# **Cultivating Equitable Communities**: Aligning the Arts, Culture, & Community Economic Development Sectors

A report produced by:

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**Introduction**

Performing an internet search on the term “community development” will return a number of definitions and descriptions, many of which describe community development as a process that broadly involves a group of people coming to a shared vision of the future for their chosen group. For example, the United Nations defines community development as, “a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems." Similarly, community development activities in the United States involve shared visioning among a group of people. However, most commonly in the United States, the term also describes how that shared vision is a) geographically “place-based” and b) for the benefit of economically and socially marginalized people in that place.

As its name implies, the National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations (NACEDA) prefers the term “community *economic* development.” Community Action Partnership (the national association for community action agencies) describes community economic development’s purpose as “to revitalize communities, develop and rehabilitate affordable housing, promote sustainability, attract investments, build wealth, encourage entrepreneurship, and create jobs.”

Similarly, NACEDA finds that the term necessarily focuses on tools that support local economies, as opposed to tools that support social services, for example. It also implies a more comprehensive set of tools available to practitioners. What Community Action Partnership’s definition lacks, however, is a focus on equity for communities of color and other places the private market has left behind. Therefore, NACEDA leans on its own definition that includes elements of equity, place, economics, and comprehensiveness.

*“Community economic development is place-based, anti-racist development and economic support that builds and improves equitable outcomes for disinvested and marginalized communities.”*

Community economic development is very hard work that lends itself well to the hearts and minds of those that kindle the warmth of the creative spirit. This report is dedicated to them, those with the drive to create, and the courage to use that drive toward the purpose of prosperity for all.

**Summary**
This report paints a picture of the community economic development field for arts-based organizations interested in collaborating to advance place-based racial equity. It was developed by the National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations (NACEDA) as part of a contract with Grantmakers in the Arts.

**Part I** presents the values of the community economic development sector and how those values interact with the arts and culture field. It explores the sector's history, strategies, and intrinsic tensions. And it provides exercises for Grantmakers In the Arts to use when considering alignment with the community economic development sector.

**Part II** shows how community economic development systems work to improve equitable outcomes for disinvested and marginalized communities – and how those systems can align with other sectors, including arts and culture.

**Part III** recommends strategies that Grantmakers In the Arts can use to collaborate with the community economic development sector in order to advance place-based racial equity goals.

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**Part I – The Values of Community Economic Development**

In its simplest sense, the sector is a collection of local community members, local nonprofits including community development corporations (CDCs), community development financial institutions (CDFIs), banks motivated by the Community Reinvestment Act, intermediaries, advocates, researchers, policymakers, funders, and capacity builders who work to improve the lives of low-income communities and people of color. Community developers improve places for the people who live and work there.

However, as are most things in life, the sector is rarely that simple.

In its 2018 publication entitled *Talking Values: Soulful Conversations within Community Economic Development*, NACEDA argues that the sector is defined by its values rather than a homogenous organizational type, or neatly- defined set of resources. NACEDA Board member Joseph McNeely writes:

> We (community developers) are, mostly, place-based organizations focused on housing and other real estate as a platform for family resilience and economically-sustainable community revitalization. We who march pursue a variety of social, grant-funded programs, but at the core of our organizations is work that uses private-sector techniques and attracts private investors to places the market economy would otherwise refuse to put resources.
>
> For some of us, community economic development is an extension of the long struggle for racial justice, or another method of community empowerment whereby residents learn by action and reflection and become more capable of driving social change. For many of us, community economic development is a **process** by which residents direct revitalization in a manner that benefits the residents of that community, particularly the most challenged. This parade of organizational diversity defies neat delineation.

NACEDA argues that the sector is defined by its values, five of which it points to directly:

1) **Community Organizing:** Community economic development seeks to redress disinvestment and disempowerment within marginalized communities. It is a deeply held value of the sector that community members must have a leading voice in the work happening in their communities. Community organizing can spark community involvement, particularly during times of political and social uncertainty. For that reason, community developers deeply value the work of organizers – even when they have little control over where those organizing efforts might lead. Similarly, arts and cultural organizations and individuals play a role in helping communities express diverse identities and come to consensus on shared place-based identities.

2) **Scale and Accountability:** Community economic development is an ambitious sector that seeks to redress historical disinvestment and market failures using limited financial

resources. Practitioners seek to be good stewards of financial resources while nurturing the community agency that is core to their work. The field balances its strong, community-centered focus with strategies to achieve efficient scale, and thereby getting the most out of every dollar.

3) **Racial Equity:** The community economic development sector grew out of communities organizing to address the inequities caused by urban renewal, redlining, the construction of toxic manufacturing districts near minority neighborhoods, and other racist policies that have prevented communities of color from accumulating wealth. A core value of community economic development is to advance racial equity. However, community developers need a greater alignment of funding and other resources to effectively pursue that goal.

4) **Community Identity:** Where someone lives informs their identity. People don't just live in any place; they live in a specific place with specific geographies, assets, and histories. People aren't just part of any community; they are part of specific communities with specific people, culture, and self-understanding. Community economic development is a place-based field that, at its best, nourishes local culture and identity.

5) **Emerging Leaders:** The community economic development field is dedicated to self-determination and respecting the agency of communities. Building community goes hand in hand with building physical spaces. Folks in the sector are committed to identifying and nurturing local leaders of all ages from all walks of life. Anyone can lift the mantle of leadership at any point in their life.

## Two Fundamental Tensions

Built into the values NACEDA put forward in 2018 are two cross-cutting tensions in the community economic development field that surface frequently. These tensions are particularly relevant for GIA and its stakeholders as they attempt to influence the community economic development sector to advance racial equity through artistic and creative strategies.

**Tension 1: Does community economic development serve people? Or does it serve places?**
A common response is that it is "both/and": people live in place, and the point of improving places is to better serve the people who live there. However, in practice this can be a challenging goal, as described below. GIA could be particularly impactful in helping the community economic development field navigate this tension.

The Moving to Opportunity (MTO) experiment in the early 1990s offered randomly selected families living in high-poverty housing projects housing vouchers to move to lower-poverty neighborhoods. In 2016, Harvard economist Raj Chetty examined the outcomes of this experiment over a 25-year period. His study found that children (girls in particular) who moved out of poor neighborhoods achieved better health and wealth outcomes than peers who received similar housing subsidies in their original neighborhood.

At the time Chetty's study was released, the findings were thought to undercut place-based advocates' claims that improving the place where people live will make their lives better. However, the findings were limited to children of a certain age at a certain point in time. The gains made by those children, while noticeable and statistically significant, were small. And the public policy implications were challenging.

Do you give every low-income family with a child a voucher and move them out of their neighborhood? And does "poor" neighborhood necessarily mean "bad" neighborhood?

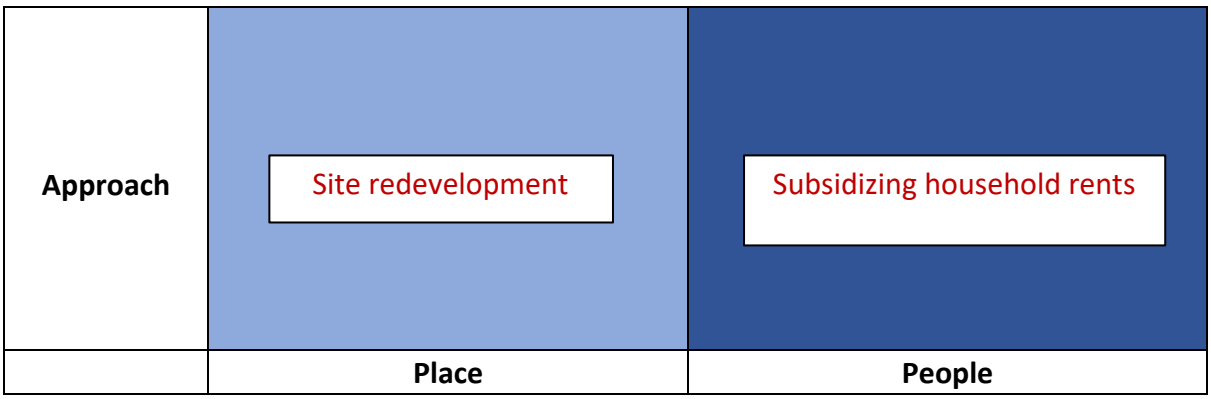
Dr. Mindy Fullilove and others have made compelling arguments that residents of predominantly African American neighborhoods and other more-culturally homogenous communities, while poorer financially than their white counterparts, gain emotional, cultural, and spiritual satisfaction from the places they call home. Enhancing the physical and economic infrastructure of these neighborhoods, however, brings the risk that residents will be economically or culturally displaced.

This tension between focusing on people or places also extends into the programmatic and funding efforts that CDCs, CDFIs, government agencies, foundations, and others employ to accomplish their community economic development missions. The practical realities of leading an institution, meeting the bottom line, and remaining mission-focused —all with limited resources — begin to quickly unravel the "both/and" approach.

For example, say your neighborhood has a substandard housing development that has public safety issues and is depreciating surrounding home values (place-based lens). However, the development offers homes that are affordable to below-median-income residents in your neighborhood who likely couldn't find unsubsidized homes anywhere in your zip code (people-based lens). A typical CDC approach might be to gain control of the site, renovate or demolish and build it back. But rent could be unsubsidized. Will all the current residents be able to afford the homes? The redevelopment will almost certainly improve the attractiveness of the neighborhood. But will it start a domino effect that raises commercial and residential home values, and therefore property taxes across the neighborhood?

All of the sudden, the "both/and" directive you have been given by those disconnected from your daily realities lacks credibility. The solutions to the tension between people and place are not easy.

One way to think about this example is on a people/place spectrum, similar to the chart below. The idea of a two-dimensional linear spectrum is overly simplistic for such a complex situation, though it can be useful in a theoretical sense. As GIA strategizes about the impact it wants to have on the community economic development sector, thinking about that spectrum can be a helpful exercise.




See also, "Housing Equity's Future: Moving from Debate to Productive Dialogue"

**Tension 2: Is community economic development an industry? Or a movement?**

**History**

The origin stories of community economic development are often some flavor of *David vs. Goliath*. Beginning in the 1950s and 1960s, poor communities and people of color stood up to the Federal Government and the excesses of urban renewal that bull-dozed poor and black and brown communities. They organized protests and tent cities. They blocked the construction of highways. They gathered political power to pass civil rights legislation, such as the Fair Housing Act, that outlawed discrimination in the housing market, and eventually the Community Reinvestment Act, that outlawed redlining and compelled financial institutions to invest in places in which they do business. But to quote former NACEDA Board Member Joseph McNeely, who got his first community experience as a Baltimore organizer in the 1960s:

> We stopped the feds from building an interstate right through the heart of black-Baltimore. We organized. We protested. We gained political power. We claimed ownership of our part of the city. And the powers-that-be listened. We won. But after the celebration, we all looked at each other and realized something really important. We were still poor. Our part of Baltimore still didn't have the investment that other parts of the city had. Sure, we stopped a highway. But now what?

That era gave birth to the urban CDC-movement — nonprofit and place-based institutions with a mission to steward the future of a place, particularly disinvested places that were often predominantly minority. The federal government and major philanthropy created substantial grant programs. With that money came rules and regulations, not to mention the complexities of real estate transactions. Slowly but surely, the 'movement' came to rely on technical experts and bureaucrats. Attorneys. Accountants. Financial intermediaries. Funders (government programs, in particular) began asking not just how their money was spent, but if their money was being spent efficiently. Trade associations were formed to increase the capacity of these local nonprofits and advocate at city councils and state legislatures.

This dynamic was accelerated as affordable housing development and finance became a major line of business for mission-oriented developers in the 1990s. Today, the terms "community development" and "affordable housing" are sometimes used synonymously, even interchangeably. Originally, however, affordable housing development was considered *a* tool in the community developer's tool bag. Complex affordable housing transactions funded the bottom lines of CDCs and allowed them to serve their mission. At first, this seemed to be a no-brainer, win-win. Further, public money came to *incentivize* developments, as opposed to funding the entire project. The projects often involved private capital, especially after the introduction of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, which ties the financial interests of private investors to the fate of an affordable housing development for at least 15 years.

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, you have banks, private investors, and governments, increasingly relying on mission-based developers and CDCs to accomplish projects, because partnering with a CDC (that has a place-based mission) scores more points on a proposal for subsidy. Housing development begins to take on its own outsized identity within community economic development. Many CDFIs also launched or expanded during this period, with consistent federal support for these financial intermediaries starting in the mid-1990s. As development gets more and more complex, there is less need for community organizers and more need for underwriters and lobbyists.

This is far from a worst-case scenario. The principles that come with private sector investment have significant benefits. Developments are more likely to be of high-quality over the long term, avoiding the scandal and embarrassment of housing developments that were predominantly relied on public subsidy, such as the Pruitt-Igoe generation of public housing and privately owned properties where federal insurance and subsidies took almost all the financial risk. You have the world's largest financial institutions publicly declaring the importance of affordable homes for all people. Fewer public dollars are needed to create affordable homes, introducing the notion of 'scale.'

All of this is part of the housing build-up of the early 2000s. This period also saw a substantial shift from rental housing to affordable home ownership in the community economic development sector, as CDCs and others took advantage of historically low mortgage rates to help people access wealth building opportunities. Then it all came crashing down.

As communities began to unravel due to foreclosures and joblessness in 2009, the private market, perhaps unsurprisingly, retreated first from low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and communities of color. Stakeholders looked to CDCs and other community-based organizations to help rebuild hard-hit neighborhoods. Afterall, that was their mission. But practically speaking, many were institutions built for housing development. And now they were trying to make the bottom-line during a housing crash.

Good data is not available on how the 2009 recession impacted CDCs. But anecdotally, it seems the most entrepreneurial organizations fared best. Some retrained first-time homebuyer counselors into foreclosure counselors. Others took on broader neighborhood revitalization

activities such as small business and economic development. After decades of increasingly complex affordable housing development, the sector was forced to reckon with an identity question: “Are we a movement? Or are we an industry?”

**Scale vs. Accountability**

That “industry or movement” question lingers still today, though it plays out against a very different backdrop. Some, including NACEDA, have introduced a different but closely related tension of ‘Scale vs. Accountability.’ These two tensions tug at the sector.

‘Scale’ advocates point to decreased public resources and unprecedented homelessness and supply-based affordability crises on the West Coast (and elsewhere) as reasons why nonprofit developers and CDCs need to take an all-hands-on-deck approach toward orienting their organizations at housing development and housing support. They go further to call on those organizations to advocate for housing-related resources, even at the expense of other community economic development needs. Of course, with rents reaching $3,000-4,000 per month for a studio apartment, and record-numbers of people experiencing some level of homelessness, that’s hard to argue against.

Advocates of a more comprehensive (place-based) strategy for community economic development point to social unrest, public safety concerns, lack of access to basic goods and services and institutional racism as problems that need strong local organizations accountable to low-income residents and communities of color. They acknowledge that access to affordable housing is critical but that it only addresses one piece of the problem. They often cite the need for more funding for community organizing as a way to lift up the needs and voices of those most marginalized.

This tension among community developers plays out in very tangible ways. NACEDA Board Member Marty Kooistra (executive director of the Housing Development Consortium of Seattle-King County) points to an RFP for affordable housing resources released a few years ago by the City of Seattle. The finalists were two developers with very good reputations – one for-profit and one nonprofit. Both, for all intents and purposes, proposed the same number of units for the same site, except the nonprofit needed $30 million dollars more to get it built and provide more deeply subsidized units. The city awarded the contract to the nonprofit developer because of the organization’s accountability to the community in which the project was to be built, the deeper affordability, and because the organization would be there to serve the community after the development was completed.

Was that the right decision? One fact is known. The city prioritized lower income residents and ongoing community accountability, assumed to be stronger with nonprofit control, to the tune of **$30 million.**

| Approach | For profit developer | Nonprofit developer |
|---|---|---|
| | **Industry** | **Movement** |

Similar to the people vs. place tension, the industry vs. movement tension can be placed on an overly simplified spectrum. Again, as GIA strategizes about the impact it wants to have on the community economic development sector, thinking along this spectrum can be a helpful exercise.

See also: "NACEDA Talking Values: Scale & Accountability"

**Dynamically interacting tensions**

These tensions (People vs. Place and Industry vs. Movement) are most easily illustrated by examining community economic development's relationship with affordable housing. But they are present within almost every project, program, organization, funding stream, and public policy. As GIA considers its strategic focus and alignment with the community economic development sector, NACEDA thinks it will be helpful for GIA to consider how it would impact these tensions.

To illustrate how these tensions are exposed within community economic development, NACEDA has identified nine strategic program categories common to the sector. Within each category, we have highlighted at least two programmatic examples, one with a clear arts and culture focus and one without. We then placed the examples on a 2x2 matrix with industry/movement on the x-axis and people/place on the y-axis.

As is common in the work of comprehensive community economic development, placing these multi-faceted projects into a box does not do them justice. However, the exercise is useful for GIA and its stakeholders to consider how a potential intervention would influence the community economic development field, the community, and/or the organization subject to the intervention. Therefore, after the first matrix, we are withholding our answers (they are available in the Appendix) and asking that you complete the exercise on your own.

**Exercises Involving Common Community Economic Development Strategies**

*Instructions:*

1. *Carefully read the examples provided for each of the strategies listed below.*
    a. *Think about how the project approaches their objective – is it people or place-based?*
    b. *Look for indicators of what framework the project operates within – is it an industry or movement?*

2. *Plot both examples on the blank matrix provided beneath the descriptions for each strategy, including a couple sentences of explanation for your own reference.*

3. *Repeat these steps for each of the remaining strategies.*

4. *Compare your own matrices to NACEDA's "answer key" (located in the Appendix) and discuss where they might converge and diverge.*

5. ***See strategy 1 for sample plotting and explanation.***

**Strategy 1**

**Rental housing**

Assist in new construction, rehabilitation and preservation of permanent and transitional rental housing for lower income households.

*Community Economic Development Approach*

Quest Communities

Atlanta, GA

Quest Village at English Avenue

Located in the Westside community of English Avenue in Atlanta, Quest Village consists of 12 affordable one- and two-bedroom apartments for low-income residents. The existing property was previously abandoned and blighted. By working with partners at Invest Atlanta, City of Atlanta and Partners for Home, Quest was able to substantially renovate the property and offer affordable rents. Quest Village is Green Certified using the EarthCraft Sustainability model. The property features an outdoor common resident gathering area with flower gardens. Rents are targeted to meet HUD rent limits people with incomes at 60% Area Median Income or below.

*Community Economic Development + Arts and Culture Approach*

Cook Inlet Housing Authority

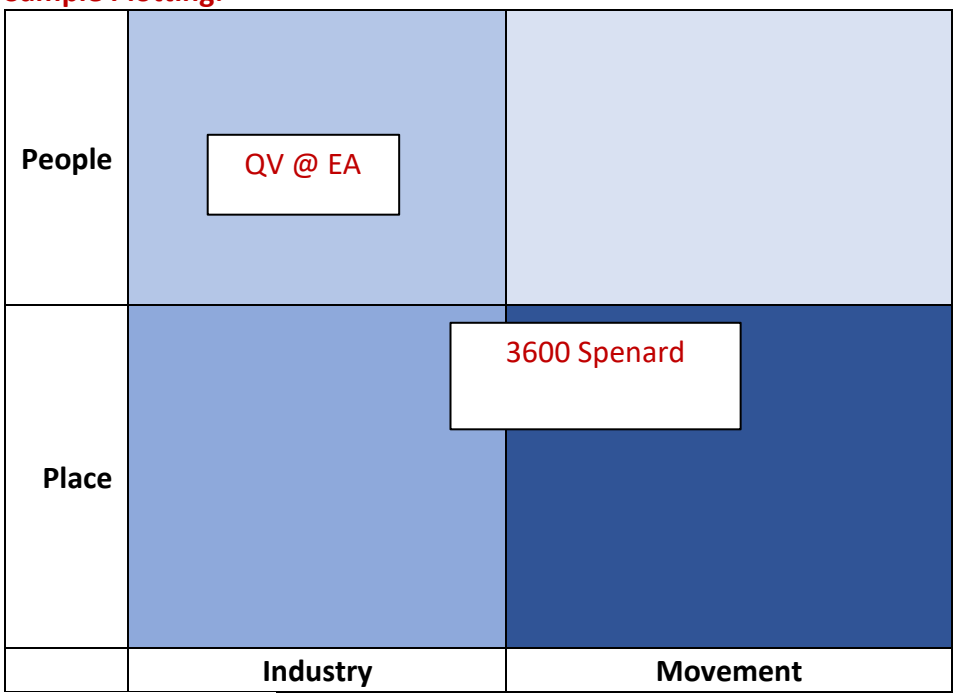
Anchorage, AK

3600 Spenard Project

3600 Spenard is a three-story building, with retail space on the first floor and 33 one-bedroom apartments on the upper floors. In 2016, Cook Inlet Housing Authority issued a call for artists to "advance the design of a small plaza as a permanent enhancement" in front of the building. In response, they commissioned Holly Nordlum, a local Alaska Native artist, to design a storyboard at the site which tells the story of the Salmon Boy, a Dena'ina (Alaska Natives of the Cook Inlet

region) tale. Another local artist, Chad Taylor, designed fish wei-inspired benches to accompany the storyboard. The Alaska Native story and art honors the site's history and the Dena'ina people in their community. 3600 Spenard was embraced not only by incoming residents, but the surrounding community as well.

**Sample Plotting:**




**Sample Explanation:**

**Quest Village at English Avenue** is a development focused on outcomes related to individuals and families of a certain demographic (distinguished by income), putting it much more on the people end of the spectrum. Their funding sources tend to be very complicated, requiring expert technical knowledge of how to navigate zoning and tax credit syndication, moving it toward the industry side of the spectrum.

**3600 Spenard** takes into consideration the culture of the place in which the development is to be located and the people it serves, putting it more toward the place side of the spectrum. The development required similar technical expertise to Quest Village, but the developer was intentional about how the place where the project is located will change and how the local culture will be preserved.

*Instructions (cont.):*

6. *We now encourage you to plot the following strategy examples on the blank matrices provided below each.*

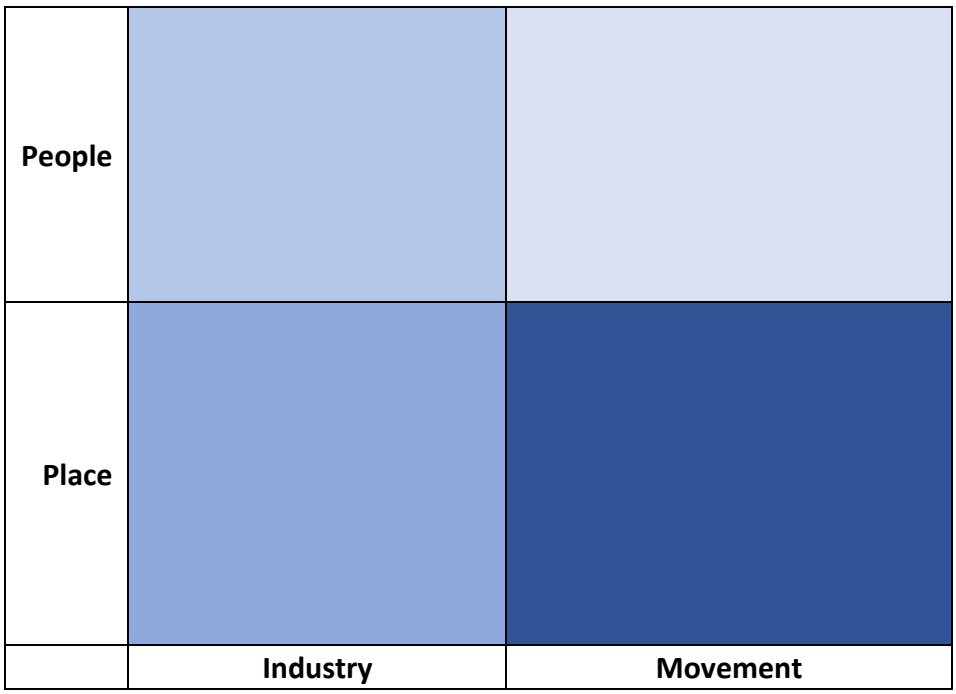
7. *Once all have been completed, compare responses to NACEDA's "Answer Key" attached. Remember, there are no right answers. These matrices are meant to serve as*

*conversation starters. Use the examples to think critically about how arts and culture can shift traditional community economic development approaches.*

**Strategy 2**
**Homeownership support**
Provide resources that aid in residential stability, property maintenance, and avoidance of mortgage foreclosure.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of Chicago
Chicago, IL
Homeowner Workshops
NHS is a nonprofit neighborhood revitalization organization committed to helping homeowners and strengthening neighborhoods throughout Chicago, South Suburban Cook County, and the City of Elgin. They offer weekly Home Buyer Education Webinars on topics including the basics of budgeting, improving credit, understanding the closing process, and down payment assistance programs. NHS also offers workshops on everything from estate planning, insurance, and taxes to youth empowerment and student loan management. To date, NHS Chicago has created 5,422 new homeowners.

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
Cook Inlet Housing Authority
Anchorage, AK
Living Big, Living Small Project
Habitable space is in short supply in Alaska and constraints like land parcel size, material costs, and the desire to reach deeper levels of affordability are increasingly impacting communities. In 2016, the organization partnered with set design artist Sheila Wyne to establish a dialogue with their residents, staff, and the community at large about how small-space living might look within an urban Alaskan context. While "Living Big, Living Small" was creating space for practical discussions about layout design, the Cook Inlet Housing Authority also used the opportunity to observe how participants were envisioning these spaces for their families' daily experiences. The participants provided valuable additional context for builders who might have just met the qualifications for subsidized housing, without considering the needs of the people who would be impacted.

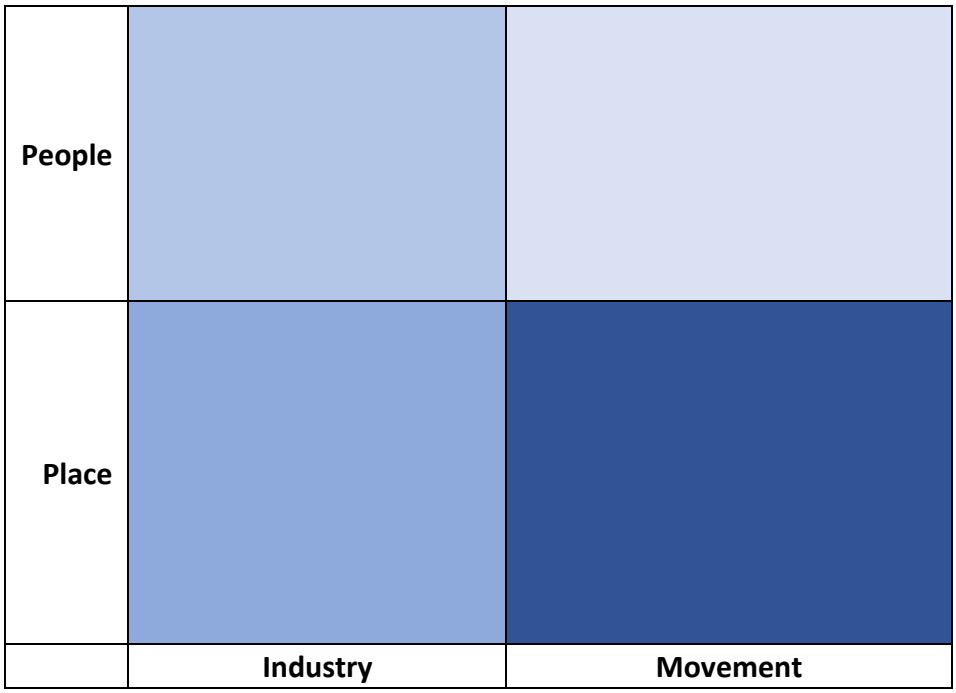



**Strategy 3**
**Homelessness prevention**
Interrupt precipitating events that cause homelessness, often through regular employment and affordable housing.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Breaking Ground
New York, NY
Prince George Hotel Renovation
Built in 1904, the Prince George was once one of New York City's premier hotels. After many years of decline and neglect, it was rehabilitated by Breaking Ground and reopened in 1999 to provide 416 affordable homes to low-income and formerly-homeless adults and people living with HIV/AIDS. The Center for Urban Community Services provides case management, recreational activities, and self-sufficiency workshops, and other onside services..

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership
Southwest Region, MN
A Prairie Homelessness Companion
The Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership is working with PlaceBase Productions and zAmya Theater Company on an artist-led process exploring rural homelessness in three Southwestern Minnesota communities. Their goal is to increase awareness and education for issues surrounding rural homelessness on a local and statewide level through the creation and performance of an original musical theater production. The artists are collaborating with

Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership staff to identify community partners, stakeholders, civic leaders, residents, and local people experiencing homelessness to facilitate a process of engagement, and exploration around rural homelessness.

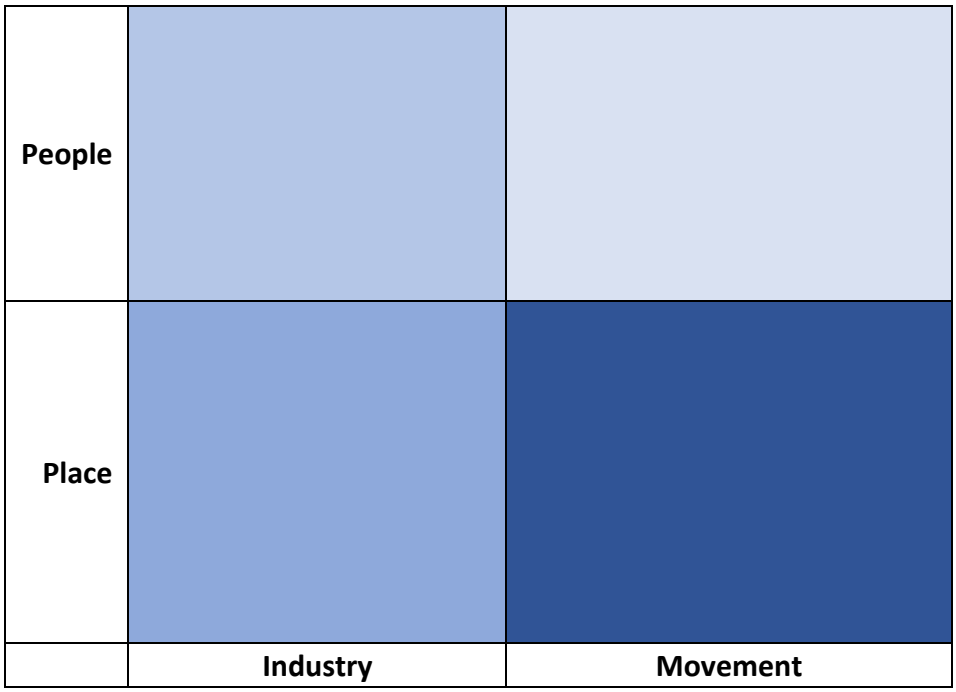



**Strategy 4**
**Workforce development**
Ensure individuals have the education, skills, and training needed to obtain jobs.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc.
Phoenix, AZ
Chicanos Por La Causa (CPLC) will use $800,000 in CED funds to expand Parker Fastners, LLC (Parker) in Buckeye, Arizona. Parker is a high growth, domestic manufacturer of quality socket drives and specialty screws. The relocation of their operations will transform the business into an important economic engine and employment generator in the targeted low-income community. CPLC will work with local partners to provide technical assistance, fill the newly created jobs with low-income individuals, and provide financial education and supportive services to promote successful employment. The project will create 40 new, full-time jobs, 75% of which will be filled by individuals with low incomes.

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
The Village of Arts and Humanities
Philadelphia, PA
The People's Paper Co-op (PPC)

PPC is a women-led, women focused, women-powered art and advocacy project that seeks to transform the stereotypes, social services, and opportunities accessible to those in reentry. Through PPC's Women in Reentry program, participants are connected to a network of artists and advocates. Working together, they create media campaigns that destroy stereotypes regarding women in reentry and their rights in society. Additionally, women provide community justice consulting that includes helping lawyers facilitate free criminal record expungement clinics, hosting exhibits and symposiums, and creating a resource guide for women in Philadelphia's halfway houses.



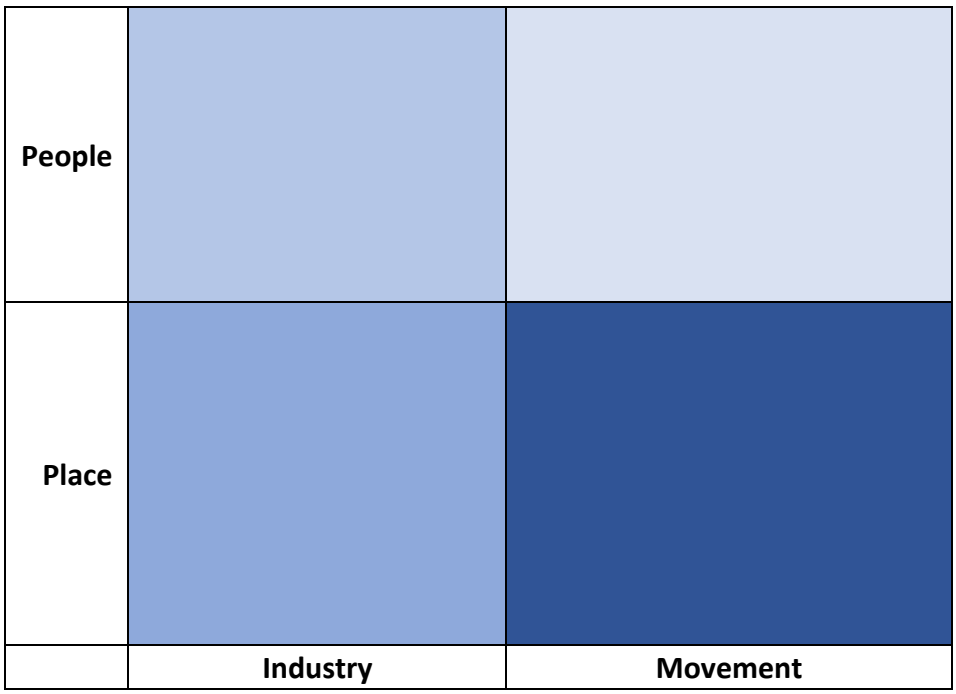

**Strategy 5**
**Small business development**
Provide business-related assistance and knowledge to help entrepreneurs start, run, and grow their business.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Coastal Enterprises, Inc.
Brunswick, ME
Incubating Child Care Businesses in Rural Maine Initiative
Coastal Enterprises will use CED Social Enterprise funds to support the Incubating Child Care Businesses in Rural Maine. The initiative will provide capital and business start-up and services training for owners of child care enterprises and their employees in Maine's most distressed rural counties. In addition to high rates of poverty, unemployment and substance abuse, these counties have a limited number of child care providers. New owners of child care enterprises will receive business advising, child care management training, project management, financial

wellness education, travel, and technical assistance. Child care businesses are social enterprises that eliminate a barrier many parents face when wanting to work, provide critical early education for children, and serve as employers themselves. Together, the 10-15 new child care social enterprises will add 400-550 new child care slots, enabling at least 350 more Maine parents to work full-time.

Latino Economic Development Center of Washington, DC (LEDC)
Washington, DC
Fund for Restaurant Employment
The Latino Economic Development Center of Washington, DC will use $800,000 in CED funds to provide loans to four existing food businesses in Washington, DC. CED funds will be used to expand LEDC's Fund for Restaurant Employment in DC (FRED), a loan fund focused on the growth of local minority-owned restaurants and creating accessible employment opportunities for low-income workers. Through FRED, LEDC will provide the necessary capital and technical assistance for four food businesses to expand their operations, increase revenue, and stimulate job creation. In addition to the loans, each business will receive small business development technical assistance and financial management support. They will be connected with workforce development and food industry training partners to fill the newly created positions within each business. LEDC will also provide financial education services to business owners and their staff.

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
City of Covington, KY + American Sign Museum
Covington, KY
Co-Sign
An initiative created between the City of Covington, Kentucky and the American Sign Museum was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts to provide storefront signage designed by local artists to area businesses in a neighborhood targeted for economic redevelopment and revitalization. With a focus on education for both small business owners and artists, the initiative provided employment and training opportunities for artists while creating new signage for small businesses to attract visitors to an area known for commerce and creativity. Project leaders were surprised to see a growth in the number of small businesses that applied, increasing from 16 to 22, which included several businesses that had not opened yet. Co-Sign hopes that the project will encourage other businesses to consider improving their own signage, as well as make facade improvements to their building.




**Strategy 6**
**Economic development**
Provide processes to improve the economic well-being of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements and quality of life.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation
Oakland, CA
Restore Oakland and COLORS Oakland
East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) will use $760,416 in CED funds to make low-interest loans to Restore Oakland and to COLORS Oakland, both in the Fruitvale neighborhood of Oakland, California. Restore Oakland is a new community hub offering education, empowerment, and advocacy with and for disadvantaged people with low-incomes. COLORS Oakland is a full-service restaurant, which will serve as a job-creating anchor in the community. The project will create at least 32 new, full-time positions with low barriers to entry. People with low incomes will fill at least 24 of the positions. On-the-job training and professional development will give employees opportunities for advancement within the organization and beyond.

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
PA'I Foundation
Honolulu, HI
Ola Ka 'Ilima
To support local arts and community culture, the PA'I Foundation set up opportunities for

native Hawaiian artists to practice their craft. In creating a new hub of creative activity, the Foundation wanted to foster new artworks and shared experiences for artists, while cultivating cultural exchange with the public through open houses, lectures, and workshops. These opportunities took the form of classes and workshops in Hawaiian dance, music, and art led by *Pua Ali'I 'Ilima*, the nonprofit arm of an important hula school founded in 1977 that focuses on serving the needs of residents and native Hawaiians. By carving out opportunities for artists to work, it would not only highlight the unique cultural tradition on the Hawaiian Islands, but also help stimulate the broader cultural and tourism economy as well. To address the need for affordable housing, the Foundation envisioned a new development with live/work housing units and shared spaces to foster collaboration and support the artists in pursuit of their craft.

International Sonoran Desert Alliance
Ajo, AZ
Ajo Masterplan
Ajo has 3,300 year-round residents, 10% of whom are Native Americans and 40% are Hispanic. Younger families are predominantly Native American and/or Hispanic. Historically a mining town, Ajo's copper mine closed in the mid-1980s, resulting in a severe lack of economic opportunity. The current tax base remains only one quarter of what it was before the mine closed, with nearly a third of the community living in poverty. More than a decade ago, the International Sonoran Desert Alliance (ISDA) proposed a new arts and culture driven economic development strategy to revitalize Ajo. With broad-based community support, ISDA purchased a historic building known as the Curley School and converted it to 30 affordable live/work residences for artisans who came from all over the country to live and work in Ajo. ISDA developed other campus buildings into studios, a clay shop, wood shop, and gallery. ISDA's larger vision is to establish Ajo as an international arts and cultural center, transforming the local economy from one based in mining to one based in tourism.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **People** | | |
| **Place** | | |
| | **Industry** | **Movement** |

**Strategy 7**
**Civic engagement**
Initiate collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania
PA Votes
Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania partnered with Nonprofit VOTE, resulting in the PA Votes initiative to support and train more than 30 nonprofits across Pennsylvania and contact thousands of voters by the Election Day in November. PA Votes supported their nonprofit partners in registering new voters, updating existing voter registrations, and encouraging people to make a pledge to vote. Local partners received civic engagement grants, tools, training, technical assistance, peer learning, networking opportunities, and evaluation and analysis of their 2020 voter engagement work.

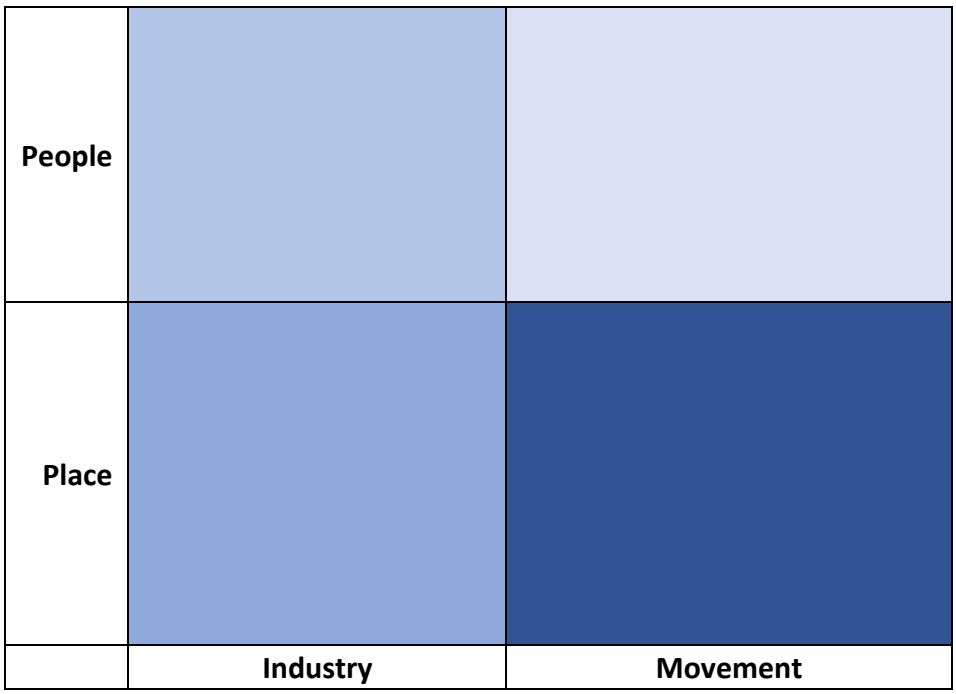
*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
Little Tokyo Service Center
Los Angeles, CA
First Street North
A neighborhood campaign spearheaded by Little Tokyo Service Center uses the community's social and physical history to claim the right to redevelop several publicly-owned parcels of land in Little Tokyo. It celebrates the only historically preserved block in Little Tokyo through community-based arts, awareness, and engagement. The campaign highlights how the First Street North block is critical to the past and future of the neighborhood while promoting a community vision for First Street North. The overarching goal of the projects is to urge the city of LA to ensure the block is developed consistent with the community's vision.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **People** | | |
| **Place** | | |
| | **Industry** | **Movement** |

**Strategy 8**
**Commercial development**
Provide practical tools to assist community organizations to strengthen and revitalize the streets and small businesses that anchor their neighborhoods.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations (PACDC)
Philadelphia, PA
Commercial Corridor Project
Through federal, state and local funds, the City of Philadelphia's Department of Commerce has invested in programs that have made a significant positive impact on commercial corridors. PACDC and its Commercial Corridor Working Group advocated for the City to boost investment in programs that have been effective, and to implement additional policies that can help create more supportive environments for corridor-based small businesses. CDCs are on the front lines of supporting Philadelphia's neighborhood corridors. They employ Corridor Managers to facilitate physical improvements, connect small businesses with resources and programs, market the corridors to attract shoppers and more businesses, engage the community, oversee cleaning programs, and more.

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
Jackson Medical Mall Foundation
Jackson, MS
The Jackson Medical Mall is a 900,000-square-foot former shopping mall that was converted to a medical and retail facility in 1996. Its mission is to provide healthcare for underserved people and to promote economic and community economic development. As an anchor institution, the Jackson Medical Mall Foundation provides healthcare education, workforce training, and community economic development for area residents. Since 2015, the foundation has strategically enhanced their work by focusing on health, wellness, economic development, and creative placemaking. They are guided by two philosophies. 1) Arts and culture play an important role in the health of individuals and communities. 2) Culture that reflects a community's character helps to deepen the social connections and stability of vulnerable neighborhoods. Their Community Development Investments program seeks to create a community-based economy driven by the creative skills and talents possessed by local residents and businesses. From the Tommy Johnson Blues Festival to Jumpstart: the Back to School Jam, their cultural productions have created economic opportunities for artists and performers and unified their community. The foundation believes that this work will ultimately improve health and wealth outcomes for their residents.




**Strategy 9**
**Community organizing**
Local residents coordinate cooperative efforts and campaign to promote the interests of their community.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Washington Park Partners (WPP)
Milwaukee, WI
Building Sustainable Communities initiative
The Washington Park neighborhood in Milwaukee has high rates of crime and poverty relative to the rest of the city. Since 2004, Washington Park Partners has been engaging residents in implementing a quality-of-life plan. In 2012, they joined a leadership team organized by the Milwaukee Police Department, who had received a federal Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation grant to support a comprehensive community response to high crime. Alongside Safe & Sound, a local organization with significant resources and expertise in community organizing, WPP worked to bring residents into the Washington Park public safety plan. This initiative focuses tightly on 35 of the 135 blocks in the community where crime is concentrated. WPP prioritizes building relationships, trust and involvement among the residents on or near those blocks. They also work to bridge the communication gap between city agencies, which can be overwhelmed by the volume of calls on something like a code violation, and the local residents who wonder what happened to their complaint.

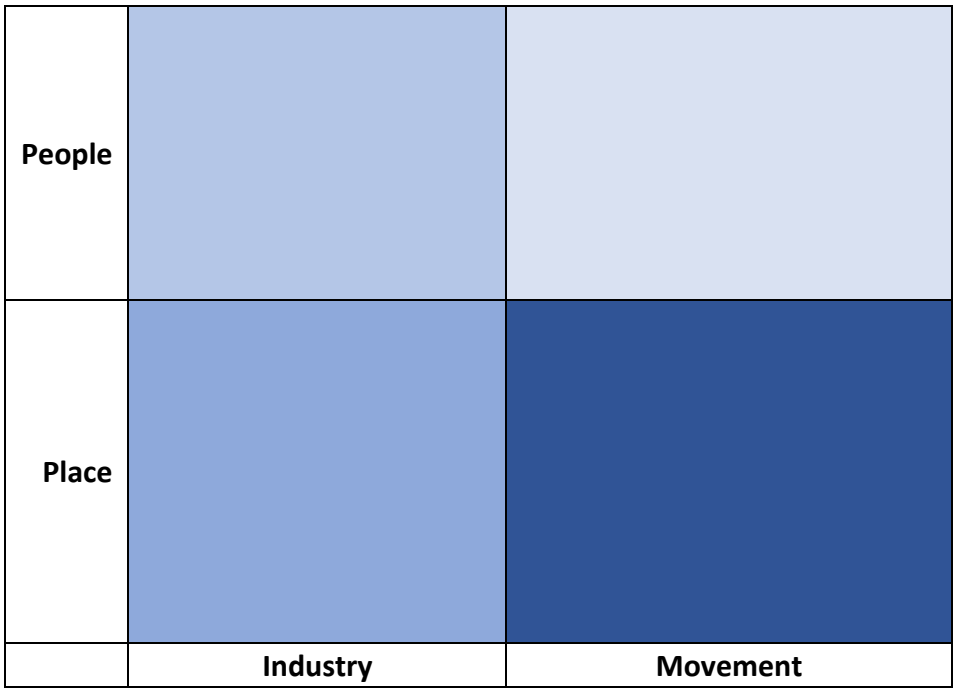
*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*

Las Imaginistas

Brownsville, TX

Hacemos La Ciudad (We Make the City)

Hacemos La Ciudad (We Make the City) is a comprehensive civic reimagining initiative. It examines and questions how colonial ideology informs contemporary civic life, architecture, and the infrastructure of our cities. The project warps traditional planning processes, inviting collaborators to imagine a decolonized civic landscape and to develop their own, more equitable version of the city. From building blocks made of chucherias for city planning exercises, to costumes made from a collage of used clothing, Hacemos la Ciudad asks us to rethink how we see the world around us, and to reconsider what is (and what is not) possible. The project culminated with the construction of a scale model of downtown Brownsville and the development of the **Plan De Arte Cívico del Pueblo Entero** (Civic Art Plan for All the People), both based on ideas for equity collected from community members throughout the project. The Plan is both an artistic representation of the dreams and ambitions of Brownsville community members, and a comprehensive call to action to individual residents of Brownsville, self-identified thought and culture leaders, and city leaders and elected officials.



**Jargon Buster**

**Community Development Corporations (CDC)**

CDCs are nonprofit, community-based organizations that aggregate resources, ideas, and actors with the shared goal of improving the future of a place to the benefit of the people who live and work there. They are most commonly located in low-income, under-served neighborhoods that have experienced a significant lack of investment. Traditional activities include real estate development, business and economic development, and community organizing.

**Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI)**

CDFIs are private financial institutions dedicated to delivering responsible, affordable lending to help low-income, low-wealth and other disadvantaged people and communities join the economic mainstream. CDFIs include both for-profit and nonprofit institutions like community development banks, credit unions, loan funds, and venture capital funds. They provide financing to for nonprofit organizations, commercial real estate and affordable housing, small businesses, and microenterprises.

**Community Economic Development**

Community economic development is place-based, anti-racist development and economic support that builds and improves equitable outcomes for disinvested and marginalized communities.

**Community Reinvestment Act (CRA)**

Enacted by Congress in 1977, the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) is a federal law that requires banks to meet the credit needs of the communities they serve, particularly individuals and businesses in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. CRA was developed in response to "redlining," a practice in which banks deemed low-income and minority neighborhoods unfit for investment.

**Equitable Development**

Equitable development creates healthy, vibrant communities of opportunity. Compared to traditional real estate development, which is generally market- and profit-based, equitable development is values-based. Equitable development encourages community members to participate in and benefit from decisions that shape their neighborhoods and regions.

**Place-based**

"Place-based" efforts that draw upon multiple disciplines and policy domains in a cohesive strategy to improve the quality of life and opportunities available in a particular geography.

**Part II – A Systems View of Community Economic Development**

As described in Part I, the values, tensions, and strategies of community economic development are important to understanding the sector's work at the project level. But that work sits within a wider system that shapes and moves the resources available for projects to succeed from community to community, a system in which network organizations play a key role. Understanding these systems and network organizations is critical to knowing how to support and influence community economic development.

NACEDA's theory of change shows how its members – state and regional networks for community economic development – support and influence the sector. This section illustrates this virtuous cycle in narrative and infographic form. The narrative aligns with the captions from the infographics. In the narrative, captions in **blue** directly reference the infographics.

*Figure 1*
Network organizations use collective action or "**resource levers**" to influence gatekeepers and power brokers who control important "**resources"**, including important laws and policies, financial resources and products, trainings and technical assistance, and best practices and innovations that shape a system propelling the work of community economic development.

*Figure 2*
Relationships are foundational to networks. Networks are a space for **people involved with community economic development to tell stories, develop trust, and build influence with each other and other sectors**. In short, network organizations forge community economic development into an identifiable sector.

*Figure 3*
When resources are available to communities, community members' **shared values drive the work of community economic development**. Coming full circle, that work builds momentum from their success stories and generates more involved individuals whose relationships build influence inside and outside of the sector.

**Networks Strengthen Community Economic Development by Improving Resources**
**Figure 1**

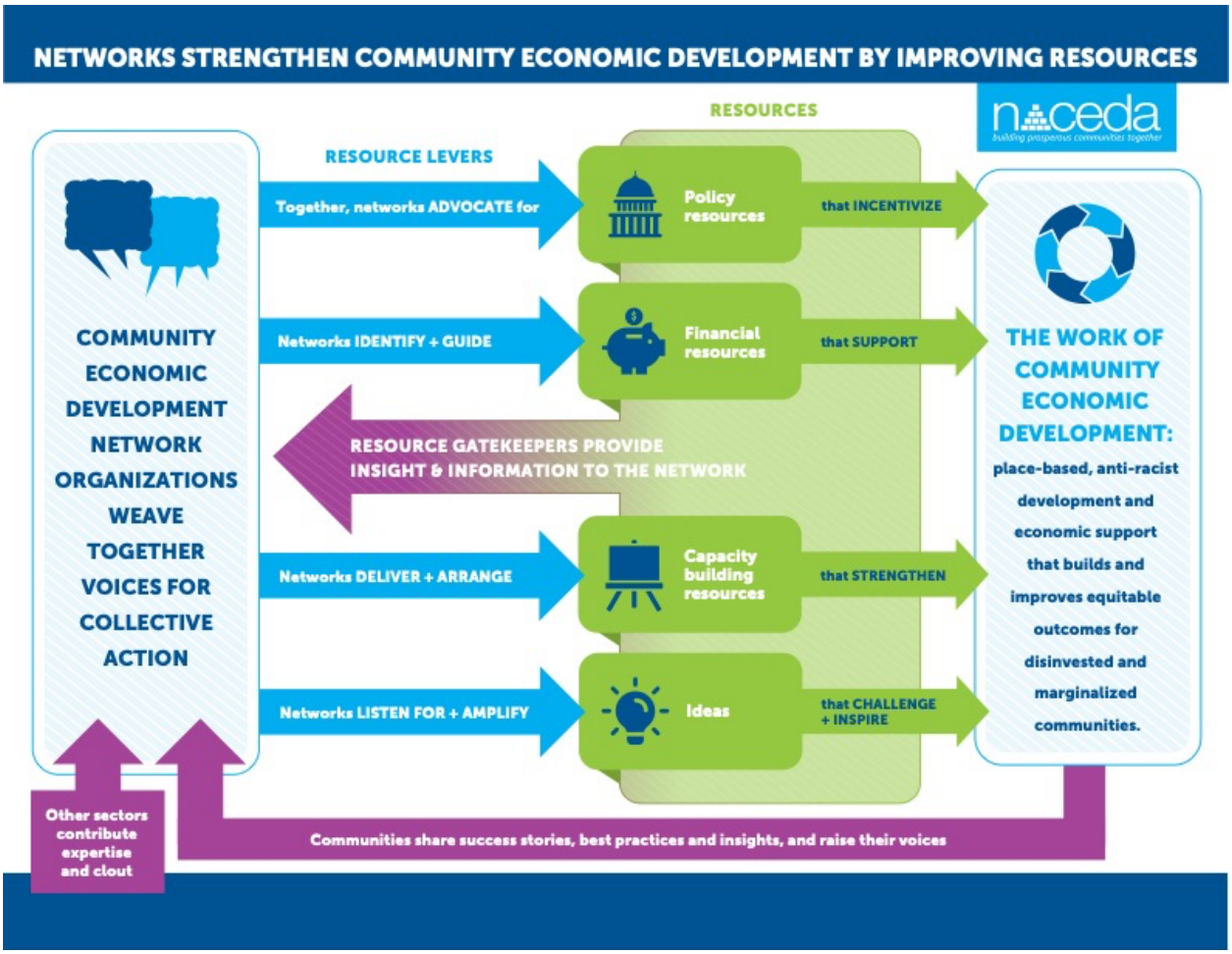



**Figure 1 Narrative**
*Captions in **blue** directly reference the infographic*

**The work of community economic development** (Figure 1: right box)
The work of community development broadly consists of place-based, anti-racist development and economic support that builds and improves equitable outcomes for disinvested and marginalized communities. Part I explores more deeply the values, tensions, and strategies woven into the work of community economic development (as does Part II, Figure 3, below). Upstream from the community and project level, there are four significant types of resources that support the work.

- Policy resources
- Financial resources
- Capacity building resources
- Thought leadership (ideas)

Networks use their influence and capacity – which NACEDA broadly defines as "*Resource Levers"* – to improve how resources are deployed, to make the case for expanding resources, and to ensure those who make these resources available are known to practitioners and vice versa. Figure 1 depicts how community economic development network organizations shape their priorities and use *resource levers* to influence *resources*.

**How community economic development network organizations shape their priorities**

**Network organizations weave together voices for collective action** (Figure 1: left box)
To build influence, network organizations foster relationships of trust among practitioners, stakeholders, and other interested parties (see Part II, Figure 2, below). Through those relationships, people exchange information – success stories, challenges and possible solutions – that build a sense of common purpose. Network organizations can channel that common purpose to build collective action directed toward decision makers who influence resources.

**Network inputs** (Figure 1: purple arrows moving right to left)

**Communities share success stories, best practices and insights, and raise their voices**
Network organizations draw together disparate voices and perspectives to focus collective action. The network organizations, through membership and informal connections, invite community development practitioners and community advocates into constructive conversation and collective action. Practitioners and advocates share best practices and stories of positive community outcomes.

**Other sectors contribute expertise and clout**
Network organizations interface with other sectors (arts or health sectors, for example) to draw upon external expertise and clout. These networks balance the multiplicity of perspectives to weave perspectives and voices together in organized advocacy and collective action.

**Resource gatekeepers provide insight and information to the network**
Network participants build relationships, gather information, and gain influence with institutional stakeholders – the individuals and institutions responsible for resource levers. The relationships with institutions are two-way. Resource stakeholders provide insight into the resources, data about the resource usage, and guidance on how to apply for or utilize the resources. Ultimately, the end goal of the network's collective action is to use influence to change, grow, and improve the resources that support the work of community development. With each of the four resource levers, that activity can take slightly different forms.

**How network organizations use "Resource Levers" to influence "Resources"** (Figure 1: blue and green arrows moving from left to right)

### Together, networks ADVOCATE for Policy resources that INCENTIVZE the work of community economic development

Networks organize the collective voice to sway policymakers, legislators, and other key decision makers to improve and expand the **policy resources** available to community development. These policy resources can be laws, regulations, or institutional policies that incentivize community economic development work. Incentives can include direct or indirect funding of the work (e.g. appropriations or tax credits), regulatory compulsion to engage in the work (e.g. Community Reinvestment Act), or policy resources that provide opportunities for the work (e.g. regulations that allow for certain project types).

> **Example:** Advocates have seen success in Massachusetts, where in 2019 the Commonwealth's Department of Housing and Community Development created a Creative Placemaking Program that funded integration of the arts, culture, creativity, and design into comprehensive, community development that promotes socially connected communities within the state's public housing facilities. Funds will go to community space projects within public housing developments that arise from **ideas generated through resident engagement and have the involvement of an artist**.

### Networks IDENTIFY + GUIDE Financial resources that SUPPORT the work of community economic development

Network organizations build relationships with funders to better understand and shape the **financial resources** available to community development work. These financial resources can be grants, loans, or capital investments, among other financial vehicles. Network organizations attempt to shape resources upstream, sometimes going as far as to be an intermediary for those resources, delivering them directly in ways larger or more complex institutions cannot. Ideally, institutions with resources will value and incorporate attempts by advocates and partners to shape resources to fit a common desired outcome.

> **Example:** Practitioner relationships with funders are crucial in assisting funders to understand how their funding vehicles can support community development and arts and culture, Deborah Kasemeyer explains in the San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank's *Community Development Innovation Review.* These relationships help ensure that innovative practice is conceptually translated in ways that funders understand how to adapt existing financial resources to support that practice, instead of unilaterally creating resources that may or may not be useful to the work.
>
> NACEDA similarly sees opportunities to improve banks' comfort level with investing in community economic development projects that infuse arts and culture. Supporters of the community economic development sector who have the trust of financial

institutions are key actors in helping financial institutions become comfortable with such investments.

### Networks DELIVER + ARRANGE Capacity building resources that STRENGTHEN the work of community economic development

Network organizations ascertain the needs and strengths of community-based organizations and arrange **capacity-building resources** that fill emerging gaps in resources and practices. These capacity-building resources can take the form of trainings, technical assistance, informational resources, peer learning, and AmeriCorps or other volunteer staff capacity that improves organizations' and communities' abilities to successfully accomplish their community development goals.

> **Example #1:** ArtPlace America's Community Development Investment (CDI) program built capacity in community economic development organizations in order for them to integrate arts and culture strategies. This deeper integration included the slow work of organizational change and community engagement – work that does not always lead to immediately quantifiable outputs yet lays the groundwork for long-term impact.
>
> **Example #2:** The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) created a resource guide in November 2020, to help creative placemakers, community developers and arts organizations navigate federal funding opportunities.
>
> Whether high touch long-term investments that expand capacity or low touch resource guides, capacity building work cannot be neglected. Capacity building work creates the foundation for community-based successes to become systemic rather than isolated.

### Networks LISTEN FOR + AMPLIFY Ideas that CHALLENGE + INSPIRE the work of community economic development

Network organizations set the stage for information sharing and frank conversations that can influence decision makers and shift the work of community development. These thought leadership resources can take the shape of best practices, testimony from leaders, innovations in practice, insights and collaborations with other sectors, and informative research that challenge and inspire individuals and communities in their daily work.

Adding arts & cultural integration into community economic development work is not an "add-on" like adding sprinkles to a donut. Intentional integration can fundamentally change the way the work happens and make it more equitable. This is also true with the sector-level activity – especially around the way individuals in the sector learn from and inspire each other.

> **Example:** Eighteen national nonprofits joined forces to present People & Places 2019, raising up local solutions from across the country and emphasizing the racial equity roots of community development. With the support of ArtPlace America, NACEDA and

its partners infused arts, culture, and equity throughout the conference activities – pushing organizers and participants beyond the idea of tokenizing artists to full integration of incorporating traditionally marginalized voices.

The emphasis on integrating arts and culture into the event was not lost on participants and has been a catalyst for other events to take similar strides to improve the way participants conceive of the interactions between community development and arts and culture. These two participant comments capture that energy: "Loved the interactive activity. Will be replicating that back home!" and "At first I was skeptical about the role playing, but it gave me a new perspective on how the arts can be used to catalyze discussion and compromise."

**Summary**

The process of building networks and wielding influence can become a positive feedback cycle, or a *system*. As the resource levers that support community development work are improved, expanded, and/or made more accessible, they produce improved and increased resources for more impactful community economic development work. This work builds and improves equitable outcomes for disinvested and marginalized communities. Improved and innovative practices, as well as more success stories and evidence of impact, feed back into the networked conversations, reinforcing the case for the sector and increasing its collective power. The system is improved.

**Networks Forge Relationships & Tell Stories to Build Influence**
**Figure 2**

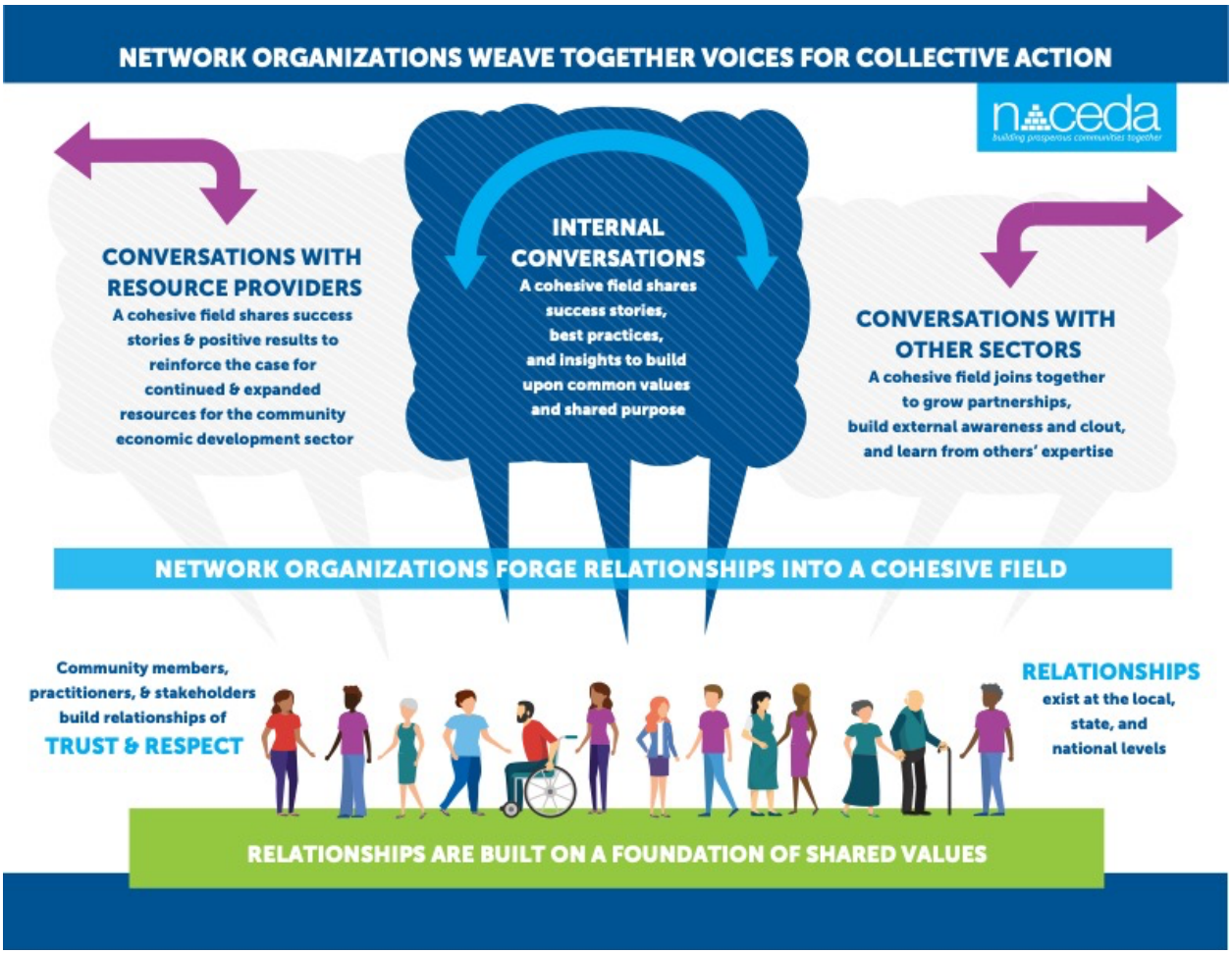



**Figure 2 Narrative**
*Captions in **blue** reference directly to the infographic*

Networks become increasingly influential through the strength of the relationships within the network. Stronger relationships build influence and set the stage for collective action. Network organizations weave perspectives and voices together to organize advocacy and collective action. The following narrative outlines Figure 2 from bottom to top.

### Relationships are built on a foundation of shared values

Relationships in community development are based on a set of foundational values NACEDA explores in Part I, including community organizing/agency, valuing both scale and accountability, racial equity, community identity, and support for emerging leaders.

### Community members, practitioners, & stakeholders build RELATIONSHIPS based on TRUST & RESPECT

Within the course of community economic development work – through community input processes, joint projects, story-sharing, and more – community members, practitioners, and stakeholders **build relationships based on trust and respect**. The community economic development process, and the positive outcomes from community economic development work, can positively reinforce the mutual trust and respect. Through network activity – which can include outreach and introduction-making, peer convenings, conferences, networking opportunities, story-sharing, financing and more – **community developers build relationships** within their **local** context, across the sector in their **state**, and **nationally**.

### Network organizations forge relationships into a cohesive field

Networks amplify stories and conversations to build influence both within the sector and with external stakeholders. Network organizations help a diverse sector amplify relevant stories from the breadth of the community development experience. These conversations provide practitioners, community members, and stakeholders with the opportunity to explore the shared values as well as the people/place and industry/movement tensions previously described. These conversations can also surface practitioner, community, and stakeholder insights into nine common community development strategies previously explored in Part I.

### INTERNAL CONVERSATIONS
### A cohesive field shares success stories, best practices, and insights to build upon common values and shared purpose

Within the field, conversations help practitioners and stakeholders **share strategies and insights to build upon common values and shared purpose** – weaving a more cohesive sector. These conversations also provide opportunities for community developers to candidly navigate people/place and movement/industry tensions. These conversations can surface relevant stories and information that can be used to build influence with external stakeholders. Candid conversations also garner credibility and buy-in for organized advocacy and collective action.

### CONVERSATIONS WITH RESOURCE PROVIDERS
### A cohesive field shares success stories & positive results to reinforce the case for continued & expanded resources

With key resource providers such as funders and policymakers, a cohesive field **expresses a collective voice that shares success stories and positive results** to reinforce the case for **resources for the sector**.

These interactions with resource providers can achieve several aims:

- Showcase how community development outcomes align with funders' and policymakers' desired outcomes

- Provide opportunities for test cases and build trust for resource providers to want to expand resources
- Create additional communication channels for communities to express their preferences to policymakers & other resource providers.

### CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHER SECTORS

**A cohesive field joins together to grow partnerships, build external awareness and clout, and learn from others' expertise**

With other sectors, a cohesive field joins together to grow partnerships and build awareness and clout. These interactions with other sectors can achieve several aims:

- Provide external audiences with an introduction to the community economic development sector, as well as its goals, values, and activities
- Raise awareness within the community economic development sector of best practices from other fields
- Build common ground and opportunities for alignment in practice in order to achieve mutually desired outcomes (e.g. when community economic development partners with the public health sector)

These conversations form the bedrock of relationships for collective action, building cohesion within the field and influence outside of the field.

**Shared Values Drive the Work of Community Economic Development**
**Figure 3**

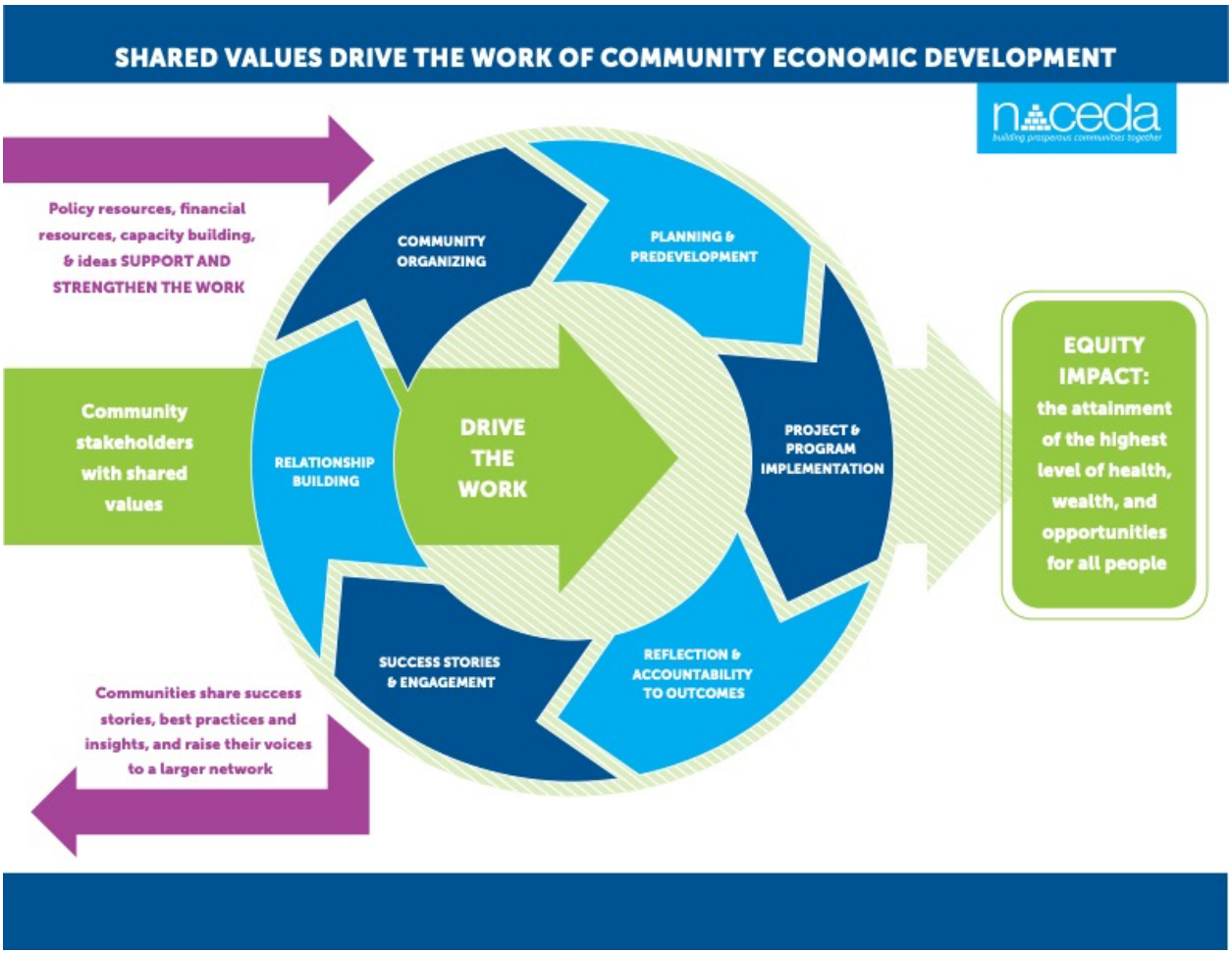



**Figure 3 Narrative**
*Captions in **blue** reference directly to the infographic*

Community members dedicated to community economic development work in a particular place harness their shared values and the resources available to implement projects.

**Community stakeholders with shared values DRIVE THE WORK** (Figure 3: green arrow, center) Likeminded community members will create or partner with a community-based nonprofit organization, codifying shared values in organizational principles and practices, and harnessing a vehicle to draw in resources. Community actors used shared values and vision to harness those resources into the work of community economic development through the nine commonly used strategies detailed in Part 1.

**Cycle of stages: many successful community economic development projects follow a similar pattern** (Figure 3: central circle)**.**
Certain elements of this cycle, like community organizing, sharing success stories, and relationship-building can be ongoing throughout a project's lifetime flow into multiple projects. The work of community development broadly consists of place-based, anti-racist development that builds and improves equitable outcomes for disinvested and marginalized communities.

### Community Organizing
Community members together identify a shared goal to achieve – this could be a gap to be addressed such as a lack of affordable housing, a desire to be fulfilled such as a neighborhood grocery store, or a vision to pursue such as multimodal transportation access along a primary thoroughfare.

### Planning & Predevelopment
Community members and stakeholders begin the necessary work towards achieving the shared goal – understanding the possible ways to achieve the goal, understanding the cost and capacities needed to implement,

### Project & Program Implementation
Stakeholders conduct implement the project or program.

### Reflection & Accountability to Outcomes
Community members and stakeholders spend time evaluating the process and the project/program's outcomes, formally or informally, and explore why it produced the desired outcome(s) or not.

### Success Stories & Engagement
Community members and stakeholders share the successes stories of the project or program and build more engagement within the community.

### Relationship Building
The newly-engaged individuals build relationships with already-engaged community members and stakeholders, growing the circle of individuals committed to identifying shared goals and acting to achieve those goals.

## Policy resources, financial resources, capacity building, and thought leadership support and strengthen the work

Taken from Figure 1, the purple arrow in the upper left of Figure 3 represents how resources are drawn into the work being driven by community stakeholders.

### Equity Impact: the attainment of the highest level of health, wealth, and opportunities for all people

In one sense, all of community economic development – the complex sector, the complicated policy and financial levers, and the messiness of collective action – are aiming at achieving impact in equity. It's a long, somewhat complicated story to get to a succinct goal: that all members of a community can flourish and that community prosperity can be achieved on a widely felt and equitably shared basis.

### Communities share success stories, best practices and insights, and raise their voices to a larger network

Taken from Figure 1, the purple arrow in the lower left of Figure 3 represents how the community economic development sector would not be able to endure without the positive feedback provided by successes – measured in outputs, outcomes, and success stories – that provide the evidence base for continuing to support the work and strengthening the resources available to practitioners.

## PART III – Recommended Strategies for Collaboration Between Community Economic Development & Arts

The projects profiled in Part I illustrate a range of outcomes that balance the field's industry/movement and place/people tensions. Many of the projects profiled involve artists and culture practitioners in some way, and artists are often the intended residents or beneficiaries of housing and work or performance spaces. These projects either recognize the needs of an existing set of community residents or contribute to a concentration of arts and culture activity for the purpose of supporting broader community revitalization, or both. Some involve artists and culture bearers in the process of designing and developing the product itself.

Is there a difference in outcomes between projects for artists and culture-bearers and projects by artists and culture bearers? Even in this small sample, it is clear that when artists and culture practitioners lead part of the process to determine what will be produced, the project serves a broader group of people than the few who will ultimately use the space or participate in the activities. This engagement of existing residents with newcomers to the community, direct beneficiaries with neighbors, helps reconcile the field's core tensions in important ways.

**Industry vs. movement:** When outside actors bring investment to previously disinvested places, it can feel alien to those who live there and culturally displace existing residents despite preserving affordability. Conversely, inserting housing or facilities that serve people with different demographic characteristics and/or cultural histories in places with stable markets can seem to threaten the dominant culture there, calling attention to difference without necessarily helping to bridge it.

Artists and culture bearers can ensure that the design of physical spaces expresses the histories and cultures present in a place, and that potential participants understand how the services provided by the project can help them realize their own opportunities together. In a 2017 ArtPlace field scan entitled, "6 Things the Arts Can Do for Housing," Danya Sherman states:

> Accessible cultural activities can increase empathy and provide a common ground for people that may not otherwise interact. These cultural activities can help mitigate the mistrust, bias, and prejudice found in highly segregated regions, which over time have created mistrust, bias, and prejudice as well as in mixed income neighborhoods. Overcoming these benefits all, who may then live more comfortably in their neighborhood and within the larger urban region with stronger ties to and understanding for a diversity of others.

Improving the resonance of built projects and services and involving diverse community members in culturally appropriate ways can create connection and sustain it through periods of change. Involving artists and culture bearers as leaders in the shaping of community economic development projects and activities positions them as a tangible part of this evolution.

**Place vs. people**: Geographic concentrations of lower income people is one legacy of an economic, legal, and social system that has historically shut people out of opportunities due to their race, ethnicity, and class. Federal, state, and local policies have often steered resources geographically, using the location of projects as a proxy for serving the intended populations. This practice has sometimes been instrumental in exacerbating concentrations of poverty and separation among demographic groups and cultures.

Large-scale desegregation efforts intended to create more equal access have often stopped short of supporting the individual connections that can shape perception, economic choices, and ultimately neighborhood and regional markets. Policies, including the Choice Neighborhoods program and the Obama administration's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule, embrace investing in historically underserved areas as well as opening opportunities in places that have been more difficult for lower income people to access. There is also a growing recognition that managing change in areas that are neither economically distressed nor "hot" is important to creating a range of stable housing and business opportunities at different price points within metropolitan regions.

Artists and culture bearers can improve the actual reach of projects within these broad policy frameworks by connecting them in vivid and deeply resonant ways to the values, history and lived experience of existing residents as well as newcomers. As Sherman puts it:

> Many community-based groups have found that arts-based strategies are crucial in their efforts to stabilize communities that are particularly vulnerable to displacement. Stabilization strategies are most often aimed to support vulnerable populations, weakened by historic or ongoing neglect or uneven funding for individuals and communities of limited means; people of color; Native American communities; and others that are commonly at a disadvantage. These practices are largely experimental and in need of more research, study, experimentation, and funding in order to help community groups develop best practices and achieve long-term stabilization for vulnerable communities and residents.

Part of the place/people tension in community economic development comes from the fact that built projects are the most tangible product in the "place" piece of the work. Success can most easily be measured in terms of low vacancies, stable or rising rents, and property values. Such measures of market success depend on individual people and institutions choosing to invest in the place with decreasing levels of public incentives. These individual economic choices depend greatly on personal perception of risk and reward. These perceptions are strongly shaped by the investor's familiarity with the place and understanding of the shared values of the people who currently live and work there, as well as those who will be attracted by the new development. Arts and culture practices build bridges among people based on values and experiences and can help lay the foundation for market stability as well as positive community change.

**Why are arts and culture modalities so effective in community economic development?**

In the creative placemaking field scan commissioned by ArtPlace America and Welcoming America, *Bridging Divides, Creating Community: Arts, Culture and Immigration*, Dr. John Arroyo writes about using arts and culture to foster understanding and inclusion in changing communities. The mechanisms he highlights in the field of immigration advocacy and services apply equally well to community economic development. Dr. Arroyo writes:

> … diffusing the tension between new and established populations requires communication strategies and programmatic efforts that show how immigrants, refugees, and long-term residents are interconnected and share common values about family, work, and economic security... This is equally true among diverse groups of United States citizens, particularly, in parts of the country where economic restructuring and population decline has adversely affected the livelihoods of all community members, regardless of citizenship status.

Dr. Arroyo concludes that "one of the biggest challenges for communities undergoing rapid ethnic demographic shifts is finding generative, collaborative ways to explore commonalities and encourage 'contact building' between new and existing groups."

The field scan provides a number of examples in which arts programming facilitates contact among residents with different backgrounds who might not otherwise have come together. Some programming does not involve formal arts and cultural disciplines. For example, when a California program to promote access to health services engaged immigrant members as *promontoras (Latinx lay health workers)*, they discovered that a sidewalk was needed so that parents could safely walk their children school. Walk events organized to publicize the need became celebrations of recognition and progress after the sidewalk was provided by the municipality.

Dr. Arroyo describes the importance of cultural programing in engaging immigrant community members and building alliances:

> Arts and culture can also engage new Americans in civic issues by building trust and raising awareness through cultural programming that makes them feel safe and valued. The sheer act of convening in a casual, creative, and culturally familiar setting provides a space where immigrants and refugees reveal issues they are facing that may not otherwise be on the radar of elected officials or the social service sector.

The approaches being described are universal and somewhat axiomatic in the field of community organizing, from which the community economic development field evolved. They include first starting where the people are and with the problems they want to solve. Community organizers go to the people: investing time and funding in interactive, creative, and

fun programs that take place in community spaces, including places of worship. Holding events outside the workday, providing food and programming for multiple generations are also key ingredients in making participation both possible and welcoming. These approaches apply powerfully to the engagement of those historically disadvantaged and disenfranchised among long-time citizens as well as new immigrants.

Organizing is also discussed by Sherman in ArtPlace's housing specific scan:

> Many community-based groups engage arts-based strategies to bolster and enliven community organizing, movement-building, and collective action. While organizing can be difficult and hard work, creative strategies help to ensure that community building through housing development is enjoyable, joyous, and enriching. Arts and design-oriented strategies and interventions help to educate, empower, and create space for shared decision-making in a housing and community economic development context. These strategies directly benefit those engaged with the campaigns at hand; secondary benefits may also accrue to other residents, policymakers, and others as a result of the organizing.

In their 2017 report *Creating Change through Arts, Culture and Equitable Development,* Kalima Rose, Milly Hawk Daniel and Jeremy Liu of PolicyLink provide examples of how arts and culture intersected with the phases of project planning and implementation. These examples fall within the domains of housing, transportation, infrastructure and community investment, economic development and financial security, health and food, youth and education, and open space and recreation. They use examples in each domain to demonstrate that "collectively, arts and culture enable understanding of the past and envisioning of a shared, more equitable future."

In his field scan, Dr. Arroyo profiles a number of projects for new immigrants that make use of community economic development tools, such as promoting small businesses based on cultural traditions and everyday arts like cuisine and repurposing vacant structures. Like the examples in Part I of this report, these initiatives manifest elements of culture as they create economic or housing opportunities, or animate public spaces with culturally inclusive programs. He also calls out developing infrastructure for cultural exchange by co-creating activities within existing cultural institutions and developing new spaces or programs and activities in public space. These threads have clear ties to the "industry" and "place" strands in community economic development practice.

**How can we get beyond individual projects to transform systems?**

In community economic development, investments of time, energy, and funding in projects is not necessarily a trade-off with transformational change. Often individual projects are a vehicle for developing relationships that enable system transformation. Individual, informal relationships allow participants to recognize shared values, creating a more fertile environment for inclusive policies. Practical, problem-solving relationships among community leaders and outside institutions bring needed funding and technical capacities. Organizational relationships

and professional networks enable more projects that have better grounding in community priorities as solutions are developed, tested, and improved.

If this network of relationships is cultivated well, the system evolves in the direction of just access to opportunity. Multiple stakeholders participate in concrete actions involving shared interests. Previously marginalized people gain new access to useful resources and networks. Transformational change becomes less scary to people who are adapted to the existing order as they experience projects that work in a new way. Part II of this report describes in pictures and words how relationships grounded in hands-on experience build awareness and demonstrate the possibilities that arise from collaboration among the local community and institutional stakeholders in community economic development and other sectors.

**How do we accelerate system change and improve the quality of the change we get?**

Projects and activities are more likely to forge working relationships among community members and partners bringing outside resources if they embody both community priorities and the goals of the outside partners. Community economic development organizations must balance a living understanding of their community's priorities with the ability to deliver on outside institutions' requirements for investments of funding, time, reputation and other assets.

Regarding mutual community/outside goals, Sherman says:

> [Arts and cultural strategies] can signal to outsiders that a particular neighborhood may be valuable and can thus attract investment. Because funds for affordable housing preservation, development, and rehabilitation are so low, utilizing arts strategies can aid in a communities' competitiveness. Many developers are beginning to get on the bandwagon, but we have to be careful that it doesn't translate to unintended negative outcomes for already vulnerable and marginalized communities or parachuting in artists with no connection to the place, just to increase profit.

The "industry/movement" tension in community economic development work reflects this balancing act, and differences in available funding for work on either side of this tension drives debate. More resources have generally been available for the "industry" pieces such as developing real property or investing in small businesses, which have the potential to directly generate revenue in the relatively near term.

Dedicated resources for community organizing, the core of the "movement" piece of the work, are generally much thinner or nonexistent. Organizations must often support these activities through volunteer work and earned revenue from real estate and other business lines. These fees are under pressure due to decreases in subsidy levels for public/private projects. Projects like the *promontoras* recognize the downstream cost savings of effective community engagement in the healthcare system, but the fragmented organizational nature of our public/private service delivery systems makes capturing those types of savings extremely difficult. Special grants are still generally needed to get the upstream work moving, and

government resources have been extremely inconsistent. In philanthropy, direct support for organizing can feel risky to many institutional funders due to the potential for political activism.

As Dr. Arroyo notes, engaging community members, building relationships in accessible ways, and facilitating conversations that distill priorities is extremely time- intensive. By definition the conclusions of these conversations cannot be precisely predicted or linked to downstream transactions, and they do not directly generate revenue. However, it is hard to see how a transformational change in our economy and society could be truly equitable without the relationships that high-quality community organizing fosters.

**What can arts and culture funders do?**

Arts and culture practices are extremely effective in establishing relationships among the diverse people who live and work in a place, and the organizations that serve them. Arts and culture funders can support arts-based organizing activities that allow people to experience their shared values and priorities, as well as the processes of conceiving and planning for projects that advance those priorities. They can also support continued involvement by community members, mediated through arts and cultural practices, in the governance, operations, and use of the resulting facilities and programs. Most of these costs cannot be financed as part of real estate or revenue-producing enterprises, but they are the pieces that keep people engaged in shaping the work that affects their lives.

Focused grantmaking to ensure that engagement happens early, continues consistently, and stays meaningful would improve outcomes in the community economic development system. The ArtPlace funder collaborative plumbed a wide variety of avenues by which such grantmaking makes a difference in various policy domains and captured what was learned in ways that can become the foundation for future philanthropic work. One important aspect that Dr. Arroyo touches on in the field scan on immigration is the importance of embedding this work at the local level. He notes that relationship-building is most effective in the context of tangible improvements to the built environment and service delivery, which makes local action the tip of the spear.

**How can Grantmakers in the Arts help its members carry out this approach in their regions?**

NACEDA has identified three important ways, which we list below in ascending order of departure from GIA's current roles.

**1. Articulating a framework for investment, including outcome metrics and proposal selection criteria**

Investing in individual projects to boost their system change potential requires some level of understanding about how an arts and culture proposal fits into the overall community economic development project and enhances its outcomes. Metrics around qualitative aspects such as contact building, ongoing engagement, leadership development, and organizational

change should be tracked alongside community economic development production indicators like families served, housing units developed, commercial space leased, businesses supported, and real estate market health. ArtPlace America, Americans for the Arts, and PolicyLink have suggested ways to measure these types of community-building outcomes, as the Cultural Development Network has done internationally. There may also be metrics in use by some GIA members that should be included. Reviewing these existing frameworks to distill the common elements would be a first step, as would articulating in a crisp way how they apply in the somewhat amorphous world of community economic development in the United States.

Once key metrics are identified and how they fit into community economic development work are articulated, GIA could develop sample proposal selection criteria to solicit high-impact projects and help members recognize them. Proposal selection criteria should explicitly prioritize funding for the community organizing antecedents, the ongoing engagement components of community economic development projects, and the integration of arts and culture practices into those activities. In addition to meaningful mechanisms for the inclusion of community members at each stage, markers of system-change potential include which institutions and individuals the funding applicant plans to involve at each stage and the roles those stakeholders are expected to play in the project. Applicants may (and often should) start with engagement that does not involve all parties at once in order to validate identity and build trust with each group before facilitating a process that brings them together. To identify proposals with the greatest potential impact for system change, funders should have a full understanding of how applicants plan to use the organizing, planning, and implementation processes to build relationships and networks – and what success will look like at each stage in terms of that relationship-building.

GIA might consider using a workshop among staff and key members to review existing work on outcomes and indicators, refresh and distill the understanding of how to apply them to community organizing, and develop a framework of project selection criteria. Substantial work has been done by a variety of organizations to identify potential indicators in different policy domains related to community economic development, so most of the participants' energy should be devoted to developing a working draft of project selection criteria. This exercise would start with a call for tools being used by members now to target arts and culture in community organizing and community economic development. Participants would map criteria onto typical community organizing, project planning and implementation phases, using prepared cases and examples from their own experience to unpack how funders can distinguish proposals that use arts and culture practices to their greatest effect in building understanding relationships and networks among groups of people in place.

Such a hands-on experience would produce a useful set of indicators and criteria and cultivate practical understanding among participants about how to apply and improve upon the tools. With thoughtful facilitation, it would also engage more experienced and innovative funders in mentoring others.

NACEDA would be pleased to work with GIA partners in this work to develop workshop materials based on a scan of tools developed by ArtPlace, PolicyLink, Cultural Development Network, Americans for the Arts, NACEDA, and other national and international contributors (see Appendix A for a preliminary list of resources). If desired NACEDA could also assist with workshop facilitation, and secure responses to the results from community economic development and community arts organizations participating in its State Enabling Environment cohort.

It is important to note that any product of such a workshop would serve as a starting point for further development, refinement, and comment by its users. The Cultural Development Network has positioned its Whitebox tool as a living resource that encompasses the feedback and new ideas of a growing community of users in different policy domains. If GIA were to organize a deep-dive into community economic development indicators and selection criteria for use in the United States, it could both contribute to the CDN knowledge management project and support a related conversation. The workshop and the ongoing conversations would provide a solid starting place for a community of practice going forward.

**2. Supporting a community of practice for arts & culture funders in community economic development**

Aligning national practices and resources to meet unique local situations is a core challenge in the community economic development field. Identifying and supporting projects with system-changing potential requires the ability to accurately read the current state of play in a specific place; understand who is and is not involved, what roles they play or could play; and identify next achievable milestones. This insight requires a firm grip on community economic development process and human dynamics, both of which are harder to quantify and clarify than the technical aspects of project design, finance, and implementation. Practitioners who have built this insight through experience will often say they know an impactful project when they see it. How can we quickly expand the number of people with this experience?

GIA can accelerate the development of funders who can read systems and intervene effectively by supporting a community of practice among arts and culture funders in community economic development. The group would share experiences and compare maps of which institutions do what in their regions to comprehend the substantial variation in possible roles and how to cultivate nontraditional allies across sectors. NACEDA, like GIA, is a network of networks. NACEDA members are grass-tops organizations that can help directly with this type of landscaping in their geographies.

The community of practice would discuss new tools and/or how to adapt existing ones, as well as capturing members' experience applying the knowledge day to day. Reflection within that same safe group about what works and where existing practices fall short can become productive laboratories for developing new resources for the field. Creating this type of peer learning and innovation network would be an enormous contribution to arts and culture

funders engaged in racial justice activities at the local level, and more broadly to the community economic development field.

**3. Supporting a network of community economic development practitioners who know how to use arts and culture for inclusion and racial equity**

Investing in relationships means investing in people, and perhaps the most impactful way to do this is to invest in the people who can organize involvement by others. There are many good examples of mid-career fellowships and communities of practice among people who already have jobs in the community economic development field. Community organizing, however, is so inconsistently funded that participation may not be feasible for many of the organizations a funder would want to involve.

In a 2018 report commissioned by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the New York Community Trust, Yancey Consulting suggested that sustainability is needed as a first step to support thriving institutions of color. Supporting staff capacity can unlock the potential of community economic development organizations just like the arts institutions that Yancey surveyed. Not surprisingly, the need is most acute among organizations rooted in non-white communities in both fields.

The need for capacity also extends to impact evaluation. The Urban Institute's Validating Arts and Livability Indicators Study notes that community-based organizations implementing creative placemaking projects needed help with data gathering and analysis to document outcomes. Cultural Development Network identifies surveys, focus groups and interviews as the best ways to collect information on contact and relationship building, network development and similar outcomes, all of which are intensive information gathering efforts that need to start either during or soon after the activities in question and benefit from some level of professional training. Like organizing, data gathering and evaluation capacity is not consistently supported among community economic development implementers.

A fellowship structure that funds (or partially funds) organizing and data gathering/evaluation positions, and also supports a community of practice among fellows, could quickly expand the use of arts and culture practices to build relationships and change local systems. It would also generate a pipeline of projects meeting the investment criteria discussed above and create opportunities for the broader network of funders and other stakeholders to assist fellows when their projects hit tricky spots. Without direct investment in day-to-day implementation and evaluation capacity, opportunities to support arts and culture in community organizing will be fewer and more ephemeral.

There has been some discussion of opportunities to support VISTA members with information about arts and culture approaches to their anti-poverty work, including placing artists and culture-bearers in those roles. This would add capacity directly to organizing efforts as described above. It also represents a way to leverage the federal VISTA program for members' stipends, the online VISTA University education platform, and some level of program

administration. VISTA University already contains general material on evaluation practice which can be used as a starting place to add indicators related to arts and culture in organizing.

NACEDA strongly supports the idea of creating an arts and culture cohort within the VISTA program. If this idea is pursued, it would be important to include placements with community economic development organizations that want to integrate arts and culture into their organizing as well as with arts and culture organizations that are interested in creative placemaking type projects. Cross-pollinating ideas and opportunities among the organizations through their VISTAs and other staff could be an important step in bringing arts and culture and community economic development closer together, particularly if multiple placements are made in the same geographic region.

The easiest way for GIA or member funders to support VISTA engagement would be through intermediary organizations that can help identify appropriate placements within their target geographies, facilitate development of proposals by organizations hosting the VISTAs, and assist with administrative requirements once the placements are made. Since the typical VISTA placement lasts one year, serial placements will be needed to sustain and expand activities. Supporting intermediaries to handle the administrative pieces maximizes the net capacity gain to community-based organizations. NACEDA can work with GIA to match interested members with VISTA intermediaries working supporting community economic development placements in the funders' focus geographies.

**Conclusion**

The use of arts and culture practices in community organizing and engagement can vastly improve the quality and speed of system change in the community economic development field. Involving artists and culture bearers in community economic development projects creates qualitatively more inclusive outcomes.

In Part I we examined projects that benefit arts and culture practitioners or include arts and cultural objects in their physical products. We compared them with projects in which artists and culture bearers led parts of the design and implementation processes. We documented that projects with earlier and more substantial arts and culture involvement did a better job of balancing core tensions in the community economic development field. These projects harnessed technical or industry capacities to serve movement objectives, manifesting a piece of the peoples' will in a place.

Part II visually depicts how the relationships that people establish through working together on specific, concrete projects become the foundation for broader movements. It also shows the crucial roles that networks of community-based organizations and their local partners play in building relationships among individuals and organizations working on similar issues in different localities. Movements are built from the ground up, and the work of connecting needs to be

cultivated along with the work of producing housing and commercial development and delivering community services and activities.

Community organizing presents a major opportunity for arts and culture to move the local economic and social systems in a more inclusive and equitable direction. Arts and culture programs provide immediate opportunities for participants from different life experiences to recognize their common values. This is the foundation for effective organizing, in which people identify shared goals and decide what to do together to achieve them. Artists and culture-bearers can facilitate the continuous engagement of original participants and broaden the circle without losing the intensity of personal commitment. By supporting community organizing empowered by arts and culture, funders can directly move our system toward a more equitable future.

NACEDA identified several ways in which GIA can advance this important work:

1. Articulating a framework of outcomes measures and selection criteria for use by interested members, ideally by building on the work of other domestic and international experts and workshopping the tools with close-in stakeholders.

2. Supporting a community of practice or innovation network among GIA members involved in community organizing and community economic development. This network would not only provide cohort learning and peer sharing opportunities, but would also contribute new experiences, tools and resources to philanthropy.

3. Supporting efforts to build capacity among community-based organizations for use of arts and culture practices in their organizing and engagement activities. GIA members could leverage the VISTA program to put staff in the right places with access to the right tools, developing a next generation of projects that can be more impactful for social change and to capture the outcomes. Investing in the people to carry out the organizing and evaluation will be necessary to embed new practices; however, community economic development organizations are often strapped for resources and these activities are among the hardest to sustain. Supporting learning and network-building among practitioners as well as funders would further strengthen the impact and reach of the overall effort.

The COVID-19 pandemic's economic fallout is just beginning to unfold, with different drivers to economic decline than the 2008 financial crisis. However, it is already clear that historically marginalized communities are disproportionately impacted by the disease itself and the loss of income resulting from required closures. The community economic development field will again play an important role in the recovery, and it is more important than ever that we rebuild in a way that provides just access to opportunity.

Local and state governments and service organizations will face tremendous challenges in generating resources to meet the scale of the problem. Federal assistance is necessarily as one-size-fits-all, depending upon local stakeholders to tailor solutions for their communities. Engaging community members and keeping them involved as projects move forward will become more difficult amid the stresses of loss and the hard work of household financial recovery, supporting children in reconnecting with education, and all of the other crucial priorities this time will bring. And yet the hope and connectedness of collective action have never been more important. Artists, culture bearers and the funders have an opportunity to show up at a crucial time with tools uniquely suited to community needs.

Funders have a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate the power of arts and culture in community economic development by filling the community organizing gap and capturing the results. By supporting its members to engage with the community economic development field in this way, GIA can help build a just transition from the ground up.

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**APPENDIX**

**Starting list of resources for outcomes indicators and selection criteria**

Cultural Development Network's *Outcomes Schema* does an outstanding job of listing qualitative outcomes that would indicate that community economic development projects are delivering on the goals of building effective networks in an inclusive and authentic way. Descriptions relevant for community economic development are found primarily in the Economic, Governance and Society domains, with feeling connected to place listed under Environment. While most of the indicators are "under development" in these sections, the approach of collecting data through surveys, interviews, focus groups and expert reviews is useful for funders to consider as an important and relatively expensive part of evaluation.

*Validating Arts & Livability Indicators (VALI) Study,* The Urban Institute for the National Endowment for the Arts, Elaine Morley and Mary K. Winkler. Among other recommendations, this assessment notes that new data collection strategies are often needed, with new investment in data gathering capacity to appropriately track the indicators.

*Fuzzy concepts, proxy data: Why indicators would not track creative placemaking success*, Ann Markusen, International Journal of Urban Sciences, November 2013.

*Continuum of Impact: A Guide to Defining Social and Civic Outcomes and Impacts*, Animating Democracy, a project of Americans for the Arts.

*Cultural Asset Mapping* - Arts and Planning Toolkit. Provides context and overview for the practice of Cultural Asset Mapping - "a process of collecting, recording, analyzing, and synthesizing information in order to describe the cultural resources, networks, links, and patterns of usage of a given community or group (CNC, 2010)" - as well as funding opportunities and successful case studies

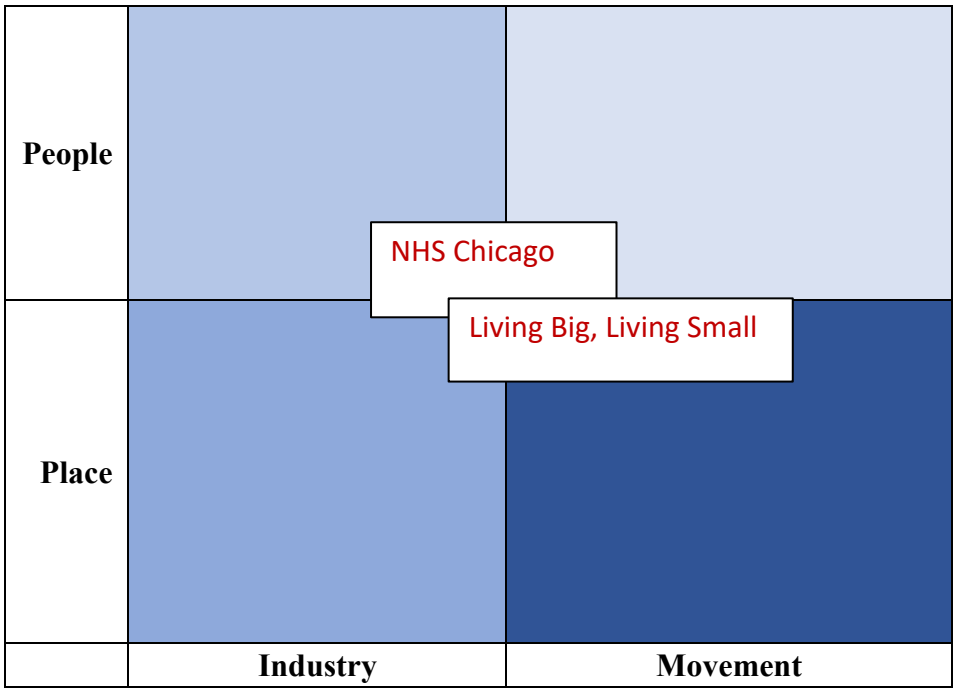
*Working With Artists to Deepen Impact,* PolicyLink for ArtPlace America. This brief examines how these organizations learned to work with artists and develop collaborative practices during ArtPlace America's Community Development Investments initiative, in which six participating organizations developed creative placemaking projects that could help them more effectively achieve their missions. PolicyLink conducted a research and documentation project to measure the progress, immediate outcomes, and impacts of those projects.

**NACEDA 1b Answer Key**

**Strategy 2**
**Homeownership support**
Provide resources that aid in residential stability, property maintenance, and avoidance of mortgage foreclosure.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of Chicago
Chicago, IL
Homeowner Workshops

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
Cook Inlet Housing Authority
Anchorage, AK
Living Big, Living Small Project



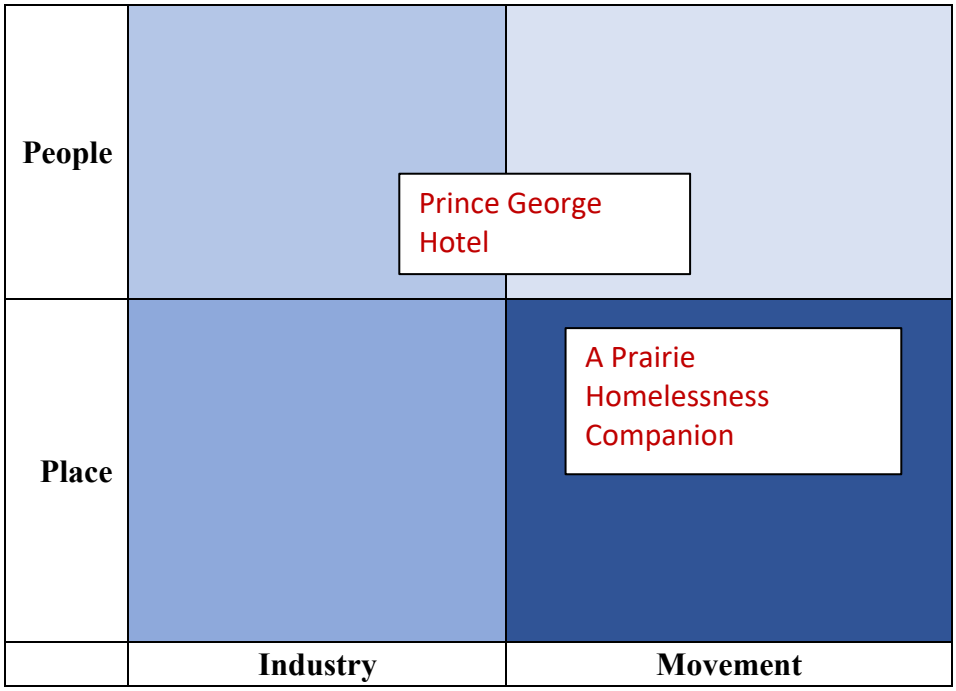

The "**NHS Model**" (in this case, Chicago) is a well-known and established approach within community development that acknowledges the power of homeownership to build family assets over the long-term, particularly low and moderate-income minorities. However, it is also usually implemented by a community organization that braids in place-based outcomes to fight against vacancy, the degradation of community culture and identity. Organizations will typically enhance place-based outcomes by concentrating homeownership promotion in a small number of places. Given these two intentions in the NHS model, the strategy typically straddles the people/place divide, though leaning toward people-based outcomes and wealth building. Given the approach's familiarity to those within community development, there are significant

aspects that have an industry flavor, such as established training infrastructures and private sector (CRA-related) financing models. **Living Big, Small** is similar, though it incorporates the cultural and spatial needs of Native Alaska (related to square footage and the cultural accommodation of Native communities in an urban area). It centers people by integrating design with conversation on lived experiences in a particular place, such that it becomes a grassroots movement enacted through local artist.

**Strategy 3**
**Homelessness Prevention**
Interrupt precipitating events that cause homelessness, often through regular employment and affordable housing.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Breaking Ground
New York, NY
Prince George Hotel Renovation

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership
Southwest Region, MN
A Prairie Homelessness Companion



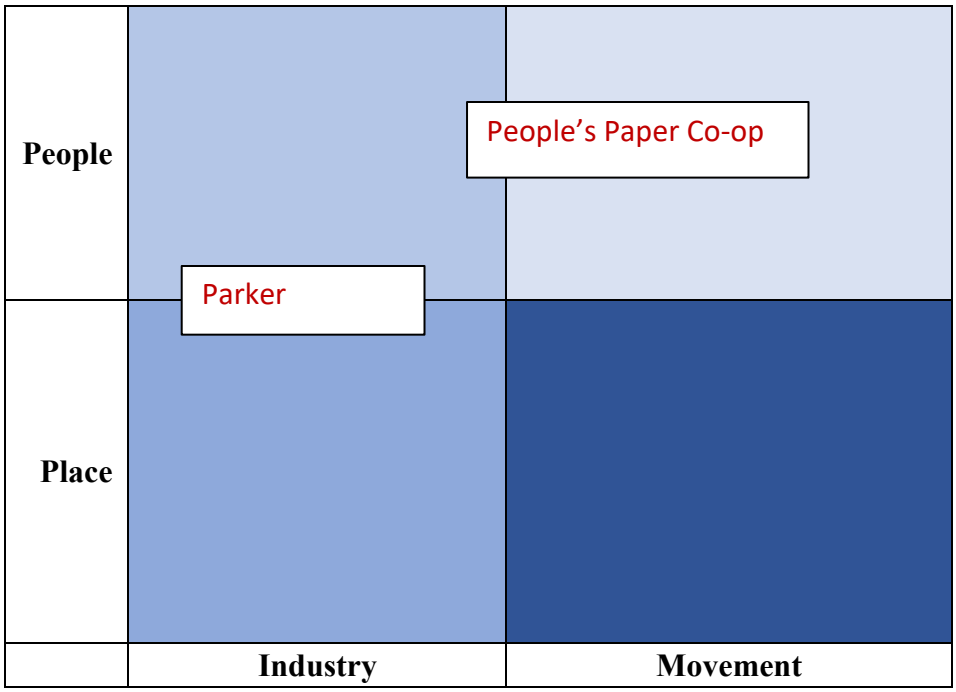

**Prince George Hotel** renovation exemplifies a notable, robust, and typical approach to nonprofit homelessness provision that leans on established practices (affordable housing units) and resources (case management, workshops, recreational activities) for a specific group of

people (those experiencing homelessness), by giving it a strong people-based industry flavor. "**A Prairie Homelessness Companion**" is largely a process with a desired policy change as the outcome. Policy change, by NACEDA's definition, is a movement-based outcome. And since the target of the policy change are units of government that represent places, moves the project more strongly into a place-based strategy.

**Strategy 4**
**Workforce development**
Ensure individuals have the education, skills, and training needed to obtain jobs.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc.
Phoenix, AZ

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
The Village of Arts and Humanities
Philadelphia, PA
The People's Paper Co-op (PPC)




Workforce development strategies are typically more people-focused, ie, implementing training for a specific group of people (those seeking employment). **The Parker strategy** in Buckeye, Arizona, moves the strategy somewhat more toward the place-based side of the spectrum given that part of its outcome is the establishment of a factory that has significant economic input into a place. **People's Paper Co-op** also utilizes people-based strategy. However, its aims are additionally oriented at people of a disadvantaged background (women and reentry) and

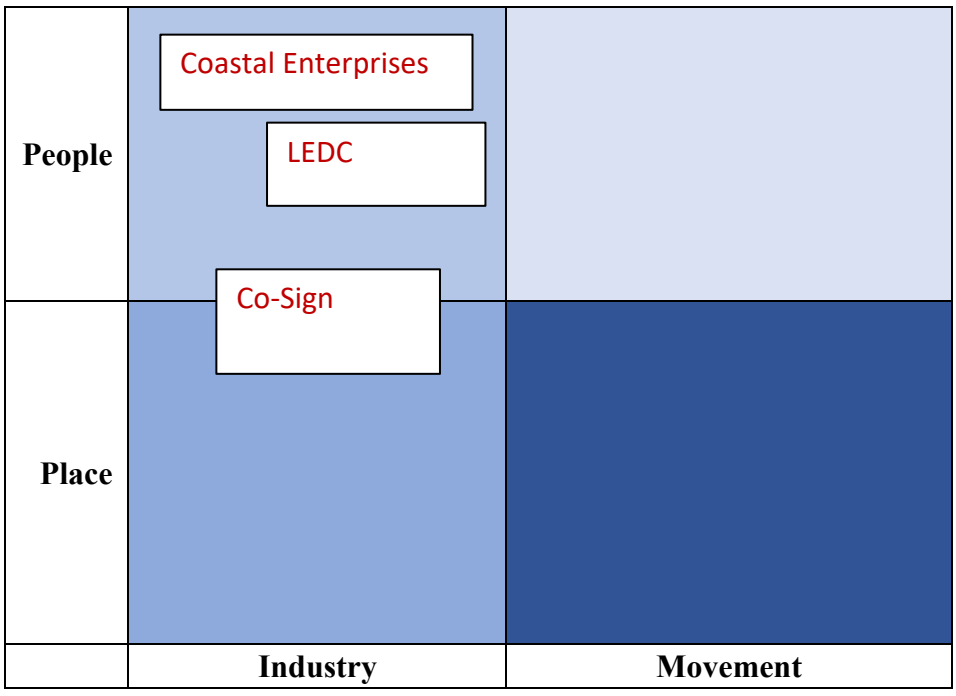
the programs seek outcomes beyond employment, to include housing and expungement of records moving the strategy somewhat more towards movement-based outcomes relative to Parker's.

**Strategy 5**
**Small business development**
Provide business-related assistance and knowledge to help entrepreneurs start, run, and grow their business.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Coastal Enterprises, Inc.
Brunswick, ME
Incubating Child Care Businesses in Rural Maine Initiative

Latin Economic Development Center of Washington, DC (LEDC)
Washington, DC
Fund for Restaurant Employment

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
City of Covington, KY + American Sign Museum
Covington, KY
Co-Sign



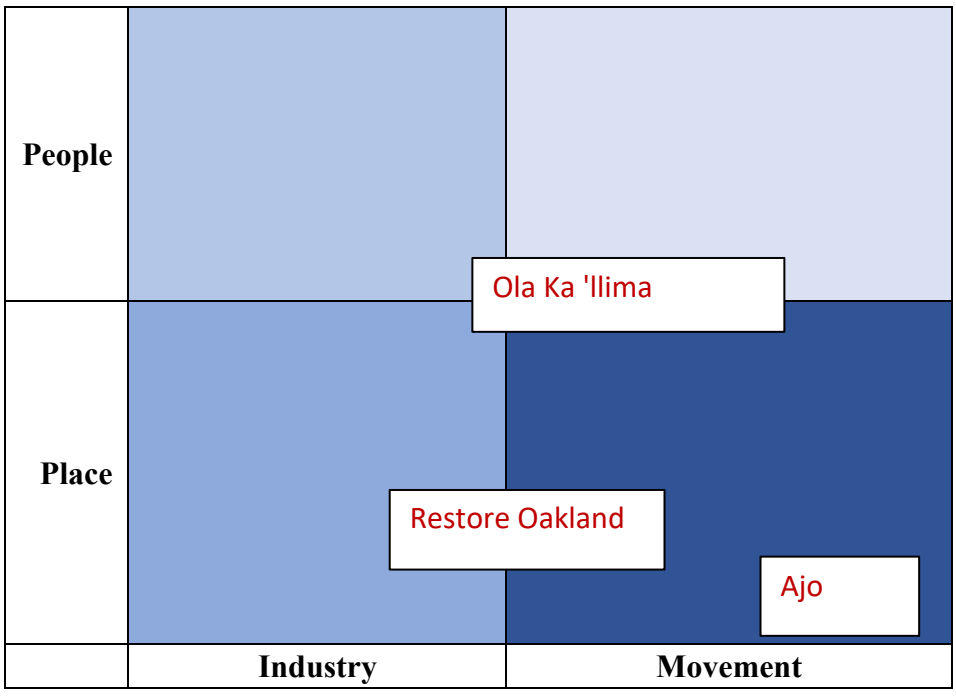
All these examples tend to lean toward more industry-like activity, establishing themselves around core tenets of small business support, to include: loans, grants, and technical assistance. **Coastal Enterprises** and **the Latin Economic Development Center** both ground their efforts in providing services to specific communities within a geographic area, parents in rural Maine and minority-owned business in Washington, DC respectively. **Co-Sign** has somewhat more of a place-based focus given its concentration of those activities in one section of Covington, KY.

**Strategy 6**
**Economic development**
Provide processes to improve the economic wellbeing of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax base enhancements and quality of life.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation
Oakland, CA
Restore Oakland and COLORS Oakland

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
PA'I Foundation
Honolulu, HI
Ola Ka 'llima

International Sonoran Desert Alliance
Ajo, AZ
Ajo Masterplan

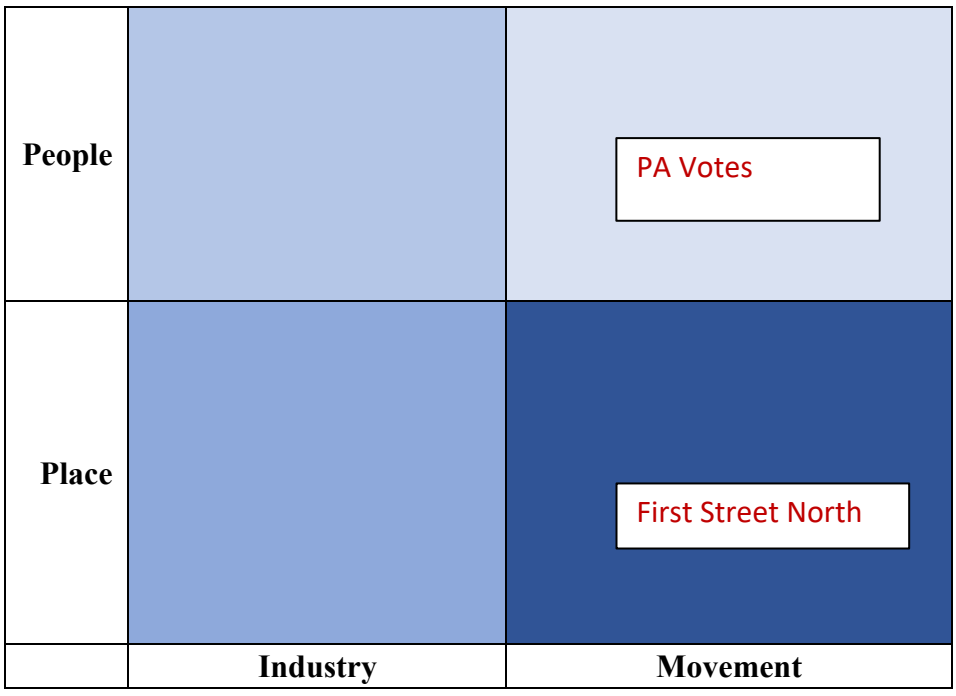


Overall, these examples tend to favor place-based strategies on various levels of reach. From bringing a suite of place-based economic needs to a neighborhood (Restore Oakland), to recognizing and cherishing the culture of an entire state (Ola Ka 'Ilima) to planning for a complete transformation of a small city in New Mexico (Ajo). **Restore Oakland** will use of mix of policy change and traditional resources for its community hub, straddling industry and movement. The **Ola Ka 'Ilima** project leans I think leans more toward a movement-based strategy, simply because traditional community developers will find it more unique than not. The **Ajo** project is the advancement of a policy change (comprehensive planning) that could fundamentally alter the future of Ajo, a real movement-based vision.

**Strategy 7**
**Civic engagement**
Initiate collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania
PA Votes

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
Little Tokyo Service Center
Los Angeles, CA
First Street North

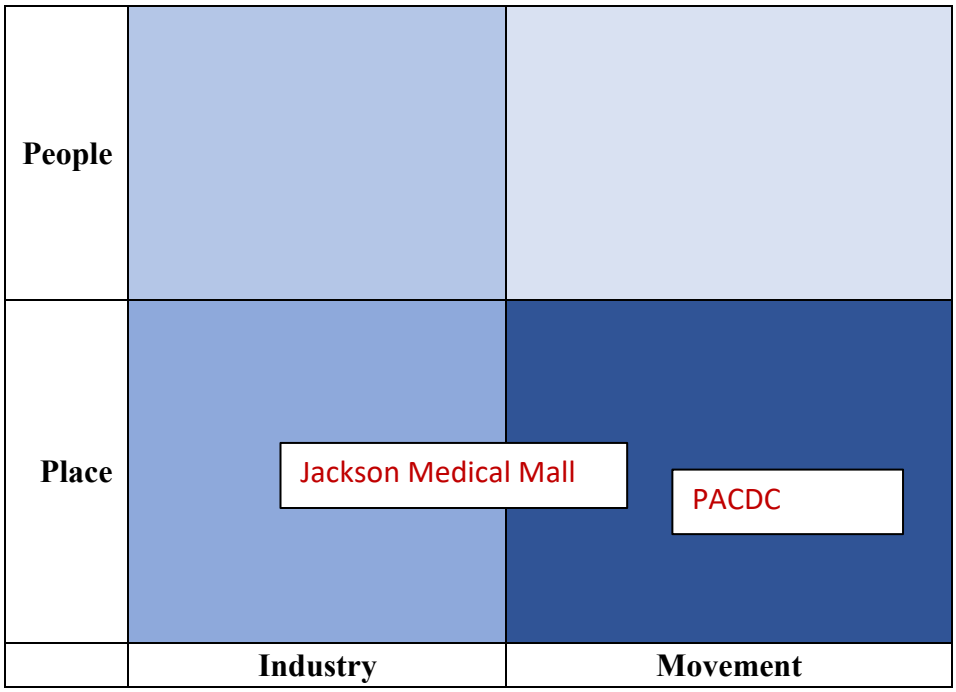


Civic initiatives, generally, tend to lend themselves toward movement-based outcomes that can shift how decisions are made personally. These two examples, however, tend to land very differently on the people vs. place spectrum. **First Street North** is a campaign to steward the future of a place. **PA Votes** looks to register new people to vote all across Pennsylvania.

**Strategy 8**
**Commercial development**
Provide practical tools to assist community organizations to strengthen and revitalize the streets and small businesses that anchor their neighborhoods.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations (PACDC)
Philadelphia, PA
Commercial Corridor Project

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
Jackson Medical Mall Foundation
Jackson, MS

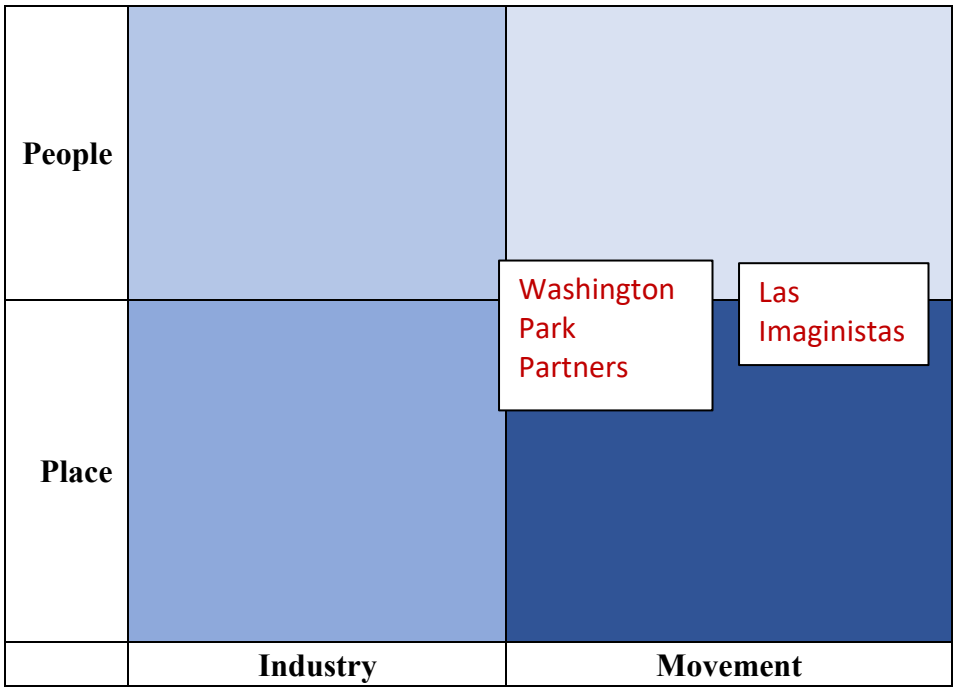



Both strategies in this case are decidedly place-based, from transformation of a former neighborhood asset, to a policy change that aims to maximize economic and social output from commercial corridors. **PACDC's** commercial corridor project gets a slightly stronger push toward a movement-based strategy since the intervention is fundamentally a policy change. **Jackson Medical Mall** slides slightly toward an industry-approach since it involves a transformational project in a place that will engage at least some traditional economic and financial mechanisms.

**Strategy 9**
**Community Organizing**
The coordination of cooperative efforts and campaigning carried out by local residents to promote the interests of their community.

*Community Economic Development Approach*
Washington Park Partners (WPP)
Milwaukee, WI
Building Sustainable Communities initiative

*Community Economic Development + Arts & Culture Approach*
Las Imaginistas
Brownsville, TX
Hacemos La Ciudad (We Make the City)




Both organizing examples straddle the line between a people and place based strategy, organizing people around the interests and future of a place. Both are very movement oriented, getting people to change the neighborhood's future. I place **Las Imaginistas** further along the movement spectrum because it engages residents around the comprehensive future of a place. **Washington Park Partners** have a slightly narrower focus on public safety.