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Democratic Planning in Seattle:

Distributive Outcomes Across Neighborhoods

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

Urban Planning

by

Teresa Lingafelter

2012

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Democratic Planning in Seattle:

Distributive Outcomes Across Neighborhoods

By

Teresa Lingafelter

Doctor of Urban Planning

University of California, Los Angeles, 2010

Professor Jacqueline Leavitt, Chair

In 1994, the City of Seattle launched a citizen-led neighborhood planning process that over a period of four years engaged over 20,000 residents from 38 neighborhoods in planning and policy decisions with far reaching consequences for the city's natural and built environments, identity, and civic capacity. At its core, the planning model of Seattle's Neighborhood Planning Program recognized the need to expand the responsiveness of municipal institutions and at the

same time to empower a demand-making civil society. The history of municipally sponsored neighborhood planning programs in the U.S. exposes three common problems with the implementation of resident-created plans. First, cities often lack the institutional architecture needed to coordinate implementation of neighborhood plans that call for action from several departments. Second, cities may fail to allocate sufficient funds to see projects through to completion, and lack the mechanisms required to assure an equitable distribution of implementation funds across neighborhoods. Finally, cities may suffer from a lack of unified support for plan implementation from the city's political structure, especially when the time needed for implementation spans several administrations. This study examines how Seattle's Neighborhood Planning Program addressed these issues, with a special focus on a description of the distribution of municipal funds in plan neighborhoods. It describes the changes made in administrative geographies, bureaucratic culture, and interdepartmental operations that enabled the completion of 80-90 percent of the plans' 4,200 recommendations by 2006. Lastly, the analysis of the distribution of implementation funding demonstrates that a number of small policy decisions made by City staff and elected officials resulted in the largest per household share of municipal funds being invested in low-income neighborhoods.

This dissertation of Teresa Lingafelter is approved.

Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris

Hilda Blanco

Jacqueline Leavitt, Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2012

To Rebecca and Mark

In memory of

Robert

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Vita

Teresa Lingafelter has been a practitioner of participatory planning and research for over 25 years. She has led participatory planning and community development projects in Jamaica, Malaysia, Australia, the Philippines, Nigeria, and Egypt. From 1988 to 1991 Teresa directed two award-winning community health projects that used participatory action research methods in rural Mississippi. Her publications include studies of natural helpers, teenage girls' views of their Boyle Heights neighborhood, and the housing conditions of low-wage home healthcare workers in Los Angeles. She earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History at the University of Washington, Seattle, and a Master of Arts in Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles. In 2012, she earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Urban Planning from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Chapter 1: Introduction

> *If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost.*
>
> *Aristotle*

In 1994 the City of Seattle launched a citizen-led neighborhood planning process that over a period of four years engaged 30,000 residents from 38 neighborhoods in planning and policy decisions with far-reaching consequences for the city's natural and built environments, identity, and civic capacity. Although Seattle neighborhoods have historically had a voice at City Hall, the Neighborhood Planning Program (NPP) represented an intensification of relations between the neighborhoods and the City that resulted in a new level of influence for the neighborhood-generated plans. The core of the planning model employed by the NPP recognized the need to expand the responsiveness of municipal institutions and at the same time to empower a demand-making civil society. The subsequent involvement of large numbers of residents and the restructuring of city government resulted in an exceptional level of plan implementation.

Four broad strategies were instrumental in achieving positive outcomes for the City. These were: 1) funding and training that enabled extensive and inclusive participation; 2) program design and accountability that safeguarded the neighborhood-led nature of the planning; 3) a sweeping reorganization of City government that facilitated the planning and implementation; and 4) a broad base of funding from City budgets, voter-approved bonds and levies, and neighborhoods.

The extent of public participation was made possible by the extensive and well-funded outreach program that launched the NPP. The City made funding and training available to neighborhood organizing committees to identify and engage all sectors and populations

represented in the neighborhoods. Continued funding for neighborhood planning was contingent upon a neighborhood demonstrating that it had included the identified groups in the planning. In describing this outreach component of the NPP University of Washington researcher Cy Ulberg (1996, 18) wrote in his mid-term evaluation that,

> Outreach is one of the success stories of the [NPP] process. Neighborhood organizing committees are in philosophical agreement with the Neighborhood Planning Office requirement to include all stakeholders in the planning process…Many of the neighborhoods have attained a healthy mix of experienced neighborhood activists and citizens who are new to the planning/organizing process. Reaching out to a new group of citizens and bringing them into the process is a big accomplishment for neighborhood planning.

The emphasis on the outreach element early in the NPP signaled that inclusion and a fair process were valued by neighborhood planning groups and the City. This focus was evident throughout the planning process and carried over to the implementation phase, contributing to policies that influenced the distribution of funding for plan projects.

Second, neighborhoods in the Seattle program were given a substantial degree of autonomy in determining key aspects of the plans and the process. Neighborhood autonomy was not unlimited and planning groups were accountable to the City for representative stakeholder involvement, democratic process, and for producing legal and implementable plans. The neighborhoods were encouraged to hire a planner or facilitator of their choice to assist them in developing a plan. They were given authority to define the geography of their planning area and the scope of their plan. The City provided funding to hire the planner/facilitator, support neighborhood outreach, and cover other planning costs. Decisions on how to allocate the money and structure the planning groups internally were left to the neighborhoods.

City staff served as technical advisors on topics ranging from community building to parking and helped shepherd the plans through the formal adoption process, but they did not lead

the planning. With regard to the depth of participation in the planning perhaps the most important policy was the one that allowed the neighborhoods to define scope of the plan.[1] Fung and Wright (2003, 27) describe a process whereby participants define the agenda and where there exists "the real prospect of exercising state power" as *deep democracy.* Deciding the scope and content of the plans allowed the neighborhoods to set their own planning agenda. This autonomy was balanced with accountability that required that the plans contain, but not be limited to, specific elements of the comprehensive plan and either be legal as written or recommend changes in the law that would be required for implementation. By meeting these requirements, neighborhoods were assured that their plans would have real influence on City policy.

Third, extensive political and institutional measures were taken to secure the neighborhood-led nature of the planning and to enable plan implementation. Functions of key City departments were decentralized into six geographical sectors, which allowed closer monitoring of implementation, and made the bureaucracy more accessible to neighborhood groups. Central planning functions were dispersed throughout City government and a new Office of Neighborhood Planning (NPO) was established within the Executive to oversee the NPP planning phase. Oversight of the implementation phase of the NPP was lodged in the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) rather than in a centralized planning department. This signaled to the neighborhoods that the City recognized their criticisms of previous, more traditional, top-down neighborhood planning approaches and demonstrated that the City was serious about doing planning in a new way. In addition to allocating funds for planning and implementation, the City Council enacted legislation that would remove any legal obstacles to plan implementation and all

[1] Neighborhood plans were required to address issues of land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, and utilities, but could include any other issues identified by residents as priorities for the neighborhood.

of Seattle's 38 neighborhood plans along with their budgets were adopted by the City Council as part of the city's Comprehensive Plan by the end of 1999.

Finally, the Seattle program generated over 700 million dollars in implementation funding by 2006. Municipal departments realigned their budges based on neighborhood plan recommendations making approximately 250 million available to implement neighborhood plan projects. Voter approved bond measures generated an additional 470 million for major capital projects such as libraries, parks and community centers that were called for in the plans. The third major source of funding, The Department of Neighborhoods' *Neighborhood Matching Fund* (NMF) supplied 23 million in cash grants to neighborhoods to support neighborhood initiated projects.[2] In addition to these municipal resources, the plans leveraged significant funding from federal, state, and private sources. The level and breadth of this funding signaled the support of City government, the voting public, and the neighborhood groups for the planning and plan implementation.

[2] This amount was matched by neighborhoods in the form of cash, in-kind materials, and labor, making the total investment in plan implementation more than $50 million.

Seattle Neighborhood Planning Timeline

1987

- Planning Commission produces "Recommendations for Neighborhood Planning and Assist

1988

- Mayor Norm Rice establishes Office of Neighborhoods with four staff and Jim Diers as Direc

1989

- Three staff people are added to Office of Neighborhoods to organize neighborhoods.
- Neighborhood Matching Fund level at $150,000.

1990

- Mayor Rice consolidates Office of Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Service Centers and the C Service Bureau into the Department of Neighborhoods with Dier as Director.
- Neighborhood Matching Fund funded at $1.5 M. It stays at this amount until 1998.
- Washington State Growth Management Plan passed.

1994

- Seattle Comprehensive Plan adopted.
- Broad opposition from neighborhoods to Comprehensive Plan
- $4.5 M is allocated for neighborhoods to hire planners to help create neighborhood plans.

1995

- Neighborhood Planning Office established. Karma Rudder named Director.

1998

- Paul Schell elected mayor.
- Neighborhood Matching Fund allocation increased to $3 M.
- City Council adopts policy language and related legislation needed to approve plans and matrixes.
- Neighborhood Planning Office moves to Department of Neighborhoods for plan implement
- City departments decentralize into sectors for plan implementation.

1999

- All plans approved by City council and become part of the Comprehensive Plan.

2001

- Neighborhood Matching Fund increased to $4.5 M.

2002

- Department of Neighborhoods has 100 staff and a $12 M/year budget.
- Greg Nichols becomes mayor and fires Jim Diers as director of Department of Neighborhooc

2003

- City budget cuts.
- Neighborhood Matching Fund reduced by $800,000.
- Plan implementation managers are cut from six to three.

2004

- Neighborhood Plan priorities system established.

Figure 1: Seattle Neighborhood Planning Timeline

This study analyzes the planning phase of the NPP (1994-1999) and its early implementation phase (1999-2003)[3]. In doing so, I return to these four key strategies as they emerge, change, and are implemented throughout this time period. Their evolution and implementation demonstrate the possibility of and the obstacles to facilitating inclusive, representative, and democratic participation in co-governance around significant issues on a citywide level. However, even a broad-based, democratically grounded process does not guarantee equitable outcomes for the planning. In order to judge the extent to which the NPP was able to result in a fair distribution of program benefits across the neighborhoods, I examine a fifth strategy – one that was composed of multiple small and sometimes seemingly unrelated policies aimed a achieving a level of social and distributional equity.

National Context: *Increasing Demand for Participation at odds with Decreasing Engagement*

The NPP took shape in the 1990s, at a time when civil society's growing demand for more participation in public life was at odds with evidence demonstrating a decline in civic engagement in the U.S. In an effort to respond to the appeal for more meaningful participation many cities added various participatory mechanisms to their structures of public debate. Among these were participatory forms of neighborhood planning. In 1995 Fainstein reported that "in 1990, 60 percent of all US cities with populations over 100,000 practiced some form of neighborhood planning, with 70 percent of these cities employing officially recognized neighborhood councils" (1). Regrettably, many of these efforts simply engendered a *culture of consultation* in which planning departments solicited feedback from stakeholders but failed to respond to the input or follow-up with participants. In the end, these planning departments were

[3] For a timeline of key events see Figure 1.

unable to demonstrate that the input they received had any meaningful influence on public policy. This, in turn, increased public skepticism and cynicism about public participation.

Evidence indicates that the decline in public participation in the U.S. (Putnam 2000, Skocpol 2003) was due at least in part to the public's growing alienation from and distrust of government. A long string of government crises stretching back to the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandals in the 1960s and continuing with recent examples of corruption, partisanship, and growing economic inequality caused citizens to become disillusioned and skeptical of government actions. One often cited indicator of this growing alienation is the decline in voter turnout from 56 percent of eligible voters in 1986 to 40 percent in 2006.[4] Neo-liberal policies designed to diminish the role of government in people's lives added to growing disaffection of the public from its government. Skocpol (2003, 245) cites Gary Orren's 1997 study of "the public's loss of faith in government" as evidence of the pessimistic perceptions held by a majority of citizens. Orren's study found that "between the mid-1960s and the mid-1990s the proportion of Americans who felt that 'government is run by a few big interests looking out only for themselves' more than doubled to reach 76 percent; and the number who believed that 'public officials don't care about what people think' grew from 36 percent to 66 percent." Following this trend, the recent Occupy Movement represents an indictment of capitalism's excesses but also of government's unwillingness or inability to mitigate extreme inequality. Polls by the National Election Survey, the Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard Kennedy School, and the *Washington Post,* found that in 1964, 76 percent of respondents "trusted the government to do the right thing", by 1974 that percentage had dropped to 36 percent and to 29 percent by 2000. As distrust and disinterest grow, participation declines. Tilly (2007, 95) writes,

[4] United States Election Project: 1980-2006

> Interested citizens participate more actively, on the average, in elections, referenda, lobbying, interest group membership, social movement mobilization and direct contact with politicians…Conversely segments of the population that withdraw their trust networks from public politics for whatever reasons weaken their own interest in governmental performance, hence their zeal to participate in democratic public politics.

As public involvement in the U.S. became disconnected from the political process, civic engagement moved into the area of social capital development (Gaventa 2006, Putnam 2000, Skocpol 2003). Robert Putnam (1998, 2000), a central figure in social capital research, draws connections between the development of interpersonal networks of trust and reciprocity and a vibrant civil society capable of holding government accountable by building alternative venues for collective expression. Although an important element of civil society, associational life as described by Putnam does little to mend the breach between the public and the state. A revitalized civil society alone is not able to address issues of "economic inequality, power disparity, and political demobilization" (Skocpol 2003, 257). Wainwright (2003) argues that the real question is not the strength or vitality of civil society, "but how, whether, and under what conditions it exercises its potential for political power in support of greater popular control and political equality."

The uncoupling of civic engagement from the political process resulted in a shallower democracy – one lacking in substance and significant meaning for citizens. More than 40 years ago, Robert Dahl (Dahl 1967 in Young 2003, 228) described the dilemma posed by such a 'diminished democracy'. He writes,

> At the extremes, citizens may participate in a vast range of complex and crucial decisions by the single act of casting a ballot; or else they have almost unlimited opportunities to participate in decisions over matters of no importance. At one extreme, then, the people vote but do not rule; at the other they rule – but they have nothing to rule over.

Dahl describes this as a 'democratic deficit', characterized by hollow citizenship in which people may act, but to no effect. Other 'democratic deficits" that reflect shallow or diminished democracy include a lack of structures whereby ordinary people can effectively hold government accountable for its use of power (Lackman, et al. 2000, 22-23 in Gaventa 2006, 10) and an associational life typified by staff-heavy nonprofits and advocacy groups "focused on lobbying, research, and media projects [that] are managed from the top, even when they claim to speak for ordinary people" (Skocpol 2003, 224).

The de-politicizing of participation contributed to a pattern of erratic political involvement. Citizens who felt alienated from a government that they viewed as unreliable, unaccountable, and distant were reluctant to invest time and energy in a process they deemed ineffective. At the same time government remained leery of public participation programs that they often viewed as unrepresentative, parochial, and uninformed. To move beyond this impasse, the participation debate needed to expand to include more empowered types of participation wherein citizens and government engaged in joint policy-making and the focus needed to shift from the development of social capital to the nurturing of political capital (Baumann 2000, in Hickey and Mohan p 65). Alienation from traditional forms of political engagement and the subsequent uncoupling of participation from the political process called for "relocating and politicizing" participation and its relation to government.

Working Both Sides: *Increasing Responsiveness and Strengthening Voice*

Proposed solutions to the problem of diminished democracy came from every point on the political spectrum. Putnam and other proponents of civil society solutions promoted restoration of a vital associational life that builds trusting and reciprocal bonds between people and groups and that tends to stand over-against government. Communitarians proposed

devolving government to semi-autonomous local units wherein citizens work to 'build community'. Neo-liberals would privatize as many government functions as possible while those supporting a 'deliberative democracy' approach argued in favor of more reasoned public debate in face-to-face settings.

Even those who generally agreed that the solution lay within a restructured relationship between government and the public, held contradictory analyses of the root causes of the weakening of democratic institutions. This, in turn, led to opposing strategies to remedy the problem. One argument maintained that the underlying cause of the problem was a disempowered citizenry – one that lacked voice and power to influence policy. For these advocates of greater citizen participation, solutions focused on increasing the political capital of citizens by organizing them to increase their political power and investing them with information and skills needed to be successful in the policy arena. The other side of the debate identified the root cause of diminished democracy as unresponsive and unaccountable institutions of government and policy-making. For this group, solutions lay in better forms of accountability, the restructuring of government institutions to make them more responsive, and the remaking of public sector culture to value empowered citizen participation.

Taken alone, each of these approaches falls short by failing to consider how addressing the problem from the point of view of fashioning more responsive government *at the same time as* increasing opportunities for substantive and inclusive citizen participation might result in effective modes of co-governance. Experience shows that participation without responsive government results in frustration and cynicism while government that is unwilling or unable to respond to citizen participation functions in a vacuum. Effectively empowering citizen voice while at the same time deepening government responsiveness requires what Gaventa (2004, 27)

calls “working both sides of the equation.” -- “going beyond *civil society* or *state-based* approaches to focus on their intersection, through new forms of participation, responsiveness, and accountability.” “The solution” he writes (2004, 28), “is not found in the separation of the civil society and good government agendas, but in their interface.” He emphasizes that it is this interaction of empowered citizen voice with responsive government institutions that can produce meaningful participatory governance and deepened democracy. “The degree of intensity by which each of the parties acts in their own sphere and interact with the other defines how meaningful citizen participation is in that particular context” (IDS Topic Guide: Thinking about Participation).

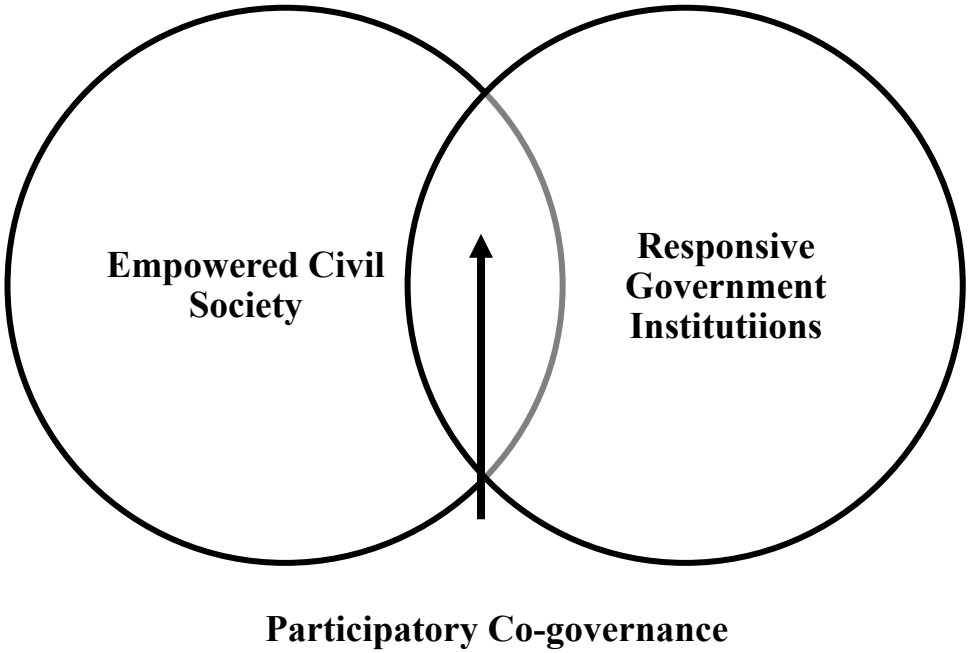


Figure 2 Working Both Sides of the Equation

Responsiveness

For Cornwall (2000) “the most decisive variable in making participatory government work is the engagement of responsive, supportive government.” Gaventa (2004, 18) calls the government side of his equation “receptivity to voice”. Receptivity to voice is a precondition for

achieving systematic changes in the institutions of government that result in increased responsiveness. Such changes may involve re-structuring of agency hierarchies and relationships, instituting policies that secure greater transparency and accountability, and/or changing bureaucratic culture to incorporate citizen voice in policy decisions. "Responsiveness" for Goetz and Gaventa (2001, 5), "describes the extent to which a public agency demonstrates receptivity to the views, complaints, and suggestions [of citizens] by implementing changes to its own structure, culture, and service delivery patterns" in order to better respond to civil society initiatives. Two factors characterize the nature of *receptivity* that results in greater responsiveness – first, it moves beyond consultation to joint decision-making and second, it ensures that the voices of previously excluded or marginalized groups are heard.

In the 1990s, as public demand for opportunities to participate grew, many city government agencies instituted forums and programs to solicit citizen input on a range of issues. Often these programs provided a sounding board for agencies that had no mandate to respond to the solicited input. What people said might or might not influence policy decisions. This resulted in the development of the aforementioned *culture of consultation* in which the public was encouraged to provide input, but not to expect their ideas to have influence. For participation to move beyond "input" to actual influence on policy, institutions of government at the municipal level would be required to allow for joint decision-making, and to exercise the power and clout to translate policy into action. This power and its use and transference are what can move participation in government beyond consultation to actual co-governance. Fung and Wright (2003) describe this as the "real prospect of exercising state power." In state-sponsored programs, this does not mean simply handing state power over to groups of citizens, but it does mean that there is "genuine devolution or sharing of power by government" (Cornwall 2008).

Second, all city governments are to a greater or lesser degree responsive to the public. Without some responsiveness, municipal administrations would be short-lived. However, they are not necessarily equally responsive to all citizens. Goetz and Gaventa (2001, 6) write,

> …most state bureaucracies are … 'responsive', but to socially powerful interest groups, not the poor. Promoting responsiveness to a broader range of social groups and particularly to the poor and other socially excluded groups can involve promoting counter-cultural reforms in bureaucratic behaviors.

Policies And External Circumstances Contributing To An Environment Of Receptivity		
	Policy	Description
Internal Policies	Incentive Systems Rewarding Participatory Processes	Reporting, monitoring, and accountability system in public agencies should reward performance that increases public participation in policy development.
	Involvement of Front-line Staff in Policy-Making and Planning	Workers closest to implementation and in the best position to improve local-level relations and feed information up the line.
	Linking Agency Income to Performance	For staff and departments with effective participatory programs.
	Investment in Attitudinal Change	Training in attitude and behavioral change.
	Vertical Slice Strategies	Reforms at the top of public agencies must e mirrored by changes at all levels of the agency.
External Circumstances	External Pressure	Encouraging mobilized communities demanding change.
	External and Local Monitoring Systems	Grassroots participation in program monitoring and evaluation,

Table 1: Policies that promote Responsiveness (adapted from IDS 138 2001, 61-66)

As with participation of the broader public, participation of marginalized groups needs to move beyond consultation to actual influence and power. A seat at the table is not enough. Cornwall (2004, 84) explains, "While procedures to increase the presence of more marginal actors in spaces for participation are necessary conditions for their formal involvement, they may not be sufficient to enable such actors to participate substantively (Knight and Johnson 1997; Kohn

2000; Pozzoni 2002)". Thus responsive government is charged with creating the procedures and environments within participatory spaces that allow for substantive participation of everyone at the table.

Achieving these conditions for responsiveness requires cultural and institutional change within bureaucracies, which in turn, requires strong support from the city's political leadership. "Politics" write Goetz and Gaventa (2001, 11) "is the intervening variable between citizen voice and public sector response." Because institutional changes of the required scope are often complex, difficult, and require large investments of time and money, they are frequently politically risky. Within bureaucracies, hierarchical relations need to be restructured, information flow needs to be redirected from the implementation level upward, and authority needs to be redirected downward. Consequently, in addition to a supportive political environment, leadership within the bureaucracy needs to be willing to facilitate the needed changes. Goetz and Gaventa continue (490),

> A common lesson running through the cases of responsiveness initiatives is that the attitudinal and cultural changes required on the part of both service providers and users to trigger a participatory process and results-based service requires enormous amounts of time and costly and continuous outreach work on the part of authorities and facilitators.

Because political and bureaucratic advocacy for inclusive and empowered participation puts government in the position of creating the context and environment within which participation occurs, it must implement policies that increase the number and types of forums in which citizens are directly involved. While this may include participatory planning and/or budgeting, it goes further by instituting more sweeping policies such as:

> …government-mandated citizen consultation, standards through which citizens may hold government accountable, various incentives to encourage officials to be responsive to citizen voice, changes in organizational culture, and legal provisions that in various ways make participation in governance a legal right (Gaventa 2003, 18).

Finally, in addition to policies that provide more opportunities for participation, government can initiate or support internal polices that make it more likely that receptivity to citizen voice will result in greater responsiveness. Such policies as well as external circumstances that contribute to the environment of receptivity are briefly described in Table 1.

Participation

An effective co-governance model calls for new measures designed to make participatory processes themselves more democratic, inclusive, and representative. Gaventa (2004, 15) calls this side of the equation *strengthening voice*. *Voice* in the context of governance practices refers to a range of measures, including such activities as criticism and complaint, organized protest, advocacy and lobbying, and participation in decision-making and planning, all of which are used by civil society to influence public sector decision-makers. Strengthening voice requires action in a least two key arenas. Action in the first arena would focus on issues of power to improve democratic process within participatory programs and action in the second would focus more attention on issues of inclusion.

"Questions of internal democracy of an organization" write Goetz and Gaventa (2001, 10), "its grassroots structure and internal culture, and the nature of its leadership are critical for establishing whose voice is being heard." It is not uncommon for small unrepresentative groups or factions to dominate participatory processes because they are better organized or hold more social power, technical know-how, or verbal skill than other groups or individuals. Cornwall (2004, 84) explains,

> …some speakers are better equipped than other to make themselves heard in particular social spaces. Others may find themselves labeled by their accent, or the words they use, as soon as they open their mouths. Couple this with entrenched prejudices that colour how the words might be heard, and question of voice becomes all the more complex.

Such dominance by internal interest groups can de-legitimize the outcomes of neighborhood level planning by privileging already powerful groups and minimizing the experience of less powerful populations within the neighborhood

Although nothing can guarantee the practice of democratic process within a participatory program, steps can be taken to increase the likelihood of success in this arena. For example, participants could be trained in group process skills such as consensus building, soliciting input from all participants, conflict negotiation, and strategic thinking (Coover et al. 1985). Also, in order to have the knowledge and skills necessary to level the policy-making field, neighborhood players may need to acquire: 1) knowledge of legal rights, procedures, roles and responsibilities, 2) skills in representing one's community, and 3) skills in practicing democratic and collaborative modes of governance. In addition to process skills, in order "to make use of invitations to participate, citizens need to be organized enough to understand what is going on, what is at stake, and over what it is possible to press demands" (Cornwall 2008, 43). This means that attention and support may also need to be given to building stronger democratic institutions in the neighborhood through: 1) supporting strong, democratic community organizations that know how to select and support community leaders, and to hold them accountable, 2) building broad-based community knowledge and awareness of the roles and functions of local government, 3) increasing opportunities and processes for community engagement, and/or 4) improving avenues for information sharing and communication that can enable and support a culture of accountability and transparency.

Second, to be meaningful, participation needs to deepen the representation and broaden the inclusion of identified stakeholders. Neighborhood planning groups may not always be aware of the barriers to participation they create by the times or locations of meetings, or by a lack of support services such as daycare, transportation, or translation. Any of these factors could marginalize critical voices. Iris Marion Young wrote in 1990, "Marginalization is perhaps the most dangerous form of oppression. A whole category of people is expelled from useful participation in social life and thus subjected to severe material deprivation" (53).

One commonly cited problem with government-sponsored participatory programs is that they attract people who already participate regularly and fail to attract new groups of people. In discussing neighborhood planning in Seattle, Sirianni (2009, 88) writes,

> A range of well-known factors tend to skew participation in neighborhood associations. Homeowners have a financial investment in their homes and tend to have longer ties to the neighborhood, whereas younger people are more mobile and tend to have fewer children in the schools. Educated people attend more often and speak more confidently at community meetings, and recent immigrants, especially those with limited English language skills, often feel intimidated and unwelcome or are deeply distrustful of the state as a result of their own homeland experiences or current immigration status – or both.

To avoid allowing these factors to dominate participatory forums requires specific efforts to include groups that have been identified as marginal to the political process. Representatives of neighborhood ethnic, racial, and gender groups need to be included along with people from the nonprofit and business groups. People who are old or young, single parents, or disabled persons must be sought out and circumstances created to encourage both their attendance at and participation in neighborhood meetings. Additionally, because people engage and participate in many different ways, for example, some people are meeting goers, some work best one-on-one, some have strengths in organizing, and others in planning any inclusive participatory program

must provide multiple avenues for participation.

Just as there are policies that can be adopted to increase the likelihood of responsiveness, so to, are there actions that can be taken to increase the likelihood of voice being heard. For

Strategies and Conditions Contributing To Strengthened Voice		
	Condition	Description
Knowledge Strategies	Technical Knowledge	Sound grasp of technical aspects of service design, financing, and supply.
	Knowledge of official policy discourses and of effective alternative discourses	Framing claims and demands in terms that fit with government objectives.
	Statutory rights to know and rights to redress	Citizens are most effective when they have full information about budgets, policy choices, regulations and how they can redress grievances.
Design Characteristics	Autonomy	Demonstrating independence from state funding, even donor funding, and distance from patronage systems and political party influence.
	Social Capital	Trust and mutual support among members.
	'Horizontal Slice" strategies	Coordination of the expression of voice by civil society with decision-making occasions.
	Formal standing and a regular presence for citizens	A formal presence in policy-making arenas or institutions.
Other	Publicity	Using the media for naming, shaming, blaming, praising.
	Time and Scale	Take time to build and increase scale over years.

Table 2: Strategies for Strengthening Voice (Adapted from IDS 138, 2001, 60-61)

example, funding to local groups can be made dependent on proof of inclusion; incentives can be offered to groups to make meaningful efforts at outreach; outreach can be continued throughout the process and efforts renewed at each stage of the planning.

Gaventa (2004, 18) describes a continuum of steps designed to strengthen voice. He writes,

> As citizens who are outside of governance processes begin to engage with government, there are a series of strategies through which their voices may be amplified, ranging from advocacy to citizen lobbying for policy change and citizen monitoring of performance. Then, as we move along the spectrum of engagement, there are the more formal arenas in which civil society works with the state in jointly managing and implementing public services (18).

Although inclusion and democratic process are necessary to improve the integrity of participatory programs, they are not sufficient to guarantee actual influence over significant issues. The creation of opportunities to participate "does not lead on its own, to policy influence. Nor do opportunities for excluded groups to be represented in political forums …mean actual influence and power" (IDS 138, 9). Strengthened voice must be empowered voice with sufficient influence to demand responsiveness from government. Clearly advocates who struggle to implement democratic co-governance by balancing the voice-responsiveness equation face the formidable "obstacles of both the unwillingness of those at the top to give up power and of gaining the involvement [of those] from the bottom" (Gaventa 2004, 32).

Adding social justice to the equation

A broad-based participatory program practiced with responsive government can go a long way toward reconnecting citizens and government in meaningful ways. Such programs can bring new people into the political process and can expand and deepen the issues with which citizens engage and government responds. However, issues of social justice arise when the benefits of co-governance efforts are not fairly shared or distributed. In cities, the inequitable use of space and its consequences are particularly visible. Just as municipal policies can act to deepen participation and broaden responsiveness, so too can such policies influence issues of social

justice as they play out daily in the economic, political, and cultural lives of the city's residents. Connolly and Stell (2009, 6) comment, "Actions taken at all scales of governance are certainly pertinent, but the city is the scale where questions of justice are felt concretely as part of everyday life." Municipal policies affect nearly every condition that defines the day-to-day experience of urban residents. Some of the arenas of daily life "in which municipalities have considerable discretion and thus power to distribute benefits and cause harm…include urban redevelopment, racial and ethnic relations, open space planning and service delivery" (Fainstein 2010, 7-8). Housing, zoning, and transportation infrastructure are just a few more arenas that can be added to the list.

The failure of municipal policy to achieve a level of fairness in the use of space is especially evident to Iris Marion Young (1990, 241). In her exploration of social justice in the city:

> Inequalities of distribution can be read on the face of buildings, neighborhoods, and towns. Most cities have too many places where everyone would agree no one should have to live. These may be a stone's throw from opulent corporate headquarters of luxury condominiums. The correct principles and methods of distribution may be a subject of controversy, but as they wander through American city streets few would deny that something is wrong with existing distribution.

"Space" writes Maher (in McLoughlin and Huxley1986, 30) "is…not a neutral medium, but one containing various assets which contribute to standards of living and life opportunities, access to which is differentially available to individuals, groups, or classes on the basis of their existing command over resources." Public policy that fails to mitigate unfair uses of urban spaces exacerbates the ways in which,

> …the city acts as a regressive redistributive mechanism as those already possessing economic power are better placed to compete for scarce resources located in geographic space. There is thus a strong locational

> component in terms of access, and it follows, in the perpetuation of inequity and disadvantage (Crawford 2003, 81).

Susan Fainstein (1990, 241), another author deeply engaged with issues of equity in the city writes, "Equity" is the term commonly used in policy analysis for describing the impacts of a program. It implies fairness, which is a more broadly accepted value than equality." She continues, defining fairness in this context as, "a distribution of both material and nonmaterial benefits derived from public policy that does not favor those who are already better off at the beginning. Further it does not require that each person be treated the same but rather that treatment be appropriate." And more specifically "distributional equity represents a particular concept of fairness in which policy aims at bettering the situation of those who without state intervention would suffer from relative deprivation (37)."

In the case of municipally sponsored public participation programs, a fair process should not be confused with just outcomes, nor can a democratic and inclusive process alone guarantee an equitable distribution of program benefits. As Devas (2004, 33) writes, "democratization does not have an automatic effect on poverty reduction or social inclusion." Irazabal (2009,131) begins to get at this dilemma as it relates to planning when she points out that planning approaches that emphasize broader participation and more inclusive democratic practice are "hinged on procedural effectiveness"(132) and may not address the need for the "achievement of equitable and long-lasting results."

The equity outcomes of co-governance programs depend heavily on the values of participants and of government. To promote fair outcomes, government can adopt a normative approach to social justice that is reflected in program architecture and process. If programs of co-governance are to encourage social and distributional justice, government must go beyond responsiveness to adopt pro-active policies aimed at producing just outcomes. Further, inclusive

participation must not only be empowered to have real influence, but must also be "aimed explicitly at the problems of inequity and democratic accountability" (Fung 2004, 7).

Examining The Evidence: *Participation, Responsiveness, and Equity*

Research to date on the relationship between responsiveness and voice in co-governance initiatives exhibits an emphasis on the "increasing voice" side of the equation. While planners are often in a position to engage public participation in urban spatial issues, they tend to have less influence with regard to the institutional and cultural changes needed to increase responsiveness across government institutions. Accordingly, the emphasis in practice has also been on the voice side of the equation. Another reason for the stress on voice is that the costs and resources needed to increase participation without necessarily strengthening voice are significantly lower than those required to increase responsiveness. As a result, there are few studies, especially in the U.S., examining the dynamics, costs, conditions for, and effectiveness of increasing responsiveness in relationship to strengthened public voice. There are even fewer analyses that examine the economic justice outcomes of such experiments.

There are a larger number of experiments with co-governance outside the U.S., and consequently, more studies are available that examine a diverse selection of situations and issues. For many years practitioners and researchers simply "assumed that participation was a 'good' thing and thus neglected the need for empirical work on the subject" (Cohen and Uphoff 1997, 2). However, a spate of criticism of participation in the international development field (Cooke and Kothari 2002) caused researchers to look more carefully and critically at the issue.

Studies of international co-governance programs vary in their assessment of program outcomes, although researchers have identified some common threads. Fung and Wright (2003,

4), write that experiments with new forms of urban governance taking place in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and India demonstrate that (although often on a small scale),

> Transformative democratic strategies can advance our traditional values – egalitarian social justice, individual liberty combined with popular control over collective decisions, community and solidarity, and the flourishing of individuals in ways which enable them to realize their potentials.

The most consistent finding from these studies is that many projects based on models of devolution and co-governance show signs of improved democratic process (Blair 2000; Navarro 1998; Osmani 2001; Abers 2000; Fung and Wright 2003). For example, Heller's (2001, 158) study of democratic experiments in Kerala, Porto Alegre and South Africa found that the following "synergies [were] created between state and society though participatory reforms in local governance" (Hickey and Mohan 2004a, 33). These reforms, he writes,

1. Allow for a continuous and dynamic process of learning.
2. Promote deliberation and compromise.
3. Promote innovative solutions to tension between representation and participation.
4. Bridge the knowledge and authority gaps between technocratic expertise and local involvement.

With regard to economic justice, in some instances, conditions were improved in "universal services" such as education and healthcare, which became more available to poor people as a result of more democratic local governance. Blair (2000) found, however, that these gains were more easily attained when the services were improved for the entire population. He found less success where efforts were designed to engage just poor people. Similar patterns are evident in the U.S. where more universal programs such as social security find more support than programs targeted at poor or minority populations.

There are a limited number of empirical studies of the outcomes of participatory planning in the U. S., especially with regard to the social justice impacts of such planning. Rohe and Gates' 1985 survey of 51 neighborhood planning programs in the U.S. aimed to provide a description of and to conduct a broad evaluation of municipally sponsored neighborhood planning programs that sought to involve neighborhood groups throughout the city (4). The study concluded that city-sponsored neighborhood planning programs improved aspects of city-citizen relations including: 1) enhanced physical conditions in the neighborhoods, 2) improved communication between citizens and public officials, 3) better local services, 4) increased citizen participation, 5) higher levels of community awareness of neighborhood issues and government functions, and 6) greater citizen influence at City Hall. However, the authors reported that these programs tended to suffer from inadequate funding and mechanisms for implementation, a lack of support from elected officials, and poor representation of the neighborhoods' population in the planning.

One of the study's research propositions was that "Neighborhood planning programs should result in a more equitable distribution of public goods. In this regard, they concluded that although their survey could not "assess quantitatively the effect the programs had on the distribution of public resources," they asked case study respondents if the programs had led to a more equitable distribution of public resources. Although the researchers reported mixed results, they concluded that "overall, the evidence supporting a more equitable distribution of public resources as a program accomplishment is weak" (22).

In 1995, Berry, Portney, and Thompson published research on five citywide systems of public participation in which they examined three primary questions: 1) is participatory democracy possible, 2) are neighborhood associations able to promote policy responsiveness on

the part of the local governments, and 3) does participation in the neighborhood associations increase the capacity of people to take part in government, or are the neighborhood associations simply vehicles for those who are already experienced and knowledgeable in the ways of the political world (16-17). Although all of the cases involved citizen participation in public processes, the nature, scope, and depth of participation varied. These authors concluded that in these five cases, a citywide structure for participation did not result in increased numbers of people participating in the political process. They also found that although the structures for participation did improve the ability of people to communicate neighborhood problems and issues to public officials and to get these problems on the public agenda, they had less effect in influencing citywide policies. Finally, they concluded that participation did lead to greater external efficacy, that is, people who participated came out with a greater sense that the political system was generally responsive to citizens, but did not increase internal efficacy, that is the sense that "I can understand and influence the political system."

As with the Rohe and Gates study, Berry et al. (1995) did not examine quantitatively the effect of these participatory programs on public resource distribution. They did however look at the ability of the programs to influence city budget decisions. In this regard, they concluded that,

> …in none of these cities is the opportunity [to influence city budgets] successfully managed with respect to operating budgets, school budgets, or regional agency budgets. But the capital budgets of the cities – and most clearly the portion of capital budgets coming from federal sources – have in some cases been closely integrated with the participation system.

Sirianni's 2009 study of neighborhood-city collaborations in Seattle and especially his analysis of the NPP provide a comprehensive overview of the history and execution of the program. He teases out " Eight Core Principles of Civic Policy Design in Seattle's Neighborhood

Planning Program" that together offer a framework that highlights key principles employed by the city to guide the program (107-108). Sirianni's core principles are:

1. Coproduce pubic goods
2. Mobilize community assets
3. Share professional expertise
4. Enable public deliberation
5. Promote sustainable partnerships
6. Build fields strategically
7. Transform institutional cultures
8. Ensure reciprocal accountability

With regard to the distribution of municipal resources, he discusses the broad outlines of funding for NPP implementation. Commenting on the public support for levies for low-income housing, parks, libraries and community centers Sirianni writes, "Since the city had been willing to invest in democracy during the planning process, citizens were willing to invest their tax money in turning neighborhood visions into reality" (100). The study does not discuss the distribution of these funds across neighborhoods and therefore does not present conclusions on issues of economic justice as it relates to the NPP.

In contrast to these three studies, Susan Fainstein's (1995) in-depth and long-term study of the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) did include an analysis of the impact of the program on the distribution of city resources as well as analyses of program operations, processes, achievements, and shortcomings. Fainstein (1995, 1-2) concluded that, overall, the program had:

1) *Increased neighborhood capacity* – The one clear-cut result is greater involvement of citizens in planning for their neighborhoods and a consequent heightening of community capacity and neighborhood identity.
2) *Inter-neighborhood cooperation* – Another of the Program's achievements is the extent to which neighborhood participants have overcome parochialism, seeking to work with people from other areas on common projects and showing concern for the effects of their plans on other neighborhoods.
3) *Improved program operations* – The NPR office has succeeded in greatly improving the efficiency of program operations. Neighborhood-level participants receive much more training and information that at first, neighborhood steering committees can get staffing to assist in carrying out their organizing and planning activities, and representatives of the departments and agencies responsible for implementation are available to provide input early in the planning process.
4) *Appropriateness of the plans* – An analysis of the completed plans shows that there is indeed considerable variation among them and that they do reflect the differences in neighborhood demographics and economic prosperity. Our survey of ratification meeting participants reveals that more than 90 percent believe that most of the important issues in their neighborhood had been addressed very well or somewhat well.

With regard to the impact of the program on the distribution of municipal resources, Fainstein (2) wrote,

> The NPR was intentionally designed to assist all neighborhoods, not just impoverished ones. In the allocation of the Program's funds, however,

> neighborhoods most at risk ('redirection neighborhoods') have received the most funding on both an absolute and per capita basis, neighborhoods in the middle ('revitalization neighborhoods') have received the next greatest amount, and neighborhoods in the best condition ('protection neighborhoods') have received the least. Thus, the Program has succeeded in benefiting all types of neighborhoods yet has helped the neediest the most.

As more co-governance programs are developed in the U.S. and across the globe, we will be better able to assess the limitations and possibilities of these programs to enhance democratic practice and to result in a fairer distribution of the resources allocated for implementation. In her discussion of questions yet to be determined with regard to addressing the issue of fairness in cities, Fainstein (2010, 16-17) asks, "Is there reason to expect that a benevolent state, guided by a competent bureaucracy, will be the leader in promoting progressive change? My study explores this question with a spotlight on the equitable use of municipal funds in the context of neighborhood planning and asks whether or not an exemplary participatory neighborhood planning process combined with a responsive bureaucracy in a politically receptive environment can promote equity in citywide development. In reflecting on studies of co-governance globally Gaventa (2004, 33) concludes,

> While much is still to be learned about the outcomes of more 'empowered' forms of participatory local governance, the emerging evidence suggests that, at least in some conditions, they can lead to positive pro-poor and pro-democracy outcomes. But they do not always.

The Seattle Context: *A History of Activism*

Historically, neighborhoods have had a powerful voice in Seattle politics and the NPP's ability to cultivate a bureaucratic disposition for power sharing was based at least in part on this tradition of neighborhood activism (Gordon et al. 1998, Bright 2000, O'Donnel 2004, Jim Diers 2004). Local power was sometimes directed to protecting parochial neighborhood interests but

in other cases it was employed to secure a voice for poor neighborhoods. In their study of Seattle's neighborhoods Gordon et al. (1998) conclude,

> A history of activism and a sense that individuals and organized citizens can make a difference are important aspects of the Seattle context. The transition from Seattle politics described as "downright dull" in 1965 by Edward Banfield to today's citizen activism and participation is attributed by many observers to the protracted citizen-initiated efforts to revive Lake Washington in the late 1950s.

Stemming from a legacy of labor activism reaching back to the 1919 general strike under the leadership of the IWW, (100,000 workers walked off the job and brought the city to a halt) nonprofit groups in Seattle tended toward direct action and protest. For example, the IAF inspired South End Seattle Community Organization (SESCO), which was founded in 1975 and remains active today, helped to organize low- and moderate-income residents to initiate direct action and mass demonstrations designed to pressure City officials to respond to community needs. Jim Diers, a founder, organizer and director of this group and later, director of the DON, wrote (2004, 24),

> As many as eight hundred people attended annual conventions at which the members elected officers and voted on community-wide issues that they wanted to work on together. Among those projects was a fight against garbage incinerators, which led to a city-wide recycling program, opposition to the overconcentration of low-income housing, which resulted in a scattered-site housing program, and a local ratepayers' revolt by SESCO's Light Brigade, which quickly grew into a successful statewide campaign against nuclear power.

The City recognized the power of organized neighborhood groups as far back as 1968 when 22 community groups pressured the City to set aside $10M of Forward Thrust[5] bond money for use in neighborhoods with spending priorities to be set by local residents. In addition,

[5] Forward Thrust was a $333.9M set of bond propositions for transit, a multipurpose stadium, low-income housing, fire protection, and a new aquarium among other things.

the City agreed that any other capital improvements in the neighborhoods would conform to a resident-approved Neighborhood Improvement Plan (O'Donnel 2004, xii).

In the 1980s the City began to experience some of its first serious growth-related problems. In describing the influence of these pressures on neighborhood groups, Diers (2004, 28) recalls,

> Old neighborhood groups were getting reenergized, and new ones were forming. They opposed the City's plan to rezone for increased density and developers' proposals to build projects not in keeping with the character of the neighborhoods. Typically the struggle took the groups from community meetings, to the hearing examiner, to Seattle City council hearings, and onto the court. Neighborhood groups, developers, and City officials all were spending more time and money than they could afford in adversarial processes and were getting results that satisfied no one.

In response, the City Council adopted the Neighborhood Planning and Assistance Program aimed at giving neighborhood activists new forms of access to City government. The 1987 Program, overseen by the Seattle Planning Commission, represented the City's first experiment with something resembling citywide participatory neighborhood planning. The Program established a network of Neighborhood Service Centers (Little City Halls) based in neighborhoods, created a system of district councils, established a neighborhood self-help fund, increased neighborhood participation in the City's budget process, launched an interdepartmental coordinating council, and created the Office of Neighborhoods.

In all of these early experiences, social justice was a motivating factor for program designers. Social justice is also one of five listed core values of the City's 1994 Comprehensive Plan, reflecting not only the values of city government, but of the broader population of the City. In preparation for moving from the planning to the implementation phase of the NPP, Mayor Norm Rice commented, "The plans were built around the value of social equity; it is now time to revisit the neighborhood plans to see if that value is still in place." Similarly near the end of the

early implementation phase, in a discussion of social equity, the Seattle Planning Commission (Meeting Notes September 11, 2003) suggested, "poorer neighborhoods or those with limited capacity [should] continue to be supported" by policies aimed at achieving social justice.

Methodological And Procedural Considerations

I began this study with a survey of municipally sponsored participatory neighborhood planning programs across the U.S. in cities with populations ranging from 500,000-600,000. My interest sprang from my own experience working in distressed neighborhoods in the U.S. and in villages internationally, combined with a superficial knowledge of the Seattle program. I identified Austin, Baltimore, El Paso, Houston, Los Angeles, Washington D.C., Rochester, and Minneapolis as places where broad participation seemed to be a program priority. I hoped to find two to three cases, in addition to Seattle, that were similar in terms of scope, and breadth and depth of participation. Based on my initial investigation, I did additional research on Rochester, Austin, Seattle, and Minneapolis as the cities that most closely met my criteria. For each program I asked the following questions:

1) the context, goals, and values of the program
2) the role(s) played by the city's planning department
3) the role of the mayor
4) the role of the city council
5) the role of other city agencies
6) the neighborhood planning process itself
7) the scope of the plans
8) the amount of time allowed for the planning
9) the status of plan implementation

10) the challenges encountered and their resolution.

My intent at this stage of the research was to use three or four cases as the basis for an examination of issues related to public participation in municipally sponsored neighborhood-planning programs. The survey produced two chief results. First, I realized that quantity of material and time needed to gain a depth understanding of three or four cases would make this approach impractical. Second, I found that what I was really interested in was the connection between the planning process and program outcomes; especially outcomes that related to the distribution of municipal resources for plan implementation. The only case I had uncovered that tracked program outcomes in a meaningful way and that conducted quantitative analysis of implementation funding was Minneapolis. Because Fainstein (1995) had conduced an extensive and in-depth study of the Minneapolis program, a second study seemed redundant. In light of these factors and because I felt an in-depth case study might be the best approach to my questions, I settled on a study of the Seattle program. However, I referred often to the Minneapolis case as a touchstone to the questions I asked and the general subject areas I covered.

The Seattle case afforded me several advantages. First, I was somewhat familiar with Seattle -- the geography and character of its neighborhoods, its general civic structure, and I had access to people who could help me get started. Seattle also allowed me to study a mature case. This meant that it would be possible to study program outcomes. Enough time had passed that results and their effect on neighborhoods were clear. There are however, drawbacks to the study of mature cases – memories fade, key players may no longer be available, and opinions may have ossified. Because of these factors I knew I would need to rely heavily on primary source documentation for my research.

The Seattle City Archives was a valuable resource for correspondence between the NPP director and elected officials and other City departments. It also gave me access to reports from Sector Managers on neighborhood meetings, their relationships with City agencies, and neighborhood project development. The Archive contains reports from key monitoring and coordinating agencies including the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee and the Interdepartmental Neighborhood Coordinating Committee. Finally the City Archives hold files on Neighborhood Planning Project Product Records, and Neighborhood Projects Records. All of this information gave me a sense of the program as it developed and was implemented – the problems faced, conflicts encountered, and loci of support.

The financial data for the study originated from a number of sources. The DON has records for the Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF), which constituted one of the three major plan implementation-funding sources. The NMF database does not record grants by Neighborhood Planning Area boundaries and so each grant was geo-coded and plotted according to plan neighborhood. A separate DON database contains a record of each of the 4,200 recommendations from the 38 plans and their completion status. The database, however, is fairly basic and allows for very limited searches. It also has no function for compiling data. Consequently implementation status data was aggregated manually. Information for the Pro-Parks, Libraries for All, and Community Centers bonds and levies was available from the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Seattle City Library System. This constituted the second major source of NPP implementation funding. Expenditures for the third major funding source – departmental budgets – was the most difficult to obtain. Expenditure reports do not record operating costs by neighborhood planning area nor do they show which costs were allocated to the NPP. As a result, I use the overall departmental budget figure provide by the

NPP. The exception to this are the departmental capital projects called for in the plans (in addition to parks, libraries, and community centers) that are available by project address and could be plotted by plan neighborhood.

Other information sources included archival material from the city's two major newspapers, records from the Seattle Planning Commission, and the 38 Neighborhood Plans along with their corresponding Approval and Adoption matrixes.

Finally, I conduced nine interviews with city staff that had played key roles in plan development and/or implementation. Each interview lasted one to one and a half hours and focused on questions relating to implementation funds allocations. I also interviewed two Neighborhood Planning Group leaders in an effort to understand the internal dynamics of neighborhood planning groups, and the director of the firm charged with training NPP staff in participatory meeting skills, again in order to understand internal group dynamics.

Outline Of Chapters/Overview Of Findings

Following this overview, Chapter 2 outlines the key debates surrounding the idea of public participation in state-sponsored planning. I briefly describe the historical development of this concept and its role in contemporary planning. I discuss the main theoretical frameworks that attempt to explain this concept and the critiques of each theory as it is applied in a planning setting. Second I discuss in more detail the concept of co-governance and the relationship of participation in a co-governance model to issues of governance, citizenship and decentralization of decision-making and policy formation. Finally I discus the particular democratic and political challenges faced by participation within municipally sponsored planning programs where participation is taking place within an "invited space".

The next two chapters detail the NPP in a roughly chronological order. Chapter 3 presents an examination of the NPP's *planning phase* (1994-1999). In it, I emphasize the political factors that helped the NPP move forward and the political and bureaucratic obstacles faced by program leadership in establishing and maintaining the integrity of neighborhood-led nature of the program. I use the concept of *accountable autonomy* (Fung 2003) to discuss the tensions inherent in co-governance efforts that aim for broad participation and meaningful neighborhood decision-making and at the particular elements of autonomy and accountability present in the NPP design. I show that although the plans vary significantly with regard to their quality and scope, with significant resources, political support, and a sympathetic bureaucratic culture, Seattle's experiment in neighborhood-led planning resulted in plans that reflected broad citizen participation.

Chapter 4 examines the *implementation phase* of the NPP (1999-2003). Here I describe the extent of government reorganization and culture change necessary to allow the City to respond to the neighborhoods by implementing the plans essentially as written. I describe the tensions that developed in the ongoing operation of the program with the 2001 budget crisis and a change in City administration. I show that in spite of diminished levels of funding and political support, the City was able to implement a majority of plan recommendations. This was accomplished as a result of steps taken in the early stages of implementation, namely the devolution of departmental functions to more local geographies, the reorganization of the City's planning functions, and the establishment of long-term funding sources like the library and parks levies. Changes in the bureaucratic culture of the City that developed as a result of departmental engagement in the planning phase also contributed significantly to the extent of plan implementation. I also identify policy decisions taken by the City Council and the Department

of Neighborhoods (DON) that were largely responsible for a diminution of resident participation in this phase of the program.

Finally, in Chapter 5 I describe the extent to which the NPP resulted in an equitable distribution of municipal resources to plan neighborhoods in both the planning and implementation phases. Using an analysis of the City's three-part implementation funding strategy I show that, of the funds examined, the largest amounts were expended in neighborhoods with the lowest median household incomes, the next largest amounts in neighborhoods that ranked second from the bottom in household income, and so on, with plan neighborhoods in the highest median household income category receiving the smallest amount. Although the amount of funding for implementation varied by neighborhood, with the largest share going to lower-income neighborhoods, the percent of plan recommendations implemented was similar in all neighborhoods. Significantly, rather than one overarching policy designed to promote social justice and distributional equity, Seattle employed a number of smaller policies with the cumulative effect of achieving a level of fairness in the distribution of resources for neighborhoods. I tease out these policies and show how they were linked and interacted to make such distribution possible.

In sum, I show that the Seattle case demonstrates the possibility that municipally sponsored neighborhood planning (MSNP) can, through a combination of broad-based, inclusive participation at the neighborhood level and commitment to principles and practices of responsive co-governance at the City level, manifest important building blocks of a more just city.

Chapter 2: Participation in Planning – A Broader Agenda

The call for new forms of engagement between citizens and the state involves a fundamental re-thinking about the ways in which citizens' voices are articulated and represented in the political process, and a re-conceptualization of the meanings of participation and citizenship in relationship to local governance.

Gaventa

Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari (2002, 4) charge that participation in planning and development has become a form of 'tyranny', which they define as "the illegitimate and/or unjust exercise of power." Hickey and Mohan (2004, 21) answer that charge by documenting new and evolving forms and structures of participation "rooted in radical political project[s]." These new forms, they assert, are re-establishing the legitimacy of participation and reclaiming its potential to "transform power relations that underpin exclusion and subordination."

Within planning in the United States, participation is used widely to fulfill requirements of planners, politicians, and citizens to include popular voice in planning processes (Arnstein 1969, 3). Nearly all of the various uses made of participation have deepened the role of popular agency in planning at the same time nearly all have underlined the complicated and sometimes problematic relationship between planners and the public. In spite of long-standing encouragement from planning scholars (Burke 1968; Arnstein 1969; Friedmann 1973) and practitioners for broader and deeper participation in planning, perhaps the most widespread form of public participation remains the citizen comment period of public meetings. This and other similar forms solicit public comment on plans that have been developed, or input on plans that are in development. The format of the public hearing tends to solicit contributions that are limited and reactive (Anderson 1995) and although providing an official channel for citizen input, this type of participation is often perfunctory and may have little effect on plan outcomes.

In response to the limitations of conventional avenues for participation and based on recognition of the importance of local knowledge in some forms of planning, practitioners developed participation designs to help them understand local conditions, cultures, and values (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993; Israel, Eng et al. 2005). Critics of traditional practices of participation emphasized the need for planners to work together with members of the public in face-to-face settings that encouraged informed and frank debate of planning issues (Fainstein and Fainstein 1996; Healey 1996). Planning theorists including John Friedman and John Forester were influential in bringing ongoing participation of the public into both informal and mainstream planning settings. Forester urges planners to "emphasize to community interests …the importance of effective participation and negotiation in informal processes of project review" (Forester 1989, 155). Practitioners who employ participation to ground planning in local knowledge hope, in part, to break the "knowledge monopoly" thought to be held by professional planners (Fals-Borda and Rahman 1991). They also foresee that by engaging citizens as local experts, power relations between the outside "expert" and the inside "community" may be balanced such that top-down bureaucratic planning systems can be made more responsive to local realities. In this view, local realities are placed at the center of the planning process, and the planner's role changes from one of directive professional to facilitator of local knowledge collection and planning. However what is judged "local knowledge" is a mutable reality, shaped by social relations and political alignments inside the "local community" and between that community and the "outside experts." As such, utilization of local knowledge can have the effect of legitimizing the interests of outsiders or inside elites rather than capturing vital aspects of the local situation. Further, the inclusion of 'local knowledge' in plan-making is sometimes used as a

measure, in itself, of a plan's success, whereby the plan is judged successful based on the amount of participation rather than on the plan's effective realization (Mosse 2001).

Finally, participation has played a central role in alternative forms of planning designed to increase the involvement of socially marginalized people in decision-making over issues that affect their lives. In this role, policy-makers include participation as a key element of anti-poverty strategies where it is aimed at the politicization of poor and marginalized people with the goal of their empowerment and capacity to oppose mainstream plans and processes (Lemann 1991, 151). Participation plays a central role in this type of "transformative" community planning (Kennedy 1996), "radical planning" (Friedmann 1992), or "social action" planning (Leavitt 1999). In all of these conceptualizations the "objective of participation is to ensure the 'transformation…of the social relations, institutional practices and capacity gaps which cause social exclusion" (Hickey and Mohan 2004b). In other words, empowerment through participation is meant to allow people to direct changes affecting their lives and to put pressure on "outside forces to support these changes" (Vincent 2004, 111), not only in one instance but in future circumstances as well. Yet even this progressive incarnation of participation in planning can stumble over cooption, unidentified power factors, and the obfuscation of broader inequalities and injustices.

The idea and practice of participation in planning has moved from a position outside the mainstream in the 1960s to its central position today in conventional planning practices as seen through the current plethora of participatory charrettes, workshops, and visioning sessions. Still, participation in planning remains a vexing and central issue for the profession. A 2004 survey conducted by the editors of the *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (JPER) asked, "What do you think are the most important concerns for planning (from your perspective)?" The

top response at 57.7 percent was 'citizen participation'. Responses from a second question – "Where does planning most need new work in theory, empirical knowledge, and in practices and policies?" – echoed responses to the first question. "The largest proportion of all respondents said new work is most needed in practices and policies in citizen participation, followed by empirical knowledge in citizen participation… and theory in social justice" (Christensen 2004, 125).[6] This concern reflects not only a desire for responsive plan making, but also our fuzzy understanding of whether and/or how citizen participation can deliver on its promised benefits for planning or contribute to democratic social change.

When participation became a prominent concern for planners in the 1960s it was partially a reaction to top-down planning expressed in urban renewal projects of the 1950s and 1960s which, in addition to closed-door decision-making and back-room deal making, resulted in disproportionally bad outcomes for poor and marginalized neighborhoods (Gans 1962). While these issues continue to be troubling, debates surrounding the framework for and practice of participation have expanded to include new conceptualizations of citizenship and new forms of democratic governance (Abers 1997; Lister 1997; Cooke and Kothari 2001; Gaventa 2004; Hickey and Mohan 2004a). Although framed by new conceptualizations of long-standing ideas, current debates surrounding participation are fueled by the experience of practitioners as they encounter increasing demands by ordinary people to participate in more significant and meaningful ways. The struggle of local governments in the U.S. and abroad to respond to growing bottom-up demand for greater say in the planning and policy process is evident "in the multitude of programmes for decentralized governance that are found in both southern and

[6] The majority of the 222 respondents were from the U.S. and 82.2 percent were tenured or tenure-track faculty. The first question regarding concerns for planning offered thirty-six topic choices and the category "other".

northern countries that represent the intersection of the concepts of participation and citizenship" (Gaventa 2004, 25).

Participation: *An Evolving and Contested Concept*

The convergence of new understandings of civil society and democratic governance with an increase in participatory practices has caused planning theorists to re-examine the question of where planning and planners fit in current understandings. In her analysis of the "transformative planning potential" of civic associations in South Africa, Winkler (2009) highlights three theoretical frameworks that have public participation as a central element and that are often drawn upon to explain the dynamics between civil society actors and those from state planning bodies in bringing about change in the public domain -- collaborative planning, planning for social transformation and 'just city' theories. I add *advocacy planning* to this analysis as a fourth approach that deals with the role of intermediaries in participation. Although each of these theories has participation as a central element of its construction, each has a somewhat different take on what constitutes participation and its dynamics.

Collaborative planning[7] theory draws on the work of Habermas in awarding communication a central role in engaging citizens in planning with the state through the practice of 'communicative action'[8]. Collaborative planning writes Winkler (68)

> …entails communicating ideas with different interest groups, arguing about these ideas, debating differences and eventually, reaching some kind of consensus on an appropriate course of action.

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[7] The term *collaborative planning* has come to be associated particularly with the work of Patsy Healey (1996). Except for the theoretical discussion in this chapter, I use the term more generally to mean any planning situation in which actors from civil society and from the state act together to create plans, policies, or projects designed for implementation in the public domain.

[8]Innes and Booher (1999, 24) point out that "collaborative planning, which involves multiple players including planners, is by definition communicative, and theory about it must be based on our understanding of the interactive, communicative nature of planning."

In reaction to dominant positivist and normative theory in planning, Healey's (1996, 247 in Campbell &Fainstein) conceptualization of collaborative planning describes an "interactive and interpretive process that makes use of "the multidimesionality of 'lifeworlds' or 'practical sense' in decision making" rather than relying solely on "formal techniques of analysis and design in planning processes." Collaborative planning seeks consensus through respectful dialogue and debate within and between discursive communities. When consensus cannot be reached, differences are acknowledged allowing "the dilemmas and creative potentials of ambiguity to enrich the interdiscursive effort, rather than being washed out in the attempt to construct a one-dimensional language (247)." The overarching aim for planning in this framework, "is to facilitate a just process" with the understanding that a just process will result in a just outcome (68). Winkler continues, that in this view,

> If the planning process is just, then the outcome will also be just. Collaborative planning theorists also embrace Habermas's faith in civil society as a source of democracy, and as a vehicle for placing pressure on the state to act more responsively (Watson, 2002). Collaboration, therefore, 'seeks ways of recovering a new participatory realization of democracy [to] focus the activity of governance according to the concerns of civil society' (Healey 1999, 119).

Critics of collaborative planning (Huxley and Yiftachel 2000, Beauregard 1995, Fainstein 1999, Lauria 1995, Purcell 2009) argue that collaborative planning tends to privilege consensus while obscuring the broader social and economic contexts within which discussion of the issues takes place. Critics also charge that although collaborative planning uses the language of difference, particularity, and identity, the theory rests on assumptions of a uniform *public* that inevitably leads to the exclusion of groups that fall outside the prevalent norm. Hillier (2003, 54) argues that although "consensus decision-making offers fantasy solution" (Bauer 1997, 145) to deep-rooted problems, rather than rejecting the concept outright planners should

> …rethink the notions of consensus-formation and agreement in a different way, incorporating both collaboration and competition, both striving to understand and engage with consensus-formation while at the same time respecting differences of values and areas of disagreement.

Finally critics point out that the theory fails to deal with the role of the state as the context within which much planning and urban policy making happens.

Second, planning with the end objective of *social transformation,* writes Winker (68),

> Begins with a critique of the present situation that is creating systemic inequalities, and it then provides an alternative response to the critique through policies for structural transformation and the potential for the empowerment of those who have been systematically disempowered (Beard 2003, Friedmann 1998, Holston 1998, Reardon 1998, Sandercock 1998.

Developed during the urban turmoil of the 1960s, *advocacy planning's* central proposition holds that planners' expertise should be used to represent groups whose interests have previously had been excluded from planning processes. Paul Davidoff, who articulated the concept, contended that "different groups in society have different needs which would result in fundamentally different plans if they were recognized (Davidoff 1965, in LeGates and Stout 1996, 423). He saw planners much like lawyers who represent the interests of specific clients and the planning system like the legal system where competing ideas are considered and judged. LeGates and Stout (1996, 421) describe how advocacy planning might work,

> For example, a planner might develop and advocate for a plan [that] would meet the needs of poor West Indian residents of London's Brixton neighborhood. Another planner might have a different plan representing the point of view of shopkeepers in the same area. And yet another might work with Brixton environmentalists to develop and advocate for a plan based on environmental concerns. A local planning commission could weight the merits of the competing plans much as a court hears and weights views from layers. Davidoff believed that the plan which would emerge from such a process would be better than a plan prepared by planning department staff without the interplay of competing advocate planners.

Supporting this central principal are two additional ideas that were outside planning thought of the time. First, advocacy planners believe that planning, at its core, is a political rather than rather than technical endeavor. Second, they reject the idea that planning serves a unified public interest. Rather, they view planners as supporters of specific, underrepresented groups competing with multiple interests in the planning arena. They discard the proposition that planners create value-neutral plans that represent the overall community. For Davidoff (1965, in (LeGates and Stout 1996, 424),

> The recommendation that city planners represent and plead the plans of many interest groups is founded upon the need to establish an effective urban democracy, one in which citizens may be able to play an active role in the process of deciding public policy. Appropriate policy in democracy is determined through a process of political debate.

Critics of advocacy planning warn that it could result in a divided society in which different groups are perpetually in conflict. For these critics (Piven 1965, Cenzatti, 1997) the question that advocacy planners fail to answer is why and how the different groups they represent would coalesce around shared interests. The failure to form coalitions could leaving splintered, under-represented groups pitted against more powerful and dominant interests. Secondly, critics argue that when the advocacy planner becomes the voice of the group she represents, there is no guarantee that she is accurately representing their views. Finally, Francis Fox Piven (1965) argues, in "Whom Does the Planner Serve?," that poor and/or underrepresented groups would gain more by engaging directly in the political process than by acting through a planner advocate. Not only would such engagement help insure that their interests were accurately represented but also would provide an opportunity for gaining direct power.

Sometimes called *radical planning* (Friedmann 1987) or insurgency planning (Sandercock 1998) this view includes civil society actors who serve as the engine of social change, often challenging the decisions and practices of the state. Sandercock (28) writes,

> Clearly we still need to see planning as, in part, a state-directed activity, an agency of city and region building, but this must not be seen as an exclusively expert-driven process. There have always been oppositional movements, within and outside of mainstream planning…

For Liggett (2009 101), "Insurgency planning has its roots in the realization that most of planning discourse doesn't directly consider most of the world." One objective of planning for social transformation is to bring the previously excluded to the forefront of social change. Planning for social transformation, therefore, frequently emerges as a bottom up movement or mobilization to challenge systemic inequalities evident in the outcomes of state planning. Winkler notes that although these movements originate outside of "mainstream practices, [they can] lead to changes in mainstream cultures" (68).

Beauregard writes that planners have a role to play in supporting these social change movements. He (1995, 165) writes,

> People need to be empowered, social philosophies need to be articulated, and a public sphere needs to be nurtured (Bellah et al. 1986, 297-309; Fraser 1990, Friedman 1991, Friedmann 1992.) Planners can contribute to each of these tasks and the development of such an alternative reference point would be a powerful antidote to reliance on the government.

Similarly Friedmann (1987, 303-306) believes there is a role for planners in supporting bottom-up "planning for structural change and transformation." Among the things planners can contribute are "a critical account of the situation to be changed," a knowledge of the field and institutional constraints that allow planners to "assess and evaluate alternative solutions, and to act as mediator between mobilized groups and the state."

Finally, *Just City* formulations are "inspired by the goals of spatial, political and socioeconomic justice and equity" (68). For Fainstein the hallmarks of urban justice are material equality, diversity, and democracy (justice spatiale/spatial justice, www.jsss.org). For Uitermark (2009, 348) two of these elements --"an equitable distribution of scare resources and democratic engagement"-- are preconditions for the realization of a just city. The just city requires "mechanisms that guarantee an equitable distribution of scarce resources" and "mechanisms that engage residents with the ongoing project of making the city" (350). Uitermark also makes a distinction between a "nice city," which enjoys prosperity, quality, tolerance, health and welfare, and a "just city," which is characterized by an absence of exploitation and alienation" (350). He points out that it is possible, for example, to imagine a city that is sustainable and diverse, and yet is "replete with inequalities" (350).

Fainstein calls attention to the fact that the norms of equality, diversity and democracy are "not automatically supportive of each other and, in fact, in any particular situation, may well clash or require trade-offs." As an example of such a conflict, she points to the conflict that arises between diversity and democracy when the question arises of whether "recognition of the other should extend to acceptance of groups that themselves are intolerant or authoritarian." For Fainstein, then, achieving an approximation of a just city is a matter of finding "the right trade-offs between equity, diversity, growth and sustainability."

For Uitermark (351), there is "no city in the world that can live up to the standards of a just city. But some come closer than others and it is exactly for this reason that we should be interested in concrete approximations of abstract ideals." To give a sense of what such an approximation might actually look like, Fainstein offers examples of some urban policies that she believes will contribute to a more just municipal environment, included in these are:

1. In furtherance of equality – All new housing developments should provide units for households with incomes below the median, either on-site or elsewhere, with the goal of providing a decent home and suitable living environment for everyone.

2. In furtherance of diversity –Zoning should not be used to further discriminatory ends.

3. In furtherance of democracy – Plans should be developed in consultation with the target population if the area is already developed. The existing population, however, should not be the sole arbiter of the future of an area. Citywide considerations must also apply.(justice spatiale/spatial justice, www.jssj.org)

The role for the state in this conceptualization "is to facilitate the equitable redistribution of resources" while the role for the planner "is similar to the role envisaged by social transformation theory, producing practical solutions to broad-based issues (68)." Uitermark adds the necessity of residents having "the right and capacity to inform and shape the distribution of universal provision in particular ways" (350).

Key Concepts: governance, citizenship, decentralization

For John Gaventa (2004, 25), "a first key challenge for the 21st century is the construction of new relationships between ordinary people and the institutions – especially those of government – which affect their lives." However, before new relationships can be created, the "meanings of participation and citizenship in relationship to democratic governance" need to be unpacked and reconceptualized (28). Part of such a reconceptualization requires rethinking three key concepts that stand at the center of the current discussion of participation in planning. First is the link between participation and the concept of *governance*[9]; second is the connection between participation and new conceptualizations of *citizenship;* and lastly is the relationship between

[9] As defined and distinguished from "government by Bingham et al. (2005, 548) – "Government occurs when those with legally and formally derived authority and policing power execute and implement activities; governance refers to the creation, execution and implementation of activities backed by the shared goals of citizens and organizations, who may or may not have formal authority and policing powers (Rosenau 1992). As an activity, governance seeks to share power in decision making, encourage citizen autonomy and independence, and provide a process for developing the common good through civic engagement (Jun 2002)".

decentralized governmental structures and institutions and the idea of empowered participation.[10]

Participation and Governance

According to Gaventa (2006, 12), the 1990s witnessed a substantial shift in the "democracy debate from one of concern for democratic government to the concern for democratic governance." This shift involved and arose from the appearance of new forms of interaction between state, market, and society. In this view, the idea of governance is not seen as a new form of government nor as a construct to weaken or eliminate government, but rather as an expanded arena for policy debate and decision-making. An important aspect of this shift is the increased role of civil society in direct debate over policy issues with public sector representatives. In traditional representative government public participation is limited primarily to the electoral process and occasional advisory functions, with responsibility for making and carrying-out policy resting in the hands of elected officials whose established role provides them exclusive control of this function. In the newer conceptualization of governance, citizens engage "with local government in the interface between representative and participatory democracy" (IDS 2003, 3) to debate and influence policy.

The demand for participation in the decisions that affect one's life became a theme that permeated many of the 20th Century's struggles for equality and deepened democracy. Civil society organizations and government increased experimentation with processes and institutions that allowed for more direct involvement in governance issues – policy, legislation, regulation, and action. A range of participatory processes were employed in new structures of governance

[10] Empowered participation in governance structures results in participants' actual influence over public decisions. Fung, A. and E. O. Wright, Eds. (2003). *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*. The Real Utopias Project. London: Verso.

including “deliberative democracy, e-democracy, public conversations, participatory budgeting, citizen juries, study circles, collaborative policy making, and other forms of deliberation and dialogue among groups of stakeholders or citizens” (Bingham, Nabatchi et al. 2005, 552). However, simply making use of participatory processes is no guarantee of democratic outcomes. The results of participatory processes depend heavily on the conventions that are established for their practice. Deep participation therefore depends on factors such as whether the general public is included or participation is limited by undemocratic selection, whether the space is public and accessible, whether discussions foster genuine deliberation or are dominated by a few, whether leadership encourages relational or rational discourse or the loudest voice is the one that is heard, whether the process is empowered and supported by government, and finally whether it has a tangible outcome (552).

The shift towards new understandings of governance includes several more elements in addition to expanding the role of civil society in policy determination. Factors such as transparency and accountability have important influence on the effectiveness of new forms of governance, as do styles of leadership and respect for law and human rights (Estrella 2001). Effective governance recognizes the complex diversity of contemporary society and the need for structures that allow group differences to be recognized and mediated. Only if such supporting structures are in place can the idea of governance allow for and guard the participation of sectors of society that have not previously had access to the public policy process (Lovan, Murray et al. 2004).

The linkage between participation and governance has catalyzed a growing number of experiments for structuring new relationships between citizens and their government. In planning, these have taken the form of a variety of municipal programs that link public planning

departments with civil society through participatory planning programs that bestow some legitimacy to the lay planer. One result of this shift in planning culture has been,

> …manifested in a general shift away from expert-led planning procedures toward consensus-driven, participatory approaches. New forms of decision-making emphasize the importance of lay-planners (ordinary citizens rather than expert bureaucrats) in shaping the future of cities" (McCann 2003, 161).

Participation and Citizenship

While increased international migrations and growing awareness of political divisions within nation states based on ethnic, cultural, and gender differences have increased the need to rethink traditional conceptualizations of citizenship, the current focus in democracy debates on governance provides a framework within which to mold new ideas of what it means to be a citizen. Purcell (2003, 566) writes that the reconceptualization of citizenship is driven by three changes occurring at the global and national levels (emphasis in original):

1. Citizenship is being rescaled, such that the former hegemony of the national-scale political community is being weakened by the creation of communities at other scales.

2. Citizenship is being reterritorialized, such that the tight link between the nation-state's territorial sovereignty and political loyalty have been increasingly open to question.

3. Citizenship is being reoriented, away from the nation as the predominant political community.

Central to the link between new formulations of citizenship and governance is the role of participation. In expanded views of citizenship, participation becomes the bridge that closes "the gap between citizens and the state by recasting citizenship as practiced rather than as given" (Gaventa 2004) -- citizenship which is practiced not simply by casting a vote but by active engagement in governance processes that legitimize citizen voice. Citizenship in this conceptualization demands understandings of governance "which seek to engage directly with

citizens and approaches to participation whereby citizens become 'makers and shakers' (Cornwall and Gaventa 2000), with full agency in governance processes" (IDS 2003, 2).

By reconceptualizing citizenship as active engagement in the political process, the participation agenda and the good governance agenda converge "under concepts of 'citizenship participation', 'participatory governance' or 'participatory citizenship" (Gaventa 2002, 3). Each of these terms implies direct involvement of citizens in public activities that demand a reciprocal accountability of the state to the citizens. "In contrast to civic republican thought," write Jones and Gaventa (2002, 7) "this inserts a relational dynamic into citizenship, placing obligations on both citizens *and* the state (emphasis in original) through participatory democratic systems."

> When citizens view themselves as "actors in governance, rather than passive beneficiaries of services and policy, they may be more able to assert their citizenship through actively seeking greater accountability, as well as through participation in the shaping of policies that affect their lives" (Cornwall and Gaventa 2000, 54).

On the other hand, when citizens see themselves solely as beneficiaries of government services, they may demand accountability for the delivery or quality of services, but they "cannot exercise their right to propose or oppose social policies that affect them" (Cornwall 2000, 77).

The shift from a passive image of citizenship as a bundle of state-conferred rights to citizenship as active political engagement transforms participation itself from a benefit to a fundamental right. As a right, participation becomes a central element of citizenship. Within LeFebvre's concept of the *right to the city* are two main rights to be claimed by inhabitants of urban spaces – 1) the right to appropriate urban space and 2) the right to participate centrally in the production of urban space. Purcell (2003, 578) describes

"participation" in the context of the right to the city as a concept that "gives inhabitants the right to participate centrally in any *decision* that contributes to the production of urban space." In her formulation, Lister (1997, 228) *equates* participation with citizenship when she writes "citizenship as participation can be seen as representing an expression of human agency in the political arena, broadly defined: citizenship as rights enables people to act as agents."

Engaged citizenship extends participation beyond political rights to include social and economic arenas. Lister writes, "The right of participation in decision-making in social, economic, cultural and political life should be included in the nexus of basic human rights." (Lister 1998, 22 in Gaventa 2002, 5). For example, "As Ferguson (1999, 7) asserts,

> …people cannot realize their rights to health, if they cannot exercise their democratic rights to participation in decision-making around health service provision. Thus, whilst social rights can be seen as positive freedoms in terms of enabling citizens to realize their political and civil rights, participation as a right can be seen as a positive freedom which enables citizens to realize their social rights" (Jones and Gaventa 2002, 5).

Lister goes on to argue that expanding the scope of participation provides a more inclusive formulation of citizenship. "Entitling all citizens to a bundle of social rights", Lister argues, "helps to address social and economic inequalities and to 'promote the effective exercise of civil and political rights by groups disadvantaged in terms of power and resources" (Lister 1997, 16-17 in Jones and Gaventa 2002, 9). The turn toward political participation is accompanied by an emphasis on "increasing poor and marginalized people's influence over the wider decision-making processes which affect their lives." Lister links citizenship "to participatory mechanisms that offer the prospect that citizenship can be claimed 'from below' [by women and other marginalized groups] through their own efforts in organized struggles, rather than waiting for it to be conferred 'from above'" (28).

Participation and Decentralization

In addition to a new kind of citizen, reformulations of governance require institutions that permit new forms to function as a whole. Participation is a pivotal factor in schemes that link democratization and decentralization. Governance that aims to reconnect ordinary people to government and to engage them in the policy process requires "mechanisms through which ordinary citizens can effectively influence governments to develop responsive policies and to implement responsive programs and services." Bringing government closer to the governed through decentralized institutions is seen as a way of increasing the opportunities for democratic participation. "Decentralized local autonomous units will be closer to their citizens, more responsive to their demands, producing as a result a greater congruence between those demands and the public policies designed to meet them" (Goldsmith 1995, 229 in Judge, Stoker and Wolman). Blair (2002) asserts that a decentralized system of governance enables citizens to engage in the decision making processes which affect their lives, and encourages governments to increase their accountability through direct mechanisms of citizen oversight" (Jones and Gaventa 2002, 7).

Proponents believe that decentralization or the transfer of decision-making and/or the administration of public functions to more local jurisdictions or to organizations that, while not strictly public, are nevertheless accountable to public institutions, creates possibilities and incentives for increased participation. Arguments in favor of decentralization rest heavily on the belief that government at the local level is more likely to be responsive because it is more accessible to ordinary people and that closeness to the people gives elected officials greater incentive to be responsive to local needs and demands. In addition, advocates of decentralization believe that it will:

1. Advance political equality from greater political participation, reducing the likelihood of the concentration of power and broadening its distribution to poor and marginalized groups in society.

2. Promote accountability through the accessibility of local representatives to the populace and who can thus be held more closely accountable for their policies and outcomes than distant national leaders.

3. Increase responsiveness of government because local representatives are in the best place to know the exact nature of local needs and how they can be met in a cost effective way (Turner and Hulme 1997).

Decentralization is often closely linked to local planning. Decentralizing the responsibility for planning and/or implementation changes the extent to which particular individuals, groups, or organizations can influence both what is planned and what actually happens. (IDS Topical Paper p. 18). Decentralized planning, that in some cases is linked with participatory budgeting is seen as a way for people who have traditionally been excluded from the planning decisions that effect their lives to join the decision-making table for the first time. Schneider and Goldfrank (2002, 13 in Hickey and Mohan 2004, 163) write that participatory planning and budgeting "'articulates first and foremost the political project of excluded groups' who seek to promote a popular vision of democracy and a redistributive vision of development." Just as participatory mechanisms in and of themselves do not guarantee democratic outcomes, so too, can decentralization have undemocratic effects. Some decentralization schemes have resulted in a reinforced local power structure and empowered local elites (IDS Topical Paper), especially where the political support and commitment of higher levels of government is lacking. "There may be some deeply reactionary elements within communities" writes Cornwall (2008, 40) and "those representing the state may find themselves to be the most progressive actors at the table. The question becomes how can decentralized structures and institutions provide the

institutional responsiveness and accountability that ensures that citizens, especially the poor, can express "voice with influence" (Gaventa 2002, 2).

Key Critiques: Power, Localism, Representation

Although participation has been mainstreamed in many planning settings and demands for greater inclusion continue to grow, participatory approaches have received significant criticism and the conceptualizations discussed above are contested both in theory and in practice (Cooke and Uthari 2001). Critics make five primary charges: first that many participatory programs practice participation as a technical fix, failing to address issues of power; second, participatory local programs generate parochial problem identification resulting in localist solutions; third, that they blur issues of legitimacy and representation; fourth, that they are vulnerable to cooption; and finally, that there is not yet enough empirical evidence of the efficacy of participation to justify its costs.

Participation and Power

When planners use participatory approaches in poor neighborhoods to identify needs, engage residents in implementing neighborhood improvements, evaluate the efficacy of service delivery, or provide a forum that meets the psychological need to participate in decisions that affect people's lives, they may improve the quality of plans or create stronger bonds between government and governed, but they do not necessarily address the underlying inequalities of power that contributed to the neighborhood's poverty in the first place. Critics of participatory approaches to planning point to this failure as a fundamental flaw in the way participatory approaches are practiced (Cooke and Uthari 2001). Without addressing issues of power, they charge, participation is reduced to a technical fix and a sham democratic practice. The underlying problem is that poor and marginalized people do not have effective means to improve their own

situation or to change conditions in society. In sum, because they lack the power to effect change, their voice is either ignored or repressed, and participatory approaches that fail to redress this situation are inauthentic and manipulative.

Three primary and vastly different theories of power and empowerment are called upon to justify participatory practices. Each has different consequences for participatory practice. The first is the neo-liberal view that maintains that power resides with individuals and consequently that empowerment occurs through the "successful pursuit of individual and collective goods" (Mohan & Stoke 2000, 49). In this view, marginalized groups can be empowered in a harmonious manner without significantly changing the social order or shifting the power balance. There are two problems with this view that affect how participation occurs. First, it fails to recognize that in any participatory process different actors have different capacities and resources with which to pursue their interests and that these may change over time. Without remedying these differences, participation simply replicates existing power imbalances. Second, in the neo-liberal view, empowerment is an infinite but static commodity. Participatory processes that function with this belief fail to take into account the shifting relationships of power in any group.

The second view of power and empowerment flows from a neo-Marxist standpoint wherein power is relational and conflictual. Empowerment of marginalized groups cannot be accomplished without a transformation of the existing social order – "a structural transformation that reorders economic and political relations toward a radically democratic society" and which upsets existing power relations (Mohan and Stokke 2000, 249). For participatory approaches, this view runs the risk of reducing power to a finite commodity that is exercised at the macro level over disempowered people at the local level.

Following Foucault, the third view posits that people are not only acted upon by power, but exercise power as acting subjects. In this view, society is not simply divided into those who have power and those who do not, but rather it holds that the exercise of power in society involves vastly more complex networks of shifting relationships. Allen (1993, 224) writes, "Thus power for Foucault is not something that flows from the center to the periphery of society…rather power circulates through individuals, linking them together in networks or webs of relationships." Kothari (2002, 141) writes that such a conceptualization of power "disrupts the dichotomies of macro/micro, central/local, powerful/powerless, where the former are sites and holders of power and the latter the subjects of power. Instead, all individuals are vehicles of power."

Critics charge that when planners adopt the two-dimensional view, be it from the neo-liberal or Marxist standpoint, they fail to identify and analyze "power that is expressed in multiple, diverse ways that may not be visible to the actors engaged in participatory planning but exist nonetheless, embedded in everyday social and cultural practices" (Cooke and Kothari 2001, 14). They argue that planners engaged in participatory projects may lack a complex understanding of how power is constituted and subsequently how empowerment may occur. Planners may miss the "readily identifiable types of social control and domination" which are most often attributed to power held at macro levels, but which are exercised equally by local elites (Kothari 2002, 14). When this happens, the transformational potential of participation is reduced, and participation is rendered a technical fix incapable of addressing underlying social problems. Further, by failing to address the question of who defines the nature and scope of participation in any given context, participation can be used as a non-ideological tool to

legitimize top-down planning decisions and may function to further empower existing elites rather than open democratic space for marginalized people (Fung and Wright 2003).

Participation and Localism

One of the underlying assumptions of advocates of participatory governance is that local empowerment is a critical engine of social change. For them, increased participation at the local level increases opportunities for more democratic and responsive government to develop. While such opportunities may in fact be increased at the local level, critics worry that proponents hold an overinflated view of what local participation can accomplish. Hickey and Mohan (2004, 13) write, "for most mainstream interventions, it is unrealistic to expect participatory projects to transform existing patterns of power relations." Further, critics warn that many advocates of local participation operate from four unexamined assumptions. The first equates 'the local' uncritically with the 'the good'" (Purcell 2006, 1923). Second, proponents may assume that local spaces are inherently more democratic than other scales. The third charge leveled by critics is that local participatory approaches are practiced without reference to the web of external relations in which they are enmeshed. And finally, that advocates of participatory governance believe that the 'local' can and should achieve a degree of autonomy and that such autonomy will immunize it from the problems and interference of the state.

Overemphasis on the local arises to some extent from a tendency to conflate the scalar concept of 'the local' with a social concept of 'community' that is understood as consensual and harmonious (Young 1990). Purcell (2006, 1921) calls this "the local trap" and charges that researchers and activists fall into it when they assume that there is something inherently 'better' about the local scale. The resulting romanticized and essentialized view of 'the local' promotes uncritical valorization of local participatory processes. Because the local is assumed to be the site

where empowerment occurs, factors present in the local situation that block empowerment may be ignored. Williams (2004, 93) writes,

> …by homogenizing communities and uncritically boosting 'the local' as the site for action, participatory [processes] both draw a veil over repressive structures (of gender, class, caste, and ethnicity) operating at the micro-scale, and deflect attention away from wider power relationships that frame the construction of …local problems.

To uncritically accept the roles and functions of participation at the local level blinds people engaged in participatory processes to unexamined elements of what constitutes 'the local'. When the local is seen as a site of struggle over competing interests and shifting agendas, attention to conflict and inequality may lead to less harmonious but more empowering participation.

Purcell (2006, 1921) is also critical of advocates who assume that "the local scale is inherently more democratic than other scales. He writes, "it is dangerous to make any assumption about any scale…localization can lead to a more democratic city, or a less democratic one." Democratic practice at the local level is as likely to be captured by elite interests or outside agendas as any other scale. Wolman (1995, 157) urges practitioners to pose questions related to this aspect of localism: "Do participatory methods engaged at the local level increase the rate and level of citizen participation or…merely provide a venue for a small number of self-selected community activists" and "Will such institutions promote reasoned public debate about community issues or will they result in defensive actions to preserve the character of their community, at the extremes excluding 'others' from entering or participating."

Third, critics of local participatory approaches voice the need to rethink 'the local' in the context of globalization (Gaventa 2004). Although acknowledging the local as an appropriate and effective scale for engaging people in civic debate, planning, and action, they warn that an

overly narrow focus on the local will result in parochial problem identification to the exclusion of broader, more structural problems (Fainstein 1990). Relating to the problem of parochialism is the issue of local autonomy. Critics warn that over emphasis on autonomous local decision-making

> …gives to citizens and governments in a municipality [or neighborhood] license to pursue only interests of residents in their locality without regard for the consequences of their actions and policies on those outside, and without having to attend to region-wide interaction.

Mohan and Stokke (third world quarterly, 249) write that by attempting to limit social change to the local, "the contextuality of place, e.g. national and transnational economic and political forces, is underplayed." Further critics point out that attempting to extract 'the local' from the web of external relations in which it is embedded is a pointless effort. Reducing problem identification and solution to local levels they charge, is "at odds with the increasingly globalizing tendencies of many economic and social processes" (Mohan 2001, 162). Critics urge advocates of local participatory forums to rethink the concept of the local in the context of globalization and to ask how local action, even in targeted geographies can change conditions at the local level (Gaventa 2004; Vincent 2004.)

Finally, a belief arises that 'the local' can operate separately from the state and free from the problems of government. This belief can lead to the creation of resource-wasting parallel or alternative systems of policy-making that, because of their disassociation from the state have little or no impact outside the particular local situation – a common problem with 'demonstration' projects (Mohan 2001, 166).

Participation and representation

Third, critics charge that direct, participatory forms of governance fail to adequately address the issue of representation or 'the problem of speaking for others' – who speaks for whom and on what basis.

> The rationale for promoting wider participation is often made on the basis that electoral representation offers a particularly limited form of democracy, that party systems often exclude the poor and that procedural democracy lacks the substance of a broader set of participatory engagements (Hickey and Mohan 2004, 19).

Proponents of direct participatory democracy also argue that representative forms are inherently undemocratic. Critics charge that this is an overly simplified view that attempts to deny that representation is both needed and unavoidable in forms of participatory democracy. Such a narrow perspective can result in cases where "direct democracies …cede political power to arrogant loudmouths whom no one chose to represent them" (Young 2000, 125). Young continues,

> The anti-representation position…refuses to face complex realities of democratic process, and wrongly opposes representation to participation. Representation is necessary because the web of modern social life often ties the action of some people and institutions in one place to consequences in many other places and institutions.

When addressing the problem of representation in participatory processes, issues of legitimacy and inclusion remain to be resolved.

As discussed above, participatory processes above the smallest scale, involve representation. Gaventa (2004, 38) writes, in "new examples of participatory governance, the legitimacy drawn from the principles of representative democracy are often pitted against other forms of legitimacy drawn, for instance, from leadership embedded in social movements or neighborhood associations." These representatives may lay claim to the right to speak for others

based on legitimacy lodged in factors other than the outcome of an election. Such claims to legitimacy may stem from factors such as "experience, common identity, traditional cultures or proximity (Gaventa 2006, 25). However, unlike elections, these and other "forms of legitimacy often lack clear rules or norms by which they can be judged or held accountable" (25). For example, the problem of legitimacy arises when the question is raised of how representatives are determined in non-electoral processes. For example, if representatives to a participatory forum are to come from key organizations, how are those organizations chosen; if leaders are to represent a particular community, who determines the parameters of the 'community'.

The appeal to these alternative forms of legitimacy often uncritically assumes that organizations or individuals represent a political community with homogeneous interests rather than communities of difference, conflict, and inequality that are, in fact, more likely to characterize contemporary urban neighborhoods (Young 2000). In neighborhood planning there is a "widespread assumption that neighborhood organizations are good institutional entities to devolve public authority" (Swindell 2000, 136), because they are embedded in the local community and close to the people. Following Downs (1981), Swindell identifies two types of neighborhood groups – the first is the single issue group that may come together for a short period of time to solve a particular problem and is characterized by high levels of involvement. The second, and the one he focuses his study on, are the neighborhood representing groups, which Swindell describes as attempting to "represent all the residents in the area claimed by the organization without regard to the level of actual involvement of members" (129).

The 'neighborhood representing' organization may claim legitimacy in two different ways. This first rests in lodging its claim to legitimacy on congruence with the characteristics of the constituency. That is, if the organization matches proportionately the socio-economic and

demographic traits of the constituency, it can claim legitimacy. Pitkin (1960 in Swindell) calls this *descriptive representation*. She calls the second form of representation *substantive representation*. Following Berry, Portney, and Thompson (1993), Swindell describes *substantive representation* as gaining legitimacy from the issues it chooses to address. Thus, if the issues addressed by the organization are the same ones identified as most important to the constituency, it can claim legitimacy.

Swindell's study of substantive representation in multiple-issue neighborhood organizations found that many of them were "clearly not addressing neighborhood issues well in terms of the issues that residents believe[d] most important (130). Similarly in a 1991 study, Cann (in Swindell, 125) concluded that "in spite of sincere attempts to do otherwise, essentially [the civic organization] acts as a 'special interest group' not always reflective of the 'general will' of the neighborhood."

In addition to problems of legitimacy, proponents of participatory democratic practice wrestle with issues of inclusion. Proponents of direct democracy charge that traditional forms of representation add to the marginalization of poor people, women, and other under-represented groups. Young (2000, 193) writes, that "in the free play of competition among groups", under-represented groups "whose interests and social perspective offer legitimate contributions to public discussions…tend to lose influence and…resources." In spite of the shortcomings of traditional forms of representation she argues that, "commitment to political equality entails that democratic institutions and practices take measures explicitly to include the representation of social groups whose perspectives would likely be excluded from expression in discussions without those measures" (148).

Advocates of participatory approaches maintain that direct participation opens new spaces for marginalized groups to participate, making it more possible for their voices to be heard. When necessary, they support representation that includes particularly underrepresented 'identities'. Still questions remain -- if representatives are chosen to "represent particular 'identities', who participates in that process and which 'identities' are acceptable to others?" (Gaventa 2006, 26). Further complicating the issue is the multi-dimensionality of identity and "understanding which identities actors use to represent others, or how they perceive identity and legitimacy of others who speak on their behalf" (Gaventa 2004, 38).

Although representation continues to be a thorny issue in discussions of participation, Hickey and Mohan (2004, 20) write, "if participation is to (re)establish itself as a coherent, viable and transformative approach…a more adequate theory of representation, and/or alternative ways in which popular agency is legitimately conferred to higher levels is required." Gaventa's (2004, 20) study of the issues leads him to conclude that "the most positive examples of participatory governance create processes for multiple forms of representation to be legitimate."

Participation in Municipally Sponsored Neighborhood Planning

Participatory programs sponsored by municipal entities face a particular set of democratic and political challenges. By their very nature, such programs play-out in an arena of unbalanced power relationships. Even with a robustly democratic institutional design, the municipal agencies sponsoring participatory planning programs have the final responsibility for program outcomes and the corresponding power over their conduct. While powerful insurgent factions may influence both the outcomes and conduct of Municipally Sponsored Neighborhood Programs (MSNP), the ultimate decisions remain with the public institution. Still, scholars write that

without such insurgent forces, participatory governance will fail to realize its democratic potential. Gaventa (2006, 27) believes that

> …the transformative potential of spaces for participatory governance must always be assessed in relationship to the other spaces which surround them. Creation of new institutional designs of participatory governance, in the absence of other participatory spaces which serve to provide and sustain countervailing power, might simply be captured by the already empowered elite. (Gaventa 2006, 27)

The challenge for supporters of MSNPs is to embrace the accountability provided by the presence of countervailing[11] forces and to employ legal and institutional designs that do the most toward balancing the power relationships between the city and the neighborhoods.

Second, the political context within which any MSNP is rooted is a determining factor in the program's realizing its promise of expanded democratic participation. The dominance of the neoliberal paradigm in U.S. urban policy since the 1980s makes a close scrutiny of any initiative's underlying ideology critical for understanding the definitions and uses of public participation in the program's execution. The challenge here for MSNPs is to be aware and critical of prevailing neoliberal and market forces.

MSNP and Spaces of Participation

In describing a continuum of *spaces of participation,* Gaventa (2006, 26) defines 'spaces' as "opportunities, moments and channels where citizens can act to potentially affect policies, discourses, decisions and relationships that affect their lives and interests." The continuum is bounded by *closed spaces* on one end, and *claimed spaces* on the other. Within *closed spaces,* decisions are made by a set of "actors behind closed doors, without any pretense of broadening

11 Fung and Wright (2003, 260) define *countervailing power* as a "concept that describes how powerful actors with privileged access to decision-making venues may be challenged and even defeated from time to time by the weak and less organized". They contend that significant countervailing power is necessary for EPG [empowered participatory governance] to deliver its promised democratic benefits. Three possible generators of countervailing power are 1) local adversarial organizations 2) political parties 3) larger social movement organizations (283).

the boundaries for inclusion" (26). At times spaces may be closed by necessity; at other times closed spaces may be forced open to greater transparency and participation.

Somewhere in the middle of Gaventa's continuum are *invited spaces* where efforts to broaden participation and inclusion involve the creation of opportunities for decision-making by new groups or which open new agendas. Invited spaces are those into which "people (as users, as citizens, as beneficiaries) are invited to participate by various kinds of authorities, be they government, supranational agencies or non-governmental organizations" (Cornwall 2004, 79 in Hickey and Mohan). She continues,

> On a more metaphorical level invited spaces can be thought of as creating spaces where there was previously none, about enlarging spaces where previously there were very limited opportunities for public involvement, and about allowing people to occupy spaces that were previously denied to them.

The boundaries between spaces are unstable and people move between different participatory spaces in different contexts and different times. "For no matter how equitable the intentions that inform the creation of an area for participation might be," writes Cornwall (2005, 77),

> …existing relationships cannot be simply left at its boundary; rather, the traces of these relationships, and of previous experiences in other spaces, continue to exert an influence on what is said, and what is sayable, within any given space.

By definition participatory MSNP programs fall into the *invited spaces* category. Participation in invited spaces is expanded when new actors gain seats at the decision –making table with real power to act in previously closed arenas. The location of invited spaces "at the *interface* between state and society permits citizen voice to be effectively channeled; the presence of the state at this interface can present a better opportunity for securing state responsiveness (emphasis in original)" (Cornwall 2008, 33). However recalling the need for

countervailing forces to stand over-against formal institutions of participatory governance, Cornwall (45) reminds us,

> For all that the word *partnership* conjures up a relationship of mutuality, where one partner is inviting the other, on their terms and holding the purse strings, the relationship is clearly not equal. Participation in invited spaces is generally on the terms set by those who create and maintain those spaces. What goes on the agenda and what remains off limits for discussion, may be implicitly rather than explicitly controlled by those doing the inviting."

There is always the danger with participatory MSNPs that the existence of formal avenues of participation can have the effect of shutting down oppositional forces—this may be especially true when generally successful and popular programs offer citizens decision-making access to the policy agenda. Two things are needed to keep this in check. The first are mechanisms that can be put in place within the program to adjust for the imbalance. The other is the presence of what Fung and Wright (2004) call 'countervailing forces'. Of these forces Gaventa (2004, 36) writes, "Creation of new institutional designs of participatory governance, in the absence of other participatory space which serve to provide and sustain countervailing power, might simply be captured by the already empowered elite."

At the opposite end of the continuum from *closed spaces* are c*laimed/created spaces.* These are spaces which are claimed by less powerful actors from or against the power-holders, or created more autonomously by them. Claimed spaces are "Those arenas in which people join together, often with others like them, in collective action, self-help initiatives or everyday sociality" (77) Often these spaces give impetus to the creation of the countervailing forces discussed above.

Still, it is possible that neither the formal structures nor the outside oppositional forces "effectively represent the interests and concerns of marginalized social groups" (Cornwall 2008, 41). "In settings where there are so many participatory initiatives and institutions, organizations

need to be very strategic about who they put forward as representatives and how much energy they devote to invited participation, and how much to stimulating other forms of participation at the grassroots" (Cornwall 2008, 61).

> Making real the promise of transformative participation calls for processes that strengthen the possibilities of active citizen engagement *both* with those institutions into which the powerful extend invitations to participate, and those through which citizens make and shape their own conditions of engagement and find and use their own voice. (Cornwall 2004, 85)

It is critical who creates these spaces because those who create them tend to have more power within them.

Participation and Neoliberalism

Although municipal government can do a great deal to improve the lives of poor citizens through policies that promote social justice,

> …much of what affects the life-chances of the poor lies outside the control of city government, determined by the market and private business, by agencies of the central state, or by the collective voluntary action of civil society. The ways in which these elements interact and the power relationships involved, are critical for the urban poor as they seek to establish and improve their position (Devas et al. 2004, 1).

A key factor determining the condition of poor people since the late 1970s and early 1980s is the embeddedness of neoliberal philosophy in state institutions. "The linchpin of neoliberal ideology," write Brenner and Theodore 2002, 350) "is the belief that open, competitive, and unregulated markets, liberated from all forms of state interference, represent the optimal mechanism for economic development." This philosophy is the underlying reason for the deregulation of industry, the weakening of labor laws, the privatization of public spaces and services, "the dismantling of welfare programs, the entrenchment of international capital mobility, the intensification of interlocality competition, and the criminalization of the urban poor" (350).

The influence of neoliberalism is present in all levels of government – global, national, and regional, but "…cities" continue Brenner and Theodore "have become strategic targets for an increasingly broad range of neoliberal policy experiments, institutional innovations, and politico-ideological projects" (375). The effect of neoliberal policy on cities can be seen in efforts that:

1. Expand community-based sectors and private approaches to social service provision.
2. Devolve erstwhile state tasks to voluntary community networks.
3. Rely on networked forms of local governance based on public private partnerships.
4. Retreat from community-oriented planning initiatives
5. Erode the contextually sensitive approaches to local policy making.

(Brenner and Theodore 2002, 369-372):

The need to gain democratic legitimacy caused neoliberal actors to adopt the language of participation while the "neoliberal project requires practices that are widely accepted as 'democratic' but that do not (or cannot) fundamentally challenge existing relations of power" (Purcell 2009, 141). For some, participation is "about efficiency and the neoliberal mantra of choice" (Cornwall 2008, 19). For others it is about the Right to the City as an ideology contrary to Neoliberalism. However as Mayer points out even this slogan has been co-opted into "a basis for legitimating existing, only weakly participatory forms of urban governance, or for exaggerating the systemic implications of newly introduced forms of citizen participation in municipal affairs" (Brenner et al. 2009, 180).

MSNP programs need to be critically examined on a case by case basis to determine whether or not a program is a ploy to gain legitimacy for neoliberal policies, as much depends

"on who participates, what they participate in, and what effect their engagement actually has on the outcomes of decisions, policies or programs" (Cornwall 2008, 19).

However, "…criticisms of participation as cooptive and ineffectual do not undermine the arguments made in its favor; rather they point to the difficulties of attaining democracy as either end or means" (Fainstein and Fainstein 1993, 68 in Fisher and Kling). In programs like the NPP, the state and civil society together create the environment that either limits or expands the influence of citizen voice in collaborative policy making. A clear understanding of the obstacles and limitations of participation as well as of its benefits is essential if practitioners are to craft strategies and institutions that combine increased citizen voice with expanded state responsiveness to produce improved democratic practice.

Chapter 3: Increasing Voice in Planning

The Neighborhood Planning Program (NPP) is an innovative approach to implementing democracy. It is an effort to change the way the City normally conducts planning by moving the locus of control from a central planning function toward the neighborhoods, for city staff to volunteer community members. It attempts to provide freedom and flexibility to neighborhoods, and at the same time, to hold individual neighborhoods accountable to the City as a whole.

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Context and Brief History of the NPP

The launch of Seattle's NPP took place in the context of widespread public distrust of City planning agencies and anger over the densification requirements of Washington State's 1994 Growth Management Act (GMA), which mandated counties to draw urban growth boundaries and assign growth targets to its urban centers. For Seattle this meant accommodating 50,000 to 60,000 new households and 140,000 new jobs within the growth boundary by 2014. To plan for the projected growth, the City developed a new comprehensive plan (Complan) called *Toward a Sustainable Seattle.* According to the plan, growth was to be concentrated in a number of designated *urban villages* that were meant to absorb a majority of the projected growth and to direct density "away from existing single-family areas and into neighborhoods where concentrations of commercial zoning and services and high density residences were already found" (Urban Villages Case Studies 2003, 8).

Initial public response to the plan was overwhelmingly negative. Neighborhood groups and associations, opposed primarily to densification, organized a *Neighborhood Rights* campaign aimed at blocking the City's adoption of the plan. They charged that the densification called for in the plan would destroy the unique local character of their neighborhoods and overwhelm existing infrastructure. Opposition groups charged that the failure of the plan to reflect the

wishes of residents was due in large part to the process adopted by the city planners to develop the plan. Although praised by professional planning groups across the country as a model planning process, neighborhood groups criticized the participation element of the process as token. They charged that the planners only allowed discussion of peripheral issues and that even with regard to marginal elements of the plan, ideas offered by residents were ignored. In response to these charges, and wanting to avoid the appearance of widespread opposition to the plan, elected officials made the case that the Complan was merely a framework for the city as a whole and that neighborhood residents would play the leading role in deciding how growth would be accommodated in the designated urban villages. The vehicle for increasing public participation in the development of neighborhood level plans was the Neighborhood Planning Program (NPP).

Occurring nearly simultaneously with the creation of the Complan was planning for a major public-private development just north of downtown called the *Seattle Commons.* If opposition to the Complan resided primarily with neighborhood groups opposed to growth, opposition to the Seattle Commons plan came principally from activists at the other end of the political spectrum opposed to the investment of City dollars in a project that would mainly benefit the city's business elite. Taken together these plans account for much of the conflict-ridden context within which the City launched the NPP.

The Seattle Commons Project

In spite of Seattle's reputation as p*rocess* city replete with active and engaged citizens, mistrust of City planners can be traced to a long history of top-down planning, failed neighborhood plans, and an overemphasis on downtown planning associated with the Planning Department (Office of Long Range Planning). All of these failings and citizen response to them

are exemplified in the battle over the proposed *Seattle Commons* project that occurred in the early 1990s. Spearheaded by downtown business interests and supported by Mayor Norm Rice, the conflict over this proposed "public-private partnership" had a profound effect on the mayor that subsequently influenced the design and implementation of the NPP. The Commons proposal would have redeveloped 480 acres just north of Seattle's downtown. At the time of the proposal, the land supported light industrial and manufacturing uses and provided inexpensive workspace and housing. The proposed redevelopment would include a 74-acre park in addition to upscale residential, commercial, and recreational space. The plan included a provision for affordable housing, but even this inclusion would not have mitigated the displacement of the neighborhood's existing uses and residents. Finally, the development called for the infusion of $380 million of City money to pay for elements of the plan -- $254 million for the park, $92 million for street access and improvement, and $34 million for affordable housing.

Supporters of the Commons project recognized that, if it were to be realized, the plan would need to become part of Seattle's developing Complan. Necessary support for the Commons "was garnered through the cultivation of 'influentials', many of whom were in leadership positions in a variety of civic organizations and who knew one another from current and past civic betterment efforts" (Iglitzin 1995, 5). The resulting group constituted the core of the "downtown elite." This group began gradually buying property in the area in order to secure the land for the proposed park. Their hope was that by becoming landowners, they would build positive relationships with existing property owners, making it easier to acquire the properties needed for the park. "The commons committee estimated that $20 million of private funds was needed to meet its land acquisition goal of owning at least 50% of the land within the proposed park boundaries. A quiet fundraising campaign during the better part of a year targeted local

individuals having substantial personal or corporate wealth (Iglitzin 1995, 7). As a result of these efforts, the group secured a $20 million loan from Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen, which allowed the organizing group to proceed with land acquisition.

At the same time the Commons Committee was acquiring land in the South Lake Union neighborhood, the City moved toward completion of the Complan. Iglitzin (10) wrote, "As the City's own timeline moved toward completion of its broad Comprehensive Plan, it became clear that the immense work that the Commons had put into the South Lake Union area was receiving a special level of attention from City staff." "It was no secret," he continued,

> …according to virtually everyone interviewed for this study on both sides of the issues that elected and appointed City officials and staff were involved informally during the whole time, providing guidance and technical assistance [to Commons supporters], presumably with the approval, if not at the explicit behest of the mayor.

Opposition to the plan came from an informal coalition of groups and residents within the neighborhood and CDCs and other nonprofit neighborhood development groups working outside the South Lake Union area. From inside the neighborhood, a loosely organized group of small business owners objected to the emphasis on residential development in the area (a projected 15,000 new housing units), fearing they would be displaced to make way for the proposed park or that they would be forced out by rising land prices and taxes. Another source of opposition from inside the neighborhood came from the Cascade Residents Action Group (CRAG). Iglitzin (1995, 9) describes this group as organizers, many of whom were longtime residents of the neighborhood, and who had been involved in advocacy for low-income and powerless people for years. A CRAG press release early in 1993 stressed community residents' lack of participation in the genesis and development of the Commons' vision, and charged that "business interests were

seeking City approval of re-zones in order to set off a wave of speculative redevelopment driving up property values and forcing out the residents currently living in low cost housing."

Opposition also came from citywide anti-poverty groups. One of these was the Washington Community Development Coalition (WCDC) – a group of 8 CDCs including the Black Dollars Day Task Force, Mount Zion Housing, and the Low Income Housing Institute. In a letter to Mayor Rice the WCDC expressed the fear that the redevelopment of the South Lake Union area would divert funds from the "high priority community and economic development needs of distressed areas of the Central District, International District, and South East Seattle" (Seattle PI Monday April 25, 1994). The letter continued:

> This long-term commitment of resources to a single project could result in diverting available dollars from critical development projects, job creation efforts, and human resource needs – affecting the future of other communities…The City must keep distressed areas in the forefront of all planning processes.

Housing advocates also charged that, in spite of the provision for affordable housing in the plan, the Commons project would result in the destruction of 800 – 1,000 low-income housing units.

The other citywide opposition group, headed by anti-displacement advocates Peter Steinbrueck (who later became a strong supporter of the NPP as a member of the City Council) and Walt Crowley was Allied Arts of Seattle. In a letter to Mayor Rice, Allied Arts wrote (Seattle P.I. April 30, 1993),

> A legitimate draft plan [for the Commons] is not possible until a clearer and more neutral public process is established, until a more realistic projection of potential cost is presented, until a more detailed and thorough analysis of reasonable alternatives is conducted and until significantly more credible context is established for evaluating competing public priorities. We do not believe that any expenditure of public resources on the Seattle Commons proposal should be considered until all of these minimum criteria are satisfied.

On October 16, 1993, Steinbrueck wrote to the Seattle P.I.,

> Scarce public money for neighborhood planning should not favor one neighborhood or group over another for political reasons, but should be fairly and appropriately allocated citywide – especially if the mayor is serious about ensuring 'social equity'. As it states in the mayor's draft Comprehensive Plan: '(the plan) must appropriately distribute the burdens and benefits of living in this city and region, and do a good job of balancing public and private interest and those of individuals and groups.

At the very least, opponents argued, the City "should finish the Complan before deciding anything about the Commons." Steinbrueck and other Commons opponents urged that the plan receive prior voter approval before the City committed funds to the project. The proposed City expenditure of $380 million was put on the ballot in 1995 and defeated.

Many residents' experience of the handling of the Commons project reinforced two feelings already present in the City: 1) planners did top-down planning and didn't listen to or consult the people affected by the plan and 2) too many City resources were dedicated to downtown development and too little to the city's neighborhoods. In his 1997 *State of the City* address, Mayor Rice "admitted misjudging the depth of public anger over the Commons levy." He continued, "…anger over the Commons still remains, and it has contributed to the chasm that's growing among us today" (Seattle PI, January 28 1997). His experience with the Commons project convinced Rice that, if it were to be successful, the NPP would need to address the imbalances of power that had resulted in the undue influence of professional planners and downtown interests in determining the future of the city.

A second element of the context for the NPP includes previous City-supported neighborhood planning initiatives. The City's record of neighborhood planning was mixed, with some plans leading to successful implementation and others that never made it off the shelf. In the neighborhoods where planners solicited only public feedback on City planners' existing

designs, residents tended to be dissatisfied with the outcomes. “I worked for four years in the U District on a City-led planning program that pooped out” said Harold Hemke, recalling an effort made by what was then called the City’s Office of Long-Range Planning (Seattle Times May 16, 1994). However in areas where the neighborhoods took the lead, with support from the City, responses were more positive, especially as regards plan implementation. Neighborhood planning had a good record in the Southeast and Central neighborhoods in particular. These two neighborhoods created five-year implementation-oriented action plans in the early 1990s. These plans were a result of a 1991 initiative introduced by Mayor Norm Rice called *Neighborhood Seattle*. The initiative was designed to “develop strategies for assisting those neighborhoods in greatest need of assistance namely Southeast and Central” (Bright 2000, 18). In Southeast neighborhoods community councils, local CDCs, and residents wrote the plan with active support from the City’s Office of Economic Development. One CDC director described the process as follows:

> The community and SEED (Southeast Effective Development, Inc.) wrote the action plan for this area in 1990. Every year, the City and SEED convene citizens’ groups to review and update the plan. Then the responses go to the mayor, who circulates them to the departments and says, ‘What are you doing about this?’ and they respond. Then the community organizations review the responses and push for more’ (Bright 2000, 18).

The process for the Central neighborhoods plan was similar and included an inventory of vacant and “underdeveloped” property, a housing maintenance repair survey to determine the condition of area housing, and job creation and business development programs. Funding for implementation of these plans came from federal (HUD and CDBG) grants, City funding, and private resources secured by the CDCs. These planning processes served in many ways as pilots for the NPP. Just as the Commons offered a cautionary example, the Central Area and Southeast neighborhoods modeled aspects of successful neighborhood planning that were later

incorporated into the NPP. The *Neighborhood Seattle* plans were especially important in convincing Mayor Rice that neighborhood-led planning could produce results and at the same time the program convinced key leaders from the Central and Southeast areas that the City could be trusted to allow the neighborhoods to take the lead and to follow through on plan implementation. Still, it was not until it was clear that neighborhoods would contract with the City to do their own planning for the NPP and that their earlier plans would be folded into the NPP plans that the leaders of these two key areas threw their support behind the *NPP*.

The Complan – Toward a Sustainable Seattle

Seattle's NPP was introduced in direct response to vocal opposition from anti-growth neighborhood activists . In 1990 the Washington State legislature enacted the state's Growth Management Act (GMA) in an effort to curb the sprawl that encroached upon foothills, farmlands, and wetlands; to decrease pollution; and to ease growing traffic congestion in the state's urban areas. The GMA mandated that the state's counties and communities that met specific population densities and growth rates, draw urban growth boundaries, assign growth targets to its urban centers, and produce comprehensive plans specifying how anticipated growth would be managed in the next 20 years (Godschalk 2000).

Called *Toward a Sustainable Seattle* the central concept of the resulting Comprehensive Plan (Complan) was the *Urban Village*. According to the plan, designated urban villages would concentrate anticipated growth around transit hubs in neighborhoods that had the necessary infrastructure to support growth. Seattle's Office of Long-Range Planning created the Complan using accepted planning practices that involved consultation with neighborhood groups. These sessions usually consisted of soliciting feedback on proposals put forth by department staff. Although it received praise from planners around the country, local critics blasted the plan as a

top-down blueprint imposed on unwilling neighborhoods. It was vigorously resisted by neighborhood groups opposed to the densification of certain neighborhoods that felt that they had not been heard in the consultation process. In reporting on public response to the Complan, The Seattle Post Intelligencer (Seattle PI, April 15, 1993) wrote,

> …some Seattle neighborhood groups complained that they had been shut out of the City's planning effort. 'This has been a top-down planning process all the way' said Thelma Straager of the Ravenna-Bryant Community Association. 'They've posed this in such a way that if you resist their change, you're against all change."

In this political climate, Mayor Rice released the final Complan in March 1994. Rice insisted that the proposed urban villages would accommodate the growth anticipated by the GMA while at the same time maintaining the neighborhood character of the city. City planners identified thirty-eight urban villages as areas that, in their best judgment, could support increased density in both housing and jobs (Figure 3-1). These 38 areas were meant to direct growth "away from existing single-family areas and into neighborhoods where concentrations of commercial zoning and services and high density residences were already found" (Urban Villages Case Studies 2003, 8). According to the Complan (p.1.7) neighborhoods outside of urban villages would be permitted to "accommodate some growth in a less dense development pattern of single-family neighborhoods, and limited multifamily, and industrial areas."

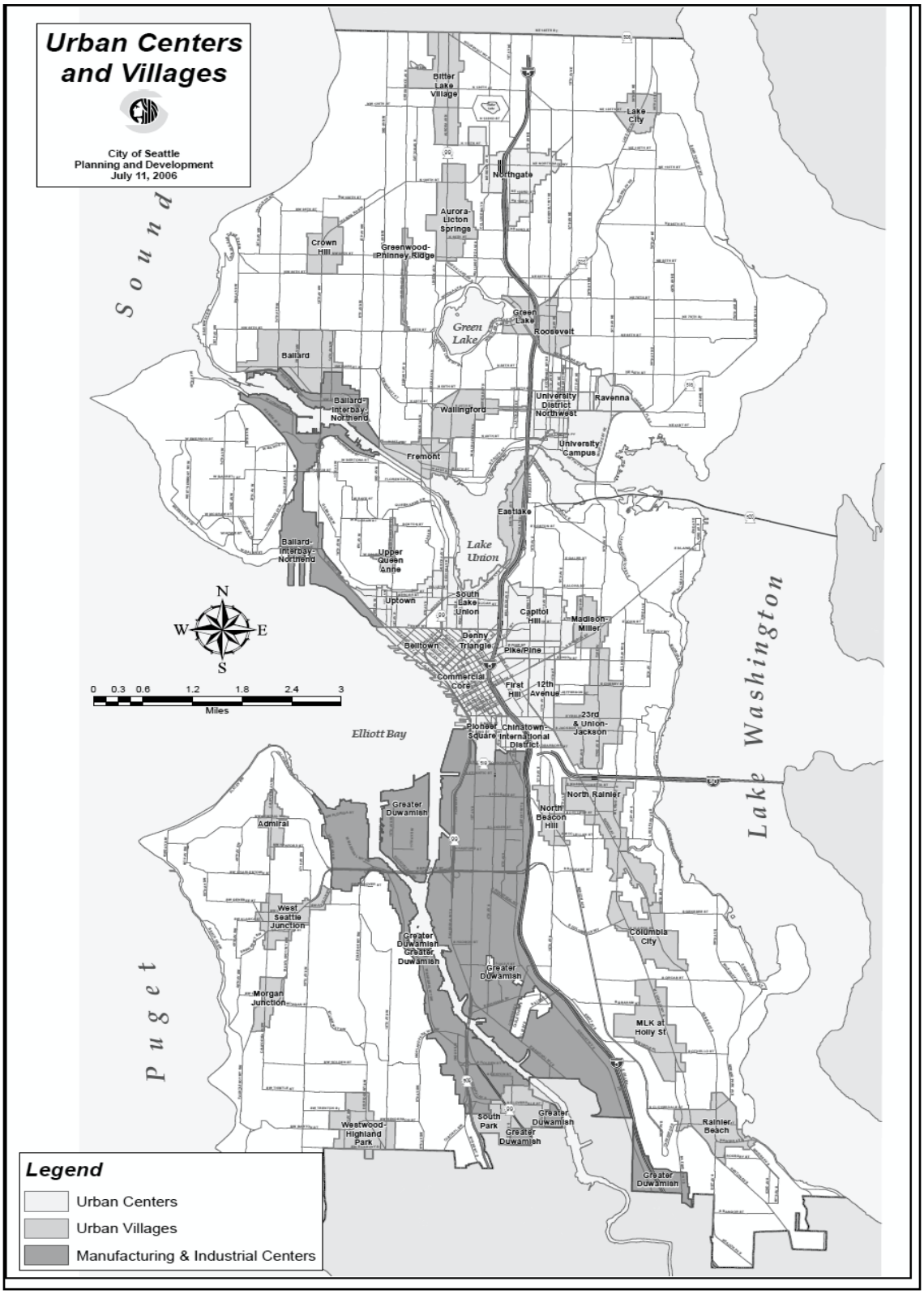


Figure 3: Designated Urban Centers and Villages

Negative reaction to the plan was almost immediate, and came especially from residential groups that feared that up-zoning with an increase in multifamily housing would change the character of their neighborhoods. The most vocal groups came from neighborhoods in the upper-middle and upper quintiles of median household income (2000 census) including upper Queen Anne, West Seattle, and Roosevelt. Residents of all these areas, with heavy representation from West Seattle, organized a *Neighborhood Rights Campaign* aimed at scaling back the urban village component of the Complan. In June 1994 more than 450 people gathered in West Seattle to voice their opposition to the plan. They backed an alternative proposal called *The Neighborhood Proposal*, put forth by a coalition of 16 neighborhood and business groups that would reduce the number of urban villages to 14, all of which would be located in already highly urbanized areas. According to this proposal, other neighborhoods would be allowed to decide for themselves whether or not they wanted to receive the urban village classification, and if they chose to become an urban village, would set their own density and job targets (Seattle P.I. June 17, 1994). The Neighborhood Proposal was supported by two City Council members who "concluded after a recent series of public hearings that it would be unwise to impose urban villages on neighborhoods where strong opposition exists." They called for a new designation called the *neighborhood anchor* where there "would be no boundaries and no multifamily housing allowed in single-family zones (Seattle P.I. July 12, 1994).

Support for the urban village concept resided in neighborhoods in the bottom and lower-middle quintile of median household incomes including Southeast Seattle, Rainier Beach, the Central Area, and the Chinatown/International District. Many residents in these neighborhoods had had positive experiences with the *Neighborhood Seattle* program and felt it was better to plan for growth in their neighborhoods rather than just wait for it to happen. They believed that

growth was inevitable and because their neighborhoods were ripe for gentrification, they wanted some check on developers. The primary concern voiced by residents of these neighborhoods was that the City would fail to commit sufficient resources to implement the plan. They voiced "overwhelming support" for the plan but urged planners to place a high priority on jobs, housing, and economic development elements. In addition, residents wanted plans that called for improved public transportation, more green space in their neighborhoods and "shorter walking distances to goods and services." "Let's get on with it" said one resident, "and spend our money on development" (Seattle P.I. June 30, 1994).

Residents of North Seattle neighborhoods including Greenwood, Green Lake, and Freemont were divided in their support for the plan holding opinions that ranged from strong support to fears that the plan "would destroy single-family neighborhoods." One resident said, "You're going to destroy families with this urban village concept. Only developers eager to build multifamily housing will benefit at the expense of single-family neighborhoods." A different view was expressed by another resident who said, "I believe density is not the enemy" and urged each neighborhood to accept its share of growth and stop trying to exclude people" (Seattle P.I. July 1, 1994).

Residents in neighborhoods not designated as urban villages were happy with their status until it became clear that significant resources would be channeled into plan neighborhoods and that although plan neighborhoods would not have final control of funds, neighborhood plans would have a significant influence on how City resources were allocated for at least the next ten years. At this point, neighborhoods not included in the NPP voiced desire to create neighborhood plans. Higher income neighborhoods, like Magnolia, Laurelhurst, and Madison Park, tended not to fit the criteria for urban village designation because they were not "neighborhoods where

concentrations of commercial zoning and services, and high-density residences were already found" Urban Villages Case Studies 2003, 8). The City's response was to allow any neighborhood to create a neighborhood plan, but to provide funding and NPP classification only for neighborhoods designated as urban villages in the Complan. In the end only these 38 designated neighborhoods engaged in the NPP.

When the Complan came before the City Council for adoption, Councilmembers remained deeply divided over the urban villages' strategy. Those opposed to adoption of the Complan said that although they supported many of the plan's elements, they were opposed to the urban village component, fearing that "imposing urban villages on neighborhoods that didn't want them was unnecessarily divisive" (Seattle PI, July 26, 1994). By moving ahead with the plan Councilwoman Sherry Harris charged that the Council was "ignoring the wishes of those who didn't want to live in urban villages" (Seattle PI July 16, 1994). Proponents including community activist Peter Steinbrueck argued at the time that the opposition's *Neighborhood Proposal* with its *neighborhood anchors*,

> …would have dismembered the Complan as whole cloth and could result in expensive, undirected, City Hall-dominated, helter-skelter development the urban village framework seeks to combat. Such a community-secession policy would prevent Seattle's ability to evolve as a whole piece and would, inevitably lead to…more traffic congestion and pockets of urban decay" (Seattle PI July 1994)

Finally on July 25, 1994 in a 6-3 vote the City Council adopted the Complan with its urban village strategy

The NPP: The Politics of Getting Started

Thus the stage was set for the NPP, but to enable the City to fulfill its promises to the neighborhoods of independence in the planning process, significant decision-making power, and broad-based participation, the City needed to make substantial changes in its planning

infrastructure and its formal participation structures. The changes crafted by Mayor Rice, in effect, sidelined the normally powerful voices in City planning and entrenched neighborhood groups and replaced them with new structures, approaches and players.

Changing Planning.

Perhaps the most significant of these preparatory moves was to re-organize the planning infrastructure of the City in order to carry-out neighborhood-led planning and to legitimatize neighborhood planners. First, the Mayor created a new office to execute the NPP. The new agency, called the Office of Neighborhood Planning (ONP), was situated in the executive branch, and reported directly to the Mayor. The ONP was responsible for all aspects of the NPP's planning phase and was designed to sunset after the projected four years of planning. The implementation phase of the NPP would be handed over to Department of Neighborhoods (DON). The ONP was staffed not with professional planners but with a director and 15 Project Managers. The Project Managers were people who had neighborhood organizing backgrounds or who had worked in community nonprofits and were selected for "skills in communication, community building, consensus generation, and project management." Their "primary function [was] to get results" and, although "project managers would not be doing the plans", planning skills were deemed "desirable" but not essential" (Attachment A to City Council Resolution 29015 establishing a Neighborhood Planning Program for the City of Seattle, 10-10-94). Instead of conducting the planning, Project Managers established relationships in the neighborhoods, helped neighborhood planning groups understand the program, and cleared away bureaucratic obstacles encountered by the neighborhoods during the planning (ONP July 19, 1995 "What is the Role of the Project Manager?").

After establishing the ONP, Rice merged the functions of the Office of Planning and the Office of Budget into a single department called the Office of Management and Planning (OMP). Although this new office housed some traditional planning functions, the reorganization had the effect of eliminating the central planning function from the City bureaucracy. One result of restructuring the City's planning functions was to minimize the role of professional planners in the execution of the NPP. Rather than acting as the lead agency for the NPP, the OMP was assigned a "prime supporting" role in neighborhood planning with responsibility for 1) preparing a Community Profile for each neighborhood planning group that consisted of background information on previous plans, maps and demographic information, 2) providing information to each planning group on City regulations and existing programs and facilities a neighborhood group could use to accomplish recommendations set out in their plan, and 3) offering information on the planning groups' relationship with the City (*Seattle's NPP: What is the NPP?,*ONP, May 2, 1995)

These proposals from the Mayor generated considerable opposition in the City Council and the planning department. The Council feared the move would give the mayor too much power and the planning department, unhappy with being broken-up, charged that the neighborhood plans would suffer from lack of professional guidance. In the end, the mayor was able to generate enough support in the City Council and among the leadership of the planning department to implement the changes.

In a mid-term evaluation of the NPP, Cy Ulberg (1996) from the University of Washington wrote,

> The City's decision to allow the neighborhoods to do their own planning through the NPP represented an effort to change the way the City had conducted planning in the past by moving the locus of control from a

central planning function towards the neighborhoods, from City staff to volunteer community members.

But redesigning the City's planning functions represented only half the job of creating an environment in which new ways of thinking about neighborhood planning and public participation could be encouraged. The City's formal participation structures consisting of Community and District Councils and Citywide Neighborhood Council had become weighed down by entrenched leadership, ossified process, and narrowly defined issues. These structures needed to change significantly or be replaced by new more flexible and inclusive vehicles for participation.

Changing Participation

Seattle's formal neighborhood involvement structure (Figure 4) of thirteen district councils, community councils and the City Neighborhood Council was established in 1987 as part of the City's Neighborhood Planning and Assistance Program legislation. Each of the District Councils developed distinctive characteristics based on the particularities of the neighborhoods, but as early as 1989 it was clear that most Councils lacked ethnic, racial, and economic diversity, and representation of each district's various neighborhoods on its Council was uneven. The City Council acknowledged these problems by passing Resolution 28115 that directed the District Councils to "seek to reflect the geographic, racial, cultural and economic characteristics of the district." Still the Councils continued to struggle with diversity and with recruiting and retaining new leadership.

By the launch of the NPP in 1994, District Councils had become more or less fixed in membership and process and were viewed by many neighborhood and community groups as "tools" of the City, thereby making them suspect as vehicles for the neighborhood planning process. Groups organizing to launch the NPP expressed the belief that reliance on them as a

local base for the planning would frustrate the independence of the neighborhood planning process. NPP designers concurred and although District Councils retained an advisory role in the



Figure 4: City of Seattle Neighborhood Involvement Structure

program, they would not have a central function or decision-making role in the process. The NPP's enabling legislation states that,

> District Councils may assist with outreach, with reaching consensus on appropriate planning areas and planning coalitions and with resolution of issues crossing the boundaries of planning areas, e.g., transportation. The District Council may offer comments on neighborhood plans. (City Council Resolution 29015, Appendix A 1994).

The meaning was clear –just as City planners could advise but not drive the neighborhood planning process, so too was the District Councils' role to be a strictly consultative one and the framework for the NPP would need to be built from the bottom-up.

Key Elements of the NPP

With the City Council on board and new departmental designs in place, Rice was nearly ready to launch the NPP. What he still lacked was a design for the program itself. Rice and leadership from the NPO and the DON decided that if the process were to be truly "community driven", representatives from the neighborhoods needed to be included from the beginning and that meant participating in the program's design. The result was a day-long Neighborhood Planning Workshop that brought together 300 City staff and neighborhood representatives to develop a structure for neighborhood planning (Seattle Times, May 16, 1994 Planning Buffs talk the Day Away).

NPP Program Design

The outcomes of the meeting included a draft framework for the program, an eleven person task force that would work with the NPO to refine the draft framework and an advisory committee whose job it was to insure that the planning process remained community driven. The general process outlined by the workshop followed the design of an existing DON program called the Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF). The NMF provides grants ranging from a few

hundred dollars to $100,000 to neighborhood groups to help them carry out projects aimed at meeting a specific need within their neighborhoods. Grantees match the City funds with in-kind goods, labor, and cash. Grants are given for neighborhood planning or design projects, neighborhood organizing, physical improvement projects, and events such as festivals, training programs, or workshops. In recollecting the Neighborhood Planning Workshop DON Director, Jim Diers (2004, 132) reflected that "the upshot was that they liked the basic Neighborhood Matching Fund model, in which the community initiates the plan, defines its own boundaries and scope of work, hires its own planner, and is integrally involved throughout the process." However, workshop participants identified two shortcomings of the Matching Fund Model that they hoped the planning processes would correct. The first was that because any group could submit Matching Fund proposals without consultation with other neighborhood residents, key stakeholders could be left out of important neighborhood development plans. The second shortcoming identified by participants was that the Matching Fund process was too independent of City government. Again Diers (133) recalls, "Participants in the Saturday meeting emphasized that a community needs advice and support prior to hiring its planners; the planning process could benefit from the information and expertise of City departments, and successful plan implementation would require ownership by City departments as well as by the community." As a result of these

comments, both *inclusion* and *collaboration* became guiding principles of the NPP and

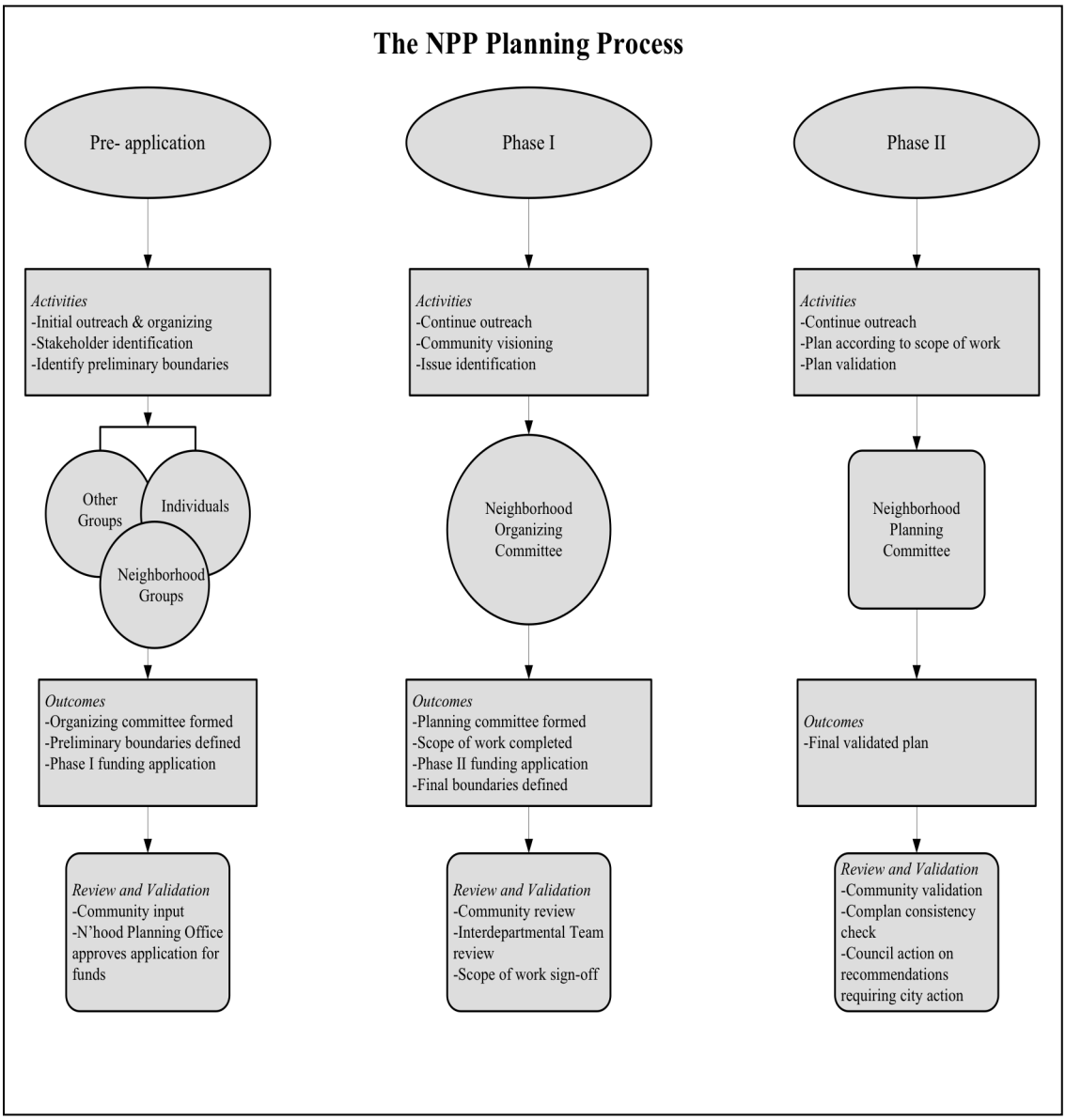


Figure 5: Phases of the NPP Process

were reflected in its design.

In the end, the NPP was divided into three phases (Figure 5). The first was called the pre-application phase. During the pre-application phase groups and individuals interested in the planning came together, met with project managers from the City, and began the process of

identifying a comprehensive list of neighborhood stakeholders and conducting initial outreach. The aim of this preliminary stage was to inform as many people as possible about the NPP and to solicit their participation. At the end of the pre-application phase a neighborhood would have selected an organizing committee to conduct Phase I of the planning and have been approved for Phase I funding by the NPO.

In Phase I the primary task of the organizing committee was to engage as broad and representative a group as possible in articulating a collective vision for the neighborhood and to decide what issues the plan would address. The principal activity of Phase I was outreach to both the community at large and to targeted segments of it; typically hard to reach or marginalized groups. At the end of Phase I, the neighborhood would have selected a planning committee to conduct Phase II, completed a scope of work that defined the content of the plan, selected final plan area boundaries, and signed a contract with the City defining conditions of mutual accountability and releasing the $60,000 to $80,000[12] for Phase II.

In Phase II the actual plan was created. With funding from the City, planning committees hired consultants to facilitate and guide plan development. Planning committees often employed task forces of residents to work on particular elements of the plan. These groups solicited technical advice from City staff and additional neighborhood participation in the task of adding detail to the identified problems and to craft recommendations aimed at problem solution. Training was also an important element of Phase II. In a 1996 email to NPO staff, Director Karma Rudder (Seattle City Archives, Box 4, Folder 9 11/22/96) identified three areas of training that NPO needed to address. These were 1) how to give neighborhood planning groups an understanding of what they needed to know in order to made a difference in a particular

[12] Industrial and manufacturing areas could receive up to $100,000 because of the increased technical nature of the problems in these areas.

topical field. 2) how to train the groups in meeting facilitation and consensus building, and 3) how to make planning groups aware of the materials that had been developed to date to address content and process issues. The resulting training program had three levels, with sessions lasting from several hours to three months, these were, 1) The Neighborhood Planning Process: Pre-Application, Phase I, Phase II ; 2) Community Building: conducting effective meetings, working as a team (including conflict resolution), meeting facilitation, and community organizing skills; and 3) Specialized Training: researching community specific issues, communicating results, and getting government action/approval. The training was provided by outside consultants, NPO and DON staff, experts from within city departments, and community organizations. Specific trainers included, the Center for Ethical Leadership, The Enterprise Community Training Project, NPO, DON, the Institute of Cultural Affairs, the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program, the Seattle Office of Management and Planning, and Sustainable Seattle.

At the end of Phase II the neighborhood had a plan that had been validated as representing the wishes of most residents. Phase II also produced an Approval and Adoption Matrix that specified any new legislation needed to implement specific aspects of the plan. The Matrices also listed the City's response to each recommendation and served as a work plan as the City and the neighborhoods moved into implementation. Phase II concluded with the adoption of each plan by the City Council and its incorporation into the Complan. Fung (2004, 6) concludes that in successful co-governance initiatives, "support and accountability [become] two pillars of a reconstructed relationship between central power and neighborhood action that can reinforce local autonomy."

Accountable Autonomy

It was not, however, the NPP's basic design that made the NPP a vehicle for increasing resident voice in the neighborhood planning process. Rather it was the complex means employed to hold the tension between City support and neighborhood autonomy; and between the multi-directional requirements for accountability embedded in the process. Underlying mechanisms was the overarching notion of what Fung (2004) calls a*ccountable autonomy*-- on the one hand, significant decisions normally made by the City were shifted to the neighborhoods and on the other, means were established for holding neighborhoods accountable for inclusion, fair decision-making, and the responsible use of public funds.

The tension between autonomy and accountability is a defining one in co-governance initiatives where decision-making is devolved to local units. Fung (2004, 6) concludes that in successful co-governance initiatives, "support and accountability [become] two pillars of a reconstructed relationship between central power and neighborhood action that can reinforce local autonomy." Accountable autonomy recognizes that local groups often lack needed support in the form of financial resources, training, expertise, and access to public agencies to accomplish their goals. On the other hand, without forms of accountability, local groups may become undemocratic, unrepresentative, and dedicated to narrow interests that do not correspond to the concerns of the broader community.

For Seattle, if neighborhood groups engaged in the publicly sponsored neighborhood planning program had no substantive decision making authority, their participation would be seen as a pretense designed to give legitimacy to planning decisions that had already been made by the City. If, on the other hand local planning groups were not accountable to both the City and their broader neighborhood constituency for the quality of their process and their planning

product, the local planning process could be dominated by local elites, exclude important local actors, and/or produce uninformed results. The NPO, whose job was to hold this tension in balance often found itself torn between allowing adequate flexibility and openness to new ideas from the neighborhoods and ensuring adequate accountability and fairness as a government program using public funds (Ulberg et al. 1996, 14).

Three policies in particular illustrate the NPO's commitment to neighborhood autonomy in the planning process. First, neighborhoods would define the boundaries of their planning area; second, they would manage the funds received from the City for planning, and hire and manage their own consultants; and third neighborhoods would define the issues and planning elements (with some restrictions, see below) to be addressed in the plan. Neighborhoods were held accountable to democratic and inclusive process by 1) the contract each neighborhood signed with the City in order to receive funding, including its reporting requirements, and 2) the series of neighborhood validation steps included in the process. In addition, the final plans needed to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan (although neighborhoods could recommend changes to the Complan as part of their neighborhood plan), inclusive, legal, and collaborative with the City" (Seattle Planning Commission 2001, 10). The City's accountability to the neighborhoods was reflected in the creation of Approval and Adoption documents that translated each neighborhood plan into a work-plan for the City's departments and agencies including any legal action required to make the plans implementable.

These policies sometimes conflicted and trade offs were made. For example, having neighborhoods define their scope of work resulted in significant variation in the content of the plans whereas a City-provided plan template would have resulted in greater consistency among the neighborhoods. Having neighborhoods determine their own planning boundaries resulted in

large differences in the size and population of planning areas. For example, the Crown Hill/Ballard planning area with a population of 43,307 covered approximately 32 square miles, while tiny Pioneer Square with a population of 2,020 covered only a few city blocks. The comprehensive neighborhood validation process meant that changes often needed to be made in nearly complete plans, stretching the process to four years for many neighborhoods. In sum, the commitment to autonomy and accountability made the process messy, long and often contentious. However, it also enabled, "neighborhood groups [to] execute the program under their own leadership and guidance with support from the City" (Seattle Planning Commission 2001, 10). One neighborhood planner described the experience as follows,

> If you're going to ask neighborhoods to do neighborhood planning, the City's job is to listen and avoid steering the process too much. To the City's credit, they tried to leave the process as open as they could. There was an inherent tension between the desire for a 'hands off' approach with the desire to keep things on track. As a result of their grassroots efforts, a lot of people got involved in planning who never would have. There were true results (Seattle Planning Commission 2001, 30).

Shifting decisions to the neighborhoods: Boundaries, Scope of Work, Finances

In sketching the issue of plan area boundaries, the City Council, (Resolution 29015, which authorizes the NPP) exposed the tension between autonomy and accountability embedded in the process of identifying neighborhood plan areas. The Resolution stated,

> The City will recognize that self-definition of neighborhood boundaries is critical to the neighborhoods. The participating neighborhoods will recognize that City has a responsibility to look at the City as a whole and ensure that City needs are considered and address whether or not those needs fit squarely with a particular neighborhood's boundaries.

Boundaries were provisionally determined in Phase I of the planning by the neighborhood organizing committees. The key issue for the City was that all areas named by the Complan as Urban Villages, Urban Centers, and Manufacturing/Industrial Areas be included

within the boundaries of a planning area. Most planning boundaries expanded the planning area to more than the designated urban village (Figure 6). The City's other specification was that all neighborhoods designated as *distressed*[13] would be included in a planning area. With the exception of the Delridge neighborhood, all distressed neighborhoods fell within one of the 37 neighborhood planning areas as defined by the neighborhoods in Phase I. Because of its designation as a distressed neighborhood, Delridge was added to the list of neighborhoods participating in the NPP and became the 38th planning neighborhood.

[13] The City described a distressed neighborhood as one that had 1) a high concentration (compared to the rest of the City) of people living in economic hardship, 2) chronic long-term economic and residential disinvestment which, in turn creates lack of adequate housing and services and 3) social, economic, and physical environments, in general, in need of improvement (Neighborhood Planning Office, "Criteria for Defining "Distressed Areas", March 21, 1996.

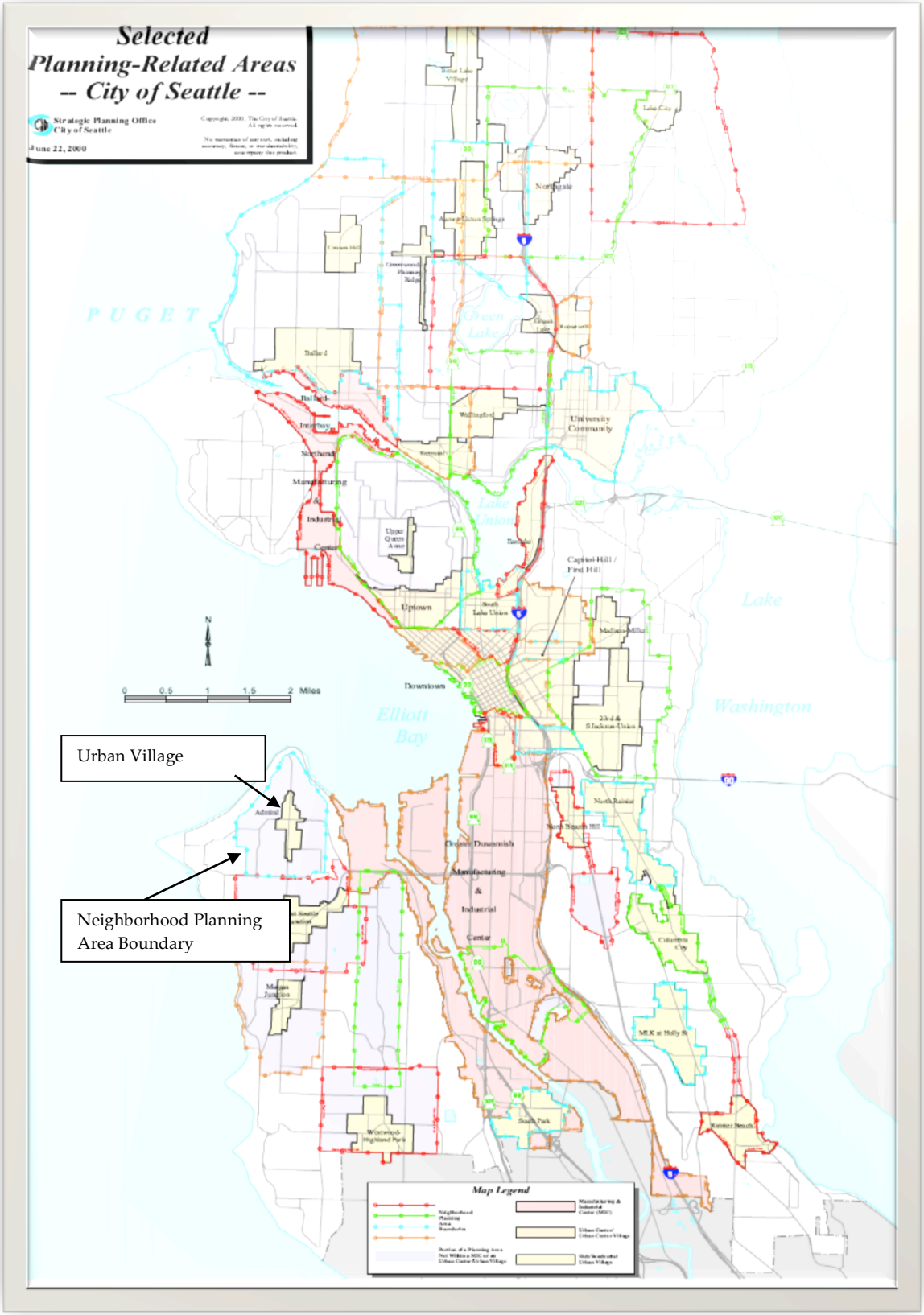


Figure 6: Neighborhood Planning Areas

Although the neighborhood planning committee established tentative boundaries, they were not final until they were confirmed in Phase I. There were cases where two contiguous neighborhoods had overlapping boundaries. When this occurred, first, representatives from both neighborhoods met to try to eliminate the overlap. Failing that the neighborhoods could 1) negotiate issues, for example, agreeing that only one of the planning efforts would be able to recommend changes in land use for that area, 2) establish a liaison committee that was responsible for dealing with issues in an area so that stakeholders only have to participate in one process, or 3) devise some other arrangement (Neighborhood Planning Office, "Planning Focus Area Boundaries, March 21, 1996). If agreement was still not forthcoming, the Director of the NPO made a final determination. In the end, boundaries varied considerably. "Some of them were *neighborhoods* as commonly defined, and some of them were not" (LWV 2001, SF3). These differences in what constituted a neighborhood contributed to variation in the scope and detail of the final plans; they also, however, helped produce plans that were appropriate to the nature and unique characteristics of the particular planning area. The boundary issues illustrate the trade-offs involved in accountable autonomy – it would have been easier and perhaps better in many ways, if the City had simply assigned boundaries to the planning areas, but having the neighborhoods make their own planning area selection lent credence, early in the process, to the City's commitment to a neighborhood driven process.

The second policy that signaled the shift of significant decisions to the neighborhoods was the decision to leave the determination of the plan's scope to the local planning groups. The DON described the scope of work as "the specific issues to be addressed in a neighborhood plan [that were] identified during community discussions and visioning" (How to Create a "Scope of

Work" for the Planning Effort, 07/05/95). In order to be accepted by the NPO, the local committee needed to demonstrate that the Scope of Work for Phase II Planning:

1. Addressed the needs and interests of all stakeholders identified in Phase I.
2. Addressed the Comprehensive Plan's core values of environmental stewardship, economic opportunity, social equity and community.
3. Addressed community interests identified in surveys, visioning, and focus groups conducted in Phase I.

The planning committee completed the scope of work in Phase I using research gathered from community outreach and with technical support in the form of neighborhood profiles and data from the OMP. The profiles included demographic data as well as information on any existing plans affecting the neighborhood and maps.

As with boundaries, the scope of work differed significantly among the neighborhoods. Neighborhoods were required to include the Complan elements: land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities and utilities, but were not limited to planning in these categories. Most plans were some combination of the Complan elements plus economic development, public safety, environment, cultural resources, human services, education, and open space depending on the issues identified through surveys, workshops, charettes and the like.

Neighborhoods constructed different scopes of work, using different approaches, depending on the particularities of the neighborhood. For example, First Hill a dense urban neighborhood with an ethnically mixed population, a large percentage of over- 65 years old residents, and large institutions including hospitals, extensive medical facilities and Seattle University distributed 7,000 surveys to a neighborhood population of 8,032 with a response rate of 15 percent. This was one of seven different strategies used by the First Hill, planning committee to reach both the broad community and targeted groups including Vietnamese speakers, children, homeless people, and human service providers. The result was that the scope

of work reflected the needs of the particular population, emphasizing meeting human needs-especially health services, open space, public safety, economic development, and mixed income housing. The Ballard Interbay Northend Manufacturing and Industrial Center's (BINMIC) neighborhood is a very different kind of neighborhood with 971 acres of waterfront and upland property that supports more than 1,000 businesses with 16,000 employees. About half of these businesses are considered industrial or manufacturing; the BINMIC is also home port of the North Pacific Fishing Fleet. The BINMIC's scope of work reflects its industrial character and included projects concerning transportation, especially related to getting goods into and out of the neighborhood, industrial land use, economic development, especially maritime industries including fishing, public utilities, services and infrastructure and the regulatory environment.

Lastly, the way the neighborhoods allocated the funds they received from the city for planning and how they managed consultants was another illustration of the complex interweaving of autonomy and accountability in NPP policy. Each neighborhood received $10,000 from the City for Phase I of the planning. These funds were used primarily for outreach and initial research on conditions in and the needs of the neighborhood. However within these general categories, the neighborhoods used the funds very differently. For example, the BINMIC, whose planning committee represented manufacturing property owners, business associations, labor, and community groups and residents, spent all $10,000 on consultant fees, which allowed them to combine the community plan with an accompanying document that detailed technical analyses of all EIS elements in the plan – a factor that was critical to the viability of this particular neighborhood plan. Greenwood/Phinney Ridge, a largely residential neighborhood, spent only 35 percent of its budget on consultants and 51 percent on printing duplicating and postage. The Eastlake neighborhood, a dense, mixed-use area, spent 61 percent

of their funds on administrative support with no money going for consultants (Ulberg et al. 1996, 10). These differences reflected not only differences in the neighborhoods themselves, but also the different ways that the neighborhood decided to approach the planning.

Many neighborhoods struggled to do the Phase I research and conduct the outreach necessary to ensure an inclusive process within the $10,000 limit. The NPO agreed with the neighborhoods' assessment and NPO director, Karma Rudder, wrote to the City Council, (Memo, March 28, 1996).

> What we have found is that most communities cannot do the extensive outreach required for an inclusive and representative planning process within the $10,000 guideline for Phase 1.

The Council responded by providing additional funding for outreach mailings from the neighborhood organizing committees to stakeholders, and by making available supplementary funds for outreach in neighborhoods with hard to reach populations and/or with high numbers of non-English speaking residents. When in Phase II neighborhoods received $60,000 - $80,000 for planning, financial decisions remained in the hands of the local planning groups. "By bringing citizens into funding decisions," wrote the Seattle PI (Monday, May 4, 1998) "City Hall is charting a new course that shares power in the distribution of municipal resources."

Finally, rather than being assigned a planner from a City planning agency to facilitate the process, as is most often the case with municipally sponsored neighborhood planning programs, consultants for Phase II were hired and managed by the neighborhood planning group and were accountable not to the City, but to the local planning group. This was an important decision for the planning groups because the type of and role played by the consultant would be an important determinant of the final plan, and along with outreach, consultant's fees usually consumed the

largest part of the neighborhood's budget[14]. By hiring their own consultants, neighborhoods were able to get the best fit for the type of process and plan the neighborhood wanted. The planning groups hired various kinds of consultants including, professional planners, environmental specialists, urban design firms, group process facilitators, and project managers. They also used their consultants in varying ways. In some cases, the consultant was limited to providing technical assistance, in others he or she might advise on both plan content and planning process, and in still others, the consultant took the lead in the planning process. Participants had different experiences with their consultants. One neighborhood planner commented (Seattle Planning Commission 2001, 25),

> We had a very good consultant team. They went far beyond their obligation, providing technical assistance, facilitated meetings, and helped a neighborhood planner create a website.

Whereas in a different neighborhood a lay planner reported,

> We relied too heavily on our consultants to write the plan, especially when the consultant didn't meet our expectations. The plans reflect the consultants a lot.

By hiring and managing their own consultants planning committees retrained more control over their planning work," but it required a trade-off with regard to consistency and quality in the final plans.

Similarly, determining internal structure and decision-making processes was left up to each individual neighborhood planning group. Consensus was the NPO's preferred method of decision-making and neighborhood planning groups received training in how to conduct democratic meetings and achieve consensus. Nevertheless, conflicts arose over specific

[14] An average of 57 percent went to consultant fees. (Ulberg et al. 1996, 9)

recommendations, the scope of the plans, the style of leadership, and boundaries issues. Planning groups were encouraged to resolve conflicts internally, but when that failed, the Program Manager intervened in an effort to settle the issue. If the Program Manager was unable to achieve a resolution, groups were faced with the question of , "What do we do now?" In a 1995 memo, NPO Director Karma Ruder wrote to City Council staff asking,

> No matter how hard we try, it is likely that someone will be unhappy with the work. What role does the City Council want in hearing and/or resolving these disputes? As and example, the Neighborhood Planning Committee has been discussing whether there should be an appeal process at the end of Phase I. Some members believe that the City Council should approve the scope of work and make decisions regarding issues with which someone disagrees. Others believe that the City Council should be briefed and provide feedback, but that disagreements should be resolved by the community. Again, since this is a community driven process, part of everyone's concern is establishing a process that will keep the work going while disputes are resolved (Seattle City Archives Box 4, Folder 4).

The Council decided that if conflicts could not be settled internally, neighborhoods were to "document the difference of opinion and make every effort to find common ground and resolve issues before submitting the plan to the City Council" (NPO Program Elements Binder: Decision-making Matrix 1997), but in the end final decisions were made by the City Council.

Multi-directional Accountability: Validation, Approval and Adoption Process

> In 1983 (214) Clay and Hollister wrote,
>
> It is important to know…that even though involvement can be positive and is a precondition to effective neighborhood planning, all citizen involvement is not constructive; citizen groups can be exclusive, parochial, obstructionist, racist, and negative in other ways that have to be managed by local government if equitable change and development is to occur.

They could have gone on to add that equitable change and development is equally thwarted when government is not held accountable for real responsiveness to citizen demands: government can be obstructionist, bureaucratically constrained, and disingenuous about promises to citizens.

Accountability in the NPP took many forms and included both government and the neighborhoods. An important mechanism for holding neighborhood planning groups accountable to the broader neighborhood and to the City was the validation process. Neighborhood validation took place twice during planning – at the end of Phase I, to gain the community's agreement on the identification of issues to be addressed in the plan (scope of work) and at the end of Phase II to confirm the final plan before it was submitted to the City Council for adoption. Validation for Phase I was required before the neighborhood could receive funding for Phase II and for Phase II before the plan could be submitted for adoption and implementation.

For Phase I validation to be considered legitimate by the NPO, organizing committees were required to provide records demonstrating the community's concurrence with the issues proposed in the scope of work. They needed to show that the scope of work addressed the needs and interests of identified stakeholders, adhered to the core values contained in the Complan[15] , and included issues identified in surveys, visioning, and focus groups. Additionally, organizing committees needed to confirm that the planning committee had been selected through an open and accessible process. For example, they had to document "How many new, missing or underrepresented people applied for Planning Committee membership." Finally organizing committees were required to document, 1) efforts to reach identified stakeholders, 2) levels of participation by representative stakeholders, and 3) that there was balanced participation by representative stakeholders. Adequate inclusion was measured by geographic representation across the neighborhood, a diversity of age, economic status, and ethnic and racial representation, and finally by representation of identified stakeholders (Neighborhood Planning Office 12/7/95, Validation for Phase I).

[15] The Complan core values were: environmental stewardship, economic opportunity, social equity, and community.

Validation for Phase II was a longer, iterative process that required planning committees to employ multiple methods to include the maximum number of people in the validation process. It was "designed to prevent a small group from dominating any neighborhood's planning process and to ensure that a broad spectrum of voices was reflected in the plan" (Seattle Planning Commission 2001, 25). Validation required a minimum of three steps:

1) Validation mailers were sent to all residents, businesses, and organizations in the planning area that described the goals and recommendations from each draft plan,

2) Validation events presented the draft plan at community meetings where it was discussed and voted on by those present,

3) Using the feedback received as a result of the mailers and events, the planning groups revised the plan into its final draft form.

Validation was a particularly contentious time in the planning process. It was here that final decisions about what would be submitted to the City Council would be made. One neighborhood planner reported, "Validation of the plan was a tremendously controversial thing. Several neighborhoods argued over this concept regularly. In one neighborhood, participants even subverted the process with their own surveys" (Seattle Planning Commission 2001, 26). A second local planner recalled, "We had some land people who disagreed with the plan and organized to fight against some recommendations. These splinter groups, however, did help in the plan's development, and many compromises were made." When the conflicts could not be resolved within the neighborhood, NPO project managers stepped in to facilitate conflict resolution.

The primary mechanism for holding the City accountable to the neighborhoods for implementing the plans that they had developed was the Approval and Adoption Matrix (A& A Matrix) and its accompanying legislation. The matrixes were developed in 1998 at the end of Phase II by City staff and neighborhood planning committees. By creating the A & A matrixes,

the City was able to respond to the variation in the plans' design, detail, goals, and methodology. The matrixes essentially constituted a legislative package, wherein the goals stated in the neighborhood plans were translated into policies that could be added to the Comprehensive Plan. The A & A package also included specific legislative resolutions and ordinances upon which the City Council would vote to institute any land use, zoning, or other ordinances that needed to be in place in order to implement the plans. City responses and commitments to each plan recommendation, estimated costs and expected community roles were included in the matrixes. The community and City staff compiled key recommendations and actions from the plans into a detailed spreadsheet that would serve as a work plan for City staff and the neighborhoods for at least the next two years (Seattle Planning Commission 2001, 29).

At the end of Phase II, the City had 38 neighborhood plans ready for implementation and a public enthusiastic about working collaboratively to get the job done. The planning phase of the NPP had achieved the objective of increasing and legitimizing citizen voice in the planning process. The time and money invested in outreach paid off in the increased number and diversity of voices at the table. Engagement moved beyond the circle of usual suspects to include some 20,000-30,000[16] people in at least a part of the process. Participation varied in terms of frequency and depth. The most deeply involved residents served on topic-specific task forces, or became members of organizing, planning, or stewardship groups. Others were engaged through surveys, on-the-street interviews, focus groups, or 'neighborhood plan fairs'. For some residents participation took the form of attendance at plan update meetings, content workshops, or validation forums. For many of these people, neighborhood planning was their first experience of civic engagement outside of the voting booth. But as Cornwall (2008) states, "a seat at the table

[16] Jim Diers in interview with the author in 2007 used the 30,000 figure. In his May 2001 article for the Seattle PI, "Here's what happened to the Neighborhood Plans", he uses the 20,000 figure.

is a necessary but not sufficient condition for exercising voice." For that to happen, formal participation must be transformed into "substantive democratic engagement." By making citizens co-producers of public policy, the NPP was able to connect civil society and the state in meaningful, substantive participation.

To achieve these results required a significant investment of limited public resources. The IDS Working Paper (IDS 138 2001, 49) on citizen engagement reports that common among initiatives designed to increase voice is the need for "enormous amounts of time and costly and continuous outreach work to bring about the "attitudinal and cultural changes required" on the part of government and civil society to make co-governance work. Achieving increased public voice also required rethinking the relationship between citizens and the state under conditions of direct and ongoing collaboration. Adopting a posture of accountable autonomy allowed for a program that amplified public voice while at the same time allowed the state to meet its obligations. Fung (2006, 19) writes that this model emphasizes,

> ...the positive and constructive face of autonomy – the capacity, indeed responsibility, of groups to achieve public ends that they set for themselves – as much as the emancipatory aspect of shedding centrally imposed constrains ant demands…Far from withering away, central authority serves two important general functions in this model. The first is to provide various kinds of supports need for local groups…to accomplish their ends…The second is to hold these groups accountable to the effective and democratic use of their discretionary latitude.

It would be misleading to ignore the constraints, limitations, and difficulties of participatory governance especially when it is played out in state-sponsored programs such as the NPP. Power between the state and the civil society in municipally sponsored programs is never equal -- it is always weighted toward the state. In the end, the state is accountable for the expenditure of public funds and for the legality of public policy. This gives it both the ability to and responsibility for making final decisions. Second, desired levels of representation and

inclusion always fall short and people are left out. These may be people who are particularly difficult to reach or who do not want to be involved in public affairs, or more troubling, they may be oppositional voices that are excluded from the process because of their ideology. Finally, participatory initiatives with an emphasis on local development may have limited influence on larger social and economic forces that contribute to inequality. Cleaver (2001, 37 in Cook and Kothari) sums up this conflict by concluding that although participatory programs are "inevitably messy and difficult, approximant and unpredictable in outcome" they also hold the promise of increasing people's say in shaping the conditions of their lives.

As the City Council adopted the plans and the planning phase came to an end, few in City Hall grasped that the NPP was only half complete. Nor did they realize the massive changes that would be required to increase government responsiveness in the form of plan implementation. But voice and responsiveness are two pieces of a whole, and voice is never truly increased until its expression has garnered concrete and positive outcomes.

Chapter 4: Neighborhood Plan Implementation and Government's Ability to Respond

> *It is now evident that one of the most decisive variables in making participatory governance work is the engagement of responsive, supportive state actors.*
>
> *Andrea Cornwall*

Broad-based participation in neighborhood planning demonstrates the potential to establish more fruitful and collaborative bonds between government and civil society. Berry et al. (1993, 5) suggest that participation can, in fact transform "institutions so that they become more effective instruments of democracy" and that with increased participation, government institutions in particular become more "responsive to the preferences of the citizens." However, responsive government is not a guaranteed outcome of participatory planning. If there are no structures for ongoing collaborative decision-making in the implementation phase of planning, renewed distrust and cynicism on the part of both government and civil society are likely to result. Without collaborative implementation vehicles, civil society loses the structural ability to hold government accountable for implementing the plans more or less as written and government loses structural channels for holding civil society accountable for inclusive and representative process.

Although public participation is now a mainstay of municipal planning efforts, even extensive participation is rendered meaningless unless government is capable of responding positively and concretely to public demands. Increasing public voice in planning unquestionably requires substantial effort to bring new people to the table, to increase the number of people and opportunities to participate, and to deepen the scope of participation. However, engendering adequate response from government requires significantly deeper change within planning bodies. In many ways the actions required to increase voice are more easily accomplished than those

required to prepare municipal departments to govern collaboratively. Perhaps because of this, planning departments tend to invest more in actions designed to increase participation in neighborhood planning initiatives than in actions that would result in power sharing within the bureaucracy and between the bureaucracy and the neighborhoods[17]. In her analysis of collaborative government initiatives from around the globe, Cornwall (2008, 62) makes this point clearly,

> More attention has been given to how to stimulate and support citizen participation than to what is needed to do the same for those who represent the state. Yet it is now evident that one of the most decisive variables in making participatory governance work is the engagement of responsive, supportive state actors.

While it is generally more politically feasible to increase the number of people participating in neighborhood planning than it is to affect the shifts in power, reallocation of resources, and the reorganization of long standing institutions and practices required to equip government to respond meaningfully, these are the very actions necessary for participatory planning to become more than a technical or public relations fix for planners. The more successful municipal neighborhood planning efforts are in broadening and deepening participation, the more critical it becomes that they are equipped to put the resulting plans into action. In his discussion of participatory governance in Porto Alegre, Brazil, Baiocchi (2004, 64) writes,

> One key to the generation of … positive public outcomes was that the reforms delivered public goods promptly to convince skeptical and time pressed residents that participation is worthwhile. The experiment would have failed as a participatory institution if it had not produced tangible material improvements.

[17] Based on 2005 author survey of seven municipal neighborhood planning programs in cities of approximately the same size as Seattle that were known for having a strong a strong participation element: Minneapolis, Austin, Rochester, Baltimore, El Paso, Houston, Washington D.C.

Similarly, in their discussion of institutional innovations and participatory governance, Fung and Wright (2003, 24) make the point that while,

> The procedural features of institutions designed according to [participatory democratic] principles may be desirable in themselves; [and] we often consider deliberation and participation as important independent values … scholars, practitioners, and casual observers will judge these experiments by their consequences as much as by the quality of their process.

If plans are invested with broad and meaningful participation and are subsequently ignored or implemented in a form that differs significantly from the original plan, public trust is lost. Participation decreases as people feel their investment of time and effort has been wasted; cynicism is generated when key ideas are abandoned, and anger surfaces as people come to believe that their participation was solicited solely to service political ends.

Democratizing citizen engagement requires a radical shift in the way government is structured and in how it operates in order to assure residents that their participation in governance will allow them to exercise real power to improve their lives and communities.

Conditions of Responsiveness

Analysis of key studies from around the globe (Fung and Wright 2003; Siriani 2009; Cornwall 2008; Gaventa 2004; Baiocchi 2004, Heller 2001 in Hickey &Mohan 2004) indicate that the most effective initiatives share four conditions that are determinative of their success. These conditions manifest in different ways and to different degrees depending on the particular context of each initiative, but some approximation of each of these elements is generally present.

First, government must create the *institutional architecture* to carry out plans and policies that result from collaborative planning initiatives. The structural conditions of responsiveness are embedded in the design of the program. Formal and informal linkages need to establish communication and mutual accountability between state actors and civil society. Agencies and

departments tasked with carrying out the plans must have the authority to allow and support decentralized decision-making and to influence implementation bodies that lie outside the planning program. Most importantly, the bureaucracy needs to be remade so that it can operate horizontally across traditionally isolated disciplines.

Second, government must secure a *resource base* sufficient to implement plans and sustain ongoing collaborative planning. This includes the ability to realign existing municipal budgets to fund plan recommendations, the ability to generate new funds from within government, and to solicit them from private sources. In addition to financial resources, successful initiatives require training and personnel assets. Non-governmental personnel need training in basic technical aspects of plan implementation, and both governmental and non-governmental participants must be skilled in negotiation and group facilitation.

Third, the *bureaucratic culture* and *political environment* must be conducive to power sharing and collaborative decision-making. Typical among the changes required in the culture of government are beliefs about the roles of professionals and ordinary citizens in planning; the responsibility of authority in municipal decision-making; and the amount of access awarded to civil society actors in the governance process. Additionally, these deeper changes need to be manifest in the practical conduct of meetings, the make-up of bodies that set agendas, and the way information is presented and shared. In summing up the cultural changes required for successful co-governance Cornwall (2008, 48) writes, "… it means actively addressing all these and other inequalities, stereotypes and prejudices that present such potent barriers to effective participation."

Finally, the initiative must rest upon a *legal framework* that legitimizes collaborative planning and makes possible the implementation of resulting plans and policies. This includes

enabling-legislation that builds in accountability, makes possible significant fiscal decision-making by civil society actors, and gives joint planning decisions legal standing. Additionally, implementing-legislation needs to include any zoning changes and policy-oriented ordinances and resolutions required to execute the plans

Practical Impediments to Implementation

Even plans unencumbered by collaborative creation often face significant barriers to implementation. Government planning bodies suffer from a legacy of creating plans that are never implemented and which earn the designation "shelf plans" -- plans that end up gathering dust in the planner's office. Scholars offer a number of explanations to account for this occurrence (Berke et al. 2006; Laurian et al. 2004; Talen 1996). Poor plan quality may impede implementation. This is especially true of neighborhood or community plans that are vaguely worded and lack specificity. For example, contrast a job development action step from an Indianapolis neighborhood plan with one from Seattle's Central Area neighborhood plan. The lack of specificity apparent in the Irvington plan makes it difficult to know exactly how to implement the activity. It also thwarts attempts to evaluate if and/or how successfully this activity was carried out. Seasons (2003, 435) writes "Vagueness in wording permits selective interpretation of intent, which may suit political purposes but complicates efforts to determine direction or level of success or failure with plan-related activity."

A second factor contributing to poor implementation is the failure, during the planning phase, to engage a broad base of stakeholders. Poor stakeholder involvement can lead to "a fuzzy identification of issues important to the community" (Berke et al. 2006, 585) and to the absence of a constituency invested in plan implementation. In his 2003 study of the effects of stakeholder involvement on rates of plan implementation, Burby (2003, 39) found that processes that

Develop a program to provide skills training and job placement. *Irvington, Indianapolis*	Provide financial and technical assistance for the creation of a Central Area Contractor's Plan and Resource Center (CACPRC) operated by CAMP. The CACPRC will serve as a one-stop shop for African-American, minority and Central Area contractors to access information about bid opportunities and to access technical assistance for business development. The CACPRC contains four specific components: 1) Plan and Resource Center, 2) Technical Assistance Program, 3) Job Linkage and Youth Placement,

"involved a broader array of stakeholders in plan-making…produced stronger plans and policy proposals that were much more likely to be implemented than was the case where participation was limited." Further he found that "When stakeholders take the initiative and put proposals on the table for consideration in plans, both the strength of plans and implementation success improve markedly."

Third, if the staff and leadership of the planning agency lack either the capacity or commitment to implement the plans, the successful realization of plans is unlikely (Berke et al. 2006). Laurian (2004a, 558) writes, "Empirically, both the capacity of the agency and its

institutional commitment to the plan (related to the degree of local political support for its mission) have been shown to affect implementation." With regard to plan implementation, *capacity and commitment* extend beyond technical planning expertise to include the ability to work effectively in a political environment and to establish and maintain the relationships needed to negotiate the multiple actors involved in plan implementation.

Finally, implementation is likely to falter when political backing and commitment are lacking. A respondent in Seasons' (2003, 435) study of implementation monitoring reflected, "…we work in a political environment. As such, the end result is not so much whether or not the policies are effective; it's whether or not the political will exists to implement those policies." For Seattle's NPP, the changes in City government during the planning phase, though substantial, were modest when compared to the requirements of the implementation phase. To make implementation of the neighborhood plans feasible, Seattle City government made far-reaching changes in the way the bureaucracy was organized and the way it did business. The result of these changes was to approximate the conditions conducive to responsiveness described above. Significant among the actions taken were 1) the reorganization of City departments. This allowed for more decentralized decision-making regarding plan implementation and the alignment of departmental budgets to respond to neighborhood plan recommendations, 2) the targeting of funding for neighborhood-plan capital projects with new bonds and levies, 3) the adoption of the plans as part of the City's comprehensive plan, the implementation of necessary zoning ordinances, the passage of policy changes needed to give standing to the plans, and 4) the creation of a key new position within the bureaucracy, charged with facilitating plan implementation and invested with the authority to act across departmental and geographic boundaries.

These changes represented the foundation upon which the City constructed the implementation apparatus that enabled the investment of an estimated nearly one billion dollars over 10 years of plan implementation and which resulted in the completion of 80 percent of the plans' 4,276 recommendations. [18] However, none of these enabling conditions were in place in 1998 when Paul Schell became the city's new mayor. By this time, most of the plans had been adopted by the City Council (the remainder would be approved in 1999), and the Mayor had sketched a plan for implementation funding. Still, there was no on-the-ground structure to sustain neighborhood engagement, nor were mechanisms set up to coordinate an integrated implementation system across city departments. Councilmember Richard Conlin in a 1998 memo to the Deputy Mayor, Special Assistant to the Mayor, Director-NPO, Director-DON, and the Strategic Planning Office, wrote,

> This memo is intended as a starting point for expanded discussions between the Executive and Council on neighborhood plan implementation. There are several factors that suggest a need for this: the extent to which many of the issues relating to implementation were not anticipated; the complexity and enormity of the task of reviewing and approving the plans. And the need for planning the whole rage of implementation related processes and tasks that are required to make neighborhood planning a success.

Plan implementation was a priority for Schell and he moved quickly on these issues. "Working closely with Councilmember Conlin, Mayor Schell devised a three-part strategy to implement

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[18] The city established a neighborhood plan implementation database to track the 4,276 recommendations from the plans. The database is divided into *activities* and *sub-activities*. *Activities* record the recommendations, as they appeared in the original Approval and Adoption Matrix for each plan. The *sub-activities* were created later to delineate the discreet steps required for the city to complete the *activity*. Thus an *activity* may require actions to be taken by the city, the neighborhood, or another agency, but the database records only the status of the actions for which the city is responsible. *Activities* with no *sub-activities* represent recommendations for which the city has no active role. These non-city *activities* have been poorly tracked even though "many have been at least partially implemented, sometimes by residents or businesses in the community or by other government agencies" (Seattle City Auditor 2007, 31).

neighborhood plans" (Diers 2004, 138). The plan was weighted heavily toward funding and its three parts were: 1) to decentralize city departments, 2) to generate additional funds through bond and levy measures and 3) to triple the amount of money in the NMF, with about half of it going to plan implementation. By the end of the year, the NPO had been folded into the DON, which now had responsibility for the program; some departments had begun to decentralize into sectors in preparation for plan implementation; an Early Implementation Fund had been created to get funds quickly into neighborhoods for small, visible projects in an effort to sustain momentum; the Libraries for All levy had been put on the ballot; the DON had hired Sector Managers and put them in place. With the exception of the use of bond and levy funding for capital projects and special initiatives, there were few precedents in Seattle to guide implementation strategies. Consequently, the implementation framework was filled out as issues arose and needed to be solved. Councilmember Sally Clark (interview 11-27-07) described her job as a Sector Manager as being sent out to "figure out how to make projects happen." In this chapter I describe the success of this approach in getting plan projects completed, and its drawbacks, especially with regard to neighborhood engagement.

The critical importance of sustaining these enabling conditions became distressingly clear with the 2001 election of a new mayor for whom neighborhood plan implementation was a low priority. As a result of the new mayor's budget and policy changes much of the implementation infrastructure was dismantled. Yet in spite of the diminution of official institutional support, the culture of collaboration developed in the bureaucracy during the planning and early implementation phases persisted in influencing staff behavior and decision-making. Only with the passage of time, staff turnover, and the loss of institutional memory did the bureaucracy revert to more conventional operations.

Condition 1: Institutional Architecture -- City Reorganization, Neighborhood Stewardship, Institutionalized Collaborative Planning

In creating the institutional architecture that would guide the implementation phase of the NPP, City actors adopted three design principles found by Fung and Wright (2003, 20) to advance the responsiveness of empowered participatory governance[19] "in deep and sustainable ways." Although Fung and Wright acknowledge that while not sufficient to ensure responsive institutions, these principles "contribute to institutions that advance, stabilize, and deepen democratic values. The central design principles that guided Seattle's implementation planners were:

1) *The devolution of power to local action units.* To accomplish this, functions and services of *City departments and agencies* were devolved to local units called *sectors*. This change in organization made City government more accessible to neighborhood implementation groups by bringing City decision-making closer to the actuality of plan implementation. Devolution of power to sectors also increased interdepartmental and City-neighborhood coordination. Brandies University public policy scholar Carmen Sirianni, (2009, 100) observed that for the NPP, departmental decentralization resulted in local departmental units working more collaboratively with the neighborhood groups during the implementation phase and allowed for more coordination between departments on specific projects and on overall plan implementation.

2) The creation of *linkages of accountability and communication that connect local units to superordinate bodies.* Linkages between the local action units and citywide bodies keep neighborhood groups from becoming isolated and parochial. They allow city government to hold

[19] Fung and Wright add the concept of *empowerment* of structures of participatory governance to emphasize the actual decision-making authority of these bodies (5).

local groups accountable for inclusion, and for local groups to hold government accountable for their promises. Fung and Wright (2003, 24) comment, "Local units are not autonomous, but rather recombinant and linked to each other and to supervening levels of the state in order to allocate resources, solve common and cross-border problems, and diffuse innovations and learning." For the NPP, the vehicle for this linkage was a new neighborhood organization called the *neighborhood plan stewardship group.* These groups replaced the neighborhood planning groups that had acted as the link between the City and the neighborhoods during the planning phase. Asked to play a dual role of sustaining broad resident involvement in implementation through ongoing organizing and local action projects, and coordinating between the City and the neighborhoods, stewardship groups were the locus of mutual accountability for implementation. Members were self-selected and had usually been active in the planning. However, the NPO's scrutiny of the make-up of planning groups was lacking in the case of these new stewardship groups. This meant that for the most part, stewardship groups did not represent all neighborhood stakeholders.

3) The *transformation of formal government institutions.* Transformation happens when ongoing participation becomes the expected operational mode of City agencies and is often the result of close and long-term cooperation among City agents and between the City and the neighborhoods. "This [transformational] formal route" write Fung and Wright (2003, 23), "potentially harnesses the power and resources of the state to deliberation and popular participation thus making these practices more durable and widely accessible." As proposed in the NPP design, Rice's successor, Mayor Paul Schell, closed the NPO and placed responsibility for managing implementation with the DON, thus giving neighborhood planning and implementation a permanent home in the City's bureaucracy. Schell believed this change would

"facilitate a smooth transition from planning to implementation" (Diers 2004, 138) and provide a construct for sustained City-neighborhood collaboration around issues of neighborhood planning. A key part of the transition to the DON was the creation of six neighborhood development manager positions (commonly known as *sector managers*) who were responsible for coordinating, managing, and encouraging both departmental and neighborhood actions at the local level and for linking implementation work directly with the City Council and the Mayor. One result of these institutional, cultural, and legal changes within the departments was that integrating elements of neighborhood plans into new projects and continuing neighborhood participation became the new norm within key departments.

NPP designers grounded these three design principles (devolution of power, linkages of communication and accountability, and institutional transformation) in the strategies and structural changes envisioned for neighborhood plan implementation. As set out in a memo dated February 8, 2000, the City intended that these design elements and corresponding institutional changes would combine to create an integrated implementation system with the following goals:

- Maintain a focus on neighborhood plan implementation by maintaining a system for accountability with the City of Seattle and providing continuity of process.
- Ensure that neighborhood plans are integrated into the overall goals and strategies of the City and that the goals and strategies are taken into account in implementation.
- Guide the City's policy decisions and actions toward Comprehensive Plan and neighborhood plan visions.
- Strengthen the relationship between the neighborhoods and the City of Seattle.
- Engage citizens in the implementation of neighborhood plans.
  (Barton et al. 2001, S-9)

The process of embedding these foundational principles in the institutional architecture of implementation was iterative, negotiated and often conflict-filled. As Sirianni (2009, 106) notes,

"These core policy design principles, emerged…piecemeal often through conflict, and certainly remain[ed] imperfect in application." Nevertheless the designs achieved a high degree of responsiveness from City agencies and provide a lens through which to examine and analyze the requirements of an answerable institutional architecture.

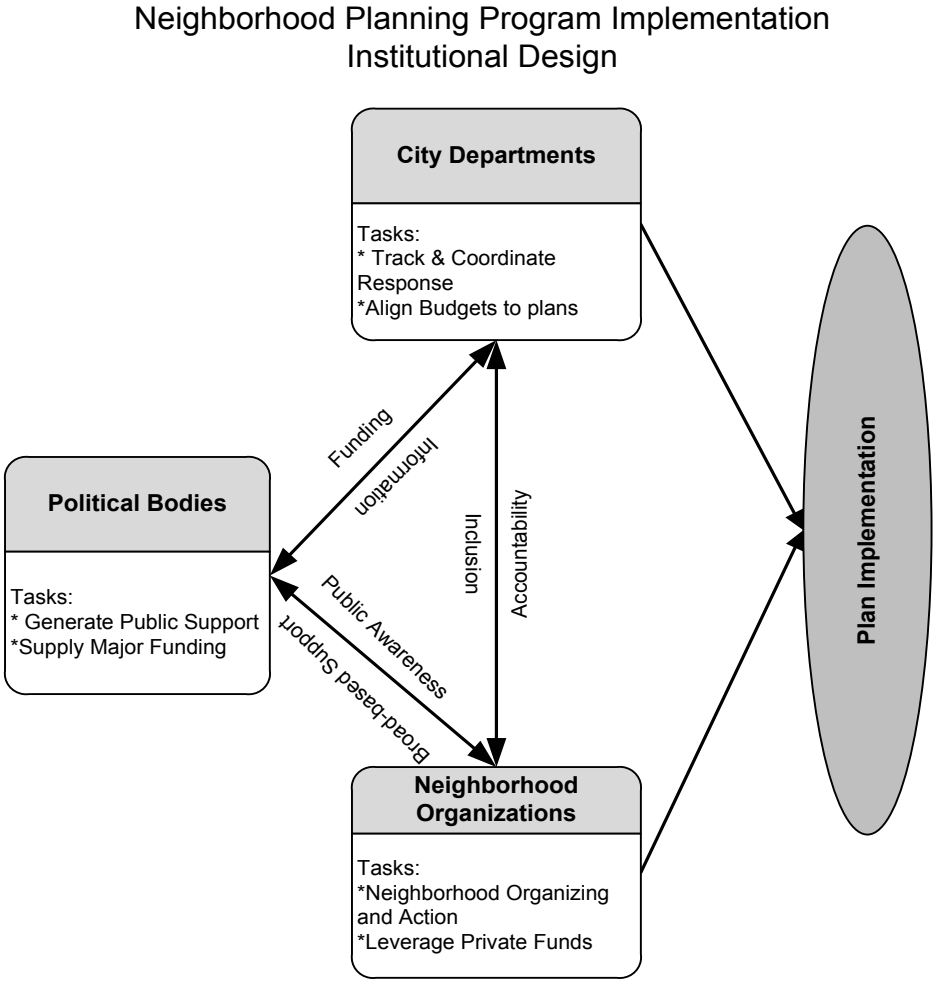


Figure7: NPP Implementation - Institutional Design

Devolution to Sectors: Departmental functions, Inter-agency Teams

As the neighborhood plans passed through the final step of the planning phase (Approval and Adoption process[20]), neighborhood planning groups began to express interest in and concern

[20] See Chapter 3

about implementation. They were especially anxious about what they could expect with regard to ongoing City support in the areas of funding, expertise, access to City departments, and administrative support. Mayor Schell responded to these concerns by promising to realign City government to make plan implementation a priority of City departments and to facilitate plan execution. City staff charged with the execution of reorganization understood that it was both essential for plan implementation and the most difficult of the implementation strategies to carry out and sustain. Sally Clark, (interview 11-27-07) City Councilmember and former sector manger for the Southeast sector, thought at the time, that reorganization would be the most complicated part of the overall strategy and would test the City's commitment and ability to implement the plans. More optimistically, DON Director Jim Diers commented that the reorganization would allow departments to collaborate in new ways, and act with other agencies, private sector developers, and neighborhood groups to complete large and complex projects that crossed departmental and jurisdictional lines. In looking back at the implementation of the plans, he reflected, "This major reorientation of City government [was] perhaps the most significant achievement of the neighborhood plans" (Here's what happened to the neighborhood plans, Seattle PI, May 1, 2000).

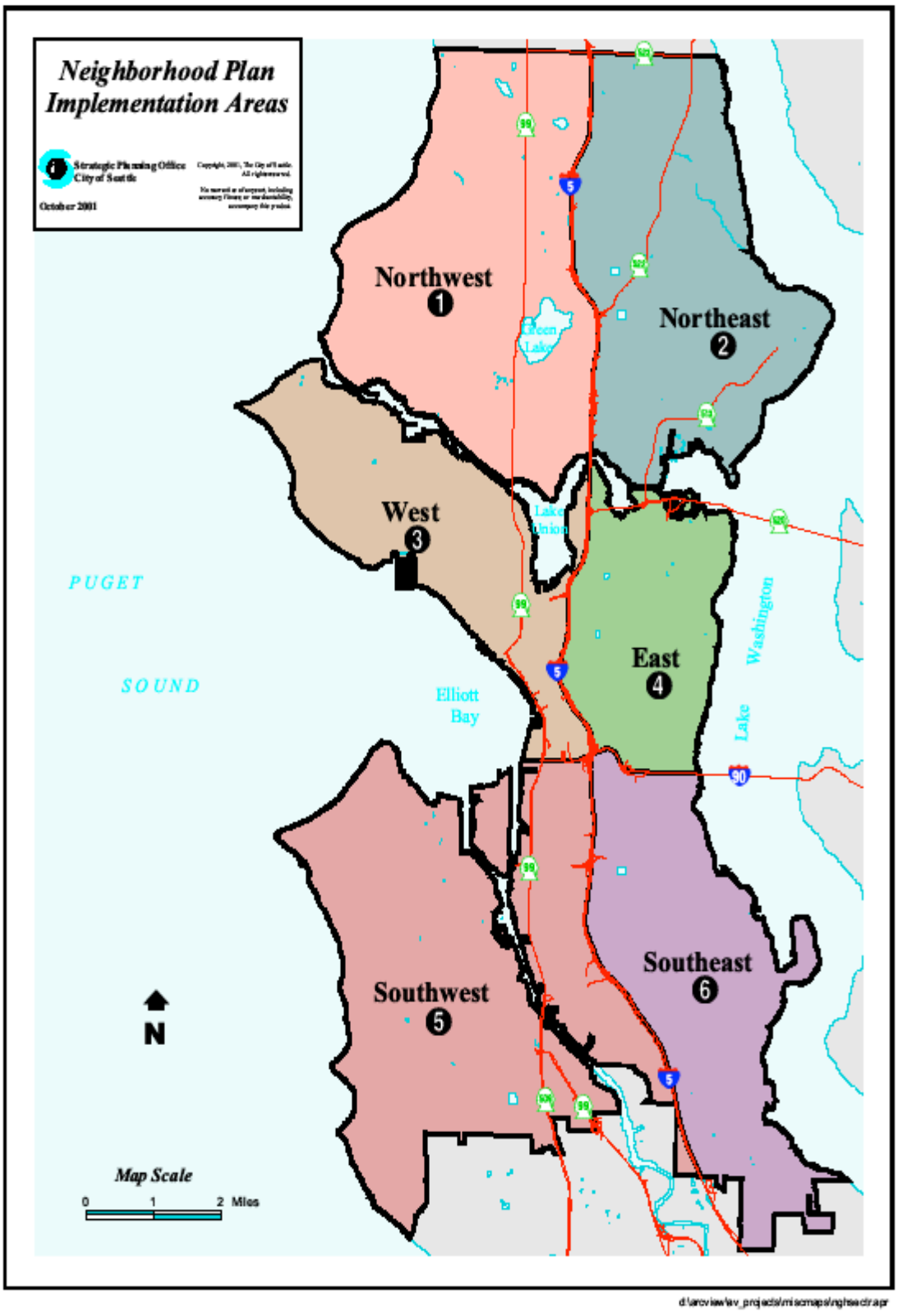


Figure 8: Implementation Sectors

Decentralizing Departmental Functions

Although at the onset of implementation in 1998, some departments were already decentralized geographically, no two operated within the same geographical boundaries. Accordingly, the first task for the mayor and the department heads was to divide the city into six agreed-upon sectors and to organize decentralized departmental functions within these areas. A policy set out in the 1999 City budget directed "departments to coordinate their activities to maximize opportunities to implement neighborhood plans" (Seattle City Auditor 2007, 10).

As in most cities, Seattle's departments were organized vertically in "silos" and often worked in isolation from each other. According to Clark, while this type of organization makes good use of a department's core competencies it is not well suited to implementation of neighborhood plans that are organized horizontally. Making decentralization work meant both cutting across and combining the expertise and decision-making authority lodged in many departments.

Among City departments, the DON took the lead in reorganizing its staff and functions to operate in the geographically based sectors. The DON had a history of operating *Little City Halls* throughout the city where residents could pay utility bills, participate in municipal court hearings, obtain pet licenses, bus passes, passports, and access other City services without traveling to the central municipal building downtown. *Little City Halls* also offered space for community gatherings and provided information about City and non-profit agencies. Because, in some cases, *Little City Halls* shared space with CDCs, libraries, police stations and/or other local groups, they served a model for the inter-agency and neighborhood cooperation needed for successful decentralization. The DON called on its experience with *Little City Halls* to help

conceptualize and start sector managers working in geographically delimited areas. After reviewing City decentralization, The Seattle Planning Commission, (2000, 45) reported that:

> The Department of Neighborhoods provide[d] a good model for the City's efforts to coordinate its activities and services along the broad geographic sectors. All of their programs have stayed intact, but are organized in sector teams to assure programmatic and geographic coordination.

While decentralization worked with minimal disruption in the DON, it required greater changes in other departments. Some City departments were more successful than others in nurturing a collaborative and plan-friendly environment. Larger departments that were able to assign full-time staff to the sectors and departments responsible for a implementing a large number of plan activities tended to be more successful in decentralizing operations than were small departments with fewer staff . For example, SDOT (Seattle Department of Transportation) and Parks (Department of Parks and Recreation), two departments responsible for a large number of plan projects assigned employees full time "to participate in this process of identifying projects within their area of responsibility that could contribute to neighborhood plan implementation" (Seattle City Auditor 2007, 6).

In addition to department size and responsibility for large numbers of plan activities, successful decentralization appeared to depend to some degree on whether or not the department viewed itself as providing essentially technical or expert services (Sirianni 2009, 104). For example, Seattle Public Utilities, acting as lead agency for projects that were high priorities in a number of neighborhood plans[21], was initially resistant to participation by neighborhood residents on large drainage projects.

[21] For example: creek restoration and large drainage projects.

Lead Agencies for Plan Implementation			
Lead Agency	Number of Plan Activities	Percent of Total Plan Activities	Sub activities
SDOT	1,308	29%	741
Planning and Development	569	13%	303
Parks and Recreation	340	8%	303
Neighborhoods	190	4%	315
Seattle Public Utilities	148	3%	244
Office of Economic Development	143	3%	65
Housing	133	3%	33
Police	110	2%	25
Human Services	61	1%	24
Office of Arts and Culture	29	1%	58
Source: Seattle City Auditor 2007			

Table 3: Lead Agencies for Plan Implementation

Sirianni (2009, 104-105) reports that this initial reluctance was overcome by the addition of environmental engineers to the SPU's staff to conduct a pilot stream restoration project that involved local residents in planning and implementation. On the one hand "various watershed groups, active for a decade or more, had been out in front of Seattle Public Utilities on innovative ways to restore the urban streams of Seattle." The pilot program brought civic watershed groups together with SPU staff to work out together the complex and technical issues of redesigned "residential streets using open, vegetated swales, storm water cascades, and small wetland ponds" as well as the specific plants and trees that would best support natural drainage systems. One SPU project manager commented, success depended on "lots of meetings [and], one-on-one work…we built trusting relationships with these people."

A second agency that struggled with decentralization was the Department of Planning and Development. Although leadership in the department was supportive of the neighborhood planning and implementation process, some staff resisted decentralization, feeling that the citywide view of planning issues would be lost with a shift of departmental functions to the sectors.

Overall, the commitment of staff and funds to support decentralization facilitated increased departmental coordination and the critical realignment of department budgets and work plans to support plan implementation. In a letter commenting on the City Auditor's 2007 report on plan implementation, Sirianni (Letter, 9/5/07) wrote ,"the marked increase [in departmental cooperation] during the earlier phases of implementation is very impressive, especially alignment of department and neighborhood plans, as well as new staff positions in Parks and SDOT." The Auditor's Report (2007, 10) concurred stating,

> Through the City's investment in neighborhood planning and its implementation, coordination across organizational boundaries increased markedly. In the early period of implementation, 1999-2002, there was considerable coordination across lines that can ordinarily create boundaries, for example:
>
> - among City departments;
> - between communities and the city;
> - among subsequent planning efforts;
> - and to a lesser extent between City and non-city government agencies.

Interdepartmental Teams

Because implementation of many plan recommendations required participation from several departments, the second element of City reorganization was the creation of formal structures for coordination in each sector. Interdepartmental teams were established to facilitate increased contact and coordination between departments at both the sector and citywide levels. In describing their function, the Seattle Planning Commission (2000, 17) wrote, "Sector

Interdepartmental Teams provide staff from City departments to work with DON and the neighborhoods on plan implementation." Interdepartmental teams represented a formal and structural commitment to departmental coordination, but they also created the opportunity for staff to develop critical informal relationships and peer-to-peer contact that helped overcome obstacles to plan projects. These informal relationships between department staff and with sector managers also smoothed the way for overcoming conflicts between departments.

Interdepartmental teams were active through the early phase of implementation from 1999 to 2002. The teams met at least once a month with the sector managers to coordinate particular projects and work out conflicts when they arose. Each sector's interdepartmental team also met once a month directly with the neighborhood stewardship groups responsible for implementation at the neighborhood level. "Together" writes Sirianni (2009, 101),

> the stewardship groups and the interdepartmental team could ensure that multiple plan components, available resources, and agency regulations were well aligned: if zoning and other changes were needed, proposals would be brought to the City Council.
> Finally, the department representatives, neighborhood groups, and sector managers

gathered annually for larger events to take stock of the status of plan implementation and to set priorities for the coming year. The cross-fertilization that occurred in all these interactions helped the City maximize its investment in the neighborhoods by eliminating duplication and creating more integrated projects. It also helped neighborhoods to see beyond their own boundaries and to recognize the competing needs of neighborhoods across the city.

Linkages of Communication and Accountability -- Neighborhood Plan Stewardship

A second issue confronting City staff and neighborhood planning groups at the end of the planning phase was to design structures that would support implementation at the neighborhood level. Implementation planners responded by proposing *neighborhood plan stewardship groups.* Similar to the neighborhood planning groups in the planning phase, stewardship groups were responsible for coordinating with City departments and for providing leadership for projects where the neighborhoods acted as the lead implementing agency. These local groups would provide the link for communication and accountability between the City and the neighborhoods.

Many stewardship groups were successful in implementing plan recommendations directly and in working with City departments to complete a range of projects. Stewardship groups were also often successful in leveraging additional funding from private sources in order to carry out plan priorities that could not be accommodated in departmental budgets. Regular collaboration with City departments provided structural opportunities to hold government accountable for pledged commitments to plan implementation. Additionally stewardship groups helped keep neighborhood plans on the broader City agenda after the 2001 mayoral election resulted in a lowered priority for plan implementation

Challenges to Effective Plan Stewardship

From the start however, stewardship groups faced several critical challenges including defining their new responsibilities, establishing an organizational form and relating it to existing City participation structures, securing funding and administrative support, and keeping the groups inclusive and representative. Early in implementation it became clear that in the face of these challenges many groups were foundering. Difficulty meeting the challenges faced by stewardship groups can be explained, in part, by the extent of "meeting exhaustion" experienced

by neighborhood groups after four years of planning. But the primary problems experienced by stewardship groups were the direct result of policy and funding decisions made by the DON and the City Council.

Roles and Functions

While there was consensus among key actors that strong plan stewardship groups were essential for successful implementation, there was no agreement as to how these groups should be formed or supported. In an attempt to articulate the consensus that did exist, and to provide guidance to neighborhood groups, the Seattle Planning Commission produced *A Guide to Plan Stewardship for Citizen Plan Stewards* (1999, 2). In it they describe the role of plan stewards as follows:

> Plan stewardship is the way the neighborhood provides ongoing organization and focus within the community for carrying out its neighborhood plan priorities. It is how the neighborhood manages the implementation of specific projects. Plan stewardship also involves further refinement of the plan and periodic assessment of accomplishments as well as emerging needs. Stewardship should be a cooperative effort between the neighborhoods and the City, with each having important roles to play over the years.

The document goes on to say that stewardship groups would carry out these functions by engaging in two levels of implementation: 1) *taking action* to implement specific projects and 2) *providing oversight* of the neighborhood goals and the City's Comprehensive Plan goals (emphasis in original). Lastly, the guide itemized the following requirements assigned to stewardship groups:

- Active members who remain engaged in their plan's original goals and strategies.
- Willingness to help plan and participate in sector-wide events.
- Attendance at meetings with the sector mangers to discuss and work on implementation issues.

- Willingness to take responsibility for managing implementation projects.
- Willingness to work on plan updates and additions – with community buy-in to respond to changing conditions and new opportunities.
- Ongoing outreach to other community members to increase awareness and project participation.
- Help getting representative community feedback on projects the City is considering.
- Feedback on the City's performance.

In spite of this work by the Planning Commission, many stewardship groups began implementation unclear about their roles and responsibilities. Confusion was caused in part by the divergent views held by the DON and the Planning Commission regarding the City's relationship to stewardship groups. While the Planning Commission envisioned neighborhood groups with close, cooperative ties to the DON and other City departments, the DON adopted an approach emphasizing the independence of stewardship groups from the bureaucracy. In a 1999 letter responding to recommendations from the City Auditor regarding the DON's relationship to stewardship groups, Diers wrote,

> One of the strengths of these organizations is their independence from the City, so the Department of Neighborhoods is not in a position to establish their roles and responsibilities or to require their representation on advisory groups.

However without a more clearly defined relationship to the City, and ongoing City support, it is unlikely that many stewardship groups would be able to carry out the list of substantive functions and responsibilities outlined by the Planning Commission (see above). In an evaluation of City-sponsored citizen participation programs, the Seattle Planning Commission (2000, 42) wrote: "As of 1999/2000 many stewardship efforts have not developed a clear group

process for the community to steward the plan vision and priories." And when interviewed in 2005, at least one plan steward reported that groups were still struggling:

> Some stewardship groups are unsure of next steps, unsure of ways to look for new opportunities for funding, for increasing membership – the City used to [provide] clear direction including timelines, structure. Some groups are not moving forward on their own, are not looking outside the City for opportunities (McCoy 2006, Appendix A).

Organizational Structure

In addition to clear roles and responsibilities, stewardship groups needed an organizational structure that would support comprehensive plan implementation and formalize a relationship with existing City-sponsored Neighborhood and District Councils. Again, the DON opted to support stewardship group autonomy by proposing no particular structure for stewardship groups. Neighborhoods had the freedom to structure their plan implementation in whatever way they believed best suited their particular circumstances. In the end, stewardship groups took on four alternative forms. In the first, plan stewardship was folded into an existing City sponsored participation structure such as a Community or District Council. In these cases, plan implementation was either established as a new committee or integrated into the overall mission and work of the Council. This type of implementation structure ensured the plan would receive ongoing attention and that there would be no conflict with a competing implementation group. However it also meant that there was little involvement of new people in decision-making and that long-standing District Council priorities could take precedence over new ideas and priorities expressed in the plan.

The second type of stewardship group was formed as an extension of the core planning group. In this case the stewardship group became a distinct organization devoted entirely to plan implementation. This structure allowed for singular focus on plan implementation and was often

motivated by momentum and enthusiasm generated during the planning phase. Participants in these groups applied knowledge, skills, and City contacts gained during the planning phase to implementation. However they also tended to be small. Groups dedicated exclusively to plan implementation were also less likely than other configurations to have structural relationships with other organizations in the neighborhood. This isolation limited their awareness of activities being carried out by other groups, which led in turn, to confusion within the neighborhood and with the City over which group had assumed responsibility for what project.

Third, in some neighborhoods multiple organizations took on the stewardship role by assuming responsibility for the implementation of different parts of the plan. This was most often the case when the neighborhood had an existing Community Development Corporation or similar community development organization. While these groups had the organizational structure, trained staff, and administrative support to carry out large projects, they tended to focus only on plan recommendations that fell within their particular competency and mission, such as housing or economic development, regardless of the priority ranking in the plan.

Finally, some neighborhoods' stewardship consisted of meeting on an "as needed" basis, as projects were put forth or issues arose. These groups could generate large participation around issues; however they tended to be reactive and failed to shepherd the whole plan toward implementation.

After evaluating the early stages of implementation efforts by these various forms of stewardship group, the Seattle Planning Commission (2000, 17) concluded that, "To date, there are no specific requirements for either the composition or operation of neighborhood plan stewardship groups and many are struggling to recruit sufficient citizen volunteers for the work that is to be done."

Closely related to the issue of organizational form, the role of the stewardship groups in relation to other neighborhood groups, especially Community and District Councils, was unclear and poorly defined. This caused confusion and conflict over implementation responsibilities. In their 2000 evaluation of citizen participation, the Seattle Planning Commission wrote, "The roles and relationships between District Councils and Neighborhood Planning Stewardship groups have surfaced as an issue that requires careful attention" (45). Conflicts arose over jurisdiction, implementation priorities, and decision-making authority. District and Community Councils often had boundaries that differed from, but overlapped with neighborhood planning areas, resulting in confusion over authority in the intermingled areas. The composition of the groups also differed which led, in some cases, to different priority rankings for plan projects. District Councils tended to be made up mostly of single-family homeowners and local business organizations whose primary concerns were land use and transportation. However, neighborhood plans included a broad range of recommendations, including actions around affordable housing, open space, human services, public safety and environmental issues, that the Councils were less motivated to address (Seattle Planning Commission 2000, 45). These differences resulted in conflict over City funding, particularly NMF grants, especially since the District Councils were responsible for review of and recommendations for NMF applications. Although the Planning Commission and sector managers worked to resolve these issues, no structural changes were made that would address the underlying causes of the conflict between the established councils and the stewardship groups.

Administrative Support and Funding

A third challenge facing stewardship groups was how to secure funding for organizational and administrative operations. Although the City committed significant funding

for project implementation, City budgets provided little to no funding for the two things consistently requested by stewardship groups: 1) City staff and administrative support at a level similar to that received during the planning phase and 2) support for outreach to keep the neighborhood residents informed about plan implementation and to recruit new stewardship group members. The City Council (Resolution 30011, 1999) decided that except for a small amount for outreach,

> The Department of Neighborhoods [would] not provide direct staff support to stewardship groups or individuals. Rather, the Department of Neighborhoods, through the six Neighborhood Development Managers [sector managers], [would] provide support for neighborhood plan implementation. This include[d] attending meetings with plan stewards and helping to align City resources to fund plan requests.

Thus neighborhood volunteers were expected to carry out significant ongoing stewardship functions with little operational or administrative support, except what they were able to raise themselves from private sources. Raising these kinds of funds was particularly difficult because requests to private funders for administrative support competed with requests for project support received from stewardship groups and from City agencies looking to leverage additional funding for City-led projects.

Representation

Finally, the long and intensive planning process had exhausted some neighborhoods' volunteer resources and stewardship groups found it hard to keep residents engaged in the implementation process. Those who did remain engaged often lost the representative nature of the planning phase groups. The Seattle Planning Commission's (2000, 8) evaluation reported that "the discussion around plan stewardship often centers on how to ensure that ongoing groups will be representative and accountable to their own constituencies and have the capacity to

accomplish their roles effectively." The City Auditor (2007, 30) reported that this problem persisted through the implementation phase:

> In our interviews, current City staff regularly asserted [that]….citizens who have continued to be active are primarily white homeowners. We found documentation that the neighborhood planning process involved concerted efforts to draw in all community members – renters as well as homeowners, members of minority and immigrant communities as well as white citizens, poor community members as well as affluent. However, it appears that this inclusiveness has been difficult to sustain. The effort to engage all citizens takes commitment of time and resources that have not been consistently available during this implementation phase.

Stewardship groups tended to be small and small groups are especially vulnerable to domination by a few voices. "Accountability and representation are hampered when a group or its meetings are dominated by a few individuals or one interest group. This leads to perceived inequities and lack of representation for those whose voices are not being heard" (Seattle Planning Commission 2000, 29). Without structures of accountability, like those in place during planning, some groups' vision shrank to a parochial focus on a few issues and representation to a few stakeholders. As a result of the inability to successfully address these challenges, some of the momentum and mutual trust generated by planning at the neighborhood level was lost, especially during later implementation (after 2003).

Stewardship Group Policy

Just as the strength of the City's plan for decentralized implementation resulted from conscious decisions to restructure City government to support implementation, so too the weakness of the stewardship groups was, in large part, the result of a conscious "hands-off" strategy adopted by the DON. In the 2000 Citizen Participation Report the Planning Commission expressed the underlying philosophy supporting this approach:

> There are many forms and venues for citizen participation. Not all citizen organizations or efforts are or should be supported by government. In fact,

> grassroots citizen participation is arguably the most valuable part of the democratic process, allowing citizens to determine their own issues and positions and how they will interact with local government and other community organizations (9).

However in 1999, the City Auditor compiled a report on the Community/District Councils' contribution to the City's budgeting process and the effectiveness of stewardship groups in early implementation. In it they criticized this uninvolved approach to stewardship. The Auditor recommended that the DON help coordinate communication and meetings of various neighborhood involvement programs, specifically the City Neighborhood Councils, the District Council, and the Neighborhood Planning Stewards, and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of these groups in relation to plan implementation. In response to the Auditor's recommendations DON Director Jim Diers (September 20, 1999) wrote,

> The key recommendation seems to be the need to better integrate the various neighborhood advisory groups established by the City with one another and with the many types of grassroots community organizations in order to ensure optimal communication, accountability, and use of time. This is a good goal. However, it is not something that the City can do unilaterally. The focus of citizen participation needs to continue to be on the grassroots neighborhood organizations.

It was clear that although the DON encouraged grassroots organizing and neighborhood based initiatives, it was extremely reluctant to put in place structures similar to those in place during the planning phase, that would allow significant neighborhood autonomy while at the same time providing a system of accountability and support.

After the substantial technical and financial support provided in the planning phase, this "hands-off" approach and the City Council's decision not to fund stewardship groups, left many of them adrift. In later reflections on the DONs decision not to intervene in the workings of the stewardship groups, Diers questions whether or not this approach was adequate to provide ongoing support for neighborhood groups. In 2004 (173-175) he wrote:

> Although the cuts [in DON budget and staff in 2003] reinforce my belief that community organizations should not become dependent on government, they also make me question whether we should have done more to institutionalize the department's programs – specifically, to facilitate the creation of a stronger system of community organizations…There are times when I wonder if a formal, representative structure … could have been helpful to Seattle's neighborhood planning program.

Condition Two: Assembling the Funds – Departmental Budgets, Voter Approved Funds, Neighborhood Matching Fund

The crafters of Seattle's implementation strategies understood that institutional change alone could not secure the plans' realization. Without adequate funding, anything more than token implementation was unlikely. As a result, they devised a three part funding strategy to go hand-in-hand with the proposed institutional changes (Figure 4-3). The strategy would spread responsibility for funding between the City budget, Seattle's voters, and the neighborhoods.

First, department budgets were restructured to fund neighborhood plan recommendations

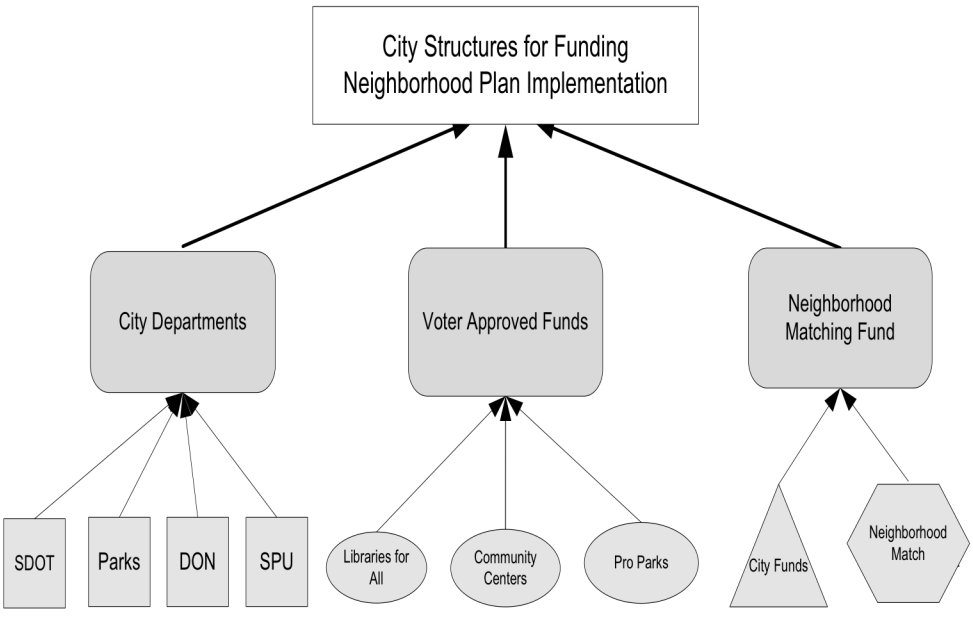


Figure 9: City Funding for Implementation

making upwards of $250 million available from City departments for early plan implementation. During the planning and approval and adoption phases, many departments worked closely with neighborhoods laying the foundation for close cooperation during the implementation phase and learning the negotiation skills needed to reorder department budgets.

The second element of the funding strategy was to ask voters to demonstrate their commitment to plan implementation by taxing themselves in order to guarantee implementation of key capital projects. Many neighborhood plans recommended new, expanded or renovated libraries; new or expanded community centers; and increased and enhanced parks and open space. Because the City's existing budget could not accommodate these projects, and because they were a high priority for so many neighborhoods, bond and levy initiatives were placed on the ballot and approved by voters in 1998, 1999, and 2000 respectively. The cumulative amount generated by the *Libraries for All*, *Community Center,* and *Pro Parks* bonds and levies was $470 million.

Third, the City effected changes in the DON's primary neighborhood funding vehicle -- the Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF). The NMF, established in 1989 with $150,000, awards grants to neighborhood-initiated projects that are matched by community input of an equal value in cash, volunteer labor, or donated goods and services. To support plan implementation, the City annually increased the NMF from $1.5 million in 1998, the time of plan adoption, to $4.5 million in 2001, and directed the increased funds to plan-specific projects.

Funding Overview and Departmental Budgets

Fourteen funds served as the primary sources for funding implementation of the neighborhood plans from 1999 to 2003. These funds are divided broadly into municipal funds and funds from other sources The 12 City funds are further grouped into three categories:

FUNDING FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN IMPLEMENTATION[1] 1999-2003			
FUND		DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
General Fund	Staff Salaries	Salaries for positions in the Department of Neighborhoods and other departments that are dedicated to plan implementation.	$6,708,800
	Early Implementation Fund	One time appropriation of $50,000 per neighborhood planning area at the completion of the planning process. Projects are chosen by the stewardship groups to jump-start implementation.	$1,900,000
	Opportunity Fund	Projects chosen by Department of Neighborhoods staff to leverage other fund sources and take advantage of time-sensitive opportunities.	$2,418,000
	Cumulative Reserve for Major Maintenance	Maintenance projects that implement neighborhood plans, such as sidewalk repair and park upgrades.	$5,000,000
	Neighborhood Matching Fund	Wide range of neighborhood-initiated self-help projects including public art, tree planting, park improvements, community organizing, etc.	$8,129,000
	Capital Improvement Projects	Ballard and Lake City Civic Centers and Southwest Police Precinct.	$26,471,000
	Neighborhood Leadership Program	Leadership training classes for community activists and technical assistance to plan events, build organizations, and resolve conflicts.	$170,000
Subtotal: General Fund			$50,796,800
Voter Approved Funds	Pro Parks Levy	Almost all levy projects were taken from neighborhood plan recommendations for open space purchases and park improvements.	$26,717,000
	Libraries for All Bond Issue	Build new and renovate existing Seattle Public Library branches in neighborhood planning areas.	$77,044,500
	Community Center & Seattle Center Levies	Build new and renovate existing community centers in neighborhood planning areas.	$23,374,000
Subtotal: Voter Approved Funds			$127,135,500
Utilities	**Electrical**	Pedestrian Safety Lighting Program to improve safety in business districts located in neighborhood plan areas.	$1,350.000
	Drainage	Drainage infrastructure improvements, support for litter and graffiti clean-up, and stream restoration projects in neighborhood plan areas.	$61,857,700\
Subtotal: Utilities			$63,207,700
SUBTOTAL: CITY FUNDS			$241,140,000
Other: State & Federal Grants**	Transportation Capital Improvements*	Fourteen large projects, including the West Lake Union Trail, complete restructuring of University Way NE, and several freight mobility projects. Also includes Neighborhood Street Fund projects.	$33,260,800
	Community Development Block Grants	Neighborhood plan projects in low- and moderate-income areas, e.g. new sidewalks, business district revitalization, and park improvements.	$519,100
SUBTOTAL: OTHER FUNDS			$33,779,900
TOTAL			$274, 919, 900†
Table 4: Implementation Funding Plan			

General Fund Sources, Funds from Voter Approved Bonds and Levies, and Utilities Funds. The largest source of funds for plan implementation at $127M[22] is the Voter Approved category. The second largest category at $61M is the Utilities category, which includes funds for the large stream restoration and drainage projects found in neighborhood plans. The third largest source of funds ($50M) was the City General Fund. Some of these funds, such as the Neighborhood Matching Fund existed prior to plan adoption but were re-directed to plan implementation, and some like the Early Implementation Fund was established after plan adoption, specifically to support plan implementation.

Funding Early Implementation

The Mayor's Office and DON realized that marshaling the resources needed for implementation could not be done quickly. They also understood that long delays in beginning implementation would likely diminish the momentum created by the planning process. Plan strategists recognized the need to keep interest in the neighborhoods high by providing quick and visible signs of the City's commitment to implementation and to begin to get departments working with neighborhoods on project implementation. In response, the City Council established the Early Implementation Fund (EIF) to allow neighborhoods to work with departments to carry out visible, high priority projects.

In 1998 City budget allocated $750,000 to establish the fund to allow neighborhoods working with City departments to "implement one or more high priority projects that would have noticeable positive benefits for future development of a neighborhood" (Seattle City Council,

[22] The amounts shown in Table 4 represent only funds expended by mid-2003, the remaining $143M of VAF was paid-out after 2003.

Resolution 29783, 6/29/98). The 1999 budget increased the amount of the fund to $1.1 million, and in the end, $1.9 million was disbursed to the neighborhoods through the EIF.

Each of the 38 plan neighborhoods was eligible for $50,000 from the fund for its proposed early implementation project(s). Analysis shows that, in fact, distribution of the funds to the neighborhoods varied significantly. Seventeen neighborhoods received more that $50,000, with the highest award ($107,000) going to the low-income Georgetown neighborhood for street

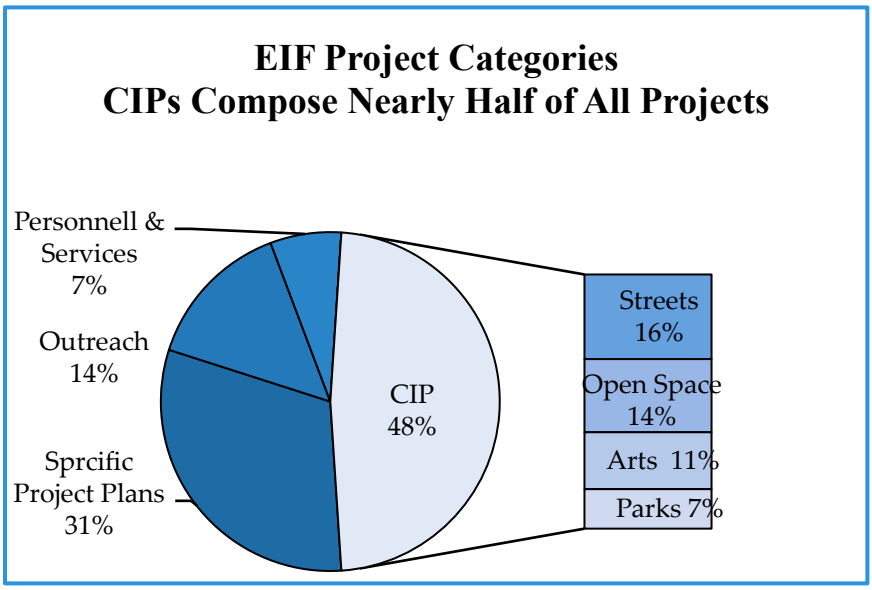


Figure 10: EIF Project Categories
Source: DON

improvements and community facility feasibility studies. Twelve neighborhoods received less that $50,000, with the smallest amount ($15,000) going to the Admiral neighborhood for a streetscape design plan. Four neighborhoods received $50,000 awards and four received no EIF funds.[23] This variation was due to the particular type of projects chosen by the neighborhoods for early implementation. Of the 104 discrete projects funded by the EIF, 52 grants, representing 48

[23] Of the neighborhoods that received no funding, one neighborhood cancelled its project, another was a neighborhood with a status somewhat different from the other 37 plan neighborhoods, one combined its projects with an adjoining neighborhood, and the final neighborhood did not apply for funds.

percent of all funds were awarded for capital improvement projects, with the largest amount going to street improvement projects, followed by CIP projects for Open Space, Arts, and Parks. These projects met the criteria of high visibility, often engaged residents in some part of the project's actuation, and helped establish a pattern of neighborhood-agency collaboration for implementation. Thirty-one percent of projects focused on conducting the more detailed planning for particular projects called for in the neighborhood plans. Because the City had allocated minimal funds for the ongoing administrative costs of implementation at the neighborhood level, outreach became an important category of expenditure from the EIF. Neighborhood implementation groups used EIF grants to establish ongoing outreach mechanisms like websites, newsletters, and high visibility neighborhood stewardship projects designed to keep awareness and interest high.

The types of projects implemented by neighborhoods using EIF funds follow priorities found in the plans. Parks and Open Space Projects received a third of all EIF funds, followed by Street and Transportation projects with 24 percent of funds, Arts and Design projects with 22 percent, Outreach projects with 14 percent, and Personnel and Services projects with 7 percent of the total. Thirty of the projects combined EIF Awards with funds from other sources that allowed larger projects to be completed. For example, the Central Area neighborhood combined a $7,500 EIF grant with $164,668 from the City's Opportunity Fund[24], $19,000 from the Neighborhood Street Fund, and $165,700 from a private source to complete a $349,368 master plan to guide pedestrian-oriented street improvements in the Central Area neighborhoods.

[24] The Opportunity Fund was created in order to "take advantage of time-sensitive opportunities for exemplary projects that address both city and neighborhood priorities in neighborhood plans, with an emphasis on projects that leverage additional funding and/or affect more than one planning area" (Seattle City Council Resolution 30094 ,12/13/1999). The 2000 budget included $1.4 million for the Opportunity Fund and the DON was charged with its administration.

Departmental Budgets

In addition to project identification and management, decentralization allowed departments to look at their budgets in new ways and to reassess budget priorities. Elected officials and City staff recognized that although a majority of the City's budget was already being spent in neighborhoods, these funds were not necessarily being applied to plan-specific projects. Diers estimated that City departments could make $263 million in neighborhood improvements through existing budgets if funds were designated for plan-specific projects (Barton et al. 2001, S13). As an example, SDOT 2002 allocations for street improvements committed $1.5 M for 52 projects specifically recommended in the neighborhood plans, including sidewalk replacement, resurfacing, improved signage, and traffic circles.

Voter Approved Funds

As the plans moved through the approval and adoption process, it became clear that there was a category of proposed projects that could not be accommodated in existing department budgets. These projects included new or expanded libraries, community centers, and parks and open spaces. There was a citywide consensus on the value of these projects, which prompted the executive and City council to call on Seattleites' to demonstrate their commitment to plan implementation by putting funding for these projects on the ballot. The first funding package put to the voters was The *Libraries for All* (LFA) levy in 1998. The following year, taxpayers approved a similar measure to fund community centers, and the year after that a measure to fund parks and open space. The bonds and levies generated over $470 million, the majority of which funded neighborhood plan projects and signaled the breadth of public support for neighborhood plan implementation.

Libraries for All. During the later months of the planning phase, Library staff became aware of the number of library projects showing up in neighborhood plans. To get a better idea of what residents felt they needed, staff conducted 35 neighborhood meetings to gather information on specific library needs. These meetings discussed library issues including location, size, convenience, access, comfort, hours, collections, technology, programs, and expanding facilities to accommodate both current and future growth (Proposed Capital Plan, March 13, 1998). Library advocates believed correctly that discussing ideas for neighborhood libraries with

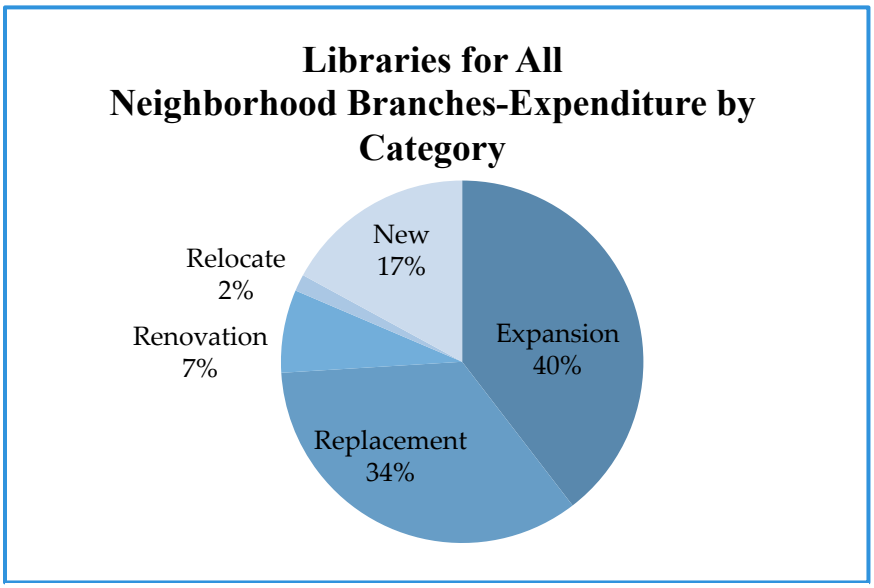


Figure 11: LFA Plan Neighborhood Expenditures
Source: Seattle City Library System

neighborhood planning groups would help generate the broad support needed to pass the LFA bond (Ceraso, Shelterforce 1999). These meetings produced the final library recommendations in neighborhood plans and the final design of the neighborhood library portion of a library ballot measure (Citizens' Summary, LFA 1998, Capital Plan for the Seattle Public Library, March13, 1998). While LFA was designed to benefit the entire library system consisting of 22 existing neighborhood libraries, the Central Downtown Library, and several mobile book services, the emphasis was on improving and expanding neighborhood libraries. The levy funded 18 of the 20

library recommendations found in the neighborhood plans[25] including the construction of three new libraries in previously underserved areas.[26] Four plan neighborhoods benefited from library upgrades although they had not recommended them in their plans and six non-plan neighborhoods received renovated or expanded libraries.

The success of the 1998 LFA levy represented a shift in Seattle voters' support for capital expenditures for libraries; this shift reflected the extent of public backing for the plans. A similar levy had failed in 1994, but the combination of the number of neighborhood plan recommendations and the ground-level work done by library staff during the planning resulted in 72 percent of voters passing the $200 million LFA levy.

Library staff was enthusiastic about the results of neighborhood participation in the planning phase and looked for ways to continue the dialogue throughout implementation. "Libraries are the most democratic of all institutions helping citizens engage in self-governance," said City Librarian, Deborah Jacobs, "Thus it is important to take all necessary steps to put in place continuous, ongoing mechanisms for public input." To achieve this, the Library committed to involving neighborhoods in siting, design, and planning issues for the new and improved libraries. This level of involvement made for a long implementation process that delayed some projects from one to four years. Nevertheless Library staff remained dedicated to community structures for participation in ongoing decision making "We really worked with the community" said Jacobs, who attended the community meetings for each library. "We made the right

[25] The two neighborhoods whose recommendations were not implemented as written were 1) Queen Anne- the plan recommended a small library outpost in the lower Queen Anne or Uptown portion of the neighborhood. This recommendation was accommodated with funds for a new Bookmobile that would serve this area. 2) the Georgetown neighborhood also recommended a small outpost style library. The library proposed the new library in nearby South Park to meet this need.

[26] In the end four new libraries were built. The South Park neighborhood library was built with funds from the LFA Opportunity Fund.

decision…I wouldn't do it any differently," she continued. Terry Collings, director of the private Seattle Library Foundation described the process this way:

> In process-driven Seattle, citizens have debated the finer points of urban design as well as where each library should be and what it should look like. Should it be two floors or one? Should it have underground or surface parking? Should it stand alone or be part of other mixed-use development? …Seattleites view libraries not just as repositories for books but as central gathering places….the library made a decision to avoid an identical design, opting to build branches that meet individual community needs. I don't know of any other library system in this country that has gone trough that comprehensive of a process, neighborhood by neighborhood—and that takes time." (Check it out: Delridge library to open ahead of schedule. Phuong Cat Le June 20, 2002, Seattle PI).

LFA was successful in leveraging other funds including a $20 million gift from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, of which $15 million was designated for neighborhood libraries. A $1.4 million increase in the 1999 library budget allowed for "new materials in areas of homework support, history, science and consumer health collections (Libraries for All Press release Nov 4, 1998) and for longer hours of operation.

Community Centers

In 1999 Mayor Schell took what he characterized as the "next logical step to fulfill wishes expressed in the neighborhoods' 37 plans" (Phuon Le, Seattle PI Saturday, Oct. 9, 1999). Again he turned to the voters and asked if they were willing to tax themselves in order to see their plans implemented. The $72 million *Community Center* levy would support what Schell called "the social or spiritual side of community building. We can't ignore that and survive," he commented (Steven Goldsmith Seattle PI Thursday, April 29, 1999). The funds generated by the levy would be divided between neighborhood community centers and improvements at the Seattle Center's arts complexes, with $36 million allocated for neighborhood projects and the

remainder for projects at the Seattle Center. The money for neighborhood community centers would allow the Department of Parks and Recreation to:

- Renovate old spaces.
- Expand community centers to provide more program space for children and youth, families, seniors and festivals.
- Make centers accessible to all by meeting ADA standards.
- Build new centers in areas currently underserved.

1999 COMMUNITY CENTER LEVY
COMMUNITY CENTERS IN PLAN NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhood	Community Center	Action	Levy Funding ($Million)	Arts Funding	Added Capacity (sq ft)
Belltown	Belltown	New (on hold)	$1.9	----	
First Hill	Yesler	Replace	6.6	$50,629	20,000
International District	International District	New	2.1	18,411	16,000
MLK @ Holly	Van Asselt	Expand	2.5	50,629	8,000
Morgan Junction	High Point	Renovate	3.7	50,629	10,000
North Rainier	Jefferson	Expand	2.5	---	8,900
Northgate	Northgate	New	8.5	36,054	20,000
Westwood/ Highland Park	Southwest	Expand	3.0	50,620	7,000

Table 5: Community Centers in Plan Neighborhoods
Source: Department of Parks and Recreation

Twenty-two neighborhood plans emphasized the need for better, expanded or new facilities for "much needed community gathering" and for extended hours to meet the need for expanded family and youth programming. The *Community Center Levy* funded seven of these recommendations, an eighth is on hold pending acquisition of an appropriate space, and the Levy funded one community center in a non-plan neighborhood. Additionally Levy funding allowed 17 community centers to be open seven days a week, whereas before the Levy, most closed at least part of Saturday and Sunday (Table 9)

Pro Parks

The third and largest voter approved source of funding for plan implementation was the Pro Parks levy. "In a move that may shape the city for generations" wrote Kery Murakami in the Seattle Post Intelligencer (Tues, May 16, 2000), "Schell yesterday proposed placing a staggering $223 million property tax levy on the fall ballot. The money would build dozens of parks, and pay for new trails, open space and ball fields over eight years." The City Council had proposed a small $160 million levy, but the Mayor, encouraged by a survey that showed voters supporting the larger proposal, decided on the larger amount in order to cover more neighborhood plan projects. The levy would pay for about half of the parks and open space recommendations in the neighborhood plans. The funds were to be allocated across four major categories:

- Acquisition – neighborhood park space; greenbelts/natural areas.
- Development – neighborhood parks; playfields and facilities; trails and boulevards.
- Acquisition and Development Opportunity Fund – funding for new acquisition and development projects identified by neighborhood and community groups.

- Environmental Stewardship, Maintenance, and Programming – maintenance of new parks and green spaces, environmental stewardship programming, enhanced maintenance of existing properties, increased recreational programming for youth and seniors and increased operational support for the Zoo.
  (Seattle Parks and Recreation June 7, 2007 Pro Parks Levy Overall Summary)

The funds could not be used to supplant parks and recreation funding from the General Subfund or Charter-mandated revenues except in the case of a natural or economic disaster. By 2005, *Pro Parks* had supported over 130 acquisition and development projects representing approximately half of the park and open space priorities in the plans. Based on prior levy and bond measures, the City anticipated that leveraging other resources would add to the levy program. The structure of the levy anticipated using levy funds to serve as match for other fund sources and many of the projects funded through the levy had community support that enhanced the opportunities for additional project contributions (Seattle Parks and Recreation. Pro Parks Levy: 2002 Annual Report June 23, 2003. P2.) By the end of 2002, the *Pro Parks* levy had leveraged an additional $5.7 million for neighborhood parks projects. The leveraged funds increased the number of new park sites that could be acquired and nearly doubled the amount of the Levy's Opportunity Fund.

Neighborhood Matching Fund

The third major source of implementation funding was the Neighborhood Matching Fund. Established in 1989 with $150,000 from the City's general fund and managed by the DON, the NMF pre-dated the NPP and served in many ways as a pilot program for key elements of neighborhood planning. The broad purpose of the NMF is to support a wide range of neighborhood initiated self-help projects including such things as public art, tree planting, park improvements, and programs for youth. In addition to physical improvements in neighborhoods, the NMF was designed to encourage development of neighborhood bonds by providing

opportunities for informal interactions between residents, and to stimulate the creation of new community organizations and to strengthen existing ones by funding community organizing, planning, and education programs (Herzog Interview 2005).

In its early stages the NMF faced two significant challenges. The first was to reach populations and neighborhoods that had little or no experience working with the City and that were underrepresented in neighborhood funding. Second, was to come to an agreement with several departments that raised important issues about the NMF.

Efforts to make the fund as broadly accessible as possible and especially to reach neighborhood groups with little or no fundraising experience began with the eligibility requirements. To be eligible to apply for a NMF award a group needed to have open membership, and be democratically governed and neighborhood based. A distinctive characteristic of the program is that applicants need not be incorporated as 501C3 charitable institutions to be eligible to apply. "In fact," writes Jim Diers (61) "neighbors who come together for the sole purpose of undertaking a project can be eligible." Originally NMF grants were awarded only to geographically based neighborhood groups, but in 1990 the DON,

> …extended [eligibility] to organizations representing communities of color. This was done in recognition that people of color tend to be underrepresented in neighborhood organizations. The eligibility extension was also premised on an understanding that, because of language and cultural differences, Seattle's growing immigrant and refugee population tended to identify more with ethnic groups than with neighborhoods.

The DON also initiated a more active effort to encourage and facilitate broad neighborhood representation by conducting outreach to groups and neighborhoods that had been underrepresented in NMF awards and in public funding generally. Staff provided technical assistance to new groups in low-income areas in project planning, community organizing and outreach, and grant writing. Organizing and planning programs in low-income neighborhoods

required half the match required in other areas. "When the Neighborhood Matching Fund began," writes Jim Diers (2004, 62),

> …there was a concern that affluent neighborhoods would be in the best position to come up with a match and that people not represented by strong community councils would be left behind. This has proven not to be the case, however: the provisions that count volunteer labor as a highly valued match, that make organizing an eligible project in low-income neighborhoods, that include organizations of people of color as eligible[27] applicants, and that emphasized need and diversity as selection criteria have helped to ensure that a disproportionately large share of the funding has gone to low-income communities.

The second challenge facing the NMF at its inception was resistance from some City departments and project managers over concerns about problems that might develop from lay people engaging in planning and implementing functions previously carried out only by professional City staff. Diers relates his early efforts to persuade Parks to support neighborhood initiated projects and to address objections raised by the department. He writes (56),

> Her [the Director of the Department Parks and Recreation] reaction was 'We don't want people messing with our parks…What about liability for volunteer work? Who will enforce our department's standards? Where will our department find time to be involved in these projects? How will the improvements be maintained?'

The DON recognized that these were serious and legitimate concerns and responded by working with Parks and other City departments to solve the liability, staffing, and standards issues. First, they found a carrier for liability insurance. Second DON agreed not to fund any project unless it had been reviewed and approved by the appropriate departments. Third, the MNF paid for two positions in the Parks Department and one in Transportation, to work with neighborhoods and serve as liaisons to other staff members in those departments. Finally, all

[27] As opposed to organizations that are strictly geographically organized, these organizations could represent several neighborhoods.

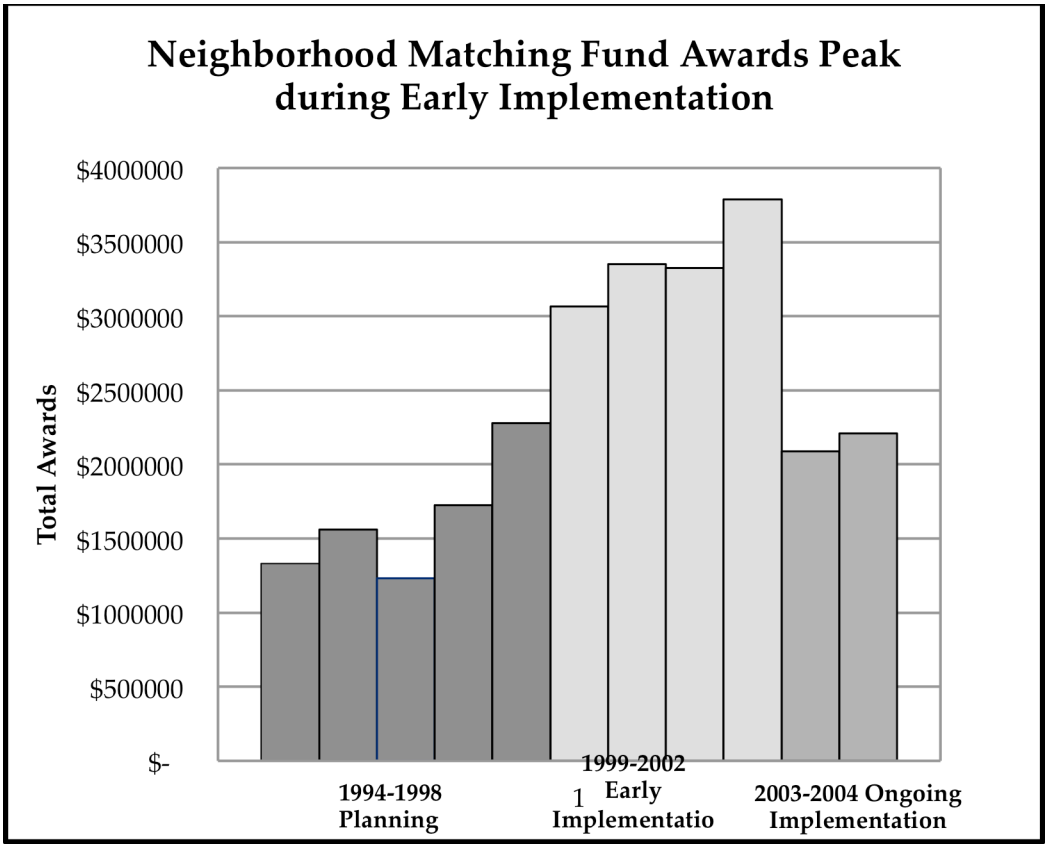
project contracts included provisions for ongoing maintenance by the community, the appropriate department, or both.

With these guidelines in place, the Department of Parks and Recreation became an enthusiastic supporter of the NMF and solving these problems together gave departments and neighborhoods experience in joint planning and decision-making. And the DON gained experience in outreach, which in turn, smoothed the way for collaboration during the planning and implementation phases of the NPP.

In 1998, changes were made to the NMF to allow it to become the City's third major strategy for funding neighborhood plan implementation. If City reorganization and budget alignment represented the City's commitment to implementation and the voter approved funds signaled the broad support of voters, the NMF represented the commitment of the neighborhoods to implementation. The fund was increased from $2.2 million in 1998 (the end of the planning phase) to nearly $4 million in the early years of implementation and plan-specific projects were prioritized for funding. In 1998, the City Council passed Resolution 29718 which called for:

> The Review and Selection Criteria used to rate applications to the Neighborhood Matching Fund shall be amended to add 10 points for project applications in 1998, which result from the current round of neighborhood planning. It is the Mayor's and Council's intent that, in the 1999-2000 budgets, at least half of the awarded Matching Funds be used to support projects identified in neighborhood plans approved by the City Council in 1998-2000.The Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee and the City Neighborhood Council are requested to jointly recommend procedures for ensuring the level of Neighborhood Matching Fund support for neighborhood planning projects [be at least half of the awarded funds].

From 1994 through 2004 the NMF channeled $66 million into Seattle neighborhoods -- $26 million in cash awards and $40 million in matching contributions from the neighborhoods. In the four years comprising the planning phase (1994-1998) neighborhoods received $20 million while in the implementation phase (1999-2004) the amount more than doubled to $46



Source: DON

Figure 15: NMF Awards 1994 - 2004

million (Figure 15). From 1998 to 2004, plan neighborhoods received about 75 percent of funds awarded and non-plan neighborhoods received the remaining 25 percent.

Making the NMF an implementation strategy raised its visibility and increased public interest in the program. In May 2000, Mayor Schell was asked how the city benefited from the

allocation of relatively small amounts to neighborhood groups. He responded that the NMF represented "the single most successful City strategy for building both tangible projects and a stronger sense of community". Among the benefits cited by Schell were:

- A dramatically increased number of people who are active in their communities.
- Provision of resources to neighborhood organizers to move from a reactive position to one of forward-looking responsibility for their communities.
- Better relationships between City departments and neighborhood leaders as a result of collaboration of project organizers with one or more City departments.
- Making funds available more broadly by allowing for a non-cash match, and targeting City outreach and technical assistance to areas where the money was needed the most.

Implementing the neighborhood plans required the broad base of funding apparent in the NPP's three-part funding strategy. By spreading responsibility for funding among the City, the voters, and the neighborhoods, NPP planners were able to solicit the concrete indicators of commitment required to make implementation happen. The success of the three-part strategy can be attributed in large part to the level of trust that developed between the City and civil society during the planning phase. Because the City delivered on its promises during planning, citizens were ready to commit resources for implementation. The commitment of funds, however, represented more than the promise of material support required for implementation. It also served as a symbol of a larger commitment on the part of government and civil society to the democratic endeavor of ongoing collaborative efforts.

Condition Three – Bureaucratic Culture and Political Environment Conducive to Power Sharing

In addition to enabling institutional architecture and adequate funding, responsive government also requires a culture within the bureaucracy and political environment that supports and encourages power sharing among different branches of government and between

government and civil society. A culture of power sharing engages reluctant City departments and agencies, builds trust with local groups, and broadens public backing. Less obvious, but no less important, is the role inclusive culture plays in helping to reduce the power imbalances inherent in any municipally sponsored participatory program. Cornwall (2008, 43) writes:

> Institutions are very vulnerable to domination by professionals and those with vested interests. Those with the least power may find themselves completely sidelined. The semblance of participation can mask deep-seated forms of exclusion: where people direct their eye contact, who gets interrupted, who raised their hand and never catches the eye of the chair, who is chosen to speak first. Addressing the social and political marginalization that perpetuates societal inequalities depends on more than making available a seat at the table and finding people to fill it, precisely because exclusion is a much more subtle process than this – it requires that we pay far closer attention to cultures of politics and to relations of power.

A bureaucratic culture committed to power sharing develops from years of struggle and experimentation with more and more inclusive political forms. Historically neighborhoods have had a powerful voice in Seattle politics and the NPP's ability to cultivate a bureaucratic disposition for power sharing was lodged at least in part, in this tradition of neighborhood activism. In some cases, local power was directed to protecting parochial neighborhood interests but in others it was employed to secure a voice for marginalized neighborhoods. In a study of diversity issues in Seattle Gordon et al. (1998) conclude,

> A history of activism and a sense that individuals and organized citizens can make a difference are important aspects of the Seattle context. The transition from Seattle politics described as "downright dull" in 1965 by Edward Banfield to today's citizen activism and participation is attributed by many observers to the protracted citizen-initiated efforts to revive Lake Washington in the late 1950s.

Stemming from a legacy of labor activism reaching back to the 1919 general strike under the leadership of the IWW where 100,000 workers walked off the job and brought the city to a halt, nonprofit groups in Seattle tended toward direct action and protest. For example, the IAF

inspired South End Seattle Community Organization (SESCO), which was founded in 1975 and remains active today, helped to organize low- and moderate-income residents to initiate direct action and mass demonstrations designed to pressure City officials to respond to community needs. Jim Diers, a founder, organizer and director of this group before he became director of the DON, wrote (2004, 24),

> As many as eight hundred people attended annual conventions at which the members elected officers and voted on community-wide issues that they wanted to work on together. Among those projects was a fight against garbage incinerators, which led to a city-wide recycling program, opposition to the overconcentration of low-income housing, which resulted in a scattered-site housing program, and a local ratepayers' revolt by SESCO's Light Brigade, which quickly grew into a successful statewide campaign against nuclear power.

The City recognized the power of organized neighborhood groups as far back as 1968 when 22 community groups pressured the City to set aside $10M of Forward Thrust[28] bond money for use in neighborhoods with spending priorities to be set by local residents. In addition the City agreed that any other capital improvements in the neighborhoods would conform to a resident-approved Neighborhood Improvement Plan (O'Donnel 2004, xii).

In the 1980s the City began to experience some of its first serious growth-related problems. In describing the influence of these pressures on neighborhood groups, Diers (2004, 28) recalls,

> Old neighborhood groups were getting reenergized, and new ones were forming. They opposed the City's plan to rezone for increased density and developers' proposals to build projects not in keeping with the character of the neighborhoods. Typically the struggle took the groups from community meetings, to the hearing examiner, to Seattle City council hearings, and onto the court. Neighborhood groups, developers, and City

[28] Forward Thrust was a $333.9M set of bond propositions for transit, a multipurpose stadium, low-income housing, fire protection, and a new aquarium among other things.

> officials all were spending more time and money than they could afford in adversarial processes and were getting results that satisfied one.

In response, the City council adopted the Neighborhood Planning and Assistance Program aimed at giving neighborhood activist alternative forms of access to City government. The 1987 Program, worked out through the Seattle Planning Commission, represented the City's first experiment with something like widespread participatory neighborhood planning. The resolution set up the Neighborhood Service Centers (Little City Halls), created a system of district councils, established a neighborhood self-help fund, increased neighborhood participation in the City's budget process, launched an interdepartmental coordinating council, and created the Office of Neighborhoods.

As a result, by the beginning of the NPP both neighborhoods and City staff had experience working together and Seattle had become familiar with two mayors willing to support neighborhood-City collaboration (Royer, Rice). Also by this time, several neighborhood activists had been elected to the City Council (Tobin 2006). Yet even with this foundation, it was still challenging to create a power-sharing culture across the bureaucracy that would support implementation of plans created by a participatory planning process based on significant joint decision-making. Three factors contributed to the City's ability to meet this challenge. First, the success of the planning phase and the new level of trust established between the City and the neighborhoods encouraged reluctant bureaucrats to engage with the public for implementation. Second, the Mayor's Office and City Council were supportive and created the infrastructure and the legal base to support power sharing. Third, the sector managers acted as powerful models of the style and efficacy of bringing together disparate actors to make plan implementation work.

Political Environment

The political foundation upon which implementation activities are carried out is often the determining factor affecting plan implementation. Political support influences how committed City departments are to plan implementation. Burby, in his 1994 study found that political support for implementation had "positive direct effects" on agency commitment to plan implementation. Department staffs that know their efforts are supported politically are more likely to risk innovation in experimentation with new forms of governance. Berry et al. (1993, 44) write that collaborative governance,

> …cannot be conceived of as an administrative reform. It must first be a political reform – a change must take place that enhances the value of effective citizen participation. The rewards to administrators of operating effective programs and the sanctions for failing to do so must be significant. Otherwise symbolic efforts will prevail as administrators act, understandably, to preserve their authority.

For implementation to succeed it was important for departments to have managers who supported the changes in government structures, were enthusiastic about the neighborhood plans, and had the skills to work in a complex and collaborative environment. Successful implementation counted on these managers to develop a receptive culture in the bureaucracy in order to sustain the structural changes required by decentralization. The DON and the Office of the Mayor began a campaign designed to win over department managers that included a seat on the mayor's executive council, regular briefings and retreats, and access to the sector managers. This high level of communication and participation along with the experience of the planning phase was enough incentive to win over most department managers.

Political support also influences the extent of citizen backing for plan implementation. Residents in participatory planning programs, who trust that political support for the plans will advance implementation are more likely to commit time and energy than participants who fear

that weak political support will undermine their efforts. Participants, who see that elected officials are committed to plan implementation, are also more likely to promote the process and give it positive exposure in the neighborhood. Lauria et al. (2004, 559) found this effect in their study reporting, "…the attitudes of the political elite toward the plan and its implementation are directly related to the community's attitudes toward the plan."

In Seattle, support for neighborhood plan implementation from the Mayor's Office and the City council was enthusiastic from the beginning and remained sound until 2002 when a new mayor was installed. Mayor Norm Rice was the first official to call for a citywide neighborhood planning process and established the Neighborhood Planning Office in 1995 to carry out the NPP. Referring to the "unprecedented level of participation" generated by the planning process, Rice commented, "We have let the genie [of public participation] out of the bottle and we'll never get it back in" (Diers 1994, 137). Rice remained extremely positive about the planning process and by the end of his term recognized that public expectations regarding implementation were high -- the City needed to deliver on its commitments to the neighborhoods. Taking office in 1998, just as the City Council began adopting the plans; Rice's successor Mayor Paul Schell continued executive support for the program. Although at the time of his inauguration, with the exception $1.9 million for the EIF, Schell began his term with high public expectations and no resources dedicated to plan implementation. Diers (1994, 137) writes of Mayor Schell that upon taking office, "[he] may have been tempted to disclaim any responsibility for the Neighborhood Planning Program, but instead he made plan implementation his top priority." Along with Diers and key members of the council, Schell devised the three-part implementation and funding strategy that the City employed for plan implementation. He was instrumental in supporting departmental decentralization and in getting the voter approved funds on the ballot.

The City Council also established neighborhood planning as a priority and dedicated significant time to implementation. The council created a Neighborhood Planning and Community Development committee to monitor and support the program and each City councilmember was assigned as "steward" for several neighborhoods. In this role they spent time in the neighborhoods becoming thoroughly familiar with the plans and barriers to implementation that the council could help remove. In this role council members also acted as a direct link between the neighborhood planning groups and City government (Wagoner 1999). The council took essential steps to ensure funding for implementation including passing resolutions to prioritize plan-specific projects for NMF grants, to establish the Neighborhood Plan Implementation Opportunity Fund, to require a long-term funding strategy from the executive, and to help ensure that the library, community center, and parks levies got on the ballot. In addition to these supportive roles, the Council played a direct role in plan implementation through the adoption of plan elements into laws or regulations. By acting to adopt "some aspects of neighborhood plans into City laws, regulation and/or procedures," these council actions made "certain recommendations of neighborhood plans virtually permanent" (Auditor's Report 2007, 21).

New Bureaucratic Norms

The NPP gave rise to significant changes in the way departmental planning was carried out. These changes endured long after the 2002 administration shifted City priorities away from neighborhood planning. When a department drew up new long-range departmental plans or launched into an implementation project, neighborhood plans were consulted as a matter of course. Two factors contributed to the establishment of this norm.

First, the plans had been integrated into the mission and operations of many departments. Sirianni (2007, 4) commented in a letter to the City Auditor,

> It seems clear that neighborhood planning established and has sustained an important *norm* of aligning with democratically generated neighborhood plans. Such norms are a critical step in changing the culture of planning agencies and government networks. (Emphasis in original)

Later, in a similar vein he writes (2009, 102), "Professional Planners across the city felt obliged to take into account the planning work done by citizens." The City Auditor (2007, 1) concluded that most major planning efforts in the City from1999 to 2007 included neighborhood plan elements and that this regularized use of neighborhood plans in departmental planning was one of four critical factors contributing to the success of NPP implementation. Second, incorporating neighborhood plan elements into subsequent City planning actions also became a legal requirement in some departments. Sirianni writes (2009, 102),

> …consulting neighborhood plans has become a legal requirement or departmental procedure for some departments, such as the planning department (City Environmental Policies and Procedures and Design Review Guidelines) and the Department of Transportation (Right of Way Manual).

Cultural patterns, such as facilitative leadership styles and collaborative decision-making, established during the planning and early implementation phases also became an integral part of the City's bureaucracy. Over time, key staff throughout government came to act as "shepherds" of the plans and "champions" of the neighborhood planning process. They kept the plans at the forefront of departmental discussions and worked to insure accurate tracking of plan implementation. As Sirianni (2009, 101) describes this process,

> Such champions emerged especially among project managers within departments; they often received official license to help align agencies own ten-year plans with neighborhood ones and helped transform agency practices more broadly.

As with the case of project managers, some neighborhood plan champions came from within departments. In the case of the library system, the processes of neighborhood planning were embraced system-wide and employed on a regular basis for decision-making. Some departments, although committed to the principles of collaborative governance, felt they lacked the internal capacity to engage in ongoing participatory practices. In some instances, these departments hired staff away from the DON to fill the gap; in others they provided specialized training for existing staff. But in every case,

> They educated senior staff to ensure that long-term city planning and policy-making in a dynamic environment, could remain responsive to neighborhood visions, as well as shifting priorities and new opportunities. (Sirianni 2009, 101)

Sector Managers

Lastly, the complexity of working with multiple departments, agencies, neighborhood groups, and private developers required someone at the sector level who could hold an overall view of implementation progress. As part of its responsibility for implementation, the DON created the sector manager position to do this job. Sector managers were assigned full-time to each sector to maintain an overall perspective and keep projects moving forward. The sector manager played a critical role in every element of plan implementation. They served as the primary City contact with the neighborhoods, they convened the interdepartmental teams, and they met directly with the mayor four times a year "to report on progress and offer advice on how to maintain momentum in each department"(Sirianni 2009, 102).

Sector managers were the cultural glue that bound together the various elements of departmental decentralization and acted as the engine that drove implementation. Former sector manager, Sally Clark (11-27-07), recalled being sent out by the DON to act as a "jack-of-all-

trades," employing whatever resources she needed in order to get the plans implemented. According to Clark with few precedents to follow, sector managers' job was to "figure out how to make projects happen." Similarly, the City Auditor (2007, 16-17) writes,

> Many interview subjects reported that the Sector Managers could help persuade department management that staff and funding resources were needed to bring a recommendation to fruition, e.g. to complete a scope and cost estimate for vague plan recommendations.

Most observers agree that without this role, which involved "guiding neighborhoods, prodding City departments, and bringing people together to solve complex problems" (Seattle Planning Commission 2001, 420), the decentralized implementation structures would have been even more difficult to achieve and sustain.

Sector managers were successful in part because the support and convening authority conferred by the Mayor's Office, the Council, and the DON helped make sector managers "nodes of Power" within the implementation machinery. Winkler (2009, 69) writes, people "occupying such nodes are uniquely positioned to extend their influence to others in their environments. According to the City Auditor (2007, 16-17),

> Many interview subjects cited the Neighborhood Sector Mangers as a key support for implementing neighborhood plan recommendations in the years immediately following plan adoption. An essential factor in the effectiveness of the Sector Managers was the backing of the Executive administration to bring departments to the same table to coordinate responses and leverage resources. One of their responsibilities was to scrutinize City planning efforts, such as transportation sub-areas, for common elements with neighborhood plans that could further high-priority plan recommendations…They were able to keep plan stewards in the neighborhoods enthusiastic and focused on the possible. This kind of organizational infrastructure helped keep the planning vision alive. The Sector Managers were sufficiently involved in each community that they could keep abreast of the shifting community priorities as circumstances changed or as new funding sources emerged.

Sector managers adopted a facilitative rather than directive style with other departments. They were flexible and willing to negotiate with both the departments and the neighborhoods to get plans implemented (Clark 2007). Research suggests that the style of implementation has an effect on outcomes, with facilitative styles being more effective than more authoritarian ones (Burby et all 1998; Kagan 1994). This facilitative style helped sector managers effectively negotiate differences in meaning that frequently occurred between department staff and neighborhood leaders. For example "to *enhance* a street may mean to make it 'prettier and slower' to a citizen, while a City employee might think it means to move more vehicles more swiftly along it" (Barton et al 2001, S-7).

Negotiation and organizing skills combined with a commitment to collaborative implementation contributed to sector managers' effectiveness as community-builders. Sector Managers "carried the community-building effort forward by continuing to meet with neighborhood planning groups" and "were able to keep the plan stewards in the neighborhoods enthusiastic and focused on the possible" (Auditor 15-16). Sirianni (9/5/07) stressed the sector managers,

> …role in *building trust* across the networks of stakeholders *within* neighborhoods…In my own research across various cities, states, and federal agencies, I found the Sector Managers' role as 'relational pivots' in what Harvard University's Robert Behn (*Rethinking Democratic Accountability*, Brookings Institution Press, 2001) calls '360-degree accountability' to be the most robust I have found to date (emphasis in original).

Finally, Sector Managers were positioned to see the big picture in a way that neither individual departments nor neighborhoods could. In addition to working with departments within their sector, sector mangers,

> …scrutinize[d] city planning efforts, such as transportation sub-area plans, for common elements within neighborhood plans that could further high

> priority plan recommendations. Sector Managers could ensure the broader city planning efforts considered neighborhood plan priorities and system-wide needs together and meshed them where practicable (Auditor 2007, 17).

They kept abreast of fund availability in state and federal as well as City budgets and worked to direct funds to plan priorities. They "were sufficiently involved in each community that they could keep abreast of the shifting priorities as circumstances changed or as new funding sources emerged" (Auditor 2007, 17). They were aware of where and what kind of private development was happening in the sector and worked with developers to include neighborhood plan recommendations in their projects. Commitment to the values of collaboration, bottom up planning and government responsiveness combined with influence, skill and a facilitative style to make sector managers unique within the City's bureaucracy.

New Administration, New Priorities

The importance of political support for plan implementation became clear with the mayoral election in 2000 and the installation of a new administration. Unlike the previous three mayors, the new mayor, Greg Nickels, did not rank citywide neighborhood planning and governance a high priority. With the changed direction and policies of the new administration, staff and budgets dedicated to plan implementation were cut, resulting in a slow-down of implementation (Seattle City Auditor 2007) and the weakening of the strong collaborative relationships between the City and the neighborhoods.

Nickels' policies shifted emphasis away from neighborhoods back toward development of targeted areas of the city with an emphasis on downtown economic development. At the time Nickels took office, the City faced a $60 million budget deficit brought about by "a stubborn recession that refuse[d] to improve, the stock market stumble, the decline of the dot-coms, and Boeing layoffs" (Mulady, Kathy and Phuong Cat Le, Seattle P.I. September 24, 2002. "Grim

numbers in Nickel's budget.) In deciding where to cut funds in order to balance the budget, Nickels focused on social service departments and agencies. The Seattle P.I. reported,

City Staffing Dedicated to Neighborhood Plan Implementation

City Staff	1999	2003	2004
Sector Managers	6.0	3.0	0
Division Director	.07	.07	.01
Database Assistant	1.0	1.0	1.0
3 Geo-reps	3.0	0	0
Parks Staff	0		0
District Coordinator ½ time	0	2.6	2.6
Total NPI Staffing	10.7	7.3	3.61

Source: Seattle City Auditor 2007

Table 6: Decreases in Staffing for Implementation
Source: City Auditor 2007

> Some changes are painful, but necessary,' said Nickels, who is facing a $60 million budget deficit – the biggest gap in 20 years. Many departments – including those that attend to the city's neediest people—took substantial cuts from their 2002 spending plans…health services experienced a 25.5 percent cut and human services, a 8.4 percent cut.

The DON also suffered substantial cuts. Within a year of the new administration taking office the NMF was reduced by $800,000, the six sector mangers were reduced to three, and Diers had been fired. The staff cuts and reordered priorities meant that there was no longer a

"group of positions with the City explicitly charged with being champions of the plans" (Auditor 2007, 28).

The result was that knowledge of the plans among department personnel with plan-related responsibilities became uneven and with staff turnover and the passage of time, the plans played a diminished role in departmental planning and budgets (Barton et al 2001, Auditor 2007). The critical roles played by sector managers became especially apparent when the positions were cut in 2002 and eliminated completely in 2003. People in the neighborhoods felt that they no longer had a voice or access to City government. "The reduction in staffing dedicated to neighborhood plan implementation in 2002 and 2003 (Table 4-4) slowed implementation of the plans," reported the City Auditor (2006, i). And "with the loss of focused staff positions, the energy in the neighborhoods galvanized by the planning process [was] dwindling or being redirected to other efforts." In assessing the status of implementation in 2006, McCoy (Appendix A) wrote,

> Communities and Neighborhood District Councils need to accept that the DON's role as related to neighborhood planning and implementation has changed profoundly since the Neighborhood Development Managers [sector managers] went away; there are no longer the financial or personnel resources available for the level of advocacy there once was.

Without dedicated staff for implementation, City departments reverted to 'silo' style operation and became less connected with the implementation process at the neighborhood/sector level. The Auditor's report concluded that by 2006 "Neighborhood plans [were] no longer a driving force in department operations, though departments do take them into consideration in some of their planning."

Without political support for institutional changes that establish new forms of collaborative governance, participatory planning and implementation become captives of

changing political administrations. While the electoral process provides a form of built-in accountability, shifting political priorities can reduce participatory planning to a "project" of one administration rather than the operational norm. Unless new forms of governance can be formalized, these new more democratic practices will continue to depend on "citizens electing effective City council coalitions as well as supportive mayors" (Siriani 2007, 386).

When cities engage in municipally sponsored neighborhood planning, implementation may be a problem that planners recognize and then are forced to set aside. Because they lack the authority to guarantee any degree of implementation, planners and citizens may invest significant time and money in a participatory process that produces plans that have no assurance of implementation. It is doubtful that the 300 people who met at the University of Washington in May 1994 to sketch the outlines of the NPP realized the extent of institutional change or the level of resources that would be required to implement the neighborhood plans. While it may have begun as an ambitious municipally sponsored neighborhood planning program, the NPP evolved into a broader co-governance initiative largely because of the City's commitment to implementation. By undertaking the institutional and cultural changes required to respond to citizen voice as expressed in the plans, the City transformed itself into "the most decisive variable in making participatory governance work", namely a responsive state actor.

Chapter 5: Shaping Policies to Promote Fairness

In terms of practical politics…without a mobilized constituency and supportive officials, no prescription for justice will be implemented.
Susan Fainstein

The influence of neoliberal ideology on public policy over the past 40 years has contributed to both increasing economic inequality and diminished social equity in nearly all industrialized democracies (Solt 2008). Purcell (2009, 144) reports that, "Numerous longitudinal studies show increasing inequality on virtually every index (Dumenil and Levy 2004; Fainstein 2001; Harvey 2005; Task Force on Inequality and American Democracy 2004)" and that whereas "under Keynesian policies, [inequality] was mitigated by significant material redistribution and the meaningful inclusion of organized labor in state decisions" under neoliberal polices no such mitigation exists. In the practice of neoliberalism, economic inequality and diminished democracy are tightly linked through the withdrawal of the state from regulation and redistributive policies and the incursion of the market into the public sphere. Purcell comments that,

> As the state retreats from regulating capital and transfers more and more decisions to the free market, those who are powerful actors in the market – corporations first among them – gain increasing power to determine the fortunes of people and places. The disciplinary forces of competitiveness and capital mobility give large corporations significant control of public policy (144).

The diminution of the state's role in mitigating the negative outcomes of the market's sway over public policy has had disproportionately negative effects on the economic lives of poor people. Gough et al. (2006, 93) point out that, "neoliberal reforms have …tended to worsen outcomes for the poor and socially oppressed and widen the gaps between them and the rest of society." But the influence of neoliberal policy reaches beyond the economic lives of poor people to contribute to a decline in their political participation. Solt (2008) contends that because

economic inequality functions to increase the relative power of the richer citizens, economic inequality undermines political equality. His study of the effects of economic inequality on the political engagement of citizens found that "economic inequality depressed political engagement, and especially that of people with lower incomes…" but "where economic resources are distributed more evenly, power is distributed more evenly, and the resulting politics encourage relatively poor citizens to take interest and take part" (58). "Democratic regimes," continues Solt "depend for their very existence on a relatively equal distribution of economic resources across citizens" (57).

Although democratic participation and economic inequality are linked, strengthening democratic participation does not automatically result in greater equity nor does greater equity guarantee enhanced democracy. A democratic process can produce outcomes that are unfair or damaging to marginalized groups, for example, a democratically constituted group could decide to prohibit the construction of affordable housing in a high-income neighborhood. On the other hand, a city agency could arbitrarily formulate and impose a fair distribution of parkland without participation of anyone outside the agency. Fainstein (in Marcuse et al., 2009, 33) writes: "…process and outcome are tangled with each other and…particular values, depending on their context and interpretation can cut against each other. Most troublesome is the tension between democracy and equality".

Establishing a positive relationship between equity and democracy requires specific policies that speak to both participation and fairness. Clavel in the introduction to *The Progressive City* (1986) defines progressive cities as ones that "try to follow both participatory and redistributive policy innovation." "My own work" writes Fainstein (2001, 885) "stresses

that the just city combines criteria for inclusionary processes with a concern for just outcomes" while recognizing "that the two can conflict."

The possibility of crafting policies to support participatory democratic practice and equity depends heavily on the civic environment and political climate of the city. As Fainstein (In Marcuse et al. 2009, 33) says, "…the preexistence of equity begets sentiments in its favor." For a supportive context to take root requires that the normal unban political setting, in which developers and politicians "…make economic competitiveness the highest priority and give little or no consideration to questions of justice" (Fainstein 2010, 181), be overturned and supplanted with a norm that establishes equity as a criteria for policy decisions. In addition to some level of existing equality, enabling context requires public and state support for democratic participation and equity. This, in turn, requires a civil society experienced with democratic participation and an open and transparent local government disposed to responding to public demands (Gaventa 2004). Fainstein sums up the issue of context when in 2010 she writes, "In terms of practical politics…without a mobilized constituency and supportive officials, no prescription for justice will be implemented (181).

In Chapters 3 and 4, I describe the prevailing civic and political environment in Seattle during this period, including factors that contributed to making the city a fertile ground for the NPP experiment. These factors include: 1) a long history of civic participation and activism, 2) the inclusion through public workshops of social justice as one of the five core values mandated to guide the development of the 1994 Complan, 3) prior experience—both positive and negative--with city-neighborhood planning, 4) the election of mayors and city council members who favored empowered public participation in policy-making with regard to neighborhoods, and 5) a receptive bureaucracy in key departments. An additional important element of the context in the

1990s was the relative economic prosperity of the city during this period. Rather than being constrained to modeling the NPP after "established best practices" in neighborhood planning, good economic times gave staffers and neighborhoods flexibility to invent and experiment with new forms and relationships.

Because the policies regulating the distribution of NPP implementation resources were developed piecemeal and over time in multiple departments, the issue of context is particularly important in the Seattle case. Without one overarching distribution policy, the idea of equity as a criterion for decision-making needed to permeate the public, political, and bureaucratic environment. It is perhaps not a coincidence that in discussing the primacy of economic competitiveness in municipal policy decisions Purcell draws on examples from Seattle to illustrate instances where values other than the norm prevailed. He (2009, 145) writes, "Decisions like signing on to Kyoto or raising corporate taxes or spending on libraries, parks and community centers can begin to look very optional in the face of the competitive, and global, struggle for survival." And yet, these are all decisions made by municipal government in Seattle.

Purcell also offers an example of a "mobilized constituency" acting against an instance of neoliberal authority in his description of the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition (DRCC). He writes that in Seattle,

…a coalition of environmental, neighborhood, Native American, small business, and environmental justice groups has come together to advocate for greater popular empowerment in a Superfund cleanup of the city's main river. The cleanup is being overseen by a typically neoliberal governance arrangement: a public-private partnership (PPP) among major polluters has been given wide authority to study, plan and carry out the cleanup…The watershed for the PPP, must meet the needs of the economy. The DRCC brings together groups with quite

disparate interests. But they share an equivalent opposition to the PPP's waterway/property vision…the diverse elements of the DRCC have therefore consciously constructed together an equivalent vision for the river. That is, they see the PPP as an adversary with whom they must struggle, not a partner with whom to build a cooperative solution through communicative action.

The NPP expanded and consolidated a sympathetic context by establishing a level of trust between the City and the neighborhoods early in the planning process. Although the NPP began in an atmosphere of rancor and distrust, elected officials and program staff launched the program with actions that demonstrated government openness to new ways of relating to neighborhoods, including giving them 1) a central role in program conception and design, 2) control of City funds to be used for planning, and 3) autonomy in decisions regarding the scope and focus of the plans. These actions contributed to a change in the relationship between the neighborhoods and the City from one of skepticism to one in which each side had some confidence that the other would work to fulfill its commitments.

In Chapter 4, I also discussed the results of changes in key elements of the City-neighborhood context. First, the failure of the stewardship committees to continue to engage neighborhood players resulted in decreased public participation in plan implementation.[29] Second, the installation of new, less-supportive executive leadership resulted in cutbacks in NPP program operations. Third, by firing Jim Diers, and reducing and finally eliminating the sector manager positions, the new administration dissolved the glue that bound together the neighborhoods, City departments, and the DON. These contextual changes made it impossible

[29] Evidence from the Auditor's 2007 Report indicates that although participation in Stewardship Groups dropped precipitately, overall participation in City planning programs may not have decreased but shifted to other, more issue specific forums. For example, the 2007 Pro-Parks report states the "to date [the launch of the Pro-Parks initiative]…more than 12,600 individuals have participated in Pro-Parks public processes on 117 projects.

Plan Neighborhoods Ranked by Median HH Income		
Neighborhood	Median HH Income	# of HH
Pioneer Square	$11128	993
International District	$11201	1689
Bottom 20%		2682
University	$22411	6230
Denny Triangle	$22883	827
Commercial Core	$23207	1849
South Lake Union	$25561	723
Rainier Beach	$26291	1797
Pike/Pine	$26480	2181
Columbia City/Hillman City/Genesee	$26879	1960
First Hill	$27743	5070
South Park	$31683	1228
Belltown	$31943	6008
Capitol Hill	$33142	12993
Central Area	$33449	12199
MLK at Holly Street	$33799	1878
North Beacon Hill	$33841	1617
Lower Middle		56560
Georgetown	$34185	546
North Rainier Valley	$35288	1889
Westwood/Highland Park	$40580	5394
Aurora-Licton	$41304	9483
Northgate	$41760	14469
Broadview-Bitter Lake-Haller Lake	$42201	13485
Fremont	$42671	7035
Delridge	$44085	3502
Ballard Interbay Manufacturing Indus. Center	$45714	2853
Duwamish (Greater Duwamish Manufacturing Indus.	$46077	2340
Eastlake	$47500	2761
North District/Lake City	$48723	11756
Ballard/Crown Hill	$49824	20980
Queen Anne	$50703	18612
West Seattle Junction	$51072	5822
Middle		120927
Greenwood/Phinney	$52710	11138
Wallingford	$56165	8456
Green Lake	$58505	8570
Morgan Junction	$58671	4626
Admiral	$59408	4411
Roosevelt	$63436	1719
Upper Middle		38920

Table 7: Plan Neighborhoods Ranked by Median HH Income
Source: Seattle Department of Design, Construction, and Land Use

for the program to evolve and develop as projects were completed, new issues arose in the neighborhoods, and new opportunities presented themselves. Significantly, however, by institutionalizing legal, funding, and policy constructs enacted through the NPP, the City had created sufficient funds and infrastructure to implement 80 percent or plan recommendations.

In this final chapter, I detail the particular policies that I identify as critical to the NPP's distributional outcomes. These seven policies – five planning phase policies and three enacted during implementation – were created at different times, in various departments and together acted to promote a redistributive outcome for the program. Second, I provide an analysis of the allocation of funds from the City's three major funding strategies – realigned Departmental Budgets, Voter Approved Funds, and the Neighborhood Matching Fund – from 2000 to 2006, showing how these funds were distributed by median household income across the neighborhoods. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of these findings and with some thoughts on areas of possible future research.

Seattle Policies

In assessing the impact of the NPP on equity issues, DON staffers McCaw et al. (2001, S-8) write, "The Department of Neighborhoods appears [with its policies] to be attempting to achieve new levels of equity across planned and unplanned areas of the city." Some policies dealt directly with the allocation of funds and others acted more indirectly by including new voices in the planning/budgeting process. In the planning phase, four policies stand out for their contribution to the NPP's distributive outcomes: 1) the overall neighborhood selection criteria, 2) the inclusion of all "distressed" neighborhoods in the planning, 3) supplemental funding for neighborhoods that were determined to be less well organized, had less experience working with the City and/or had significant numbers of hard-to-reach residents, 4) the provision of

supplemental resources for extensive outreach to underrepresented groups. In the implementation phase, three policies in particular significantly influenced the allocation of funds among neighborhoods: 1) the creation of *opportunity funds,* 2) the policies dictating the siting of libraries, parks, and

community centers, and 3) the policy that established plan neighborhoods as priority recipients of NMF grants.

Planning Phase

Selection Criteria The first policy that affected the distribution of City resources was the *selection criteria* for plan neighborhoods. The policy identified potential plan neighborhoods as those "expected to take significant amounts of growth in the next twenty years and with the infrastructure to support growth." Neighborhoods meeting these criteria included neighborhoods that in addition to high poverty rates, historically, had little sway at city hall. Sirianni (2007, 385) writes, "Neighborhoods eligible for neighborhood planning, with the exception of the core retail area, did tend to be those with the weakest voices in City Hall." Of the 38 plan neighborhoods, 42 percent fell into the bottom to lower-middle quintile of median household income.[30] The NPP's citywide scope meant that all low-income neighborhoods would benefit from participating in the planning. This was in contrast to the proposed Seattle Commons project that focused only on the South Lake Union neighborhood or earlier neighborhood planning projects aimed at the Central District. In these and similar previous programs, a few low-income neighborhoods would receive benefits, but others would not.

Distressed Neighborhoods The second policy that effected the distribution of implementation funding was the decision to include all neighborhoods designated by the City as

[30] Based on 2000 U.S. census data.

distressed in the planning process regardless of their fulfillment of other selection criteria. The Comprehensive Plan defined neighborhoods as distressed if they demonstrated evidence of disinvestment, deteriorating housing conditions, high vacancy rates in residential and/or commercial developments, high unemployment rate, high percentage of low-income residents, need for community facilities or neighborhood improvements, opportunities for redevelopment or business district revitalization.

Of the 13 areas that met the criteria for "distressed" neighborhoods, 12 were near or within an already designated plan neighborhood and were easily included. The Delridge neighborhood, however, was not contiguous with an existing plan neighborhood but was added as the NPP's 38th neighborhood based solely on its *distressed* designation. The NPO policy with regard to distressed neighborhoods stated that "special support for…dealing with difficult issues such as high poverty level, major deterioration in housing stock, or abundance of vacant commercial storefronts" would be provided to strengthen efforts in planning efforts in those areas (NPO Program Elements Binder, 1997).

The NPO's decision with regard to distressed neighborhoods was supported by the Comprehensive Plan, which states that adherence the core value of social equity required that, Special attention…be directed to residents of distressed communities, where incomes, educational levels, skill levels and labor force participation rates are lower than average. Special attention will also be provided to economically distressed communities to ensure that the quality of infrastructure and services are provided to support economic viability and a sense of high quality living in all parts of the city (Seattle Comprehensive Plan 2004, vii).

Planning Support Third, key among planning phase policies that influenced funds distribution was the provision of additional resources to assist in the planning for neighborhoods

that had little planning experience, little experience working with City government and/or neighborhoods that had significant numbers of hard-to-reach residents, including renters, immigrants, and non-English speaking populations. The NPP provided additional program funds to neighborhoods with a demonstrated need for additional planning such as transportation studies, housing studies, economic development plans, etc. The City also provided supplemental funding for training dedicated to "help build skills within chronically under-funded neighborhoods" (Program Binder, Resolution 29105) and for additional technical assistance (Seattle Planning Commission, March 2000). Finally these neighborhoods received funds for childcare, transportation to meetings, language translation services, media, and mailings. By recognizing the need to bolster planning in less experienced neighborhoods, the NPP took a step toward insuring that all plans would have an equal chance for adoption and implementation.

Outreach Fourth, the NPO set specific requirements regarding outreach, inclusiveness, and representation in the neighborhood planning groups and the overall planning process. Although planning groups sometimes saw these requirements as burdensome, the NPO persisted in upholding the policies. Sirianni (2007, 385) writes,

> Seattle made determined efforts to enhance diversity and equity in neighborhood participation in the face of many well-known factors that tend to favor participation by groups that are older, white, better educated, have higher incomes, own homes, and are not recent immigrants (Berry et al. 1993, Skogan 2006).

By devising policies directing neighborhood planning groups to include previously underrepresented groups in the planning, the NPO worked to ensure that new voices and viewpoints would be heard. In discussing the outreach elements of the NPP Stephen Page (2008, 4) wrote: "The breadth of outreach matters because the scope of participation surrounding a

problem affects the power dynamic among participants, the topics discussed, the range of information and perspectives brought to bear on them, and the outcomes of the debate.

To receive funding for the next phase of the planning, neighborhoods needed to document that they had met the NPO requirements for outreach and inclusion. These requirements were written into the funding contracts between the City and each neighborhood and in addition to specific guidelines, stipulated the documentation of significant outreach, communication, and validation involving a broad cross-section of the community. (Seattle Planning Commission's 2000 evaluation of City-sponsored participation programs). One performance measure outlined in the NPO's 1997-1998 budget stated: "The measure of broad-based community involvement of new people, all stakeholders, and hard to reach groups will be quantitatively documented by the NPO and by individual planning groups including outreach events and methods used throughout the planning process."

By including people who were marginalized in the political process the NPP stove to insure that the scope of the plans and their final recommendations reflected the diversity of neighborhood views. By targeting outreach and planning to neighborhoods with lower median household incomes, the NPP fostered the inclusion of low-income people's ideas.

Implementation Phase

Three policies enacted during the implementation phase stand out for their contribution to the distributional outcomes of the NPP. These were: 1) the establishment of opportunity funds across the funding structure, 2) policies directing the siting of libraries, parks, and community centers, and 3) the priority given to plan projects in the awarding of Neighborhood Matching Funds grants.

Opportunity Funds were supplemental resources designed to catalyze neighborhood plan implementation, attract private investment, and to support plan projects not included in existing approved budgets. The funds were to be used especially for time-sensitive projects identified as high priorities in neighborhood plans. Although opportunity fund grants could be awarded to any neighborhood, criteria for project selection favored low-income, high-density neighborhoods. The three largest opportunity funds were embedded in the funding mechanisms for 1) overall plan implementation, 2) the Libraries for All initiative, and 3) Pro-Parks. The total amount for these three funds was $17.4 million.

In 1999 City Council Resolution 30094 established a $1.4 million opportunity fund for the year 2000 to support "exemplary projects that address both City and neighborhood priorities in the neighborhood plans, with emphasis on projects that leveraged additional funding and/or affect more than one planning area." Because the grants were relatively small ($50,000 to $200,000, with flexibility for larger or smaller awards) they acted to catalyze plan implementation and tended to go to lower-income neighborhoods where an early investment in development could serve to attract private investment. Sector Managers worked with stewardship groups and the City Budget Office (CBO) to identify high priority projects; final funding decisions were made by the City Council.

The Pro-Parks $10 million opportunity fund was established to fund "new acquisition and development projects identified by neighborhood groups, with high priority given to acquisitions in presently underserved areas of the city." Of the $10 million, $7.4 million went to plan neighborhoods and $2.6 million to non-plan neighborhoods. Three million dollars of the Fund was designated for the acquisition of land in three dense Urban Villages: University District (median HH income $22,411) for a new park; Denny Triangle (median HH $22,883) for a new

park or open space; International District (median HH $11,201) to double the size of Hing Hay Park from .31 acres to .64 acres. In addition, the Pro-Parks Opportunity Funds allowed for acquisition of new parkland in the Central District, First Hill, Columbia City, South Lake Union, South Park, and the MLK @ Holly neighborhoods. The Median Household Income in these plan-neighborhoods ranged from 23,207 to $33,841 putting them in the lower-middle income quintile.

Lastly, Libraries for All established a $6 million opportunity fund that was "reserved for meeting additional or unforeseen neighborhood needs. This fund was also intended to focus new attention on underserved areas of the city (LFA Proposed Capital Plan for the Seattle Public Library, March 13, 1998)". Half of this fund built a new library for the South Park Neighborhood, with a median household income of $31, 683 putting it in the lower-middle income quintile. The 5,019 square-foot library has a 18,700 book capacity with approximately one-third of the collection in Spanish, including bilingual children's materials, and Spanish-language function and nonfiction. The library also serves the nearby Georgetown neighborhood (median household income $34,185), which until the South Park Library was built had very poor library access.

Siting Decisions. Many neighborhood plans called for action in the areas of parks, libraries, and community centers. Their prominence in the plans was an important factor in the passage of the bonds needed to fund the projects. However, in spite of the significant amounts in the bonds and levies, there was not enough money to fund every plan recommendation. Therefore, the passage of with the Pro-Parks, Community Centers, and Libraries for All initiatives, meant that the City needed to decide which neighborhoods would benefit from the

investment of these funds and which would have to wait, perhaps years, for these amenities. In her discussion of evaluating plan implementation, Emily Talen (JPER 16:79-91 p. 91) writes, Planning for park development is particularly demanding for planners because the distribution of public facilities is tantamount to the dissemination of public welfare. Certainly park distribution determines "who gets what", and determination of distributional equity can be highly controversial.

The foremost factor in determining locations for the new parks, libraries and community centers was the status of the neighborhood's existing access to these facilities. Each funding ordinance permitting the allocation of these VAF funds stated that filling in gaps in underserved areas was the first priority in siting decisions. For example Pro-Parks Ordinance 120024 stated, High priority will be given to acquisition in presently underserved areas of the City as defined in the Seattle Parks and Recreation Plan 2000. (Neighborhood groups will identify the new acquisitions projects.) Next priority was given to acquisitions in areas of the City experiencing population growth, particularly those with expected and actual growth in urban center and urban village locations and to acquisitions in Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy areas.

Although this seems like the common sense approach, this is not always a determining factor in siting decisions. In their study of Los Angeles parks, Loukaitou-Sideris and Stieglitz (2002, 468) found that,

> While children of different socio-economic backgrounds have been found to value parks and open space, studies have shown a more intense use of parks in poor inner-city communities than in suburban and exurban areas where children have ample access to private recreation facilities (Lawrence, 1984; Johnson, 1987; Loukaitou-Sideris, 1995.) At the same time, popular financing mechanisms for urban parks have tended to favor their allocation in wealthier neighborhoods.

This set of policies delivered 43 percent of plan neighborhood VFA Funds for parks neighborhoods in the Bottom 20% and Lower Middle income quintiles. Forty-nine percent Community Centers funding and 32 percent of LFA funding went to neighborhoods in the same income categories.

Neighborhood Matching Fund. The final policy with a significant influence on funds distribution was lodged in the Neighborhood Matching Fund. In 1998, the City Council passed a resolution (29718, February 12, 1998) "to give priority to projects resulting from neighborhood plans when distributing funds from the Neighborhood Matching Fund." The intent of the resolution was to insure that, "at least half of the awarded Matching Funds be used to support projects identified in the neighborhood plans" in 1999-2000 budgets. Another DON policy provided extra technical assistance and training to neighborhoods with less experience in seeking funds for neighborhood projects. They received assistance in grant writing, project planning and implementation, and leadership development.

The Funds

The $240 million of implementation funding analyzed here represents resources from the City's three primary plan implementation funding strategies: Departmental Budgets, Voter Approved Funds, and the Neighborhood Matching Fund. Money from these sources also funded citywide projects, like the new central library and the Woodland Park Zoo, and money from these funds supported projects in non-plan neighborhoods. Of the funds apportioned to neighborhoods, allocations favored plan neighborhoods and within plan neighborhoods, distribution favored neighborhoods in the lowest household income categories based on 2000 census data and configured by Seattle's Office of Management and Budget to reflect the boundaries of the Neighborhood Planning Areas.

Analysis of the overall distribution of the funds shows that within plan neighborhoods, those in the bottom 20 percent of the median household income distribution received the highest allocations and 46 percent of the funds. Those in the lower middle quintile received the next largest amount and 25 percent of the funds. Neighborhoods in the middle quintile received the

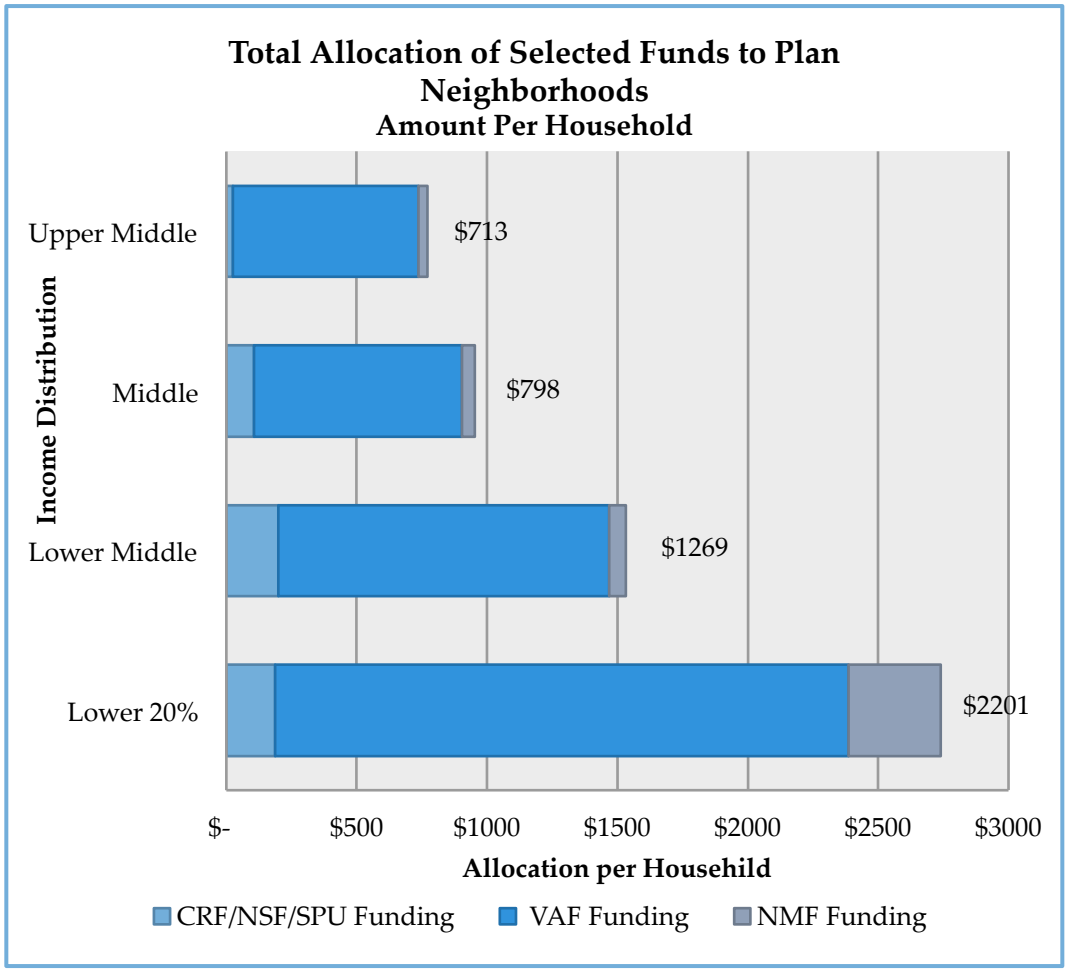


Figure 16: Allocation of Selected Funds to Plan Neighborhoods
Source: DON, Department of Parks and Recreation, SPU Capital Budgets, Seattle Libraries

Third largest amount and 16 percent, and those in the upper middle category received the smallest amount and 13 percent of the funds.[31]

[31] There are no plan neighborhoods in the upper quintile.

Departmental Budgets

For this analysis, allocations from departmental budgets are represented by three funds. They are, the Neighborhood Street Fund, administered by the DON, the Cumulative Reserve Fund, also administered by the DON, and Seattle Public Utilities Drainage and Wastewater fund. Data on other departmental expenditures including salaries and other operational costs were either not available by neighborhood, in a form that would allow geocoding, or were kept in markedly different formats across the departments and the timeframe of the NPP.

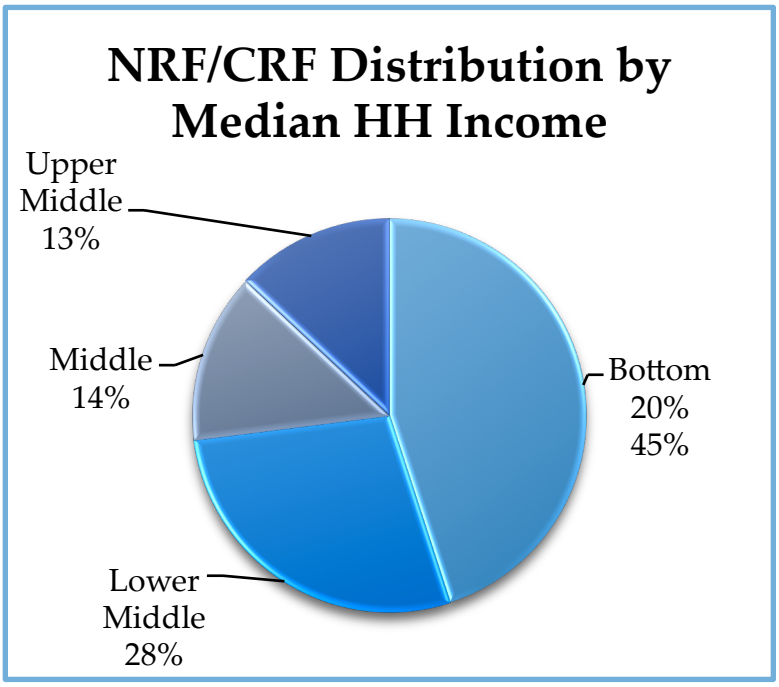


Figure 13: NRF/CRF Distribution to Plan Neighborhoods
Source: DON

The Neighborhood Street Fund (NSF) is used primarily for sidewalk repair and replacement and the installation of curb bulbs or other traffic calming devices. Recommendations for work of this sort were very common in the neighborhood plans. Cumulative Reserve Fund Projects can be funded up to $90,000 for either street or park improvements such as tennis court repaving, or playground or accessibility improvements. For the period 2001-2007 the combined expenditures for CRF/NSF in plan neighborhoods was $8.2 million. Of that amount, 45 percent was spent in

neighborhoods in the bottom 20 percent of median household income. The distribution followed the pattern of overall distribution, with neighborhoods in the lower middle quintile receiving 28 percent, the middle-income category 14 percent, and the upper middle 13 percent.

The Seattle Public Utilities Drainage and Wastewater fund supports large neighborhood plan projects such as creek restoration and large drainage projects. For example, the lower-middle income neighborhood of Westwood/Highland Park was awarded $900,000 from this fund for wetlands restoration, public access trails, interpretive/education signs for the Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail at Roxhill Park. As was the case with many large projects, funding came from several sources and exceeded the $900,000 amount. For example, the neighborhood planning/stewardship group launched the project with a $20,000 Early Plan Implementation Fund grant for a Roxhill Park Wetlands Feasibility Study to be carried out by DPR. An interagency agreement between SPU and King County Surface Water Engineering allowed the county to provide design services for the project, and private funds were secured for additional park amenities. The overall amount allocated to neighborhood plan projects during the 2001-2006 period was $17, 983,000, allotted to 15 of the 38 neighborhoods. Of that amount 29 percent went to neighborhoods in the bottom 20 percent category, 44 percent went to lower middle neighborhoods, 24 percent to middle income and 3 percent to upper middle areas. Analysis of the combined NSF/CRF/SPU distribution shows that 36 percent of the money funded projects in neighborhoods in the bottom 20% category, 38 percent in neighborhoods in the lower middle quintile, 21% in middle income neighborhoods and 3 percent in neighborhoods in the upper middle group.

Voter Approved Funds

The bonds and levies approved by Seattle voters in 1998, 1999, and 2000 generated some $470 million for the city's parks, libraries, and community centers. Of that total amount, approximately half was designated for projects benefitting the city as a whole and half was spent in the neighborhoods. For example, the Community Centers Levy generated $72 million, $36 million of which was designated for plan neighborhood community centers. The remaining $36 million was used for capital projects at the Seattle Center – the home of the city's opera, ballet, reparatory theater, and other citywide arts and recreation venues. The Pro Parks levy provided $21 million for Woodland Park Zoo improvements, $35 million for citywide green space acquisition, enhanced maintenance, and environmental programming in addition to the $95 million allotted to plan neighborhood parks. In the case of Libraries for All, approximately $250 was generated of which $156 million funded a new downtown library and $76 million was spent to renovate, expand, or build new libraries in the plan neighborhoods.

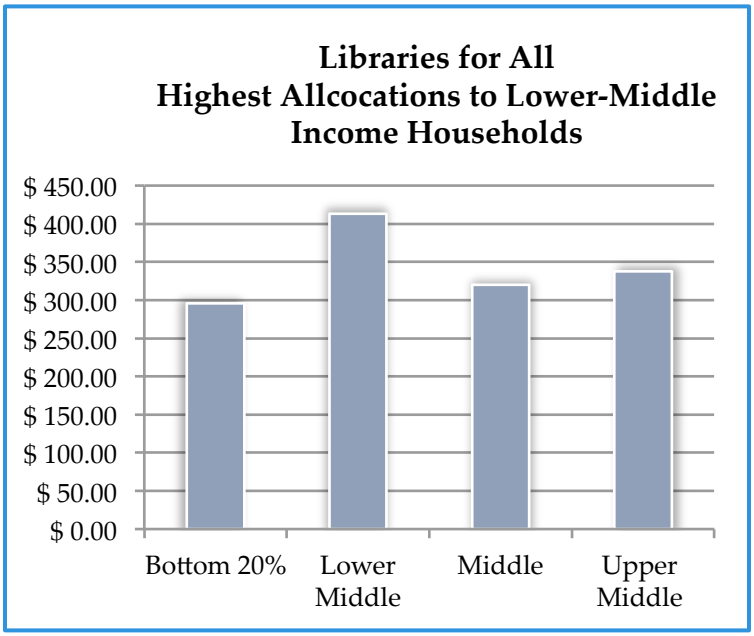


Figure 14: Libraries for All Allocations in Plan Neighborhoods

Source: Seattle Public Library

Libraries for All Twenty-one of the 38 neighborhood plans received funding from the LFA initiative. Of the $76 million that went to plan neighborhoods, the Lower-Middle income quintile received the largest per household allocations. Existing libraries in these *neighborhoods, many of* which were built between 1901 and 1910, were renovated, restored and/or expanded. New libraries included a facility in the International District neighborhood, one of two neighborhoods in the bottom quintile for household income. The neighborhood received $794,815 or an average of $470 per household to build a new library inside the International District Village Square II complex, which also includes affordable housing units, a community center, and retail space. Prior to the addition of this library, the city did not have a library branch specializing in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese materials. As a result of the LFA initiative the total program area for all neighborhood libraries expanded 82 percent for a total of 236,776 square feet.

Community Centers The Community Center Levy generated $36 million for nine

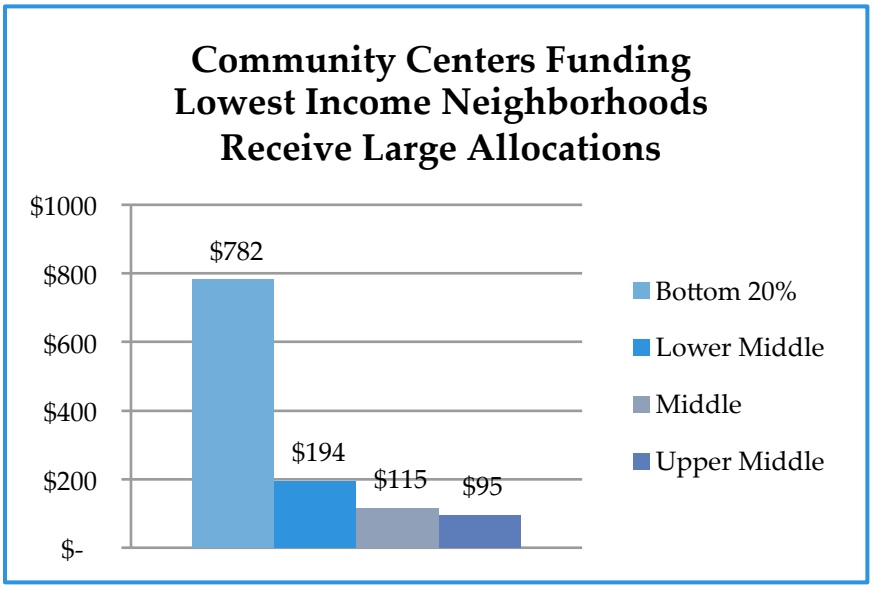


Figure 15: Community Center Funding in Plan Neighborhoods
Source: Department of Parks and Recreation

neighborhood community centers. The highest per capita amount falls in the Bottom 20 percent category, most of the funds went to neighborhoods at the upper end of the Lower-Middle quintile and the lower end of the middle quintile – households with median incomes ranging form $27,793 to $41,760 – with the highest amount ($8.5 million) going to the Northgate neighborhood. The new community center is part of a complex that includes a new library and park. This neighborhood is densely developed and lacking in amenities for a population expected to double by 2010. Generally, the Community Center funds were used to:1) build new centers in underserved areas, 2) bring existing buildings up to code, 3) increase safety in the old buildings, 4) make all buildings universally accessible, and 5) add to program space in existing centers.

Pro Parks The 2000 Pro Parks levy generated $200 million for the expansion and development of Seattle's parks and open space. Of the $200 million:

- $26 million was allocated for the acquisition of new parklands and green space,
- $26.9 million spent on projects that spanned or served a number of neighborhoods such as trails, boulevards, and playfields,
- $10 million was set aside as an opportunity fund,
- $61.3 went for system wide costs of environmental stewardship, maintenance and programming.

Of the total $95 million spent in neighborhood plan neighborhoods, households in the bottom income quintile received 46 percent of the per-household allocations; neighborhoods in the lower middle quintile received 27 percent, those in the middle quintile 15 percent, and in the upper middle group the amount was 12 percent. The overall Pro-Parks budget was divided into three sub-categories -- Acquisition, Development, and Opportunity.

The Pro Parks Acquisition Fund allowed for the purchase of 20 acres of new parklands

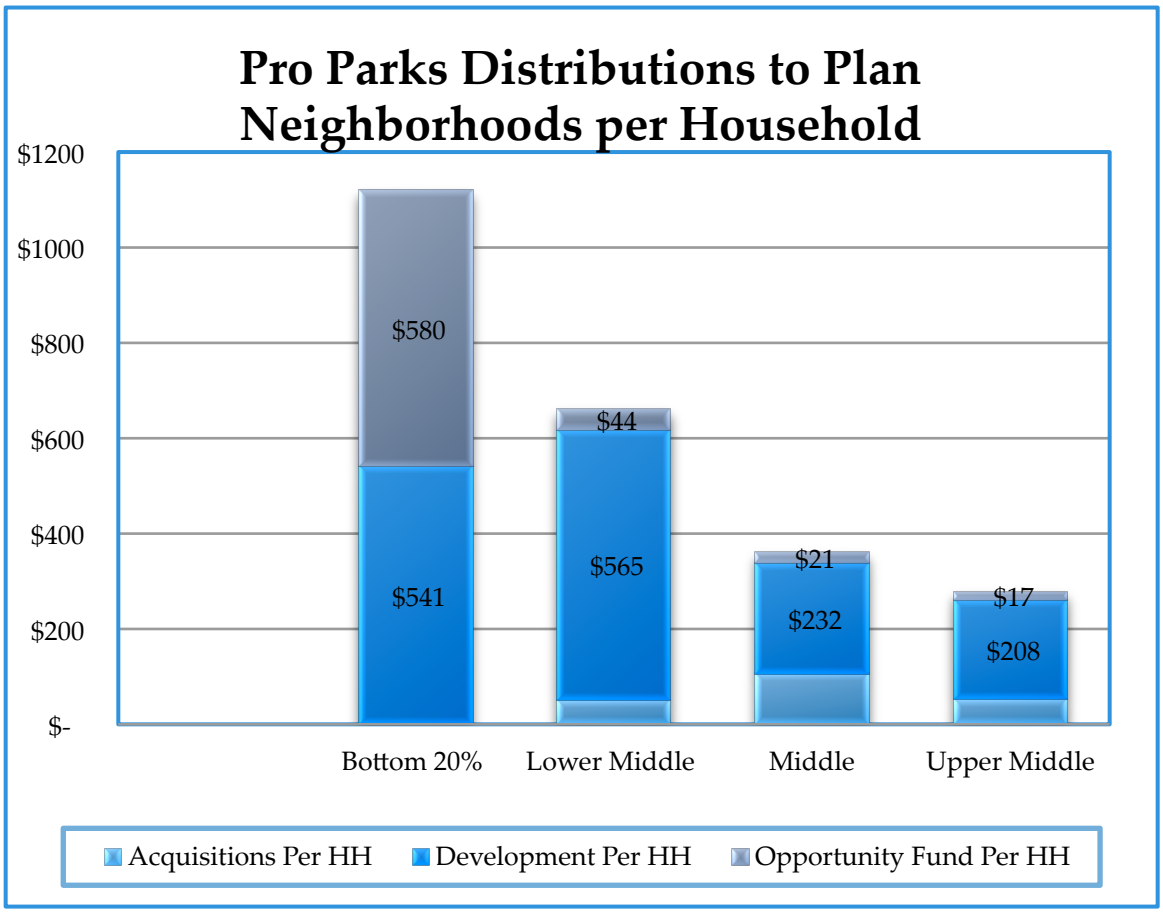


Figure 16: Pro Parks Distributions in Plan Neighborhoods
Source: DON

and the preservation of 19 acres of green space throughout the city. All of the new parkland acquisitions were within plan neighborhoods. Of the $18 Million spent on acquisitions in plan neighborhood parks, 50 percent went to neighborhoods in the Middle median household range; 25 percent went to each the Lower Middle and the Upper Middle groups. The Pro Parks Development Fund supported creek daylighting projects, new community gardens and pea patches, art installations, and converting three former City Light substations in neighborhood parks. From this fund, 35 percent was invested in neighborhoods in the Bottom 20% of the income distribution, 37 percent in lower middle-income neighborhoods, 15 percent in middle income areas, and 13 percent in upper middle-income neighborhoods. Off the total Pro Parks

Opportunity Fund discussed above, the distribution was: Bottom 20% -- 88 percent, Lower Middle – 7 percent, Middle – 3 percent, and Upper Middle – 3 percent.

The Neighborhood Matching Fund

The decision to direct Neighborhood Matching Funds (NMF) grants to plan

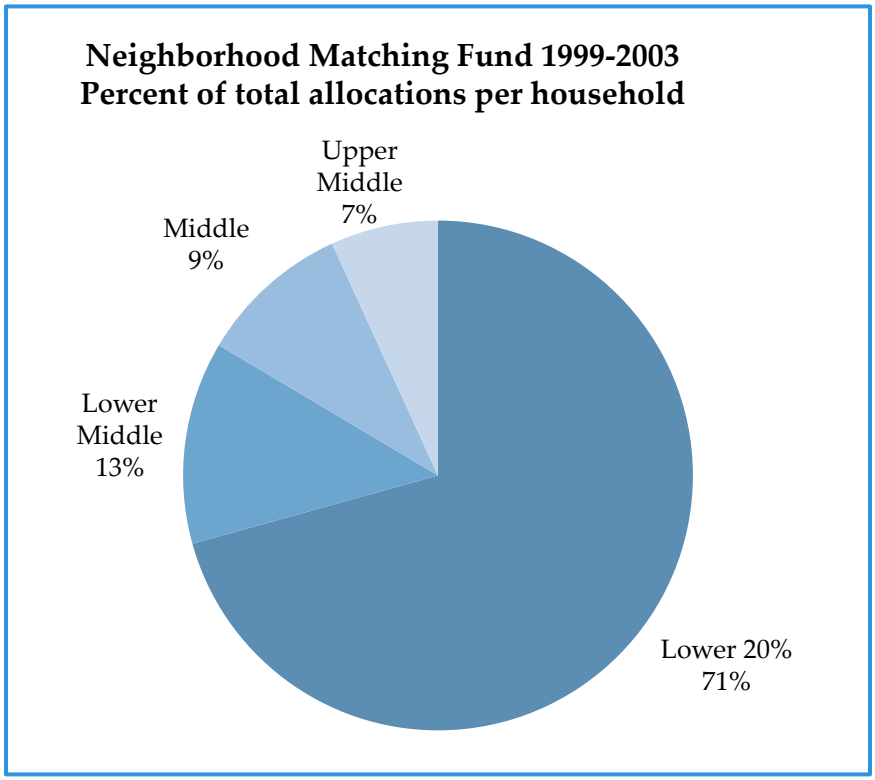


Figure 17: Per Household NMF Allocations 1999-2000

Source: DON

neighborhoods was the third of the City's three-part funding strategy. The broad purpose of the Fund is to support a wide range of neighborhood initiated self-help projects including public art, tree planting, park improvements, community organizing, planning around neighborhood issues, and community education programs (Herzog 2003). An objective of the Fund is to create new community organizations and strengthen existing ones by giving groups the chance to create,

manage, implement, and manage projects that would solve neighborhood problems and/or enhance neighborhood amenities. By providing outreach and technical assistance to new groups, the DON hoped to make project funding accessible for new endeavors, especially those proposals by neighborhoods that had previously been underrepresented in public funding. In the period 1999-2003, 71 percent of the nearly $20 million dispersed from this fund to plan neighborhoods was allocated to areas in the Bottom 20% category, 13 percent to Lower Middle income neighborhoods, 9 percent to Middle Income and 7 percent to Upper Middle income

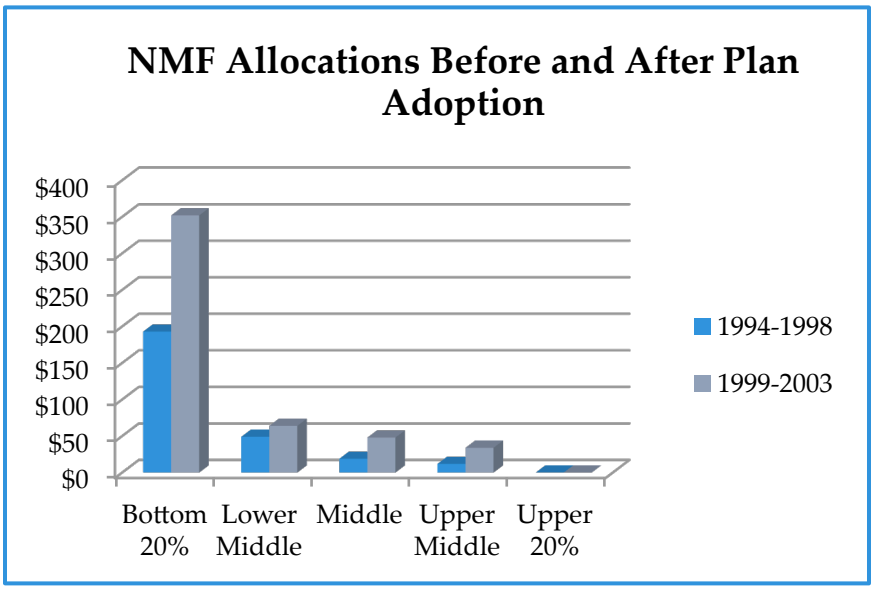


Figure 25: NMF Before and After Plan Adoptions

Source: DON

neighborhoods.

Initiated in 1989 with $150,000, the Fund grew to a maximum of nearly $4 million in 2002. In the first year, the total award amount of $150,000 was divided equally between the city's thirteen geographical districts. Because some districts were able to use their total allotment and others were not, the process for allocating funds was changed in 1990 to the basis of greatest demonstrated need and the highest level of resident involvement (Diers 2004). In general, to be

considered for funding, a project needed to be neighborhood-based, time-limited, and results or outcomes needed to provide a public benefit. A key project eligibility criterion was that the award amount be matched by neighborhood contributions of cash, volunteer labor, or goods and services. The exception to this requirement was that "only half as much match [was] required for organizing in low-income communities and for planning, since it is more difficult to generate local contributions for such projects" (Diers 2004).

From 1994 through 2003 the NMF channeled $65 million into Seattle neighborhoods: $24 million of cash awards and $41 million in matching contributions. In the four years comprising the planning phase (1994-1998) neighborhoods received $20 million; in the plan implementation phase (1999-2003) the amount more than doubled to $45 million. The 89 percent increase in the implementation phase is due to a large extent to Mayor Schell's strong support of the NPP in general and the NMF in particular.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

By 2006, the neighborhood plans had been part of Seattle's overall planning apparatus for eight years. During that period, the plans had established their influence on the evolving shape of the city. Eighty percent of the plan's 4,200 recommendations had been accomplished and over $700 million had been secured for plan implementation. "Until the 2003 cutbacks, the plans informed most of the city's line departments' activities" (S. Page 2008) and even today, key departments and developers consult them before taking action in plan neighborhoods and resident groups refer to them when undertaking new projects. Creating and implementing the neighborhood plans engaged 30,000 neighborhood residents, city bureaucrats, local business people, developers, and politicians in thinking through concretely and specifically, their 20-year vision for the city. Much of what they imagined can be seen today in the form of new libraries, community centers, and parkland; public art; redesigned streets and sidewalks; revitalized historic business areas, and new programming for community and cultural centers.

In Chapter 1, I raise the question of whether or not outcomes such as these could be expected from a municipally sponsored participatory neighborhood planning process if combined with a responsive bureaucracy in a politically receptive environment. I posed the additional question of whether municipal resources for such a project could be distributed fairly across the city. I introduce the idea of *working both sides of the equation* (Gaventa 2004) wherein co-governance is achieved by strengthening citizen voice while at the same time deepening government responsiveness.

I define *responsiveness* as collaboration between government and citizens that moves beyond consultation to joint decision-making and that ensures that the voices of excluded or marginalized people are heard. I argue that the four overall strategies employed by the framers of

the NPP (funding for outreach, neighborhood led design, government reorganization, broad funding base) positioned City institutions to meet the requirements of responsive government. I define *strengthening voice* as participatory forums that are democratic, inclusive, and representative, and in which citizens expect to have substantive impact on substantive issues. I argue that the design of the NPP – outreach, scope, control of the money -- situated the program to empower citizen voice.

In Chapters 2 and 3, I take up the question of what an exemplary municipally- sponsored participatory neighborhood planning program, working both sides of the equation might look like concretely. I argue that by adopting the practices of *accountable autonomy* (Fung 2004), the NPP framed program structures and operations that allowed the planning processes to be neighborhood led and at the same time meet the requirements of public accountability. This approach gave neighborhoods significant control over defining the geography of the planning area, determining how the plans would be created, and deciding which aspects of neighborhood life would be addressed. I posit that by fulfilling its promise of autonomous accountability early in the process, the NPP overcame high levels of distrust and rancor that existed in the neighborhoods as a result of previous, more traditional top-down neighborhood planning approaches – particularly the recent planning conducted for the new comprehensive plan. Adopting the ideas of autonomous accountability established a foundation for collaborative decision-making in the planning process that, although embraced, was tested throughout. In the end, the adoption process for the A & A Matrixes demonstrated the realization of these principles. During the adoption process neighborhood planning groups, departments, and the City Council examined, negotiated, and ultimately approved every recommendation in the plans.

Chapter 3 focuses in some detail on the obstacles NPP implementers overcame in order to launch the program, engage residents in meaningful planning, and construct the program such that voices of marginalized and hard-to-reach groups were included. Conditions at the start of the program were not auspicious for any of this happening. These included anger in the neighborhoods, resentment in the planning department, resistance in some key agencies, disagreement from Seattle's established formal neighborhood involvement structures, opposition by elements of the City Council that advocated for limiting the program, and downtown interests who complained that they had been left out. In this atmosphere, it was a radical risk for Mayor Rice to insist that the program operate on the values of real participation, accountability, and equity. The risk was amplified by the decision to adequately fund the planning and necessary outreach, and to make city staff available to neighborhood planners. Although difficult, commitment to these values made it to possible to increase and legitimize citizen voice in the planning.

At the time of the program's launch there was an overall framework for the NPP, but ONP staff still needed to develop the actual policies and procedures that would guide the program. As these developed and the program became concretized, "city staff and officials were cognizant of and grappled with the complexities of effective citizen participation when it is initiated to involve citizens in government planning and policy making" (p7 Seattle Planning Commission – Citizen Participation in Seattle March 2000). They learned that the decision to strengthen citizen voice in the planning took them down a rocky road where obstacles were complex, vexing, and often contentious. ONP staff was forced to "figure it out as they went along." They listened and responded to what the neighborhood planners and their consultants said about their experience of the program and they listened and responded to the departments

when they voiced difficulties they encountered. This meant that changing requirements and specifications sometimes frustrated all participants. But because they felt they were part of the process of figuring it out rather than recipients of top-down policy, neighborhood planning groups and departmental liaisons were willing to stick with it.

Chapter 4 focuses on this second side of the equation -- the nature and requirements of government capable of responding concretely to citizen demands. Although the plans were on their way to adoption in 1998 when Mayor Schell came to office, little thought had been given to plan implementation or funding. After investing four years in hours of meetings, participants and the public were anxious to see implementation begin immediately. Mayor Schell used the public pressure to help him leverage the bonds and levies to fund the libraries, parks and community centers called for in the plans. This signaled to voters that the City was serious in its commitment to plan implementation. Securing funding for these projects was important in another way. While it was hard for the city as a whole to see the new curb bulbs called for in the Bitter Lake neighborhood plan, the capital projects built using voter approved funds received city wide publicity and residents experienced significant implementation moving forward.

It was soon clear to the Mayor and the DON that tinkering at the edges was unlikely to get the job done and sweeping changes would be required in the City's institutional architecture to realize plan implementation. In this Chapter, I provide an understanding of the extent of the change required: the Mayor and the Council restructured the City's geography into six sectors, departments redesigned their programs to operate in this configuration, departments aligned their budgets to meet the needs of the plans, and central planning functions were dispersed into other departments. I contend that key to making changes work at this level was the newly created position of Sector Manager. Sector Managers were the bridge between City bureaucrats and

neighborhood planning groups. They received little instruction other than "to get the job done," but were given the support and convening power to bring people together and push the process forward. Sector Managers helped neighborhood groups find the "right" person in the bureaucracy and departments to find the "right" person in the neighborhoods. Sirianni (2009, 109) writes,

> Without neighborhood development managers (sector managers) as the relational pivots of reciprocal accountability among departments and local citizens and stakeholders, it was much more difficult to convene interdepartmental sector teams, build trust with potential champions among departmental staff, and check departmental tendencies to revert to bureaucratic silos and technical mindsets.

I suggest that these necessary changes were possible not only because of the commitment of plan proponents inside the administration but also because of the confluence of contextual factors and conditions that created a civic environment conducive to changes at this scale. I also described the consequences when there were significant changes in the context. In this case, the election of a new mayor who was less supportive of the NPP resulted in major cutbacks in the program. Sirianni (2009, 114) comments on the effects of these cutbacks:

> Mayor Nickels's centralizing style, which he demonstrated immediately upon taking office, not only in his administration's dealing with neighborhoods but also with the neighborhoods committee of the City Council and the Seattle Planning Commission. The latter two had played important roles in the design of neighborhood planning but were largely side stepped in the initial design of the [neighborhood plan] updating process.[32] Trust has visibly eroded in some circles. As one neighborhood leader put it…when Jim Diers was fired by the mayor and the neighborhood development managers [sector manages] were cut, "we felt deserted by the city.

[32] In 2009, the Nickels administration proposed to update the neighborhood plans. Only a few neighborhoods were included in the process, which was conducted by the re-centralized planning department using a traditional process. The resulting plans were expensively produced and illustrated with photos, renderings, and maps but had little content supplied by the affected neighborhoods. The attempt was soon abandoned in the face of additional cutbacks.

In Seattle, city ordinances that facilitated plan implementation, departmental budgets, dedicated funding streams, and cultural changes in the bureaucracy were essential to the ongoing implementation of the plans even after the new administration cut major parts of the program.

Reversal of a supportive context is not an uncommon occurrence and points to the importance of institutionalizing as much structure as possible. In discussing cases of co-governance in Brazil, Cornwall reflects, (p51, IDS discussion paper 389. Brazilian experience, a critical look),

> …there is another dimension to the significance of political commitment. When visionary reformers, who bring statutory commitments to participation to life, are replaced by those who are more circumspect or defensive, participatory institutions may revert to patterns of political and bureaucratic conduct that reproduce rather than challenge or transform pervasive political culture.

Similarly in discussing Amsterdam as an example of the tenuous

continuation of just policies, Fainstein (in Marcuse et al. 2009, 33)

comments,

> Achievement of the just is a circular process, whereby the preexistence of equity begets sentiments in its favor, democratic habits produce popular participation, and diversity increases tolerance. The sobering lessons of present-day Amsterdam, however, show that even virtuous circles can be destabilized and the disruption… can precipitate a chain of events that easily breeds intolerance and fear of difference (Baruma2006).

These examples highlight the need to formalize working instances of co-governance -- even though doing so is not a guarantee of sustained practice. Continuing her discussion of the Brazilian cases, Cornwall (IDS Paper 389, 52) remarks that,

> …Brazilian experience confirms the importance of legislative frameworks including, in this case, constitution guarantees (McGee et al. 2002). With these legal frameworks and guarantees, participation passes from being something that government can selectively use to consult its citizens, to a binding obligation.

Chapter 5 takes up the last question – the possibility of a fair distribution of municipal resources to fund implementation. I argue that a set of policies, some of which dealt directly with funds distribution and some that did not, reflected the value placed on social justice within government. Holding social justice as a policy priority made possible the distribution of implementation funds such that the largest per household amount went to the most needly neighborhoods. This value is reflected throughout NPP policies from identifying the participating neighborhoods to deciding how implementation funds would be distributed. I show that in addition to these specific policies, the overall civic environment was a key factor in determining distributional outcomes. When asked about issues of equity in plan implementation, Former Sector Manager Sally Clark (interview 2007) observed that justice and fairness were played out in the concrete day-to-day interactions between residents, among neighborhoods, and between the neighborhoods and the City as they negotiated the details of implementation.

Unanswered questions

This study raises two distinct but related questions specific to the NPP but with broader implications for participation and planning. First, where were the planners? What does it mean that professional planners were essentially excluded from the process? In the Seattle case, many neighborhoods' previous experience with centralized planning had soured local leaders on conventional neighborhood planning approaches. Even within the planning department there was some sentiment that people outside the formal planning apparatus of the City would best lead the NPP. More broadly however planners, regardless of their commitment to social justice, are constrained by their work in public bureaucracies where "they lack the power to implement policy on their own, and they are restricted by their political masters and their clients regarding

the objectives they can seek" (Fainstein p 180-181 Just City). In response to a lecture by Fainstein (just city 180-181) on the just city, James Throgmorton wrote:

> My experience as an elected official leads me to think that the planners of any specific city cannot (and should not) simply declare by fiat that their purpose is to create the just city. In the context of representative democracy, they have to be authorized to imagine, articulate, pursue, and actualize the vision of a just city. This means that a mobilized constituency would have to be pressuring for change (Person communication, January 28, 2006).

Cities where neoliberal policy holds sway offer a particular challenge, because the concept of participation may have been co-opted to justify the devolution of state responsibility to voluntary organizations.

There are also practical and budgetary reasons blocking planners from initiating forms of substantive participatory planning. Although there is a well-established tradition of seeking fairness in planning,[33] democratic planning and decision making require a great deal more time and effort than centralized top-down planning and development, and may threaten established interests. Many city administrations are reluctant to invest time, money, and powerful support in what is essentially an unproven approach.

One suggested response to this dilemma is for progressive planners in the public sphere to use their position and expertise to influence the debate and the context. Fainstein (Just City 180-181) argues that because planning relies heavily on "data and the choice of how to present it" planners can "shift the debate" by presenting analyses that not only present cost/benefit ratios but also show "who gets the benefits and who bears the costs."

[33] Paul Davidoff's theory of advocacy planning, Norm Krumholz's efforts to "deliberately create policies aimed at redistribution of resources and create means of enhancing participation in the planning process (p357 Community Planning, Intro to the Complan), and Robert Mier's work in Chicago to attach social justice issues at the community level through neighborhood empowerment programs (p 82 Reinventing Cities: Equity Planners Tell Their Stories. Krumholz and Clavel, Temple U Press, Philadelphia) are just a few examples.

Laura Wolf-Powers writes, "A central question for progressive planning, therefore, is that of how the state sphere, lying as it does at the conflict-ridden heart of the planning field might be shaped (from without and within) in the interests of justice." (162 Keeping counter publics alive.) She (in Marcuse et al p168) answers her own question by arguing that "city planners are in a good position to 'shake things up, both by offering expertise to social movement actors and by introducing alternative visions of the city to the dominant public discourse." She urges planners to "nudge, prod or drag government institutions to create policy mechanisms through which resources and opportunities are more equitably shared."

In many circumstances, the tools planners will need to achieve this shift in context may simply have to be invented. However, additional studies focused specifically on planners in state-sponsored co-governance initiatives could provide greater understanding of strategies for "shifting the debate". Studies of cases where planners have succeeded in influencing "government institutions to create policy mechanisms through which resources and opportunities are more equitably shared" and where they have tried and failed, could provide insight into the kinds of conditions that need to exist for success, the kinds of coalitions that might need to be formed, and ways in which planners might identify opportunities when they arise. Such studies could inform the strategic planning within planning departments that provides a long-view on policy change and outlines steps toward this goal. I believe planners understand that "inclusion and social justice are at the heart of democratic engagement, not just making better plans" (Cornwall April 2008, 10) but they lack practical frameworks for moving a social justice agenda in the public sector.

A second, but related question raised by this study is -- where were the voices of opposition? Wolf-Powers (2009), calls them counter-publics, Fung and Wright (2003) call them

countervailing forces, for Fainstein (2010) they are protest movements, and for Steil and Connolly (2009) insurgent agendas. All of these terms point to the existence of less-powerful forces, working outside the state to advocate for, demonstrate, and demand more progressive policies from government. Of these forces, Fainstein (2010, 183) writes,

> Beyond sanctioned modes of participation the role of protest movements is crucial to more equitable policy. Without pressure from beneath, official participatory bodies are likely to become co-opted; when there is a threat from below, governments become more responsive to popular interests.

Fung and Wright (2003, 263) agree arguing,

> …in general, collaborative governance without an appropriate form of countervailing power is likely to fail…where countervailing power is weak or non-existent, the rules of collaboration are likely to favor entrenched, previously organized or concentrated interests.

Finally, Gaventa (2004, 35) describes,

> …spaces which are claimed from below by less powerful actors from or against the power-holders…and which Cornwall refers to as organic spaces [of participation] which emerge 'out of sets of common concerns or identifications' and may come into being as a result of popular mobilization…

Although these forces played prominent roles in past Seattle conflicts, and especially during conflicts between City Hall and the neighborhoods, they were mostly absent during the NPP. That is not to say that there was no opposition to the NPP. The most vocal resistance came from neighborhood groups opposed to any form of densification, but other, more progressive organizations also voiced concern. During the early planning phases, some non-geographically based organizations serving specific ethnic groups expressed fear that neighborhoods were being encouraged to create geographically based "Community Development Corporations (CDCs) to implement plans developed by Euro-American Councils" (Maestras and Gonzales 1999, 3). They expressed additional concern that the NPP could divide ethnic communities and would increase the competition for scare community development resources.

Much of this concern stemmed from experience with the official participation structures of the City of Seattle like the Community and District Councils that were known to lack inclusiveness and to favor the concerns of white homeowners. As the program took on concrete shape, and as it became clear that implementation would not decrease the amount of money available for citywide social justice work, a majority of these groups decided to put representatives on the NPP planning committees and to take responsibility for implementing sections of the plans.

Speculating on why it was the case that insurgent voices were not part of the Seattle mix, several possibilities emerge. First, it may be that the NPP converged closely enough to their own goals, that it represented an opportunity to advance their agenda. Second, enough leadership from city's progressive groups supported the NPP that forming an effective coalition would have been difficult. Finally, when it became clear that implementation would generate new funds rather than siphon off old ones, one possible point of objection became moot. Nevertheless, countervailing forces might have been able to keep enough pressure on Mayor Nickels that more of the program could have been saved. A coalition of historically underrepresented groups might have been able to push for even more inclusion and might have been able to monitor power dynamics within neighborhood planning meetings. Insurgent voices might have been able to support the NPP at the same time standing as a reminder that although the NPP was a radical departure from previous City-neighborhood relationships, it was not transformational in the way that more radical restructuring of City policy-making might have been.

Further research into parts played by countervailing forces in programs like Minneapolis' NRP, Seattle's NPP, or Mayor Harold Washington's Chicago might clarify the dynamics of these forces in progressive cities. Do they just disappear? Are they somehow transformed? What

role do they have in progressive state-sponsored planning? As participation comes more and more into the mainstream, the importance of critical assessment of the agenda being served grows.

Some scholars contend that achieving a just city under the current system of global capitalism is not possible. For example, Harvey (2009, 46) suggests that "…acting within the existing capitalist regime of rights and freedoms…[can only result in] mitigating the worst outcomes at the margins of an unjust system". Marcuse et al. argue that at the municipal scale, realization of justice is thwarted by the ideological and political domination of most cities by "business-led régimes and homeowner groups rather than public bureaucracies." In this environment, they continue, "individual citizen participation will not provide a path to social transformation even though it can block destructive projects" (Marcuse et al, 2009 Searching for the Just City, Debates in Urban Theory and Practice p. 35, T & F Books, UK Kindle edition).

During the course of this study, I found that my own views corresponded with these sentiments. However, I argue that there is much cities can do beyond "mitigating the worst outcomes." While no city may be able to live up to the designation of the just city under current economic and political conditions, this study shows that concrete policies enacted in a climate of a progressive city can make cities fairer and result in pro-poor outcomes. Pro-poor decisions and policies made by municipal government can have significant impact on the lives of poor people, just as decisions driven primarily by the logic of the market "can…make matters worse for the poor, through inappropriate and repressive policies and interventions…" (Devas, 2004, 1). Programs like the NPP can have a significant impact on who is listened to and who gets what, and provide planners with opportunities to further the conversation though practical engagement and critical analysis. Marcuse comments (in Uterik in Marcuse et al 2009) "We cannot know,

exante, what will be the sources of change, but by continuing to converse about justice, we can make it central the activity of planning." Knowing what worked and in what context, can help planners define the policies, institutional architecture, and participation structures most likely to produce outcomes that are inclusive and fair.

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Seattle City Archives:

Department of Neighborhoods

- *Director's Correspondence*
  Correspondence, memoranda, reports, staff notes and other materials realted to the administration and programs of the DON. Records document the Neighborhood Matching Grant program, the neighborhood planning process, and the City's relationship to its various neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Planning Office

- *Director's Subject Files*
  Correspondence, memoranda, agendas notes, and policy drafts. Work NPO did with other city departments: City Light, the Department of Construction and Use, Seattle Engineering, Office of Economic Development, Department of Parks and Recreation, etc. Subjects include budget, transportation issues, parks and open space, interaction with the City Council, etc.

- *Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee*
  Established in 1992 to help with the development and implementation of the Neighborhood Planning Office. Included in the files are drafts of planning guidelines, program overviews and project updates, funding and budget information

- Neighborhood Planning Project Product Files
  Final reports and products of the city-sponsored neighborhood planning project. Records include the final neighborhood plan, other materials submitted to the city Council, draft plans, plan recommendations, Approval and Adoption Matrixes, SEPA determinations and checklists, consultant reports, neighborhood mailings, and other materials related to the development of individual neighborhood plans.

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