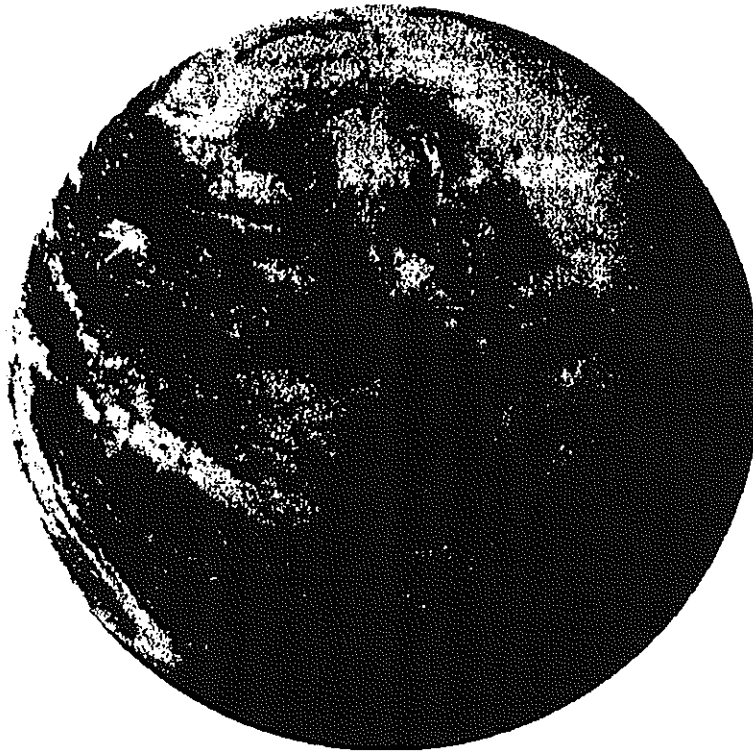


# CHANGING THE WAY WE DO THINGS

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Recommendations and Findings of The Futures Committee



■ October 1997 ■

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# **Changing the Way We Do Things**

**Report of the Futures Committee on  
Community Development in Chicago**

**October 1997**

Front cover photo by Dan Kemmis

The Futures Committee extends its deep appreciation to its funders:

**The Chicago Community Trust  
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation  
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The Albert Pick Jr. Fund  
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First Chicago/NBD Bank  
LISC/Chicago**

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# Changing The Way We Do Things

## Recommendations and Findings of the Futures Committee

In every field of endeavor there are moments when it is important, indeed necessary, to step back and see what is going on in the field, whether in fact the field is still relevant to its purpose, and what directions it should take to make a difference in the future. Such a moment occurred in the community development field in Chicago in 1996. Though well-known for its long and productive history of community activism, the city was then confronted by a confluence of challenges in both the public and private sectors that compelled those involved in community development to reflect on their work and its prospects for the future. One such reflection is described in this report of the Futures Committee, which was drawn together to provide a deliberate means by which these issues could be engaged.

The Futures Committee was convened by the LISC/Chicago Board of Advisors in 1996 to address fundamental concerns in the community development field in Chicago. Its charge was to develop a vision for the future of the field – with recommendations for implementation – based on contextual and situational analyses, broad-ranging discussion among leaders in the field and input from critical thinkers in Chicago and the nation.

In order to make the project as independent and broadly-based as possible, the Committee focused its work through a 'Strategy Group' composed of twenty leaders drawn from various sectors in the city who had an impact on community development at the local level. Among those represented were religious congregations, government and political leaders (including suburban leaders), businesses, foundations, community development corporations, intermediaries, health care, schools, and public safety. The Group was co-chaired by Rebecca Riley, Vice President of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Aurie Pennick, President of the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities; and Raul Raymundo, Executive Director of The Resurrection Project in the Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago.

Executive  
Summary

The key questions for the Committee were:

- What does the future hold for Chicago's communities?
- Is there a common vision of community life and its future in Chicago?
- What should local organizational responses to that future look like?
- What tools and resources will community-related organizations and institutions require to play their roles in this future?
- What roles should intermediary organizations like LISC play in this future?

In relation to these questions, the objectives of the Committee were to:

- assess the situation of community development in Chicago and its likely context in the future
- investigate whether there is a consensus on healthy community life in Chicago and if so, what it is
- create scenarios for interventionist efforts in community development in the future
- identify possible methods, forms of organization and resources required for such interventions
- communicate these findings through various media and a symposium to be held in Chicago.

The Committee's process was divided into four strands:

- Data collection that included background research and a literature review, focus groups, and outreach to nationally-recognized leaders and researchers in the field;
- Forums at which various themes were explored in public conversations conducted by recognized authorities in the field;
- Strategy Group deliberations, based on the data collection process and utilizing resource personnel from Chicago and nationwide; and
- Communication of the Group's work to the public through various media and at a symposium to be held in Chicago at the end of the process.

The  
Questions

At the very start, the Strategy Group decided that the fundamental task in speaking about the future of community development was to articulate a vision of a healthy community. The Group composed its Vision through fourteen "Precepts of a Healthy Community" discussed below. In general,

**What the Vision suggests is that what makes a community healthy is its ability to manage or govern itself, both formally and informally, on its own behalf and on behalf of the wider community. American civil society depends upon this ability and nowhere is this more evident, more practical and more necessary than at the local community level.**

The Precepts are all derivative of this fundamental belief.

- Precept 1. *Healthy communities offer economic opportunity for residents to become producers, as well as consumers, through participation in the work force and/or entrepreneurial activity.***
- Precept 2. *Healthy communities reflect and build positive values. The moral and intellectual development of individuals takes place in the context of significant interaction with others who are of diverse backgrounds.***
- Precept 3. *Healthy communities nurture and sustain families and children.***
- Precept 4. *In healthy communities, individuals have multiple opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.***
- Precept 5. *Healthy communities provide a public forum for common conversation, shared stories, and diverse expressions.***
- Precept 6. *Healthy communities are supported by political structures and processes that encourage responsible citizenship and accountable government and balance individual interests and local needs with the needs of the larger community.***

The  
Precepts of  
a Healthy  
Community

- Precept 7. *Healthy communities have strong mediating institutions, such as churches, schools and community organizations with the power to affect important issues.*
- Precept 8. *Healthy communities identify, nurture and promote leadership.*
- Precept 9. *Healthy communities value the past as they invite the future and are able to manage change.*
- Precept 10. *Healthy communities manage and invest in local properties, public spaces and public ways, so as to enhance each community's ability to prosper.*
- Precept 11. *Healthy communities provide opportunities for artistic and cultural expression that nurtures individual talent and celebrates the events of community life.*
- Precept 12. *Healthy communities offer a convenient array of retail stores and professional and human services.*
- Precept 13. *Healthy communities maintain superior standards of public health, environmental integrity and safety.*
- Precept 14. *Healthy communities are accessible to people of all colors, all income groups, and those who have special needs, including the homeless, the elderly and disabled.*



Each of the Fourteen Precepts suggests an array of strategic community development approaches for the future. The Group identified a common set of strategic priorities, however, that could form the basis of a community development program for the future:

- Priority 1.** *Community development interventions should rebuild and strengthen civil society and public life.*
- Priority 2.** *Community development interventions should spring from a long-term Vision that a community has of itself and that embodies the Fourteen Precepts of a Healthy Community. This implies that community development interventions should be comprehensive in nature so as to influence the complex moral and social factors upon which the health of a community depends.*
- Priority 3.** *Community development interventions should leverage, integrate and coordinate the many diverse actors having impact on a community. The principal organization to which this responsibility falls is the community development corporation or similar agency within a neighborhood or region.*
- Priority 4.** *Community development interventions should 'lead the market' by leveraging capital in the form of private financing and public infrastructure for housing, business and commercial development.*
- Priority 5.** *Community development interventions should induce wise land use and assembly that gives priority to the redevelopment and infill of inner-city sites in which the public infrastructure is already in place. In the future, localized community development interventions must be strategized within the context of multiple community areas and the metropolitan region as a whole.*
- Priority 6.** *Community development interventions should focus on education, skill training and skill-upgrading.*
- Priority 7.** *At base, community development interventions should lead to a healthy local economy, with higher levels of disposable income per household and a higher level of median income throughout the community.*

Strategies  
for the  
Future

In addition to the strategic priorities, the Strategy Group devoted considerable attention to the fundamental building blocks that form the foundation of community development work. These include :

- ◆ organizing and advocacy;
- ◆ leadership development;
- ◆ long-range planning;
- ◆ public policy development;
- ◆ collaborations and partnerships;
- ◆ real estate development and management;
- ◆ funding and performance standards;
- ◆ human capital development in the community development field.

Ultimately the value of the Futures Committee and the deliberations of the Strategy Group will be judged by the impact they have on the community development field in Chicago and therefore on the development of Chicago's neighborhoods in the long-term. In the short-term, the Committee has already begun to have an impact in several ways. Chief among these is that the Committee has re-affirmed the validity of the community development enterprise itself. This was not a foregone conclusion at the beginning of the process, which began with many hard questions about where the field finds itself today and where it is going. But there are other impacts as well: there is a better sense of direction in the field and an emerging sense of assurance as to where to go from here; several development organizations – including LISC/Chicago – have already begun to invest in the findings of the Committee and are altering their paths accordingly; and a substantive dialogue has begun among several major policy organizations about the essential link between inner-city development and metropolitan growth.

As this indicates, the real value of the Futures Committee (and this report) lies in the influence it will have on the organizations and institutions already in place in the community development field that can transform the Committee's recommendations into creative and pragmatic courses of action. It is incumbent on those who are associated with community development in Chicago to consider the Committee's findings seriously and to implement the most relevant and most transformative in the communities in which they work.

It is exhilarating to consider what might happen if all of the significant actors in a given community – public and private leaders, businesses, religious congregations, community organizations and institutions – were to focus together on the realization of the Fourteen Precepts in their community. Through the proposed Strategic Priorities, the Precepts open the door to new methods of revitalization, new forms of collaboration, and new and different goals for each of the actors themselves. And, perhaps most important, the Precepts provide the most powerful tool of all: a Vision to which a community can commit itself and its future.

Changing  
the Way  
We Do  
Things

# Report of the Futures Committee on Community Development in Chicago

It certainly seems odd to begin a discussion on the future of community development in Chicago with a satellite picture of the earth.

Yet that is exactly where the discussion began when Dan Kemmis – author, former Montana legislator and now Director of the Center for the Rocky Mountain West – opened the first public session of the Futures Committee in January 1997. Kemmis used the satellite view as a dramatic demonstration of what he called the “organic” nature of human communities, the sense that communities are living forms with structures that develop according to their own logic, on their own timelines and without much attention to artificial limitations, including political boundaries. Moreover, Kemmis argued that human community develops along the lines proposed by the contemporary theories of chaos and complexity, which suggest that apparently independent tracks of activity (which we often see in community development work) may actually lead to coherent forms, coming together just at the moment we least expect.

Despite the “global” nature of his remarks, Kemmis’s observations were directly relevant to the situation in which the community development field found itself in Chicago in 1997. On the one hand, community development corporations (CDCs) and others in the field had established an enviable track record of achievement over the years that included the reinvigoration or stabilization of a number of neighborhoods in the city of Chicago. Because of their success, however, development practitioners were now being called upon to expand into new areas, such as school reform and regional development, that were outside their traditional scope of work and for which resources were scarce. At the same time, those engaged in community development work were sobered by the recent business failures of several CDCs and, perhaps more importantly, by the realization that poverty and its consequences had actually intensified in several areas of the city in which community development interventions had occurred over the last several years.

The community development field in Chicago was at a crossroads; The 'forms' of community life that could be anticipated to emerge as a result of development interventions were unclear at best. And there appeared to be no generally accepted vision of community life in the city that could guide community development work in the future. It was timely therefore to begin a deliberate conversation about the future that would, as Kemmis suggested, "hospice old ways of thinking" in order to "midwife the new organic forms that (might) emerge". It was in this spirit that the Futures Committee convened its work and now reports its findings.

## ***Background***

The idea of assembling a "Futures Committee" emerged quite accidentally during a panel discussion at the 1996 Chicago Neighborhood Development Awards. The panel included executive directors from several of the city's leading community development corporations (CDCs). The directors spoke articulately about the new demands being placed on CDCs in the 1990s and the need to rethink traditional CDC roles, organization and strategies. Indeed, the directors' remarks went a step further: the community development enterprise itself needed to be re-thought, as well as the roles and functions, if any, of the CDCs with which they were themselves associated.

These comments were both startling and impressive, coming as they did from acknowledged leaders in the field who had both a personal and professional stake in its long-term future. As it turned out the panelists were not alone: similar questions were being raised in other venues with other stakeholders in the community development field, including government officials, funders and members of the media who were echoing the concerns that the CDC directors had voiced themselves.

There seemed to be several underlying reasons for the shared sense of concern:

- ◆ Three high profile CDCs had terminated their development activities and essentially gone out of business during 1995, leaving behind a troubled portfolio of low-income residential projects that they had developed and managed over the years. In addition, several other CDCs were going through unsettling leadership changes.
- ◆ The federal government had sent signals, if not clear legislation, that its involvement in local community development would be significantly changed and reduced in the future. Since the majority of CDC work sponsored by the City of Chicago is funded with federal dollars, future operating and development support had become a major issue.

"...real estate development, taken alone and without relation to such social factors as the quality of local schools ... was inadequate to revitalize a disadvantaged neighborhood."

- ◆ Practical experience in the field over the past five years indicated that several assumptions related to community development work needed to be re-thought. Among these were the role that real estate ownership and management should play in a CDC's on-going operations and the reliance that CDC's could place on real estate development fees as an adequate source of on-going revenues.

Finally, there was an acknowledgment that despite all the good things accomplished by CDCs over the last decade the overall situation in a number of the city's neighborhoods had declined rather than improved. One of the emerging conclusions was that real estate development, taken alone and without relation to such social factors as the quality of local schools and sparsity of employment opportunities, was inadequate to revitalize a disadvantaged neighborhood.

Obviously, these issues went to the very heart of the community development enterprise and their consequences would have a profound effect not only on CDCs but on nearly everyone and every organization engaged in the field. They required an investigation that would address the state of the field and – even more importantly – suggest directions for the future.

The groundwork for such an investigation was laid in the summer of 1996 in two open forums convened by LaSalle National Bank and the United Way of Metropolitan Chicago. Entitled "Lessons Learned", the forums provided an intriguing look into the state of the community development field and its problems and opportunities. Over 800 people – including community leaders, bankers, government and political officials, and real estate developers – attended the two sessions, indicating the depth and breadth of general concern. The forums deliberately avoided coming to conclusions about the condition of the field, but the "airing of the issues" provided an invaluable contribution to the emerging dialogue about community development in Chicago.

The forums suggested again that it was necessary to provide a deliberate means through which those concerned with these matters could investigate their meaning and their significance for the future. At the suggestion of its Program Director in Chicago, Andrew Mooney, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation Board of Advisors (see Appendix 1 for a Board list) decided to convene such a process through which the community development field could take a look at itself, ask some very

hard questions and then determine what directions it could and should take from this point forward. The Board asked Rebecca Riley, a respected leader in community development issues and Vice-President of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, to assemble a 'Futures Committee', composed of Board members, community development practitioners and others from outside the 'traditional' field, as the group through which this process would unfold.

### ***Historical context***

The issues with which the Futures Committee would concern itself did not, of course, spring up overnight. They emerged within a long and rich history of community activism that could trace its roots from Jane Addams's settlement houses in the late 1800s to Saul Alinsky's grass roots mobilization efforts in the 1950s and 1960s. These initiatives provided some of the impetus for the federal government's War on Poverty during the 1960s which – through the Community Action Program and the subsequent Model Cities initiative – sparked the modern day organizing efforts for which Chicago is best known. This activism also inspired a new type of local citizen association, the community development corporation or CDC, to plan and win resources for projects that specifically addressed local residents' needs, particularly job creation and affordable housing. CDCs became prominent in Chicago during the 1970s and 1980s when federal and state programs, particularly the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), provided significant financial support for CDC operations and projects for the first time.

There are approximately 100 CDCs in Chicago today, about half of which are consistently active and involved in development projects of one kind or another. Most tend to specialize either in economic development, subdivided into commercial and industrial development, or housing. In part because of the federal and philanthropic support available over the last fifteen years, the number of housing CDCs increased the most during the 1980s, as did their public profile.<sup>1</sup> At the same time it is this segment that has shown the most stress over the last few years, evidenced by the fact that the three CDCs that ceased

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted, however, that the number of economic development CDCs was equally significant during this period.



operations in Chicago in 1995 were housing development corporations.

The 1980s and the Reagan administration signaled an end to the federal government's massive commitment to inner-city revitalization. As part of a larger pullback from social welfare programs, the Administration eliminated the Community Services Administration (Model Cities and related programs), cut funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (CDBG and housing programs) by 76 percent, and sharply reduced expenditures on employment and training programs – all of which had become essential to local community development work in the nation's cities. Reagan's successors have continued to hold funding for urban programs flat, with the exception of the Clinton administration's Empowerment Zone program which is targeting inner city neighborhoods in a dozen or so cities nationwide, including Chicago.

“Despite the federal pullback there is a remarkable track record of success in the nation's cities, including Chicago.”

Despite the federal pullback, there is a remarkable track record of success in the nation's cities, including Chicago. In most cases, the response to inner-city problems has come primarily from the nonprofit/CDC sector – though more recently CDCs have been joined by a new class of “entrepreneurial” mayors who are taking a more pragmatic approach to their cities' urgent problems. Much of Chicago's success can be attributed to an organizing effort in the mid-1980s in which CDCs, through the Chicago Rehab Network and the Chicago Association of Neighborhood Development Organizations, working with the National Training and Information Center and the Woodstock Institute and under provisions of the federal Community Reinvestment Act, negotiated precedent-setting neighborhood lending programs with major downtown financial institutions that opened the doors to significant capital infusions into investment-starved inner-city areas. In conjunction with intermediary organizations like the Local Initiatives Support Corporation and utilizing other funding mechanisms like the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, CDCs have since been able to leverage enough funding from banks, the public sector, and foundations to develop several million square feet of commercial/industrial space and roughly 10,000 units of affordable housing in Chicago's neighborhoods. These efforts have led to the rejuvenation of a number of communities throughout the city, including several that had long been written off in the public mind. In fact, in the last twenty years, eight of Chicago's poorest

neighborhoods have improved their condition relative to the city as a whole.<sup>2</sup> More currently, the City is experiencing an economic boom that has even led to gentrification concerns in a number of formerly disinvested communities.

Other current indicators are equally impressive:

“...in the last twenty years, eight of Chicago’s poorest neighborhoods have improved their condition relative to the city as a whole.”

- ◆ The number and amount of loans made in Chicago’s low-income communities have increased markedly in the past five years. All of Chicago’s major banks now have active community investment programs as well as branch offices throughout the city that compete for inner-city business, making capital available for housing and entrepreneurial development.<sup>3</sup>
- ◆ Chicago’s public schools have begun to make remarkable progress in student achievement levels in the past two years, spurred by reforms at both the local and central administrative levels.<sup>4</sup>
- ◆ Chicago’s violent crime rate has declined, suggesting among other things that the city’s community policing program has had a positive impact.<sup>5</sup>
- ◆ There is increased optimism about the city’s future on the part of local residents. Fully 38 percent of Chicago residents now believe that their neighborhood will improve in the next few years, up from 32 percent in 1991.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Improvements are based on community area scores on a revitalization index composed of per capita income, residential loans per capita, and median sale prices of single-family homes. The index was formulated as part of a forthcoming doctoral dissertation by Sean Zielenbach at Northwestern University.

<sup>3</sup> “CRA Boosts Multifamily Housing Loans in Chicago,” Woodstock Institute Reinvestment Alert #8 (May 1995); “Expanding the American Dream: Home Lending Surges in Modest-Income Neighborhoods,” Woodstock Institute Reinvestment Alert #9 (May 1996).

<sup>4</sup> D. Garth Taylor, *Trends for the '90s: Changes in Quality of Life Indicators in the Chicago Region* (Chicago: Metro Chicago Information Center, 1996)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

“...the massive construction of interstate highways and federal mortgage guarantee programs (FHA) that have fueled suburban residential development... have all contributed greatly to the decline of urban communities and the concentration of poverty in those communities.”

Even in the face of such achievements in Chicago and elsewhere in the nation, economic and social conditions in many urban neighborhoods have worsened. Affordable housing has become increasingly scarce: 72 percent more households need adequate housing than they did in 1970, while the inventory of cheaper housing has declined by 12 percent.<sup>7</sup> In Chicago, nineteen community areas now have more than 30 percent of their residents living under the federally-defined poverty line in 1990 compared to three such areas in 1970. Violent crime and drug dealing affect many low income neighborhoods while localized unemployment rates often exceed 25 percent.<sup>8</sup> In fact, much of the city's manufacturing base and many of its major corporations and chief executive officers have moved out of the city, either to the suburbs or, in some cases, out of the state entirely. And until recently, public education has been grossly ineffective in most of Chicago's inner-city neighborhoods, with almost half of entering high school freshmen dropping out before graduation.<sup>9</sup>

Inner-city neighborhoods are also suffering dramatically from the consequences of the metropolitan area's suburban sprawl which has bled jobs and industry from the city and led to a political fragmentation that undermines the city's efforts to attract state and federal resources to such essential public services as transportation and infrastructure. As a cause of neighborhood decline, the complex web of suburbanization deserves emphasis: the migration of manufacturing and corporate headquarters to suburban campuses, the massive construction of interstate highways and federal mortgage guarantee programs (FHA) that have fueled suburban residential development, and the relocation of retail outlets in outlying areas have all contributed greatly to the decline of urban communities and the concentration of poverty in those communities. The spread of the metropolitan area has also continued Chicago's historic pattern of racial segregation and discrimination in both jobs and housing, particularly in the area's southern and western suburbs.

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<sup>7</sup> Jason DeParle. "The Year That Housing Died." *New York Times Magazine* (October 20, 1996), pp. 52ff.

<sup>8</sup> Rebecca London and Deborah Puntenny. "A Profile of Chicago's Poverty and Related Conditions" (Evanston: Northwestern University Center for Urban Affairs, 1993), p. 20.

<sup>9</sup> Taylor, *ibid*.

Purpose  
and  
Expected  
Outcomes  
of the  
Futures  
Committee

It is in the face of such seemingly intractable problems as these that the value and efficacy of community development intervention comes into question. What will it take to improve the odds for effecting positive change in the future? What roles should community organizations like CDCs play and what tools will they need? Most important, what vision can we create for community life in Chicago in the future and what do we think it will take to get there? These questions and others like them formed the basis for the work of the Futures Committee.

As convened by the LISC Board of Advisors in late 1996, the Futures Committee was intended to address the fundamental issues challenging the community development field today with an emphasis more on the needs of Chicago's neighborhoods in the future than on what has happened over the last several years. The Committee's charge was to "develop a vision for the future of the field and recommendations for implementation" that were "based on contextual and situational analyses, broad-ranging discussion among key leaders in the field and input from critical thinkers in Chicago and nationwide."

In line with this, the Committee was asked to focus on the following questions:

- ◆ What does the future hold for Chicago's communities?
- ◆ Is there a common vision for the future of community life in Chicago?
- ◆ What should local organizational responses to that future look like?
- ◆ What tools and resources would organizations need to play their roles?
- ◆ What roles should intermediary organizations (like LISC) play in this future?

It was expected that the Committee's answers to these and other questions would eventually be embodied in a report that would not only help guide LISC, the convening organization, in its future programs, but assist all those seriously concerned about the future of community development in Chicago.

In establishing the Committee, LISC's Board understood the difficulty in gauging the "success" of such an endeavor. It is difficult indeed to gauge the power of an idea once released into a field of action like community development. The Board felt it would be enough perhaps

"The most important would be the revitalization of those neighborhoods which today are haunted by both social and physical deterioration."

to develop a meaningful vision of the future of community development that the Committee's participants would accept, as well as a set of recommendations based on the vision that could be implemented after the Committee's work was done. Still, if the Committee was to be truly successful, there would be both short- and long-term impacts on community development in Chicago. The most important of these would be the revitalization of those neighborhoods which today are haunted by both social and physical deterioration. In the short-term, however, the following might also be expected:

- ◆ Greater public confidence in the community development enterprise and consequently greater public cooperation with, and investment in local development efforts;
- ◆ A vision of what 'development' means within the context of a 'healthy' community;
- ◆ Different forms of community organization, including innovative approaches and structures;
- ◆ A realistic assessment of the roles local community organizations, government, the business sector and funders might play in the community development process;
- ◆ A revitalization of the traditional Chicago partnership between the public and private sectors, with new strategies for investment, new tools for financing, and new methods of collaboration;
- ◆ Redefined roles and products for community development intermediaries like LISC; and
- ◆ A more attractive field of endeavor in which to establish a career.

Convening a 'Futures Committee' and with it creating a high level of expectation is a high-risk venture in that such a process can end up to be unproductive or, even worse, misleading. But those who were involved in pulling the Committee together felt that the questions regarding community development are very much on the table today and that it would be an even greater risk to avoid their challenge or underestimate their importance to the future of the community development enterprise.

“The report is intended to provoke thought, not end it; to challenge accepted traditions and practice, not justify them; and to point to some of the many paths that might be taken in the future...”

This report will show how the Committee set about its task and how it lived up to its mandate. The report is not by any means a “solution” to a problem or the last word on community development in Chicago. It is simply a vehicle through which to focus on the issues faced by community development practitioners today and to stimulate the dialogue about how those challenges are to be faced. The report is intended to provoke thought, not end it; to challenge accepted traditions and practice, not justify them; and to point to some of the many paths that might be taken in the future to rebuild communities in the metropolitan area of Chicago.

LISC's Board of Advisors assigned a subcommittee under the direction of Board member and MacArthur Foundation Vice President Rebecca Riley to plan and initiate the Futures Committee. The subcommittee made two important decisions early on: the first, to retain an outside facilitator to assist in the process; and the second, to form an independent "Strategy Group" that would conduct the actual deliberations required under the Committee's mandate. These decisions were made in order to make the process as independent of LISC as possible – given LISC's own role in community development in Chicago – and as a way to allow for a full, frank and representative dialogue that could lead to a consensus on the issues.

Having made these fundamental decisions, the subcommittee turned over day-to-day decisions to Riley, facilitator and local CDC director Jim Capraro, and LISC Program Director Andrew Mooney and his staff. They were soon joined by Raul Raymundo, Executive Director of The Resurrection Project in the Pilsen neighborhood, and Aurie Pennick, President of the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities, who had been recruited as co-chairs of the Strategy Group.

Together, these organizers laid out a process for the work of the Strategy Group, divided into four strands:

1. Data collection that would include background research and a literature review, focus groups, and outreach to nationally-recognized leaders and researchers in the field;
2. Forums at which various themes could be explored in public conversations conducted by recognized authorities in the field;
3. Strategy Group deliberations, based on the data collection process and utilizing resource personnel from Chicago and nationwide, both in and outside the field; and
4. Communication of the Group's work to the public through various media and at a symposium to be held in Chicago at the end of the process.

The  
Process

The process was deceptive in its apparent simplicity. The first and most important issue to be faced was the composition of the Strategy Group itself. Given the number of creative and influential individuals engaged in community development in Chicago, the selection of a limited number who would have the time and commitment necessary for the success of this process was a significant challenge: To go about the selection in an orderly way, the organizers and LISC's Board developed a set of criteria according to which candidates would:

- ◆ be prepared to discuss the future with a creative and open mind;
- ◆ be people who are attempting to work on community building through multidisciplinary ways;
- ◆ be committed to the process and willing to be active in crafting a common vision of healthy communities and advocating for the achievement of that vision;
- ◆ provide leadership in a sector critical to the future of Chicago's communities; and,
- ◆ be willing to subordinate their traditional leadership interests and biases so that they could achieve and assume a communal leadership role in the advancement of community development interests.

In addition, the Group as a whole required several perspectives:

- ◆ traditional community development perspectives, in housing, economic development and so on;
- ◆ private sector parties who were active in community development projects;
- ◆ community development "thinkers" with experience from an array of locations within the Chicago region;
- ◆ broader community perspectives, including safety, education, jobs, transportation and health; and
- ◆ enriching perspectives, including urban economics and race relations.

After considerable discussion, a list of candidates emerged that met these criteria. However it still remained a difficult task to win commitments from all those invited to participate if for no other reason than the amount of time they were being asked to give to the process (see Appendix 2 for the list of Strategy Group members).



There were other challenges in getting the process off the ground besides the composition of the Strategy Group. For example, it became apparent that there was little research in the field of community development that was non-ideological or useful for the Group's deliberations. LISC staff therefore developed a literature review (available under separate cover), as well as other research materials. It was also surprisingly difficult to identify national leaders in the community development field who could serve as resources to the Group and speakers at the Group's public sessions. Organizers finally asked former Enterprise Foundation President Paul Brophy to assist them in this regard.

Despite these initial difficulties, the process by which the Group deliberated was straightforward. In all, the Group met fourteen times, for up to four hours per session. Several sessions included public presentations by the resource speakers identified by Brophy. All sessions were thematic and followed a pattern set initially by Riley and her fellow organizers. The intent was to have the Group deliberate first on its vision of a 'healthy' community in Chicago, and then to investigate the strategies, tactics and organizational roles that would be required in order to make such a vision real. (See Appendix 3 for the process agenda and list of resource speakers.)

In addition to structuring the process, organizers were also very concerned about making it as transparent to the public as possible. Community development is a public work and the organizers realized that the Group would only have value insofar as it was open to the community development field and communicative of its discussions. For that reason, organizers developed a communications plan that included the creation of a large mailing list of interested parties who were routinely invited to participate in the Group's public (plenary) sessions and who received a monthly newsletter about the Committee and the Group's deliberations. As a result, more than 250 individuals participated in at least one session during the process, and a total of over 450 for all sessions.

Organizers also established a web page through the University of Illinois/Chicago and utilized other media resources (such as the LISC newsletter) to disseminate information. In addition, a symposium on community development, at which the Committee will discuss this report, was scheduled for the fall of this year.

Focus groups were conducted during December 1996 and January 1997 with sixty-five leaders in the community development field in the Chicago area. Interviewees included representatives of community development organizations, government agencies, funders, the media, real estate developers, intermediaries, church leaders, business leaders, and others. Additional interviews were conducted with several business leaders who could not attend a group session.

The focus groups were intended to gather opinions about community development in the Chicago area to be used as a starting point for more in-depth discussions by the Strategy Group. It is important to understand that the groups were a gauge of perceptions about community development in Chicago – important information in a field so dependent on the interplay of judgments among many diverse parties.

The facilitators used the Futures Committee's basic questions as guides for the focus groups:

- ◆ What does the future hold for Chicago's communities?
- ◆ Is there a common vision for the future of community life in Chicago?
- ◆ What role(s) will or should local development organizations play in that future?
- ◆ What tools and resources would these organizations need to play their roles?
- ◆ What roles should intermediary organizations like LISC play in this future?

### ***Findings***

#### **The Future of Chicago's communities**

***Opinions about the future of Chicago's communities are very different, reflecting in large part whether the individual comes from the public, private or not-for-profit sector.***

Many private developers expressed optimism about the city, commenting that the private sector is investing in almost every neighborhood in Chicago now. But community development organization officials were, on the whole, wary and discouraged, citing the concentration of poverty in the

Neither CDCs nor private developers worked within a larger vision of community development that could instruct and guide them in their individual actions.

city, welfare restructuring, reduced federal funding, a changing political climate, drugs and crime, and gentrification as reasons for serious concern. Participants also diverged significantly on the question of regionalism and whether it would serve neighborhoods best to organize their own efforts within a regional perspective.

### Common Vision

***In what was perhaps the most surprising result of the focus group sessions, there was overwhelming agreement among those interviewed that there is no common vision regarding community life or its future in Chicago.***

Participants stated that there was no commonly accepted vision of community life in the city of Chicago. Community development organizations averred that they focused on their own neighborhoods while private developers stated that they concentrated on the economic viability of individual projects within those neighborhoods; neither worked within a larger vision of community development that could instruct and guide them in their individual actions. Church leaders, government officials, funders and media also expressed a similar perspective, with each having their own unique focus and vision.

Several participants believed that this fragmentation was both natural and positive: a mix of competing interests that adapt their approaches to individual concerns. Others warned against the attempt to create a broad or common vision, suggesting that it would be easier to develop consensus around smaller issues. Still others, however, held that without a common vision there is a lack of commonality in the strategies, policies, and goals that could otherwise unify and strengthen the community development field in Chicago.

### The Role of Local Development Organizations

***A large majority of those interviewed indicated that CDCs and local development organizations play a critical role in guiding development in Chicago's neighborhoods. That role is expanding because it has become evident that for community development to be successful, it must encompass a broad variety of social and economic activities.***

“...many stressed the importance of addressing community development in a coordinated, comprehensive fashion.”

There was no consensus on the appropriate role for local development organizations in the future of community development in Chicago. To most interviewees, “community development” implies the entire range of social, economic and political forces that make neighborhoods work; from this perspective, community development programs should include a broad spectrum of activities from housing development to economic development to issues of drugs, crime, education, job training, and recreation. In view of this, many stressed the importance of addressing community development in a coordinated, comprehensive fashion. “Holistic,” “unified,” “inter-related” and “integrated” were terms that were repeated often.

Opinions differed widely on the role of local development organizations in packaging, owning, developing and managing real estate. Most interviewees agreed, however, that real estate development is a tool that should be considered within the context of a larger community development strategy.

### **Tools and Resources for Community Development**

***Most interviewees reported the need for more tools and resources to encourage development at a time when the currently available tools and resources are disappearing. Many believed, however, that time and effort should be spent on making the latter easier to use and more efficacious.***

Local development organization representatives emphatically stated the need for more funding for staff salaries and benefits, training, organizing and management. They also expressed their concern about recruiting and retaining good staff in a competitive employment environment.

Interviewees offered several specific suggestions about the methods community development practitioners use, most notably:

- ◆ making the Low Income Housing Tax Credit cheaper and easier to use, while broadening its mandate to allow for higher levels of income and home ownership
- ◆ developing citywide “SWAT” teams that would offer intensive technical assistance to local development organizations engaged in housing or economic development projects

- ◆ encouraging collaborations among not-for-profit organizations and between not-for-profit and for-profit organizations in order to make more efficient use of existing resources and expertise.

### **Role of Intermediary Organizations**

***Interviewees focused their remarks on the Local Initiatives Support Corporation. Opinions differed widely about the latter's appropriate role. LISC has played the role of a funder, lender, technical assistance provider and policy advocate in the past. Each of those roles is valued by different constituencies to varying degrees.***

The most frequent suggestions urged that LISC use its "considerable" power as an effective policy advocate to support expansion and improvement of existing programs (e.g., tax credits) as well as other resources for community development (e.g., CDBG). Many supported LISC's traditional role of working with local development organizations to influence policy, support (and market) worthy projects and strategies, and create linkages with the private sector to generate financial resources. Others suggested a wider role for LISC in CDC staff and Board training as well as in a broader set of community-building activities that contribute overall to community development.

Few comments were made regarding other intermediary organizations. Some interviewees noted that the potential roles proposed for LISC could or should be performed by other intermediaries as well.

## Summary

“...there was a sense that new tools and methods, as well as new funding sources, would be needed to allow community development organizations to pursue a more comprehensive agenda.”

Interviewees in the focus groups took widely disparate points of view as to the trajectory of community development in Chicago today. The vast majority of participants believed, however, that there was no common vision of community life in Chicago and no acknowledged sense of goals of community development or the best methods to be employed in the field. Participants agreed that the traditional “frontline” actors in the field – community development organizations – had played an invaluable (if not always clear) role in the history of their communities. But there was an overwhelming sense that the task at hand was much larger than the real estate development programs that many community development organizations pursued. In this regard, there was a sense that new tools and methods, as well as new funding sources, would be needed to allow community development organizations to pursue a more comprehensive agenda. Intermediaries, like LISC, would also have to become more aggressive in supporting policy positions in support of such an agenda and become more flexible in their programming.

The focus groups were also revealing, though, in what interviewees did not say. For example, much of the discussion focused on “frontline” organizations – such as community development corporations or LISC – with which the community development field is traditionally associated. There was little discussion of the important, perhaps determinative roles that the private sector and government can or should play. There were also few ideas about methods, at either the local or regional level, that could be put in play to make community development more effective.

Still the most decided silence occurred when interviewees were asked about a common vision of community life in Chicago. After decades of work in Chicago’s neighborhoods, it is both surprising and discouraging that the chief protagonists in the city’s community development efforts do not share a common vision of what they are about or where they are going, and that they are equally divided about whether such a vision is valuable or necessary to their work. One might say that it was in response to this silence and sense of ambivalence that the Futures Committee found its mandate.

"...what the Vision suggests is that what makes a community healthy is its ability to manage or govern itself, both formally and informally, on its own behalf and on behalf of all the residents of the city."

## The Precepts of a Healthy Community

### *The Vision of a Healthy Community*

The Strategy Group decided in its first meetings that the fundamental task in speaking about the future of community development is to develop a vision of what a healthy community is. While at first blush this may seem to be an easy task, the results of the focus groups provided a serious challenge to the Group. Indeed, it required several long sessions before the Group developed a complete consensus on what constitutes a healthy community in urban America today.

The Group was aided at the very start by the incisive observations of Illinois State Representative Barack Obama, who, along with Dan Kemmis, spoke at the Group's first plenary session. Obama provided an outline of the precepts he considered most important in thinking about healthy communities, an outline which served to guide the Group's discussions throughout the entire process.

The precepts discussed below compose a powerful Vision of what it means to be a healthy community in Chicago according to the participants in the Strategy Group of the Futures Committee.

**Overall, what the Vision suggests is that what makes a community healthy is its ability to manage or govern itself, both formally and informally, on its own behalf and on behalf of all the residents of the city. American civil society depends upon this ability and nowhere is this more evident, more practical and more necessary than at the local community level. The Precepts discussed below are all derivative of this fundamental belief.**

In bringing these Precepts together, the Strategy Group attempted to avoid the twin dangers of over-generalization and impracticality. It also accepted the fact that 'healthy' neighborhoods may exhibit only some of the principles at any particular time. Nevertheless, all of the Precepts depend upon and relate to each other and as such form a set of conditions the attainment of which would, in the Group's opinion, create the best setting in which individuals and families will develop in Chicago.

It is stimulating to consider what might happen if all of the significant actors in a given community – public and private leaders, businesses,

religious congregations, community organizations and institutions – were to focus together on the realization of the Fourteen Precepts in their community. It opens the doors to new methods of revitalization, new forms of collaboration, new and perhaps different goals for each of the actors themselves. And it gives the most powerful tool of all: an ideal to which the community can commit itself and its energy.



**Precept 1. *Healthy communities offer economic opportunity for residents to become producers, as well as consumers, through participation in the work force and/or entrepreneurial activity.***

At the heart of a healthy community is a sound economic base. This means that residents either have access to jobs or to their own businesses and that they are able to earn enough to cover their families' basic needs and to support the economic vitality of the neighborhood as a whole.

This does not necessarily imply that such jobs or businesses are found in the same neighborhood in which an individual resides, though this might be desirable. It does mean that a healthy community is one in which individuals can gain ready access to either jobs or capital, regardless of where their job or business might be.

**Precept 2. *Healthy communities reflect and build positive values. The moral and intellectual development of individuals takes place in the context of significant interaction with others who are of diverse backgrounds.***

Just as strong communities are built on a sound economic base, so too are they built on a base of positive values that allows residents to live in a civil and mutually respectful society. Such values include respect for the person and property of others, a sense of fair play and honesty in dealing with others, and consideration for legitimate differences displayed by others. Indeed, healthy communities not only respect others' differences, they actively promote diversity because of the potential for individual growth that diversity affords. The true test of a community built on values is in its ability to respond to the challenges that a diverse population often represents. Ironically, it might also be in its diversity that a community finds the resiliency it needs to deal with the challenges it faces over time.

**Precept 3. *Healthy communities nurture and sustain families and children.***

Fundamentally, communities are an extension of the families in their midst. Communities are healthy in the degree to which they support

families and children. The range of support can be dramatic, yet straightforward: a sound educational system, day care, health care, care for the elderly. It might also include higher degrees of intervention, such as in cases of substance abuse or spousal abuse, where the community should take a determined approach for remedy.

**Precept 4. *In healthy communities, individuals have multiple opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.***

It is a truism that today's economy requires a level of knowledge or skills undreamt of in earlier generations. It is also true that these skills need to be constantly upgraded if individuals wish to get ahead, or remain competitive in the jobs or businesses they currently hold. A healthy community will work to assure that families and individuals have a means to gain the knowledge and skill base they need – whether it is in the neighborhood school, the local community college or any other venue that provides such educational resources. This becomes particularly urgent in today's welfare reform climate in which an individual's ability to enter and remain in the job market is of paramount importance.

**Precept 5. *Healthy communities provide a public forum for common conversation, shared stories, and diverse expressions.***

'Community' – whether place-based or otherwise – implies a coming-together in which individuals share aspects of themselves that taken together contribute to the commonweal. Coming together is an essential feature of community. A healthy community will provide both formal and informal opportunities in which diverse members of the community can assemble, become known to each other and develop a mutual identity. In so doing, the community not only strengthens the individual but is itself strengthened by the common interest that develops.

“...can it be said that the metropolitan area is itself a ‘healthy’ community when it maintains areas within it that are poor, isolated and adrift from the economic, social and political currents of the larger community?”

**Precept 6. *Healthy communities are supported by political structures and processes that encourage responsible citizenship and accountable government and balance individual interests and local needs with the needs of the larger community.***

What is the relationship, for example, between a distressed inner city Chicago neighborhood and a wealthy village in west suburban Chicago? Can the inner city neighborhood be healthy unless it is integrated into the larger economic and political life of the City and the metropolitan area? Indeed, can it be said that the metropolitan area is itself a ‘healthy’ community when it maintains areas within it that are poor, isolated and adrift from the economic, social and political currents of the larger community?

Government plays a formidable role in response to these questions, so communities are healthiest when they hold their elected and appointed officials accountable for their decisions – a task that is often delegated to others outside the community and therefore without effect. Healthy communities require effective citizen participation – the basic unit of self-governance in a truly democratic society.

**Precept 7. *Healthy communities have strong mediating institutions, such as churches, schools and community organizations with the power to affect important issues.***

There are within communities ‘organic’ organizations and institutions which play the role of knitting communities together and acting as their voice. The role such mediators play has been underestimated in the past, as has their ability to create a wider sense of community and civil society. Religious congregations in particular have the moral authority and organizational prowess to speak out on behalf of their communities, which includes both their own congregations and the neighborhoods in which they are located. Schools provide for networks of families involved in issues related both to their children and to the community at large. Community development organizations are particularly well-positioned with respect to a community’s ability to govern itself. Healthy communities rely on these institutions, and others, to play critical roles in local community affairs.

“A healthy community is able to embrace what is truly good for its future without losing its memory or the values it has come to embody.”

**Precept 8. *Healthy communities identify, nurture, and promote leadership.***

It may seem self-evident that communities need leaders, but it is not always evident that communities will sustain their leaders, especially in difficult times. The emphasis of this Precept is precisely on this point. Healthy communities will provide various venues in which leaders can be properly identified, thus encouraging them to collaborate with each other in the communities' best interests.

**Precept 9. *Healthy communities value the past as they invite the future and are able to manage change.***

If there is one constant to urban communities, it is change. A test of a community's strength is its ability to respond to and manage change in order to determine its future.

Yet in the course of change history can be forgotten. Other Precepts have suggested, however, that a community's identity is in large part tied into its history: forgetting its history is tantamount to forgetting who it is, what it stands for, the struggles it has endured, the victories it has won and the defeats it has overcome. A healthy community is able to embrace what is truly good for its future without losing this memory or the values it has come to embody.

**Precept 10. *Healthy communities manage and invest in local properties, public spaces, and public ways, so as to enhance each community's ability to prosper.***

A community's physical environment bespeaks the standards the community has set for itself as well as its ability to protect its residents. Well-maintained properties, streets and other spaces are a clear signal of the relative health of a community and its ability to win essential resources. Moreover, a healthy community understands and manages the interplay of design, public and private resources and its own needs into livable human space. It assures at least adequate housing for all its residents, and especially those of low income, whether the housing is provided by public or private sources, or combinations of the two<sup>10</sup>. It

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<sup>10</sup> Though it is important to note that the "assurance" of adequate housing does not necessarily imply that a community or community organization must itself own, develop and manage that housing.

assures adequate commercial and industrial space to provide services and jobs to local residents. It assures a safe space in which residents are protected from harm and in which a climate of well-being is the norm. And it stands in the way of projects that will affect the physical and social environments of the community adversely.

**Precept 11. *Healthy communities provide opportunities for artistic and cultural expression that nurtures individual talent and celebrates the events of community life.***

Healthy communities know how to have fun. They do so through local bowling leagues, church sodalities, parents' groups, street fairs, baseball leagues. They also provide the means for individual expression in the arts, often representing the many diverse cultures and traditions that compose contemporary urban neighborhoods. In so doing they celebrate the community itself, undergirding again the community's sense of itself and its well-being.

**Precept 12. *Healthy communities offer a convenient array of retail stores and professional and human services.***

Woolworth's is gone, but the need for convenient local shopping is one of the well-springs of a healthy community. Retail stores and other service providers supply the necessary staples to a neighborhood, as well as local job and business opportunities. In most communities, retail stores form a "main street" that serves as a symbol of the community's health. A healthy main street attracts investment, increases residential and commercial property values, encourages business growth, offers goods and services, provides job opportunities and frequently serves as a social center or "town square" that bestows upon local residents a sense of identity and place, i.e., community.

**Precept 13. *Healthy communities maintain superior standards of public health, environmental integrity and safety.***

Just as a healthy community will invest in and seek to manage its property well, so too will it protect its environment. Public health and safety have always been a matter of the public trust; today, public health and safety -- the integrity of the environment -- have taken on a new urgency forcing local community residents and leaders to assume roles that they have not had in the past. Examples of the issues

"In most communities, retail stores form a 'main street' that serves as a symbol of the community's health."

involved range from the redevelopment of industrial "brownfields", to improving infant mortality rates, to decreasing the incidence of street crime.

**Precept 14. *Healthy communities are accessible to people of all colors, all income groups, and those who have special needs, including the homeless, the elderly and disabled.***

Other Precepts have pointed to this, but none quite as directly: healthy communities are open communities. Just as a community can be judged by its ability to manage change, so too can its strength be gauged in its embrace of diversity, in its ability to shelter the poorest and in its openness to others. The result is a richer fabric of life, the kind of fabric that distinguishes the city historically as the source of human civilization.

## A Planning Exercise

As a prelude to their discussion of strategies and tactics, Strategy Group members participated in a timed exercise in which they were asked to create plans for areas in the metropolitan region that would implement the Fourteen Precepts of a Healthy Community. The Group was itself sub-divided into three smaller groupings for the exercise. All three were allowed to choose their own neighborhoods with the understanding that they were to select areas in which they believed they could induce the most tangible improvements in a five year period given appropriate resources.

The results were quite interesting. All three of the groups chose neighborhoods lying on the outer ring of downtown Chicago. All three also chose multiple, adjacent neighborhoods as their target areas. For these, the groups developed comprehensive community building plans that emphasized collaborations, economic and workforce development, schools and education, and mixed income residential development that included homeownership. They all included neighborhood cultural centers and social service providers as well.

The exercise indicated that in the 'practical' judgment of the Strategy Group:

- ⇒ Community development interventions stand the best shot at success in areas in which market forces are beginning to emerge.
- ⇒ By linking the development of adjacent communities to areas experiencing substantial market growth, neighborhoods can capitalize on economic opportunities presented by the larger market place.
- ⇒ Approaches to community development that are comprehensive and diversified in nature offer a greater opportunity to influence complex social and economic factors in the development of communities.
- ⇒ Collaborative community approaches provide a strategic vehicle to organize the development process, serve as a bridge between different interest groups, and manage change.
- ⇒ Workforce (and entrepreneurial) development strategies offer a mechanism to prepare people in need to access the market place and import income into their communities.
- ⇒ Comprehensive, diversified and collaborative community development strategies will present a challenge for funders and policy makers, in contrast to tightly-drawn approaches targeted to specific neighborhoods or single inflexible programs, projects or strategies.

Each of the Fourteen Precepts suggests an array of strategic approaches for the future. The Strategy Group investigated many of these, but organized its discussion according to several 'traditional' stakeholders: community development corporations, intermediaries, the private sector, the public sector, funders and religious congregations. Throughout these categories the Group identified a common set of priorities that could form the basis of a community development program for the future.

### ***Strategic Priorities***

#### **Priority 1. *Community development interventions should rebuild and strengthen civil society and public life.***

If it is true that a healthy community is one which is able to govern itself in the most general sense, then it is incumbent on those engaged in community development to work to enhance the sense of civil society in their communities. This can be done in many ways, but it begins with individual and family responsibility on the streets on which people live and work. It is extended further through the multiple formal and informal associations that cut across a community, including community development and political organizations, businesses, schools, public safety agencies, parks and recreational programs, cultural institutions and health care providers. All play essential roles in making communities livable and civilized. It is in and through such institutions that values are built and respect for others – a fundamental principle in American democracy – grows. And it is on this basis alone that a community acquires its ability to manage itself and to relate positively to the larger world in which it is found.

It must be acknowledged that the Chicago metropolitan area remains one of the most segregated in the country in terms of both jobs and housing. This means it is essential that community development interventions are also designed to lead to equity and justice within individual communities and across the region.

Strategies  
for the  
Future



"A community energizes itself through a Vision of itself that is not narrowly focused but which sees broadly the integral relationships that hold the community together over time."

**Priority 2. *Community development interventions should spring from a long-term Vision that a community has of itself and that embodies the Fourteen Precepts of a Healthy Community. This implies, further, that community development interventions should be comprehensive in nature so as to influence the complex moral and social factors upon which the health of a community depends.***

A community energizes itself through a Vision of itself that is not narrowly focused but which sees broadly the integral relationships that hold the community together over time. It is a Vision, moreover, that sweeps outward toward the city as a whole. This is the type of Vision developed through the Fourteen Precepts. Such a vision lends itself to powerful long-term strategies that comprehend the interplay of diverse relationships – such as education, jobs, health care, and housing and commercial development – and build upon them. In this respect, the planning and mediating roles required in community development work have been undervalued in recent years which may explain why there is no commonly accepted vision of community life in Chicago today (as evidenced in the focus group conversations described earlier in this report).

This is not to suggest that all community agencies must take responsibility for the implementation of every aspect of a community's vision. Communities are rich and complex organisms composed of diverse populations with a wide range of needs and interests. No single institution or program can be equally responsive to everyone. But even though an institution may not be directly related to community development, it may still have a significant impact on the health of a community. Religious congregations, for example, can have an extraordinary impact not only through traditional community development methods like housing development, but through their role as the community's 'voice of conscience' which constantly challenges its own members and their neighbors to higher standards of concern and behavior.

Yet community development organizations, and especially CDCs, are well-positioned to take the lead in helping a community draw its Vision together and to devise and coordinate strategies for development that spring from that Vision. It is precisely this role that must be restored to the sometimes too-narrow responsibilities given to

“...without competent organizations deeply rooted in low-income communities and capable of delivering results, distressed neighborhoods cannot be transformed.”

CDCs in Chicago, without necessarily taking away from the specialized expertise that individual CDCs have developed over the years.

*Example: The Westside Health Authority has organized residents into a series of neighborhood block clubs under the title 'Every Block a Village' that are effectively working on such issues as neighborhood safety, drugs and crime. In this example, the creation of a Vision for each street within the neighborhood is an essential element in the organizing effort and the strategies which the Authority is now pursuing emanate from that Vision.*

**Priority 3. *Community development interventions should leverage, integrate and coordinate the many diverse actors having impact on a community. The principal organization to which this responsibility falls is the community development corporation or similar agency within a neighborhood or region.***

The work of community rebuilding over the last few decades suggests that without competent organizations deeply rooted in low-income communities and capable of delivering results, distressed neighborhoods cannot be transformed. CDCs and other agencies performing CDC-functions in a neighborhood must therefore remain an essential part of the community development landscape. They are called upon today, however, to be open to and work with a wide-variety of other actors – particularly in the private sector – who are, to a certain extent, providing many of the functions that CDCs were required to provide by themselves before. This is especially true with respect to real estate development (both residential and commercial), property management and business capital. Of course, this does not imply that CDCs should simply relinquish their efforts in these areas, but that their efforts can be enhanced significantly through sophisticated relationships with other providers. On the other hand, and given the limited resources available for community development today, CDCs will perform an ever-more valuable role by coordinating and integrating the efforts of all those involved in the development of their communities.

*Example: The South Bronx of New York has been rebuilt largely through the leadership of half a dozen CDCs that generated wide-spanning programs integrating the resources and leadership of the many public*

and private agencies present in their community. In many cases, the CDCs persuaded these agencies to provide essential services directly to neighborhood residents, without further intervention by the CDC itself and without duplication by the CDC.

**Priority 4. Community development interventions should 'lead the market' by leveraging capital in the form of private financing and public infrastructure for housing, business and commercial development.**

"The more a neighborhood makes itself useful -- indeed, necessary -- to the wider city, the more the latter will nurture that community and commit capital to it."

Low income neighborhoods have been isolated from the marketplace. But basic economics suggest and experience demonstrates that market forces and access to capital are a crucial component of any healthy community. The Community Reinvestment Act has led to a significant increase in the availability of bank capital in many communities in recent years, while the Low Income Housing Tax Credit has successfully utilized private sector investments to provide thousands of units of affordable rental housing throughout the city. Still, distressed neighborhoods continue to lose the competition for private investment, primarily in the form of commercial and industrial facilities, to nearby suburbs, even when City locations could have a distinct locational advantage. Similarly, there are few financial tools available to provide low and moderate income owned-housing at scale. It is essential, however, to induce the private sector to consider inner city locations for its investments.

With respect to this last point, community development strategies should be directed at making a neighborhood useful to the city as a whole and to the private sector. The more a neighborhood makes itself useful -- indeed, necessary -- to the wider city, the more the latter will nurture that community and commit capital to it. Whether this is so in such very direct terms as in the creation of an industrial park, or indirectly, as the creation of a functioning bedroom community, a neighborhood will attract investment forces all the more surely to the degree it proves its worth or value to those making investment decisions.

*Example: A potential example is the use of empowerment zone funds and tax credits in a 'brownfield' industrial site to finance the redevelopment of the site into a mixed-use environment that would include the development of affordable housing and open space as well perhaps as light manufacturing or commercial office facilities.*

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**Priority 5. Community development interventions should induce wise land use and assembly that gives priority to the redevelopment and infill of inner-city sites in which the public infrastructure is already in place. In the future, localized community development interventions must be strategized within the context of multiple community areas and the metropolitan region as a whole.**

Regional sprawl has been both the cause and effect of the disinvestment of the inner city and even the inner ring of suburbs around Chicago. The federal government, the State of Illinois and a number of suburban governments have supplied powerful inducements – especially in public highway construction and other capital infrastructure – to private industry and private developers to create this situation. Yet the City and its adjacent suburbs already have the infrastructure in place that could accommodate new development if land was assembled and offered for use. Alternatively, the state has not provided city residents with the means to access the jobs available throughout the region; and much of the region remains closed to low income and minority residents who may wish to move to take advantage of the jobs and superior services (such as education) offered in suburban locations. The strategic solution to this dilemma is largely the responsibility of governmental bodies, and especially the state: in the future, governmental policies will have to address the twin policy issues of smart growth and reinvestment in the inner suburban ring and inner city. The private sector and community development organizations will also have significant roles to play, especially in view of their mutual interest in the employment opportunities and other resources that are available in outlying areas.

On the other hand, it is essential for a community to take advantage of and manage market forces in nearby communities that are ‘spilling over’ into a local neighborhood. The ‘spillover effect’ can be a powerful tool in a development strategy and should be used as such (cf. *A Planning Exercise* above).

*Example: The City of Portland, Oregon, is well known for its control of regional sprawl which has led to the revitalization of the downtown area and adjacent inner city neighborhoods. The Twin Cities have successfully utilized a tax base sharing arrangement with their regional neighbors for several years, while other cities, including Indianapolis*

and Miami, have restructured their local governments to address metropolitan issues.

**Priority 6. Community development interventions should focus on education, skill training and skill-upgrading.**

“Without a sound education or the development of employable skills, residents in low income neighborhoods will remain unemployed or underemployed throughout their working lives.”

Without a sound education or the development of employable skills, residents in low income neighborhoods will remain unemployed or underemployed throughout their working lives. Education is not the sole responsibility of the public school system even though the Chicago Board of Education and the Community College System are critical if historically deficient vehicles. Education is also a major responsibility of the private sector which is increasingly dependent on a skilled and productive workforce for its ability to survive in a global marketplace. The public, private and not-for-profit sectors have a mutual interest in developing collaborative strategies in this area, strategies that also recognize the importance of attendant requirements like day care and transportation for individuals engaged in educational programs.

It should be pointed out that families on welfare today are most in need of acquiring employable skills since they will become dependent solely on their own resources to obtain an income in the near future.

*Example: The City of Chicago has recently begun to require that funding be set aside from tax increment financing (TIF) districts to provide for workforce preparation and training for jobs that may become available within the district as leveraged by the TIF.*

**Priority 7. At base, community development interventions should lead to a healthy local economy, with higher levels of disposable income per household and a higher level of median income throughout the community.**

Jobs and income are essential attributes of a healthy community. So too is the creation of personal family wealth, primarily through homeownership. Community development interventions must therefore encourage the transformation of low income communities into mixed income communities by expanding opportunities for low income residents, raising the average income level of residents, and attracting and retaining middle-income families. This implies that such

“...community development interventions should lead to a healthy local economy, with higher levels of disposable income per household and a higher level of median income throughout the community.”

interventions will provide access to employment opportunities (whether in the community or elsewhere), access to home-financing and access to entrepreneurial and business capital. Interventions may attract higher income families into a community for strategic purposes, but the focus should be on raising the income levels of low income people and making the community attractive enough to keep them and other higher income families engaged in the life of the community. In this perspective, interventions must continue to provide for low income families; for example, ‘mixed’ income communities will likely remain such only if the public or the local community retains control of affordable housing developments in the area.

*Example: The Bidwell Training Center in Pittsburgh, a not-for-profit community-based organization, successfully trains inner city residents and unemployed steel workers in several career areas, including the arts, the hospitality and food industry, and the travel industry. But in its role as a ‘trainer’, Bidwell has in fact become a significant force for redevelopment in neighborhoods close to its facility in downtown Pittsburgh.*

## ***Fundamentals***

In addition to the strategic priorities noted above, the Strategy Group devoted considerable attention to the procedures and processes that form the foundations of community development work. It is important to understand the context in which this question is raised: for some years, Chicago's community development industry has been swayed by the passing popularity or availability of certain tools, such as tax credit housing or streetscape improvement programs. But the Strategy Group believed there were certain fundamental approaches that have withstood the test of time and are essential to the community development enterprise. Many of these are directly related to the work of community development corporations. Nevertheless, as this report has amply noted, community development is a shared responsibility among several actors, including government, business, financial institutions, educational institutions, and community residents, as well as community development corporations. Thus the 'fundamentals' are not only relevant but should be respected and embraced by all those engaged in the community development enterprise.

### **1. Organizing and advocacy**

Experience demonstrates that community development organizing is the "that-without-which" basis upon which a community is transformed and its redevelopment sustained. Community development efforts – whether public or private – must rely on the strength of inclusionary strategies by which development occurs with meaningful community involvement. Top-down strategies do not work; they either lead to shallow redevelopment projects or to the displacement of those most vulnerable in a community. Rather, development is sustainable when it has deep roots in the community in which it occurs.

This implies the importance of basic community organizing to community development, organizing that should include residents, businesses, government and institutions – anyone with a stake in the community. It also underscores the need for community development organizations to constantly "reground" themselves through organizing efforts, particularly if they are to maintain the legitimacy and power necessary for the community to govern itself and negotiate beneficially with others.

“Those engaged in community development... must become involved in areas that have not been part of their traditional policy agenda...”

Effective community organizing often leads to conflict with, or at least apprehension in established business and political structures. Nevertheless, the call for organizing is tempered with the recognition that community development work relies intrinsically on the collaboration of the public and private sectors and that conflict for the sake of conflict is an ineffective organizing tool in this regard.

## **2. Leadership**

There are many ‘leaders’ in community development work: community leaders, political officials, business leaders. The important thing is to find and nurture those who are genuinely committed to community development, and then to support them when they need it most.

## **3. Planning**

As noted earlier, long-term strategic planning is an essential component too often neglected in community development work. It is neglected because such planning is particularly difficult in this area in which many diverse actors with seemingly independent or contradictory agendas are essential to the success of a program. Nevertheless, experience demonstrates that good planning leads to successful community development. Planning becomes all the more important as organizations attempt to implement a long-term comprehensive program in which many players are inextricably engaged.

## **4. Public policy**

Community development work is by nature conducted within and dependent upon a public policy framework at every level of government. In many respects, the role of government is determinative, even though its direct support of community development work is receding. In fact, the vagaries of the community development field today result in large measure from the governmental framework put in place locally and nationally over the last ten years. Those engaged in community development must be continually vigilant to the effect public policy will have on their communities. They must also become involved in areas that have not been part of their traditional policy agenda but which have proven themselves to



have a significant impact on the city. Today in Chicago that means particular attention to regional and state issues like transportation, education and welfare reform, though these too will evolve over time.

### **5. Collaborations and partnerships**

The field of community development and cities in general have few resources with which to work. Collaborations are in order all the more so because the synergy of true collaborative relationships fundamentally enhances the ability of each party to get things done. For example, joint ventures between community development corporations and private developers have proven to be a very effective way to expand CDC capacity while also limiting CDC risk. Private developers, on the other hand, have learned the value of working with community development organizations in order to lay the groundwork for their own projects within a community. In these situations, CDCs are able to craft projects that are acceptable to the community while still allowing them to proceed.

There are other important collaborations as well that should be explored between community development organizations and others that operate in Chicago's neighborhoods, including the police, schools, health care and social service agencies.

### **6. Real estate development and management**

CDCs have been engaged in real estate development and management for several reasons over the years: 1) to provide housing opportunities, jobs and retail services to residents, especially low income residents; 2) to rehabilitate dilapidated and abandoned structures; 3) to 'lead' market forces back into a neighborhood; and 4) to give residents power with respect to development forces within their neighborhoods and within their own lives. All of these goals are still intact today. Real estate is, in fact, a powerful tool for community development. However, community development organizations have learned that real estate can be a two-edged sword and that there are other ways than direct ownership, development and management to influence and control property development in their communities.

In making decisions about real estate, community organizations must remain particularly concerned about the supply of affordable housing and the impact that private development may have in their areas.

## **7. Funding, innovation and performance standards**

Funding agencies have become accustomed to the specialized work CDCs perform in the fields of housing and economic development. But these agencies have also helped constrain CDCs and others to their 'traditional' sectors. Funders will likely find it difficult now to change course or, as their funding priorities change, to support the new roles and strategies that CDCs may take in the future. Insofar as funding agencies have been engaged in the creation of the community development field as we know it today, though, they continue to have an obligation to change with the field and provide 'risk' capital to underwrite the innovative work called for in this report.

Coincidentally, it will be important to establish performance measures for those being funded, including CDCs. Community development work is an art form, not a science. Yet CDCs and other development agencies must establish standards and goals for themselves that are realistic and attainable within the context of their individual neighborhoods. These standards and goals should include measurable factors as well as qualitative assessments that allow funders to see if the activities they are funding do in fact lead to objective improvement.

## **8. Human Capital**

While acknowledging its grass-roots foundation, community development has become a sophisticated endeavor that requires expertise in a number of different disciplines. For it to succeed in the future, the field must develop a human resource component that provides assistance to community development organizations in the recruitment, retention and training of staff and Board members, as well as to such basic issues as staff wages and benefits.

Ultimately the value of the Futures Committee and the deliberations of the Strategy Group will be judged by the long-term impact they have on the community development field in Chicago. There are certain indications already, however, that the work of the Committee has had some practical impact.

In the broadest sense, the Committee has re-established the validity of the community development effort. This was not a foregone conclusion at the beginning of the process. As noted at the start of this report, the field was in the midst of a radical self-evaluation that questioned much about itself. The Committee began its work with these questions and with the hard experience of the last few years. It held the field up to its own intense scrutiny. And it made some clear recommendations about changes in vision, strategy and organizational roles that may cause significant dislocation in many quarters in the near-term. But at the end, the Group re-affirmed the validity of the community development enterprise as an essential function in the city of Chicago and the metropolitan region.

Other immediate impacts:

- ◆ the deliberative process afforded by the Futures Committee has allowed the community development field in Chicago to get a better sense of what has happened here over the last few years, to forge a perspective on what is being done and proposed elsewhere in the country, and to develop a realistic and positive sense of the role that the community development enterprise can take in the future.
- ◆ several community development organizations and funders have already begun utilizing the recommendations of the Strategy Group<sup>11</sup> as a basis for planning their programs. Other organizations have stated their interest in doing so once this report has been finalized and published.
- ◆ a substantive dialogue has begun among several organizations or leaders within those organizations that are seriously engaged with the issue of community development from different perspectives, including the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club (the

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<sup>11</sup>Preliminary summaries of these recommendations were published in the Futures Committee newsletter.

Metropolitan Project'), the Metropolitan Sponsors' organizing project, and the Metropolitan Planning Council.

- ◆ at least one major funding organization – LISC/Chicago – will utilize this report as the basis of a demonstration program that will provide flexible funding to several selected neighborhoods and their CDCs in support of a comprehensive community-building program in those areas.

These impacts all reflect the outcomes that were projected at the time the Futures Committee began its work. But it is important to realize that the Futures Committee was never intended to implement its recommendations itself. Rather, the hope is that the Committee's conversation will influence the organizations and institutions already in place in the community development field in Chicago and thereby transform the Committee's recommendations into creative and pragmatic courses of action. It is precisely for this reason that this report will be discussed at a symposium later this year with representatives from the many different sectors of the community development industry in Chicago.

At the very least, it is clear that the Futures Committee process has fostered a dialogue on community development in Chicago that should continue even though the formal work of the Committee is done. It will be incumbent on everyone involved in the field to see that this dialogue continues and deepens, leading to new ideas and practices – and to new "organic" community forms – that the Committee itself cannot now predict. It is also likely that this dialogue will lead to new and more sophisticated relationships among community development actors, broadening the field by multiplying the talents of those who are so engaged.

But the exhilarating potential that such a future manifests will depend upon flexible resources, new tools and different practices to turn what is only now dimly perceived into a reality. Funders and public officials will be particularly pressed to provide support for innovative programs and organizations as they emerge. The Committee believes that this should be expected and welcomed if the findings described in this report are to be advanced over the coming years.

“...if American civil society is to survive and if the city of Chicago is to flourish it is essential to honor and support those who are engaged in the task.”

Finally, and perhaps most important, the Committee hopes that its conversations have helped to re-affirm the merit of all those seriously engaged in community development in Chicago. Building community in America's cities today is a worthy, even a noble endeavor. It is also a trying one that, for a variety of reasons, has been undervalued in recent years. But if American civil society is to survive and if the city of Chicago is to flourish it is essential to honor and support those who are engaged in the task. It is because of them that the Futures Committee first accepted its charge and it is to them that the Committee dedicates its work and this report.

## APPENDIX 1

### BOARD OF ADVISORS LOCAL INITIATIVES SUPPORT CORPORATION/CHICAGO

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**John Varones**  
Director  
Illinois Housing Development Authority

## APPENDIX 2

### FUTURES COMMITTEE STRATEGY GROUP MEMBERS

**Rebecca Riley**  
(Chair, Futures Committee)  
Vice President of Civic Affairs  
MacArthur Foundation

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**Raul Raymundo**  
Executive Director  
The Resurrection Project  
(Co-chair, Strategy Group)

**Arthur Brazier**  
Bishop  
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**Jean Butzen**  
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Oak Park, Illinois

**Jeanne Clark**  
Deputy Chief Patrol Div. Admin.  
Chicago Police Department

**Andrew Ditton**  
Partner  
Davis Ditton L.L.C.

**Kevin Jackson**  
Executive Director  
Chicago Rehab Network

**Aurie Pennick**  
President & CEO  
Leadership Council for  
Metropolitan Open Communities  
(Co-chair, Strategy Group)

**Elmer Johnson**, Project Director  
**Erika Poethig**, Assistant Project Director  
Metropolis Project, Commercial Club of Chicago

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Suburban Job-Link Corporation

**Jackie Reed**  
Executive Director  
Westside Health Authority

**Paul Roldan**  
Executive Director  
Hispanic Housing Development Corporation

**Howard Stanback**  
Vice President  
Shorebank Corporation

**Ted Wysocki**  
Executive Director  
Chicago Association of Neighborhood  
Development Organizations

## APPENDIX 3

### Futures Committee/Strategy Group Plenary Sessions

<u>Date/Topic</u>	<u>Speakers</u>
February 14th <b>Principles by which we Judge a Healthy Community</b>	Daniel Kemmis, former Mayor, Missoula, Montana Barack Obama, Illinois State Legislator
March 7th <b>Community Rebuilding: Expectations and Standards I - Housing &amp; Economic Development</b>	Paul Brophy, Paul Brophy & Associates Bruce Abrams, LR Development Timothy Wright, Pryor, McClendon, Counts & Co., Inc.
March 21st <b>Community Rebuilding: Expectations &amp; Standards II - Work, Education &amp; Arts</b>	Gery Chico, Chicago School Board of Trustees Bob Giloth, Annie Casey Foundation Bill Strickland, Bidwell Training Center
April 4th <b>Community Rebuilding: Expectations &amp; Standards II - Welfare Reform, Health Care &amp; Social Services, Safety</b>	Ruth Rothstein, Director, Cook County Hospital John Bauman, Poverty Law Project Jeanne Clark, Chicago Police Department Esther Nieves, Erie Neighborhood House
April 16th <b>Race &amp; Class in the Work of Building Communities</b>	Hugh Price, National Urban League
May 2nd <b>Roles of Government, Institutions &amp; Organizations</b>	John Powell, University of Minnesota Bruce Katz, Brookings Institute Joe McNeeley, Development Training Institute
May 16th <b>Roles of Government, Institutions &amp; Organizations</b>	Andrew Ditton, Davis, Ditton Group LLC Jean Butzen, Lakefront SRO Corporation Raul Raymundo, The Resurrection Project



APPENDIX 3

THE FUTURES COMMITTEE  
Strategy Group Calendar

Date	Time	Topic
January 24	8:00 a.m. - 10:30 Bank of America - 13th Floor Conf. Rm. North	<b>Orientation and Planning Meeting:</b> Purpose of Strategy Group, role of individual members, review speakers and program plans (Strategy Group Members)
February 14	1 North State Street 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.  9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b>Principles by Which We Judge a Healthy Community I</b> Plenary Session: Speakers and Plenary Discussion (Strategy Group, Convening Group and Invited Guests) Working Session: Begin Development of Principles (Strategy Group)
February 28	1 North State Street 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	<b>Principles by Which We Judge a Healthy Community II</b> Working Session: Development of Principles (Strategy Group)
March 7	1 North State Street 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.  9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b>Community Rebuilding Activity: Expectations and Standards I:</b> Housing, & economic development Presentation by Speakers: (Strategy Group, Convening Group and Guests) Working Session: (Strategy Group)
March 21	1 North State Street 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.  9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b>Community Rebuilding Activity: Expectations and Standards II-</b> Work, education, and the arts Presentation by Speakers: (Strategy Group, Convening Group and Guests) Working Session: (Strategy Group)
April 4	1 North State Street 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.  9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b>Community Rebuilding Activity: Expectations and Standards III-</b> Welfare reform, health care, social services & safety Presentation by Speakers: (Strategy Group, Convening Group and Guests) Work Session: (Strategy Group)
April 16	One First National Plaza - 57th floor 2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Reception following	<b>Race and Class in the Work of Building Communities</b>  Presentation by Speaker: (Strategy Group, Convening Group and Guests)
April 18	1 North State Street 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	<b>Community Rebuilding Activity: Expectations and Standards IV</b> Work Session: (Strategy Group)
May 2	1 North State Street 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.  9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b>Roles of Government, Institutions and Organizations I</b> Presentation by Speakers: (Strategy Group, Convening Group and Guest) Work Session: (Strategy Group)

Date	Time	Topic
May 16	1 North State Street 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.  9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	<b><i>Roles of Government, Institutions and Organizations II</i></b> Presentation by Speakers: (Strategy Group, Convening Group and Guests) Work Session: (Strategy Group)
May 30	1 North State Street 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	<b><i>Consensus on Vision and Principles</i></b> Work Session: (Strategy Group)
June 13	1 North State Street  8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	<b><i>Identify Opportunities to Improve the Future of Urban Communities</i></b> Work Session: (Strategy Group)
June 27	1 North State Street  8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	<b><i>Identify Opportunities to Improve the Future of Urban Communities</i></b> Work Session: (Strategy Group)
October	One First National Plaza	<b><i>Citywide Conference</i></b>

Organizers for the Futures Committee spent several months planning the process for the Committee's work before invitations were offered to the members of the Strategy Group and the process officially got started. The organizers were particularly concerned about three matters:

1. Though convened by Chicago/LISC, the Committee wanted to develop an independent identity inasmuch as LISC was itself a major actor in the community development field. For that reason the Committee decided to turn the deliberative part of the process over to the Strategy Group. The task then would be to select participants in the Group who were recognized leaders in their fields and who had the time and interest to work through the process. It was also important that the participants would be compatible so that the Group could develop its own identity and working procedures once it got together.
2. It was important to provide a structure for the Group's deliberations, especially as it was organizing itself, while still leaving enough flexibility to make changes in the structure at the Group's direction.
3. Finally, it was important to send out a public message early in the process that the Committee intended to look at the future of community development work and not simply provide a critique of "what went wrong" in prior years or to criticize any particular actor in the field (e.g., CDCs or the City). On the other hand, it was also important to send a message that the Committee would not attempt to be prescriptive in its findings, but rather suggestive, giving due respect to the individual circumstances of communities and CDCs within the Chicago metro area.

On the whole, the Committee met these initial objectives. The biggest problem it faced, as it turned out, was in trying to involve representatives from business and organized labor in the Strategy Group process. Several major leaders were invited to participate but refused, citing the amount of time that would be required by the process as their reason. Organizers did consider changing the time and length of the meetings to accommodate this concern but ultimately accepted that it could not meet every invitee's needs in this regard and that the process itself required a significant commitment of time in concentrated periods. Organizers did, however, attempt to adjust for the absence of business and labor through the speakers invited to the plenary sessions, although the process would have undoubtedly been stronger with their direct participation. (It should be noted that all meetings with one exception were held on Friday mornings twice a month from 8:00 am to approximately noon at the educational facility downtown of FirstChicago/NBD Bank.)

Another problem emerged approximately one-quarter of the way through the Strategy Group's process when several participants voiced their concern about inconsistent attendance by members of the Group. Organizers took this concern to heart and considered several radical changes to the process in order to increase participation, but finally decided to "trust" what they had put in place and not make significant changes at that time. However, each of the organizers agreed to touch base with members of the Strategy Group between meetings in order to stimulate their interest in the deliberations and to see if there were reasons other than scheduling conflicts for their lack of attendance. It appears that this was a wise decision in that attendance improved considerably, with 17 of the original 20 Group members attending consistently by the end of the process.

As discussions became more interesting, several Strategy Group members voiced their willingness to spend additional time together to investigate issues in more depth. Organizers were diligent, however, in remaining close to the process suggested initially. Again this was probably a wise decision in that it placed time limits on the Group's discussions and on the process in general, forcing participants to come to decisions in a timely way.

Upon reflection, however, the organizers concluded that the process would have benefited from the following:

1. a retreat for the Strategy Group early on so as to jump-start the interpersonal dynamics that did not take hold until much later in the process
2. a 'field trip' by the Group to one or more community development organizations in order to get a first hand experience of community leaders and staff, and the issues they face
3. a trip by the Group to one or more community development organizations outside of Chicago that are known for their success in the field
4. additional presentations at the plenary sessions by community development practitioners outside Chicago who are known for their leadership and creativity.

On a final note, organizers believe that the question of the relationship between race and community development was never fully engaged by either the process or the Strategy Group, even though the question was put on the table quite deliberately and discussed in several sessions during the process, including a special plenary session with the President of the National Urban League, Hugh Price.

## Communications

From the very beginning, Committee organizers felt it imperative to put together a communications plan by which the public in general, funders, the media and especially community development practitioners could be invited into the process, offer their own insights and benefit in turn from the insights of the Strategy Group. As noted earlier, the plan included several key elements:

- ◆ a mailing list of over 600 names
- ◆ invitations to all plenary sessions, plus reminders
- ◆ a monthly newsletter, plus updates in newsletters produced by other organizations
- ◆ a web page
- ◆ a written report summarizing the Committee's process and the Group's deliberations, and
- ◆ a one-day Symposium scheduled after the release of the report.

The intent of the communications plan was not only to provide information about the Futures Committee but to make its deliberations meaningful in the long-term for community development practitioners in Chicago. To do this even more effectively, the Committee has invited several organizations in the Chicago area engaged in different aspects of community development to participate in the Symposium and to take responsibility for implementing recommendations embodied in this report, as appropriate.

Report written by Andrew Mooney, Program Director, LISC/Chicago

Edited and designed by MK Communications, Inc.

# Changing the Way We Do Things

## Recommendations and Findings of The Futures Committee

October 1997

### **Strategic Priorities**

- Priority 1. Community development interventions should rebuild and strengthen civil society and public life.
- Priority 2. Community development interventions should spring from a long-term Vision that a community has of itself and that embodies the Fourteen Precepts of a Healthy Community. This implies that community development interventions should be comprehensive in nature so as to influence the complex moral and social factors upon which the health of a community depends.
- Priority 3. Community development interventions should leverage, integrate, and coordinate the many diverse actors having an impact on a community. The principal organization to which this responsibility falls is the community development corporation or similar agency within a neighborhood or region.
- Priority 4. Community development interventions should "lead the market" by leveraging capital in the form of private financing and public infrastructure for housing, business, and commercial development
- Priority 5. Community development interventions should induce wise land use and assembly that gives priority to the redevelopment and infill of inner-city sites in which the public infrastructure is already in place. In the future, localized community development interventions must be strategized within the context of multiple community areas and the metropolitan region as a whole.
- Priority 6. Community development interventions should focus on education, skill training, and skill-upgrading.
- Priority 7. At base, community development interventions should lead to a healthy local economy, with higher levels of disposable income per household and a higher level of median income throughout the community.

### **Fundamentals**

- 1. Organizing and advocacy
- 2. Leadership
- 3. Planning
- 4. Public policy
- 5. Collaborations and partnerships
- 6. Real estate development and management
- 7. Funding, innovation and performance standards
- 8. Human capital

Local Initiatives Support Corporation/Chicago  
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# Changing the Way We Do Things

Recommendations and Findings of The Futures Committee

October 1997

## **Precepts of a Healthy Community**

- Precept 1. Healthy communities offer economic opportunity for residents to become producers, as well as consumers, through participation in the work force and/or entrepreneurial activity.
- Precept 2. Healthy communities reflect and build positive values. The moral and intellectual development of individuals takes place in the context of significant interaction with others who are of diverse backgrounds.
- Precept 3. Healthy communities nurture and sustain families and children.
- Precept 4. In healthy communities, individuals have multiple opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.
- Precept 5. Healthy communities provide a public forum for common conversation, shared stories, and diverse expressions.
- Precept 6. Healthy communities are supported by political structures and processes that encourage responsible citizenship and accountable government and balance individual interests and local needs with the needs of the larger community.
- Precept 7. Healthy communities have strong mediating institutions, such as churches, schools, and community organizations with the power to affect important issues.
- Precept 8. Healthy communities identify, nurture, and promote leadership.
- Precept 9. Healthy communities value the past as they invite the future and are able to manage change.
- Precept 10. Healthy communities manage and invest in local properties, public spaces, and public ways, so as to enhance each community's ability to prosper.
- Precept 11. Healthy communities provide opportunities for artistic and cultural expression that nurtures individual talent and celebrates the events of community life.
- Precept 12. Healthy communities offer a convenient array of retail stores and professional and human services.
- Precept 13. Healthy communities maintain superior standards of public health, environmental integrity, and safety.
- Precept 14. Healthy communities are accessible to people of all colors, all income groups, and those who have special needs, including the homeless, the elderly, and disabled.

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