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Community Design Centers (CDCs) on the Upsurge: Investigating Perceptions Amongst CDC Leaders and Administrators in Texas

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COMMUNITY DESIGN CENTERS (CDCs) ON THE UPSURGE: INVESTIGATING PERCEPTIONS AMONGST CDC LEADERS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN TEXAS

by

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ABSTRACT

COMMUNITY DESIGN CENTERS (CDCs) ON THE UPSURGE:
INVESTIGATING PERCEPTIONS AMONGST CDC
LEADERS AND ADMINISTRATORS
IN TEXAS

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For several decades, community design centers (CDCs) have specialized in professional design and planning assistance to non-profit groups, agencies, and individuals that lack the funding or resources to otherwise receive such services (ACD 2016). Notwithstanding the historical context under which CDCs were originally created, their persistent presence since the year 2000 has seen the number of CDCs nearly triple in North America, from just under 70, to "over 200 active organizations, covering ever-expanding geographic, disciplinary, and strategic territories" (ACSA 2014, 4). Yet, this growth aside, "CDCs remain a somewhat silent partner in the world of design" (Curry 2004, 70) with limited information regarding the spread of their practices nationwide.

The purpose of this research was to explore the recent surge of CDCs in North America. Specifically, by interviewing CDC leaders and administrators in Texas, this study sought answers to the question of why CDCs have experienced such increased growth across North America since the early 1990s. By studying the rise and decline of these organizations,

through literature review, this pattern can historically be linked to the social, political, and economic conditions of the times (Castells 1983; Levy 2000; Sanoff 2000). Similarly, the current expansion of CDCs across North America may indicate a shift in any number of social, cultural, political, professional, or economic ideologies, yet to be determined. Therefore, from the vantage point of their administration, this study attempted to elucidate, from the perspective of CDC directors, the factors underlying the proliferation of CDCs in North America. The study explored economic, environmental, and social factors as possible causes of this growth. Furthermore, given the multi-disciplinary nature of community design, this study pursued to answer what roles do architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning, play in the recent growth of CDCs nationwide.

Subjects of this research were leaders and administrators of CDCs in the state of Texas. Utilizing qualitative methods informed by the “research act” of John and Sharon Gaber (2007), this research was based on semi-structured interviews. It used open-ended questions to build upon the respondents' current knowledge of community design practices and of the growing number of CDCs across the nation. Through online searches and the review of public listings of registered U.S. nonprofits, these Texas leaders and administrators were identified and their contacts compiled from existing sources such as the Association for Community Design's member directory, and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture's Community Design Directory. Information obtained from the interviews was analyzed to draw themes (Gaber and Gaber 2007; Taylor and Bogdan 1984) explaining the upsurge of CDCs and to gain insight regarding the continued spread of CDCs and their practices nationwide.

The findings of this research cited an increased economic, environmental, and social need for the services CDCs offer in Texas. Equally driving the growth of CDCs across the nation, an increased awareness of these perceived issues, along with an individual capacity and determination, proved influential not only in regards to CDC operations, but through educational outreach and an open appreciation for multi-disciplinary practices.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This section presents a concise description of CDC's historical background and current context. The purpose and goals of this research are then described and specific questions are outlined for further investigation, leading into definition of terms, research methodology, and the significance and limitations of this study.

1.2 Community Design Centers: Then and Now

The advent of community design centers (CDCs)[1] can be synonymously "...linked to the community-based struggles of the 1960s that took place in the context of the civil rights movement, the rise of women's liberation, the anti-war movement, and the challenges of alternative cultures... all of which represented an upheaval of civil society" (Sanoff 2000, 2). In this regard, most CDCs were also actively engaged by design professionals who were motivated advocates for social justice (Curry 2004). Influenced by the simultaneous rise of Paul Davidoff's advocacy planning movement (Sanoff 2000; Friedmann 1973), CDCs rose up in the 1960s as dedicated providers of planning, design, and development services to low and moderate-income communities (ACD 2016). Utilized strategically as full service planning and design practices, university-based, or nonprofit organizations, CDCs were documented and often explored amongst both professional and academic communities alike (Blake 2015; Curry 2004; Dorgan 2012; Sanoff 2003).

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1. Not to be confused with community development corporations (also referred to as CDCs) which although intimately related to community design centers, often tend to focus primarily on affordable and low-income housing and business development.

With the coming of the 1980s, however, national politics began to shift. "For reasons of political ideology the Reagan administration was opposed to such programs, and the federal government largely withdrew from the field during the 1980s" (Levy 2000, 58). Widespread support of CDCs consequently wavered, losing favor to a less government-funded, perceivably more business-led, economic development strategy (Taylor 1998). By this, "in response to the economic and political pressures of the 1980s some community design centers remained..." (Sanoff 2000, 5) although their numbers eventually tapered.

Within the past few decades though, CDCs have once again experienced a resurgence. Since the year 2000, the number of CDCs in North America has grown from around 70, to over 200 active organizations of various structures and capacities (ACSA 2014). Despite this growth, "little is known about the normative underpinnings of CDCs, how successful these centers have been, which factors have contributed to or impeded their success, and how they have responded to the changes in social, political, professional and economic contexts" (Tural 2011, 2). This is important to note about the CDCs of today. For although "CDCs have managed to establish new fronts... more documentation is needed to support and broaden the dialog, and to firmly establish them as valued community-development resources" (Curry 2004, 70).

1.3 Purpose of this Research

The purpose of this research is to document the current state of affairs for Texas CDCs, at a time when their increased presence demands attention to a growing, but lacking body of current research (Tam 2011; Tural 2011; Zhou 2011). Specifically, this research sought to determine if economic, environmental, or social factors are underlying this growth. Simultaneously, this research attempted to interpret disciplinary boundaries within CDCs to determine what role, if any, the professions of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning play in the spread of CDCs nationwide.

To investigate the current state of CDCs, the following research questions were posed:

1) What are the reasons for the recent increase of CDCs across North America?
2) Are there economic, environmental, or social factors underlying this growth?
3) What roles do architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning, play in the recent growth of CDCs nationwide?

1.4 Definition of Terms

Administrator - a person who administers the affairs of an organization; a person who manages

Community Design - community design is a movement focused on the creation and management of environments for people; a process promoting change to the built environment from the neighborhood to regional scale, and aiming to meet community needs through participatory decision-making at all levels (ACD 2016)

Community Design Centers (CDCs) - Community design centers are dedicated to the provision of planning, design and development services in low and moderate income communities which assist non-profit groups, agencies, and individuals which lack the funding or resources to otherwise receive such services (ACD 2016)

CDC Typologies - these typologies include private for-profit CDCs, university-based CDCs, NGO's and non-profit CDCs, municipal-based CDCs, as well as an assortment of hybrid CDCs which adopt some form of organization from the other various typologies (ACD 2016)

Community Development Corporations - although not the focus of this research, these organizations are intimately related to community design centers, but differ in that they often tend to focus primarily on affordable and low-income housing and business development; also referred to as CDCs

Leader - a guiding or directing head, as of any army, movement, or political group; a person who rules, guides, or inspires others

Public Interest Design - since the 1990s, a human-centered and participatory design movement based on the tenets of sustainability in regards to product, structures, and systems design which address issues of environmental preservation and economic development

Social Entrepreneurship - since the 2010s, used to describe conventional, private sector business techniques and approaches which also take into account a positive return to society; a term not clearly defined, but which includes philanthropists, social activists, environmentalists, and other socially oriented practitioners which creatively innovate and utilize non-traditional strategies to find collaborative solutions to social, cultural or environmental problems

1.4 Methodology

Through fifteen recognized CDCs which currently exist in the state of Texas (ACD 2016; ACSA 2015), this study sought the input of their leaders and administrators via qualitative methods (Deming 2011; Gaber and Gaber 2007). Probing into the current mindset of CDC leaders and administrators in Texas, in-depth interviews were conducted regarding the increased numbers of CDCs across North America. To better gauge this phenomena, prior to the interviews, a literature review concerning these research questions as well as the more detailed methods utilized to investigate them, were extensively discussed in the ensuing Chapters 2 and 3, respectively, which covered the literature review and methodology.

1.5 Significance and Limitations

Aiming to inform and build upon the current contextual knowledge of CDCs spread across North America, the significance of this research was also particularly insightful to CDC practices throughout Texas, as they pertain to the professions of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning. The potential benefits of this research also apply to

municipalities, design professionals, educators, the general public, and students of design whom partake in the experience of CDCs. Yet, recognizing that the results of this study were based upon qualitative inquiry, it should be clarified that the findings of this research were also subject to certain limitations. For instance, this research was largely based upon responses to the interview questions, as the expressed practices and opinions of individual respondents. In reality, these participants may come from differing regions of the state, as well as divergent personal and professional backgrounds. As such, while their opinions may be valid, their feedback may not be completely representative of CDC practices and operations as explicitly applied throughout Texas or across the nation.

1.6 Summary

Historically, the rise and fall of CDCs appears to be connected to the social and political context of the times. In this manner, the current spread of CDCs across North America may carry with it several implications which reveal the need for further research. Could their rise in numbers be an indication of other possible shifts in social, political, professional, or economic conditions? Or has the leadership of these organizations changed in some capacity? To address these questions, this study begins with a literature review of community design and CDCs, followed by research methodology, an analysis of findings, and a conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Delving into its historical origins, the concepts of community design and its perceived objectives are discussed, followed by its roots as a multi-disciplinary profession. Lastly, the creation of CDCs and their various typologies are initially defined, along with a synopsis of their activity over the past 50 years throughout the nation and in Texas.

2.2 Historical Roots of Community Design

Throughout the urbanization and cultural development of the United States, a rich history of not only physical, but social and political change has followed (Hartshorn 1992; Mehrhoff 1999). These shifts in the history of ideas, according to Thomas Kuhn, may be described or documented in terms of "paradigms" (1962). Correspondingly, "the historical study of paradigm change reveals very similar characteristics... like the choice between competing political institutions, that between competing paradigms proves to be a choice between incompatible modes of community life" (Kuhn 1962, 94). In much the same way, the origins of community design can be tied to *incompatible modes of community life* and documented paradigm shifts within the urban planning profession. As such, this section seeks to reveal the motivation for community design through the history and theory of planning in the United States. By that approach, this literature review begins by discussing the historical roots of community design, in the decades immediately following World War II (WWII).

2.2.1 Post-War Physical Planning

Generally noted after the Great Depression (1929 - late 1930s), a predominantly positive view of the government and its investment in civic establishments was upheld. During this time, federal funding to build and staff planning departments was provided not only as a form of job-creation, but also to develop maps and databases, and to instigate the creation of community master plans (Levy 2000).

During WWII (1939 - 1945) and shortly thereafter, the planning and design of cities throughout the United States was often characterized by this physically-based process, emphasizing design and the production of "master plans" (Boyer 1983). Viewed as a natural extension of architecture and landscape architectural training, urban planning utilized similar spatial design skills to design groups of buildings and create aesthetically pleasing urban spaces. In this regard, it was perhaps not surprising that architects often took up roles as urban planners, attempting to address the shifting, anti-urban, postwar planning values of the time (Taylor 1998).

2.2.2 Rational Comprehensive Planning

Following WWII, however, planning activities expanded for a number of reasons (Levy 2000). During the 1950's, technological advances and the standardization of parts translated economically to the mass production and consumption flow of products into the mainstream faster than ever before (Mehrhoff 1999). Yet, despite increasing capital, a shifting workforce battled with standardized labor and the driving down of wages (Taylor 1998). In response to this, while labor unions rose and massive immigration continued, so too did the influence of government and regulations which encouraged sprawling industrial cities. "A vast expansion of the suburban fringes of American cities occurred... heavily influenced by federal and state highway construction programs, national prosperity (which fostered extensive automobile and home ownership), and the FHA and VA housing programs" (ICMA 1988, 44).

To this effect, planning theory also evolved accordingly, diverting processes away from the post-war emphasis on physical planning. During these times of rapid growth and development, planners began to realize that "not only do the conditions within which the planner works change rapidly, but so also do the ends for which he is planning" (Banfield 1959, 145). Recognizing that cities are constantly evolving and changing made the aesthetic emphasis of master planning seem fairly impractical. Rather, the city should be analyzed and interpreted as a series of interrelated and interdependent parts. As part of this paradigm shift, city planning was consequently viewed primarily as a science, rather than an art (Taylor 1998). Thus, after years of emphasis upon beautification and the physical aspects of planning, a shift would occur from planning as an exercise in design, to one of systems analysis and control (Boyer 1983; Relph 1987).

Likewise, whereas the profession was viewed before as rather technical and apolitical, a growing faith in science and technology promoted increased awareness to the political nature of urban planning (Boyer 1983). In a move away from physical determinism, it was argued that a perceived lack of consultation with the public, ultimately catered to the elite, thereby providing a weaker focus on broader issues. This was particularly true in regards to social matters (Relph 1987).

In this light, the emergent rational-comprehensive approach idealized a method from which to redeem previous negligence and insufficiencies (Davidoff 1965). Developed as a “normal” science, rational-comprehensive planning followed a procedure of exploring, identifying, evaluating, implementing, and monitoring (Taylor 1998). Through this demonstrative, sequential, and cyclical process of decision-making, it was believed to encourage analysis addressing not only the physical, but social and economic components as well.

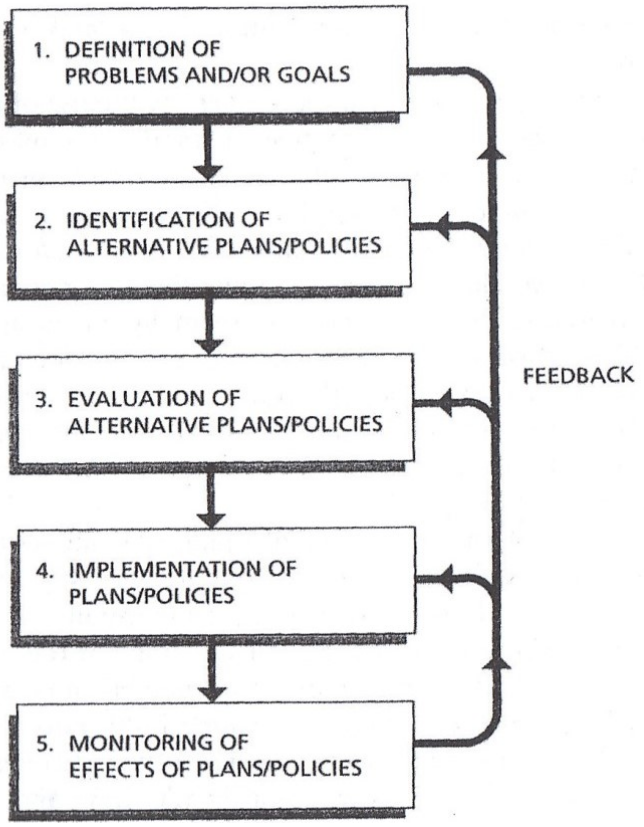

Figure 2.1 The Rational Comprehensive Planning Process (Taylor 1998)

Furthermore, in regards to the rising political aspects of planning, the rational-comprehensive approach was believed to provide a safeguard to the profession. “Rationalism of the professional was seen as the objective substitute for the self-interest of the politician” (Goodman 1985, 161). Following its due scientific process (see Figure 2.1), planners were “standardized” and therefore removed from politics. As such, having considered all options extensively and without bias, planners could then legitimately derive and provide logical and objective decisions based upon the given circumstances. Taking this scientific stance, the role of planner had become that of neutral, technical expert (Taylor 1998). In this manner, rational-comprehensive planning was ultimately deemed as an improvement which exemplified planning at its best potential to reach its identified goals and objectives (Banfield 1959).

2.2.3 Shifting Paradigms and the Rise of Advocacy Planning

With the previously described rise of the rational-comprehensive approach, a deeper appreciation and consideration for viable alternatives eventually developed. Combined with a newly enriched belief in science, this corresponded to the eventual questioning and proposed restructuring of the rational comprehensive planning processes of “exploration” (Taylor 1998).

Technical tweaks were implemented such as cost-benefit analysis, allowing a form of measurement to be placed upon decisions in order to arrive at the ideal solution (Harsanyi 1982; Sen and Williams 1982). At the same time, many professionals argued that the ranking of monetary values only emphasized an inherent flaw of this approach. It was described as "without a soul" that much of rational-comprehensive planning could be considered abstract and empty, based on quantifiable values alone – speaking nothing to social or cultural values (Relph 1987; Taylor 1998). This was also a complaint of early modern physical planning which similarly viewed action and implementation as afterthoughts to the process.

Perhaps of greater significance, the professional role of the planner was also called into question. Although disguised as neutral, providing technical expertise, both paradigms had essentially catered to the elite and avant-garde (Davidoff 1965). In much the same way, this was similar to the International Style of physical planning and architecture, popularized by Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe during the 1930s, which emphasized style, form, and aesthetics over cultural characteristics or social concerns of place. Retrospectively drawing criticism, however, this would imply a singular public interest devoid of contextual complications, which arguably does not exist (Davidoff 1965). In part, this is because knowledge and planning decisions are not neutral or value free, therefore a singular public interest would share differential effects in a society of such diverse interests, values, and perceptions, divided even further by class and race (Castells 1983; Taylor 1998). "Determinations of what serves the public interest, in a society containing many diverse interest groups, are almost always of a highly contentious nature" (Davidoff 1965, 193). Likewise, to make such determinations from a

position of neutrality would be less than realistic (Davidoff 1963). In spite of the scientific philosophy of planning as an apolitical procedure, this would imply personal values are not frequently influential to the decision-making process. However, "because society is structured around conflicting positions which define alternative values and interests, so the production of space and cities will be, too" (Castells, xvi). As a matter of opinion, one could presume that the preferable solution might in fact be skewed depending upon the eyes of the beholder, or in this case, decision-maker. Appropriate decisions are therefore always subjective (Davidoff 1965). As a decision maker, it was argued planners do not actually have the comprehensive knowledge to determine what is of the *highest* and *best* use but rather only partial knowledge, similar in many regards to anyone else. “Decision-makers do not, cannot, and as a matter of fact have no chance of ever being able to, decide in ways outlined by the rational-comprehensive model” (Faludi 1973, 117). Therefore, as planners may lack omniscience or direct control over what they plan for, a truly comprehensive planning approach, as implied, is mocked by the reality of life as wholly unpredictable. Case in point, the planner is neither neutral nor an expert (Davidoff 1965).

Still, during the 1960s and 70s, under the banner of rational-comprehensive planning, slums clearance and “urban renewal” initiatives were justifiably accomplished (Taylor 1998). Further coinciding with government scandals such as the Watergate Affair, these actions resulted in a heavy influence on public opinion (Levy 2000). In an era of multiculturalism and social unrest, faith and trust in the government consequently wavered (Castells 1983). Along with the civil rights movement, feminism, and anti-war movements, a number of other grassroots mobilizations to fight freeway expansions and urban renewal issues plagued American cities (Sanoff 2000). As explained by Manuel Castells,

> Beyond its internal diversity, the revolt came from a common matrix of contradictions underlying the fabric of the inner cities, defined as the spatial manifestation of ethnic segregation, urban poverty, economic discrimination, and political alienation. It was triggered by the disruptive efforts of urban renewal, by the process of legitimation opened by the programmes of social reform known as the 'War on Poverty, and by the

> more favourable power situation in which the blacks and the poor found themselves in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement (1983, 49).

Ignited in part by these movements, advocacy planning arose as a rejection to the notion of planner as but purely technician of the decision-making process (Davidoff 1965; Faludi 1973). In a move away from this, advocacy planning came about as an alternative attitude to urban planning, which proposed the profession might in fact embrace such political and social ambitions, in order to better address the wide range of problems afflicting the poor and disadvantaged (Checkoway 1994). With an emphasis upon citizen engagement and participation, to promote advocacy planning, would be to reject the position of planner acting solely as a technician (Checkoway 1994; Davidoff 1965). For this matter, whereas rational-comprehensive planning treated the planner's role as "removed" from politics, its intended goals and objectives ironically could not be implemented - oftentimes *due* to lack of political support (Davidoff 1965). As analyzed by Manuel Castells, "...we are still helpless when we wish to act on cities and regions, because we ignore the sources of their social change and fail to identify with sufficient accuracy the political processes underlying urban management" (1983, xv).

In response to this, advocacy planning openly gave recognition to planning as a political process and required it be kept transparent, as well as made explicit in its values (Davidoff 1965; Peattie 1968; Taylor 1998). Representing the client, the planning advocate communicates their position both openly and candidly (Davidoff 1965). As a form of empowerment, community participation of the underrepresented is heavily emphasized, simultaneously reaching outside the public realm, and engaging college universities and non-profit organizations as well (Davidoff 1965; Peattie 1968). By its aspirations, participation is presented as much more obtainable and invites citizens to become more aware of the political processes around them (Davidoff 1965).

2.2.4 Transactive Planning Theory

To this extent, advocacy planning spawned several other theories of procedural thought. Transactive planning, as a result, inherited many of these traits but with notable differences. Like advocacy, transactive planning was seen as a response to the perceived weaknesses of the rational-comprehensive approach (Forester 1980; Friedmann 1993; Innes 1995). In a move away from this, transactive planning focused heavily on action and implementation, further calling upon planners to engage in the *present* rather than an imagined future (Friedmann 1993; Innes 1995). Additionally, the transactive approach was seen as democratic and participatory, with planners accepting the responsibility of their positions as knowledgeable professionals, rather than as disengaged political bureaucrats (Forester 1980; Innes 1995). At a more intimate scale, transactive planning reacts to this communication gap between planners and their clients (Forester 1980; Innes 1995). For although "messages may be exchanged… the relevant meanings are not effectively communicated. As a result, the linkage of knowledge with action is often weak or nonexistent" (Friedmann 1973, 172). Under this tenet, according to Friedmann and Forester, the best scenario would be to restructure the communicative relationship between planners and clients (1973; 1980).

This belief is what most defines the process of transactive planning. Based on the notion that human beings are linked through reasoned communication, it is the selective intervention of strategic decision-making in cooperation with others that should define the profession (Friedmann 1973; Innes 1995). In this regard, planners must be both willing to teach and willing to learn. By this, "…when there are neither teachers nor students, as in mutual learning, the property of learning is held in common trust: no one is master, each has something to give and something to receive" (Friedmann 1973, 189). In this approach, planner is not an expert, but a facilitator. Mitigating these differences of behavior and approach, the mutual learning process invites the client's personal knowledge to mingle with that of the planner's technical expertise (Forester 1980). Both having something to offer, the two must then partake

in a respectful process whereby the actions between planner and client promotes meaningful discussion (see Figure 2.2). "Through dialogue, mutual learning occurs; and through mutual learning changes are brought about in the collective behavior of society" (Friedmann 1973, 189).

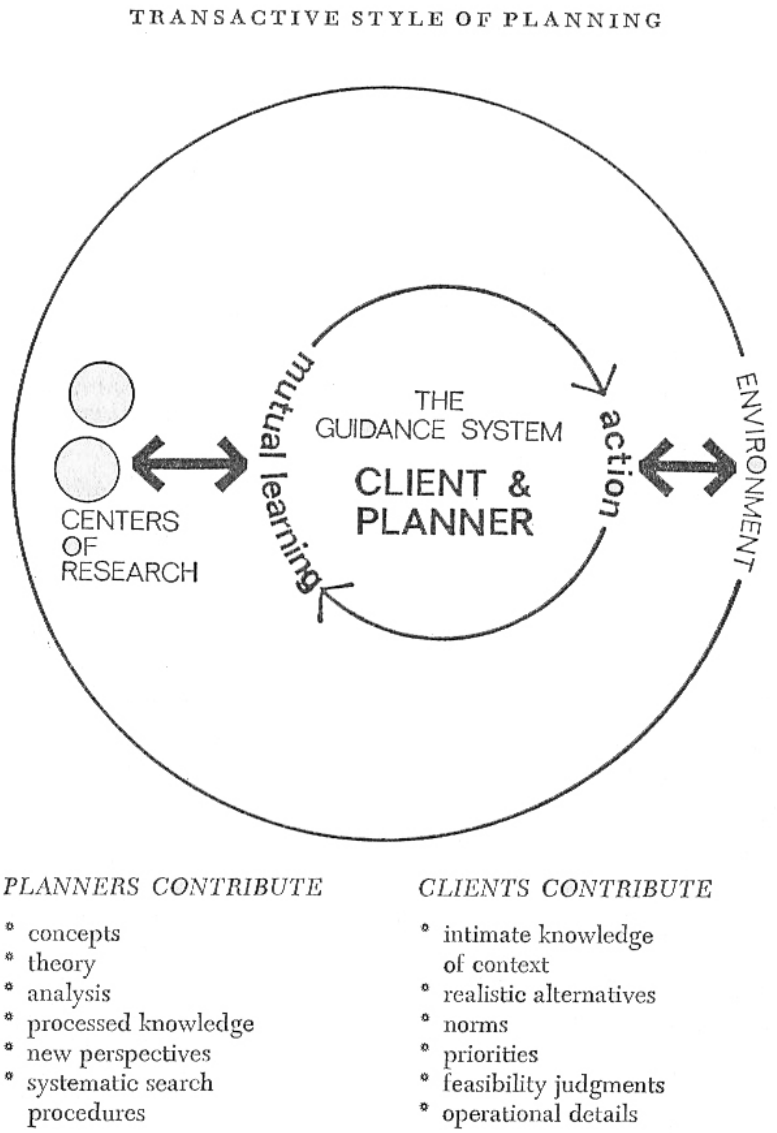

Figure 2.2 Respective Contributions of Planners and Clients Under the Transactive Style of Planning (Friedmann 1973)

Thus, as it may be viewed, transactive planning attempts to engage scientific and technical knowledge within the civic realm, focusing not purely on the physical planning of space, but on the people who use that space. Through this mindful process of engagement and interaction, Friedmann asserts the planner to be not only professionally, but humanly successful (1973).

2.3 Tenets of Community Design

It is within both this historical and theoretical context of the 1960s and 70s, that citizens wanted to shift power away from the government and take control of their *own* environments. Consequently, grassroots efforts were made to correct this perceived "professional" mismanagement of the physical environment (Sanoff 2000; Taylor 1998), and the concept of community design then developed upon these premises. By its own definition, community design is a movement focused on the creation and management of environments for people, *by* the people. Through participatory decision-making of citizens in the design process, changes to the built environment are promoted to meet a plethora of community needs ranging from the neighborhood to regional scale (ACD 2016).

Embracing a variety of practices, community design has been referred to as an all-encompassing term which includes community development and participation, social architecture, as well as community architecture and planning (Sanoff 2000). Ambiguous in this regard, community design can be unified, however, by the provision of certain principles generally considered to define its practice. Characterized by the following aspects, community design can be viewed as addressing the needs of the people, their everyday environments, and highlighting their empowerment and participation to leverage environmental justice (Hester 1990). Inclusively driven by these concerns, these tenets of community design as described by Hester, are then individually significant, and further identified in the following section for comprehension.

2.3.1 The Needs of the People

Produced by the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, several ongoing exhibits now emphasize *Design for the Other 90%* (Design 2016). These exhibits showcase a high percentage of the world's population living without even their basic needs being met. Similarly, these exhibits also underline what authors such as Davidoff (1965), Peattie (1968), and many others have been stating for years, implying that a much larger portion of the population does not utilize or have access to the power of design in their everyday lives. As a result, those most in need of such professional design services are often unable to afford or secure them through traditional methods.

By contrast, community design may be considered a more people-inclusive business. Working extensively with a diversity of clients, community design connects civic leaders and administrators with the economically disadvantaged, oppressed, or disabled minority groups which are typically underrepresented in society (Checkoway 1994). Arguably an essential and rewarding part of the profession, providing services of architecture, landscape architecture, and planning to those who would otherwise not be afforded these skills, is why some refer to community design as “architecture for the poor” (Hester 1990). As supported by Paul Davidoff, the safety and welfare of everyone in society is worthy of such meaningful endeavors (1965). Thus, it is potentially through community design that the designer's services may reach an expanded population, united in efforts to help ameliorate some of the most critical issues afflicting the world today (Bell 2008).

2.3.2 Everyday Environments

Including most places central to daily activities, community design at its core applies to not only housing and commercial workplaces, but parks, neighborhoods, and even entire towns (Sanoff 2000). In such a way, encompassing locations where many people spend the majority of their time, community designers help to create the everyday environments that are arguably

most important to our psychological well-being. In this regard, although diverse, these environments are usually inclusive and collective places which ideally provide grassroots economic development opportunities as well (Hester 1990).

2.3.3 Empowerment

Aiming to provide not only physical, but social and economic development opportunities, the processes of community design may consequently offer economically disadvantaged citizens a sense of pride and control in organizing around a variety of environmental issues (Melcher 2013). In particular, it may be most advantageous when incorporated into the life of a community through development resulting in capital generation, and an increased level of investment and economic participation (Hester 1990). From this experience, leaders may emerge from within the community that can continue to advocate for other community needs. Thus, as a consequence, these opportunities to develop leadership skills may in turn help citizens to channel frustrations into positive action. Community design practice, since its inception, has strived to empower through as many of these methods as possible. "Although that idealism has been tempered by experience, advocating for the powerless remains a primary community design principle. And the strategy remains to provide technical assistance at the grassroots level, similar to the work of the Peace Corps and Agricultural Extension Service field agents" (Hester 1990, 22).

2.3.4 Participation

One of the most important elements of community design, however, is the participation of lay citizens in the design process (ACD 2016, Francis 1983). As defined by Sanoff, "participation means the collaboration of people pursuing objectives that they themselves have defined" (2000, x). Of course, dependent upon the particular context of a given situation, these citizens may have varying degrees of control and engagement, as further emphasized by

Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969). Still, participation is paramount to increasing the volume of people who might potentially benefit from access to such design services (Bell 2004). Focusing in on the empowerment of community, it is through this process of engaging both users and experts, that the hope for better informed and more socially suitable design is pursued.

2.3.5 Creating Environmental Justice

This last tenet is perhaps what most distinguishes *community* design from other design endeavors. Going beyond the physical realm, whether it be unequal distribution of power or income, community designers work towards improving these conditions and often lobby for legislation on these issues, taking on a political role and initiating or instigating such change (Checkoway 1994). In these efforts to offer equal opportunity to all citizens, it is then asserted that community design assists with fostering the active partnerships between community and private businesses which are necessary to addressing quality of life issues (ACD 2016). For "although community design has changed over the twenty-five years that it has been an active part of the design professions, the end goal of environmental justice remains the same" (Hester 1990).

2.4 Perceived Objectives of Community Design

It is then understanding the founding tenets of community design, that their perceived objectives may be considered. Through its virtues, community design aims to more specifically enhance sense of community, promote mutual learning, build self-esteem, and allow the community to share in the joy and experience of creating (Hester 1990). Motivated by these goals, it is now necessary to explore the following objectives of community designers, as comprehensively presented by Hester (1990).

2.4.1. Enhancing Sense of Community

As a key element, the participatory processes of community design also help to build social capital amongst those involved, establishing from citizen contributions, a sense of place, and resultant pride and ownership (Sanoff 2000). Although designers cannot create community, they can design physical settings where people can come together and, more importantly, they can create a process that nurtures the social sense of community (Hester 1990). In helping to define a community through its engagement and learning about its history and current needs, the visual aspects of place become only a part of the equation (Mehrhoff 1999). As a consequence, the act of working with neighbors or maybe even strangers to solve a common problem creates social bonds which may continue even after the design process is completed.

2.4.2. Learning

Numerous case studies and research exist regarding the effects of service-learning as a recognized teaching and learning strategy within the design fields (Forsyth 1999; Wagner 2005; Winkler 2013); one which attempts to integrate meaningful community service with instruction and reflection (Steinberg 2010). In a related viewpoint, as Paulo Freire defines an authentic educational experience:

> Authentic help means that all who are involved help each other mutually, growing together in common effort to understand the reality which they seek to transform. Only through such praxis -in which those who help and those who are being helped help each other simultaneously - can the act of helping become free from the distortion in which the helper dominates the helped (1996, 136).

Therefore, as a technique often utilized through community design practices, face-to-face participation promotes two-way communication in a transactive process, where everyone learns (Friedmann 1973). In this give and take, whether acquiring the political savvy to work the within a given system or raising general environmental awareness on a variety of issues, learning is an essential goal of community design.

2.4.3. Building Self-Esteem

Due to its focus upon empowerment and learning, community design also has the potential to help both the individual and collective self-esteem of its participants. “The word 'help' is critical. Community designers must be willing to provide technical assistance in a way that allows users to make and effect their own decisions" (Hester 1990, 26). By having their voices heard, participants' sense of purpose and worth may increase, for a variety of reasons. In addition, there are numerous opportunities for participants to learn new skills when they are actively involved from planning and design to construction and management of community projects (Hester 1990). Individually tapping into the strengths of these individuals, personal characteristics are nurtured and consequently allowed to grow and shine. For this reason, it remains a core value and commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout the practices of community design (ACD 2016).

2.4.4. The Joy of Creating

To be reasonably stated, "equity can change society by addressing the fairness of both the decision making process and the distribution of resources, while empowerment changes people’s ability to control decisions that impact their lives" (Melcher 2013, 171). However, neither of these things account for what is the unequivocal gain and level of enrichment obtained via the process of creation. For it is through this experience that an individual can manifest their own surroundings, in their own artistic, expressive, and very satisfying way (Hester 1990, 11). No doubt, "the professionalization of placemaking has convinced many lay people that they should not design, crippling their environmental creativity. The trend is to leave it to the experts... community design works to reverse that trend" (Hester 1990, 11). As a potential outlet for expression, as well as an additional source of inspiration, this aspect of community design is invaluable and offers further intangible benefits to be considered.

2.5 Professional Roots of Community Design

Defined above all else, however, community designers work towards addressing social, economic, and political issues in relation to the built environment (ACD 2016). In doing this, "the study of cities is a dynamic, multifaceted area of inquiry that combines a number of disciplines, perspectives, time periods, and actors. Urbanists alternate between examining one issue through the eyes of a single discipline and looking at the same issue through the lens of a number of disciplines to arrive at a holistic view of cities and urban issues" (Mehrhoff vii).

Therefore, guided by the preceding tenets and underlying motives of their trade, the community designer may come from a variety of personal and professional backgrounds. Recognizing the multi-disciplinary nature of the profession, the roots of community design lie within several disciplines: architecture, landscape architecture, city planning, social work and environmental psychology (Hester 1990). Alone, each "...may be practically recognized as a community of thought and practice that possesses… a distinctive mandate, paradigm, or worldview" (Deming 2011,17). For this reason, in relationship to community design, each of these core disciplines shall be discussed further.

2.5.1 Architecture

At the forefront, architecture is often literally defined as the art and science of designing and constructing buildings. Playing a notable role in the community design movement, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) has been the professional organization for architects since its establishment in 1857. However, it was not until the keynote speech at its 100th convention in 1968, that Urban League Executive Director Whitney Young directly addressed its members:

> ...you are not a profession that has distinguished itself by your social and civic contributions to the cause of civil rights... You are most distinguished by your thunderous silence and your complete irrelevance.
>
> ...You share the responsibility for the mess we are in in terms of the white noose around the central city. It didn't just happen. We didn't just suddenly get this situation. It was carefully planned...

> It took a great deal of skill and creativity and imagination to build the kind of situation we have, and it is going to take skill and imagination and creativity to change it. We are going to have to have people as committed to doing the right thing, to “inclusiveness,” as we have in the past to exclusiveness (1968).

Within a year of this statement, an AIA Task Force on Equal Opportunity started the AIA/Ford Foundation On-the-Job Training and scholarship program to support entering students of color to the profession, in addition to publishing a handbook for its local chapters, entitled “Guideline: Community Design Centers” (Dorgan 2012).

Although perhaps initially promoted out of obligation or a necessitated response to political pressure, these actions were an important step towards validating and tethering community design practice to the profession of architecture. Bridging the practices, after all, could be easily justified, as community design shares with architecture the technical and visionary skills to affect the built environment. Yet, those commonalities aside, community designers tend to work more frequently with minorities or the economically disadvantaged. Unique in this regard, it is perhaps best stated by Hester:

> Although both intend to meet the needs of their clients, the community designer’s work frequently extends beyond what the architect would see as his or her domain. Attaining suitable housing for lower-income people frequently requires venturing into social planning or political-action arenas. In solving the housing needs of a poor neighborhood, it would not be unusual for a community designer to initiate a self-help housing program or rent control as well as design housing (1990, 16).

With this notable difference, other distinctions between architecture and community design are a bit more subtle. For instance, the entrepreneurial business skills of architects have become more commonplace amongst community designers, while post-occupancy evaluation, and the group and social-spatial analysis techniques of community designers are now widely accepted and utilized by those in the architecture field (Hester 1990). Further blurring professional lines, some community designers are also highly acclaimed architects with distinct personal styles. However, although there are some well known community designers, most avoid the status "starchitects" are oftentimes associated with, and generally stress citizen participation over aesthetic chic.

In many ways, this position was again reinforced heavily by the AIA, which initially nurtured the community design movement to fruition. Today, it is interesting to note the federal partnerships which have developed out of a desire to encourage the principles of participatory design and urban revitalization (Dorgan 2012). While over the years this professional support has undoubtedly wavered, after a period of dormancy, there are signs of revitalized enthusiasm for community design from both the AIA as well as individuals from within the profession (Dorgan 2012). Designing for the 98% without architects (Bell 2004), it is through the public interest design movement, that "architecture and all the design professions are undergoing a major transformation that is both pro-active and reactive: proactive as a search for roles with greater relevance, and reactive as a response to the humanitarian and environmental crises facing the world" (Fisher 2008, 8). Dependent in a way upon the cultural attitudes of society, this encompasses:

> ...the diverse and growing practice of community design and public-interest architecture. Some architects may consider these activities to be marginal within the field, but this form of practice promises to open up whole new areas of service for design professionals; and, given demographic and environmental trends, it may eventually become a primary career track for many people... as the gap continues to grow between what millions of people need and what the current system of housing and building provides (Fisher 2008, 9).

2.5.2 Landscape Architecture

The profession of landscape architecture both in practice, as well as in academia, incorporates not only aspects of architecture and physical site planning, but elements of environmental psychology and the earth sciences, in order to design multi-functional and attractive parks, gardens, campuses, subdivisions, playgrounds, and public spaces (Bureau 2016; Phillips 2012). Involving components of botany, horticulture, and even the fine arts, the landscape architect also researches and deals with issues of environmental planning for not only trees, flowers, and shrubs, but buildings, roads, recreational venues, and streetscapes (Bureau 2016; Phillips 2012). More specifically, in relation to community design, landscape architecture shares the respective realms of urban design, urban ecology, and altogether

promotes a holistic approach to design in much the same fashion and rigor of community designers. Via mapping social patterns, and dealing with ecological issues of microclimate, grading and drainage, and soils and vegetation, landscape architects may lend their potential expertise in green infrastructure to most any community endeavor. Furthermore, due in part to the legal requirements for citizen involvement on most public open-space projects, participatory techniques are also shared between the professions (Hester 1990). Holding this in common, through the processes of community design and landscape architecture, users and designers work together to propose mindful solutions and strategic implementations which fit within the social and environmental constraints of its context.

2.5.3 City Planning

Possessing many of the same goals and objectives, city planning is a profession which shares both long and short term implications with community design. In a field otherwise referred to as urban planning, or simply *planning*, professional planners help to create an overall vision for the community (APA 2015). They may often do this through research, design, and program development. However, planners also lead public processes, as well as manage and educate others to affect social change (APA 2015). With regards to each of these roles, planners ultimately work through outreach and policy to improve communities through more healthy, equitable, and efficiently attractive places for generations to come (APA 2015). In striving for this, community design similarly promotes carefully integrated community development through locally controlled and participatory projects. However:

> The distinction typically is one of scale and role – the planner writes policies to guide the economy at the regional or sector level and the community designer implements single projects that independently generate a few locally controlled jobs within sector constraints. The community designer undertakes projects that have incremental economic impact. And due to a scarcity of resources for such work, community designers must be increasingly creative when arranging grass-roots real-estate development and financing and in finding hidden marketable resources in local landscapes (Hester 1990, 22).

2.5.4 Social Work

As its name suggests, social work includes any number of professional processes or activities geared towards providing social services, with an emphasis on the investigation, treatment, and material aid of the economically, physically, mentally, or socially disadvantaged (Merriam 2016). Advocating for a similar clientele, community design is in many ways founded on theories and principles of social group work (Youth 2009). As a core methodology of the social work profession, social group work puts an emphasis of individual growth from within a group setting (Youth 2009).

Sharing this foundation, traditional methods of community organization are applied by both disciplines. However, embodying certain aspects of social planning (Sanoff 2000), community design also shares with social work "...an empathic service ethic and social activism" (Hester 1990, 22) in working with the community through human development. From this perspective, whether as designer or social worker, solutions are stressed to evolve from within an individual. As such, "the community design process is intended to be therapeutic for individuals and the group as a whole, like clinical social work. The distinction is that the focus of community design is primarily, although not exclusively, modification of the physical environment" (Hester 1990,22).

2.5.5 Environmental Psychology

Lastly, it was the interdisciplinary field of environmental psychology which lent itself to many of the techniques associated with the practice of community design. Concerned with both the natural and built environment, "environmental psychology is a field of study that examines the interrelationship between environments and human affect, cognition and behavior" (De Young 2013). Concentrating on the interplay between people and their surroundings, the communication and goal setting processes of community design both theoretically and

pragmatically substantiate environmental needs of control, accessibility, personal space, and choice (De Young 2013; Hester 1990).

2.6 Community Design Centers

For a number of compelling reasons, it was at the AIA Convention of 1968, that Whitney Young's speech further influenced the development of community design practice. "He indicated that inner cities were in great distress, and the architectural profession was not rising to the challenge of addressing their physical and social problems. His concern remains today, but it has been met in part by an idea that emerged at this meeting - the community design center (CDC)" (Curry 2004, 63).

Brought about during the 1960s, these centers were created in dedication to the provision of planning, design, and development services in low - and moderate - income communities which would normally lack the funding or general accessibility to receive such services (ACD 2016). Yet, in providing these services of community design, it should be further clarified the difference between community design centers and community development corporations (also referred to as CDCs). Community development corporations are similar organizations, in that they too were incorporated with government assistance to help supplement the need for community development services. Existing almost exclusively as non-profits, however, community development corporations often serve only the more specific purpose of carrying out low-income, affordable housing and economic development services (Rubin and Rubin 2008).

2.6.1 The Role of Typologies

First established in 1963, the Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development (PICCED) is currently the oldest university-based advocacy planning organization still operating in the United States (Pratt 2016). Significant to be studied, it is in this regard that

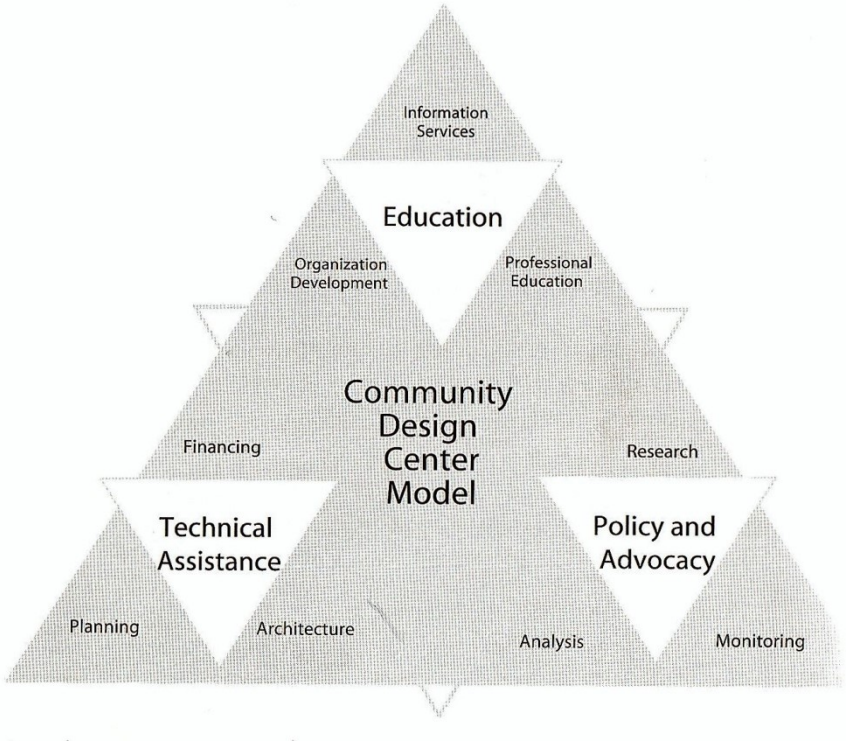

Figure 2.3 Philosophical and management structure of PICCED (Curry 2004)

the CDC model which it followed depicts the sort of multi-pronged, yet interrelatedness of its practices (see Figure 2.3). Following the many years since its inception, however, a number of CDC models have been incorporated throughout North America which either build upon or narrow the scope of such services. Regarding the topic at hand, typology refers to the classification or categorization of CDCs based upon the type of models these organizations follow (Lang 2005). Understanding that CDCs can also be differentiated by typology, “the CDC typology sets up the framework for understanding and classifying the plethora of CDCs that have proliferated since the 1990s” (Tam 2012, 7). These typologies include private for-profit CDCs, university-based CDCs, NGO's and non-profit CDCs, municipal-based CDCs, as well as an assortment of hybrid CDCs which adopt some form of organization from the other typologies (ACD 2016). Pertaining to each of these typologies though, all can be further analyzed and

differentiated via a number of criteria, based upon their context, mission, organizational structure, budget, scope of work, inherent strengths and weaknesses, and even position on Campbell's Sustainability Triangle (Campbell 1996; Tam 2012). Acknowledging this inherent depth of diversity, the classification of CDCs informs both designers and municipalities with a general awareness of the processes and products that each organizational type may contribute to their unique context and circumstances (Lang 2005).

Making important these distinctions, the first type of CDC to consider is the for-profit CDC. In addition to daily practices, these firms may operate in a CDC capacity via pro-bono planning and design services. Fueled in part by the public interest design movement, such firms are more often incorporating this financial structure into their organizations, in an effort to offer its employees such community engagement opportunities. As privately run and controlled entities, the potential for CDC services to be offered via this model is both vast and budding.

Besides these, university-based CDCs are particularly common. Supported by a variety of academic institutions, the community engagement aspect of CDCs along with an experiential learning component make for a very appealing commodity. By this, the successful CDC, if properly managed and marketed, provides universities a unique combination of innovative learning opportunities for its students, and favorable publicity. As applied to their practices, however, university-based CDCs sustain some drawbacks as well. For instance, university-based CDCs have a primary goal of education. Although perhaps providing a number of enthusiastic students, many may be understandably inexperienced. As such, the scope of services offered by these CDCs are equally limited in terms of project capabilities as well.

Beyond that, non-profit CDCs offer a more independent setup in regards to project potential and capabilities. Much more flexible in this manner, non-profit CDCs may offer an endless possibility of planning and design services with regards to their organizational structure. Dependent upon its particular goals and objectives, non-profit CDCs may also be more readily capable of crossing both social and economic boundaries as well.

Municipal-based CDCs, however, are operated in a somewhat more monitored and controlled atmosphere. Usually established for a very specific purpose, municipal-based CDCs are often utilized as a tool for cities to achieve a particular set of economically-driven development goals. In this manner extending the capacity of local government, the expertise of an in-house CDC may not only provide services to its citizens, but ultimately create new markets for investment and community revitalization.

Although each CDC typology is unique in regards to their mission and particular context, "through CDCs, architects and planners have found creative ways to serve community organizations and distressed urban and rural regions throughout the country" (Curry 2004, 63).

2.6.2 Aspects of Longevity

With some regards to their diversity, the formation of CDCs since their inception has lead down a path of both popularity and uncertainty. Through the efforts of both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, beginning in the 1960s, CDCs were increasingly utilized as part of the War on Poverty, to improve inner city neighborhoods, and to satiate social unrest (Rubin and Rubin 2008). Amongst a hodgepodge of other government funded programs, it was during this time that a number of policies dealing with economic inequality and poverty were implemented by the federal Office of Economic Opportunity (Rubin and Rubin 2008). However, delving into the Nixon and Ford administrations (1968-1976), a number of policy changes occurred which might affect CDC funding. The Office of Economic Opportunity, for instance, was eventually eliminated during this time frame. As well, under the Housing and Community Development Act, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program was setup by massively combining categorical grants for housing, infrastructure, urban planning, and economic development work, which both offered flexibility, but notably reducing overall funding (Rubin and Rubin 2008). In addition, the Section 8 Housing Program made for a strong shift in how the government dealt with low-income housing - offering vouchers rather than physical buildings (Rubin and Rubin

2008). These changes aside, in the 1970s, the number of CDCs remained relatively stable, as their numbers ranged between the 60 to 80 range across America, according to directories produced by the AIA (Schuman 2000). More specifically, in 1971, 74 CDCs were documented, leading up until 1978, when 80 CDCs were recorded (Schuman 2000).

Nonetheless, during the time of the Reagan administration (1980-1988), further changes were on the horizon. Heavily due in part to a shifting political ideology, program funds were dropped in a coordinated effort to reduce the costs of social service programs on the government and to help balance the federal budget. Likewise, the consolidated CDBGs which may often help to fund CDCs were not in totality cut, but reduced with notable certainty (Rubin and Rubin 2008). The sum of these changes over the course of many years essentially put a cork on not only CDC growth, but on their sustained existence.

After a distinct decline in the 1980's, however, the 1990s brought with it a new era of burgeoning growth. To be certain, it should be first generally referenced that the number of non-profits currently in operation throughout the United States has experienced great growth, both in terms of presence, as well as funding since the 1970s (Sumption 2012). As of 2012, the nonprofit sector of the US economy grew to include more than 950,000 organizations; 501(c)3 nonprofits recognized as tax-exempt by the Internal Revenue Service (Sumption 2012). Therefore, while funding for non-profits is highly decentralized, the multitude of such community based organizations (CBOs) receiving such a status over the years could very well influence an increased number of CDCs, as demonstrated by the surge of non-profits nationwide.

Within this context, however, regarding university-based CDCs alone, according to Cary in an Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture's (ACSA) survey (2000), over fifty percent of university-based community design programs were initiated during the 1990s. Accordingly, many authors specifically noted the practice of community design/build education throughout the United States to have grown since the 1990's as well, although the reasons for this are not completely understood (Goodman 2014; Schuman 2000). Looking into this further,

by the year 2000, over 30% of North American architecture schools ran university-based community design and research centers that engage the public in decision-making about the built environment (Cary 2000). Such growth would appear both significant and noteworthy.

2.6.3 Texas CDCs

As applied to the state of Texas alone, further information specifically regarding CDCs in Texas appear sparse and lacking. However, upon independent study of the researcher, currently operating Texas CDCs were carefully compiled and identified (see Table 2.1).

CURRENTLY OPERATING TEXAS CDCs	TYPOLOGY	LOCATION	ESTABLISHED
The Alley Flat Initiative	Hybrid	Austin, TX	2005
Architecture for Charity of Texas	Non-Profit	Brownsville, TX	2008
Arlington Urban Design Center	Hybrid	Arlington, TX	2009
Austin Community Design and Development Center	Non-Profit	Austin, TX	2006
bcWORKSHOP	Non-Profit	Dallas, TX	2005
Center for Sustainable Development	Academic	Austin, TX	2001
Community Design Lab	Academic	Lubbock, TX	1995
Community Design Resource Center	Academic	Houston, TX	2005
Dallas City Design Studio	Municipal	Dallas, TX	2009
Graduate Design/Build Studio (University of Houston)	Academic	Houston, TX	1990
Institute of Urban Studies	Hybrid	Arlington, TX	1967
Project Row Houses	Non-Profit	Houston, TX	1993
Rice Building Workshop	Academic	Houston, TX	1996
San Antonio Design Center	Municipal	San Antonio, TX	2013
Urban Tech Design Center	Academic	Lubbock, TX	2010

Table 2.1 Currently Operating CDCs in Texas (ACD 2016; ACSA 2014)

These organizations were primarily identified through the Association of Community Design (2016) as well as the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (2014) and further categorized based upon typology by the researcher. Through this information, the number of currently operating Texas CDCs based upon date of establishment has clearly demonstrated similar results to that of CDCs across the nation (see Figure 2.4).

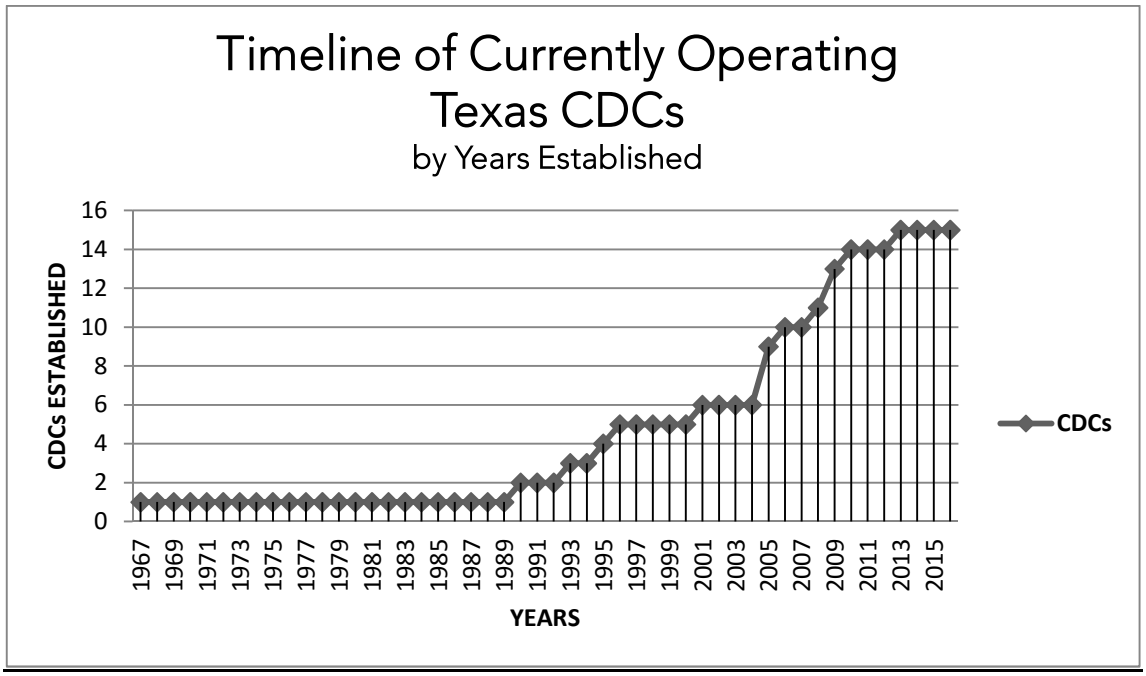

Figure 2.4 Timeline of Currently Operating Texas CDCs by Years Established (ACD 2016; ACSA 2014)

Whether or not this information of CDCs in Texas, truly confirms trends nationwide, it is in totality that since the year 2000, the number of CDCs has nearly tripled in North America, from just under 70, to over 200 active organizations which are providing community design services in a diversity of settings (ACSA 2014). Once again, however, the reasons for this are yet unclear (Goodman 2014; Schuman 2012). As such, without enough insight to properly diagnose this phenomena, further research should be conducted in order further interpret the

role of CDCs in contemporary practice. In doing so, "knowing why the practice becomes popular at particular historic moments is key to understanding its utility for the profession and for the communities it claims to serve" (Goodman 2014, 504). For as it has been evidenced throughout the contrasting political climates and ideologies over the years, "the differential impact of capital investment and disinvestment, government intervention... create dynamic forces that continually reshape city form and opportunities or threats to its people" (Hartshorn 1992, 14). As such, this growth of CDCs could be indicative of any number of economic, environmental, or social factors, still not easily determined or clarified. Yet, with a history of less than fifty years, the CDC model remains open to study and interpretation, and in particular to the architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning professions, opens itself up to a broader discussion (Pitera 2015).

2.7 Summary

In order to develop a foundational knowledge of the topic of this thesis, one must strive to interpret the last several decades of planning history in a meaningful and ideological way (Levy 2000). In this manner, regarding a number of paradigm shifts within the field of urban planning, each was seemingly impelled by the community's rejection of its merit. However, with each paradigm change was a consequent shift in the perceived problems associated with its worthiness (Kuhn 1962).

This notion was perhaps best exemplified during the 1960s "...in the context of a general upheaval of civil society in the USA which included the civil rights movement, the rise of women's liberation, the anti-war movement, the student protest, together with more militant labour demands and the challenge of alternative cultures which were destroying the myth of a conflict-free, post-industrial society, and shaking the basic mechanisms of social control" (Castells 1983, 49). Although numerous and not of one accord, the multitude of these

movements challenged either political or cultural values. Consequently, this proposed a new relationship between space and society (Castells 1983).

Exploring new social meaning for cities, to this effect, community design was intended to help address growing concerns which "...called into question the pattern of urban development that had reshaped the American landscape for almost half a century" (Castells, 49). Started as a grassroots effort, the community design movement was meant to help make it possible for citizens to function in the process of creating and managing their environment (Sanoff 2000). Aiming to address the everyday environmental needs of the people, community design focuses on empowering them through collaborative engagement, towards a more fair and just environment (Hester 1990). Its goals and objectives likewise propose to enhance the sense of community, while simultaneously promoting mutual learning, building self-esteem, and allowing the community to share in the joy and experience of creating (Hester 1990).

Therefore, it is the theory and practice of community design which hopes to exemplify an attitude of change and promotion of unity in the creation of place (Sanoff 2000). To be duly noted, however, such theories may not always shape society, but rather, society is shaped by theories (Wolf & Resnick 1987). So it is that the obtainment of its goals and objectives are dependent upon those in the field, as "every day in every context, people acting individually or collectively, produce or reproduce the rules of their society, and translate them into their spatial expression and their institutional management" (Castells xvi). This is perhaps particularly relevant to the professions of architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, social work, and environmental psychology, as those core disciplines which have most informed the practice of community design (Hester 1990). Concerning these multi-disciplinary roots, community designers are often able to pull from not only a number of design skills such as visual problem solving and spatial creativity, but an almost unpredictable variety of additional skills in collaboration, organizing, and political strategic planning, based upon their particular backgrounds (Hester 1990).

It is therefore through the establishment of community design centers (CDCs) that such professionals found an outlet for channeling those skills to the benefit of others. Since then, the initial inception of CDCs during the 1960's led to the further growth of CDCs well into the 1970s. However, due to political shifts in the 1980's, this growth became noticeably stagnant. It was not until the 1990's that again, amongst a variety of typologies, the work of CDCs has continued to grow onward with significant gains. Despite this growth, though, the reasons are less than well understood. As such, considering the current inventory of CDCs across not only North America but the state of Texas, this resurgence would appear worthy of further research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

With a developed awareness of the origins and current state of community design, CDCs can then lend themselves to a variety of research methods dependent upon the content and complexity of the perceived issue. For the purposes of this research, however, qualitative methods informed by the "research act" of John and Sharon Gaber were utilized (2007). As such, this section describes the overall approach to research, its form of progression, and guidelines for the goals and objectives of this research to be revealed.

3.2 Research Design

Establishing a framework for further inquiry, the act of constructing research then followed a qualitative process divided into sequential steps. In relation to data, these steps included: establishing research questions, defining a study population and location, data collection, organizing and analyzing data for its observations of reality, identifying data limitations, and presenting the research results (Gaber and Gaber 2007).

3.2.1. Establishing Research Questions

To begin, "in academic research, problems are made concrete and specific, and the topic is narrowed to make the task manageable and amenable to completion" (Dandekar 2003, 10). In this manner, the development of particular research questions was necessary to propose an orderly and useful investigation (Deming 2011). Acknowledging this, the following inquiries sought to investigate:

1) What are the reasons for the recent increase of CDCs across North America?
2) Are there economic, environmental, or social factors underlying this growth?
3) What roles do architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning, play in the recent growth of CDCs nationwide?

3.2.2 Study Population and Location

Once established, these research questions were specifically aimed at leaders and administrators of CDCs located throughout Texas. As of today, Texas is currently the second largest state in the United States of America, in terms of not only land area, but estimated total population as well (Census 2014). Spanning across the state, this study population was therefore decidedly limited to Texas for reasons of not only accessibility, but practicality, and potential diversity of both rural and urban perspectives. Having defined this study population in such a manner, individuals were further identified primarily through the online directories of the Association of Community Design (2016), as well as Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (2014) to be discussed further in the following section.

3.2.3 Data Collection

With a study population and location then defined, data for this research was based on semi-structured interviews that allowed the researcher to ask exploratory and descriptive questions (Gaber and Gaber 2007). Designed to elicit open-ended responses, a set of secondary interview questions (see Appendix C) were consequently meant to elaborate upon the original research questions, and were formulated and heavily influenced by findings from the literature review. These interview questions specifically ask:

- How long have you been in your profession, and how long have you served in your current position?
- What is your educational background, and how, if at all, do you feel it may have helped prepare you for this position?

- Can you briefly describe some of your previous work experience which you feel may have prepared you for your current position?
- Can you provide a brief history of why this organization was established?
- Can you briefly describe the organization's scope of work or type of projects it undertakes?
- Who would you say composes the most significant portion of your clientele?
- What percentage (%) of your project portfolio would you say emphasize primarily:

  _Economic issues?

  _Environmental issues?

  _Social issues?
- What percentage (%) of your project portfolio would you categorize as primarily: _Architecture?

  _Landscape Architecture?

  _or Urban Planning-based services?
- How would you rate or assess the importance of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning, as applied to your organization's practices and why?
- What do you feel is causing the recent increase of CDCs across North America?

As prepared, the resulting interview questions were then directed towards the leaders and administrators of CDCs currently located in the state of Texas (ACD 2016; ACSA 2014). Names and contact information of these individuals were gathered from existing sources such as the Association for Community Design's member directory, and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture's Community Design Directory, in addition to online searches, and public listings of registered U.S. nonprofits. All of these sources are publicly available.

Identified in such a manner, participants were then recruited through either personal contact, phone calls, or email correspondence (see Appendix B). Once confirmed, participants were scheduled to be interviewed either face-to-face by the researcher, over the telephone, or to have these questions sent to them via email to be answered through written communication.

In-person interviews, scheduled at the participants' convenience, were conducted at the respective participants' place of occupation or at another location of the participants' choosing. The interviews were audio recorded. Phone interviews were also scheduled at the participants' convenience and - conducted over speakerphone - these interviews were audio recorded.

For all three methods of study enrollment (in-person, over the phone, or via email), all participants were provided a letter of informed consent via email for personal review, prior to any scheduled interview. All participants were provided with a letter of informed consent stating that by choosing to participate in the interview, they confirm that they are 18 years of age or older and have read or had this document read to them. Prior to interview, they were likewise informed about this study's purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks, and provided a copy of this form as well. IRB approval was received on October 20, 2015 (see Appendix A).

3.2.4 Organizing and Analyzing Data

To facilitate extraction and recording of qualitative data, each of the interviews, as previously mentioned, was audio recorded. As the first step to organizing the data, each of these audio recordings were transcribed into electronic text. During transcription, each of these interviews were typed exactly as they were recorded, word-for-word. Interviews conducted via email were similarly recorded through written documentation. Via all methods, no personally identifiable information was included from the information obtained during the interviews. However, in the following chapter of this thesis, quotes from the interviewees were frequently used to illustrate key points. While these quotes were basically shown verbatim, the researcher took license to remove unnecessary "filler" words (such as "very," "really," "like," etc.) in order to strengthen the contribution of the quoted material.

Once the transcription process was complete, data obtained from each of the respective interviews were then placed chronologically, with responses sequentially organized per interview guide question. It is then cumulatively, as they pertain to each interview question,

that these responses were set up for content analysis (Gaber and Gaber 2007). Analyzed categorically in this fashion, it is all together, that any comparable differences and commonalities were noted and compiled at this stage for future visual representations. Prepared to eventually be shown in graphical form, tables and figures were preliminarily designed in order to best communicate the significance of these findings. Information obtained from these interviews were analyzed to draw themes for studying the upsurge of CDCs and to gain insight regarding the continued establishment and practices of CDCs nationwide.

3.2.5 Data Limitations, Bias, and Error

It is important to note that the conclusions drawn from the interview data were subject to particular limitations and biases, as analysis of the data was based upon certain assumptions that were inherently part of the research process. For instance, the results of the interviews were based upon a sampling of CDC leaders and administrators in Texas who responded to the interview questions based upon their own unique perspectives. These respondents vary not only in their personal and educational backgrounds, but by the particular geographic locations and the human populations that they serve as well. Their responses, therefore, may not fully be representative of the majority of CDCs across Texas nor North America.

3.2.6 Presenting the Research Results

Acknowledging the constraints of this research, data extracted from the results of the interviews were then carefully discussed and presented in comparative chart and table formats to help better illustrate any comparable themes amongst participants. In such a manner, the results of this analysis were highlighted and presented to build upon the existing framework of CDC knowledge and research, set forth from previous studies (Tam 2011; Tural 2011; Zhou 2011) and to share the results with others in a way which hopefully best expresses the significance of the findings.

3.3 Summary

Whether appearing as a need or an opportunity, all research and design projects share the same beginning – an awareness, articulation, and acceptance of a problem (Koberg 1976). This research involved the qualitative methods of John and Sharon Gaber to explore why community design centers (CDCs) have experienced increased growth across North America since the 1990s. Establishing specific questions, this research also inquired if there are economic, environmental, or social factors underlying this growth, as well as what roles do architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning, play in the growing number of CDCs across the nation. The study concentrated on CDCs in Texas and selected participants due to their current administrative position and knowledge of CDC operations in Texas. Offering their perceptions from the vantage point of a leader and administrator, data accessed and collected from the participants provided insight into this phenomena and helped interpret the recent growth of CDCs nationwide. This section thus explained the research process from accessing, organizing, and analyzing data, to identifying data limitations, and conclusively presenting the results

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

Through the interviews with CDC leaders and administrators conducted over the course of this research, the preliminary findings in this chapter were formally discussed and presented. Each interviewee was first described in terms of their professional, educational, and experiential backgrounds. Consequently, it is then question by question, that responses from these participants were analyzed and discussed in search of both common themes as well as responses unique to individual participants (Gaber and Gaber 2007; Taylor and Bogdan 1984).

4.2 Participants' Profiles

Out of 15 recognized CDCs located throughout the state of Texas (see Table 2.1), this study interviewed 11 leaders and administrators (7 male, 4 female) representing all but 3 CDC organizations. These participants[2] currently operate under a variety of titles, including, but not limited to: director, co-director, program coordinator, manager, founder, and co-founder. In addition to this, 27% of respondents actually hold these titles *concurrently*, within multiple CDC organizations. This is important to note, as respondents' views and opinions may ultimately be representative of more than one CDC organization.

That said, all participants were asked the same series of questions regarding their professional, educational, and experiential backgrounds. In response, 46% of the participants identified their profession as planning, and 36% stated it to be architecture. Meanwhile, somewhat unexpectedly, 18% of participants actually self-identified themselves as professors (see Figure 4.1). This is of particular interest, as upon further investigation, 46% of the

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2. Please note that in this work the research subjects are indistinctively and interchangeably referred to as respondents, interviewees, or participants.

remaining participants currently teach in academic institutions as well. This infers a minimum of 64% of participants which ultimately have academic connections, as opposed to being strictly a working professional.

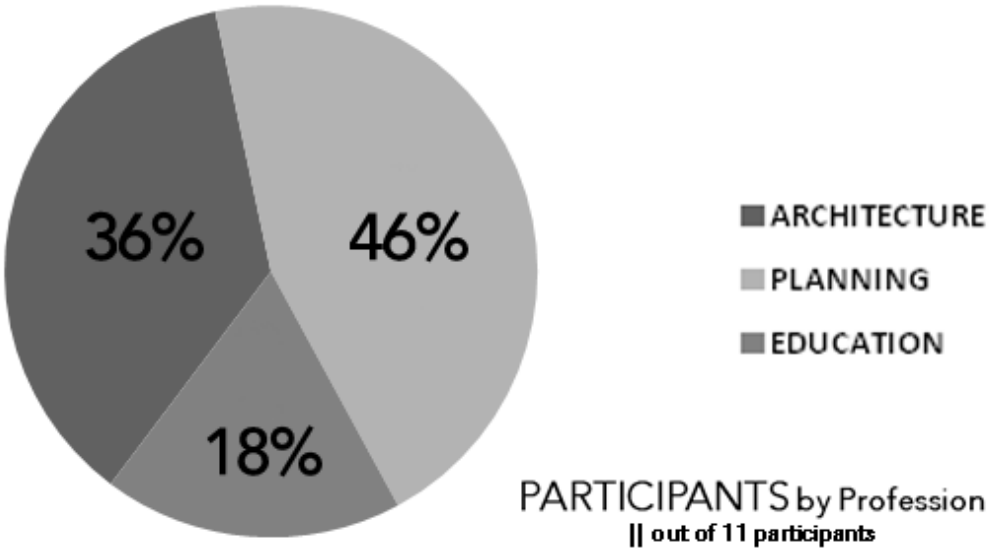

Figure 4.1 Participants by Profession

In terms of professional experience, a relatively diverse sampling seems to be represented as well. With an average number of 25 years experience, 36% of participants fall between 9-12 years, while 36% have over 40 years professional experience (see Figure 4.2). Once compared by profession, however, those numbers seem to skew considerably. By years, those in architecture seem to have the most experience overall, with an average of 39 years in the profession. While planners, on the other hand, had an average of 16 years experience; less than half the average as those in architecture (see Figure 4.3). By professional comparison, this trend holds true similarly in regards to the number of years each participant has held their current CDC position as well. For those in architecture, the average was significantly higher at 13 years in their current position, versus those in planning at 3 years (see Figure 4.4).

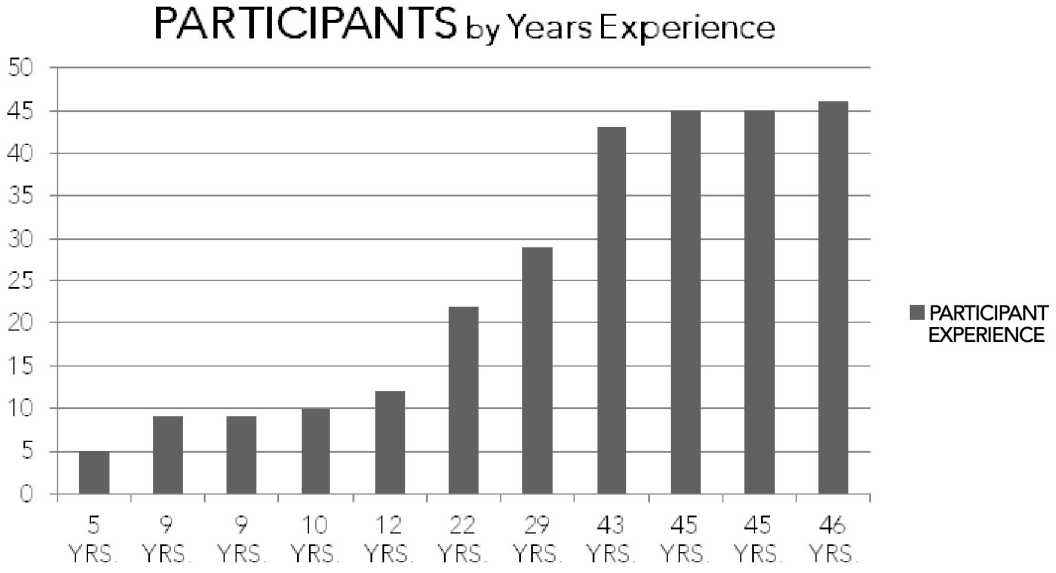

Figure 4.2 Participants by Years Experience

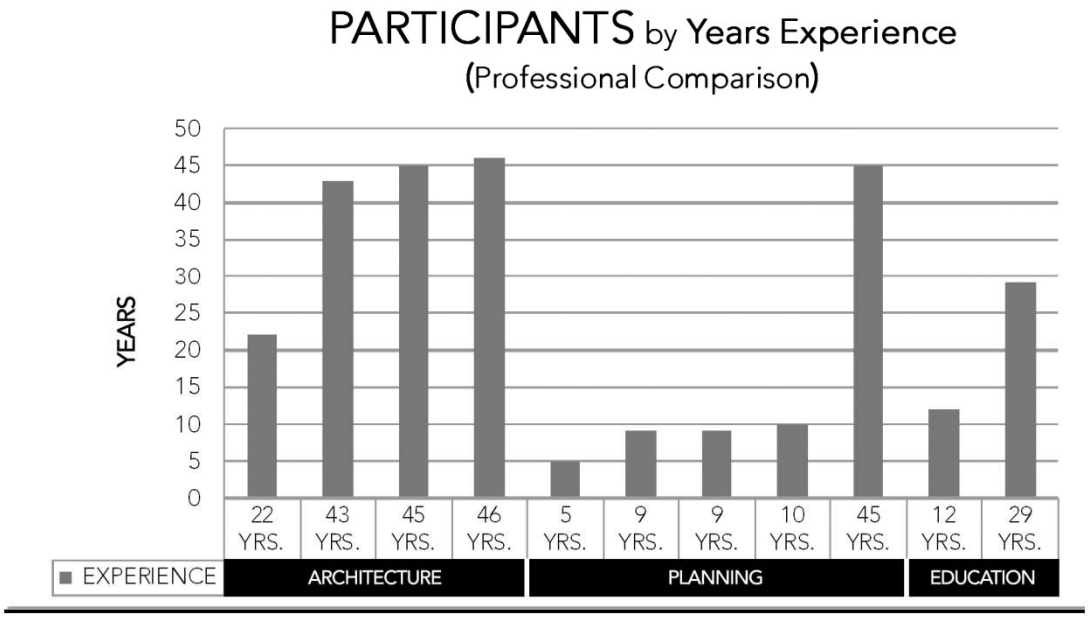

Figure 4.3 Participants by Profession and Experience

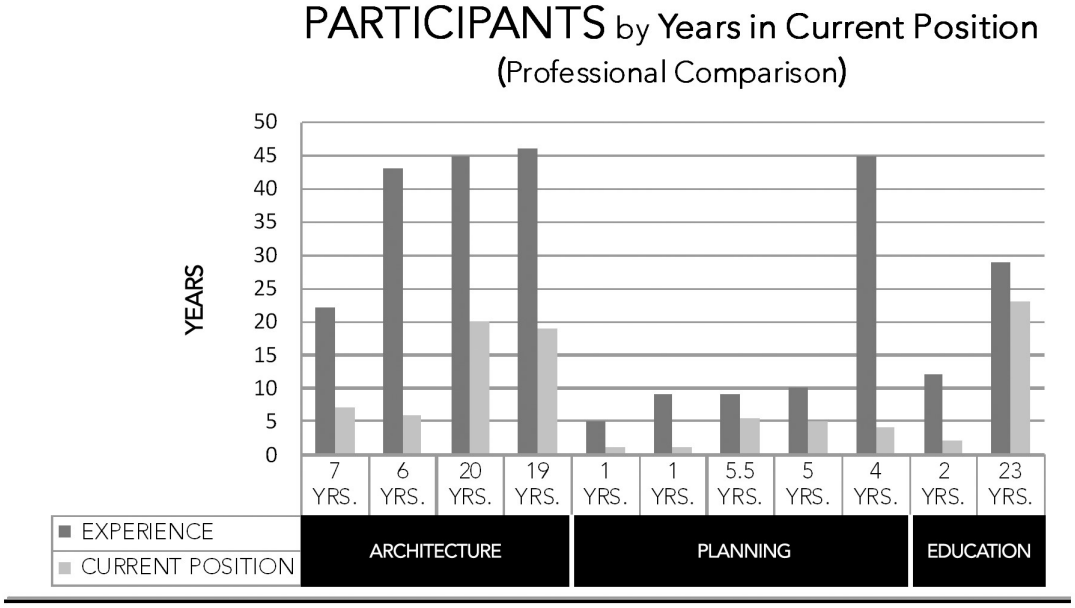

Figure 4.4 Participants by Profession and Current Position

In regards to educational attainment, 100% of participants hold a bachelor's degree from their respective fields of study. Of them, nearly 50% obtained their professional degree in architecture (B.Arch). Moreover, out of all participants, 82% also hold master's degrees. Similarly, nearly 50% of those with master's degrees have it in urban planning (see Table 4.1). These simple findings are notable, as held in common academic backgrounds. Educationally speaking, why is architecture the dominant bachelor's, yet urban planning a dominantly held master's?

From the interviews, two possible answers to this question are revealed. For one, 27% of participants identified their degree in urban planning as complementary to an architectural background, particularly as applied to community design processes. Regarding this topic, participant 1 (P1) explains, "I have this background where I know a fair amount about design... but also, I have the planning background and municipal experience of how cities operate, that all pull together so that I run this interdisciplinary center with all those things combined."

PARTICIPANTS by Educational Attainment

by DEGREE	of 11 total participants
BACHELOR	100%
MASTER	82%
PhD	27%
BACHELOR	
B. Arch (professional)	46%
Art History	18%
Architectural Engineering	9%
Environmental Design	9%
Environmental Science	9%
Philosophy	9%
MASTER	(2 participants held multiple master's)
Urban Planning	46%
Landscape Architecture	18%
Architecture	18%
Urban Design	18%
PhD	
Urban Planning	9%
Landscape Architecture	9%
Philosophy	9%

Table 4.1 Participants by Educational Attainment

Furthermore, coming to urban planning with a design background offered an advantageous opportunity for participants to bring their design skills and to look at urban issues from not only a policy perspective, but in terms of micro-scale urban design issues (P7). Not the least of which, participant 5 simply states it to be an educational combination which provides both the administrative and design background for useful for planning positions (P5).

Besides being professionally practical, however, the other reason 27% of participants cite is of a more personal nature. "I've always taken a sort of environmental slant, sustainability slant - in my personal interests and in work. And pursuing my master's in planning, really was a great way for me to look deeper into issues I cared about - about spaces, and community, and sustainability" (P4). For these participants, there was a desire to work more with the community. Seeking opportunities to do more community engaged work in their careers or profession, some participants found that work architecturally less accessible to come by (P8). In other words, "I just felt that it should be more... as an architect practicing, for me the question was how can I be relevant to the place I live, and how do I have my work not be disconnected from that" (P9). Seeking this sense of purpose and satisfaction, participants expressed an appreciation for architecture school as having prepared them as a designer (P8), "but as far as being able to actually work with people... (laughter) and, you know, consider all of those other things, outside the walls of a building, I think planning school was really essential for that" (P8).

Still, as one participant gave credit, "I basically learned in the School of Reality" (P2). More to this point, the practical work experience of these participants was considered (see Table 4.2). Amongst the most common, approximately 64% of participants described working in the private sector; spanning from entry-level or research positions, to firm principles and founders. These participants shared a variety of ways in which this influenced them in their current position.

PARTICIPANTS by Work Experience

WORK EXPERIENCE	of 11 total participants
Teaching	73%
Private Practice	64%
City Planning	18%
Transportation Planning	18%
Non-Profit	18%
Construction	9%

Table 4.2 Participants by Work Experience

For some, this may have been distinguished by the work they did, mostly in regards to the public arena and on public buildings (P8). For others, it was noted for the practical skills that they learned, which included budgeting a project, scoping a timeline, and really just managing a project from beginning to end (P4). Such experiences in the private sector, provided with a set of parameters, billing rates, and other very prescriptive information, were cited as being of the most value to participants, as applied to their current CDC position.

Besides this, 36% of participants had experience in other public-sector planning ventures, both long and short term, dealing with transportation related projects, transit oriented development (TODs), traffic congestion, and issues of walkability (P7). By and large though, most common amongst 73% of participants was experience in the classroom. Reminiscent of the first question, this implies teaching may play a special role amongst the participants; significant enough for them to not only mention, but completely define their profession by it.

4.3 Findings: Themes from the Data

Through learning about the participants' backgrounds, the goal is to promote a more insightful and enhanced outlook for analyzing the remainder of the interviews. For example, when asked to describe why their organization was established (see Table 4.3), 45% of participants responded specifically in regards to students' engagement. "We had to find a way to do projects that would be interesting for students and useful for the community" (P2). Here, a very direct connection may be made linking the participants' experience teaching, to that of their organizational mission. Many of these CDCs, at least partially, started off to get the students out of the studio and into the community (P2) and in some instances, were "...established circumstantially, by accident really, as a means of getting graduate students involved in hands-on construction of buildings - to learn more by making buildings at full scale" (P11). These CDCs offer opportunities where students can actually get out into the community and have real world projects and real world clients (P2). In addition, through the processes and services they offer, university interns, for instance, are gaining invaluable real-world experience which they can in turn put into their portfolios, and resumes, and utilize for future employment purposes (P1).

ORGANIZATIONS by Purpose

PURPOSE	of 11 total participants
Community Resource	91%
Student Engagement	45%
Private Sector Development	27%
Research	27%

Table 4.3 Organizations by Purpose

Academically, this goes beyond just student engagement. Research is cited amongst 27% of participants as another primary goal of their existence. For those organizations, their main purpose is to function as a home for research to be discussed, initiated, and distributed to others of common interests and mindsets (P4). In such a way, these organizations work to foster, develop, and execute sponsored research projects within their respective academic institute or department (P6).

Also, in the case of some CDCs, their creation was spearheaded by a private group of stakeholders engaged in downtown redevelopment (P10) or in developing design guidelines for downtown (P5). Twenty-seven percent of participants identified private sector development to be a primary concern; "...to provide some professional expertise to help facilitate private-sector issues to do with integration of new development into neighborhoods, like infill development" (P5).

Despite this fact, whether downtown focused or not, community engagement is what was cited as really instrumental here (P10). The overwhelming majority of participants (91%) specifically stated their purpose as just trying to be more of a community resource for design (P8). As an intricate component of why their organization was established, "I always thought it would be great to have a design-oriented practice that was based in communities" (P9). In such a manner, CDCs may lend themselves to offer a variety of planning, research, and design services that a particular community needs.

Indeed, the scope of services offered by several of these organizations would appear relatively extensive (see Table 4.4). A total of 73% of participants, through their respective organizations, offer design services, as well as 82% which offer planning services. In one aspect, design services may address common, everyday needs by offering private, local businesses assistance with business facade renovations, landscaping, site plans, or even interior design work (P1). Working with neighborhoods, "we help them with visioning different things... sprucing up their neighborhood... landscape improvements to their entryway, or

signage design for their entry, or street toppers, or open space improvements" (P1). In terms of planning, however, these services have a broad range of implications, which includes analysis of regional planning activities, regarding projects of over 10,000 sq. miles, to urban design scale projects, and everything in between (P6). As evidenced, by a number of projects both big and small (P7), the scope of these services may include aspects of a more administrative nature as well. Examples of this would include the evaluation of design proposals for historic preservation and design review purposes, as well as for downtown overlays where a particular design criteria is desired or required (P5). Through this sort of design assessment, the disciplines of planning and design combine to produce master plans, comprehensive plans, redevelopment plans, transportation plans, and economic analysis (P7) while attempting to address questions of appropriate building materials and urban design (P6).

ORGANIZATIONS by Scope of Services

SCOPE OF SERVICES	of 11 total participants
Planning	82%
Design	73%
Affordable Housing	55%
Design/Build	45%
Research	45%
Policy	45%

Table 4.4 Organizations by Scope of Services

This leads into research aspects, which 45% of participants acknowledge as vital to their operations. By collecting data, providing cleanup, and further processing that data for analysis, these services are invaluable to give back to a city or community which may use the findings from that research as the basis for future decision-making (P7). In a similar fashion, grant writing for faculty and staff is equally as important (P4). Administratively overseeing these research opportunities, a number of projects looking at downtown walkability qualities, high speed rail, and quality of life impacts, only lead to further research on affordable housing and a slew of other related topics (P7). In this light, over half the participants also placed an emphasis on affordable housing options, working in some cases "to develop accessory dwelling units, which are like a second house, basically, in the backyard of a single family lot. We help homeowners and community organizations develop ADUs as an affordable housing option in the neighborhood" (P8). In many circumstances, this leads into policy work as well. Lobbying and collaborating with different city agencies, CDCs can impact and influence changes in development ordinances, making it more accessible or cheaper to build" (P8). Forty-five percent of respondents similarly cite policy work, oftentimes which is actually related to public health, regarding the impacts of infill development on air quality (P3, P8). Such a multitude of activities cover the gamut of services which CDCs are currently offering throughout Texas. As perhaps best expressed by participant 9, "there are times when we can look like an architecture firm... but you'll discover that there are things that we do, that are outside, far, *far* outside, what would be basic services within the [architecture] manual."

In addition, the work that these organizations are doing, may oftentimes go beyond their local jurisdiction (see Table 4.5). Stretching across the entirety of the state, 45% of participants take on projects in an ongoing capacity, as well as project by project basis. Taking this even further, reaching across state boundaries, 36% take on national endeavors, while 27% of participants cite ongoing or previously completed projects of an international nature. Thus, having transcended national lines, who in fact are these community design centers serving?

ORGANIZATIONS by Impact Area

IMPACT AREA	of 11 total participants
Local	100%
Statewide	45%
National	36%
International	27%

Table 4.5 Organizations by Impact Area

When asked who composes the most significant portion of their clientele, this inquiry becomes more intriguing. "That's hard because the public is our client. And the public has a broad cross-section" (P9). Understandably, based upon a project's geography, "that context helps to define sort of thresholds of more immediate stakeholders or immediate clients" (P9). Therefore, clients can range anywhere from non-profit organizations, to municipal governments, neighborhood organizations, or even a modest family (P9). That having been said, a fairly well-distributed response rate was obtained from the remainder of participants' perspectives (see Table 4.6).

MOST SIGNIFICANT CLIENTS by Sector

SECTOR	of 11 total participants
Public	45%
Private	36%
Non-Profit	36%

Table 4.6 Most Significant Clients by Sector

Governmental, institutional, or municipal-based work was most common amongst 45% of participants, who cited projects for public elementary and middle school campuses alongside works with the city parks department (P11). In addition to this, several participants acknowledged Texas cities to be a huge part of their daily clientele (P4). Lastly, "in regards to funding through the center - if you look at it by dollars - the largest stakeholder funder has been the US Department of Housing and Development (HUD), followed by various State of Texas agencies. We've also had funding through other things: the US EDA, the US Department of Defense, the Department of Energy - we do a lot of studies with CITY 6 and COUNTY 6" (P6).

For the remainder of participants, "I'd say it's split pretty evenly between non-profit affordable housing providers, and long-time homeowners who are on a restricted income" (P8). Along with non-profits that are engaged in the community (P10) the private sector would appear equally important amongst participants. "Well, the thing is, not necessarily financially, but we *always* have ongoing work in regards to downtown redevelopment. That's central to our mission" (P10).

What is perhaps more notable though, was what was learned regarding the value that participants place upon *creating* projects. Twenty-seven percent of participants remarked "...what we have found is that it's also necessary for us to reach out on our own, to generate the kind of projects that need to be done, rather than just waiting for other non-profits to come to us" (P3). By this, "...in some cases we actually are *inventing* a project to help us do a level of R&D around a particular segment of work" (P9). Consequently, "there have been other, sometimes entirely opportunistic projects that come along, because it's always difficult to keep a private, non-profit floating" (P3). For this reason, over half the participants (64%) stress the benefit of partnerships, not only for projects, but for overall organizational support and success. "We couldn't do what we're doing if we didn't have the university's assistance and buy-in to the program and support of it. So it's very important that you reach out to your community partners and get them involved because that way it's just a stronger operation over all" (P1).

Collaboration, therefore, helps to facilitate projects and build clientele. Once these relationships are formed, "instead of us going to the community to get projects, *they* call us! They call us and ask for the help, for a particular project, or design, or research. And we evaluate their needs and we see if this is something that we can do at CDC 7 and then we get back to them" (P7).

In such a manner, these organization's project streams are dependent upon a variety of factors. Firstly involving the client, this may heavily influence and produce project portfolios of a particular nature. Keeping this in mind, the next question is influenced by Scott Campbell's Sustainability Triangle (1996) and seeks to understand what percentage of these organization's projects emphasize primarily economic, environmental, or social issues. Undoubtedly, in posing this question, there was a notable amount of respondents (36%) who found this question difficult to answer. "That's hard to say... it's so mixed up, it's hard to separate it" (P2). Along with long pauses, "...oh, that's a hard question..." (P4) and "Well, it would be hard to put into percentages…" (P7) were very common initial responses. In this manner, for the majority 64% of these participants, they were emphatic that "every project does all of the above… I mean, they're just part of what we do" (P2). Adding onto this, "I would say most of our projects are a combination of all" (P7) and "one of the things *you* should understand… every project we should be doing all 3 of those things, simultaneously" (P3). Therefore, what was stated definitively in response to this question, "I can't do it...I can't really separate these. So what I would tell you, is in our work, the economic, environmental, and social issues, all of them come to bear in different weighted emphasis, based on context" (P9).

Correspondingly, 27% of the participants corroborate this notion; acknowledging a certain amount of subjectivity based upon both client and context. "It depends though, as certain clients are more heavy on the environmental piece. Some clients are more heavy on the economic piece. So, it sort of depends on who we work with" (P8). Still, for those participants who responded in terms of percentages, these values tended to vary all across the board (see Table 4.7).

PROJECT PORTFOLIO by Emphasis

	ECONOMIC	ENVIRONMENTAL	SOCIAL
P1	60%	5%	35%
P2	---	---	---
P3	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
P4	25%	50%	25%
P5	50%	---	50%
P6	10%	70%	20%
P7	---	---	---
P8	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
P9	---	---	---
P10	---	---	---
P11	---	---	---
AVG.	**35%**	**32%**	**33%**

Table 4.7 Project Portfolio by Emphasis

Interesting in this regard, these spanning percentages would appear strongly divergent, in part, due to the typology and circumstances of the particular organization. As previously determined from the literature review, CDCs may be differentiated by a number of variables, based upon context, mission, organizational structure, budget, its scope of work, as well as position on Campbell's Sustainability Triangle regarding its economic, environmental, and social interests (Campbell 1996; Tam 2012). As evidenced by participants' responses, it would also appear that by taking the average of these percentages, a more-or-less equivalent outcome

was the result. Even with a slight economic emphasis, these findings would in fact seem to confirm what participants have stated that "those are obviously very intertwined issues" (P4) and that despite a number of variables, it is in totality by the sum of its parts, that "it can be weighted, but ideally all 3 are always present, in every project" (P9). To this affect, as participant 2 put it, "I mean basically its design, so... everything else is secondary to design."

This begs the following question as to which of the traditional design disciplines might be most prevalent or represented by their works. Accordingly, participants were asked what percentage (%) of their project portfolio would be categorized as primarily architecture, landscape architecture, or urban planning-based services. Similar to the last question, however, "I try to not have them be so clearly separated" (P9). Rather, 36% of participants emphasized cross-discipline or the interdisciplinary nature of what they do. "What we're seeing right now... is the funding streams, the projects, and the need, aren't really falling into one of these categories. So, I think that what I am seeing in terms of funding opportunities, and just in the opportunities that we are interested in pursuing because they are exciting and bigger projects… are really more and more interdisciplinary in nature, where they want teams from different disciplines coming together to tackle a problem" (P4). This sentiment was echoed by others, in that "our practice language isn't around those disciplines... they're more around storytelling, mapping... and these terms that are about what we are doing, and ideally its cross discipline... it's about having all the skills and talents present, not talking about it as one or the other" (P9).

Still, in terms of percentages of their organizations' project portfolios, several participants shared their insight (see Table 4.8). Based upon the findings, a variety of practice models are clearly demonstrated. Yet, when calculating the average of these percentages amongst CDC organizations, architecture made up an estimated average of 44% of project portfolios, while urban planning-based projects accounted for about 38% and landscape architecture projects came in at about 18%.

PROJECT PORTFOLIO by Discipline

	ARCHITECTURE	LANDSCAPE	PLANNING
P1	50%	45%	5%
P2	80%	15%	5%
P3	50%	20%	30%
P4	20%	20%	60%
P5	66.6%	---	33.3%
P6	10%	10%	80%
P7	20%	30%	50%
P8	75%	---	25%
P9	---	---	---
P10	25%	25%	50%
P11	---	---	---
AVG.	**44%**	**18%**	**38%**

Table 4.8 Project Portfolio by Discipline

These percentages may possibly indicate a number of things. "If you asked me this question 3 years ago, I would say we were probably 85 to 90% urban planning based services... that's really changed a lot lately (P4). Similarly stated, "when I came here, our projects were almost all of them planning-based. But I'm so glad to see that now, we are bringing projects that are more interdisciplinary" (P7). Based upon input from these participants, and without any previous knowledge of the researcher, those organizations previously offering primarily urban planning-based services, are now (at least here in Texas) expanding into other fields. This

revelation, if at all represented through these percentages, would then lend credence to the interdisciplinary nature heretofore referenced by a majority of participants. Putting that aside, however, participant 11 remarks of their project portfolio that "100% have a strong urban design component," while participant 10 corroborates "all these form and address the urban design."

Yet, by this statement is brought up another point of inquiry. Are any of these design disciplines more important than another? As applied to their own organization's practices, participants then imparted words of insight to this question. Insight which unapologetically led down a familiar path. "Again I can't rate one more important than another - it depends on what the situation is" (P9). Once more, "well, I see them all... (laughter) as the same thing. It's like a figure ground, what's more important, the figure or the ground? You know, you don't have one without the other" (P10). Thirty-six percent of participants made similar comments of "... we don't make any real distinctions between those - all of it is design. So whether you are designing a landscape, or a building, or a city, it's the same kind of process of design... I can't really separate those specifically" (P2). Decidedly put, "they're the basis for the lens at which we look at issues and try and address things. So, I wouldn't pick one over another, because again, I think they're very interrelated" (P4).

Not unlike previous questions, cross-discipline or interdisciplinary practices were coveted by 45% of participants as being key to their organization's practices. "Bringing that kind of expertise in urban design, and architecture... the person we had who was in charge of the office had degrees in both landscape and architecture and also planning, so they were able to bring that combination of skills to the situations" (P5). This level of expansive knowledge and expertise finds much appreciation by others as well. "When you look at the skill in CDC 9 today, we have architects, landscape architects, planners. We also have individuals related to urban studies, urban geography. We have folks with backgrounds in history, anthropology... and so, it's cross discipline, even beyond the design professions" (P9). From a community design perspective, this makes both logical and practical sense as "each of the various disciplines

brings a lens to the work, that can help round out our work activities to be more complete and more responsive to the public's interest. And also to incubate variations of ideas, because they're informed by these kinds of different trainings and backgrounds and interests" (P9). For this reason "I think they are important individually, but the best possible scenario happens when they work together... we come up with outcomes that are more comprehensive and are more ready to be implemented by practitioners" (P7).

In this same breath, 27% of participants cite urban design as a unifier. "Urban design puts it all together, and I think that's the most important. It's not helpful to practice landscape nor architecture separate" (P10) because "they all rely on an urban design expertise to integrate specific site design decisions into the larger urban design strategies" (P11).

So it is, considering these responses, that 73% of participants cite either urban design or interdisciplinary practices as most important to their organizational operations. Yet, this overall perspective aside, participants were still able to identify for a variety of reasons why particular disciplines played a unique and essential role in their practices (see Table 4.9).

MOST IMPORTANT by Discipline

DISCIPLINE	of 11 total participants
Architecture	36%
Urban Planning	36%
Landscape Architecture	18%

Table 4.9 Most Important by Discipline

From their responses, 36% of participants cited architecture. "So, I think architecture still is a little more prominent, maybe partly because I'm an architect. But we work to try and balance that significantly" (P9). Almost out of obligation, it would appear 18% of participants cited landscape architecture, in combined support of architecture. "The vast majority of our clients are looking for visual representations of projects that they need help with. So it's kind of by default that architecture and landscape architecture skills kind of rise to the top... without the rendering and actual hard design skills of the architecture and landscape architecture interns, we wouldn't be able to run the center. So those are probably the most practical, most important skills" (P1). In further words of sharing, "our work is fundamentally architectural works, but they rely on the integration of landscape architecture in most projects due to the site constraints" (P11).

Besides this, 36% of participants cited urban planning services to be the most relevant and critical to helping communities define their own needs (P3). For financial reasons, as well, "...if we simply do it by the dollars (laughter)... the urban planning programs are most important" (P6). In relation to the other disciplines, though, "...I would say that an undercurrent of all of that is definitely tied to themes that come out of urban planning. So it's almost like the urban planning element is operating in the background, tying everything together. So it's a little bit harder to quantify it... it's not as obvious that we use that skill, but it is still really an important skill" (P1). When asked why, "I think that because the skills that planners bring to the table, really make the other pieces work much better... a lot of the things that we run into with the architectural side of our practice, are really related to city policy and zoning and different regulations around what you are allowed to build, where and how... you need a level of education or experience with the planning field, to be able to interact in that sphere" (P8). So it is supplementary, as well as independently that "I think that design centers would benefit from more people having that planning and policy, and urban design scale knowledge and experience" (P7). Considering what motive, it is because "when you get into this work... you find

more and more ripples. And to really get in and understand those ripples, you need to have a perspective that can jump across scales that I think planning really helps with" (P8). Figuratively speaking, participant 6 further interprets "importance" as in relation to oneself, in terms of both scale and influence:

> I think that there's a different way, in terms of importance - and I tell my students this - all of them will be asked in their professional lives to *choose* how they want to spend their influence. How they want to execute and make use of the influence they have as a professional. And you can imagine that as a spectrum between influencing *a few people a lot*, and influencing *a lot of people a little*. So if you want to influence a few people a lot, go and design their house. Because they'll spend a lot of time there, they'll raise their kids there, it's where they'll wake up in the morning, it will be part of who they are. If you want to influence a lot of people a little, then you work more planning scale. Where people might not visit or pay attention to everything about a city in a given day, but there are parts of the city that kind of filter out through ambiance and impact their lives.

Deeply rooted and contemplative, this response thoughtfully leads into the heart of this research and to the final question at hand: what are the reasons for the recent increase of CDCs across North America? With insight from these leaders and administrators, 55% believed that the need for these services CDCs provide is imperative. "There is a huge need" (P4) and the possible reasons for this are multi-faceted. "The role of municipal governments to not plan and to not have design skill, that's one. So you need to find a way to augment that" (P9). On more of a political level, as participant 3 states, "government has taken a serious turn to the right, both at the federal level and state and local level. And so it leaves people who are the most vulnerable at risk... so there is a greater need" (P3). How this view might compare currently in relation to the rise and fall of CDCs historically, is not at this point verifiable. But certainly "there are things that community groups need that design firms cannot deliver... and in part, they can't deliver because of the way cost structures in firms work. There are many communities that cannot afford to pay for, we'll call it retail design fees (P6). Economically then, lie several challenges. In response, CDCs may provide services to these groups but "...have cost structures which allow quality work to be done with different kinds of overhead" (P6).

Indeed, in order to meet the demand, a number of participants utilize alternative operating and funding processes in their daily practices. Some charge nothing for their services. "By not charging anything for our work... providing a free service to the community… helps people save money... that's how we provide our value" (P1). Others charge at a reduced rate. "We still charge them to pay our GRA's salaries, but that's *all* we charge. So we provide them with a service that costs them a *fraction* of what a planning firm would charge them... So because of that, many of our clients are from small cities or towns that they can't afford to hire a planning firm to do the job for them" (P7). Although some organizations receive funding from the state, on a yearly basis, to provide services to the community (P7), others "...subsidize our design fees with grants and donations and other ways to pay ourselves. And we participate in a program with the city that reduces or eliminates all the development fees on their end, so our clients don't pay for like permit fees, or other things like that. So that helps reduce the costs. And then we work with contractors and engineers that help reduce the cost further, so that people can afford to build these units and rent them out at an affordable rate for a certain period of time" (P8).

In mitigating financial barriers, however, these organizations also attempt to address a multitude of environmental and social issues. Depending upon circumstances, the work of CDCs may also serve dual purposes in "being able to supplement people's income with this rental piece, but also develop affordable housing for other families" (P8). Pursuing extensive issues such as homelessness (P10), "what we're trying to do is to construe - help people understand that CDC 3 is not just about housing. It's also then about providing environmental services to the broader community... and we do that by creating energy, by sequestering water, and by allowing the people to walk or ride the bus to work, rather than driving. Those all have consequences for public health as a whole community, not just those of modest means" (P3). These issues are on the table for many CDCs, with simultaneous goals of mitigating

gentrification and "making sure our neighborhoods have opportunities for everyone. And that we maintain a diverse body in that neighborhood" (P8).

In addition, 36% of participants also mentioned that the growth of CDCs had something to do with age. "I think that younger people are much more interested in social implications of architecture now, and it's just a good way to channel your energy" (P2). In the words of participant 3, "I think people of *your* age have an awakened political consciousness and a recognition that design really should be for the public health and welfare... not just design for the rich" (P3). In some ways, by this statement, CDCs "both grow from a critique of postmodernism and elitism in architectural practice" (P11). And so, "it's both increased capacity of the young people and the greater need, I think, that's one of the things that has made the public interest design movement as successful as its been" (P3). Still, "I don't know that this is purely a generational thing. Most of the guys, like me, aren't millenials, right? And we're kind of the old guys now, I would say, in this movement, but we're still not that old" (P9). Echoing this sentiment, "I'm old enough that I was part of the original movement for community design centers... there are also community development corporations and I was involved with one of those in the 1970s" (P3).

In such a way, it would perhaps seem that rather than being specifically age-related, or a generational factor, it is indeed a certain consciousness, an *awareness*, which is more so the unifying motivation. Collectively, "I also think there is just more of an awareness of how connected we all are, and how nobody really benefits from people being held down in different ways, in different parts of their community" (P8). An awareness to the issues, which develops over the course of one's lifetime. Whether professionally or educationally, participants cite a variety of experiences and events which have influenced them in their current position. For instance, "I mentioned that I had been in the Peace Corps, specifically, because I think that was certainly one of the biggest parts of my education. In other words, it gave me some insight at looking back at American culture from a very, very different perspective... it taught me a lot

about what our culture is to others abroad. And so it gave me a new way to see it" (P3). Along with having influential professors and engaging in community-based projects (P9, P11), other experiences such as disaster recovery and relief (P2, P8), and the type of exposure where "I remember seeing first-hand, severe poverty, rural poverty" (P9), would seem very influential to the formation of humanitarian awareness. "So, I think that creates a sense of empathy, or at least an approach where empathy is a core value" (P9). A value which many participants undoubtedly employ while working with "home owners who had lost their homes, who were low-income... working in a neighborhood that was majority African American and Vietnamese families" (P8), and with "the Southern Ute Indian Tribe... trying to overcome what the government had done through the Bureau of Indian Affairs" (P9). These are but a few examples participants shared which harkens back to the original tenets of community design, addressing the needs of the people and striving for a more equitably just environment. Requiring qualities of a more insightful and cultural awareness, "...I quickly found out that you don't only need an architecture degree to do that, you also need some humility and relationship-building skills" (P8). Learning from those experiences, "the most valuable part of that work experience was… just sort of knowing your limitations, and respecting other people's experiences, and their own knowledge and their own expertise on what they need, the way they live, and what the priorities should be" (P8). By this, "I think this idea of designing and creating *with* a community, and amplifying their voice - not talking over them- and amplifying their expertise on the project or the issue at hand, is really, really important" (P4).

Likewise, undertaking private projects of a specific nature may help to raise the profile and awareness of their organizations (P7). One of the ways these CDCs are gaining more awareness is by marketing. "Well publicized programs... put it on the radar screen" (P10) because "you know, when one program is successful, another school looks" (P2). In this manner, universities are pushing it. "Within the university environment, from the upper

administration of the university, there's support for and desire for community engagement. So it tacks well within the university. You get perks a college or university likes. Alumni like it" (P10).

As such, universities also play a role in the expansion of CDCs across North America. From an academic perspective, providing practice-based, educational opportunities to its students (P1; P9; P11) offers the benefit of gaining experiential knowledge through service to communities. These are community engagement opportunities which, as previously mentioned, potentially drove a number of participants (48%) to obtain their master's degrees in urban planning (see Table 4.1). Likewise, "the publication of the 1996 Boyer Report (Building Community: A New Future for Architecture Education and Practice) was very influential and recommended the incorporation of hands-on learning and service learning into all architectural programs" (P11). To this extent, the services offered by CDCs are equally considered to be in service to private firms and practices as the eventual recipients of students being both knowledgeable and competitive in the employment arena (P9).

However, "I do think that because universities have engaged design centers within their curriculums, there are a large number of students that come out and they would like to do this. That said, they don't know how to make money - they don't know how to pay themselves doing it" (P9). Needless to say, this does not stop job searchers from aggressively seeking such opportunities. Speaking in further regards to employment, many private firms are now looking into the work of CDCs as well. "I think that new people entering the field... like emerging leaders and generations of people in *every* field are looking to have more of a social impact or a social cause behind what they spend their time doing. So I think there is just more demand from people graduating from school and people looking for career opportunities to have more of an impact and reason behind what they are doing" (P8). This is an employment demand that firms more and more want to meet. "I think that shows in the fact that not only are there more community design centers, but that these larger architectural practices, specifically, have now a social impact or community engagement piece to their practice. So there's FIRM 1, FIRM 2,

FIRM 3... all of these ginormous firms are now trying to compete to provide opportunities to people coming out of school, or people starting to get licensed, and wondering what they want to do for a long time, trying to provide that fulfillment there as well" (P8). Participant 9 affirms this, citing "...a growing interest from firms to want to participate more in public engaged projects, because their employees want to do it. Right? They want to do something beyond just design... so they're trying to figure out how they can engage projects that are engaging people in communities, because its more meaningful work" (P9). Understanding the market, "one of the reasons they want to focus on that, is that they're losing some of their most talented designers, because they are leaving to go to smaller firms or community organizations that aren't necessarily architecturally-based, because they are seeking those more fulfilling opportunities. And they feel like it is one way that they can retain the talent that they need, to be able to provide that opportunity in the firm" (P8). So it is, that an individual's awareness and desire creates a demand in the job market "and I think CDCs are an *absolute* reflection of that" (P4).

Similarly, "when you have a successful organization they inspire somebody else to do it. So they kind of accumulate. They grow because they *work*" (P2). In so much as these organizations actually *do* work or are considered successful, this in part would seem to inspire confidence. "More communities are now feeling empowered or wanting to have more of their own say about what happens in their areas" (P6). In search of this, "communities, obviously some more than others, are finding ways of finding their voices and identifying resources and people who are willing to work *with* them, and not *for* them... and I feel like, for me, in planning and in public engagement... getting out there the *with*, not *for*, is a huge distinction" (P4). Accordingly, through mutual learning and communication processes, CDCs are often able "to look at things a little bit differently and to lend a different voice to some issues. To not just be... you know, it's big brother, it's the government, it's some expert in an ivory tower, telling me what to do. But no, I'm at the table and I'm helping decide what happens to my space" (P4). Thus, by building such a rapport, "I think, maybe sometimes people have their own biases against city

officials and government and everything. But they are *happily* working with CDCs - they can *trust* CDCs" (P7). This is an important distinction to make. "And so I think there is both a push by community members, and a pull by the economics of the situations, that allows CDCs to exist and to expand" (P6).

In some ways, it could be described as the "maturity of place" (P9) which accounts for this expansion. By this term, cities will naturally evolve over time, and shape themselves in accordance to a variety of factors. As a living and breathing organism, these cities have had to adapt "...to deal with more complex issues and find more dynamic ways to be able to deal with those complex issues" (P9). In response, the operations of CDCs "...necessarily keeps changing. And that's because we keep learning new things. And new people get involved - and *uninvolved* - and the conditions around us keep changing. In other words, urban cities are always incredibly dynamic. And you really... you can try to plan the future, but you never *really* can" (P3). Here in Texas, "...I also think it has to do with the civil rights movement and the relationship of the civil rights movement to the south, versus to the north, or east or west coast. It's a very different context. So, the idea of social justice, of what we call *design* justice, is even further removed and so I think we are more able today to engage the work, constructively, and have the resources to do it. Because the places have matured in their sophistication of how they're going to deal with issues. That's what I think" (P9).

4.6 Summary

Gathering data of their personal, professional, and educational backgrounds, several findings were noted regarding both common and unique aspects of the participants. Progressing through the interview process, these participants respectively shared their insights regarding the purpose of their organizations, its scope of work, and most significant clientele. In addition, participants also discussed their project portfolio's characteristics regarding sustainable practices, and in relation to the disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture,

and urban planning. Lastly, participants shared their current knowledge and opinions of community design practices and of the growing number of CDCs across the nation.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

With the results of the interviews at hand, this chapter summarizes the findings of this study, its relevance to the professions of landscape architecture, planning, and architecture, and provides suggestions for future research. Outlined through the three research questions previously posed, it is specifically discussed how this research once again addresses:

1) What are the reasons for the recent increase of CDCs across North America?
2) Are there economic, environmental, or social factors underlying this growth?
3) What roles do architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning, play in the recent growth of CDCs nationwide?

5.2 Overview of Research Findings

Concerning the primary question of this research, a commonly perceived reason for the increase of CDCs across North America is that there is a definite need for their services. Everyday environments in cities and counties throughout Texas exist in less than ideal conditions, suffering from aging infrastructure, and lacking both social and economic opportunities for sustainable redevelopment.

Often falling under the economic, environmental, and social tenets of sustainability, these various needs exist in seeming perpetuity. Although altogether driving the growth of CDCs across the nation, as evidenced by this study, not one of these tenets proved to be necessarily nor significantly more influential than another in regards to CDC operations. No doubt, based upon the particular goals and objectives of a given CDC, emphasis on these particular tenets may exist, but are largely based upon the scope of services being offered.

Findings from this research thus tend to confirm the opinion of multiple participants, regarding the overall summation of these tenets to be held as "equal."

Acknowledging that CDCs are driven in part by a psychological and physical awareness of these needs, it is then important to consider how this consciousness is developed. Whether it be through past experiences, both personal and professional, it would seem that through awareness of these issues, an individual desire or determination is instilled. This was again, discussed previously in regards to why participants pursued a master's degree in planning; out of a passion or desire to make a difference. This might explain why 27% of participants were also involved in multiple CDC operations. In many ways, it is this unique individual desire and determination which drives CDCs to be not only started, but consistently operated and supported. Because there is a need. And because individuals are either made economically, environmentally, or socially aware of this need, they start to care. Care enough that they get individually invested and demand these opportunities in their careers to empower others and even themselves through the processes of community design. "The reason why CDC 9 was established was because, number one, I saw we had a need for this function here, and selfishly, it's the kind of work I wanted to do" (P9).

Therefore, while the increase of CDCs in North America, as well as in Texas, may be commonly believed to be generationally motivated, it is also a movement which cuts across both generational and disciplinary boundaries. Inspired by an ever present need, professionals in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning, are each called upon by the ethics of their respective professions to react. More to the point, it is the interdisciplinary actions of these professions in collaboration and totality, which most impacts the operations of CDCs in Texas. Individually, "the practices are... subverted... they're really not meant to be in charge. They're meant to be an enabler" (P9). Yet, in terms of enabling, it would seem an underlying connection between all of these disciplines is teaching. While collectively, the practices are strengthened by each other, particularly in pursuit of urban design issues, it is

through teaching and the mutual learning process that 64% of participants ultimately connect that knowledge to others. Provided such a platform, an individual's passion and desire may then influence and be passed on to others. Asked why their organization was started, "actually 2 of my former students decided that what the world - or- the world and *CITY 3* needed, was a community design center. And so they were the 2 co-founders" (P3). Outside of an individual's experiences, it is in the realm of academia, therefore, with irrelevance to discipline, that the cycle of awareness is potentially continued. No doubt, there are limitations to what an academic institution can do. However, providing an educational and experiential knowledge to individuals may not only empower them with an awareness, but also the potential capability to help address the economic, environmental, and social issues which afflict any given community.

5.3 Significance and Limitations of this Study

Acknowledging that there are limits to the significance of these qualitative findings, this research also notes a number of constraints. First, having identified 15 CDCs in the state of Texas (see Table 2.1), this sampling may not be totally inclusive, as based mostly upon ACD and ACSA sources. Other CDCs not listed or discovered through online research may have been unintentionally omitted. Moreover, regarding those CDCs identified, not all are here represented, as participants from each respective organization could not be obtained for this study.

As well, the label of "CDC" may have discouraged some leaders and administrators from participation in this study. When initially reaching out to CDCs in Texas, a number of respondents replied they were not qualified to engage in such a study, as they did not identify their organization as being a "community design center." Eighteen percent of those who participated, similarly mentioned "I should just sort of clarify... that CDC 4 is *not* a community design center, but we work with them" (P4) and "...you have to remember that CDC 6 is not a CDC, per se. We help support community design work, public interest design work, but that's

not our only business" (P6). In addition, many of the participants represented in this study are also from predominantly urban, metropolitan areas, as opposed to rural areas. Responses may therefore be biased based upon their geographic location and demographic context. Based upon this, the practices and opinions expressed in this study may not be indicative of those views shared throughout the entirety of Texas, let alone definitely expressive of those views held nationwide.

5.4 Relevance to the Professions of Landscape Architecture, Planning, and Architecture

While there is no direct benefit as a result of participation in the interview, participants have contributed to new knowledge about CDCs and why and how they are growing nationwide. These findings correspondingly carry with it several implications for the professions of landscape architecture, planning, and architecture.

To begin, in terms of CDC leaders and administrators in Texas, the results of this study would seem to imply an overall architectural dominance, both in terms of professional experience (see Figure 4.3) as well as longevity in their current positions (see Figure 4.4). This authority is continued on academically, as 100% of participants which self-identified their profession as architecture, have teaching experience in their respective field as well. In addition, while 27% of the entire pool of participants concurrently hold titles within multiple CDCs in Texas, the entirety of these participants come from the profession of architecture. Altogether, these pieces of information might infer an elevated level of leadership, expertise, and social entrepreneurship, most common amongst those in architecture. Interesting to note, this is perhaps understandable, as community design practices can be traced historically to the profession of architecture via literature review. In such a manner, having nurtured the community design movement during its early stages in the 1960s and 70s, the current rise of the public interest design movement since the 1990s could appear to reaffirm this motivation.

No doubt, as demonstrated by the results of this study, these strong professional connections are still evident and influential today.

On the other hand, planners still made up the slight majority of participants in this study (see Figure 4.1) and accounted for the highest percentage of master's degrees attained (see Table 4.1). In terms of percentages, planning services were also amongst the most offered across CDC organizations (see Table 4.4) and composed a corresponding amount of these organization's project portfolios, comparable to that of architecture (see Table 4.8). Likewise, in comparing the two professions, planning was held in equal esteem to architecture in regards to its disciplinary relevance and application to daily CDC practices and operations (see Table 4.9). All this considered, as cited by participants, the profession of urban planning was also credited not only for its stand-alone benefits, but for multi-scalar visioning capabilities, and for its supplementary value to cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Yet, as compared to architecture and urban planning, landscape architecture, it would seem, yielded an overall lower representation amongst not only self-identified professionals (see Figure 4.1), but in terms of educational backgrounds as well (see Table 4.1). Even more noticeable, project portfolios of these organizations (see Table 4.8) in addition to the discipline's perceived relevance to CDC practices in Texas (see Table 4.9) show similarly lower percentages for landscape architecture, as estimated by the participants of this study.

For this reason, it is important to reassess the current environments in which CDCs operate, and the role that landscape architecture plays within it. In accordance with some participants, "we're doing architecture right now with a community group and that includes all the landscape, so…" (P10) maybe it's that "I'd say... landscape architecture is only a part of it, of any project" (P2). Based on the following statement by participant 11, though, "all our works have an orientation toward enhancing the stakeholder community through promotion of social gathering, and outdoor education, where appropriate, and by knitting the new gathering space into the existing institutions" (P11). By this, there could clearly be implications for landscape

architecture, if only provided those type of projects are realized. As a frame of reference, however, "I don't really have a lot of experience with landscape... I think that it plays in - sort of as the in-between scale between architecture and planning" (P8). As a result of this, "we don't really do any landscape, mostly because we don't really have that expertise in-house" (P8). Indeed, as this statement is backed up by corroborating percentages from the research, it may appear that a lacking, *active* presence of landscape architecture is to be held accountable. If so, it is profoundly interesting to consider if the sum of these statements could imply a slightly diminished value of landscape architecture to current CDC practices in Texas.

Therefore, while new knowledge resulting from this research may be of benefit to participants and their respective organizations, this research also has the possibility to promote a deeper understanding of community design practices as they engage the profession of landscape architecture, in addition to urban planning, architecture, and other professions regarding community design and CDCs.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Although this research was partly inspired to build upon the knowledge of previous studies (Tam 2012; Tural 2011; Zhou 2011), through the findings of this research, several shortcomings were also identified. Therefore, in order to expand upon the breadth of this research, topics which can be recommended for future research include:

- Assessing the value of social entrepreneurship to CDC practices
- Assessing the impact of new governance arrangements between the public and non-profit sectors (e.g., network governance) upon CDC operations in Texas
- Exploring the role of urban design as promoting cross-disciplinary collaboration
- Evaluating opportunities for the role of landscape architecture in the operation and practices of Texas CDCs

- Investigating quantitative methods for evaluating CDC practices, productivity, and outcomes

Over all, although CDCs have continued to sustain themselves throughout North America, "they have not been effective chroniclers of their own times and work" (Curry 2004, 69). As such, it is up to others to analyze their practices inclusively and comprehensively for future outcomes. In doing so, each of these general topics could expand upon key components of this research, while simultaneously emphasizing research as a communal undertaking which relies upon the continued work of others for future study (Dandekar 2003).

APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS ARLINGTON | OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION
REGULATORY SERVICES

Institutional Review Board
Notification of Exemption

October 20, 2015

Robert Kevin Rodriguez
Dr. Taner R. Ozdil
School of Architecture / Urban and Public Affairs
Box 19108

Protocol Number: 2016-0064

Protocol Title: Community Design Centers (CDCs) on the Upsurge: Investigating Perceptions Amongst CDC Leaders and Administrators in Texas

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

The UT Arlington Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chair, or designee, has reviewed the above referenced study and found that it qualified for exemption under the federal guidelines for the protection of human subjects as referenced at Title 45CFR Part 46.101(b)(2).

- (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:(i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, either directly or through identifiers linked to the subject; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You are therefore authorized to begin the research as of **October 20, 2015**.

Pursuant to Title 45 CFR 46.103(b)(4)(iii), investigators are required to, "promptly report to the IRB ***any*** proposed changes in the research activity, and to ensure that such changes in approved research, during the period for which IRB approval has already been given, are **not initiated without prior IRB review and approval** except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject." Please be advised that as the principal investigator, you are required to report local adverse (unanticipated) events to the Office of Research Administration; Regulatory Services within 24 hours of the occurrence or upon acknowledgement of the occurrence. All investigators and key personnel identified in the protocol must have documented Human Subject Protection (HSP) Training on file with this office. Completion certificates are valid for 2 years from completion date.

The UT Arlington Office of Research Administration; Regulatory Services appreciates your continuing commitment to the protection of human subjects in research. Should you have questions, or need to report completion of study procedures, please contact Alyson Stearns at 817-272-9329 or astearns@uta.edu. You may also contact Regulatory Services at 817-272-3723 or regulatoryservices@uta.edu.

REGULATORY SERVICES
SERVICES

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APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT LETTER

Email/Phone/Letter/Script for Recruitment

Dear **CDC Leader and Administrator**,

As a dual graduate student of landscape architecture and urban planning at the University of Texas at Arlington, I would humbly like to request your assistance.

My name is Kevin Rodríguez and I am contacting you in regards to my Master's thesis, tentatively titled: Community Design Centers (CDCs) on the Upsurge: Investigating Perceptions Amongst CDC Leaders and Administrators in Texas.

The primary goal of this research is to study why community design centers have experienced increased growth across North America since the 1990s. You have been selected because of your knowledge and expertise of community design center operations in Texas. As a leader and administrator, your insight into this phenomena would be vital to my research. As such, working under the supervision of Dr. Taner Özdil and Dr. Ivonne Audirac, I would like to request your participation via face-to-face or telephone interviews.

Before agreeing to participate, you will be provided with an Informed Consent Document either through email or in person. This form will explain the study in further detail. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary.

Should you be willing to participate, please notify me of you decision via email at kevin.rodriguez@mavs.uta.edu or by phone at (817) 360-0569.

Thank you so very much for your consideration. Please know that your time and efforts would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any other questions, feel free to contact me via email or the phone number listed below.

Sincerely,

Kevin Rodríguez, LEED Green Associate

Student ID # 1000196296
Graduate Student | Dual Masters
- Landscape Architecture
- City & Regional Planning
  emph. Urban & Suburban Design & Redevelopment

E: kevin.rodriguez@mavs.uta.edu
P: (817) 360-0569

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

- How long have you been in your profession, and how long have you served in your current position?
- What is your educational background, and how, if at all, do you feel it may have helped prepare you for this position?
- Can you briefly describe some of your previous work experience which you feel may have prepared you for your current position?
- Can you provide a brief history of why this organization was established?
- Can you briefly describe the organization's scope of work or type of projects it undertakes?
- Who would you say composes the most significant portion of your clientele?
- What percentage (%) of your project portfolio would you say emphasize primarily:

  _Economic issues?

  _Environmental issues?

  _Social issues?
- What percentage (%) of your project portfolio would you categorize as primarily: _Architecture?

  _Landscape Architecture?

  _or Urban Planning-based services?
- How would you rate or assess the importance of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning, as applied to your organization's practices and why?
- What do you feel is causing the recent increase of CDCs across North America?

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Robert Kevin Rodríguez was born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas. Prior to pursuing his dual master degrees in landscape architecture and urban planning, Kevin received his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from The University of Texas at Arlington. During this time, Kevin also worked for over 5 years in the education field, tutoring and mentoring middle and high school students regarding personal and academic success. Currently, Kevin is employed at Fain Cuppett Landscape Architects, LLC, where he plans to continue working while pursuing his license as a landscape architect. In the future, Kevin also wishes to collaboratively contribute to the work of community design centers in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.