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# Sustainable Community Development Case Study of Collaboration, and Participation between a Nonprofit Organization and Governance

Nicholas L. Brooks

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# Walden University

College of Health Sciences and Public Policy

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Nicholas N. Brooks

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
and that any and all revisions required by  
the review committee have been made.

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Walden University  
2023

Abstract

Sustainable Community Development Case Study of Collaboration, and  
Participation between a Nonprofit Organization and Governance

by

Nicholas Brooks

MA, APUS, 2016

BS, CSU, 2013

Proposal Submitted in Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Public Administration

Walden University

August 2023

## Abstract

The Lake Calumet Task Force (LCTF) is a nonprofit community organization that has developed the Green Economic Industrial Corridor (GEIC) plan. The GEIC plan presents the socio-economic needs of Lake Calumet's communities and proposed improvements to the natural and built environment, which have been neglected for decades. There was a gap in knowledge regarding collaboration and formation of partnerships for the design and implementation of sustainable development strategies across other key stakeholders. The qualitative case study explored how LCTF can combine principles of cooperation, partnership, and participation, with the local governmental agency's design and implementation strategies, to enlarge upon the feasibility of their sustainable development plan. The conceptual framework was guided by collaborative governance theory. The data were gathered through focus groups and individual interviews with the relevant stakeholders. Findings are that citizens in the community have a measure of distrust of the city's leadership and politicians; and that honesty, openness, and social responsibility are needed to create a framework for sustainable development. However, participants also expressed willingness to establish relationships, build trust, collaborate with officials, and seek commitment from community organizations and leaders to create processes for galvanizing the community. Findings may be used by communities to exact positive social change, and to better serve their members.

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## Dedication

It is in loving memory of Jerri Dawn Warlick, who believed in, motivated, and loved me, even when I had doubt, that I dedicate this Professional Administrative Study. Her sense of family and community is at the core of sustainable communities and what they encompass. I will be forever grateful that she chose to share her life, love, and strengths with me.

## Acknowledgments

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## Section 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Background of the Problem**

Currently, many cities are creating sustainable communities strategically centered around industrial corridors (ICs). Industrial corridors are areas located along desirable transportation networks such as waterways and railroads (See Appendix A). The City of Chicago's Zoning Ordinance Administration defines industrial corridors as "any area that has been designated as a priority area for industrial development and/or retention in a plan approved by the Plan Commission or City Council" (Chicago Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17-17-0274).

These ICs are zoned primarily for industry and manufacturing (Industrial Corridor Modernization Initiative [ICMI], 2020, para. 6) and are an essential element in this region's economy. Sustainably developing and revitalizing ICs not only provide the communities with clusters of manufacturing and other industry, but they also provide sustainable development opportunities and socio-economic solutions such as renewable energy systems, sustainable housing, and well-designed green spaces. Sustainable development is defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs; it is the removal of disparities across economic, environmental, and social elements, and it requires collaborative planning and designing (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

The City of Chicago has 26 ICs (see Appendix A), which were formally designated in 1992 by the Chicago Plan Commission (ICMI, 2020, para. 6). Of the 26 ICs, several development framework plans have been approved by the Chicago

Department of Planning and Development (DPD). The DPD, “started a public interaction in spring 2016 to refine land use arrangements for proceeded with development and private interest in the City’s Industrial Corridor framework” (City of Chicago, Planning and Development, 2020, para 1). Via the Chicago DPDs ICMI, several revitalization projects and needs assessments have been performed in four of the City’s ICs, including the North Branch, Ravenswood, Little Village, and Kinzie ICs (City of Chicago, 2019, para. 5,6). Endeavors of this capacity involving multiple stakeholders, local government, community organizations, and residents and investors require joint participation. The DPD’s analyses consist of assessments of deficiencies found in the freight transportation systems, housing, manufacturing businesses, and employment within the 26 ICs. As such, a unique opportunity exists to sustainably revitalize the southernmost IC, i.e., the Lake Calumet Industrial Corridor.

In 2016, the DPD sought to redirect their approach and began a public process that redefined private investment initiatives and land use policies that would bolster redevelopment in the City’s IC system. The initiative incorporated “community-based goals, market data, infrastructure assessments, financial planning, and other criteria into framework plans that will guide future public and private investments within each unique corridor” (City of Chicago-ICMI, 2020, para. 2). To realize the desired outcomes for the industrial corridors, the DPD began seeking input from other stakeholders, property owners, businesses, and local planning agencies.

## **Introduction to the Client and the Problem**

The Lake Calumet Taskforce (LCT) is a community-based, environmentally-focused organization, which is in the southeast Chicagoland area. The organization has an industrial corridor plan for the surrounding region, which thus far has not succeeded in securing local government approval and funding assistance. The LCTF seeks to develop a feasible implementation plan, which integrates collaborative and partnership strategies in its design.

### **Background of Client Organization**

The client organization for this professional administrative study is the LCTF, whose general mission is that of informing and educating the southeast Chicagoland residents, businesses, and leaders regarding improvement of their environment. Formed in 1989 as a coalition of 30 grassroots organizations, the LCTF continues to strive for solutions to the economic, social, and environmental problems within the Lake Calumet region. The organization seeks to sustainably redevelop the Lake Calumet community's IC and previously undeveloped area without destroying the ecosystem or harming the environment of the surrounding area. The LCTF has been striving longer than 25 years, for the sustainable development of residential facilities, environmentally friendly and green business practices, and preservation of natural areas that will improve the quality of life in the region (LCTF, 2018).

To explore revitalization opportunities in the Calumet region, the LCTF has developed the Green Economic Industrial Corridor (GEIC) plan. The GEIC plan presents solutions to the economic needs of Lake Calumet's communities and improvements to



the area's natural environment, which has been neglected for decades. The broader mission of LCTF and the GEIC plan is to affect positive social change in the Calumet region by ensuring that redevelopment efforts address the past and ensure the future for its residents (<http://setaskforce.org/2016/02/geic/>). The GEIC plan is guided by several previous plans: the Calumet Area Land Use Plan, Calumet Open Space Reserve, the Calumet Design Guidelines, and the Go To 2040 comprehensive regional plan for metropolitan (Chicago See Appendix B).

The client organization developed the GEIC plan to accomplish several goals which are synonymous with elements of sustainability and include designs that are limited by the environment, preventing detrimental burdens to the communities, water use efficiency, maximization of renewable energy, and sustainable land-use standards (Great Cities Institute, 2019). The GEIC design encompasses strategies, plans and projects to accomplish the following: create the highest and best redevelopment of abandoned and underutilized brownfield sites; provide availability of business training and sweat equity/bootstrap financing for community investment in local businesses, including startups; establish job training for community residents with an interest in sustainable jobs ensure mandatory preference for local hiring of current community resident. The design includes the following objectives:

1. Foster local businesses and attract outside businesses that adhere to established standards of excellence for sustainability.
2. Ensure adherence to the Environmental Justice Principles of the Environmental Justice Alliance.

3. Maximize intermodal capability to manage highway, rail, and water accessibility in such a way as to minimize the environmental burden imposed from transportation of goods.
4. Redevelop area infrastructure to reduce energy and resource demand.
5. Create locally produced energy and transportation fuels and maximize their local use.
6. Reduce, reuse, and recycle local land and resources currently being wasted.
7. Respect the unique nature of the Calumet Region in a manner that preserves, protects, and enhances natural areas as a right of future generations.
8. Support healthy communities.
9. Make the area a showcase of sustainability at the gateway to the City and to the State.

Also, a report produced by the Great Lakes Institute at the University of Chicago provided a framework of revitalization that includes communities along the Calumet River on Chicago's Southeast Side. The report demonstrates the need to plan and carry out future projects that deal with the environment, social equity, and economic development (Great Cities Institute, 2019), which is the premise of the GEIC plan.

The Lake Calumet IC is located on the southeast side of Chicago and is the largest of Chicago's 26 ICs. More than half of the land available for manufacturing is in Lake Calumet IC. The Calumet Open Space Reserve, which spans over 4,000 acres of open prairies and marshes, is adjacent to the area (Calumet Open Space Reserve Plan, 2005).

In terms of sustainable community opportunities, Lake Calumet region needs and fits the criteria for developing the three Es of sustainability: environment, economy, and equity.

In 2016, to leverage these desirable features of the Lake Calumet region, the LCTF developed the GEIC plan.

The GEIC plan was designed to integrate three facets of sustainable development: industry, natural areas, and community (LCTF, 2016). LCTF and Chicago DPD's Planning and Sustainability divisions (PSD) have separate but similar missions and agendas, which is to work towards creating sustainable communities via neighborhood land use plans including the development of open space and sustainability policies (City of Chicago, 2019). Despite these mutually shared objectives, LCTF does not have adequate commitment from elected City officials, businesses, property owners, local planning agencies, and other community stakeholders to achieve the goals of the GEIC plan.

### **Background of the Problem**

The Lake Calumet region needs “redevelopment that addresses the past and ensures the future for its residents. This revitalization will provide job creation and business opportunities while improving the environmental health and safety of the region and serving as a showcase for sustainable development” (<http://setaskforce.org/our-work/>, para.1). The LCTF has developed their GEIC plan to address the above-mentioned issues, but it appears that the organization is left wanting due to gaps in the knowledge of how to further implement the plan into action. According to the findings of a study by Sajjad Haider in 2003, the various sorts of authoritative information holes that

organizations recognized over the course of the years relate to different kinds of information. I surmise that a lack of collaborative knowledge amongst LCTF and other agencies, organizations, and research institutions is at the root of the LCTF's problem of not realizing their industrial revitalization plans. This gap in knowledge has a trickle-down effect in which one of the principles of sustainability, (public and private partnerships) that leverage resources and provide greater impact, is not being utilized. An administrative study can perhaps provide recommendations that all parties can utilize and benefit from. The Lake Calumet community has the largest undeveloped area within the Calumet industrial district, and it offers opportunities for industrial expansion unique in metropolitan Chicago (Mayer, 1955). There are also environmental injustice concerns, the need for the uplifting of a fallen community, and social-economic concerns. Closing the present gaps of collaborative knowledge is crucial to the wellness of this community and many others who have experienced such decline over the years. Knowledge is often treated as a resource that enhances competitive advantages. However, in the field of public administration of nonprofit organizations such as the LCTF, a gap exists in literature of how knowledge requirements change over time and how knowledge plays a different role in different phases of organizational development. The phenomenon is perhaps the core of the lack of collaboration.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem is a gap in knowledge regarding collaboration and partnership formation for the design and implementation of sustainable development strategies across the LCTF, Chicago DPD's PSD and other key stakeholders. This problem has negatively

impacted communities in the Lake Calumet region by inhibiting the modernization of the industrial corridor, which is prohibiting the creation of new economic opportunities and preventing ecologically inspired land use in the nearby open space reserve. Through collaboration and inclusion, the LCTF will understand the specific design and implementation strategies that the DPD's PSD requires for industrial corridor modernization projects. Consequently, the community vision remains unaccomplished.

Chicago's North Branch Industrial Corridor project administrators found practical solutions to similar obstacles by identifying and building strategic capacities to produce the greatest public value for key stakeholders (Bryson et al., 2007). Furthermore, because of the complex nature of sustainability goals, principles of sustainable governance require careful coordination of diverse participating stakeholders (Glass & Newig, 2019). Building on such strategies, a plan is needed that will enable LCTF to revise the existing GEIC plan into a successful and competitive industrial corridor modernization framework that also fulfills the requirements of Chicago DPD's PSD Industrial Corridor Modernization Initiative.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to identify barriers to collaborative knowledge in the administrative designs and implementation strategies between LCTF, Chicago DPD's PSD, and other important stakeholders. A qualitative case study research approach could reveal possible differences in strategies for collaboration, partnership, and participation amongst various preexisting IC framework plans, including the recently successful North Branch's Lincoln Yards LCTF's GEIC plan. The successful

consummation of this research study can yield significant knowledge in the field of public administration in that a practical implementation strategy for stakeholder collaboration will be established and can be replicated by other community organizations with similar goals. By gathering stakeholders' perspectives through interviews, literature review, and a focus group, I created an Implementation Memo with recommendations that the LCTF can incorporate into their planning activities for the revitalization of the Lake Calumet IC. I used a qualitative case study research approach to identify and examine possible differences in strategies for collaboration, partnership, and participation amongst various IC framework plans, including the already-approved North Branch's Lincoln Yards plan with the LCTF's proposed GEIC plan. The practice-focused phenomenon of interest in this study is the design and implementation of administrative collaborative strategies across entities, enabling nonprofit community-based organizations to develop successful industrial corridor/sustainable community plan, which meets the requirements of Chicago DPD's PSD ICMI.

To achieve this purpose, I specifically explored the activities of the LCTF in the context of collaboration, partnership, and participation with the relevant City departments of the Corridor s initiative. The participants in this case study included leadership and staff from the DPD's PSD and LCTF, representatives of organizations and groups involved in the North Branch IC framework, and other stakeholders such as businesses and community members of Lake Calumet IC and neighborhoods. The collaboration process that this study seeks to design will enable the LCTF to better understand, and thus implement strategies that are currently not realized.

## **Research Questions**

RQ1: What principles of cooperation, partnership and participation are necessary to create a successful industrial corridor modernization framework?

RQ 2: How can LCTF combine principles of cooperation, partnership and participation with government agency design and implementation strategies to develop a feasible sustainable development plan for the GEIC?

Sub-RQ1: What do Lake Calumet stakeholders perceive as barriers to effective collaboration?

## **Nature of the Administrative Study**

This research is qualitative in nature. “Qualitative research is a process of inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within natural settings. It focuses on the why rather than the what” (Creswell & Poth, 2016). A qualitative case study is best suited for exploring the perceived rationales of facilitators and identifying the apparent barriers, which impede the design and implementation of an effective sustainable development initiative for the area. The nature of this inquiry is a process of seeking understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore social problems.

The primary data used in this case study included semi structured interviews with representatives from the relevant governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, review of literature, and a focus group with community stakeholders. The nature of this study presents both a scholarly and practical/professional approach to problem solving within the field of public administration and seeks to provide design science for collaboration,

partnership, and participation amongst community nonprofit organizations, key stakeholders, and local governances.

### **Significance**

This PAS aims to identify new best practices in collaborating and forming partnerships amongst public administrators, which community nonprofit organizations can incorporate to successfully plan and implement sustainable redevelopment projects. The research findings will contribute to the professional practice of public administration for the developing and managing of sustainable communities by offering new knowledge or a new understanding of existing knowledge of why and how governmental organizations (nonprofit and profit) can coordinate, collaborate, and form partnerships for sustainable develop programs and plans.

### **Significance to Practice**

The recommendations drawn from this study were guided by concepts of collaborative governance, such as capacity for joint action (Emerson et al., 2011). The study will provide clear examples of the actions and processes required by community-based nonprofit organizations, such as the LCTF, which seek to take their sustainable community designs from concepts to implementation. Also, this study will identify potential public administrative practices and/or policies that the client organization and other organization can use as an example when creating partnerships and collaborating with other entities who have similar goals and agendas.



### **Significance to Social Change**

Positive social change agents will have the opportunity to benefit from this study's identified effective, evidence-based contributions. They will also have the ability to create opportunities that connect residents to their community. Governance can bring economic opportunities that enhance the quality of life for the residents within the community, along with restoring, protecting, and connecting natural areas on a local scale that improves the quality of land, air and water. Newfound best practices can be used as a format for similar industrial communities seeking to create positive social change through community sustainability.

### **Summary and Transition**

The City of Chicago has a comprehensive action (We Will Chicago) plan that encompasses several themes: revitalizing communities, not limited to industrial corridors, which will create economic development and job creation; energy efficiency and clean energy; transportation options; water, wastewater, waste, and recycling; parks, open space, and healthy food; and climate change. The LCTF has been dedicated to serving the southeast side and south suburbs of Chicago by promoting environmental education, pollution prevention, and sustainable development for many years. These mutually shared visions and goals have the capacity to be realized when the administrators form partnerships and collaborate to achieve the objectives. This study has provided LCTF with an implementation memo that can serve as a guideline in meeting the requirements of the City of Chicago sustainable development criteria.

## Section 2: Conceptual Approach and Background

There appears to be a gap in collaborative knowledge and action to align design and implementation strategies between LCTF, Chicago DPD's PSD, and other key stakeholders. The gap has negatively impacted communities in the Lake Calumet region by inhibiting the modernization of the industrial manufacturing corridor, in conjunction with prohibiting the creation of new economic opportunities and preventing ecologically inspired land use in the nearby open space reserve. The purpose of this qualitative case study is to identify barriers to collaborative knowledge in the administrative designs and implementation strategies between LCTF, Chicago DPD's PSD, and other important stakeholders. This qualitative case study research approach revealed different approaches in achieving collaboration, partnership, and participation between the North Branch's Lincoln Yards project and the LCTF's GEIC plan.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Collaborative governance in the context of this study is defined as a governing arrangement or interaction where one or more public agencies directly engage community organizations and stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assets (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Several assumptions are manifested amongst researchers of this type of strategy, including the belief that goals are unlikely to be reached by any one individual or group working alone (Maag & Fischer, 2018). Secondly, "participants should include a diversity of individuals and groups who represent the concerns and/or geographic area or population; and that having

shared interests make consensus among the prospective partners possible” (Roussos & Fawcett, 2000, p. 370).

A collaborative governance model represents a conscious attempt to clarify the representation of key actors and their relationships. Specifically describing the model will allow one to easily identify and understand the most common and frequent findings of both the PSD guidelines and the LCTF’s GEIC plan, as they relate to the ICMI objectives. In line with research question sub-1, there are also the conditions under which stakeholders act collaboratively. Of utmost importance will be the willingness of all players to engage in good faith negotiating. Different priorities amongst entities will naturally need to be prioritized and aligned. These could include and are not limited to community and stakeholder outreach throughout the master planning process, open houses, formal community presentations, institutional design, and leadership represented as either critical contribution to or context for the collaborative process (Sheppard et al., 2011). The starting conditions set the basic level of trust, conflict, and social capital that become resources or liabilities during collaboration. Institutional design sets the basic ground rules under which collaboration takes place, while leadership provides essential mediation and facilitation for the collaborative process. The collaborative process itself is highly iterative and nonlinear, and thus, the process can be represented as a cycle. This research shall describe each of the actions taken in more detail and draw out their implications for a contingency model of collaborative governance.

**Deliverable to the Client**

A viable plan is needed to establish collaboration, partnership and participation with local government agencies, municipalities, investors, economic and community stakeholders to create a feasible implementation of a modernization plan for the Lake Calumet region. The North Branch's industrial corridor (see Appendix C), also known as the Lincoln Yards project, offers components that the GEIC plan (see Appendix D) will need to satisfy essential guidelines of the ICMI. It is juxtaposed that the inclusive strategies ought to include successful plans such as the North Branch's Lincoln Yards as a barometer for partnerships and collaboration in the planning and implementation of sustainable development of the Lake Calumet Industrial Corridor. This study provided the client organization, the LCTF, with administrative recommendations for reforming their GEIC plan in the form of an Implementation Memo. The deliverable was parallel with the design and implementation strategies of the DPD's requirements. The Implementational Memo "typically considers all relevant sources of information when completing an approved determination" (EPA.gov, 2021). The memo was a component mix deliverable that has the greatest potential to support the organization's strategic initiatives and achieve strategic goals. The identified components were grouped into relevant business decision options, by which a common set of filters and criteria can be applied for evaluation, selection, and prioritization.

## **Key Concepts in the Study**

This section presented two key concepts. They are collaborative governance and sustainable development. Each are discussed here along with tables to illustrate.

### ***Collaborative Governance***

To discover and resolve the knowledge and practice-focused gaps, which are preventing successful implementation of LCTF's Green Economic Industrial Corridor plan, this qualitative case study uses a conceptual framework that is guided by collaborative governance theory. As noted by Ansell and Gash, "Collaborative governance brings public and private stakeholders together in collective forums with public agencies to engage in consensus-oriented decision making" (2008). Referring to scholarly literature on this subject, the idea that theory can be applied, practical, and interdisciplinary is considered sound reasoning regarding collaborative governance in public administration (Frederickson et al., 2018).

Practitioners also find that a need exists for greater conceptual clarity and theoretical reliability in the treatment of public administration across entities who seek similar outcomes. An emphasis in research notes how in today's complex, plural, and fragmented governance settings, a single organization is able to manage only a subset of the strategic resources affecting the wider system outcomes (Bianchi, 2021; Osborne 2010). Despite mutually shared objectives, LCTF does not have adequate commitment from Chicago's Public Administrators, businesses, property owners, local planning agencies, and other community stakeholders to achieve the goals of the GEIC plan. It is

the purpose of this study to identify the gaps in knowledge of collaborative and implementation strategies that exist amongst the stakeholders involved in this case study.

A gap existed in collaborative knowledge of the planning and implementation strategies between LCTF, Chicago DPD and other key stakeholders. The collaborating matrix and collaborative governance are terms that this research interchangeably uses to express the act of working together to achieve a common goal. Collaborative teams ensure that participants engage, move through the stages of team development (become high performing), solve problems, and get more work done (Bennett & Gadlin, 2012) In this instance, the various applications of communicating across entities and agencies will certainly need administrators who are able to think critically and consequently challenge the status quo negotiating procedures of the past. “Coined collaborative governance” (among other terms) is neither a bottom-up nor top-down approach but seeks to balance both.

Characteristics of collaborative governance include (a) multiple actors sharing power, planning, and decision-making in complex structures and processes made up of formal and informal relationships; (b) vertical, horizontal, and temporal integration; (c) multi-scale (nested), recognizing the importance of the local stakeholders; (d) holistic vs. siloed approach (multi-objective, multi-sector); (e) and an ongoing process of dialogue, struggle, learning, and adaptation. Collaborative governance involves the government, community and private sectors communicating with each other and working together to achieve more than any one sector could achieve on its own. Collaborative governance juxtaposes that desired outcomes are systematically achieved across the organizations

involved including community and business stakeholders. Collaboration between entities increases the likelihood that a common purpose can be obtained (Emerson et al., 2011). However, Swann (2017) concluded that “collaboration may build capacity, but effective collaboration could also require capacity” (p. 458), which suggests that LCTF’s capacity (in the form of financial and technical capabilities, policy expertise and information) may not solely be enough to develop a successful industrial corridor revitalization plan. Efforts may require “innovative radical and multi-faceted changes across multiple levels of governance and action from the community” (McIntosh, 2013, p. 9). The collaborating matrix will certainly need administrators who are able to think critically and consequently challenge the status quo negotiating procedures of yesterday.

### ***Sustainable Development***

To establish an effective collaboration plan between LCTF and DPD-PSD, specifically in the context of sustainability, this research integrates key concepts from sustainable development, i.e., economy, environment, and equity, which are also clearly embedded in LCTF’s GEIC plan. The preponderance of evidence drawn from an extensive review of scholarly collaborative governance literature is supporting applicable theories and content for collaboration, partnership and participation amongst the entities involved in this study. I framed out each of these concepts in the table below and the following text.

**Table 1**

*Elements of Collaboration/Partnership Between Non-Profit and Governance: Sustainable Community Development Partnership: Chicago's Department of Planning/Lake Calumet Task Force*

Partnership Objective	Partnership Design	Collaboration Task	Partnership Performance
Competent development	Organizational form	Strategy forming	Innovation
Relationship building	Roles and responsibilities	Operational	Sustainability
Efficiency	Skills and competences	Forming policies	Efficiency
Quality	Coordination, integration of stakeholders	Sourcing	Quality
Competent development			Compliance
			Strong processing

*Note.* Created by, Brooks, N. 2023

*Economy:* A sustainable economy is one that is resilient and provides a good quality of life for everybody.

*Environment:* Environmental sustainability is the responsibility to conserve natural resources and protect global ecosystems to support health and wellbeing, now and in the future.

*Equity:* In the context of sustainability, the term equity has to do with fairness – whether all people have similar rights and opportunities, basic needs to maintain an acceptable quality of life.

### **Relevance to Public Organizations**

Public administration as it relates to planning and implementing programs for sustainable development plays an important role. Appropriately so, this endeavor requires collaboration amongst the various stakeholders involved. Previous studies have explored the gaps that exist amongst such stakeholders of sustainable developments. For example,



Pinkse and Kolk (2012) elaborated that governance function of partnerships, stakeholder's involvement, synergies and trade-offs in the sustainable development nexus and how partnerships may help address them. Local governmental agencies provide policies that frame the objectives to be realized. Stakeholders' roles are primarily governed by government entities (Eversole, 2011). Organizations that desire to participate in redeveloping the communities will need to collaborate with local authorities. A review of scholarly literature about how partnership and collaboration amongst these entities can benefit the process of developing a collaborative plan revealed answers to issues that organizations have had and are experiencing. It is vital that administrators understand that "inter-firm collaboration is a major topic of interest and relevance in the present organizational world" (Ariño & De La Torre, 1998, p. 1)

Smith et al. (1995) called for "more longitudinal case studies that are capable of capturing the complexities and dynamics of cooperation" (p. 19). Likewise, the qualitative approach in this study seeks to understand core, and underlining issues within the theory of collaboration. Practitioners in the field of sustainable communities agree with governments and nonprofit organizations augmenting in ways that meet public needs and benefit both parties (Gazley & Brudney, 2007). Consequently, engaged actors in a successful collaborative process will need to "coordinate their actions to achieve common policy goals—a behavior known as cross-coalition coordination" (Koebele, 2020, p.727).

## **Organization Background and Context**

The City of Chicago has 26 industrial corridors. They provide industrial-use land for existing and new economic opportunities. The LCTF serves one of the largest and optimal corridors communities in Chicago, the Lake Calumet Industrial region. The organization's mission is to help the southeast side of Chicago become a national and international model for the integration of industrial, residential, and natural areas into a productive, green, and environmentally sustainable urban community. Formed in 1989 by Marian Byrnes as a coalition of 30 grassroots organizations working together to oppose a garbage incinerator proposed for the former Wisconsin Steel; the organization continues to be vitally important in the perpetual struggles necessary to strike a balance between economic life, human welfare, and the environment—struggles that define the Calumet Region.

Chicago's ICs are an essential element in the region's economy. Sustainably developing and revitalizing industrial corridors can not only provide the communities with clusters of manufacturing and other industry, but can also provide socio-economic solutions, such as renewable energy systems, that create jobs, sustainable housing, and well-designed green spaces, and reverse the environmental injustice that presently prevail. Chicago's industrial plans and policies has been guiding developments since the 475-acre Stockyards opened in 1865. The policies had not been updated for nearly 25 years until, in 2013 when community-based planning efforts had determined that new policies were needed to respond to changing industrial demands and for Chicago to maintain its historic role as one of the world's most competitive manufacturing centers,

resulting in the Chicago Sustainable Industries (CSI) “comprehensive plan to support and expand Chicago’s industrial base, which included 14 policies and 32 action items” (Reifman, 2017, p. 10).

Chicago’s DPD is the primary agency responsible for the comprehensive growth and sustainability of the City and oversees the City’s zoning and land use policies. The DPD’s most recent guideline design for the Lake Calumet area was prepared in 2004, in association with two engineering firms and is now outdated. However, within the Public and Private Partners subheading of that plan, the city’s position is that the DPD is committed to working with the private sector to attract new and retain existing businesses. The city aids developers and business owners for land use issues, approve remediation of contaminated waters and soils, and assist in designing sites that meet requirements of design’s guidelines. The guidelines of 2004 did not address many of today’s sustainability considerations, nor did collaboration and partnership amongst relevant stakeholders. Since that time, Chicago’s Sustainable Development Policy has been continually implementing additional goals of enhancing sustainable performance of projects, offering city assistance, and requiring development projects that receive financial assistance or special approvals, to include sustainable elements.

The LCTF will need to collaborate with the DPD’s Planning and Sustainability Division, who are charged with creating and expanding public open space systems (fields, forest) and developing policies and programs. As a community-based not-for-profit organization located in the Lake Calumet area where the industrial corridor is located, the LCTF has designed the Green Economic Industrial Corridor plan, which

seeks to redevelop the community into a showcase of sustainability at the water gateway of the City of Chicago and thus the State of Illinois. The corridor can benefit from revitalization that will provide maximum value to the surrounding community.

### **Chicago Department of Development Sustainable Development Division**

This governmental agency is responsible for creating and expanding public open space systems and developing policies and programs to advance the sustainability of the City's buildings, businesses, and urban form. Long-term initiatives include waterfront access improvements, the expansion of natural habitats, improvements to the environmental performance of development sites, and the promotion of urban agriculture and other aspects of the local food system. The agency has derived at its own guidelines for the Lake Calumet area which depart from the city's traditional landscape ordinance by establishing unique landscape standards that help economic development projects blend with the rare wetland features in the area.

The DSD's design guidelines are unison to several elements of the LCTF's GEIC plan, namely: the cost of competitive land availability for new developments, excellent transportation by water, rail and road, qualified local labor force from the metropolitan area's large population, and convenient transportation for employees by bus, train, car, or bike. There are also financial incentives for locating a business in the Calumet Area, and State Enterprise and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) may become available. There is also strong community commitment to preserve the Calumet Area for business and as a model industrial corridor. The City of Chicago is committed to working with the private sector to sustainably redevelop communities across the city.

## **The Lake Calumet Task Force**

The Lake Calumet Task Force (LCTF) is a community-based environmentally-focused organization whose general mission is that of informing and educating the southeast Chicagoland residents, businesses, and leaders, in the areas related to the improvement of their environment. LCTF's GEIC plan has been the focal point of their open space program for years, and links the historic, cultural, and natural areas into a system of open spaces and multi-use trails. Their plan sews together the fragmented industrial landscape and looks forward to restoring the region's natural unity. The GEIC plan promises many benefits for the neighborhood and surrounding communities. Residents will someday enjoy high quality open spaces and an expansive network of greenways and trails. New opportunities will open for economic development. (LCTF, 2018).

The organization developed the GEIC plan to accomplish these goals. The goals specified in the plan are synonymous with elements of sustainability, which includes designs that are limited by the environment, preventing detrimental burdens to the communities, water use efficiency, maximization of renewable energy, and sustainable land-use standards (Great Cities Institute, 2019). The GEIC design encompasses strategies, plans and projects to accomplish the following: create the highest and best redevelopment of abandoned and underutilized brownfield sites; provide availability of business training and sweat equity/bootstrap financing for community investment in local businesses, including startups; establish job training for community residents with an

interest in sustainable jobs ensure mandatory preference for local hiring of current community resident. Other overall land use design includes the following:

- Existing land Uses – Residential
- Existing land Uses – Office
- Existing land Uses – Retail
- Existing land Uses - Industrial + Manufacturing
- Existing Land Uses – Transportation + Utilities
- Existing Land Uses – Auto-related
- Existing Land Uses – Institutions
- Existing Land Uses – Open Space
- Existing Land Uses – Vacant Properties

### **Role of the Researcher**

I, Nicholas Brooks as a researcher /student, have the responsibility of managing both myself and the work within the research degree program. I am familiar with Walden's requirements and behaved honestly and ethically during this research study. As such, my experience as a sustainability practitioner within the built environment is an influence on the content of this study. The region in question played a major role within the community in which I grew up. Home to many factories, the Lake Calumet region housed steel mills, one in which my father worked until his retirement. I have witnessed the decline of the community's socio-economics status and the ensuing poverty that followed the shutdown of the major companies located in Lake Calumet. To not overlook

any biases, I have acknowledged them, paid attention to how I felt during the process, adhered to the methodology and framework and maintained an open mind.

As regards to any ethical concerns, employing standards of moral principles such as autonomy, justice, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and fidelity, which are absolute truths, I have maintained the required integrity that is expected in academia and public trust/ administration. My relationship with the client organization has been purely professional even though I have been comfortably acquainted with the staff because of my interactions with them, as regards to this study.

### **Summary**

To identify and understand why the LCTF's GEIC plan has yet been adopted into the ICMI, this research has investigated the strategies of collaboration and partnerships. The premise is that methods can be discovered and implemented by the agency in question, (LCTF) of this research, that can afford the LCTF to carry out its vision for the Lake Calumet industrial corridor and surrounding communities. A collaborative governance model is best suited for the conceptual framework of this research study in that models exist that has demonstrated its effectiveness in establishing a working collaboration of partnership and participation with local government agencies, municipalities, investors, economic and community stakeholders.

Data collected for this inquiry was presented in the form of semi- structured interviews with key and other stakeholders and a focus group, in which the qualitative technique of asking open-ended questions to converse with respondents. The objective was to obtain detailed information and avoid oversimplifying the complex issues in

question. The data were analyzed using a process of steps beginning with reading the transcripts, annotating the information, conceptualizing, and segmenting that data and analyzing the segmentations and noting the results. Recommendations in the form of an implementation memo manuscript were made available for the clients use.



### Section 3: Data Collection Process and Analysis

#### **Introduction**

There was a gap in collaborative knowledge, a lack of partnerships, and thus action, in the planning of and implementation strategies between LCTF, Chicago DPD's PSD, and other key stakeholders, which has negatively impacted communities in the Lake Calumet region. The gap had inhibited the modernization of the industrial manufacturing corridor, was prohibiting the creation of new economic opportunities, and preventing ecologically inspired land use in the nearby open space reserve. Simply stated, the preclusion of building a sustainable community. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative case study was to identify what the barriers had been in collaborative knowledge, and in the administrative designs and implementation strategies, both separately and collectively, amongst the LCTF, Chicago DPD's PSD, and other key stakeholders. The objective of this research study was to obtain significant knowledge for the field of public administration of sustainable communities, so that a practical strategy for stakeholder collaboration could be established and replicated by other governance agencies and like-minded community organizations.

The LCTF serves one of the largest and optimal corridor communities in Chicago, the Lake Calumet Industrial region. The organization's mission is to help the southeast side of Chicago become a national and international model for the integration of industrial, residential, and natural areas into a productive, green, and environmentally sustainable urban community. The Lake Calumet IC is an essential element in the region's economy. Sustainably developing and revitalizing this industrial corridor and

community will not only provide the region with clusters of manufacturing and other industry but can also provide socio-economic solutions such as renewable energy systems. These systems will create jobs, sustainable housing, and well-designed green spaces, and reverse the environmental injustice that presently prevails in the area.

Chicago's DPD is the primary agency responsible for the comprehensive growth and sustainability of the city's communities and oversees the city's zoning and land use policies. Additionally, the Sustainable Development Division has a stake in creating sustainable communities and has derived its own guidelines for the Lake Calumet area. These guidelines depart from the city's traditional landscape ordinance by establishing unique landscape standards that help economic development projects blend with the rare wetland features in the area. These key stakeholders and others are vital in creating a collaborative process that works.

This section considered the causes of the LCTF's industrial corridor planning's ineffectiveness as it pertains to collaborating and partnership building by addressing three research questions. The collection and data analysis process explained, as well as how I recruited and selected participants, and the sampling process for this study. In this segment I established what ethical issues could be present and how the participants would be protected. I also explain the credibility of this research and establish its trustworthiness.

### **Practice-focused Questions and Research Design**

The LCTF's GEIC plan is still dormant after many years, seemingly because of the lack of collaboration and partnership building with the local governance offices,

which are agencies established to approve and participate in the sustainable development of Chicago's community. The gap in professionally applied and academic knowledge, specifically explaining how to establish such working relationships across entities, is the basis of this research's following questions.

RQ1: What principles of cooperation, partnership and participation are necessary to create a successful industrial corridor modernization framework?

RQ 2: How can LCTF combine principles of cooperation, partnership and participation with government agency design and implementation strategies to develop a collective, feasible sustainable development plan for the industrial corridor community.?

Sub-RQ1: What is Lake Calumet Industrial Corridor stakeholder's current perceptions of an effective collaboration and partnerships?

This professional administrative, qualitative case study is an attempt to understand the phenomenon that has prevented partnerships and collaboration amongst a non-profit and local governance entities who share similar objectives but have yet to effectively collaborate. I employed semi-structured interviews with individuals who direct these entities and obtained community stakeholders' points of view in a focus group setting. The focused research questions were the underlying themes that guided the interview processes and meetings.

## **Methodology**

### **Sources of Evidence**

The sources of evidence for this study include information gathered from participants who are directly and indirectly involved with the planning and decision-

making processes of a community sustainable development initiative, namely the Industrial Corridor Modernization Initiative (ICMI), authorized by the City of Chicago's DPD. The premises of my practiced-focused questions are based upon scholarly literature with respect to collaboration and partnerships amongst multi-stakeholders. Similar industrial corridors within the Chicagoland area are undergoing sustainable developments; however, there is further need to enlarge local entities' commitment to partnership and cooperation to achieve sustainable objectives (see LK Haywood et al., 2019).

I engaged other peer-reviewed, scholarly, and evidence-based literature that substantiates this research's conjecture. The key phrases employed for the literature review were *Collaborative planning*, *The governance of collaboration for sustainable development: Exploring the "black box"*, *Chicago's Industrial corridors*, *Collaboration and partnerships for sustainable developments*, and *sustainable communities*. To obtain data, I performed semi-structured interviews with the key administrators and stakeholders, held a focus group attended by residents, reviewed the LCTF visions and goals for the Lake Calumet corridor and the adopted We Will Chicago Plan. The core of the problem lies in the lack of collaboration amongst City administrators, the LCTF, and relevant stakeholders including citizens of the community and businesses that can provide substance to the sustainable development of the Lake Calumet region. The focused research questions were the underlying themes that guided the interview process and focus groups.

I used traditional qualitative content analysis methods to identify patterns and themes amongst the data collected. These methods provided a preponderance of evidence to be analyzed. The evidence was a body of knowledge from which collaborative strategies can be drawn out from and designed into a presentation for implementation collectively across the stakeholders' collaborative plan of action.

### **Evidence Generated for the Administrative Study**

The evidence found in this inquiry was obtained through a series of interviews and a focus group setting. The focus group was held on October 24, 2023. The group consisted of seven participants, six of which were interviewed virtually and one in-person. One of the semi-structured interviewees was with a top ranking official of Chicago's Office of the Mayor. I obtained the We Will document link from an Official of the DPD within its SD division, and the remaining interviews with residents of the Lake Calumet region and related stakeholders.

### ***Participants***

The neighborhood located within the Lake Calumet Region of Chicagoland is the 10<sup>th</sup> Ward's South Deering, with Hegewisch just south and the East Side community at its east. According to a June 2017 analysis by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, there were 15,305 people and 5,068 households in South Deering. The racial makeup of the area was 3.9% White, 65.1% African American, 0.1% Asian, and 1.0% from other races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 29.9% of the population. In the area, the population was spread out in age, with 28.8% under the age of 19, 19.1% from 20 to 34, 16.4% from 35 to 49, 19.6% from 50 to 64, and 15% who were 65 years of age

or older. The median age was 37 years (Community Data Snapshot - South Deering, 2017).

I selected seven individuals from this community as participants in the focus group, which included staff members of LCTF. I was also able to secure an individual in a senior position from Chicago's DPD. I ascertained that the senior position participants of this study held sufficient information and power to form partnerships and build collaboration. As such, the sample size of this study didn't have to be large; the more information the sample (key participants) holds relevant to the study, the lower the number of participants needed to acquire saturation (Malterud, et al., 2016).

A sample of the community was obtained from the above population for the purpose of community participation. The public administrator from the city departments listed in the preceding paragraphs was invited to the focus group but only participated in the semi-structured interviews. The recruiting process for participants was multi-faceted. Recruitment was conducted via word-of-mouth, flyers located at the LCTF, and a convenience store located within the community, and an email sent to administrators of the city departments.

Chicago Department of Planning and Development is the principal planning agency for the City of Chicago, from which it promotes the comprehensive growth and sustainability of the city and its neighborhoods. The department also oversees the City's zoning and land use policies and employs a variety of resources to encourage business and real estate development, historic preservation, accessible waterfronts, walkable neighborhoods, and related community improvements. As a key stakeholder, this office

was represented by two participants. One participated in a semi-structured interview, while the other provided the link to the adopted February 2023 We Will Chicago Plan. The Lake Calumet Task Force's staff are key stakeholders from whom information was gathered during the focus group at their office. The organization's community outreach was already established and was a vital resource for recruiting participants who lived within the community.

### ***Procedures***

I used traditional qualitative content analysis methods to identify patterns and themes in the data collected via semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and organization documents. Through the City of Chicago's website, I identified preferred participants, particularly those with positions in the DPD and the sub agencies involved with sustainable development, within the industrial corridors, and in general. I formally invited several public administrators to be participants for semi-structured interviews via email, (their contact information is located on the City's webpage directory). I also followed up with invitations via phone calls. I established a written agreement with the Director of the LCTF, who assured participation from herself and willing staff people. They were contacted and given appointments for their participation. As for the community participants, I used several methods for recruiting including flyers located in key establishments within the community and word of mouth. Upon contact with willing participants, I asked for written consent after fully disclosing the research's primary purpose and objectives, the data collection process, requirements, privacy protections and

the exclusion/inclusion criteria for their participation. All participants were willing contributors.

I offered the administrators the choice of in person semi-structured interviews, phone calls or a zoom (video call) platform. The focus group was held at the LCTF office at 13000 S. Baltimore, Chicago IL. 60633 in the community room. I scheduled the interviews to be no longer than 30 minutes, while the focus group was scheduled for 1 ½ hours. I set a timeframe of approximately 3 months to effectuate the interviews and focus group. My back-up plan extended the timeframe for the securing of participants and the data collection process. I collected and secured the data on a flash drive and have it stored in a personal safe I have in my home office. Upon the completion of the data collection activities, I debriefed the participants with a written explanation of my objectives, expressing that the data collection activities hold no deceptions, and that the results will be available for viewing, upon completion and approval of the study and where it can be found. There were no follow up activities regarding the study except the revealing of the result in the form of an implementation memo.

The first step in the data analysis process was to transcribe the interviews. Next, I will use qualitative data analysis software (e.g., MAXQDA) to organize the transcript data (Fontanella, 2019) and the content from pertinent documents (and focus groups, if possible). Relevant concepts (including those related to collaborative governance theory and sustainable development) were coded within the transcripts and subsequently, themes were identified based on groupings of the coded concepts. These themes were interpreted



in the context of Lake Calumet's Green Economic Industrial Corridor plan juxtaposed to the North Branch Industrial Corridor Framework.

### ***Instrumentation***

The instrument I implemented for data collection was primarily the interview protocol questions (see Appendix D). Forgoing yes or no questions, I shall be conducting semi-structured interviews with a series of probing questions that will elicit in-depth information. The questions will present flexibility so that the participants can elaborate on the points of each research question. The intent is to allow a degree of freedom and adaptability in getting the information from the interviewees. Providing open-endedness will give the participants an opportunity to further express their views (Turner, 2010). The interviews and focus group were recorded via a recording device, and in the case of zoom interviews, recorded and saved to my zoom account.

### ***Protections (Ethical Procedures)***

Prior to conducting the actual research, I obtained all the necessary permissions from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure the ethical protections of participants in this professional administrative study. The University's approval number for this study is IRB 08-26-22-0727862. To fulfill the human subject approval process in behavioral research, I had a clear understanding of the ethical principles guiding the conduct required in such an exploration. The ethical principles that guide research involving human subjects are – beneficence, justice, and respect for persons (Cugini, 2015). As researcher, I assured participants that their identities will not be revealed, and that the raw data collected will not be released to any third party

(Parahoo, 2006). I informed the participants of the purpose of the study, explained what sort of information is being sought, how it will be used and the implications for them as contributors. Ethicality includes autonomy, the participants have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time.

The semi-structured interviews were designed to gather qualitative data for this research while adhering to ethical principles. Written consent had been previously given from the director of the LCTF, detailing the purpose and proceedings, safety measures, rights of the participants and data storage methods. The DPD of Chicago, the SD division's participants, and participants posed for the focus group were also given the same consent form provided to the LCTF.

**Strategies for Recruitment.** In finding the participants for this study, I recruited via face-to-face interactions, fliers, social media, and letters to people who fits the criteria of samples that adequately represents the target population: namely, senior personnel of the entities involved in the Lake Calumet industrial corridors initiative; people who live in and surrounding the community. An appropriate sample size of the existing business's operating within region, and the city of Chicago's DPD personnel. Obtaining informed consent from all participants involved will ensure that ethical principles are adhered to and is based on the respect for all potential participants and thus require me to protect participants with impaired decision-making capacity and maintaining their confidentiality (Hulley, 2007).

**Consent and Privacy.** Written permission has been given to conduct this research for the LCTF by the Director of the organization. Other participants were asked for their

consent written letters, and open invitations to the community by flyers posted on the LCTF website and hard copies at various locations within the community, via the informed consent process prior to the actual research. As for the community participants who attend the focus group or community meeting, an implied consent was assumed by their participation.

### ***Client Organization Approval***

See Appendix C.

***Walden IRB Approval.*** Walden's Institutional Review Board (IRB) is duly constituted under the Office of Human Research Protection and are federally mandated the responsibility of reviewing research involving human subjects to ensure that a proposed protocol meets the appropriate ethical guidelines. The IRB's ethics review and approval are required before participant recruitment, or data collection. As such, participants privacy was respected and their private information confidential. They had the right to change their mind, to decide that the research does not match their interests, or to withdraw without a penalty.

### **Analysis and Synthesis**

The first step in the data analysis process was transcribing the interviews. Relevant concepts (including those related to collaborative governance theory and sustainable development) were coded within the transcripts and subsequently, themes began to be identified based on groupings of the coded concepts. These themes were interpreted in the context of Lake Calumet's Green Economic Industrial Corridor plan

and the North Branch Industrial Corridor Framework as they pertain to collaboration and partnerships amongst community organizations and local Governance.

Qualitative data analysis is the process of examining and interpreting qualitative data to understand what it represents. Content analysis is the most common example of qualitative data analysis (Atlan, 2018) and was the approach used in this study. This analysis will refer to categorization, tagging and thematic analysis of qualitative data. The tags may take the form of words, images, or other identifying marks. Thematically I shall read through the data sets (such as transcripts from in depth interviews or focus groups) and identify patterns in meaning across the data by categorizing or “coding” words, themes, and concepts within the texts and then analyze the results. I will compare similar case studies to synthesize a clear outcome for recommendations. The plan is to utilize content analysis because it allows researchers to recover and examine the nuances of organizational behaviors, stakeholder perceptions, and societal trends as they pertain to collaboration and partnership building of the industrial initiatives. I will focus on using the stories and experiences shared by the stakeholders to answer the research questions.

### **Analysis Systems**

I employed an automated and autonomous thematic analysis software program, to be determined prior to data collection. Thematic analysis finds themes in text by analyzing the meaning of words and sentence structure and can easily capture the “unknown unknowns” to identify themes I would perhaps not spot by manually coding the data. The main purpose for using this sort of program, for example MAXQDA, Atlas.ti or NVivo, is to manage and help in the analysis of qualitative data. These

programs can “sort and organize qualitative data, store, annotate and retrieve text, locate words, phrases and segments of data, prepare diagrams and extract quotes” (Burnard et al., 2008, p. 430).

### **Analysis Procedures (Coding)**

The interviews were performed via Zoom and recorded, then transcribed by the researcher using Microsoft Word’s Voice dictation. The focus group and key interview was processed through a transcribing service (Go Transcript) transcribing the audio recording into text. I will describe the data collection process first for the focus group and then for the interviews, and then for the document reviews. These procedures are the most common descriptive research method used, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. The value of this type of procedure is based on the premise that problems can be solved, and practices improved through observation, analysis, and description (Kozleski, 2017). I analyzed and coded the collected data inductively; having a limited or no predetermined framework, theory or structure but instead using the data itself to organize the analysis by identifying themes and categories that emerge from the data. My approach included analyzing transcripts, identifying themes within those data sets, and comparing examples of those themes from the interview and group setting’s text.

### **Data Integrity**

Data integrity is the process of maintaining and assuring the accuracy and consistency of data throughout research. The audio recordings ensure that the data is reliable, accurate, and I have stored the data on a flash drive. The data will not be changed or modified, transferred, or deleted.

### ***Credibility***

Credibility is the most important criterion in establishing trustworthiness in a research study. The premise of this concept is to be able to clearly link the research study's findings with reality, thereby demonstrating the truth of the research study's findings. In qualitative case study research, the most often techniques used to establish credibility are member checking and triangulation. To ensure that my findings (from the literature, semi-structured interviews, and focus group) are comprehensive, rich, and robust, I have used multiple sources of data to exact triangulation. I compared the different perspectives of the two populations of participants at different points in time and different settings as well as a comprehensive review of literature on collaboration, partnerships and sustainable development and the We Will Chicago Plan This method ensures the consistency of the findings.

### ***Transferability***

I established transferability by using the technique of thick description. I have provided a robust and detailed account of the participant's interviews and that of the focus groups, in the content of collaboration and partnerships amongst the community, the nonprofit community agency and local Governance. The findings and recommendations of this research are available to be presented as a method by which researchers and public administrators of sustainable developments can apply in other research studies and context as possible new best practices in collaboration across public and governmental agencies.

### ***Dependability***

Dependability establishes that the research study's findings are consistent and repeatable. This study has been subjected to an inquiry audit to demonstrate dependability, which requires an outside person to review and examine the research process and the data analysis. The work has been scrutinized by a University Review Board.

### ***Confirmability***

Confirmability establishes confidence in a study's findings, my findings are based upon the participants' narratives and words rather than my personal/potential biases. I detailed the data collection and analysis procedures and described how the data is interpreted. I provided my rationale for the method I use for coding the ideals drawn from the interviews.

### **Summary**

During the collection and analysis of the information gathered for this study I established and maintained a systematic method that I previously described under the abovementioned headings. The objective has been to describe specifically the context, events, people, and relationships with stake in the development of the LCTF's Green Economic Corridor Plan. I have clearly described, in clear and concise manner an understanding of how I proceeded in accomplishing the objective, by identifying the underlying failings to be avoided in future endeavors seeking to implement sustainable developments through collaboration and partnerships amongst community organizations and local governance entities.

## Section 4: Results

### **Introduction**

The LCTF recognizes that the city of Chicago has long used the Southeast Side and other lower-income communities of color ...as “dumping grounds for heavy and dirty industries” as quoted by Nancy Loeb, the director of Northwestern University’s Environmental Advocacy Center. In addition, even the locals label their situation as “receiving zones for industries no longer welcomed in wealthier, whiter areas” (CDPH, 2022). However, these and other conditions that the community experiences are the foundational cause for the visions that the LCTF has, and why the organization was established. The LCTF strives for positive social change. Its vision and hope are that southeast Chicagoland will one day serve as a national and international model for the integration of industrial, residential, and natural areas into a productive, green, and environmentally sustainable urban community.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to identify strategies of collaboration, partnership, and participation in Chicago’s Citywide Framework plan as they relate to the Lake Calumet community. By gathering stakeholders’ perspectives through interviews, a focus group, and the city’s We Will Chicago Plan, this research sought to create an implementation memo in manuscript form with recommendations that the LCTF can incorporate into their role as advocates for the revitalization of the Lake Calumet IC and surrounding communities. The core research questions that guided this study were as follows.



RQ1: What principles of cooperation, partnership and participation are necessary for an advocate non-profit organization to participate in realizing a community modernization framework?

RQ 2: How can LCTF utilized the principles of Collaboration, Cooperation, and Partnerships to gain access to Chicago's We Will Plan from design thru implementation?

Sub-RQ1: What do Lake Calumet stakeholders perceive as barriers to effective collaboration?

The organizational conditions and personal experiences of LCTF staff members, several who are residents of the community as well, and the other participants, that may very well influence the interpretation of the results of this study varies. There is a chance that the LCTF's staff and employees have prejudices due to having suffered environmental health disparities, fought well-known polluting companies and court rulings for years. For instance, a 1999 study pointed out that, "Chicago's death and hospitalization rates for asthma are twice the national average. Certain areas, such as Chicago's Southeast Side, have double the number of emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and deaths in the city as a whole" (Jones, K., 2016). In a similar manner, other resident and participants who directly face the same injustices and other issues are also very much influenced by their experiences. However, without the shared experiences the findings would be incomplete.

### **Demographics**

Participant recruitment yielded approximately 14 individuals from the 9th and 10th ward communities that included several staff members of the LCTF. Seven

participants from the Lake Calumet vicinity and surrounding communities were interviewed individually through semi structured interviews. The population also included a top official from Chicago's Mayor's office whose agenda includes a commitment to centering the City of Chicago's climate and sustainability agenda on equity and mitigating environmental harm in Chicago's most overburdened and underserved communities such as Lake Calumet and an executive from Do for Self-Community Development Corporation (DFS). Additionally, a focus group was comprised of seven community members, which included several staff members of the LCTF.

The neighborhood located within the Lake Calumet Region of Chicagoland is the 10th Ward's South Deering, with Hegewisch just south and the East Side community to its east. According to a June 2017 analysis by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, there were 15,305 people and 5,068 households in South Deering. The racial makeup of the area was 3.9% White, 65.1% African American, 0.1% Asian, and 1.0% from other races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 29.9% of the population. Within the ward the populace is dispersed with 28.8% under the age of 19, 19.1% from 20 to 34, 16.4% from 35 to 49, 19.6% from 50 to 64, and 15% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 37 years (Community Data Snapshot - South Deering, 2017). See Table 2. The population and household tables include general demographic, social, and economic characteristics summarized for South Deering. As an added note, previous Calumet Connect research found that residents in the Calumet Industrial Corridor, where Hispanic/Latino residents make up 59% of the population and Black residents make up 25%, have disproportionately poor health outcomes, there is a shortage of primary

healthcare services, and toxic chemical releases remain high

(<https://www.metroplanning.org>).

**Table 2**

*General Population Characteristics, South Deering, and City of Chicago*

Ethnicity	South Deering		City of Chicago	
	Population	% Of The Population	Population	% Of The Population
Black	9,646	63.7	776,470	28.8
White	753	5.0	900,055	33.3
Hispanic	4690	31.0	776,470	28.6
Asian	0	0.0	182,251	6.8
Other/Multiple Races (Non-Hispanic)	55	0.4	67,780	2.5

*Note.* Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

The population and household tables above include general demographic, social, and economic characteristics summarized for South Deering. As an added note, previous Calumet Connect research found that residents in the Calumet Industrial Corridor, where Hispanic/Latino residents make up 59% of the population and Black residents make up 25%, have disproportionately poor health outcomes, there is a shortage of primary healthcare services, and toxic chemical releases remain high, (<https://www.metroplanning.org>).

## **Data Collection / Sources of Evidence**

The sources of evidence were individual interviews, a focus group, and literature review that includes the newly adopted City of Chicago's DPD "WE WILL CHICAGO." This is a framework plan for the city's future, provided by a top official from the DPD's Bureau of Citywide Systems, Historic Preservation & Central Area Planning Division.

### **Focus Group**

The focus group was held at the LCTF office, located at 13300 S Baltimore Ave, Chicago, IL 60633. The pool of eight participants consisted of SEFT staff and employees who live and work in the community. The meeting lasted just over an hour, and all research questions (see research questions in Appendix D) were addressed.

### **Interviews**

The first interview was held via the Teams platform with a City of Chicago's top official. The method of collection used was an audio recording device (Olympus DM-720). Other semi structured interviews were held via Zoom and recorded, and a face-to-face interview was held with an executive from Do For Self-Community Development Corporation, a not-for-profit organization, and a member of the MDC Economic Development Corporation. Both organizations held contracts with the City of Chicago's DPD Housing Department.

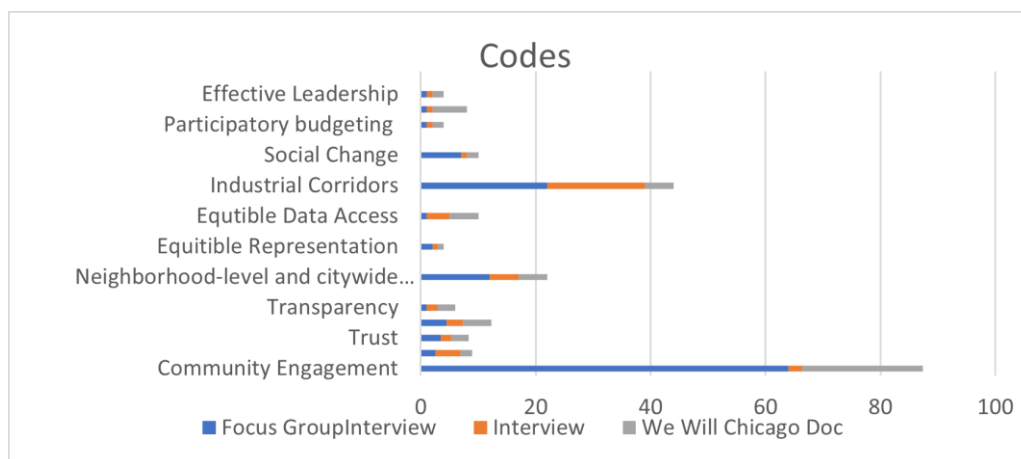
### **Documents**

In addition to and in lieu of other DPD employee interviews, an official from the DPD's Bureau of Citywide Systems, Historic Preservation & Central Area Planning, provided the City of Chicago' DPD document (We Will Chicago Citywide Plan)

approved by the Chicago Plan Commission after three years of intensive neighborhood-based and virtual public engagement. The plan is a framework designed for growth and vibrancy for the entire city over a decade and is considered a critical instrument that will guide future budgets, capital projects, and policies while ensuring public decision making includes a focus on resident needs.

### **Analysis of Data**

I scrutinized the semi structured interviews without any preconceived notions of what the codes would be by using an inductive approach. As such, the codes were derived from the data. In the initial coding procedure, I utilized in-vivo and values coding methods by using the participants own shared experiences, words, and terms as codes. Semi structured interview transcripts and the We Will Chicago document were read several times to identify codes, categories, and themes. Further emerging themes (and/or categories) were developed by studying the transcripts repeatedly and considering possible meanings, as well as how the labels best fit with ongoing developing themes. The data acquired from the DPD's CIVIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, CCE doc provided similar codes, themes, and categories discovered from the analysis of the focus group and semi-structured interviews.

**Figure 1***Prevalent Coding*

Note. Created by Brooks, N.

After forming the initial codes and reading the transcripts again, I noted categories began to emerge. The major categories are as follows: *collaboration*, *development*, and *officials engaging community*. The code *leadership* enlarged into the category of *local citizens, participating and stakeholders*. This further developed into a theme I entitled *community perspectives*. Likewise, the code *partners/partnerships* categorized into *engagement, businesses, and joint ventures*; I linked these to the theme *collaboration*. Correspondingly, the categories relating to the *environmental injustice, redevelopment, and corridor modernization* initiative derived from the code *social change* and the theme *sustainable development*. Under the code *governance, equitable representation, neighborhood decision-making, and planning* were included, as well as in the theme *officials engaging with the community*.

Table 3

*Codes, Categories, and Themes*

Codes		Categories		Themes
Residents	Local Citizens	Participation	Stakeholders Decision-Making. Cooperation, Partnership, Participation.	Community Perspectives. Equity as a Value and Principle. Community Engagement. Trust Building.
Partnerships	Neighborhood Engagement	Business Relationships	Partners. Cooperation Partnership Participation	Collaboration. Trust Building Accountability
Social Change	Justice	Socio-Equity	Environmental Integrity	Sustainable Development Equity as a Value and Principle
Governance	Equitable representation	Decision-Making	Planning Cooperation, Partnership, Participation.	Officials engaging with the Community. Accountability. Inter & Intra-agency and Cross-Collaboration.

*Note.* Created by Brooks. N

By analyzing and sorting the codes into categories, I detected consistent and overarching themes from the data: *trust building, equity as a value and principle, community engagement, accountability, inter & intra-agency, and cross-collaboration.*

### Findings

The primary research questions were asked: What principles of cooperation, partnership and participation are necessary to create a successful industrial corridor modernization framework? How can LCTF combine principles of cooperation, partnership and participation with government agency design and implementation

strategies to develop a collective, feasible sustainable development plan for the industrial corridor community and, what is Lake Calumet Industrial Corridor stakeholder's current perceptions of an effective collaboration and partnerships? The collective answers to these questions and supplemental ideals that derive from them are presented in this section.

The participants from both the focus group and the interviews expressed the need for a community development framework that is grounded principles of cooperation, partnership, and participation. Participants similarly shared that values of honesty, openness, and social responsibility as the guiding principles is needed to create framework for sustainable development in any community. Findings also suggest that primarily, citizens in this community have a measure of distrust of the city's leadership and politicians. However, the participants also expressed the willingness to establish relationships with the formal and informal leadership, try to build trust, collaborate with officials, and seek commitment from community organizations and leaders to create processes for galvanizing the community.

The participants all agreed that governance must live up to the responsibility of putting the well-being of individuals and communities ahead of political and selective agendas. In addition, literature regarding cooperation, partnership and participation suggest that equitable community partnerships and transparency is likely to produce the results desired. As such, the City of Chicago, this study has found, has adopted its new 10-year framework for citywide growth and vibrancy on February 16,2023. It is a critical tool to guide the city's future annual budgets, capital projects, and policy priorities to



ensure public decision-making is focused on the needs of the entire City and all its residents. It is the first-ever citywide plan and was drafted by neighborhood residents and community leaders. The plan is a timely answer to the disconnect and gaps that has stunted the efforts of the LCTF and other community organizations who seek positive social changes and socio-economic relief through sustainable developments. By virtue of the We Will framework, the opportunity to engage has increased substantially. Many of the elements of the plan are aligned with this study and several are presented that addresses the RQs.

### **Cooperation**

The Principles of Collaboration: Applying Trust, Respect, Willingness, Empowerment, and Effective Communication to Human Relationships.

### **Partnership**

The principles guiding partnerships: Trust, Shared knowledge, Innovation, Agreed Goals, Balance of return.

### **Participation**

Principle includes Supporting and encouraging participants, government and community institutions, and others to work together to advance the common good, being consistent and understand who your members are and how they want to engage.

The need to increase public access and participation in civic and democratic processes proved to be paramount amongst the participants and the We Will Chicago document. A City's Top Official stated during her interview that "I think throughout the whole process it is not just about the planning, the implementation, I think that creating

structures to ensure that people are guiding processes from start to finish are extremely critical”. A similar statement is presented in the Civic & Community Engagement section of the We Will Chicago (WWC) also. In addition, other participants express the need and desire for community engagement and participation at all phases of developmental projects within their neighborhoods.

The experience regarding the opportunity for community engagement, presented within the WWC documents in 2022 claims that the city hosted over 20 in-person and virtual engagements that reached more than 15,000 residents that addressed topics ranging from public safety to cultural celebrations. Of all whom participated in this study, only staff of the LCTF had known about some of the outreach engagements. The WWC document also list numerous other community engagements goals held by the City of Chicago.

### **Trust and Commitment to mutual benefit**

Key themes were procured from the data analysis that indicates common trends amongst the LCTF, community, and DPD’s aspirations for sustainable development through collaboration and partnerships. Yet, the reality is that the average living standards, in other communities adjacent to certain industrial corridors in Chicago (North Branch) have risen and the gap between those well-offs and the impecunious neighborhoods adjoining Lake Calumet’s IC, has broadened. As stated by one participant of the focus group and agreed upon by the whole, “My thoughts are the same as Felicia. It is about agendas; I think there is a community agenda of what is needed and then what the city’s looking to have here. It is the city’s long-term game of continuing to have the

area as an industrial corridor, wanting to fit the needs of corporations” (Resident & Staff of LCTF). Indirectly, the collective ideals that stem from the data which supports the need for agencies to collaborate, appears to be governance and leadership, having unified purposes and motivations, and relationships. The We Will Chicago Plan’s, Civic and Community Engagement section highlights the new directive to “ensure equitable access to virtual and in-person public meetings and processes across City departments, and agencies” (We Will Chicago, 2023) in order to create stronger, proactive, long-term partnerships with community organizations, block clubs and other coalitions to increase engagement, but herein lies a gap in collaboration.

The data gathered in this study also suggests that the community has not been content with the previous arrangement. Participants from the focus group and individual interviews with other participant/ stakeholders further expressed sentiments of exclusion. One interviewee stated that when it comes to community participation, “unless you are an urban planner, unless you are part of the industry or a union, or-- if you are not part of that, then you are really cut off. You probably do not even know that there is a community engagement opportunity” (FG,11/22). Contrastingly, Pillar 2 the Civic & Community engagement section of the WWC plan, ensures all Chicago Stakeholders could help guide the city’s future. In addition, Pillar 3, the Economic Development section of the Plan proposes to “attract and retain residents” and increase density to strengthen neighborhood vibrancy, especially on the South and West Sides, *HOUSING&NEIGHBORHOODS*, pg.69. (<https://wewillchicago.com/draft.2023>).

## **Stakeholder's Perceptions of Collaboration and Partnerships**

The Lake Calumet Industrial Corridor and surrounding communities, namely the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> City Wards would benefit from future growth and density in and around transit hubs, key commercial corridors and/or anchors. The Directors and Staff members of LCTF have been for over 25 years involved in a coordinated effort to address environmental injustice & sustainability, in a quantifiable manner and subsequently extreme poverty.

Efforts include the Green Economic Industrial Plan, which aims to bring revitalization to the Calumet Region through redevelopment that addresses the past and ensures the future for its residents. The LCTF's Our Power Plan, that proliferates upon the EPA's 2015- Clean Power Plan (CPP) presents clear and specific strategies for implementing the Clean Power Plan in a way that will truly benefit the community's health and economy. The LCTF's Our Power Plan necessitates investing in real, clean renewables, jobs, and health without carbon trading. The LCTF Plan calls on leaders to cease incentivizing extractive and dirty energy and ensuring that significant representation and decision-making power is imparted to communities such as Lake Calumet who has been overburdened by climate impacts and the EPA's Clean Power Plan including other surrounding southeast Chicago communities that are primarily people of color and low-income.

The Chief Sustainability Officer for the City of Chicago stated in her semi-structured interview that "I can say that my hope is that, as we do this work, we are thinking about justice. Thinking about how we can ensure that the outcomes are aligned

with what is fair and just to the people of the southeast side”. She further stated that her hope is that “as we move forward, that we are thinking about collaboration and partnership as a principle. That we can do this work in coordination with the stakeholders of the southeast side to make sure that the outcomes support their vision for community”. At the time of this interview, the Chief Sustainability Officer leads a team and reports to Chicago’s Policy Chief and Mayor, respectively; She has influence in decisions that are made and uses her role to weigh in and to provide strategic guidance over decisions.

Another aspect of stakeholders’ perceptions regarding partnerships and collaboration that developed during the interview with DFS’s CEO is the correlation between low-community developments and the violence and killings that plague Chicago’s economically despaired neighborhoods; how it indicates the absence of opportunity and sustainable, well-considered options. Under the leadership of DFS CEO, collaborating with Chicago’s DPD housing Authority, his Jobs versus Jails initiative employed 300+ people who earned more than \$8,000,000, fulfilling contracts for the housing authority and other entities. The program proved that residents of public housing and rival gang members could rise above their circumstances and become leaders and role models in the community. Mr. Muhammad stated that “Investing in people changes communities one neighborhood at a time” (Muhammad, D. 2023).

This study also reveals that in the pre-planning phase of the WWC Plan, the committee intends to have a sustained structure for city departmental and agency collaboration throughout the planning and implementation process and ensure that stakeholders across sectors, geographies, are engaged from the beginning to establish

collaboration, data sharing, and sustained involvement in the creation and implementation of the plan.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

This case study reveals that the disconnect in achieving shared goals between citizens, community organizations, and local government stems from a lack of collaboration, partnerships, and participation, but not due to a lack of understanding of these concepts, but rather from a failure to apply them. Several studies point toward the value of collaborative strategies while other studies, however, point to the problems that collaborative strategies encounter as they pursue valued outcomes (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Also, “fragmentation is often a main cause of inconsistency in the attempt to improve community outcomes” (Borgonovi, et al.2019). The findings of this investigation indicated that individual organizations’ attempts to solve community issues on their own are frequently unsuccessful. Here I define each principle relative to developing sustainable measures and developments.

Prior to the We Will Chicago plan, the DPD presented opportunities to private enterprises (profit and nonprofits) as request for proposals. The newly adopted plan affords community engagement at all levels of developments, including citizens participation. The previous barriers included a lack of strong governance framework and leadership to manage complex practices; difficulties in establishing appropriate skill mix and team size; insufficient space and time for communication and collaboration; and inadequate communication, as well as selective agendas. The methodological merit of this study stems from the views of the diverse samples of community stakeholders, public

and nonprofit organizations staff and leadership. With the newly adopted We Will Chicago plan, community organizations can collaborate and form partnerships for the redeveloping of their communities. The plan consists of forty goals and one hundred fifty objectives to better the lives of Chicagoans, particularly those affected by inequalities in health, fiscal security, community livability, and other structural problems. The LCTF and past Director had spent years creating a Green Economic Industrial Corridor plan, a redevelopment guide for the Calumet River area that aims to protect communities, conserve natural habitats and facilitate sustainable economic development.

There are great economic incentives that exist in the Lake Calumet region that supports sustainable development initiatives. One of the opportunities is transportation. Interstate 94, a highway that connects Detroit to Montana, serves as the western limit of the Calumet Area. On the east is Interstate 90, which connects Boston to Seattle. Within a 10-mile radius are Interstates 80, 55, 57, and 65. The Calumet Area is reached by trucks arriving from any market in the eastern and southern United States before they pass through downtown Chicago, saving time and money on transportation.

Chicago ships more intermodal containers by rail than any other US metro area, with an annual total of almost 19 million (Mall,2021). A significant amount of the intermodal traffic is centered in the Calumet Area and has access to seven Class I regional major railroads. Finally, there is water transportation available via ships and barges. The Port of Chicago at Lake Calumet Harbor and Iroquois Landing on Lake Michigan, both operated by the Illinois International Port Authority, offer access to the

Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence Seaway, the Atlantic Ocean, the Mississippi River, and the Gulf of Mexico.

### **How Findings Serve the Client Organization**

Civic and Community engagement has long been one of the issues that the SEFT has experienced as a barrier to the community work that they perform. The study has revealed the City's commitment to expand upon engaging and collaborating with the communities throughout Chicagoland. Under the Plan's Civic & Community Engagement section, goal number 1 promotes the building of robust and effective civic infrastructure to enable Chicagoans to improve their lives and neighborhoods. The objective here is that strong, proactive, and long-term partnerships with organizations, block clubs, and other coalitions be created to increase engagement.

### **Unanticipated Limitations or Outcomes**

Knowledge sources primarily based upon participants definition of collaborative and partnerships and how the performance is managed. This implies that different definitions of the same concept could lead other researchers to study different disciplines, reach different conclusions and define a different research agenda.

## **Implications Resulting from Findings**

### **For the Client Organization**

The findings in this study juxtaposes that the client organization build a sound knowledge base in collaborative performance management and focus their efforts on the most relevant issues. Further research could deepen understanding of the relationships



between collaborative and partnership strategies and the conditions under which they are effective.

### **For Positive Social Change**

This research identified four opportunity-based practices that can help to create favorable conditions and mobilize resources to execute PSC projects more effectively. The deep-level route opportunity mechanisms are made possible and supported by the following activities, (1) Changes in patterns of thinking, behaviors, and social relationships are made by a multilevel, “bottom-up” process; (2) Positive social change across organizational and legal frameworks, which comprise PSC initiated by both for-profit and nonprofit entities; (3) combinations of change strategies and supportive organizational behaviors that may have varying effects on Positive social change aims and (4) increasing volunteerism in the community, charity giving, and prudent investment (Stephan, 2016).

### **Recommendations**

The LCTF as an organization will first want to register (this can be done online) with the We Will Chicago Plan and familiarize itself with the website and the various aspect of the plan. It is recommended that the LCTF apply to become one of the Community Partners when the opportunity presents itself again. Currently, applications are now closed. Application criteria consist of being evaluated as to the applicant’s proven ability to advocate for the interests of the people it represents; to actively contribute to research team needs; to host community meetings; and to make related, positive contributions to the formation of a citywide plan. The adopted plan 8<sup>th</sup> Pillar

seeks external stakeholders to define and identify engagement standards that should be considered for projects that require City review, approval or assistance.

Internally, the LCTF will want to redetermine the organizations priorities as they relate to the We Will Chicago Plan and develop goals and objectives that align with the newly adopted plans.

### **Strengths and Limitations of the Study**

The credibility of this study lies in the demonstrated data analysis that has proven to be performed in a consistent precise and exhausting manner. The methodological merit of this study stems from the views of the diverse samples of community stakeholders, public and nonprofit organization's staff and leadership, and how the findings align with principles of collaboration and partnerships in theory.

Partial findings in this research were gathered from non- professional or academia perspectives, participants who expressed their views from actual experience within their community only. This implies that different definitions of the same concept could lead other researchers conclude different implications, reach different conclusions, or define a different research agenda. The line of questioning presented to the Focus Group yielded significant similarities to the questioning presented to individual interviewees. The We will Chicago Plan, in which the CSO participated, provides similar to exact reasoning and conclusions for the implementation of collaborative efforts between community stakeholders and the DPD. Across each data set, the document, focus group, and interviews, the criteria to meet trustworthiness has been met. The research design, method and conclusions has been mostly free of biases, is open to critique, is replicable,

and is encourage. In fact, follow up research on the outcomes of LCTF participation in the We Will Chicago Plan is encouraged to determine if the parties involved will have found success in the recommendations and the plan itself.

### **Summary**

Southeast Chicagoland, according to the LCTF vision and goal, will one day serve as a national and worldwide example for integrating industrial, residential, and natural regions into a profitable, green, and ecologically sustainable metropolitan neighborhoods. This research has established a strategic plan in manuscript form by collecting stakeholders' viewpoints via interviews, a focus group, and the city's We Will Chicago Framework.

The data analysis yielded key themes that suggest shared tendencies across the LCTF, community, and DPD's ambitions for sustainable development via cooperation and partnerships. The findings of this research show that there are information gaps, which impede good cooperation between government and community organizations. It is recommended that the LCTF as an organization will first wish to register with the We Will Chicago Plan. The plan provides an inclusive pragmatic approach to designing sustainable local community goals and targets. The staff will want to familiarize itself with the webpage as well as the numerous components of the strategy. It is suggested that the LCTF seek to become a Community Partner when the chance arises again. It is crucial that LCTF stakeholders engage in decision making at all levels and align their strategies with those of the WE Will Plan since sustainable development of a community is the culmination of everyone's activities.

## Section 5: Dissemination Plan

This research in its entirety will be presented to the Lake Calumet Task Force. Upon the approval of said research by the Walden University Chief Academic Officer, I shall make an appointment with the Director of LCTF. I shall present the research and the findings as well as the recommendation in a formal meeting to the staff. The organization will also receive a hard copy and email in pdf form.

### **PAS Deliverable Described**

The finished product is a qualitative case study entitled “Sustainable Community Development Goals: A Case Study of Collaboration, Partnership and Participation between a Community Nonprofit Organization and a City’s Planning Division.” The entire study will be presented to the client organization along with recommendations for their inspection. The deliverable is subject to ongoing research and/or revisions and should be as needed or as deemed necessary by the staff. The Implementation Memo is in Appendix E of this document.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The Lake Calumet Task Force has believed that the southeast side of Chicago can and will serve as a national and international example for the integration of industrial, residential, and natural regions into a productive, green, and environmentally sustainable urban neighborhood since its founding. The basis of this study has been to identify barriers and/or gaps of knowledge that have hindered the organization’s ceaseless attempts, as change agents, to bring into fruition the aspirations of a truly sustainable community.

This in-depth inquiry has found that direct community engagement via collaboration and partnerships with governance, local non- and for-profit organizations, can provide the strategic planning and guidance needed to meet this objective. The newly adopted We Will Chicago Plan offers the opportunity for the LCTF and other community organizations to actively pursue their collective purposes. Planning fails when there is no cooperation, no direction, no commitment, and win-lose behaviors. Collaboration that works produces win-win outcomes. Planners and administrators can work together to accomplish goals that would be impossible to accomplish separately by exchanging information, resources, activities, and talents across sectors.

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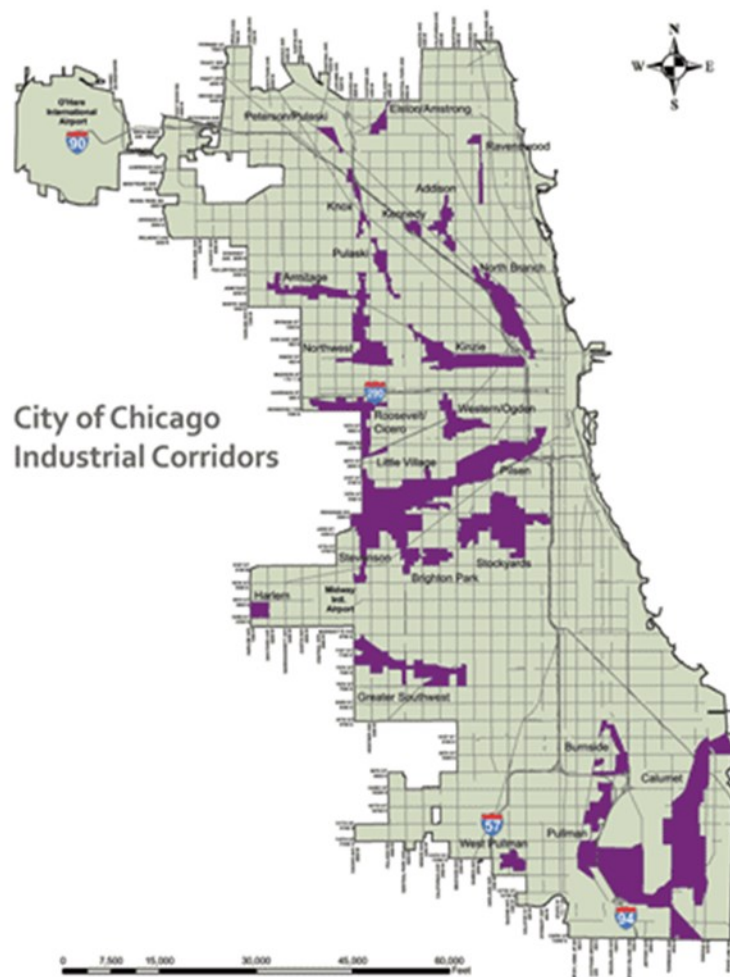
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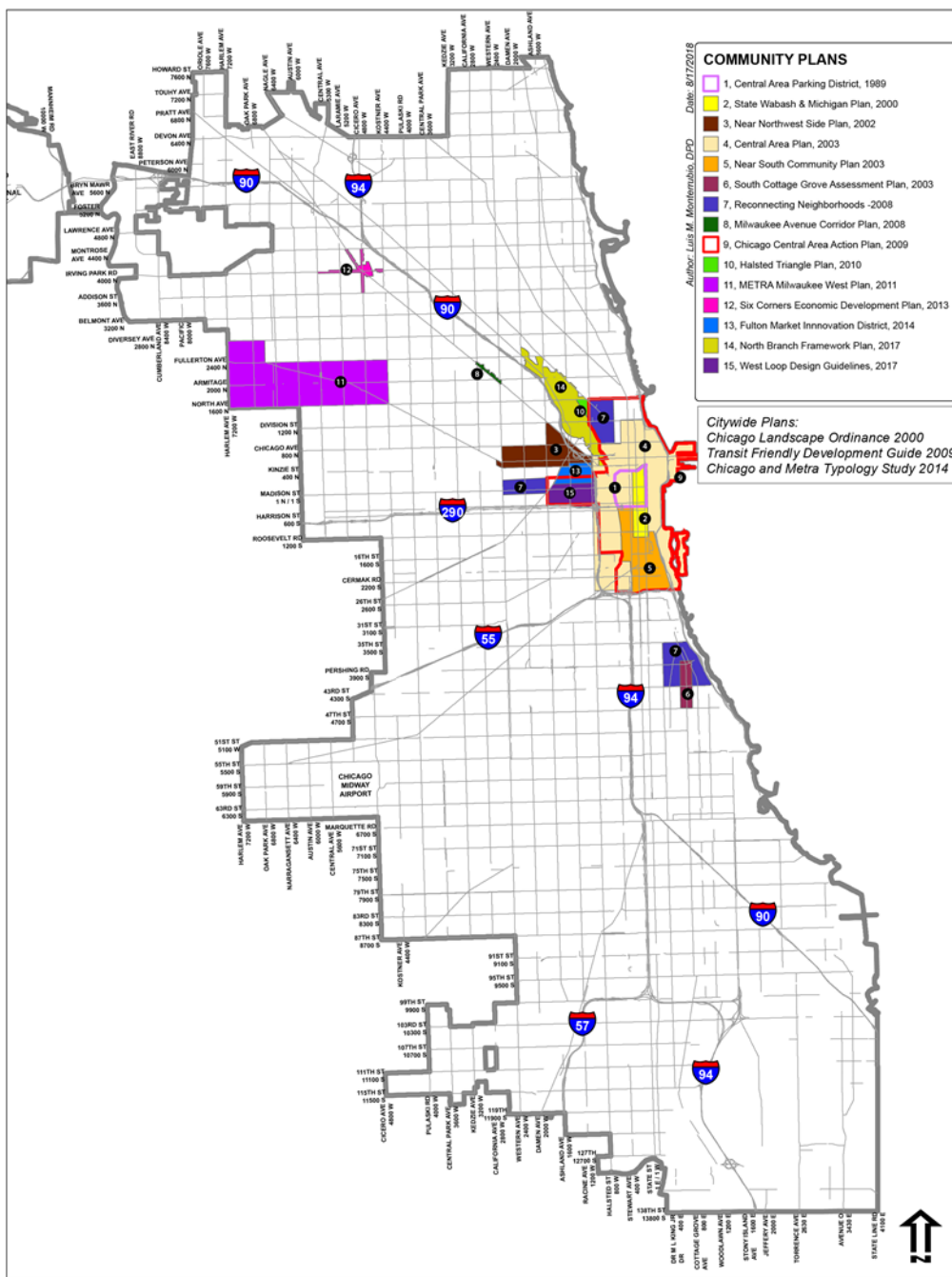
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Appendix A: Chicago's Industrial Corridors



Appendix B: Planning and Sustainability Division Community Plans





## Appendix C: Client Participation Agreement

## Project Proposal

This Project Proposal has been drafted by Nicholas Brooks for The Southeast Environmental Task Force and is dated May 2, 2019.

## Scope of Work

- [describe internship expectations and outcomes/deliverables]

Work Phase	Estimated Time Required
<p><b>interactions:</b>            MEET WITH SETF ON            Regular basis to receive            input on status of            the (GEIC) program</p>	<p>2 hrs per            MEETINGS</p>
<p><b>Outcomes/Deliverables:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Obtain ANSWERS that              the community has              from group MEETINGS</li> <li>2. Create Surveys</li> <li>3. Examine Reports</li> </ol>	<p>Dependant              up on desired              outputs.</p>

Additional Services Provided if Requested:

Attend other related  
meetings with staff.

Total

Services Summary

Estimated Length of  
Engagement

provide  
ASSISTANCE with  
the Public Administration

1 year

### Terms of confidentiality and compliance:

In all reports (including drafts shared with peers and faculty members), the student is required to maintain confidentiality by removing names and key pieces of information that might disclose an Institution's/individual's identity or inappropriately divulge proprietary details. If the Institution itself wishes to publicize the findings of this project, that is the Institution's judgment call. The student will publish the case study in ProQuest as a doctoral capstone (with site and participant identifiers withheld). The case study will be based upon interviews with nonvulnerable adults on the topic of the Institution's business operations, review of public records, and review of internal records/documents related to the Institution's operations that the Institution deems appropriate for sharing with the student.

The doctoral student will not use these data for any purpose other than the project outlined in this agreement. Interview recordings and full transcripts will be shared with any interviewee (upon request), and the doctoral student will provide opportunities for clarifying previous statements. Transcripts with identifiers redacted may be shared with the doctoral student's university faculty, peer advisors, and site leadership (upon request). The doctoral student is responsible for understanding and complying with all the Institution's policies and regulatory requirements.

### Ethical Conduct in this Consulting Relationship

The Code of Conduct in the Walden University 2016-2017 Student Handbook and the ethical requirements for IRB compliance.

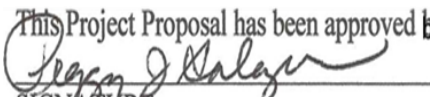
Also, students are required to uphold professional principles in fulfilling their roles as consultants and coaches to client organizations. Beyond the confidentiality requirements outlined above, three principles are key to ensuring ethical conduct in consulting relationships. Principle 1 : Protect the integrity of Walden University o Not representing conflicting or competing interests or positioning themselves such that their interest may be in conflict or may be perceived to be in conflict with the purposes and values of Walden University o Not intentionally communicating false or misleading information that may compromise the integrity of Walden University and of the consulting capstone experience

Principle 2: always Exhibit professional conduct. Respecting the climate, culture, values, and regulatory requirements of client organizations and client workforce members

Principle 3: Protect the promise of confidentiality o Not using or adapting client organization's data and information after the capstone experience, unless the information has been publicly shared by the client

- Not conducting telephone conferences with the client organization in public places where information may be overheard

This Project Proposal has been approved by [NAME]:

  
SIGNATURE

## Appendix D: Interview Questions

RQ1: What principles of cooperation, partnership and participation are necessary to create a successful industrial corridor modernization framework?

- A. What is your role /position within this agency/organization?
- B. Explain your organization's position as it pertains to the ICMI project.
- C. As a decision maker for this organization, what is your take on working in unison with the other organizations and communities involved, from planning designs to implementation?
- D. Please explain the advantages and disadvantages of collaborating with the other entities and communities involved in the industrial corridor project.
- E. Please explain the advantages and disadvantages of partnership building with the other entities and communities involved in the industrial corridor project.
- F. Are you in favor with collaborating and partnership with the LCTF and the residents of Lake Calumet?

RQ 2: How can LCTF combine principles of cooperation, partnership and participation with government agency design and implementation strategies to develop a feasible sustainable development plan for the GEIC?

- A. What do you see as barriers to managerial collaboration, creating partnership with the other entities involved in the sustainable development of the Lake Calumet industrial corridor and community?
- B. Can you describe any competitiveness that exist across the entities involved?

- C. As public servants and administrators, is your primary responsibility an advocacy role? Explain your answer.

Sub-RQ1: What do Lake Calumet stakeholders perceive as barriers to effective collaboration? (This RQ is primarily for the community residents).

- A. As a taxpayer in the Lake Calumet region, what are your thoughts about revitalizing the community?
- B. What do you believe the public servants primary objective ought to be?
- C. What has been your communication experience with your local officials?
- D. What do you believe the community can contribute to the Lake Calumet Industrial Modernization Initiative?

The research questions above are a precursor to the interviews that I shall perform with key stakeholders and the basis of the community focus group setting. Each research question shall present future questions that will allow the participants to elaborate in a much more robust manner, supplying me with thick commentary to analyze. This method can provide broader capability in the analyzing and my being able to draw conclusions.

## Appendix E: Implementation Memo

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Lake Calumet Task Force

[adm@cityofchicago.org](mailto:adm@cityofchicago.org)

From: Nicholas Brooks

Date: July 7, 2023

Subject: Recommendations for Implementation as a Result of Findings in the Professional Administrative Study, “Sustainable Community Development Goals: A Case Study of Collaboration, Partnership and Participation between a Community Nonprofit Organization and a City’s Planning Division

**Introduction**

The Lake Calumet Task Force (LCTF) is a community-based environmentally focused organization located in the southeast Chicagoland area. This organization has a Green Economic Industrial Corridor plan and other sustainable efforts that can benefit the region, which thus far has not succeeded in securing local government approval and funding assistance. Therefore, the problem that this Professional Administrative Study (PAS) aimed to solve is a gap in knowledge regarding collaboration and forming partnerships for the design and implementation of sustainable development strategies across the LCTF, Chicago DPD’s PSD, and other key stakeholders.

**Background and Overview**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to identify barriers to collaborative knowledge in the administrative designs and implementation strategies between LCTF, Chicago DPD’s PSD and other important stakeholders to identify and examine possible differences in strategies for collaboration, partnership, and participation amongst various IC framework plans, including the already-approved North Branch’s Lincoln Yards plan, the LCTF’s proposed GEIC plan, and the new We Will Chicago Community Development Plan. The collaboration process that was studied will enable the LCTF to better understand and implement strategies that are currently not realized.

The findings overview is captured in the following figure:

*Codes, Categories, and Themes*

Codes		Categories		Themes
Residents	Local Citizens	Participation	Stakeholders Decision-Making. Cooperation, Partnership, Participation.	Community Perspectives. Equity as a Value and Principle. Community Engagement. Trust Building.
Partnerships	Neighborhood Engagement	Business Relationships	Partners. Cooperation Partnership Participation	Collaboration. Trust Building Accountability
Social Change	Justice	Socio-Equity	Environmental Integrity	Sustainable Development Equity as a Value and Principle
Governance	Equitable representation	Decision-Making	Planning Cooperation, Partnership, Participation.	Officials engaging with the Community. Accountability. Inter & Intra-agency and Cross-Collaboration.

*Note.* Created by Brooks. N

By analyzing and sorting the codes into categories, I detected consistent and overarching themes from the data: *trust building, equity as a value and principle, community engagement, accountability, inter & intra-agency, and cross-collaboration*. I will provide additional explanation of barriers discovered, themes from the interviews capturing perspectives of participants, and finally recommendations for LCTF to implement.

### **Barriers To Partnership**

- Lack of engagement, and unwillingness to engage

Many of the participants felt that any attempts to seek help would be futile, and specifically the participants in the focus group expressed that LCTF formerly has had little to no assistance from the City of Chicago's DPD.

- Lack of trust and transparency  
Participants expressed that when city officials have engaged and asked residents what they would like to see accomplished, that input is not adhered to; but the officials either implement their own plans or nothing at all. One participant said he believed that agendas are different between the community and the public administrators.
- Lack of equitable community partnerships and transparency

### **Themes Discovered**

- The Need for Trust Building  
One interviewee stated that when it comes to community participation, “unless you are an urban planner, part of the industry, or part of a union...if you are not part of that, then you are really cut off”.
- Equity as a Value and Principle has not been Practiced  
Pillar 3, the Economic Development section of the Plan proposes to “attract and retain residents” and increase density to strengthen neighborhood vibrancy, especially on the South and West Sides
- Community Engagement has been Missing  
There is hope as the new plan states it will “ensure equitable access to virtual and in-person public meetings and processes across City departments, and agencies” (We Will Chicago, 2023) to create stronger, proactive, long-term partnerships with community organizations, block clubs and other coalitions to increase engagement.
- Accountability to the Community has been Missing  
Participants call on leaders to cease incentivizing large money firms only, and start ensuring that significant representation and decision-making power is imparted to communities such as Lake Calumet
- Inter- & Intra-Agency Collaboration has been Missing  
The City needs to establish collaboration, data sharing, and sustained involvement with its own departments and community organization, and the citizens, both in the creation and implementation of projects.
- Cross-Collaboration Must be Developed



Create a sustained structure for city departmental and agency collaboration throughout the planning and implementation process and ensure that stakeholders across sectors, geographies, are engaged from the beginning.

### **Recommendations To Implement**

The following are the recommendations resulting from interviews with community participants:

**1. Familiarize LCTF staff and partners with *We Will Chicago Action Plan***

LCTF as an organization should familiarize itself with the *We Will Chicago in Action 2023 Plan*, scrutinizing the eight pillar's goals and objectives that align with the Lake Calumet Task Force's vision and mission. The initial pillars to research, based upon the disconnect with the DPD, are Pillars 2 and 3 (Civic & Community Engagement and Economic Development).

**2. Register as a Participant/Partner for *We Will Chicago***

At the website (<https://wewillchicago.com>), the opportunity to register as a participant/ partner of the adopted citywide planning initiative is presented.

**3. Focus on the *We Will Plan* Pillars**

Addressing the Green Economic Industrial Corridor objective, which is to bring revitalization to the Calumet Region through redevelopment by providing job creation and business opportunities that also improves the environmental health and safety for the community, LCTF Director and staff can focus on any of the pillars of the *We Will Plan*, but especially pillars 2- 5, 7 and 8 which encompass the above mentioned goals.

**4. Begin Partnering and Collaborating with the DPD**

Likewise, the staff can begin partnering and collaborating with Chicago's DPD within the guidelines of Pillar 4 with regards to the LCTF's initiatives for Integration into Natural Systems, Energy, and Water. Many of the plan's objectives are already being met daily by the Department of Planning and Development through existing departmental strategic plans and initiatives, in collaboration with sister agencies and cross-sector partners. As such, to meet its organizational objectives it is imperative that the LCTF join the forward movement happening by virtue of Chicago's Department of Planning & Development's *We Will* initiatives towards building sustainable communities.

**5. Identify and Meet Key Administrators of the *We Will Plan***

The organization needs to assign the task of identifying and meeting key and influential administrators of the *We Will Plan* in order to build good rapport and business relationships with stakeholders from the various backgrounds that shape the plan.

#### **6. Intensify Outreach Activities**

The organization needs to intensify its community outreach and education efforts within the Industrial community.

### **Conclusion**

Collaboration, participation, and partnerships as a working concept juxtaposes that if governance and community organizations come together to achieve a common goal, the chances of achieving that goal more effectively, and even in a timelier manner, are much higher. Partnership and collaboration offer shared operations and minimizes programmatic issues that may arise upon individual entities going it alone. By means of Collaboration, participation, and partnerships, this research assures that the LCTF and other nonprofit agencies who align with the recommendations provided, can assist in providing guidance to communities that are seeking to become productive, and environmentally sustainable urban communities.