
ASSESSING THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH COMMUNITY OUTREACH PARTNERSHIP CENTER (COPC)

CAPSTONE SEMINAR IN PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

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DEVELOPMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2000, the University of Pittsburgh's Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) has supported collaborative outreach endeavors with university and neighborhood partners. The focus of COPC is to strengthen citizens' and organizations' capacity to aid their respective communities. The COPC is designed to assist community organizations and neighborhood revitalization through research, funding, and networking opportunities.

Assessing the University of Pittsburgh Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) is an evaluation constructed by students in the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs Capstone Seminar, spring 2007, led by Professor Sabina Deitrick. Students in the class evaluated the effectiveness of COPC in terms of its stated mission. This report examines organizational capacity, organizational networking, student impact and outcomes, community building and performance outcomes, and neighborhood development.

1. Capacity Building of the COPC partners is essential to the evolution of the organization.

Most community partners in the COPC are relatively small, nonprofit organizations. Lack of sustainable financial funding streams, limited internal controls, and insufficient administrative support are all areas common to most organizations in the COPC partnership. However, these organizations through the COPC partnership can work together in understanding and developing their own capacity building initiatives to fulfill their organizations mission. Analysis has shown the COPC to be an effective tool in building capacity among partners.

2. Community Building creates stronger neighborhoods, furthering the mission of COPC and its partners.

Investigation into the progress reports of COPC found that the COPC has completed to date half of the 91 tasks identified in its New Directions proposal and half of those tasks completed contributed to *Visioning/Planning* (52%) and *Participation* (49%) in the COPC neighborhoods. Fewer tasks were completed that contributed to *Identify* (33%), *Connectedness* (31%) or *Trust* (33%). Nonetheless, a majority of the programs contributed to building sustainable neighborhoods. The reports indicate that multiple partners contributed by participating in only one or two programs, but these programs were centered on community building. There are differences among the COPC programs regarding their effects on community building. The Active Living program has the highest focus on participation, the Community Organizing activities on Visioning and Planning, while the Neighborhood Database Project ranks highest on Connectedness. Only one activity, the Hazelwood Block Club project, contributed to all indicators of community building.

3. Research Service Learning and Service Learning are valuable contributions to the communities, while providing students with opportunities to engage in scholarship and experience in community development.

Interns facilitated the mission of COPC of engaging in applied research and service-learning experiences that address community needs, as well as develop student academic, leadership, and citizenship skills and responsibilities.

4. **Trust** between the organizational partners is imperative in maintaining healthy relationships.

COPC was successful in promoting networking and developing trust between partners, including COPC.

5. **Neighborhood development** is the constant ambition of community organizations, and COPC is essential in providing support to their mission.
6. **Furthering the educational mission of the University.** A survey administered to former and current COPC interns found that COPC played important roles in their educational experience while at Pitt. Specifically:
 - COPC played a positive impact on the community where students worked (74%).
 - The COPC internship had a positive impact on their academic studies (58%).
 - Nearly all respondents recorded that the skills they acquired played a significant role in their professional development.
7. **COPC has been important in the development of student interns and their role in the community.** The COPC has positively affected their educational experience at Pitt and their professional development. The COPC experience allowed interns to learn about Pittsburgh's neighborhoods and, more importantly, about the critical issues that Oakland and Hazelwood face on a daily basis. COPC has been fundamental in development for the past seven years but their greatest contribution has been the ability to foster a desire in post graduates to stay in the Pittsburgh area and continue in reaching out to make the City a better

Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn from this study.

1. **COPC should implement a method of measuring its networking goals.** It may seem difficult to measure, but social network analysis provides a methodology to measure networking, as we have demonstrated in this study.
2. **We recommend that a contract be formulated at the onset of each grant for each partner** to clearly state the goals and objectives of the project to solidify the commitment level of the organization and their resources (time, money, other) for the agreed duration of the project. Since the partnership needs to be fluid and adapt with circumstance, then a stipulation in the contract should insert a line that states and other changes as agreed upon by both parties will be contractually binding as well.

3. **COPC should apply the *Staging Organizational Capacity* model to its own organization.** This is an important step to measure its current capacity as it strives to institutionalize the formal organization and its mission in the University of Pittsburgh.
4. **Future COPC programs should include components that Connect communities to their neighbors, promote neighborhood Identity, and directly connect with the University classes or programs (Trust).** Looking at the COPC overall, about half of the 91 tasks reported as completed contributed to *Visioning/Planning* (52%) or *Participation* (49%), but only one third contributed to *Identity* (33%), *Connectedness* (31%) or *Trust* (33%). COPC clearly has chosen to focus on tasks that address community health and land use issues, which lend themselves to *Visioning/Planning* and *Participation*. However, these projects could also address the other aspects of community building without sacrificing their core benefits. The trust analysis from Chapter 2 shows that COPC has the capacity to expand trust relationships in the partner neighborhoods. It needs to expand this work.
5. **COPC needs to recognize the contributions of “occasional friends” and work to make more connections with them.** Many partners did just a little work, although they contributed a lot to community building.
6. **The Active Living & Youth Development activities in Oak Hill should be expanded as soon as possible.** A new agreement between the University and Oak Hill developers may open the door for renewed cooperation through COPC.
7. **COPC should use the data management tool developed here to enable COPC managers to better track the program’s progress.** Some objectives that were successfully completed were either not reported or were poorly reported in the two Progress Reports.
8. **OPDC should continue to focus on areas specified by their housing strategy, particularly in areas which require additional housing.** The progress made in Oakland’s housing stock is noteworthy, but it is evident that not all the goals have been achieved. Revamping and adding new housing is a constant process, especially in an area where housing is in high demand. Housing stock in Oakland neighborhoods will have to continue to grow, paralleling the expansion of the university. The university has added several dormitories in recent years, notably in the north end of campus (ex. Pennsylvania Hall). While the university has made accommodations for additional students, Oakland must anticipate a higher demand for housing.
9. **Hazelwood Initiative should continue to focus on areas targeted by the master plan, focusing on the reduction of blighted houses.** Hazelwood must continue to work toward becoming a sustainable community. Ridding the neighborhood of blighted property and thwarting a population decline are achievable goals in need of ongoing efforts.
10. **The Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System needs improvement to become a more effective planning tool for community organizations.** Some of the issues with the system in creating this report include:

- Lack of updated information.
- Color schemes are difficult to comprehend.
- Navigational ability somewhat complex.
- Overlapping of variables tricky to comprehend.
- Getting data on the specific community was more complex than it should be.
- More data would have made findings more significant.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For the past six years, the University of Pittsburgh has embarked on a project with an ambitious goal: re-build a community that the school had once neglected. Through a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Pitt founded the Community Outreach Partnership Center to connect with its neighbors and institutionalize community service.

This report is an attempt to evaluate those efforts.

The evaluation is the product of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) Capstone Seminar in Planning and Economic Development. For most of the students in the class, this is their final project at GSPIA. They come to the class from different disciplines and holding complimentary skill sets: Urban & Regional Affairs, Social Work, Policy Research & Analysis and Non-Profit Management. The evaluation tools they chose were just as diverse:

- A survey of the experience of the student interns who implement COPC;
- A probe of the organizational capacity of COPC's two main community partners;
- A social network analysis of COPC partners to determine levels of trust;
- A content analysis of progress reports to chart the COPC's outputs;
- A GIS survey of COPC neighborhoods to see if the program has made a difference.

As the New Directions phase of the COPC wraps up, we hope this analysis enables the program to adjust and improve and institutionalize, fulfilling HUD's ideal for a university/neighborhood partnership.

History and Purpose

COPC represents Pitt's effort to overcome neighborhood opposition following decades of university expansion and decades more of distrust.

Opposition to Pitt's land use decisions began in the 1960s after the school converted from a private institution to a "state-affiliated" university (Deitrick, 2004). Plans to replace the sports venue, Forbes Field, with classrooms and to expand student housing into existing neighborhoods in the late 1960s solidified public opinion against Pitt. People's Oakland (now a major COPC partner) was founded in 1970 to try to delay the construction of the new dorms.

"Eminent domain, the acquisition of property, the lack of relocation of residents, and the destruction of Forbes Field provided the sparks for neighborhood residents and activists. Community opposition at the grassroots level emerged and organized as the confrontation with the University intensified. As in many areas across the country, community efforts to battle eminent domain and redevelopment resulted in new community development corporations (CDCs) in these neighborhoods" (Deitrick, 2004, p. 4).

The election of Peter Flaherty as Mayor of Pittsburgh in 1969 signaled the end of the road for the University's expansion plans. From then on, nothing would happen without extensive neighborhood involvement. Many efforts of cooperation were developed over the intervening decades.

The latest effort at cooperation is the Community Outreach Partnership Center program, launched by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 1994.

"A core premise of the program is that university engagement in communities is best done via collaborative, mutually-respectful, mutually-beneficial partnerships." (Vidal 2002. p. 6).

HUD founded the COPC program to encourage collaborations between universities and their surrounding neighborhoods (Vidal 2002). HUD envisioned the COPCs as organizations that would become self-sustaining, not just by generating revenues (HUD's grants were limited to four years for the first grant and two years for the second), but by institutionalizing community involvement into the very structure of the university, through service learning or applied research.

The University of Pittsburgh received its first COPC grant from HUD in 2000. A two-year extension was awarded in 2005 for the New Directions programs. The new programs focused on community organizing, active living, and building a neighborhood information system. A chart of the COPC grant and the subsequent New Directions grant from HUD are summarized in Appendix A.

Research Questions

The purpose of our report is to establish if COPC has been effective in carrying out its mission. We first look at how COPC has built the capacity of two of its partnering organizations, Oakland Planning and Development Corporation (OPDC) and Hazelwood Initiative (HI). We chose to look at these two organizations because HI signified a desire to be assessed in how the organization has grown. Contrasting this relatively new organization against an established partner provides HI with a template of how it can build its capacity. We then chose to look at the entire spectrum of COPC partners through social network analysis. We wanted to know which organizations had the strongest partnership with COPC. Further, we wanted to know how much the organizations trusted the university, given the habitual tension communities have with large universities.

Students are a major part of COPC because it is through their internships, partial employment, and class work that COPC is successful. We asked the students how the COPC experience helped them further their education and careers, as well as the impact they had on the communities they serves.

Every program evaluation needs to address the issue of what services have been provided. The progress reports were analyzed to find out what programs, based on the COPC logic model, and which of the partners carried out these plans. We examined each program further to understand what type of role they had in carrying out the goals of community partnerships.

We wanted to find out if COPC is having an impact on changing the neighborhoods' housing stock for the better. We wanted to do so with the information system developed by COPC, the

Pittsburgh Community and Neighborhood Information System. The alternative result was finding how well the tool worked for neighborhood planning.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our course instructor, Prof. Sabina Deitrick, whose leadership has been our motivation all semester to complete a first-rate evaluation. We would also like to thank Tracy Soska and John Wilds of the COPC, David Blenk of Oakland Planning and Development Corp., Jim Richter of the Hazelwood Initiative, Dr. Russell Schuh of the Education School at Pitt, Professor Patrick Doreian of the Sociology Department, Tami Hirth of the COPC, and all the partners, students, and Pitt alumni who answered multiple requests for surveys.

CHAPTER 2 UNDERSTANDING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Organizational capacity is vital to understanding an organization's ability to grow with effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery and implementation. "The ability of an organization to successfully implement and complete a new project or to expand an existing one is known as its capacity. Organizational capacity can be thought of as whether a vessel can carry any more without spilling some, and not only as the size of the vessel." (Schuh et al, 2006, p 2.1) By understanding one's own level of capacity and development, an organization can determine if a project is within reach or if it should be reviewed at a later state in time.

The purpose of this evaluation was to answer the fundamental research question: *How do you know what an organization's capacity is in relation to its ability to implement new programs or improve existing ones?* Many times, organizations take time and energy to create extensive strategic and business plans, but rarely refer back to the documents once they are completed. As a result, too many organizations drift away from their mission and vision statements in an attempt to expand their programs and services. Moreover, many times organizations try to build capacity in areas inappropriate for their stage of development. Consequently, organizations tend to be consumed and/or extremely stressed by these decisions in the short and long run. Organizations, who inappropriately build capacity, end up experiencing obvious impacts on the quality and quantity of core services offered to their clients.

This part of the evaluation's aim is to assist COPC member organizations in understanding their own organizational capacity in relation to their overall operating options. We strongly believe that both small and large organizations can benefit from gaining insight on organizational capacity. More mature agencies that are fully functioning at the utmost level of efficiency and capacity can experience problems related to capacity when attempting to add a new program or service just as easily as less developed agencies. Through introducing the organizational capacity model to a select few organizations involved in the COPC, it was expected that these COPC member organizations would then gain knowledge about potential growth opportunity for more effective service delivery and outreach. The assessment process has a strong focus on smaller organizations, enabling us to provide more appropriate feedback in understanding and possibly enhancing their organizational capacity.

Participants

For an in-depth analysis of organizational capacity, two COPC organizations were chosen: Hazelwood Initiative (HI) and Oakland Planning and Development Corporation (OPDC). The Hazelwood Initiative is a relatively new organization that has grown up with COPC, while OPDC has a long standing history in the Oakland community and joined a number of the efforts of the COPC in its inception and growth as a university/community partnership program. For a brief synopsis of each organization, please refer to Table 2.1.

Methodology/Assessment Tool

In order to effectively and efficiently assess HI and OPDC, we utilized an instrument known as *Staging Organizational Capacity*, hereafter referred to as *SOC* (Schuh and Levitan, 2006). The SOC was developed by Dr. Russell Schuh and his collaborators through the Robert Wood

Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to improve health and healthcare of Americans. The *SOC* instrument is a reliable and valid framework for understanding, assessing, and evaluating the capacity of community agencies. Much of the conclusions of the assessment are based upon interviews with each Executive Director, a few outside interviews of interns, employees, and the dissection of numerous organizational documents.

	Hazelwood Initiative	Oakland Planning & Development Corporation
Mission	To act as a catalyst for the revitalization of the Greater Hazelwood community by working in collaboration with the city, county and state representatives.	A community-based organization that engages in planning and development activities that contributes to the revitalization of Oakland.
Vision	N/A	A stronger, healthier, and better Oakland.
Date of Establishment	1999 as a non-profit 501(c)(3) community-based organization	1980 as a non-profit 501 (c) 3 community-based organization.
Exec. Director	Jim Richter	David Blenk
Total Employees	2 staff, 1 full-time, 1 part-time	11
Annual Budget	FY 2007: \$204, 844	FY 2007: \$999,035
Major Funding Sources	ACCBO, CDBG, Mainstreet, State Dept of Health, PPND, DCED	Development revenues, Foundation grants, PPND, ACCBO
Board Size	9 Members	13 Members
Board Length of Term & Service	Two year staggered terms	3 year staggered terms, no consecutive term limit
By-laws	Easily accessible, revised regularly by Board	Accessible: very detailed and followed
Communities Served	Greater Hazelwood: Hazelwood, Glenwood, Glen Hazel, & Riverside	Oakland
Major Programs	Community organizing & advocacy Health education & outreach Neighborhood planning Business district development Housing development	Community advocacy/ community organizing Housing and commercial development Job seeking skills training
Website	www.hazelwoodhomepage.com/	www.oaklandplanning.org/index

The SOC is an observational assessment tool based upon research and practice of non-profit organization lifecycles and their ability to develop organizational capacity. It is based upon the application of

a maturity model and scoring rubric that guide the assessment levels of the organization. In the realm of education research, this approach is extremely common, mostly due to its ability to improve in both reliability and validity through repetitive application and revision each time it is taught and then applied to organizations (Schuh et al, 2006). It has currently been applied to over 55 organizations across different sectors, communities, states, geographic regions, and for varying purposes. The SOC is typically used in three main ways: (1) to assess agency capacity at a single point in time, (2) to describe capacity development, and (3) to evaluate capacity building initiatives. It can be applied at any organization at any stage of development, with the

more significant changes most likely to occur in the earlier stages. By more accurately understanding capacity levels, organizations can enhance their capacity in ways that are more appropriate for their stage and pattern of development. Each organization was assessed by using the five main organizational features defined by the SOC instrument;

- Governance
- Financial resources
- Organizational maturity
- Internal operations
- Core services.

With such significant and promising development in the SOC instrument in recent years, it has reached the development level in which it can now be used by other non-profit organizational experts outside of the development team. By having individuals with such expertise use the SOC model, it is expected that they will be able to detect the underlying pattern and issues in organizational capacity precisely and effectively, ultimately increasing the reliability and validity of the assessment tool.

Nonetheless, it is still considered to be very much a work in progress, so refinement and validation through observation and reaction to observations are requested to help improve the instrument. It is through this effort that Dr. Russell Schuh of the Department of Administrative and Policy Studies, School of Education, at the University of Pittsburgh agreed to work with the Capstone Evaluation class in explaining how to understand and apply the SOC instrument to selected organizations involved in the COPC. In order to completely understand the organizational evaluation of Hazelwood Initiative and Oakland Planning Development Corporation, attached below is a brief summary of each of the five stages that consist of the SOC instrument.

Stages of Organizational Development

A description for each stage of development as well as an example of a current organization in the Greater Pittsburgh area that compliment each stage is applied to further understand the differences between the stages.

Stage 1- Initial start-up or small agency- Organizations that are just beginning and have not had the time to become fully operational, those that have not acquired appropriate licenses and those that could have devolved from more mature stages. Organizations that are engaged in advocacy, crisis response, neighborhood organizations, or direct social support services are common stage 1 organizations because of their need to have informal mechanisms to meet the immediate needs of their clientele.

Example: Hazelwood Initiative

Stage 2- Advanced young or small agency- These organizations have more stable funding sources, built infrastructure, slightly differentiated roles, more formal procedures, and are many times in transition from the informal and multitasking of Stage 1 to the more formal bureaucratic attributes that emerge in Stage 3.

Example: The House of the Crossroads, Church located in the Hill District of Pittsburgh that provides substance abuse treatment services.

Stage 3- Established agency- Organizations possess adequate financial stability, differentiated internal operations, and core services, as well as these organization tends to be larger and older than less mature organizations. The executive will most likely work for the board and the board is well-attended and formal in its procedure.

Example: Turtle Creek Valley Mental Health/Mental Retardation, Inc.

Stage 4- Proficient agency- These are larger, older, and well funded organizations as Stage 4 attributes do not occur quickly. High levels of differentiation and specialization allows key staff to function at appropriate skill levels and the organization to evidence a mix of extremely formal and informal procedures. Research and Evaluation or Planning and Evaluation are oftentimes labeled as internal operations during this stage.

Example: University of Pittsburgh

Stage 5- Highly productive agency- Has complete control of its own destiny regardless the internal and external environment.

Example: Urban Institute, a non partisan economic and social policy research organization ¹

Results

The following section summarizes our main findings of the five core areas (Governance, Financial Resources, Organizational Maturity, Internal Operation, and Core Services) looked at in relation to OPDC and HI (see Tables 2.2 and 2.3). Take into consideration that time was a major limitation for this assessment. More specifically, due to the fact that we had a few short months to study both Oakland Planning and Development Corporation and Hazelwood Initiative, the following results are based on an overview of the organizational documents, websites, press releases and other such organizational documents. The purpose of this report was to provide an explanation of our application of the SOC instrument in learning how to understand, assess, and recognize attempts made by small non-profit organizations to build their overall capacity. Through our assessment and observation, the many organizations in the COPC partnership can work towards understanding and developing their own capacity building initiatives through the following common areas of capacity development.

¹ Due to the nature of the non-profit sector, most organizations lie within the first three stages of development and it is very rare to find non-profit organizations with Stage 4 or Stage 5 attributes. This is not to say that the non-profit is any less capable of providing intended services, the stage of an agency is not necessarily related to its service ability and may have excellent reasons for containing itself at a certain stage.

Table 2.2: Oakland Planning and Development Corporation

Feature	Stage of Development	Observation
Governance	2	Governance appears to be developed at a Stage 2 with a few Stage 1 attributes, but an active attempt to Stage 3. The board is very engaged with a high board attendance, differentiated skills, and contributions on multiple levels in response to its areas of weakness in striving towards Stage 3 governance.
Financial Resources	2	The organization is at Stage 2 of financial resource development with some attributes of Stage 3. Due to multiple funding sources the organization is able to carry out various projects including an extensive real estate portfolio to help offset the unstable funding environment. However, due to the limited funding options for their specific projects, capacity is therefore hindered at the current level.
Organizational Maturity	2	The organization is at a Stage 2 with some Stage 1 attributes. OPDCs organizational arrangement and infrastructure support is highly developed and could benefit from key players with higher levels of expertise to allow for continued growth and development. Due to specific service guidelines and operations, cross subsidization does not occur; potentially restraining optimal capacity initiative development.
Internal Operations	2	The organization is at a Stage 2 with a strong pursuit of Stage 3 attributes. Multiple internal controls are in place to significantly reduce fraud. Human resource department is limited, but further hiring will significantly increase capacity. Communication to stakeholders and constituents occurs on multiple levels and through many different techniques.
Core Services	2	The organization is at a Stage 2 with both Stage 1 and Stage 3 attributes. Due to the limitation in time, this is a much generalized score of all core services as we were not able to look into each core service as a part of OPDC. Overall, each of the core services appears to be maturing at different stages (very common in organizations), with attributes showing progress towards Stage 3 capacity.

Table 2.3: Hazelwood Initiative

Feature	Stage of Development	Observation
Governance	1	A participatory board tends to impede an organizations ability to mature further than Stage 1 because members are focused on their participants and not the maturity of the organization. Detailed By-laws and governance processes for such a new organization is something to be noted.
Financial Resources	1	Although, the Executive Director is actively attempting to diversify funds through numerous actions, the organization is still unstable and vulnerable.
Organizational Maturity	1	Having only 2 employees, 1 being full time and the other part time significantly hinders the capacity of an organization. Therefore, all tasks of the organization have to be cross-subsidized and limited differentiation of jobs can occur.
Internal Operations	1	At this point, due to a limited number of staff members, internal operations are forced to remain at current levels of operation. That being said, HI has made strides to what is possible with available resources.
Core Services	1	Due to the limitation in time, this is a generalized score of all core services at Hazelwood Initiative. However, the Stage 1 attributes in core services allow HI organization to provide rapid response and flexibility in serving its constituents.

Governance

All incorporated non-profit organizations have charters and by-laws as a requirement of incorporation. The relationship between boards and organization staff tends to vary between small and large agencies. As organizations mature, boards tend to grow in size and become more formal in their structure and work. However, the SOC's focus on governance is not on formal development but, rather, on organizational behavior, like how the board organizes itself or how it makes decisions.

Oakland Planning and Development Corporation just completed a significant board revision, a result of another assessment process. As a result of this process, OPDC has recognized areas in governance that need to be improved. The Executive Director has expressed several attempts to diversify the board have been made as well as changes that are still occurring. The by-laws are easily accessible and the Board revisits these statutes on a consistent basis. However, the most important issue at hand is the fact that the ED and other staff and stakeholders are very cognizant of the need for board reorganization to build a stronger, more engaged board. Therefore, although the OPDC may be at a Stage 2 in regards to governance, this is an organization that is aware of its weaknesses in pursuit of moving towards a stage 3.

Hazelwood Initiative has a larger board than it does staff members. With this said, it is a concern that board members of HI may take on the role of staff members, as opposed to leaders of the organization. Also, a participatory board tends to impede HI to mature further than Stage 1. Most of HI's board members have been with the organization since inception. Although, the governance structure encourages staggered terms, consecutive terms occur often with HI board members. HI's board is a valuable tool in the ability to grow capacity within the organization. Therefore, acknowledging these weaknesses in the governance structure and working towards improvement would facilitate capacity at Hazelwood Initiative.

Financial resources

The funding environment in the non-profit sector is very inconsistent and extends significant stress to organizations. Therefore, diversifying funding sources is key to developing a financially robust organization. Over the years, OPDC has skillfully diversified their funds. Unlike many organizations of this size, OPDC does not rely solely on typical funding streams and has reached out to grants and donation monies. HI has also used special events and membership fees to diversify funding for their organization.

At this stage, hiring an associate director for either organization would allow for significant increases in organizational capacity. This would allow the Executive Director to focus more on financial resources and fundraising and less on administrative details. OPDC also demonstrates great internal controls when handling their financial resources for an organization of this size. Most organizations of this size lack strong financial controls and consistency in handling financial resources. Implemented processes and procedures to carefully establish a strong internal control system distinguishes from Stage 2 to Stage 3 development.

Organizational maturity

In order for organizations to mature at a consistent level, adequate infrastructure of programs and operations needs to be developed. Each employee at OPDC has specific job responsibilities and duties clearly outlined in job descriptions, which can then also be acknowledged through OPDC's organizational chart. In contrast, HI has identifiable levels of cross subsidization of its programs due to limited staffing. More specifically, HI has not moved past Stage 1 development because differentiation is not present among job descriptions. The main factor that distinguishes OPDC from a Stage 1 to a Stage 2 organization is that each program and function is differentiated; funding and operations as well as employee's skills and knowledge are specific to that core service.

Due to the nature of the separate service entities, cross subsidization does not occur in OPDC, but regular communication across staff of programs does. The programs compliment the overall mission of OPDC, but do not appear to strongly support one another. Such compartmentalized programs (partly due to the nature of funding and constituents served) can restrain stronger organizational capacity development. The ability of an organization to cross-subsidize its programs ultimately increases organizational capacity through building new programs and initiatives.

Internal operations

Many organizations struggle in facilitating effective internal operating methods. Small non-profit agencies tend to lack sufficient supportive staff in distinguishing between routine and expert level tasks. With this said, OPDC recognizes their areas need of improvement and are actively working on hiring an associate director (by Summer 2007) to enable further funding development and human resource management. Lack of an administrative assistant does not imply that the organization is at a Stage 1, like many other COPC partners.

Finding very little need for traditional secretarial support, OPDC made a conscious decision to eliminate the secretarial position based upon their increased use of e-mail, voice mail, networked computers and therefore receive very little walk in traffic. However, a secretarial position could potentially take menial common day tasks and activities off the hands of the more skilled employees to allow use of more effective use of talent. Due to a limited number of staff members at HI, secretarial support could significantly enhance their operations and in turn increase capacity of programs.

In regards to communication with all levels of constituents, OPDC and HI routinely produce newsletters and mailings, door-to-door outreach activities, and constant contact with public relation officials. Such communication methods have proved essential in reaching the organization's target audience and marketing key programs and/or services. In organizations with limited employees, innovative communication outreach is vital in creating organizational capacity. Therefore, the COPC partnership creates an additional support tool in facilitating effective and cost efficient communication outreach.

Core services/maturity

Due to a limited timeframe, the core services offered by both organizations were not studied in depth. Brief overviews of the services main functions and operations were researched with a generalized assessment produced. Both OPDC and HI have defined, developed, and effective core service programs that work to complement the overall functioning of the organization. Although it is understood that each core service is designed in a unique and specialized way at OPDC, (largely due to very different funding streams), this somewhat limits capacity development of each service as a total function of OPDC as an organization. Unlike OPDC, HI has more core programs, but the programs are more integrated within each other, therefore producing a slightly higher degree of versatility in services offered.

Through such efficient and effective service delivery control mechanisms the core services can then progress, rather than regress organizational capacity. However, the challenge for most non-profit organizations is a lack of consistent funding for their core services and operations. It is not easy making a leap from stage 2 to a stage 3 etc. in a tough funding environment, which has been especially challenging for the non-profit community as a whole in recent years.

Recommendations for Future Use

In applying SOC to COPC organizations, we found it evident that SOC does not provide responsive feedback to relatively new organizations because of the limited development that has occurred. It will, however, detect changes in attributes of Stage 1 development with sensitivity. Non-profits differ in how and when they develop, not suggesting that one stage of development is necessarily better, as in the case of Hazelwood Initiative's Stage 1 ability to provide immediate response and flexibility to its community's needs. Nonetheless, SOC should be used once an organization has a chance to expand and grow and therefore develop its function and operation more fully. The SOC instrument can however, be an excellent tool at the sign of trouble, whether it is growth or collapse. It has the potential to help the organization understand their current capacity levels for future endeavors and therefore increase the stability of the organization.

Through understanding and applying the SOC instrument the following recommendations for future application of the SOC instrument to COPC organizations are explained. First, it is essential to obtain as many organizational documents as possible before talking with Executive Directors, staff, board members etc., as this can help develop a better understanding of organizations and therefore allow conversation to flow more freely. Second, use the SOC instrument on organizations as they enter the COPC to determine the maturity level capacity stage of the organization upon entrance of network. Then, if used yearly, the progress of building capacity among the organizations can be tracked as they become more involved in the COPC and ultimately develop more organizational capacity. Finally, if COPC truly wants to assist in developing its partner's capacity initiatives, it must use the results from each organizations SOC assessment to develop programs and proposals that adequately compliment their capacity levels. There is nothing more frustrating and disheartening than a great proposal left undone because of stakeholders' inability to recognize the current capacity and maturity levels of the constituents with whom they are working.

The SOC is an extremely valuable instrument for assessing organizational capacity. We have successfully used it to evaluate two COPC partners. Both are the size and stage of development that benefit from the COPC partnership network, reflective of the many other organizations in the COPC partnership. An organization's capacity is its feasibility to perform. By understanding organizational capacity, organizational performance is enhanced through its resources and management in meeting goals and achieving its overall mission.

In conclusion, the SOC evaluation facilitated the process of identifying strengths and weakness of both COPC partners: Oakland Planning and Development Corporation and Hazelwood Initiative. Furthermore, the SOC instrument was beneficial in recognizing the level of need and assistance between these two organizations and COPC.

It is recommended that COPC apply the SOC model to its own organization. This is an important step to measure its current capacity as it strives to institutionalize the formal organization and its mission in the University of Pittsburgh.

In order to experience the greatest level of capacity growth, a certain level of trust be identified. More specifically, trust is the most important principle in the COPC partnership. High levels of trust will only facilitate communication and the dissemination of information between organizations, thus increasing the productivity of COPC. The following chapter closely examines the importance of building trust among COPC partners and evaluates whether COPC is fulfilling its purpose.

CHAPTER 3

PARTNER RELATIONS: THE TIES THAT BIND

“Trust ...arises from consistently meeting expectations, and creating outcomes which the partners perceive as mutually beneficial, so that they decide to keep working together.” (Wierwel and Lieber, 1998, p.11)

Trust is the most important principle in partnership development and it is built through relationship development. Relationships are a series of interactions over time. To build a successful relationship the interactions should be positive. Thus, organizational ties are the essential foundation for partnerships. These ties need to be strengthened to develop and increase trust levels which determine the communication, transfer of information and ultimate productivity of any relationship.

This chapter analyzes the processes of building trust among COPC partners and evaluates whether COPC is meeting its stated goal to “promote networking among the many university and community partners to coordinate and maximize the impact of the University’s civic engagement work” (COPC, 2007, http://www.pitt.edu/~copc/index_mission.html).

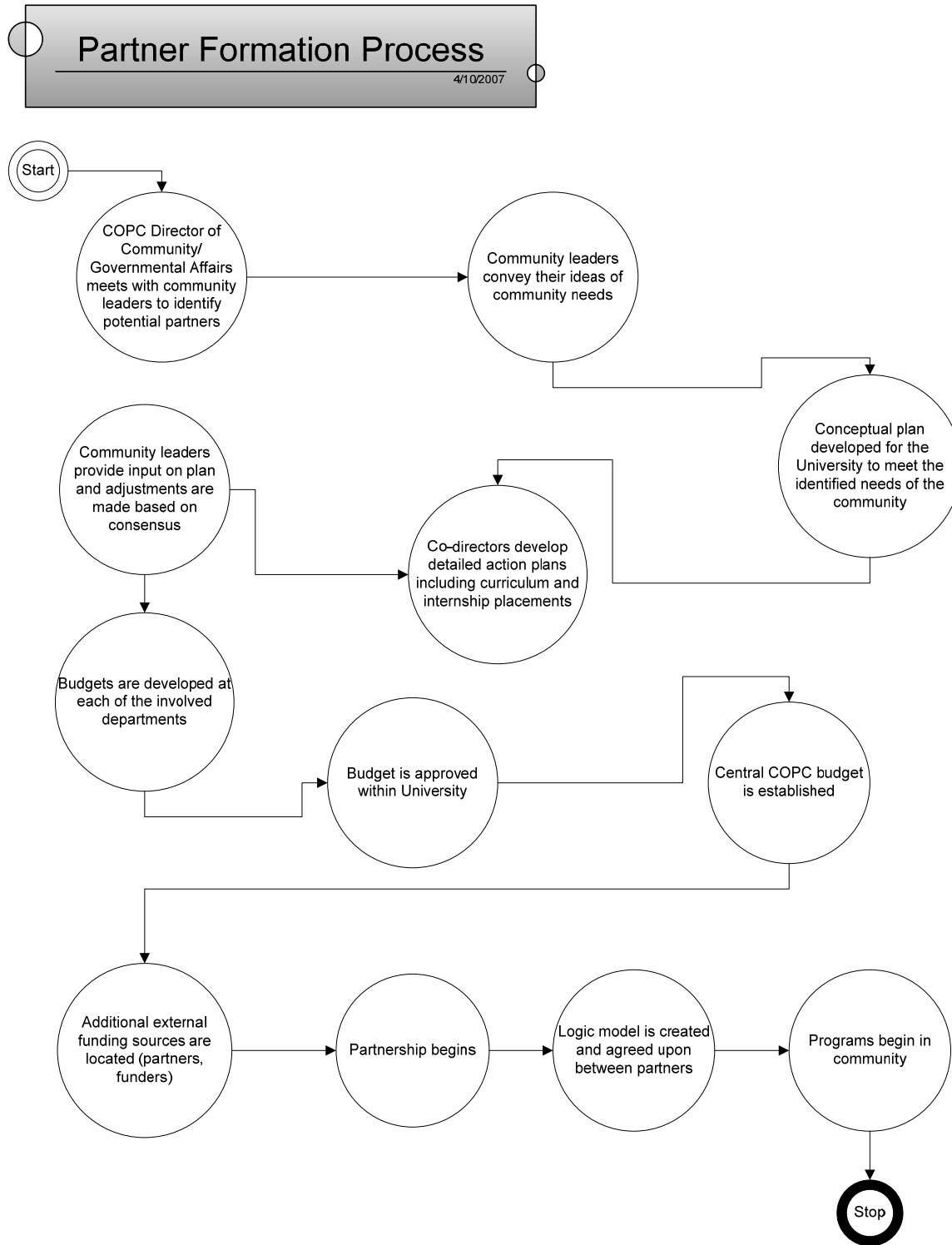
Context

The COPC partnership is complex with multiple organizations involved simultaneously in many projects across various university units. The goal is to remain fluid and be adaptive to change. Since the action of implementation and cohesiveness is complex, the recommendations and evaluations must also be complex. The solutions proposed must also be multi-faceted and multi-leveled to properly accommodate the situation.

The University of Pittsburgh got involved with the COPC project to improve relationships with the community and to enhance the neighborhood in which the University is located to attract future students and maintain the current ones. Also, it wanted to improve the learning experience for the students at the University to have a stronger alumni and better reputation for education in the future. It has many things to offer the community, such as technical skills, research abilities, expertise, and academic resources. It also has access to placing students in internships. The COPC represents these goals and ideas.

Figure 3.1 shows the COPC partnerships process. Note that the process has many steps and includes the community leaders (potential partners) throughout each step to ensure agreement and make changes if necessary when the potential plans are discussed. A budget is created within the University and approved before any outside funding can be located. Once all of the funding is located, the logic model or the program plan is developed with timelines and responsible organizations noted. This is the guideline for accountability which success will be gauged against.

Figure 3.1: Partner Formation Process



Source: Wilds (2007).

Two different types of trust exist (Lewicki and Wiethoff, 2000):

1. Calculus Based Trust (CBT) – based on rewards and punishments people act to avoid consequences and maintain or build reputations

2. Identification Based Trust (IBT) – based on emotional attachments

This chapter will focus on the CBT. Over time IBT can be formed in business relationships as well with certain individuals, but that is beyond the scope of this study. CBT establishes a clear objective method for building trust. The premise is if boundaries are established with rewards and punishments to encourage positive behavior, the positive interactions will occur and will continue, thus creating successful interactions over a period of time and establishing an ongoing relationship with a high level of trust.

I think (COPC) has done an excellent job in Oakland and the surrounding community and within the University to promote more of a community-oriented perspective.... I think the next step is to institutionalize the COPC in the University system. COPC has formed effective programs, partnerships, and services and should be an integral part of the University. (*COPC Community Partner*)

The COPC relationships are the foundation that determines success. The trust level is what determines the strength of the relationship. If one party does not trust that another party will deliver on their duties what incentive does the partnering party have to go above and beyond the necessary duties? They will only complete the minimum level of duties required or get out of the partnership completely leaving the project unfinished. This leaves a hole in the community that is highly visible. Therefore, the success of the partnerships and the COPC's reputation within the community relies heavily upon the trust level between the organizations. There are four types of partnerships (Sockett, 1998):

- Service relationships – volunteer efforts for organization, mutual benefit is not the goal.
- Exchange relationships – exchange of resources for mutual benefit to meet common goals for each.
- Cooperative relationships – responsibility is shared and mutual planning is performed to reach common goals on a unified project.
- Systemic and transformative relationships – each organization is transformed through the relationship, partners share complete responsibility, planning funding, operations and evaluation of projects over time. This is typically a long term arrangement and not project specific and the organizations merge (or fully unite) in one aspect of their organizations where they have the same mission and vision on this area of service to the community.

Partner relationships are at different stages. They are either at the cooperative level or the transformative level. The goals may be different where the cooperative stage is the ultimate goal and some may be at the cooperative level and would like to progress toward a more systemic relationship. The partnership level should be determined and defined in a contract and decided on how to move towards that level through specific goals divided by responsibilities that are monitored through accountability. This will help to meet expectations for both parties.

Methodology

The survey questions were created with the trust and partnership theory in mind. There are two parts to the survey: 1) Social network analysis questions; and 2) Trust and partner satisfaction questions.

The COPC networks will be evaluated through social network analysis. This will give insight to what other factors may have had a role in relationship building and sustaining so that the COPC can move forward with a clearer understanding in partner selection, maintenance and growth to better aid in the successful completion of program goals and objectives.

The organizational relationships that are formed between the COPC and its partners are the foundation where ideas are built, goals established and work plans developed. Social network analysis is being performed to determine the networks that have been formed over the life of the COPC. Trust and partner satisfaction data is being gathered to determine more insight into relationship development.

Social Network Analysis is a tool that provides a visual map of relationships and measures them through mathematics (www.orgnet.com/sna.html). The unit of measure is the entire network, versus each individual, showing the collection of linkages between them (Gretzel, 2001). This study is a one-mode directed analysis, which encompasses only one set of actors. It is a directed analysis because it is asymmetrical due to non-response. The network questions collected for three different points in time (pre-2000, 2000-2004 and post-2004) using the survey on March 9, 2007 (post). Limitations exist when using the

The creation of the COPC network allowed our organization to become more attuned to the initiatives of our neighborhood organizations. It strengthened our bonds and allowed us to work hand-in-hand for the betterment of our city. *(COPC Community Partner)*

social network analysis as a tool. Non-response or no contact is viewed as the same. Each responding organization adds new information to the network and creates different centrality, betweenness, degrees and closeness. This information that would be drawn would change if all organizations had responded and would be more accurate, therefore these calculations are not being performed in this

evaluation. Also, the potential exists that non-response could translate into negative relationships or no relationships, however, no interpretation of that can be developed without information from the organizations.

The survey and social network analysis methods attempt to answer the following questions:

- Has COPC delivered on its goal to “promote networking among university and community partners to coordinate and maximize the impact of the University’s civic engagement work” (COPC, 2000)?
- Do higher levels of trust lead to more networking and partner satisfaction?
- Does a stronger partnership include more traits of trust?
- Can the process of partner interactions be adapted to develop better (stronger and more in-depth) relationships that result in longer lasting balanced partnerships?
- Is there a way to measure the network growth of the COPC?

The software programs used to conduct the research were UCINet, Pajek and Survey Monkey. UCINet is capable of running many calculations and performs all general functions with a low error rate. Pajek is simple to import text data from Excel into a Pajek file. Pajek can easily draw visual networks which are customizable and Pajek files are easily imported into UCINet for the subsequent calculations. Survey Monkey, also used in Chapter 4, is a web survey.

For the social network analysis, the COPC community partners include only *organizations with full-time staff* (excluding Healthy Oakland People and the Oakland Community Council). Organizations with limited ties, such as City of Pittsburgh, 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania and Oakland BID, were excluded as well. This left 13 community partners. They were:

Beacon Corcoran Jennison Partners	Oak Hill Residents' Council
Breachmenders Ministries, Inc.	Oakland Planning and Development Corp.
Collegiate YMCA	Oakland Transportation Management Assn.
Community Human Services	People's Oakland
Fair Housing Partnership of Greater Pgh	Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group
Hazelwood Initiative	Pgh Partnership for Neighborhood Devt.
Housing Opportunities Unlimited	

The trust survey questions were open to all community partners, including those excluded from the social network analysis. E-mail addresses were obtained through the COPC administration and various partner websites. The survey was sent to 52 people in 20 organizations on March 9, 2007, and 8 of those were returned as undeliverable. Out of those 8, three correct e-mails were identified and sent. A total of 47 people received the survey. A reminder e-mail was sent to those who did not respond. The survey was sent to multiple individuals at the partner organizations. 27 of which 2 were repeats, 25 total unique responses were received or 53%. The network analysis questions had a 50% maximum response rate, 64% responded but only 50% answered some of the network analysis questions.

The survey was designed to gather data on the interactions between partners, the trust level the partners assign the COPC and partner satisfaction with COPC overall. Different points in time were used. For trust and satisfaction questions pre-COPC and current time periods were used and for networking questions pre-2000, 2000 – 2004 and post- 2004 were used to identify the networking base level (pre-2000) the initial grant networking impact (2000 – 2004) and the New Directions grant (post-2004) networking impact. This model is used to identify the level of change in partnership networking, trust and satisfaction level over the life of COPC.

Relevance for COPC

The foundation of the success of COPC rests on the relationships built between the COPC and the partners. Sustainability of programs and the ultimate improvement of the COPC neighborhoods rely on the relationships forged with the other partners and the ideas that result in new projects and programs that come from networking.

Also, the social network analysis method introduces a potential evaluation method of the networking goal that COPC has defined. This can provide clarity on what relationships work and which ones do not and insight into why. It can also tell you which organizations are

influential in the partnership based on their location in the network. If a decline in communication is noted it is useful to understand why. It may be an explainable reason and planned such as a project ending or it can be something that should be discussed with the partner proactively. It could be resulting from a conflict, a perceived imbalance, or other scenario.

The COPC operates under an open arrangement with agreed upon goals, timelines and responsibility segregation without an actual contract. This results in a very fluid partnership that exposes the COPC to greater risk for abandoned projects due to dissatisfaction. This will result in goals not being accomplished and can be damaging to the reputation of the University in the community with high visibility of a dissolved or collapsed partnership situation. This can be avoided by establishing a partnership contract stating terms and conditions.

Results

A description of the population that responded to the survey is described below (Table 3.1 and Table 3.2). Eighteen respondents were executive directors or full-time employees. Most – 19 – of the organizations were engaged in community development, while social services and workforce development represented the second and third most common activities.

Table 3.1: Positions of Respondents Surveyed

Number of Respondents	Position
5	Executive Directors
13	Full-time workers
2	Part-time workers
1	Volunteer
1	Board member
3	Interns
2	Other

Table 3.2: Organization Types Represented by Survey Respondents

Number of Respondents	Organization Type
19	Community Development
7	Social Services
5	Workforce Development
6	Other

What were the main reasons organizations entered into partnership with the COPC?

- Create a stronger presence in the community (20%).

- Gain wider visibility and a larger network base (16%)
- Strengthen ties to the University (16%)
- Deliver services more effectively (16%)
- Build organizational capacity (15%)
- Gain access to University technical skills (15%)

Partner Relationships with the COPC

One role for the COPC is to bring the University and community partners together. Before the COPC began some partners (62%) felt their relationship was negative or neutral with the University of Pittsburgh. The results here show that the COPC has indeed developed strong bonds of trust with community partners. All respondents rated their relationship with the COPC as either positive or very positive both today and into the future.

The COPC has created a high level of trust between the partners and the COPC and create positive relationships that are representative of the University in the community. The COPC has delivered added value by achieving better relationships for the University and improving its reputation among the partners although this is not one of the explicitly stated goals of the COPC. Out of the 14 respondents, 12 or 86% using a scale from 1 – 5 (5 being the highest) rated the trust level with COPC at a 4 or above.

The COPC has been successful in achieving predictability, reliability, and partner competence to achieve such a high level of trust among the partners. The community partners view the COPC as predictable as demonstrated in the survey results. Out of the 15 respondents, 100% think that the partnership goals and objectives are clearly stated. Out of 14 respondents, 100% stated that COPC carried out its responsibilities and commitments, with 12 of those stating that it was to a great extent. This shows that the goals and objectives are clearly stated and that the COPC has carried out its duties over time, thus being predictable. Reliability is also demonstrated through the responses. Out of 14 respondents, 14 or 100% stated that the COPC was viewed as a reliable partner by their organization. The results show that partner competence was strengthened throughout the partner relationship with the COPC through increased organizational capacity. Out of 15 respondents, 14 or 93% stated that the COPC has increased their organizational capacity. Half of those stated that it increased the organizational capacity extremely and the other half moderately. The COPC has used its technical skills and academic resources to increase the organizations' capacities while they have successfully fulfilled their duties as well as indicated by 100% of respondents indicating that their organization carried out its responsibilities and commitments to some extent with 67% stating that it was to a great extent.

The COPC has developed trust with its community partners by exceeding expectations. Out of 15 respondents, 14 or 93% stated that COPC addressed organizational expectations. Half of those stated that the expectations were exceeded. The COPC has achieved the goal of promoting networking opportunities between the COPC and its partners. All of the respondents, 16, or 100% stated that networking opportunities were promoted by the COPC with its partners.

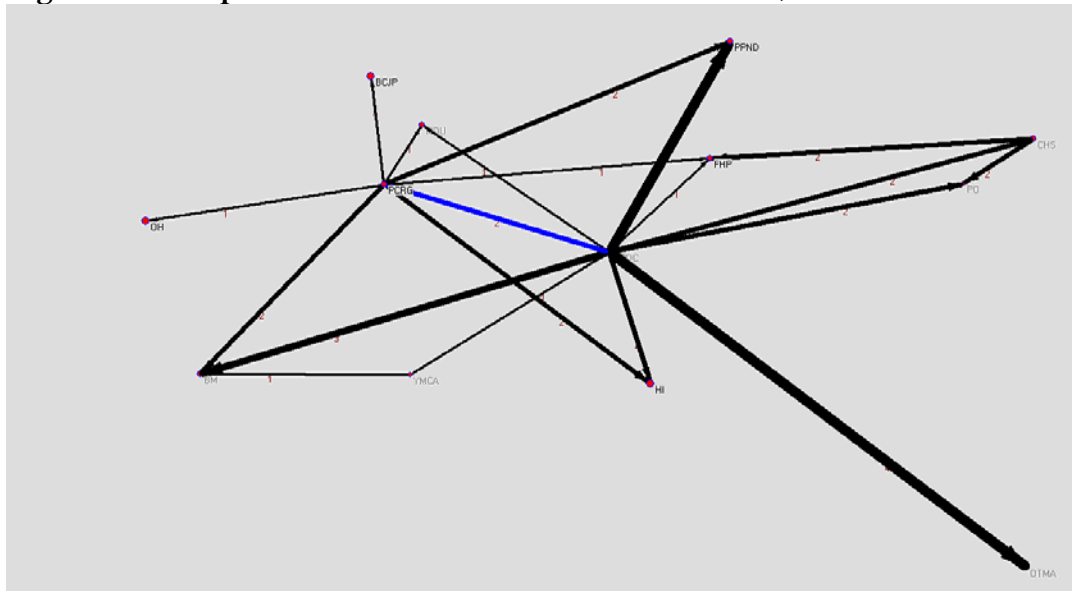
Social Network Analysis Results

The social network analysis results, though limited, showed interesting results. We will first look at the visual impact of the change in the network form pre-2000 through post-2004. The question the respondents answered was: Has someone in your organization spoken with individuals in the organizations listed below about COPC?

Each organization is represented by a node. Lines represent a relationship between two vertices (Everton, 2004). Vertices are endpoints of the lines (Everton, 2004). The thickness of the line determines the frequency. A thicker line denotes more frequent communication between actors.

Figure 3.3 illustrates that these organizations are not very connected. The lighter line represents the edges, or the relationships formed. This means that communication inbound and outbound did not overlap. Edges are undirected lines that connect nodes or lines without a single direction (Everton 2004). The figure depicts that OTMA, PPND and OPDC had significant communication at the daily level pre-COPC. OPDC had the highest level of contact in the network (in both in-degree and out-degree). The degree represents the number of lines that connect with it. In-degree is the number of inbound communications from other partners; out-degree is that partner contacting other partners. The reason that in-degree and out-degree levels are stated separately is because the network is not complete, due to non-response.

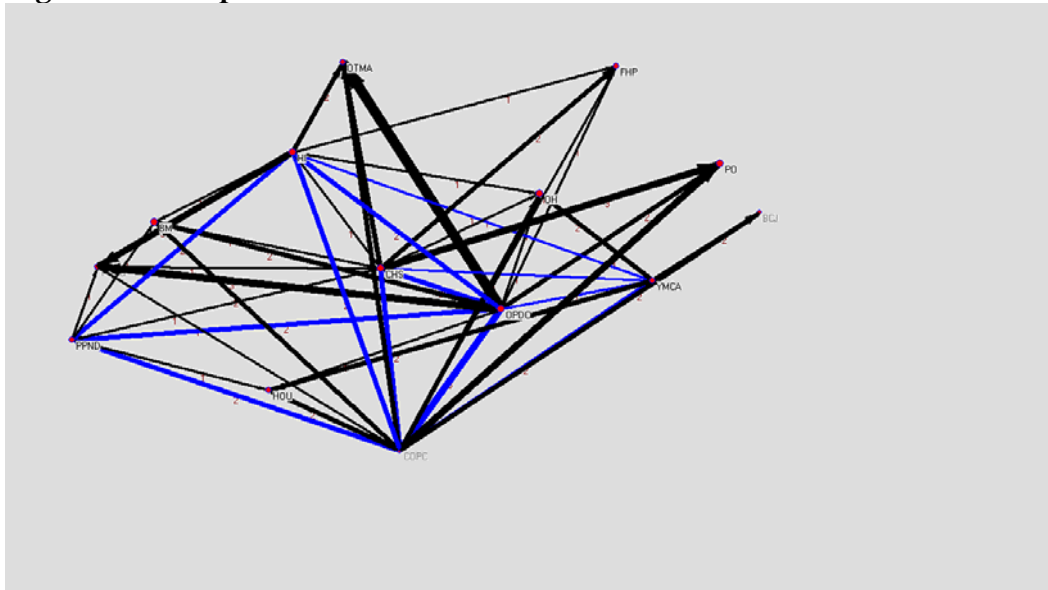
Figure 3.3: Graph of Communication Between Partners, Pre-2000



Source: Pajek

In Figure 3.4, the graph illustrates how often community partners interacted with one another from 2000 – 2004. Many more edges or relationships were formed. COPC had the highest communication levels with the partners both outbound and inbound, with OPDC next highest.

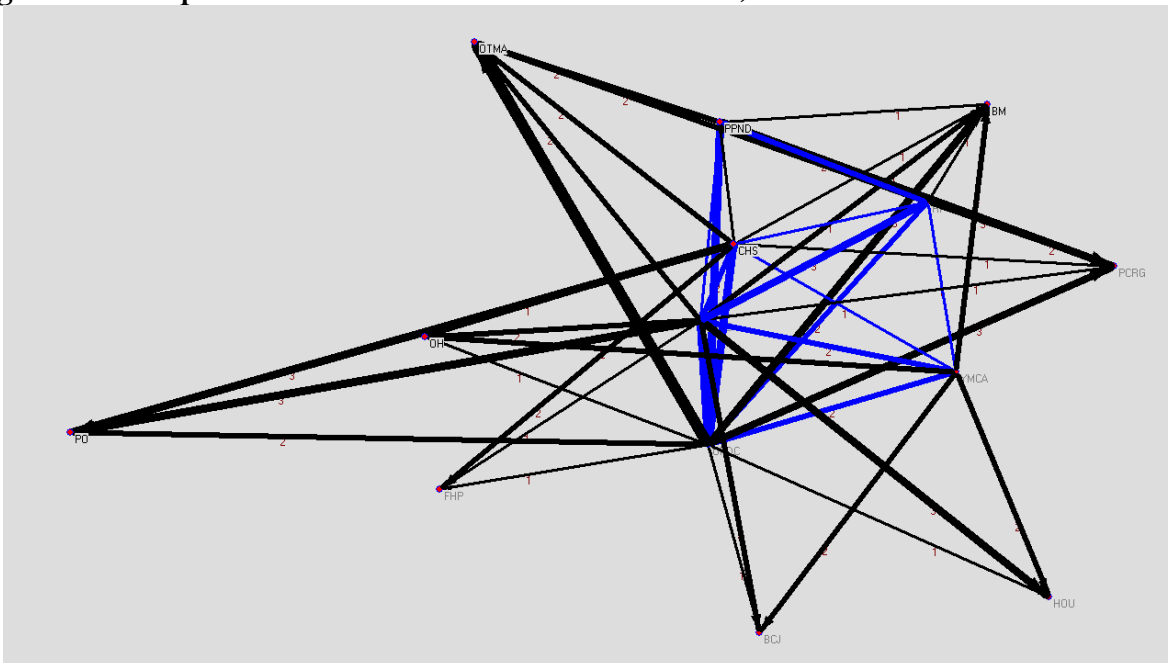
Figure 3.4: Graph of Communication Between Partners, 2000 – 2004



Source: Pajek

In Figure 3.5, the graph shows the level of interaction among partners post-2004. The overall network continued to grow with more edges or relationships present. In this data set, OPDC scored highest on both outbound and inbound communications with COPC as a close second. OPDC may have equal or more influence in the network with having the highest communication level. This would be able to be indicated if the response rate were higher and the statistical calculations would be reliable.

Figure 3.5: Graph of Communication Between Partners, Post - 2004



Source: Pajek

As shown in the series of graphs above, the amount of ties between the organizations has grown over time.

Partners do speak to other partners about the COPC and it is in a positive or neutral manner. The results were interesting and different from the frequency of contact between the partners over time. The YMCA had the highest amount of outbound communication and OPDC was next highest. Breachmenders (BM) had the highest inbound communications, outside of COPC itself. Communication about COPC is being distributed among the partners, and none of the responses indicated that it was in a negative manner. This indicates that the visibility and reputation of COPC between the partners has continued to grow.

The answers for the question regarding strengthening and creating relationships as a result of the COPC resulted in all partners receiving benefit of network growth. Each partner cited at least a few strengthened and/or created relationships that were a direct result of the COPC efforts. The YMCA created the most relationships besides the COPC and OPDC strengthened the most relationships. OPDC began with the largest network initially. All of the partners created or strengthened their relationships with COPC.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the results indicate that COPC has met its networking goal and that the partners who responded to the networking questions had a high trust level score, 4 or 5, indicating that higher levels of trust lead to more networking. Those that scored high on the trust level measurements also recorded high levels of partner satisfaction.

The process of partner interactions can be improved upon through conclusions drawn through social network analysis; however, the study limitation of an incomplete network resulted in unreliable statistics. However, if the information was present decisions could be made regarding power, influence and positioning with betweenness, centrality and various other calculations that social network analysis provides.

(COPC) has contributed to new collaborative efforts throughout the Oakland neighborhood and on into Hazelwood. It has helped many community groups to develop more of an idea on community service, service learning and community development.
(COPC Community Partner)

Overall, as indicated by the results, the COPC has been a great resource and tool for the community partners. It seems that COPC has helped to increase partner capacity through networking and has enhanced the University's reputation among partners and strengthened ties between them.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the COPC implement a method of measuring the networking goal. Currently, the COPC includes detailed plans and reported outcomes for operational goals in the progress reports, but nothing is stated on the progress or level of impact that the networking that the University of Pittsburgh COPC provides has on the projects and organizations overall. It may seem like a difficult goal to measure. However, it is stated in the mission as a goal and

therefore needs to be measured and reported in a structured format as the other mission goals. There are ways to attempt to measure networking, as we have demonstrated in this chapter through social networking.

We recommend that a contract be formulated at the onset of each grant for each partner to clearly state the goals and objectives of the project to solidify the commitment level of the organization and their resources (time, money, other) for the agreed duration of the project. Since the partnership needs to be fluid and adapt with circumstance, then a stipulation in the contract should insert a line that states and other changes as agreed upon by both parties will be contractually binding as well.

Further Studies

A follow up study using a complete network and calculating the positional analyses and using the other tools the social network analysis provides to their full extent would provide further insight into the partner positions in the network indicating the most effective manner of increasing the network for each partner and achieving the program goals with a high level of fluidity.

A further study could be done to track the impact of the reputation being built through the successful interactions among the partners and the position being built in the community through social network analysis.

A study could also be performed to analyze the resources of the organizations and goal achievement and process assessment through social network analysis where the actors would be the goals, resources or processes.

CHAPTER 4

COPC AND THE COMMUNITY: LEARNING FROM THE INTERNS

“In my opinion, COPC is very well-run and serves an important role in connecting the community and university environments. It has succeeded in contributing to local neighborhoods while providing graduate students with a wonderful opportunity to gain professional skills. I am very grateful for the experience and hope it remains available for GSPIA students and the community.” (Judith D.)

Since its inception, the Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) has been proactive in building a strong relationship between the University of Pittsburgh and the local communities of Oakland and Hazelwood. To promote this positive interaction COPC sends student interns into the field to work alongside its partners in developing strategies designed to show the community and the University that they both are interdependent.

This portion of the evaluation will detail how effective the COPC was in the community through the through the eyes of the interns. The objective is to identify how their physical presence promoted University presence and what were they able to take away from the experience. To evaluate the COPC in this area, we determined that an interview of current, and former, interns would be the ideal method to obtain key information. In order to get this information we conducted an online survey for the interns that would follow the Likert method of analyzing the data.

Developing and launching the survey

Given that the survey was to be administered on-line, it was important that the questions be formatted in such a manner that they would be exact in their definition, to glean the most pertinent information. Subsequently, it was also critical to create a survey that could be answered in a time frame of no greater than 10 to 15 minutes. Circulation of the survey was done through Survey Monkey®, an on-line tool designed to effectively distribute and monitor the survey once posted. Its primary strength is its intuitive Web interface, which makes it easy for even non-technical individuals to create surveys and export collected data. It has advanced features, like the ability to branch questions based on response and exporting to different formats, including HTML, CVS and SQL (Westin, 2005).

We developed our survey in the Likert Scale format to ensure that the participants would be able to answer the questions with minimal ambiguity. Additional open ended questions were added to allow the respondent an avenue for additional comments. By using Likert’s method, a person’s attitude is measured by combining (adding or averaging) their responses across all items. This summing or averaging across several items is essential to genuine measurement (Uebersax, 2006, 3) The resultant questions for the survey were derived from four key indicators that we identified as essential to a comprehensive evaluation of the COPC and the role of the intern. The following encapsulate this correlation:

- Contribution to the Community
- Effect on Academic Experience
- Sense of Civic Engagement
- Effect on Employment/ Career Path

The beginning phase of this evaluation required us to acquire the contact information of the graduated interns; a task that would prove to be more difficult than anticipated. COPC Director, Sabina Deitrick, did provide us with a payroll spreadsheet of 55 names, although, there was some speculation as to their accurateness. This subsequently led to several weeks of field research in an attempt to track down contact information of University of Pittsburgh alumni. It was clearly understood that COPC was not responsible, nor had the means, to maintain a current listing of alumni, as this is a resource that should be maintained by the University, or individual programs. As a result, we were required to contact the appropriate schools to access their records to locate the information that we needed. This approach became an unanticipated delay in the project but, through persistent e-mail correspondence and multiple meetings with department staff we were able to identify and match e-mail addresses of 46 COPC interns. These 46 would become a sample population for the many interns that were part of the program; unfortunately, time constraints would not allow us to find information on every intern passing through the COPC program. Throughout our investigation we determined that the University as a whole has a poor system of keeping Alumni records even though the individuals we were seeking had graduated within the past *five years*. Had there been at least a regularly maintained database we would have been able to cut our research time by several weeks.

The resultant survey was e-mailed to the 46 interns and placed in open status for two weeks. During this time period we received one automated response of an invalid e-mail address. Of the remaining 45 interviewees, 26 answered the survey, and one respondent left the survey partially completed. We resolved not to include this data in the final analysis. Of the remaining 18 unreturned reviews it is unclear as to whether they actually received the survey, or just opted not to participate in the exercise.

Identifiable need for the survey

One of the primary objectives of the COPC is to bring the resources of the University to the community. An important way that this has been achieved is through the use of interns working with COPC partners in the neighborhoods near the University. In return, these professional young men and women are rewarded by gaining “real time” work experience while being able to make application of their academics by developing methods in which to make positive neighborhood improvements.

The purpose of this portion of the evaluation is to determine whether utilizing Pitt students in this capacity is beneficial both to the student and the neighborhoods that COPC oversees. We felt that it was imperative to understand how these areas interrelated; in particular since a large portion of COPC funding goes to the salaries of the interns. To initiate the evaluation we first recognized four key components that defined how COPC, the student, and the community all correlate:

- What did the students contribute to the community?
- What was the effect of COPC on the students’ academic experience?
- What sense of civic engagement did the students develop?
- What was the resultant effect on employment, or career paths?

Using the statistics accrued from the survey can provide the COPC with the insight needed to make changes to the organization's structure or strategic plan. It can also play an active role in attracting new interns to the program and, at the same time provide a benchmark in which future progress can be compared. Most importantly, the figures compiled from the survey can provide the quantitative support that may be needed when soliciting agencies for monetary support.

Understanding the results

Of the 45 surveys, there was a response of 26: 58% for the Likert scale questions and a 46% average for the open-ended questions. Of the total respondents, 69% were Masters Students; the majority of them enrolled in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

Former COPC interns provided great information in the open-ended question section of the survey. Some of these are captured throughout the text, plus Carolyn Ivanusic's comments below:

"As far as I could tell, the COPC was the driving force behind the COSA program. It is the means through which interns know what other interns / organizations are working on, so that they can collaborate. Without it, I ... would have been less effective. If there's one suggestion I have, it is that the COSA program, the organizations interns work for, and the COPC more effectively utilize former interns in their activities. Where are you going to find a more willing group of volunteers and with expertise too? We understand how difficult it is to be an intern..."

Carolyn Ivanusic, MSW, COSA, Oakland Planning and Development Corporation, Coleriate YMCA

There were a total of 31 questions; 19 questions were Likert Scale style questions meant to elicit a response ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, with five total increments. The remaining 12 questions allowed for open-ended responses that require some form of data entry on the respondent's part (including informational questions regarding name, school, etc.). A copy of the complete questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

Analyzing the results from the survey was made possible by the clear summary statistics provided compiled by Survey Monkey®. From these results, further analysis was done by inserting response values into a Microsoft Excel® spreadsheet and performing some simple statistical functions. In designing the survey, we wished to obtain both quantitative and qualitative results, and in this we were successful. Despite having a lower response rate than we would have liked, the results from those who did respond were

still compelling. The survey was divided into four major sections of interest (with an introduction and conclusion section book-ending the survey in order to provide us with additional data about the respondents):

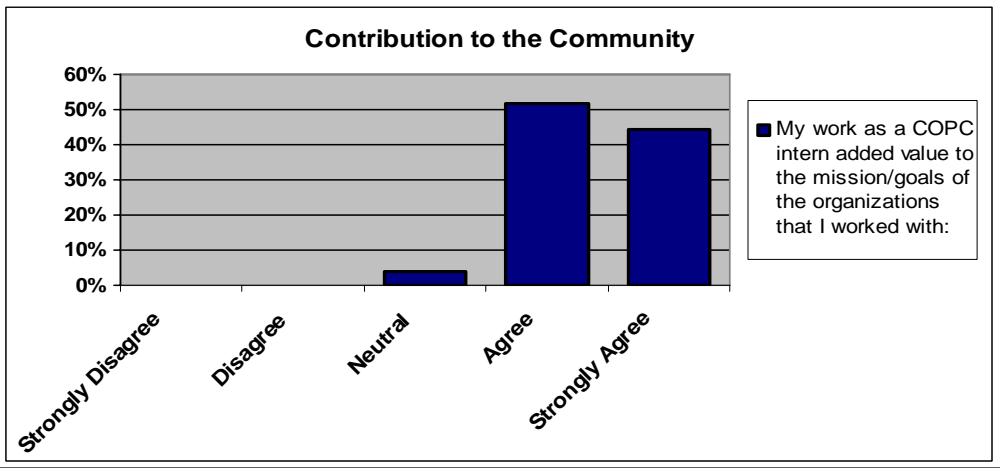
- Organizational capacity and contribution to the community
- Effect on academic experience
- Sense of civic engagement
- Effect on employment/career path

Organizational capacity and contribution to the community

The first group of questions detailed the COPC interns’ contribution to the communities that they worked in, and the impact that their work had in improving the capacity of the various organizations. There were three Likert Scale questions in this category and one open-ended question. We chose this category to lead off the survey because it gets to the core of the COPC’s mission: to foster cooperation between the University and the neighborhoods. Getting to the core of the COPC and eliciting responses from the interns who represent the link between university and neighborhood were key to setting the tone for the remainder of the survey. We crafted our questions carefully, keeping in mind that “the COPC program is intentionally a complex, adaptive, self-organizing effort, the purpose of which is to build the capacity of each partnership and develop actions and strategies appropriate to the resources at hand and responsive to the conditions they confront” (Rubin, et al., 1998, 15).

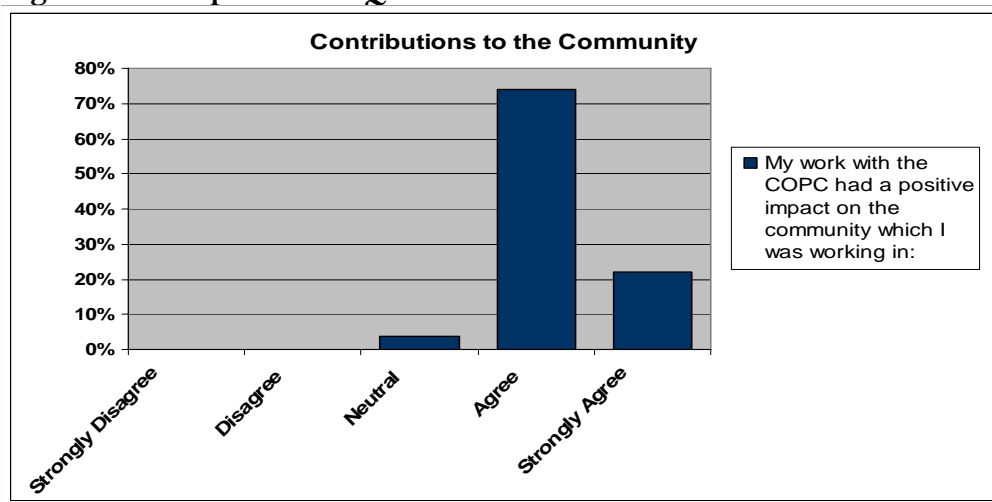
From the responses we received, we can infer that the COPC interns did in fact make strong connections to the community organizations they served, and that the goals of these organizations were furthered by their work. The responses from the first major section of our survey bode well for the COPC from the interns’ perspective. Perhaps most significant is that of Question #9. 96.3% of respondents agreed that they added value to the mission or goals of the organization they worked with (51.9% agree, 44.4% strongly agree).

Figure 4.1: Responses for Question #9



One of the core values that the COPC is intended to address is that of helping local community organizations to fulfill their missions. The COPC interns that were involved with these groups overwhelmingly felt that this aspect of COPC was beneficial. 84.7% (38.5% agree, 46.2% strongly agree) of respondents agreed that the COPC was effective in helping their respective organization further their missions.

Figure 4.2: Responses for Question #11



This shows us that the interactions between the University and the community organizations were generally good. Most importantly, the interns felt that their work increased the capacity of the organizations they worked with. The benefit to the COPC partners is validated in this section, and we will explore later how the reverse is also true—as a university sponsored endeavor, students should reap academic benefits as well.

We asked the respondents to provide an example of a positive impact that their work had on the community, and there were a number of specific cases cited, from initiating community clean-up events to providing technical assistance, such as grant application help and GIS expertise. The COPC interns provided us with a good variety of examples in which they made positive impacts on their communities.

Effect on academic experience

The second major component of our survey attempted to gauge the cause and effect of the relationship between the student’s academic experience at the University and their internships with COPC. As a university/community partnership, we expected to see the interns be very proactive in expressing their view of this relationship in this section. The results were very optimistic and from them we can infer that there was a positive correlation between what the

“Sabina Deitrick and Tracy Soska make the COPC an invaluable experience. Without (that) guidance as both a supervisor and an academic guide, my experience at GSPIA would be non-existent. I am very grateful for the opportunities I had to learn through her and through the COPC internship.”
(Katherine K.)

intern learned in the classroom and how they applied that knowledge in their respective communities, and vice versa.

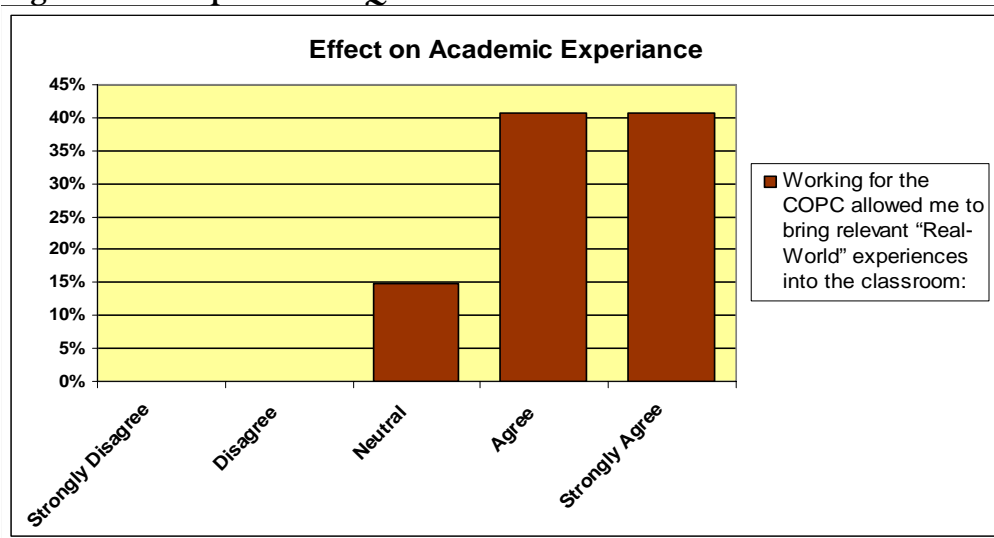
The goal of an internship is to enhance one’s knowledge in a way that could not ordinarily be done in a classroom setting—University of Pittsburgh students of various backgrounds worked with COPC partners to increase their respective capacities and help fulfill their missions. The natural

follow up to the question of “what did you do for the COPC partners?” was, “what did working for the COPC partners do for you?” The respondents gave us insight into their half of the reciprocal relationship they had with the COPC by way of four Likert Scale questions.

An important aspect of a well-rounded education with “real world” experience has few substitutes. 84.6% of our respondents validated this aspect of the COPC by affirming that they had, in fact, gained such experience and applied it to their studies. The give-and-take relationship established between university and community was spearheaded by the COPC and enhanced by intern participation. The resultant data solidifies that the interns have recognized the importance of bringing this experience back into the classroom especially when they have the language to discuss community issues at a deeper level.

“The whole experience was incredibly worthwhile and enriching. It definitely impacted me personally and professionally and, in the classroom, provided me with real world experience” (Kerry M.).

Figure 4.3: Responses for Question #13



The second question in this section attempted to gauge the degree to which the internship expanded the students’ knowledge of how community organizations work. This is an important aspect of the COPC, because building social, intellectual, and political capital helps local organizations to build capacity—“successful COPCs generate this capital” (Rubin, et al., 1998, 16). 92% of our respondents agreed or strongly agreed (61.5% strongly agree, 30.8% agree) that the COPC helped them to understand how community organizations function.

Not only did the experience of working with the community partners help interns in their classwork, their classwork helped them to be more effective in working with their organizations. An example of the beneficial relationship that students had between their academic experience and their internship experience is shown by the 96.2% of students who felt that their overall academic experience was enhanced by their internship with the COPC. Likewise, 80.8% of respondents felt that their academic classes gave them the knowledge to aid

them in their internship endeavors (50% agree, 30.8% strongly agree), with 15.4% being neutral on the issue and only 3.8% disagreeing.

The responses to the questions in this section helped to show that the students (who facilitated the connection between the University and the COPC partners) were a part of a “mutually advantageous collaboration” (Rubin, et al., 1998, 16).

Sense of civic engagement

This section examines the extent to which COPC interns connected with the neighborhoods that they worked in, and to determine if their level of social awareness was impacted by their experience with the COPC. By determining the degree to which the COPC experience affected

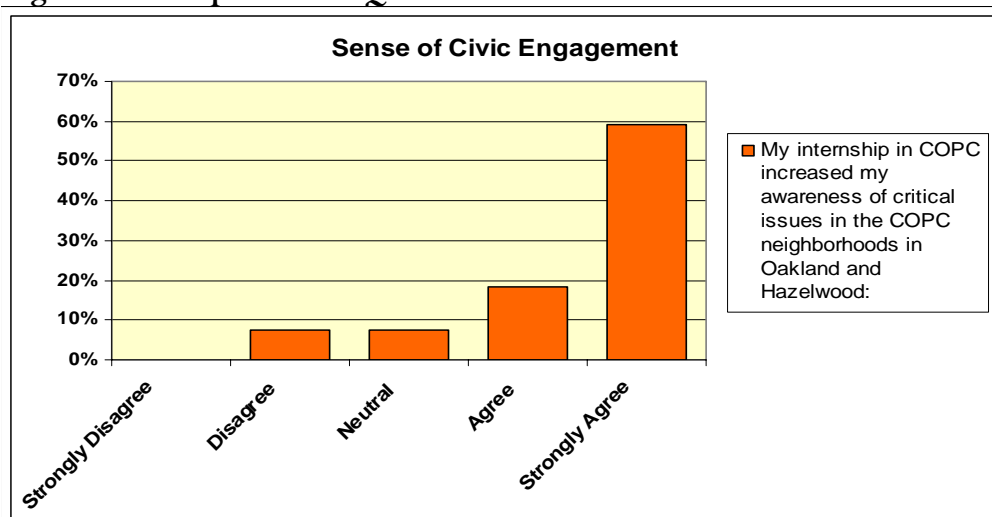
*“The ED of Hazelwood Initiative really became a mentor to me when I was in graduate school, and that made a big difference in the opportunities I chose to seek. In addition, I felt very involved in the **community** in which I lived which is one of the reasons I chose to move back to Pittsburgh (Deb L.)”*

the interns’ sense of civic engagement we can infer the effectiveness of the COPC itself, as “the ultimate value of these partnerships is that they help the partners move beyond short-term interests to new strategies and new learning” (Rubin, et al., 1998, 12).

The questions in this section move in a progression from the interns’ own awareness of issues affecting the COPC neighborhoods to their overall sense of

citizenship. Showing that the COPC experience did indeed impart some knowledge with its interns, 84% of them agreed (20% agree, 64% strongly agree) that their awareness of critical issues in their neighborhoods was increased.

Figure 4.4: Responses for Question #17

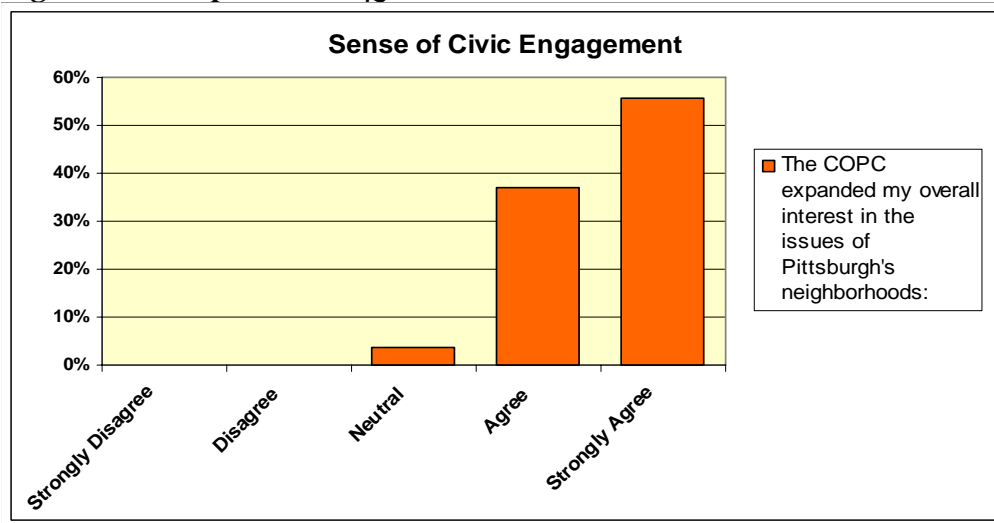


This illustrates that as an extension of the University, the COPC is helping to further the educational experience outside the classroom. It also shows that the COPC partners were providing an enriching environment for interns to grasp the issues that the communities face.

Another point of interest is the effect that the COPC experience had on the interns’ overall interest in the Pittsburgh area’s neighborhoods. We wanted to make sure that the awareness of

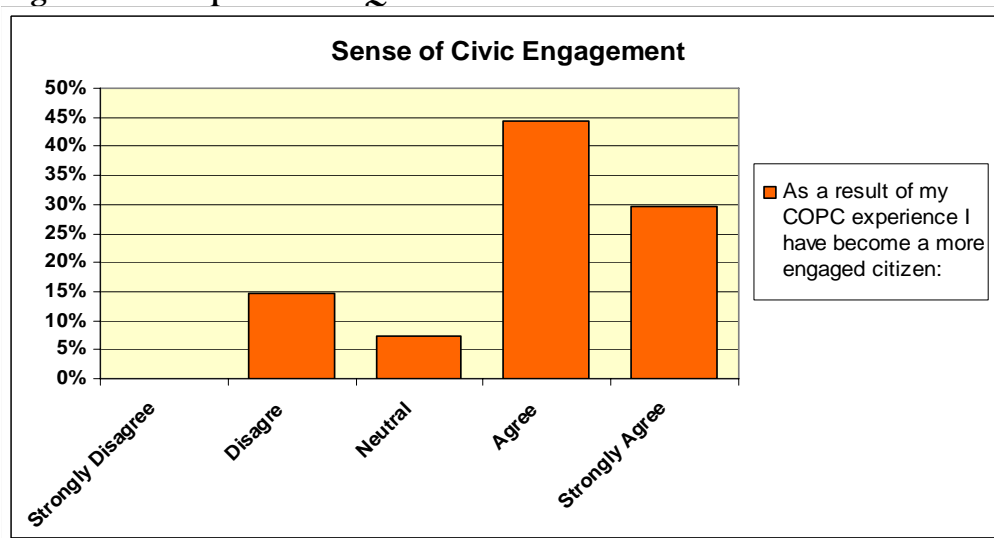
neighborhood issues in the COPC neighborhoods translated to the City as a whole. It did, in fact, with 96.2% agreeing (38.5% agree, 57.7% strongly agree) that they had expanded their interest in Pittsburgh neighborhoods.

Figure 4.5: Responses for Question #18



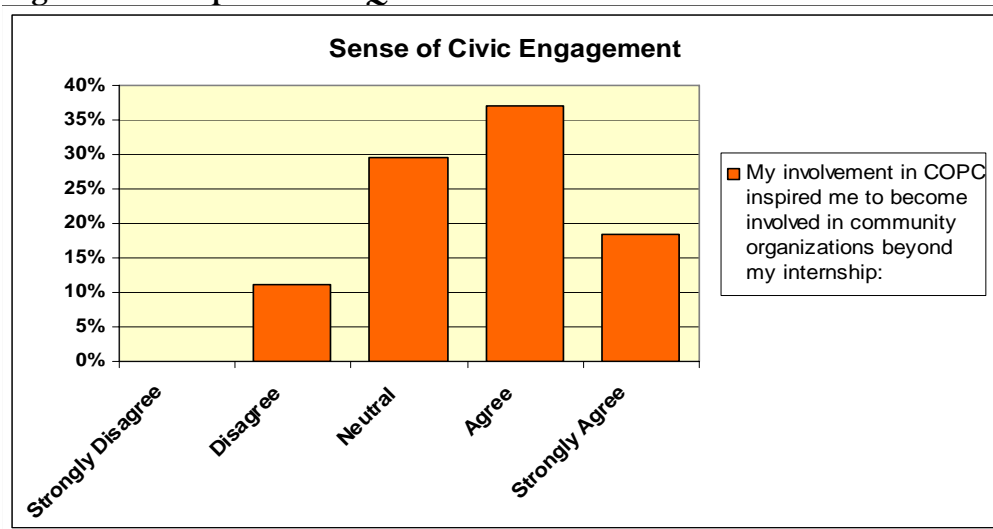
The remaining two questions focused on civic engagement and community involvement in more generalized terms, and the results of these two questions were mixed. The goal was to ascertain whether, or not, the interns' experience with the COPC made them more interested in neighborhoods and getting involved with them—while there were some encouraging responses for the question regarding the issue of increased civic engagement (46.2% agreed, 30.8% strongly agreed that they became more engaged), 15.4% disagreed with the question and 7.7% were neutral. Perhaps their COPC experience was not successful in engaging them in the community, but perhaps these results came about because of the wording of the question. It is possible that these interns were *already* engaged citizens, and the COPC did not change this.

Figure 4.6: Responses for Question #19



The final Likert question in this category returned the most mixed results—11.5% disagreed that their COPC experience inspired them to be more involved with community organizations, while 30.8% were neutral on the issue, 38.5% agreed, and 19.2% strongly agreed. The key word in the question that may have skewed the results was “more.” Some interns were not involved with community organizations before their internship, and were not involved with them after—some were already involved before their internships, and therefore were not likely to say that they became *more* involved after their internship.

Figure 4.7: Responses for Question #20



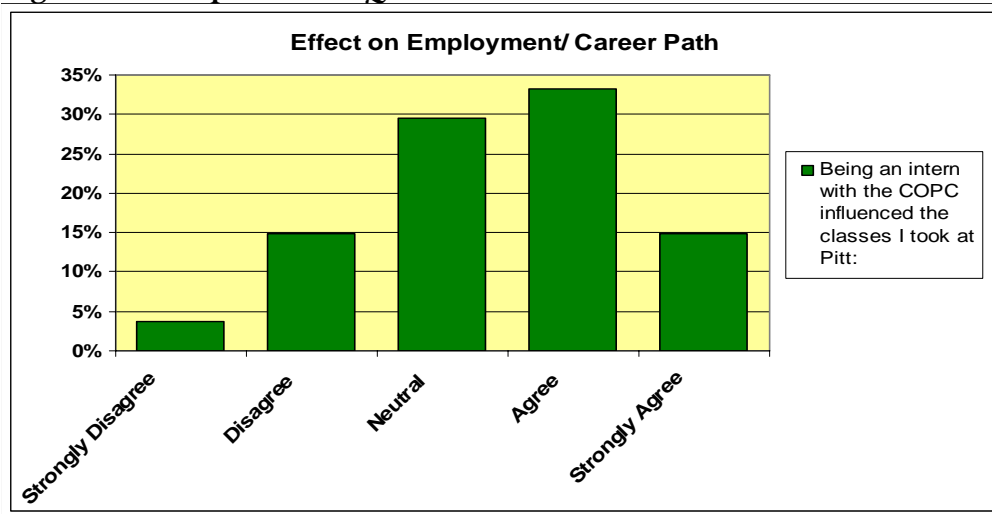
Effect on employment/career path

This section is set up to assess what, if any, effects that an internship with the COPC may have had on the career paths of the interns. This path is an important one, and the University has a vested interest in making sure its graduates are successful. Just as COPC programs are designed to help the residents of the communities they serve, the COPC also ought to help the students who serve the communities as well. Since the COPC is designed to be mutually beneficial to the community as well as the University, this section will elaborate on a few of the ways that those in the middle of it all—the interns—benefited.

“The work at COPC (as shown on my resume) is the reason I landed my current job... (Mark V).”

At the University of Pittsburgh, there is a large selection of classes from which students can choose—those students who completed internships with the COPC responded to our question of whether their internship influenced their class selection. The responses were fairly spread out, with exactly half agreeing (34.6% agree, 15.4% strongly agree) that the COPC had this effect on their education track. 30.8% were neutral, and 19.2% disagreed in some fashion (15.4% disagree, 3.8% strongly disagree). Perhaps the correlation between one’s internship and the classes that the intern chooses is not strong, but some students commented that their course progression was inflexible, so this was perhaps a moot point to them.

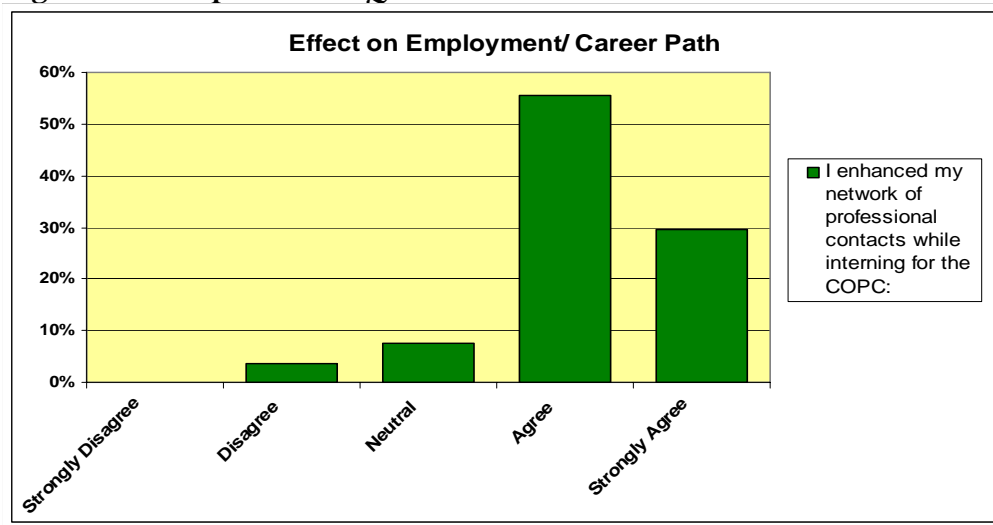
Figure 4.8: Responses for Question #22



The next two questions dealt with the interns' post-graduation path, and are intentionally broad in nature. They are meant to gauge whether or not the COPC factored into the students' career goals, and the results were somewhat mixed, probably due to the ambiguous nature of the questions. When asked if their internships influenced their post-graduation path, 65.4% agreed (38.5% agree, 26.9% strongly agree). The remaining 34.6% that were either neutral or in disagreement were perhaps already set along their career path, and the COPC fit *into* their career goals, rather than dictated them. The following question about the COPC's impact on the interns' job prospects yielded similar results, indicating that perhaps some interns' job prospects were already clear.

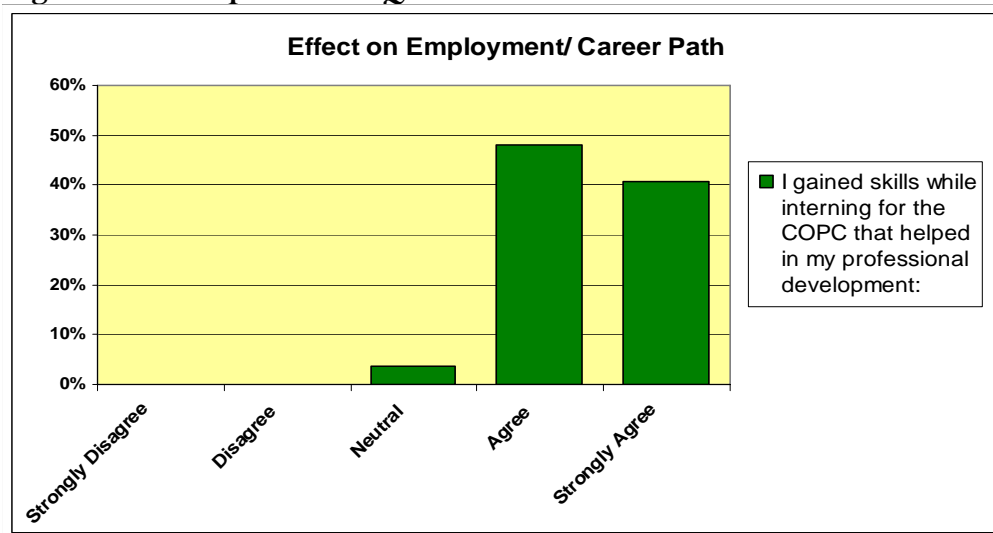
The remaining two questions proved to be more significant, and reflect some of the more specific advantages that a COPC internship may have offered. A considerable majority of interns agreed (57.7% agreed, 30.8% strongly agreed) that the COPC enhanced their network of professional contacts. Networking is a vital aspect of any job search, and the fact that the COPC was able to enhance the students' network of contacts should be seen as a success.

Figure 4.9: Responses for Question #25



The final Likert-style question in the survey may well be the most significant. We wanted to know whether or not the students felt that their COPC internships helped them to gain skills vital to their professional development. The responses were momentous, with 96% (52% agree, 44% strongly agree) of students declaring that they had gained skills pertinent to their professional growth. From the University’s perspective, this is a resounding success—sending students out into professional life with valuable skills is a core goal of the institution. The COPC partners also end up benefiting, as a larger crop of skilled professionals in the community development field helps them to further their missions for the long run.

Figure 4.10: Responses for Question #26



Conclusion

The role of the COPC intern has become essential in easing the tensions that have fostered between the University of Pittsburgh and the communities that it sits upon. As the link from academia to the real world, interns have an opportunity to learn about themselves

and the capacity to teach others. In this evaluation, COPC interns have spoken and identified what makes this program successful. They have taken their own experiences and turned them over to us to use as quantified data that can become a benchmark for those to come.

When questioned about whether their work with the COPC played a positive impact on the community they were working in, there was a resounding consensus agreement of 74%. When asked about the impact their internship played in their overall academic experience 58% of the responses were in “strong agreement” that the internship was a critical facet of one’s academic studies. In the area of civic engagement there were mixed reviews but, still positive.

When asked if the COPC helped them to identify issues beyond the scope of their internship, the results were high but, when asked if the COPC moved them to physically become involved outside of the organization, fewer (58%) responded favorably. This is one crucial area that the COPC can be more proactive in helping the intern identify with. It is important that they understand that the work that they are doing and the life’s lessons they are learning can be carried on into other areas once they have moved on from the program. Following a similar pattern, most of the interns were divided in their stance that the COPC was influential in their post graduation decisions but, a unanimous 96% of them were in agreement that the skills they acquired played a significant role in their professional development.

Overall, the COPC has been important in the development of student interns and their role in the community. The COPC has positively affected their educational experience at Pitt and their professional development. The COPC experience allowed interns to learn about Pittsburgh’s neighborhoods and, more importantly, about the critical issues that Oakland and Hazelwood face on a daily basis. COPC has been fundamental in development for the past seven years but their greatest contribution has been the ability to foster a desire in post graduates to stay in the Pittsburgh area and continue in reaching out to make the City a better place.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATING NEW DIRECTIONS OUTPUTS

This chapter of the evaluation looks at the activities of the COPC and asks: What has the COPC done to improve the community?

The evaluation looks directly at the outputs of the New Directions programs at COPC, comparing them against the proposal that was made to the federal government in 2004, and against Community Building Goals. We ask if the COPC is performing activities that will create stronger neighborhoods and determine which areas need more focus.

Methodology

We conducted a content analysis of the COPC Progress Reports.

We decided to focus on the New Directions phase of the COPC for several reasons. First, it made sense to look at the program in its current format, incorporating the lessons COPC organizers learned from the first stage. Some programs were stopped, others spun off, and new efforts were launched. Second, the data on the New Directions period (from 2005 to 2007) was readily available in the form of two progress reports to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), making a content analysis approach a good choice.

Community building scorecards

The idea for a Community Building Scorecard approach came from an analysis of the University of Memphis COPC by Stanley Hyland (2000). Hyland seeks to draw a comparison between an evaluation model based on economic development goals, such as “job training” and “housing” and a form of evaluation that looks at the outcomes that build communities.

To evaluate a neighborhood mapping project through the Memphis COPC, Hyland identifies five main Community Building Goals: *Connectedness (outside the neighborhood)*, *Identity*, *Participation (within the neighborhood)*, *Trust* and *Visioning/Planning*. In his evaluation, Hyland lists several COPC accomplishments and clusters them around these five Community Building Goals.

Our evaluation takes a similar approach, but on a larger scale, assigning Community Building Points to each task reported as completed by the University of Pittsburgh COPC based on how these outputs contribute to *Connectedness*, *Identity*, *Participation*, *Trust* and *Visioning/Planning*. This will allow us to see exactly where the COPC is focused and where it needs to improve.

Logic model scorecard

The first task was to assess if the tasks laid out in the application documents to HUD at the beginning of the New Directions project had actually completed—or at least reported as completed in the two progress reports.

We worked with the Logic Model, comparing it to the 1st Progress Report, from December, 2005, and the 2nd Progress Report from June, 2006.

The first step was to break the logic model down into its component tasks and put those tasks into a Microsoft Access database. The database included a table for **tasks** (with fields for the task name, program area, and a checkbox to indicate completion, as well as notes on why or why not the task was marked as completed), and a table for **organizations**.

A custom form made comparing the Logic Model tasks to the prose in the Progress Reports easy. The evaluator checked the box if there was specific mention of the task as completed in either Progress Report, then wrote notes detailing the decision, where appropriate.

A custom query called the tasks out by organization or program area, allowing a spreadsheet analysis. Excel charts formed the foundation of the conclusions.

Figure 5.1: Logic Model Evaluation Form

ORGANIZATION
Generations Together
Hazelwood Initiative Inc
Oakland Community Council
OPDC
*

Community building scorecard/output analysis

Another custom Microsoft Access database was used to analyze the completed tasks for their Community Building impacts. This analysis separated the tasks from the original proposals to look for the actual outputs of COPC, regardless of the initial proposals for the grant.

In addition to the two Progress Reports, we used data from the Student Survey (see Chapter 4). Former COPC interns responded to the open-ended questions with a number of examples of

their work. In many cases, they illuminated COPC outputs that had been neither anticipated by the grant proposal nor reported in the official Progress Reports. This is a natural result of the creativity of the COPC interns and partner organizations. While outputs from the Progress Reports were assigned to one of the three program areas, outputs reported by the interns were not, meaning that just 76 outputs were analyzed by *program area* while 91 were looked at by *organization*.

The Access application for this phase of the project also allowed responsible organizations to be assigned to various outputs. Many times, an output had more than one organization involved, and most organizations contributed to several tasks. The database also included a field for which report the output was taken from, and a section for checking off the output’s Community Building goals.

Community Building Objectives were checked based on a scan of the entry for keywords, using the following rubric:

Table 5.1: Evaluation Rubric

Connectedness (outside the community)	Does the task connect the partner organization to any other outside organizations, or does it involve groups from other neighborhoods?
Identity	Does the task heighten the sense that the community is a distinct neighborhood? Does it reinforce the community's character/history/heritage?
Participation (within the community)	Does the task have a primary goal of involving members of the community who are not organizers of the project? For example, does it serve community residents directly?
Trust	Does the task directly connect the community organization to the university, either through classes or other direct contacts between Pitt groups and the organization or community?
Visioning/Planning (and land use)	Does the task address land use or planning issues?

A given task might be accomplished by several organizations and might accomplish several Community Building Objectives. For example, a land use planning charrette seeking community input on the re-use of an historic neighborhood building would be checked for *Identity*, *Participation*, and *Visioning/Planning*. If University of Pittsburgh architecture professors led the session as part of a regional review of historic buildings involving organizations from other neighborhoods, the task would also be checked for *Identity* and *Trust*.

Figure 5.2: Community Building Objectives Data Entry Form

Completed Tasks

TaskID: []

Task: NYSF – National Youth Sports Program operated at Pitt through CLL from 6/27/05 to 8/05/05 and served over 225 youth, ages 10 – 15, daily for 25 days. The program offered instruction in various sports skills and also daily enrichment classes, which included sessions on: Health & Nutrition, Drug Abuse Prevention, Career Exploration, and Self-sufficiency. This year the overall average enrollment increased 20%, which was positive since the NYSF regulations state that 90% of enrollment must come from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods, which includes Oak-Hill, West Oakland, and the Hill District. Also of note, was the emphasis on hands-on learning, especially regarding nutritional information focusing on what the children were eating each day. (Note: Unfortunately, NYSF Funding was another Federal Budget casualty for 2006.)

Program Area: ACTIVE LIVING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Date of completion and responsible organization:

Organization	Report Date
Leisure Learn Program	1st Progress Report July through December 2005
School of Education	1st Progress Report July through December 2005
*	

Record: 1 of 91

Hyland Community Building Objectives

- Connectedness (outside the community)
- Identity
- Participation (within the community)
- Trust
- Visioning/Planning

The data were then transferred to an Excel spreadsheet for analysis. They were broken out by program area, organization and for a special case study, the organizations Oakland Planning and Development Corporation and Hazelwood Initiative, Inc. were broken out.

For the analysis, each check for a Community Building task becomes a Community Building Point (CBP). For example, the City of Pittsburgh contributed one task to New Directions: a data sharing agreement as part of the Neighborhood Database Program Area. This task was coded as contributing to *Connectedness*, *Trust* and *Visioning/Planning*. Thus, the City of Pittsburgh was rated as completing one task and accruing three CBP.

Logic Model Analysis

Program Areas

The University of Pittsburgh COPC has, so far, reported as completed exactly half of its promised objectives.

Table 5.2: Completion Rate by Program Area

Program Area	Proposed	Completed	%
<i>NEIGHBORHOOD DATABASE</i>	20	10	50%
<i>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION & ENVIRONMENTAL/PUBLIC SAFETY</i>	26	13	50%
<i>ACTIVE LIVING AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT</i>	18	9	50%
Total:	64	32	50%

Organizations

The COPC Logic Model document carefully identifies the organizations responsible for carrying out the various projects that make up the New Directions proposal. Some of these

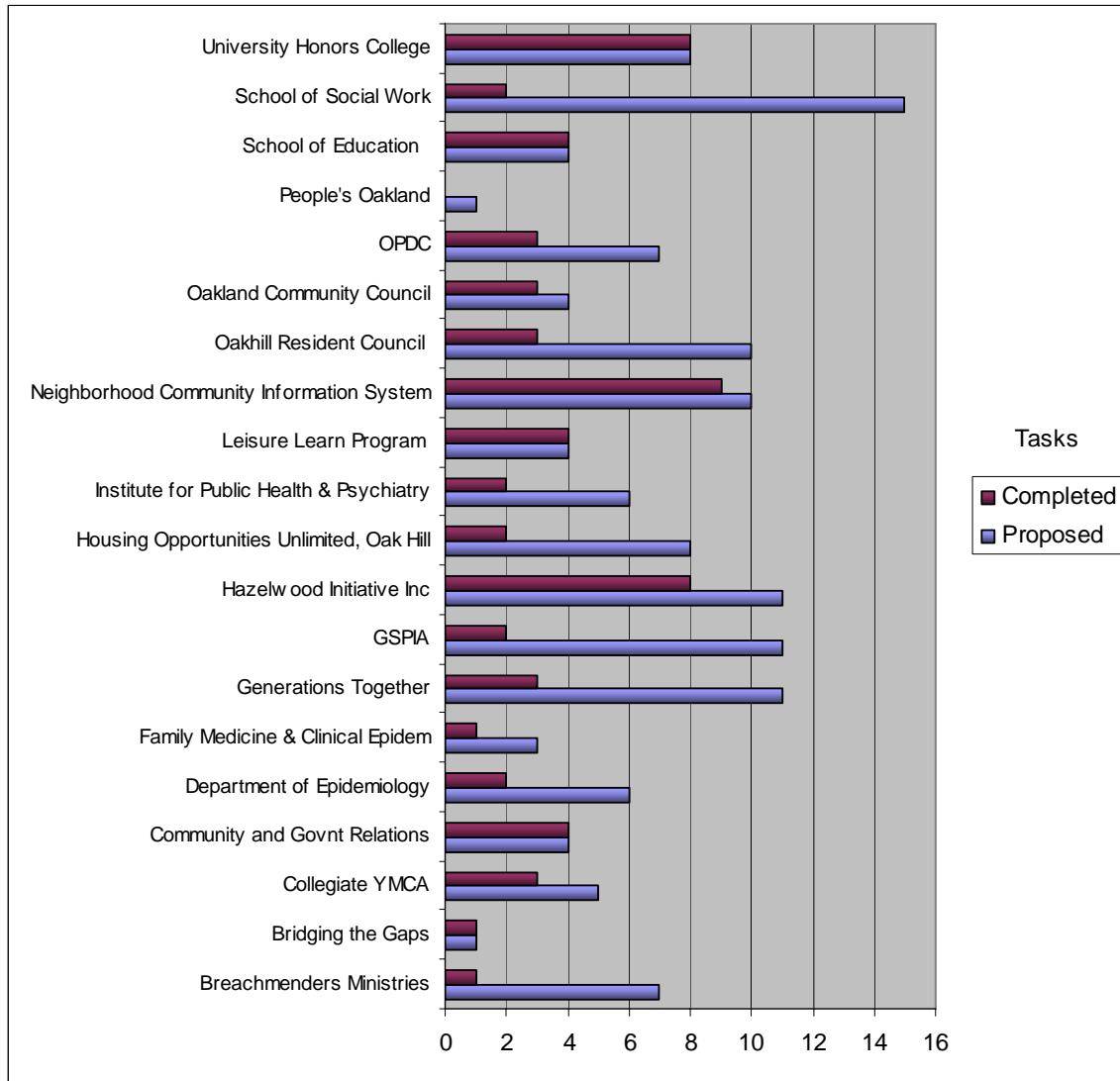
partners are part of the university, such as the School of Social Work, while others are community-based, such as the Oak Hill Residents Council. The COPC's primary strategy for completing these tasks was to assign students to internships with the organizations. The University Honors College has most completely accomplished its goals, finishing eight out of eight. The Neighborhood & Community Information System project has completed nine out of ten.

It should be noted that this analysis represents only those tasks reported as completed in the two Progress Reports. Other tasks may have been misreported, or underreported. For example, a group of tasks listed in the logic model under the Neighborhood Database Program Area involved a service learning project to create a database of student housing in Central Oakland. The goal was to institutionalize the project by creating a recurring course at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA), then marketing the database concept to other neighborhoods. None of this is mentioned in the two Progress Reports, although several aspects of this project were actually completed as part of a course at GSPIA.

COPC did not issue a third report, opting to wait until the end of the New Directions grant to prepare a final report for HUD. Many of the tasks in the logic model may be reported as completed in that final report.

In some cases, priorities have shifted dramatically, either by choice or by fortune. For example, many of the Active Living Program Area activities initially identified for the Oak Hill neighborhood were indefinitely suspended as the dispute between the University of Pittsburgh, the developers of the HOPE VI housing project in the neighborhood and the Oak Hill Residents Council erupted into a full-blown lawsuit (Jones, 2007).

Figure 5.3: Tasks Proposed vs. Completed by Organization



Community Building Analysis

Program areas:

The first thing about examining the COPC’s three program areas is that one is much different from the other two.

The Pittsburgh Neighborhood Community Information System (NCIS) project cannot really be compared with the Active Living: Fitness, Wellness and Youth Development or the Community Organizing, Environmental/Public Safety program areas. The NCIS is “in-house.” While it is a project involving contact with many community partners—both as clients and resources—it is housed at the University of Pittsburgh and staffed mostly by Pitt faculty and students. Its tasks are concerned with producing a particular product for the community. In the two Progress Reports, the Neighborhood Database Project’s outputs are easily reduced to bullet points:

- ArcIMS server and secure data server set-up and functioning;
- Continued clean-up of administrative datasets;
- System moved from temporary location to UCSUR servers;
- Security system installed;
- Real estate data analyzed; (COPC 2006)”

Table 5.3: Community Building Scores for COPC Program Areas

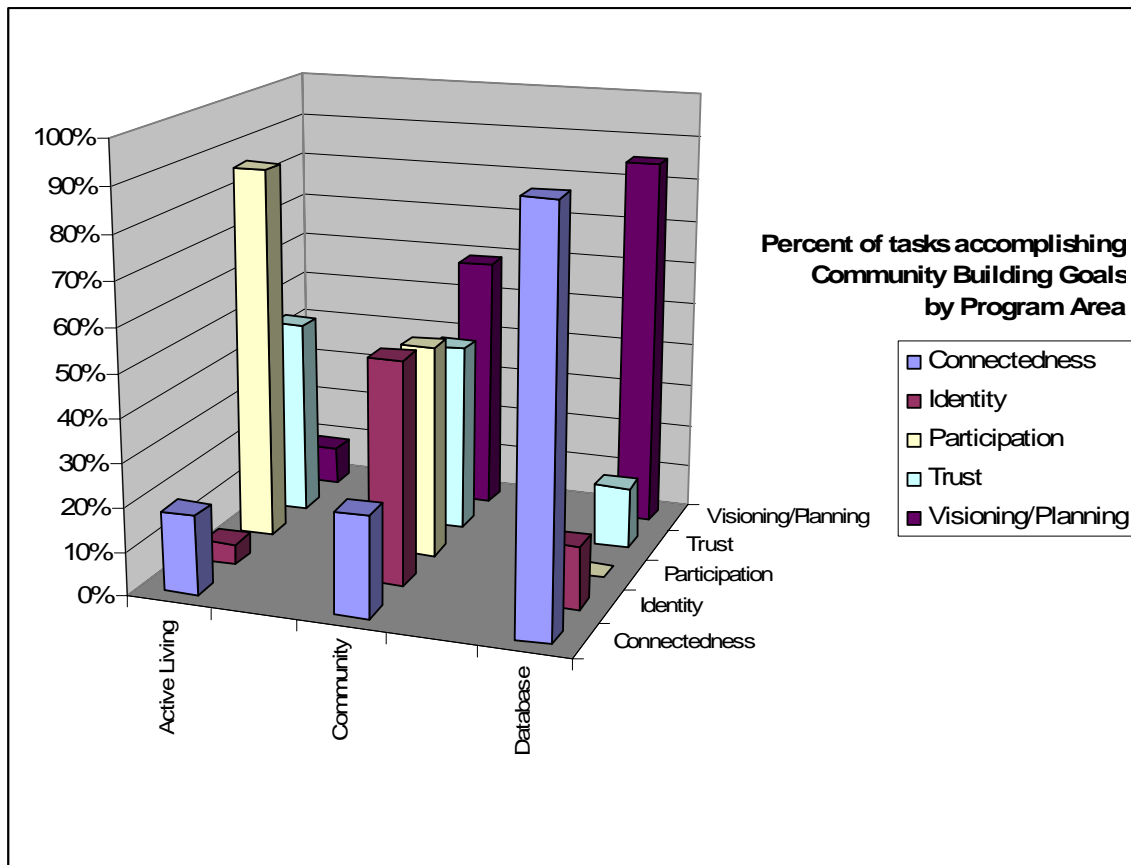
	Total		Active Living	pct	Community organizing	pct	Database	pct
Connectedness	28	31%	4	18%	9	23%	13	93%
Identity	30	33%	1	5%	20	51%	2	14%
Participation	47	52%	19	86%	19	49%	0	0%
Trust	30	33%	10	45%	17	44%	2	14%
Visioning/Planning	45	49%	2	9%	23	59%	12	86%

These are far different from the goals of the other two program areas. They are much more concrete. The NCIS’ impact on Community Building or neighborhoods is not addressed in the Progress Reports because the project is still new. Because it involves the development of new technology, it has been slower to reach the point where its effects can be seen. For the purpose of this evaluation, most NCIS outputs were coded as contributing to *Connectedness* (since the system allows neighborhood groups to see how the indicators impacting their area also affect other parts of the city) and *Visioning/Planning* (since the indicators are largely focused on land use issues). Very few of the outputs registered on the *Trust* or *Identity* indicators and none involved the public enough to be coded as contributing to *Participation within the community*.

There is a public participation component to the NCIS project—A public access website that uses the same mapping software to display aggregated data that is not subject to the confidentiality rules essential to the agreements between the City of Pittsburgh, the University of Pittsburgh and the various non-profit groups that contributed data to the project. This website could have a meaningful impact on the community by allowing the general public to see how indicators such as crime, land use, erosion and other factors affect the policy choices about their neighborhood. However, this system is not well-publicized, and it is not mentioned at all in the two Progress Reports.

Reducing the comparison of the Program Areas to a two-horse race, it is clear that the Active Living program area is one that is focused on public involvement (*Participation*), while the Community program area is more concerned with *Visioning/Planning*. While both Program Areas were scored for 19 *Participation* tasks, this represented 86% of the Active Living output, as opposed to 49% for Community.

Figure 5.4: Community Building Scorecard for COPC Program Areas



Community Organizing outputs also scored well for *Identity*, with 51% of the tasks achieving these results. Together, COPC’s three program areas scored better in *Participation* and *Visioning/Planning* than in *Connectedness*, *Identity* or *Trust*. This suggests that future COPC programs should find ways to emphasize these areas more.

Organizations

The COPC’s partner organizations were assigned the bulk of the work through the New Directions program. Most of the New Directions grant money was allocated to student internships at these organizations where they were expected to accomplish the goals outlined in the Logic Model. However, many students found themselves working on other neighborhood projects that were not part of the Logic Model—in some cases, these were new ideas that came directly from the students. Two organizations accomplished the most tasks and accumulated the most Community Building Points: OPDC and Hazelwood Initiative each contributed to at least 20 tasks. These two groups will be discussed in more detail in the next section. In contrast, 17 partners took on five tasks or less, contributing a combined 59 CBP.

Many other partners contributed to a medium number of tasks:

- The Oakland Community Council was involved in eight tasks for 21 CBP. The OCC was not coded as contributing to *Connectedness*, and only two points for *Participation*, however they scored strongly for *Visioning/Planning* (7), *Trust* (7), and *Identity* (5).

BLOCK CLUB ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Only one task was recognized as contributing to all five Community Building Objectives: the Hazelwood Block Club project:

“*Block Club Development* continued as an important activity in Hazelwood with the support of a COPC social work intern; efforts included:

- Flowers Avenue Block Club- recruited new members and co-leaders for the club.
- Hazelwood Towers - members took over the leadership of the club.
- Blair/Lytle Street Block Club - Identified key leaders and issues and recruited new members.
- COPC intern helped residents address issues on their block, advocated for residents, and helped to resolve issues” (COPC 2005).

This project *connected* the neighborhoods to each other and City Hall; involved public *participation*; connected to the School of Social Work (building *trust*); encouraged the consideration of *identity* issues; and was very much a *planning/visioning* project.

The block clubs are highlighted in the community newsletter and on the Internet, where organizers expressly invoked the ideals of urbanist Jane Jacobs to attract new members: “The Second Avenue Block Watch is important to the community because they act as a natural surveillance system. It is their goal that, by acting as ‘eyes upon the street,’ they will help to make their community a better, safer place to live (Tomei, 1997, p. 2).” The club works with local law enforcement and assists in other community activities, such as National Nights Out, along with other block clubs.

Social workers have often put emphasis on the effectiveness of block clubs in expanding the “collective efficacy” (Ohmer, 2006) of both neighborhoods and organizations. There is research that block club members are more likely to have expectations that they can solve problems by working collectively and are more likely to engage in collective anti-crime efforts (Ohmer, 2006).

- Community Leisure Learn contributed to 9 tasks for 13 CBP, while the Collegiate YMCA had 11 tasks and 22 CBP. These two organizations were integrally involved in the Active Living Program Area. They provided much of the COPC’s *Participation* score, despite their moderate involvement.
- The Oak Hill Residents Council (6 tasks, 11 CBP) was reported as a strong partner in both the Community and Active Living Program Areas; however a dispute arose between the builder of the housing development in the neighborhood and the university, resulting in a lawsuit and a halt to cooperation through the COPC.
- The COPC Working Group on Housing (13 tasks, 34 CBP) was a strong force in generating *Trust* between the university and the community. The Working Group was involved with OPDC in a number of projects improving the student housing situation around Pitt.
- Keep it Clean Oakland (7 tasks, 14 CBP) is an organization that came out of the COPC as a result of the work of student interns. Three of KICO’s seven tasks were reported by students in the GSPIA survey, not in the Progress Reports.

Case Study: OPDC vs. HI

OPDC and Hazelwood Initiative, Inc. were the focus of many COPC projects, especially in the **Community Organizing, Environmental/Public Safety** Program

Area, where both organizations completed 15 tasks. OPDC also contributed one task to the

Active Living Program Area while HI had one task for the Neighborhood Database. The remaining tasks (5 for OPDC and 4 for HI) were reported on the GSPIA Student Survey and so were not affiliated directly with a Program Area in this analysis.

Both organizations were remarkably similar in terms of their COPC output: OPDC completed 21 tasks, while HI had 20; OPDC had 45 CBP while HI had 42. This makes the two organizations well-suited to a comparison that runs across the Community Building Goals.

Figure 5.5: Hazelwood Initiative & OPDC: Tasks and Community Building Points

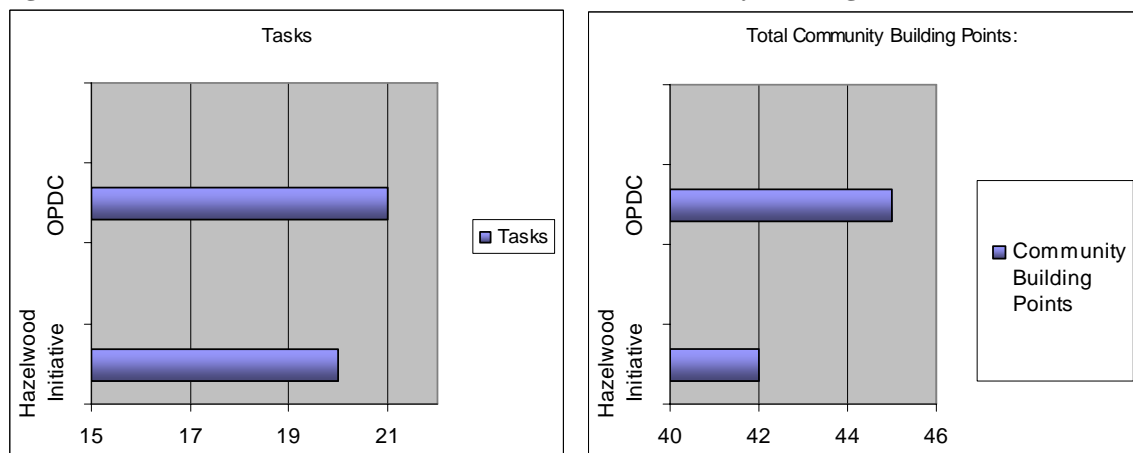
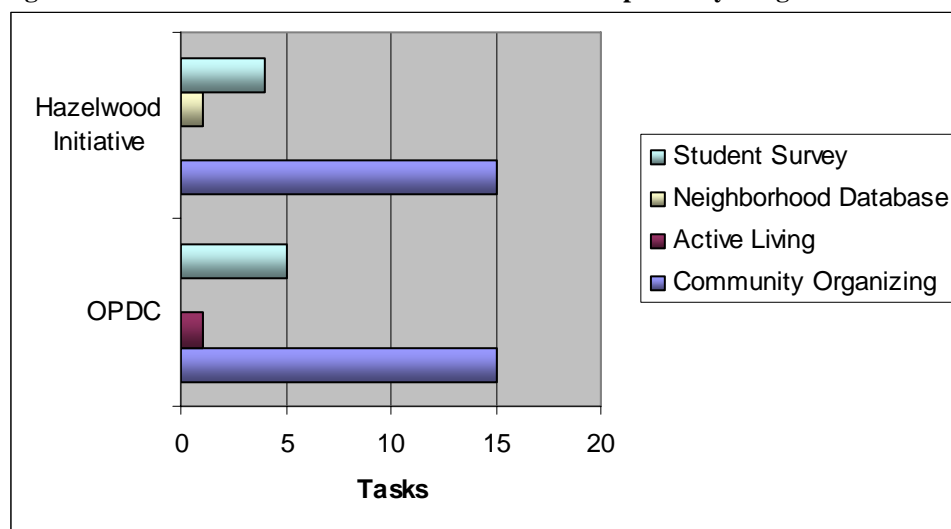


Figure 5.6: Hazelwood Initiative & OPDC: Tasks Completed by Program Area



Although OPDC and HI each contributed a similar number of tasks and CPB, there Community Building efforts were focused in different areas. OPDC's activities were much more focused on land use issues, gaining many more points for *Visioning/Planning*, while HI had almost twice as many points for *Participation*. This may reflect the COPC effort to form participatory **block clubs** in Hazelwood.

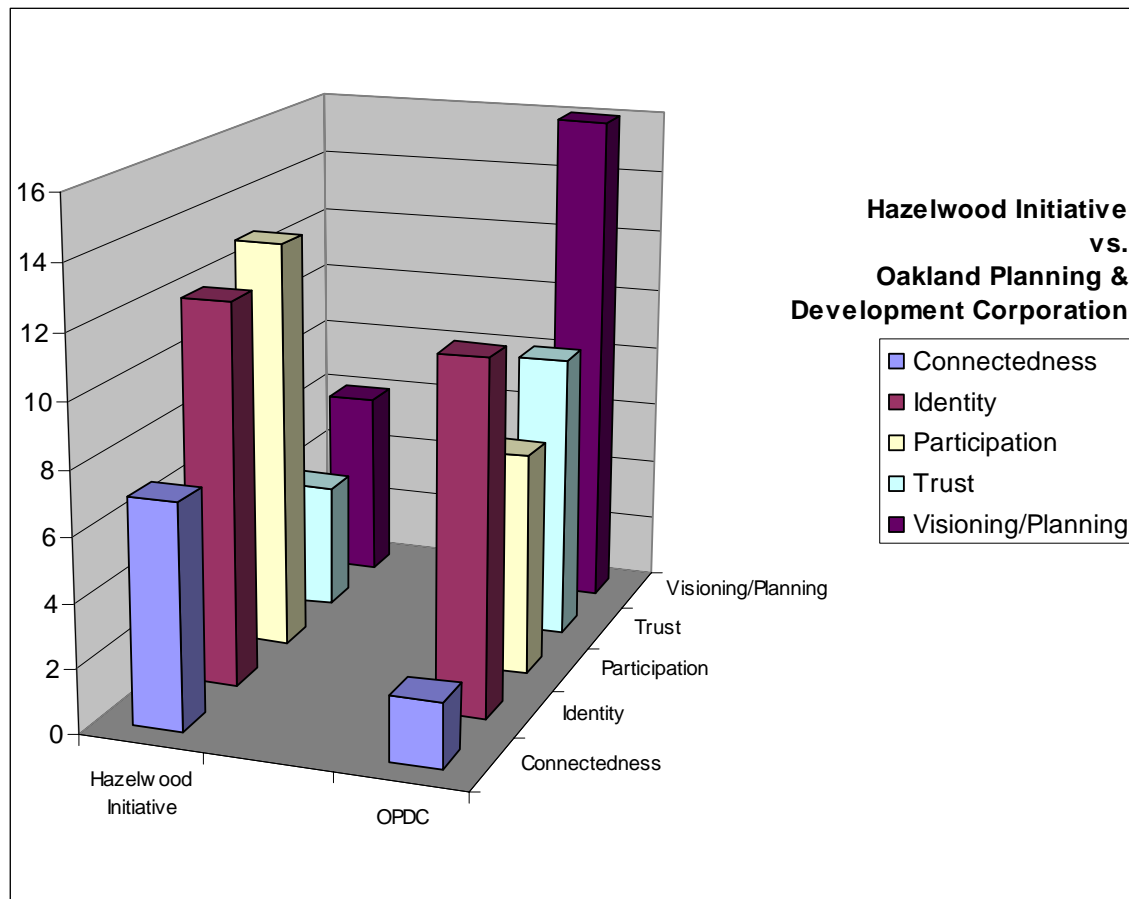
Table 5.4: Hazelwood Initiative & OPDC: Community Building Goals

	Hazelwood Initiative	Oakland Planning & Dev't Corp.
Connectedness	7	2
Identity	12	11
Participation	13	7
Trust	4	9
Visioning/Planning	6	16
Total Tasks:	20	21
Total CBP:	42	45

Hazelwood Initiative was more successful at stressing *Connectedness* while OPDC gained more points for *Trust*. The *Trust* score reflects the degree to which the organization cooperates with the University. This could mean that Pitt is not doing as much to form direct connections with the Hazelwood community, which is farther from the main campus than Oakland.

Connectedness is an issue for both organizations, as they have few tasks that reach beyond their borders, although HI scored much higher on this scale than OPDC. On the other hand, both organizations contributed strongly to the overall *Identity* score.

Figure 5.7: Hazelwood Initiative & OPDC: Community Building Goals



Conclusions

This examination of outputs and community building goals leads to a number of conclusions and action items. There is clearly a difference between the types of community building undertaken by the COPC's three Program Areas. There are also differences between the partner organizations and the types of activities they are completing.

This is especially true for Hazelwood Initiative and OPDC, the COPC's two main partners. HI's activities are focused on *Participation*, while OPDC's are about *Visioning/Planning*. *Trust* is also much higher between OPDC and the University. This is likely due to the geographic proximity of Oakland to Pitt as compared to Hazelwood. This analysis clearly suggests that future COPC programs need to engage more directly with HI to build *Trust*. Taking on more land use issues in Hazelwood would improve the *Visioning/Planning* score. On the other hand, future COPC programs in Oakland need to do more to actively involve residents in planning and community building activities to increase *Participation*.

Looking at the COPC overall, about half of the 91 tasks reported as completed contributed to *Visioning/Planning* (52%) or *Participation* (49%), but only one third contributed to *Identity* (33%), *Connectedness* (31%) or *Trust* (33%). COPC clearly has chosen to focus on tasks that address community health and land use issues, which lend themselves to *Visioning/Planning* and *Participation*. However, these projects could also address the other aspects of community building without sacrificing their core benefits.

Other recommendations:

- Future COPC programs should include components that *Connect* communities to their neighbors, promote neighborhood *Identity*, and directly connect with the University classes or programs (*Trust*).
- Many partners did just a little work, although they contributed a lot of community building. Perhaps the COPC needs to recognize the contributions of these “occasional friends” and work to make more connections with them.
- A new agreement between the University and Oak Hill developers may open the door for renewed cooperation through COPC. The former Active Living & Youth Development activities in Oak Hill should be revived as soon as possible.
- Some objectives that were successfully completed were either not reported or were poorly reported in the two Progress Reports. The use of a data management tool may enable COPC managers to better track the program's progress.

CHAPTER 6

MEASURING HOUSING NEEDS AND IMPROVEMENTS WITH THE PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY INFORMATION SYSTEM

One of the major issues facing the COPC and its partners is problems with housing, especially the quantity of deteriorated housing. The existing housing has been problematic in some neighborhoods because of the abundance of abandoned properties and building code violations. Further, existing residential and some commercial properties have become rundown due to neglect. Abandoned and/or deteriorated properties contribute to a declining housing market because potential residents do not want to move to areas with urban blight.

The quantity of deteriorated houses in Oakland and Hazelwood are problematic in terms of the appearance of each neighborhood, but it is important to note that there is a difference with each community's housing stock. Oakland has a substantial market of rental properties to accommodate students, especially in Central and South Oakland, as well older residents whose family-owned homes have been past down through generations (Aurand et.al 2002). While the family homes are being maintained as homes, the rental properties are not. Many "family" homes have been converted to rental properties, many undergoing divisions to create apartments. Absenteeism amongst landlords is creating physical blight in the housing stock in both Oakland. The high demand for these houses means students are willing to pay for rundown structures, with no repercussions on the owners (Derenzo 2003).

Hazelwood has a different housing market than Oakland. It has more home ownership than Oakland, relatively, but also more deteriorated and abandoned structures. Oakland has a high demand for housing because of the proximity to the university, as well as the other amenities, such as Schenley Park and a variety of hospitals. Hazelwood is viewed as a less desirable place to live, especially for renting students who comprise most of Oakland housing. The only common denominator between the two neighborhoods is that property blight is a predicament that is being addressed by community organizations. Hazelwood's population has steadily declined from 1990 to 2000 and single family homes sold, on average, 27.3% less than the assessed value in that time frame (Aurand et al 2001).

Under the first COPC grant, several housing initiatives were implemented and carried out. The effectiveness of these initiatives has been discussed in prior COPC reports. The New Directions Grant, begun in 2004, focuses on community organizing, active living, and the neighborhood information system. Nonetheless, COPC continues to focus on housing issues with emphasis on the initiatives of the COPC partners. This section will show growth of capacity of both the OPDC and the HI through strides made in the area of building improvements. The focus on these two organizations is due to their abilities to affect the physical conditions more than any of the other partners in the respective neighborhoods.

Context for Methodology

In 2003, the University of Pennsylvania used a Neighborhood Information System to predict housing abandonment through indicating variables in property-level housing data. Their model for predicting abandonment was based on a linear series of events with three aspects;

functional, physical, and financial. Functional abandonment occurs when a property is no longer fulfilling its role as a residence, with indicators such as vacancy and suspension of mail service. Physical abandonment indicators include violations of housing codes and declarations of unfit for human occupancy, demonstrating that owners are neglecting the property. Financial abandonment occurs when owners stop meeting financial responsibilities, with signals such as tax liens and default mortgages (Hiller et al 2003).

The authors specify that housing-related warning systems can identify properties at risk for physical decline. This chapter will focus on several of the predicting variables to demonstrate neighborhood deterioration. The following comparisons are excluding financial abandonment indicators because they do not illustrate the appearance of the neighborhood. Physical and functional abandonment indicators, however, can be used to display the conditions of housing structures in the neighborhood.

The model Penn created does not include indicators that would display neighborhood improvement. Building permits, razed houses by the city, and demolition permits can illustrate progress made in improving the physical condition of the neighborhood. The information provided by our partners in our information system allows for us to make an improvement comparison. The improvement variables can illustrate a correlation between a problem and a solution. For example, if a property has a code violation and a building permit in contrasting maps, it can be inferred that the violation was resolved. If that particular violation was not resolved, a building permit demonstrates that someone has worked previously to improve the property and is willing to do so again.

Use of NIS

Hyland (1998) addressed the role of information systems in his study of a similar mapping program developed at the University of Memphis. He identified three areas in which university partnerships with community organizations can build a sustainable partnership: information, training/education, and resources. By developing a mapping system, the university can provide information on the community to the organizations. It will have to train and educate the partners on how to use the system. The resources provided are both with funding and interns who assist the organizations on the use of the system.

Hyland follows this piece with an evaluation of Memphis mapping program. His focus began with identifying economic development measures of the program, and then progressed to community building outcomes. His evaluation yielded that the maps created by the students were used as part of the planning studies for three Memphis neighborhoods, thus contributing to the community's planning and visioning (Hyland 2000). The importance of this evaluation is to show that information systems can have a positive affect on community planning.

The comparable maps will be a demonstration of the utility of the Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System (PNCIS), as developed through COPC. The PNCIS is property information system that collects information on community conditions and displays it with the use of ArcMap, a web-based mapping software program developed by ESRI. The mission of the PNCIS is to build trust with public sector partners in order to advance communities and generate positive neighborhood change (www.pghnis.pitt.edu/approach). The use of PNCIS in this regard will show that the partnership with the City of Pittsburgh, in

particular the Bureau of Building Inspection, has been successful. The change in the community planning with the use of PNCIS has yet to be determined, given that of time the system has been in service since 2006. Neighborhood change can be inferred from this data in the areas with two major COPC partners.

Methodology

This research uses the PNCIS (www.pghnis.pitt.edu) to show housing improvements made through August 2006 in the specific areas targeted in the organizations' respective housing plans. The housing improvement maps include the following improvement variables, as identified by the City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Building Inspection (BBI):

- *building permits*
- *buildings that have been razed by city government*
- *buildings marked for demolition*

These will be compared to maps showing where improvements are needed. The components of these maps will include variables as identified by the BBI and the U.S Postal Service:

- *dead end ownership*
- *condemned buildings*
- *code violations*
- *vacant and sealed properties*
- *unfit for human habilitation*
- *postal vacancies*

This analysis will display the improvement needs. It draws a parallel to progress indicators, such as building permits and razes. Razes by the city are considered progress in the housing market because it is the first step in growth. Given the age of houses in both areas, a certain amount of houses will exceed their life span every year and have to be replaced. Granted, some razes have become vacant lots that contribute to urban blight; however, the removal of dilapidated houses will be considered progress in this report. If properties have both a corresponding need and an improvement indicator, it will show progress made toward changing the community for the better.

All maps are divided by the goals listed for the area in the partners' housing strategy, including the description of the plan. The maps focus on the specific areas mentioned in the respective housing plans of ODPC and HI. After the maps are compared, a list of all variables for the respective neighborhoods will be displayed. The charts can be compared as a means to see what progress has been made versus the degeneration of the neighborhood. The compared maps will allow for several generalizations to be made about the indicator charts.

Figure 6.1A

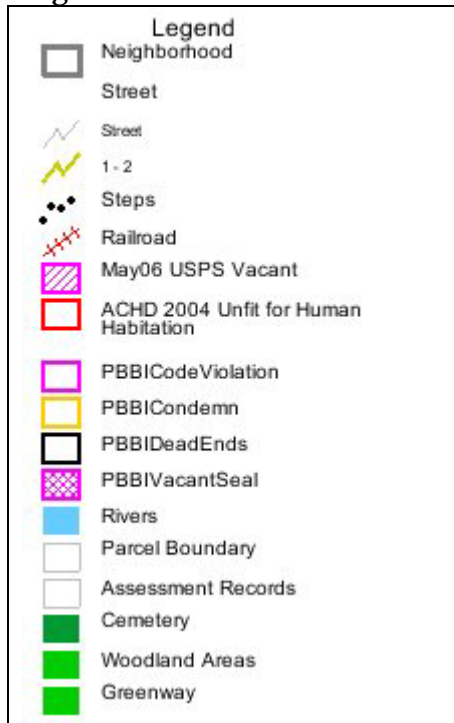
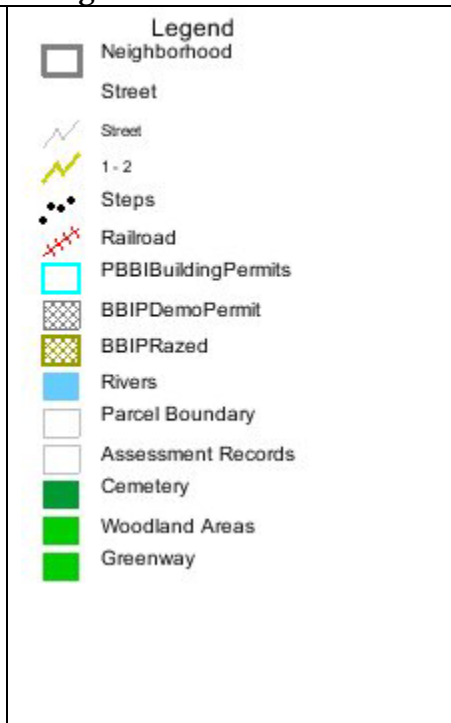


Figure 6.1B



Strategies and Maps

OPDC Housing Strategy

The OPDC housing strategy consists of both outlines for larger areas and individual streets (<http://www.oaklandplanning.org/realestate/housingstrategy.html>). The following outline shows the housing strategy for each area of OPDC focus.

Central Oakland Core

- Strengthen the physical environment with rehab and new construction of rental property

The maps of the Central Oakland core display a multitude of building permits (Figure 6.2A) and building code violations (Figure 6.2B). The majority of the code violations have matching permits, showing that problems were recognized and repaired. There are several key areas in which code violations do not have matching permits, including

- Louisa between McKee and Semple
- Corner of Bates and Ward
- Areas between Oakland and Atwood

The goal of strengthening the physical environment is progressing, given the amount of building permits; however, the problem areas suggest that work is needed.

Figure 6.2A



Figure 6.2B



South Central Oakland

- Create a physical context through new development and public improvements
- Develop homeownership initiatives on Oakland Square, Parkview, and the east side of Dawson.
- Improve or redevelop major rental properties that are not suitable for conversion to homeownership.

The first map (Figure 6.3A) shows numerous building permits, indicating progress toward the housing strategy. However, it is offset by a similar number of code violations (Figure 6.3B). In these maps, only 6 of the code violations have a matching building permit to the property. The combination of both maps show that almost every property in the area was in need of work in the past decade, with only half the properties recorded as receiving the required attention. The displayed building permits signify that improvement and redevelopment of rental properties has occurred.

Figure 6.3A



Figure 6.3B



Coltart / Halket Streets

- Create a physical context through new development and public improvements.

The housing strategy indicates that public improvements need to be made, but there are not many permits on both Coltart and Halket. There are seven code violations that do not have a building permit correlation (Figure 6.4A).

Figure 6.4A



Figure 6.4B



Bates at Bouquet

- Create a physical context through new development and public improvements <http://www.oaklandplanning.org/realestate/housingstrategy.html>.

The most pressing concern in this area is the large postal vacancy displayed in the map. This is obviously a property larger than a normal house and should be a priority for improving the physical structure of the area. These maps also have deficiency in terms of a building permit and code violation correlation. Again, the code violations are shown as different properties than ones that have been repaired.

Figure 6.5A



Figure 6.5B



South Oakland

- Develop affordable for-sale housing at scale targeting instances of concentrated vacant property and physical blight.

There appears to be a lack of correlation between building permits (Figure 6.6A) and code violations (Figure 6.6B). Four properties marked with code violations were razed. Frazier, between Ward and Dawson, appears to be a concentrated area of physical blight that has been addressed, given the amount of building permits in the area. Edith has a block of code violations that does not have any building permits, indicating that it may need attention.

Figure 6.6A

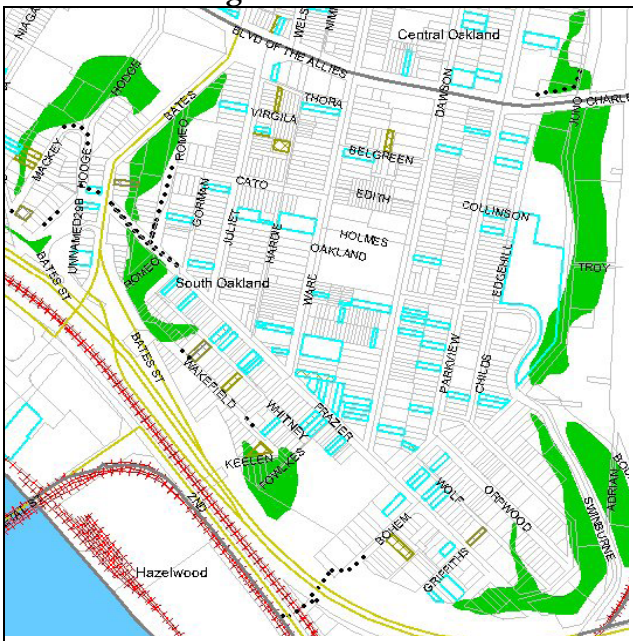


Figure 6.6B



Oakcliffe

- Develop affordable for-sale housing at scale targeting instances of concentrated vacant property and physical blight.

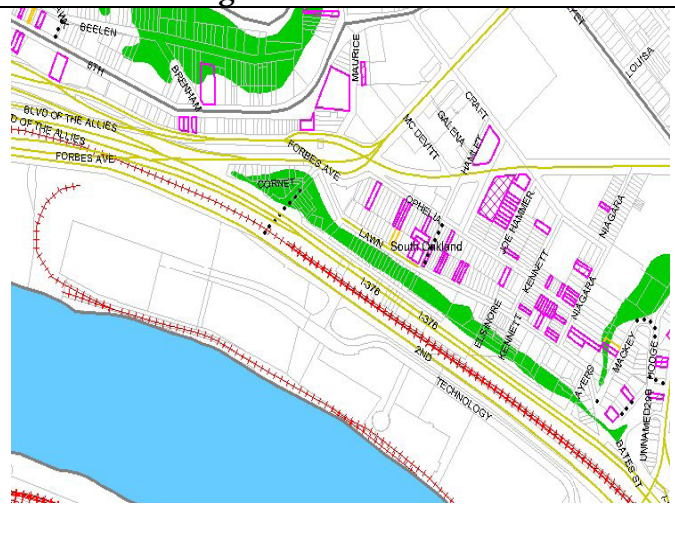
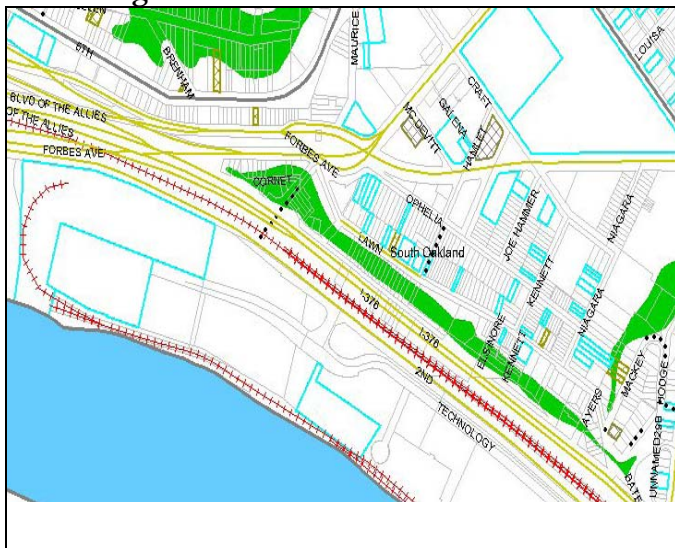
These maps indicate progress toward OPDC's goal. One condemned property and one building code violation were both razed by the city. There are a total of nine properties razed, six of which are west of Forbes. The postal vacancy tagged properties all have building permits, indicating that these properties are working toward being maintained.

Building code violations indicate several areas of concentrated blight that do not have any corresponding progress indicators, including:

- Joe Hammer to Hamlet
- Ophelia between Kennett and Niagara

Figure 6.7A

Figure 6.7B



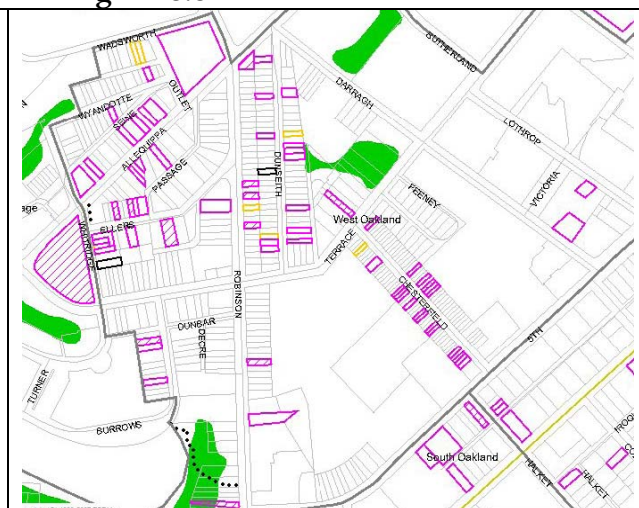
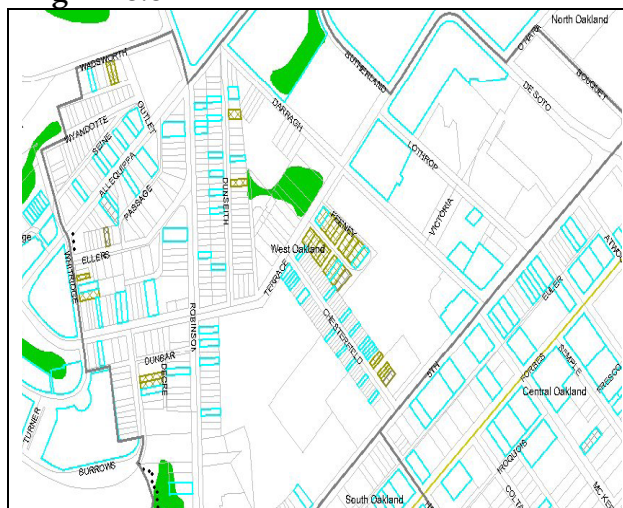
West Oakland

- Develop affordable for-sale housing at scale targeting instances of concentrated vacant property and physical blight.

The first map shows several properties as razed by the city, showing movement toward the housing strategy goal. The properties marked as postal vacancies either have been razed or have a building permit, again showing progress. There are a number of building permits (Figure 6.8A), but not enough of them match where code violations occurred (Figure 6.8B). The largest concern from the maps is the condemned buildings on Dunseith. There are no indications of anything completed from the progress map.

Figure 6.8A

Figure 6.8B



Chesterfield

- Develop affordable for-sale housing at scale targeting instances of concentrated vacant property and physical blight.

The maps indicate that physical blight is a problem in the area because of the large amount of indications on both maps, but progress is more prevalent. The one condemned property has a building permit and more building permits exist than code violations. The interesting note from the maps is that properties rarely are indicated on both maps.



Hazelwood Initiative's Housing Strategy

HI's housing strategy is part of their master plan, developed by Saratoga Associates. This plan was developed in corporation with the City of Pittsburgh. The master plan lists the following areas of interest as well as the intended results. HI and OPDC differ in the regard that housing is part of a comprehensive plan for changing the neighborhood. OPDC lacks an inclusive community plan.

South of Hazelwood Avenue

- Redevelopment of housing and new housing stock (Fairweather 2001).

The goal of revamping the housing stock in Hazelwood does not seem to be illustrated by the progress map. Density of code violations exists at:

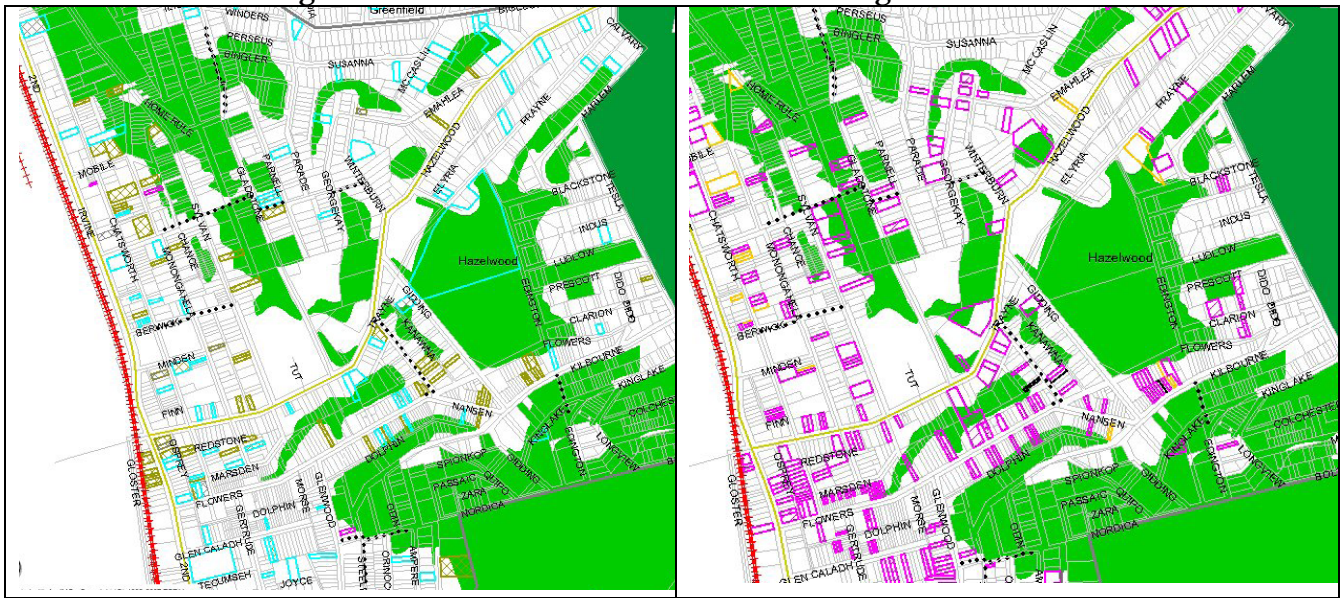
- Chatsworth, south of Hazelwood

- Flowers and Kilbourne
- All along Flowers

These areas indicate that physical blight is prevalent, especially when taking into consideration that the properties that are razed in the areas are not the same as those tagged with violations or condemned. The number of building permits is outweighed by the number of code violations, indicating a lack of progress being made toward the goal of overhauling houses.

Figure 6.10A

Figure 6.10B



Second Avenue

- Housing and business redevelopment target, with efforts possibly focusing on the Keystone Opportunity Zone along the 4800 block (Fairweather 2001).

There is some correlation between building permits and code violations, but problem areas such as Almeda and Pawpaw have more code violations than progress indicators. Postal vacancies at Johnston and Second do not match the properties that have been razed. The most disturbing comparison that can be made is that the one property marked as unfit for human habitation does not have a progress indicator in the first map. The maps seem to indicate a stronger need to work toward the goal of housing redevelopment.

Figure 6.11A

Figure 6.11B



Neighborhood Progress by Numbers

The comparable maps are able to illustrate the progress and needs the specific areas targeted by housing plans. It is important to discuss the number of indicators of the neighborhoods to illustrate the bigger picture of neighborhood progress. The following charts are the total number of progress and need indicators, divided by neighborhood.

Central Oakland

The number of progress indicators is slightly higher than of the needs indicators, but more come on line. This implies that troubled properties are addressed.

Table 6.1A

Progress	Number in NIS	Last Date Completed
BBI Building Permits	258	June 2006
BBI Demo Permits	4	September 2003
Razed by City	4	September 2003

Table 6.1B

Needs	Number in NIS	Last Date Completed
BBI Building Code Violations	215	June 2006
USPS Dead Ends	17	May 2006
Vacant	0	-
Condemned	0	-
Dead End	1	
Unfit for Human Living	0	-

South Oakland

The number of troubled properties is much higher than those where progress was made, but the stronger indicators of progress (demo permits and razed) are relatively high. The 26 properties razed by the city shows a commitment to reducing physical blight in the area.

Table 6.2A

Progress	Number in NIS	Last Date Completed
BBI Building Permits	151	June 2006
BBI Demo Permits	12	June 2004
Razed by City	26	January 2005

Table 6.2B

Needs	Number in NIS	Last Date Completed
BBI Building Code Violations	249	July 2006
USPS Dead Ends	50	May 2006
Vacant	4	2006
Condemned	15	2006
Dead End	5	2005
Unfit for Human Living	1	2004

West Oakland

The figures specify that revamping the housing core has been a priority in West Oakland. The **large number of progress indicators compared to the relatively low number of needs designate** the area as improved. The number of razed properties is drastically high, perhaps with razing parts of Allequippa Terrace housing units. This should not take away from the overall conclusion of neighborhood advancement.

Table 6.3A

Progress	Number in NIS	Last Date Completed
BBI Building Permits	325	June 2006
BBI Demo Permits	7	January 2005
Razed by City	56	2002

Table 6.3B

Needs	Number in NIS	Last Date Completed
BBI Building Code Violations	133	June 2006
USPS Dead Ends	25	May 2006
Vacant	1	June 2005
Condemned	29	2006
Dead End	7	2006
Unfit for Human Living	0	-

Hazelwood

The needs in Hazelwood are much higher than the progress indicators, signifying that there has been little progress. Just looking at the number of razed properties (126) would indicate advancement; however the total number of severe needs (dead ends and condemned) is near equivalent.

Table 6.4A

Progress	Number in NIS	Last Date Completed
BBI Building Permits	193	June 2006
BBI Demo Permits	16	2006
Razed by City	126	2006

Table 6.4B

Needs	Number in NIS	Last Date Completed
BBI Building Code Violations	462	June 2006
USPS Dead Ends	128	May 2006
Vacant	11	2006
Condemned	90	2006
Dead End	73	2006
Unfit for Human Living	1	2004

Conclusions on Neighborhood Progress

The maps showed some correlation between improvement needs and progress indicators, but not as much as anticipated. The biggest difference that was not expected was the lack of correlation between building permits and code violations. The reasoning behind this could be due to a number of factors such as:

- Code violations were not repaired.
- Code violations were repaired, but were minor and not in need of a permit.
- Code violations required razing.
- Code violations were repeated after being repaired.

The unknown factor here does not allow us to make assumptions on neighborhood progress from a code violation and building permit correlation. This may be found with a logistical regression, such as the Penn model. The Penn model was not able to be replicated with the data in PNCIS because of controlling factors not available, such as utility shut-offs.

The comparison maps for Oakland clearly show the OPDC targeted areas as having numerous building permits, as well as elimination of dilapidated properties through razing. In the comparison maps, it was clear that specific goals in areas were being achieved, such as strengthening the physical environment of Central Oakland and improvement or rental properties in South Central Oakland. There were also areas where the maps failed to show progression, such as the concentrated blight in Oakcliffe. The Hazelwood maps also gave a sense of mixed results. While there was some building permits, areas of concentrated blight were prevalent.

Assessing the neighborhoods by figures showed Oakland as being more even by way of need indicators being matched by progress. This was mainly due to the large amount of code violations in Hazelwood and a relatively low number of building permits.

Based on the two types of comparisons, this report can make several conclusions on both OPDC and HI. The OPDC housing strategy is shown to have several goals achieved or in progress of being achieved. This suggests that the organization has put forth resources toward their mission. The strides made in the neighborhood demonstrate OPDC's ability to make positive changes in the housing stock.

Progress in Hazelwood

A noteworthy recent occurrence in Hazelwood is the announcement of six new single-family homes scheduled for construction this spring. The new houses will be located on Monongahela St., Sylvan Ave. and Hazelwood Ave. near the 210 year-old Woods House. National City is providing funding for the \$1.4M project and HI will provide homebuyer training and marketing services, as well as assistance with securing third party funding. The new homes are part of Hazelwood's master plan, which calls for redevelopment of the former LTV steel site, rehabilitation of housing authority properties, and the creation of access points to the park and Woods House (Baron 2007). This evidence of progression in developing new houses in Hazelwood is excellent, especially in accordance with the master plan.

HI has a bigger challenge than OPDC because of the lack of demand for housing in the area. The master plan for Hazelwood is shown as progressing, but not as clearly as OPDC's housing strategy. This suggests that HI must continue to put forth resources toward changing the neighborhood.

Conclusions on PNCIS

The data was able to provide a useful interpretation of the neighborhood, displaying areas of progress and improvement needs. This system was effective for analyzing trends on an evaluation, but that is not its intent. The purpose of the system is to provide community leaders with a planning tool. The system is being used by the COPC partners for that purpose, mainly through the dispersion of COPC interns to the partners. Based on the usage in this report, the system can be improved to aid community planning.

This will be addressed more with recommendations, but it is important to note here that the data was not completely up to date. This is a potential threat to validity when using the system for analyzing development.

Recommendations

OPDC should continue to focus on areas specified by their housing strategy, particularly in areas which require additional housing. The progress made in Oakland's housing stock is noteworthy, but it is evident that not all the goals have been achieved. Revamping and adding new housing is a constant process, especially in an area where housing is in high demand. Housing stock in Oakland neighborhoods will have to continue to grow, paralleling the expansion of the university. The university has added several dormitories in recent years, notably in the north end of campus (ex. Pennsylvania Hall). While the university has made accommodations for additional students, Oakland must anticipate a higher demand for housing.

HI should continue to focus on areas targeted by the master plan, focusing on the reduction of blighted houses. Hazelwood must continue to work toward becoming a sustainable community. Ridding the neighborhood of blighted property and thwarting a population decline are achievable goals in need of ongoing efforts.

PNCIS needs improvement to become a more effective planning tool for community organizations. Some of the issues with the system in creating this report include:

- Lack of updated information.
- Color schemes are difficult to comprehend.
- Navigational ability somewhat complex.
- Overlapping of variables tricky to comprehend.
- Getting data on the specific community more complex than it should be.
- More data would have made findings more significant.

These problems made the report an enduring exercise in patience. It is essential for the system to be user-friendly for partnering organizations. This system is in its infancy and is continuing to be developed. The navigational tools and identifying instruments will progress with advancements in technology. Additional data will come as new partnerships are created. The system was effective for creating an illustration of the neighborhoods' housing stock, but it will be improved as the system evolves.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS

The University of Pittsburgh's Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) is on pace in achieving goals and mission. Our evaluation has produced a number of quantitative and qualitative results demonstrating the effectiveness of COPC.

In rating the capacity levels of Oakland Planning and Development Corporation (OPDC) (Stage 2) and Hazelwood Initiative (HI) (Stage 1) both had similar yet different attributes. The majority of the COPC partners are Stage 2 organizations, with limited staff and funding, Stage 1 attributes are common. The comparison of two different levels of organizations illustrated how capacity initiatives can move a Stage 1 organization to Stage 2. For smaller organizations, the benefit of gaining knowledge of current capacity levels has both short and long range implications on the ability to successfully develop and/or expand current programs. The COPC enables the partner organizations to network among each other in building stronger organizational capacity than could have incurred independently. COCP interns assist partners in a number of program and policy areas. The comparison showed COPC as an effective tool in capacity building, especially in smaller organizations.

Networking growth and trust levels between the partners and COPC were measured with a survey and social network analysis. The network grew from pre-COPC to the present, showing the effect of COPC in promoting networking. The survey indicated trust levels are high between COPC and its partners. This can be attributed to the effect COPC had on building organizational capacity, clear statement of objectives, and meeting partner expectations. COPC has helped the University build trust with neighbors in Oakland and Hazelwood.

It is recommended that the COPC implement a method of measuring the networking goal. It may seem like a difficult goal to measure, but social network analysis provides a methodology to measure networking, as we have demonstrated in this study.

We recommend that a contract be formulated at the onset of each grant for each partner to clearly state the goals and objectives of the project to solidify the commitment level of the organization and their resources (time, money, other) for the agreed duration of the project. Since the partnership needs to be fluid and adapt with circumstance, then a stipulation in the contract should insert a line that states and other changes as agreed upon by both parties will be contractually binding as well.

A survey of former COPC interns was conducted to determine the effectiveness of service learning through COPC. Students contributed to building organizational capacity to the communities in which they served. Their academic experience was enhanced with professional practices, while gaining a sense of civic engagement. Students enhanced their career prospects through both the skills they gained and the professional contacts they made.

Analysis of the progress reports made by COPC showed half of the logic models goals have been met, leaving the other half as to yet to be accomplished. The tasks performed through COPC and the partnering organizations have focused on visioning and planning and

participation in the community. COPC needs to accomplish more tasks that contribute to identity, connectedness outside the community, and trust.

Using the PNCIS system to measure housing deterioration and property improvement provided an illustration of change in COPC neighborhoods. The neighborhoods were shown to be progressing on their respective housing strategies, but they are ongoing endeavors. The PNCIS system was found as a useful planning tool for partnering organizations.

This evaluation shows the effectiveness that the University of Pittsburgh is having through COPC with partners in its surrounding neighborhoods. An assortment of programs has been performed through COPC and its partners, all contributing to a more positive university/community partnership. COPC has been strategic in helping neighborhood organizations build their capacity, develop strong networks, and institute a new level of trust. The relationship built between Pitt and the neighborhood, under the direction of COPC, has created a new perspective of the University of Pittsburgh to the communities. Through the COPC, Pitt has worked to make to the neighborhood more livable for the residents. It is no longer viewed as a nuisance to the community but, a friend and neighbor.

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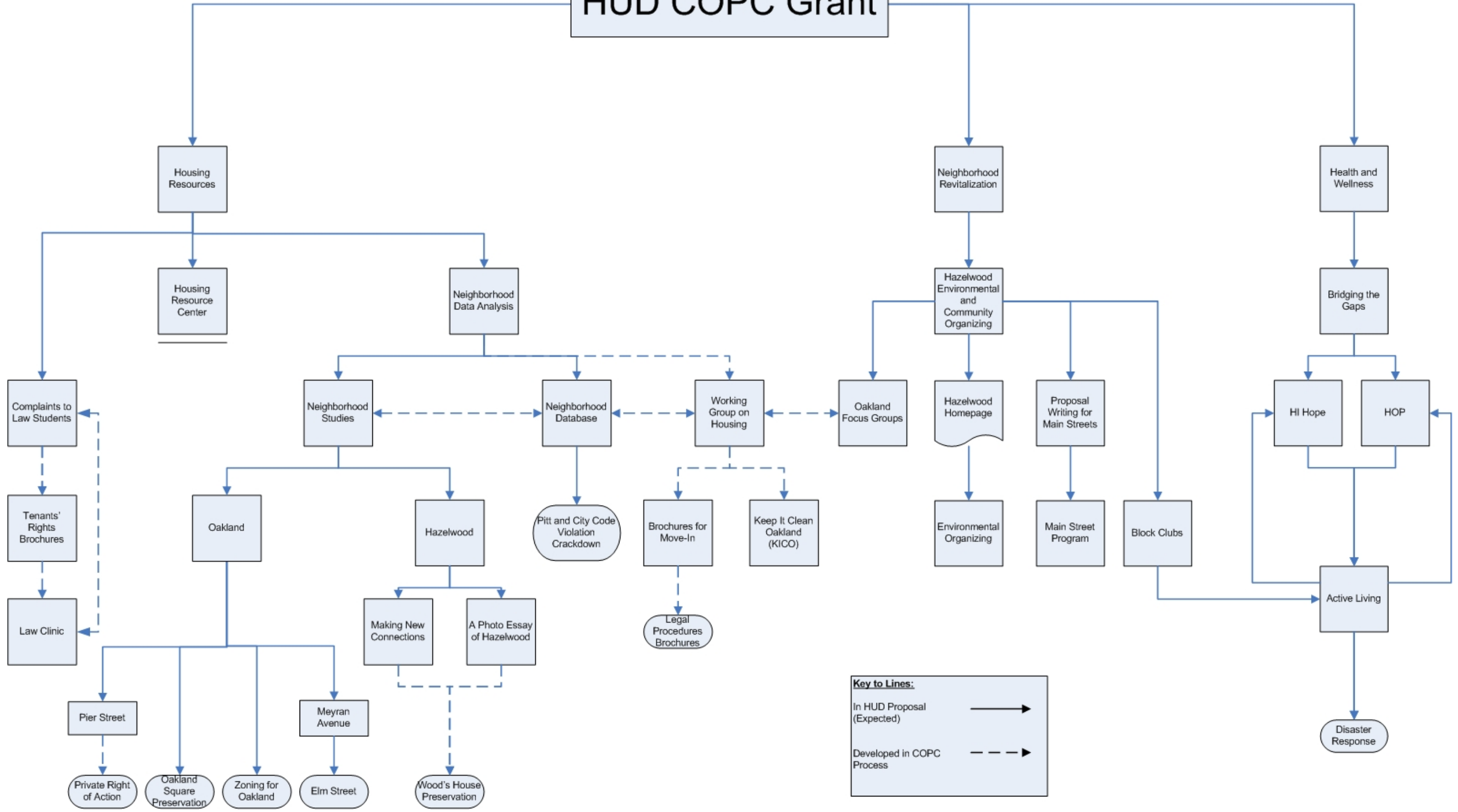
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**APPENDIX A: UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH COMMUNITY
OUTREACH PARTNERSHIP CENTER FLOW CHART**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNITY OUTREACH PARTNERSHIP CENTER GRANT AND NEW
DIRECTIONS GRANT, 2000-2006

HUD COPC Grant



Key to Lines:

- In HUD Proposal (Expected) —————>
- Developed in COPC Process - - - - ->

Original COPC Projects Not Included in the New Directions Grant

These Projects Were Not Sustainable Under the COPC Grant.
They are Continued in Their Respective Agencies

