THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LOCAL AND THE LIMITS OF CONTEMPORARY COMMUNITY BUILDING IN THE UNITED STATES

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With new relationships between state and civil society, community building has arisen as a preferred mechanism to ameliorate urban poverty. Community building is a much-supported but undercriticized paradigm, especially with respect to questions about the benefits that impoverished neighborhood residents actually acquire from these initiatives. The authors examine community building as a process that is related to larger agendas meant to enact certain productions of urban space and challenge many taken-for-granted notions about the realized benefits of this form of antipoverty work. Moreover, they argue that community-building initiatives occur in an increasingly globalized context, providing opportunities for stakeholders other than residents to promote certain productions of space and place. A case study is presented of an initiative occurring in a southern city in the United States to highlight the theoretical framework presented.

Neighborhood initiatives have had a long history in the United States as a response to social problems. Community building, in particular, often has been proposed as a mechanism to ameliorate urban poverty (Alinsky 1971; Beckwith 1996; Chaskin 2001; Clavel, Pitt, and Yin 1997; Medoff and Sklar 1994). As such, the responsibility to care for others is increasingly relegated

to the scale of the local, and the recent trend toward the neoliberal restructuring of urban governance, including the devolution and outsourcing of widespread public services to private enterprises, has made this reliance on the local integral to social service provisions. This is especially true in cities where the relative shift in responsibilities for providing social services occurs via civil society in which citizens play a larger part in the care and management of the city (Clarke and Gaile 1998; Rose 2000). In this reworking of the relationship between the state and civil society, community building has arisen as the preferred strategy to fill the void left by the reduction of state services and the eradication of entitlements in the wake of a postwelfare national agenda (Duffy and Hutchinson 1997; McKnight 1995; Sampson 1999).[1]

Community building is a much-supported but undercriticized paradigm, especially with respect to questions about the benefits that impoverished neighborhood residents actually acquire from these initiatives. We examine community building as a process that is related to larger agendas meant to enact certain productions of urban space, identifying how community building is larger than the community that it portends to build (even while localizing its own activities for the resident participants), and we challenge many taken-for-granted notions about the realized benefits of this form of anti-poverty work.

Although organic community-organizing projects based in progressive politics are not removed from our concerns, we maintain that the current mass of community-building projects, initiated by nonresident stakeholders and carried out largely by professional community builders, needs to be understood as a spatial practice that produces complex sets of effects other than poverty alleviation. We argue that community-building initiatives occur in an increasingly globalized context, providing opportunities for stakeholders other than residents to promote certain productions of space and place and that urban restructuring and the development of inner-city neighborhoods may be viewed as arenas where developers, realtors, lending institutions, and a host of other private ventures extract profit and instigate a particular vision of the city (Craig 1998; Smith 1996).[2] However, more than just offering a political-economic critique of community building, we hope to demonstrate how community building is employed as a powerful and legitimated set of activities because of the ways in which it operates as a spatial practice. More discretely, this article points out how community building, as it is currently practiced, uses scale in particular ways to reconfigure spatial relationships and processes and aims at certain, but not inevitable, constructions of what it means to be living in contemporary, urban places. As a spatial practice, community building is part of profound changes in today's cities

that resonate beyond the narrow boundaries of a particular "community" designated to be in need while "localizing" many stakeholders.

To ascertain the effects of this spatial practice on urban governance and the citizens of a city, there must be an understanding of the processes and scales of urban restructuring (DiGaetano and Klemanski 1999).[3] This article addresses this by treating community building as a spatial practice in the context of current urban restructuring and, further, as a practice that constitutes not only "local" neighborhoods but also helps produce other scales and scalar relations. In the first part of the article, we outline community-building theory and problematize it as a solution to inner-city poverty, focusing on how scale matters in community building. Next, we provide a brief outline of some of the impacts of globalization on cities thus contextualizing community building in relation to these larger social forces and pointing to the localization that occurs alongside forms of globalization. Finally, we present a case study of an initiative occurring in a southern city in the United States to highlight how community building may operate with limited opportunities for resident stakeholders to participate in its version of the production of space and place. We conclude by pointing out how these limiting features may be detrimental to impoverished neighborhood residents in an era of devolution, offering suggested ways in which community building could open up the rights to the city for poor residents and truly expand their participation in the future of U.S. urban areas.

BUILDING COMMUNITY AND FIGHTING POVERTY IN THE LOCAL SCALE

There is general agreement that over the past 20 years poverty concentration in metropolitan areas has increased and the rate of poverty has grown dramatically.[4] One of the central explanations of inner-city poverty is Wilson's (1987) argument that focuses on the deindustrialization of the U.S. economy, the shift of jobs and people from inner-city locales to the suburbs, and out-migration of middle-class families to the suburbs. Inner-city neighborhoods, according to Wilson, are characterized by a lack of institutions, role models, and resources necessary to maintain an adequate quality of life. Furthermore, he contends that concentrations of male joblessness, poverty, and female-headed households may lead to a shift in social and cultural norms in a community. Although his approach is multifaceted, Wilson's main focus is on the absence of job networks that serve to anchor everyday patterns of life as well as provide income.

Jobless neighborhoods are isolated from wealth, mainstream institutions, and social networks that provide mobility and status attainment opportunities (Wilson 1996). Research tends to support Wilson's (1987) contentions that isolation and poverty combine to produce other disadvantages to neighborhood residents (such as decreased social infrastructure) leading to a host of negative outcomes (Ellen and Turner 1997; Jencks and Mayer 1990; Coulton et al. 1996; Taylor and Covington 1993; Land, McCall, and Cohen 1991). Empirical studies find that poverty has become more spatially concentrated, especially for poor African-Americans (Jargowsky 1996). Minority group members who find themselves living in an area of isolated poverty have fewer economic opportunities, thus exacerbating economic disparities between these neighborhoods and more affluent neighborhoods, which reinforces segregation (Farley 1997; Massey and Denton 1993).

The community-building field has embraced a version of Wilson's (1987) perspective and has argued that strengthening community-level structural features is a function of community-level processes, a theme that permeates all programmatic efforts (Fraser, Kick, and Williams 2002). Structural features refer to educational, economic, religious, recreational, and nonprofit organizations with an emphasis on strong community-based political organizations. A hallmark of current community-building initiatives is that they strive to address these structural aspects of neighborhoods in a holistic manner because these structures are conceptualized as interrelated (Walsh 1997). The community-level processes include building community capacity and social capital formation that are meant to effectively foster relationships within a neighborhood as well as at different scales and that are usually conceived of at the metropolitan level (Chaskin 2001; Sampson, Morenoff, and Earls 1999; Rohe and Mouw 1991).

The community capacity and social capital focus in community-building initiatives is informed by contemporary variants of social disorganization themes (e.g., Thomas and Znaniecki 1918; Park, Burgess, and McKenzie 1925), which emphasize the pernicious consequences of a breakdown in the social infrastructure.[5] This breakdown in institutional ties between residents and the limited development of effective neighborhood-based groups can lead to decreased social control and increased social problems, ranging from crime to psychological distress (Sampson 1999; Ross, Reynolds, and Geis 2000; Chaskin 2001; Sampson 1991). Community capacity has been put forth as a remedy for such situations. This multidimensional construct includes sense of community, the level of commitment among community members, the ability to solve problems, and access to resources. These dimensions are engaged at the individual level (i.e., skill, knowledge, participation), organizational level (i.e., community-based institutions that provide

goods and services), and network level (i.e., social capital or patterns of relations between individuals and organizations inside and outside the neighborhood). Four strategies for developing this capacity include engaging in activities around leadership development, organizational development, community organizing, and interorganizational collaboration. It is hypothesized that when community capacity increases and is mobilized, then organized institutional structures emerge and positive neighborhood outcomes may be achieved. Outcomes include, among others, effective neighborhood governance entities that have the capacity to plan, navigate the social terrain of the larger metropolitan area, and advocate for their residents (Vidal 1997; Chaskin 2001).

In addition, there is particular emphasis on the salience of social capital in mobilizing community capacity (Chaskin 2001; Lin 2001) and a growing consensus among urban analysts that inner-city neighborhoods suffer from a lack of social capital. Social capital is said to crucially determine the conditions of inner-city neighborhoods (Stegman 1995). Because target neighborhoods are conceived of as not having strong social infrastructures in place to support successful revitalization efforts, urban policy recommendations now call for developing social capital in these "worst-off" areas of cities (Coleman 1988; Putnam 1993, 1995, 2000). Although there are different definitions of social capital in the community-building literature, it is most widely conceptualized as being the existence of social ties characterized by trust and reciprocity.

Although the community capacity thesis has received relatively less critical attention, a significant literature has emerged to critique the social capital thesis (DeFilippis 2001). Central to our present critique and relevant to both theoretical streams is the manner in which community building is viewed as inherently related to poverty alleviation, neighborhood improvement, and the pursuit of a hopeful vision of the city rather than a set of practices that emerge from the complex set of institutional arrangements and spatial formations that have allowed areas in cities to decline (Walsh 1997; Vidal 1996; Traynor 1995; Schorr 1999; Putnam 1993; Page-Adams and Sherraden 1997; Naparstek and Dooley 1997). In particular, we raise the concern that the basic foundations of the community-building field function to mitigate the responsibility of extra-neighborhood, public and private institutions whose (in)action has played a major role in the creation of devalorized neighborhoods through certain efforts in the production of space and place, calling upon "local" neighborhood residents to change their social and spatial situation without providing full access to the processes that contribute to neighborhood change (Eisinger 2000; Harvey 2000; Lin 1995; Logan and Molotch 1987; Massey and Denton 1993; Wagner 1995; Smith 1996).

Although it can be argued that the entire focus upon social capital development (and concomitantly community capacity building) is to directly connect isolated actors into these more powerful social networks, we remain skeptical as to how social capital development does this in a meaningful way. Even proponents of social capital, such as Robert Putnam (2000), draw a distinction between *bridging* social capital and *bonding* social capital (i.e., social capital aimed at horizontal networking and vertical networking, respectively, or the creation and maintenance of internal networks and external networks). Proponents have pointed out not only the primary focus on bonding social capital in community building (the social capital that exists within the bounds of a local community) but also the difficulty in directing programmatic efforts at building bridging social capital, which would be the form of social capital to connect impoverished neighborhood residents with more politically powerful stakeholders (Purdue 2001; Kearns and Parkinson 2001). As such, undue emphasis on neighborhood-level networks, as a means of ameliorating poverty, not only serves to put the responsibility of alleviating poverty onto the shoulders of residents residing in a small geographic area but also removes these people and these places from their broader spatial context.

We contend that it is not only a matter of needing to connect isolated actors in touch with more powerful and broadly networked ones but rather effective community-building work must also aim to enable impoverished neighborhood residents to change the processes that lead to a status of isolation. This is a task that requires an appreciation of the shifting position that cities are playing in an era of increased globalization, the spatial practices that are occurring in these urban locales, and a critical examination of the role of neighborhood revitalization efforts (e.g., community building) in relation to these. That is, we argue that community-building initiatives have multiple effects that are produced by the intersection of these activities with other multiscalar forces that alter the urban landscape and that these are not all aligned with the singular goal of improving the quality of life for residents in central city neighborhoods.

CITY RESTRUCTURING AND THE MOVE TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE GLOBAL SCALE

Looking more broadly at how community building is part of urban restructuring necessitates seeing community building as a spatial practice that is part of dominant trends in U.S. urbanism. Many cities have become important locales in a rapidly globalizing world in which the city remains as the key location at which processes of globalization occur, intersect, and get

managed (Harvey 1989a; Fainstein and Campbell 1996; Sassen 1994; Knight and Gappert 1989). This form of globalization relies upon the mobility of capital, information, and resources through mobile networks and a cultural economy of symbols and status, as well as a geographic imagination that can envision these networked cities and other varied sites of production, consumption, and cultural life as a cohesive whole. Furthermore, the dominant form of globalization maintains a particular relationship between space and place. Although the expansion of capital accumulation embeds infrastructure in a city and uses this infrastructure for further expansion (such as factories or office buildings and the labor working within these places), ultimately the dominant mode of capital accumulation occurs through the ability for quick movement between different places and the impermanence of that infrastructure for capital (regardless of how permanent it might become in the urban landscape), altering the scale at which the urban political economy operates.

As modes of accumulation have become more and more flexible, a political economy of place has emerged to mediate the competition for capital among different places by which cities compete to draw capital to their locale (Scott 2000). However, the scale of this market—the global—does not encompass every site on the planet. Rather, the globally scaled political economy of place among cities relies on an uneven distribution of participants. The strategic, deliberate activities of certain places to maintain or change their participatory status in this political economy in turn shape the distribution of participants and shift just how global this global scale is (and where it takes place). Ultimately, the work done at the city scale functions to rechart the map of participants in the global political economy of place and therefore reconstitutes the global scale itself. As the global scale gets reshaped, the local scale subsequently gets redefined in terms of just how local it really is (i.e., in terms of its ability to operate at different scales and change the scalar relationships it has with other participants in the global scale).

This scalar flexibility is in part made possible in the new relationships between the public and the private, the state and civil society, and how significant extra-state actors are in shaping the direction and management of city affairs. These relationships are being forged in a time of increased global interaction between people, places, and things, and local actors are becoming much more global in terms of how they act, why they act, and the consequences of their actions. Public-private ventures in urban areas have been at the forefront of this political economy of place by regenerating city infrastructure and altering urban governance structures to become more competitive within this political economy. Furthermore, the rise of participatory planning, citizen action groups, private security forces, and such neighborhood organizations as crime watches gives an added role for and shifts the

meaning of citizens in the city. In sum, the activities of so-called local actors has increased significance in the emergent "global" scale of many contemporary cities, and many struggles come forth out of the scale at which different actors are able to operate.

A part of the reproduction of urban space and place has been the ongoing struggle to define what cities mean and, subsequently, for whom cities exist. In the contemporary city, these struggles are often mediated through a growing sense of global ambition by city leaders and other city actors hoping to have greater control over how the scalar relationships that shape a specific local come to be reconfigured. The renegotiation of scalar relations also affects how many people understand the relationship between place, identity, and social responsibility. This not only provides a process contributing to the geographic imaginations by which many people claim belonging to place, but it also connects these geographic imaginations to broader interpretive repertoires of society. Urban revitalization, particularly in the form of community building and the call for civic engagement and personal responsibility, has heightened the struggle over the meaning of cities and has moved this contest in the direction of those who are able to express and performatively enact citizenship in the city. This, in turn, shapes the definition of who is a citizen of the city and concurrently whom the city belongs to.

In the United States, such a context has given rise to community building as a key strategy to transform impoverished neighborhoods through heavily private-sponsored initiatives, particularly in the form of the comprehensive community-building initiative. Because community-building is the dominant mechanism that claims to simultaneously improve neighborhoods as well as the quality of life for those who reside in these locales (Halpern 1995), it is necessary to understand the ways in which it has been made relevant to the needs of the poor while concomitantly operating to enhance efforts to allow cities to participate in and operate at the global scale and rewrite themselves in this new urban geography of hope.

Typically, community-building efforts have been theorized and evaluated without attending to the multiple scales that are constituted out of these initiatives. The focus is on the neighborhood, defined by its constructed boundaries, without heed to how these boundaries get constructed (and how such boundaries might be dishonest to the spatial relationships contributing to the generation and maintenance of that locale). Such conceptual "localism" leads to practices that marginalize the context, assuming that processes shaping the urban arena freeze and stay fixed in the duration of a community-building project rather than understanding how such ongoing processes give greater complexity to initiative outcomes as well as how community building itself is a contributing factor to the development of the city.[6] This raises the

questions that guide our study: (1) What are the scalar politics that inform the construction of community building? (2) Who are the key stakeholder groups that affect and are affected by community-building initiatives? Given the exploratory intent of this study, our explicit goal is theoretical elaboration to provide a foundation for further debate rather than empirical generalizability.

METHOD

The case study is located in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where a community-building initiative has been in progress for four years. Chattanooga was selected as the site for this study because it is a midsize city that allows analytical representation of all local institutional actors. Very large cities do not typically afford researchers the same opportunity to collect accounts from the perspectives of so many actors involved in urban restructuring. Another reason for choosing Chattanooga is that is has been treated nationally and internationally as an exemplar of urban and environmental restructuring, appearing on many "places to do business" and "places to live" lists in mainstream media. As cities compete with each other for the investment and maintenance of capital, an analysis of this "lead city," therefore, is especially appealing, particularly as Chattanooga is situated in the fastest growing region in the United States and deeply part of the larger political economy of place.[7] This is evidenced by the intensive activities of the local chamber of commerce at recruiting global investment, the increasing transnational migrant flows of Latin American population that fill jobs and the subsequent rise in Anglo-Hispanic tensions, and even the latest citywide neighborhood conference, titled Building a Global Community. Moreover, the city has become a favored place for national-level private foundation investment and garners accolades most other cities of its size do not.

Our study was initiated in 1998 in four areas contiguous to the downtown business district: Bushtown, MLK, Highland Park, and the Historic Southside District (see the appendix for area descriptions) where the newly formed Community Impact Fund (CIF) launched their Neighborhoods of Opportunity community-building initiative. This consortium of key stakeholder groups funding the effort included the city, the United Way, and three foundations in the area. The CIF board, consisting of members from each of these groups as well as in consultation with other organizations (e.g., the Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise, the University of Tennessee–Chattanooga [UTC], and the Urban League), has governed the project since its inception. The primary activities of the initiative have been directed at building social capital and community capacity through organizing groups of residents to

collectively act on specific issues related to neighborhood wellness, developing leadership through sets of activities aimed at selecting and promoting local leaders, and promoting organizational developments (including activities that support the transference of knowledge, skills, and resources from resident groups). For example, an early component of this initiative included learning exchanges and intensive training programs that included a technical assistance bank of local and national advisors to assist neighborhoods in planning. Another ongoing component has entailed CIF staff working with neighborhood leadership groups to provide reflective feedback and support during the strategic planning process to facilitate their connection to the information, technical skills, and resources needed to accomplish their goals.[8]

We have operated as consultants examining the impact of community-building activities since their beginning. During our four-year and ongoing tenure as researchers for Chattanooga, we began to hear multiple key stakeholder groups discuss the community-building effort as part of a larger process of restructuring the urban landscape as well as the geographical imagination of what Chattanooga could be and is becoming. These interactions shaped the methodological position taken in this article, namely, to interrogate community building as a spatial practice rather than narrowly focus on a set of causes and effects that would reify its status as a preferred strategy to alleviate neighborhood poverty.

The following analysis is based on data gleaned from interviews, focus groups, initiative documents, and initiative board meetings. Since 1998, we have conducted four rounds of key stakeholder interviews with a wide range of key stakeholders including the mayor of Chattanooga, municipal government departments (e.g., planning, housing, and neighborhood services), private developers, lenders, real estate firms, corporate interests, as well as neighborhood association leaders, activists, and more than 1,000 residents. In addition, more than 10 focus groups were conducted in neighborhoods with residents. All data were collected continuously as late as the last round of key stakeholder interviews in March 2002.[9]

THE EMERGENCE AND SCALE OF
COMMUNITY BUILDING IN CHATTANOOGA

During the 1980s, amidst the national trend of decreasing manufacturing jobs and out-migration of the middle class to the suburbs, Chattanooga was characterized as having a host of typical urban problems, including an impoverished downtown business district and increasingly isolated, run-

down inner-city neighborhoods surrounding the downtown area. Indeed, Chattanooga was awarded the moniker "the dirtiest city in the country" by the U.S. Environmental Planning Agency. According to city leaders, this was the point at which the future of the city was imagined to be bleak by many in Chattanooga.

The story of Chattanooga's environmental turnaround and downtown revitalization focuses on the role of public-private ventures beginning with the lead role played by the Lyndhurst Foundation during the 1980s. Then, the city and Lyndhurst sponsored "Vision 2000," a planning exercise that included input from more than 2,500 residents in the area and that spawned a $45 million aquarium, "being the biggest gem right on the center" of a long necklace that runs through the city (Motavalli 1998, 4).[10]

Chattanooga has been reimagined as "a city with a future" (Galleta 2002). The downtown business district, considered the heart of Chattanooga, has shown remarkable material signs of improvement whether measured by the dramatic increases in revenues garnered from hotel taxes, the $400 million in new construction along with a record-setting number of building permits being issued, or the new minor league baseball stadium (Riverpark) and other renovation projects, all totaling more than $1 billion in investments. Similarly, Chattanooga is now recognized around the country as a "green" city that is environmentally and socially progressive (Reidel 2001).[11] Publications across the country, as well as the city newspaper, have represented Chattanooga's revitalization efforts as nothing less than a citizen-driven "urban renaissance." Despite this positioning, what requires further elaboration is the process by which such a citizenry gets defined and empowered. In other words, who are the citizens in citizen-driven change, and how do these citizens use and contribute to altering the relationship between state and civil society, the public and the private, in the city?

Central to the efforts of Chattanooga leaders to reimagine the city as a space of hope and prosperity has been their ability to shift the scale at which they operate by reclaiming devalorized areas, "reincorporating" them into the city, and building a landscape that is appealing to certain sensibilities. These sensibilities essentially are those associated with middle- and upper-middle-class consumption and the related process of capital investment (e.g., convention center facilities, shopping districts, university expansion) (Fraser, Kick, and Williams 2002). As urban scholars suggest, Chattanooga shares with other cities a form of global ambition, the need to attract and maintain capital investment and participate in a global geographic imagination by changing its material and symbolic landscape (Zukin 1997; Smith 1996). It is in this context that community-building initiatives can be conceived of and employed as spatial strategies to reclaim inner-city

neighbor- hoods, arguably transforming these areas from predominantly spaces of use by inner-city residents into a site for capital accumulation (Harvey 1982).

For example, since the community-building initiative was in its design stages, the Historic Southside District had planned and then saw the actual development of a $50 million expansion of the convention center, $43 million business center, $12 million garage, and millions of additional dollars dedicated to other shops, businesses, and middle- to upper-income housing, as well as a new elementary school in the area. Many of these projects have been funded by public-private ventures.

Simultaneously, the community-building initiative has focused on developing neighborhood crime prevention strategies and mixed-income housing ventures. However, when we asked neighborhood leaders closely affiliated with the community-building project to describe the history of the process, they emphasized that residents have had no input in the business development in their area. They added that to their knowledge, no existing residents had purchased any of the new housing. The feelings many residents discussed ranged from hope that these projects would actually benefit existing low-income people (by providing jobs, housing, and a new school for their children) to frustration that the only role they had in the redevelopment of their neighborhoods was to attend CIF meetings and collectively plan to purchase a few parcels of property that they would control. They also feared that many older people and others in poverty would not be able to remain in their neighborhoods because "everything is happening too quickly." Community building came to the Historic Southside District at a time when many other revitalization activities were already being planned and implemented. In this context, given that the same stakeholders have been involved in all the various spatial practices that are reshaping the landscape,[12] the meaning of community building becomes suspect. At least in part, it appears to be a strategy to create consent and present an image of citizenship being accessible to even the most disenfranchised. Closer examination demonstrates that even the structure of the community-building initiative marginalizes resident involvement and decision-making authority.

Inner-city areas, and the residents that reside in them, have become crucial in the reconfiguration of "hope" in Chattanooga. The transformation of these places—perhaps more so than the eradication of the endemic poverty of the people in these places—has become a central project in the redevelopment of Chattanooga overall and has emerged as a necessary factor in maintaining Chattanooga's position in the broader political economy of place.

> The city has learned to its chagrin that deteriorating neighborhoods in the cen-
> tral city are inimical to progress. It came late to that realization but, to its credit,
> Chattanooga is now moving forward with ambitious plans to reverse the de-
> cline. The rebuilding and redevelopment of neighborhoods and the corre-
> sponding increase in sense of community bound to follow are admirable goals
> indeed. (Old neighborhoods 1999)

Consequently, these neighborhoods represent the intersection of the politi-
cal, economic, and cultural expressions of how Chattanooga is reconstituting
itself as having "a future," and the residents of these neighborhoods—or
more directly, those that are willing and able to enact their responsibility to
manage these neighborhoods—become implicated in this future vision. The
burden, then, is placed upon them to civically engage for the benefit of the
city and to participate in the building of "community."

Often, this means that community building and its related activities
become place-based efforts, and with the development of place as a bounded,
localized entity separate from the people who live there, the place is reduced
to the parts that can contribute to a particular vision of hope for the future for
the city overall. Impoverished neighborhood residents can pursue their vision
of hope through community-building efforts, but more often than not, this
will not come to fruition unless it is in line with the vision of hope that is being
pursued to sustain participation in the wider political economy of place for
the city.

This became evident to the residents with whom we spoke in the MLK
area of Chattanooga. In the community-building initiative, the UTC paid $1
to the University of Chattanooga Foundation for a large parcel of land to
expand its campus. Planned and implemented simultaneously with the com-
munity-building initiative, UTC's expansion occurred without significant
resident input. The first presentation of the project, held in the evening at a
complex in MLK, attracted more than 100 residents, but officials said that
their questions could not be answered until a daylong working meeting on
UTC's campus. This meeting occurred during the daytime and attracted only
a small handful of residents from MLK. However, it did attract a host of mid-
dle-class residents from another adjacent neighborhood (Fort Wood) whose
agenda was to push for moving the largely white fraternities and sororities
from their neighborhood to the MLK area, which was largely African-Ameri-
can and low income.

There were no planning sessions coordinated between the CIF staff con-
ducting the community-building initiative and UTC on this matter. A year
later, an $18 million student-housing complex, characterized by the devel-
oper as luxury apartments, was nearly completed. Of the many stories that

have run in the *Chattanooga Times*, none reported on where the displaced, low-income residents went, and none spoke of the community-building initiative in MLK brokering a deal with other stakeholders who wanted to take land in their area. Indeed, our interviews with neighborhood leaders and residents elicited remarks ranging from people who were skeptical of the benefit UTC's presence would have on people in the neighborhood to very matter-of-fact comments suggesting that MLK residents could either "play the game and get some wins" or "get steamrolled" because UTC was moving into MLK regardless.[13]

In these situations in which there are multiple agendas between groups of residents and other stakeholders, impoverished neighborhood residents have an unequal voice in claiming their own rights to the city; their ability to speak and be heard is often dependent upon the conduit of a community-building project through which they can speak essentially as impoverished neighborhood residents and only about their impoverished neighborhood (as opposed to issues on "urban development," widely defined). Others, such as the nonresident stakeholders in a community-building effort (or other stakeholders in the city's redevelopment), have far greater opportunity and flexibility in how they can perform their civic engagement toward the city.

In effect, community building as a spatial practice, which is part of larger spatial practices to restructure the city, *localizes* impoverished neighborhood residents through civic engagement into the scale of the neighborhood while those who operate at larger scales (i.e., the city/regional or even global scale) can benefit from the work that these localized citizens do. For example, the community-building initiative is central to the city's claim that civic participation is an integral part of the planning process and implementation of citywide improvements, such as those that occur when a university expands and fills more than 400 new properties or when new mixed-income housing is built next to newly renovated businesses, conventions centers, and stadiums. These material and symbolic "successes" not only allow people to imagine the city as a space of hope but also allow federal agencies and private foundations to constitute themselves as successful. For example, Chattanooga is one of the lead affiliates of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation and it is touted as an example of the organization's success. Moreover, other cites import best practices from Chattanooga's neighborhood revitalization efforts and emphasize that community building is a key component. In a substantial way, localities are responsible for state and national agendas just as much as the opposite is the case. Places that receive accolades for their urban-restructuring efforts not only become players that national-level organizations seek out to conduct projects and pilots but also become internationally known as a best place to do business. The scale at which community building operates,

like other urban-restructuring strategies, is not fixed to the neighborhood level by any means, and the work that is done in neighborhoods has a constitutive effect on scales of stakeholders that the development literature has yet to address.

We posit that this not only contributes to furthering the disparity between those who can and those who cannot participate in the changes under way in the city but also solidifies a distinction between who can be counted as a resident and who is a nonresident in terms of the scalar politics of urban restructuring, whereby people with no physical residency status in a neighborhood can have a greater impact on the production of space than people who live in the city. Therefore, with the changes going on in the city, there is a disarticulation between *citizen* and *resident* that is fundamental to understanding community building (at heart a call for civic participation) as a spatial practice. Moreover, in the postwelfare era characterized by the devolution of responsibility to the scale of low-income residents acting civically to fulfill responsibilities (i.e., building community) that were once the domain of governmental organizations, it is paradoxical that such a large field of professionals, foundations, and governmental initiatives (i.e., federal, state, municipal) are dependent on convincing residents to participate in community-building-type initiatives that provide them with few rights (i.e., rights to the city, citizenship rights) to offset their obligations.

This is further complicated by the reality that while residents in inner-city neighborhoods are being asked to shoulder responsibility through building community, other spatial practices are also operating to alter the landscape of their neighborhoods as well as the definition of who has a right to the place being created.[14] For example, in June 2000, the *Chattanooga Times* had published an article titled "Community Should Strut More Often," referring to an annual event during the city's Riverbend Festival where "thousands strutted their stuff on M.L. King Boulevard." The Bessie Smith Strut has been an event that brings large groups of Chattanoogans into the MLK neighborhood to partake in festive activities one night a year, and as the *Times* article states, there has been growing sentiment that it needs to be reclaimed and developed if Chattanooga is going to continue its progress toward redefining itself as a "livable city."

While residents were asked to operate at a scale of the "local" by focusing on building community within predetermined physical boundaries, other key stakeholders (including those partnering with the CIF consortium) were engaging in spatial practices that altered the actual landscape of the neighborhood in which residents were supposed to be leading the planning process, a process that began quite some time prior to the knowledge of residents in the area.

> Even as festival crowds were thrilling to the sounds of Gary Puckett, Santana, Mary Chapin Carpenter and others back in 1995, an anonymous donor was making a gift of property between M.L. King Boulevard and McCallie Avenue to the University of Chattanooga Foundation. It was to be used to promote UTC's growth and spark revival for the historic district. The initial results will be evident in a matter of weeks, when ground will be broken for the expansion of the campus. (Pringle 2000)

These simultaneous spatial practices problematize the very meaning of the *local*, the preferred scale at which community-building theory takes uncritically as its foundation, and call into question the promise of building community as the primary activity that residents in impoverished neighborhoods ought to be engaged in to create livable neighborhoods for themselves, as opposed to furthering capital investment and an exclusionary vision of the city.

If the local scale is conflated with practices that originate within geographical boundaries of a neighborhood, then what is the relationship between the construction of this scale and the ever-changing scale of the city? In part, this is a question regarding citizenship or, more directly, residents' ability to access the rights to the city (Lefebvre 1996). That is, to what extent does community building provide residents the opportunity take part in leading the decisions about the production of the place they call home? Moreover, how does community building constitute a mechanism for other stakeholders to realize their ambitions? To answer these questions is to understand the key stakeholder groups that affect and are affected by community-building initiatives.

WHO HAS A STAKE IN COMMUNITY BUILDING?

Typically, community-building efforts are conceptualized and promoted by extra-neighborhood institutions, including private foundations and government agencies, but with aspirations of having meaningful neighborhood impact (Chaskin and Garg 1997). In Chattanooga, a public-private venture, the CIF, was organized to locally address problems that inner-city areas posed for Chattanooga and its citizens. The defining feature of the comprehensive community-building initiative, according to its founders, has been a "resident-driven" commitment "to mobilizing local resources and supporting people in distressed neighborhoods to develop and implement long-term strategies for improving the quality of life in their communities" (Lyndhurst Foundation 1998, 1). At the beginning of the initiative in 1998, diverse groups of neighborhood residents were asked to have faith that this effort would produce tangible results for all residents whether they were home

owners or renters; African-Americans, Latinos, or Anglos; men or women; young or old; or socioeconomically challenged. The foundational concept was to spur residents to develop plans for their neighborhoods using the expertise of a host of experts who had taken part in similar efforts in other cities.

This engagement with experienced community-building/development professionals created a new scale of operation for many neighborhood residents whereby information and ideas were disseminated and discussed. Our field notes, firsthand experiences in these sessions, and interviews with dozens of residents (who were participants in these "learning exchanges") pointed toward two general conclusions: that community building could have a real impact on the knowledge made available to residents but the resources and collaboration spawned by interactions with representatives engaged in community building/development in other cities were being "policed" by the CIF staff. The spaces for this type of interaction were created by the CIF staff because they determined the meeting times, locations, key speakers, and activities surrounding efforts to focus on different components of the comprehensive community-building effort. At one point in the early stages of the initiative, many residents reported to us that the learning exchanges had become one-way information sessions whereby residents were directed toward developing plans for their neighborhoods from a list of largely predetermined options. This situation was exacerbated by the burgeoning bureaucratic apparatus that was being created by the CIF leadership.

One strategy that the CIF attempted to employ to control the direction and activities of the initiative was a hierarchical, bureaucratic structure codified in daily interactions between residents, CIF staff, the CIF board, and community development experts and in the initiative-generated networks of communication to other impoverished residents that lived in cities across the United States. Residents were expected to communicate with their neighborhood associations and resident leaders who, in turn, would communicate directly with neighborhood coaches. More senior CIF staff had even less direct contact with residents and more contact with the CIF board members and other relevant organizations. Such stakeholders included private developers and the Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise, a public-private venture largely funded by the Lyndhurst Foundation and with general funds from the city set up to promote housing development in areas in which private developers might be wary to invest. An example of these practices was a key, closed meeting that CIF staff had with Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise staff to coordinate the roles that each organization would play in the restructuring of the target neighborhoods participating in the community-building initiative. The significant point is not the empirical example of closed-door

planning sessions, including those that occurred regularly when the wealthiest foundations and organizations in the area met with the city to determine what efforts would be supported in these neighborhoods but the fact that under the auspices of "resident-driven" community building, these social formations existed largely unchallenged.

This is not to suggest that residents and communities of residents fail to resist these types of practices. In fact, the CIF had to largely restructure their entire effort after one infamous meeting between the resident leaders from the four areas. During the initiative, residents from each area went to Atlanta to hear about community-building efforts in some of its neighborhoods. One night, they secretly met with each other in one of the hotel rooms to discuss the community-building initiative. This gathering was dubbed the "Midnight Crew" and spawned strong opposition toward the initiative including a written list of complaints presented to the CIF. These issues were based on the perceived lack of opportunities for residents to actually steer those CIF activities that would affect residents and the built environment in their neighborhoods (Lepofsky and Fraser forthcoming). This affirmation of resident agency highlights the potential control residents in impoverished neighborhoods may exert on the trajectory of cities. The scalar politics that are central to urban restructuring (e.g., spatial practices such as community building) are never fixed for long; therefore, the possibility that less mobile and privileged residents in a neighborhood can affect change that significantly alters the trajectory of the production of place and the people who have rights to it always exists.[15] It seems that it is precisely because of the power immanent within the impoverished neighborhood residents that so much work goes into the generation and maintenance of the local scale in community-building projects. The effect is to minimize the possible outcomes and better direct spatial practices toward certain visions of the future over others. In constructing the local, as such, community building serves to cordon off participating impoverished neighborhood residents from the broader spatial productions that more directly affect the future of the city.

A key question that emerges from our case study of community building is, Why is the standard of resident participation so minimal? Resident involvement, although differentiated, was relegated to the scale of the neighborhood, many times focusing resident energy on cleanups, surveillance, and meetings as opposed to the structuring of the relationship between a smaller piece of geography (i.e., the neighborhood) and the larger area in which it is embedded (i.e., the city), recognizing that both are implicated in, and constituted by, the scalar relationships that extend globally. As a specific illustration, neighborhood residents had no seat at the table when the decision was made to court developers from around the country to create mixed-income

housing in their neighborhoods. Even when resident leaders did attend meetings, there was no assurance that these primary middle-class residents reflected the various agendas of their constituencies. The residents allowed to become and to maintain their status as leaders in the community-building effort were diverse and represented a host of viewpoints, but this group also had to negotiate relationships with CIF staff and the most powerful organizations in Chattanooga. Although the rhetoric employed by foundations and government agencies involved in community building has always been inundated with the language of resident leadership, civic participation, social capital, and community capacity, many people (who have been involved in the community-building initiatives) have witnessed the maneuvering that takes place to control, direct, and limit the type and level of resident involvement as well as the type of residents who are afforded the flexibility to work at different scales that constitute the local neighborhood. There was an understanding expressed to us by virtually all stakeholders outside the neighborhoods that attracting capital investment into the city was paramount and that these neighborhoods had become important places in Chattanooga's collective future. As one leader from the mayor's office put it,

> In every report that has been done since the mid 80s has said if we are going to really have a vibrant exciting downtown you had to focus on housing. I think that we really have the best of partnerships. You have strategic partnerships formed at this point because for a long time we didn't really have anyone waking up worrying about downtown housing. Now between CNE [Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise], River City Company, City Hall, there is sort of a focused effort. The biggest effort I think that shows that this community is serious about downtown housing is that a year ago River City came out with it's strategic plan.

These neighborhoods have been recharted into the map of Chattanooga by virtue of their importance as contiguous areas to the downtown business district. In essence, the scale of Chattanooga had changed to reclaim areas that were once places the city, corporations, and foundations ignored. The dilemma is that community building has worked in tandem with the development goals of the city and private foundations/corporations rather than providing a strategic plan to ameliorate poverty.

The original agenda of CIF was to focus on resident quality of life and neighborhood wellness. One component of the agenda was the provision of affordable, quality housing, and most of the other outcomes involved human capital development and opportunities for existing residents. After two years, the CIF was pressured by their board to produce some tangible results that would indicate to the funders that this community-building endeavor was

worth the resources being expended. In fact, many of our interviewees expressed frustration over the length of time it was taking for the CIF to begin enactment of the neighborhood plans that were produced by CIF staff and a small group of residents. The board was straightforward in telling CIF staff that "low-lying fruit" needed to be picked. That low-lying fruit, or mixed-income housing, coincided well with the sentiments and actions of other public, private, and public-private ventures that were reclaiming large tracks of land in two of the target neighborhood areas. In reality, because there were plenty of low-income properties in these neighborhoods, mixed-income housing meant the development of middle-class housing stock, which ended up falling in the $70,000 to $200,000 range.[17]

Our interviews show that resident leaders were aware of the impacts this might have on their neighborhoods. Because Highland Park had a comparably larger middle-class base than other CIF areas, the focus on the development of higher value properties was welcomed by the neighborhood association because it meant that their hard work and perseverance over the years would hopefully bear fruit. The leadership in the area welcomed one developer from Atlanta, who was interested in rehabilitating older homes and selling them to middle-income families, but even some of them worried about the rate and type of development that would be occurring in their neighborhood. When asked about any plans to assist lower-income people in the neighborhood, especially renters and older people, one CIF staff member who lived in the neighborhood said that nothing had been developed yet. As discussed prior, there was less enthusiasm for development emanating from the other neighborhoods in the community-building initiative. To many people in these areas, the response we got to our questions about the development occurring in their neighborhoods was that they wondered what community was being built and who was going to be a part of it.

Stakeholders, including the city, the university, some middle-income residents, CIF staff, and the range of public and private entities, have gained a considerable amount in the name of neighborhood revitalization and community building. All of these groups sat on, and continue to sit on, interlocking boards of directorates (Fraser, Kick, and Williams 2002). Many of the funders own land in the downtown business district, and many have interests in the tourist industry and/or development companies.[18] Moreover, community building has been one spatial practice that has minimized spaces where poverty (i.e., people in poverty) can manifest, a common strategy central to reimagining the city as a space of hope and shoring up a city's participation in the political economy of place (Smith 1996). All of this may occur within the context of community building, which if properly conducted and represented, can also add to the representation of a city as a place of progressive

politics and civic engagement, a label that the *Utne Reader* bestowed upon Chattanooga in 1999. Cities like Chattanooga have also become important to the community-building/development industry.

Certainly, some residents do gain from community-building efforts. Social capital and community capacity may be important strategies to provide inclusiveness in neighborhood decision making and action, but community building is a spatial practice that is related to other spatial practices. Therefore, community building needs to be understood as having no inherent meaning or value, but rather it is an effect of, and affects, other processes that reshape urban landscapes like that of Chattanooga. A major component in the Chattanooga community-building initiative, as is true for comparable initiatives, is planning in an open forum where residents and other stakeholders are heard. However, even this is insufficient as a mechanism to ensure voice because "voices" may be appropriated to legitimate a wide range of activities, including those that alter the level of capital investment in a neighborhood to the detriment of many impoverished residents. The story about Chattanooga and all other community-building efforts is not that they are either effective or not because spatial practices always produce effects, but rather, it is exactly about exploring the full range of these effects and the different impacts on all stakeholders and opening up the meanings that are attributed to community building itself. As one resident leader in a very impoverished neighborhood said to us, "It's been a mixed bag."

CONCLUSION

This article has attempted to analyze community building as a spatial practice, that is, as a concerted set of activities that are directed at reformulating the current spatial configuration and redefining how such a spatial configuration contributes to the construction of a place. Rather than view community building as a limited social intervention, we demonstrate the inherently spatial aspect of community building as a practice that is changing the cityscape. This particular spatial practice is often part of a larger set of spatial practices that predominantly aim to reshape the city and connect the city into the global scale through a political economy of place. In doing so, we have also shown how community building is not a local phenomenon but rather part of the construction of a certain global scale as well as constructed by scalar relationships that coalesce at the global, regional, city, and neighborhood scales. A paradox, then, is maintained by community building. It localizes impoverished neighborhood residents while globalizing an impoverished neighborhood inasmuch as the neighborhood becomes a central hinge on

which a city's ability to maintain participation in a global political economy of place swings. Although we contend that these locales have always been global in one form or another, the current era of urbanism heightens the global-local interaction and alters the site of political power in the development and management of the city (which is already being reconstructed with the turn to the neoliberal, "entrepreneurial city" [Isin 2000]).

We offer this perspective of community building to highlight the ambivalence and paradoxes of these efforts and prompt changes in community building and the scholarship that analyzes it. Community building must be understood as a complex set of practices with a complex set of effects. Initiatives too often are treated as a series of causes and effects with short-, mid- and long-range outcomes. This is understandable if community building is treated as a social intervention in a bounded place, such as an impoverished neighborhood. But community building, as is true for any form of spatial practice, has a large number of contingencies and spreads way beyond the constructed boundaries of immediate efforts. All community interventions must be understood as social and spatial, and the potential outcomes, both beneficial and detrimental, must be conceptualized as such. We have attempted to show this by examining Chattanooga's main community-building initiative and by revealing how interventions in local neighborhoods are part of global, spatial processes (and vice versa).

Community-building theorists and practitioners must be cognizant of the spatial implications of their actions and must aim at empowerment strategies that are honest to the spatial needs of impoverished neighborhood residents. In an era of increased reliance on civil society in the governance of cities, neighborhood residents can play a significant role in managing their affairs. But this does not occur in isolation from what is happening in other neighborhoods, the city, the region, or even the globe. Rather, community-building practitioners must open up the meaning and experience of community building so that localized neighborhood residents are brought to the processes taking shape at larger scales. A much more nuanced relationship between the local and the global is necessary. We believe, in part, that this is achieved by enabling impoverished neighborhood residents to express their right to the city (understanding the city as a nodal point in a larger network), especially through experiences of greater flexibility in citizenship (Lepofsky and Fraser forthcoming). Following the disarticulation between city resident and city citizen that is being pursued in today's form of urban governance, all community-building stakeholders must be afforded the ability to enact citizenship and not be bounded by residency. Although residents make claims to land and place, forging identities and notions of belonging to community through this connection, this should not be the sole factor by which those living in a place

of poverty are able to contribute to envisioning the future of the city. If community building is to work as an effective antipoverty tool in today's urban arena, it must attempt to build community through the spatial formations that contribute to neighborhood decline, and the community that is to be built must be able to transcend narrow definitions of the local place.

APPENDIX
Area Descriptions

Highland Park: The population of this neighborhood is approximately 3,600. About 60% are African-American, non-Latino; 35% are white, non-Latino; and about 5% are Latino. About 50% are female. The average resident of Highland Park has lived in the neighborhood for about six years (group median), although 17% of the sample is composed of persons who have lived in the neighborhood one year or less. A total of 40% have lived in the neighborhood four years or less. These latter data show a very high level of residential turnover. Only 45% of the residents own their homes. Close to 30% live below the poverty line.

Historic Southside District (Jefferson Heights, Fort Negley, and Rustville): The population of the Southside neighborhood is just more than 700 and somewhat divergent in sociodemographics. Just more than 84% are African-American, and 14% are Latino. Males and females are evenly divided in the neighborhood. The average resident of the Southside has lived there for 6 years, and 18% have been in the Southside for a year or less. A total of 42% have been there 4 years or fewer, and 40% have been there for 10 years or more. Only 17% own their home. About half the population is below the poverty line.

MLK District: The population of the MLK neighborhood is just more than 1,000 and is a great deal more homogeneous than Highland Park and the Southside. A little more than 94% of the residents are African-American. The neighborhood gender composition is approximately the same as Highland Park. The average resident of MLK has lived there just fewer than seven years. About one in five have lived there one year or less, and 44% have been in residence four years or less. Almost 75% of the residents rent rather than own their own homes in MLK. More than half of MLK residents are living below the poverty line.

Bushtown: The population of this neighborhood is approximately 2,957 and has decreased about 9% since 1990. About 88% of the population is black and 12% Latino. About 45% of the residents are men and 55% are women. The average resident of Bushtown has lived in the neighborhood for about 11 years (group median), although 11% of the sample is composed of persons who have lived in the neighborhood 1 year or even less. A total of 24% have lived in the neighborhood 4 years or less. These latter data show a high level of residential turnover. About 66% own their homes, whereas 34% rent. Well more than half of Bushtown residents are living below the poverty line.

NOTES

1. The community-building approach is widespread throughout the United States and currently enjoys a higher level of funding than other poverty-reduction strategies. Philanthropic foundations and government agencies, such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development, give priority to community building because it claims to be a holistic approach, addressing virtually all aspects of neighborhood life within the framework of a "community-driven" approach (Chaskin et al. 2001; Kubisch 1996; Stagner and Duran 1997).

2. Local chambers of commerce and other municipal governmental agencies many times offer incentives for this type of behavior to attract capital investment to their metropolitan areas (Strom 1999; Squires 1996).

3. Typically, people speak of the local, municipal (urban), state, nation-state, and global scales, although there have been recent efforts at arguing that scale represents an intersection of constructed sets of relationships and that these types of scales cannot be assumed to exist in a certain hierarchy to one another or have essential levels of impact on socio-spatial processes (Miller 2000; Marston 2000; Smith 1993). We conceive of scale in terms of scalar relations—that spatial activities occurring at the "local" are implicated at other scales and vice versa. Moreover, in thinking of scale and scalar relations as achievements that are never fixed but constantly worked (materially and discursively), we avoid speaking of scale as entities that are somehow hermetically sealed from each other.

4. Some estimates suggests up to 27%, although there is some indication of recent reversal of this trend.

5. A discussion of the formation and adaptation of social disorganization theory can be found in Sampson and Morenoff (1997).

6. Although a full discussion of this point is beyond the scope of this article, it is clear that this bias to marginalize an examination of the role that community building plays at different scales and the effects that it has on other stakeholders is not random. Such bias obscures the possibility that community-building efforts do not operate at one scale as well as possibly conceptualizing community building as a spatial practice, aligned in a network of activities and actors that do not have solely identifiable cause-and-effect impacts upon a particular neighborhood defined as in need.

7. Chattanooga has been highlighted as follows: (1) *Expansion Management Magazine*: "Top Fifty Hottest Cities for Attracting Business"; (2) *Parade Magazine* cover story: "The Reborn American City"; (3) *U.S. News & World Report*: "One of Six Cities That Work"; (4) *Family Fun*: "Top Ten Family-Friendly Cities"; (5) *Utne Reader*: "One of the Ten Most Enlightened Towns in America"; (6) Vice President Gore Praises Chattanooga "Smart Growth" Initiatives; (7) *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*: "Pardon Me Boys, is THIS Chattanooga?"; and (8) *University of Maryland Report Commends Chattanooga's Leadership*.

8. Neighborhoods were invited to select six indicators as their comprehensive agenda for change. The Community Impact Fund provides corresponding "results-based" incentives for improvements. These included (1) increasing the percentage of kindergartners scoring above at "risk levels" in all three categories on the first step screening, (2) increasing the percentage of third graders passing the reading competency test, (3) increasing the percentage of youth younger than 21 who are in school or have graduated from high school, (4) increasing the percentage of families with one wage earner, (5) decreasing the percentage of births to teenagers, (6) decreasing the percentage of births to single parents, (7) decreasing the percentage of crime in each neighborhood, (8) increasing the number of new or rehabbed houses and business, and (9) improving the physical appearance of the neighborhood.

9. The multimethod approach we have taken to analyzing the community-building initiative includes survey research, participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and the collection of secondary data including newspaper stories, initiative and community-based literature, documentation of foundation and nonprofit boards, and public records on land ownership and use in the metropolitan region. The different data collection and analysis techniques range from regression analysis and content analysis to exploring the narratives stakeholders have provided on the reasons for revitalization and potential outcomes. This article relies on interview, focus group, meeting, and secondary data sources.

10. We note the allusion to Olmstead's "Emerald Necklace" design of Boston's park system, harkening the redevelopment of the nineteenth-century city beautiful movement. Although beyond the scope of this article, we are cognizant of the parallels between such redevelopment efforts and those of the current time, particularly in how class functions as a pivot to legitimate major reconstructions of urban space and how class operates as a performative identity through which actors can claim their rights to participate in these spatial practices.

11. Chattanooga has received a wide range of accolades, ranging from being a top-10 progressive city in the country in the *Utne Reader* to being touted as one of the most family friendly cities in *Parade* magazine.

12. We argue that this is not unique to Chattanooga given that municipal governments in every city across the country are investing in public-private ventures (as well as outsourcing to private firms) to rebuild infrastructure and provide services.

13. The University of Tennessee–Chattanooga (UTC) stated that the benefits for residents would be many, including temporary construction jobs, revenue for businesses (existing or planned, they did not say), and the new housing. To this end, we report that the Lyndhurst Foundation made $100,000 available to faculty and staff of UTC who would move to the MLK neighborhood and purchase new housing. We are not aware of those incentives being offered to current residents to move into better housing.

14. Our contention is that community-building theory does not take into consideration that multiple spatial strategies occur in the same locales. This lack of theorization, we believe, is indicative of proponents of community building steering away form dealing with issues of power and their geographical implications.

15. In other words, although the type of relationship building that community-building proponents chant as their mantra may not radicalize urban politics, less prescriptive relationship formations may very well alter the status quo or belief in neoliberal governance as the panacea for a system that is, in part, composed of people who experience poverty.

16. It is worth noting that many resident leaders felt that there were benefits as well as drawbacks from being the focus of CIF efforts. This was especially the case in one neighborhood that had the highest concentration of middle-class professionals and a stock of large historic homes that were being restored to their prior state. Another set of neighborhood leaders and residents, from a neighborhood that was characterized by few middle-class professionals and no historic housing stock of quality, were less enthusiastic about the opportunities residents had to lead the community-building process.

17. We note that there were "low-income" rental properties developed by Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise (Cowart Place) for 50% and 80% median income in the area for $415 per month. The income range one would need to afford these properties is $17,250 to $27,600 for one person and $19,000 to $31,000 for two people.

18. For example, the current and former mayors both have development companies, and the family that created Lyndhurst Foundation owns large tracts of property in the downtown business district, as does the former mayor.

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