Scaling Up to Increase Community-Based Organization Voice

Presented by

Teresa Neumann[1]
Philip Nyden
Sean Young
Jason Burkett

Center for Urban Research and Learning, Loyola University Chicago

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[1] Address correspondence to: Philip Nyden, Director and Professor of Sociology, Center for Urban Research and Learning, Cuneo Hall, Loyola University Chicago, 1032 W. Sheridan Rd., Chicago, Illinois 60660. E-mail: pnyden@luc.edu. Neumann, Nyden, and Young have equally contributed in completing the research and writing. Jason Burkett made significant contributions to the research in the course of a graduate practicum completed over the past year. CURL Undergraduate Fellows also worked on data collection and analysis for this paper. The fellows include: Melinda Bunnage, Hesam Camilo, Eddie Chong, Ja'Elle Croom, Leah Durst-Lee, Kyle Lilly, Zach McNealy, Maura Rocks, and Amber Vignieri. This May 2015 version also reflects revisions following additional discussion with our project's University-Community Advisory Committee.

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Teresa Neumann, Philip Nyden, Sean Young and Jason Burkett
Center for Urban Research and Learning
Loyola University Chicago

ABSTRACT

In the initial phase of a case study of the merger of two already-effective decades-old community-based organizing groups in Chicago, we examine the extent to which the "scaling up" new organization is increasing its power at neighborhood-wide, citywide, regional, statewide, and nationwide levels. The combined geographic based of the new organization covers ten community areas containing 600,000 residents. At the same time the organization has redoubled efforts to maintain strong grassroots member involvement in internal organizational deliberation and setting organizational priorities. The previous organizations had a history of working on a broad range of issues of importance to equity and the quality of life in local communities. These have included work on public education, affordable housing, mental health justice, violence reduction, mass incarceration, homeless and LGBT youth issues, youth engagement, as well as a stronger voice for the entire community in political decision making. Using more than 30 interviews with old and new organization staff and members along with observation of the new organization's councils, issue teams, and community actions over the past year, we determine the dimensions of power that leaders and members identify as being affected by the scaling up. As the larger project progresses, these dimensions will be used in measuring the impact of the merger on its power and influence. Both organizations had been known for both their confrontational tactics and effective coalition building. We use a community-based participatory research approach in examining the organization which seeks to promote equity in racially, ethnically, and economically diverse communities on Chicago's northside.

Scaling Up to Increase Community-Based Organization Voice

As more decision-making related to policy, resource allocation, and legislation is being made in political arenas beyond the strictly neighborhood level, grassroots, neighborhood-based organizations feel increased pressure to expand their organizational reach and impact.   Groups attempting to increase their reach and impact can follow different strategies such as increasing the number of neighborhoods and political districts in which the group is organizing individuals or local institutions.   It can also be done through increased participation in citywide, regional, or statewide coalitions. Formal affiliation with a national umbrella organization of grassroots, neighborhood based organizations such as the Industrial Areas Foundation, PICO, National People's Action, and Gamaliel is another way local organizations can expand their political reach beyond the neighborhood.[2]

A number of researchers have argued that *scaling up* is necessary to create the organizational and political footing needed to challenge forces perpetuating inequality. This is particularly the case with neighborhood-based organizations in low-income or economically diverse communities that are seeking to challenge inequity and marginalization of members of their communities.   In her case study of the development of Metropolitan Organizing Strategy Enabling Strength (MOSES), an organization bringing together Detroit religious congregations and groups to address regional transportation and land use issues, Lara Rusch defines scaling up as "a process of coordination or unification among locally rooted organizations for increased capacity, reach, and impact at higher levels of policy making." (Rusch 2012, 51) Scaling up is also seen as an antidote to parochialism sometimes inherent in neighborhood-based organizing (Gillette 2005; Santow 2007).   Researchers coming at this issue from a community-organizing perspective have pointed to the political value of scaling up (DeFilippis et al. 2010; Pastor et al. 2006; Scully 2008; Wood 2007) as have those scholars focusing on the efficiencies and democracy-enhancing character of regional equity and regional government (Dreier et al 2004; Orfield 1997; Rusk 1993).

However, within the scaling up process to promote equity comes an ongoing tension between growing bigger and increasing influence at higher levels of decision making on the one hand, and maintaining ongoing, day-to-day connections between grassroots constituencies and leaders.   Among

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[2] http://www.industrialareasfoundation.org/; http://www.piconetwork.org/; http://npa-us.org/; http://www.gamaliel.org/

scholars and activists there is a long-established tension between scaling up to match other forces and increased dangers of being "bought off" by those very forces, or at least accepting more of the perspectives of the powerful and losing touch with the perspectives of the grassroots.   This is a prominent theme in labor union democracy and union organizing literature where some have argued that national union leaders are often pulled into the orbit of management as they get used to interacting with powerful and affluent corporate leaders who they increasingly see as their reference group rather than their own rank-and-file.   In this view the tendency to develop oligarchic leadership in the face of powerful national corporate forces -- a playing out of an "Iron Law of Oligarchy" -- is viewed as natural. (Lipset et al. 1956)   However critics of this cynical analysis point to the importance of organizational structures that maintain strong links between leaders and the rank-and-file even in the face of powerful national forces. (Friedman 1982; Nyden 1975; Nyden 1984)

   It is this same tension that scholars of community organizing refer to as the dilemma of scale. When organizing efforts move to higher levels, it can strain connections to the grassroots. Sociologist Robert Kleidman (2004) notes that

> As organizing moves from local to regional and perhaps beyond, the dilemma of scale manifests itself sharply in terms of organization and identity. Organizational problems include how to retain participatory democracy while creating larger groups that encompass more people and a wider geographic area, and how to administer larger units. The identity problem is how to extend people's sense of community beyond the neighborhood or city to at least the region. (416)

As political scientist Swanstrom and policy activist Brian Banks explain in a report to a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation-supported policy network, some observers of the advocacy/policy making process point to the potential "damaging effects of regionalism on democratic political processes and the power of disadvantaged groups. … [And add that] moving decision making up to the regional scale will disempower minorities and poor neighborhoods and will worsen inequalities." (2007, 2) Yet, in their detailed examination of "community-based regionalism" in transportation and local hiring agreements in California, they argue that community organizations must contend with the fact that political decisions are being made at ever-higher levels by keeping grassroots needs in synch with regional campaigns regardless of the challenges of scaling up. As they put it: "The conventional wisdom that community organizing must start at the grassroots misses the fact that success at the grassroots depends on the laws and policies enacted at higher levels." (2007, 21).

   The dilemma of scale should not suggest that working for social change and equity is an either-or proposition – either work at the neighborhood or the bigger region.   It is not a matter of determining if organizing activity should happen through house-by-house organizing versus showing up at the state

capitol to lobby elected officials.   It is not a matter of doing "one-on-one" organizing to convince one person at a time versus confronting leaders of corporations whose hiring policies are discriminating against people of color.   It is a matter of working at *both* levels.

The issue is more the *complexity* of scale and understanding that neighborhoods are where everyday lives meet citywide, regional, statewide, national and global forces – directly and indirectly. In their book *Contesting Community: The Limits and Potential of Local Organizing*, James DeFilippis, Robert Fisher, and Eric Shragge elaborate on this local-community-as-crossroads perspective:

> Communities are important because they are the places of daily life in which people are housed, fed, care for each other, and raise children.   …. However, these activities are not carried out by an abstract community but through a complex interaction of state services, community-based nonprofit organizations, private sector companies, and voluntary and informal processes.   The forces that shape these activities often come from outside the community, either with state policies and related services or through the private market.   The interaction of the external forces and the basic needs that are provided locally is the central tension that makes community a place in which interests and power are shaped, and in which important social, economic, and political conflicts occur. (2010, 16)

Part of this complexity of scale is about seeing communities as an entry point to understand social, political, and economic forces and how they play out and not as the local, parochial object of organizing or study.   As DeFilippis and his co-authors put it, the political potential of community organizing is more about *working within* a place rather than *about* the place. (169) For example, understanding high levels of unemployment in one community can lead to an analysis of race, class, and corporate decision making on where to close old factories and where to open new factories.   Similarly, trying to stop developers in one community from shutting down affordable single-room occupancy residential buildings can lead to an understanding of citywide and statewide policies on affordable housing, banking practices, developer-elected official connections, and the intricacies of the real estate industry.

In cases where communities are racially, ethnically, and economically diverse, the demographic heterogeneity of place itself enhances connections between the local and forces beyond the local.   In addition to being microcosms of where the United States is headed in becoming a "majority-minority" nation before 2040, social network building and coalitions as well as intergroup tensions and confrontations play out in the daily lives of community members.   The likelihood that day-to-day community-level personal and institutional interactions already cross social class, occupational, racial, ethnic, nationality lines is high in such communities.   Therefore such diversity can mitigate against a parochial focus on place and rather uses the different perspectives within the community as natural portals on regional and national issues.

Studying an ongoing scaling up process taking place in such a complex, diverse community is of particular value in understanding the process itself and the extent to which the organization has become more effective at levels above the neighborhood.   In fact at the end of her article reporting on her archival study of the scaling up of MOSES in Detroit, political scientist Lara Rusch suggests that "For future research, real-time observations could better assess internal power dynamics across racial or socioeconomic groups and characterize the quality of such discussions driving organizational change." (2012, 66) Specifically she points to the need to further understand tradeoffs between different democratic practices – specifically which practices may privilege elites and which practices may facilitate populist engagement.

With this in mind in early 2014, we began a multi-year study of the merger of two successful established Chicago community-based organizations advocating for greater equity across their neighborhoods and beyond. The two organizations saw this merger as an organizational restructuring that would provide them with a broadened political base and an increased capacity to better represent neighborhood interests and match political and policy decision-making that have increasingly moved to citywide, statewide, and national levels. Reported here is an analysis of interviews and data collection in the first year of this study when we examined organizational members' understanding of how the merger affected *dimensions* of power and influence displayed by the organization in its various activities and grassroots political campaigns.   Once articulated, these dimensions will provide criteria along which pre- and post-organizational effectiveness will be measured. Secondly, we are looking at post-merger changes in internal organizational structures – specifically those structures aimed at more strongly linking neighborhood interests and members' input to organizational processes as the organization scales up.   As with the dimensions of power, these areas in which organizational structures and processes have been changed will be points of particular attention in the ongoing study -- particularly whether or not these structures and processes have strengthened grassroots-leaders ties.

The Two Organizations and the Case Study[3]

Established in 1973, Organization of the Northeast (ONE) was a community-based organization that grew from the efforts of Alinsky-style organizers in Uptown, Edgewater, and Rogers Park – community

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[3] Information for this section is drawn from various documents in the archives of ONE and LAC, now ONE Northside.   Two of the more extensive documents (with no authors indicated) were "Uptown Special Projects, Organization of the NorthEast (1975)" and "ONE History" (circa 1980).

areas of Chicago that have had about 180,000 residents over the past four decades.[4] In the early 1970's, Uptown and other nearby communities on the northside of Chicago saw a high degree of disinvestment and experienced the effects of deinstitutionalization, most notably the increase in half-way houses and individuals released from mental health institutions. ONE's early organizing efforts around promotion of affordable housing and countering economic disinvestment eventually grew to include a wide range of issues including education, crime, youth and family support, cultural diversity, and jobs and economic development.

Since the 1970s, these communities have been among the most stable and ethnically, racially, and economically diverse communities in the country. (Nyden et al. 1998) At the same time, inequities within this diverse population have been and are significant.   ONE's work focused on understanding and challenging these inequities, in order to create a unified and socially just community.   Its motto, "We Are Many, We Are ONE" was used for many years. Although it was an umbrella organization of organizations (religious congregations, schools, colleges, businesses, ethnic mutual aid societies, and other groups), ONE organizers used one-to-one relational building as a key organizing strategy to grow its base of organizations. As with other Alinsky-style organizations, ONE was explicit in using members' mutual "self-interest" to identify key issues and create social change.

A similar story was playing out during the 1980's in the Lakeview community of Chicago just south of Uptown—a community area of approximately 95,000 residents. In an effort to secure loans and mortgage insurance for low- and moderate-income residents, Lakeview Tenants Organization was formed to organize executive directors of local service organizations to respond to these challenges of displacement. In 1992, through the influence of key funders and partners well-versed in multi-issue community organizing, Lakeview Action Coalition (LAC) was created out of the work of the Tenants Organization to retain existing and create new affordable housing in the Lakeview neighborhood, then in the early stages of rapid gentrification. In addition, because East Lakeview had grown into a significant residential, business, cultural, and political center for the LGBT community, commonly referred to as

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[4] ONE started in the Uptown community area in 1973.   In 1980 Uptown was divided into two community areas Uptown and Edgewater.   In the 1990s ONE added Rogers Park in its areas of organizing activities. As implied by the 1980 division of Uptown, community identity and community boundaries can be the focus of contention. Similarly which community-based organization represents the interests of an area can be a point of contention when multiple organizations claim to represent neighborhood interests. This has been the case in these three communities over the years. At the heart of this issue is the question of whether an organization was representing one population segment of the community or attempting to represent diverse segments within the community.

Boystown, LAC also adopted a strong emphasis on ensuring the civil rights of the growing LGBT community growing in Lakeview – particularly LGBT youth.[5]

Both ONE and LAC shared a number of distinctive characteristics in their leadership structures and governance that sought to democratically involve and represent community members through an institutional member base made up of key non-profit, social service, and faith organizations. Both organizations had active membership councils, bi-monthly meetings of representatives of member institutions who voted on organizing priorities presented to them by senior leadership. The vast amount of ONE's and LAC's advocacy work on issues was done by a small army of unpaid, volunteer leaders. These were people who came from communities and populations at the center of the issues on which the organizations worked. For instance, both organizations had housing teams comprised of tenants of Single Room Occupancy hotels (SRO's), public housing residents, renters in affordable buildings, individuals experiencing homelessness, and others. Each organization invested heavily in identifying and cultivating those leaders through active training and leadership development activities.

ONE and LAC saw significant accomplishments from their respective efforts in community organizing within Chicago neighborhoods. ONE's early victories included establishing a local credit union, winning minority hire contracts for city construction projects, winning a moratorium on new halfway house creation, and forcing city officials to hold delinquent landlords accountable for illegal practices (including "arson for hire").[6] Similarly, in its early years LAC established new affordable housing by brokering deals between city officials, developers, and non-profit organizations dedicated to high quality, affordable housing.

Among the more notable of ONE's organizing campaigns was one with an impact that quickly moved from local organizing to national policy changes.   ONE worked to preserve ten affordable housing high-rises in Uptown built by private developers through HUD loans.   Threatened by the prospect of owners who were going to pay off mortgages early, flip to market rate housing, and evict over 11,000 low-income tenants in Uptown alone, ONE waged a successful campaign to preserve affordable housing in Chicago and elsewhere.   ONE worked with existing national organizations in addition to assisting in the organizing of a national network of "HUD Busters." (CURL and ONE).

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[5] The unofficial designation of East Lakeview as "Boystown" dates back to 1970 when residents marches in the first annual Gay Pride Parade. *Encyclopedia of Chicago* http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/160.html (Accessed March 24, 2015).

[6] One of the first community organizations to use data mapping, with the help of Northwestern University faculty and students, ONE constructed computer-based maps of arson fires and building characteristics in Uptown. They then developed formulas to predict buildings likely to fall victims of arson (presumably orchestrated by landlords looking for insurance money for the loss of their run-down buildings), and would issue warnings to landlords to beware that their building might fall prey to arsonists.

However, more and more, the difficulties of accomplishing results without a broader view – both a broader geographic view and a broader ideological analysis – were becoming more apparent to ONE and LAC activists. A former ONE organizer observes that in the 1970s, ONE and similar neighborhood-based organizations could effectively address issues such as mortgage redlining or the lack of small business loans by organizing a protest in the lobby of a local bank branch. They knew that the CEO was in the building. However now that banks are controlled by larger nationwide corporations, local pressure is ineffective. It takes regional demonstrations like that organized by PICO against the Bank of America in the Bay area to get attention today. (Former staff)[7]

By 2011 ONE and LAC each found themselves thinking more about the increasing shift of decision centers away from individual neighborhoods and even the city. Despite having a strong Executive Director and national connections, LAC felt limited by its parochial geographic organizing and was looking for ways to break through those barriers. Given the similarities between LAC and ONE philosophies, strategies, organizational structures, member organizations and issues, the topic of joining forces emerged. A central theme driving each organization's agendas was to continually "build power" by increasing size and geographical reach.

In addition to building power, the two organizations were particularly concerned with not losing the voice of local residents and the input from community-based organizational members in the process of scaling up. Prior to the merger ONE had already been in the process of putting strong internal democratic structures and processes in place. This increased democratization process blended into the merger process and many of these changes were formalized in the structure and practices of the new ONE Northside. These changes are described more in the analysis in later sections of this paper. Key staff and leaders initiated merger talks in 2012 and officially merged in July 2013.

Methods

The research is a collaborative university-community research project using community-based participatory research (CBPR) approaches. CURL is a non-traditional 20-year-old collaborative university-community research center that promotes equity through developing innovative solutions to

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[7] Interviews for this study were completed from April 2014 through February 2015. In cases where interviewees gave permission to use their names, they are provided in parentheses after quotations; in cases where organizational staff or member organization leaders requested names not be used, they are indicated as "leader" or "staff."

pressing social problems. CURL is distinguished from many research centers by its involvement of community partners in all aspects of its research – from conceptualization and design of the research projects to the collection of data, analysis of results, and completion of final reports.[8]

CURL's relationship with ONE Northside and its two antecedent organizations (ONE and LAC) extends back more than 20 years. In the mid-1990s as noted earlier, CURL collaborated with ONE during the tenant-led, high-profile campaign to preserve 11,000 units of affordable housing that influenced HUD's national policy (Center for Urban Research and Learning/ONE). The report generated by CURL continues to be used in training new ONE Northside organizers; it serves as an example of the power of combining organizing with collaborative research. A series of other reports focusing on sustaining stable, racially, ethnically, and economically diverse communities were completed in collaboration between CURL and ONE.

When LAC and ONE were completing the merger process in 2012, leaders from the two organizations and CURL discussed the possibility of evaluating the impact of the merger on the organization and its effectiveness in promoting equity in Chicago communities. Over a series of meetings a formal research plan was developed. A 12-member research advisory committee comprised of CURL staff and student fellows, faculty researchers, ONE Northside staff, and community members was established to guide the research process.   The research team includes full-time CURL research staff and faculty as well as graduate and undergraduate fellows at CURL.

To date, the research team has conducted 33 semi-structured interviews with present ONE Northside staff and key leaders as well as with past staff and leaders involved in LAC and ONE.[9] In addition to the interviews, the research team conducted 2 focus groups of leaders from a selection of ONE Northside's most active member organizations. In order to follow the organizing and issue work of ONE Northside more closely, the research team also attended and participated in the meetings and activities of two of ONE Northside's "issue teams."[10]   Researchers have also attended important organizational events such as board meetings, membership councils, leadership councils, and public actions put on by ONE Northside that did not fall under any particular issue team (such as candidate forums during municipal elections).

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[8] More information on CURL is available at www.luc.edu/curl.
[9] These interviews have averaged 1.5 hours in length. The questions and topics covered in the interviews are included in an appendix below.
[10] ONE Northside organizes its work according to these issue teams and uses them to strategically select campaigns and advocacy priorities out of the myriad potential issues the organization could take up. Of the seven issue teams, we focused on two: Violence Prevention and Affordable Housing.

The decision to scale up and the creation of ONE Northside

The need to scale up was recognized by both LAC and ONE leaders. There was increased recognition that decisions are increasingly made outside the neighborhoods, outside City Council, and by forces outside of political institutions proper. This more global influence on Chicago politics underscored and personified in the form of Chicago's newly-elected mayor Rahm Emmanuel, who was frequently tagged as "Mayor One Percent." This is not as much a reference to his personal wealth as it is to his close alliance with national and international banking and finance interests. A recent measure of the connection is that a substantial portion of the $20 million he raised in the 2015 mayoral race came from interests outside of Chicago.[11] As a key consultant who helped to guide ONE and LAC through the merger process (and past community organizer herself) stated: "A lot of power isn't in Chicago anymore. The banks used to be in Chicago -- centered here. …. [Now] what do you do about foreclosure even if you're working across the city of Chicago. It's a real big problem. There're just a lot a lot of issues that [when] organizing locally, you're very limited in terms of what impact you can have." (Butzen)

A good illustration of how the new organization adapted to the complexity dilemma where an issue had very local impacts, but had its roots in broader, society-wide inequities, is ONE Northside's successful battle to protect single-room occupancy buildings (SROs) that provide affordable housing to low-income, single person households. This is a neighborhood issue affecting thousands of individuals in scores of building, but an issue that has its origins in national trends of well-financed developers in many cities of buying up SROs as cheap properties to tear down or to convert, making way for new higher rent middle-income housing. A former LAC staff member, now on ONE Northside staff reflects that this was an issue that was getting harder and harder to address one building at a time as both LAC and ONE had been doing. As she puts it "unfortunately sometimes the way to predict the future is to have the future start happening to you." (Staff #8) The merger -- with the increased visibility of the organization, its increased capacity to work with other organizations in coalition, and its increased attention from some key City Council alderman – is seen as increasing community capacity enough to successfully push for legislation protecting SROs from conversion in Chicago.

One key issue that started pushing the organizations together was recognition after 2008 that the financial crisis and shifting political priorities was a major threat to low-income families, non-profit organizations, and advocacy groups in Chicago communities. A senior staff member in LAC recalls a

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[11] Even business-oriented Forbes magazine published a commentary on the dramatic increase in "pay-to-play" practices connecting corporations and their campaign support to the mayor, defining this as a broken culture of public service." (Andrzejewski)

meeting of many community advocacy groups where they realized that not only was the State of Illinois in arrears on payments to many organizations serving Chicago's northside (in arrears in the millions of dollars), but at the Federal level Republicans were proposing 50 percent cuts in community development block grants – a source of money for many organizations serving low-income families. She explains:

> I remember just spontaneously saying "Who here gets community development block grant money to fund their work and their agency?" And every single non-profit raised their hand, which I should have known, but it was just a moment of saying "We are really in trouble. We are really in trouble on the state level. We're really in trouble on the Federal level. This is a big problem". (Staff 8)

ONE Northside's New Structure

While LAC and ONE both emphasized the role of members in setting priorities for issue campaigns, during the merger process they paid renewed attention to internal democratic structures and the perceived need to strengthen ties between grassroots members and leader leaders as the organization scaled up (see organizational chart in Appendix 2). ONE had already put structural changes in place shortly before the merger. These included a newly-created group, the Leadership Council, comprised of representatives of each Issue Team -- committees looking at specific issues such as violence prevention and affordable housing. With the creation of ONE Northside additional slots for representatives from newly created Neighborhood Councils were included in the Leadership Council. These have not been fully developed yet, but the structure was put in place for representation from these primarily geographic, neighborhood-based councils. These changes were carried over to ONE Northside after negotiation between LAC and ONE leaders. In addition, a Membership Council combining the functions of the existing similar bodies at LAC and ONE (the LAC Community Council and the ONE Action Council) was created.

The addition of the Leadership Council – giving representation from to each issue team -- and the creation of Neighborhood Councils – giving the possibility that local neighborhoods may be more formally involved in decision-making within ONE Northside, increased perceptions that more decision-making power was put into the hands of ONE Northside's member organizations. With the merger has come an increased perception by active members that member organizations have a stronger voice. While similar structures giving member organizations an active voice in organizational decision making were there before and after the merger, a few interviewees felt that while before member organizations were just approving decisions already made by senior leadership; now the membership organizations have a more active role in *shaping* senior leadership decisions.

Measuring the Impact of the New ONE Northside: Increasing Power

As noted above, one focus of this paper is to understand the dimensions of power exerted by the community-based organization. Through interviews with past and present leaders of LAC, ONE, and ONE Northside, we have identified a number of power dimensions that have either been demonstrated in past advocacy activities or that are important to leaders as the new organization moves forward. In addition to providing insights into community-based organization structure, these dimensions will be used as points of measurement as to the success of the new ONE Northside in its activities from the local level to larger citywide, statewide, and national levels.

The basic sociological definition of power is the individual's or organization's ability to get his/her/its way despite opposition. In the course our interviews with community activists and our discussions at research advisory committee meetings, we have identified additional dimensions of, or nuances of, power, adding to this one basic measure. These include:

- *power through increasing the organization's reach beyond the neighborhood*
- *power in numbers, building community voice, and attracting attention*
- *power to act*
- *power to act: demystifying political leadership*
- *power to act: realizing that you can have an impact*
- *Power to act: creating a culture of challenging inequity*

Power through increasing the organization's reach beyond the neighborhood

Inherent in scaling up is the goal of increasing power by increasing the organization's geographic reach. In the course of interviewing ONE Northside leaders it is clear that one measure of the new organization's success and impact is an increase in its geographic visibility and geographic-based power. In Chicago power has distinct geographic reference points. It can be measured by how many of the 50 wards in which an organization is active and how many of those ward aldermen are on its side on any given issue. In a city where the sociologists of the Chicago School divided the city up into more than 70 community areas in the 1920s – a division made after interviewing residents and capturing different community identities -- these community areas continue to have significant meaning in the eyes of Chicagoans. The geographic divisions are often congruent with racial, ethnic, and social class boundary lines in this still-segregated city. The geographic divisions have also been used by scores of community organizations as their organizing boundaries.

NATIONAL CONNECTIONS

LAC, ONE, and now ONE Northside had always had formal or informal links with national organizing networks.   For a number of years ONE and LAC were closely affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF).   In the 1990s and early 2000s, they were a prominent organization in an IAF-backed Chicago regional organizing initiative, United Power for Action and Justice (UPAJ). [12]   LAC left UPAJ because the more suburban orientation and focus on a national health insurance campaign did not resonate with LAC members. Although ONE never formally joined NPA, the new ONE Northside did formally join NPA after the merger.   Asked about the history of relationships of LAC, ONE, and now ONE Northside with regional and national organizations, former LAC senior staff member, now an ONE Northside senior staff member takes a pragmatic approach in explaining that organizations have always looked for connections to organizations that could best serve their interests in serving to strengthen local Chicago communities.

ONE Northside is now an organizational member of NPA, a national network of 29 organizations in 14 states.[13] An organization created in 1972 by Gale Cincotta and Shel Trapp, prominent Chicago-based advocates for equitable community development and fair housing, NPA has a reputation as a less hierarchical network than IAF.   Jennifer Ritter, the Executive Director of ONE Northside, also serves as a member of the NPA national board providing a strong link between ONE Northside and NPA. Consistent with the self-described pragmatism of ONE Northside, NPA itself speaks of "Letting go of certain self-limiting orthodoxies of professional organizing frees us to embrace the project of building people power at the scale needed to win a long-term agenda." (Grassroots Policy Project 2013, 1)   In a break from some of the longstanding tensions and lack of cooperation between various national community organizing networks, NPA has worked with the PICO National Network, another association of community groups organizing on national banking and community development reform issues.[14] (Goehl 2014)

There are multiple overlaps between ONE Northside priority issues and those of NPA. NPA's 2015 campaigns include: corporate fair share taxation, protecting undocumented immigrants, stopping predatory lending, creating a "Robin Hood Tax" on Wall Street transactions, organizing low-income

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[12] With a particular focus in organizing around equity in access to health care and health insurance, United Power received $100,000s in support from major church organizations such as the Chicago Catholic Archdiocese and the Chicago Episcopal Archdiocese. LAC is still listed on United Power's web site as one of their 40 active groups even though LAC does not exist as a separate organization anymore. http://www.united-power.org/content/members (accessed March 22, 2015)

[13] As reported on NPA's website: http://npa-us.org/npa-network (accessed March 22, 2015).

[14] In 2004, PICO changed its name from the Pacific Institute for Community Organizations to PICO National Network

workers, and more broadly "building a new economy."   Determining whether local affiliates affect national issues or the national organization affects local issues can sometime be a which-came-first-the-chicken-or-the-egg kind of issue, there are certainly clusters of issues that are congruent when comparing local to national activities. ONE Northside now and LAC before it has been a leader in the fair share tax issue.   LAC was instrumental in forming a statewide coalition on this issue in 2011 and leading a statewide campaign to legislate corporate tax transparency – a campaign that was seen as a first step toward making large corporations pay their fair share of taxes public. [15]

Another case in point was the involvement of some of ONE Northside's members in a national campaign to stop Walgreens, the nation's largest pharmacy, from moving its corporate address from Illinois to Switzerland to avoid paying taxes. While not a direct ONE Northside project, its national and regional connections and visibility played a role in this successful campaign.   NPA had joined Americans for Tax Fairness, a national coalition of 400 national and state organizations protesting the move.   ONE Northside members got involved as a result of NPAs connections and also had the benefit of detailed research on the economics of the move documenting the loss in state tax revenue and ultimately the loss of state payments to local social service agencies and other non-profits to which the State of Illinois was already in arrears in paying for existing contractual obligations. (Americans for Tax Fairness 2014). ONE Northside and other local organizations provided the activists who protested outside Walgreens stores in downtown Chicago in June 2014.   It was this negative publicity for a customer-dependent retailer that help lead to Walgreens bucking its own stockholders and rethinking its escape to a tax haven. Instead it agreed to stay in the U.S. and pay taxes on its business supported by local consumer dollars. (Fortino 2014; Hjelmgaard & McCoy 2014). In the end this was a national campaign that came to light because of NPA connections and national alliance research, but was successful because of local visibility provided by ONE Northside and other local activists' picketing activity in Chicago and elsewhere.

CITYWIDE AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

In citywide policy areas closely aligned to ONE Northside's own priority on affordable housing, ONE Northside was an effective voice in a new ordinance, passed in 2015, that will increase the supply of affordable housing units in the city.   As background, ONE and LAC have been longstanding

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[15] See summary at http://onenorthside.org/16-one-northside-leaders-go-to-springfield-for-corporate-tax-transparency/ (**16 ONE Northside Leaders go to Springfield for Corporate Tax Transparency)**

organizational participants in a variety of citywide, statewide, and national affordable housing efforts.[16] Both organizations had been part of a citywide Balanced Development Coalition (BDC) that had successfully pressured Chicago City Council to pass a 2007 ordinance requiring new housing developments receiving city money or city zoning variances to provide a certain percentage of affordable housing units in the development or pay a fee "in lieu of" making this accommodation.   As City Council considered amendments the ordinance in 2014, a ONE Northside housing organizer was formally appointed by the City of Chicago to be a member of the City's Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO) Task Force.   Along with two other members of the BDC (Business and Professional People for the Public Interest, a well-connected and highly-effective legal advocacy group, and the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless) ONE Northside underscored that it had now been "invited to the table" in shaping city housing policy.   A new more stringent ordinance passed in 2015 requiring more affordable housing units in new developments and significantly higher "in lieu of" payments. (Podmolik 2015)   ONE Northside members have repeatedly stated that their larger merged organization, their past effective work on affordable housing, and the sensitivity of the aldermen and mayor to low-income renters in an election year were all contributing factors in this victory.

Also after the merger, ONE Northside successfully joined with others to pass a statewide legislation banning the check-off box on public or private sector job applications indicating whether or not the applicant has been convicted of a felony.[17]   Working in coordination with the Chicago-based Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, the Worker Center for Racial Justice and the Safer Foundation, ONE Northside was instrumental in getting state legislation passed in 2014.   This made Illinois the fifth state to pass such a ban. (National Employment Law Project)   Trying to determine whether this was a national or state initiative picked up by ONE Northside or a ONE Northside issue supported by state and national organizations becomes somewhat of a chicken-and-egg question.   This campaign fit violence prevention team's ongoing work but also paralleled the work of their statewide partners and other national organizations, such as PICO, one of NPA's national allies.

This is an example of how the complexities of the national political and economic forces are constantly playing out in local communities – in this case in the form of practices affecting job searches and employment. It is difficult to determine the direction of influence in ONE Northside's political work.

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[16] See for example the history of ONE and LAC's involvement in a national campaign to preserve ten affordable high rise buildings in Chicago's Uptown and Lakeview neighborhoods 20 years ago (CURL/ONE)

[17] This does not stop employers from asking this question at an actual job interview or from doing background criminal checks after the interview.   It does, however, allow the candidate to have their past work history and accomplishments fully reviewed by an employer before such questions are asked.

There is generally a two-way street on local-to-national, local-to-state, or local-to-citywide work. Ideas may originate at one level or the other. Work on either levels may reinforce the other. Also different levels may have distinctive but complementary resources to contribute to the campaign (research reports completed by national organizations, local activists to demonstrate, and local organizational credibility developed through a history of successful advocacy on a particular issue).

Also even though decision making may be taking place more and more at regional levels and above, more and more communications and information-sharing resources are available to community activists. The view that local community perspectives and neighborhood-based organizing efforts are parochial is antiquated. The isolation of things local has changed dramatically with more sophisticated web-based communications, social media, greater ease in accessing research information on line, and more affordable and accessible ways of communicating across organizations and regions. The widespread and affordable access to smart phones and computers has democratized part of the communications world. This means that local activists can both get critical information and analysis from multiple regional, national, and global resources *and* they can share this and their own information with supporters.

Power in numbers, building community voice, and attracting attention

Central in the ONE and LAC merger discussions was the desire to be more effective for neighborhood-based constituencies by increasing the proposed new organization's political visibility and ability to influence policy and decision making at citywide levels and beyond. In a city that has always focused on influence over Chicago City Council, numerous references were made by ONE Northside leaders as to how the new organization was increasing its influence from five wards to ten wards. In a city where wards include 55,000 residents on average, this meant a jump from working to organize and influence five wards with 275,000 residents to working in ten wards with 550,000 on Chicago's northside. This is a population larger than the central city populations in Atlanta, Miami, Oakland, Minneapolis, or Cleveland.

As one ONE staff member put it: "We're half of the northeast side of the city. I mean it's huge, right?" (Kusmierz) Another former LAC leader and current ONE Northside board member explained "We're trying to get people engaged locally and then connect them up. That's building the power. It's getting people involved locally and then making the connections bigger and bigger and bigger when the issue gets bigger." (Ryan)

The larger geographic presence and ability to get more than 1000 people to show up at their first convention as ONE Northside is also seen as a measure of power. One young leader who had just gotten involved in the new organization was asked to introduce and pose questions to then-Illinois Governor Quinn in front of the convention; he explained: "Knowing that Quinn, the most powerful guy in the state is going to sacrifice some of his time to be in the same building as us - that in it of itself really opened my eyes." (Leader #1)

One goal of scaling up is to increase the numbers of people and organizational representatives who can be turned out for public demonstrations or brought to the polls. Lori Clark, Executive Director of the Jane Addams Senior Caucus summarizes how an organization uses numbers to measure its power: "[It's] how many institutions we have…, how many people this represents…, [how many] we can turn out on a daily basis. …. Could we turn out four buses to get to a target? Could we make a thousand phone calls? How many people could we register to vote?" (Clark)

As another staff member put it, the merger has seen an increase in organizational power through simple arithmetic: "It is the people and the money that you're able to bring in. Our ability to act has increased because we have more people and we have more money under one roof. …. It's just a simple math equation…, of A+B=C." (Staff #3)

Power in numbers is also a matter of getting people involved who have not been engaged in civic activism before. A former ONE organizer in her forties who has stayed active as a leader in ONE Northside explains:

> So organizing people is power…. I worked with parents [to keep a local school from closing]. It was thousands and thousands of letters and postcards that the parents did, that the kids did. They were not even that active before that. …. Then, they were in the office all the time, they were in the Board of Education meetings all the time, they were riling the streets, they were collecting signatures, with a huge number of parents and kids. …. We can build a relationship and organize people and create a base and extend our membership…. [It is] the people. (Kusmierz)

What this power-in-numbers talk reflects is building community voice, involving people who were not previously involved, and increasing members' analytical capacity to understand the issues playing out in their community, in order to determine what strategies will be most effective in addressing inequities. Creating more "people power" is seen as an antidote to big money in politics. It is both the capacity to get larger numbers to the polls, but also have more people involved in defining what the issues are. Andrew Tonachel explains "if you can bring more people together, if you can get more registered voters, get more registered voters to the polls, and have those registered voters grapple with issues *and develop their own sense of what the issues are*, [emphasis added] then you have a chance

against the money."   It is a matter of members' more sophisticated understanding and analysis of the complexity of issues facing their community, and their increased ability to develop new ways of addressing these issues.

The power to act

In keeping with the point that even in a "more global" society, local communities are still the location where complex social, political, and economic play out on a daily basis (DeFilippis et al), increasing power is increasingly an issue of understanding these changes and the complex connections between what is happening in local communities and the forces beyond the local community that are affecting the local communities.   A lack of understanding of these complexities on the part of community residents not only keeps them in the dark, but it can also create an impermeable boundary between things local and those forces beyond the local that results in residents' resignation that "this is the way it is" and "I can't do anything about it."   Within such a limiting perspective, local residents are unlikely to explore existing and new avenues for action that might change their community for the better.

In this context increased knowledge is increased power.   Increased knowledge of the complex forces affecting one's community is one facet of increasing power.   With this increased knowledge *along with* the opportunity to determine and voice one's opposition to current inequities and shape more equitable alternatives to the status quo, comes even greater power.   This is a view that is woven into much of the literature on community organizing and participatory action research.   Certainly this is the message of Paulo Frerie in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. (1970)   John Gaventa and Andrea Cornwall (2001) explain that when community members are actively engaged in understanding the source of injustices and in the shaping of solutions it breaks down barriers that have previous limited their ability to act:

> Knowledge, as much as any resource, determines definitions of what is conceived as important, as possible, for and by whom. Through access to knowledge, and participation in its production, use and dissemination, actors can affect the boundaries and indeed the conceptualization of the possible. In some situations, the asymmetrical control of knowledge productions of others can severely limit the possibilities which can be either imagined or acted upon; in other situations, agency in the process of knowledge production, or co-production with others, can broaden these boundaries enormously. (p 74)

The scaling up of ONE Northside is seen as facilitating this increased analysis of the source of inequities and increased community resident voice in shaping alternatives to inequitable practices and strategies for bringing about change of those practices.   While ONE and LAC had always recruited new

members, engaged in training sessions for those new members, and involved members in developing new ideas and new strategies, these leadership training and engagement activities have been emphasized even more in the new ONE Northside.

Not only can the larger organization be more efficient in scheduling and holding its training sessions and offer them to a larger number of community members, but ONE Northside's increased size has provided a psychological boost to members and perceptions of what is possible. As a member of ONE Northside explained, power can be a literal thing such as having the numbers to influence decision makers, but it can also be a psychological thing.   She observed that just the "*thought* of growing our power and growing our numbers and growing our reach and growing our level of influence, was really important during the merger." (Haynes) An ONE Northside member, who is also staff at a local provider of health and housing services to low-income residents and homeless individuals, describes how there are different levels of involvement in the organization from showing up at a convention on the one hand, to understanding an issue so well that you can get a state legislator to change his mind.   She argues that a success of scaling up and a real measure of organizational impact would be "how many people really get the details of the stuff that we're working on."   She recognizes that the number of people who are more engaged in the complexities of issues will always be relatively small.   However she states that

> really building power is building knowledge about these issues, informing people about their rights and then people exercising those rights. So that would be cool, it's a lot more work to do that; it's a lot deeper level of work. …. There's going to be tiers of people that are engaged at different levels, so we would need a lot more staff to do that level of engagement, but I think we could do more of that. (Ryan)

Power to act: demystifying political leadership

Another facet of the power to act is the demystification of political leadership, getting rid of the aura around elected officials and realizing they do not have special qualities that separate them from "ordinary people." ONE Northside's greater size, visibility, and increased attention from political leaders does not merely translate into power for the organization, but it also brings all members of the organization into closer contact with elected officials and demystifies political leadership, knocks them down off of an invisible pedestal, and allows community members to recognize that they have the ability to talk with, to question an alderman, a Congresswoman, or even a governor. One young leader who introduced the governor at the 2014 convention is deferential and speaks of the "honor" of introducing the governor on the one hand. On the other hand he notes that he sees himself differently now that his organization entrusted him with such a role. He reflects:

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As the agendas were passed out and the speaking roles were laid out for people, when I saw that I would be one of the people up there not only standing with Quinn but addressing Quinn and asking Governor Quinn questions, that was maybe one of the moments that really hit home to me, like "Okay this is an honor." It's a complete honor to have people see you in that way that they feel like you're adequate enough to represent the organization when it comes to talking to someone of that stature and it pretty much immediately gave me an entirely new view of my role there with them. (Leader 1)

The demystification of political leaders that grows out of a grassroots organization's confrontational relationship with them creates a boldness that pushes boundaries and knocks policy makers off their invisible pedestals. Reflecting on experiences with arrogant Chicago Public School (CPS) administrators a former ONE organizer recollects: "all these CPS in-suits guys … would not answer the question. [They would] say something…, not answer the question, [and then say], 'next one.'   [But] we said, 'wait a second, you didn't answer the question!   Answer the question.' ….. It's more likely that you win when you have that fuel." (Kusmierz)

ONE Northside Board President Monte Johnson, pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church, a long-time institutional member of ONE reflected on ONE Northside legislative successes such as the new Illinois "Ban the Box" legislation (prohibition of an employer requirement that job applicants reveal previous history of a conviction) and the City of Chicago Affordable Requirements Ordinance revisions (to provide more affordable housing in the city). He describes how the larger organization is being taken a lot more seriously than before: "It used to be you know we had two alderman … and they just put you in their pocket and [would say] 'you're cute.' They'd pick you up and they'd pet you and put you back in their pocket. But now one alderman can't just make or break you. We're playing them against each other [now]." (M Johnson)

Power to act: creating a culture of challenging inequity

Scaling up in the form of broadening the number and type of communities in which the organization works serves to highlight the diversity within and between the community areas and neighborhoods within those areas. Because day-to-day interactions within such diverse areas can highlight inequities and even tensions, this scaling up sheds more light on racial, ethnic, and economic dynamics.   These are inequities that are right under the noses of everyone in the local community, just a few blocks away or less than a mile down the street. Rogers Park, Edgewater, and Uptown are among the most stable diverse communities in any larger U.S. City. (Nyden et al.)   The eight community areas fully or partially inside ONE Northside's boundaries are overall 70.5 % white non-Hispanic, 11.2 % Black, 10.6 % Asian,

and 14.5 % Hispanic. There are differences across the community areas within the boundaries. For example, Rogers Park and Uptown have 28.5 % and 20.6 % Black populations. West Ridge has a 23.2 % Asian population. Rogers Park, West Ridge, and Lincoln Square all have proportions of Hispanic residents over or near 20%. Poverty rates in these community areas range from 26.9 percent in Rogers Park to 6.4 percent in North Center. (Social Impact Research Center)

A ONE Northside leader with longtime experience working in Chicago's northern lakefront communities observes that the expanded catchment area of the organization has captured even more of these inequities under its umbrella.   He argues that a powerful community is one that has addressed inequities within the community.   Focusing on economic and employment inequities he states,

> I'm not concerned for myself being able to make more than minimum wage. I don't need the minimum wage laws so that I feel more comfortable. I need it because our community isn't as strong as it should be until everybody has some basic securities. My experience with ONE and ONE Northside has constantly reinforced the fact that there are huge inequities in our society and those hold us all back. (Tonachel)

In addition to placing more of the inequities and challenges under the larger organizational catchment area, the merger has also brought a diversity of stakeholders under one organizational roof. This produces valuable different perspectives on issues that help the organization to see things from different angles, through the eyes of different community members.   In initial contacts with community members that ONE Northside is hoping to recruit into more active involvement – contacts referred to as "one-on-ones" – there are efforts to understand the prospective member's concerns, but then look at ways of connecting them with broader community concerns. As a former housing organizer working across different racial and ethnic groups explains:

> The one-one-one is like the key thing. It's helped me see that we all have such different stories, but really very similar also. [I worked in] …organizing in this Section 8 building [government subsidized affordable housing] that has a lot of African population versus organizing in the [nearby] Polish … senior building. …. Engaging people on a one-on-one basis, [including them in broader]… issue-based meetings, … [and] then to bringing them into the larger affordable housing committee meeting is a way for people to see that ONE Northside is not just me organizing in the Polish building.   It's to bring people to what is closest first and then bring them into the larger organization. (Staff #4)

This process is part of understanding both the forces beyond the community itself, but also how these forces play out *in* the community on a day-to-day basis.   It produces a more complex understanding of power among members.   A ONE Northside board member explains that there is an increased sense of power among members because of the diversity of stakeholders in the merged organization.   This produces both an understanding of different perspectives on issues, but also

underscores that "power can be defined in different ways." (C Smith)   It can range from an individual's sense of their power to act or the actual impact that a larger political campaign has on legislation. ONE Northside's very conscious adoption of more deliberative processes to encouraging communication across racial, ethnic, and economic divides is part of this building community power through building greater equity.   These new democratic processes are also an important part of making sure that connections to the grassroots are not weakened in the scaling up process.

Strengthening internal organizational democracy in the new ONE Northside

In scholarly literature on community organizing a distinction is often made between "relational organizing" and "issue-based" organizing. Robert Kleidman (2004) explains the differences:

> [in relational organizing there is an] emphasis on personal development and relationship building. …. In relational organizing, issues are seen primarily as tools to create action campaigns that will develop leaders, deepen relationships, and build organizations, and only secondarily as goals with inherent social justice and social change value. Organizers typically describe their main goal as developing leaders, not as changing society. Embodying the organizer's creed of "let the people decide," relational organizing rests on the populist premise that a democratic process will produce a positive outcome. In issue-based organizing, specific issues are the starting point around which organizations and campaigns are built, while ideology-based organizing starts with a vision and analysis from which specific issues are derived. In both these forms, issues are valued more as ends than as means. (pp. 407-408)

ONE Northside *combines* relational organizing and issue-based organizing.[18] It is this dual approach that Rusch and Swarts describe as more effective than one or the other approaches separately:

> Organizers can bring the disenfranchised to the table, mobilize for participation, and empower community members to hold public officials accountable. Deliberative advocates can help create spaces for open-minded exchange during and in between issue campaigns, and bring both ideologically and professionally diverse voices to the discussion—including those who may otherwise avoid activist settings. Together, they might build creative alliances, where

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[18] In creating two "types" or community organizing approaches, academic researchers may have created a dichotomy that does not always exist in day-to-day practices of many organizations. In their analysis of current issues in U.S.-based community organizing practices, Rusch and Swarts (2015) argue that there is a need to move away from the either-or perspective on organizational styles. They argue that a "curious gap exists between research on democratic deliberation and institution-based community organizing…. The disconnect perpetuates misunderstandings of these broad approaches to civic engagement and undermines opportunities for collaboration. In the same communities where organizers use relational strategies to craft campaigns, practitioners of deliberation bring together assemblies of citizens to experience a meaningful exchange of ideas and elevate public discourse." (22) They add that "organizing is too often portrayed as storming city hall and deliberation is dismissed as just talk." (22)

diverse citizens exchange ideas, learn from each other, and leverage the most appropriate
tools of engagement for the challenges at hand. (p 23)

Bringing new members into the organization and making sure these new members have the skills to
analyze local issues, to see connections to national forces, and to take an active role in shaping direction
of the organization and community is seen as critical. Training new members in effective strategies and
organizing techniques is equally as important. All of this training and involvement is referred to as
"leadership development" by ONE Northside.

When ONE Northside members talk of leadership development they are essentially talking about
strengthening the connections of residents and organization members to both ONE Northside
leadership *and* decision-makers outside the organization, e.g. elected officials, developers, and other
policy makers.   They are also talking about training and political education to increase understanding of
how neighborhood-level practices and outcomes are connected to forces outside the community.
Similarly leadership development and training involves members in developing strategies to address
problems facing their community whether the origin is at neighborhood, city, state, or federal levels.

Leadership development is at the crux of maintaining internal organizational democracy and
community voice as ONE Northside sets its sights on higher levels of decision making – targeting the
entire Chicago City Council rather than one alderman or targeting local developers as well as national
corporations. For ONE Northside leadership development is not a matter of cherry-picking the most
talented residents to build into effective leaders. Rather it is about maximizing participation of
marginalized members of the community who perhaps did not think they had the ability to influence
policies affecting their own community or did not think their neighborhood-based actions could
influence policies made outside of their local community.   In this sense leadership development is a
continuous process, it is more a constant process of expanding a membership base, participation by the
base, and an expanded community power to act.

ONE Northside restructuring has given more opportunity for members to shape agendas and
analyses.   In past years there were varying levels of relative input from senior leaders versus other
members of ONE and LAC. However the perception of the political culture of the newly-merged
organization by interviewees is that levels of participation have increased at all levels.   Reflecting on
one of her first meetings of the Membership Council after the merger, a former ONE organizer
observed, "Now it was *all* of our leaders" participating in the discussion.   She noted that another former
ONE leader who had been active for decades exclaimed, "This is the best … Council meeting ever! I

never experienced such a good meeting."   She observed that because of the way they put the agenda together

> there was a lot of room for discussions between the members. …. They created some time for people to have conversation and exchange opinions. …. Before ... there was no interchanging ideas and conversations. …. It was sort of we were all on the same level, you could ask anything. I mean I would never ask things like this to an ED [executive director] in the past…. We have to be open and transparent and we have to be honest." (Kusmierz)

This increased transparency and emphasis on broader membership involvement in analyzing issues and strategies has excited new and old members.   A grassroots member connected with a comprehensive social service agency in a far northside neighborhood with a longstanding low-income population welcomes the creation of this new Leadership Council:

> It's a really cool group that sends representatives from each of the organizing arms of ONE Northside. There are representatives from the education team, violence prevention, economic justice, affordable housing, mental health justice, and we all sit together and we update each other on our issues. We ask for support and question each other about the direction [of] each team…. We make determinations together that go before the board before they [get adopted]. It's very representative of all the work that ONE Northside does. It's a great way to check progress in our work because, you know, we're actually asking each other "This is the direction we want to go in? …. What do you guys think of this?' …. There are lots of great ideas that are formed there that we bring back to our teams and we work on and we talk about more. (Leader #2)

Conclusions

The scaling up process we have discussed is not necessarily an effort to be more effective.   Rather it is a process to *remain* effective.   While this may be a matter of increasing power – particularly power aimed at high levels of decision making in the city, in the state, and in the nation – it represents a needed adaptation to the changing political and economic environment.   This is also not a process of building a new organization from scratch.   It is taking elements from combined decades of successful organizing experience and not only combining what were two different organizations, but redoubling efforts to build stronger internal organizational democracy and stronger member voice in shaping the community agenda to achieve greater equity.

As indicated this is the first stage of a longer collaborative university-community research project to measure both 1) the success of scaling up and maintaining power and 2) building stronger leader-grassroots member ties.   In a world where cynicism and disengagement are a response to declarations that we live in a world more controlled by more powerful national and global political and economic forces, community-based organizations trying to scale up face an uphill battle.   Similarly in a world full

of reports of self-serving elected officials who do not respond to the needs of their constituents, faith in leaders and their ability to stay true to local interests and needs is regularly challenged.

This initial analysis of the elements of power, the dynamics of scaling up, and the dimensions of grassroots-leader relationships will serve as a guide as this project moves ahead. It has pointed to dimensions of power beyond some of the obvious measures.   Community organization members pointed out that increased internal organizational democracy and the ability of local residents to have a routine voice in framing issues and pursuing strategies was a form of empowerment and power.   The small increments of change in the local community that increase equity across economic, racial, and ethnic lines, among others, is another form of increased power.   We will approach the scaling up and grassroots democracy not as contradictory forces, but as processes that need to be examined in local communities where the global forces are in play every day.

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APPENDIX 1
MAP OF CHICAGO WITH OLD AND NEW BOUNDARIES OF ONE/LAC/ONE NORTHSIDE
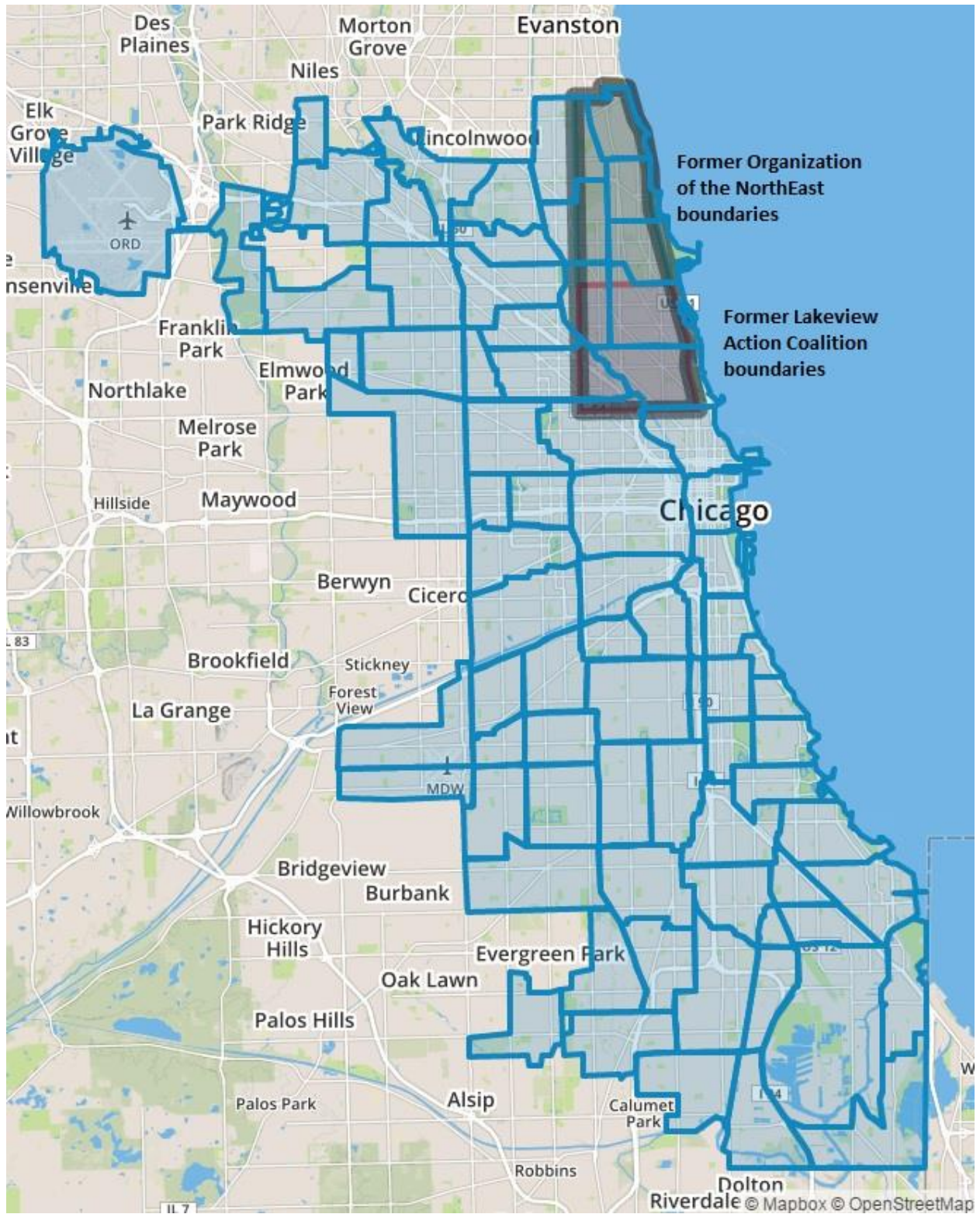
Appendix 2
ONE Northside Organizational Structure
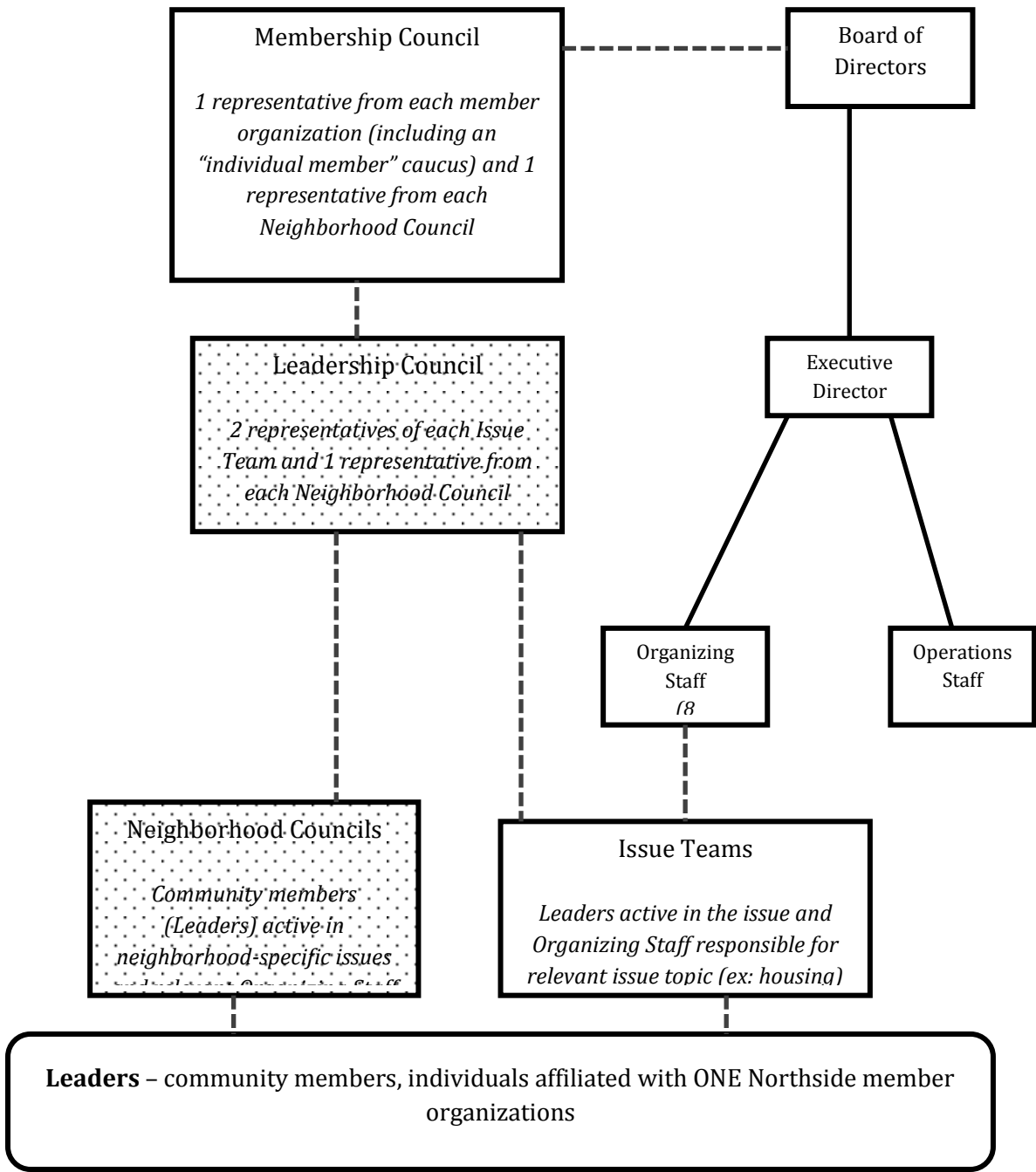
*shaded areas are newer elements of the ONE Northside structure since the ONE/LAC merger

Membership Council – advises and endorses overall strategy for ONE Northside, elects Board of Directors, approves "issue platform" to be adopted by ONE Northside (based on input from Leadership Council)

Leadership Council – advises Membership Council on currently active Issue Teams, sets overall organizing strategy and vision for ONE Northside, offers strategic guidance to Issue Teams and Neighborhood Councils

Issue Teams – coordinate geographically diverse (i.e., not neighborhood-specific) issue-oriented campaigns, for each issue the respective team would "cut the issue, determine the target, develop and implement strategy, and evaluate their own work."
> *- current teams: Affordable Housing, Education, Economic Justice, Mental Health, Violence Prevention, and Youth*

Neighborhood Councils – ad-hoc creation depending on level of interest and involvement of that neighborhood's residents on issues, runs geographic-specific (i.e., neighborhood based) campaigns to determined by those involved

Board of Directors – comprised of elected individuals from member organizations or closely affiliated individuals, advises and has authority over the Executive Director, oversees HR policies, fiscal health, and operations of organization

Organizing Staff – Eight paid organizers, each focusing on a particular Issue Team

Leaders – community members affiliated with ONE Northside member organizations and/or individuals from the neighborhoods in which ONE Northside operates who are active and participating in campaigns with Issue Teams

Appendix 3

Past Accomplishments of ONE and LAC as listed on ONE Northside's website:

Accomplishments – Organization of the Northeast (ONE)
ONE was founded in 1974. ONE's first campaign was a successful effort to get the City Colleges to award $1.5 million in construction contracts to local Latino contractors as they built Truman College in the 1970's.

Additionally, ONE:

- Named Community Organization of the Year in 2001 by the Woods, Weiboldt, New Prospects and The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundations
- Coordinated a long and intense organizing campaign in the early 2000's that resulted in the Wilson Yard, an award winning housing and shopping development in the center of Uptown with 187 units of affordable family and senior rental housing, along with a community hiring agreement for the construction and the resulting Target;
- Joined with six other community organizations to create the coalition Voices of Youth in Chicago Education (VOYCE.) This coalition has partnered with the Gates Foundation to address the drop out rate in Chicago Public Schools.
- Supported 36 parents and community representatives to be elected to local school councils.
- Provided community school classes to 600 children and 80 parents.
- Established parent mentoring project at five local elementary schools to help over 350 students improve academically.
- Established a $1 Million Transitional Jobs program for community members returning from prison.
- Passed the SMART Act with the Developing Justice Coalition to address recidivism and affects of drugs on community.
- Established North Side Community Support Advisory Council to facilitate reintegration of community members returning to north side from prison.
- Created the New Americans Loan- the first loan program in the U.S. for the citizenship application fee- now a national model.
- Won $200,000 in funding to train and place community members in construction careers.
- Assisted over 200 people in applying for citizenship
- Founding member of the Balanced Development Coalition, which organized a campaign that resulted in the Affordable Requirements Ordinance, a citywide affordable housing set aside.

Accomplishments – Lakeview Action Coalition (LAC)
LAC was founded in 1993. Over the years, LAC has:

- Forced the Chicago Police Department to implement an improved policy for treatment of transgender detainees in 2102
- Won statewide legislation simplifying and systemizing access to charity care in 2012
- Worked with Senator Durbin to secure a $10 million appropriation to retain affordable housing in buildings like 510 W. Belmont and Ogden Corners
- Won the preservation of the Diplomat SRO, which will soon be redeveloped into affordable supportive housing.
- Won 3 five year renewals, most recently in December 2011, of the Section 8 contract for Lincoln Park Plaza (formerly Rienzi Plaza). These 148 units of project based section 8 house senior citizens, people with disabilities and many long time Lakeview residents.
- Along with partners in United Power, won the first ever State of Illinois commitment to affordable housing in the capital budget of $145 million in 2009.
- Secured the essential support of the Mayor and local Alderman for the opening of Marah's place, a transitional housing program run by Deborah's Place.
- Transformed the Bel-Ray Apartments, a 70 unit SRO building at 3150 North Racine, from a poorly managed hotel to quality low income housing that links tenants to social services and jobs.

- Partnered with the Jane Addams Senior Caucus and Interfaith Housing Development Corporation to create Ruth Shriman House (4040 North Sheridan), a unique 83 unit apartment building for low and moderate income senior citizens. The building, designed with seniors' input, opened in 1999.
- Won a mandatory citywide affordable housing set aside ordinance along with partners in the Balanced Development Coalition
- LAC's Hate Crimes work resulted in the reversal of a Police Department bike policy and the first of its kind late-night bike patrol (patrolling until midnight), and a subsequent 50% reduction in hate crimes in Lakeview and North Center.
- Worked with the Attorney General to pass a statewide policy in early 2006 to systemize bill collections at all hospitals in Illinois.
- Won major reforms including: revised charity care policy (system-wide change), informal moratorium on all lawsuits at IMMC, creation of guidelines for the new policy, better signage and training for staff at Illinois Masonic, and at least one seat for an LAC clergy on IMMC's charity care committee.
- Brokered a deal to saved 712 W. Diversey as long term affordable housing.
- Formed a new tenants' union at Belmont Tower, a 276-unit apartment building at 510 W. Belmont Ave., which blocked an attempt by the building's owner to eliminate affordable Section 8 rents.
- Won the expansion of Cook County Class 9 tax break, an incentive for developers to build or rehab affordable housing. The tax break was formerly only available in low and moderate-income census tracts.
- Played a frontline role through United Power for Action and Justice in the on-going campaign to expand affordable healthcare to low-income families through FamilyCare in Illinois.

From: http://onenorthside.org/7-2/accomplishments/ (accessed March 21, 2015)