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A SOCIAL INNOVATION APPROACH TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

The City of Baltimore, Maryland, is a major metropolitan city that has had its well-publicized challenges both economically and with its highly segregated housing stock. However, after decades of disinvestment, discrimination, and neglect, one community in West Baltimore is beginning to take control of its neighborhood and forging ahead with sustainable and community-centric development. The purpose of the study is to analyze the socially innovative approach of urban development in West Baltimore in contrast to traditional development mechanisms used in the United States. The research is an empirical case study focusing on the Upton Community of West Baltimore and its multi-sector approach to development. The research results illustrate how the multi-sector community-led collaboration has created a sustainable economic activity that centers the community and approaches urban development without displacing its legacy residents.

KEY WORDS Community Development, Social Innovation, Housing, Community-Centric

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1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Baltimore in the mid-1800s was the second largest city in the United States and was home to the nation's largest Black community (enslaved or free). Benefiting from an influx of population via the Great Migration in the early to mid-20th Century, where 6 million Blacks moved out of the rural Southern United States, Baltimore at its height had a population near 1,000,000 people in the 1950s and currently has a population of approximately 576,000 of which Black (African-Americans) make up 62% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). This proud city which is branded as 'Charm City,' comprises over 250 distinct neighborhoods. Many of these neighborhoods surrounding the downtown and harbor areas of the city are predominantly Black and are characterized by a history of disinvestment, discrimination, and neglect. After decades of state-sanctioned discrimination (i.e., redlining), federal policies which initially excluded minority recipients (i.e., FHA, Land Grants, GI Bill, etc.), followed by failed governmental urban policy (i.e., Urban Renewal, Model Cities, etc.), have left many of these highly segregated Black communities economically devastated.

In recent decades, state and local governments have attempted to bring out urban development through private sector incentives, which have not brought about sustainable development and/or positive neighborhood change. This study looks at the history and tradition of urban development in the United States over the past number of decades.

All of these initiatives were either governments led, going back to the 1960s, or market drive via the private sector in more recent decades. The challenge, is that after decades of activity for both government-led or private sector-driven development, the results are mixed with questionable sustainability (Bland & Overton, 2016; Weber & Goddeeris, 2007; Teaford, 2000). An alternative to these structural initiatives is the social innovation of a

community-led multi-sector approach to sustainable development. One particular community in West Baltimore has created a new model in its approach to community development in an effort to create development that is community-centric and designed to redevelop the one flourishing Black conclave of Upton. The underlying principle here is development without displacement. The intent was to devise a sustainable development approach that could take place without displacing the community's legacy residents. Recognizing that frequently, "successful" urban development across the country often ends with gentrification and displacement. The Upton community's social innovation identifies the actors and recourse available to the community and, through a multi-sector collaboration led by a community-based nonprofit, has created a model to bring about development that is driven in a community-centric manner.

2. HISTORICAL APPROACHES TO URBAN REDEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

The modern techniques being used today in urban development and redevelopment throughout many urban centers in the United States are based on evolving strategies over the past century. The decline of urban economics in the early 20th Century issued in a new structure of government, which would change American Federalism and created new relationships between the various levels of government in the United States.

The Great Depression, which had begun in the late 1920s, produced the New Deal by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The policy implementation of the New Deal created the flow of capital from the central government in the United States directly to state and local municipalities. The theory of fiscal and monetary policies developed around this time created the framework of modern macroeconomics, which calls for using federal spending to create demand in what is known as pump priming (Shafritz et al., 2013).

These theories combined, created a shift in thinking about intergovernmental relations and how government and commerce interacted. Additionally, it precipitated the move from the Dual format of Federalism, which consisted of clear and separate roles of the Federal Government and the state government, to the cooperative format of Federalism, where local, state and federal levels of government all collaborated in joint efforts to foster development and create cooperation among intergovernmental relations (Barnes, 2005; O'Toole & Christensen, 2013). This phase of Federalism also provided financial support from the Federal Government to state governments as well as cooperation among states, including commissions and interstate compacts.

Variations of Federal Government programs were also established in the early 1900s to address the compounding social challenges, including urban development, as a result of economic contractions and the concentration of urban populations, most notably the Federal Government's grant-in-aid program (O'Toole & Christensen, 2013). Initially, the program was met with opposition over concerns of federal grants being unconstitutional surrounding distributions of taxes. However, after a pair of landmark decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court on the issue of the constitutionality of federal grants in 1923, the United States saw increased interest from states and dependence on federal grants (Massachusetts v. Mellon and Frothingham v. Mellon, 262 U.S. 447, 1993). The original grants-in-aid were limited and primarily consisted of program/project grants in specific areas such as agriculture and road construction. As grants become more popular with the states, increases in grants from the Federal Government resulted in greater influence by the Federal Government over state and local governments (O'Toole & Christensen, 2013).

The 1930s marked the end of Dual Federalism with greater acceptance and popularity of the grant-in-aid program

combined with the devastating economic impact of the Great Depression; state and local governments were more dependent on the Federal Government, and the use of categorical grants became a signature piece of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" program to address the challenging economic and social problems of the country (Shafritz et al., 2013; O'Toole & Christensen, 2013). A new era of Federalism was officially developed as the country transitioned into its next phase of Federalism, called Cooperative Federalism. By the mid-1960s, the creation of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society and War on Poverty, which focused on addressing urban challenges issued in the next stage in American Federalism called Creative Federalism. The shifts in American Federalism, population changes, and the creation of the highway system in the United States gave way to changing demographics, suburban sprawl, White flight, and a national focus on the development of urban centers. Changes in Federalism in the United States, dictated development policy in the first half of the 20th Century, through access to capital, as urban centers continued to grow. However, as the growth of the American City plateaued, and large anchor cities began to experience what scholars classified as "Urban Crisis", the need for urban developmental policies was created (Weaver, 2017, Barnes, 2005; Lawrence, Stoker & Wolman, 2010).

3. URBAN POLICY INITIATIVES

Urban migration, the Great Depression, civil unrest, economic challenges, World Wars, and military actions all contributed to the economic environment, along with increased populations, and by the late 1950s, many urbanized areas across the United States had begun to experience what many called an urban crisis (Barnes, 2005; Lawrence, Stoker & Wolman, 2010). Growing criticism of suburban sprawl and fractioned governments among scholars such as renowned MIT political scientist Robert Wood, who

articulated his concerns in his 1961 book *1400 Governments: The Political Economy of the New York Metropolitan Region*, helped put the challenges of the urban city on the national agenda.

The Federal Government passed several federal initiatives to address the urban crisis. In the 1940s, the Federal Government passed the Redevelopment Act to expand the mortgage insurance and construction of public housing. Many of the policies implemented at this time, including Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Loans, Land Grants, GI Bill, etc., often excluded Blacks, which perpetuated decades of government-sanctioned segregation of urban neighborhoods (including Baltimore) and led to the largest transfer of wealth to White Americans in the nation's history (Herbold, 1994; Boehm & Schlottmann, 2008; Elfenbein et al., 2011; Rothstein, 2017; Gourrier, 2021). In addition, the Federal Highway Act constructed the 41,000-mile Interstate Highway System and created the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations along with its signature urban policy program called Urban Renewal and Model Cities (Barnes, 2005).

The Federal Government's commitment to a series of federal programs beginning in the late 1950s aimed at addressing the urban city's challenges was initially met with support and optimism. However, the slow implementation and performance of many of the programs led to criticism of the Federal Government's ability to implement large-scale federal programs. Over the next thirty years, a series of legislative policies and programs addressed the urban city's challenges and defined the essence of urban policy (Lawrence, Stoker & Wolman, 2010). Below is a sample of the key urban policy initiatives taken by the Federal Government in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s to address the growing challenges of the urban city in United States.

Urban Renewal. The Urban Renewal Program came out of the 1954 Housing Act with the purpose of stabilizing neighborhoods and eliminating substandard housing in the United

States' urban cities was generally considered unsuccessful in achieving its primary objectives (Orlebeke & Weicher, 2014). The program was considered a failure with high-density concentrations of poverty and increased crime in many areas developed under the program (DeHaven, 2009).

Great Society/War on Poverty. After President Kennedy's assassination in 1963, President Lyndon B. Johnson quickly began policy directives under his Great Society initiative that focused on integrating America's poor into mainstream society. The Great Society concentrated on intergovernmental relations beyond just the Federal Government with state and local agencies and private entities (Shafritz, et al., 2013). The expanded role of the Federal Government, classified as "creative federalism" with an emphasis on categorical grants, symbolized in the War on Poverty initiative designed to eliminate poverty in the United States and programs like Head Start designed to provide early education to the poor prior to kindergarten.

Model Cities Program. Congress authorized the Model Cities Program in 1966. On the heels of the highly criticized Urban Renewal program, President Johnson began proposing a test program called Model Cities which could show the country what could be done by the Federal Government when allocated resources to a local area were used in a concentrated and planned manner (Orlebeke & Weicher, 2014). Unlike its predecessor program, Model Cities required significant upfront planning and coordinating that slowed the process and, eventually, the program's results.

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. After a landslide victory in 1964, and a summer filled with riots and violence in urban cities across America, President Lyndon B. Johnson proposed the creation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of his signature program, the Great Society

and War on Poverty. In September of 1965, notwithstanding some opposition, Congress passed legislation by a large margin approving the formation of HUD (Pritchett, 2008). The establishment of HUD marked a new era in urban policy with concentrated resources aimed at directly addressing the challenges of the urban city. The creation of HUD, the Great Society, and the War on Poverty also signified the transition to a new form of Federalism that came to be known as Creative Federalism, symbolized by the intergovernmental relationship of the Federal Government with not only the state but also local governments and private organizations (Pritchett, 2008; Shafritz et al., 2013; Orlebeke & Weicher, 2014).

By the 1980s, led by President Ronald Regan's inaugural address indicating that government was not the solution but the part of the problem, produced an area of limited government under the mantra of "Starve the Beast" (Niskanen, 2006). In creating a demand for smaller government, and a move away from serves traditionally considered inherently governmental, interest increased in Public-Private Partnerships.

4. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Focusing more on grants as a tool for urban redevelopments, issued in a new wave of development using Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). These PPPs are a specific type of long-term contracted relationship between government and private entities in which public infrastructure is constructed or maintained, and the private entity finances and hold significant management responsibility and risk (World Bank PPP Knowledge Lab, 2020; van den Hurk, 2018). PPPs allow government entities to deliver services efficiently while also delivering value for money by utilizing the private entities' expertise and financial resources (Tariq & Zhang, 2021; van de Hurk, 2018). In return, private entities are able to manage risks collaboratively and gain access to public projects often aimed

at urban redevelopment (Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2011, as cited in Rybnicek et al., 2020).

Due to the complex nature of PPPs, there is an increased amount of risk factors. Rybnicek et al. (2020) identified contracts, resources, and objectives as top risk factors. Contracts need to be clearly and completely defined, arranged, and agreed upon amongst the involved parties. In addition, entities must properly estimate costs and resources and agree on time horizons for the project. Cohesion and clarity in the aims and plans of a PPP project are also critical. Although contracts can be a source of risk, it is also a source of risk mitigation for the private sector (Rybnicek et al., 2020). Therefore, contract creation needs to be a deliberate and careful process amongst all entities involved in the PPP project. However, it is important to recognize that risk management is a continuous process (Chinyio & Fergusson, 2003). Thus, all parties need to assess and manage risks throughout the entirety of the project.

A specific type of risk that must be considered is ethics. Public sector entities often collaborate with the private sector to increase the financial capacity for public projects. In forming these financial relationships, ethics is critical. The Center for Disease Control's Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) has identified four general ethical principles to help guide PPPs: partnerships should not negatively impact the public's trust, transparency should be maximized, partnerships should support an entity's core mission, and all entities and their personnel should be accountable for following established partnership guidelines and principles (Yassanye et al., 2021). Conflicts of interest and ethics between the PPP entities can be just as much a source of risk as others. Therefore, comprehensive risk management is imperative to ensure the success of a PPP.

Recently, the State of Maryland's senate has failed to pass a bill that would establish an "oversight review board"

that would examine PPPs and require a financial adviser to conduct a "risk analysis" for PPPs (Shaver, 2021). The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) expressed objection to the bill, stating a review board would "increase project cost and uncertainty" and detract private sector investment in public infrastructure (Shaver, 2021). However, current research on PPPs does not support this notion. In contrast, a review board and risk analysis procedure would become a source of risk mitigation and clarity for PPPs. This could help attract private sector entity interest because their financial and management resources would be more likely to produce value for money. Thus, the private sector would perceive less involved risk when investing in State of Maryland projects. Although the use of PPP collaborations is highly sought after in practice, the results of these partnerships have resulted in mixed success. Recently, scholars have questioned the impact on political agenda decision-making, political accountability, and the long-term impact of these public-private partnerships (Hula & Jordan, 2018).

5. PRIVATE SECTOR INCENTIVIZATION

With the modern development of New Public Management (NPM) and Reinventing Government theories based on entrepreneurship in government and the microeconomic principles of supply and demand, the movement of development in urban centers across the county centers on private sector market driven incentives designed to motivate private sector entities to undertake project otherwise deemed as undesirable or unprofitable by the industry. These incentives included programs such as Opportunity Zones, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), New Market Tax Credits (NMTC), and Tax Increment Financing (TIF). The creation of these supplemental programs has increased interest and production in large-scale urban real estate projects. The research has shown the collection of these programs, especially NMTC, has definitely increased the overall level of

investment in economy activity (Gurley-Calvez et al., 2009). However, although the desired outcome of increased private investment is achieved, criticism exists. The type of development that out-of-market large-scale developers produce, creates physical structures in nature but not sustainable community development, which often ends in displacement and/or gentrification (Hager and Ross, 2016). Without the direct community involvement, another challenge identified is the nature of the principal-agent relationship driving these programs and whether these investments are the most efficient for leveraging investments in poverty-stricken areas (Hula & Jordan, 2018)

Even though these modern approaches have led to increased investment in urban communities, the private sector is still driven by a profit maximization model. In many of these projects, community development is perceived as a transaction or risk-mitigated/business opportunity that an entity takes on, as opposed to addressing the need and wants of a community in desperate need of investment, capital, and resources. Understanding this phenomenon is why the Upton Community in West Baltimore began developing a new innovative model to address community development in an organic community-led and community-centric approach to urban development using multi-sector partnership.

6. SOCIAL INNOVATION

In recognizing the contribution being undertaken in the community of Upton as a social innovation, we must first understand the modern meaning and evolution of the term social innovation. Although the concept of social innovation has an unclear history, it emerged in the early 20th century with the work of Émile Durkheim and Max Weber (Portales, 2019). Lester Ward first used it in sociology in 1903 (McGowan et al., 2017). Social innovation also does not have a clear definition. It is often used as a “buzz term” in the public and private

(McGowan et al., 2017, p. 1). Moreover, scholars and practitioners alike use the term differently across disciplines and fields (McGowan, 2017; Portales, 2019). McGowan et al. (2017) have defined Social Innovation as “...a new program, policy, procedure, product, process and/or design that seeks to address a social problem and to ultimately shift resource and authority flows, social routines and cultural values of the social system that created the problem in the first place” (p. 4). The most cited definition is from the Young Foundation (2012) which defines Social Innovation as “new solutions that, simultaneously, satisfy a social need, create new or better capabilities and relationships, and make better use of assets and resources” (p.18).

Both conceptualizations of social innovation reflect dynamic processes involving exchanging ideas and examining societal structures and relationships to implement new approaches to address complex societal issues efficiently.

The development of the term over time is also unclear. Geoff Mulgan, a social innovation scholar, traces the term back to the industrial revolution (McGowan et al., 2017). As more people migrated to urban areas, there was a greater need for public services. This need gave rise to the modern concept of social innovation. Moulaert et al. (2013) trace the term’s origins to Europe during the social revolts of the 1960s, recognizing that the term “social invention” was used earlier by Weber in the early 1990s (p. 15). Social innovation was used as a standing point for a more bottom-up and participative society (Chambon et al., 1982, as cited in Moulaert et al., 2013). The use of the term increased post-World War II, particularly in the 1960s (McGowan et al., 2017).

Portales (2019) identifies four key elements of social innovation: satisfaction of a need, innovation of the solution, change of social structures and relationships, and the increase of society’s capacity to act (p. 4). The satisfaction of a need is the objective of

innovation, and innovation of the solution refers to a novel method used to satisfy the need. Change of social structures and relationships is the idea that social innovation transforms society through structures and redefining relationships. The increase in society’s capacity to act refers to how social innovation must empower actors, especially traditionally marginalized groups. In addition, Portales (2019, p. 9) identifies four sources of social innovation: the public, private, nonprofit, and informal sectors.

The Young Foundation (2012, p.6) identifies five ways social innovation is used: social transformation, a model of organizational management, social entrepreneurship, the development of new products, services, and programs, and as a model of governance, empowerment, and capacity building. Social innovation can be used to initiate social change and transform society by highlighting the role of social responsibility. Additionally, it can contribute to organizational efficiency by modernizing the way organizations utilize social capital. Social innovation illuminates the work of social enterprises and entrepreneurs in the face of social challenges. Social innovation redefines the ways public services are developed and implemented. Social innovation reexamines how the public, private, and nonprofit sectors collaborate to provide better public services and programs to the communities they serve. Moreover, Moulaert et al. (2005) argue that social innovation is an alternative approach to the “overly technocratic approach to urban planning” (as cited in Young Foundation, 2012, p. 5).

Social innovation in terms of urban development is a wide array of ingenuity, creativity, and entrepreneurialism that brings about a new way of addressing the challenges and complexities of urban development. Examples of social innovation in urban development in the literature are abundant from a project base perspective across the United States and Internationally.

Examples such as a joint venture designing services for housing in New York City, using a University as the catalyst for urban development (Staszowski, et al. 2013). Angelidoua and Psaltogloub (2017) highlight 29 cases of community-led innovations for sustainable urban development, which point to the essence of bottom-up innovation as the key to sustainability. In Baltimore City, the case of Port Covington Development is a prime example of how coordinated community activism through social innovation created the use of a successful Community Benefit Agreement protecting the interest of its residents (King & Rich, 202)

In defining and understanding what social innovation is, we look at how it is applied to the model of urban development created by Upton Community of West Baltimore by using a multi-sector approach to development without displacement.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The case study provided below is a first-hand account of the author’s work as Vice-President and Board Member of the Upton Westside Community Development Corporation, along with Jules Dunham Howie, Executive Director of the Upton Westside Community Development Corporation, and Wanda Best, the Chairwoman of the Upton Planning Committee. Additional data, correspondence, and material are references accordingly.

7.1. The Case of Upton Community Redevelopment in West Baltimore

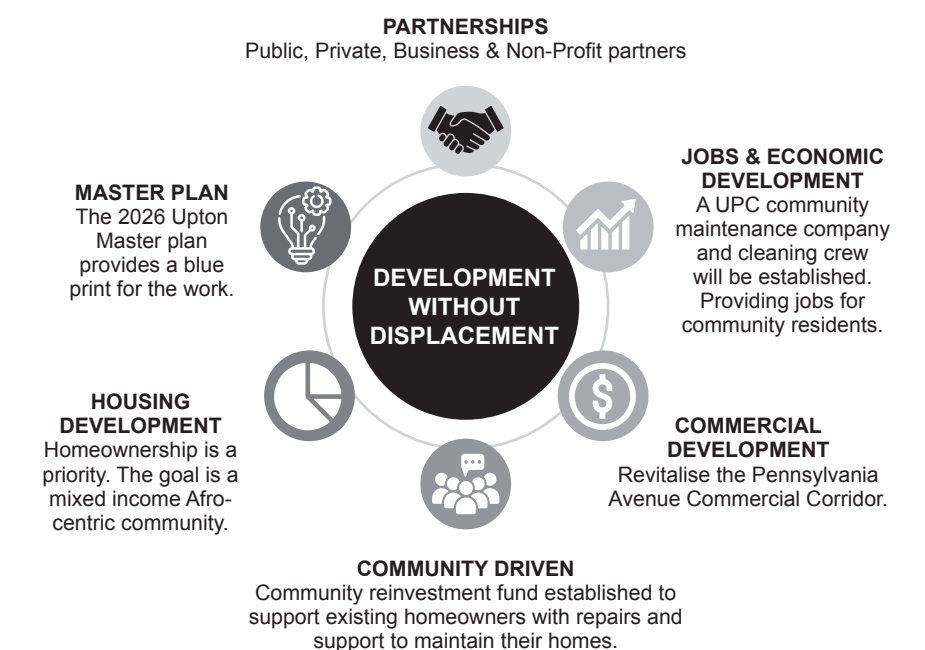
The Upton Community of West Baltimore is a historical African American (currently over 90% of its residents are Black) neighborhood and home to some of Baltimore’s most prominent citizens, including Thurgood Marshall, Parren Mitchell, Eubie Bland, and Billy Holliday, to name a few (Gibson, 2012). The predominately residential community is built around the historic Pennsylvania

Avenue, also known as ‘Main Street’, which has traditionally been the cultural center of the Black community in West Baltimore. Although the Upton Community has been celebrated for its cultural and historical importance to the surrounding community, much like many urban centers across the county, decades of discrimination, disinvestment, neglect, and failed government policies have left the community of Upton economically challenged.

After the 1968 riots in Baltimore, the Upton Planning Committee (UPC), a nonprofit, was created with the idea of coordinating and overseeing development in the community. After its formation as a non-consulted stakeholder, the UPC had observed one failed government project after another for decades. In 2005, under new leadership, the UPC began to work on a community master plan. Under the UPC leadership of Wanda Best and Jules Dunham Howie, they recognized that the traditional approach, tools, and mechanisms for urban development would only bring about the same outcomes as the previous decades. They began looking for a new model of urban development that could bring about the revitalization and rebirth of the Historic Upton Community without displacing its legacy residents (W. Best & J. Dunham-Howie, personal communication, September 2021). With funding obtained via a grant from a local financial institution to develop a community master plan, the UPC began working with consultants, professionals, and city planners. A second master community plan, called the Historic Upton Neighborhood 2026 Master Plan (HUN), was produced and accepted by the City of Baltimore in 2016.

This HUN Master Plan highlighted a new approach to community development using a community-led and community-centric model focused on multi-sector collaboration. The community-centric model diagram displayed below in Figure 1 illustrates the central theme of ‘Development Without Displacement’. This core principle is established through the idea that all development within the Upton Community is derived through the UPC, a nonprofit represented by community residents, the primary stakeholders in all development, under the authority and support of the City of Baltimore’s approval of the Historic Upton Neighborhood 2026 Master Plan. Which means that all development project within the community of Upton, must first receive approval by the UPC, under the authority of the City of Baltimore.

Figure 1: Upton Community-Centric Development Model



Source: Upton Planning Committee Resources

In addition to the UPC being made up of community stakeholders, UPC holds regular charrettes to garner consensus on the type of development the community wants and needs. Also, monthly developers' meetings are open to the community residents, where developers present to the community the status and performance of their subject projects. This process of consensus building is a key step to gaining community support for projects and leads to community buy-in and sustainability on the back end of development. In addition, as part of the HUN Master Plan, the creation of the Upton Westside Community Development Corporation (Upton CDC) was established to serve as the implementation arm of the Upton Planning Committee and to oversee construction, development, and implementation as designed in the HUN Master Plan.

Although the HUN Master Plan encompasses Commercial Development, Housing, and job creation, given that homeownership is the largest generator of wealth, the single largest asset of most American families, and the foundation of generational wealth, the UPC decided to focus its resource initially on homeownership within Upton (Boehm & Schlottmann, 2008, Choi, Zhu, & Goodman, 2018). With the Upton CDC in place, the Upton Planning Committee began to coordinate resources, actors, private sector entities, government agencies, and representatives at all levels of government. What UPC had identified from previous failed initiatives was that they were spearheaded by either a governmental agency or private sector entities with little or no input from the community, and the central focus was never solely the community's needs and wants. However, with this model, the UPC and the community were at the center of the decision-making process and coordinating the community-led multi-sector collaboration.

Traditionally, community nonprofits lack both the resources and power/control in order to initiate these types of transactions. However, in this model,

because the UPC has been given sole authority for development within the Upton Community, all development and developers must first be cleared through the Upton Planning Committee. What this does it allow the UPC and the community to dictate what, when, where, and how development takes place in Upton. Moreover, the City of Baltimore has begun to transfer vacant and abandoned real estate over to the Upton CDC for development. This partnership with the City of Baltimore (City Department of Housing & Community Development) has given the UPC both resources and credibility. The UPC is then able to leverage its relationships with City and State agencies to then coordinate with private sector developers interested in corporate social responsibility (CSR) or social entrepreneurship and willing to take on projects under the conditions established by the UPC. Additional resources such as State funding through, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Project C.O.R.E. (Creating Opportunities for Renewal and Enterprise), along with a collection various private foundation fundings and loans initiatives provides considerable subsidies for the newly redeveloped housing to allow community legacy residents to purchase homes significantly less than construction cost and below market value.

Through the community-centric model, using a multi-sector approach, the Upton Planning Committee currently has over 100 housing units in production and has leveraged nearly \$100 million in development throughout the Upton Community. The UPC has also begun to source its own commercial and mix-use projects for development and is continuing to provide additional resources to new homeowners while developing a pipeline of future homeowners. Recognizing that homeownership can be a foundation block of sustainable community development, the Upton Community of West Baltimore is redeveloping its neighborhood on its own terms and developing without displacement of its legacy residents. Traditional mechanisms of urban development in the United

States focus on market-drive principles with a top-down approach, employed by principals with little or no interest in the community's outcomes. The Upton community-led bottom-up multi-sector approach puts the community at the forefront of decision-making, focused on collaborative, sustainable development, with the buy-in and participation of community residents.

8. CONCLUSION

Urban development has been a challenge in the United States over the past century, massive migration, highway development, and a series of urban development initiatives. However, one of the main points the Upton case demonstrates from many of the previous initiatives is a bottom-up approach, a true grass-root community-led undertaking. As referenced previously, oftentimes community organizations lack the necessary resources, skillset, and sometimes are only provided a proverbial 'seat at the table', or these stakeholders are brought in as a show of good faith for their input with no real leverage, control, say. But the Upton model puts the community at the center, the center of decision-making, the center of outcomes, and the center of those who financially benefit from the process and the output.

In defining what social innovation is, Portales (2019) highlights satisfaction of a need, innovation of the solution, change of social structure and relationship, and the increase of society's capacity to act. Clearly, the Upton case demonstrates satisfaction of the community's needs through an innovative solution while providing social structures and relationships that increase society's capacity to act. When we look at The Young Foundation's (2012) definition, which incorporates a model of organizational management and social entrepreneurship in the development of new products and services, empowerment, and capacity building, we once again see the works of the Upton Planning Committee and its approach of a community-centric model

through multi-sector collaboration as a prime example of community social innovation leading to the betterment of its community and the City of Baltimore as a whole.

A well-respected African-American Historian scholar is known for often stating that “we not expect any individual, organization, or institution, to do for us, what we can do for ourselves” (Dr. Alfred G. Gourrier, personal communication, December 2022). The Upton Planning Committee and the Upton Community is a clear demonstration of a community taking control of what they want their neighborhood to be for themselves and for generations to come.

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