



RESEARCH REPORT

Equitable Development Planning and Urban Park Space

Early Insights from DC's 11th Street Bridge Park Project

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Equitable Development Planning and Urban Park Space

Though urban planners and developers agree that parks and other green spaces are essential to the health and stability of neighborhoods and cities, we have little information on exactly how these large public spaces shape their surrounding communities or how we can use them to ensure equitable and inclusive growth. Though a growing number of cities are converting disused open spaces to parks—for example, rail right-of-ways (Atlanta’s BeltLine), elevated tracks (New York City’s High Line and Paris’s *Coulée Verte René-Dumont*), and former industrial areas (Newark’s Riverfront Park)—it’s hard to find best practices to ensure local communities reap the benefits of these spaces. This report draws on findings from an implementation study of DC’s 11th Street Bridge Park to articulate potential lessons for the field on how to plan for, measure, and produce equitable results through developing urban common spaces.

Background and Context

Washington, DC’s 11th Street Bridge Park concept was launched in 2011 by the Department of Planning of the District of Columbia and is now a project of Building Bridges Across the River at THEARC (BBAR). Slated to open by late 2019, the Bridge Park is envisioned as an elevated space for recreation, environmental education, and the arts that connects DC’s Capitol Hill—one of the nation’s most powerful communities—to historic Anacostia—one of the city’s most distressed neighborhoods. The goals of the project are to

- create a healthy community by establishing a safe place for residents to exercise and play,
- connect the community with the Anacostia River,
- reconnect the neighborhoods of Anacostia/Fairlawn and Capitol Hill/Navy Yard, and
- generate new jobs and economic activity.

Thanks in part to the park’s symbolic geographic juxtaposition, park planners have focused on equity from inception, making the project an especially interesting case for deep inquiry and documentation. This report covers how 11th Street Bridge Park planners used community engagement

to develop the plan's recommendations, the benchmarks and metrics that will measure equity as the Bridge Park project progresses, and how the first phase of plan implementation is progressing. Upcoming products will continue to track progress and will focus on aspects of special interest to city planners, developers, and concerned citizens.

Equity in Urban Planning: An Overview

Discussions of equity in urban planning and development are not new. Concepts such as participatory planning were first developed as early as 1969 in reaction to the Urban Renewal movement, which sought to update and systematize distressed sections of American cities through top-down development projects (Arnstein 1969). Efforts associated with urban renewal included the concentration of public housing in isolated, high-rise developments and the full-scale demolition of neighborhoods identified as blighted. Critics noted that these projects disproportionately affected low-income and minority (primarily African American) communities and pointed to the exclusion of these and other residents in the planning processes for their cities and neighborhoods (Glasco 1991; Pritchett 2003).

A reaction to these top-down measures, participatory planning allows for increased voice and greater control by the affected communities. Rather than calling for a single change, participatory planning models identify a range of levels, moving from nonparticipation through “tokenistic” practices, such as informing and placation, to true participatory planning, which may include citizen-government partnership, delegated power, or direct citizen control. Later adaptations of this concept include incorporating the disproportionate impact of pollution or environmental degradation on certain communities (i.e., environmental justice) or the long-term social, economic, and environmental viability of a city or community (i.e., sustainability) into the planning process (Campbell 1996; Coburn 2003).

There is surprisingly little discussion on how to evaluate outcomes of development in terms of equity. Evaluations that do exist tend to focus on process; they examine the steps taken to include community voices in planning, sometimes going as far as asking how well the final plan reflects the community's stated interests. Best practices for equitable development are likewise process oriented. One example, the Unified New Orleans Plan—developed in 2006 as a post-Katrina recovery plan—was touted as a gold standard in community engagement and equity (American Institute of Architects 2008). However, the plan is also considered a failure. The multiplicity of voices meant that there was no cohesive, overarching vision and no one with ultimate responsibility for results. As such, other business interests dominated recovery in New Orleans, increasing economic disparity and leaving many parts of the city behind (Dreier 2006; Ross and Ross 2008; Seidman 2013).¹

Because parks are explicitly designated as spaces for the common good, urban park planning can present unique, even ironic, challenges to urban planners who wish to ensure equity. When properly designed, parks provide safe spaces for recreation and build communities through interaction and organized activities; they can also help stabilize distressed neighborhoods, reduce crime, and inspire increased local investment (Chiesura 2004; Lewis 2002). Yet, parks can be “shiny objects” for overheated residential development in the neighborhoods that surround them, restricting access to only those most able to afford nearby dwellings. The High Line in New York, a project structurally similar to the 11th Street Bridge Park, increased property values near the park 103 percent between 2003 and 2011 (Huynh et al. 2011). Moreover, local businesses that have served those communities for many years are now closing or feeling financial strain.² Organizers of Atlanta’s BeltLine have also expressed concerns about gentrification in neighborhoods bordering the trail that will connect neighborhoods in a loop around the city (Atlanta BeltLine Partnership 2013).

Community Change in the District of Columbia

Washington, DC, has a long and controversial history of community change—a history that has often featured large-scale displacement and exclusion of different ethnic, racial, and income groups. Tensions over who “owns” DC are as old as the city.

Founded in 1790, DC grew slowly for 70 years. As late as 1860, fewer than 100,000 people lived in the city, and almost all of them were white. Population growth accelerated from the Civil War through World War I, hitting an all-time peak of 802,000 people by 1950. During the 1950s and 1960s, the white population fell by over 300,000; by the late 1950s, DC had become a majority-black city. The black population fell steadily from 538,000 in 1970 to 309,000 in 2010. In the 1980s, the white population stabilized, and Latinos and Asians began moving into the city. During the first decade of the 21st century, 50,000 more whites, 9,700 more Latinos, and 7,900 more Asians moved to DC. Black households continued to leave, but the combined number of new residents had reversed the city’s population decline. Today, DC is one of the few US cities where growth is driven by an influx of whites, rather than Latinos, Asians, or immigrants, and, according to 2010 census data the share of DC’s population that is African American is 51%, only just barely still a majority (Tatian & Lei 2015). And by some estimates, DC ceased to be a black majority city by 2011 (Tavernise 2011).

On average, DC is also getting wealthier and younger, mostly on account of an influx of highly educated young adults. From 2000 to 2010, the city’s 18- to 34-year-old population grew by roughly 37,000; it now makes up 35 percent of the population (compared with 23 percent of the US population),

and is growing in nearly every part of the city (Tatian and Lei 2016). Although the poverty rate has remained roughly the same (approximately 18 percent) across the city, average family income has risen about 21 percent from about \$102,000 in 2000 to about \$124,000 in 2012 (Urban Institute 2016b).

A brief look at demographic change in two historic communities, Georgetown and Anacostia, illustrates the challenging history planners of projects like the 11th Street Bridge Park must overcome to achieve measurable outcomes that disparate constituencies will agree are equitable. Both communities share common roots as 17th-century riverside villages inhabited by the Nacotchtank, a native Algonquian people (Burr 1920). After most of the tribe was either displaced or decimated by European aggression and disease, the remaining members temporarily relocated to Anacostine Island (now called Theodore Roosevelt Island) and were likely absorbed into the larger Piscataway tribe of the Chesapeake Bay region.

Georgetown became a large and infamous slave port. Following the Civil War, the area remained a gritty industrial port community composed of mostly black working-class residents. The community retained this profile until just after World War I, when young white professionals began to buy up Georgetown's inexpensive riverside housing stock. Escalating housing prices and exclusionary policies and practices are widely cited as having pushed and kept African Americans out of Georgetown ever since.³ Today, Georgetown has the lowest share of black residents (2.4 percent) and the highest median home sale price (\$1,733,000) in the city. The average annual income of Georgetown residents is \$350,000 (Urban Institute 2016a).

The demographic development of historic Anacostia, located on the east bank of the prospective site for the Bridge Park, follows a different path. By the mid-19th century, the area had left behind its own Nacotchtank beginnings to become incorporated as Uniontown, a largely white working-class enclave that housed workers from the nearby Washington Navy Yard. Exclusionary covenants prohibited the sale, rental, or lease of Uniontown property to anyone of African or Irish descent (National Park Service 2016b). Interestingly, in 1877, the famed abolitionist and orator Frederick Douglass became one of the first African Americans to own property in the neighborhoods just outside Uniontown when he bought Cedar Hill, an estate that originally belonged to the developer of Uniontown and lay just beyond the reach of the covenants (National Park Service 2016a).

Anacostia remained predominantly white until after World War II, when millions of African Americans from the rural south flooded north in search of better economic prospects during the Great Migration. Several positive factors attracted migrating African Americans to DC, particularly to Anacostia and other "east-of-the-river" neighborhoods. First, southern migrants were drawn to the

social and civic capital already created by a small and influential community of African Americans, many of whom already lived in greater Anacostia in family homes established by free blacks, who had settled there before the Civil War. Second, the federal government's conversion of DC public schools into the nation's first fully integrated school system in 1950 beckoned families hopeful for better educational opportunities for their children than could be found in the Deep South. Partly in response to this influx, DC city planners enacted exclusionary practices and policies that produced the controversial Anacostia Freeway and massive public housing communities, such as Anacostia's Barry Farm, throughout Wards 7 and 8. Projects like these had the net effect of driving many of the city's African American residents into neighborhoods of concentrated poverty found on the city's east side and cutting them off from the amenities, services, and job opportunities found in the city's growing neighborhoods to the west, such as Capitol Hill and Georgetown. White flight and the eventual out-migration of many middle-class blacks who could afford to move stripped Ward 7 and 8 neighborhoods of wealth and municipal investment over the second half of the 20th century (History of Anacostia 2007).

Today, historic Anacostia is about 97 percent black, and its poverty rate (46 percent) is about two and a half times the city average. Although these data suggest little is changing in the neighborhood, affordable housing advocates argue that high housing prices in other areas of the city, such as in the trendy H Street Corridor, and increasing investment in Anacostia by government actors—such as the US Department of Homeland Security, which is consolidating on the St. Elizabeth's Hospital campus, located in the neighboring Congress Heights neighborhood—have already made the dwelling places of historic Anacostia residents attractive to housing speculators. Some data suggest that the local housing market may already be heating up. The median homes sales price in Anacostia increased from \$221,000 in 2010 to \$377,000 in 2015 (Urban Institute 2016a). And while renters throughout the city are significantly burdened by housing costs—nearly a quarter pay 50 percent or more of their income for rent—historic Anacostia is among only a handful of DC neighborhoods where over 40 percent of the population is this rent burdened (Tatian et al 2015).

DC's 11th Street Bridge Park: Planning for Equity

Urban planners often mistakenly assume that inclusive planning—bringing together local stakeholders to advise on development goals—will generate inclusive economic benefits. Take the High Line project. From open ideas and design competitions to community meetings and transparent planning processes, the High Line was a community-driven urban revitalization project (David and Hammond 2011). Yet, the process failed to anticipate or address the significant levels of residential and commercial displacement

the project has since inspired. Although the project generated \$2 billion in real estate investment and 12,000 new jobs in the neighborhood, very few of the area's original small businesses and low-income residents remain to enjoy these benefits directly.⁴

The 11th Street Bridge Park also began with an extraordinarily inclusive planning process that has imprinted the creativity and culture of surrounding communities on the park's design. The project differs from most other urban development efforts, however, in that its organizers have tried to bake equitable development into its design and implementation plans from early in the project's planning—well before construction has even begun. In commissioning this study to follow the Bridge Park's process of equitable development planning and implementation over time, Bridge Park leaders hope to learn as they go and document a process that can be used elsewhere in DC and in other urban contexts to ensure that those who start out living near a large economic development site end up reaping its benefits long after that site has come to fruition.

Origins of the Park

In 2009, the DC Department of Transportation began replacing the 11th Street river bridge that connects DC's Capitol Hill and historic Anacostia neighborhoods. Harriet Tregoning, the city's director of planning, saw a way to repurpose the defunct urban infrastructure into a privately operated, publicly owned park that would traverse a historically divisive social and economic barrier, the Anacostia River.⁵ Tregoning shared her idea with Scott Kratz, vice president of education at the National Building Museum, who volunteered to field and gauge interest in the idea by presenting at over 200 community meetings from 2011 to 2013. According to Kratz, these meetings were “just to see if anybody cared about this—if it had legs, if it was viable. From there it was me, the volunteer, going out and doing research on the civic associations, ANCs (advisory neighborhood commissions), community leaders, church leaders, business owners—anyone we can talk with to have deeper conversations to see if this can continue to have legs.”

As the Bridge Park vision materialized on the front end, Kratz and Tregoning began to consider how and by whom the park should be managed on the back end. Rather than turn the project over to community-level activists, developers, or city government—the most typical leaders of urban development projects—Kratz and Tregoning reached out to BBAR, the DC nonprofit that manages the highly lauded Ward 8-based Town Hall Education Arts Recreation Campus (THEARC). During early negotiations with executive director Edmund Fleet, it became clear that BBAR was the ideal organization to shepherd the Bridge Park project forward, because it (1) is physically located east of the

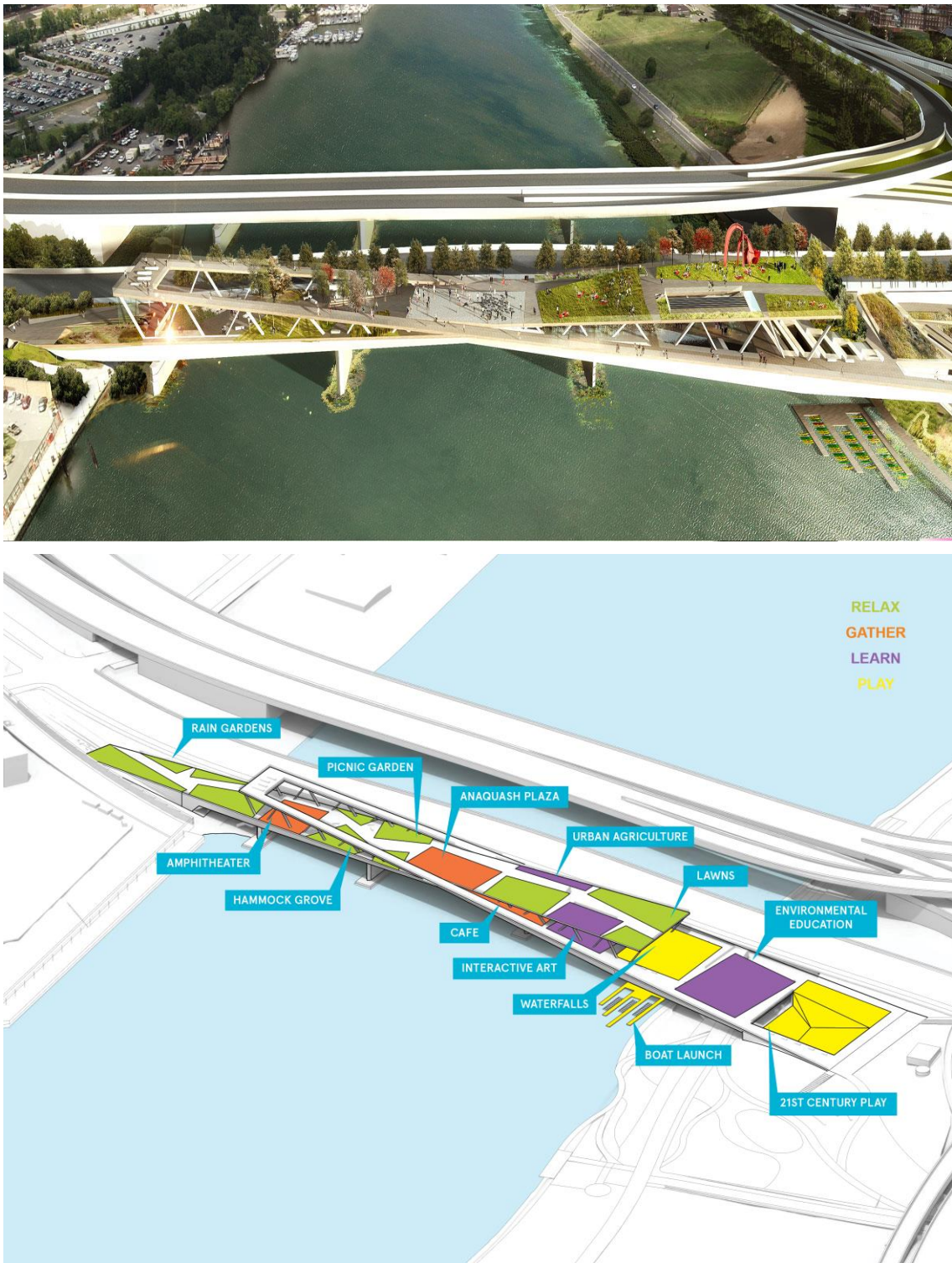
Anacostia River, which is critically and symbolically important to the Bridge Park's core aim to bring together historically divided communities; (2) shares similar goals with the Bridge Park in that both entities seek to revitalize distressed east-of-the-river communities through equitable inclusion; (3) has a proven track record of serving local low-income neighbors (e.g., through Covenant House's Supportive Housing Program for youth with special needs and the National Children's Medical Center's Children's Health Project of DC) and fostering interactions across income strata (it is not unusual to see the children of members of Congress dancing alongside children from public housing in on-site workshops offered by the Washington Ballet); and (4) would offer the still-speculative Bridge Park venture a credible fiscal footing, given that BBAR raised 27 million public and private dollars to build THEARC shortly after its launch in 2005.

In December 2013, the 11th Street Bridge Park was officially installed as a project of BBAR, freeing Kratz, Fleet, and other Bridge Park planning leaders to convert the momentum created by three years of intensive broad stakeholder engagement into a bona fide organization with a solid funding base and a significant early "proof-of-concept" win. By 2014, over \$1 million in funds were raised from public and primarily private sources to hire two full-time staff people (including Kratz as the new 11th Street Bridge Park project director) and build out the Bridge Park website. The funding also mounted a community-engaged Bridge Park design competition, which Bridge Park planners kicked off by holding formal park-design charrettes with neighborhood residents on each side of the river in December 2013. The charrettes used stakeholder input to prioritize the myriad programming ideas collected over the three years of engagement into park-design parameters, complete with a list of desired facilities. A design oversight committee was constituted to oversee the charrettes and the design competition. The committee was composed of stakeholders from across the city, including Elizabeth Miller of the National Capital Planning Commission, Mary Abe of the Anacostia Watershed Society, community residents, community advocates and ANC commissioners, food insecurity nonprofits, arts nonprofits, green-space advocates, parks administrators, planners, and architects.

In October 2014, after numerous meetings with four finalist design teams, the Bridge Park design oversight committee and a formal selection jury selected the design created by OMA+OLIN, which is the pairing of an architectural and urban design firm (OMA) with a landscape architecture firm (OLIN). The winning plans feature outdoor performance spaces, innovative playgrounds, urban agriculture, classrooms to teach students about river systems, public art that tells the history of the region and surrounding communities, and kayak and paddle boat access to the river—all programming concepts requested by community stakeholders. See figures 1 and 2 for a design overview and sample elements.

FIGURE 1

11th Street Bridge Park: Overall Design



Source: OMA+OLIN.

FIGURE 2

11th Street Bridge Park: Sample Design Elements



Source: OMA+OLIN.

Producing an Equitable Development Plan

Throughout the ground-level engagement process described above, low-income residents—primarily from east of the river—raised concerns about the kind of attention an innovative Bridge Park would draw to their neighborhoods from developers and wealthy would-be home and business owners. “What does this mean for me?” questions were repeatedly asked—expressing hope for the enjoyment of new amenities, but also fear of displacement. These concerns and cautionary tales emerging from similar projects around the country caused Bridge Park planners to quickly realize that the park would be a failure unless it served the full interests of those who already lived in the surrounding neighborhoods before construction.

To address these concerns and augment planning, Bridge Park planners commissioned an economic impact study to gauge the park’s effects on neighborhood- and city-level employment, real estate, and local business. While the study helped planners say something about the economic benefits the park would bring to its immediate neighborhoods and the city overall, it was typical of other studies of its kind in that it said nothing about the composition of residents who would enjoy these new benefits and offered no insight into how the Bridge Park would address the “hyper-local” community needs that Kratz continually heard about at meetings (e.g., making sure neighborhood residents are hired for Bridge Park construction, supporting and maintaining connections with existing small businesses, and promoting homeownership among existing residents).

Recognizing that they needed a new approach to answer these legitimate equity concerns, Bridge Park leaders sought out a natural ally: the Local Initiatives Support Corporation in DC (LISC DC). Through quality-of-life improvements, LISC DC has supported community development in low-income DC communities since the mid-1980s. The organization’s priorities include funding “catalytic projects” that are planned and designed to cause equitable improvements in social, physical, and economic conditions of project impact areas.

Seeing the potential of the Bridge Park effort for having such an effect, Oramenta Newsome, head of LISC DC, offered to underwrite a portion of Kratz’s first-year salary as Bridge Park project director; Newsome also assigned a LISC DC program officer, Adam Kent, to work half time with Bridge Park staff to provide project management, research, and technical assistance on inclusive development. Kratz cites the partnership with LISC DC as the “essential element” in driving Bridge Park’s already deep community engagement approach into discussions about equitable development. Says Newsome, “The reality is that when we first started working with [Kratz], we saw the park as an amenity, but as the process went on and we saw the [prospective park’s surrounding] neighborhoods starting to change, we

realized we were going to see faster change yet and that we had better address it. A hallmark of LISC's work is engaging people who live in low-income neighborhoods in having a say about the future of their neighborhoods, and the [park's equitable development planning process] was very successful at engaging people in making specific recommendations of that kind."

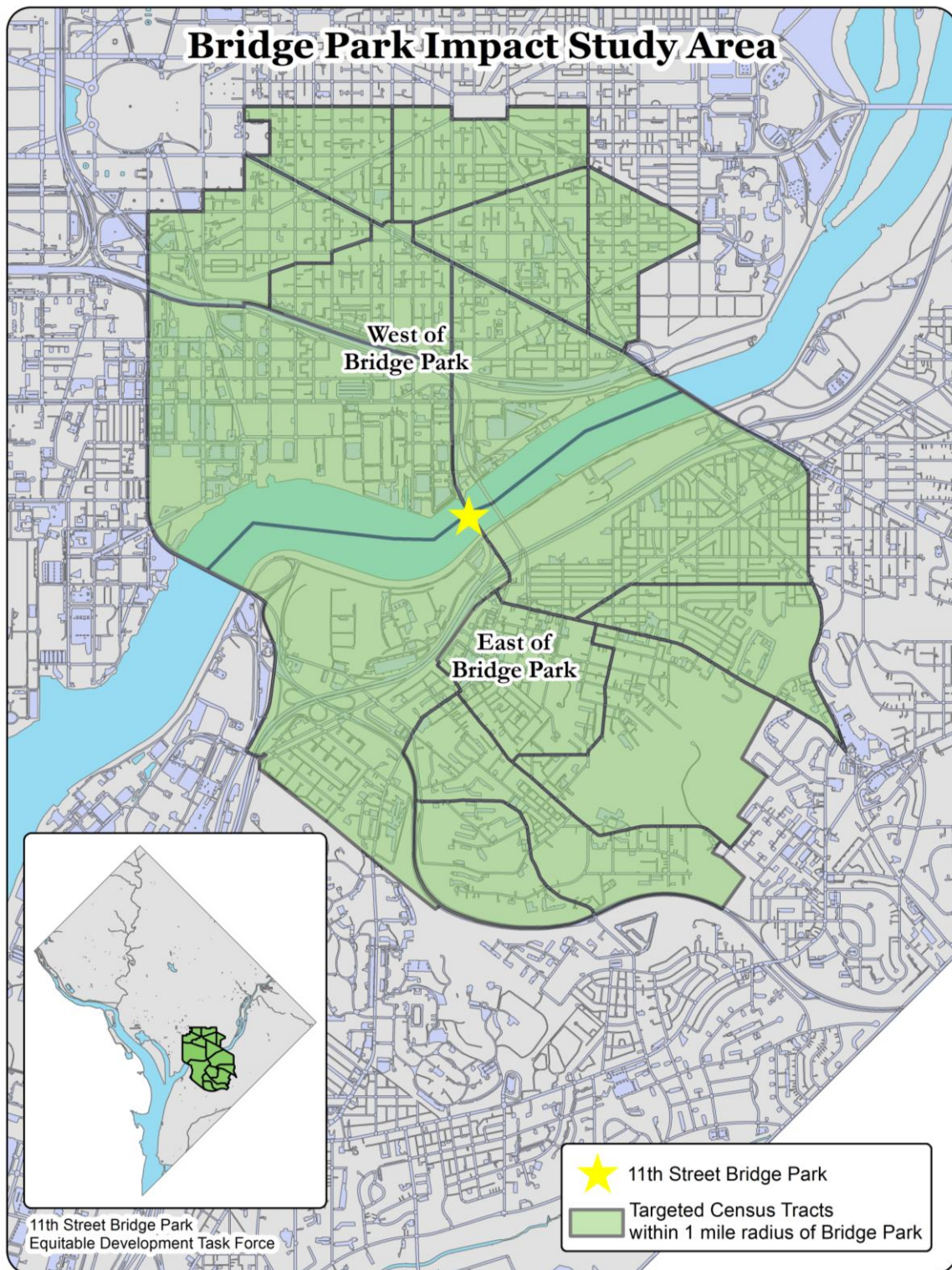
LISC DC also offered a long-standing set of community relationships to the project and the organization's firsthand experience with neighborhood revitalization projects that seek equity for current and future low-income residents. The organization's history of affordable housing preservation work demonstrates how LISC DC's intentional, dual focus on neighborhood revitalization and equitable development has produced positive outcomes for low-income residents. By investing in quality affordable housing, LISC DC helps to spur neighborhood revitalization and allows existing lower-income residents to stay put in spite of rising housing prices. From 1988-2015, LISC DC made 107 investments totaling over \$78 million in 76 properties located across the District of Columbia, resulting in the preservation of 3,701 apartments, cooperatives, and condominiums.

With a supportive partner in place, the first step for the Bridge Park was to paint a baseline picture of the surrounding areas through data. Kent worked with Kratz to form the Bridge Park's Equitable Development Task Force (EDTF), identifying and recruiting researchers, planners, and community experts from the DC Office of Planning, the DC Fiscal Policy Institute, and the Urban Institute. The group was tasked with setting expectations "grounded in reality" around how the Bridge Park might support equitable development. With an initial focus on housing, the EDTF gathered data on resident and demographic trends and land-use, ownership, and taxation conditions. Census tracts within the Bridge Park impact area, a one-mile radius of the prospective site (figure 3), were designated as the geography for examination.

Baseline findings revealed large needs within both the east- and west-side census tracts, as well as startling differences between them. Both areas are roughly equal in population (21,007 in the eastern tracts and 22,194 in the western tracts), but the similarity ends there. The unemployment rate for the west-side census tracts is about 1 percentage point above national averages, at 6.63 percent. In contrast, unemployment for the east-side census tracts is 20.71 percent, a Depression-era level of joblessness. Likewise, although the child poverty rate in the west-side tracts sits at a distressingly high 20.46 percent, it is 53.18 percent on the east side. Median home values also show a startling and steep disparity, from \$262,601 east of the river to \$653,737 on the west side.

FIGURE 3

Bridge Park Impact Study Area



The task force's second step was to collect and synthesize community feedback on the equitable development goals the project should seek to achieve. During the Bridge Park's early years of planning, community members had made clear that jobs and income were a greater concern to them than housing. After combining this feedback with baseline economic data on the impact area, the EDTF identified three priorities around which to develop recommendations: housing, workforce development, and small business development.

From there, the EDTF launched a second wave of stakeholder meetings, which were funded by the JPB Foundation and focused on equitable development. In February and May 2015, the EDTF convened over 60 DC-based nonprofit and community leaders, housing and workforce development experts and advocates, and government delegates to discuss equitable development. Participants and note takers were broken up into three groups by professional expertise and topic area (housing, workforce development, and small business development). The goal of this convening was to segment each priority area into ideas for achieving results. In May 2015, the EDTF convened a subset of the larger group of additional stakeholders to fine-tune each idea into a set of actionable recommendations. Both sets of expert stakeholder meetings were facilitated by Don Edwards, CEO and principal of Justice and Sustainability Associates, a group that specializes in designing and implementing agenda-setting and decisionmaking processes focused on equity in land use.

In June 2015, the Bridge Park invited the public to review the expert recommendations at two meetings at the RISE Center on the east side of the river and at Navy Yard on the west. The Bridge Park invested significant funds and staff capacity in outreach for these meetings, sending e-mail blasts, printing and posting thousands of fliers, taking out ads on local blogs on both sides of the river, making presentations at community meetings, and canvassing door to door. Attendees were asked to review and vet the recommendations through facilitated discussion and a dot-voting system. The recommendations that received the greatest resident support included developing a Community Land Trust, focusing on jobs with viable career pathways, and building and maintaining a locally grown small business community. Resident participants also added recommendations such as increasing access to capital for small business owners and providing greater support for tenant advocacy. After incorporating the new community feedback, the EDTF brought the final plan back before the public at a final vetting meeting at THEARC in October 2015. This meeting was also designed to shift the community mindset from planning to action and included an asset-mapping session to identify existing community resources and potential partners operating in the impact area. The Bridge Park also made draft recommendations available online for additional feedback.

Edwards credits the first wave of community engagement, which focused on Bridge Park design, for laying an important foundation for the second, smaller wave of equitable development conversations: “[Kratz] had hundreds of meetings, hundreds of inputs...he really lowered the access bar so that people could just really say, ‘You really wanna know what I think? Well, this is what I think.’ I think that brought in a lot of people who might be more inclined to say ‘This ain’t for me in the first place, so I’m not going to play.’ That matters because in order to have equitable development conversations, you have to provide information and education beforehand so people know what that conversation is about. If you say, ‘What do you think we should do to promote equitable development using this project,’ people are going to say, ‘Huh?’ [The equitable development conversations] were a smaller ‘in’ than the design conversations, but they were a good ‘in.’ They captured the voices and the views of the people who have them.”

In November 2015, Bridge Park leaders published the *11th Street Bridge Park Equitable Development Plan*.⁶ This final plan outlines several major strategies and 19 recommendations by the three topic areas: workforce development, small business development, and housing (table 1).

Measuring Plan Results

To properly document and monitor the Bridge Park’s efforts, members of the EDTF have identified neighborhood- and individual-level (“hyper-local”) performance measures that align with the three focus areas. In table 2, Urban Institute researchers have organized and refined these measures into a logic model against which the progress of implementation of the Bridge Park equitable development plan will be measured. In table 3, we establish an initial list of population-level metrics to track community change. Future reports in this series will display and analyze this data as implementation of the equitable development plan proceeds.

TABLE 1

11th Street Bridge Park Strategies for Equitable Development

| Workforce Development | |
|--|---|
| Strategy 1: Construction-Phase Hiring | Create community workforce agreement to maximize the number of surrounding residents placed on construction jobs |
| Strategy 2: Post-Construction-Phase Hiring | Maximize hiring of surrounding residents for jobs on the Bridge Park when opened |
| Small Business Development | |
| Strategy 1: Support and nurture a thriving network of small businesses that operate on the Bridge Park following construction | Establish kiosk-based food service on the Bridge Park Identify businesses for Bridge Park services |
| Strategy 2: Leverage the 11th Street Bridge Park to build and sustain small businesses in the surrounding community | Build and sustain community of small businesses Advocate for including small business tenants in developments near the Bridge Park Support nearby social enterprise and workforce incubators |
| Strategy 3: Ensure that Bridge Park is deeply connected to business corridors on both sides of the Anacostia River | Improve connections between the Bridge Park and local businesses |
| Housing | |
| Strategy 1: Collect, organize and disseminate resources and information regarding housing opportunities to residents in the Bridge Park impact area | Educate and inform residents of existing housing resources Promote participation in DHCD's five-year consolidated plan rewrite Support Welcome Home East of the River Homeownership Campaign |
| Strategy 2: Work with city agencies and nonprofits on strategies to preserve existing affordable housing (rental and ownership) and leverage existing public and private resources to build new affordable housing near the Bridge Park | Provide down payment assistance for Hunter Place SE property Support Manna Housing's East of the River Home Buyers Club Pursue creation of Community Land Trust Support additional housing nonprofits |
| Strategy 3: Engage and participate in partnership with those in the housing community to support and advocate for policies that preserve existing affordable housing and spur the creation of new affordable units within the Bridge Park impact area | Partner with DCHA to ensure Build First model moves forward Use the Bridge Park impact area as a pilot for DC Preservation Network's Affordable Housing Preservation Strategy Partner with broader coalition to advocate for changes in DC's comprehensive plan Partner with housing advocates to push for the District to continue its strong investment in housing |

Note: DCHA = District of Columbia Housing Authority. DCHD = DC Department of Housing and Community Development.

TABLE 2

Logic Model of Performance Measures

| | Goals | Inputs | Outputs | Intermediate outcomes | Long-term outcomes |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| Workforce development | Ensure neighboring residents in Wards 6, 7, and 8, and harder-to-employ District residents are prioritized in the application process and hired for construction jobs on the Bridge Park | Create a community workforce agreement Establish hiring plan | Local hiring goals Living wages for all jobs on the Bridge Park Labor monitoring and reporting systems hold employers accountable for community workforce agreement Nearby residents are recruited and skills training is employed | Neighborhood residents are hired for jobs on the Bridge Park, construction or otherwise Incomes for families in the Bridge Park area increase Employers on the Bridge Park will comply with Ban the Box and other local regulations | Unemployment for surrounding residents of the Bridge Park decreases Families in the Bridge Park area have greater access to economic mobility Employees are better trained to obtain jobs outside the Bridge Park |
| Small business development | Support and nurture a thriving network of small businesses that operate on the Bridge Park Leverage the Bridge Park to build and sustain small businesses in the surrounding community Connect the Bridge Park to business corridors on both sides of the Anacostia River | Establish kiosk-based food service Identify businesses for contracting opportunities Connect businesses to community nonprofits and financial institutions Advocate for small businesses in vacant properties Connect business incubators Streetscape improvements on both sides of the park | Additional food vendors and retail spaces in Bridge Park impact area Mentorships form between businesses in the Bridge Park impact area Self-sustaining community of small businesses forms Walkability improves on both sides of the park and to nearby neighborhoods | Residents have more food choices within the Bridge Park impact area Businesses have increased access to workforce training strategies City-owned property is redeveloped for local businesses Capital Bikeshare stations are added, and public transportation becomes more easily accessible | Businesses access a wider customer base Minority and women-owned businesses get more activity Business partnerships can advocate together for future neighborhood change More small businesses attain property east of the Bridge Park Vacant property is filled by businesses |

| | Goals | Inputs | Outputs | Intermediate outcomes | Long-term outcomes |
|--------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| Affordable housing | <p>Collect, organize, and disseminate resources regarding housing opportunities</p> <p>Work with city agencies and nonprofits to preserve existing affordable housing, and leverage additional resources to build new affordable housing</p> <p>Engage and participate in partnerships with housing community to advocate for preservation of existing affordable housing</p> | <p>Educate residents about DC legislation and tenant rights</p> <p>Promote participation in a five-year consolidated plan update</p> <p>Partner with homeownership initiatives within the Bridge Park impact area</p> <p>Secure funding for down payment assistance program and Manna's Home Buyers Club</p> <p>Community Land Trust</p> <p>Partner with DC Housing Authority to bring Build First to nearby properties</p> <p>Door-to-door canvassing</p> | <p>Partnerships with local agencies involved in tenant rights</p> <p>Language in a five-year consolidated plan update includes vacant and blighted properties in Bridge Park impact area</p> <p>Vacant and blighted properties will be converted to additional affordable units</p> <p>Down payment assistance will be made available in Bridge Park impact area</p> | <p>Tenants can access financing to purchase property</p> <p>Residents can access financial and homeownership services</p> <p>Homeownership campaign is active within Bridge Park impact area</p> <p>More nonprofits and philanthropic funders are involved in securing affordable housing in the Bridge Park impact area</p> | <p>Homeownership in the Bridge Park impact area increases</p> <p>Residents in the Bridge Park impact area have more access to wealth</p> <p>Residents are empowered to advocate for affordable housing in the neighborhood</p> <p>More affordable housing options are available near the Bridge Park</p> <p>Establishment of a sustainable Community Land Trust</p> |

TABLE 3

Baseline Metrics

| Category | Baseline data (population level for Bridge Park area) | Source |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Workforce development | Percentage of people ages 16 to 64 in labor force | American Community Survey (Census tract level) |
| | Percentage of people in labor force who are employed (employment rate) | |
| | Percentage of people below federal poverty level | |
| | Percentage of people by race/ethnicity | |
| | Percentage of people age 25 or older with a high school diploma or equivalent | |
| | Percentage of people age 25 or older with some postsecondary education | |
| | Number of people receiving TANF benefits | |
| | Number of people receiving SNAP benefits | |
| Small business development | Number of businesses in main business corridor | Dun and Bradstreet; Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia (both at Census tract level) |
| | Number of unused spaces in business corridor | |
| | Number of small businesses owned by residents of Bridge Park impact area | |
| | Number of violent crimes reported | |
| Housing | Number of property crimes reported | DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs; DC Preservation Catalog; real property data; Home Mortgage Disclosure Act |
| | Number of building permits issued for residential construction or rehabilitation | |
| | Number of affordable units from DC Preservation Catalog | |
| | Number of renter households | |
| | Number of homeowner households | |
| | Percentage of homeowner households (homeownership rate) | |
| | Percentage of renters with severe housing cost burden | |
| | Percentage of homeowners with severe housing cost burden | |
| | Number of home sales | |
| | Median sales price of single-family homes and condominiums | |
| | Percentage of residential property owned by area residents | |
| | Number of mortgage-financed home purchases by buyer's race/ethnicity | |
| | Number of mortgage-financed home purchases by buyer's income | |

Early Implementation Milestones

Since the release of the equitable development plan, Bridge Park leaders have reached out to resident groups, nonprofits, government agencies, business, and other potential partners who can help to implement the plan's recommendations. Early results include the following:

- Down payment assistance secured for Manna's Hunter Place SE townhomes, a 12-unit affordable homeownership development in the impact area

- Release of a Bridge Park Community Land Trust Action Plan (Roberts 2016)
- Work with advocacy partners to develop a tenant advocacy and education strategy
- Canvassing in two 12-unit rental apartment buildings in the Bridge Park impact area to assess tenant needs
- A strategic plan to implement kiosk-based food service within the park

In addition to these early wins, the Bridge Park received a significant boost to its overall equitable development goals in May 2016 when LISC DC committed to provide \$50 million to nonprofits undertaking projects, programs, and activities that help long-term residents and newcomers live, work, and thrive in the neighborhoods adjacent to the future park. The Elevating Equity Initiative seeks to achieve equitable outcomes for residents in and around the Bridge Park impact area by investing in affordable housing, early childhood education, medical care, food support, arts education, and other services. LISC DC's investment will provide its nonprofit partners with loans, grants, tax credit equity, in-kind services, and technical support. The projected investment total is greater than the \$45 million cost of constructing the park.

Noting the ramped up development that is already going on near the park site, Newsome says, "What we're trying to do is first of all send a message that it does matter, that we have to be conscious and deliberate to improve our quality of life in these neighborhoods and make sure that people with modest incomes have a fighting chance to stay and remain there and enjoy all the goodies that are on the way like the Walgreen's that is coming, the Busboys & Poets [restaurant] that is coming."⁷

Early Insights

Ultimately, planning processes that launch community revitalization projects are best judged by the results they achieve during and after project implementation. It is too early to say whether Bridge Park planning has secured equitable results for current residents of the Bridge Park impact area. We only know that Bridge Park leaders have laid a strong foundation for results by engaging a wide range of stakeholders, especially residents, in designing the park and in setting equitable development goals; setting metrics to objectively measure implementation results on the neighborhood and individual level; and achieving some notable early equitable-development milestones. Key lessons from the process that produced these early results include the following:

Start early. Real estate markets in “hot” locations such as the Bay Area and New York City often outpace attempts to build equity into development projects focused on public space. Kratz and other DC stakeholders have planned and pursued equity goals before fundraising for the park’s construction.

Emphasize community engagement in all phases of the project; prepare for a significant time investment. Intensive community engagement and consistent communication helps establish trust and accountability with the community members public-space projects are designed to benefit most. “All of this is about building trust, specifically with the community,” says Kratz. “It’s one thing to talk about economic development as one of your key goals. It’s another to spend a year and a half to build a community-generated project. Most importantly, the [engagement] process got us this great plan—these 19 different recommendation items—that we are now acting on in a deliberate, intentional, and transparent way. That’s already a huge outcome.”

Leverage thought partners from all levels (e.g., regional, national) to define and measure equity locally. Bridge Park leaders utilized experts in planning, development, the job market, research, and community building to develop a historical and high-level understanding of the state of equity across DC and within the impact area. By putting the emphasis on neighborhood- and individual-level outcomes, these thought partners helped the Bridge Park set realistic expectations for what inclusive economic development should look like.

Engage government, funder, community-based, and other partners in tandem. Carefully facilitated planning forums that engage a broad range of stakeholders provide an opportunity for government and community-based representatives, including residents, to decide together what is feasible and amenable to all parties to ensure equity. Relationships forged in the planning phase are likely to fuel progress in the implementation phase.

Prepare an actionable wish list. Local advocates and community members are often unaware of the community benefits they can leverage from the developers who wish to profit from revitalizing their communities. Through deep community engagement, Bridge Park leaders could acknowledge legitimate resident suspicion for the park concept while creating space for conversation about how to defend against displacement.

Conclusion

Having established community trust, a clear list of action-oriented recommendations, and an impressive set of early milestones, Bridge Park leaders are certainly poised to face the challenge of harvesting the economic value the park will inevitably bring to the surrounding area in such a way that it benefits the low-income residents who already live there or who may wish to live there in the future. However, given citywide and neighborhood-level development pressures that started building even before the Bridge Park idea took root, it still remains to be seen if the project's "get-out-in-front" approach can create equitable results for the current residents of neighborhoods like historic Anacostia.

Edwards offers this praise and caveat: "I think what [the planning process] did was help [residents] understand that attention for the Bridge Park—not as a project, but as a magnet for investment—could launch a narrative that says 'There is a choice here. This is not locked in so that people don't benefit. There is a way that people can benefit, but we have to decide what those benefits are, how they get applied, how they get prioritized, and let's be intentional about that.' I think what it did was change people's expectations, and that's of course where the risk is. If this project doesn't produce equitable development, it will harm the very immature support for the concept which the project itself helped to develop in DC."

Future products from this study will document what happens next.

Notes

1. See also Amy Goodman, "New Orleans after Katrina: Inequality Soars as Poor Continue to Be Left Behind in City's 'Recovery'," *Democracy Now!*, August 27, 2015, http://www.democracynow.org/2015/8/27/new_orleans_after_katrina_inequality_soars; and Alan C. Miller and Ken Silverstein, "Lobbyists Dominate Gulf Coast Reconstruction Plans," *Seattle Times*, October 11, 2005, <http://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/lobbyists-dominate-gulf-coast-reconstruction-plans/>.
2. Jeremiah Moss, "Disney World on the Hudson," *New York Times*, August 21, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/22/opinion/in-the-shadows-of-the-high-line.html?_r=0.
3. Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove, "Not gone, not forgotten: Struggling over history in a gentrifying D.C.," *Washington Post*, October 19, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/therootdc/post/not-gone-not-forgotten-struggling-over-history-in-a-gentrifying-dc/2012/10/18/09ad8c24-1941-11e2-b97b-3ae53cdeaf69_blog.html.
4. Jonathan O'Connell, "Can D.C. build a \$45 million park for Anacostia without pushing people out?" *Washington Post*, January 21, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/can-dc-build-a-45-million-park-for-anacostia-without-pushing-people-out/2016/01/20/d96e9cde-a03c-11e5-8728-1af6af208198_story.html.
5. O'Connell, "Can D.C. build a \$45 million park for Anacostia?"
6. The complete equitable development plan can be found at <http://bridgepark.org/sites/default/files/EDP%20Final%20-%20UPDATED.pdf>.
7. Jonathan O'Connell. "Nonprofit Commits \$50 Million to Prevent Gentrification East of the Anacostia River - The Washington Post." *Washington Post*, May 3, 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/digger/wp/2016/05/03/non-profit-commits-50-million-to-prevent-gentrification-east-of-the-anacostia-river/>.

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