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**COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS AND COMMUNITY CULTURE:
CROSS-SECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS
IN OMAHA AND PORTLAND**

By

Patrick McNamara

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Major: Public Administration

Omaha, Nebraska

August, 2007

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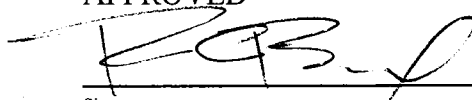
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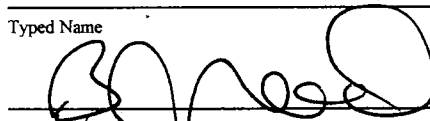
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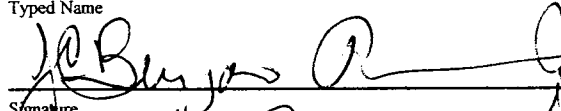
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**COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS AND COMMUNITY CULTURE:
CROSS-SECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS
IN OMAHA AND PORTLAND**

Patrick McNamara

University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2007

Advisor: Richard C. Box

This dissertation explores the impact of community culture on the success of cross-sectoral collaboratives addressing homelessness in Omaha, Nebraska, and Portland, Oregon. A comparative case study approach is used to build theory about how the environment helps to make conditions conducive or challenging to collaboration between government, business and nonprofit organizations. The concept of community culture is operationalized by including three interrelated factors – social capital, community power, and political history – to assess the two cities. Omaha is a model of a private sector community culture, high in bonding social capital, where central control of decision making and elite support has traditionally been the sign of a successful collaboration. Portland is a model of a public sector community culture, high in bridging social capital, where decisions are legitimized by using appropriate processes, with a history of pluralism and citizen participation, and where elected officials or public administrators have served as the leaders of a successful collaboration.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. My learning all began with my parents, Joan and Frank McNamara. They are both life-long educators – no matter what professional or personal environment they found themselves in – and passed their love of learning along to me and my sisters, Kathleen and Beth Erin. Thanks, Mom and Dad!

My pursuit of learning has been enhanced by marrying a brilliant and beautiful partner on the journey, Aviva Segall. I appreciate all the wonderful support and love you have given as I worked on this doctorate. I married into a family which also highly values education. Thanks, Segalls!

And my education moved to a whole new level as I became a parent during my doctoral studies. Thank you to my daughters, Ilana and Leora, for all you have taught me and will teach me. As you like to say, “Now you’ll be Doctor Daddy!”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I appreciate the many faculty members that played a role in getting me to this point. First, thanks to my committee members, Drs. B.J. Reed, Christine Reed, Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado and, especially, my chair Dr. Richard Box. I would like to acknowledge the whole faculty of the School of Public Administration, who encouraged me as teachers, mentors and friends. And, finally, looking back at my former schools, I would like to thank Dr. Donald K. Swearer of Swarthmore College’s Religion Department and Rabbi Dr. Marc Gopin of George Mason University’s Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution for their important contribution to my personal and scholarly evolution.

COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS AND COMMUNITY CULTURE:
CROSS-SECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS
IN OMAHA AND PORTLAND¹

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Collaboration is often identified by government agencies, philanthropic funders, and community organizations as a cost-saving and more efficient method for service delivery (Pitt, 1998, p. 6; Takahashi & Smutny, 2002, p. 165). While much has been written about collaboration, “it is often unclear as to why one collaboration is successful, while another is not” (Mandell, 2002-2003, p. 36). One reason for this lack of clarity or agreement is that contexts in which collaboratives operate differ significantly from one another.

This dissertation research considers community culture as a factor leading to or impeding the success of collaboration between public, private and nonprofit sector organizations. Two specific collaborative efforts are compared in this dissertation: the Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (OACCH) in Omaha, Nebraska, and Central City Concern (CCC), a Portland, Oregon-based homeless services partnership. These two cases were chosen because they represent similar models for serving the needs of the homeless, but they operate in contrasting community contexts. These different contexts are examined using the conceptual framework of community culture, which includes social capital, community power and political history. A multiple-case study (Yin, 2003, p. 46) or comparative case study (Agranoff & Radin, 1991) approach is used to explore the research questions.

Organization of Manuscript and Research Question

This manuscript is arranged in six chapters. The introductory chapter provides a brief outline of the important questions, working definitions, literatures, and methodology

of the dissertation. Chapter 2 contains a literature review that summarizes the main authors from which the working definitions of community culture and community collaboratives are drawn. Chapter 3 discusses the research design that includes the strategy of inquiry, research questions and data collection and analysis tools used. Chapter 4 summarizes the literature and data analyzed which led to the findings from the first case study on Omaha's community culture and the success of OACCH. Chapter 5 does the same for Portland's community culture and the success of CCC. Chapter 6 proposes some conclusions from the two case studies, explores applications of this research for various fields and proposes some questions for further exploration.

The primary research question of this study is: *How does community culture affect the success of cross-sectoral collaboration?* Success is defined in this research as reaching the goals internally adopted by the collaborative. These goals can be self-imposed or imposed by some mandate from funders or policy-makers who influence a collaborative. As this research question implies, there seems to be a relationship between context and collaborative success. While this relationship is supported by some of the literature on collaboration (Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey, 2001; Mandell, 2002-2003), how this relationship works has not been well-understood up to now.

Contribution to the Public Administration Field

This dissertation contributes to the public administration literature by developing new theory with an explicit focus on how the success of a collaborative involving public, private and nonprofit entities, is affected by the external context in which it operates. The topic of collaboration is of interest to many public administration scholars, as evidenced

by a special issue of *Public Administration Review* (2006, December) devoted to the topic. The increase in government agencies collaborating with private and nonprofit organizations has been documented (Linden, 2002, p. 12). Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006, December) write that “Cross-sector collaboration is increasingly assumed to be both necessary and desirable as a strategy for addressing many of society’s most difficult public challenges (Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Goldsmith and Eggers 2004; Kickert, Klijn, and Koppenjan 1997; Mandell 2001; Rethemeyer 2005)” (p. 44). However, how public administration scholars and practitioners understand, articulate and implement collaboration is rather inconsistent (Bingham & O’Leary, 2006, December).

This collaboration phenomenon takes many forms in the public sector and has been referred to by public administration scholars as “third-party government” (Salamon, 1981), “government by proxy” (Kettl, 1988), “the hollow state” (Milward, Provan & Else, 1993; Milward & Provan, 2000), and “collaborative governance” (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003). In essence, the idea is that there is a blurring of boundaries between what was once clearly understood as government, business and nonprofit sectors. Because of this phenomenon of increasing collaboration between government, private companies and nonprofits¹, understanding the relationship between where a collaborative operates and what leads to success is important for public administration scholars and practitioners.

The literature on interorganizational networks (IONs) provides one tool to explore the collaboration phenomenon when a researcher is interested in mapping a large terrain

¹ At points in this dissertation the more colloquial term “nonprofits” will be used for nonprofit organizations.

of internal organizational relationships (Alter & Hage, 1993, pp. 151-152; Milward & Provan, 2000). However, it is not as helpful for the focus of this research, which is directed toward how the external environment or community culture affects a collaborative. Additionally, Gray (2000) offers a critique of measuring collaboration in terms of density of internal network relationships, a technique used by IONs researchers to evaluate efficiency (Provan & Milward, 1995) or successful management (Meier & O'Toole, 2003).

Because the IONs literature has been used by many public administration scholars, especially those associated with the public management school (Berry, Brower, Choi, et al., 2004), a dissertation using alternative literatures will hopefully provide a significant contribution to the field. In the instance of this research, the alternative literatures are drawn from social capital, community power, and political history, as well as from literature on community collaboration.

Discussion of Key Terms

Definitions of community culture and community collaboratives are briefly addressed in this introductory chapter and more thoroughly discussed in the literature review chapter.

Community Culture. A community's culture can be understood as *the ideas, processes, beliefs and values that serve as norms for a particular people*. The particular people are geographically located in a particular locale and constitute both those who consciously choose to be more engaged in civic affairs and the general public who may not be as engaged. The conceptual framework used in this study for assessing community

culture includes three factors related to environmental characteristics: social capital, power and political history. (See *Appendix A* for matrix on Assessing Community Culture.) This model for examining a community using a variety of factors follows that of Green and Haines (2002) who use five factors to assess “community capital” (p. vii) and Henderson, Lickerman and Flynn (2000) who use twelve “quality of life indicators” to track a “holistic view of our lives, society, and the economy” (p. 14).

While these three elements of community culture are assessed in Omaha and Portland, they are not to be understood as independent variables to be tested to determine the most robust in relation to the dependent variable of collaborative success. The goal of this dissertation is exploratory rather than deterministic. Future research on the topic of collaborative success may use a more formal hypothesis testing methodology, but that would be premature and inappropriate without a more exploratory approach initially.

The focus in this dissertation on community culture of the environment in which collaboration takes place follows a particular stream in the research literature on collaboratives. In a meta-analysis of collaboration, Mattessich et al. (2001) found that one of the main factors influencing collaborative success is the environment. They noted that, “Environmental characteristics consist of the geographic location and social context within which a collaborative group exists. The group may be able to influence or affect these elements in some way, but it does not have control over them” (p. 12). It is the social context that is examined in this dissertation using the conceptual framework of community culture.

Before briefly introducing each of the three factors that relate to community culture, another key term must be defined. “Community,” as used in both community culture and community collaborative, refers to the settings for the two case studies. In the two cases in this dissertation, the communities affected are the cities of Omaha and Portland. Over half a century ago, Hillery (1955) found 94 separate definitions in the literature for the term community. Drawing from several recent definitions of community (Berg, 2001; MacQueen et al., 2001; Nuefeldt, 1997), three themes influence the understanding of community here. First is the idea that there are some common characteristics – geography, shared interests, social identity, homogeneity, etc. – of the general public in a community. Second is the idea that there is some level of social interaction and relationship between the people within a community although the quality and quantity of that interaction may differ depending on how engaged the individual is in organizations or activities that bridge the various identity groups within a community. Third is the idea that there are shared norms or values that unify the perspectives of people within a community. Community is defined here as *a place where people share common characteristics, interact in some way, and hold unifying norms or values.*

The first factor in assessing community culture is social capital. Robert Putnam (1995) popularized the concept of social capital in the late twentieth century in a *Journal of Democracy* essay on the decline of civic engagement in America. He expanded on his initial thesis attempting to answer critics in the book *Bowling Alone* (Putnam, 2000). Putnam (1993) first explored the general concept of social capital in *Making Democracy Work*, a book summarizing a longitudinal study comparing the civic traditions of regions

in northern and southern Italy. In that earlier exploration of the concept he writes, “Social capital here refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam, 1993, p. 167).

This definition of social capital builds on previous work by other authors. Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville’s (1954) famous study, *Democracy in America*, first published in 1831-1832, pointed to civil society – in the form of voluntary “civil associations” that bond together communities in a way similar to the concept of social capital – that was uniquely strong in America during the Jacksonian Era when he visited (pp. 123-128). James Coleman (1988, 1990) brought the term into the modern social science lexicon with perhaps “the most influential formulation of the concept of social capital” (Edwards & Foley, 2001, p. 9). He emphasizes the function that social capital plays, “Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence” (Coleman, 1990, p. 302).

Edwards and Foley (1999) extend Coleman’s (1990) functionality argument in their treatment of social capital as always context dependent. The local community possesses a certain amount of social capital to be tapped for productive purposes by those who live there, just as financial and human capital would be used to produce certain goods and services. In the two cases in this dissertation research, OACCH and CCC, the communities in which social capital inheres are Omaha and Portland. Drawing from these three discussions of social capital, the working definition for this dissertation is: *Social*

capital consists of the networks of trust and the norms that exist in a community to be productively used by individuals and organizations.

The second factor used in assessing community culture is power. The literature on power at the local and national level is vast (Box, 2005, p. 75) and must be limited here to focus primarily on issues of community power including debates during the 1950s through the 1970s between elite theory proponents (Hunter, 1953; Mills, 1956; Domhoff, 1978, 2002) and pluralists (Dahl, 1961). The definition of power used here draws on Domhoff (2002, p. 9) and Wrong (1995, p. 2) who stress the conscious use of resources to exert a group's collective will over others, which can be benevolent or self-serving. Power is then defined as *a group's ability to use resources to achieve desired results.*

This definition is consistent with Mary Parker Follett's concept of "power-over" as coercive control, and to a lesser extent her concept of "power-with" which has a more collaborative connotation (Fox & Urwick, 1973, p. 72). The definition of power proposed for this research also parallels a definition from sociologist Max Weber (Gerth & Mills, 1946, p. 80) in which power is synonymous with influence. Many times power and influence are treated as the same variable, as both Hunter (1953, pp. 2-3) and Dahl (1957; 1961, p. 330) seem to do. However, Haugh (1980) makes an important distinction between "power (the control of finite and valued resources which gives on the ability to expand or restrict the option of another) and influence (the capacity to persuade people to move in ways you think are constructive and desirable)" (p. 115). While both conceptualizations of power – as control of resources and influences of people – can be

helpful in understanding the community culture of a place, this dissertation research is most interested in power as control.

Political history is the third factor used in assessing community culture. There are three indicators explored which constitute a community's political history: citizen participation, land-use planning, and leadership. Though some of these indicators may overlap with the issue of community power, political history is important to distinguish because it draws more specific attention to the public sector and the role of public administrators in the community's culture. The three factors used to explore the community culture of Omaha and Portland in this study help us to understand why community collaboratives meet with success or challenge.

Community Collaboratives. The term used in this dissertation research for the entities involved in cross-sectoral partnerships is "community collaboratives." This term was chosen after exploring various definitions of collaborative efforts. Collaboratives are the formal or informal partnerships that engage in collaboration and/or result from collaboration. The collaboratives of particular interest in this paper involve public, private, and nonprofit sector organizations that focus on an important community issue, homelessness.

Barbara Gray (1985), who draws on a conflict resolution perspective, defined collaboration as "the pooling of appreciations and/or tangible resources, e.g., information, money, labor, etc., by two or more stakeholders to solve a set of problems which neither can solve individually" (p. 912). Gray built on this definition in her later work. In an introductory article to the second issue of a symposium on "collaborative alliances,"

Wood and Gray (1991) discuss the different definitions used by the authors of the nine symposium articles and propose an overarching definition of the process of collaboration that revises early definitions by Gray (Gray, 1985, p. 912; 1989, p. 11). The authors propose a definition for the process of collaboration: “Collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain” (Wood & Gray, 1991, p. 146).

A definition for collaboratives comes from Myrna Mandell (1999a), who uses the term “network structure” in this and other work (Mandell, 1994, 1999b, 2002-2003). Drawing on Mandell’s (1999a) and Wood and Gray’s (1991) definitions, this dissertation will use the following working definition for community collaboratives: *A community collaborative is a formal partnership in which public, private, and/or nonprofit organizations work together to address an agreed-upon problem that impacts a particular community.*

Overview of Methodology

The methodology for this dissertation is comparative case studies. Data collection was accomplished in four ways: interviews, focus groups, analysis of previous surveys, and document review. In Phase 1 of the dissertation research, the community culture of Omaha and Portland was assessed. This was done using three sources of data: (1) interviews with leaders in the public, private and nonprofit sectors who may have insight into the character of the city, (2) document analysis, particularly media reports and

previous studies about the city, and (3) survey data that describes some of the demographic characteristics of the city.

In Phase 2, attention turned to how the community culture of Omaha and Portland assessed in Phase 1 affects the collaborative success of OACCH and CCC. To help answer this research question, three forms of data collection were used: (1) focus groups were conducted which included board members and executive staff from the collaboratives; (2) additional interviews with key informants were conducted; and (3) document reviews were conducted using documents regarding whether the collaboratives have been successful in meeting their goals and objectives. To increase validity, the initial findings from the two case studies were presented to some of the key informants who were asked for their reactions and feedback in a qualitative research process referred to as “member checking” (Schwandt, 2001, p. 155; Creswell, 2003, p. 196). More details regarding the two phases of research are included in the methodology chapter which follows the literature review.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review chapter explores two key themes – community culture and collaboration – that lay the foundation for this dissertation. The first section of this literature review explores the theme of community culture and the three factors – social capital, community power structure, and political history – within that conceptual framework. The first factor explored establishes what social capital is and how it works. One perspective of particular relevance to this dissertation argues that social capital is not a quality possessed by an individual or organization to be used at will, but that social capital inheres in a particular community and is functional in the sense that it can be used to produce specific outputs. Next, the community power literature is reviewed. While much of this literature is from the classic debates in the 1950s through the 1970s between elite theorists and pluralists, there are also references to more recent literature on power. Finally, in this section on community culture, the political history literature will be discussed. Political history, as examined in this dissertation, has three indicators: citizen participation, land-use planning, and community leadership. The overarching theme of community culture is important for understanding the environmental context in which community collaboratives operate.

The second key theme in this literature review is defining community collaboratives and their relationship to community culture. One way to state the relationship is that community culture is the independent variable and community collaborative success is the dependent variable. However, this study takes place in a complex, real-life setting and there are multiple variables that are difficult to measure. So,

this dissertation is less about hypothesis testing and more in the tradition of an exploratory case study which seeks “to develop pertinent hypotheses and propositions for further inquiry” (Yin, 2003, p. 6) or an explanatory case study approach that seeks “to achieve both more complex and fuller explanation of phenomena” (de Vaus, 2001, p. 221). The second theme in the literature – what community collaboratives are and how community culture affects their success – is central to the primary research question and methodology of this dissertation.

Theme 1: Community Culture

As mentioned above, a community’s culture can be understood as the ideas, processes, and values that serve as norms for a particular people. The three factors included in the operationalization of community culture are social capital, community power and political history. (See *Appendix A* on Assessing Community Culture.) Each of these factors will be discussed below, but first some of the literature generally related to community culture is discussed.

Political Ethos: Public-Regarding versus Private-Regarding. One concept related to community culture is what Banfield and Wilson (1963) call “political ethos” (pp. 41-42) of a community. This is simply defined as “a set of common expectations about how others will behave in civic and political affairs” (p. 58). The authors contrast public-regarding with private-regarding political ethos. The ideal public-regarding community member participates in public affairs and votes with a sense of obligation to the community “as a whole,” especially the poor or disadvantaged (p. 41). The ideal private-regarding community member embraces the “ethnic politics” that seeks to promote one’s

own group without regard to the greater good of the community (p. 42). Banfield and Wilson (1963) write of the ethnic groups generally associated with these two types of political ethos:

we have maintained that two fundamentally opposed conceptions of politics are to be found in the cities. One, which was Anglo-Saxon Protestant in its origins but has been accepted by the middle class in general (and particularly by many Jews), is essentially public-regarding; the other, which had its origins in the lower-class immigrant culture, is essentially private-regarding. (pp. 234-235)

Wilson (2002), in a tribute to his co-author, summarizes the contrasting political ethos by writing that the public-regarding or unitary members of a city “wanted efficiency, impartiality, honesty, nonpartisanship, planning, and strong executives,” while the private-regarding or individualist members of a city “wanted favors, personal support, and influential legislators who could help neighborhoods” (p. 81). The typology was empirically tested through voting patterns and public opinion.

Dye and Zeigler (1993) examine the inevitability of elite control in a democracy, but end with a call for the elite to be more “public regarding” (p. 415). This would mean reducing spending and raising taxes to eliminate the deficit, reallocate public dollars from entitlement programs to infrastructure, education and research, and live personally ethical lives. “Only an elite courageous enough to impose costs on the public could undertake this responsibility” (Dye & Zeigler, 1993, p. 416).

Political Culture: Individualistic, Moralistic, Traditionalistic. A second concept that is related to community culture and reinforces the underlying proposition in this

study that the context in which collaboratives operate is important is “political culture.” Daniel Elazar (1975) proposes three types of political culture in America: *individualistic* which “emphasizes the conception of the democratic order as a marketplace” and limits government intervention in private affairs (p. 17); *moralistic* which promotes the idea that “it is the duty of every citizen to participate in the political affairs of his [sic] commonwealth” and advance the “common good” (p. 20); and *traditionalistic* which promotes “a paternalistic and elitist conception of the commonwealth” (p. 22) meant to maintain the hierarchy of power within a community. There are also combinations of these three types within communities, for instance individualistic-moralistic.

Elazar (2002) explains that he originally intended to add to the debate between elite theorists and pluralists. He focused on the relationships within a federal system of government – local, state, national – in a forty year empirical study of the upper Midwest region, coming to the conclusion that the “civil community,” constituted by “public and private institutions and actors” within a specific locale, is unique from place to place (Elazar, 2002, p. xiv).

Elazar’s conclusion is consistent with the underlying proposition of this dissertation: that communities differ and what works in one – for example, in the cross-sectoral collaboration that is the focus of this research – may not work in another. There are not necessarily “best practices” that can be applied in all places and cases, but the context matters greatly to what will work. That context is difficult to analyze without a conceptual framework and it is community culture with its three factors – social capital, community power, and political history – that provides the framework.

Theme 1A. Social Capital

The evolution of the use of the term “social capital” and the different understandings of the concept is an important starting point for this study.

History of the Term Social Capital. The term social capital was first used by a West Virginia school administrator, Lyda Judson Hanifan (1916, 1920), in discussions of rural school community centers (Smith, 2001). Hanifan’s definition foreshadows much of the later work on the issue. He defines social capital as “those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people: namely good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make up a social unit” (Hanifan, 1916, p. 130).

Though Jane Jacobs (1961) used social capital in reference to tangible networks within well-connected urban neighborhoods, Pierre Bourdieu (1986) used it more abstractly in the context of social theory. With a coauthor he writes, “Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119). This definition indicates that social capital resides internally in the individual or group rather than externally in a community for individuals or groups to use in productive ways. Although this understanding is not the sense in which I use the term in this dissertation, it is important to acknowledge that some social capital scholars do use it in this way.

It is in the sense that James Coleman (1990) understands the concept that I will use social capital in this dissertation. Coleman distinguishes between three types of

capital – financial, human, and social – all of which can be used to produce outcomes which may be positive or negative for society as a whole. In Chapter 12 of his book *Foundations of Social Theory*, Coleman (1990) explores social capital. He writes,

Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: They all consist of some aspect of a social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence. (Coleman, 1990, p. 302)

Coleman's functional definition of social capital, drawing on Anthony Giddens' (1979, 1984) structuration theory (Edwards & Foley, 2001, p. 267), is important in the development of the concept. This external, productive and structurally situated understanding of social capital does not lend itself to simplistic quantifiable analysis and social networks mapping. Instead, this definition of the concept is useful "for qualitative analyses of social systems" (Coleman, 1990, pp. 305-306). Coleman points to "trustworthiness" in the sense of confidence "that obligations will be repaid" and to "the actual extent of obligations held" in a particular social environment as the two critical elements in social capital (p. 306). Trust is of individuals in this definition. Therefore, social capital inheres in specific communities where people can be in relationship with each other rather than in a nation or region.

In contrast to Coleman, various authors (Cohen & Prusak, 2001; Durlauf, 2002; Lin, Cook, & Burt, 2001) use social capital with the understanding that it inheres in intra-

or inter-organizational networks rather than in specific communities. Though this perspective can be attractive to those who want to quantitatively map and model the horizontal and vertical relationships within or between organizations to show benefits to specific entities with more and stronger ties (Burt, 2001, pp. 31-34), it lacks the qualitative depth of understanding of social capital in a community in which organizations work together to address an agreed-upon problem (Coleman, 1990).

A major undertaking by the World Bank, *The Social Capital Initiative*, uses a generally qualitative approach – focused on societal norms and values – supplemented by quantitative economic data to understand social capital. The conclusion is that higher levels of social capital result in productive and positive benefits for specific localities or nations, such as economic development and health. In a foreword to the thirteenth working paper of the *Social Capital Initiative*, the World Bank’s Vice President of Special Programs provides the following definition: “Social capital refers to the internal social and cultural coherence of society, the norms and values that govern interactions among people and the institutions in which they are embedded” (Serageldin, 1999, p. iii). He concludes from the results of empirical research that “Social capital is the glue that holds societies together and without which there can be no economic growth or human well-being” (Serageldin, 1999, p. iii).

This is an important point which is central to the conclusions of this dissertation research: the context, examined in this stream of literature with the concept of social capital, is crucially linked to the outputs, whether economic development or collaborative success. Similar to the argument that social capital produces specific outputs, such as

economic development (Serageldin, 1999), some studies have shown that social capital produces better government. A study by political scientists (Pierce, Lovrich, & Moon, 2002) concluded that “social capital remains a strong predictor of the quality of government performance” (p. 394). The thesis is further supported by empirical studies of the relationship between social capital and perceptions of good government performance (Pierce et al., 2002; Rice, 2001).

The idea that economic and political benefits result from high social capital parallels the findings of Robert Putnam. He postulated a decline of social capital in late-twentieth century America in a *Journal of Democracy* essay (1995) and later expanded his study and attempted to answer critics in the book *Bowling Alone* (2000). Although his essay and then book with the catchy title popularized his declining-social-capital-in-America thesis, Putnam (1993) first explored the general concept in a book summarizing conclusions from a longitudinal study comparing the civic traditions of regions in northern and southern Italy. One critique of Putnam’s work (Foley, Edwards, & Diani, 2001) is that social capital must be examined at the community level rather than national level, as in *Bowling Alone* (1995, 2000), or the regional level, as in *Making Democracy Work* (1993). Another critique is that Putnam was measuring the wrong things to quantify social capital in a community (Barber, 2000; Bennett, 1998). No longer are church membership and the Elks Club the way that people connect to networks of trust in a community.

Many attempts to measure social capital in specific communities have been made. Three of these that take narrower approaches to the definition of social capital may be

particularly instructive. Putnam (2001) developed his own tool, “The Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey,” that he uses to measure social capital in various American cities.² The second attempt is the National Civic League’s eight elements to measure “civic infrastructure” from which is decided the annual All-American City Award.³ The third is the National Commission on Civic Renewal’s Index of Civil Society Health (INCH). One of the five categories INCH measures is trust; the others are political activities, membership in associations, security and crime components, and family components such as divorce and out-of-wedlock births (National Commission on Civic Renewal, 1997). There is additional material from the Gallup Organization (2006, September) that looks at the declining trust in government, which is related to social capital.

The conclusion may be that social capital is, indeed, a complex interaction of many factors. While some of these factors may be quantitative in nature, others are qualitative, which parallels Coleman’s (1990) argument that a qualitative approach to understanding social capital provides depth to the analysis. The process for measurement of social capital in Omaha and Portland in this dissertation involves some initial broad descriptive statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Center for Public Affairs Research (1994, 2004) then provides depth and insight through a number of qualitative data as well.

² For more on the project see Putnam’s website for the “Saguaro Seminar: Civic Engagement in America” at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University: <http://ksgwww.harvard.edu/saguano>.

³ For more information on this National Civic League All-American City program see the NCL website: <http://www.ncl.org/aac/index.html>

Although different tools for measurement may produce varying emphases in defining or fostering social capital, all treatments of the concept have the common element of trust (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 9). Illustrating this view, a public administration scholar, in his study of deliberative discourse in the Study Circles dialogue model wrote, “At its broadest level, social capital is the existence of networks among individuals within a community. These networks are based on social trust and reciprocity” (Clary, 2002, p. 2).

In his book *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*, Francis Fukuyama (1995) proposes that the presence of trust, and the social capital that results, is the essential factor in the economic progress of various nations. He writes, “Social capital is a capability that arises from the prevalence of trust in a society or in certain parts of it” (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 26). Trust is nurtured when there is a “prior moral consensus [that] gives members of the group a basis for mutual trust” (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 26). Moral consensus is not something a particular group can suddenly invent. One implication of Fukuyama’s (1995) argument is that social capital and its prerequisite, trust, must also be nurtured over a long period.

Although the idea of trusting our neighbors seems attractive, Kass (1999) warns about the “normative bases of social capital” (p. 23). This trust can have negative consequences. The “‘dark’ side of social capital” (Edwards & Foley, 2001, p. 10) or, as contemporary scholars of interorganizational networks call them, “dark networks” are providing opportunities for bonding between like-minded terrorists, criminals, and other nefarious elements in society (Milward & Raab, 2002). There were communities

throughout history that were high in social capital in the sense that there were tight bonds of trust between neighbors who are of the same race or religion – such as in apartheid South Africa or Nazi Germany – that were notorious for committing acts considered by most people to be evil.

McConnell (1966) writes that “the distinction between ‘public’ and ‘private’” “has been seriously blurred in recent years” (p. 146). He warns that private associations that deceive themselves into believing their own “homogeneity” (p. 149) are less likely to “guard against the tyranny and injustice to minorities and individuals” (p. 154). This is, indeed, an example of how the dark side of bonding social capital can manifest.

Niebuhr (1944) also examines the dark side of bonding social capital, although he also did not use that language. He explores the problem associated with growing ethnic pluralism and the backlash against it. He acknowledges the inherent tension in a community both divided by and connected by class, race, ethnicity and religion. His answer is to call upon “the children of light” to create a “world community” which “is a necessity and possibility because history is a process which extends the freedom of man (sic) over natural process to the point where universality is reached” (Niebuhr, 1944, p. 187).

Putnam on Social Capital. In the book *Bowling Alone*, Putnam (2000) distinguishes between two types of social capital which he calls bridging and bonding. His analysis grows out of the realization, as a result of criticism of his earlier work (Putnam, 2000, p. 446, note 19), that he did not recognize the potential negative effects of social capital, but only saw the positives. He writes, “Therefore it is important to ask how

the positive consequences of social capital – mutual support, cooperation, trust, institutional effectiveness – can be maximized and the negative manifestations – sectarianism, ethnocentrism, corruption – minimized” (Putnam, 2000, p. 22).

Putnam acknowledges both the potential positive and negative aspects of social capital in his discussion of bridging and bonding. Bridging social capital fosters an inclusive mindset that intends to bridge the diversity that sometimes divides a community. “Examples of bridging social capital include the civil rights movement, many youth service groups, and ecumenical religious organizations” (Putnam, 2000, p. 22). On the other hand, bonding social capital tends “to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups. Examples of bonding social capital include ethnic fraternal organizations, church-based women’s reading groups, and fashionable country clubs” (Putnam, 2000, p. 22). This bonding social capital might be used to innocently build team spirit within a group, but can also be used more nefariously to exert control over resources in ways that benefit one group and harm another. To put this contrast between the two types of social capital another way, “Bonding social capital is a kind of sociological Super Glue, whereas bridging social capital provides a sociological WD-40” (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 2).

A empirical study (Varshney, 2002) of social capital and ethnic conflict in India employs the distinction between bridging and bonding social capital and supports Putnam’s (2000) contention that there are positive and negative aspects to social capital. Varshney (2001) concludes that when bridging-type civic organizations – inter-religious neighborhood peace committees that bring together Hindus and Muslims – are present

there is less likelihood of ethnic conflict in a community. However, when bonding-type civic organizations – intra-religious neighborhood peace committees where only Hindus or only Muslims are members – are present there is greater likelihood of ethnic conflict in a community (p. 362). A similar argument is made by Kaplan (1994) who writes that the dissolution of the homogeneous nation-state where bonding social capital was high and the rise of identity-based conflicts have ushered in an age of anarchy around the globe. He does not make the more hopeful argument that bridging social capital is a way to heal the coming anarchy.

In a book following *Bowling Alone*, Putnam and co-author Feldstein (2003) explore twelve case studies in which communities have consciously built bridging social capital. In contrast to earlier work in which Putnam's assertions apply to the whole U.S., they conclude that "social capital is necessarily a local phenomenon because it is defined by connections among people who know one another" (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 9).

Operational Definition of Social Capital. A key conclusion from the literature, then, is that social capital cannot be generalized across nations or possessed by individuals, but is always context dependent, meaning it "inheres in the social contexts, not in the individuals or groups. Individuals, groups or communities can access and use social capital, but cannot strictly speaking possess it" (Edwards & Foley, 1999, p. 524). Elsewhere, the authors (Foley, Edwards, & Diani, 2001) make a similar argument that the concept of social capital cannot be abstracted and measured in some aggregate way, but must be localized (pp. 265-270). In other words, when it comes to understanding social

capital, “Context counts, and it counts crucially” (Foley, Edwards, & Diani, 2001, p. 268).

The context is precisely the key factor of interest in this dissertation and the literature on social capital helps set the stage for the research on community collaboratives. A working definition I propose for purposes of this dissertation is: *Social capital is the networks of trust and the norms that exist in a community to be productively used by individuals and organizations.*

Theme 1B. Community Power

The second factor used to illuminate the concept of community culture is community power. The issue of power is one of the most widely discussed in the social sciences. For the purposes of this dissertation power is defined as *a group’s ability to control resources to achieve desired results.* This dissertation focuses on group power rather than individual power, a macro rather than micro focus which is more consistent with the overall theoretical framework of community culture. The analysis in this study is focused on group power, while French and Raven’s (1959) work focused on the five types of individual power. French and Raven’s typology included expert power, reward power, legitimate power, referent power and coercive power.

This broader scope of group power in a community follows Domhoff’s (2002) understanding. Domhoff is writing from a neo-Marxist perspective, so has a particular interest in power as it relates to the class-conflict of communities and nations. He writes that power is “the ability of a group, class or nation to be successful in conflicts with other groups, classes, or nations on issues of concern to it. Here the stress is on *power*

over, which is also called *distributive power*” (Domhoff, 2002, p. 9). Domhoff (1987) also writes that the “policy experts” in government agencies or quasi-governmental organizations such as the Council of Economic Advisors are utilized by “the power elite” to carry out the wishes of big corporations (p. 200).

Power-over versus Power-with. Power over, in contrast to *power with*, is a more coercive and controlling method for achieving desired results. In order to better understand the Domhoff (2002) definition, it is helpful to contrast it with the alternative view here. Mary Parker Follett in her paper titled “Power” which she presented in January 1925, distinguishes between these two approaches to power: “So far as my observation has gone, it seems to me that whereas power usually means power-over, the power of some person or group over some other person or group, it is possible to develop the conception of power-with, a jointly developed power, a co-active, not a coercive power” (Fox & Urwick, 1973, p. 72).

Although in her January 1925 paper the distinction between power-over and power-with is more fully developed, the idea originally appeared in earlier work, but the descriptors used were different. Follett (1924) wrote in her book *Creative Experience*, “Coercive power is the curse of the universe; coactive power, the enrichment and advancement of every human soul” (p. xiii). Follett’s (1918) most influential work, *The New State*, also dealt with the issue of power in the form of cooperative or integrative approaches to organizational and neighborhood governance, although she did not use the power-with term in this publication either. On the neighborhood leader’s effective use of

power she writes, “The power of leadership is the power of integrating. This is the power which creates community” (1998, p. 229).

Power is a prominent theme in Follett’s work. She sees the dynamic of power as a central concern for communities, organizations and managers. But the distinction she makes between power-over and power-with was revolutionary in her day and has far-reaching implications even today. The idea of power-with is now common in feminist theory (Mansbridge, 1998, p. xvii). Many feminist authors (Allen, 1998; Arendt, 1963; Gilligan, 1982; Hartsock, 1974; Starhawk, 1987) distinguish between coercive power and cooperative power in terms that come right out of Follett’s work from the 1920s, but they do not give her credit for the idea. She has been reclaimed by feminists in recent years (Morton & Lindquist, 1997). In her foreword to the new edition of *The New State* (Follett, 1998), Jane Mansbridge asks “Why were so many feminists attracted to ‘power-with’?” (1998, p. xx).

She offers three answers to this question. First, the feminist movement has always promoted the idea of a participatory democracy. Second, the ideal of women as nurturers had a profound effect on feminist thinkers, especially during the progressive era’s “first wave” of feminism, but even in the “second wave” for instance in the work of Carol Gilligan (1982) on the ethic of care. And third, women are more likely to embrace a consultative style of leadership than a strict authoritarian style of leadership. Mansbridge (1998) argues that all three of these feminist interpretations of power are consistent with Follett’s idea of power-with.

In Follett's work, the use of resources to gain or retain power can be used by both individuals and groups. However, because this dissertation is in the field of public administration and because the author's own interest is in the collective use of power, the individual dimension of power is not the focus here.

Operational Definition of Power. While Domhoff's (2002) definition always involves conflict, the definition of power used here as *a group's ability to use resources to achieve desired results* leaves open the possibility that a group may use collaborative strategies rather than conflictual strategies to reach its goals. This definition also presupposes that there are groups within communities who seek particular ends rather than that communities are made up of disconnected individuals all seeking their own ends which may or may not be the same as other individuals seek. The definition does not, however, assume that the same group is always the powerful one within a community, although that may be the case in certain places at certain times.

Elite Theory. There has been a debate throughout the second half of the 20th century about whether power is held tightly by one group of elites or is dispersed more pluralistically throughout a community. This debate is particularly relevant for public administration scholars and practitioners because it is in local communities that the work of government most intimately affects the daily lives of citizens. Presthus (1964) argues that the difference in perspective lies largely with the discipline one practices:

Whereas sociologists have often found an elitist or para-elitist community power structure, in which politics has often seemed to be the handmaiden of economics, political scientists have usually found community leadership to be more

dispersed, more consonant with the pluralist ideal which has long dominated American political ideology and analysis. (pp. 61-62)

Presthus (1964) also introduced the concept of “leg men” who do the work for the elite, but are not actually the elite. They are an important element in carrying out certain activities in elite communities. Presthus (1964) explains the term: “One other term, ‘leg-man,’ is used to accommodate a well-known phenomenon in political behavior whereby those in positions of ‘potential’ power often delegate to their subordinates an active role in community affairs” (p. 50). On the relationship between the elite and public administrators, Presthus (1975) uses the term “elite accommodation” whereby a public administrator plays the role of “a junior partner, insofar as the major decisions are concerned” (p. 154).

The two competing theories that help frame the debate about community power are elite theory and pluralist theory. Elite theorists claim that a small group at the top makes decisions for a community or nation without much if any participation from those below. Examples are Lynd & Lynd’s (1929; 1937) study of “Middletown”; Floyd Hunter’s (1953) study of the “community power structure” in Atlanta; and, although in a national rather than local context, C. Wright Mills’ (1956) study of “the power elite” made up of the top military, business and political leaders of the nation. While the contexts of the studies were different the conclusions were the same: a small group controls decision making.

The understanding of local community power in the first two examples, Lynd & Lynd and Hunter, are worth summarizing here because they are a prelude to the work that

follows. Robert and Helen Lynd wrote two books on a city they called “Middletown,” which was their pseudonym for Muncie, Indiana. The goal of their original research was “to study the interwoven trends that are the life of a small American city” (Lynd & Lynd, 1929, p. 3). They did not set out to test a hypothesis, but rather to observe the whole of life and changes taking place in the city. The study examined life in Muncie from 1890 to 1924. What emerged in this original study was a picture of how life changed during the period of interest.

Their methodology was to observe the life-activities of the city by residing in Middletown over a year and a half period from January 1924 to June 1925. The techniques for data collection included (1) participation in the everyday life of Middletown residents during the period the researchers spent living in Middletown; (2) review of documents such as census data, city and court records, meeting minutes, personal papers, and newspapers; (3) compilation of statistics where they did not already exist; (4) interviews with “working class” and “business class” families (Lynd & Lynd, 1929, pp. 507-509); and (5) questionnaires.

Their original study was implicitly related to questions of community power and leadership, but these issues were not taken on directly. The Lynds concluded that life had changed in Muncie from 1890 to 1924 in many ways. They ranked the six major areas of life-activities that they studied in descending order of change.

Getting a living seemingly exhibits the most pervasive change, particularly in its technological and mechanical aspects; leisure time, again most markedly in material developments such as the automobile and motion picture, is almost as

mobile; training the young in schools, community activities, and making a home would come third, fourth, and fifth in varying order, depending upon which traits are scrutinized; while, finally, on the whole exhibiting least change, come the formal religious activities. (Lynd & Lynd, 1929, p. 497)

It is their second study, *Middletown Revisited: A Study in Cultural Conflicts* (Lynd & Lynd, 1937), that is more directly relevant to community power. The Lynds returned to Muncie in 1935 to examine the effects of the Great Depression on the issue of change in the six areas of life-activities that they discovered in their first study. They explicitly address the issue of leadership in their second study, concluding, “Leadership in the community has not shifted in kind, but has become more concentrated in the same central group observed in 1925” (Lynd & Lynd, 1937, p. 489).

The conclusion about the concentration of leadership in Muncie is consistent with what is later called “elite theory,” which contends that a small group of people run local affairs. The Lynds (1937), in response to critiques of their first book, focus much of their second study on the influence of one “business class” family referred to as the “X family,” which was the Ball family of the Ball Jars manufacturing dynasty.

The Ball family had interests and influence in a number of sectors of Muncie, including manufacturing, banking, legal, newspapers, politics, education, and philanthropy. The Lynds devote a chapter (1937, pp. 74-101) to the influence of the Ball family on Muncie. The general conclusion is that “The business class in Middletown runs the city. The nucleus of business-class control is the X family” (Lynd & Lynd, 1937, p. 77).

The other elites or those close to the elites in the business class defer to the Ball family, a theme echoed by later elite theory authors. The Lynds (1937) write that the business class, in the main, either embraces or huddles toward the X's because they know that the system through which they earn their salaries, receive dividends, buy new Buicks, and send their children to college depends upon the enterprise of men like these. (p. 94)

Floyd Hunter (1953) coined the term “community power structure” in his book on Atlanta. He identified forty white leaders who ran the affairs of “Regional City,” his pseudonym for Atlanta. With few exceptions they lived in the same exclusive neighborhoods, lunched at the same exclusive clubs, and served on the same exclusive boards. Twenty-five of these forty leaders inherited their wealth and leadership positions. “Fifteen of the leaders may be said to have gained positions of prominence on their own” (Hunter, 1953, p. 29).

The methodology for identifying these forty white leaders was to produce lists of 175 names of people active in four areas of the city – “civic, governmental, business, and status leaders” (Hunter, 1953, p. 26) – and invite fourteen “judges” to choose and rank the top ten people on the four lists in terms of influence “from the point of view of ability to lead others” (Hunter, 1953, p. 265). The judges were a diverse group of people familiar with community affairs in Atlanta. “These judges revealed a high degree of correlation in their choices” (Hunter, 1953, p. 269).

The forty leaders, comprised of the top ten from each of the four areas of city affairs, were then interviewed by Hunter. Within this group of forty, eleven were

commercial business leaders, seven were in finance and banking, five were lawyers, five were in manufacturing, four were in government and schools administration, two were labor leaders, four were classified as leisure personnel meaning professional volunteers, one was a dentist, and one was a non-Atlanta resident who made significant financial contributions to charities in the city (Hunter, 1953, pp. 12-13). Thirty-five were men and five women.

Hunter (1953) includes a chapter on the leadership of the black community in Atlanta. While one difference is that the black leadership group included six ministers, “the pattern of power leadership within the Negro community follows rather closely the pattern of the larger community” (Hunter, 1953, p. 114). Two important dynamics noted by Hunter (1953) are that white leaders do not interact with and in many cases do not know the black leaders (p. 140); and, that there was growing unrest in the black community about economic inequality, even about having to move to the back of the buses, a point which foreshadowed the imminent Civil Rights movement (pp. 144-147).

In the white majority community, Hunter (1953) found that there was an inner circle of leaders who were more frequently chosen for leadership roles than others in the top 40. He innovated the use of the sociogram (Haugh, 1980, p. 19), a graphic tool for showing relationships. Hunter’s sociograms had lines that linked the individuals in the upper echelons of power to each other through membership on boards, in clubs, and other entities (Hunter, 1953, pp. 69, 70, 71, 77, 87). These leaders in the inner circle are the real “policy makers” while those other top 40 and the community leaders just below them are the implementers or “doers” (Hunter, 1953, p. 100). There is great descriptive value

in Hunter's analysis of Atlanta, but there is no real analysis of who these policies benefit or whether the elite group is motivated by altruism or greed.

Hunter (1953) ends the book with some prescriptions for how to remedy the elites' tight hold on community power. The structural changes mentioned to possibly address the power monopoly are to draw in "associational groupings" to help with policy decision-making and implementation (p. 256). For the individual who wants to have a voice in policy decisions "the only course that seems open to him [sic] for possible inclusion in the upper power groups is to become allied with a powerful organization in the areas indicated" (Hunter, 1953, p. 257).

An important later innovation in elite theory is the examination of motivation for the elite. "Growth machine" theory, a concept created by Harvey Molotch (1976) and expanded on by Logan and Molotch (1987), is an example of an elite theory which argues that economic self-interest motivates developers and government to maximize economic benefit for the elite through the use of land and buildings. Growth machine theory is consistent with elite theory because it hypothesizes existence of a certain elite group that has power to drive decision-making regarding land development, zoning, public funds for infrastructure investment, and other aspects of land-use.

Logan and Molotch (1987) contrast the exchange value of land which is of interest to those who, by implication are the economic elite, buy and sell properties, with the use value of land which is of interest to people creating a home for themselves. For those interested in the exchange value of land, they or their leg men, will attend meetings to decide land use issues of the day. Box (1998) writes, "Because these meetings are

indeed dull and the decision process extends over months and years, few people other than those directly involved attend and the media pay little attention” (p. 50).

From the growth machine perspective, the public administrator is a tool for the elite group to create and implement policies that make money for that elite group. One example of this is when urban planners become the greatest advocates for pushing the agenda of the business elite (Judd & Mendelson, 1973, p. 181). When lower level administrators do not cooperate with their agenda, the elite power group may push policy decisions up the chain of command until they find a more cooperative administrator or elected official to keep the growth machine working. Growth machine theory is consistent with Judd’s (1988) argument that in examining the “nexus between public and private power” in urban politics the “stakes have been principally economic” (p. 8). The growth machine may also use local amenities such as the arts (Whitt, 1987) or sports teams (Molotch, 1976) as part of development strategies that benefit the economic elite.

Other Views of Community Power. Peterson (1981) also concludes that economic self-interest motivates those investing in land at the local level, but he argues, using classic trickle-down economic theory, that money made by land speculators benefits all in a community. The “unitary interest” of a community is toward economic development policies that benefit the economic elite who then create new and better jobs for all those in the community (Peterson, 1981). Critiques of the unitary interest include that it does not account for the unique dynamics of particular communities (Waste, 1993), that it favors the rich at the expense of the poor (Box, 1998), and that economic development is

not actually based on developing land in order to benefit the elite, but rather on attracting a “creative class” of talented workers to drive the modern economy (Florida, 2002, 2005).

The idea of a creative class does not necessarily parallel an economic class, although in some cities these creative workers may demand a higher salary than the traditional industrial manufacturing workers. Florida (2005) writes that highly educated, creative people are drawn to communities that have quality-of-life amenities and are open to diversity of all kinds (p. 36). To successfully develop a city takes more than providing economic incentives to the elite. There must be a combination of the “three T’s”: technology, talent and tolerance (Florida, 2005, p. 37).

Clarence Stone (1980) writes about systemic power and the unequal distribution of it in society. While some groups will possess more resources to achieve what they desire, politicians and public administrators, for instance, may have the power to counteract the growth machine through a governing coalition although Stone (2005) admits that this is rare. This understanding of systemic power is expanded into “regime theory” by Stone (1989) in his case study of Atlanta, the same locale as Hunter examined in the 1950s. An urban regime is defined by Stone (1989) as a coalition of “public bodies and private interests” which join together “to make and carry out governing decisions” (p. 179). He argues that politics is “the art of arranging” (p. xii) the governing structures in a society. Those governing structures can be arranged by anyone with access to the powerful policy-makers, access which in practice is reserved almost exclusively for an elite class. The three types of regimes or governing coalitions described by Stone (1989) are corporate, caretaker and progressive.

Stone (1993) revised his typology in his later work, ending up with four types: developmental regimes which promote land development as the means to economic development; maintenance regimes that preserve the status quo; middle-class progressive regimes that promote environmental conservation, historic preservation and social equity in the community; and lower-class opportunity expansion regimes that promote public transportation and education, job training, and home ownership for all.

While regime theory has been equated by some authors (Davies, 2002; Lauria, 1999) with pluralism, Stone (2005) argues that it combines elements of both elite theory and pluralism, but does not completely fit into either approach. Although Stone (2005) claims he is not an elitist, it is the economic elite that he argues controls the resources to make policy changes (p. 313). Pluralism, he claims, argues that political participation is “open and penetrable” while regime theory argues that political participation “is mainly accessible to those who can meet substantial threshold tests” such as access to the wealthy and influence of the structures of government (p. 310). While economic development issues would require the business elite to be involved in a governing coalition, police-community relations in Boston would require black clergy to be in a governing coalition (p. 314). Stone does not explicitly address the question of whether context matters to what partners would be necessary in a coalition – an interest of this researcher – but does address history as a factor in the type of governing coalition needed (p. 315).

Pluralist Theory. Pluralist theory, in contrast to elite theory, argues that community leadership is fluid, and often different leaders emerge in different issue

arenas. Pluralist theory rejects the notion that power is held exclusively by a small number of people in a community. However, there may be only a small number influencing transportation policy, another small number of different people influencing education policy, and yet another small number of different people interested in business growth in a city. Based on the issue arena, only some people will be interested in or passionate about getting involved in influencing the policy agenda or implementation of policies. Stated another way, “The fundamental axiom in the theory and practice of American pluralism is, I believe, this: Instead of a single center of sovereign power there must be multiple centers of power, none of which is or can be wholly sovereign” (Dahl, 1967a, p. 24).

Waste (1987) traces the “pluralist legacy” through American history (pp. 3-17). Spokesmen for the pluralist legacy include James Madison (2001, pp. 42-49), especially in *Federalist* 10, Alexis de Tocqueville (1954), Arthur F. Bentley (1908), David B. Truman (1951), David Riesman (1953) and John C. Calhoun (1964). The point of Waste’s (1987) list is to argue that pluralism is not a new invention, but has deep roots in American democratic history.

The concept of “polyarchy” is the modern manifestation of pluralism (Dahl & Lindblom, 1953). Pluralist theory or polyarchy is used as a normative ideal, the way the democratic state *should* be. It is defined in the following way:

Polyarchy is a label developed to describe the largely democratic societies (predominantly but not exclusively in Western Europe and North America) that share basic institutions crucial to democratic regimes, including the freedom to

vote in secret ballot elections in which the vote of each member has about the same weight, the freedoms of speech and assembly, the right to petition and redress grievances, the right to expect that duly elected officials will be allowed to assume office following their election, the right to alternative sources of information including sources not under the unilateral control of the government, the right to offer rival policies from those that are offered by the prevailing governmental officials, and the right to seek office based on the presentation of those rival policies and rival candidacies. (Waste, 1987, p. 17)

Robert Dahl's (1961) study of New Haven is the central empirical examination in this perspective concluding that pluralist theory is a better explanation for community power and leadership than Hunter's (1953) elite theory. His claim is that in New Haven different issue arenas have different groups of people who make decisions. For instance, within the realm of economic development an upper class group of individuals decides policy, in the realm of public education a middle class group is the decision makers, and within party politics it is the working class who are most involved (Dahl, 1961, pp. 181-182).

The pluralist theory laid foundations for what has been called the arbiter community, similar to Stone's (1993) maintenance regime, one of four ideal community types that Williams and Adrian (1963) explore. Williams and Adrian's (1963) four types of cities are promotion cities in which boosters promote growth in population and economic development; amenities cities in which the focus is on making neighborhoods and homes as comfortable as possible; caretaker cities in which government is expected

to provide basic services but not intervene in other aspects of daily life; and arbiter cities in which diverse interest groups compete for influence in a pluralistic environment. With different groups competing in this arbiter type of community, the ideal public administrator has “technical, professional skills” as well as “interpersonal and conflict resolution skills” (Box, 1998, p. 54). “The function of local government in this community type is to serve as *arbiter* between the competing groups. In this hyperpluralist environment the highest value is placed on political responsiveness” (Box, 1998, p. 52).

Critiques do exist of pluralist theory. Dahl and other pluralists have been critiqued by some authors (Box, 1998, p. 45; Haugh, 1980, p. 13) for not acknowledging that his analysis examined only policy decisions that were made, not those that were not made or not even allowed to come up as a decision possibility – what Bachrach and Baratz (1962) called “non-decisionmaking” as a source of power – which can greatly alter the allowable choices. Domhoff (1978) also directly critiqued Dahl when he took his data and concluded that Hunter’s elite theory was a better explanation for the facts. A final critique of both pluralism and elite theory is that they do not always acknowledge the complexity of a situation but can sometimes try to analyze a particular snapshot of a community without sufficient attention to the dynamics of history such as Atlanta in the early 1950s (Hunter, 1953) or New Haven in the early 1960s (Dahl, 1961).

Theme 1C. Political History

There are three specific indicators that will be examined in regard to this factor of political history: citizen participation, land-use planning and community leadership. While these three are often connected, the literatures are unique.

Citizen Participation. The first indicator of political history in a particular community is citizen participation. The question of the proper relationship of citizens to government has been debated since America's founding (Box, 2004, p. 25; Box, 2007a, p. vii). While there are different ideas of what constitutes citizen involvement, I propose using a broad understanding. Timney's (1998) observation supports this approach: "The literature identifies several meanings of citizen participation, from the simple act of voting to lobbying to affect political decision to active involvement in decision making, as in a town meeting" (p. 94). Langton (1978) also supports a broad approach to understanding citizen participation through a range of options from public action such as policy advocacy or civil disobedience to obligatory participation such as paying taxes or jury duty.

For the purposes of this dissertation citizen participation is defined as *active involvement by citizens in the public affairs of the community*. Citizen participation, understood using this broad definition, has taken different forms in different places, times, and cultures. However, in the United States the dominant form of government is representative democracy and citizen participation must be understood through that lens.

Major questions in the debate over participatory democracy include "whether people are able to govern themselves" (Box, 2004, p. 25), in what matters should they

govern themselves, and with what mechanisms can they govern themselves. In answer to some of these questions, Eberly (1994) declares, “The defining characteristic of America’s unique experiment in democracy is reducible to one core principle: self-government” (p. xxviii). But what is meant by democratic self-government is not always clear. A distinction between two ideal types of democracy is helpful to frame citizen participation in self-government. “Democracy that involves elected officials making decisions for the people is called *representative democracy*, and a situation in which citizens personally participate in decision making is *direct democracy*” (Box, 2004, p. 25).

Another way that representative democracy is described is by using the “loop democracy” model in which the people elect candidates who will best satisfy their wants, elected officials pass laws that reflect people’s wants, and people reelect those who do well at satisfying their wants (Fox & Miller, 1996, p. 15). In this model, voting is the main form of citizen participation. This parallels the political philosophy of Edmund Burke (1901) who spoke about the legitimacy of a representative government that includes both elected officials and public administrators. In the Burkean model, this legitimacy of public administrators “must be earned” through the test of “how well he or she seeks the goal of the whole” (Haque, 1994, p. 102). While it is true that voting is citizen participation in the ideal loop democracy, it is also true that loop democracy may ultimately disempower citizens by taking away direct voice in decisions because elected representatives make the decisions for them (Fox & Miller, 1996, pp. 16-17).

The United States national government is a representative form of democracy, although at the local government level there are differing degrees of direct democracy. An example of direct democracy would be the traditional New England town meeting where an entire citizenry makes decisions about governance (Box, 2004, p. 34; Box, 2007a, p. xi). An empirical study (Oliver, 2000) found that as cities' populations grew, there was less citizen participation. So, size matters when it comes to citizen participation.

Some authors (Follett, 1918; Mansbridge, 1999) argue that participation makes better citizens, or that the independent variable of participation influences the dependent variable of good citizenship. Other authors (Frisby & Bowman, 1996) argue that government, in particular the work of public administrators, makes for engaged citizen participation, or that the independent variable of good government influences the dependent variable of participating citizens.

The citizen participation indicator for the political histories of Omaha and Portland can be understood in terms of a continuum from mere window dressing to true decision making. In a typology of participation by Sherry Arnstein (1969) eight rungs on a ladder of citizen participation are explicated. Arnstein argues from a critical theory perspective as a community organizer interested in "the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future" (Arnstein, 2000, p. 242). Arnstein's (2000) typology of citizen participation had eight levels:

- These first two rungs of the ladder (1-2) are called Nonparticipation.

1. *Manipulation* – On this bottom rung, the “people are placed on rubberstamp advisory committees or advisory boards for the express purpose of ‘educating’ them or engineering their support” (p. 244). This is the typical mode of citizen participation and it creates hostility towards the power-brokers of a community (p. 245).

2. *Therapy* – In this “dishonest and arrogant” approach by public officials, the agenda is on “curing” citizens of “their ‘pathology’ rather than changing the racism and victimization that create their ‘pathologies’” (p. 245). This blame-the-victim approach also creates great hostility.

- These three rungs of the ladder (3-5) are called Tokenism.

3. *Informing* – This is an important first step to citizen participation, but provides only one-way communication from public official to citizen with “no channel provided for feedback and no power for negotiation” (p. 246). Tools for this level of citizen participation include coverage by the “new media, pamphlets, posters, and responses to inquiries” (p. 246).

4. *Consultation* – Like informing citizens, the consultation process is a good first step, but can be limiting if “it offers no assurance that citizen concerns and ideas will be taken into account” (p. 246). Some tools frequently used at the level of consultation include “attitude surveys, neighborhood meetings, and public hearings” (p. 246).

5. *Placation* – At this level, the citizens begin to influence decision-making by appointment to public boards although the amount of influence depends on whether

the citizens are truly empowered to make decisions or whether the “have-nots can be easily outvoted or outfoxed” by the power elite (p. 247).

- These top three rungs of the ladder (6-8) are called Citizen Power.

6. *Partnership* – At this level, the power-brokers “agree to share planning and decision-making responsibilities through such structures as joint policy boards, planning committees and mechanisms for resolving impasses” (p. 249). It is this level of citizen participation that might be most relevant for the type of community collaboratives that will be the focus of future research.

7. *Delegated Power* – When “citizens hold the significant cards to assure accountability” then the “powerholders need to start the bargaining process rather than respond to pressure from the other end” (p. 250). These arrangements for delegating power might include budget decisions, staffing decisions, policy decisions, and subcontracting decisions.

8. *Citizen Control* – This top rung on the ladder of citizen participation is one in which the program participants or residents of a particular area will “be in full charge of policy and managerial aspects, and be able to negotiate the conditions under which ‘outsiders’ may change them” (p. 251). Much of this depends on the structural arrangements and the financial controls of programs, although Arnstein, drawing from the experience of the Model Cities Program initiated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, indicates that no locale has totally implemented the full citizen control type of arrangement.

A second typology of citizen participation comes from Mary Timney (1998). She draws on field research to illuminate her argument and concludes that there are three broad types of participation. She is particularly focused on the “administrative strategies for managing public input” (Timney, 1998, p. 89).

Her three contrasting models for citizen participation are:

- *Passive or Traditional Model* – “This is government *for* the people,” writes Timney (p. 93), in the sense that public administrators claim to only be carrying out the policies of elected officials who are seen to have legitimacy by having been voted in to office by citizens. This is the representative or loop democracy model. This model views administrators as “hired experts to carry out policy as articulated by political leaders – the pure form of the politics-administration dichotomy” (p. 93).
- *Active Model* – In this model, which could be thought of as government *by* the people, the public “administrators serve as consultants or advisors to the people and also fund the participation effort” (p. 94), but they do not ultimately control the decision, the citizens do. This is a deliberative or participatory democracy model. The processes inherent in this model may lead to greater community consensus (or they may not), however, the roles of the administrators as experts are diminished.
- *Hybrid Model* – “The aura of expertise is retained in the hybrid model, which represents government *with* the people” (p. 94). While the administrators retain ultimate control over policy decisions in this model, the processes are designed to include many voices and build consensus for the policy recommendations that will then be drafted by administrators.

A third typology which comes from Wang (2001), draws on the work of other authors (King, Feltey, & Susel, 1998; Sanoff, 2000). Wang (2001) proposes two levels of participation: *pseudo participation* which is used “to inform citizens about decisions, placate their complaints, and manipulate their opinions” (p. 322); and *genuine participation* which is when the “public is involved in administrative decision making, and citizens are the owners of government and the coproducers of public goods” (p. 323).

Wang (2001) presents results from a large-sample survey of chief administrative officers of U.S. cities with populations of 50,000 or larger. He found that while cities used many different mechanisms for participation, the public seldom participated in “central management functions” and had a very limited role in “decision making” (Wang, 2001, p. 329). But Wang (2001) concludes that citizen participation does lead to understanding of and responding to public needs and building consensus among the public (p. 333). He admits that one limitation of his study is that the survey respondents were public officials and their answers may differ from citizens (p. 334).

Two related questions regarding citizen participation are: Why should government encourage citizen participation? And, what are the ideal ingredients for citizen participation?

In 1918, Mary Parker Follett wrote *The New State* which “introduced Americans to the idea that democracy required a reorganization of social and political life” (Mattson, 1998, p. liv). Her proposal for this reorganization called for “a new conception of politics: it means that the organization of men [sic] in small, local groups must be the next form which democracy takes” (Follett, 1998, p. 142). The specific method for

citizen participation that Follett proposed was founding community centers located in neighborhood schools. These community centers would provide forums for neighbors to discuss the issues that impacted their lives most directly.

To the question of why government should encourage citizen participation, Follett would answer that true democracy requires it. In contrast to a traditional representative or loop democracy, Follett saw the benefits of citizen participation to be the associations that would make possible a consensus among the public. She wrote, “Representation is not the main fact of political life: the main concern of politics is *modes of association*. We do not want the rule of the many or the few; we must find that method of political procedure by which majority and minority ideas may be so closely interwoven that we are truly ruled by the will of the whole” (Follett, 1998, p. 147).

The modes of association that Follett wrote about were correctly interpreted by other authors as civil society (Drucker, 1995; Liebmann, 2001). Follett spanned the divide between the citizen-to-citizen dynamic of social capital discussed earlier and the citizen-to-government dynamic of citizen participation with her concept of modes of association. The associations she wrote of extended in both directions.

The trend is that many people in the late-20th and early-21st centuries are demanding more citizen participation (Box, 1998, pp. 7-8). While there are large numbers of citizens who are simply disengaged from any participation in governance – whether voting, attending public hearings, or volunteering for school committees – there is also a large group who “appear to want to move beyond basic public information to honest, two-way communication” (Frisby & Bowman, 1996, p. A-4). The empirical evidence to

support these trends and why the trends exist maybe part of a further study, but the point is that there is a tension between the apathetic and the engaged in many communities.

So, in answer to the question, Why should government encourage citizen participation?, the reasons may be that a self-selected group of engaged people are increasingly demanding it and that true democracy, at least that of a more direct sort, requires it. In answer to the question of what ingredients make a city ripe for citizen participation, answers may include size and social context.

On the relationship between city size and levels of citizen participation, Oliver (2000) comes to the same conclusion as Robert Dahl (1967b), that the ideal size for a city that wants to nurture citizen participation is 50,000 to 200,000. “These cities would be small enough to facilitate civic participation but large enough to generate meaningful political discourse” (Oliver, 2000, p. 361).

Oliver (2000) draws on Verba, Scholzman, and Brady’s (1995) civic voluntarism model. “According to their framework, political participation is a function of individual resources, interest, and mobilization: people are more likely to participate if they have skills and knowledge, if they are more psychologically engaged, or if they are recruited by others” (Oliver, 2000, p. 362). Two of the conclusions of his study are that “Residents of large cities are much less likely to be mobilized by friends or neighbors than are people in small places” (p. 369) and “people in larger places are less interested in local affairs” (p. 371).

Most important in determining how the civic voluntarism model is realized in a particular community is the way in which “each factor varies with a person’s social

environment” (Oliver, 2000, p. 362). So, the significant finding in the study is that “social context has a large and independent effect on civic participation” (Oliver, 2000, p. 371). This insight is relevant for the case studies in Omaha and Portland because the social contexts differ indicating that citizen participation will differ in the two cities.

Social context or community culture is not a static reified concept to be determined once and for all time. A concept helpful to understanding the dynamic quality of a community is Anthony Giddens’ (1979, 1984) structuration theory, mentioned above in the discussion of Coleman’s (1990) concept of social capital. “Giddens’ central argument is that communities are constantly re-creating themselves through social interactions of their members. Thus, communities are not stable structures to be built by programs; they are in a state of continual transition” (Sinclair, 2002, p. 313). The structuration concept is used by other authors (Box, 1998, p. 28) to explore the organizations and practices within a local community. The two relevant points from this discussion for purposes of this dissertation research are that context matters when examining citizen participation and that communities as well as the underlying community cultures may be changing based on citizens’ interactions.

Land-use Planning. The second indicator used in examining the political history of the two communities examined in this study is land-use planning. The battles over planning issues can divide or unite a community, or do both at times. The issues surrounding land-use are important not just for the physical environment of a place, but for the sense of community. Highlighting the importance of land-use planning to the

political history and, ultimately, community culture, Jonathan Barnett (2003) writes of a community in Missouri:

The issues in Wildwood were not just about a new highway or about land conservation, they were about the way that people in the area wanted to live their lives. They had a mental picture of what their community should be, and they needed public policies that would help shape the community in that image. (p. 2)

The planning field evolved during the twentieth-century from the elitist, top-down model where an individual planner or small commission would propose a master plan for a city, often focused on improving public spaces using the City Beautiful model, to the more bottom-up, participatory planning model meant to “provide a platform for the formation of community consensus about land-use issues” (Kaiser & Godschalk, 2000, p. 376). The importance of land-use to the overall culture of a community is highlighted in a quote from a Seattle Planning Commission report in 1993, “How a city’s land is used defines its character, its potential for development, the role it can play within a regional economy and how it impacts the natural environment” (Kaiser & Godschalk, 2000, p. 376).

In this second indicator of political history, the planners themselves are public administrators who often must combine technical expertise with conflict resolution and facilitative skills in order to move a planning process forward. Planners interact daily with the growth machine elite – developers, financiers and lawyers – and are both parties to conflicts over land-use and mediators of those conflicts (Forester, 2000). Forester (1987, 1993) explores this tension in the roles of city planners. He concludes that, while

structural power imbalances will remain in society, planners can and should use “mediated-negotiation strategies,” six of which he explicates (Forester, 2000, pp. 414-418), in order to level the playing field and create sustainable resolutions to land-use conflicts.

Judd and Mendelson (1973) argue that in the early 20th century the planning professionals were closely allied with reformers who worked to break the power of the machines in urban politics and promoted a “public interest” (p. 181). Their case studies showed that, in reality, the redistributed power in many cities favored the business elites who readily stepped in to fill the void left by political bosses. This resulted in a situation in which the “goals of the business community often became the goals of the planners” (pp. 181-182). While planners claim to be neutral experts, they are, in fact, advocates for a particular interest group within society.

The suggestion that Judd and Mendelson (1973) make for the planning professionals is to respond to the pressures of political interest groups or clients that may advocate for change in the status quo of development policies. The complex relationship between planning, community culture and homelessness will be further explored in the dissertation research. At least one factor in the relationship is whether a community consciously or unconsciously develops in ways that preserve or increase the options of affordable housing for those at risk of homelessness (Wright, 1992).

The histories of land-use planning in Omaha and Portland differ. The broad histories of these cities are explored further in the two case study chapters of this manuscript, but an introduction might be helpful here. There was a particular focus on

land-use laws and planning in the 1960s and 1970s in Oregon generally and Portland specifically (Weitz, 1999, p. 50). This Portland history is discussed more in Chapter 5 on the findings and analysis of Portland's community culture, but the importance of land-use planning is clearly a factor in the political history of Portland. In the introduction to an edited book titled *The Portland Edge: Challenges and Successes in Growing Communities* by a group of scholars associated with Portland State University's School of Urban Studies and Planning, the editor states the book's theme as a question that connects the use of space with community culture. "How can we organize ourselves spatially and socially to maintain and restore our sense of community?" (Ozawa, 2004, p. 1).

In a chapter titled "It's Not an Experiment," three of the lessons gleaned from the experience with regional government in Portland's metropolitan area are consistent with the analysis of community culture in this dissertation: land-use planning matters, citizen participation matters and political leadership matters (Seltzer, 2004, pp. 54-56). Another chapter on the history of the Portland Development Commission (PDC) in urban redevelopment, points to a turning point in the mid-1990s when former City of Portland Transportation Director Felicia Trader was appointed by Mayor Vera Katz to bring a more "participatory planning process" to PDC (Gibson, 2004, p. 62). James Kunstler (1993) writes in *The Geography of Nowhere* that Portland "embodies the most hopeful and progressive trends in American city life and especially in urban planning" (p. 189). Other authors (Barnett, 1995; Garvin, 2000) name Portland as leading the nation in urban

planning and design. The “transit-oriented design” movement (Calthorpe, 2000) often uses Portland as a successful example of the approach.

To highlight the pressure of citizen’s on policy decision-making, Altshuler and Luberoff (2003) write of the politically tumultuous debate in the 1970s over whether to build a busway or lightrail next to the Banfield Freeway to the east of downtown Portland: “Environmental and neighborhood activists were adamant in favor of rail” (p. 193). The citizen activists won and the Portland metropolitan area is served today by a web of lightrail lines running east, west, north and south of the downtown. This has encouraged the kind of development clustered around the mass transit lines that has come to be known as smart growth.

Omaha is a different story. The history of planning in Omaha parallels the history of planning in the U.S. as a whole. Following World War II, planners “viewed the city primarily as a place to work, a place that functioned to hold industry and jobs” (Daly-Bednarek, 1992, p. 2). In contrast to Portland, which is friendly to pedestrians, bicycles and public transportation in its design, Omaha is built for cars. As former Omaha Planning Department director Marty Shukert predicted, “You will be even less comfortable outside of your car in the future than you are now” (Kaplan, 1998, p. 63).

In the 1960s and 1970s, planners viewed downtown and riverfront areas as amenities to attract culture, arts and other civic-minded organizations. The agendas of the city boosters, who were businessmen interested in promoting Omaha’s image, and city planners converged. Daly-Bednarek (1992) writes that “Boosters used the planning process to demonstrate their city’s energy and up-to-date nature” (p. 5).

There is currently a focus on land-use laws and planning in Omaha that again brings together boosters and planners, but also includes neighborhood activists and environmentalist. Omaha by Design (OBD) coordinated a year-long process culminating in the December 2004 unanimous passage by the City Council of the OBD-sponsored Urban Design Element into the City's Master Plan (Kotok, 2004, p. 1). The city is also exploring how to codify the Urban Design Element into enforceable standards in the City Code (Barnett, 2005). The political history around land-use planning in Omaha has been mixed. This is illustrated by the OBD process' origins when a developer was asked by a reporter why a proposed Sam's Club, Home Depot, and Wal-Mart were such bad "big box" designs. He said, "We build to the ordinance, and the politics." Then added, "What blends into the area is, frankly, big box" (Burbach, 2003, March 6, p. B1).

In an article in the *Harvard Design Magazine* Jonathan Barnett, the lead urban planner on the OBD project, concludes that

Omaha's leadership understands the economic importance of keeping Omaha competitive by making it a place where people choose to live and work in a time when people can choose to live and work almost anywhere. The leadership and the public now see how urban design and planning can help improve their city. (2005, p. 49)

Political Leadership. The third indicator used in examining political history is political leadership. Often this includes elected officials. This may also include a phenomenon that emerged after the Civil War in which political bosses, who may not hold a formal elected position, had power over local government decision-making and

used a patronage system to ensure continued power (Shafritz & Russell, 2005, p. 100). It may also include the role of corporate leaders in politics. This may be more behind-the-scenes in the sense of corporate interests lobbying politicians or public administrators to influence decisions, which has a long history in America (McConnell, 1966, p. 3). It may also be a more visible role in which corporate leaders actually run for elected office.

In Omaha and Portland there are many leaders who stand out. Oregon's recent history is dominated by two political leaders, Governor Tom McCall and Mayor, then Governor, Neil Goldschmidt. Both are discussed at length in Chapter 5 on Portland's community culture. Although neither was available to be interviewed for this dissertation research – McCall died in 1983 and Goldschmidt is no longer a public figure after a scandal that has many Oregonians reevaluating his legacy – key staff members and historians were interviewed.

Omaha does not have the same type of political leaders on whom all historians would agree had great influence. But there are influential corporate leaders mentioned often in the interviews conducted, such as Walter Scott, the former CEO of Kiewit companies, who have had great impact on the city's community culture. Some of these influential leaders are discussed in Chapter 4 on community culture in Omaha.

Theme 2: Community Collaboratives

The term used in this study for the entities formed by cross-sectoral partnerships is "community collaboratives." This term was chosen after exploring various definitions of collaborative efforts summarized in this section. A clear understanding of the concept of community collaboratives is important because it is the unit of analysis in the case

studies in this dissertation. The qualifier *community* before the word collaboratives becomes a crucial boundary-limiter for the scope of research in this dissertation. Even with this limited scope – collaboratives must impact a specific community – there is further need to propose a definition of what community will be affected.

In the two cases in this dissertation, the communities affected are the cities of Omaha and Portland. Community was defined in the introductory chapter as *a place where people share common characteristics, interact in some way, and hold unifying norms or values*.

Collaboration Explored. Collaboratives are the formal entities or informal partnerships that engage in collaboration and/or result from collaboration. The collaboratives of particular interest in this dissertation are cross-sectoral, involving public, private, and nonprofit organizations. Collaboratives are, by definition, involved in collaboration. So, the definition of collaboration must be explored before turning to defining collaboratives.

Barbara Gray (1985) defined collaboration as “the pooling of appreciations and/or tangible resources, e.g., information, money, labor, etc., by two or more stakeholders to solve a set of problems which neither can solve individually” (p. 912). Gray built on this definition in her later work. Wood and Gray (1991) propose an overarching definition of the process of collaboration: “Collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain” (p. 146).

Key terms in this definition that are explored in detail (Wood & Gray, 1991, pp. 146-148) include autonomous stakeholders, problem domain, interactive process, shared rules, norms, and structures, and issues to be decided upon. Their definition of collaboration intentionally provides room for a broad range of possible collaborative forms. They write of their proposed definition:

It makes no assumptions about which or how many stakeholders will participate, at what level of social organization the collaboration will occur, whether the collaborative structure will be temporary or not, the nature of the intended outcome, or whether the effort will succeed. (Wood & Gray, 1991, p. 149)

Another article that proposes a definition for collaboration is by Bailey & Koney (1996). Although acknowledging that a variety of terms have been used for what are essentially the same or closely related phenomena, the term chosen by Bailey & Koney (1996) is “interorganizational community-based collaboratives.” They write, “Whether called consortia, coalitions, alliances, networks, or federations, interorganizational collaborative efforts are all interactive structures that emphasize the creation of a partnership among parties in which joint participation ideally leads to the achievement of a common goal” (Bailey & Koney, 1996, p. 605).

Bailey & Koney (1996) identify “eight core concepts” for consideration in interorganizational community-based collaboratives: “leadership, membership, environmental linkages, strategy, purpose, tasks, structure, and systems” (p. 605). The authors explore the paradox in each of these core concepts. For instance, regarding leadership, there is a paradox because the effective collaborative leader is “both assertive

(guiding and directing) and responsive” (Bailey & Koney, 1996, p. 606). Bailey & Koney reference Robert Greenleaf’s (1973) concept of a “servant leader” as an example of this paradox.

Another definition for collaboratives comes from Myrna Mandell (1999a), who uses the term “network structure” in this and other work (Mandell, 1994, 1999b, 2002-2003). She writes, “A network structure consists of public, private and not-for profit organizations and/or individuals in an active, organized collaboration to accomplish some agreed upon purpose or purposes” (Mandell, 1999a, p. 45). Mandell (1999a) proposes that network structures are the most formal type of partnership on a spectrum in her typology of collaboratives. In her definition of a network structure, Mandell (1999a) has one element similar to other definitions and two unique elements that are worth exploring. The element similar to other definitions is that the parties have an agreed-upon purpose, which parallels Bailey & Koney’s (1996) “common goal” (p. 605), and Wood & Gray’s (1991) “intended outcome” (p. 149). The first of the unique elements in her definition is the possibility that individuals, not just organizations, can be parties in a collaborative effort. The other unique element is the specifically cross-sectoral – public, private, and nonprofit – nature of network structures. Her cross-sectoral definition influenced the working definition for this dissertation and is important in relation to the trends in public administration. This “blurring of boundaries separating the public, corporate, and nonprofit sectors” is of particular relevance in an “age of contracting out, privatizing, and devolution of services” (Linden, 2002, p. 12). The complexity of governance in a contemporary context makes the study of cross-sectoral collaboratives

more challenging, and more important. This cross-sectoral nature of many collaboratives is also proposed by Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2006, December) as the most effective way to deal with “society’s most difficult public challenges” (p. 44).

Mattessich, Murray-Close, and Monsey (2001), from the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation in St. Paul, Minnesota, an operating foundation which does community-based work, use a typology that includes three types of partnerships. The three types, in order of formality of relationships, are cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. The four dimensions used in distinguishing between the three types are: vision and relationship; structure, responsibilities, and communication; authority and accountability; and, resources and rewards. (See Table in *Appendix B* for more detail.)

Another typology for community collaboratives would arrange them by issue arena. This typology borrows from Robert Dahl’s (1961) concept of issue areas in a pluralist democracy. One collaborative effort may focus on the issue area of education, another on housing, and another on community relations. Dahl’s concept of issue area is similar to Gray & Wood’s (1991) concept of the problem domain on which a collaborative focuses its efforts. The key to this approach to a typology is that the entities involved in a collaborative effort explicitly agree on which problem will be addressed within a specific arena. For example, in this dissertation the issue area for the community collaboratives in Omaha and Portland is homelessness.

Operational Definitions of Community Collaboratives and Success. From this review of selected definitions and typologies, I would propose the following working definition for community collaboratives to frame my dissertation research on the topic: *A*

community collaborative is a formal partnership in which public, private, and/or nonprofit organizations work together to address an agreed-upon problem that impacts a particular community.

The argument pursued in this dissertation research is that a community collaborative's success is affected by the environment in which it operates, specifically as viewed through the conceptual framework of community culture. While many communities may rally in response to a particular event – for instance, city government, local nonprofits, and businesses may partner to organize a Diversity Rally to counter a neo-Nazi gathering in a community – it is harder to sustain that partnership over time. Morse (2004) writes, “The evidence is clear that Americans can link arms and join hands with the proper motivation. The key to community success, however, is the *habit* of working together, not the *incident* of working together” (pp. 45-46).

Mattessich et al. (2001) list three factors related to the environment in which collaboration takes place that influence success of an effort. First is a “history of collaboration or cooperation in the community” which “offers the potential collaborative partners an understanding of the roles and expectations required in collaboration and enables them to trust the process” (p. 12). Second is whether “the collaborative group (and, by implication, the agencies in the group) is perceived within the community as reliable and competent – at least related to the goals and activities it intends to accomplish” (p. 13). Third is whether “Political leaders, opinion-makers, persons who control resources, and the general public support (or at least do not oppose) the mission of the collaborative group” (p. 13). These environmental factors for collaborative success

are consistent with the political history indicators explored in the previous section, especially community leadership.

Besides the three environmental factors for collaborative success, Mattessich et al. (2001) also suggest that for the success of collaboratives factors related to membership characteristics, process and structure, communication, purpose, and resources are important. The factors related to resources are not just funding and staffing, but leadership. This focus on leadership as a factor for successful collaboration echoes other research findings (Crislip & Larson, 1994). A metaphor used by researchers (Lober, 1997; Takahashi & Smutny, 2002) to capture the importance of leadership is collaborative entrepreneurs who take advantage of particular collaborative windows in order to achieve specific goals.

To operationalize the concept of community collaborative success in this dissertation research, I use the similar definition found in Mandell (1999a), Bailey & Koney (1996), and Wood and Gray (1991) of agreed upon goals. So, *community collaborative success is defined as achieving the agreed upon goals of the collaborative*. Sources for determining what the agreed upon goals are might include internal documents of the collaboratives such as strategic plans or program evaluations, interviews of stakeholders and leaders of the collaboratives, and focus groups of board members. These data sources and the collection and analysis methods will be further discussed in the next chapter on research design.

The two themes in this literature review chapter that have been explored above provide the conceptual foundation for this dissertation. First, community culture was

discussed with attention to the three factors examined in this dissertation: social capital, power, and political history. Second, community collaboratives were defined, and the relationship proposed was that environmental factors may effect community collaborative success.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

The strategy of inquiry in this dissertation research is a comparative case studies approach with mostly qualitative data collected and analyzed. Some data used to explore community culture in the two cases – specifically, the U.S. Census Bureau’s data and the Center for Public Affairs Research’s (1994, 2004) *Omaha Conditions Survey* – are quantitative in nature. However, this quantitative data was used in a limited way during the first phase of research for descriptive statistical analysis of the community culture of Omaha and Portland.

The two cases are cross-sectoral community collaboratives addressing homelessness in Omaha and Portland, the Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (OACCH) and Central City Concern (CCC). These two collaboratives are similar enough to provide a good comparison, but are situated in different communities so as to provide greater insight into answers to the research questions. There is strong evidence in the literature that the community culture of Omaha and Portland differ. After a brief discussion of this literature on the contrasting community cultures of Omaha and Portland which is discussed in greater detail in Chapters 4 and 5, the research questions and research design will be further explained.

Contrasting Community Culture in Omaha and Portland

The broad indicators of community culture discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2 – social capital, community power and political history – provides the framework for analyzing the contrasting cultures of Omaha and Portland. The complete political histories, analyses of community power or social capital of Omaha and Portland

are beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, some analysis of these cities is essential to understand in assessing community culture.

Much has been written on Portland. Portland is said to be high in social capital (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003), high in citizen participation in governance (Berry, Portney, & Thomson, 1993; Thomson, 2001), high in civic capacity (Shinn, 1999) and high in public input on planning (Ozawa, 2004). There is also a robust local government with the City of Portland, Multnomah County and Metro, the three-county regional government for the Portland metropolitan area, working together to exert control over much of the activity of the region (Barnett, 1995, 2003).

For Omaha, in contrast to Portland, there is less written on community culture. Omaha's top corporate leaders made up what was referred to by one journalist in 1966 as the "Twenty Influentials" (Larsen & Cottrell, 1997, p. 256; Daly-Bednarek, 1992, p. 190). These twenty white men were the elite that held power to make community decisions. This analysis of Omaha's power structure parallels the work of "elite theory" author Floyd Hunter (1953) who wrote *Community Power Structure* about the forty members of the elite who ran Atlanta in the early 1950s. In Omaha, the power elite had certain clubs to which they belonged and the "ultimately social reward" was "election and coronation as King of Ak-Sar-Ben" (Larsen & Cottrell, 1997, p. 258).

The contrasting community cultures – Portland, a city with a tradition of strong local government control; Omaha, a city with a tradition of strong corporate control over decision-making – made the selection of these two cities methodologically sound for a study exploring the affect of the environment on the success of collaboratives focused

homelessness. The community cultures of Omaha and Portland will be examined in detail in Chapters 4 and 5, respectively.

Research Questions

The research questions drive the design of a research project (Berg, 2001, p. 24).

The primary research question of this dissertation is:

- How does community culture affect the success of community collaboratives?

Secondary research questions are:

- What other factors lead to the success of community collaboratives?
- What are barriers to the success of community collaboratives?
- What actions can partners within the community collaboratives take to promote success?
- What actions can those outside the community collaboratives take to promote success?

The strategy of inquiry grows directly out of the research questions (Creswell, 2003, p. 5). The cases chosen were based on the research questions and appropriate strategy of inquiry. After an explanation of each of the cases and a recounting of how the researcher gained access to the information collected (Creswell, 2003, p. 184), the specific strategy of inquiry will be further discussed.

Two Collaboratives Researched

Although the two collaboratives researched will be examined with more detail in the chapters presenting the case studies, they are introduced here. OACCH is a 12-year old collaborative which had its origin in the desire by a group of Omaha residents to

attract and retain federal money to address the issue of coordination of services for the homeless population. It has received grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the McKinney Act which funds continuums of care for the homeless. OACCH recently received a 501(c)(3) determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service and was renamed the Metropolitan Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (MACCH).⁴ While it does not currently provide direct services as a collaborative, member agencies do. General membership includes 70 active organizations that are public, private and nonprofit. There was an elected Executive Committee that oversaw the collaborative when this dissertation research began, but that morphed into a board of directors of the new nonprofit MACCH by the time this research ended.

On September 10, 2004, I met with the OACCH Executive Committee during its annual retreat and received formal approval to use OACCH as one of my dissertation case studies, if approved by my doctoral committee. On June 14, 2004, the OACCH staff person at the time, David Thomas, who is housed in the City of Omaha's Department of Planning, endorsed my plans to use that community collaborative as a case study.

CCC is a 25-year old collaborative which was started by a group of Portland residents in order to attract and retain federal funds for coordination of services to homeless alcoholics. It evolved into a loose coalition of organizations coordinating services provided by partner agencies for all of the homeless population. Eventually CCC established a 501(c)(3) nonprofit which provides some direct services and continues in partnership with public, private and other nonprofit organizations to provide other

⁴ When referring to the collaborative, OACCH will be used for that time before this renaming and MACCH for the organization after that time. Most of the research in this study will focus on the OACCH era.

services. It has received grant money from HUD under the McKinney Act. It is governed by a Board of Directors.

In a phone call on August 17, 2004, I received permission from the Board Chair, Dean Gisvold, to use CCC as a case in my dissertation research, pending doctoral committee approval. On August 18, 2004, Christine Appleberry, an executive staff member at CCC, pledged to assist with my research in whatever way she could. On January 5, 2005, I met with Richard Harris, Executive Director of CCC, who committed to assisting with my dissertation research.

Phases of the Research

The dissertation research and writing began in July 2005. There were four phases to the research. (See *Appendix C* for Case Study Protocol.)

- *Phase 1: Assessing Community Culture.* Site visit to Portland in July 2005 and research in Omaha beginning in August 2005. During Phase 1, interviews with influentials were conducted and key documents were collected and analyzed in order to assess community culture in the two communities.
- *Phase 2: Effects on Community Collaborative Success.* Site visit to Portland in December 2005 and research in Omaha beginning in January 2006. During Phase 2, focus groups with board members and executive staff of the two collaboratives and further interviews were conducted to understand whether stakeholders inside and outside the collaboratives think the collaboratives are successful in reaching their goals with particular attention to the environment of the collaboratives. In both cases, two particular issues of interest were

tracked, implementation of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and the collaboratives' roles in advocating for affordable housing.

- *Phase 3: Cross-case Analysis and Findings.* The two cases were compared and initial findings were proposed. Another site visit to Portland in December 2006 allowed for “member checking” of preliminary findings with key informants in order to increase validity of findings (Creswell, 2003, p. 196). The same checking for validity of findings was done in Omaha in January 2007.
- *Phase 4: Final Editing and Defense.* After dissertation committee members reviewed the draft submitted, changes were made and the final dissertation was defended.

Strategy of Inquiry

The strategy of inquiry is comparative case studies, with the two cases being OACCH and CCC. “In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” (Yin, 2003, p. 1). The three criteria that Yin (2003) sets out for using case studies are all met in this dissertation research project: the primary research question is stated in a “how” format, the researcher has no control over the events being studied, and the activities are ongoing, contemporary and real-life.

The comparative case study approach is familiar in public administration (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003; Agranoff & Radin, 1991; Yin, 2003, p. 14). This

comparative approach uses the same research questions and a common research design then develops multiple cases separately. In the final phase the individual cases are analyzed comparatively in order “to look for unique and common experiences, patterning of variables and relationships” (Agranoff & Radin, 1991, p. 204). (See *Appendix D* for Case Study Flow Chart.)

Yin (2003) argues that the multiple-case design follows a replication logic in the sense that multiple experiments might be used to test the same hypothesis. A case should be selected because “it either (a) predicts similar results (a *literal replication*) or (b) predicts contrasting results but for predictable reasons (a *theoretical replication*)” (Yin, 2003, p. 47). In this research, the replication logic would predict contrasting results because of the predictable reason that the environment of Portland is a different context for community collaborative success than the environment of Omaha. This logic of replication is in the postpositivist tradition of experimental science because it makes findings more robust through external validity (de Vaus, 2001, p. 238). While the postpositivist knowledge claim, as discussed above, is not the primary epistemological approach because the exploration of meaning for the participants and the qualitative data collection methods used are more consistent with the constructivist knowledge claim, postpositivism is not abandoned in this research either.

This dissertation may not have clearly distinct epistemological assumptions. However, the result of the comparative case study strategy of inquiry is “the development of a rich theoretical framework” to explain how something does or does not happen (Yin, 2003, p. 47). That theoretical framework can then be cautiously applied to similar cases

and some predictions made about what might happen in those. While the question of whether one can generalize the results of a case study is debated in the social sciences (Gomm, Hammersley, & Foster, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 2000), the external validity or generalizability of a proposition is certainly strengthened when multiple tests of the theory are performed or replication logic is followed. In other words, “When case studies are properly undertaken, they should not only fit the specific individual, group, or event studied, but generally provide understanding about similar individuals, groups, or events” (Berg, 2001, p. 232).

Another much debated question in the social sciences relevant to this dissertation research is “What is a Case?” (Ragin & Becker, 1992). One approach is to ask a follow-up question, “What is this a case of?” in order to more clearly define what is the focus of a research undertaking. In fact, the answer may evolve over the life of the study. “The question should be asked again and again, and researchers should treat any answer to the question as tentative and specific to evidence and issues at hand” (Ragin & Becker, 1992, p. 6). The case, which in this study is the community collaborative, is the unit of analysis. This unit of analysis grows directly out of the research questions of this study (Yin, 2003, p. 24).

Much of the data collected to explore the units of analysis were qualitative in nature. Some of the characteristics of this dissertation research that fit well with the qualitative research strategy are that the research takes place in the natural setting, the researcher interpreted data throughout the process and looped back the interpretation to more deeply explore meanings with participants, and there were multiple data collection

methods (Creswell, 2003, pp. 181-183). Many of the theoretical insights that are presented in this manuscript were unanticipated, which is consistent with an interpretivist epistemology and qualitative data collected in the natural setting (Creswell, 2003, p. 199; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data Sources and Data Collection

The advantage of using a variety of *data collection tools* in case studies is that these multiple data can increase internal validity through “triangulation” (Creswell, 1998, p. 202; Huberman & Miles, 1994, p. 438). These data can include qualitative, quantitative or a mix of both types. As Bryman (2001) writes, “case studies are frequently sites for the employment of *both* quantitative and qualitative research” (p. 48). Stated differently, in case studies the “researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time” (Creswell, 2003, p. 15).

Data collection tools for this study include:

➤ Interviews – This data collection tool was used in both Phase 1 and 2 of the research. In the first phase, influentials in each city were interviewed to explore the issue of community culture in Omaha and Portland. (See *Appendix E* for Phase 1 interview instrument.⁵) A semi-structured interview technique was used (Fotana & Frey, 1994, p. 365). The interviewees were purposively selected through use of key informants in each city and positional and reputational identification. Some categories of interviewees are:

⁵ The interview instrument was pilot tested on a City of Omaha department director on April 5, 2005, and a program officer at a local philanthropy on April 13, 2005. The questions were revised to address two critiques: first, that I should provide a clearer definition of the sectors of interest in the cross-sectoral interaction questions (2A & 2B); and second, that I should probe about what is driving the changes in the character of the city more (4A).

- present and former elected officials or public administrators: examples are current City Council President Dan Welch, former Mayor Hal Daub and former Planning Department Director Marty Shukert in Omaha, and current City Council members Erik Sten and Sam Adams and former Portland Development Commission Deputy Director Wyman Winston in Portland;
- staff of former elected officials: examples are former Portland Mayor Goldschmidt's Chief of Staff Bill Scott, and former Omaha Mayor Zorinsky's Budget Director Bob Armstrong;
- current public administrators in agencies with jurisdiction over housing and planning: such as Gil Kelly, Director of the Bureau of Planning and Deena Pierott, Deputy Director of the Bureau of Housing and Community Development in Portland, and Bob Peters who was Director of the Planning Department in Omaha;
- academics and politics historians: such as Carl Abbott in Portland and Orville Menard in Omaha;
- and executive staff in the partner organizations of OACCH and CCC.

These interviews helped support the initial conclusions from the literature reviewed and documents collected during Phase 1. In the Phase 2, the interviews helped to assess whether internal and external stakeholders see the collaboratives as successful in meeting their goals. (See *Appendix F* for Phase 2 interview instrument.) The interviews were an opportunity to test whether the three environmental factors that Mattessich et al. (2001, pp. 12-13) discuss were present in Omaha and Portland and affects the success of

OACCH and CCC. The three factors, which were summarized in the literature review chapter, are the history of collaboration in the community, whether the collaborative is trusted by those outside of it, and whether influentials and the general public support the mission of the collaborative. During the interviews, the researcher took notes and typed a summary as soon after the conversation as possible.

➤ Document Review – In Phase 1, the review of relevant documents included media reports and previous studies which contain insights into the social capital, community power, or political leadership of Omaha and Portland, and land-use laws which impact the way land-use planning is done in Omaha and Portland. In Phase 2, documents regarding origins, operations, goals and objectives, and impacts of the two collaboratives, including minutes of board and executive meetings, internal reports, strategic plans, media reports, websites, HUD grant applications, personal communications, brochures and publications were reviewed when available and appropriate.

➤ Survey Data – Two sources of quantitative data were used during the first phase of research to help describe the character of the cities of Omaha and Portland. These were the U.S. Census Bureau's data from the centennial census and the *American Community Survey*, and the *Omaha Conditions Survey* (Center for Public Affairs Research, 1994, 2004).

➤ Focus Groups – In the second phase of data collection, in addition to the interviews discussed above, one focus group was held in each of the communities with board members and executive staff. (See *Appendix G* for focus group instrument.) The

focus groups were taped and summarized. Who moderates a focus group (Greenbaum, 2000) and the style of moderation (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Krueger & King, 1998) are important to the outcomes. The focus groups were moderated by the author. The considerations of time, money, and the experience of the researcher with facilitation made this a good choice. An open-ended, elicitive style, consistent with qualitative research methods, was used for moderating the groups. (See *Appendix H* for a complete list of those who participated in focus groups or interviews.) In the following chapters, data collected in the focus groups and interviews will refer to participants in both processes as “interviewees.” This will help to maintain anonymity of the participants.

➤ Observation – The author had opportunities in Phase 2 of the research to attend meetings of OACCH and have personal communication with stakeholders in OACCH.⁶ Creswell (2003) discusses the advantages and limitations of observation. Advantages relevant for this research include first hand experience of the researcher with the collaborative, timeliness of the data as it is observed in real-time as opposed to revealed in archival records, and the ability to observe unusual aspects of a morphing collaborative (p. 186). Limitations include that the researcher might be viewed by the participants as intrusive and that private information observed may not be appropriate for inclusion in the findings (p. 186). While ethical issues can arise in observation research

⁶ In January 2006, the author began full-time employment as the Director of Philanthropic Services for the Omaha Community Foundation. By that time, the data collection phase of the Omaha case study was nearly complete. By February, I completed the focus group with the leadership of OACCH and interviews with OACCH stakeholders. Throughout the whole process, I fully disclosed my role as employee of the Omaha Community Foundation, as well as researcher of OACCH. I discussed my employment and potential conflict in my researcher role with my dissertation committee and received approval to continue with the case studies I had undertaken. I believe that this unique position in the philanthropic field enhanced the insights I gained into both the community culture of Omaha and the cross-sectoral collaborative success of OACCH.

(de Vaus, 2001, p. 246), these have been consciously thought through and an attempt has been made to deal with the limitations. Yin (2003) also warns of potential problems in participant-observation data collection such as biasing the organization in a particular way, but that is often outweighed by the benefits of greater access to insights about decisions and “producing an ‘accurate’ portrayal of case study phenomenon” (p. 94).

To further increase the validity and reliability of the findings, there was a process called member checking that was used (Schwandt, 2001, p. 155; Creswell, 2003, p. 196). In both case studies, initial findings were presented to some of the key informants in both cities for feedback. The overwhelmingly positive feedback confirmed that the findings were correct. There were a some good suggestions – such as to change the words “right leader” and to provide more detail on a few points – but mostly there were confirmations that those to whom the findings were presented agreed with the main points.

The purpose of this research is to provide a “rich theoretical framework” (Yin, 2003, p. 47) and “achieve both more complex and fuller explanation of a phenomena” (de Vaus, 2001, p. 221) around the relationship of context and collaboration. The comparative case study methodology is an effective research design for the research questions explored. While the conclusions from this dissertation research process invite new research questions, as is appropriate for exploratory case studies (Yin, 2003, p. 6), there will be a significant contribution to the public administration field that the theory developed in this research made.

CHAPTER 4: FINDING AND ANALYSIS FOR CASE STUDY #1: OMAHA'S COMMUNITY CULTURE AND THE SUCCESS OF OACCH

This chapter will present the analysis and findings of the Omaha case study in the research undertaken. The primary research question – *How does community culture affect the success of community collaboratives?* – organizes the chapter into three sections. These three sections are: findings regarding the community culture of Portland which are drawn from a review of the literature, interviews and some media coverage; findings regarding the successes and challenges of the Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless, with particular attention to the question of how operating in the context of Omaha has been a factor, which are drawn from interviews, a focus group and some document review; and, the findings for the secondary research questions. First there are some descriptive statistics on Omaha included.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON OMAHA

A starting point for information on community culture in the form of descriptive data on the general population's social, income and education statistics is the U.S. Census Bureau data available online.⁷ Nebraska and Oregon are coincidentally two of only a small number of states included in a pilot project of the *American Community Survey*. Omaha and Portland can be easily compared demographically and socially, as can the counties in which they are situated, Douglas and Multnomah, respectively. These data provide an interesting statistical comparison of the two communities as background for an in-depth

⁷ All descriptive statistics used in this study are from the U.S. Census Bureau online data available at www.census.gov unless otherwise noted.

qualitative understanding of the cultures of the two cities based on interview data in the following sections.

The city of Omaha has a population of 373,215 while the metropolitan area has 716,998. Of that population, the racial and ethnic breakdown is: 77.4% white, 13.5% black or African American, 1.9% Asian, and 10.6% Latino or Hispanic (of any race) with 2.1% identifying themselves as two or more races. (See *Appendix I* for statistical comparison of Omaha and Portland.) The median household income is \$40,484 and 15.3% of individuals live below the poverty line. Housing statistics from the 2000 Census state that 57.6% of units in Omaha are owner-occupied while 42.4% are renter-occupied. This compared to the national average of 66.9% owner-occupied versus 33.1% renter-occupied.

While Omaha does have a diverse population, the housing patterns are more segregated than in Portland. Although the overall percentages of whites were similar in Omaha (77.4%) and Portland (79.5%), the concentration of whites was much greater at the census tract level in Omaha. In Omaha, the census tract with the highest percentage of white non-Hispanic had 98.1%, while in Portland it had 94.5%. However, the census tract with the lowest percentage of white non-Hispanic in Omaha had 5.9%, while in Portland it was 27.8%. The range from maximum concentration of whites to minimum concentration of whites was 92.2% in Omaha and 66.7% in Portland. So, Omaha has more census tracts with a very small percentage of white population than Portland.

The housing patterns of Omaha were commented on by a number of interviewees. One said “*There is a clear delineation. There’s North and South Omaha, then there’s*

Omaha.”⁸ Another said of the historic relationship between class and geography: “*South Omaha was where many ethnics were. Those were the working people. There have always been the Aksarben Ball people and then the hard working people. When those South Omaha people moved across Dodge, they’d really made it.*”

The history of Omaha is a history of immigrants. Many of the waves of immigrants in Omaha came in search of jobs in the railroad and meatpacking industries. Kratville (2002) writes about the advent of railroads in Omaha: “Railroading came to the Omaha, Nebraska and Council Bluffs, Iowa area when Abraham Lincoln met with General Grenville Dodge in the Iowa town in 1859 to discuss the best location for building a railroad west from the area” (p. 7). By 1869, the Union Pacific company had completed the railway westward and Council Bluffs and Omaha were the point connecting east and west. From that time until today, Kratville (2002) writes, “When you think Omaha, you think Union Pacific” (p. 9).

The other industry that built Omaha was meatpacking. Otis (2000) writes of the 19th century immigrants that “Once the news got out, the good pay of these slaughterhouses attracted hundreds of Europeans of every description, as well as African Americans recently freed from Southern slavery. Later on, folks from Latin America arrived at Omaha’s door to replace the Europeans as railroad and packing house laborers” (pp. 5-6). The statewide percentage of Latinos in Nebraska is 5.5%, or an estimated 120,000 residents, although there is a concentration of the Latino population in Omaha (Benjamin-Alvarado, 2006).

⁸ All quotes from interviews and focus groups will not identify the subject or date in order to maintain the promised anonymity of those who generously provided the data for this dissertation.

The changing demographics evident in the descriptive statistics of Omaha is a theme in the interview data as well. Many spoke about the influence that immigrants have had on the history and present of Omaha, especially the growing influence of Latinos in South Omaha.

- *“The exploding Hispanic population has changed Omaha so fast.”*
- *“The business leaders realized that there’s a huge market in the Latino community.”*
- *“One change in the last 10 years is in the demographics. There’s a huge Latino population. It was 98% Mexican and now is about 75% Mexican. Many are from Texas and Florida.”*
- *“The Latinos have economic buying power and huge political power.”*
- *“We need to accept the newcomers, especially because they take jobs none of us will do.”*

While the acknowledgment that immigrants, most recently Latinos in South Omaha, have been a great influence on the City’s community culture, these immigrants are aware of the tensions that exist. Some differences in how people are treated are bound up in persistent prejudices, as a Latino leader lamented, *“Yes, it’s different. Here is an example, the icebreaker at parties is ‘So, where’s your favorite Mexican restaurant?’ Or your car is stolen out of the parking lot and the first question by the police is, ‘Were you behind on your payments?’”* Other tensions are between North Omaha – the predominantly African American area – and South Omaha, or between politicians, such as former Mayor Hal Daub, and community leaders.

- *“While there is lots of willingness to engage South Omaha, there is lots of skepticism about engaging North Omaha. That’s because of failures in the past and a lack of understanding of who to involve there.”*
- *“When I would bring up South Omaha, Hal Daub would always say, ‘Here is what we did for the minority community.’ But it’s always North Omaha, the African American community. And I’d say, ‘That is different.’”*
- *“Hal Daub said to us, ‘You need to figure out who your leader is and then come back and talk to us.’ As if we could have just one leader.”*

So, the demographics of the population of Omaha has grown in numbers and diversity. As one interviewee summed it up, *“This is a siloed community.”* The opportunities and problems that diversity brings are but one important characteristic of Omaha’s community culture. In the next section, this will be explored further.

PHASE 1: OMAHA’S COMMUNITY CULTURE

In the literature review chapter, the concept of community culture was explored. There are three interrelated factors that inform the community culture of a particular place: social capital, community power and political history. Each of these factors constitute a section below for exploration of the community culture of Omaha. Many of those interviewed seemed to recognize the importance of community culture to understanding Omaha, as illustrated by this quote: *“The whole question of culture is really important. The habits, heroes and customs are important to understanding this town.”*

One of the broad frameworks discussed in the literature review that could be understood as synonymous with community culture is political culture. The descriptor that Elazar (1975) used for Nebraska generally and Omaha specifically was an individualistic-moralistic political culture (p. 31). This highlights a tension between the common belief, deep in the roots of Nebraska, that Elazar (1975) explains in the individualistic political culture that people create the good life when no outside entity prescribes what that life should be (p. 17) and the Progressive belief, also deep in the roots of Nebraska history, that the good life is created through public engagement in the commonwealth (p. 20).

One interviewee's quote illustrates well this individualistic political culture:

"There is a self-sufficient independence, a pioneer spirit. Arrive with nothing and build the good life. The attitude is, 'Do your own thing and don't get in my face.'" Recalling the historical roots of frontier Nebraska in order to shed light on the present was a frequent theme in the interviews. Often the theme was one of hard work and a can-do attitude.

- *"We grew up as a pioneer town on the frontier."*
- *"We're all relocated farmers. We know there are tasks at hand, but the goals are achievable."*
- *"There's always been a strong sense of 'We make our own destiny.'"*
- *"There's a pioneer mentality here. If you had anything, you'd share it. The Depression set our values both in Omaha and elsewhere."*

Another theme from the interview data that also ties back to Elazar's (1975) moralistic political culture was one of tolerance amid differences when it benefits the whole of civil society (p. 20). This theme also grew out of a sense of the history of Omaha and Nebraska. Kemmis (1990) writes about his native Montana, where this tension between those who might not usually associate with one another or even like each other, were forced to come together for barn-raising and calf-branding. Some interviewees mentioned that same pioneer spirit in Nebraska.

- *“There is a populist attitude in Nebraska, born of a tolerance of others. There's a 'live and let live' attitude.”*
- *“The Jews and Catholics and Protestants all mix very well. It goes back to the prairie – Who your neighbors are didn't matter, their religion or whatever. I still see that in Omaha. Your friends are your friends whether they're janitors or neurologists.”*

Another typology explored in the literature review comes from the “political ethos” of Banfield and Wilson (1963). In this framework, Omaha could historically be described as a private-regarding community in which ethnic groups “wanted favors, personal support, and influential legislators who could help neighborhoods” (p. 81). This reflects Omaha's predominantly working-class, immigrant culture in the 19th and first-half of the 20th century. And, although the working-class nature of the community has changed in the past 50 years (Dalstrom, 1997), the political ethos is still largely private-regarding. That private-regarding type of community is consistent with the demographics of an ethnically diverse, predominantly Catholic community (Banfield & Wilson, 1963,

p. 234) which was used to describe Omaha. As one interviewee said, *“It’s heavily Catholic. That goes back to the start of this City and continues to today.”* Describing the character of Omaha, another interviewee said, *“It is a conservative community. We expect people to work hard and measure up. That may have to do with our ethnic origins.”*

The ethnic, working-class roots of Omaha inform a pragmatic approach to the City’s problems. Efforts are, ultimately, measured by their outcomes or results. This is reflected quite clearly in the interview data.

- *“Omaha has a very ‘getting down to business’ attitude. Like, ‘I think you should have a strategic plan, be accountable, have specific outcomes.’ Here in Omaha the feeling is that you should be outcomes driven.”*
- *“The private sector wants to see good results from what they donate to. They measure success by positive outcomes. There is not as much public investment, but lots of private investment.”*
- *“Part of it is the rub between process and outcomes. Omaha is so outcomes driven.”*

The typologies discussed above – Elazar’s political culture and Banfield and Wilson’s political ethos – are two ways that community culture has been described by scholars. Another way used in this research is in the three sections that follow on social capital, community power and political history.

SOCIAL CAPITAL IN OMAHA

The definition of social capital used in this dissertation is: *Social capital is the networks of trust and the norms that exist in a community to be productively used by individuals and organizations.* There are three elements of this definition of social capital to highlight in anticipation of the analysis below. First is the idea that networks of trust exist in the community, the kinds of connections that can be used productively to get done things that cannot otherwise be done. The second is the idea of norms which are the unspoken rules and customs that, again, can be used productively to get done things that cannot otherwise be done. And third is that social capital, like economic or human capital, is available for productive uses in a community.

General comments from the interviews about trust characterized Omaha in both positive and negative ways. Some said that trust is a problem: *“There is tremendous mistrust that creates barriers to people getting involved.”* Others thought trust was not such a barrier, that trust was a positive factor that can be tapped to make things happen in Omaha: *“The Omaha way is that everybody comes together to address something.”*

Overwhelmingly, those interviewed spoke of networks of connectedness that exist in Omaha, often using terms like “big small town” and “tight relationships” to describe the community.

- *“This is still essentially a big small town. It’s not overly complex and the problems are not overwhelming, so people have hope.”*

- *“We are a large small town. The power structure here knows each other and basically supports each other. We can call the Mayor or Governor and we’ll actually get a call back.”*
- *“Relationships between the leadership is tight. We’re still a small enough community that corporate Omaha knows political Omaha very well. They are just a phone call away.”*
- *“In all sectors, the leaders see the need to work together and address the population served. All of these individuals have been here a long time. From the late ‘70s to the ‘90s, we were the same players.”*

Familiarity and trust does exist in Omaha in some circles, especially for those who are connected through professional, social, religious and educational networks. This could be described as parochial with opportunities and access to resources based on personal connections, which is consistent with Banfield and Wilson’s (1963) private regarding community in which culling favors from those in power is the *modus operandi*. This could also be described as the *bonding* social capital that serves as “sociological Super Glue” to bond a group together (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 2). In Putnam’s (1995) original essay on the decline of social capital in the U.S., he measured social capital through more traditional institutions such as church membership, service clubs and bowling leagues, a measurement methodology for which he was critiqued (Barber, 2000; Bennett, 1998). But in the Omaha interviews, these types of traditional institutions that foster within-group or bonding social capital were mentioned frequently by interviewees.

- *“There are sanctioned pathways. One pathway is through faith communities and this is a highly affiliated town. Lots of work takes place through churches. Another pathway is through service organizations like Rotary or Lions. Another is through volunteerism at work, like giving to the United Way or participating in a corporate run.”*
- *“This is a faith-based town, highly affiliated. It has Roman Catholic roots and a strong base of evangelicals. This has the highest per capita giving of any Jewish Federation in the U.S. People shy away from single actions because it would not be ‘humble in the eyes of the Lord’ to take credit.”*

However, the *bridging* social capital that serves as “sociological WD-40” (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 2) to create meaningful relationships between groups is not always prevalent in Omaha. In a previous research project (McNamara, 2003) focus group data collected by the author from Omaha residents active in community collaboration revealed a strong sense that Omaha was “fractional” or “very fragmented” supporting the proposition that bridging social capital is not at a high level. For some this creates a feeling of being an outsider, which was a common theme in the interview data collected in this dissertation research.

- *“If you graduated from Creighton or UNO, you have a pair of wings around you that will help you get connected. That makes it more difficult for outsiders, unless you’re bringing a lot of money to invest in the community.”*
- *“Omaha is not as homogeneous as one might think. It is so factionalized here.”*

- *“If you’re a white male and want to get involved – that’s the qualifier – then it’s easy.”*
- *“Immigration has been a big part of our city’s history. While it’s easy to get involved here, it is not for outsiders.”*
- *“Outsiders have to be careful when they first come here. You have to learn the leadership and the dynamics of the community.”*

Other interviewees mentioned the bonding social capital in Omaha and the familiarity that grows out of these tight within-group networks in a little different light. Where one attended high school was mentioned as an important point of reference which could label one as an insider and, subsequently, reveal one’s economic and social standing.

- *“The first question people will ask is, ‘Where did you go to high school?’ Even if you grew up here and say you went to Tech High School, there’s an impression people get. ‘Oh, you didn’t go to Westside or Duchesne?’”*
- *“Regarding that sense of place, a friend said to me, ‘This is a high school town.’ We have this internalized inferiority complex here, so I said, ‘What do you mean?’ And he said that the first thing people ask is ‘Where did you go to high school?’ It’s a resource monitor.”*

The inferiority complex that many Omahans had was a theme that other interviewees also mentioned. While some saw this as a negative, others saw this internalized inferiority as a motivation to strive to be better.

- *“There’s an inferiority complex with not being Chicago, not New York, not some big city. Then these guys get back from their world travels and say, ‘Oh, we’ve got to have that in Omaha.’”*
- *“These public – private partnerships will be very important in Omaha in the 21st century. Maybe it’s because we don’t have mountains and oceans, but there is a real psychological need to be number one. That’s why the football team is so damn important. We want to be world class.”*
- *“There’s a pride in Omaha. People want to make Omaha the very best. It wants to be the best in the country. So, people are brought in who have a broader perspective.”*
- *“There’s a sense – along with our inherent inferiority complex – that we can still get things done here.”*

This inferiority complex is changing. Omaha is a place that people are taking more pride in, which can be characterized as the growing “cool” factor. This was frequently mentioned in interviews and has also been increasingly apparent in the popular media. In an article in a high-end urban culture magazine, *Metropolis*, the author wrote about how Omaha has become a cultural destination that attracts a young professional and creative class workforce (Zacks, 2006, September). Kurt Anderson, a native Omahan, author and host of National Public Radio show *Studio 360*, recently wrote in the *New York Times*, “In short, Omaha’s cultural moment is all about the application of the great Midwestern bourgeois virtues – thrift, square dealing, humility, hard work – to bohemian artistic projects. On this, everyone agrees” (Andersen, 2007, March 25). No longer is

Omaha thought of as just a nice family town and this is due, to some degree, to the changing physical and social environments, as reflected in the interview data.

- *“The biggest change in Omaha has happened in the past five years. Before that we were an apologetic city, like: ‘Well, it’s a nice place to raise kids.’ Now we have a cocky, can-do attitude: ‘You’re damn right I’m from Omaha.’ Before we would drive visitors through downtown as fast as possible. Now, we’re proud to show off Old Market and the Riverfront.”*
- *“In the last 10 years, Omaha is more a point of destination for people outside the city. It’s no longer just a good place to raise a family.”*
- *“This is a town that’s learned to dream about itself again. No longer do we just say, ‘We have no mountains or ocean, but this is a nice place to raise a family.’”*
- *“We got over the confidence crisis.”*
- *“Recently I was at the Homey Inn and a trendy 25-year old kid said, ‘I never thought I’d say this, but Omaha is turning into a cool town.’”*

While the cool factor has grown, the Midwest down-to-earth quality of the people was still mentioned by many. This is the second idea to explore growing out of the definition of social capital. The norms or unspoken rules in Omaha are that people will be friendly, nice and live rather conservatively. Omaha is the home to multi-billionaire investor, Warren Buffett, the second richest man in the world (Cantrell, 2006, June 26), who lives in the Dundee neighborhood near the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The expectation of friendliness and respect was mentioned frequently, such as, *“People are generally friendly”* and *“In the Midwest, the kindness is always there. We don’t operate*

from a cut-throat mentality, even if we don't always agree with people. We're considerate" and "There have been leaders who threw money at things but didn't respect the people. Respect is important here."

Parallel to that Midwestern niceness is a conservative norm that translates into pressure to live traditional lifestyles. Traditional lifestyles were mentioned in different ways in the interview data, but a theme was that to rise to a level of influence in Omaha, you needed to live within certain constraints.

- *"To earn your stripes you need to have a traditional lifestyle, either a husband with long-standing connections to the community, a debutant at Aksarben, or independent wealth."*
- *"I discovered that Omaha had a very conservative culture and was resistant to change. They love to talk in progressive terms, but in reality they don't like change."*

Another aspect of this conservative culture is the risk avoidance that cuts across all sectors. Again, this norm was mentioned in different ways, but was a consistent theme.

- *"Both the City and the corporate community are risk adverse."*
- *"The corporate community here is very comfortable. They don't like to get involved in things that are controversial."*
- *"The nonprofit sector is very adverse to controversy. They don't want to take risks because they don't want to lose money."*

- *“Omaha portrays that it is changing, but it’s not. I heard at a Chamber of Commerce presentation they gave for a not-for-profit award: ‘We had to play it safe and give it to someone who’s integrated and well-respected in the community. Maybe in a few years we can give it to some nontraditional agency.’”*

One of the results of the conservative norm of the city is that public debate is stifled. The norm is to simply avoid all controversy. A longtime community activist described in general terms this lack of public debate: *“Omaha brings the flavor of small town America to it. People are not used to being engaged in these things in public because those you debate today, you sit next to in the pews or buy shoes from tomorrow.”* Others spoke about this controversy-avoidance by citing the example of the conflict over school district boundaries in the greater Omaha area. The worry of bad publicity about a public controversy motivated Omaha business leaders to get involved (Robb, 2006, April 9). Interviewees also commented on this.

- *“I’m worried now about the publicity we are getting for the One School One Community.”*
- *“The whole school district controversy is an example of the same-ol’-same-ol’. The unwillingness to engage in public debate about the segregation of the city and the schools. Then the corporate community makes a statement at the last minute that ‘this is bad for business.’”*
- *“One City One School is an example of not consulting the public. But when the business leaders said, ‘Omaha will not be known for this bullshit,’ then there was a move toward some solution.”*

The intervention by business leaders in the public debate about school boundaries was seen by most who commented on it as an attempt by the powerful to avert an image problem for the City of Omaha. The community power that rests with that business community is explored in the section below. However, there is genuine concern for the betterment of the community by many of those corporate leaders.

This relates to the third idea to explore from the definition of social capital; how social capital can be productively tapped for use in the community. A number of interviewees commented on this in the context of the tight within-group or bonding social capital. For instance, the close relationships between community leaders from all sectors are useful in successful projects.

- *“It’s a small city, but there are lots of successful businesses. People know each other here and I think that makes for great collaborative relationships.”*
- *“I think that the three sectors get along amazing well. There’s an awareness by each of the tools, expertise and resources that each can make available. There’s respect and that leads to trust. This leads to success in any project they take on.”*

There is also, partly because of a high degree of satisfaction with living in the Omaha area, a productive result measured in charitable giving. One source of information on Omaha’s community culture is the *Omaha Conditions Survey* (Center for Public Affairs Research, 1994, 2004). This random survey of 800 individuals in the metropolitan area was conducted in 1991, 1993, 1994, and 2004. Of those surveyed, 86.3% said that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “The Omaha area is an ideal place to live” (2004). The 2004 *Omaha Conditions Survey* included a question on charitable

giving which is frequently used in social capital measurement (Putnam, 2001). Drozd (n.d.) writes that “More than eight out of ten respondents (85.5 percent) said they contributed annually to charitable causes” (p. 1). Local religious organizations and congregations received charitable contributions most often (80.3%), followed by local human and social service organizations (65.3%) (p. 3).

Omaha can be described as high in bonding social capital. There is general trust between those within groups and the norms that exist are to be personally conservative and respectful, living a traditional lifestyle with some more recent allowance for the emerging cool factor. This social capital is used productively to inspire corporate executives to play community leadership roles and a high rate of citizens to give back to the community through charitable contributions.

COMMUNITY POWER IN OMAHA

Community power is *a group's ability to use resources to achieve desired results*, as discussed in the literature review chapter. The classic debate between elite theory and pluralist theory is one framework for understanding community power. Larsen and Cottrell (1997) write of the elite leadership of Omaha in the 1980s that “knowledgeable sources called them ‘The Big Five’” (p. 270). These five – Leo Daly, the architect, V. J. Skutt, Mutual of Omaha executive, Willis Strauss, Northern Natural Gas chairman, John Kenefick, Union Pacific president, and Jack McAllister, Northwestern Bell Telephone president – “represent a rationalizing of community decision-making” and “appeared to have control over affairs” (p. 270). And an interviewee recognized the history of private sector leadership by a few men in every collaborative: “*You look at every major*

collaboration in the past and there is always some business leader at the forefront. We are fortunate to have six or seven business leaders who do that.” Another echoed that *“The common denominator in all successful collaboration is the business community. Because there is that philanthropic engagement, the business community has legitimacy in this city.”* And another, depicted the weakening of the public sector with the strong rise of the private sector funding, *“Omaha has a history of being an aberration. Partly because we’ve had so many entrepreneurs who made their money here, they’ve taken over the things that government does.”*

The interviewees believed that in Omaha decisions are controlled by a small number – six or ten or twelve – of white male corporate executives who are the elite. This was mentioned either directly or indirectly in nearly every interview, then validated in every presentation of initial findings in Omaha.

- *“Generally, over the years, the major community decisions have been made by people in the corporate sector, the Captains of Industry. It’s the gang of 6 or 10 or whatever.”*
- *“On the surface it’s changed, but I’m not really sure it’s changed in its core. There are still the major players around who run this city.”*
- *“There’s a perception that the city is controlled by a few people and input from the human services community is not valued. There are a few community leaders that drive decisions in our community.”*
- *“It’s the five or ten white males who all sit on boards, run the corporations and are very community-minded.”*

This elite control was not viewed as a negative by most. The benefits mentioned include clarity in knowing whether a project will be successful. One interviewee put it bluntly, *“Personally, I’d rather work with five or six guys rather than a broader group. It’s easier to ask them, ‘Will this happen?’ and they say ‘Yes’ or ‘No.’”* Another benefit is that when a member of the elite serves as a champion for a cause or organization, that ensures success. *“You can get involved, but getting into the inner sanctum is more difficult. You need someone who will champion your cause.”*

Another benefit mentioned was that the elite know the value of partnering with others and that it wants Omaha to be successful.

- *“I was among the critics of the 12 corporate leaders, but the good thing about them was that they realized you need to have all sectors be strong to be successful. That model introduced us to public-private partnerships. There were benefits shown.”*
- *“There’s a real control game going on in this town. The big boys who are making the decisions, they like to get things done. In Omaha things are still doable. It’s a question of us marshalling the right resources.”*

The elite maintain control through tight social and business networks as discussed in the social capital section above. Stories were told in the interviews about how people have broken into or fallen out of the elite circles of influence. One interviewee told a story to illustrate how important relationships are in Omaha. He prefaced his story with the old fundraising mantra, *“People don’t give to causes, they give to people.”* After trying for years to get a donation from the Omaha World-Herald Foundation for a

nonprofit on whose board sat this man, the board decided to add a friend of John Gottschalk, the editor of the *Omaha World-Herald*. He and Gottschalk's friend scheduled a meeting with Gottschalk which they had not been able to do up to that point. When they arrived for the meeting, the friend and Gottschalk talked at length about fishing trips they had taken together which were depicted in framed pictures on the wall. The next week the Omaha World-Herald Foundation sent them a \$50,000 check. "*Personal relationships matter in this town,*" the interviewee concluded with great emphasis.

Another interviewee told a story about how he had made a choice that left him out of the relationships with the elite in Omaha. He said, "*Those guys socialize together. Like when I was invited to their duck blind and turned them down, I was never treated as an insider again.*"

Many interviewees described the elite in Omaha as heterosexual, white, Christian men. Women in leadership positions are rare in Omaha. A report by the Women's Fund of Greater Omaha makes this point with statistics about women in positions of power. An article about the report summed it up: "Yet the city's power base – its boardrooms, executive suites, civic posts – remains decidedly in the hands of men, an inequity that could hamper Omaha's future, community leaders of both sexes say" (Nygren, 2007, April 10, p. 1A). Interviewees agreed.

- "*This is still very much a man's town. The glass ceiling is welded in place. I let people know it is so easy to be a Girl Scout leader and it comes back ten-fold. I don't think the boys have got that yet. There's an elephant in the dining room.*"

- *“There are folks that would like to see it change because there’s this notion that good ol’ boys make things happen in Omaha. There’s no good ol’ girls here. Some don’t see us as race and gender diverse.”*
- *“The leadership clique here has been white male.”*
- *“Perception is that you can’t be a leader in your own right if you’re black.”*

Comments were made about how the elite power works in the African American community similarly to how it works in the white power structure. Although it is not explored at length in this dissertation, this parallels the findings by Hunter (1953) that the black community in Atlanta also had its own elite community power structure. Of Omaha, interviewees said:

- *“The money folks are who you need to get something done. There’s a parallel in the black community. You have to know the professional class.”*
- *“Both black and white communities were closed communities. It was hard to get involved if you didn’t know someone in the professional class. You could get involved in the civil rights movement through the Churches, but civic affairs you had to know the right people.”*

The one requirement for being part of the elite in whichever racial or ethnic community is to have money. While just money is not enough – the ultimate criterion is being connected to the networks of influence which may parallel the networks of wealth – many interviewees mentioned one’s economic status as important in Omaha.

- *“Power in this community is economically driven. Power is money.”*

- *“Money is power. I think that the Nebraska culture is based on an amazing work ethic that goes back to the fact that Nebraska was a pioneer community. Read any Omaha history and it is rough and tumble. People work here, they like making money and wealth is power.”*

There was also the distinction made by some interviewees between those who made and those who inherited money. You are definitely more respected if you have made your own money. This is true when these corporate leaders go to others to support their projects.

- *“People who make their money and who earn it are respected by others who’ve done that. Think about Walter Scott and the Qwest Center or John Gottschalk and the Holland Center. These are people who’ve made their money then gone to others who’ve made their money. Very few people are of inherited wealth.”*
- *“There’s a difference between the nouveau riche and the old rich.”*

Those who do have money feel an obligation to give back to the community in Omaha. Omaha is a highly philanthropic community (Beals, 2007) and the generosity, especially among those who have wealth, was a definite theme in the interviews.

- *“There’s lots of wealth and it’s a very generous town. There is an expectation to give.”*
- *“There is a large amount of money that flows to nonprofits from the elites.”*
- *“I think Omaha is blessed in that the corporate leaders realize they must invest back into the community.”*

- *“There’s this noblesse oblige here. Accumulating lots of money and not doing anything with it is unacceptable in Omaha.”*
- *“We’ve had a tradition of hometown boys being in control of the banks, insurance, railroads, utilities. But there’s a sense of noble oblige. Even if the corporation gave, it is still the individual who must give.”*

Beyond just financial giving, there is a more general sense of service to the community by the corporate leaders (Beals, 2007). This was one of the clearest themes growing out of the research. Many interviewees cited examples of how Omaha’s community culture promotes this ethic of civic service.

- *“Corporate leaders are pressured to be civically engaged. If you are a titan, there are expectations that you will give back. You will become head of Boy Scouts, be on the Board of Creighton University and you will head the United Way campaign.”*
- *“People think that Walter Scott and Ken Stinson and a well-organized business community make decisions. They come from a strong ethic of giving back to the civic community. There is a class of people who are active in the community.”*
- *“The culture of this community is giving back. There is going to be someone from the large corporations who steps up. They have the resources and leadership skills. Here in Omaha there is an expectation that this is just what corporate leaders do.”*
- *“If you were the CEO of U.P. or Mutual or Kiewit or Enron or the banks, you had to serve. They were the people who oversaw the major cultural institutions.”*

- *“One constant is a successful and driven business community that cares about the city. The business leaders are really engaged in the community. Peter Kiewit, U.P., Mutual, Berkshire all have a home-grown commitment to Omaha.”*
- *“Peter Kiewit is a good example of giving back to the community. He was a rock-ribbed Presbyterian and there’s an ethic to give back.”*
- *“The City relies heavily on those people in business to get things done. Maybe business people just expect to get called on when they are needed to step up for this City.”*
- *“There is a culture of civic service. It is honorable to serve the city even if you never run for office.”*
- *“The Knights of Aksarben have diminished over the years, but still the civic involvement is prized. People who rise to the top of the pyramid have an ethic and resources to give back. ”*

One of the most frequently mentioned organizations whenever the question of elite leadership comes up is Aksarben. Aksarben – Nebraska spelled backwards – was formed in 1895 “to promote patriotism among the citizens” (Olson, 1966, p. 255) and was the vehicle for planning and securing funds for the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition of 1898 in Omaha. Later, Aksarben acquired the horse race track on what was then the western edge of the city. “Sponsoring an annual racing meet was but one of Ak-Sar-Ben’s functions, for the organization conducted a livestock show, granted scholarships, brought prominent entertainers and other family attractions to town, and carried on other civic activities” (Dalstrom, 1988, p. 113).

The proceeds from the horse racing track and other operations which were owned by Aksarben were used for charitable purposes. But the real power rested in the social networks of the Knights of Aksarben. These leaders of business and politics were the unquestioned elite at one point in time. To be crowned the King of the mythical Kingdom of Quivira at the annual Aksarben Ball – and have a Queen who is the 20-something year old daughter of a prominent family of Omaha – was the “ultimately social reward” (Larsen & Cottrell, 1997, p. 258). Many interviewees mentioned the history of the Omaha elite all having Aksarben connections.

- *“The Aksarben Board of Governors became the extreme civic and political powerhouse in Omaha. Just look at that Board and compare the members to corporate or civic organization boards and it’s the same people. This was a close-knit group who also served on other boards and socialized together.”*
- *“Go back and look at the Kings of Aksarben and you see the power. It’s not like the Trilateral Commission, but more of a collegial organization that they all belong to. Primarily it is a charitable organization.”*
- *“It is sort of like a pyramid. The City has a history of strong corporate leadership at the top. The extraordinary examples of this are the Aksarben Board of Governors. They’ve always had the power.”*

While Aksarben was frequently mentioned as home to the elite at one point in Omaha’s history, the elite has evolved over time. The City’s founding can be traced to the middle of the 19th century. As Bristow (2002) writes: “But the Omaha of 1854, the Omaha of 1900, and the Omaha of today differ so radically from each other that they can

hardly be thought of as one city” (p. xiii). The second half of the 19th century saw Omaha evolve from a dusty trading post across the river from the established city of Council Bluffs, Iowa, to a frontier town where gambling, drinking and prostitution were the greatest attractions (Bristow, 2002).

In the early 20th century, “Old Man” Tom Dennison ran the political machine in Omaha (Menard, 1989). This period of history will be explored more in the section on political leadership later in this chapter. By the mid-20th century, after World War II, a business elite emerged in Omaha that sought to counterbalance the legacy of machine politics. Omaha’s top corporate leaders made up what was referred to by one journalist in 1966 as the “Twenty Influentials” (Larsen & Cottrell, 1997, p. 256; Daly-Bednarek, 1992, p. 190). These twenty white men were the elite that held power to make community decisions. This analysis of Omaha’s power structure parallels the work of elite theory author Floyd Hunter (1953) who wrote about the forty members of the elite who ran Atlanta in the early 1950s. The elite has changed over time – from “boss” Dennison to the Knights of Aksarben to the corporate “six-pack” of today – but Omaha has a community culture that always looked to a centrally controlled decision-making system, as illustrated by this quote: *“I believe that communities have this muscle-memory. If you do it over and over again, then it becomes automatic. And Omaha’s muscle-memory is that we are addicted to a group of people who know-better, addicted to a centrally controlled system. The results are not inherently negative, but it does affect the strength of our institutions.”*

Frequently mentioned in interviews as the elite of the mid-20th century, were the Big Five discussed earlier. Frequently mentioned names of the current elite leadership include John Gottschalk, Walter Scott, Mike Yanney, and Ken Stinson, as observed by this interviewee: *“The first level of leadership is the four guys who run Omaha – Gottschalk, Scott, Yanney and Stinson.”* Although the names of the current elite differed a bit depending on the interviewee, the one name that everyone mentioned was Walter Scott, retired CEO of Kiewit Construction. Many told stories about him.

- *“Ten years ago, it was the 100th anniversary of Aksarben. They put on a show at the Omaha Playhouse about the history of Aksarben. It ended with all the Knights of Aksarben on stage faced with some big decision and everybody is whispering ‘What shall we do?’ Then Dick Boyd, the actor, pops his head up and says, ‘I know, let’s go ask Walter!’ Now that was very telling about the power structure of Omaha.”*
- *“One community leader told me, ‘The reason I like to serve on a committee with Walter is because I know it won’t fail.’”*
- *“There was a former city councilman, John Miller, who was working on some economic development issue at the Chamber. I met with him about some of the work we were doing and he says, ‘Have you met with Walter Scott? You can’t do something like this in this town without meeting with Walter Scott.’”*

While there may be a muscle-memory of central control of decisions for the Omaha community, there also must be mechanisms to exert that control. The use of philanthropy to maintain elite control has been critiqued by public administration

scholars (Eikenberry, 2007, pp. 182-183) and by foundation executives (Fleishman, 2007). How is elite control maintained in Omaha? One of the benevolent mechanisms for this control is the group called Heritage Services. On each project undertaken by Heritage Services, one of the board members takes the lead on asking community leaders for donations. The Heritage Services board “consists of many of Omaha’s most influential leaders” including Walter Scott, former Peter Keiwi Sons’ chairman, Ken Stinson, current Peter Keiwi Sons’ chairman, Charles Durham, founding member of the engineering firm HDR, Mike McCarthy, founder of McCarthy Group, John Gottschalk, *Omaha World-Herald* publisher, Charles Heider, investor, Richard Bell, HDR chairman, and Mike Yanney, founder of America First Companies (Kotok, 2006, October 19, p. 1A). Through this organization, the elite funders in Omaha exert control over what projects are endorsed and ultimately successful.

- *“The Heritage group – when they decide something is going to get done, it will.”*
- *“Gottschalk said to me one day, ‘Heritage Services is the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval for all fundraising for projects.’ There are six or seven members of that board who decide what projects go. They control not just personal resources, but influence over others. There are some people who just won’t give unless asked by those guys.”*
- *“Decisions come from one of these individual leaders, taking their turns. One person makes a gift or calls in a favor from a politician. Decisions start with one individual then he calls in the chits for others.”*

Another tool used by the elite to maintain control and influence is the press, in particular the newspapers. There were three major papers in the Dennison-era of the early 20th century – the *Omaha Bee*, which was pro-Dennison; the *Omaha News*, which was anti-Dennison; and the *Omaha World-Herald*, which was neutral – but there is only one today. In October of 1962, the construction company magnate Peter Kiewit bought the *Omaha World-Herald* to keep it from falling into the hands of publishing mogul S. I. Newhouse. The local ownership of the *Omaha World-Herald* was maintained with 20% owned by the Peter Kiewit Foundation and 80% by employees, with the restriction that the company could not be sold without agreement of the foundation (Fogarty, 1993, p. 100). Darlstrom (1988) writes about the influence that Peter Kiewit, as owner of the *Omaha World-Herald*, had over the politics of the 1960s and 1970s: “The *World-Herald*, since 1937 Omaha’s only daily paper, staunchly reflected the views of Omaha’s business leaders and symbolized the elite” (p. 131). Many interviewees mentioned how John Gottschalk, the current publisher, has influenced Omaha politics.

- *“When Hal Daub lied about the cost of helicopters and the Omaha World-Herald brought in a lie-detector, that was all John Gottschalk. Think about how strong the leadership of the press is there.”*
- *“Remember that most of the money here is what I call ‘civic republican’ money. They vote republican, but they are still interested in social justice. Just look at the Omaha World-Herald editorial policy.”*

- *“Today, the influence of the Omaha World-Herald is very great. It has a strong voice in the power structure of Omaha, especially through the influence of Gottschalk, the editor.”*
- *“John Gottschalk was sort of a new leader. He wasn’t the old six-pack. He did have a position with a company, but John did his homework and understood others.”*

With this strong central control of decisions being the default for Omaha’s community power for over 100 years, there is a question about what will happen in the future. Some did not seem worried about the future: *“The importance of corporate leadership in the community has not changed. That’s a good thing because it keeps Omaha steady.”* But the anxiety about who will be the future leaders once the elite of today move on was mentioned by many interviewees.

- *“The private sector leaders were the decision makers. But what happens when they leave the scene. Peter Kiewit did a lot to mentor Walter Scott. And Walter did a lot to mentor Ken Stinson. But what happens next. That worries me.”*
- *“The next five years will tell us whether Omaha will change because the heir apparents take over. We don’t know whether that philanthropic gene has passed on.”*
- *“What happens when Walter or Warren pass on. One can only hope that the \$40 billion estate when Warren dies will stay and benefit Omaha. The numbers are staggering. If you don’t include Buffett, there is still \$20 billion going here.”*

- *“It’s changing in part because we’ve had a transition of leadership. Bill Strauss is gone. Walter Scott is going and he’s named his heir, David Scott, but he didn’t earn his money, so he’s a different person. Harper is gone. He built ConAgra and now who’s going to take the leadership there. Holland is old. There’s going to be a different dynamic.”*

This anxiety is not just about who will take the leadership positions, but how the control of decisions will happen. Will the central control of decisions still be the community’s modus operandi? Interviewees answered this question in different ways.

- *“There just aren’t the six-pack that there used to be. The Chamber and Aksarben are no longer the powers they used to be. Even the Heritage Services board, many of them are not living in Omaha anymore.”*
- *“The business leadership is changing. It’s no longer five white men. The next generation of business leadership looks different, more global and more women.”*
- *“Who’s coming up? Who is the next generation of leaders. It’s not a matter of training. You can’t decide it. They just emerge.”*
- *“Mutual, Omaha World-Herald, Kiewit, First National Bank. These are homegrown companies. These businesses have tapped leaders who will be the next generation of leaders for Omaha. They stay connected to the community. There is a responsibility to make Omaha a better place.”*

The leadership elite in Omaha are definitely drawn from the private sector. And not the owners of small businesses, but executives of large corporations that are based in Omaha. The transition from a local economy based on the railroad and meat-packing

industry to an economy driven by the service industry transformed the culture of Omaha (Daly-Bednarek, 1992, p. 191). Dalstrom (1997) writes that “Omaha’s transition from a blue-collar to a white-collar community, which started in the 1950s, continued through the late twentieth century to bring about a ‘new Omaha’” (p. 297). What this new Omaha looks like is a corporate city, built on the strengths of telecommunication, quality-of-life for business leaders and their families, and a favorable environment for the private sector with low taxation for large corporations who bring jobs and investment. The passage of Legislative Bill 775 in 1987, with its huge tax breaks for corporations, is credited with keeping the Omaha-based Fortune 500 Company, ConAgra, in the state (p. 304) and providing the anchor tenant for what has become a boom of development near the Missouri River. Other Fortune 500 companies in Omaha include Warren Buffett’s holding company Berkshire Hathaway, Union Pacific Railroad, Mutual of Omaha insurance company, and Peter Kiewit and Sons construction company.

In an earlier research project by the author, focus group data reveal a clear theme that the impression of the culture of Omaha was “corporate” (McNamara, 2003). In another study (Omaha Community Foundation, 1999) of Omaha done by a consultant hired by the Omaha Community Foundation, a similar conclusion was reached: “*Ronnie Brooks’ philanthropy study showed a strong business sector, but not strong government.*”

Interviewees for this dissertation frequently depicted Omaha as a corporate city. And the political leaders who don’t defer to the corporate elite – former U.S. Congressman and Omaha Mayor Hal Daub was mentioned as an example – are ultimately run out of office.

- *“I think the culture of Omaha is that the private sector has a pretty tight grip on the public sector. And they’ve used that to control the agenda. Hal Daub is a good example of how that breaks down. Because he has the personality he does, he couldn’t be controlled by those guys.”*
- *“You get a strong mayor like Hal Daub and he butts heads with the lever holders, the business leaders. And they end up rejecting their own. You see, the leaders decide what issues to take on. There is an illness in our community. It unintentionally stifles the more democratic institutions that might balance the corporate leaders.”*
- *“The corporate leaders were at the top. That’s still pretty evident. They had a vision and knew it was important to involve other elements of the community. They were always caring for the major nonprofit cultural organizations. They determined who that corporate leadership would be and exerted power over policy issues.”*
- *“After we lost Enron to Houston, the Chamber brought in Ross Boyle to do an economic study of the city. His conclusion was that Omaha is not a city of entrepreneurs, but a corporate city.”*

The community power of Omaha can be summed up as elite control by corporate leaders. While the question of how this will evolve in the future has been on the minds of many, the “muscle-memory” of the community’s centrally controlled decision-making anticipates that more of the same will take place. The elite community power structure, while widely recognized, was not widely condemned. There is much fluidity between the

private and public sectors (at least to elected office) so the political history of Omaha has many of the same themes and players as the evolving community power explored in this section.

POLITICAL HISTORY IN OMAHA

The political history factor of community culture has three specific indicators: citizen participation, land-use planning and political leadership. Each indicator will be explored below.

Citizen Participation

Many interviewees commented on the ease of being involved in community groups, nonprofits or faith-based organizations – especially if you are from Omaha and fit a particular type – which may parallel Arnstein’s (1969) lower rungs on the ladder of participation. However, for citizen participation to occur on higher rungs of ladder, public administrators must welcome and consciously create avenues for it, and citizens must expect and actively pursue it. One interviewee said, *“It is relatively easy to work with government, but there are some barriers. Government officials can have the attitude that citizen participation stops them from doing their jobs. It’s easy for government officials to say, ‘I’m not interested in engaging with that community because it will take more time.’”*

Whether because of public administrators’ attitudes, elites’ exclusionary networks, citizens’ expectations, or a combination, interviewees agreed about the impossibility of getting involved at the highest levels of decision-making in Omaha. This

would support the conclusions from the previous section that community power rests with the business elite.

- *“There are a lot of organizations that citizens can get involved in. But at the higher level, it is not possible. There are minor and major boards, then there are the elite league boards. There’s a high level of control at the elite level.”*
- *“It is pretty easy to get involved in this community. But it is mostly in nonprofits or religious organizations.”*
- *“It’s easy for people to get involved if they have money or a high profile job with a corporation or university. It’s harder for the up and coming young person to get involved. There are invisible enclosures which are mostly relational.”*
- *“I think it’s very easy to get involved. But for someone who is a little more liberal, it may seem like you are on the outside.”*
- *“I don’t think it’s easy. Maybe easier for the neighborhood routes. When I moved here, it was hard to get involved. If you’re from here, you know the organizations and maybe it’s easier.”*

Volunteering for neighborhood boards or activist community groups like Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) was seen as easier than being appointed to public commissions or elected to political office. Again, this supports the conclusion from earlier sections that high bonding social capital means Omahans are connected through social networks of similar people and that the power structure in Omaha does not allow much entry for newcomers.

- *“I think there are barriers if you don’t step forward yourself. Things don’t just fall in your lap. Politics is more difficult. But for community involvement there is access.”*
- *“On neighborhood associations, you have to be resourceful enough to find out about them then be willing to go to meetings. But if you want to be appointed to a commission it’s harder. Those appointing tend to appoint the people they know.”*
- *“It is easier to get involved in OTOC, if that is the type of civic involvement you want. But they’ll never be accepted within the Omaha power structure.”*
- *“I’ve never lived anywhere that is easier to get involved. But getting elected to office has particular barriers. The City Council and State Senate doesn’t pay well, so that is a deterrent for people to run.”*

The diversity of Omaha, mentioned in many ways including group relations, power and decision-making, is a topic that many interviewees discussed. But race is a difficult subject in many circles, as illustrated by this interview quote: *“Omaha treats the minority community with kid-gloves.”* A recent series of articles in the *Omaha World-Herald* dealt with this difficult issue, reporting, “Among America’s 100 largest metro areas, Omaha has the third-highest black poverty rate. Worse yet, its percentage of black children in poverty ranks No. 1 in the nation, with nearly six of 10 black kids living below the poverty line” (Cordes, Gonzalez & Grace, 2007, April 15, p. 1A).

Some thought that there were places where Omahans of all sorts can be found together, as this quote illustrates: *“Heartland of America Park is the one place where all people mix: black, white, Latinos, rich, poor, young and old.”* But Omaha is a segregated

city, as revealed in the statistical data examined at the beginning of this chapter, interview data and two Harvard University reports that “looking at the 100 largest U.S. cities ranked Omaha 40th and 45th in segregation of blacks” (Cordes, Gonzalez & Grace, 2007, April 15, p. 8A). One of the reasons for the segregated housing patterns, documented above in the statistics of the racial mix in different census tracts, is the history of race relations in Omaha (Larsen & Cottrell, 1997, p. 272). The perceptions of different parts of the City are quite clear. North Omaha is the predominantly African American section. South Omaha has seen waves of immigrants come through over the last 100 years, but today is where the majority of Latinos live. And West Omaha is mostly white.

- *“We are remarkably segregated. Visitors from other cities see this.”*
- *“It may be that your realtor won’t show black people your home. I’m a realist and I realize that blacks are not invited.”*
- *“Black people are not just dark white people. We live in two different worlds. We may work together, buy together, but our worlds are different.”*

Some interviewees thought this segregation and discrimination was quite conscious, while others thought the segregation was the result of disunity, especially in the black community.

- *“Omaha’s greatest virtue is its stability. When you’re white and middle-class, you lose sight of the fact that others exist.”*
- *“The corporations give to the Urban League so that blacks will stay in their neighborhoods.”*

- *“Opportunities for shopping, entertainment, for education and employment are all different for people of color. It’s more covert now than it what it was. But I know people who still get watched while shopping or pulled over by the police. Look at the board of any corporation or upper management of any corporation, blacks just aren’t there.”*
- *“We have a shield in assisting the African American community. Because they are so fractured, the African American community is not so powerful a force.”*

Some interviewees said the corporate elite, often through philanthropic investments and corporate hiring and promotion practices, perpetuate the status quo of a segregated community.

- *“I sometimes perceive that there is a small group of community leaders who think that they know what’s best for the community. They will support the high-end, the arts. But it’s harder for the John Beasley Theater or the new Love Center for the Arts. I think that race is involved in that. For all it’s generosity and insight, the Omaha giving community looks at the face of need as a face of color.”*
- *“The Omaha community views the people of color as, ‘What role do they play? What position do they have in a corporation? How successful is their business?’ Right now it is popular to develop programs to assist the Latino community.”*
- *“Latinos are stuck at the middle manager level. Omaha is letting them know they’re not quite ready yet. They keep us where we have a place at the table, but it’s not a visible position. It’s because we don’t vote, so there’s no return for their money.”*

The tensions highlighted by the quotes above are not just in the present either. The history of Omaha includes racial tensions. Like most major urban areas, conflicts between African Americans and police have been present for some time. From before he was elected State Senator, Ernie Chambers has been a leader in Omaha's black community. He led the Near North Side Police-Community Relations Council and in March 1966, he presented a list of citizen complaints against the police (Larsen & Cottrell, 1997, p. 272). One interviewee said, *"When the police are like the Gestapo, there is fear and anger in the African American community because there is no justice."* In 1966, there were three nights of rioting in July and another three nights in August. In March 1968, after an appearance by controversial presidential candidate George Wallace, further rioting took place. In 1970, three nights of rioting occurred after police shot a fourteen year-old black girl. These events left a lasting scar on the predominantly African American residential neighborhood of North Omaha. As one interviewee said, *"There were these terrible riots in the '60s. All of a sudden we all became conscious of race. Then there was busing in the '70s so we got more integrated, but whites moved out of the community. In the '80s we got district elections and some blacks were elected to office. Then there was a series of police shootings in the '90s."*

Dalstrom (1997) suggests three reasons for the continuing tension over race relations: police relations with the black community; the white flight that took place when busing was court-ordered in 1970 to desegregate the Omaha Public Schools; and, the divide between the older homes in the more Democratic and diverse section east of 72nd Street, and the predominantly newer and Republican homes west of 72nd.

On the one hand, some interviewees thought that the tensions were quite bad based on intentional exclusions, especially of blacks. An African American community leader said, *“I don’t get to be in the same room as the corporate leadership most times. The cooperation is just not there.”* Another said, *“The community-based organizations get tired of ‘the white man’ – that’s what we call them – throwing money at them and telling them what to do.”* But another portrayed the non-cooperative relationship as mutually reinforcing. *“Jim Hawes at Northwest Bell was the only African American in leadership. On the government side, we have Ernie Chambers and Frank Brown. They are active in their communities, but not in an environment that is integrated with others.”* And yet another interviewee observed, *“Every black who has risen to some level of authority in Omaha has lost it because of some controversy.”*

Other interviewees saw the situation in more positive ways. They portrayed the race relations in Omaha as generally good.

- *“They work well together. Some specific incidents might cause tension. Like when a police officer shoots a young black man, but still, there is lots of discussion and interaction.”*
- *“In Omaha, kids went to school together. Black kids who went to Central High School with white kids had strong relationships.”*

In the section on social capital, there was a discussion of the need to live a traditional lifestyle in order to rise to a level of influence in Omaha. This is highlighted by the comments some interviewees made about the lack of acceptance of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered Omahans. In 2000, Measure 416, the Defense of Marriage

Amendment, was passed by 70% of Nebraska voters, which made some homosexual Nebraskans feel even more unwelcome (Nygren, 2006, February 14, p. 2B).

- *“There is lots of diversity here. But after 416, I felt like as a gay man I wasn’t a full member, accepted by this community.”*
- *“It is easier to build buildings and clean streets than to talk about gays.”*
- *“When the Mayor talks about the need for diversity and talks about including gays and lesbians, that blows Nebraskans’ minds.”*

Another theme mentioned in a few interviews was that of socio-economic status or class. Omaha has many millionaires, partly because of those Berkshire Hathaway shareholders who investment in Warren Buffett’s original company, but there is also a large group who live under the poverty line (15.3%). As one interviewee said, *“There is a culture of poverty that no one wants to admit exists.”* Although these are not exclusively blacks, there is a large black underclass. A recent article said “a number of factors are combining to give poverty a strong, multigenerational grip in Omaha’s black community” including a small black middle class to provide positive role models, fewer low-skill jobs than in the past, widening gap between white and black school dropouts, high percentage of black single-parent homes and racially segregated housing (Cordes, Gonzalez & Grace, 2007, April 15, p. 8A). This disparity between the rich and poor was mentioned in interviews.

- *“There is so much money in Omaha. It’s all those original investors.”*

- *“Omaha has scores of Warren Buffet millionaires. Like Dick Holland who came out of nowhere, then ‘boom’ he gives the money for the new performing arts building and he’s somebody.”*
- *“The poor get left out of most collaborations. The greatest collaboration is between the rich.”*
- *“Many people are just getting by – the working poor. They are in survival mode. Then you have the middle-class who have education. They have more choices and can live and go anywhere and have opportunities.”*

Citizen participation as an aspect of the political history of Omaha is rather complex. There is an elite control that makes breaking into the higher levels of boards and organizations impossible for all but a select few. Yet there is an open invitation to participate in many grassroots or nonprofit organizations. Race, class and sexual orientation segregate the city, but there has been some political and community leadership which has tried to change that. One of the biggest changes recently has been the built environment.

Land-Use Planning

Another dimension of the political history of a place is the way in which land-use planning has shaped the physical environment and community culture. An urban planner who knows both communities well said, *“Portland is very different from Omaha.”* Omaha seems to take on capital projects because they are often easier to accomplish than finding solutions to complex social issues and fit well in a city where architects,

engineers and construction companies have been part of the corporate elite, as several interviewees observed.

- *“In Omaha, we tackle much more tangible issues – we build something – but we do not grapple with the homeless. We’re thinking cosmetically, not thinking systemically.”*
- *“Transformations on the brick and mortar level in this city happen when different sectors get together.”*
- *“There’s a good working partnership between the City and corporate leadership. If you want something built, those are the builders.”*

Although Omaha has traditionally not been viewed as progressive in terms of urban planning, this has begun to change recently (Barnett, 2006). The tight control that developers have had on land-use decisions has begun to shift since the founding of Lively Omaha, a collaborative effort focused on citizen participation in designing well-used public spaces and initiator of the Omaha By Design effort to adopt more restrictive urban design standards into the City’s Code. Supporting the findings summarized in the previous section on community power, many attributed the success of Lively Omaha to support from people in corporate leadership positions. This is illustrated by a City of Omaha department director who responded to a question about the origins of Lively Omaha in an earlier research project by the author (McNamara, 2004) by saying that in this community a successful effort “has to be initiated in the private sector.” This was echoed by another who said, “The City could have never done this without corporate leadership.” Another said, “After the private group had this idea, the City saw how it

would help them politically.” Interviewees in this dissertation research also made the similar point.

- *“People grasp at some level what I believe fundamentally... government here is a fairly small piece of the equation. Locally, government is not the forum for getting public choices made. When significant public choices are made the government doesn’t make them alone.”*
- *“Being outside City Hall, I see that culture of City government as reactionary. That vision was clear under Hal Daub, but not as clear now. The vision now is that the corporate community is seen as driving everything. No longer is the City involved in every initiative. They wait for corporate or family foundations to take the lead. The City should be in every deal at the first.”*

What are the tools used by the City? Growth machine theory (Molotch, 1976; Logan & Molotch, 1987) postulates that there is an elite group that controls local government decisions to maximize economic benefits of land exchange for that group. The land-use decisions endorsed by the corporate leaders who have the most to gain financially from development are then approved by politicians whose campaigns have been financed by the developers and implemented by public administrators. Although touted as a partnership, this planning process can end up being “an insulated, elitist activity” in which “Residents, neighborhood groups, nonprofits, and community developers are not viewed as essential or explicit to these partnerships” (Turner, 2002, p. 536).

One interesting historic example of how the corporate leaders influenced the economic development of Omaha through power over the zoning and development of land is the Omaha Industrial Foundation formed in the 1950s to “to promote the industrial development of the city” especially along the railroad tracks west of Omaha (Dalstrom, 1988, p. 294). One interviewee said that *“The Aksarben group formed the Omaha Industrial Foundation which promoted a corridor of business along the U.P. tracks and that attracted Western Electric and Crown Cork and Bottle.”* Mayor A.V. Sorenson had close ties to the Omaha Industrial Foundation and was one of the biggest boosters of developing the western edge of Omaha (Dalstrom, 1988). In 1955, the Omaha Industrial Foundation ensured that Western Electric would build a plant in Millard, a small town to the southwest which was later annexed by the City of Omaha, when Sorenson and E.N. Van Horne, then president of Omaha Industrial Foundation, agreed to pay a farmer from private funds the extra \$5,000 he demanded to sell his land for the factory. “The log-jam was broken and in the next few days the farmer got his money and Western Electric decided to come to Omaha” (Dalstrom, 1988, p. 21).

There are other examples of big development projects that needed approval by the City of Omaha but funding from the private sector. One interviewee told about another vehicle for private sector funding called the Omaha Development Fund: *“In the early 1980s, the Omaha Development Fund was formed to fund Central Park Plaza, Park Fair Mall on 16th, and Con Agra’s campus which got \$30 million from the private sector.”* Recognizing this revitalization of downtown as crucial to the sustainability of the core of Omaha, one interviewee said, *“The pivotal projects downtown were the ConAgra campus*

in the 1980s which kept the corporate community downtown, the Qwest Center which gave people a reason to live and come downtown, and the Old Market.”

The westward growth of Omaha has certainly contributed to its community culture, prompting one interviewee to say, *“We’ve always been a city of suburbs.”* Another illustrated this by saying, *“Our ability to grow has been a big part of our culture. We’ve annexed like crazy and grown.”* But this has not always led to sustainable development, as one interviewee argued, *“We’ve had the SID mechanism that has encouraged growth. It’s like manifest destiny. We’ve always known that we will grow westward. We’ve had quick development, but not always smart development.”* Blair (2001, October) writes about the unique policy tool of “liberal annexation authority” in Omaha (p. 110). This can spur further growth of already developed areas on the urban margins of the city. The use of policy tools by local government to encourage development is one of the most frequent and effective mechanism for the growth machine to retain control of decisions that affect the profit possibilities in an urban context.

A recent example of the growth machine in Omaha was exposed in a series of articles in the *Omaha World-Herald* (Dejak & Kotok, 2007, March 25; Dejka, 2007a, March 25; Dejka, 2007b, March 25; Kotok, 2007, March 25). The investigative report told the story of how local developer Ted Seldin has actively courted county, state and federal politicians to build an offramp where he just happens to own 935 acres of undeveloped land. Through contracts with a consulting firm, Kirkham Michael, that was hired by the developer to convince the Nebraska Roads Department to approve the project and then again by Sarpy County to do a feasibility study, Seldin was able to

increase the exchange value of his land (Dejka, 2007c, March 25). He also donated \$20,350 to four members of the Nebraska Congressional delegation – Sens. Ben Nelson and Chuck Hagel and Reps. Lee Terry and Jeff Fortenberry – who helped get federal earmarks for the interchange (Kotok, 2007, March 25).

There has also been a major push for development in downtown and near the Missouri River in recent years. Many interviewees commented both positively and negatively on the development that has taken place in downtown Omaha recently.

- *“Mayor Daub was the one who had a vision for the Riverfront development.”*
- *“What I’ve seen change is all the money being pumped into downtown. Mayor Daub got it going, but Fahey has made the difference in implementing it.”*
- *“Some are critics of the decisions, like tearing down Jobber’s Canyon for the ConAgra campus, but they can’t criticize them for lack of making the decision.”*
- *“Parkfair was a monumental mistake. The indoor shopping mall was the wrong model. The 16th Street transit mall was modeled on Portland but it was a failure. Omahans, by and large, don’t have a very good esthetic taste.”*

Land-use planning in Omaha has been controlled by developers and those who benefit from development. Elected officials and public administrators have been the supporters of this growth, while the private sector has funded much of it using different vehicles. The situation parallels what growth machine theory argues in terms of land exchange value driving local decision making. And that decision making has been centrally controlled by the business and political leadership of Omaha over the years.

Political Leadership

The history of political leadership in Omaha has gone from a Democratic machine to a growth machine. For the first third of the 20th century, Omaha was run by a political boss named Tom Dennison (Menard, 1989). At the turn of the century, Omaha was “a regional transportation, manufacturing and livestock center” (Menard, 1989, p. 37). Dennison started out as a professional gambler who soon immersed himself in the gambling, saloon and prostitution operations in the working class, immigrant dominated third ward of the city in lower-downtown near the Missouri River. His political machine was run with the help of many others. Recognizing this, one interviewee said, “*Dennison had contacts with the wealthy in Omaha and when they got together they got what they wanted.*” Menard (1989) writes of the boss and his machine:

Dennison ruled neither alone nor completely, and several others were also key figures in the organization. They were individuals from Omaha’s wealthy and socially respectable elite as well as men far removed from the society pages, the “undercrust” of the city’s marginal men. With connections throughout Omaha’s social structure, Thomas Dennison had penetrated to the center of political power by the turn of the century, and there he remained for three decades. (p. 59)

Between 1906 and 1930, for all but a brief period, James Dahlman was mayor of Omaha. Cowboy Jim, as he was known, won seven out of eight mayoral campaigns (Larson & Cottrell, 1997, p. 177). He was a Democrat who embraced populist themes and stayed close to the people, and his continuous reelection was assured because of Boss Dennison’s support (Larson & Cottrell, 1997, p. 180).

In 1932, Dennison's opponents filed a lawsuit against him and sixteen co-conspirators for violation of federal prohibition laws. After a lengthy trial, the jury deliberated for a week. When they came back deadlocked with "hopeless disagreement" a mistrial was declared and Dennison and his co-defendants were free (Menard, 1989, p. 307). There were allegations of jury tampering (p. 308), but ultimately there was no retrial. Dennison's power faded when he moved to California after the trial ended and he died on February 14, 1934 (p. 313).

Before he faded from the scene, there were other attempts to counterbalance Dennison's power. Although one explanation for the genesis of Aksarben was patriotism and boosterism for the 1898 International Expo in Omaha, an interviewee said it was in the context of Dennison's Omaha that Aksarben's power grew: *"Look at the Tom Dennison era. This was a very nervous time for the corporate leaders of Omaha. The Knights of Aksarben was formed to offset the power of Dennison to organize this immigrant community."*

The mid-20th century was a tumultuous time in the political leadership of Omaha. Dennison's passing left a vacuum of political leadership and power was bifurcated between the machine and businessmen. While there was a strong Democratic machine that still operated, especially in South Omaha, the tide was shifting to more corporate control of the major decisions in the City. Some interviewees portrayed Omaha as still a machine-run town.

- *"For a significant part of post-World War II history, Omaha was a boss-run town. It was not politically corrupt, like Chicago or New Orleans, but there were*

clear power people. They were primarily Catholic and Democratic. The levers of power were not the City Council or Mayor, but the Register of Deeds, Treasurer and County Attorney. Sometime in the 1970s, that changed. It shifted to the corporate leaders becoming the levers of power.”

- *“Omaha was more Democratic when I was a kid. Boniface ‘Barney’ McGuire was a business owner and Mike Fahey worked for him. But when Fahey went out on his own, McGuire never forgave him. McGuire owned the Surfside Club and put on fundraisers for politicians. Only after McGuire died could Fahey run for office.”*
- *“Barney McGuire took care of Gene Leahy and other politicians.”*
- *“Gene Mahoney is an example of the Democratic machine.”*
- *“You used to know how neighborhoods would vote. It used to be that South Omaha was a Democratic bastion.”*

Other interviewees commented on the shift during the same period from a political leadership rooted in the Democratic machine to a corporate elite rooted in Aksarben.

- *“In the 1950s and beyond there was the political perception of a ‘new boss’ which was the Aksarben Board.”*
- *“Omaha has gone from an agribusiness to an information economy. It was all packing houses and grain exchanges and Omaha’s immigrants came from Slavic countries. Now it’s all corporate.”*

The local government structure is important in forming the community culture of Omaha. The City had a commission form of government in which City Council members both legislated and administered the various departments. A new City Charter in the mid-1950s established more clearly defined executive and legislative branches of local government, a human relations commission, and a strong mayor form of local government (Muir, 1969). A.V. Sorensen, a self-made millionaire owner of Midwest Equipment Company who was Chamber of Commerce President at the time, was called upon by Mayor Rosenblatt to recruit the corporate leaders of Omaha to serve on the charter committee, which he did (Muir, 1969). The eventual vote of the convention had only one dissent – John Cavanaugh – and the new charter was passed on to the citizens of Omaha for ratification. In November 1956, a new City Charter was approved by 55% of the voters (Larsen & Cottrell, 1997, p. 239). The most important change to the charter was the adoption of a strong mayor form of government which paved the way for many mayors since that time to hold power over policy decisions and implementation.

Interviewees commented on this local government structure.

- *“Our strong mayor form of government has been responsible for lots of positive changes in recent years. The last two mayors – Daub and Fahey – both came in with pro-growth agendas and with good business relations.”*
- *“The level of control depends on the Mayor. Fahey is more collegial, more decentralized in his power. Daub was totally centralized power. He overstepped on the issue of who was really in control.”*

The community culture was changed by the new Charter's making the heads of departments political appointees who were better paid, but not protected by civil service regulations (Muir, 1969). How public administrators have helped shape the political history of Omaha is a complex question. In the interviews, many commented on the role of public administrators. One interviewee focused on relations between public administrators and African Americans, *"The folks in the black community sometimes think that public administrators are out to get them."* Another commented on the importance of a welcoming environment, *"Anybody can extend an invitation, but you have to work hard to get those underrepresented groups to come to the table."* Others commented more generally on government.

- *"Our government is very weak because of the history of the big boys running things."*
- *"This is an anti-government town. The assumption is that the government doesn't work and the private sector will do better. There is little confidence that the government is doing anything. The frontier spirit is suspicious of government."*

The political leadership of Omaha has changed parties often, but in recent years has always been pro-corporations, pro-development, pro-growth. This was commented on by an interviewee who said, *"There's a piece of Omaha that defies the political analysis. The democrats and republicans on City Council are no longer as stereotypical. Change is affected not by the party affiliation of the actors. Issues don't tend to break down by affiliation."* The visions that often unite political leaders across party lines are those that involve capital, bricks-and-mortar projects.

- *“We’ve had some people with really big visions of what we could do. The whole riverfront development is that vision – from ConAgra to Qwest to condos. You’ve got to have that in a city to be great. Those visionaries may not be the same people as the big guys. They are planning directors, Lyn Zigenbein and the foundation people, big nonprofits.”*
- *“More people are coming in. It is no longer the same families that run the town. There are more outsiders.”*
- *“The First National Bank Tower and ConAgra both built on land that the city took back and razed other buildings to the ground. The public sector would not have done all this without impetus from business. This may leave the government by itself a bit unambitious. It may take business leaders to say, ‘Imagine a tower here.’”*

Mattessich et al. (2001), in a meta-analysis of studies on collaboration, argue that one the three environmental factors that influence collaborative success is “history of collaboration or cooperation in the community” (p. 12). If there is a strong history of collaboration, then the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders within a community collaborative are clearer and this will lead to more likely success. Some interview data supports the proposition that there has been a good history of collaboration in Omaha. *“There’s a lot of working together, which you can see in the big things that happen here like the Holland Performing Arts Center and Qwest Center. Even the nonprofit sector because it works well with the foundations. In small things too. Look at the cooperation*

when we did evacuees from Katrina. There's lots of private donations from individuals like the Kiewit Foundation string-of-pearls on Abbott Drive and the Holiday Lights."

Many interviewees commented on the strong ties between the public and private sectors. Indeed, this was a point of pride for many Omahans.

- *"There's a lot better working together between business and government than with nonprofits in this city. Part of that is dictated by self-interest – government wants to please business and business needs government. My perception is that elected officials are more ready to pay attention to business leaders because there is economic power and wealth."*
- *"Public and private sectors work very well together. Look at the Qwest Center. There was \$75 million privately raised for a public facility. And look at the Performing Arts Center. Business site selection consultants sell Omaha on that public-private effort."*
- *"Business and government relationships has not changed that much. The relationship is built on quid pro quo. This is still alive today."*
- *"I think the relationship is very good. First of all, they're intermeshed. The corporate leadership takes on the volunteer leadership in the nonprofit sector. The political leaders are often outgrowths of the corporate leadership. That's how this community has gotten things done."*

Others said all three sectors work well together. Power may be skewed toward the private sector in these partnerships, but some interviewees thought the three sectors got things done by working together. Again, this seemed to be a point of pride.

- *“Without the cooperation of government, business and nonprofits working as a catalyst, very little would get done.”*
- *“All three sectors work remarkable well. Inherent in that there are conflicts, but there really is a can-do spirit.”*
- *“Omaha has a long tradition of business involvement. Omaha By Design and the Convention Center are examples. Any major initiative here involves business, government and nonprofits. There is a mutual respect between the sectors here.”*

However, the history of relations with the nonprofit sector was not always portrayed by interviewees as uniformly good. One said, *“The collaborative efforts may seem good on the surface, but in actuality they are not effective.”* Another said, *“People soothe their souls by saying we work together, but in reality they don’t do that much.”*

Others said that nonprofits are often left out of the mix.

- *“The mindset is different. There is a different bottom line for business and nonprofits.”*
- *“The sectors work well together if the roles are clearly defined. For example, in our contracts with the state, our roles are clear. They are the fiduciary agent. We deliver the services. If the roles aren’t understood, then it brings friction.”*
- *“To work well together you need to have a relationship based on mutual respect that is equal or close to equal. The answer then is no, because that relationship is out-of-balance because corporations dominate.”*

- *“Nonprofit managers are not held in high regard by private business. There’s a bias that doesn’t recognize that people like Pete Tulipana – who’s just incredible – are just outstanding.”*
- *“The linkages between the sectors is just not there. We could close half the nonprofits in Omaha and not miss them.”*
- *“I would say that the nonprofit sector is not viewed by the business community as elevated to a level that is valuable to the community.”*

There were some who thought the nonprofit sector competes with government entities for money. One said, *“Representatives from the private sector are very involved in the community. They are the people who serve on nonprofit boards. The public sector brings a little bit less enthusiastic response to the nonprofit sector. In some ways, they are competing for the dollars and to be successful.”* Another said, *“From a government perspective, the relationship between nonprofits and government is weak. There is a perception of competition and there’s a perception that nonprofits are making money off the government.”* Perceived and real scarcity of resources was one reason given that nonprofits and government do not always work well together.

- *“When resources are limited, the partnerships are more important. Like right now there’s a feeling in the City government that we can’t do any more because there’s no money. Ten or 15 years ago, there were more resources in City government and they were better partners.”*
- *“There’s so much money in this community that’s going to turn over in a short amount of time. But there’s a sense of ‘We can’t because there’s no money.’ The*

City should be the player on these projects – they shouldn't always be looking to private corporations and foundations.”

Some said that the collaboration between the sectors was not good in Omaha because of a lack of trust.

- *“I think the sectors don't work as well together because there's suspicion – what do you want from this? Am I going to lose? Are they just asking for money?”*
- *“Working together is not that difficult, but there is a trust issue.”*
- *“Building trust is the most difficult thing in collaboration. But it is the most important.”*
- *“In the past, the community culture was about looking at the whole. Working with people that won't budge, that's the challenge.”*

So, the history of collaboration in Omaha as a factor of success is mixed.

However, as will be argued in the conclusion to this chapter, the history of strong public-private sector collaboration is a limited factor of past success of OACCH and a predictor of future success of MACCH.

CONCLUSION TO PHASE 1 RESEARCH IN OMAHA

The community culture of Omaha analyzed above has some themes that emerged. First, on the factor of social capital, Omaha can be described as high in the bonding type, but not in the bridging type. Networks of trust exist within particular groups, but not necessarily across groups. While this bonding social capital has been used to accomplish a lot in terms of the growth of the city, it does have the downside that outsiders can feel excluded. The norms of Omaha dictate a more traditional lifestyle, although this too may

change as more of the young creative class professionals make it their home. Outsiders, whether from somewhere other than Omaha or embracing non-traditional lifestyles, can often feel excluded from the circles of influence and even uncomfortable in the community.

Second is on the factor of community power, where Omaha is an elite rather than pluralist community. The elite come from corporate leadership roles. They sometimes grew up going to the same schools and still socialize together. Traditionally, one of the main gathering places for the elite was on the Knights of Aksarben board. More recently, Heritage Services has been a place where the elite gather to decide on what shape Omaha will take. Although members of the elite may ultimately benefit financially from the decisions made, the elite is also known for an ethic of community commitment. Omaha's elite are expected to give back to the community through gifts of time, talent and treasure. There is a growth machine with a pro-development agenda that influences the agenda and decisions of the community.

On the factor of political history, Omaha has had a number of eras over the course of the 20th and early-21st centuries, all of which have been dominated by a central control of decision-making. From Boss Dennison in the early-20th century to the Knights of Aksarben in the mid-20th century to the corporate elite of today, major decisions have been made by the tight group that holds the power. Citizen participation may be possible at the lower levels, but not upper level of influence. Public administrators are often seen as barriers to citizens, especially African Americans and Latinos, being deeply involved in governance. Land-use planning laws have allowed developers to pursue their growth

agenda unfettered up until now. That may change if the City Code is amended to include more policy tools for encouraging smart growth. The public and private sectors work well together, although the private sector has always had the stronger position in that relationship.

PHASE 2: COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS OF OACCH

In Phase 2 of the data collection, four sources were used to understand what led to the successes and challenges of OACCH within the community culture of Omaha. These sources were (1) a focus group with the executive committee members and former staff of OACCH, (2) interviews with members of OACCH, (3) document analysis of key documents for OACCH, and (4) some participant observation.

This section on Phase 2 of the research will begin with an overview of the history of OACCH. The remainder of this section will be structured around answering the primary and secondary research questions. The primary research question is: How does community culture affect the success of community collaboratives? Secondary research questions are: What other factors lead to the success of community collaboratives?; What are barriers to the success of community collaboratives?; What actions can partners within the community collaboratives take to promote success?; and, What actions can those outside the community collaboratives take to promote success?

Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless' History

The Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless formed when, “in early 1995, the City of Omaha Planning Department began a series of meetings with the Greater Omaha Shelter Alliance, a group of emergency shelters” (Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless, 2000, p. 1). The following year, the Greater Omaha Shelter Alliance became OACCH and “a formal planning structure for strategy development and implementation had been created” (Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless, 2000, p. 2). This formal structure was in response to the U.S. Department

of Housing and Urban Development requirement that a continuum be in place in order to receive funding for homelessness under the Steward B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. Before the formation of OACCH, individual organizations, rather than the continuum as a whole, applied for McKinney Act funds. This coordinated effort was a change for Omaha's homeless service providers and was unique across the country. "Only a few communities made serious attempts to plan or structure their homeless programs and services. Most communities could not be described as having a 'system,' and providers developed programs for which they saw a need and could find money, without regard to the larger pattern of services in the community," write Burt et al. (2002, May, p. xii).

The continuum of care (CoC) model that HUD endorsed was implemented through increased funding, especially for transitional and permanent housing which went from \$331 million in 1992 to \$931 million in 1995, a 181% increase, as opposed to emergency shelter funding which went from \$72 million in 1992 to \$157 million in 1995, a 116% increase. The CoC model also mandated a level of collaboration between all providers in the community (Fuchs & McAllister, 1996, p. 4). The proper term may be coordination rather than collaboration because services were not necessarily changed in the beginning to best leverage the assets in the community, but rather meetings where information sharing went on was the beginning point of OACCH activities. (See *Appendix B* and earlier discussion of the typology of partnerships offered by Mattessich et al. [2001] for a distinction between collaboration, cooperation and coordination.) In the CoC models, there was also a level of autonomy for local communities to define their

unique needs and “develop locally driven solutions” (Fuchs & McAllister, 1996, p. 5).

One example of a solution that evolved from the CoC was day shelters where homeless people could go during the day to wash, access different programmatic resources or just stay out of the cold.

The initial purpose of OACCH followed the guidelines set out by HUD, according to internal documents, which were “To evolve and implement ‘a Continuum of Care Strategy’; i.e., a community-based, collaboratively-evolved (and evolving) strategy for most effectively addressing the needs of the homeless and near-homeless population in the Omaha/Council Bluffs three county area (Douglas, Sarpy and Pottawattamie Counties)” (Omaha Planning Department, 1999, p. 1). OACCH remained a loose coalition of agencies which provided a vehicle for applying to HUD for annual CoC support and for coordinating efforts to serve the needs of the homeless and near-homeless up until 2006, when it became the Metropolitan Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (MACCH). In reflecting on this earlier period, one interviewee close to the history of OACCH questioned the motivations behind collaborating, *“While there’s been a push for collaboration, people are saying we should not just collaborate for funding, but we want meaningful collaboration. OACCH is a great example. We need to educate the donor community that forcing collaboration does not always create a positive.”*

There was a planning process in March 2006, called a Decision Accelerator (DA), sponsored by a number of philanthropic foundations including the Alegent Community Benefits Trust, William and Ruth Scott Foundation, Iowa West Foundation and Omaha

Community Foundation.⁹ A vision statement was crafted at the DA which read: “Through an integrated collaborative network, the new 501(c)3 will coordinate community resources to ultimately eliminate homelessness and its effects” (OACCH, 2006, p. 1). There were work groups that wrote plans with benchmarks to reach by 2 years, 5 years and 7 years along seven tracks: network coordination, organization design, funding, day facilities, other service gaps and new services; shelter/housing gaps and needs; and, health needs (OACCH, 2006).

Coming out of that planning process there was a momentum to work together to help OACCH succeed. In March 2006, the Executive Committee of OACCH changed the organization’s name to MACCH, which was controversial for at least one OACCH Executive Committee member because it seemed to be “bowing to the donors” some of whom advocated a name change (personal communication, 2006, March 13). However, progress was slower than anticipated on many of the short- and mid-term goals – such as hiring a director, submitting a 501(c)(3) application, and developing a plan for supportive services and day shelters – that were decided on during the DA. Some of the representatives at foundations who funded the effort became frustrated (personal communication, 2006, May 13).

In a meeting on September 14, 2006, the funders and homeless service providers came together to discuss the lack of progress and plan for success.¹⁰ One shelter director wrote afterward that this meeting “verticalized” the relationship between funders and

⁹ By this time, the author was serving as the Director of Philanthropic Services at the Omaha Community Foundation.

¹⁰ During this meeting, the author was asked – without prior notification – to facilitate a portion of the discussion. The data collection phase of this research was complete by then and I did not think that my role as impromptu facilitator would bias the conclusions presented in this manuscript.

providers, highlighted the dependency of nonprofits on donors for funding, and he quit the Executive Board of MACCH (personal communication, 2006, September 18). At this meeting it was clear that the foundation representatives were setting the agenda, the nonprofit service providers felt unfairly criticized, and the public administrators who had run OACCH in the Planning Department were conspicuously absent with only a lower-level Mayor's office employee present. Two things became even more clear at this meeting: the City's commitment to the collaborative waned once the HUD money was no longer flowing through the City's accounts and staffing no longer being provided by City employees; and, the involvement of private foundations to help cover the costs of services was not planned for in an early and conscientious way.

After that September 14th meeting, the MACCH Board contracted with Mary Lee Fitzsimmons to serve as Interim Director of MACCH. In October 2006, MACCH received a 501(c)(3) determination letter from the IRS. In January 2007, Erin Porterfield was hired to serve as Executive Director of MACCH. Many thought that this was not a particularly successful transition from City-administered to independent organization, partly because the City did not have a clear succession plan and the providers who were OACCH members did not have a concrete plan either. This was confirmed in the interview data, as this interviewee commented: *"OACCH failed in setting up a smooth transition process when the City pulled out of the administrative role."*

From its inception until 2005, OACCH was staffed by an employee of the City of Omaha's Planning Department, first Mike Saklar and later David Thomas. The City of Omaha paid for this full-time employee through federal Community Development Block

Grant funding (personal communication, 2007, June10). The remainder of the funding for OACCH activities in the Metropolitan Omaha region came as a pass-through from the City from federal grants. This arrangement led an interviewee to comment, *“As federal allocation goes, so goes the City’s commitment to the homeless and other issues.”*

OACCH did earn some national recognition and awards over the years: 1998 John J. Gunther Award described as “a Blue Ribbon Best Practices Award in Housing and Community Development” and a 2000 semifinalist selection for the Innovations in American Government Award from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University (Omaha Planning Department, 2003, January, p. 1; personal communication, 2007, June10).

The Executive Committee of OACCH issued an annual report of accomplishments for the first four years, a period of much activity. Some of the accomplishments highlighted over the years include: governance structure adopted in 1997 by OACCH for five officers (Chair, three Vice Chairs, and Secretary), an Executive Committee and General Membership; most of the substantial funding requested from HUD – which averaged about \$2 million – was successfully obtained in all years; a colleague feedback process and a client feedback process were implemented; and, an attempt was made to launch a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) called OASIS, which will be discussed in more detail later (Omaha Planning Department, 1997, December, 1998, December, 1999, December, 2000, December).

If the growing number of individuals, agencies and programs involved in OACCH was a criterion for success, then it would seem OACCH was successful. The Omaha

Planning Department (2000, December) reported the average number of people attending the General Membership meetings and number of agencies represented at the early meetings.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Individuals Attending</u>	<u>Agencies Represented</u>
1995	17	12
1996	40	22
1997	58	36
1998	67	39
1999	63	36
2000	58	33

An Omaha Area “Continuum of Care” Directory 2003/2004, reported that “OACCH represents over 200 programs serving homeless individuals and families in our three county area (Douglas, Sarpy and Pottawattamie Counties)” (Omaha Planning Department, 2003, January, p. 1).

Two issues tracked in this research are affordable housing and Homeless Management Information System. The role that OACCH has played in affordable housing is negligible based on the fact that internal documents do not mention this as a focal point for OACCH and that the interview data does not reflect OACCH having affordable housing as a priority. In fact, a study being done by the Wilder Foundation’s Research Group which is anticipated in summer 2007 will most likely conclude that Omaha has “lost opportunities to get federal dollars for transitional and permanent housing” because of a continuum overly focused on “emergency shelters” (personal communication, 2007, May 10). One interviewee foreshadowed one of the conclusions in this dissertation that any collaborative activity, in this case around affordable housing, must be designed appropriate to the community culture, which in Omaha includes a

powerful growth machine mentality: *“The capital and the will have not been developed for affordable housing. You need to find an economical model to solve this problem. What would it take to make this happen? Get big investors and find a way to make money on it.”*

Others had more general comments about OACCH’s lack of advocacy for affordable housing. Of housing developers, one partner in OACCH said, *“We don’t speak their language,”* then went on, *“Developers don’t relate to shelters, they only relate to lower income and transitional housing.”* There was consensus that OACCH had not been successful at policy change around affordable housing, but also that OACCH had not intended to play such a role.

- *“OACCH is focused on homelessness but not affordable housing.”*
- *“We don’t have a network that’s really good yet, so the affordable housing issue just isn’t there. That’s the 50,000 foot view and I don’t think OACCH has gotten beyond the 20,000 foot level.”*
- *“I don’t think of OACCH as being in the affordable housing world. We don’t worry about where they will stay when they get out of the shelter.”*
- *“We have done a terrible job of convincing the community that we need to have Single Room Occupancy places in Omaha. Where are the people going to go?”*

The second issue tracked here is the implementation of the HMIS system. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2007, February) reported that in 2005, 72% of Continuums of Care receiving HUD funding collected some data using HMIS. In 2004, the number was 60% and in 2003, just 33%. In the case of OACCH

implementing HMIS, there was a mixed review. There have been two attempts to implement the HMIS in Omaha. In the first attempt at implementation, which was in 2002, Fair Housing Advisory Services (FHAS) was the lead agency. The implementation of this HMIS system, using software called OASIS, was criticized by some interviewees. One said, *“The effectiveness of the HMIS system was fatally flawed by putting it at FHAS. It lacked the expertise and resources to do an effective implementation.”* Another critiqued the motivation behind this HMIS implementation effort: *“What drove the OASIS system is a HUD-conformity thing. If we had wanted to do a better effort on HMIS, we could have.”* And yet another lamented the lack of resources committed by and the conflict avoidance experienced within OACCH – which is consistent with the community culture of Omaha – when various stakeholders did not speak up when there were obvious problems with the implementation efforts: *“OACCH missed a key opportunity to get knowledge from HMIS that could drive decisions. We tragically under-resourced it. That’s because everyone was trying to play well together and no one had the courage to say ‘No!’”*

This failed attempt at implementing an effective HMIS which could have illustrated the impact of different programs with reliable quantitative data and ultimately shown HUD and local funders the kind of results that they sought. With the strong bias toward an outcomes-orientation in Omaha these performance measurement metrics are particularly attractive. OACCH did include language in internal documents that seems consistent with effectively operating within the pro-business community culture of Omaha, including the phrases “results-oriented approach” and “accounting (all the more

readily) for their use of funds” (Omaha Planning Department, 1999, p. 2), but did not implement an HMIS system at that time that would have supported the rhetoric.

Since that first attempt at implementing HMIS, another was launched in June 2006 that is called MACCHBook. HUD contracted with the Iowa Institute for Community Alliances, which administers the Iowa statewide HMIS system, to run the Omaha area HMIS. There is a new software called ServicePoint that is being used. There is hope that the new system will be successfully implemented in the second round. One interviewee close to the process said, *“In the past, I don’t think they’ve been successful. I think it’s because, first of all, no one agency had the resources to take the lead on the HMIS. Everything about it was done voluntarily. And there was not the commitment to the OASIS system. Now that we have ServicePoint, it’s a better product and we have dedicated resources to make it happen.”* A person familiar with this latest effort said, *“As a state, Nebraska is considered to be one of the stronger in implementing HMIS. The concern is that we are measuring outputs, but are we really tracking information that would indicate if we are ending chronic homelessness?”*

This second round of implementation includes the food pantries, as well as emergency shelters and homeless service providers. Although there are great expectations for this new system in terms of gathering non-duplicated data and information sharing between agencies, one interviewee said that *“the vision is not reality because there are no agreements in place for info sharing right now.”* Another said, *“There are incredible barriers to sharing information between agencies in Omaha. There are all these turf*

issues.” And another said of service providers, *“They don’t want to talk about outcomes, but OACCH has been successful in pushing information sharing.”*

The HMIS implementation is going better than it was in the first round, but cannot yet be characterized as successful, according to interviews and other data (personal communication, 2007, February 14). On the issue of OACCH’s role in promoting affordable housing, there has been no success, but working on that issue may not have been the self-defined goal of OACCH. The primary research question looks beyond just these two issues to ask more generally how the community culture of Omaha has affected the successes or challenges of OACCH.

Primary Research Question Answered

In the first section of this chapter, the community culture of Omaha was analyzed. There were some broad themes that emerged consistent with the three factors examined in community culture: social capital, community power and political history. The primary research question applied to this case study asks whether Omaha’s community culture, as articulated in these overarching themes and other details discussed in Phase 1, has an effect on the success of OACCH.

One interviewee commented generally on the success of OACCH: *“They are rated higher than most in the region. It’s not a perfect system, but it’s perceived at the federal level as a success.”* The definition of success used in this dissertation is whether the internal partners and external stakeholders think the collaborative has achieved its self-defined goals.

There was not necessarily consensus on what the goals of OACCH were. As one provider said, *“I’m not sure they’ve been very good at setting goals. Maybe so, if the goals are get the SuperNOFA submitted and have a monthly meeting. But if the goal is to raise awareness of homeless issues and end homelessness, I’d give us a C-.”* Another said OACCH encouraged *“competitors to come to the table and build coalitions. This has partially increased trust among organizations.”*

There was a vision statement discussed earlier that came by consensus out of the Decision Accelerator in February 2006 that could serve as a goal for OACCH. The people present at the DA had some OACCH members represented, but also there were many others outside of OACCH. Although there were different working groups at the DA, many of whom set their own goals for their working areas, there was not the staffing or volunteer commitment to implementing many of those goals in the short- and mid-term timeframe. Clearly, there were mixed reviews in the interview data of the success of OACCH based on what the stakeholders felt were the articulated goals.

- *“They are successful in increasing resources to the Omaha area. But they’ve failed in holding agencies accountable to provide services. If they had done this then there wouldn’t be a lack of trust in some people’s data.”*
- *“I’m not sure I could tell you what the goals of MACCH are at this time. That’s partly because there are myriad task forces, but they are not coordinated in terms of broader organizational goals.”*

While the question of OACCH’s ultimate success may only be answered in a longer timeframe, the data does support the findings that there are at least four ways in

which the community culture of Omaha affects the collaborative success of OACCH. First, given the strong private sector in Omaha, the leadership of OACCH has not successfully involved business leaders in the collaborative nor consistently, clearly and positively shown outcomes and return on investment. Second, the community culture of Omaha influenced a feeling of dependence, first on federal funding and Omaha Planning Department administration, then on foundation and private donor funding for the nonprofit service providers in the network during a transition period from OACCH to MACCH. Third, the Omaha area has a history of strong collaboration between public and private sectors, especially when initiated by the elite, and OACCH has been partially successful in exploiting this history. Fourth, homelessness is not an issue that is often in the consciousness of Omaha residents which has made the job of OACCH doubly difficult, first raising awareness of the issue then addressing homelessness. The four proposed answers to the primary research question are explored in detail below.

Strong Private Sector. As argued in the section on Phase 1 of this study, Omaha has a strong private sector. OACCH did not often involve corporate leaders in championing the cause or actual decision making about the collaborative's activities. One interviewee clearly articulated this: "*The private sector, early on, was not a factor at all in OACCH. It is better, but there is still a long way to go.*"

The stakeholders in the OACCH collaborative were not and still are not business leaders. The more recent history of MACCH reflects much more engagement in and support of the collaborative by corporations and private sector leaders, many times through their philanthropic entities. And the MACCH Investors Group, as the foundation

representatives who are funding the efforts of the collaborative call themselves, is engaged.

At least one interviewee saw a downside to the perspective that some private sector donors bring to the homeless issue: *“The problem is that OACCH is a system and you have to fund the whole system. Omaha seems to be more that competitive business perspective.”* The business leaders who make the major decisions in the community are perceived to encourage the competitive marketplace approach to homeless services and fund agencies accordingly. This is further supported by an argument from the Omaha case study’s section on land-use planning in which the contrast was made between building something tangible which Omaha does well and finding solutions to complex social issues which it does not. As one interviewee was quoted saying, *“In Omaha, we tackle much more tangible issues – we build something – but we do not grapple with the homeless. We’re thinking cosmetically, not thinking systemically.”*

Given the community culture in Omaha, the role of a public administrator who staffed the collaborative effort could never be that of a peer who could bring the business leaders to the table. This was captured in what one interviewee said, *“A city employee could never have been the one that goes to the business leaders.”* There was also the fact that the mid-level public administrator’s position in the City Planning Department was not one that could forcefully encourage or even enforce effective collaboration by using carrots or sticks. An interviewee commented on this, *“David Thomas tried to be the conscience for the homeless providers, but he was a City employee. He called people to*

come together and put personal agenda's aside, but he didn't have the teeth because of his position."

Dependency. OACCH in its first ten years was mostly dependent on the federal government for funding and the City government for staffing. One interviewee characterized the City's creating a dependency of OACCH on its Planning Department staff as "*a well-intentioned paternalism.*" During that period of City administration OACCH did not diversify the funding streams to the collaborative, although at the individual agency level there were certainly various sources of funding including foundations and individual donors. It may not have been as clear during the OACCH era that the collaborative depended on private funding because it was actually receiving federal government funding, but now during the MACCH era as the federal government has moved away from funding some of the collaborative's core activities "*the dependency on corporate funding is clearer,*" said an interviewee. Once OACCH lost some of its federal grant support from HUD and morphed into MACCH, it could be argued that Omaha foundations and private donors now have too much influence by virtue of providing the majority of funding for administrative costs. With local government abdicating responsibility for staffing and funding the collaborative, private sector businesses, individuals and the philanthropic foundations are expected to step in. As one interviewee said, "*Being a conservative town, there are things the nonprofit community is expected to do that in other cities the government does. You hear some grumbling in the private sector in recent years about such heavy dependence on business for funding the nonprofits.*"

One example of this is on the funding and leadership of the efforts to keep the day facilities operating. In a meeting in August 2005, the Mayor made a statement interpreted by many present as committing to raising a million dollars from the private sector for day shelters (personal communication, 2006, September 14). Interviewees spoke to this point:

- *“The frustration with the day facility is that the City did not take the leadership role in raising the funds from the private sector.”*
- *“The mayor committed to raising the funds for the Day Facility. There was a commitment in front of all these people and a momentum to do it at the time. But the frustrating aspect of the whole exercise is that you can see the erosion of the trust. There’s now some cracks in the relationships because of that lack of trust.”*

So, the fact that some people lost trust that the public sector would produce or help with a solution to the day shelters specifically and homelessness more generally, reflects two things with regard to the primary research question. First, it reifies the dependency of the nonprofits on the private sector for funding. Second, there is an erosion of trust in the public sector leadership on issues of importance that reifies the community culture of Omaha, namely the position of the corporate elite as trusted leaders on civic issues.

History of Collaboration. As was argued in the political history section above, the history of general collaboration in Omaha is mixed, but there were examples of public-private partnerships throughout Omaha’s history that were exemplary. This history of collaboration can be viewed at the level of nonprofits within the collaborative or at the cross-sectoral collaboratives in the general community. One interviewee, reflecting on the

level of nonprofits collaborating and arguing that the community was ripe for collaboration, said, *“Twenty years ago, this community was hostile to collaboration. There was no trust, competition, every agency for itself. But we were ready for collaboration by the very absence of it.”*

There is a history of public-private collaboration in Omaha which MACCH has begun to exploit, but was not built upon as much during the OACCH period of the collaborative. The history of collaboration in Omaha has been largely private sector led or driven, as was argued in the section above. There has been a history of public-private collaboration in Omaha led by the elite, which contributes to the clear “roles and expectations” of the partners in a collaborative (Mattessich et al., 2001, p. 13). Part of that clarity is to understand that the elite have controlled many of the important decisions in different arenas of civic affairs. One interviewee said, *“Generally speaking, there is collaboration imposed from the top.”*

The role of the philanthropic foundations in the success of OACCH was discussed above with regards to the dependency of OACCH and the partner agencies within the collaborative on foundation funding and leadership. The philanthropic foundations’ representatives were critiqued by some in MACCH as too top-down or “verticalized” (personal communication, 2006, September 18). There are authors (Eikenberry, 2007; Fleishman, 2007) who argue that foundations can, in fact, be a tool the rich use to maintain elite control. Dye (2001) argues that foundations play a role of allowing the elite to maintain control through “the top-down policy formulation process” (p. 46). While big national foundations such as Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie

Corporation have traditionally funded a liberal to moderate policy agenda, lately newer foundations such as Bradley Foundation, Smith Richardson Foundation and Olin Foundation have emerged to fund a more conservative agenda (p. 47). On the local level, there was some critique in the interview data of the reliance on the foundations by the corporate elite in Omaha. *“We have these strong foundations, but the business leaders abdicate to them too much,”* said one interviewee.

The history of collaboration which, in Omaha, might be imposed from the top by corporate executives and philanthropic foundations can come at a price for nonprofits. Namely, collaboration takes resources to work (Mattessich et al., 2001). The costs of collaboration might include staff time, equipment such as the computers and software to implement HMIS, and actual dollars potentially reallocated to others. One interviewee recognized this and said, *“I fault the foundation staffers who have not had to run an organization and think that collaboration is the end-all. The organizations realize that collaboration comes at a cost.”*

The collaboration between sectors in Omaha has historically happened when a business or philanthropic leader champions the cause. That has not yet happened with homelessness, although it has happened with mental illness when Ken Stinson, Chairman of Kiewit Corporation, and Rhonda Hawks, President of the Hawks Foundation and wife of Howard Hawks, CEO of Tenaska and a University of Nebraska Regent, championed building a new treatment and recovery center in Omaha. An *Omaha World-Herald* editorial began with this question, “Why do some ambitious civic projects fail, and why do others succeed?” then concluded with this,

The role of Stinson and Hawks was crucial in several regards. The dynamic of the situation improved significantly after they became involved. They both encouraged a constructive, no-nonsense approach to the discussions. Stinson, with his private-sector background, was particularly impressive in getting people to focus on practical solutions. (“Reasons for success,” 2007, February 25, p. 6B)

One interviewee compared Omaha with other cities: *“It seems to me that there’s been less coordination on homelessness here in Omaha than in bigger cities. Boston and Chicago have both brought the issue of homelessness to the civic leaders. We have not done that in Omaha.”* This may change after a study is completed by the Wilder Foundation’s research team about services available and anticipated needs in the homeless arena. That study should be completed in the summer of 2007 (personal communication, 2007, March 27).

Not Conscious of Homelessness. The issue of homelessness is not on the consciousness of Omaha’s civic leaders or citizens, so MACCH is fighting to bring visibility to the issue itself as well as to the services provided by partner agencies. Some interviewees have seen some progress on raising the issue in the public consciousness:

- *“Until the 1980s, homelessness was not very high on the agenda. And it still isn’t.”*
- *“Before, it was a struggle to get people to address the issue of homelessness. More people are now educated that it is an issue.”*

The community culture of Omaha, especially considering the pioneer history recalled by many interviewees in the sections above, is not always conducive to those

who are not working hard and succeeding. One interviewee said, *“We subscribe to the philosophy that you pull yourself up by your own bootstraps and people get what they deserve. So, the community doesn’t have a good sense of problems around addiction.”* Another said, *“The spirit of people in Omaha is a pioneer spirit or a hearty spirit of survival. So, how is the community going to understand why people are homeless?”*

Another reason that the issue of homelessness may not be on the consciousness of Omahans is that it is not as visible, although the numbers would indicate a different story. The latest point-in-time homeless count estimated 1,870 homeless people in Omaha (Sloan, 2007, June 4). In comparison, Portland’s homeless count in January 2007 was 1,438, a drop of 39% over two years ago, for which some credit Portland’s 10-year plan to end homelessness (Anderson, 2007, February 27). While Portland’s homeless population can be seen all over the downtown area, Omaha’s homeless are confined to fewer places.

One place people do see the homeless is in the Gene Leahy Mall which is in the heart of downtown Omaha. This visibility on the Mall may increase as two of the three shelters offering day services may end up closing their doors because of lack funding (Sloan, 2007, June 4). One interviewee said, *“For the most part, it is not on the community’s consciousness. People say, ‘Let’s just get them off the Mall.’”* Another interviewee said, *“The Continuum of Care started because homeless people were hanging out on the Mall. While that’s not a pure motive for doing something, it worked. Basically, it was the realization that these resources needed to be coordinated.”* One interviewee who knows both communities said on the issue of the consciousness of homelessness by the general public, *“In Portland, homelessness is much more of a public*

issue of concern. Here in Omaha, people know about it, but it gets pushed aside because you don't see it every day."

Secondary Research Questions Answered

The first of the secondary research questions is, What other factors lead to the success of community collaboratives? In other words, what else, beyond the community culture of Omaha, is a factor in the success of OACCH. One answer is good staff and board leadership with the power to make decisions. Speaking of the first public administrator in the Planning Department who headed the OACCH efforts, who has gone on to direct Siena Francis House, one of the largest homeless shelters in Omaha, an interviewee said, *"Mike Saklar was the key person at the City at the beginning of OACCH. He had a keen interest in homelessness and he ensured that it had the high profile it needed with the Mayor and other key leaders. Mike recognized the complexity and challenges of bringing all these groups together."* Although some data presented in the earlier section on Omaha's strong private sector may indicate that it is hard for staff of a City department to operate as effectively because of the power imbalance, there is a clear sense that interviewees had of the importance of the staff and board. During much of the period when the City of Omaha served as fiscal and administrative agent for the collaborative, David Thomas was the OACCH administrator. Many interviewees gave him credit for the relative success of OACCH: *"David Thomas asked the service providers to all move together in a new way. He called people to come together and put personal agendas aside."*

The second research question is, What are barriers to the success of community collaboratives? In a community with high bonding social capital, not recognizing the inter-connections within the community can be detrimental to success. Interview data supports this. One person observed of the interconnections, *“As mid-managers moved up and took over leadership in all sectors, they already had networks and relationships here. They were already talking to each other.”* Another said, *“There is a mutual respect. It is really important that the person elected mayor be respected by the business community and it’s important that nonprofits are able to operate within that same sphere. You don’t want a homeless shelter calling a CEO because he took away the building for a shelter. You need to have compromise.”*

The third secondary research question is, What actions can partners within the community collaboratives take to promote success? One of the most frequently mentioned themes in the interview data was trust. To promote success within MACCH, the key is to continue to build relationships of trust between partners within the collaborative and between the individuals involved. Of problems encountered early on in OACCH’s history, one interviewee said, *“Trust was the missing factor.”* Another said, *“Trust ebbs and flows. It just takes time.”* And echoing the adage that familiarity breeds trust, one long-serving nonprofit leader said, *“Lots of the same players are still around because people are more comfortable with old-timers.”*

The fourth secondary research question is, What actions can those outside the community collaboratives take to promote success? Adequate funding and mutual trust between those inside and outside of the collaborative were both themes in the interview

data. Funding challenges are a frequent concern in the nonprofit sector, as this interviewee observed, *“Nonprofits have to scrounge for every penny every six months to a year. No business anywhere would do that. Survival is as far as you can get for nonprofits.”* Another framed the challenge for OACCH in the context of federal resources being shifted by the George W. Bush administration toward the “housing first” model: *“OACCH was pretty successful in the past, but with the change in federal funding from supportive services to beds, it is going to be much tougher to be successful.”* The second part of the answer to the fourth secondary research question is mutual trust. *“Trust was a huge factor between service providers, government and the business community,”* said one involved in OACCH at the beginning. Another said, *“Trust did not really develop because OACCH was under the constraints of the City.”* This was put in a hopeful light by one interviewee, *“I believe, in Omaha, where there is a common goal that spans institutions, Omaha comes together well. When institutional goals collide, Omaha is as siloed as anywhere else.”*

**CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS FOR CASE STUDY #2:
PORTLAND'S COMMUNITY CULTURE AND THE SUCCESS OF CENTRAL
CITY CONCERN**

This chapter will discuss the analysis and findings of the Portland case study in the research undertaken. The primary research question – *How does community culture affect the success of community collaboratives?* – organizes the chapter into three sections, just as in the previous chapter presenting the Omaha case study. These three sections are: findings regarding the community culture of Portland which are drawn from a review of the literature, interviews and some media coverage; findings regarding the successes and challenges of Central City Concern which are drawn from interviews, a focus group and some document review; and, analysis of the findings with particular attention to the question of how operating in the context of Portland has been a factor in the successes and challenges of CCC. There will be some descriptive statistics on Portland. This follows the same pattern of descriptive statistics that was used in the first part of the chapter on Omaha.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON PORTLAND

The City of Portland has a population of 513,627 while the metropolitan area has 2,137,565. Of the population in the City of Portland, the racial and ethnic breakdown is: 79.5% white, 6.2% black or African American, 7.1% Asian, and 8.4% Latino or Hispanic (of any race) with 4% identifying themselves as two or more races. (See *Appendix I* for statistical comparison of Omaha and Portland.) The median household income is \$42,287 and 17.8% of individuals live below the poverty line. Housing statistics from the 2000

Census state that 56.6% of units in Portland are owner-occupied while 43.4% are renter-occupied. These figures are very close to the statistics for homeownership in Omaha. The distribution of the non-Hispanic white residents of Portland is not as concentrated as in Omaha when looking at the census tract level, as was shown in the previous chapter.

PHASE 1: PORTLAND'S COMMUNITY CULTURE

In the literature review chapter, the concept of community culture was explored. There are three interrelated factors that inform the community culture of a particular place: social capital, community power and political history. Each of these factors constitute a section below for exploration of the community culture of Portland.

One of the broad frameworks discussed in the literature review that could be understood as synonymous with community culture is political culture. The descriptor that Elazar (1975) used for Oregon was a moralistic political culture with strong communitarianism that “promotes the public good and in terms of honesty, selflessness, and commitment to the public welfare of those who govern” (pp. 20-12). In an exploration of Elazar’s application of political culture to Oregon, Bowersox (2005) notes the early settlers in Oregon were “religious motivated immigrants” and “Protestant missionaries who left the Northeast to found the first Protestant missions in the region” (p. 17). He writes that “Elazar himself notes other elements in Oregon’s political culture, including a healthy dose of individualism” (p. 18). So, the moralistic and individualistic descriptors in Elazar’s typology both apply to Oregon just as in Nebraska.

One interviewee’s quote illustrates well this individualistic political culture in the form of a pioneer spirit:

- *“I think that the character of Oregon is that there is an independence here. People don’t like to be told what to do. There’s a strong belief in democracy, like, ‘Of course, I have the right to say something.’ Oregon is full of pioneers. We are not so removed from that history.”*

Another typology explored briefly in the literature review comes from the “political ethos” of Banfield and Wilson (1963). In this framework, Portland could be described as a public-regarding community with interest in “impartiality, honesty, nonpartisanship, planning” (p. 81). That public-regarding type of community is consistent with the ethnic demographics of a historically white, Anglo-Saxon and Protestant community (Banfield & Wilson, 1963, p. 234) which describes Portland.

Some of the themes evident in the public-regarding community described by Banfield and Wilson (1963) parallel Elazar’s (1975) moralistic community. One trend in Portland reflecting this is the shift in the 1990s to less commitment on the part of registered voters to the traditional political parties and more toward independent and unaffiliated voters (Lansing, 2003, p. 461). An earlier historic fact supporting this political ethos and political culture is Oregon’s embrace in 1904 – very early in the history of the Progressive movement to implement such reform-oriented measures (Ellis, 2005) – of the initiative and referendum system, a form of direct democracy in which citizens vote for ballot measures rather than defer decision-making to representatives. “No state has used the initiative and referendum more often than Oregon” (Ellis, 2005, p. 65). The following quote illustrates the consciousness that direct democracy and independent thinking has been a part of Oregon, and specifically Portland, political

culture: *“People have an expectation of openness in public dealings. Oregon was the first state to have open meeting laws, the initiative petition and the recall election. Oregon has always been strongly participatory.”*

Community culture seemed on the minds of Portlanders. It is helpful to look back at how other authors viewed Nebraska and Oregon. However, this community culture concept is better suited to a more narrowly defined community rather than at the state-level. The next sections explore community culture through the framework of social capital, community power and political history.

SOCIAL CAPITAL IN PORTLAND

Portland is said to be a city in which social capital is high (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, Chapter 11; Abbott, 2001, p. 204). As Johnson (2004) writes, “Portland represents a challenge not only to Putnam’s thesis of a decline in civic participation but also to his concern that such declines erode the shared goals and patterns of trust that are often called ‘social capital’” (p. 116). The definition of social capital used here is: *Social capital is the networks of trust and the norms that exist in a community to be productively used by individuals and organizations.*

The December 1999 issue of *Administrative Theory & Praxis* contains a symposium by faculty and doctoral students at Portland State University (PSU) on civic capacity in Portland. This term is sometimes used synonymously with social capital, but the contributors to the *ATP* symposium make a distinction between the two. In the introductory essay the authors write, “Unlike social capital, we believe civic capacity is the product of consciously chosen strategies to use all of the resources of communities to

enhance their capacity for self-governance” (Morgan & Shinn, 1999, p. 10). The symposium includes four case studies of Oregon (Mazaika, 1999; Vizzini & Morgan, 1999; Welsch & Heying, 1999; Witt, 1999). All of these case studies illustrate in concrete ways how civic capacity, in the Portland tradition, can be useful for “communities to respond to events in ways that are self consciously directed at shaping a common future” (Shinn, 1999, p. 103). The authors who were part of the Civic Capacity Research Group at PSU may be reluctant to use the term social capital, but their research is certainly relevant for those in public administration who are similarly “in search for a theory to explain the social requirements for democratic governance” (Shinn, 1999, p. 103). In addition to a thorough document review and interviews with some of the present and past community and political leaders of Portland, in this dissertation community culture was assessed by interviewing some key PSU faculty and summarizing their research.

Besides the literature supporting the proposition that social capital is high in Portland, this proposition was a clear theme that emerged in the interview data. One of the indicators of social capital is that people are connected through networks of trust. Portlanders offered many quotes that support this relational trust.

- *“Portland’s story is that we know each other.”*
- *“Portland is amazingly open to doing collaboration. People here lean towards collaborative nature. I’ve never seen a city as open to relationships.”*
- *“It’s a city, but it’s a big town. People know each other. People who head organizations have access.”*

There was a definite sense from the interview data that the way things are done in Portland has relationships at the center. The phrase “the Portland way” was used by many different interviewees, almost always with positive connotations. In the Foreword to Abbott’s book on *Greater Portland* (2001), the Portland way is defined as “a willingness to keep talking and a belief that the more inclusive the conversational circle the better” (Martin, 2001, p. xi). And versions of that same definition were used by many interviewees.

- *“The Portland way is basically a culture that is conditioned on collaborative work. This is a small enough community that you encounter people at events or public hearings over and over again.”*
- *“The Portland way is about the foundation and creation of relationships, mutual respect. If you don’t have that, people will get slapped back. People react quite badly to you.”*
- *“The Portland way is that instead of somebody saying, ‘I’m doing this!’ they come in and say, ‘Well, I’m thinking about doing this...’ Then they ask the community, ‘Do you like this?’ Or they ask in the beginning, before proposing anything. There is a willful engagement of the community in the process.”*

There was also a sense in the interview data and literature reviewed that this connectedness through networks of trust, which is that high bridging social capital in Portland, has been challenged in recent times. Johnson (2004) questions whether Portland’s unique social capital and the community culture that results will fade in the 21st century: “Will newcomers care to learn the Portland style? Can a particular political

culture or style be transmitted across generations?” (p. 117). This same sentiment was evident in the interview data, often framed as almost a lament.

- *“Is this a new kind of involvement, one that will sustain community? My fear is that you won’t have the same relationships as you had before. In the Goldschmidt-era political power was used to reinforce the values of an inclusive, fair, open and safe community. There is not the value of sustained relationships with this new sense of community.”*
- *“In general for Portland the culture is changing because there are more people and it’s becoming more dense and less connected. The schools are declining and the gaps in the achievement levels grow. In some ways we’re a nice, cute city, but you also have pockets of unemployment, poverty, big problems. People commute more now to school and work.”*

So, social capital in Portland may be on the decline for some of the same reasons Putnam (2000) said it was declining throughout America: longer commutes, disparities in socio-economic status, and technology. But there remains a core of people in Portland who still recognize and believe in the Portland way. And that way is predicated on the relationships between people in Portland and between individuals and institutions in different sectors. One must use these relationships to achieve what one desires.

COMMUNITY POWER IN PORTLAND

If community power is defined as *a group’s ability to control resources to achieve desired results*, the question in Portland is: Which group is – or which groups are – in control? The classic debate between elite theorists and pluralists explored in the

context of Omaha in the previous chapter is the same framework through which the community power in Portland is analyzed. Most people interviewed indicated a pluralist model at work in Portland, but a few pointed to a small elite that controlled or should control all major decisions in the city. However, the elite in Portland included political leaders, unlike Omaha which had corporate leaders at the top.

- *“When you get to the top-level, elites need to do it themselves. Who are the elites? Top level politician and business leaders.”*
- *“It’s not easy to get involved at this level. The consultation can’t be as broad as a more democratic process would allow. You need elite control.”*
- *“The political culture is pretty insular. The decision making within Portland’s political culture is insular.”*

However, many more of those interviewed used the pluralist model to more appropriately describe Portland’s community power structure. These interviewees said:

- *“Portland very definitely is the pluralistic model. Neil used to say, ‘I could call 10 people on any subject and get something done.’”*
- *“On the public-private relationships Portland has more in common with Dahl’s New Haven.”*
- *“Other states are so top-down compared to Oregon, which is more grassroots. In Portland, the power is coming from nonprofits like Central City Concern.”*

To illustrate the tension between the elite and pluralist control of decision-making, one interviewee used the 2004 mayoral upset victory of Tom Potter, a former Portland Police Chief who ran on the platform of greater citizen involvement and did not

accept contributions above \$25, as an example of a grassroots candidate ousting the elite. Potter ran against the well-financed City Commissioner and downtown attorney Jim Francesconi.

- *“Portland is very much a grassroots sort of place. Politicians and business leaders forget that. They think key influential people in Portland control the decisions downtown. It’s the political money machine. The top influential people supported Francesconi for mayor. He had one million dollars. He wrote off all others then this huge grassroots effort came out of nowhere. It was like Potter gave hope to regular citizens.”*

A counterbalance to this sense that Portland is this pluralist Mecca comes when growth machine theory is applied to the place. Logan & Molotch (1987) make a distinction between the exchange value and use value of land when they write, “An apartment building, for example, provides a ‘home’ for residents (use value) while at the same time generating rent for the owners (exchange value)” (pp. 1-2). As mentioned in the demographics section at the beginning of this chapter, 43.4% of Portlanders rent compared to 42.4% of Omahans.

How one views property is crucial to this distinction between use and exchange value. Portland’s median home value has increased more rapidly than Omaha’s in recent years and compared to the change in median household income, has skyrocketed. (See *Appendix I* for raw data on which this analysis is based). With the median home values in Portland going up by 61% between 1990 and 2000 and by 31% from 2000 to 2005, there was a lot of money to be made from the exchange value of property. Compared to

Omaha, where median home values went up by 42% between 1990 and 2000 and by 24% from 2000 to 2005, the difference is significant. When looking at the question of affordability of housing, this median home value must be compared to the median household income and is even more dramatic. In Portland, the median household income went up 19% between 1990 and 2000 and 5% from 2000 to 2005, while in Omaha, the median household income went up by 33% between 1990 and 2000 and by only 1% from 2000 to 2005. So, income has not kept up with housing prices in either place, but in Portland it is especially bad.

Part of the reason for the increase in home values is that Portland has attracted many people who are known as the creative class workers. How Portlanders view this more transient population is mixed. One interviewee said, *“What’s changing is the transplants from other cities. The housing market is changing things. The younger generation, 30 to 35 year olds, are moving here. There is a clash of the old culture with the new culture.”*

City Commissioner Erik Sten put this tension between the haves and have nots in the broad framework of Portland’s livability. He said, “The test for the City isn’t whether we can make it livable. I think we’ve learned how to do that. The question is whether we can make it livable for everyone” (Leeson, 2002, July 8, p. B2). Many developers in Portland, especially in the trendy Pearl District which is located just north of downtown, are speculating on real estate investments and making lots of money. The Pearl District has “the most expensive real estate in the region (Sleeth 2003)” (Howe, 2004, p. 199). There are definitely mixed feelings about this development.

- *“The boom in real estate is changing things. People want to make a profit on houses. We are getting more elitist. The Pearl District is a problem. We are going upscale and that won’t help us in building community. We don’t need each other as much.”*
- *“The redevelopment of the Pearl District, very few cities could pull off what we did here with parks, mixed-use development. In these days, with tax issues and everything, the city can still rally for arts and culture activities like the Armory Project in the Pearl.”*
- *“A lot of Portlanders are very upset about the whole Pearl District. They say, ‘We’re about neighborhoods that know each other.’ They feel like it’s not Portland.”*

The power of the local developers who are interested in the exchange value of property is driving the economics of Portland. One interviewee put it bluntly, *“Behind the scenes of this progressive culture, this town is like all other towns. It’s all about real estate.”* However, the power of developers to achieve results they desire cannot be achieved without active cooperation, or at least acquiescence, from the public sector. There were many interviewees who commented on the close relationships between the public sector and developers as evidenced by these quotes.

- *“There’s a good collegial relationship between developers and the city. They all know each other. There are situations where they don’t agree, but in general there is good dialogue.”*

- *“We have a good relationship with developers. This is a city that’s really a small town. You can’t burn bridges.”*
- *“Look at how much different developers gave to Council races. What do you think these connections mean?”*
- *“In 2000, a proposal was voted down to change the form of government to a strong mayor and city manager form. Rob Ball, a developer, sponsored the proposal. People questioned why a developer supported that. Well, it’s so that he had to make only one campaign contribution rather than five.”*

The role played by a quasi-governmental entity, the Portland Development Commission (PDC), has been crucial to urban redevelopment efforts. There was recognition by some interviewees that the PDC is an institution that has been very important in urban renewal projects over the decades: *“The PDC has trusted civic leaders that the City delegates to making deals on behalf of the public since the 1950s.”*

However, others view the PDC as antithetical to the openness and citizen-oriented culture of Portland. It was created in 1958 and “developed an autocratic organizational culture” in which “Decisions were made in closed-door deals, and public commission meetings were scripted” (Gibson, 2004, p. 61). Gibson (2004) writes that when citizens are invited into the committee decision-making process, the quality of participation is inhibited because of “(1) the unequal distribution of technical expertise between PDC staff and the committee members and (2) poor communication” (Gibson, 2004, p. 74). Using the recommended strategy of Marshall and Ozawa (2004) to even the playing-field by bringing all parties “to a comparable level of substance and process competency” (p.

164), Gibson (2004) argues in two case studies that the PDC has often allowed for high-end housing in the urban core. The areas of Portland where blacks traditionally reside have “experienced the urban renewal bulldozer” often (Gibson, 2004, p. 63).

Interviewees commented on the gentrification of Portland as well.

- *“This made homes more affordable in the historically black and low income areas. Then the newcomers who were young, white and college educated moved in.”*
- *“People of color do experience the community culture of Portland differently. A perfect example is this neighborhood. Mississippi Avenue was traditionally a black neighborhood then when they saw the cheap property here, whites developed it. Look around this restaurant, I’m the only black in it.”*
- *“It is changing and to the detriment of the African American community. It has lost its way. In the old structure, the African American community knows where it is. Now they are pushed out to Rockwood or Gresham or Parkrose.”*
- *“Gresham prohibited building any new rental units for a short time recently because they were freaked out by ‘those’ people.”*

The issue of community power can be viewed through a framework of cross-sectoral power as well. While the PDC, often working closely with developers, has influenced where and for whose benefit the urban redevelopment in Portland takes place, other institutions of the public sector – both elected officials and public administrators – have had great influence on the community culture of Portland as well.

There have been very influential elected officials in Portland such as Neil Goldschmidt and Tom McCall who are discussed in the following section. There are also influential public administrators such as Tim Grewe, City of Portland's Chief Administrative Officer, who was referred to by one interviewee as *"like a city manager,"* and the former director of the Portland Development Commission Mazziotti who was Mayor Goldschmidt's Planning Director then appointed as PDC director under Mayor Vera Katz. Many believe Mazziotti was forced from office because his style was not consistent with Portland's community culture of inclusion and transparency, although internal PDC politics are also to blame (Jaquiss, 2005, March 9).

There was consistency in the interview data that the private sector was not strong in Portland when it comes to collaborative efforts which contrasts the funding and leadership role played by Omaha's very strong corporate community. Some quotes from Portland to illustrate that include:

- *"The private sector is the weak link. As local companies get bought out by large corporations based elsewhere there is less commitment to Portland."*
- *"Today, collaborative efforts are more difficult because of the gap between the business community and city."*
- *"The public-private partnership is not here yet. The City is like, 'This is my world.'"*
- *"The private sector is not particularly generous anywhere, but in Portland it is even worse than the national average."*
- *"We fall short here of getting the private sector money and support."*

- *“With the downtown business leadership, 70% of the conversation is around ‘Our taxes are too high!’”*
- *“A special income tax for schools passed 60 – 40. A huge victory. And all these business people now say, ‘I’m sick of this extra tax. I’m moving out.’ I say – confidentially – ‘Good! Go live in Vancouver or Camus.’ The more progressive people came here because of the culture and values.”*

The corollary to the weak private sector is a theme heard frequently in the interviews which is that Portland has a strong public sector and that the local government works well with nonprofits. There were many examples of interviewees commenting on that point.

- *“The public and nonprofit sectors collaborate well. Local government has realized that they can do better by farming it out to nonprofits rather than do it themselves.”*
- *“The City and nonprofit partners work well together, but the private sector is missing.”*
- *“One of the important factors in Portland is having public officials who appreciate community groups.”*
- *“Portland does really well on collaboration. The City has taken the lead on collaboration on homelessness. Erik Sten has shown political leadership on the issue. Serena Cruz is the political leader at the County.”*

In the literature review chapter, the work of Richard Florida was discussed. His exploration of the creative class driving economic development in a community is

applied to Portland (Florida, 2002). Florida (2005) proposes the three Ts – talent, technology and tolerance – are engines for local economies. The Portlanders interviewed recognized the strong influence of the influx of the creative class professionals.

- *“And the new Portlanders are young, creative class, newcomers.”*
- *“For an area that used to be relied on for its resources, now it’s about the people.”*
- *“The young cultural creative class has somehow deemed Portland a good place to live and work.”*
- *“We’ve gone from a shipping and logging town to a creative center.”*

Part of what attracts the creative talent to Portland is the tolerance of the place, one of the three Ts, which is another influence on the community culture. Florida rates Portland high on the Bohemian-index and the Gay-index, two indicators of tolerance (Florida, 2002; Portland Development Commission, 2004). Interviewees echoed this sense of tolerance and the attractiveness of that.

- *“I’m not sure when Portland became a more open-minded, tolerant community. I presume it was in the early 1970s when the culture-shift was taking place. I can’t say definitively what makes Portland different and what makes some people get engaged. But it is different than most places. New job hires really want to live here.”*
- *“This whole impression of Portland as a weird place, open for anyone, tolerant of anyone, helps too.”*

- *“Portland is this liberal bastion in a relatively conservative state. It attracts liberal grassroots groups. They’re drawn here.”*
- *“The culture of the national government is not as tolerant as the Northwest or Portland.”*
- *“There is a tolerance for community experiments.”*

The tolerance for experimentation is an important part of the community culture. This means the community power is not held by just the elite, as is revealed in the interview data from those in Omaha. The community power in Portland is a study in tension between the expectation of citizen voices included in a process of decision-making and the influence of developers often using a quasi-governmental institution, the PDC, to encourage new housing options attractive to newcomers, but forcing others out of no-longer affordable neighborhoods. The tension between who controls resources and how those resources are used to achieve results is intimately related to the political history of Portland.

POLITICAL HISTORY OF PORTLAND

Each indicator of the political history factor of community culture will be explored below: citizen participation, land-use planning and political leadership. This structure parallels the analysis of community culture in the last chapter.

Citizen Participation and History

Many who were interviewed for the community culture phase of this research commented on how easy it is to get involved in the civic affairs of Portland. The spirit of

participation was illustrated through institutional examples, personal stories and eloquent metaphors.

- *“There’s something in the water, in the air, in the fabric of this place that makes it easier to get involved.”*
- *“I don’t know if it’s something in the water, but there’s something that motivates us to collaborate and that reinforces the culture.”*
- *“Portland has permeable boundaries. That whole idea of government for, by and of the people is very real here.”*

The question of why Portland developed into a particularly engaged community must be answered by starting with its history. The early history of Oregon was a story of explorers and pioneers. The Pacific Ocean on the pristine Oregon Coast was the destination point for Lewis and Clark’s expedition. Early settlers came on the Oregon Trail through Missouri and Nebraska to make homes in what was then the Oregon Territory. In 1859, President Buchanan signed the Congressional act that admitted the State of Oregon to the United States. Most of the state was made up of farms and ranches. A distinct individualism, discussed earlier, and later a populism was part of this history.

The consciousness of that history is still alive as reflected in the quotes from interviewees below.

- *“I think our history with Lewis & Clark and the pioneer spirit still comes through.”*
- *“Oregon is full of pioneers. We are not so removed from that history.”*

The Progressive Era brought a new dynamic to the history of Oregon and the expectations of Portlanders changed too. Robert Johnston (2003) argues that the emergence of the radical middle class in Portland grew out of the cooperation between the white-collar petite bourgeoisie who owned small businesses and the blue-collar proletariat skilled laborers who united against the elite big business owners in Portland. It was due to advocates in this radical middle class that Progressive Era reforms – such as direct democracy and the single tax – were enacted. Johnston (2003) argues in his history that Portland in the early-20th century had four residents that were heroes of radical direct democracy alongside the likes of Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, Jane Addams, Eugene Debs, W.E.B. Du Bois and Cesar Chavez.

My modest contribution is to have added Harry Lane, Will Daly, William U'Ren, and Lora Little to this pantheon of hope. Not just them, of course, but also the thousands of middling folks who made Portland during the early twentieth century the most complete democracy in the world. (Johnston, 2003, p. 277)

The same period brought a Progressive agenda to some of Portland's social service agencies, such as the YWCA which promoted an Employment Bureau for women to move them towards financial independence. The General Secretary of Portland's YWCA in 1901, Alma Hunt, and her colleagues "grounded their work in the developing philosophies and practices of professional social work while the older women remained rooted in church and elite social networks" (Dilg, 2003, p. 176). The history of Portland paralleled what many cities in the U.S. were experiencing with Progressive reformers in power struggles with conservatives (MacColl, 1979; Dilg, 2003, p. 179).

One of the legacies of the Progressive Era reforms on the politics of Portland is the commissioner form of local government. Five city commissioners sit on the Portland City Council making legislative decisions for the municipality, but each commissioner oversees one or more of the city bureaus. “Progressives believed that the commission form would lead to more efficient and effective government” (Jeydel, 2005, p. 193). The commission form has now been abandoned by all other major U.S. cities except Portland (Lansing, 2003, p. 465). A study by the Portland League of Women Voters in 1991 found that the commission form of government was “‘accountable, flexible and responsive to citizens,’ and preferable to other alternatives” (Lansing, 2003, p. 466). Many interviewees commented, overwhelmingly in positive ways, on the commission form of local government.

- *“This is the only city in the U.S. with a weak mayor and five commissioners. When you first come in here you hate the system. After a few years you fight to protect the system.”*
- *“The commission form of government is inherently democratic and collaborative.”*
- *“The thing that makes it work is the commission system in Portland. The very weakness of the commission system is its strength. The mayor is only one of five commissioners. That means the mayor must be collaborative.”*
- *“The commission form of government requires not just collaboration with officials, but between staffs.”*
- *“It’s really easy to talk to commissioners.”*

- *“I’ve lived in city manager cities where everything stops at the city manager level. But with the commissioner form of government in Portland there are multiple ports of access for citizens.”*
- *“Portland has an impressively open form of government. What I believe about our political system is: you know who has the potholes and who has the jails and people can call and get their voices heard.”*

The political history of Portland, with roots in pioneer settlers and Progressive Era reformers, led to the expectation that individuals should and could have a voice in public decisions. As one interviewee said, *“People have the expectation that they will be part of changing what Portland looks like. They believe change is possible.”* The structure of the commissioner form of city government is one institution that allows for multiple voices. Another institution for citizen participation is neighborhood associations.

Citizen Participation and Neighborhood Associations

Neighborhood associations are a strong institution in Portland and seen as an entry point for many citizens to participate in public life. Portland’s neighborhood association system began in 1973 under Mayor Neil Goldschmidt. He created the Office of Neighborhood Associations, now called the Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI), to support the work of neighborhood leaders and balance the power of the political machine that ran Portland from the 1940s into the 1960s. One interviewee recalled that history: *“Mayor Shrunn ran an old Democratic political machine and Neil ran against that by empowering neighborhood activists. Neil was able to take those activists with him.”*

National studies (Berry, Portney & Thomson, 1993; Putnam & Feldstein, 2003) point to Portland's neighborhood association system as the main avenue for citizen participation. Portlanders recognize the uniqueness of the neighborhood association both in structure and longevity. This was evident in the fact that all but one of those interviewed about the community culture of Portland in phase one of the research named the neighborhood associations as an avenue for participation. A number of examples of those quotes are below.

- *“The neighborhood associations are strong. The City and County are good at holding focus groups and public meetings.”*
- *“The City of Portland has had such an active role for neighborhood associations and a very visible one. That helps it set the climate for citizen involvement and engagement.”*
- *“The neighborhood identity lends itself to a sense of place.”*
- *“A neighbor in my building said, ‘You should get involved in the neighborhood association.’ I felt from the beginning that I’m crafting my neighborhood.”*
- *“Part of what compelled us to move here is the sense of community. Those neighborhood associations give a sense of community.”*
- *“It is really easy to get involved. The Office of Neighborhood Involvement is a really easy entry point. There are lots of neighborhood-based nonprofits and community-oriented volunteer opportunities.”*
- *“I think it’s easy. There are lots of avenues. Neighborhood associations are welcoming for the most part.”*

However, there is another view held by some who see the neighborhood association system as satisfying the lower levels of participation – the middle three rungs called tokenism on Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of participation – and not truly empowering citizens. For some of those interviewed, this tokenism reflects a way for those who don’t fit the stereotypical involved citizen – white, middle-class, educated, professionals who can speak with the bureaucrats in city government – to be effectively shut out.

- *“It’s easy to get involved in Portland. There’s always someone to listen to complaints or neighborhood concerns. But there’s not real access.”*
- *“The Baby Boomer institutions – like the neighborhood associations, University Club and Arlington Club – don’t work for me and they really don’t work for 20-somethings.”*
- *“The neighborhood association system does not work for Russian immigrants or for Asian Americans.”*
- *“They already had neighborhood associations in Northeast Portland and new whites came in and set up new organizations. Then the African Americans who had been there were like, ‘We already have them.’ And the whites said, ‘Oh, we didn’t know.’ Well, they should have asked!”*

How the neighborhood association system has dealt with conflict over its 33 years of existence is particularly revealing. In two major conflicts during the 1990s the City of Portland’s central Office of Neighborhood Involvement chose to sever ties with neighborhood groups (Witt, 2004, p. 86). This power play by the City’s ONI was essentially a move to de-certify a neighborhood association because of conflicts with the

City-control. While the interviewees in Portland saw the strengths of the neighborhood associations – albeit with the critique that the model doesn't work for all people in Portland – there is a question about how much control has actually been given to citizens.

Citizen Participation and Diversity

An important influence on Portland's community culture is the racial demographics of the city. Race relations in Oregon have been strained throughout its history. In 1844, Oregon's Territorial government passed a "lash law" which prohibited slavery but required all blacks to move out of the territory or be whipped. "In 1849, the Oregon Territorial Legislature passed a law banning 'Negroes and mulattos' from living in Oregon, for fear that by intermingling with the Native Americans population they might instill 'feelings of hostility against the white race'" (Corcoran & Greisdorf, 2001, p. 37). Although not enforced, this legislation was not repealed until 1926.

In the early 20th century, there was an immigration of a small number of blacks who came to Portland in search of service jobs, many on the railroads, and affordable residential neighborhoods. They were met with racism, but not as much as the "anti-Asian xenophobia" directed against Chinese and Japanese laborers who were already in Portland in larger numbers (Toll, 1998, p. 39). By 1940, some blacks had settled in residential neighborhoods to the east of the Willamette River, which is still the area where many African Americans live today, with Asians living predominantly on the west side of the river in or near the Old Town/Chinatown district (Abbott, 1983, p. 121). The growing black population – increasing from 2,100 in 1940 to 15,000 in 1945 – many of whom came to work in the Kaiser shipyards during World War II, "met open hostility" in

Portland characterized by discrimination on buses, tension with white unions and police harassment (Abbott, 1983, p. 129).

Langer (2003), in her book about an infamous hate crime in Portland, writes that some of the reasons Portland seemed so hostile to non-whites was because of an active Ku Klux Klan throughout much of Oregon's history (p. 211), institutionally sanctioned discrimination which determined where real estate agents could sell homes to blacks (p. 216) and ongoing tensions with police (p. 218). All this added up to the reputation among blacks that "Portland is a good place to be out of" (Langer, 2003, p. 212). This sense of racial and ethnic tensions was confirmed in a number of interviews. As one white person interviewed said, *"Can I access the system? Yes, definitely. Can anyone? No. There's distrust in communities of color about access to the system."*

Other interviewees echoed this sentiment.

- *"The early history of Oregon was racist. The civic and political leaders were Klan. The black community was moved several times. The Chinese were brought in as railroad workers."*
- *"When you talk to someone who's Caucasian, Portland is a great place. But to minorities, Portland is racist and the doors weren't as open to them as to someone else."*

The open hostility and racism may not be as prevalent today as in the past, but there was a phenomenon referred to as "Portland polite" by some interviewed, especially by African Americans. The concept, which was widely used and consistently understood,

is that real conversation about the more conflictual issues involving race is not allowed in Portland because of the veneer of politeness.

- *“Lots of people of color from other places call the culture here ‘Portland polite.’ There is an extreme avoidance of doing or saying anything that will offend anyone, which shuts down any conversation about tough issues. This is a friendly but tough place to be because you can’t have real conversations.”*
- *“On the whole Portland politeness thing there’s a tendency for people to get along and they don’t address issues. They shut down if people are at all confrontational.”*
- *“There’s this Portland politeness. Whites say, ‘You don’t get it. You don’t fit Portland.’”*

Because of the changes in both the racial mix of neighborhoods – driven in part by rising property prices explored earlier – and the tension between long-time Portlanders and newcomers, the community culture is changing with regards to the diversity of the city. As stated earlier, the population of Portland is 79.5% white. One of the reasons that may contribute to the feeling of community cohesion in Portland is that “the city was fairly homogenous racially and economically” and so “it was easier for many residents to think of themselves as members of one community and avoid divisions along lines of race, income, and inner-city-versus-suburbs that have hindered efforts to unify other cities” (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 251).

For those who don't fit the demographic majority, Portland may be unwelcoming and, if given the opportunity, they may leave. Some commented on the tension between those Portland-born and those who have moved to Portland from somewhere else.

- *“In Portland the community is not that welcoming, especially for African Americans, and they end up moving in 2 or 3 years. Many Latinos feel the same. But for African American natives of Portland, they don't know any different. They are more passive, more accepting.”*
- *“The younger people of color from here, they're oppressed and not standing up. There's almost a jealousy thing for those from here and newcomers. We're holding ourselves back. It's not the 'white man' holding us back.”*

There were also interviewees who observed different dynamics at work that led to the successes and challenges of non-whites in Portland. Whether it is education, class, networks or institutional assumptions, there was a feeling among many that there were factors holding people from achieving as much as they might.

- *“It depends on the educational and class status that the minority groups find themselves in. The working poor see the Portland around them, but don't really experience the culture here.”*
- *“Portland is a city of circles. Often times the circles don't touch.... To the degree that people of color can connect with other circles, they do very well.”*
- *“Blacks say they don't understand what other communities are doing. What angers communities of color the most is that the whites outreach is to just the traditional black organizations.”*

Besides being in the minority, other factors – such as the process-heavy way in which things are done which is explored below – may inhibit people of color from experiencing the community culture of Portland in the same way as whites.

Citizen Participation and Process-Oriented

Despite the generally homogenous community that is Portland, Putnam and Feldstein (2003) write that citizens were not always engaged: “Civic activism in Portland in 1974 was virtually identical to that of other comparable metropolitan areas” (p. 241). While “there is no way to sum up Portlanders’ experiences of access and participation in a single formula” (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 265), there is now a community culture that prioritizes process at least as much as product. “‘Process’ here means participation, a collaborative endeavor to make (or keep) Portland a livable city” (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 246). And this focus on process was probably the clearest theme in the interview data and was implied by many to be the key to understanding the community culture of Portland. Many interviewees mentioned this:

- *“The patience with process is higher in Oregon and Portland. Citizen involvement is part of the process here.”*
- *“The earlier the neighborhoods are involved, the better the process. It can be irritating because you can’t always do what you want to do.”*
- *“It’s very polite here. We want to be very inclusive. The best way to be inclusive is to have lots of meetings.”*

Yet, this process-heavy community culture may work better for some than others. As argued in the earlier section on citizen participation and diversity, people who don't fit in with the majority may not be as comfortable with the processes used.

- *“A quarter million was spent on a great process on the reservoirs issue. But look at who was actually engaged in the process. The real influence was probably coming from the predominant culture.”*
- *“People in the City Club, the boards of nonprofits, and neighborhood associations are similar. They are white, middle-class and homeowners who are comfortable with talking, with lots of process.”*
- *“An example is the packet from the Mayor's office sent to citizens who want to participate in some committee. They have to fill out the two-page application. Well, they end up saying, ‘I would like to participate, but don't want to fill out this form.’ There is a tension between people from relational cultures and the bureaucratic application process. Do they want those that are different or English language learners or homeless?”*
- *“Business people are terribly impatient with the processy stuff that government and nonprofits always do. They tend to think they don't need process, which is bullshit.”*

Often Portland officials, especially public administrators in the Bureau of Planning, Bureau of Housing and Community Development and Office of Neighborhood Involvement, are the initiators and facilitators of processes. They liaise between the city government and citizens, and the city government and developers. Forester (1987, 1993,

2000) explores the tension between interacting with the elite and citizens. The planners who are most successful in this role are those with conflict resolution skills (Forester, 2000, p. 414). It is the ideal public administrator who can mix the technical and facilitative skills in order to negotiate the tension (Box, 1998) and that takes a process that the public trusts. The role of local government in the process-oriented community culture of Portland was a sub-theme to that explored in the quotes above.

- *“This place is steeped in communication and process. It’s a pain in the butt, but necessary. When people don’t go through that process, it will fail. Everything has to be vetted through the community. This is not true in other cities. The business of government in other cities is not to run the process the same way as it is here. It’s all about the process here – sometimes ad nauseum.”*
- *“The official slogan is ‘The City that Works.’ The unofficial slogan is ‘The City that Meets.’ The community expects to meet, expects government to convene, but they don’t wait for government.”*
- *“This is a city of neighborhoods. There are neighborhood coalition offices that are intermediaries between government and neighborhoods.”*
- *“On any issue affecting the community since the 1970s, you have to get public input. That’s different than other cities. It’s well-known and people have a strong expectation of that.”*

The process-focused community culture in Portland contrasts a results-oriented culture in Omaha. There was a certain frustration voiced by some who longed for results,

not just an appropriate process, as the determinant of success. As one public official said with a certain fatigue, *“We process things to death!”*

Land-Use Planning

Portland is often referred to as a model for urban design and planning (Kunstler, 1993; Barnett, 1995; Garvin, 2000; Calthorpe, 2000). Planning issues get a lot of attention in Portland, as opposed to other locales where these planning debates are relegated to the technocrats and developers with little attention or public participation. The public consciousness of planning that explicit debates about land-use policies have highlighted over the years, was mentioned by some interviewees.

- *“Planning issues actually get coverage in the paper, so five percent of the public understands planning instead of one-half of one percent.”*
- *“Urban design standards are high in Portland. Sometimes that’s frustrating, but it is good.”*
- *“There is sort of a self-fulfilling prophecy to it. We build more bike paths and more bikers move here so we build more bike paths.”*

As far back as 1938, the legendary urbanist Lewis Mumford challenged Portlanders to envision a regional approach to planning. Many of the ideas he proposed in a 1938 speech grew out of his book *The Culture of Cities* (1938). He said in that speech to the Portland City Club:

You have here the basis for civilization on its highest scale, and I am going to ask you a question which you may not like. Are you good enough to have this country in your possession? Have you got enough intelligence, imagination and

cooperation among you to make the best use of these opportunities? (Mumford, 1939)

Portlanders rose to Mumford's challenge and years later built a system of regional planning that is the envy of many communities around the nation. With the first elected regional government in the U.S., called Metro, Portland took a tri-county – Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington – approach to planning. But even within this regional planning structure, there are distinct differences in the counties' philosophies and foci, as one interviewee observed, "*Portland's political leadership is on board with smart growth, dense growth, but the Washington County corporate community is not on board.*"

Despite the differences in perspective in the different counties, most people in the Metro region pride themselves on creating one of the most livable cities in the country. This pride was reflected when one of the interviewees said: "*Portland's development – physically, economically and culturally – is based on what makes Portland a great place to live and work, not the me-too attitude. We want to be the most livable city.*" The term livable city was used frequently in Portlanders' interviews. Often it referred to the kind of "smart growth" for which Portland has become known (Barnett, 1995, 2003; Abbott, 1983, 2001).

What makes Portlanders so proud depends on who you ask. One point of pride among some is the urban growth boundaries passed by Governor Tom McCall and the state legislature in 1973 as part of a comprehensive land-use reform package, Senate Bill 100, which limited the suburban sprawl in Portland and had other far-reaching effects.

One of Governor McCall's allies on passage of the Bill was State Representative Stafford Hansel. An interviewee recalled his critical role in passage of the land-use legislation and unique method of lobbying colleagues: "*Stafford Hansel sold land-use planning in Oregon. He was a policy leader, State Representative and hog farmer. He'd say, 'Do you know there's no law for keeping my hog farm next door to you?'*"

The creation of Senate Bill 100 was the handiwork of McCall. In his call to the Oregon Legislature to pass SB 100, Governor McCall gave a much-quoted speech in January 1973 on the need for land-use planning laws.

There is a shameless threat to our environment and to the whole quality of life – unfettered despoiling of the land. Sagebrush subdivisions, coastal condomania, and the ravenous rampage of suburbia in the Willamette Valley all threaten to mock Oregon's status as the environmental model for the nation. We are dismayed that we have not stopped misuse of the land, our most valuable finite resource. The interests of Oregon for today and in the future must be protected from grasping wastrels of the land. (Walth, 1994, p. 356)

SB 100 was viewed quite differently by those on ideologically opposed poles. Morgan (2005) describes the views of SB 100 by the two camps with public administrators being tugged at by both sides:

Oregon progressives consider it a premier example of how government can strike a socially beneficial balance between social and individual interests. Conservative populists view such regulations, whose costs are generally absorbed by property owners, as a direct attack on fundamental American liberties. The bureaucracy is

caught in the middle, since it is obligated to implement the law in face of powerful political and legal attacks. (p. 156)

The conservative populists seem to have won the latest round of the land-use battles when Oregon voters passed Measure 37 in 2004 by a margin of 61% to 39%. It reversed some of the enforcement measures in SB 100 by requiring that local governments must reimburse land-owners for the potential loss of income from not being able to develop their property because of land-use regulations. A columnist for the *Oregonian* wrote:

With Measure 37, it's far too early to measure the full impact. But the message sent was clear by its passage even in Multnomah County: The historical protectors of Oregon's land-use system, Portland's urban voters, no longer see a vision. The reason? A confusion of public process for public leadership. In short, there are too many policy wonks, too few visionaries and a critical dearth of talented salesmen. (Gragg, 2004, December 26, p. C1)

One interviewee also lamented the ideological shift in Oregonians demonstrated by the passage of Measure 37: *"Some people ask why Measure 37 passed. All these new people are moving in. It's not the Oregon we used to know. It's not the same group as when Senate Bill 100 passed."*

Another legacy of SB 100 was the requirement that all land-use policies must have public participation in order to be legitimate. This required institutions that greatly changed the avenues for citizens to be heard. And this led to a change in the community culture of Portland ushered in by political leaders who were change agents. This legacy

of SB 100 will be discussed more in the treatment of McCall's legacy in the section below.

Political Leadership

Abbott (2001) writes that in the 1970s, "Portland experienced radical and remarkable change" (p. 139). Two figures that shaped Oregon's history in the 1970s and who are largely responsible for the culture of civic engagement are Oregon Governor Tom McCall and Portland Mayor Neil Goldschmidt. One interviewee summed this up well: "*You can't underestimate how important Goldschmidt's mayoralty was. Neil was someone with a once in a century political gift. He solidified the institutional changes too. It was also coincident with Tom McCall being governor. He was open to new ideas and not beholden to vested interests. He was willing to buck the establishment. He had a journalist's skeptical viewpoint about the way it has to be done.*"

McCall was born into one of the wealthiest families in the U.S. Tom McCall's paternal grandfather, Samuel Walker McCall, was a Massachusetts governor and congressman. His maternal grandfather, Thomas William Lawson, built a Massachusetts estate called *Dreamwold* with his enormous proceeds from an 1897 scheme he concocted with William Rockefeller and Henry Rogers, of Standard Oil, to corner the copper market. Young Tom McCall spent many years of his early life along with his mother, sister and brother at *Dreamwold* while his father worked the farm back in central Oregon, which had a huge house called *Westernwold* that Thomas Lawson built as a wedding gift for his daughter and son-in-law (Walth, 1994).

McCall was a journalism major at University of Oregon and his early career as a journalist and television commentator honed his flair for language which later served him well as a politician. He gained statewide acclaim for his documentary titled *Pollution in Paradise* which condemned the practice of dumping sewage, farm runoff and industrial waste into the Willamette River that ran through downtown Portland (Abbott, 2001, p. 67). Elected as Oregon's Secretary of State in 1964, McCall almost immediately began a campaign for the governorship which he won in 1966 and held for two terms until 1974.

McCall's major legislative successes include the Beach Bill of 1967 which kept all Oregon beachfront property public, the Bottle Bill of 1971 which required a return deposit on all cans and bottles, and two Land-Use Bills, Senate Bill 10 of 1969 and Senate Bill 100 of 1973. SB 10 mandated local jurisdictions to comply with state land-use goals including preservation of open spaces and farmland, curbing development except where infrastructure such as water and sewer can reach it, and requiring local governments to complete zoning plans within two years of passage (Walth, 1994, p. 246).

McCall crafted the legislation and SB 100 was highly controversial at the time. When it looked dead in the Oregon legislature, L. B. Day, former director of the Department of Environmental Quality, was brought in to broker a deal. In what would prove to set a precedent for Portland and Oregon, SB 100 mandated citizen participation in all land-use planning at the local level. In the months after passage in an effort to gain input on the statewide planning goals the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission hosted "nearly 100 public hearings and workshops attended by more than

10,000 Oregonians” (Weitz, 1999, p. 53). Walth (1994) writes of the legacy of citizen participation of the SB 100 plan which was brokered by Day:

Most importantly, though, Day changed the means of land-use planning. The standards that guided care of the land would now be set not by bureaucrats, but by Oregonians themselves through a series of hearings. “We’re talking about planning that basically comes from the bottom up, not from the top down,” said Day. (Walth, 1994, p. 360)

SB 100 was mentioned often by interviewees as a turning point in Oregon history, a point when citizen participation and the resultant community culture of Portland was institutionalized.

- *“Senate Bill 100. It all starts back there. The genesis of SB 100 was the idealism and altruism of the 1970s.”*
- *“SB 100 is really key. Neil Goldschmidt is also key. He embraced an idea and codified it. He was behind the creation of Pioneer Square, Tom McCall Waterfront Park, stopping the Mt. Hood Freeway.”*
- *“The leadership of Oregon has included some larger than life figures. Tom McCall is premier among them, followed by Neil Goldschmidt. McCall hooked into a deep sense that Oregon is special and everyone got behind that. He stopped Californians from subdividing the state. That’s the motive behind Senate Bill 100.”*

While Measure 37 discussed earlier did change some key components of McCall’s greatest legislative legacy, it did not change the bottom-up requirement for

hearings and citizen input on land-use matters. This institution of participation on land-use issues throughout Oregon – as well as other institutions born at that time – was consistent with the process that Neil Goldschmidt embraced as mayor of Portland.

- *“Goldschmidt gets the credit for seeing how mutually supportive goals and institutions can support each other. These institutions include the neighborhood association system, Metro, and the state land-use planning program.”*

Goldschmidt grew up in Eugene, Oregon, graduated from University of Oregon and attended law school at University of California–Berkeley during the turbulent years of 1964-1967. He moved to Portland and served as a Multnomah County Legal Aid attorney and activist before his election to the Portland City Council in 1970.

Goldschmidt, at the age of 32, won his race for mayor in 1972 and served until President Jimmy Carter appointed him Secretary of Transportation in 1979.

Two of his first moves as mayor were to reinvigorate the Planning Commission by appointing co-presidents – Hardy Myers, who acted as the *pro bono* legal counsel for Central City Concern in the early years of the organization and later served as Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives and Oregon Attorney General; and, George “Bing” Sheldon, a Portland architect who has served since its inception as the Vice Chair of Central City Concern’s Board of Directors – who were tasked with involving citizens, and to reorganize the Bureau of Planning to give it more power in the City’s structure (Abbott, 1983). Goldschmidt focused on planning issues, in particular the vision he championed for a renewed urban core, including inner-city neighborhoods and downtown, through public transportation. Goldschmidt embraced the Central City Plan

for downtown Portland which was chaired by Dean Gisvold, the current Chair of Central City Concern's Board. In March 1988, a new Central City Plan was adopted after a 4-year process that included much citizen input (Oliver, 1989, February).

Portland historian Carl Abbott (1983) writes that "Goldschmidt had the ability to implement significant parts of his planning strategy. He was a skillful politician who stepped into a power vacuum at the start of the 1970s" (p. 180). Goldschmidt's skill was partly due to his ability to tap the growing desire of citizens to be actively involved in local decision making, and partly his activist background. One interviewee said, "*In Portland, the sense of wanting to be involved is even more salient, especially since Neil Goldschmidt's administration, probably because he was a civil rights activist.*"

A dynamic in the history of the 1970s Portland grew out of the "active and often angry neighborhood organizations" (Abbott, 1983, p. 190). In response to this, Goldschmidt proposed a major structural innovation that encouraged positive citizen engagement in 1974. He established the Office of Neighborhood Associations (ONA), which was discussed in the section on citizen participation and neighborhood associations above. This neighborhood governance system sparked an evolution of citizen democracy in the city (Clary, 1986; Thomson, 2001). By providing technical assistance, training, funding, and real decision-making power to neighborhoods, the ONA "legitimized activism and built it into the official life of the city" (Putnam & Feldstein, 2003, p. 247). Many interviewees told stories of the Goldschmidt era, especially the fight to stop the Mt. Hood Freeway. One interviewee said, "*There is a strength to the neighborhood association system. There are stories of stopping the Mt. Hood Freeway.*"

Stopping the Mt. Hood Freeway was used a number of times as an example of citizens rising up against the City and, ultimately, of the political wisdom of Mayor Neil Goldschmidt in allying himself with those neighborhood groups in the affected area. Lansing (2003) writes, “No issue of the 1970s was debated more hotly than the east-west Mt. Hood Freeway proposed for southeast Portland” (p. 405). The neighborhood groups successfully lobbied against the freeway which would have cut through a vibrant section of the city and then diverted the federal money earmarked for the freeway to develop the light-rail system of public transportation. In a later retrospective article in the *Willamette Week*, the death of the Mt. Hood Freeway was seen as transformational for the community culture of Portland: “The murder not only saved 1,750 households in Southeast Portland from the wrecking ball, it also established Portland’s philosophy of urban livability – the idea that cities are for people, not just for commerce and cars” (Young, 1999). The neighborhoods were more empowered coming out of that victory against the Mt. Hood Freeway, as reflected in these quotes:

- *“The inner Southeast was loyal to Neil because Neil saved that neighborhood from being destroyed by the Mt. Hood Freeway.”*
- *“Neil battled against Frank Ivancie on the Mt. Hood Freeway. Ivancie was an old fashion machine politician – totally lacking in vision – a political hack with loyal political hacks around him.”*

Killing the Mt. Hood Freeway was one of the legacies of Goldschmidt. He was credited with creating then implementing a vision that included a strong downtown, inner-city neighborhood and public transportation system. Goldschmidt’s Portland

Downtown Plan was passed in 1972, the same year as SB 100. Gragg (2004, December 26) writes of the Downtown Plan, “For those who don’t know their Portland catechism, the ’72 plan laid the groundwork for downtown’s comeback with such catalytic projects as Tom McCall Waterfront Park, the transit mall, light rail and Pioneer Courthouse Square” (p. C1). Many interviewees mentioned the crucial role that the Goldschmidt inspired downtown redevelopment played in Portland’s evolution.

- *“Neil had a vision of using real estate and business as the anchor of downtown but he also brought the white middle class along, which is the process we now call gentrification. We see now Portland has a vibrant inner city with vibrant neighborhoods. There are jobs downtown and public transportation to bring people downtown. Also, people who want to live in neighborhoods close by.”*
- *“Neil had to get them to buy his vision of a transit mall and lightrail and what a downtown can be. No models existed at that point. I would have loved to have asked Neil at the time, ‘Where did you get this idea?’”*
- *“Neil realized early on that he needed to prove himself to the business community downtown. He was voted in as liberal and left-wing, and he was Jewish to boot. But that was not a disadvantage in Portland because his grandfather, Morry Goldschmidt, was a highly respected political science professor at Reed.”*

Goldschmidt was also credited by many of those interviewed with using power and surrounding himself with people who understood how to use power to achieve his goals.

- *“Had Neil been the center of strong mayor system, it wouldn’t have worked. He’d run roughshod over everybody.”*
- *“Not a lot of control left Neil’s office.”*
- *“He had absolutely brilliant people around him. There was a rare combination of brilliant vision and strategy in the Mayor’s office and people in the bureaucracy who were very helpful in putting the plans in place.”*
- *“Neil had a brilliant way of strategically keeping people on board. Neil laid the foundation and others continued to build on it, even after he went to DC.”*
- *“He was the key figure in developing the progressive World War II culture of this town. He had a group of people that rivaled the Brooklyn Democratic Party. They knew power very well.”*
- *“In the Goldschmidt-era, political power was used to reinforce the values of an inclusive, fair, open and safe community.”*

CONCLUSIONS TO PHASE 1 RESEARCH IN PORTLAND

There are some broad themes which have emerged over this analysis of the community culture of Portland. First, is on the factor of social capital. In Portland, there is high bridging social capital. The literature and interviews both support the idea that there is a “Portland way” understood by Portlanders as networks of connectedness, norms of public participation and trust in the processes used for civic engagement. There is also allowance for experimentation in government programs and social services delivery. While questions have arisen in recent years about whether the Portland way is changing,

the belief expressed by most is that there is still a fundamental way of doing business in Portland that has been consistent in recent times.

Second, is on the factor of community power. If framed in the classic debate between pluralists and elite theorists, Portland has more in common with the pluralist theory structures of multiple arenas for participation of different citizens. However, the power of real estate developers in Portland – aided by the quasi-governmental PDC – supports a growth machine theory understanding of land-exchange value as the overarching driver of the local economy often excluding from the beneficiaries the poor and non-white population in the name of “progress.” This is somewhat kept in check by strong public sector leaders – both elected officials and public administrators – that are creative, compassionate, collaborative and willing to flex their governmental muscles by using policy tools to force development of some affordable housing amidst the rising new construction. It is important to the success of community collaboratives, especially when dealing with issues such as homelessness and affordable housing, to have the appropriate public sector leaders at the table. These two interrelated issues are on the public consciousness partly because of a local government committed to addressing them.

Third, is on the factor of political history. The early history of pioneers settling Oregon and Progressive reformers pushing for transparency and efficiency certainly had an influence on Portland’s institutional infrastructure. There is a strong expectation of citizen participation, albeit with tensions around which types of citizens are welcome and comfortable at the process-heavy meetings. There was also a “collaboration fatigue” that was heard from those interviewed. Portland has a long history of land-use planning

enhanced by the passage of Oregon Senate Bill 100 with its requirements for urban growth boundaries and public participation in land-use laws. And finally, two towering figures dominate the political leadership in Oregon; Governor Tom McCall and Portland Mayor then Oregon Governor Neil Goldschmidt, whose legacy includes neighborhood associations, a downtown plan and growth plan that was later coined transit-oriented design, and urban renewal. Both McCall and Goldschmidt consciously worked to institutionalize the kind of participation that has become expected in Portland today.

PHASE 2: COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS OF CCC

In Phase 2 of the data collection, three sources were used to understand what led to the success and challenges of Central City Concern with attention to the community culture of Portland. These sources were (1) a focus group with the executive staff and board leadership of CCC, (2) interviews with partners of CCC, and (3) document analysis of key documents for CCC.

Paralleling the structure of the previous chapter's Phase 2 on OACCH, this section on Phase 2 of the research will begin with an overview of the history and philosophy of CCC. The remaining part of this section will be structured around answering the primary and secondary research questions.

Central City Concern's History

The organization that morphed into CCC began in 1979 as a loose coalition called the Burnside Consortium. The model at the start was to partner with and act as a pass-through of funding for the City of Portland, which had responsibility for public safety and housing, and Multnomah County, which had responsibility for substance abuse treatment and physical and mental health services (Wood, 2004, p. 12). The original commitment to addressing the issue of substance abuse was predicated on the multi-year funding received from the National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse for the Public Inebriate Project, directed by Richard Harris, the third person hired at CCC and currently the Executive Director. With the federal funding CCC received, Harris organized the Homeless Alcohol and Drug Intervention Network (HADIN), through which agencies

coordinate services, improve service delivery, and track clients' progress. HADIN has been meeting every week since 1980.

In 1982, the Burnside Consortium took over operation of the Hooper Detoxification Center from Multnomah County. In 1985, Harris started a van service named Central City Concern Hooper Inebriate Emergency Response Service (CHIERS) which was coordinated with the 911 system to pick up people intoxicated on the streets. In the one-year period from July 2003 through June 2004, Hooper admitted 10,588 people into the sobering station and CHIERS picked up 3,165 people (Wood, 2004, p. 28). The CCC's coordination of picking up and sobering those intoxicated on the streets of Portland has been praised by local law enforcement, elected officials and public administrators (Wood, 2004, p. 26).

Those interviewed who knew the history of CCC talked about the roots of the organization going "*from an umbrella to a service provider. It morphed because of the failure of providers and a crisis of leadership*" in the homeless services arena. The leader in crisis referred to by the interviewee was Michael Stoops, the charismatic former Executive Director of the largest shelter in Portland called Baloney Joe's, who resigned in 1987 amid scandal. CCC filled the void left in the homeless services arena when Stoops left to, ultimately, become Executive Director of the National Coalition for the Homeless in Washington, DC. CCC stepped into the void by growing its housing operations and supportive services.

The Burnside Consortium quickly moved from passing through funds for services to addicts to rehabilitating Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels in order to provide

affordable and sober housing. The first Executive Director, Andy Raubeson said, “After a considerable amount of soul-searching, it was decided to amend the organization mission to include maintenance and repair of those facilities managed by non-profit organizations” (Wood, 2004, p. 17). By 1981, the Burnside Consortium was managing the Butte Hotel with 38 units, the Estate Hotel with 163 units and the Rich Hotel with 42 units (Wood, 2004, p. 17).

One of those interviewed who was familiar with the early history of CCC said, “*What it set out to do originally was to be a pass through. But once it became the provider of residential, it became extraordinarily successful.*” This turning point in the organization is important to examine because it provides insight into CCC’s activity on one of the two major issues tracked in this dissertation research, affordable housing. The close partnership, at times with some tension, between CCC and PDC led to many opportunities for CCC to develop additional affordable housing units (Wood, 2004, p. 85).

An executive staff member at CCC said that “*the base cause of homelessness is the lack of affordable and acceptable housing.*” When asked what was the solution to homelessness the executive answered, “*Create more affordable housing and give rent assistance to others.*” But what CCC does goes beyond just fulfilling the need for affordable housing, the executive said, “*To the outside world I just refer to it as housing, but what we are really doing is creating supportive communities.*” Almost all of the CCC-owned housing is drug and alcohol free. “*It isn’t the treatment that is making the difference, it is the sober relationships that the housing is offering to people,*” said the

executive. When building or rehabbing a property *“we consciously create spaces for social interaction in sober environments.”*

This particular focus on affordable sober housing is implied in its mission through the phrase “access to housing,” but is also quite clearly the priority of the agency when looking at the property it owns, rehabs and manages. Because they are the largest property developer and owner in downtown Portland, they are viewed as essential whenever conversations about downtown development take place. To illustrate that point, a CCC executive staff member said of the Portland Business Alliance (PBA), which is the Greater Portland area’s Chamber of Commerce, *“I go to PBA meetings as a property owner, not as a service provider. That’s a huge difference in perspective.”*

The second issue tracked in this research is the Homeless Management Information System or HMIS. There is a commitment to HMIS by CCC, but the implementation has been only somewhat successful. One issue is the volume of services provided by CCC; another is the human resources needed to collect, enter and maintain the data. The system got mixed reviews from homeless agency directors. One said, *“HMIS was a pain in the ass for us to put together. We have so many people, so many programs, so many questions we ask people. Originally, HMIS was set up for interagency use. But they are not always trusting of each other.”*

Another interviewee said, referring to the different software systems used, *“There are 20 or more local agencies on the ServicePoint system who get HUD homeless money, but it is not integrated with the State system. We struggled with HMIS. We are behind the deadlines Congress set on this, but so are most other Continuums of Care. We had a*

meeting between the State and Multnomah County. It was really a turf battle. 'We want to use this, not that!' Some of these small nonprofits in town just don't have the capacity to do this. But the IT person from Multnomah County said they'd do service for any of the nonprofits."

On the issue of affordable housing CCC has succeeded. But on implementation of HMIS, CCC has not yet succeeded. The primary research question which is answered below asks how, with regards to and beyond these two issues, the community culture of Portland affects the success of this collaborative.

Primary Research Questions Answered

In the first section of this chapter, the community culture of Portland was analyzed. The broad themes that emerged on the factor of social capital, community power and political history were discussed. The primary research question asks whether this community culture examined has an effect on the success of CCC. Before answering that directly here, there is a short exploration of whether CCC is, indeed, successful. The definition of success used in this dissertation is whether the internal partners and external stakeholders think the collaborative has achieved its self-defined goals.

The CCC website articulates its self-defined goal, in the form of a mission and operating philosophy:

The Mission of CENTRAL CITY CONCERN is to provide pathways to self-sufficiency through active intervention in poverty and homelessness. It is the core philosophy of CENTRAL CITY CONCERN that in order for a person to successfully achieve self-sufficiency, they must not only have access to housing,

support services and employment opportunities, but also must be building positive relationships with those who have had common experiences and can offer support. (Downloaded from <http://www.centralcityconcern.org> on November 24, 2006)

No one interviewed said that CCC was *not* successful in achieving its mission.

Variations of this quote appeared numerous times, "*Central City has been very successful.*" While the overall success of CCC was not disputed by anyone, the question of how the context – explored by analyzing the community culture of Portland – affects that success is a more difficult one to answer. When asked if CCC was successful, one interviewee said, "*They are very successful in reaching their goals.*" Another framed CCC's success in terms of achieving the goal of developing affordable housing: "*They are the largest holder of affordable housing in Oregon. When they finish the Ramada project, they'll go over the number of units in L.A.*" CCC is definitely a major player in the arena of affordable housing, and because developing and managing affordable housing is a goal of CCC, it is successful. With that general affirmation of CCC's success, the question raised by the primary research question is how that success is affected by the community culture of Portland.

The data collected and analyzed in answer to the primary research question supports that there are at least four ways in which the community culture of Portland affects the success of CCC. First, because Portland has a strong public sector, the key players in CCC have consciously nurtured relationships of trust with elected officials and public administrators. Second, the community culture of Portland allows for

experimentation and innovation which CCC has done through its entrepreneurial approach to its operations. Third, there are institutions in Portland, many of which sprang up in the 1970s, that support collaborative practices which CCC has used in successful ways. Fourth, the issues of homelessness and affordable housing are on the consciousness of Portland's citizens, so CCC is not fighting to bring visibility to the issues themselves. Each of these four answers to the primary research question will be explored further below.

Strong Public Sector. The strong public sector in Portland meant that CCC had to have allies in the local governments – City, County and Metro – in order to be successful. Interviewees involved in or familiar with all three of these levels of local government confirmed that CCC had strategically built alliances with public administrators and elected officials. One observed, “*They have been successful at political positioning.*” Another said, “*They have access to the political process.*” And another CCC insider observed that “*Central City is known for its political acumen. We understand the political nature of this place and how to do things. Not just how to respond to RFPs, but affecting what the money will be for.*”

An illustration of just how good relations are between CCC and the local government is that Ed Blackburn, the number two executive staff person at CCC, was given a six-month sabbatical “*on loan to Multnomah County to help them fix their mental health system. He created a process for community consensus behind the mental health system for the County.*”

Because the genesis of CCC was as a city-initiated umbrella organization to disperse federal funding on public inebriates, the original bylaws required three directors to be appointed by the city, three by Multnomah County and the remaining three appointed by those six. The first three Executive Directors of CCC – Andy Raubeson (1979-84), Don Clark (1984-87) and Margaret Strachan (1987-89) – were all people who knew their ways around politics. Raubeson, who left CCC to replicate the agency’s model in Los Angeles, was called “*a political animal*” by one interviewee who knew him well. Clark was the former Multnomah County Sherriff and County Executive who negotiated a historic deal with downtown business representative Roger Shiels. Strachan was a Portland City Commissioner and community activist. One interviewee who was present at CCC in those early years said of the importance of the relationship between CCC and political bodies in those early years: “*No other agency had that kind of political access. You need good communication between bodies. We performed well and they gave us more business.*”

The Clark-Shiels Agreement signed in 1984 was the “*critical document that cemented the relationship between the City, County and Central City,*” said one interviewee. It guaranteed a no-net-loss housing policy, later enshrined in the Downtown Housing Preservation Partnership, in which the number of units lost to development in the downtown area must be replaced with the same number of affordable rehabbed or new units (Wood, 2004). Clark negotiated the deal with Shiels, an attorney who represented the downtown businesses community. It also clarified the City’s role as providing PDC funds to develop or rehabilitate housing units in the downtown core, the

County's role as providing funds for mental health and substance abuse, and CCC's role as providing services and transitional housing for the homeless.

One interviewee said, in support of the proposition that having a strong public sector in Portland matters to the success of CCC, *"There was a huge stock of run down old hotels in Portland that provided stock for rehabs. But other places had that. In Portland, we had a local government that supported the idea."* Echoing the argument for the importance of a strong local government that supports the collaborative's efforts, another person said, *"Our model for this continuum doesn't always work elsewhere. Other cities don't have the support of the City and County."*

Experimentation. The community culture of Portland allows the experimentation and risk-taking that CCC does, in contrast to the more risk-adverse culture of Omaha. Recalling a quote included in the section from Phase 1 – *"There is a tolerance for community experiments"* – people do see in Portland an attitude of openness to new ideas. A person familiar with CCC made this connection explicitly: *"Being located in Portland made a big difference to the success of Central City Concern. Portland is willing to try some things that other cities aren't."* Another interviewee observed that this willingness to experiment comes from the top. Referring to the top two executives, the interviewee said, *"With Richard and Ed they've never been stronger. They are risk-takers."* Richard Harris was the employee who, after heading the Hooper Detox Center, and founding CHIERS and HADIN, started the Portland Alternative Health Center (PAHC) in 1990 under the CCC umbrella, to treat recovering addicts with acupuncture. Demonstrating the entrepreneurship of CCC, the funding streams that have sustained

PAHC over the years have been cobbled together from multiple sources. Woods (2004) writes,

This isn't an agency that identifies one source of funding and laments when it's gone. Instead, the energy is focused on finding funding that fits the needs of the clients, continuing the work in the funding climate that exists at the time. (p. 35)

Today, CCC has an annual budget of over \$30 million and employs approximately 500 people. Yet the culture is not about meeting a profitable bottom-line, but is based on an ethic of care for those addicted and homeless. As one interviewee said of CCC, *"They are more entrepreneurial. They got into property development and management. Their indirect and cost allocation is spread across housing development. They run their projects thinner from a repair and maintenance standpoint. They'll err on the side of providing for clients over having buildings repaired."*

The balance between performing well fiscally and programmatically was mentioned by many of those interviewed. A public administrator who has overseen many contracts with CCC said, *"You never have to worry about performance with Central City. They are innovative because they have this whole business enterprise wing too. Their businesses compete very well against others. They serve their mission well."* The same public administrator went on to observe that the Executive Director of CCC can make the sometimes hard business decisions that may include closing down enterprises. *"Like when the acupuncture clinic's expansion wasn't successful, Richard closed them down."*

As in the example of the PAHC, overall the CCC has found multiple funding streams including grants from federal, state, county and city governments, rent from

properties it owns, service fees from various programs, property management, donations from over 3,500 individuals, businesses, civic and religious groups, and foundation support, as well as revenue generated from business enterprises in which 70% of employees are recovering addicts and/or formerly homeless (Retrieved from <http://www.centralcityconcern.org> on November 24, 2006). These enterprises illustrate the entrepreneurial approach to serving the homeless that sets CCC apart from so many other nonprofits around the country. These business enterprises and the year they began are listed below.

- Central City Concern Workforce Program/West Portland One Stop (1992): Assists individuals and families in achieving self-sufficiency by identifying and teaching the necessary job skills to obtain and sustain employment.
- Central City Painting (1999): An interior/exterior painting service.
- Central City Janitorial (2000): A janitorial business providing services to our own housing and office sites as well to other local businesses and agencies.
- Central City Property Maintenance (2000): Building Maintenance, renovations, and repair from our buildings and other low income housing providers.
- Second Chance Furniture Warehouse (2002): Provides hotels with a new donation opportunity, and good quality, used furniture to low-income housing providers and residents.
- Clean & Safe (2004): Maintains Portland's status as one of America's Most Beautiful Cities by picking up litter, keep the sidewalks clean, remove graffiti, and contributing to public safety.

Although the “social enterprise” model (Schramm, 2006) in which a 501(c)(3) corporation has profit-centers under the nonprofit umbrella, exists in many places, the environment of Portland has allowed this to thrive at CCC. Trying new things, taking risks, allowing experimentation is part of the community culture and CCC has worked successfully within that community culture.

Institutions that support collaboration. Institutions that support collaborative practices are part of the community culture of Portland. One long-time Portlander put it succinctly, “*Collaboration has been institutionalized.*” Another who works in a provider agency said, “*When we go to national conferences, Portland is a model for collaboration.*” And CCC is a successful collaborative that has used existing institutions and cross-sectoral partnerships to achieve its goals. A quote from Barbara Roberts, former Governor and former Central City Concern Board member illustrates this:

Central City Concern believes in partnerships in the broadest sense of the word. They have always been able to work with a breadth of people and a breadth of needs. If you look at the agencies they work with across all kinds of government and nonprofit lines, the communities they’ve worked with, the alliances they’ve built, and even the funding mechanisms they’ve brought together across every border and boundary – that’s the kind of partner that most of us want to work with. (Wood, 2004, p. 58)

CCC has effectively used those institutions in order to successfully achieve its goals. Just as argued above with regards to the political acumen of CCC in a strong local government town, so too CCC has used those collaborative institutions – such as

neighborhood associations, land-use planning laws that require citizen input and even a commissioner form of city government that allows citizens access to bureau heads because they are elected City Commissioners – to nurture relationships that lead to success.

CCC has used these institutions in order to further its own agenda. The majority of properties owned by CCC are in the Old Town/Chinatown neighborhood. Some are in the traditional downtown business district and another big, newly opened project, 8 N.W. 8th, is on the edge of the trendy Pearl District. In an article about Richard Harris that appeared in *The Oregonian*, the issue of neighborhood tensions was raised. “The agency’s concentration of housing in Old Town has raised concerns in the neighborhood, especially among businesspeople who see a wider range of incomes as a key to vitality” (Leeson, 2004, September 9, p. B3). But an administrator in City Commissioner Erik Sten’s office credited Harris with smoothing over tensions with neighbors: “‘He plays everything straight and is not confrontational,’ Durston said. ‘I think the businesspeople see him as a reasonable advocate they can work with’” (Leeson, 2004, September 9, p. B3).

The Pearl District neighbors also raised concerns about the 8 N.W. 8th project on their edge when it was in the planning phase. One neighbor said of the tension, “*The more established a nonprofit is, the better. Central City Concern is very established and supported by public and private dollars. In the Pearl, it’s challenging for nonprofits.*” Because of the reputation, and conscious relationship-building with neighbors through the Pearl District Neighborhood Association, the CCC project was ultimately supported.

Many stories exist about how the leadership of CCC has utilized the land-use planning framework in Portland to successfully achieve its goals. One story involves the CCC's long-serving Board Chair Dean Gisvold, who chaired the Mayor's 1971 Citizen Advisory Committee that developed the Downtown Plan that mapped the future of the urban core of Portland including the maintenance of the area's affordable housing units. The Downtown Plan was revisited 15 years later, boundaries were expanded and it was named the Central City Plan.

Gisvold was later appointed to an advisory committee of the Portland Development Commission, the City's urban renewal agency, to establish a Housing Guidelines Plan for the Lloyd Center area on the inner-east side of the Willamette River. A cross section of developers, affordable housing advocates, residents, and local land owners were also appointed to the advisory committee, the typical kind of citizen participation required under Oregon law. When it came time to issue the report, the required amount and timelines for development of affordable housing were woefully inadequate, according to Gisvold (personal communication, 2007, June 9). He had seen what happened to affordable housing in the Pearl District development and was skeptical of the recommendations in the draft report. He threatened to file a minority report and made his argument in a public PDC meeting. After two more meetings, the PDC staff ultimately agreed to add the guidelines, goals, and timelines proposed by Gisvold with very minor changes. Two years later, it turned out that a dilapidated Ramada Inn in the Lloyd Center district became available. CCC purchased it in accordance with the Housing Guideline Plan's goals and timelines and will remodel it for affordable housing,

and PDC can boast that it is meeting the plan's requirements (personal communication, 2007, June 9).

In another story, Richard Harris succeeded the previous Executive Director of CCC, Debbie Wood, as a member of the River District Implementation Committee which set the general goals for the River District on the inner-west side of the Willamette River. Harris was later appointed along with for-profit and nonprofit developers, housing advocates, planners and other citizens to the Housing Taskforce, convened to make more specific recommendations on income and unit targets for the River District (personal communication, 2007, June 18). Harris advocated for more affordable housing units to be developed in accordance with a formula that reflected the same distribution of income levels of residents in the River District as in the City of Portland as a whole. The same formula is also used in the new South Riverfront District. The City of Portland would embrace this basic argument when they adopted regulations requiring PDC to set aside 30% of all urban renewal funding to be used for housing made available to residents below a certain income level (personal communication, 2007, June 18). The point to both these stories is that by voluntarily being involved in and strategically using the institutions required for land-use planning in Portland, CCC is very consciously keeping the agenda of affordable housing on the radar.

The relationships between CCC and the institutions of the local government infrastructure, namely the elected City Commissioners and public administrators, has been another study in conscious relationship and trust building. One example of this is CCC's relationship with the PDC that has allowed for many of CCC's rehab projects by

extending tax increment financing. “It is a partnership based on trust, a shared vision of the future and confidence that the ongoing relationship can best serve the interests of both agencies and the community,” writes Wood (2004, p. 85). Another example is the federal grants from HUD that are put into the City’s Continuum of Care each year. In 2005, there were \$9.2 million and CCC was the lead agency. Although staff at the City’s Bureau of Housing and Community Development “*did lots of the writing and collaborative planning, I think the relationship with Central City works here quite well,*” said one involved in the process. CCC has benefited from having strong advocates on the City Council, which goes back to the earlier argument that a characteristic of Portland’s community culture is the strong public sector with which CCC has nurtured relationships. One interviewee said of the connection between local government and the issue, “*We have always had the political will at the City and County to address the symptoms of homelessness.*”

Consciousness of Homelessness. As stated in the last chapter, the number of homeless in 2007 in Omaha was 1,870 (Sloan, 2007, June 4), while in Portland the number was 1,438 (Anderson, 2007, February 27). Homelessness may be something that is on the minds of citizens anywhere, but the Portlanders interviewed seemed to think there was something unique about the City’s attitude. One made the connection between context and collaborative success quite directly: “*Yes, being in Portland has something to do with the success of Central City. Being so liberal, we embrace the homeless and don’t try to run them out of town.*” Another viewed the difference through a partisan lens, but also

supported the context and collaborative success connection: *“Portland is a heavily Democratic city and views homeless issues more as social problems rather than crimes.”*

In a phenomenon public administration scholars have called “the race to the bottom” (Shafritz & Russell, 2005, p. 162) there are some cities where not providing services to the homeless or needy is a point of pride because they think it will attract fewer homeless. One interviewee recognized this in the reasoning about why homeless people come to Portland. *“People from California come up here because we have such great services. Some mayors don’t want these Continuum of Care grants because it might attract more homeless people.”*

One interviewee who has lived in other places observed that *“In Portland we just have such an understanding of others. We assume that the homeless person on the street is a person, not some lesser form of life.”* In Portland, because of the higher prices of housing, the homeless population is growing said one interviewee: *“My concern on homelessness is that as Portland has gentrified, as the Goldschmidt vision has been realized, we’ve actually created more homelessness.”* And another saw the policy development system in Portland in contrast to other places, *“We’ve created a culture in Portland where it’s unacceptable to make policy around homelessness without the homeless at the table.”*

Additionally, there were some interviewees who mentioned the weather as a factor in Portland being more conducive to the homeless than Omaha: *“The climate is different here. People can live on the streets all year around in Portland. You can’t live on the streets in Omaha.”*

Whatever the reasons for the homeless in Portland, the metropolitan area has designed a 10-year Plan to end chronic homelessness (Citizens Commission on Homelessness, 2004, December). This Plan has been credited with a 39% drop in the number of homeless people in Portland over a two year period (Anderson, 2007, February 27). The basic strategy is one articulated by Gladwell (2006, February 13) in his *New Yorker* article titled “Million Dollar Murray” about a homeless man who cost the city of Reno a million dollars in social, medical, legal and other services. Referred to as the housing first model, it is meant to move the chronically homeless into permanent housing as a first step, after which they can receive appropriate supportive services, rather than through a series of housing option.

Some people respond well to the system’s design – which moves people from emergency shelters, to short-term shelters, to transitional housing and then to permanent housing. For others, however, the system merely ferries people from service to service and then back out onto the street. (Citizens Commission on Homelessness, 2004, December, p. 2)

Secondary Research Questions Answered

The first of the secondary research questions is, What other factors lead to the success of community collaboratives? This question invites analysis of those reasons for CCC’s success that may not be related to the community culture of Portland. A factor that leads to the success of CCC is employing a strong staff and board. One of the most consistent themes in the interview data was, indeed, the level of respect for the board and executive staff of CCC. But respect for a good management team could be a factor in

success anywhere, not just in Portland. The universality of CCC's success which was captured in the quote from one interviewee – *“The people are more important than the places”* – was expressed by many. But it was also acknowledged that there have been ups and downs in the staff leadership and it has taken a long time to get where they are. One person interviewed said, *“Central City has been through a lot of rockiness.”* As overheard at a CCC board meeting, *“How can others do what we did? It didn't happen overnight, but was an evolutionary process over 27 years.”*

And while it has taken a long time to achieve success, again and again those interviewed pointed to the key leaders – Executive Director Richard Harris, Director of Health and Recovery Services Ed Blackburn, Chair of the Board Dean Gisvold, and Vice Chair of the Board Bing Sheldon – as the greatest reasons for the success of CCC.

- *“Richard Harris and his board would be politically effective in any jurisdiction if that place was progressive in housing and homelessness policies.”*
- *“Richard Harris is a visionary. Ed Blackburn is one of the most politically astute guys I know.”*
- *“Harris is very smooth with people in the establishment. He understands conflict avoidance very well.”*
- *“Richard is a great mix of entrepreneur and manager.”*
- *“Richard thinks like no other person on the planet. He's innovative!”*
- *“Richard Harris is brilliant.”*
- *“Richard is very good on policy development, but also on management.”*
- *“Richard Harris is very astute and their board is well connected politically.”*

An interviewee who had thought a lot about the organizational culture of CCC said: *“Dean Gisvold is very relationship- based in the way he leads. He understands his role as Board President is to share the context, the history, how they got to where they are. This is a very high-context organization which is not the prominent type in the U.S.”*

The unique leadership and longevity of Gisvold and Sheldon was also mentioned by Wood (2004):

Dean Gisvold has served on the Board since 1980 and has been Chair since 1987. Bing Sheldon is an original Board member and has always served as Vice-Chair. Some people are visionaries who see the big picture. Others are realists who make things happen. Dean and Bing are both. (p. 58)

The board and staff are a major factor in the success of CCC, but this is true of any collaborative. Strong leaders can make a difference anywhere.

The second secondary research questions is, What are barriers to the success of community collaboratives?

One big barrier to success is when people don't attend to the norms within the community culture of Portland. This goes back to a theme discussed earlier, the idea – often voiced by non-whites – of “Portland polite.” Abbott (2001) addresses this when he writes about the big table at which “anyone can sit in who accepts the rules (politeness is important) and knows how to phrase ideas in the language of middle class policy discussion (the goal is to do ‘what’s good for the city’)” (p. 151). CCC would certainly be considered one of the “‘well-behaved’ advocacy groups” that would be invited to the table for civil discussion (p. 151). This was confirmed by what one interviewee said,

“They work well with others and are competent, but they are in it for the long-run. They’ve been major players in downtown development for a long time.”

Not being well-behaved or “reasonable” is a barrier to success. Conflict is particularly difficult given this community culture. A service provider said, *“People choose to come here because they have this populist idea that everyone has a voice and one leader does not carry all the ideas. But people in Portland don’t like conflict.”* An example of this is when the Portland Organizing Project, an Industrial Areas Foundation affiliate now known as Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good, used confrontational protests to force a PDC and developers coalition to include affordable housing on the agenda for a River District development and were uninvited to the table for further discussion (Abbott, 2001, p. 152).

Another barrier that was mentioned by a few of the directors of homeless services agencies was that of competition. While many interviewed reflected positively on the inter-agency collaboration between CCC and other nonprofits, it is important to acknowledge that recognition of the positive relationships with CCC was not universal. CCC is viewed by other homeless service agencies as the 800-pound gorilla; well-funded and not in need as much as others. One agency director said, *“Richard and I get along fine. It was the previous directors. But Steve Rudman when he was at BHCD took a map of the city and different agencies were given different territories.”*

The third secondary research question is, What actions can partners within the community collaboratives take to promote success? A focus on relationships within the collaborative was a theme heard often when asked about the key to success.

- *“I think it’s all about personal relationships. The contracts and institutional relationships are just window-dressing.”*
- *“Because people know each other – and much of collaborative success is based on relationships and trust – I’d say Portland is a pretty good place for collaboration.”*

On the intra-organizational level, attention is paid at CCC to individual relationships, just as attention is paid to this with external stakeholders. Data from the interviews illustrate this point.

- *“Central City puts relationships front and center, in a deep way. Long-term people on the board and staff means that deep trust and respect develops. The core value of the organization is paying attention to relationships.”*
- *“I went to a meeting today and heard them talking about the importance of relationships.”*

The fourth secondary research question is, What actions can those outside the community collaboratives take to promote success? For the public sector and the private sector leaders outside of the collaborative, adequately funding the homeless service providers was a frequently heard theme. As one interviewee said of the climate of competition between nonprofits, *“It’s tough because everyone is getting cut.”*

Besides funding, another action that can be taken by those outside (and inside) the collaborative is building trust. Trust is the most frequently mentioned factor for success of collaboration in a meta-analysis of studies on collaboration which was discussed in the

literature review (Mattessich et al., 2001). Many mentioned Portland being well-connected.

- *“There are less than ten social service agencies that do work with the homeless.”*
- *“Portland is a small town. Everybody knows everybody, so we can work out our problems.”*
- *“Because people know each other and much of collaborative success is based on relationships and trust, I’d say Portland is pretty good at collaborating.”*

There are many lessons from these two case studies of community culture and collaborative success. One interviewee who has lived and worked in both Omaha and Portland summed it up this: *“In Portland, a collaboration would bring parties from each sector together and give equal weight to each party. In Omaha, there’d always be a private sector bias to the power in any collaboration. In Portland, we won’t take a big business if their values don’t fit with ours. The livability of Omaha will be enhanced inherently by business progress. Omaha’s clean. In Portland things become more messy.”*

CHAPTER 6: COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY ANALYSIS, APPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

What has been learned from the two case studies presented in Chapters 4 and 5? A number of insights arise as a result of this dissertation research. The “rich theoretical framework” (Yin, 2003, p. 47) that emerged from this research was both helpful and hopeful. The help comes in better understanding the keys to success for collaboratives operating in two different types of community culture. The hope is that the theoretical insights presented in this chapter will have some practical relevance to the work of those interested in collaboration from a variety of perspectives.

The findings of this study address the research question by providing exploratory evidence of how community culture affects collaborative success. In Phase 1 of the research, the social capital, community power and political history of Omaha and Portland were explored, revealing a typology for community culture based on the two cities. Phase 2 then explored the two collaboratives working in the issue arena of homelessness, Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless and Central City Concern. An important point to highlight at the outset of this chapter is that the author is not making an evaluative argument for one type of community culture being better than another, but that this is a descriptive exercise in which the two types are described for the purpose of more appropriately choosing a collaborative design that will work given the type of community culture.¹¹

¹¹ In a presentation of the initial findings to a class of students in the University of Nebraska at Omaha’s Masters of Public Administration program, after saying that it was probably easier to get something done in the private sector community culture of Omaha than the public sector community culture of Portland, a young African American woman said, “Easier for you maybe, but not for me.”

This chapter will present the two distinct types of community culture that emerged out of the research, examine the elements of successful cross-sectoral collaboration within these two types of community culture, explore how this theory is applicable in three different fields, and propose questions for further research.

Two Types of Community Culture

In the case studies presented in this dissertation research, there were two distinct types of community culture that became apparent. While any typology necessitates a level of generalization, one must exercise caution when using any theoretical framework to typify an actual community. Other communities will certainly be different than Omaha and Portland. However, the typology that results from these case studies hopefully has some applicability to settings other than the two communities researched (Berg, 2001, p. 232).

The first type we will call private sector community culture and the second public sector community culture. (See *Appendix J: Two Types of Community Culture Explained* for a table with key elements of this typology.) These types are modeled in the two case studies in this research. While there are, no doubt, additional types that might be explicated – most obvious of these additional types is a nonprofit sector community culture – these will need to wait for future research to be explained. The three factors for analyzing community culture in Phase 1 provide the elements for explaining in this section the two types that emerged from this research.

The *private sector community culture* type was modeled in Omaha. On the factor of social capital, this type of community culture has high bonding social capital. The

networks of relationships of trust are tight within certain groups, such as those with whom one works, worships, goes to school and socializes. But these relationships of trust do not exist across groups, resulting in a feeling that the community is siloed. Often in this type of community culture there is a high rate of affiliation with traditional organizations such as places of worship, service clubs or neighborhoods. This type of community may have a less transient population, so one's original neighborhood and school can tell a lot about the race, class and possibly even the values of a person. The norms for interaction are that people don't often travel outside their comfort zones to mix with those who are perceived as different from themselves. The physical design of the environment may reinforce this by being auto-centric, meaning people need a car to go most places, and not as friendly to public and bicycle transportation.

On the factor of community power, the private sector community culture observed in this study conforms with the elite theory description of a local community. The elite is drawn from the corporate executives of the community. They are similarly situated and like-minded – often older, white, heterosexual, Christian males – and that makes the bonding between the elite easier. They belong to the same groups, serve on the same boards, and sometimes have kids at the same schools. Outsiders can feel excluded from the circles of influence in this type of community culture. The elite may have different mechanisms for maintaining control, such as family connections, philanthropy and partnering with public sector officials when needed to do the work deemed “economic development.”

On the factor of political history, there is often a sense that citizens can participate in decision making at only the lower levels, but the default is to central control over decision making. This decision making style parallels the idea of elite power, but becomes like a community's muscle-memory when done over and over. This central control is relevant in the area of land-use planning by allowing for the growth machine – the key actors of which are developers, builders, bankers, and other businesses that profit from increased land-exchange value in alliance with local government officials, both elected and public administrators – to operate unfettered. Political leadership is held by those who are closely connected to the growth machine. Where the central control is located might change over time, from a political boss to the board of an elite social club to a philanthropic entity for instance, but the fact that it is centrally controlled may not.

The *public sector community culture* type was modeled in Portland. On the factor of social capital, it has a high bridging social capital. There exists in this type of community culture avenues for building relationships of trust across lines of difference. The community's residents may be more transient and, therefore, less connected in their core-identity to the schools or churches or organizations to which they now belong and, in the case of less transient cities, have belonged all their lives. The norms that exist in the type of community culture observed are to venture out and meet people who may hold values different than one's own. Physical design of the urban environment also facilitates this bridging social capital with a well-used public transportation system, many public green spaces and walkable neighborhoods encouraging more interaction between residents of the community.

On the factor of community power, the public sector community culture is pluralist. Leadership is fluid and allows for new influentials to emerge and play a role in shaping the agenda. In different issue arenas there are different leaders. In the arena of the public schools there may be white and black middle-class parents involved together in site-based management teams or serving on the district's school finance committee, while in the arena of affordable housing there may be active participation from new Latino immigrants who are day laborers, rich white developers and a racial mix of college-educated public administrators working for local government agencies.

On the factor of political history, there is a trust that the highly participatory processes in place will yield appropriate results. The process is believed to work when enough citizens' voices are heard (or at least given an opportunity to be heard) that the eventual decisions incorporate many points of view and cannot be second-guessed by anyone after decisions are made. This citizen participation might take different forms given differing issue arenas or epochs, but the key point is that the participatory process matters to the acceptance of the result. One arena in which citizen participation can make a major difference is land-use planning. While the political leadership over time might be particularly important to the direction on land-use planning laws because those public sector leaders are looked to for community leadership, there might also be an influential growth machine with its pro-growth agenda at work in a public sector community culture as well.

One last point to clarify with regard to these two types described above is that community culture is changeable. Community culture is not reified in the sense that it is a

tangible and static thing. This dissertation does not present a normative argument that any community should strive to be a particular type and that one type is better than another. In fact, there are examples of community culture changing over time, as did Portland's in the 1970s. As Putnam and Feldstein (2003) write, "Civic activism in Portland in 1974 was virtually identical to that of other comparable metropolitan areas" (p. 241). But this city grew into one of the most politically active, with engaged citizens in the U.S. How?

This is also not a causal argument with a simplistic formula for changing community culture, in the sense of "If only we did this..." However, changes can and do happen in both conscious and coincidental ways. The argument here could be called a "fertile ground proposition" in the sense that different factors must be present for change, just as dirt and seeds and sun and water must be present for the earth to bear ripe fruit. What makes the ground fertile for change might involve leaders who see the benefit in changing community culture such as Neil Goldschmidt and Tom McCall did in Portland and Oregon in the 1970s. It might involve a series of catalytic events such as race riots of the late-1960s in North Omaha. Or it might simply be a reflection of the era such as the Vietnam war/Watergate years when citizens' distrust of government inspired much local activism. Whether conscious or coincidental, or a combination of the two, the changing of community culture can be difficult, like the death that happens during winter, only to be followed by the new birth of life in springtime growing from the fertile ground.

It is probable that an elite group that has been in control for a number of years will not willingly give up that position of control and the benefits that come with it. The elite might try to exert even more influence over public administrators that are conscious

of or unaware of this shifting dynamic of a community culture. So, a private sector community culture easily changing into a public sector community culture is unlikely, while a public sector community culture changing into a private sector community culture is more likely. For those who advocate for change, in whichever direction, how can the ground be fertilized? Perhaps a few lucky coincidences and the creation or strengthening of a few institutions can help prepare the ground for community culture shifts. In a private sector community culture, perhaps strengthening the nonprofit sector so that a strong private sector and weak public sector is not the dominant dynamic in a community will prepare the ground. Perhaps identifying people or institutions that can play neutral bridging roles between sectors can help the shift in community cultures. And, perhaps a shift begins by launching a public dialogue process to engage residents who might not otherwise be involved in civic and political participation, such as in the example of Omaha by Design (McNamara, 2005, August).

Hunter (1953) argues that “associational groupings” (p. 256) might allow a person outside the elite to access and ally with the elite power groups. These associational groupings could be made through institutions, such as neighborhood or trade organizations, that allow for access to the elite. They could also be made on a more individual basis such as when a member of the elite serves as a mentor for someone who is not in that elite, although that could also reinforce the hierarchy of power through the mentor/mentee relationship. Whatever the means, associational groups can open opportunities to cross-fertilize the elite and non-elite. This may be parallel to Mary Parker

Follett's (1998) "modes of association" (p. 147). The idea in both Hunter and Follett is that relationships across divides are a way to begin the process of social change.

Some other ways to prepare the fertile ground for changes in community culture might include: (1) local government that consciously empowers citizens, through well-supported neighborhood associations, and citizen design boards or budget review panels; (2) physical space that creates avenues for bridging to take place between different groups, such as public green spaces, events to which all residents are invited and at which all are comfortable, and ongoing opportunities for meeting others in neighborhood coffeehouses; and (3) philanthropy that funds efforts to build bridging social capital and broaden the scope of who benefits from charitable investments in the community to do work that is known as social entrepreneurship (Eikenberry, 2007, p. 184).

While some of the ways to change community culture are suggested in the case studies of Omaha and Portland, this was not the core question in this study. In fact, there was some evidence that community culture does not change, such as in the phrase used by one interviewee that "*communities have this muscle-memory. If you do it over and over again, then it becomes automatic.*" However, as stated above, this dissertation research was exploratory and descriptive. If a hypothesis is being tested, that will wait for future research. What did emerge from the research undertaken was a description of the two types of community culture and some of the reasons for collaborative success within these two.

Collaborative Success in the Two Types of Community Culture

The primary research question asks about the affect of community culture on collaborative success. The types of community culture explained above call for different collaborative models in order to be successful. The three tracks used to examine collaborative success here are (1) how success is defined, (2) from which sector leadership comes and (3) from where funding is perceived to come. (See *Appendix K: Community Culture and Collaborative Success*.) If other types of community culture emerge in future research, they too will necessitate different models for collaboratives to be successful. Below, the two types of community culture which emerged in this research are examined using the three variables above.

In a *private sector community culture*, collaborative success is based on showing a return on investment. Financial, human and social types of capital are invested in the collaborative. Often there are philanthropic donations from corporate, private or family foundations which are viewed by the donor in the same way that a business investment is viewed. There must be a return of some kind for the investment to make sense. The return may not necessarily be a financial one, although that might also be a contributing motivation, but it may be a community one. Building a world-class concert hall such as Omaha's Holland Performing Arts Center, remodeling and reopening a facility for the mentally ill such as Recovering Hope Center in Omaha, or starting a new comprehensive program for kids to succeed such as Building Bright Futures may not have a direct financial return on investment for the donor – although one could argue that the tax benefit of donating to a nonprofit is, in fact, a personal benefit – but it may have a return

through the enhanced quality of life, national recognition for the community and even good feelings.

Cross-sectoral collaboratives form in a private sector community culture when a business leader champions the cause. In the lead role, that corporate executive can open up doors to people that would not otherwise care about the issue. These business leaders are often drawn from well-established corporations such as Peter Kiewit Companies in Omaha, rather than small start-up businesses. They can call upon those in their circles of influence to publicly support (or at least not to obstruct), contribute to and even in some cases volunteer on behalf of the collaborative.

The perception is that major funding for collaborative efforts in a private sector community culture is provided by businesses themselves or individuals who have made money in those businesses, often given through philanthropic foundations. The nonprofit partners in a collaborative use the funds to provide services. In this type of community culture, the government can be vilified for not doing more for the collaborative.

Although, in truth, there probably is government support for the issue, in one form or another, that support may be less than expected. A tension exists between the expectation that government should be doing more and the perception that they are not, so the private funders step in.

In a *public sector community culture*, collaborative success is determined by using the appropriate processes. What those appropriate processes are may differ from the conscious citizen engagement of Portland, depending on where the collaborative operates, but the process is important. If a collaborative effort has vetted ideas through an

appropriate process, such as public participation in Portland, and coordinated with the appropriate local government bureaus, it will more likely achieve its goals.

Cross-sectoral collaboratives form when a leader from the public sector champions a particular cause and leads the effort. These leaders are often elected officials who are passionate about a particular issue, such as Erik Sten on the Portland City Council and Serena Cruz on the Multnomah County Commission who led the effort to create Portland's *10-year Plan to End Homeless* (Citizens Commission on Homelessness, 2004, December), but they can also be senior public administrators who are working in an agency that deals with that issue. When they are public administrators, they are often in a bureau that has allowed a more entrepreneurial approach to partnerships, such as is the case with Heather Lyons, Homeless Program Manager in the City of Portland's Bureau of Housing and Community Development, who staffed the process to create Portland's 10-year plan, or Andy Wilch, Housing Director for Portland Development Commission. Leadership from the private and nonprofit sectors must also be included for ultimate success, but the public sector leaders take a more visible role.

The perception is that funding for these collaborative efforts comes largely from the government and flows to nonprofits involved in the collaborative. Those nonprofits, sometimes alongside the public agencies which have traditionally been tasked with delivering services, then provide services to the target population. Support can also come from the private sector and foundations, but this is often directed to individual nonprofits. There can also be entrepreneurial profit centers or social enterprises within individual nonprofits. Although the private sector may also fund some of the collaborative's

activities, there is frequently a sense of vilification by those stakeholders within the collaborative that businesses are not doing more with their time, talent and treasures.

Collaborative challenges are also different in the different community cultures. In the private sector community culture, challenges might come if a collaborative and its stakeholders do not know how the many networks of bonding social capital operate, the history of the intertwining relationships, and the personalities and power involved in these tight networks of the elite. As a result of not knowing the dynamics of the community, there may be handicaps for the collaborative such as not knowing and using the people who are or have access to the elite, not doing the groundwork of relationship building, and not proving one's worth in terms of return-on-investment. There is also a question of how broad and bold a vision the elite in a private sector community culture bring to the issues. In the public sector community culture, challenges might come if you do not play by the rules or fit the norms which include politely engaging in the appropriate processes, working closely with public sector leaders, and maybe even the belief by the populace that government leaders should exert their political will trying to solve the most complex social issues of the day. As a result of not playing by the rules or fitting the norms, the collaborative might be handicapped because it gets alienated and is not effective in reaching its goals.

A final challenge is the false perception that one sector can totally dominate all the others. Although the two case studies undertaken here are probably more extreme than other communities in terms of one sector clearly being stronger than the others, the truth is that nowhere could any one sector operate effectively in the absence of the two

others. While one sector – business in Omaha and government in Portland – can provide innovative leadership, partial funding and energizing inspiration to take on a complex problem, that sector alone cannot sustain a community.

One of the limitations of this dissertation is that OACCH and CCC, while both collaboratives focused on homelessness that had similar origins, evolved over the years – influenced, in large part, by the contexts in which they operated – to be structured differently. Another limitation is the potential for critique that the definition for collaborative success was not as objective as it could have been, although the definition used here was consistent with the primary research question’s focus on the context for collaboration. And a final limitation is that this research did not include another case study that might reveal the characteristics of a nonprofit sector community culture. In future research, the characteristics that emerge from nonprofit sector community culture might include values-oriented decision making, mission-driven organizations, high bridging social capital, more pluralist community power, high levels of citizen participation, more community development corporations building affordable housing with less growth machine intervention, and community leaders who are social entrepreneurs. However, this sketch of the characteristics of a nonprofit community culture is just conjecture until the further research is undertaken.

Three Applications of Theory Emergent in Dissertation

Although this dissertation research was undertaken in partial completion of the doctoral degree in the School of Public Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, there are applications of the emerging theory in fields beyond public

administration. This concluding section will apply the emerging theory first to public administration, then to conflict resolution and urban studies. There are, no doubt, additional fields to which the general hypothesis growing out of this research – that collaborative success happens when partners understand the community culture and design appropriate strategies – can be applied. In future presentations and publications of the research findings, the fields of nonprofit management and international studies can be explored. For nonprofit managers, understanding the community culture is essential for success. What works in one place may not work in another or, at least, not in the same way. That means nonprofit managers also need to understand and adapt to their contexts. This basic premise applies in international studies as well, where understanding culture is particularly important. Whether using the national, regional or local culture as the framework for analysis, understanding the culture is crucial. This author has chosen three fields to explore below.

Public Administration. In the field of public administration, the theory that emerged from this study has many implications. The first is how a public administrator is allowed to and actual does operate may need to be adapted to the community culture in which she or he works. There are challenges and opportunities faced by public administrators working in the two types of community culture that emerged from this analysis.

This general concept – that public administrators must understand and operate differently within different communities – follows the argument of Box (1998) that expectations about citizen participation in governance and “what role a professional

administrator should play are important features of the local political setting” (p. 63). He argues that in strong growth machine communities public administrators must ensure that “actions taken enhance the economic gains of local elites” while in weak growth machine communities public administrators’ actions must “conform to community values of protecting and enhancing the living, rather than the commercial, environment” (p. 63). Although in both of the case studies presented in this dissertation elements of a growth machine are present, these two types would generally parallel the situations of Omaha and Portland, respectively.

An additional argument by Box (1998) that relates to the application of the theory emergent in this study to the field of public administration involves the “Acceptance of, or Resistance to, Public Professionalism” (p. 65). He argues that “Highly politicized arbiter, or conservative caretaker, communities are wary of the influence of professionals, whereas communities with relatively consensual politics or those facing serious problems of finance or infrastructure may depend on professional knowledge” (p. 65). This difference between what is allowed by public sector professionals in different communities parallels the analysis in this dissertation. Below are descriptions of the roles public administrators are allowed to play in the private sector community culture and public sector community culture, as observed in the two case studies.

In the private sector community culture observed, it is more challenging for public administrators to play proactive roles in collaboration. There is a danger that they may become agents of the economic interests of the elite. They find themselves in a subservient role to the corporate leaders who make the major decisions. This can look

like the classic growth machine with development of property for land-exchange initiated by the private sector and public administrators simply carrying out the elite's wishes. However, the public administrator in this type of community culture, just as anywhere, has a duty to uphold democratic values and deliver democracy to citizens (Hamilton, 2007, p. 14). As such, the public administrator has an opportunity to potentially be a culture creator by operating under the radar and getting a lot accomplished, as did Mike Saklar and David Thomas at the City of Omaha's Planning Department during the initial phase establishing OACCH. They led efforts to design and seek HUD CoC funding each year for a collaborative that, ultimately, provided many services to homeless people. They did change the practice within the homeless service arena in Omaha. There may be opportunities in the future to constructively engage private sector leaders in homelessness, or in other issue arenas that involve complex social problems, but the public administrators involved need to help identify and work with appropriate and effective champions in order to do that. Of course, how public administrators gain access to those private sector champions is a continuing challenge and may call for more specific training by educational institutions.

In a public sector community culture, public administrators have the opportunity to play more proactive roles. This may include identifying the community power structure inherent in a particular place and imagining how this could be different, especially by raising issues of social equity (Box, 2007b, p. 209). This can happen by creating avenues for real citizen participation. The tension between traditional citizen participation and public administration has been explored by numerous authors (Box,

Marshall, Reed, & Reed, 2001; Box, 1998; King & Stivers, 1998; Timney, 1998; McSwite, 1997). The greatest challenge in a public sector community culture may happen when those public officials in leadership roles are questioned by an empowered or embittered citizenry. Citizens might be empowered and, as a result, expect and demand more control over policy and resource decisions; they might be embittered by only “nonparticipation” or “tokenism” offered them in the area of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969) or a complete disregard for their input because they are not “experts.”

Conflict Resolution. The editors of the *Public Administration Review* issue on collaborative public management write in the concluding essay that the contributing authors’ frequent calls for using “facilitators and conveners” from the public sector “suggests there is a missing synthesis between work on collaborative public management, civic engagement, and public participation and work on negotiation, conflict resolution, dispute system design, and consensus building” (Bingham & O’Leary, 2006, December, p. 165). This section attempts to synthesize the lessons on collaboration from this study and conflict resolution.

The same basic lesson from this dissertation research – that collaboration must be designed appropriately for the community culture in which it operates – can be applied to the field of conflict resolution. The most obvious connection is in the area of conflict *analysis* tools and the importance of understanding the setting of conflict. To be effective at resolving conflict, a mediator, facilitator or other conflict resolutionary must analyze the context in which she or he is operating. The framework for this analysis might use the typology developed in this research of private sector and public sector community

cultures or the framework for analysis might use organizational culture or the cultural backgrounds of individual parties in the conflict. There are, of course, many other frameworks for analyzing context. Whatever framework used for analysis, the lesson from this research is to not attempt to design and implement some conflict resolution intervention without first understanding the context.

There is a tool for conflict analysis called nested theory of conflict (Dugan, 1996) which relates to the key lesson in this dissertation research. This theory presents a model in which intertwining layers of the context for conflict can be peeled away like an onion. At the core, there is an *issue* which is the source of or impetus for manifest conflict. That issue is nested in a set of *relationships*, sometimes between just two people, but often within a more complex web of relationships. Those relationships are nested in a *subsystem*, for example a school, neighborhood or workplace. That subsystem is nested in a *system*, which could be American education, Christianity or global capitalism. Only after analyzing the contextual nests in which a conflict resides can one move toward designing an appropriate resolution, just as one must understand the community culture in order to design an appropriate model for cross-sectoral collaboration.

Another useful framework for conflict analysis is Ted Gurr's (1970) theory of relative deprivation. He writes, "Relative deprivation (RD) is defined as actors' perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities" (p. 24). If individuals expect that they should have more of "the desired events, objects or conditions" than they actual do, this creates frustration and, ultimately, conflict (p. 25). The connection to the research findings in this study is that in different community

cultures, the expectations of residents differ. For instance, in a private sector community culture, such as that observed in this study, people may expect less participation in decision making, but more largess from the business leaders to support social causes, culture and the arts. In a public sector community culture, such as in this study, people expect to have more voice in the process of decision making, but less support for civil society from the private sector. Conflict analysis using the lens of RD would reveal different value expectations of people in different community cultures, and the value capabilities of individuals in different community cultures would also differ. Gurr (1986) writes that “rebellions are likely to be numerous and intense in societies that have sharp class stratification and ethnolinguistic cleavages, and are likely to be greatest of all where dominant groups are distinguished from others by both class and ethnicity” (p. 159). In a private sector community culture with a very visible rich white elite, are the value expectations of poor blacks raised beyond the point of value capabilities resulting in frustration and, possibly, rebellion?

Contingency theory (Fisher, 1997; Fisher & Keashly, 1990) proposes that the appropriate intervention model to be used for resolution is contingent on the phases of the conflict. Although the details of the taxonomy for this contingency model are not as important here, the basic idea of “matching the taxonomy of interventions to the stages of escalation” of the conflict (Fisher, 1997, p. 166) parallels the emergent theory in this dissertation that the design of collaboratives must be appropriate to the community culture. The issue of ripeness or readiness for resolution is closely aligned with contingency theory. Mitchell (1996) and Zartman (1985) both argue that a conflict must

be ready and appropriate for the resolution used. The basic idea is supported by the concept of a collaborative window (Lober, 1997; Takahashi & Smutny, 2002). So, different techniques – whether collaboration or conflict resolution – are appropriate at different times. The impact of timing on community collaborative success raises other questions. For instance, with downtown development increasing in Omaha was there a window for collaboration around a day-shelter for the homeless (Grace, 2004, p. B1)? Does that window still exist? Do collaborative windows on other issues exist? And how can public administrators most effectively exploit those windows when they open?

Lederach (1995, 1997) proposes an “elicitive approach” to conflict analysis, resolution and training. His approach is consistent with the basic methodology used in this research. He proposes asking the people in a community how they understand their own cultural setting in order to effectively design conflict resolution tools. He writes,

In sum, an elicitive orientation suggests that we consider what is present in a cultural setting the basis for identifying key categories and concepts to use as foundational building blocks for a conflict resolution model. It assumes that the culture is a resource and that participants are capable of identifying and naming their own realities and tools. (Lederach, 1995, p. 100)

So, the key lesson from this study can be applied to conflict resolution in a number of ways. The basic idea of the application is that analysis of one’s context is important before launching an intervention. There are many frameworks to analyze the conflict and its context, but the fact that analysis should be done is evident from this research.

Urban Studies. The findings of this study also have implications for the field of urban studies. Urban studies, not unlike public administration and conflict resolution, draws from a number of different disciplines and theoretical schools. The key lessons from this study can be applied to a few subfields within urban studies. Urban politics, or the political economy of place, is one area where the analysis of public sector and private sector community culture might be most applicable. Urban design is another area where there is some applicability. And intergroup relations in the urban setting is a final area of application.

Urban politics in theory and practice is essentially a cross-sectoral negotiation. As Judd and Kantor (1992) write, “City politics has come to be understood as a continuous, complex interaction between public and private institutions, between the marketplace and the public sphere, between private goals and collective purposes” (p. 1). The typology that emerged from this study is one that examines this complex interaction asking who makes decisions, who is engaged on what issues, and why is it this way. The factors in the analysis of community culture in this study – highlighted by the tensions between bonding or bridging social capital, elite or pluralist community power, creating avenues for or barriers to citizen participation, land-use policies that favor the exchange value or use value of property, and political leadership with imagination or not – are key concerns to those in the field of urban studies, particularly the urban sociology school of urban studies.

One of the issues tracked in this research, affordable housing, cuts across disciplinary interests from political economy to urban planning to private development.

The same conclusion that was offered in the arena of homelessness – any collaborative must be designed appropriately for the community culture – can be applied here. Specifically, if there is a private sector community culture, there is greater likelihood that corporate leaders will need to be champions of any successful collaboration around affordable housing. In Omaha, the answer to a lack of affordable transitional and permanent housing that is often the first step out of homelessness is most likely to be a market-based solution. As an Omahan quoted earlier said in an interview, *“The capital and the will have not been developed for affordable housing. You need to find an economical model to solve this problem. What would it take to make this happen? Get big investors and find a way to make money on it.”* In a public sector community culture there is more likelihood that an innovative government or quasi-governmental agency will be the vehicle for developing affordable housing. In Portland, the creation of affordable transitional housing is happening with leadership from the quasi-public Portland Development Commission and partnerships between housing providers like CCC and funding from local and federal government.

Urban planning and design is different in the two different community cultures. The private sector community culture probably has a more top-down system of planning, while the public sector community culture is more process-oriented. Both may have imagination when it comes to urban design, although the inspiration and motivation for may be different, with the private sector community culture being driven by business leaders as decision makers and public sector community culture having elected officials and public administrators as decision makers. Imaginative planners and developers in

both types can ultimately create an appealing place for many to live, work and play. How they create public spaces influences the community culture. As Zukin (1995) writes, “Public spaces are the primary site of public culture; they are a window into the city’s soul” (p. 259).

Intergroup relations may be another area of applicability. Like the issue arena of affordable housing, this issue cuts across a number of fields. The relations between blacks and whites in Omaha have been strained over the years by racism, segregation, and riots. Where can citizens look for leadership toward solutions? In a private sector community culture as modeled in Omaha, the solutions will be initiated or championed by the corporate elite. When asked by reporters (Grace, Gonzalez & Cordes, 2007, April 15) from the *Omaha World-Herald*, “What’s a first step the Omaha community needs to take to erase poverty?” a number of community leaders pointed to solutions emphasizing education and jobs (p. 9A). In a nod to the need for collaboration, Mayor Mike Fahey called for a “coordinated effort by government, schools and the business community” (p. 9A). Based on the findings in this dissertation there is also a need for bridging social capital in order for African Americans to access some of the networks of power that exist in Omaha. This all may need to be preceded by a change in the attitudes and positions of Omaha’s elite. As Dye and Zeigler (1993) write, “Only an elite courageous enough to impose costs on the public could undertake this responsibility” (p. 416).

Although the two types of community culture examined here may expand to include additional types, this dissertation offers a starting point for further research. The descriptors are important tools because they amalgamate a variety of factors rather than

viewing a community through a uni-dimensional lens. While there are some descriptive statistics included about the cities in the two case studies, the approach here was to use qualitative data for examining community culture. It is through this qualitative comparative case study approach that the rich theoretical framework was discovered. In future research, the following questions may be explored:

- ✓ Is there a city that models a nonprofit sector community culture?
- ✓ How has community culture changed in different cities?
- ✓ Does collaboration in issue arenas involving complex social problems other than homelessness have similar successes and challenges in the environments of Omaha and Portland?
- ✓ What other fields might the findings be applied to? Might nonprofit management and international studies be fields where there is some applicability?
- ✓ Do other factors – for instance the number of homeless in a city, density of the housing in a city or number of businesses located in areas where the homeless congregate – have any effect on collaborative success?

The topics explored here will stay relevant in the coming decades. Understanding the nuances of the context in which one operates will always be a key to success. The ultimate conclusion of this dissertation might be best stated in the words of one interviewee who said, “*There is not one model for collaboration that will work in all communities.*”

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Assessing Community Culture (Appendix A)

FACTORS	INDICATORS	DATA SOURCES
Social Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust (in others, organizations, government) • Norms (of reciprocity) • Bridging (not just bonding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>American Community Survey/U.S. Census Bureau</i> ➤ <i>Omaha Conditions Survey (1994, 2004)</i> • Document Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Media stories ➤ Previous studies, esp. Putnam & Feldstein (2003) • Interview 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2. Would you say people in Portland/Omaha find it easy to work with government or are there sometimes barriers or difficulties? ➤ 3A. Could it be something about the character of the city as a whole? • Interview 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 6. In general, how would you assess Omaha/Portland as a place for collaboration? • Focus Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2. What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the collaboration between public, private and nonprofit sector organizations in OACCH/CCC? ➤ 4. How would you assess Omaha/Portland as a place for community collaboratives?
Community Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda-setting • Decision-making • Nondecision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Media stories regarding policy decisions ➤ Previous studies • Interview 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2A. Would you say representatives from different sectors – meaning government, business and nonprofits – work well together? ➤ 3B. Could it be something about the leaders? Who are the leaders? ➤ 4A. What do you think is driving these changes? • Focus Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 5A. What do you think might happen in Omaha/Portland if the city's leaders had tried to kill OACCH/CCC? ➤ 5B. What do you think might happen in Omaha/Portland if the city's leaders had tried

		even harder to promote the success of OACCH/CCC?
Political History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen participation • Land-use planning • Community leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Media stories ➤ Land-use laws ➤ Previous studies • Interview 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2. Would you say people in Portland/Omaha find it easy to work with government or are there sometimes barriers or difficulties? ➤ 2A. Would you say representatives from different sectors – meaning government, business and nonprofits – work well together? ➤ 2B. Why or why not? ➤ 3C. Are there historical or current events that have helped in shaping that character? ➤ 4. Do you think that the character of the city is changing? In what ways? ➤ 4A. What do you think is driving these changes? • Interview 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 3. Do you think that being located in Omaha/Portland has been a factor in the OACCH's/CCC's success? ➤ 3A. Have other collaboratives involving government, business and nonprofits that you are familiar with here been as successful (or as challenged) as OACCH/CCC?

Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration Table (Appendix B)

<i>ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS</i>	COOPERATION	COORDINATION	COLLABORATION
VISION & RELATIONSHIPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basis for cooperation is usually between individuals, but may be mandated by third party • Organizational mission and goals are not taken into account • Interaction is on an as-needed basis, may last indefinitely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual relationships are supported by the organizations they represent • Mission and goals of the individual organizations are reviewed for compatibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of the organizations and their leaders is fully behind their representatives • Common, new mission and goals are created • One or more projects are undertaken for longer-term results
STRUCTURE, RESPONSIBILITIES & COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships are informal; each organization functions separately • No joint planning is required • Information is conveyed as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations involved take on needed roles, but function relatively independently of each other • Some project-specific planning is required • Communication roles are established and definite channels are created for interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New organizational structure and/or clearly defined and interrelated roles that constitute a formal division of labor are created • More comprehensive planning is required that includes developing joint strategies and measuring success in terms of impact on the needs of those served • Beyond communication roles and channels for interaction, many communication modes are created as clear information is a keystone of success

<p>AUTHORITY & ACCOUNTABILITY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority rests solely with individual organizations • Leadership is unilateral and control is central • All authority and accountability rests with the individual organization which acts independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority rests with the individual organizations, but there is coordination among participants • Some sharing of leadership and control • There is some shared risk, but most of the authority and accountability falls to the individual organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority is determined by the collaboration to balance ownership by the individual organizations with expediency to accomplish purpose • Leadership is dispersed, and control is shared and mutual • Equal risk is shared by all organizations in the collaboration
<p>RESOURCES & REWARDS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources (staff time, dollars, and compatibilities) are separate, serving the individual organization's needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources are acknowledged and can be made available to others for a specific project • Rewards are mutually acknowledged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources are pooled or jointly secured for longer-term effort that is managed by the collaborative structure • Organizations share in the products; more is accomplished jointly than possible individually

SOURCE: Mattessich et al., 2001

Case Study Protocol and Timelines (Appendix C)

Phase 1: Assessing Community Culture

Site Visit #1 to Portland and Analysis

- Interviews with political, academic, media, and community influentials regarding community culture in Portland
- Document collection including internal CCC documents and other information on CCC
- Summarize interviews and analyze documents collected
- Draft preliminary section on community culture in Portland

Research in Omaha and Analysis

- Interviews with political, academic, media, and community influentials regarding community culture in Omaha
- Document collection including internal OACCH documents and other information on OACCH
- Summarize interviews and analyze documents collected
- Draft preliminary section on community culture in Omaha

Phase 2: Affect on Community Collaborative Success

Further Research on OACCH

- Focus Group of OACCH Board members and summarize
- Interviews with community leaders familiar with OACCH and summarize
- Draft section on case study of OACCH

Site Visit #2 to Portland

- Focus Group of CCC Board members in CCC and summarize
- Interviews with community leaders familiar with CCC and summarize
- Analysis of interview data
- Draft section on case study of CCC

Phase 3: Cross-Case Analysis & Findings

Analyze two cases

- Cross-case analysis
- Compare and contrast
- Findings from comparison

Check Findings with Key Informants

- Site Visit #3 to Portland and check preliminary findings with key informants
- Research in Omaha to check preliminary findings with key informants

Draft Dissertation

- Draft dissertation putting together all sections

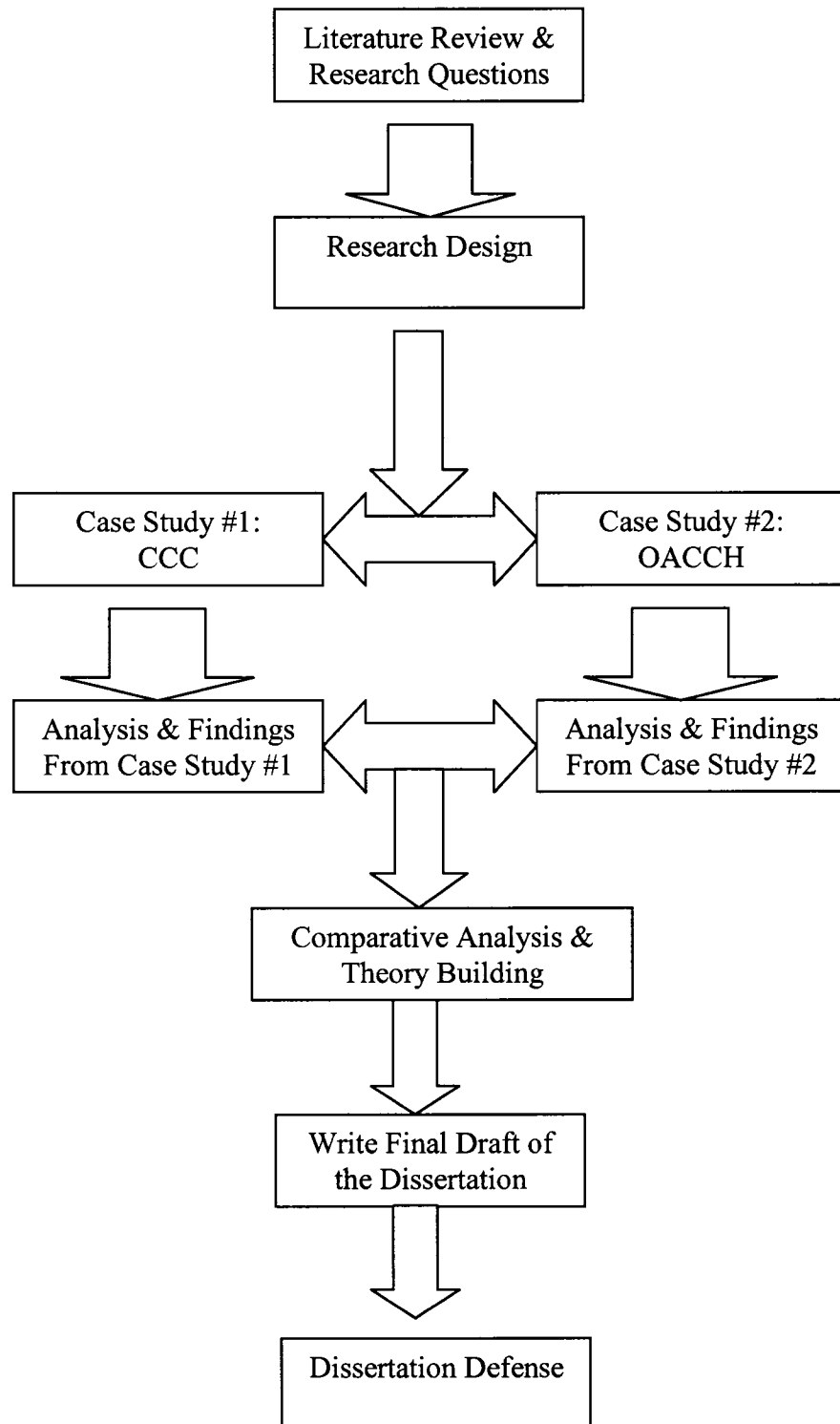
Phase 4: Editing and Defense

Readers' Comments

- Revise draft of dissertation based on comments of readers

Final Draft & Defense

- Send final draft to committee members
- Defend dissertation

Case Study Flow Chart (Appendix D)

Interview Instrument Phase 1: Community Culture (Appendix E)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WILLINGNESS TO BE INTERVIEWED. IT SHOULD TAKE NO MORE THAN 30 MINUTES OF YOUR TIME. YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE USED IN RESEARCH BY PATRICK MCNAMARA, A DOCTORAL STUDENT IN UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA'S SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (IRB # 137-05-EX). WHILE GENERAL PROFILES OF INTERVIEWEES MAY BE INCLUDED IN THE DISSERTATION, YOUR NAME WILL NOT BE USED, NOR WILL ANY ATTRIBUTION OF SPECIFIC INFORMATION BE IDENTIFIED TO ANY RESPONDENT. ONLY SUMMARY DATA WILL BE PRESENTED TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY, AND NO ONE OTHER THAN THE RESEARCHER WILL SEE THE INDIVIDUAL ANSWERS YOU PROVIDE. DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT THIS INTERVIEW? IF YOU HAVE ANY FUTURE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT PATRICK AT 402-554-4925 OR pmcnamara@mail.unomaha.edu

1. How long have you lived in Portland/Omaha?

Possible follow-up questions:

- A. What is your experience in different organizations here?
- B. Have your experiences been in government, business or nonprofit settings?

2. Would you say people in Portland/Omaha find it easy to work with government or are there sometimes barriers or difficulties?

Possible follow-up questions:

- A. Would you say representatives from different sectors – meaning government, business and nonprofits – work well together?
- B. Why or why not?

3. Why do you think working relationships in Portland/Omaha are like this?

Possible follow-up questions:

- A. Could it be something about the character of the city as a whole?
- B. Could it be something about the leaders? Who are those leaders?
- C. Are there historical or current events that have helped in shaping that character?

4. Do you think that the character of the city is changing? In what ways?

Possible follow-up questions:

- A. What do you think is driving these changes?

5. Who else would you suggest I talk to in order to get more insight into the character of Portland/Omaha?

6. Do you have anything else to add?

Interview Instrument Phase 2: Collaborative Success (Appendix F)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WILLINGNESS TO BE INTERVIEWED. IT SHOULD TAKE NO MORE THAN 30 MINUTES OF YOUR TIME. YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE USED IN RESEARCH BY PATRICK MCNAMARA, A DOCTORAL STUDENT IN UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA'S SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (IRB # 137-05-EX). WHILE GENERAL PROFILES OF INTERVIEWEES MAY BE INCLUDED IN THE DISSERTATION, YOUR NAME WILL NOT BE USED, NOR WILL ANY ATTRIBUTION OF SPECIFIC INFORMATION BE IDENTIFIED TO ANY RESPONDENT. ONLY SUMMARY DATA WILL BE PRESENTED TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY, AND NO ONE OTHER THAN THE RESEARCHER WILL SEE THE INDIVIDUAL ANSWERS YOU PROVIDE. DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT THIS INTERVIEW? IF YOU HAVE ANY FUTURE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT PATRICK AT 402-554-4925 OR pmcnamara@mail.unomaha.edu

1. How long have you worked at this agency?

Possible follow-up questions:

- A. Have you worked in other organizations that deal with housing or homelessness?
- B. How closely have you worked with people at OACCH/CCC?

2. What are your general thoughts on whether OACCH/CCC has been successful in achieving its goals?

3. Do you think that being located in Omaha/Portland has been a factor in OACCH's/CCC's success?

Possible follow-up questions:

- A. Have other collaboratives involving government, business and nonprofits that you are familiar with here been as successful (or as challenged) as OACCH/CCC?
- B. Why do you think that is?

4. Do you think OACCH/CCC has been successful in developing an information system or database for tracking individuals and services for the homeless? Why or why not?

5. Taking another example of addressing the need for permanent affordable housing, would you say that OACCH/CCC has been successful? Why or why not?

6. In general, how would you assess Omaha/Portland as a place for collaboration?

7. Who else would you suggest I talk to in order to get more insight into the successes and challenges of OACCH/CCC?

8. Do you have anything else to add?

Focus Group Instrument (Appendix G)

THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS FOCUS GROUP. THIS IS AN OPEN RECORD. IT IS BEING TAPED SO THAT I CAN GO BACK IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS. ARE THERE OBJECTIONS TO TAPING? IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY WITHOUT THE TAPE ON, AT ANY POINT, I WILL TURN IT OFF. THE DISCUSSION WILL BE USED IN DISSERTATION RESEARCH BY PATRICK MCNAMARA, A DOCTORAL STUDENT IN UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA'S SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (IRB # 137-05-EX). WHILE GENERAL PROFILES OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS MAY BE INCLUDED IN THE DISSERTATION, YOUR NAMES WILL NOT BE USED. YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOLUNTARILY OPT OUT AT ANY TIME. IF YOU HAVE ANY FUTURE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT PATRICK AT 402-554-4925 OR pmcnamara@mail.unomaha.edu

Focus Group Introductory Question:

1. How long have you been active in Portland's/Omaha's homeless services?

Focus Group Middle Range Questions:

2. What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the collaboration between public, private and nonprofit sector organizations in OACCH/CCC?
3. Would you say that OACCH/CCC was successful in the sense that it achieved its goals?

Possible follow-up questions:

- A. Why was OACCH/CCC successful?
- B. Identify factors of success.
- C. Why was OACCH/CCC not successful?
- D. Identify barriers to success.

4. How would you assess Omaha/Portland as a place for community collaboratives?

Possible follow-up questions:

- A. Why is it that way?
- B. What have those inside OACCH/CCC done to affect the collaborative?
- C. What have those outside OACCH/CCC done to make the collaborative successful?

5. SCENARIOS: What do you think might happen in Omaha/Portland if:
 - A. The city's leaders had tried to kill OACCH/CCC?
 - B. The city's leaders had tried even harder to promote the success of OACCH/CCC?

Focus Group Concluding Question:

6. Are there any final thoughts on how the community culture of Omaha/Portland affects community collaboratives?

Interviews and Focus Group Participants (Appendix H)

Portland

- ✓ Carl Abbott, Professor of Urban Studies, Portland State University
- ✓ Sam Adams, Portland City Council
- ✓ Monica Beemer, Executive Director, Sisters of the Road
- ✓ Liora Berry, Homeless Program Coordinator, City of Portland Bureau of Housing and Community Development
- ✓ Doreen Binder, Executive Director, Transition Projects Inc.
- ✓ Ed Blackburn, Director of Health & Recovery Services, Central City Concern
- ✓ Sam Brooks, Small Businessman and President, Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs
- ✓ Chris Carlson, Executive Director, Policy Consensus Initiative
- ✓ Serena Cruz, Multnomah County Commissioner
- ✓ Nancy Donovan, Program Manager, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ✓ Russ Dondero, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, Pacific University, Mayor Goldschmidt staff
- ✓ Sally Erickson, Homeless Program Coordinator, City of Portland Bureau of Housing and Community Development
- ✓ Brian Faherty, President, Schoolhouse Electric, Real Estate Developer
- ✓ Pietro Ferrari, Executive Director, Hacienda Community Development Corporation
- ✓ Steve Freedman, Archer Strategic Alliances, Former Director Multnomah County Commission for Human Rights and Relations
- ✓ Amalia Alarcon Gaddie, Manager, City of Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement
- ✓ Patricia Gardner, Vice President and Chair of Planning Committee, Pearl District Neighborhood Association
- ✓ Vanessa Gaston, President & CEO, Urban League of Portland
- ✓ Dean Gisvold, Chair of Board, Central City Concern
- ✓ Tim Grewe, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Portland
- ✓ Rob Gould, Director, Conflict Resolution Graduate Program, Portland State University
- ✓ Dick Harmon, Regional Lead Staff, Industrial Areas Foundation
- ✓ Richard Harris, Executive Director, Central City Concern
- ✓ Marion Haynes, Policy Analyst, Portland Business Alliance/Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Dale Hess, Professor of Political Science, Portland State University
- ✓ Marcia Hille, Vice President for Youth & Family Services, Albertina Kerr Center
- ✓ Gretchen Kafoury, Former City Council, Multnomah County Commissioner, State House of Representatives
- ✓ Gil Kelly, Director, City of Portland Bureau of Planning
- ✓ Charles Lewis, Executive Director, Ethos Music Center

- ✓ Diane Luther, Housing Director, Multnomah County
- ✓ Heather Lyons, Homeless Program Manager, City of Portland Bureau of Housing and Community Development
- ✓ Paula Manley, Consultant, Central City Concern
- ✓ Lance Marrs, Realtor, Hasson Company
- ✓ Joe McFerrin II, President & CEO, Portland OIC
- ✓ Michael Mills, Ombudsman, City of Portland
- ✓ Judith Mowry, Director of Mediation Services, Resolutions Northwest
- ✓ Cece Hughley Noel, Executive Director, Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program
- ✓ Jan Scott Olson, Financial Analyst, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ✓ Tonya Parker, Senior Deputy Director, Fannie Mae
- ✓ Deena Pierott, Deputy Director, City of Portland Bureau of Housing and Community Development and President of Oregon Chapter of National Forum for Black Public Administrators
- ✓ Andy Raubeson, Founding Executive Director, Central City Concern
- ✓ Steve Rudman, Executive Director, Housing Authority of Portland
- ✓ Lefty Schultz, Retired United Methodist Church Minister
- ✓ Bill Scott, Mayor Goldschmidt's Chief of Staff, Governor Goldschmidt's Director of Oregon State Department of Community and Economic Development, now CEO Flexcar
- ✓ Bing Sheldon, Vice Chair of Board, Central City Concern
- ✓ Bev Stein, Former Multnomah County Executive and Oregon Governor Candidate, now Public Strategies Group
- ✓ Erik Sten, Portland City Council
- ✓ Lawrence Teherani-Ami, Director of Media, Weiden & Kennedy
- ✓ Niki Toussaint, Doctoral Student in Urban Studies, Portland State University, and former Executive Director, Oregon Uniting
- ✓ Cameron Vaughn-Tyler, Government Affairs Director, Portland Business Alliance/Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Steve Wasson, Board member, Central City Concern
- ✓ Martha Westgate, Laurelhurst & Center Neighborhood Association Activist
- ✓ Andy Wilch, Director of Housing, Portland Development Commission
- ✓ Wyman Winston, Deputy Director, Portland Development Commission
- ✓ Debbie Wood, Former Executive Director, Central City Concern

Omaha

- ✓ Stephanie Alschwede, Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless Executive Committee, Pastor, Dietz United Methodist Church and Director of United Methodist for Mission and Justice
- ✓ Bob Armstrong, Former Director, Omaha Housing Authority, Former Director, City of Omaha Budget Office in Mayor Zorinsky's administration
- ✓ John Barriantos, President, South Omaha Business Association, and Insurance Company Owner

- ✓ Doug Bisson, Director of Community Planning, HDR
- ✓ Del Bomberger, Former Chair, Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless Executive Committee, Executive Director, Stephen Center
- ✓ Anne Boyle, Nebraska Public Service Commissioner
- ✓ Mary Lee Brock, Executive Director, Concord Center
- ✓ David Brown, President, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ A'Jamal Byndon, Director of Public Policy, Catholic Charities
- ✓ Don Bredthauer, Retired United Methodist Church Minister, and Volunteer, Omaha Together One Community
- ✓ Anne Hindery Camp, Program Director, Omaha Community Foundation
- ✓ David Catalan, Executive Director, Nonprofit Association of the Midlands, Retired Union Pacific Executive, Former Director of Workforce Development in Mayor Daub's administration
- ✓ Deborah Conley, Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless Executive Committee, and Deputy Director, Family Housing Advisory Service
- ✓ Hal Daub, Former Omaha Mayor
- ✓ Tim Dempsey, Police Chief, Elkhorn, Nebraska
- ✓ Carol Ebdon, Director, City of Omaha Budget Office
- ✓ Jill Fenner, Director, Fair Housing Center of Nebraska
- ✓ Pete Festersen, Chair Omaha Planning Commission, and Vice President of Public Policy, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Mary Lee Fitzsimmons, Interim Director, Metropolitan Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless, and Former Director, OneWorld Community Health Center
- ✓ Ann Goldstein, Former Director of Education, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Mary Heng-Braun, Former Director of Donor Services, Omaha Community Foundation
- ✓ Cecil Hicks, Director, City of Omaha Human Resources Department
- ✓ Tom Holler, Supervisor and Lead Organizer, Industrial Areas Foundation
- ✓ Rick Jeffries, Attorney, Kutak Rock
- ✓ Deborah Keating, Director of Community Banking, First National Bank of Omaha, and Former Executive Director, Girl Scouts Great Plains Council
- ✓ Virgil Keller, Community Programs Director, United Way
- ✓ Rich Koeppen, Former Chair, Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless Executive Committee, and Executive Director, McCauley Center for Women & Children
- ✓ Paul Landow, Chief of Staff, Mayor Fahey's Office
- ✓ Joanne Lofton, Retired Assistant Dean, College of Public Affairs and Community Service, University of Nebraska at Omaha
- ✓ Doug Maline, Omaha Public Power District, Retired Diversity Director
- ✓ Marilyn McGary, President & CEO, Urban League of Nebraska
- ✓ Dennis Mehelich, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, Creighton University
- ✓ Orville Menard, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, University of Nebraska at Omaha

- ✓ Reed Morgan, Grants Program Director, Iowa West Foundation
- ✓ Joyce O'Neil, Systems Administrator, MACCH Book – Homeless Management Information System and Former Interim Coordinator, Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless
- ✓ Magda Peck, Professor of Pediatrics and Public Health, University of Nebraska Medical Center, and CEO of CityMatCH
- ✓ Bob Peters, Former Director, City of Omaha Planning Department, now Robert Peters Co.
- ✓ Stan Quy, Regional Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ✓ Mike Saklar, Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless Executive Committee, and Executive Director, Sienna Francis House
- ✓ Marty Shukert, Former Director, City of Omaha Planning Department, now RDG
- ✓ Connie Spellman, Director, Omaha By Design, Former Director of Education, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Joanne Strong, Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless Executive Committee, and Deputy Director, Community Alliance
- ✓ David Thomas, Former Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless staff, City of Omaha Planning Department
- ✓ Pete Tulipana, President & CEO, Heartland Family Service
- ✓ Rebecca Valdez, Executive Director, Chicano Awareness Center
- ✓ Del Weber, Chancellor Emeritus, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and Former President of Omaha Community Foundation
- ✓ Marilyn Wegehaupt, Omaha Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless Executive Committee, and Shelter Nurses Director, Visiting Nurse Association
- ✓ Dan Welch, President, Omaha City Council
- ✓ Bob Wolfson, Former Director, Anti-Defamation League Great Plains Region
- ✓ Lyn Wallin Ziegenbein, Executive Director, Peter Kiewit Foundation

Comparison of Descriptive Statistics on Portland and Omaha (Appendix I)

Population, Race & Ethnicity	Portland	Omaha	U.S.
Total Population	513,627	373,215	301,607,886
White	79.5%	77.4%	74.7%
Black or African American	6.2%	13.5%	12.1%
Asian	7.1%	1.9%	4.3%
Latino or Hispanic (of any race)	8.4%	10.6%	14.5%
Identifying themselves as two or more races	4.0%	2.1%	1.9%

Homeownership & Household Income	Portland	Omaha
Owner-occupied Housing Units	56.6%	57.6%
Renter-occupied Housing Units	43.4%	42.4%
Median Home Value in 1990	\$59,200	\$54,600
Median Home Value in 2000	\$154,900	\$94,200
Median Home Value in 2005	\$225,900	\$124,400
Median Household Income in 1990	\$32,424	\$26,927
Median Household Income in 2000	\$40,146	\$40,006
Median Household Income in 2005	\$42,287	\$40,484
Citizens Living Below Poverty Line 2005	17.8%	15.3%

Housing Segregation by Race	Portland	Omaha
Census tract with highest % of white non-Hispanic	94.5%	98.1%
Census tract with lowest % of white non-Hispanic	27.8%	5.9%
Range of highest to lowest	66.7%	92.2%

Two Types of Community Culture Explained (Appendix J)

<i>Type of Community Culture</i>	<i>Social Capital</i>	<i>Community Power</i>	<i>Political History</i>
Private Sector Community Culture (Modeled in Omaha)	High <i>Bonding</i> SC = reinforces more exclusive identities and homogeneous groups	<i>Elite</i> = a small group at the top makes decisions for a community	<i>Control-oriented</i> = central control of public affairs are trusted
Public Sector Community Culture (Modeled in Portland)	High <i>Bridging</i> SC = inclusive mindset that intends to bridge the diversity that can divide a community	<i>Pluralist</i> = community leadership is fluid, and often different leaders emerge in different issue areas	<i>Process-oriented</i> = trust of the process for arriving at political/policy decisions

Community Culture and Collaborative Success (Appendix K)

<i>Type of Community Culture</i>	<i>Criterion for Collaborative Success</i>	<i>Leadership Needed to Successfully Form and Sustain Partnerships</i>	<i>Sector From Which Funding Comes for Collaborative Success</i>
Private Sector Community Culture (Modeled in Omaha)	Showing a return on investment	Private sector leaders, often from the largest corporations with a long history in the community	Perception that mostly private sector funding to nonprofits who provide services
Public Sector Community Culture (Modeled in Portland)	Using the appropriate processes for decision making	Public sector leaders, both elected officials and public administrators	Public generally believes mostly public sector funding to the nonprofits who then provide services