Building Community Capacity via Place-Based Hyperlocal Engagement

REPORT FROM THE FIELD

The Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU) is an international affiliate organization of universities in large metropolitan areas that share common understandings of their institutional missions and values. CUMU was formed in 1989 by leaders of metropolitan and urban institutions who realized their unique challenges and opportunities as they looked to the future of higher education. With its founding, CUMU took the lead in defining the concepts of university-community engagement and stewardship of place. CUMU is dedicated to its member institutions and to the creation and dissemination of knowledge on the issues that face our urban and metropolitan campuses and the communities we serve.

CUMU Research Fellowship: In 2019, CUMU created a research fellowship to support inquiry that would identify, implement and evaluate innovative strategies to address regional opportunities, ambitions and needs. This report was produced as part of the project undertaken by 2019 Research Fellow, Dr. Lina Dostilio.

The Kresge Foundation is a private, national foundation that works to expand opportunities in America's cities through grantmaking and social investing in arts and culture, education, environment, health, human services and community development in Detroit.

The Kresge Foundation's American Cities program seeks to expand opportunity by promoting effective and inclusive community development practice in American cities. The program invests in three areas: knowledge exchange; surfacing, seeding and scaling effective and/or new approaches to community development; and Place-based work in Memphis and New Orleans

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Recommended Citation

Introduction and Key Concepts

Across the United States and Canada, many Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU) member institutions are committed to place-based engagements (Yamamura & Koth, 2018) and value them as a powerful way to connect the resources and investments of the campus to the development of communities in ways that foster mutually beneficial impacts. Enhancing the student experience through community-based learning and amplifying the impact of research through applying research findings locally boosts a university's ability to be relevant through its core mission of teaching and research. Adopting anchor institution commitments, such as inclusive and local hiring, building, and buying, enables a university to economically strengthen its surrounding communities and enhance the campus' community and governmental relations.

A growing number of institutions are embedding within their regional place-based commitments a form of engagement at the neighborhood scale and are connecting them with the community development agendas being undertaken in that community. These could be considered hyperlocal engagements (Dostilio, 2017)—instances in which community engagement efforts are focused on a bounded area, such as a neighborhood, within a larger city or metropolitan region, which align with that community's development goals. In some instances, place-based commitments lead to the development of shared spaces or physical infrastructure located within the community of focus (Barajas, 2016).

Adequately measuring postsecondary place-based engagement contributions appears to be challenging for many institutions. These engagements have been measured in changes to the provision of services, numbers of people served, and changes in specific outcome measures related to service (such as changes in third grade reading scores when a university-provided tutoring program targets reading remediation).

However, it is difficult to isolate the postsecondary institution's influence within an ecosystem of other influences on economic and social outcomes present within that place. Additionally, it is a mistake to assume that postsecondary institutions are equipped or responsible for such community impacts, alone, without ample capacity within the community for change efforts. This mistake amounts to the attributional error that has been documented within place-based grantmaking. Looking at the previous 20 years of community change initiatives (CCIs) in philanthropy, Kubisch and colleagues (2011, p. 146) determined that,

> Over the last decade, foundations and their partners have developed a better understanding of the 'attribution problem' and the difficulty of drawing a straight causal line between investments in community change and specific outcomes. This more nuanced appreciation of the complex and dynamic nature of community change has led evaluators to focus more on understanding how such investments add value and capacity, serve a catalytic role toward achieving desired outcomes, build on or accelerate existing momentum, help shape relevant resource and policy decisions, and leverage new resources and partnerships.

In order for an institution's involvement to complement and enhance the self-determined agendas of the community, it is vital that the community's existing capacities for change and growth be recognized. Community capacity is the interaction of "human, organizational, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of that community" (Chaskin, 1999, p. 4). Areas of community capacity that hyperlocal engagements may consider as important to their work include social capital, collective efficacy, sense of community, and readiness for change, among others (Ohmer, Coulton, Freedman, Sobeck, & Booth, 2019). These capacities can impact individuals, organizations or collectives, places such as neighborhoods, and also social level systems (Ohmer et al., 2019).

Noting hyperlocal engagement as a growing area of practice among its member institutions, CUMU commissioned a benchmarking study to catalog the diversity of hyperlocal engagement strategies and to investigate which areas of community capacity were of interest to hyperlocal engagements.

Survey and Report Development

To assemble a diverse array of hyperlocal practices, a survey was sent to CUMU members in the spring of 2019. An invitation to participate was sent electronically by CUMU's executive director, Bobbie Laur, to all 107 CUMU member institutions via email to all contacts listed for each campus. This could include a key contact within the president or chancellor's office along with persons from that campus who had been involved with CUMU through annual conferences and/or the Metropolitan Universities journal. The survey was designed to gather a range of quantitative data points on the characteristics and practices of hyperlocal engagements, and provided a few open-ended fields for respondents to elaborate on their selections and explain the purpose and motivation for their engagement. Survey items are summarized below in **Table 1.1**. Responses provided information about 35 engagements across 32 communities within the U.S. and Canada. Of these, 26 were hyperlocal in that they focused on a bounded area within a larger city or metropolitan region. The 26 instances of hyperlocal engagement came from 22 institutions.

This report offers a summary of the diversity found across the respondents' hyperlocal engagements, highlights areas of similarity, and provides some key insights gained from examining how postsecondary institutions approach hyperlocal engagement, and which areas of community capacity they are interested in documenting. Due to the survey design, a majority of findings presented in the following sections are quantitative, with qualitative findings offered only for purpose, motivation, and interest in community capacity. The report concludes with insights gained across the hyperlocal engagements CUMU members shared and a discussion of areas for investigation of hyperlocal engagement that CUMU hopes to pursue.

Table 1.1. Summary of Survey Items

Information Collected	Item Type
Geographic boundaries	Open-ended response
Unit responsible for coordinating institutional involvement within the hyperlocal effort	Open-ended response
Proximity of the hyperlocal engagement to the institution's campus	Multiple choice
Purpose of the hyperlocal engagement	Open-ended response
Motivation for organizing the engagement	Open-ended response
Length of time the engagement had been institutionally coordinated	Multiple choice
Length of time individuals had been engaged in the area	Multiple choice
Range of organizational and individual community stakeholder groups being engaged	Multiple choice (check all that apply)
Presence and nature of any physical facility and infrastructure that exists to support the hyperlocal engagement	Multiple choice
Areas of community capacity the institution was interested in measuring	Ranked choice
Explanation of choice of capacity	Open-ended response

KEY CONCEPTS

Hyperlocal Engagement: Instances in which a postsecondary institution has strategically organized community engagement efforts to focus on a bounded area within its larger city or metropolitan region in ways that enhance the institution's ability to form partnerships and advance community development (adapted from Dostilio, 2017, and expanded from this report's findings).

Community Capacities: Capacities for change and growth within a community, which may include (adapted from Ohmer et al., 2018):

- **Social Connections and Processes** (various types of connections among residents and/or their connection to a neighborhood or place, including: sense of community, social capital, social cohesion/ties, personal and social networks, collective efficacy)

- **Community Empowerment and Engagement** (civic engagement and participation, including involvement in neighborhood and community organizations, neighborhood activism, youth engagement in communities and sociopolitical control)

- **Community Resources** (awareness of and satisfaction with public services and facilities, awareness of community resources, as well as neighborhood satisfaction)

- **Community Organizing and Social Action** (participation and membership base, constituent leadership and power, organizational power, organizational wins, organizational capacity, organizational governance and ethics)

- **Community Readiness and Capacity for Change** (community capacity for collective action)

General Characteristics of Respondents

Survey responses provided information about 35 engagements across 32 communities within the U.S. and Canada. Of these, 26 engagements were hyperlocal in that they focused on a bounded area within a larger city or metropolitan region. Some of the responding institutions had more than one engagement, and some engagements operated across more than one site. In total, 22 institutions had a total of 26 engagements across 33 sites.

Table 2.1. List of Respondents by Institution and Hyperlocal Engagement Name, *listed alphabetically by institution name. Blank responses represent unnamed engagements.*

Institution Name	Hyperlocal Engagement Name
Augsburg University	
Buffalo State College	West Side Promise Neighborhood
CSU San Marcos	Oceanside Promise
DePaul University	
Drexel University	
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)	Near West / River West Great Place 2020 Anchor Initiative
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)	Indy East Promise Zone
Marquette University	Near West Side Partners Promoting Assets and Reducing Crime (PARC) initiative
Metropolitan State University of Denver	
Missouri State University	Center for Community Engagement
Rutgers University-Camden	
Simon Fraser University	SFU's Vancity Office of Community Engagement
Temple University	Lenfest North Philadelphia Workforce Initiative
UNC Greensboro	Community Centers Program
University of Louisville	Signature Partnership Initiative
University of Minnesota	Metropolitan Engagement Zones
University of Pittsburgh	Community Engagement Center in Homewood
University of San Diego	Envision 2024 (Within this singular hyperlocal engagement, exist five neighborhood sites to which the University of San Diego has articulated commitment: Linda Vista, Logan Heights, City Heights, Tijuana, and the Kumeyaay Nation).
University of Utah	University Neighborhood Partners
Virginia Commonwealth University	VCU Health Hub at 25th
Virginia Wesleyan University	Wesleyan Engaged: Center for Civic Leadership and Service Learning
Virginia Wesleyan University	Marlins Read, Marlins Count, Western Bayside Community Partnership
Weber State University	Ogden Civic Action Network
York University	York U-TD Community Engagement Centre

Hyperlocal engagements were dispersed across the United States and Canada, with one U.S. institution, the University of San Diego, operating an engagement site in Tijuana, Mexico. Figure 2.1, below, and available at **http://bit.ly/CUMUhyperlocal**, show an interactive map of these engagements. The interactive map provides greater detail on engagement sites along with more geographic detail.

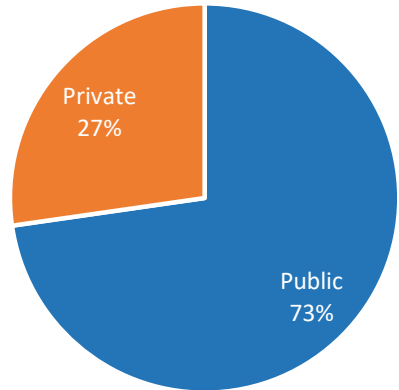**Figure 2.1. Interactive Google Map of all Engagements**

Source: http://bit.ly/CUMUhyperlocal

PRIVATE/PUBLIC SPLIT OF ALL RESPONDENTS

Of the 22 institutions that reported hyperlocal engagements, 73% are public and 27% are private.

Figure 2.2. Institutions Categorized as Public or Private (n=22 Institutions)
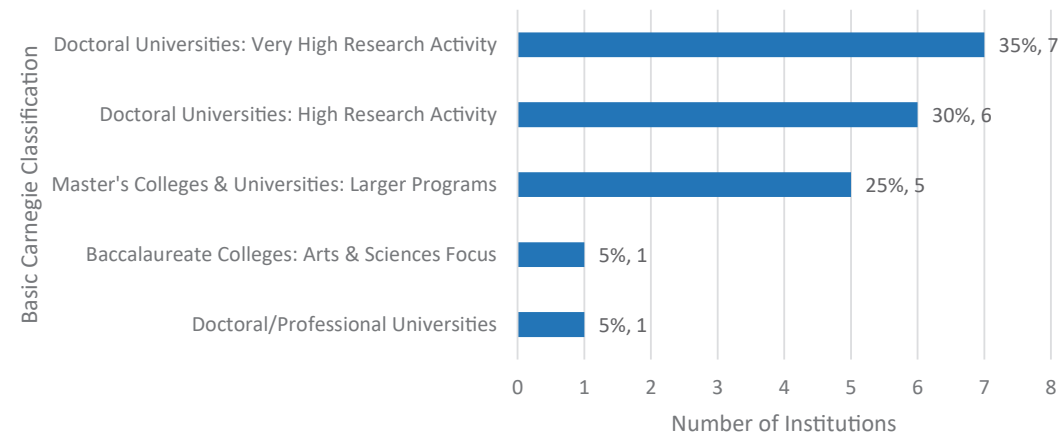
CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATIONS OF U.S. RESPONDENTS

Twenty of the institutions are U.S.-based, having basic Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching classifications. The majority of these institutions (13 or 65%) are classified as doctoral universities with high or very high research activity. Five (or 25%) are master's colleges and universities with larger programs, one is classified as a doctoral/professional university, and one as a baccalaureate college: arts and sciences focus. This distribution differs from all U.S. degree-granting postsecondary institutions, in which 10% are doctoral universities, 16% are master's colleges and universities, and 13% are baccalaureate and associate's colleges (Carnegie Classifications, 2018).

Figure 2.3. Institutions' Basic Carnegie Classification (n=20 U.S. Institutions)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CLASSIFICATION OF U.S. RESPONDENTS

Of the 22 institutions that report hyperlocal engagements, 20 are U.S.-based and eligible to apply for the Carnegie Foundation's elective community engagement classification. Of those, 85% hold the community engagement classification, while 15% (or 3) do not. As a point of comparison, 50% of CUMU member institutions hold the community engagement classification.

Figure 2.4. Institutions by Carnegie Community Engagement Classification (n=20 U.S. Institutions)

Proximity of Hyperlocal Engagement Sites to Campus
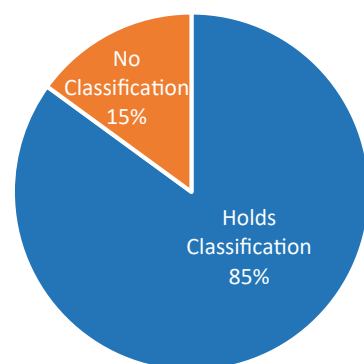
Respondents (N=33 sites among the 22 institutions) were asked if their campus was located within the geographic area being engaged, adjacent to the area as indicated by sharing one geographic border, or some distance from the hyperlocal site. Thirty-six percent of respondents indicated their campus was located within the area being engaged, 49% said their campus was located some distance away, and 15% engaged an area that was adjacent to their campus.

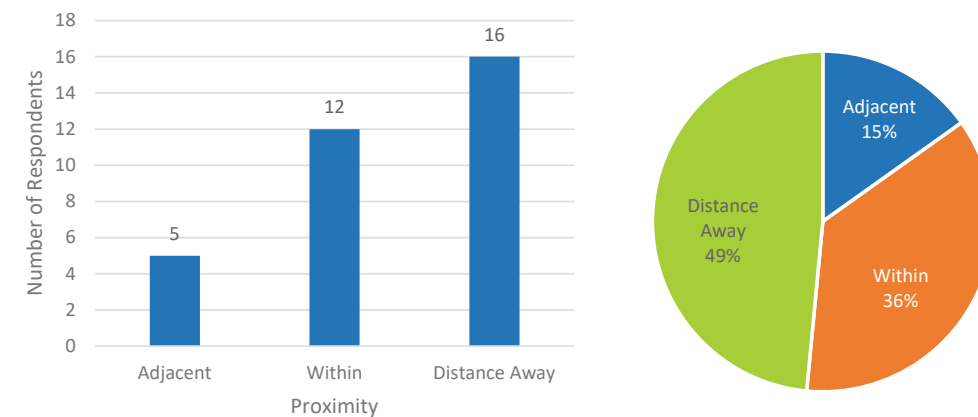**Figures 3.1 and 3.2. Engagement Site's Proximity to Campus (n=33 Sites)**

Figure 3.3. List of Hyperlocal Engagement Sites by Proximity

Within

- Augsburg University
- Buffalo State College
- Drexel University
- Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), Near West / River West Great Place 2020 Anchor Initiative
- Marquette University
- Missouri State University
- Simon Fraser University, SFU Surrey-TD Community Engagement Centre
- Simon Fraser University, SFU's Vancity Office of Community Engagement
- Temple University, Lenfest North Philadelphia Workforce Initiative
- University of San Diego, Envision 2024: Linda Vista
- University of San Diego, Envision 2024: Kumeyaay Nation (throughout San Diego)
- Virginia Wesleyan University, Marlins Read, Marlins Count, Western Bayside Community Partnership

Adjacent

- Metropolitan State University of Denver
- Rutgers University-Camden
- University of Minnesota, Metropolitan Engagement Zone: University District
- Virginia Wesleyan University, Wesleyan Engaged: Center for Civic Leadership and Service Learning
- York University

Distant

- CSU San Marcos
- DePaul University
- Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), Indy East Promise Zone
- Rutgers University-Camden
- UNC Greensboro, Community Centers Program: Oakwood Forest
- UNC Greensboro, Community Centers Program: Legacy Crossing
- UNC Greensboro, Community Centers Program: Glen Haven
- University of Louisville
- University of Minnesota, Metropolitan Engagement Zone: North Minneapolis (Near North and Camden)
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of San Diego, Envision 2024: Logan Heights
- University of San Diego, Envision 2024: City Heights
- University of San Diego, Envision 2024: Tijuana
- University of Utah
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Weber State University

DISTANT ENGAGEMENT SITES

Forty-nine percent, or 16, hyperlocal sites are located some distance away from campus ranging from one to 25 miles, at an average of 6.55 miles. While the survey did not directly ask respondents why they chose to focus their engagement with a community some distance away from campus, a theme emerged within the question related to institutional motivation: an institution's motivation to organize hyperlocal engagement in a particular geographic area is shaped by an awareness of that community's assets and needs.

Furthermore, respondents with distant engagement sites overwhelmingly cited specific community needs and desired impacts when explaining the purpose of their engagement. Desired impacts included "educational attainment of residents," "community health," "healthy commercial corridor," "connect immigrant and refugee communities with access to health, education, and social services and to help them integrate successfully," "comprehensive neighborhood revitalization," and "quality of life and economic opportunity."

To put this qualitative finding into additional context, geospatial analysis of distant engagement sites was conducted, comparing site location and tract-level estimates of social mobility, a measure of neighborhood economic opportunity. Social mobility is measured by the difference between tract-level estimates of children's incomes in adulthood compared with their parents' household income level, adjusted for the proportion of their childhood that children spent growing up in their parents' census tract (Chetty, Friedman, Hendren, Jones, & Porter, 2018). Geospatial analysis revealed that the locations of distant engagements correlate with social mobility measures: 13 out of 15, or 87%, of distant engagement sites located in the U.S. are located in census tracts with lower social mobility than the census tract in which the institution is located as indicated by the Opportunity Atlas (https://opportunityatlas.org/). The other two sites are located in census tracts with slightly higher social mobility, home to the specific immigrant and refugee communities that the institution seeks to impact. One site was excluded from the geospatial analysis because it was outside of the U.S. and social mobility data was not available.

Figures 3.4 through 3.6 illustrate the relationship between distant hyperlocal engagements and social mobility.

ADJACENT ENGAGEMENT SITES

Fifteen percent, or five, hyperlocal engagement sites share a geographic border with the institution. Respondents reported motivations to engage that include proximity, pre-existing connections, and recognition of "intertwined" futures. Adjacent engagement sites represent a small portion of the responses, so more research is needed to confirm the prevalence of these motivations.

Figure 3.4. Difference in Social Mobility between Institution Community and Hyperlocal Site Community (n=15 Distant Sites located in the U.S.)

Difference in Social Mobility between Institution Community and Hyperlocal Site Community
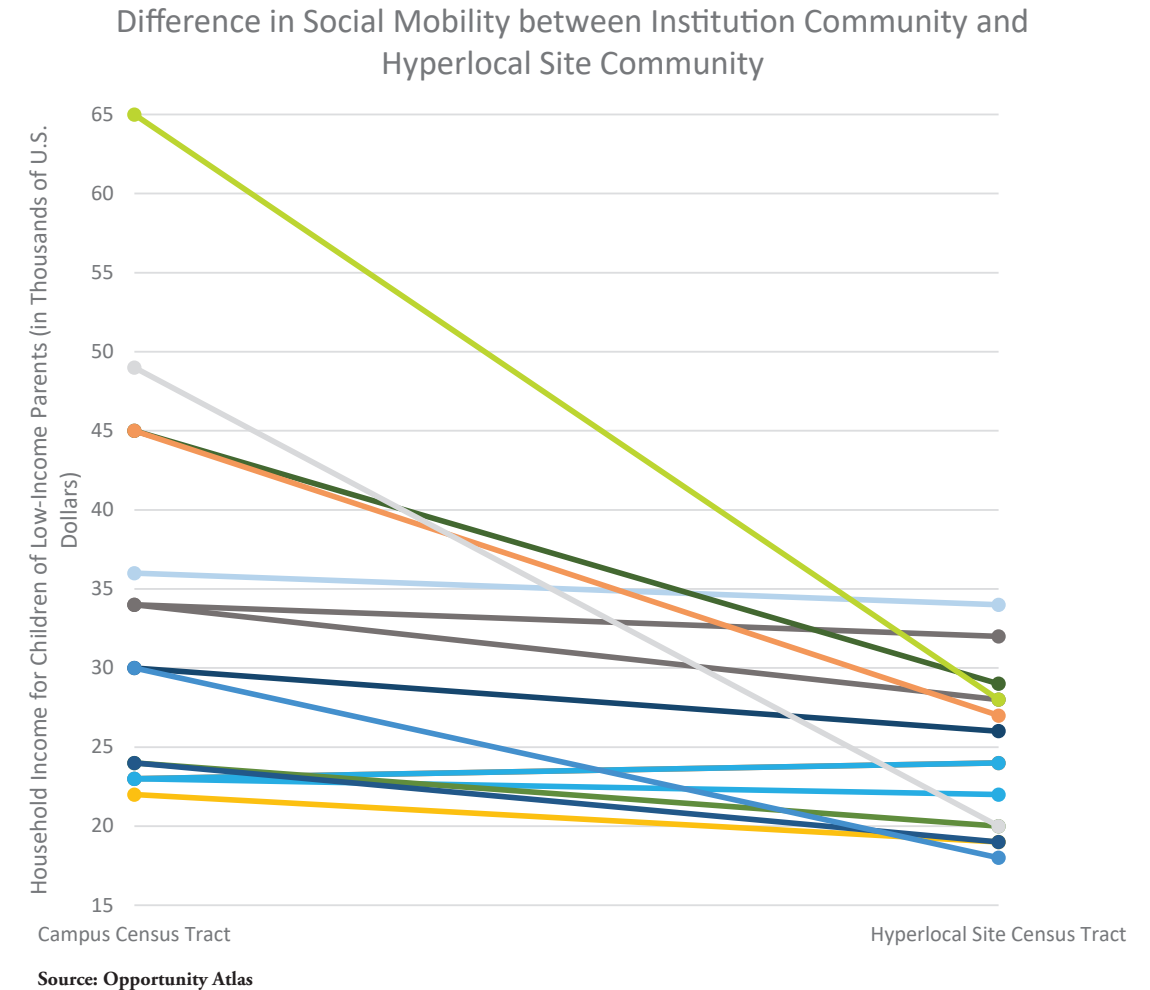
Source: Opportunity Atlas

Figure 3.5. Engagement between a Community with Higher than Average Social Mobility and Lower-than-Average Social Mobility
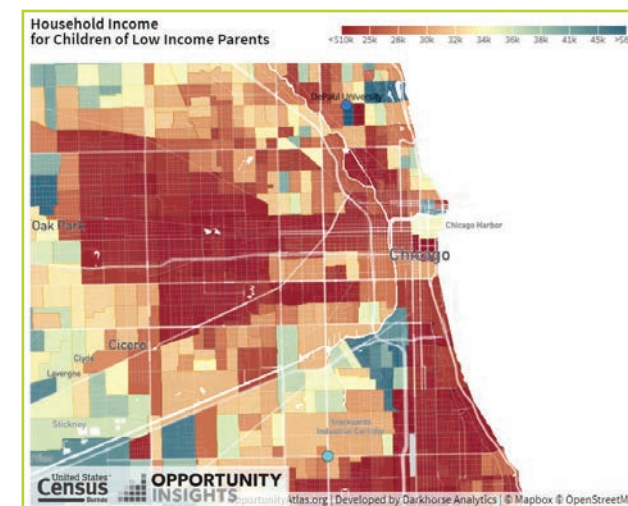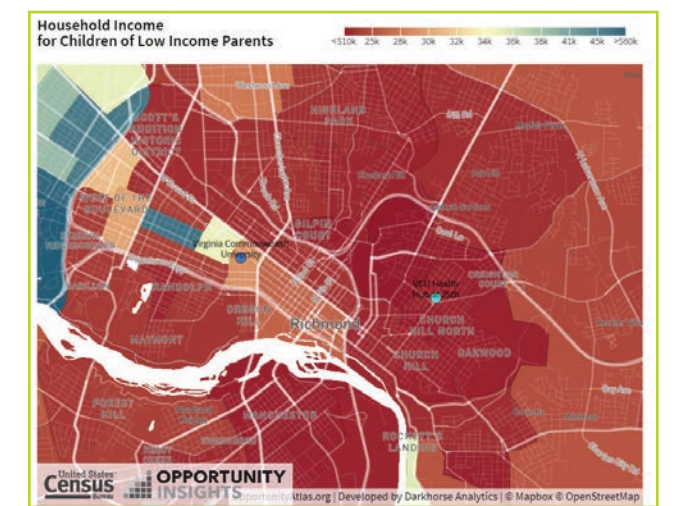

Figure 3.6. Engagement between Two Communities with Lower-than-Average Social Mobility

Presence of Physical Infrastructure to Support Hyperlocal Engagements

Respondents (n=26 engagements) were asked if their institution has a physical presence *within* the community being engaged, such as an office or entire facility, to facilitate their hyperlocal engagement. A majority (85%) of hyperlocal engagements were facilitated with some sort of physical infrastructure within the community being engaged while 15% were not.
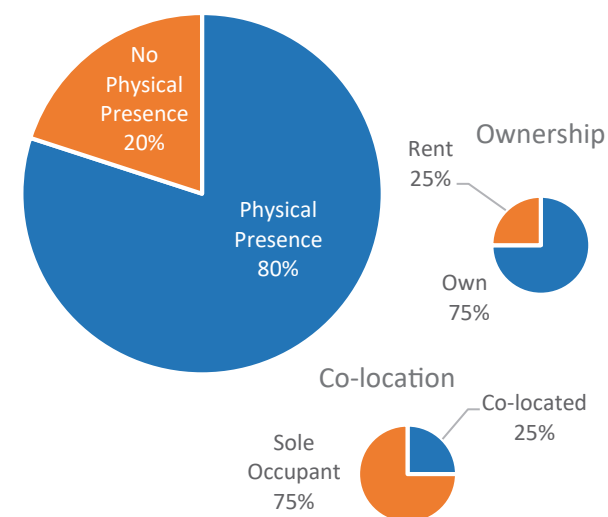
Figure 4.1. Physical Infrastructure of All Hyperlocal Engagements (n=26 Engagements)
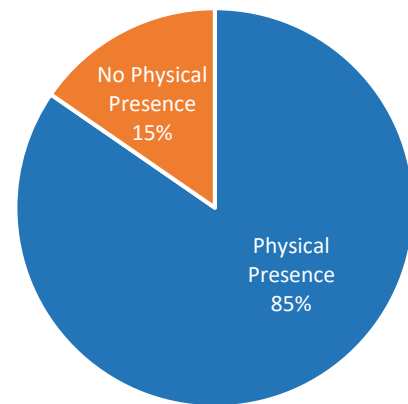
PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE OF ADJACENT ENGAGEMENTS

Similarly, a majority of hyperlocal engagements located adjacent to campus (85%) have a physical presence in the area being engaged. Within these engagements, a majority are institution-owned (75%) and sole-occupied (75%).

Figure 4.2. Physical Infrastructure of Adjacent Campus Engagements (n=5 Engagements)

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE OF DISTANT ENGAGEMENTS

Most hyperlocal engagements located some distance away from campus (70%) also have a physical presence. In contrast with the adjacent engagements, within these engagements, institutions more frequently rent the space (57%) and co-locate with other entities (57%).

Figure 4.3. Physical Infrastructure of Distant Campus Engagements (n=10 Engagements)
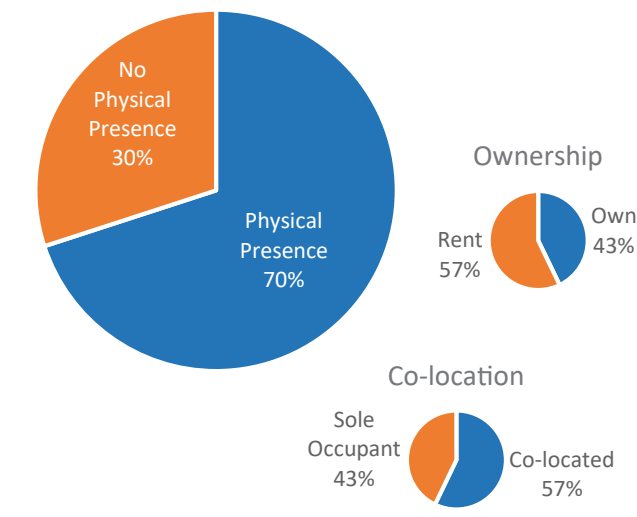
Length of Engagement

Respondents (n=26 engagements) were asked to provide the length of time that their colleges and universities maintained institutional commitments to the area of hyperlocal engagement and also the length of time individuals from their campuses had been engaged in those same areas.

Hyperlocal engagements have most frequently existed as formalized institutional commitments for six to 10 years. Meanwhile, individuals at these institutions have most frequently been engaging in this work for more than 20 years. Indeed, in 65% of engagements, individuals had engaged before the institution made a formalized commitment. Only in 12% of engagements did individuals follow the lead of the institution, engaging only after a formal institutional commitment.

Figure 5.1. Length of Institutional vs. Individual Commitment (n=26 Engagements)
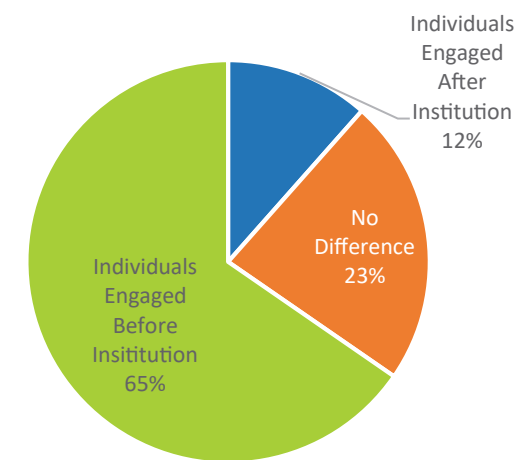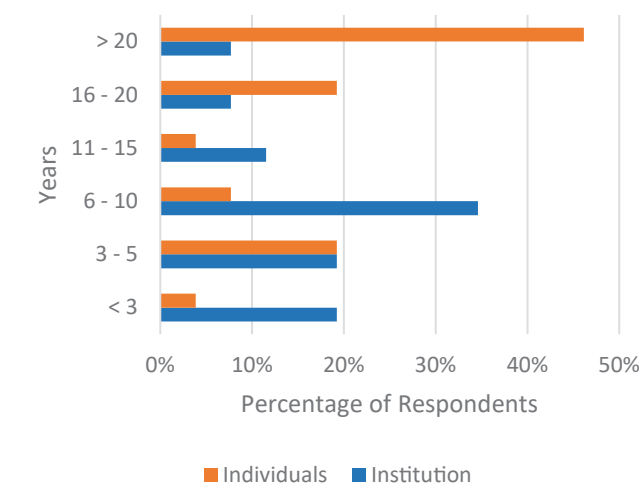
LENGTH OF ENGAGEMENT: INSTITUTIONAL VS. INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT

Among the hyperlocal engagements in which individuals engaged first, the lag in time before the institution made a formalized commitment varied. At institutions such as Temple, MSU Denver, the University of Pittsburgh, and Marquette, there was a longstanding history (of more than 20 years) of individuals engaging in these communities that preceded their institutions more recently formalizing the engagement within the past five years.

Among engagements in which institutions and individuals engaged simultaneously, the focus of the engagements, especially the newer ones (in existence for three to five years), tended to be more specific and targeted initiatives, including collective impact and Promise Zone initiatives.

Figure 5.2. Length of Institutional vs. Individual Commitment (n=26 Engagements)
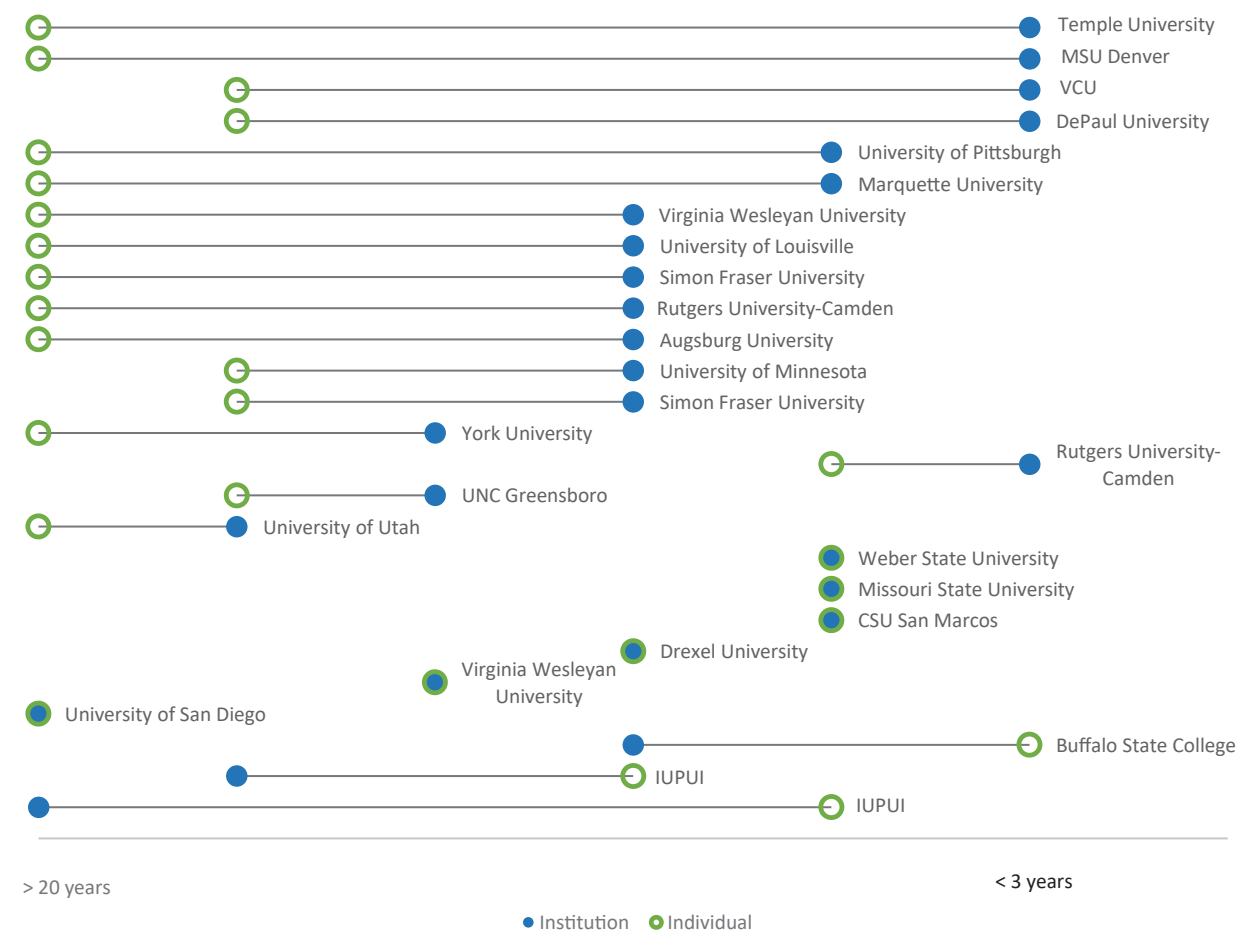
LENGTH OF ENGAGEMENT BY PROXIMITY

Length of engagement varied by proximity to campus. Individuals at institutions with adjacent hyperlocal engagements have been engaged for longer, on average, than those at institutions with distant engagements. Among all adjacent engagements, individuals had been engaged for more than 11 years. In a majority (60%) of these adjacent engagements, individuals had been engaged for more than 20 years. On the other hand, the length of engagement of individuals was more varied in distant commitments, and only 30% had been engaged for more than 20 years, while another 30% had been engaged for just three to five years.

Similarly, institutions with adjacent hyperlocal engagements have been committed for longer than institutions with distant engagements. Most adjacent engagements have existed as formalized commitments for between 6 and 15 years, while most distant engagements have existed for five years or less.

Figures 5.3 and 5.4. Length of Institutional vs. Individual Commitment for Adjacent Engagements (n=5) and Distant Engagements (n=10)
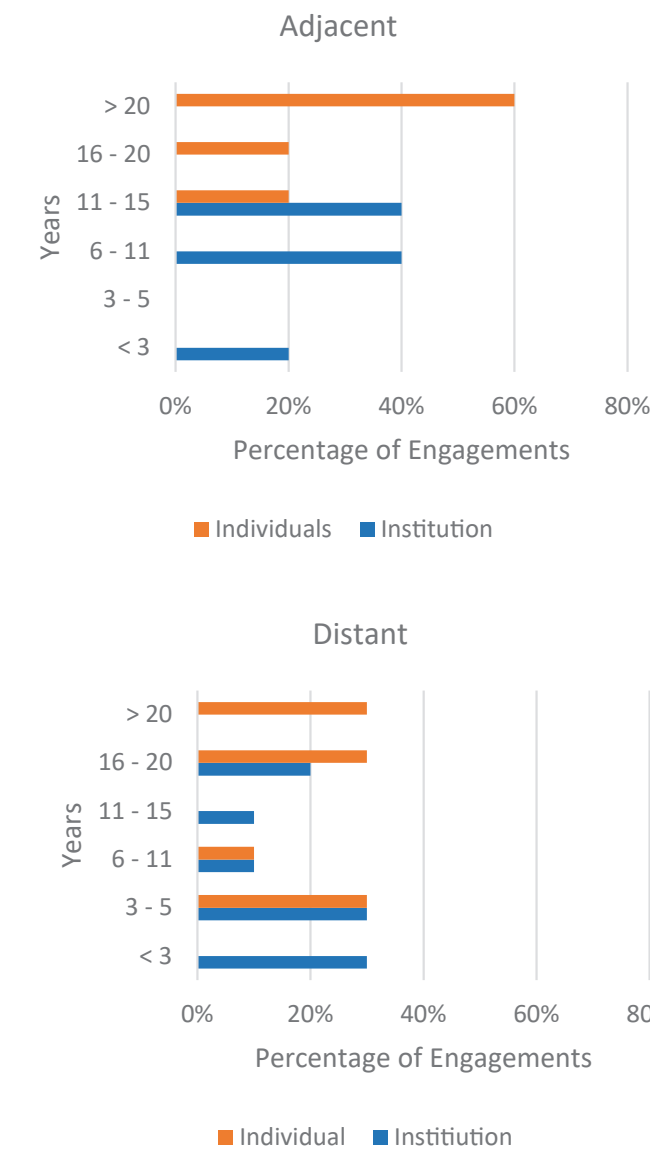
Institutional Reporting Lines

Respondents (n=26 engagements) were asked which campus unit was responsible for coordinating campus involvement in the hyperlocal engagement. A majority of surveyed hyperlocal engagements (54%) are operated out of units that report to the president or chancellor. To provide additional context, we put this into comparison with other analysis of reporting lines for community engagement activities in higher education. First, we compared with the annual member survey of Campus Compact, a national coalition of mor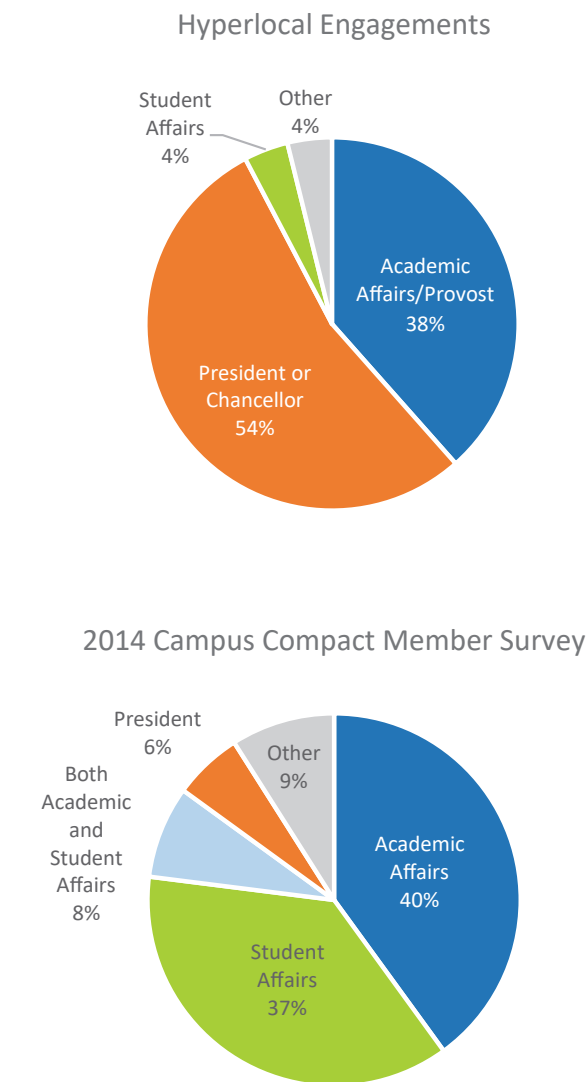e than 1,000 colleges and universities committed to the public purposes of higher education. Among the 434 Campus Compact members that responded to the survey, only 6% report their campus center for community engagement reports to the president's office (Campus Compact, 2014). Conversely, while nationally 37% of all Campus Compact members' engagement centers report to Student Affairs, only 4% of hyperlocal engagements do (ibid). Next, we compared with Carnegie-classified Institutions. Compared with centers at institutions that hold the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, hyperlocal engagements report to academic affairs about half as frequently as Carnegie-classified centers (77.6% of all Carnegie-classified centers vs. 38% of centers with hyperlocals) (Welch and Saltmarsh 2013).

Respondents with engagements operated out of units that report to the president more frequently described need- and external environment-based motivations, citing specific disparities, demographic changes, service availability, feedback from external stakeholders, or funding availability in their reasoning. This is evidence of strategic decision making. On the other hand, respondents with engagements operated out of units that report to academic affairs more frequently described philosophical and identity-based motivations, using words such as "calling," "mission," "should," and "believe."

Figures 6.1 and 6.2. Reporting Lines for Hyperlocal Engagements (n=26 Engagements) and Campus Compact Survey Respondents

Hyperlocal Engagements

- Academic Affairs/Provost 38%
- President or Chancellor 54%
- Student Affairs 4%
- Other 4%

2014 Campus Compact Member Survey

- Academic Affairs 40%
- Student Affairs 37%
- Both Academic and Student Affairs 8%
- President 6%
- Other 9%

Stakeholder Engagement

Respondents (n=26 engagements) were asked which parts of the community, or stakeholder groups, were being engaged by their hyperlocal engagement efforts. Stakeholders are defined as "people or groups with the power to respond to, negotiate with, and change the strategic future of the [engagement]" (Eden and Ackermann 2013). Respondents were shown a list of ten community stakeholder groups and asked to check all that they engaged.

STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Among respondents (n=26 engagements), hyperlocal engagements more frequently engage with communities through organizations and collective interests, rather than directly engaging with individuals. For example, while 88% of hyperlocal engagements engage faith-based organizations, only 50% of engagements report engaging the members of those organizations. One hundred percent of respondents report that they engage with community-based organizations. Governmental agencies were the least commonly engaged organization, reported by 77% of respondents.

Figure 7.1 Percent of Engagements Partnering with Stakeholder Groups (n=26 Engagements)
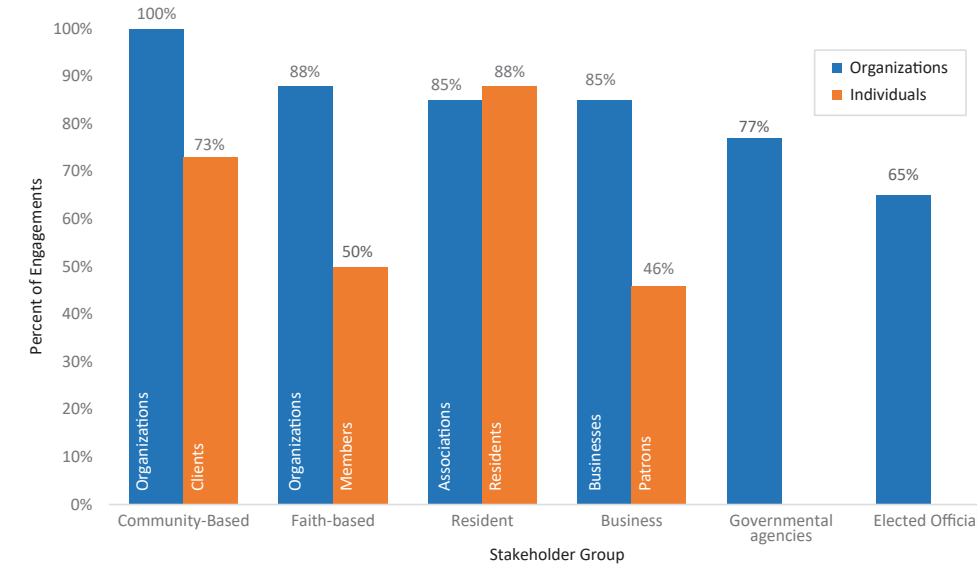
BREADTH OF ENGAGEMENT

A majority of hyperlocal engagements engaged with a wide breadth of community stakeholder groups: 52% of engagements engaged with eight or more stakeholder groups, while only 9% of hyperlocal engagements (n=2) selectively engaged with four or fewer stakeholder groups. Those outliers that engaged with the fewest stakeholder groups (<4) did not have physical infrastructure and reported engaging only through organizational channels, with a commonly expressed purpose of connecting students to service learning experiences. Both outlier engagements report to academic affairs, although engaging fewer stakeholder groups is not a trend across all academic-reporting engagements.

Figure 7.2 Breadth of Partnerships by Engagement (n=26 Engagements)

- 0-4 Stakeholder Groups 9%
- 5-7 Stakeholder Groups 39%
- 8-10 Stakeholder Groups 52%
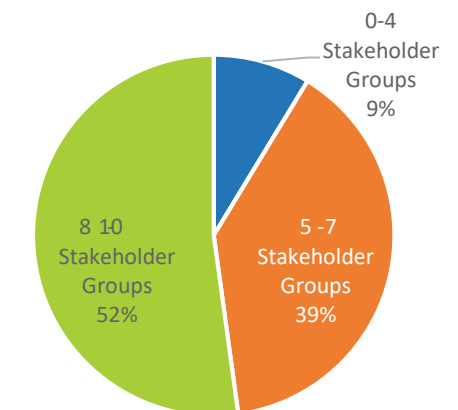
Purpose of Hyperlocal Engagements

Respondents were asked to describe the purpose of their hyperlocal engagement. Two themes were identified across responses. First, "community building and revitalization," and second, "enhancing institutional ability to engage." Institutional efforts for hyperlocal engagements are informed by an understanding of diverse community indicators. Examples of community indicators addressed in participant responses included improving educational and employment attainment, workforce development, improving housing, and health disparities. This recognition of community indicators shaped community informed development supported by hyperlocal engagements.

However, it is essential to note that participants indicated that, while hyperlocal engagements seek to support the broader goals of community building and revitalization, they also seek to expand knowledge production efforts through teaching and research at institutional levels. Their purpose serves the community and postsecondary institutions through place-based, mutually beneficial alliances. These alliances were often described as collaborative, collective, co-created, and coordinated in participant responses. This indicated how hyperlocal engagements are intentionally cultivated through resource sharing and a recognition of shared context. This second theme, "enhancing institutional ability" illustrates how hyperlocal engagement enhances the institution's ability to engage by deepening partnerships and providing a vehicle to mobilize assets university-wide.

COMMUNITY BUILDING AND REVITALIZATION

This theme explores how an institution's purpose for hyperlocal engagement is focused on contributing to community development.

It is centered on the role of an institution in community building with engagement efforts that are community-facing and community-informed.

Illustrative Quotations:

"In September 2010, SFU's Contemporary Arts program relocated to the historic Woodward's district in downtown Vancouver known as the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts. The geographic location where this campus is located, in the Downtown East Side, is a vibrant community, rich with arts and culture, but also experiences significant socio-economic challenges. The 130,000-square-foot SFU facility in this area is part of the Woodward's revitalization project. With this development, it was important to ensure continued voice and involvement from the downtown east-side community in urban revitalization issues, social justice, and community inclusion, which catalyzed the creation of the Vancity Office of Community Engagement.

—Simon Fraser University, Vancouver City

The Signature Partnership is a University effort to enhance the quality of life and economic opportunity for residents of West Louisville. The goal is to work with various community partners to improve the education, health, wellness, and social status of individuals and families who live in our urban core.

—University of Louisville

PARC's purpose is to revitalize and sustain the Near West Side as a thriving business and residential corridor, through collaborative efforts to promote economic development, improved housing, unified neighborhood identity and branding, and greater safety for residents and businesses.

—Marquette University

Temple University's Lenfest North Philadelphia Workforce Initiative (LNPWI) seeks to strengthen the earning potential of local communities by providing job training and career Readiness programs that result in outcomes that lead to sustainable employment. Through the support of a grant from the Lenfest Foundation, LNPWI focuses on creating career and workforce development in the North Philadelphia community, and provides opportunities for both youth and adult employment. By collaborating with Temple University, local employers, and North Philadelphia residents, Temple's LNPWI is a community-informed initiative providing resources and information to residents targeted in the eight ZIP codes immediately surrounding Temple's Main Campus and Health Sciences Center.

—Temple University

Our mission is to create comprehensive neighborhood revitalization through a place-based strategy that focuses resources on the East Central neighborhood in Ogden, UT. The Ogden Civic Action Network (OgdenCAN) is an alliance of seven anchor institutions, eight partners, many friends and 15,037 residents, all determined to create a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization in the East Central neighborhood of Ogden, UT.

—Weber State University

ENHANCING INSTITUTIONAL ABILITY

This theme explores how institutional ability is served and strengthened by strategic community partnerships facilitated by hyperlocal engagements.

Illustrative Quotations:

To develop a more intentional and coordinated geographic community-oriented approach to employing DePaul resources in support of neighborhood assets.

—DePaul University

To strengthen relationships with our neighbours through mutually beneficial collaborations that contribute to and enhance assets in the community and fit with our commitment to build a more engaged university. On a practical level, our Centre is a resource for university-community collaborations; we support community-based research; we broker opportunities for experiential education (students working with community organizations); and increasing access to postsecondary education among residents (identified as a community priority).

–York University

Our goal is to mobilize our assets institution-wide to improve community health and wellness, advance transformational learning, accelerate cross-disciplinary research, and co-create a values resource that brings together all East End residents to promote healthy lifestyles.

— Virginia Commonwealth University

USD is committed to intentionally deepening our partnership network to create equitable and democratic partnerships. Traditionally this has manifested in K-12 education, community economic development, health care, and serving as a catalyst for community development.

—University of San Diego

Motivation for Institutions to Hyperlocally Engage

Respondents also described what motivated their institution to organize its involvement in the particular area in which the hyperlocal engagement was situated. Two themes were identified in participant responses. The first was institutional recognition of community assets and needs. The second was institutional identity and infrastructure.

Central to nurturing hyperlocal engagements is the continued recognition of community assets and needs that energize community development efforts. For example, participants spoke of demographic and cultural diversity, community networks, and connections as assets while also drawing attention to community needs such as gentrification, poverty, and gaps in educational attainments. This acknowledgment of community assets helps to offer a counter-narrative to need-based deficient narratives that have historically shaped postsecondary institutional interventions in their communities. The emphasis on community assets and needs is integral in maintaining the ecosystem of a hyperlocal engagement.

The second theme, institutional identity and infrastructure, refers to the presence of institutional antecedents, such as historical context and institutional mission, which drive hyperlocal engagements. Participants spoke of their institutional legacy of engagement and alignment of strategic goals with public responsibility as motivations. Institutional identity also helped shape engagement efforts. Some examples of institutional identity were being known as an anchor institution, a faith-based organization, or a regional steward of higher education.

INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION OF COMMUNITY ASSETS AND NEEDS

This theme explores how an institution's motivation to organize hyperlocal engagement is shaped by community assets and needs.

Illustrative Quotations:

The Near West has a long and rich history as one of the oldest Indianapolis neighborhoods. However, this very diverse neighborhood also has experienced the loss of heavy industry employers, natural disasters from river flooding, years of redlining and disinvestment, declining educational attainment, and decay of infrastructure and housing stock. IUPUI has been active in this neighborhood for over 30 years through education programs, neighborhood development and community development programs, service programs and volunteerism, and as partners in education and neighborhood renewal initiatives.

—Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)

Existing connections in these neighborhoods and outreach from the neighborhoods to the university, as well as a recognition that these are areas impacted by gentrification and that struggle with poverty.

—Metropolitan State University of Denver

Leaders at the University of Utah recognized that the region's demographics were changing rapidly. The Salt Lake Valley was home to growing communities of color, many of immigrant and refugee background[s] and with limited economic resources. These communities were concentrated on the west side of the valley, including the neighborhoods of west side Salt Lake City, divided from the more wealthy and whiter east side where the University is located. They had many assets, but facing significant barriers to advancing their education. Few are enrolled at the University. The University saw that it had both a self-interest and a responsibility as an anchor institution to find ways to decrease barriers to higher education (e.g., issues of housing, employment, citizenship, schooling) and increase higher ed access for west side residents.

—University of Utah

The development of an SFU Campus in the heart of the Central City area in Surrey, along with the associated strengths, assets and needs in the surrounding community, catalyzed the creation of the SFU Surrey-TD Community Engagement Centre. Over the past 10 to 15 years, the city, particularly in the Central City area, has experienced a surge of development…. While this rejuvenation of the area has been positive in many ways, it also brings challenges. Development in the greater Vancouver area has been pushing low-income people out of the city to surrounding suburb areas such as Surrey since the 1970s which has resulted in a high low-income population in the area. In addition, the City of Surrey is a young, diverse municipality that is growing at a rapid rate. The city settles close to 10,000 new residents each year, approximately one third of the population is below the age of 19, and it is home to more refugees than any other city in the Province….

—Simon Fraser University, Surrey

Linda Vista, the community USD is located in, was experiencing a variety of immigration waves that started with Vietnamese and Laotian [immi-grants] after the war in Vietnam in 1975. In the early 1990s, Linda Vista was also a location for Southern Sudanese refugees after the war of Ethiopia.

—University of San Diego

INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

This theme explores how an institution's identity and infrastructure in a community contribute to the motivation for hyperlocal engagement.

Illustrative Quotations:

The future of our institution is intertwined with the future of our community.

—University of Minnesota

As an Anchor Institution, we have a shared interest with our neighbors in a safe, vibrant, and healthy Cedar Riverside neighborhood.

—Augsburg University

Drexel's current president, John Fry, identified civic engagement as a top priority when he stepped into his position in 2010. Drexel argues that working for the greater good is a core responsibility of institutions of higher education, and further that there, is a mutual benefit when a university partners with local communities to advance goals around learning, education access, and economic development.

—Drexel University

Temple University's history begins in 1884, when a young working man asked Russell Conwell if he could tutor him at night. A well-known Philadelphia minister, Conwell quickly said yes. It wasn't long before he was teaching several dozen students—working people who could only attend class at night but had a strong desire to make something of themselves. That legacy and mission of serving continues today. Temple University and the Temple University Hospital serve as the major anchor institutions in this impoverished community. Temple University is committed to supporting this neighborhood for the benefit of the community and the university.

—Temple University

Oceanside is in our University's service region; we have a guaranteed admission MOU with the Oceanside School District; we are the only public four-year institution in the region. All these factors influenced our decision to participate and engage with the Promise.

—California State University San Marcos

# Interest in Measuring Community Capacities

Communities exhibit a diversity of capacities that foster "healthy, strong, sustainable, and effective places where people live, work, and play" (Ohmer et al., 2019). To provide insight into how universities with hyperlocal engagements recognize the existing capacity of their communities and how they impact the capacities of communities through engagement, respondents (N=22 institutions) were asked to rank five capacities in order of interest. These community capacities, as defined within the benchmarking survey, are offered in Table 10.1, below.

Table 10.1. Definition of Community Capacities

Capacity	Definition
Social Connectedness and Processes	Various types of connections among residents and/or their connection to a neighborhood or place, including: sense of community, social capital, social cohesion/ties, personal and social networks, and collective efficacy
Community Empower-ment and Engagement	Civic engagement and participation, including involvement in neighborhood and community organizations, neighborhood activism, and youth engagement in communities and sociopolitical control
Community Resources	Awareness of and satisfaction with public services and facilities, awareness of community resources, as well as neighborhood satisfaction
Community Organizing and Social Action	Participation and membership base, constituent leadership and power, organizational power, organizational wins, organizational capacity, organizational governance and ethics
Readiness and Capacity for Change	Community's capacity for collective action

Specifically, respondents were asked to rank the capacities in order of how interested their institution is in measuring a particular area of capacity in the geographic area of its hyperlocal engagement efforts. The rankings of highest interest across respondent institutions (n=22 institutions) are presented below. Overall, Social Connectedness was of highest interest to respondent institutions, 37% of whom ranked it of highest interest. Community Empowerment was of next highest interest, receiving 27% of number-one rankings. Notably, no respondent institutions ranked Readiness and Capacity for Change as their capacity of highest interest.

Figure 10.1 Capacities Ranked #1, "Highest Interest to My Institution" (N=22 Institutions)
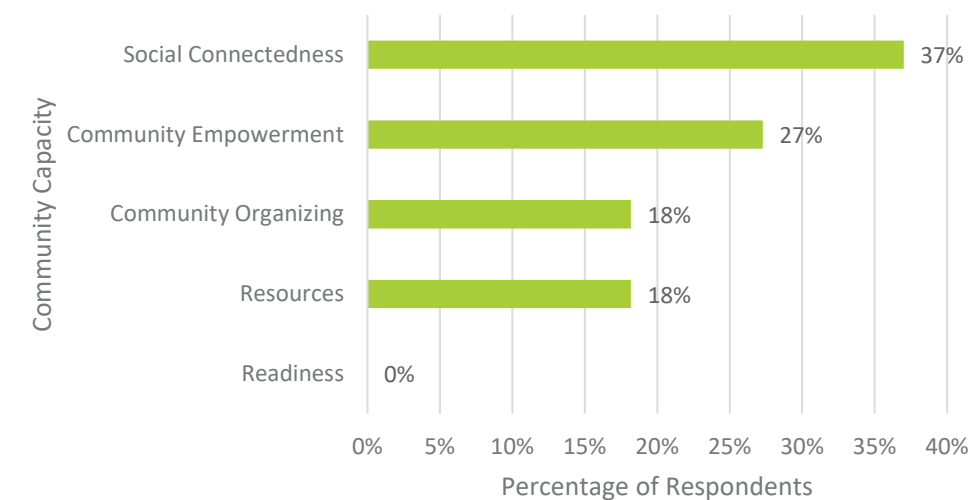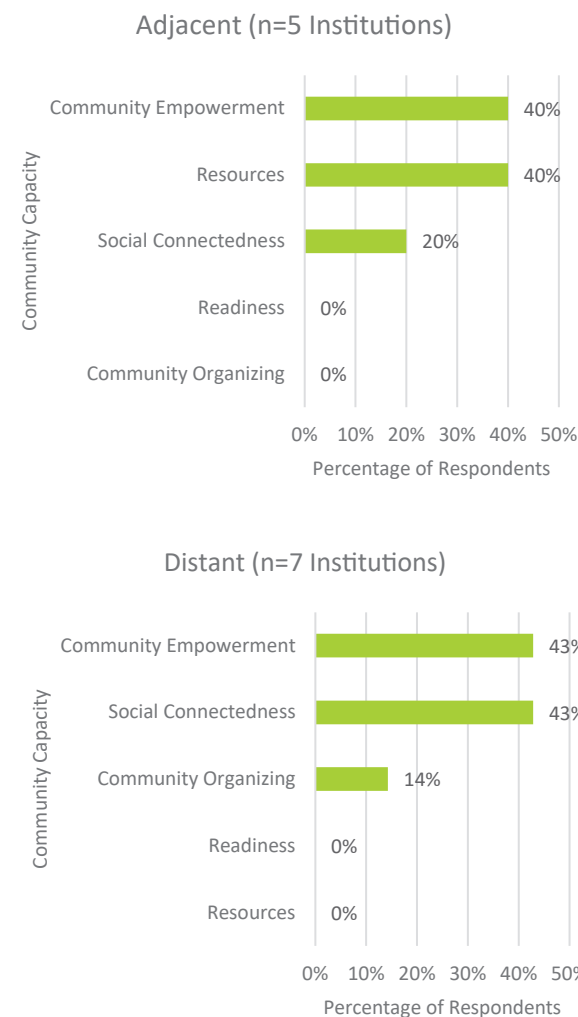
Social Connectedness was of highest interest to institutions with hyperlocal engagements that reported up to the president/chancellor. It was also of highest interest to those hyperlocals that had been in existence for less than five years. Finally, Social Connectedness was of highest interest to institutions with hyperlocal engagements facilitated by a physical presence in the area being engaged. These trends are explored further in the following sections.

INTEREST BY PROXIMITY TO CAMPUS

Community Empowerment was a common interest across institutions with adjacent and distant engagements (at 40% and 43%, respectively). Interest in Community Empowerment will be explored further in the next section, Interest by Infrastructure.

While institutions with adjacent engagements were also highly interested in Resources (40%), 0% of institutions with distant engagements were interested in Resources. One institution with an adjacent engagement described the purpose of its hyperlocal was to "contribute to and enhance assets in the community" and noted that the capacity of Resources "best describes the kind of work we are doing and will continue to do."
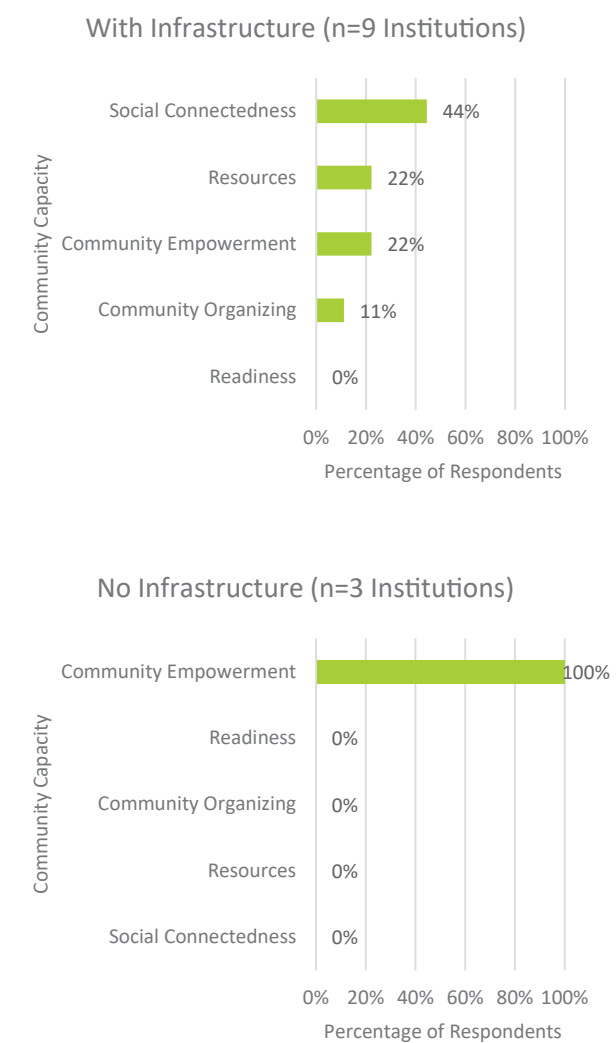
Figures 10.2 and 10.3 Capacities Ranked #1, "Highest Interest to My Institution" by Proximity

Adjacent (n=5 Institutions)

Community Capacity	
Community Empowerment	40%
Resources	40%
Social Connectedness	20%
Readiness	0%
Community Organizing	0%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%
Percentage of Respondents

Distant (n=7 Institutions)

Community Capacity	
Community Empowerment	43%
Social Connectedness	43%
Community Organizing	14%
Readiness	0%
Resources	0%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%
Percentage of Respondents

INTEREST BY INFRASTRUCTURE

Institutions with hyperlocal engagements, but without infrastructure, unanimously (100%) were most interested in Community Empowerment, while only 22% of those with physical infrastructure were most interested in Community Empowerment. When explaining why they were most interested in measuring Community Empowerment, institutions without infrastructure were focused on identifying and building strong partnerships with community organizations. One explained, "It is not driven by the University so we are not 'studying' the community. We are working in collective partnership with the community." Another emphasized "long-term engagement of service learning and internship students" and "community partners where their leadership is interested in long-term partnership."

Figures 10.4 and 10.5 Capacities Ranked #1, "Highest Interest to my Institution" by Infrastructure

With Infrastructure (n=9 Institutions)

Community Capacity	
Social Connectedness	44%
Resources	22%
Community Empowerment	22%
Community Organizing	11%
Readiness	0%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
Percentage of Respondents

No Infrastructure (n=3 Institutions)

Community Capacity	
Community Empowerment	100%
Readiness	0%
Community Organizing	0%
Resources	0%
Social Connectedness	0%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
Percentage of Respondents

INTEREST BY AGE OF HYPERLOCAL ENGAGEMENT

Institutions with newer engagements were most interested in Social Connectedness at double the rate (80%) of all institutions surveyed (37%). These institutions described Social Connectedness as a precursor to building other capacities. One respondent noted that, "People need to feel connected in order to engage and build trust." In addition, Social Connectedness was also seen as a precursor to achieving the engagement's long-term goals: "We believe that by fostering trust [and] social connections we will be better able to address housing, safety, and economic challenges."

Institutions with hyperlocal engagements that have been in existence (as formalized institutional commitments) for more than five years were most interested in Community Empowerment, Community Organizing, and Resources, while institutions with newer engagements were largely uninterested in these capacities (at 20%, 0%, and 0%, respectively). Institutions with older engagements use language such as "activating resident voice" and "make their voices heard" to explain why they prioritize Empowerment, Organizing, and Resources. Notably, 0% of institutions with older engagements prioritized Social Connectedness, suggesting that the more mature engagements may feel that they have already achieved Social Connectedness and are now using it to develop other capacities. **See Figures 10.6 and 10.7**

Figures 10.6 and 10.7 Capacities Ranked #1, "Highest Interest to My Institution" by Hyperlocal Engagement

Newer (< 5 Years) (n=10 Institutions)

Older (> 5 Years) (n=12 Institutions)
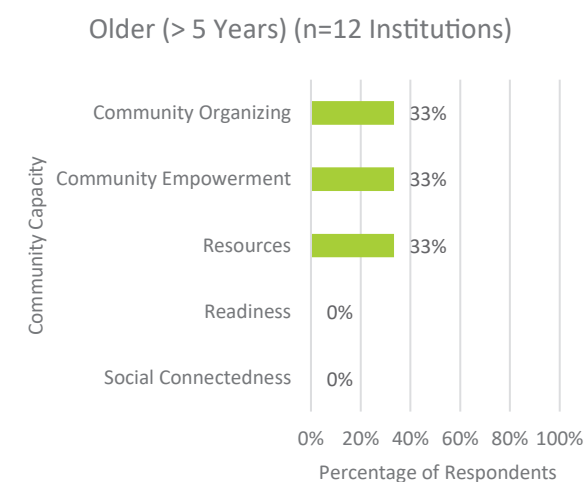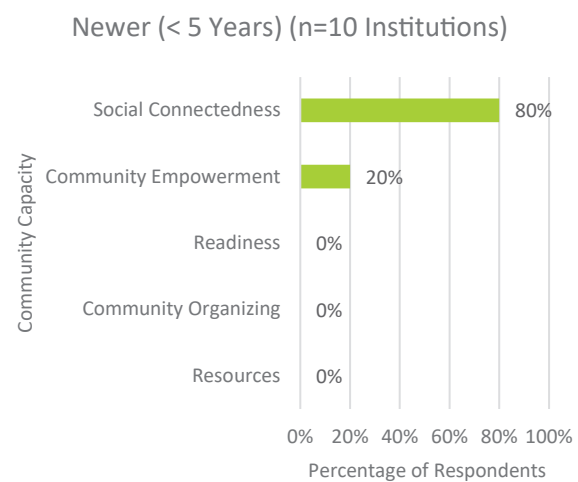
INTEREST BY REPORTING LINE

Institutions with hyperlocal engagements reporting to academic affairs were most interested (33%) in Resources, while only 9% of those reporting to the president were. These institutions did not express a common rationale for their interest in Resources.

Figures 10.8 and 10.9. Capacities Ranked #1, "Highest Interest to My Institution" by Reporting Line

Academic Affairs (N=9 Institutions)

President (N=11 Institutions)
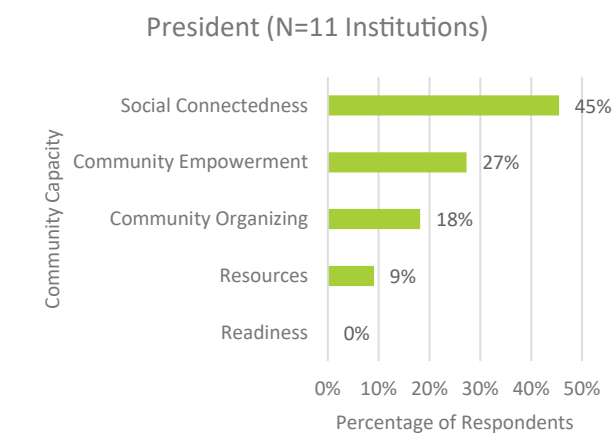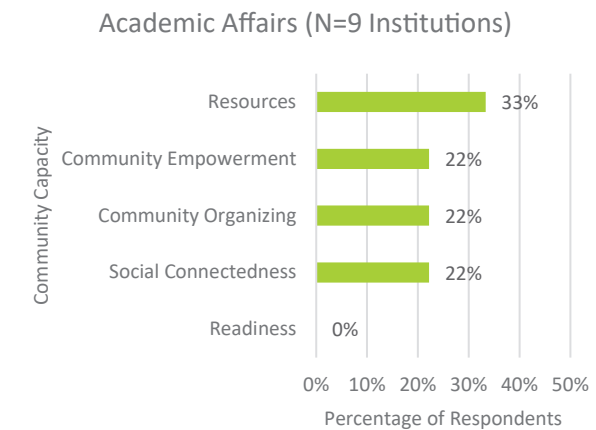
Profile: Back of the Yards Hub

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

IRWIN W. STEANS CENTER
FOR COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE LEARNING & COMMUNITY SERVICE STUDIES

PURPOSE

DePaul University aims to develop a more intentional and coordinated geographic community-oriented approach to employing University resources in support of neighborhood assets. Their Back of the Yard's hub exemplifies this work, as it is a blossoming partnership rooted in relationships and geography in one of the most storied parts of Chicago. Back of the Yard's is home to people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Located twelve miles from DePaul University, the Back of the Yard's hub brings the purpose of DePaul's community engagement goals to life, allowing them to have a deeper impact on the community and provide students with deeper learning, research and service experiences.

HIGHLIGHT

DePaul Graduate Student Serves as Local Middle School Community Organizer

An example of the way DePaul's relationship with Back of the Yard's community comes to life is through their partnership with the neighborhood's San Miguel Middle School. This partnership consists of layered courses, activities and a faculty institute to plan for future course partnerships. A three year graduate student serves as the school's Community Organizer and liaison for this project. The Community Organizer is at the school three times a week coordinating tutoring, getting to know students, parents and staff, and fostering relationships with community based programs. Through his work at San Miguel Middle School, he has been supporting efforts to open a neighborhood community center and to provide different courses and activities that are tailored to students, families and community needs, including arts, music, and educational programming.

WEBSITE

**www.resources.depaul.edu/
steans-center-community-based-service-learning**

Profile: University of Pittsburgh Community Engagement Centers

University of Pittsburgh

PURPOSE

The University of Pittsburgh's Community Engagement Centers, a key part of the University's Neighborhood Commitments Initiative, enable the University to develop and maintain sustainable, mutually beneficial partnerships that serve the neighborhoods of Homewood and the Hill District. The Community Engagement Centers are physical facilities that anchor long-term community-university partnerships, house the staff dedicated to facilitating collaborations and mutual agendas, and provide welcoming facilities that host community and university initiatives. Building avenues for strong community engagement enables the University to combine the community's wisdom and agendas with the resources and expertise of the University, and in doing so enhance the quality of life for Pittsburghers while enriching Pitt's core mission of teaching and research, which contribute to social, intellectual, and economic development in the Hill District and Homewood communities. The Community Engagement Centers facilitate programs that include health and wellness support, business development, educational assistance and youth leadership development, environmental stewardship, nonprofit organizational capacity-building, data analysis, and strengthened cultural arts.

HIGHLIGHT

Research for Equity and Power Project

The Research for Equity and Power Project is a partnership between the University of Pittsburgh's School of Social Work, Community Engagement Center, and Homewood Children's Village, a non-profit that takes a cradle to career approach to community building. This project engages Homewood residents as leaders to respond to development in the area that has impacted the quality of life of people who live there. It engages residents in a Community Based Participatory Research Project that fosters civic engagement in and influence over equitable development in the neighborhood. Led by Dr.Ohmer, from the School of Social Work, and Dr. Tharp-Gilliam, from the Homewood Children's Village, this project engages residents around civic engagement, development and equity, in addition to exploring what perceived power residents have to tackle issues of development that arise. Through this project, the residents have created an advocacy plan that they can utilize to impact development and neighborhood change in Homewood.

WEBSITE

www.cec.pitt.edu

Profile: SFU's Office of Community Engagement and the SFU Surrey-TD Community Engagement Centre

PURPOSE

The SFU Surrey-TD Community Engagement Centre offers programming in partnership with community organizations with a focus on supporting children, youth and newcomers to Canada. Over the past 10-15 years, the City, particularly in the Central City area, has experienced a surge of development, including the completion of the SFU Surrey campus. While this rejuvenation of the area has been positive in many ways, it also brings challenges as the development in the greater Vancouver area has pushed people facing economic challenges out of the city to surrounding suburb areas such as Surrey. The opening of an SFU Campus in the heart of the Central City area in Surrey during this time, along with the associated strengths, assets and needs in the surrounding community catalyzed the creation of the SFU Surrey-TD Community Engagement Centre. As a place-based entity, the SFU Surrey-TD CEC provides an opportunity for SFU to connect with people and organizations in Surrey in a genuine way through collaboration, the sharing of resources and the co-creation of ideas and solutions to build more resilient communities.

HIGHLIGHT

Early Learning Families Program

The geographic location of the SFU Surrey Campus in the heart of the Surrey City Centre community has provided unique opportunities for engagement and participation within the community. The Early Learning for Families (ELF) program is a partnership between the Surrey School District, Central City Shopping Centre and the SFU Surrey - TD Community Engagement Centre. ELF is a pop-up early learning program for children ages 0-5 and their families focusing on child-centered and play-based learning, parent engagement, and community connections. As the program takes place at the Central City Shopping Centre, in the same building the SFU Surrey Campus is located, it increases access to early learning programming for families who are not yet engaging with the school system. It also brings Early Learning activities out of the schools and into public spaces to promote engagement with new and under-served demographics. ELF is delivered by Surrey School District staff members with support from SFU student volunteers who benefit from the community-engaged learning experience.

WEBSITE

www.sfu.ca/cec

Profile: Karen and Tom Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness and Social Action (CASA) Neighborhood Commitments

PURPOSE

As part of Envisioning 2024, University of San Diego's strategic plan, the Karen and Tom Mulvaney Center for Community Awareness and Social Action (CASA) has five articulated neighborhood commitments: Linda Vista, Logan Heights, City Heights, Indigenous commitment to the Kumeyaay Nation (located throughout San Diego), and Tijuana, Mexico. Through their work, USD is committed to intentionally deepening their partnership network to create equitable and democratic partnerships. Aligned with USD's core value of community, the Center encourages students, alumni, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds to come together to build and join community. The Mulvaney Center provides individuals an opportunity to expand their community outside of USD and join the broader San Diego community. It recognizes the wisdom these communities hold and strives to be a part of them by bringing the University's resources and knowledge to the community. Partnering with neighborhoods, social agencies, and organizations throughout San Diego and beyond, USD is committed to realize the common good by building strong relationships and working co-intentionally with partners to create "common unity" through compassionate and reciprocal engagement. Traditionally this has manifested in K-12 education, community economic development, health care, and serving as a catalyst for community development.

HIGHLIGHT

CASA's Youth Engagement Initiative

CASA's Youth Engagement Initiative (YEI) recognizes the high-impact of place-based initiatives and their potential to help close the opportunity gap. YEI is a local immersion program that trains 80 work-study students to serve as classroom mentors for up to 10 hours a week at low-income K-12 schools in the Linda Vista community. A community partner also serves as a co-educator. Mentors are well prepared for this work as they are trained by community members and in Critical Pedagogy, Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Social Constructivist theory. In addition to their time spent in the classroom, the mentors support the co-creation of programs in the Linda Vista community that are in line with neighborhood needs, exposing them to learning beyond their classes. 80% of the Mentors in this program are first generation college students, students of color, and/or low income students. This allows the students they work with to see that college is attainable and also encourages students to build strong relationships with their mentors that results in reciprocal learning and empathy development.

WEBSITE

www.sandiego.edu/mccasa

Insights and Open Questions

The instances of hyperlocal engagement documented within this benchmarking report are diverse in their structural implementations, motivations, purposes, who they engage, and which aspects of community capacity they are interested in. Even so, some insights may be gained about how hyperlocal engagements facilitate collective institutional involvement in a community and how they may enable an institution's community development contributions in ways consonant with the existing capacities and assets of the community. Due to the limitations of this project, the insights offered here should be interpreted as specific to the group of institutions that responded to the benchmarking survey. This report is limited to 22 institutions reporting 26 instances of hyperlocal engagements across 33 sites. The insights are further constrained by the nature of the questions asked within the benchmark survey, which was designed to assemble the array of hyperlocal practices and structures, and asked only a few open-ended questions.

INSIGHTS

Respondents indicated their hyperlocal engagements were developed as strategic institutional commitments to particular places within larger urban and metropolitan areas. In many instances, there had been individual members of the campus involved in those areas for some time, but there came a point at which the institution made a decision of commitment, often symbolized by coordination across the many avenues of partnership and involvement possible within the institution. Such self-organization positions a university to leverage the breadth of its collaborators and resources across the campus. Having commitment to a particular community enables the institution to deploy the work of those collaborators and resources with focus. In essence, the practice of hyperlocal engagement, as described throughout this report, represents a vehicle for institutional, collective action taken in a coordinated and strategic fashion.

When asked to describe their institution's motivation to adopt a hyperlocal strategy, respondents expressed an awareness of the social, political, and economic challenges that faced the particular communities being engaged.

- For example, one respondent said their institution was motivated by a "recognition that these are areas impacted by gentrification and that struggle with poverty."
- Another described their community as having a long and rich history but also said it had "experienced the loss of heavy industry employers, natural disasters from river flooding, years of redlining and disinvestment, declining educational attainment, and decay of infrastructure and housing stock."
- For some respondents, they saw the future of their institution entwined with that of the community.

- For others, they felt that their institutional identity—as an anchor, as a faith-based institution, as an institution that served the public good—called them to be involved. When asked to describe the purpose of their hyperlocal engagement, many cited community development and community revitalization.

Moore (2014) suggests university involvement in a geographic community comes in one of three avenues: community and economic development, student learning, or faculty research. While most of the instances of hyperlocal engagement within this report blend all three, often exemplifying aspirations of mutually beneficial engagements, the repeated mention of community development and community revitalization appears to be a significant preference within the hyperlocal engagements included.

This raises a concern. Community development scholars have critiqued community and economic development approaches that position outsiders and investors as key decision makers at the expense of community residents. How then are the universities within this study centering the self-determination of community residents and leaders within hyperlocal engagements? The benchmarking survey did not explicitly ask about community-led decision-making related to the hyperlocal engagement. However, in reviewing the open-ended answers, respondents indicated that they are positioning their institutions as collaborators and co-developers.

- For example, one institution explained they "connect with people and organizations ... in a genuine way through collaboration, the sharing of resources and the co-creation of ideas and solutions to build more resilient communities."

- Another said, "With this development, it was important to ensure continued voice and involvement from the downtown east-side community in urban revitalization issues, social justice and community inclusion."
- Yet another respondent explained, "The University and west side neighborhoods share a vision of a community woven together through partnerships based on mutual empowerment, discovery and learning rooted in diverse life experiences."

We think statements such as these indicate that hyperlocal engagement is not a vehicle for universities to deploy expertise and resources in a unilateral fashion, but represent collaborative work resulting in shared public problem solving that responds to the agency and capacity that already exists within a place. The involvement of higher education in community development is not redemptive, but supportive; hyperlocal engagements are co-developed, through continuous dialogue between community and campus.

- A few respondent institutions exemplified a keen self-awareness of their role, describing themselves as "conveners."
- One "strives to be a trusted convener of dialogue on key public issues, creating space for respectful conversations, mutual curiosity and collaborative inquiry between diverse stakeholders."
- Another explains, "Our core purpose is as a convener, and our long-term theory of change is rooted in increasing reciprocal relationships and collaboration across residents, organizations, and university actors."
- In these ways, hyperlocal engagements enable a university to join with the existing ecosystem of community progress.

Further, across respondents, Social Connectedness and Community Empowerment were the areas of community capacity of highest interest to be measured. Social Connectedness refers to the various types of connections among residents and their connection to a neighborhood or place, including sense of community, social capital, social cohesion/ties, personal and social networks, and collective efficacy. Community Empowerment refers to civic engagement and participation, including resident involvement in neighborhood and community organizations, neighborhood activism, youth engagement in communities and sociopolitical control. These particular areas of community capacity are very focused on residents and to some extent resident involvement in neighborhood and community organizations. Eighty-eight percent of respondents (n=22) indicate their hyperlocal initiative engages with residents, 100% with community organizations.

OPEN QUESTIONS

Within this benchmarking study, hyperlocally engaged institutions value partnership and co-creation and feel resident-centered community capacities are highly important. There is a great deal more to understand about how these inclinations are being enacted and this prompts a series of open questions:

- What strategies were used to develop hyperlocal engagements in co-developed ways?
- How do the processes and activities present within hyperlocal engagement recognize and amplify Social Connectedness and Community Empowerment?
- What roles do authenticity, power sharing, and solidarity-building play in the ways universities engage hyperlocally?
- Does the proximity of the campus to the community being engaged (within, adjacent to, or some distance from) influence the institution's relationship to Social Connectedness and Community Empowerment?
- Does the presence of physical infrastructure change the institution's approach and how?

We would hope that institutions that are hyperlocally engaged know the degree to which Social Connectedness or Community Empowerment are present in the communities being engaged and the ways their partnered and collaborative work affect the enhancement of these capacities. Forty percent of respondents said they do not measure any area of community capacity. We followed up with the 60% (n=13) who said they do to request that they share their measurement plan or instrument. Only three provided their measurement plan in response. Universities can affect community capacity, both positively and negatively. Having a sense of how we are affecting community capacities, both from an impact measurement perspective and an ethical perspective, is central to hyperlocal engagement.

We think more needs to be learned about higher education's ability to be a meaningful participant in the growth and development of our urban and metropolitan communities through hyperlocal engagement. Specifically, more contextual information should be gathered from the cases within this report that help us to know more about how hyperlocal engagements are planned and governed such that they respond to the self-determinism of communities; how hyperlocal engagements are organized and implemented such that they enhance community capacities such as social connectedness and community empowerment; and how institutions connect their hyperlocal engagement efforts with their anchor institution agendas.

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