Community Collaboratives Whitepaper:
A Promising Approach to Addressing America's Biggest Challenges
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Communities face powerful challenges – a high-school dropout epidemic, youth unemployment, teen pregnancy – that require powerful solutions. In a climate of increasingly constrained resources, those solutions must help communities to achieve more with less. A new kind of community collaborative - an approach that aspires to significant, community-wide progress by enlisting all sectors to work together toward a common goal – offers enormous promise to bring about broader, more lasting change across the nation.

By their very nature, individual nonprofit services are fragmented and dispersed, with each organization typically serving a limited population with specific interventions. Funders then measure success at the organizational level, not for the broader community. To be sure, these efforts are critical to the lives and well-being of individuals in those communities and are important "pockets-of-success" to demonstrate that progress is possible. But overall, these approaches are not resulting in significant change at a community-wide level, which is frustrating to all: taxpayers, funders, policymakers, providers and the beneficiaries themselves.

Consider Milwaukee as an example. For the past two decades, public and private funders have made major investments in after-school programs, mentoring programs and school reform. Only a fraction of today's programs and services existed in 1992. Many of these programs are achieving successful outcomes for the children they serve. Yet, despite a host of new organizations and investments, Milwaukee still recently recorded the worst 4th grade reading scores for African American children in the country.[i]

But Milwaukee has another story that demonstrates the power of banding together in a common cause. In 2006, the city had one of the highest birth rates by teen-age mothers in the nation. Civic leaders knew that teen pregnancy was closely linked to other issues with which Milwaukee was grappling: poor educational outcomes, crime and the stubborn cycle of intergenerational poverty, as well as being a huge financial drain on city services. Moved to action, United Way of Greater Milwaukee brought together a cross section of public officials, nonprofits, businesses and funders to map a detailed action plan tied to an ambitious goal: nearly halving the teen birth rate by 2015, bringing it in line with the national average.

Together, they devised innovative solutions and coordinated existing efforts. One solution was a massive, largely pro bono, public awareness campaign that ensured virtually every Milwaukeean, both urban and suburban, became aware of the teen pregnancy issue. Teens also got involved in shaping these ads to ensure their relevance. Meanwhile, in partnership with the Milwaukee Public Schools, the collaborative

has trained close to 1,000 teachers to deliver age-appropriate, science-based curriculum on sexuality. Progress has been encouraging. Data for 2010 show a 30% drop in the teen birth rate since 2006.

"Moving the Needle" on Community Challenges

In December 2010, President Obama created the White House Council for Community Solutions to demonstrate the power of engaging "all citizens, all sectors working together" to address America's needs. The White House Council decided to look beyond individual programs showing success with limited populations and instead look at where communities are solving problems together and moving the needle in a way that improves results for the whole community.

America has a long history of community revitalization efforts that were groundbreaking and changed the lives of many individuals, helping shape the work of successful efforts today. (See Appendix A for more on that history.) Communities can point to numerous examples of collaborations created to solve local problems. But thus far only a few, such as the "cradle-to-career" Strive Partnership in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky (profiled below), can show data that confirms a significant and measurable impact on the entire community. The Council recognized that cross-sector community collaboratives, such as Strive, could represent an emerging national trend, where communities were working together to solve their biggest challenges.[ii] The Council was interested in exploring this trend's potential by identifying examples where communities were achieving needle-moving change (10%-plus progress on a key community-wide indicator as a clear standard for success), determining what contributed to that change and capturing the lessons their experience holds for other communities.[iii]

The Council worked with The Bridgespan Group to identify the most effective needle-moving collaboratives, understand the keys to success and recommend ways the Council could help encourage more collective action, particularly to address the challenges of disconnected youth.

Using the 10% plus measure, we found a dozen examples of community collaboratives that met our definition of success. (See Case Studies of Effective Collaborations for detailed profiles on these communities.) In addition to sharing a commitment to needle-moving change, we found these collaboratives had the following operating principles in common:[iv]

- *Commitment to long-term involvement*. Successful collaboratives make multi-year commitments because long-term change takes time. Even after meeting goals, a collaborative must work to sustain them.
- *Involvement of key stakeholders across sectors*. All relevant partners play a role, including decision-makers from government, philanthropy, business and nonprofits, as well as individuals

and families.[v] Funders need to be at the table from the beginning to help develop the goals and vision and, over time, align their funding with the collaborative's strategies.

- *Use of shared data to set the agenda and improve over time*. Data is central to collaborative work and is the guiding element for collaborative decision-making.
- *Engagement of community members as substantive partners*. Community members maintain involvement in shaping services, offering perspectives and providing services to each other – not just as focus group participants.

GRAPHIC I

Our review found at least 80 to 100 collaboratives across the country that are actively working to move the needle in this way, with at least another 500 in planning or early implementation stages[vi]. These community collaboratives are often connected with national organizations, such as Ready by 21, Strive, the United Way and others.

<u>Characteristics of Success</u>

After conducting deeper research into the 12 needle-moving collaboratives, five common elements emerged as essential to their success. (See Graphic I.) Listed below, each element is also illustrated by one or more case histories:

1. *Shared vision and agenda: Finding the common denominator*

Developing a common vision and agenda is one of the most time-consuming and challenging of all the tasks a community collaborative undertakes. It is also one of the most vital. Establishing quantifiable goals can catalyze support and build momentum, and developing a clear roadmap can help organizations look beyond narrow institutional interests to achieve broad goals.

In the case of the Strive Partnership of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, an exemplar of collective impact, leaders from education, youth development, health care, business, philanthropy, government, academia and other sectors came together to craft a detailed roadmap to achieve cradle-to-career progress for each child. (see: http://strivenetwork.org/vision-roadmap)

Getting there was not easy. It took time to build trust among the various leaders and interests. Public school officials, funders, labor union heads, nonprofit executives, and civic leaders all had to create a shared agenda for which they would all be held accountable. Indeed, core partners grappled for several years to understand the research and local data before agreeing to a course of action.

In fact, successful collaboratives usually conduct extensive research and data collection to understand both the problem and how systems will need to shift over time. They hold focus groups, interviews and community meetings to gather input from residents, community leaders, funders, experts in the field and other stakeholders.

Consider the case of Nashville, Tennessee, which – despite the individual efforts of more than 175 nonprofits working to improve the city's failing schools – was, by 2002, experiencing dismal high school graduation rates and poor school attendance. A study conducted by the Nashville Chamber of Commerce that year described the fragmented nature of this support network. With clear data to show the way, the city's business leaders seized an opportunity to coordinate the disparate efforts aimed at youth.

Born from the business community's investigation and analysis was Alignment Nashville. As Councilman Ronnie Steine told us, "Nashville, with its consolidated city-county government, has a long history of collaboration. Anyone trying to act on their own in this town quickly realizes they are on the wrong bus." Designed as a nonprofit intermediary, Alignment Nashville began by pooling the thinking and advice of more than 100 nonprofit leaders and community members to develop its shared vision. A major focus was school attendance, which was found to be closely linked to graduation rates, school performance, youth crime and public safety.

By 2010, with strong leadership from the city's mayor, Nashville had a Children and Youth Master Plan. It was the city's first formal roadmap for how Nashville would actually connect youth with needed services. Several significant reforms emerged from that effort. For example, research showed many youth had a hard time literally getting transportation to school and other programs. In response, the city created new

bus stops, instituted fare waivers for qualifying students and touted these changes with several city-wide marketing campaigns.

To achieve their goals, collaboratives like Nashville's need to be more than just a collection of institutions. Without community members actively sharing in the process, they may pass up an opportunity to get better results and sustain their accomplishments over the longer run. In Nashville, youth and families were heavily involved in the development of the Children and Youth Master Plan. A high school student served as one of the three co-chairs and other students took places on the taskforce. Meetings were scheduled after the schools' 3 p.m. dismissal, and transportation assistance was provided to facilitate student participation. Youth members also took responsibility for creating a large-scale survey of 1,000 city youth. The broader community got actively engaged too, mainly through listening sessions involving hundreds of residents and youth. The taskforce employed a variety of meeting formats to gain community insights, such as small group discussions and one-on-one exchanges. At each, translators enabled participation from the Hispanic community.

2. *Effective leadership and governance: Keeping decision makers at the table*

Successful collaboratives need a strong leader to fully engage stakeholders and coordinate their efforts. The biggest challenge is not so much bringing decision makers to the table but keeping them there for years of hard work ahead. To achieve such a feat, it is important for the collaborative's leader to be highly respected by the community and viewed as a neutral, honest broker. In addition, the leader must work to create and maintain a diverse and inclusive table where both larger organizations and smaller grassroots organizations have a powerful voice.

The Milwaukee teen pregnancy prevention effort, mentioned above, is spearheaded by the United Way and co-chaired by two well-respected public figures: Elizabeth Brenner, the publisher of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, and Bevan Baker, the city's Commissioner of Health. With the trust of the community, the power and perceived neutrality to convene leaders at the highest levels, and the independence to make a long-term commitment to an issue, United Way was uniquely positioned to play the convener role. It has also done so with a skillful touch. As CEO Mary Lou Young puts it, "We don't own the agenda. The collaborative and the community own the agenda." The agency also ensures that proper credit goes to partner organizations, such as the Milwaukee Public Schools. The result is a collaborative focused on success rather than on empire-building or credit-claiming.[vii]

In terms of governance, the Milwaukee collaborative has only a few explicit decision rules. For example, the Oversight Committee's co-chairs have veto power over any new public awareness advertisements. Otherwise, it operates without bylaws or formalized roles, relying on a strong culture of trust among participants. Milwaukee's approach is similar to many other collaboratives: unity is achieved through

common purpose and trust (enhanced by effective communication and clear decision-making rules), rather than a highly formalized governance structure.

In Milwaukee, as in many of the other effective collaboratives we observed, success has also involved engaging many levels of leaders. Typically, senior leaders or a subset of senior leaders sit on a steering committee, the decision-making body that guides the overall work of the collaborative. Mid-level practitioners also engage in developing detailed plans and doing work on the ground. The steering committee and the "working groups" meet at least monthly to engage in the work of collaboration until a collaboration is very firmly established and achieving results. While the honest broker role in a collaborative is typically filled by nonprofit leaders, university presidents, business leaders or local philanthropic leaders, rather than government officials, a highly engaged public sector is almost always critical to success. In other words, mayors, legislative leaders, school superintendents or police chiefs are needed to bring together city officials, influence funding and enact critical policy changes.

3. *Alignment of resources toward what works: Using data to continually adapt*

Regardless of their breadth, successful collaboratives pursue a logical link between the goals they seek, the interventions they support and what they measure to assess progress. Collaboratives are by nature adaptive – adjusting their approaches based on new information, changes in conditions and data on progress against goals. At times, collaboratives may push for new services to fill in gaps. But much of their work focuses on "doing better without spending more" – getting funders, nonprofits, government and business to align existing resources and funding with the most effective approaches and services to achieve their goals. In many cases, this will mean working together to target efforts towards particular populations, schools or neighborhoods rather than operating in a more ad hoc manner.

Take, for example, Boston's Operation Ceasefire. Responding to an epidemic of youth homicides tied to gang activity and crack cocaine, Boston created Operation Ceasefire in 1995. A working group of community participants – including the police force, educators and front-line practitioners – sought to develop a viable solution for the gun-related slaughter among the city's urban youth. Relying on data that showed that while only 1% of Boston youth actually participated in youth gangs, these youth generated at least 60% of youth homicide in the city. Operation Ceasefire applied a radically different approach to gun violence, focusing on direct deterrence of youthful offenders. The working group began by identifying gangs with the highest risk of gun-related violence and then contacted their members. In face-to-face confrontations, Operation Ceasefire communicated an unequivocal warning: if violence continued, authorities would ensure an immediate and certain response. The approach made use of existing authorities – such as police, parole officers and the like – to aggressively prosecute violent actions and to create a strong deterrent. Family members, community leaders and nonprofits also engaged directly with gang members to communicate a moral message against violence and to offer help to those willing to accept it.

Living up to its name, Boston's Operation Ceasefire was associated with significant reductions in youth homicides and gun assaults. Youth homicides dropped to 15 in 1997, about one-third of the 1991-1995 average. Due to its achievements, the Operation Ceasefire model was institutionalized as the Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS) and since 2000 has been replicated in many other communities under a variety of names. Operation Ceasefire discontinued operations in 2000 due to loss of key leadership, shortages of manpower and political wrangling. In the mid-2000s, as Boston found itself faced with a resurgence of youth violence (though nowhere near previous levels), the city has focused on reinvigorating some of the same strategies and bringing some of the same key stakeholders back to the table. Boston has since experienced a decline in youth homicides. An important lesson is if collaboratives are disbanded too early, hard-won gains may not be sustained.

Boston's Operation Ceasefire, like all the effective collaboratives we studied, made extensive use of data at every stage of its work – to define the problem (in this case, the need to focus on a relatively small group of gang-involved individuals who were driving the violence problem), to set and collect output measures (such as the number of "chronic gang offenders" engaged) and to provide an agreed-upon set of outcome measures that would be used to define success.

4. *Dedicated staff capacity and appropriate structure: linking talk to action*

> *"Nothing happened between meetings. If the mayor had not appointed a full-time staff person to lead the work, this could not get done."*

In our research, we heard more than a few such comments underscoring the key finding that having a dedicated staff is critical to success, as is a staff structure appropriate to the collaborative's plan and goals.

A good example is Philadelphia's Project U-Turn collaborative, created to tackle the city's dropout crisis. When conceived, only about half of the entering public school ninth graders slated to graduate from high school actually did on time. Through the support of a 10-year grant from the William Penn Foundation, the Philadelphia Youth Network, the collaborative's lead agency, was able to hire a vice president to focus on the daily operations of Project U-Turn. She creates agendas, facilitates the steering committee, pushes the work ahead between meetings, keeps members informed about current progress and maintains relationships with the broader partner group. The foundation also funds a policy analyst within the mayor's office, a director of a re-engagement center at the school district and a data analyst, who is vital to a project that focuses so closely on key metrics. Between 2004 and 2011, the Project U-Turn collaborative saw a dramatic 12 percentage point increase in four-year graduation rates in Philadelphia's public schools.

What we learned is that there is no predetermined right size for a collaborative's staff. Effective staff teams can range from one full-time strategic planning coordinator to as many as seven staffers for more complex, formalized operations. In general, dedicated resources must focus on the following roles:

- *Convening*: A leader brings and keeps partners together and maintains a cohesive vision for the group. This person could be the head of the local community foundation, a university president, a nonprofit leader or a public official. The backbone organization (the organization that is responsible for the collaborative's operations) leader also plays an important role in keeping the collaborative efforts coordinated and moving forward.
- *Facilitation*: The collaborative needs a day-to-day person to maintain momentum, guide participants to the right questions and facilitate the group towards agreement and action.
- *Data collection*: Collaboratives frequently take responsibility for data aggregation and analysis. Depending on the extent of the data, a dedicated analyst may be required. Some collaboratives use staff from a participating organization or hire staff or outside consultants to fulfill this capacity.
- *Communications:* Someone must manage internal and external communications to make sure that participants are kept well-informed. Collaborative leaders intentionally highlight the progress of partners, as opposed to seeking credit for the collaborative itself, and coordinate communications with partners to seek opportunities to advance the collaborative's agenda.
- *Administration*: With many moving parts and many partners, collaboratives typically require significant administrative support.

A formal collaborative structure allows for meaningful engagement of partners, but formats vary based on the issues being addressed. All collaboratives tend to have a steering or oversight committee. Collaboratives with a narrow focus also tend to have a few working groups, but those tackling more than one issue (for instance "cradle-to-career" collaboratives such as Strive Cincinnati) often maintain many separate subgroups or committees. Strive's 30-member executive committee oversees five strategy teams focused on the five core priorities of the partnership. The Strive Partnership also has 10 related "collaboratives" – networks of providers and school officials focused on specific goals, such as early education. These provide specific interventions in line with Strive's roadmap to success and receive support from the Strive staff in facilitation and coaching, data analysis, communications, advocacy and grant-writing.

5. *Sufficient funding: Targeted investments to support what works*

Collaboratives require funding both to maintain their dedicated staff and to ensure that nonprofits have the means to deliver high-quality services. Even though the first job of most collaboratives is to leverage existing resources, in every truly needle-moving collaborative we studied, there was at least a modest investment in staff and infrastructure. This investment often included in-kind contributions of staff or other

resources from partners. Sustainable funding itself becomes one of the collaborative's key objectives, as does "funder discipline" – sticking with the plan rather than developing individualized approaches or continuing to fund activities that aren't part of the strategy.

The history of an Atlanta collaborative shows how well-managed funding can work. By the mid-1990s, Atlanta's East Lake neighborhood was in trouble: murders averaged one a week and the crime rate was 18 times the national average. To create new opportunities for its besieged residents, a prominent real estate developer, Tom Cousins, started the East Lake Foundation in 1995 with the goal of transforming the neighborhood. East Lake Foundation's eventual strategy focuses on three essential goals: cradle-to-college education, safe and affordable housing and community wellness.

The East Lake Foundation provided the funding and personnel for the initial two-year planning phase, which culminated in the replacement of the public housing project with a mixed-income development. With three of its seven non-programming staff members dedicated to fundraising and a fourth focused on marketing and communication, the Foundation is able to attract resources from a variety of major partners. These include the Coca-Cola Company, the supermarket chain Publix, Georgia State University, Atlanta Public Schools and the Atlanta Housing Authority. The Foundation's dedicated fundraising team, combined with a patient long-term approach to investments and a commitment to tracking and publicizing progress on neighborhood metrics, attracts additional funds from local public and private funders and directly contributes to the sustainability of the collaborative's efforts.

East Lake's many years of collaborative work have led to more than just fundraising success – violent crime in the neighborhood has dropped by an astonishing 95%, and educational attainment among East Lake's young people has risen significantly. Today, through an initiative called the Purpose Built Communities network, East Lake is sharing its hard-won knowledge with other communities.

What do collaboratives need to thrive?

Most of the ingredients for a successful collaborative must be locally grown. But to thrive, they can benefit from several key resources provided by institutions beyond the community such as state and federal government, national networks and national philanthropy. Here's how:

***1**. Increasing the visibility and legitimacy of a collaborative's work*

As one leader of a community collaborative put it, "Even more than resources, I need some outside group with credibility to point to this model and say „this is a great thing to do.' That would help me get the local partners and resources to the table." Government, philanthropy and other regional and national institutions can be vital sources of such external credibility – through awards, reports and other formal or informal forms of support and encouragement.

***2**. Supporting policy and environmental change*

A variety of state and federal policies and practices influence what happens at the local level, especially what happens with funding. Allowing the use of federal, state and local funding for collaborative staff and infrastructure would make a significant difference in existing capacity. Government agencies also tend to fund in narrow streams tied to particular programs. But more flexible funding could be especially valuable in supporting the work of multi-sector collaboratives, as could government requests for proposals (RFPs) for grant applications that encourage existing and new collaboratives (not just individual organizations) to apply. Other types of government policy changes that would support the work of collaboratives include establishing realistic timetables for outcomes. These timetables should account for the extended time required to get to ultimate outcomes from intermediate gains. Indeed, government policy should favor efforts that articulate clear intermediate outcomes and collect data to gauge and improve the quality of those outcomes.

***3**. Providing knowledge and implementation support*

One of the most heartening trends we have seen is the way in which networks such as Promise Neighborhoods, Strive and others are using knowledge gleaned from past efforts – both failures and successes – to support this next generation of collaborative work. After all, it took the initial Strive effort in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky almost six years to fully develop its "cradle-to-career" approach and tools. Targeted support for implementation, made available when needed, has the potential to move collaboratives more quickly toward meaningful community change. Based on feedback from collaborative leaders, we identified several key knowledge and practice gaps.

On the management side, the most prominent and pervasive challenge was finding (and training) the right talent to manage accountable partnerships and collaborations. Other critical issues include: developing or discovering efficient and effective ways to identify, collect and use data from disparate sources to manage and improve performance; building strong backbone organizations that can support a growing number of collaboratives; and authentically incorporating community participation, resident voice and the dynamics of race and power in the initiative's strategy and work.

On the programmatic side, the primary need may be for help in identifying what works or what shows promise of working in critical areas such as addressing the needs of disconnected youth or identifying the best early childhood supports.

The White House Council on Community Solutions worked with Bridgespan to develop a toolbox that provide guidance for both collaboratives focused on improving results and for new efforts. (See Community Collaboratives Toolbox).

***4**. Funding for collaborative infrastructure and implementation support*

Even if the primary purpose of a collaborative's work is to align existing funding to effective interventions and strategies, communities still need extra funding to support their collaborative infrastructure. While much of this is usually provided locally, national philanthropists have a stake in helping bring about more success stories and supporting efforts to streamline collaborative work, for example in helping to foster data systems that are useful to collaborative efforts. In addition, national intermediaries such as Ready by 21 and Strive play a critical role in providing knowledge and implementation support. These intermediaries require additional resources if they are to address the burgeoning demand from communities that are interested in learning how to increase the effectiveness of their existing collaborative efforts or begin new ones.

***5**. Pushing for greater community partnership*

Finally, there is much to be learned about ways to engage community residents beyond being focus group participants and sources of input. Rather, they must become integral members of community collaboratives and providers of service and impact to address their own challenges. As described earlier, youth were integrally involved as leaders and participants in the development of Nashville's Child and Youth Master Plan and its collaborative efforts. (See Case Studies of Effective Collaborations)

Beyond engaging beneficiaries as participants, community collaboratives also could benefit from seeing residents as "natural allies" that could be tapped as producers of service and impact. Robert Putnam, in Bowling Alone and Better Together, highlights the role social capital plays in building community, suggesting that the quality of relationships is central to creating long-term community health. Community collaboratives and other community revitalization initiatives can learn much from this research on how peers, parents, extended family and faith-based leaders can be engaged in being supportive allies of achieving community goals. Programs, such as the Family Independence Initiative, based in Oakland, have demonstrated how community members can self-organize to increase family income and stability, improve their children's academic results and connect with each other in ways that advance opportunity

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In today's resource-constrained environment, communities are struggling to find ways to better address their greatest challenges and achieve more impact. Community collaboratives represent a growing trend that offers real hope that more *can* be achieved – that high school graduation rates can rise, teen pregnancy rates fall and communities beset by violence see a renewal of peace.

To achieve such goals, government, community members, nonprofits, philanthropy and business must pull together. They must create common goals and singleness of purpose around what works, supported by adequate resources and outstanding leadership. So far, a growing number of effective multi-sector collaboratives – proof points for success – are showing the way.

The time is ripe for such efforts to build momentum. We have the benefit of learning from previous generations' efforts, and a growing body of knowledge about effective approaches. Public and private sources are beginning to dedicate funding to support community collaboration. And across the country we have seen that there is a broad constituency for change, a shared sense of purpose and a renewed opportunity to include those left out of the American dream.

APPENDIX A

A Long History of Community Revitalization Efforts in the United States

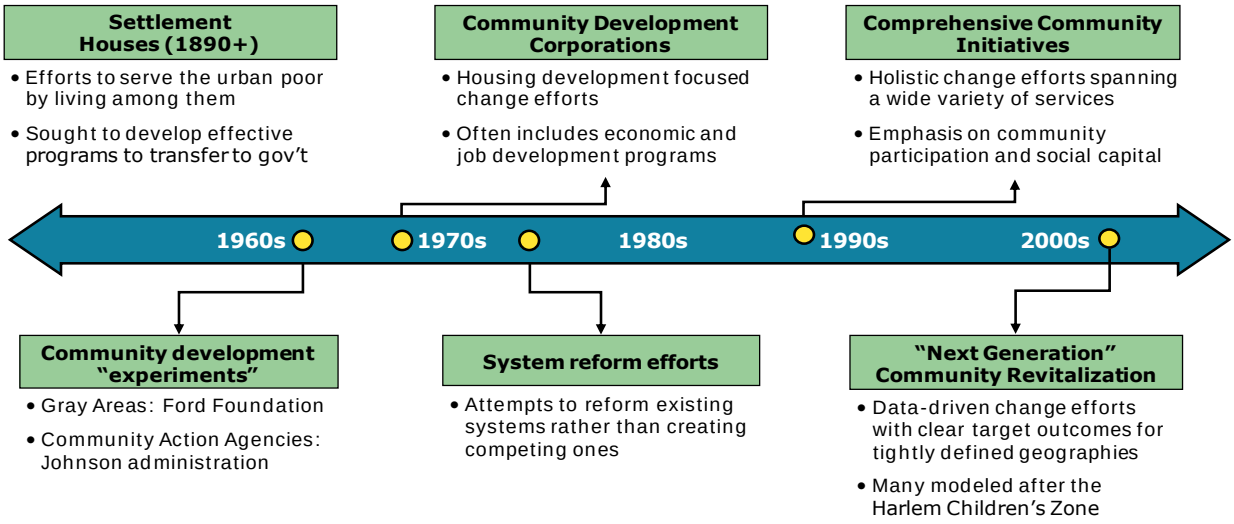
Efforts to transform American communities date back at least to the settlement house movement of the late 19th century. Designed to assimilate immigrants into American society, organizations such as Hull House in Chicago provided adult classes, daycare, shelter for the homeless, public baths and other social services, and also served as advocates for an ambitious social reform agenda.

Since then, private citizens, business, philanthropy, and government have often come together in efforts to revitalize communities. These included federally supported efforts as part of the 1960s War on Poverty, such as Model Cities and the Community Action Program.

Federal funding for distressed communities fell during the 1970s and 1980s, while responsibility for distributing the remaining funds shifted to local governments, which tended to pay more attention to sparking economic development than to tackling social problems. At the same time, community development corporations (CDCs), which had initially focused on helping residents develop economic self-sufficiency, increasingly took on housing development as their primary activity. Support for social services that would supplement public funds largely fell to nonprofits and foundations, whose activities tended to focus on smaller scale programs which were designed to target specific issues. While new ideas and innovative practices emerged from these efforts, the results overall led to only limited change and fragmented delivery systems that disintegrated social problems, populations, and even neighborhoods as they sought to provide isolated interventions to specific populations.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the pendulum began to swing back toward an approach that included social services, child care programs and workforce development, as well as housing. Community participation and capacity-building figured largely in this generation of “comprehensive community initiatives” (CCIs), as did a preference for focusing on the community’s assets (rather than its deficits) as a platform for change. Despite the comprehensive nature of these approaches, they resulted in changing the lives of some individuals but ultimately did not result in community-wide change. Today, a new wave of efforts to break the cycle of poverty and revitalize distressed communities is building and attracting interest, engagement and support from every segment of society. These include such emerging national networks as the Building Sustainable Communities initiative of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Living Cities, Promise Neighborhoods (based on the example of the Harlem Children’s Zone), Purpose Built Communities and Strive.

The following chart summarizes some of the more notable landmarks in the more than 100 year history of community revitalization and collaboration:



While collaborative efforts have a long history, the work remains immensely challenging – with a record of many more failures than successes. Today, a new generation of multi-sector community collaboratives across the United States is seeking to learn from previous efforts, build on what works and use collaboration as a fulcrum for generating community-wide change.

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[i] A. Hentzner, "State's Black Fourth Graders Post Worst Reading Scores in U.S.," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, March 24, 2010.

[ii] See the seminal article Collective Impact by John Kania and Mark Kramer, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Winter 2011.

[iii] While 10% may not seem ambitious, over time it can represent enormous progress for a community and huge savings in incarceration, welfare services, homeless services and other costs.

[iv] The Bridgespan Group reviewed more than 100 collaboratives and conducted extensive interviews with leaders from the 12 exemplary ones. Bridgespan also hosted a meeting with community collaborative and community revitalization leaders and experts to discuss and hear feedback about what we were learning. A number of these leaders went on to take part in further discussions that informed our work and our recommendations.

[v] We understand that these criteria do not pertain to single sector or other collaboratives, such as government initiatives or shorter-term coalitions, which may also have achieved important results in their communities.

[vi] Based on information from Living Cities, Project U-Turn, Ready by 21, Strive and United Way.

[vii] In the case of Boston's Operation Ceasefire (profiled in this paper), designed to address youth violence in the 1990s, one consequence of its success was that various stakeholders tried to claim credit for the achievement. Police, probation officers, social workers and the minister-led Ten Point Coalition all thought they stood to gain by being seen as responsible for the nationally acclaimed "Boston Miracle," even though it was really the sum of their efforts which made the difference. Credit-claiming in part caused the collaborative to stumble.