



# Voices from Forgotten Cities

Innovative Revitalization Coalitions  
in America's Older Small Cities

Prepared by  
Lorlene Hoyt and André Leroux

Practitioners,  
political leaders,  
and scholars speak  
about understanding  
and renewing  
smaller cities when  
resources are scarce  
and the economy  
has changed

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# Prefaces

## Preface from the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT

MIT's School of Architecture and Planning is home to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, one of the top planning schools in the United States. DUSP's faculty seeks to educate practitioners and scholars who will be able to affect urban and regional development, community and economic development, physical planning and design, and environmental policy. We are committed to cultivating planners who can effectively advocate the interests of underrepresented constituencies; we emphasize democratic decision-making involving both public and private actors and acknowledge the necessity of government leadership to ensure greater social and economic equality; we foster a positive approach to technological innovation as a major force of social change; and we trust that the built environment can meet the needs of diverse populations and serve as a source of meaning in their daily lives.

The revitalization of America's older small cities, especially those with a higher proportion of low-income families, is an imperative undertaking that requires new insights, new energy, and new partnerships. From September 2004 through May 2005, DUSP sponsored a "Forgotten Cities" speaker series to address this undertaking. It is our best hope that the lessons from that series, as communicated in *Voices from Forgotten Cities*, will offer a new perspective to the burgeoning local and national discourses on the quality of life experienced by people living in our nation's small urban centers.



**LORLENE HOYT**  
Assistant Professor of Urban Planning

## Preface from PolicyLink

The smaller industrial cities that are the focus on the Forgotten Cities symposium and this report face daunting challenges, but they are also places of remarkable character and resilience. Progress in retooling for economic competitiveness and reinvigorating civic life will come from the creativity and commitment of leaders both old and new, and the Forgotten Cities project has given voice to many of these committed and articulate leaders. Their remarks, as well as those of many national experts, have provided the basis for the insightful findings and recommendations in this report. The report, and the project from which it grew, represent the best kind of partnership between a researcher, Lorlene Hoyt of MIT, and a community-based practitioner, Andre Leroux of Lawrence Community Works.

PolicyLink is a national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity. We are actively engaged in research, consultation, and advocacy activities with community and civic leaders in many older core cities throughout the Northeast and Midwest, lifting up what works for positive change and providing tools for bringing about new local, state, and federal policies. We are very pleased to have participated in the Forgotten Cities symposium and to cosponsor this report, and will continue to work to ensure that the experience and wisdom of local leaders are the foundation for policy change.



**ANGELA GLOVER BLACKWELL**  
Founder and CEO



## Preface from CHAPA

Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) is a non-profit organization for affordable housing and community development activities in Massachusetts. CHAPA's mission is to advocate for the production and preservation of affordable housing and community development strategies that benefit low-income households. In 2006, CHAPA and the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations produced a major report and sponsored a conference on revitalization strategies for smaller cities in Massachusetts.

CHAPA's sponsorship of Forgotten Cities is part of the agency's ongoing partnership with PolicyLink to focus on addressing regional equity within a smart growth context and a logical extension of CHAPA's work in Massachusetts.



**AARON GORNSTEIN**  
Executive Director

# Acknowledgements

This report is a reflection of the ideas and hard work of a range of experts—practitioners, political leaders, and scholars—who have dedicated their time and energy to making older small cities better places to live. In alphabetical order, those who participated in the MIT’s Forgotten Cities lecture series and whose voices are presented throughout this report are:

**Robert Ansin**, founder, CEO, and president of MassInnovation, LLC

**Angela Glover Blackwell**, founder and CEO of PolicyLink, a national research and advocacy institute

**Barry Bluestone**, professor of political economy and director of the Center for Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts

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**Marc Dohan**, executive director of Twin Cities CDC, a community development corporation in Fitchburg and Leominster, Massachusetts

**Mark Eisenberg**, chairman of the New Bedford Economic Development Council, a public-private partnership that coordinates economic development initiatives in New Bedford, Massachusetts

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**Sherry Lee Linkon**, professor of American studies and co-director of the Center for Working-Class Studies at Youngstown State University

**Sarah Lown**, director of economic development at Eastgate Council of Governments in Ohio

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**Carlos Matos**, former city councilor in Lawrence, Massachusetts

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**Douglas Rae**, professor of political science at Yale University and former chief administrative officer of New Haven, Connecticut (1990–1991)

**John Russo**, professor in the Williamson College of Business Administration and co-director of the Center for Working-Class Studies at Youngstown State University

**Beth Siegel**, founder and president of Mt. Auburn Associates, an economic development consulting firm

**Harry Spence**, former commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services and former bankruptcy receiver for Chelsea, Massachusetts

**Jass Stewart**, former candidate for mayor of Brockton, Massachusetts; founder and president of Invent Media

**Bill Traynor**, executive director of Lawrence CommunityWorks, Inc., a community development corporation in Lawrence, Massachusetts

**Jay Williams**, mayor of Youngstown, Ohio and former director of Youngstown’s Community Development Agency

**John T. Yunits, Jr.**, former mayor of Brockton, Massachusetts

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**Rick McDougall**, vice president, Burkey Construction Company, Reading, Pennsylvania  
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**David Zagunis**, executive director, Higher Education Resource Center, Lawrence, Massachusetts

Just beyond the factory and mill ran the river that long ago had powered them, and Miles often wondered if these old buildings were razed, would the town that had grown up around them be forced to imagine a future? Perhaps not. Nothing but a chain-link fence had gone up in place of the Rexall, which meant, Miles supposed, that diverting one's attention from the past was not the same as envisioning and embarking upon a future.  
—Richard Russo, *Empire Falls*



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# I. Executive Summary

Though once known as cities with good jobs and places where families could achieve the American Dream, our nation's older small cities—like Camden, New Jersey; Flint, Michigan; and Hartford, Connecticut—and the people who live there are struggling to cope with a changing economy and diminishing resources. We call these communities “forgotten cities” because they have been left behind by the global economy, the media, major foundations, and policy trends. Sometimes they have been marginalized by their surrounding regions—even by people who once lived there.

Yet these communities and others like them feature some of the most imaginative and instructive revitalization work happening anywhere in the country. Local practitioners and businesspeople have overcome intimidating challenges and seized opportunities in the face of apathy and cynicism. We believe that those individuals and groups have some important lessons for the rest of the country.

Forgotten cities are old (more than 5,000 inhabitants by 1880), small (between 15,000 and 150,000 residents as of the 2000 Census), and poor (median household income of less than \$35,000). There are 150 cities in the country that meet these criteria, representing 7.4 million people (Hoyt 2005). These cities were part of the first wave of industry in the United States, and they are therefore concentrated geographically, primarily in the Northeastern (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont), Mid-Atlantic (New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania), and Midwestern (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin) states.

For a host of reasons, revitalizing these cities is especially difficult. The perennial challenges facing forgotten cities tend to be implicitly understood but rarely articulated. They are: a lack of civic engagement and institutions, inadequate governing capacity, and a chronically negative collective mindset. Together, these factors undermine the ability of local stakeholders to forge collective schemes of cooperation—what we call innovative revitalization coalitions (Hoyt 2006).

This report provides a thematic summary of MIT's Forgotten Cities seminars, and a framework and analysis that arose from them. It will take the reader through the arc experienced by forgotten cities as alluded to in its many facets by the seminar participants and in the urban literature (Bluestone and Harrison 1982; Hoyt 2006; Linkon and Russo 2003; Mayer and Greenberg 2001; Rae 2005; Siegel and Waxman 2001). The historical trajectory of forgotten cities began with an era of dominance characterized by strong infrastructure, industry, in-migration, institutions, and identity; it was followed by an era of decline notable for its shock, slippage, self-destruction, stigmatization, and shame. We call these the “five pillars of dominance” and the “five slides of decline.”

In the wake of dominance and decline, local leaders and residents struggled to understand and accept a new set of conditions, which often included the realization that high-wage manufacturing jobs would no longer return and there would be no white knight to come in and save the city. The third phase that we identified—the new reality—is characterized by inadequate civic capacity, lack of governing capacity, crime and

corruption, disinvestment in infrastructure, environmental contamination, large minority and/or immigrant populations, racial and ethnic tensions, low educational attainment and skills, poverty, and regional disparity.

In turn, successful revitalization efforts focused on a number of themes that came up time and again. They are: leadership, civic infrastructure, vision and planning, social inclusion, quality of life, access to opportunities, resource acquisition, and image and perception. Initiatives that blend a number of these elements, in our opinion, have more far-reaching positive impacts. Whether guided by residents, business leaders, government, or nonprofit organizations, the work of revitalizing

forgotten cities is about institutional relationships and collective mindset. We strongly believe that the dramatic, and very real, value of these innovative revitalization coalitions is the way they change the game, shift expectations, and improve communication. Such coalitions provide people with a different story to tell about themselves and a more productive way of interacting with one another.

It is time for our forgotten cities to be remembered. They will be lifted up when those isolated voices turn into unheralded networks of change that reshape the institutional landscape of their communities. It can be done. We are showing each other how.

## II. Introduction

Much like the well-known characterization of families—“Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way”—at the beginning of Tolstoy’s novel *Anna Karenina*, every struggling small city seems to be dysfunctional in its own way. Formerly industrial powerhouses, these cities carry on a solitary struggle with their particular history of upheaval and dislocation in the global economy. Only remnants of the social connections that forged these cities still exist, and the boomtown narrative has often degenerated into stories of failure. Many of these places have become isolated and highly segregated. Their only residents may be long-time inhabitants who do not wish to leave, families who are without the means to leave, and newcomers who are looking for a first foothold. Among them, some remarkable people see a world of possibility, a place where people can find opportunities to work, live, learn, and play, while enjoying a high quality of life.

None of the participants in the Forgotten Cities seminars led by Professor Lorlene Hoyt in MIT’s Department of Urban Studies and Planning in 2004-2005 believed that the situation was hopeless, or that solutions were impossible to find. They were brimming with ideas, as well as examples of small and large successes achieved through creativity and perseverance. Much of the good work they noted has taken place outside the spotlight of major foundations and media outlets, often fueled by the dedication of a collected group of citizens who love their city and want to change the story.

Through a variety of collective, intentional acts of transformation, some of these efforts have found traction despite

the persistent challenges of weak markets, job loss, low morale, and limited corporate and municipal capacity. We call them innovative revitalization coalitions. A number of these initiatives, of which we offer a few case studies, are remarkable enough that more people are taking note and trying to understand why they succeed and why so many others fail. Local practitioners themselves are leading the way, documenting their struggles, creating local and regional networks, establishing virtual communities, collaborating with universities, and engaging more in marketing and messaging.

On the surface, these efforts may look like fortuitous exceptions. Systemic inequity endures in many of our nation’s older small cities, as they suffer from decaying infrastructure, the flight of young talent seeking jobs and a better quality of life, the flight of middle-class families from underperforming school systems, increasing segregation, antiquated and burdensome local regulations, widespread disinvestment, and the high cost of doing business or developing land. Concern is growing about the ability of America’s regions to compete globally and about our long-term fundamentals like education, health care, and job readiness. These older cities have labor, buildings, history, institutions, and infrastructure that are being squandered, but which could and should be competitive advantages.

Innovative revitalization coalitions can bring cities out of these seemingly intractable ruts because they work to break the habits of distrust and isolation that permeate most of these communities. It seems that change in forgotten cities begins to occur when

people feel safe sharing information and direct their energies toward solving problems that affect more than one constituency. We have seen instances of success, where shared by a number of stakeholders, generate tremendous enthusiasm and unleash a number of positive repercussions, including raised expectations and the desire to do more.

### What Exactly Is a Forgotten City?

Of course, these cities have never actually been forgotten, but they have generally been written off by many outsiders and even those who live in or near them. They may be considered dangerous, impossible places to get things done, or ungovernable. Better to work around them.

It was not always so. These are cities whose citizens once supplied the world with clothing, machinery, and material luxuries. But they underwent wrenching economic restructuring and other challenges that led them to become instead national leaders in unemployment, devaluation of housing stock, and crime.

Forgotten cities are defined by the following three criteria:

- *old*—cities with an industrial history, meaning they had a population of more than 5,000 inhabitants by 1880;
- *small*—cities with between 15,000 and 150,000 residents according to the 2000 US Census; and
- *poor*—cities with a median household income of less than \$35,000 according to the 2000 US Census.

There are 150 cities in the country that match these criteria, representing a total of 7.4 million people. One is Lawrence, Massachusetts, a carefully planned, model town, home of the world’s largest textile conglomerate in the early 1900s, the American Woolen Company. Another is Trenton—New Jersey’s state capital. A representative sampling of others, by state, appears in Table 1.

Unlike global cities and “comeback” cities, forgotten cities did not reap the benefits of a robust national economy in the late 1990s. Though their needs are great, they have only very recently received attention from scholars and policymakers.

**Table 1 – Examples of Forgotten Cities by State**

Forgotten Cities	State	Region
Hartford, New Haven	Connecticut	Northeast
Danville, Decatur	Illinois	Midwest
Gary, Muncie	Indiana	Midwest
Lewiston, Augusta	Maine	Northeast
Lawrence, Holyoke	Massachusetts	Northeast
Flint, Saginaw	Michigan	Midwest
Youngstown, Canton	Ohio	Midwest
Reading, Allentown	Pennsylvania	Mid-Atlantic
Keene, Laconia	New Hampshire	Northeast
Camden, Trenton	New Jersey	Mid-Atlantic
Troy, Albany	New York	Mid-Atlantic
Pawtucket, Woonsocket	Rhode Island	Northeast
Burlington, Rutland	Vermont	Northeast
La Crosse, Beloit	Wisconsin	Midwest



## The Forgotten Cities Seminar at MIT

The Forgotten Cities seminar at MIT, a launching point for future research on the revitalization of America's smaller post-industrial cities, was born out of a number of questions. Why didn't these cities benefit from the nation's economic expansion during the 1990s? What historical and contemporary commonalities do these cities have? What is being done on the ground to improve the quality of life in such cities? Who is leading the charge and what are the most significant barriers they face?

Professor Lorlene Hoyt believed that the best way to begin answering such questions was to invite individuals from a number of these communities, representing a number of professions, to talk about their work and their challenges, successes, and failures, while engaging in a candid and lively discussion with faculty and students. Over a period of eight months, a cross-section of practitioners, political leaders, and scholars from some of these smaller post-industrial cities visited MIT to present and discuss their work. Those seminars served as a starting point for Hoyt's ongoing research on the relationship between rooted institutions and the revitalization of America's older small cities. (For a complete list of speakers, see the acknowledgements.)

The seminars were recorded, partially transcribed, and temporarily put on hold until Lorlene Hoyt approached André Leroux, the director of policy and planning at Lawrence CommunityWorks, about collaborating on this policy report. Hoyt and Leroux had worked together for several years through a remote university-community partnership, known as MIT@Lawrence, which connects faculty, students, and staff at MIT with rooted institutions and civic leaders in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

Upon completing the transcription, we had nearly 500 pages of ideas and analysis. These conversations were later edited down to 175 pages of essential material, and organized into cross-cutting themes. The voluminous amount of transcripts, together with the often subjective or anecdotal nature of the material, made progress difficult, but the richness of the material kept us coming back. At that point, we realized that we were the stewards of something important, reflecting careers' worth of wisdom from some of the most challenging urban environments in our nation. Even more unusual was the opportunity to arrange the material thematically and group together passages addressing similar issues but reflecting a range of skills and sensibilities from different academic disciplines, political viewpoints, professions, and cities. By combining the information and ideas that Lorlene Hoyt had developed through several years of research and teaching, André Leroux's professional experience in Lawrence, and the substantive content embedded in the voices found throughout this paper, we have attempted to build a framework for practice in forgotten cities.

PolicyLink and CHAPA, with their own emerging interest and research on small cities, came together in 2007 to make this report possible. We believe that it provides a representative sampling and overview of the proceedings.

## What You Will Find in this Report

Three concerns motivate this report. First, we aim to present a thematic summary of the Forgotten Cities seminars.

Second, we wanted to focus on developing an understanding of what is happening in forgotten cities at the local level. Much of the literature focuses on how such cities are affected by larger economic and other forces, top-down strategies, or historical trends. The seminars made it even more apparent that any dialogue about instigating or reinforcing change in these cities needs to begin with practice for two reasons: It is difficult to retain talented, committed people to participate in the work of revitalizing these communities without burning out. And the problem is often not one of finding solutions, but rather implementing them. We want to share the voices in this report to show other practitioners that they are not alone and, of course, to share strategies that have worked.

Finally, by combining the contributions of the seminar participants with our own research and experience, it became noticeable to us that patterns do emerge from the disorder. The information that the seminar series yielded allowed us to create a framework that would help practitioners in these cities and other challenging urban contexts make more sense of the problems that they face in the communities they love. Our highest hope is that it will help practitioners be more strategic about their work and identify the issues and projects that will help them raise expectations and transmit healthy patterns of communication and cooperation beyond their immediate surroundings.

We begin this report by identifying the inherent strengths and perennial challenges facing forgotten cities. In Chapter 3, we also

identify and introduce the new forms of collective action that are emerging in some cities such as Youngstown, Ohio. Since most of the speakers talked of the birth, growth, and heyday of their communities when they were major production centers, we cover this topic briefly in Chapter 4. Understanding this period continues to be important because it provides clues to the problems and solutions these cities contemplate today. Economic restructuring and other forces like government policy and environmental hazards provoked difficult times; these factors are considered in Chapter 5. Here, the downward spiral is discussed because the problems it created were significant, multifarious, and came to structure the adverse climate that our contributors still struggle to understand. The time of decline was a time when the bottom fell out for these cities, when everything that used to work became nothing working at all, and people's perceptions of themselves shifted, sometimes overnight. Chapter 6 speaks to the changes that soon followed and the current social and economic landscape that forgotten cities have come to accept as fact. In contrast, Chapter 7 explores strong notions about what needs to be done, how to solve problems creatively, and varied experiences with implementation. Finally, what are the lessons learned from this seemingly disparate collection of experiences? In Chapter 8, we offer a forward-looking and hopeful framework for urban reinvention in forgotten cities and support it with excerpts from the most compelling and practical advice from our contributors.

The reader will note that each chapter in *Voices from Forgotten Cities* contains an introduction and conceptual framework, followed by first-person accounts from those who participated in the Forgotten Cities seminar at MIT. We hope that you find the voices from forgotten cities and the framework that flows from them as thought-provoking and inspiring as we have.

### III. Context

We believe in the idea that everyone should have the chance to thrive in our nation, but forgotten cities are places of limited opportunity. Vibrant communities tend to be diverse, in the sense that they offer a range of job options, a mix of housing types, and a thriving commercial sector, as well as recreational and cultural outlets. They are places capable of sustaining a multi-generational, multi-class population. They are welcoming to outsiders and can accommodate a racially and ethnically mixed society. Forgotten cities cannot be described in this way—too often, they are quite the opposite—though this is the ideal that many individuals working in forgotten cities strive to achieve.

The forces that push people from forgotten cities are stronger than those that pull them in. On a number of measurable scales, including unemployment rates, poverty rates, and crime rates, forgotten cities have low economic viability. Such cities also possess a range of obstacles, including, but not limited to, a poor existing infrastructure, a legacy of externalities including environmental damage, and an unsatisfactory housing stock (Mayer and Greenberg 2001; Siegel and Waxman 2001).

The communities that we consider forgotten cities, while doing fairly poorly by most municipal indicators, also contain pockets of extreme poverty at the neighborhood level—some of the most extreme cases in the country. Taken in the context of their region, they are sites of severe economic and racial segregation. Our experience tells us that they are also places where “nobody’s looking,” or at least not too closely, where disorganization and thinly

spread resources enable antisocial elements to flourish: crime, both petty and organized; fraud of all kinds; patronage; dereliction of civic and official duties; haphazard enforcement; disinvestment; and illegal dumping and other environmental injustices.

#### The Perennial Challenges Facing Forgotten Cities

Making change is especially difficult in these cities. There are three menacing conditions they face that are commonly understood but rarely asserted. We believe it is important to name them. They are: a lack of civic engagement and institutions, inadequate governing capacity, and a chronically negative collective mindset. These characteristics tend to permeate forgotten cities and powerfully shape what does and does not happen in these places.

#### Civic Engagement and Institutions

Many forgotten cities lack the variety of employers and local institutional presence that healthy cities have, and, as a result, the leadership necessary to support an innovative revitalization coalition is diluted or absent. The company and factory owners who once lived in small cities and were committed to their well-being are gone or very few in number. A once-thriving small business community struggles to survive on the margins (Rae 2005). In contrast, downtowns in larger cities still have a corporate presence both in terms of physical structures and economic influence. Moreover, large foundations, think tanks, and professional associations tend to focus resources on the economic development of larger cities (Siegel and Waxman 2001).

Another factor that impedes the ability of forgotten cities to build civic capacity is their parochial nature. Residents who have long identified closely with their neighborhood, church, or union are often reluctant to work across political and spatial boundaries. As a result, there are a handful of community leaders who remain, yet they sit squarely within seemingly autonomous political, religious, and economic enclaves, rarely reaching across deep-seated divisions to make the kind of connections necessary to formulate innovative revitalization coalitions.

Forgotten cities, however, are still home to such institutions as community-based nonprofits, community colleges, universities, and hospitals. These rooted institutions, grounded in the community but with ties to government, businesses, and regional entities, can often be leveraged to convene across those barriers.

### **Governing Capacity**

Most forgotten cities also lack adequate governing capacity due to limited financial resources. In many forgotten cities, the employment and residential tax base has steadily diminished as manufacturing jobs that pay a living wage and middle-income families have relocated to the suburbs and the Sunbelt. Combined with a decrease in federal and state subsidies for urban redevelopment, this has left forgotten cities struggling to provide basic public services.

The capacity to govern is further marginalized by the “old guard”—in many cases, the aging white population who, in their efforts to cope with the aforementioned structural changes, may be reluctant to

work across racial, ethnic, and generational divisions for a variety of reasons. In forgotten cities, the old guard often dominate City Hall by holding the majority of elected offices. They also hold the lion’s share of civil service positions, which represent some of the best jobs in the city with respect to salary, benefits, and job security. As a result, racial and ethnic minorities, as well as young and up-and-coming professionals, seldom hold positions of power. In some cases, the old guard support a climate of intolerance and division along racial and ethnic lines in an effort to protect the positions of authority that they have worked for decades to occupy. Rules regarding hiring and firing and seniority often discourage unproductive personnel from moving along. An unfair political atmosphere may favor insider candidates and hinder the appointment of highly qualified professionals.

Change, of course, is possible, and may be driven by demographics, charismatic leadership, innovative revitalization coalitions, or a combination of the three.

### **Collective Mindset**

The collective mindset in many forgotten cities is chronically negative. A city’s collective mindset often deteriorates in tandem with the dramatic exodus of industries and residents, which not only depletes civic capacity, but also traumatizes local officials (Mayer and Greenberg 2001) and creates a shared memory of failure (Linkon and Russo 2003).

Collective mindset is inextricably intertwined with a city’s national reputation, and seemingly irrevocable damage occurs

when the media trumpets negative local events. There are many infamous examples of this, which do not bear further repeating here. Suffice it to say that each forgotten city has been accused of being the regional or even national “capital” of one social ill or another. Such stories have a profound and harmful impact on the city’s collective mindset because they shape how local people see themselves. According to Sherry Linkon, a professor of American Studies at Youngstown State University, residents of highly stigmatized cities have “come to expect failure.” This is a vicious cycle because as individual and collective expectations about the city consistently diminish, citizens become less hopeful and less likely to engage in civic affairs, thus decreasing civic capacity and governing capacity. They are also less likely to demand adequate city services and less likely to question other forms of dysfunction. Many people lose the recognition that things *can* change, that they could effect change—even those who work in local government.

Something simple needs to happen to begin to reverse the sense of disempowerment: Something needs to *work well*. Setting collective goals and generating enthusiasm need to be accompanied by follow-through on the ground, which is so critical and so problematic for many communities. Many of the examples of success highlighted by our contributors involve doing one thing well and in a way that builds civic pride, initiatives that encourage a range of stakeholders to own that success, and communal will to leverage that vital accomplishment to advance systemic change.

## The Strengths of Forgotten Cities

Forgotten cities are also home to a wide array of physical, cultural, and social assets. They are repositories of history and infrastructure, and increasingly function in some regions as portal communities for newcomers because of the availability and affordability of housing. These assets may function as the foundation for innovative revitalization coalitions and ultimately serve to promote a positive image of the city. Common assets of forgotten cities include:

- **Location and connectivity**—proximity to larger cities and rural places
- **Scale**—walkable downtowns and neighborhoods, easy access to elected officials
- **Layout and infrastructure**—rails, rivers, parks
- **Architecture**—historic mills, homes, churches
- **Cultural assets**—symphony halls, museums, small colleges, universities
- **Diversity**—immigrants, entrepreneurship, niche markets, unique labor pool
- **Identity**—fierce loyalty among old-timers, willingness to volunteer time and resources
- **Affordability**—competitive housing and labor opportunities compared to stronger markets

## Innovative Revitalization Coalitions

The most successful reinventions of these challenged cities that we have seen involve groups of people—perhaps small groups at first—sharing a commitment to bringing disparate people together in ever-expanding networks, raising expectations, keeping an eye on the big picture, but focusing on small, attainable successes and relentlessly building



on them. In changing dysfunction to function, the collective, cumulative impact of hundreds of small but better decisions are revealed to be ultimately more powerful than the big project, the big investment, or the “silver bullet” strategy.

We call these new forms of collective action and cooperation innovative revitalization coalitions. Some significant examples include:

- **Youngstown, Ohio:** Youngstown 2010, a planning process coordinated by the City of Youngstown and Youngstown State University that involved hundreds of residents and generated a comprehensive citywide plan that was formally adopted
- **Reading, Pennsylvania:** Initiative for a Competitive Greater Reading, a collaboration of city business leaders— young and old—who worked with a national nonprofit to create a regional plan for economic growth and community development.
- **Lawrence, Massachusetts:** The Reviviendo Gateway Initiative, a project in which a neighborhood-based planning group leveraged a large public infrastructure project to convene a broad range of stakeholders and create a 15-year vision for an urban village.

These cases, which are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8, are important because they are intentional, strategic efforts to establish new patterns of communication and cooperation where civic disengagement may be pervasive and systemic. It is remarkable the extent to which these efforts and others like them have been able to reset expectations and spark deeper changes in the stories that a community tells and hears about itself.

Such coalitions, over time, create a new culture and have the potential to function as real vehicles of long-term transformative change in these places. They begin with organizing and planning initiated by a dynamic sector of the community, often using a long-range visioning process as a tool for convening a diverse group of stakeholders. Participation is inclusive and open to all who are motivated to donate their time and goodwill. Efforts are made to reach out to well-regarded individuals representing a variety of skills and groups. Instead of focusing on “what went wrong” in the past, the process sets people to thinking about what kind of a city they want to live in. Despite perceived differences among them, participants often agree about many things—for example, the desire to have clean, safe streets; access to decent job and educational opportunities; a range of high-quality housing; attractive recreational spaces; and the availability of diverse goods and services. These common goals can be the foundation of consensus.

The work done by innovative revitalization coalitions often includes grassroots planning processes, yet they are different from a traditional planning process in that the end goal for such coalitions is not to create a document (though documents are created and goals are set), but rather to establish a loose alliance of residents, businesses, officials, organizations, and institutions that can act and plan simultaneously. These alliances are at once coalitions, forums for democratic decision-making, and concrete visions.

Network theory teaches us that information, ideas, and values flow powerfully and efficiently among decentralized groups of people as long as they have even minimal linkages among them (Traynor and Andors

2005). Shared principles and a long-term vision enable one stakeholder's short-term success to be owned by the entire group. By raising expectations and effectively changing the narrative in forgotten cities, these coalitions may provoke a "tipping point." The ultimate goal for these coalitions is for the change in thinking to spread beyond the coalition itself to people, businesses, and organizations throughout the city and the region, generating a rising tide of ambition and investment in response to newly perceived opportunities.

We believe that innovative revitalization coalitions are a replicable tool. They are ultimately locally led efforts to call into question the inherited framework of loss and misdirection, replacing it with a paradigm of survival, resilience, and adaptability.

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## *Opening Thoughts*

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**Beth Siegel of Mt. Auburn Associates:** These cities used to have bustling downtowns in their prime. They had vibrant economies that were dominated by manufacturing and they had jobs that were providing the ability for most of their residents to live a middle-class lifestyle. They had a professional class that all used to go to the country clubs. They had their offices downtown, the lawyers, the accountants, the bankers who lived on the hill, and were very involved in activities in those communities. They were Hometown America of the 1950s—these cities are very different places right now.

**Angela Glover Blackwell of PolicyLink:** Today, more than any other time, where you live has become a proxy for opportunity. Literally, it's all about your address. If you go back and think about the efforts on the part of the civil rights movement, most of what people sought to achieve has been thwarted by our development patterns. Where you live determines whether or not your children have access to quality education. Where you live determines whether or not you get an opportunity to build equity in your home—if you live in a community suffering from disinvestment, your likelihood of getting a home is slim, and if you get a home, the likelihood that it will build a pot of equity is greatly diminished. Where you live determines whether you're going to have access to the kind of entry-level jobs that are important to people. Equally frightening is that where you live has become a proxy for how long you will live and the quality of your life.

**Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution:** There's 20 percent to one-third of American cities that really didn't really get lifted up by the 1990s. I think what's happening in forgotten cities is really a combination of three things. Number one is that most of them are former industrial places that experienced a huge economic shock and the downside of globalization and technology. Number two, which I think makes the American experience really quite different from the typical

European experience, is that this economic shock is accompanied by a spreading out of population and jobs. And third, it was accompanied by severe racial, class, and, to some extent, ethnic separation. In stark contrast, cities in Britain, such as Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham, that also experienced a huge economic shock are vibrant and vital today.

**Marc Dohan of Twin Cities CDC:** Perhaps there's a lack of political muscle for cities like Fitchburg and Leominster, Massachusetts. Perhaps it's a lack of transportation, the fact that you can't get there from here. Perhaps it's the poor quality of our educational system. Perhaps it's a lack of institutional capacity to take advantage of the existing resources. Maybe it's brain drain—maybe small cities have lower salaries and they're less

exciting places to work for folks like you coming out of graduate schools in places like Cambridge or Boston. The bottom line is that people are leaving and they want to go to more exciting places.

**Jay Williams of Youngstown, Ohio:** Youngstown is a distressed city and it is seemingly schizophrenic. Where else do you see dilapidated buildings across the street from the home of the symphony? Where do you have wonderful museums and an exceedingly high crime rate? There is a growing university and a struggling K–12 school system. Certain schizophrenic behavior has almost become acceptable.

## IV. Dominance

A common thread in narratives about forgotten cities, and an impression in fact embedded in the term itself, is the acknowledgement of past greatness. These cities experienced an era of dominance. They had without a doubt been regional hubs, centers not only of population, but also jobs, infrastructure, and culture. They were often known throughout the country, and in some cases the world, for their products, innovations, and talent. Many were visited and studied by national politicians and leading scholars.

Ironically, the past continues to have an enormous impact—perhaps a disproportionate impact—on these cities precisely because their history is so present. Every new idea or change, development or initiative, has to contend with the past. What is happening now almost always suffers by comparison to a golden age, especially when some of the popular history is part mythology, as Bill Traynor of Lawrence CommunityWorks points out, and “tells the wrong story.”

Many practitioners find that deeper historical analysis helps them understand and contextualize today’s struggles and is vital to resetting the public dialogue about

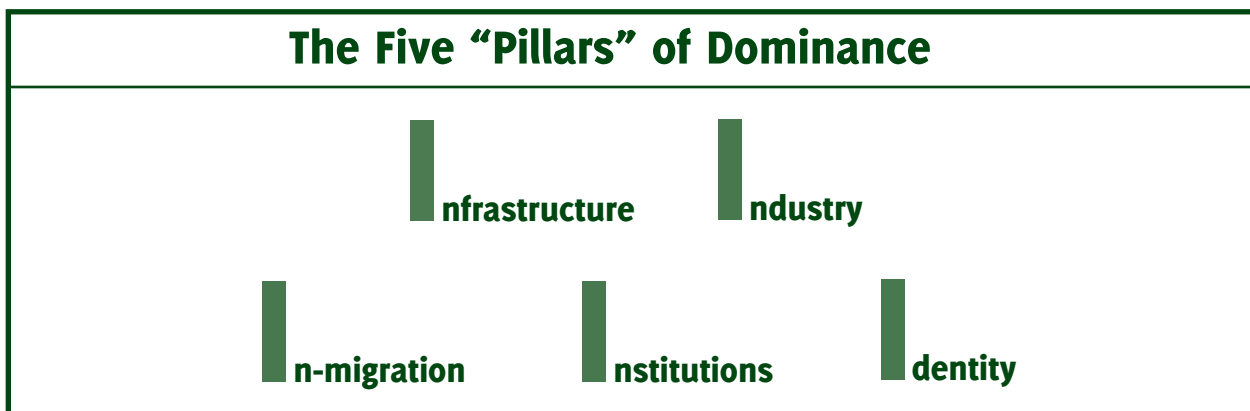
identity and vision. We, too, have found it helpful to conceptualize some of the main characteristics of what made these communities work. We call them the five pillars of dominance.

### 1. Infrastructure

Many forgotten cities, because of the purpose for which and the moment in time when they were constructed, have a unique and valuable infrastructure, including historically significant canals, dams, bridges, and mills. They may have underutilized industrial facilities or ports. To this day, the existing infrastructure, if updated, could support significant new uses and growth.

### 2. Industry

These cities were a product of the Industrial Revolution and experienced their heydays as major manufacturing centers. Many of them, in fact, were company towns. Industry funded many civic activities including culture and sports, local institutions, and social enterprises such as English language classes and was the primary source of wage income.



### 3. In-migration

Industry needs labor, and forgotten cities have historically relied on, and in some cases continue to rely on, the arrival of immigrants and newcomers to fuel the local economy. Immigrants and other newcomers—notably the flow of African-Americans to northern cities—have always been a major source of small business formation and the development of new markets and products.

### 4. Institutions

The apex of these manufacturing centers corresponded with a surge in American communitarianism during the Progressive Era. The beginning of the twentieth century saw an unparalleled rate of formation of civic groups, small businesses, labor unions, ethnic associations, congregations, fraternal organizations, service clubs, public parks, kindergartens, and public high schools (Putnam 2000). Local institutions benefited from the community's wealth and volunteers. Smaller central cities also boasted museums, colleges, hospitals, and business headquarters. Small businesses, particularly neighborhood retail, promoted street activity, and key commercial anchors, like banks, were owned and operated locally. Downtowns thrived.

### 5. Identity

The dense web of institutions and personal relationships in forgotten cities engendered a strong sense of one's place in the community, as well as that city's uniqueness in relation to the rest of the world. Homeownership and family growth—as well as employment and economic mobility—could usually be accommodated within the city limits.

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## *The Dominant Past*

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#### **Henry Mayer of Rutgers University:**

Industrialization often occurred near sources of important raw materials, along major waterways, along railroads. Agglomeration economics and geography caused many companies to locate near one another. Many cities became synonymous with specific industries—Akron with rubber; Moline with farm equipment; Detroit and Saginaw with automobiles; Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Gary, and Youngstown with steel. As such, these cities became heavily dependent on the continuation of these industries.

#### **Robert Forrant of the University of**

**Massachusetts-Lowell:** Through the 1950s, 1960s, through the early 1970s, Springfield, Massachusetts, had one of the richest working classes of anywhere in the Northeast because of these metalworking jobs and the machinery work that existed there. Now the city is broke. The Connecticut River Valley through the 1950s and 1960s was one of the most highly productive machine tool centers in the world. The city, because of that, became known as “The Industrial Beehive” because there was so much economic activity.

#### **Sarah Lown of Eastgate Council of Governments:**

In spite of the problems, Youngstown is still a beautiful city that is filled with potential. The city was well-planned. The streets are lined with lush hardwoods. Each neighborhood is distinctive and charming, many with beautiful historic homes. Each neighborhood has its own little retail district. An urban park is located within a 10-minute walk of every home in the city. They also created Mill Creek Park, one of the biggest metropolitan parks in the country. It runs along a 22-mile gorge, where there are walking trails, tennis courts, public gardens, a golf course, winter sledding, and all kinds of other amenities.



**John Russo of Youngstown State University:** In the 1920s, '30s, '40s, Youngstown was called the City of Homes. It was the largest steel-making district in the '20s, and was never less than number five in the world in terms of steel making until 1977. It was the home of the Warner Brothers. This was an incredible town. How could it lose its sense of direction and its own identity?

**Douglas Rae of Yale University:** Roughly the period from about 1870 to about 1920 is the height of urbanism; it's the period when the economic advantage of central location is huge.

At that time, ethnic populations were immigrating in large numbers, and state legislatures across the country, with the support of the federal government, made a concerted effort to cripple the capacity of city governments to act independently. We froze in place a set of institutions that were pretty inflexible. In that period, really weak city government worked, because all the forces that supported cities were in place. By the end of the twentieth century, those forces had gone away. Weak cities were faced with strong problems.

## V. Decline

The wrenching changes experienced by most small industrial cities in the United States in the second half of the twentieth century left behind many new challenges as industries and people fled. With resources stretched thin, new ideas scarce, and left to their own devices by state and federal government, local governments were all too often overwhelmed. The centripetal forces that once pulled people, resources, and businesses in and created a rich density of urban civic life weakened over decades against a backdrop of national economic restructuring, changing technologies, and shifting government policy. After a series of shocks—usually the loss of major employers offering well-paying, skilled manufacturing jobs—these forces were replaced by negative cycles of loss and disassociation from the center.

We have found remarkable similarities in the shared experiences of these cities, which can be described by five elements, or “slides,” of decline. These categories, while not linear stages—they recur time and again—frequently begin with “shock” and culminate in “shame” (Hoyt 2005).

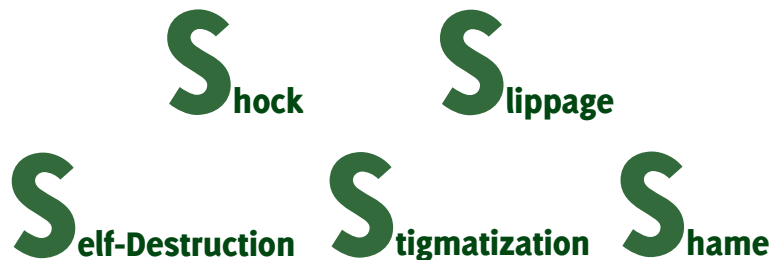
### 1. Shock

Shock is often characterized by plant closings. Most forgotten cities have experienced a dramatic exodus of industries and residents provoked by deindustrialization. Unlike their larger cousins, many small industrial cities were wholly dependent on a single employer for their economic well-being. According to Henry Mayer, local officials often have a “delayed response” to their new economic position and some are more deeply traumatized than others. These traumatic events become a part of the city’s collective mindset—what is best described as a shared memory of failure. The rapid demographic change that often results is a secondary shock that generates social upheaval and rising tensions among neighbors, often misdirecting resources into conflicts and politics that do not address the central challenges faced by the city.

### 2. Slippage

The flight of capital and people has a devastating impact on a municipality’s tax base. Slippage is characterized by a decline in public service delivery, with an increase in mismanagement, nepotism, and

### The Five “Slides” of Decline



even receivership in some extreme cases. Resources also dry up at the same time that demand for services is most acute. This precipitates an unhealthy climate of frustration on the part of public servants, businesspeople, and residents, where many stop trying to exert control (Mayer and Greenberg 2001). Common responses may be to become embittered or aggressive, to self-isolate, or to leave, all of which reinforce the effects of the initial shock.

The city can be overwhelmed and ineffective, leading to a general decline in the quality of life for the community. Hallmarks of this include no response to vandalism; accumulating deterioration and neglect; crumbling playgrounds; and cuts to libraries, youth programs, summer jobs, and public schools. Youth are often the hardest hit, with unconscionable numbers of children falling into poverty.

This general disengagement creates an environment that no longer values accountability. Unable to address everything, the city's enforcement becomes lax or selective. Trust erodes among neighbors and institutions. Local politics easily becomes fractious or adversarial, and the quality of public discourse is poor, often accusatory. One paradoxical result is that local regulations become even more multilayered and arbitrary as those who do care enough to participate in the public realm attempt to curb abuses or impose personal values. City administration and cumbersome regulatory requirements surface as the real deal breakers for positive economic development in forgotten cities (Soule, Fitzgerald, and Bluestone 2004). And in the absence of accountability, certain opportunities surface for more flagrant and unproductive behavior.

### 3. Self-destruction

Arson, a symbolic representation of disinvestment, has a particularly devastating impact on small cities. Arson goes hand in hand with abandonment, and it is not uncommon to have areas where over 30 percent of the land area is vacant or blighted. Not only do those parcels stop producing revenue for the city, but the effect on surrounding properties can be catastrophic. Property tax revenues plummet.

Meanwhile, as avenues for legal economic advancement dry up and civil society fragments, crime of all kinds may skyrocket. Violent crime, gangs, and the drug trade may be the most obvious, but fraud and corruption may be the most pervasive. Sensing a weakened state of governance, elected and appointed officials may bend the rules. High-profile corruption cases have plagued some cities and taken out a string of public leaders. Payoffs or favor trading for building permits, zoning variances, alcohol licenses, and the like are commonly suspected. More recently, many of these cities have suffered from mortgage industry fraud and predatory lending, all the more painful because individuals may be preyed upon by people they trust within their own ethnic community.

### 4. Stigmatization

These problems, many of them publicized through regional and national news outlets, along with the unfavorable word-of-mouth by those who leave these cities, lead to stigmatization. This is what happens when a city's negative image can itself have adverse effects on an individual. There may be a powerful, unspoken assumption that the city itself and the people who live there are

not worthwhile. This negative perception is extremely difficult to overcome. For example, a city with a reputation for laxity and large tracts of blighted areas will become a magnet for illegal dumping of trash, construction materials, and even hazardous waste. Some, perhaps even a great deal, of the dumping comes from outsiders. Yet usually there are no consequences, not even a cleanup—the reason being that everybody thinks that no one else cares, and even if they did, more dumping would occur tomorrow.

The city's image discourages businesses and families from choosing to relocate to forgotten cities, resulting in continued population loss. The question many outsiders have, yet rarely articulate is: Why would anyone choose to live there? Accordingly, college admissions offices may even discount the academic success of a student from one of these cities because the public school system is inadequate.

An important and distressing result of a city's stigmatization is that it makes it even more expensive than usual to be poor. Obtaining credit and insurance can be difficult and terms are unfavorable. There is limited access to amenities such as grocery markets. Transportation to employment centers can be inconvenient and costly. Families who value education may need to pay for private schools, or may have no options.

## 5. Shame

Shame is the culmination of decline, what happens when the city's residents themselves have internalized the perception of failure. Individual and collective expectations about the city are very low. Shame is characterized by chronic civic disengagement and a general lack of faith in the city and its ability to control its future.

This is an especially vulnerable stage for forgotten cities. Where leaders and residents have internalized feelings of failure, cities are ill-equipped and unlikely to defend themselves against the siting of NIMBY (not-in-my-back-yard) projects. Forgotten cities are often home to the lion's share of unwanted facilities such as incinerators, sewage treatment plants, or prisons, and may even view these activities perversely as an economic development strategy worth promoting.

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## *Coming Apart*

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### **Sarah Lown of Eastgate Council of Governments:**

The whole story of Youngstown revolves around September 17, 1977—the height of the disco era. We call that day Black Monday. Youngstown Sheet and Tube's Steel Company closed its door and five thousand jobs disappeared. The city had a population of just over 150,000 at the time. Within five years, every steel company along a 25-mile stretch of the Mahoning River closed its doors and we still haven't recovered. When the steel mills went down, what remained were a lot of different factions. We had strong labor unions, strong ethnic enclaves, strong neighborhoods, strong communities of faith, and none were accustomed to building the community together.

**Robert Ansin of MassInnovation:** My grandfather was a shoe maker in Fitchburg, my dad was a shoemaker in Fitchburg, and I was a shoemaker in Fitchburg. I had this great extended family of workers who worked for my grandfather and who worked for my dad, who were like my uncles and aunts. And as a young kid, I watched them working and really thriving in that community. And I had a front row seat for a lot of people losing their jobs. I remember asking at the time, Why are all these people losing their jobs?

**Henry Mayer of Rutgers University:** The reasons given for the inaction of the local government and the community leaders during this period is two-fold. The first was an apparent denial by the

local leaders that the city faced any long-term economic problem. These industries had always brought the cities prosperity and the community officials found it difficult to believe that this was suddenly coming to such an abrupt end. The second reason given for inaction by public officials during this period related to the lingering effects of past prosperity and worker unionization. The higher wages and better working conditions that were enjoyed by many workers during this time had been earned through constant confrontation and difficult bargaining by local and national unions. Over time, the average worker came to see the union as his friend and the business as his enemy.

**Jass Stewart of Brockton, Massachusetts:**

Brockton is a city that's run by five families, and that's been going on for ages. If you look at the payroll of City Hall, the Police Department, and the Fire Department, you start to recognize the five families who keep replicating those jobs through other family members. Those jobs should be open to the public, and they're typically not, they are just given to people. I'm not saying that nepotism is an entirely bad thing, there are benefits to it because you have people who are loyal to you and believe in you. But at least they could be competent people—that would be helpful.

**John Mullin of the University of Massachusetts-**

**Amherst:** I did the master plan for the City of Holyoke, and I will remember as long as I live, that I was boosting Holyoke on television, and I said, "You know, this stuff about crime in downtown Holyoke is overblown." I'm on live TV at about 11 o'clock and all of a sudden in the background is "blam-blam-blam" and I hear the bullets whistling by me. Timing is everything, right? Changing the city's image is very tough to overcome. It doesn't happen overnight.

**John Russo of Youngstown State University:**

Youngstown was one of the arson capitals of the world in 1982. The unemployment rate at the time was 25 percent. Imagine living through this. One day you look across the street and you see a light in a house, and the next day you don't. This is happening throughout your neighborhood and the only asset that you have is your home. What do you conclude about the value of your home? It's going downhill. During the first few years people burned their houses themselves, but they were not very good at it. So who are you going to call to burn your house? The mob.

**Sherry Linkon of Youngstown State University:**

Images of communal and individual failure shape not only how the nation sees the county, but increasingly how people locally see themselves, so that they come to expect failure. Communities internalize these stories, and with them come feelings of despair, helplessness, defensiveness, and denial. All of these multiple losses undermine the effectiveness of civic culture. So not only do people in Youngstown believe themselves to be responsible for their own failures, they also, as a community, find it difficult to act on their own behalf.

**Neal Hegarty of the Mott Foundation:** Flint sort of has this burden of being the poster child for bad cities.

**Robert Ansin of MassInnovation:** These communities—the Fitchburgs, the Providences, the Lawrences, the Lowells, the Brocktons—these places are collectively depressed, just like a person.

**Marc Dohan of Twin Cities CDC:** Fitchburg sees itself as the dumping ground for North Central Massachusetts. Fitchburg has a methadone clinic. Fitchburg has a needle exchange program. Fitchburg has the homeless shelter.

## VI. The New Reality

Following episodes of dominance and decline, forgotten cities experience a period that we refer to as “the new reality.” This is the time when, after the dust has settled, local leaders and residents struggle to understand and accept a new set of local conditions, which often include the fact that high-wage manufacturing jobs have been replaced, if at all, by low-wage service employment. As a result, the public and nonprofit sectors have become wage leaders and gained importance to the local economy. Environmental degradation has made redevelopment of industrial areas cost prohibitive and in some cases impossible. Additionally, property values have plummeted and generated waves of arson and abandonment. Ironically, the presence of cheap housing has attracted new streams of poor residents, usually immigrants and minority groups, which often has fueled social tensions and accelerated white flight.

It is not decline alone that made these cities “forgotten” to the outside world, but rather the judgment, passed along by those who fled as well as many observers, that they were not worth the trouble of saving. The exodus of middle-class whites has produced damaging and racist interpretations of these cities as places that have “failed” and will “never turn around.” The well-established narratives about dominance were replaced by narratives about failure and dysfunction.

The dwindling old guard that remained to live or work in these cities—consisting to a large extent of local officials and public employees, a reduced number of Chamber of Commerce business leaders, and other institutions like local newspapers—often tried to make the old paradigm work for a time through urban renewal schemes or efforts to

recruit major industries to replace those that had gone. Some of these well-intentioned efforts failed, leaving scars on the fabric of the community that have yet to be healed. Those communities whose urban renewal projects were modestly successful, like Lowell, Massachusetts, found that they were still at best transitional strategies along the way to a more diversified economic and social base. The new reality meant that there would be no silver bullet solution, no white knight to come in and save the city.

Understanding and accepting the new reality has been a painful process for forgotten cities. Eventually—and to a greater or lesser degree in each community—the realization begins to set in that the clock will never run backwards and that the challenges are not going to go away easily. This enables people to begin problem solving more productively and to even find new chances to redefine and revalue their city. Principal among the hidden opportunities are historic infrastructure and buildings, brownfields redevelopment, and large minority or immigrant populations. This “self-discovery” seems to be a necessary step toward revitalization.

In short, the new reality is characterized by (1) fragmented civic capacity, (2) low governing capacity, (3) crime and corruption, (4) historic infrastructure, (5) brownfields and vacant properties, (6) large minority and/or immigrant populations, (7) isolated racial and ethnic groups, (8) struggling schools, (9) poverty, and (10) regional disparity. In this chapter, our seminar participants comment on how these different pieces affect forgotten cities.



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## 1. Fragmented Civic Capacity

The disappearance of jobs and businesses meant that many of the civic activities that they supported also disappeared. Disposable income shrank and many of the families who supported local institutions moved away. Civic life shifted to new, smaller clusters of engaged individuals and organizations, often centered around the public and nonprofit sectors.

### **Robert Farrant of the University of**

**Massachusetts-Lowell:** The dominance of the big businesspeople in this city left as the crisis unfolded. For example, one of the major downtown employers was Bank of New England, which no longer exists. Now there's no major institutional player there. Insurance companies that were major downtown boosters and civic players are gone. Part of the process of erosion was that these established civic leaders who might push political structure disappeared from the scene.

**Beth Siegel of Mt. Auburn Associates:** Most of the companies—the old factories—were owned by local people. There were local insurance companies. There was a whole infrastructure of regional leaders who belonged to the Chamber of Commerce, the United Way, the Boys Club, and the YMCA. They gave money and time; they were on the school board. That is gone. In most of these cities, all you have left are the nonprofits. The leaders you have in these communities are amazingly devoted to them, but the same fifteen people sit on every single board and they are also all over the age of fifty.

**Douglas Rae of Yale University:** Here's the roster of large employers in New Haven: Yale: 11,700 full-time employees; Yale-New Haven Hospital: 4,500 such employees; St. Raphael's Hospital: 3,700 such employees. After that, no employer with as many as 1,000 people.

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## 2. Low Governing Capacity

Governing capacity declined in a number of ways. First, property values stagnated or most often eroded, leading to public sector layoffs and reduced levels of service. Municipal administrations were overwhelmed and forced to respond to constant crises, becoming more reactive and less strategic. It became harder to recruit highly qualified personnel as these cities became less desirable.

**Harry Spence of Chelsea, Massachusetts:** One of the great tragedies of economic decline is that public institutions become increasingly large employers as employment falls away. So, for example, the importance of getting control of the schools is not to improve education for the kids, it's in order to get a share of the spoils of the jobs. Desperation always produces a short-term perspective that emphasizes survival over purpose. Public institutions in very poor cities rapidly decay because their ostensible purpose usually gets subordinated to the purpose of providing some of the only decent paying jobs around. Political fights are generally about control of those decently paying jobs.

**Barry Bluestone of Northeastern University:** Many of these older industrial cities have massive deficiencies. What was fascinating, though, was that over and over again when we started mentioning brownfields, a poorly skilled labor force, an immigrant labor force, crime, or congestion, many of the developers responded that they knew all about these problems, but that they were not the real deal breakers. The real deal breakers they kept coming back to involved difficulties with working with older industrial cities' administrations over all of the very detailed specific regulatory requirements they would have to meet. My first reaction was that they were blowing smoke. They don't want to tell us that they do not want to go into communities that are 70 percent Hispanic or immigrant. But the more

we talked with developers, we came to realize the deal breakers were often regulatory, not demographic.

**Jass Stewart of Brockton, Massachusetts:**

Companies would come because we have an incredible location. We're twenty miles south of Boston, thirty miles north of Providence. But companies don't come because there's no urban planning, and this has happened over and over again. An organization doesn't want to come in, invest a lot of money in setting things up and making deals, while they have one city councilor saying, "I don't want this in my backyard, it's not gonna happen!" And then the deal is done, the organization or company has spent tons, in cases millions of dollars, to come to the city and then things are shot down. Urban planning is key.

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### *3. Crime and Corruption*

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Global restructuring, along with the shrinking of public and civic life, created new opportunities for one segment of the economy—crime and vice-related industries. Budget cuts and property abandonment also led to increased vandalism and petty crime.

**Harry Spence of Chelsea, Massachusetts:**

Organized crime depends for its existence on lots of extra people who have no alternative way of making a living. Organized crime often begins to flourish in immigrant communities because many people have no access to jobs since they are undocumented and they can't work any other way. Organized crime is a huge siphon of wealth from poor people. One of its goals is to maintain the poverty of the community.

Organized crime tends to work along ethnic lines. We were trying to end the dominance of organized crime that had grown out of the previous great round of immigration, which was largely Russian, Jewish, Italian, and Irish in its ethnic make-up. In the midst of doing that, our task was at the same time to prevent the development of new organized crime out of the rapidly burgeoning Latino community.

Dominican drug gangs were obviously happy to take the place of the old mafia. So there was a kind of constant two-fold activity with respect to organized crime—getting rid of whoever is now in charge and identifying what is emerging. There is a constant tension around this.

**Robert Forrant of the University of**

**Massachusetts-Lowell:** One of the peculiarities that you find is that the more a city slumps economically, [the more] corruption rears its head. In Springfield, the level of corruption has reached massive proportions. All the way to the incredible heinous thing of housing authority workers stealing money out of the laundry machines in the elderly housing complexes. It turned out to be the head of the housing authority. They caught him opening the machines and putting all the money in his pocket. This is a pocketful of quarters, and it's just incredibly absurd to have that level of graft.

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### *4. Historic Infrastructure*

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As forgotten cities lost much of their economic and political clout, valuable infrastructure spending flowed to the suburbs, fueling much of the regional "sprawl without growth" seen throughout the Rustbelt. Yet the infrastructure already in place in these cities, with targeted updates and improvements, would often support a larger population. There may also be beautiful and historic resources such as bridges, canals, mills, and parks. Bringing back these community assets is an important step toward creating an environment that is attractive for private investment to follow.

**Robert Forrant of the University of**

**Massachusetts-Lowell:** If you drive through Springfield on I-91, there's absolutely no reason to get off. The highway is on an elevated structure that passes quickly through the city. The Basketball Hall of Fame sits on the other side of the highway from the downtown, and for

some reason people seem mystified by the fact that people go to the Basketball Hall of Fame and don't walk under the highway and eat lunch or dinner at a downtown restaurant. Why would anyone walk under a gloomy overpass to go into the downtown? This highway structure has had a really negative impact spatially in terms of what the city wants to do. The city is really trying to figure out how to develop its waterfront, but it's hamstrung.

**Beth Siegel of Mt. Auburn Associates:** If you know these cities, you realize very quickly that they were located on rails and rivers because that made sense in their industrial past. Now, many of these cities are off the highway and without the kind of access to modern transportation infrastructure that's required to compete in this economy. Lack of access to an international airport, or at least a major national one, was proving to be a very serious problem for many of these cities as they looked towards their future. For example, in Glens Falls, they had a major local company that had been just bought out by a European company. The plant manager at this company told me that they had to consolidate between Atlanta and Glens Falls. On every single measurement Glens Falls was better—the productivity of labor, every single measure—but it took 45 minutes from Glen Falls to get to the Albany airport, which is not international. So there was just nothing they could do at that point because that was what this company needed.

**John T. Yunits, Jr. of Brockton, Massachusetts:** Let's talk a little bit about what happens when the city stops investing in itself. I was in law school when Proposition 2 1/2<sup>1</sup> was passed, and they were closing city halls, police stations. They

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<sup>1</sup>Passed by Massachusetts voters in 1980, Proposition 2 1/2 places two constraints on the amount of property taxes a city or town can levy: (1) a community cannot levy more than 2.5 percent of the total full cash value of all taxable property in the community (called the levy ceiling); and (2) a community's allowable levy for a fiscal year (called the levy limit) cannot increase by more than 2.5 percent of the maximum allowable limit for the prior year, plus certain allowable increases such as new growth from property added to the tax rolls. (Massachusetts Municipal Association, [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org))

were investing nothing in Brockton's or Boston's infrastructure. And the city outside the downtown was collapsing. The attitude had taken root in the Reagan years that cities were gone, so people stopped investing, and if you stop investing in the city, it decays all around you. People forget about all the infrastructure needs and the roads, water, and sewer in particular. When you're running a city or when you're in the planning business, you need to make sure that the community understands that you're not *spending* money, you're *investing* in the community when you do projects like a corner park or a ballfield.

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## 5. Brownfields and Vacant Properties

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Forgotten cities made their name from heavy manufacturing, with dirty processes that became regulated only over the last thirty years. Nowadays brownfields and their redevelopment are a central challenge in the rebirth of these cities. Liability protection, appropriate cleanup, and effective property disposition are necessary to turn these sites around and attract major investment. These sites may offer large tracts fit for dense redevelopment and an opportunity to shift away from a declining industrial sector to a model of mixed-use. Some of these parcels may also be appropriate for new parks and green space, particularly in neighborhoods and along formerly industrial waterways. Since many of these older cities have been built out for a long time, vacant or brownfield sites can offer a great opportunity to remake the physical fabric of the city.

**Henry Mayer of Rutgers University:** A large percentage of these cities also faced environmental impediments when seeking to attract new industry and jobs into the area. Many of the mining and heavy manufacturing companies that dominated the region left behind lasting environmental problems. They included unattractive mountains of mining waste,

abandoned buildings and contaminated land, large quantities of toxic liquids that threatened to destroy aquifers. Most urban areas in the Northeast and Midwest still have sizeable inventories of abandoned and underutilized buildings and sites that are contaminated with everything from mercury, lead, PCBs, multiple organics, and in some cases, radioactive wastes.

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## *6. Large Minority and/or Immigrant Populations*

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Affordable housing prices and low-paying jobs in the decaying manufacturing sector often attracted minority or immigrant populations to forgotten cities while whites continued to move out in large numbers. These new populations were usually not as socially mobile as a result of limited financial resources as well as unfair zoning and lending practices. These groups often represent the only positive elements of growth—in terms of newcomers, population growth, or business creation—in many forgotten cities. Stimulating this development requires intentional strategies to break down barriers to public participation, access to education, employment ladders, stable homeownership and small business resources, as well as to encourage a feeling of ownership among these communities.

**John Russo of Youngstown State University:** The key point is that the African Americans who were part of the migration that came from the South in the late '40s and '50s took over all the dirtiest jobs in the mill. But these jobs paid middle-class wages, so they had an economic foothold. The white folk were moving out to the suburbs and the white manufacturing area, and there was such a vibrant black community, a great deal of entrepreneurship going on that we identified.

**Ramon Borges-Mendez of the University of Massachusetts-Boston:** New York went bankrupt. As manufacturing moved overseas, cities like Baltimore and Philadelphia were breaking down and those were the cities where Puerto Ricans and Latinos in the Northeast were concentrated. So, when this breakdown takes place in the '70s and the early '80s they move into other cities of the Northeast. They were not coming directly from their countries of origin.

**Marcia Marker Feld of the University of Rhode Island:** Culturally, there are big differences between the older, settled population and the newer immigrant groups. We held a couple of charrettes on the design of the renewed Payne Park and there were some very different perspectives. The interesting thing for me there was that there was an age fight, rather than a race or ethnicity fight, where the older population wanted quiet walkways and the mothers of the young population wanted to build tot lots.

**Bill Traynor of Lawrence CommunityWorks:** Lawrence is known as the “Immigrant City” and though it’s true that Lawrence’s history is full of immigrants, there have only been two major waves of immigrants over the last hundred years: one a hundred years ago and one very recently. When I was growing up, we had a few Latinos in the city, not that many. The school system is now almost a hundred percent Latino. That is a very significant historical transformative moment in a city.

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## 7. Isolated Racial and Ethnic Groups

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The demographic shift experienced by many of these cities is sometimes perceived as a wrenching social change that provokes tensions and accentuates divisions among groups, which is particularly devastating in cities like these where all resources are needed. In order to turn a city around, the issue of race needs to be addressed. Otherwise, a large portion of the city's human capital may be squandered. The successful revitalization of forgotten cities begins with making space for everyone to play a role in defining their city's future. The lack of channels for effective communication among racial and ethnic communities needs to be addressed forcefully and explicitly, and conflicts that arise from these tensions offer the opportunity to do so.

**Jay Williams of Youngstown, Ohio:** Let me say that Youngstown is about 50 percent African American and 50 percent white. While we made this a very inclusive process, there were those who felt that by starting at the top-down, that we were immediately marginalizing and disenfranchising the African Americans. Which wasn't true, but once it's become the perception, it's hard to deal with. So, the African American community, at least a segment of it, said "We don't want to hear about Youngstown 2010 again."

It got so intense that we worked with the local PBS station on a program about Youngstown 2010 and race. We had to talk about the need for this to be a very inclusive process and how race relations in Youngstown are going to be a key component in making or breaking Youngstown 2010. We brought the issue of race to the forefront because people believed that "Youngstown 2010 is bad news for blacks in the city because it will lead to gentrification." Since then the African American business leaders have stepped up.

**Ramon Borges-Mendez of the University of Massachusetts-Boston:** It's very interesting that this project is called forgotten cities. For some part of the population they are discovered cities. There is a feeling of sharp contrast and contradiction, which often takes the observer by surprise as one strolls or drives by the big Latino barrios that have formed in the small/mid-sized cities of New England like Lawrence, Holyoke, and Providence.

If you open your eyes you can see big turn-of-the-century industrial textile mill buildings that would be truly spectacular for a SoHo or Tribeca-style revival, but yet they're mainly a decaying infrastructure belonging to a bygone industrial era. However, you also see the signs of dislocation and poverty often singled out and displayed in *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe* and even *The Washington Post*. Stories that speak about, often with great exaggeration and in racist terms, how some of these cities are stops in the New England drug sale, full of welfare mothers, or [have] school systems in which nothing works.

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## 8. Struggling Schools

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Nearly all public school systems in the country are tied to the local property tax levy, meaning that students in forgotten cities have paid and continue to pay the real price of a declining tax base. Teacher salaries in older small cities have generally not been competitive with their suburban counterparts, and materials and extracurricular resources are often scarce. There is also a need to look at learning as a lifelong endeavor, where investments in ESL, adult basic education, worker training, daycare, and youth after-school and summer programming are all components. In general, there is a serious need for new partnerships, expanding options, and investment in facilities. Educational centers can become positive focal points of neighborhood development.



**Carlos Matos of Lawrence, Massachusetts:** Over the last 10 years we've spent \$1 billion in the city of Lawrence for education. It doesn't look it. You know we have one of the highest dropout rates in the state. We have one of the highest MCAS failure rates in the state. How is our \$100 million per year used to address those problems?

**Mark Eisenberg of the New Bedford Economic Development Council:** The drop out rate for New Bedford High School is 35 to 45 percent. You have an uneducated workforce and you have all these young people who can't do the jobs that exist. Trying to hire good local people is a huge problem. Let's say you put something in the newspaper advertising positions and you get an onslaught of people. Now you have to be able to read and write to work for us. Twenty-five percent of applicants can't fill out the application because they can't read and write. You can eliminate another 10 percent because they have profanity on their shirts; you don't want someone who would come in to a job interview like that. When we finally select people, we send them for a drug test. Fifty percent don't show and 50 percent of those who show fail. So, one out of four of the preselected people actually make it. Once they make it past six months, they're set. If you go over to my warehouse and you ask somebody how long they've been working there, they'll say 12 years or more.

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## *9. Poverty*

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By the very definition of a forgotten city, these cities are home to families with very low incomes. High rates of unemployment and underemployment suggest that it is extremely difficult for most families to acquire assets, such as a home they own. The inability of residents to be investors in their own city leads to less stable neighborhoods, indicating that strategies in these cities should include asset-building activities such as helping people obtain financial skills and access employment with opportunities for advancement.

**Beth Siegel of Mt. Auburn Associates:** There was higher poverty, lower median household income when compared to MSAs overall. Twenty-eight percent of the cities that we identified as being third-tier cities had poverty rates of over 20 percent. And 61 percent had poverty rates of over 15 percent. This was 1990 census data because we wrote the report before the 2000 Census was available. We found that in some states a disproportionate percentage of the population in poverty is in those cities. For example, the small cities in Massachusetts, with about 10 percent of the population, had over 20 percent of the poverty in the state.

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## *10. Regional Disparity*

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Ironically, many forgotten cities have suffered while their neighbor communities in the suburbs have grown and thrived. As a result, city officials in forgotten cities sometimes seek to emulate what they see as a successful suburban model instead of rebuilding a vital urban place. There are often opportunities for solving problems at the regional level that are not apparent locally. Forgotten cities may be able to market themselves and plan for their development in a way that is complementary to surrounding communities. Taking a broader view can assist them in targeting niches such as singles, empty nesters, working-class families, immigrants, artists, and others who may be quicker to see value in forgotten cities than most. Cooperation across municipalities and cost-sharing are difficult conversations to begin, but may become increasingly attractive over time as local budgets become more constrained and states look to promote more regional growth.

**John Mullin of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst:** We have to understand, and it's hard, since we all get tied up in these little bitty towns and cities, that the market is clearly regional, and regional growth strategies and policies are crucial. The Blackstone experience to me is very exciting.



The Blackstone Valley was pickled. For a long time, it was a valley too far away in terms of the Boston metropolis. It was in an area south-southwest of Worcester, and it connected Worcester and Providence. There was no growth there for about 30 years, then lo and behold came Route 495, and that created what I call the “Boston growth tsunami,” and the Blackstone Valley is now within range of Greater Boston.

**Douglas Rae of Yale University:** The big strategy problem for New Haven in my opinion is the rail line between New Haven and Grand Central Station. If that follows any kind of a reasonable course over the next decade, New Haven is going to be a hot item, because New Haven competes very well both on price and quality of life with

most of the suburbs along the Westchester-Connecticut shore that people have to choose from. I think New Haven is kind of a hybrid of a post-industrial or post-urban city, and a satellite community for New York. I think there are a bunch of these.

**Robert Luongo of the New Bedford Economic Development Council:** I think smart growth creates some hope for these forgotten cities to work on a regional level, but in order to really implement smart growth you need to figure out revenue sharing. There has to be revenue sharing because property taxes drive the community’s revenue, and how do you tell a town to give up development for New Bedford when they’re going to lose revenue.

## VII. Revitalization

Coming to terms with the new reality is the first step in the revitalization process. Through the cases presented in the lecture series, as well as through our time on the ground in Youngstown, Reading, and Lawrence, we have seen that forgotten cities confront many similar problems as a result of their shared history. However, it is abundantly clear that there are also a set of factors that contribute to a community's successful revitalization. While each city approaches the revitalization puzzle quite differently, the pivotal pieces are the same from one context to the next. They are: (1) leadership, (2) civic infrastructure, (3) vision and planning, (4) social inclusion, (5) quality of life, (6) access to opportunities, (7) resource acquisition, and (8) image and perception. In this chapter, our contributors reflect on the complex ways in which these pieces fit together.

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### *All Things Being Equal...*

**Beth Siegel of Mt. Auburn Associates:** I've always wanted to look systematically at our third tier cities to find out which ones are successful and why. We were able to identify some of them—Green Bay, Wisconsin, or Danbury, Connecticut, for example. Here are some commonalities for the ones that have been doing better: First, they focus on amenity development. The cities that did better have focused on arts, culture, the environment. They realized that they could not progress until they addressed the amenity issue and made themselves places where people wanted to live. Secondly, cities that had colleges or universities that took an active interest in the city—that made a difference. Third, cities that were more effective in terms of regional cooperation were more likely to thrive and do better. The fourth commonality is building new leadership and engaging community. What are the

barriers to getting new leadership involved? Can you integrate that new leadership into the existing civic infrastructure? The last commonality is building on the strengths of the new immigrants. Cities that identify the new immigrants not as the problem but as an asset seem to do better.

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### *1. Leadership*

Two of the most important characteristics of transformative leadership are *vision* and *capacity*. Vision is the ability to imagine a future that is radically different than the present, as well as to recognize the paths of action that will lead to that future. Capacity is the ability to set goals and achieve them in a consistent, systematic way. Leadership in forgotten cities can come from any sector: institutions of higher learning, financial institutions, community development organizations, etcetera. The single charismatic leader is not the solution; it is the least common, and perhaps the least useful, form of leadership in a forgotten city. In these cities, leadership needs to be intentionally developed as broadly as possible and with an eye toward the longer view.

**John Mullin of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst:** Local leadership is the single greatest factor that we've identified in those communities that are successfully revitalizing themselves. Leadership comes in all sizes and shapes. In New London, we saw it was the local newspaper that took the lead. In one part of Worcester, it was the president of Clark, and in Hartford, at Trinity College, it was the college president. In the Blackstone Valley, it was the president of the regional bank. In Lowell, it was the superintendent of schools, along with Paul Tsongas, who were key leaders.

**Harry Spence of Chelsea, Massachusetts:** One of the things I think you have to do is find people who emphasize strength. One of the huge problems for poor communities, as well as poor families, is despair and depression. So a piece of the fight begins with finding people who will assert strength, who will assert capacity, who will begin to identify places of hope in this setting. In child welfare we call that resilience. Some kids have it and some don't—we're not sure why. But there are people with the sense that they can shape their destiny.

**Marcia Marker Feld of the University of Rhode Island:** Our overriding concern was a lack of empowerment and leadership on the part of the residents to participate in public and private decisions about the neighborhoods and to access the local economy. There was sense of the people living in the neighborhood that they were ignored by City Hall with the exception of one or two neighborhood groups that fought back. The school committees ignored the neighborhoods. It was our perception that what was needed in fact was not another economic development strategy, but a strategy that would provide capacity, learning, skills, and leadership. This is about leadership for a changing world. We see leadership as a dynamic process in which people come together to pursue change. In doing so collectively, they develop a shared vision of what their community should look like and shape their decisions and actions.

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## *2. Civic Infrastructure*

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Where civic capacity is lacking, incrementally constructing a new and possibly very different type of civic infrastructure is essential. One of the most effective ways to begin is through building social networks and social capital. Thus, the process involves creative relationship building, especially in forgotten cities where distrust is prevalent. Nonprofit organizations with neighborhood roots may be instrumental in connecting with other local organizations and institutions and mobilizing

a critical mass. Sustaining the effort is more difficult than getting it started. Burnout is common and individuals have multiple and demanding responsibilities. Meetings and projects, therefore, must be enjoyable and every victory, no matter how small, should be celebrated.

**Bill Traynor of Lawrence CommunityWorks:** What I really want to focus on are some of the human and relational transformative experiences that have to happen in a place like Lawrence for change to take place. It's not just about infrastructure, it's not just about building things, it's not just about design, and it's not even just about politics. It's about power, it's about human transformation, it's about changing long-term habits and ways of doing business, and ultimately, it's about having some hope and ambition. Without a widely shared habit of having hope and ambition for the future, it's very difficult to make positive things happen and it's almost impossible to reinvent an old place.

What we've got to do is repopulate public life in a thousand different ways—create a new public realm, new habits of engagement and leadership, because people's habits now cycle around negative things like distrust and cynicism and a lack of hope. In Lawrence, there needed to be a positive future vision that was based on the reality of this place and also based in the positive assets of this place, because it does have positive assets.

**Neal Hegarty of the Mott Foundation:** We're all about trying to leverage, trying to forge partnerships, and trying to support centers of strength. "Centers of strength" is different from institution-building in the sense that it's not just about the major institutional players. That was important in its time, and I think we still do some of that, but while a center of strength can be the University of Michigan-Flint, a center of strength can also be the three-person Greater Flint Art Council, which has been doing grassroots-related artwork and has a wonderful, small building downtown. It can be a neighborhood doing grassroots work, or it can be the hospital.

**Angela Glover Blackwell of PolicyLink:** Most of these places have some major anchor institutions. Some businesses are more tied to community and place than others, like the energy companies, which cannot just get up and move; major universities that have built their reputations around certain places. A lot of medical facilities and hospitals are the same.

Many of those institutions that have seen their communities deteriorate have thrown up either physical or psychological walls between themselves and the communities that surround them, assuming that though the “city” may be going downhill, we’ll still remain this glowing place up on the hill. But we have found wonderful models of institutions that have seen the writing on the wall, as they did at the University of Pennsylvania. They came to the conclusion that the university could not thrive if that area around West Philly continued to go downhill. They started helping pull in businesses and supporting entrepreneurial activity in the region. They began to use their contracting power: Who’s cleaning the buildings? Who’s doing the gardening? Who’s doing all those things that allow the institution to function? They began to prioritize the women and minority contractors. They started hiring people from the community and training people.

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### *3. Vision and Planning*

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In an environment of many challenges and limited resources, priorities must be set and investments targeted. A vision built with broad community input and consensus provides a framework for those difficult decisions. If people cannot see the future, then they cannot work to change direction. The vision should be elaborated in terms that everyone can relate to and understand, meaning that it is concrete, avoids jargon, and is visceral. An effective visioning process can be a tool for changing the way a community thinks and talks about itself—it resets the city’s narrative. It also needs to go hand in hand with an effective organizing

strategy. Planners can be interlocutors for disadvantaged communities, connecting them to development opportunities and civic engagement. Our contributors have also identified that there is a direct link between good planning and attracting private investment. Business flows to where the rules are clear and predictable, and where the administrative “deal breakers” are absent (Soule, Fitzgerald, and Bluestone 2004).

**Henry Mayer of Rutgers University:** I feel that many of these cities could rise above their structural and locational constraints if they could come together under a common vision. It has to be a community vision, one that everyone supports and buys into. And it has to be workable, feasible given the physical, financial, political, and other constraints that planners will face. When I talk about vision I’m talking about what the community wants to physically look like. What amenities should it have? Who is going to live there? Who is going to work there? Leadership is critical to developing and then implementing such a vision. To convert a vision into a workable plan requires consensus building and making difficult decisions. The unknown or feared impact of change can sometimes make it difficult to reach a consensus. And trust becomes a critical element in moving forward.

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### *4. Social Inclusion*

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The human capital in forgotten cities is often untapped. Minority communities and new immigrants often do not contribute all that they might otherwise offer often because the public sector is still dominated by the old guard that may not understand or identify with them. Successful communities are able to turn their diversity into a strength, even a competitive advantage. Often the immigrant or minority business community in a forgotten city consists of extraordinarily entrepreneurial individuals, who could be better supported by technical assistance to help them grow,

including financing opportunities and business planning. It is important to note that political and economic progress are not one and the same in these cities; both are critical to these ethnic communities putting down long-term roots and assuming some political control of the city.

**John T. Yunits, Jr. of Brockton, Massachusetts:**

We have a huge job base. As I said, the Cape Verdeans and Haitians who are coming to our city are desperate to work. They love to work, they love to make money, that's why they are here. We don't have enough training for the adults and unfortunately both the federal government and the state government have been cutting back. Over 1,200 people are on our ESL lists and we've got to get those people trained because they would be fantastic workers. One of our fastest growing companies was literally offered a building to relocate to Macon, Georgia. He wouldn't leave Brockton because of the quality of work he gets from his people, mostly Cape Verdean workers. He trains them himself. We have to recognize the huge value of this new wave of immigrants coming to our communities. There are doctors, there are nurses, there are other professionals in those groups that nobody knows about because they don't speak the language.

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## *5. Quality of Life*

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Everybody wants to live in a place with a high quality of life. Many forgotten cities have physical features such as waterways that could be turned from liabilities to assets. Walkable, safe, clean public spaces and recreational opportunities for adults and children all represent the public face of the city. A city's quality of life determines whether people will want to relocate their businesses there and grow their families there. Some forgotten cities are beginning to understand the vital role that such basic amenities play.

**Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution:** When you go to these places, what you're really struck by is how much they are affected by idea viruses: "If only we'd built the minor league stadium," and "If only we'd had our convention center expanded, maybe we could get a shot at these trade shows" or whatever. What I don't find is a whole bunch of folks in these cities—and maybe it's because the networks of corporate, civic, and political leaders have been decimated by economic change—what I don't find is a real strong focus on the basics. For example, good schools, safe streets, and the delivery of services in an efficient and effective manner.

**Mark Eisenberg of the New Bedford Economic**

**Development Council:** If you want us to develop the economic plan for the city, I'm here to tell you that it's more than just jobs and it's more than just business. I was sitting in a meeting with a guy who's a Ph.D. in marine biology and he was hiring 50 marine biologists. He was telling me how, when his candidates come to interview, they're asking him questions about parks, museums, beaches, and theaters. I realized that economic development is more than just job development. It's about pulling it together. It's about quality of life, because if I'm going to move my company to a location, that's where I'm going to live with my family. That's where my kids are going to school and those are the parks they're going to play in. One without the other doesn't work. If you can't create the vision, then I can't promote the economic development effectively.

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## *6. Access to Opportunities*

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Forgotten cities need to improve their residents' opportunities to access quality housing, good schools, and decent jobs. Lifelong education, including English classes, adult learning, and daycare are fundamental in most forgotten cities. Helping families build assets—through homeownership, microenterprise, and higher education—is an intentional economic development strategy to move them up the economic ladder and



develop a middle class from within. Investing in people is as important as investing in place, and this is nowhere more important than in forgotten cities, with their undeveloped human capital. It should be noted that some forgotten cities are nearby to major markets, so strategies can include improving access to opportunities outside city limits.

**Bill Traynor of Lawrence CommunityWorks:**

We're pragmatic and we care about struggling families, so our approach is to invest in the family assets and the collective community assets of people who live there. We talk about smart equitable growth; we talk about investing in people as an economic strategy. In our view, it's the way that Lawrence will be rebuilt, by growing that asset base in a thousand different ways, creating value in family assets, in community assets.

**John T. Yunits, Jr. of Brockton, Massachusetts:**

That'll be the biggest key for any city to achieve success, whether it's Springfield, Lawrence, or Lowell. You've got to have a good school system. There's no better investment that the taxpayers, businesses, and government can make in a city than investing in its schools.

**Robert Luongo of the New Bedford Economic Development Council:** If you ask anyone in the economic development field what the most important thing a city can do for economic development, it's not bringing a big box into the city or doing a real estate deal, it's improving infrastructure, as well as job training and education. Without an educated workforce and without infrastructure, you're not going to have any economic development.

**Barry Bluestone of Northeastern University:**

Cities need to create a permitting system that is simplified. At the present time, in some of these cities and towns, a developer has to go before multiple agencies to get a building permit. It can be a very convoluted, very complicated, slow process. Developing a "one stop" permitting

process would help a great deal. We can actually make a deal work more effectively if we can receive expedited permits and infrastructure than by factoring a tax subsidy into our pro forma.

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## *7. Resource Acquisition*

Forgotten cities need to be clever about developing new resources in order to become proactive about managing their future. Resource acquisition is often the hinge between planning and implementation. In order to reach its ambitions, a forgotten city needs to be entrepreneurial, locate creative financing sources and identify access to capital. "Resources" can refer to funding, of course, but it can also mean innovative partnerships with strong institutions or businesses in other communities, or among sectors within a city. Community development corporations, colleges and universities, community foundations, and churches can all supplement government capacity if there is a positive working relationship with the municipality. In some instances where the problems are so severe that the local government ignores or diverts resources, the intervention of state and federal authorities may be required to create accountability over resource management. Thinking more positively, proactive or incentivized collaborations among different communities can be useful for solving resource challenges. Such cooperation creates efficiencies and strengthens a region's ability to compete in the global economy.

**Ramon Borges-Mendez of the University of Massachusetts-Boston:** You have to go out there and have three or four good planners looking at the RFPs. You need dynamic planners with vested interest in the communities doing that kind of surveillance. I recently interviewed all the economic development officers in these cities.



There is practically no effort to go the extra mile to dig in at the monies and opportunities that will help untangle some of these policy conundrums.

**Carlos Matos of Lawrence, Massachusetts:**

Lawrence has been building \$450 million of new schools, mostly funded by the state. We're the youngest city in the state, with 43 percent of the population under the age of 25. We're currently constructing a \$110 million high school, the second largest in the country. Yet no one has made the connection between \$450 million worth of new schools and an economic development strategy. There's work associated with that \$450 million, there's procurement. An infusion of half a billion dollars into the community doesn't come along every day. Nobody planned a strategy to take advantage of it.

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## *8. Image and Perception*

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Expectations can play an enormous role in whether things go right or wrong with a city. There are cities with locational constraints that make progress and others with multiple advantages that continue to decline. Most forgotten cities and the people around them expect failure. To change the perception of forgotten cities, a small group of people must believe in the city, do something as well or better than any other city around, and then talk about it to everyone. Success can be infectious—once a beautiful park is built, then every neighborhood wants one, and expects it done right. It is possible to turn around the direction of these cities fairly rapidly, at least in perception, by generating a sense of common purpose or, at the very least, forward motion.

**Jay Williams of Youngstown, Ohio:** Youngstown 2010, in a nutshell, will result in a new comprehensive plan for the city of Youngstown. It

is also intended to serve as a launching point for a philosophical change in the way we do business. We were told time and time again by the state and other funders, "Youngstown perennially asks for help, but there is no vision, there is no plan. You are all over the place and you're not on the same page." Now we have a plan that the state can plug in to. We understand where we want to go and what we want to do.

Another key lesson is the role the media plays. Youngstown is a relatively small market, but it's saturated with media outlets. There are four television stations, there's one major daily paper, there's a couple of tabloids, and there is an abundance of talk radio. The role that the media plays can help to make or break any revitalization efforts of the community.

**John T. Yunits, Jr. of Brockton, Massachusetts:**

Our first major task was getting the city to believe in itself again in a positive way. It gave us the opportunity to convince people that we could do what nobody else said we could do. Right now, we're building the first desalination facility in the Northeast with the private sector, which will supplement our water supply so that we can continue to grow as a city. We're also putting photovoltaic (PV) panels on a 27-acre capped brownfield that has the ash from the old coal plant underneath it. It'll be the largest solar PV array producing power for the grid east of the Mississippi when it's completed. Once you've had a success, it builds upon itself.

**Sherry Linkon of Youngstown State University:**

Youngstown should refuse to let others destroy or humiliate it. As the community works to envision a new future, Youngstown needs to understand both the positive values and the real problems of its past. Youngstown needs to be able to use its history to shape its future. To remember the virtues of hard work, community and family loyalty, and commitment to social justice that helped to make it a great industrial city. These are the lessons that all industrialized communities must learn.

## VIII. Toward a New Model

Many forgotten cities are in a state of transition or well-positioned for one. The younger generations, including new immigrants, do not recall the “good old days” when the mills were humming and wages for manual labor were high; they are ready to envision a positive and new future. In contrast, the political and financial structures of these cities are usually less ready for change, still dominated by individuals and conceptions shaped by the years of decline, with a prevailing mindset of skepticism. Based on our own experiences and those of the seminar contributors, we would suggest that the most successful urban reinventions occur through the formation and actions of innovative revitalization coalitions.

This report demonstrates that such coalitions are emerging in forgotten cities. This is an important finding because it indicates that the barriers of lack of civic capacity, inadequate governing capacity, and negative collective mindset can be, and are being, overcome.

In the Introduction, we mentioned three significant examples of innovative revitalization coalitions that we will now discuss in greater detail:

- **Youngstown, Ohio:** Youngstown 2010
- **Reading, Pennsylvania:** Initiative for a Competitive Greater Reading
- **Lawrence, Massachusetts:** The Reviviendo Gateway Initiative

These three cities share some similarities, as each emerged as a dominant manufacturing center during the nineteenth century and each was once one of the nation’s 100 largest urban places. Today,

after having lost a substantial proportion of their residents, they are similar in size, with residential populations ranging from 70,000 to 85,000. The white population of these cities continues to shrink, while minority populations continue to grow. Each city also lost most of its manufacturing jobs throughout the twentieth century and with median household incomes well under \$30,000 according to the 2000 Census, they are among the poorest cities in the nation (Hoyt 2006).

Professor Hoyt’s initial research, which was conducted in tandem with the speaker series in 2004–2005, examined a subset of ten forgotten cities to find evidence of new initiatives. These cities included: Allentown, Pennsylvania; Camden, New Jersey; Flint, Michigan; Gary, Indiana; Hartford, Connecticut; Lawrence, Massachusetts; Pawtucket, Rhode Island; Reading, Pennsylvania; Troy, New York; and Youngstown, Ohio. The aforementioned cases were selected for several reasons. First, they represent different regions of the country: the Midwest (Youngstown, Ohio), the Mid-Atlantic (Reading, Pennsylvania), and the Northeast (Lawrence, Massachusetts). Second, it was readily apparent that there were new and significant initiatives, embedded in notions of cooperation and collective action, working to reinvent those cities. Last, the key agents for each coalition were markedly different: in Youngstown, the city and an institution of higher learning united to play a key role; in Reading, the coalition is shaped by a regional network of business and civic leaders; and in Lawrence, a range of community-based nonprofits guide the efforts.

Inspired by the Forgotten Cities lecture series, Professor Hoyt made numerous visits to each city throughout 2005 and 2006. The case studies presented below—which are the material result of more than four dozen on-site personal interviews with coalition leaders in Reading, Youngstown, and Lawrence—reveal some important and transferable lessons for forgotten cities.

### **Youngstown, Ohio: Youngstown 2010**

David Sweet, former dean of the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University, was selected to serve as the president of Youngstown State University in 2000. At this time, the relationship between the university—whose campus is immediately adjacent to downtown Youngstown—and the city was weak and the collective mindset of Youngstown was at its worst. In 1999, the Harwood Group—after synthesizing data collected from thirty-five personal interviews with community leaders and seven neighborhood focus groups—published an unfavorable study. The report concluded that “Years of growing frustration and mistrust have caused people to retreat from public life; and they are now waiting for someone or something else to come along and save the city.” To make matters worse, Youngstown’s comprehensive plan, completed in 1951 and updated in 1974, had been designed to accommodate a rapidly growing city and was obsolete.

However, before Sweet arrived, a new and energetic team of professionals in the Youngstown Planning Department and Youngstown’s city council (who had visited Chattanooga, Tennessee, to learn more about its recent comeback) both expressed an interest in developing a plan for the city. They, as did Sweet, understood that the fate of the

city and the university were intertwined and decided it was time to join forces and work cooperatively (Finnerty 2003).

The visioning process, led in part by a Canadian consulting firm called Urban Strategies, began in 2002 and included six workshops with more than 150 stakeholders, which were held over a period of three days. The vision that emerged debuted in the Stambaugh Auditorium on a cold night only nine days before Christmas. Nevertheless, approximately 1,400 people from Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley were in attendance. By February 2003, the city council officially adopted the Youngstown 2010 vision by resolution.

Unlike both Lawrence and Reading, which continue to grow from immigration, Youngstown has experienced steady and dramatic population loss over a span of several decades. As a result, of the four goals set forth in the Youngstown 2010 vision, the first is to accept that “Youngstown is a smaller city.” The other three goals are to define the city’s role in the regional economy, improve the city’s image and quality of life, and motivate people to participate in the effort.

The development of the Youngstown 2010 plan (to implement the vision) was also achieved through a collaborative process. Eleven neighborhood meetings were held at which residents and community leaders were asked to identify assets and liabilities in their community. This town and gown led coalition has provided new leadership, improved local governance, and created a sea-change in the city’s collective mindset. The process of formulating Youngstown 2010 restored a sense of engagement among a diverse set of stakeholders and ultimately changed people’s expectations of what success means for the City of Youngstown.

## **Reading, Pennsylvania: Initiative for a Competitive Greater Reading (ICGR)**

In contrast to Youngstown, it is the younger and older business and civic leaders who have established a revitalization coalition in Reading, Pennsylvania, and throughout the surrounding region. Though retired since 2001, Albert Boscov, the founder of the largest family-owned department chain in the country (Boscov's Department Store) has been instrumental in changing the community mindset as well as the physical landscape of Reading. Boscov—who was born and raised in Reading—is determined to transform the city center into a regional destination and has already completed several downtown projects, including the Sovereign Bank Center (a small arena for shows with 2,500 to 4,500 patrons), Our City Reading (a nonprofit that restores abandoned homes for first-time home buyers), and GoggleWorks Center for the Arts (a 140,000 square foot integrated arts center). His unwavering dedication to improving the downtown and his ability to move development projects through the pipeline were the catalyst for what is now known as the Initiative for a Competitive Greater Reading.

ICGR emerged in 2003 when Mayor Thomas McMahon, a champion of business, and two new county commissioners were elected to office and asked the private sector to join forces with them on a major economic development initiative. Like many forgotten cities, Reading had a number of well-intentioned business leaders and elected officials, but it had no plan and institutional leaders were not accustomed to working together toward a common goal. This small group, aware of the successful turnaround that Philadelphia had experienced

in the previous decade, carefully selected and studied the recent transformation of downtowns in other small post-industrial cities. The Berks County Community Foundation initiated trips to Greenville, South Carolina, and Boscov generously transported leaders via his personal plane.

The shared experience of the trip generated enthusiasm, but the plan for ICGR became a reality when John Dever, a local business owner who had received an award from Harvard's Initiative for a Competitive Inner City in 2000, persuaded the business community to hire ICIC to guide the formulation of a business-led regional economic development plan. The plan and its recommendations were presented at a community celebration attended by over five hundred enthusiasts.

A key provision of the plan involves reviving the city's core by legally and physically linking Penn Street and Penn Avenue from Reading to West Reading to Wyomissing, creating a regional entertainment corridor replete with Mexican eateries, yoga studios, and outlet shopping. The belief driving this strategy is that the inner city is an asset, which can be developed through the establishment of a Latino Chamber of Commerce, a business incubator, and youth entrepreneurship and loan programs. This top-down effort, which is driven by a group of volunteers, has launched multiple development strategies including the creation of a nutrition and wellness corridor. With help from such rooted regional institutions as Penn State Berks-Lehigh Valley College, they are working to establish a "food innovation zone" or a hub of research and development facilities for food processing.

## Lawrence, Massachusetts: The Reviviendo Gateway Initiative

Born and raised in Lawrence, Bill Traynor assumed the reigns of a nearly defunct community development corporation in 1999, which soon became Lawrence CommunityWorks. Having worked as the founding executive director of Coalition for a Better Acre in nearby Lowell in the 1980s and as a nationally acknowledged community development consultant in the 1990s, Traynor set his sights on making a difference in his home town. Through Lawrence CommunityWorks, he charted a course that would ultimately be defined and guided by the traditionally marginalized constituents of Lawrence—Latina women and youth. Project Reviviendo (Spanish for “coming back to life”) was a neighborhood-based organizing, development, and family asset-building strategy for the historic but blighted North Common area of the city. The Reviviendo Planning Group included residents, small businesses, churches, and a range of rooted nonprofit organizations.

In 2000, Lawrence CommunityWorks was approached by proponents of the Gateway Project—a massive brownfields remediation project coupled with road and parking improvements—looking for community support. The Gateway Project was a joint effort of Gencorp (the private landowner of the contaminated site), the City of Lawrence, and various state agencies. Lawrence CommunityWorks and other community leaders embraced this as an opportunity to broaden the scope of the Gateway Project and create a new and collective vision that would more deeply benefit the residents of the city. As a result, the Reviviendo Gateway Initiative was born, coordinated by Lawrence CommunityWorks

and Groundwork Lawrence, a nonprofit dedicated to open space improvements. The RGI, supported by state grant funding and with the encouragement of the city, produced in 2002 a 15-year vision for creating a vibrant urban village in the heart of Lawrence. The kickoff event that unveiled the plan in November 2002 was a community celebration with 300 participants, mostly neighborhood residents, that also attracted the mayor, congressman, and Massachusetts attorney general.

The tremendous spirit evident at that celebration was channeled into a unique visit by sixty residents, business people, and public officials to Washington, D.C., where groups met with representatives of nine different federal agencies and the entire Massachusetts congressional delegation.

In Lawrence, RGI is backed by two nonprofits that bring different strengths to bear. Lawrence CommunityWorks has over 2,000 members in and around the city, which gives it a strong legitimacy and constituency among residents. Groundwork Lawrence offers considerable design and planning expertise. RGI seems to have successfully sparked a renewed appetite for development in Lawrence. Where just four years ago, most mill owners continued to insist that the future of the city would remain warehousing, nearly \$150 million dollars worth of residential projects have been either completed or are in the planning stage in the city. New parks have been built or are planned. Overall, expectations for Lawrence are far above where they were, and, despite the ongoing challenges, there has been a modest increase in civic and governmental capacity.



## Lessons Learned

New leadership helped catalyze each of these efforts. Whether a community development corporation or a state university, nonprofit institutions can play a key role in convening and facilitating coalitions, which is particularly valuable in forgotten cities where corporate leadership is often scarce. And these rooted institutions are less likely to exit or suffer from political turnover. Regardless of which sector first took the lead, all three of these initiatives underscore the importance of making connections to other sectors and stakeholders in order to be successful. The community-driven RGI found key allies in the mill owners. The business-driven ICGR had to appeal to local residents. Youngstown 2010 had to gain legitimacy in the African-American community. It is imperative that a wide range of stakeholders have a sense of ownership of the collective vision.

The city administration, in particular, plays a critical role in the evolution of these coalitions. The public sector may feel threatened and try to stop or co-opt the effort, may ignore it, or may welcome it—or yet more likely, the administration will be internally conflicted and a combination of these will reactions will be exhibited by different staff people. In these three cases, the city is a partner (Reading), ambivalent supporter (Lawrence), or truly owns it (Youngstown, where the city council adopted the plan and Jay Williams became mayor in 2005). It is important for there to be some strong support from the public sector for an innovative revitalization coalition to ensure that the plans are actively implemented and updated. At the same time, the coalition needs a measure of independence to breathe and live.

We have found that there is no silver bullet or “one-size-fits-all” solution for revitalizing forgotten cities. While helpful, corporate leadership is not necessary; strong leadership in any sector has the potential to drive change. The key is to identify and engage local leaders, wherever they may exist, who possess a genuine interest in working cooperatively across economic, social, racial, and class divisions to assemble resources, build governing capacity, and articulate an inclusive and positive vision of the future.

An innovative revitalization coalition—consisting of stakeholders who are willing to accept the city’s new reality while fully recognizing the potential of their many assets including proximity to larger cities, walkable downtowns and neighborhoods, historic mills and churches, affordable housing opportunities and cultural amenities—becomes the living plan and the focus sits squarely on the tasks, not the personalities or the process. The question before the group should always remain: What can we do *now*?

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## *Final Voices*

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**Jay Williams of Youngstown, Ohio:** The last lesson is to try to create a self-sustaining structure that will survive attempts to subvert it. I stated publicly at the beginning of the Youngstown 2010 process that we had to create a process that is bigger than any individual, politician, or special interest group. The process has to transcend politicians and ideologies that come and go. It has to be about the community.

**Angela Glover Blackwell of PolicyLink:** You can’t use an adversarial process to do every single thing. At some point, you need to stand on a platform and start spiraling upwards, and policy can do that. And we believe that if we’re going to have a new generation of policy, we need a new



generation of policy leaders, and we need to have leaders who are more grounded in community, committed to social justice, able and comfortable talking to people whose lives are going to be impacted. We need a new generation of policy leaders who are committed to trying to build regional equity and the kind of society that we've been talking about.

When we look at leaders for policy change, we need to look at the barriers preventing leaders of color, leaders who are committed to social justice, from getting into the policy work. So often, people of color do get invited to policy tables, but even when that person is as well-meaning as can be, they are not effective because they don't have the infrastructure of [an] organization to review a policy and critique it, or [to] write their own position paper, to be able to have that press conference, to be able to get the community acknowledged and knowledgeable about what's going on. So we also talk about the kind of organizational infrastructure that we need to build.

**Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution:** We want a sustainable America. We want to protect the natural resources and treasures that we value, but we also want to be fiscally responsible. What we now know is that the kind of development patterns we have are not just degrading the environment and not just eating up a lot of land, but they're fiscally wasteful, they're affecting us in our pocketbook. We want an inclusive society; we want to help bring people into the middle class. Finally, we want the built environment, whether it's neighborhood design or public or private space, to enhance our quality of life. We want to be inspirational. We don't need to live in these sterile communities that we've developed across the country. It is a middle-class agenda, it is a big picture agenda, and we have failed to make that our discourse.

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## Concluding Comments

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In forgotten cities today, a key power is "the capacity to mobilize a long-term coalition that is capable of achieving change on the ground" (Mossberger and Stoker 2001). Innovative revitalization coalitions can be a tool for provoking a positive sea-change in the adverse civic environment of many forgotten cities. Successful efforts should be hosted by the sector with the greatest institutional capacity and dynamic leadership in the city and should start at the scale at which the project initiators can convene the most major stakeholders. This could be a neighborhood, a district, or citywide.

Whether guided by residents, business leaders, government, or nonprofit organizations, we believe that the dramatic, and very real, value of these innovative revitalization coalitions is the way they change the game, shift expectations, and improve communication. They provide people with a different story to tell about themselves and a more productive way of interacting with one another.

Last, but certainly not least, we have assembled some rules of thumb that, based on our knowledge and experience, are useful in instigating innovative revitalization coalitions in forgotten cities. It is our hope that this will serve as a useful guide.

## Generating Innovative Revitalization Coalitions in Forgotten Cities

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- Start small.
- Bring people together to talk about something they care about, not just something you think they should care about.
- Do one thing well. It should be concrete. It should be visible.
- Then take the next step. Be consistent, persistent, and relentlessly hopeful.
- Build trust.
- Raise expectations.
- Convene a group of committed and talented people who can support each other.
- Respect yourself and your community. Don't act desperately or discount your future.
- Save the treasures of the past.
- Be intentional—do your work strategically and well.
- Generate enthusiasm around a long-term vision for the community.
- Outlast everyone.
- Enable a range of rooted stakeholders to brainstorm and invest in the vision.
- No zero sum games. Play a different game. Make the pie larger.
- Remember the basics: clean and safe streets, access to jobs, education, housing, and recreation.
- Attend to the internal market; it does exist.
- Focus on the needs of working-class families—if they thrive, so will your city.
- Everyone can participate. Be positive. Don't rehash old history.
- Make it possible for people to participate—provide food and child care, and meet during off hours.
- Focus on the present and future: What can we do now?
- Recognize the importance of active organizing, creating partnerships, and coalitions.
- Create a demand environment where hundreds of people expect things to work right.
- If people aren't excited about an initiative or project, it's not working. Stop doing it.
- Creative failure is vital; that's why you start small.
- Don't get too invested in organizational structures; build a form that follows function.
- Keep it fun. If it's not, then there will only be a few true believers.

# IX. Appendix

## Forgotten Cities by State

State	Forgotten City
<b>Alabama</b>	Selma
<b>Connecticut</b>	Bridgeport
	Hartford
	New Britain
	New Haven
	New London
	Waterbury
<b>Florida</b>	Pensacola
<b>Georgia</b>	Macon
	Savannah
<b>Illinois</b>	Alton
	Champaign
	Danville
	Decatur
	East St. Louis
	Galesburg
	Jacksonville
	Kankakee
	Mattoon
	Quincy
	Rock Island
<b>Indiana</b>	Crawfordsville
	Evansville
	Logansport
	Muncie
	Richmond
	South Bend
	Terre Haute
	Vincennes
<b>Iowa</b>	Burlington
	Clinton
	Ottumwa
	Waterloo
<b>Kansas</b>	Lawrence
<b>Kentucky</b>	Bowling Green
	Covington
	Henderson
	Newport
	Owensboro
	Paducah
<b>Maine</b>	Augusta
	Bangor
	Lewiston

<b>Maryland</b>	Cumberland
	Hagerstown
<b>Massachusetts</b>	Chelsea
	Fall River
	Holyoke
	Lawrence
	New Bedford
<b>Michigan</b>	Bay City
	Flint
	Jackson
	Kalamazoo
	Muskegon
	Port Huron
	Saginaw
<b>Minnesota</b>	Mankato
	Winona
<b>Mississippi</b>	Natchez
	Vicksburg
<b>Missouri</b>	Hannibal
	Joplin
	Sedalia
	St. Joseph
<b>New Jersey</b>	Atlantic City
	Bridgeton
	Camden
	Passaic
	Paterson
	Trenton
	Union City
<b>New York</b>	Albany
	Amsterdam
	Auburn
	Binghamton
	Cohoes
	Elmira
	Gloversville
	Ithaca
	Jamestown
	Kingston
	Newburgh
	Oswego
	Plattsburgh
	Poughkeepsie
	Rome
	Schenectady
	Syracuse

	Troy
	Utica
	Watertown
<b>North Carolina</b>	New Bern
	Wilmington
<b>Ohio</b>	Canton
	Chillicothe
	Fremont
	Lancaster
	Lima
	Mansfield
	Massillon
	Newark
	Portsmouth
	Sandusky
	Springfield
	Steubenville
	Tiffin
	Youngstown
	Zanesville
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	Allentown
	Altoona
	Carlisle
	Chambersburg
	Chester
	Easton
	Erie
	Harrisburg
	Hazleton
	Johnstown
	Lancaster
	Lebanon
	McKeesport
	New Castle
	Pottsville
	Reading
	Scranton
	Sharon
	Wilkes-Barre
	Williamsport
	York
<b>Rhode Island</b>	Pawtucket
	Woonsocket
<b>South Carolina</b>	Columbia
	Greenville
<b>Tennessee</b>	Jackson

<b>Texas</b>	Galveston
	Marshall
	Sherman
	Waco
<b>Utah</b>	Ogden
<b>Vermont</b>	Burlington
	Rutland
<b>Virginia</b>	Danville
	Fredericksburg
	Lynchburg
	Petersburg
	Portsmouth
	Staunton
<b>West Virginia</b>	Parkersburg
	Wheeling
<b>Wisconsin</b>	La Crosse

## Number of Forgotten Cities by State

State	Count
Alabama	1
Connecticut	6
Florida	1
Georgia	2
Illinois	11
Indiana	8
Iowa	4
Kansas	1
Kentucky	6
Maine	3
Maryland	2
Massachusetts	5
Michigan	7
Minnesota	1
Mississippi	2
Missouri	4
New Jersey	7
New York	20
North Carolina	2
Ohio	15
Pennsylvania	21
Rhode Island	2
South Carolina	2
Tennessee	1
Texas	4
Utah	1
Vermont	2
Virginia	6
West Virginia	2
Wisconsin	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>

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