Using the State-Reinforced Self-Governance framework to evaluate neighborhood revitalization in the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.

Gifty Amma Adusei
*University of Louisville*

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USING THE STATE-REINFORCED SELF-GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK
TO EVALUATE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION IN THE CHOICE
NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE

By

Gifty Amma Adusei
BSc., University of Ghana, 2012
MPA, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis, 2019

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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Doctor of Philosophy
in Urban and Public Affairs

Department of Urban and Public Affairs
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

May 2024
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A Dissertation Approved on

March 29, 2024

by the following Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Daniel DeCaro (Dissertation Director)

Dr. David Imbresco

Dr. Kelly Kinahan

Dr. Emmanuel Frimpong Boamah

Dr. Sumei (May) Zhang

Dr. Allison Smith
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the late Moses Akwasi Adusei, who wisely gave the names:

Nyameakyedieye (God’s gift is good)

and

Ebewieye (It will end well!).
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I cannot help but join my predecessors who say, “To God Be The Glory”. Indeed, this is the doing of the LORD and it is marvelous in our sight!

This long academic experience has also not been without the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual support of several people and I would love to express my sincerest appreciation.

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assistants who contributed in different ways to the data collection and preparation process: Andrew Brian, Matthew Burress, Ethan Gorton, Rachel McDowell, Chelsea Sharma, Jordan Sharp, Jaylyn Terrell, Bria Trotter, and Sydney Wright. I am deeply grateful to my ‘senior’ Doctor of Philosophy in Urban and Public Affairs – Sait Sarr and Maryam (Marie) Entezam – for the years of precious friendship and many reminders to “simply get it done”.

To the awesome Tinuade Ilori, Fidals, Ms. Betty, and my Southeast family who began to call me “doctor” from the first day when the finishing line was nowhere in sight – thank you!!! You all have been my steadfast cheerleaders and support from day one. Thank you for continually believing in me, pushing me, and not letting me slide into an ambivalent mode. To Mi Lollipoppy, Aunt Vivienne, and the Adusei crew, thank you for the “I believe in you” and “Bepow so hann – Nyame ne hene!” moments and reminders. I am truly grateful to have the immense support I found in you.

Finally, to the one and only Dr. Felix Owusu Ansah Sarfo, thank you for the prayers, “oneness” moments, laughter, and patience to the very last hour. You are truly one of a kind and I am really proud of my ingenious younger self for saying “okay, let’s do it!”. I cannot wait to be the first honored recipient of copies of all your autographed bestselling books and other works!
ABSTRACT

USING THE STATE-REINFORCED SELF-GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK TO EVALUATE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION IN THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE

Gifty Amma Adusei
March 29, 2024

Scholars and planners advocate for neighborhood revitalization programs that prioritize inclusive planning and partnership with indigenous residents. Such planning must derive its vitality from residents’ leadership and legitimatize citizens as full partners and collaborators. Over time, the U.S. federal government's approach to neighborhood distress has shifted from top-down approaches towards inclusive revitalization planning. Despite advancements, concerns persist about the sustainability of revitalization outcomes through initiatives like the most recent federal revitalization effort, Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI).

The dissertation project begins from the premise that when governments effectively support coproduction (a complementary, synergistic relationship between different groups working together as equal partners to produce goods/services) and the adaptive capacity of groups (ability to be dynamic and withstand change), it enhances the groups’ capacity to devise optimal resolutions to dilemmas. The study applied the State-Reinforced Self-Governance (SRSG) framework and a sustainability model to analyze
CNI revitalization policies, processes, and outcomes in Louisville's Russell neighborhood. Using interview and archival data, this research demonstrates a much-needed conceptual and analytical lens with which to measure actor and institutional capacities for cooperation and adaptive decision-making in neighborhood revitalization.

The study revealed both successes and failures in coproduction within Russell's revitalization process. While cooperation among actors existed, there were limitations in shared decision-making and formal modes of accountability and enforcement. State reinforcement of neighborhood capacities showed promise as some residents were recruited as neighborhood liaisons and granted full decision-making authority during the selection of projects as Action Activities. While the federal CNI is deficient in granting constitutive and constitutional decision-making authorities to residents, state and local level institutions offer these powers. Despite limitations, the CNI facilitated the emergence of neighborhood leadership, notably through the Russell Neighborhood Association. However, analysis of the Transformation Plan suggests limitations in advancing neighborhood sustainability.

To enhance government-enabled neighborhood revitalization, it is recommended that the state actively reinforce community-level governance, institute formal and accessible mechanisms for accountability and enforcement, and ensure continuous clear communication and shared decision-making during the implementation phase of revitalization projects. Additionally, clear sustainability goals and benchmarks should be defined with the community to foster stable, thriving neighborhoods.
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1: INTRODUCTION

Neighborhood distress is a major concern in nearly every contemporary urban area in the United States (England-Joseph, 1998). Distressed neighborhoods are described by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as communities of concentrated poverty that have extremely low population incomes as well as widespread residential vacancy (HUD, 2022). These conditions are often compounded by a complex web of related problems including high levels of crime, low educational attainment, low collective efficacy and social capital, deficient economic development, poor provision of public goods/services, and hazardous built and natural environments (e.g., pollution, scarce greenspaces, abandoned properties) (Turner et al., 2014). A history of racial discrimination, coupled with systemic political and economic disenfranchisement, is the primary source of neighborhood distress seen today (Roithmayr, 2004; Teitz & Chappple, 1998; Wilson, 1987). A report submitted by the Economic Innovation Group (EIG) in 2020 indicates that 50.5 million Americans reside in distressed communities – that constitutes one-sixth of U.S. zip codes – while 57 million people live in communities deemed “at risk” of fully becoming distressed (EIG, 2020). Failure to address neighborhood distress and its underlying causes severely weakens local economies, increases the risk of illness and mortality for residents, and contributes to urban and global unsustainability (Turner et al., 2014).

Since the middle of the twentieth century, many American cities have undertaken various revitalization projects in response to the devastating effects of massive outflow of
social and economic resources from city centers (Birch, 2007; Sutton, 2008). Much of the efforts to redevelop distressed neighborhoods have been fraught with concerns about the socioeconomic profile of the ultimate beneficiaries in revitalized neighborhoods (Gale, 1990). These concerns particularly relate to the displacement of existing residents and businesses, which is particularly prevalent in minority distressed neighborhoods (Gale, 1990). The literature is replete with research emphasizing the role of various government and non-governmental actors in successful revitalization (Adames, 2017; Gale, 1990; Elwood, 2002). However, little work has been done to explore the potential role of government-sponsored revitalization projects in producing outcomes that address the objectives of equitable sustainable development.

Neighborhood organizations (e.g., neighborhood associations, block clubs, citizen councils) embody the desire for local control in democratic societies and serve as a platform for participatory democracy and self-governance (Kotler, 1969). Depending on the amount of political clout and economic power they wield, neighborhood organizations clamor for opportunities and at times, successfully mobilize state actors to endorse community-inspired development projects for their neighborhoods. This increasing popular collaborative effort is hinged on the renewed understanding of neighborhoods as a legitimate organ of democracy and has fueled terms such as “citizen engagement,” “public participation,” and “community empowerment” (Checkoway, 1985; Guldi, 2017; Shipley & Utz, 2012).

Scientific theory and practice of examining local communities as legitimate units of democracy have regained attention only recently after a series of judicial rulings and interpretations in the 1880s, which began prominently in New Hampshire, paved the way
to strip municipal governments and communities of their local autonomy and self-
governance powers (Chaskin & Garg, 1997; Fox, 2017; Siddiki et al., 2019). The U.S.
Supreme Court’s germinal decision in *Trustees of Dartmouth College v. Woodward*
declared the property rights of public corporations to be without protections against state
interference and thus, public corporations (municipalities, and by extension communities)
were deemed subordinate to the state. The landmark return to advancing local governance
is largely credited to 1950s – 1960s public revolts by poor minority communities against
complete place-modification of neighborhoods under the guise of urban renewal,
intrusion of highway construction into marginalized neighborhoods, and massive
organization buildings that disrupted community character (Arnstein, 1969; Checkoway,
1985). The demand for greater input in community-level decisions was also in objection
to the prevailing planning sector culture in which planners adopted a technocratic
approach in public decision-making processes (Guldi, 2017; Jacobs, 1961). In the
theoretical literature, critical works like Jane Jacobs (1961) book “The Death and Life of
Great American Cities”, Sherry Arnstein’s (1969) paper on “A Ladder of Citizen
Participation”, and Paul Davidoff’s (1965) piece on “Advocacy and Pluralism in
Planning”, the authors questioned the popular use of “civic engagement” as a rhetoric
device and advocated for authentic community engagement in planning practice (Shipley
& Utz, 2012).

Arnstein’s (1969) ladder distinguishes eight types of public engagement, which
differ in terms of the degree of individual and collective autonomy (i.e., decision-making
authority) granted to community members. Partnership, delegated power, and citizen
control lie at the top of Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation as the truest actualization
of citizen power in community-state collaboration. Building on this work, Elinor Ostrom (Ostrom & Whitaker, 1973; Ostrom & Ostrom, 1977; Ostrom et al., 1978; Ostrom, 1996) proposed the concept of “co-production” based on the observation that a complementary, synergistic relationship can be developed between parties from different groups to efficiently produce public goods and services. Co-production takes community participation even further by “seeking to involve people in the ‘execution of public policy as well as its formulation’” (Alford, 2014, p. 300). The underlying premise in co-production is that both parties are genuinely co-owners of the outcomes. According to Spiegel (1987, p. 55), “coproduction implies bi-or multilateral and symbiotic engagement involving goal formulation, planning, and implementation of specified activities with explicitly shared responsibilities to gain jointly beneficial objectives.”

The U.S. federal government’s response to the distress crisis has evolved from a purely top-down, centralized approach to bottom-up neighborhood revitalization planning, an approach that seeks to involve residents in important decision-making processes (Sutton, 2008). Quite notable among these are initiatives developed during the 1930s Great Depression, where the federal government established a direct relationship with municipalities for the first time, and the Urban Renewal Program, where urban revitalization was mostly at the expense of low-income and minority communities (Hyra, 2012). The most recent program is the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI). The CNI seeks to create mixed-income neighborhoods and expand access to social amenities by facilitating resource pooling and collaboration between multiple sectors and key stakeholders. This process may be seen as a shift towards greater co-production. For the purpose of this project, I formally define co-production as a complementary, synergistic
relationship between different groups working together as equal partners to produce goods/services (Ostrom 1996, 2010). It has been argued that when governments effectively support co-production, they also facilitate the independent and collective (joint) adaptive capacity of key stakeholder groups, enabling them to innovate and cooperate to address important societal dilemmas (Chaffin et al., 2014; Rosen & Painter, 2019). Conceptually this process may be referred to as a form of state-reinforced self-governance (Sarker, 2013; DeCaro et al., 2017).

The key components of successful state-reinforced self-governance (SRSG) in neighborhood revitalization are poorly understood, practically and scientifically. As a result, there is co-productive failure – poor partnership and implementation of the collaborative process during neighborhood revitalization. For example, this manifests as deficient levels of public participation, deficient levels of community-level empowerment, and deficient levels of cooperation and coordination among key actors, as well as insufficient governmental action and formal laws to enable such co-production. The current dissertation project seeks to address these conceptual and practical gaps by studying the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative in terms of how it enables (or constrains) effective co-production.

1.1 Overview of the Research Project

This study applies the tools of the SRSG framework to analyze and understand the revitalization process in Russell neighborhood, Louisville (a Choice Neighborhoods project). Using a qualitative case-study approach that combines interview and archival data, it examines how governments at federal, state, and, especially, local levels support neighborhood collective action and self-governance, during neighborhood revitalization
in racially marginalized neighborhoods (that is state-reinforced self-governance). Analysis of elements of state-reinforced self-governance present in Nebraska’s Platte River system and Japan’s irrigation commons as well as the provision of greenspaces in Chicago’s marginalized communities indicate SRSG’s potential to promote adaptive governance in dynamic social-ecological systems (Sarker, 2013; DeCaro et al., 2017; DeCaro et al., in press). State-reinforced self-governance is especially beneficial because it can positively impact the cooperation among actors in action situations and consequently, improve the level of outcomes in dilemma resolutions in both the short and long term (Sarker, 2013). Revitalization often creates conditions where existing residents and local businesses end up benefiting less in their transformed communities. The potential of state-reinforced self-governance in strengthening the problem-solving capacities of neighborhoods implies the possibility of changing the old revitalization-disempowerment outcome.

This dissertation is driven by the following questions:

1. What co-productive process(es) took place in Russell neighborhood revitalization?
2. How do the regulations and requirements of the CNI planning grants foster or constrain self-governance for the neighborhood and synergistic relationship among major actors?
3. What are stakeholders’ perceptions of their involvement in Russell’s revitalization decision-making processes against the backdrop of neighborhood self-governance?
4. What is the impact of Russell's revitalization on its dimensions of sustainability?
5. What can the Russell case teach the scholarly and scientific community about concepts and theoretical principles of co-production?
This research develops much-needed conceptual and analytical tools to measure actor and institutional capacities for cooperation and adaptive decision-making in neighborhood revitalization, using the concept of state-reinforced self-governance as the starting point. This theoretical perspective has the potential to transform future research in this domain. The qualitative study provides a detailed example of the diagnostic capabilities of the SRSG framework which could be replicated by city planners and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), among others, towards improving policy design and outcomes. In addition, lessons from the study provide some insights on how public policy could improve the co-productive process for neighborhood revitalization in Louisville (i.e. Russell neighborhood) as well as other similar neighborhoods across the country. Unlike the existing few Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CNI) studies that have generally focused on the Initiative’s impact on neighborhood character and conditions such as social capital, crime reduction, access to quality schools, housing quality, economic development, and environmental health outcomes (Brown, 2015; Joice, 2017; Pendall et al., 2015; Popkin et al., 2021; Tegeler & Gevarter, 2021), this dissertation project serves as the first comprehensive study of the CNI in terms of how it influences the function and structure of complex governance systems as well as how it complements or constrains different types of state and local institutional arrangements to produce a myriad of outputs (e.g. neighborhood Transformation Plan) and outcomes.

In the remaining part of this chapter, I introduce the SRSG framework and undertake a preliminary SRSG assessment of past revitalization policies. I consequently review the literature on related themes of neighborhood capacities for revitalization,
public participation, and sustainable neighborhood outcomes. In the chapter that follows, I discuss the qualitative methods used to address the research questions. Chapter three reports the results of the data analyses and the final chapter discusses the main findings and attendant conclusions.

1.2 State-Reinforced Self-Governance

The concept of state-reinforced self-governance (SRSG), as introduced by Sarker (2013) and further developed by DeCaro et al. (2017), offers a systematic approach for investigating the dynamics of co-production and adaptive governance. The SRSG framework has been applied to several cases including water governance (Porras et al., 2019), forest restoration (Cyphers & Schultz, 2019), fire management (Abrams et al., 2018), urban community greenspace (DeCaro et al., in press), and urban air pollution (Sarr et al., 2021). The current dissertation will be the first study to apply the concept of SRSG governance to neighborhood revitalization.

SRSG describes a process whereby governments foster conducive legal, administrative, financial, and political environments for stakeholders facing a particular social-ecological dilemma (e.g., neighborhood planning) to not only self-organize but also cooperatively adapt in an ever-evolving social-ecological system (Sarker, 2013; DeCaro et al., 2017). It follows the premise that the state can promote (or undermine) such supportive environments through its legislative, administrative, financial, and other activities.

Dilemmas such as neighborhood distress exist in complex social-ecological systems where human and non-human agents each possess the capacity to alter or influence the other (Ostrom, 2010). This constant interaction between interconnected
society and the natural environment means that for every social action (e.g. enactment of zoning legislation), there can be a negative impact on the ecosystem (e.g. decreased air quality or natural habitat destruction), thereby altering the nature of the social-ecological system and pre-existing social-ecological dilemmas (Grimm et al., 2008; McManamay et al., 2017). Addressing social-ecological dilemmas like distressed neighborhoods warrant an understanding of the factors influencing problem solving, planning, decision-making, and collaboration. The SRSG Framework aids analysts in understanding these dynamics (DeCaro et al., 2017; DeCaro et al., in press).

The SRSG framework (DeCaro et al., in press) introduces two sets of institutional design principles and an updated version of Ostrom’s (Ostrom, 2009; McGinnis & Ostrom, 2014) social-ecological system (SES) framework to examine co-productive processes in complex systems. These tools serve as guiding instruments in exploring the strengths and weaknesses of institutional arrangements for enabling an actor’s capacity for self-governance as well as engaging in collective action. The design principles are institutional features or conditions (e.g., multi-stakeholder communication, formally assigned authority and requirements for shared decision-making), which tend to be observed in successful cases of government-supported adaptive governance, or co-production (Ostrom, 1990; DeCaro et al., 2017). These design principles are conceptualized as the institutional foundations (i.e., adaptive capacities) for adaptive decision-making, collaboration, and governance. The SES framework is an analysis tool that enables researchers to methodically assess the contextual factors, actors, institutions (e.g., laws, policies), ecological and built systems, governance network structures and interactions that shape (the process of addressing) the focal dilemma.
1.2.1 Design Principles

Design principles are used to describe the basic building blocks (design features) and adaptive capacities provided by particular governance systems, and their elements. The first set of design principles, which the SRSG Framework calls the design principles for multi-actor cooperation, were first developed by Elinor Ostrom (1990, 2010). These principles describe institutional features that enable diverse stakeholders to work together to problem-solve and cooperatively govern complex societal problems. They consist of communication, shared decision-making, enforcement, well-defined sociopolitical and ecological boundaries, equity of costs/benefits, and accountability (Table 1). The SRSG Framework is interested in characterizing how governments facilitate or restrict co-production, by altering actors’ capacity to engage in these underlying principles (e.g., communication, shared decision-making), by formal and informal government actions (e.g., rule-making, funding). For example, the Framework helps us to understand the effects of a federal government citizen participation policy that requires municipalities to involve residents in local planning (e.g. via communicating project funding plans), but without instituting formal enforcement mechanisms (e.g. sanctions) for non-compliance.

The second set, design principles for state-reinforcement, were introduced by DeCaro et al. (2017) and pertain to the combination of legislations, regulations, governmental programs, and government-supported normative rules and processes which facilitate an actor’s capacity to self-organize and problem-solve. These include various types of formal (and informal) decision-making and operational authority, responsibility, operational resources, and mechanisms for institutional flexibility and stability (Table 1). For example, a state government could enact a revitalization program that specifically
directs the creation and/or formal recognition of neighborhood associations across a city, along with a devolution of local planning authority and funding to support problem solving among residents in distressed neighborhoods.

Table 1. Design principles for state-reinforced self-governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State-Reinforcement (SR)</th>
<th>Authority (e.g., powers, authorization) to make decisions (“decision-making authority”) to govern oneself and relevant aspects of the dilemma; and conduct necessary functions (“operational authority”).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Requirements to perform particular functions to address the dilemma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Resources</td>
<td>External resources (e.g., funding, equipment, facilities) and sources or mechanisms for self-sufficiency to acquire necessary resources to conduct vital functions. Balance influences fiscal autonomy, which influences de facto independence, authority, and responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility/Stability</td>
<td>Flexibility to change core institutional structures (e.g., constitutional makeup, rules), operations, and/or functions. Examples: decision authority, policy sunsets, and general standards (e.g., legal ceilings/floors). Stability to ensure advantageous institutional characteristics resist change to enable beneficial predictability and long-term goals. Examples: decision constraints, fixed rules, long sunsets, and moratoria on change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Multi-Actor Cooperation (MC)</th>
<th>Sufficient communication among stakeholders to support coordination and mutual understanding of the dilemma, and each other (e.g., characteristics, goals).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Key stakeholders collaboratively and meaningfully participate in relevant decisions. Stakeholders are empowered to collectively determine institutional design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement</td>
<td>Methods to compel rule compliance and cooperation with social contracts, whether formal/informal, external/internal. Graduated sanctions (escalating punishments) and restorative justice (provisions for multi-lateral communication, education, and deliberation when managing enforcement).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-Defined Boundaries</td>
<td>Critical ecological boundaries (e.g., geospatial, biophysical extent and dynamics) of the dilemma are clearly defined, understood, and known to the key stakeholders. Sociopolitical boundaries (e.g., actors; actor roles and capacities; jurisdictions) are similarly well-comprehended.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>Costs/benefits of governing the dilemma are shared equitably. Actors/collective action processes are held accountable to superior authorities (upward accountability), peers (horizontal accountability), and/or beneficiaries (downward accountability).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: DeCaro et al., (in press)*
2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Distressed Neighborhoods in the United States

This study investigates the concept of state-reinforced self-governance (SRSG) within the context of neighborhood revitalization, with a focus on how it impacts co-production processes, and regulatory dynamics. The ensuing background covers two broad themes: (i) the role and position taken by government in neighborhood planning/revitalization and (ii) structural racism in the development of distressed neighborhoods. It follows the evolution from the Depression Era initiatives in the 1930s through the Urban Renewal period to the rekindling of federal redevelopment efforts, and finally, the design of contemporary urban revitalization (see Table 2). These developments are conceptualized in terms of failures, and opportunities, in co-production. This discussion is informed by two conceptual standpoints on co-production, Ostrom’s (1990) concept of collective action and self-governance, and state-reinforced self-governance (DeCaro et al., 2017; Ostrom, 1994; Sarker, 2013). These concepts influence the critique of each program as I assess the extent of authority and resources granted to support community-level governance and opportunities to meaningfully participate in shared decision-making.

Specifically, these frameworks inspire to ask the following interpretative questions for each period of neighborhood revitalization. First, what was the relationship between state and non-state actors? Second, how did the state facilitate and/or constrain constitutional decision-making authority and funding among key stakeholders, especially
minority populations? Third, what was the role of the state in enabling and/or hindering cooperation among key actors? For the third question, I focus on the dynamics of communication, shared decision-making, and equity.

**Table 2. Timeline of revitalization initiatives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Federal Revitalization Policy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>New Deal (e.g., “district replanning”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940s</td>
<td>Redlining and Urban Redevelopment Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Urban Renewal</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Model Cities Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Community Development Block Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere (HOPE VI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.1.1 The New Deal

The first national attempt to reverse urban neighborhood distress in the United States emerged during the Great Depression in the early 20th century, as the New Deal. Many cities were debt-laden and struggling against unprecedented poverty, hunger, crime, unemployment, and disinvestment. This period marked a significant turning point in the federal government’s relationship with state and local governments, as well as the general public. The New Deal represented a new style of co-production.

In 1932, 26 mayors united to create the United States Conference of Mayors, an organization that lobbied the federal government for assistance to ameliorate the social and economic devastation of the Great Depression. Upon election into office in late 1932, President Franklin Roosevelt signed into effect several administrative and legislative measures to provide relief to the unemployed and poor, reform of the financial system, and recovery of the economy, under the New Deal agenda. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), endowed with a total of $3.1 billion to alleviate urban unemployment via state and local agencies, was one of the newly created agencies under
the New Deal and its first relief operation. Besides tackling unemployment, poverty, and physical and environmental blight, President Roosevelt’s New Deal agenda also sought to confront other facets of community distress including escalating crime (Beer Permit Act of 1933; 21st Amendment), local economy insecurity (via Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, 1938), and housing issues (Federal Housing Administration of 1934; Wagner-Steagall Housing Act of 1937). However, federal and state administrators were predominantly White, and there was a prevailing culture of racial marginalization. Many white officials charged with distributing relief items believed Blacks did not require as much money, food, or work programs as their White counterparts (Murphy, 2020). For example, the extensive public works projects undertaken by the new Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) involved few Black men who were then placed in segregated accommodations. The CCC also denied Black participation in most administrative positions. Thus, the New Deal programs were geared primarily toward meeting the needs of White populations/neighborhoods, depriving many Blacks of immediate relief (Murphy, 2020). Before its closure in 1935, the FERA succeeded in employing more than four million Americans into the built environment sector to construct parks, roads, streets, and schools.

The FERA was later replaced by a more ambitious program, the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Between 1936 and 1941, the WPA spent $11 billion in employment opportunities for almost one-fifth of the U.S. workforce to address the deterioration of the built environment in mostly older cities (Sutton, 2008). By this point, it could be seen that the New Deal employment opportunities had failed to substantively change the ubiquitous hardship and despair among racial minority populations. African
Americans, in particular, who had long been battling racial discrimination, were commonly the last recruited and the first laid off or entirely excluded from job opportunities (Murphy, 2020). In fact, owing to strict practices of racial segregation and structural racism, Black workers were three times the number of white workers on relief assistance during this period (Cravens, 2009).

The impact of the Great Depression on housing conditions, especially in low-income neighborhoods, left residential properties significantly worse off. It was during this time that the terms “blight” and “slum” attained unprecedented importance in the lexicon of legislators. To formally differentiate between the two words, a report by the 1941 Committee on Blighted Areas and Slums described slums as a “social liability” and blighted areas as an “economic liability to the community” (Weiss, 1985). Thus, the economic solution to the problem of physical and environmental blight in distressed neighborhoods, as promoted by a coalition of downtown business and property owners, was “district replanning” (Sutton, 2008). District replanning meant receiving federal aid to raze and transform distressed neighborhoods bordering downtown into profitable businesses and high-income residences. This began to lay the conducive framework for the Urban Redevelopment-Renewal agenda in the years ahead and the model for federal-local revitalization collaboration.

**Critique.** By 1944 when President Roosevelt won his second re-election, the New Deal had allowed the U.S. to improve its system of national wealth distribution (Billington & Ridge, 1981) but certain social class populations and distressed communities were left in bleak conditions, battling deep persistent poverty. More so, while the government administrators of the New Deal initiatives worked with local
community leaders (e.g. leaders of racial organizations), they envisioned themselves as enlightened experts and mostly neglected to include the ordinary citizens in their decision making (Little, 2020). Even worse off were minority populations in this landscape of labor segmentation and racial discrimination. Without institutional provisions requiring equitable distribution of resources and involvement of minorities in shaping and implementing important solutions (shared decision-making, accountability), the state failed in facilitating important communication lines and collaborations between local government actors and marginalized groups. The reality of the worsened conditions compelled several Blacks to unite and form neighborhood organizations and labor unions, stage militant campaigns against employment discrimination, and denounce structural inequalities, laying the foundations for the nationwide civil rights movement’s impact in two decades to come (Murphy, 2020). From an SRSG perspective, these movements could be seen as attempts to change the fundamental co-productive relationship for minoritized individuals and communities, and specifically to achieve greater constitutional and operational decision-making authority, shared decision-making, and economic empowerment (i.e., operational resources).

2.1.2 Redlining and the Urban Redevelopment Program

Housing shortages and neighborhood decline persisted after World War II, despite various federal low-interest loan programs designed to subsidize residential and community development. In 1947, the Federal Housing Authority (an outgrowth of the New Deal) introduced a booklet called the Underwriting Manual. This Manual, a guide for evaluating mortgage risk, essentially proclaimed it highly risky to make housing loans in predominantly African American neighborhoods (Jackson, 1980). This practice,
popularly called “redlining,” facilitated the concentration of poverty and related adverse conditions in minority, distressed communities as the Federal Housing Authority refused to insure mortgages in and around Black neighborhoods. Unsurprisingly, many lending bodies also withheld credit opportunities or offered highly inflated interest rates to racial and ethnic minorities, regardless of their creditworthiness (Jackson, 1980). It was in the late 1940s that an “urban crisis” was declared (Greer & Gonzales, 2016). The crisis was largely spurred by middle-class flight to suburbia for better quality of life, the transition to an era of deindustrialized urban economies, and a systematic sidelining of racial minorities through land use policies and occupational discrimination practices (Roithmayr, 2004; Teitz & Chapple, 1998; Wilson, 1987). For many in the philanthropic and corporate sector, social scientists, and government, the urban crisis drew acute awareness to the troubled, blighted, and poverty-stricken neighborhoods that permeated many cities. They linked the disinvestment in and depopulation of urban areas to the variety of social dilemmas plaguing distressed communities (Dawkins & Nelson, 2003). Again, debaters over the national urban crisis postulated that the only solution to transforming distressed neighborhoods was a relocation of commercial and residential properties and clearance of slums and blighted areas for land redevelopment. Under this philosophy, President Harry Truman passed the Housing Act of 1949, creating under the Act, the Urban Redevelopment Program.

The creation of the Urban Redevelopment Program marked the U.S.’ first full-fledged strike against distressed urban neighborhood conditions. In President Truman’s own words in July 1949: “It equips the Federal Government, for the first time, with effective means for aiding cities in the vital task of clearing slums and rebuilding blighted
areas” (Peters & Woolley, n.d.). Given the historical context, this proclamation could very well be interpreted as an agenda against urban minority concentrations, predominantly African-American communities. A common understanding that appeared to drive Urban Redevelopment projects in cities was that only by removing impoverished and racial minorities from inner-city neighborhoods and replacing them with middle-income populations and commerce would neighborhoods and, by extension, the city, attain vitality and stability again. Funds were granted to city officials to redevelop “blighted areas.” Without a formal criterion for “blighted” under the Urban Development Program, local political authorities were often incentivized to exploit the meaning. Therefore, from the onset, poor (mostly minoritized) residential properties were sacrificed for mostly white-serving commercial and infrastructural investments via the exercise of eminent domain and forced property condemnation (Gale, 1990).

**Critique.** The physical transformation of neighborhoods sponsored by these Acts and federal and state government intervention was expected to correct the physical, institutional, and ascribed social pathologies of neighborhood distress. Although the Housing Act of 1949 mandated public hearings, and government would work with local leaders of labor and religious organizations, homeowners and residents in targeted neighborhoods had little or no meaningful input in these local decisions as government maintained its centralized decision-making approach (Arnstein, 1969; Birch 2007). From an SRSG perspective, homeowners and residents in these distressed neighborhoods were unequipped with the authority (decision-making, operational) and financial resources (operational resources) needed to contest or advocate for a compromise in these decisions. Even if these homeowners and residents sought to unite and contest the
decisions, with flexible regulations on eminent domain granting greater powers to the state and no regulations explicitly enabling neighborhood self-governance, citizens of targeted neighborhoods were denied the opportunity for state-reinforced self-governance. Furthermore, the Acts and other policies surrounding Black political rights did little to formally support effective, routine, or meaningful communication or shared decision-making among/between Black residents and federal or local governments in charge of policy and local change. Finally, Black communities bore the primary costs of revitalization and reaped few if any benefits.

2.1.3 Urban Renewal

Following an improved understanding of the economic and political costs of the Program, Congress passed the amended Housing Act of 1954 and rebranded its efforts as Urban Renewal. Urban Renewal continued to emphasize physical capital development (e.g. quality housing), with little emphasis on addressing local political disenfranchisement, systemic racism, or the root problems surrounding distressed communities. Urban Renewal coincided with the Interstate Highway Act of 1956 and major regional and national economic development. Highway construction boosted white flight and suburban expansion, further concentrating poverty and a vacuum of individual and community-level political empowerment within cities. Thus, from 1956 to 1972, revitalization projects that were supposed to make cities more livable had the opposite effects on predominantly racial minorities’ neighborhoods. More minority neighborhoods (including housing, schools, small businesses) were torn down than were rebuilt. By the mid-1970s, the result of neighborhood and transportation improvement efforts was the displacement of hundreds of thousands of families from their homes (Pfau et al., 2021).
In effect, the removal and displacement of targeted residents led to the emergence of new neighborhoods of distress elsewhere.

Several previous studies on community leadership and decision-making over the Urban Renewal period focused not only on understanding “who governs” in local revitalization contexts, but also “where, when, and with what effects” (e.g. Clark, 1968; Kovak 1972; Madgwick, 1971; Skok, 1974; Smith 1976). However, despite their contributions, these studies face critiques regarding their methodological approaches and/or theoretical frameworks. For example, Clark's (1968) work delved into the intricate web of community decision-making, emphasizing the importance of understanding not only "who governs" but also the underlying causes and consequences of governance structures and neighborhood characteristics. While Clark's study provided valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of community power dynamics, one may argue that it lacked a comprehensive theoretical framework, which limited its ability to offer nuanced explanations for some observed patterns. Using the perspective of SRSG, we can begin to unpack these dynamics more clearly.

**Critique.** Recipients of federal Urban Renewal grants were required to include citizen advisory boards during their revitalization planning to correct former deficiencies in community-level empowerment. In reality, these boards had no legitimate purpose or authority in planning processes as officials used them to symbolically meet the lax, overly general and minimalistic federal requirement for public input (Arnstein, 1969). Though the federal precondition for receiving revitalization funds was local officials’ cooperation with neighborhood residents, the language of the federal regulations regarding the purpose of the Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC), “support”,
“information gathering”, and “public relations”, appeared to legitimize weak forms of SRSG (Arnstein, 1969; Hallman, 1972). In other words, local officials were not explicitly required to share authority or provide (operational) resource support to the citizen groups. For example, urban officials recruited African Americans to serve on CAC subcommittees that were responsible for advancing Black interests. Many programs that were signed off and approved by the subcommittees were only mentioned, if at all, to the people in general terms, portraying the projects as major sources of benefits like jobs and health services. What was both written in the legal fine print and local officials failed to disclose was that the ultimate beneficiaries of the projects were interest groups other than the Black community. Subcommittee members were without technical advisors to help them understand the legalities of what they had been asked to sign. As a result, merely communicating program objectives without sharing decision-making authority, responsibility, and operational resources with grassroots participants was sufficient to meet the requirements for stakeholder cooperation. While the federal intent for the updated program may have been to improve lines of communication, equity, and shared decision-making between state actors and neighborhoods, local execution of programs did little to change the defective co-productive relationship. Indeed, government’s paternalistic approach to planning processes continued into this era.

2.1.4 Critical Movements in the 1960s

The 1960s witnessed widespread public revolts against complete place-modification of neighborhoods under the guise of urban renewal, intrusion of highway construction into marginalized neighborhoods, and massive buildings that disrupted community character (Arnstein, 1969; Checkoway, 1985). The civil rights movements of
the 1960s created a forceful backlash against Urban Renewal and its underlying vision of eradicating the pernicious spread of neighborhood distress. Particularly, civil rights leaders greatly focused on “patterns of discrimination built into ostensibly race-neutral policies and norms” (Sutton, 2008, p. 32).

The environmental protection/justice movement of this period also significantly sparked complementary opposition (and a call for sustainable development) in 1962 when marine biologist Rachel Carson publicly challenged the conventional wisdom in degrading the environment in the name of “economic development.” Championed predominately by African Americans, Latinos, and other minorities residing in distressed neighborhoods, this movement sought redress to environmental protection inequities towards a clean and healthy environment in their neighborhoods. According to Professor Robert Bullard, these communities suffer some of the worst environmental degradation nationwide (US EPA, 2023).

Another critical supporting opposition movement that emerged in this period was citizen participation activism. The citizen participation movement, made up of affected minority residents, academics, activists, and philanthropic leaders, demanded greater input in community-level decisions. Their demand for true community empowerment (collaborative, bottom-up approach) challenged the legitimacy of the status quo in the planning sector where citizen participation was essentially an illusion (Shipley & Utz, 2012).

The 1960s further marked the innovative emergence of the community development corporation (CDC) via the community development movement which had begun after WWII. This innovation, spearheaded by New York Senator Robert F.
Kennedy, was conceived in 1966 to function as a nonprofit conduit to channel the power and financial resources of corporate America toward the betterment of neighborhoods in distress (Hoffman, 2012; Turner et al., 2014). In 1967, Senator Kennedy, along with other supporting political representatives, persuaded Congress to assign federal funding to rapidly emerging CDCs via existing neighborhood revitalization programs (Hoffman, 2012). As community-based entities, CDCs were deemed representative of a clearly defined neighborhood (their board of directors includes some community members, if not a majority) and allocated funding to redevelop, acquire, and manage housing and commercial properties as well as connect social services such as jobs, to their neighborhood of interest.

Over the next two decades, the CDC model (broker between government, private business, and distressed neighborhood) would guide most development work done in distressed neighborhoods, particularly as stewards of billions of dollars for improving access to affordable housing (Rhayn, 2019). While some CDCs were classified as successful in terms of improving access to decent, low-income housing, the narrow focus on housing development, however, would stifle the efficacy of the CDC neighborhood improvement efforts in the long run as they over-relied on developer fees to support routine organizational operations (Turner et al., 2014). In other words, though they received federal and philanthropic funding to undertake projects, many failed to develop a robust funding base and consequently, often struggled to sustain their own day-to-day management. In addition, probably for fiscal reasons, many failed to expand their core focus, beyond affordable housing, to include the provision of social services in distressed neighborhoods.
Given CDC’s formal responsibility for producing and maintaining affordable housing units for only distressed neighborhood residents, it is worth noting that the majority of their funding have been used to successfully build and support low-income housing. For example, it is reported that approximately four thousand CDCs have used the lion’s share of resources earmarked for neighborhood development to build and secure over 1,252,000 low-cost housing units (Sutton, 2008).

2.1.5 Model Cities

The 1960s revolts and the destruction that followed prompted government and non-government stakeholders to reassess the root causes of neighborhood distress. From 1961, a congressionally appointed commission, Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (1985), began to examine and prepare annual reports on distressed conditions of both urban and rural neighborhoods. A classic publication in the 1960s aptly captured the multidimensional challenge of distressed neighborhoods: “These are people who lack education and skill, who have bad health, poor housing, low levels of aspiration, and high levels of mental distress...Each disability is the more intense because it exists within a web of disabilities. And if one problem is solved, and the others are left constant, there is little gain” (Harrington, 1993, p. 68). In sum, the issues in distressed neighborhoods are complex and interrelated and hence, require a comprehensive approach involving a coordination of physical, ecological, economic, individual, and social service needs. However, it will be some three decades later before federal agencies (e.g. Department of Housing and Urban Development) will begin to officially endorse such a holistic approach as the ideal strategy for improving conditions in distressed neighborhoods (Turner et al., 2014).
In the interim, federal government gave heed to calls for increased quality in public participation during local government planning. Federal efforts in the subsequent intervening years increasingly legitimized genuine engagement and public participation in public planning activities (Birch, 2007; Checkoway, 1985; Guldi, 2017). For example, when President Lyndon Johnson declared a “War on Poverty” and initiated the Model Cities Program of 1966, urban officials were obligated to ensure “maximum feasible participation” in their antipoverty initiatives to ensure federal resources attained maximum effective use in the relevant communities (Arnstein, 1969; Checkoway, 1985; Guldi, 2017). In practice, many local governments only increased community engagement efforts (e.g. more public meetings), without an actual devolution of decision-making control (Sutton, 2008).

**Critique.** Besides a shift towards legitimate citizen participation, the Model Cities Program of 1966 also marked, for the first time, a shift towards a more people-centered and multisector collaborative approach to addressing concentrated poverty and blight. The program promoted coordination between economic, physical, and social development. It also saw for the first time a direct transfer of administrative and financial responsibility from the federal government to neighborhood-based organizations (e.g. CDCs, churches), much to the ire of the established local government body. Unfortunately, Model Cities failed to live up to expectations due to underfunding, local political pushbacks, and inadequate support from participating federal agencies (Turner et al., 2014). However, the Program’s larger purpose of tackling inner-city distress continued through its newly created Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
Arnstein’s (1969) seminal work on the ladder of citizen participation analyzed the different ways power and resources were shared between the state and citizens during the Model Cities era. While there were scattered instances of true shared decision-making (that is, via partnership and delegation of power to citizens), Arnstein observed that the majority of Model Cities programs adopted public participation techniques that simply “placated”, “consulted”, or “informed” citizens of planning goals and outcomes. From an SRSG perspective, one could also add that the Model Cities program represented an innovative attempt to empower minority residents and increase their local political influence (e.g. decision-making authority, responsibility) during every stage of local planning efforts. Because many local officials consistently undermined expectations and requirements for government-citizen collaboration, fearing the loss of control, they stifled neighborhoods’ capacity to self-govern by denying them necessary administrative, technical, and financial support. To counteract this, federal institutions could have included mechanisms (e.g. enforcement using graduated sanctions) that would make downplaying collaboration requirements penalizable as well as make meaningful participation requirements more specific.

2.1.6 Community Development Block Grant

Under the Nixon-Ford Administration between 1969 and 1977, federal policies targeting urban neighborhood development such as Urban Renewal and Model Cities were replaced with new policies. Of special note is the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) of 1974. To date, it is one of the longest-running programs administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to address distressed neighborhoods. While local officials were granted great flexibility in the Grant’s use, the
funds were generally expected to be used to address housing, poverty, and infrastructural development. Toward controlling the growth of the federal government and decreasing centralization of power at the federal level, Nixon administration advanced federal disengagement from cities by limiting its involvement in urban planning affairs (Marbach, 2006). This decentralized approach granted municipalities total discretion over the use of federal aid. Consequently, many local leaders were incentivized to fund pet projects rather than support neighborhoods facing critical problems (Rich, 2006).

**Critique.** The federal approach under this era was to place more fiscal decision-making power in the hands of local government as they were deemed “most familiar with local needs” (Marbach, 2006). As a result, the direct transfer of authority and resources to citizen groups observed under the Model Cities disappeared and this power was placed back in the hands of local political authorities. To address the issue of municipalities’ inappropriate use of funds, a reauthorization of the Community Development Block Grant in 1978 brought more control in the allocation and use of funds in serving distressed communities. For instance, candidates for the grant are expected to engage residents and relevant neighborhood organizations when designing the revitalization plans (Sutton, 2008). However, the extent of citizen influence over the decision-making process was still left at the discretion of local governments. In the context of SRSG, this development in the neighborhood revitalization landscape could be seen as a retrogression in the progress towards effective co-production, where appropriate actors are legally, responsibly, and financially equipped to cooperatively and adaptively design and execute neighborhood revitalization that equitably benefits residents and businesses across different socioeconomic groups. Without protections for constitutional powers and
operational resources as offered under the Model Cities program, low-income minorities faced significant constraints in their capacity to adaptively problem-solve and address issues of neighborhood distress.

2.1.7 Hope VI

Over the 1980s, Ronald Reagan and George H. Bush administrations continued President Nixon’s approach of minimizing federal involvement at the urban level. In the following decade, a recommendation by the National Commission on Severely Distressed Housing (1992) for support of public housing reconstruction in distressed communities, initiated the first federal reinvolve ment in neighborhood revitalization since the 1970s. It noted severely troubled public housing as a key correlate of blight and crime in several communities. In 1992, President George H. Bush signed into effect an Urban Revitalization Demonstration program and tasked the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with its administration. In the following years, the program became popularly known as HOPE VI (Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere). HOPE VI departs from past neighborhood policies in that it shifts the emphasis from outputs (e.g. number of housing units) to outcomes (e.g. establishing safe living environments). The underlying philosophy of HOPE VI was heavily influenced by prominent Chicago sociologist, William Julius Wilson’s theories of social isolation and community effects. Believing that persistent neighborhood poverty is exacerbated by social isolation, federal policymakers concluded that developing income-diverse communities would help ameliorate entrenched poverty and its related issues as well as improve resident self-sufficiency (Clark & Negrey, 2017). The key to creating mixed-income housing (and neighborhoods by extension) was reigniting market forces in distressed neighborhoods,
while lesser attention was given to strengthening conditions for community-level governance. Instead of, for example, neighborhood self-governance or “sovereignty,” HOPE VI encourages resident leadership. Resident leaders from the distressed housing are frequently given capacity-building training to improve their ability to participate in planning the revitalization of the HOPE VI site (Cuomo, 1999). However, HOPE VI focuses on revitalizing a specific housing first and foremost.

Despite annual appropriations, HOPE VI remained unauthorized until 1998 when Congress formally recognized it by law. Over the history of HOPE VI, the federal government expended over $6.2 billion in 268 revitalization grants awards to housing authorities in 41 states, districts, and territories (McCarty, 2012). HOPE VI is reported successful in transforming the socioeconomic and physical conditions of neighborhoods in large cities (e.g. New York, Chicago) and small cities (e.g. Newport) alike. According to some urban scholars, these successes, however, are tempered by the Program’s displacement of mostly poor, minority residents, and spurring a change in the demography of the ultimate beneficiaries (gentrification) (Duryea, 2006; Sink & Ceh, 2011). Additionally, some relocated residents of the demolished housing still end up in segregated, distressed neighborhoods despite provisions for subsidized rents (Clark & Negrey, 2017).

Critique. Since city governments believed razing and reconstructing distressed housing sites into safe zones would draw more affluent residents back to the city, their primary focus under HOPE VI was on attracting private investment toward mixed-income transformation of these sites (Crump, 2002; Gress et al., 2019). This vision resulted in less emphasis being given to developing the relationship of community-wide
governance units such as CDCs and neighborhood associations (Turner et al., 2014). In fact, Clark and Negrey (2017) assert that “HOPE VI is more for cities than for people” (p. 184). From an SRSG perspective, the absence of clear regulatory guidelines supporting neighborhood self-governing capacities and meaningful shared decision-making in HOPE VI projects left low-income residents with little leverage over the revitalization planning processes and attaining satisfactory outcomes. Without these capacities, for example, the most troubled and disadvantaged original residents were simply rehoused in other low-cost accommodations (Turner et al., 2014).

In mid-2010, the importance of federal government partnership in addressing distressed neighborhoods was revisited by Alan Mallach, renowned revitalization expert and senior policy fellow at Brookings Institution and the National Housing Institute. In addition to increased federal support of CDCs and local governments’ efforts to stimulate local market demand, Mallach declared a need to redesign existing federal revitalization programs to strongly focus on broader neighborhood sustainability with regional economy considerations (Mallach, 2010). This included an advocacy for a more substantive and purposeful planning process as may be evidenced through more support for community-level governance. However, this had little opportunity to be actualized under HOPE VI as the Obama administration ended the program in 2011 and sought to replace it with a more placed-based, responsive, and comprehensive initiative.

2.1.8 Choice Neighborhoods Initiative

In 2012, the Obama administration formally launched the replacement program, the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI). Building on the lessons learned from HOPE VI, the Choice Neighborhood Initiative was established to build upon the strengths of
HOPE VI as well as address the program’s limitations. First, it shifts the focus from distressed public housing projects to distressed neighborhoods (explicit plans to revitalize the entire neighborhood are required) (The Urban Institute, 2015). An important aspect of the Initiative is greater inclusion of affected stakeholders into the planning and implementation phases of neighborhood revitalization. Particularly, the CNI calls for and fiscally supports collaboration between multiple sectors and key stakeholders such as neighborhood residents, nonprofits, local government, private capital, and public housing authorities. This way, the CNI shows some promise of promoting greater neighborhood self-governance and empowerment in the long run via an enhanced co-productive process. Furthermore, the Choice policy addresses displacement by improving relocation arrangements and encourages rules that foster the return of incumbent residents (The Urban Institute, 2015). Like its predecessor, the Initiative seeks to create mixed-income communities but with an additional goal of expanded access to social amenities (e.g. employment, greenspaces, quality schools, etc.).

The debates persist among policymakers, scholars, and advocates on the effects of revitalization programs such as CNI on original residents in the redeveloped properties and neighborhoods. Early studies on the success of the CNI remain inconclusive owing to limited research on its impacts thus far, in part because of the recency of these projects and limited attention to important dimensions of the process and its outcomes.

For a start, a group of analysts from the Urban Institute and its partner organizations conducted a preliminary assessment in 2015. Their analyses of neighborhood Transformation Plans (planning reports required of grantees), along with other supplementary data, affirmed greater centering of residents’ voices in revitalization
planning processes, at least with residents from the distressed housing (Pendall et al., 2015). This is likely precipitated by the stringent CNI requirements on community engagement. Additionally, these analysts observed some evidence of improved housing quality, workforce development, and healthcare access (Pendall et al., 2015).

In 2017, a social science analyst from the Department of Housing and Urban Development found some evidence of increased economic outcomes for Choice residents (Joice, 2017). On the other hand, a 2021 study that analyzed the creation of mixed-income schools and improved access to high-quality schools found the CNI to be deficient in promoting racially and economically integrated school options to serve revitalized neighborhoods (Tegeler & Gevarter, 2021). No conclusive evidence has emerged on crime reduction, individual and environmental health outcomes, neighborhood investment flows, and other neighborhood-level effects (Popkin et al., 2021).

Critique. Given the complexity of this issue (neighborhood revitalization), diversity of locations and specific solutions (i.e., place-based character), and considering the staggered history of federal interventions in distressed neighborhoods, it is unsurprising that there has been little to modest impact. According to Mallach (2010), three factors likely account for this: i) absence of a strategic framework to purposefully build sustainable neighborhoods as well as sustainable cities; ii) lack of coordination across [at least, 13] federal departments and agencies who operate hundreds of programs for distressed neighborhoods (Community development: Challenges face comprehensive approaches to address needs of distressed neighborhoods, 1995); and iii) failure to maintain long-term resource support. Together, these indicate fertile conditions for
adopting principles for multi-actor cooperation and state-reinforced self-governance in resolving neighborhood distress. The federal clear directive to undertake comprehensive planning with residents and initiate partnerships with local bodies such as resident organizations heighten the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative’s capacity to significantly revise the common narrative of citizen disempowerment in marginalized neighborhoods.

2.1.9 Conclusion

The most recent version of the federal revitalization policy, Choice Neighborhood Initiative, shows potential in developing neighborhoods with sustainable outcomes. However, the question remains whether it would be able to withstand cyclical changes in political administrations as well as any fluctuations in (financial) resources. Also, the emergence and continued existence of distressed neighborhoods have been substantially shaped by systemic and structural discrimination and minority segregation policies and practices. Revitalization policies that vigorously tackle the problems in distressed neighborhoods but fail to explicitly address their race and ethnicity dimensions may prove to be inadequate in the long run. More fundamentally, policies that fail to actively transfer significant decision-making power and capacities to the neighborhood itself may prove no different from their ineffective predecessors in the long run. The importance of this is aptly captured by Jane Jacobs (1961) when she emphasized that “our failures in city neighborhoods are, ultimately, failures in localized self-government. And our successes are successes at localized self-government” (p. 114). From an SRSG lens, this means ensuring citizen groups are equipped with appropriate decision-making and operational authority, sufficient fiscal and human resource capital, assigned specific responsibilities, capability to change and resist change as needed as well as conducive
environment that facilitates co-productive partnership with public administrators to
develop revitalization solutions that are socioecologically fit (DeCaro et al., in press;
Epstein et al., 2015).

An example of what this might look like occurred in the North Camden
neighborhood, New Jersey (Spiegel, 1961). Some homeless 13 families, who became
known as Concerned Citizens of North Camden, illegally settled in some dilapidated state
housing and subsequently self-organized and began to rehabilitate the housing.
Confrontations with the city eventually led to a set of agreed-upon conditions. First, the
city would enable the squatters to obtain legal titles to their various lodgings (design
principle: authority). Second, the citizens were to receive training in building renovation
(design principle: operational resources). Third, each household would be given a $1,500
grant and charged with undertaking some electrical and heating renovations (design
principle: responsibility). Over the years it took to complete the project, the Concerned
Citizens of North Camden entered a beneficial working relationship with the government.
By the end, the residents had become empowered to move on to address other
neighborhood needs like opening a cooperative laundry service and credit union. The city
 gained an effectively redeveloped community along with an increased tax base while the
citizens secured their homes as well as a continued supportive environment for self-
governance and community-government partnership.

2.2 Neighborhood Capacities for Revitalization and Public Participation

According to Jacobs (1961), a neighborhood with a diminished capacity for
collective action is likely to be overwhelmed with challenges and become progressively
powerless in the face of problems. Consequently, such neighborhoods fail to adaptively
manage their problems because of failures in localized self-government (Jacobs, 1961; Ostrom et al., 1994). When neighborhoods successfully establish themselves as strong organs of self-government, they are able to improve their conditions either through self-generated solutions or by demanding state representatives to be responsive to their priorities and goals (Elwood, 2002; Jacobs, 1961; Mesch & Schwirian, 1996). On the other hand, neighborhoods with weak self-governance (or leadership) are less likely to contest state priorities and demand active control in development strategies (Elwood, 2002).

Both neighborhood leadership and empowerment are critical ingredients to increasing community benefits during neighborhood revitalization (Dreier, 1996; Shroyer et al., 2019). Neighborhood leadership can manifest in many forms. Residents may organize as formal neighborhood groups, actively participating in planning and policy meetings across different government units (Wohlers, 2009). Such groups may emerge in response to distressing neighborhood conditions or in some cases, through state policies or programs that facilitate and strengthen their formation. For example, legislators in Minnesota enacted the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program where local planning authority and funding were devolved to resident groups to develop and implement plans in collaboration with relevant city, county, parks, and school staff (Fagotto & Fung 2006; Stern, 2013). Residents could also be granted significant influence over decision-making during revitalization planning processes (Van Der Merwe & Meehan, 2011). Regardless of the mode of origin, research suggests that certain requirements are necessary for neighborhood leadership and empowerment.
First, there should be access to sufficient or stable funding to support neighborhood activities such as events that promote community cohesion and information dissemination among residents and other stakeholders (Mesch & Schwirian, 1996). Resident stakeholders need access to technical assistance or the capacity to acquire free or low-cost technical support when developing plans/ideas regarding issues affecting the community (McKnight, 2017). Also important are residents’ access to capacity-building opportunities to bolster their ability to effectively participate in policy and planning processes on problems specific to their neighborhood, as well as develop a shared vision for the neighborhood (Shroyer et al., 2019). No one stakeholder alone can bring about neighborhood transformation and sustain the desired change from neighborhood revitalization (Greenspan & Mason, 2018). Concerted efforts by residents and a cross-sector of stakeholders (e.g. state, nonprofit) are needed to build support and leverage the necessary resources to implement revitalization plans (Shroyer et al., 2019; Walker, 2002).

Beyond the important role played by leadership and empowerment, co-productive partnerships also facilitate meaningful neighborhood revitalization. Spiegel (1987) emphasizes the importance of partnerships such as co-productive arrangements in the generation of lasting neighborhood improvement assets and services. For co-production within neighborhood development to be successful, Spiegel (1987) asserts five prerequisites. Each prerequisite is connected to the design principles for SRS&G and these design principles are outlined along with the prerequisites in the ensuing paragraph.

First, citizens must be able to participate in the redevelopment planning process via semi-autonomous bodies, such as neighborhood associations (design principle:
Secondly, citizen groups must have legitimate and substantial roles in both joint planning and implementation processes (design principle: responsibility, equity). Thirdly, key stakeholders must accept one another’s (including residents) authority and legitimacy to problem-solve together (design principle: shared decision-making, accountability). The fourth condition is that stakeholders must mutually agree on a clear delineation of roles and expectations (design principle: well-defined “sociopolitical” boundaries). Finally, each partner must have the requisite capacity or support (e.g. citizens’ ability to manage its portion of a mutually agreed project, public servants backed by mayoral commitment to co-production) for individual self-governance as well as cooperation among themselves as needed (design principle: operational resources).

These prerequisite conditions are considered to be the minimum principles for effective, community-level governance and governmental co-production. However, even where these requirements are met, the decision-making arena can become skewed in favor of certain groups. In the absence of intentional measures to support disenfranchised groups, it is comparatively easy for participants with greater advantage in terms of money, expertise, or position to dominate the agenda or decision choices during public decision-making processes (Roberts, 2004). For example, there is an inconspicuous endorsement of private business interests in policymaking processes (Klosterman, 1985). Revitalization decision-making processes that include citizen deliberations challenge the distribution of power among social participants (Silverman et al., 2020). More so, Roberts (2004) argues that “citizen deliberations intentionally seek to level the playing field among the participating social actors during the deliberations.” However, it should not be assumed that planners naturally welcome informed societal contributions in
decision-making (Silverman et al., 2020). The extent of citizen control from public engagement methods used during revitalization decision-making can indicate whether planners view community participation as an instrument to achieve their goals or as an organizing principle (Chaskin & Garg, 1997; Silverman et al., 2020). One way to understand the role played by community participation is to explore the various types of participation and the freedoms each entail.

Arnstein (1969) outlined eight possible levels to which citizens may be invited into planning processes in what she terms the “ladder of citizen participation” (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969)**

8. Citizen Control
7. Delegated Power
6. Partnership
5. Placation
4. Consultation
3. Informing
2. Therapy
1. Manipulation

At the bottom rungs of the ladder, *manipulation* and misuse of *therapy* indicate clear attitudes of nonparticipation. Arnstein (1969) explains that the middle levels of the ladder, *informing, consultation,* and *placation* signify some perfunctory attempts at community participation via acts of tokenism. The higher rungs of *partnerships,*
Delegated power, and citizen control illustrate when public engagement strategies begin to truly redistribute decision-making power to citizens (Arnstein 1969).

In 2018, the IAP2 International Federation built on Arnstein’s work and introduced the IAP2 “spectrum of public participation” (Figure 2). Like Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation, the IAP2 spectrum of public participation is a useful typology for assessing and designing meaningful citizen participation and empowerment during neighborhood revitalization processes. The spectrum consists of five levels which show the different levels at which public participation strategies impact public decisions, that is, from a point that informs citizens of issues, to consulting their opinions, to involving their efforts, to collaboration on processes, and finally to a point where citizens are empowered to make ultimate decisions on issues (IAP2 International Federation, 2018).

For example, mailing of newsletters keeps citizens informed; surveys allow consultation of citizens’ opinions; charettes enable citizens to be involved in influencing decisions; participation in stakeholder advisory committees grants citizens the chance to collaborate at each stage of decision-making; and referendums empower citizens to determine the final course of action.

**Figure 2. Spectrum of public participation (IAP2 International Federation, 2018)**
In the case of top-down revitalization projects, citizen participation strategies could easily fall within the degrees of tokenism rungs on the ladder of citizen participation – informing, consultation, and placation (Arnstein, 1969). For example, community engagement efforts during the Urban Renewal era in the 1950s would have typically involved consulting or informing citizens of general project plans without channels of feedback (acts of tokenism). Also, the popular use of citizen advisory committees under the 1960s Model Cities program, where citizens served to legitimate but not influence project decisions, exemplifies placation on Arnstein’s ladder. Similarly, along the IAP2 spectrum of public participation, interactions between the community and the state can be expected to fall between inform and consult in top-down revitalization projects (IAP2 International Federation, 2018).

### 2.3 Sustainable Neighborhood Outcomes

One major goal of the recent federal government revitalization policy, Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI), is to transform distressed communities into mixed-income, sustainable communities (Choice Neighborhoods, n.d.). Currently, there is yet to be any work evaluating the degree to which CNI projects are advancing this goal in urban neighborhoods. Against the background of an inequity-laden, resource-scarce society, a sustainable community is one that strives to balance conflicting, yet complimentary and interrelated social, economic, and ecological interests of its residents and local stakeholders (Wheeler, 2009; Morelli, 2011; Rees, 1995). Campbell (1996) describes such an area as “green” as it embodies low-impact consumption practices and values and intentional efforts at protecting the ecological environment. It is also “growing” because it is attentive to the effects of its economic growth decisions on the natural and built
environment (Campbell, 1996). Finally, as one that is “just”, it is committed to advancing equitable benefits and outcomes across groups divided across the lines of wealth, status, knowledge, power, and geographic territory (Campbell, 1996). From this, it is recognized that sustainability is not a singular point but a driving goal for optimizing each dimension as much as possible, within the context of policy decision-making and implementation. By its very nature, the concept of “sustainable development” implies adaptive decision-making and environmental governance.

Several instruments have been introduced to aid the assessment of sustainability at the neighborhood scale. Between 2001 and 2004, a coalition of seven European countries developed HQE²R as a decision-support tool for local governments and partners as they work to improve the standard of living and sustainability in urban neighborhoods (Martin & Blum, 2002). The HQE²R approach advances a two-part method (Blum, 2007). The first part, fast screening, aims to shortlist social, economic, and ecological issues of highest concern and partly requires data obtained in the field (that is during the neighborhood redevelopment planning process). The next part, specific assessments, consists of a more thorough evaluation of the shortlisted issues using models to assess environmental, building, and long-term impacts on the community (Sharifi & Murayama, 2013). The results are to inform decisions for actions and hence, should be completed before the neighborhood plan is finalized.

Another neighborhood sustainability assessment instrument was also developed in Europe between 2002 and 2005. The European Commission funded the development of this instrument, the Ecocity project. Ecocity aims to realize compact and land-efficient settlements that promote eco-friendly transportation options in urban communities
(Gaffron et al., 2005). Guided by a list assessing urban structures and infrastructure, planning stakeholders are better equipped to design settlement patterns that have minimal negative impacts on ecological and human health. In the end, Ecocity-designed neighborhoods are expected to be attractive locations for residential and commercial purposes (Gaffron et al., 2005).

To assess the objectives and outcomes of community plans in Calgary – Canada, Tsenkova and Damiani (2009) designed a sustainability framework amenable to use retroactively. More precisely, this instrument assesses the implementation of sustainable standards as outlined in the 1995 Sustainable Suburbs Study (SSS) policy document formulated by the Calgary city government. The evaluation process involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the extent to which communities have directed their spatial development policies to create socioecologically-friendly neighborhoods (Tsenkova & Damiani, 2009). As the core objectives of the SSS policy are to minimize built environment impacts, minimize financial cost of suburban neighborhood development, and develop mixed-income, mixed-used neighborhoods, the sustainability framework is better suited to cases with access to multiple forms of data including planning budgets, zoning maps, and transportation plans.

After further review of the neighborhood sustainability literature, a measurement for neighborhood sustainability using only one data source such as the CNI Transformation Plan may be derived from the sustainability work undertaken by Wheeler, Yui, Grandi, and Naughton in 2013. India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan was a project initiated by the City of Portland, Maine. Wheeler’s team was invited to brainstorm and formulate recommendations to advance sustainability in the India Street
neighborhood. Being a historic neighborhood, the city sought to preemptively develop a sustainable planning framework that would ensure future urban developments would continue to socially and environmentally benefit its incumbent residents and local businesses (Wheeler et al., 2013).

The recommendations from Wheeler’s team follow the social, economic, and ecological dimensions of sustainability as advanced by Wheeler (2009) and Morelli (2011). It addressed twelve major areas: (i) building form and scale; (ii) climate mitigation and adaptation; (iii) green buildings; (iv) low-impact mobility; (v) complete and green streets; (vi) ecological restoration; (vii) stormwater drainage; (viii) food systems; (ix) local economy; (x) social equity needs; (xi) historic linkages; and (xii) civic infrastructure and art (Wheeler et al., 2013). As this work addresses many sustainability elements and is practical, it is recommended as a starting model for other historical neighborhoods nationwide (Wheeler et al., 2013).

2.4 Summary

In summary, the literature underscores the importance of public participation and local leadership in decision-making processes to foster resilience and adaptive capacity. Through strong institutional arrangements facilitating adaptive management of neighborhood socioecological dilemmas, neighborhoods with effective self-government mechanisms may be able to take charge of their development and advocate for sustainable solutions. Effective local leadership enables communities to articulate their needs, mobilize resources, and influence decision-making processes to ensure that development strategies align with their priorities and goals. Specifically, a well-designed and implemented SRSG initiative (e.g., possibly CNI) would need to convey the right
capacities for co-production to enable key actors achieve the aforementioned aspects of what Wheeler calls a sustainable neighborhood. Given the federal government’s goal for sustainable outcomes following neighborhood revitalization processes, a constellation of laws reinforcing adaptive decision-making, public participation, and neighborhood governance may help local actors achieve this goal, especially if revitalization programs are properly designed and implemented.
3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Area

The primary goal of many revitalization plans is to transform blighted and economically distressed neighborhoods into thriving social and economic centers. In Louisville, Kentucky, this vision might be translated as elevating neighborhoods in west Louisville to the condition and status of east Louisville. East Louisville is generally associated with majority white and middle-and upper-income groups while west Louisville, commonly called the West End, is an archetype of high Black concentration in economically distressed neighborhoods. The West End, which used to be a locus for vibrant commercial and residential settlements for predominantly white populations, exists in its current state today as a result of a long, complicated history of racial discrimination, two epic devastating flood events (1937 and 1945), intensified urban renewal in the 1960s, and accelerated “white flight” at the onset of racial integration legislations and subsequent general middle-class flight exodus for job opportunities.

As the third-most populous neighborhood in west Louisville, Russell’s geographical location and socio-political attributes make it an excellent case study site of state-backed efforts for neighborhood self-governance. The city, in the last decade, has launched redevelopment initiatives in west Louisville and Russell neighborhood is the third and most recent beneficiary of the city’s efforts since 2015. Russell is advantageously located close to the Ohio River and directly borders Louisville’s central business district with the 9th Street dividing line, a dividing highway with connections to
Interstate 64 (Figure 3). The “9th Street Divide” serves not only as a physical divide but even more, as a psychological divide and socio-economic divide, separating the West End communities from the rest of the city. It has the popular perception that one must be poor to live on the other side of the line and also the perception that bad things could happen to anyone who crosses over the divide but does not belong to communities in that area. These tend to influence economic and social mobility.

Figure 3. Beecher Terrace housing and Russell neighborhood in West Louisville

Source: Vision Russell Transformation Plan.

Two additional historical community development events are worthy of note. In 1991, the City of Louisville, with financial support from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, appointed the Russell Urban Renewal Project Advisory Committee to undertake a neighborhood study and develop a Master Plan. The development process
involved a market study, physical surveys of the neighborhood, informal resident interviews, and the creation of neighborhood maps (Russell Urban Renewal Project Advisory Committee, 1991). The resulting Russell Urban Renewal Master Plan was designed to guide commercial and greenspace development, transportation infrastructure, provision of utilities, and general land use patterns. The Plan was deemed a major step for the city and developers to undertake revitalization efforts in the neighborhood since the 1950s Urban Renewal era. It should be stated that the Committee was tasked to solely focus its efforts on the eastern section of Russell.

In January 1992, researchers at the University of Louisville collaborated with community leaders to develop a proposal for neighborhood revitalization called Housing and Neighborhood Development Strategies (HANDS) as a response to the U.S. Department of Education's Urban Community Service Grant Program (Gilderbloom & Mullins, 1995). HANDS emerged as a comprehensive approach to neighborhood revitalization, addressing both physical and social aspects of the neighborhood. Russell neighborhood was selected as the grant's focus due to its significant need, with HANDS designed to operate within the broader Russell Partnership, which comprised numerous programs and services aimed at improving residents' lives. The HANDS program was funded ($1.5 million grant) by the U.S. Department of Education from 1993 to 1995 and later extended from 1996 to 2001 through the University's Sustainable Urban Neighborhoods (SUN) program (Gilderbloom & Mullins, 2005). One key difference between these programs was HANDS focused on revitalizing east of Russell while SUN expanded its reach to the broader west Louisville neighborhoods with a primary focus on economic development.
HANDS included a range of initiatives such as case management, job training, leadership training, educational programs, community design, and homeownership training. For various reasons including inefficiencies in program delivery, these initiatives experienced a mix of failures and successes with leadership skills training, for example, failing to attract the resident population as desired, while community design services and homeownership training recorded the greatest success (Gilderbloom & Mullins, 1995). Beginning in 2002, researchers in the University of Louisville’s (then) College of Business and Public Administration were barred from applying for continuous federal funding for the program by the College’s leadership body (Gilderbloom & Mullins, 2005). This brought an end to a program that had become nationally acclaimed as successful.

As of 2017, Russell had an estimated total population of 10,531. African Americans constitute a majority of the population at 89% compared to 20% in Louisville Metro as a whole (Table 3) (Kentucky State Data Center & Metro United Way, 2017). Further compared to Louisville Metro, Russell faces a higher percentage of unemployment (29% vs. 8%), violent crime rate per 100,000 population (2,678 vs. 600), and renter-occupied housing unit (80% vs. 38%) (Kentucky State Data Center & Metro United Way, 2017).
Table 3. Demographic profile at neighborhood and city-county levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Russell</th>
<th>Russell (%)</th>
<th>Louisville Metro</th>
<th>Louisville Metro (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>10,531</td>
<td>755,809</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of households</td>
<td>4,143</td>
<td>306,915</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4,406</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>391,090</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6,125</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>364,719</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>9,373</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>154,852</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>White</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>525,430</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<td>Multiple Races, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>19,760</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign Born</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>50,641</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age distribution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Residents under age 18</td>
<td>4,788</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>221,407</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residents age 18 to 64</td>
<td>6,246</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>476,759</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residents age 65 and over</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>106,847</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<td>Educational attainment, age 25 and over</td>
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<tr>
<td>High school graduate/GED or less</td>
<td>3,585</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>198,912</td>
<td>39%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some college, no degree</td>
<td>1,522</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>115,561</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate's degree</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>38,948</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree or higher</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>162,513</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial and employment status</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$17,264</td>
<td>$48,695</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population below federal poverty line</td>
<td>5,372</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>121,683</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total unemployed, age 16 and over</td>
<td>1,279</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33,210</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Population not in Labor Force, Age 16 or over</td>
<td>2,812</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>206,752</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<td>Median home value</td>
<td>$65,425</td>
<td>$150,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing units</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner occupied</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>189,914</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter occupied</td>
<td>3,326</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>117,001</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>773</td>
<td>7941</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant lots and structures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent crime rate per 100,000 population*</td>
<td>2,678</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Kentucky State Data Center & Metro United Way (2017)*
The median household income in the neighborhood is $17,264 with over half the population living in poverty. The effects of the decline of Russell’s population and thriving economy resulted in many vacant and abandoned lots and properties (e.g. 20% of its housing stock is vacant). Some of these sites are documented as brownfields. Compared to the 22.4 acres of park space for every 1000 residents in Louisville Metro, Russell’s available park space is below the city average at 1.5 acres per 1000 residents (Louisville Metro Housing Authority, 2017). Poor families have particularly suffered from decades of disinvestment in the neighborhood as well as a general lack of amenities and social services.

As mentioned earlier, the core program driving Russell’s revitalization is the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. The federal Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) is a pivotal program in the United States aimed at fostering comprehensive neighborhood revitalization. Through Planning, Action Activities, and Implementation grants, CNI empowers local communities to holistically revitalize their neighborhoods using strategic investments and partnerships. It addresses multifaceted challenges like affordable housing, education, and economic disparities, aiming to create sustainable, mixed-income neighborhoods with decent housing, quality education, and economic opportunities. Planning grants, amounting up to $500,000, facilitate the development of comprehensive revitalization plans, known as Transformation Plans, and these enable the assessment of needs, community engagement, and formulation of revitalization strategies. Action Activities grants (approximately $1 million) are less commonly awarded but may be granted during the planning phase as support for quick tangible neighborhood improvements or activities fostering social capital. Implementation grants, typically more
substantial with a maximum amount of $50 million, support the execution of revitalization plans by funding activities such as housing construction, infrastructure improvements, and delivery of supportive services. Finally, at HUD’s discretion, recipients of implementation grants may later be granted a Supplemental Funding grant to enable the completion of a specific project (e.g. housing construction).

Nationally, Russell’s revitalization project, known as Vision Russell, is unique for being the only Choice Neighborhoods grantee to date to have received the above four awards for the same neighborhood. Vision Russell has been immensely invigorated by the federal grants totaling $35 million, for planning, action activities, and implementation. The city capitalized on this to raise additional public funding and attract a plethora of private and non-governmental investment to both Russell and west Louisville in general. This additional $200 million is anticipated to particularly transform sections of Russell into an arts and cultural district.

The Vision Russell project began in January 2015 and spans ten years, ending in September 2023 (see Figure 4). It proceeded in two phases. During the planning phase (January 2015 – January 2017), Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA) and Louisville Metro Government (LMG) used HUD’s Planning grant award of $425,000, matched by additional funding from LMG, to engage Russell neighborhood stakeholders and partners in the development of the Vision Russell Transformation Plan. During this same period, HUD awarded a $1 million Action Activities grant to spur additional development in Russell. LMHA submitted the completed Transformation Plan to HUD in January 2017.
Figure 4. Timeline of revitalization-related events

Toward the end of the planning phase in December 2016, Louisville received a CNI Implementation grant equaling $29.575 million. Though intensive planning public engagement processes ended by January 2017, subsequent grants’ funding continued to be paid out till late 2023. During the implementation phase, the city in collaboration with Cities United and Community Foundation of Louisville, launched Russell: A Place of Promise, a project incubated by both the city and Cities United. In the following year, 2019, a group of residents who had actively participated in the revitalization planning processes, self-organized and created Russell Neighborhood Association. Finally, December 2019 marked the award of the fourth grant to Louisville, HUD Supplemental Funding Grant. This additional funding extends the initial project end date of September 2023 to September 2025.

Concerns of displacement in Russell largely emerged from the demolition of a
1939 barrack-style public housing complex which housed nearly 700 households for conversion to a mixed-income residential and mixed-use commercial space. The former occupants are currently dispersed across the city in alternative housing, albeit mostly within west and south Louisville, two distressed areas. These relocated occupants were promised the option of returning to the remodeled Beecher Terrace complex. At the time of this study (2022), some previous residents have returned and are residing in the completed Phase I of the new housing complex.

During the revitalization planning phase, Russell had no self-led and self-governing neighborhood organization (e.g. a neighborhood association) to mobilize residents and local businesses efforts towards addressing their myriad socioecological dilemmas. After the planning processes ended in January 2017, the city became noteworthy for creating and funding an initiative called *Russell: A Place of Promise* (RPOP) in 2018 to work with residents to secure economic opportunities and build wealth to avert displacement outcomes often associated with economic revitalization. RPOP is led by two executives on loan from Cities United and LMG and supported by an advisory board of directors that is largely comprised of residents and Russell-based entrepreneurs. In 2019, however, barely two years after the revitalization planning processes ended, an active Russell Neighborhood Association emerged – organized and led by Russell residents. The dynamics of this development are further explored in chapter four. The involvement of federal and local governments in Russell’s revitalization via the CNI makes Vision Russell an ideal candidate for analysis using the concepts of SRSG and sustainable development.
3.2 Data Collection

Data collection took place from June 2022 to May 2023. This study used a combination of key informant interviews and archival analysis (e.g., of policy documents, news articles, governmental reports) to address research questions. Information gathered was used to understand the past (historic) and current conditions, processes, and outcomes surrounding the Vision Russell revitalization process.

3.2.1 Interviews

Interviews for the study focused on key decision makers and participants in Russell’s Choice Neighborhoods revitalization process. These individuals are important actors within local government organizations, non-government organizations, as well as current residents and microbusiness owners in Russell. Interviewees consisted of five government officials, eight non-government officials, and thirty-four residents (29) and proprietors (5). Information from the interviews enabled a rich understanding of how various stakeholders interacted and shaped decisions during Russell’s revitalization within a broader historical and policy frame.

The principal investigator conducted the interviews. All interviews were conducted with approval from the University of Louisville Institutional Review Board (#22.0310). Organizational participants signed a consent form beforehand indicating their understanding and consent to participate in the interview. Their interviews lasted about 1.5 – 2 hours and were held via phone or video conferencing, depending on the interviewee’s preference. Residents and microbusiness owners’ interviews lasted approximately 15 – 25 minutes and were conducted in person (except for five informants who opted for a phone option). After building some relationships in the neighborhood,
many residents indicated a distaste for signing informed consent forms as well as being audio-recorded. At this point, I had only been able to complete five resident interviews. A subsequent amendment to the IRB approval allowed resident and business informants to participate in the study without formally signing an agreement but with a foreknowledge of what the study entailed and how their responses would be used (i.e., Preamble and verbal agreement).

**Government Officials.** The interview process combined three non-probability sampling techniques: purposive sampling, chain-referral sampling, and convenience sampling (Atkinson & Flint, 2001; Creswell, 2013; Simkus, 2023). Government officials were purposefully selected based on their involvement in neighborhood revitalization and planning decision-making experience in Louisville Metro. They also included individuals in city government, who are knowledgeable about the laws and policies that influence community participation in the Metro area. The list of government participants includes:

- Louisville Metro Housing Authority (Choice Neighborhoods Coordinator)
- Office of Advanced Planning and Sustainability (Brownfields Manager and Grant Writer)
- Office of Advanced Planning and Sustainability (Former Director)
- Office of Redevelopment Strategies (Former Director)
- Develop Louisville (Director)

**Non-Government Organizations.** After the initial round of government interviews, more interviewees were identified via a chain-referral sampling method as the government participants suggested additional (non-government) informants. Five of the recommendations were either unreachable or unavailable for the interview. All but two of
the additionally interviewed participants (Co-Lead for Russell: A Place of Promise; Organizer for Russell Neighborhood Association) were key figures from organizations that had significantly contributed to Russell’s revitalization process. These individuals were contacted via emails, phone calls, and where possible, during community events (e.g. Russell Homecoming Weekend). The list of non-government participants includes:

- McCormack Baron Salazar (Developer organization- Project Manager)
- Louisville Central Community Center (President and CEO)
- Center for Neighborhoods (Former Director)
- Molo Village (President and CEO)
- OneWest (Board Member)
- Western Louisville Library (Manager and Librarian)
- Joshua Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church (Pastor)
- Russell: A Place of Promise (Co-Lead)
- Russell Neighborhood Association (Organizer)

**Residents and Microbusiness Owners.** The selection of residents and proprietors was primarily via convenience sampling. This involved different strategies including canvassing the neighborhood and approaching residents who were outdoors, participating in homecoming weekend events and activities, sitting in Elliot Park (one of two main parks in Russell), and visiting a church and neighborhood businesses, among others. Additionally, the interview questions were simplified to allow quick jotting down of responses. All participants were legal adults.

- Residents (29)
- Microbusiness owners (5)
Interview Questions. The interviews were semi-structured to facilitate rich discussions and allow participants to raise new issues as needed (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010). In developing the interview questions, a rigorous approach was taken to ensure alignment with existing literature and theoretical frameworks. Firstly, a thorough review of prior studies examining the application of SRSG principles at the neighborhood level, community self-governance, and public engagement in local government contexts was conducted. For example, I reviewed works that had adapted Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation into its interview instrument as well as the interview guide developed in DeCaro et al. (in press) work on co-productive failure of community-governed greenspace in marginalized neighborhoods. The review served as the foundation for identifying key themes, sample questions, and areas of interest. Drawing upon insights from these studies, a preliminary set of interview questions was crafted to explore various aspects of neighborhood revitalization and collaborative relationships during such processes. Specifically, the questions were designed to probe the extent to which public participation, multi-actor cooperation, and government support for neighborhood-level governance during Russell’s revitalization align with principles of meaningful citizen participation as advocated by Arnstein and the design principles for SRSG.

After the initial development, the interview questions underwent two rounds of revision based on feedback and recommendations from my research supervisor and mentor. During these revisions, emphasis was placed on elucidating and refining the wording of questions, ensuring coherence and relevance to the research objectives. Additionally, adjustments were made to incorporate insights gained from “pilot testing” of the interview protocol (informal conversations with some government officials). This
iterative process of refinement helped to enhance the comprehensiveness and rigor of the interview questions, ultimately contributing to the robustness of the research methodology and the depth of insights obtained from the interviews. See Appendix A for a complete list of the interview questions.

For the government and non-government participants, the total number of questions was approximately fifty-three. The questions probed their organization’s background, powers to undertake its general mission, and involvement in neighborhood revitalization specifically, Vision Russell’s Transformation Plan. The questions inquired about neighborhood (self) governance and the presence or absence of the design principles for state-reinforced self-governance in Russell’s revitalization context, as well as their associated effects in terms of influence on adaptive capacities and constraints. For example, a question pertaining to the authority design principle required respondents to reflect on the most important powers they or their organization had that enabled them to carry out their responsibilities during the design and implementation of Vision Russell. Some sample questions related to responsibility, funding, authority, and public participation include: What were your organization’s key responsibilities during Vision Russell (and how were they assigned)? Did your organization receive new funding in order to support its role in Russell’s revitalization? Who had the most important decision-making authority and influence over the revitalization process? In your opinion, were residents and businesses sufficiently informed and appropriately involved in Vision Russell processes?

Additional questions to government and non-government participants inquired about factors that may have affected opportunities and outcomes for multi-actor
cooperation. For example, these questions asked if communication was effective and sufficient during the planning processes, how various parties held one another accountable via formal or informal mechanisms, and if the costs and benefits of Russell’s revitalization were shared equitably.

Questions to resident and business participants followed a similar format but were shorter (thirty-three in number) and excluded the organizational focus. For example, instead of asking what role was played by the participant as a representative of their organization, resident and business informants were asked to describe what role they individually played in the decision-making processes. Questions about the Plan and its accompanying public engagement process asked about their familiarity and role in designing the Plan, and whether the Plan’s vision/goals complimented or conflicted with the neighborhood’s needs and priorities. Interview questions on self-governance asked about the existence of a neighborhood-representative organization (e.g. Russell Neighborhood Association), factors influencing its formation, and whether such an organization strongly represents the neighborhood’s interests.

3.2.2 Archival Data

To gain a better understanding of how the Choice Neighborhoods process was implemented in Russell, various government law, policy, and program documents were examined. These documents reflect different centers of government (local, state, federal) and cover community development, engagement, co-production, and revitalization. All documents were easily accessed from publicly available sources. The documents of interest include:
3.3 Data Analysis

Analysis of the data consisted of four main phases. During the first phase, I coded and evaluated the policies and informant interviews related to co-production. The information was coded for design principles of state-reinforcement and multi-actor cooperation. Coding took approximately seven months (December 2022 – June 2023), including development and application. During the second phase, I coded and assessed
the informant interviews using a consolidated version of Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation and IAP2 spectrum of public participation. The coded information focused on the actual implementation of the public engagement process. Refining the conceptual and operational definitions as the coding process spanned approximately two months (June 2023 – July 2023). The third phase of the data analysis involved a content analysis of interview transcripts to identify the planning and resident stakeholders’ opinions of the sufficiency of the public engagement processes. Like the second phase, this process transpired between June 2023 and July 2023. During the final phase, I coded and evaluated the strategies outlined in the Vision Russell Transformation Plan using the Sustainable Neighborhood framework applied in the India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan (see Wheeler et al., 2013). The information was coded in relation to dimensions of sustainability. This process spanned a month (August 2023).

3.3.1 Co-production

A group of five trained research assistants transcribed the interview responses. Interviews were transcribed manually, and it involved listening to the recorded interviews carefully and then typing out the spoken words verbatim. While this method does not require specialized equipment, it relies on the attentiveness and accuracy of the research assistants to capture the content of the interviews accurately. After transcription, the text was reviewed and edited as necessary to ensure clarity and correctness before being used for analysis in the research study.

Next, each line in the interview transcripts for the government and non-government organizational informants was numbered and segmented using timestamps to prepare for the data coding process. All focal policy documents, except the Vision
Russell Transformation Plan, were similarly numbered. The Transformation Plan mainly provides information about Russell’s socio-ecological context and revitalization strategies. Thus, it was treated less as a focal policy document and more as a reference document during this phase. After this point, the data underwent screening, initial evaluation, and reorganization and final evaluation stages.

**Screening.** This stage involved the use of a systematic, specialized spreadsheet (codesheets) developed under the DeCaro et al. (in press) SRSG project that spanned approximately 1.5 years. The coding methodology was developed over a series of meetings, applying, discussing, and revising the codes as needed to address emergent concepts and properly define and represent each category. The development procedures followed the guidelines presented by Ratajczyk et al. (2016). During this time, I was trained in coding and helped to create the coding sheets for two projects, outside this dissertation. When coding the current study, I met with Dr. DeCaro (serving also as the director of this dissertation) periodically and on an as-needed basis, to receive feedback and further improve the adaptation and creation of codes for application to neighborhood revitalization and governance.

The coding sheet provides operational definitions for the various design principles, facilitating the process of screening and coding. Thus, the numbered documents were systematically analyzed and screened for statements relevant to each design principle. For example, how statements depicted or related to (including denoted absence of) the design principles for state-reinforcement (authority, responsibility, operational resources) and for Multi-Actor Cooperation (communication, shared decision-making, monitoring, enforcement, and equity). Then, the statements were
labeled and recorded. These entries included the line numbers, corresponding excerpt, applicable aspect of the design principle(s), and data source (see Appendix B for sample coding spreadsheet). For example, the following passage from Neighborhood Plan Ordinance was coded as Decision-Making Authority (DM Authorization: Constitutional), Responsibility (DM Constitutional), and Responsibility (Administrative: DM Operational): “The stated purpose of the neighborhood organization must include the conservation and improvement of the neighborhood, and shall not be limited in scope to the performance of one particular project or program”.

**Initial Evaluation.** After sorting the data into the various dimensions of the design principles in the SRSG coding (Excel) spreadsheet, similar entries were consolidated and further coded and regrouped in an evaluative coding form (see Appendix C). These excerpts were assessed to ascertain the extent to which the documented types of authority, responsibility, and other enabling conditions were reflected in practice. This assessment process also involved evaluating how the constellation of design principles shaped Russell’s capacity for self-governance, decision-making authority as well as collaboration among the major actors. To evaluate the adequacy of each existing capacity, the entirety of excerpts associated with each capacity was thoroughly scrutinized. Rather than assigning scores to individual excerpts that describe state-reinforced Self-Governance (SRSG), the analysis focused on identifying predominant ideas conveyed across the collection of excerpts. Subsequently, each capacity's degree was assessed and scored on a scale spanning from -2 to +2:

-2: bad *(indicates strong and obvious evidence that the capacity was deficient)*
-1: poor (indicates insufficient evidence of the capacity, with noticeable shortcomings)

0: moderate (indicates a balanced assessment, with neither significant deficiencies nor notable strengths in the evidence)

+1: good (indicates some evidence of the capacity, meeting basic expectations on sufficiency)

+2: very good (indicates consistent and obvious evidence that the capacity was sufficient, demonstrating exceptional strengths)

In evaluating evidence of the capacity of state reinforcement within a complex mixture of federal, state, and local government institutions, a careful approach was necessary to account for variations in evidence availability. One example of addressing mixed or unclear aggregation occurred when assessing operational resources for neighborhood self-governance. While there was ample evidence of support at the local and state levels, the evidence for the federal level was inconclusive. In such cases, the approach was to determine whether the strength of evidence at the local and state levels could sufficiently compensate for the lack of clarity or information regarding federal support.

Another example arose when examining administrative rulemaking capacities for the neighborhood. While there were clear indications of administrative rulemaking authorities at the state and local levels, the extent of direct federal enabling authorities was limited. Here, a judgment call was made to determine whether the observed mechanisms at the lower levels of government could serve as a reliable proxy for federal support.
In both scenarios, the evaluation process required careful consideration of the overall context, including the roles and responsibilities of each level of government and the coherence of the institutional arrangement. By applying a judicious approach to aggregating evidence and making informed judgment calls, the evaluation sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of the capacity of state reinforcement of co-production and driving neighborhood revitalization efforts.

**Reorganization and Final Evaluation.** Lastly, I compiled all the statements relevant to each capacity and then wrote a descriptive summary for each one. Afterward, I evaluated the summaries through the broader themes of organizational capacities including constitutive, constitutional decision-making/rule-making (DM/RM), administrative DM/RM, regulation, and fiscal capacities (Table 4). For example, statements from the federal regulations to states and local governments regarding Citizen Participation Plans authorize citizens/residents to participate in the development of neighborhood-related plans by providing input and sharing grievances about plans (design principle: authority). This summary was afterward evaluated as a source of constitutional DM authority for the residents or the neighborhood when it self-organizes as an entity.

**Table 4. Capacities for self-governance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitutive</td>
<td>Capacity to establish and define goals, regulations, and basic organizational structure (i.e., capacity to create institutional arrangements).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitutional DM/RM</td>
<td>Capacity to decide on and create fundamental policies that govern a particular sphere of activity, including neighborhood revitalization and self-governance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative DM/RM</td>
<td>Capacity to decide on and create routine matters necessary to execute essential responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>Capacity to check and ensure members abide by rules and undertake disciplinary actions when needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Viability</td>
<td>Capacity to sustain oneself financially from a balanced mix of internal and external sources as applicable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3.2 Participatory Democracy

The next coding process was driven by the need to better understand the extent to which Russell neighborhood residents were included in the planning phase, specifically examining the public engagement process, via the joint lens of SRSG and Arnstein/IAP2’s spectrum of participation. This is summarized as an evaluation of state-reinforced participatory democracy.

In a sense, Arnstein’s ladder encapsulates the idea of state-reinforced self-governance, that is, higher forms of constitutional DM authority (which includes communication and shared decision-making) represent potentially higher forms of SRSG (Figure 5). The IAP2 spectrum of public participation functions in a similar manner (Figure 6).
Applied to the Russell case, along the upper rungs of Arnstein’s ladder are increasing degrees of state reinforcement of neighborhood sovereignty. That is, the higher one is on the ladder, the greater the degree to which the State is supporting self-governance for problem solving at the neighborhood level. Each rung has a
corresponding level of authority and resources needed to properly undertake specific tasks.

For the purpose of evaluating state-reinforced participatory democracy, I consolidated Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation and the IAP2 spectrum of public participation into five categories (Figure 7) to allow a more direct focus on the pertinent categories:

**Figure 7. Modified categories for state-reinforced participatory democracy**

![Figure 7](image)

I operationalized what each of these categories means in terms of the level of constitutional decision-making authority, administrative authority, and resources shared between LMHA/LMG and Russell neighborhood during the public engagement events (see Table 5 for updated definitions).

**Table 5. Conceptual definitions of the modified categories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Conceptual Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empower</td>
<td>This seeks to place final decision-making in the hands of the public/entity; decision making is delegated to the entity/public with their decision(s) taken as final and to be implemented. In this case, the public/entity is given all constitutional DM and administrative powers and resources needed to make and/or implement decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collaborate

This mainly seeks to create a partnership relationship with the entity/public that focuses on key aspects of the decision-making process; interactions here consist of informing and finding consensus for a preferred solution to the maximum extent possible. In this case, the entity/public does not possess full constitutional DM powers and is given administrative authority and resources that are to be shared among actors in decision-making processes.

Involv e

This seeks to obtain the public/entity's input on problem definition and in the development of alternatives and decisions, as well as listen and acknowledge the public/entity's concerns and aspirations. In this case, the public/entity is given the bare minimum authority and resources.

Consult/Inform

This mainly extends objective information to the public/entity; keeping them abreast on what is happening; and providing information to understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and solutions, potentially to be used for future decisions. In this case, all resources and constitutional DM powers lie fully with the overseeing body (e.g. government). The public/entity possesses minimal administrative authority to navigate across the different forms of information offered.

Placation/Manipulation

This seeks to provide an illusion of participation. The public/entity is led to believe they possess the powers to participate and influence problem solving and decision making. In reality, the overseeing body continues to retain all decision-making authority and resources.

I reviewed passages from the interview transcripts, noting passages pertaining to constitutional decision-making authority, administrative authority, and resources. The final evaluation of state-reinforced participatory democracy is based on where the bulk evidence falls along the operationalized categories. Thus, when the bulk of the analyses point to “collaborate” and/or “empower”, I conclude that there is evidence of a stronger form of state-reinforced participatory democracy (i.e., formally authorized public
participation in decision-making). When the bulk of the analysis point below to “consult/involve”, “inform”, and/or “placation/manipulation”, I conclude that there is evidence of a weaker form of state-reinforcement.

3.3.3 Sustainability

To address the question regarding the impact of Russell’s revitalization on its dimensions of sustainability, the objectives and actions outlined under “strategies and priorities” in the Vision Russell Transformation Plan were reviewed and coded using various sustainability indicators derived from Wheeler et al. (2013) project on India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan. Russell and India Street shared common attributes including a historical neighborhood status and mounting development pressure. Both neighborhoods also expressed the goal of developing a sustainable community. These factors together make Russell’s case suitable for the sustainable neighborhood benchmark that was proposed by Wheeler et al. (2013). The Transformation Plan, rather than objective impact evaluation reports of actual outcomes of the plan, was used for this analysis because according to LMHA/LMG, the key elements of the final Plan would be implemented over six years, that is approximately 2023 - 2024. With my data analysis occurring in 2023, this does not allow ample time to measure the impact of the anticipated outcomes.

Wheeler et al. (2013) criteria for an effective Sustainable Neighborhood Plan consists of twelve categories that correspond to different aspects of the commonly recognized social, economic, and ecological pillars of sustainable development. The twelve categories include:
(i) Building form and scale: includes plans addressing diverse housing sizes, addition of mixed-income housing, and building scale which is moderate in scale.

(ii) Climate mitigation: includes advancing reduced energy use, reduced vehicle use, and resilient and green building design.

(iii) Green building: includes requiring passive solar design, providing technical assistance, encouraging larger-scaled green strategies and green retrofits.

(iv) Low-impact transportation: includes plans to increase bike and pedestrian connections, encourage space-saving parking strategies, encourage shared vehicles, and reduced parking spaces at green project sites.

(v) Comprehensively designed green streets: includes plans to create parklets for on-site drainage and sidewalk seating, reconnect bicycle and pedestrian access across needed streets, and modeling complete streets.

(vi) Ecological restoration: includes plans that encourage green walls, and add pockets of parks and native green spaces.

(vii) Stormwater drainage mitigation: includes plans to design or contribute to a green infrastructure fund to offset poor practices, and multiple strategies to manage stormwater runoff.

(viii) Food systems: includes plans to facilitate a co-op retail store, develop community gardens, and improve neighborhood food access strategies.

(ix) Strengthen the local economy: includes plans to provide space for and facilitate innovation in small businesses, encourage food-related businesses, work with existing commercial owners on business retention, and provide space for and facilitate innovation in small businesses.
(x) Address equity concerns: includes plans to improve transit services, create a college-going culture; more accessible & affordable, work with social service providers to mitigate existing social ills and address new ones that emerge with mixed-housing projects, provide incentives for nonprofit developers of affordable housing, and initiate neighborhood zoning ordinance to promote mixed-income housing.

(xi) Strengthen and utilize historic heritage: includes plans to preserve and commemorate historic sites and structures, and use historical sites as focal points for arts, plazas, and pocket parks.

(xii) Incorporate and facilitate civic infrastructure and art: includes plans to add public art installations, create small plazas and pocket parks for social gatherings and everyday life, use art to delineate green living areas, and coordinate locals to help contribute to public art.

I operationalized these as sustainability criteria (see Appendix D for sample coding sheet). I reviewed the Vision Russell Transformation Plan and noted the objectives and actions that addressed the criteria for neighborhood sustainability. Next, each of these indicators was evaluated based on how they met the sustainability criteria using a rating of 0 to 3 (Table 6) and also marked with a short description explaining the given score (Tsenkova & Damiani, 2009). An average rating for each category was calculated by summing up the ratings and dividing by the number of indicators. A median rating was also calculated for each category. This average and median rating represents the degree of sustainability achieved across the twelve categories.
Table 6. *Sustainability rating scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>No effort related to the indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Limited effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Good effort, meeting or slightly exceeding minimum benchmarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>High effort, exceeding minimum benchmarks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Tsenkova and Damiani (2009)

**3.3.4 Data Analysis: Participants’ Perceptions**

The final step in the data analysis process was tailored to answer the research questions regarding stakeholders’ perceptions of the decision-making processes and outcomes of Russell’s revitalization. The primary source of data for this was responses from across all interview participants, that is the raw interview transcripts and not coded entries used in prior phases. Here, the transcripts were individually reviewed and compared to one another, identifying various themes addressing the research questions. Specifically, I looked for statements indicating an informant’s opinion of whether public engagement processes were adequate, any caveats to opinion on the issue, and whether the revitalization truly addressed the neighborhood’s priorities and needs. This search, within and across data informants, allowed me to build a better understanding and representation of the differing viewpoints, thereby improving reliability (Carter et al., 2014; Patton, 1999).
4: RESULTS

4.1 Overview of Russell Neighborhood Revitalization

After decades of disinvestment and worsening socio-economic conditions, Russell neighborhood received renewed attention in 2014 when preparations to apply for HUD’s Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant commenced. Prior to this, several stakeholders including the Louisville Central Community Center, 2014 Bingham Fellows (founders of OneWest), and Molo Village CDC, had been working in diverse ways to draw the state’s attention to Russell’s distressed conditions. Much of this advocacy work was championed by nonprofit organizations as the neighborhood was yet to self-organize as a unit and tackle its complex dilemmas. As a result, there was not an existing formal or informal neighborhood-led or neighborhood-representative organization during the planning phase of Russell’s current revitalization. Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA), the lead grant applicant, in collaboration with Louisville Metro Government (LMG), spearheaded the planning grant application process.

Upon being awarded the grant (worth $425,000) in January 2015, a two-year-long process of designing and creating a Transformation Plan commenced. This marked the beginning of Vision Russell, a collaborative effort across multiple stakeholders unified under the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative program in Russell. LMHA and LMG, along with McCormack Baron Salazar (project developer), worked with the Russell community and stakeholders to develop a Plan that would guide how Russell would be transformed into a vibrant and thriving neighborhood. Of special mention is the Beecher Terrace
public housing residents who had to be relocated since the housing complex had to be
demolished and rebuilt.

In June 2016, the Vision Russell project was awarded another $1 million Action
Activities grant by HUD. This additional funding was expected to fund projects that
essentially garner more support for the revitalization occurring in Russell. In addition,
more than $200 million worth of support across multiple sectors was leveraged to
implement revitalization strategies by the end of the planning period. LMHA successfully
won the third CNI grant, Implementation grant ($29.575 million), in December 2016.

A range of public engagement activities and events accompanied the planning of
Russell’s revitalization. Generally, these provided different opportunities and platforms
to inform stakeholders (e.g. newsletters, website), consult opinions (e.g. surveys,
interviews), involve efforts (e.g. roundtables, resident meetings), and enable active
collaboration in producing outputs (e.g. planning committees). LMHA and LMG also
contracted some nonprofits to provide training opportunities for building residents’
leadership capacities and these spanned over a month or series of months. For example,
NeighborWorks Training Institute was held during August 2015 while Neighborhood
Institute was held from October 2015 to February 2016.

As additional background information, a group consisting of 8-11 churches called
the Concerned Pastors of Russell emerged much earlier in the planning conversations.
They tried to engage LMHA and LMG and initiate potential real estate projects in
Russell. Their goal was to build affordable houses and undertake economic projects like a
grocery store. However, differences in the nature of the agreement hindered its realization.
and the group faded off, failing to serve as a self-governing unit representing the neighborhood’s interests.

For the purposes of the data analysis, I discuss the neighborhood (Russell) as the focal entity and analyze the capacities for neighborhood self-governance (neighborhood organizations/associations with rights and legal standing). For me, this means the capacity of residents to organize into formally recognized groups like neighborhood associations. A neighborhood association is a recognized entity that can represent residents’ interests, but the residents are the constitutive, constitutional, and administrative agents that are focal for neighborhood associations. Hence the terms, “Russell neighborhood/community” and “Russell residents” are used interchangeably within the analysis. Also, because a Russell Neighborhood Association emerged late in the revitalization process (two years after planning public engagement processes ended), I assess potential powers for this entity given what the various formal laws allow.

In the following sections, I present the key findings from the data analysis phase. First, it begins with an assessment of the various ways the state strengthened or constrained cooperation among multiple actors. This is followed by an analysis of the institutional network influencing Russell’s capacity for self-governance as well as an assessment of the public engagement process during the revitalization planning period. Then, a summary of stakeholders’ personal opinions on public engagement and revitalization outputs in Russell is reported. The chapter ends with an evaluation of sustainability in Russell’s revitalization.
4.2 Capacity for Multi-Actor Collective Action

The analysis for multi-actor collective action is predicated by the question: what is the nature and dynamics of the co-productive process(es) that have occurred during Russell’s revitalization? The analysis primarily focuses on the interactions and capacities of the following actors:

- Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA: government)
- Louisville Metro Government (LMG: encompasses different government offices and agencies)
- Louisville Central Community Center (LCCC: a children-and-families-focused nonprofit)
- Russell/Beecher Terrace community
- Center for Neighborhoods (CFN: a community planning nonprofit)
- Molo Village (MV: a community development nonprofit)
- McCormack Baron Salazar (MBS: a for-profit developer)
- Urban Strategies (housing case management nonprofit; subsidiary of MBS)
- New Directions (a community development nonprofit)

Beyond being present at meetings, these key actors held specific responsibilities and/or authorities during Russell’s revitalization and were also available to be interviewed. Generally, in the analyses that follow, I discuss both *de jure* (by law) cooperation and *de facto* (observed) cooperation among the actors and actual ways their capacity to cooperate were enhanced or hindered. The input of other stakeholders interviewed but not presented in the findings helped to provide additional context on the network of relationships.
Similar to the capacity for self-governance and capacity to address the dilemma, the assessment is conducted via the lens of each of the design principles for multi-actor cooperation. Overall, the analyses reveal significant *de facto* evidence of moderate capacity for multi-actor cooperation among the key actors in Russell’s revitalization (see Figure 8). In other words, the analyses suggest greater state-reinforcement (authority and responsibility, for example) is needed to enable robust capacity for multi-actor cooperation in the Russell revitalization case/context. This means that the environment for collective action was characterized by constraints such as having shared decision-making authority and formal accountability systems predominantly among government and developers, with general input (i.e., lack of constitutional DM authority) by residents.

**Figure 8. Capacity for multi-actor collective action – Russell revitalization**
4.2.1 Communication, Shared Decision-Making

The interviews revealed *de facto* evidence of strong communication and shared decision-making between LMHA (government actor), LMG (government actor), and MBS (housing developer). The pre-existing synergistic relation between LMHA and LMG was underscored as both actors were co-applicants for Russell’s CNI applications. For instance, LMG loaned one of its staff to LMHA to help in writing the grants and Transformation Plan. Their partnership allowed LMHA to collaborate with LMG on zoning modifications and other city-related work that were needed to facilitate the design and implementation of Russell revitalization. LMHA and LMG, along with MBS, the developer of the target public housing project, established a core team of about 25 persons, consisting of their staff members. They maintained regular lines of communication and together, they addressed major issues arising from the revitalization projects.

Per the formal requirements of the CNI funds, residents and the Russell community as a whole were important in the planning phase and were given numerous opportunities to discuss neighborhood challenges and preferences via various participation media and public engagement events. For example, the community offered their input to LMHA, LMG, and MBS (including Urban Strategies) on matters of housing, greenspace, retail, and commercial services via resident meetings, focus groups, surveys, bus tours, etc. This information was used to develop the goals and objectives delineated in the Vision Russell Transformation Plan. LMHA took an additional step of providing updates on progress by mailing out quarterly newsletters to 3000+ households in Russell. In partnership with New Directions, some residents were hired as outreach
workers to give out flyers, hold office hours to answer questions, and undertake door-to-door outreach to Beecher Terrace residents on relocation options and available support services. A Vision Russell website was additionally created to communicate updates and meeting information. Despite being a great resource, the website is not very user-friendly and it is most beneficial if one knows what specific information to look for and how and where exactly to locate it on the website. Also, while supportive, these activities do not constitute the presence of a proactive and engaged community organization serving as a co-equal in the co-productive process with LMG, LMHA, and MBS. Russell Neighborhood Association did not emerge as a co-productive entity to collaborate with these other actors until later into the implementation phase.

Communication and shared decision-making opportunities with key organizational stakeholders were also heightened by virtue of the Vision Russell project. Neighborhood residents, stakeholders, and organizations were able to contribute to the creation of the Transformation Plan through participation in various committees and task forces. While resident representation in these groups is unclear, it is a fact that leaders of prominent nonprofits in Russell (LCCC, MV, and Louisville Urban League) served as co-leads on three out of the four task forces. The teams met and brainstormed solutions to complex dilemmas and routinely reported their recommendations to the coordinating committee over the two-year planning process. These teams met at least bi-weekly and coordinated ideas on how to improve redevelopment efforts. One nonprofit interviewee (CEO of MV) remarked that these open and regular communication opportunities allowed stakeholders to identify and streamline multiple duplicated services in the neighborhood as social service agencies often worked in silos. Russell’s revitalization
also facilitated opportunities for LMHA/LMG to financially partner with nonprofits like LCCC and MV to complete projects that support the Transformation Plan’s goals. For LCCC, by way of example, this resulted in the receipt of $200,000 to finalize its small business incubator project.

I rated the adequacy of shared decision-making as “0” to indicate that while suitable conditions for enabling the Russell neighborhood to equally participate in making important decisions (e.g. making important decisions via consensus) could have been instituted, the Russell community was primarily kept at the level of “providing input” to those in positions of power as the latter ultimately decided on the important issues.

4.2.2 Enforcement

Enforcement in the Russell revitalization case was rated “0” to point out that in reality, the Russell community had little formal authority and operational resources to enforce agreements that emerged from the planning process. Residents and neighborhood stakeholders could not formally compel adherence to inputs or contributions provided. At best, they could informally query LMHA or LMG or other organizational actors on perceived lack of follow-through on proposed plans or activities during participation meetings. However, they first needed to have timely, detailed updates on what was being accomplished. Beyond the general updates provided, residents had no way of monitoring whether they were being properly involved in the important decisions. I acknowledge that there are technically other potential mechanisms for enforcement (e.g. filing of lawsuits) but this recourse may not be followed through by residents. Hence, this fact would not change the score assigned to the enforcement principle.
4.2.3 Accountability

In this section, three categories of accountability are discussed: downward, horizontal, and upward. Also, I consider elements of enforcement, communication, and shared decision-making and how their institutional structures influenced the de facto nature of accountability in the case. The results indicate that institutional arrangements for informal accountability eclipsed arrangements for formal mechanisms of accountability in the Russell case.

**Downward.** As the lead coordinating entity, LMHA had the power to establish systems for accountability. This was exemplified when LMHA recruited a small group of residents and tasked them with the specific project of planning recreational amenities for the redeveloped Beecher Terrace complex and environs. This group was granted some capacity to hold LMHA accountable as LMHA frequently gave them progress reports and sought their input as decisions needed to be made along the way (downward accountability). Also, federal and local government citizen participation plans provide for residents to review summaries of neighborhood development plans. However, this is only after the plan is ready for approval, within a 30-day window. Beyond this, Russell residents did not possess the authority to directly hold LMHA accountable for its revitalization plans and actions, seriously limiting downward accountability.

**Horizontal.** Organizational stakeholders serving on committees did not have formal mechanisms for holding one another accountable. At most, fellow stakeholders kept each other informally accountable via their reports at progress meetings.

**Upward.** As lead applicant and administrator of the CNI project, LMHA is held formally accountable by both government sponsors, HUD and LMG (upward
accountability). HUD holds LMHA accountable via the Choice Neighborhoods Grant Agreement, which constitutes a funding approval and cooperative agreement to work collaboratively with LMG (as co-applicant) and use grant funds as approved. LMHA is further held accountable via monthly and quarterly reporting to HUD. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) demonstrating a cooperative commitment between LMHA and LMG is required during the application for the Choice Neighborhoods grant. This MOU is binding throughout the entirety of the grant period. Like HUD, LMHA regularly meets with LMG to report progress on the revitalization project and any related challenges. More so, nonprofits who received fiscal assistance like LCCC and MV were accountable to LMHA and LMG via MOUs. In addition to an MOU, MBS was accountable to LMHA and HUD via a preexisting set of procedures for funds disbursement.

Similar to enforcement, accountability was also rated as “0” to underscore the absence of a formal medium for accountability between those who held the utmost authority and responsibility for Russell’s revitalization and those who were impacted the most by the revitalization project, the residents.

4.2.4 Sociopolitical Boundaries

The primary roles and responsibilities of LMHA, LMG, MBS, and the Russell community were clearly defined at the onset of the planning process. LMHA was authorized as the grant administrator and was responsible for providing housing relocation and supportive services to residents of Beecher Terrace. LMG already held the requisite authority and was responsible for leading the neighborhood redevelopment component of the project. It also doubled as another major financier of Russell’s revitalization. MBS, the developer, and its subsidiary, Urban Strategies, undertook
responsibility for the housing construction and managing the return of residents to the new Beecher Terrace complex. The Russell community was expected to be active in the public engagement processes and was “implicitly” responsible for providing feedback and ideas during problem formulation and goal setting for the Transformation Plan.

Additional roles were defined for some stakeholders following formal contractual relationships. For instance, LMHA contracted CFN to manage community engagement during the selection of projects for Action Activities. Before that, CFN was responsible for leading the Russell Neighborhood Institute, a program designed to nurture the leadership capacities of 20+ residents to problem-solve and effect positive change in the neighborhood. Besides serving on various committees, LCCC and MV’s roles became formally defined after receiving funding support for their respective organizational projects.

4.2.5 Equity

Analysis of equity in the Russell case focused on three dimensions: collective decision-making, funds distribution/management, and community involvement/representation. For collective decision-making, several interview participants commended LMHA’s efforts to engage stakeholders via different types of public engagement modes. This included community conversations, resident meetings, kitchen conversations, surveys, stakeholders’ interviews, distribution of flyers and newsletters (mailing list: 3000 – 3500 people), and several others. The wide range of opportunities for engagement appealed to more people and the level of participation they were comfortable with. Kitchen conversations largely led by neighborhood liaisons, for example, enabled the gathering of input from some who might have been too busy to
make it to group meetings or some who were wary of attending large meetings. LMHA also made intentional efforts to engage high-school students and nursing home residents, stakeholders who otherwise would have been unable to participate owing to restrictions in mobility (nursing home) and students (potentially least motivated to be involved in revitalization planning activities). Altogether, relevant stakeholders who were influential to and in Russell’s socioeconomic environment were invited to participate in the deliberation and planning processes.

In terms of funds distribution/management, the majority of the CNI Implementation grant funds went towards housing-related projects while Critical Community Improvement projects (physical and/or economic projects that accelerate neighborhood transformation) received relatively lesser funding. The law permits a maximum allocation of 15% of total funds to Critical Community Improvement, thus explaining this disparity. In other words, there is a disparity in the distribution of benefits when Russell as a whole is compared to Beecher Terrace. As one member of the core leading team puts it:

*Russell is a huge neighborhood and most of the resources are focused here in Beecher. So, a lot of the people that living out there, um, in their own home, but their home is kind of falling apart. And they need assistance, you know. They are not getting as much help as the Beecher residents are. So, it’s not really fully equitable. Um– And of course, this is one of the flaws of the Choice Neighborhood program.*

Additionally, from a local government perspective, LMHA and LMG’s ability to enter new partnerships with grassroots organizations was restrained by a preestablished local policy, thus affecting the dynamics of funds distribution/management in reality. As a Director in the Louisville Metro government explained:
[For example] we’re trying to help a non-profit um a, a new 501 (c) (3) grassroots organization that wants to do some work around addiction prevention, and um one of the policies of Louisville Metro Government is that they need to literally pay out of their coffers all the expenses and then show that they’ve cleared the bank before they submit an invoice to Metro for us to reimburse them and, and if you’re a grassroots organization, and you don’t have the money to pay, I mean if you’re, you just don’t have the money. If they had the money, they wouldn’t be coming to us.

For racially marginalized communities like Russell, such restrictive policy hinders grassroots actors from gaining much-needed fiscal support to problem-solve, concurrently disproportionally affecting people of color. As a result, newer grassroots organizations were often worse off during revitalization funds distribution while established organizations, often white-led, with a long history and large budgets and resources tended to be funds’ recipients.

In terms of community involvement/representation, three organizational participants observed an underrepresentation of the larger Russell residents and businesses during the community engagement process. The bulk of the engagement efforts drew in predominantly Beecher Terrace residents while other Russell residents had minimal and/or limited involvement via surveys, newsletters, flyers, and similar information dissemination methods. This view is corroborated by the majority of the resident interviewees. 74% either indicated they were unaware of the Vision Russell processes or had no knowledge of the newsletters. Several of these respondents resided in the western part of the Russell neighborhood. When asked why local businesses were underrepresented in the public participation events, the CEO of Molo Village replied:

For the businesses it was a little bit different you know because some of them were interested in making that change, others were not so, you know. And so, the question is why “well I got mine [business] and you know I’m not worried about this you know, I’m not gonna change employees, I’m not going to” and so there
were some things that probably needed to be done more with the businesses so they bought into the processes. You know we had talked several times about putting the agreements together with the businesses so that if people were trained, the expectation would be that they would hire them, you know. And so, those were things that we wanted to do but I’m not sure that we actually got those things accomplished with a lot of the businesses.

Interviews with five long-time local business owners also reiterated their experiences with feeling disconnected from the revitalization process.

Following the evaluation of collective decision-making, funds distribution/management, and community involvement/representation, I rated equity as “0” to indicate the deficiencies observed above in the latter two dimensions.

4.3 Russell Capacities for Self-Governance

Neighborhood planning in Louisville is governed by the Neighborhood Plan Ordinance and it provides for the creation and official recognition of neighborhood organizations. According to Chapter 161 of Louisville Metro Code of Ordinances, neighborhood organizations must, among other things, define their neighborhood boundaries (in conjunction with the state), include “neighborhood conservation and improvement” in their mission, and be incorporated with bylaws. As is the case of many low-income, marginalized communities, resident organizers of neighborhood organizations (often called neighborhood associations) in Russell can be reasonably expected to incorporate as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit as this inures the most benefits as self-governing entities (NeighborWorks Pocatello, 2016). A neighborhood association is a recognized entity that can represent neighborhood residents’ interests, but residents are the constitutive, constitutional, and administrative agents that emerge as the key actors in neighborhood associations. Thus, in this section, I essentially discuss
neighborhood association capacities and the capacities of Russell residents to form such entities. Given these, the ensuing analysis of Russell’s capacities for self-governance together assesses the powers availed to “Russell” to participate in neighborhood planning and development as well as ways the CNI amplifies or constrains self-governing capacities.

The results of the analyses of the capacities of Russell are reported in the following order: constitutive, constitutional decision-making/rulemaking (DM/RM), administrative DM/RM and regulation, and fiscal viability. I discuss what is formally written into law (de jure) in the constitutive and constitutional DM/RM authority subsections. However, in the administrative DM/RM and regulation and fiscal viability subsections, I present what is both possible (de jure) and examples of what actually occurred (de facto).

Altogether, the analyses suggest that during the planning phase of Russell’s revitalization, there was a weak form of state-reinforced neighborhood self-governance, characterized by absent federal government direct support for neighborhood sovereignty. There also appeared to be significant potential for a strong form of state-reinforced neighborhood self-governance, characterized by state and local governments’ legislative supports for the creation and empowerment of neighborhood-led organizations. An overview of the major policies is provided in Table 7, followed by the summary of my analyses as found in Figure 9.
### Table 7. Overview of policy documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title 24 CFR 91.105</td>
<td>This is a codified federal (HUD) regulation for local governments to create citizen participation plans and it includes the minimum required provisions to be outlined in the plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title 24 CFR 570.486</td>
<td>This is a set of codified federal (HUD) requirements to local governments regarding provisions for citizen participation when the local government is a recipient of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 US Code 501(c)(3)</td>
<td>This is a set of federal regulations for governing tax-exempt organizations (e.g. nonprofits).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 (H.R.3547)</td>
<td>This section of the Act authorizes appropriations and general directions for HUD’s CNI activities and projects for the fiscal year 2014 (Russell planning grant was approved in 2014 and funds disbursement began in early 2015).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant Budget Guidance</td>
<td>This HUD document provides direction for creating and revising budgets for the CNI planning phase. It specifies what may or may not be covered by grant funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Budget Guidance</td>
<td>This HUD document provides direction for creating and revising budgets for the CNI implementation phase. It specifies what may or may not be covered by grant funds.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky Nonprofit Corporation Act</td>
<td>This Act includes state government provisions for creating and governing nonprofit corporations in Kentucky.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Plan Ordinance</td>
<td>This ordinance regulated neighborhood planning and the formation of neighborhood organizations in Louisville Metro.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisville Metro Citizen Participation Plan</td>
<td>This document outlines Louisville Metro’s (minimum) provisions for citizen participation based on federal government’s requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.1 Constitutive

The Neighborhood Plan Ordinance (NeiPO) (§161.35) authorizes citizens to self-organize and create self-governing collectives like neighborhood organizations. To be officially recognized by Louisville Metro government, neighborhood organizations (e.g. neighborhood associations) must become incorporated entities (officially register with the local government) with codified rules and regulations. Neighborhood associations may acquire formal recognition from the city via a written request, along with evidence of incorporation status, bylaws, and agreed-upon neighborhood geographical boundaries. Organizers are also required to focus on developing their neighborhoods across different projects or programs. While the Ordinance explicitly requires organizational membership to be open to all residents in the bounded neighborhood, it does not mention limiting organizers to existing neighborhood residents.
The Kentucky Nonprofit Corporation Act (KRS §273) and federal US Code 501(c)(3) extend further constitutive capacities to neighborhood organizations. They grant organizers the authority and responsibility to initially decide the purpose(s), structure, powers, and management of the corporation. Some powers especially important to potential neighborhood organizers in Russell are to own and acquire property (for redevelopment), attract and raise funds (for fiscal viability), and function as a “living” entity (for legal and administrative accountability). Both the Act and the Code bestow incorporated bodies powers to advance their goals as “cultural,” “social,” “civic,” “charitable,” “educational,” “recreational,” and/or “benevolent.” Incorporation for any such purposes allow neighborhood organizations to earn tax-exempt status, so long as they abide by the fundamental requirements for acquiring and maintaining their non-profit status. It is generally understood that these capacities are intended to provide non-profit organizations, and by extension neighborhood associations, sufficient constitutive, constitutional decision-making, and administrative authority to govern their affairs (i.e., self-govern), with appropriate external governmental support and monitoring.

Neither the CNI Budget Guidance nor the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2014 directly advance the creation of self-governing neighborhood organizations such as the Russell Neighborhood Association. However, their provisions and requirements appear to lend support to the strengthening of relations with such organizations. The Consolidated Appropriation Act 2014 particularly mandates grantees to establish collaborations with resident organizations. The Budget Guidance authorizes fiscal support for capacity-building initiatives through covering costs for expert trainers, training venues, transportation for trainings, as well as attendant/related childcare.
Further, grant funds for Action Activities may be used toward physical transformation projects in the neighborhood or alternatively, projects that facilitate social cohesion and the community’s capacity.

4.3.2 Constitutional DM/RM

At the federal level, the Choice Neighborhood Initiative does not grant constitutional DM/RM powers to neighborhoods. The local governments Citizen Participation Plan (24 C.F.R. §91.105) and local governments Citizen Participation Requirements (24 C.F.R. §570.486) require local government recipients of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, such as LMG, to encourage and facilitate citizens and neighborhood organizations participation in neighborhood development planning. This is particularly so for persons residing in blighted and distressed neighborhoods. Both federal regulations require opportunities for residents and collectives to comment on and submit concerns about proposed projects and activities contained in the local government plan. These public inputs are simply required to be considered and may or may not be accepted. Louisville Metro’s Citizen Participation Plan similarly affirmed these public participation provisions.

At the state and local level, the Act and Ordinance jointly assign additional mandates to neighborhood organizations. Constitutive provisions in the KY Nonprofit Corporation Act (KRS §273.207) and the NeiPO (§161.35) collectively authorize the creation/designation of a board of directors to manage the affairs of the incorporated neighborhood organizations. According to the NeiPO, organizational bylaws should be agreed upon by the general membership and may include the right to modify governing bylaws. In the absence of specific provisions in the bylaws or articles of incorporation,
each member of the corporation possesses equal voting weight(s) (KRS §273.201, NeiPO §161.35). This implies that decision-making authority regarding the establishment and modification of bylaws rests with the membership (residents) as a whole. Additionally, the mention of the right to modify the bylaws implies that the bylaws can be adjusted over time to better suit the evolving needs and circumstances of the organization, allowing for responsive decision-making processes.

The NeiPO requires local-level officials to share their constitutional decision-making authority with neighborhood organizations as the latter are authorized and required to serve as advisors to the “Mayor, Metro Council, and other Metro Government boards, Commissions, and officials on matters affecting their neighborhoods” (§161.37). In addition, neighborhood organizations are expected to monitor proposed legislation affecting their neighborhoods in order to engage in the legislative process.

These organizations are also permitted to foster co-productive relationships with any jurisdiction or entity in Louisville Metro as long as these do not conflict with the neighborhoods’ relations with the local government.

It is worth noting that the powers and functions of neighborhood organizations as provided in the NeiPO are specifically constrained by the Citizen Participation Plan (KRS §161.39) and more generally by the KY Nonprofit Corporation Act (KRS §273.400). For example, the Act prohibits nonprofit corporations from engaging in “taxable expenditures” as outlined in the Internal Revenue Code (Section 4945(d)).

4.3.3 Administrative DM/RM and Regulation

A configuration of federal, state, and local regulations and legislations extends administrative and regulation capacities. By virtue of the local government’s Citizen
Participation Plan (24 C.F.R. §95.105) and local governments Citizen Participation Requirements (24 C.F.R. §570.486), citizens and groups representing distressed communities are granted administrative DM/RM needed to acquire and organize/access planning information and technical assistance as part of government’s efforts to ensure meaningful community participation. Other administrative DM/RM authority and constraints and regulation powers are assigned to neighborhood organizations via the KY Nonprofit Corporation Act and the Neighborhood Plan Ordinance. In principle, these powers enable collectives, such as neighborhood associations, to regulate and oversee their “organizational” affairs, which for a neighborhood association could be used to advance neighborhood development.

The Neighborhood Plan Ordinance confers onto neighborhood organizations some specific administrative responsibilities. One such responsibility includes a continuous review of the objectives and goals delineated in official neighborhood plans. On the other hand, the CNI Budget Guidance does not grant specific administrative DM/RM powers to residents, beyond permitting some funds allocation towards resident employment during the revitalization planning process. This provision paved the path for LMHA and LMG to enter a partnership agreement with New Directions for the recruitment and employment of resident liaisons. The door-to-door engagement efforts of these liaisons contributed to efforts at bridging the historically distrustful relationship between government officials and residents.

4.3.4 Fiscal Viability

As indicated earlier, this subsection goes beyond what is potentially possible by law and includes some examples of what was realized in practice. Capacity for fiscal
viability is evaluated on two grounds: self-sufficiency and external. None of the CNI institutions directly permit or recommend external fiscal support to unincorporated neighborhood associations. Federal citizen participation guidelines require the provision of technical assistance for project proposals but this assistance need not be fiscal. Nonprofit corporations potentially have access to a variety of powers that would enable them to acquire or raise much-needed financial resources (KRS §273.171). In reality, following the absence of existing substantial collateral/owned assets, neighborhood corporations primarily led by residents in distressed neighborhoods may be unable to benefit from such funding opportunities as loan applications and leasing of property. In this case, the remaining options involve applying for applicable grants and receiving gifts – unless the state dedicates regular funding to support neighborhood organizations’ projects. The Neighborhood Plan Ordinance authorizes the organization to seek funding support from Metro government towards neighborhood improvement projects. The approval of such requests however is subject to “availability” as determined by Metro government. The capacity to apply for grants itself is also limited by the availability of staff or volunteers with grant-writing expertise.

Another potential for organizational self-sufficiency is via levying dues. The Neighborhood Plan Ordinance grants neighborhood organizations the authority to levy non-prohibitive dues on their members (§161.35). In the Russell neighborhood, considering the general financial capacity of residents and the volunteer-based nature of neighborhood organizations, this option for self-sufficiency faces several challenges. The amount collected monthly or quarterly is likely to be insufficient for the organization’s needs. Several members may be unable to pay the dues and likewise difficult for the
organization’s leadership to enforce payment. For example, in an interview with the organizer of Russell Neighborhood Association, it was explained that the Association currently had neither a fiscal sponsor nor collected regular dues.

Under the Home Repair program, individual residents (homeowners) may contribute to addressing neighborhood distress conditions by applying to Louisville Metro government for funds up to $25,000 to transform blighted and dilapidated housing. These funds may not be applied toward fence repairs, cosmetic repairs, basement repairs, or tree trimming. According to officials from Louisville Metro Government, $7 million in 2022 was set aside for the nine West End neighborhoods (including Russell) but the amount paled in comparison to the value of requests received. For example, within seven hours of opening the application portal on July 1st, about 980 households submitted requests, requiring a minimum of $24 million.

4.4 State-Reinforced Participatory Democracy

Next, I delve into further understanding the public engagement process during the revitalization planning phase, via the joint lens of SRSG and Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation/IAP2's spectrum of public participation. There were a few entries for collective decision-making processes that highlighted LMHA and LMG’s desire to “be truly collaborative”, “build consensus”, and make major decisions with Russell stakeholders during the development of the Vision Russell Transformation Plan. As described by one of the government participants:

Now, as far as how collaborative were we with residents, I think that's kind of a separate question. Because you don't engage with residents the same way that you engage with other planners right, or architects. And so, I would be curious to hear how the residents feel about that process and if they felt it was collaborative. From my side, I can find fault, right? There's no perfect engagement process. It was the best to date that has been done in Louisville, I will say that. Um, they
built on the history of this program, they corrected errors in previous HUD grants mistakes that had been made in other developments. *I feel like this was a valiant effort to be truly collaborative, not just among partners, but with residents as well.* (emphasis added)

This inclination suggests public engagement processes that support a climate for moderate constitutional decision-making authority, moderate administrative authority, and limited resources. Indeed, comments such as the above underscore instances where revitalization participation events went beyond a form of consultation and involved some form of shared decision-making control. For instance, residents were granted opportunities to engage in higher-level public participation activities including charettes, workshops, and voting. However, the latter was limited to the selection of four projects under the Action Activities grant.

Overall, as LMHA and LMG retained ultimate decision-making power over the entire revitalization process, most of the public engagement seemed to amount to a form of consultation where residents provided input but not direct decision control. The bulk of the participation evidence lends support to this assessment. Several interview participants reported that there was more listening; there were many opportunities for the community to provide feedback on issues and preferences such as during open houses, small focused meetings, neighborhood meetings, focus groups, and surveys. Residents serving as neighborhood liaisons were given basic constitutional DM capacities to undertake tasks on information gathering and dissemination. Some participants, however, described the consultation as an “improved” version. As one participant, who used to be a planner at Center for Neighborhoods, put it:

*I did see instances where you know the lead planners heard from residents and abandoned ideas that they had brought to the table because residents did not like them so- you don't see that every day with planners and developers. Most of the*
time, they say ‘yeah, we’ll take that under consideration’ and come back and say ‘well, that wasn't feasible’. You know, in particular, originally there was a plan to construct about a 12-15 story multi-unit residential building um, which you know traditionally uh, turned out to be a bad situation for a lot of people just because you know—if once you get off the first floor there, people are isolated so it becomes easy for crime and you know, other things to happen, and some residents were like ‘no, we don’t want anything like that, we know about Cabrini Green’ [a high-rise public housing project in Chicago that became an epitome of violence and decay] and you know, yada yada uh and they abandoned that idea – which is a very impressive honestly because you know – I just don’t see people doing that too often.

4.5 Public Engagement

4.5.1 Perceptions of Planning Stakeholders: Sociocultural Conditions Influencing Public Engagement

Public Engagement

This section is meant as an exploratory assessment of the participants’ opinions at an individual level of the socio-cultural conditions that influenced public engagement and decision-making opportunities. Their answers are not meant to be representative of their organization nor probe issues of state-reinforcement. Hence, the responses are addressed in this separate section, rather than infused with analyses in prior sections. The perceptions of the public engagement processes discussed in this section focus on the planning stakeholders, specifically the thirteen government and the non-government organizational interviewees.

As argued previously, the planning stakeholders generally agreed that significant efforts were made to engage key actors. Both government and non-government participants cited similar reasons for their stance. The revitalization planning process provided numerous and diverse opportunities to listen and engage residents and other neighborhood stakeholders. Compared to experiences under HOPE VI redevelopment projects, there were clear attempts to ensure adequate and robust community involvement.
in the development of the neighborhood (Transformation) Plan. One of the non-government organizational informants noted that it was generally evident the grant administrators accepted the planning process ought to be heavily influenced by citizens of the Russell community:

*And so I know the culture was there in place to have resident services and resident programs and resident involvement and especially so when that objective is a mandated policy you know it does require you to have resident involvement as an [CNI] applicant. And I think that they did a pretty admirable job of at least going through the motions to demonstrate that.*

At the same time, many recognized the reality that no matter the extent of efforts, some neighborhood actors would choose not to participate in the process:

*I will say that anyone who wanted to be a part of that process, resident stakeholder, business owner, was given ample opportunity. That doesn't mean that they took that opportunity. I'm sure that there are people who should have been at the table who did not participate for many reasons, right? They don't trust Louisville Metro, um, they don't have the time, um, I don't know, whatever. Uh, lots of reasons for that. But I do think that that door was open to anyone who wanted to participate.*

More specifically, as one of the informants who served on the outreach team put it:

*The residents, if they wanted to be involved, it was up to them to be involved because we had some residents that no matter what we did, no matter what we told them, or tried to meet their needs, they were not involved.*

Despite the general agreement on the improved public participation process, some felt more could have been done to make the process further engaging and extensive, and especially, to extend the active engagement initiatives beyond the planning phase and into the implementation phase of the revitalization process. Recognizably, this may have been difficult to actualize given the available funding amount ($425,000), expected to cover all engagement-related expenses (e.g. food, childcare, transportation, etc.), architectural design work, historical preservation work, and other fees tied to the planning
process. In fact, LMG had to match the grant amount with an additional $600,000 as HUD’s required project preparatory work, like the extensive environmental review process, is time-bound and quite costly.

The interviews also revealed contrasting views on whether the revitalization outputs addressed the neighborhood’s priorities and needs. One Louisville Metro official and one non-government participant contended that while a lot of work was done in the east of Russell, much less was observed in the west of Russell. Two others argued that the majority of the engaged residents were primarily from Beecher Terrace as they were most concerned about the upcoming big changes and its related uncertainties. Thus, the outputs reflected their perspectives on neighborhood needs and not the broader perspective of the Russell community. Others supported the argument that the revitalization outputs support the neighborhood’s priorities and needs but with caveats. For example, as explained by the CEO of Molo Village, “changing mindset is difficult and just because you have something new doesn’t necessarily mean that you are ready for it and see the benefits of it.”

4.5.2 Perceptions of Residents/Microbusiness Stakeholders on Planning Processes

As earlier stated, a total of twenty-nine residents and five microbusiness owners agreed to participate in the study. The self-reported demography of these participants is shown in Table 8. Participants were majority males (68%) and all Black/African American. All but one participant had lived in Russell during the planning phase (2015-2017). The microbusiness owners indicated also being residents of Russell. As both residents and business proprietors were asked similar questions, for the purpose of this section, their responses related to this analysis would be addressed together.
Table 8. *Demography of neighborhood participants* (n = 34)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Participants (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>34</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
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<td>29.4</td>
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<td>&gt;65</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>High school degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
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<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
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<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the stakeholders were asked to assess how much access they had to the decision-making processes and if the revitalization outputs reflected their desires, the majority (53%) provided a negative response. The key reason for their assessment was that neither had they been personally or by association invited to the decision-making table nor heard of the engagement events. Most of them resided in the western part of Russell and reported not receiving any of the Vision Russell newsletters or flyers.

Eighteen percent (18%) of the interviewees indicated that they had heard and received invitations but were not involved in the process, while another 18% of the interviewees believed that the planning processes indeed provided sufficient access as well as prioritized Russell’s interest. The former group opted not to engage in the planning events for various reasons including health concerns, family issues, and lack of time. As expected, the latter group actively participated in the planning events and
interestingly, three of these participants resided at the west of Russell. It is important to equally note that each of these three was acquainted with one of the lead organizers of Russell Neighborhood Association and had heard of the revitalization planning through her.

Finally, the last set of informants (12%) held that resident stakeholders were somewhat involved in Vision Russell planning. Those holding the “limited access” perspective generally reported they had not been directly invited to participate in decision-making but had seen or read about the redevelopment in the news or via word of mouth. One participant’s response to the question of whether residents and businesses were sufficiently informed was: “They may have been but with me, I didn’t know about it, like I said, until a couple months ago. People didn’t tell us about it, but I won’t say any names”.

Altogether, there was a lack of cohesion regarding participant views on how much access resident stakeholders had to the revitalization planning processes and consequently, the extent to which their interests (the neighborhood interest) were prioritized.

4.6 Sustainability Analysis

Analysis of the sustainability of the revitalization output (outlined in the Vision Russell Transformation Plan) is discussed in four interrelated dimensions - social, ecological, economic, and sustainable transport infrastructure. The strategies in the Plan received a total average rating of 16 out of 36 (see Table 9). The total median rating was comparatively lower, 12 out of 36. Overall, the analysis indicates Russell’s revitalization has limited success in impacting the neighborhood’s sustainability.
4.6.1 Economic

LMG is making significant attempts to strengthen Russell’s local economy through innovative approaches fostering pop-up businesses, corner stores, and active local business associations. Additional financial incentives (e.g. micro-credit) are provided to support new and existing businesses towards encouraging business retention in the neighborhood. Though some efforts are made to improve local food access and production, the critical need for a major grocery store is still outstanding. Residents still have to travel out of the neighborhood to address grocery concerns. Efforts to develop more neighborhood gardens are limited to “where training and plots are available.” The plan also fails to provide opportunities to advance economic outcomes through places centrally located for professionals to work and play.

Table 9. Analysis of sustainability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Average Rating</th>
<th>Median Rating</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building Form and Scale</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Mitigation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ecological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Building</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Ecological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Impact Transportation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sustainable Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensively Designed Green Streets</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sustainable Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological Restoration</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Ecological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stormwater Drainage Mitigation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Ecological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Systems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen the Local Economy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address Social Equity Concerns</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6.2 Social

Measures related to addressing social equity concerns signal satisfactory performance. Some progress is being made towards alleviating social ills plaguing the neighborhood via multiple initiatives such as engaging the youth in substance abuse and violence prevention endeavors, removing obstacles to employment, offering accessible counseling services, and promoting the desirability and affordability of college education. Despite the absence of zoning ordinances that foster mixed-income housing throughout Russell, the Beecher replacement units make accommodations for mixed-income and mixed-use housing. More work is still needed on providing new affordable housing options and increasing the number of sites for social gatherings and everyday life.

4.6.3 Ecological

The evaluation shows limited success in this category. Ecological restoration efforts through developing new greenspaces (outside of the remodeled Beecher Terrace property) and promoting green walls are virtually non-existent. Provisions for stormwater management are constrained to just one street (Liberty Street). Beyond the new Beecher Terrace site meeting green building standards and the application of Enterprise Green Communities 2015 standards to all new housing, no specific effort is being made to
ensure neighborhood-scaled green strategies, as well as encouraging green retrofits. Reduced energy consumption is restricted to only opportunities for energy efficiency retrofits in existing homes while strategies under transportation focus on supporting all types of road users rather than reducing motor vehicle use.

4.6.4 Sustainable Transport Infrastructure

The Vision Russell Plan highlights laudable attempts to promote the use of shared cars, bikes, and similar services in the neighborhood. All newly created streets in the redeveloped Beecher Terrace area, as well as additional targeted streets, are designed as complete streets, streets that are designed and operated to support the safety, comfort, and mobility of diverse users and activities (Gregg & Hess, 2018). There is an absence of initiatives to reduce parking at green project sites. Rather than the promotion of space-saving parking measures like stacked parking, infrastructure and incentives are being offered to boost parking options.

4.7 Summary

In this chapter, I identified the key collective action processes that transpired between multiple key actors in Russell neighborhood revitalization. I showed that despite many opportunities for state reinforcement, the multi-actor collective action processes failed to receive strong support from the state. Similarly, under capacities for self-governance, I found that federal, state, and local governments need to do more to reinforce the institutional designs and capacities for neighborhood self-governance. Furthermore, the lead and co-grant applicants, LMHA and LMG, retained ultimate decision-making authority over the processes while Russell residents mainly provided feedback. The individual perceptions of interviewees regarding the public engagement
processes helped to provide further understanding of how and why public engagement efforts were not truly successful in drawing the entire community into the planning decision-making processes, owing to factors such as residents’ notions of trust and usefulness of the engagement process. Finally, I found that the resulting output of the planning phase – Vision Russell Transformation Plan – showed limited success in promoting the objectives of sustainable development in Russell.
This dissertation project focuses on the planning and implementation of a Choice Neighborhoods project to explore how the state facilitates or hinders effective co-production in revitalization efforts. The study employs a qualitative case-study approach, utilizing interview and archival data, to analyze the revitalization process in Russell neighborhood, Louisville. It investigates how governments at various levels support neighborhood collective action and self-governance, particularly in racially marginalized neighborhoods. By applying the tools of the SRSG Framework, the study aims to shed light on co-productive processes in Russell neighborhood revitalization, how CNI grants promote or constrain self-governance and synergistic relationships among stakeholders, and the outcomes of the revitalization efforts. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the key findings, the study’s contributions to conversations on community development, as well as its limitations and suggestions for future research.

5.1 Discussion of Key Findings

5.1.1 Capacity for Multi-Actor Collective Action

One of the objectives of the study is to understand how the state facilitated or constrained the adaptive capacity of key actors in Russell’s case. Positive state-reinforcement has been shown to enable the establishment of robust institutional arrangements necessary for adaptively addressing complex socioecological dilemmas (DeCaro et al, in press; Sarker, 2013; Schlager, 2019). For neighborhood development, genuine co-production involves a collaborative approach where multiple stakeholders
including residents, community organizations, local government agencies, and other partners, view and work together as equal partners to plan, implement, and manage revitalization efforts. This means key stakeholders including residents possess substantive constitutional and administrative decision-making authority, and sufficient operational resources to make and implement individual (organizational) and collective decisions. This perspective is corroborated by several past studies which also assert that the most effective type of neighborhood redevelopment program is one that emphasizes meaningful partnership across neighborhood stakeholders as well as advances and protects the interests of indigenous residents (Balsas & Dandekar, 2006; Fagotto & Fung, 2006; Silverman et al., 2019; Taylor, 2001). Such inclusive planning must derive its vitality from residents’ leadership and legitimize the citizens as full partners and collaborators (Baron, 1978, as cited in Salsich, 2012; Spiegel, 1987). According to Ostrom (1990, 2010), this partnership relationship (collective action) would function more effectively (that is, build trust as the parties pool knowledge and expertise and problem-solve collaboratively), when there are clear mechanisms and rules that support and require clear communication and boundaries, shared decision-making, enforcement of rules, equitable costs/benefits sharing, and mutual accountability. My research into Russell’s CNI revitalization processes revealed that capacities and cooperation among multiple actors were moderately enhanced, albeit limited to the production of a specific good (thriving neighborhood). This means that while Russell’s revitalization showed reinforcement of some aspects of the design principles underpinning the relationship between the various actors, there was also significant areas for improvement. In the
following paragraphs, I delve further into how this manifested in processes of communication, shared decision-making, accountability, enforcement, and equity.

Compared to the narrative of several past revitalization projects (e.g. Axtell & Tooley, 2015; Fraser, 2004), there was significant improvement in the level of communication between the leading parties, Louisville Metro Housing Authority (LMHA), Louisville Metro Government (LMG), and the Russell community. Extensive community engagement efforts enabled Russell and its stakeholders to receive major project updates (e.g. Vision Russell website, flyers) and contribute their input to the design of the Transformation Plan (e.g. surveys, stakeholder interviews). A related notable improvement occurred during the fall of 2016 when LMHA/LMG granted full decision-making authority to residents to suggest and shortlist (that is, through surveys, open houses, and voting) four neighborhood projects to be executed using the Action Activities grant. The four projects included creating overpass murals, greenspace improvements, vacant lot projects, and smart bus stops. While not a key component of the Transformation Plan, this opportunity nonetheless enabled Russell residents to explicitly contribute to addressing issues they deemed high priorities for the neighborhood.

The results indicate that despite significant efforts to obtain neighborhood stakeholders’ input, their influence was often limited to consultation rather than direct decision control, as ultimate decision-making lied with LMHA and LMG as well as McCormack Baron Salazar (in matters of housing development). The improved communication however did not necessarily mean residents, for example, had been elevated to the level of equally contributing to the decision making at a higher level, that
is, as one granted full constitutional decision-making (DM) power. Applying IAP2’s modified version of Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation and the spectrum of public participation, this form of engagement used typifies as Consult/Involve. In terms of SRSG, this arrangement translates to a weak form of state-reinforcement, characterized by low constitutional DM authority, low administrative decision-making and operational authority, and limited operational resources. Critically, communication virtually ended when the Transformation Plan was submitted to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), hindering the neighborhood’s ability to continue to partner during the subsequent project implementation phase. Co-production requires that participatory processes move beyond the planning phase and encompass the execution of plans or policies (Spiegel, 1987). Overall, these results are consistent with past research that reports community engagement during neighborhood development often fails to rise to the level of co-decision-making and co-implementation (Clark & Negrey, 2017; Cutts et al., 2023; Greene, 2008).

LMHA and LMG are in positions of relative power. Therefore, these government entities have a role to play in ensuring that redevelopment processes are accountable. From an SRSG and co-productive perspective, accountability includes mutual accountability and enforcement of agreements. One exemplary instance where this design principle was reinforced was when LMHA engaged some residents to plan recreational amenities for the new Beecher Terrace complex and its surroundings. LMHA empowered these residents to hold it accountable as LMHA regularly provided them with updates and sought their input as the project made progress. Besides this, the responses from the interviewees indicate that robust mechanisms for enforcement and accountability among
all of the co-productive partners (including residents) were notably absent. For the most part, residents were unable to compel adherence to agreements and social contracts, or hold decision-makers accountable for the major part of the two-year planning processes. For example, when asked if there were any procedures or mechanisms in place for residents to hold the government and various organizational partners accountable for their roles, a senior personnel at one of the community development organizations responded, "No, I can’t think of any way honestly.” This response was also echoed by several interview participants. Partnerships that are deficient in mutual accountability and enforcement tend to weaken trust and confidence in the collaboration, undermining the status of the parties as co-owners of the process and outcomes (Emerson et al., 2012; Romzek et al., 2013). CNI regulatory documents are silent on this provision as well as the federal requirements for citizen participation. The closest alternative for accountability granted by federal and local government citizen participation plans is citizens’ opportunity to review (a summary of) neighborhood plans after they have been completed by local officials and are ready to apply for approval (within a 30-day window). This medium of accountability is weak at best and woefully inadequate given how late it is in the decision-making process. As observed in other case studies of neighborhood-city relations, missing robust structures for upfront and ongoing accountability is one of the principal weaknesses of collaborative arrangements, which hinders community-based action and decision-making (Chaskin, 2003; Vale et al., 2018; When Hope Falls Short, 2003).

The ability of Russell residents to contribute to co-production and redevelopment of their neighborhood is also tempered by local fiscal policies that restrict local grassroots...
resident organizations’ ability to access financial support. As a result, the major recipients of project contracts were, in practice, more elite groups and affluent organizations. For example, a new grassroots nonprofit seeking grant support from Louisville Metro to help tackle addiction prevention was expected to first demonstrate exhaustion of its own funds before it could be granted fiscal support from the city. Such seemingly race-neutral policies and norms disproportionately impact self-governance capabilities and foster inequitable distribution of benefits in racially marginalized communities like Russell (Fashaw-Walters & McGuire, 2023; Greene et al., 2017; Maye, 2022). This dynamic suggests that while institution-wise, there is SRSG in some critical dimensions of neighborhood development, in practice, it is possible that affluent stakeholders are being reinforced in co-production, despite best efforts to prevent this. This view is supported by other studies like Cutts et al. (2023) and Filner (2006) who found that powerful participants held the most influence during planning processes in neighborhood (brownfield) redevelopment.

5.1.2 Perceptions of Decision-Making Processes

Two interesting themes emerged after assessing the planning and resident/microbusiness stakeholder perceptions of the revitalization decision-making processes: (1) local government planners valued public participation, and (2) there was a lack of consensus among both planning and resident/business stakeholders regarding whether the citizens’ interests were prioritized.

Contrary to arguments that planners tend to approach the participatory process as a basic ritual in planning practice (e.g. Shipley & Utz, 2012; Silverman et al., 2019), local government planners in Russell appeared to value meaningful citizen participation during
the revitalization planning processes. This is evidenced by the broad forms of public engagement strategies they employed as well as significant proactive and novel attempts to include the voice of often-less engaged groups (nursing home residents and high school students) in deliberative processes. This inference is also affirmed by the non-organizational informants who commended the extent of efforts put in by LMHA and LMG. In the words of the President and CEO of Louisville Central Community Center:

At the Housing Authority…the culture was there in place to have resident services and resident programs and resident involvement and especially so when that objective is a mandated policy, you know, it does require you to have resident involvement as an applicant. And I think that they did a pretty admirable job of at least going through the motions to demonstrate that.

The lack of consensus regarding the extent of residents’ and microbusinesses’ access to planning processes and thus, adequate prioritization of their interests in the Vision Russell Transformation Plan suggests potential shortcomings in Russell’s revitalization planning efforts. The dividing line, it seems, is whether, for example, one resides in the eastern part of Russell or the western part of Russell. From the interviewees’ responses, most, if not all, of the attention and projects undertaken in Russell neighborhood tended to pivot closer to the eastern section of Russell, the side on which Beecher Terrace is located. Most of the resident informants who asserted that they had not been invited to participate in public engagement events resided in the west side of the Russell neighborhood. While additional research (e.g. interview of more residents across the neighborhood) would need to be undertaken to fully understand the dynamics of this pattern, if residents feel that their voices are not adequately heard or that their interests are not prioritized, it can diminish their sense of ownership and investment in the revitalization efforts. (Stringer et al., 2006) Also, it can undermine the legitimacy of
the planning efforts and cast doubt upon the representativeness of the revitalization output (Transformation Plan), further eroding trust between the residents and government (Reed, 2008; Richards et al., 2004). It is possible that the solution (that is, goals and strategies in the Plan) might not be as optimal as it could have been with broader community input.

5.1.3 Capacity for Self-Governance

The findings for constitutive and constitutional decision-making/rulemaking (DM/RM) powers revealed that the regulations and requirements of CNI grants do not confer such powers for enhancing neighborhood self-governing capacities. At most, CNI supports the strengthening of relations with such entities (e.g. resident organizations) as well as encouraging residents’ participation in revitalization planning processes, suggesting a potential level of influence of processes. At the state and local government level, individuals and neighborhoods are granted constitutive and constitutional DM powers through statutes like the Kentucky Nonprofit Corporation Act and the Neighborhood Plan Ordinance respectively, granting them a formal standing in neighborhood development processes. This constellation of authority and empowerment arguably implies that while state and local government policies attempt to convey greater neighborhood leadership and self-governance (e.g. constitutional DM authority) by enabling neighborhood organizations (e.g. neighborhood associations) to emerge, federal CNI regulations are more geared towards enabling robust public engagement (e.g. improved communication and shared decision-making processes). An exemplification of this may be ascribed to the multiple leadership and capacity-building training opportunities LMHA and LMG made available to Russell residents (that is, to strengthen
their ability to self-organize and problem-solve). While CNI regulations permitted the use of grant funds for such activities, its end goal was less on enabling the emergence of self-governing neighborhoods but rather on building the capacity of residents to participate in public engagement opportunities.

The above illustration may also explain why CNI regulations explicitly enabled the decentralization of administrative DM/RM powers to Russell residents, for example, through hiring some residents to serve as liaisons between the local government and neighborhood. Such decentralization represents a more accessible level of decision-making and rulemaking authority, particularly when contrasted with constitutional DM/RM authority. Individuals possessing constitutional DM/RM authority typically wield greater influence in deliberative processes compared to those with solely administrative DM/RM. Furthermore, there are no provisions regarding providing fiscal resources to self-organized bodies under the CNI. Federal citizen participation requirements permit the provision of technical assistance to representatives of distressed communities who are in the process of developing neighborhood project proposals. However, local governments may choose whether or not such assistance may be granted in the form of fiscal support. Once again, institutions at the state and local level (e.g. Kentucky Nonprofit Corporation Act and Louisville Neighborhood Plan Ordinance) are clearly at the forefront of facilitating self-governance via creating access to fiscal support for self-organized neighborhood groups. Funding assistance under the Neighborhood Plan Ordinance is however limited to “availability” as determined by Louisville Metro government.
Towards addressing complex socioecological dilemmas like those prevalent in Russell’s case, co-production offers an iterative process of adaptively defining and implementing strategies for more equitable outcomes (Fagotto & Fung, 2006; Rosen & Painter, 2019). Thus, it is important and equally beneficial to ensure robust support for actors’ capacity for collective action as well as their self-governing capacities. A review of prior works has shown that self-governing entities hardly function effectively without support from the state (Ostrom, 2009; DeCaro et al., 2017). As a result, self-governing entities trying to problem-solve socioecological issues nested in complex systems likely need the support of the state in order to function adaptively and effectively (DeCaro et al., in press; Hallman, 1972; Sarker 2013). Therefore, federal CNI institutions, along with state and local governments, need to reinforce one another towards providing support for self-governance and collective action to these entities. The driving factors that likely influenced Russell Neighborhood Association in 2019 illustrate how an interplay of governmental institutions fostered leadership and self-governance in Russell, enabling the emergence of the Association.

According to one of the organizers of Russell Neighborhood Association (RNA), the idea for setting up such a neighborhood group was sown during the planning phase of Russell’s revitalization. Through a constellation of revitalization-related factors, the Association, organized and led solely by residents, finally emerged in early 2019. At least, government policies and decisions fueled this development in three ways.

First, a combination of the CNI fiscal guidelines that allowed granting administrative DM/RM authority to residents, and LMHA/LMG decision to recruit neighborhood liaisons facilitated the self-organizing process. For example, the RNA
organizer who was interviewed, along with some of the other founding members, was part of the team of neighborhood liaisons. In this position, they were responsible for several administrative tasks including administering neighborhood surveys, leading kitchen conversations, and fielding general questions about the revitalization process. If they did not know the answer in the latter case, they knew who was the best resource for it. Since the liaisons were recruited earlier in the planning process, this leadership experience likely laid the fundamental groundwork for subsequent developments.

Second, CNI Planning grant budget guidance encouraged the appropriation of funds towards capacity-building training. In turn, LMHA/LMG embraced this opportunity and organized at least four different sets of resident leadership trainings between August 2015 and April 2016 alone. A former director of the Center for Neighborhoods (CFN), a non-profit charged with leading two of these four leadership trainings, confirmed the profile of participants as predominantly residents. CFN’s training, called Neighborhood Institute, was a 12-week class that covered topics including active citizenry, modes of interaction with local government, and forming a neighborhood improvement project. The acquisition of such knowledge helped some of RNA’s founding members to understand the powers and advisory and advocacy role available to them when organized as a self-governing, semi-autonomous neighborhood organization – such as delineated in policies like Louisville’s Neighborhood Plan Ordinance.

Third, through its constitutive and constitutional DM/RM powers as a local government (provided through the state of Kentucky), LMG partnered with Cities United and Community Foundation of Louisville to launch Russell: A Place of Promise (RPOP).
This project began in 2018, formally led by officials-on-loan from LMG and Cities United, and supported by an advisory board comprised of mostly residents and Russell-based entrepreneurs. RPOP’s core function is to connect residents, faith leaders, and community-level businesses/organizations to resources that support stability, growth, and (Black) wealth creation. Again, one of the RNA organizers is employed under this project and some others serve on the advisory board. During their time with RPOP, these group of RNA organizers have supported RPOP community engagement efforts, participated in neighborhood decision-making related to RPOP mission, and expanded their knowledge and network of contacts across the neighborhood.

At the time of data collection in 2022, RNA was still actively advancing the neighborhood’s interests but had yet to obtain its incorporation status (anticipated in 2023). As an example of its advocacy work, it proactively collaborated with Shawnee Neighborhood Association (an adjourning West End neighborhood) to protest and successfully deny the addition of liquor products to stores created for Transitional Housing (temporary housing for certain populations experiencing homelessness). While a causal relationship cannot be drawn between the above three factors and the creation of RNA, the fact remains that the interplay of federal, state, and local government institutions and actions created the enabling conditions for the residents to self-organize and establish a neighborhood-level governance body, especially as these conditions did not exist prior to the Vision Russell processes. The CNI could potentially be enhanced through purposeful reforms aimed at facilitating the emergence of collective action processes as observed among Russell residents.
5.1.4 Russell Revitalization and Sustainability

Finally, the study undertook an exploratory analysis of how the CNI is advancing HUD’s goal to “create strong, safe, sustainable, and inclusive neighborhoods” (Choice Neighborhoods, n.d.). The results showed the Choice-Neighborhoods-initiated revitalization had mixed success in producing outcomes that address the goals of sustainable development. However, it is important to interpret the results with caution, since the Transformation Plan focuses primarily on actions that could elevate Russell above its current distressed state and does not account for other efforts and development springing up in the community as a “side effect” of the government-sponsored revitalization project. Nevertheless, the sustainability patterns demonstrated by the overall result are meaningful and could be very pertinent to sustainable planning in Russell and other Louisville Metro neighborhoods. The “mixed success” of Russell’s revitalization is partly a consequence of cumulative higher ratings in the economic and sustainable transport infrastructure dimensions. Rating for the social dimension shows comparatively lower scores and that for the ecological dimension reports the lowest set of median ratings. Similar to findings obtained by Alshuwaikhat and Aina (2006) and Li and Li (2017), the strategies in the ecological dimension received lesser attention, suggesting advancement in the economic and sustainable transport infrastructure dimensions might be at the expense of the ecological dimension. In other words, while efforts were accorded to all the sustainability dimensions, the CNI revitalization project was unable to optimize each dimension and thus, failed to balance the conflicting but interrelated interests of the people, economy, and environment.
However, it is also possible certain strategies were selected in a piecemeal fashion without the specific goal of attaining sustainable development outcomes in the long term, thus explaining the unequal attention given to the sustainability dimensions (Jepson, 2004). This is quite likely owing to the absence of pre-defined neighborhood sustainability goals to guide the contents of the Transformation Plan. Such goals could have been required as part of the CNI grant application process or developed in collaboration with the neighborhood as part of the project preparatory phase. On the contrary, the existence of the 2013 Louisville Metro Sustainability Plan could mean LMHA and LMG subjected the revitalization outputs to the broad goals outlined in the plan. Further research is however needed to confirm the extent to which the strategies of the Vision Russell Plan are aligned or inconsistent with the city’s sustainability plan.

Findings from the sustainability analyses also suggest that the absence of formal criteria or a definition of “sustainable development” for the federal CNI program endowed local authorities with extensive discretion in how they interpret its essential nature and purpose, potentially failing to advance what Li and Li (2017) caption as ‘genuine sustainability’. This situation is identical to how a lack of formal definition by the federal government for the term “blighted area” led to misinterpretations and undesirable outcomes during the 1949 Urban Redevelopment Program. For example, it could result in the neglect of certain dimensions like the ecological dimension. This neglect can further lead to imbalanced development outcomes and hinder the overall sustainability of the neighborhood.
5.2 Summary and Overall Characterization of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative

In conclusion, the planning and execution of the Choice Neighborhoods project had diverse effects on multi-actor collaboration, decision-making processes, neighborhood self-governance, and the sustainability outcomes of revitalization efforts. The investigation unveiled notable enhancements in communication levels among residents and key stakeholders within the CNI project, alongside a noticeable transfer of constitutional DM authority during the selection of projects for the Action Activities grant. However, resident engagement was primarily limited to consultation during the planning phase, and formal mechanisms for enforcement and accountability were lacking. This was compounded by local fiscal policies that tended to hinder grassroots organizations’ involvement in seeking financial support for problem-solving initiatives. Moreover, while local planners appeared to value meaningful citizen participation, some participants contended that revitalization engagement efforts and projects were disproportionately focused on the eastern side of Russell, where the Beecher Terrace housing project is situated.

Concerning neighborhood self-governance, it was observed that the federal CNI does not confer constitutional DM/RM powers, but state and local institutions do. The CNI and associated federal regulations predominantly foster community engagement processes and facilitate the sharing of administrative DM/RM powers with residents. Through a combination of state policies and initiatives—such as leadership capacity training, the appointment of neighborhood liaisons, and the establishment of Russell: A Place of Promise—a cohort of residents self-organized and established the Russell Neighborhood Association. Lastly, an evaluation of the Vision Russell Transformation
Plan indicated mixed success in advancing sustainable development objectives within the Choice Neighborhoods project.

The CNI’s current approach to revitalization of distressed communities may be broadly characterized as weak state-reinforcement of neighborhood self-governance, moderate state-reinforcement of co-productive relationships among key actors, and high state-reinforcement of community engagement processes. This means that its institutional design is deficient in providing or enabling adequate supports to community-led efforts at addressing distressed conditions. On the other hand, the CNI institutional design generally supports building collaboration with important organizational partners for joint problem-solving and implementation of solutions while its strongest support leans towards strengthening community engagement processes. This design may emerge successful under certain circumstances. For example, the effectiveness of this current approach in tackling distressed neighborhoods is likely under circumstances where before the advent of a government-led revitalization, there already exists a strong, well-organized neighborhood-representative group (e.g. neighborhood association) that is active in identifying and tackling neighborhood issues. Additionally, there would already exist strong backing from the city government for this local neighborhood group. In this case, the CNI promotion of stakeholder partnerships and community engagement would serve to additionally enhance the effectiveness and efficacy of the existing system as well as enable a robust platform for co-productive arrangements that prioritize and address neighborhood-specific dilemmas.
5.3 Lessons for Policy and Practice

This study provides insights into the nature and importance of state reinforcement of neighborhood self-governance and participation during neighborhood revitalization. Five lessons are discussed in this section. They include: (i) a need to support neighborhood-level governance, (ii) provision of clear communication and shared decision-making with residents during the revitalization implementation phase, (iii) adopting the diagnostic capabilities of the SRSG tools, (iv) need for formal and accessible mechanisms for accountability and enforcement, and (v) requiring a clear definition of sustainability goals and benchmarks.

First, effective neighborhood-based leadership enables communities to articulate their needs, mobilize resources, and influence decision-making processes to ensure that development strategies align with their priorities and goals. However, gaps and rigidity in institutional structures underlying this process can impede the ability of resident actors to take ownership of their community development and adaptively respond to socioecological challenges (Cosens et al., 2017). Taylor (2001) argues that without reinforced citizen leadership and control of the neighborhood redevelopment process, sustained transformative neighborhood change would be difficult. Like Spiegel’s (1987) preconditions for co-production, Taylor further asserts that critical turning points in community development require residents to have important authority, responsibility, resources, and other enabling conditions to ably participate in neighborhood revitalization. I propose that one way to ensure this is by providing formal supports to communities that lack robust neighborhood associations or fostering the creation of such a representative body before or by the start of the revitalization processes.
Thus, a stronger form of state-reinforcement in CNI would be proactiveness in diagnosing first whether such a deficit in neighborhood self-governance exists, and then providing supports for neighborhoods to create these entities (e.g. neighborhood associations) as an authorized, required, trained, and funded part of the CNI process. This can strengthen community-level governance and involvement in federally and locally sponsored revitalization. In the Russell case, we learn that a Russell Neighborhood Association only emerged in the latter stages of the CNI implementation phase. An implication of the absence of such an entity throughout the planning process was that Russell's extent of reinforcement was “improved consultation”. The presence of an organized and empowered neighborhood-leadership group could have enabled the neighborhood to undertake a stronger role (e.g. at a level of collaboration) and fostered neighborhood resilience in the face of change. It should also be noted that authorizing and equipping community-based governance with constitutional DM authority and other self-governance capacities can help ensure continued neighborhood improvement after the CNI revitalization process. These capacities enable residents to continue to own and lead their neighborhood development after the revitalization grant period ends, consequently, helping to ensure long-term stewardship of neighborhood development without a relapse again into a distressed state (Ostrom et al., 1993; Shivakumar, 2005).

Second, from the research findings, one of the additional enabling conditions necessary under CNI-initiated revitalization is the extension of meaningful communication and shared decision-making powers/requirements into the revitalization implementation phase. Current CNI regulations and Louisville Citizen Participation Plan generally only provide for public engagement techniques up to the neighborhood plan
approval stage and instances of plan amendment. Such extension would help foster a greater sense of ownership of the process within the community (Spiegel, 1987). To reinforce this change, HUD could require continued evidence of active neighborhood involvement (and not just residents in the newly developed housing) or formal supports to neighborhood-representative groups throughout the revitalization implementation phase. Methods of engagement should not simply be limited to “consultation” (lower rungs on the consolidated Arnstein’s ladder/IAP2 spectrum of participation). As co-owners of the co-productive process, the neighborhood should also be granted a specific role to play during the implementation phase (higher rungs on the ladder of citizen participation). For example, the current Russell Neighborhood Association could be brought on board to coordinate information between Russell and the local government authorities.

Third, extending the above lesson beyond the Russell context, the diagnostic capabilities of the SRSG tools enable a broader perspective on ways to address one of the issues affecting the effectiveness of past and current revitalization programs/policies as identified by Mallach (2010): lack of coordination among key stakeholders. Applying the key design principles that tend to manifest in cases of effective collaboration, it is clear that, instead of simply expecting key actors to change their modus operandi and easily perceive the benefits of collaboration, HUD could identify which agencies or actors need to be sufficiently communicating with each other and incentivize the process. It could also take a more regulatory approach and require certain actors to (regularly) communicate specific types of information to other actors and vice versa. This could also include processes for shared decision-making. Indeed, when entities work in silos and do
not coordinate with other actors, clear communication and shared decision-making processes can help reduce redundancy or repetition of efforts. For example, the interviews showed how improved systems of communication during Russell’s planning processes helped some nonprofit partners serving on task forces to streamline their organizational efforts and eliminate duplication of development work. However, other important actors and kinds of information were left out of the process, reducing overall co-production.

Fourth, the dissertation results also reinforce the need for clear and accessible mechanisms for formal accountability and enforcement between local government actors and residents or any group(s) representing the revitalizing neighborhood. Such mechanisms are more likely to be implemented and efficacious if instituted or required by higher governing bodies (e.g. HUD or state government). The same provisions would need to be made for equitable processes during revitalization. For example, CNI regulations do not directly address issues of equity in its program design, just like many of its policy predecessors. Thus, despite best attempts for minority groups to access or partake in project opportunities created during neighborhood revitalization, it appears affluent groups continue to benefit the most.

Finally, towards the objective of furthering sustainable community development outcomes, HUD should mandate the inclusion of clear sustainability goals and benchmarks as essential components of the early planning process. To ensure that residents are adequately informed and involved in the formulation of these, it is imperative to address the level of sustainability awareness within the community. This entails public engagement processes that enhance awareness as well as guarantee
residents’ access to sustainability resources and relevant data (Cohen & Wiek, 2017; Reed, 2008). It is also crucial to align neighborhood sustainability goals with broader city-level sustainability plans, if available (Wheeler 2000). By subjecting the goals to the larger city sustainability plan, such as the Louisville Metro Sustainability Plan of 2013, potential conflicts or inconsistencies can be identified and addressed early in the planning process. This alignment, together with neighborhood involvement, improves the likelihood of adoption and successful implementation of neighborhood sustainability strategies, as they are integrated into the broader strategic direction of the city (Portney & Berry, 2010).

Extending the above point, it is acknowledged that achieving sustainable outcomes often requires a delicate balance between the interests of the local government and the residents of the neighborhood. Potential compromises or tradeoffs may be critical to this joint responsibility, particularly in cases where sustainability may not be a top priority for residents. One example of joint responsibility between local government and neighborhoods in advancing sustainability lies in infrastructure development. Local governments typically oversee zoning regulations and infrastructure planning, while neighborhoods have a vested interest in maintaining their character and quality of life. To draw on an important example that arose during interviews in the current study, some residents resisted efforts to encourage sustainable practices, such as increased density and additional greenspace, because doing so meant a loss of existing nearby parking spaces, which posed a perceived safety risk. To address this, local governments might relax parking requirements in exchange for developers implementing green building practices
and/or residents accepting higher-density development in other areas, allowing for a balance between preservation and urbanization.

5.4 Contribution to Research and Theory

This work advances the novel adoption of the state-reinforced Self-Governance (SRSG) framework and tools in the urban planning and community development field. The study serves as a pioneering effort to showcase the utility and relevance of SRSG tools as instructive instruments for diagnosing and comprehending the institutional dynamics that shape the actions and decisions of urban actors within collaborative governance systems. By utilizing the SRSG tools to address the research questions, this study offers valuable insights into the complex interplay between state institutions, local governance structures, and community stakeholders. At its core, the SRSG framework provides a lens through which to analyze and understand the mechanisms by which government institutions reinforce self-governance at the neighborhood level. By examining the legal and institutional frameworks that govern collaborative decision-making processes, the SRSG framework and tools offer a nuanced understanding of how various types of authority, operation resource allocation, and norms and rules guiding multi-stakeholder cooperation influence the outcomes of urban planning initiatives. This analytical approach enables researchers and practitioners to identify potential barriers to effective collaboration and co-productive outcomes, thereby informing more context-sensitive and responsive planning interventions.

Additionally, the perceived value that some urban planners place on public participation in planning decision-making processes has been a subject of scrutiny in previous studies. This study contributes to this discourse by highlighting the significance
of the breadth and diversity of public engagement methods in revealing planners' attitudes toward citizen involvement. Specifically, the level and type of authority devolved to citizens through these engagement methods serve as strong indicators of urban planners' stance on public participation. For instance, government entities such as LMHA and LMG could have adhered to HUD's requirement for resident involvement in neighborhood revitalization by adopting engagement methods that shared minimal or no decision-making authority with the neighborhood, such as the use of websites, newsletters, surveys, and open houses. However, despite facing limitations in federal funding, these agencies went beyond the minimum requirements to engage populations that are often overlooked, such as nursing home residents and high school students. They also attempted to overcome barriers to participation by employing innovative methods like door-to-door visits and "kitchen conversations."

In their efforts to engage residents, LMHA and LMG utilized a diverse range of public engagement techniques, including information-dissemination tools, information-gathering methods, capacity-building techniques, and advisory committees. Moreover, they provided citizens with varying degrees of control over project decisions, such as during the Action Activities project where they granted residents full constitutional DM authority. By offering this range of options, these local officials demonstrated a commitment to fostering meaningful community engagement and empowering residents to shape the future of their neighborhoods. Altogether, this study demonstrates that the level and type of authority delegated to citizens through public engagement methods serve as strong indicators of urban planners' attitudes toward public participation.
5.5 Limitations and Future Research

This study, however, also has some limitations. First, one of the limitations of this dissertation research is that the coding of data was conducted solely by the author, with initial assistance from a research assistant during the coding of the first two organizational interviews. This raises potential questions regarding the validity of the coding process, as it lacked extensive inter-coder reliability checks (Ratacyzk et al., 2016). However, it is important to note that the author had prior experience as a core coding/research assistant during the development of the initial state-reinforced Self-Governance (SRSG) coding system by DeCaro et al. (in press). During the span of years for this previous project, the author gained valuable insights and familiarity with the coding norms and methodologies. The project included multiple rounds of feedback to amend the coding system and data entries (Ratajczyk et al., 2016). Efforts were made to replicate and adhere to these established coding norms in the current research project, thereby mitigating some concerns regarding the coding process' validity and reliability. Additionally, the author had the opportunity to engage with senior personnel involved in the SRSG project, like the director/chair of this dissertation, as needed to clarify coding procedures and address potentially ambiguous passages. Nevertheless, the absence of extensive inter-coder reliability checks remains a limitation that should be acknowledged when interpreting the study's findings and conclusions.

Second, another limitation of this dissertation research pertains to the use of convenience sampling methods for selecting resident and microbusiness stakeholders, which may have resulted in a skewed profile of informants. Specifically, the study observed a higher participation rate among male informants (68%), contrary to the typical
observation in community-based research where females are often more engaged (e.g. Kane & Macaulay, 1993; Silverman et al., 2019; Sun et al., 2024). It is possible that the effect of the interviewer’s gender (female) may have elicited higher participation responses among male informants than female informants (Groves & Fultz, 1985). The deviation from the expected gender distribution in participation suggests a potential bias in the sample composition, which could influence the overall neighborhood perceptions and insights gathered, particularly stakeholders' perspectives on issues such as access to revitalization planning processes. To help minimize and control for interviewer effects, future studies should ideally pursue larger sample sizes as well as utilize a diverse and large interviewing personnel (Davis et al., 2010).

Related to the previous limitation was the difficulty encountered in obtaining extensive and in-depth interviews with residents and microbusiness owners within the neighborhood. Many individuals expressed distrust or reluctance to participate in recorded interviews for research purposes, which presented challenges in securing a sufficiently large and diverse sample size. As a result, I was unable to interview the total number of neighborhood stakeholders initially planned for the study, leading to a smaller sample size of thirty-four. The limited sample size may have restricted the range and depth of perspectives captured within the study, potentially biasing the results towards those individuals who were more willing to participate in interviews. Additionally, the difficulty in obtaining interviews with a representative sample of neighborhood stakeholders raises questions about the generalizability of the findings beyond the boundaries of Russell. The perceptions and experiences of those who were willing to participate may not fully reflect the broader diversity of perspectives within the
neighborhood. Even with these concerns, it is deduced that the interview data collected is sufficiently rich and diverse to address the research questions as I began to observe a saturation of ideas halfway through the residents’ interview phase. Yet, future studies may consider coupling the interviews with survey data to proactively mitigate any potential adverse effect on the study’s representativeness.

Despite the above limitations, the findings of this case study offer several opportunities for additional research. Potential lines of research include the following:

One future research direction stemming from this study includes exploring the experiences and perspectives of past residents of Beecher Terrace who were relocated, and examining factors influencing their decisions to return or not to return to the remodeled Beecher Terrace. Conducting interviews with these residents would provide valuable insights into their perceptions of the participation processes, involvement in the neighborhood revitalization efforts, as well as shed light on the determinants of their present residential choices. A comparative analysis between past residents who returned to Beecher Terrace and those who chose alternative living arrangements would allow for a deeper understanding of the diverse pathways and outcomes of neighborhood revitalization initiatives. Future studies could explore differences in demographic characteristics, socioeconomic status, prior neighborhood attachment, and experiences with the revitalization process between the two groups. Such comparative analysis could elucidate the impacts of revitalization efforts on residents' lives and inform strategies to address disparities in housing access and neighborhood development outcomes.

Future research should replicate the methodology employed in this study across different neighborhoods and cities to investigate the specific mechanisms and tools
employed by state and local governments to reinforce neighborhood self-governance
and/or compensate for the lack of constitutive and constitutional DM authorities inherent
in the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI). This could include analyzing policies,
programs, funding mechanisms, institutional structures, and capacity-building initiatives
aimed at empowering local communities and enhancing their decision-making authority.
Such a study could also study the impact of the combination of governmental efforts on
revitalization processes and outcomes. By conducting comparative case studies,
researchers can identify common trends, variations, and innovative approaches utilized in
different contexts. This expanded research scope would enhance understanding of the
dynamics of neighborhood governance, identify additional factors that contribute to
effective revitalization, and inform policy and practice at multiple levels of government.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development’s goal of achieving
sustainable outcomes is another important area for further research. A final
recommendation for further research is an analysis of different Transformation Plans
toward understanding the different ways CNI-sponsored revitalization projects are
producing outcomes that address the objectives of sustainable development. This study
would additionally investigate the level of community participation and empowerment
during the revitalization projects, and its relationship to the nature of revitalization
outcomes. Exploring the role of community-based governance in shaping revitalization
outcomes could inform the development of participatory and community empowerment
strategies that contribute to realizing sustainable development objectives.

Finally, a potential relationship could be drawn between past Russell
neighborhood redevelopment efforts and the planning and implementation of the CNI in
Russell. For example, the 1991 Russell Urban Renewal Master Plan is listed as one of the documents referenced during the preparation of Russell’s Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant application. There is also the renowned University of Louisville’s Housing and Neighborhood Development Strategies (HANDS) program, later renamed Sustainable Urban Neighborhoods (SUN) program. HANDS was oriented to revitalizing the east of Russell while SUN widened its reach to the west Louisville neighborhoods as a whole. Despite some claims of success, the University of Louisville’s researchers were no longer permitted to seek additional federal funding support for the program after 2002. The current distressed state of the West End neighborhoods like Russell raises questions about the robustness of the HANDS/SUN redevelopment efforts. For example, could more effective resident leadership trainings, coupled with continuous state reinforcement of neighborhood capacity for self-governance (e.g. authority, responsibility, operational resources), have enhanced the stability of the program’s success after the grant period? Did the program facilitate an important network of actors and processes whose impact influence the dynamics and success of ongoing neighborhood revitalization in Russell? Such complex adaptive governance systems have been known to emerge in similar contexts and are described as an “ecology of games” (Lubell, 2013). Future studies might find it worthwhile to additionally investigate the resulting outputs and outcomes of Russell’s current revitalization as a function of multiple games’ decisions made since the 1990s.
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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (ORGANIZATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS)

Introductory Background Statement:
Many urban neighborhoods throughout the U.S. are undergoing government-sponsored revitalization projects. These projects often focus on historically marginalized communities. Over the years, the government-sponsored programs and public policies for neighborhood revitalization have changed. A currently important program is the federal Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. For this research study, we would like to ask you some questions about the recent Choice Neighborhoods revitalization project that was carried out in Louisville’s Russell neighborhood. Particularly, we are interested in understanding how various stakeholders interacted and shaped key decisions and outcomes.

SECTION 1: ORGANIZATION AND YOUR POSITION
First, we would like to get a little information about your organization, and your role and experience.

1. Could you please **describe your organization** and its mission? (Follow-up:) What does the organization typically do to achieve the mission?
2. What is your **position and role** in the organization? (Follow up:) How long have you been working in this position?

SECTION 2: NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION
We would like to get a little information about your general experience with revitalization here in Louisville.

1. Have you been involved in or had any experience in the revitalization of neighborhoods in West End or Louisville Metro in general? Please explain.
2. Vision Russell was a multi-year collaborative effort between Louisville Metro government, nongovernmental organizations, and residents to develop revitalize the Russell neighborhood. Have you or your organization been involved in Russell’s revitalization? (Follow up:) Please describe the involvement.
   - For example, what role or roles did you play?
   - What did those roles involve?
   - What were the main activities you did as part of the revitalization?
SECTION 3: VISION RUSSELL’S TRANSFORMATION PLAN

From what we understand, one of the goals of the Vision Russell project was to develop a shared vision and strategies to revitalize the Russell Neighborhood. This process resulted in the creation of a plan called the Vision Russell Transformation Plan. We would like to ask you some questions about the creation of the Plan, the Plan itself, and its potential outcomes.

A. Your Role/Organization Role

1. Are you familiar with the Vision Russell Transformation Plan? Please explain your familiarity.

2. Have you or your organization been involved in the creation of the Vision Russell Transformation Plan?
   • What role did you or your organization play in designing the Plan?

3. Have you or your organization been involved in implementing the Vision Russell Transformation Plan?
   • What role did/does your organization play in carrying out the Plan?

B. Purpose

4. In your expert opinion, what was the purpose of the Plan and Planning process?

5. How do you think the plan and process has influenced Russell neighborhood revitalization and its outcomes?

6. (Follow-up:) Was Vision Russell planning and processes helpful for the revitalization project?
   • Is there anything you think worked especially well?
   • Poorly?

C. Collaborative (Co-Productive) Relationships and Processes

1. How would you characterize the relationship between the Plan’s vision/goals and your organization’s mission?
   • (Follow up:) Are these complementary, conflicting? In what ways?

2. Overall, would you describe the revitalization planning process as collaborative, among the important key stakeholders?

3. Did you find the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative to be helpful in creating specific important collaborative opportunities or processes for the revitalization of Russell?
4. Did the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative process trigger the creation of any partnership between you and/or your organization to carry out the revitalization? If so, what were these? What was the nature of them and their goals?
   • Why did you and/or your organization enter into the partnership(s)?

5. Is there any other information you would like to add about the Plan?

SECTION 4: GENERAL PROCESSES

We are also interested in understanding some general factors that potentially shaped the outcomes of Russell neighborhood revitalization.

1. Decision Authority/Influence: Who had the most important decision-making authority and influence over the revitalization process? (Follow-up) What main actors were most influential?

2. Responsibility: Who was responsible for the revitalization process?
   • In your expert opinion, were the right or best actors responsible?
   • Who do you think should be responsible for leading/coordinating Vision Russell (city, specific nonprofit, neighborhood)?

3. Participation/Engagement: What kinds of public participation and engagement were used to involve residents and businesses in the Vision Russell processes?

4. In your opinion, were residents and businesses sufficiently informed and appropriately involved in Vision Russell processes?

5. Representation: Were any important stakeholders left out of the process?
   • Who do you think should be involved in Vision Russell that was absent? (Follow-up:) Why do you think they should have been involved?

SECTION 5: OUTCOMES

1. Do you know if the current form of revitalization being experienced in Russell differs or coincides with the existing residents’ desires and expectations? (Follow-up:) Why do you think so?

2. In your opinion, what are the current outcomes of Russell’s revitalization? For example, in terms of changes in demographics, housing, economic trends, environmental changes?

SECTION 6: NEIGHBORHOOD GOVERNANCE

In some cases, residents create formal or informal community organizations to represent the residents in projects such as neighborhood redevelopment. We would like to understand how any such organizations may have been involved in the Vision Russell process.
A. General

1. Were there any community organizations that stood out for you, as being involved in the Vision Russell process? If so, please explain (e.g., what were they? what did they do?).

2. In your opinion, were these organizations helpful? [Or, if they did not exist, how could they have been helpful?]

B. Neighborhood Association

It is my understanding that there is currently a neighborhood association in the Russell Neighborhood. However, this organization may not have existed prior to the Vision Russell project. I would like to ask you some questions about that topic.

1. Do you have any idea about the existence of the Russell Neighborhood Association before the Vision Russell Project? Please explain.

2. Do you have any idea when, why, and how the Russell Neighborhood Association formed? And if the Choice Neighborhoods grant or Vision Russell process helped it to form?

3. How was the Russell Neighborhood Association involved in the Vision Russell Process?

4. How is the Association currently involved in the Russell Neighborhood?
   a. How active is the Association?
   b. What kinds of activities does it typically do?

5. Who directs the Association, and how much is the Russell community involved in its operations and decisions?

6. In your expert opinion, to what extent is the Association able to strongly represent the desires and expectations of Russell residents?

SECTION 7: STATE-REINFORCEMENT (ACTOR CAPACITY)

Different actors seem to bring different “things” to the table in a project like revitalizing a neighborhood. Different actors have different capacities and capacity limitations or constraints. We would like to understand how these factors may influence revitalization outcomes in a neighborhood like Russell.

A. Authorities/Powers

1. What are the most important authorities/powers your organization has to carry out its duties during the design and implementation of Vision Russell?
B. Responsibilities

2. What were your organization’s key responsibilities during Vision Russell? (Follow-up): How were these assigned? Did these match well with your organization’s own prior mission?

C. Operational Resources

3. How was the Vision Russell process funded?

4. How does your organization support itself financially? This information helps us understand the fiscal capacities and constraints of key stakeholders involved in the revitalization process.

5. What percentage of your organization’s operating expenses generally come from public/private sources?

6. Did your organization receive new funding in order to support its role in Russell’s revitalization?

D. Balanced Authorities-Resources

7. So, as we have discussed, your organization has certain authorities or powers and particular financial support. Were these powers and financial resources sufficient for your organization to carry out both its primary mission, and its duties during Vision Russell?

E. Flexibility/Stability

8. Are there any laws, policies, or procedures that seem to pose a significant challenge for your organization during Russell’s revitalization (to improve distressed neighborhood conditions)?

9. Are there any laws, policies, or procedures that seem to pose a significant challenge for your organization during Russell’s revitalization in terms of partnering with other organizations?

10. In what ways were your organization’s assigned authorities challenged during Russell’s revitalization, thus restricting your organization’s ability to act or make a decision?

11. In what ways were your organization’s authorities to make decisions concerning the Russell case reinforced or amplified during Russell’s revitalization?

12. Are there any ways in which existing laws, policies, or procedures could be more flexible to facilitate Russell’s revitalization or revitalization in other distressed neighborhoods?
13. Are there any ways in which existing laws, policies, or procedures could be more less flexible to facilitate Russell’s revitalization or revitalization in other distressed neighborhoods?

SECTION 8: MULTI-ACTOR COOPERATION (COOPERATIVE CAPACITY)

Many factors may affect opportunities and outcomes for collaboration during neighborhood revitalization. Next, I would like to ask you some questions about that topic.

A. Communication

1. We understand that residents and other governmental and non-governmental units were involved in Vision Russell in some way. Which groups or stakeholders were communicating with each other that you are aware of?
   - What did they tend to communicate about?

2. In your role during Vision Russell, who did you communicate with the most in carrying out your duties? (Follow-up:) How did you communicate?

3. Considering the previous questions about communication during the Vision Russell process, do you think communication was effective and sufficient among the parties involved?

B. Accountability and Enforcement

4. Were there any formal or informal mechanisms (rules, procedures) in place so that your organization and other parties could hold each other accountable for their responsibilities or agreements during the Vision Russell process?

   (Probe:) Federal government? City authorities? Peer organizations? Neighborhood?

5. Do you think the various parties were being held accountable by other means?

C. Equity

6. Do you think the costs and benefits of creating and implementing the Vision Russell project were shared fairly/equitably among the key stakeholders, including those with relatively more power and resources and those with relatively less?

7. Do you think the outcomes of Russell’s revitalization have been positive?
D. Conflict Resolution

8. Have there been any significant conflicts or disputes with any of the key stakeholders of Vision Russell and your organization, regarding duties or goals? (Follow-up:) If so, how were those typically resolved?

E. Well-Defined Boundaries

9. What are the boundaries of Russell neighborhood?

10. In your opinion, did all the parties know and agree on the boundaries of Russell neighborhood?

Thank you for your time today. Is there anything else you think I should know about this topic or look into for my project?
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (RESIDENTS AND MICROBUSINESSES)

Introductory Background Statement:
The federal Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grants for revitalizing distressed neighborhoods is expected to facilitate critical resource pooling and foster critical collaborations among key sectors and stakeholders, thereby enhancing revitalization processes and benefits for existing residents and businesses and the neighborhood as a whole. We are interested in understanding the design and implementation of the Choice Neighborhoods grants in the Russell neighborhood. Particularly, we are interested in understanding how various stakeholders interacted and shaped key decisions and outcomes. We are also interested in understanding how various actors were empowered and/or challenged in contributing to Russell's revitalization process.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND
First, we would like to get a little information about your yourself.

1. In which year were you born?
2. What is your highest level of education?
3. Do you live in Russell? (Follow-up:) How long have you lived in Russell?
4. Do you have a business in Russell? (Follow-up:) How long have you had this business there?
5. Can you tell me a little about what life/commercial activity was like in Russell when you came to live/work here for the first time or as you grew older?

SECTION 2: REVITALIZATION AND VISION RUSSELL TRANSFORMATION PLAN
We would like to get a little information about your general experience with revitalization in Russell. We are also interested in understanding the preparation process for Vision Russell, especially as relating to the development of the Vision Russell Transformation Plan along with its key contributors.
1. Have you been involved in or had any experience with the current revitalization efforts in Russell? (Follow-up:) Please describe your involvement.
2. Are you familiar with the Vision Russell Transformation Plan?
3. What role did you play in designing the Plan?
4. What role did you play in carrying out the Plan?
5. How would you characterize the relationship between the Plan’s vision/goals and the neighborhood’s vision/goals? (Follow up:) Are these complementary, conflicting? In what ways?
6. Is there any other information you would like to add about the Plan?

SECTION 3: NEIGHBORHOOD GOVERNANCE

It is my understanding that there is currently a neighborhood association in the Russell Neighborhood. However, this organization may not have existed prior to the Vision Russell project. I would like to ask you some questions about that topic.

7. Do you have any idea about the existence of the Russell Neighborhood Association before the current Russell revitalization project? Please explain.
8. Do you have any idea when, why, and how the Russell Neighborhood Association formed? And if the Choice Neighborhoods grant or current Russell revitalization process helped it to form?
9. How is the Russell Neighborhood Association involved in the Russell revitalization process?
10. Who directs the Association?
11. Have you participated in any meeting(s) that have been promoted by the Association?
12. In your expert opinion, to what extent is the Association able to strongly represent the desires and expectations of Russell residents?

SECTION 4: MULTI-ACTOR COOPERATION (COOPERATIVE CAPACITY)

We would like to ask a little more about you and the neighborhood’s collaboration with other parties working on Russell’s revitalization.
11. Who did you communicate with the most during Vision Russell? (Follow-up:) How did you communicate?
12. In your opinion, was anyone left out of key communication processes? (Follow-up:) Could you explain in what ways?
13. Were you involved in key decision-making processes for Vision Russell?
14. Do you think all the important stakeholders made key decisions together? (Probe:) Which stakeholders made the key decisions for Vision Russell?
15. Do you think the decision-making processes were adequate and appropriate?
16. Were there any formal or informal mechanisms (rules, procedures) in place so that the neighborhood and other parties could hold each other accountable for their duties or agreements? (Probe:) Federal government? City authorities? Other organizations?
17. Do you think the various parties were being adequately and properly monitored?
18. What are the boundaries of Russell neighborhood?

SECTION 5: GENERAL QUESTIONS

Finally, we are interested in understanding some general factors that potentially shaped the outcomes of Russell neighborhood revitalization.

1. Who do you think should be responsible for leading/coordinating Vision Russell (city, specific nonprofit, neighborhood)? (Follow up:) Who currently has this responsibility?
2. Who do you think should be involved in Vision Russell that was absent? (Follow-up:) Why do you think they should have been involved?
3. How were you informed about different issues, events, meetings (both by governmental and non-governmental representatives)?
4. In your opinion, were residents and businesses sufficiently informed and appropriately involved in Vision Russell processes?
5. Do you think the current form of revitalization being experienced in Russell differs or coincides with the neighborhood’s desires and expectations? (Follow-up:) Why do you think so?
6. Have you noticed any change in the composition of the population or residents of the neighborhood? If so, how has this change been?

7. Have you seen some changes in the infrastructure of the neighborhood (lights, streets, businesses, security?) If so, what have they been? Have they been positives or negatives?

8. Have these changes affected your life and that of your family, and if so, how have they affected it?

Thank you for your time today. Is there anything else you think I should know about this topic or look into for my project?
### APPENDIX B: SAMPLE SRSG CODESHEET

**ACTOR CODING SHEET (SR)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor Coding Sheet (SR)</th>
<th>Focal Dilemma:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project:</td>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor:</td>
<td>Coder:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AUTHORITY (SR1): DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY**

Authorization to make decisions with regard to (A) an actor's own governance and operations ("internal decision-making authority, Self-governance") or (B) the focal dilemma ("decision making authority over the dilemma").

Authority (SR1) differs from Responsibility (SR2) in that Authority grants power to act, whereas Responsibility refers to a requirement to act or act in some way.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Identify any statements about DM authority, indicate whether it pertains to authority over "internal" affairs, the "dilemma," or both.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DM Authorization</td>
<td>Authorization/permission to make decisions regarding the actor's own governance/operations (&quot;self-governance&quot;), or the dilemma. Formally, this includes authority conferred by the official (legal) type of organization (e.g., status as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization confers internal decision authority).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM Authorization: Constitutional</td>
<td>Authorization pertaining to constitutional decision making (e.g., constitutional design, rulemaking, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM Authorization: Operational (Gen)</td>
<td>Authorization to make decisions pertaining to general daily operations and affairs, within the existing constraints of the constitutional arrangements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM Authorization: Operational (Fiscal)</td>
<td>Authorization to make decisions pertaining to fiscal operations and affairs, within the existing constraints of the constitutional arrangements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Choice Rules</td>
<td>Rules/policies that determine the process by which organizational/collective decisions are to be made, whether for internal affairs or the focal dilemma. Type and quality of collective choice rules may affect (modify) the extent that the actor can exercise its decision authority (i.e., its DM Authorization).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation</td>
<td>The actor's share of representation on (a) its internal decision-making bodies and/or (b) bodies that make decisions about the focal dilemma. Pertains to whether the actor has majority, minority, or equitable share/control over its internal decisions and/or decisions about the dilemma (e.g., such as with multistakeholder boards, partnerships, etc.).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Record statements that pertain to any of the above dimensions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Gov Self, Dilemma</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Bold relevant part(s)*
## EVALUATIVE CODING FORM: CAPACITY FOR SELF-GOVERNANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>AUTH</th>
<th>RESP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitutive</td>
<td>Perform essential constitutive actions (establish or give organized existence to something): organizational inception (form, incorporate the organization); define/bestow/create fundamental or inherent concepts, elements (e.g., roles, rights, duties, functions, processes) [Constitutive Capacity]</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constitutional DM</strong></td>
<td>Make decisions about its fundamental social contract: organizational makeup, mission, processes, rules, and major activities [Constitutional DM Capacity]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Collective Choice</strong></td>
<td>Subcomponent of Constitutional DM: Determine the procedures (rules) by which organizational / collective decisions are to be made: collective choice arrangements ensure democratic decision-making, equitable influence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Representation</strong></td>
<td>Subcomponent of Constitutional DM: Possess appropriate share of representation on its internal constitutional decision body: whether the actor has majority, minority, or equitable share/control over internal decisions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constitutional RM</strong></td>
<td>Codify constitutional decisions as constitutional rules (&quot;fundamental social contracts&quot;; e.g., bylaws) that govern the actor. [Constitutional Legislative Capacity]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative DM</td>
<td>Make administrative decisions pertaining to general/routine operations and affairs (within constitutional constraints). *These are non-constitutional, implementation decisions. (Administrative DM Capacity)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative RM</td>
<td>Codify operational rules (e.g., norms, best practices) in service of executing core functions of the organization or collective, without altering the constitutional rules or arrangements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Regulation</td>
<td>Monitor own (e.g., collective, organizational, member) actions, enforce rules, and implement punishments, rewards, and/or remediation for behavior change and/or compliance.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Viability (External)</td>
<td>External sources of funding/fiscal capacity.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiscal Viability (Self-Sufficiency)</td>
<td>Internal or inherent sources of funding/fiscal capacity (e.g., by virtue of org. type or status).</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX D: SUSTAINABILITY CODING SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wheeler Criteria</th>
<th>Transformation Plan Indicator</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Indicator Rating</th>
<th>Average Rating</th>
<th>Median Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building Form and Scale</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diverse housing sizes <em>(smaller and affordable units; bigger units for families)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Addition of mixed income housing</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Building scale is moderate in scale</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Climate Mitigation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced energy use, plus funding mechanisms, &amp; monitoring services</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce motor vehicle use <em>(compact, mixed use design, bicycle &amp; pedestrian improvements, car sharing &amp; appropriate pricing of parking &amp; transit)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Resilient &amp; green building design</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Green Building</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Require passive solar design, geothermal AC, &amp; LEED certification for new projects</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage larger-scaled green strategies like district heating</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encourage green retrofits like green roofs &amp; solar power units</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide technical assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Low-Impact Transportation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced parking spaces at green project sites</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage developers to provide shared vehicles</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage space-saving parking strategies e.g. stacked parking</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase bike and pedestrian connections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehensively Designed Green Streets</td>
<td>Use a street as a demonstration project of complete streets with many design features</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reconnect bicycle &amp; pedestrian access across needed streets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create parklets for on-site drainage &amp; sidewalk seating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecological Restoration</td>
<td>Add pockets of parks &amp; native green spaces</td>
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<td>Encourage green walls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stormwater Drainage Mitigation</td>
<td>By design or by contributing to a green infrastructure fund to offset poor practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landscaped swales for stormwater runoff, rain gardens, permeable paving etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Systems</td>
<td>Improve neighborhood food access strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop community gardens etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitate a Co-op Retail Store</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthen the Local Economy</td>
<td>Provide space for &amp; facilitate innovation in small businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central locations where professionals from diverse backgrounds can work &amp; play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage food-related businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with existing commercial owners on business retention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address Social Equity Concerns</td>
<td>Neighborhood zoning ordinance to promote mixed income housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide incentives for nonprofit developers of affordable housing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strengthen and Utilize Historic Heritage</strong></td>
<td>Use historical sites as focal points for arts, plazas &amp; pocket parks</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorporate and Facilitate Civic Infrastructure and Art</strong></td>
<td>Preserve &amp; commemorate historic sites &amp; structures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorporate and Facilitate Civic Infrastructure and Art</strong></td>
<td>Create small plazas and pocket parks for social gathering &amp; everyday life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorporate and Facilitate Civic Infrastructure and Art</strong></td>
<td>Use art to delineate green living areas</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorporate and Facilitate Civic Infrastructure and Art</strong></td>
<td>Add public art installations</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorporate and Facilitate Civic Infrastructure and Art</strong></td>
<td>Coordinate locals to help contribute to public art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Work with social service providers to mitigate existing social ills and address new ones that emerge with mixed-housing projects
- Improved transit services
- Create a college-going culture; more accessible & affordable
CURRICULUM VITAE

Gifty Amma Adusei

1500 South 5th Street, Unit 116, Louisville KY 40208 | gaadus01@louisville.edu | (317) 701 8530

EDUCATION

**PhD Urban and Public Affairs, Sustainable Development Planning**
University of Louisville (UofL), Louisville, Kentucky
*Dissertation:* Using the State-Reinforced Self-Governance Framework to Evaluate Neighborhood Revitalization in the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative

**Master of Public Affairs, Environmental Policy and Sustainability**
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), Indianapolis, Indiana

**Bachelor of Science in Administration, Public Administration**
University of Ghana (UG), Legon, Ghana

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

**Graduate Research Assistant (SD/M & Sustainability Research Lab)**
Department of Urban and Public Affairs - UofL
- Coded interviews and policy data using State-Reinforced Self-Governance/Adaptation framework and methodologies
- Analyzed greenspace policies and identified leverage points for greater success in collaborative problem-solving
- Researched, evaluated, and synthesized literature for various research papers
- Mentored undergraduate researchers in the Research Lab

**Instructor of Record – Undergraduate Course**
Department of Urban and Public Affairs - UofL
*Sustainable Societal Systems (SUST 403)*
- Fall 2022
- Prepared course materials such as syllabi, lesson plans, assignments, and exams
- Delivered lectures to students on topics such as sustainable cities and co-production
- Guided students to think and analyze critically through in-depth lectures and case study analyses

**Graduate Teaching Assistant – Undergraduate & Graduate Courses**
Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences – UofL
*Introduction to Psychology (PSYC 201)*
- August 2023 – May 2024
- Coordinated materials for bi-weekly exams
- Assessed and graded student papers

Department of Urban and Public Affairs – UofL
*Urban Experiential Learning (UPA 691)*
- Spring 2023
- Coordinated class activities
- Organized course materials for ease of access
Introduction to Sustainability (SUST 101)  
- Delivered guest lectures and guided in-class discussions  
- Evaluated and graded students’ assignments, in-class work, and exams  

Sustainable Societal Systems (SUST 403/UPA 676)  
- Facilitated in-class break-out groups and provided guidance to students on semester project work  
- Evaluated student essays, online discussions, and presentations  

Graduate Assistant  
School of Public and Environmental Affairs - IUPUI  
- Researched, collated, evaluated, and organized information from local government websites, reports, and maps to create a cohesive dataset of floodplain and flood-related data on all 50 U.S. states  
- Analyzed the sustainability of local flood plans and policies for flood-prone areas  
- Identified, assessed, and extracted arts and culture materials for examining artists’ role in public sector decision-making  
- Coordinated work and meetings with research partners across city and state lines  

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE  
Urban Naturalist  
Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Indianapolis, Indiana  
- Restored native habitats through invasive species removal and native plants maintenance in Indianapolis woodlands  
- Engaged neighborhood residents in community-based environmental stewardship  
- Actively participated in maintaining community greenspaces, stormwater planter beds, and rain gardens  
- Planned and led student groups on native species-focused hikes  

Sustainability Intern  
Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Indianapolis, Indiana  
- Led the design and development of an evaluation matrix for tracking greenspace conditions  
- Engaged residents and volunteers in maintaining greenspaces for environmental sustainability  
- Investigated, analyzed, and identified issues of concern and factors affecting the health of the greenspaces  
- Compiled relevant data on select greenspace projects towards IU Prepared for Environmental Change program  

Field/Office Assistant  
J-Life Ghana, Ashongman Estates, Accra, Ghana  
- Gathered data on distressed communities towards the 12-Village Initiative program  
- Liaised with diverse partners to assemble operational resources for distressed communities’ welfare programs  
- Facilitated leadership training for youth leaders in distressed communities  
- Prepared materials for quarterly newsletters and reports for mission partners  

Operations and Front Desk Manager  
Le Suites Serviced Apartments, Accra, Ghana  
- Co-designed and developed the Apartment’s menu and publicity materials  
- Compiled a front desk and housekeeping handbook  
- Prepared budgets for the front desk, restaurant, and special events departments
MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW


CONFERENCE PRESENTATION AND POSTER
“Using the State-Reinforced Self-Governance Framework to Evaluate Neighborhood Revitalization in the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.” 17th Annual GSC Regional Research Conference, University of Louisville, 27 March 2024

“An Assessment of State Governments’ Initiatives in Building Resilient Communities.” Environmental, Energy and Natural Resources Law Symposium, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, 22 March 2019

AWARDS
Dean’s Supplement Award ($1,000), Graduate School, University of Louisville (2022)
Dean’s Council Scholarship: Janet McCabe ($1,000), School of Public & Environmental Affairs, Indiana University (2019)

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS
Mentor Collective Licensing Summer 2022
Doctoral Teaching Seminar Fall 2021
Graduate Teaching Assistant Academy Fall 2021
Mentoring Academy Summer 2021

SKILLS
• Software Packages: Microsoft Office (Advanced), ESRI ArcGIS (Proficient), STATA (Proficient), SPSS (Working Knowledge), R-Studio (Working Knowledge), Python (Working Knowledge)
• Excellent written and oral communication skills: honed through public speaking and academic writing
• Strong analytical skills: reinforced through review of numerous academic papers and media articles
• Excellent planning and time management skills: evidenced through timely completion of assigned tasks

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Mentor for Sustainability Undergraduates – IUPUI August 2022 – August 2023
Lead Volunteer at Paws Pantry – IUPUI February 2018 – May 2019