



**RESETTING THE TABLE:
CREATING AN URBAN EQUITY AGENDA**

A Levin College Forum Series in partnership with PolicyBridge

Gregory L. Brown

Executive Director, PolicyBridge



Levin.
The Maxine Goodman Levin
College of Urban Affairs



Why an Urban Agenda?

- PolicyBridge was conceived to address issues negatively affecting life in Cleveland's distressed neighborhoods, especially the African American community.
- In our 17 years of research and advocacy, we have seen plenty of quality programs and initiatives undertaken to address a wide range of specific issues.
- Yet even our most successful endeavors have not moved the needle in improving the overall quality of life and access to economic opportunities in Cleveland's low-wealth neighborhoods.



Levin.
The Maxine Goodman Levin
College of Urban Affairs





Why an Urban Agenda?

In Our City of Cleveland

- Cleveland is a city that consistently ranks among the poorest in the nation and is also singled out for undesirable realities ranging from ***black infant mortality*** to the ***digital divide***.

The Question - How can this be?

Especially when we are a city of many hard-working and innovative community leaders and activists, an engaged business community, and with admirable philanthropic institutions and resources.

Answer

Why an Urban Agenda?

1.

Years of disinvestment, structural and institutional racism and inequities that continue to loom large in Cleveland.

2.

Challenges must be deliberately addressed and accounted for in any effort to bring about meaningful change.

3.

Well-intended endeavors, and single-issue initiatives are not enough to combat systemic, intersecting challenges.

To truly make a dent in such broad-based needs, we must unify our many individual efforts behind a single plan.



Levin.
The Maxine Goodman Levin
College of Urban Affairs


POLICYBRIDGE

What is an Urban Agenda?

An Urban Agenda is a call for coordinated and integrated planning, collective action and accountability.

The Urban Agenda framework identifies six focus areas:



**Economic
Opportunity
and Mobility**



**Neighborhoods
and
Housing**



**Community
Health and
Wellness**



**Criminal
and
Social Justice**



**Educational
Attainment
and Career
Launching**



**Community
Mobilization
and Stability**

Each focus area has a full plate of priority issues, problems and concerns.

It is hoped that this framework is shared with corporate and philanthropic boards, shapes local elections, sparks community discussions, emboldens stakeholders and drives this community to act with collective purpose for a better future for Cleveland and its people.

What is an Urban Agenda?

- An Urban Agenda advances the economic and social inclusion of Black and Brown people.
- It builds a vital, sustainable, healthy, and engaged community.
- It addresses conditions that have resulted in disinvestment in communities of color.
- It mitigates policies and practices that foster structural and institutional racism.
- An Urban Agenda is a blueprint that clarifies community priorities, codifies joint approaches for action, and unifies like-minded leaders from various backgrounds and disciplines to ensure successful implementation.

An Urban Agenda

- Is not a report or policy brief
- Is not a new program or initiative

Urban Agenda Recommendations

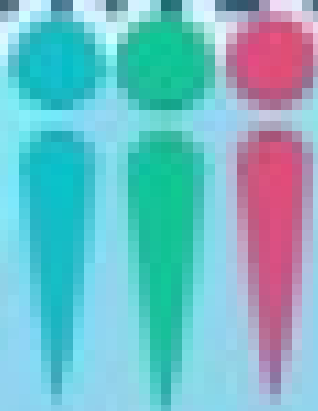
- A central assertion is that cities and communities must prioritize their needs, outline and communicate solutions, and work with and through policymakers to initiate board-based, population-level change.
- Another foundational principle is that siloed efforts cannot bring about the broad-scale transformation needed in Cleveland.
- The challenge for Cleveland neighborhoods is macro, but our solutions tend to be micro.
- While acknowledging and valuing the substantial efforts and resources expended, we encourage the following recommendations:
 - **Adopt Community-Level Accountability Measures**
 - **Encourage Inclusive Stakeholder Alignment**
 - **Seek Extensive Community Input and Voice**
 - **Acknowledge Intersectionality**
 - **Sequence Community Change Efforts**
 - **Reimagine Philanthropy as a driving force behind this urban agenda**
 - **Dismantle Structural and Institutional Racism**

Networked Systems

Networked systems commonly known as collective impact is how we operationalize our urban agenda.



COLLECTIVE IMPACT



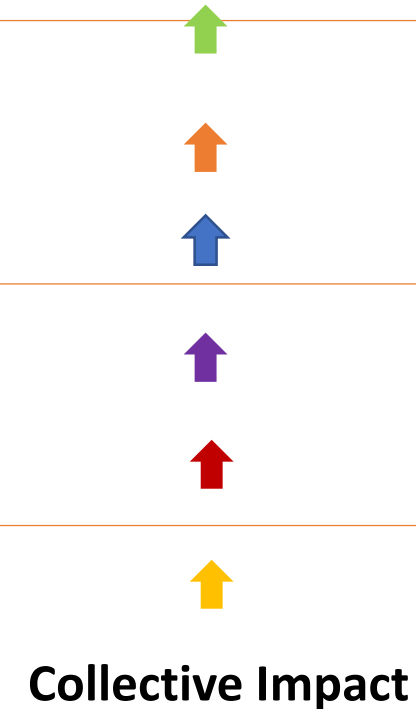
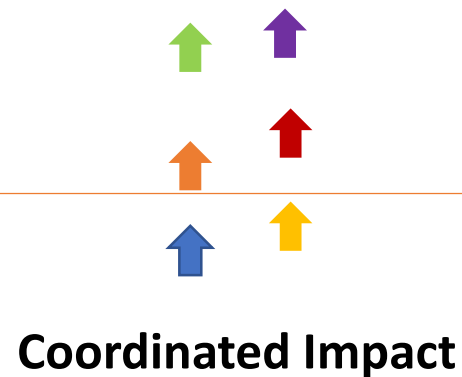
What Is Collective Impact?

“Collective impact is a structured form of collaboration that embraces continuous improvement and rigorous data to drive transformative social change.”

Success

Some Success

Minor Success



What Is Collective Impact?

5 Essential Conditions

1. Common Agenda

All participants have a shared vision for change that includes a common understanding for the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem through agreed-upon actions.

2. Shared Measurement

Agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported, with a short list of common indicators identified and used across all participating organizations for learning and improvement.

3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders, typically across sectors, coordinating a set of differentiated activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

4. Continuous Communication

Frequent and structured open communication across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.

5. Backbone Support

Ongoing support by independent, funded staff dedicated to the initiative, including guiding the initiative's vision and strategy, supporting aligned activities, establishing shared measurement practices, building public will, advancing policy, and mobilizing funding.

Backbone staff can all sit within a single organization, or they can have different roles housed in multiple organizations.

What is Collective Impact?

Principles of Practice

- Design and implement the initiative with a priority placed on **equity**.
- Include **community members** in the collaboration.
- Recruit and co-create with **cross-sector** partners.
- Use data to continuously **learn, adapt and improve**.
- Cultivate leaders with unique **system leadership** skills.
- Focus on program and **system strategies**.
- Build a culture that fosters **relationships, trust and respect** across participants.
- Customize for **local context**.



Thank you!



Levin.
The Maxine Goodman Levin
College of Urban Affairs



RESETTING THE TABLE:

CREATING AN URBAN EQUITY AGENDA

A Levin College Forum Series in partnership with PolicyBridge

Panelists

Moderator



Mayor Justin M. Bibb
City of Cleveland



Gregory L. Brown
Executive Director
Policy Bridge



Baiju Shah
President & CEO
Greater Cleveland
Partnership



India Pierce Lee
Senior VP, Program
Cleveland Foundation



Randell McShepard
Chair
PolicyBridge

