

**Multi-Partner Funding
For
Neighbourhood Revitalization in Toronto**

Final Report

(May, 2005)



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1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the history, challenges and successes of neighbourhood investment strategies and a template for mobilizing multiple funding partners for revitalising neighbourhoods in Toronto. In particular, questions addressed in the study relate to the experience with, and the nature and scope of, the urban development agreements in place in Vancouver and Winnipeg and the roles of the private and voluntary sectors. The report provides:

- An overview of the experience with existing western Canadian urban development agreements and the relevance of that experience for Toronto;
- A review international funding models for neighbourhood revitalization development;
- The identification of best practises in multi-partner funding; and
- Ideas and recommendations regarding a possible partnership/funding model for future neighbourhood revitalization programs in Toronto.

The report begins with a comprehensive review of the literature focused on various aspects of neighbourhood revitalization as practiced by other municipalities in Canada, the UK and the US including funding mechanisms, organizational/institutional approaches, program approaches and evaluation and monitoring methods. Finally, some recommendations are proposed with respect the development of a model for multi-partner funding for neighbourhood revitalization in Toronto.

2 MULTI-PARTNER FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD REVITALIZATION IN CANADA: URBAN DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

2.1 Introduction

Urban Development Agreements (UDAs) are mechanisms for bringing together Canada's three levels of government to address problems posed by urban development (e.g. social inequalities, social exclusion, crime, health issues, physical regeneration, etc.). Called tri-partite agreements, they create formal partnerships, structures and funding arrangements with the goal of alleviating some or many of the problems mentioned above in geographically specific contexts. Notwithstanding that these agreements are time bound, lasting only a few years, a key aim is to create the conditions under which a particular problem or set of problems might be resolved in the long term. In response to specific local conditions, each Agreement differs slightly in content and the structures established for delivery. Currently, Urban Development Agreements are operational in Vancouver, Edmonton and Winnipeg.

The key feature of the agreements is political involvement, cooperation and partnership. This is in clear recognition that no single level of government can tackle the challenges faced in today's cities, yet each has a stake in trying to do so. In other words, the structure of the agreements recognizes that partnership and cooperation are necessary for dealing with many of the problems currently faced by cities. Neil Bradford, notes this point in an article in which he also describes Canada as an "*urban policy laggard*":

*"...city problems are resistant to traditional monosectoral interventions designed from above by insulated, distant bureaucracies. Instead, they demand place sensitive, holistic approaches. That is, strategies built from the "ground or street up," on the basis of local knowledge, and delivered through networked relations crossing program silos, even jurisdictional turfs."*¹

Essentially, partnerships offer a much greater chance of success. Sharing approaches, good practice, budgets and staff means that issues can be tackled in a more comprehensive and concerted manner.

¹ Bradford, Neil (February 2004) 'Place Matters and Multi-Level Governance: Perspectives on a New Urban Paradigm', Policy Options.

Generally, agreements bring together resources from a variety of sources with a view to developing a strategic approach to dealing with place specific (often at the neighbourhood level) issues. Resources provided have either been 'new' or have been assembled through improved coordination and the harnessing of existing programmes and budgets of municipal, provincial and federal governments.

Another central feature of the agreements is the desire to involve other partners, notably the private sector and voluntary/community sector, in order to generate buy-in and long term commitment from as broad a range of stakeholders as possible. In addition, there is an implicit recognition of the role of cities as economic drivers within the agreements (i.e. an understanding that they are key to the competitiveness of regional and national economies). In other words, agreements are entered into with a view to improving the quality of life and economic underpinnings of an area, which in turn enhances a city's overall competitiveness on a regional, national and possibly international scale.

As noted above, agreements are in place in Winnipeg and Vancouver. The following outlines the key features of these Agreements.

2.2 Winnipeg Agreements

Winnipeg has a strong track record in the formulation and implementation of Agreements: since 1981 there have been four 5-year agreements:

- 1981-1986: Winnipeg Core Area Initiative I - \$96M
- 1986-1991: Winnipeg Core Area Initiative II - \$100M
- 1995-2001: Winnipeg Development Agreement - \$75M
- May 2004: Canada-Manitoba-Winnipeg Agreement for Community and Economic Development - \$75M

The first two initiatives were implemented through a separate organization, with an office and management, and directed by a management board of federal, provincial and municipal representatives. The third agreement included tri-level political involvement and a management committee, but had no dedicated office or general manager. The fourth Agreement is discussed in more detail below.

2.2.1 **Key features of the 2004 Canada-Manitoba-Winnipeg Agreement**

As noted above, a central aim of the agreements is to develop a strategic focus or direction for action on specific issues. As stated in the agreement itself, the May 2004 agreement concentrates upon interventions in four key areas²:

- **Aboriginal Participation:** including Aboriginal Economic Development; Aboriginal Training, Education and Employment; and Aboriginal Health, Wellness, Quality of Life and Social Development.
- **Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods:** focusing on specific older inner-city neighbourhoods.
- **Downtown Renewal:** especially capital infrastructure projects and heritage preservation initiatives.
- **Supporting Innovation and Technology:** both from a community use perspective and an economic development perspective.

Prior to signing the agreement, the governments of Canada, Manitoba and Winnipeg signed a Memorandum of Understanding and a consultation process began to garner views as to the detailed priorities and interventions to be established under the four priority areas. Indeed, community participation underpins much of the strategy.

Based on our review of it, several other key features of the agreement are evident including:

- *Vision and partnership:* underpinning the agreement is a commitment to a partnership approach around a shared vision – recognizing commonality and a desire to coordinate interventions. The agreement states that all three levels of government, “...share the vision of creating strong, healthy, safe and sustainable Winnipeg communities by celebrating their diversity and undertaking and supporting programs that will enhance their quality of life”.
- *Community involvement:* throughout the agreement the role of the community in deciding priorities and participating in consultation and decision-making is emphasized. This is an explicit recognition of some of the failures of traditional top-down approaches to development in Canada, the UK and US. In addition, capacity is also recognized as an issue: “...the Parties can work with the community and the private sector to strengthen the fabric of Winnipeg’s communities by identifying means for increasing community capacity...”

² Western Economic Diversification, 2004

- *Sustainability and long-term planning:* the need to coordinate interventions and make decisions within a long-term strategic framework is emphasized, recognizing the positive effect this can have on partnerships involving the private sector as well as the community and non-profit sectors. The agreement lays out Guiding Principles and Objectives in order to promote this.
- *Mix of interventions:* the agreement covers programs that aim to improve conditions in the social, economic and physical spheres – thereby further aiming to coordinate efforts and promote partnership. There is a clear view that no single agency can address these challenges in isolation.
- *Target group focus:* throughout, the agreement refers to the needs of the Aboriginal population of Winnipeg. In effect, the needs of the Aboriginal community act as a crosscutting theme.
- *Implementation procedures:* in addition to the underpinning strategic focus, principles and objectives, the agreement sets out detailed procedures for making the strategy operational. This includes: 1) procedures for approving projects; 2) financial details including payment procedures; and 3) evaluation of interventions, and communications procedures.

While the target group focus on the Aboriginal community may or may not apply in the Toronto context, each of the other key features would appear to be necessary in underpinning any agreement. They form the philosophical and practical basis on which strategic directions are established, decisions are made, programs are implemented and success is likely to be achieved.

Institutional structures were also established to implement the strategy and include:

- *Policy Committee:* representatives from all three levels of government (Principle Federal and Provincial Ministers and the Mayor) responsible for the overall policy direction and success of the agreement as well as appointing members of the Management Committee. Decisions of the Policy Committee must be unanimous to be implemented.
- *Management Committee:* consisting of six regular members (the three members of the Policy Committee appoint two members each) responsible for the overall management, coordination, administration and evaluation of the agreement. The Management Committee reports to the Policy Committee.
- *Tripartite Agreement Office:* again, consisting of staff from each level of government for coordination, liaison, communications and public relations relating to interventions under the agreement.

2.3 Achievements

The first three agreements concentrated on the physical regeneration of the downtown area and select inner-city neighbourhoods and saw significant achievements in downtown revitalization including new community facilities, improved delivery of social services, and education and training supports to groups such as the Aboriginals, immigrants, people with disabilities, youth and women³. In addition, the agreements were important in capital projects for physical regeneration in inner city areas including projects to renovate housing, industrial development and the creation of neighbourhood resource centres. They also acted as significant levers, bringing in private funds and giving the regeneration of the city a focus. For example, the third agreement (\$75 million in tri-partite funding) brought in a further \$77 million of private sector funding and \$49 million from other government sources. Bringing together interested stakeholders in a formal long-term partnership has been key in terms of coordinating actions and pooling funding. In addition, there has been considerable growth in networks of community-based organizations as well as community participation in projects.⁴

2.4 Vancouver Agreement

The Vancouver Agreement (VA) was signed in March 2000, runs for five years and was originally unfunded. Its primary concern was the coordination and delivery of services and programs of municipal, provincial and federal governments. Each of their constituencies overlaps but their mandate for providing services and programs differs significantly. As with the Winnipeg agreement, the VA provides a mechanism for a formal partnership between the three levels of government to overcome those differences. In April 2003, the federal and provincial governments then committed \$10 million each to the agreement, which was to be matched by the City of Vancouver through the provision of in-kind goods and services (e.g. staffing, development and zoning costs and office space). At the federal level, Western Economic Diversification assumed a leadership role along with Health Canada and Human Resources Development Canada. In all, 12 federal departments, 19 provincial ministries, 14 municipal departments, as well as the Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority are involved on a partnership basis.

³ Western Economic Diversification, 2004

⁴ Bradford, Neil (February 2004) 'Place Matters and Multi-Level Governance: Perspectives on a New Urban Paradigm', Policy Options.

The Vancouver Agreement is smaller in terms of levels of funding and narrower in focus than the most recent Winnipeg Agreement. It arose in response to crisis in a specific downtown neighbourhood. Actions under the Agreement are to focus on the regeneration of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside area, which despite interventions by federal, provincial and municipal departments has suffered economic and social decline over the last 20-30 years. The neighbourhood has endured crime, substance addiction, mental illness, sexual exploitation, homelessness, dilapidated infrastructure and a depressed economy. As an example of the challenges posed by this area, in 1997 the public health authority declared that rising HIV rates amongst intravenous drug users constituted a public health crisis. At that time, it was also the poorest postal code area in Canada.

2.4.1 Key Features of the Vancouver Agreement

Within the Agreement, the outline strategy lays out three priority areas for action which were agreed upon following consultation on a Draft Agreement with the business community and local public:

1. Community Health and Safety, including:
 - Primary Health Care
 - Comprehensive Substance Misuse Strategy
 - Safety and Justice
2. Economic and Social Development, including:
 - Economic and Social Development
 - Housing
3. Community Capacity-Building.

The emphasis in the strategy was on improving public health as the building block for economic and community revitalization.⁵

The Vancouver Agreement is very similar to the most recent Winnipeg Agreement in terms of the underpinning principles and structures established for implementation. The vision is for *“healthy, safe and sustainable communities”*, and throughout there is a

⁵ Bradford, Neil (February 2004) 'Place Matters and Multi-Level Governance: Perspectives on a New Urban Paradigm', Policy Options.

focus on the expected benefits of coordination and partnership. The three levels of government recognize that:

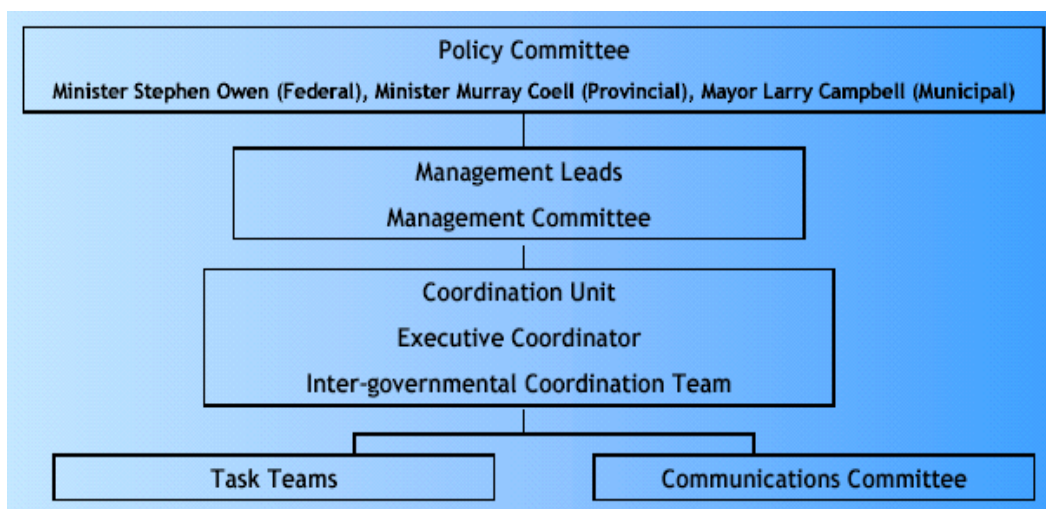
“...by working more closely together they will be able to enhance economic, social and community development in Vancouver. Their mandates, though different, are complementary, and are directed at the same people.”

As in Winnipeg, there is recognition of the need for a long-term strategic framework and multi-faceted interventions addressing challenges in economic, social and community development spheres. There is also a similar focus on community involvement, diversity and participation: *“There are many communities in Vancouver, and their diverse interests must be articulated, understood, supported, and balanced.”*

As noted above, there is, however, a much stronger geographic focus than in the most recent Winnipeg Agreement. The aim is to coordinate action spatially in identified priority areas: *“focus [their] efforts on those parts of Vancouver where the need is greatest...focus first on the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver.”*

In terms of establishing structures for implementation, the Vancouver and Winnipeg Agreements are also similar: both have a Policy Committee and Management Committee, performing the respective roles outlined above. The diagram below represents the structures established in Vancouver:⁶

Figure 2.1
Institutional Arrangements for the Vancouver Agreement



⁶ Taken from a presentation by Isobel Donovan, Executive Director, Vancouver Agreement to the I.C.E Committee, April 2004

2.4.2 *Achievements*

The VA has achieved some significant accomplishments in a relatively short period of time. Included among them are a hotel conversion project, the Mobile Access Project (which focuses on working with sex trade workers to provide peer services), an economic development project (using arts and cultural activities to improve streetscapes) and the first safe drug injection site in North America. Each of these accomplishments was achieved through active partnerships with a variety of stakeholders. For example, the hotel conversion involved the VA Housing Task Force in partnership with the Watari Community Agency, Vancouver Community College and municipal building inspectors. Similarly, the safe drug injection site involved law enforcement officials and health care workers from all three levels of government. Finally, the streetscape improvements project brought together social service agencies, low-income residents and the Chinese Revitalization Committee.

The focus on improving health as the building block for economic and community revitalization facilitated getting the various actors aligned around common objectives. At the same time, the role of the community was recognized as being important to the process, and building capacity to engage the community was deemed to be an essential objective of the plan. As of yet, however, there has been no formal incorporation of the community into the governance structure of the VA. In fact, in an evaluation of the VA conducted by the McLeod Institute⁷ in 2004, governance issues, not project outcome issues, were deemed most important to be addressed in the short term. In particular, the McLeod Institute set out five recommendations related to the governance structure of the VA. They are:

1. Develop a Model of Horizontal Management – a governance framework to complement the VA, based on a policy paradigm that explicitly acknowledges the VA as an inspired partnership driven by passion and commitment in response to community needs and demands. This is in recognition that achievements have been made, that collaboration has underwritten the achievements, but that there is still some ambiguity amongst the stakeholders as to what the VA really is. Formally recognizing the VA as an ‘inspired partnership’ with horizontal management is meant to obviate this ambiguity.
2. The Governance Framework (Model of Horizontal Management) should embellish the framework and set measurable standards by defining and

⁷ McLeod Institute, (2004) In the Spirit of the Vancouver Agreement: A Governance Case Study

describing relationships, roles and responsibilities; decision making criteria and processes; goals and strategic thinking processes; a community participation model; and accountabilities. The framework should be a forward looking document, building on the VA's successes.

3. Develop a metaphor by VA participants based on the policy paradigm in the Governance Framework to provide a succinct, immediately identifiable phrase that communicates the VA's pith and substance to participants and the community.
4. Develop three brief Companion Guides to the Governance Framework to assist VA participants and the community in determining when to participate, how services are integrated overall and how to manage their participation.
5. Implement an evaluation process that assesses the VA's performance objectives in terms of measurable standards stipulated in the Governance Framework. Indicators should be specifically chosen to measure how the partnership has performed including measures of social capital.

The importance of these recommendations resides in the fact that there are key governance issues associated with the Vancouver Agreement. This reality was emphasized in the discussions we held with VA stakeholders who suggested that getting consensus on strategic directions, programs and projects has proven time consuming and difficult. This is exacerbated by the need for unanimity amongst the partners. Furthermore, the evaluation of the VA conducted by the McLeod Institute suggested that there was still much work to be done in fully engaging the community as full partners to the agreement. This would suggest that very careful consideration must be given to the governance structure and to the manner in which the community is engaged on any agreement that the City of Toronto might pursue.

2.5 Other multi-partner funding arrangements

2.5.1 *Edmonton, Regina and Saskatoon*

The Edmonton Economic Development Initiative (EEDI) was signed in September 1995 and is not time limited. It does not represent anything additional in terms of resources and is rather a commitment for the three levels of government to better coordinate and use existing resources.

Currently, Regina and Saskatoon are negotiating Agreements similar to those outlined above with the federal government through Western Economic Diversification and the

Province of Saskatchewan. It is not clear if new funding will be made available or if agreements will be based around the more efficient use of existing resources.

3 REGENERATION AND INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION: EXAMPLES FROM THE UK.

3.1 Introduction

Partnership between different levels and agencies of government is arguably the central feature of the UK's current area based regeneration initiatives. Efforts to respond to multi-faceted problems present in many areas of the UK with wide-ranging solutions have meant that within Europe, the UK is recognized as providing examples of advanced practice in this area. Unlike the Canadian examples mentioned in the previous section, however, regeneration initiatives are not based on formal agreements. Instead they are carried out as a matter of policy established by the central government with local partnerships forming a key aspect of how policy becomes delivered at the local level. This is a clear distinction between Canada and the UK. Whereas, Canada is a federal state with federal, provincial and municipal or local governments, the UK is a unitary state with a dominant central government and local governments only.

Recent efforts have been based upon the recognition that, often in the past, regeneration schemes have failed due to problems being addressed in 'silos'; with health authorities tackling poor health outcomes, police tackling criminality, housing authorities addressing the physical environment and so on.⁸ It is now recognized that 'joining up' (i.e. bringing local government in as a full partner as well as fostering inter-departmental working) the partnership can bring added value and wider impacts. It is also clear that area-based initiatives provide an opportunity and rationale for a partnership based, coordinated response.

A further rationale for creating partnerships around area-based initiatives is to stimulate innovation in service delivery. For example, creating partnerships between police, schools and social service agencies to tackle youth crime means bringing a variety of approaches to the table to deal with the problem. New collaborative approaches emerge as a result. There is recognition that, even with the high levels of funding available, short-term regeneration funding will not, by itself ameliorate the problems faced in the most deprived areas. These problems have manifested themselves over decades of decline and will not be solved by time-limited regeneration schemes.

⁸ For a fuller discussion of this issue see the report of the Policy Action Team 17: 'Joining It Up Locally' (2000)

The focus therefore is on making a sustainable difference by ‘bending the mainstream’ – i.e. using learning emerging from short-term initiatives to reconfigure mainstream services⁹. This recognizes the fact that regeneration budgets are insignificant relative to the resources deployed by mainstream services, such as health, education and policing. Long-term change will be best served and supported by improvements in these areas. Mainstreaming (i.e. redistributing resources to meet priority needs; shaping resources to make them more responsive and accessible to local communities; incorporating innovations from special initiatives into mainstream practice) can be achieved in a variety of ways, for example, through the use of conferences, policy briefs, joint staff training and specific products promoting good practice in a particular. The objects being mainstreamed emerge out of comprehensive evaluation and discovering ‘what works’.

3.2 Regeneration: National Strategy and funding

Regeneration is one of the key priorities of Central Government in the UK. There is a comprehensive national strategy¹⁰ and high levels of funding in place, with the aim that within the next 10-20 years no one will be disadvantaged by where they live. There are two central long-term goals:

- In all the poorest neighbourhoods, to have common goals of lower unemployment and crime, and higher levels of health, skills, housing and physical environment
- To narrow the gap on these measures between the most deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country.

The emphasis on regeneration at the central government level has provided the impetus, funding and long-term framework for interventions of various types.

Currently, the key-funding stream is the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF), which is concentrated on the 88 local authorities (i.e. local government) districts containing 82% of the poorest wards in England. It is notable that these areas were chosen using the 2000 Indices of Deprivation¹¹, rather than competitive bidding – a criticism of previous regeneration initiatives such as the City Challenge and Single Regeneration

⁹ Testing new approaches with a focus on mainstreaming has long been a feature of European level funding and is increasingly a feature of UK programmes, e.g. the Renewal Fund. For an example of a programme set up with mainstreaming as a central feature see the EU’s labour market Community Initiative, EQUAL.

¹⁰ ‘A New Commitment to Renewal’ (2001)

¹¹ ODPM (2003) Review for the Neighbourhood Unit of Blueprint for the Index of Multiple Deprivation

The focus of the NRF is narrowing the gap between the most deprived local authority areas and the rest of the country. It is worth £1.875 billion over the 2001-2006 period (over CA\$4.3 billion) and supports the long-term improvement of mainstream services in relation to established national targets.

There are similar funds available which other areas are eligible for, these include:

- *New Deal for Communities* (NDC) was established in 1998 and many lessons learned delivering this programme have informed the development of the NRF. NDC provides £2 billion over 10 years, and targets 39 areas on a much smaller geographic level (neighbourhoods of less than 4000 households) and less strategic policy level than NRF. The NDC brought together measures for physical regeneration (housing and the environment), enhancing levels of educational achievement and improving the employment, health and safety of residents. In providing funds, priority was attached to generating improvements in neighbourhood management through multi-sectoral partnerships and resident involvement. Initially, 17 areas were invited to be 'pathfinders' that were selected based on levels of deprivation and location (i.e. there was desire to include areas spread throughout the country) as well as based on the presence of local partnerships.
- *The Community Empowerment Fund* was established to build the capacity of community and voluntary organizations to engage in the work of Local Strategic Partnerships (see below). The Fund (amounting to 60 million pounds over the 2001-06 period, links to the *Community Chest*, which administers grants and is weighted towards the 88 NRF areas.
- *The Single Regeneration Budget* (SRB) was introduced in 1994 to simplify regeneration funding. It brought together twenty separate existing programmes, spanned six different Government Departments and totalled £1.4 billion in the first financial year. There have been six funding rounds and SRB is now coming to an end.
- *European Structural Funds*. There are four separate structural funds covering regional development, the labour market and agriculture. The type and level of funding an area is eligible for is dependant upon its relative level of deprivation and economic structure. Typically, local initiatives have to match the funds available from the EU: this is done to promote local buy-in and add value at local level.

The volume of initiatives and attendant funding streams present in the UK has been criticized as confusing. Work is currently underway to simplify the delivery of programmes at the regional level by streamlining monitoring and reporting requirements.

3.3 The role of government and the National Strategy

All levels of government are involved in the delivery of the strategy, through Central Government departments, Regional Development Agencies, Government Offices for the Regions and Local Authorities. This multi-level government involvement is referred to as a 'joined-up' approach. 'Joining-up' government is a priority in the UK and renewal provides an example where this is being attempted, for example by establishing the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit to work across departments while coordinating actions.

The following section briefly outlines the key responsibilities of each level of government with respect to the neighbourhood renewal agenda. It is supported by Diagram 3.1, which shows the main structures, funds and strategies in place in the UK.

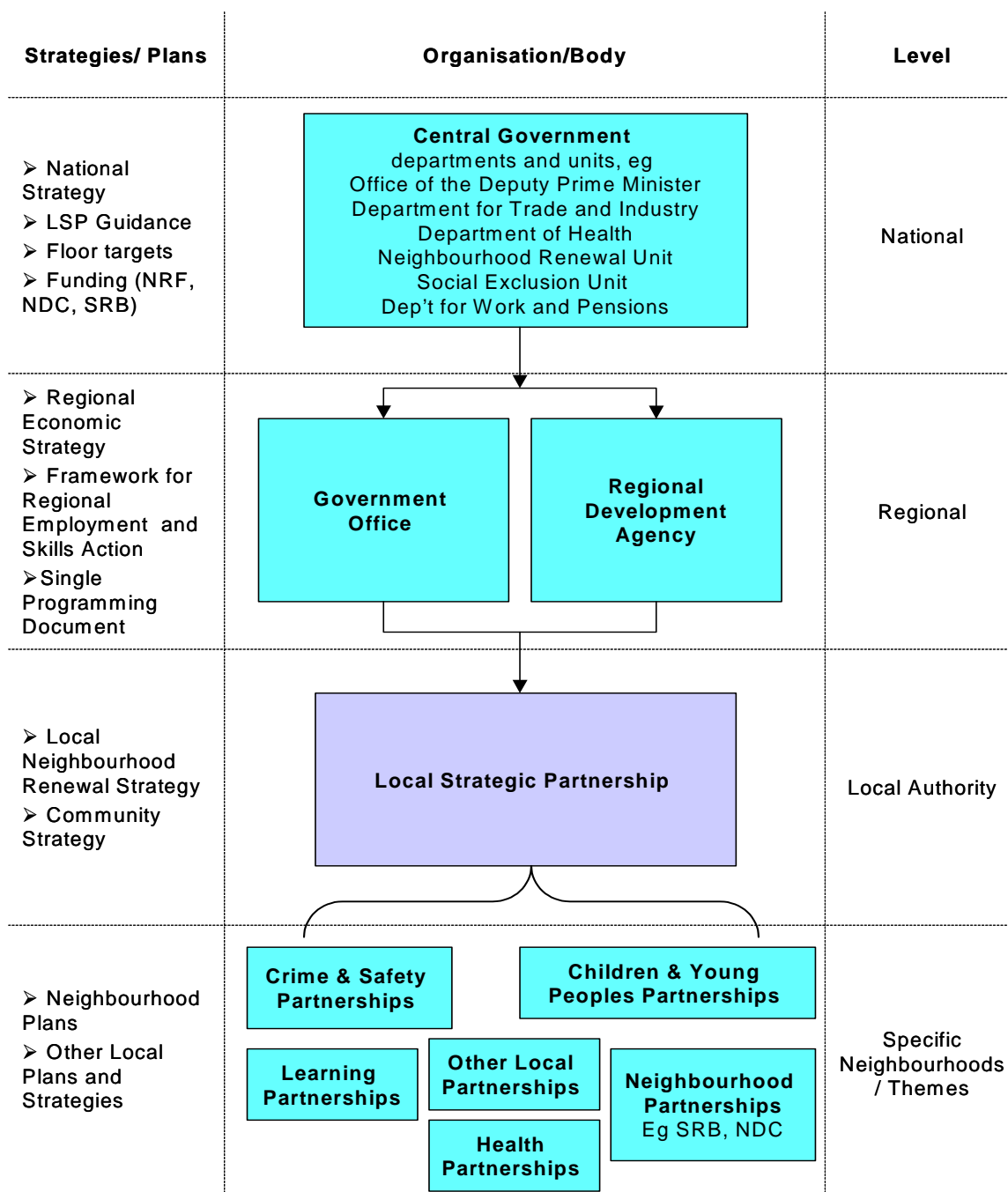
3.3.1 Central Government

The principle underpinning Central Government involvement is to reach a point at which accountability and oversight are retained, while delivery can take place at the local level. This is done by:

- Establishing performance assessment frameworks such as the national Strategy and Local Public Service Agreements. A central aspect of this work has been in setting minimum service standards (or 'floor targets') for local delivery: for example, to cut domestic burglary by 25% from 1998-99 to 2005. The logic here is that, as the most deprived areas are disproportionately reliant upon public services and improvements, focusing on these areas will have a disproportionately positive impact. In addition, local partners can be held to account for delivery against the targets set.
- Enacting legislation such as the Local Government Act 2000, giving local authorities more powers to improve their areas ('Well-Being' powers). Local authorities also have the power to establish regeneration companies (see below) and pool budgets between services, for example, between health and education services.
- Establishing the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) to work across Central Government departments and coordinate work under the national Strategy.

- 'Deprivation proofing' policy and programmes to ensure that priority communities receive funding and delivery is 'joined-up'.
- Providing specific funding to stimulate innovation and to improve services, e.g. NRF.

Diagram 3.1:- Structures in Place to Support Regeneration



3.3.2 *Government Offices for the Regions*

Nine Government Offices represent the Central Government regionally. These English Regions (Gos) provide the link between the regional and national level, offering a further mechanism for joining-up delivery of neighbourhood regeneration. As well as communicating Central Government priorities, GOs manage various regeneration initiatives: such as the New Deal for Communities. They also produce more strategic documents, such as the Single Programming Documents, which establish regional priorities for using European funding.

GOs work closely with the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), who are business-led bodies responsible for producing economic development and skills strategies at the regional level.

A further crucial role of the GOs is supporting the development of Local Strategic Partnerships and overseeing the implementation of local regeneration strategies. GOs are also responsible for the accreditation of Local Strategic Partnerships ensuring that they are viable partnerships with the capacity to deliver large programmes.

3.3.3 *Local Strategic Partnerships*

At the local level the key structure - and one of the central elements of the national strategy - is the need for local authority areas to establish 'Local Strategic Partnerships' (LSPs). LSPs are the central vehicle for the delivery of renewal at the local level and have been established primarily (but not exclusively) in the 88 most deprived local authority areas in England ¹².

The development of LSPs represents a break with past regeneration efforts and signals a step-change in the approach to neighbourhood renewal. It is still early in the life of these organizations, but the underpinning logic and early results are cause for optimism.

Who is represented in an LSP?

A wide range of partner organizations and partnerships come together on LSPs and they operate on a local authority-wide basis. They are typically established and led by the local authority – thereby providing for some democratic accountability. Working at this wider geographic level allows attention to be given to neighbourhoods surrounding those where specific initiatives are targeted, while recognizing that many initiatives can

¹² It is not possible to receive NRF without having an accredited LSP, but it is worth noting that areas not eligible for NRF have established LSPs in recognition of their potential benefits.

result in displacement of problems rather than their reduction, e.g. crime reduction initiatives can leave some areas safer at the expense of others.

Most LSPs have been built around and have expanded upon existing partnerships, many of which were thematic (e.g. around crime or health), and have been widened to include all services and areas relevant to regeneration. It is expected that the formation of LSPs will lead to a rationalisation of other local partnerships and simplification of funding streams. In many cases, existing geographic or thematic partnerships have been retained as sub-groups of the LSP in order to provide the ability to look more in depth at specific issues or areas. A partnership Board typically oversees these smaller partnerships whose members would most likely include:

- Local government – (Local Authorities, GOs and RDAs)
- Health authorities
- Police and Fire services
- Private sector/Business organizations
- Education authorities and bodies responsible for developing education/skills locally
- Economic development bodies/forums
- Voluntary sector
- Other key public bodies (e.g. employment service, probation service, housing authorities)
- Resident and community organizations
- Faith groups

What structures are established?

Case study research ¹³ has identified several structures common to most LSPs:

- *A Forum* – generally with an open membership containing a wide range of interested stakeholders, often numbering more than a hundred. These bodies tend to meet infrequently (maybe just once or twice a year) but provide a wider base of support, spread understanding and increase the ‘visibility’ of LSP activity.

¹³ ODPM (2004) ‘LSP Evaluation and Action Research Programme Case-Studies interim report: A baseline of practice.’

- *A Board* - typically around twenty members from senior levels of the organizations contained on the LSP. The Board is the formal body to which partners sign up and which through some form of constitution makes up the LSP.
- *An Executive* – a smaller and more operational body than the Board made up largely of officers. The key function of the Executive is to implement the more general agreements and decisions of the Board.
- *Theme Groups* – responsible for developing specific thematic or cross-thematic work (e.g. health, community safety, learning, inclusion, sustainability, young people).
- *Task Groups* – responsible for specific functions supporting the LSP (e.g. Programme delivery groups, communication groups, information groups).
- *Community Forums* – pulling together stakeholders at the neighbourhood level (e.g. teams of community development workers/ officers and/or local community organizations and resident groups).

In the majority of cases, the Local Authority has taken responsibility for leading the LSP, but many have decided upon independent or rotating chairs. Generally speaking, high-level representation is required from partner organizations so that decisions can be made relatively quickly.

What do they do?

LSPs themselves do not deliver services directly. They provide coordination and oversight to local services, plans, partnerships and initiatives. However, LSPs generally do have a permanent structure (often units within local authorities), typically funded using NRF, pooled budgets and seconded staff.

Freedom provided by the frameworks established by Central Government means that there will be local variation in the exact nature of the work undertaken by LSPs. However, in all cases the development and delivery of a Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (LNRS) forms the core of the work of LSPs.

LNRSs must identify local priorities, areas and neighbourhoods most in need of renewal as well as setting out the ways in which the nationally set floor targets (see above) are to be met.¹⁴ Central to the logic of LSPs and the drive for neighbourhood

¹⁴ Note that floor targets only apply to those in receipt of NRF – i.e. the most deprived 88 Local Authority areas.

renewal is that local services can be better devised and delivered if they are joined-up and coordinated at the local level (i.e. if service provision is better aligned to the goals of renewal and the needs of people in priority neighbourhoods).

LSP case studies

The following provides three brief case studies of the ways in which LSPs have been established and any early results they may have had.

Croydon

The London Borough of Croydon is the 88th most deprived borough in England and, as such, receives a relatively small NRF allocation of around CA\$3.5 million 2003-2006. However, several aspects of the LSPs work have been cited as good practice by central government publications.

As with LSPs in other areas, Croydon Strategic Partnership contains a range of partners (and partnerships) from the public, private and voluntary sector, including Croydon Council, Primary Care Trusts, Police, Croydon Voluntary Action and the Chamber of Commerce. The strategy developed was based upon widespread stakeholder consultation involving surveys, citizen's panels, conferences and meetings. There are twenty-two local priorities in the strategy (with attendant targets), clustered under six key themes:

- Improving the environment
- Reducing crime and disorder
- Education and life-long learning
- Improving health and social care
- Regenerating the borough
- Providing better and fairer access to services

One of the key areas of early success has been in pooling budgets and effectively coordinating external funding through the use of joint steering groups. Members of the LSP have also pooled budgets to fund a specific unit to coordinate and target funding bids.

Pooling budgets has proved especially successful in the areas of health and social services and new integrated services have been formed in the areas of mental health and occupational therapy. Croydon is also a pathfinder area for the development of

Children's Trusts, which are being established to better co-ordinate children's services and encourage partnership working, joint funding and commissioning.

The LSP has also created a 'Croydon Observatory' to monitor socio-economic trends across the Borough, measuring areas of progress and failure. The observatory pools data (e.g. information relating to employment, health, education) collected by the various agencies involved in the partnership and is also funded jointly.

A further mechanism of note is the Neighbourhood Partnerships established to bring services closer to people living in priority areas and to encourage greater accountability and responsiveness. Each partnership contains various representatives, e.g. Health professionals, residents groups and elected councillors. In support of this, action plans at the neighbourhood level have been produced for priority neighbourhoods.

Sandwell

Sandwell Partnership contains representatives from the private sector, voluntary sector and key public bodies such as police, health authorities, employment service and local authorities. Sandwell receives around CA\$70 million in NRF funding. Based on widespread consultation with delivery organizations and the local community, the Partnership has produced the Sandwell Plan.

The Plan lays out the ambitious vision that *"The Sandwell of 2020 will be a thriving, sustainable, optimistic and forward-looking community."* Currently, Sandwell is one of the most deprived local authority areas in the UK and contains several areas that are in desperate need of revitalization.

The Plan contains several priority themes, such as health, learning and safety. In support of the plan, the Partnership has produced a comprehensive Neighbourhood Strategy and is currently producing plans for each neighbourhood in the area.

Producing the Neighbourhood Strategy entailed the identification of 79 neighbourhoods through an analysis of their situation based upon a set of indicators ¹⁵. The neighbourhoods were then grouped into three broad bands: most deprived, vulnerable, and least deprived. Bids to government programmes addressing deprivation now prioritise the most deprived neighbourhoods and organizations on the Partnership are

¹⁵ A special Intelligence Network was established for the purpose of providing level analysis. The Black Country Observatory, who supplies indicators relating directly to the local strategy, also supports the Partnership.

investigating ways of improving services delivered at neighbourhood level. Essentially, this means that the delivery of regular services is being given a regeneration focus.

Bolton

Bolton is a borough in the North West of England that contains several areas experiencing significant levels of deprivation. There are several examples of strong partnerships developed in the area and the LSP was able to build on much existing good work.

The Vision for the Future Partnership (Bolton's LSP) has a core steering group containing key public bodies, the private sector and the voluntary and community sector. Linked to the core steering group are twelve smaller strategic partnerships, covering a diverse range of themes including: culture, transport, learning, environment, drugs, community homes, health and well-being, economic development, crime and disorder.

Organizations within the Partnership have pooled budgets to support the work of the LSP and several jointly funded posts have been created to drive the strategy. There have also been successful projects using pooled budgets and NRF money aimed at crime reduction, including the rehabilitation and reintegration of prolific offenders and targeting of young offenders. Young offenders projects are frequently linked to education projects, e.g. after school and not in school activities, lifestyle support and visits to the Bolton Arena for young children.

3.4 Urban Regeneration Companies

Another example of successful regeneration through different levels of government cooperating is the Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs) currently operating in sixteen areas in England.

What are they?

In the late 1990s, an Urban Task Force report recommended establishing local bodies charged with the regeneration of specific urban areas,

“The pace of regeneration could be increased if responsibility for delivering area programmes was placed in the hands of 'arms length' organizations, owned by local partnerships. Urban Regeneration Companies could not only oversee work

to completion, but also raise private finance and undertake direct development where necessary.”¹⁶

In response to this recommendation, three pilot URCs were established (as separate private legal entities) in 1999, in Liverpool, East Manchester and Sheffield. Following early successes, the scheme has now been extended to sixteen areas in England.

The Urban White Paper (Nov. 2000) established the purpose of URCs as being to *“work with a range of private and public sector partners, including the Local Strategic Partnerships, to redevelop and bring investment back to the worst areas in our cities and towns.”*

As can be seen therefore, URCs operate within wider regional and local frameworks, primarily to bring about the focused physical and economic regeneration of specific urban areas; they are also a key mechanism for promoting cooperation and partnership between various levels of government.

Who is involved?

Essentially, URCs are formal partnerships contained within independent, legally established companies¹⁷. They are generally established by the relevant local authority in partnership with the regional development agency and English Partnerships¹⁸. Other stakeholders will also be involved, including the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) as well as local employers and community representatives. URCs operate ‘at arms length’ from local authorities, although they have the necessary commitment and backing to make them work.

URCs provide a high profile for the regeneration of specific areas and are a more formal and focused partnership than many other comparable initiatives. Involvement of key public bodies, such as local authorities, also means that involvement for the private sector is simplified. URCs can provide clarity, focus and leadership to investment plans from the various sectors and can therefore add value.

Funding

Typically, URCs depend entirely upon their constituent partners for their funding – i.e. the local authority, RDA and English Partnerships. There is some emerging good

¹⁶ The Urban Task Force Report 'Towards an Urban Renaissance', June 1999, ODPM

¹⁷ Not unlike the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation

¹⁸ The national regeneration agency established to coordinate activity responsible for the URC model.

practice in terms of these bodies providing longer term funding once strategies have been agreed. In terms of private sector funding of the URC itself, this does attract tax benefits, but is not widespread in practice.

Success factors and benefits

Specific success factors and benefits of URCs include ¹⁹:

- Establishing the right team and Board to add value.
- Having clarity of purpose and objectives, responsibilities and roles (hence the improvement over loose partnerships).
- Enhancing the capacity of the local and regional partners, to deliver generally (e.g. planning speed and decisiveness) and in support of specific Government policies.
- Clear lines of responsibility and working relations with the local authority and other partners.
- Accountability, to members and the community.
- Linking Board decisions to local authority processes – enhancing capacity.
- Improved communication/transparency of activity.
- Close partnership working.
- Conflict resolution.
- A master planning approach raises the level of ambition and quality, provides a focus for debate, creates a long term vision which others can buy into, provides investment confidence and certainty – for funding and marketing purposes, and provides an integrated framework for driving forward projects and delivery plans.
- Ability to proactively plan and manage periods of transition – to address problems before they become a crisis.
- There is evidence to suggest the private sector confidence has been boosted in these areas.

Case study example – Liverpool Vision

Liverpool Vision was established by English Partnerships, Liverpool City Council and the North West Development Agency (the RDA for the North West) in early 1999. It is an independent company established to bring together key public and private sector

¹⁹ Taken from 'Urban Regeneration Companies: Policy Stocktake. Final Report – May 2004', ODPM.

agencies to produce a strategy - the Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) - that guides the regeneration of Liverpool City Centre.

The Strategy guides the use of resources from the City Council, the RDA, central government and European funding, thereby providing some coherence to the diverse and sizable amounts of money available to the city. The goal is the regeneration of specific parts (seven 'Action Areas') of Liverpool city centre in order to enable the city to compete regionally, nationally and at European level.

Liverpool Vision is a not-for-profit company. It has twelve Board members drawn from the public and private sectors and an executive team of around fifteen. It is estimated that the total cost of implementing the strategy devised is over CA\$3 billion, of which around a third will be public sector investment.

Liverpool Vision is undertaking several high profile projects to achieve its goals. For example, one of the key projects is the regeneration of the L1 postal district. This central area contains much of the post-war social housing commonly found in the UK's most deprived neighbourhoods. The project is to undertake selective demolition and to create a mixed-use development with a variety of housing types and tenures to create a more mixed income community. As of yet, there has been no evaluation of Liverpool Vision.

3.4.1 Achievements of UK Regeneration Strategies

According to Neil Bradford²⁰, at a strategic policy level, the recent emphasis on-area based regeneration on the UK has met with some success. For example, no longer is there the competition amongst local authorities for funds established by the central government to achieve its own priorities. Instead, central government has recognized local authorities as central partners in their local regeneration efforts. Strong emphasis is placed on coordination and integration amongst the different levels of government with area or neighbourhood based projects being dovetailed with regional strategies and mainstream policy.

Specific results on the ground, however, are by and large, too early to evaluate. Nonetheless some evidence of improvement in many neighbourhoods has been detected. One comparison of neighbourhoods before and after interventions suggest that in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, conditions had, at minimum, stabilized with facilities and services showing some improvement. Moreover, evidence of a

²⁰ Neil Bradford (2005) Place-based Public Policy: Towards a New Urban and Community Agenda for Canada, Canadian Policy Research Networks, Research Report F/51

change in attitude amongst public officials in favour of collaboration was evident as was greater involvement and participation on the part of community members in decision-making as it related to specific projects²¹.

Despite some early evidence of at least some success, the neighbourhood strategies currently used in the UK are not without their critics. In particular, the emphasis on evaluation and 'what works' at the level of the central government can mean control over any particular neighbourhood project could potentially be outside of the neighbourhood in which it is occurring. Central government's desire for evidence of favourable results could mean that learning from mistakes and setbacks could be lost if failure means the withdrawal of central government support for the project. Under such conditions, innovative and/or risky initiatives might not be undertaken for fear of failure even if potential benefits would be large.

A second criticism of the neighbourhood strategies used in the UK stems from the level of funding afforded to the various programmes. There are suggestions, for example, that funding regimes are insufficient to guarantee long lasting and favourable impacts²². Fears exist that insufficient, stable and long term funding commitments from central government, will lead to its eventual withdrawal as a collaborator leaving the problems to the local partners.

²¹ Ruth Lupton (2003) *Poverty Street, The Dynamics of Neighbourhood Decline and Renewal*, Bristol: Policy Press

²² Ruth Lupton, *ibid*

4 REVIEW OF US EXPERIENCE IN NEIGHBOURHOOD REGENERATION

Community development in the United States is complicated if only because of its highly decentralized governmental organization, heavy reliance of private sector investment, considerable diversity of neighbourhood circumstances, and the many sources of subsidised support for the various elements that go into neighbourhood quality. With respect to urban neighbourhoods, the Federal government has traditionally funded county and municipal governments to carry out community development activities and has left decisions on strategies and tactics to them. This has led to a proliferation of approaches to community development, and to some extent, a loss of true accountability for results. State governments have not traditionally been involved as either funders or regulators, although the scope of local action to acquire land and use public funds to benefit private parties depends on State grants of authority.

It should be noted, however, that in relation to urban policy and, there are significant differences between the US and Canada in the way in which it is implemented. This stems largely from the fact that there is no constitutional recognition of cities in Canada. While in Canada, cities are 'creatures of the provinces'; cities in the US have significantly more autonomy and have access to a variety of funding, fiscal and financing options. In addition, there is a more clearly articulated urban policy agenda at the federal level in the US than in Canada. Drawing lessons for Toronto from the US experience is therefore difficult at best.

Nonetheless, the diverse circumstances in the US have produced a diverse set of approaches to change. They can be distilled into four basic models, which often appear in combination to produce an endless variety of approaches²³:

1. The Redevelopment model characterized by wholesale land assembly, demolition, and new construction or substantial rehabilitation of large numbers of housing units, commercial properties, and community facilities. This model was pursued extensively in the 1950s and 1960s, and most recently, the 1990s, which saw widespread demolition and reconstruction of the nation's most distressed public housing authorities. These developments most often involve large-scale private

²³ Bruce Katz, *Neighbourhoods of Choice and Connection: The Evolution of American Neighbourhood Policy and What it Means for the United Kingdom*, Brookings Institution

development companies, active government policy, regulatory, and financial involvement, and very large amounts of public subsidy allocated directly from the Federal government. Particularly strong examples of this approach include Techwood in Atlanta and Hollman in Minneapolis.

2. The market-regeneration model in which multiple public, non-profit, and sometimes private actors invest in discrete and loosely connected projects and initiatives is intended to influence investor perceptions of neighbourhood market prospects. The idea is that the change in perception will lead to a positive shift in investment flows and profitability over the long term. These efforts have increasingly relied on the community leadership and investment strategies of non-profit community development corporations. Financing comes typically from local Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, federal tax credits for affordable housing development and other sources that must be assembled project-by-project. Strong examples of this approach include Boston, Cleveland, and Chicago.
3. The community-building model, in which community organizing supported by philanthropic and sometimes public sector entities aims to develop community leadership, promote social solidarity, encourage self-help in the form of educational, homeownership, financial asset-building, cultural expression and other initiatives. This model is often pursued in tandem with the market-regeneration model, and often led by non-profit organizations that do not have physical development as their primary purpose. Financing has been heavily dependent on national and local foundations, as well as some of the more flexible social services funding streams. Strong examples include Cleveland and Oakland.
4. The “stock preservation” model, in which local governments aim to forestall neighbourhood-wide housing deterioration by aggressive enforcement of building codes and provision of subsidies for the repair and moderate rehabilitation of owner-occupied housing has been primarily pursued in relatively stable working class neighbourhoods where aging of the housing stock, increasing concentrations of senior citizens, and depreciation of public facilities threatens to undermine the market appeal of neighbourhoods to future residents. Funding for code enforcement typically comes from local appropriated funds or Community Development Block Grants. Funding for owner-occupied rehabilitation has been supported almost entirely by CDBG. Strong examples include Pittsburgh and Charlotte.

These strategies have been pursued in a variety of combinations, most often in ad hoc fashion dictated by planners’ preferences, the presence of capable community

development organizations, local political arrangements, and the availability of certain kinds of public subsidies. In recent years, however, local government and their non-profit sector partners have begun to pair up community development programs with neighbourhoods in a more deliberate, strategic, fashion, spurred by the increasing scarcity of funding in relation to rising land costs, new Federal and public demands for better program performance, and availability of high-quality information on the characteristics of neighbourhoods.

What has emerged is a general feeling in policy circles that: 1) renewal strategies designed without local knowledge and intergovernmental cooperation are largely unsuccessful; 2) evaluation frameworks need to be incorporated into programs at the outset; and 3) an emphasis on enumerating challenges neighbourhoods face meant overlooking other community assets that could be used to leverage to achieve success.²⁴ According to Neil Bradford, it was the election of Clinton in 1992 that saw an emphasis develop at the federal government level towards the idea that it should begin its neighbourhood renewal efforts by first cultivating local leadership and planning and then have all relevant programming adapted to locally defined needs. This was initially engendered in the Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community program, a federal, state and local government partnership for generating renewal in distressed urban neighbourhoods as well as rural communities. Funding for urban enterprise zones came in the form of block grants of \$100 million and for Enterprise Communities \$3 million.

The program required that each partnership develop its own strategies in making principles such as sustainable community development work. Most engaged in a multi-sector approach that saw the involvement of a variety of actors, including those engaged in public health, safety, housing, social services and the like.

The program involved federal government funding to states for 10 years who then flowed money to local project managers, non-profits or municipal governments. Three federal departments provided program coordination: Housing and Urban Development, Agriculture and Health and Human Services. The roles and responsibilities of the local players (project managers, community partners, and state governments) were codified in Memorandums of Agreement. In some cases, additional state funding was made available.

In housing, the federal government established the Hope VI program. The Hope VI program was designed to help in the replacement of dilapidated public housing projects

²⁴ Neil Bradford op.cit.

with high concentrations of poor and replace them with affordable housing and mixed income communities. Better urban design was also a key feature of the program. The program involved the use innovative financing partnerships involving local, state and federal governments and was funded to the tune of \$5 billion over 10 years beginning in 1993.

4.1.1 Achievements of US Renewal Programs

According to Jargowsky²⁵ (2003) the achievements of US neighbourhood strategies since the 1990's have been significant, amounting to important reductions in geographically concentrated poverty (especially among African Americans) and increasing home ownership and minority owned businesses in inner city areas. Equally important, citizen participation in neighbourhood planning was substantially higher than under previous federal government urban programs. This is in addition to evidence of economic progress in the form of job growth and labour force development in for example, the Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Unfortunately, much of the funding for the renewal and community development programs is expected to face significant cuts in the next federal budget.

²⁵ Paul Jargowsky (2003) *Stunning Progress, Hidden Problems*, Brookings Institution

5 LESSONS FOR TORONTO

In considering the applicability of any particular funding arrangement for Toronto, it is necessary to acknowledge that many believe Toronto to be ‘different’ – that Toronto faces a unique set of challenges and circumstances. Certainly it must be noted that that Toronto does have characteristics exclusive from Winnipeg and Vancouver - many of which are related to scale and the fact that Toronto attracts a far greater number of migrants. In addition, while the intention of schemes that exist in the UK and US may have applicability in Toronto, the specifics of the funding arrangements probably do not owing to significant differences in governance structures and intergovernmental relations. Furthermore, the schemes used in the US and UK are more programmatic in nature, i.e. they are not based on specific agreements but rather reflect on broader policy concerns of the higher levels of government. As such, a more likely path to follow would be the Urban Development Agreements already existing in Canada with the requisite variations that could account for Toronto’s uniqueness. Having said this, there some lessons that can be learned from the schemes used in the US ,UK and the western Canadian urban development agreements.

A key element of the study was also to interview key stakeholders in existing UDA’s with a view to develop an understanding of the pros and cons of the agreements in which they were engaged and thereby ultimately prepare a set of recommendations that could guide the negotiation of an agreement for Toronto.

In all, interviews were carried out with 9 stakeholders. Interviewees and their affiliations are shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Stakeholders Interviewed

Interviewee	Affiliation
Derek Burleton	TD Bank
Naomi Alboim	Queens University
Nathan Edelson	Vancouver Agreement
Isobel Donovan	Vancouver Agreement

Derek Ballantyne	Toronto Community Housing Corporation
James Kennedy	Vancouver Agreement
Ian Bromely	Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
Jim August	Forks North Partnership, Winnipeg
John Burrett	Federation of Canadian Municipalities

The results of the interviews and reviews of the various schemes used in the US and UK revealed several key lessons to be considered in the context of the establishment of an urban development agreement for Toronto. These are:

- There is a clear need to provide a strategic framework upfront with desired outcomes being clearly defined.
- The need for time upfront to build shared vision and working relationships between the key partners – there must be an aim of promoting a culture of partnership and a recognition of the ‘softer’ benefits here (e.g. more informal networks and greater trust).
- There is a need to build in political ownership at the highest level – implementation will require leadership and champions.
- The need to engage with the communities present before final approaches are decided and then to engage on a continuous basis thereafter. Levels of effort in terms of time, patience and resources required should not be underestimated.
- The need for multifaceted interventions (having a spatial focus is a proven method in promoting this) recognizing the multiple challenges faced by many people in distressed neighbourhoods – thereby seeking to avoid negative externalities (e.g. housing prices boom that could force poorer residents elsewhere).
- The need to be as detailed as possible about the types of programs likely to be funded in support of the strategy.
- The need to consider what comes next. The most effective approach in terms of ensuring the sustainability of this type of time-limited intervention is to focus on re-alignment of mainstream budgets and services – this may entail institutional change to move away from service and policy ‘silos’.

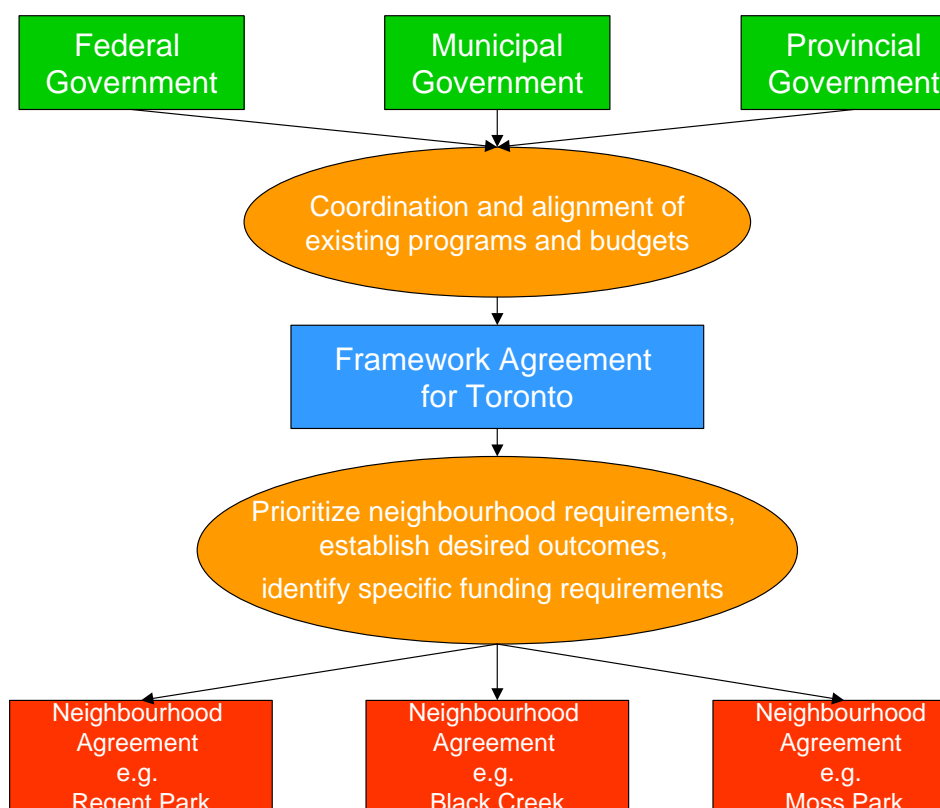
- The need to be clear upfront about the expectations of the partnership, e.g. is long-term change in service delivery an aim, or is the focus on addressing a specific issue in the short-term? How will added value be brought about – joint provision of services? Joint funding of projects? Partnership with organizations external to the Agreement must be considered up-front, especially in terms of leverage (private sector and other government initiatives) and delivery (voluntary and community sector).
- The need to be clear in terms of funding contributions. Each Agreement has been different in terms of contributions – should each level contribute equal amounts? (a situation which may have a greater effect on municipal level budgets). Is funding to be new, in-kind or from a more effective coordination of existing resources?
- The need to establish clear structures for implementing the Agreement, with clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities at each level. Also, the need for administrative support and sufficient resources to support implementation. At the same time, over-bureaucratisation is to be avoided.
- Evaluation and performance monitoring must be an ongoing feature – both for learning ‘What Works’ (linked to the need to consider ‘What Next?’) and to keep implementation ‘on track’. Implementation should be supported by formative evaluation and/or technical assistance.

It should be noted that UDAs are simply *mechanisms* - not wholesale approaches, and certainly not panaceas for dealing with neighbourhoods. The ways in which challenges are tackled must always be context specific – addressing specific challenges and building on specific strengths. In this context, any agreement entered into must be flexible and allow for learning and adjustment so that lessons learned can be incorporated into the agreement.

One way this can be achieved in Toronto is to establish a framework agreement (see Figure 5.1) for the entire City. The framework agreement would set out a general set of rules and strategies by which neighbourhood revitalization can be achieved in Toronto. It would focus on establishing the means by which the municipal, provincial and federal governments would coordinate their efforts and achieve program alignment and support. In the first instance, the idea would be to achieve this within the existing program budgets of the different levels of government. Of course the make-up of the partnership (i.e. departments, individuals, programs and agencies of each level of

government) would reflect the precise strategy for revitalization that is agreed upon. For example, if the strategy is to deal with community health, then partners might include members of the federal departments of the Health and Environment, the provincial Ministries of Health and Long Term Care, Environment, and Community and Social Services Toronto Public Health and Toronto Community and Neighbourhood Services. Other strategic foci would necessitate other partners. As mentioned above, the key is to develop a strategic framework up-front, to decide on the most appropriate partners (including the way in which the community is to be engaged) and to bring about the coordination of existing programs and budgets. The Framework Agreement would include these elements, providing a solid foundation for action 'on the ground' in specific neighbourhoods. This approach would help avoid the delays in achieving concrete results associated with signing agreements in advance of the preparation of a strategic framework that have been witnessed in the Vancouver Agreement for instance.

Figure 5.1
A Framework for Multi-partner Funding in Toronto



Once the Framework Agreement is in place, separate agreements could be developed for specific neighbourhoods based on specific priorities and needs. In approaching the establishment of a UDA for Toronto in this way, the specific funding requirements of any particular neighbourhood agreement, that are over and above what might be available within existing program budgets can be identified and new funding sought.

The selection of specific neighbourhoods is potentially problematic. As mentioned above, there is a clear need for an evidence based approach using objective measures of deprivation, social exclusion and vitality. Research Product #3 of the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force entitled “Measuring Neighbourhood Vitality” goes part of the way to doing this for Toronto neighbourhoods. The research product provides a review and analysis of neighbourhood vitality indicator systems in place in the UK, US and elsewhere. Based on the review and analysis, a ‘vitality tool’ for Toronto neighbourhoods is developed focusing on 15 variables measuring across themes related to neighbourhood safety, the economy of neighbourhoods, educational attainment, urban fabric, health and population. The vitality tool allows for the identification of neighbourhoods facing challenges related to these themes. The research product does, however, recommend that the tool be broadened to include a wider range of quantitative measures but also qualitative measures of neighbourhood vitality related to themes such as such as community engagement and liveability.

In the context of an urban development agreement for Toronto, a more comprehensive tool should probably be developed to provide as clear evidence as possible of neighbourhoods to be prioritized based on the challenges they face. Once the neighbourhoods have been prioritized, the engagement of the community must be undertaken, giving them a full partnership role in establishing the directions any interventions might take. In essence, a full partnership role for the community recognizes that exigencies are local in nature and knowledge of the issues is most profound at the local level. As such, a full partnership role for the community is imperative. The lack of a full partnership role for the community has been mentioned as a shortcoming of the Vancouver Agreement. At the same time, a full partnership role for the community would work against a general tendency of power relations in the partnership tending to favour the ‘funders’. The review of both the UK neighbourhood revitalization schemes and Canadian urban development agreements indicated that this general tendency towards centralised control over the process was evident in both cases. This tendency seriously diminishes opportunities for learning from the community.

One way of obviating the potential for unbalanced power relations within a partnership is to include a mediation mechanism as part of the partnership arrangements. A mediator could ensure that the power relations do not tend towards favouring the 'funders', that all voices are heard (especially the voice of the community) and due consideration is given to all partnership members. In addition to being neutral, a mediator should have specific knowledge on neighbourhood revitalization in general and Toronto neighbourhoods in particular to ensure that informed, as well as objective, assessments of arguments presented by partners can be made. The United Way of Greater Toronto through its Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force could potentially provide the mediation expertise.

Although not formalized in the form of an urban development agreement, the process currently underway to achieve the revitalization of Toronto's Regent Park neighbourhood includes many of the elements mentioned above that should inform the development of an urban development agreement in Toronto. From the very beginning, the planning process undertaken by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation, (landlord of roughly 2100 rent geared to income housing units in the area) recognized the role of the community in shaping Regent Park's future, seeking community input at several stages, incorporating concerns and getting a broad consensus on the way forward. The community has been a full partner in the process.

At the same time, informal partnerships with federal and provincial agencies (e.g. the Federation of Canadian Municipalities regarding funding for sustainability initiatives to be incorporated into the revitalization scheme and the Ontario Lands Corporation facilitating TCHC's acquisition of land in the area) were formed and have been crucial to the successes achieved to date. That is not to say that an informal approach is the way forward. Indeed, the process has been confronted with a variety of challenges many of which may have had more orderly and timely solutions to them had a formal agreement been in place. This is particularly, true in the case of issues where overlapping and multi-jurisdictional interests were at play, namely the sustainability aspects of the redevelopment plan and the social development plan. In the case of the sustainability initiatives²⁶, the plan has required the cobbling together of funds from a variety of sources, conducting research involving stakeholders of all three levels of government and establishing a common purpose. Similarly, the creation of the service delivery plan involved accounting for the inputs of numerous agencies in order to create a multi-service delivery system for the area. Both of these initiatives could have

²⁶ Sustainability initiatives engendered in the Regent Park Redevelopment Plan include initiatives relating to water and wastewater management, solid waste management, material recovery and district heating.

benefited from the presence of a framework through which efforts could have been coordinated.

In addition, formal agreements signal the political will to achieve certain goals and objectives. As such, Regent Park offers a useful example as to how partnerships for neighbourhood revitalization can be successful and can inform how both an agreement for Toronto might be entered into. At minimum, an agreement for the revitalization of Regent Park coming under a negotiated Framework Agreement would see observable outcomes that could be evaluated and contribute to learning in a relatively short time frame as Phase 1 of a six part redevelopment plan is to begin in 2005.

At the outset, the Vancouver and Winnipeg agreements established evaluation criteria that were outcome based only i.e. designed to measure the success or failure of particular projects and programs in terms of the degree to which they met certain stated objectives (for example increase in safety and crime reduction in the Downtown East Side in the case of the Vancouver). Outcome based evaluation criteria are extremely important in terms of measuring the success of a project or program. However, evaluating the processes undertaken in an attempt to meet specific goals and objectives is also important. What about the processes undertaken, lead to the outcomes observed? Can they be changed? What, from a process point of view can we take from the success of one project and use in another? Can we do things better or more efficiently? Are the processes adopted leading to poor outcomes? These are all important questions that will need to be addressed in the evaluation of any urban development agreement entered into by the City of Toronto.

5.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the work conducted, we make the following recommendations:

1. Establish a Framework Agreement for Toronto as a whole that incorporates an overall set of strategies for neighbourhood revitalization in the City. The Framework Agreement would identify the most appropriate partners (including the way in which the community is to be engaged) and how to bring about the coordination of existing programs and budgets This would be prepared by the senior partners of the agreement at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government and will ensure full partnership status for communities as neighbourhood agreements are established.

2. Use an evidence based approach to decide on making arrangements for specific agreements for specific neighbourhoods. This will require broadening the scope of the neighbourhood vitality tool developed as part of Research Product 3 of the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force.
3. Use the Regent Park revitalization as the first neighbourhood agreement under the Framework Agreement to provide a laboratory for learning for the revitalization of other Toronto neighbourhoods in the future.
4. Identify a mediator that can ensure that power relationships among the signatories to the agreements do not become unbalanced and ensure the full partnership of all relevant stakeholders.
5. Establish evaluation criteria oriented towards measuring both outcomes observed and processes undertaken under the agreements.