorts without proper representation. If potential pitfalls are considered prior to the start of and throughout the process, much of this can be avoided. It is important that communities approach the cultural imprint process with great care. If done so, the implementation and review process will reflect that reality.

If done properly, this process can be transformative for communities in many ways. Not only will the community have greater authority in its own community development, but in the long-term, planning departments will be able to redefine their relationship with the communities they serve. As urban planners implement more transparent participatory practices, not only will community engagement be a more positive experience for all, but community partnerships and development will reflect that change

Conclusion

Urban planning is guided by the will to improve American life, but unfortunately those improvements have been experienced by a limited few. While white America has reaped the benefits of urban planning initiatives, these programs came about at the expense of communities of color, particularly black Americans. While it is clear that urban planners are not solely responsible for the current state of black communities, they do share responsibility in creating and sustaining the deprivation and marginalization that these communities endure. Although all communities deserve prosperity and opportunity, black Americans too often occupy spaces that lack economic and social mobility. As a result, black Americans frequently view urban planning initiatives with great disdain and apprehension.

While black Americans have suffered from biased and inequitable urban planning projects, black communities have actively explored alternatives in order to provide community services. Community activists in black communities have fought to secure basic rights in their neighborhoods and, they have also worked tirelessly to meet community needs when city officials failed. These facts are evident today in organizations like Detroit Black Community Food Security Network and Creative Control Fest. Creative Control provides workshops and programming for black creatives

that cannot be found elsewhere. Their work supports creatives' entrepreneurial aims leading to greater economic mobility, but they also provide programs that are culturally relevant and appeal to the broader black community in Columbus. Several communities in Detroit suffer from a lack of healthy food options. While the city may not see the benefit in addressing this concern, DBCFSN addresses that void through their farm and cooperative food buying club. Both organizations provide services to their respective communities that most residents would not receive otherwise. Through community engagement, black activists have demonstrated commitment to community and acquired valuable community building skills. Often this engagement started organically, but resulted in established community institutions with the personnel to promote positive systemic change.

At certain points in urban planning practice, urban planners recognized the benefit of collaborating with community organizers in the community economic development process. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a select group of urban planners worked alongside the community, particularly communities of color, to meet their needs. Prior to this change in urban planning practice, practitioners rarely consulted with the community, but instead only considered city officials' and developers' interests. Although the collaboration of communities and planners during the 1960s and 1970s proved short lived, planners began to see the need to seek community input on development projects. As a result, urban planners provided opportunities for community members to express their concerns, though this action is rarely taken at each step in the process. Often, urban planners introduce community development projects and facilitate the approval process

before the community becomes aware of the initiative. When the community learns about these projects at such late stages, urban planners tend to be met with derision by residents who feel slighted and overlooked.

The proposed visioning plan is intended to correct planners' lack of consideration of community input evident in previous urban planning models. This alternative planning framework emphasizes the need and benefit to involving community members in the approval of community economic development projects. The community cultural imprint process allows for greater creativity in the planning process, but also ensures that community members can work alongside planning departments to decide what community services are needed to move the neighborhood forward. To be successful, the cultural imprint process requires department transparency and community willingness to participate fully. While the community and urban planners may desire this process, past offences could prove to be a barrier. This community cultural imprint attempts to account for potential barriers, but previous relationships between black communities and urban planners must be resolved at various levels in the process. The establishment of the community cohort is intended to mitigate this contentious relationship, but without the commitment to make the community cohort a permanent entity, community distrust of the planning process will likely reemerge.

Establishing the community cohort as a permanent entity will ensure that urban planning departments do not lose sight of the importance of community engagement and honoring community will. The community cohort exists as a liaison between the community and urban planners because cohort members understand both parties. Since

the community cohort is comprised of organizations that have excelled at community engagement, they possess a certain skill set which appeals to urban planners. Additionally, these organizations have existed in these communities for a number of years, exhibiting a commitment that residents will appreciate. It is these conditions that make the community cohort necessary in the community cultural imprint process. They also explain why their continued involvement in community development projects is indispensable.

Permanent establishment of the community cohort is not included in this study because the determination of this process requires further study and analysis. At the most basic level, the community cohort must serve similar functions to an area commission. Development projects would still be introduced within the planning department, but before the proposal could move forward for city commission or council approval, the community cohort would need to approve the project. Further study is needed to establish the structure, rules, and regulations for the cohort, as well as to outline how the cohort intends to collaborate with both planning departments and the larger community.

While the permanent establishment of the community cohort is a critical step in ensuring meaningful community engagement, the cultural imprint process is the most fundamental step in securing this level of engagement. History is filled with distressing examples about the reality of the black lived experience. It also reveals the agency that black America has exercised to transform this reality. Though black Americans' efforts are noteworthy, the problems that exist in urban areas are not theirs alone to solve. The state has gone to great lengths to promote community economic development for certain

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populations, and the time has come for these privileges to be extended to all, particularly those previously marginalized. For these reasons, further study should also involve case studies of the community cultural imprint process. Through further study, scholars can determine best practices for community cultural imprint implementation prior to this process being accepted as an alternative urban planning model.

Social and economic security must be secured for all Americans and the United States possesses the tools to achieve this goal. While this reality has existed for decades, the expectation remains that communities will address major concerns with minimal assistance. This state-sanctioned inattention to the needs of marginalized populations has not produced transformative change for those most in need. Therefore, it is incumbent upon policy makers to remedy this situation. Urban planners do not possess all the power needed to improve struggling communities, but they do play a critical role in the process. The community cultural imprint process is important because it honors community voices. It is also a critical step in addressing community neglect. Marginalized communities have long acted on their own, but now is the time to act collaboratively because there is no other way to achieve an equitable and virtuous society in America.

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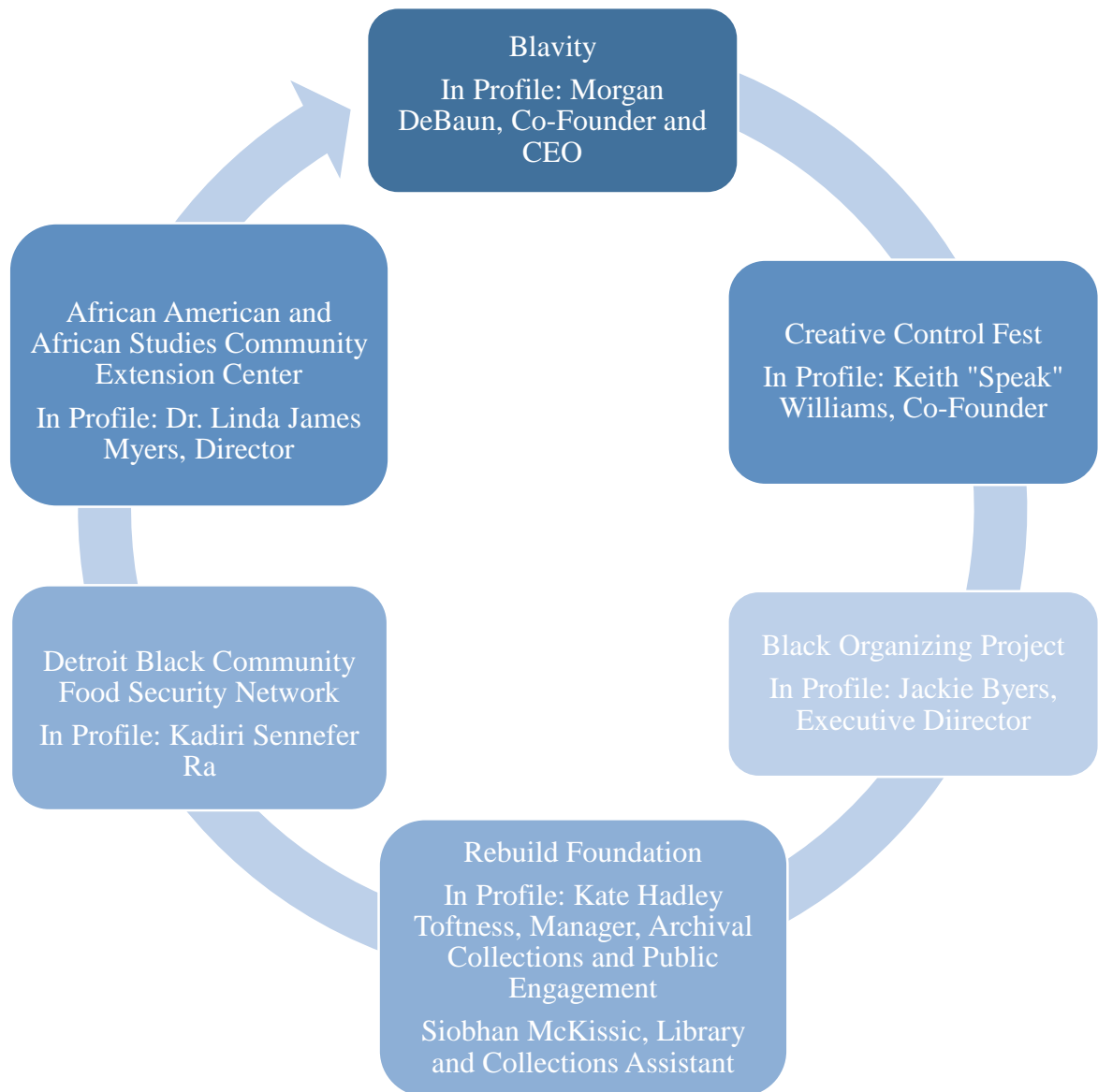
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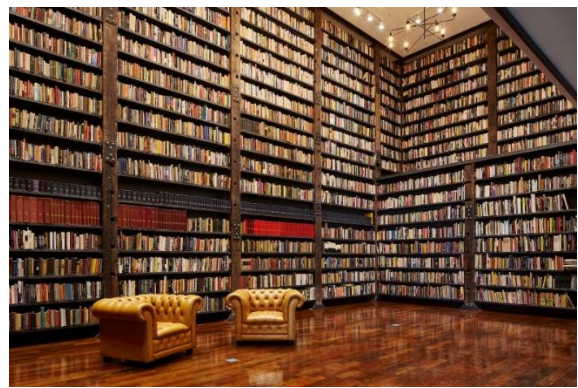
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Appendix A: Community Organization Profiles

Graphic No. 4 Community Organization Profile List

Blavity

In Profile: Morgan DeBaun, Co-Founder and CEO

Creative Control Fest

In Profile: Keith "Speak" Williams, Co-Founder

Black Organizing Project

In Profile: Jackie Byers, Executive Diirector

Rebuild Foundation

In Profile: Kate Hadley Toftness, Manager, Archival Collections and Public Engagement

Siobhan McKissic, Library and Collections Assistant

Detroit Black Community Food Security Network

In Profile: Kadiri Sennefer Ra

African American and African Studies Community Extension Center

In Profile: Dr. Linda James Myers, Director

Community Cohort Tier: Small

Rebuild Foundation
Chicago, IL

Established: December 2010

Mission: To rebuild the cultural foundations of underinvested neighborhoods and incite movements of community revitalization that are culture based, artist led, and neighborhood driven.

Major Objectives

- Activating underutilized spaces in the community with arts and cultural programming.
- Providing opportunities and spaces for neighbors to come together and engage in meaningful exchanges that spark collaborative action.
- Empowering artists and creative individuals to realize their potential as community change agents.
- Investing in the development of the skills and talents of local residents to catalyze entrepreneurial efforts.

"We are often challenged to find the best way to communicate an idea that is new. We don't necessarily have the language to articulate that."

Kate Hadley Toftness
Manager, Archival Collections and Public Engagement

Rebuild Challenges

When asked about the challenges Rebuild faces, Archival Collections and Public Engagement Manager, Kate Hadley Toftness explained that, "we are often challenged to find the best way to communicate an idea that is new. Rebuild is at the scale now to where almost everyone has some curiosity, but we don't necessarily have the language to articulate that. We are still flexible regarding our identity and we recognize that building requires interpretation over time." Toftness acknowledged that "there can be misperceptions of Rebuild, but hopefully a lot of collaborative voices will develop alongside founder, Theaster Gates to create the identity of the organization."[93]

Personal Take on Issues in Black Communities and Solutions

Library and Collections Assistant and longtime Southside Chicago resident, Siobhan McKissic feels that black communities "need jobs, health care—basic needs are not being met. We need to love on people real hard and communicate with people on an individual level." To adequately address these issues, McKissic noted, "It is important to determine what organizations are addressing larger scale issues (i.e. Shriver Center). But being nice to people on a regular basis helps. We need to recognize that addressing these issues is going to take a really long time because it took a long time to create the problems we experience today."[94]

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[93] Kate Hadley Toftness, in interview with author, Stony Island Arts Bank, Rebuild Foundation, Chicago, Illinois, January 30, 2016.
[94] Siobhan McKissic, in interview with author, Stony Island Arts Bank, Rebuild Foundation, Chicago, Illinois, January 30, 2016.

Black Organizing Project (BOP)
Oakland, CA

Established: November 2009

About BOP: A Black member-led community organization working for racial, social, and
economic justice through grassroots organizing and community-building in Oakland, CA.

The BOP Vision is to build a strong bottom up organization of Black people that will:

- Craft alternative models and institutions that will advance our vision of racial and
  economic justice.
- Rebuild the spirit and foundation of our community.
- Exercise political and economic power.
- Act to win real systematic change.
- Transform the lives of Black people.
- Embody the spirit that has sustained the Black community.

Most Important Part of BOP's Work
Executive Director, Jackie Byers feels that the most important part of the work done at
Black Organizing Project is "the people. The issues drive some organizations, but we see
issues as opportunities and tools. When we come together collectively to break down the
system, there are seeds planted in people that no one can take away and the people want

more." Byers noted that "through addressing issues, you see leadership develop. These are people who have been marginalized, but begin to see their own leadership. BOP can win policies, but if the people aren't for it then it won't work. The system is ready to go back to its default position if people aren't there to move it forward. Our liberation is about more than just reforming the system, we have to transform ourselves."[95]

BOP and the Black Freedom Struggle

When asked about Black Organizing Project's connection to the Black Freedom Struggle Byers explained that "our organization, like others, is a vessel. We mentor people with the framework that reform is like a classroom to revolution. BOP is a space that we hope becomes where community building, system reform, etc. takes place." For that reform to take place, "consciousness raising and visioning about what we want our community to look like are important steps in the black freedom struggle." Byers feels that the work done at Black Organizing Project is important, but emphasized "it isn't the only way to get there—we need black liberation on various levels. Mass activism is important, but we also need groups like BOP that do local base building. We need all of that to get us towards black liberation."[96]

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[95] Jackie Byers, in interview with the author, Black Organizing Project, Oakland, California, February 4, 2016.
[96] Ibid.

Creative Control Fest (CCF)
Columbus, OH

Established: September 2010

First Creative Control Fest: September 2012

Mission: To help grow an ethnically and culturally diverse landscape while providing exposure, resources, and opportunities in the design and creative fields.

CCF Aims

- Promote the creative with an appreciation for cultural diversity and the profound impact that it has on areas of design.
- Create opportunities to strategically attract, build, inspire and develop the best talent.
- Promote clear thought, leadership, and insight in fostering a creative culture with self-perpetuating diversity and inclusion.

"Community? It's a synonym to Creative Control Fest."

Keith "Speak" Williams
Co-Founder, Creative Control Fest

Creative Control Fest as a Pioneering Space

Creative Control Fest Co-Founder, Keith "Speak" Williams noted that Creative Control sees "ourselves as pioneers of this space—showcasing black artists and giving black creatives a platform. Others are engaged in that work, but we laid a groundwork in our community for this work to be done." When addressing others who engage black creatives in their community work, Williams stated that they know each other and "we are all together, and supporting one another. These kinds of exchanges make the city thrive. We're all about collaboration and partnerships." Partnerships are central because "Creative Control Fest is built on social capital. We didn't put up $50,000 to do this, we didn't want that. We wanted it to be organic and a space to display the things we felt were important."[97]

Creative Control Fest's Outlook on Community

When asked how important community is to Creative Control Fest, Williams expressed that community "is a synonym. Creative Control Fest is a community. We look to expand and preserve our community, and do what any other community would do. CCF is growing and that's good." Williams feels that "the notion of community is interesting anyway. When we say that word it denotes different images in people's minds. Community is not always defined geographically, community can be based off of what people care about." To Creative Control Fest, "community is what happens when we come together, and we're always interested in that. Bringing people together and bringing people into our community."[98]

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[97] Keith Williams, phone interview with author, March 10, 2016.
[98] Ibid.
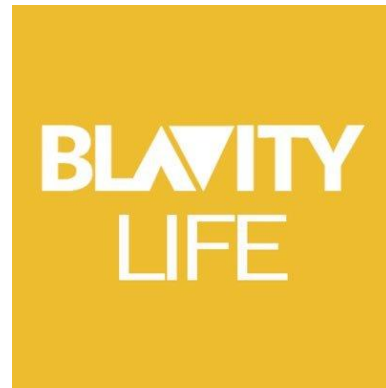
Blavity
Silicon Valley and Washington DC

Established: July 2014

About Blavity: A community of multi-cultural creators and influencers. The intent is to partner with diverse content creators and influencers to help them reach a wider audience, amplify their message, and fund their work.

Major Objectives

- To be the voice of black millennials.
- To push the boundaries of culture and the status quo. If you change the way people view the world, you can transform it.

> "It's lonely to be a Black woman in tech, so it is important to find people who share your vision."
>
> Morgan DeBaun
> Co-Founder and CEO, Blavity

Blavity as the Blueprint
Blavity CEO, Morgan DeBaun explained that "black people are culture makers. We set trends, express what's cool, and have tremendous economic impact. We've been doing that for decades." She adds that while black Americans' economic impact is significant, "currently there are very few people actually applying innovative and design thinking to address the needs and pain points of Black consumers." DeBaun further explained "what

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makes Blavity different is that we prioritize building high quality smart experiences for Black consumers. As a community our problems should be represented in the innovations that are coming out of Silicon Valley, and other technology hubs."[99]

Blavity Challenges

In an interview, DeBaun said that Blavity's work is "all about the people. Technology is important, but without smart people next to you, you have nothing." Finding those people is a challenge, but for DeBaun, "acceleration happened after I recruited some of my smart friends who were equally as passionate about the issue we're solving for the Black millennial generation." An obstacle Blavity faced "is not being afraid of traditional failure. We're funding our own startup, which is hard, but the financial sacrifice puts a fire under us. It's great for the team to have full ownership and that has allowed us to build at our own pace and for the right reason. Strong peer mentors and sister friends are everything. It's lonely to be a Black woman in tech, so it is important to find people who share your vision for the future and hold them close."[100]

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[99] Morgan DeBaun, email correspondence with author, February 11, 2016.
[100] Ibid.

Community Cohort Tier: Medium

Detroit Black Community Food Security Network (DBCFSN)
Detroit, MI

Established: February 2006

Vision: To advance movement towards food sovereignty while advocating for justice in the food system that ensures access to healthy foods with dignity and respect for all of Detroit's residents.

Major Programming + Initiatives

- Agriculture: D-Town Farm
- Food Policy Development
- Cooperative Food Buying: Ujamaa Food Co-op Buying Club

"If you can talk to someone, you won't be fearful of a person."

Kadiri Sennefer Ra
D-Town Farm Manager

Community Response to DBCFSN

D-Town Farm Manager, Kadiri Sennefer Ra explained that in order for the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network "to be self-sufficient and self-determined, the community support is everything. The community is the reason why we do this. People need culturally appropriate and healthy food to eat. When we have our farmers stand on the weekends, we lay out our produce on these beautiful carts. People often drive down

and look, buy the produce, and ask questions." He remembered that, "This year we have had more visibility in the neighborhood because we have been consistent with passing out fliers. We also have a yearly harvest festival that the community attends, but we are always thinking about planning and other ways to engage the community." For further community engagement to occur, Ra noted that they recently "introduced a volunteer incentive program: for each hour someone volunteers, they receive a D-Town dollar. D-Town dollars can be redeemed for produce or DBCFSN paraphernalia. We are working to have other Detroit organizations accept the D-Town dollar as well."[101]

DBCFSN and the Black Freedom Struggle

When asked how black communities need to address central issues that hinder progress in the Black Freedom Struggle, Ra explained that "black communities need to focus on establishing and supporting institutions that recognize the diverse value sets of black people. We also need neighborhood institutions that bring people together." Ra believes that "if you can talk to someone, you won't be fearful of a person. Bringing people together wipes away fear, and the community becomes safer. That is why having urban gardens and community farms in our neighborhoods are good because we can bring people together and rebuild a sense of community." He added that in addition to rebuilding community, "we are putting the right food in our bodies. It is a win-win. DBCFSN is taking the necessary steps to get there."[102]

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[101] Kadiri Sennefer Ra, phone interview with author, January 13, 2016.
[102] Ibid.

Community Cohort Tier: Large

African American and African Studies Community Extension Center
Columbus, Ohio

Established: September 1972

About AAAS CEC: The Center conducts research and serves as a conduit for relevant research done on main campus. It hosts forums, symposia, training, professional development programs and national conferences on a variety of topics and critical social issues. In addition, it offers credit and non-credit courses of study to students in the surrounding area and from The Ohio State University campus, emphasizing life-long learning.

Major Programming + Initiatives

- Sustainable Well Being Program Series
- Black History Month Forum
- Youth Programs:
  Summer Residential Program and Summer Enrichment Program
- African Affairs Symposium

"The university is the society in microcosm."

Dr. Linda James Myers
Director, African American and African Studies Community Extension Center

AAAS CEC Challenges

When asked about the Community Extension Center's greatest challenge, Director, Dr. Linda James Myers started by explaining that "the university is the society in microcosm. Africana Studies is the experience of black American people in this society. All the issues and concerns we have outside of the academy, we see inside the academy. Racism is a part of all of that." Myers noted that the Extension Center's definition of racism recognizes that there are "three kinds of racism: structural, personal, and internalized," and that this is the biggest challenge. While there are three forms, Myers noted that the greatest forms of racism plaguing black communities "is structural and internalized racism."[103]

Importance of community to AAAS CEC

When asked about how central community is to the Extension Center, Myers said that "as a scholar, I've never been an ivy tower person so I've never separated myself from the community. So community is essential. There is no reason for me to do what I do if it isn't for the community." Since community is essential, she added that the Center's goal "is to improve the quality of life for people acknowledging African ancestry—both globally and locally. This is what we have in mind with our mission. We have to connect as people before we can have community in the larger sense. We must heal the individual so they can be full participants."[104]

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[103] Linda James Myers, interview with author, African American and African Studies Community Extension Center, Columbus, Ohio, April 8, 2016.
[104] Ibid.