
**CLEVELAND NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRESS:
EXTERNAL ROLE, RELATIONSHIPS AND IMPACT**

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

December 2015

***National Initiative
on Mixed-Income
Communities***
at the



JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL
SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

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Executive Summary

Overview

This organizational assessment addresses the current effectiveness and future role of Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) from the perspective of various community development stakeholders in Greater Cleveland. This report is a synthesis of feedback collected through interviews, focus groups, and an online survey from approximately 300 individuals who represent funders, board members, community development corporation leadership and staff, and other partners. This assessment is intended to help initiate a renewed phase of dialogue, strategizing and action to enhance CNP's effectiveness and impact. This assessment is sponsored by the Cleveland Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, and the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation and was initiated with enthusiastic support of CNP executive leadership. This report is best considered a stakeholder feedback process with specific focus on perceptions of CNP's external role, relationships and impact. To fully assess CNP's progress and impact, funders and stakeholders must also consider information about project implementation and outcomes, and neighborhood progress indicators to be provided by CNP in separate organizational reports and proposals. This executive summary provides some brief highlights of the findings and implications presented in the full report.

High-Level Summary of Key Findings

Overall, most community development stakeholders rate Cleveland Neighborhood Progress as very effective and regard the organization highly. Across the surveys, interviews and focus groups, we heard broad admiration and appreciation for the quality and competence of the CNP staff and the work that CNP does on behalf of Cleveland and its neighborhoods.

CNP Roles

Effective roles. There was general consensus among respondents that CNP's role as a convener and a facilitator is important for the industry and that CNP usually plays that role quite well. CNP is also thought of as a thought leader and agenda setter, including providing the vision and leadership necessary to promote best practices and establish high standards for neighborhood revitalization. CNP's role as a funding intermediary was also cited as a role it plays well, and respondents suggested that the organization is effective in amassing funding from major funding sources and strategically distributing them in Cleveland's neighborhoods. However, this role as a funding intermediary is also one of CNP's more contentious roles, as discussed below.

Roles Needing Enhancement. Although respondents described some of CNP's roles as highly effective, other roles were discussed as needing more enhancement. CNP aims to aid all neighborhoods so that they may be successful, but respondents stated that CNP's efforts in capacity building and technical support are not yet consistently effective across *all* Cleveland's

CDCs and neighborhoods. Another role where CNP was described as needing improvement was in bringing in more financial resources from new sources outside of Cleveland and distributing them among local organizations. Finally, respondents see room for growth and clarification in CNP's advocacy role. While some respondents have a "wait-and-see" approach since that unit is in a learning and rebuilding phase, others feel strongly now that CNP should leverage its influence more to advocate for Cleveland's neighborhoods on a city and a state level.

Contentious Roles. Some of CNP's roles elicited considerable concern and disagreement among respondents. Implementing a new direct-service program, Community Financial Centers, as part of the Economic Opportunity Portfolio rather than working through a community partner raised questions about CNP's role as an intermediary. Also contentious was CNP's strategy of targeting funding. Specifically, how CNP chooses to target funding to CDCs and neighborhoods raised concerns about equity and how more support and a more robust strategy could be developed for neighborhoods that are struggling. Also, since the shift to a more comprehensive, people-focused approach, there are questions about CNP's specific ongoing role in Placemaking. Physical development was a key part of the former Neighborhood Progress, Inc.'s agenda, but respondents are less clear about CNP's current and future positioning on this front.

Missing Role. One key missing role that came to light during conversations with stakeholders was CNP's role in community organizing and engagement. While respondents did not indicate that CNP itself should be on the ground doing community organizing, many respondents agree that CNP should do much more to foster resident and community engagement, network building, and resident empowerment. There is great potential for CNP to collaborate more with other local organizations that are promoting innovation and achieving success in this area, such as Neighborhood Connections.

Unclear Roles. Two main areas that were unclear to respondents also emerged during discussion: CNP's roles in education and workforce development. Many respondents discussed education as critical piece of neighborhood revitalization, but respondents remain unclear about how CNP can be most effective in this realm. In terms of workforce development, some respondents felt that although it is supposed to emerge as a part of the Economic Opportunity agenda, there is not yet a clear strategy, and concerns were expressed about the absence of a focus on the lowest income and unemployed neighborhood residents.

Operations

Merger. In 2013, Cleveland Neighborhood Development Coalition (CNDC), LiveCLEVELAND! and Neighborhood Progress, Inc. (NPI) merged into Cleveland Neighborhood Progress. The new organization integrated the programming of all three organizations under a new organizational structure. This merger is largely seen as positive because it strengthened capacity for each organization, although many respondents said they did not have enough information to make a judgment, which might due in part because some respondents were not involved prior to the merger. Uncertainty was expressed by some

regarding the loss of an independent voice and advocacy for CDCs, a role that CNDC previously played as a separate organization.

Executive Leadership. In general, the overall executive team received strong ratings and is seen as working effectively with partners and Cleveland neighborhoods. Respondents enthusiastically shared many positive perspectives on the CEO's leadership and the organizational change and success he has guided in his four years at the helm. He was particularly commended for the strong and diverse team he has assembled, but respondents also shared concerns and constructive feedback about the downsides of his leadership style and ways in which it could be strengthened.

CNP Board. Since the previous assessment the board structure has significantly changed with improved diversity and representation of neighborhoods through individual members and greater engagement through an extensive committee system. However, the board is also seen by some as having a board culture that does not spend enough focused time on substantive issues and could be more engaged in the strategic directions of the organization.

Communication. Though it was rated relatively highly by respondents, communication was raised by many as a key organizational limitation, which is consistent with our previous report. While acknowledging effort and improvement, respondents raised concerns about a lack of understanding and clear messaging of CNP's vision, direction and strategy, the need for even more promotion of the organization's work and accomplishments, and more clarity about the organization's policy agenda.

Transparency. Lack of transparency was a key issue in our previous assessment and is again a common concern. Some thought CNP's transparency has improved and is appropriately transparent given the nature of the organization's work, while others expressed concerns about some continued favoritism in decision-making and a lack of openness about certain information.

Summary of Implications for Strategic Planning and Organizational Development

Strategic Priorities and Discipline

Our findings suggest several key areas for strategic decision-making for CNP, including:

- How can CNP establish and remain disciplined to a more narrow set of strategic priorities, in the face of suggestions that it could do more in a variety of areas?
- What is the CNP strategy for revitalization in struggling neighborhoods?
- What is the medium and longer term plan for the Economic Opportunity portfolio?
- How can CNP enhance its other key roles such as placemaking, external resource development and distribution, advocacy, research and community organizing?

Strategic priorities

A major concern among CNP's external constituency, and indeed its internal staff as well, is that the organization is taking on too many things at once. The forthcoming strategic planning process is an excellent opportunity to step back, review the current portfolio and consider some key questions:

- Within each of CNP's portfolios, what are CNP's areas of strength and comparative advantage that CNP should definitely maintain as a high priority?
- Can CNP identify any areas that could possibly be carried out by or in close collaboration with another entity? How might that be explored?
- Which areas does that leave for further consideration? What criteria will CNP use to determine its level of investment and commitment in these areas?
- How can CNP align its commitments with its capacity? To what extent could more strategic sequencing of activity and priorities be part of the solution, so that CNP could put some current activities on a back burner until there is sufficient capacity to execute them?

Recommendations:

- CNP staff should determine how to better discipline themselves to work within their strategic capacity, only taking additional commitments when they can:
 - 1) add the necessary capacity or
 - 2) take something off their plates.
- There could be a staff member given lead responsibility for tracking organizational activity against the strategic plan and helping to raise and facilitate difficult discussions about seizing opportunities and passing on others. This would be an excellent responsibility for a Chief Operating Officer, a missing function at CNP that has been recommended by respondents previously and again in this assessment.

- We recommend that CNP consider engaging an organizational consultant to assist in reviewing internal operational issues such as internal communication and coordination and to help CNP executives determine how best to address them.
- The role of the board in helping to advise the difficult challenge of aligning organizational commitments and capacity should be made clear and more time should be set aside at board meetings for in-depth strategic discussions of this nature.

Develop a better strategy for various levels of neighborhood vitality and CDC effectiveness

If there was an overriding issue that wove throughout the surveys, interviews and focus groups, it was the glaring and growing gap between the neighborhoods that are beginning to thrive and those that remain in a rather dire condition, and the CDCs that are strong performers and those with limited capacity. Respondents accept the power of a market-driven strategy for certain areas of the city but they question where that leaves those neighborhoods that remain more physically, politically, economically, and socially isolated. The emerging Progress Dashboard tool is an excellent device to help differentiate between different types of neighborhoods and their challenges. The next step is for CNP to be more explicit about the revitalization strategy for each type of neighborhood circumstance.

Key questions include:

- What would be an investment and capacity building approach that is aligned with each tier of neighborhood vitality?
- Likewise, how does CNP's capacity-building strategy vary depending on the strength and effectiveness of each CDC?
- Given the obvious disparities among neighborhoods associated with the racial demographics of their population, how could a more tiered approach align with the commitment to a race, inclusion and equity agenda at CNP?

Recommendations:

- Develop and articulate an investment approach that encompasses all levels of neighborhood vitality while maintaining a strategic targeting approach and seeking a return on investment, but identifying strategic actions by CNP and other partners that can be taken even in the most challenged and isolated neighborhoods.
- Assess the goals and effectiveness of the Neighborhood Solutions grants and determine how that strategy might be enhanced for broader impact.
- Determine and articulate the responsibilities of the high-capacity CDCs and how their success, experience and capacity might be better leveraged to lift system-wide capacity.
- Consider leveraging the high engagement in the Progress Institute to expand other forms of technical assistance and capacity-building throughout the year.

This leads to the key topic of mergers or so-called “right-sizing.” Given the successes and failures experienced in the city thus far, what are the strategic implications for the next phase of CNP’s work?

Recommendations:

As part of the forthcoming strategic planning process, consider:

- What specific lessons have been learned from successful and failed mergers?
- What are the pre-cursors for an effective merger process?
- What exactly does “right-sizing” mean and how can this best be approached by CNP and others?
- How do mergers fit into a more explicit strategy to support struggling neighborhoods?

Economic Opportunity Portfolio

The Economic Opportunity portfolio (EO) was generally viewed as a positive addition by respondents. Among those with a clear opinion, there was near universal agreement that it has been a valuable addition to CNP. However, 66 percent of respondents said that they did not have enough information to make a judgment at this time. The favorable comments about EO focused mostly on support for taking a more comprehensive approach, in which placemaking (physical development) works in tandem with the people side of neighborhood revitalization.

Key questions for consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What is the strategic direction of the Economic Opportunity portfolio?
 - What is the medium and long term developmental plan?
 - Beyond the Community Financial Centers, what are the plans for the other components of a human capital strategy?
 - Workforce development, particularly of lowest-income and unemployed residents?
 - Education?
 - Given early CNP progress scoping out a race, equity and inclusion agenda, what are the implications for EO?

Recommendations:

As part of the strategic planning process:

- Develop a theory of change for the EO portfolio with a clearer articulation of expected outputs and outcomes.
- Determine how EO can be better integrated with the Placemaking and CDC Services portfolios.
- Develop more clarity about the role of CDCs and other partners in advancing and implementing the EO strategy and a process for securing more engagement and participation.

- Develop ways to communicate the strategy and its evolution to a broader range of stakeholders.

Enhancing other roles

Placemaking. Many respondents recognize the Placemaking portfolio as the “bread and butter” of CNP. Many of the services and supports provided are seen as high quality and valuable, though it is not necessarily clear how they connect strategically with the work in other portfolios.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are the strategic connections between Placemaking and the other portfolios?
- What are the strategic directions for Village Capital Corporation (VCC) and New Village Corporation (NVC) and what are the implications for CNP as a whole?

External resource development. Questions were raised by respondents about external resource development by CNP: how much funding is it raising from outside Cleveland and how much of that is being distributed beyond CNP itself?

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are the facts about external resource development and distribution of those funds?
- What should be CNP’s goals in this regard?
- What is the strategy for leveraging CNP and Cleveland’s growing national profile as innovators in neighborhood revitalization to raise more national funding?
- How can local organizations be helped to raise national funds directly?

Advocacy. Advocacy is an area of work that respondents had many questions about. It is understood that CNP is in a listening and reorienting phase of this work, but many are anxious to learn more about the strategic direction.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are the medium and long-term directions for this area of work?
- Will CNP and its constituency have an “urban policy agenda” or a “neighborhood agenda”? What is the potential value in this?
- What levels of policy: federal, state, county, city are priorities for focus and at each level; what is the CNP strategic approach?

Our recommendations:

- Make the advocacy function an organization-wide strategy and commitment at CNP with all CNP staff involved in some specific ways. Avoid this being seen internally as just the responsibility of Erika and the lobbyist.
- Determine how advocacy can be seen externally as a more collective effort and how CDCs and many other partners can be more effectively engaged and mobilized to develop a policy agenda and participate in the research and policy work.

- Review the role that NPI played historically in conducting research and informing advocacy efforts. To what extent is this function now being played sufficiently by other organizations, or is there a collaborative role that CNP can continue play?

Community organizing. Community organizing was identified by respondents as a missing but important role for CNP. CNP's hosting of the Organizers and Allies group is noted and appreciated, but it is unclear what the overall strategy and impact of that group is, beyond being an important source of peer support and networking.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are CNP's interests and agenda for community organizing in Cleveland? Is there a commitment across the organization to it?
- How can community organizing be thought about and promoted not only with and through CDCs, but through the wide range of existing neighborhood-level organizations and associations?
- What is the appropriate and feasible role for CNP in supporting this?
- How can CNP form more intentional, explicit and productive collaborations with groups such as Neighborhood Connections, the Neighborhood Leadership Development Program and the Neighborhood Leadership Institute?

Recommendations:

- Develop a deeper commitment to promoting community organizing and engagement, which does not necessarily require additional staff, but a commitment by staff across the organization to embrace an organization-wide approach and incorporate this into their portfolios where possible.
- CNP should engage the Organizers and Allies group to determine how its role might be better defined: what is the function of the group and its relation to CNP, its committees and other institutional partners? Beyond peer support and information exchange, is there more the group could be doing to help advance community change in Cleveland? How could it be more integrated into the strategizing and work of the rest of the organization?
- CNP should collaborate more extensively with Neighborhood Connections to help community-based organizations and other institutions understand the value and potential of the network organizing approach and to help CDCs and others complement or possibly replace the block clubs approach with other ways to promote resident and community engagement.
- CNP should also investigate and understand the asset represented by the cohorts of graduates from the Neighborhood Leadership Institute and the Neighborhood Leadership Development Program and how grassroots leadership might be more effectively engaged and supported by the local community development industry.

More Effective Partner Engagement

Finally, having proposed areas of focus for what CNP should be prioritizing in its next phase of work, we turn to the questions of *how* CNP should conduct its work, particularly the question of how to work more effectively with partners. We summarize here three types of proposed shifts in engagement: balancing disruptive and generative leadership, balancing leading and supporting roles, and balancing engagement and transactional mode. We also propose renewed effort to improve the working relationship with the City and its elected officials, which was a major concern among many respondents.

Balancing Disruptive and Generative Leadership Mode

In reflecting on CNP's evolution and impact during the past four years, many respondents express admiration and gratitude for the ways in which the leadership team has been willing to shake up the existing system, point out areas of dysfunction and weakness, and propose new and innovative ways of doing business and seeking results. As many noted, sometimes disruption to the system is a very good thing. However, while many acknowledged that there are still areas of the system that require some "disruption," we also heard a clear call for a more balanced approach, with more relative emphasis on the "generative" role of engaging, nurturing and building up.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- Is there consensus about the need for a better balance between "disruptive" and "generative" rhetoric and action?
- What would it specifically mean for CNP to amplify its generative role relative to its disruptor role?

Balancing Leading and Supporting

Another issue of institutional leadership style is the concern raised by respondents about how CNP can strike a better balance between leading and supporting. Often in interviews we heard concerns that CNP is more comfortable with a top-down approach and relishes being in a leadership position but is not as committed or engaged when they are in the role of supporter or participant. Playing a variety of roles in different contexts was an explicit charge that emerged from the strategic planning process with documents produced that indicated when CNP would be in which roles.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are CNP reflections on its engagement in various roles: leader, one of the leaders, supporter and participant and what are implications moving forward?
- Is there consensus about challenges on the part of CNP staff to be as responsive as they would like and what specific steps and practices would improve this?

Balancing Engagement and Transactional Mode

A frequent theme among respondents in terms of interaction with CNP is how quickly staff are usually moving. While this is understandable to most, given the recognition of how much is on the plates of CNP as an organization and each of its staff, still there is a concern that CNP staff, do not take enough time to slow down, be present, observe, learn, listen, and build relationships and trust over time. There is a sense CNP is often stuck only in transactional mode: moving the deal forward, seeking or exchanging information for a specific purpose, trying to make things happen and get things done.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- Is there consensus about a value in seeking a greater balance between engagement and transactional mode?
- How can CNP executives and staff slow down and dedicate more time to relationship-building and on the ground learning and listening?

Restoring the City Relationship

The sometimes tense and often ambivalent relationship that generally exists between CNP and the City of Cleveland – both its elected officials and city departments – was a key area of concern raised by multiple respondents. Many suggested there is a need to address various systemic issues within the City's bureaucracy and in ward politics that can actually impede progress on neighborhood revitalization. Above all, respondents saw the need for greater consensus and coordination between CNP and the City and appealed on both sides for renewed efforts in this regard.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- Ideally, what should be CNP's working relationship with City departments and council representatives?
- What is an objective assessment of the current relationships and where are there any bright spots and assets to build on?
- What responsibility can CNP acknowledge in contributing to these broken relationships and how can a different approach be taken in the future?

Recommendations:

- Develop an explicit strategy, facilitated by intermediaries trusted by both sides, to work to rebuild stronger working relationships between CNP and the City, motivated by the shared goal of strengthening Cleveland's neighborhoods.
- Prioritize the most promising avenues for collaboration – people, departments, activities, issues – and focus effort and attention on building some collaborative momentum through those starting points.
- Establish processes and routines for regular communication between relevant staff from CNP and City departments to share information and discuss policies and procedures of mutual interest.

Concluding thoughts

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress has been a critical asset to the local community development industry for over 25 years. Over the past four years it has taken some major steps to restructure and reorient its focus, and this assessment indicates that this has been a highly successful organizational renewal. In many ways CNP's constituency is calling for it to continue its trajectory of leadership and innovation while continuing to find ways to enhance its roles and impact. Our assessment also revealed that the constituency is excited about the numerous indicators of revitalization in Cleveland but deeply troubled by growing disparity across its neighborhoods and stymied by enduring challenges of education and workforce development. This defines the imperative for CNP's next phase of development and engagement: to shore up and expand the areas of neighborhood vitality while finding more effective ways to include an ever-increasing number of neighborhoods and their residents in the growing city prosperity.

Introduction

Background

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) is a nationally renowned local intermediary organization that has been supporting community development in Cleveland for over 25 years. CNP works closely with community development corporations, community-based organizations, local foundations, the business community, local government and a range of other partners to support neighborhood revitalization. CNP's mission is to foster communities of choice and opportunities throughout Cleveland. The organization's vision is for all of Cleveland's neighborhoods to be attractive, vibrant communities where people from all incomes, races, and generations thrive, prosper, and choose to live, learn, work, invest, and play.

In 2013, following an in-depth organizational assessment and an extended strategic planning process, Neighborhood Progress, Inc. (NPI) entered into a merger with the Cleveland Neighborhood Development Coalition (CNDC) and LiveCLEVELAND! to form the current organization known as Cleveland Neighborhood Progress. Neighborhood Progress, Inc. primarily focused on real estate development as a tactic for community development and neighborhood revitalization and had a primary strategic focus on a select subset of local CDCs through its Strategic Investment Initiative. Through the merger, responding to widespread feedback in the assessment process, NPI aimed to take a more holistic approach to neighborhood revitalization and position itself to have greater value to and impact on CDCs and neighborhoods throughout the city. The structure of the new organization includes three portfolios: Placemaking, CDC Services, and Economic Opportunity, each headed by a Vice President. Village Capital Corporation and New Village Capital, CNP's real estate lending and development subsidiaries are affiliated components of the Placemaking portfolio. An Advocacy, Policy and Research function rounds out the new organizational structure.

Purpose of assessment

This assessment follows the study of NPI conducted by our team from Case Western Reserve University in 2011. Our main purpose once again was to gather input from grantees, partners, and other key stakeholders about the current effectiveness and future role of CNP. Given the major changes in the organization since the previous assessment, including the design and implementation of the strategic plan, extensive staff changes, the organizational merger and restructuring and a major change of location to the city's east side, this is an opportune moment to take stock of stakeholder perceptions of the progress of the organization. This assessment is intended to initiate a renewed phase of dialogue, strategizing, and action to enhance CNP's effectiveness and impact. The assessment is sponsored by the Cleveland Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, and the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation and was initiated with the enthusiastic support of CNP executive leadership. Like our previous report, this is best considered a stakeholder feedback process with a specific focus on perceptions of CNP's external role, relationships and impact. To fully assess CNP's progress and impact, funders and

stakeholders must also consider information about project implementation and outcomes and neighborhood progress indicators to be provided by CNP in separate organizational reports and proposals.

As with our first assessment, the objectives of this assessment included:

- to learn about strengths and shortcomings of the work of CNP,
- to promote thinking and discussion about the future role of CNP,
- to reinforce a “learning culture” among CNP and its stakeholders and partners with a focus on greater impact and effectiveness,
- to reinforce CNP’s reciprocal communication with its stakeholders and partners, and
- to lay the foundation for an organizational strategic planning process.

This assessment also included additional questions about key strategic developments:

- the current state of community development in Cleveland,
- the priorities in the 2013–2016 Neighborhood Progress Strategic Plan, and
- the impact of the merger between Neighborhood Progress, Inc., CNDC, and LiveCLEVELAND!

This report presents the perspectives of a broad cross-section of almost 300 individuals including 212 respondents to an online survey, 86 interviewees, and seven focus groups with a total of 47 individuals. Survey and interview respondents included directors and staff at CDCs, community based organizations and other nonprofits, regional, statewide, and national organizations, education organizations, foundation representatives, city and county department representatives and CNP board members and staff. There were focus groups for east-side based organizations, including CDCs, west-side based organizations, including CDCs, one with staff of policy organizations and other city-wide leaders, one with city council members, one with individuals who work in the education arena, one with individuals who work in the economic development arena and one with CNP staff.

Please see the Appendix for complete tables with respondent demographics and background and a full description of the assessment methodology. In general, as shown in the Appendix tables, respondents represented the diversity of CNP’s constituency in terms of demographics, organizational type and size, location and service areas, roles, years in the industry, and frequency of contact with CNP. The Appendix also has a full list of participants and organizations represented in this study.

Report outline. The report is structured as follows. The remainder of this introduction highlights some key perceived trends in neighborhood revitalization in Cleveland. We then present our findings with an overall assessment of CNP’s evolution and performance since our first organizational assessment and then more detailed findings on CNP’s effectiveness, roles and positioning. We follow that with an assessment of CNP operations including perspectives on the merger, the performance of CNP executive leadership and board and progress on the issues of communication and transparency. We then turn to implications and recommendations for

strategic planning and organizational development, first focusing on key strategic priorities for CNP and then discussing recommendations for how CNP can more effectively engage and collaborate with its various partners.

State of community development in Cleveland

These times present a mixed outlook for our city. Respondents agreed that the context for neighborhood revitalization work continues to change dramatically and is more complex and difficult than ever. There are clear signs that Cleveland is experiencing an exciting renaissance including migration into the city and an enhanced national profile. Downtown is much more vibrant than it has been in decades with residential occupancy rates there soaring. Some neighborhoods are experiencing strong investment and turnarounds. However, other neighborhoods and areas of the city, in particular those with predominantly African American populations, remain economically stagnant and continue to experience disinvestment. As we write this report, the city is grappling with a spike in gun violence and killings, primarily in marginalized areas. This uneven growth and vitality creates an urgency for more effective, broad-scale neighborhood revitalization.

When reflecting on today's context for community development work, by far the most frequent issue raised by respondents was the dramatic decrease in funding available to support their efforts. At the same time as resources have decreased, the needs and expectations for community-level support have increased.

The task has become more difficult. We lost lots of gains made before 2008. The loss of value and other social ills (educational system, stagnant economy, safety issues) means the system is being overwhelmed. We are asked to play many roles and as a result of the great need, people are becoming more critical. They have high expectations but there is less to work with while problems have increased.

If there is a positive to the limited resources, respondents pointed out that it has forced greater collaboration among organizations.

Resources are thin – we can't be everything to everybody but we have to bring people together.

Now I think the economy, with the downturn, it has caused people to think more globally and work together. It's a good thing they've been able to look beyond ego and territory and create synergy.

But most agree that there is still a long way to go in advancing organizational collaborations and mergers.

We can alleviate the funding strain by smart-sizing the industry. There are still too many organizations vying for the same money. We need more collaboration or mergers. We have made great strides but we're still scratching the surface.

Another key development in the local community development industry is a growing recognition among a broader set of stakeholders that neighborhood revitalization must be approached in a more comprehensive way and that physical development alone is not a sufficient catalyst for broad and more equitable change.

Those social aspects are what make a community. It's not just bricks and mortar. CNP realizes change can't be sustained without the whole myriad of life being addressed.

[CNP and the CDCs are] getting away from a narrow focus of community development. The focus was on building things, tax credit houses, building whatever – especially residential, some commercial. There was also community organizing in some places, but not others. But when you think of where someone wants to live, it's more than just a house. . . day to day conveniences, safety, quality school, recreation, employment opportunities. Community development has to be about neighborhood development that includes all those things.

But some respondents pointed out that there is significant resistance to this shift.

From my perspective it seems like there are broadly defined camps. One camp is interested in seeing how you can integrate all of these things together in a holistic way and then there is another camp. The other is more unwilling to see change for any number of reasons. . . I think that is a profound split and you see it in slow moving institutions, for example schools, financial, education institutions and the city, putting a foot in a pool but not yet comfortable.

The shift to more comprehensive development also means that it is harder to document and measure success.

There is an increased recognition of the complexities of neighborhoods. We used to measure success by number of housing units brought in . . . CNP has recognized the need to interface with schools, safety, etc. and can't have just housing focus. Internally, we measured success on units and now it's harder to measure in terms of neighborhood vitality.

These opportunities and challenges frame the current context for CNP's efforts: an urban renaissance with uneven benefits and inclusion, shrinking resources for community development, increasing complexity of the work and an imperative for greater comprehensiveness and collaboration.

Assessment Findings

Overall summary of CNP effectiveness and performance

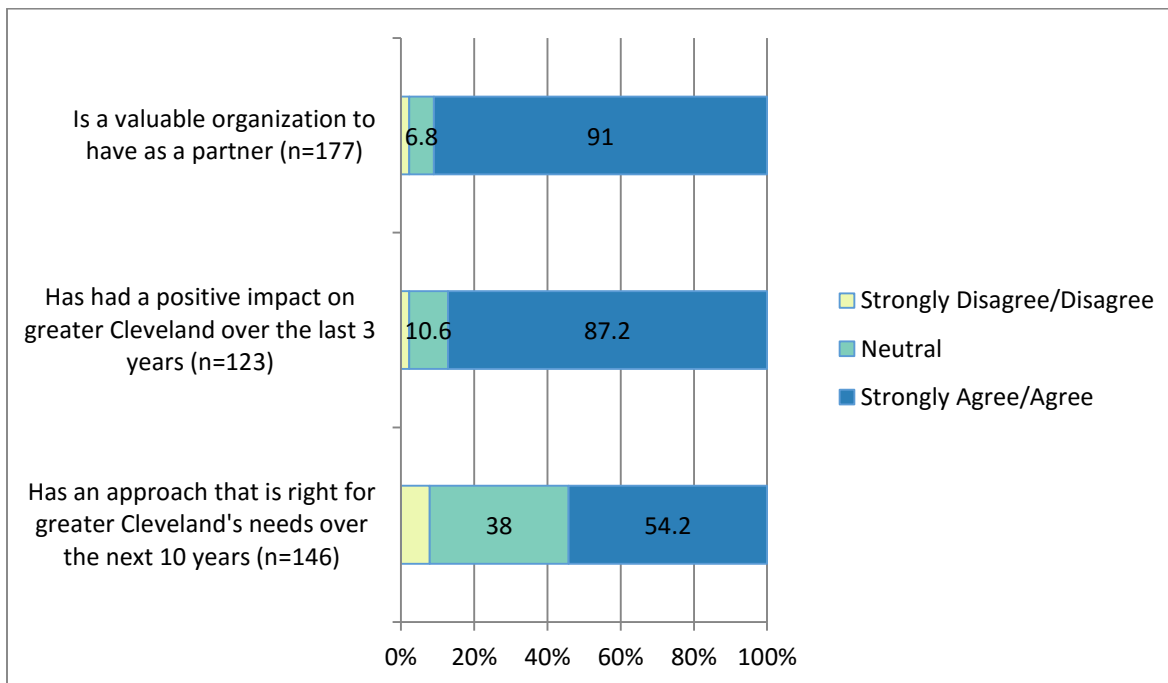
From the survey, interview and focus group data, we found a generally high assessment of CNP's performance. There is broad admiration and appreciation for quality and competence of the staff, the diversity of staff, and the dedication and effort that the staff exemplify. The organizational evolution over the last four years is generally seen as very positive: the merger is largely considered a success with minimal downsides, and the shift to a greater focus on addressing the issues affecting the people within neighborhoods is welcomed by most.

They did the merger, so that was their big win there. I think they've achieved that – they've encouraged innovation, they've put their money where their mouth is on that. They've done a decent job. . . I think they're on track.

What do we do to take care of the folks living in the neighborhood right now? Love this approach. They are on track with this approach – the people side of neighborhoods.

They're moving in the right direction.

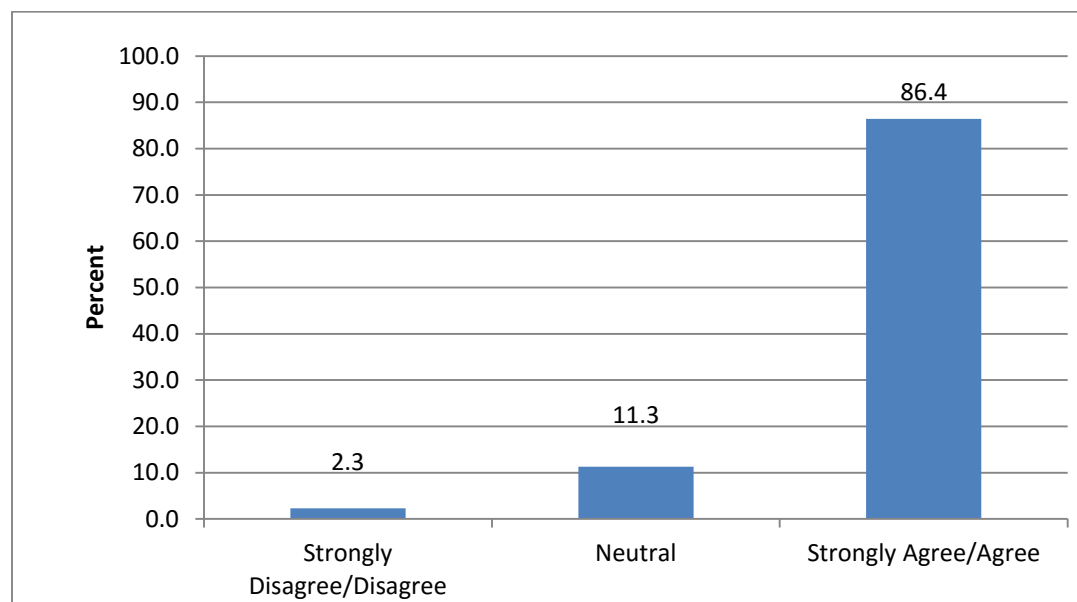
Figure 1: Perceptions of CNP



As Figure 1 above indicates, CNP's overall effectiveness was highly rated by survey respondents. About 91 percent of respondents considered CNP to be a valuable organization to

have as a partner and 87 percent felt that CNP has had a positive impact on Cleveland over the last three years. However, only 54 percent felt that CNP has an approach that is right for greater Cleveland's needs over the next ten years. This indicates a recognition among CNP's constituency that despite its success, it must continue to adapt and innovate to address evolving local opportunities and challenges.

Figure 2: CNP Staff Have Skills, Knowledge, and Experience to be Effective (n=177)



As Figure 2 above indicates, CNP staff were very highly rated by respondents.

The staff at CNP are exemplary in their knowledge, skill base, and most importantly, their willingness to share their knowledge and skills with others, both for the purpose of neighborhood development as well as for the personal [and/or] professional development of industry leaders and professionals.

The CNP strategic plan identifies four different participation modes that the organization could play as a part of its work with partners: the leader of an effort, one of several leaders, a participant or a supporter. On various activities in the strategic plan, CNP staff and other stakeholders indicated which type of mode seemed most appropriate. Later in the report, we will discuss respondent feedback about the various participation modes. For now, the respondent feedback also provides an introductory overview of the variety of accomplishments and impact that respondents credit to CNP.

Some respondents highlighted key ongoing activities for CNP, including:

- Funding for CDCs
- Real estate development and lending through VCC and NVC
- Facilitating mergers and alliances
- Coaching for CDC leaders

CNP was commended by some respondents for its leadership role on:

- The St. Luke's redevelopment project
- Re-Imagining Cleveland
- The W 25th Street Master Plan
- The launch of Community Financial Centers
- LiveCLEVELAND!

Some respondents noted CNP's integral support on projects such as:

- Slavic Village Recovery
- Opportunity Corridor
- Reforest City Campaign
- La Villa Hispana
- CMSD Transformation Alliance
- Vacant Land/Vacant Property Reuse
- EITC coalition
- HackCLE
- NEORS green infrastructure work
- VAPAC
- PRE4CLE

And some respondents extolled two new and very well-attended events hosted by CNP:

- The Progress Institute
- The Vibrant City Awards Lunch

CNP Roles and Positioning

Respondents are well aware that CNP is a complex organization that plays multiple roles to promote neighborhood revitalization. Over 90 percent of survey respondents were aware of its role convening and networking a variety of actors. Almost 90 percent of survey respondents were familiar with its role providing vision and leadership; interviewees referred to CNP as a thought leader and agenda setter. Also relatively widely recognized were its roles in advocacy, technical support and capacity building and, to a lesser extent, its role in direct services to link individuals to financial education. Please see the Appendix for complete graphs on awareness, usage and assessment of CNP's supports and services.

We turn now to respondents' assessment of CNP's various roles. We found that CNP's performance can be grouped into the following categories: roles where it is seen as highly effective, roles that need substantial enhancement, roles in which there is some contention and debate, roles which are perceived as missing, and roles in which there is some confusion and uncertainty about the appropriate positioning for CNP.

Most effective roles and primary strengths

Convener and facilitator. CNP's role in bringing together various actors in the community development industry was virtually unanimously seen in a positive light. There was consensus that this is an important role for the organization and that it plays that role very well.

CNP is a convener, a brain trust, bringing a lot of minds together to help shape the neighborhood landscape.

I see it as a convening, facilitating, and strategic planning and implementation community-wide organization across the city. They have a collection of significant partnerships with local CDCs. They are trying to develop better relationships across peer organizations that work on different issues. Being a place that can connect people with what's happening in neighborhoods to larger issues and initiatives.

Thought leader and agenda setter. Closely related to its convening role is CNP's well-regarded role providing visionary leadership, shaping the neighborhood revitalization agenda, lifting up best practices, and promoting standards of excellence.

I think that they've thought about where they fit in the ecosystem of neighborhood revitalization. Have placed themselves appropriately within that. If nothing else, that's one of their most important roles. I think they're taking leadership around the right types of issues.

The size of the organization allows for many big picture items to be accomplished that may otherwise not be addressed in regards to the overall economic health and livability of our region.

It has its pulse on a lot of different things, exciting progressive things. Their role is to be a leader toward shifting the conversation. I think CNP is able to start articulating solutions to problems in Cleveland. CNP can act as a good way to start implementing solutions. Shifting the conversation. It might require tough conversations, but if anyone can do it, it's CNP. I can't think of another organization that can do it. CNP has a stake in the comprehensive picture.

Funding intermediary. CNP's flagship role is as a local intermediary pooling funds from foundations and other sources and making strategic decisions about allocating those funds for maximum effect. There are high ratings of CNP's efforts in this regard and many respondents considered it an excellent redistribution mechanism.

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress is effective at funneling funds from larger foundations to the CDCs. The CDCs can make the most impact in their own neighborhoods because they know them best.

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress maintains strong local funding for community

development through multiple philanthropic relationships. It is my opinion that individual CDCs would not successfully raise this level of support without a shared effort such as Cleveland Neighborhood Progress.

CNP is an excellent redistribution mechanism for local foundations and other funders for which CDCs compete for attention – it adds focus and builds mutual accountability between funder and neighborhood agency.

As Figures 3, 4 and 5 below indicate, almost 80 percent of survey respondents believed that CNP is effective at leveraging new funding, over 90 percent believed that it works effectively with institutional stakeholders and almost 80 percent believed that it uses its resources well to support neighborhood organizations. There is consensus that the CDCs could not raise this level of support themselves and also general support for CNP's targeting approach rather than uniform allocation of funds. However, as we shall discuss below, CNP's funding decisions are also one of their more contentious roles with what appears to be an increasing critique of what some see as imbalanced or unwarranted continued primary investment of funds in stronger CDCs and neighborhoods with development momentum, and a concern that not enough funding gets redirected to a broader range of CDCs and neighborhoods.

Figure 3: CNP Effectively Leverages New Funding (n=152)

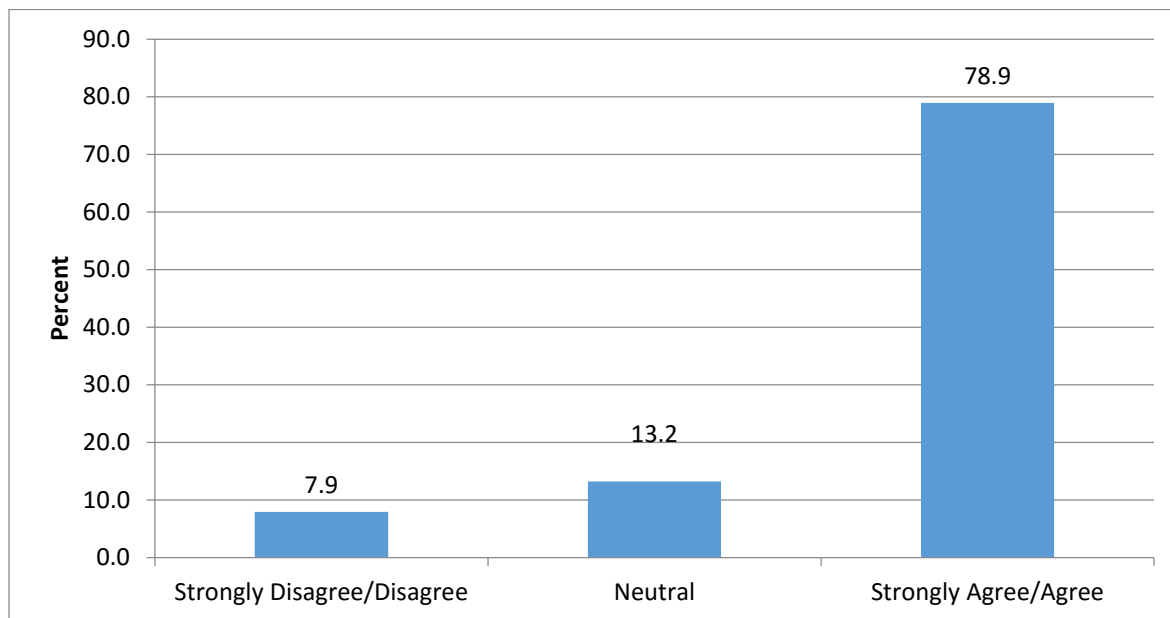


Figure 4: CNP Works Effectively with Institutional Stakeholders (n=175)

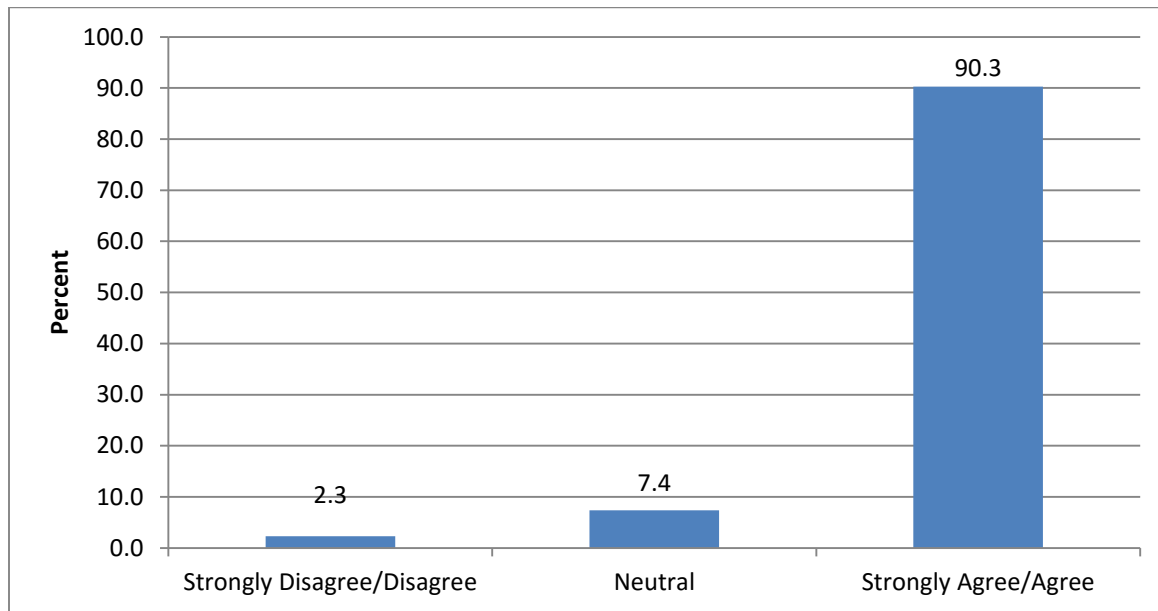
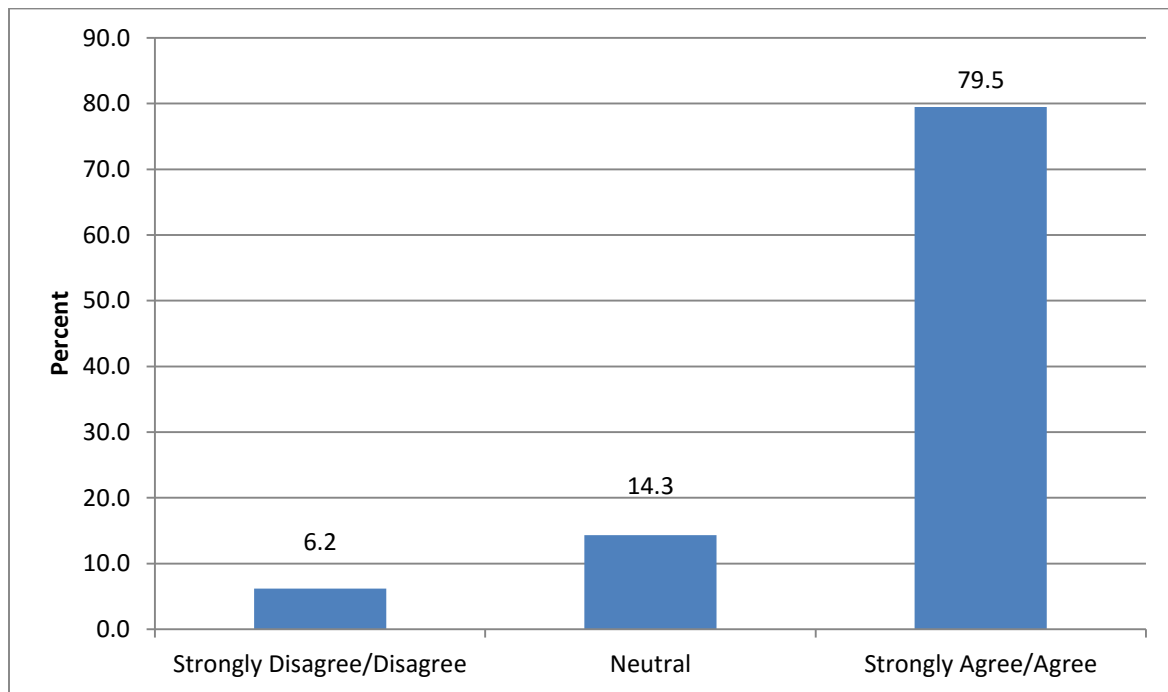


Figure 5: CNP Uses Resources to Support Neighborhood Organizations (n=161)



Roles needing enhancement

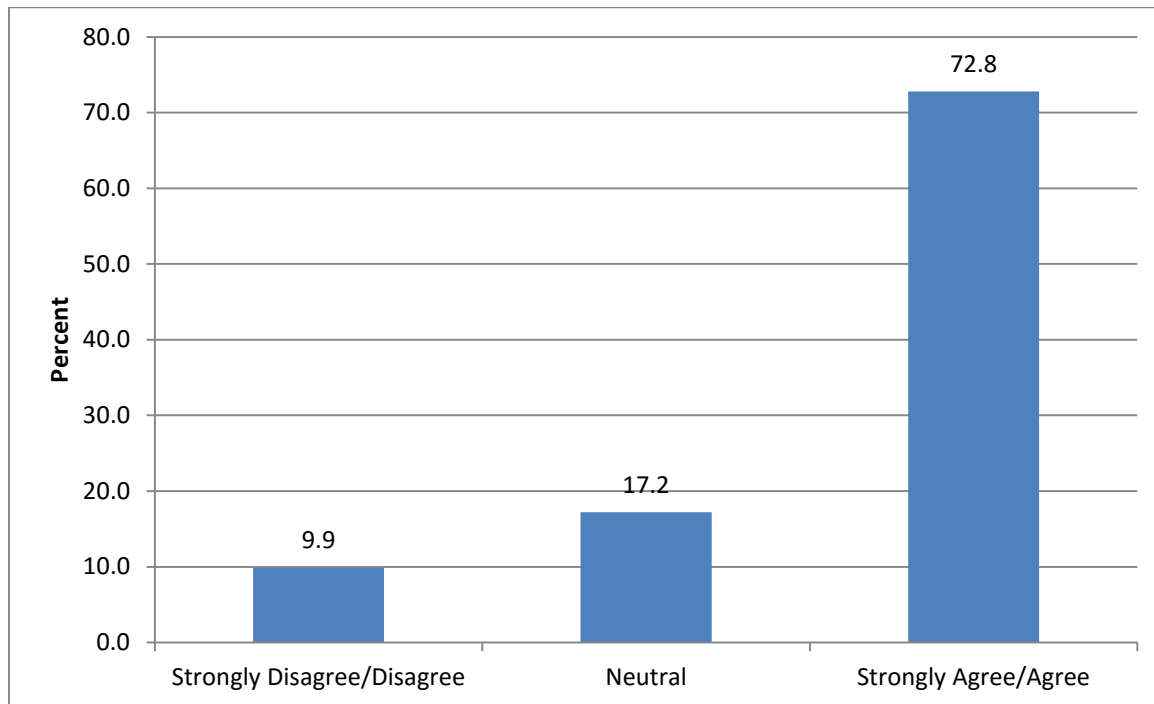
Technical support and capacity building. A prominent and recurring theme in this report is the uneven performance and capacity across CDCs and neighborhoods in the city, and respondents urged CNP to redouble its efforts, seek more resources, and sharpen its strategies for building capacity among a broader cross-section of organizations and neighborhoods. As we will discuss, the merger with CNDC and adoption of the CDC services portfolio is widely seen as a positive move that re-orientes the CNP infrastructure toward serving a broader set of neighborhoods. But this is generally seen as not yet yielding the desired improvements.

I get the sense that they've done capacity building outside the strategic investment areas with the hope that CDCs would become more effective through capacity building. In an ideal world that could turn CDCs not performing at a top level and turn them into a better CDC. Some CDCs just haven't responded well.

Resource development from outside Cleveland. Another area where respondents see considerable room for improvement is in bringing in more resources from new sources outside of the city and distributing them to local organizations. With CNP's national reputation and the significant needs facing Cleveland's neighborhoods, several respondents felt much more funding should be raised from national public and philanthropic sources. And a few shared their perception that when outside sources of funding are secured, often those funds are channeled to CNP for their own projects and operations rather than to neighborhood organizations. Some respondents described specific situations where they found themselves in competition for the same local funding as CNP. This finding echoes a major concern from our previous assessment, where respondents noted that the organization was "not leveraging its national reputation enough to bring in far more significant national resources to Cleveland."

Advocacy. CNP's role in policy and advocacy is another area where respondents feel there is much room for growth and improvement. There were a broad variety of perspectives on this particular role as well as clearly very different levels of knowledge and awareness. Some of this stems from different viewpoints among respondents who were aware of earlier phases of advocacy work when the organization was still NPI versus those who consider it a "new" role being taken on by CNP. While Figure 6 below indicates that over 70 percent of survey respondents agreed that CNP is playing an important role in this area, there are a substantial number who were on the fence or disagreed.

Figure 6: CNP Advocates for Policy Change (n=151)



In interviews, we were able to learn more about the ambivalence here. For many, there is the sense that CNP is just building up this role after some staff turnover in this area, and they are taking a “wait-and-see” approach (which is a common perspective on CNP’s work in a number of areas).

The advocacy piece is newest piece so there isn’t much to gauge at this point. I think that they’ve done a fantastic job supporting organizations and their different needs.

Their role in doing advocacy is yet to be determined. I think they are getting there, I don’t know if I can point to a big win yet. That’s something they’ve taken on that after the merger, new staff person is building on it. We’re not going to see them [as strongly carrying out this advocacy role] until they have their “we did this” moment. We fought for you, and we achieved something. Or we lost, but we tried.

Others expressed more definitively that CNP should be doing much more to use its positioning and influence to advocate for the community development field and that there should be more clarity and more communication about the role and strategy.

The policy piece is important – another key thread. I don’t know another organization that has the positioning to speak on the policy side like CNP.

I do think it’s necessary. It requires expertise and skill that CDCs don’t necessarily have.

There were also some who referred specifically to the research and investigative function that NPI used to play, for example with regards to the issue of foreclosures and vacant property and wondered about the organization's current capacity and commitment to carry out research, either independently or in partnership with other organizations.

NPI did more on policy and advocacy than CNP. I was close to NPI's policy work, which was focused on vacant property, availability of lending, mortgage money, relationships with the city and state government around hardest hit funds. Neighborhood Stabilization funds, treasury, federal advocacy – real advocacy about money, legal issues.

Now I don't see any advocacy. They have a new advocacy person, but I haven't seen any advocacy.

Respondents saw a need for advocacy both at the city level and at the state level.

I would like CNP to be an advocate and push the City to do [even] more at the neighborhood level.

The state is not focused on an urban agenda. Some of this is about compiling the information that shows that by promoting an urban agenda, you are benefiting this state. The information is out there. What is the urban agenda for the city of Cleveland and its neighborhoods. How effectively are they linking to state reps?

They have to be more decisive about getting involved in advocacy. They should embrace the ability and see the value of advocacy. They need to better message the role that CNP is playing in supporting certain legislation.

Most contentious roles

There were two roles that raised the most concerns and questions among respondents.

Direct implementation of the new Community Financial Centers strategy. The first, and most contentious, is a new role that has emerged out of the Economic Opportunity Portfolio, which we will discuss more generally later in the report. But the specific role in question here is CNP's decision to play the lead role in implementing the Community Financial Centers financial education strategy rather than working through a partner. Even among those who are supportive of the program strategy itself, there are concerns about CNP in this role, given that they are supposed to be an intermediary. Respondents wondered why they would compete with other organizations that could do this.

I would caution them against running programs. Connecting programs is more appropriate for them. I worry there is starting to be a shift to promoting programs.

On the Economic Opportunity stuff – I just don't understand what they're doing in that area. They're supposed to be an organization about collaboration, but they're now doing

the direct service that their collaborators do themselves. . . I look at this and I can name 10 organizations who do all of these things. I don't see CNP playing roles in workforce... what they end up being is a roadblock between funders and programs. . . a competitor versus an arbiter for funds.

I don't think they should be in direct services either. . . they should have been working to increase the capacity and professionalism of other organizations. Seems anti-mission for a funding intermediary to get into direct services but constantly telling others that they should be merging.

From our conversations with CNP leadership and staff, we understand that CNP is playing this lead implementation role as a proof-of-concept phase. They explained that there are local partners, such as Neighborhood Housing Services and Enterprise Community Partners, that have been involved in the roll out of the program and it is offered in conjunction with the Cleveland Public Library and an Earned Income Tax Credit program that involves some of the CDCs. It was not fully clear to respondents whether CNP intends to relinquish the lead role once the program is successfully established. Even so, the rationale is not clear to many as to why CNP is leading the effort. We will return to this issue in the implications section to discuss the need for more effective communication about this approach and future plans.

Funding targeting and equity. A second area where there is broad debate among respondents is how CNP is choosing to target its resources. Many respondents feel that there has been improvement in this regard:

I think there is less favoritism than there was before. I feel there is a concerted effort to talk about all neighborhoods.

There has been improvement, a conscious effort to provide support and TA to all CDCs and areas.

They have done more capacity building that's not limited to SII neighborhoods, but to all CDCs; they've held a couple of citywide events; they've had a call for ideas or proposals for Re-Imagining that was not limited to Re-Imagining grantees. They have been more deliberate in trying to ensure that they are targeting on a citywide level.

They are less closed; they are working in more neighborhoods than they were before. They are less SII focused.

Several respondents mentioned the new Neighborhood Solutions grants as a good mechanism to distribute some funding more broadly:

Through the merger with CNDC, there is now the Neighborhood Solutions grant. There is a panel that decides. Everyone has a fair shot.

Yes, there has been improvement. Very much intentionality. Even Neighborhood Solutions and the Re-Imagining pot are evidence of a shift, making them competitive across all neighborhoods.

But there was considerable disagreement on this point.

I don't think that they have improved in this area. If you look at who the SII areas were prior to this round and this one, it's the same organizations. Those that don't get funding are almost always stagnant in terms of their [progress]. They try with CDC services, but results are skewed toward older funded organizations.

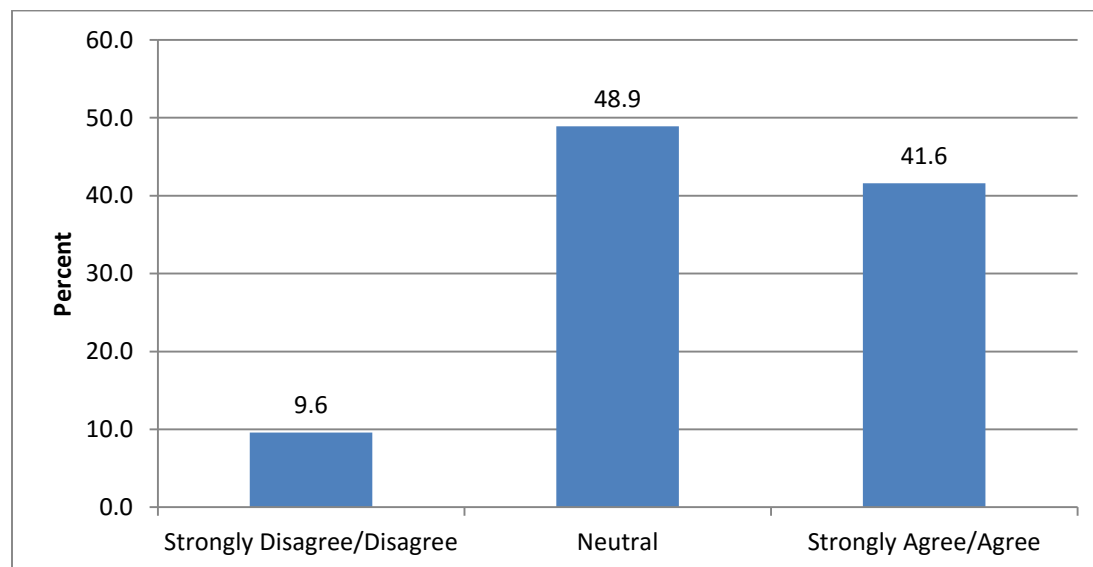
My observation is that it is still an ongoing tension. . . There needs to be some 'tiering' and paths for how to get to the next level. It's not about size. It can't be enough just to determine who the nine best are. There is not an articulated strategy for lower and medium level organizations. It would be useful to have this.

More respondents than in our previous report raised the question about “weaning” some neighborhoods off of CNP support.

Effective investment in strategic areas does improve the entire city by stabilizing some core neighborhoods. At what point do you wean neighborhoods?

Figure 7 below demonstrates strong differences of opinion among survey respondents, the majority of whom are either neutral or disagree on the question of whether CNP provides a clear rationale for its funding decisions.

Figure 7: CNP Communicates a Clear Rationale for Funding Choices (n=159)



The key concern was the lack of an effective strategy for the neighborhoods that are not strategically located with the potential for creating a market-driven turnaround in the near future. While CNP is seen by many as providing a greater array of services and support to a broader set of CDCs and neighborhoods, it is unclear what the underlying operating theory and overarching, cohesive strategy for underperforming CDCs and neighborhoods are.

Most respondents are firmly supportive of CNP's investment decision to pool its resources in strategic ways for maximum impact.

I support making concentrated investments, and this is their strong suit, greatest capacity and greatest results.

Few, if any, would suggest that CNP should “spread the resources like peanut butter” and many suggest that CDBG funding should be more strategically targeted by the city and by councilpeople. The main area of contention is *how* CNP chooses which CDCs to target. In our current assessment, there is a heightened concern about the widening gap between strong neighborhoods and neighborhoods that continue to struggle. Many respondents raised pointed questions about why CNP continues to direct most funding to the stronger performing CDCs rather than targeting more investment to those that most need improvements

Funders are taking more of a market approach and looking at return on investment. Some communities can't give the high return so they are not getting resources. We somehow separate CDCs from this reality and the leaders get criticized. It's harder to turn a dollar in this area as opposed to others. . . How do you properly evaluate one group that is on hilly and rocky ground when another is on smooth flat ground? From an investment perspective, it's easier to get a return from smooth ground.

It should be noted that with the high poverty rates across most of Cleveland's neighborhoods, the notion of “smooth flat ground” is relative and even the perceived stronger CDCs face challenges and there is a degree of fragility in the turnarounds that their neighborhoods are experiencing. CNP staff point out that the largest SII grants in the most recent round of funding went to CDCs working in or expanding into high poverty neighborhoods. Still, there remain questions among respondents about how CNP could dedicate more resources to help strengthen underperforming CDCs.

Complicating this issue about promoting more equity across city neighborhoods is the reality of racial disparities with majority African-American neighborhoods facing great challenges and more barriers to revitalization.

It is not always organizational or absence of organizational strength that creates absence of neighborhood strength. . . One of the racial dynamics is racism – people will avoid certain neighborhoods – and among some African American communities, people want to move up and out . . . The point is that there are big forces that go beyond the City of Cleveland and CNP. Having the ability to affect these trends is challenging. CNP could have poured all its resources into one of these neighborhoods and not had the impact.

What's become more evident over the past five years is the imbalance, some neighborhoods are really taking off – such as Detroit Shoreway, Ohio City – some neighborhoods are “heating up” and others are not getting the benefit of that. The difference has become more pronounced, I think. . . you want to build on strengths, but you can't disregard areas that need to be strengthened. If you look at the areas that are stronger, they have been traditionally white neighborhoods. Race plays a role, perceptions of differences [play a role].

Some respondents indicated that a key part of the solution is making sure that the challenges of racial inequity remain on the table and that there is racial inclusion in the discussions and execution of strategic responses.

How can the City of Cleveland start talking about race? . . . There is no conversation on race and we're not bringing enough people of any color to the table on any of these conversations. Maybe they are somewhere, and I don't see it. CNP has to make sure we're talking about the broader-based issues [such as] race, because all of this is what is going to keep the City of Cleveland going.

With increased knowledge and a better understanding about the values, policies and practices that advantage some groups while disadvantaging racial and ethnic minorities, this community and [CNP] can influence the real change that must occur for all to have the opportunities they need and deserve.

Placemaking. While not as contentious as the issues described above, there are still some tensions in perspectives about what has traditionally been CNP's core role of support for bricks and mortar development. While there is now widespread agreement, at least in principle, with the need for more comprehensive development, some respondents question whether the organization has gone far enough in this direction while others assert that it has gone too far.

Housing is a critical platform, an essential ingredient in the revitalization of neighborhoods.

It all starts with housing – but it is not housing alone – we need economic development, engagement, retail development. But the foundations have gone away from physical development and toward human capital development – education, workforce. So you have to get your money some other way to do housing. CNP is now coming back to realizing that housing is important and no longer saying leave housing alone.

They went from bricks and mortar to a quality of life focus. There still needs to be real attention to bricks and mortar, I mean like what the streetscape looks like. There is not enough beauty in many neighborhoods. There is not enough attention paid to making people's community environments beautiful places. When neighborhoods are filled with

trash that causes people to question their sense of worth and their contributions to that community. There are so many terrible looking business properties. CNP needs to enhance their focus on beautifying neighborhoods.

A second tension is around the issue of potential displacement from gentrification. There are concerns that, given the low housing prices and massive vacant property and vacant land issues, CNP's stance is that gentrification and displacement are not issues to worry about in Cleveland.

There's tension between community benefitting existing residents and a revitalized neighborhood that's going to attract new residents. Sometimes I'm wary about an agenda that's all about revitalization and not also really taking into account some of the tensions or issues that would come up with existing populations. I think displacement could be an issue in the not-too-distant future. I would like to see CNP not poo-pooing displacement. I think, just being careful and not just measuring through real-estate values, but measuring their impact with some of the work they're doing with families.

Overall, respondents are unclear about where the bricks and mortar component of CNP has settled in this post-recession, post-foreclosure crisis era.

Missing role

Community organizing. Though we will discuss later the concerns among many respondents that CNP is doing too many things and needs to narrow its strategic priorities, community organizing was one area that stood out as being perceived as overlooked by CNP. Several respondents, both in interviews and on the survey, identified support for community organizing as a missing function of CNP. Given the importance of fostering resident and community engagement, network building, and resident empowerment for sustained and equitable community change, respondents questioned why CNP does not pay more attention on this front. Some recognized that there is an Organizers and Allies peer group that CNP hosts but still believe that there is much more that CNP and the CDCs could be doing.

While there is no one on the [CNP] team that does 'community organizing', I think we need another body on the ground. . . someone who has direct interaction with residents, dealing with residential issues. . . They have capacity; they have such a strong foundation. A 'network-weaver' could change perception [of CNP] to the general grassroots community.

CNP could direct funding to CDCs . . . and make a clear scope of work around community organizing. We will give you funding for that. Need to do bottom up community organizing.

The missing role is more than one of funding and staffing as there does not appear to be a clear strategy or even set of best practices that CNP promotes to further resident participation and empowerment. A few respondents asked specifically about the absence of collaboration between CNP and Neighborhood Connections, given all of the energy, momentum and success that

Neighborhood Connections is having in getting increasing numbers of residents actively engaged in neighborhoods across the city.

The lack of connection of between CNP and Neighborhood Connections is a missed opportunity. I'm not sure why that hasn't happened. I'm not clear why they are not more plugged in.

CNP should be looking at Neighborhood Connections and saying, 'we want that quality of organizing in all our neighborhoods, each and every one of them.'

One respondent framed it in terms of adding “vertical integration” to the existing “horizontal integration,” placing emphasis on whether, for example, neighborhood residents are able to engage with influential community development professionals and institution leaders to design and execute neighborhood change strategies.

I think they've done a good job bringing diverse organizations together. . . but it's very horizontal in terms of how they're looking. . . my opinion, the way that works best, bringing small teams together who can experiment together. . . Bringing together people from big institutions or a City with some intermediary organizations, with residents, and then you have a diverse team who can work shoulder to shoulder with things. They've done a good job getting across sections, but I don't think they've incorporated vertically – opportunities to pilot stuff rather than think of a grand plan for the entire city; the vertical integration is not happening in terms of integration, implementing, and designing.

Unclear roles

Finally, there are two roles about which there remains a high degree of uncertainty among respondents about the appropriate role for CNP: education and workforce development. It is clear that these absolutely critical issues for neighborhood revitalization and for the success of individuals within neighborhoods, but to most respondents it remains unclear how CNP and its neighborhood-level partners can best influence meaningful change on these issues.

Education. Some respondents were more optimistic about CNP's possible role in the area of education.

I think they do understand that schools are an essential part of community building – schools and safety determine whether people stay in a city or not. The biggest driver for families leaving the city has been safety and schools. I think they understand really good schools will attract people back to the city. In the work they are doing they are trying to realize that connection.

CNP could play several roles in the educational arena. They could identify suitable facilities to create schools in high need areas. Schools don't want to build brand new

buildings without a guarantee that the neighborhood wants a new school. Schools want to begin with a community demand. For the Breakthrough Charter schools, CNP has been a good partner in introducing Breakthrough to neighborhood leaders who then grant Breakthrough access to the community and grassroots organizations. CNP could do more along these lines.

The district and the community have adopted the Cleveland Plan . . . There is a lot of momentum in the community to move the Plan forward. There has never been a Plan before. But the district can't do this alone, particularly in hard pressed communities. Partnerships in these communities are critical. I feel like we are all moving in the right direction but the issue is implementing mini Cleveland Plans with fidelity all over the city. . . it's going to take a lot of collaboration and conversation to make it happen. I think that CNP can be a huge factor in that.

One respondent suggested that Neighborhood Progress could play a facilitator role in shaping conversations between the District and the community about the importance of place in a child's education.

CMSD creates a new school and then hopes for community to be engaged in it, hopes they will support it. When CMSD does its meetings, it does a traditional meeting—they “talk at” the audience. The biggest roles CNP can play is to start conversations around place rather than programs.

Some respondents suggested that an appropriate CNP role could be supporting pilot programs.

Maybe the role this portfolio could be playing is pilots and proof of concept. Local organizations should be able to elevate it to CNP to say this is working and we need support for this. Grassroots initiatives that have a passion for something greater, they go to CNP and get help with resources.

In the area of literacy development, CNP should be a partner. One successful example is CNP partnership on the Reach Out and Read Program in Metro Health waiting rooms. There are ways they could be involved in programs to improve literacy rates. CNP could promote strategies that are working in some areas and spread them to others. CNP could incentivize CDCs to promote literacy programs and other enrichment opportunities. CNP needs to help CDCs expand their portfolios to offer these support services in their neighborhoods. CNP could put out RFPs for CDCs to come up with their own ideas to promote literacy in their neighborhood.

Workforce development. Many respondents perceive that a workforce development strategy has not yet emerged in the Economic Opportunity (EO) portfolio even though that is a clear component of EO as originally conceived. In particular, there are concerns among respondents that no strategy focused on the lowest and most struggling earners has emerged.

There's a level of skepticism that goes into “human development” or “economic opportunity”. There are those who are like, that's where the funders are, so let's shift

there. Then there's those who come in with a sense of urgency that can be detrimental. . . like they're looking for the silver bullet. I think about Cleveland, and everyone is focused on workforce development.

Workforce development is a challenge, given state structure. It depends on health of communities and driven by private market dynamics. We can train and recruit but it's driven by private market. Hopefully, we set the table more—land assembly, cleaning up toxic sites, being involved in business attraction, creating appropriate market for investment in area.

Having reviewed feedback on CNP's various roles, we turn next to assessment of the organization's operations.

CNP Operations

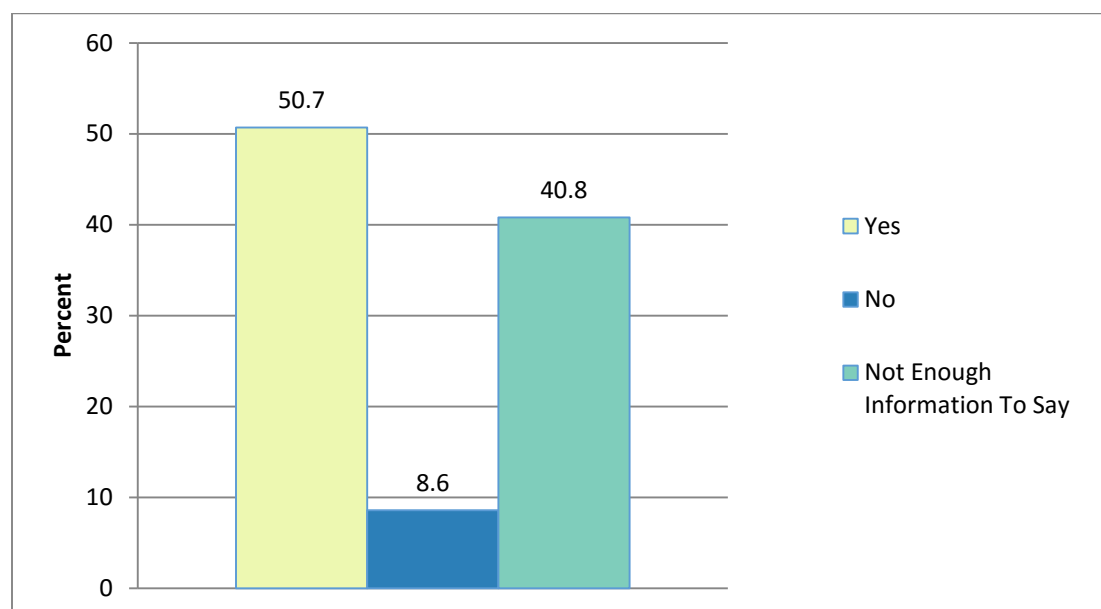
Respondents shared their perspectives on several key facets of CNP's current operations including the merger with Cleveland Neighborhood Development Coalition and LiveCLEVELAND!, the roles of executive leadership, board and the issues of communication and transparency.

The merger

In 2013, as a result of a yearlong facilitated process that emerged from the NPI strategic planning effort, Cleveland Neighborhood Development Coalition (CNDC), LiveCLEVELAND!, and Neighborhood Progress, Inc. (NPI) finalized a merger in an effort to shore up the efforts of CNDC and LiveCLEVELAND! and enable NPI to promote a more comprehensive and inclusive community development agenda. The merged organization, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, incorporated staff of all three organizations under a new board that built upon and expanded the NPI board with increased neighborhood and CDC representation from CNDC and LiveCLEVELAND! The new organization integrated the programming of all three organizations under a new organizational structure and assumed responsibility for the NPI 2013–2016 strategic plan.

As Figure 8 below indicates, a substantial number, just over 50 percent, of survey respondents were positive about the impact of the merger with less than 10 percent expressing negative views. However, over 40 percent of respondents said that they did not have enough information to make a judgment. This may in part reflect some respondents who were not involved with the organizations prior to the merger.

Figure 8: Has the Merger Increased CNP's Effectiveness (n=177)



Those who see a positive effect of the merger explain that it brought three organizations under one roof, strengthening what each organization was doing previously in a coherent and more comprehensive way.

I'm a big fan of organizations coming together, it helped to create a positive place for CDCs to have one place for everything: marketing, CDC services, funding to implement projects. I think it's starting to help more with neighborhood marketing and branding instead of neighborhoods just focusing on it on their own. Certainly created a more powerful organization, instead of three individual ones.

There was general consensus that there has been continued and increased support for the CDC industry since the merger.

Additionally, LiveCLEVELAND! is now able to advance their mission under the larger, better funded organizational structure. The goals of marketing neighborhoods and supporting the promotion of CDCs have been significantly enhanced.

Jeff [Kipp] no longer has to work at keeping the organization open. He has been buoyed and helped make big gains. The Vibrant City Awards was an amazing accomplishment. Now it's a [much stronger] engine and [he is] part of being a driver. Now [CNP does] tours, social media, website, guides, etc., a whole menu of things.

For CNDC, the merger resulted in greater capacity to serve all neighborhoods through grants, capacity building and consultation. The annual Progress Institute brings stakeholders from across the entire city together for education, networking and strategic thinking – something CNDC did not have the funding or staffing to accomplish before. CDC Services (previously a primary

function of CNDC) now has more resources to serve CDCs across the city and promote networking among CDCS.

I've been impressed with CNP doing what CNDC used to do. CNP trying to push toward mergers of CDCs has been tough due to politics. It's difficult to have such a large portfolio but I like the Progress Institute and the Organizers and Allies [Committee]. I really like this and it gives people a way into different neighborhoods.

Through the merger with CNDC, there is now the Neighborhood Solutions grant – there is a panel that decides, everyone has a fair shot. If they can do more of that, be more of an advocate for us to the city and to the state.

There were concerns that CNDC collaborative way of working would be swallowed up by the more corporate and sometimes top-down style of NPI. Respondents by and large felt that CDC Services has been able to maintain its approach and even positively influence the whole organization.

For Neighborhood Progress, Inc. there have been significant gains as well. CNDC brought to NPI a much-needed balance by increasing support to all CDCs. Despite some fears, these contributions actually increased through the merger. The merged organization is also seen by CDC and Neighborhood Progress staff to be out in the community more than was the case with Neighborhood Progress, Inc.

The old NPI didn't have the capacity to deliver to CDCs anything more than the grants it gave out, and also special projects, but it didn't itself have an intensive program to strengthen the CDCs, the CD field, or to market the neighborhoods of the City of Cleveland. It's a big bonus for CNP to now have that.

Certainly adding CNDC has helped getting away from the elitist narrative. Also allowed that part of CNP to be more accessible to a wider group. Having the marketing and Jeff Kipp at CNP allows them to better tell the story than LiveCLEVELAND could do on their own. It helps CNP do a better job of promoting neighborhood identity.

Despite all these gains, there are tensions that remain. As before, some CDCs receive operating support through the SII program while others do not. CDC Services has more funds to support all CDCs than CNDC had, but more work is needed to coalesce all the CDCs.

Another concern that remains is the role of advocacy that CNDC had played on behalf of all CDCs and neighborhoods. As the unofficial trade association of the community development field, CNDC was seen as the voice that represented CDCs. The merger resulted in the loss of membership status for CDCs in an organization that was independent of the funding organizations. For some, this meant the loss of the ability to be an independent advocate.

Did CNDC's advocacy role really transfer to CNP? Because there was a pushback against NPI in those CNDC meetings. The industry might have lost some independence due to this merger.

But the loss has been – an advocate, a trade association for CDC industry. Twenty-seven CDCs, 11 get funding, 16 are not happy – who is that voice?

We know that those involved with the merger anticipated that it will actually bolster the capacity to advocate for the CDC industry.

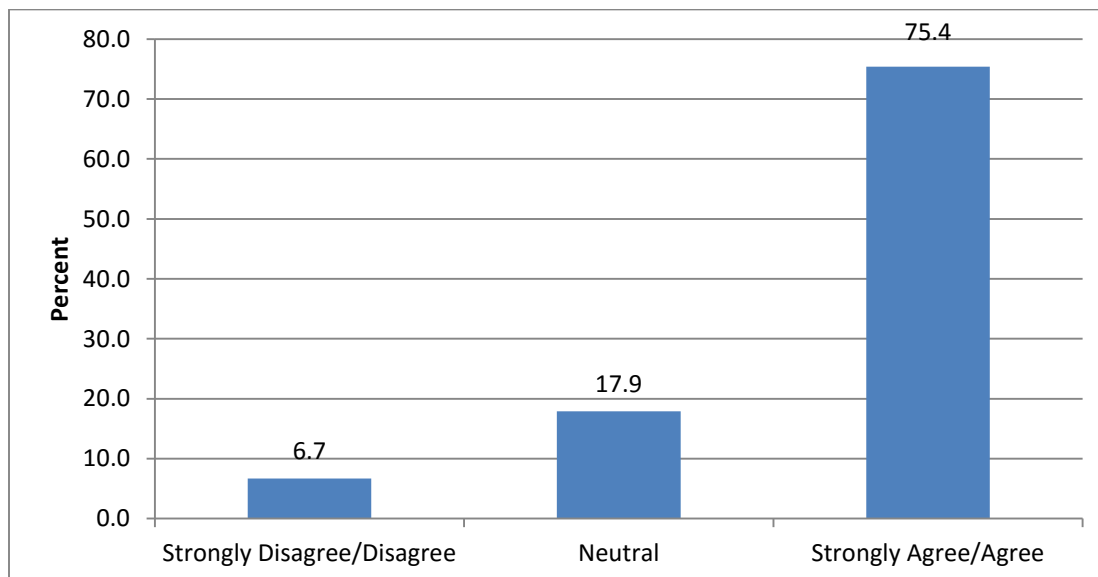
Related to the perceived loss of voice, there were also concerns about the composition of the board of the new organization, the small portion of neighborhood stakeholders that make up this large body and whether the CDC representatives on the board are effective as advocates for CDCs in general.

The broader board looks more corporate than ever, even though there are more CDCs on the board. It makes it harder to challenge the corporate voice. . . the CDCs want to survive [and] are so much less vocal as advocates.

Executive leadership

We now turn to a discussion of CNP's leadership. In general, the overall executive team leadership receives strong ratings. As Figure 9 below indicates, survey respondents overwhelmingly agree that the CNP executive team effectively works with community and its partners: 75 percent agree or strongly agree and only seven percent disagree or strongly disagree.

Figure 9: CNP Leadership Effectively Works with Community and Partners (n=130)



There was generally very positive comments from interviewees about the executive team as a whole.

[The CEO] was brilliant in getting some really smart people on his team. Their leadership [comes from their] solid understanding of conditions in the neighborhoods, but they're also taking a long-view of what the neighborhoods will be.

It's strong – they've got experienced, smart, creative people working there. They've only been together for two years now, still early on, trying to figure things out and see how things work together. I think everybody they have is highly capable and has really good skills.

I think the leadership with each and every one of them is excellent. I think when you have a bunch of leaders individually, bringing them together individually takes some time to find their pace and their rhythm; and I know they're all committed to making that work, and I know that it's not easy.

There were only a few negative perceptions expressed about the leadership team as a whole. Concerns include that they take a “paternalistic” stance towards other organizations, some saw them as not willing to “get in the trenches” and maintain a more consistent presence on the ground. Perspectives on the CEO’s leadership are mixed, with many very strong positives as well as some strong negatives. Often respondents had both very complimentary things to say as well as concerns to raise. But even most of those respondents who expressed the strongest concerns acknowledged that the commitment and approach has achieved an important degree of change and progress at CNP. In general, most feedback about the VPs was very positive.

CNP Board

The board of CNP has been significantly restructured since our previous assessment report. This is in part due to shifts in the membership and make-up due to the CEO’s work with board chairs and committees to recruit a more diverse and neighborhood-representative board. With the merger, the NPI board expanded to include representation from the boards of CNDC and LiveCLEVELAND! As part of the merger agreement, a multifaceted system of four board committees, five advisory committees and six working groups was put in place with leadership and representation from board members on many of those as well as the engagement of numerous organizational partners and stakeholders.

The diversity of the current board is seen by many respondents as a strength, and it is seen as having representation from a broad cross-section of CNP’s constituencies. There was not consensus on the level of engagement and activeness of the board. For some respondents the board is impressively engaged with members taking on roles on CNP advisory committees for the various portfolios of work. Other respondents, including some board members, are concerned that the board is not engaged enough at a strategic level and that meetings consist of too much reporting out by staff and not enough time to drill down into difficult strategic issues. Some

board members are seen as not very curious about the nuances and implications of the organization's work. The board is also seen as challenging to manage given that the various board members each have areas of expertise related to the organization's work and thus may tend to be hesitant to press each other on what is perceived as a particular person's turf. Some board members and other stakeholders voiced concerns as to whether there is enough of a balance of voices that can speak from a community level perspective.

Of the four strategic goals, I can sense activity in each but I'm not sure of the strategic approach and progress. There is clearly activity. . . What's the approach, what's working, where do we need to course correct? . . . Board meetings are filled with information but it is not always clear how choices are being made, how results are being measured, and what we are deciding not to do.

As a board, we don't talk about leadership, we don't talk about governance. We have a board that's not very curious. And not enough time on board discussion. Meetings are review and report. There is truncated time for real discussion.

Board members are not all as engaged as they could be. Just being on a committee does not make you engaged. Seems like it's the right people but not being fully used. Doesn't feel like a shared leadership board.

Communication

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress engages in a variety of communication strategies to promote its work and activities, share knowledge and promote Cleveland. Currently, CNP sends out a monthly E-Newsletter to individuals on their mailing list and updates their website to share news about the organization, Cleveland neighborhoods and events. CNP also has a robust LiveCLEVELAND! campaign that includes an annual publication, a dedicated website, City Life Tours of Cleveland neighborhoods, and daily social media activity. Respondents who felt that CNP does communicate well commended the organization for making its strategic plan widely available, hosting frequent meetings and committees that are open to organizations outside of CNP. Overall, many respondents said that CNP's communication has improved since the merger.

As can be seen in Figures 10 and 11 below, among survey respondents, the ratings for communication were relatively high: 68 percent agreed that the organization promotes a clear vision and strategy for neighborhood revitalization in Cleveland and 66 percent agreed that the organization has effective communication with external partners and constituencies. But these ratings were lower than for other organizational characteristics.

They're getting better – up until last year they were doing pretty poorly. It's an area for improvement, but when they do communicate it's insightful.

Figure 10: CNP Promotes a Clear Vision and Strategy (n=171)

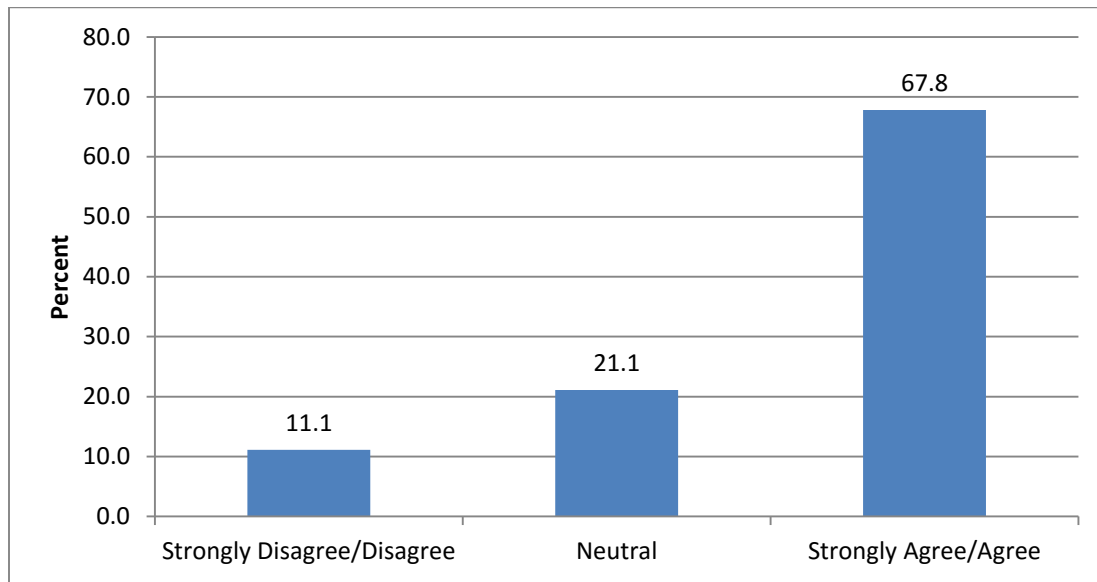
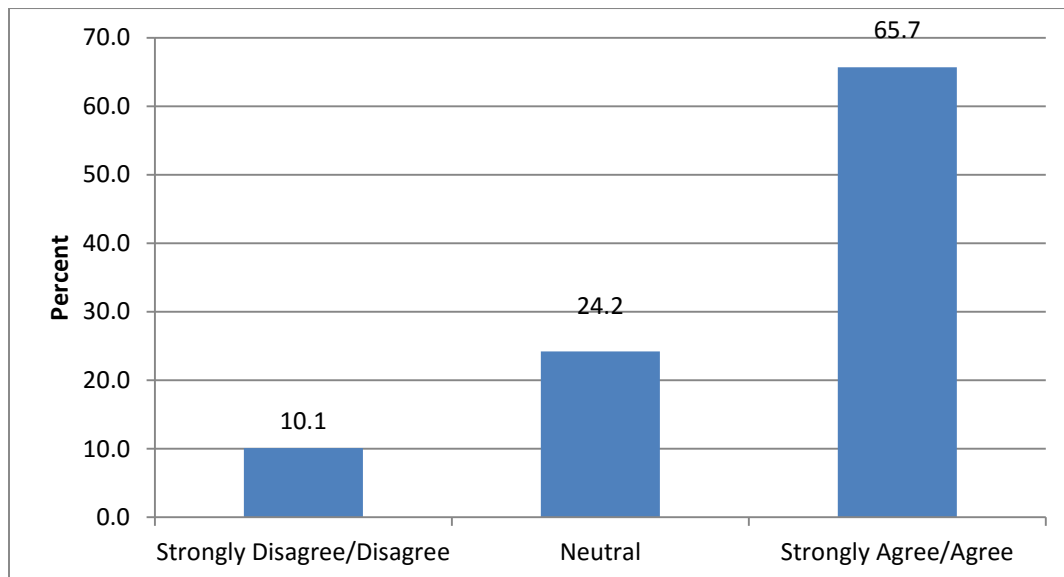


Figure 11: CNP Communicates Effectively with Partners (n=152)



So while this reflects important progress, in our interviews, we were able to learn more about why communication was still identified as the most frequent limitation. Some criticisms of CNP's communication is that it is not frequent enough, there is currently no distributed annual report or plan, and the website needs to be more diligently updated. Additionally, many respondents felt as though CNP did not advertise itself and its accomplishments adequately and suggested CNP should be clearer in communicating its goals and strategic direction.

One survey respondent reflected a common view that while there was respect for the quality of the work, the overall strategy was not obvious:

CNP uses creative solutions to solve some of our neighborhoods' development problems. I agree with all of these statements, but don't necessarily have a comprehensive and clear understanding of the overall vision and strategy for Cleveland's revitalization.

A related concern was that Neighborhood Progress does not promote the work effectively to a broader audience and public.

Educating people on what it is they do and can offer. There are so many different areas of focus, and it seems complex to a layperson. A succinct marketing and PR plan might be needed. They don't do enough to publicize their accomplishments.

The third concern was the lack of communication around policy, which is likely due to the lack of a focused and developed policy agenda (discussed previously in terms of CNP's advocacy role). This was illustrated by one person, who stated:

In regards to policy change, I have no clear understanding of what CNP is advocating for or against.

It should be noted that with the expanded portfolios, the organization interacts with a much larger spectrum of stakeholders than in 2012. Survey respondents felt that there is a lack of knowledge among outsiders as to what the organization is about.

Right now it seems more like an insider organization that most people would only know about if you work in a CDC or the like.

I am guessing it's not so good because they don't work in the neighborhoods, they work with CDCs, and not all residents work with CDCs. They aren't touching the entire population. They have to think outside the box, outside the CDC network.

A more troubling concern is if these communication problems undermine the trusting relationship between Neighborhood Progress, the CDCs and their neighborhoods.

Sometimes I feel like information isn't passed down in a way that you can get it that's easily accessible, or you know in time. For example, they did the whole thing with the Marshalls, the Brelo verdict; I didn't know any of that. Which is fine, but that's an example. . . or the Climate Ambassadors – I heard about that through another meeting. It's just things like that, you gotta whole pool of people who you work with pretty closely, and these things are happening; it doesn't get down to us to get that information to people. So, obviously it's getting to somebody, but it's not getting to us.

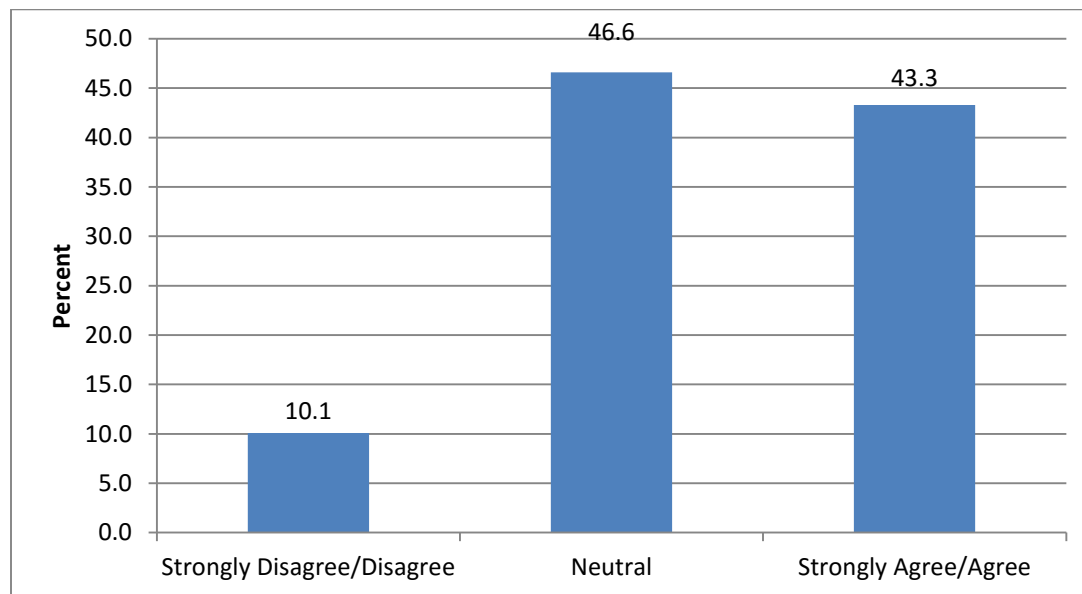
There was an internal dashboard—green, red in different areas. It'd be nice if they continued the internal work and made it more publicly available and made it more systematic—maybe quarterly updates to constituents regarding the strategic plan.

Overall, the organization is large and multifaceted and communication seems to be better in some areas but not in others. New initiatives, like Economic Opportunity, to be discussed below, are complex and emerging; staff turnover also creates a temporary disconnect in communication. It appears that among those who are more involved with the organization, there are those in the know that seem to be more satisfied and others that are seeking more from the organization.

Transparency

A lack of transparency was a major issue in the previous assessment and once again it was one of the lowest rated items by survey respondents, as seen below in Figure 12: only 43 percent of respondents agreed that the organization has become more transparent in its decision-making, and only 10 percent clearly disagreed that it had become more transparent and most respondents were not sure.

Figure 12: CNP Is More Transparent About Its Decision Making (n=159)



Interestingly, interviewees who said CNP is transparent varied in how they described this quality. Some said they were straightforward and transparent while others said they were transparent *enough* and seemed to accept that there is a limit to how much transparency should be expected.

CNP has done a good job – they’re very transparent. More so than before. I think there was criticism of it but it has gotten better. People might not like the decisions they have made but it’s clear how the decision was made.

I think CNP is where they should be. They are not very transparent, but should they be, probably not. I think the board is well informed. They are operating at the level they should.

For those who felt the organization was not transparent, the criticism reflected concerns voiced in the previous assessment, that there is favoritism in the decision-making and a purposeful lack of openness about certain information.

All of their decision-making is done behind closed doors with a very small group of people. CNP staff live in different neighborhoods in Cleveland, and those neighborhoods get funded. I think people who have a conflict of interest should not be a part of the review process. They should publish their proposals and publish how their scoring went. That would be a good start.

I don't know how their decisions get made. I have no idea how they make their decisions – nothing is communicated down line staff. My belief is, they don't care... The managers of CNP don't care what any of us think. I don't think that's within the framework of how they choose to operate.

Implications for Strategic Planning and Organizational Development

Based on the findings presented in the first part of the report and some other items we will provide more detail on below, we turn now to specific implications and recommendations for consideration and action as CNP enters a new phase of strategic planning and organizational development. We first consider implications for CNP's strategic focus – **what** should the organization prioritize as its focus? Then we consider implications for **how** CNP can more effectively engage its partners and constituencies in this next stage of its work.

Strategic Priorities and Discipline

Our findings suggest several key areas for strategic decision-making for CNP, including:

- How can CNP establish and remain disciplined to a more narrow set of strategic priorities, in the face of suggestions that it could do more in a variety of areas?
- What is the CNP strategy for revitalization in struggling neighborhoods?
- What is the medium and longer term plan for the Economic Opportunity portfolio?
 - What is CNP's role in the areas of education and workforce development?
- How can CNP enhance its other key roles:
 - Placemaking
 - External resource development and distribution
 - Advocacy and research
 - Community organizing

Strategic priorities

A major concern among CNP's external constituency and indeed its internal staff as well, is that the organization is taking on too many things at once. Despite the investment of considerable

time and energy in an extremely thorough strategic plan there is a sense that the organization's leaders remain very opportunistic and entrepreneurial and tend to consistently add more activity to the organization's commitments, without taking anything off or without necessarily increasing the capacity to match the increased expectations.

This is clearly not a sustainable mode of action, and CNP staff and its partners are feeling the strain of the imbalance of commitments and capacity.

Respondents noted to us a decrease in responsiveness or availability from various CNP staff, due to their heavy workloads. It was not clear to many of the respondents, including some staff and board members, what system and process CNP uses to check in on its strategic plan and to what extent the plan is being used to discipline and shape decisions about what to take on.

The forthcoming strategic planning process is an excellent opportunity to step back, review the current portfolio and consider some key questions:

- Within each of CNP's portfolios, what are CNP's areas of strength and comparative advantage that CNP should definitely maintain as a high priority?
- Can CNP identify any areas that could possibly be carried out by or in close collaboration with another entity? How might that be explored?
- Which areas does that leave for further consideration? What criteria will CNP use to determine its level of investment and commitment in these areas?
- How can CNP align its commitments with its capacity? To what extent could more strategic sequencing of activity and priorities be part of the solution, so that CNP could put some current activities on a back burner until there is sufficient capacity to execute them?

Recommendations:

- CNP staff should determine how to better discipline themselves to work within their strategic capacity, only taking additional commitments when they can:
 - 1) add the necessary capacity or
 - 2) take something off their plates.
- There could be a staff member given lead responsibility for tracking organizational activity against the strategic plan and helping to raise and facilitate difficult discussions about seizing opportunities and passing on others. This would be an excellent responsibility for a Chief Operating Officer, a missing function at CNP that has been recommended by respondents previously and again in this assessment.

As an additional note here, though our assessment was focused on CNP's external positioning and partnerships, several *internal* operational issues were raised by respondents. In addition to the operational challenges of matching commitments to capacity, other such issues included improving internal communication and coordination across CNP's multitude of portfolios, committees and working groups. Continuing to

strengthen external communications and promote appropriate transparency will also require internal capacity and focus. And many of our recommendations call for CNP to continue to grow as a *learning* organization, building in time to be reflective and incorporate lessons learned into course corrections and enhancements. One possible organizational solution to promote more effective management of these internal issues would be to determine how to resource and recruit a COO who could support in bringing focus, authority and accountability to the imperative of better internal coordination.

- We recommend that CNP consider engaging an organizational consultant to assist in reviewing these internal operational issues and to help CNP executives determine how best to address them.
- The role of the board in helping to advise the difficult challenge of aligning organizational commitments and capacity should be made clear and more time should be set aside at board meetings for in-depth strategic discussions of this nature.

Develop a better strategy for various levels of neighborhood vitality and CDC effectiveness

If there was an overriding issue that wove throughout the surveys, interviews and focus groups, it was the glaring and growing gap between the neighborhoods that are beginning to thrive and those that remain in a pretty dire condition, and the CDCs that are strong performers and those with limited capacity. Respondents accept the power of a market-driven strategy for certain areas of the city but they question where that leaves those neighborhoods that remain more physically, politically, economically, and socially isolated. Since most, if not all, support the choice made long ago by NPI to pursue a targeted approach, the choice seems to be either invest deeply in the “winners,” as some would frame it, or begin to shift the focus of resources and invest in those neighborhoods and CDCs being left behind. To be clear, while some respondents spoke in favor of such a strategy, others spoke vociferously against it, questioning the rationale for pouring investment into an organization or neighborhood ill-prepared to make the most of it.

We propose another way to approach this strategically, which would be to take more of what one respondent called a “tiered” approach. The emerging Progress Dashboard tool is an excellent device to help differentiate between different types of neighborhoods and their challenges. The next step is to be more explicit about the revitalization strategy for each type of neighborhood circumstance.

Key questions include:

- What would be an investment and capacity building approach that is aligned with each tier of neighborhood vitality?
- Likewise, how does CNP’s capacity-building strategy vary depending on the strength and effectiveness of each CDC?
- Given the obvious disparities among neighborhoods associated with the racial demographics of their population how could a more tiered approach align with the commitment to a race, inclusion and equity agenda at CNP?

Recommendations:

- Develop and articulate an investment approach that encompasses all levels of neighborhood vitality while maintaining a strategic targeting approach and seeking a return on investment, but identifying strategic actions by CNP and other partners that can be taken even in the most challenged and isolated neighborhoods.
- Assess the goals and effectiveness of the Neighborhood Solutions grants and determine how that strategy might be enhanced for broader impact.
- Determine and articulate the responsibilities of the high-capacity CDCs and how their success, experience and capacity might be better leveraged to lift system-wide capacity.
- Consider leveraging the high engagement in the Progress Institute to expand other forms of technical assistance and capacity-building throughout the year.

This leads to another key topic that we have not yet addressed: mergers or so-called “right-sizing.” Given the successes and failures experienced in the city thus far, what are the strategic implications for the next phase of CNP’s work? This was a contentious topic on which respondent perspectives varied widely, from those who saw the important quest for efficiencies and economies of scale to others who saw it as a cover to disempower and remove weak CDCs.

What is the definition of right-sizing? What that means right now is reducing the number of CDCs. It’s not about the right size and match of CDCs. Not a strong analysis of right-sizing in my mind. Given the neighborhood context, what is the size of CDC needed?

Right sizing is my most hated buzz word, it is a meaningless phrase, you mean to say you support mergers to produce scale and greater efficiency. I think you should be honest with people and tell people organizations need to change or go.

Many respondents were quite aware of the distinction between the attempted mergers that have failed, and were perceived to have been “forced” by CNP, and other mergers that have occurred more “organically” and are looking more promising. Focus group and interview participants raised significant drawbacks to the current merger process. Even after a merger, the need for strong neighborhood representation remains and may not be well-served by a merged CDC that has not formed meaningful connections across its expanded target area. There is a concern that if two CDCs become one nonprofit, the available city and SII funding could decrease, given that it is now just one organization. The following quote raises several important strategic questions: how to identify instances where dissolution of an organization would be preferred to a merger, how can the viability of organizations best be assessed and are there community-based organizations besides CDCs that could be better positioned to advance neighborhood progress where a CDC has limited capacity or openness to change.

I have a personal bias about mergers—only in high school algebra did putting two negatives together make a positive. Merging them will lead to one big negative organization with lots of infighting. Dissolution of organizations needs to happen, which is not the same as mergers. Small can be great, nimble and effective. We are not thinking about right-sizing the right way. Need metrics and evaluation that recognize differences

in organizations. It's a life cycle—you cannot measure all with the same standards of mature, fully-developed CDCs. Goal is to get all to be high functioning (apart from those that need to be dissolved). CNP needs to decide if the only partner is a CDC. LISC has gone away from that model and others have too. Maybe a church or some other organization is a good partner where a CDC has not worked out. Work goes on in best way possible.

Recommendations:

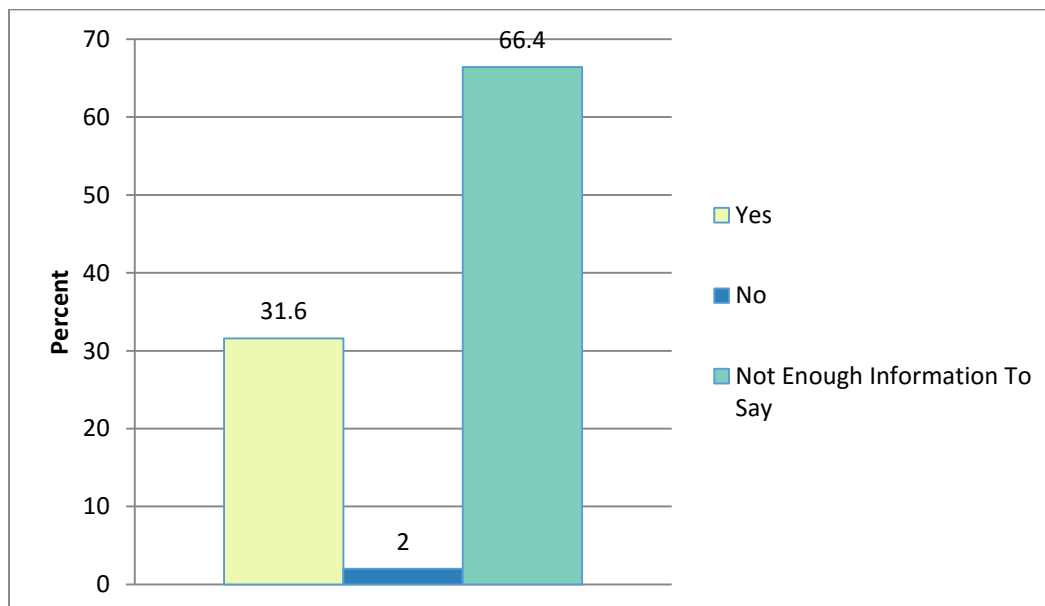
As part of the forthcoming strategic planning process, consider:

- What specific lessons have been learned from successful and failed mergers?
- What are the pre-cursors for an effective merger process?
- What exactly does “right-sizing” mean and how can this best be approached by CNP and others?
- How do mergers fit into a more explicit strategy to support struggling neighborhoods?

Economic Opportunity Portfolio

As Figure 13 below demonstrates, the Economic Opportunity portfolio (EO) was generally viewed as a positive addition by respondents. Among those with a clear opinion, there was near universal agreement that it has been a valuable addition to CNP. However, 66 percent of respondents said that they did not have enough information to make a judgment at the time of this assessment.

Figure 13: Economic Opportunity Portfolio Valuable Addition (n=177)



The supportive comments about EO focused mostly on support for taking a more comprehensive approach, in which placemaking (physical development) works in tandem with the people side of neighborhood revitalization.

It's put a focus on that so people understand that you need those things to have strong neighborhoods. You can put someone in a house that's brand-new, and that house doesn't have economic empowerment, that house is going to fall down. They've kind of planted that flag and said this is important.

Yes, because they can bridge multiple worlds. Physical infrastructure crowd is insular and specific universe but that's not all that community is. To be able to navigate physical and social infrastructures is key, and CNP can speak both these languages.

A very important piece. Twenty years ago, wealth building was home ownership—you can't rely on that any more. Having the human development piece is critical. I don't know how you can do neighborhood revitalization without it. Funding is not there for housing, you are left with working with the people to build their own assets, get skills they need, get jobs. Can't come to government for everything. EO allows you to build people to solve their own problems.

I think that a lot of what EO did was expand the partners that should be in the community development world. I think it expanded the definition of community development to be more focused, which I think are good things. At times, I felt like it took resources (time, leadership) away from what I considered to be NPI's bread and butter, which was placemaking. But I think, in the end, it was a good addition.

Those respondents with a more mixed view of the value of Economic Opportunity had many questions and concerns. These included questions about the feasibility of CNP being engaged in so many areas, the lack of clarity about the role the organization should play in this area, resource allocation, and the ability to execute and produce measurable results.

It's been important to say our communities aren't getting better if we're not improving on the people side. It's very important that economic and human development got added to CNP's capabilities. And we already see some tangible programs that are going into effect—the financial empowerment program is just getting off the ground, and it will remain to be seen its impact, but it's already bringing a new resource into Cleveland.

This area is so broadly defined that I shudder to give it my blessing. We are either going to be creating a monstrous organization or they could fail because they are trying to do too much. They need to figure out what role they are going to play in EO.

A major theme across responses to questions about the Economic Opportunity portfolio as a valuable addition was that it was too early to tell, which was the feeling of most respondents. Their comments centered around three different views: the portfolio is complex and will naturally take time to develop, uncertainty but hope that a clear strategy will ultimately be created, and concern about the lack of clarity in the strategy and messaging of the portfolio.

[EO is] valuable in the sense that it was a step toward CNP acknowledging that community development is not just bricks and mortar. Outside of that, I don't know how it's really changed much at this point. It's still very new. It did elevate certain conversations to better accommodate other factors into development. That's been great. Not clear where it will move.

I think it is still fairly early to say it has had a positive impact. It has added to the conversation, we have to pay attention.

When we probed on how Economic Opportunity could be better defined, responses were distributed across three responses: narrow the focus of the portfolio, develop clearer goals and a more explicit long-term plan, and elevate the Neighborhood Progress role to a strategist, connector, and resource rather than engaging in directly providing programs or services in neighborhoods.

They need a more laser-like focus. They should reorder priorities within EO; the flagship is CFC.

CNP's role could take the neighborhood as the area of focus. First, they could become a strategist to understand the neighborhood need and then become a convener to bring the resources to address those needs. They need to be a neighborhood expert rather than [financial] health or education experts.

Key questions for consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What is the strategic direction of the Economic Opportunity portfolio?
 - What is the medium and long term developmental plan?
 - Beyond CFC, what are the plans for the other components of a human capital strategy?
 - Workforce development, particularly of lowest-income and unemployed residents?
 - Education?
 - Given early CNP progress scoping out a race, equity and inclusion agenda, what are the implications for EO?

Recommendations:

As part of the strategic planning process:

- Develop a theory of change for the EO portfolio with a clearer articulation of expected outputs and outcomes.
- Determine how EO can be better integrated with the Placemaking and CDC Services portfolios.
- Develop more clarity about the role of CDCs and other partners in advancing and implementing the EO strategy and a process for securing more engagement and participation.

- Develop ways to communicate the strategy and its evolution to a broader range of stakeholders.

Enhancing other roles

Placemaking. Many respondents recognize the Placemaking portfolio as the “bread and butter” of CNP. Many of the services and supports provided are seen as high quality and valuable, though it is not necessarily clear how they connect strategically with the work in other portfolios. With the leadership change at CNP’s affiliate VCC, this represents yet another “wait-and-see” component for respondents.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are the strategic connections between Placemaking and the other portfolios?
- What are the strategic directions for VCC and NVC and what are the implications for CNP as a whole?

External resource development. We described earlier the questions raised by respondents about external resource development by CNP: how much funding is it raising from outside Cleveland, and how much of that is being distributed beyond CNP itself?

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are the facts about external resource development and distribution of those funds?
- What should be CNP’s goals in this regard?
- What is the strategy for leveraging CNP and Cleveland’s growing national profile as innovators in neighborhood revitalization to raise more national funding?
- How can local organizations be helped to raise national funds directly?

Advocacy. As discussed earlier, advocacy is an area of work that respondents had many questions about. It is understood that CNP is in a listening and reorienting phase of this work but many are anxious to learn more about the strategic direction. There was also a lack of information about the Columbus lobbyist and his role and expectations.

This is in contrast to the well-developed work NPI did in Research and Development. An in-house team of researchers and policy advocates provided leadership in confronting the housing foreclosure and predatory lending crisis, leading the nation in the development of responses and tools. Having a strong department and agenda led to many accomplishments, including helping create the county land bank, co-developing the Neighborhood Stabilization Team (NST) as a powerful real-time tool for CDCs confronting vacant properties, facilitating an organizational assessment of Cleveland Building and Housing Departments, and developing receivership as a tool for targeted blight elimination. NPI also helped create and staff VAPAC (the Vacant and Abandoned Property Action Council), which has produced many results.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are the medium and long-term directions for this area of work?

- Will CNP and its constituency have an “urban policy agenda” or a “neighborhood agenda”? What is the potential value in this?
- What levels of policy – federal, state, county, city – are priorities for focus and at each level, what is the CNP strategic approach?

Recommendations:

- Make the advocacy function an organization–wide strategy and commitment at CNP with all CNP staff involved in some specific ways. Avoid this being seen internally as just the responsibility of one or two team members.
- Determine how advocacy can be seen externally as a more collective effort and how CDCs and many other partners can be more effectively engaged and mobilized to develop a policy agenda and participate in the research and policy work.
- Review the role that NPI played historically in conducting research and informing advocacy efforts. To what extent is this function now being played sufficiently by other organizations or is there a collaborative role that CNP can continue play?
 - How can partnerships and affiliations with entities such as Case Western, Cleveland State, and the Thriving Communities Institute be even more effectively leveraged?

Community organizing. Community organizing was identified by respondents as a missing but important role for CNP. CNP’s hosting of the Organizers and Allies group is noted and appreciated but it is unclear what the overall strategy and impact of that group is, beyond being an important source of peer support and networking.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are CNP’s interests and agenda for community organizing in Cleveland? Is there a commitment across the organization to it?
- How can community organizing be thought about and promoted not only with and through CDCs, but through the wide range of existing neighborhood–level organizations and associations?
- What is the appropriate and feasible role for CNP in supporting this?
- How can CNP form more intentional, explicit and productive collaborations with groups such as Neighborhood Connections, the Neighborhood Leadership Development Program and the Neighborhood Leadership Institute?

Recommendations:

- Develop a deeper commitment to promoting community organizing and engagement, which does not necessarily require additional staff, but a commitment by staff across the organization to embrace an organization–wide approach and incorporate this into their portfolios where possible.
- CNP should engage the Organizers and Allies group to determine how its role might be better defined: what is the function of the group and its relation to CNP, its committees and other institutional partners? Beyond peer support and information exchange, is there

more the group could be doing to help advance community change in Cleveland? How could it be more integrated into the strategizing and work of the rest of the organization?

- CNP should collaborate more extensively with Neighborhood Connections to help community-based organizations and other institutions understand the value and potential of the network organizing approach and to help CDCs and others complement or possibly replace the block clubs approach with other ways to promote resident and community engagement.
- CNP should also investigate and understand the asset represented by the cohorts of graduates from the Neighborhood Leadership Institute and the Neighborhood Leadership Development Program and how grassroots leadership might be more effectively engaged and supported by the local community development industry.

More Effective Partner Engagement

Finally, having proposed areas of focus for what CNP should be prioritizing in its next phase of work, we turn to the questions of *how* CNP should conduct its work, particularly the question of how to work more effectively with partners. Overall, while respondents commend CNP leadership and staff for a continued vital role helping advance the community development industry, numerous important recent accomplishments, and efforts on many fronts to be a more effective partner there remains a number of ways in which CNP can continue to strengthen its ability to effectively engage a wide variety of partners.

We summarize here three types of proposed shifts in engagement: balancing disruptive and generative leadership, balancing leading and supporting roles, and balancing engagement and transactional mode. As we will see, CNP currently does engage in each of these but the proposal is that a better balance could be struck among each of them. We also propose renewed effort to improve the working relationship with the City and its elected officials, which was a major concern among many respondents.

Balancing Disruptive and Generative Leadership Mode

In reflecting on CNP's evolution and impact during the past four years, many respondents express admiration and gratitude for the ways in which the leadership team has been willing to shake up the existing system, point out areas of dysfunction and weakness, and propose new and innovative ways of doing business and seeking results. As many noted, sometimes disruption to the system is a very good thing. The "disruptor" role played so boldly and often effectively by CNP is increasingly seen as out of balance with more emphasis on CNP's "generative" role: engaging, nurturing and building up that complements the role of critiquing and challenging existing processes. To be clear, many realize that there is still a need for "disruption" of parts of the system and that CNP is well-positioned, indeed expected, to help promote that, but there is also a clear call for a more balanced approach.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- Is there consensus about the need for a better balance between “disruptive” and “generative” rhetoric and action?
- What would it specifically mean for CNP to amplify its generative role relative to its disruptor role?
- What is the role for others, internal and external to CNP, in striving for greater balance toward this more generative mode?

Balancing Leading and Supporting

Another issue of individual and institutional leadership style is the concern raised by respondents about how CNP can strike a better balance between leading and supporting. Often in interviews we heard concerns that CNP is more comfortable with a top-down approach and relishes being in a leadership position but is not as committed or engaged when they are in the role of supporter or participant. Playing a variety of roles in different contexts was an explicit charge that emerged from the strategic planning process with documents produced that indicated when CNP would be in which roles.

Figure 14, 15 and 16 below indicate that the survey responses contradict the conventional wisdom about CNP’s role versatility. Over 64 percent of respondents agreed that CNP effectively plays different roles depending on the context and organizations it is working with, though this was one of the lowest rated characteristics for CNP. When asked if they had seen CNP play specific different roles (the leader, one of the leaders, supporter, participant), slightly more (87 compared with 86 percent) had seen CNP as “one of the leaders” rather than “the leader”. And, almost as many said they had seen CNP in the role of supporter (82 percent) or participant (76 percent). Ratings were relatively high on how well survey respondents assessed CNP’s performance in each of these roles and, most instructively, the graphs indicate little difference across roles, as would be expected from what we heard in interviews and focus groups.

Figure 14: CNP Effectively Plays Different Roles (n=158)

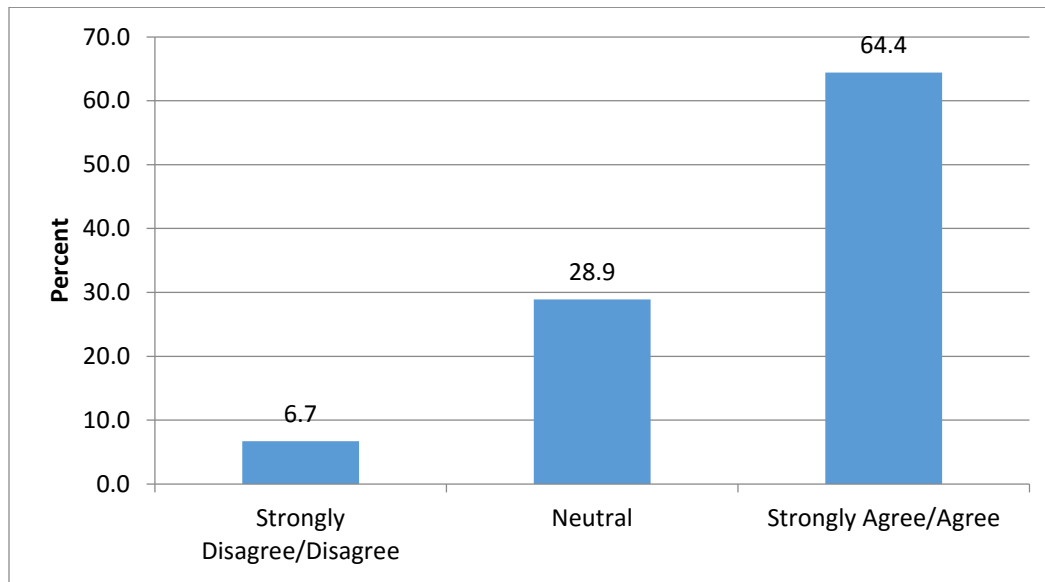


Figure 15: CNP Roles

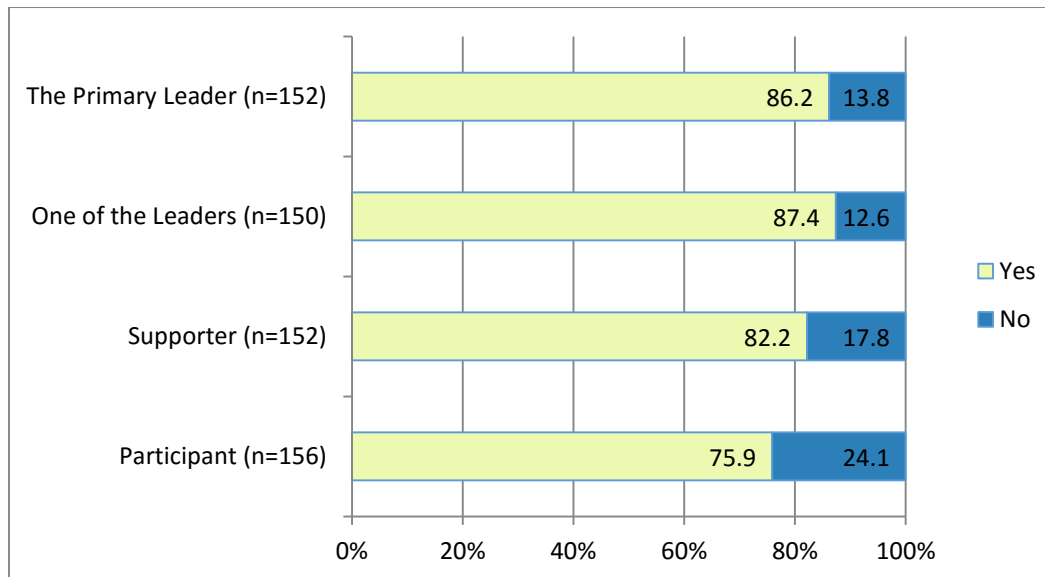
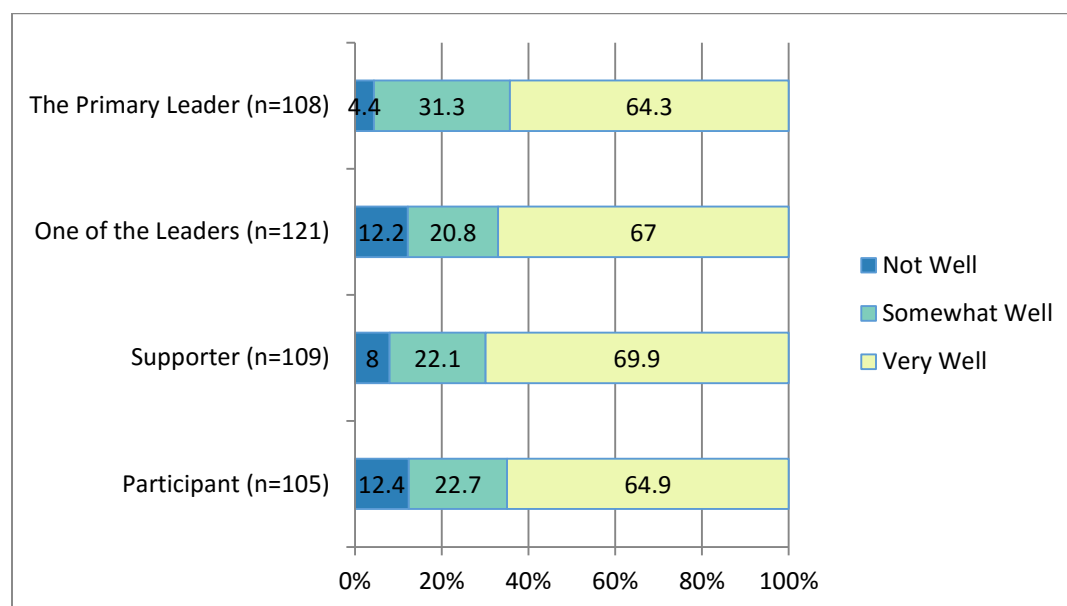


Figure 16: How Well Has CNP Played This Role?



Some of this may be contextual – there is some suggestion that some CNP staff play their roles differently in different settings.

When coming into low income communities, especially where there are cultural differences. They need to take on the role of supporter – haven't seen much of this. They come in and lead.

This seems to indicate that the intentionality about playing different roles has paid off and that more of the focus needs to be *how* CNP plays its roles when a CNP representative is in the room. A key component of the *how* is how well they “listen”. There was some positive feedback:

They've done an excellent job there. It's funny when you go to a meeting and don't expect to see someone from CNP there but they are because they're listening. Maybe they were invited or maybe they just showed up there to understand the dynamics and the neighborhood.

I think we are being heard and it is having influence on the work CNP is doing.

I think they listen fairly well, though not everyone likes the decision after they listen. They will meet with anyone, they will share their views, they have even commissioned some focus group work and community meeting type activity to ensure that other CDCs and communities have a chance to weigh in on work they are doing. . . The good thing is they will be honest, they will tell you if they agree or not. I'd give them high marks.

For others, there is often a sense that CNP assumes that they are the knowledge source, offering prescribed solutions to neighborhoods.

The most important thing is for them to be better listeners. I believe neighborhoods and CDCs know what they need, and CNP as well as the City set parameters on what they think you ought to be doing. . . I don't believe they ever ask us.

There is still a massive listening problem, as bad as before.

A deeper level concern is that even when CNP staff listen, there is a sense that it will not matter.

Listening is not something they do. Responsiveness is not a thing that they do. We have dialogue with them but they are not responsive. They are the leaders. They are the instigators. You could call it leadership or bullying or both. They are very strong and this can be reassuring.

I think they listen well. I just don't know how well they respond. It could be a long list of things; could be the model they are operating under. I believe from personal experience that they listen well. Response is another issue.

This parallels a concern identified in our previous assessment, which stated, “stakeholders want a particular kind of leadership from NPI, one that engages more perspectives earlier in the process and one with plenty of room to include the agendas and ideas of others.” The report went on to stress that “there were widespread calls for NPI staff to find ways to spend more time on the ground familiarizing themselves with what is happening in different neighborhoods, which could also help with making sure that strategies and priorities were more ground-up than top-down.” The current findings could be characterized as recognizing progress but still repeating this same call.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- What are CNP reflections on its engagement in various roles: leader, one of the leaders, supporter and participant, and what are implications moving forward?
- Is there consensus about challenges on the part of CNP staff to be as responsive as they would like, and what specific steps and practices would improve this?

Balancing Engagement and Transactional Mode

A frequent theme among respondents in terms of interaction with CNP is how quickly staff are usually moving. While this is understandable to most, given the recognition of how much is on the plates of CNP as an organization and each of its staff, still there is a concern that CNP executives do not take enough time to slow down, be present, observe, learn, listen, and build relationships and trust over time.

I am generally encouraged by the collaboration – but it requires ongoing process, ongoing showing of the cards, figuring out where there is common bond, where this is common ground, a trust exercise that needs to happen over time, really tricky business, always has to be current.

There is a sense CNP is often stuck only in transactional mode: moving the deal forward, seeking or exchanging information for a specific purpose, trying to make things happen and get things done. This is clearly seen by many as a strength of the organization. But the downside is also recognized by many as an underinvestment in the slow groundwork of understanding community circumstances and dynamics, and cultivating empathetic relationships and seeking common ground.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- Is there consensus about a value in seeking a greater balance between engagement and transactional mode?
- How can CNP executives and staff slow down and dedicate more time to relationship-building and on the ground learning and listening?

Restoring the City Relationship

The sometimes tense and often ambivalent relationship that generally exists between CNP and the City of Cleveland – both its elected officials and City departments – was a key area of concern raised by multiple respondents. Many suggested there is a need to address various systemic issues within the City’s bureaucracy and in ward politics that can actually impede progress on neighborhood revitalization. Above all, respondents saw the need for greater consensus and coordination between CNP and the City and appealed on both sides for renewed efforts in this regard.

CNP has tried to rationalize community development and set specific goals but it is not clear that either the City administration or City Council has endorsed these goals and this limits the effectiveness of the work. They have not built a community consensus around a shared vision for community development.

How can CNP make an impact there, they’ve tried that, it’s really tough, even with some progressive-thinking council people who have been involved . . . it’s a system that is just hard to penetrate.

Respondents also pointed out that the allocation of CDBG funding through wards hinders coordinated community development and makes it more difficult to create a strong CDC system across the city.

City Council funding of CDCs [is problematic] because it is more than CNP provides, it’s more than foundations, it’s more than Enterprise, it has literally no performance standards behind it, [and is] subject to that particular council person.

Respondents see CNP as having limited influence with the City for two main reasons. First, due to its targeted approach through the Strategic Investment Initiative (SII) funding, CNP is seen as elitist by some, making it difficult for the organization to challenge the CDBG allocation system which divides funding equally across all wards.

Second, the relationship between CNP leadership and the City – both its elected officials and administration – is considered distant, if not fractured and requires rebuilding. The current pattern of interaction which some indicated can be characterized primarily as avoidance is seen as only exacerbating the problem. Many noted that any barriers to CNP’s ability to positively impact system improvements diminishes CNP’s efficacy as a local intermediary. It is incumbent on CNP, given its positioning, and City representatives to continue to work hard at this relationship.

For possible consideration in the strategic planning process:

- Ideally, what should be CNP's working relationship with City departments and council representatives?
- What is an objective assessment of the current relationship and where are there any bright spots and assets to build on?
- What responsibility can CNP acknowledge in contributing to these broken relationships, and how can a different approach be taken in the future?

Recommendations:

- Develop an explicit strategy, facilitated by intermediaries trusted by both sides, to work to rebuild stronger working relationships between CNP and the City, motivated by the shared goal of strengthening Cleveland’s neighborhoods.
- Prioritize the most promising avenues for collaboration – people, departments, activities, issues – and focus effort and attention on building some collaborative momentum through those starting points.
- Establish processes and routines for regular communication between relevant staff from CNP and City departments to share information and discuss policies and procedures of mutual interest.

Concluding thoughts

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress has been a critical asset to the local community development industry for over 25 years. Over the past four years it has taken some major steps to restructure and reorient its focus, and this assessment indicates that this has been a highly successful organizational renewal. In many ways CNP’s constituency is calling for it to continue its trajectory of leadership and innovation while continuing to find ways to enhance its roles and impact. Our assessment also revealed that the constituency is excited about the numerous indicators of revitalization in Cleveland but deeply troubled by growing disparity across its neighborhoods and stymied by enduring challenges of education and workforce development. This defines the imperative for CNP’s next phase of development and engagement: to shore up and expand the areas of neighborhood vitality while finding more effective ways to include an ever-increasing number of neighborhoods and their residents in the growing city prosperity.

Appendix

Methods and Sample

The assessment was initiated with an online survey of Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) stakeholders. The survey was followed by in-person and phone interviews with a broad range of neighborhood revitalization stakeholders throughout greater Cleveland. Interviews were also conducted with members of the CNP board, other key CNP partners and funders, and CNP senior and administrative staff members. Following the interviews, focus groups were conducted with additional stakeholders and Cleveland Neighborhood Progress program staff. Interviews and focus groups were audiotaped and detailed notes were taken, capturing verbatim or near-verbatim quotes from interviewees and focus group participants.

Online survey

The online survey was made available to 890 community stakeholders, of which 212 completed or partially completed the questionnaire. The survey was sent to directors and staff at CDCs, community-based organizations and other nonprofits, regional, statewide, and national organizations, education organizations, foundation representatives, city and county department representatives and CNP board members and staff.

Interviews

The research team conducted 86 interviews with directors and staff at CDCs, community-based organizations and other nonprofits, regional, statewide, and national organizations, education organizations, foundation representatives, city and county department representatives and CNP board members and staff.

Focus groups

The research team facilitated 7 focus groups with 47 total participants, including CDC staff, representatives of policy, education, community-based organizations, and City representatives.

Additional Data

Interview Respondents

Table A1: Organizational Type

	n	%
Community Development Corporation	25	29.1
County or Regional Agency	6	7.0
Municipal Government Entity	3	3.5
Foundation	11	12.8
Community-Based Organization or Grassroots Organization	11	12.8
Other	30	34.9

Table A2: Organization Service Area

Service Area	n	%
City–Wide	31	36.0
East	13	15.1
West	11	12.8
Other	31	36.0

Table A3: Interviewee Organizational Roles

Role	n	%
Executive Director/President	25	29%
Program Director/Manager	19	22%
Other Staff	4	4%
Consultant/Contractor	3	3%
Board Member	22	26%
Other	13	15%

Survey Respondents**Table B1: Survey Demographics**

	n	%
Gender		
Male	77	50.3
Female	75	49.0
Other	1	0.7
Age		
18–35	36	23.8
36–50	59	39.1
Over 50	56	37.1
Ethnicity		
Hispanic or Latino	7	4.9
Not Hispanic or Latino	136	95.1
Race		
White	102	66.7
Black or African American	40	26.1
Other	11	7.2

Table B2: Organizational Type

	n	%
Community Development Corporation	52	24.5
Municipal Government Entity	19	9.0
For–Profit	15	7.1
Foundation	12	5.7
Community–Based Organization or Grassroots Organization	22	10.4
Community Member	5	2.4
Other	63	29.7

Table B3: Service Area

	n	%
East Side of Cleveland	34	21.9
West Side of Cleveland	16	10.3
City-Wide	41	26.5
Other	61	39.4
Does Not Apply	3	1.9

Table B4: Organizational Role

	n	%
Executive Director	39	25.3
Program Director/Manager	56	36.4
Other Staff	25	16.2
Consultant/Contractor	3	1.9
Neighborhood Volunteer	1	0.6
Board Member	4	2.6
Other	26	16.9

Table B5: Years Active in Current Role

	n	%
Less Than 1 Year	14	9.0
1–2 Years	40	25.8
3–5 Years	29	18.7
6–10 Years	31	20.0
Over 10 Years	41	26.5

Table B6: Years Active in Neighborhood Revitalization Work

	n	%
Less Than 1 Year	4	2.6
1–2 Years	14	9.2
3–5 Years	2	17.6
6–10 Years	28	18.3
Over 10 Years	80	52.3

Table B7: Organizational Budget

	n	%
<\$250k	9	5.9
\$250k to \$499k	11	7.2
\$500k to \$999k	13	8.6
\$1 mill to \$2.99 mill	40	26.3
\$3 mill to \$4.99 mill	6	3.9
\$5 mill to \$9.99 mill	13	8.6
\$10 mill or more	33	21.7
Not Applicable	27	17.8

Table B8: Frequency of Contact With Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

	n	%
Daily	19	12.3
Weekly	35	22.6
Monthly	68	43.9
Quarterly	26	16.8
Rarely	7	4.5
Never	0	0.0

Figure 17: CNP Perceptions

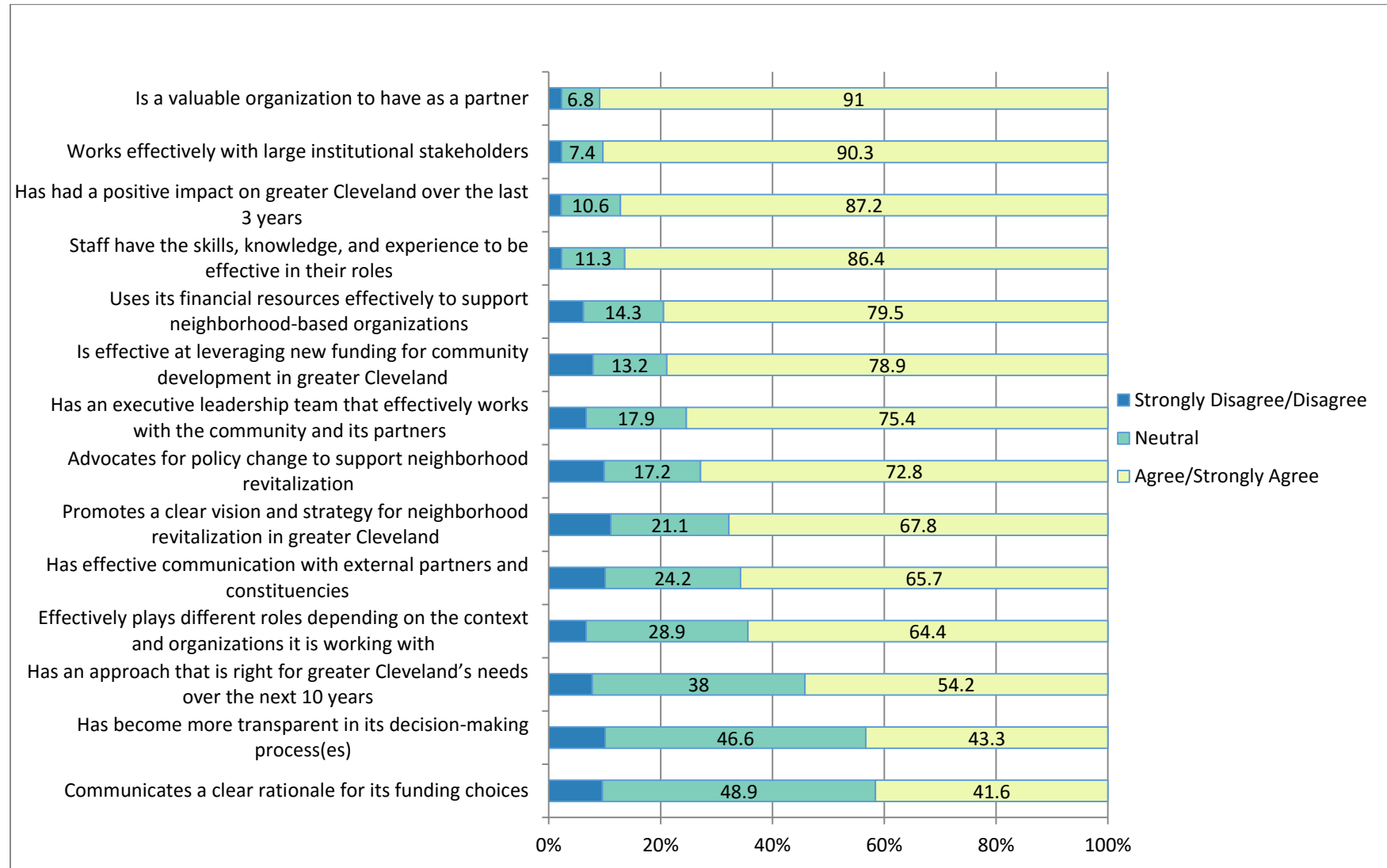


Figure 18: I am aware CNP offers this support/service

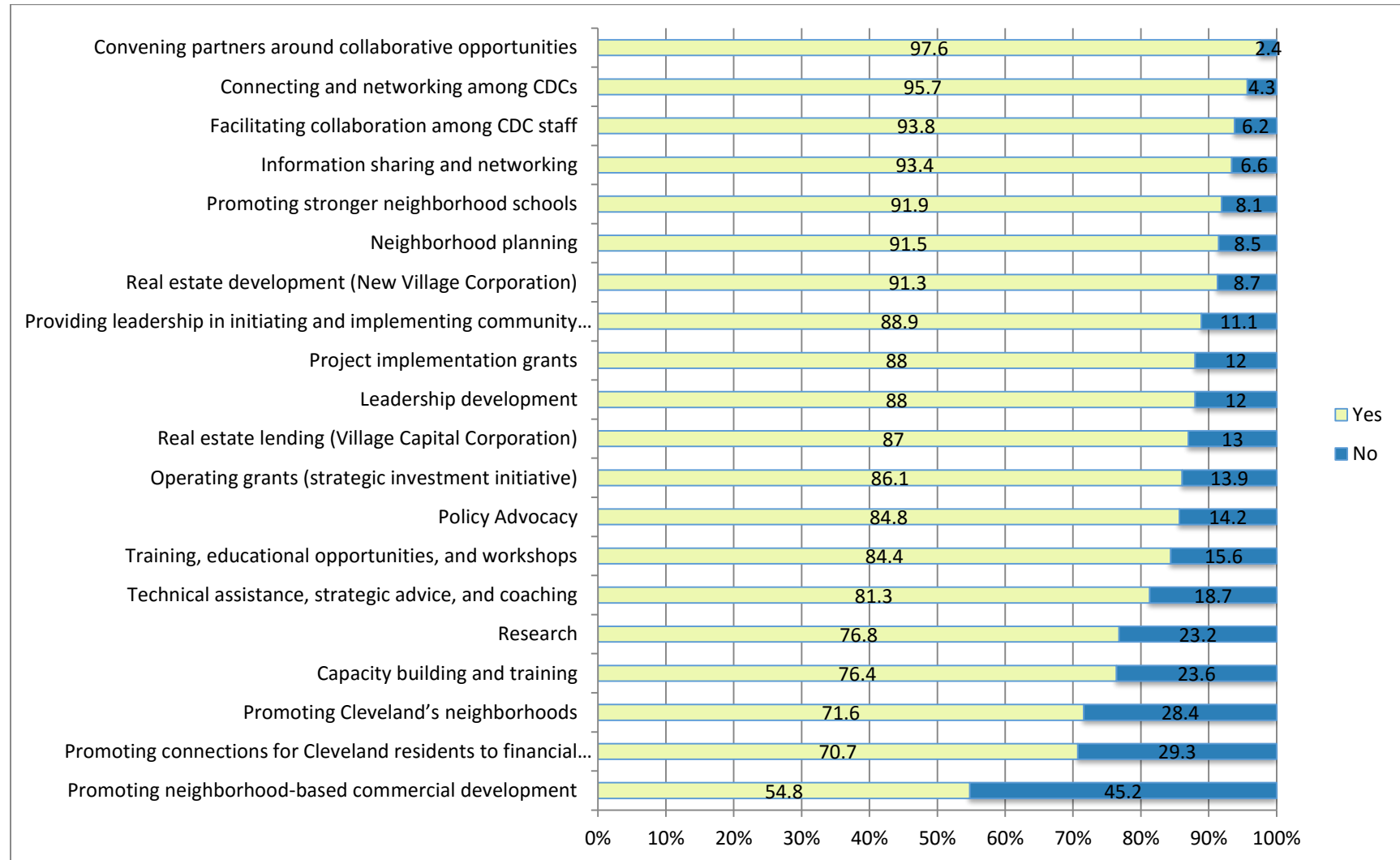


Figure 19: How useful was this support/service

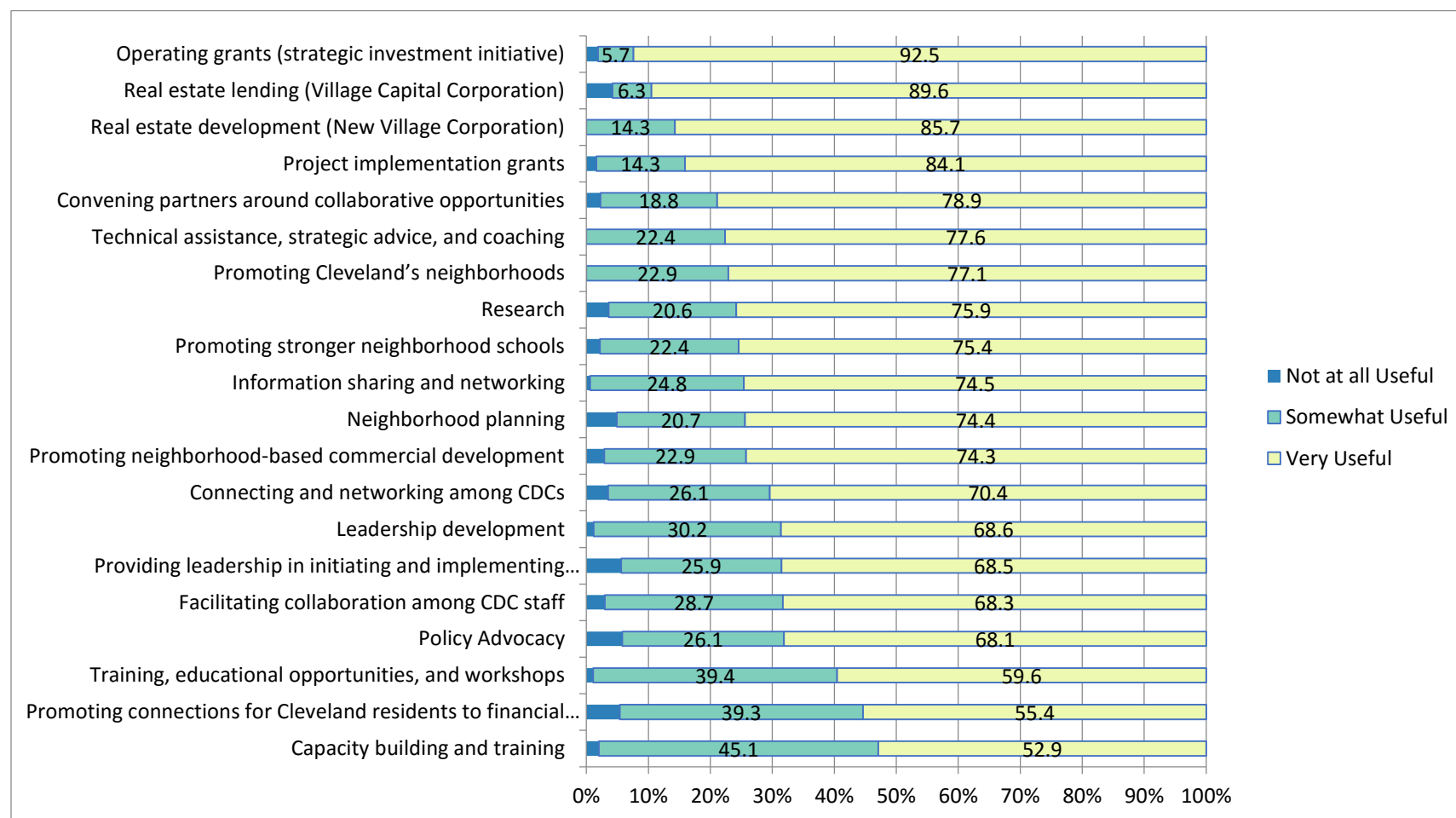
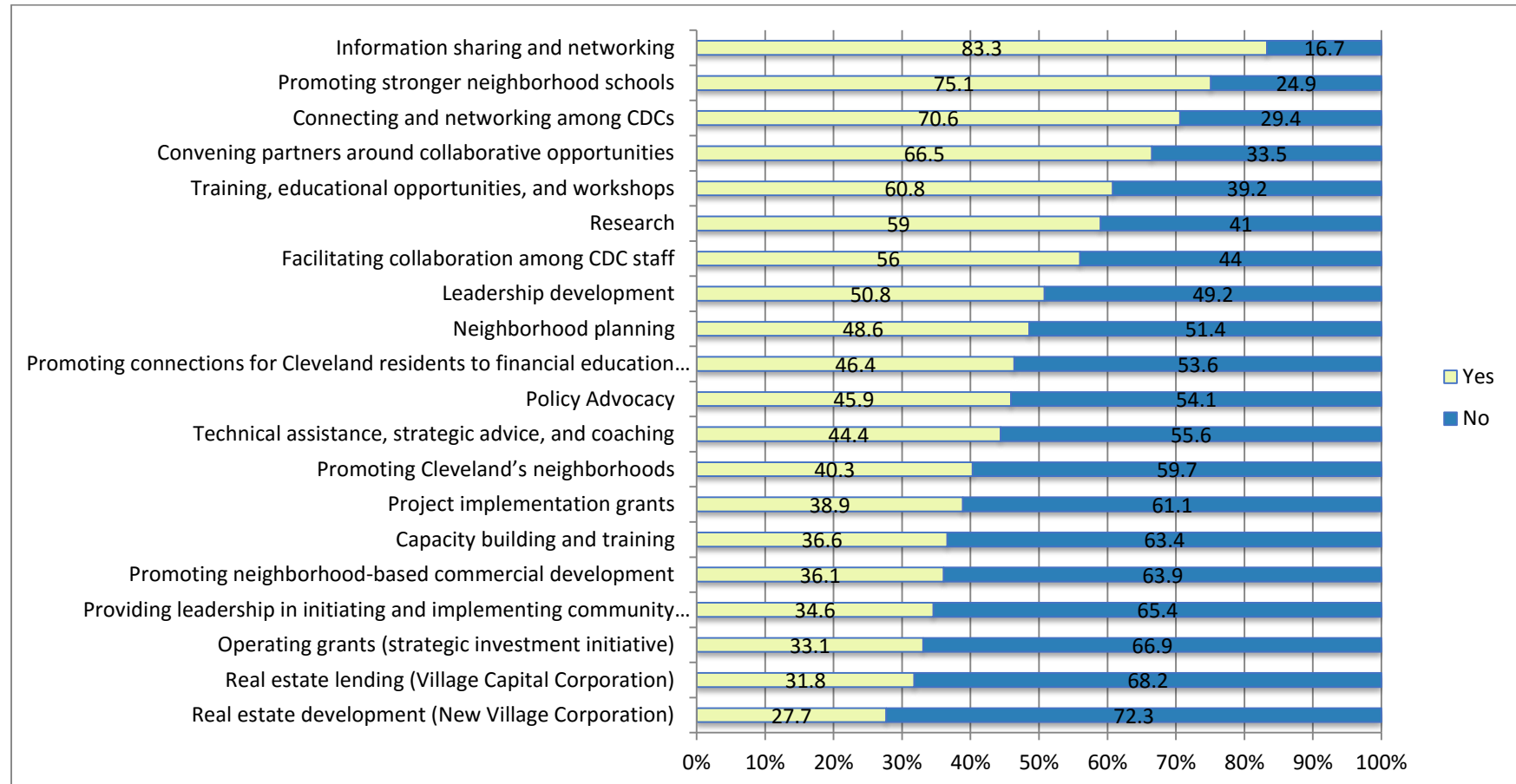


Figure 20: I/We have used this support/service



Study Participants

List of Interview and Focus Group Participants

David Abbott	Michael Graham
Chuck Ackerman	Amy Hanauer
Barisha Addison	Trevelle Harp
Kevin Alin	Amelia Hayes
Chris Alvarado	John Hopkins
James Amendola	Robbin Hudson
Kristi Andrasik	Garnella Jamison
John Anoliefo	Bob Jaquay
Nelson Beckford	Ken Johnson
Austin Boxler	Justin Johnson
Tony Brancatelli	Toni Jones
Anita Brindza	Linda Kane
Keith Brown	Kurt Karakul
Perenthia Brown	Martin Keane
Richaun Bunton	Peggy Kearsey
Patti Choby	Dennis Keating
Joe Cimperman	Shilpa Kedar
Phyllis Cleveland	Katie Kelly
John Corlett	India Lee
Michael Cosgrove	Steve Lorenz
Claudia Coulton	Stephen Love
Thomas Coyne	Joe Marinucci
Brian Cummins	Mark McDermott
Michelle Davis	Jenita McGowan
Jamar Doyle	Tom McNair
Kyle Dreyfuss–Wells	Randy McShepard
Robert Eckardt	Mamie Mitchell
Marcia Egbert	Anthony Moore
Susan Ertle	Zoe Mueller
Maribeth Feke	Anne Mullin
David Fitz	Rachel Napolitano
Michael Fleming	Lourdes Negron–McDaniel
August Fluker	Tom O'Brien
Brian Friedman	Greg Peckham
Karen Gahl Mills	Michael Polensek
Grace Gallucci	Danielle Price
Chris Garland	Roz Quarto
Zachariah Germaniuk	Nelson Ramirez
Bryan Gillooly	Jeff Ramsey
Anne Goodman	Bobbi Reichtell
Susan Gordon	John Renner

David Reynolds
Elizabeth Richards
Cory Riordan
Jill Rizika
Terry Robbins
Jim Rokakis
Chris Ronayne
Alan Rosskamm
Victor Ruiz
Terry Schwarz
Philena Seldon
Adam Sheldon
Janus Small
Carolyn Smith
Martin Soucek
Jenny Spencer
Greg Staursky
Tom Stone

Michael Taylor
Lou Tisler
Timothy Tramble
April Urban
Denise Van Leer
Piet van Lier
Jacob VanSickle
Jeff Verespej
Byron White
Michael White
Helen Williams
Walter Wright
Lilah Zautner
Brian Zimmerman
Rose Zitiello
Anne Zoller
Matt Zone
Cleveland Neighborhood Progress Staff

List of Organizations Represented in Interviews, Surveys and Focus Groups

Bellaire Puritas Development Corp.
Bike Cleveland
Breakthrough Schools
Buckeye–Shaker Square Development Corp.
Burten, Bell, Carr Development Corp.
Case Western Reserve University
Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development
Citizens Commercial Banking
City Architecture
City of Cleveland
City of Shaker Heights
Cleveland City Council
Cleveland Foundation
Cleveland Housing Network
Cleveland Leadership Center
Cleveland Metroparks
Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority
Cleveland Metropolitan School District
Cleveland Museum of Natural History
Cleveland Neighborhood Progress
Cleveland State University
Cleveland Transformation Alliance
Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative
Cobalt Group
Community Partnership for Arts and Culture

Council of Smaller Enterprises
County Land Bank
Cudell Improvement, Inc.
Cuyahoga Arts & Culture
Cuyahoga County
Cuyahoga Land Bank
Destination Cleveland
Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization
Downtown Cleveland Alliance
Edgerton Investments
Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County
Empowering and Strengthening Ohio's People
Enterprise Community Partners
Environmental Health Watch
Equality Ohio
Esperanza, Inc.
Fairfax Renaissance Dev Corp
Famicos Foundation
Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland
Freshwater Cleveland
Forest City Enterprises
Global Cleveland
Greater Cleveland Partnership
Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority
Gund Foundation
Harvard Community Services Center
Hispanic Alliance, Inc.
Hispanic Business Center
Hispanic UMADAOP
Howard Hanna
JP Morgan Chase
Kamm's Corners Development Corp.
Karamu House
Kent State University
Key Bank
La Villa Merchant's Group
LAND Studio
Legal Aid Society of Cleveland
Mandel Foundation
Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences
MBDA Business Center Cleveland
MetroHealth
Midtown Cleveland, Inc.
Mt. Pleasant NOW Development Corp.
Neighborhood Connections
Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Cleveland

Neighborhood Leadership Development Program
Neighborhood Leadership Institute
NewBridge Cleveland Center for Arts & Technology
Northeast Ohio Alliance for Hope
Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency
Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District
Northeast Shores Development Corp.
Ohio City Inc.
Old Brooklyn Community Development Corp.
PNC Bank
PolicyBridge
PolicyMatters Ohio
PRE4CLE
Progressive Urban Real Estate
Saint Luke's Foundation
Shaker Square Area Development Corp.
Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland
Slavic Village Development
St. Clair Superior Development Corp.
Stockyard/Clark Fulton/Brooklyn Center Development
Strategy Design Partners
The Campus District
The Center for Community Solutions
The Centers for Families and Children
The Chesler Group
The Intergenerational Schools
Third Federal Savings and Loan
Thompson Hine
Thriving Communities
Towards Employment
Tremont West Development Corp.
U.S. Small Business Administration
Union Miles Development Corp.
United Way of Greater Cleveland
University Circle, Inc.
University Settlement
Warehouse District
Western Land Conservancy
Westown Community Development Corp.
Wherry Associates, Inc.
WIRE-Net
WXZ Development Inc.