

# LIVING CITIES

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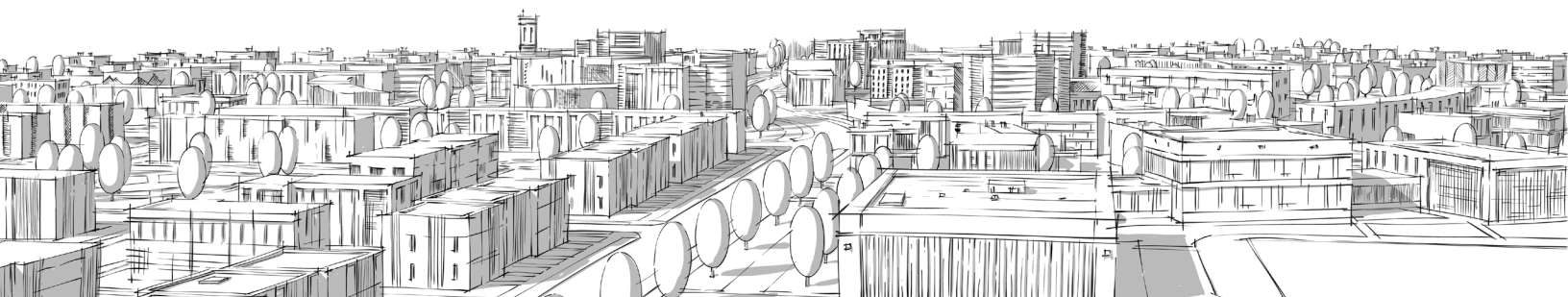
## REFLECTIONS ON LIVING CITIES' INTEGRATION INITIATIVE

BEN HECHT ► LIVING CITIES ► MAY 2014

# Reflections on Living Cities' Integration Initiative

**BEN HECHT**

The pace of social change is simply too slow; the scale, too small. In 2010, Living Cities, a long-standing collaborative of 22 of the world's leading foundations and financial institutions, created the Integration Initiative (TII) to try to change that. We set out to work with a 'coalition of the willing'—a cross-sector group of leaders from a limited number of cities—committed to learning how to achieve needle moving outcomes for low-income people.



Each site incorporated four high-impact strategies into their work: (1) move beyond delivering programs and instead focus on transforming systems; (2) build a resilient civic infrastructure where decision-makers from across sectors and jurisdictions formally and work together to address complex social problems, a framework now often referred to as collective impact; (3) bring disruptive innovations into the mainstream and redirect funds away from obsolete and ineffective approaches toward what works; and (4) supplement traditional government and philanthropic funding streams by driving the private market to work on behalf of low-income people. The problems being targeted address many of the nation's seemingly intractable urban challenges, such as workforce readiness & jobs (Baltimore), economic development (Cleveland), urban revitalization (Detroit), equitable transit-oriented development or ETOD (Minneapolis/St. Paul), and education and health (Newark).

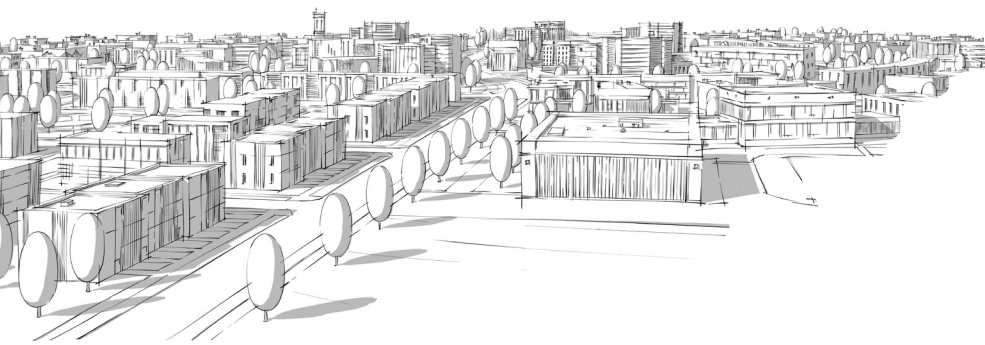
As we embark on the next phase of TII, continuing the work with four of the five original sites and expanding the Initiative to include Albuquerque, New Orleans, San Antonio, and Seattle/King County, I thought it would be valuable to reflect on some of the things that I believe that we have learned along the way that could be of value to others doing this kind of work:

## Selecting sites

We believed that how we selected the sites was going to be incredibly important. We were very specific about trying to change **how** cities addressed issues affecting low-income individuals and communities. We wanted sites that would demonstrate the power of cross-sector partnerships, the ability to achieve real systems change, and that the private sector could indeed work on behalf of low-income people. In contrast, we were completely open to **what** specific problems or solution sets applicants wanted to address.

This approach had a number of benefits. It freed sites to come together around issues that were most critical to their local contexts, rather than being tied to addressing issues identified by us. For example, Detroit set out to drive population and increase residential and commercial density in Detroit's major commercial corridors, starting with Woodward Avenue, with quality mixed use amenities, mixed-income residences and increased entrepreneurial access. Baltimore focused on reconnecting low-income, primarily African-American, residents in three targeted neighborhoods, to the workforce and broader economy. This approach also made it so that the new ways of working together set out in the application criteria had a greater chance of being adopted even in sites that were not ultimately selected to participate in TII. In fact, three of five sites that were considered but not chosen—New Orleans, San Antonio and San Francisco—continued the work of their cross-sector partnerships. Their progress over the past three years positioned them to be selected recently to participate in the next round of TII.

On the other hand, we now realize that we would have done better to have completed the site selection process in phases, including a planning grant phase. Although a three-year commitment was made at the outset, TII's experimental nature and complexity made it difficult for both sides to know the ramifications of what we were asking each other to commit to. For example, we articulated phrases such as 'using collective political capital to change complex systems and realign major funding streams' and 'being committed to sharing and learning from both their failures and successes'. These requirements can be interpreted, in good faith, very differently, in both scope and scale, when ultimately put into practice. As we expand TII to new sites, we will be giving ourselves and the sites a twelve month exploratory period to ensure that we fully understand each other and that we are congruent in both theory and practice.



## Building a new type of urban practice

Inherent in the design of TII was the belief that the current methods being used in cities to solve our most complex problems aren't working. Public, private, and philanthropic leadership and capital are not being fully harnessed, deployed, and aligned for maximum impact. TII was going to help us understand what the key elements of a new model of urban practice should be and the challenges and barriers to building it successfully. While we began TII in 2010 before the emergence of 'collective impact' as a discipline, we believe that much of what we have learned so far, as described below, will contribute to this growing field.

### (1) Setting the collaborative table

An underlying tenet of TII was the importance of building resilient, cross-sector civic infrastructure that could tackle the complex challenges facing cities and achieve large-scale results. We often referred to this as the sites having 'one table'. As expected, this civic infrastructure has turned out to be a critical component of this model and we've learned a number of important lessons about what it takes for places to build and sustain it:

**Table composition must be tailored to meet the desired result.** Our program design required that sites form cross-sector leadership tables at the time of application. In fact, we initially pushed sites to have higher-level and more balanced representation from all of the key sectors and institutions. This "Noah's Ark" approach had unintended consequences and didn't adequately anticipate the need to adapt the table over time. In some cases, this meant that there wasn't enough attention paid to ensuring that the right people were at the table at the right time to drive the institutional behavior change that would move the needle on the desired results. Relatedly, while sites identified the problems that they wanted to address through the applica-

tion process, the work of articulating their desired outcomes and developing hypotheses for achieving them was a longer process, and until this was done, sites couldn't have known who most needed to be at the table. These realities led to some sites 'retrofitting' their tables as the process matured. For instance in Baltimore, we encouraged higher level city representation at their table, but in the end, their focus on workforce really required more leadership from the State and community colleges to be successful.

**Strong multi-sector table leaders can facilitate deeper behavior change.** As the efforts were building momentum, it became clear that table leadership was extremely important. We saw the greatest success when tables identified strong chairs who had credibility in multiple sectors, were willing to push the group to prioritize, and were committed to modeling the desired behavior—changing their own institutions' ways of working and funding streams. In Cleveland, for example, the work was focused on leveraging the economic power of universities and hospitals, along with the resources of philanthropy and government, to create economic opportunity, individual wealth, and strong communities for residents of the neighborhoods around University Circle and the Health-Tech Corridor. These goals required significant behavior change from multiple actors. The site established a governance group and senior leaders from the universities and hospitals, for example, created universal employee metrics to track employment goals and outcomes across the institutions.

**Public sector engagement is critical.** Engagement of the public sector was broadly prioritized by all sites, in large part because of the sector's ability to direct resources at the scale necessary to make fundamental changes. The question was how to best do that. All sites had some representative from their local government at their table. However, getting them to be active participants took longer than expected. Further, in some sites—Detroit, Baltimore and Minneapolis/St. Paul—it was also clear that the state government



was critical to their success, and it took time to identify and engage the appropriate individuals. There were two factors that seemed to accelerate a sense of shared ownership with the public sector: (1) having a public sector representative as a co-chair of the governance group; and (2) a pre-existing, positive relationship between the philanthropic community and the public sector so that they had a realistic understanding of one another's strengths and challenges.

Overall, the more the initiative was addressing a high priority of the mayor or top regional official, the more likely the appropriate, high-level people were authorized to participate and the more resources and policy changes were committed. This was most evident in Minneapolis/St. Paul where the Chair of the Metropolitan Council (a regional government body appointed by the Governor), two county supervisors, and four Mayors served on the governance group. Newark also had strong public sector leadership with the Deputy Mayor co-chairing the Steering Committee and another department head playing a significant role. Although TII work was generally not in conflict with the city's priorities, and was often aligned with priorities of agency staff, most sites' primary focus was not the primary focus of city political leadership. This lack of alignment has affected the level of city engagement in TII as well as progress in some of the system change work.

We also found that engagement of the public sector was more challenging when TII was seen primarily as a philanthropic initiative. We inadvertently reinforced this perception with our focus on having a philanthropic lead in each city that coordinated the local initiative. For Round Two of TII, we made it clear that the institutional home and leadership of the Initiative could vary depending on local context and what would best move the result forward. Of the five new TII sites, two are housed within the Mayor's Office and one within a County Department. It will be interesting to see whether this results in more public sector leadership as we expect without diminishing leadership from philanthropy or other sectors.

Another challenge faced explicitly by Newark, and now lingering in the back of the minds of leaders in new sites that have a lot of public sector representation at their table, is that there are usually few political rewards for making the substantial commitments involved in systems changes toward improving the lives of low income people. When such commitments are made, they tend to be identified with the chief executive—so surviving regime change can be an issue. Long term success, we believe, includes sufficient awareness of and commitment to the initiative among other sectors and the electorate to maintain the expectation of local government engagement.

The response to the Living Cities learning communities (where we bring representatives from all sites together to share learnings with each other and with us, and to engage around issues and emerging solutions of mutual interest) and site visits revealed that opportunities for learning, particularly peer learning, are very highly valued by public sector stakeholders. At learning communities, public sector leaders and staff were able to connect their peers in other cities and other sectors, and to learn about new innovations. This has been seen to enhance their interest in the cross-stakeholder work, and increase their level of engagement. We are already seeing the value of this for new sites as well as they are engaging peers from other sites during the exploratory phase of their work.

While we often made reference to the new civic infrastructure that we were helping to catalyze and support as 'one table', it really was far from that in practice. Often, there was a governance table and working groups appointed by the 'table' to pursue specific priorities. For example, Cleveland, found it most helpful to have senior leaders at the table commit to broad outcomes and strategies but to rely on nested tables of management from participating institutions at multiple levels to engage in strategy refinement/formation and implementation. Similarly, Newark viewed its table less as a monolith as more as a connector to multiple, pre-exist-

ing local tables so their collective work could be aligned. In fact, the connection often occurred because participants at the Newark TII table also sat at these other tables.

## **(2) Moving from Collaboration to a 'New Normal'**

The formation of these collaborative tables alone is not going to bring about the desired result. Ultimately, as evidenced by the discussion in the previous sections, behavior change is required. Essentially, what we are seeing is parties coming together and agreeing to what amounts to a multi-organizational change management process. These cross-sector partnerships define an ambitious set of expectations and commit to regular reflection, and create an openness to change both how they work as individual institutions and how they work with each other. Early in the application process, we referred to this as creating a 'new normal', where cross-sector leaders would agree on where they wanted to go and then align their priorities, activities, and existing resources towards those ends, and stay aligned for as long as it took to achieve them. Here are some lessons about that:

### ***The 'tables' facilitated important qualitative changes among institutions and the direction of resources.***

We used the term 'systems change' to capture the vision for the new normal outlined above. One powerful example of what that looks like came out of the work in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Their local effort, 'Corridors of Opportunity' (COO), is an ambitious regional partnership co-chaired by leaders from the McKnight Foundation and the Metropolitan Council and comprised of top leadership from state and local government, philanthropy, business interests, and key non-profit organizations. COO was opportunistic, setting out to take

advantage of the imminent build out of the regional transit system to improve access to opportunity and, in particular, to ensure that those with the greatest need benefited from that investment and its attendant housing and economic development.

Member organizations used the table to hold each other accountable to the vision—asking each other to present publicly how they were making changes internally to support bigger picture, systems changes. In 2012, the Metropolitan Council directed \$32 million to support multiple TOD projects in the region and created a \$5 million annual TOD grant program, as well a new 5-person Transit-Oriented Development office. MN Housing and the Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul all updated their Low Income Housing Tax Credit application process to award more points for transit accessible projects. The Saint Paul Foundation's involvement with COO and its focus on capital led it to create two new programs towards filling gaps system gaps, using Program Related investments and loan guarantees. One program, the Accelerator, is financing development projects on the eastern end of the Central Corridor and a new Job Creation Loan Fund is building the capacity of two financial intermediaries (NDC and MEDA) to lend to more mid-size companies with greater potential for job creation.

These successes have led to a larger shift in local philanthropy's behavior as well. There is now greater utilization of geographic or issue-area based funder collaboratives that are pooling resources to drive toward a shared vision and outcomes (e.g. Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, Northside Funders Group, MSP Workforce Innovation Network).

What we see happening here is a prerequisite to long term change: building of trust, peer pressure, norm making, and the changing of the status quo of critical institutions needed to make the shared vision a reality that is reflected in their decision-making in areas from programmatic investments to staffing.

While, in retrospect, every site had substantial realignment among participating parties, the use of the term ‘system change’ from the outset likely did more harm than good. Since no site was working in one single ‘system’, as they are commonly perceived, such as K-12 education, our use of the term was confusing. When we talk about ‘systems’, we are really referring to a set of actors and institutions whose collective practices, policies, and interactions produce a particular result. When defined this way, it is clear that change will not happen in a linear way, and that the change required might actually encompass multiple systems as they are commonly defined. Moreover, we didn’t appreciate how much more we should have done to help the sites understand and define what ‘systems change’ would mean in their individual context.

Additionally, because we didn’t require all participating sites to be solving the same problem, those contexts were very different. The TII work in Minneapolis/St. Paul for example is focused on influencing and harnessing a public sector investment towards the construction of a light rail line that was going to occur no matter what. The work in Detroit and Newark, on the other hand, is focused on creating opportunities and building momentum that weren’t likely to occur without their intervention. In Baltimore and Cleveland, the tables are trying to harness existing private sector activity of universities and hospitals to drive more opportunities to targeted populations.

***Adding measurable, quantitative outcomes to the results sought from the New Normal has proven to be challenging.*** We have been working with Strive Together since 2009 to build a Theory of Action (TOA) for bringing about large scale change in education, from cradle to career. A critical element of the TOA that has virally been adopted by places across the country over the past two years is the specific articulation of quantitative, measurable outcomes or ‘community level outcomes and core indicators’.

For the past eighteen months, we have been working with TII sites to determine how these types of quantitative outcomes relate and apply to their work. We have found this emergent body of work to be extremely challenging. We have, however unearthed the following factors that greatly impact progress towards this type of articulation, and we are working to understand the weight each has in the process:

- **Context and phase of the work.** The context within which the effort is taking place, as described above, matters. We particularly found this to be true in terms of whether or not the efforts are built around established timelines and opportunities, as is the case with the work in Minneapolis/St. Paul. This type of catalyzing event provides a certain level of certainty, as opposed to the unpredictability inherent in the work of tables that had to catalyze the change independent of an existing opportunity. And, where the opportunity is ‘known’, the urgency and momentum that ensues makes it easier for tables to be clear about the outcomes they are working towards.
- **Quantitative v. qualitative outcomes.** Participants seem to feel that a focus on quantitative outcomes oversimplifies the work by overemphasizing what can be counted,

and downplays the long term importance of the qualitative, systems changes. This can, some argue, lead to a program rather than a systems focus. The challenge, then, is to identify measures that are right-sized so that they reflect the level of complexity and ambition in the work, while still being clear and measurable.

- **Well-established measurable outcomes, indicators and baseline data.** The general lack of well-established or standardized, measurable outcomes and indicators for many of the results sought by sites, such as more equitable economic development and TOD, means that sites are having to do this work from scratch—making the work extremely hard. And, even where data is available, the default is often to use it to report on the success of a program, rather than leveraging it to question conventional wisdom, to test against hypotheses about what most moves the needle on results, and to continuously improve. This is further exacerbated by the fact that there are few proven, evidence based practices for achieving those results and often, limited available local, baseline data about current conditions.

- **Willingness publicly to commit to or prioritize outcomes.** In some cases, sites have been slow to commit to or prioritize outcomes. This can, in part, be explained by the challenges outlined above. Other contributing factors are the lack of strong table leadership, concerns that prioritization of outcomes will cause the tables to lose important people who might have competing or different priorities, and the perception that there is little political or reputational value in doing this work that puts partners publicly on the hook for really big results.

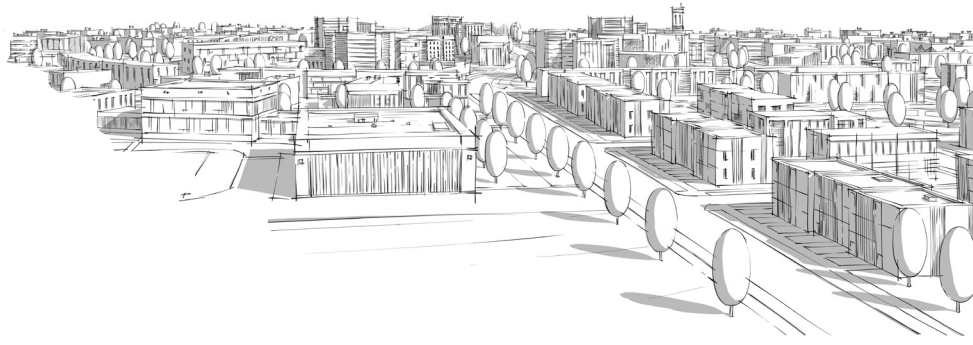
We have designed the next round of TII so that each site has twelve months and financial and technical support to work as teams and with us to define the qualitative and quantitative outcomes desired. We are hoping that doing this work early in the efforts will set the stage for a deeper focus on outcomes as the work progresses.

### (3) Deploying private capital

Living Cities is unique as a philanthropic collaborative because we are comprised of both financial institutions and foundations. Given this, we have always been committed to innovating in ways that bring private capital to public purpose efforts. We believe that this is one of the few ways both to leverage precious public and philanthropic dollars and to aggregate a meaningful amount of money. In fact, during our collaborative's life, we have been able to leverage \$1 billion of our members loans and grants more than 16 times over. That's why our TII program design called for us to lend \$10–15 million in commercial debt and \$3–4 million in philanthropic capital to a local lender at each site. That element, of course, meant there had to be a capable local borrower that we could lend to, that they would have the experience lending to activities that promoted the site's programmatic priorities and that they would be integrated as full partners in the site's collective impact table. Here are some things we learned about deploying private capital for public purposes in US cities:

***The existence of experienced local borrowers is uneven nationally.*** The work of deploying private capital as part of TII was easy in theory, but challenging in practice for a number of reasons. Despite the fact that there are over 900 community based financial institutions (CDFIs) in the





United States, in three of our five sites there weren't any local borrowers who had the financial strength (assets on their balance sheet) and programmatic expertise (depth of lending to activities desired by sites) to serve in that role. In Detroit and Baltimore, for example, we helped sites to import larger, more experienced CDFIs (Capital Impact Partners and The Reinvestment Fund, respectively) to play the role. This reality led us to develop an entirely new body of work to understand gaps in what we have begun to refer to as "capital absorption capacity" – the ability of communities to make effective use of different forms of capital to provide needed goods and services to underserved communities. See Letting the Dollars Land, [http://www.shelterforce.org/article/3652/letting\\_the\\_dollars\\_land/](http://www.shelterforce.org/article/3652/letting_the_dollars_land/).

***The 'language' difference between grantmakers and lenders at the table must be acknowledged and overcome.*** We've also seen considerable 'language' and 'sequencing' challenges to building a collective impact initiative and table that includes among others, grant makers and lenders. Generally, grant makers speak a language of the possible that is not constrained by rigorous underwriting criteria or the need to be paid back. Lenders speak a very different language that is focused on risk mitigation, loan to value ratios and likelihood of payback at the end of the loan term sometimes 10 years later. Often that friction is exacerbated by two other things: neither has much experience working with the other and the lead time to deploy grants is much faster than the lead time required to identify lending opportunities and to underwrite and deploy the loans. Virtually every site acknowledged the value of intentionally including both perspectives at the table but the pressure to simultaneously deploy capital was not always constructive. Moving forward, we are working to address those challenges

by expecting grants and loans to be linked programmatically but deployed on a different schedule.

Further, timing in terms of securing commitments of capital and capital deployment presented additional challenges. We asked our financial services members to act together in extraordinary ways in order to be able to offer each site \$10-15 million in commercial debt upon their selection. In short, our lending members all agreed up front to collectively provide funds for transactions that had yet to be identified, in cities few had a presence in, at terms that they could all agree to. Generally, lending works the opposite way: loans for specific purposes, such as housing or small business growth, are approved for specific borrowers, in markets the lenders know well, at a rate and term appropriate to the risk associated with that borrower. While we all thought that our unusual approach would facilitate certainty and expedite deployment of capital, it actually created a rigidity that made it harder for TII resources to bend to meet local needs, whether they be term, rate or purpose. We are in the process of designing a very different way to deliver private capital to TII cities in the future that is both more efficient for the lenders and useful to the sites.

#### **(4) Managing the Collaborative**

Working across sectors and institutions towards a shared vision is not a natural act. Across all of our sites, we learned a few critical things about what it takes to manage this type of collaboration:

***Investing in the glue function:*** The hiring of full-time initiative director—someone akin to a Mayor's chief of staff who works between department heads, city council, business

leaders and other key actors—was a critical component in terms of keeping all the parties and activities glued together and moving forward effectively. These directors need formidable adaptive leadership, interpersonal, and communications skills in order to enable the co-chairs to hold the table and themselves accountable while making sure that responsibilities are distributed and tracked. Sites, like Newark, benefited greatly from a highly-skilled director who was able to weave the TII work into many disparate local activities and to facilitate the linkage of TII, and often TII governing board members, to other existing tables.

**Expanding adaptive leadership skills.** Cross-sector leaders working towards shared outcomes quickly realize that not only is there no formula or roadmap to follow, but that a comfort with complexity, ambiguity and ‘fast failure’ are essential to their success. It also quickly becomes clear that none of these things come easily or naturally. As a national funder, it was important that we acknowledge this challenge, be open with our own struggles in it, and provide tools and resources to assist leaders in adopting a new model that is both disciplined and adaptive. This ‘adaptive leadership framework’ acknowledges the realities of complex social problems by suspending the presumption that leaders already have the right answers while working instead towards solutions by being open to learning and rethinking prior assumptions. Although we introduced these concepts at the first learning community of the Initiative, it soon became clear that one-hour sessions on it every six months were not enough.

Borrowing from our partners at the Annie E. Casey Foundation and their successful fellowship program, we sponsored several daylong retreats for Initiative Directors on adaptive

leadership and leading through change and complexity. We also hosted longer sessions for site teams at several learning communities to increase people’s familiarity with the practice in low-risk environments. In post-learning community evaluation surveys and formal interviews with our national evaluation team, Initiative Directors and team members have rated these sessions as some of the most effective in terms of helping them to accelerate results in their local communities.

All of these activities are supporting a culture of continuous improvement where the work is not to go ‘all in’ on one program, but rather to formulate hypotheses around what it will take to move the needle on the desired results; and to experiment, measure, and iterate towards what works.

## Acting as a National Funder

We expected to learn a lot about how a national funder could best catalyze new, cross-sector ways of achieving large scale results at a local level through TII and we have not been disappointed:

**Disrupt business as usual.** One key thing we learned was that if we expected sites to move beyond incremental change, then we had to help them to disrupt the current ways that problems were being solved locally, at a pace that was realistic. Multiple sites asserted in their reports to us that they found having an outside, neutral national partner that would challenge and push them at times to be very helpful. They tempered that with reflecting that this pushing must be balanced against local context, the building of mutual trust and ensuring local ownership. This type of re-

lationship, that goes beyond the traditional grantor-grantee practice, takes time to build.

In addition, the sites have consistently told us that supporting the hiring of initiative directors and data collection as described above; and giving teams of leaders time away from home to work on team building and to take a big picture view of their work; were some of our most transformational interventions. Several sites also used the time to identify new leaders to invite to their tables (and sometimes existing ones to disinvite), to develop new strategies and to rethink existing ones. For example, Newark was, at one point, feeling particularly challenged by how to increase the quality of food provided by the school district to low-income kids, having explored a number of paths that did not work. Then they brought the City's Business Manager to a learning community with the team and discovered that he was responsible for all the contracts for summer feeding programs and very open to changing the health requirements of the meals provided.

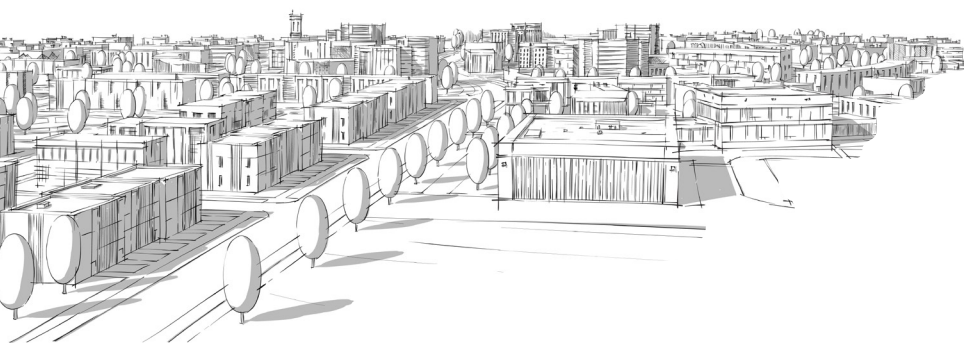
Another important lesson was that we also had to disrupt our own 'business as usual.' While we talked about the sites as our innovation partners and asked them to act differently, we originally set up a traditional reporting structure that was more about compliance than about partnership. Because of feedback from sites after the first year, we overhauled our processes. We switched our mindset from one that focused on 'reports' to one that promoted alignment, accelerated progress, built effective teams and ensured accountability. Changing our reporting requirements was one step towards being better partners, but we also started co-designing the site visits with the sites to ensure that we focused our time together on areas where they most wanted our help or

attention. We increased the number of representatives from sites presenting at learning communities and decreased the number of outside experts. We built team strategy time into the learning communities and facilitated cross-site visits so local leaders could meet one another. This different, more robust, engagement with sites gave us much deeper insights into the work on the ground. And, the shift away from compliance strengthened our relationships with the sites enormously.

***Correlate ambition and learning.*** Perhaps the most important lesson we learned as a national funder was that the more ambitious and disruptive you want your initiative to be, the more prominent the role of learning must be in it. We designed TII because we didn't believe that any one institution or sector knew the best ways to increase the pace and scale of change. If no one had the answers, then there had to be a premium put on real time mining and sharing of what was being learned.

We instinctively knew that, but both our understanding of this work's importance and the level of activities required to support it increased over time. By creating a robust information sharing capability among the cities and a forum for teams from each city to come together with each other throughout the year, ideas quickly spread from place to place. These gatherings enabled sites to develop an openness to sharing challenges that they were facing, and enabled Living Cities to focus on common trends emerging across the work, and even to accelerate local progress through friendly competition.

For example, Baltimore integrated its HUD Sustainable Communities work into TII based on the successes it saw in



Minneapolis/St. Paul doing so. Detroit adapted the strategy developed in Cleveland for working with universities and hospitals into its Live, Buy, and Hire frame. Cleveland then revamped its own Live Local program based on successes Detroit had in Midtown.

Take a developmental approach to evaluation. Living Cities' organizational commitment to capturing and sharing real time learning from across our entire portfolio (not just TII) led us to adopt an overall evaluation strategy that is radically different than a traditional, linear and mostly backward-looking approach. We chose a developmental approach which is often, "compared to the role of research & development in the private sector product development process because it facilitates real-time, or close to real-time, feedback to program staff thus facilitating a continuous development loop." Developmental evaluation is especially recommended for efforts, like TII, where the sites are focusing on complex systems change where the path to success is unclear, nonlinear, and dynamic.

This approach required us to build new developmental evaluation muscles within our own organization. To do so, we embedded evaluation fundamentals—developing evaluation questions, testing hypotheses, collecting data systematically, and making judgments from that data—into our day-to-day work. This daily work combined with annual formative evaluations by a third party, enabled staff and sites to learn in real-time and to facilitate rapid course corrections. The change in site reporting described above was a direct result of this process.

## A Marathon, Not a Sprint

Accelerating the scope and scale of social change work is a marathon, not a sprint. Transformational outcomes are long-term and require deep and enduring commitment to creating a 'new normal'. These first three years of the Integration Initiative have made us more cognizant than ever that we have to use all the tools in our portfolio—grants, investments, research, networks and convenings—to learn how to help civic leaders to realign existing systems to achieve these results at scale. As we continue to iterate and innovate with our partners on the ground; and as we expand the Initiative to include additional cities over the next three years; we will remain committed to capturing and sharing lessons what we are learning.

## About Living Cities

Living Cities harnesses the collective power of 22 of the world's largest foundations and financial institutions to develop and scale new approaches for creating opportunities for low-income people and improving the cities where they live. Its investments, research, networks, and convenings catalyze fresh thinking and combine support for innovative, local approaches with real-time sharing of learning to accelerate adoption in more places. Additional information can be found at [www.livingcities.org](http://www.livingcities.org).

**Ben Hecht** was appointed president and CEO of Living Cities in July 2007.