

Citizen Engagement with the Changing City

Shauna Brail

Citizen Engagement with the Changing City

Edited by Sally Hussey

© 2019, 2018 Introduction, Sally Hussey
© 2019, 2018 Shauna Brail

Bang the Table, Pty Ltd
C.E.Lab 96 Pelham Street, Carlton, Vic 3053 Australia

bangthetable.com

Bang the Table is a digital community engagement company with a strong social mission.
Our purpose is to involve citizens around the world in the conversations that affect their lives and
advocate public participation as vital for any well-functioning democracy.

Cover photo: Daniel Funes Fuentes

Contents

Introduction - <i>Sally Hussey, Editor</i>	iv
About the Author	vi
Building Cities by Engaging Communities: Social Infrastructure, Community Benefits, Anchor Institutions	1
Community-Engaged Approaches to Contemporary City-Building	5
Prioritizing Social Infrastructure	7
Community Benefits Agreements	11
Leveraging Anchor Institutions	15
Afterword	19
Recommended Reading	20



“Is it possible to build
a livable city without
collaborating with the
very communities that
will live in them?”

Regent Park Toronto. Social infrastructure is critical to the neighbourhood's ongoing transformation.

*Copyright Queen's Printer for Ontario,
photo source: Ontario Growth Secretariat, Ministry of Municipal Affairs*

Introduction

How can we address patterns of inequality in the twenty-first century city? More crucial, how do we address inclusion for all urban citizens? Does city-building without community engagement violate the very sense of community itself?

Inequalities that shape twenty-first century urbanization act as a querulous warning for future city-building. Contemporary urban cities, it appears, are the seat of prosperity and inequality in equal measure. The gentrification of lower-cost neighbourhoods suggest a milieu increasingly made up of an emphasis on spaces for an urban elite at the exclusion of diversity. Socio-spatial inequality, moreover, polarizes neighbourhoods where wealthy enclaves push out lower income populations. To-date the concept of the 'livable city' does not suffice; nor does it help us understand how cities are imagined as collective or 'cultural' entities,¹ particularly where "globalization is rapidly changing urban life."²

Citizen Engagement with the Changing City examines meaningful citizen engagement in city-building for the future. Here, Shauna Brail reflects on the urban challenges facing the complex contemporary city and the spatial and socioeconomic divisions that alternately polarize neighbourhoods along an axis of wealth/low income.

"Is it possible," she asks, "to build a livable city without collaborating with the very communities that will live in them?"

But this is not empty provocation. Brail reflects on the changing city and provides a positive, tangible approach to city-building and planning that makes citizen engagement integral. For Brail, contemporary city-building presents a boundary around who is included and who is excluded. She finds that truly successful city-building can only exist through the meaningful engagement of all citizens.³

¹ Blokland, Talja, *Community as Urban Practice*, Polity Press, Malden, MA, 2017, p.9.

² For a discussion of community as a cultural concept created through public practices, see Blokland, *ibid.* Chapter 3, pp. 42-64 and Chapter 5, pp.88-95.

³ While recent research reveals the vital necessity to investigate inequalities that exist in contemporary urban cities, I want to point up that Brail offers a counterpoint in a pragmatic, policy-applicable approach to city-building that focuses on inclusion.



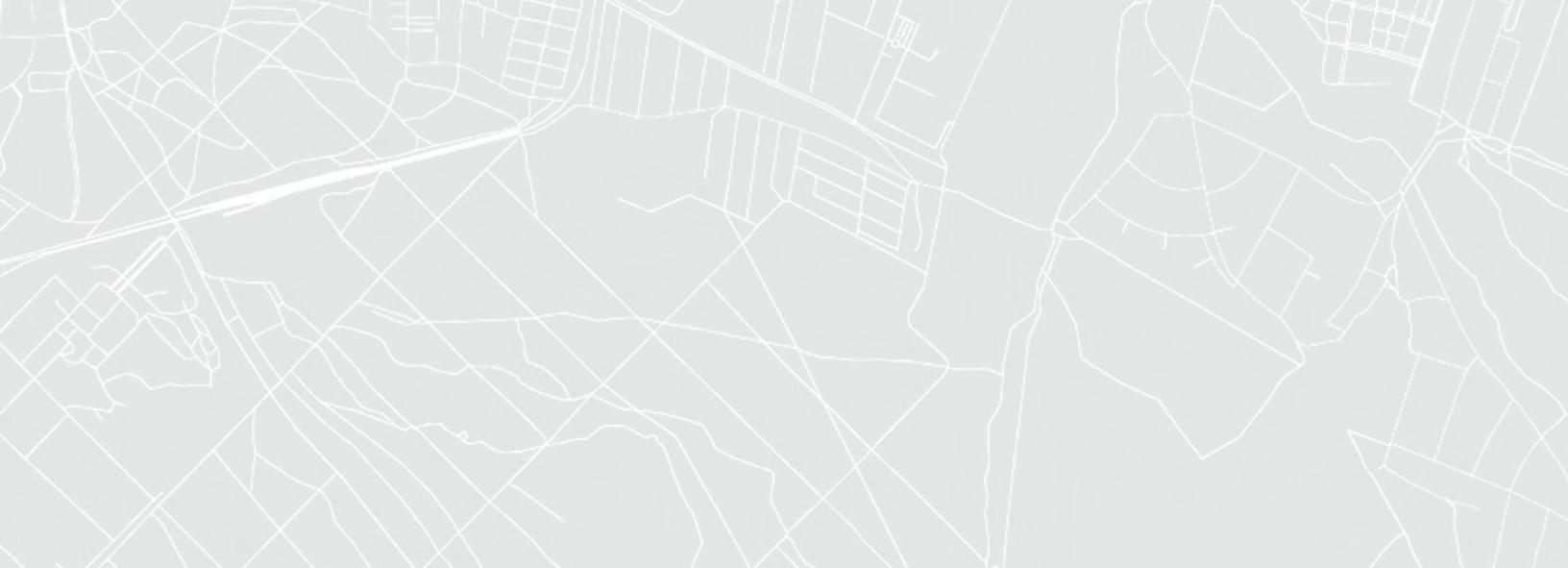
The positive tenor of Citizen Engagement and the Changing City is a by-product of its provision of an approach to the contemporary city that meaningfully connects policy to community building and citizen engagement – an approach that works on a grass-roots and larger city and region-wide level.

Prioritizing social infrastructure, meaningful neighbourhood opportunities, and leveraging the prosperity of large scale institutions, Brail shows how intentional support for social networks and skill developments brings benefits to lowest levels of the income spectrum. Looking at case studies of large-scale urbanization initiatives in Toronto, Canada, Woodberry Down, London and the place-making initiatives in Pune, India, she shows the efficacy of this approach and outcomes of intentional support of social infrastructure.

The pressing relevance of Citizen Engagement and the Changing City is the practicable – and demonstrable – approach to citizen engagement. Most crucially, engaging those who are excluded, vulnerable citizens and marginalized communities, Brail looks to the city of the future.

Sally Hussey

Commissioning Editor



About the Author

Dr Shauna Brail is Director and Associate Professor, Teaching Stream in the Urban Studies Program, Presidential Advisor on Urban Engagement, and a Senior Associate in the Innovation Policy Lab at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto.

She holds an MA in Urban Planning (University of British Columbia), and a PhD in Geography (University of Toronto). Prior to joining the University of Toronto, she worked in management consulting and as a senior policy advisor to the Ontario provincial government. As an economic geographer, her research focuses on the transformation of cities as a result of economic, social and cultural change. She has led the development of academic internships and community engaged learning in the Urban Studies Program for over a decade, working with students, university administrators and partners at urban-focused organizations across the city.

Building Cities by Engaging Communities



A site of concentrated public housing, Regent Park has built community participation into local planning.

Photo: The City of Toronto

Social Infrastructure, Community Benefits, Anchor Institutions

THE 'URBAN MOMENT'

City-Building. Community. Citizen Engagement. What do these things have in common with one another? Is it possible to build a livable city without collaborating with the very communities that will live in them? Can city-building succeed if it does not succeed in engaging marginalized citizens and supporting them in meaningful ways? In the complex, contemporary city, the answer to these questions is resoundingly 'No'.

Twenty-first century cities are increasingly divided both spatially and socioeconomically. Columbia University-based sociologist Saskia Sassen contends that the millennium is distinguished by the corporatization of large swaths of the city, increasing emphasis on urban spaces for an elite, wealthy group of residents to the exclusion of a mix of people and diversity.¹

Alternately, through his extensive research on sociospatial inequality in Canadian cities, David Hulchanski demonstrates the increasing intra-urban geographic shifts of low income populations in Toronto between 1970 – 2010. Hulchanski identifies a trend referred to as the 'Three Cities' in which city neighbourhoods are becoming increasingly polarized based on household income.² The city's core is transitioning to an enclave of wealthy households, while lower-income households are becoming more concentrated in the inner and outer suburbs of the Toronto region. Similar patterns of marked and increasing sociospatial inequality are demonstrated elsewhere in Canada³ – particularly in Montreal⁴ and Vancouver,⁵ as well as in the United States in Chicago.⁶

¹ Sassen, Saskia, 'Who Owns Our Cities and Why This Urban Takeover Should Concern Us All,' *Guardian Cities*, The Guardian, 24 November, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/nov/24/who-owns-our-cities-and-why-this-urban-takeover-should-concern-us-all>.

² Hulchanski, David, *The Three Cities within Toronto: Income Polarisation among Toronto's Neighbourhoods, 1970 – 2005*, Centre for Urban and Community Studies Research Bulletin 41, December, 2007, <http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/pdfs/cursp/tnrn/Three-Cities-Within-Toronto-2010-Final.pdf>

³ See NCRP Publications, Neighbourhood Change and Building Inclusive Communities From Within, Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto, 2011-2017, <http://neighbourhoodchange.ca/publication/research-papers>.

⁴ See Montréal Neighbourhoods, *ibid*.

⁵ See Vancouver, *ibid*.

⁶ Smith, Janet L., *The Deepening Divide in Chicagoland*, Nathalie P Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement, University of Illinois, 11 April, 2014, <http://neighbourhoodchange.ca/documents/2014/04/chicago-3-cities.pdf>.

In his recent book, *The New Urban Crisis*, urban scholar and theorist Richard Florida acknowledges these urban challenges and suggests that the way forward for our increasingly divided cities requires a concept he refers to as "inclusive prosperity".⁷ This he defined in a recent article with Jodie W. Mclean in the Harvard Business Review: "Inclusive prosperity is the idea that the opportunity and benefits of economic growth should be widely shared by all segments of society."⁸

Florida suggests elsewhere that the challenge of how to spread economic wealth more widely can be addressed through urban policies connected to the creation of more affordable housing, transit system investments and private sector contributions that enhance jobs, wages and communities. Cities and their populations, then, could continue to thrive, rather than exacerbate divisions and inequality.⁹

Given a global convergence of interest with respect to cities, we appear to have arrived at an unprecedented moment in terms of political attention being paid to the role that cities play economically, socially, physically, and environmentally. As the engines of our nation's economies, as the places in which the majority of people around the world live, and as sites of promise for addressing wicked global challenges such as poverty and climate change – cities are our future.

All this raises the question: Can we leverage the opportunity of the current 'urban moment' – combined with the many strengths inherent in cities and city-building – to create an environment in which all urbanites have an opportunity to rise alongside the rising urban tide?

⁷ Florida, Richard, *The New Urban Crisis: How Our Cities are Increasing Inequality, Deepening Segregation and Failing the Middle Class – and What We Can Do About It*, Basic Books, New York, 2017.

⁸ Florida, Richard and Jodie W. McLean, 'What Inclusive Urban Development Can Look Like,' Harvard Business Review, July 11, 2017, <http://hbr.org/2017/07/what-inclusive-urban-development-can-look-like>.

⁹ Florida, Richard, 'The Unaffordable Urban Paradise', MIT Technology Review, 20 June, 2017, <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/607957/the-unaffordable-urban-paradise/>.



Cover photo: Daniel Funes Fuentes



Community-Engaged Approaches to Contemporary City-Building

Located in Hackney, London, Woodberry Down was described as a 'tsunami of social deprivation' prior to rebuilding.

Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Recent research that I have led suggests that opportunities exist to address the issues of economic divisions within cities and engage community members – especially in low income and marginalized communities – in large scale urban change. It emphasizes the need to create opportunities for participation, engagement, benefit and prosperity.

Three key areas that policymakers and advocates can focus on in this regard are:

1. prioritizing social infrastructure;
2. building meaningful neighbourhood opportunities through community benefits agreements (CBAs); and,
3. leveraging anchor institution strategies.

Each of these strategies are connected to building community and citizen engagement by strengthening relationships and providing tangible avenues for including residents in processes of urban change. Furthermore, all three strategies can be applied at a grass roots level, and can also be scaled up to address city or region-wide concerns.

Probing more deeply into these strategies, the next section provides an overview of how social infrastructure, CBAs and anchor institutions currently serve to address urban inequality and the pressing need to include citizens in an era of increased urbanization.

Prioritizing Social Infrastructure

Woodberry Down highlights social infrastructure building in action.

Photo: Shauna Brail

Before I turn to social infrastructure, it's important to outline what is meant by 'urban infrastructure'. Urban infrastructure is touted as a means to physically build access, opportunity and growth in cities through the development of infrastructures such as roads, bridges, sewers, subways, parks, housing, and digital connectivity. In 2012, McKinsey Global Institute estimated that cities around the world would need to double current infrastructure investments from \$10 to \$20 trillion annually in order to build the necessary physical infrastructure to support growing populations and needs.¹ A 2014 report by the Mowat Centre, an independent public policy think tank located at the University of Toronto, suggests that every \$1M in infrastructure spending in Canada leads, on average, to the creation of 16 person-years of employment.² Infrastructure development and associated ongoing maintenance and management creates jobs, continued investment and contributes to local spending through spinoff effects.

Unlike urban infrastructure, social infrastructure is less linear. While it is relatively easy to understand the impacts and outcomes of physical infrastructure investment as concrete and tangible, the concept of social infrastructure is less well understood. Social infrastructure refers to support for human and social capital, including institutions that facilitate the integral community-building necessary for a satisfactory quality of life for residents. Examples of social infrastructure include community centres, parks and libraries as well as job or skill training programs, leadership development initiatives and cultural supports such as film or music training. Social infrastructure is increasingly understood as being vital alongside the physical process of building community in a transforming environment.

Committing energy, political willpower, and financial resources towards building and enhancing a community's social infrastructure is a key component of city-building. Intentionally supporting social networks and skills development through pre-employment and job training programs, through leadership training opportunities connected to community consultation processes, and acknowledging the existence and important role that community members play in supporting one another both on a daily basis and through significant change, are all key to promoting and enhancing social infrastructure in a community.

Social infrastructure is also critically important during times of dramatic physical change,

¹ Dobbs, Richard, et al, *Urban World: Cities and the Rise of the Consuming Class*, Report, McKinsey Global Institute, June 2012, <https://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/urbanization/urban-world-cities-and-the-rise-of-the-consuming-class>.

² Cautillo, Chiara, Zon, Noah, and Matthew Mendelsohn, *Rebuilding Canada: A New Framework for Renewing Canada's Infrastructure*, Mowat Centre, School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Toronto, August 2014, <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/99270>.

particularly when physical rebuilding has the potential to disrupt and destroy longstanding relationships and community spaces. Furthermore, strong support for social infrastructure brings benefits to those at the lowest levels of the income spectrum who otherwise might not benefit, or be negatively impacted, during a physical rebuild.

REGENT PARK

My own research has focused on the transformation of Regent Park in Toronto, Canada³ – a 69 acre site located in downtown Toronto, and the site of concentrated public housing undergoing large-scale redevelopment as a mixed income community. Plans for the neighbourhood's redevelopment include a physical plan guiding the rebuilding of 1,800 non-market housing units along with the addition of 5,400 market units, a street grid, sewer system and other physical infrastructure needed for a neighbourhood that, ultimately, is expected to include upwards of 12,500 residents. In addition to the physical plan, a social development plan, emphasizing the necessity of including residents in community-building and rebuilding processes was developed (after all, Regent Park was characterized by a high degree of social cohesion prior to the physical rebuilding). While early efforts in Regent Park focused on developing the planning framework for physical redevelopment, a shift in emphasis took place once physical plans were more firmly rooted, towards focusing on social infrastructure and community-building activities.

Examples of Regent Park's social infrastructure initiatives that have made a tangible difference to community-building activities include:

- A community animators program in which neighbourhood residents were hired by the housing authority to provide other residents with information, advice and assistance with redevelopment related questions;
- Leadership training opportunities wherein residents gained skills and extended their networks by participating in community consultations, non-profit boards, and community engagement worker training; and,
- Community-driven programs at newly built city-owned centres, such as the aquatic centre, where women's only swim times and expanded access to swim lesson signup were implemented following the success of community-led advocacy.

³ Brail, Shauna, Mizrokh, Katerina and Sonia Ralston, 'Examining the Transformation of Regent Park, Toronto: Prioritizing Hard and Soft Infrastructure' in eds Wise, Nicholas and Julie Clark, *Urban Transformations: Geographies of Renewal and Creative Change*, Routledge, New York, 2017, 177–194. Brail, Shauna, and Nishi Kumar, 'Community Leadership and Engagement after the Mix: The Transformation of Toronto's Regent Park,' *Urban Studies*, v. 54, no.16, 2017, 3772–3788, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098016683122>.

Overall, it is evident that building and investing in social infrastructure in Regent Park is a clear and critical part of the neighbourhood's ongoing transformation.

WOODBERRY DOWN

Another example of a large-scale housing rebuilding initiative is Woodberry Down located in Hackney, a borough of London, England and a short subway ride from central London. The site of a major redevelopment initiative, a public-private partnership has been created to rebuild both the 3,000 non-market homes on site and add an additional 4,000 market housing units. The redevelopment is intended to serve two purposes – refurbish social housing stock in London and add new market housing in a global city in which housing supply and housing costs are amongst the highest in the world.

Woodberry Down was described by a community leader as a 'tsunami of social deprivation' prior to rebuilding, and similar to Regent Park, a social sustainability plan was implemented to address community development at the same time as physical redevelopment. A visit to Woodberry Down's community centre highlights social infrastructure-building efforts in action. A community board welcomes residents to share their thoughts on what 'community' means to them, the poster for a community arts festival suggests that 'we have more in common than that which divides us', and advertisements emphasize job training and apprenticeships.

PUNE

In Pune – India's seventh largest metropolitan area with a population of five million – the city's participation in India's Smart City Mission includes the development of a series of local strategies to accommodate and intentionally redirect massive urban growth and change.

In Pune, the residents' top priorities for transitioning towards an improved urban future include the development of basic physical infrastructure such as the building of a transportation system and ensuring a supply of water 24/7. Notably, of 51 initiatives identified in Pune to advance their Smart City mission, a placemaking initiative related to the enhancement of public spaces and job training programs for low income residents are two examples of social infrastructure priorities. This example helps demonstrate and acknowledge the role of social infrastructure in city-building.



Community Benefits Agreements

High-profile examples of Community Benefit Agreements include major league sports facilities like Staples Centre and Yankee Stadium, which stipulates annual distribution of free tickets to local community organizations for a 40-year period.

Community Benefits Agreements – also referred to by the acronym CBA – represent one way to ensure that infrastructure investments create community value at the local level. CBAs first became popular in the 1990s in the United States as a mechanism to help developers earn support for large-scale initiatives, especially those meant to serve a regional or broader group but with a disruptive impact on local communities. Outside of North America, knowledge and experience with CBAs appears to be limited to nonexistent.

The negotiation and signing of CBAs as legally binding agreements typically involve private developers, local government and community-based organizations. Particularly in cases where public subsidies are used to support private development, CBAs can be a mechanism to ensure that the desired public benefits are achieved.¹ These can take the form of new jobs and new local investment, particularly emphasizing jobs and training for local, often low income, residents. In exchange for community support, the developer guarantees a set of negotiated benefits to help communities and neighbourhood-based groups gain from redevelopment.

High profile examples of CBAs in the United States² include the development of major league sports facilities such as the Staples Centre in Los Angeles and Yankee Stadium in New York City, the opening up of new land for development as a result of freeway demolition in downtown Milwaukee, and the redevelopment of a former industrial site into a mixed use neighbourhood in Denver. The types of benefits built into these agreements include requirements to:

- hire locally;
- direct jobs to low income residents;
- pay living wages to construction workers;
- build affordable housing in conjunction with redevelopments;
- procure from local businesses; and,
- provide community grants.

¹ Gross, Julian, Leroy, Greg and Madeleine Janis-Aparicio, Community Benefits Agreements: Making Development Projects Accountable, Good Jobs First and the California Partnership for Working Families, Washington and Los Angeles, 2002, <https://www.goodjobsfirst.org/sites/default/files/docs/pdf/cba2005final.pdf>.

² See Wolf-Powers, Laura, 'Community Benefits Agreements and Local Government: A Review of Recent Evidence,' Journal of American Planning Association, vol. 76, no.2, Spring 2010: 141 – 159, https://works.bepress.com/laura_wolf_powers/11/

In the case of the Yankee Stadium CBA, the agreement stipulates that 15,000 free tickets be distributed annually to local community organizations for a period of 40 years.

There is variety in the structure and formality of CBAs. In the case of Regent Park, community benefits clauses,³ written into development contracts, have helped to ensure that there are local spillover employment benefits associated with both redevelopment and subsequent commercial activity. Community benefits clauses in Regent Park have resulted in commitments to create jobs for public housing residents in construction and maintenance, as well as at newly opened neighbourhood retail establishments including a coffee shop, bank and grocery store. Since the start of the redevelopment in 2006, a total of 1,100 jobs have been created for public housing residents living in the neighbourhood.

While it appears that most high-profile examples of CBAs apply to large scale initiatives with budgets in excess of \$1 billion, there is also potential to explore how community benefits can be derived from smaller development projects. For example, the office of Toronto City Councillor, Kristyn Wong-Tam, worked with a group of Urban Studies students at the University of Toronto in July 2017 to research and consult on guidelines to be used when negotiating community benefits with developers in Ward 27. This central downtown ward currently includes nearly 80,000 residents and is the site of 114 active planning/development applications. Given the financial benefits that accrue to developers in cases of intensification and redevelopment, Councillor Wong-Tam is leading a discussion on how to accommodate growth and development in the ward while at the same time developing a systematic plan towards achieving community benefits for residents.

Community Benefits Agreements, contractual community benefits clauses, and other variants on acquiring community benefits for local community members during redevelopment and rebuilding processes represent an opportunity to engage, strengthen and connect communities during periods of otherwise disruptive urban change.

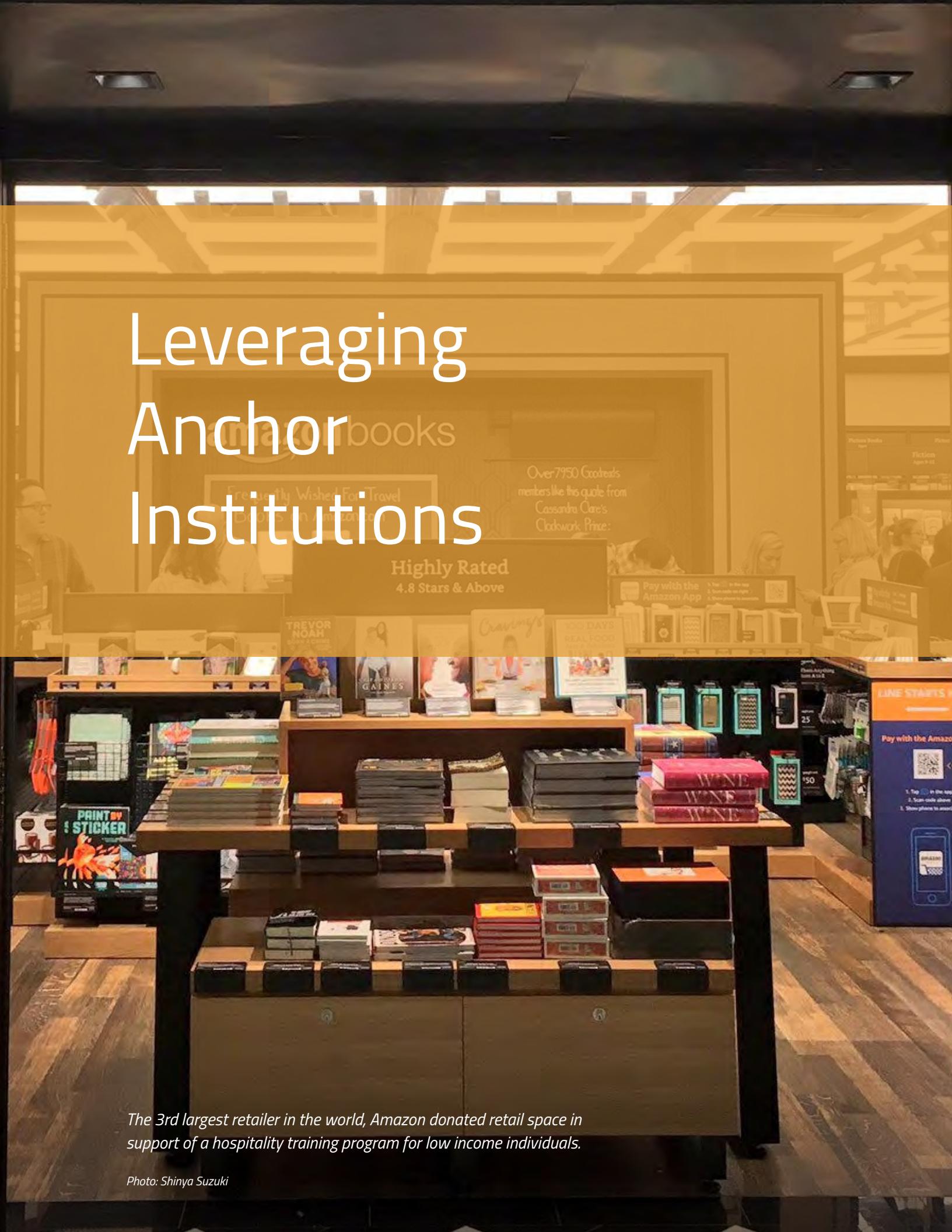
³ Graser, Dina, Community Benefits and Tower Renewal, Report, Evergreen, May 2016, https://www.evergreen.ca/downloads/pdfs/HousingActionLab/TowerRenewal_Report_FINAL.pdf.



Pune, India's 7th largest metropolitan area, includes a series of local strategies to intentionally redirect massive urban growth and change.

Photo: Adam Cohn

Leveraging Anchor Institutions



The 3rd largest retailer in the world, Amazon donated retail space in support of a hospitality training program for low income individuals.

Anchor institutions are typically defined as large, public sector institutions such as hospitals, universities and municipal governments that are firmly embedded in place and play a significant role in the local economy – often measured in terms of employment, expenditures and real estate holdings.

Harvard Business School's Michael E. Porter identifies the ways in which anchor institutions can leverage their economic heft to contribute to local economic and community development. According to Porter, there are three types of strategies that anchor institutions can use to promote community vitality:

1. based on core business activities anchors can hire locally, procure local goods and services, use real estate resources for local benefit and provide goods/services specific to local community needs;
2. anchor institutions can act as leaders in their city/region to support broader community goals in collaboration with other partner institutions; and,
3. anchor institutions can specifically dedicate resources to support community needs and build capacity.¹

With cities increasingly divided spatially, socially and economically, calls for anchor institutions to adopt deliberate strategies that support economic and community development efforts continue to be part of public debates focused on increasing prosperity for a larger number of urbanites (for example, see reports by the Penn Institute for Urban Research,² Mowat Centre,³ and New York University's Urban Lab⁴).

Furthermore, while anchor institutions are traditionally considered to be those with a public or non-profit mandate, for-profit corporations are now included in calls for anchor institution strategies to help bolster local communities. In Toronto, Mitchell Cohen, President of the Daniels Corporation is thinking along these lines.

¹ See Michael E. Porter, Founder of the non-profit research, education and policy organization, Institute for Strategy & Competitiveness, Harvard Business School, <http://www.isc.hbs.edu/>.

² Ehlenz, Meagan M, Birch, Eugénie L, and Brian Agness, The Power of Eds and Meds: Urban Universities Investing in Neighborhood Revitalization and Innovation Districts, Penn Institute for Urban Research, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, July 2014, <http://penniur.upenn.edu/uploads/media/Anchor-Institutions-PRAI-2014.pdf>.

³ Dragicevic, Nevena, *Anchor Institutions*, Report, Mowat Centre, Ontario, 24 August 2015, https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/mowatcentre/wp-content/uploads/publications/109_anchor_institutions.pdf

⁴ Florida, Richard and Steven Pedigo, *The Case for Inclusive Prosperity*, Schack Institute of Real Estate/NYU School of Professional Studies, New York, 2017, <https://iamstevenpedigo.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/NYUSPS-Schack-Urban-Lab-The-Case-for-Inclusive-Prosperity.pdf>



Cohen wrote an editorial⁵ in which he suggests that for-profit corporations begin to actively engage in social procurement activities – a key pillar of an anchor institution strategy. In particular, he is focused on the notion that directing planned spending towards hiring local talent positively impacts and improves community capital and community development. This is similar to the strategy that Daniels Corporation has supported as the builder of Regent Park's new housing units.

Amazon has the potential to demonstrate leadership as of a for-profit anchor institution. The third largest retailer in the world,⁶ Amazon had a market capitalization of over \$655B US. In Seattle, Washington – where the company is headquartered – the firm employs 25,000 people and has ten new office buildings at various stages of construction.⁷ Though Amazon has by no means adopted an anchor institution strategy, they did donate retail space in support of a hospitality training program for low income individuals, and agreed to donate up to \$1M (USD) to the initiative.⁸

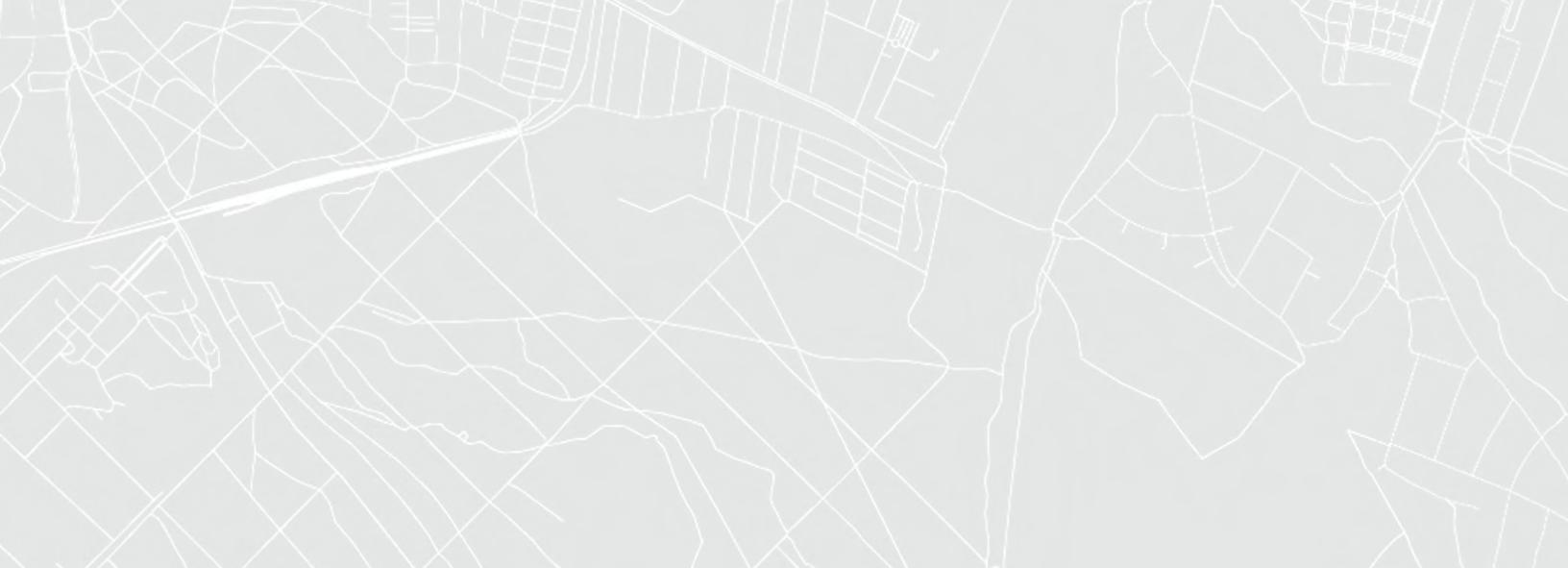
In many ways, an anchor institution strategy can be seen as an extension of what firms typically refer to as 'corporate social responsibility' or philanthropy. However, unlike both philanthropy and corporate social responsibility, anchor institution strategies go beyond philanthropy and volunteerism to build crucial community connections and sustained impact. These might include initiatives such as local training, hiring and procurement programs, affordable housing supports for low income workers, and support for social enterprises.

⁵ Cohen, Mitchell, 'Companies Should Tap into Social Procurement's Endless Opportunities,' The Globe and Mail, June 14, 2017, <https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/rob-commentary/companies-should-tap-into-social-procurements-endless-opportunities/article35310257/>.

⁶ Gensler, Lauren, 'The World's Largest Retailers in 2017,' Forbes, 24 May, 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurengensler/2017/05/24/the-worlds-largest-retailers-2017-walmart-cvs-amazon/>

⁷ Rosenberg, Mike, 'Downtown Seattle's Construction Boom Surges to New Record, with no End in Sight,' The Seattle Times, 20 July, 2017, <http://www.seattletimes.com/business/real-estate/downtown-seattles-construction-boom-surges-to-new-record-with-no-end-in-sight/>.

⁸ González, Ángel, 'Amazon to Match up to \$1 million in Donations, Revenue Earned by FareStart as New Restaurants Open,' The Seattle Times, July 18, 2017, <https://www.seattletimes.com/business/amazon/amazon-to-match-up-to-1-million-in-donations-revenue-earned-by-farestart-as-new-restaurants-open/>.



A recent piece in Politico⁹ suggests that the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio – a world renowned health centre, the second biggest employer in the State of Ohio, and an anchor institution – is neglecting its obligations to the surrounding impoverished neighbourhood while basking in wealth, success and non-profit status that absolves the institution from paying taxes. While the Cleveland Clinic delivers value to the state in the form of job creation, income tax payments, and prestige – it is criticized on the grounds that it has not contributed its fair share of benefits to surrounding neighbours who struggle against racism, poverty, lack of access to jobs, and poor health.

What these examples make abundantly clear is that it is no longer acceptable for prosperous public or non-profit institutions to build wealth for themselves while disregarding the well-being of neighbours and neighbourhoods. In light of growing urban inequality, anchor institutions are expected nowadays to extend their traditional missions – whether they are focused on excellence in education, research, health care, governance or revenues – and incorporate a more intentional, and more extensive agenda supporting local economic and community development.

⁹ Diamond, Dan, 'How the Cleveland Clinic Grows Healthier While its Neighbors Stay Sick,' Politico, 17 September, 2017, <http://www.politico.com/interactives/2017/obamacare-cleveland-clinic-non-profit-hospital-taxes/>.



Afterword

Can a Rising Tide Really Lift All Boats?

Cities are increasingly divided and polarized – while civic leaders generally agree that this is unacceptable and untenable, uncertainty remains in terms of how to address this contemporary urban challenge. Including residents and citizens in engagement and planning processes, particularly those who are most marginalized and disadvantaged, is a crucial step towards addressing urban divisions.

Although the idiom suggests that ‘a rising tide lifts all boats’ – it appears that without intentional policies and programs, this is not the case. Investment in social infrastructure, community benefits agreements and anchor institution strategies present opportunities for improving economic and social opportunities for greater inclusion in cities.

Recommended Reading

Brail, Shauna, and Kumar, Nishi, 'Community Leadership and Engagement after the Mix: the Transformation of Toronto's Regent Park,' *Urban Studies*, 54(16), 2017, 3772–3788, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098016683122>.

Brail, Shauna, Mizrokhi, Katerina and Sonia Ralston 'Examining the Transformation of Regent Park, Toronto: Prioritizing Hard and Soft Infrastructure,' in *Urban Transformations: Geographies of Renewal and Creative Change*, eds Wise, Nicholas and Julie Clark, Routledge, 2017, 177–194.

Dragicevic, Nevena, Anchor Institutions, Report, The Mowat Centre and Atkinson Foundation, Toronto, 2015, https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/mowatcentre/wp-content/uploads/publications/109_anchor_institutions.pdf.

Florida, Richard and Pedigo, Steven, *The Case for Inclusive Prosperity*, New York University Schack School of Real Estate Urban Lab, New York, 2017, <http://scps.nyu.edu/content/dam/scps/pdf/200/200-4/200-4-15/Urban-Lab/NYUSPS-Schack-Urban-Lab-The-Case-for-Inclusive-Prosperity.pdf>.

Gross, Julian, Leroy, Greg and Madeleine Janis-Aparicio, *Community Benefits Agreements: Making Development Projects Accountable*, Good Jobs First and the California Partnership for Working Families, Washington, 2005, <http://www.forworkingfamilies.org/resources/publications/community-benefits-agreements-making-development-projects-accountable>.

Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, 'Anchor Institutions and Urban Economic Development: from Community Benefit to Shared Value'. *Inner City Insights*, vol 1, issue 2, 2011, Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, Massachusetts, http://icic.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ICIC_Anchors-and-Urban-Econ-Dev.pdf.



www.bangthetable.com

© Bang the Table Pty Ltd

Photo: Brevité