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Cleveland's Greater University Circle Initiative: An Anchor-Based Strategy for Change

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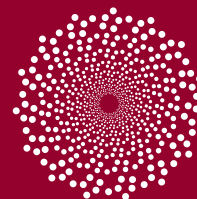
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An Anchor-Based
Strategy for Change

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DEMOCRACY
COLLABORATIVE

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Cities are increasingly turning to their “anchor” institutions as drivers of economic development, harnessing the power of these major economic players to benefit the neighborhoods where they are rooted. This is especially true for cities that are struggling with widespread poverty and disinvestment. Urban anchors—typically hospitals and universities—have sometimes isolated themselves from the poor and struggling neighborhoods that surround them. But this is changing. Since the late 1990s, as population, jobs, and investment have migrated outward, these “rooted in place” institutions are becoming a key to the long, hard work of revitalization. In Cleveland, the Greater University Circle Initiative is a unique, multi-stakeholder initiative with a ten-year track record. What is the “secret sauce” that keeps this effort together?

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Cleveland has won national attention for the role major non-profits are playing in taking on the poverty and disinvestment plaguing some of the poorest neighborhoods in the city. Where once vital university and medical facilities built barriers separating themselves from their neighbors, now they are engaging with them, generating job opportunities, avenues to affordable housing, and training in a coordinated way. Where once the institutions may have viewed each other as mere competitors for funding or clients, now they are allies finding ways not only to improve their surrounding neighborhoods but cooperate on savings through joint business operations.

This case study shows how the Greater University Circle Initiative achieved this coordination among three large anchor institutions located in Cleveland's park-like University Circle

Where once a major institution might only seek to gentrify its surrounding area by pushing out impoverished residents, this strategy seeks to improve the prospects and income of the 60,000 people who live in these neighborhoods.

area—almost one-square mile of world-class educational, cultural, and health institutions. Through this initiative, the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, and Case Western Reserve University networked and deployed their resources in a powerful challenge to the persistent poverty and disinvestment in seven surrounding neighborhoods. Where once a major institution

might only seek to gentrify its surrounding area by pushing out impoverished residents, this strategy seeks to improve the prospects and income of the 60,000 people who live in these neighborhoods. The Greater University Circle Initiative seeks to reweave community networks, in part through community engagement, to improve the quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods, and to give residents a greater voice and connection to the resources of the anchor institutions.

The initiative includes other strategic partners, among them the City of Cleveland, neighborhood and workforce develop-

ment entities, business accelerator organizations, and the data and evaluation partner, Cleveland State University. It is convened, supported, and led by the Cleveland Foundation, the world's first community foundation.¹ We will focus on the day-to-day reality of building and sustaining the relationships of the partners and their commitment to meeting goals that they broadly identified as: Hire Local, Live Local, Buy Local, and Connect. We describe how the structure and the work evolved, and what the partners achieved, with an emphasis on what could be useful for others. It is our hope that the Greater University Circle Initiative—and the Economic Inclusion Management Committee (EIMC) created to support the work—will serve as models for effective, durable, anchor-based strategies nationwide. We will trace the evolution of the work from the first meetings in 2005, which consisted of one-on-one conversations between CEOs and the Cleveland Foundation, to today's multiple convenings: the Greater University Circle Leadership Group, the Economic Inclusion Management Committee, and the various subcommittees and ad hoc working groups that have formed to tackle particular issues.

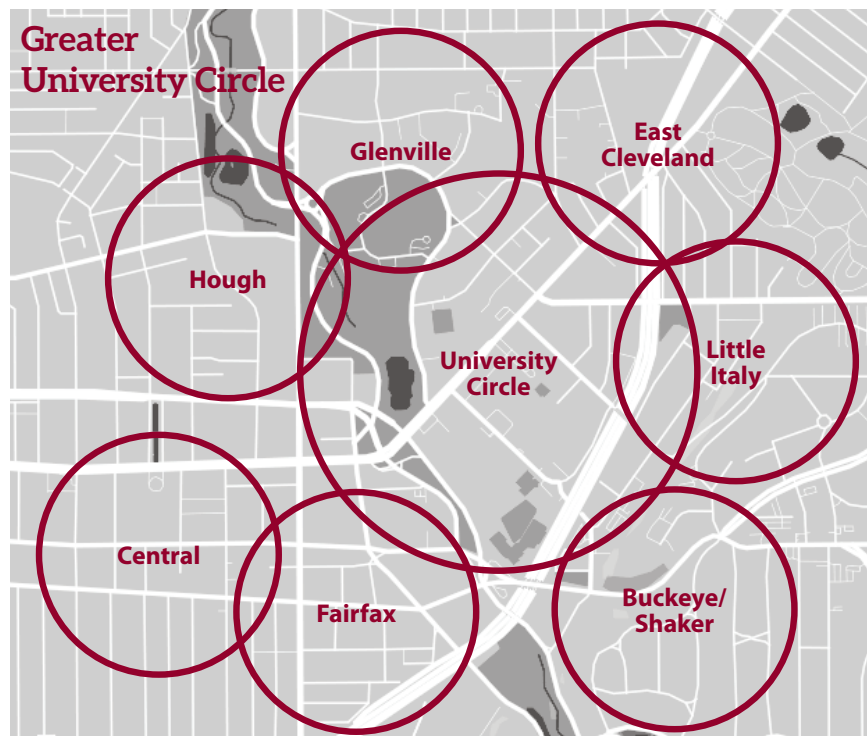
We will spend the most time on the Economic Inclusion Management Committee (EIMC) because it drives much of the day-to-day work of the Greater University Circle Initiative. Consisting of directors and managers from each of the participating organizations, this group is charged with implementing the goals, once they are determined by leadership. It began meeting in 2011, five years after the Greater University Circle Initiative formed. Its collaborative, patient work has resulted in new policies and practices within each anchor institution, as well as in new collaborative projects that are creating jobs, income, and ownership opportunities for residents. From our perspective, it is the networks and relationships resulting from all of these interconnected efforts that are the “glue” that holds the whole thing together. If there is a “secret sauce,” we feel that this might be it.

The Greater University Circle Leadership Group

The Greater University Circle Initiative (GUCI) was first conceived of by the Cleveland Foundation in 2005. The Cleveland Foundation’s new CEO, Ronn Richard, had an idea—could the leaders of University Circle institutions conceive a “new geography of collaboration,” a Greater University Circle?

He envisioned connecting the institutions to the seven surrounding neighborhoods—Hough, Glenville, Fairfax, Buckeye-Shaker, Central, Little Italy, and portions of the inner-ring suburb of East Cleveland, which include some of the most disinvested areas in Cleveland.² Their residents are among the poorest in the city and most had no connection to the educational and cultural resources, much less the economic resources, located in their own “backyard”—University Circle.

Richard’s first step was to share this vision individually with the CEOs of three key anchor institutions in University Circle—Case Western Reserve University, the Cleveland Clinic,



and University Hospitals. University Circle is the city's second largest employment hub with over 30,000 jobs, 12,000 post-secondary students, and 2.5 million visitors annually—in effect, a second downtown. Historically, its institutions had existed in some isolation from the surrounding neighborhoods. This vision of a Greater University Circle was a new and powerful idea. The City of Cleveland and additional partners quickly signed on, first pooling resources around big physical development and planning projects, but later moving on to the challenges of job creation, neighborhood stabilization, and community engagement.

The Cleveland Foundation sensed that although the major institutions had not had a robust history of working together in the past, the time was right to move on this vision. In 2004, new leadership was in place at both the Foundation and the three anchors, and \$3 billion in capital projects were being planned in University Circle by these and other large institutions. However, the continued rampant poverty and distress in the adjacent neighborhoods made clear that the status quo was not acceptable, and not only for ethical reasons. The neighborhood disinvestment affected the anchors' core business functions—their ability to recruit talent and attract students or patients—and potentially even damaging their “brand.” The attractiveness of the Cleveland Clinic, for example, is tied to the image Cleveland itself.

The CEOs agreed to work together with other key stakeholders, including the mayor, the regional transit authority, and local nonprofits. They formed the GUCI leadership group, which now meets two to three times a year to set goals and review progress. Their initial agreement was to work collaboratively on “win/win” strategies that would benefit the community and help them to meet their own goals. The work is built on trust, which has grown over time, and the leaders review the commitment of their institutions at three-year intervals. The

central question that guides their work is: “what can we do better together that we would find difficult to do apart?”

The CEOs quickly each designated a top-level person with broad authority who became a key contact for the Cleveland Foundation staff and were charged with moving the initiative forward.

The Cleveland Foundation was itself well-positioned to nurture the partnership because of another innovation by Ronn Richard, then its new CEO—the creation of senior-level program directors who were relatively unburdened with responsive grant-making, but were instead charged by the board with leading initiatives that require independence, savvy, and deep connections. India Pierce Lee, the program manager for neighborhoods, housing, and community development, and Lillian Kuri, program manager for arts and urban design, were ideally positioned to launch the effort.

The Economic Inclusion Management Committee

By 2010, the Greater University Circle Initiative had momentum. Several major initiatives were underway: the Uptown housing project, which included a high-profile arts organization, the Museum of Contemporary Art; three major transit infrastructure projects; an unprecedented workforce effort, the Evergreen Cooperatives;³ and the NewBridge education and training effort, based on the successful Manchester-Bidwell model in Pittsburgh.⁴ An employer-assisted housing program, Greater Circle Living, was created to provide incentives for the anchor employees to buy and renovate homes, or rent apartments, in the neighborhoods. Meanwhile, Cleveland had experienced its worst economic downturn since the depression of the 1930s and was the epicenter of the nation’s foreclosure crisis; the Greater University Circle neighborhoods were hit especially hard. Despite these broad economic challenges,

the Cleveland Foundation continued to invest in the Greater University Circle effort, and had also developed parallel board-directed initiatives in the arts, youth development, education, and economic development.

The Cleveland Foundation's initiatives attracted the attention of Living Cities. A funding collaborative representing the nation's largest philanthropic and financial institutions, Living Cities had supported affordable housing for two decades, housing that was now at risk due to the foreclosure crisis. In an effort to better address the pressing needs of urban communities, the funding collaborative developed the "Integration Initiative," which sought to join grant funding, loans, and intellectual capital to existing efforts that showed great promise, and "take them to the next level." Cleveland joined four other cities—Detroit, Newark, Baltimore, and the Twin Cities—in the first cohort.

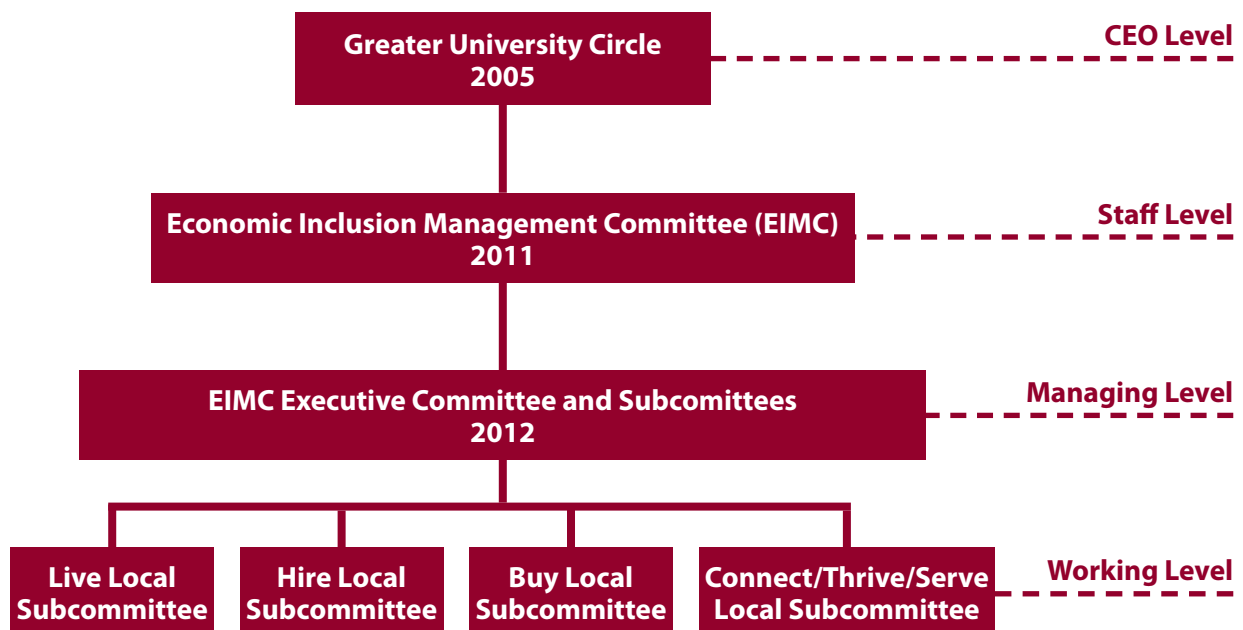
Living Cities provided funds to hire a program director and other staff in Cleveland to augment the Foundation personnel seeking to build the capacity of the partner organizations to work together. Importantly, Living Cities encouraged the Greater University Circle effort to join forces with the Health Tech Corridor, a centerpiece of the city's economic development strategy and a growing area of investment by the City of Cleveland and the anchor institutions. Living Cities also encouraged the partners to undertake a "systems change" approach, one which led the Greater University Circle effort to coalesce around four high-level, shared, economic-inclusion goals—Buy Local, Hire Local, Live Local, and Connect:

- **Buy Local**—increase opportunities for anchor institutions to purchase goods and services locally, and help small businesses increase their capacity to meet these needs;

- **Hire Local**—expand efforts by anchors to hire residents from the neighborhoods, and help improve the local workforce system;
- **Live Local**—support and improve the employer-assisted housing program, Greater University Circle, and leverage it to help create more stable neighborhoods.
- **Connect**—the key to all of these efforts, using the resources and skills of organizations such as Neighborhood Connections, a grassroots grant-maker, as well as other intermediaries such as Towards Employment and Ohio Means Jobs (workforce investment board), Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (community development), BioEnterprise, MidTown, University Circle Inc., and the Economic and Community Development Institute (small business support).

Governance Structure

“EIMC is what holds the work together and moves it forward”



In 2011, the Greater University Circle Initiative realized it needed to bring together the directors and managers of the departments within the participating organizations who are charged with implementing the goals set by the leadership team. It launched the Economic Inclusion Management Committee (EIMC) to set operational objectives and develop collaborative programs to implement them. This is the team of doers.

This committee's members have developed new ways of working together and invested considerable time, dollars, and ideas to develop programs to meet their shared goals. Their work is very much place-based, aimed at materially improving the lives of the people who live in the seven neighborhoods surrounding University Circle.

Now entering its fifth year, the EIMC can begin to point to significant system changes in how the participating institutions do business individually and collaboratively, which in turn is yielding tangible improvements for area residents seen in jobs, business opportunities, physical development, and social cohesion.

The work has evolved into a system of interconnected committees and subcommittees—the leadership GUCI table, the EIMC and its subcommittees, and ad hoc working groups, developed in re-

By the Numbers: Key Metrics

Total employees of Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, and Case Western Reserve University who work in University Circle: **33,546**

Of these workers, **7%** live in Greater University Circle Neighborhoods, and **17%** overall live in the City of Cleveland.

New residents living in area through the Greater Circle Living program: **500**

Total dollar amount of anchor procurement spending (2014) in the City of Cleveland: **\$392.8 million**

City investments in Health Tech Corridor: **\$71 million**

New and renovated office and lab space: **500,000 sq ft**

New jobs created: **1,800**

Total investment leveraged from all sources: **\$4 billion**

Average annual income of households living in GUC neighborhoods (excluding University Circle): **\$18,500**

Number of residents in NeighborUp! program: **1800**

Number of residents connected to jobs and career training—Step Up to UH (92), Welcome to Fairfax (50), NewBridge (109), NextStep (17), HomeWork (70) and Evergreen Cooperatives (91): **429 and growing!**

sponse to both needs and opportunities. The anchors themselves serve as chairs, co-chairs, and facilitators of the work, backed by the Cleveland Foundation and Cleveland State University staff. They in turn engage a broad cross-section of their own staff, embedding the work deeply within the institutional structure of each anchor. Senior leadership from the city of Cleveland and the Health Tech Corridor are also deeply involved. The EIMC engages in asset-based “grass-roots to grass-tops” work that includes community wealth-building and engagement. Committee work consists of regularly occurring, facilitated conversations to develop strategy and review goals. They develop metrics to measure progress, and the work is increasingly data-driven. They also collect stories, helping to create a powerful, shared narrative.

Why “Greater University Circle?”

University Circle is a remarkable asset. About three miles east of downtown Cleveland, the neighborhood developed around Wade Oval, the former estate of one of the founders of West-

The Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, and Case Western Reserve University together employ more than 60,000 people, and spend almost \$3 billion in goods and services annually.

ern Union.⁵ This seven-acre, park-like setting is home to over 40 nonprofit arts, cultural, healthcare, and educational institutions.⁶ World-class arts institutions that enhance the reputation of the area include the Cleveland Orchestra, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Cleveland Institute of Art, and the Cleveland Institute of Music.

University Circle is home to the Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals, the number one and two employers in the region, respectively, and Case Western Reserve University, a major educational and research institution.

The Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, and Case Western Reserve University together employ more than 60,000

people, and spend almost \$3 billion in goods and services annually. They drive the knowledge economy that is reshaping Cleveland, benefitting from some of the \$500 million in venture capital invested in the biotech and healthcare industry in the Midwest in the first half of 2015 alone.⁷ Every day, 40,000 people drive into the area to work, to visit, and to shop.

But for Greater University Circle neighborhoods' 60,000 residents, unemployment remains stubbornly high—24% of working age adults are actively seeking employment. It is closer to 40% when the “discouraged workers”—those no longer seeking employment—are included. These neighborhoods have the highest percentage of “returning citizens” (the formerly incarcerated), and household median incomes are around \$18,500 per year. And, according to recent studies by *24/7 Wall Street*⁸ and the Martin Prosperity Institute,⁹ Cleveland is still the most segregated city, both economically and racially, in America. This is a legacy of unresolved factors extending back in our history for a half century or more, perhaps beginning with elites' backlash against the “great migration” of Southern blacks in to the area to escape the harshness of Jim Crow. The elites effectively limited blacks to “less desirable” areas, particularly older, east side neighborhoods such as Hough and Glenville that were home to Cleveland's Jewish population—some of the same neighborhoods which now make up Greater University Circle.¹⁰

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When these same neighborhoods erupted into riots in the late 1960s, the reaction of the institutions was largely to withdraw—a “go it alone” attitude. They focused on their core mission of healing the sick and educating the elite, not on neighborhoods—a fact reflected in the “brutalist” and “riot-proof” architecture of the buildings completed during the '60s, '70s and beyond. These concrete, bunker-style build-

ings with blank walls on the first story, parking lots located on the perimeter, and other physical elements of “defensible space” served to separate “us” from “them.” And of course, this was reflected in national policies emblematic of the time—the “redlining” that created ghettos, the urban renewal (ironically known as “negro removal”) that cleared swaths of black neighborhoods, replacing them with “projects”—housing that deliberately concentrated poverty. The black community has not forgotten this legacy.

The Cleveland Foundation president, Ronn Richard, tells the following story about how he became driven to change that “us vs. them” dynamic. His wife, artist Bess Rodriguez Richard, began volunteering in the prestigious Cleveland School of the Arts soon after the family moved to Cleveland in 2003. The school draws top students from the surrounding neighborhoods and is located in the entryway to University Circle, directly across from the Cleveland Museum of Art. The museum, which is always free to attend, is one of the top museums in the country and also enjoys an endowment of \$750 million.

Mentioning an exhibit at the museum that was connected to that day’s lesson, she asked her students to raise their hands if they had seen it. When none did, she asked why. At first, the students were evasive, but finally one of them said, “Miss Bess, that’s not for us.” Deeply upset, she told this story to her husband that evening. She asked, how do we restore trust between the large, wealthy University Circle institutions and the poor, largely black, residents of the adjacent neighborhoods? The next day, he reached out to the heads of the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, and Case Western Reserve University.

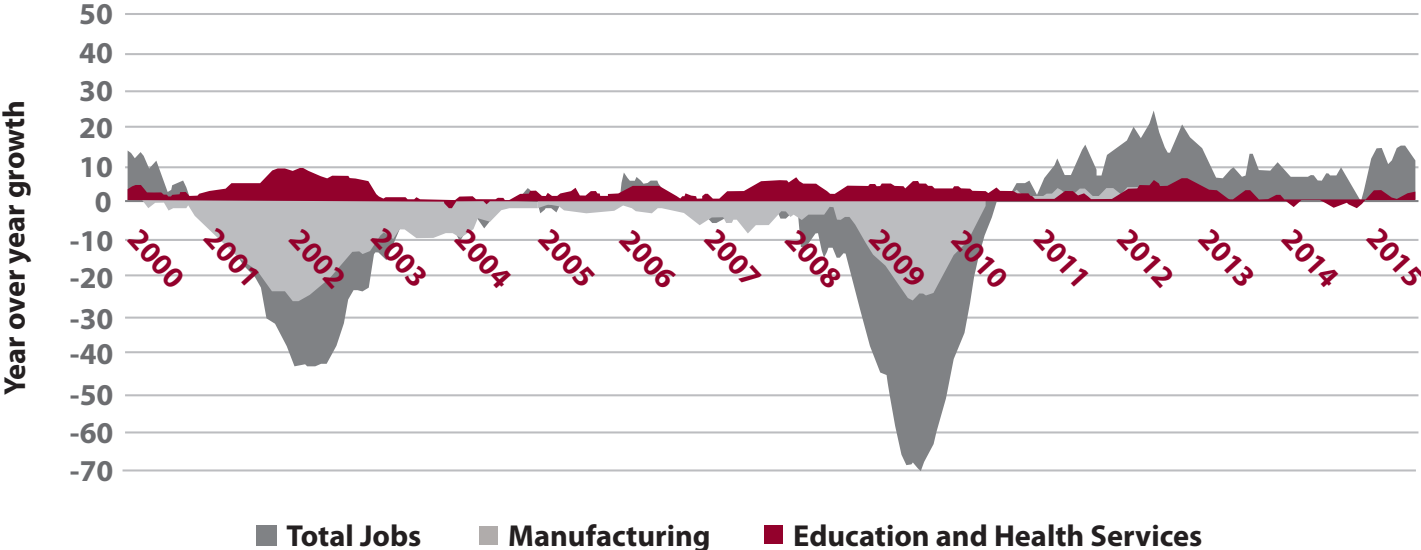
And this was the beginning of the conversations that led to Greater University Circle.¹¹

Context: Cleveland

Cleveland, Ohio, currently has a population of just fewer than 400,000 in a larger five-county metro area of over 2 million. Cleveland’s prime location on Lake Erie and natural resources helped drive wealth and population growth through the 1950s before the city’s fortunes declined. At one time the sixth-largest American city (with a peak population of 1 million), Cleveland’s decline has led to its reputation as a rustbelt, postindustrial, legacy city. This reputation was not helped by the riots of the 1960s, or the legendary fire on the Cuyahoga River, which helped to create the city’s unfortunate label as “the mistake on the lake.” This is a legacy with which every political, civic, and corporate leader has had to contend. But there’s hope.

The same locational advantages that drove Cleveland’s early growth and industrial might—a centrally located Midwest port and rail hub on one of the Great Lakes, the source of 20% of the world’s fresh water supply—potentially make it attractive today. Further, its wealthy, community-minded industrialists

Year-Over-Year Job Change for Cleveland MSA January 2000 to August 2015, (in months) Source: BLS



left behind a legacy of richly endowed cultural, educational, and philanthropic institutions. Cleveland is positioned for future growth.

By 2015, Cleveland's economy was driven by the healthcare industry and had a well-developed research, biomedical, and IT infrastructure. It ranked sixth nationally in healthcare employment.

While manufacturing had contracted and restructured, and is no longer a major employer at its former scale, it remains relatively strong. The city's downtown population has doubled in recent years and population loss has slowed overall; it may be close to reversing in certain neighborhoods. Cleveland enjoys one of the lowest costs of living in America, with big-city assets at small-town prices. Perhaps this is one reason why Cleveland has become a magnet for well-educated millennials; it also ranks tenth in the nation in the concentration of workers with an advanced or professional degree.¹²

Challenges remain—Cleveland is still among the most segregated cities in the country, with great disparities in wealth, health, and education that largely break along racial lines. The

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Cleveland housing market was deeply hurt by the foreclosure crisis and thousands of vacant homes remain, depressing the market and limiting the appeal of some areas.¹³

But the past decade has seen unprecedented cooperation on key issues—the public education system (with support from the Cleveland Foundation) has implemented the Cleveland Transformation Plan;¹⁴ a county-wide land bank is helping to reduce and manage the inventory of vacant property; and community development corporations are working to renovate homes, fill retail

spaces, and create new green space, parks, and bikeways. And importantly, the Cleveland Foundation has created new models of cooperation where it's most needed, and focused investment in the Greater University Circle area, downtown, and along the Health Tech Corridor that connects them both.

Accomplishments

Physical Development and Initial “Cross-Cutting” Collaborations

When the Cleveland Foundation convened the key public, private, and nonprofit partners in Greater University Circle, it launched the effort with a relatively simple approach—develop a collaborative master plan for the physical development of the area, pool resources, and engage the residents. Answering the question, “What can we accomplish together that we would find difficult to do apart?” the anchor institutions and the Cleveland Foundation first focused on assembling funding for important transportation improvement projects to improve accessibility, including relocating a Regional Transit Authority Rapid Transit station and re-designing a hard-to-navigate traffic circle that serves as a gateway to the area. Combined, transportation projects represent \$44 million in infrastructure improvements to the area thus far.

Another key part of the physical development is dubbed “Uptown” because it created a new Main Street for the University Circle neighborhood. With a \$1 million grant and a \$4 million loan, the Cleveland Foundation (with Case Western Reserve University and University Circle, Inc.) launched the Uptown District’s first phase in 2010, spurring a further \$145 million investment in the area. Once anchored by the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Cleveland, Uptown quickly moved into phase two, creating a vibrant, high-density urban space, with apartments, dorms, shops, restaurant, and a much-needed grocery store.¹⁵

The apartments and townhomes at Uptown highlight another element of the Greater University Circle Initiative: the housing incentives aimed at encouraging area neighborhood revitalization. Greater Circle Living, an employer-assisted housing program, offers financial assistance to anchor and other nonprofit employees who buy, rent, or rehabilitate property in Greater University Circle.¹⁶ To date, almost 300 people have taken advantage of the program, and more than 80% come from outside the area. Together with their families, this represents almost 500 new residents—diverse in race and income—contributing to healthy, vibrant neighborhoods.

Early on, the partners realized that the limited employment prospects in the neighborhoods were a critical issue. Ted Howard of the Democracy Collaborative had long admired the Mondragon Cooperatives¹⁷ in Spain, and was called in to consult on the possibility of creating a cooperative model

Currently, more than 100 residents are now employed with the three Evergreen Coops, and further growth is anticipated.

with the Cleveland Foundation. After conducting more than two hundred community interviews, the team conceived of capturing a portion of the anchor institutions' \$3 billion a year in procurement spending into a "buy local" movement through the creation

of local, cooperatively owned business. The key question was one of fit—what type of businesses would employ residents of the surrounding neighborhoods, while also providing needed services to the area institutions? This led to the creation of the Evergreen Cooperatives, a new model in worker-ownership, green job creation, and anchor-based community wealth building.¹⁸ In 2009, the alliance launched the first two cooperative businesses, Evergreen Commercial Laundry and Evergreen Energy Solutions, followed by the nation's largest urban hydroponic greenhouse, Green City Growers, in 2012. Currently, more than 100 residents are now employed with the three Evergreen Coops, and further growth is anticipated.

Also in 2009, the Cleveland Foundation worked to replicate the successful Manchester Bidwell model that Bill Strickland launched in Pittsburgh, bringing high quality, after-school arts and tech activities to at-risk youth and focused job training for adults—all free to the participants.¹⁹ The NewBridge Cleveland Center for Arts and Technology²⁰ features a welcoming, centrally located space on the Health Tech Corridor where students are surrounded by art, flowers, music, and the latest technology. Secondary students enjoy music production, graphic design, photography, and ceramics, while adults learn phlebotomy or pharmacy tech skills in curricula developed by their prospective employers, the Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals.

Over time, as it became evident that there were other barriers for residents, the Cleveland Foundation and partners have worked to overcome them. For instance, it was quickly apparent that many Evergreen Cooperative employees had a hard time finding decent, affordable housing due to poor credit histories or previous contact with the criminal justice system. To address this, the Greater University Circle Initiative brought in the Cleveland Housing Network (CHN)²¹ to help workers deduct mortgage payments from their paychecks and purchase attractive, renovated homes over five years, paying less than they would with prevailing rental rates. They buy existing homes that CHN controls for lease-purchase arrangements that were back on the market—quality, afford-

The number one issue: jobs.

Resident Saadia Taylor, from Cleveland's Fairfax neighborhood, graduated from high school in 2009. Since that time, she'd held a lot of jobs, none of which paid well or had opportunities for advancement.

She and her partner are raising a two-year old and her income is essential. Through the Neighborhood Connections network, she learned of an opportunity, "Step Up to University Hospitals," which prepares Greater University Circle residents for entry-level jobs in healthcare. Once accepted, she began training with program partner Towards Employment, to "help me prepare for the job, develop a strong work ethic, and conduct myself in a professional manner."

After a successful year in housekeeping, she was offered a job as an operating room assistant, which comes with increased pay and responsibility, as well as additional opportunities for advancement. She plans to take advantage of the additional training and certification offered by her employer, and feels that "they're always there to support me." Her personal philosophy is: "keep doing what you're supposed to do, maintain a positive outlook, and most importantly, never give up."

able housing costing about \$25,000. Twenty Evergreen families have bought homes through this pilot program.

When it was apparent that many NewBridge graduates lacked reliable transportation to travel to potential employers in the suburbs, a local owner of car dealerships, Bernie Moreno, volunteered to cover the cost of the grads' new cars for one year; meanwhile, the grads received financial education, opened savings accounts where they stashed money away so they could eventually purchase the cars, and covered insurance and maintenance. This program was successful, but has not continued beyond the pilot year for now.

A core objective of the Greater University Circle Initiative is to reweave community networks as a way to improve the quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods, and give residents a

A core objective of the Greater University Circle Initiative is to reweave community networks and give residents a greater voice and connection to the resources of the anchor institutions.

greater voice and connection to the resources of the anchor institutions. This required a major community engagement effort. Neighborhood Connections, which was launched as a small grants program by the Cleveland Foundation in 2003, led this process.²² As Neighborhood Connections' executive director Tom O'Brien explains, "Our role in this is to raise resident voices and say, "This is what

we want. This is what we need in the community. This is how we can help ourselves. And this is what we can use from the institutions.' So, whether it's better access to healthcare, jobs, or job training, help fixing up their homes, whatever it is, what do they desire and how can they get in on the conversation?"

Through community networks, residents are connected with their neighbors, across neighborhoods, and with anchor partners. NeighborhoodConnections figures out multiple, easy ways people can access the network. These include: NetworkNights,

that builds the “NeighborUp” network; NeighborUp University, where residents share skills; the MarketPlace, and exchange of goods and services in mutual support; and the connections to jobs through programs like Step Up. These are largely resident-led initiatives that encourage people to recognize their strengths and develop mutual support, building resiliency. Monthly events attract hundreds of participants, and more than 1800 have become official members. The network is active in everything from job and housing opportunities, to reinventing public space in the Circle North area adjacent to Uptown, to addressing health and safety concerns, to creating healthy dialogue on race and inequality. Neighborhood Connections staff play an active role with the Economic Inclusion Management Committee and subcommittees. They help connect the “grass-roots” to the “grasstops” in authentic dialogue—for example, the development of the Step Up program, which included Neighborhood Connections and resident voices, human resources staff, department managers, executives, and philanthropy. Their work has helped to “Connect” the various partners who work together, making the EIMC an effective platform for cooperation.

While the Greater University Circle effort is multifaceted, it cannot be all-inclusive. For instance, while education is a major concern and was an early focus of the initiative, political and other challenges shifted it into a separate city-wide effort led by the Cleveland Foundation and others, resulting in the Cleveland Transformation Plan. Ultimately, this work engaged additional funders, the mayor and the state legislature, the teachers union, charter school leadership, parents, and many others. Early results are promising; Cleveland residents passed a new school tax to support the schools, there is an emerging portfolio of high quality schools, and key student metrics have begun to turn around. While no one is proclaiming victory yet, there are now high-performing school options available to the residents of Greater University Circle neighborhoods.

EIMC Subcommittees

Five years in, the Economic Inclusion Management Committee organized its work into three distinct “buckets”—Hire Local, Live Local, and Buy Local. The model, promoted by the Living Cities Integration Initiative, has been used in the Midtown Detroit area, and the University of Pennsylvania adapted it for its West Philly project. U3, a consulting firm that grew out of this approach, shared this model with our team. Below are some of the results of this strategy in these key areas. We also include a fourth bucket, “Connect,” reflecting the importance of our work with Neighborhood Connections in community engagement, as well as the other connecting organizations that help implement the work.

Hire Local

Goal—increase the number of residents from the neighborhoods hired by the anchors, and help improve the local workforce system.

The EIMC has not only opened up more opportunities for the hospitals to work together, but it has opened up opportunities for the anchors to deepen their partnership with existing groups working directly with residents, helping them to achieve their own goals. First, in 2012, the Cleveland Foundation gave Towards Employment, a workforce intermediary founded in 1976, a small planning grant to develop an anchor-based job strategy. Towards Employment provided training for University Hospitals employees through an existing program called Bridge to the Future. Bridge moves entry-level workers to positions of greater responsibility and pay; this benefits both the employees and the employer by nurturing a loyal and engaged workforce and reducing turnover, resulting in lower costs.

University Hospitals then turned to Neighborhood Connections to help identify neighborhood residents who could fill these newly vacated entry level jobs—and accomplish a key

goal of the Hire Local subcommittee. Neighborhood Connections, with its close ties to people in the community, proved to be a very efficient means of connecting the anchor partners with the people who live in the neighborhoods. Begun as a pilot program funded by Living Cities and the Cleveland Foundation, it was such a success, it has continued, and University Hospitals went on to develop a strategic plan for its workforce development efforts and is now expanding the program to serve its entire operation. The Cleveland Clinic launched its own Welcome to Fairfax workforce program with a slightly different model. Between these two approaches, almost 150 residents have been placed in jobs as of 2015, with more to come. Each partner has now also launched their version of an employee resource group for these employees, to more deeply work together as both successful employees and neighborhood residents.

The Economic Inclusion Management Committee also worked with the public workforce investment board, Ohio Means Jobs Cleveland and Cuyahoga County. Funds from Living Cities and the Cleveland Foundation helped support the creation



A graduating class of University Hospitals' successful "Step UP to UH" program

of a strategic plan, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland was tapped to provide research and data. Most recently, Ohio Means Jobs was able to secure a \$2.1 million federal grant, \$600,000 of which will be provided to support a major new training program involving the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals and another system, Metro Health. They are now collaborating with NewBridge to co-develop a Patient Care Technician training program, providing an additional pathway to health careers for people from the neighborhoods.

The City of Cleveland has further supported workforce development among the anchors and other institutions using a new Community Benefits Agreement that sets out voluntary benchmarks for hiring local residents and using minority and female owned business. EIMC branched out beyond the anchors to support with the paint company Sherwin Williams in its launch of the HomeWork program, which will train residents of public housing for jobs in painting and related trades. An early pilot now connects to the Jobs Plus program of the Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority in the Central neighborhood, and partner Towards Employment will provide additional support to the workers. All of these efforts are interconnected.

The tracking of data is an important feature of our work, but it took us a number of years to build the trust necessary to share data and create common metrics. In 2013, the anchor institutions began to work together with Cleveland State University to track how well its workforce interventions are doing. CSU now tracks and updates employment data for the anchors quarterly. These reports include information on where workers live and their job category.

Buy Local

Goal—increase opportunities for anchors to purchase goods and services locally, and helping small businesses to grow and increase their capacity to meet these needs.

Buy Local's strategy is complex, engaging with procurement practices, strengthening small business, and improving their access to capital. The Evergreen Cooperatives creates new opportunities for residents while giving anchors the chance to buy services locally. The NextStep program trains entrepreneurs. And the Economic and Community Development Institute (ECDI) provides loans and training for small businesses. But the most important element is the ability to work with the anchor institutions.

Aram Nerpouni is executive director of BioEnterprise,²³ a business accelerator founded by the three anchors that commercializes bioscience technologies and has been a critical partner in the Buy Local effort. He values the EIMC because of the high level of trust and engagement among its diverse and collaborative network of allies, and its focus on decision-making. The EIMC has helped build greater awareness of the need to connect residents with the growing biomedical economy in Cleveland, including linking area schools to entry-level jobs in the industry. BioEnterprise itself is a trusted intermediary for the anchors, playing a central role in helping to incubate bioscience ideas in the Health Tech Corridor and take them to market. It has also sought to attract bioscience, healthtech, and IT firms to the area. After fruitless efforts to develop a Buy Local database, the anchors and BioEnterprise settled on a relatively straightforward idea—issue joint “request for proposals” from local companies for goods and services they currently source from outside the region. So far, two projects are in the pipeline: a joint mail hub and central sterilization project. While results are still a way off, we now have a platform that allows for the anchors' procurement personnel to work cooperatively.

Through the EIMC, the health care anchors shared internal conversations about their need to purchase more healthy local food for their employees and patients. They formed an ad hoc

working committee to help them leverage their collective purchasing power so that local distributors would provide more locally grown and processed products to meet their needs. The group members include the anchors' sustainability directors, their food service vendors, the Ohio State University Extension office, and the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition. Without the trust built through the EIMC, the anchors would not have been in the position to have these conversations.

The Economic Inclusion Management Committee also helped the City of Cleveland to achieve its goals on the Health Tech Corridor.²⁴ Some pilot funding was provided to help build city capacity in developing, marketing, and leasing the new tech and biomedical incubators that have opened in the area. Now the City has created two new positions, Health Tech Corridor director and a real estate specialist, who together are working to fully develop and lease the corridor.

Live Local

Goal—support and improve the employer-assisted housing program, Greater University Circle, and leverage it to help create more stable neighborhoods. The program includes support for home purchase and apartment rental to attract new residents, and for home renovations for current residents.

The Greater Circle Living²⁵ employee-assisted housing program was not widely used in the first years after its launch. The anchors were questioning their continued commitment to the program, which at that time included joint funding of \$4 million. The Economic Inclusion Management Committee helped redesign and relaunch the program, helping to create more uniform policies and procedures. Greater Circle Living management and marketing representatives were invited to join the committee, where they could meet face-to-face with anchor representatives, Neighborhood Connections, and Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, which is marketing

neighborhoods through its LiveCleveland program. Through these efforts, the program has flourished, with over 200% improvement in utilization since the 2012 relaunch. In 2015, the anchors recommitted to the now-successful program for another three years, with the Cleveland Foundation making a \$1 million grant for administrative and marketing costs.

The Cleveland Clinic, Case Western Reserve, and University Hospital are also working with Neighborhood Connections to help launch a pilot program on community health. Still in the planning stages, the effort will focus on lead safety and infant mortality, two major, complex issues that will require well-coordinated strategies.

Connect

Our work under the rubric of “Connect” is unique. It is not a stand-alone subcommittee, but rather a key component integrated into our Hire/Buy/Live Local efforts.

Using the resources and skills of organizations such as Neighborhood Connections as well as other intermediaries in workforce, procurement, and neighborhood stabilization, we seek to eliminate silos and create connections. The role of Cleveland State University, as a data and evaluation partner, is to provide shared stories and metrics that help the partners understand and evaluate the impact of the work.



The Role of Living Cities

In 2011, based on the success of the Greater University Circle partnerships, the Cleveland Foundation was invited to participate in Living Cities' newly launched Integration Initiative.²⁶ Along with efforts in Detroit, Newark, Baltimore, and the Twin Cities, Cleveland became a site for additional grant funds and capital. Importantly, it also joined a cohort that shared information networks and learning opportunities.

Ultimately Cleveland elected not to reapply for the program after the initial three years, mainly because the program required the use of capital from an associated loan fund whose rates and terms were not appropriate for the Cleveland market. However, participation in the Integration Initiative spurred important achievements:

- Living Cities provided three years of flexible grant funds of about \$1 million per year that supported two dedicated staff, a director and program assistant, to work daily on building the Greater University Circle effort.
- These grant funds were also used to “prime the pump” through planning and pilot grants to numerous program partners, primarily in workforce, procurement, small business development, and community engagement. The funding created pilots, pilots led to changes in programs and policy, and (often) to enduring relationships and new ways of doing things—a “new normal.”
- Living Cities hired a national evaluator for the whole initiative and each city had a local evaluation team. These teams were part of

a learning community that shared ideas and practices. The Cleveland Foundation employed Cleveland State University as the local program evaluator and data partner, and continued this relationship after the Living Cities funding ended.

- From work in other cities, notably Detroit, Cleveland adopted the “Live, Buy, and Hire” Local model, adding “Connect” to reflect the deep engagement in community and network-building; there was an enormous amount of cross-learning in these areas. Living Cities also provided the initial impetus to connect the work of the Health Tech Corridor to the Greater University Circle Initiative.

Living Cities also provided intellectual capital: the collective impact model, cross-sector collaboration, and anchor strategies. This encouraged Cleveland to “expand the table” beyond the Greater University Circle leadership group. Although already deeply engaged in conversations and planning with a broad cross-section of anchor institution and partner staff, this work was codified with the creation of the Economic Inclusion Management Committee in 2011. The first meetings were relatively small and modest in ambition, but as the committee grew in scope and achievement, the relationships built have proved durable. This has helped to make the effort more resilient in the face of staff changes and transitions in leadership.*

* In 2012, the Cleveland Clinic had a complete turnover of key staff connected to the EIMC—all within one month. We quickly engaged the new staff in a series of meetings to orient them to the work, and gave them leadership roles. We’ve also weathered layoffs, the closing of a hospital in one of our neighborhoods and competitive challenges. To date, we’ve managed to hold the alliance together.

Lessons Learned

From our point of view, three critical elements account for the success of our anchor-based strategy:

- Initiatives involving more than one anchor, must have a convener—a trusted, central player with some clout (money, influence, power) to bring and keep people together. The Cleveland Foundation has been very successful in this role. Philanthropy, with its combination of intellectual, financial, and social capital, is a natural choice. In some cities, a municipality might play this role—however, inevitable changes as one administration yields to another may create some risk.
- There must be assets to build on—hospitals, universities, nonprofit, or corporate players who are willing partners. In our view, residents also must be engaged in an asset-based, network-building effort. In Cleveland, our unusual multi-stakeholder model includes three key anchors. As the work has grown, additional partners have joined the work, and we've broadened our concept of “anchor institution” to include both the City of Cleveland as well as the Cleveland Foundation itself.
- There must be a source of funding to pay for staffing and programming. It can be possible to use loaned staff, interns, fellowships, and other low-cost options, but this will still require a commitment of time and resources. Unless there is funding on the table for key pilot programs and initiatives, it is unlikely you will see significant change.

Beyond these three elements, it is important to understand the complex dynamics of an anchor collaborative—the individual personalities, institutional cultures, and the economic and regulatory environment that will impact the work.

As the initiative has grown, we've built in additional layers of engagement. We started with the CEOs and senior staff, added VPs, directors, and managers of operations, governmental relations, human resources, and sustainability, then staff who are directly involved in information systems, procurement, menu planning, marketing, all the way to entry-level workers employed from the neighborhoods themselves. For each of these, there are various avenues to engagement, with differing interests, agendas, and motivations. Each sector engaged—philanthropy, corporate, and governmental—added its own complexities to negotiate. Across areas, we must always be cognizant of the role of race. Overcoming a legacy of racial bias and mistrust is one of the key goals of the work of Neighborhood Connections.

The initiative's staff must learn to “manage from the middle.” The actual authority to execute strategy lies within the institution in the hands of few people. At the anchor level, the

Challenges Going Forward

We must better measure our impact on neighborhoods and our neighbors.

We can easily see changes in such things as educational attainment and property values but these are “lagging indicators,” less likely to be affected in the short term until our work reaches scale. It will take time for our programs to reach a “tipping point” and show meaningful population-level changes visible among Greater University Circle's 60,000 residents.

We must stay focused on initiatives that stand to benefit from collaboration.

It is important to distinguish between collaborative projects achieved through the participation on the EIMC, and those that have been accomplished independently. The anchor partners have found it is easiest to collaborate in areas that are not too close to their core business, i.e., not directly related to the competitive delivery of health care.

Maintain momentum in light of changes.

With a long-term vision, it is important to sustain interest, participation, and commitment in the face of changing market and business conditions. For instance, the health care industry is experiencing intensifying pressure to cut costs while maintaining quality following the passage of the Affordable Care Act. The impact of this will take time to assess. The Initiative has also weathered changes in leadership. In 2014, high-level leaders at two of the anchor institutions retired. By quickly engaging the new leadership and orienting them to the initiative, we were able to maintain their engagement. Despite these and other changes, the commitment has not only endured, but strengthened.

work is “no one’s day job.” It will often be in areas that are related but not key to the core mission of a healthcare or educational institution. Who and how to hire? Where to buy goods and services? Where to invest? How to engage community? This all involves changes in individual behavior, culture, and policy. Experimentation, persistence, and learning from failure are required.

One of the driving philosophies of the effort is “give the work back”—an adoptive leadership model developed by Cambridge and Associates and advocated by Living Cities. In other words, find who most needs to do the work, who most benefits, and help them to own it. Understanding the motivations of the partners is important.

It seems obvious, but “What Gets Measured Gets Done”—using data in planning and evaluation is a best practice. However, as we mentioned, it took us several years before enough trust was built to share data, and developing the right mechanisms to collect and manage that data took additional time. Cleveland State University was an essential partner, but the anchors themselves have contributed hours of staff time, working to create common metrics and definitions.

What Keeps the Anchors at the Table?

The Greater University Circle leadership team continues to meet ten years after the first convening. They have now updated the goals and metrics they wish to reach, and recommitted to the process, in three-year increments. What keeps them at the table?

Since the EIMC was created in 2011, the anchors have only deepened their participation and commitment to collaborate. They recognize that change takes time, but their leaders provided the impetus through the ten years of the Greater University Circle initiative. As Andrea Jacobs, executive director

of operations at the Cleveland Clinic put it: “Seeing the collective power of the anchors is inspiring.... It is important that the Clinic be part of it.” For UH, prioritizing neighborhood investment in the Greater University Circle and the Health Tech Corridor represents a cultural shift, according to Heidi Gartland, vice president of government relations at University Hospitals. The staff now think of the community in tandem with their other goals. This is a direct result of participation in Greater University Circle and the Economic Inclusion Management Committee. The anchor partners further value these collaborative venues for giving them “space” to innovate together. The EIMC has driven a lot of the thought processes that are generating new ideas for programming at the anchor partners. It is one of the few places where traditional competitors can collaborate, share best practices, and develop synergy. Participants have come to trust that there is an honest exchange of information around the table.

Evidence of Change

Changing policies and practices within large organizations like the Clinic or University Hospital takes time. They now see how they can have a more positive impact on surrounding neighborhoods. But their core business is health care and it is important to make the business case for greater involvement in the community, whether it is local hiring, community healthcare, or sustainability. It is also important to be able to quantify that impact. For example, the Cleveland Clinic sees the EIMC’s local purchasing and hiring goals as an important part of its resiliency strategy, a way of ensuring it can sustain operations in case of a disaster. Everything it does comes back to patient value, which is the Clinic’s bottom line. Further, all anchors reveal that measuring results and sharing them publicly, as is done with the EIMC annual assessments, demonstrates progress and encourages them to do more. Still, there have been profound changes at the anchors. The Cleveland Clinic formed an internal “Greater University Circle” team

that meets regularly. And University Hospitals, although it initially wrestled with internal skepticism over the value of its workforce efforts, now has a strategic plan for workforce development. These internal changes demonstrate that they have begun to take new ownership of the work that originated in the EIMC.

The anchors themselves have noted that participating in the EIMC has not only changed the way they work with the Greater University Circle neighborhoods, it has also changed how they align with other neighborhoods surrounding their facilities beyond their main campuses. The anchor partners realize that anything they do has a large impact—and that impact should be positive for the communities surrounding their facilities. ●

Appendix I

Profiles of Anchor Institutions and Partner Organizations

Here are the partners—local employment and economic anchors in the area whose interest it is to work with the community to find solutions to poverty and blight. Over time, our idea of an anchor has evolved—we now think of the City of Cleveland as an anchor, beginning with the current administration, led by Mayor Frank Jackson and his director of economic development, Tracey Nichols. Strategically, this includes the Health Tech Corridor, which is a driver of jobs and entrepreneurial energy. Harnessing the tech industry to benefit the city as a whole and the neighborhoods in particular is a challenge, and an opportunity. We also have come to think of the Cleveland Foundation itself as an anchor partner, which is the trusted convener as well as often being the “first-in” funder. We also find it essential to engage a third-party evaluator, and Cleveland State University has played a critical role in tracking data and outcomes, interviewing the partners and assess-

ing impact. But the critical anchors are the “eds and meds” institutions themselves—without their financial strength and willingness to engage, the initiative itself would not exist.

The Cleveland Foundation

<https://www.clevelandfoundation.org/>

Committed to large scale community change, the Cleveland Foundation plays the role of convener, catalyst, agent of change, and “honest broker.” As the institution has evolved to take on a more activist role, it has engendered a profound shift in the way in which its work is done, and how success is measured.

The first in the world, and one of the largest community foundations in the country, the Cleveland Foundation was formed in 1914 “to enhance the lives of all residents of Greater Cleveland, now and for generations to come, by building community endowment, addressing needs through grant-making, and providing leadership on key community issues.” The foundation, with assets of more than \$2 billion, distributes about \$90 million each year. Under Ronn Richard’s leadership, the Foundation expanded its focus beyond the traditional role of responsive grantmaker to include a more proactive approach. The Foundation identified five vital areas in which to focus this board-directed, staff-led work—public education reform, youth development, neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and arts advancement. In 2005, the foundation seized the opportunity to launch a project which integrates within a single location every one of these vital issues—the Greater University Circle Initiative. Greater University Circle has become a durable part of this portfolio, with the leadership of two dynamic program directors, India Pierce Lee and Lillian Kuri.

The Cleveland Clinic

<http://my.clevelandclinic.org/>

Today the Cleveland Clinic is one of the world’s leading medical, teaching, and research institutions, renowned for heart

care and numerous other specialties. With over 40,000 employees, it is the largest employer in northeast Ohio, the second largest in the state of Ohio, bested only by Walmart. Dr. Delos M. Cosgrove, a surgeon and veteran, became the head of the organization in 2004. He is known for his innovations, and for his interest in how venture capital can build the bio-science sector in Cleveland.

University Hospitals

<http://www.uhhospitals.org/>

Two years after Thomas Zenty III became president and CEO in 2003, University Hospitals launched a major \$1.2 billion capital program, Vision 2010. In partnership with the City of Cleveland and the Cleveland Foundation, this path-breaking model for economic development resulted in nearly \$800 million in annual purchases of goods and services going to local businesses, 5,200 construction jobs, a new project labor agreement with unions, 1,200 permanent jobs, and alignment with female and minority-owned businesses.

Case Western Reserve University

<http://www.case.edu/>

Barbara Snyder became the president of the university in 2007, the first woman to do so. Under her leadership, undergraduate enrollment increased significantly and fundraising reached record levels, while an ambitious capital program has created a newly prominent campus presence. Students and faculty are drawn from 91 countries, emphasizing the increasingly global nature of the university.

The City of Cleveland—Health Tech Corridor

<http://www.healthtechcorridor.com/>

The mayor of the city of Cleveland and his director of economic development have been critical allies as well as providing strategic and financial support for revitalizing the Greater University area. The city's key focus has been developing the

Health Tech Corridor, which crystallized with the opening of the Cleveland Regional Transit Authority's award-winning bus rapid transit HealthLine in 2008. This \$200 million investment has played an enormous role in reinvigorating a once-struggling corridor, and is cobranded by both the Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals. Euclid Avenue, the historic "Millionaire's Row" that joins University Circle and downtown, was once known for exclusive wealth and privilege, but became a mix of residential and industry. At its lowest point, the 6.8 mile corridor was known mostly for vacancy and blight. Now its 16,000 acres are a showcase of innovation, with over 130 high-tech and health-tech companies connected via the world's fastest 100 gigabit internet system. The City of Cleveland's focused investment in this area has resulted in 800 new jobs, and 500,000 square feet of new and renovated office and lab space since 2008. The City of Cleveland's investment of \$71 million during this period leveraged over \$4 billion from all sources.

Cleveland State University

<https://www.csuohio.edu/urban/>

The university, which is the data and evaluation partner for the Greater University Circle Initiative, hosts the nationally ranked Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Studies, and three important research centers—the Center for Economic Development, directed by Ziona Austrian and with critical input from PhD candidate Candi Clouse, the Center for Community Planning and Development, under Kathryn Hexter, and most recently, the Center for Population Dynamics, led by Richey Piiparinen. The Centers for Economic Development and Community Planning and Development have coled the evaluation of both the Greater University Circle Initiative and the Economic Inclusion Management Committee work since 2011. In 2013, their role as a data partner became even more important as they worked with all three primary anchors to track every employee on a quarterly basis. These

reports show both their job changes and important information related to community revitalization—how many people employed by the anchors live in the seven Greater University Circle neighborhoods, the city, and the county; and what happens to employees over time—do they leave the neighborhoods once they have sufficient income? Monitoring this data over time creates a benchmark from which to plan, set, and revise, goals. Starting in 2015, Cleveland State University also became the host for the two key staff positions for the Economic Inclusion Management Committee: the Program Manager for Economic Inclusion, Walter Wright, and the Program Coordinator, Toni White. With an initial two-year grant from the Cleveland Foundation, as well as additional resources, such as graduate assistants from the university, Walter and Toni have continued to work closely with the partners to advance this work. The Center for Population Dynamics, which launched in 2014, has carefully tracked population micro-trends in Cleveland and its neighborhoods and adds to the dynamism of the work.

Other Partners

Other partners include:

- MidTown, a nonprofit, community development corporation located in the heart of the Health Tech Corridor;
- BioEnterprise, a business formation, recruitment, and acceleration effort to grow healthcare companies and commercialize bioscience technologies;
- Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, a funding and capacity-building resource in the community, and its family of community development partners;

- Towards Employment, a workforce nonprofit, and Cleveland and Cuyahoga County Ohio Means Jobs (the workforce investment board), all critical partners on workforce issues;
- The Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, a recent partner providing research and convening support.

All of these are “connector” organizations that help facilitate the work, but the most critical connector of all is Neighborhood Connections, a subsidiary of the Cleveland Foundation and the lead in community engagement efforts in Greater University Circle.

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About the Authors

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Kathryn W. Hexter, Director of the Center for Community Planning and Development of Cleveland State University's Levin College of Urban Affairs, is a planner and public policy analyst. She has over 25 years of experience managing and directing program evaluations, research and technical assistance projects in the areas of housing policy, community and neighborhood development, sustainable development, city and regional planning, and civic engagement. Since 2011, she has been a co-leader on the evaluation team for the Greater University Circle effort.

Nick Downer, Graduate Assistant at the Center for Community Planning and Development at Cleveland State University, is a student currently focusing on issues at the intersection of physical space, sociology, equity, and art. With previous experience as an intern at two east side community development organizations and the Cleveland Foundation, he is excited to be working at the Center for Community Planning and Development where he can continue to expand his skills and champion the interests of the people.

The Democracy Collaborative

The Democracy Collaborative, a nonprofit founded in 2000, is a national leader in equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development. Our work in community wealth building encompasses a range of advisory, research, policy development, and field-building activities aiding on-the-ground practitioners. Our mission is to help shift the prevailing paradigm of economic development, and of the economy as a whole, toward a new system that is place-based, inclusive, collaborative, and ecologically sustainable. A particular focus of our program is assisting universities, hospitals, and other community-rooted institutions to design and implement an anchor mission in which all of the institution's diverse assets are harmonized and leveraged for community impact.

Learn more:

<http://democracycollaborative.org>
<http://community-wealth.org>

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