Agenda

1. Evaluation approach and methods
2. Progress toward shared result
3. Contribution to civic infrastructure
4. Reflections and lessons
Evaluation approach and methods
Evaluation approach: theory of change

**WCC GOAL**: Achieve lasting gains in economic outcomes and quality of life for LMI residents in small cities by creating a civic infrastructure with the individual and organizational capacity, collaboration, and resources to make and sustain meaningful change.

**Site-level implementation of WCC Core Elements**

- **System Change**: Use learning to identify system levers and strategies including changes in policies, practices, realignment of funding, organizational capacity as well as changes in system dynamics such as changes in relationships and perspectives.
- **Collaborative Leadership**: Develop cross-sector, racially, ethnically, and economically distributed leadership, with all entities collectively contributing to result and backbone functions to support collaboration.
- **Community Engagement**: Involve racially, ethnically, economically diverse residents to understand underlying problem, develop strategies, participate in governance; support resident empowerment and/or increases in social cohesion.
- **Evidence-Based Learning**: Use "data" (broadly defined) to identify root causes, develop strategies, assess progress, inform learning, catalyze adaptation and innovation.

**Site-level outputs and outcomes for WCC cities**

- **Short-term outputs/outcomes (1-2 years)**
  - Team Capacity
    - System Change: Indicators WCC leaders gain experience, build proficiency
    - Collaborative Leadership: Indicators WCC leaders gain experience, build proficiency
    - Community Engagement: Indicators WCC leaders gain experience, build proficiency
- **Intermediate outcomes**
  - 3-4 years
    - Team Progress, Diffusion of Practices
      - WCC team has identified and demonstrated meaningful progress toward system-level changes (policies, practices, resource flows) in service of shared result
      - Team demonstrates programmatic progress in service of shared result
      - Team articulates how progress to date relates to pathway for achieving 10-year result
- **Long-term outcomes**
  - 10 years
    - Civic Infrastructure
      - Economic/Social Indicators: suggest improvements in resident well-being particularly for LMI residents
      - Leaders who are capable, collaborative, adaptive, and representative of their communities
      - Organizations (nonprofits, business, and/or government) are stable, effective, and citizen-mindful
      - Networks are united around a shared vision for the city’s future and inclusive of the broader community
      - Residents are empowered to participate in civic life and have mechanisms through which to do so

**WCC Initiative Strategies**

- Capacity Building
- Network Development
- LifeScape
- Resources
Evaluation approach: key interim progress measures

The evaluation assessed city progress on the following measures of interim progress

Shared result

• Measurable progress
• System change
• Momentum and clear pathway to 10-year goal

Civic infrastructure

• Collaborative leadership sustained and expanded
• Use of core elements valued, deepened
• Greater resident engagement
• External recognition
Evaluation methods

- Survey of city stakeholders
- City stakeholder interviews
- Observation at governance meetings, learning communities
- Review of documents
- Interviews with select non-winning cities
- Interviews with state and national leaders from the public, business, nonprofit, and philanthropic realms
Progress toward shared result
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Shared Result (2017)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chelsea</td>
<td>Chelsea Thrives</td>
<td>The Neighborhood Developers (CDC)</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Decrease crime and increase the community’s perception of safety by 30%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitchburg</td>
<td>ReImagine North of Main</td>
<td>Montachussetts Opportunity Council (CAA)</td>
<td>Neighborhood improvement</td>
<td>Make the North of Main a neighborhood of choice whether for business, resident, or employee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holyoke</td>
<td>SPARK</td>
<td>Greater Holyoke Chamber Foundation</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Create 300 new businesses and increase Latino business ownership from 9% to 20%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>Lawrence Working Families Initiative</td>
<td>Lawrence CommunityWorks (CDC)</td>
<td>Workforce development</td>
<td>Increase in household income for families of students in the Lawrence Public Schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Overview of Round 1 City Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Key Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chelsea Thrives</td>
<td>Became a “table of tables” aligned around public safety. Efforts encompassed: prevention and intervention of substance use disorder and trauma; engaging residents to increase safety; youth programming; and improved physical environment (addressing problem properties). Key WCC-supported activities: Chelsea Hub, Youth Opportunity Task Force, Community Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitchburg Reimagine</td>
<td>Started with a fairly comprehensive set of neighborhood improvement strategies and eventually narrowed to Main Street redevelopment, improving neighborhood housing market, and community engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holyoke Spark</td>
<td>Implemented programmatic activities to promote entrepreneurship, train existing and aspiring business owners, and prepare entrepreneurs to start a new business. Primary focus was 9-week class for aspiring entrepreneurs. Eventually broadened focus to address overall ecosystem and culture to support Latino and citywide entrepreneurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Working Families Initiative</td>
<td>Implemented a system of parent engagement, coaching, job search support, referral to services and training, and to provide ESOL classes working in close partnership with the public schools. Later, collaborated with the Lawrence Partnership on a set of employer-focused strategies involving local hiring and piloting of employer-driven workforce development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Progress on shared result: measurable progress

All cities achieved measurable progress on their shared result.

**Chelsea**
- Citywide violent crime index down from 10.8 in 2014 to 9.4 in 2016, target area down from 15.5 to 12.3
- Chelsea Hub reviewed 205 cases of high-risk individuals and connected 133 to services

**Fitchburg**
- Improved conditions on Main Street
- Project pipeline
- Improved resident perceptions of neighborhood

**Holyoke**
- More than 10 percent toward meeting long-term goal
- 33 new businesses, half women-owned, half Latino-owned, 82 jobs

**Lawrence**
- 201 LPS parents gained employment
- Parents gain skills, competencies, and certifications to be more competitive in the workplace
Progress on shared result: system change

WCC teams contributed to notable system change in service of their shared result.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chelsea</th>
<th>Fitchburg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Hub transformed collaboration between police department, city, social service sector  
• New relationships led to Justice grant  
• Expanded boundaries of system focused on improved safety (healthcare, downtown revitalization)  
• Brought new attention and resources for youth activities  
• Policy changes around improving housing | • Strong alignment of multiple stakeholders focused on revitalizing downtown  
• Progress in branding neighborhood as “North of Main”  
• Some policy and practice changes related to downtown and neighborhood redevelopment  
• New financing tools and incentives for businesses locating downtown |
WCC teams contributed to notable system changes in service of their shared result.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Holyoke</th>
<th>Lawrence</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>• Partners added resources, expanded offerings</td>
<td>• Providers have a sharper focus on the parent population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partners developed aligned programming</td>
<td>• Stronger referral networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partners are collaborating to address system barriers such as limited workspace</td>
<td>• Gains in workforce development capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased interest in and attention to entrepreneurship throughout city</td>
<td>• Change in city mindset connecting economic development to jobs for low-income residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Partners reallocated resources to sustain activities in service of shared result</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Progress on shared result: perceived impact

While only three years into a 10-year goal, the stakeholders in the four communities see an impact from the efforts for the intended beneficiaries of the work: low-income people.

76% of WCC city stakeholders believe low-income people are better off because of WCC
Contribution to civic infrastructure
Expanded and sustained collaborative leadership

Most significant outcome of the initiative

• 92 percent agreed/72 percent strongly agreed, that WCC facilitated new or deeper relationships among organizations

Signs of improved collaborative leadership

• Greater cross-sector collaboration including educational institutions and businesses
• Stronger referral networks
• Less competition
• Greater alignment of municipal support
• Alignment of multiple networks

Stakeholders increasingly value and pursue collaborative approaches
### Progress on civic infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sub-Indicators</th>
<th>Progress</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Expanded and sustained collaborative leadership</td>
<td>Distributed leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mostly Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readiness for sustainability</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong /Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing leadership connections strengthened and new leaders are cultivated.</td>
<td>New or deeper relationships among organizations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New partners welcomed to team</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher priority on working with leaders who represent cities’ racial and ethnic diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong /Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noted rising, new, talented civic leaders who reflect the diversity of their communities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong /Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration with other networks, other key organizations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mostly Strong</td>
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### Progress on civic infrastructure

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<tr>
<td>Value and diffusion of core elements</td>
<td>WCC teams see substantial contribution of core elements in progress toward shared result.</td>
<td>Collaborative leadership</td>
<td>Mostly Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community engagement</td>
<td>Moderate/Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Use of data</td>
<td>Moderate/Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>System change</td>
<td>Strong /Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leaders bring core elements back to home organizations and diffuse into practices and policies.</td>
<td>Partner organizations have changed systems to support stronger collaborations with other leaders or leading organizations in the cities.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Partner organizations have changed systems to better engage residents.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Partner organizations have changed systems to better use data.</td>
<td>Strong /Moderate</td>
</tr>
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Diffusion of core elements

Since 2014, have there been changes in how important you personally believe the following practices are to your work making positive change in your community? (n=99)

- Pursuing strategies to change policies, practices, funding flows
  - Somewhat more important: 37%
  - Significantly more important: 51%

- Building new relationships or involving different types of organizations in...
  - Somewhat more important: 28%
  - Significantly more important: 57%

- Using "data" to develop strategies, assess progress, inform learning...
  - Somewhat more important: 42%
  - Significantly more important: 41%

- Pursuing strategies to support resident empowerment/leadership
  - Somewhat more important: 45%
  - Significantly more important: 36%

- Seeking the perspective of diverse body of residents
  - Somewhat more important: 34%
  - Significantly more important: 43%

- Seeking out diverse leaders
  - Somewhat more important: 37%
  - Significantly more important: 43%

- Sharing decision-making and responsibility
  - Somewhat more important: 38%
  - Significantly more important: 43%

- Changed policies, practices, or resource allocations to develop stronger collaboration
  - Somewhat more important: 38%
  - Significantly more important: 43%

- Changed policies, practices, or resource allocations to better engage residents
  - Somewhat more important: 43%
  - Significantly more important: 36%

- Changed policies, practices, or resource allocations to better use data
  - Somewhat more important: 57%
  - Significantly more important: 51%
## Progress on civic infrastructure

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<td>Engaged residents</td>
<td>WCC partners regularly sought out resident voices and insights when developing strategies.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong /Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WCC teams’ strategies directly respond to resident insights.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WCC teams demonstrate accountability to residents by directly communicating progress toward shared result.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate/Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External recognition</td>
<td>WCC leaders develop or improve relationships with entities outside the cities, including attracting new outside resources aligned with shared result.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
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## Progress on civic infrastructure

Is your city better off because of the WCC initiative?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chelsea</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitchburg</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holyoke</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If my city faced an unexpected economic, physical, or social shock, the civic leadership in my city could respond quickly and capably to the challenge.

- Strongly Agree: 37% (2014), 48% (2017)
Reflections and lessons
Lessons: shared result

- Choice of a shared result impacts the progress
- Flexibility to pivot based on learning and feedback is critical
- Team’s ability to attract and leverage external resources is important
- Pre-existing civic capacity accelerates progress
Lessons: collaborative leadership

• Consistent, clear WCC messaging and support on collaborative leadership reaped benefits

• Partners need specific role and task

• A strong initiative director is critical

• City support is an accelerant, but best when balanced with strength from other sectors

• Business engagement appears most likely to occur through intermediaries

• Greater collaboration among existing leaders vs. cultivating new leaders – are both a WCC priority?
Lessons: system change & community engagement

System Change

• System changes are more likely to be informal practice change emerging from partner collaboration

Community Engagement

• Backbones with deep community engagement experience accelerate team use of element

• Defining “community” – different based on city goals

• Need greater clarity on role and purpose of community engagement
Lessons: evidence-based learning

• Data use during early strategy formation most common
• Systems for sharing data can be valuable, but challenging to implement
• More sharply defined point of view and set of supports are needed
• Teams likely need dedicated, experienced capacity
Initiative reflections

• Boston Fed as the convener brings new players to the table and credibility to the cities

• WCC’s learning orientation and its embrace of adaptation is a powerful model

• WCC asks the cities to embrace system change approaches, but there is no articulated statewide strategy pursued by MA WCC. Can there be a system change agenda for cross-cutting working city issues? Is there a potential role for the MA Steering Committee?

• Tension of balancing city progress on a specific shared result and improvements to civic infrastructure. What is the priority?