Community Development through More Inclusive Urban Place-Making: Challenges and Opportunities for the Urban Revitalization Field

Thomas Burns 28 January 2016

Introduction and Overview

There is a gradual but profound shift underway within the urban revitalization landscape that calls for continuing innovation within the community development sector. That shift is toward an increasingly influential investment approach that we now describe as urban place-making. This approach has gained support as a method of stimulating increased economic growth and encouraging more affluent residents to relocate into the urban core. Unfortunately, too few of these typically large-scale investments are now designed with principles of equitable development in mind.

This approach, as currently practiced, does not always mesh well with the values and goals of many working within the community development sector. The growth of urban place-making is posing real adaptive challenges for practitioners and advocates. At the same time, approaches to urban place-making are still evolving and there are large opportunities for further innovation so that place-making investments are more equitable in their impacts on the interests of lower-income populations living in urban core neighborhoods. I believe the time has come for community development to more fully embrace this investment approach and work harder to improve its potential as a more inclusive framework for the revitalization of core neighborhoods.

This article has three parts:

- I begin with an assessment of how emerging thoughts about strategies to increase urban and regional competitiveness are presenting the community development sector with some significant adaptive challenges. Some strategies that are intended to stimulate new economic growth in the urban core and reduce income disparities – for example those generally described as targeted urban place-making -- are often seen by community developers as triggering troublesome levels of gentrification and displacement. However, it is also important to recognize the ways in which these urban place-making efforts are actually helping core cities and whole regions to evolve and remain competitive within our global economy. Numerous critics claim that the current community development paradigm is out of step with this trend and still places too much emphasis on a narrower set of tools and practices designed mostly to alleviate the symptoms of poverty and disinvestment. Perhaps the time has come to embrace place-making strategies as one of the more promising ways for disadvantaged neighborhoods to regain market strength. Repopulation strategies that attract higher-income residents and new enterprises that bring new wealth and vitality with them can be beneficial when they are implemented in a more balanced way. As the sector comes to terms with the potential benefits of urban place-making, it should also seek to ensure that it delivers more tangible benefits for lower-income households, something that is entirely consistent with the objective of reducing income disparities between core cities and their surrounding suburbs.

- The second part of this article highlights how urban place-making could, with some further refinement, provide an improved platform for core neighborhood revitalization. Some community development practitioners are already demonstrating this by championing what I call an “inclusive place-making” model that not only incorporates equitable development goals but also includes strong cross-sector partnerships and broader community participation. Some common characteristics of this model are listed and three examples from Detroit, Baltimore and Indianapolis are described that provide evidence of emerging best practices. These three cities demonstrate the potentially wider benefits of place-making strategies that intentionally balance complex combinations of goals including population growth, increasing income diversity, new enterprise development and poverty alleviation. Although the examples differ significantly in their details, together they represent a significant shift in how large-scale urban revitalization work is approached.

- The final part of the article suggests that with a more aggressive commitment to refining this model, the community development sector has an opportunity to claim a more central role in the continuing recovery of many other older cities with conditions similar to those in Philadelphia. However, moving in this direction will require changes in perspective and strategy. Certainly, it requires a deeper level of engagement across sectors, especially including the private sector whose financial capital is so essential to changing core neighborhood market conditions. I conclude by suggesting a few practical ways that foundations, community development intermediaries, local governments and neighborhood nonprofits could promote a more balanced approach to urban place-making.

1. Repositioning Community Development within a Broader Urban Growth Frame

Our notions of what makes for economically healthy cities and regions are continually evolving. This is certainly true for aging American cities like Philadelphia that have played such a large role in the emergence of the community development sector. Many now acknowledge the truth of arguments made since the 1990s by people like Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution. Katz argued that, in order to remain competitive, metropolitan areas must continue to innovate in ways that protect, rebuild and sometimes reinvent their economies. Among other things, this imperative is requiring whole regions to move beyond the unhealthy competition that pits cities against suburbs and draws attention away from discovering how to make the best use of their assets and infrastructure to achieve greater prosperity and quality of life. This more metropolitan perspective is also prompting those within the community development sector to review and refresh some established ideas that have shaped its development.

Expanding Concerns with Regional Growth and Disparity

Thanks to economist Manuel Pastor and others who have studied issues of income, race and ethnicity from a regional perspective, we are seeing mounting evidence that sustained regional growth is correlated with lower levels of disparity among cities and suburbs. This work shows strong correlations between unequal distributions of wealth and poverty and overall regional economic performance. This work points specifically to the negative impacts of high concentrations of poverty in core city neighborhoods. We now have a more empirical basis to support the argument that equitable development is the preferred model for achieving greater regional prosperity.

Thanks in particular to efforts by CEOs for Cities, we are now able to compare differences in progress being made by regions seeking to attract new employers that enable them to grow their economies. Researchers associated with the Urban Institute and other academic institutions have demonstrated that regions fare better and are more competitive when they have core cities with less concentrated poverty, more vital downtowns and diverse neighborhoods offering lifestyle choices that appeal to people of different incomes and cultural backgrounds.

Still, other arguments have been made that reinforce the need for more metropolitan approaches to resolving core city challenges. Some have to do with the negative effects of fiscal disparities that limit the capacity of cities with eroding federal dollars and declining local tax bases to address symptoms of concentrated poverty, maintain the quality of citywide services, or invest in removing blight and correcting other conditions associated with disinvested neighborhoods. This budgetary argument, in particular, is leading many such places to pursue population attraction strategies that draw more people with higher incomes back into the urban core. Similarly, analyses have shown the negative effects of regional disparities and unchecked sprawl on the educational performance of core city schools and the labor force competitiveness of residents living in more disadvantaged neighborhoods near the city core. Finally, we now have numerous studies highlighting how underused land in the urban core increases transportation expenditures and environmental degradation.

All of this research showing the interconnection of core city conditions and overall regional health has helped to refocus attention on the need for increased reinvestment in our central cities. A new and different case is emerging for why such investments are needed and what form they should take. Their purpose is not necessarily to alleviate poverty in areas where it remains concentrated, nor is it to address the symptoms of disinvestment through efforts to improve existing housing stock or remove blight. Instead, the objective is to rebuild market strength and increase economic diversity. This more regional focus on reducing disparities is significantly different from the one that has historically driven the investments that we typically associate with community development.

The Need for Better Strategies to Address Broader Regional Concerns

Community development approaches have evolved incrementally over more than five decades, mostly by embracing opportunities for locally-driven improvements in neighborhoods and communities across the country. The sector is now large and includes a variety of stakeholders beyond the many thousands of nonprofit community-based organizations working in urban and rural settings in every state. The industry includes significant governmental support in the form of dollars and policies, dedicated lending streams, civic partnerships, active foundation sponsorship, local and national intermediaries, and numerous technical, financial and policy advocacy groups. There are educational programs, research organizations and consultants who specialize in this field. In short, the sector now has a considerable infrastructure in place.

Fifty years is more than enough time for inertia to set in. For those working within the field who have observed its development, it is easy to identify challenges and inefficiencies that limit results. Financial resources are not always put to best use, capacity on the ground is uneven, the effects of new investments in human capital are often ephemeral, and opportunities for learning and development seem hard to sustain. A candid survey of the national landscape over the past decade or more would acknowledge some significant retrenchment across many cities where the industry once thrived. Resources have dwindled and there is greatly increased competition for the dollars that remain. Hundreds of CDCs have closed and hundreds of others are struggling. There has been an erosion of capacity within neighborhoods and in many local governments. In addition, critics will claim that the field has not evolved sufficiently to account for the steady deconcentration of poverty in many core neighborhoods, the migration of lower-income residents to suburban areas and the increasing prevalence of newly-poor households in other places within regions.

Gloomy as this sounds, I prefer to think of this period not as a time for adjusting expectations downward, but rather as an opportunity for making course corrections. A reappraisal is needed that extends beyond the sector's traditional focus on neighborhood improvement to encompass other aspects of its role within the wider urban revitalization field.

In many ways, the field has demonstrated its ability to shift course. Many community developers are already adopting new practices that are producing tangible results in lower-income communities – for example, in reimagining how vacant and under-used land can become repurposed as an asset; tapping into new energy technologies and the natural environment as avenues for building community wealth; advocating for new transit investments that will transform places; forging new relationships with local anchor institutions as increasingly powerful economic drivers; investing in local entrepreneurship and small business as a means for rebuilding neighborhood economies; stimulating stagnant housing markets through better targeted and leveraged investments; restoring vitality on commercial corridors as arteries that reconnect different parts of the city; reinvesting in failing schools so that they are once again performing better for students, parents and communities; and capitalizing on the economic potential of arts and entertainment, culture and the creative sector. Each one of these pathways has expanded over the past decade and will likely continue to be part of the community development landscape.

However, as exciting as these newly opening pathways may be, their pursuit has been mostly opportunistic, often fragmented and sometimes marginal to the often larger investments being made to help cities and regions reposition themselves to be more competitive. More is needed in integrating this work into a more cohesive and compelling change agenda that moves community development to a more central place among the economic development policies and practices that are driving today's urban investments. In addition, better ways are needed to bring community stakeholders, particularly the residents of core city neighborhoods, into the broader conversation about economic revitalization.

Strengthening Connections between Traditional Community Development and Larger-Scale Core City Revitalization Efforts

The time has come to more closely link the traditional work of core neighborhood revitalization for the benefit of lower-income residents with growing efforts to attract higher income households and new economic growth back into the core as a way of enabling metropolitan areas to remain productive, prosperous and competitive. Finding suitable ways to make this wider frame a more central part of community development theory should become a higher priority among thought leaders who care about how the sector develops.

Pragmatically, this seems the only way the sector can expect to garner the level of attention and support it requires to expand its impacts. Otherwise, much of what community development practitioners now do could be viewed as well-intentioned but not relevant enough to address the more fundamental challenges facing cities and regions. The pursuit of equity and fairness in addressing the challenges facing lower-income residents of core neighborhoods has to be positioned within a broader understanding of how cities and suburbs must work more closely to address disparities that affect regional competitiveness.

This shift involves more than just cleaning up our thinking. Very significant modifications are also needed in established practices as well as in policy and legislative agendas. This will require letting go of some familiar community development approaches and replacing them with change strategies that are more consistent with notions of improving the fiscal health of core cities and overall regional performance. Some of the more controversial shifts involve deeper questioning of continuing emphasis on poverty alleviation primarily through narrower and mostly incremental investments in affordable housing and economic development that depend heavily on fragile funding subsidies that continue to decline despite fierce political advocacy.

In making these shifts, we will also have to move past the often divisive language that has grown up around issues of “gentrification and displacement;” “haves” and “have nots;” “new vs. existing” stakeholders; even “people vs.

place." These fault lines have generally been nonproductive and have often exacerbated the racial, ethnic and class differences that draw energy away from sound efforts to take on the broader challenges that threaten economic viability of cities and regions in a changing global economy. Only by doing this will we be able to adopt a more holistic approach to equitable development that connects the health of urban neighborhoods to wider regional economic concerns. This conceptual transition will require well-articulated arguments that all citizens can understand and support, and that politicians and civic leaders can embrace in their efforts to promote the continuing revitalization of our core cities.

2. The Impact of Urban Place-Making on Community Development Practices

There are no good reasons why urban place-making should not be viewed as having great promise for the community development sector. Strategies of place-based investment have drawn the attention not just of community developers but also a diverse audience of philanthropic and public investors concerned about both poverty alleviation and wider issues of economic health. A December 2014 national convening of philanthropic investors and others sponsored by the Ford and Kresge Foundations and held in Los Angeles at the University of Southern California's Center for Philanthropy and Public

Policy concluded a year-long review of a broad array of place-based investments. Its accompanying publication, the State of Place-Based Philanthropy and Public Policy, offers an array of perspectives about how to better align change strategies focused on specific localities where poverty levels are high with ones that aim to change the broader economic and political systems that affect employment, household income and capital investment. Publications like this show a growing understanding that place-based work must be better connected with more systemic strategies to achieve beneficial impacts for people-in-place, at far greater scale than has thus far occurred.

For the community development sector in particular, one implication of this shift in perspective is a growing recognition that investments within the wider urban economy should also bring additional opportunities for improving the lives of people still living in communities of concentrated poverty. One way to accomplish this is for community developers to embrace more fully a range of equitable development approaches that ensure that residents of core neighborhoods are able to share more directly in the economic benefits of the often very large-scale place-making investments occurring in recovering downtowns, core industrial districts and commercial corridors that account for a large share of the economic revival underway in many cities.

Programs targeted to lower-income and vulnerable residents living in core area neighborhoods are likely to achieve more when sustainable linkages are established between the public and philanthropic investments being made in lower-income communities and the investments being made by the private sector and anchor institutions that constitute a much greater share of the revitalization underway in core cities. When I refer to improved sharing of the economic benefits of larger-scale economic investment, I mean much more than the more widespread adoption of strategies such as community benefit agreements. We also need to incorporate principles of equity and increased economic opportunity more deeply into the designs of the large-scale, market-driven reinvestment efforts occurring across a wide variety of urban places. More intentional programmatic linkages are essential to ensure that a share of the economic result benefit is included for low- and moderate-income residents of the places that are being transformed by those investments.

We are already seeing that place-based investments such as individual physical redevelopment projects or single-purpose social programs are giving way to bolder transformation plans that often touch multiple neighborhoods and involve larger-scale, more integrated investment strategies requiring years to implement. This more comprehensive approach to larger-scale urban place-making is appearing not just within and near core business districts. It is happening around established educational and health anchor institutions, transit hubs and corridors, aging and under-used port and industrial areas, emerging arts and cultural destinations and newly-established technological “innovation hubs.” The best of these efforts recognize and build from specific assets and economic strengths, are inclusive in their focus, and recognize the value of offering both diversity and choice in residential, employment and other options including arts, culture, entertainment and recreation.

A common feature of these initiatives is that they require much larger infusions of capital to influence market trends and bring increased economic vitality to a locality. The level of capital needed is typically greater than what can be marshalled by the philanthropic or public sectors, whether acting alone or in tandem. No matter what the location, there is a common understanding that the approach must work with the totality of real estate dynamics, demographics and capital flows that ultimately determine the health and competitiveness of individual places within a complex metropolitan region.

Inclusive Urban Place-Making as a Promising Paradigm for Achieving Equity Goals

I am not in favor of inventing new words when existing terms work perfectly well. Nonetheless, a change in language can sometimes be helpful when the language we are accustomed to using becomes overly tied to older notions that do not fully describe the directions in which we are heading. Lately a term that has gained attention and momentum is inclusive urban place-making. This term is helpful in capturing a range of approaches within the urban revitalization arena that deliberately integrate core neighborhood improvement objectives with strategies to make entire cities and regions more competitive. I believe that this adjustment in language could also be instrumental in supporting very tangible equitable development objectives. Perhaps the community development sector is due for at least a partial language makeover that captures more of the essential pathways that are already being followed in our efforts to strengthen the weaker parts of our core cities.

Common Strategies and Practices

Within the community development sector, place-making strategies may vary considerably but they also share similar characteristics. Here are some of the most common themes:

- **Strategically targeting investments within a well-defined geography.** Targeting provides a means for concentrating a sufficient scale of investments to influence a particular neighborhood market so that it is better able to compete within a broader metropolitan context.
- **Working with rather than against market trends.** This requires an understanding of the preferences of homebuyers, renters and businesses

whose decisions might be influenced by the options available to them within a wider market context. Such strategies have two audiences – the residents and businesses already present who may be weighing the options to remain or move, or to make additional investments in repairs and improvements, and the potential new residents and businesses that could choose to move into the area.

- **Recognizing and building on unique and distinctive assets.** Neighborhood assets may derive from location, transportation access, environmental and recreational amenities, the presence of larger-scale institutions and private employers, or unique cultural and historic identities. Asset-based thinking serves as an antidote or counterpoint to a focus on deficits; however, it often includes correcting inherent deficits that are present in a community that may reduce its desirability as a focus of investment.
- **Embracing a comprehensive agenda.** This often combines physical development investments with other programmatic investments that address the social and economic needs of people and enhance the natural environment. How comprehensive this agenda is framed at the start and how encompassing it becomes as the work proceeds are important continuing issues for debate among advocates of place-making approaches. Nonetheless, it is clear that the scope of the agenda is significantly larger than the execution of a single development project

and outcome measures often consider a wider community or market context.

- **Harnessing the potential of localized economic drivers.** These are often larger institutions such as universities, hospitals, churches and cultural centers; but they can be larger employers or concentrations of employers for whom the quality of the neighborhood matters for their own economic bottom line. Such economic anchors are increasingly viewed as essential contributors to their surrounding community's stability and strength and also as important economic engines for cities and regions.
- **Recognizing the potential of transit access to expand regional connections.** Real estate development is often closely linked with enhancements to existing transit infrastructure and strengthening connections to transit access points. This not only brings people, businesses and employment into a target area but also improves resident access to employment and other economic benefits elsewhere in the city and region.
- **Growing the creative economy.** Increasingly, urban place-making strategies are built upon strategic investments in artistic, cultural, design and entertainment activities that bring creativity and vibrancy into a neighborhood. These not only help attract new businesses, residents and visitors but also strengthen neighborhood social capital, encourage diversity and equity, and ultimately

transform the identity of neighborhoods and commercial districts.

- **Sustaining diversity and choice within a localized market.** The best place-based designs recognize that the recovery of neighborhoods in the urban core should be measured by their success in competing for people and enterprises with the ability to locate anywhere in the region. A growing segment of the wider market is seeking neighborhoods that are perceived to have qualities such as vitality, vibrancy, authenticity, and cultural or lifestyle diversity. These terms reflect the increasing value of places that retain and enhance variety in the choices they offer. Place-making strategies that embrace this idea of diversity balance attracting new residents and businesses with efforts to ensure that those who want to stay are able to do so, thus maintaining income as well as racial and ethnic diversity.

Besides practices such as those described above that together establish the direction of place-based revitalization strategies, the new state of the art also includes practices related to how revitalization strategies are executed in a way that is more inclusive and accountable. Practices related to methods by which those initiatives are implemented include:

- **Effective engagement of stakeholders.** Investing in community planning and engagement activities that build a working consensus among neighborhood residents and other local stakeholders on a shared neighborhood vision and “quality of life” plan that guides future investments.

- **Agreement on a vision that embraces equity and income diversity.** Discovering sufficient common ground around such a vision and direction and building a broader commitment to preserve it are important dimensions of the planning and engagement processes associated with inclusive place-making.
- **Establishing transparent processes for collaborative decision-making that balance the interests of stakeholders.** These processes are seen as critical in allowing community voices to be heard and carry weight alongside those of the more powerful institutional, governmental and private development interests.
- **Adaptive and sustaining leadership and coordination.** This leadership function is different from management and may be shared among one or more organizations who are able to work effectively together to advance the shared agenda, maintain respect among the partners for the core principles, anticipate and resolve conflicts that threaten the integrity of the partnership. Recognizing and investing in these functions keeps the partners’ efforts aligned and maintains accountability for results.

Certainly, not all inclusive place-making efforts encompass all the objectives and methods mentioned above. However, there seems to be growing agreement about the wisdom of employing a majority of the above practices together. This is helping to define a new state-of-the-art model with increasing relevance within and beyond the community development sector. These ideas and practices are a healthy evolution in how core area revitalization is being approached. In addition, I believe that there is still ample opportunity to further shape this approach so that it includes all the features required to achieve neighborhood improvements that are both equitable and yield broader urban and regional benefits.

Examples of Inclusive and Equitable Place-Making Approaches

Efforts to introduce this form of place-making strategy are appearing in many places across the country. Many of these innovations have been driven from within the community development sector, or at least have occurred as a result of close alliances of community development leaders working with leaders in other sectors. Here are three examples that I have had the opportunity to observe at close range:

In Detroit, a group of foundation investors began in 2010 to support an intensive place-based initiative driven by an established community nonprofit working with a wider range of partners. The initiative has attracted significant additional public and private capital. It is intensively focused on an area referred to as Midtown along the Woodward Corridor north of the Downtown; more recently it has extended to include early stage investments in a second target area in Northwest Detroit.

The strategy has combined a concentrated investment aimed at improving market conditions in a unique geography with a concentration of anchor institutions in the education, health and cultural sector, along with several complementary policy- and system-focused investments to reinforce its effects at the district level. More recently the strategy has been expanded to include a citywide research and measurement agenda centered on defining the investment requirements for achieving "inclusive growth" at a district level – thus providing a promising platform for further expansion.

This comprehensive place-based approach was driven by broader assumptions about what Detroit must do to strengthen its severely weakened overall city economy which had left its neighborhoods with very little remaining market strength. The strategy was also a response to limited resources and capacity in the governmental sector, the absence of a financial pipeline through which resources channeled into the local economy could reach residents living in the city, and the absence of an overall land-use strategy to guide more targeted urban reinvestments. This assessment led those leading the effort to select the one geography in the city that arguably had the greatest potential for attracting the new residents and economic activities needed to strengthen the market. A focus on the Midtown area capitalized on the economic strength of many of the city's major anchor institutions and its proximity to downtown to create a new, more densely-populated regional hub. Over the past five years the lead funders have consistently and successfully pursued projects and activities related to both the place-based and system-level dimensions of its strategy.

In Baltimore, the Homewood Community Partnership Initiative (HCPI) is a large-scale revitalization effort that has been underway in Central Baltimore for approximately ten years. This initiative encompasses eleven different neighborhoods extending north from Baltimore's central rail station to the Homewood campus of Johns Hopkins University. It follows a market-oriented approach that combines physical revitalization projects with other community engagement and service improvement efforts to achieve a comprehensive array of results. The initiative is committed to equity, diversity and choice. It combines an impressive array of partners including the public sector. It has successfully engaged strong anchor institutions who have already pledged their financial and other resources along with their leadership in support of an agenda that enjoys widespread community support. There is a strong TOD component and a widely shared commitment to building a creative economy that encompasses arts, cultural and design elements.

The place-making approach in Central Baltimore is particularly noteworthy because it has skillfully avoided some of the pitfalls of an earlier generation of partnerships that tended to be less effective in inviting and maintaining broad stakeholder participation. Democracy Collaborative's series of studies have argued these earlier efforts to partner with the surrounding community tended to reflect the interests of the larger businesses and anchor institutions that wield considerable political and financial leverage over development decisions.) Unlike these earlier efforts, the Central Baltimore initiative deliberately adhered to a more decentralized coalitional organizing approach in which much of the day-to-day responsibilities for implementation are distributed among a broad array of partners who remain committed to the vision and strategies spelled out in the HCPI plan. The Central Baltimore effort is attracting attention not only as an ambitious urban revitalization strategy but also as a source of inspiration and guidance in putting together the components of an effective multi-stakeholder collaboration. It demonstrates the potential for aligning institutional and neighborhood interests around an equitable development vision that attracts new private sector investment while delivering a wealth of social and economic benefits to area residents.

In Indianapolis, a combination of sponsoring organizations representing the community development, social services and corporate sectors are working with local government to design a targeted place-making strategy that balances population attraction and equitable development goals. This ten-year effort is designed to attract up to 100,000 new residents back into the city while also raising per capita income across all of Marion County by 20%. his dual approach requires that efforts be directed not simply toward convincing middle-income residents to return to core city neighborhoods but also achieving significant gains in the incomes of current lower-income residents living in those same neighborhoods. If successful, this effort will also bring significant benefits by increasing the City of Indianapolis tax base, something that is critical to maintaining essential city services and balancing the budget.

To this list of three examples we could easily add another half dozen more. We should soon expect to be adding Philadelphia where the enormous development agenda that has been outlined around the University City area provides the same array of potential avenues for innovation in community linkage, with at least as large a potential for economic empowerment and other benefits for the surrounding neighborhoods.

These cases offer avenues for experimenting with a different source of neighborhood revitalization approach – one that seeks to connect with the powerful market shifts associated with core city transformation, working skillfully with market trends to achieve tangible and lasting benefits for residents of poor communities. However, there are challenges in executing place-making strategies that ensure that people in disinvested neighborhoods benefit more from wider market improvements. The best place-making strategies, such as those described in Detroit, Baltimore and Indianapolis, often start with a more inclusive vision of what the future of a place may be. These planning efforts require considerable skill in finding common purpose among disparate stakeholder groups representing older and newer interests. Bargaining can be fierce to ensure broader community access to the economic rewards that recovering markets bring with them, such as access to better housing, jobs and business opportunities. Financing tools often involve complex deployment of public and philanthropic dollars alongside private investment capital.

Although the urban place-making field is still fluid, there is growing enthusiasm for the potential that these larger-scale coordinated investments have to strengthen the uniqueness and the competitive appeal of urban neighborhoods and core cities, making them attractive destinations whose variety and unpredictability in turn spawns increased market strength, new economic opportunities and steadily improving neighborhood quality of life.

3. Practical Steps to Support a Shift toward More Inclusive Urban Place-

Making

As the practices associated with larger-scale place-making have evolved, so have the roles of community-based organizations, philanthropy, urban intermediaries, government and the private sector in supporting them and influencing their direction. The examples offered above illustrate how a range of actors within and adjacent to the community development sector are already working to better capture and distribute more of the benefits of such large capital investments. Support strategies range from active thought leadership to more direct complementary investments in programs and partnerships that advance inclusion and equity goals – for example, new real estate or economic development ventures that preserve housing affordability, expanded employment opportunities for youth or adults, a range of strategies involving more beneficial land uses, and the development of policies and practices that broaden how the economic benefits of planned new investments are shared with stakeholders whose interests would otherwise be marginalized.

Assuming that more inclusive place-making approaches continue to gain strength as a method of achieving broader urban revitalization goals, there is a continuing need to determine how resources intended to bring about community development results could be brought to bear in shaping these market-driven investments so they become more effective tools for addressing chronic issues of poverty and disinvestment in lower-income communities. A new generation of community development practices is needed to move inclusive place-making to a more dominant position as one of the numerous strategies for alleviating poverty and expanding economic opportunities for lower-income individuals and families.

Looking ahead, the community development sector and its supporters have much to gain from becoming more active and central participants in large-scale urban place-making efforts. For example:

• Nonprofits working on the front lines in core city neighborhoods, as well as urban intermediary organizations providing resources to community-based nonprofits, are well positioned to bring value to institutional or private sector investors in place-making initiatives – whether at the level of participation and governance, or as financial partners in benefit sharing, or in designing and implementing programmatic approaches that increase access to education, training, employment and entrepreneurship.

• Community-based nonprofits and those involved in other forms of service delivery also have an opportunity to play a stronger role in clarifying, consolidating, and sharing what is being learned about practices that prove effective in linking place-making investments to lower-income residents.

• Public-sector agencies with established interests in the sector are often especially well-positioned to use their influence in determining how public policies and public dollars can be best leveraged to achieve greater benefits for largely poor and minority communities that are the target of larger-scale transformation initiatives that are heavily capitalized by the private sector.

• Philanthropies often have significant influence on the direction of place-based initiatives that depend to some degree on flexible grant support investments. Typically, they are best positioned to encourage innovation through their capacity to provide both core and program support for nonprofits working with and for lower-income residents. They are also one of the few sources available to enable community voices to be expressed in the physical and economic revitalization plans that attract and deploy large amounts of private capital.

• Philanthropic investors and private lenders within the community development arena are potentially critical resource partners with an ability to influence the quality of urban transformation efforts through their priorities and guidelines determining the availability of equity capital and other financial facilities; their policies related to capital availability can send powerful signals related to expectations for equity and inclusion in relation to larger-

scale place-making investments.
The growth of larger-scale place-making strategies presents the community development sector with an enormous opportunity to rethink and expand on current approaches to place-based investment. This type of innovative work will contribute to the further evolution of the community development paradigm, away from initiatives that may be designed to yield clearly-defined but often limited results and toward greater engagement with both public and private investment partners in charting the direction of larger urban revitalization investments that are more equitable and inclusive and that promise to produce bigger, more lasting results for communities that continue to struggle with the myriad challenges of concentrated poverty.

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