

ABCD + E:
The Evolution of Asset Based Community Development to Address Equity and Displacement

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A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Urban Planning

University of Washington
2023

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Program Authorized to Offer Degree:
Urban Design and Planning

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ABSTRACT

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Asset based community development (ABCD) is a theory of practice developed in response to economic, social, and political landscape shifts that emphasizes assets currently present in the community: the capacities of the residents or workers, the relationships built between people, and the power of local associations, and institutions. Countering traditional community development strategies that focus on neighborhood deficits, this approach focuses on strengthening intangible connections and advancing community self-determination. However, ABCD has received significant criticism towards its inattentiveness to power dynamics, as the core principles and strategies were locally focused without account for structural barriers throughout history, such as displacement. Seattle is facing a gentrification crisis, with the Central Area continuing to face displacement pressures that disproportionately impact low-income residents of color. Utilizing an equity-oriented framework drawing from existing ABCD principles, this thesis assesses how ABCD principles evolved to assist current equitable neighborhood development and anti-displacement efforts. An equity oriented ABCD framework (ABCD+E) is created and utilized to analyze the 23rd Ave Action Plan with the goal of continuing the efforts of original ABCD principles while accounting for displacement and other structural barriers facing neighborhoods today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not be possible without the many people who have guided me throughout my time at the University of Washington. First, I would like to extend my gratitude to my thesis committee chairs: Manish Chalana and Joaquin Herranz for assisting me in developing my skills as a researcher. Manish Chalana for being a much-needed detail-oriented reviewer and taking the time to give valuable feedback on my work so that every sentence was meaningful. Joaquin Herranz, for introducing the asset based community development framework to me in your community economic development class and being a sounding board for my thesis storytelling. Thank you both for challenging me to think critically, write concisely, and create an engaging story for my thesis.

I want to acknowledge all my professors and staff in the Community, Environment, and Planning undergraduate department at the University of Washington including Christopher D. Campbell and Megan Herzog for guiding my undergraduate capstone in 2020 and fostering my love of community development planning. This thesis expands on many themes I explored in my undergraduate capstone, therefore I could not have completed my research without everyone who guided me during my time in Community, Environment, and Planning.

To my friends and family who have supported me throughout my entire journey as a college student, I am forever grateful for your guidance and love (both academically and personally). As someone who went straight from being an undergraduate student to a graduate student, I am forever appreciative of all the support along the way. Without it, my growth as a person and a student would not be possible.

Finally, this thesis is for all communities struggling to hold on to their culture and historical legacy amongst great social, economic, and cultural shifts. I would like to acknowledge many community-based organizations that have been doing great work to mobilize the assets of these neighborhoods and ensure that their stories continue to be written.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Within the context of city planning and policy, asset based community development (ABCD) is a model created by John Kretzmann and John P. McKnight in the 1980s as a response to top-down initiatives supporting disinvested city populations in the United States (ABCD Institute, 2017). They argued that a deficit orientation to development strategies which identifies and targets the problems or weaknesses in a community only harms a neighborhood by reducing them to a list of issues and needs. Instead, ABCD creates social and economic opportunities through the identification of existing assets and social capital inherent in existing relationships and local networks (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). At the time of its creation, ABCD primarily targeted investment and development to encourage the mobilization of present and future assets.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the evolution of asset based community development principles to understand the conditions where it has been mobilized to address equitable neighborhood development and anti-displacement efforts. The research questions that this study attempts to answer is: how have asset based community development principles evolved to assist equitable neighborhood development and anti-displacement efforts? To answer this question, this thesis begins with a comprehensive overview of ABCD's origins, the context in which it was implemented, and the deficit based orientation it contrasts. The evolution of ABCD utilization, effectiveness, and critique is reviewed. This is followed by a review of displacement and gentrification in minority neighborhoods facilitated by planning policies and programs implemented as a result of urban renewal and the "back to the city" movement, and their equity implications are examined within Seattle's Central Area. This research is followed by a synthesis of ideas into an equity-based framework inspired by ABCD principles, which is used to analyze the 23rd Avenue Action Plan in the Central Area.

Asset Based Community Development Over Time

While ABCD produced positive results in the United States and abroad, it was not immune to critique. Notably, from the 2000s onward, ABCD has received significant criticism towards its inattentiveness to power dynamics, as the core principles and strategies were locally focused without account for structural barriers throughout history. Critics argued that ABCD would not create lasting change without addressing power systems that influence assets that the framework hoped to mobilize. However, that does not mean that ABCD is obsolete and no longer relevant in addressing existing issues and community development strategies today, as there is evidence of current community strategies utilizing ABCD in an evolved manner that includes equity considerations to address current issues like displacement.

ABCD + E

Original ABCD principles still live on in current anti-displacement strategies through an evolved framework of equity oriented ABCD. Core ABCD principles have not disappeared, but rather evolved to better address the power systems that disproportionately harm marginalized communities. This creates an expanded framework of ABCD to include the next logical step: “E” for equity, creating an ABCD+E or ABCDE framework to illustrate this evolution. Present in considerations of context, stakeholder engagement, cultural heritage, economic conditions, and social capital, core principles in ABCD have not disappeared over time, but have evolved, adapted, and expanded to account for displacement, power systems, and other equity issues that disproportionately impact marginalized communities. This is seen in equitable development initiatives in Seattle’s Central Area like the 23rd Avenue Action Plan.

Implications

ABCD+E presents an evolution of ABCD that accounts for existing principles and gaps in equity considerations. Despite neighborhood conditions evolving since the 1980s, there are principles of ABCD that have still permeated through development efforts today, showing the longevity of the original framework. Therefore, there is still opportunity to adapt to future challenges that neighborhoods may face. While the core values of ABCD, if applied in contextual and equitable ways, can still create sustainable change, the world has evolved so that they cannot stand solely on their own. Additionally, many initiatives utilizing ABCD+E are still being carried out, thus the success of these strategies has not yet been evaluated. There are more opportunities for research to be done on how ABCD+E can be implemented successfully, including conditions that would make the framework most effective. Further tracking of ABCD’s evolution can shed more light on how the principles are able to adapt to present and future community development challenges, potentially transforming into a new framework altogether.

INTRODUCTION

Seattle is facing a displacement crisis in low-income communities of color, with the Central Area continuing to face rapid transformations that facilitate displacement of their historically African American residents. Seattle is considered the third most gentrifying city in the nation (Balk, 2019), as impacts of housing discrimination, racist policies, and racial wealth divides continue to affect culturally historic neighborhoods. The Central Area in central Seattle was a historically Black neighborhood, but that population has since decreased from 75% to 15% from 1960 to 2017 (King, Shepard, 2020). Many historic homes and buildings have been replaced by new development including apartments, condos, and commercial spaces with increased density. This has made it difficult for many long-time residents, particularly those with lower incomes, to afford to live in the area.

One significant reason that the Central Area is facing displacement is an increased housing demand in Seattle. In a recent study, it was revealed that King County would need to see nearly 17,000 new homes built every year for the next two decades to keep up with demand (Groover, 2023), a higher level of building than the state has seen in recent years. The Department of Commerce's growth management services unit stated that "many communities will need to change the way they plan for housing and plan for more apartments," with many looking at "redevelopable" neighborhoods like the Central Area to do so (Washington State Department of Commerce, 2023). However, as these developments continue and the city grows, land value in the Central Area and CID, alongside local housing costs will increase, leading to higher rents and property taxes (Hess, 2020) which can further displace the low-income people of color in these neighborhoods.

Strategies to mitigate gentrification and displacement must address issues of equity, especially when analyzing the Central Area and CID who have already faced a history of development under discriminatory policies, such as redlining and racial restrictive covenants that were forced on the historically black and pan-Asian populations. For centuries, historic and ongoing displacement, exclusion, and segregation in the United States has facilitated social and economic racial disparities between white and non-white communities. Through the years, policies that secure land and expand property ownership and affordable rental housing have almost exclusively benefited white households and denied people of color to wealth-building opportunities, thus restricting them to segregated neighborhoods that still exist today (Solomon, Maxwell, and Castro, 2019). Redlining, racial covenants, and historical policies like the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) have echoing impacts on existing conditions today, so much that it could take more than 200 years for the average Black family to accumulate the same amount of wealth as its white counterparts (Collins, 2016).

The solution to mitigating displacement and retaining cultural connections goes beyond simply securing homeownership and affordable housing. Neighborhoods of high displacement risk are vulnerable to disinvestment, particularly low-income communities of color who continue to receive less public and private sector investments in infrastructure, social power, and policy decisions (Trounstine 2018, Kinder 2016). Displacement occurs either when the declining conditions prompt residents to leave, or when neighborhood decline prompts reinvestment strategies that gentrifies the neighborhood by outsourcing professional assistance, introducing institutional support, and eventually pricing out current residents (Grier & Grier 1978). In response to the economic, social, and political landscape shifts occurring in the late 20th century,

strategies emerged to ensure that communities still had access to housing and economic opportunities.

Asset based community development (ABCD) was introduced by John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann as a development strategy to support disinvested city populations in the United States in 1988 (ABCD Institute, 2017) with the goal to empower communities through local assets already available to them. ABCD is a theory of practice that emphasizes what is currently present in the community, the capacities of the residents or workers, and the relationships built between people, associations, and institutions. Focusing on deficits - what is absent or problematic - can have harmful impacts on a community's perception, where people view the neighborhood as a list of issues and needs, a perceived dependence on outside experts (while undermining relationships within the neighborhood), and the overall glue that binds communities together is weakened (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996).

ABCD focuses on strengthening reciprocal relationships and advancing community self-determination by emphasizing intangible assets a community may have, such as cultural identity, generational wisdom, community-based organizations, and other forms of social relationships (Chase, 2019). Focusing on the intangible assets of low-income communities of color does not mean that they do not need additional tangible assets from potential outside sources, such as improved infrastructure, monetary compensation, or institutional policy changes. Instead, asset based community development strategies ensure that these outside resources may be put to use more effectively due to the equitable mobilization and investment in the local community who can help facilitate and define the agendas for which additional resources are obtained and implemented (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996).

Despite the success of ABCD approaches to community planning and development, original ABCD principles have also been criticized over time for having a hyper-local focus and not addressing macro-level influences such as power systems or structural institutions. Issues that communities face today such as displacement are not directly mentioned in the original ABCD framework. However, many neighborhoods have embraced elements of ABCD without directly naming it, thus keeping the spirit of the framework alive. As neighborhood development has evolved over time, so has ABCD in response to gaps in the original framework. Although it may not be explicitly named as a framework evolution, there is an opportunity to understand how ABCD as it has evolved over time fits in or assists anti-displacement efforts.

By utilizing the core principles of ABCD to develop an assessment framework ABCD+E (Equity), this research examines the following question: how have asset based community development principles evolved to assist equitable neighborhood development and anti-displacement efforts? Existing anti-displacement efforts in Seattle's Central Area highlight the value of social capital, personal relationships, and the mobilization of local organizations. Based on existing literature including the original conception of ABCD by Kretzmann and McKnight, examples of ABCD outlined earlier, and implications of equity in development strategies, an ABCD+E assessment framework is established to better understand the case studies consistently under key ABCD considerations. While there is no direct stated correlation between ABCD and displacement mitigation, case studies will help understand the presence of ABCD principles in existing anti-displacement efforts in the Central Area, the extent to which it is present, and the gaps where ABCD can incorporate anti-displacement strategies that align with the original framework.

The purpose of the ABCD+E framework creation is to provide a lens of ABCD that incorporates original principles established in the 1980's along with current equity and anti-displacement considerations driving efforts in Seattle's Central Area today. Acknowledging that ABCD does not explicitly address these factors of displacement and racial equity, having Seattle's Central Area as the focus of the case studies provides an opportunity to understand the degree to which ABCD has evolved to address equity, and where opportunities exist within the ABCD model to account for displacement. The goal is to incorporate ABCD's areas of growth to better address equity and widen the scope of to account for institutional drivers, neighborhood demographics, and power systems that can influence the success of core ABCD principles. Through this thesis, a storyline of ABCD's evolution has been discussed to better understand how it is applied to address issues many marginalized communities face today, such as displacement.

Due to the nature of this thesis, there are limitations of this study that could be improved in further research. This study utilizes the 23rd Ave Action Plan as a primary study, and no other development plans were analyzed with the ABCD+E framework. The framework itself is based on my own interpretations of existing literature and critique, and more frameworks could be incorporated to supplement future examinations of ABCD. Concepts like equitable development, cultural heritage, and social assets are ever-evolving and difficult to measure in precise terms. The impact of the 23rd Ave Action Plan has not yet been determined, therefore there is no way to evaluate and assess the quality of performance of an ABCD+E framework.

Taking all of these considerations into account, this thesis concludes with an analysis of the 23rd Ave Action Plan through the ABCD+E framework, and a discussion about the utilization and next steps of ABCD+E for planners and policymakers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Moving Away from a Deficit Orientation

In response to economic, social, and political landscape shifts in the last two decades leading to the disappearance of employment opportunities, and worsening conditions of people in low-income neighborhoods, community developers have sought solutions by taking two divergent paths (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996). One path focuses on a community's needs (deficit based) while the other focuses on a community's capacities (asset based), with the latter being the focus of this research.

Traditional community development strategies historically use a deficit orientation, centering the needs of a community through the identification of problems or weaknesses. This approach is rooted in the belief that by identifying what is missing or problematic in a community, it is possible to develop targeted interventions to address those issues (Beaulieu, 2002). Deficit-based community development is a traditional approach that has been historically used to identify and address problems in a community. This approach centers on identifying what is absent or problematic in a community and focuses on addressing those issues. While it may seem like a logical way to approach community development, a deficit-based approach can have harmful impacts on a community.

However, focusing on deficits - what is absent or problematic - can have harmful impacts on a community's perception, where people view the neighborhood as a list of issues and needs, and the overall glue that binds communities together is weakened (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996). This can lead to a sense of hopelessness and a lack of motivation to work towards positive change which can be especially damaging in already marginalized communities, where residents

may already be struggling with issues such as poverty, unemployment, and poor health. Additionally, these low-income neighborhoods often have little power to escape the deficiency model because a number of society's institutions have developed an investment in maintaining that focus (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996). Academic institutions, government agencies, and media outlets rely on a deficit orientation utilize the needs of lower-income communities in studies, surveys, and attention-grabbing stories which can create barriers between lower-income communities and the rest of society based on a savior-complex or the desire to "help" (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996).

Consequences of this perception can facilitate a belief that the community is dysfunctional and problematic, leaving residents undermining their own strengths and seeking outside assistance to address their identified needs (Goldman & Schmalz, 2005). This can undermine the development of local leadership and decision-making capacity, leading to a lack of ownership and investment in community development efforts. Therefore, a deficit orientation in development strategies may inadvertently worsen conditions of marginalized communities.

Moving Towards Asset Based Community Development

The second path focuses on a commitment to discovering a community's capacities and assets (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996). Asset based community development (ABCD) is a theory of practice (ABCD Toolkit, 2023) that emphasizes what is currently present in the community, the capacities of the residents or workers, and the relationships built between people, associations, and institutions. Asset based community development focuses on strengthening reciprocal relationships and advancing community self-determination by emphasizing intangible assets a community may have, such as cultural identity, generational wisdom, community-based

organizations, and other forms of social relationships (Chase, 2019). Through the mobilization of existing (but often unrecognized) assets, ABCD can create local economic opportunity through the identification of social assets and social capital inherent in existing relationships and local networks (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

Focusing on the intangible assets of low-income communities of color does not mean that they do not need additional tangible assets from potential outside sources, such as improved infrastructure, monetary compensation, or institutional policy changes. Instead, asset based community development strategies ensure that these outside resources may be put to use more effectively due to the equitable mobilization and investment in the local community who can help facilitate and define the agendas for which additional resources are obtained and implemented (Kretzmunn and McKnight, 1996).

Deficit and Asset Perspectives: Understanding the Difference

Understanding how ABCD differs from a traditional deficit oriented approach to community development requires an analysis of the differing perspectives, measures, and processes of the two strategies.

Perspective is an important measure of comparison to understand the value of ABCD, as imagery can heavily influence how development strategies are implemented. Names like “South Bronx,” or “South Central Los Angeles,” or even “Public Housing” can conjure negative images of poverty, crime, abandoned buildings, and unemployment which can paint an overall problematic and deficient picture of a neighborhood (Kretzmunn and McKnight, 1996).

Ultimately, a negative map of a neighborhood can create a need for a deficit-based approach, as all someone may see is a list of problems that need fixing, often by outside assistance. ABCD

challenges this perspective by reverting this perspective towards opportunities, shared ownership, and capacities. Figure 1 depicts the contrasting perspectives in a deficit based and asset based orientation.

DEFECIT BASED	ASSET BASED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems • Blame • What's missing • Scarcity • Risks • Needs • Control-outside in • Top-down • Clients and passive receivers • Provider-led • Changing community through increased services • Institutional reform • Leaders are professional staff, accountable to institutional stakeholders • Money is the key resource. Falls apart without money • How do we get citizens involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibilities • Shared ownership • What's there • Abundance • Courageous leadership • Strengths, capacities, assets • Lead by stepping back • Inside-out • Do with & enable to do • Co-producers & active creators • Citizen-led • Changing community through citizen involvement • Citizen-centered production • Leaders area widening circles of volunteer citizens. Accountable to the community • Assets are relationships to be discovered and connected. • Relationships are the key resource. Falls apart when money becomes the focus. • How do we channel and build on all this citizen participation?

Figure 1: Comparison chart of deficit based and asset based strategies (Nurture Development, 2018).

In addition to impacting the imagery of a neighborhood, a deficit-based mindset can establish a community as a set of needs or problems that need fixing. In this case, there is a contrast of measures and indicators in a deficit based approach and ABCD. This guides the approach in which a community may be developed.

Origins of Asset Based Community Development

Originally created by John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann as a development strategy to support disinvested city populations in the United States in 1988 (ABCD Institute, 2017), the goal of ABCD was to empower communities through local assets already available to them. McKnight and Kretzmann observed a policymaking blind spot that did not recognize local residents and their inventiveness and problem-solving capabilities as a valid factor in neighborhood change (ABCD Institute, 2017). Within an urban policy research group of 24 faculty members at the Center for Urban Affairs at Northwestern University, McKnight and Kretzmann facilitated a four-year process of case studies and analysis of multiple neighborhoods. Through a collected responses from residents of small neighborhoods and towns, six core principles of ABCD practice was determined:

1. *Individual resident capacities*
2. *Local associations*
3. *Neighborhood institutions - businesses, non-profit, and government*
4. *Physical assets - the land and everything on or beneath it*
5. *Exchange between neighbors - giving, sharing, trading, bartering, exchanging, buying, and selling*
6. *Stories*

While some core principles (physical assets) may consider tangible resources, the blind spot of urban policy making was uncovered through the value of intangible assets. Specifically, principles 2, 3, 5, and 6 involve human interaction with one another and oftentimes, the building

of relationships. Therefore, the center of these ABCD principles is the strength of relationships, connectivity, and self-determination, which is also considered the “basic connective tissue” of effective neighborhood work (ABCD Institute, 2017). Additionally, McKnight and Kretzmann focused their case studies on small neighborhoods and towns, thus manifesting a paradigm shift in the planning and policy field where the importance of local resources provided new frameworks for implementing community change (ABCD Institute, 2017). The six core principles were now seen as connected (if treated as unconnected prior), and the proper identification of these principles allowed for the mobilization of these principles which may not have been utilized properly before.

While there is no blueprint on the methods of how to utilize these core principles, some examples include:

- Collecting stories of community successes and analyzing the reasons for success;
- Mapping community assets;
- Forming a core steering group;
- Building relationships among local assets for mutually beneficial problem solving within the community;
- Convening a representative planning group;
- Leveraging activities, resources, and investments from outside the community (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003)

For all the methods listed above, core principles outlined by McKnight and Kretzmann are interconnected amongst formal and informal leadership to establish networks and identify

social assets which may not have been properly utilized before. Therefore, there is more involvement of community members who may not be represented under a traditional deficit oriented development process. The collection of stories allow for the strengthening of cultural heritage and the ability to pass on generational wisdom, while the creation of steering groups and representative planning groups allows for collaboration and empowerment of the community to assist in development decisions.

The last point, “Leveraging activities, resources, and investments from outside the community” is particularly relevant when ensuring that communities can balance internal and external support. McKnight and Kretzmann argue that ability to recognize the extent of outside resources emerges when local groups ask themselves three critical questions:

1. *What can we produce with assets in our neighborhood?*
2. *What can we produce with our assets and some supportive outside resources?*
3. *What will our assets not be able to produce, so that outside resources will have to do the entire function? (ABCD Institute, 2017)*

The sequence of these questions is crucial because communities need to identify their internal resources first in order to effectively determine the additional resources they require from external sources. This approach empowers local communities to take ownership of the development process and work collaboratively with outside institutions to leverage their strengths and fill in any gaps. This creates a more comprehensive and sustainable initiative that benefits the entire community. Therefore, ABCD not only highlights the importance of local community strengths and relationships, it also allows for the identification of what extent outside

resources are needed, and how they may be utilized to work together with existing assets in a neighborhood in hopes to mobilize the community from within.

ABCD Success: Local and Global Examples

Asset-based community development (ABCD) has been effective in the decades since its inception in the 1990s in promoting community engagement, empowerment, and resilience. ABCD initiatives have been implemented in a range of contexts and communities around the world, proving that the original principles can facilitate community development through the mobilization of intangible assets, social networks, and strengthening relationships.

As early as 1988, cities in the United States like Savannah, Georgia utilized ABCD in their neighborhood-revitalization strategies. Savannah established “Showcase Savannah” to encompass efforts beyond the original clean-up and code enforcement activities in the Eastside neighborhood using partnerships between residents and city government (Moore and Punttenney 1999). It focused on the concerns of the residents through a variety of mechanisms including community surveys, asset mapping, and the creation of neighborhood plans where residents worked alongside city staff to review neighborhood goals, objectives, strategies, and priorities for funding (Moore and Punttenney 1999). Key elements of Showcase Savannah implemented principles of ABCD through the following: utilizing a vision established by residents and city staff, work teams and neighborhood-improvement efforts conducted with people at all levels of staff, residents, and administrators, establishing resident partnerships amongst inside and outside stakeholders, and utilizing existing neighborhood strengths. While a key step in this example was to identify the problems the neighborhood faced which could be considered a deficit-based approach, Showcase Savannah re-routed their focus towards establishing community

relationships, creating a shared vision amongst residents and city government, and establishing strong networks and relationships amongst all stakeholders. Overall, the city saw resident participation in monthly meetings increase by more than 50%, and improved relationships between community service staff, block captains, neighborhood association leaders, and other residents (Moore and Puntteney 1999).

ABCD has also thrived in global contexts, with asset-based interventions that emphasized the discovering, mobilizing, and strengthening the capacities of local communities. In Flores Island, Indonesia, ABCD principles were used to conduct a community-based participatory research project to evaluate Tuberculosis (TB) intervention programs. Utilizing social networking and capacity-focused techniques through monthly visits, home visits, informal discussions, and group discussions, there were significant changes in the TB groups' view of outsiders and their relationship with the villagers (Dewi et al., 2018). Additionally, this strategy built dialogue between the group members, strengthened local initiatives that could reduce the rates of TB, and enabled local leadership to be more confident in running their own programs. ABCD values can thrive in non-planning contexts, producing desirable outcomes in adjacent fields such as healthcare. These approaches also show the importance that perception plays towards refocusing efforts towards community strengths and social networks.

ABCD Shortcomings and Critiques

While ABCD initiatives have been utilized in communities and neighborhoods around the world to degrees of success, ABCD has received significant criticism as recently as the 2000s onwards, specifically towards its inattentiveness to power dynamics (Maclure, 2022). Specifically, ABCD has been criticized for its lack of theoretical depth and consideration of the

macro level causes of disempowerment in a world where institutional power plays a major role in current community problems (Ennis & West, 2010). A primary argument of ABCD is that communities can grow internally through leveraging internal assets, intangible connections, and social networks. However, as the strategy has evolved over time, many have argued that ABCD does not create lasting change if it does not address power systems that influence those assets. These power systems are directly linked to problems communities can face, including unequal access to capital and resources, poverty, and displacement, which disproportionately impact marginalized communities. Displacement pressures faced by many marginalized communities are often due to power systems and structural institutions, thus representing another phenomenon that the original ABCD framework does not account for. These communities cannot mobilize assets that do not exist or are displaced, therefore there is a gap in ABCD about how to address equity considerations that would allow for marginalized communities to mobilize social capital.

A critique of ABCD is its “hyper-local” focus on assets which are supposed to autonomously drive community development, however neglects fundamental large-scope causes of community problems (MacLeod & Emejulu, 2014, p. 435). By individualizing societal problems, focus is pulled towards local community associations and what can be accomplished on a small scale while “systemic inequalities and structural causes . . . are downplayed if not dismissed” (Fursova, 2018). What results is an overreliance and exaggeration of community-level power capacities that only operates within institutional power systems rather than challenges them. When ABCD initiatives remain hyper-local and do not attempt to address issues of poverty, racism, and other structural inequities, ABCD can reinforce those systems as local assets and capacities become commodities that community developers can exploit (Maclure, 2022). ABCD strategies implemented by the community cannot operate

independently, as “external power systems’ oppression is too pervasive and inevitably infiltrates the ABCD process,” resulting in ABCD simply reinforcing the status quo (Maclure, 2022). Local-scale issues are addressed while actual sources of community problems are neglected, creating short-term solutions that fail to create long-term equitable change. Ultimately, without challenging dominant discourse, “all other forms of empowerment will bring limited results” (Masterson & Owen, 2006, p. 29).

Recent ABCD criticism also points out that it does not acknowledge internal power dynamics within the community, which can have additional equity implications within the ABCD process. External institutional power systems can permeate into ABCD strategies, and some groups within a community may hold more institutional power due to their identity, race, class, and other social categories. As ABCD relies heavily on the ability to create relationships and social networks, those with more power may intentionally or unintentionally utilize the ABCD process to serve their own interest (Kramer et al., 2012). While original ABCD principles can be interpreted to address equity concerns by giving power to those traditionally marginalized, it does not directly confront issues of race, class, gender, and other social and institutional categories. McKnight and Kretzmann outline the goals of ABCD and the value of human connections and the assumption that those most disadvantaged within a community can be mobilized and included. However, the discourse grows sparse when discussing real-world implications of how ABCD can specifically empower marginalized groups to “occupy the space,” therefore not guaranteeing equitable results (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

In addition to real-world equity considerations, the internal mechanics of ABCD has also been criticized as not being adequate in all contexts for particular community issues. Community engagement and social networking through ABCD is not always consistent, and there are

concerns whether community participation is facilitated equitably, or whether it represents tokenism on most initiatives (Minkler & Pies C, 1998). In that case, token community boards or the exploitation of assets can occur, resulting in a misunderstanding of the social assets present and potential for furthering the issues the community is suffering from. Additionally ABCD requires trust and mutual respect for successful relationship building and social networking (Sharpe, et al, 2000) which may be varied depending on the community at focus. If an institution such as an NGO or government agency is facilitating ABCD processes by setting the terms of community engagement, it can sometimes be limited to a consultation rather than participatory decision making, therefore inadvertently stifling the ABCD progression (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

While ABCD has ties to policy making, there is an opportunity to incorporate the strategies towards planning with an equity and displacement focused lens. As ABCD has evolved over time, many principles have become more mainstream and incorporated in other planning strategies such as participatory development which emphasizes social networking, local decision-making, and power relocation towards those traditionally marginalized to provide services in a community (De Gramont, 2013). Additionally, in order to address common critiques of ABCD, researchers and planners have suggested a “dual strategy” that incorporates both community-level solutions and strategies to combat oppressive power systems (Hopkins & Ferris, 2015). Whether this means adding to existing ABCD principles or creating a new strategy altogether, core ideas and goals of ABCD are still alive and manifest in initiatives to combat issues of displacement and gentrification that minority neighborhoods experience.

Understanding Displacement & Gentrification

Displacement is caused by pressures that threaten the ability of marginalized households to stay in their homes and limit where these households can live, thus reducing their ability to stay connected with supportive networks and limiting their access to opportunity (City of Seattle OPCD, 2020). This can result in displacement at both a direct and indirect level:

- *Direct Displacement:* Households are directly forced to move for reasons such as eviction, foreclosure, natural disaster, or deterioration in housing quality.
- *Indirect Displacement:* Households are indirectly compelled to move by rising housing costs, or loss of cultural and social networks.

Development can displace marginalized populations and impact their access to resources and opportunities (Equitable Development Plan, 2016). All these factors are impacted by the imprint of redlining, racial covenants, and racial inequities across the world.

Displacement is often mentioned alongside gentrification, which is commonly defined as the process in which disinvested urban neighborhoods experience reinvestments that improve infrastructure and introduce a migration of middle-and-upper-middle-class population (Smith, 1998). What results from reinvestment is often increases in housing prices and amenities, demographic shifts, entrance of higher socioeconomic status residents, and overall improved quality of life. Beginning as early as the 1970s through patterns of urban renewal, gentrification has facilitated extreme neighborhood change, particularly in many low-income communities of color. These neighborhoods have experienced accelerated shifts towards white higher-class residents (Baum-Snow & Hartley, 2016) moving into historically Black neighborhoods (Freeman

& Cai T, 2015). This is also connected to the “back to the city movement” which refers to the reversal of the urban flight witnessed in America between the 1960s and 1990s, as population and capital investments arrived to urban cores at unprecedented rates (Hyra, 2015), resulting in an urban turnaround. While there isn’t a consensus that this movement is directly correlated with neighborhood revitalization, population influxes in the United States during the 1990s and 2000s happened alongside major neighborhood developments of low-income, mainly minority communities in major star cities such as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Washington DC, Durham, Charlotte, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Houston, Los Angeles and Portland (Schnake-Mahl et al, 2020).

While not inherently a negative phenomenon, gentrification and the trend of higher-income populations moving into cities of historically low-income communities of color has raised issues of displacement amongst communities who are already historically marginalized. Displacement risk as a result of gentrification is greater in some neighborhoods, and the negative effects of gentrification are felt disproportionately by people of color, whose residents have fewer options of neighborhoods they can move to compared to their white counterparts (Feder, 2010). The Black community in particular have additional constraints when they move, leading them to move to a shrinking set of affordable yet disadvantaged neighborhoods within the city and to affordable fringe suburbs (Feder, 2010). As a result, these communities are particularly vulnerable to the negative impacts of gentrification and displacement, including the loss of community, cultural erasure, and the widening of the racial wealth gap (Schnake-Mahl et al, 2020).

While existing literature gives focus to direct, physical, or residential displacement as a result of gentrification and the “back to the city” movement, indirect displacement also occurs

through social and intangible factors. Political displacement can occur when a long-standing racial, ethnic, or social group becomes outvoted or outnumbered by new residents' leading to the loss of decision-making power (Martin, 2007), particularly when White residents who already have inherent institutional power are moving into low-income communities of color. This can impact the nature of public participation in a community and the ability to build trust and social connections within a neighborhood. Cultural displacement can also occur, where the norms, behaviors and values of the new residents dominate, prevail, or change the preferences of long-term residents (Zukin, 2010). While the cultural nature of a community can evolve over time, and there may be points of common ground amongst newcomers and existing residents, long-term residents no longer being able to identify with their neighborhood and having a decreased place attachment to their community (Abramson et al., 2006). These negative feelings may even encourage them to leave these economically transitioning neighborhoods (Maly, 2005), resulting in that neighborhood becoming more homogeneous instead of integrated and further facilitating displacement.

With all these factors of displacement, development strategies like ABCD that depend on community relationships, trust, stories, and local associations will not be as successful when the community faces the negative impacts of gentrification. Additionally, the principles of ABCD align with strengthening existing community assets and local power, aligning with anti-displacement values. Original ABCD principles do not have a direct correlation with displacement risk, which can be attributed to the fact that in the 1980's, the primary focus of ABCD was urban neighborhood investment. However, as ABCD has evolved alongside the emergence of displacement as a problem for marginalized neighborhoods, the core principles are still mobilized in anti-displacement efforts.

Displacement in Context: Seattle's Central Area

The area of this thesis is Seattle's Central Area (commonly referred to as the "Central Area" by residents, but officially defined as "Central Area" in official Seattle Office of Neighborhood Planning and Development documents), due to its history of development, patterns of displacement, and prominence as a historically minority neighborhood. One significant reason that the Central Area is facing displacement is an increased housing demand in Seattle. In a recent study, it was revealed that King County would need to see nearly 17,000 new homes built every year for the next two decades to keep up with demand (Groover, 2023), a higher level of building than the state has seen in recent years. Today, Seattle's Central Area lies in the center of the city's isthmus, with the downtown core to the west across the I-5 interstate and the neighborhoods of Madrona and Leschi to the east bordering Lake Washington. The neighborhood sits just above Judkins Park, which borders the I-90 interstate, and is south of Capitol Hill. Since being platted in the 1870's and 1880's, it is an area that has undergone massive renovation both physically and socially in the last century (Morril, 319).

As early as the 1800's, The Central Area established itself as a multicultural four-square-mile area housing African Americans, European, Japanese, Jewish immigrants who left a deep cultural impact on the neighborhood (Henry, 2001). Notably, African American William Grose arrived in Seattle in 1861 and purchased 12 acres of land in the Central Area after establishing successful restaurant and hotel businesses. From there, he built his own house on the property and sold lots to other African American community members who would otherwise be restricted by racial covenants from owning land (Henry, 1998). While the Central Area

flourished as a middle-class black community in the early 1900s, practices of redlining and racial covenants were upheld by the U.S. Supreme court and established the Central Area as one of the only neighborhoods open to African Americans (Henry, 2001). Additionally, the development of streetcars alongside a large influx of residents between 1900 and 1910 caused the inner city to become more segregated by both class and race as white residents moved further outside the city center. Additionally, the neighborhood's redlined status created barriers between African American families and access to capital, as they were unable to access mortgage loans and own homes in the area (Taylor, 1994).

In the 1930s, the federal Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) facilitated the disinvestment of minority neighborhoods through a neighborhood rating system that would classify various areas as "best" to "hazardous" (Honig, 2021) and described the Central Area as "in need of extensive repairs." This process continued disinvestment in the Central Area neighborhood, and a deficit-focused rhetoric began to facilitate future development efforts. At this time around 1935, most of Seattle's black residents lived in the Yesler-Jackson Street neighborhood, going from only 406 in 1900, to over 3,000 people (Taylor, 1994). After the end of World War II, the Black population rapidly grew to over 15,000 people, many of which were forced to settle in the Central Area due to housing discrimination and restrictive property laws. People of color were denied housing loans due to the "hazardous risk" it proposed. While the 1968 Fair Housing Act made this behavior illegal, the inequities from the era of redlining remain; there is direct correlation between formerly redlined neighborhoods and current areas with high risk for resident displacement featured in Figures 2 & 3 below, with Figure 4 representing the maps overlaid.

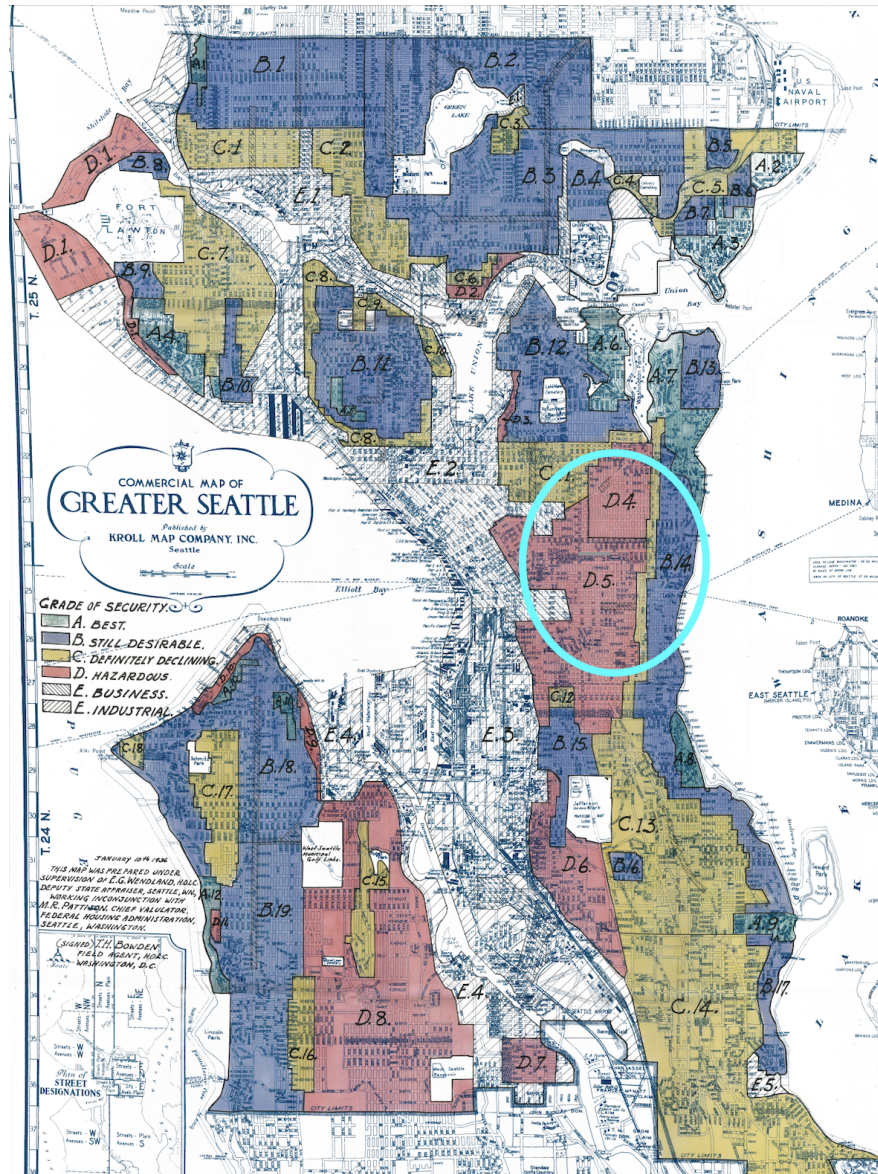


Figure 2: 1936 Redlining Map, Central Area neighborhood circled in blue
 Source: "Mapping Inequality" Project, University of Richmond (2023).

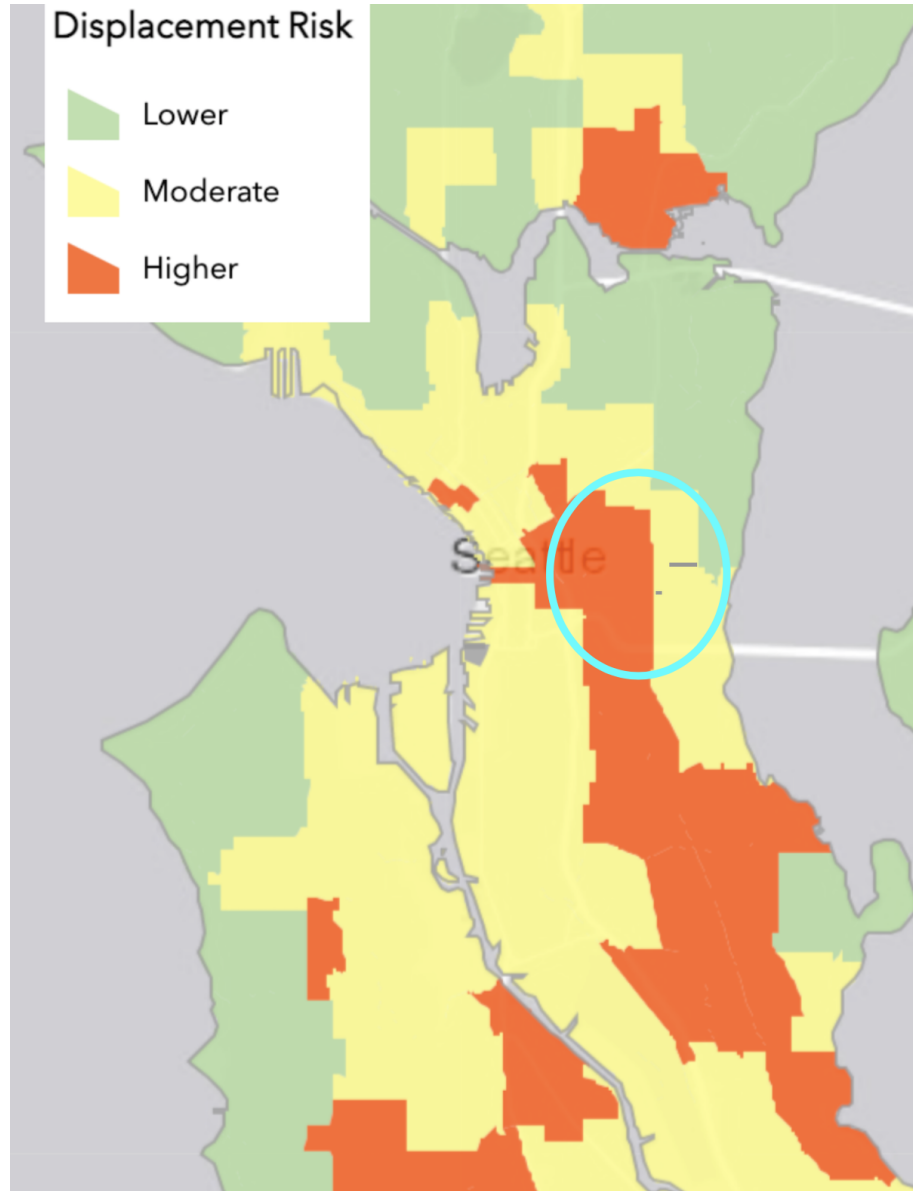


Figure 3: Current Displacement Risk Map, Central Area neighborhood circled in blue
Source: Puget Sound Regional Council's Displacement Risk Tool (2023).

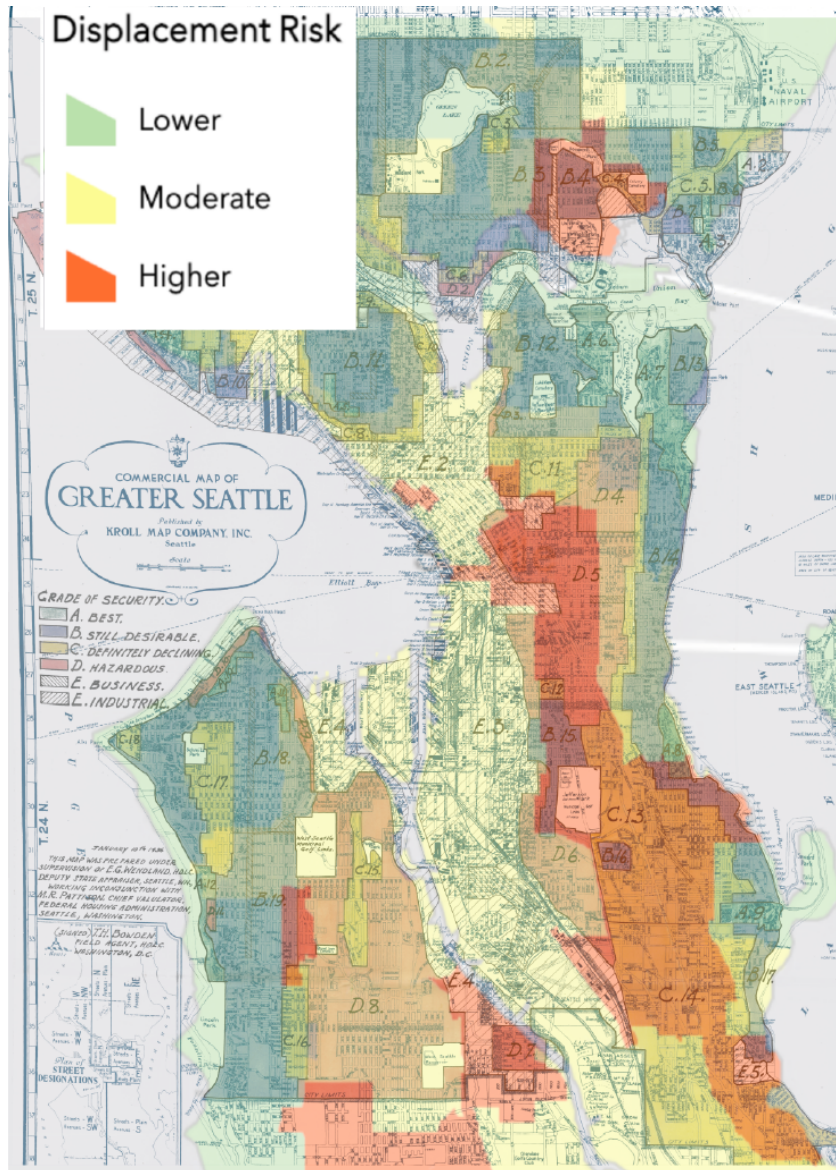


Figure 4: Current Displacement Risk Map Overlaid on the 1936 Redlining Map
 Source: "Mapping Inequality" Project, University of Richmond (2023) & Puget Sound Regional Council's Displacement Risk Tool (2023).

Seattle's urban renewal program through the mid-to-late 20th century continued deficit focused investment strategies in the Central Area that focused on the needs, weaknesses, and shortcomings of the neighborhood. Launched by the federal government, urban renewal operated with the intention of addressing blight and connectivity while moving white, middle class

families back into the central city, at the cost of removing current black residents. In 1959, a City of Seattle ordinance designated the area "bounded by Yesler Way, Empire Way South, Lake Way, Rainier Avenue South, and 14th Avenue South" a "blighted area" and proposed an urban renewal project to demolish decaying structures and construct "streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds...public buildings or facilities..." (Seattle Municipal Archives, 2023). Identified in 1966 as a "Model Neighborhood" alongside Pioneer Square and the International District, the Central Area was selected for funding administered through HUD to combat "urban poverty and blight" in the "initial stages of decay" (Seattle Municipal Archives, 2023).

The civil unrest of the 1960's and 1970's, combined with urban renewal decimating the community, caused many black residents to move out of the Central Area. An increased proportion of black residents relocated in south Seattle in neighborhoods along Rainier Avenue from 1950 and onward. In 1979, Black entrepreneur James Sumler proposed the shopping center Promenade 23 as an attempt to spur development and local community pride. Opened in 1980, Promenade 23 offered the community its first grocery store in the area, The Red Apple. This highlighted the city's inequitable distribution of food access. In the decades following, the center was an important social and recreational hub for the Black community, as well as housing several small Black owned businesses.

While these developments funded improved infrastructure projects and rehabilitated existing facilities that benefited the Central Area, not all urban renewal goals materialized in the city. A report published in 1984 by Seattle's Department of Community Development on the disposition of land still owned by the city in the Yesler-Atlantic project area acknowledged that the original project's promises of "substantial public and private housing development" had been "slow to develop," and that the project had "failed to meet many of its objectives" (Seattle

Municipal Archives, 2023). Another report stated that urban renewal was a direct contributing factor to the Central Area's overall decline in available housing, with the demolition of buildings only resulting in an accumulation of vacant land (Seattle Municipal Archives, 2023). The City Council has since apologized and condemned the displacement caused by these projects through the passing of Resolution 32015, apologizing for the harm caused and urged all City Departments to "make reparation for that injustice" (Seattle City Council Resolutions, 2021).

Response to Displacement: Recent Developments & Policies

As Seattle began to change with the influx of upper class tech workers migrating into the city beginning in the late 1990's, the Central Area faced further displacement pressure. 2001 marked the opening of a Starbucks in Promenade 23, followed by continued rapid growth of the city and increased demand for housing. The area's desirable location in terms of accessibility and lower density led Paul Allen's company Vulcan Real Estate to buy a majority of the intersection's land for \$30.9 million in 2016. In 2017, the area was upzoned by the Seattle City Council, paving way for new taller, mixed use apartment complexes with a much larger scale than the neighborhood had ever seen.

In response to Seattle's housing affordability crisis, the city put forth the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) as part of Mayor Ed Murray's term in 2014, which consists of a set of 65 recommendations issued by the 28 member HALA Advisory Committee. Many recommendations revolved around housing policies, finance and tax incentives, regulatory changes, and funding to encourage the development of more affordable housing (Bonjukian, 2015). HALA was created with the goal of creating 50,000 homes by 2025, including 20,000

affordable homes to eventually slow housing costs increases and provide a wider range of housing choices (Implementing Mandatory Housing Affordability Citywide). While the policy has helped to create more affordable housing options in the area, including the development of new affordable housing units and the preservation of existing affordable housing through the use of various incentives and funding programs, there are concerns that HALA will continue the trend of neighborhood revitalization resulting in displacement of the existing residents.

To address these concerns, the City of Seattle has implemented additional policies and programs aimed at mitigating the impacts of HALA and promoting equitable development in the Central Area and other neighborhoods. In 2017, Seattle put forth the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) which ensures that new commercial and multifamily residential development contributes to affordable housing (Implementing Mandatory Housing Affordability Citywide). Implemented citywide in 2019, MHA requires developers to contribute to affordable housing in exchange for increased density allowances and facilitates less intensive changes in areas with higher risk of displacement and “fewer community assets” (Implementing Mandatory Housing Affordability Citywide).

Despite these moves to ensure the affordability and access to housing, at the time of this thesis, the Black population in the Central Area is below 20% compared to nearly 75% in the 1970s (King, Shepard, 2020). Many historic homes and buildings have been replaced by new development including apartments, condos, and commercial spaces with increased density. As time has gone by, The neighborhood's median home value has more than tripled since 2000, from around \$200,000 to over \$700,000 in 2021. This has made it difficult for many long-time residents, particularly those with lower incomes, to afford to live in the area. It's a narrative seen throughout history; Black communities displaced in the name of urban growth and development,

which prices out long term residents who no longer recognize the community around them. Despite these changes, the Central Area remains an important center for Seattle's African American community, with a number of community organizations, businesses, and cultural institutions who have persisted through these changes. This makes the Central Area a viable location for an ABCD framework that analyzes how asset based community development principles evolved to assist equitable neighborhood development and anti-displacement efforts.

METHODS

Given Seattle's situation as a rapidly growing city as well as a richly multicultural region with a history of tightly segregated neighborhoods, this thesis analyzes case studies in Seattle's Central Area (defined as "Central Area" in official Seattle Office of Neighborhood Planning and Development documents). This neighborhood was selected for the focus of this thesis because it 1) has a rich multi-ethnic history with prominent low-income communities of color and 2) has been classified as "high risk for displacement and high access to opportunity" in a 2016 City of Seattle study. Additionally, due to the City of Seattle's commitment towards facilitating growth through "placing without displacing" and prioritizing "public investments, policies, and programs with a race and social equity lens" (Equitable Development Plan, 2016), the Central Area has been identified for its presence as the center of the African American community, strong business opportunities, and a vibrant cultural district (Central Area - OPCD, 2023).

As stated in the literature review, it is becoming increasingly recognized that ABCD operates as a general framework focusing on community relationships, power redistribution, and social capital. It was created to address a policy blind spot (the power of local communities) and assist those in disinvested communities. However, critics argue that these principles of ABCD are unable to flourish when those communities are suffering from historical redlining, gentrification, and limited access to opportunities which all result in displacement pressures on the existing communities. Acknowledging that original ABCD does not explicitly address these factors of displacement and racial equity, having Seattle's Central Area as the focus of the case study provides an opportunity to understand how ABCD may have evolved to mitigate these issues. Original ABCD principles have already been identified through existing literature, and

this research intends to also examine other key considerations strategies developed through the evolution of ABCD that may address displacement in neighborhoods.

Based on existing literature including the original conception of ABCD by Kretzmann and McKnight, examples of successful ABCD outlined earlier, and gaps in equity presented by ABCD critiques, an evolved ABCD assessment framework is established to better understand how the case studies utilize original ABCD principles, and what other factors they utilize by proxy. This is not a proposed new model to be tested and evaluated, rather an interpretation of how ABCD has evolved from its original principles to address common criticism. This framework pulls from original ABCD principles to create an expanded and evolved version incorporating challenges, elements, and considerations that are relevant to current challenges communities face today. The new framework takes into account equity, analyzes accessibility measures, and engages with power dynamics within and surrounding communities with the implication that it better captures techniques used by neighborhoods in anti-displacement and equitable development efforts.

This framework serves the purpose of identifying how the case study incorporates original ABCD principles to address issues of equity and displacement, while also evolving some of ABCD's original values to account for equity and displacement. While there is no direct stated correlation between ABCD and displacement mitigation, this research will help understand the presence of ABCD principles in existing anti-displacement efforts in the Central Area, the extent in which it is present, and the gaps where an evolved ABCD can address anti-displacement strategies that align with the original framework. Thus, the purpose of this case study will be to see how these ABCD principles are evolving in current neighborhood development plans, how policies and strategies are unfolding, and what it ultimately means for the use of ABCD going

forwards. Based on findings, results and implications will be discussed to understand what the future of ABCD might look like, and the potential for an ABCD+E (equity) framework.

ABCD+E ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The goal of the assessment framework is to provide a lens of ABCD that incorporates original principles and current equity and anti-displacement considerations driving efforts in Seattle's Central Area today. Instead of using the original six core principles established in 1988, I will be creating an updated assessment framework to take into account how ABCD has been critiqued and how it has grown to better address equity and power dynamics. My assessment framework widens the scope of ABCD to include factors of cultural heritage, economic conditions, and social capital to better account for institutional drivers, neighborhood demographics, and power systems that can influence the success of core ABCD principles. Ultimately, it acknowledges an equity orientation to ABCD (ABCD+E) that will be used to analyze the case study to better understand how ABCD has evolved over time and where it shows up in current development strategies.

The case study will be analyzed through an assessment framework based off of the original ABCD values, existing literature, and practices. Original aspects of ABCD values are incorporated, but expanded upon to establish five key considerations that hope to fill the gaps that the original ABCD framework missed, address a wider scope of application, and relate to common challenges communities face today due to power systems and institutional structures. These five key considerations are identified using existing literature, principles identified by Kretzmann and McKnight, past examples of successful ABCD strategies, and critiques of ABCD

to create a lens in which to understand how an evolved ABCD+E is utilized today for anti-displacement efforts. As displacement remains a pressure that many marginalized communities face, it represents a macro-level phenomenon influenced by power systems that the evolved ABCD+E can be utilized to address. Each consideration is tied to existing ABCD literature to explain its inclusion in my evolved assessment framework, and new elements are explained to understand why they are incorporated into the evolved ABCD+E framework. The framework is not meant to be an evaluation tool to determine the success of anti-displacement or equitable development efforts. Instead, it hopes to analyze existing development efforts in neighborhoods experiencing displacement to better understand how ABCD has evolved to meet current challenges, and how communities are utilizing those values. A summary, discussion, and visual of findings is provided at the end of the analysis.

The following assessment framework will be used to comprehensively analyze each case study. The order does not indicate priority of considerations.

1. Context

The background and context in which the development project is taking place allows for a comprehensive understanding of each case study for a holistic assessment. Asset based community development requires the knowledge of a community's capacities and abilities (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996), thus the context of each case study must be analyzed in order to understand its place in the history of the neighborhood and how it fits within other events in the community. Asset based community development succeeds with "the active involvement of community members and recognition of their individual gifts" (Killing Wood, 2008), therefore a summary of demographics and relevant stakeholders for each case study is also included in this

framework to provide an understanding of who the community is composed of. Relevant background information will be provided such as the planning and policy history behind the case study, zoning and land use changes and reasons for development. Demographic data of race in the context of displacement will be displayed to clarify the context in which the case study is taking place. Any relevant projects (eg. urban renewal) and related community stakeholders will be described to provide additional history to the case study. This consideration ties into all original ABCD principles by providing the real-world environment in which the values will be applied to.

2. Stakeholder Engagement

The level of engagement with public and private stakeholders at community and institutional levels in the development process, evaluating who was included or left out, and accessibility of the engagement process. Asset based community development focuses on the empowerment of existing community members, emphasizing relationship building, resident community engagement processes, and community-driven decision-making (Killing Wood, 2008). Therefore, an understanding of stakeholder engagement is needed to assess how the case studies have involved those currently in the community. Due to the value of holistic community inclusion in ABCD, equity is also considered in the stakeholder engagement process to assess the involvement of those traditionally excluded from decision making (Dwyer-Voss & Bishop, 2019).

Includes relevant community based organizational involvement. Notably identifies how much engagement was conducted within the neighborhood versus stakeholders outside of the community. Identifies methods in which stakeholder engagement is conducted (eg. in-person

meetings, virtually, surveys). Identifies how stakeholders were reached out to, and who was involved. Analyzes accessibility considerations in the engagement process (eg. translation services, digital accommodations). If found, includes what issues were discussed, demographics of participants, and overall summary of findings from stakeholder engagement efforts. Accounts for any power redistribution towards those with traditionally low power. This consideration ties into original ABCD principles of local associations, neighborhood institutions, and storytelling due to its nature of community outreach, engagement, and connection across multiple sectors. This evolved framework consideration takes into account the equity and accessibility of stakeholder engagement processes.

3. Cultural Heritage

The continuation of the historical legacy of the neighborhood, the cultural identity of the community, and norms, traditions, identity of communities, groups, and individuals. Cultural assets can consist of both tangible (physical buildings, objects) and intangible (festivals, music, language) elements of a community which establishes a community's built environment, identity, and values (Sapu, 2009). Communities are commonly home to these cultural assets that encourage increased innovation, creativity, and civic engagement (Stern & Seifert, 2010) through a shared identity or heritage. While the aspect of cultural heritage in relation to minority urban communities is not consistently stated as a part of ABCD framework, the capacity-focused approach of asset based community development encourages the leveraging of activities, resources, stories, and relationships of a community (Sapu, 2009), thus tapping into the cultural assets present in a community. Therefore, cultural heritage can be preserved through ABCD through the promotion of customs, traditions, and relationships in a diverse community. The City

of Seattle has seen Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities at a disproportionate risk of displacement, thus experiencing higher loss of cultural and social networks as a result (City of Seattle OPCD, 2020). Therefore, successful asset based community development efforts will acknowledge and uplift the existing cultural heritage of a neighborhood through both tangible and intangible development decisions.

Development plans are analyzed to assess the impacts on the cultural heritage of the neighborhood. Identification of existing cultural assets in a neighborhood generated by the activities of residents, business, organizations, and activists (Stern & Seifer, 2010). This consideration ties into original ABCD principles of local associations, neighborhood institutions, and storytelling due to its nature of community outreach, engagement, and connection across multiple sectors. This evolved framework consideration takes into account both tangible and intangible sources of cultural heritage.

4. Economic Conditions

Low-income communities are often targets of deficit-oriented development strategies which are designed to “fix” community problems with a focus on a communities weaknesses, needs, and shortcomings (Beaulieu, 2002; Goldman & Schmalz, 2005). Due to what is viewed as a deficit of resources, this strategy additionally seeks outside assistance to address a community’s needs (Goldman & Schmalz, 2005), therefore is seen as the antithesis of asset based community development. The mobilization of assets in asset based community development includes both tangible and intangible assets (Sapu, 2009). Focusing on the local intangible assets in communities does not imply that these communities do not need to strengthen tangible assets (often defined as physical materials, infrastructure, raw materials, and land) (BDC, 2023).

Instead, these additional resources will be much more effectively used if the local community is properly mobilized and can define the agendas for which additional resources must be obtained (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996). Therefore, economic conditions of a neighborhood must be considered when analyzing a case study, as it represents a community's ability to contribute, benefit, and create pathways towards financial security and improved infrastructure through an asset based community development lens. Due to the disproportionate amount of BIPOC communities who live in low-income communities (Displacement Risk Indicators, 2020), the racial disparities in these economic conditions will be analyzed to understand whether case studies are committed to equitable development as outlined in the Seattle OPCD Equitable Development Plan.

Development plans are analyzed to understand how they will impact the economic conditions of the neighborhood. Analysis will be conducted in conjunction with the context of each case study to have a more holistic view of what drives the economic conditions in the neighborhood. Tangible assets in each case study will be identified and discussed alongside intangible assets to understand their interdependence. This consideration ties into original ABCD principles of individual resident capacities and exchange between neighbors (including buying, selling, trading, and sharing). This evolved framework consideration takes into account financial security, local business support, and barriers to opportunity.

5. Social Capital

A community development process that utilizes ABCD must be “relationship driven” between local residents, local associations, and local institutions (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996). Three core principles of ABCD: local associations, neighborhood institutions, and

exchange between neighbors rely on trust and strong ties between community members which foster support and strength. ABCD strengthens these unrealized resources of social, kinship, or associated networks (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003) through the mobilization of these informal networks so that formal institutional resources can be activated. These associations can drive the community development process to leverage additional support from formal institutional resources, such as local government, formal community-based organizations, and private enterprise (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). While social capital as a term is not explicitly outlined in the original framework of ABCD and does not have one universal definition, it is a social science theory rooted on the notion of trusts, norms, and informal networks (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009). Recently, it has been used to represent the values of social relationships, “encompassing a stock of social norms, values, beliefs, trusts, obligations, relationships, networks, friends, memberships, civic engagement, information flows, and institutions that foster cooperation and collective actions for mutual benefits and contributes to economic and social development” (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009).

Recent publications on ABCD address social capital as a key intervening process that leads to social outcomes including economic performance, education, health, and community well-being, and also consider it as equal alongside other community assets such as public infrastructure and market relationships (Stern & Seifert, 2010). Some even go to argue that “ABCD is a practical application of the concept of social capital” (Stuart, 2013), thus, social capital is key consideration when assessing ABCD efforts, as it values intangible assets (trust and relationships) as something that can be socially built over time, exchanged, leveraged, invested, and expanded just like tangible financial assets.

Analysis will be conducted through the analysis of relationships, networking, and associations supported or created in the development process. Relationships both within and outside the community will be identified and assessed for their role in development plans. This consideration ties into original ABCD principles of local associations, neighborhood institutions, and storytelling as a means of accumulating and investing in social capital. This evolved framework consideration incorporates the social science concept of social capital into ABCD practices.

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

Seattle's Central Area neighborhood will serve as the case study and focus of this thesis, and a notable development project will be analyzed with the assessment framework to understand what assets can be enhanced to prevent displacement of the remaining low-income residents.

The case study selected for the purpose of this thesis is a recent example of neighborhood development in the Central Area. The primary case study is the 23rd Avenue Action Plan, which has been identified as a part of the City of Seattle's Office of Planning and Community Development Central Area strategy under the top community priority of "a destination with unique identity that recognizes the Central Area as the historical heart of the African American community while welcoming all people" (Central Area - OPCD, 2023). Due to its association with these priorities and commitment towards recognizing the cultural significance of the Central Area area, this project is chosen as a case study to identify asset based community development strategies present that prevent displacement amongst the remaining residents. Additionally, it is aligned with City of Seattle's Equitable Development Initiative, which hopes to guide development to meet the needs of marginalized populations, reduce disparities, and increase quality of life incomes in the city's low-income neighborhoods of color (City of Seattle Equitable Development Initiative, 2023). Due to the specific goals of "prevent residential, commercial, and cultural displacement," "build on local cultural assets," and "advance economic mobility and opportunity" (City of Seattle Equitable Development Initiative, 2023), the priorities of this development align with ABCD principles of strengthening local associations, social networks, and trade amongst neighbors. This case study will be analyzed to understand how asset based

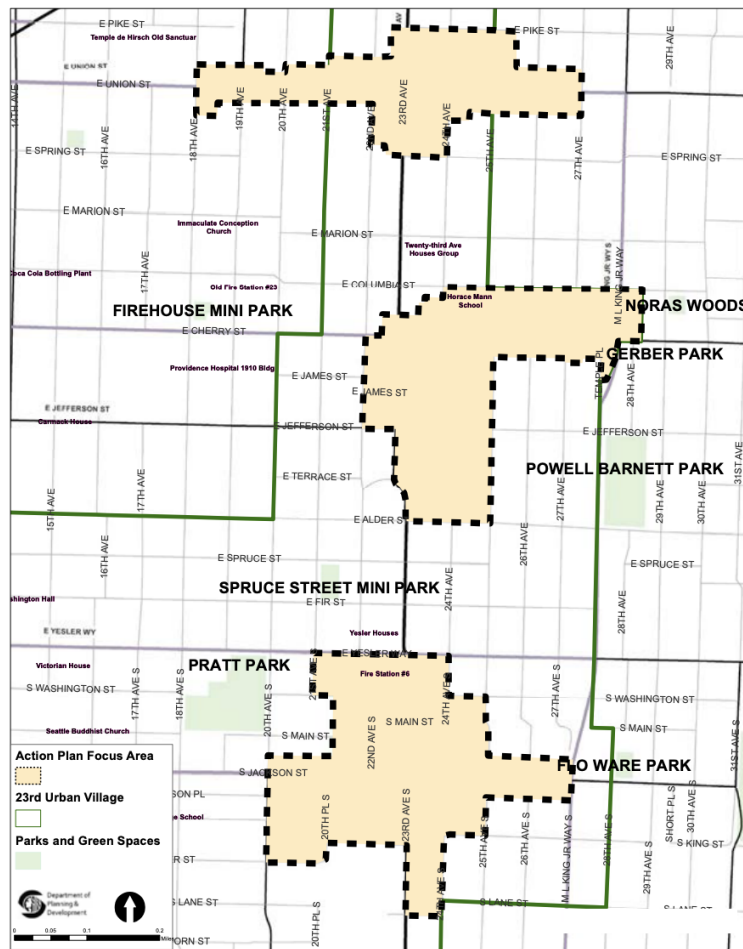
community development principles evolved to assist equitable neighborhood development and anti-displacement efforts. Through the identification of assets and the assessment of ABCD principles in existing anti-displacement strategies, there will be a discussion on how existing ABCD strategies can be beneficial to addressing displacement in minority urban communities, or whether there are opportunities to add to the existing ABCD model to better assist neighborhoods facing displacement pressures as cities evolve and grow into the future. As the 23rd Ave Action Plan does not directly mention “displacement,” proxy words that represent anti-displacement efforts are underlined in policies, strategies, and goals referenced in this analysis.

A comprehensive summary of findings is included with this report alongside a visual matrix outlining primary observations. With the overall goal of identifying ways in which ABCD aligns with anti-displacement efforts in Seattle’s Central Area, this thesis concludes with an analysis of ABCD’s overall evolution and utilization in anti-displacement efforts for neighborhoods facing displacement pressures.

23RD AVENUE ACTION PLAN

The 23rd Avenue Action Plan is a “place-based community development project” established by the City of Seattle and local Central Area community to work together to facilitate development along the primary intersections (referred to as “community cores”) of 23rd Ave and E. Union, E. Cherry and S. Jackson (Office of Planning and Community Development, 2023). See figure 5 for a map of the three community cores.

23rd Avenue Action Plan (Union-Cherry-Jackson) - Focus Areas



*Figure 5: Map of focus areas from the 23rd Ave Action Plan
Source: 23rd Avenue Action Plan (2017).*

Created in response to the Central Area’s rapid growth and new developments, the goal of the plan is to develop a shared vision and create a framework for actions that leverage resources and investments through the following: 1) Strengthen the community’s resilience so that its rich cultural heritage and diversity flourishes, 2) Build community, businesses, and organization’s capacity to take actions to achieve the shared vision, 3) Create livable, healthy and supportive places that provide equitable access to resources and opportunities for everyone, and 4) Leverage public and private investments to create tangible, positive change that meets the

needs of existing and new communities. The plan hopes to translate community visions and priorities into urban design recommendations and implementation steps as well as strengthen strong partnerships among the community, private and public entities to move forward projects in the action plan (Office of Planning and Community Development, 2023).

Context

The 23rd Avenue Action Plan was created in March 2017 by the City of Seattle’s Office of Planning and Community Development. This plan follows in the footsteps of the Central Area Action Plan I (1992) and Action Plan II (1999) which hoped to manage increased growth and changes in the Central Area. The previous two plans recognized the Central Area as a “a multicultural community, proud of its African-American heritage as well as its many links to other cultures” (23rd Avenue Action Plan, 2017). Physically, the previous plans picture the Central Area as “a series of unique individual urban villages and neighborhood magnets linked together” and highlighted 23rd and Union as the hub of the Central Area.

The 23rd Avenue Action Plan intends to confirm and update priorities in the previous action plans. Spearheaded by the 23rd Avenue ACT (Action Community Team) and alongside the City of Seattle and Central Area team, the ACT confirmed five top priorities and facilitated Action Teams composed of work groups and community members that would carry out the action items of the plan. The top five priorities are summarized as:

- A destination with unique identity
- A place that connects people and community
- A great business community

- Livable streets for all
- A place that supports a healthy and stable community (23rd Avenue Action Plan, 2017).

The 23rd Avenue Action Plan also proposes zoning changes along the community cores.

The zoning types are identified as:

- *NC1 Neighborhood Commercial 1*: A small shopping area that provides primarily convenient retail sales and services to the surrounding residential neighborhood. This zoning type is proposed for the community core of 23rd Ave & Cherry (Figures 6 & 7).

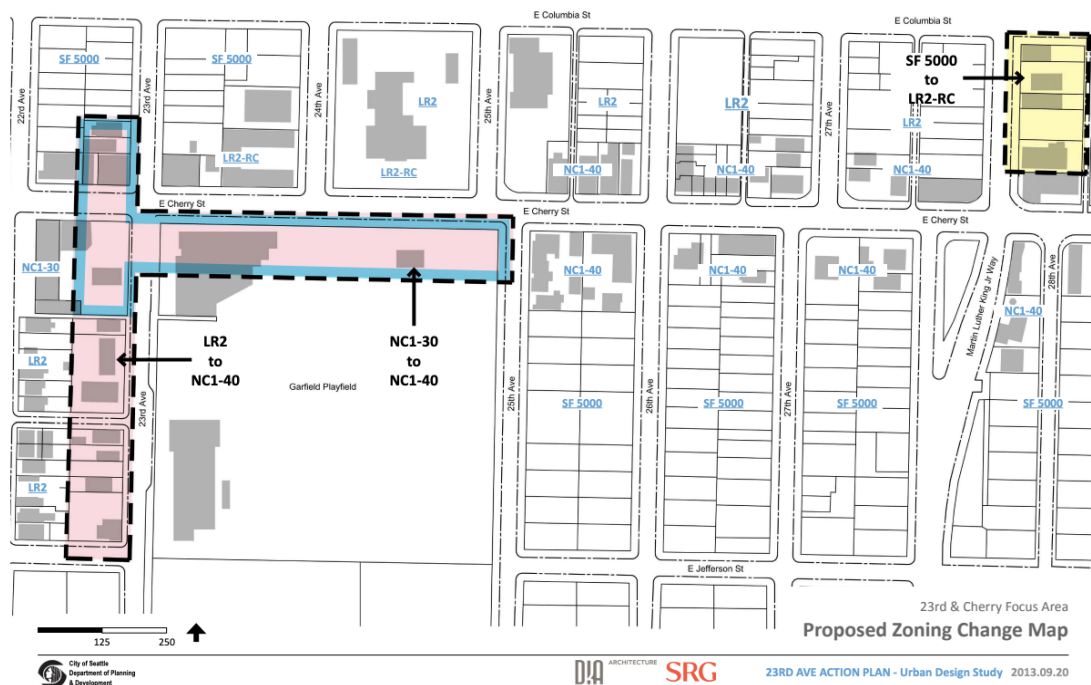


Figure 6: Zoning map for the community core of 23rd Ave & Cherry
 Source: 23rd Avenue Action Plan (2017).



Figure 7: Street View of 23rd Ave & Cherry
Source: Google Maps Street View (2023).

- *NC2 Neighborhood Commercial 2:* A moderately-sized pedestrian-oriented shopping area that provides a full range of retail sales and services to the surrounding neighborhood. This zoning type is proposed for the community core of 23rd Ave & Union (Figures 8 & 9).

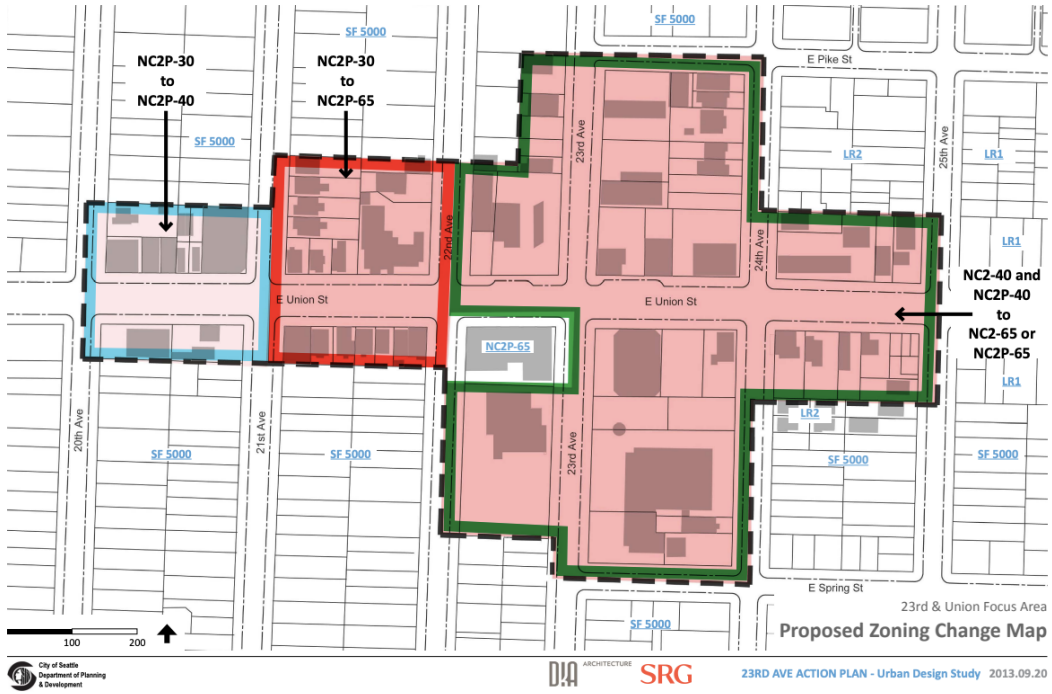


Figure 8: Zoning map for the community core of 23rd Ave & Union
 Source: 23rd Avenue Action Plan (2017).



Figure 9: Street View of 23rd Ave & Union
 Source: Personal Photograph (2023).

- *NC3 Neighborhood Commercial 3*: A larger pedestrian-oriented shopping district serving the surrounding neighborhood and a larger community, citywide or regional clientele; allowing comparison shopping among a range of retail businesses. This zoning type is proposed for the community core of 23rd Ave & Jackson (Figures 10 & 11).



Figure 10: Zoning map for the community core of 23rd Ave & Jackson
 Source: 23rd Avenue Action Plan (2017).



*Figure 11: Street View of 23rd Ave & Jackson
Source: Seattle Star (2016).*

- ***P Pedestrian-Designated Zones:*** The P designation preserves and encourages an intensely pedestrian-oriented, retail shopping district where non-auto modes of transportation, both to and within the district, are strongly favored. The P zone is applied to all community cores on NC zones along pedestrian-oriented commercial streets.

The primary goals of the action plan has ties to existing ABCD principles, such as a desire to link local urban magnets together, strengthen community resilience and heritage, and strengthen strong partnerships among the community, private and public entities. It

acknowledges the Central Area as a neighborhood of rapid change and a history of displacement amongst its historically African American residents. The plan emphasizes a desire to “hold the Central Area vision and balance the differing community interests” which it acknowledges may have changed since the two previous plans in 1992 and 1999. The Central Area has changed demographically since then, and the plan occasionally mentions that they have adapted their development strategies to reflect the shifts in the neighborhood. In the early 1990s close to when the first plan was conceived, about 47% of the Central Area’s population was African American

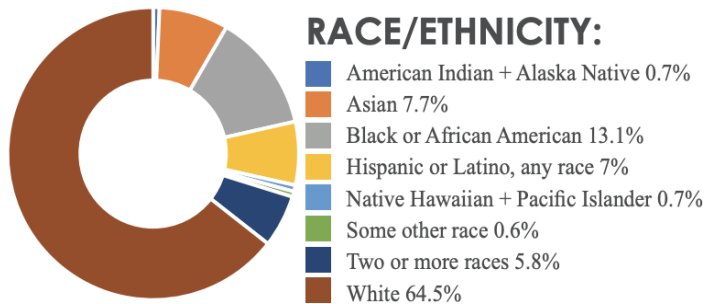


Figure 12: Demographic pie chart of Central Area

Source: City of Seattle Neighborhoods (2017)

with 40% of the population being White (City of Seattle Planning Department, 1990). At the time of the 23rd Ave Action Plan’s publishing in 2017, African Americans represented only 13.1% of the neighborhood’s population as seen in Figure 12, while

White residents represented 64.5% (Seattle Neighborhoods, 2017). Despite this, the 23rd Avenue Action Plan still stresses the rich cultural heritage of the Central Area being a predominately African American neighborhood throughout history, aiming to mitigate further loss of those residents.

The 23rd Avenue Action Plan utilizes an evolved ABCD framework to incorporate equity through planned developments specifically in the community core of 23rd Ave & Union. ABCD has been criticized for not acknowledging macro-level influences of power systems and institutional structures that influence many marginalized communities, including but not limited to redlining, racism, housing policies, and displacement. The Liberty Bank Building (Figure 13)

and the Africatown Land Trust represent community-led development projects in the community core that address these influences by providing affordable land and housing to the traditionally Black community in the Central Area.



Figure 13: Liberty Bank Building
Source: Personal Photograph (2023).

Specifically, the Liberty Bank opened in May of 1968 as the first Black-owned bank in the Pacific Northwest as a response to issues redlining and disinvestment in the Central Area, providing financial services to the community who faced many structural barriers to obtaining them (Liberty Bank - History, 2020). In 2015, the property was sold to Community Roots Housing below market value in order for it to provide affordable housing specifically for the Black community, inviting an advisory board of descendants of the original founders, a former

executive director, and long-time community members (Liberty Bank - History, 2020). The Liberty Bank Building not only honors the legacy of the original building by name, but provides an example of an asset-based development project incorporating equity to address community concerns of displacement and historical redlining. Contextually, developments being facilitated along community cores identified by the 23rd Ave Action Plan show an equity-based approach to ABCD that addresses macro-level community concerns such as displacement. While the plan and the Liberty Bank Building do not engage with ABCD by name, the principles still live on as they are applied in these modern contexts.

Stakeholder Engagement

The 23rd Avenue Action Plan incorporates an inclusive outreach and engagement process amongst community stakeholders who live, work, play, attend school, own property, own a business, worship, or have other personal and/or professional interest in the planning area (23rd Avenue Action Plan, 2017). The plan states that inclusive outreach and engagement was a primary objective, ensuring that the development process included both old and new voices who frequent the Central Area area and reflected a deeper understanding of community issues. To take into account the immigrant and multilingual populations in the Central Area, bilingual Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons (POELs) connected with seven historically underrepresented communities (youth, seniors, the Black /African American community, immigrants and refugees communities with a focus on AfaanOromo, Amharic and Tigrinya languages, and the Latino community). Methods of engagement included workshops, focus group meetings, individual workshops, in-person interviews, business canvassing, and online surveys.

The stakeholder engagement process was subdivided into four phases (numbered 0-4) with the first beginning in early 2013.

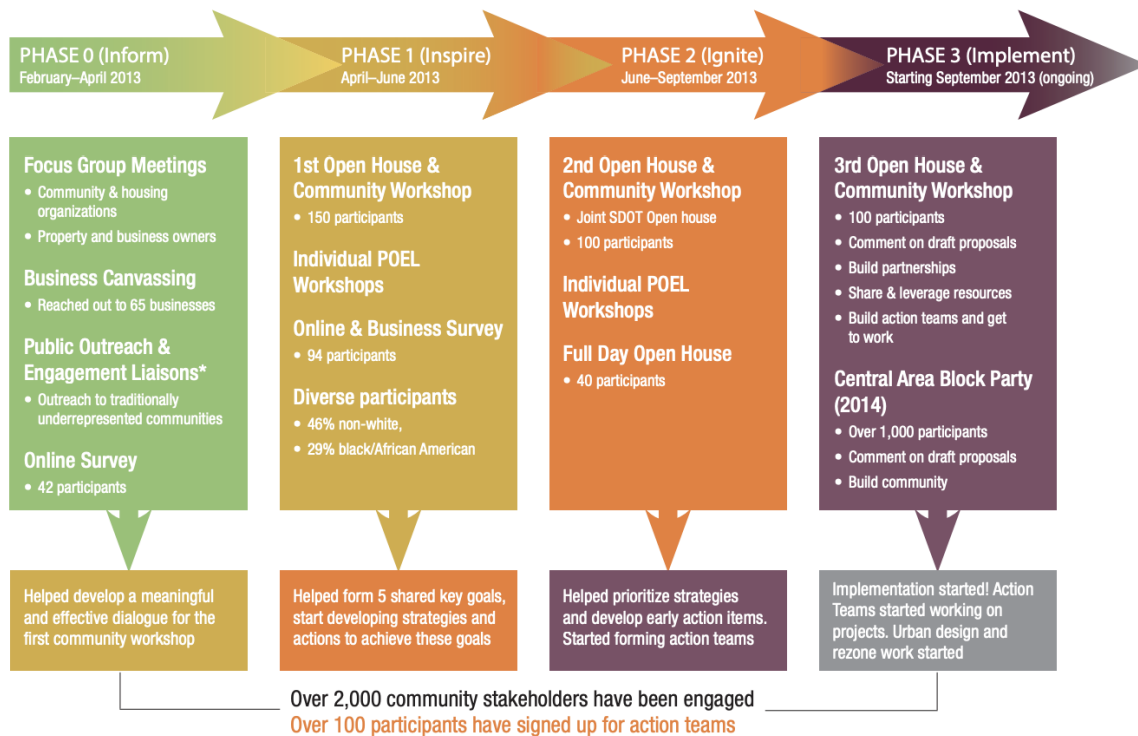
- **Phase 0 (Inform):** A 3 month period beginning February 2013 where the Central Area community was informed about the project, asked for input and help outreach, and encouraged to recruit for the 23rd Ave Community Team (ACT). Inputs were received via focus group meetings, individual workshops, in-person interviews, business canvassing, and online surveys. 23rd Avenue Action Plan (Union-Cherry-Jackson) Community Survey received 42 answers, specifically asking what the most important assets were along the community cores, and what roles they could see themselves in creating a healthier community (individually and organizationally) (See Appendix A). Stakeholders reached out to included community-based organizations, housing organizations, property owners, business owners, community members, and historically underrepresented community members.
- **Phase 1 (Inspire):** A 3 month period beginning April 2013 beginning with the first community workshop to engage the community and “generate passion.” Over 150 participants with diverse backgrounds, race, ages, and interests were engaged in a dynamic discussion on the future of the Central Area. Among those, nearly 30% were Black/African American, and 46% were non-white participants. Instant polling surveys and map exercises were used to learn how people interact in the neighborhood; what is great and needs to be supported; what needs improvement; and what the future of the area should look like to reflect the needs of its residents. 23rd Avenue Action Plan Visioning Survey received 85 answers, majority lived in the Central Area and were connected to the

neighborhood for 2-10 years (See Appendix B). Emphasis on trust and collaboration built between the community and the City.

- ***Phase 2 (Ignite)***: A 4 month period beginning June 2013 beginning with two community open houses of over 140 participants. Workshops included collaboration with the City of Seattle (SDOT) as well as additional open houses of about 40 participants. All community discussions helped to form the five priorities. Associated goals, strategies and actions were also developed as a result of this phase. The Central Area community started taking ownership and building partnerships during this phase, with action teams being formed who worked on prioritizing strategies and developing early action items. Continuation of individual POEL Workshops from Phase 1.
- ***Phase 3 (Implement)***: Beginning September 2013 onwards and beginning with a 3rd open house and community workshop of over 100 participants to comment on draft proposals, continue building partnerships, share and leverage resources, and review urban design proposals within action teams. proposed goals and policies to ensure. Drafts were reviewed to ensure that they reflect the shared community vision developed over the past year. A Resource Fair was held to allow community members to connect with local organizations in the Central Area and provide resources on how to join forces with community partners and City staff to start implementing specific projects. Based on the community feedback, the Action Plan was further refined, and the Urban Design Framework (UDF) and rezoning work started to reflect the community vision for each community core. In September 2014, the ACT held the Central Area Block Party where the draft Action Plan, UDF and rezoning proposal were presented to the community. About 1,000-1,500 community members were involved at the event which featured local

musicians, restaurants, food, and the arts. Created an opportunity for ACT members and local organizations to be informed about the 23rd Ave Action Plan and provided an opportunity for community feedback on the plan’s impact and recommendations. “Many participants mentioned that they haven’t seen such a diverse, inclusive, and engaging community event in the Central Area for decades, and they would love to see this become an annual event.” (SDCI Community Engagement, 2014).

Figure 14 displays a comprehensive visual of all four phases of community engagement utilized in the 23rd Avenue Action Plan.



* This project’s Public Outreach & Engagement Liaisons include Afaan-Oromo, Amharic, Tigriinya, Spanish, African American, Seniors and youth communities.

Figure 14: Diagram of 23rd Ave Action Plan Community Engagement Phases

Source: 23rd Ave Action Plan (2017).

In total throughout the planning process, the 23rd Avenue Action Plan engaged these community stakeholders through 93 meetings (54 city-hosted meetings, 15 community organization-hosted meetings, 24 Advisory Core Team meetings), online surveys (127 participants), and business canvassing (67 businesses). Across the community engagement process, over 2,000 total participants and 40 community based organizations helped to form priorities, goals, strategies, and actions for the project (23rd Ave Action Plan, 2017).

Cultural Heritage

The first goal (Priority A) for the Central Area stated in the five community-identified priorities for the Central Area is:

A destination with unique identity that recognizes the Central Area as the historical heart of the African American community while welcoming all people in a multicultural, and layered environment that celebrates old and new

The plan describes the Central Area as a place with “inclusive multicultural fabric” which welcomes all people, but remains the heart of the region’s African American community. Additionally, stakeholder engagement reveals that the current community is proud of its culture, heritage, and diversity of people and places while also being a place of welcome. Due to this, it hosts a wealth of social and cultural assets not limited to art, schools, libraries, recreation, music, and others. The urban form represents “mature trees and historic architecture” that represents the young and old generations alongside multiple business districts and a “neighborly feel of a village” (23rd Avenue Action Plan, 2017).

The three community cores have been identified as exhibiting three different niches, but still home to businesses and institutions that are central to the African American community and serve the diversity of cultures in the Central Area:

- 23rd and Jackson: Shopping center, urban village
- 23rd and Union: Business and restaurant center, small scale commercial hub providing range of residential housing types
- 23rd and Cherry: Community and historic center, small scale community and commercial hub providing education, youth, and other community activities.

Proposed policies address “community character and identity” with a goal of “strengthening the unique identity and recognizing the historical significance through improvements to the physical and social environment” while “supporting programs that embrace diversity.” Relevant policies and strategies that are interpreted to help meet these goals include:

- **Policy 1:** Strengthen a unique identity for the Central Area that celebrates its culture, heritage, and diversity. Increase feeling of pride and sense of community amongst residents, business owners, employees, and visitors.
 - **Strategy A-2.** Build strong neighborhood cultural facilities which reflect the values and cultures of the community and serve as beacons of community pride.
- **Policy 4:** Create opportunities for public spaces, public art, and gateways that engage and express the Central Area’s unique heritage and identity

- **Strategy A-3.** Create public art and provide welcoming space to enhance its multicultural identity especially as the center of African American community
- **Strategy A-4.** Support existing and provide new events, festivals and programs for all people to share and learn different cultures
- **Policy 5:** Identify activities and spaces for people with diverse cultures, ages and backgrounds to meet, share, learn and strengthen community ties.
 - **Strategy A-5.** Support existing and provide new events, festivals and programs for all people to share and learn different cultures
 - **Strategy A-7.** Support cultural centers and programs that cater to the community

Through these policies and strategies, local institutions like cultural centers and schools are emphasized as being vital to accomplish the goals set by the 23rd Ave Action Plan. The history and culture of the neighborhood is seen as a top priority in future development of the Central Area, showing an interest in investing and strengthening the social and cultural assets in the community. Investment in cultural festivals show the importance of community belonging and relationships, signifying the emphasis on networks between community members. All of these values are reflected in the core principles of ABCD theory, but are specified here in the plan to specifically include the Central Area's legacy as the primary African American neighborhood in the region and the importance of diversity and multiculturalism that must be preserved during development efforts.

Economic Conditions

The third goal (Priority C) for the Central Area stated in the five community-identified priorities for the Central Area is:

A great business community where commercial and community cores work together to provide a broad spectrum of goods and services, viable and sustainable commercial centers and proclaim the Central Area's identity;

The plan envisions the Central Area as a neighborhood with connected business districts (outlined in the proposed zoning changes in the Context section). The plan explicitly mentions that the Central Area is culturally and ethnically diverse with an economically strong community (it is also considered "High Opportunity" by the City of Seattle's Equitable Development Initiative). One goal is to ensure that the business districts "provide the goods and services needed for the multicultural community who live, work, worship, and shop there."

The plan acknowledges the need for affordable and "culturally appropriate and healthy food" in order to "maintain the multi-cultural character" of the Central Area. It also hopes to "provide opportunities and support to facilitate start-up small businesses." Relevant policies and strategies that are interpreted to help meet these goals include:

- **Policy 1:** Support vibrant, diverse and distinct commercial districts that provide a range of goods and services for the entire community.
 - **Strategy C-2.** Preserve ethnic businesses.

- **Strategy C-3.** Work with the property owners and developers on future redevelopment projects to attract the right types and forms of businesses and services that will serve the community needs including healthy food, affordable spaces, and preserve healthy social gathering places like Starbucks.
- **Policy 3:** Support efforts to encourage existing and new minority and locally owned businesses in the Central Area to grow and expand.
 - **Strategy C-22.** Provide ethnic/cultural and local small businesses with solutions to stay in the area and maintain the multicultural/diverse character
 - **Strategy C-23.** Support Black/African American owned and operated businesses
 - **Strategy C-25.** Explore strategies to retain or add affordable commercial space to support diverse character.
 - **Strategy C-26.** Explore legislative changes needed to remove structural barriers to supporting affordable commercial space.

These policies and strategies have the goal of improving the economic conditions of the Central Area, which is connected to ABCD core principles of facilitating trade and exchange between community members. The plan hopes to increase affordable options for businesses, provide opportunities for startups, and remove structural barriers to existing local businesses to allow them to remain in the neighborhood. Displacement impacts businesses alongside residents, so providing these strategies help ensure that community members can meet the economic conditions needed to remain in the Central Area if they wish. Another key point is the plan's heavy emphasis on ethnic businesses (specifically Black/African American businesses) and the importance of businesses reflecting the multicultural/diverse character of the Central Area.

Through stakeholder engagement, it is revealed that a value of the community is the diverse nature of the people, therefore retaining this is a high priority amongst all economic strategies. Having values that connect a community is a core principle of the ABCD framework. Additionally, improving the economic conditions of a “disinvested” neighborhood is one of the key catalysts of the inception of ABCD, therefore ABCD values can be seen in the economic conditions of the 23rd Avenue Action Plan.

Social Capital

The second goal (Priority B) for the Central Area stated in the five community-identified priorities for the Central Area is:

A neighborhood with connected people and community where community assets serve and reflect the community and are equitably accessed by all people including youth, seniors and people of color, and where people from all backgrounds connect, engage, and learn from one another;

The plan acknowledges that the Central Area is rich in community assets including but not limited to business districts, educational facilities, visual and performing arts programs, and community-based organizations. The plan envisions these assets “serving and reflecting the community” and facilitating “meaningful connections with each other,” specifically children, youth, and the elderly. Emphasizing the cultural diversity and caring community within the Central Area, the plan prioritizes social networks of community organizations, service

organizations, education institutions, and government organizations that can empower current and future generations.

By strengthening social connections, the plan outlines social outcomes such as increasing opportunities for students, creating pathways to meaningful employment, providing employment training opportunities, economic opportunities within commercial districts, and strengthening organizations and local leadership that reflect the cultural diversity of the neighborhood. There is an emphasis on strengthening associations within the neighborhood while also connecting with networks outside the Central Area (such as with the City of Seattle) to incorporate both inside and outside relationships. There is an emphasis on utilizing “connected people” to produce educational, economic, and social outcomes that ultimately facilitate expanded connections and asset building. Relevant policies and strategies that are interpreted to help meet these goals include:

- Build strong partnerships and support projects that provide opportunities for local jobs for Central Area residents and pathways to living wage jobs in the region’s employment centers.
- **Policy 11:** Strive to develop healthy workplaces where employees are treated with respect, and have a voice in decisions that impact their jobs, lives and community.
- **Policy 14:** Encourage local institutions, community-based organizations, and other agencies to provide lifelong learning opportunities needed by the Central Area’s diverse community.
 - **Strategy B-20.** Strengthen coordination and engagement between schools and the community

- **Strategy B-21.** Improve communication and partnership opportunities among community and organizations
- **Strategy B-23.** Support community organizations that represent multifamily neighborhoods
- **Strategy B-24.** Identify volunteer opportunities for the community

While not explicitly referencing social capital by name, the 23rd Ave Action plan emphasizes the value of strengthening community relationships and networks. The plan connects intangible assets like community engagement, partnerships, and leadership, to tangible outcomes such as organizational youth programs, increased educational training, volunteer opportunities, and more. Over half of ABCD's core principles involve personal relationships and interactions, as those assets are often mobilized to produce ABCD's desired outcomes. The 23rd Ave Action Plan builds upon existing community relationships in the Central Area and creates opportunities that both strengthen those assets and create new assets for the diverse community.

DISCUSSION

Framework Analysis of the 23rd Avenue Action Plan

Framework analysis is conducted to understand how evolved ABCD principles are present in the 23rd Ave Action Plan, and how they have evolved to assist equitable neighborhood development and anti-displacement efforts. As the 23rd Ave Action Plan does not refer to ABCD by name but still utilizes elements of the framework, the ABCD+E framework exists to track how original and evolved principles have been utilized in the development plan. Utilizing the assessment framework created in this thesis based off of existing ABCD goals, the findings of the case study are as follows:

Context

While the 23rd Avenue Action Plan does not explicitly name ABCD as a framework, ABCD principles have been mobilized throughout the strategies, such as a desire to link local urban magnets together, strengthen community resilience and heritage, and strengthen strong partnerships among the community, private and public entities. It was created to manage increased growth and changes in the Central Area, which is often a reason for ABCD intervention since its conception. Additionally, the plan emphasizes its general goal of upholding the Central Area vision and balancing the differing community interests, a strong aspect of ABCD principles. Through this plan, ABCD principles have evolved to incorporate equity and anti-displacement via proxy terms underlined in the case study analysis (eg. “stable communities,” “preserve ethnic businesses,” “stay in the area,” “support community

organizations”). Contextually, the 23rd Ave Action Plan utilizes ABCD principles in their equitable development and anti-displacement efforts without terming it as such.

This plan is an evolved version of two previous action plans in the Central Area, and the creation of ACT groups alongside the City of Seattle to facilitate this evolution utilizes ABCD principles by strengthening strong partnerships among the community, private and public entities. ABCD acknowledges that creation of associations within the community is the most valuable, however partnerships across sectors and outside the neighborhood is also important to balance. The plan has utilized these groups to create a joint vision and a set of priorities that guide the plan that reflects the overall perspective of the community.

Physically, the 23rd Action Plan hopes to change zoning along the three identified community cores, primarily to create community spaces that provide services to the Central Area. These zoning types include neighborhood commercial areas that provide retail, pedestrian-oriented shopping spaces, community meeting spaces, and plazas. While economic development and non-vehicle mobility is a priority with these zoning changes, it reflects ABCD principles by providing physical spaces for an “exchange between neighbors” through business opportunities, and a gathering space for people to create relationships and networks with one another. From a zoomed out neighborhood perspective, these zoning changes also create connectors that link local urban magnets together, thus strengthening both the economic and social capital of the Central Area. With an emphasis on a united community vision, a priority towards empowering the local residents, and establishing physical networks and community cores, the conception, goals, and evolution of the plan reflect ABCD principles despite not outwardly naming the framework as an inspiration. What results is a plan that acknowledges the history of the Central Area, the shifting demographics, the value of retaining the local vision and

cultural identity of the neighborhood, and the opportunity to mobilize community networks and relationships.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is a common process in development, but is not always conducted equitably. As mentioned in the literature review, community engagement and social networking can result in the tokenization or exploitation of marginalized groups leading to the exploitation or misunderstanding of assets. While such things can still happen while operating under the original ABCD principles (which outline the importance of stakeholder engagement but does not explicitly guide equitable engagement), more recent ABCD theory expands on the initial idea by discusses the importance of power reallocation and empowerment of marginalized groups (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003, De Gramont, 2013). The 23rd Ave Action Plan addresses both of these values by conducting a multi-step and multi-scale level of stakeholder engagement that included members of the community, stakeholders from the City of Seattle, community-based organizations, and other focus groups. By providing multiple methods of engagement including surveys, public meetings, community events, festivals, and more, the plan was able to reach a variety of stakeholders that would have an interest in the development of the Central Area.

While stakeholder engagement by name is not an original principle of ABCD, it was included in this framework because it is a method of relationship building, networking, and trust building amongst a community (which represent ABCD principles). When there is a plan to develop a neighborhood, ensuring that those who live, work, and frequent that neighborhood have a voice in those changes is good practice, as they will ultimately be one of the most affected

populations during and after development. When those facilitating development ensure that they provide equitable and accessible methods of engagement that account for potential barriers allows for trust-building, as it shows the community that developers are invested in collecting a holistic and accurate picture of the community's thoughts and opinions. Additionally, it shows that the developers are invested in equitable development by acknowledging and empowering voices often excluded from the development process - often marginalized populations. What results is a process built on relationships, trust, and the opportunity to network and establish connections via potential focus groups, partnerships, and meetings as a result of stakeholder engagement.

In total throughout the planning process, the 23rd Avenue Action Plan engaged these community stakeholders through 93 meetings (54 city-hosted meetings, 15 community organization-hosted meetings, 24 Advisory Core Team meetings), online surveys (127 participants), and business canvassing (67 businesses). Over 2,000 total participants and 40 community based organizations helped to form priorities, goals, strategies, and actions for the project. Over 100 participants signed up for action teams (23rd Ave Action Plan, 2017). Throughout this process, robust language and translation assistance was provided for any community members who do not speak English as a first language. Additionally, the opinions of the historically African American population were highlighted as a priority to account for retaining the cultural identity of the neighborhood. The City of Seattle also facilitated block parties that allowed for a more informal and recreational gathering space for the community to voice their thoughts and get acquainted with other stakeholders.

The involvement of the City of Seattle alongside community-based organizations and advisory core teams represent a multi-scale and diverse set of stakeholders all facilitating efforts

to engage the community. The creation of action teams display ABCD core values of establishing steering or planning groups of local residents who will be involved in decision-making. All of these efforts reflect ABCD principles of strengthening relationships, creating connections, and establishing local neighborhood associations that can mobilize and advocate on behalf of the community.

Cultural Heritage

The 23rd Ave Action Plan frequently mentions the rich and diverse history of the Central Area as the heart of Seattle’s African American community. In addition, the neighborhood is also presented as a welcoming community in a multicultural and layered environment that “celebrates old and new” (23rd Ave Action Plan, 2017). This sentiment is supported by representing the first goal (Priority A) for the action plan as determined by the CAT amongst four other community-identified priorities. Within this priority, key policies and strategies are established that specifically celebrates the Central Area’s culture, heritage, and diversity, thus increasing the feeling of pride and sense of community in the neighborhood.

While cultural heritage is not explicitly mentioned as a principle of ABCD, it was included in the framework for its representation of cultural assets, both tangible and intangible. These assets that reflect the heritage and identity of the neighborhood encourage a sense of pride and connection amongst community members due to a shared identity, heritage, or vision. The sharing of stories and strengthening amongst community members represent key principles of ABCD, and are built upon with this framework to include culture as a method of creating those connections. Due to the Central Area’s historical legacy as a cultural neighborhood for the African-American community, the 23rd Ave Action Plan emphasizes the importance of

celebrating and preserving that aspect of the neighborhood in all facets of development. Local institutions like cultural centers and schools are emphasized as being vital to accomplish the goals set by the 23rd Ave Action Plan. Investment in cultural festivals show the importance of community belonging and relationships, signifying the emphasis on networks between community members. All of these values are reflected in the core principles of ABCD theory, but are specified here in the plan to specifically include the Central Area's legacy as the primary African American neighborhood in the region and the importance of diversity and multiculturalism that must be preserved during development efforts.

Physically, the proposed zoning changes to the three community cores are specified to include space for businesses that reflect the culture of the neighborhood, community and historic centers, education and youth centers, and retail spaces for existing residents. These spaces either reflect the cultural heritage of the neighborhood (restaurants, local Black-owned businesses) or serve members of the traditionally African-American community (community centers, education centers). This not only strengthens the cultural history through tangible assets and physical spaces, it also improves opportunities for residents who carry on the historical legacy of the community.

Economic Conditions

ABCD was established in part to assist disinvested communities who receive less public and private sector investments in infrastructure, social power, and policy decisions (Trounstine 2018, Kinder 2016). ABCD principles also include the exchange between neighborhoods including sharing, trading, buying, and selling. Additionally, most development plans incorporate economic development in some capacity. This is seen in the 23rd Ave Action plan as the third

goal (Priority C) in the the five community-identified priorities for the Central Area. What stands out in this section of the plan is the dedication to establishing commercial and community cores that work interdependently to provide goods, services, and centers that “proclaim the Central Area’s identity” (23rd Ave Action Plan, 2017). As the Central Area is considered “High Opportunity” by the City of Seattle’s Development Initiative, it is acknowledged that the neighborhood has the ability to grow economically. However, as economic growth can be a factor of displacement (Equitable Development Plan, 2016), the 23rd Ave Action Plan specifies that any improved business districts would “provide the goods and services needed for the multicultural community who live, work, worship, and shop there,” thus acknowledging that economic conditions must reflect the local residents. Additionally, there is an emphasis on local, small, or start-up businesses in contrast to established corporate businesses.

Policies and strategies to reach this goal utilize key words or phrases such as “preserve,” “work with [local businesses],” “stay in the area” and “remove structural barriers” to emphasize their dedication to assisting local neighborhood economic development. Strategies acknowledge the challenges local business owners face, often as marginalized groups, when development occurs. Similarly as to how ABCD was utilized to address disinvested communities and a lack of tangible resources by empowering community members, this plan establishes strategies for the Central Area’s local community members to improve the economic conditions of the neighborhood.

These policies and strategies have the goal of improving the economic conditions of the Central Area with an emphasis on local community businesses, which is connected to ABCD core principles. The plan hopes to provide opportunities for startups, and remove structural barriers to existing local businesses to allow them to remain in the neighborhood. Displacement

impacts businesses alongside residents, so providing these strategies help ensure that community members can meet the economic conditions needed to remain in the Central Area if they wish. Another key point is the plan's heavy emphasis on ethnic businesses (specifically Black/African American businesses) and the importance of businesses reflecting the multicultural/diverse character of the Central Area. Through stakeholder engagement, it is revealed that a value of the community is the diverse nature of the people, therefore retaining this is a high priority amongst all economic strategies. Having values that connect a community is a core principle of the ABCD framework. Additionally, improving the economic conditions of a "disinvested" neighborhood is one of the key catalysts of the inception of ABCD, therefore ABCD values can be seen in the economic conditions of the 23rd Avenue Action Plan.

Social Capital

The 23rd Ave Action Plan does not explicitly state social capital as a term in the document, however it does create a goal (Priority B) for the Central Area as a neighborhood with "connected people and community" where "people from all backgrounds connect, engage, and learn from one another" (23rd Ave Action Plan). Original ABCD principles also do not name social capital as a term, however, they emphasize the relationship drive aspect of ABCD and the importance of creating local associations and strengthening unrealized resources of social, kinship, or associated networks (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003) through the mobilization of these informal networks so that formal institutional resources can be activated.

The 23rd Ave Action Plan achieves this through their policies and strategies that strengthen social connections within the neighborhood while also connecting with networks outside the Central Area. The plan outlines social outcomes such as increasing opportunities for

students, creating pathways to meaningful employment, providing employment training opportunities, economic opportunities within commercial districts, and strengthening organizations and local leadership that reflect the cultural diversity of the neighborhood. The plan connects intangible assets like community engagement, partnerships, and leadership, to tangible outcomes such as organizational youth programs, increased educational training, volunteer opportunities, and more. Over half of ABCD's core principles involve personal relationships and interactions, as those assets are often mobilized to produce ABCD's desired outcomes. The 23rd Ave Action Plan builds upon existing community relationships in the Central Area and creates opportunities that both strengthen those assets and create new assets for the diverse community.

Through the case study analysis, ABCD+E principles appear in multiple areas of the 23rd Avenue Action Plan. This includes but is not limited to:

- Creation of focus groups
- Emphasis on community based organizing
- Appreciation of social assets
- Retention of cultural heritage
- Inclusive community engagement
- Priority of Black business owners and residents

Notably, these principles often appear with the goal of retaining the heritage of the community, providing opportunities for the historically marginalized community to either remain

or preserve meaningful aspects of the neighborhood, and investing in the local community that is still in the Central Area. This is assumedly in response to the rapid gentrification and displacement that the Central Area is facing which disproportionately displaces marginalized communities. This case study provides an opportunity to see how ABCD principles assist neighborhoods facing displacement, and what the framework lacks in addressing current neighborhood phenomena. While there is no common, direct, or explicit linkage between ABCD and anti-displacement efforts in the case study and existing literature, this analysis argues that there is correlation between ABCD efforts and anti-displacement efforts under certain conditions. More detailed examples of ABCD+E principles within the 23rd Ave Action Plan are presented in the table summary below.

Table Summary of Case Study Findings

	23rd Ave Action Plan	ABCD+E Principles
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created to manage increased growth and changes in the Central Area Uphold the Central Area vision and balance the differing community interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create connectors that link local urban magnets together Strengthen community resilience and heritage Strengthen strong partnerships among the community, private and public entities. Providing housing and economic opportunities for the historically Black community
Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority of inclusive outreach and engagement Included both old and new voices who frequent the Central Area area in the development process Accessibility for immigrant and multilingual populations in the Central Area Variety of engagement methods individually, in groups, in person, and virtually. Spoken and written forms of communication accommodated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowerment of community members not traditionally included in community planning decisions Accessibility options and language services provided for all community members to allow for more equitable engagement Opportunities for network building, relationship strengthening, and partnership amongst community members, local associations, and outside organizations Multi-scale engagement of diverse

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community input on what assets should be valued and how they see themselves being a part of the community. • Emphasis on ownership and partnership building • Goals and action items decided by the community • Opportunities for community members to connect with local organizations in the Central Area • Events held to establish an Urban Design Framework that celebrated the local community and cultural heritage of the Central Area. 	<p>stakeholders that represent the neighborhood community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of action teams, steering groups, and planning groups amongst local residents
<p>Cultural Heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Area as the historical heart of the African American community while welcoming all people in a multicultural, and layered environment that celebrates old and new • Wealth of social and cultural assets not limited to art, schools, libraries, recreation, music, and others. • Proposed policies address “community character and identity” with a goal of “strengthening the unique identity and recognizing the historical significance through improvements to the physical and social environment” while “supporting programs that embrace diversity.” • Strategy A-2. Build strong neighborhood cultural facilities which reflect the values and cultures of the community and serve as beacons of community pride. • Identify activities and spaces for people with diverse cultures, ages and backgrounds to meet, share, learn and strengthen community ties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for local institutions like cultural centers and schools • Prioritizes the history and culture of the neighborhood and strengthening the social and cultural assets in the community • Investment in community belonging and relationships, signifying the emphasis on networks between community members.
<p>Economic Conditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial and community cores work together to provide a broad spectrum of goods and services • The Central Area as a neighborhood with connected business districts that provide a range of goods and services for the entire community • Preservation of ethnic and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for local businesses and the strengthening of neighborhood associations. • Stabilizes community during economic shifts and provides community members agency and power • Community businesses reflect the character of the neighborhood • Retention of core values in a community

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> culturally significant businesses Supports efforts to encourage existing and new minority and locally owned businesses to grow and expand. Provides ethnic/cultural and local small businesses with solutions to stay in the area and maintain the multicultural/diverse character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement of the economic conditions of a “disinvested” neighborhood
Social Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs where community members can connect, engage, and learn from one another The plan facilitates meaningful connections amongst the community, specifically children, youth, and the elderly. Prioritizes social networks of community organizations, service organizations, education institutions, and government organizations that can empower current and future generations. Outlines social outcomes as a result of social capital: increased opportunities for students, meaningful employment, employment training opportunities, Strengthens associations within the neighborhood while also connecting with networks outside the Central Area Utilizes “connected people” to produce educational, economic, and social outcomes that ultimately facilitate expanded connections and asset building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens community relationships and networks. Connects intangible assets like community engagement, partnerships, and leadership, to tangible outcomes Involves personal relationships and interactions, as those assets are often mobilized Builds upon existing community relationships in the Central Area Creates opportunities that both strengthen those assets and create new assets for the diverse community

23rd Avenue Action Plan: The Use of Anti-Displacement Proxies

The 23rd Ave Action Plan acknowledges the Central Area as a neighborhood of rapid change and a history of displacement amongst its historically African American residents. The plan does not explicitly mention “anti-displacement” by name as a primary goal (the word “displacement” itself is only mentioned twice in the entire 58 page document). However, it does support policies and strategies that specifically support the historically African American

community, youth, elderly, and low-income residents that are at the highest risk of displacement pressures. Proxy words like “retain” and “preserve” appear in many key strategies that address the housing, businesses, and cultural development of the Central Area, thus I infer that these strategies inherently facilitate anti-displacement efforts of the current low-income residents of color. The plan also utilizes census data to acknowledge the decline of the Black/African American population in the Central Area (64% in 1990 to 28% in 2010) and increase of the White population (16% to 44% in the same time period) and raises awareness that the neighborhood is “attracting significant private and public investment” (23rd Ave Action Plan, 2017). Therefore, I suggest that the 23rd Ave Action Plan operates as an anti-displacement initiative for the Central Area.

I make an argument that in the condition of the case study, the 23rd Ave Action Plan and the Central Area, there is an evolved usage of ABCD principles that incorporate equity and anti-displacement efforts. ABCD is not listed as an official method or framework utilized in the 23rd Ave Action Plan, however as seen in the framework analysis, core principles of ABCD are represented in the plan through an equity lens. For example, community engagement and relationship building is a core principle of ABCD. The 23rd Ave Action plan takes it one step further by acknowledging the multiple languages spoken by the Central Area, thus providing language services for the neighborhood so that all residents can participate in the community engagement process. Additionally, the plan makes an effort to equitably engage those community members, facilitate development that reflects the overall cultural heritage and vision of the community, and remove structural barriers that have historically marginalized members of the Central Area neighborhood. This shows that ABCD values, while not explicitly stated in the plan, are still utilized to guide current planning decisions and have been mobilized to incorporate

elements of equity, accessibility, and power systems that ABCD was once criticized for leaving out. Additionally, the plan emphasizes goals that allow residents and business owners to stay in the neighborhood, preserve significant, historical, or cultural assets, and strengthen educational and economic opportunities for community members who may have not had those resources, providing a way for ABCD to assist with mitigating displacement.

The 23rd Ave Action Plan presents five top priorities decided by the Central Area, and while mitigating displacement is not listed as a goal, as I argue that a majority of their efforts mitigate displacement by proxy. Specifically, I interpret the priorities of “A place that connects people and community” and “A place that supports a healthy and stable community” as proxies for anti-displacement, as a connected and stable community means that displacement pressures would not force any residents to leave the neighborhood. This doesn’t mean that the plan does not realistically consider the introduction of new residents, nor does it attempt to prevent the arrival of residents who are not traditionally a part of the Central Area. For example, the plan does not state that they want to increase the percentage of African-American residents or prevent White residents from moving into the neighborhood. The plan does emphasize that the Central Area is a multicultural neighborhood that welcomes all potential community members. By doing so, they also place a high priority on ensuring that the neighborhood does not lose its cultural roots.

Similar to critiques of ABCD mentioned beforehand, some may say that because of the use of proxy words rather than directly mentioning displacement, the 23rd Ave Action Plan doesn’t take a hard enough stance to combat power dynamics or institutional systems that have caused displacement in the past. This puts into question if ABCD principles, even evolved to include equity, can halt displacement or pause the impacts of displacement rather than overturn

it, reverse it, or truly embody “anti-displacement” efforts (depending on one's definition of anti-displacement”). If critics were not satisfied with the core principles of ABCD and believe it needs to address equity more clearly to achieve sustainable change, does the 23rd Avenue Action Plan do enough with evolved ABCD values? Or does it need to go a step further? There is also the question of whether the 23rd Ave Action Plan came too late to truly make lasting anti-displacement efforts when so much of the historical African American community has already been displaced. With what assets are still there, will evolved ABCD principles be enough to mobilize what remains? The 23rd Ave Action Plan is still unfolding as of this thesis, therefore it is beyond the scope to determine how successful their efforts are.

ABCD + Equity: The Story of ABCD

The above questions presented lead to the research question of this thesis: how have asset based community development principles evolved to assist equitable neighborhood development and anti-displacement efforts? Additionally, under what conditions will these evolved ABCD principles assist neighborhoods experiencing displacement? And if so, will these “ABCD + Equity” initiatives truly be considered ABCD, or has it evolved so much so that it is no longer prioritizing existing assets, but another framework altogether that prioritizes other values? The purpose of the ABCD+E framework creation is to provide a lens of ABCD that incorporates original principles established in the 1980’s along with current equity and anti-displacement considerations driving efforts in Seattle’s Central Area today. The goal is to incorporate ABCD’s areas of growth to better address equity and widen the scope of to account for institutional drivers, neighborhood demographics, and power systems that can influence the success of core ABCD principles. Through this thesis, a storyline of ABCD’s evolution has been discussed to

better understand how it is applied to address issues many marginalized communities face today, such as displacement.

I argue that by tracing ABCD's origins, evolution, and application in modern development plans, the core principles have not disappeared, but rather evolved to better address the power systems that disproportionately harm marginalized communities. This creates an expanded framework of ABCD to include the next logical step: "E" for equity, creating an ABCD+E or ABCDE framework to illustrate this evolution. Rather than thinking of this as an equity based community development (EBCD) or an anti-displacement based community development (ADBCD) framework that is separated from ABCD, I specifically choose to refer to this evolved orientation as ABCD+E to illustrate how the core principles in ABCD have not disappeared over time, but have evolved, adapted, and expanded to account for displacement, power systems, and other equity issues that disproportionately impact marginalized communities.

As seen in the 23rd Ave Action Plan, elements of core ABCD principles are still present in strategies that strengthen community relationships, celebrate the cultural heritage of the Central Area, and empower local associations. The mobilization of existing assets still play a large role in the policies and strategies, illustrating how ABCD has not completely disappeared from development plans. However, with the addition of goals that assist with anti-displacement efforts and the consideration of equity concerns, the 23rd Ave Action Plan utilizes ABCD as a way to facilitate equitable development, expanding on existing framework to remove structural barriers to opportunity, increase accessibility for the diverse community, and invest in the Central Area's historically Black community.

Equitable Transformation in the Central Area

While the 23rd Ave Action Plan was the case study of this thesis, the Central Area is also home to other initiatives, programs, and organizations that utilize ABCD principles to address issues of displacement, equitable development, and structural barriers to opportunity. I argue that the evolution of ABCD into ABCD+E is present in many development initiatives in the neighborhood, despite it not being utilized by name. In addition to the Liberty Bank Building mentioned previously, the following represents examples of past and current equitable transformation efforts in the Central Area, which expands on the idea that evolved ABCD principles exist in current development initiatives that emphasize equity and anti-displacement. Common linkages between these efforts include creating affordable housing for residents to mitigate rising costs, housing accessibility for long-term residents, improved economic support for small businesses, and equitable development practices specifically for marginalized communities.

- **Africatown Community Land Trust:** As a part of the 23rd Avenue Action Plan in the 23rd & Union community core, the Africatown Community Land Trust is a community-led initiative that aims to promote affordable housing and community ownership in the Central Area. The land trust acquires and develops land for affordable housing and other community assets, with the goal of keeping the neighborhood accessible to long-term residents. By keeping land within the current community and empowering the historically Black community in the Central Area, this program engages with ABCD+E principles of strengthening local associations and mitigating displacement pressures.

- **The Equitable Development Initiative:** This initiative was launched by the City of Seattle in 2016 to support community-led projects that promote equitable development in neighborhoods like the Central Area. The initiative provides funding for projects that address displacement, build community wealth, and promote economic mobility for marginalized communities. Utilizing ABCD+E principles through equitable community engagement practices and addressing structural barriers caused by power systems, this initiative hopes to support other programs that facilitate equitable development.
- **The Central Area Collaborative:** This coalition of community organizations works to promote equitable development and community empowerment in the Central Area. The group advocates for policies that support affordable housing, small businesses, and community-led development projects. This utilizes ABCD+E principles of strengthening local associations while also accounting for equity and the cultural heritage of the Central Area.
- **The Central Area Preservation and Development Authority:** This organization was established in 1992 to promote economic development and affordable housing in the Central Area. The organization has developed several affordable housing projects in the area and provides small business support services to local entrepreneurs. This organization aligns with the ABCD+E framework principles such as cultural heritage and economic development while also providing affordable housing for the existing community.

While these projects all represent values in the ABCD+E framework by engaging equity and addressing macro-level community concerns, many are created as a response to power

systems and institutional structures, such as historical redlining and racist policies. Critics of ABCD may raise concerns that these projects which are utilizing an ABCD+E framework are still operating within these power structures and mitigating the harmful impacts rather than disrupting it. This can go as far as saying “displacement” by name, which only happens twice in the entirety of the 23rd Avenue Action Plan. It also puts into question what ABCD+E is supposed to achieve: radical change in community development strategies that reinvent institutional structures, or a strategy to be implemented in neighborhoods that have already faced structural barriers and need assistance accessing resources to catch up with everybody else. If ABCD+E is still at a place where it is used as a response rather than a disruptor, the next logical question would be to ask whether the evolution has not yet finished, and if there is a future in which ABCD and ABCD+E can begin directly address institutions that directly cause the marginalization of many communities.

ABCD+E: Evolution and Next Steps

As the world evolves over time, so should the frameworks we use to develop it. ABCD was developed in the late 1980s when neighborhoods were struggling with disinvested neighborhoods, and a policy gap was identified where social assets were not being mobilized. Strategies focused on providing money, financial capital, and resource investment into neighborhoods which needed both tangible and intangible assets to strengthen. ABCD principles have stressed the importance of community empowerment, relationship building, and strengthening existing assets. This has permeated into planning practices today such as participatory planning and empowerment zones, even if ABCD is not mentioned by name. However, ABCD has been critiqued and results have not been fully successful due to events in

history such as policies like HOLC, redlining, the “back to the city movement” and other institutional powers that marginalized communities. Following the evolution of ABCD to address these critiques and power systems reveals that ABCD principles are still alive, but have evolved to include equitable development initiatives and anti-displacement strategies.

Original ABCD framework goals state that it is meant to be replicated and successful across different communities around the world, therefore the evolution of ABCD is logical to adapt to the evolution of challenges that a community faces. Originally, I wondered if the framework of ABCD needed to be changed to explicitly mention issues of equity, displacement, and power systems or if they are just simply implied based on how the principles are interpreted. However, after following the evolution of ABCD, I have realized that the E in ABCD+E has manifested on its own, such as through initiatives present in the Central Area. Due to the historical context of the neighborhood, ABCD+E is able to mobilize local assets in a neighborhood with a historically Black community while also addressing issues of housing affordability, economic development, displacement, and more. ABCD is not named explicitly, but the principles still live on. While I am using ABCD+E to describe an evolved ABCD framework, it is also not necessary to explicitly name, as the principles live on in other initiatives outside of the 23rd Ave Action Plan and in other neighborhoods.

I can envision ABCD and ABCD+E continuing to adapt to future challenges that neighborhoods may face. Despite neighborhood conditions evolving since the 1980s, there are principles of ABCD that have still permeated through development efforts today, showing the longevity of the original framework. As critiques have been shared and time has passed, ABCD has been able to evolve into ABCD+E to account for those issues while still mobilizing their original values. I believe the core values of ABCD, if applied in contextual and equitable ways,

can still create sustainable change. However, the world has evolved so that they cannot stand solely on their own. The framework analysis shows that other elements such as cultural heritage and economic conditions play a role in how ABCD is utilized to become ABCD+E. In the future, I can see a world where additional assessment categories are added to evolve ABCD+E further to address growing challenges or new critiques. Additionally, since the 23rd Ave Action Plan is still carrying out their proposed strategies, the success of the plan has not been evaluated. I can also envision a world where based on what is successful or not, core values of ABCD+E being utilized in other ways to address those challenges.

When considering next steps, I refer back to the purpose of this study, which is to explore how asset based community development principles evolved to assist equitable neighborhood development and anti-displacement efforts? This thesis answers this question by providing a storyline of ABCD's evolution, response to neighborhood issues like displacement and critique, and examples of principles being used currently in an ABCD+E orientation. However, the research question simply asks how a framework has evolved over time, and does not measure the success or evaluate the implementation of such strategies. Therefore, there is more opportunities for research to be done on how ABCD+E can be implemented successfully, including conditions that would make the framework most effective. I am particularly interested in tracking the success of the 23rd Ave Action Plan, as the Central Area has undergone high levels of gentrification leading up to the implementation of the plan. I am curious to see whether critiques of ABCD are met through ABCD+E, or whether there is still more evolution to be done with the original principles to meet today's challenges. It could be beneficial to compare the Central Area's strategies to a neighborhood like Seattle's Chinatown-International District which has also utilized ABCD principles to preserve the historically pan-Asian community.

Next steps could be to create a quasi-policy analysis approach, and create evaluation criteria based on ABCD+E to evaluate the efforts of different policies that engage in anti-displacement efforts. The timing of ABCD and ABCD+E can be studied to better understand when intervention is the most effective in terms of displacement rates and equitable development. Additionally, best practices for engaging people of color, low-income communities, and other marginalized communities within ABCD+E practices could be created to ensure that the equity gaps in ABCD are addressed. Specifically since those communities are often facing the highest displacement pressures. Further tracking of ABCD and ABCD+E's evolution could shed more light on how the principles are able to adapt. Perhaps at some point, ABCD will transform into a new framework altogether depending on the context of neighborhood development.

CONCLUSION

Asset Based Community Development was innovative for its time of creation through its recognition of intangible assets and the power of human relationships. Traditional community development strategies were using a deficit orientation, centering the needs of a community through the identification of problems or weaknesses. However, this approach created harmful impacts on a community's motivation, perception, and ability to escape other issues such as poverty, unemployment, and poor health. By recognizing local residents and their problem-solving capabilities, John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann established core principles that manifested in a paradigm shift in the planning and policy field towards local leadership and social capital. Through examples like steering groups, partnership building, internal resource leveraging, and story collections, community members who may not be traditionally represented in the development process are given a voice to collaborate in decision-making.

While ABCD produced positive results in the United States and abroad, it was not immune to critique. Notably, from the 2000s onward, ABCD has received significant criticism towards its inattentiveness to power dynamics, as the core principles and strategies were locally focused without account for structural barriers throughout history. Critics argued that ABCD would not create lasting change without addressing power systems that influence assets that the framework hoped to mobilize. Unequal access to capital and resources, poverty, racism, and other structural barriers disproportionately impact low-income communities of color, which in turn impacts the ability for them to utilize ABCD and mobilize existing assets. However, that does not mean that ABCD is obsolete and no longer relevant in addressing existing issues and community development strategies today.

Displacement has become one of the primary issues facing low-income communities of color, caused by pressures that threaten the ability of residents to stay in their homes, thus reducing their ability to stay connected with supportive networks and limiting their access to opportunity (City of Seattle OPCD, 2020). Neighborhoods can experience direct displacement with households being directly forced to move, and they can experience indirect displacement with rising house costs and loss of cultural and social networks. All these factors are impacted by the imprint of redlining, racial covenants, and the “back to the city” movement. At the time of conception in the 1980’s, displacement was not a top priority for ABCD, as more focus was spent on ensuring disinvested neighborhoods received infrastructure, development and resources needed to attain assets. However, original ABCD principles still live on in current anti-displacement strategies.

The examination of the Central Area’s 23rd Ave Action Plan provides a case study to analyze how ABCD principles are utilized in current development strategies. Notably, it allows an opportunity to see how original ABCD principles have been supplemented or evolved to address issues of displacement, cultural heritage, and social capital. These are areas that many critique the original ABCD framework for leaving out, therefore it provides an understanding of ABCD+E as an evolution of ABCD that accounts for existing principles and gaps in equity considerations. Despite neighborhood conditions evolving since the 1980s, there are principles of ABCD that have still permeated through development efforts today, showing the longevity of the original framework. Therefore, there is still opportunity to adapt to future challenges that neighborhoods may face. While the core values of ABCD, if applied in contextual and equitable ways, can still create sustainable change, the world has evolved so that they cannot stand solely on their own. While the success and evaluation of ABCD+E in current initiatives have not yet

been determined, it is evidence that ABCD values still exist in modern initiatives, but in a more equitable way. ABCD+E may still need further evolution depending on the outcomes of plans like the 23rd Ave Action Plan. There are more opportunities for research to be done on how ABCD+E can be implemented successfully, including conditions that would make the framework most effective. However, the goal of this research was to understand ABCD as a framework in past and present contexts, and track how it has evolved to account for issues of equity. Based on the findings of this thesis, there is evidence that ABCD has evolved into ABCD+E, although it is not referred to as such. Instead, development plans often utilize proxy words embedded into their policies and strategies in hopes to incorporate more equitable neighborhood planning.

If I were to summarize the story of ABCD's evolution in this thesis, I would say that ABCD+E is not the ending chapter. Rather, I consider it a bookmark in the narrative of ABCD, with many more pages unwritten. ABCD+E is a natural evolution of ABCD, as it has carried sparks of the original framework into equitable development strategies used to address community issues today. As communities evolve, I can see ABCD+E evolving alongside it. Perhaps there is a future where ABCD+E becomes so normalized that it becomes regular practice and no longer requires a specific framework name. For now, further tracking of ABCD's evolution can shed more light on how the principles are able to adapt to present and future community development challenges.

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APPENDIX A:

23rd Avenue Action Plan (Union-Cherry-Jackson) Community Survey

23rd Avenue Action Plan (Union-Cherry-Jackson) SurveyMonkey Community Survey

1. a. What are the most important assets in the identified areas along 23rd between Union and Jackson that support a healthy community? Assets can be physical such as sidewalks, parks, or social such as organizations etc.

	Response Count
	42
answered question	42
skipped question	0

2. What physical or social aspects along 23rd between Union and Jackson have a negative impact on you, your business, your family and/or the community? Examples might be poor lighting, broken sidewalks, or feeling unsafe after dark.

	Response Count
	42
answered question	42
skipped question	0

3. What opportunities, existing or that could be developed within the next 5 years or so, could improve your community?

	Response Count
	39
answered question	39
skipped question	3

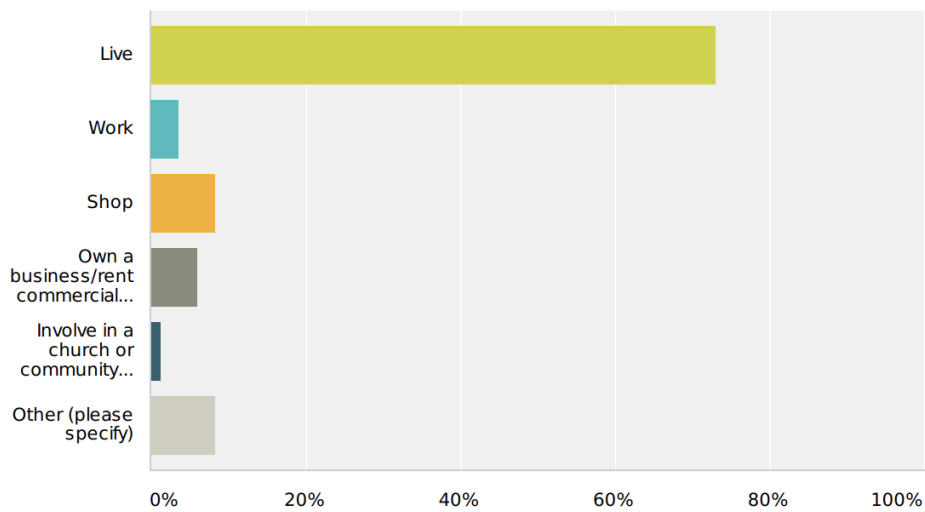
APPENDIX B:

23rd Avenue Action Plan Visioning Survey

23rd Avenue Action Plan Visioning Survey

Q1 Which of the following describes your connection to the Central Area? Choose one answer that best applies to you.

Answered: 85 Skipped: 1

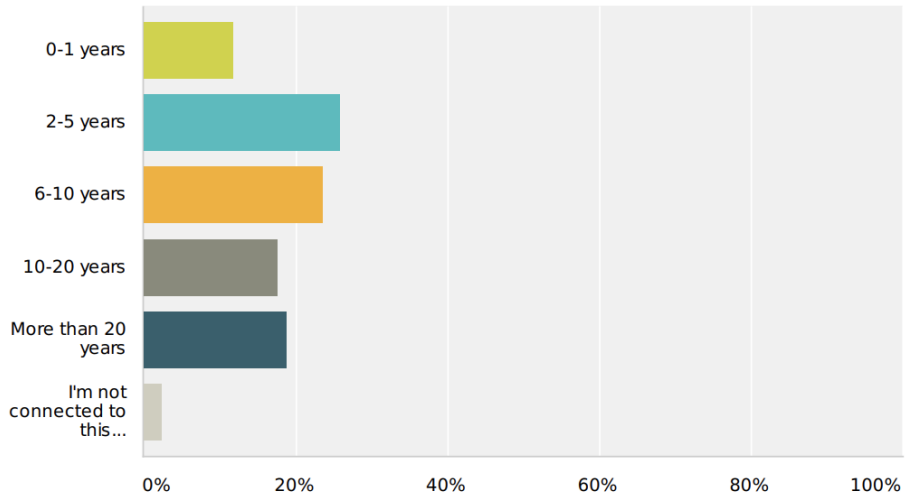


Answer Choices	Responses
Live	72.94% 62
Work	3.53% 3
Shop	8.24% 7
Own a business/rent commercial space	5.88% 5
Involve in a church or community organization	1.18% 1
Other (please specify)	8.24% 7
Total	85

23rd Avenue Action Plan Visioning Survey

Q2 How long have you been connected to the Central Area?

Answered: 85 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
0-1 years	11.76% 10
2-5 years	25.88% 22
6-10 years	23.53% 20
10-20 years	17.65% 15
More than 20 years	18.82% 16
I'm not connected to this neighborhood	2.35% 2
Total	85